

The background of the page is a photograph showing a silver laptop keyboard on the right and a black leather-bound notebook on the left, both resting on a dark wooden surface. A green horizontal bar runs across the middle of the page, partially overlapping the notebook and laptop.

# April 2023 Monthly Current Affairs GK Digest

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# MONTHLY CURRENT AFFAIRS GK DIGEST: APRIL 2023

- The household agricultural income has also increased by 78.50% in the tank ayacut area.

## NEW INDIA LITERACY PROGRAM' STARTED FROM THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2022-23 TO 2026-27

**Current Context:** Recently, the Government has launched a new Centrally Sponsored Scheme "New India Literacy Program" (NILP) for implementation over five years from FY 2022-23 to 2026-27 with a financial outlay of Rs 1037.90 crore.

### KEY FACTS

- The New India Literacy Program has been launched to cover a target of 5.00 crore illiterates in the age group of 15 years and above.
- The scheme is mainly implemented through online mode and is based on technology. Teaching and learning materials and resources are available on the DIKSHA platform of NCERT and can be accessed through the mobile app.

## WEST BENGAL CM BANERJEE LAUNCHES FLAGSHIP ROAD 'PATHASHREE- RASTASHREE'

**Current Context:** Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has inaugurated the 'Pathashree Rasta shree' project in Singur, Bengal. 'Pathashree-Rastashree' is a flagship project of the Government of West Bengal to strengthen road infrastructure and enhance connectivity to villages by building 12,000 km of roads in 22 districts of the state.

### ABOUT

- This will be a fully state funded scheme. Notably, the project was announced by state finance minister Chandrima Bhattacharya on February 15 in West Bengal while presenting the budget in the Bengal Legislative Assembly.

## TELANGANA URBAN DEVELOPMENT MINISTER LAUNCHES 'LAKE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM'

**Current Context:** Municipal Administration and Urban Development Minister KT Rama Rao launched the 'Lake Development Program' on 28 March 2023.

### DETAILS

- These lakes have been adopted by real estate developers under the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) scheme.
- The benefits of the Telangana Lake Development Program include rejuvenating and developing 50 water bodies in and around Hyderabad.
- The tanks and lakes are dug to remove silt for increasing water storage capacity.

## FOREIGN TRADE POLICY 2023 RELEASED BY UNION MINISTER PIYUSH GOYAL

**Current Context:** The Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Shri Piyush Goyal has launched the Foreign Trade Policy 2023 on 31 March 2023. He said India's total exports including services and merchandise exports have already crossed US\$ 750 billion and are expected to cross US\$ 760 billion this year.

### KEY POINTS

- It is a policy document which is a continuation of time-tested schemes facilitating exports.. Earlier FTP 2015-20 was working.
- It is based on principles of 'trust' and 'partnership' with exporters. The policy emphasizes export promotion and development, moving away from an incentive regime to a regime which is facilitating, based on technology interface and principles of collaboration.
- The key features of the policy include ease of doing business, reduction in transaction cost and e-initiatives. Automatic approval of various permissions under Foreign Trade Policy based on

process simplification and technology implementation.

## THE SECOND TOURISM WORKING GROUP MEETING BEGINS IN SILIGURI

**Current Context:** The second G20 Tourism Working Group (TWG) meeting will be held in West Bengal's Siliguri and Darjeeling from 1-3 April 2023.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- This meeting will carry a message about the prospects and potential of the North Eastern part of India.
- The meeting is to be attended by more than 130 Delegates from the G20 Member Countries, Invite Countries, and International Organizations along with Tourism Industry partners, State Tourism, and local tour operators.
- The main aim behind holding this meeting at Siliguri is to showcase the typical features of the area, tea ploughing to the foreign delegates as well as to expose the opportunities for adventure tourism and local art and culture.

## INDIA'S AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS GROW BY 6.04% DURING APRIL-JAN 2022-23

**Current Context:** India's agricultural exports rose 6.04 percent during April-January of the current financial year to worth USD 43.37 billion.

### ABOUT

- During the same period last year, it was USD 40.90 billion.
- During the full financial year 2021-22, India's agricultural exports touched the highest ever at USD 50.21 billion.
- The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) engages in export promotion activities for agricultural and processed food products.

## INDIA'S UNEMPLOYMENT RATE RISES TO 3-MONTH HIGH OF 7.8% IN MARCH 2023

**Current Context:** According to the data from the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE), India's unemployment rate increased to 7.8% in March 2023, marking a three-month high and indicating a decline in the country's labour market conditions.

### DETAILS

- The unemployment rate in the country surged in December 2022 to 8.30 percent but declined in January to 7.14 percent.
- It edged up again in February to 7.45 percent.
- In March, the unemployment rate in urban areas of India reached 8.4%, while in rural areas it stood at 7.5 percent.
- In March, unemployment was the highest in Haryana at 26.8 percent.
- It was closely followed by Rajasthan at 26.4 percent, Jammu and Kashmir at 23.1 percent, Sikkim at 20.7 percent, Bihar at 17.6 percent, and Jharkhand at 17.5 percent.

## GST REVENUE COLLECTION INCREASES 13% TO RS 1.60 LAKH CRORE IN MARCH 2023

**Current Context:** India's GST revenue collection for March 2023 stood at 6 lakh crore rupees, which is 13% higher than the GST revenues in March 2022.

### KEY FACTS

- It is for the fourth time, in the current financial year that the gross GST collection has crossed 1.5 lakh crore rupees, since the implementation of GST.
- Out of the total collection, CGST is 29,546 crore rupees, SGST is 37,314 crore rupees and IGST is 82,907 crore rupees, including ₹42,503 crores collected on import of goods.
- While cess contributed 10,355 crore rupees, including 960 crore rupees collected on the import of goods.
- The total gross collection for the year 2022-23 stands at 18.10 lakh crore rupees, while the average gross monthly collection for the full year is 1.51 lakh crore rupees.

## GOVERNMENT HIKES INTEREST RATES OF SMALL SAVINGS SCHEMES

**Current Context:** The government has raised interest rates on most post office saving schemes by up to 0.7 percent for the April-June 2023 quarter.

#### KEY POINTS

- The interest rates for popular PPF and savings deposits have been retained at 7.1 percent and 4 percent, respectively, there has been an increase between 0.1 percent and 0.7 percent in other saving schemes.
- The highest increase was in the interest rate of the National Savings Certificate (NSC), which will now attract 7.5 percent, up from 7 percent, for the April 1 to June 30, 2023 period.
- The new rate for the girl child savings scheme Sukanya Samridhi has been increased to 8 percent from 7.6 percent.
- The interest rate on the senior citizen savings scheme and Kisan Vikas Patra (KVP) is 8.2 percent (up from 8 percent) and 7.5 percent (up from 7.2 percent),
- KVP will now mature in 115 months as against 120 months earlier.

#### FINLAND WILL BECOME THE 31ST MEMBER OF NATO AFTER TURKEY'S APPROVAL

**Current Context:** Jens Stoltenberg, the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), has announced that Finland will become the 31st member of the alliance thanks to Turkey's unanimous vote.

#### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Finland will now be formally admitted to NATO at the next summit in Lithuania in July 2023.
- Despite Russia's opposition to Finland's membership, Turkey's acceptance has allowed the expansion of NATO. Finland is now set to become the 7th NATO country on the Baltic Sea.

#### ITALY BECOMES FIRST WESTERN COUNTRY TO BAN CHAT GPT OVER PRIVACY CONCERNS

**Current Context:** Italy has become the first western country to block advanced chatbot Chat GPT. The Italian data-protection authority stated that there were privacy concerns related to this model.

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#### ABOUT

- Chat GPT is already blocked in many countries including China, Iran, North Korea and Russia. The Italian watchdog said it will not only block Open AI's chatbot but will also investigate whether it complies with the General Data Protection Regulation.
- ChatGPT has gained wide global attention for its ability to generate essays, songs, exams and even news articles from brief prompts.

#### WHO CERTIFIED AZERBAIJAN AND TAJIKISTAN FREE OF MALARIA

**Current Context:** The World Health Organization (WHO) has certified Azerbaijan and Tajikistan to have eliminated Malaria in their territories. Certification of malaria elimination is the official recognition of a country's malaria-free status by the World Health Organization.

#### DETAILS

- Symptoms of malaria include fever, chills, general feeling of discomfort, headache, nausea and vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, muscle or joint pain, fatigue and rapid breathing<sup>12</sup>. Malaria signs and symptoms typically begin within a few weeks after being bitten by an infected mosquito.
- Malaria is transmitted primarily through the bite of an infective female Anopheles mosquito<sup>123</sup>. Other less common modes of transmission include transfusion of contaminated blood products, congenital transmission and transplantation of an organ from an infected donor.

#### 10TH JOINT NAVAL EXERCISE 'SLINEX-2023' TO BE HELD BETWEEN INDIA AND SRI LANKA

**Current Context:** The tenth annual edition of the Regional Maritime Exercise 'SLINEX-2023' will begin in Colombo, Sri-Lanka from 3 April 2023 which will run till 8 April.

#### KEY FACTS

- The exercise is being conducted in two phases of three days each, harbour phase and sea phase.
- The Indian Navy will be represented by INS Kiltan and INS Savitri, while the Sri Lankan Navy will be represented by SLNS Vijayabahu and SLNS Samudura.

- SLINEX-2023 aims to enhance interoperability, improve mutual understanding and exchange best practices and procedures in multi-dimensional maritime operations between the two navies.

## GEORGIA BECOMES THE FIRST US STATE TO PASS RESOLUTION AGAINST 'HINDUPHOBIA'

**Current Context:** America's Georgia has become the first US state to pass a resolution condemning 'Hinduphobia' (prejudice towards Hinduism).

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- The resolution was introduced by Representatives Lauren McDonald and Todd Jones of Forsyth County in the suburbs of Atlanta, home to one of Georgia's largest Hindu and Indian-American communities.
- It also said that the community's contributions to yoga, Ayurveda, meditation, food, music, art have enriched the cultural fabric and been widely adopted in American society and have enhanced the lives of millions

## INDIA RANKED FIFTH IN THE GLOBAL LIST OF NATIONAL CONTRIBUTION TO GLOBAL WARMING

**Current Context:** Researchers from Europe and the United States calculated the national contribution to warming due to greenhouse gases such as CO<sub>2</sub>, CH<sub>4</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>O from the 1850s to 2021.

### KEY POINTS

- Global warming causes climate change which poses a serious threat to life on Earth in the forms of widespread flooding and extreme weather. Changes to near-surface air temperatures will likely influence ecosystem functioning and thus the biodiversity of plants, animals, and other forms of life<sup>12</sup>. Climate change will also worsen a range of risks to infrastructure, health, agriculture, forestry, transportation, air and water quality<sup>3</sup>. Climate change has caused increased heat, drought, and insect outbreaks
- The United States topped the list with a 0.28 °C (17.3%) rise in temperature. China ranked second with 0.20 °C (12.3 percent) of warming, Russia third

at 0.10 °C (6.1 percent), Brazil fourth at 0.08 °C (4.9 percent) and India fifth at 0.08 °C (4.8 percent).

- The other countries in the top 10 list are China, the United States, Russia, Brazil, Indonesia, Japan, Iran, Germany and South Korea.

## FIRST ANTI-SUBMARINE EXERCISE BETWEEN THE NAVIES OF SOUTH KOREA, THE US AND JAPAN BEGAN

**Current Context:** The navies of South Korea, USA and Japan have started their first anti-submarine exercise from 3 April 2023.

### ABOUT

- In addition to this anti-submarine exercise, the three countries will practice humanitarian search and rescue operations, including rescuing people overboard and treating emergency patients.
- The Defense Ministry statement said that this would be the first such training of the three countries in seven years.
- The maritime exercise is being conducted in the international waters off South Korea's southern island of Jeju.
- The US Navy's nuclear-powered aircraft carrier USS Nimitz is participating in it.

## AIRTEL-IPPB LAUNCHES 'WHATSAPP BANKING SERVICES'

**Current Context:** Airtel-India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) has launched WhatsApp banking services in New Delhi. This allows customers to conveniently access banking services on their mobile phones.

### DETAILS

- This new banking channel will allow customers to connect with the bank on WhatsApp and access a range of services such as ordering home services, finding the nearest post office, etc.
- The addition of WhatsApp messaging is part of India Post Payments Bank's multifaceted efforts to promote financial inclusion and reach out to rural areas of the country.

## UP CM YOGI STARTED "SCHOOL CHALO ABHIYAN"

**Current Context:** With the aim of ensuring 100 percent enrollments in primary and upper primary schools under Uttar Pradesh Basic Shiksha Parishad, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has launched "School Chalo Abhiyan" from April 1, 2023.

#### KEY FACTS

- Under this campaign, the UP government will try to re-enrol those children who have dropped out during this session.
- The state government conducts the campaign every year.
- The CM had launched this campaign from the aspirational district Shravasti in April last year. The state government has enrolled many children in schools under the campaign.

#### ISRO SUCCESSFULLY TESTS REUSABLE LAUNCH VEHICLE AUTONOMOUS LANDING MISSION (RLV LEX)

**Current Context:** ISRO successfully tested the Reusable Launch Vehicle Autonomous Landing Mission (RLV LEX). The test was conducted on April 2, 2023 at the Aeronautical Test Range (ATR), Chitradurga, Karnataka. Along with ISRO, IAF, CEMILAC, ADE and ADRDE contributed to this test.

#### KEY POINTS

- The RLV was flown to an altitude of 4.5 km as an underslung load by a Chinook helicopter of the Indian Air Force.
- The Reusable Launch Vehicle Autonomous Landing Mission (RLV LEX) test was the second of five tests and part of ISRO's efforts to develop space planes/shuttles that can travel to low earth orbits, deliver payloads and return to earth for use again.

#### NASA ANNOUNCED A FOUR-MEMBER TEAM OF ASTRONAUTS UNDER MISSION ARTEMIS-2

**Current Context:** NASA's Artemis II mission is a crewed lunar flyby mission that aims to send four astronauts in the first crewed Orion MPCV Spacecraft into a lunar flyby for a maximum of 21 days using the Block 1 variant of the Space Launch System.

#### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

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- NASA has announced a team of four astronauts for the lunar mission Artemis-2, which will fly around the Moon for a 10-day mission next year.
- In this team of 4 members, Ms Kochi will be the 1st women to walk around the moon.
- The mission profile is a multi-trans lunar injection (MTLI), or multiple departure burns, and includes a free return trajectory from the Moon

#### The names of the 4 astronauts are:

1. Reid Wiseman
  2. Victor Glover
  3. Christina Koch
  4. Jeremy Hanson.
- As part of the Artemis II mission, the spacecraft will be powered by a NASA SLS rocket with nuclear power.
  - The mission is slated to launch in late 2024.

#### INDIA'S GDP GROWTH RATE IS LIKELY TO MODERATE TO 6.3% IN FY2024

**Current Context:** According to a recent World Bank report 'India Development Update', India's GDP growth is predicted to slow down to 6.3% from 6.6% in FY2024.

#### DETAILS

- **The reason for decline in the GDP is due to the decrease in income levels and the challenges people face from different external conditions.**
- Asia's third-largest economy registered a growth of 4.4 per cent in October-December, up from 11.2 per cent a year ago and 6.3 per cent in the previous quarter.
- **Though there could be short-term risks after the collapse of three mid-sized banks in the US, and the acquisition of Credit Suisse by UBS, it said the Indian banks are well capitalised.**
- Spillovers from recent developments in financial markets in the US and Europe pose a risk to short-term investment flows to emerging markets, including India. But Indian banks remain well capitalised.

#### MF HYDRA IS THE WORLD'S FIRST LIQUID HYDROGEN POWERED FERRY

**Current Context:** A company from Norway on the name of Norled has successfully launched the world's 1st ferry that runs on liquid hydrogen.

## ABOUT

- The ferry is named as MF Hydra which uses liquid hydrogen fuel cells.
- **This significant achievement is a major step taken for reducing the greenhouse gas emissions in the shipping industry.**
- This ferry can carry almost 300 passengers and 80 vehicles.
- **With its two 200 kW fuel cells, two 440 kW generators, and two Shottel thrusters, it can travel at a speed of 9 knots.**
- This ferry reduces the emissions of carbon by 95%.

## CHHATTISGARH'S FIRST DIGITAL RADIO STATION 'RADIO SANGWARI' INAUGURATED

**Current Context:** The Chief Minister said that through Radio Sangwari, Chhattisgarhi folk art, folk culture and song-music will be taken to the common people through digital radio stations and also describing it as a better effort in the direction of widely promoting the art and culture of Chhattisgarh.

## KEY FACTS

- Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel launched Chhattisgarh's first digital radio station 'Radio Sangwari'.
- Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel released the audio of Chhattisgarhi song 'Kaka Zinda Hai' in the program.
- **The radio station can be listened to comfortably even on 2G internet speed and the application can be downloaded on Google Play Store**

## INDIA AND ROMANIA SIGNED A 'DEFENCE COOPERATION AGREEMENT'

**Current Context:** Romania's Deputy Defence Minister Simona Cojocaru recently met India's Défense Secretary Giridhar Armane in New Delhi after the two countries signed their first defence cooperation agreement.

## KEY POINTS

- **Bilateral cooperation will be done in areas such as cyber defence, training and education, communication and information technology, military medicine, defence policy and scientific research in the military sector, as well as technological issues.**
- **Collaboration will be done with the Romanian Institute for Political Studies of defence and Military History and the Indian Manohar Parrikar Institute for defence Studies and Analyses.**
- Furthermore, Romania and India have already cooperated in multinational environments such as UN missions, and highlighted their joint contribution to promoting stability and strengthening peace and security.

## US AND INDIAN AIR FORCE TO ORGANIZE 'COPE INDIA' COMBAT TRAINING EXERCISE

**Current Context:** US and Indian Air Force will conduct 'Cope India' combat training exercise from 10-21 April 2023 at Kalaikunda Airbase in West Bengal. Japan will be the observer nation in this exercise.

## KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- The Indian Air Force (IAF) is set to field its frontline fighters SU-30MKI, Rafale and indigenous Light Combat Aircraft as well as force multipliers, while the US Air Force is expected to bring in F-15 fighter jets.
- The Indian Air Force has recently participated in several multinational exercises, including Ex Desert Flag in the UAE and Ex Cobra Warrior in the UK.

### Indo-US joint exercise:

- Vajra Prahar (Army)
- Yudha Abhyas (Army)
- Cope India (Air Force)
- Red Flag (US multilateral air exercise)
- Malabar Exercise (Trilateral exercise between India, US and Japan)

## ISRAEL LAUNCHES NEW 'OFEK-13' SPY SATELLITE INTO SPACE

**Current Context:** Israel has successfully launched its new spy satellite 'Ofek-13' into space on March 2023. The satellite is meant to provide advanced intelligence capabilities to the

Israeli military and intelligence agencies. Ofek-13 was launched from the prestigious Israeli airbase Palmachim.

## DETAILS

- "The 'Ofek-13' satellite is an [synthetic-aperture radar] observation satellite with advanced capabilities," the defence Ministry said in a statement after the launch.
- **The launch of the Ofek-13 satellite comes at a time of rising tension levels in the Middle East, with Israel facing security threats from various sources.**
- Ofek-16 was launched into space in July 2020, and won Israel's top security award last year. These satellites are operated by the IDF's Military Intelligence Directorate.
- **Ofek-13 will be handed over to Unit 9900 once it is considered fully operational.**

## INDIA JUSTICE REPORT 2022

**Current Context:** According to the India Justice Report (IJR) 2022, released on 4 April 2023, the state of Karnataka has secured the top rank among 18 large and medium-sized states with a population of more than 1 crore.

## ABOUT

- **Tamil Nadu has secured the second position in the ranking, while Telangana has secured the third position.**
- The state of Gujarat has got the fourth position and Andhra Pradesh is at the fifth position.
- **The state of Uttar Pradesh has been placed at the 18th position, which is at the bottom among the states.**
- Each pillar was analysed through budget, human resources, workload, diversity, infrastructure and trends towards the state's own declared standards and benchmarks.
- This third IJR also separately assesses the capacity of the country's 25 State Human Rights Commissions.

## COMPETITION (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2023 PASSED BY BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT

**Current Context:** The Rajya Sabha on 3 April 2023 approved the Competition (Amendment) Bill, 2023, which aims to modernize the two-decade-old 2002 antitrust law to be consistent with changes in the economy.

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## KEY FACTS

Main features of the bill are:

- **Under the new bill, mergers and acquisitions worth more than Rs 2,000 crore must be notified to the Competition Commission of India (CCI) provided the party being acquired has substantial business operations in India.**
- The Bill reduces the overall time limit for assessment of composition from 210 days to 150 days.
- Now the Commission will have the power to appoint a Director General (DG) instead of the Central Government. However, the ministry clarified that such appointment requires prior approval of the central government.
- **Other changes include broadening the scope of anti-competitive agreements to cover hub-and-spoke cartels, vendors, and the sale of goods and services.**
- The Green Channel Route is an automated approval scheme that acts as a filter for certain types of merger transactions or Competition (Amendment) Bill, 2023 passed by both houses of Parliament combination filings that are devoid of any risk of harm to competing regimes.
- **The Competition Commission of India (CCI) introduced a green channel in 2022 for automatic approval of combinations.**

## FINO PAYMENTS BANK AND RAJASTHAN ROYALS TIE UP AS DIGITAL BANKING PARTNER

**Current Context:** Fino Payments Bank and Rajasthan Royals have tied up as digital banking partners. Fino Payments Bank has renewed its association with Rajasthan Royals (RR) for Season 16 of IPL.

## KEY POINTS

- With the launch of its new FinoPay digital savings account, the bank hopes to gain more momentum from its partnership with Rajasthan Royals.
- **This partnership provides an opportunity to the Bank to provide a wide visibility of its innovative digital banking solutions and promote financial inclusion in the country.**
- Fino Payments Bank is a new age bank which was launched in India in 2017.



- It is a presence of Fino Pay tech Limited, a leading payment and banking solutions provider in India.
- Fino Payments Bank is headquartered in Mumbai with a network of over 500 branches and 25,000 banking points spread across the country.
- **The focus of the bank is to provide digital banking solutions and financial services especially to the customers in rural and semi-urban areas.**
- The bank also offers easy and convenient banking services through its mobile banking app Finopay.

- **The global theme for International Day of Sport 2023 is "Scoring for People and the Planet".**
- **The day marks the positive impact sports have had on the harmony and peace of various communities around the world.**
- Sports help promote social ties, peace and sustainable development across the planet.
- Hence, the day serves as a platform for the nations to focus their attention on the development of the region.
- **Nations are encouraged to invest in sports and games infrastructure development, awareness among the public and quality education.**

## KERALA BECOMES THE STATE WITH MAXIMUM GI TAG IN THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2022-23

**Current Context:** Kerala has secured the highest number of Geographical Indication (GI) tags for products among all states in India in the financial year 2022-23, according to data shared by the GI Registry.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Products from Kerala, including Atappadi Attukombu avara (beans), Atappadi thuvara (red gram), Onattukara ellu (sesame), Kanthalur vattavada veluthuli (garlic) and Kodungallur pottuvellari (snap melon) have been awarded the GI tag.
- Apart from 6 products from Kerala, Mithila Makhana (Aquatic Fox Nut) from Bihar, Alibaug White Onion from Maharashtra, Tandoor Redgram from Telangana, Ladakh Raktse Karpo Khubani from Ladakh and Gamosa Handicraft from Assam were also selected for the honour.
- **A total of 12 products were given GI recognition between April 2022 and March 2023, including two foreign products. Brandy de Jerez from Spain and Provolone Valpadana from Italy received GI recognition.**

## INTERNATIONAL DAY OF SPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE (IDSDP) OBSERVED ON 06 APRIL

**Current Affair:** On 6 April, the International Day of Sport for Development and Peace (IDSDP) is observed annually.

### ABOUT

- The day is celebrated to highlight the importance of sports in the society.

## SKY ROOT AEROSPACE TESTS 3D PRINTED CRYOGENIC ENGINE 'DHAWAN-II'

**Current Context:** Indian private space vehicle company Sky root Aerospace has tested 3D printed cryogenic engine Dhawan-II for a record 200 seconds for its heavy vehicle Vikram-II.

### DETAILS

- **This major milestone has been accomplished at the Solar Industries Propulsion Test Facility in Nagpur, Maharashtra using an indigenously developed mobile cryogenic engine test pad.**
- Earlier in November 2022, Sky root launched India's first privately developed rocket Vikram-S, which made the firm the first Indian private company to send a rocket into space.
- **Dhawan II:**
  - Sky root's Dhawan cryogenic engine line is named in honor of renowned Indian rocket scientist Satish Dhawan. Dhawan II is based on Sky root's first privately developed full-cryogenic rocket engine - Dhawan I, which was successfully flight tested on 21 November. It is completely indigenously manufactured and uses a super alloy for the 3D printing engine, which has reduced the manufacturing time by up to 95%. It will use Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) and Liquid Oxygen (LoX) as propellants.

## NATIONAL ELECTRICITY PLAN' RELEASED FOR THE YEAR 2022-27

**Current Context:** The latest draft of the National Electricity Plan (NEP) covers the period 2022-27, marking a significant change from its previous version, which mainly focused on renewable energy.

#### KEY FACTS

- **This highlights the need for additional coal-based capacity ranging from 17 GW to about 28 GW by 2031-32, over and above the 25 GW coal-based capacities currently under construction.**
- The draft plan also highlights the need for significant investment in battery storage with an estimated requirement of between 51 GW to 84 GW by 2031-32.
- This will increase the Plant Load Factor (PLF) of coal-fired power plants from 55% in 2026-27 to 62% in 2031-32.
- **It also emphasizes the challenges posed by increasing reliance on renewable energy, which will require careful management and planning in the years ahead.**

#### NADA BANS CWG CHAMPION SANJITA CHANU FOR FOUR YEARS

**Current Context:** Sanjita Chanu, an Indian weightlifter who has won the Commonwealth Games twice, has been banned for four years by the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) for doping twice.

#### KEY POINTS

- **The 29-year-old had tested positive for a metabolite of Drostanolone – an anabolic steroid – which is included in the banned list of the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA).**
- Her dope sample was collected at the competition on September 30, 2022, during the National Games in Gujarat last year.
- Sanjita's ban will start from November 12, 2022, the date of her provisional suspension.
- **The athlete has violated Article 2.1 and 2.2 of NADA ADR, 2021, therefore she is sanctioned with ineligibility for four (04) years as per Article 10.2.1 of NADA ADR, 2021. The Anti-Doping Disciplinary Panel of NADA headed by Chaitanya Mahajan said in the order.**
- “As per Article 10.10 of the NADA ADR, 2021, the athlete is hereby disqualified of all of the individual

results obtained in the said Event with all Consequences, including forfeiture of all medals, points and prizes since 30-09-2022,”

#### BAHRAIN LAUNCHES 'GOLDEN LICENSE' TO ATTRACT INVESTMENT, JOBS

**Current Context:** Bahrain announced the launch of a Golden License on April 2023, with an aim to attract major companies to invest in the Gulf country to increase investment, jobs.

#### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- According to the Bahrain Economic Development Board, only companies with a value of \$50 million or plans to create 500 jobs in the country will be eligible for this license.
- **Bahrain's cabinet introduced this license in line with its October 2021 economic reform plan, with the goal of improved economic performance, creating jobs and attracting more local and foreign investment.**
- Last year, Bahrain introduced its Golden Visa program, aimed at attracting foreign investment.
- **Golden licensed companies will enjoy perks and privileges unavailable to others, including priority allotment of land for investment and access to basic services and utilities.**

#### INDIA'S GROWTH RATE WILL COME DOWN TO 6.4 PERCENT IN 2023-24: ADB

**Current Context:** According to the Asian Development Bank (ADB), India's economic growth rate is expected to decline to 6.4 percent in the current financial year (2023-24).

#### DETAILS

- **It has projected a growth of 6.7% in the financial year 2024-25, driven by private consumption and private investment.**
- **Growth in Asia is projected to exceed 4.8% this year and 4.2% in 2024. Inflation is projected to ease from 4.4% in 2022 to 4.2% in 2023 and 3.3% in 2024.**
- Growth moderation for India in FY23 is based on the current global economic slowdown, tight monetary conditions and higher oil prices.
- India's fiscal deficit will remain below 5.9% of GDP.

- **Inflation is expected to ease to 5% in FY2023 and 4.5% in FY24 given the reduction in oil and food prices.**
- The current account deficit is projected to decline to 2.2% of GDP in FY2023 and 1.9% in FY2024.

- Delhi's Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport has been ranked as the ninth busiest airport in the world in 2022, which handles about 59.5 million passengers every year.
- **Passenger traffic also showed an increase of 60.2% as compared to the previous year.**

## APPLE WILL OPEN ITS FIRST RETAIL STORE IN MUMBAI

**Current Context:** Apple is getting ready to open its first physical store in the country. Apple's two top contract manufacturers, Foxconn and Wistron, were the fastest growing manufacturers in India during the last quarter of 2022.

### ABOUT

- According to a Bloomberg report, the Taiwanese company plans to invest around \$700 million on a new plant in the state capital Bengaluru to make iPhone parts.
- **The company has announced that its first-ever retail store in India will open on April 18 at the Jio World Drive mall in Mumbai, the financial and commercial hub of India.**
- A second one, at the Select Citywalk mall in Saket, Delhi, will be launched on April 20.
- **Its earlier plan to open a store in the country in the year 2021 was derailed by the corona virus pandemic. The company will open its store at JIO World Drive Mall, a property owned by Reliance Industries.**

## ACCORDING TO ACI REPORT, DELHI AIRPORT IS THE 9TH BUSIEST AIRPORT IN THE WORLD

**Current Context:** Airports Council International (ACI) has released the list of top 10 busiest airports in the world for 2022.

### KEY FACTS

- The top 10 airports account for 10% of global traffic and see a growth of 51.7% from 2021.
- **ACI also pointed out that global passenger traffic is projected to reach nearly 7 billion in 2022, representing an increase of 53.5% from 2021 or a recovery of 73.8% from 2019. 5 of the top 10 airports globally are in the United States.**

## HARYANA GOVERNMENT LAUNCHED THE (DRIISHYA) SCHEME

**Current Context:** On 4th April 2023, Haryana Chief Secretary Sanjeev Kaushal in a 'Startup Seminar' started Drone Imaging and Information Service of Haryana Limited for infrastructure (DRIISHYA) scheme for monitoring of agriculture and horticulture crops and survey of sensitive areas for security purposes etc.

### KEY POINTS

- Drone Imaging and Information Services of Haryana Limited (DRIISHYA) will provide pilot drone training to the youth in the state which will create employment opportunities for the youth.
- **The state government is using drones to curb illegal mining activities and ensure sustainable mining practices in the state.**
- The Drone Imaging and Information Services (DRIISHA) scheme of Haryana Limited was started in the year 2021 as a pilot project.
- **The first meeting of the Board of Directors was organized in October 2021 under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Manohar Lal.**

## GREGORIA MARISKA TUNJUNGHAS CLINCHED THE WOMEN'S TITLE IN THE SPAIN MASTERS 2023

**Current Context:** The women's title in the Spain masters was won by Gregoria Mariska Tunjunghas and P V Sindhu stood in the second place.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **India's P.V. Sindhu went down in straight games to Indonesia's Gregoria Mariska Tunjung in the women's singles final of the Spain Masters, a BWF World Tour Super 300 event, in Madrid on Sunday.**
- Second-seeded Sindhu went into the final with a 7-0 head-to-head advantage over Tunjung.

- However, the fifth-seeded Indonesian came out all guns blazing and thrashed the Indian 21-8, 21-8 in just 29 minutes to clinch the title.
- **Tunjung had earlier beaten Rio Olympic gold medallist and home favourite Carolina Marin the semi finals**

## 5TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON DISASTER RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE (ICDRI) 2023

**Current Context:** 5th ICDRI 2023 is an annual international conference and platform to continue building an engaged global community for disaster and climate resilient infrastructure.

### DETAILS

- Recently through a video message, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi delivered a speech at the 5th International Conference on Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (ICDRI) 2023.
- **The Prime Minister emphasized the significance of CDRI's work and its relevance, particularly in light of the recent disasters such as the earthquakes in Turkey and Syria, which were of significant scale and intensity.**
- **The Prime Minister expressed that the concept of CDRI emerged from a global perspective that recognizes the far-reaching consequences of disasters in an interconnected world.**
- He emphasized that our approach towards such incidents must be comprehensive rather than fragmented, promoting an integrated response. He also informed that the CDRI has been included in several working groups

## HOME MINISTER UNVEILED A 54 FEET TALL STATUE OF LORD HANUMAN

**Current Context:** Indian Home Minister Amit Shah has unveiled a 54-feet-tall statue of Lord Hanuman at a temple in Gujarat, India.

### ABOUT

- The statue was installed, made of bronze, at Sarangpur temple in Botad district, Gujarat.
- **The statue, which stands on a 48-feet-tall pedestal, has been built at a cost of around Rs 30 crore (\$4**

**million USD) by the Hanuman Seva Samiti, a trust associated with the temple.**

- It is said to be one of the tallest statues of Lord Hanuman in the world.
- In his address at the unveiling ceremony, Shah said that the statue is not just a symbol of devotion but also a message of India's cultural heritage and spirituality to the world. He added that the statue will become a major tourist attraction and boost tourism in the region.
- **The statue was installed with the help of a crane and the whole process took several hours to complete. The statue's face was unveiled first, followed by the body and the tail. The entire process was telecast live on television channels.**

## PUNJAB GOVERNMENT HAS LAUNCHED THE 'CM DI YOGSHALA' PROGRAM AND PORTAL

**Current Context:** The objective of the program is to create a mass movement to carve out a healthy and prosperous Punjab.

### KEY FACTS

- Under the Punjab government's initiative, people can give a missed call on helpline number 7669400500 to seek a free yoga teacher.
- **Sixty people have been trained at the Guru Ravidas University to teach yoga under the 'CM di Yogshala' initiative.**
- Initially, we are starting this initiative in four cities -- Patiala, Phagwara, Amritsar and Ludhiana -- and later, it will be expanded to other cities and towns too and three crore people will be imparted free yoga training in the state.

## IRAN HAD APPOINTED REZA AMERI AS AN AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES (UAE)

**Current Context:** Iran's newly appointed ambassador Reza Ameri had served as the Director General of the Iranian expatriates' office in the Foreign Ministry.

### KEY POINTS

- **The move comes after the UAE in last August moved to upgrade ties and said it was returning its ambassador to Tehran.**

- The UAE downgraded relations with Iran after Saudi Arabia severed ties with Iran in January 2016 after Iranian protesters stormed the Saudi embassy in Tehran following Riyadh's execution of a prominent Shiite cleric.
- The UAE, which has business and trade ties with Iran stretching back more than a century, started re-engaging with Tehran in 2019 after attacks in Gulf waters and on Saudi energy sites.

## CHINA'S PRIVATE SPACE COMPANY SPACE PIONEER LAUNCHED ITS FIRST "TIANLONG-2" ROCKET

**Current Context:** Space Pioneer, a Chinese private company has achieved a milestone by launching its 1st Tianlong- 2 rocket from the Jiuquan Satellite launch center in Mongolia.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- This rocket is also known as "Sky-Dragon-2".

#### Space Pioneer:

- The company was established in 2018. Its purpose is to launch a small satellite into a polar orbit around the Earth in a "fixed" position relative to the Sun.

#### Tianlong-2 Rocket:

- This rocket is capable of carrying 2000 Kg to a low Earth satellite of 500 Km altitude.
- **Beijing Tianbing Technology Co. has reported that the rocket follows a "three planes and one vertical" test and launch mode, which gives the possibility of launching a liquid fueled rocket from a simple cement field.**

## PM INAUGURATES 'COMMEMORATION OF 50 YEARS OF PROJECT TIGER' PROGRAM

**Current Context:** PM Shri Narendra Modi has inaugurated the program to mark the completion of 50 years for 'Project Tiger' at Mysore.

### DETAILS

- In the same event PM also launched the International Big Cats Alliance (IBCA).

- In this event PM has released the Amrit Kaal's Vision for Tiger Conservation', Summary Report of All India Tiger Estimation (5th Cycle) of Management Effectiveness Assessment of Tiger Reserves.
- As per the data, tigers increased to 3167 in count.

#### Project Tiger:

- This project was implemented in the year 1973 by then Union Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. In the year 1973, when this project was started only 9 tiger reserves were in the country.

#### St. Petersburg Declaration:

- In the year 2010, a meeting of the International Tiger Conservation Forum held in St. Petersburg city of Russia which was attended by the heads of state of 13 tiger range countries of the world.
- **In this meeting it was agreed to implement the 'Global Tiger Recovery Program'. Under this program, the 13 TRC countries had set a target of doubling the number of tigers globally by the year 2022.**
- A total of 13 countries including India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar, Nepal, Russia, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam are included in the 'Tiger Range Countries' (TRC).

## KSINC LAUNCHES SOLAR POWERED TOURIST BOAT "SOORYAMSHU"

**Current Context:** Solar powered tourist boat "Sooryamshu" or "Suryanshu" has been launched by the Kerala State Inland Navigation Corporation (KSINC) which can generate 27 kW power.

### ABOUT

- **The solar panels will meet approximately 75% of the boat's energy.**
- **The cost of this boat is around 3.95 crore and it was made in Srilanka.**
- There are two packages planned by Kerala State Navigation Corporation using this new boat:

- **The first package is named Kadamakkudi package which will allow tourists to enjoy Keding for sightseeing for Rs 799.**
- Kadamakkudi is a group of 14 islands in the city of Kochi.
- The second package will take tourists to Matsyfed Farm in Ernakulam district.

## FRENCH DEVELOPMENT AGENCY WILL ASSIST IN RAJASTHAN'S FORESTRY AND BIODIVERSITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

**Current Context:** On April 2023, State Chief Secretary Usha Sharma said that an agreement has been reached between the State Government and the French Development Agency, under which plantation will be done on a large scale.

### KEY FACTS

- The state government of Rajasthan in collaboration with French Development Agency will implement a project called 'Rajasthan Forestry and Biodiversity Development Project'
- **The joint agreement between Rajasthan and French Development Agency was signed by Dr. D N Pandey and Bosle Bruno who is the French Development Agency Director**
- Rs 1693.91 crore will be spent in 13 districts in the next 8 years, out of which 70 percent (Rs 1185.28 crore) will be borne by the French Development Agency and 30 percent (Rs 508.62 crore) by the state government.
- **The plantation process will be done in 55000 hectares area and also the forest development agency will distribute 55 lakh samplings to the areas which were not listed by the government.**
- 610 km of borders in forest areas will be protected by concrete walls.

## UTTAR PRADESH GOVERNMENT LAUNCHED 'ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE POWERLOOM ELECTRICITY FLAT RATE SCHEME'

**Current Context:** On April 2023, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath approved the 'Atal Bihari Vajpayee

### KEY POINTS

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- On this scheme the Uttar Pradesh government will be spending an amount of Rs.400 crores.
- This scheme will come into effect from 01 April 2023.
- **At the time of implementation of this scheme, a subsidy amount will be given on handloom weavers and also for installation of power loom. The subsidy amounts are 80% and 60% respectively.**
- **The advantage of this scheme is that, under this scheme all the handloom weavers will be provided with flat rate facility on the electricity bill.**
- The power charges will be as follows:
- Power loom connection holders with 5 KW connections – Rs.400 for half horse power and 800 for one horse power.
- Rural Areas – Rs.300 – 600.
- **Subsidy of Rs 700 per horsepower, maximum of Rs 9100 per month will be given to powerloom connection holders with load above five kilowatts.**
- Under Jhalkari Bai Kori Handloom and Power loom Development Scheme, weavers will be given a grant of Rs 50,000 and Rs 80,000 respectively.

## NASA'S HIGH-RESOLUTION AIR QUALITY MONITORING INSTRUMENT "TEMPO" LAUNCHED

**Current Context:** NASA has successfully launched the Tropospheric Emission Monitoring of Pollution (TEMPO) instrument on 7 April 2023,

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- This was launched for monitoring the major air pollutants. This TEMPO is the America's first space instrument.
- **The instrument was launched from the Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Florida on a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket along with the Intelsat 40E satellite.**
- The TEMPO which was launched will help to observe the air quality from space.
- NASA Administrator has said the TEMPO mission **aims to improve life on Earth by monitoring the effects of everything from**

**congested traffic to wildfires and pollution from volcanoes.**

- TEMPO will be able to measure air quality over North America hourly during the day.
- **The TEMPO was invented to measure a number of major pollutants including ozone, nitrogen oxides, sulfur dioxide and formaldehyde.**

## THE CABINET COMMITTEE ON SECURITY RELEASED THE 'INDIAN SPACE POLICY 2023'

**Current Context:** The Indian Space Policy-2023 was approved by the Cabinet Committee on Security chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

### ABOUT

- **The purpose of the Indian Space Policy is to introduce the private industry in the space.**
- By this Indian Space Policy, it will help the country to improve the economy by 10% from 2%.
- This framed policy will define the responsibilities of ISRO along with NSIL and also IN-SPACe.
- **The main activity of the NSIL is to carry out the strategic activities related to the space sector.**
- IN-SPACe will act as an interface between ISRO and non-governmental organizations. ISRO will focus its energy on new technologies, new systems and research and development.
- **The policy will allow the private sector to participate in end-to-end space activities that include building satellites, rockets and launch vehicles, data collection and dissemination.**
- ISRO has launched an innovative program called "Samvad" at Bengaluru in order to encourage the young students.

## ADVANCED GRAVITATIONAL-WAVE OBSERVATORY (LIGO) TO BE SET UP IN MAHARASHTRA

**Current Context:** The Union Cabinet approved the project to build an Advanced Gravitational-wave Detector (LIGO-Laser Interferometer Gravitational- Wave Observatory) on 174 acres of land in Maharashtra's Hingoli district at an estimated cost of Rs 2,600 crore.

### DETAILS

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- The Director of the Raman Research Institute Bengaluru said that this LIGO will which was created will help in cutting-edge frontiers of great national relevance, especially quantum-sensing and metrology.
- **LIGO is built by the U.S. Department of Atomic Energy and the Department of Science and Technology.**
- **This will be accompanied by an MoU with the National Science Foundation and several national and international research institutes.**
- The Government of India had given in-principal approval to the project in February 2016.
- LIGO is the world's most powerful observatory that exploits the physical properties of light and space to detect and understand the origin of gravitational waves.
- **This observatory will help in better understanding of celestial objects like neutron stars and black holes and in-depth study of gravitational waves.**
- Each LIGO detector has two arms, each 4 kilometres long, consisting of 2-meter-wide steel vacuum tubes arranged in an "L" shape and anchored by a 10-foot-wide, 12-foot-tall concrete shelter. are covered, which protect the tubes from fire.

## MINISTRY OF AYUSH CELEBRATED 'WORLD HOMEOPATHY DAY' ON 10TH APRIL

**Current Context:** World Homeopathy Day is organized every year on 10 April. The theme for this year is "One Health, One Family".

### KEY POINTS

- **The main objective of this day is to promote the homeopathy treatment.**
- Ministry of AYUSH has conducted a conference in New Delhi. The theme for the conference is 'Homeoparivar- Sarvajan Swasthya, One Health, One Family'.
- In this conference, they have conducted various sessions on advancements in homeopathy, research advancements and also clinical experiences in homeopathy.
- **The day aims to create awareness about the effectiveness of homeopathy in treating various health conditions.**

- **World Homeopathy Day is observed every year on 10 April to commemorate the birth anniversary of the German physician Dr. Samuel Hahnemann, the founder of Homeopathy. This year is the 268th birth anniversary of Dr. Hahnemann.**
- Dr. Samuel Hahnemann, the founder of homeopathy, was born on April 10, 1755 in Paris.

## FIVE HANDICRAFT PRODUCTS OF MADHYA PRADESH GOT GI TAG

**Current Context:** On April 2023, GI tag has been given to 5 handicraft products of Madhya Pradesh by the Union Ministry for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade. Earlier, it has been announced to give GI tag to Sundarja mango of Rewa district, Gajak of Morena.

### KEY FACTS

**These 5 products are:**

- Gond Painting of Dindori,
- Carpet of Gwalior,
- Batik Print of Ujjain,
- Stone Craft of Jabalpur Bhedaghat
- Saree of Varasivni of Balaghat.
- **With this, the number of GI-tagged products has increased to 19 in Madya Pradesh.**
- International Intellectual Property (IP) Index 2023
- **India has been ranked 42nd among 55 major global economies in the International Intellectual Property (IP) Index 2023 released by the US Chambers of Commerce, which is topped by the US, followed by the United Kingdom and France**

## TAMIL NADU GOVERNMENT LAUNCHES 'TN REACH' INITIATIVE

**Current Context:** The Tamil Nadu Industrial Development Corporation (TDCO) has developed a system called Tamil Nadu Regional Aerial Connectivity Through Helicopters

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Through this TDCO the government will provide the intercity and town connectivity using 80 helipads.
- **In order to implement this scheme, the government has assigned this responsibility to Tamil Nadu Industrial Cooperation (TIDCO).**

- At present air connectivity is available only to five cities - Chennai, Coimbatore, Trichy, Madurai and Thoothukudi.
- **According to Thangam Thennarasu, Industries Minister of Tamil Nadu, TN Reach will set up a network of air routes within a state that will facilitate people to travel between cities and towns using helicopters.**
- Additionally, a robust helicopter service can prove particularly beneficial in emergency situations where time is of the essence.
- **This mechanism will rely on two existing initiatives – Heli Disha, which is an administrative manual for helicopter operations, and Heli Seva, which is an online portal for providing landing clearance for helicopter operations.**

## 13TH OLIVE CROWN AWARDS HELD IN MUMBAI

**Current Context:** The 13th edition of the Olive Crown Awards was held in Mumbai, India, to appreciate individuals and corporate promoting sustainability or 'green advertising'.

### ABOUT

- **This Olive Crown Award was presented by International Advertising Association.**
- **There are totally 17 categories in this Award** which also included 'Green Agency of the Year' and 'Green Campaign of the Year'.
- The winner of the Green Crusader of the year is Mr. P. N. Mohan. He was awarded this as he restored seven lakes near Chennai.
- Kirloskar Limitless received Gold for 'A Minute for Nature' and 'Green Brand of the Year' for 'Corporate Crusader of the Year' and 'Powered by Nature'.
- Famous Innovations won 10 awards across all categories, wherein
- **Chirag Rural Development Foundation and People for Animals Wildlife Rescue and Conservation Center were awarded the Gold Award in the 'Green NGO of the Year' category.**
- The communication designed by Ogilvy for The Hindu titled 'The Inconsiderate Planet' won Silver at the IAA Olive Crown Awards 2023.
- Livpure won Gold for 'Green Campaign of the Year' - 'Rally for River'.



## NATIONAL SECURITIES DEPOSITORY RELEASED 'ASSETS UNDER CUSTODY REPORT'

**Current Context:** The National Securities Depository has released the Assets Under Custody (AUC) report for the financial year 2022-23, which details the financial flows of foreign portfolio investors.

### DETAILS

- **The National Securities Depository recently released the Assets Under Custody (AUC) report for the financial year 2022-23, which reveals financial flow information about foreign portfolio investors.**
- **The report highlights the major countries from which maximum FPI has been received, including the US, Singapore, Luxembourg, Mauritius, and the UK.**
- However, Mauritius experienced the biggest decline in foreign capital inflows, while Norway and Singapore registered an increase in AUC of 13% and 5%, respectively.
- **The report also shows that the Assets Under Custody from Mauritius are expected to decline by about 42% to Rs 6.66 trillion by the end of March 2023 from Rs 10.88 trillion in the previous year.**
- Experts suggest that this decline is due to the renegotiation of the India-Mauritius tax agreement, greater sensitivity on capital flows, and facing stiff competition from GIFT City. Furthermore, the Assets Under Custody of Foreign Portfolio Investors decreased by 4.44% in the financial year 2022-23 due to asset value erosion and capital outflows of over Rs 35,000 crore. In the previous year of 2022, FPI outflow reached a record high of ₹1.21 lakh crore.

### National Securities Depository

- The National Securities Depository Limited (NSDL) is a central securities depository of India, based in Mumbai.
- It was established on November 8, 1996, to handle securities in electronic form and aims to ensure the safety and soundness of Indian marketplaces by developing settlement solutions that increase efficiency, minimize risk and reduce costs.
- The NSDL provides various services related to securities including depository services, e-IPO, e-

voting, and e-insurance. It also provides facilities for the holding of mutual funds and exchange-traded funds (ETFs).

## ELECTION COMMISSION SCRAPS NATIONAL STATUS OF TRINAMOOLO CONGRESS

**Current Context:** The Election Commission has withdrawn the national party status from Trinamool Congress, Communist Party of India and Nationalist Congress Party. On the other hand, the commission has accorded national party status to Aam Aadmi Party.

### KEY POINTS

- **The national party status of Trinamool Congress, Communist Party of India and Nationalist Congress Party has been withdrawn by the Election Commission, while Aam Aadmi Party has been accorded the national party status.**
- The decision to withdraw the status of TMC, CPI and NCP was taken under the provisions of the Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order 1968. The BJP, the Congress, the Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M), the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), the National People's Party (NPP) and the Aam Aadmi Party are the six national parties recognized by the commission now.
- **The Representation of the People Act 1951 allows political parties registered to be recognized as a 'State Party' or a 'National Party' over time.**

### Gained National Party Status

- Additionally, the Election Commission has granted national party status to the Aam Aadmi Party, following its recognition as a state party in four states, namely Delhi, Punjab, Goa, and Gujarat.

### Gained State Level Party Status:

- Tipra Motha Party in Tripura
- Voice of the People Party in Meghalaya
- Lok Jan shakti Party (Ram Vilas) in Nagaland
- Loosed National Party Status
- Trinamool Congress in the states of Manipur and Arunachal Pradesh
- Communist Party of India in West Bengal and Odisha

- Nationalist Congress Party in Goa, Manipur and Meghalaya

#### Loosed State Party Status:

- Bharat Rashtra Samithi in Andhra Pradesh
- Pattali Makkal Katchi in Puducherry
- Revolutionary Socialist Party in West Bengal
- People's Democratic Alliance in Manipur
- Mizoram People's Conference in Mizoram

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY INDEX

**Current Context:** Union Minister of Power and New & Renewable Energy Shri R.K. Singh released the State Energy Efficiency Index (SEEI) 2021-22 report on 10 April 2023.

### KEY FACTS

- **The Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) has developed an index called the State Energy Efficiency Index (SEEI) to evaluate the progress of states and union territories in implementing energy efficiency measures.**
- The SEEI 2021-22 consists of 50 indicators spread across 7 sectors, including Building, Industry, Municipal Services, Transport, Agriculture, DISCOMS and cross-sectors.
- In the financial year 2021-22, the index assessed 36 states and union territories and classified them as 'Front Runner', 'Achiever', 'Contender' or 'Aspirant' based on their efforts and achievements.
- **This is the fourth edition of the index, following the State Energy Efficiency Readiness Index 2018, SEEI 2019, and SEEI 2020.**

#### Important Points

- Front Runner Category (>60) - Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Rajasthan and Telangana.
- Achiever Category (50-60) - Assam, Haryana, Maharashtra and Punjab.
- Contender Category (30-49.5)- Chandigarh, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha and Uttar Pradesh.
- Telangana and Andhra Pradesh are the two best-performing states, increasing their score by 45.5%, while Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Assam and Chandigarh are the top performing states in their respective state groups.

#### Bureau of Energy Efficiency

- Under the Energy Conservation Act of 2001, the Indian government founded the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) on March 1, 2002 to assist states in identifying areas of improvement, incorporating best practices, and adopting energy-efficient implementation approaches.

## WORLD'S FIRST CONSERVATION AND BREEDING CENTRE FOR ASIAN VULTURES

**Current Context:** In Uttar Pradesh's Maharajganj district, the Jatayu Conservation and Breeding Centre (JCBC) has constructed and designed the first-ever centre focused on the preservation of Asian king vultures.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **The Jatayu Conservation and Breeding Center (JCBC), a joint project of the CAMPA Fund, the Bombay Natural History Society, and the Wildlife Research Institute, has been established in Uttar Pradesh's Maharajganj district with the aim of conserving Asian king vultures.**
- The centre has been built on 1.5 hectares of land in Gorakhpur Forest division at a cost of approximately Rs 15 crore and includes various aviaries such as breeding and holding aviaries, a nursery aviary for juveniles, a hospital and recovery aviary, a food processing centre, and an incubation centre.
- The JCBC intends to breed a minimum of 40 vultures during the course of its 15-year project. To ensure a 100% success rate, there is an incubation centre to artificially rear eggs, and a food processing centre where food for the vultures will be prepared and tested before being fed.
- **The vulture population has dwindled in recent years due to the widespread use of the NSAID diclofenac in veterinary medicine in India, which has since been banned.**

#### Asian vulture

- **The Asian king vulture, also known as the red-headed vulture, is found primarily in northern India.**
- It was classified as 'Near Threatened' by the IUCN in 2004, and later as 'Critically Endangered' in 2007.

- In an effort to conserve vultures in the country, the Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change launched the 'Vulture Action Plan 2020-25', which proposes the establishment of four rescue centres in different regions of India, including Pinjore in Haryana, Bhopal in central India, Guwahati in the northeast, and Hyderabad in the south.

**Current Context:** The Gauhati High Court has developed the 'Bhoroxa' app for women's safety, which was launched by President Draupadi Murmu.

#### DETAILS

- **Women can use the app to send SOS messages with their location to emergency contacts in times of crisis, and also make a call by shaking their phone, without the need for internet connectivity to access emergency services.**
- The Bhoroxa app has several noteworthy features, including a helpline number (181) that women can call for immediate assistance during times of distress.
- **Additionally, the app provides information about different schemes designed to empower and protect women.**
- As a part of the platinum jubilee celebrations of the Gauhati High Court, the 'Bhoroxa' mobile app was launched.
- The event also featured the release of a commemorative postage stamp on April 5 by Union Minister Kiren Rijiju and the Assamese version of the book "Guwahati High Court: History and Heritage" by Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma.
- **Two apps, one for Integrated Criminal Justice System (CIS) and another for e-Prison applications, were launched along with an online e-Seva Kendra for Assam by the Chief Justice of India**

### THREE-DAY 'BAISAKHI FESTIVAL' WILL BE ORGANIZED IN JAMMU

**Current Context:** In the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, the Directorate of Tourism is organizing a three-day Baisakhi festival on Dogra culture and heritage from April 13 to 15.

#### ABOUT

- Various functions will take place across the Jammu division during a festival, including a procession from the Raghunath Temple to the Mubarak Mandi complex, a Kite Flying Festival, a Tonga Baggi ride, cultural programs, and other attractions.
- **Additionally, the first edition of the Constitution of India in Dogri language was released by Union Minister for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Kiren Rijiju at Jammu University.**
- Dogri was included in the 8th schedule of the constitution in 2003, and this effort was a joint achievement of the Government of India and the University of Jammu after three years of hard work.
- The earliest written reference to Dogri dates back to 1317 in Nuh Sipihar ("The Nine Heavens"), written by the poet Amir Khusro.
- **The celebration on April 14 will include a Kite Flying Festival at Maharaja Hari Singh Park in Jammu, and the revival of the traditional 'Tonga Baggi' ride at Kanak Mandi. Additionally, there will be cultural programs held at the Peer Kho Temple, featuring Dogri Dham.**

### 'BHOROXA' APP LAUNCHED BY PRESIDENT MURMU FOR WOMEN'S SAFETY

### PERIYAR TIGER RESERVE TOPPED THE EXCELLENT CATEGORY OF MANAGEMENT EFFECTIVENESS EVALUATION

**Current Context:** The Periyar Tiger Reserve (PTR) has once again been declared the best managed tiger reserve in the country in the 'Excellent' category, according to the 5th cycle of Management Effectiveness Evaluation (MEE) released by the Centre.

#### KEY POINTS

- **Among the 51 reserves evaluated, Periyar Reserve scored the highest MEE score of 94.38%, followed by Satpura and Bandipur at the second position (93.18%), while Nagarhole**

came in third (92.42%). In the 5th cycle, 12 Tiger Reserves scored over 90% and were ranked in the "Excellent" category.

- The next 20 were classified as 'Very Good', followed by 14 in the 'Good' category and 5 in the 'Fair' category, with none falling under the 'Poor' category.
- **The tiger reserves were assessed with the exception of Ramgarh Vishdhari and Ranipur.**
- The MEE score has improved from 65% in the second cycle to 77.92% in the current evaluation. Presently, India has 998 protected areas, which include 106 national parks, 567 wildlife sanctuaries, 105 conservation reserves, and 220 community reserves, covering 5.28% of India's geographical area or 1,73,629 km<sup>2</sup>.
- **Management Effectiveness Evaluation (MEE):** Established in 2006, the assessment of management effectiveness of protected areas is conducted every four years (in 2006, 2010, 2014, 2018 and 2022) based on the six criteria on protected areas set by IUCN.

## NSE INDEX LAUNCHES INDIA'S FIRST REITS AND INVITS INDEX

**Current Context:** NSE Indices Ltd, a subsidiary of NSE, has launched India's first Real Estate Investment Trust (REITs) and Infrastructure Investment Trust (InvIT) index.

### KEY FACTS

- A real estate or infrastructure investment vehicle owns revenue-generating assets.
- **The Nifty REITs and InvITs Index aims to monitor the performance of publicly listed real estate or infrastructure assets on the NSE.**
- **The securities' weighting within the index is based on their free-float market capitalization, each subject to a margin of safety of 33%.**
- The top three securities' average weighting is limited to 72%. The Nifty REITs and InvITs index's top constituents include Embassy Office Parks REIT (32.9% weight), POWERGRID Infrastructure Investments (20.2%), Mindspace Business Parks REIT (15.3%), and India Grid Trust (15.3%). The index's base date is July 1, 2019, with a base value of 1,000.
- **It will be reviewed and rebalanced quarterly.**
- **The United Nations Office for Outer Space**

**Affairs (UNOOSA) organizes events to commemorate the day it was established by resolution 1348 (XIII) of the General Assembly on December 13, 1958.**

### REITs and InvITs Index

- Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs) invest in real estate projects, while Infrastructure Investment Trusts (InvITs) invest in long-term infrastructure projects. These investment vehicles provide investors with a diversified and steady source of income, as well as risk diversification from traditional asset classes like equity, debt, and gold.

### National Stock Exchange

- Established in 1992, the National Stock Exchange (NSE) of India has become the largest financial market in the country and ranks fourth globally in terms of equity trading volume. The NSE was the pioneer in India to introduce a state-of-the-art, fully automated electronic trading system. The Nifty 50 is the key index of the National Stock Exchange of India Limited (NSE).

### Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)

- In compliance with the Securities and Exchange Board of India Act, 1992, the Securities and Exchange Board of India was founded on April 12, 1992. Its primary objectives are to oversee the securities market and safeguard the interests of securities investors.

## BEST USE OF MPLADS FUND IN GUJARAT IN FY 2022-23, UP GOT MAXIMUM FUNDS

**Current Context:** MPLADS is a central government scheme under which MPs can programs in their constituencies with an expenditure of Rs 5 crore every year.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **The state of Gujarat achieved the highest utilization ratio of MPLADS funds in FY23, with 145.11% of the allocated ₹66 crore utilized.** Jharkhand, Karnataka, and Kerala also had high

utilization ratios of 128.45%, 127.76%, and 122.33%, respectively.

- The MPLADS scheme was suspended during the initial stages of the pandemic and was resumed only in November 2021.

#### Maximum Funds

- The allocation of funds to each state is determined based on the number of MPs elected from the state.
- For instance, Uttar Pradesh, with 80 Lok Sabha MPs, received ₹427.5 crore and utilized 99% of the allocated funds by March 27, 2023.
- **Maharashtra, Bihar, and West Bengal received ₹341.34 crore, ₹219.95 crore, and ₹182.17 crore respectively, following Uttar Pradesh. Meanwhile, four union territories - Lakshadweep, Chandigarh, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, and Dadra and Nagar Haveli - did not receive any funds in FY23.**
- Sikkim received the smallest amount of ₹2 crore among all the states. The scheme was put on hold due to the pandemic and was resumed in November 2021.
- **Gujarat had the highest utilization ratio of MPLADS funds, with ₹66 crore allocated to the state and a utilization ratio of 145.11%.**
- Jharkhand, Karnataka, and Kerala also utilized the funds efficiently, with utilization ratios of 128.45%, 127.76%, and 122.33% respectively.

#### MPLAD Scheme

- **The MPLAD scheme is a Central Sector Scheme that was introduced in December 1993 to enable MPs to suggest developmental works with an emphasis on creating durable community assets in areas such as drinking water, primary education, public health, sanitation, and roads, etc., in their respective constituencies.**
- Since June 2016, MPLAD funds have also been permitted to be utilized for implementing schemes like Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, Sulabh Bharat Abhiyan (Accessible India Campaign), water conservation through rainwater harvesting, and Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana, among others.

## HIMACHAL PRADESH TO START 'PROJECT SANJEEVANI FOR LIVESTOCK HEALTH CARE

**Current Context:** Himachal Pradesh government will start "Project Sanjeevani" or National Animal Disease Control Program – Mobile Veterinary Van unit (NADCP-AHD-MVU) for livestock health care and to provide quality veterinary services to the livestock farmers.

#### ABOUT

- **An MoU has been signed between the Animal Husbandry Department (AHD) and Bharat Financial Inclusion Limited (BFIL), a subsidiary of IndusInd Bank, for "Project Sanjeevani".**
- **This project aims to provide veterinary services to farmers in 44 blocks located in 12 districts of the state through the integration of a centralized call center at the Directorate of Animal Husbandry with 44 mobile veterinary ambulances. Animal husbandry is a significant component of the rural economy in Himachal Pradesh, which is primarily based on agriculture.**
- The state has a livestock population of around 4.41 million, and livestock health care is crucial for every rural household.

#### Project Sanjeevani

- **The proposed initiative aims to establish mobile veterinary clinics that will bring veterinary services directly to farmers in their homes. It also involves the creation of an integrated call centre as a one-stop point of contact for all livestock health care and vaccination needs.**
- Through this project, farmers will be able to access comprehensive information on curative treatments, vaccinations, artificial insemination, preventive care, and animal husbandry, all from the comfort of their homes. The initiative will reduce the financial burden of traveling to existing clinics and buying medicines for sick animals.
- **Moreover, the initiative will utilize a mobile app to connect doctors and farmers, track the efficiency of service delivery, record prescribed drugs and livestock pathological data on a**

single platform, and offer guidance on nutritional care for animals. This program is expected to benefit farmers in 44 blocks across 12 districts in the state.

## TAMIL NADU GOVERNOR APPROVES BILL TO BAN ONLINE GAMBLING

**Current Context:** Tamil Nadu Governor R.N. Ravi has given assent to the bill to ban online gambling. It is worth noting that Governor Ravi sent the bill back to the Tamil Nadu government for reconsideration, but in March 2023, the Tamil Nadu Assembly unanimously passed the bill once again.

### DETAILS

- **The legislation also aims to regulate online gambling, which includes fantasy sports as well as online games such as rummy and poker.**
- The law establishes a committee to assess each company individually and decide whether they should be regulated or prohibited.
- **Online gaming companies were quick to respond to the law, citing earlier court decisions that classified rummy and poker as games of skill rather than chance.**
- On June 9, 2022, the Tamil Nadu government established a committee headed by Justice Chandru to investigate the harmful effects of online gambling.
- **The four-member committee submitted a report to the chief minister on June 27, 2022, suggesting the implementation of an ordinance to prohibit online gaming activities such as rummy and poker.**

## INDIA RANKED 5TH IN STANFORD UNIVERSITY'S AI INDEX REPORT-2023

**Current Context:** The 6th edition of Stanford University's AI Index Report-2023 has been released. This time the assessment of 127 countries has been given in this index whereas in the year 2022 it was limited to 25 countries.

### KEY FACTS

- **In 2022, India secured the fifth spot among nations that attracted investments in startups that provide AI-powered products and services, trailing behind the United States, China, the United Kingdom, and Israel.**

- The overall sum of funds invested in AI-based startups in India during the same year amounted to \$3.24 billion, surpassing the investment amounts of South Korea, Germany, Canada, and Australia.
- **Based on the report, India ranked sixth among nations that received significant investments in AI startups from 2013 to 2022, with a cumulative funding amount of \$7.73 billion. It's worth noting that almost 40% of this total was contributed in 2022 alone.**
- According to Stanford University's AI Index report, over half (54%) of researchers who work on Large Language Models (LLM) are affiliated with US-based institutions. Nonetheless, Canada, Germany, and India made their debut contributions to the development of the LLM. last year.
- In a recent survey, 71% of respondents from India expressed a positive view of AI products, whereas only 35% of US respondents shared the same sentiment.
- The percentage of Indian publications related to AI has been steadily increasing, growing from 1.3% in 2010 to 5.6% in 2021.

## INDIA'S FIRST SEMI-HIGH SPEED REGIONAL RAIL SERVICE 'RAPIDX' STARTED IN DELHI NCR

**Current Context:** National Capital Region Transport Corporation has named India's first semi-high speed regional rail service as 'RAPIDX'. These trains will run on the 'Regional Rapid Transit System' corridor, which is being implemented to connect major urban areas in the National Capital Region.

### KEY POINTS

- **India is developing its first semi-high-speed Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS), which will provide connectivity between Delhi and neighboring areas such as Meerut, Alwar, and Panipat.**
- This system, known as 'RAPIDX,' will offer modern, sustainable, convenient, fast, safe, and comfortable travel options at a speed of 182 kmph.
- **The NCRTC aims to launch the 17 km priority section between Sahibabad and Duhai of the 84 km Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut corridor ahead**

of schedule in 2023, and the entire first 'RAPIDX' corridor by 2025.

#### 'RAPIDX'

- The brand's objective is to emphasize its dedication to the decarbonization of the NCR by reducing the number of vehicles on the road and utilizing green energy. E NCRTC is utilizing solar panels at its stations and depots to generate green energy. It is a joint venture between the Central Government and the states of Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh.

### "A-HELP" PROGRAM STARTED TO IMPROVE ANIMAL HEALTH IN THE STATE OF UTTARAKHAND

**Current Context:** The Chief Minister of Uttarakhand Shri Pushkar Singh Dhama launched "A-HELP" (Accredited Agent for Health and Extension of Livestock Production) program in the state of Uttarakhand.

#### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- The Indian government has launched a new initiative called A-HELP, in which women in remote rural areas will be selected to strengthen livestock-related activities.
- The initiative was launched through a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the Department of Rural Development and the National Rural Livelihoods Mission, under the Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying.

#### A-HELP

- "A-HELPS" trained under this program will contribute significantly in prevention of various infectious diseases of animals, artificial insemination under Rashtriya Gokul Mission (RGM), animal tagging and animal insurance.

### UNION MINISTER NITIN GADKARI INAUGURATED ' KUNFER-PEERAH TUNNEL ' IN RAMBAN

**Current Context:** Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari inaugurated the Kunfer-Peerah tunnel at Ramban on 11 April 2023.

#### ABOUT

- The Union Minister announced that the completion of four more tunnels on the Ramban-Banihal section of the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway is expected by next March.
- Additionally, another tunnel will soon be commissioned, which will shorten the travel distance between Jammu and Srinagar to around three and a half hours.
- To improve connectivity between Jammu and Srinagar, three corridors are being built at a cost of Rs 35,000 crore.
- The first corridor connects Jammu to Udhampur-Ramban-Banihal, and then onward to Srinagar, which includes the section from Srinagar to Banihal.
- This 250-kilometer-long four-lane road is being constructed at a cost of Rs 16 thousand crore. As of now, 210 km of the route has been completed with four lanes, featuring ten tunnels spanning 21.5 km.

#### Kunfer-Peerah Tunnel:

- Tube 1, which is 924 meters long, will provide an alternative route bypassing the congested, accident-prone area between Nashri and Ramban that spans 2.9 km.
- This tunnel is a crucial component of the National Highways Authority of India's (NHAI) four-laning project between Udhampur and Ramban on the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway.
- The tunnel will significantly shorten the distance of the National Highway. The construction of the second tube, T-2 of Kunfer-Peerah tunnel, is currently underway, and excavation work on the second tube has only 50 to 100 meters remaining.

### RBI RELEASED GREEN DEPOSIT FRAMEWORK

**Current Context:** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has announced a new framework for offering green deposits to customers with the objective of developing a Green Finance Ecosystem (GFE) in India. This framework will come into effect from June 1, 2023.

## DETAILS

- A Green Deposit is a type of interest-bearing deposit that is received by a Regulated Entity for a specified period, and the funds are reserved for use in green finance.
- **The guidelines apply to scheduled commercial banks, excluding regional rural banks, local area banks, payments banks, and housing finance companies, as well as deposit-taking non-banking financial companies.**
- However, certain industries such as nuclear power, direct waste incineration, alcohol, tobacco, palm oil, landfill projects or hydroelectric plants larger than 25 MW, and renewable energy projects generating energy from biomass using feedstock from protected areas are excluded from the framework.

### Green Finance Ecosystem

- The term GFE refers to a financial system that facilitates investment in projects and activities that promote environmental sustainability. This system encompasses various financial instruments such as green bonds, green loans, green insurance, and green funds, all of which are intended to encourage eco-friendly methods and initiatives. The ultimate goal of the Green Finance ecosystem is to establish a financial framework that encourages the transition to a sustainable, low-carbon, and resource-efficient economy, while also acknowledging the potential risks and benefits related to environmental concerns such as climate change, pollution, and loss of biodiversity.

## EUROPEAN SPACE AGENCY STARTED 'JUICE MISSION' TO STUDY JUPITER AND ITS SATELLITES

**Current Context:** On 13 April 2023, the European Space Agency has launched the 'Jupiter Icy Moons Explorer (JUICE) mission' to study Jupiter and its icy moons namely Ganymede, Callisto and Europa.

## KEY POINTS

- The spacecraft, which cost 1.6 billion euros (\$1.7 billion), was manufactured by Airbus Defense and Space, a division of the Airbus Group.

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- **It was launched into orbit using the Ariane 5 launcher from French Guiana, and is expected to enter Ganymede's orbit in 2034.**
- **The mission's main focus is Ganymede, which is the largest moon in the Solar System and has its own magnetic field.**
- The three moons - Ganymede, Callisto, and Europa - are believed to contain substantial amounts of water, which could potentially make them habitable.

### Objective

- The primary goal of this mission is to conduct detailed mapping of the lunar surfaces and analyse the sub-surface water bodies to determine the potential habitability of the environment. Additionally, the mission aims to gain a comprehensive understanding of Jupiter, including its origin, history and evolution.

### Former Mission

- Jupiter has been visited by nine spacecraft, out of which two orbited the gas giant while the rest flew by. During the Voyager mission in 1979, the faint ring system of Jupiter was discovered. The Galileo Probe, sent by NASA, orbited the planet from 1995 to 2003. Juno, also launched by NASA, has been orbiting the planet since 2016.

### Jupiter:

- As the largest planet in the Solar System and fifth from the Sun, Jupiter is categorized as a gas giant or Jovian planet, along with Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune. Jupiter's dense atmosphere comprises mostly hydrogen and helium, and it has a total of more than 75 moons. The planet's four largest moons, discovered by the Italian astronomer Galileo Galilei in 1610, are known as the Galilean satellites, named Io, Europa, Ganymede, and Calisto.

## US-PHILIPPINES START "BALIKATAN" JOINT MILITARY EXERCISE IN INDO-PACIFIC REGION



**Current Context:** On 11 April 2023, the US and the Philippines have started their annual "Balikatan" military exercises and it aims to improve the respective armies' ability to jointly respond to threats in the Indo-Pacific region.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **The Balikatan exercise, which means "shoulder to shoulder", has been conducted since 1991, reflecting the Philippines' close ties with the US in foreign policy.**
- The joint military exercise **aims to strengthen the Philippines' military capabilities and deter China's assertiveness in the region.**
- This year's exercise is set to be the largest ever, with over 17,000 troops participating, over 12,000 of whom will be from the US.
- One of the exercises will simulate a defence of a small island in the Philippines and a simulated target warship off the coast of Zambales province in the South China Sea, with live-fire drills involved.
- Under the 1951 Mutual Défense Agreement (MDA), the US and the Philippines have been treaty partners for many years.
- **In 2014, the two countries signed the Enhanced Défense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA), which is their most recent agreement.**

### OPEC+ COUNTRIES ANNOUNCE CUT IN OIL PRODUCTION

**Current Context:** OPEC, established in 1960 along with its allies, known as OPEC+, has announced a significant reduction in their oil production by 1.16 million barrels per day (bpd) to maintain market stability.

### KEY FACTS

- Furthermore, Russia has declared a voluntary decrease of 500,000 bpd by the end of 2023.
- **The announcement of production cuts has led to a rise in crude oil prices, with Brent prices increasing up to \$5 a barrel within a day.**
- **The prices of oil have been erratic in recent months and surged after the Russia-Ukraine conflict, dropping to as low as \$70 a barrel in March 2023 due to concerns of a potential global banking crisis that could harm demand.**

- OPEC is responsible for nearly 40% of the world's crude oil production, and its member countries' exports account for roughly 60% of the world's petroleum trade.
- Due to the reduction in oil production and subsequent increase in prices, India, which imports around 85% of its crude oil requirement, is likely to face a higher import bill.
- **This could lead to inflation, wider current account deficit (CAD) and fiscal deficit, as well as a weaker rupee against the dollar. Moreover, it could also negatively impact stock market sentiment.**
- OPEC, established in 1960, initially had five founding members: Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Venezuela.
- Since then, it has grown to include 13 member countries, including Algeria, Angola, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, and Venezuela. The headquarters of OPEC is located in Vienna, Austria.
- In 2016, OPEC expanded its membership to include 10 other major oil-producing countries, and the organization became known as OPEC+. The 13 OPEC member states were joined by Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Brunei, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Mexico, Oman, Russia, South Sudan, and Sudan.

### GHANA BECOMES FIRST COUNTRY TO APPROVE OXFORD'S MALARIA VACCINE FOR CHILDREN

**Current Context:** Ghana has created history by becoming the first country to approve a high-efficiency malaria vaccine developed by scientists at the University of Oxford.

### ABOUT

- **The R21/Matrix-M vaccine against malaria has demonstrated a significant breakthrough in the fight against the disease by exceeding the World Health Organization's target of 75% efficacy.**
- Under a new agreement, the Serum Institute of India will produce up to 200 million doses of the vaccine developed by Oxford.
- **Malaria remains a major public health concern, with about 619,000 deaths reported in 2021, mostly affecting children in sub-Saharan Africa.**
- Ghana alone records about 5.3 million cases of malaria annually, leading to 12,500 deaths in 2021.

- Although the R21 vaccine has shown a promising efficacy rate of 77% in earlier trials, the World Health Organization (WHO) has not yet recommended it for routine use pending the ongoing phase 3 testing.

#### First Malaria Vaccine

- The WHO approved Mosquirix (RTS, S/AS01), the first-ever malaria vaccine, in 2021. It was developed by GlaxoSmithKline, a British pharmaceutical company, after several decades of research. The vaccine's active ingredient is derived from a protein found on the surface of the Plasmodium falciparum parasite (PFP) that causes malaria. It also offers protection against hepatitis B virus-induced liver infections.

### ACCORDING TO THE ADR REPORT, JAGAN MOHAN REDDY IS THE RICHEST CHIEF MINISTER OF INDIA

**Current Context:** The Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) reports that 29 out of 30 chief ministers (97%) are Millionaires, with an average asset of Rs 34 crore for each chief minister.

#### DETAILS

- The report by ADR was based on an analysis of the election affidavits of chief ministers from 28 states and two union territories. It found that five of the top 10 chief ministers were from north-eastern states.

#### Millionaire Chief Minister

1. Andhra Pradesh CM YS Jagan Mohan Reddy - assets worth Rs 510 crore
2. Pema Khandu of Arunachal Pradesh - assets worth Rs 163 crore
3. Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik - assets worth Rs 63.9 crore

#### Millionaire Chief Minister of Northeast

1. Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh Pema Khandu - net worth of Rs 163.38 crore
2. Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio - Rs 46.95 crorenet worth

3. Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma - Rs 17.27 crore

#### Poor Chief Minister

1. Mamata Banerjee of West Bengal - assets worth Rs 15 lakh
2. Pinarayi Vijayan of Kerala - assets worth Rs 1.2 crore
3. ML Khattar of Haryana - assets worth Rs 1.3 crore

#### Most Criminal Cases

- According to an ADR report analysing the election affidavits of chief ministers from 28 Indian states and two union territories, Telangana Chief Minister KC Rao tops the list with 64 criminal cases against him, including 37 serious offences and two charges for attempting to commit a serious offence.
- Tamil Nadu CM MK Stalin follows with 47 cases, out of which 10 are serious IPC cases.
- Andhra Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy has 38 cases against him. The ADR report states that 13 out of 30 chief ministers, which is 43%, have declared serious criminal cases related to murder, attempt to murder, kidnapping, and criminal intimidation

### GARUDA AEROSPACE FIRST INDIAN COMPANY TO RECEIVE AGRI-DRONE SUBSIDY

**Current Context:** Made in India drone startup, Chennai-based Garuda Aerospace has become the first company in the country to receive subsidy for making Agri-drones.

#### KEY FACTS

- Eight farmers in Pune received Garuda Kisan drones through a program, which had drone distributors from all over Maharashtra present at the event.
- During the event, Vishnu Salve, the Director of the Maharashtra State Agriculture Department, congratulated Garuda Aerospace for becoming the first drone company to receive the Agri Drone Subsidy for those eight farmers.
- He also commended their efforts to improve crop yields, reduce losses, and promote sustainable agricultural practices that have positively impacted the entire farming community.

- **The subsidy is part of several initiatives launched by the Government of India to support the growth of the country's drone industry.**
- The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare amended the criteria of the Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization to include a grant of up to 100% of the cost of agricultural drones.
- **The Garuda Kisan drone, which has been approved by the DGCA, enables farmers to monitor the health of their crops and identify areas that require fertilization or irrigation. Additionally, it can be used to spray pesticides and fertilizers, reducing the need for manual labour and improving overall efficiency.**

### GLOBAL CONFERENCE ON COMPRESSED BIOGAS (CBG) TO BE HELD IN NEW DELHI

**Current Context:** Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Government of India is organizing IFGE- CBG Producers Forum Global Conference on Compressed Biogas on 17th and 18th April 2023 at Silver Oak, Indian Habitat Centre, New Delhi.

#### KEY POINTS

- The conference **will revolve around the theme of "Towards Progressive Policy Foundation and Growth"**. The Hon'ble Union Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas, Shri Hardeep Singh Puri, will grace the occasion as the Chief Guest and inaugurate the conference.
- **The conference aims to update the industry regarding the Government of India's initiatives for the development of the compressed biogas industry, as well as identify policy areas that need modification.**
- India has set a target of achieving net-zero emissions by 2070 and the government has taken several measures to reduce emissions, including promoting Compressed Biogas (CBG) through the Sustainable Alternatives to Affordable Transportation (SATAT) scheme.

### CANARA BANK AND NPCI BHARAT BILL PAY LAUNCH A CROSS-BORDER INWARD BILL PAYMENT SERVICE

**Current Context:** Canara Bank and NPCI Bharat Billpay (NBBL) have launched a cross-border inward bill payment service for Indians in Oman. Canara Bank is the first public sector bank in India to offer inbound cross-border bill payments through BBPS.

#### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- NBBL and Musandam Exchange have launched the Bharat Bill Payment System (BBPS) platform, which will allow Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) to conveniently pay bills for their families.
- **This service is a major achievement for Canara Bank, making it the first public sector bank in India to offer cross-border bill payment services.**
- **The service was initially available only in Kuwait, but Canara Bank and NPCI Bharat Bill pay Limited (NBBL) have now teamed up to enable Indians living in Oman to pay their bills in India.**

### TAMIL NADU'S FAMOUS 'CUMBUM GRAPES' GETS GI TAG

**Current Context:** Tamil Nadu's famous Cumbum Panneer Thrachai, also known as Cumbum grapes, has been granted the Geographical Indication (GI) tag.

#### ABOUT

- **The Western Ghats in Tamil Nadu are home to the 'Grape City of South India', also known as the Cumbum Valley, where the Panneer Thrachai grape is cultivated.**
- The Theni district is a major grape producer, but the 'Panneer' variety is predominantly associated with the Cumbum Valley, where 10 villages cultivate this variety over an area of approximately 2,000 acres.
- **The Muscat Hamburg, also called the Panneer grape, is renowned for its fast growth and early maturity, making it available in the market almost year-round.**
- Introduced to Tamil Nadu in 1832 by a French priest, this grape is rich in vitamins, tartaric acid, antioxidants, and can help reduce the risk of chronic diseases.

### INDIA WON TOTAL 14 MEDALS IN ASIAN WRESTLING CHAMPIONSHIP 2023

**Current Context:** The 36th edition of Asian Wrestling Championship took place from 9 to 14 April 2023 in Astana, Kazakhstan. The event was earlier scheduled to be held in New Delhi, India.

#### DETAILS

- **A total of 331 wrestlers from 22 countries competed in the championship, including 30 wrestlers from India.**
- The Indian wrestlers have won a total of 14 medals, consisting of one gold, three silver and 10 bronze medals, securing the 7th position in the overall medal table.
- Among the participating countries, Kazakhstan, Japan, and Iran topped the medal table based on their number of gold medals.
- **The 2022 Asian Wrestling Championships was the 35th edition of the Asian Wrestling Championships combined events, and took place from 19 April to 24 April in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia.**

#### UNION MINISTER PARUSHOTTAM RUPALA LAUNCHES ANIMAL PANDEMIC PREPAREDNESS INITIATIVE

**Current Context:** On 14th April 2023, Shri Parshottam Rupala, Union Minister for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying launched two important initiatives – Animal Pandemic Preparedness Initiative (APPI) and Animal Health System Support for One Health (AHSSOH) project.

#### KEY FACTS

- Under the National One Health Mission of India, the launch of the project will be held at the India Habitat Centre in New Delhi and will be financed by the World Bank.
- **The main goal of this initiative is to bolster India's ability to prepare for and respond to pandemics in animals, with a specific emphasis on zoonotic diseases that pose a risk to both human and animal health.**
- This will be accomplished by improving veterinary services and infrastructure, enhancing disease surveillance capabilities, implementing early detection and response measures, building the capacity of animal health professionals, and raising

awareness among farmers through community outreach programs.

- **The initiative will be launched under the National One Health Mission of India and will be funded by the World Bank.**
- The Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying has collaborated with the World Bank for a project named "Animal Health Systems Support for One Health" (AHSSOH).
- **This project is aimed at covering 151 districts in five states, upgrading 75 district/regional laboratories, and strengthening 300 veterinary hospitals/dispensaries.**
- **The project also plans to provide training to 9,000 para-veterinarians/diagnostic professionals and 5,500 veterinary professionals.**

#### 'CHIEF MINISTER ADIVASI PARAB SAMMAN NIDHI YOJANA' STARTED IN CHHATTISGARH

**Current Context:** Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel launched the 'Chief Minister Adivasi Parab Samman Nidhi Yojana' in the presence of special guest Priyanka Gandhi at the 'Bharose Ka Sammelan' organized at Lal Bagh, Jagdalpur, the headquarters of Bastar division, on 13 April 2023.

#### KEY POINTS

- **The State Government has initiated a scheme to provide funds to Gram Panchayats for the proper organization of tribal festivals, wherein each panchayat will receive a grant of Rs 10,000 per year in two instalments.**
- **The Chief Minister launched the scheme by providing the first instalment of Rs. 5000-to-1840-gram panchayats in the Bastar division.**
- The 'Chief Minister Adivasi Parab Samman Nidhi Yojana' aims to preserve tribal festivals, fairs and cultural traditions, such as Madai, Jatra festival, Sarna Puja, Devguri, Navakhai, Chherchera, Akti, Hareli, in their original form and pass them on to future generations.
- **The scheme provides a provision for a grant by the State Government to Gram Panchayats, with each receiving an amount of Rs 10,000 per year in two instalments.**
- The nodal agency responsible for the scheme is the CEO of Janpad Panchayat, with the implementation

being carried out through village and block level governing bodies.

- **The budget for the financial year 2023-24 has allocated Rs 5 crore for this scheme. During the scheme's launch, the Chief Minister released the first instalment of Rs 5000 each to 1840-gram panchayats of the Bastar division.**

## AMERICA BECAME INDIA'S LARGEST TRADING PARTNER IN THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2022-23

**Current Context:** Recently, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry has released the trade statistics for the year 2022-23. According to this, America has become India's largest trading partner in the last financial year 2022-23. After that China is second, whereas UAE is third with \$76.16 billion followed by Saudi Arabia (\$52.72 billion) and Singapore (\$35.55 billion) at fourth and fifth place.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **According to commerce ministry data, bilateral trade between India and the US is set to grow by 7.65 per cent to \$128.55 billion in 2022-23. In the previous financial year (2021-22), the bilateral trade of the two countries was \$ 119.5 billion, while in 2020-21 it was only \$ 80.51 billion.**
- According to the data, exports from India to the US are set to grow by 2.81 per cent to \$78.31 billion in FY 2022-23 from \$76.18 billion in 2021-22.
- **Imports from the US in India have increased by 16 percent during this period to \$ 50.24 billion. In 2022-23, India has a trade surplus of \$28 billion with the US.**
- Major export items from India to the US include petroleum, polished diamonds, pharmaceutical products, jewellery, light oils and petroleum, frozen shrimp, made ups, etc. while major imports from the US include petroleum, rough diamonds, liquefied natural gas and gold.
- **On the other hand, India-China trade in 2022-23 declined by 1.5 percent to \$113.83 billion, from \$115.42 billion in the previous year.**
- Exports from India to China are set to decline by 28 per cent to \$15.32 billion in 2022-23, while imports are expected to grow by 4.16 per cent to \$98.51 billion.

- **India's trade deficit with China is set to increase to \$83.2 billion in 2022-23 from \$72.91 billion in the previous year.**
- According to the data, **China was India's top trading partner from 2013-14 to 2017-18 and again in 2020-21.**

## INDIA TIES UP WITH 'WORLD FOOD PROGRAM' TO SEND WHEAT TO AFGHANISTAN

**Current Context:** India signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the World Food Program (WFP) to pave the way for sending 10,000 metric tonnes of wheat to the people of Afghanistan.

### ABOUT

- **The signing ceremony between officials from the Ministry of External Affairs and the UN WFP was held in Mumbai where WFP assured that it would ensure prompt delivery of wheat to the most vulnerable sections of the Afghan population.**
- The MoU is in line with the Indian announcement made last month at the India Central Asia Joint Working Group on Afghanistan, which stated that 20,000 metric tonnes of wheat would be sent through the Iranian port of Chabahar.
- Painting a picture of the dire crisis in Afghanistan, WFP said nine out of 10 Afghan households currently cannot afford enough food and at least 20 million Afghans face the risk of starvation.
- **India does not recognize the Taliban government in Kabul, saying Afghanistan's crisis is "unprecedented" as it is a combination of decades-long conflict, drought, economic crisis and last month's 6.5-magnitude earthquake in northeast Afghanistan.**

### World Food Program

- The World Food Program, the food-aid arm of the United Nations, is the largest humanitarian organization working to combat hunger and promote food security globally. The World Food Program was established in the year 1961. Its headquarters is located in Rome (Italy). The World Food Program is governed by an Executive Board, which consists of 36 member states.

## NEPAL APPROVES INDIA'S SJVN INVESTMENT PROPOSAL FOR LOWER ARUN HYDROPOWER PROJECT

**Current Context:** Nepal's Board of Investment, chaired by Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal, has approved an investment proposal of 92.68 billion Nepalese rupees by India's Satluj Jal Vidyut Nigam (SJVN) to build the 669 MW Lower Arun Hydro Project.

### DETAILS

- Arun River, after the 900 MW Arun-III and 695 MW Arun-IV hydroelectric projects. These three projects will generate about 2,300 MW of electricity from the river in Sankhuwasabha district.
- **Investment Board Nepal signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with India's state-owned NHPC Limited to develop two projects—West Seti and Seti River (SR6)—storage projects totalling 1,200 MW.**
- The Pancheshwar Multi-Purpose Project is an important offshoot of the Mahakali Treaty signed between Nepal and India in 1996 which is pending.
- In July last year, Nepal signed an agreement with SJVN to develop the 679 MW Lower.
- It is a run-of-the-river project planned on the Arun River (a tributary of the Koshi River), Nepal.
- **The project will be built under the Build, Own, Operate and Transfer (BOOT) model. The project is being developed by Investment Board Nepal and SJVN.**

## INDIAN OIL AND US-BASED LANZAJET INC TO SET UP INDIA'S FIRST GREEN AVIATION FUEL FIRM

**Current Context:** Indian Oil and US-based LanzaJet Inc to set up a joint venture with US-based clean energy technology company LanzaJet Inc and several domestic airlines to produce Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF).

### KEY FACTS

- **The proposed venture will set up a plant to make SAF with alcohol-to-jet technology at Panipat Refinery in Haryana at a cost of Rs 3,000 crore. IOCL and LanzaJet will invest Rs**

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**1,500 crore and Rs 750 crore respectively on the proposed plant.**

- As per the finalized structure of the new company, IOCL will hold 50% while LanzaJet Inc will hold 25%. The remaining 25% stake will be given to a group of airline companies.
- **This proposed plant would use the technology to convert corn, cellulosic, or sugar-based ethanol into SAF. It will initially produce 85,000 metric tonnes of the fuel in a year.**
- SAF is a biofuel with properties similar to conventional jet fuel, but with a smaller carbon footprint. Depending on the feedstock and the technologies used to produce it, SAF can dramatically reduce life cycle GHG emissions compared to conventional jet fuel.
- **To make it - corn kernels, oil seeds, algae, other fats, oils and greases, agricultural residues, forestry residues, lumber mill waste, municipal solid waste streams, wet waste (manure, wastewater treatment sludge) and dedicated Energy crops etc. are used.**

## EXPORT STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR 2022-23 RELEASED BY THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

**Current Context:** India's total exports during FY 2022-23 are estimated to be worth USD 770.18 billion with a growth of 13.84 per cent as compared to FY 2021-22, which was 676 billion in 2021-22, while imports rose to a new high of \$892 billion amid subdued demand for goods due to global headwinds.

### KEY POINTS

- Apart from this, the trade deficit was \$ 122 billion in the year 2023, while it was \$ 83.35 billion in the year 2022 and the service surplus in the year 2023 was \$ 144.76 billion.
- Major importing countries from India – USA, UAE, Netherlands, China.
- **Major exporting countries to India – China, UAE, USA, Russia.**
- Merchandise exports have registered a highest ever annual export of USD 447.46 billion during FY 2022-23 with a growth of 6.03%, surpassing the previous year's (FY 2021-22) record export of USD 422.00 billion.

- **Imports increased by 16.5% to \$714 billion, resulting in a record trade deficit. On the merchandise exports front, 17 out of 30 major sectors showed positive growth during 2022-23.**
- China's share in India's merchandise imports declined from 15.43% in 2021-22 to 13.79% in 2022-23. Imports of electronic goods from China have seen a decline of about \$ 2 billion in 2022-23 (April-February) as compared to the same period last year.
- **Services exports lead the overall export growth and are estimated to set a new record annual value of USD 322.72 billion during FY 2022-23 with a growth rate of 26.79 per cent over FY 2021-22. Strong growth in services including IT, accounting and business processing was registered.**
- With five multispectral bands, Taifa-1 can capture images with a ground sampling distance (GSD) of 32 m, while its panchromatic band has a GSD of 16 m.
- China achieved a successful launch on April 16, 2023, placing the Fengyun-3 meteorological satellite into orbit by employing a Chang Zheng-4B carrier rocket.
- **The launch took place at the Jiuquan Cosmodrome, located in the north western province of Gansu, as reported on the Chinese social network WeChat.**
- The primary purpose of the Fengyun-3 satellite is to monitor severe weather conditions, particularly heavy rainfall, and to measure atmospheric precipitation.
- This successful launch marks the 471st mission for the Chang Zheng rocket family.

## KENYA'S FIRST EARTH OBSERVATION SATELLITE "TAIFA-1" LAUNCHED

**Current Context:** Kenya has launched its first operational Earth observation satellite "Taifa-1" on 15 April 2023 from Vandenberg Base in California on a rocket of Elon Musk's rocket company SpaceX. The launch rocket carried 50 payloads from Turkey, among other countries, under SpaceX's 'rideshare program'.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- SayariLabs and EnduroSat collaborated to design and develop Taifa-1, a satellite that took two years and 50 million Kenyan shillings (\$372,000) to build.
- **The satellite is expected to remain operational for five years before it enters the atmosphere and burns up after 20 years of decay.**
- **Its main purpose is to gather agricultural and environmental data, specifically related to floods, droughts, and wildfires, to aid Kenya in managing disasters and addressing food insecurity.**
- Taifa-1, the first Earth observation satellite in operation in Kenya, is equipped with an optical camera that can capture images simultaneously in multispectral and panchromatic modes.
- **This unique feature allows the satellite to operate both within and beyond the visible light spectrum.**

## DRDO INDUSTRY ACADEMIA CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE INAUGURATED AT IIT HYDERABAD

**Current Context:** Development Organization (DRDO) Industry Academia Center of Excellence (DIA-CoE) was inaugurated at the Indian Institute of Technology-Hyderabad. DRDO Chairman, Dr Sameer V Kamath inaugurated the facility at the IIT-Hyderabad campus in Telangana.

### ABOUT

- The Director of Défense Research and Development Organization (DRDO) stated that the defence Innovation and Atal Incubation Centre (DIA-CoE) at the Indian Institute of Technology, Hyderabad (IITH) is the largest among the 15 Centres of Excellence (CoEs) in the country.
- **The DRDO team will collaborate with IIT-H to identify targeted projects in each domain and execute them within a span of 3-5 years.**
- **The research cell established by DRDO and IITH three years ago in 2020 has now been transformed into a Centre of Excellence.**

## OIL JETTY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT' STARTED IN KANDLA, GUJARAT

**Current Context:** The Minister for Shipping, Ports and Waterways, Sarbananda Sonowal has approved the 'Oil Jetty

Development Project' at Deendayal Port, Kandla (Gujarat) on 17 April 2023 on Build-Operate-Transfer basis under PPP mode.

#### DETAILS

- **The construction of the oil jetty at Kandla is estimated to cost Rs 123.40 crore, and it will be funded under the PPP mode by One Sensenair.**
- The construction is expected to take 24 months, and the concession period for the project will be for 30 years.
- **Once completed, the project is expected to contribute to the overall economic development of the hinterland and increase the port's cargo handling capacity, thus reducing the turn-around time of vessels.**
- Deendayal Port, Kandla, handled 137.56 million tonnes of cargo in FY23, up 8% from the previous year.
- The port is expected to double its cargo handling to 267 million tonnes by 2030, with an annual growth rate of 10%.
- The Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways has identified 74 projects worth Rs 57,000 crore under the Sagar Mala program in Gujarat, demonstrating its commitment to the development of the port sector in India.

#### 'DIGITAL HEALTH SUMMIT 2023' ORGANIZED BY CII IN GOA

**Current Context:** Recently, the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) has organized the Digital Health Summit 2023 in Goa in collaboration with the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

#### KEY FACTS

- **The summit's focus was on "Building One Health Together – Improving Health Equity" and emphasized the significance of digital health innovations like 3D printing, point-of-care diagnostics, robots, bioinformatics, and genomics to enhance exponential medicine.**
- **The summit aims to establish a framework for digital public goods that promote standards of interoperability, data privacy, and data security while prioritizing "citizen-centric" digital health systems and treatments.**

- Moreover, the World Health Assembly **approved a global strategy on digital health in 2020, which provides a roadmap to integrate innovation and the latest advancements in digital health.**
- POCD is a growing trend in the medical device industry that facilitates precise diagnosis either by healthcare providers or patients in places with limited resources.
- A variety of applications have been developed for POCD including biosensors, handheld ultrasound, portable X-ray, and POCD based on smartphones. On the other hand, an e-pharmacy is a pharmacy that operates online and delivers orders via mail, couriers, or delivery persons.

#### SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY MINISTER LAUNCHED 'YUVA PORTAL'

**Current Context:** Science and Technology Minister Dr Jitendra Singh launched the 'Yuva Portal' in New Delhi. This portal will help in identifying and exploring potential start-ups.

#### KEY POINTS

- On April 17, 2023, the honourable minister also inaugurated a "One Week-One Lab" campaign that runs until April 21, 2023.
- **The objective of this campaign is to showcase the various innovations and technological advancements of each CSIR lab to the people of India.**
- This program aims to inspire young innovators, students, and startups to explore deep tech ventures by involving academia and industry in reaching out to the masses.
- Furthermore, he inaugurated an Astronomy Laboratory in Karnal, Haryana, and emphasized that it would provide equal opportunities to all, including Divyang individuals, to excel in various skills, arts, and crafts.
- Additionally, the facility, which will be launched in different languages, **will enable deaf students to learn about the sun, moon, and stars and simple to complex concepts of space.**

#### MOTA MINISTER ARJUN MUNDA LAUNCHES MARKETING AND LOGISTICS DEVELOPMENT



**Current Context:** On April 18, 2023, Union Minister Arjun Munda launched MoTA's new Central Sector Scheme (CSS) – 'Marketing and Logistics Development for Promotion of Tribal Products from North -Eastern Region (PTP-NER)' for the benefit of Scheduled Tribes (STs) of NER, during a function at Auditorium of Manipur State Film Development Society (MSFDS) in Imphal, Manipur.

## EAM JAISHANKAR WRAPS UP VISIT TO UGANDA, MOZAMBIQUE

**Current Context:** External affairs minister S. Jaishankar concluded his six-day visit to African nations - Uganda, Ethiopia and Mozambique which started from Uganda on 10 April.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **The scheme will promote tribal products from North-Eastern Region (NER) by providing support for marketing and logistics development.**
- The scheme aims to strengthen livelihood opportunities for tribal artisans through increased efficiency in procurement, logistics and marketing of tribal products from North Eastern States.
- **The scheme will apply to the States of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura and Sikkim.**
- As part of the scheme, it is planned to initiate the empanelment of agencies for providing marketing and logistics support to tribal artisans

### ABOUT

- During his visit to Uganda, **he launched the Tulsī Ghat Restoration Project which is an initiative aimed at enhancing the aesthetic appeal of Varanasi, the oldest inhabited city in the world.**
- He also inaugurated the NFSU's Uganda Campus in Jinja province. This is the first overseas campus of India's National Forensic Sciences University (NFSU), which is an institution of national importance and the world's first university dedicated exclusively to forensic sciences.
- **He took a ride in a 'Made in India' train from Maputo to Machava with Mozambican Transport Minister Mateus Magala on April 13, 2023.**
- External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar virtually inaugurated the Buzi Bridge in Mozambique on April 14, 2023. The bridge is part of the 132 km long Tika-Buzi-Nova-Sofala road project and was constructed by India.

## WORLD'S WEALTHIEST CITIES REPORT 2023

**Current Context:** According to the World's Wealthiest Cities Report 2023 released by Henley & Partners, New York is the wealthiest city in the world with 340,000 millionaires. It is followed by Tokyo and San Francisco Bay Area with resident millionaire populations of 290,300 and 285,000, respectively.

## UNFPA'S SOWP 2023

**Current Context:** UNFPA's SOWP 2023 is the State of World Population report released by the United Nations Population Fund on April 19, 2023.

### DETAILS

- **India's Rank: Mumbai** is the wealthiest city in India with 59,400 millionaires and it ranked on the 21th spot in the list 1. **Delhi** is the **second wealthiest city** in India with 30,200 millionaires.
- This Report covered 97 cities across the world that used data from wealth intelligence firm, New World Wealth. This firm forms a ranking by tracking the movements and spending habits of high-net-worth individuals with the work titles like Founder, Chairperson, CEO, and Director.

### KEY FACTS

- The report is titled as SOWP 2023: 8 Billion Lives, Infinite Possibilities and explores how people understand current population trends, and how those views can impact sexual and reproductive health and rights.
- **According to this report, India has become the world's most populous country with 142.86 crore people as of mid-2023, marginally ahead of China's 142.57 crore people.**
- The report also shows that India's working population (15-64 years) comprises 68 per cent of the total population, while 25 per cent is

between 0-14 years, 18 per cent between 10 and 19 years, 26 per cent between 10 and 24 years, and 7 per cent above 65 years.

- **The report highlights the challenges and opportunities of having a large and young population in terms of sustainable development, sexual and reproductive health and rights, and human capital.**

## IBA SETS UP WORKING GROUP ON ARCS

**Current Context:** IBA or Indian Banks' Association has set up a working group on asset reconstruction companies (ARCs). The group will operate continuously on various issues and take them up with the IBA, the RBI and the government.

### KEY POINTS

- The four-member group comprises Hari Hara Mishra, CEO of Asset Reconstruction Companies Association, Purshotam Agarwal, chief investment officer of National Asset Reconstruction Company (NARCL), Mythili Balasubramanian of Edelweiss, and Tarun Kumar, director of Encore Asset Reconstruction Company.
- **The working group was formed in the backdrop of the creation of the NARCL, a bad bank promoted by lenders, which also enjoys some guarantees from the government.**

## SOUTH INDIAN BANK INTRODUCES FLEXIBLE SAVINGS ACCOUNTS FOR NRIS

**Current Context:** South Indian Bank has launched flexible saving products for NRI customers dubbed as SIB SEAFARER and SIB PULSE for mariners and healthcare professionals are just the instances for the same.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **SIB SEAFARER is a special savings account for non-resident Indians (NRIs) who are working as seafarers or mariners. It has some attractive features such as:**
  - Flexibility to maintain a minimum balance of Rs.10,000/- in linked accounts (eligible for the latest 2 NR Accounts opened)

- No minimum balance required for the maintenance of the NRI Term Deposit of Rs.2,00,000/- and above
- Free International Debit card and internet banking services
- Airport lounge access with International debit card
- Priority banking facility available for you and your family
- Special rates for inward remittances

### • Features of SBI PULSE

- Flexibility to maintain a minimum balance of Rs.10,000/- in linked accounts (eligible for the latest 2 NR Accounts opened)
- NR Term Deposit above Rs.2 Lakh or • RD with minimum monthly instalment above Rs.20,000/-
- Get 1000 SIB REWARD points on opening the NRE/ NRO account together
- Preference for 25% waiver on processing fees for Home Loans and Vehicle Loans.
- Priority banking facility available for you and your family
- UPI payment facility available
- Airport lounge access with International debit card.

## RBI GRANTED AD CATEGORY-I LICENCE TO AU SFB, EQUITAS SFB

**Current Context:** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has granted an Authorised Dealer (AD) category-I licence to AU Small Finance Bank (SFB) and Equitas Small Finance Bank under Section 10 of FEMA (Foreign Exchange Management Act), 1999 to deal in foreign exchange for specified purposes.

### ABOUT

- This licence **will enable these banks to offer foreign exchange facilities to non-resident Indians (NRIs) and ease their banking transactions.**
- An Authorised Dealer (AD) category-I licence is a licence granted by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to banks that allows them to buy and sell foreign exchange for specified purposes like: foreign travel, education abroad, remittances, trade transactions, foreign investments, and other current account transactions.

- The RBI has recently announced that all scheduled small finance banks (SFBs) **will be eligible for AD category-I licence after completion of at least two years of operations as AD category-II3**. This will give more flexibility to SFBs to meet their customers' foreign exchange business requirement.

### FEDERAL BANK SIGNS ON AGRI FINTECH START-UP KIVI AS BANKING CORRESPONDENT

**Current Context:** Federal Bank has entered into a Banking Correspondent agreement with Chennai-based KiVi, an agri fintech start-up operated by Agrosperity Tech Solutions, with a view to scaling and expanding its agri lending portfolio in Tamil Nadu.

#### DETAILS

- Under the agreement, **KiVi will acquire, service and augment Federal Bank's underwriting capability**. This partnership is expected to bring affordable, timely and convenient credit to farmers and agri MSMEs.
- **The agreement is aimed at providing small-value loans to small and marginal farmers, and facilitating efficient credit flow to underserved rural populations**
- The agreement is also seen as a crucial step for India to achieve its budgeted agriculture credit of 20 lakh crore.

### RBI ACCEPTS RS 5,500 CRORE BIDS AT SWITCH AND CONVERSION AUCTION OF GOVERNMENT BONDS

**Current Context:** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) accepted bids worth Rs 5,500 crore at an auction for conversion and switching of five government of India (GoI) bonds against the notified amount of Rs 11,000 crore.

#### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- The auction was conducted on April 17th 2023 and involved five government of India (GoI) bonds with different maturity dates and interest rates.
- **The conversion and switching of bonds is a way of managing the debt and liquidity in the market by exchanging old bonds with new ones with different maturity dates and interest rates.**

- The RBI conducts the auction by inviting bids from market participants who agree to sell the source securities and buy the destination securities at their respective quoted prices.
- **The types of bonds involved in the auction include floating rate bonds (FRB), which have variable interest rates that change periodically, and fixed rate bonds, which have fixed interest rates that remain constant throughout the tenure.**

### RBI APPROVES APPOINTMENT OF KAIZAD BHARUCHA & BHAVESH ZAVERI AS DY MD AND ED AT HDFC BANK

**Current Context:** The Reserve Bank of India has approved the appointment of Kaizad Bharucha as the Deputy Managing Director and Bhavesh Zaveri as the Executive Director of HDFC Bank for a period of three years, with effect from April 19, 2023. The appointments are based on the recommendation of the bank's Board of Directors.

#### KEY POINTS

- **Bharucha has been with HDFC Bank since 1995 and was previously an Executive Director responsible for various segments such as corporate banking, emerging corporates group, business banking, healthcare finance, agri lending, tractor financing, commercial vehicle finance, commercial equipment finance, infrastructure finance, department for special operations and inclusive banking initiatives group.**
- **Zaveri has been with HDFC Bank since 1998 and is the Group Head- Operations, Cash Management & ATM Product of HDFC Bank.**

#### Static part:

Managing Director and CEO of HDFC Bank: Sashidhar Jagdishan

### NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR LAUNCHED THE SATHI PORTAL AND MOBILE APP

**Current Context:** Union Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister Shri Narendra Singh Tomar launched the SATHI (Seed Traceability, Authentication and Holistic Inventory) Portal and Mobile App, a centralized online system for seed traceability, authentication and inventory designed to deal with the challenges of seed production, quality seed identification and seed certification.

## KEY FACTS

- It has been developed by the NIC in collaboration with the Union Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare on the theme of 'Uttam Beej – Samridh Kisan'.
- **The portal will ensure a quality assurance system, identify the source of seed in the seed production chain, and offer direct subsidies to registered farmers' bank accounts. It will also have a QR code feature to trace the seeds**
- The portal **will also include other platforms such as e-commerce, international agri-business platforms, barter, private market platforms etc.** to provide more options and opportunities for the farmers.

### THE NEW DELHI DECLARATION AND THE GLOBAL BUDDHIST CONFERENCE

**Current Context:** The Global Buddhist Summit 2023 was held in New Delhi and concluded successfully with the New Delhi Declaration.

## DETAILS

- The two-day summit saw the participation of delegates from nearly 30 countries, including Taiwan, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, and Mongolia.
- **Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated the summit on 20th April 2023. The Declaration reinforces the points highlighted by the Prime Minister in his opening address**
- The Global Buddhist Summit 2023 was organized to discuss global Buddhist Dhamma leadership and scholars on matters of Buddhist and universal concerns with solutions.
- **The theme of the summit was "Responses to Contemporary Challenges: Philosophy to Praxis" which aimed to use Buddhist teachings and ideas to address contemporary problems.**
- The summit brought together leaders and academics from all across the world's Buddhist communities to talk about current global concerns from a Buddhist perspective

### APRIL 21, 2023 IS THE 16TH NATIONAL CIVIL SERVICE DAY

**Current Context:** April 21, 2023 marks the observance of the 16th National Civil Services Day in India. The day is celebrated  
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by all civil servants in India and Central Civil Services including 15 non-technical and 20 technical services are collectively observing the 'Civil Service Day'.

## ABOUT

- The first National Civil Services Day was celebrated at a function held in Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi, Delhi on April 21, 2006
- **The theme of the 16th National Civil Services Day is "Viksit Bharat: Empowering Citizens and Reaching the Last Mile".**
- The day is **marked to celebrate the exemplary work done by civil servants and as an opportunity for them to recommit themselves to the cause of citizen.**

### "A BREAKTHROUGH FOR PEOPLE AND PLANET: EFFECTIVE AND INCLUSIVE GLOBAL GOVERNANCE FOR TODAY AND THE FUTURE" REPORT

**Current Context:** Effective And Inclusive Global Governance for Today And The Future" Report is a report launched by the United Nations' High-Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism.

## KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **The report emphasizes the need to redesign the global governance system to address current and future challenges**, such as the climate crisis, rising security threats, and digital transition.
- **The report argues that there needs to be a major shift in global governance** to better tackle such current and looming challenges as the climate crisis and rising security threats.

### JIOCINEMA SIGNS ROHIT SHARMA AS BRAND AMBASSADOR

## KEY FACTS

- **Rohit Sharma has been announced as JioCinema's brand ambassador.** JioCinema is an Indian over-the-top streaming service owned by Jio Platforms.
- According to the brand, Sharma's many world records as captain and player will open a new inning to build on JioCinema's vision of making sports viewing synonymous with digital

## NINE INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT CAMPAIGNS

**Current Context:** On National Panchayati Raj Day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched nine campaigns centered around the theme of Inclusive Development in Reqa, Madhya Pradesh.

### KEY POINTS

- **These campaigns are intended to have high-impact value and a high potential for Jan-Bhagidari, or public participation.**
- The campaigns were launched on a mobile app called 'Samaveshi Vikas'.

**The nine campaigns are:**

- Samagra Awas-Convergence under PMAY-G
- Financial Literacy at District Level
- Promoting Digital Transactions
- Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen)
- Jal Jeevan Mission (Grameen)
- Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana
- Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana
- Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana
- Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana

## INPRIME FINSERV RECEIVED NBFC LICENCE FROM RBI

**Current Context:** InPrime Finserv is a financial services start-up that aims to serve the emerging "Prime" segment within the informal economy in India.

### ABOUT

- It was founded in 2021 by Rajat Singh, Manish Kumar Raj and Sneha Thakur.
- It recently obtained a Certificate of Registration (COR) from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to operate as a Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC).
- **This is a significant milestone for the company as it will enable it to offer more advanced and customized financial products and services to its customers.**
- NBFCs can offer more customized and flexible financial products and services to their customers, especially those who are underserved or unbanked by the formal banking sector.

- **NBFCs have lower operating costs and regulatory requirements than banks, which gives them an edge in terms of efficiency and profitability.**

## COROVER, LIC COLLABORATE TO LAUNCH 1ST PHASE OF AI VIRTUAL ASSISTANT LIC MITRA

**Current Context:** CoRover LIC Mitra is a conversational AI-powered chatbot that has been developed by CoRover, a Bengaluru-based startup, in collaboration with the Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC), the country's largest insurance company.

### DETAILS

- It is available on LIC's website and mobile app and can answer users' queries about LIC products, policies, premiums, maturity dates and more in multiple languages.
- **It can also interact with users through voice and compare various insurance plans. It is part of LIC's digital transformation initiative and aims to enhance customer support, sales, revenue and efficiency.**
- It is available 24x7 and is powered by technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML), and Natural Language Processing (NLP).

## UNION BANK OF INDIA SECURES 1ST RANK IN EASE REFORMS INDEX FOR Q3 FY23

**Current Context:** Union Bank of India, for the first time, secured 1st rank as per the report on EASE Reforms Index for Q3 FY 2022-23 published by Indian Banks' Association (IBA).

### KEY FACTS

- EASE stands for Enhanced Access & Service Excellence, which is an initiative by the Department of Financial Services (DFS) as part of the PSB Reforms Agenda.
- **The bank has performed well in areas such as digitally-enabled customer offerings, big data and analytics, modern technology capabilities, and employee development and governance.**

## WG CDR DEEPIKA MISRA BECOMES 1ST WOMAN OFFICER OF IAF TO RECEIVE GALLANTRY AWARD

**Current Context:** Wing Commander Deepika Misra is the first woman Air Force officer to receive a gallantry award.

#### KEY POINTS

- She was conferred the Vayu Sena medal by Indian Air Force (IAF) chief Air Marshal VR Chaudhari on Thursday.
- She is a trained helicopter pilot, qualified flying instructor and an instrument-rated instructor and examiner.
- She saved 47 lives during a humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operation in response to flash floods in northern Madhya Pradesh in August 2021. She is an inspiration for many!

#### CRED LAUNCHES P2P UPI PAYMENTS ON ITS APP

**Current Context:** CRED has launched UPI-based peer-to-peer (P2P) payments on its app. This means that CRED members can now send and receive money from anyone in their contact list, whether they are CRED members or not, using their phone numbers or UPI IDs.

#### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **CRED claims that this feature will provide a trusted and rewarding payment experience for its users.** Some of the benefits of using CRED UPI P2P are:
  - Payment reminders for recurring transactions
  - Custom VPA for enhanced privacy
  - Nudges for payment protection in risky scenarios
  - Cashbacks and rewards for both payer and payee
  - Multiple payment options including bill payments, scan-and-pay, tap-to-pay, CRED Pay, and CRED flash
  - CRED is a fintech platform that rewards users for paying their credit card bills on time. It has over 11 million members and offers various services such as cash, mint, pay, max, rewards, store and travel.

#### CSIR AND OIL SIGN MOU FOR ADVANCED ENERGY RESEARCH

**Current Context:** The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and Oil India Limited (OIL) have signed an umbrella Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to pursue technological partnership in select domains across the Energy value chain.

#### DETAILS

- **The aim of this collaboration is to facilitate research in advanced technologies for energy security.**
- Both organizations have also agreed to work towards capacity building through training and skill development.
- The OIL would also consider providing Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funding support towards achieving sustainable development goals, Aspirational Districts, Rural Development, Govt missions/initiatives etc.

#### RATAN TATA IS THE RECIPIENT OF AUSTRALIA'S HIGHEST CIVIC DISTINCTION

**Current Context:** Industrialist and Tata Sons' chairman emeritus Ratan Tata has been conferred with the Order of Australia, the highest Australian civilian honor.

#### KEY FACTS

- The Bharat Gaurav Tourist Train on Ambedkar Circuit flagged off from New Delhi. **World Bank's LPI 2023 Report: India Ranked 38; Singapore Topped the Index.**

#### HDFC BANK GETS RELIEF FROM RBI ON PRIORITY SECTOR LENDING NORMS

**Current Context:** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has given HDFC Bank three years to comply with the priority sector lending norms (PSL) following its merger with HDFC Ltd (HDFC), though no relaxation is allowed for abiding by the cash reserve ratio and statutory liquidity ratio rules.

#### KEY POINTS

- According to RBI norms, **commercial banks need to extend 40 per cent of the adjusted net bank credit (ANBC) of the previous year towards the priority sector.**

## MASTERCARD COLLABORATES WITH INDIA'S M1XCHANGE TO ROLL OUT DIGITAL INVOICE DISCOUNTING FOR FARMERS

**Current Context:** Mastercard announced its collaboration with M1xchange to offer a digital invoice discounting solution to farmers, farmer producer organizations (FPOs), and agri-MSMEs through Farm Pass.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Mastercard aims to bring together MSMEs, FPOs, traders, and farmers on a single platform** to address their working capital and credit needs through an invoice discounting solution, leveraging the secure and consented data on the Farm Pass platform.

## ICICI BANK HAS LAUNCHED AN EMI FEATURE FOR UPI PAYMENTS VIA QR CODE SCANNING

**Current Context:** ICICI Bank introduces EMI facility for UPI payments by scanning QR code is a new feature launched by the bank on April 11, 2023, to offer more convenience and affordability to its customers.

### ABOUT

- **The feature allows customers who are eligible for PayLater, the bank's 'buy now, pay later' service**, to convert their UPI payments into easy installments by simply scanning the merchant QR code at a store.

## MORGAN STANLEY FORECASTS 6.2% GROWTH IN INDIA'S GDP IN FY24

**Current Context:** According to a report by Morgan Stanley, India's GDP is predicted to grow by 6.2% in FY24 due to the reopening of the economy, increased private sector investment, a cyclical recovery in consumption and an increase in government spending.

### DETAILS

- **The report also said the inflation in India is likely to be below 5 per cent in the second quarter of calendar year 2024.**

## RISHABH PANT, AN INDIAN CRICKETER, HAS JOINED STAR SPORTS AS A BRAND AMBASSADOR

**Current Context:** Star Sports has signed Indian cricketer Rishabh Pant as its latest 'Believe Ambassador'. The company also has other cricketers as its 'Believe Ambassadors' like Hardik Pandya, Ravindra Jadeja, KL Rahul, and Shreyas Iyer.

### KEY POINTS

- **The 'Believe Ambassadors' represent different parts of the country as well as different IPL Teams**. Star Sports will work closely with the Cricketers to develop new campaigns and properties to grow the popularity of the sport and drive fandom.

## INTERNATIONAL MOTHER EARTH DAY 2023 – APRIL 22

**Current Context:** International Mother Earth Day is celebrated annually on April 22 to raise awareness of environmental issues and promote action to safeguard the planet.

### KEY FACTS

- The holiday was established by the United Nations in 2009 through Resolution A/RES/63/278. The resolution was initially sponsored by Bolivia and ultimately approved by more than half of the member states.
- **The theme of World Earth Day 2023 is "Invest in Our Planet," and it encourages businesses to choose sustainable practices.**

## WATER METRO IN KOCHI

**Current Context:** The Kochi Water Metro is India's first water metro that was inaugurated today by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. It connects 10 islands around Kochi through battery-operated electric hybrid boats.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **The project is worth ₹ 747 crore and has identified 15 routes connecting islands spanning 78 km. The overall project comprises 78 electric boats with a total of 38 terminals.**
- The water metro service will start at 7 am and continue till 8 pm. During the peak hours, boats will

operate in the High Court to Vypin route every 15 minutes.

## UDAN 5.0 SCHEME

**Current Context:** UDAN 5.0 is the fifth phase of the government's regional air connectivity scheme that aims to further enhance connectivity to remote and regional areas of the country.

### DETAILS

- The **focus of this round is on Category-2 (20-80 seats) and Category-3 (>80 seats) aircraft.** The scheme will add or revive air strips closer to wildlife sanctuaries, tourist destinations or spiritual places located in tier II and tier III cities.

Some key features of UDAN 5.0 include:

- **The earlier stage length cap of 600 km is waived off and there is no restriction on the distance between the origin and destination of the flight.**
- Viability gap funding (VGF) to be provided will be capped at 600 km stage length for both Priority and Non-Priority areas which was earlier capped at 500 km.
- **No predetermined routes would be offered. Only Network and Individual Route Proposal proposed by airlines will be considered.**
- The airlines would be required to submit an action/business plan after 2 months from the issuance of LoA wherein they submit their aircraft acquisition plan/availability of aircraft, crew, slots, etc. at the time of the Technical Proposal.

## MOH&FW'S NATIONAL COVID-19 VACCINATION PROGRAMME HAS RECEIVED THE PRIME MINISTER'S AWARD

**Current Context:** The Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in Public Administration is an annual award given to recognize the contribution of Civil Servants to Society. It is awarded in various categories including Innovation. The award is a prestigious recognition of the efforts and achievements of the individuals and organizations in the field of public administration.

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### ABOUT

- **On April 21, 2023, the National COVID-19 Vaccination Programme of the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoH&FW) received the Prime Minister's (PM) Award for Excellence in Public Administration 2022 under the innovation category.**
- **The programme focused on 'एक ही प्रण हो सबका टीकाकरण' and was premised upon four pillars:** Structured governance mechanism, Ramping up of production, Logistics and supply management, and Implementation strategies for effective & decentralized vaccine administration involving both public & private health facilities

## RBI UNIFIED PROVISIONING STANDARDS FOR ALL UBCS, REGARDLESS OF TIER

**Current Context:** The standard asset provisioning norms applicable to Tier I, Tier 2, Tier 3 and Tier 4 UCBs under the revised framework shall be as follows:

### KEY FACTS

- **Direct advances to agriculture and SME sectors which are standard, shall attract a uniform provisioning requirement of 0.25 percent of the funded outstanding on a portfolio basis.**
- Advances to the commercial real estate (CRE) sector that are standard shall attract a uniform provisioning requirement of 1.00 percent of the funded outstanding on a portfolio basis.
- **For advances to the commercial real estate - residential housing (CRE-RH) sector, which are standard, the provisioning requirement shall be 0.75 percent.**
- For all other advances, banks shall maintain a uniform general standard asset provision of a minimum of 0.40 percent of the funded outstanding on a portfolio basis.

## RAMBAAN, ASIA'S 1ST MOBILE BIOSAFETY LEVEL-3 LABORATORY

**Current Context:** Asia's first mobile biosafety level-3 (BSL-3) laboratory named **Rapid Action Mobile BSL-3 Advanced Augmented Network (RAMBAAN)**, designed to investigate emerging viral infections was showcased at the G-20 Health Working Group meeting in Goa.



## KEY POINTS

- The **BSL-3 is the first of its kind in Asia and India** and can access the **remotest part** of India.
- India has **two operational mobile laboratories**, one at **RMRC, Gorakhpur**, and another at **NIV, Pune**

### HDFC BANK, AXIS BANK SIGNS THE DEFINITIVE AGREEMENTS WITH GO DIGIT LIFE INSURANCE

**Current Context:** HDFC Bank and Axis Bank have signed definitive agreements to invest up to ₹69.90 crore in Go Digit Life Insurance Ltd in two tranches, subject to the terms and conditions set out in the definitive agreements.

## KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **The banks will both acquire 9.94% equity stake each in the life insurance company, which is a subsidiary of Go Digit General Insurance Ltd, an insurtech unicorn that is planning to go for an IPO.**
- The transaction is expected to be completed by 3 to 6 months from the execution date.

### RESERVE BANK OF ZIMBABWE TO LAUNCH GOLD-PEGGED DIGITAL CURRENCY

**Current Context:** The Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe (RBZ) is considering this initiative to stabilize the local currency, which has been suffering from high inflation and devaluation.

## ABOUT

- **The digital gold tokens would allow Zimbabweans to exchange their Zimbabwean dollars with a more stable asset and protect their savings from currency volatility.**
- The RBZ Governor, Dr. John Mangudya, said that they want to "ensure that those with low amounts of local currency are able to purchase the gold units so that we leave no one and no place behind."

### MOHAMMED SHAHABUDDIN SWORN IN AS 22ND PRESIDENT OF BANGLADESH

**Current Context:** **Mohammed Shahabuddin** is a veteran freedom fighter and politician who was elected unopposed on February 13, 2023 as the nominee of the ruling Awami League party.

## DETAILS

- He replaced Abdul Hamid, who served as the president for 10 years in two consecutive terms.
- **Md Sahabuddin took the oath of office at the Bangabhaban presidential palace in Dhaka on Monday, April 24, 2023.**
- The ceremony was attended by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Chief Justice Hasan Foez Siddique, Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury and other dignitaries

### 14TH NATIONAL PANCHAYATI RAJ DAY – 24TH APRIL 2023

**Current Context:** National Panchayati Raj Day is observed on April 24 every year in India. It marks the day when the Panchayati Raj System was given a constitutional status in 1993.

## KEY POINTS

- The system enables the people in rural areas to govern themselves and make decisions for their own development. The system also fosters democracy and decentralization of power at the grassroots level.
- **The theme for National Panchayati Raj Day 2023 is 'Sustainable Panchayat: Building Healthy, Water Sufficient, Clean & Green Villages'. The aim of this theme is to encourage the Panchayats to adopt sustainable practices that can improve the quality of life and environment in rural areas.**
- On this occasion, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will launch various projects and schemes under the "Inclusive Development" theme of Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav, which commemorates 75 years of India's independence.

### INTERNATIONAL DAY OF MULTILATERALISM AND DIPLOMACY FOR PEACE 2023 – APRIL 24

**Current Context:** The International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace is an annual observance celebrated on April 24th.

## KEY FACTS

- This day was established by the United Nations General Assembly in 2018 to promote and

strengthen multilateralism and diplomacy as means to achieve peace and security in the world.

- **The day also aims to raise awareness of the values of multilateralism and diplomacy, such as consultation, inclusion and solidarity.**
- The United Nations is the main instrument of multilateral cooperation and the utmost expression of multilateralism.

## SHREEKANT M. BHANDIWAD TAKES CHARGE AS CHAIRMAN OF KVGB

**Current Context:** Shreekant M. Bhandiwad has taken charge as the new Chairman of Karnataka Vikas Grameena Bank (KVGB) on Monday. He was previously heading the Patna circle of Canara Bank.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **He has a master's degree in agriculture and is also a certified associate of Indian Institute of Bankers.**
- He has worked as an Agricultural Extension Officer in rural branches of Canara Bank and also worked as a consultant in Agricultural Consultancy Services of Canara Bank at the Head Office.
- He has worked in states such as Haryana, Rajasthan, Bihar and Karnataka in various capacities such as branch in-charge, regional head and circle head.
- **He was Deputy Managing Director of Canfin Homes Ltd for a period of three years.**

## CANARA BANK & RBIH COLLABORATES TO LAUNCH 'DIGITALISED SUBMISSION OF FORM 15G/15H'

**Current Context:** Canara Bank, in collaboration with Reserve Bank Innovation Hub (RBIH), has launched a new customer-friendly service called "Digitalised Submission of Form 15G/15H".

### ABOUT

- **This service is aimed at simplifying the process of submitting these forms, which are self-declaration forms that individuals submit to the bank to avoid the deduction of TDS on interest income, provided their income is below the basic exemption limit.**
- The service leverages technologies that are familiar to senior citizens and also uses an OMNI-channel approach.

- All deposit holders, including senior citizens, can now easily submit their tax waiver forms through SMS and website.

## BAJAJ ALLIANZ GENERAL INSURANCE, ACTYV.AI PARTNERS TO OFFER INSURANCE PRODUCT

**Current Context:** Bajaj Allianz General Insurance, one of the leading private general insurers in India, has announced a partnership with actyv.ai, a Singapore-based enterprise SaaS platform with embedded B2B BNPL and insurance, to offer insurance products to enterprises and their business partner ecosystem across the supply chain.

### DETAILS

- The partnership aims to provide affordable and innovative insurance products to MSME companies that have been severely impacted by the pandemic.

## GOVERNMENT APPOINTS ARUN SINHA AS CHAIRMAN OF NTRO

**Current Context:** The government has appointed Arun Sinha as the new chairman of the National Technical Research Organisation (NTRO) on April 20, 2023.

### KEY POINTS

- He is a 1984 batch IPS officer of Kerala cadre and was the former chief of the Special Protection Group (SPG) that provides security to the Prime Minister and other VVIPs.
- **The NTRO is a technical intelligence agency that works under the National Security Advisor in the Prime Minister's Office. It was set up in 2004 and provides technical intelligence to other agencies on internal and external security issues.**
- The NTRO plays an important role in safeguarding India's national security interests from various threats.

## NEOBANKING JUPITER RECEIVED AN NBFC LICENSE FROM THE RBI

**Current Context:** Jupiter, a neobanking start-up based in Bengaluru, India, has been granted a non-banking finance company (NBFC) license by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- The move will allow the firm to offer credit directly to customers and builds on Jupiter's existing lending operations through partner NBFCs.
- **Jupiter intends to capitalize the lending business with around Rs 100 crore and raise an additional Rs 100 crore in debt to fund the NBFCs credit operations.**
- It aims to hit annual disbursements of Rs 600-700 crore in short- and medium-term personal loans.
- **Jupiter has over 2 million customers and was recently valued at more than \$700 million**

- **It has tied up with Yes Bank to facilitate the collection of premiums in digital mode using the bank's eRupee platform.**
- Customers who have an active eRupee wallet with any bank can scan Reliance General Insurance's eRupee QR code to make easy, safe, instant, and green payments

## PM DEDICATED VARIOUS PROJECTS WORTH RS 4850 CR IN DADRA AND NAGAR HAVELI

**Current Context:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched various development projects related to health, housing, tourism, education and urban development, worth more than Rs 4850 crore in Silvassa, Dadra and Nagar Haveli on April 25, 2023. Some of the projects are:

### ABOUT

- **The inauguration of the new campus of NAMO Medical Education & Research Institute, the first and only medical college in the Union Territory of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu.**
- The laying of the foundation stone of 96 development projects in the Union Territory of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu, such as government schools, Government Engineering College, fish market and shopping complex, beautification and widening of roads, and augmentation of water supply scheme.
- **The handing over of the house keys to beneficiaries of PM Awas Yojana Urban from Diu and Silvassa.**

## DEFENCE MINISTER RAJNATH SINGH LEADS THE SHANGHAI COOPERATION ORGANIZATION (SCO)

**Current Context:** India is hosting the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Defence Ministers' Meeting on April 28th in New Delhi.

### KEY POINTS

- **The SCO is an intergovernmental organization established in 2001 that includes eight member states and four observer countries.**
- The Defence Ministers will discuss matters concerning regional peace and security, counter terrorism efforts and effective multilateralism.

## INDIA'S FIEO SIGN MOU WITH BUSINESS RUSSIA TO PROMOTE TRADE & FDI

**Current Context:** India's apex exporters body Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Business Russia to promote trade and investments between the two countries.

### KEY FACTS

- **The MoU was signed during a visit of a 50-member delegation of the agro and food processing sector to Moscow and St. Petersburg from April 24 to 27.**
- The delegation explored opportunities in diverse business ventures such as ready-to-eat meals, fish meal, animal feed, soyabean and conventional products.
- **The MoU aims to cooperate in arranging exhibitions, buyers-sellers' meetings, workshops, seminars and encouraging enterprises to work in tandem with their counterparts for joint ventures.**
- The FIEO also expressed its intention to increase agro and processed food exports from about USD 750 million to over USD 3 billion in the next three years

## RELIANCE GENERAL BECOMES 1ST INSURER TO ACCEPT ERUPEE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH YES BANK

**Current Context:** Reliance General Insurance has become the first general insurance company to accept eRupee - or the central bank digital currency (CBDC) - for premium payments.

### DETAILS

- India's Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will chair the meeting and also hold bilateral meetings with some of his counterparts.
- One of them is China's Defence Minister Li Shangfu, who arrived in India on Thursday amid strained ties between the two countries over the border dispute.

## WORLD BANK HAS APPROVED A USD 1.25 BILLION LOAN FOR THREE NEW PROJECTS

**Current Context:** The financing was approved after the meeting of the Bank to discuss a new Country Partnership Framework (CPF) for Bangladesh (2023-27) on Friday. The CPF will support Bangladesh's goal to achieve upper-middle-income country status by 2031 by helping the country address key barriers to higher and sustainable growth.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- It will help develop a diversified and competitive private sector to create more and better jobs; promote socio economic inclusion to expand opportunities for all; and address climate and environmental vulnerabilities.

The three new projects are:

- **Program on Agricultural and Rural Transformation for Nutrition, Entrepreneurship, and Resilience (PARTNER) project:** This project will help promote diversification, food safety, entrepreneurship, and climate resilience in the agri-food systems.
- **First Green and Climate Resilient Development Credit:** This project will help the country's transition to green and climate-resilient development.
- **Sustainable Microenterprise and Resilient Transformation (SMART) project:** This project will help transform the micro-enterprise sector into a more dynamic, less-polluting, resource-efficient, and climate-resilient growth sector.

## HIMACHAL PRADESH GOVERNMENT & OIL INDIA SIGNS MOU

**Current Context:** The Himachal Pradesh government and Oil India Limited (OIL) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on April 26, 2023 to establish a framework for cooperation in harnessing and developing new and renewable energy sources (NRES) in the state.

### KEY FACTS

- The Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh, Thakur Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu, said that the company would explore the possibilities of setting up floating solar power plants in various water reservoirs, besides establishing ground-mounted solar power projects.
- He also said that the OIL could set up a plant for producing green hydrogen and green ammonia on a pilot basis.
- He hoped that this MoU would significantly boost the development of the state's energy sector and help in achieving the state's energy goals

## TRIPARTITE MEMORANDUM OF SETTLEMENT SIGNED BETWEEN CENTRE, ASSAM STATE GOVERNMENT AND DNLA/DPSC

**Current Context:** A tripartite Memorandum of Settlement was signed between the Centre, the Assam government and representatives of Dimasas National Liberation Army/Dimasas Peoples' Supreme Council (DNLA/DPSC) on April 27, 2023 in New Delhi.

### DETAILS

- The agreement aims to end the insurgency in the Dima Hasao district of Assam and bring peace and development to the region.
- **Under the agreement, the representatives of DNLA have agreed to abjure violence, surrender all arms and ammunition, disband their armed organization, vacate all camps occupied by their cadres and join the peaceful democratic process.**
- The agreement also provides for a special development package of Rs 500 crore each by the Centre and the Assam government over a period of five years for the all-round development of the North Cachar Hills Autonomous Council (NCHAC) as well as Dimasas people residing in other parts of the state

## MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES ANNOUNCES RELEASE OF SOPS UNDER PLI AUTO SCHEME

**Current Context:** Ministry of Heavy Industries, the SOPs under the PLI Auto scheme to testing agencies were released on April 27, 2023.

India. It is India's first cable-stayed railway bridge. It is built by Hindustan Construction Company.

## ABOUT

- **The SOPs aim to promote local manufacturing and reduce dependence on imports, thereby boosting the Indian economy.**
- The applicants under the scheme can now submit their applications for the testing and certification of advanced automotive technology (AAT) products (both OEMs and components), which will help them qualify for incentives under the PLI Auto scheme.
- The PLI Auto scheme has a budgetary outlay of 25,938 crore rupees and proposes financial incentives to boost domestic manufacturing of AAT products and attract investments in the automotive manufacturing value chain.
- **The scheme has two parts: Champion OEM, which will make electric or hydrogen-powered vehicles, and Component Champions, which will make high-value and high-tech components**

## INDIA AND UK TO CREATE INDIA-UK NET ZERO INNOVATION VIRTUAL CENTRE

**Current Context:** India and the UK have agreed to create India-UK NET zero innovation virtual centre. This centre will provide a platform for stakeholders of both countries to work together in areas like the decarbonization of manufacturing processes, transport systems, and green hydrogen as a renewable source.

## KEY FACTS

- **The centre is part of the Roadmap 2030 that provides a framework for UK-India relations across health, climate, trade, education, science and technology, and defence.**
- The centre will also launch the first-ever UK-India scientific deep sea voyage for carrying out scientific studies

## INDIA'S FIRST CABLE-STAYED RAIL BRIDGE, ANJI KHAD BRIDGE

**Current Context:** The Anji Khad bridge is a cable-stayed bridge connecting Katra and Reasi section of Jammu–Baramulla line in the Jammu Division of Jammu and Kashmir,  
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## KEY POINTS

- The bridge has a total length of 473.25 m (1,552.7 ft) and a height of 196 m (643 ft) above the river bed.
- **It has a longest span of 290 m (950 ft) and consists of 96 cables in total. The bridge was designed to withstand harsh weather conditions and seismic activities.**
- The bridge was initially proposed to be an arch bridge similar to the Chenab Bridge, but it was rejected due to the geological instability of the region.
- **The cable-stayed design was approved in October 2016 and the project cost was 458 crore. The bridge was completed in record time and inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 30 October 2022**

## MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE & FARMERS WELFARE AND NAFED LAUNCHED THE 'MILLETS EXPERIENCE CENTRE (MEC)'

**Current Context:** The Millets Experience Centre (MEC) is a joint initiative by the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare (MoA&FW) and the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd (NAFED) to promote millets as a healthy and sustainable food option.

## KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- The first MEC was launched at Dilli Haat, INA, New Delhi on April 29, 2023 by Union Minister Narendra Singh Tomar.
- **The MEC offers a unique dining and shopping experience for customers who can enjoy various dishes and products made from millets, such as millets dosa, millets pasta, millets snacks, etc.**
- The MEC also showcases the local millet startups and their innovations. The MEC is part of India's celebration of the International Year of Millets (IYM 2023), which was declared by the United Nations General Assembly upon India's proposal supported by 72 countries.
- **The aim of IYM 2023 is to raise awareness on the environmental, health and economic benefits of millet farming and consumption**

## 19TH INDIA-FRENCH NAVY BILATERAL EXERCISE 'VARUNA-2021'

**Current Context:** The exercise witnessed high tempo-naval operations at sea, including advanced air defence and anti-submarine exercises, intense fixed and rotary wing flying operations, tactical manoeuvres, surface and anti-air weapon firings, underway replenishment and other maritime security operations.

### ABOUT

- **The exercise was conducted in the Arabian Sea from 25th to 27th April 2021. The exercise aimed to enhance interoperability and strengthen the coordination between the two navies.**
- After the exercise, Indian Navy's guided missile frigate Tarkash continued to exercise with the French Navy's Carrier Strike Group (CSG) from 28th April to 1st May 2021 participating in advanced surface, anti-submarine and air-defence operations with the French CSG

## RBI ISSUED GUIDELINES FOR APPOINTMENT OF SCAS/SAS WITH CONTINUOUS 3 YEARS TENURE

**Current Context:** Reserve Bank of India (RBI) issued guidelines for appointment of statutory central auditors (SCAs) and statutory auditors (SAs) of banks and non-banking finance companies (NBFCs), including housing finance companies. The guidelines will be applicable for financial year 2021-22 and onwards.

### DETAILS

- **The guidelines provide necessary instructions for appointment of SCAs/SAs, the number of auditors, their eligibility criteria, tenure and rotation, etc. while ensuring the independence of auditors.**
- The banks and NBFCs will have to appoint the SCAs/SAs for a continuous period of three years, subject to the firms satisfying the eligibility norms each year.
- **This condition is made to protect the auditor's/audit firms' independence.** Removal of the audit firms during the three years' period could be done only with the prior approval of the concerned office of RBI

## GOOGLE ANNOUNCED RS 135 CRORE FUND TO TACKLE THE COVID-19 CRISIS IN INDIA

**Current Context:** Google has announced a commitment of Rs 135 crore (or approx \$18 million) to help fight the coronavirus crisis in India, which is facing a devastating second wave of Covid-19 infections.

### KEY FACTS

- **The commitment includes two grants from Google.org, Google's philanthropic arm, totalling Rs 20 crore (or approx \$2.6 million).**
- The first grant is to GiveIndia to provide cash assistance to families hit hardest by the crisis to help with their everyday expenses.
- The second grant is to UNICEF to help get urgent medical supplies, including oxygen and testing equipment, to where it's needed most in India.
- **Google CEO Sundar Pichai and Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella have also pledged their personal support to fight the Covid-19 pandemic in India**

## DUBAI-BASED AIRLINE EMIRATES HAS UNVEILED THE WORLD'S FIRST ROBOTIC CHECK-IN ASSISTANT

**Current Context:** Emirates has introduced the world's first ever check in robot assistant which it calls Sara. Sara can match faces with scanned passports, check passengers in, and guide them to the luggage drop area at the centre too.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- The robot is part of a new City Check-in and Travel Store Emirates has opened in ICD Brookfield Place in Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC).
- **The store allows customers to conveniently book travel, check-in for flights, drop off their luggage, and purchase travel essentials to save time at the airport**
- Sara works by using cutting edge socially-aware artificial intelligence to interact with people in a personalized and engaging way.

## 7TH EDITION OF INDIA, UK BILATERAL TRAINING EXERCISE 'AJEYA WARRIOR 2023'

**Current Context:** Exercise Ajeya Warrior 2023 is a biennial training event with the United Kingdom that is conducted alternatively in the United Kingdom and India.

#### KEY POINTS

- The 7th edition of the exercise is being conducted at Salisbury Plains, United Kingdom from 27 April to 11 May 2023.
- **The aim of the exercise is to build positive military relations, imbibe each other's best practices and promote the ability to operate together while undertaking company-level sub-conventional operations in urban and semi-urban environments under UN mandate.**
- Soldiers of the 2 Royal Gorkha Rifles from the United Kingdom and Indian Army soldiers from the Bihar Regiment are participating in the exercise

#### NLCIL SIGNS MOU WITH TNC INDIA FOR REPURPOSING MINED-OUT LANDS FOR RE PROJECTS

**Current Context:** NLC India Limited (NLCIL) and Nature Conservancy India Solutions Private Ltd. (TNC India) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on 26.04.2023 to collaborate on research work related to repurposing mined-out lands for renewable energy, exploring carbon mitigation potential and carbon markets.

#### ABOUT

- **The MoU would further strengthen the endeavour of NLCIL to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and combat climate change in line with India's commitment under CoP 26 for a transition to a low-carbon economy and increased use of renewable energy sources.**
- The SiteRight tool developed by TNC and its partner will help in determining the suitability of the land to be used for renewable energy projects.

#### MOHUA LAUNCHES THE 'CITY BEAUTY COMPETITION' AND PORTAL

**Current Context:** The 'City Beauty Competition' is a national-level initiative launched by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) to celebrate the beauty and diversity of urban areas in India.

#### DETAILS

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- **The competition aims to encourage and recognize the transformational efforts made by cities and wards to create beautiful, innovative and inclusive public spaces.**
- The competition has two award categories: Beautiful Wards and Beautiful Public Spaces. The wards and public spaces will be judged on five criteria: accessibility, amenities, activities, aesthetics and ecology.

#### MIT ENGINEERS DEVELOPED INJECTABLE SYNTHETIC NANOPARTICLES AND A POLYMER

**Current Context:** Engineers have designed a two-component system that can be injected into the body and help form blood clots at the sites of internal injury. The two components are a nanoparticle and a polymer.

#### KEY FACTS

- **These materials, which mimic the way that the body naturally forms clots, could offer a way to keep people with severe internal injuries alive until they can reach a hospital.**
- The nanoparticle mimics the action of platelets, the cells that initiate blood clotting, while the polymer mimics the action of fibrinogen, a protein that helps form clots.
- **This technology could have a significant impact in preventing death from blood loss due to traumatic events such as car crashes or combat injuries**

#### ARYA.AG PARTNERS WITH SHIVALIK SFB TO LEND FARMERS & FPO

**Current Context:** Arya.ag is a grain commerce platform that partners with various financial institutions to offer loans to small and marginal farmers and FPOs (Farmer Producer Organizations) who fall out of the consideration of formal banking.

#### KEY POINTS

- On April 27, 2023, **Arya.ag announced a strategic partnership with Shivalik Small Finance Bank to drive farmers' financial inclusion.**
- With this business correspondent model partnership, Arya.ag will offer loans through Shivalik Small Finance Bank under Warehouse Receipt Finance, which allows farmers to store their produce

in a warehouse and use the receipt as collateral to get credit.

- **The partnership aims to bridge the trust deficit in the ecosystem, empower smallholder farmers, and promote equitable growth in agriculture**





