

December - 07

TNPSC BITS

- ❖ Akshata Krishnamurthy is a woman working at NASA.
 - She has become the first Indian citizen to operate a Mars rover.
- ❖ Cybersecurity firm Promon has identified a novel Android malware named FjordPhantom.
 - It is a new malware that employs virtualization to elude detection and target applications.
- ❖ A scientist from the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) recently discovered a new plant species of 'wild okra'.
 - It was discovered in a moist deciduous forest in Keonjhar district, Odisha.

NATIONAL

Agniveervayu (women)



- ❖ The Indian Air Force (IAF) inducted a batch of female Agniveervayu (women) soldiers in its non-officer cadre for the first time.
- ❖ A total of 153 Agniveervayu (women) graduated from the Airmen Training School in Belagavi, Karnataka.
- ❖ While the Indian Army currently only inducts women in the Personnel Below Officers Rank (PBOR) cadre in the Corps of Military Police, it is expected to expand opportunities for women in other areas soon.

- ❖ Agniveers are cadets appointed to the Army wings under the Agnipath scheme, a short-term service youth recruitment.

Governor's role as Chancellor

Escalating row

Amid the rising conflict with Governor Arif Mohammed Khan, the Kerala Cabinet decides to remove him as Chancellor of State universities



THE ORDINANCE: State Cabinet resolves to request the Governor himself to promulgate an ordinance removing him from the position

THE IMPACT: The Governor will be divested of his powers as Chancellor and will be kept away from all aspects of university governance

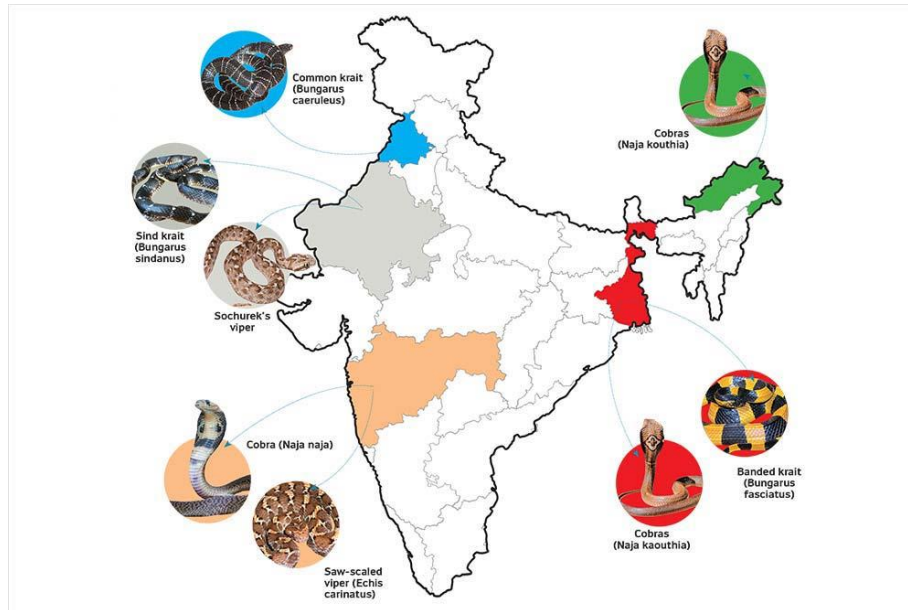
THE STATE'S REASONING: M.M. Punchhi Commission had recommended that States desist from burdening Governors with the Chancellor's role

- ❖ Recently, a Supreme Court bench, presided by Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud, reiterated that the governor acting as Chancellor are not bound the aid and advice of Council of Ministers and shall act only on his personal capacity.
- ❖ It was given in the context of Vice-Chancellor appointment of Kannur University in Kerala.
- ❖ The Governor has been designated as the Chancellor of most of the State public universities created by state legislature.
- ❖ The powers as a Chancellor have no relation to the exercise of the powers and duties as the Governor of the state.
- ❖ In 2022, West Bengal tried to replace the Governor with the Chief Minister as the Chancellor, while Tamil Nadu tried to transfer the power of appointing the Vice-Chancellor to the state government.
- ❖ In 1981 judgment in Hardwari Lal, Rohtak v. G.D. Tapase (Chandigarh), the High Court had held that "the Governor was the ex officio Chancellor of the University and by virtue of his office, he was not bound to act under the aid and advice of the council of ministers".

Snakebites in India

- ❖ India has the biggest burden of deaths due to snakebites in the world, with most of the cases in rural India.

- ❖ Avoidable Deaths Network (ADN) have set up a hub in an Odisha village to look into lifesaving solutions for snakebites.
- ❖ ADN is a global membership network working on avoiding human deaths from natural hazards.
- ❖ In 2015, India ratified the WHO's Snakebite Envenoming Strategy for Prevention and Control, along with UN' Sendai Framework for halving the deaths by 2030.



Exercise Milan 2024



- ❖ The next edition of Exercise MILAN is scheduled to be held in February 2024.
- ❖ It is a biennial multilateral naval exercise hosted by the Indian Navy.
- ❖ It was originally conceived in line with India's "Look East Policy".



- ❖ 1st one was held the exercise in 1995.
- ❖ It is India's biggest naval exercise.
- ❖ The last edition of Milan is held off Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.

New Post Office Bill, 2023

Postal Services Bill 2023

Replacing Indian Post Office act 1898

- ❖ The Rajya Sabha passed the Post Office Bill, replacing the 125-year-old Indian Post Office Act of 1898.
- ❖ It is redefining the role of the central government and empowering the Director General of Postal Services.
- ❖ The Director General of Postal Services will be appointed to head India Post.
- ❖ It is also addressing key aspects such as interception of postal articles, liability exemptions, and the removal of certain offences and penalties.
- ❖ The government may intercept an article transmitted through India Post on specified grounds, including security of the state and public order.
- ❖ India Post (HQ: New Delhi) operates under the Department of Post within the Ministry of Communications.
- ❖ It was formed in 1854 as Crown service by Lord Dalhousie.
- ❖ There has been a significant increase in the number of post offices, with around 5,000 new offices opened between 2014 and 2023.

World's First Portable Hospital

- ❖ Aarogya Maitri Aid Cube is the world's first portable hospital.
- ❖ It was unveiled recently in Gurugram, Haryana.

- ❖ It was designed indigenously under Project BHISHM (Bharat Health Initiative for Sahyog Hita and Maitri).
- ❖ The hospital can be airlifted and assembled into 72 cubes that contain essential medical equipment and supplies.
- ❖ The cubes can support 200 survivors for 48 hours during natural disasters or crises.
- ❖ The “Aarogya Maitri Cube” is part of “Aarogya Maitri” project.
- ❖ The project aims to provide essential medical supplies to any developing country affected by natural disasters or humanitarian crises.



INTERNATIONAL

Paris Club



- ❖ Sri Lanka has recently reached an “agreement in principle” with India and the Paris Club group of creditors including Japan, on a debt treatment plan.
- ❖ The Paris Club is an informal group of creditor nations.
- ❖ It works to find sustainable solutions for debtor countries that are unable to repay their bilateral loans.

- ❖ It has originated from a 1956 meeting in which Argentina agreed to meet its public creditors in Paris.
- ❖ The Paris Club has 22 permanent members.
- ❖ India is not a member to this club.
- ❖ The Paris Club usually coincides with the IMF program period.

UN Peacekeeping Ministerial Meeting 2023



- ❖ It was scheduled to take place in Accra, Ghana.
- ❖ 85 countries and international organizations participated in this.
- ❖ It is a biennial meeting organized by the United Nations.
- ❖ The Minister of State of Defence Ajay Bhatt participated in this.
- ❖ Every peacekeeping mission is authorized by the UN Security Council.
- ❖ It was established in 1948.
- ❖ UN Member states contribute their manpower for Peacekeeping forces on a voluntary basis.
- ❖ The financial resources of UN Peacekeeping operations are the collective responsibility of UN Member States.
- ❖ In the last seven decades, India has contributed more than 2,75,000 troops in 53 different missions.



- ❖ In 2007, India became the first country to deploy an all-women contingent to a U.N. Peacekeeping mission.
- ❖ The Indian Army has established the Centre for United Nations Peacekeeping (CUNPK) in New Delhi.
- ❖ In 2021, India in collaboration with the UN launched UNITE AWARE platform.

International Cotton Advisory Committee



INTERNATIONAL
COTTON
ADVISORY
COMMITTEE

81st Plenary Meeting



- ❖ The Ministry of Textiles is hosting the 81st Plenary Meeting of the International Cotton Advisory Committee (ICAC) in the Jio World Convention Centre, Mumbai.
- ❖ Theme for this year is “Cotton Value Chain: Local Innovations for Global prosperity”.
- ❖ The Plenary Meeting of ICAC is held every year in the member countries.
- ❖ It is an association of members of cotton producing, consuming and trading countries.
- ❖ Formed in 1939, its headquarters is Washington, United States
- ❖ India is one of members of the International Cotton Advisory Committee (ICAC)
- ❖ It has 28 members, most of the world’s cotton producing nations.
- ❖ But two of the ten largest producers (China and Turkmenistan) are not members.
- ❖ India has the largest area under cotton cultivation and is the second largest cotton producer in the World.
- ❖ Gujarat, Maharashtra and Telangana are the major cotton producing states.
- ❖ They produce about 65% of cotton production in the country.
- ❖ Kasturi Cotton Bharat is a premium cotton brand of India.

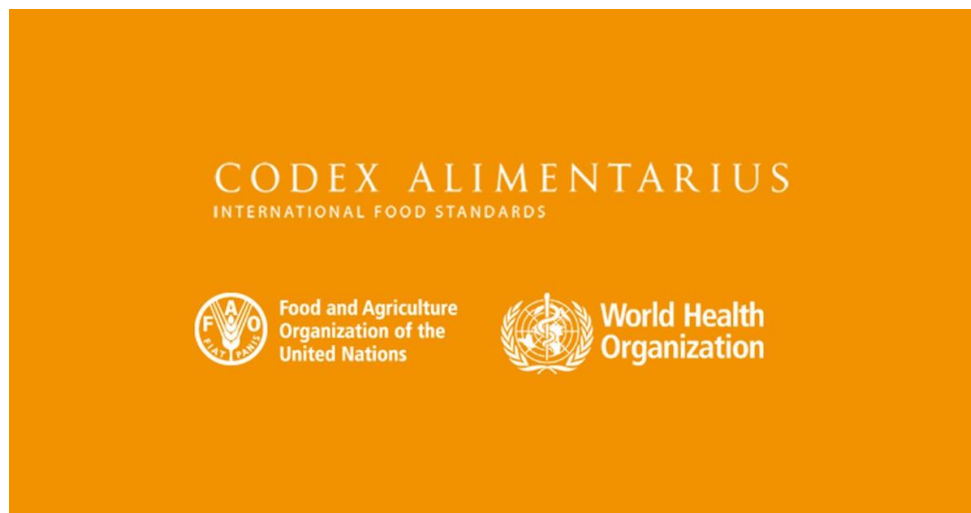
Mount Merapi eruption 2023

- ❖ Mount Merapi is located in West Sumatra, Indonesia.
- ❖ It claims the title of the most active volcano in Sumatra.

- ❖ Pacific Ring of Fire also known as the Circum-Pacific Belt, is a path along the Pacific Ocean characterised by active volcanoes and frequent earthquakes.
- ❖ It traces boundaries between several tectonic plates—including the Pacific, Juan de Fuca, Cocos, Indian-Australian, Nazca, North American, and Philippine Plates.



Codex Alimentarius Commission 2023



- ❖ India has been unanimously elected as a member representing the Asian region in the Executive Committee of Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC).
- ❖ It was during its 46th meeting at Food and Agriculture organization (FAO) headquarters at Rome, Italy.
- ❖ India proposed the establishment of global standards for millets like Finger millet, Barnyard millet, Kodo millet, Proso millet, and little millet.
- ❖ Codex currently has standards for Sorghum and Pearl Millet.
- ❖ CAC is an international food safety and quality standard-setting body.

- ❖ It was established jointly by the FAO and the World Health Organization (WHO) in 1963.
- ❖ The Agreement on Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) of the World Trade Organization (WTO) recognizes Codex standards.
- ❖ India became the member of Codex Alimentarius in 1964.

ECONOMY

Terms of Reference for 16th Finance Commission (2026-2031)

Fresh formulation

The 16th Finance Commission will have time until Oct. 31 2025, to recommend the tax sharing math between Centre and States

■ Panel will also prescribe measures to augment Consolidated Fund of a State to supplement resources of panchayats, local bodies



■ An Advance Cell was set up in the Finance Ministry last November to oversee preliminary work

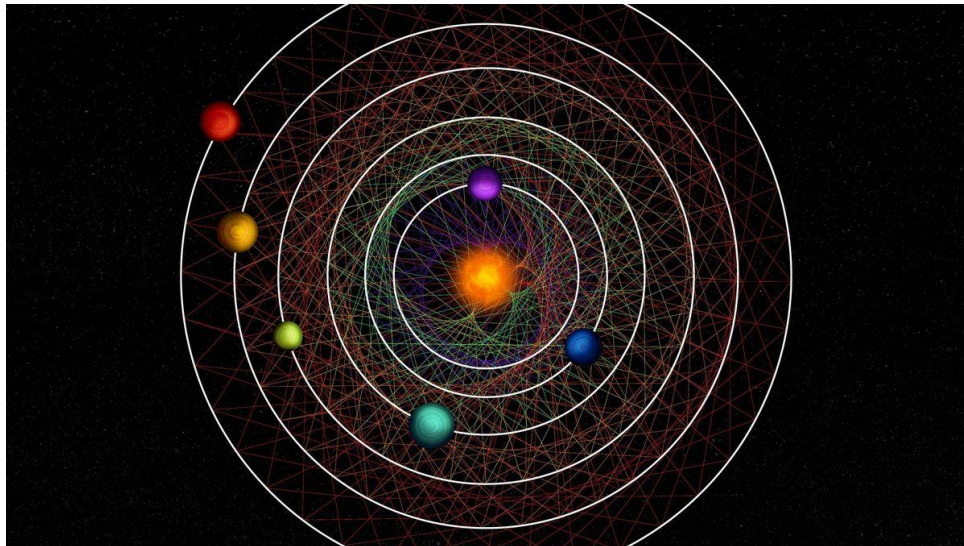
■ Panel may review existing arrangements on financing Disaster Management initiatives

- ❖ Recently, the Union Cabinet has given the nod to the terms of reference (ToR) for the Sixteenth Finance Commission.
- ❖ This commission holds the critical responsibility of recommending the formula for revenue distribution between the Centre and the States for the upcoming five-year period starting from April 1, 2026
- ❖ The recommendations of the Fifteenth Finance Commission are valid up to the financial year 2025-26.
- ❖ The government has set a deadline of October 31, 2025, for the panel to submit its recommendations.
- ❖ The key recommendation will be the distribution of net proceeds of taxes between the Centre and States and allocation among States of the respective share of such proceeds.

- ❖ The panel will also prescribe measures needed to augment the Consolidated Fund of a State to supplement resources of the panchayats and local bodies on the basis of recommendations made by the respective State Finance Commissions.
- ❖ The panel will recommend principles that should govern the grants-in-aid of the revenues of the States out of the Consolidated Fund of India and the sums to be paid to the States by way of grants-in-aid of their revenues.
- ❖ Also, it may review the existing arrangements on financing Disaster Management initiatives and make appropriate recommendations.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

HD110067



- ❖ It is a star with 6 known sub-Neptune exoplanets.
- ❖ The star is located in the constellation Coma Berenices, which is near Virgo in the northern sky.
- ❖ It is about 100 light-years away from Earth.
- ❖ NASA's Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS) detected the star's brightness dipping in 2020.
- ❖ This indicated that planets were passing in front of the star.

INS Sandhayak

- ❖ Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE) of Kolkata delivered INS Sandhayak to the Indian Navy on the occasion of Navy Day (December 4).
- ❖ INS Sandhayak is the largest survey vessel ever built in India.

- ❖ It is the first in the series of four Survey Vessels (Large), or SVLs, being built by GRSE.



ASW Shallow Water Craft (CSL) project



- ❖ 3 anti-submarine warfare ships for Indian Navy were launched at Cochin shipyard.
- ❖ The ships will be named INS Mahe, INS Malvan and INS Mangrol.
- ❖ The ships are part of the ASW Shallow Water Craft (CSL) project.
- ❖ It is being built by Cochin Shipyard Limited, Kochi.
- ❖ These are envisaged to undertake anti-submarine operations in coastal waters as well as Low Intensity Maritime Operations (LIMO) and Mine Laying Operations.

ENVIRONMENT

Damoh Tiger reserve

- ❖ Madhya Pradesh is to get the largest tiger reserve in the country spanning 2,300 square kilometres.

- ❖ The Central government has approved a proposal to merge the two wildlife sanctuaries in Madhya Pradesh.
- ❖ These two are the Nauradehi Wildlife Sanctuary and the Rani Durgavati Wildlife Sanctuary.



Accredited Compensatory Afforestation (ACA) Program

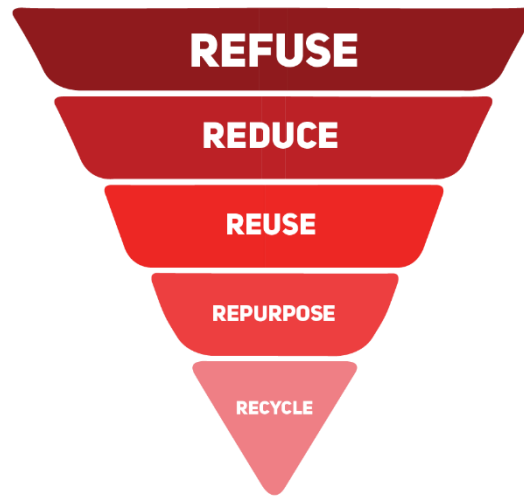


- ❖ The success of the Jamuna Open Cast Project (OCP) in Madhya Pradesh exemplified the success of this program.
- ❖ It aims to reclaim the erstwhile coal field for afforestation.
- ❖ It ceased mining activities in June 2014, due to resource depletion.
- ❖ According to recent satellite data, 88.07% of the quarry area has been successfully reclaimed.



- ❖ Compensatory afforestation is a program to ensure that the forest land diversion to non-forest purposes shall be accompanied by afforestation on an equal area of land.
- ❖ It is a legal requirement under the Compensatory Afforestation Fund Act of 2016.

“Bio-vision” for Bharat



- ❖ The inaugural meeting of the Biotechnology Research and Innovation Council (BRIC) Society at Delhi emphasized the need to define a “Bio-vision” for India.
- ❖ BRIC brings together 14 top science autonomous institutions under a unified platform to maximize the impact of biotech.
- ❖ It is an apex autonomous society operating under the Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Ministry of Science and Technology
- ❖ The “Zero Waste Life on Campus” program was also launched in this meeting.
- ❖ iBric (institutions of BRIC) will strengthen the 5 R’s of zero waste with a 6th ‘R’- “Research Insights”.
- ❖ The 5 R's are ‘Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Repurpose, Recycle’.
- ❖ This initiative aligns with Mission LiFE movement.

REPORTS AND INDICES

India Infrastructure Report on Urban Planning and Development 2023

- ❖ It is an annual publication initiated by the IDFC Foundation in 2001.

- ❖ It is the detailed roadmap for improving existing cities through urban redevelopment.
- ❖ It was published by IDFC Foundation, Infrastructure Development Corporation (Karnataka) Ltd. (iDeCK) and the National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA) of New Delhi.
- ❖ IDFC Foundation is a not-for-profit institution, working on philanthropic initiatives in social infrastructure.



Crime in India 2022

- ❖ It is the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) report released by the Ministry of Home Affairs.
- ❖ The NCRB, established in 1986, has four divisions: Crime and Criminal Tracking Network and Systems (CCTNS), Crime Statistics, Finger Prints, and Training
- ❖ It is gathering and examining crime-related information based on the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and Local Laws (SLL).
- ❖ The NCRB report underlines that the data record the incidence of registered crime, not the actual occurrence of crime.

- ❖ Kolkata has secured its position as India's safest city for the third consecutive year in the rate of recognizable crimes (IPC) per lakh population among metropolises.
- ❖ Pune (Maharashtra) and Hyderabad (Telangana) secured the second and third positions, respectively.
- ❖ It is followed by Chennai, Coimbatore and Surat.

Safest Cities in India		
Ranks	City	IPC Rate
1.	Kolkata	78.2
2.	Chennai	178.5
3.	Coimbatore	211.2
4.	Surat	215.3
5.	Pune	219.3
6.	Hyderabad	266.7
7.	Bengaluru	337.3
8.	Ahmedabad	360.1
9.	Mumbai	376.3
10.	Kozhikode	397.5

- ❖ While Kolkata excelled in overall safety, the report highlighted an increase in crimes against women.
- ❖ The crime rate against women in Kolkata was recorded at 27.1 per lakh population, surpassing figures for Coimbatore (12.9) and Chennai (17.1).
- ❖ Delhi logged the highest rate of FIRs linked to crimes against women in the country in 2022.
- ❖ States like Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and Telangana experienced a surge in cases against Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST) persons in 2022.
- ❖ Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan persist as key contributors.
- ❖ Maharashtra reported the highest number of cases in animal attacks.
- ❖ Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Chhattisgarh, and Madhya Pradesh followed.
- ❖ The highest number of bite cases were reported from Rajasthan followed by Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh, respectively.
- ❖ States with the highest charge sheeting rates under IPC crimes are Kerala, Puducherry, and West Bengal.

NCRB Data on Farmer Suicides 2022

- ❖ India saw 11,290 suicides in the farming sector in 2022.

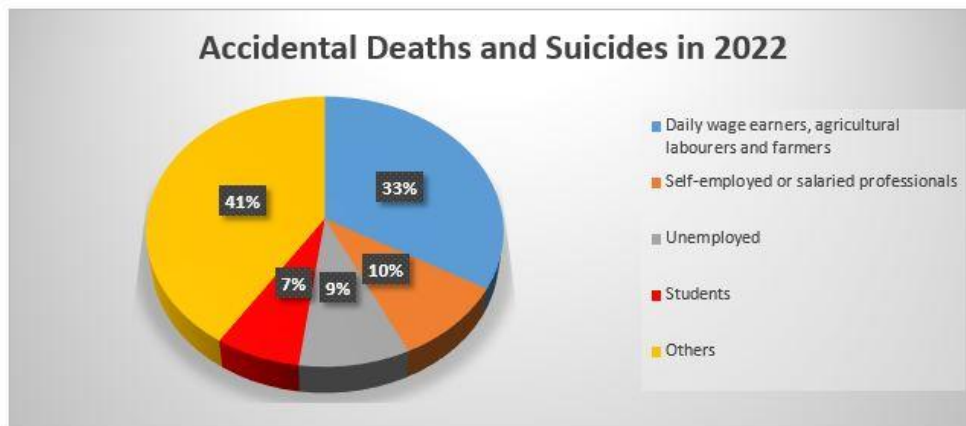
- ❖ Of these victims, 5,207 were farmers and 6,083 were agricultural labourers.
- ❖ The year 2022 witnessed a distressing surge in farmer suicides across India.
- ❖ At least one farmer is taking their own life every hour in 2022.
- ❖ The suicides among agricultural labourers, those reliant on daily wages from farming activities, surpassed those among farmers and cultivators.
- ❖ Maharashtra reported the highest number of farmer suicides (4,248), contributing to 38% of all cases in India.
- ❖ Vidarbha and Marathwada district report most of the suicides in the state
- ❖ Karnataka (2,392), Andhra Pradesh (917), Tamil Nadu (728), and Madhya Pradesh (641) followed.
- ❖ Uttar Pradesh recorded the highest increase in suicides, rising by 42.13% compared to 2021.
- ❖ Andhra Pradesh reported a 16% decrease.
- ❖ Farm suicide constitutes around 7-8 per cent of the total suicides reported in the country
- ❖ The NCRB report does not specify its definition of farmers and agricultural labourers.
- ❖ Operational holding is used to differentiate between marginal, small, medium and large labourers.
- ❖ Farmers with land holding up to 1 hectare (2.5 acres) are termed marginal farmers, while small farmers hold between 1-2 hectares.

Year	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
Farmer suicides	5,207	5,318	5,579	5,957	5,763
Agri labourer suicides	6,083	5,563	5,098	4,324	4,586
Total	11,290	10,881	10,677	10,281	10,349

Accidental Deaths and Suicides in India (ADSI) 2022 Report

- ❖ It was released by the National Crime Record Bureau's (NCRB).

- ❖ Maharashtra tops Maximum suicides.
- ❖ It is followed by Tamil Nadu Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Telangana.
- ❖ No suicides of Farmers & Agricultural Laborers are recorded at 8 states and 4 UT's.
- ❖ Among women suicides, homemakers were highest (about 14% of in total suicides).
- ❖ It is followed by students and daily wage earners.
- ❖ Mizoram had no cases of atrocities on SC and ST in 2021
- ❖ But it has reported atrocity cases in 2022.



STATES

Transplant Games



- ❖ For the 1st time, Kerala is organizing Transplant Games.
- ❖ It is international multi-sport events that take place every two years.

- ❖ It is a competitive sporting event for organ transplant recipients and donors.
- ❖ The WTGF organizes the World Transplant Games (WTG).
- ❖ The World Transplant Games Federation (WTGF) is a non-profit organization based in the United Kingdom.

Revanth Reddy



- ❖ The Congress central leadership has named Telangana party chief A. Revanth Reddy as its choice of Chief Minister of the State.
- ❖ He is set to become the first Congress Chief Minister of the state since its formation in 2014.
- ❖ He has been appointed as the leader of the Congress Legislature Party (CLP).

State Elections 2023

BJP Gains
Modi's BJP wins three of four key state polls

■ BJP ■ Congress



- ❖ BJP wins three of four state polls.

- ❖ It wrests control of Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan from the Congress and wins record fifth term in Madhya Pradesh.
- ❖ The Congress ended the Bharat Rashtra Samiti's (BRS) nine-year rule under Chandra Sekar Rao.
- ❖ BRS was formerly known as the Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS).

PERSONALITIES, AWARDS, AND EVENTS

VR Lalithambika – Kerala



- ❖ She is a distinguished scientist and former Director of the Human Spaceflight Programme at the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).
- ❖ She was honored with the prestigious 'Légion d'Honneur' in France.
- ❖ She is the second ISRO scientist after former ISRO chairman A S Kiran Kumar to be awarded the Legion d'Honneur of France.
- ❖ She played a pivotal role in fostering collaboration between the French National Space Agency CNES and ISRO.

Suganthy Sundararaj

- ❖ Suganthy Sundararaj, Regional Head of PR at Apollo Hospitals, receives Public Relations Society of India (PRSI) National Award for Outstanding Contributions to PRSI and the industry.
- ❖ She received the Award at the International Public Relations Festival held at New Delhi.

- ❖ The theme of this year's festival is 'G20: Showcasing Indian Values and The Emerging India to the World: Opportunities for Public Relations'.



India Internet Governance Forum 2023



- ❖ It is a multi-stakeholder platform bringing together representatives from various groups to discuss public policy issues related to the Internet.
- ❖ Established in 2021, it is an initiative associated with the UN Internet Governance Forum

- ❖ It held in new Delhi under the theme of “Moving Forward – Calibrating Bharat’s Digital Agenda”.

ISSA Vision Zero 2023 Award



- ❖ The Employees’ State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) bagged the “International Social Security Association’s ISSA Vision Zero 2023” Award.
- ❖ It was given in the recently held 23rd World Congress on Safety and Health at Work in Sydney, Australia.
- ❖ International Social Security Association was founded in 1927 under the auspices of the International Labour Organization.
- ❖ Its headquarters is at Geneva, Switzerland
- ❖ ESIC is a statutory corporate body set up under the ESI Act 1948.

