

December - 09

TNPSC BITS

- ❖ Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has given approval for the establishment of the country's inaugural Telecom Center of Excellence in Saharanpur.
 - It is to be situated at the Saharanpur campus of IIT Roorkee.
- ❖ President of India Droupadi Murmu, launched the 'New Education for New India' campaign by Brahma Kumaris, Sambalpur, in Sambalpur, Odisha.
 - This campaign is envisaged to inculcate values and uplift the consciousness of the students for better society.
- ❖ Olympian M. Sreeshankar (long jump) has been honored with the prestigious 35th Jimmy George Foundation Award for emerging as the best sports person of Kerala.
 - The Jimmy George Foundation Award is a distinguished accolade in Kerala's sporting community.
- ❖ Indian para-archer Sheetal Devi from Jammu and Kashmir clinched the title of Best Youth Athlete at the Asian Paralympic Committee (APC) awards ceremony during the fourth edition of the Asian Awards in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.
 - The Asian Awards, organized by the Asian Paralympic Committee, is a ceremony dedicated to honour outstanding achievements of Asian para-athletes and officials.
- ❖ The Vijayawada Railway Station of Andhra Pradesh has been awarded the prestigious platinum rating by the Indian Green Building Council (IGBC) for its commitment to environmental sustainability and eco-friendly practices.
 - It is based on six environmental categories including sustainable station facility, health, hygiene and sanitation, energy efficiency, water efficiency, smart and green initiatives and innovation and development.
- ❖ Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (PGCIL), a Maharatna Public Sector Undertaking, under Ministry of Power, has been conferred the prestigious SKOCH Gold Award 2023.
 - The SKOCH Gold Award 2023 acknowledges the outstanding contributions and technological advancements.
- ❖ Meghalaya's Lakadong turmeric has been granted the prestigious Geographical Indication (GI) tag.

- Three more products from Meghalaya were honoured with the GI tag: Garo Dakmanda (traditional dress), Larnai pottery, and Garo Chubitchi (alcoholic beverage).

NATIONAL

Amazon and IWAI

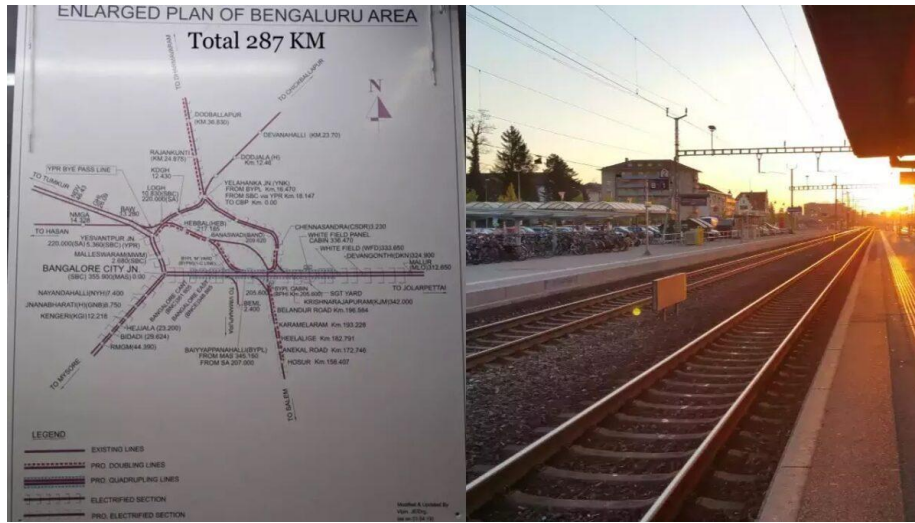


- ❖ The Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) and Amazon Seller Services Private Limited (Amazon) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).
- ❖ It focuses on enhancing cargo movement and transporting customer shipments and products through inland waterways, specifically utilizing the river Ganga (National Waterway 1).
- ❖ The partnership allows Amazon to leverage all modes of transport in the country, including rail, air, water, and surface.
- ❖ The Union Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways aims to increase inland water transport volumes significantly by 2030 and surpass 500 MMT by 2047, as per the Amrit Kaal Vision 2047.
- ❖ The plan includes increasing the number of operational waterways to 23 by 2030, with a vision to surpass 50 operational waterways by 2047.

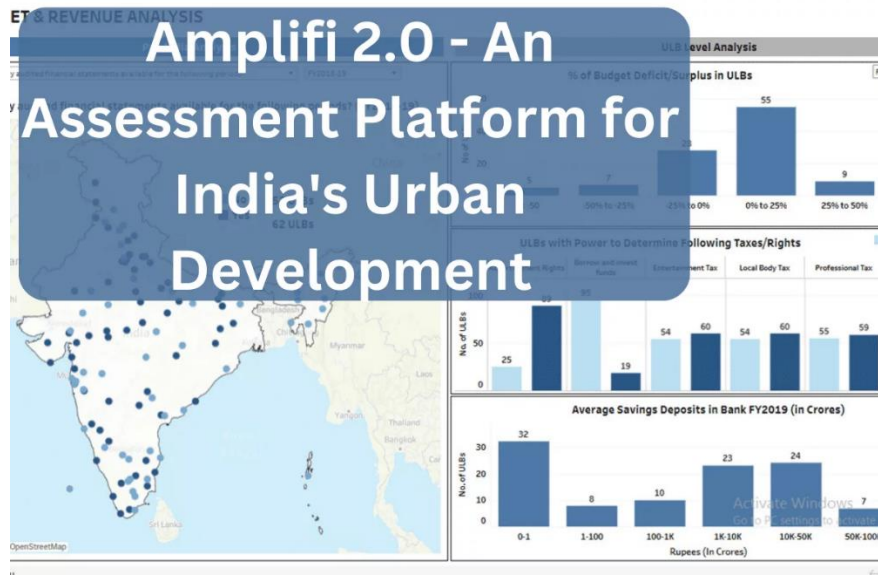
Largest circular Railway

- ❖ India's largest circular railway will be established in Bengaluru.
- ❖ The total length of this circular railway will be 288 km.

- ❖ It will achieve this position by defeating the circular railway of Chennai.
- ❖ The length of Chennai Circular Railway is 235 km.



Amplifi 2.0



- ❖ The Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs in India has launched the Amplifi 2.0 (Assessment and Monitoring Platform for Liveable, Inclusive and Future-ready urban India) portal.
- ❖ It has embarked to centralize and streamline raw data from cities across the country.
- ❖ It is designed to encompass data from over 4,000 Urban Local Bodies eventually.

- ❖ It already provides a wealth of information, covering diverse aspects such as total diesel consumption, water quality testing, annual healthcare expenditure, slum population statistics, and road accident fatalities.

CERT-In – RTI



- ❖ The Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT), has recently issued a notification exempting the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) from the purview of the Right to Information Act, 2005.
- ❖ CERT-In, will now operate outside the scope of the RTI Act, 2005 will be limiting public access to information about its activities and functioning.
- ❖ However, the subsection does not apply to the information pertaining to the allegations of corruption and human rights violations.
- ❖ The prominent intelligence and security organizations such as Intelligence Bureau, Directorate of Revenue Intelligence, Directorate of Enforcement, Narcotics Control Bureau, and others are excluded from RTI.
- ❖ CERT-In is the national nodal agency responsible for handling cyber security threats, such as hacking and phishing.
- ❖ It operates under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.

INTERNATIONAL

‘One Province, One Policy’

- ❖ China's National Financial Regulatory Administration introduced a tailored "One Province, One Policy" strategy for financial risk management.

- ❖ Instead of adopting a one-size-fits-all strategy, provinces are urged to formulate their own policies to address specific challenges and risks.
- ❖ It is exacerbated by the lingering effects of restrictive Covid Zero policies and a persistent property crisis.



Italy and BRI



- ❖ Italy is the only major Western nation and the only G7 nation to sign to join China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in 2019.
- ❖ But in 2023, it has confirmed its withdrawal from the project.



- ❖ The Belt and Road Initiative (One Belt One Road) is a global infrastructure development strategy adopted by the Chinese government in 2013
- ❖ It has faced criticism, with the US labelling it “debt-trap diplomacy.”

Vice-chairperson of the UNESCO executive board

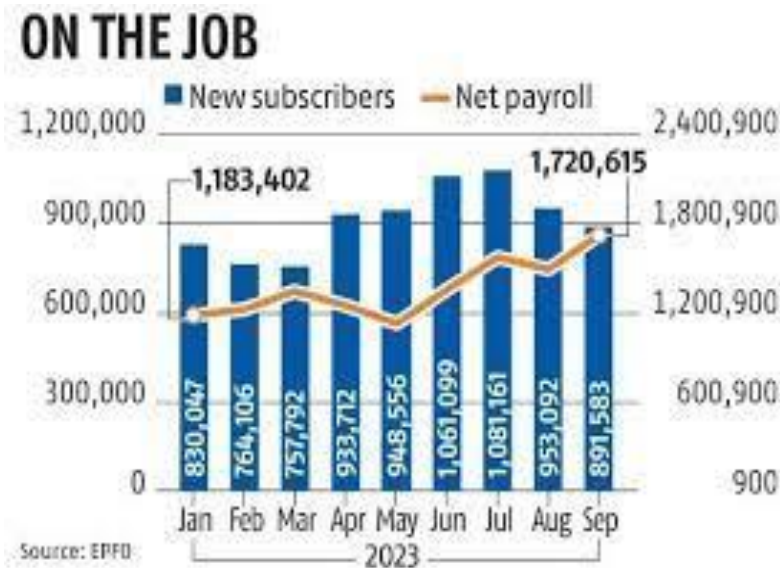


- ❖ Pakistan beats India at UNESCO vote for the Vice Chairperson post.
- ❖ The executive board is one of the three constitutional organs of UNESCO — a specialised agency of the United Nations (UN).
- ❖ The other two are the general conference and the secretariat.
- ❖ India was elected to the UNESCO executive board in 2021 for a four-year term till 2025.
- ❖ The bureau of the executive board consists of 12 members — the chairperson, six vice-chairpersons and the five chairpersons of the permanent commissions and committees.
- ❖ All members of UNESCO are grouped into six regional electoral groups, and each such group is represented by a vice-chairperson.
- ❖ This latest election won by Pakistan was for the vice-chairperson of Group IV, which includes Australia, Bangladesh, China, Cook Islands, India, Indonesia, Japan, the Philippines, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka and Vietnam.

- ❖ The six groupings are: Group I (Western Europe and North American States), Group II (Eastern European States), Group III (Latin America and Caribbean States), Group IV (Asian and Pacific States), Group V (a) (African States) and Group V (b) (Arab States).

ECONOMY

Fewer fresh formal jobs in 2023



- ❖ It was the recent data from the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO).
- ❖ It reveals a 10.1% decline in new subscribers during the first half of the fiscal year 2023-24, indicating a slowdown in formal job creation.
- ❖ One concerning trend is the 9.54% reduction in subscribers aged 18-28.
- ❖ This group is a demographic typically associated with first-time entrants into the job market.
- ❖ The data also reveals an 11.1% decrease in the number of women subscribers.

'Build for Bharat' Initiative

- ❖ The Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC), in collaboration with Google Cloud India, Antler in India, Paytm, Protean, and Startup India launched this.
- ❖ It aims to address challenges in digital commerce, fostering innovation and practical solutions across various sectors.
- ❖ It is expected to draw over 200,000 participants, including startups, enterprises, and educational institutions.

- ❖ The Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) was established on December 31, 2021, under the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry.



National Circular Economy Roadmap to Reduce Plastic Waste

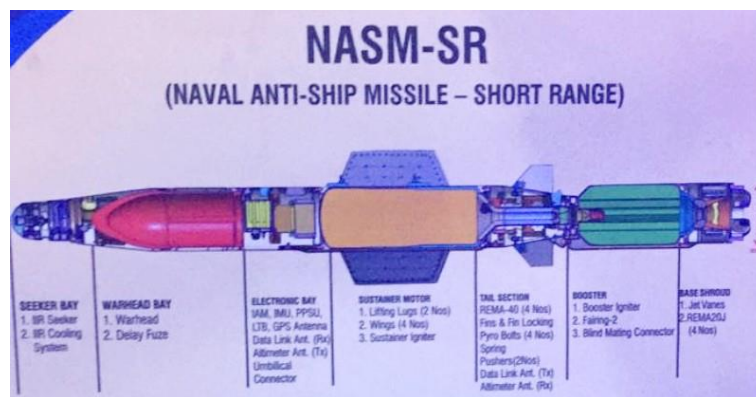


- ❖ Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh unveiled this report.
- ❖ It is a collaborative effort between leading research institutions in India and Australia.

- ❖ India and Australia are active participants in the negotiations for formulation of a Global Plastics Treaty to be finalized next year.
- ❖ It aims to establish research and industry partnerships to develop a roadmap for India's transition to a circular economy in the plastics sector.
- ❖ India has taken the lead in its quest for a circular economy towards achieving the Net Zero target by 2070.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Naval Anti-Ship Missile Short Range (NASM-SR)



- ❖ The Indian Navy, in association with DRDO, successfully undertook Guided Flight Trials of the first indigenously developed Naval Anti-Ship Missile Short Range (NASM-SR) from a Sea King 42B helicopter recently.
- ❖ It is the first indigenous air-launched anti-ship cruise missile developed for the Indian Navy.
- ❖ This missile will replace the Sea Eagle missiles, which are currently in use with the Navy.
- ❖ The NASM-SR can cruise at just 5 metres above sea level.
- ❖ This low-level capability of anti-ship missiles is known as sea skimming.

Revolutionizing Geospatial Mapping

- ❖ The Survey of India (SoI), the nation's premier National Survey and Mapping Organization, has joined forces with Genesys International, a leading Indian mapping company specializing in Geospatial solutions.
- ❖ Genesys becomes the first company to establish a public-private agreement with SoI for the creation of a three-dimensional (3D) digital twin-mapping program in India.

- ❖ It aligns with India's National Geospatial Policy 2022, emphasizing the promotion of Atmanirbhar Bharat.
- ❖ The collaboration will introduce the India Map Stack initiative, utilizing high-precision 3D data, Digital Terrain Models (DTM), Digital Surface Models (DSM), and orthoimagery.



Mosquitofish impact in India



- ❖ The various regions in Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, and Punjab have released mosquitofish into local water bodies to address mosquito problems.
- ❖ Mosquitofish is originally from the U.S.

- ❖ In 1928, Gambusia, particularly *Gambusia affinis* and *Gambusia holbrooki*, was first introduced in India during British rule
- ❖ The idea was to use these fish to feed on mosquito larvae and control mosquito populations.
- ❖ In Australia, introduced mosquitofish contributed to the local extinction of an endemic fish species.
- ❖ In India, reports suggest a decline in tadpoles following the introduction of mosquitofish.
- ❖ The World Health Organization stopped recommending *Gambusia* as a mosquito control agent in 1982.
- ❖ And in 2018, the National Biodiversity Authority of the Government of India designated *G. affinis* and *G. holbrooki* as invasive alien species.

INS Imphal



- ❖ Defence Minister Rajnath Singh unveiled the crest of Yard 12706 (Imphal).
- ❖ INS Imphal is the third amongst the four Project 15B stealth guided missile destroyers.
- ❖ It is featuring Kangla Palace on the left and 'Kangla-Sa' on the right.
- ❖ The Kangla Palace is an important historical and archaeological site of Manipur and was the traditional seat of the past kingdom.
- ❖ The 'Kangla-Sa' is a mythical being from Manipur history, and is symbolic as the guardian/protector of its people.
- ❖ 'Kangla-Sa' is also the state emblem of Manipur.

- ❖ It was designed by the Indian Navy's Warship Design Bureau and built by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL), Mumbai.
- ❖ This ship is a hallmark of indigenous shipbuilding and is amongst the most technologically advanced warships in the world.

Generic Drugs for Rare Disease Cure

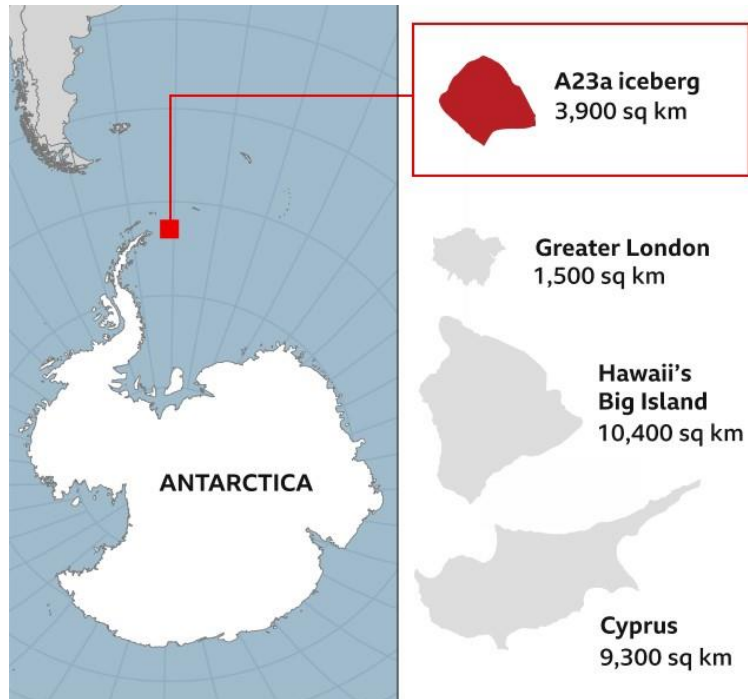


- ❖ The Union Health Ministry in India has introduced generic drugs to treat four rare diseases.
- ❖ These are Tyrosinemia-Type 1, Gaucher's Disease, Wilson's Disease, and Dravet-Lennox Gastaut Syndrome.
- ❖ It is a special initiative by manufacturing four types of homegrown 'Made in India' drugs for rare diseases for the first time.
- ❖ The Central Government has prioritised 13 rare diseases and sickle cell disease.
- ❖ A rare disease is a health condition of a particularly low prevalence that affects a small number of people.
- ❖ Currently, there are eight types of generic drugs and among them, four types of drugs are available in India and another four types of drugs will be available next year.
- ❖ Generic drugs are medications that are equivalent to brand-name drugs in terms of active ingredients, dosage, safety, strength, quality.
- ❖ These are typically sold at a lower cost.
- ❖ Once the patent protection for a brand-name drug expires, other pharmaceutical companies can produce and sell generic versions.

- ❖ The price of these unbranded generic versions of medicine for the four rare diseases will be 100 times lower than the current market value of the branded drugs.

ENVIRONMENT

A23a



- ❖ It is the World's Biggest Iceberg.
- ❖ It was arising from the Filchner-Ronne Ice Shelf in West Antarctica in 1986.
- ❖ It has embarked on a rare journey after being largely stationary for more than three decades.
- ❖ It has been a static fixture in the Weddell Sea
- ❖ The Weddell Sea is part of the Southern Ocean and contains the Weddell Gyre.

Virgin Atlantic Airlines

- ❖ It flies World's 1st 100% Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) Flight from London to New York, US.
- ❖ It is the first time a commercial airliner has flown long haul on 100% SAF.
- ❖ Derived from sources like waste cooking oil, it has the potential to reduce emissions by up to 70%.




- ❖ But the high cost and tight supply of materials needed to make SAF make large-scale production difficult.
- ❖ Currently, SAF accounts for less than 0.1% of global jet fuel usage.
- ❖ The Aviation industry accounts for an estimated 2-3% of global carbon emissions.




REPORTS AND INDICES

State Educational Achievement Survey (SEAS) 2023

"Important Updates Regarding State Educational Achievement Survey 2023"

 शिक्षा मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
EDUCATION

 विद्यया ऽ मृतमश्नुते
विद्यया ऽ मृतमश्नुते

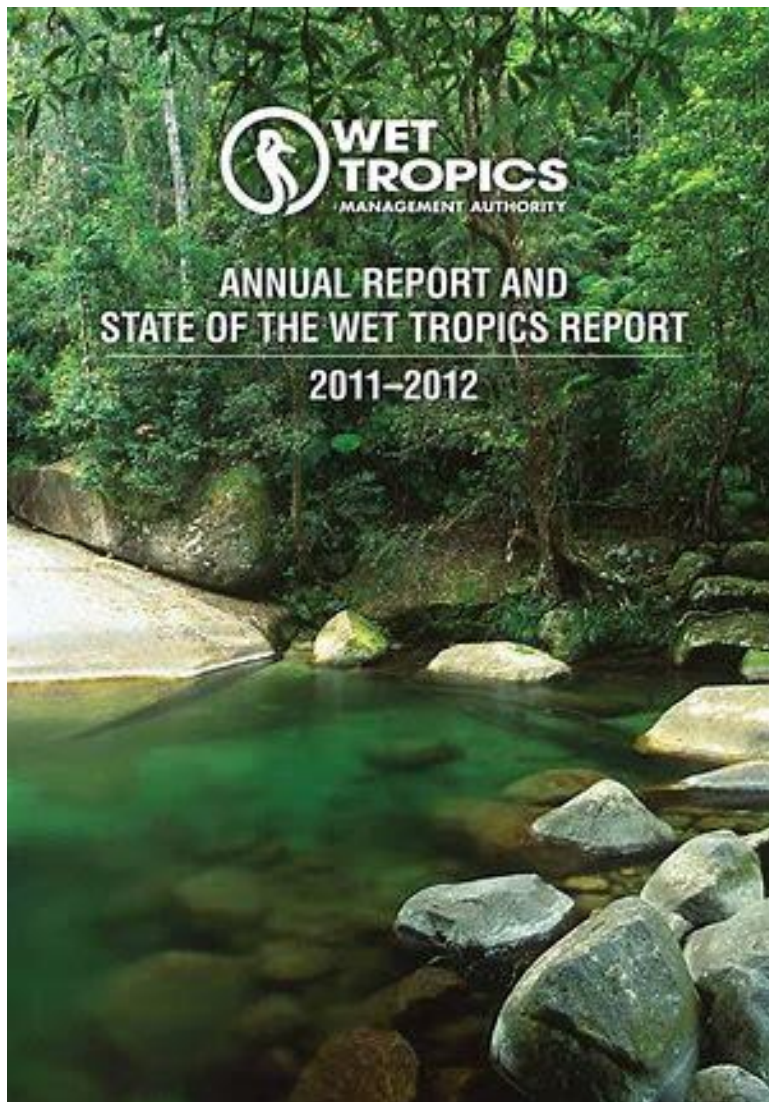
PARAKH
A constituent unit of NCERT funded by World Bank under STARS

PARAKH
(State Educational Achievement Survey)
Grades III, VI and IX

- ❖ It is the inaugural State Educational Achievement Survey.
- ❖ It was to assess the learning competencies of students at the end of foundational, preparatory, and middle educational stages.

- ❖ It will be with a special focus on Language and Mathematics.
- ❖ It was organized by the Performance Assessment, Review, and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development (PARAKH), the national assessment regulator.
- ❖ Notably, all states and Union Territories, with the exception of Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, and West Bengal, actively participated in the survey.

State of the Wet Tropics Report



- ❖ It was prepared and submitted by the management and conservation authority for the UNESCO-listed Queensland wet tropics to the state government.



- ❖ It highlighted the growing threats and declining health of species such as ringtail possum.
- ❖ Climate change has pushed 25 per cent more organisms in Australia's biodiversity-rich northern rainforests into the list of threatened species since 2020.

Dynamic Ground Water Resource Assessment Report 2023

Ground water Resources assessment 2004 to 2023

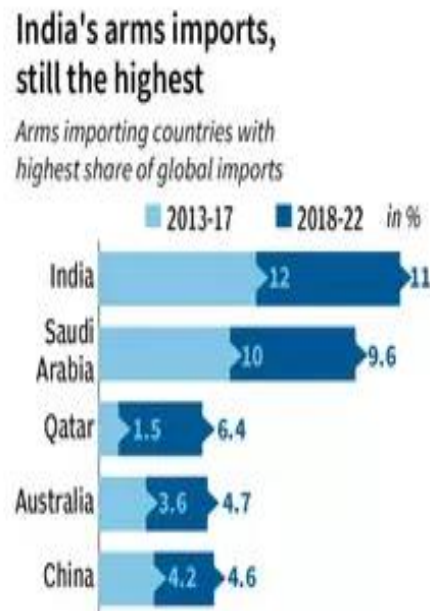
S.No.	Ground Water Resources Assessment	2004	2009	2011	2013	2017	2020	2022	2023
1	Annual Ground Water Recharge (bcm)	433	431	433	447	432	436	438	449
2	Annual Extractable Ground Water Resource (bcm)	399	396	398	411	393	398	398	407
3	Annual Ground Water Extraction for Irrigation, Domestic & Industrial uses (bcm)	231	243	245	253	249	245	239	241
4	Stage of Ground Water Extraction (%)	58 %	61 %	62 %	62 %	63 %	62 %	60%	59%

- ❖ The Union Ministry of Jal Shakti has released this report for the entire country.
- ❖ It was previously carried out in 1980, 1995, 2004, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2017, 2020 and 2022.
- ❖ It aims to determine the prevailing status of groundwater resources and the impact of ongoing groundwater management practices.
- ❖ As per the 2023 assessment report, the total annual ground water recharge for the entire country is 449.08 billion cubic meters (BCM).
- ❖ And the annual ground water extraction for the entire country is 241.34 BCM.
- ❖ It is marking an increase of 11.48 BCM compared to the previous year (2022).
- ❖ Further, out of the total 6553 assessment units in the country, 4793 units categorized as 'Safe' and 736 units have been categorized as 'Over-exploited'.

Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) report 2023

- ❖ Sales of arms and military services by the 100 largest armament companies in the world reached \$597 billion in 2022.
- ❖ It was 3.5 per cent less than 2021 in real terms.

- ❖ This is first decline since the SIPRI list of the top 100 arms companies was established in 2015.
- ❖ Indian defense PSUs Hindustan Aeronautics, Bharat Electronics, and Mazagon Docks are among the top 100 arms-producing companies.
- ❖ The US dominates the list, but its revenues fell by 7.9%.
- ❖ USA is accounted for 51% of the total armament's revenue of the top 100 companies.
- ❖ As per earlier SIPRI figures, India (\$81.4 billion) is the fourth largest military spender in the world, after the US (\$877 billion), China (\$292 billion) and Russia (\$86.4 billion).
- ❖ India also continues to remain the world's largest arms importer, accounting for 11% of the total global imports in 2018-2022.



2023 World Digital Competitiveness Ranking

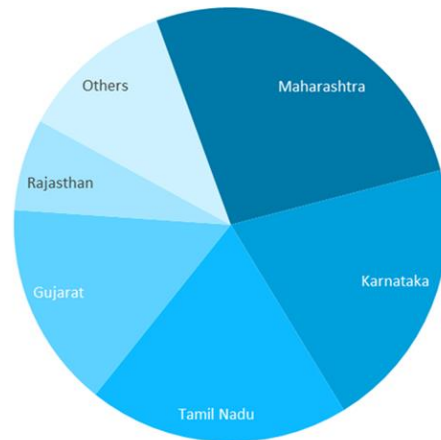
- ❖ The International Institute for Management Development (IMD) unveiled this.
- ❖ India ranks 49th in this index.
- ❖ The United States ranks first in the index.
- ❖ Netherlands is in second place and Singapore is in third place.
- ❖ This index is prepared on the basis of 3 indicators.
- ❖ These indicators are – knowledge, technology and future preparedness.
- ❖ Total of 64 countries have been included in this ranking.

- ❖ A parallel report from the World Bank identified five countries—China, Brazil, India, Indonesia, and Vietnam—as responsible for 75% of the world's total digital infrastructure investment in 2023.



Q3 2023 Mercom India Rooftop Solar Report

Top 5 States: Solar Open Access Installations in Q3 2023 (%)

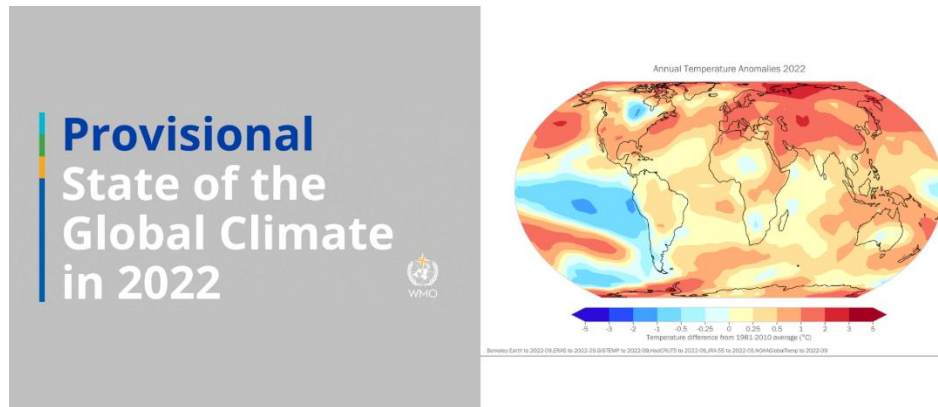


Source: Mercom India Research (Sep 2023)

- ❖ It was released by Mercom India Research institution.
- ❖ The rooftop solar installations in India registered a 34.7% year-on-year (YoY) jump.
- ❖ India added 907 MW of open access solar capacity in Q3 2023.
- ❖ It was in the third quarter (Q3- July-September) of calendar year (CY) 2023.
- ❖ Maharashtra (26.5%) added the most capacity.

- ❖ It is followed by Karnataka (20.3%) and Tamilnadu (19.5%).
- ❖ As of September 2023, India's total open access solar capacity reached 11 GW.
- ❖ Karnataka accounts for 33.3% of the cumulative capacity
- ❖ Maharashtra (14.1%) and Tamilnadu (10.3%) followed in the total installed open access solar capacity.

The WMO provisional State of the Global Climate report 2023



- ❖ It confirms that 2023 is set to be the warmest year on record.
- ❖ The global temperatures (until the end of the October of 2023) are soaring to approximately 1.4 degrees Celsius above preindustrial levels (1850-1900)
- ❖ It surpasses the previous record set in 2016.
- ❖ The current findings, however, do not imply that the world has crossed the long-term warming threshold of 1.5C.
- ❖ The scientists consider 1.5C as the upper limit for averting catastrophic climate impacts as per the 2015 Paris Agreement.

PERSONALITIES, AWARDS, AND EVENTS

4th edition of AIGIF in Malaysia

- ❖ The 4th edition of the ASEAN India Grassroots Innovation Forum (AIGIF) was hosted by Malaysia.
- ❖ The AIGIF serves as an annual platform fostering collaboration between India and ASEAN Member States in Science, Technology and Innovation (STI).
- ❖ Mr. Dipak Bharali, hailing from Sualkuchi, Kamrup, Assam, secured the 1st prize for his innovation, the Weft Insertion Device.

- ❖ Mr. Sunil Shinde, based in Jalna, Maharashtra, claimed the 3rd prize for his Silkworm Breeding Net Folding Machine.
- ❖ Ms. Aanchal Aggarwal from Delhi secured the 3rd prize in the student innovation category for her creation, Parkinson Lathi.



SPORTS

Khelo India Para Games 2023

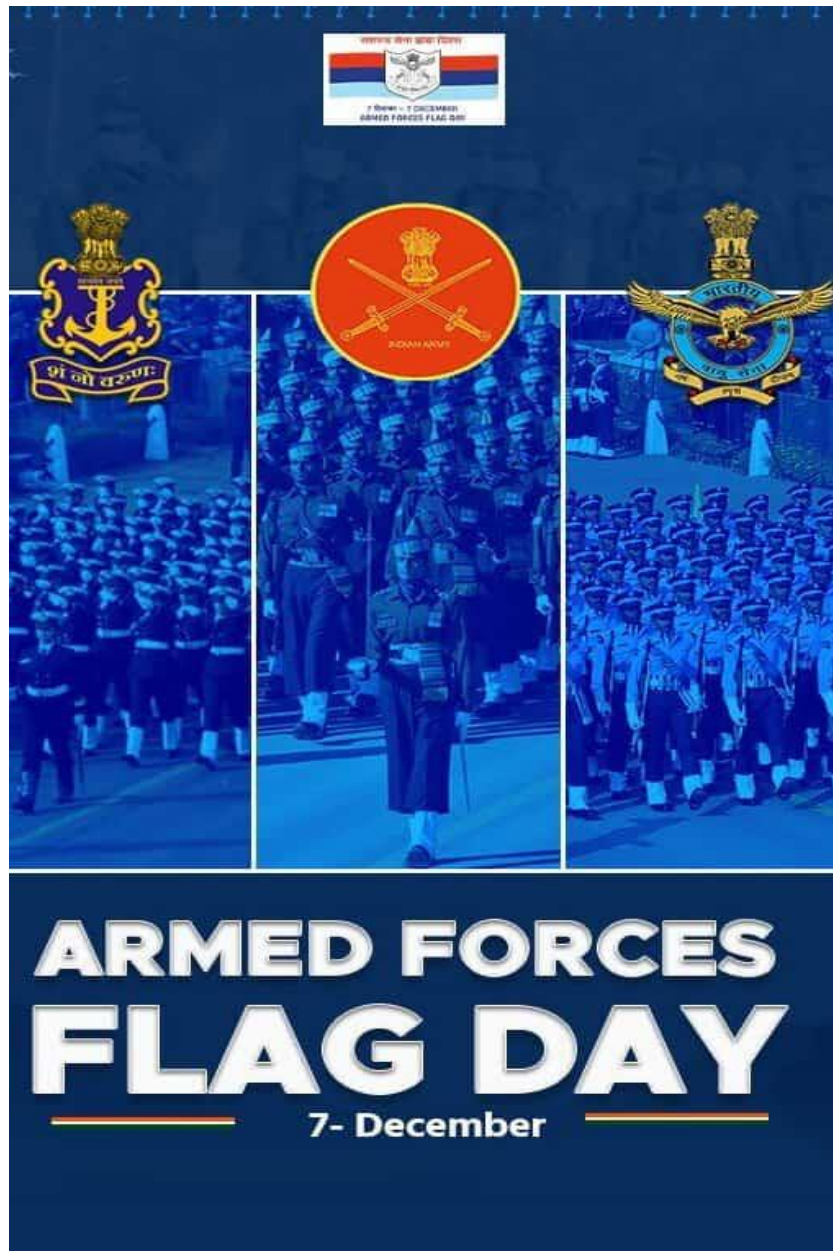


- ❖ Anurag Singh Thakur, Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports, unveiled the logo and mascot for the first-ever Khelo India Para Games 2023.
- ❖ The first-ever Khelo India Para Games is scheduled to be held in New Delhi.
- ❖ The official logo and mascot, 'Ujjwala,' a sparrow, was revealed during the ceremony.
- ❖ Since its inception in 2018, Khelo India has successfully hosted 11 games.

- ❖ This includes 5 Khelo India Youth Games, 3 Khelo India University Games and 3 Khelo India Winter Games.

IMPORTANT DAYS

Armed Forces Flag Day 2023 – December 07



- ❖ On August 28, 1949, the Ministry of Defence announced that December 7 will be celebrated as Armed Forces Flag Day.

- ❖ It is to honour the martyrs and the men in uniform who valiantly fought & continue to fight on our borders to safeguard the country's honour.
- ❖ It is celebrated to collect funds for the betterment of the forces.

International Civil Aviation Day 2023 – December 07



- ❖ It commemorates the distinctive role and establishment of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) in 1944.
- ❖ ICAO is the part of United Nations Body.
- ❖ On December 7, 1994, to mark the 50th anniversary of the Chicago Convention, the ICAO observed the International Civil Aviation Day for the first time.
- ❖ For this year, the theme is “Advancing Innovation for Global Aviation Development”.

