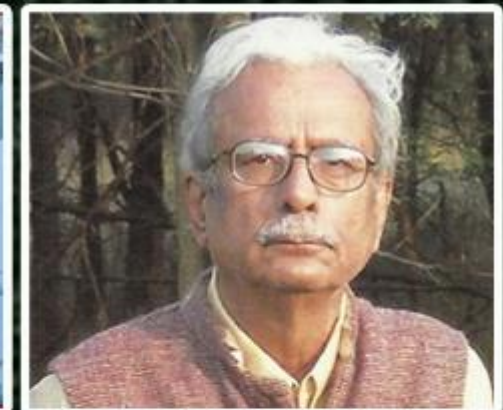
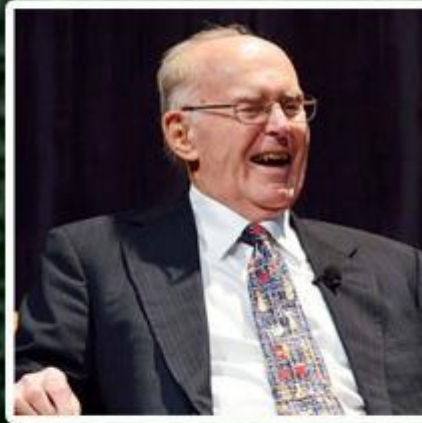


TNPSC THERVUPETTAGAM CURRENT AFFAIRS MARCH 2023

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TNPSC BITS

- ❖ Indian Navy Kilo class conventional submarine, INS Sindhukesari, docked for the first time in Jakarta, Indonesia.
- ❖ The Churchgate railway station in Mumbai will soon be renamed after the first governor of the Reserve Bank of India 'Chintamanrao Deshmukh'.
- ❖ The Chinese government has decided to block ChatGPT, a search engine, in the country, citing concerns about propaganda and censorship.
- ❖ Real Madrid lifted the FIFA Club World Cup for a record fifth time by win over Al Hilal of Saudi Arabia held in Morocco.
- ❖ Rohit Sharma became the first Indian captain and globally fourth to score centuries in all three formats with his first Test century against Australia.
- ❖ As part of India's G20 Presidency, the Youth 20 India Summit 2023 held at the Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Gujarat.
- ❖ Prime Minister inaugurated Shivamogga airport in Karnataka.
 - This is the 9th domestic airport in Karnataka.
- ❖ The 19th annual Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, India Zone-3 conference, was inaugurated by Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla at Gangtok, Sikkim.
- ❖ Australia has won the 8th edition of Women's T20 World Cup title for the sixth time held at South Africa after defeating South Africa.
- ❖ Nokia of Finland changed its brand identity logo for the first time in nearly 60 years.
- ❖ Madhya Pradesh won the prestigious 13th Hockey India Senior Women National Championship 2023 in Kakinada, Andhra Pradesh.
- ❖ The 31st edition of the New Delhi World Book Fair (NDWBF) began at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi.
- ❖ Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma lays foundation stone of North East India's first compressed biogas plant project in at Domora Pathar in Sonapur.
- ❖ The India Today Tourism Survey has chosen Jammu & Kashmir Tourism for best adventure tourism award for its efforts in promoting 'Gulmarg' as an adventure destination of international order.
- ❖ The Spanish government approved a law granting paid medical leave to women suffering from severe menstrual pain.
 - It is the first for any European country.
- ❖ 'National Protein Day' is celebrated every year on 27 February in the country from 2020.



- ❖ Two Australian universities, Wollongong and Deakin, will be setting up their campuses in GIFT city, Gujarat.
 - These will be the first foreign education institutions to set up campuses in India.
- ❖ Indian Air force's Eastern Command has commenced its annual Command level combat readiness exercise Ex - POORVI AKASH in the North East region of the country.
 - The Shillong-headquartered Eastern Air Command was carrying out the exercise.
- ❖ Racewalkers Priyanka Goswami and Akshdeep Singh won National Race-Walking Championships and qualified for the 2023 World Athletics Championships and 2024 Paris Olympics.
- ❖ Maharashtra government decided to rename Aurangabad and Osmanabad as Chhatrapati Sambhaji Nagar and Dharashiv respectively.
- ❖ India hosted the first meeting of the governing board of BIMSTEC Energy Centre (BEC) in Bengaluru.
- ❖ GSM Association (GSMA) has conferred Government Leadership Award 2023 to India for implementing best practices in telecom policy and regulation.
- ❖ The Supreme Court formed a committee Headed by Justice Abhay Manohar Sapre to examine the controversy following American short-seller Hindenburg Research's damning report against the Adani Group.
- ❖ The Union Health Ministry of India has been awarded the Porter Prize 2023 for successfully combating the COVID-19 crisis.
- ❖ NTPC has commissioned India's first Air cooled condenser installed Super Critical plant at North Karanpura in Jharkhand to demonstrate its Commitment towards water conservation through reduce, reuse and recycle.
- ❖ Gabrielle was a Severe Tropical Cyclone.
 - It devastated the North Island of New Zealand and affected parts of Vanuatu and Australia.
- ❖ The 4th edition of joint military exercise, "EX DHARMA GUARDIAN", between India and Japan held at Camp Imazu in Shiga province, Japan.
- ❖ Pusa Krishi Vigyan Mela held in New Delhi under the theme of 'nutrition, food grains and environmental protection through coarse grains'.
- ❖ President Droupadi Murmu launched the Jal Shakti Abhiyan - Catch the Rain 2023 campaign under the theme of 'source sustainability for drinking water'.
- ❖ Salhoutuonuo Kruse made history by becoming Nagaland's first woman minister.
 - She and Hekani Jakhalu were elected as the first women MLAs of the State.



- ❖ The biggest contract manufacturer in the world-Foxconn Group will set up electronics manufacturing and assembly unit near Bengaluru with nearly \$1 billion investment.
- ❖ As per UN report, Afghanistan become the most repressive in the world for women and girls, deprived of many of their basic rights in 2023.
- ❖ Saurashtra Cricket team defeated Bengal team to lift the Ranji Trophy title 2023 for the second time in their history.
 - During this season, Sikkim hosted Ranji Trophy matches for the first time
- ❖ Savlon appointed Sachin Tendulkar as its world's first 'Hand Ambassador' for its Swasth India Mission to inspire people for wash hands.
- ❖ The 23rd Commonwealth Law Conference held in Goa.
- ❖ The two-day G20 Foreign Ministers meeting under India's presidency held in New Delhi.
- ❖ Tata Group has bagged the title rights for the Women's Premier Cricket League.
 - Tata already holds the rights to the Indian Premier League (IPL).
- ❖ Saudi Arabia has been selected to host the 2027 Asian Cup football tournament during the 33rd AFC Congress recently held in Manama, Bahrain.
- ❖ The Election Commission of India (ECI) hosted the 3rd International Conference on the theme 'Inclusive Elections and Elections Integrity' in virtual format.
- ❖ Supreme Court Judge Justice V. Ramasubramanian released a book titled India's Struggle for Independence – Gandhian Era.
- ❖ The first edition of the Naval Commanders' Conference 2023 held in India's first indigenous aircraft carrier, INS Vikrant.
 - It is a platform for the officers to discuss important security issues at the military-strategic level and interact with senior government functionaries.
- ❖ Prime Minister inaugurated the permanent campus of Indian Institute of Technology, Dharwad, Karnataka.
 - The campus is the first Smart and green IIT campus in the country.
- ❖ Indian Bureau of Mines celebrated its 75th Foundation Day on March 1.
 - It was established on 1st of March 1948 based on the recommendations of the National Mineral Policy Conference.
- ❖ Delhi airport has been declared as the cleanest airport in the Asia Pacific region by Airports Council International.
- ❖ Weightlifter Mirabai Chanu wins 2022 BBC Indian Sportswoman of The Year for second year in a row.
- ❖ 'Mundaka Upanishad: The Gateway to Eternity', written by former MP Karan Singh was released recently.



- Another book in the same name was released by Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan in 1987.
- ❖ Spain became the first country in the world to give mothers and fathers the same parental leave.
 - In this, 16 weeks are non-transferable and fully paid.
- ❖ Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare released the book 'India's Vaccine Growth Story - From Cowpox to Vaccine Maitri' authored by Sajjan Singh Yadav at the World Book fair 2023.
- ❖ Karnataka won its first Santosh Trophy national football championship by beating Meghalaya in Saudi Arabia.
 - Previously it had won four times as the princely state of Mysore after a major gap of 54 years which was last in about 1968-69.
- ❖ Deepika Padukone become the third Indian presenter at the 95th Oscar Academy Awards of 2023.
 - The previous Indian presenters are Persis Khambatta (1980) and Priyanka Chopra (2016).
- ❖ The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has extradited 33 fugitives involved in various criminal activities under its 'Operation Trishul' in the past one year.
- ❖ Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA) has been granted an 'Infrastructure Finance Company' (IFC) status by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
- ❖ Asia's first woman loco pilot - Surekha Yadav, become the first female to operate the semi-high speed Vande Bharat Express train.
- ❖ A Bench led by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud refers petitions to legally recognise same-sex marriages to a Constitution Bench of five judges of the Supreme Court.
- ❖ BSE and UN Women India launched a new programme, 'FinEMPOWER', at the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE).
 - It is a year-long joint capacity-building programme to empower women towards financial security.
- ❖ Senior Nepali Congress leader Ram Chandra Paudel was sworn in as Nepal's third President.
- ❖ An auditorium at the Government Ariyalur Medical College has named after S Anitha, a medical aspirant.
 - Her death triggered a protest in 2017.
- ❖ India and the World Bank have signed a loan agreement to construct 781 kilometres of green National Highway Corridors across four states in India.
 - These states are Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh.



- ❖ The BVK Biryani, Chennai-based food startup has launched India's first 'manless takeaway' in Kolathur.
- ❖ 3rd edition of the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (NPDRR) held in New Delhi.
- ❖ The Mumbai-headquartered Central Railway has achieved a significant milestone with 100 per cent electrification of the entire (3,825 km) broad gauge network.
- ❖ The Chief Election Commissioner and other members of ECI inaugurated Vote Fest 2023 to create awareness on the election process in Bengaluru.
- ❖ The B20 meeting under India's G20 Presidency took place in Sikkim's capital Gangtok.
- ❖ Gianni Infantino has been re-elected as president of FIFA for four more years.
- ❖ The second Meeting of the Global Partnership for Financial Inclusion (GPII) under G20 India Presidency took place in Hyderabad.
- ❖ The 146th Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Assembly held in Bahrain, Saudi Arabia.
 - The theme of the event is "Promoting peaceful coexistence and inclusive societies: Fighting intolerance."
- ❖ RBI Governor Shakti kanta Das, was awarded the 'Governor of the Year' award for 2023 by the international publication Central Banking.
 - Former governor Raghuram Rajan was the first to be conferred the title back in 2015 from the country.
- ❖ Indian Railways has set a target of becoming a 'net-zero carbon emitter' by 2030.
- ❖ Krithi Krithivasan has been appointed as the CEO designate to Tata Consultancy Services.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin inaugurated the new 'Kalaigarnar Karunanidhi stand' in at Chidambaram stadium, Chennai.
- ❖ National Institute of Ocean Technology is going to set up green, self-powered desalination plant in Lakshadweep
 - This will provide potable water in six islands of Lakshadweep using Low Temperature Thermal Desalination (LTTD) technology.
- ❖ Bengaluru was awarded 'Partnership for Healthy Cities Award' for its efforts to reduce smoking in public and thereby significantly reduce the burden of non-communicable diseases.
- ❖ 'Kashi'(Varanasi) has been declared the first tourism and cultural capital of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO).
- ❖ Team Rest of India secured their 30th Irani Cricket Cup title by defeating Madhya Pradesh Team.
- ❖ Uttarakhand has become the first state in the country to start 'Resham Keet Bima' insurance scheme for protecting its sericulturists.



- ❖ Asia's largest tulip garden, the Indira Gandhi Memorial Tulip Garden, opened in Srinagar.
 - The garden has over 1.5 million (15 lakh) tulips of various colours and hues.
- ❖ Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Global Millets (Shree Anna) Conference in New Delhi.
- ❖ The United States passed a resolution to recognise the McMahon Line as the international boundary between China and Arunachal Pradesh.
- ❖ The World Day of Theatre for Children and Young People occurs annually on March 20 throughout the globe.
- ❖ Since 2010, The UN French Language Day is observed annually on 20 March.
 - This day marks the creation of the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu Agriculture-Farmers Welfare Minister M.R.K. Pannerselvam said that the Government is to implement Tamil Nadu Millet Mission for a period of five years.
 - The millet festivals would be celebrated to create awareness among consumers and increase millet cultivation.
- ❖ Bombay Jayashree was chosen for Sangita Kalanidhi Award 2023 by Music Academy.
- ❖ The Radha Puram Assembly constituency in Tirunelveli district has become the first Assembly segment in Tamil Nadu to get at least one smart classroom in all 295 government and government-aided schools.
- ❖ Indian team's star hockey player Rani Rampal has become the first woman in the sport to have a stadium named after her, in Rae Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh.
- ❖ President Xi Jinping was endorsed as a president for third five-year term by the Chinese parliament.
- ❖ The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) opened the ITU Area Office and Innovation Centre in New Delhi.
- ❖ India's 43 years old Rohan Bopanna creates history by becoming oldest player to win ATP Masters 1000.
- ❖ International Color Day is observed every year on March 21.
- ❖ Chief Ministers of Tamil Nadu and Kerala will jointly inaugurate the State-level celebrations in connection with the centenary year of the Vaikom Satyagraha at Vaikom on April 1.
- ❖ Kerala's women empowerment and poverty alleviation programme Kudumba Shree celebrates its silver jubilee in 2023.
- ❖ Dubai's Emaar Group will build a \$60 million shopping and office complex called 'Mall of Srinagar' in Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir.



- This marks the first foreign direct investment (FDI) in the Union Territory.
- ❖ The Income Tax Department of India has launched a new mobile app called ' AIS for Taxpayers' to facilitate taxpayers.
 - It uses to view their information as available in the Annual Information Statement.
- ❖ The International Day for the Right to the Truth Concerning Gross Human Rights Violations and for the Dignity of Victims is observed on 24th March every year.
- ❖ Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled the Bharat 6G Vision Document and launched the 6G research and development test bed.
- ❖ Hindustan Zinc company has bagged the GreenCo Silver rating by CII (Confederation of Indian Industry) for its sustainable mining operations.
- ❖ Six persons from India including Shiv Sena leader Aaditya Thackeray and BJP Yuva Morcha vice-president Madhukeshwar Desai were named among the Young Global Leaders for 2023 by the World Economic Forum.
- ❖ The World Trade Center Association (WTCA) and the Merlin Group have partnered to develop a World Trade Center (WTC) in the Nabadiganta Industrial Township Authority (NDITA) area, Salt Lake, Kolkata.
 - This is the first under-construction World Trade Center in eastern India.
- ❖ The Border Roads Organisation opened the strategically important Leh-Manali highway (NH 3) in a record time of 138 days.
 - Last year, it took 144 days for the BRO to open the highway for traffic movement.
- ❖ The UN 2023 Water Conference took place at UN Headquarters in New York.
 - It is co-hosted by the Government of Tajikistan and the Kingdom of the Netherlands.
- ❖ Mumbai Indians lifted inaugural Women's Premier League cricket trophy by defeating Delhi Capitals at Mumbai.
- ❖ Former Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff has been "unanimously elected" as the head of New Development Bank.
- ❖ ICICI Lombard General Insurance has introduced an industry-first feature for health insurance policyholders called 'Anywhere Cashless'.
 - It allows customers to avail cashless facilities even at non-empanelled hospitals.
- ❖ Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida has formally invited Prime Minister Narendra Modi to the G7 Summit.
- ❖ Jharkhand govt launched 'Jharniyojan' portal aimed to act as a digital platform to bridge the gap between recruiting companies and employment seekers of the state.

TAMIL NADU

New GI Tag

- ❖ The Vellore Spiny Brinjal and Ramanathapuram Mundu Chillies have been awarded the Geographical Indications (GI) Tag.
- ❖ The Vellore Spiny Brinjal is known as Elavambadi Mullu Kathirikai in Tamil.
- ❖ It has 2 per cent Protein and 10.5mg per 100g.
- ❖ A single spiny brinjal weighs about 40 grams on average and has a shelf life of three days at room temperature and about a week in a refrigerator.
- ❖ Mundu Chillies is a round-shaped chilli that is used as a food colouring and is widely utilized in South Indian cuisine.



Pact with UNEP

- ❖ The Tamil Nadu government signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).
- ❖ It aims to develop an urban cooling programme in the State.
- ❖ The programme is being undertaken under the framework of the 'Cool Coalition' and the India-Denmark Green Strategic Partnership.
- ❖ The MoU will facilitate capacity-building for a range of stakeholders on sustainable cooling.
- ❖ It enhances South-South cooperation through training to other States in India and other countries on lessons from the programme

Dry Fish outlet in railway Station

- ❖ India's first Dry Fish (Karuvadu) outlet opened at Madurai railway station.
- ❖ Shungudi saree is currently sold at Madurai railway station.



- ❖ To promote popular local products, the railway administration is setting up outlets under the “One Station, One Item” scheme at the respective district railway stations.
- ❖ Around 5,000 railway stations across the country have allowed such sales.
- ❖ Below that, at the railway stations in the following other six railway lines under the Southern Railway, popular local products are available for sale.
 - Chinlapatti handloom sarees at Dindigul railway station,
 - Macaroon at Tuticorin and Vanchi Maniachi,
 - Seaweed products at Rameswaram,
 - Coconut candy at Kovilpatti,
 - karachevu at Virudhunagar and Chattru,
 - Bamboo products at Thenkasi and Sengottai.

Keezhadi museum

- ❖ The Keezhadi museum, constructed in Chetti nadu architectural style was inaugurated by Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin at the excavation site, Sivagangai District.
- ❖ The museum contains artefacts unearthed from the Keezhadi excavation sites since 2018.
- ❖ Keezhadi had the ancient civilisation that thrived on the banks of the Vaigai.
- ❖ Vaigai riverbed was urbanised during the early 6th century BCE, around the same time that the Ganges civilisation was urbanised.
- ❖ Artefacts classified into categories of Keezhadi and Madurai, Agrarian and Water Management, Ceramic Industry, Weaving and Iron Industry, Sea Trade and Lifestyle.
- ❖ The excavations at Keeladi pushed the Sangam Age to 6th Century BCE from the earlier assessment of between 3rd Century BCE and 3rd Century CE.
- ❖ More than 1000 symbols and 60 pot shells with lettering in Thamizhi, an ancient Tamil script, have been found.
- ❖ The ASI carried out explorations at 293 sites along the Vaigai Valley in Theni, Dindigul, Madurai, Sivagangai and Ramanathapuram districts in 2013-14.
- ❖ The excavation was carried out at Pallichanthai Thidal of Keeladi.
- ❖ The State Department of Archaeology took over from the fourth season in 2018.
- ❖ From the sixth season, Konthagai, Agaram and Manalur were added as clusters of Keeladi.

- ❖ While Konthagai is largely a burial site, Agaram and Manalur show the existence of an active human habitation.



St. Anthony's feast Katchchatheevu

- ❖ The Annual St. Anthony's feast will be held at the Katchchatheevu island in Sri Lanka.
- ❖ Indian pilgrims have reached the island to participate in the feast.
- ❖ Over 2400 pilgrims have reached the island and an equal number will join from the Sri Lankan side.
- ❖ Katchchatheevu is the 163-acre uninhabited island near Jaffna.
- ❖ The shrine of St. Anthony is the only structure on the island.
- ❖ It was built by a prosperous Indian Catholic TAMILIAN fisherman in the early 20th century.



Best Airport in Asia Pacific region

- ❖ The Tiruchi International Airport has been rated the best airport in the Asia Pacific region.
- ❖ This is topped in the category of under two million passengers for 2022.
- ❖ This is the first time that the Tiruchi Airport had received this recognition.
- ❖ The Tiruchi Airport received this global recognition following an Airport Service Quality (ASQ) survey.
- ❖ Airports Council International (ACI), a global non-profit organisation of airport operators conducted this survey.



200 years of Thol Seelai Porattam

- ❖ Tamil Nadu and Kerala Chief Ministers came together in Kanyakumari's Nagercoil on March 6, to commemorate 200 years of the Thol Seelai Porattam or Maaru Marakkal Samaram.
- ❖ It is a decades-old struggle by women of the oppressed castes in erstwhile Travancore to cover their upper bodies.
- ❖ Travancore was comprised parts of present-day south Kerala and south Tamil Nadu.
- ❖ Wearing clothes to cover chests was at the time – early 19th century – deemed a right only enjoyed by women of the dominant castes.

- ❖ In 1812, the Maharani of Travancore gave order that allowed the depressed class women who converted to Christianity to wear a blouse.
- ❖ Social reformer Ayya Vaikunda Swami began the struggle, bringing together women and holding meetings with them.
- ❖ The first stage of 'Upper Cloth Revolt' held between 1822-1823.
- ❖ The second stage of the revolt happened between 1827-1829.
- ❖ It was during the third stage of revolt held between 1958-1859 that the women, irrespective of class, caste and religion, were allowed to wear the upper cloth.

Women's Day awards 2023

- ❖ Tamil Nadu chief minister M K Stalin presented the Avvaiyar Award 2023 to R Kamalam Chinnasami.
- ❖ She is a 90-year-old writer and social worker based in Ooty.
- ❖ She has penned many poems and authored around 43 books.
- ❖ Girl Child Empowerment Award 2022-23 was given to Class XI student Ilanthirai.
- ❖ She invented a new equipment to prevent deaths during repairing lifts in multi-storey buildings.
- ❖ He also gave the first prize for improving child sex ratio for the year 2023 to Tiruvallur Collector Alby John Varghese.
- ❖ The Collectors of Nagapattinam and Namakkal were given second and third prizes respectively.

Punnagai scheme





- ❖ The Minister of School Education launched a new scheme for government school students called 'Punnagai'.
- ❖ This scheme has been started for the dental care of students.
- ❖ In the first phase, the students of class VI-VIII will be subjected to dental examination.
- ❖ This project has been started to prevent oral diseases among students.
- ❖ This program will benefit school children by screening them and creating awareness about oral diseases, tooth decay and gum problems.


M sand Policy

- ❖ Tamil Nadu government has introduced a new policy to regulate quarries of manufactured sand (popularly known as M-sand) in the state.
- ❖ It aims to improve the quality of M-sand, a type of crushed sand that is used as a construction aggregate, and regulate the quarries.
- ❖ The government will establish a single-window portal and a centralised system to monitor the activities of M-sand and crushed sand units.
- ❖ As per the new policy, the pollution control board, public works department, mines, and other departments will be merged to ensure that quarry owners receive speedy clearance for their licences.
- ❖ At present, there are 378 licensed crushed stone sand manufacturing units in the state.
- ❖ Under the new policy, all crusher units must be registered with the Directorate of Industrial Safety and Health under the Factories Act of 1948.
- ❖ M-sand or crushed sand is produced by crushing rock quarry stones into sand-sized particles.
- ❖ The policy also states that no quarry lease will be granted exclusively for manufacturing m-sand.
- ❖ Overall, the new policy is expected to bring more regulation and transparency to the M-sand industry in Tamil Nadu.
- ❖ The M-sand units are classified into two groups
 - Integrated units, which are owned and operated by persons who hold operational stone quarry leases.
 - Standalone units, which are operated by persons who do not hold valid stone quarry leases.

Water release from Mettur dam

- ❖ In 2022, the highest-ever quantum of excess water (440.76 tmcft) being released from the Mettur dam.
- ❖ This is the highest quantity since it was built in 1934.
- ❖ The amount of surplus water let out was over 4.7 times the dam's capacity.
- ❖ The total surplus quantum in the last 88 years was about 3,614 thousand million cubic feet (tmcft).

Year	Surplus water released (in tmc ft)
2022	440.76
1961	321.062
1959	186.148
1956	180.02
1943	179.082
1942	148.839
1964	146.623
2005	142.513
2018	119.084



In 2022, surplus water released was over 4.7 times the Mettur dam's capacity.

All-women production line

- ❖ Ashok Leyland has unveiled a new production line in Hosur completely operated by women employees.
- ❖ It aims to promote women empowerment and encourage them take up roles in manufacturing industry.
- ❖ This firm set up this new line with 80 women employees.



Thiruppugazh Panel final report

- ❖ Thiruppugazh Committee for the Chennai Flood Disaster Mitigation and Management submitted its final report to Chief Minister in Tamilnadu.
- ❖ It had recommended reforms to the regulatory framework and improved gauging of climate change induced flooding and techno-legal regime in mitigating flood management in Chennai.
- ❖ The CM had requested the committee to give area-specific stormwater drainage plans.
- ❖ The committee has also proposed area-specific detailed long-term flood management plans for 600 and odd vulnerable areas in the city.

First-ever synchronized survey

- ❖ As many as 246 vultures were spotted in the first ever synchronised survey conducted along the borders of Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnataka.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu continues to remain a favourite nesting and roosting ground for vultures among all three states.
- ❖ Mudumalai Tiger Reserve (MTR) alone accounts for 98 of the bird species.
- ❖ The 98 includes the rare sighting of two Egyptian vultures and one Himalayan vulture.
- ❖ The Bandipur and Nagarhole tiger reserves in Karnataka, recorded a combined population of 94 vultures.
- ❖ Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary in Kerala is home to 52 vultures.



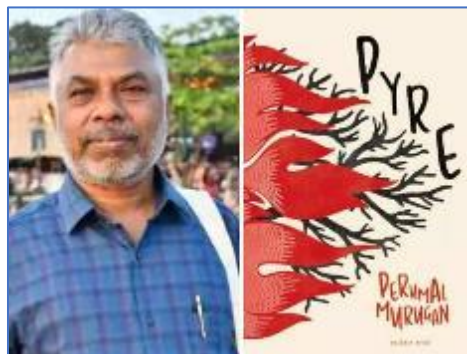
Tamil Nadu organic farm policy

- ❖ The Tamil Nadu Organic Farming Policy 2023 was released by Chief Minister.

- ❖ This Policy is aimed at conserving and protecting soil health, agroecology, and biodiversity besides providing safe, healthier and environment-friendly food.
- ❖ The policy will be reviewed after a period of five years.
- ❖ State-level and district-level committees will be formed to monitor the progress.
- ❖ A Single window system will be implemented to simplify the certification procedure.
- ❖ The organic farming policy will help to ensure, upscale, and support chemical-free organic agriculture in TN.
- ❖ India occupies fifth place with a total area of 2.66 million hectares.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu holds 14th rank in organic farming across the country with 31,629 hectares of organic agriculture land.
- ❖ Madhya Pradesh has the largest area under organic certification followed by Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Karnataka.
- ❖ In 2020-21, Tamil Nadu shipped 4,223 metric tonnes of organic products worth Rs 108 crore.

Pyre novel

- ❖ Tamil writer Perumal Murugan's novel 'Pookkuzhi' was translated as 'Pyre' in English by Anirudh Vasudevan.
- ❖ It has made it to the International Booker Prize 2023 longlist.
- ❖ Thus, it was becoming the first Tamil novel to be nominated for the Bookers.
- ❖ Set in rural Tamil Nadu in the 1980s, the book explores caste-based violence through the elopement of a young inter-caste couple.
- ❖ In total, 13 novels have made it to the longlist this year.
- ❖ In 2022, Geetanjali Shree became the first Hindi novelist to win an International Booker for 'Ret Samadhi'.
- ❖ This was translated into English as 'Tomb of Sand' by Daisy Rockwell.





Highlights of Tamil Nadu budget

- ❖ Tamil Nadu Finance Minister Palanivel Thiaga Rajan presented the Budget for the financial year 2023-24 March 20, 2023.
- ❖ The fiscal deficit of the state would decline to 3.80% from 4.33% in the 2021-22 budget estimate.
- ❖ The overall revenue deficit decreased to Rs. 55,000 crores against the 2021 budget estimate of Rs. 58,000 crores.
- ❖ State's revenue deficit was reduced by Rs 30,000 crore from Rs 62,000 crore.
- ❖ State's own tax revenue is expected to increase to more than Rs 1.5 lakh crore in FY24.
- ❖ It was over Rs 1.4 lakh crore in the current fiscal.
- ❖ TN to launch Rs 1,000 monthly financial aid for women home makers from September 15.
- ❖ The assistance is officially known as 'Magalir Urimai Thogai' in Tamil, meaning 'Women's Right to Assistance'.
- ❖ For this the allocation was 7000 crores for this year.
- ❖ Free breakfast scheme is to be extended to all 30,122 government primary schools from 2023-24.
- ❖ The Literacy and numeracy programme is to be extended up to Class V.
- ❖ North Chennai development initiative is to be launched at Rs 1000 crore.
- ❖ International birds centre would be established at Marakkanam.
- ❖ Monthly financial assistance for severely differently abled persons increased from Rs1,500 to Rs.2000.
- ❖ Rs.3,993 crore will be allotted to waive gold and education loans.
- ❖ TN targets bank loans to the tune of Rs 30,000 crore for women self-help groups
- ❖ The Tamil Nadu government will set up a new Textile Park in the Western Region at Salem.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu government will also set up a world class skill centre named "Tamil Nadu World Innovation and Skill Training Hub" (TN-WISH) at Ambattur.
- ❖ A grand Chola Museum will be set up in Thanjavur.
- ❖ Rs 77,000 crore is allocated for developing a mega power project to generate 14,500MW power by 2030.
- ❖ The state-of-the-art global sports city will be set up in Chennai.



- ❖ All schools functioning under various departments including Adi-Dravida and Tribal Welfare, Backward Classes, Most Backward Classes and Denotified Communities and Forest will unify under the school education department.
- ❖ Civil service aspirants will be provided ₹7,500 per month for 10 months to prepare for the preliminary examination.
- ❖ Those students who clear the preliminary examination will be provided a lumpsum amount of ₹25,000.
- ❖ To promote economic development of SC/ST entrepreneurs, a new scheme called 'Annal Ambedkar Business Champions Scheme' will be launched.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu government is to hold international Tamil computing conference to popularize the use of Tamil in computers.
- ❖ To promote Tamil Nadu as a global hub for IT/ITeS, the State Government will establish 'Tamil Nadu Tech City' (TNTech city) at Chennai, Coimbatore and Hosur.
- ❖ The government would extend the free bus pass scheme to 591 more elderly Tamil scholars.
- ❖ The first ever 'Project Nilgiri Tahr' shall be initiated in TN at a cost of Rs 10 Crores to protect & conserve Nilgiri Tahr.
- ❖ School education department is allocated Rs 40,229 crore in budget
- ❖ Rs 9000 crore is estimated for Coimbatore Metro between Avinashi Road and Sathyamangalam Road.
- ❖ Rs 8500 crore is allocated for Madurai Metro between Thirumangalam and Othakadai.
- ❖ Ezhilmigu Coimbatore and Ma Madurai programme is for planned development of the two cities.
- ❖ Target to double the installed power generation capacity will be adding 33000 MW by 2030 and increase the share of green energy to 50 per cent will be by 2030.
- ❖ New SIPCOT industrial parks are to come up in Virudhunagar, Vellore, Kallakurichi and Coimbatore
- ❖ A new wildlife sanctuary called the 'Thanthai Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary' is to come up at Erode.
- ❖ New sanctuary declared will be the 18th in Tamil Nadu.
- ❖ A memorial would be established in Chennai to honour the legacy of Tamil martyrs Thiruvargal Thalamuthu and Natarajan, who sacrificed their lives to protect Tamils in the struggle against Hindi imposition

- ❖ 1,000-bed Kalaignar Memorial Multi-Super Speciality Hospital in the premises of the King Institute of Preventive Medicine and Research Centre, Guindy, will be inaugurated this year.
- ❖ Neo-tidel parks to be expanded in 3 more locations including Chengalpattu, Tirunelveli and Erode.
- ❖ Kalaignar memorial library in Madurai will be inaugurated in June 2023
- ❖ The State government has decided to reduce the registration fee to 2 per cent.
- ❖ A state-of-the-art Skill Development Centre will be established at SIPCOT Industrial Park in Krishnagiri district.
- ❖ To establish better connectivity and provide various digital services at an affordable cost, the Government will set up a “Unified Digital Infrastructure”, that will create high speed optical fibre network from the State Headquarters to all districts.
- ❖ To mitigate the effects of climate vagaries on the coastal ecosystem, the Tamil Nadu government has announced the Tamil Nadu Coastal Restoration Mission.
- ❖ The mission, to be implemented with World Bank assistance at an estimated cost of ₹2,000 crore over the next five years, is aimed at preventing sea erosion, reducing marine pollution and conserving marine biodiversity.
- ❖ Chennai, Avadi, Tambaram, Coimbatore, Madurai, Tiruchirappalli and Salem cities will get free Wi-Fi services at important places.



RuPay Card For Pudhumai Penn Scheme

- ❖ Bank of Baroda has partnered with the Government of Tamil Nadu to offer co-branded RuPay Platinum Debit Card.
- ❖ The Bank has launched the debit card that would be offered to the beneficiaries of the state government’s ‘Pudhumai Penn’ scheme.

- ❖ The Pudhumai Penn scheme by the government aims to enhance the enrolment ratio of the girls from government schools to higher educational institutions.
- ❖ Through this scheme, financial assistance of Rs 1,000 per month would be provided to ever girl till the completion of their degree course.



'Navaratna' announcements



பெண் காவலர்களுக்காக நவரத்தின அறிவிப்புகள்

-  காவலர்களின் வருகை காலம் 7 மணிக்கு பதிலாக 8 மணிக்கு தொடங்கும்
-  பெருநகரங்களில் பெண் காவலர்களுக்கு தங்கும் வசதிதான்
-  காவல் நிலையங்களில் பெண் காவலர்களுக்கு தனி ஓய்வறை
-  பெண் காவலர்களுக்கென காவல் சூழ்நிலைகள் காய்சல்
-  திரண்டுகளை அங்கீகரிக்க உடனடியாக காவல் பணி விருதும் கேள்வியும், ஆண்டுதோறும் வழங்கப்படும்
-  குடும்பக் குழுவிற்கு ஏற்ப விதிப்பு, பணிவிட மாற்றம் - உரிய உத்தரவு வழங்கப்படும்
-  துயரங்களை கடும் போட்டி ஆண்டுதோறும் தனியாக நடத்தப்படும்
-  காவல்துறையில் பெண்கள் எனும் தேசிய மாதாதி தழித்தாட்டில் ஆண்டுதோறும் தந்தப்படும்
-  புதிய அலுவலகத்தில் "பணி வழிகாட்டும் ஆலோசனைக் குழு" ஒன்று அமைக்கப்படும்




பெண் காவலர்கள் பெண்விழாவில் தலைமை
அகழக ஸ்பாலின் அறிவிப்பு

- ❖ Tamil Nadu celebrates 50 years of women in police force.
- ❖ The women police force had a humble beginning with 22 cadets in 1973.
- ❖ Chief minister released a stamp to mark the occasion and announced Nava Ratna schemes.

Components:

- ❖ Roll-call for women changed to 8 am from 7 am
- ❖ Lodging facility for women cops
- ❖ Separate retiring rooms for women cops
- ❖ Child care centre for women cops will be gentrified
- ❖ Felicitation with Kalaignar police cup
- ❖ Transfers and holidays to accommodate a women cop's familial commitments
- ❖ An all-women shooting contest
- ❖ An annual national summit for women cops
- ❖ Work consultation committee would be set up

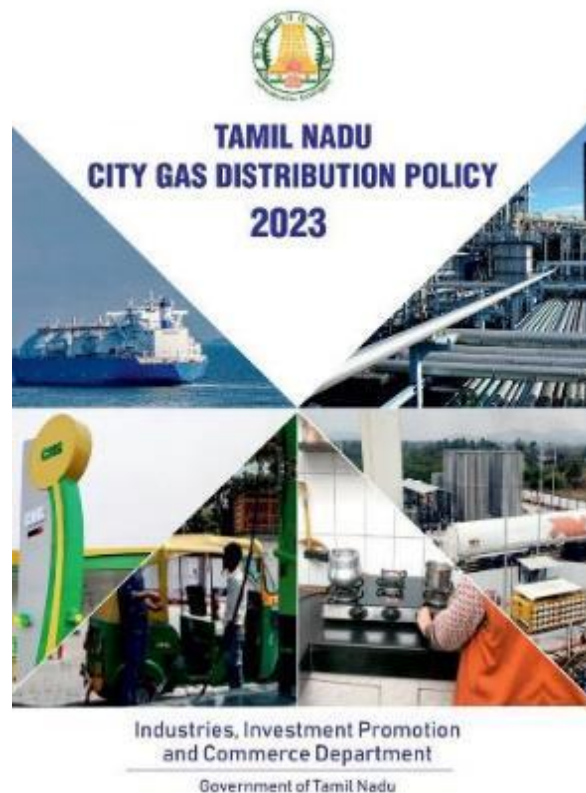
TN Ethanol blending policy

- ❖ The Tamil Nadu Ethanol Blending Policy (EBP) 2023 was released by the Industries Department.
- ❖ Under the EBP programme, the State will encourage sugar industries to set up molasses-based ethanol plants and improve capacity utilisation.
- ❖ The policy also will present an opportunity for reviving the sugar industry in the State by improving the capacity utilisation of existing plants.
- ❖ Oil marketing companies (OMCs) presently source ethanol from other States, including Maharashtra and Karnataka.
- ❖ In the present OMCs, the State currently has installed plant capacity of 664 kilolitres per day (KLPD).
- ❖ They are specifically used to produce fuel grade ethanol under the EBP were blending up to 12% of ethanol with petrol in the State.



Tamil Nadu City Gas Distribution Policy 2023

- ❖ The City Gas Distribution (CGD) Policy aims to promote the adoption of natural gas by the state as a green and clean fuel.
- ❖ To speed up supply of piped natural gas to homes across Tamil Nadu, the state government has come up with a detailed policy.
- ❖ The Govt also appointed the Tamil Nadu Industrial Development Corporation Ltd (TIDCO) as the nodal agency.
- ❖ The target is 2.28 lakh domestic connections and 2,785 compressed natural gas (CNG) stations covering all 38 districts within eight years.
- ❖ The Centre had given the first contracts to build city gas distribution (CGD) infrastructure in 2018.
- ❖ It includes for Chennai and neighbouring districts.
- ❖ The CGD network is being built in 15 districts and the contracts for the remaining 23 districts have also been authorised.



TN Logistics policy and integrated logistics plan

- ❖ The Tamil Nadu Logistics Policy and Integrated Logistics Plan 2023 was released by the Chief Minister.

- ❖ The vision of the Policy is “to promote an integrated, reliable, cost-efficient and sustainable logistics system in the State for enhanced competitiveness and fast-tracked economic development of the State.”
- ❖ Adopting new age technologies, enabling skill development, and building resilience and sustainability in logistics eco-system form part of key objectives.
- ❖ This is a strategic plan for the next 10 years.
- ❖ It is outlining identified interventions, their envisaged outcomes, timelines as well as key stakeholders’ responsible for their implementation.
- ❖ The policy aims at
 - Reduction of cost of logistics (for export-import as well as domestic freight) in the State;
 - Leveraging private participation for development of logistics infrastructure;
 - Formulating an effective coordination mechanism between State and Central agencies towards facilitation and execution of initiatives concerning the logistics sector.
- ❖ The Govt will also explore providing medical and health insurance to heavy vehicle drivers registered in the State at a nominal price.

Appreciation for ‘The Elephant Whisperers’ team



தமிழ்த் திரைப்படப் பரிசாடானில் 95-வது ஆம் ஆண்டு அறிவிக்கப்பட்ட (53.2023) திரைப்படப் பரிசாடானில், முதலாவது இந்திய திரைப்படம் வென்றது. அறிவிக்கப்பட்ட திரைப்படம் 'The Elephant Whisperers' ஆகும். இது திரைப்படம் தயாரிப்பதில் உதவி செய்துள்ள கர்விகி கன்சல்வ், கர்விகி கன்சல்வ் மற்றும் கர்விகி கன்சல்வ் ஆகியவர்களுக்கு 1 லட்சம் ரூபாய் அளவிலான பரிசாடானை வழங்கியது.

- ❖ The Tamil documentary "The Elephant Whisperers" created history at the 95th Academy Awards by becoming the maiden Indian production to win in the Documentary Short Subject category.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu Chief Minister gave away Rs one crore incentive to Kartiki Gonsalves, director of Academy Award-winning documentary.
- ❖ Bomman and Bellie, the couple acted in the Documentary gets awarded with Rs 1 Lakh each as a token of appreciation.

- ❖ The Chief Minister has also ordered the payment of ₹1 lakh each to all the 91 mahouts and cavadis at the Mudumalai and Anamalai elephant camps in Tamil Nadu.

Reduction in TB deaths

- ❖ The initiative, TN-KET (Tamil Nadu Kasanoi Erappila Thittam, meaning TB death-free project) began in April 2022.
- ❖ In 2,500-odd public healthcare facilities that diagnosed TB in 30 districts.
- ❖ It has already achieved significant reduction in the number of early TB deaths.
- ❖ Nearly 70% of all TB deaths among notified TB patients take place in the first two months after diagnosis.
- ❖ Deaths within two months of TB diagnosis (early TB deaths) have reduced from more than 600 in April 2022 to less than 350 in December 2022.
- ❖ Also, the average time to death after diagnosis doubled from less than 20 days before April to 40 days in July 2022.
- ❖ In December 2022, we reached the 90%-90%-90% goal at State level.

Saving lives by cutting down delay, beginning treatment

The TN-KET (Tamil Nadu-Kasanoi Erappila Thittam) initiative began in April 2022 in 2,500-odd public healthcare facilities that diagnosed tuberculosis in 30 districts

- The heart of the initiative is the 'Differentiated TB Care' aimed at assessing whether people with TB need ambulatory care or admission in a health facility to manage severe illness at the time of diagnosis
- Nearly 70% of all TB deaths among notified TB patients take place in the first two months after diagnosis
- Preliminary assessment of patients based on just three conditions was sufficient for quick identification at diagnosis and referral for admission in a hospital
- This resulted in admission of people with severe TB illness in a hospital on the same day of diagnosis, thus increasing the chances of saving lives



Lacking: Most PHCs, many taluk and block-level healthcare facilities lack clinical and diagnostic capacity

- Around 150 nodal inpatient care facilities have been identified, and nearly 900 beds earmarked for people with TB who are severely ill
- In December 2022, the State achieved 90% triaging of patients, 90% referral and confirmation of severe illness, and 90% admission among confirmed

Tamil Nadu's 18th wildlife sanctuary

- ❖ During the Tamil Nadu Budget 2023-24, creation of new wildlife sanctuary in Erode district called 'Thanthai Periyar Animal Sanctuary' was announced.
- ❖ This is the 18th wildlife sanctuary in Tamil Nadu.



- ❖ There are two existing wildlife sanctuaries in the district - Vellode Birds Sanctuary and Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve (STR).
- ❖ In the proposed sanctuary, the animal populations would mainly comprise elephants, tigers, leopards, panthers, wild boars, and deer.
- ❖ There are 21 different mammals, 139 bird species and 118 types of butterflies that would also inhabit.

TN Agriculture Budget

- ❖ Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister M.R.K. Pannerselvam presented the 2023-2024 Agriculture Budget.
- ❖ The Agriculture Budget for 2022-23 increased the allocation for agriculture and allied sectors to ₹33,007.68 crore.
- ❖ It is slightly higher than the ₹32,775.78 crore in the revised estimate for 2021-22.
- ❖ The government will take steps to achieve 126 lakh MT of foodgrain production in 2022-23.
- ❖ Rs 2,337 crore allocated as the state government's share of premium subsidy for crop insurance.
- ❖ The 'Kalaigharin All Village Integrated Agriculture Development Programme' was announced in the first agriculture budget.
- ❖ Cooperative crop loan to the tune of Rs 14,000 crore will be given to farmers.
- ❖ Interest-free cooperative loan of Rs 1,500 crore will be given to farmers for goat rearing, dairying, poultry and fisheries activities.
- ❖ Rs 744 crore will be allocated for the implementation of the micro irrigation scheme.
- ❖ Rs 450 crore will be spent to cover 53,400 hectares under micro irrigation in the group of villages where agriculture is affected due to water shortage.
- ❖ The Nammazhvar award will be given to farmers who practise and promote organic farming and hand-hold fellow organic farmers.
- ❖ The award of Rs 5 lakh and a citation will be given on Republic Day.
- ❖ A new regional startup hub is to be created in Thanjavur by the Tamil Nadu Startup and Innovation Mission to promote agrotechnological innovations in the Cauvery delta region.
- ❖ A scheme to stabilise the supply of onion and tomato throughout the year will be launched.
- ❖ An additional 20 per cent subsidy is to be provided for small and marginal farmers of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.



- ❖ Kits containing perennial fruit seedlings such as mango, guava, jackfruit, amla, acid lime, and custard apple will be distributed to 10 lakh households.
- ❖ The beautification of government botanical gardens will be done at Yercaud and horticultural park and Madhavaram in Chennai.
- ❖ Around 150 farmers will be taken on an overseas tour to countries like Israel, Netherlands, Thailand, Egypt, Malaysia, Philippines etc to teach them about the high-yielding technologies.
- ❖ Farm tourism is to be promoted in association with the education department for school students.
- ❖ A specific cluster development scheme at cost of Rs 130 crore for bananas in the Theni district will be provided.
- ❖ One scientist from agricultural colleges, research centres or Krishi Vigyan Kendras is set to be appointed as officer-in-charge for each block.
- ❖ Desiltation in rivers, canals and drainage channels in the Cauvery delta command area at an estimated cost of Rs 90 crore.
- ❖ Food parks will come up at Tindivanam, Theni and Manapparai in Trichy district.
- ❖ The production of jaggery will be encouraged to benefit the sugarcane farmers.
- ❖ 3,000 solar pumps will be set up under the chief minister's scheme.
- ❖ The state government will distribute 10 lakh palm seeds to increase the number of the state tree – palmyra.
- ❖ Rs 3 crore will be allocated for Turmeric and ginger cultivation.
- ❖ The defunct cooperative NPKR Ramasamy Coop sugar mills at Mayiladuthurai will be reopened.
- ❖ Special zone for tur dal cultivation will be set up in Salem and Krishnagiri districts.
- ❖ New mobile app will be developed to provide all the required information to farmers.
- ❖ Soil testing centre will be established at the cost of Rs 75 lakh at Mayiladuthurai.

Re-adoption of Anti-gaming bill

- ❖ The Tamil Nadu Assembly on Thursday re-adopted the Tamil Nadu Prohibition of Online Gambling and Regulation of Online Games Bill, 2022 without any changes.
- ❖ An ordinance was promulgated by the Governor on October 1, 2022 and was notified in the gazette on October 3, 2022.
- ❖ It was followed by a Bill which was adopted in the Assembly on October 19, 2022.

- ❖ It was sent to the Governor for assent on October 26, 2022.
- ❖ After 141 days, the governor returned it on March 6 stating the legislature lacked the legislative competence to enact the bill.



First PM MITRA Park

- ❖ India's first PM MITRA mega textiles Park was setup in Virudhunagar district.
- ❖ PM MITRA stands for Pradhan Mantri Mega Integrated Textile Region and Apparel Park.
- ❖ The parks were based on the 5F vision - Farm to Fibre to Factory to Fashion to Foreign.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu accounts for one-third of the country's handloom production.
- ❖ The PM MITRA Parks will have world-class industrial infrastructure.
- ❖ It would attract cutting age technology and boost FDI and local investment in the textiles sector.

TN Disaster Management Policy

- ❖ Chief Minister released the updated Tamil Nadu State Disaster Management Policy and Disaster Management Plan 2023.
- ❖ The policy aims at reducing the negative impact of disasters with the help of strong disaster management machinery.
- ❖ The policy has been developed adhering to the global and national frameworks for disaster risk reduction and contextualised to the State perspectives and priorities.
- ❖ It provides a consistent, state-wide institutional framework to enable the state, local governments, Central government, and the private sector to work together.

Mainstreaming	State Development Plans/Strategies	To Mitigate	To ensure Reduced Disaster impacts
	> Policies	> Floods	◇ Reduction in
	> Land Use, Flood Plain Regulations	> Cyclone	◇ Number of
	> Building Regulations	> Tsunami	◇ Vulnerable Areas,
	> Budget	> Landslide	◇ Reduction in degree
	> Sector Plans	> Earthquake	◇ of Vulnerability
	> Programmes	> Drought	◇ Minimising loss of
	> Projects	> Heat Wave	◇ Lives
	> City Development plans	> Lightning	◇ Minimising Loss and
		> CBRN	◇ Damages to public & private properties

NATIONAL

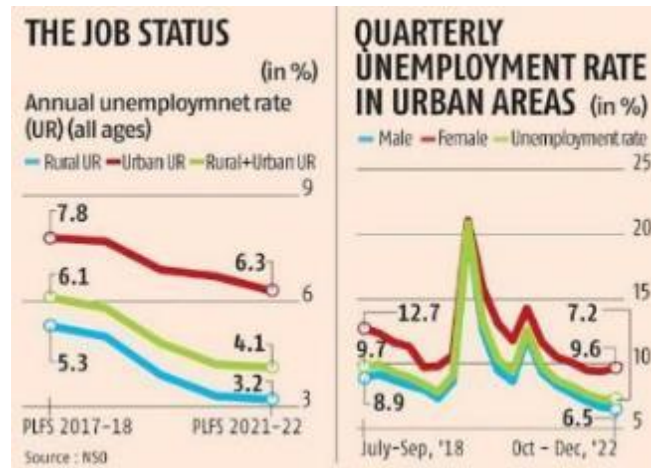
22nd Law Commission of India

- ❖ The 22nd law Commission was constituted under Justice Rituraj Awasthi for a period of three years on February 21, 2020.
- ❖ The Union Cabinet now extended by one-and-a-half year (August 31, 2024) the term of the 22nd Law Commission.
- ❖ The commission is mandated to identify laws which are “no longer relevant” and recommend for their repeal.
- ❖ The Law Commission is a non-statutory body, constituted by the Ministry of Law & Justice under the central government from time to time.
- ❖ The term of the 21st Law Commission ended on August 31, 2018.

Jaipur Declaration

- ❖ The Jaipur Declaration was adopted at the 18th World Security Congress jointly organized by the Railway Protection Force and the UIC.
- ❖ It is an actionable agenda for UIC to explore innovative approaches that can help global Railway organizations achieve their long-term goal of safety and security.
- ❖ The Congress held on the theme of "Railway Security Strategy: Responses and Vision for Future."

Unemployment Rate



- ❖ The latest annual Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) was released by the National Statistical Office.
- ❖ India's unemployment rate was dropped to a five-year low in July-June (2021-22) to 4.1 per cent.
- ❖ During 2021-22, the unemployment rate in both rural and urban areas declined to 3.2 per cent and 6.3 per cent, respectively.
- ❖ During 2020-21, they stood at 3.3 per cent and 6.7 per cent in rural and urban respectively.
- ❖ The latest survey also showed the labour force participation rate (LFPR) had increased significantly in the last five years from 37.5 per cent in 2018-19 to 55.2 per cent in 2021-22.
- ❖ The Worker Population Ratio has increased to 52.9 per cent in 2021-22 from 52.6 in 2020-21.
- ❖ It was 50.9 per cent in 2019-20.
- ❖ Separately, the NSO released the quarterly PLFS survey for urban India.
- ❖ During the December quarter, the unemployment rate for men declined marginally to 6.5 per cent.
- ❖ The unemployment rate of women increased narrowly to 9.6 per cent from 6.6 per cent.

Hindustan 228 aircraft

- ❖ A new variant of Hindustan Aeronautics Limited's aircraft 'Hindustan 228-201 LW' has been approved by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation.
- ❖ This variant has maximum take-off weight of 5,695 kg with 19 passenger capability.

- ❖ This can reduce pilot qualification requirement and enabling pilots with Commercial Pilot Licence to fly the aircraft.



Mechanical elephant for performing rituals

- ❖ Kerala's Irinjadapilly temple in Thrissur district introduced a life-size motorised model of elephant for performing rituals.
- ❖ It is the first such initiative in India.
- ❖ The elephant was gifted to the temple by PETA India.
- ❖ The iconic life-like mechanical elephant, named Irinjadapilly Raman.
- ❖ It can carry around 4 people.
- ❖ The elephant's head, eyes, mouth, ears and tail all work on electricity.



Raisina Dialogue 2023

- ❖ Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni made official visit to India.
- ❖ She is the Chief Guest and Keynote Speaker at the 8th Raisina Dialogue, 2023.
- ❖ The Raisina Dialogue is an annual conference that brings together global leaders to discuss and exchange views on important global issues.

- ❖ It is held annually since 2016 in New Delhi.
- ❖ It is organized by the Observer Research Foundation (ORF) in partnership with the union Ministry of External Affairs.



Hindusthan Samachar



- ❖ Public broadcaster Prasar Bharati has signed a two-year contract with Hindusthan Samachar (HS) to supply news feed for Doordarshan and All India Radio (AIR).
- ❖ It is expected to provide 100 news stories every day to Prasar Bharati, which would include 10 national stories and 40 “local” ones in regional languages.
- ❖ Prasar Bharati cancelled its subscription to Press Trust of India (PTI), the nonprofit cooperative of Indian newspapers in 2020.
- ❖ Hindusthan Samachar was founded in 1948 by Shivram Shankar Apte, along with M.S. Golwalkar.

Army exercise Topchi

- ❖ Indian Army conducted its annual training exercise Exercise Topchi in Devlali, Nashik, Maharashtra.
- ❖ The event shows the capability of the Indian artillery.

- ❖ This year, we have stressed on 'Atma nirbharata' (self-reliance).
- ❖ It showcased the integrated employment of firepower and surveillance assets to include guns, mortars, rockets, drones, and aviation assets.
- ❖ The guns and other systems be it the K-9 Vajra, Dhanush system or M777 gun system and Pinaka multi-barrel rocket launchers.



Army puts up imposing firepower display
The Indian Army on Sunday put up an imposing firepower display with a raft of indigenous artillery guns, rocket systems and ammunition, including weapons deployed along the contested Line of Actual Control (LAC) where the Indian and Chinese armies have been locked in a lingering dispute for over 32 months. By Rahul Singh

EXERCISE TOPCHI-2023
The blockbuster demonstration of the Army's capabilities by the elite School of Artillery featured several big guns. It was invited to witness the show.
The focus of the exercise was to showcase indigenous capabilities and strides made in achieving self-reliance in the defence sector, said Lieutenant General S Hanumanth Iyer, commandant of the Devikulam-based School of Artillery. "Atmanirbharta in defence is scaling new heights. The army is ready for any challenge," he said.
The drills came at a time when the army is pursuing a major firepower upgrade, and is set to induct more artillery guns, longer range rockets and bolstering readiness to bolster its capabilities along the China border.

Weapons deployed in the exercise
Dhanush towed artillery gun
It made its maiden appearance at the R Day parade in 2017. Made by Jabalpur-based Gun Carriage Factory, its 6000 PH Scorpions. Known as the desi Borers, it's the first long-range artillery gun to be produced in India. The army has operationalised its first Dhanush regiment along the China border, and is now looking at raising a second regiment by March 2023. **38km range**

K9 Vajra-T guns
The guns have been manufactured in India by private sector defence major Larsen & Toubro and South Korea's Hanwha Defence. The army has already inducted 100 of these guns under a 2017 contract worth \$120 million, and some of them have been deployed in the Ladakh sector after winterisation equips as the guns were bought for a desert role. The army plans to buy 300 more of these.

M777 ultra-light howitzers
India ordered 145 M777 howitzers from the US for \$750 million in November 2016. The M777 were the first artillery guns to be ordered after the Bofors scandal unfolded in the late 1980s. The 155 mm/99-calibre howitzers can be sling-loaded to helicopters and deployed to high-altitude areas. M777 manufacturer BAE Systems delivered 25 ready-built howitzers and the remaining guns have been built locally in collaboration with Mahindra Defence.

Sharang guns
The upgraded Sharang artillery guns are a key element of the artillery modernisation. The army already has three Sharang regiments. It's raising a fourth one, and eventually plans to have 15 such regiments. The Sharang project involves upgrading the army's vintage Soviet-origin Bofors M46 towed artillery pieces to 155 mm/45-calibre standard. The guns have an enhanced range - up from 27km to 29km - and better terminal effectiveness.

What's next
The army is looking at inducting ATAGS by the year-end. The indigenous howitzer was deployed for the ceremonial 21-gun salute at the 75th Independence Day ceremony at Red Fort last year along with British guns that have been traditionally used for the event. The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) began the ATAGS project in 2011 to replace older army guns with a modern 155 mm artillery gun. It partnered with two private firms, Bharat Forge Limited and Tata Advanced Systems Limited, for manufacturing the gun, which has a range of 48 km.

Joint training exercise 'Trishakti Prahar'

- ❖ The Indian military concluded a joint training exercise - Exercise Trishakti Prahar in North Bengal.
- ❖ The aim of the exercise was to practice battle preparedness of the security forces, using latest weapons and equipment in a networked, integrated environment, involving the Army, the Indian Air Force and CAPFs.
- ❖ As a part of the exercise, swift mobilisation and deployment practices were carried out in various locations across north Bengal.
- ❖ The area is strategically important to India.
- ❖ This narrow Siliguri region 20 to 30-km-wide passage touches Bangladesh in the south and Bhutan in the north.



TARKASH exercise

- ❖ India and USA military recently conducted the TARKASHA exercise in Chennai, Tamil Nadu.
- ❖ It is a joint exercise by the National Security Guard (NSG) and US Special Operations Forces (SOF).
- ❖ For the first time “Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN)” terror response was included in this drill.
- ❖ CBRN weapons have the capability of creating mass casualties as well as mass disruption and therefore, are classified as weapons of mass destruction.
- ❖ The Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use of CBRN in War, also known as the Geneva Protocol, signed on June 17, 1925, at Geneva, Switzerland.
- ❖ It entered into force on February 8, 1928.
- ❖ Most recent use of CBRN weapons is came in the form of a sarin gas attack carried out by the Syrian army in 2013 against civilians during the Syrian Civil War.



Country Reports on Terrorism 2021: India

- ❖ The U.S. Bureau of Counterterrorism released a report named 'Country Reports on Terrorism 2021: India'.
- ❖ The Indian government has made significant efforts to detect, disrupt, and degrade the operations of terrorist organizations.
- ❖ Terrorism affected the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), the north eastern States, and parts of central India.
- ❖ Lashkar-e-Tayyiba, Jaish-e-Mohammed, Hizbul Mujahideen, ISIS, al-Qa'ida, Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen, and Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh, are the terrorist groups active in India.
- ❖ In 2021, 153 terrorist attacks were reported in India's Jammu and Kashmir.
- ❖ The attacks caused 274 deaths which included 45 security personnel, 36 civilians, and 193 terrorists.
- ❖ NIA (National Investigation Agency) through September 2021, investigated 37 cases related to ISIS and arrested 168 people.


Supreme Court verdict on ECI appointment

Revamp mode

A Constitution Bench hearing a series of petitions seeking functional independence for ECs, is examining various aspects:

- Appointment of CEC and ECs by a Collegium of PM, CJI and Leader of the Opposition
- Equal protection to CEC and ECs and common procedure of removal
- Rule-making power to Election Commission like Supreme Court, Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha
- Independent secretariat, budget for the commission

Independence is not an unruly horse ... Independence also partakes in playing by the rules of the game. In areas where he [EC] has discretion, he should exercise that discretion and show independence



JUSTICE K.M. JOSEPH

- ❖ The Supreme Court held that the appointment of an Election Commissioner for a tenure less than six years is in “clear breach” of law.
- ❖ The court’s observation came while discussing the designation of Arun Goel as an Election Commissioner.
- ❖ Mr. Goel appointment took place on November 18 last year, has a term of a little over five years.

- ❖ Section 4(1) of the Election Commission (Conditions of Service of Election Commissioners and Transaction of Business) Act, 1991 requires that Chief Election Commissioners and Election Commissioners should separately have a period of six years in office.

Dibang Multipurpose Project

- ❖ India approved its largest ever hydropower project in Arunachal Pradesh.
- ❖ This multipurpose project is being set up close to China's border on the Dibang River.
- ❖ The Dibang project is estimated to take nine years to build.
- ❖ This project will be developed by National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC) Limited.
- ❖ Dihang, Dibang, and Lohit are the major tributaries of Brahmaputra.
- ❖ Dibang joins River Lohit near Dibru-Saikhowa Sanctuary.
- ❖ The tributaries of Dibang are Emra, Ithun, Dri, Rangon, Mathun, and Sisar.



Ornamental fish aquaculture

- ❖ Community-based ornamental fish aquaculture, using local resources, is expected to help women in the Lakshadweep islands.
- ❖ This takes the first step towards self-reliance through concerted activities.
- ❖ It is the first-of-its-kind experiment, as many as 82 islanders, 77 of them women, were selected and underwent intensive training.
- ❖ They have formed groups for ornamental fish aquaculture with technical support from the ICAR-National Bureau of Fish Genetic Resources (NBFGR).

Exercise Shinyuu Maitri

- ❖ The Indian Air Force (IAF) participated in Exercise Shinyuu Maitri with the Japan Air Self Defence Force (JASDF) conducted at Japan.
- ❖ The exercise is being organised on the side-lines of the Indo-Japan Joint Army Exercise, Dharma Guardian.
- ❖ The exercise gives an opportunity for the respective subject matter experts to interact and study each other's operational philosophies and best practices.



AIRS Fellowship Program



- ❖ More than 60 Australian and Indian emerging researchers have been awarded an Australia India Research Students Fellowship for 2023.
- ❖ The AIRS Fellowship Program is a bilateral program between India and Australia.
- ❖ It is part of the Update to the India Economic Strategy to 2035 action plan that seeks to strengthen academic relations.
- ❖ It is led by Australia India Institute.
- ❖ The funding for this program is provided by the Australian Government Department of Education.
- ❖ It promotes research collaborations and student mobility between India and Australia.
- ❖ It is to see collaboration among 22 Australian universities and 37 Indian higher education institutes.

National Conference on Economics of Competition Law

- ❖ The Competition Commission of India (CCI) hosted its 8th annual National Conference on Economics of Competition Law.
- ❖ The Conference is being organised every year since 2016 by the CCI.
- ❖ The Conference has a plenary session and two technical sessions.
- ❖ The Plenary at this year's Conference is on the topic 'Antitrust and Regulation: Interfaces and Synergies'.

DUSTLIK 2023



- ❖ India-Uzbekistan 15-day joint military exercise DUSTLIK was concluded in Uttarakhand.
- ❖ This was the fourth edition of the biennial exercise DUSTLIK, meaning friendship in Uzbek.
- ❖ The first edition of the joint military exercise took place in Tashkent in 2019.
- ❖ It aims at enhancing military capability to undertake multi-domain operations in a Sub Conventional scenario under United Nations Mandate.

Supreme Court Verdict on ECI Appointments

- ❖ A five-judge bench of the Supreme Court (SC) headed by Justice KM Joseph unanimously gave verdict on appointment of the Chief Election Commissioner and the Election Commissioners.
- ❖ These appointments shall be made by the President on the advice of a selection Committee.

- ❖ This Committee will be consisting of the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition of the Lok Sabha and Chief Justice of India (CJI).
- ❖ In case no leader of Opposition is available, the leader of the largest opposition Party in the Lok Sabha in terms of numerical strength will be a part of such committee.
- ❖ The Bench also appealed to the central government to constitute an independent secretariat for dealing with the expenditure of the Commission.

Appointment Procedure

- ❖ As per the Article 324(2), The appointment of the CEC and other Election Commissioners shall be made by the President.
- ❖ It is also subject to the provisions of any law made in that behalf by Parliament.
- ❖ The President determines the conditions of service and tenure of office of the Election.
- ❖ Under the Election Commission (Conditions of Service of Election Commissioners and Transaction of Business) Act, 1991 they have a tenure of six years, or up to the age of 65 years, whichever is earlier.
- ❖ Typically, the senior-most election commissioner is appointed as the CEC.

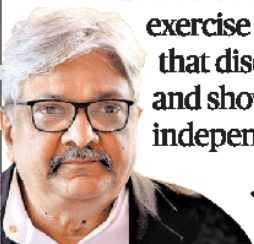
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JUSTICE K.M. JOSEPH




One Nation, One Challan Initiative

- ❖ Gujarat Government implemented 'One Nation, One Challan Initiative' recently.
- ❖ One Nation, One Challan is an initiative of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.

- ❖ It aims to bring all related agencies, such as the traffic police and the Regional Transport Office (RTO), on one platform.
- ❖ It will enable seamless collection of challans as well as data transfer.
- ❖ National Informatics Centre (NIC) is set to launch its own application for this.
- ❖ If someone doesn't pay the challan amount within 90 days, the challan will be automatically forwarded to a virtual court and proceedings will be initiated.
- ❖ Virtual courts are aimed at eliminating the presence of litigants in the court.

PMLA against Cryptocurrency

- ❖ The centre issued a notification bringing transactions involving crypto assets under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002.
- ❖ It laid out the nature of transactions to be covered under PMLA.
- ❖ These are as follows
 - Exchange between virtual digital assets and fiat currencies;
 - Exchange between one or more forms of virtual digital assets;
 - Transfer of virtual digital assets;
 - Safekeeping or administration of virtual digital assets or instruments enabling control over virtual digital assets;
 - Participation in and provision of financial services related to an issuer's offer and sale of a virtual digital asset.
- ❖ The measure is expected to aid investigative agencies in carrying out action against crypto firms.
- ❖ From April 2022, India introduced a 30 per cent income tax on gains made from cryptocurrencies.
- ❖ In July 2022, rules regarding 1 per cent tax deducted at source on cryptocurrency came into effect.

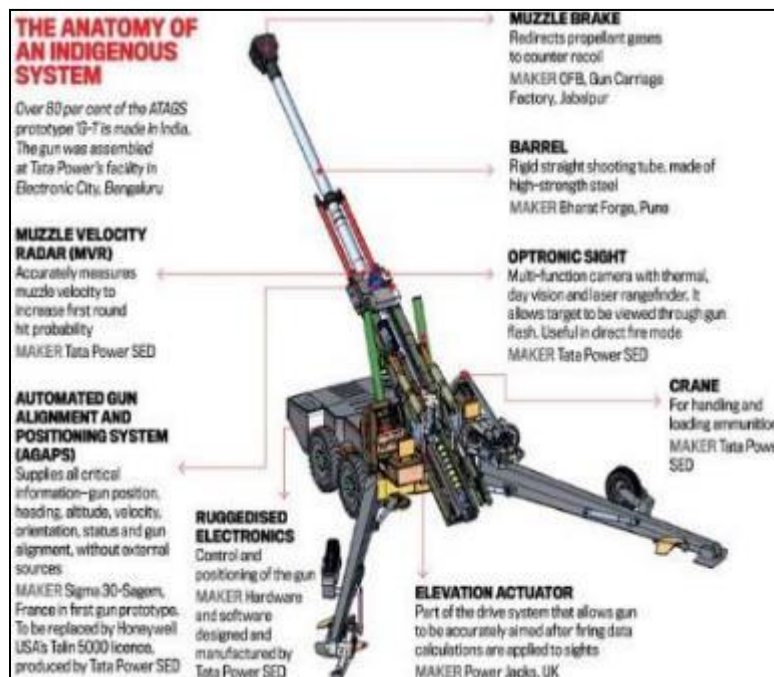
CENTRE CAN SHUT DOWN ERRANT ENTITIES	
Govt's moves	RBI's position
<ul style="list-style-type: none">> In last year's Budget, FM introduced 30% tax on income from VDAs, 1% TDS on transactions> FM had clarified that taxing cryptos does not make them legal> Centre has now said exchanges will need to perform KYC of clients> Govt can penalise or shut down entities that do not comply	 <ul style="list-style-type: none">> RBI has likened crypto to Ponzi schemes and said recognising them could lead to 'dollarisation' of the economy, which would be against India's interests> It has been highlighting risks cryptos pose to financial stability> To counter the challenge, RBI launched own digital currency

Millets Giveaway

- ❖ Millets Giveaway is a special marketing campaign being undertaken by Small Farmers' Agri-Business Consortium (SFAC).
- ❖ Under this campaign the SFAC aims to promote buying directly from FPO (Farmer Producer Organisation) farmers.
- ❖ It encourages citizens to purchase millets directly from FPOs through Open Network for Digital Commerce's My Store, a marketplace built for Indian sellers.
- ❖ It aims to supporting small & marginal farmers of the country.

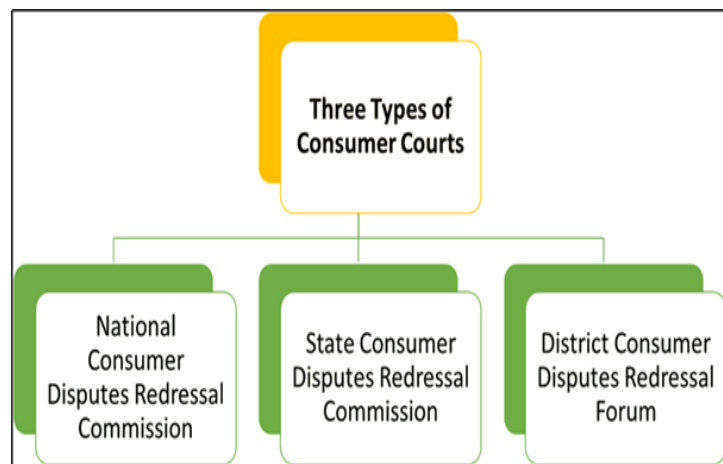


Advanced Towed Artillery Gun System



- ❖ The Indian Army has moved a proposal to acquire indigenous Advanced Towed Artillery Gun System (ATAGS).
- ❖ It can be deployed at high altitude areas and fill critical capability gaps.
- ❖ The ATAGS is configured with all electric drive to ensure maintenance free and reliable operation over a longer period of time.
- ❖ It has advanced features in terms of high mobility, quick deployability, auxiliary power mode, advanced communication system, automatic command and control system with night firing capability in the direct fire mode.

Criterion for Consumer courts



- ❖ The Supreme Court used reduced the mandatory professional experience from 20 to 10 years to preside over consumer courts.
- ❖ For this, the Supreme Court used its extraordinary powers under Article 142.
- ❖ It also introduced written exams and viva voce to check the candidates' performance.
- ❖ The Centre has proposed several amendments to the Consumer Protection (Qualification for appointment, method of recruitment, procedure of appointment, term of office, resignation and removal of President and Members of State Commission and District Commission) Rules, 2020.

'World's first' bamboo crash barrier

- ❖ India has tested bamboo crash barrier as an environmentally friendly alternative to steel.
- ❖ This world's first 200-meter-long Bamboo Crash Barrier has been installed on the Vani-Warora Highway in Maharashtra.

- ❖ The bamboo crash barrier will be an alternative to steel and will be environmentally friendly.
- ❖ The recycling value of the bamboo crash barrier is 50-70%, while that of steel barriers is 30-50%.



TROPEX 2023

- ❖ Indian Navy's major Operational level exercise TROPEX for the year 2023, was conducted across the expanse of the Indian Ocean region.
- ❖ It includes the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal surface.
- ❖ The overall exercise construct included coastal defence exercise Sea Vigil and the amphibious exercise AMPHEX.



Nano liquid DAP

- ❖ The Government recently approved the launch of nano liquid DAP (di-ammonium phosphate) fertilizer in India.
- ❖ It has been notified in the Fertilizer Control Order (FCO).
- ❖ It has been issued under the Essential Commodities Act 1955.

- ❖ Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative Limited (IFFCO), introduced nano liquid urea in 2021.
- ❖ DAP is the second most consumed fertilizer in the country after urea.
- ❖ Out of the estimated annual consumption of around 10-12.5 million tonnes, local production is around 4-5 million tonnes, while the rest has to be imported.



MSME Competitive (LEAN) scheme



- ❖ Ministry of MSMEs launched the revamped MSME Competitive (LEAN) Scheme.
- ❖ It aims to provide a roadmap to global competitiveness for the MSMEs of India.
- ❖ The first phase will cover the manufacturing sector while the services sector will be covered in the second phase.
- ❖ Under the revamped scheme, the Centre's contribution will be 90 per cent of the implementation cost for handholding and consultancy fees as against 80 per cent previously.

- ❖ Earlier, the implementation period for the scheme was set at 18 months.
- ❖ Additional contribution of 5 per cent with 90% for the MSMEs which are part of SFURTI clusters, owned by Women/SC/ST and located in North East Region.

4th National Youth Parliament Festival

- ❖ The 4th edition of the National Youth Parliament Festival (NYPF) held in the Central Hall of Parliament, New Delhi.
- ❖ The Youth Parliament has been organised since 2019.
- ❖ The objective of the event is strengthening democracy and enabling the student community to understand the working of Parliament.
- ❖ The 4th edition was launched with the theme “Ideas for a Better Tomorrow: India for the World”.



New cities in Swadesh Darshan 2.0

- ❖ As many as 30 cities from across 15 states are being shortlisted to be developed as sustainable and responsible destinations Swadesh Darshan 2.0 programme.
- ❖ The 15 states also include Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra.
- ❖ The Swadesh Darshan Scheme was launched by the Centre in 2014-15 for the integrated development of theme-based tourist circuits.
- ❖ Under the scheme, the Ministry of Tourism provides financial assistance to states and Union territories for the development of tourism infrastructure.
- ❖ Swadesh Darshan 2.0, focussing on one destination at a time, to attract domestic tourists, was conceptualised.

Building India's Cultural Tourism: SWADESH DARSHAN

Development of infrastructure in tourism destinations

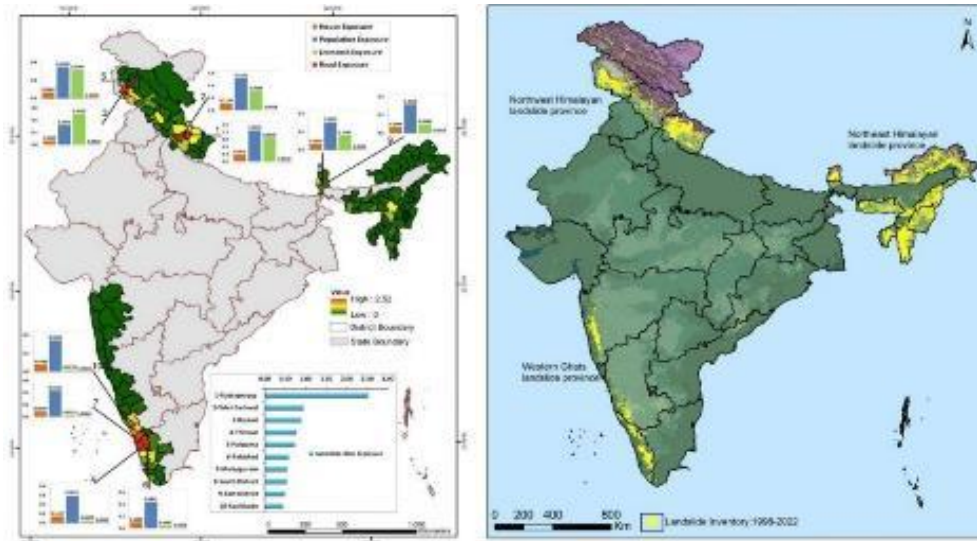
500+ Destinations, 31 States and 15 Theme based circuits under development

- Buddhist Circuit
- Coastal Circuit
- Desert Circuit
- Eco Circuit
- Heritage Circuit
- Himalayan Circuit
- Krishna Circuit
- North-East Circuit
- Ramayana Circuit
- Rural Circuit
- Spiritual Circuit
- Sufi Circuit
- Tirthankar Circuit
- Tribal Circuit
- Wildlife Circuit

8 Years
Seva, Soshasan, Sarth Nayan

myGov

Landslide Atlas of India



- ❖ The National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC), Hyderabad under the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has released the Landslide Atlas of India.
- ❖ The team released a list of 147 most landslide-vulnerable districts in 17 states and two Union Territories.

- ❖ Rudraprayag and Tehri Garhwal districts of Uttarakhand have the highest landslide density and landslide risk exposure in the country.
- ❖ Chamoli district of Uttarakhand, where Joshimath is grappling with a land-subsidence crisis, has been ranked 19th.
- ❖ Haridwar and Udham Singh Nagar figure at the bottom at 146th and 147th, respectively.
- ❖ Apart from Uttarakhand, among the 10 most landslide-prone districts, four are in flood-prone areas of Kerala, two in Jammu and Kashmir and two in Sikkim.
- ❖ After the Himalayas, the Western Ghats has high landslide density.

VAIBHAV Fellowship Scheme

- ❖ The Union Government launched the VAIBHAV Fellowship scheme.
- ❖ The fellowship offers NRI researchers an opportunity to work for a minimum of one month to a maximum of two months a year with a research institution or an academic institution in India.
- ❖ The duration of the fellowship is three years with the government offering the researchers an amount of up to Rs 37 lakh for the entire period.
- ❖ Applicants must be non-resident Indians (NRIs), Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs), or Overseas Citizens of India (OCIs).



Underwater anti-submarine rockets

- ❖ The Indian Navy has received a fully indigenised fuze YDB-60 for underwater Rocket RGB 60.
- ❖ The YDB-60 for underwater Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) Rocket RGB-60 will be used in major warships.
- ❖ The Fuze is part of the weapon or ammunition that initiates its function.
- ❖ In torpedoes, its function is to make them explode.
- ❖ RGB-60 is a rocket used to hit submarines.



New Centers of Excellence for Horticulture crops

- ❖ The Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) under the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare has approved three new Centers of Excellence (CoEs) for horticultural crops.
- ❖ These CoEs serve as demonstration and training centres for latest technologies in the field of horticulture.
- ❖ These CoEs also serve as source of planting material for fruits and vegetable seedlings for protected cultivation and used for transfer of technology and knowhow in diverse areas.
- ❖ The CoE for Kamlam (Dragon Fruit) will be established at the Experimental station, Hirehalli, in Bengaluru.
- ❖ The CoE for Mango and Vegetables will be established in Panikoili, Jajpur District, Odisha.
- ❖ The CoE for Vegetables and Flowers will be established in Govt. Agricultural Farm, Codar, Khandepar, Ponda, South Goa, Goa.

G20 flower festival

- ❖ The New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) has organised a two-day G20-themed flower festival.
- ❖ The festival is aimed at highlighting the vibrancy of G20 members and guest countries.
- ❖ The four G20 countries – China, Japan, Singapore and the Netherlands – are participating in the NDMC G20 Flower Festival.
- ❖ The festival also showcased the painting or photographs of flowers such as national flowers or major flower gardens of G20 member countries and guest countries.

Aahar 2023

- ❖ The 37th edition of the International Food and Hospitality - Aahar, held at Pragati Maidan, Delhi.
- ❖ Aahar is India's largest four-day culinary show.
- ❖ It was organized with the support of the Union Ministry of Food Processing Industries, Agriculture and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority.
- ❖ It focused on unveiling the potential of the hospitality sector and exhibiting technologies, products and services to domestic and international buyers.



B2B Global Conference & Expo on Traditional Medicine

- ❖ The business-to-business conference and Expo on Traditional Medicine held in Guwahati, Assam.
- ❖ The first-of-its kind conference is being held under the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).
- ❖ It aims to promote traditional medicines at the global level.

ATL Sarthi

- ❖ Atal Innovation Mission launched ATL Sarthi initiative.
- ❖ It is a comprehensive self-monitoring framework to strengthen the ever-growing ecosystem of Atal Tinkering Labs (ATL).
- ❖ Sarthi is a charioteer and ATL Sarthi will enable the ATLs to be efficient and effective.
- ❖ In the first phase, AIM has provided funding for 10,000 schools to open Atal Tinkering Laboratories (ATLs).
- ❖ The Atal Innovation Mission was initiated by the NITI Aayog in 2016 to promote innovation and entrepreneurship across the country.

Best airport in India and South Asia

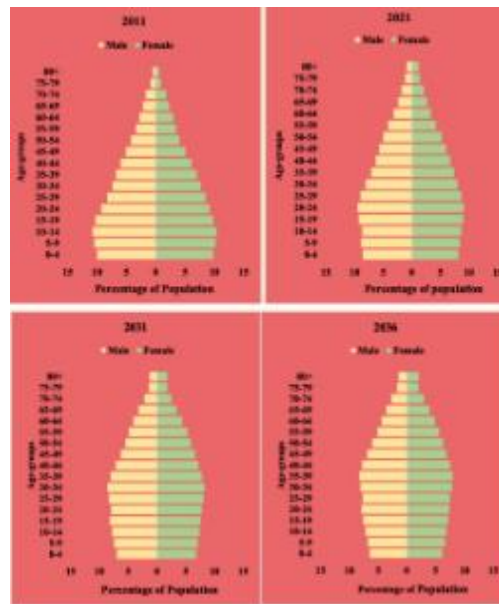
- ❖ Delhi airport has been adjudged the best airport in India and South Asia.
- ❖ This is according to international air transport rating organisation Skytrax.
- ❖ The Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) has moved up to the 36th position this year from 37th in 2022.
- ❖ The Skytrax World Airport Awards are based on annual global airport customer satisfaction survey.



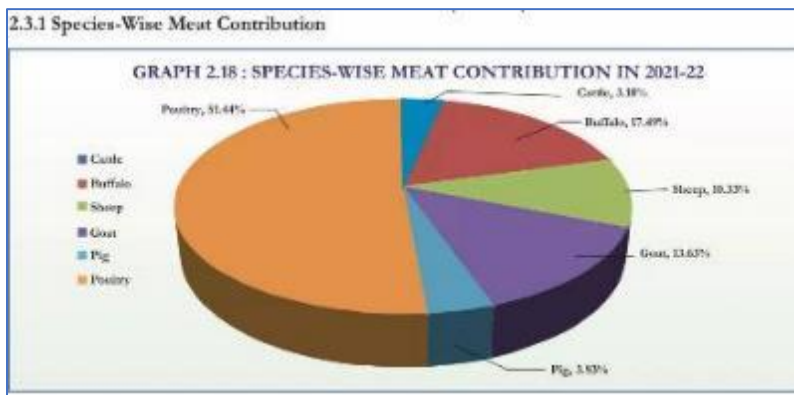
Women and Men in India 2022

- ❖ The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation has released Women and Men in India 2022 report.
- ❖ India's sex ratio (females per 1,000 males) is expected to improve to 952 by 2036.
- ❖ The sex ratio at birth went up by three points to 907 in 2018-20 from 904 in 2017-19.
- ❖ India's Labour Force Participation Rate for those above 15 years of age has been on the rise since 2017-2018.
- ❖ The rate was 77.2 for males and 32.8 for females in 2021-22.
- ❖ The population growth is on a downward trend from 2.2% in 1971 to 1.1% in 2021.
- ❖ It is projected to fall further to 0.58% in 2036.
- ❖ The age-specific fertility rate for the 20-24 years and 25-29 years age group between 2016 and 2020 reduced from 135.4 and 166.0 to 113.6 and 139.6 respectively.
- ❖ The same indicator for the 35-39 years age group increased from 32.7 in 2016 to 35.6 in 2020.
- ❖ The mean age for marriage has improved marginally up from 22.1 years in 2017 to 22.7 years in 2020.

- ❖ The population under 15 years of age is expected to decline and the population above 60 years is expected to increase by 2036.



Basic Animal Husbandry Statistics 2022



- ❖ The Central government unveiled the department's annual publication, the 'Basic Animal Husbandry Statistics 2022'.
- ❖ The book become a tradition and important source of information in the field of Livestock.
- ❖ Total milk production in the country during 2021-22 is 221.06 million tonnes.
- ❖ In the current year 2021-22, the milk production has registered an annual growth rate of 5.29%.
- ❖ The Top five major milk producing States are Rajasthan (15.05%), Uttar Pradesh (14.93%), Madhya Pradesh (8.06%), Gujarat (7.56%) and Andhra Pradesh (6.97%).

- ❖ In 2021-22, the total egg production in the country is 129.60 billion no which has increased by 6.19% as compared to previous year.
- ❖ Total five major egg producing States are Andhra Pradesh (20.41%), Tamil Nadu (16.08%), Telangana (12.86%), West Bengal (8.84%) and Karnataka (6.38%).
- ❖ The total meat production in the country is 9.29 million tonnes for the year 2021-22 with an annual growth rate of 5.62%.
- ❖ The total five major meat producing States are Maharashtra (12.25%), Uttar Pradesh (12.14%), West Bengal (11.63%), Andhra Pradesh (11.04%), and Telangana (10.82%).
- ❖ The total wool production in the country during 2021-22 is 33.13 thousand tonnes which has decline by 10.30% as compared to previous year.
- ❖ The top five major wool producing States are Rajasthan (45.91%), Jammu and Kashmir (23.19%), Gujarat (6.12%), Maharashtra (4.78%) and Himachal Pradesh (4.33%).
- ❖ In 2020-21, the share of Livestock at constant prices in Agriculture Sector and total GVA was 30.13% and 4.9% respectively.

Literacy rate in India

Literacy rates for those aged 7 or more (%)										
State/UT	Male	Female	Person	Gender Gap (% pts)	State/UT	Male	Female	Person	Gender Gap (% pts)	
Kerala	97.4	95.2	96.2	2.2	Chhattisgarh	85.4	68.7	77.3	16.7	
Delhi	93.7	82.4	88.7	11.3	J&K	85.7	68	77.3	17.7	
Uttarakhand	94.3	80.7	87.6	13.6	Odisha	84	70.3	77.3	13.7	
Himachal	92.9	80.5	86.6	12.4	Karnataka	83.4	70.5	77.2	12.9	
Assam	90.1	81.2	85.9	8.9	Jharkhand	83	64.7	74.3	18.3	
Maharashtra	90.7	78.4	84.8	12.3	MP	81.2	65.5	73.7	15.7	
Punjab	88.5	78.5	83.7	10	Uttar Pradesh	81.8	63.4	73	18.4	
Tamil Nadu	87.9	77.9	82.9	10	Telangana	80.5	65.1	72.8	15.4	
Gujarat	89.5	74.8	82.4	14.7	Bihar	79.7	60.5	70.9	19.2	
West Bengal	84.8	76.1	80.5	8.7	Rajasthan	80.8	57.6	69.7	23.2	
Haryana	88	71.3	80.4	16.7	Andhra	73.4	59.5	66.4	13.9	
					India	84.7	70.3	77.7	14.4	

- ❖ According to the World Bank India report, only 1 of 11 girls was literate at the time of India's independence, about nine percent.
- ❖ At present, the women's literacy rate has jumped to 77%.
- ❖ India's male literacy rate stands at 84.7%.

- ❖ As per the National Sample Survey report, Kerala is the most literate state in the country with 92.2%.
- ❖ It is followed by union territory Lakshadweep (91.85%).
- ❖ The third-most literate state in the country is Mizoram (91.33%).
- ❖ Bihar has the lowest literacy rate in India at 61.8%, followed by Arunachal Pradesh at 65.3% and Rajasthan at 66.1%.
- ❖ However, around 12.6% of students drop out of school in India.
- ❖ 19.8% discontinued education at the secondary level.
- ❖ The literacy rate in rural India is 67.77% as compared to 84.11% in urban India.

Groundwater: A Valuable but Diminishing Resource” Report

- ❖ This report was tabled in Parliament by the Standing Committee on Water Resources.
- ❖ Of the total annual extractable groundwater resource of 398 billion cubic metres (BCM) in the country till 2020, 245 BCM was being extracted.
- ❖ It indicated there was a decrease in the overall level of groundwater extraction from 63.3 per cent in 2017 to 61.6 per cent in 2020.
- ❖ Groundwater levels in Delhi, Ghaziabad, Faridabad, and 20 other cities dipped by more than 20 metres from 2017 to 2020.

GROUNDWATER USAGE			
State	Irrigation (IN BCM)	Extraction (IN BCM)	Share in Irrigation (%)
Punjab	32.80	33.85	96.90
Haryana	10.47	11.61	90.18
Assessment units from 2017-2020			
State	Improvement	Deteriorated	No change
Punjab	5	11	122
Haryana	13	15	113

- ❖ Haryana’s Faridabad has become 100 per cent dependent on groundwater use.
- ❖ Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan, which are extracting 97%, 90% and 86% of groundwater, respectively.
- ❖ Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh are also significant users of groundwater for irrigation as they are using approximately 89%, 92% and 90%, respectively.

NSS 78th Round Report

Item Description	Percentage (all-India) %		
	Rural	Urban	All*
persons reported to have improved source of drinking water ¹	95	97.2	95.7
persons reported access to improved latrine, among the persons who had reported access to latrine ²	97.5	99	98
persons reported access to hand washing facility with water and soap/detergent within the premises	77.4	92.7	81.9
households using clean fuel as primary source of energy for cookings ³	49.8	92	63.1
persons of age 15-29 years were in formal and non-formal education and training for the 12 months preceding the survey	33	39.4	34.9
persons of age 15-24 years not in education, employment or training (NEET) as on date of survey	30.2	27	29.3
persons of age 18 years and above who used mobile telephone with active sim card during the three months preceding the date of the survey	67.8	83.7	72.7
households in rural areas reported availability of all-weather roads within 2 km from the place of living	92.5	-	-
households reported purchase/ construction of any new house/flat after 31.03.2014	11.2	7.2	9.9
households reported purchase/construction of new house/flat for the first time, among the households which reported purchase/construction of any new house/flat after 31.03.2014	47.5	57.9	49.9
persons having current place of residence different from the last usual place of residence	26.8	34.6	29.1

- ❖ The National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) released the 78th round Multiple Indicator Survey (MIS) report
- ❖ Kerala, Manipur, Nagaland, and Jharkhand have less than 90% access to an improved source of drinking water.
- ❖ Among major states, Assam, Jharkhand, Bihar, and Odisha are among the worst in access to tapped drinking water for both rural and urban households.
- ❖ Among the major states Bihar, Jharkhand, and Odisha have the lowest proportion of rural households with access to an exclusive toilet.
- ❖ In Chhattisgarh, Odisha, West Bengal, Nagaland and Madhya Pradesh, for more than 70% of households, firewood is the primary source of energy for cooking.
- ❖ These states along with Jharkhand have less than 25% of households using LPG for cooking.
- ❖ During the survey period, 16.1% of males and 43.8% of females aged 15-24 years, were not studying, working, or training.
- ❖ Less than 50 % of people who were aged 18 or above had exclusive access to mobile phones.
- ❖ Among big states, Uttarakhand, Odisha, Kerala, and Delhi have the highest proportion (more than 20%) of men aged 15 to 24 who were not in education, employment, or training.

- ❖ For females, the proportion was highest in the states of Uttar Pradesh, Assam, Odisha, Gujarat, West Bengal, and Bihar.
- ❖ Some Key Findings

Green Tug Transition Program

- ❖ India aims at becoming 'Global Hub for Green Ship' building by 2030 with launch of Green Tug Transition Programme (GTTP).
- ❖ The programme will start with 'Green Hybrid Tugs'.
- ❖ It will be powered by green hybrid propulsion systems, and subsequently adopting non-fossil fuel solutions like (methanol, ammonia, hydrogen).
- ❖ India's first National Centre of Excellence in Green Port and Shipping was inaugurated in Haryana's Gurugram.

Mission Sahbhagita

- ❖ Mission Sahbhagita has been launched by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
- ❖ It is an important step towards participatory conservation and wise use of wetlands.
- ❖ Its aim is to enable a society ownership approach with communities leading at the forefront.
- ❖ The Ministry is currently implementing a centrally sponsored scheme namely, National Plan for Conservation of Aquatic Eco-systems (NPCA).
- ❖ Under the NPCA scheme, the ministry has sanctioned the central assistance for conservation of 165 wetlands across the country, including 42 Ramsar sites.

DigiClaim





- ❖ The Union Minister of Agriculture ministry launched the National Crop Insurance Portal's digitized claim settlement module 'DigiClaim'.
- ❖ This is launched under the ambit of Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY).
- ❖ Now claims will be disbursed electronically, which will benefit the respective farmers of six states.
- ❖ Those 6 states are Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Uttarakhand and Haryana.

Vedic Heritage Portal

- ❖ Union Home Minister inaugurated the Vedic Heritage Portal.
- ❖ It is created by the Indira Gandhi National Center for the Arts under the Ministry of Culture.
- ❖ It aims to communicate the message contained in the Vedas.
- ❖ It will be a one-stop solution for any information regarding Vedic Heritage.
- ❖ It has more than 18 thousand mantras of all four Vedas.

GST Appellate Tribunal

- ❖ Lok Sabha cleared changes in the Finance Bill to pave the way for setting up of an appellate tribunal for resolution of disputes under GST.
- ❖ As per the amendments, benches of the GST Appellate Tribunal would be set up in every state.
- ❖ This bench will include two judicial members, and two technical members representing the Centre and state.
- ❖ There will be a principal bench in Delhi.
- ❖ Principal bench will consist of a president, a judicial member and two technical members representing the Centre and state.
- ❖ Currently, taxpayers are filing writ petitions before high courts in the absence of the appellate tribunal.

Disqualification of Rahul Gandhi as MP

- ❖ Wayanad MP Rahul Gandhi's membership of Parliament has been cancelled following his conviction and 2 years sentencing by a local court in Surat.
- ❖ This disqualification made under in terms of the provisions of Article 102(1)(e) of the Constitution of India read with "Section 8 of the Representation of the People Act (RP), 1951".

- ❖ Section 8(3) of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 states that “a person convicted of any offence and sentenced to imprisonment for not less than two years shall be disqualified from the date of such conviction and shall continue to be disqualified for a further period of six years since his release.”
- ❖ Article 102 of the Constitution deals with grounds for disqualification of a parliamentarian.
- ❖ Sub-clause (e) of Article 102(1) says an MP will lose his membership of the House “if he is so disqualified by or under any law made by Parliament”.
- ❖ The law in this case is the RP Act.

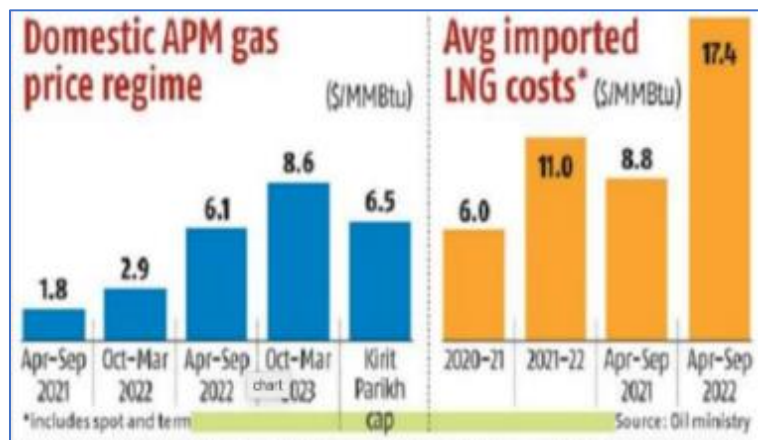
MAY ALSO HAVE TO VACATE TUGHLAQ LANE BUNGALOW

<p>> Section 8(3) of RP Act mandates disqualification of any lawmaker who is 'convicted of any offence and sentenced to imprisonment for not less than 2 years'</p> <p>> Sec 8(4) of Representation of People Act, 1951 states that disqualification takes effect only 'after 3 months have elapsed' from date of conviction. In 2013 ruling in 'Lily Thomas v Union of India', SC struck it down as unconstitutional and declared that MP/MLA would stand disqualified immediately</p> <p>> In 2018 'Lok Prahari v Union of India' order, SC said disqualification 'will not operate from date of stay of conviction by appellate court'</p> <p>> Rahul may have to vacate 12, Tughlaq Lane house in a month if he</p>	<p>doesn't get relief from higher court</p> <p>> Abhishek Manu Singhvi cites Lok Prahari judgment, says there's no automatic disqualification as Article 103 of Constitution states that only President has power to disqualify after taking EC's advice</p> <p>> Citing Section 8 of RP Act, an expert says disqualification from contesting polls will be for 8 years – 2-year jail and 6 from date of release</p> <p>> Gandhi second LS member, after Lakshadweep MP P Mohammed Faisal of NCP, to be disqualified following conviction. Kerala HC suspended Faisal's conviction and sentence but LS Secretariat is yet to revoke his disqualification</p> <p>> RJD chief Lalu Prasad Yadav was disqualified in 2013 after conviction</p>	<p>Rahul Gandhi attended Lok Sabha's morning session and a meeting of Congress MPs</p>
<p>Consequent upon his conviction by the court of Chief Judicial Magistrate, Surat... Rahul Gandhi, Lok Sabha MP representing Wayanad parliamentary constituency of Kerala, stands disqualified from the membership of the lower house from the date of his conviction, ie 23 March, 2023</p> <p style="text-align: right;">–LS Secretariat</p>		

I am fighting for the voice of India, I am ready to pay any cost

–Rahul Gandhi

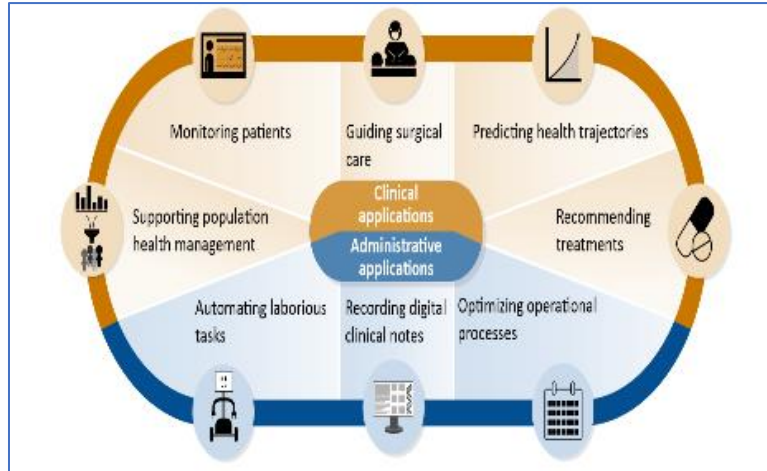
Kirit Parikh panel recommendations



- ❖ The Kirit Parikh panel was set up 2022 September to review the gas pricing formula for gas produced in the country
- ❖ The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas seek cabinet approval on the recommendations of the Kirit Parikh committee report.
- ❖ This report was suggesting fair price of natural gas to the end-consumer.
- ❖ The pricing of natural gas is revised bi-annually.

AI use in the health sector

- ❖ The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has released the country's first Ethical Guidelines for Application of Artificial Intelligence in Biomedical Research and Healthcare.
- ❖ It is aimed at creating “an ethics framework which can assist in the development, deployment, and adoption of AI-based solutions.
- ❖ This document is intended for all stakeholders involved in research on AI in biomedical research and healthcare, including creators, developers, researchers, clinicians, ethics committees, institutions, sponsors, and funding organizations.
- ❖ As per the guidelines, the ethical review process for AI in health comes under the domain of the ethics committee.



Guidelines to Address Human-Wildlife Conflict

- ❖ The Union Ministry for Environment, Forest and Climate Change released 14 guidelines to address Human-Wildlife Conflict (HWC).
- ❖ It aims to facilitate a common understanding among key stakeholders, on what constitutes effective and efficient mitigation of HWC in India.
- ❖ The guidelines are advisory in nature, and will facilitate in further development of site-specific HWC mitigation measures.

- ❖ These guidelines are developed under the Indo-German cooperation project on HWC Mitigation.
- ❖ 10 species-specific guidelines
 - Guidelines for Mitigating Human -Elephant, -Gaur, -Leopard, -Snake, - Crocodile, -Rhesus Macaque, -Wild Pig, -Bear, -Blue Bull and -Blackbuck Conflict.
- ❖ 4 guidelines on cross-cutting issues
 - Guidelines for Cooperation between the Forest and Media sector in India: Towards effective communication on Human-Wildlife Conflict Mitigation
 - Occupational Health and Safety in the Context of Human–Wildlife Conflict Mitigation
 - Crowd Management in Human-Wildlife Conflict Related Situations
 - Addressing Health Emergencies and Potential Health Risks Arising Out of Human—Wildlife Conflict Situations: Taking a One Health Approach.

CBuD App

- ❖ The app named ‘Call Before u Dig’ (CBuD) was launched recently.
- ❖ It is an initiative of the Department of Telecommunications, Ministry of Communications.
- ❖ It is aimed at providing an interface to the excavating agencies where they can enquire about the availability of existing underground utilities before beginning excavation work.
- ❖ It will prevent losses of about Rs 3,000 crore (\$400 million) every year due to damage to underlying assets like optical fibre cables.
- ❖ It will help ensure the safety of the various underlying utility assets such as gas pipelines, water pipelines, and optical fibre cables.



Increase of MNREGA wages

- ❖ The Centre has notified a hike in wage rates under its rural job guarantee programme, the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MNREGS), for the 2023-24 financial year.
- ❖ Haryana gave the highest daily wage at Rs 357 per day.
- ❖ Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh gave the lowest at Rs 221.
- ❖ Goa and Karnataka have received the lowest hike with an increase of a mere two per cent.
- ❖ Rajasthan has received the maximum gain, with wages increasing by 10.39 per cent from April 1 over the current wage rate.
- ❖ Seven other states have received less than a 5 per cent increase in wage rates for 2023-24 over the current (2022-23) rates.
- ❖ They are Meghalaya (3.4 per cent), Manipur (3.59 per cent), Arunachal Pradesh (3.7 per cent), Nagaland (3.7 per cent), Assam (3.93 per cent), Tamil Nadu (4.63 per cent), and Puducherry (4.63 per cent).

State	MNREGA wages 2022-23	Notified min wages**	Avg wage of agr workers ¹	Avg wage of non-agr workers ²	% chng. 8	State	MNREGA wages 2022-23	Notified min wages**	Avg wage of agr workers ¹	Avg wage of non-agr workers ²	% chng. 8
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	311-323*	NA	NA	NA	NA	Madhya Pradesh	221	228	217.8	230.3	-3.57
Andhra Pradesh	372	392	343.5	337.7	-7.35	Maharashtra	275	276	284.2	277.2	-1.30
Arunachal Pradesh	224	NA	NA	NA	NA	Manipur	250	NA	NA	NA	NA
Assam	238	242	307.6	306.4	+0.49	Meghalaya	238	NA	326.8	283.9	NA
Bihar	228	279	250.3	259.1	-22.37	Mizoram	249	NA	NA	NA	NA
Chhattisgarh	221	257	NA	NA	-16.29	Nagaland	224	NA	NA	NA	NA
Chennai and Nagar Haveli	257	NA	NA	NA	NA	Odisha	237	308	249.5	284.9	-29.06
Daman and Diu	257	NA	NA	NA	NA	Puducherry	294	NA	NA	NA	NA
Goa	322	NA	NA	NA	NA	Punjab	303	341	322.5	355.9	-19.36
Gujarat	256	310	210.3	252.3	-21.09	Rajasthan	255	225	358.3	333.6	11.76
Haryana	357	358	395	409.3	-3.28	Sikkim	236	NA	NA	NA	NA
HP	224-293**	275	457.6	389.8	NA	Tamil Nadu	234	322	445.6	442.3	-0.52
Jammu & Kashmir & Ladakh	244	225	524.6	520.8	7.79	Telangana	272	306	NA	NA	-12.50
Jharkhand	228	300	NA	NA	-31.58	Tripura	226	NA	220	250	NA
Karnataka	316	425	335.2	297.9	-34.49	Uttar Pradesh	230	237	268	302.9	12.61
Kerala	333	410	326.8	381.8	-23.32	Uttarakhand	230	245	NA	NA	-6.52
Lakshadweep	304	NA	NA	NA	NA	West Bengal	237	260	305.3	303.7	-0.70

‘Human Rights Issues’ in India: US Report

- ❖ This is an annual exercise led by a bureau within the State Department and is mandated by the US Congress.
- ❖ It has listed significant human rights issues in India in 2022.
- ❖ This includes unlawful and arbitrary killing, freedom of press and violence targeting religious and ethnic minorities.
- ❖ It mentions human rights violations such as extrajudicial killings, torture or cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment by police and prison officials, and harsh and life-threatening prison conditions.

INTERNATIONAL

UN Voting on Ukraine War

- ❖ India has once again abstained from voting in a UN General Assembly resolution that condemned Russia's invasion of Ukraine on the eve of the first anniversary of Russia's invasion.
- ❖ During the vote in the 193-member UNGA, 141 member nations voted in favour of the resolution.
- ❖ While 7 opposed the resolution, India, China, Iran and South Africa were among the 32 countries to abstain in the vote.
- ❖ The seven countries who voted against it were Russia, Belarus, North Korea, Eritrea, Mali, Nicaragua and Syria.
- ❖ India's defence trade with the US is around 21 billion USD.
- ❖ But Russia is still the largest exporter of defence goods for India.

New World Bank President

- ❖ Indian-American business executive Ajay Banga was nominated by US President Joe Biden to head the World Bank.
- ❖ He will be the first Indian-American to head either of the two top international financial institutions: the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.
- ❖ He was also the president and CEO of Mastercard, the financial services company.
- ❖ In 2016, Banga was awarded the Padma Shri by the President of India.
- ❖ The president of the World Bank is ex officio chair of the Board of executive directors of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) or the World Bank and the International Development Association (IDA).
- ❖ US banker David Malpass was the previous president of the World Bank Group who stepped down recently.



World Sustainable Development Summit

- ❖ The 22nd edition of the Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) — the World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS) is held in New Delhi.
- ❖ The Summit deliberations was focused on the umbrella theme: Mainstreaming Sustainable Development and Climate Resilience for Collective Action.
- ❖ The year 2022 marks an important milestone.
- ❖ It has been 50 years since the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, popularly known as the 1972 Stockholm Conference.



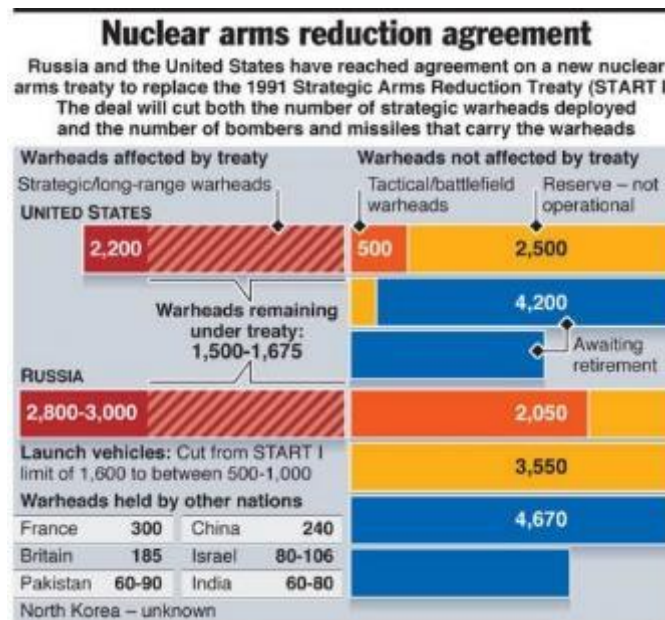
FATF membership of Russia

- ❖ The Financial Action Task Force has suspended Russia's membership.
- ❖ But the Russian Federation must continue to meet its financial obligations.
- ❖ It also added Africa's two largest economies, Nigeria and South Africa in the "grey-list".
- ❖ Morocco and Cambodia were taken off the list after improving their controls.
- ❖ The Financial Action Task Force is an inter-governmental organisation, founded in 1989 on the initiative of the G7.
- ❖ It fights against money laundering and terrorism financing by setting global standards and checking if countries respect them.

Russia and START Nuclear Treaty

- ❖ Russian President Vladimir Putin suspended his country's participation in the New START nuclear arms reduction treaty with the United States.
- ❖ The name START comes from the original "Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty".

- ❖ It is also known as START-I.
- ❖ It was signed between the US and the erstwhile USSR in 1991, and came into force in 1994.
- ❖ START-I is capped the numbers of nuclear warheads and intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) that each side could deploy at 6,000 and 1,600 respectively.
- ❖ The New START was officially entered into force on February 5, 2011.
- ❖ The US and Russia Federation subsequently agreed to extend the treaty through February 4, 2026.



Frozen seafood from India



- ❖ Qatar has lifted its temporary ban on the import of frozen seafood from India.
- ❖ It was paving the way for enhanced export and improved bilateral relations with the West Asian country.
- ❖ The ban was imposed last year in November 2022 following the alleged detection of Vibrio cholera from a few consignments from India.
- ❖ Recently, Beijing also lifted the suspension of 99 Indian seafood-processing exporters after acknowledging India's assurance over source control.

Windsor framework

- ❖ The UK government under Prime Minister Rishi Sunak reached a landmark deal with the European Union (EU).
- ❖ This will aid on post-Brexit trade rules that will govern Northern Ireland.
- ❖ The 'Windsor Framework' will replace the Northern Ireland Protocol.
- ❖ It had proved to be among the thorniest of Brexit fall-outs, creating problems both economic and political.
- ❖ The new framework has two crucial aspects – the introduction of a green lane and red lane system for goods that will stay in Northern Ireland and those that will go to the EU respectively.
- ❖ It also aimed at protecting Northern Ireland's position within the U.K., and restoring its people's sovereignty.



'Chip 4' talks for supply chain

- ❖ Japan, USA, South Korea and Taiwan have taken part in the virtual conference of the "Chip 4" alliance.
- ❖ It is held under a new U.S.-led framework to help ensure a stable supply of semiconductors.

- ❖ It aims to discuss ways to maintain supply chain resilience in times of natural disasters and other contingencies.

83.7 percent enriched uranium

- ❖ International Atomic Energy Agency discovered uranium particles enriched up to 83.7 per cent in the underground Fordo nuclear site of Iran.
- ❖ But there is no stockpile of uranium enriched above 69 per cent is being built by Iran.
- ❖ Iran's 2015 nuclear deal limited Tehran's uranium stockpile to 300 kilograms (661 pounds) and enrichment to 3.67%.
- ❖ The 3.67% enrichment is enough to fuel a nuclear power plant.
- ❖ The U.S.' unilateral withdraw from the accord in 2018 set in motion a series of attacks and escalations by Tehran over its program.



Sweden International Information Campaign



- ❖ The Swedish government has announced an international information campaign to discourage migrants from coming to the country.



- ❖ The campaign will spread information about the migration policy of Sweden.
- ❖ During the campaign, the Sweden Government will create contact points in foreign countries.
- ❖ Sweden has been welcoming refugees and resettling them since 1950.
- ❖ According to the Sweden Government, in 2019, 76% of the refugees who arrived in the Nordic countries ended up in Sweden.
- ❖ Sweden is planning on decreasing this number by adopting this campaign.

REAIM 2023

- ❖ The world's first international summit on the responsible use of artificial intelligence in the military held in the Netherlands.
- ❖ The REAIM 2023 brings together governments, corporations, academia, startups, and civil societies.
- ❖ It aims to raise awareness, discuss issues,
- ❖ And possibly, it aims agree on common principles in deploying and using AI in armed conflicts.

Nine Point Crypto Action Plan

- ❖ The International Monetary Fund has laid out a nine-point action plan for how countries should treat crypto assets.
- ❖ It was against to give cryptocurrencies such as bitcoin legal tender status safeguard monetary sovereignty.
- ❖ It was asked to guard against excessive capital flows.
 - Instruction to adopt unambiguous tax rules and laws around crypto assets.
 - Favour to developing and enforcing oversight requirements for all crypto market actors.
 - Establishment of international arrangements to increase enforcement regulations.
 - Setting up of methodologies to monitor the impact of cryptocurrency.
 - Imposing taxes on organizations which using crypto.
- ❖ El Salvador in late 2021 became the first to adopt bitcoin as legal tender.
- ❖ It lost more than 60 million USD during its bitcoin experiment and faced an economic crisis and a very high deficit.

Ban on Caste Discrimination

- ❖ Seattle has become the first city in the US to bring in legislation banning caste-based discrimination.
- ❖ It prohibits “businesses from discriminating based on caste with respect to hiring, tenure, promotion, workplace conditions or wages.”
- ❖ Over 1,67,000 people from South Asia live in Washington state, largely concentrated in the Greater Seattle area.
- ❖ In December 2019, Brandeis University near Boston became the first U.S. college to include caste in its non-discrimination policy.



Vanuatu and climate justice

- ❖ A group of 16 countries has launched a gallant effort to fight the problem of climate change at the United Nations (UN).
- ❖ The group led by Vanuatu, seeks an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on the issue of climate change.
- ❖ Vanuatu launched an initiative, through the UNGA, to seek an advisory opinion from the ICJ to “clarify the legal obligations of all countries to prevent and redress the adverse effects of climate change”.
- ❖ The ICJ has two types of jurisdictions: contentious and advisory.
- ❖ While contentious jurisdiction refers to resolving legal disputes between consenting states, under advisory jurisdiction.
- ❖ Unlike decisions given under the contentious jurisdiction, the ICJ’s advisory opinions are non-binding.
- ❖ The ICJ’s advisory opinion on climate change will also be handy in climate-related litigation at the national level.



Intercontinental ballistic missile Hwasong 5

- ❖ North Korea launched its Hwasong-15 intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) in open waters of the East Sea of Korea.
- ❖ The missile flew 989 km with a maximum altitude of 5,768 km.
- ❖ It had the capacity to reach the continental United States given a normalized range of 14,000 kilometres.
- ❖ The missile had its maiden flight in 2017.

North Korea's main intercontinental ballistic missiles

	Hwasong-14	Hwasong-15	Hwasong-17
Range (km)	10,000	8,500-13,000	At least 15,000
Length	19.8 m	21-22.5 m	22-24 m
Diameter	1.85 m	2-2.4 m	2.4 m
Engine	Two-stage	Two-stage	Three-stage
Key facts	Two were successfully fired in July 2017, shortly before sixth nuclear test.	First launched in November 2017. Leader Kim Jong Un declared the "completion" of the "state nuclear force."	Thought capable of carrying multiple to be nuclear warheads. Thursday's launch apparently failed. Claim of first successful launch in March 2022 may have involved an older version.

Sources: Center for Strategic and International Studies, Yonhap News TV, others.
Photos: Korean Central News Agency via Reuters.

Munich Security Conference

- ❖ Munich Security Conference (MSC) is an annual conference on contemporary global security policy challenges in Munich, Germany.
- ❖ The MSC was founded by a German official and publisher Ewald-Heinrich von Kleist at the peak of the Cold War (1947-1991).

- ❖ The conference, started in 1963 and initially only focused on military issues.
- ❖ It was mainly attended by western countries and their high-profile officials.
- ❖ After the end of the Cold War, it expanded its agenda that went beyond defence and security matters to include issues such as climate change and migration.
- ❖ It also started to invite leaders from eastern nations, including Russia, India and China.

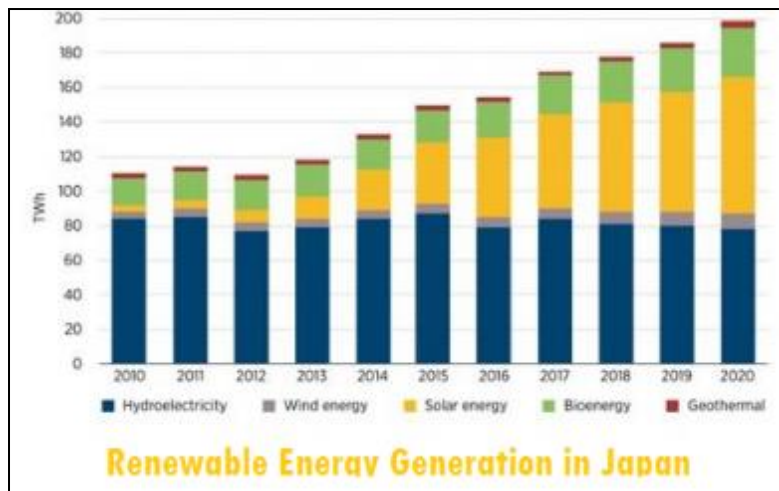
Global Security Initiative



- ❖ A new Global Security Initiative (GSI) was proposed by Chinese President Recently.
- ❖ GSI calls for a "common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable" security and building an Asian security model of mutual respect, openness and integration".
- ❖ It aims to counter the US Indo-Pacific strategy and the Quad (India, US, Australia, Japan grouping).
- ❖ China held that the Global security initiative is envisaged to uphold the principle of "indivisible security".
- ❖ The principle of "indivisible security" means that no country can strengthen its own security at the expense of others.

Asia Energy Transition Initiative (AETI)

- ❖ Japan plans to provide support to India to drive the transition to clean energy, expanding Japan's 'Asia Energy Transition Initiative'.
- ❖ Japan's Asia Energy Transition Initiative (AETI) was launched in 2021.
- ❖ Initially it supported the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries towards achieving net zero emissions.
- ❖ India has set an ambitious target of achieving net zero by 2070.
- ❖ Japan has initiated a goal of becoming net zero by 2050.
- ❖ The countries are utilising new technologies and economic models that would help reduce emissions.



Cobra Warrior exercise



- ❖ The Cobra Warrior Exercise is to be held at Waddington Air Force Base, England.
- ❖ It is a multilateral Air exercise in which Air Forces from Finland, Sweden, South Africa, the United States of America and Singapore would be participating.

- ❖ India is also participating in the exercise with Mirage 2000 fighters, C-17 Globemaster III and an IL-78 mid-air refueller aircraft.

India-ASEAN Digital Work Plan 2023

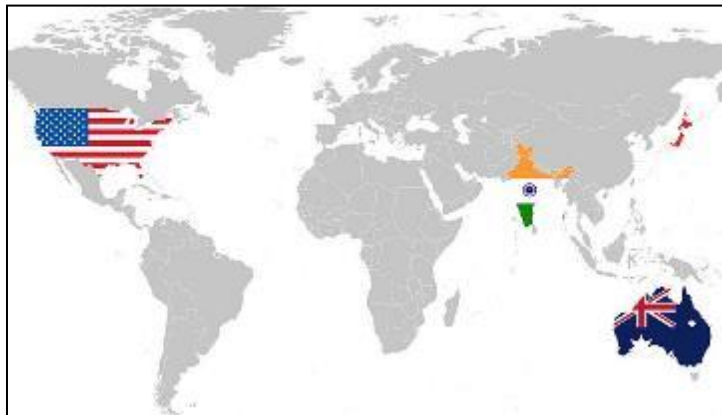
- ❖ The 3rd ASEAN Digital Ministers (ADGMIN) meeting with India was held on a virtual platform.
- ❖ India-ASEAN Digital Work Plan 2023 approved during the meeting.
- ❖ This plan includes initiatives for capacity building and knowledge sharing in areas such as AI in Cybersecurity, IoT and AI in Next Generation Smart Cities, and the role of ICTs in implementing digital health and security.
- ❖ The theme of the meeting was “Synergy towards a Sustainable Digital Future”.
- ❖ The main objective of the meeting was to enhance the strength between India and ASEAN in the field of IT.



Quad Cyber Challenge

- ❖ The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue or Quad launched a public campaign 'Quad Cyber Challenge' to improve cyber security across their nations.
- ❖ The Quad has invited Internet users across the Indo-Pacific and beyond to become part of the challenge and practice "safe and responsible cyber habits."
- ❖ It is the continuous efforts of Quad nations to bolster cyber security awareness and action and to foster a more secure and resilient cyber ecosystem to benefit economies and users.

- ❖ The action in India is being coordinated by the office of the National Cyber Coordinator with the National Security Council Secretariat.
- ❖ The Quad is comprising India, United States, Japan and Australia.



9th Asian Ministerial Energy Roundtable (AMER9)

- ❖ India hosted 9th Asian Ministerial Energy Roundtable in association with the International Energy Forum (IEF) in Bengaluru.
- ❖ Theme for this event was “Mapping new pathways for energy security, inclusive growth and energy transitions.”
- ❖ India has met its commitment of 40% of its installed electricity capacity from non-fossil energy sources by 2030 November 2021.
- ❖ The International Energy Forum (IEF) is the world’s largest energy organization with 71 member countries.
- ❖ The members accounting for 90 per cent of the global energy market.

Fifth International MPA Congress

- ❖ Recently, the 5th International Marine Protected Areas Congress (IMPAC5) was held in Canada.
- ❖ It aims to discuss the solutions to address the Funding Gap of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs).
- ❖ IMPAC5 aims to provide a forum for sharing knowledge, successes and best practices in an open and respectful environment for the exchanging of ideas among a diversity of views.
- ❖ Three marine protected areas (MPAs) won prestigious Blue Park Awards in the event.



Ban on gas, diesel car sales

- ❖ The European Parliament has approved the law to ban the sale of new gas and diesel cars in the EU, starting in 2035.
- ❖ But the manufacturers can still make the cars and sell them in other countries
- ❖ The new legislation sets the path towards zero CO2 emissions for new passenger cars and light commercial vehicles in 2035.
- ❖ The Commission will present by 2025 a methodology to assess and report data on CO2 emissions throughout the full life-cycle of cars and vans sold on the EU market.
- ❖ This regulation encourages the production of zero- and low-emission vehicles.



IDEX and NAVDEX

- ❖ Indian Navy has sent INS Sumedha to participate in NAVDEX 23 (Naval Defence Exhibition) and IDEX 23 (International Defence Exhibition).
- ❖ The IDEX-UAE is considered to be a strategically important tri-service defence exhibition internationally.

- ❖ This is the only international defence exhibition and conference which takes place in the Middle East and North Africa region (MENA) region.
- ❖ It displays the latest, state of the art technology available globally in the defence sector – across land, sea and air.
- ❖ INS Sumedha is the 3rd ship of the indigenously built Saryu class Naval Offshore Patrol Vessels (NOPV) which was commissioned into the Indian Navy in 2014.



Exercise Desert Flag VIII



- ❖ UAE is hosting 3-week long Exercise Desert Flag VIII.
- ❖ It is a multilateral air exercise involving the participation of UAE, France, Kuwait, Australia, the UK, Bahrain, Morocco, Spain, the Republic of Korea, and the US.
- ❖ It aims to bring about the interoperability of different fighter engagements and sharing of best practices of various Air Forces.
- ❖ The IAF would be participating with five LCA Tejas and two C-17 Globemaster III aircraft.
- ❖ This is the first occasion when the LCA Tejas shall participate in an international flying exercise outside India.

Malabar Exercise 2023

- ❖ Malabar 2023 is scheduled to be held in August this year and Australia will host this edition.
- ❖ Australia was included as a permanent member of Ex Malabar in 2020.
- ❖ Japan joined the Naval Exercises in 2015.
- ❖ Japan hosted the last edition of Malabar which was held in November 2022.
- ❖ 2022 edition marked 30 years of the exercise which began as a bilateral exercise between India and the U.S. in 1992.



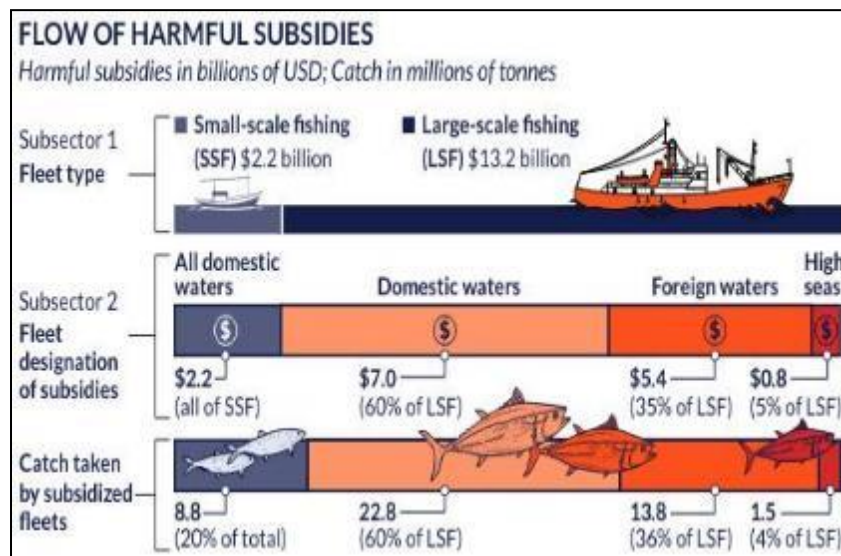
World's longest calligraphic mural



- ❖ Saudi Arabia has installed the longest calligraphic mural in the world on King Abdul Aziz Street, the road that leads to Makkah's Grand Mosque.
- ❖ The 75-meter-long mural, designed by artist Amal Felemban, joins an array of sculptures and installations.
- ❖ The mural presents a beauty that carries the heritage of people, their ideas and their history throughout the ages.

New Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies

- ❖ Switzerland is the first WTO member to formally accept the new Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies.
- ❖ Singapore became the second member to ratify this agreement.
- ❖ WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies was adopted at the 12th Ministerial Conference in 2022.
- ❖ The agreement is prohibiting harmful fisheries subsidies, which are a key factor in the widespread depletion of the world's fish stocks.
- ❖ Developing Countries and Least Developed Countries have been allowed a transition period of two years from the date of entry into force of this Agreement.
- ❖ It is the first WTO agreement to focus on the environment, the first broad, binding, multilateral agreement on ocean sustainability.
- ❖ Also, this is the second agreement reached at the WTO since its inception.



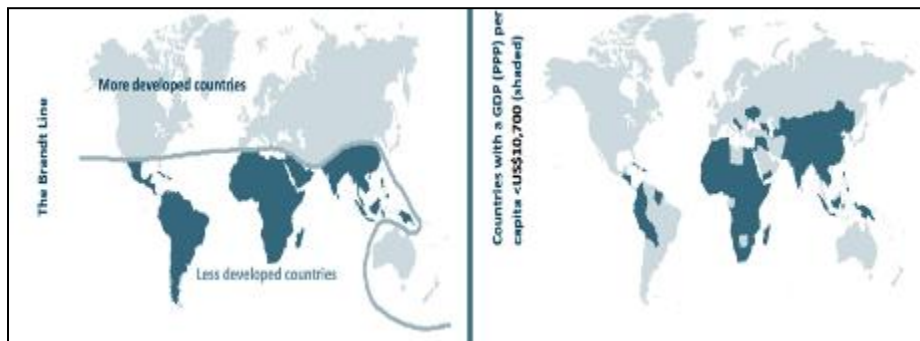
Bluesky



- ❖ Jack Dorsey, Twitter's former CEO and founder launched his own social media platform, called Bluesky.
- ❖ Bluesky is based on the principle of allowing users to build a shared and open social media platform.

The Qatar Ministerial Meeting on South-South Cooperation

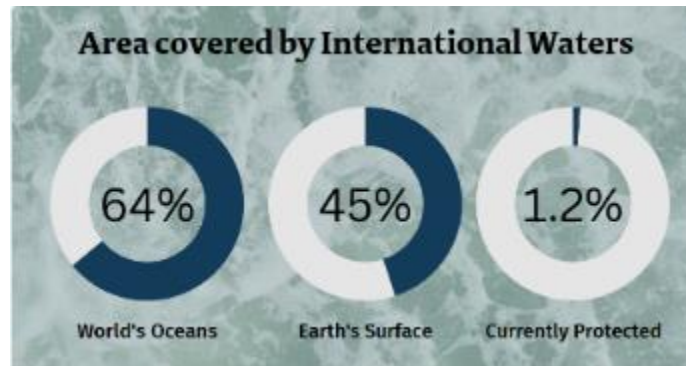
- ❖ A Ministerial Meeting on South-South Cooperation has been held during LDC5 (Least Developed Countries).
- ❖ It aims to explore concrete, innovative and actionable solutions.
- ❖ The South-South cooperation track aims to provide a platform to forge broad partnerships in support of deliverables of the Doha Programme of Action.



UN High Seas Treaty

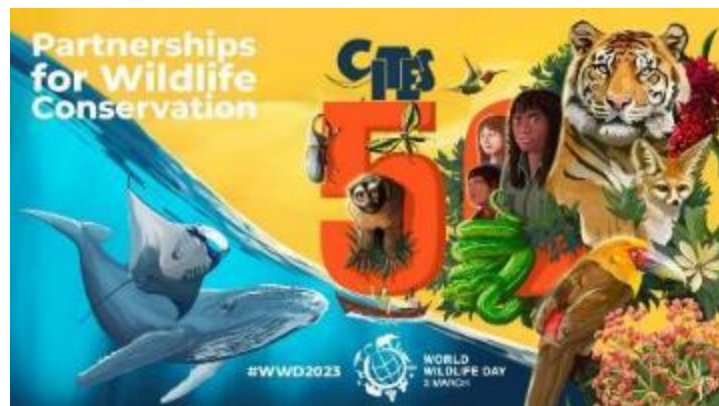
- ❖ Members of the United Nations have agreed on an international treaty to protect biodiversity in international waters, which cover nearly two-thirds of the ocean.
- ❖ It is also referred to as the 'Paris Agreement for the Ocean'.
- ❖ In 1982, the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, or UNCLOS was adopted.
- ❖ The Convention delineated rules to govern the oceans and the use of its resources.
- ❖ But there was no comprehensive legal framework that covered the high seas.
- ❖ Parts of the sea that are not included in the territorial waters or the internal waters of a country are known as the high seas, according to the 1958 Geneva Convention on the High Seas.
- ❖ It is the area beyond a country's Exclusive Economic Zone which extends up to 200 nautical miles (370 km) from the coastline.
- ❖ No country is responsible for the management and protection of resources on the high seas.

- ❖ The high seas account for more than 60% of the world's ocean area and cover about half of the Earth's surface.
- ❖ At the COP of the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP15), countries agreed to protect 30% of oceans by 2030.
- ❖ It is a part of the '30 x 30 pledge' made by the historic Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF).

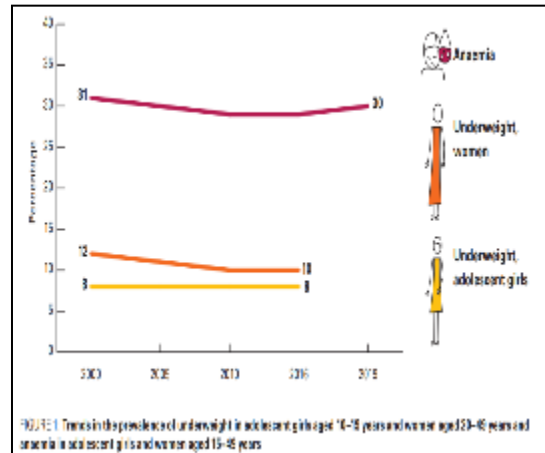


50th anniversary of CITES

- ❖ The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) was signed in 3rd March 1973.
- ❖ CITES is an international treaty that aims to regulate and monitor the trade of endangered plants and animals, including their parts and derivatives.
- ❖ Under CITES, member countries are required to regulate and monitor the trade of endangered species through a system of permits and quotas.
- ❖ They must also report regularly on their implementation of the treaty and collaborate with other countries to ensure its effectiveness.
- ❖ CITES protects almost 40,000 species against over-exploitation because of international trade.
- ❖ Currently, CITES has 184 parties.



Undernourished and Overlooked



- ❖ UNICEF released a report named 'Undernourished and Overlooked: A Global Nutrition Crisis in Adolescent Girls and Women'.
- ❖ It examines the current status, trends and inequities in the nutritional status of adolescent girls and women of reproductive age.
- ❖ The number of pregnant and breastfeeding adolescent girls and women suffering from acute malnutrition has soared from 5.5 million to 6.9 million or 25 per cent since 2020 in 12 countries.
- ❖ The 12 countries are including Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Chad, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Yemen.
- ❖ Globally, 51 million children under 2 years suffer stunting, meaning they are too short for their age due to malnutrition.
- ❖ South Asia and sub-Saharan African remain the epicentre of the nutrition crisis among adolescent girls and women.
- ❖ They are the home to 2 in 3 adolescent girls and women suffering from underweight globally, and 3 in 5 adolescent girls and women with anaemia.
- ❖ In 2021, there were 126 million more food insecure women than men, compared to 49 million more in 2019.

FRINJEX-23

- ❖ The maiden joint military exercise, FRINJEX-23, between the Indian Army and French Army conducted at the Pangode military station, Kerala.
- ❖ It is for the first time that both countries are engaging in this format with each contingent comprising a Company Group.
- ❖ The exercise is aimed at enhancing inter-operability, coordination, and cooperation between both forces at tactical the level.

- ❖ The theme for the exercise is based on “Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Operations in a Contested Environment”.



IMX/CE-23 Exercise



- ❖ INS Trikanth is taking part in the International Maritime Exercise/ Cutlass Express 2023 (IMX/CE-23), being held at the Gulf region.
- ❖ It is organized by the US-led Combined Maritime Forces (CMF), a 34-nation naval group.
- ❖ Trikanth will participate in the exercise alongside participants from over 50 nations and international maritime agencies.
- ❖ IMX/CE-23 is one of the world’s largest multinational maritime exercises.
- ❖ While this is the Indian Navy’s first IMX participation, it is also the second time an Indian Naval ship has participated in a CMF exercise.

- ❖ Previously, in November 2022, INS Trikand took part in the CMF-led Operation Sea Sword 2.

Maritime Partnership Exercise (MPX)



- ❖ Indian Navy's INS Sahyadri participated in Maritime Partnership Exercise (MPX) along with French Navy ships held in the Arabian Sea.
- ❖ The exercise witnessed a wide spectrum of evolutions at sea which included cross deck landings, boarding exercises and seamanship evolutions.
- ❖ INS Sahyadri is the advanced, stealth-minded, guided-missile frigate warship of the Shivalik class.

Graduate from Least Developed Countries

- ❖ Bhutan become the seventh nation to graduate from the United Nations' (UN) list of Least Developed Countries (LDC).
- ❖ Bangladesh, Laos, and Nepal were suggested for deletion from the list at the UN's triennial review of LDC nations in 2021.
- ❖ In 1971, Bhutan was added to the initial list of LDCs.
- ❖ Bhutan first achieved graduation criteria in 2015 and then again in 2018.
- ❖ Bhutan was so expected to complete its graduation in 2021.
- ❖ With an average annual growth rate of more than 7 per cent, Bhutan's economy has grown more than eight times in the previous 20 years.
- ❖ Its hydropower exports to India currently make about 20% of its economy.
- ❖ UN definition for LDC: A country that exhibits the lowest indicators of socio economic development, with low levels of income, human capital, and economic diversification, high levels of economic vulnerability, and a population that is disproportionately dependent on agriculture, natural resources, and primary commodities.

- ❖ The UN now recognises 46 nations as LDCs.
- ❖ One from the Caribbean, 9 from Asia, 33 from Africa, and 3 from the Pacific region make up the remaining group.



Silicon Valley Bank Collapse

The Silicon Valley Bank (SVB) crisis explained

WHAT IS SVB?

The 1983-founded California-based SVB has become an iconic Silicon Valley status.

"IT PROVIDES MULTIPLE SERVICES TO VENTURE CAPITAL, PRIVATE EQUITY FIRMS IN ADDITION TO OFFERING PRIVATE BANKING SERVICES FOR HIGH NETWORTH INDIVIDUALS."

HOW BIG IS IT?

SVB has 2.5 million customers with nearly half of all the US venture-backed start-ups, and 44% of the US venture-backed tech start-ups are firms that went public last year.

As of December 31, SVB had \$210 billion in deposits.

The bank's assets include bonds, loans, and other financial products.

WHAT WENT WRONG AT SVB: A TIMELINE

- During the funding boom of 2020, SVB increased large deposits to \$180 billion in 2021, which rose peaked to \$198 billion.
- It later invested heavily in bonds, which were being valued at low interest rates since SVB's balance sheet for 2022 and showed \$40 billion in securities.
- In 2022, the US Federal Reserve started raising interest rates, which drove down the value of bond holdings owned at lower rates.
- Rising interest rates also led to venture capital firms cutting newer start-ups due to lack of available funding.
- As funding depleted, news of a bank by startups in California led to SVB's stock price falling, forcing the bank to sell securities at a loss to cover up.
- On Wednesday, SVB announced it had sold \$2 billion worth of bond assets at a loss of \$1.5 billion.
- It also said it was raising \$2.25 billion via a share sale.

WHAT'S THE IMPACT?

Fearing insolvency, SVB's large investors like Coatue Management, First Round Capital, and others are adding their own losses to the bank's crisis.

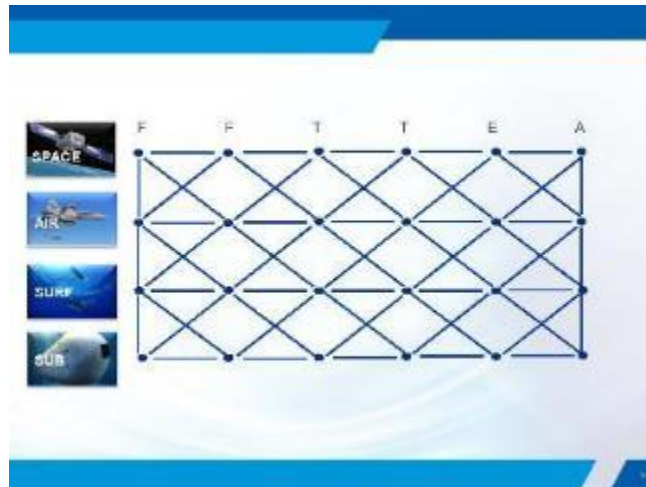
SVB has urged its customers to not spread rumors about the bank's financial health.

- ❖ The Silicon Valley Bank was closed by California banking regulators of USA.
- ❖ This is the biggest retail banking failure since the global financial crisis in 2008.
- ❖ US regulators shuttered Silicon Valley Bank (SVB) and took control of its deposits.
- ❖ Silicon Valley Bank is known for lending money to some of the biggest technology startups.
- ❖ Silicon Valley Bank invested most of its assets in US bonds.
- ❖ To bring down the inflation rates, the federal reserve last year began raising interest rates, which resulted in the bond values going down.
- ❖ It had lost nearly \$2 billion.

- ❖ After the bank's closure, nearly \$175 billion of customer deposits are now under the control of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC).
- ❖ The FDIC has created a new bank, the National Bank of Santa Clara.
- ❖ That will now hold all the assets of Silicon Valley Bank.

Kill Web strategy

- ❖ South Korean military would use a more effective operational concept, “Kill Web”.
- ❖ This will eliminate threats from North Korea’s advancing nuclear and missile capabilities even at the prelaunch stage.
- ❖ It is a multi-layered system that uses advanced warfare techniques such as cyber operations and electronic warfare.
- ❖ The Kill Web is a flexible strategy that allows field officers to modify their initial target selections to maximize strike operations.
- ❖ Currently, the nation uses the Kill Chain mechanism, under its Three Axis System.
- ❖ Unlike the Kill Web, the Kill Chain uses a single path and is less flexible.



Sea Dragon 23

- ❖ The Indian Navy’s P8I aircraft participated in Sea Dragon 23, Guam of USA.
- ❖ It is the third edition of the coordinated multilateral anti-submarine warfare (ASW) exercise for long-range maritime reconnaissance aircraft.
- ❖ The exercise aimed to consolidate their shared commitment to regional and global security challenges.

- ❖ The Exercise also aims to achieve high levels of synergy and coordination between the friendly navies.



3rd edition of La Perouse

- ❖ The two-day multilateral maritime exercise La Perouse was held in the Indian ocean.
- ❖ The French navy is the in-charge of this drill.
- ❖ Personnel, ships and integral helicopters of the Australian Navy, French Navy, Indian Navy, Japanese force, and United States participated in this event.
- ❖ It aims to enhance maritime co-ordination among the participant navies.



Common Currency for Brazil and Argentina

- ❖ Brazil and Argentina are starting preparatory work on having a common currency.
- ❖ The new currency Brazil suggests called as "sur" (south).

- ❖ It could boost regional trade and reduce reliance on the U.S. dollar.
- ❖ It would at first run in parallel with the Brazilian real and Argentine peso.
- ❖ A currency union that covered all of Latin America would represent about 5 per cent of global GDP.
- ❖ The world's largest currency union, the euro, encompasses about 14 per cent of global GDP when measured in dollar terms.



Doha Political Declaration

- ❖ The Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries LDC5 conference held under the theme “From Potential to Prosperity” at Qatar.
- ❖ The LDC5 concluded with adoption of the ‘Doha Political Declaration’ by the world leaders.
- ❖ The 10-year plan to put the world’s 46 most vulnerable countries back on track to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).
- ❖ In the last decade, debt service costs in LDCs have jumped to over 20 per cent from around 5 per cent in 2011.

Gender self-determination law

- ❖ Spanish lawmakers approved a transgender law letting anyone 16 and older change the gender on their ID card.
- ❖ In Europe, Denmark was the first country to grant such a right in 2014.
- ❖ This law recognises the right of trans people to self-determine their gender identity, it depathologises trans people.



Australia - Anniversary of Stolen Generation Apology



- ❖ As many as one in three Indigenous children were removed from their families between 1910 and the 1970s in a bid to assimilate them into white society.
- ❖ In 1995, the Human Rights Commission of Australia launched a nationwide investigation and collected more than 1000s of stolen generation children.
- ❖ In 1997, “Bringing them Home” was launched.
- ❖ In 2008, former Prime Minister of Australia Kevin Rudd formally apologized to the indigenous people of Australia.
- ❖ In 2023, the Australian Government is marking the 15th Anniversary of Stolen Generation Apology.

King Charles III stamp

- ❖ New stamps featuring the image of King Charles were revealed recently.
- ❖ The new so-called "definitive stamp" is intended for everyday use and consisting solely of the monarch's head.
- ❖ From coins and banknotes and to the official royal cypher used by the government.
- ❖ Britain has been slowly introducing replacements featuring the new monarch.
- ❖ Charles is the seventh British monarch to appear on a definitive stamp.



Arrest warrant for Vladimir Putin

- ❖ The international criminal court (ICC) in the Hague has issued an arrest warrant for Vladimir Putin for overseeing the abduction of Ukrainian children.
- ❖ Russia does not recognise the court's jurisdiction, and it was not affected by the warrants.
- ❖ But the Russian leader will face limits on his freedom of travel to the ICC's 123 member states.
- ❖ India is also not an ICC member.
- ❖ And Putin is expected to travel to New Delhi at the end of the year for the G20 world leaders' summit.
- ❖ The ICC does not recognise immunity for heads of state in cases involving war crimes, crimes against humanity or genocide.



NZIA and CRMA

Comparing the CRMA and NZIA of the EU to the IRA of the United States

Please note that US Treasury guidance has not yet been issued

	EU		USA	
	NZIA: Manufacturing Capacity Targets	CRMA: Strategic Raw Materials Value Chain	IRA: Scientific Content and Manufacturing Requirements	
Total net zero manufacturing capacity	40% of EU annual deployment needs to meet REPowerEU and Green Deal objectives	Enables capacity	Dependencies (including steel, lithium, rare earths, silicon, graphite, copper, cobalt, nickel, platinum, palladium, silver, tellurium, tungsten, vanadium, zinc)	Not set
Steel production (t/y)	40% of annual deployment needs			2026 of any steel used produced in domestic production capacity in the United States
Wind turbine	40% of annual deployment needs	Processing capacity (incl. of intermediate steps)	Dependencies	2026 of any steel used produced in domestic production capacity in the United States, except for steel used in the United States, except for steel used in the United States
Heat pump¹	40% of annual deployment needs			2026 of any steel used produced in domestic production capacity in the United States
Batteries	40% of annual EU battery demand	Processing capacity		2026 of any steel used produced in domestic production capacity in the United States
Electronics²	30% of intermediate and final demand for hydrogen-related materials			2026 of any steel used produced in domestic production capacity in the United States
Diversification	Increase manufacturing capacity for net-zero technologies for each sector of capacity	Diversification	10-15% of net-zero consumption of each raw material	

Notes: 1. Net-zero target is a goal in the latest version of the NZIA and not included in the previous 1.0 version. 2. Source: Author's own analysis of the IRA, NZIA, and processes in the IRA. (https://www.ustr.gov/policy/energy/energy-secure-act)

- ❖ The European Union (EU) has recently announced two major legislations.
- ❖ They are the Net Zero Industry Act (NZIA) and the Critical Raw Materials Act (CRMA).
- ❖ The NZIA aims to meet at least 40 per cent of the EU's green technology needs through domestic manufacturing by 2030.
- ❖ Eight technologies are identified as "strategic net zero technologies".
- ❖ The CRMA aims reduce the EU's reliance on imports of critical raw materials by setting goals for their extraction, processing, and recycling within the EU.
- ❖ The expected reduction level is, at least 10 per cent of the EU's annual consumption for extraction, 40 per cent for processing, and 15 per cent for recycling by 2030.

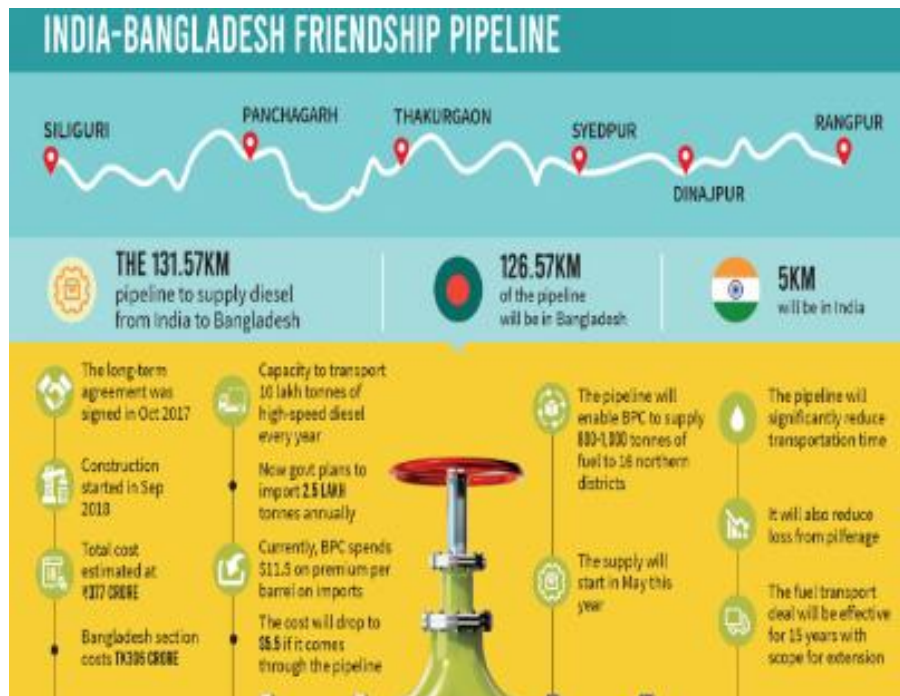
AFINDEX-23

- ❖ The second edition of the Africa-India Field Training Exercise (AFINDEX 2023) began at Pune.
- ❖ The first Africa-India Field Training Exercise was held in Pune in March 2019.
- ❖ The exercise is divided into four phases in which trainers would be initially trained.

- ❖ This would be followed by a humanitarian mine action and a peace-keeping operations phase.



India-Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline



- ❖ Prime Ministers of India and Bangladesh virtually inaugurated the India-Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline.
- ❖ This is the first cross border energy pipeline between India and Bangladesh.
- ❖ The 131.57Km long pipeline runs from Siliguri, West Bengal to Parbatipur, Bangladesh.
- ❖ The Pipeline has a capacity to transport 1 Million Metric Ton Per Annum (MMTPA) of High-Speed Diesel (HSD).
- ❖ The fuel transport deal will be effective for 15 years with an option for further extension.

ECONOMY

India's first Municipal Bond Index

- ❖ NSE Indices Limited launched India's first-ever Municipal Bond Index.
- ❖ The Nifty India Municipal Bond Index tracks the performance of municipal bonds issued by Indian municipal corporations across maturities and having investment-grade credit rating.
- ❖ The index includes municipal bonds issued as per the Securities Exchange Board of India Issue and Listing of Municipal Debt Securities Regulations, 2015.
- ❖ Presently, the index has 28 municipal bonds issued by 10 issuers all having credit rating in the AA rating category.



Global sovereign debt roundtable

- ❖ Global Sovereign Debt Roundtable was held in Bengaluru.
- ❖ It was co-chaired by the IMF, the World Bank and India.
- ❖ It brought in key stakeholders to discuss issues that have been impeding a timely debt restructuring process.



- ❖ Sovereign Debt is the debt the government of a country owes to a financial organization.
- ❖ This includes both domestic and foreign financial organizations.

Global trade and technology council of India

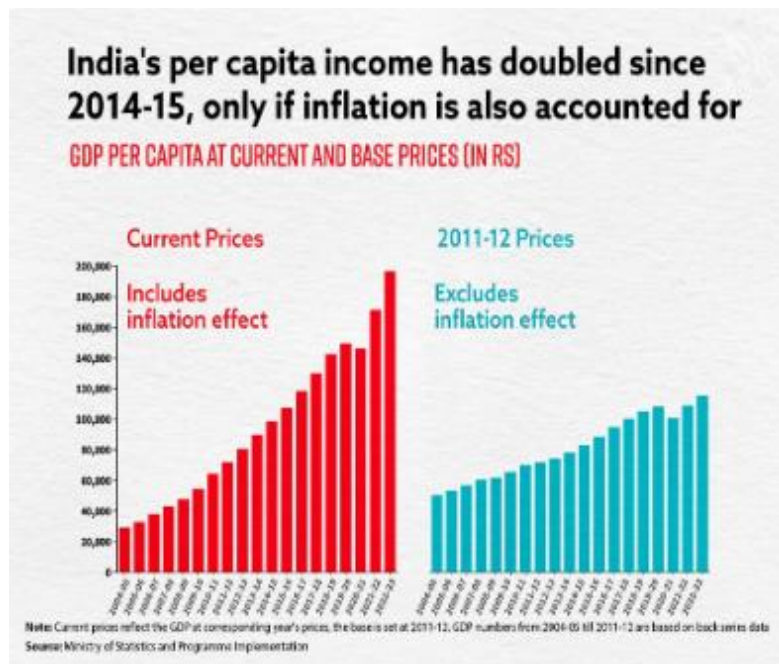
- ❖ India and the European Union announced setting up of a new Trade and Technology Council (TTC).
- ❖ The TTC is a strategic coordination mechanism that will allow both partners to tackle challenges at the nexus of trade, trusted technology and security.
- ❖ Under the TTC, three working groups have been established.
- ❖ The first working group is on strategic technologies, digital governance and digital connectivity.
- ❖ The second one will cover green and clean energy technologies.
- ❖ The third working group is on trade, investment and resilient value chains.
- ❖ The ministerial meetings of the TTC will take place at least once a year, with the venue alternating between the EU and India.
- ❖ It is the second such TTC after the first one with the United States that was firmed up in June 2021.



India's per capita income

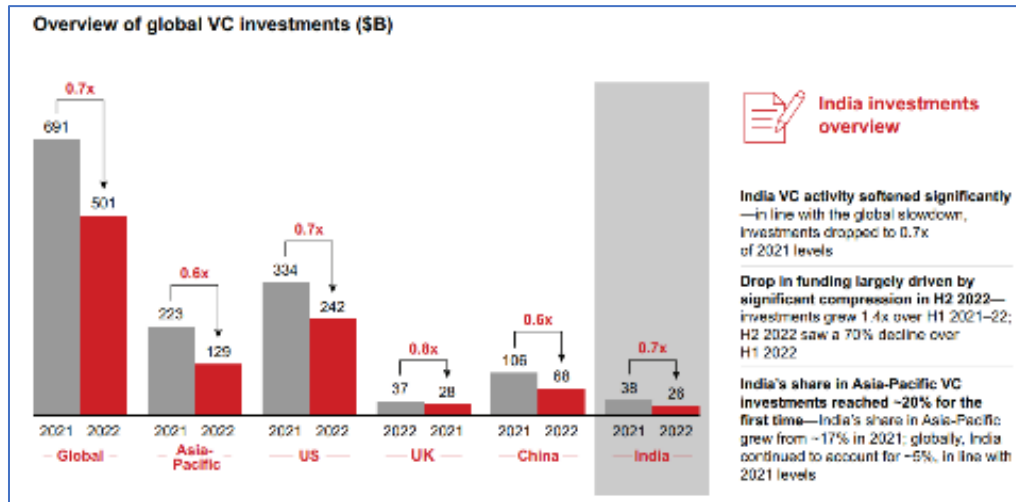
- ❖ The National Statistical Office (NSO) had released the second advance estimates of national income and expenditure components of GDP, 2022-23.
- ❖ India's per capita income has doubled in nominal terms since 2014-15.
- ❖ The per capita national income (at current prices) was Rs 86,647 in 2014-15.
- ❖ It is now Rs 172,000.
- ❖ This is an increase of 98.5%.

- ❖ Per capita income is a measure of the average income earned per person in a given area in a specified year.
- ❖ It is calculated by dividing the area's total income by its total population.
- ❖ If the per capita population of a country has increased, it doesn't mean the income of the entire population has increased.
- ❖ As per the Oxfam India's report, the top 1% of the population in India owned more than 40.5% of the total wealth in 2021.
- ❖ While the bottom 50% or 700 million people, had around 3% of the total wealth.



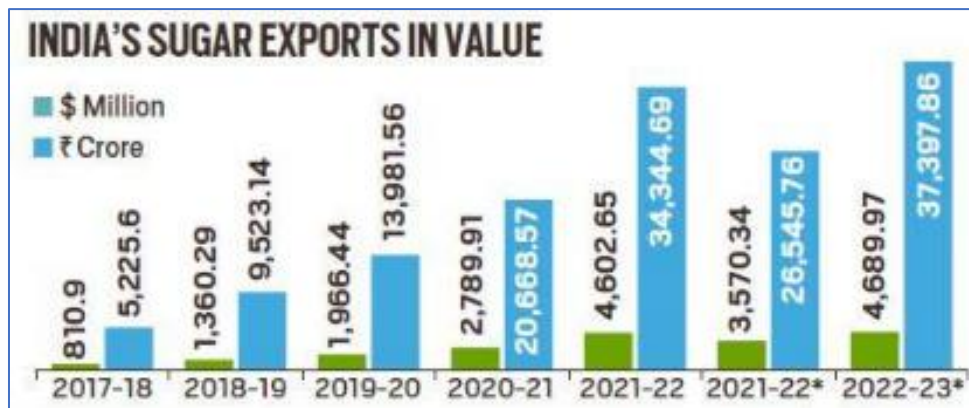
India Venture Capital Report 2023

- ❖ Bain & Company released its annual India Venture Capital Report 2023.
- ❖ As per the report, venture capital investments in India saw a decrease in deal value of 33% from \$38.5 billion to \$25.7 billion in 2022.
- ❖ Software-as-a-service and fintech will continue to be significant segments for investors
- ❖ The two sectors together contributed roughly 35% and 25% to the overall funds that came to Indian startups in 2022 and 2021.
- ❖ Investments grew 1.4x over the first half of 2021–2022.
- ❖ It saw a 70% decline in the second half of 2022 compared to the second half of 2021.



India's sugar shipments

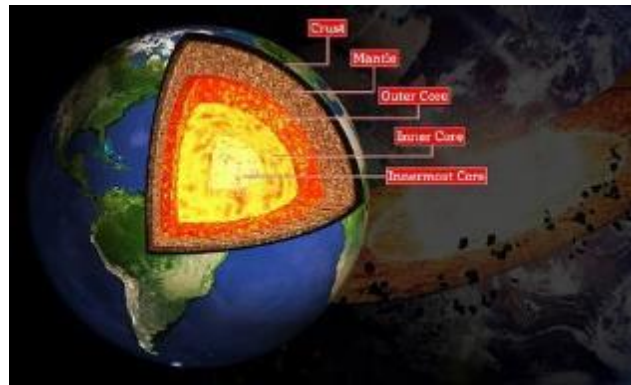
- ❖ Sugar exports from India Between 2017-18 and 2021-22 have soared from \$810.9 million to \$4.6 billion.
- ❖ During the 2016-17 and 2017-18 sugar years (Oct-Sept), India's shipments were a mere 0.46 lakh tonnes (lt) and 6.2 lt respectively.
- ❖ They had zoomed to 110 lt by 2021-22.
- ❖ The biggest importers of Indian raw sugar were Indonesia (16.73 lt), Bangladesh (12.10lt), Saudi Arabia (6.83 lt), Iraq (4.78 lt) and Malaysia (4.15 lt).
- ❖ India has become the world's No. 2, next only to Brazil (255.40 lt).



SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Deepest Region of the Earth

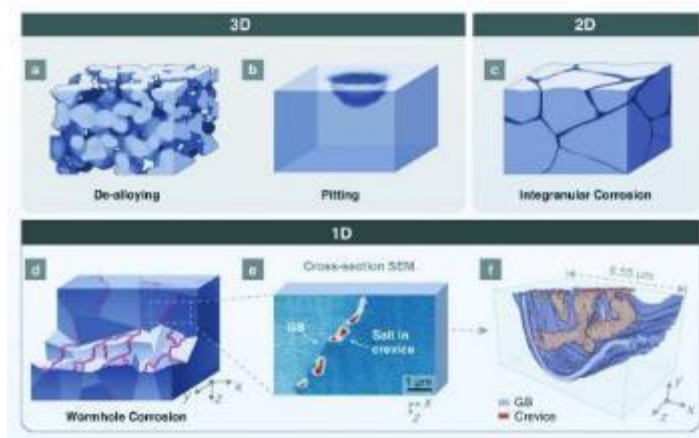
- ❖ The fifth layer of Earth has been uncovered by scientists working to unlock the geological mysteries of the planet.
- ❖ The crust, mantle, outer core, and inner core were once thought to make up the Earth's structure.
- ❖ The team analysed the variation of travel times of seismic waves for different earthquakes.
- ❖ They found that crystallised structure within the inner core's innermost region is likely different from the outer layer.
- ❖ This structure is an 800-mile (1,350-kilometre) wide solid ball of iron and nickel which is fiercely hot.
- ❖ This layer is a solid 'metallic ball' that sits within the centre of the inner core.



1D Wormhole Corrosion

- ❖ Scientists have recently discovered a new form of corrosion known as the 1D wormhole corrosion.
- ❖ The 1D wormhole corrosion is a highly localized form of penetrating corrosion that occurs in a nickel-chromium alloy when exposed to molten fluoride salt.
- ❖ This type of corrosion leads to the development of a percolating network of tunnels along grain boundaries.
- ❖ These tunnels are filled with molten salt and leave voids along the grain boundaries.
- ❖ It has important implications for the understanding of material degradation mechanisms in molten salt environments.
- ❖ Molten salts are a key candidate for coolants in next-generation nuclear power plants.

- ❖ The use of molten salts as coolants is particularly attractive because they have a high thermal conductivity and a high boiling point.
- ❖ This makes them ideal for transferring heat away from the reactor core and for generating electricity.



CE-20 cryogenic engine

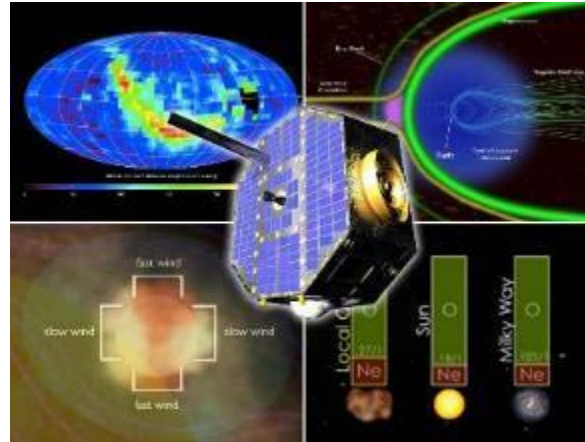
- ❖ ISRO has successfully conducted the flight acceptance hot test of the CE-20 cryogenic engine.
- ❖ It will power the Cryogenic Upper Stage of the LVM3 launch vehicle for the Chandrayaan-3 mission.
- ❖ Chandrayaan-3 interplanetary mission has three major modules — the Propulsion module, Lander module and Rover.



Interstellar Boundary Explorer

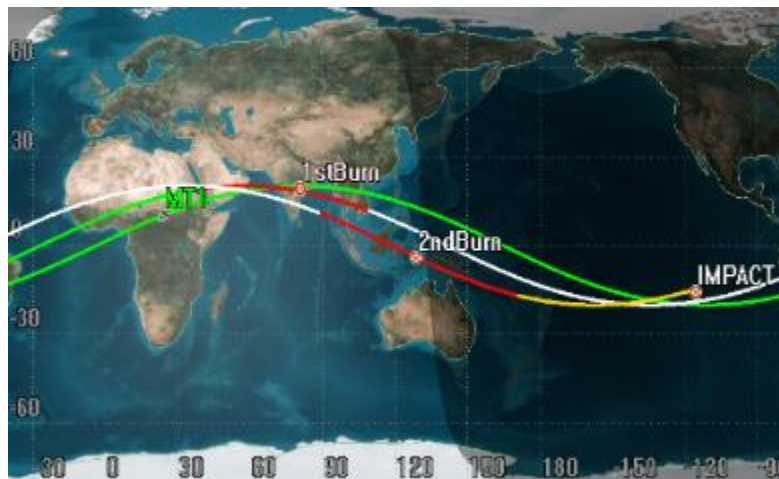
- ❖ NASA's Interstellar Boundary Explorer (IBEX) spacecraft is fully operational after successful reset.

- ❖ IBEX is a small spacecraft designed to map the boundary (heliosphere) where winds from the Sun interact with winds from other stars.
- ❖ It was launched in 2008 and has spent nearly 15 years in space already.



Decommission of Megha-Tropiques 1

- ❖ A decommissioned Indo-French weather satellite, Megha-Tropiques 1 (MT-1), was safely disintegrated in the Earth's atmosphere.
- ❖ It was done by ISRO after the controlled re-entry operation that was successfully carried out on March 7.
- ❖ The weather satellite was launched on October 12, 2011, as a collaborative effort between ISRO and French space agency CNES.



Handover of NISAR satellite

- ❖ The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has received the NASA-ISRO SAR (NISAR) satellite from the U.S. space agency.

- ❖ NISAR is a Low Earth Orbit observatory jointly developed by NASA and ISRO.
- ❖ The satellite is expected to be launched in 2024 into a near-polar orbit.
- ❖ NISAR carries L and S dual-band Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR).
- ❖ According to ISRO, NISAR will map the entire globe in 12 days.



Influenza subtype H3N2

Time to mask up
With flu cases rising across the country, the Health Ministry has advised people to wear masks and follow social distancing.

M. PERIASAMY

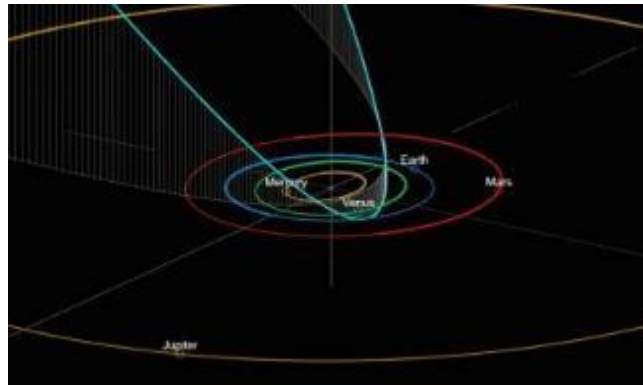
- Up to 15,826 of these patients were hospitalised with severe acute respiratory illness
- 451 confirmed H3N2 cases were seen this year
- Suspected H3N2 patients show symptoms like fever, cough, breathlessness, wheezing
- India reported 9.66 lakh cases of flu in 2023
- Some also report signs of pneumonia and seizures



- ❖ Two persons have succumbed to the H3N2 subtype of seasonal influenza in India.
- ❖ The first recorded death from H3N2 this year was of an 82-year-old man in Karnataka's Hassan district.
- ❖ H3N2 is a non-human influenza virus that normally circulates in pigs and has infected humans.
- ❖ This virus is known to be a subtype of Influenza A virus.
- ❖ Symptoms are similar to those of seasonal flu viruses and can include fever and respiratory symptoms.
- ❖ H3N2 outbreaks can "indeed cause death" and are more severe than regular flu.

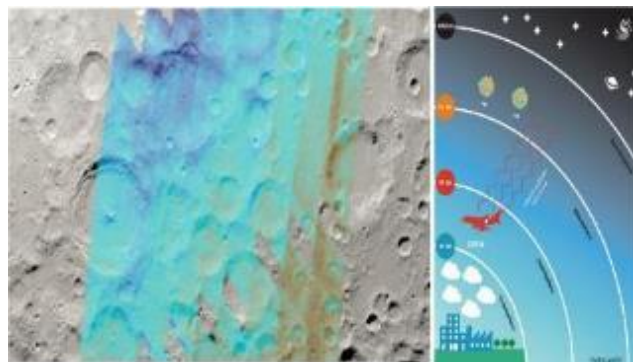
Tsuchinshan - ATLAS - Comet C/2023 A3

- ❖ Astronomers discovered a new comet named C/2023 A3 (Tsuchinshan-ATLAS).
- ❖ The comet is currently between the orbits of Jupiter and Saturn, a billion kilometres from Earth.
- ❖ It is currently about 680 million miles (1.09 billion kilometers) from Earth and will make its nearest approach to the Sun.
- ❖ It will dazzle Earth's night sky in October 2024.
- ❖ And it will be as bright as many of stars or even the planet Venus.



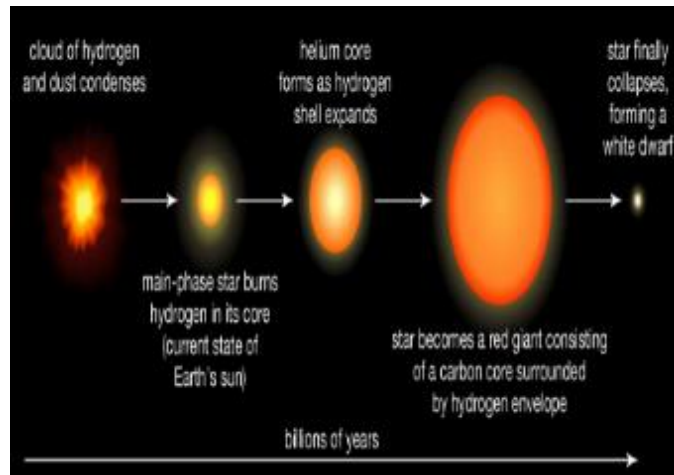
SOFIA Telescope's findings

- ❖ Scientists used Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy (SOFIA) to formulate a detailed map displaying the distribution of water on the moon.
- ❖ The telescope also detected heavy atomic oxygen in the upper layers of Earth's atmosphere, the mesosphere, and the lower thermosphere.
- ❖ This is the first-time heavy oxygen has been found outside a laboratory.
- ❖ The oxygen 18 is stable isotope of oxygen.
- ❖ It has eight protons and 10 neutrons.
- ❖ Oxygenn-18 is used to determine the temperature at which ice forms at temperatures in Arctic and Antarctic regions.



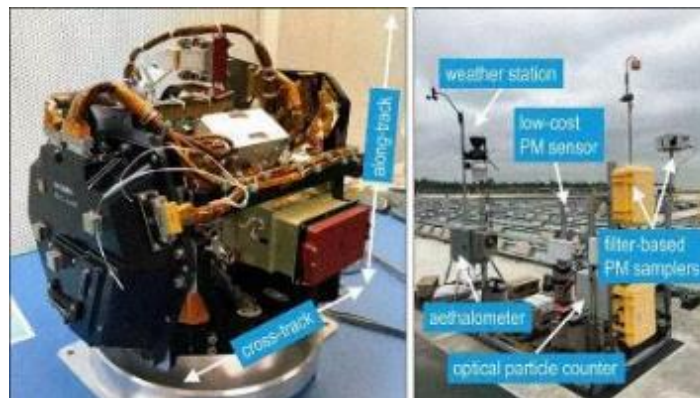
High-speed process of star formation

- ❖ SOFIA Telescope have revealed a much more accelerated process of star formation than previously believed.
- ❖ The Cygnus X region is a stellar nursery about 5,000 lightyears from the Earth, with a vast luminous cloud of gas and dust.
- ❖ In the Cygnus X region, the gas clouds were found to consist of dense cores of molecular hydrogen, surrounded by atomic shells.
- ❖ These clouds then interact with each other at high speeds, to dynamically and quickly form new stars.
- ❖ The new findings can better explain the process by which particularly massive stars can be formed.



Multi-Angle Imager for Aerosols (MAIA)

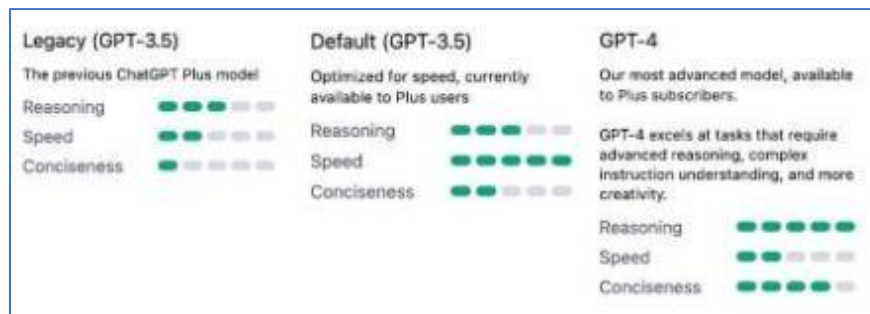
- ❖ NASA will be partnering with the Italian Space Agency ASI to build and launch MAIA, or the Multi-Angle Imager for Aerosols missions.
- ❖ The joint mission will investigate the health impacts of air pollution in the world's most populated cities.



- ❖ The MAIA observatory will consist of the PLATiNO-2 satellite.
- ❖ It will collect and analyse data from the observatory, sensors on the ground and atmospheric models.

Chat GPT-4

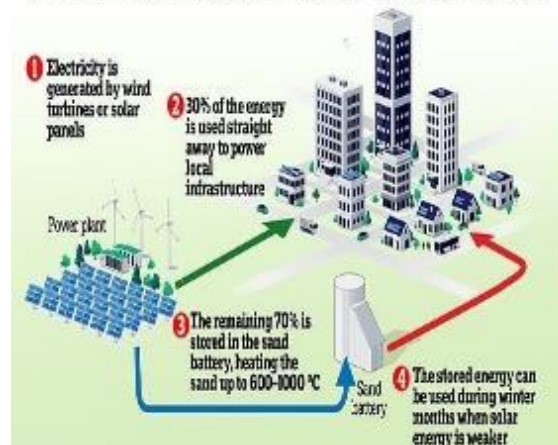
- ❖ Microsoft Corp-backed startup OpenAI began the rollout of GPT-4.
- ❖ It is a powerful artificial intelligence model that succeeds the technology behind the wildly popular ChatGPT.
- ❖ GPT-4 is "multimodal", which means it can generate content from both image and text prompts.
- ❖ GPT-3.5 takes only text prompts, whereas the latest version of the large language model can also use images as inputs to recognize objects in a picture and analyse them.
- ❖ GPT-3.5 is limited to about 3,000-word responses.
- ❖ The new GPT-4 can generate responses of more than 25,000 words.



World's 1st Sand battery

- ❖ Finland has installed the world's first sand battery that can store heat from renewable energy sources for months.
- ❖ It is connected to the town's centralised heating network that keeps buildings and public water systems warm.
- ❖ The storage has 100 kW of heating power and 8 MWh of capacity.
- ❖ Sand or sand-like materials are used as the store medium in a high-temperature thermal energy storage system known as a "sand battery."
- ❖ Sand acts as a heat reservoir for energy.
- ❖ Its primary function is to serve as a high-power and high-capacity energy storage system for extra wind and solar energy.
- ❖ The energy is converted into heat, which can be utilised to heat buildings and other uses.

HOW THE SAND BATTERY WORKS



Anti-Submarine Craft INS Androth

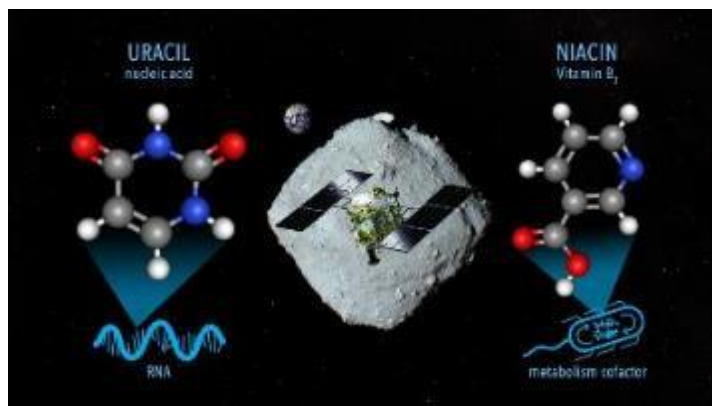


- ❖ The INS Androth, second in a series of eight Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASW SWC), was launched in Kolkata.
- ❖ It is designed to conduct anti-submarine operations in coastal waters, low intensity maritime operations and mine laying operations.
- ❖ The first ship of the series, the INS Arnala, was launched three months ago.

Alien vitamins sample

- ❖ The Hayabusa2 spacecraft spent a year and a half gathering rock samples from the asteroid Ryugu.
- ❖ Organic compounds essential for life have been discovered these samples.
- ❖ The compounds discovered include niacin, which is also known as vitamin B3, and uracil.
- ❖ It is one of the four nucleobases (nitrogen-containing compounds), that make up RNA.

- ❖ These molecules contain the instructions of how to build living organisms.
- ❖ Hayabusa2 was launched in December 2014 by the Japanese space agency JAXA.
- ❖ It reached its target, the space rock Ryugu, in June 2018, stayed for a year and a half to gather samples, and returned them to Earth in December 2020.



Launch of LVM3

- ❖ Indian Space Research Organisation's heaviest payload rocket, LVM3 carrying 36 OneWeb satellites onboard took off from Sriharikota.
- ❖ The first set of 36 satellites was launched in LVM3-M2/OneWeb India-1 mission on October 23, 2022.
- ❖ This is the sixth flight of LVM3.
- ❖ The LVM3 had five consecutive successful missions, including the Chandrayaan-2 mission.

LVM3-M2 // ONEWEB-14

DATE & TIME	23 October 2022, 12:07 AM IST
LAUNCH VEHICLE	LVM3
PAYLOADS	36 OneWeb satellites
PAYLOAD MASS	5450 kg
CUSTOMER	OneWeb
INJECTION ORBIT	87.4°, 550 km LEO
LAUNCH SITE	SLP, SDSC, Sriharikota, India

LVM3 render by ESP/ET30



ENVIRONMENT

Agriculture Innovation Mission for Climate

- ❖ India has joined a global platform launched by the US and the UAE on the margins of the I2U2.
- ❖ It aims to accelerate investment and support for climate-smart agriculture and food systems innovation.
- ❖ I2U2 - Israel, India, the United States and the United Arab Emirates – is the Business Forum held in Abu Dhabi.
- ❖ The Agriculture Innovation Mission for Climate (AIM4C) was launched by the two nations in November 2021.
- ❖ IM4C seeks to increase investment in and support for climate-smart agriculture and food systems innovation.
- ❖ To date, the AIM4C initiative has successfully increased these investments to more than USD8 billion globally.

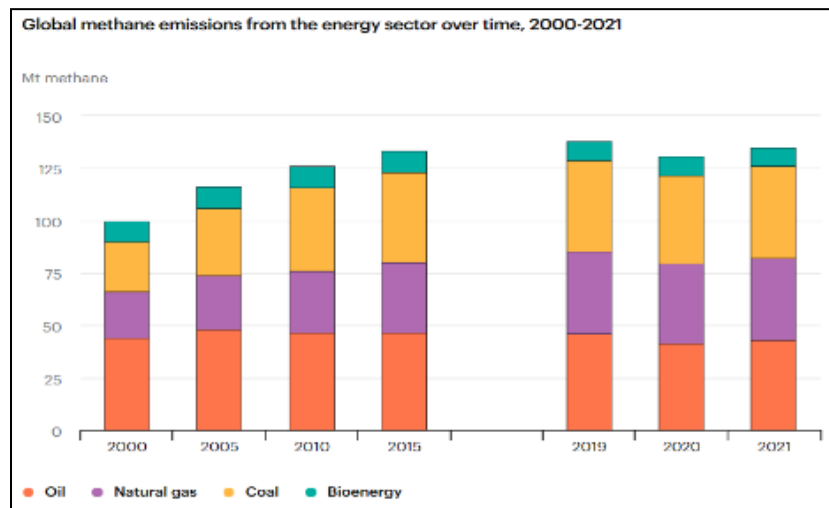
Bird Survey Dharoi 2023

- ❖ Birdwatchers from Gujarat, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh completed the second two-day Bird Survey Dharoi 2023.
- ❖ Dharoi is a wetland and is spread over 107 square kilometres.
- ❖ There are more than 616 bird species in the state of Gujarat.
- ❖ The surveyors found only 193.
- ❖ The maiden Dharoi Bird Survey held in 2022.

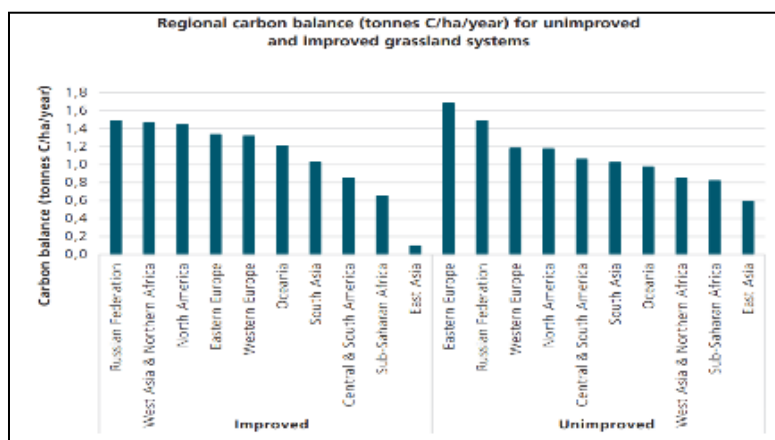
Methane Global Tracker Report

- ❖ International Energy Agency (IEA) released its annual Methane Global Tracker report.
- ❖ As per the report, the fossil fuel companies emitted 120 million metric tonnes of methane into the atmosphere in 2022.
- ❖ This is only slightly below the record highs seen in 2019.
- ❖ The best performing countries are more than 100 times better than the worst.
- ❖ Norway and the Netherlands have the lowest emissions intensities.
- ❖ Countries in the Middle East such as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates also have relatively low emissions intensities.

- ❖ Turkmenistan and Venezuela have the highest emissions.
- ❖ 75 per cent of methane emissions from the energy sector can be reduced with the help of cheap and readily available technology.
- ❖ The energy sector accounts for around 40 per cent of the total average methane emissions from human activity.
- ❖ Oil and natural gas companies are known to release methane into the atmosphere when natural gas is flared or vented.
- ❖ Methane is a greenhouse gas, which is responsible for 30 per cent of the warming since preindustrial times, second only to carbon dioxide.



Global assessment of Soil Carbon



- ❖ The first FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization) Global assessment of Soil Carbon in Grasslands measured the baseline of stocks of Soil Organic Carbon (SOC).
- ❖ SOC is the amount of carbon stored in soil organic matter.

- ❖ It is made in both semi-natural and managed grasslands and estimated their potential of SOC sequestration.
- ❖ Grasslands contain approximately 20 per cent of the world's SOC.
- ❖ The fodder gardens have a potential increase in soil carbon of 0.03 tonnes C/ha per year.

Jerdon's narrow-mouthed frog

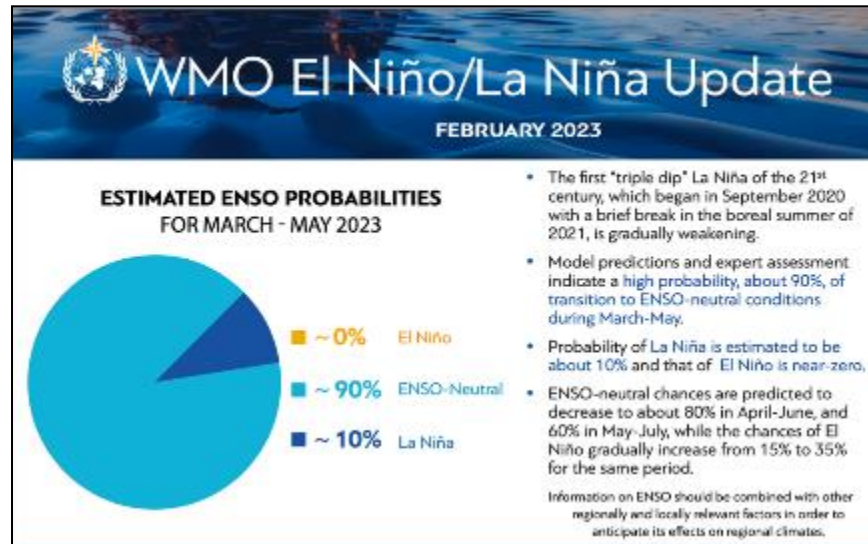
- ❖ *Uperodon montanus*, a frog endemic to the higher altitudes of Western Ghats, was rediscovered after 89 years Recently.
- ❖ It was studied last in 1934 by a British scientist.
- ❖ It is also known as Jerdon's narrow-mouthed frog, Jerdon's ramanella, mountain dot frog, mountain globular frog, or Malabar Hill frog.
- ❖ This frog is considered a montane species and is restricted to higher altitude ranges of 800-1,700 metres.
- ❖ They are distributed from near Wayanad south across the Palghat and the Shencottah gaps to the Agasthyamalai hills.
- ❖ It is classified as 'Near Threatened' in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.



ENSO Update

- ❖ As per the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) updates, a warming El Nino event may develop in the coming months.
- ❖ The El Nino event may develop after three consecutive years of an unusually stubborn and protracted La Nina.
- ❖ It will influence temperature and rainfall patterns in different parts of the world.
- ❖ The year 2016 is currently the warmest on record because of the combination of El Nino and climate change.
- ❖ There is a 93% likelihood of at least one year until 2026 being the warmest on record.

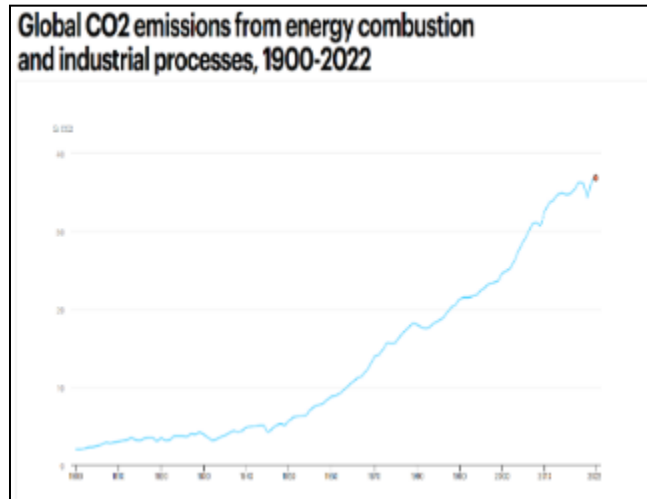
- ❖ The current La Nina began in September 2020 with a brief break in the boreal summer of 2021.
- ❖ La Nina has the opposite impacts on weather and climate as El Nino in affected regions.
- ❖ La Nina has been associated with the persistent drought in the Greater Horn of Africa and large parts of South America as well as above average rainfall in South East Asia and Australasia.



‘CO₂ Emissions in 2022’ report

- ❖ CO₂ Emissions in 2022 Report was released by the International Energy Agency.
- ❖ Global energy-related emissions of carbon dioxide hit a record high last year.
- ❖ Global emissions from energy rose by 0.9% in 2022 to a record 36.8 billion tonnes.
- ❖ Carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions from coal grew by 1.6% last year
- ❖ CO₂ emissions from oil rose by 2.5% but remained below pre-pandemic levels.
- ❖ Emissions in China decreased in 2022 due to the COVID lockdown.
- ❖ In the European Union, emissions decreased by 2.5%.
- ❖ The Asia Pacific region also saw unprecedented reductions (-1.8%).
- ❖ The emissions from the global industries decreased.
- ❖ The main reason behind the reduction was a 10% decrease in cement production and a 2% decrease in steel production.
- ❖ Emissions due to natural gas decreased by 1.6%.

- ❖ The biggest sectoral increase in emissions in 2022 came from electricity and heat generation.



Global alliance for big cats

- ❖ India has proposed to launch a mega global alliance under its leadership to protect big cats.
- ❖ It also assured support over five years with guaranteed funding of \$100 million (over Rs 800 crore).
- ❖ This International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) will focus on the rehabilitation and conservation of the seven big cats namely tigers, lions, leopards, snow leopards, pumas, jaguars and cheives.
- ❖ Its major activities will include advocacy, partnership, knowledge e-portal, capacity building, eco-tourism, partnerships between expert groups and finance tapping.



151st anniversary of Yellowstone National Park

- ❖ Yellowstone National Park of USA, the first national park in the world, celebrated its 151st anniversary.
- ❖ It is located in the northwest corner of Wyoming and extending into Montana and Idaho.
- ❖ It was established by the US Congress on March 1, 1872 with the Yellowstone National Park Protection Act.



Mimeusemia ceylonic

- ❖ *Mimeusemia ceylonica*, a rare moth species, was last recorded in Sri Lanka 127 years ago.
- ❖ This has been rediscovered now in Thoothukudi and Tirunelveli.
- ❖ George Hampson recorded *Mimeusemia ceylonica* at Thirukonamalai in Sri Lanka in 1893.
- ❖ It was not recorded elsewhere across the world since then.



- ❖ This is the first time this moth species is being recorded in India.

- ❖ *Mimeusemia ceylonica* species belonging to the subfamily Agaristinae and family Noctuidae.
- ❖ It was first sighted in India during a moth survey conducted by Thalavai Pandi in 2020 at the Agasthyamalai Community-based Conservation Centre (ACCC).
- ❖ ACCC situated in the buffer zone of Kalakad Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve (KMTR) in Tirunelveli district.

“Don’t Choose Extinction” climate campaign

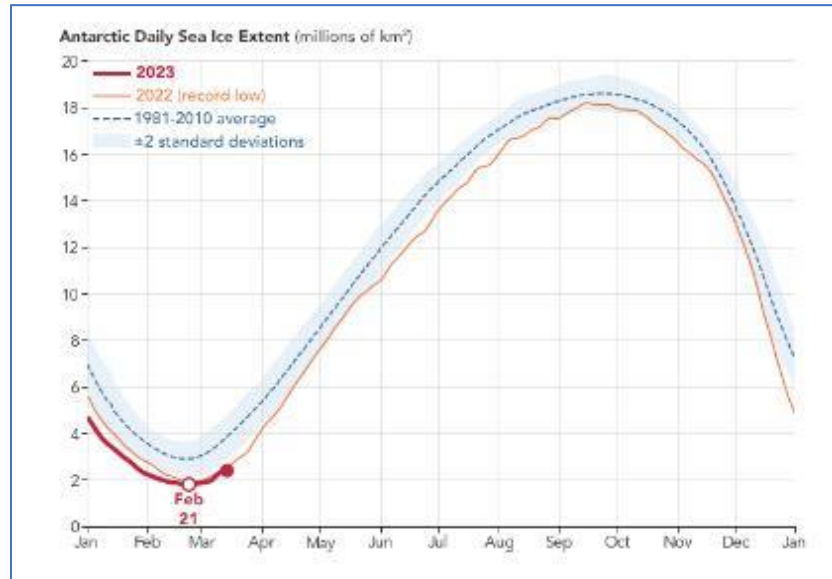
- ❖ The ‘Don’t Choose Extinction’ campaign was launched by the UN Development Program (UNDP) to raise awareness about the climate emergency.
- ❖ It has won Gold and Silver in two different categories at the 2nd Annual Anthem Awards.
- ❖ This was announced by the International Academy of Digital Arts & Science (IADAS).
- ❖ The Awards are intended to celebrate mission-driven work and the social impact of individuals, corporations and organizations.
- ❖ Its goal is to define a new benchmark for impactful work that inspires others to take action in their communities.



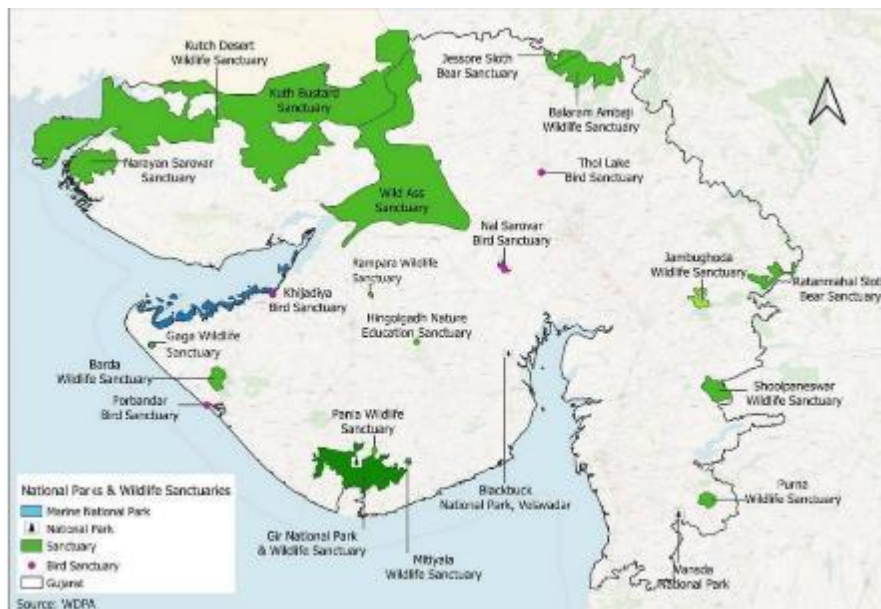
Antarctic sea ice cover 2023

- ❖ In February 2023, sea ice around Antarctica reached the lowest extent ever observed since the start of the satellite record in 1979.
- ❖ The figures were published by the US-based National Snow and Ice Data Centre (NSIDC).
- ❖ Sea ice around Antarctica reached its lowest extent on February 21, 2023, at 1.79 million square Km (691,000 square miles).

- ❖ It is 130,000 square kilometres (50,000 square miles) below the previous record-low reached on February 25, 2022.
- ❖ It marks the second time that scientists observed the ice shrinking below 2 million square kilometers.



Translocation of Lions of Asiatic Lions



- ❖ The Gujarat government has planned to translocate 40 adult and sub-adult lions to the Barda Wildlife Sanctuary.
- ❖ Barda sanctuary is located about 100 kilometres away from Gir National Park.

- ❖ It has been identified as a potential site to accommodate the Asiatic Lions.
- ❖ As per the last count in 2020, there are 674 lions in the state and Gir has long been overflowing with the big cats.
- ❖ The Supreme Court of India in 2013 had also ordered relocating some lions to Madhya Pradesh to avoid the possibility of disease or some other disaster wiping out the entire population.

Ganeshaiiah's Dwarf Gecko

- ❖ A new species of gecko has been discovered in the Male Mahadeshwara Hills in Chamarajanagar, Karnataka.
- ❖ Researchers named the new species 'Cnemaspis ganeshaiahi' or Ganeshaiiah's dwarf gecko.
- ❖ KN Ganeshaiiah is an agricultural scientist from University of Agricultural Sciences (UAS) Bengaluru and noted Kannada writer.
- ❖ Previously, a grass species (*Centotheca ganeshaiiahiana*) at the Saddle Peak National Park, North Andaman, a small cryptic ant species (*Parasyscia ganeshaiahi*) and a cycas species (*Cycas uma-ganeshaiahi*) were named after him.



Aravalli Green Wall Project

- ❖ India launched its own green wall project that will, through afforestation, cover roughly 1,400-km long and five-km wide green belt.
- ❖ This will be the buffer around the Aravalli Mountain range.
- ❖ It is covering parts of Gujarat, Rajasthan, Haryana and Delhi.
- ❖ The ambitious project will involve planting native species of trees and shrubs on scrubland, wasteland and degraded forest land.
- ❖ It will prevent eastward expansion of the Thar Desert.

- ❖ The green belt will also act as a barrier for the dust coming from the western side of the country to Delhi-NCR.
- ❖ The five-km buffer zone of the entire Aravalli covers 6.3 million hectares (Mha) of land.



Moray eel



- ❖ Researchers have discovered a new species of Moray eel at the Mudasalodai fish landing centre off the Cuddalore coast.
- ❖ The species has been named after Tamil Nadu as *Gymnothorax tamilnaduensis*.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu brown moray will be the common name of this species.
- ❖ This is the first ever record of this genus, *Gymnothorax*.
- ❖ About 28 species of *Gymnothorax* have been documented in Indian waters so far.

REPORTS AND INDICES

Foundational Literacy and Numeracy report

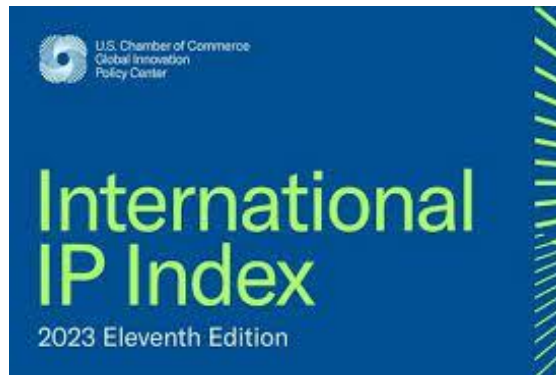
- ❖ The study was released by the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM) recently.
- ❖ It was prepared by the Institute for Competitiveness — the Indian wing of the Institute for Strategy and Competitiveness at Harvard Business School.
- ❖ This is an indicator of literacy among children below 10 years of age.
- ❖ Punjab topped all key indicators like educational infrastructure, access to education, basic health, learning outcomes and governance.
- ❖ West Bengal maintained its lead while Uttar Pradesh stood at the bottom among large state categories.
- ❖ Among smaller states, Punjab was at the top of the index while Telangana was at the bottom.
- ❖ While Puducherry topped the index among union territories Ladakh was the worst performer.

CATEGORY WISE RANKING – INDEX ON FOUNDATIONAL LEARNING					
Large State			North-Eastern		
State	FLN Scores 2022	Category Rank 2022	State	FLN Scores 2022	Category Rank 2022
West Bengal	54.58	1	Sikkim	56.75	1
Maharashtra	52.78	2	Mizoram	48.31	2
Tamil Nadu	52.23	3	Manipur	47.17	3
Rajasthan	52.12	4	Assam	46.15	4
Karnataka	44.91	5	Tripura	39.77	5
Gujarat	44.08	6	Arunachal Pradesh	35.82	6
Madhya Pradesh	42.43	7	Nagaland	34.41	7
Bihar	40.95	8	Meghalaya	29.66	8
Uttar Pradesh	37.46	9			

CATEGORY WISE RANKING – INDEX ON FOUNDATIONAL LEARNING					
Small State			Union Territory		
State	FLN Scores 2022	Category Rank 2022	UT	FLN Scores 2022	Category Rank 2022
Punjab	64.19	1	Puducherry	54.76	1
Kerala	58.42	2	Delhi	52.13	2
Goa	51.05	3	Jammu & Kashmir	50.75	3
Uttarakhand	46.57	4	Lakshadweep	49.26	4
Himachal Pradesh	46.56	5	Chandigarh	48.53	5
Haryana	45.24	6	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	48.15	6
Odisha	44.35	7	Ladakh	38.46	7
Chhattisgarh	40.98	8			
Jharkhand	39.82	9			
Andhra Pradesh	39.02	10			
Telangana	34.35	11			

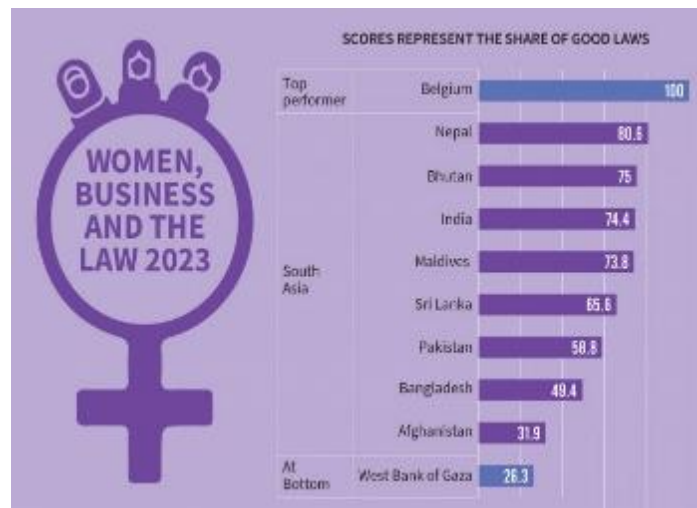
International IP Index

- ❖ India ranks 42nd among 55 leading global economies on the International IP Index.
- ❖ It is released by the US Chambers of Commerce.
- ❖ This is a fall for India, which was at the 40th rank in 2021 and at the 25th place (out of 25 countries assessed) in 2014.
- ❖ The United States ranks first in the index, followed by the UK and France.



Women, Business and the Law 2023 report

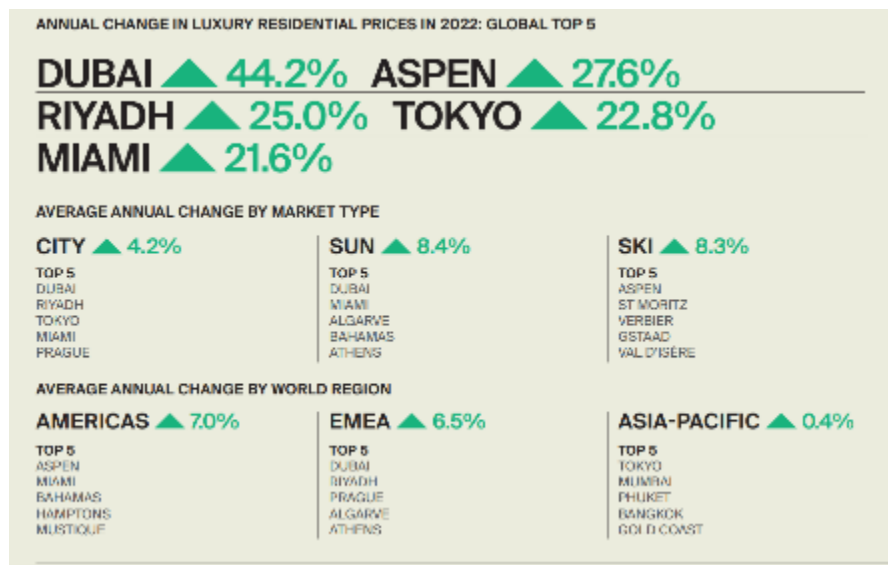
- ❖ Women, Business and the Law 2023 is the 9th in a series of annual report of World Bank.
- ❖ It analyses laws and regulations affecting women's economic opportunity in 190 economies.
- ❖ It has eight indicators such as Mobility, Workplace, Pay, Marriage, Parenthood, Entrepreneurship, Assets, and Pension.



- ❖ A perfect score of 100 on the Index means that women are on an equal standing with men.
- ❖ Only 14 countries scored a perfect 100.
- ❖ India scored 74.4 in the index which was higher than the 63.7 average for the South Asian region.
- ❖ But it is lower than Nepal which had the region's highest score of 80.6.
- ❖ The Index used data on the laws and regulations applicable in Mumbai.
- ❖ In 2022, the global average score is 76.5 out of 100.

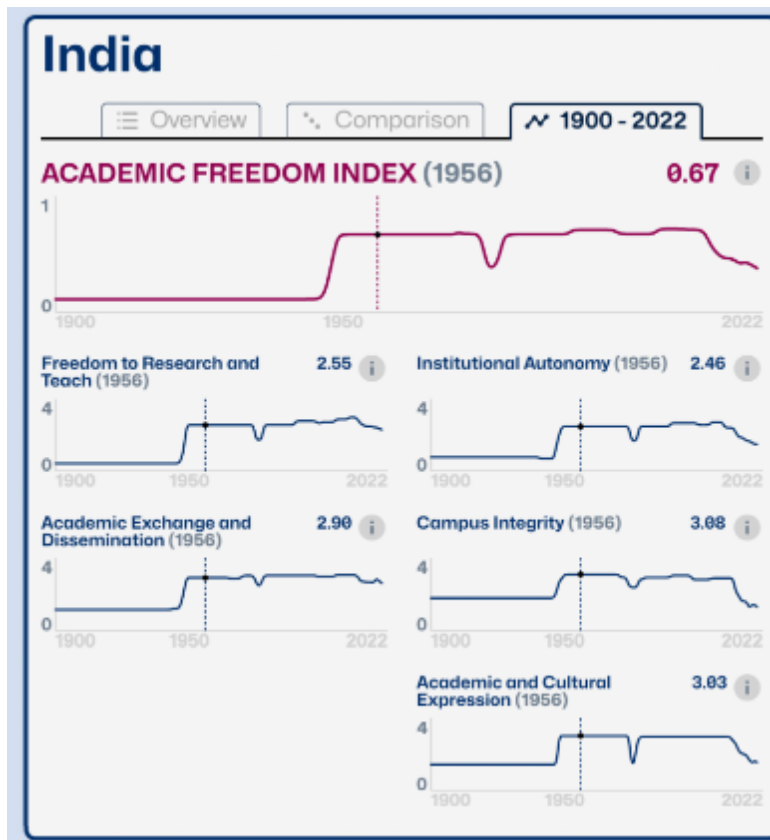
Price Growth in Luxury Housing

- ❖ Property consultant Knight Frank virtually released 'The Wealth Report 2023'.
- ❖ Mumbai's rank has improved to 37th from 92nd in a global list of movement in prices of luxury homes.
- ❖ Mumbai's prime property market has seen a 6.4 percent price increase globally.
- ❖ In Bengaluru, prime property prices rose 3 percent and ranked 62nd.
- ❖ Delhi increased by 1.2 percent, moving it up to 77th from 93rd in 2021.
- ❖ This report tracks the movement in luxury house prices across the world increased by 5.2 percent YoY (year-on-year) in 2022.
- ❖ As per the report, the prime residential prices in Dubai rose 44.2 percent in 2022 and ranked first.
- ❖ Colorado's Aspen ranks 2nd with 27.6 percent growth in prices, followed by Riyadh Riyadh (25 percent).



Academic Freedom Index 2023

- ❖ This report was compiled by Swedish think tank V-Dem Institute and the Institute of Political Science at the Friedrich Alexander University in Germany.
- ❖ The report provides an overview of academic freedom in 179 countries by assessing five indicators.
- ❖ India's academic freedom index is in the bottom 30% among 179 countries in 2022.
- ❖ India is among 22 countries and territories out of 179 in the world that achieved this feat.
- ❖ India's immediate neighbours Nepal (0.86), Pakistan (0.45) and Bhutan (0.46) scored higher than India whereas Bangladesh (0.25) and Myanmar (0.01) scored lower than India.
- ❖ India's freedom index score was high in the past, ranging from 0.60-0.70 between 1950 and 2012.
- ❖ Only five small countries (Gambia, Uzbekistan, Seychelles, Montenegro, and Kazakhstan) improved their rankings.



World Obesity Atlas 2023

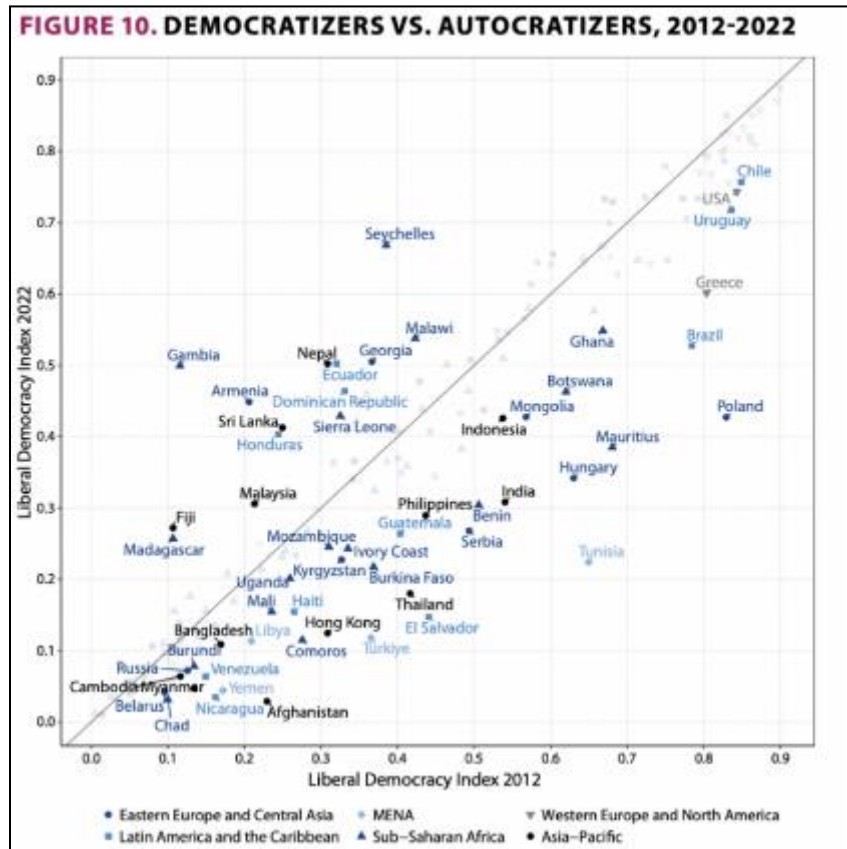
- ❖ The World Obesity Federation has released a report “World Obesity Atlas 2023”.
- ❖ Childhood obesity in India is likely to see an annual rise of 9.1 per cent by 2035.
- ❖ In India, around 11 per cent people will be obese by 2035.
- ❖ Annual increase in adult obesity between 2020 and 2035 is to be 5.2 per cent.
- ❖ In 2020 boys in India had a 3 per cent obesity risk, but by 2035 the risk will likely go up by 12 per cent.
- ❖ For girls the risk was 2 per cent in 2020, but in the next 12 years, it will rise to 7 per cent.
- ❖ Indian women in 2020 had an obesity risk of 7 per cent, which will rise to 13 per cent by 2035.
- ❖ Men had a risk of 4 per cent in 2020, which will rise to 8 per cent in 12 years.
- ❖ Obesity risk will contribute to a total economic impact of UD 4.32 trillion by 2035
- ❖ It is equal to nearly 3 per cent of global GDP.
- ❖ The likely impact on India’s national GDP will be 1.8 per cent,



V-Dem Electoral Democracy report 2023

- ❖ India ranks 108th in the Electoral Democracy Index of the V-dem Democracy report 2023.
- ❖ The country ranks way below countries such as Tanzania, Bolivia, Mexico, Singapore and Nigeria.
- ❖ India has also been named in the top 10 autocratizing countries in the last 10 years in the report.
- ❖ India's ranking dipped from the 100th position in 2022 to 108th this year in the report's Electoral Democracy Index (EDI).

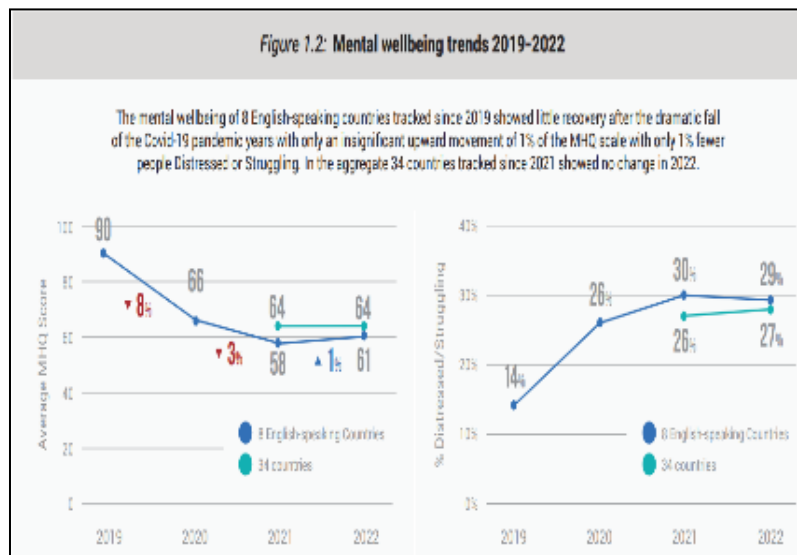
- ❖ It was 97th in the Liberal Democracy Index (LDI).
- ❖ Pakistan slipped two steps lower at 106th in the LDI and 110th in the EDI.
- ❖ The US ranked 23 in the LDI while Canada and the UK occupied 24th and 20th spots, respectively.
- ❖ Denmark was ranked first with the highest comprehensive score in the LDI.
- ❖ Sweden and Norway occupy the second and third spot respectively.
- ❖ The report finds that inter-democracy world trade has declined to 47% in 2022 from 74% in 1998.
- ❖ 46% of the world's Gross Domestic Product now comes from autocracies and democracies.



Mental State of the World Report

- ❖ The third annual mental state of the world report (MSW) was released by Sapien Labs.
- ❖ The survey found that there has been little recovery in declining mental health during the pandemic.

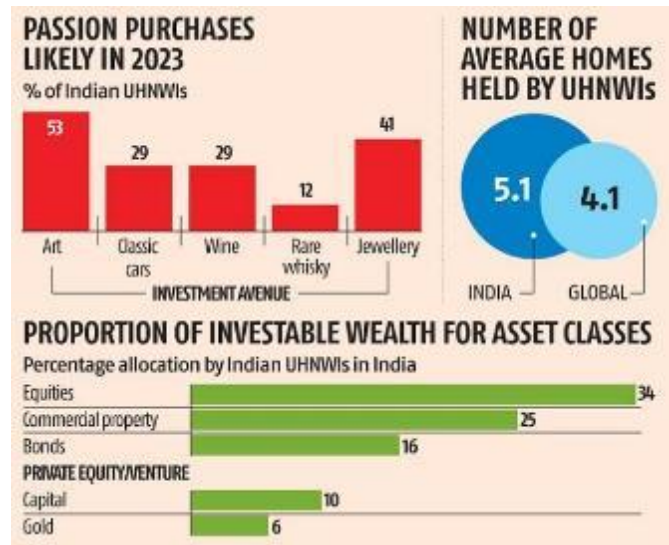
- ❖ The group measures by a score called “mental health quotient”.
- ❖ It had found that average score had declined by 33 points over the past two years and still showed no signs of recovery.
- ❖ People aged 18 to 24 also had a lower “social self”.
- ❖ It is a metric that measures how an individual perceives themselves and the ability to maintain meaningful relationships.
- ❖ The global average Mental Health Quotient was 64.
- ❖ Tanzania, Panama, Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic and Venezuela are countries with the top 5 highest rankings of mental health.
- ❖ Britain, Ireland, Australia, South Africa and Brazil all have lower mental health rankings.
- ❖ India placed at 49th rank and Pakistan in 48th place.
- ❖ Peru, India, Bolivia tops the list with over 42% more young adults 18-24 Distressed or Struggling with their mental health compared to those aged 55-64.
- ❖ The report did not include any details about China.



Wealth report 2023

- ❖ Knight Frank, a global real estate consultancy, was released its Wealth Report 2023.
- ❖ This report provides insights into the trends and performance of the prime residential property market across the world.
- ❖ Among Indian respondents, 88 per cent saw a rise in UHNWI’s (ultra-high-net-worth individuals) wealth in 2022.

- ❖ Indian UHNWIs saw an increase in their wealth in excess of 10 per cent last year.
- ❖ While 47 per cent expect wealth to increase by more than 10 per cent.
- ❖ 53 per cent expect wealth to rise by at least 10 per cent over the previous year.
- ❖ The survey also found that investable wealth of Indian UHNWIs is largely allocated between equities, real estate and bonds.
- ❖ Allocation in equities is higher by Indian UHNWIs than wealthy people globally.



India Philanthropy Report 2023

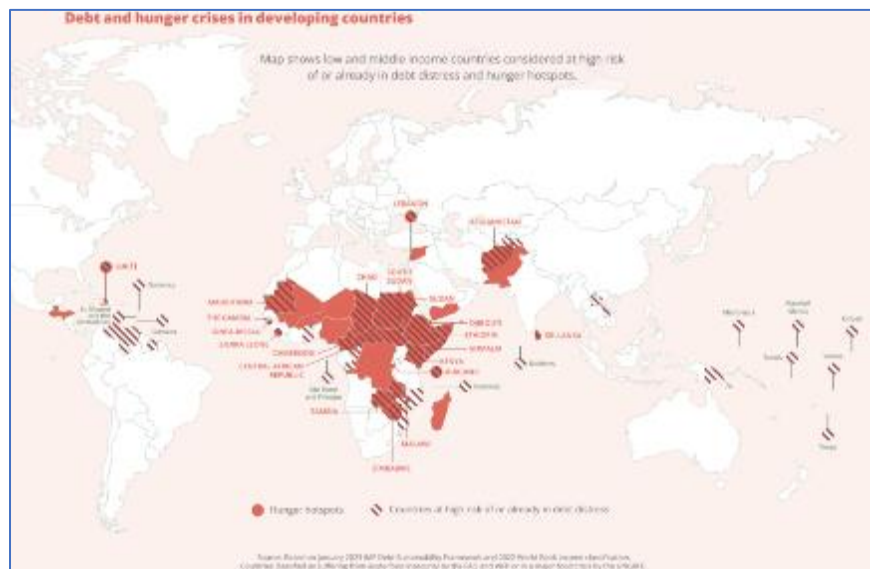
- ❖ Recently the India Philanthropy Report 2023 was released by Dasra and Bain & Co.
- ❖ The report, which is a comprehensive analysis of the state of philanthropy in India, gives insights into interesting trends.
- ❖ Philanthropic contributions made by India's ultra-high net worth individuals (UHNIs) dropped significantly.
- ❖ It was reduced to Rs 4,230 billion in FY22 from Rs. 11,821 billion the previous financial year.
- ❖ UHNI contribution from all other sources decreased to Rs 3,843 crore in FY22 from Rs 4,041 crore in FY21.
- ❖ But the corporate social responsibility spending increased by 5%, amounting to INR 27,000 crore in 2021-22.
- ❖ India's UNHIs have chosen to focus on education and health.
- ❖ CSR contributions are anticipated to increase at a rate of 19% annually.
- ❖ It may reach a proportion of around 32% of total private giving by FY 2026.

- ❖ Relative contributions made by Indian UHNIs range from 0.1% to 0.15%.
- ❖ While they range from 1.2% to 2.5% in the US, 0.5% to 1.8% in the UK, and 0.5% to 1.4% in China.



Special report by the IPES-Food

- ❖ The IPES-Food (International Panel of Experts on Sustainable Food Systems) released a special report.
- ❖ 60% of low-income countries are now considered at high risk of, or already in, debt distress.
- ❖ Some 21 countries are nearing catastrophic levels of both debt distress and food insecurity.



- ❖ Zambia, Sri Lanka, and Suriname already defaulted on their debts.



- ❖ Ghana and Pakistan are currently in urgent talks to avoid default.
- ❖ The world's poorest countries saw the costs of servicing their debt increase by 35% in 2022.
- ❖ They paid 47% of external debt payments to private lenders, 12% to China, 14% to other governments and the remaining to multilateral institutions like the IMF.
- ❖ Several countries are now stuck in what has been described as a 'fertilizer trap'.
- ❖ India, Kenya, and the Philippines are among a host of governments ramping up fertilizer subsidies in the face of the crisis, alongside rising fuel import costs.

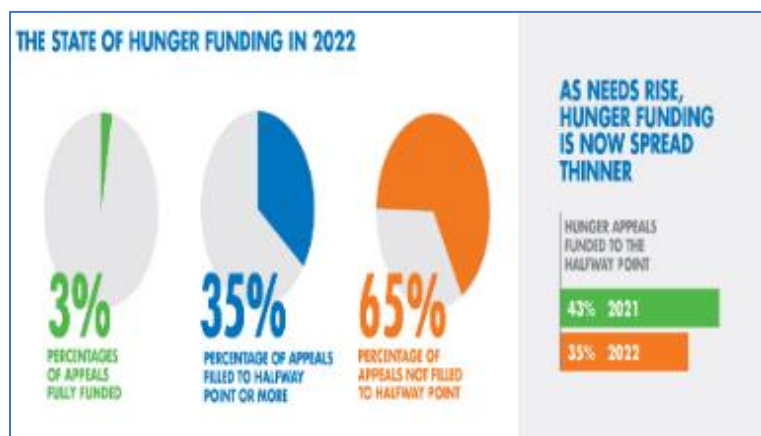
SIPRI report 2022

- ❖ The new data on global arms transfers between 2018 and 2022 released by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI).
- ❖ India's arms imports fell 11% between 2013-17 and 2018-22.
- ❖ In 2022, India's imports fell 21% between 2012-16 and 2017-21.
- ❖ But that the country was still the world's biggest arms importer.
- ❖ India's share of the global arms imports was the highest in the past five years at 11%.
- ❖ It is followed by Saudi Arabia (9.6%), Qatar (6.4%), Australia (4.7%) and China (4.7%).
- ❖ The ranking system is dynamic as it depends on how orders are placed in a particular year.
- ❖ France's arms exports jumped 44% between 2013-17 and 2018-22.
- ❖ India is receiving 30% of its exports during the past five years.
- ❖ US was the world's top most military exporter in the past five years, accounting for 40% of global exports.
- ❖ It is followed by Russia (16%), France (11%), China (5.2%) and Germany (4.2%).
- ❖ US arms exports jumped 14% between 2013-17 and 2018-22.
- ❖ Russia's fell 31% during the same period.
- ❖ Russia's imports to India fell 37%.
- ❖ Ukraine was the third biggest importer of major arms in 2022.
- ❖ The report also highlighted that arms imports, especially long-range strike weapons, rose in South Korea by 61 per cent, in Japan by 171 per cent, and in Australia by 23 per cent.



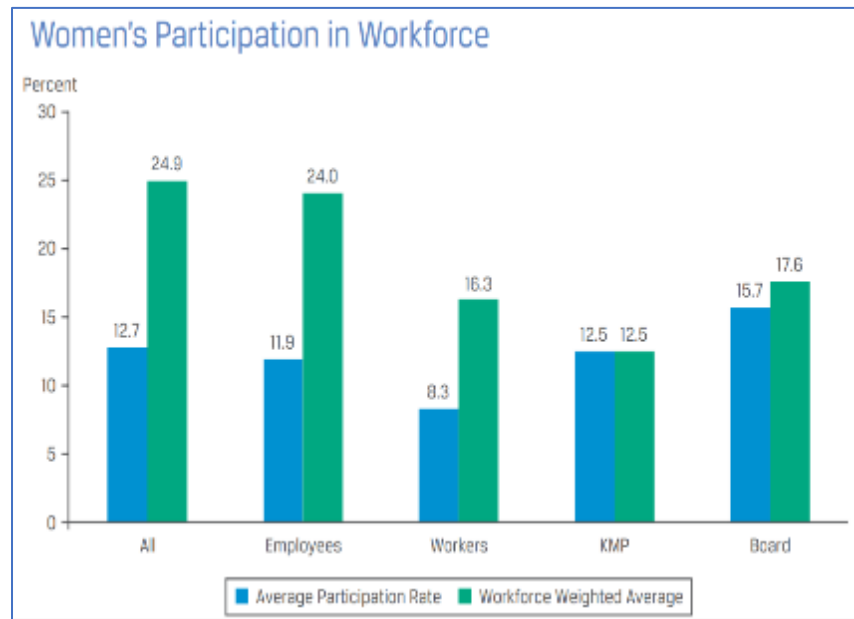
Hunger Funding Gap Report 2023

- ❖ A report titled “2023 Hunger Funding Gap Report: What’s Needed to Stop the Global Hunger Crisis” was released recently by Action Against Hunger.
- ❖ According to this report, countries facing intense hunger crises received lesser hunger funding than the countries that have comparatively lesser hunger crises.
- ❖ The report noted a hunger funding gap of 53%. In 2022.
- ❖ Only 3 per cent of hunger programme needs were fully funded.
- ❖ Around 65 per cent of appeals were not fulfilled even to a halfway point.
- ❖ 47% of the global hunger needs are met through UN funds.
- ❖ Thus, the Hunger Funding Gap stands at 53%.
- ❖ 828 million people were affected by hunger in 2021.
- ❖ This is 46 million people more than the year earlier and 150 million more from 2019.
- ❖ It requires 4 billion USD to stop the hunger crisis in the world.
- ❖ Mozambique and Kenya received 32% higher funding than Afghanistan and Haiti.



Mind the Gender Gap Report

- ❖ The report titled “Mind the Gender Gap” was released recently by the CFA Institute.
- ❖ Women’s participation rate in finance and related sectors are low in India.
- ❖ The average female participation rate across companies in our sample was 12.7%.
- ❖ Among sectors, IT companies had the highest female participation rates, at 30%, followed by financial services (22.4%).
- ❖ Only 15.9 per cent are employed in key managerial positions.
- ❖ The ratio of women to men was 0.97.
- ❖ It drops down to 0.52 for key management personnel and around 0.64 for directors.
- ❖ 69% had no women working in their companies.



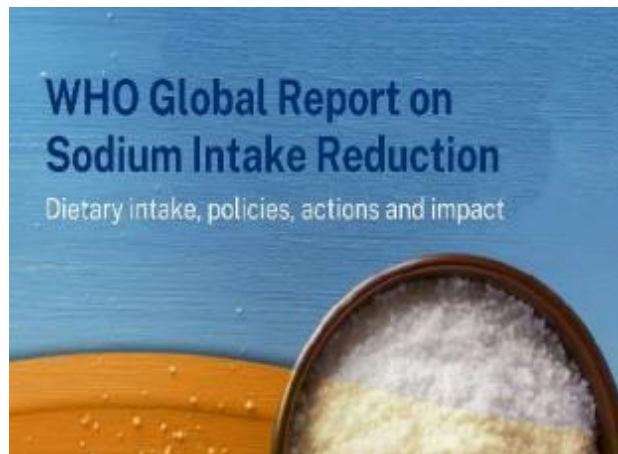
World’s Greatest Places of 2023

- ❖ The TIME magazine has released its annual list of the 'World's Greatest Places' for the year 2023.
- ❖ The list which has 50 spots includes two Indian places.
- ❖ Mayurbhanj and Ladakh, have been selected for their rare tigers and ancient temples, and adventures and eats, respectively.
- ❖ Last year, Kerala and Ahmedabad were the Indian destinations in Time's 'World's Greatest Places of 2022'.



Global Report on Sodium Intake Reduction

- ❖ World Health Organization released a report named Global Report on Sodium Intake Reduction.
- ❖ The report says the estimated global average salt intake is 10.8 grams per day.
- ❖ It is more than double the WHO recommendation of less than 5 grams per day in adults.

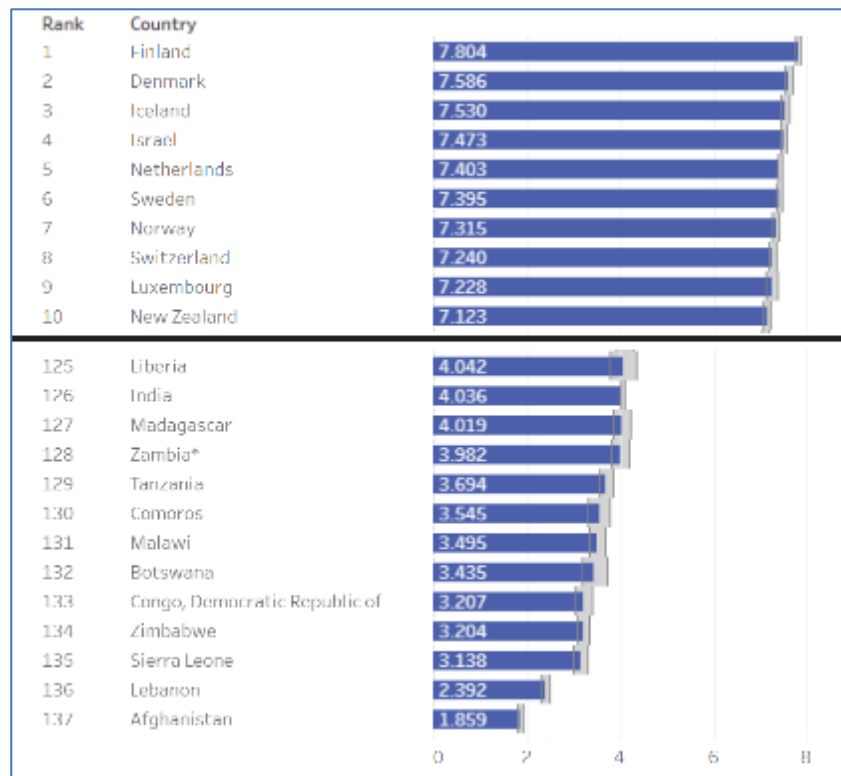


- ❖ The report allocated a sodium country score from 1 (the lowest level) to 4 (the highest level) to each member state.
- ❖ This score is based on the level of implementation of sodium reduction policies and other measures.
- ❖ The sodium country score is used to estimate the impact of policy progress on population dietary sodium intake and cardiovascular disease.
- ❖ Although all 194 WHO member countries committed to the target set in 2013, only 5% have implemented comprehensive sodium-reduction policies,
- ❖ Of the 194 WHO member states, 56 remain in score 1 in the sodium country score card.

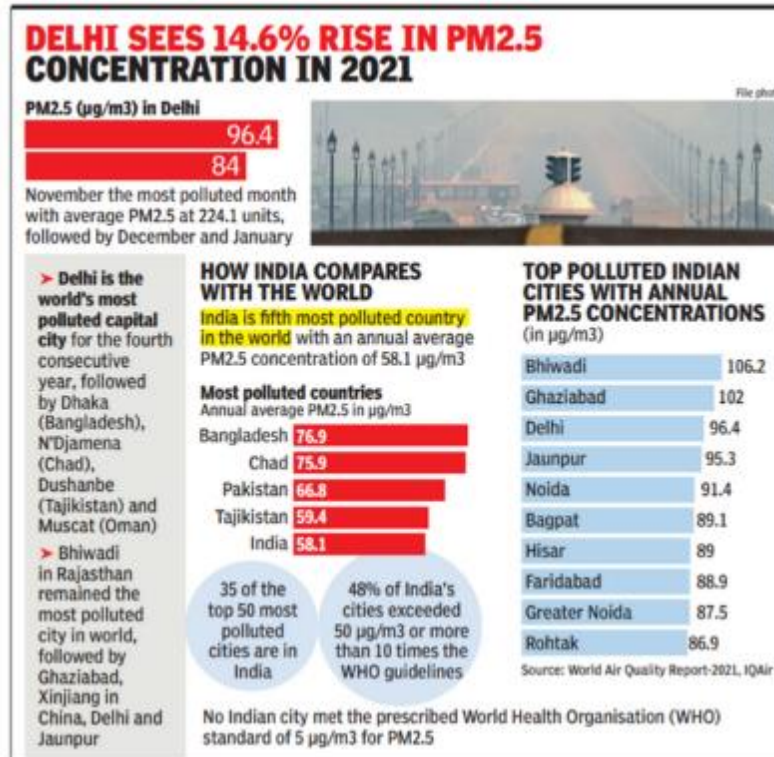
- ❖ Ninety-eight implemented either voluntary, or mandatory policies and other measures, and scored higher.
- ❖ Such policies could save an estimated 7 million lives globally by 2030.

The World Happiness Report 2023

- ❖ This is the 10th year of the World Happiness Report.
- ❖ It is published by the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network.
- ❖ Finland has maintained its position as the world’s happiest country for the sixth consecutive year.
- ❖ Six different factors go into determining a country’s happiness quotient.
- ❖ These include GDP per capita, social support, healthy life expectancy, freedom, generosity and low corruption.
- ❖ India’s rank improved from 136th (2022) to 126th in 2023 Report.
- ❖ India is still behind close neighbours like Sri Lanka (112), Pakistan (108), Nepal (78) and China (64).
- ❖ The war raged Ukraine was positioned at 92 and Taliban ruled Afghanistan stood in the list at the last spot (137th).



5th Annual World Air Quality Report 2022



- ❖ The 5th Annual World Air Quality Report was released by IQAir.
- ❖ It states that roughly 60% of cities in India included in the report recorded annual PM2.5 levels at least seven times higher than the WHO guidelines.
- ❖ The average PM2.5 level in 2022 was 53.3 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$.
- ❖ It is only slightly lower than 58.1 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ in 2021.
- ❖ Bhiwadi in Rajasthan was the most polluted city in the country with PM levels of 92.7.
- ❖ Delhi is the most polluted metropolitan city with PM levels of 92.6.
- ❖ India has ranked eighth in the list of countries with the worst air quality index.
- ❖ It is dropped from the fifth spot the previous year.
- ❖ Lahore in Pakistan jumped more than 10 places to become the city with the worst air in the world in 2022.
- ❖ 12 of the 15 most polluted cities in Central and South Asia are in India.
- ❖ The PM2.5 levels in Bengaluru went up from 29 to 31.5 micrograms/cubic metre.
- ❖ In Hyderabad the increase was from 39.4 to 42.4 micrograms/cubic metre.
- ❖ Delhi, Mumbai and Chennai saw a marginal drop in the level of pollutants by a few micrograms.

- ❖ Kolkata remained the same.
- ❖ The US Pacific territory Guam had cleaner air than any country, with a PM2.5 concentration of 1.3.
- ❖ Canberra of Australia had the cleanest air for a capital city, with 2.8.

Global Terrorism Index

RANK	COUNTRY	SCORE	RANK CHANGE	RANK	COUNTRY	SCORE	RANK CHANGE	RANK	COUNTRY	SCORE	RANK CHANGE
1	Afghanistan	8.022	↔	29	Sri Lanka	4.038	↓ 4	98	Ethiopia	3.044	↓ 7
2	Burkina Faso	8.004	↑ 2	30	United States of America	4.020	↓ 2	97	Argentina	2.976	↔
3	Burkina Faso	8.003	↔	31	Greece	4.193	↓ 2	96	Slovakia	2.954	↑ 38
4	Mali	8.412	↑ 3	32	Libya	4.030	↓ 6	95	Belgium	2.953	↑ 11
5	Yemen	8.161	↑ 1	33	Pakistan	4.671	↓ 1	90	Spain	2.912	↓ 5
6	Pakistan	8.160	↑ 3	34	France	4.478	↑ 7	81	Austria	2.877	↓ 0
7	Iran	8.138	↓ 5	35	Germany	4.202	↓ 4	82	Japan	2.856	↑ 12
8	Nigeria	8.056	↓ 3	36	Kenya	4.154	↓ 2	83	South Arabia	2.851	↓ 9
9	Myanmar (Burma)	7.977	↑ 1	37	Algeria	4.083	↑ 3	84	Sweden	2.837	↑ 7
10	Niger	7.915	↓ 7	38	Tanzania	4.025	↓ 3	85	Switzerland	2.805	↓ 9
11	Cameroon	7.947	↑ 1	39	Burundi	4.031	↓ 6	86	Ecuador	2.988	↓ 8
12	Mozambique	7.930	↓ 1	40	Tunisia	3.968	↓ 1	87	Netherlands	2.920	↓ 0
13	India	7.176	↔	41	Peru	3.858	↓ 3	88	Jordan	2.850	↓ 0
14	Democratic Republic of the Congo	6.870	↑ 2	42	United Kingdom	3.640	↓ 5	89	Australia	1.830	↓ 0
15	Colombia	6.897	↓ 1	43	Bangladesh	3.824	↓ 2	70	Uzbekistan	1.751	↑ 26
16	Egypt	6.632	↓ 1	44	DRC	3.803	↑ 52	71	Paraguay	1.626	↓ 7
17	Chile	6.616	↑ 1	45	Russia	3.759	↓ 1	72	Mexico	1.578	↓ 10
18	Philippines	6.328	↓ 1	46	New Zealand	3.776	↓ 4	73	Ukraine	1.555	↓ 10
19	Chad	6.168	↔	47	Côte d'Ivoire	3.767	↓ 4	74	Cyprus	1.392	↓ 8
20	Kenya	6.163	↔	48	Uganda	3.588	↓ 3	75	Malaysia	1.357	↓ 7
21	Iran	6.000	↑ 5	49	Norway	3.574	↑ 31	76	United Arab Emirates	1.341	↑ 20
22	Yemen	5.876	↓ 1	50	Tajikistan	3.430	↓ 3	77	Senegal	1.008	↓ 5
23	Turkiye	5.840	↔	51	Venezuela	3.409	↓ 5	78	Eswatini	1.058	↓ 5
24	Indonesia	5.502	↔	52	Lebanon	3.400	↔	79	Bahrain	0.828	↓ 14
25	Israel	5.488	↑ 5	53	Italy	3.280	↓ 3	79	Rwanda	0.826	↓ 3
26	Thailand	5.430	↓ 4	54	Canada	3.275	↓ 6	79	South Africa	0.826	↓ 3
27	Togo	4.916	↑ 46	55	Central African Republic	3.104	↑ 17	79	Uruguay	0.826	↓ 4
28	Benin	4.840	↑ 23								

- ❖ Afghanistan retains the top spot in the list of country impacted by terrorism in the new Global Terrorism Index report.
- ❖ It is released by the Australia-based Institute for Economics and Peace.
- ❖ Afghanistan has topped for the fourth consecutive year.
- ❖ India was ranked 13th on the index, marking only a marginal decrease from the previous year.
- ❖ Pakistan has overtaken Afghanistan as the country with the most terrorist attacks and death in South Asia.
- ❖ The report listed India among the 25 worst terror-hit countries, with a high impact of terrorism and ranked 13th.

Report on social protection for children

- ❖ The International Labour Organization–UNICEF Second joint report on social protection for children has been released.

- ❖ Globally 26.4 per cent (just 1 in 4 children) of children aged 0-15 years are only shielded by social protection.
- ❖ The remaining 73.6 per cent are exposed to poverty, exclusion and multidimensional deprivations.
- ❖ Nearly 1.77 billion children aged 0-18 years lack access to a child or family cash benefit
- ❖ It is a fundamental pillar of a social protection system.
- ❖ Regional disparities exist in effective social protection coverage for children.
- ❖ In the Americas, coverage is 57.4%, in the Arab States at 15.4 % and in Asia and the Pacific, coverage is currently 18.0 %.
- ❖ 31 Indian states have implemented the national “PM CARES for Children” scheme launched during the pandemic.
- ❖ So far, only 4,302 children have received support from the scheme.



City Index 2023

- ❖ According to City Index, the United States has the highest number of female billionaires in the world with 92 in total.
- ❖ China is in second place with 46 female billionaires.
- ❖ Germany takes third place with 32 female billionaires.

- ❖ With 16 female billionaires Italy stood in fourth place.
- ❖ Australia, India and Hong Kong are home to the fifth highest number (9) of female billionaires in the world.
- ❖ Savitri Jindal, an Indian politician and businesswoman, is the richest woman in India.

Countries with the most female billionaires

Rank	Country	Number of female billionaires
1	United States	92
2	China	46
3	Germany	32
4	Italy	16
=5	Australia	9
=5	India	9
=5	Hong Kong	9
=8	Spain	8
=8	Switzerland	8
=10	Brazil	7
=10	Sweden	7
=12	France	6
=12	Canada	6
=14	Denmark	4
=14	Israel	4

*= represents joint value

Utility Bidder's Deforestation Report

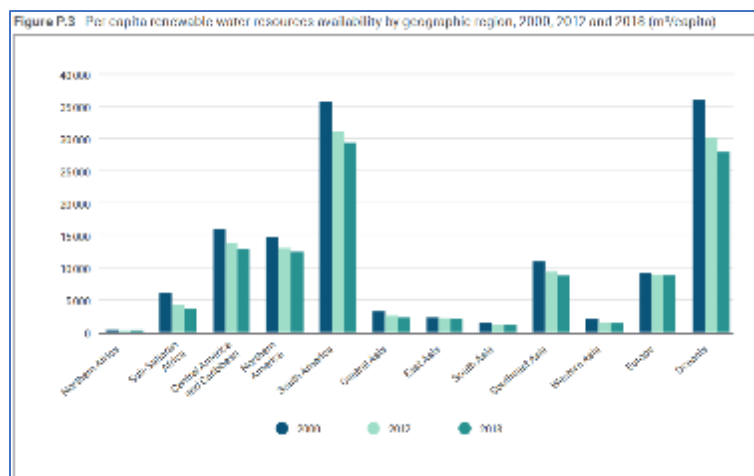
Average deforestation (hectares) between 2015-2020

Country, Continent	Average deforestation (hectares)
1 Brazil South America	1,695,700
2 India Asia	668,400
3 Indonesia Asia	650,000
4 Tanzania Africa	474,000
5 Australia Oceania	416,840
6 Myanmar Asia	293,920
7 Paraguay South America	279,340
8 Mozambique Africa	267,030
9 Sudan Africa	264,000
10 Bolivia South America	242,540
11 Colombia South America	199,230
12 South Africa Africa	199,000
13 Zambia Africa	189,710
14 Peru South America	179,090
15 Mexico North America	165,820
16 Nigeria Africa	163,310
17 Argentina South America	134,800
18 China Asia	133,200
19 Venezuela South America	108,290
20 Nicaragua South America	105,030

- ❖ This report analysed deforestation trends of 98 countries in the last 30 years.
- ❖ India has seen the highest rise in deforestation in the last 30 years, with a stark surge recorded between 2015 and 2020.
- ❖ During these years, the country was ranked second only after Brazil, with average deforestation of 668,400 hectares.
- ❖ Indonesia witnessed a significant loss of forests due to palm oil cultivation.
- ❖ Soyabean cultivation is also responsible for significant deforestation globally.

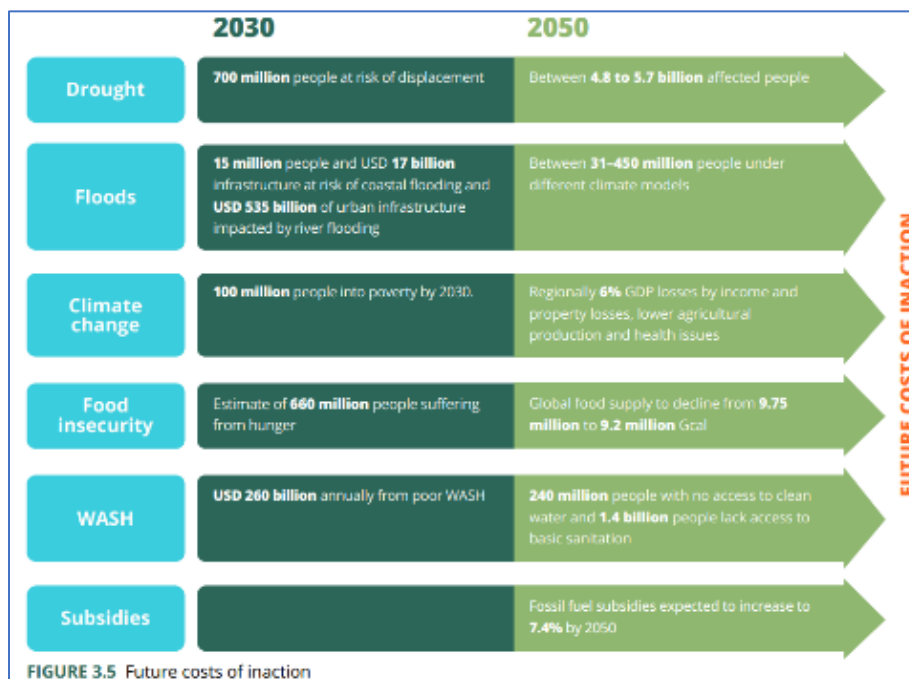
UN Water Development Report 2023

- ❖ On the eve of World Water Day, UN World Water Development Report 2023 was released.
- ❖ India is expected to be the most severely affected country by water scarcity by 2050.
- ❖ About 80% of the people living under water pressure are in Asia, especially northeast China, India and Pakistan.
- ❖ 26 per cent of the world's population do not have access to safe drinking water
- ❖ And 46 per cent lack access to basic sanitation.
- ❖ On average, “10% of the global population lives in countries with high or critical water stress”.
- ❖ Up to 3.5 billion people live under conditions of water stress at least one month a year.
- ❖ Globally, 80% of wastewater is released to the environment without any treatment



GCEW report on water

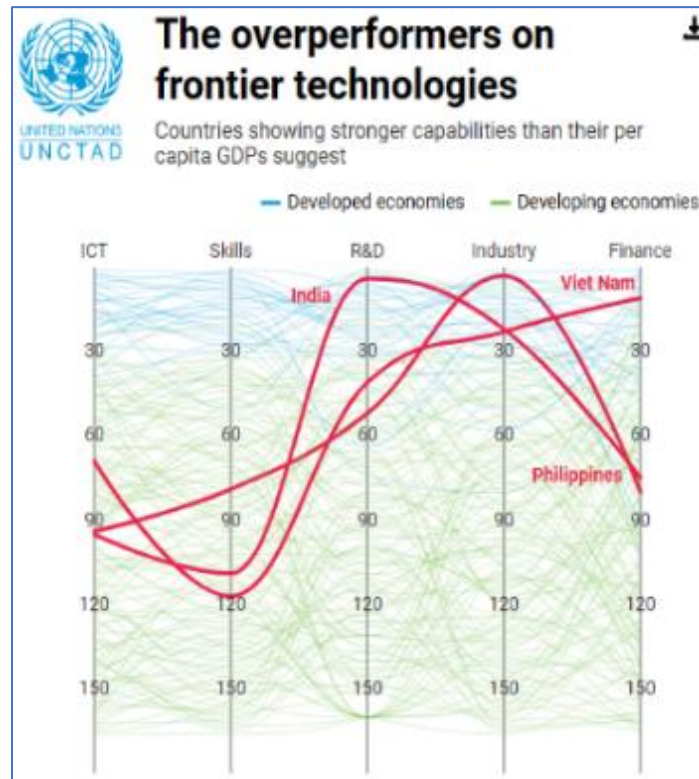
- ❖ The report is titled 'The What, Why and How of the World Water Crisis: Global Commission on the Economics of Water Phase 1 Review and Findings' published by the Global Commission on the Economics of Water (GCEW).
- ❖ India will face a reduction of over 16 % in food supply due to water and heat stress in 2050.
- ❖ The report placed China at the top, where food supply would be reduced by 22.4%, followed by South America by 19.4%.
- ❖ Many Asian countries, including China and ASEAN members, who are currently net food exporters, would become net food importers by 2050.
- ❖ The water supply availability in India is between 1100-1197 billion cubic meters (bcm).
- ❖ In contrast, the demand is expected to grow from 550-710 bcm in 2010 to around 900-1,400 bcm in 2050.
- ❖ India ranks 13 globally on the facing water stress in 2019.



Technology and Innovation Report 2023

- ❖ This was released by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).
- ❖ The developed countries are benefiting more from green technologies than developing countries, and this could deepen global economic inequality.

- ❖ The green technologies could create a market worth \$9.5 trillion by 2030, up from \$1.5 trillion in 2020.
- ❖ The 'frontier technology readiness index' was included in this year report.
- ❖ As per this, only a few developing countries have the capacity to take advantage of frontier technologies such as blockchain, drones, and solar power.
- ❖ It is dominated by high-income economies, notably the US, Sweden, Singapore, Switzerland, and the Netherlands.
- ❖ Notably Brazil was ranked at 40, the Russian Federation at 31, India at 46, China at 35, and South Africa at 56.



QS World University Rankings

- ❖ QS World University Rankings by Subject 2023 12th edition was released recently.
- ❖ The QS Rankings highlights that the IIT Delhi has marked its place in top 50 institutions for engineering.
- ❖ India is ahead of 5 courses when it comes to marking its place in top 100.
- ❖ This year, 44 programmes offered by Indian higher education institutions in different disciplines have figured in the top 100 globally.
- ❖ Last year, the number was 35.

- ❖ IIT Bombay is 67th spot in mathematics.
- ❖ IIT-Kanpur has been ranked 87th in engineering-electrical electronic and in computer science information systems 96th.
- ❖ IIT-Kharagpur has occupied 94th spot for computer science and information systems.
- ❖ IIT-Madras to come at 98th spot for mathematics.

Achieving new milestones in world-class Higher Education with strong global position

QS World University Rankings by Subject 2023

- ▶ Total 17 Indian universities in the top 100 of the World, across 20 subjects areas.
- ▶ IIT Delhi ranks 49 in top 50 institutions in the world for Electrical & Electronic Engineering.
- ▶ IIT Madras ranks 21 in the world for Petroleum Engineering.
- ▶ Overall 66 Indian universities feature across 38 subjects.



STATES

India's first Marina

- ❖ Karnataka is set to get India's 1st Marina which will be constructed Byndoor in the Udupi district.
- ❖ This project has been initiated to promote coastal tourism in the state.
- ❖ Marina is a specially designed place of pleasure for small boats and yachts.



Bird's eye chilly export to US

- ❖ Mizoram would soon export 'bird's eye chilli' of the state to the United States for the first time.
- ❖ The Government has obtained geographical identification (GI) tag for bird's eye chilli or 'Mizo chilli'.
- ❖ The chilli is to be exported has passed an organic confirmation test in Bangalore last week.
- ❖ The chillies are highly pungent.
- ❖ The Scoville Heat Units (SCU) of spiciness is 50,000 to 1,00,000.
- ❖ The higher the SCU are the greater their spiciness.
- ❖ They are widely grown in Cambodia, Vietnam, Thailand, etc.



First women MLAs from Nagaland

- ❖ Two women created history in Nagaland by becoming the first two women to win the Assembly polls.
- ❖ Hekani Jakhalu and Salhoutuonuo Kruse are both from Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio's Nationalist Democratic Progressive Party.
- ❖ No woman was elected an MLA in Nagaland, though the state has witnessed 14 Assembly elections since its formation.
- ❖ Four women were among the 183 candidates who contested this year's elections for the Nagaland Assembly.



International Dharma Dhamma Conference

- ❖ The President of India, inaugurated the 7th International Dharma Dhamma Conference in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh.
- ❖ Theme of the event is "Eastern Humanism for the New Era"
- ❖ It is organised by the India Foundation in collaboration with the Sanchi University of Buddhist-Indic Studies.
- ❖ India Foundation is a New Delhi-based independent think-tank that focuses on issues, challenges and opportunities of Indian polity.

Indian States' electricity transition Report

Dimension 1	Dimension 2	Dimension 3	Dimension 4	
Karnataka	Karnataka	Karnataka	Haryana	Quartile 1
Rajasthan	Punjab	Andhra Pradesh	Gujarat	
Punjab	Telangana	Gujarat	Karnataka	
Haryana	Gujarat	Maharashtra	Chhattisgarh	
Tamil Nadu	Haryana	Telangana	Rajasthan	Quartile 2
Andhra Pradesh	Delhi	West Bengal	Maharashtra	
Gujarat	Andhra Pradesh	Odisha	Delhi	
Delhi	Tamil Nadu	Tamil Nadu	Punjab	
Maharashtra	Odisha	Madhya Pradesh	Uttar Pradesh	Quartile 3
Telangana	Chhattisgarh	Chhattisgarh	Madhya Pradesh	
Madhya Pradesh	Rajasthan	Punjab	Bihar	
Odisha	Maharashtra	Delhi	Telangana	
Uttar Pradesh	Uttar Pradesh	Rajasthan	Tamil Nadu	Quartile 4
Bihar	Bihar	Uttar Pradesh	Andhra Pradesh	
West Bengal	Madhya Pradesh	Haryana	West Bengal	
Chhattisgarh	West Bengal	Bihar	Odisha	

- ❖ India's energy transition report was prepared by the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis (IEEFA) along with EMBER India.
- ❖ The report has analysed 16 states, which together account for 90% of India's annual power requirement.
- ❖ Karnataka and Gujarat are among the major states making the most progress in transition to clean electricity.
- ❖ The analysis has tracked four dimensions of transition module.

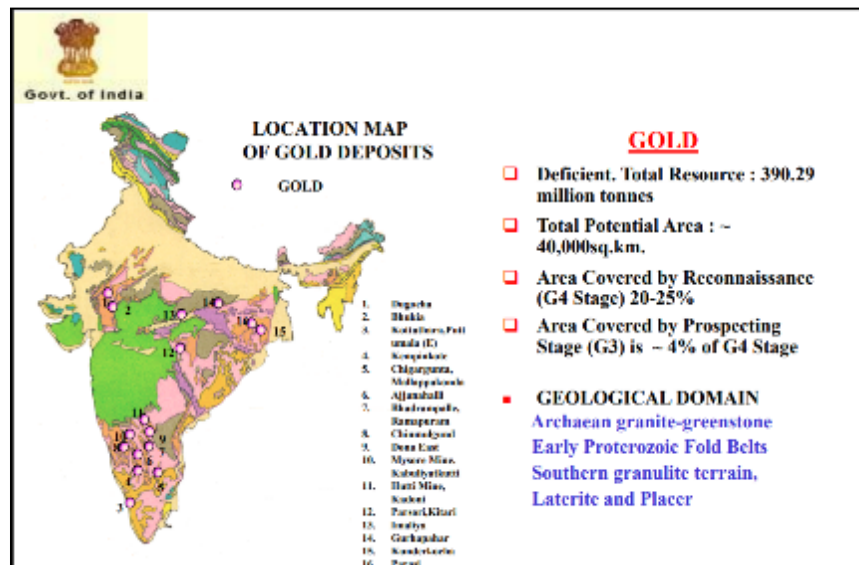
Bhojpur's Millet Festival

- ❖ The Bhojpur's Millet Festival was organized in Bihar.
- ❖ It aims to increase the awareness among the people towards Shree Anna.
- ❖ Bihar is known to produce Jowar, Bajra, Ragi and Small Millets.

- ❖ India accounts for 20% of the global millet production and 80% of Asia's millet output.
- ❖ However, millets still account for a mere 3% of the world grain trade.

New Gold Deposits

- ❖ Gold mines have been found at different locations of three districts (Deogarh, Keonjhar and Mayurbhanj) of Odisha.
- ❖ An estimated 1,685 kg of gold ore has been detected by the Geological Survey of India experts along with copper in the Adas area.
- ❖ Odisha is accounting for 98 per cent of the country's chromite deposits.



New CMs of Meghalaya, Tripura and Nagaland

- ❖ National People's Party (NPP)'s Conrad Sangma took oath as Chief Minister of Meghalaya.
- ❖ Prestone Tynsong and Sniawbhalang Dhar took oath as deputy chief ministers.
- ❖ Nationalist Democratic Progressive Party (NDPP)'s Neiphiu Rio took oath as Chief Minister of Nagaland.
- ❖ He is the longest serving chief minister and this is his fifth consecutive term.
- ❖ Manik Saha took oath as the Chief Minister of the coalition government in Tripura.



Yaoshang Festival

- ❖ The five-day-long Yaoshang festival is Manipur’s version of Holi.
- ❖ The festival is celebrated every year on the full moon of Lamta (February-March) of the Meitei lunar calendar.
- ❖ Traditional “thabal chongba” dance held during the celebration.
- ❖ The thabal chongba is a traditional dance of the Meitei.

World's Longest Railway Platform

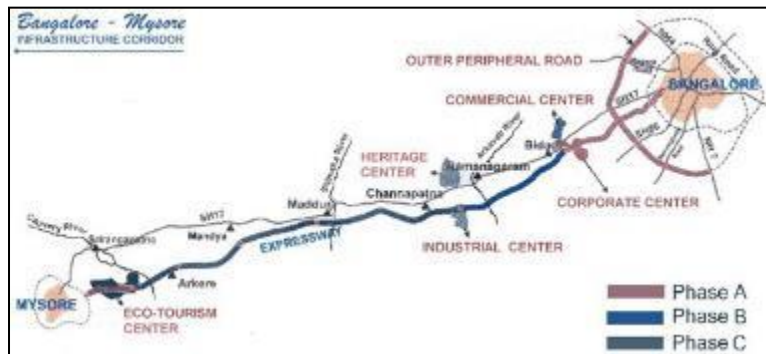
- ❖ Prime Minister dedicated World’s longest railway platform (1.5 km long) in Hubballi, Karnataka.
- ❖ South Western Railway Zones Hubballi is now registered in the Guinness Book of World Records for having the longest platform.
- ❖ Gorakhpur platform in Uttar Pradesh is the second longest at 1,366.33 meters.
- ❖ Kollam Junction in Kerala has the third longest platform at 1,180.5 meters.

LONGEST RAILWAY PLATFORM IN INDIA

Rank	Station name	Length (metres)	State
1	Hubballi Junction railway station	1,595	Karnataka
2	Gorakhpur Junction railway station	1,366	Uttar Pradesh
3	Kollam Junction railway station	1,180.5	Kerala
4	Kharagpur Railway Platform	1,072	West Bengal
5	Chennai Egmore Railway Station	925.22	Tamil Nadu

Bengaluru-Mysuru Expressway

- ❖ Prime Minister inaugurated the Bengaluru-Mysuru Expressway.
- ❖ The 118-km-long expressway will reduce the travel time between Bengaluru and Mysuru from three hours to about 75 minutes.
- ❖ He also laid the foundation stone for the Mysore-Kushalnagar four-lane highway which is about 92 km.



Ladli Bahna scheme

- ❖ Ladli Behna Scheme is a programme launched by Madhya Pradesh government.
- ❖ As part of the initiative, women from lower- and middle-class homes will get a monthly transfer of Rs 1,000 into their accounts.
- ❖ It will help women become more financially independent and encourage their effective participation in family decision-making.

Vote-From-Home

- ❖ Karnataka is all set to elect its next government in the elections in April-May.
- ❖ For this, the Election Commission of India has introduced the Vote-From-Home Option.
- ❖ It will be beneficial to those above the age of 80 years and also those who are suffering from any disabilities.
- ❖ This is for the first time that the Election Commission is providing this facility to those above the age of 80 years.
- ❖ A mobile application 'Saksham' has been introduced through which they can login and choose the facility to vote.
- ❖ Another mobile application called, 'Suvidha' has been developed.
- ❖ This is an online portal for candidates to file their nomination and affidavits.
- ❖ Candidates can use this portal to seek permission for meetings and rallies.

Mulethi cultivation

- ❖ Himachal Pradesh has become the first state in India to start the organized commercial cultivation of Licorice (Mulethi).
- ❖ Mulethi' (glycyrrhiza glabra) is not only used as a spice but also in ayurvedic medicines.
- ❖ The presence of glycyrrhizin, which is 50 times sweeter than sucrose, gives the roots a sweet flavour.
- ❖ In this, Antiviral, anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, and antibacterial properties are present.
- ❖ Presently, it is largely imported from other countries.



India's first 'Trans Tea Stall' at a railway platform



- ❖ All Assam Transgender Association got approval from Indian Railways for Trans Tea Stall'.
- ❖ The first tea stall came up on Guwahati railway station's platform.
- ❖ It would empower the community and generate income for them.

First methanol run buses

- ❖ For the first time, Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTc) run some of its city buses using methanol-blended fuel.
- ❖ The buses will be operated on a pilot basis.
- ❖ These Buses run on 15% methanol-blended fuel.
- ❖ On this occasion, a truck that runs on 100% methanol (M 100) also launched.
- ❖ Blending 15% methanol in gasoline can result in at least a 15% reduction in the import of gasoline/crude oil.
- ❖ In addition, this would bring down GHG emissions by 20%, thereby improving urban air quality.

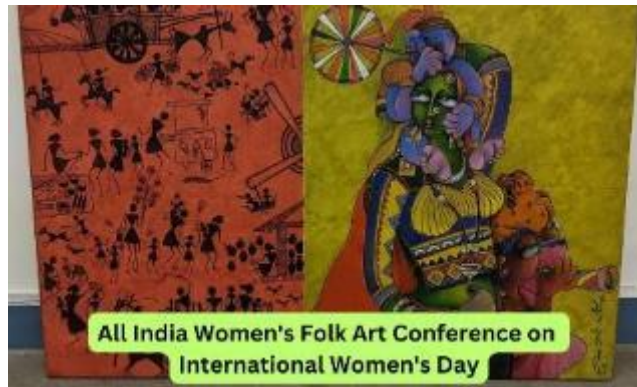


Beggar-free city

- ❖ In Maharashtra, a new initiative called 'beggar-free city' has been started in Nagpur.
- ❖ This is the joint venture of Nagpur City police and Nagpur Municipal Corporation's (NMC) social welfare department.
- ❖ The NMC has made special arrangements to accommodate homeless people in the shelters owned by it.

All India Women's Folk Art Conference


- ❖ On the occasion of International Women's Day, an All-India Women's Folk Art Conference was organised in Mumbai.
- ❖ It was organised by P. L. Deshpande Maharashtra Kala Academy, Government of Maharashtra in association with Sangeet Natak Akademi.
- ❖ Two seminars on 'Contribution of Indian Saint Poetess' and 'Folk Art on Silver Screen' also organised during the event.



TB drug – Bedaquiline

- ❖ Pharma major Johnson and Johnson made application to extend its patent on anti-Tuberculosis drug Bedaquiline that expires in July this year.
- ❖ The Indian Patent Office rejected this application.
- ❖ The patent would have extended J&J's monopoly on the drug in India till 2027.
- ❖ But with this rejection, generic manufacturers can now make their own versions at an affordable price from this year.

Vital intervention
Bedaquiline, manufactured by J&J, is a crucial anti-TB drug



around \$400 for a six-month treatment regimen, the prices are likely to fall

- India has rejected J&J's appeal to extend its patent beyond July 2023
- Currently priced at
- After July, generic producers like Lupin and Macleods are likely to manufacture the drug
- Over 55,000 patients, in whom other drugs have stopped working, may benefit from Bedaquiline access
- Till March 2020, only a little over 10,000 patients received the drug

Bihar Diwas - March 22

- ❖ Bihar came into existence on March 22, 1912.
- ❖ Earlier, Bihar and Bengal provinces were the same.
- ❖ Bihar and Bengal were divided in 1912.
- ❖ Odisha was separated from Bihar in the partition of 1936.
- ❖ The third partition took place in 2000 when Jharkhand became a separate state.

Right to Health Bill – Rajasthan

- ❖ The Right to Health (RTH) Bill was passed by the Rajasthan Assembly.
- ❖ It becomes the first Indian State to enact such Act.
- ❖ Under the law, neither government nor private hospitals nor doctors can refuse a person seeking emergency treatment.
- ❖ Emergency treatment would include care in case of accidents, animal or snake bite, complications in pregnancy or an emergency defined by the state health authority.
- ❖ In such a case, a patient will not be required to make an advance deposit, or pre-payment for either treatment or diagnostics even at a private hospital.
- ❖ In case a patient cannot pay for his treatment, the state government will reimburse the hospital for the cost.
- ❖ Patient also gets the right to choose the shop or the lab from where he wants to buy medicines.



**SALIENT FEATURES OF THE
RIGHT TO HEALTH DRAFT BILL, RAJASTHAN**

OBLIGATIONS OF THE GOVERNMENT

- ❑ Appropriate state budget for health
- ❑ Within six months of enactment, develop and institutionalize a human resource policy for health for equitable distribution of healthcare workers across hospitals
- ❑ Social audit and grievance redressal mechanism
- ❑ Within one year, prescribing standards for quality and safety at all levels of hospitals
- ❑ Guarantee availability of government funded healthcare services as per distance or geographical area
- ❑ Ensuring that there is no direct or indirect denial to anyone for any government funded healthcare service
- ❑ Institute effective measures to prevent, treat and control epidemics and other public health emergencies
- ❑ Setting up state and district level health authorities

PERSONALITIES, AWARDS AND EVENTS

Marconi Prize 2023

- ❖ Computer scientist Hari Balakrishnan has been awarded the 2023 Marconi Prize.
- ❖ He has been cited “for fundamental contributions to wired and wireless networking, mobile sensing, and distributed systems”.
- ❖ The Marconi Prize is a top honour for computer scientists and is awarded by the U.S.-based Marconi Foundation.
- ❖ It is given to those “who have made a significant contribution to increasing digital inclusivity through advanced information and communications technology.”
- ❖ Dr. Balakrishnan has previously won the Infosys Prize (2020) and the IEEE Koji Kobayashi Computers and Communications Award (2021).



Ellora-Ajanta International Festival 2023



- ❖ The three-day Ellora-Ajanta International Festival held at Soneri Mahal in Aurangabad, Maharashtra.
- ❖ The Ellora-Ajanta International Festival aims to promote tourism in Aurangabad district.
- ❖ The festival was a massive hit when it was first launched in 1985.
- ❖ The Ellora-Ajanta International Festival was last held in 2016.

Women 20 inception meet

- ❖ The two-day W20 (Women 20) inception meeting as part of India's presidency of the G20 forum held in Aurangabad, Maharashtra.
- ❖ The W20 is an official engagement group under G20 and was established during the Turkish presidency in 2015.
- ❖ Its primary objective is to ensure gender considerations are mainstreamed into discussions of G20.
- ❖ W20 India took over the presidency from W20 Indonesia on December 12, 2022.

Member of the National Commission for Women



- ❖ Khushbu Sundar from Tamil Nadu has been nominated as a member of the National Commission for Women.
- ❖ The National Commission for Women was set up in 1992 under the National Commission for Women Act, 1990.
- ❖ This body was established to review the constitutional and legal safeguards for women.
- ❖ The first commission was constituted on 31st January 1992 as Jayanti Patnaik as the chairperson.
- ❖ The Commission consist of a minimum number of members which includes a chairperson, a member secretary, and the other five members.
- ❖ The five members are nominated by the central government from amongst the person of ability, integrity, and standing.

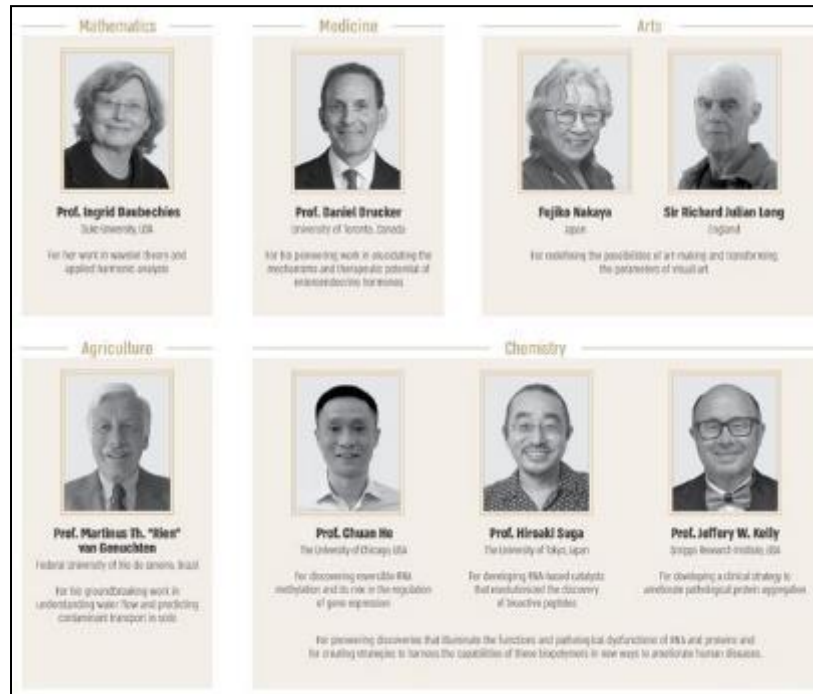
UNESCO Peace Prize 2022

- ❖ Germany's former chancellor Angela Merkel received a prestigious UNESCO Peace Prize 2022.
- ❖ Merkel was hailed for welcoming more than 1.2 million refugees and asylum seekers to Germany in 2015 and 2016.
- ❖ She was elected as first women Chancellor of Germany in 2005 and served 16 years.
- ❖ UNESCO's Felix Houphouet-Boigny Peace Prize was created in 1989.
- ❖ It honours living individuals and active public or private bodies or institutions that have made significant contribution to peace.



Wolf Prize 2023

- ❖ The awards are presented in six fields namely arts, physics, agriculture, mathematics, chemistry, and medicine.
- ❖ The Arts Wolf Prize rotates between music, painting, architecture, and sculpture.
- ❖ The Wolf prize is presented by the Wolf Foundation of Israel since 1978.
- ❖ The award winners are
 - Medicine: Professor Daniel Drucker - Canada
 - Agriculture: Martinus Th Rien - Rio De Janeiro
 - Physics: Professor Can Genuchten
 - Chemistry: John T Wilson, Hiroaki Suga and Jeffery W Kelly
 - Mathematics: Ingrid Daubechies - USA
 - Arts: Fujiko Nakaya - Japan and Richard Long – England



76th BAFTA Awards

- ❖ The 76th British Academy Film Awards, also known as the BAFTAs were presented at the Royal Festival Hall in London, England.
- ❖ The winners are

CATEGORIES	WINNERS
Best Film	All Quiet at the eastern Front
Leading Actress	Cate Blanchett for Tar
Leading Actor	Austin Butler for Elvis
Best Director	Edward Berger for All Quiet at the Western Front
Best Casting	Elvis
Best Cinematography	All Quiet on the Western Front
Adapted Screenplay	Edward Berger, Lesley Paterson, Lan Stokell for All Quiet on the western front
Editing	Paul rogers for Everything Everywhere All AT Once,
Cinematography	James friend for All Quiet on the western front,
Best Documentary	Navalny (Daniel Roher)
EE Bafta Rising star Award	Emma Mackey
Film Not in the English Language	All Quiet on The Western Front

Asian Chess Excellence Awards 2023

- ❖ Indian Grandmaster D Gukesh has been honoured with Player-of-the-Year award by the Asian Chess Federation (ACF) annual summit at Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.

- ❖ This is award for clinching the gold medal with a record-breaking score of 9/11 in the 44th Chess Olympiad at Mahabalipuram last year.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin has been conferred with Man-of-the-Year award for his effort in the successful hosting of the FIDE Chess Olympiad in Chennai.
- ❖ The Indian women's team, comprising of Koneru Humpy, D Harika, R Vaishali, Tania Sachdev and Bhakti Kulkarni, was adjudged the 'Best Women's team of the Year'.
- ❖ Grandmaster R B Ramesh bagged the men's Coach-of-the-Year award.
- ❖ Grandmaster Abhijit Kunte won the Women's Coach-of-the-Year awards.
- ❖ The All-India Chess Federation (AICF) bagged the 'Most Active Federation' award.

Group Captain Shaliza Dhami

- ❖ The Indian Air Force has selected Group Captain Shaliza Dhami to take over command of a frontline combat unit in the Western sector.
- ❖ She will be the first woman officer in the IAF to command a missile squadron in the Western sector facing Pakistan.
- ❖ A Group Captain in the IAF is equivalent to a Colonel in the Army.
- ❖ The Indian Army has the largest number of women officers at 1,705, followed by 1,640 women officers in the Indian Air Force, and 559 in the Indian Navy



CBIP Award 2022

- ❖ NTPC Limited was awarded CBIP Award 2022 for the 'Outstanding Contribution in Power Generation'.
- ❖ The Odisha Power Transmission Corporation Limited (OPTCL) has been conferred with the Central Board of Irrigation and Power Award 2022.
- ❖ OPTCL awarded for the 'best-performing transmission power sector'.

- ❖ The State-run utility has been conferred with this award for the first time since its inception.
- ❖ Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) has been awarded the CBIP Award 2022 for 'Best Contribution in Solar Energy'.



8th National Photography Awards

- ❖ A total of thirteen awards were presented during the ceremony including 6 each in the Professional and Amateur category and one Lifetime Achievement Award.
- ❖ The theme for the Professional category was "Life and Water".
- ❖ The theme of the Amateur category was "Cultural Heritage of India".

Oscars for India



- ❖ SS Rajamouli's RRR has created history by becoming the first Indian feature film to win an Oscar.
- ❖ The film's 'Naatu Naatu' soundtrack by MM Keeravani was awarded the Best Original Song Award.



- ❖ Notably, 'Naatu Naatu' won the Golden Globe for the best song earlier this month.
- ❖ The win made RRR the first Indian film to win a Golden Globe.
- ❖ India won a second Oscar for 'The Elephant Whisperers' which won in the Best Documentary Short film category.

Oscars awards 2023

- ❖ The Academy Awards, or Oscars Awards 2023's 95th anniversary ceremony held recently.
- ❖ Oscars Awards 2023 full winner list.

Category	Winners
Best Picture	Everything Everywhere All At Once
Best Actress	Michelle Yeoh (Everything Everywhere All at Once)
Best Actor	Brendan Fraser (The Whale)
Best Director	Daniel Kwan and Daniel Scheinert (Everything Everywhere All at Once)
2023 Best Film Editing	Everything Everywhere All at Once
Best Original Song	'Naatu Naatu' (RRR)
Best Sound	Top Gun: Maverick
Best Adapted Screenplay	Women Talking
Best Original Screenplay	Everything Everywhere All at Once - Daniel Kwan and Daniel Scheinert
Best Visual Effects	Avatar: The Way of Water
Best Animated Feature Film	Guillermo del Toro's 'Pinocchio'
Best Actress in a Supporting Role	Janis Lee Curtis in 'Everything Everywhere All at Once'
Best Actor in a Supporting Role	Ke Huy Quan in 'Everything Everywhere All at Once'
Best Documentary Feature Film	'Navalny' by Daniel Roher, Odessa Rae, Diane Becker, Melanie Miller and Shane Boris
Best Live Action Short Film	'An Irish Goodbye' by Tom Berkeley and Ross White
Best Cinematography	'All Quiet on the Western Front' by James Friend
Best Makeup and Hairstyling	Adrien Morot, Judy Chin and Annemarie Beadley for 'The Whale'
Best Costume Design	Ruth Carter for 'Black Panther: Wakanda Forever'
Best International Feature Film	'All Quiet on the Western Front' - Germany
Best Documentary Short Film	'The Elephant Whisperers' by Kartiki Gonsalves and Guneet Monga
Best Animated Short Film	The Boy, the Mole, the Fox, and the Horse
Best Original Score	All Quiet on the Western Front
Best Production Design	All Quiet on the Western Front

Controller General of Accounts

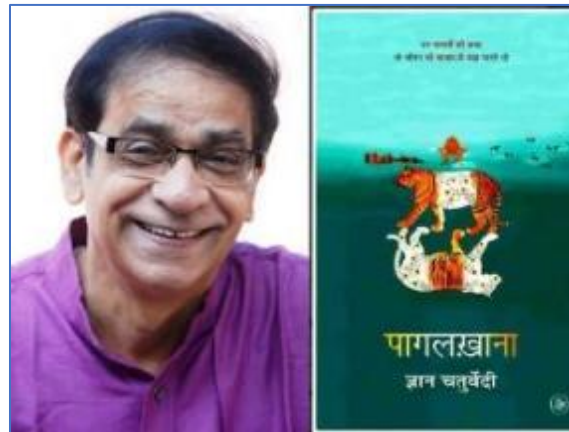
- ❖ Senior Civil Accounts Service officer S.S. Dubey took charge as the 28th Controller General of Accounts (CGA).
- ❖ He will be the principal adviser on accounting matters to the Union government.
- ❖ He is responsible for preparation of the accounts and conduct of internal audits for the central government.
- ❖ The Office of CGA prepares monthly and annual analysis of expenditure, revenues, borrowings and various fiscal indicators for the Union government.

- ❖ The Controller General of Accounts (CGA) works under the Department of Expenditure in the Finance Ministry.
- ❖ The accounting functions of the CAG were taken away in 1976 and handed over to the CGA.



32nd Vyas Samman

- ❖ Hindi writer Dr Gyan Chaturvedi's 2018 satirical novel, Pagalkhana, has been selected for the 32nd Vyas Samman, 2022.
- ❖ It was Instituted by the KK Birla Foundation in 1991.
- ❖ The annual Vyas Samman is given to an outstanding Hindi literary work by an Indian citizen published during the last 10 years.



Swachh Sujal Shakti Samman 2023

- ❖ Ministry of Jal Shakti has organized the “Swachh Sujal Shakti Samman 2023”.
- ❖ It aims to honour the women champions of the rural water and sanitation sector.

- ❖ The event also saw the launch of Jal Shakti Abhiyan – Catch the Rain 2023.
- ❖ 36 women WASH Champions were conferred with the ‘Swachh Sujal Shakti Samman 2023’.

WINS Awards 2023



- ❖ To highlight the impact of women in sanitation and waste management, the Union Ministry for Housing and Urban Affairs announced the WINS Awards.
- ❖ The WINS Awards 2023 aim to recognize celebrate and disseminate inspiring and exemplary initiatives in urban sanitation and waste management by women led organizations and individual women.
- ❖ WINS stands for ‘Women Icons Leading Swacchata’.

Golden city gate tourism awards 2023

- ❖ The Golden City Gate Tourism Multimedia Awards are given annually in various categories related to the Tourism and Hospitality sectors.
- ❖ The annual award ceremony takes place at ITB Berlin, the world’s leading tourism trade show.
- ❖ The Ministry of Tourism of India, has bagged Golden & Silver Star awards in ‘TV/Cinema Commercials International and Country International’ Category.



First woman to command an army battalion

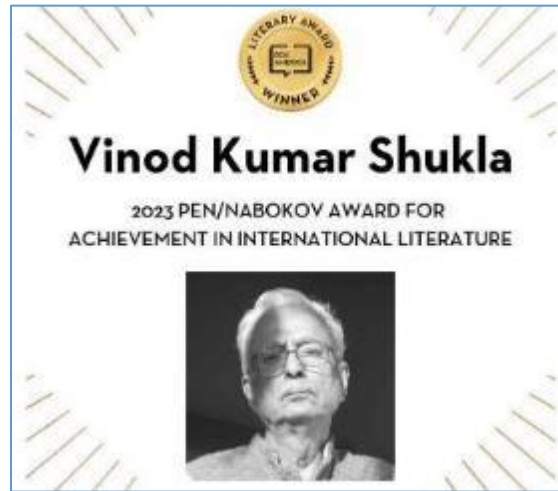


- ❖ Colonel Geeta Rana has taken charge of an independent field workshop in a forward and remote location in eastern Ladakh.
- ❖ A woman officer has, for the first time, taken over the command of an independent unit in the sensitive Ladakh sector.
- ❖ In early January, the army for the first time deployed a woman officer, Captain Shiva Chouhan, at Siachen, the world's highest and coldest battleground.

PEN/Nabokov Lifetime Achievement Award

- ❖ Vinod Kumar Shukla of India, has won the PEN America award for lifetime achievement in literature.
- ❖ This is one of the most coveted literary prizes worldwide.
- ❖ He composed acclaimed novels like Naukar Ki Kameez (1979) and poetry collections like Sab Kuch Hona Bacha Rahega (1992).

- ❖ The award was founded in 2016 by Pen America in collaboration with the Vladimir Nabokov Literary Foundation.



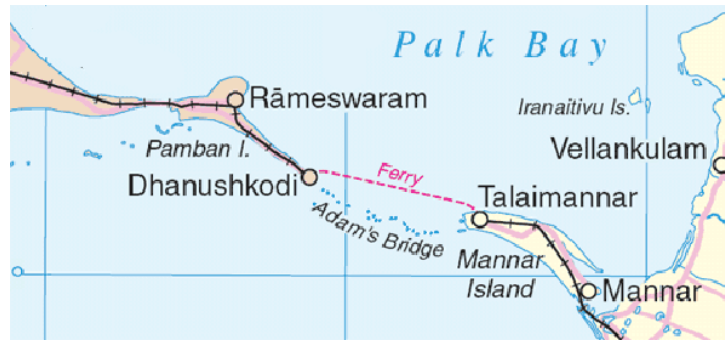
Laureate of the Pritzker Architecture Prize 2023



- ❖ Urban planner and activist, Sir David Alan Chipperfield of British has been selected as the 2023 Laureate of The Pritzker Architecture Prize.
- ❖ It is widely regarded as architecture's highest honour.
- ❖ Chipperfield's storied career spans more than 40 years and includes 100-plus projects, ranging from civic, cultural, and academic buildings.

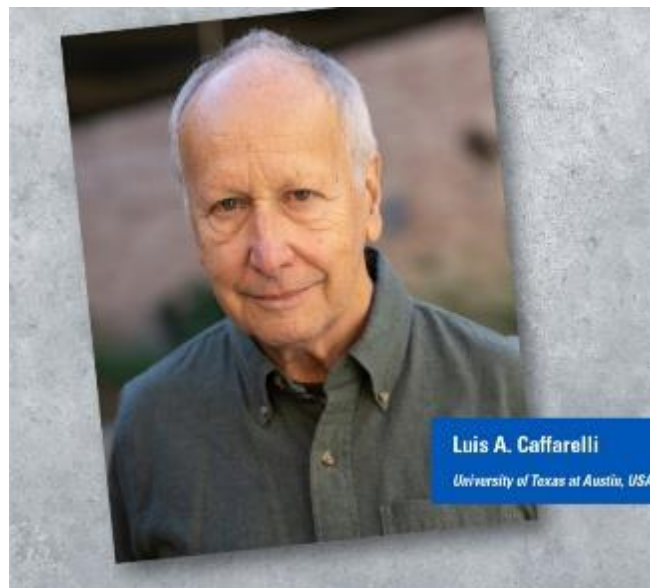
Fastest Indian to swim across Palk Strait

- ❖ Pune-based swimmer, Sampanna Ramesh Shelar has become the fastest Indian in the Under-21 group to swim across the Palk Strait.
- ❖ This is spread from Talaimannar in Sri Lanka to Dhanushkodi in Tamil Nadu.
- ❖ He crossed this distance in 5 hours 30 minutes.
- ❖ The previous record was 8 hours 26 minutes.



2023 Abel Prize

- ❖ Argentine-American mathematician Luis Caffarelli was awarded the Abel Prize for this year 2023.
- ❖ The prize is conferred every year by the King of Norway and is awarded to one or more outstanding mathematicians.
- ❖ Caffarelli's work has had a significant impact on several areas of mathematics.
- ❖ This awarded is widely regarded as the equivalent of the Nobel Prize in mathematics.

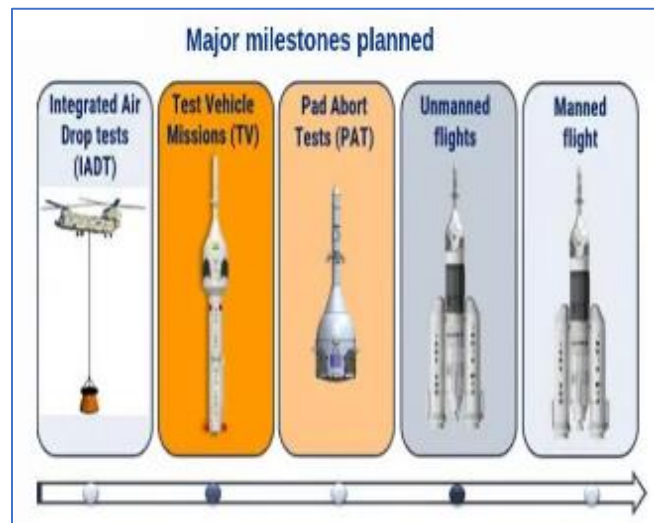


Ramnath Goenka Awards

- ❖ The awards, every year, celebrate the legacy of the founder of The Indian Express Group, acknowledging and honouring the excellence in journalism.
- ❖ A total of 43 winners from 2019 and 2020- who could not be honoured earlier owing to the pandemic were felicitated this year in New Delhi.

Gaganyaan mission astronauts

- ❖ Four astronauts have been selected for India's first Human Space Flight Programme or the Gaganyaan.
- ❖ They have successfully completed the first semester of crew training.
- ❖ The candidates who are Indian Air Force (IAF) test pilots have been undergoing Gaganyaan Mission specific training at the Astronaut Training Facility in Bengaluru.
- ❖ They were sent to Russia in 2020 where they completed generic space flight training at Gagarin Cosmonaut Training Centre.



Children's Champion Award 2023

- ❖ An Assam-based NGO that cares for special and autistic children has won the Children's Champion Award 2023 in the health and nutrition category.
- ❖ The award was instituted by the Delhi Commission for Protection of Child Rights in 2022.
- ❖ It recognises individuals and institutions championing the cause of children in education, justice, health, nutrition, sports, and artistic expression.

SPORTS

25,000 runs in international cricket

- ❖ Virat Kohli became the sixth and the fastest batter in the world to score 25,000 runs in 549 innings.
- ❖ He broke the legendary Sachin Tendulkar's record to become the fastest batter in international cricket history to score 25K runs.
- ❖ Sachin took 577 innings to complete 25,000 runs.
- ❖ Virat is the second Indian after Sachin who has joined this elite club.

FASTEST TO 25000 INTERNATIONAL RUNS ACROSS FORMATS				
INNS		CAREER MTS	RUNS	AVG
549	VIRAT KOHLI	492	25003	53.64
577	SACHIN TENDULKAR	664	34357	48.52
588	RICKY PONTING	560	27483	45.95
594	JACQUES KALLIS	519	25534	49.10
608	KUMAR SANGAKKARA	594	28016	46.77
701	MAHELA JAYAWARDENE	652	25957	39.15

Tops in all three formats



- ❖ The Indian Men's Cricket Team has become the ICC World No.1 in all three formats of the game.
- ❖ This is the first time India has become the World No.1 in all three formats at the same time.
- ❖ South Africa had achieved this feat in 2014.

- ❖ India is only the second team in the world to achieve the rare feat of becoming the World No.1 in all three formats.
- ❖ India is also the first Asian team to achieve the feat.

FIFA Awards 2023

- ❖ The FIFA Football Awards 2022 ceremony held in Paris.
- ❖ Alexia Putellas and Lionel Messi were crowned as the outstanding players of the past year.
- ❖ The winners of The FIFA Football Awards 2022 are
 - The Best Women's Player: Alexia Putellas (Spain)
 - The Best Men's Player: Lionel Messi (Argentina)
 - The Best Women's Goalkeeper: Mary Earps (England)
 - The Best Men's Goalkeeper: Emiliano Martínez (Argentina)
 - The Best Women's Coach: Sarina Wiegman (England Women's Team)
 - The Best Men's Coach: Lionel Scaloni (Argentina Men's National Team)
 - The FIFA Puskás Award: Marcin Oleksy (Poland)
 - The FIFA Fair Play Award: Luka Lochoshvili (Georgia)
 - The FIFA Fan Award: Argentinian Fans



Men's long jump Record

- ❖ Tamil Nadu's Jeswin Aldrin hogged the limelight with a national record in men's long jump in the second AFI National Jumps Competition, held at Karnataka.
- ❖ He leapt 8.42 metres to erase the previous mark of 8.36 metres set by India teammate M Sreeshankar last year.



Hyderabad Formula E-Championship

- ❖ The Hyderabad ePrix is a race of the single-seater, electrically powered Formula E race held in Hyderabad.
- ❖ It was first held as part of the 2022–23 Formula E World Championship season and was the first Formula E race to be held in the country.
- ❖ Two-time Formula E world champion Jean-Eric Vergne won the championship.

2026 FIFA World Cup



- ❖ The US men's national football team, along with Mexico and Canada, will automatically qualify for the 2026 World Cup.
- ❖ The US men's national team, along with Mexico and Canada, will automatically qualify for the 2026 World Cup.
- ❖ The three countries won the right to host the World Cup in a united North American bid.
- ❖ FIFA usually allows host nations to surpass qualification rounds.
- ❖ This is the first time FIFA had to set aside three host bids.
- ❖ The tournament is set to expand from 32 teams to 48 in 2026.

ISSF Shooting World Cup

- ❖ The ISSF Shooting World Cup 2023 was held at Cairo in Egypt.
- ❖ Indian shooters closed their account with 4 gold and 3 bronze in Cairo, and one bronze in Doha.
- ❖ Their overall medal tally is 8 and got 5th place in the overall Medal Table.
- ❖ India Medal Winners list:

Shooter(s)	Event	Medal
Narmada Raju & Rudrankksh Patil	Mixed Team 10m Air Rifle	Gold
Rhythm Sangwan & Varun Tomar	Mixed Team 10m Air Pistol	Gold
Rudrankksh Patil	Men's 10m Air Rifle	Gold
Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar	Men's 50m Rifle 3 Positions	Gold
Tilottama Sen	Women's 10m Air Rifle	Bronze
Varun Tomar	Men's 10m Air Pistol	Bronze
Anish	Men's 25m Rapid Fire Pistol	Bronze
Prithviraj Tondaiman	Men's Trap	Bronze

India's third-highest wicket-taker

- ❖ The spinner R Ashwin surpassed the legendary Kapil Dev to become India's third-highest wicket-taker in international cricket.
- ❖ Ashwin, who has played 91 Tests, 113 ODIs and 65 T20Is for India, has 466, 151 and 72 wickets in the three formats respectively.
- ❖ He has a total of 689 wickets in 269 international matches.
- ❖ Anil Kumble leads the wicket-taking charts for India in international cricket with 953 wickets in 401 matches.
- ❖ He is followed by Harbhajan Singh at the second spot with 707 scalps.



IMPORTANT DAYS

Zero Discrimination Day - March 01

- ❖ In order to promote equality and justice, the United Nations and other international organizations marked this day.
- ❖ The goal is to fight structural and cultural prejudice against those who have HIV/AIDS and to advance equality and fairness before the law.
- ❖ The UNAIDS aims to raise awareness about discriminatory laws and practices that rob individuals of their dignity
- ❖ The theme for Zero Discrimination Day for this year is "Save lives: Decriminalize."

World Civil Defence Day - March 01

- ❖ It aims to raise awareness about the importance of civil defence measures in protecting people and their property from natural disasters, accidents, and other emergencies.
- ❖ The day honours the work of several civil defence organisations.

- ❖ The day also recognises the efforts put in by the organisations in protecting communities and saving lives.
- ❖ This Day was first celebrated in the year 1990 by the International Civil Defence Organisation (ICDO).
- ❖ The theme for this year is “The role of information technology in risk assessment”.

World Seagrass Day - March 01

- ❖ This is a day of awareness and celebration of the role seagrass plays in creating healthier oceans, coastlines and its role as a climate solution.
- ❖ It serves to highlight the importance of protecting seagrass ecosystems and increasing their resilience to challenges such as climate change, pollution and other human impacts.
- ❖ Seagrasses are the only marine flowering plants and are found in shallow waters from the tropics to the Arctic Circle.
- ❖ There are more than 60 seagrass species in the world.
- ❖ It was covering over 300,000 square kilometres of the ocean floor.
- ❖ It is referred as a type of “blue forest” - supply food and shelter to thousands of species of fish, seahorses, turtles, and other marine animals.
- ❖ IUCN categorizes nearly 21% of the world’s seagrasses as near threatened or vulnerable or endangered.
- ❖ It was established by the UN General Assembly in a resolution adopted in May 2022.



World Wildlife Day - March 03

- ❖ The 68th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) designated this Day on December 20, 2013.
- ❖ It aims to raise awareness of world's wild flora and fauna.
- ❖ It was on March 3 when the adoption of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) took place in 1973.
- ❖ The convention helps ensure that international trade doesn't pose any threat to the species.
- ❖ This March 3 marks the 50th anniversary of the convention.
- ❖ The theme for this year is 'Partnerships for Wildlife Conservation'.



World Hearing Day - March 03

- ❖ This Day is observed to encourage ear and hearing care worldwide and to increase awareness of ways to avoid deafness and hearing loss.
- ❖ The World Health Organization has been hosting this event since 2007.
- ❖ The theme for this year is "Ear and hearing care for all!"



National Security Day - March 04

- ❖ The day aims to show gratitude to our security forces which include military, para-military, commandos, police officials, guards, and other security forces.
- ❖ National Security Council is the apex agency looks into the country's political, economic, energy and strategic security concerns.
- ❖ It was established by the then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee on November 19, 1998.



National Safety Day - March 04

- ❖ The main goal of the day is to highlight safety measures and ensure that people are aware of them and follow them in order to avoid workplace accidents.
- ❖ This day commemorates the establishment of the National Safety Council.
- ❖ National Safety Council is a non-profit, self-financing body.
- ❖ It was established on March 4, 1966.
- ❖ This year's theme is "Our Aim - Zero Harm".
- ❖ National Safety Week is also observed in India every year from the 4th to the 10th of March.



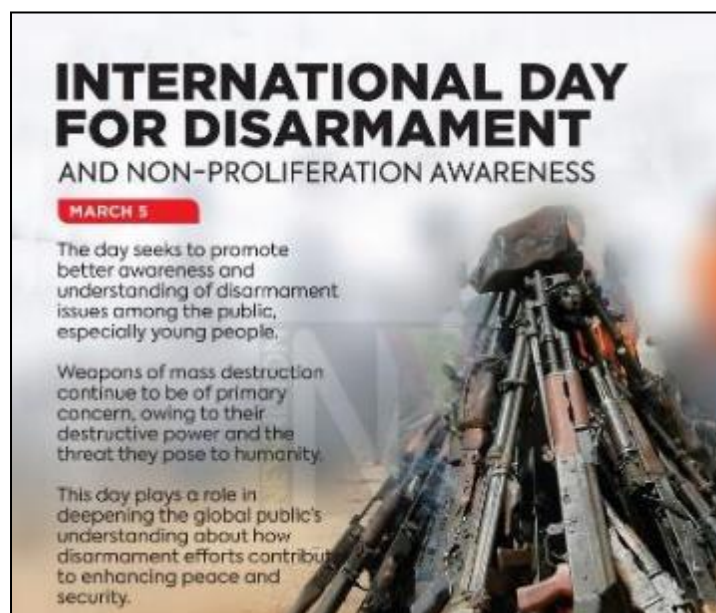
World obesity day - March 04

- ❖ World Obesity Day was established in 2015.
- ❖ It aims to draw attention towards the rising cases of obesity.
- ❖ Theme of this year is 'Changing Perspectives: Let's Talk About Obesity'.
- ❖ Obesity is a complex disease that occurs when an individual's weight is higher than what is considered healthy for his or her height.

World Day of Fight Against Sexual Exploitation - March 04

- ❖ This day was first observed as a global movement in 2009.
- ❖ This day is dedicated to raising awareness about the disturbing reality of sexual abuse and trafficking, and empowering individuals and communities to fight back against these heinous crimes.
- ❖ The day also aims to promote and protect the rights of victims of sexual exploitation.
- ❖ It is estimated that every second of the day, an average of eight people is trapped by international criminal networks for sexual exploitation, trafficking, and enslavement.
- ❖ The U.N. General Assembly designated July 30 as World Day against Trafficking in Persons.

International Day for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Awareness - March 05



- ❖ It aims to promote better awareness and understanding of disarmament issues among the public, especially young people.
- ❖ It makes understanding about how disarmament efforts contribute to enhancing peace and security, preventing and ending armed conflicts, and curbing human suffering caused by weapons.
- ❖ In 2021, global military spending reached \$2.1 trillion and 12,700 nuclear weapons remain an existential threat to humanity.

5th Jan Aushadhi Diwas - March 07

- ❖ The 5th Jan Aushadhi Diwas is organized across India based on the theme “Jan Aushadhi – Sasti bhi Acchi bhi”.
- ❖ The programme was kick started with Jan Aushadhi Jan Chetna Abhiyan on 1st March across the country.
- ❖ It was organized by the Union Health Ministry in collaboration with the Pharmaceuticals & Medical Devices Bureau of India and states and union territories.



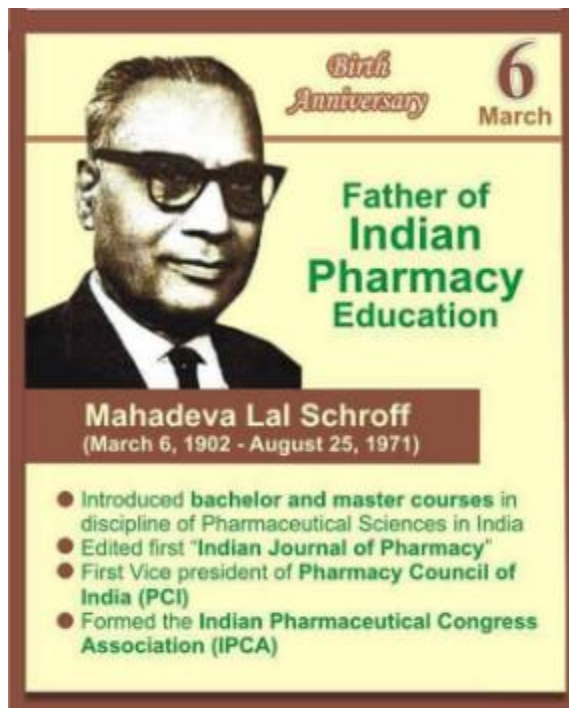
International Women's Day - March 08

- ❖ This global day is celebrating the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women.
- ❖ It was first celebrated in 1911, in Austria, Denmark, Germany and Switzerland.
- ❖ This year we are celebrating the 111th International Women's Day.
- ❖ In 1975, the United Nations started celebrating the day.
- ❖ The UN's theme for 2023 is "DigitALL: Innovation and technology for gender equality".



National Pharmacy Education Day - March 06

- ❖ The day was designated by the Pharmacy Council of India (PCI).
- ❖ This day commemorates the birth anniversary of Professor Mahadeva Lal Schroff.
- ❖ It aims to recognise his contribution to establishing pharmacy education in India.
- ❖ He is known as Father of Indian Pharmacy Education.
- ❖ In 1935, he founded the United Provinces of Pharma Association.
- ❖ PCI is a statutory body working under the Ministry of Health, Government of India.
- ❖ It is constituted under the Pharmacy Act, 1948.



No Smoking Day - March 08

- ❖ This day is an annual health awareness day observed on the second Wednesday of March.
- ❖ The day aims to encourage people to quit smoking and raise awareness about its harmful effects on their health.
- ❖ No Smoking Day awareness movement was first started in 1984 in the United Kingdom on the day of Ash Wednesday.



World Kidney Day - March 09

- ❖ World Kidney Day is observed on the second Thursday of March every year.
- ❖ It aims to raise awareness of the importance of our kidneys to our overall health and to reduce the frequency and impact of kidney disease and its associated health problems worldwide.
- ❖ It is a joint initiative of the International Society of Nephrology (ISN) and the International Federation of Kidney Foundations – World Kidney Alliance (IFKF-WKA).

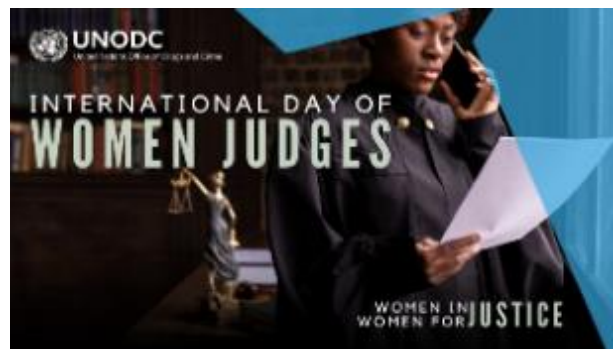


54th CISF Raising Day - March 10

- ❖ The CISF was set up under the act of the Parliament of India on March 10, 1969.
- ❖ The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) is one of the five Central Armed Police Forces in India.
- ❖ The primary objective is providing security to public sector undertakings.
- ❖ This is the first time that this Day is celebrated at Hyderabad, outside the National capital.



International Day of Women Judges - March 10



- ❖ This day aims to honour female judges across the globe and their contributions towards justice, equality and fairness in society.
- ❖ It is a symbolic day for the fight for gender equality, equality of opportunities and the fight against gender-based discrimination
- ❖ On April 28, 2021 UNGA adopted a resolution for this day.

- ❖ In India, Anna Chandi became the first female judge of court in 1937 in Travancore.
- ❖ In 1989, Fathima Beevi became the first female judge of the Supreme Court of India.

World Rotaract Day - March 13



- ❖ This day acknowledge the services provided by the rotaractors across the world.
- ❖ Rotaract means rotary in action.
- ❖ Rotary Club is the community service organization for young men and women.
- ❖ The theme of 2023 is “Create Hope in the World”.
- ❖ The Rotary Club of Calcutta became the first Rotary club chartered in India on 1 January 1920.

International Day of Action of Rivers - March 14

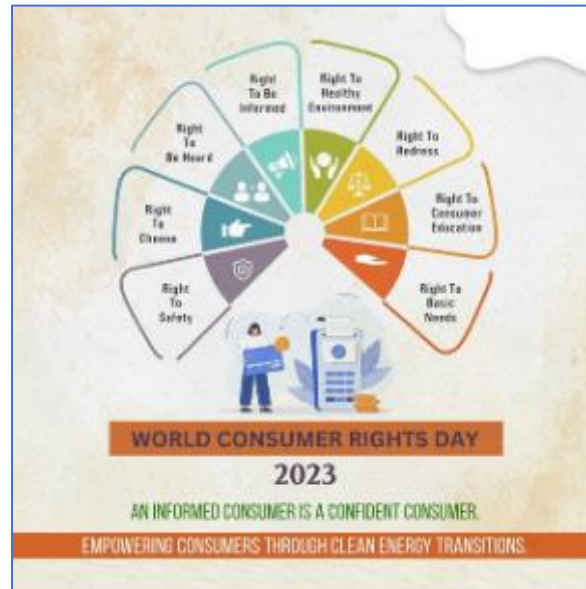
- ❖ This day aims to raise awareness of how crucial rivers are to our daily lives.
- ❖ This year, the 25th anniversary of the day will be observed.
- ❖ The day also seeks to spread awareness about unequal access to clean water and the growing pollution of freshwater habitats like rivers.
- ❖ Theme for 2023 is 'Rights of Rivers'.
- ❖ The day was earlier known as International Day against Dams, for Rivers, Water, and Life.

International Day of Mathematics or Pi Day - March 14

- ❖ International Day of Mathematics is also known as Pi Day.
- ❖ The date is written in the format of month and date (MM/DD) to represent the value of Pi, which is 3.14.
- ❖ The day is celebrated by mathematics enthusiasts and educators worldwide to recognize and appreciate the significance of mathematics in our lives.

- ❖ The theme for International Day of Mathematics 2023 is “Mathematics for Everyone”.
- ❖ In 2019, International Mathematics Day was recognized by UNESCO.

World Consumer Rights Day - March 15

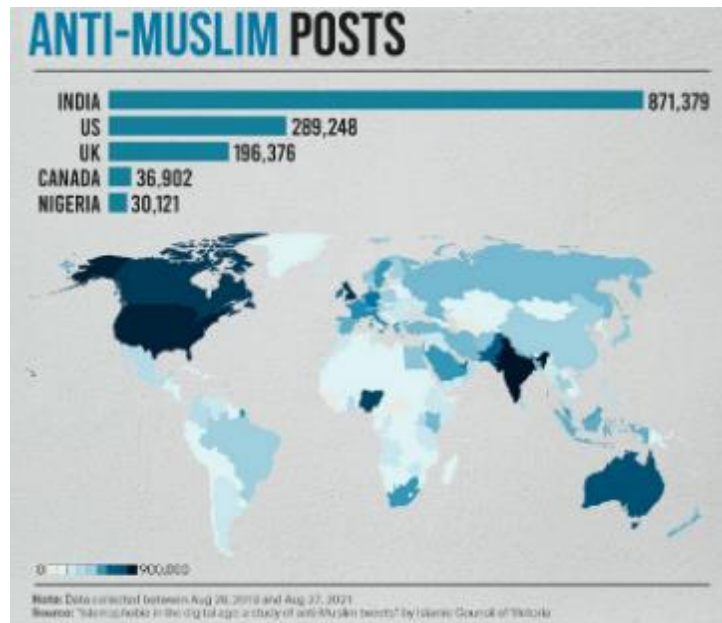


- ❖ The day is observed to create global awareness about the rights and needs of consumers.
- ❖ It aims to recognise consumer rights and ensure that they are respected and protected.
- ❖ The theme for this year is “Empowering consumers through clean energy transitions”.
- ❖ World Consumer Rights Day has been inspired by former President of the United States John F Kennedy in 1962 March 15.
- ❖ World Consumer Rights Day was first marked in 1983.
- ❖ On December 9, 1986, the consumer protection act was passed in the Indian Parliament to empower the consumers.

International Day to Combat Islamophobia - March 15

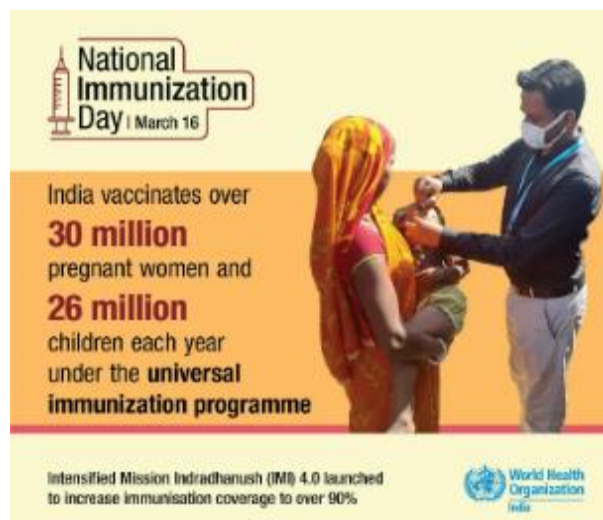
- ❖ The UN General Assembly approved a resolution for setting March 15th as the International Day to Combat Islamophobia.
- ❖ The resolution was introduced by Pakistan on behalf of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

- ❖ Islamophobia is a fear, prejudice and hatred of Muslims that leads to provocation, hostility and intolerance.



National Immunization Day - March 16

- ❖ It aims to spread awareness about the importance of vaccines in the human health.
- ❖ The day was first observed in 1995 when the government of India officially launched the Pulse Polio Immunisation program to eradicate polio from the country.
- ❖ On March 16, 1995, the first dose of the oral polio vaccine was administered in India.



World Sleep Day - March 17

- ❖ It is organized by the World Sleep Day Committee of World Sleep Society.
- ❖ It aims to lessen the burden of sleep problems on society through better prevention and management of sleep disorders.
- ❖ 'Sleep is Essential for Health' is the theme for this year.



Global Recycling Day - March 18

- ❖ This day aim to spread awareness about the rapid pace at which our natural resources are depleting and the need for recycling to slow it down.
- ❖ The day promotes the concept and practice of recycling and encourages the limited use of natural resources to save the planet.
- ❖ Theme of the 2023 observation is "Creative Innovation".



India's Ordnance Factories Day - March 18

- ❖ This day commemorates the founding of the first ordnance factory in colonial India near Kolkata, in 1801.
- ❖ The Ordnance Factories Board was founded in 1775.
- ❖ Now it has 41 ordnance factories, nine training institutes, three regional marketing centres and five regional controllerates of safety.

- ❖ East India Company established a Gun Carriage Agency in 1801 in Kolkata.

International Day of Happiness - March 20

- ❖ It was first observed by the United Nations General Assembly in 2012.
- ❖ It aims to raise awareness about the importance of happiness and well-being as universal goals and aspirations in the lives of people all over the world.
- ❖ This year's theme is: 'Be Mindful. Be Grateful. Be Kind'.



World Sparrow Day - March 20



- ❖ It is designated to raise awareness about sparrow conservation and protection, as their numbers are declining globally.
- ❖ The first commemoration of the day occurred in 2010.
- ❖ The goal of the day is to educate people about the value of sparrows in the ecosystem, their role in pollination, and their importance in pest control.
- ❖ The theme of 2023 is "I Love Sparrows".

World Oral Health Day - March 20

- ❖ The day aims to create awareness about the significance of oral health.
- ❖ It also tries to educate individuals about the different oral hygiene practices that one should be following on daily basis.
- ❖ In the year 2021, a three-year-long theme was launched for the day as "Be Proud of Your Mouth."



Spring equinox - March 21

- ❖ The Spring Equinox 2023 also called the vernal equinox is the first day of spring in the Northern Hemisphere.
- ❖ On this day, Sun is exactly above the Equator and day and night are of equal length.
- ❖ The Persian New Year, Nowruz, also falls on the first day of spring.



World Down Syndrome Day - March 21

- ❖ The day is celebrated in an effort to raise awareness about Down syndrome and to advocate for the rights, inclusion, and well-being of people with Down syndrome.
- ❖ The date was selected because Down syndrome is caused by the presence of a third copy of the 21st chromosome, and 21/3 (March 21st) represents this genetic condition.
- ❖ This day was first observed on March 21, 2006.
- ❖ It was officially recognized by the United Nations General Assembly in 2011.
- ❖ The Theme for 2023 is "With Us Not For Us".



World Poetry Day - March 21

- ❖ The day was first adopted by UNESCO in 1999 at the 30th General Conference in Paris.
- ❖ It is an occasion to honour the poets, revive oral traditions of poetry recitals, and promote the reading, writing, and teaching of poetry.
- ❖ It aims to support “linguistic diversity through poetic expression and increasing the opportunity for endangered languages to be heard”.

International Day of Forests - March 21

- ❖ The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) established World Forestry Day in 1971.
- ❖ The day was established to create and raise awareness of the importance of forests for people and the planet.
- ❖ In 2011, the United Nations declared the years 2011 to 2020 as the International Decade of Forests.
- ❖ In the year 2012, the International Day of Forests was established.
- ❖ The theme for 2023 is 'Forests and Health.'



International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination - March 21

- ❖ On that day, in 1960, police opened fire at a peaceful demonstration in Sharpeville, South Africa, against the apartheid pass laws.
- ❖ On October 26, 1966, the UN General Assembly designated this day.
- ❖ Theme of this year is : 75th anniversary of UDHR - an impetus to combat racism.

World Puppetry Day - March 21

- ❖ This day was established in 2003 by the International Puppetry Association.
- ❖ The 1st ever World Puppetry Day was observed on 2003.
- ❖ The day is an attempt to pay tribute to and honour puppeteers from around the world.
- ❖ Theme of This year: "Call of the Forest'.
- ❖ There are 4 major different types of puppets used in India.
 - Glove Puppets – 3 different types
 - Rod Puppets – 3 different types
 - Shadow Puppets – 6 different types
 - String Puppets – 6 different types

International Nowruz Day - March 21

- ❖ Nowruz is the Persian New Year.
- ❖ The first month of the Iranian solar calendar is sometimes referred to as the Persian New Year.
- ❖ Nowruz is celebrated in Iran, Afghanistan, the Kurdish areas of Iraq, Turkey, Syria, India, and Central Asia.
- ❖ It was established in 2010 with the goal of fostering closer relations amongst nations.
- ❖ Balban introduced this into India.

World Water Day - March 22

- ❖ Since 1993, it has been celebrated to highlight the importance of freshwater.
- ❖ It focuses attention on the importance of water and how to preserve it.
- ❖ The theme for this year is 'Accelerate Change.



World Meteorological Day - March 23

- ❖ This day commemorates the formal establishment of the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) in 1950.
- ❖ The day highlights “the essential role that ‘National Meteorological and Hydrological Services’ (NMHS) plays in the safety and wellbeing of the society.”
- ❖ This year theme is ‘the future of weather, climate and water across generations’.
- ❖ The idea of IMO came from the Vienna International Meteorological Congress 1873.
- ❖ This year marks WMO's 150th anniversary.



World Tuberculosis Day - March 24

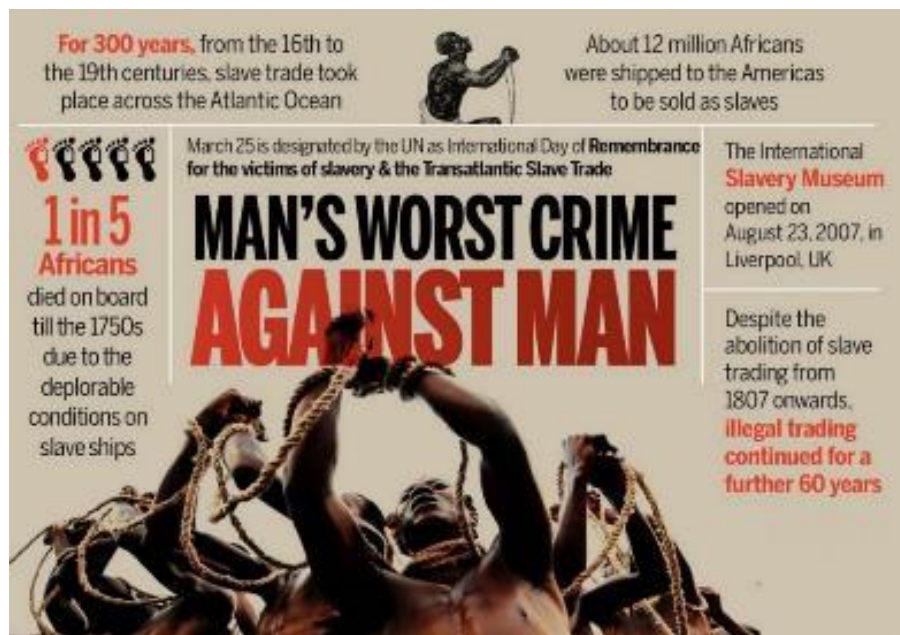
- ❖ On this day in 1882, Dr. Robert Koch identified the bacterium that causes tuberculosis, *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*.
- ❖ It aims to create and raise awareness about tuberculosis (TB) and work to completely eliminate this disease.
- ❖ TB is caused by the bacterium *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* and primarily affects the lungs.

- ❖ TB is one of the top 10 causes of death worldwide
- ❖ 'Yes, we can end TB!' is the theme for 2023.



International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade - March 25

- ❖ The day honours and remembers those who suffered and died as a consequence of the transatlantic slave trade.
- ❖ It has been called "the worst violation of human rights in history".
- ❖ Over 400 years more than 15 million men, women and children were the victims of this practice.
- ❖ The theme for this year is "Fighting Slavery's Legacy of Racism Through Transformative Education."



International Day of Solidarity with Detained and Missing Staff Members - March 25

- ❖ This day commemorates the abduction of a journalist named Alec Collett, who died while on a UN assignment.
- ❖ The day is observed on March 25 to mark the anniversary of the abduction of Alec Collett.
- ❖ He was a former journalist who worked for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).
- ❖ In 1985, he was abducted by armed gunmen.
- ❖ In 2009, his body was found in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley.
- ❖ The resolution to protect the UN's employees was first adopted in 1993 by the Security Council.



International Day of the Unborn Child - March 25

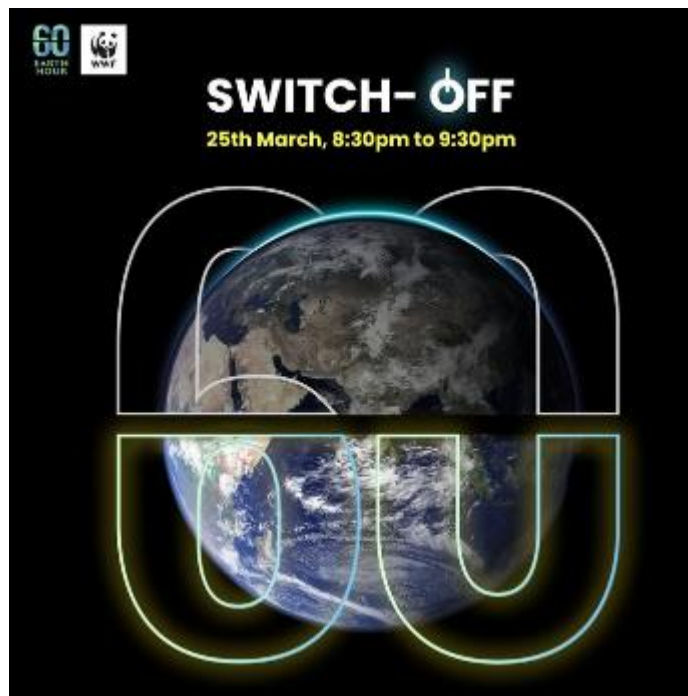
- ❖ The aim of this day is to raise awareness about the value and importance of unborn children and to promote the protection of their rights as it condemns abortions.
- ❖ This day was established in 1999 by the late Pope John Paul II.
- ❖ Theme of this year is: The dignity and value of every child yet-to-be-born.

World Theatre Day - March 27

- ❖ The day has been celebrated since 1962 at the International Theatre Institute.
- ❖ The first ITI conference took place in Finland, Helsinki, and the next session was held in Vienna.
- ❖ This day preserves dramas and their essential role in the theatrical arts.
- ❖ "Theatre and a Culture of Peace." is the theme of 2023.

Earth Hour 2023 – March 25

- ❖ Earth Hour is a worldwide movement organised by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF).
- ❖ Earth Hour is an annual event that takes place on the last Saturday of March.
- ❖ It encourages individuals, communities and businesses to turn off non-essential electric lights for one hour, from 8:30 pm to 9:30 pm as a symbol of commitment to the planet
- ❖ More than 100 countries across the world participated in Earth Hour.
- ❖ It was first started in Sydney, Australia in 2007.



188th Raising Day of Assam Rifles - March 24

- ❖ March 24 marks the 188th Raising Day for the Assam Rifles.
- ❖ It is the nation's oldest and most esteemed paramilitary organisation.
- ❖ Assam Rifles was raised on March 24, 1835.
- ❖ The force was redesigned as Assam Frontier Police in 1883, Assam Military Police in 1891, and East Bengal and Assam Military Police in 1913.
- ❖ It got its present name in 1917.
- ❖ It is a central paramilitary force responsible for border security, counter-insurgency, and maintaining law and order in Northeast India.
- ❖ It is also responsible for guarding the Indo-Myanmar border.

Purple Day of Epilepsy - March 26

- ❖ This day dedicated to raising awareness about epilepsy and reducing the stigma surrounding this neurological disorder.
- ❖ Epilepsy is a chronic disorder of the brain.
- ❖ It affects brain's ability to transmit electrical impulses which could lead to seizures.
- ❖ This day was first organised by Cassidy Megan from Canada on March 26, 2008.
- ❖ It accounts for a significant proportion of the world affecting 50 million people worldwide.
- ❖ Each year an estimated 5 million people are diagnosed with epilepsy.
- ❖ In India, more than 10 million patients (20%) are suffering with Epilepsy.

International Transgender Day of Visibility - March 31

- ❖ It aims to raise awareness of discrimination faced by transgender people worldwide, also celebrating their contributions to society.
- ❖ The day was founded by US-based transgender activist Rachel Crandall of Michigan in 2009.
- ❖ It recognizes and revere their contributions, successes, and relentless resilience in standing tall and strong in the face of injustice.



World Backup Day - March 31

- ❖ The day reminds us to protect our precious digital documents as we've become more reliant on technology.
- ❖ It is a day for people to learn about the increasing role of data in our lives and the importance of regular backups.
- ❖ According to the World Backup Day web site, 21% of people have never backed up their data.
- ❖ 29% of data losses are caused by accidents and 30% of all computers are infected with malware.

MISCELLANEOUS

World Heritage in Danger site

- ❖ UNESCO had designated the historic centre of Odesa, a strategic port city on Ukraine's Black Sea coast, a World Heritage in Danger site.
- ❖ It has been under threat since Russia's invasion, and enable access to financial and technical international aid.
- ❖ Odesa has been bombed several times by Russia since its invasion of Ukraine.
- ❖ Odesa's Museum of Fine Arts was inaugurated in 1899.
- ❖ This city was founded in the final years of the 18th century, near the site of a captured Ottoman fortress.



1,300-year-old Buddhist stupa



- ❖ The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) found a 1,300-year-old stupa in Odisha's Jajpur district.

- ❖ The stupa could be 4.5-metre tall and initial assessment showed it may belong to the 7th or 8th century.
- ❖ It was found at Parabhadi which is situated near Lalitagiri, Odisha.
- ❖ Lalitagiri is a major Buddhist complex, having a large number of stupas and monasteries.

Strongest telecoms operator

- ❖ Brand Finance has compiled a list of companies based on their brand value.
- ❖ In this post, we will explore the Top 150 most valuable and strongest telecoms operator brands according to Brand Finance 2023 rankings.
- ❖ Swisscom is the strongest telecoms brand earning 92/100 and elite AAA+ rating.
- ❖ It is followed by Jio and Etisalat as the second and third strongest brands.
- ❖ Huawei is ranked the most valuable and strongest telecoms infrastructure brand.

Strongest telecom brands globally		Top Indian firms in terms of brand value	
Company	Rank in 2023 (2022)	Company	Global rank in 2023 (2022)
Swisscom	1 (2)	Airtel	21 (20)
Reliance Jio	2 (5)	Reliance Jio	27 (32)
Etisalat	3 (1)	VIL	89 (102)
MTC	4 (4)	Tata Communications	131 (132)
Telcel	5 (8)	BSNL	148 (149)
Singtel	6 (9)		
Vodacom	7 (NA)		

Source: Brand Finance

Hallmark Unique Identification

- ❖ From April 1, the sale of gold jewellery will not be allowed without a Hallmark Unique Identification (HUID) number.
- ❖ It is a unique identifier for each gold item.
- ❖ It is aimed at ensuring the purity of Hallmarked jewellery and check any malpractice.
- ❖ Hallmark is a mark on gold jewellery which is affixed by an entity recognised by Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) to assure its fineness and purity.
- ❖ Earlier, the HUID used to be of four digits.
- ❖ As of now both HUIDs (4- and 6-digit) are used in the market
- ❖ After March 31 only 6-digit alphanumeric code will be allowed.

- ❖ The jewellery is stamped with the unique number manually at the Assaying & Hallmarking centre.



Largest number of commercial women pilots

- ❖ Air India said 15% of its 1,825 pilots are women pilots.
- ❖ This was making it an airline with the largest number of female pilots.
- ❖ Air India is flying 40 flights across domestic and international locations.
- ❖ According to the carrier, women constitute more than 40% of Air India's work force.
- ❖ Thus, India has the largest number of commercial women pilots in the world.

