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MONTHLY
CURRENT AFFAIRS
MARCH 2024

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1. POLITY

1. BRIBES FOR VOTES: SC SAYS MLAS AND MPS NOT IMMUNE FROM PROSECUTION

Why in news: Seven-judge Bench of the Supreme Court ruled that **MPs and MLAs are not immune to criminal prosecution on bribery charges** related to their votes or speech in Parliament or state assemblies.

What is the present case about?

- **Sita Soren Bribery Case (2012): Sita Soren, a member of the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM**), was accused of accepting a bribe to cast her vote in favour of a certain candidate in **the Rajya Sabha elections** of 2012.
- She claimed immunity under Article 194(2), citing the SC 1998 Ruling in **the P.V. Narasimha Rao Case**.

> **Article 194(2) of the Constitution states:**
>
> "No member of the Legislature of a State shall be liable to any proceedings in any court in respect of anything said or **any vote given by him in the Legislature or any committee thereof,** and no person shall be so liable in respect of the publication by or under the authority of a House of such a Legislature of any report, paper, votes or proceedings."
>
> **Article 105(2)** provides identical protections to members of Parliament.

As per the SC orders, now an MP or an MLA can't claim immunity from prosecution on a charge of bribery in connection with the vote or speech in the legislative house.

What is a Bribe-for-vote?

Bribe-for-vote **refers to the act of offering or accepting a bribe in exchange for casting a vote** in a specific manner, typically during elections or legislative proceedings. It undermines the integrity of the electoral process and is considered a form of corruption.

2. THE ANTI-DEFECTION LAW

Why in news: Six Himachal Pradesh MLAs, disqualified for cross-voting in the Rajya Sabha polls, have moved the Supreme Court against the Speaker's decision.

What is anti-defection law?

- The Anti-Defection Law in India is a legal framework aimed **at preventing elected representatives from defecting or changing their allegiance** from one political party to another.
- This law was introduced **to curb the unethical practice of "floor-crossing,"** which can lead to instability in governments and compromise the democratic process. The provisions related to anti-defection are primarily enshrined in **the Tenth Schedule in 1985 (52nd Amendment).**

Elected members can be disqualified on grounds of defection

1. If an elected member voluntarily gives up his membership in a political party;
2. If he votes or abstains from voting in such House contrary to any direction issued by his political party or anyone authorized to do so, without obtaining prior permission.
- **Exemptions:** There are certain situations where defection is **not considered grounds for**

disqualification. For example, if a legislator, as a member of one political party**, joins another party after a merger between the two parties**, it may not lead to disqualification.

3. CITIZENSHIP AMENDMENT ACT RULES

Why in news: The government announced **the implementation of the Citizenship Amendment Act rules**, four years after the bill was passed in Parliament.

What is CAA?

- The Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) offers citizenship based on religion **to six non-Muslim communities (Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians) from Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh who entered India on or before December 31, 2014**. It exempts these communities from criminal cases under the **Foreigners Act, 1946, and the Passport Act, 1920,** which penalize illegal entry and overstaying on expired visas and permits.

Key Features of the Act:

- **Exceptions**: The citizenship provisions for illegal migrants do not apply to regions protected by **the 'Inner Line' permit system** and areas under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution.
- **Citizenship by Naturalization**: The Citizenship Act, 1955, requires residency in India during the last 12 months and **for 11 of the previous 14 years for naturalization.** The amendment reduces the residency requirement **from 11 years to 5 years** for applicants belonging to the specified six religions from the three mentioned countries.

- **Cancelling Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) Registration:** The act grants the government authority to cancel Overseas Citizen of India registration for violations of the Citizenship Act or other laws.
- The Supreme Court has noted the necessity of guiding the nature of laws subject to OCI registration cancellation, to ensure the limitation of authority's powers and prevent arbitrariness.

4. RAJYA SABHA ELECTIONS FALL UNDER THE PURVIEW OF ARTICLE 194(2) OF THE CONSTITUTION

Why in news: The recent Supreme Court ruling clarified that Rajya Sabha elections fall under the purview of **Article 194(2) of the Constitution, recognizing its role as part of the Basic Structure of the Constitution.**

- It emphasized that **parliamentary privileges extend beyond legislative activities**, covering other powers and responsibilities of elected members, **even when the house is not in session.**
- The decision also rejected **the argument that Rajya Sabha voting isn't a legislative vot**e, affirming that such elections are integral to elected members' powers and responsibilities.
- Basic **Structure doctrine safeguards** essential constitutional features from amendment.
- The **Rajya Sabha (constituted under Article 79 and 80), as the upper house of Parliament,** represents state interests and **is vital for ensuring equal representation among states.**

5. THE MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT (MCC)

Why in news: The Model Code of Conduct (MCC) has been enforced by the Election Commission of India (ECI) for **the 2024 Lok Sabha elections**, beginning from the announcement of the election schedule until the declaration of results.

- o **The Model Code of Conduct is valid from the date** of the election schedule announcement, either to the Parliament, state Assemblies or districts, and continues through the election in question.
- o The MCC is effective **as soon as the poll dates are announced.**
- o It remains effective until **the election results are formally declared and notified**.
- Geographical Application: The Model Code of Conduct is valid throughout the poll-bound state in case of Assembly elections.
- In the case of Parliamentary or general elections, the Model Code of Conduct is valid throughout the country.
- **MCC in By-Election:** In the case of by-elections to districts, the MCC is valid throughout the district where the election will be held.
- <u>**Key restrictions imposed by**</u> the MCC include **prohibiting the announcement of policy** decisions by the ruling party, using official positions for campaigning, combining official visits with election work, **using government resources for campaigni**ng, and making ad-hoc appointments that may influence voters.
- The MCC **is not legally binding** but is enforced through **moral sanction or censure by the ECI.**

6. E-SHRAM PORTAL

Why in news: Supreme Court directed all States and UTs to provide ration cards to migrant labourers **registered on e-Shram portal within two months**

- **e-Shram portal of Ministry of Labour and Employment aims at creating a National Database of Unorganized Workers for providing welfare benefits.**
- Out of around 29 crore registrants, around 8 crore do not have ration cards and do not receive subsidized foodgrains under **National Food Security Act (NFSA) 2013.**
- For ensuring food security under NFSA for migrants, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution is implementing **One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC) plan.**
- It allows both the migrant beneficiary (in destination state/UT) and his/her family (in origin state) to claim their part of entitled ration.

National Food Security Act (NFSA) 2013

- NFSA marks a paradigm shift in approach to food security from welfare to rights-based approach.
- It is implemented by Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution.
- It legally entitles **upto 75% of rural and 50%** of urban population (covering around 80 crore persons) to receive subsidized foodgrains.

- SC also directed that Ration cards must be issued irrespective of the quotas defined in section 3 of NFSA 2013.
- **Section 3 contains provisions for eligible households who have the right to receive subsidized foodgrains.**

- It entitles **Priority Households to receive 5 kgs of subsidized foodgrains per person per month and Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) households to receive 35 kgs of subsidized foodgrains per household per month**.

- Presently, government is providing these foodgrains free of cost to AAY and Priority Households under Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY).

7. PREVENTIVE DETENTION

Why in news: The Supreme Court emphasized the **need to prevent the arbitrary use of preventive detention powers, overturning a Telangana High Court decision.**

- It clarified that preventive detention is **meant to avert future harm, not as a form of punishment,** and should be based on careful consideration of facts.

- The court highlighted **that preventive detention is a severe measure and should not be invoked** routinely or arbitrarily by authorities.

- The Supreme Court also underscored that the grounds for detention **must be clearly stated**, and the decision should be based on a thorough examination of relevant facts.

About Preventive Detention:

- Preventive detention entails the detention of an **individual without a trial or conviction by a court,** aiming to prevent future offences rather than punish past ones.

- Governments enact preventive detention laws to ensure public safety and maintain social order.

- In India, **Article 22 of the Constitution provides safeguards for individuals detained under such laws.**

- It limits the duration of preventive detention to **three months unless an Advisory Board approves an extension.**

- The detainee has the right to know the grounds of detention and make representations against it.

- **Parliament has exclusive power to enact preventive detention** laws for defence, foreign affairs, or national security reasons, while both Parliament and State **Legislatures can enact laws for maintaining public order or essential services.**

8. INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS (IDP)

Why in news: Election Commission of India notified a 'scheme for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) of Manipur to cast vote at relief camps' in upcoming elections.

- It will facilitate voting facilities to the people who were displaced from their native places.

About IDPs:

- **IDPs are those forced to leave their homes due** to armed conflict, violence, human rights violations, or disasters, without crossing international borders (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees)

- Key challenges faced by IDPs:

- Higher rates of mortality compared to the general **population Increased risk of physical attack, sexual assault, e**tc.

- Deprivation of adequate shelter, etc.

9. GRANT BAIL

Why in news: CJI highlighted that growing reluctance on the part of **trial judges** to grant bail is violating right **to personal liberty under Article 21 of the Indian Constitution.**

- This trend is also leading to increased number of appeals reaching High Courts and the Supreme Court.
- This trend is also undermining the longstanding principle that **'bail is the rule, jail is the exception' [State of Rajasthan V. Balchand alias Baliay (1978)]**
- Principle is based on belief that if it is ensured that the accused will be available when required **for the trial stage, detaining the person is not compulsory.**

About Bail

- Refers to release of a **person accused of or suspected of commission** of an offence from the custody of law upon certain conditions imposed by an officer or Court on execution by such person of a bond or a bail bond **(Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023).**
- It ensures synthesis of two basic concepts of human values, namely the right of the accused person to enjoy his/her personal freedom and the public interest.
- CJI also highlighted that adjournment culture in courts is rising.
- It is prolonging the **agony of litigants and perpetuating the cycle of backlog.**

10. ARTICLE 32 OF THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION

Why in news: Supreme Court (SC) said that Article 32 cannot be a remedy after a person has abused fundamental rights under Article 19(1)(a) and Article 25. **Article 19(1)(a) grants right to freedom of speech and expression.**

- **Article 25 grants freedom** of conscience and free profession, practice and propagation of religion.
- **Article 32 of the Constitution gives** an extensive original jurisdiction to SC in regard to enforcement of Fundamental Rights.
- SC is empowered to issue directions, orders or writs, including writs in the **nature of habeas corpus, mandamus, prohibition, quo warranto and certiorari to enforce them.**

11. SUPREME COURT (SC) APPROVES RAJASTHAN GOVERNMENT'S TWO-CHILD RULE

Why in News: It upheld Rule 24 (4) of the Rajasthan **Police Subordinate Service Rules, 1989, as non-discriminatory and constitutional.**

- It stipulates a maximum limit of two children per candidate.
- A similar provision was upheld by the SC in its 2003 ruling in **Javed vs. State of Haryana**.
- It was introduced as an eligibility condition to contest **panchayat elections. "Population control and family planning"** is a subject on the concurrent list.
- Both states have made multiple attempts to push the population towards the two-child policy.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. Consider the following statements regarding citizenship amendment act rules:

1) Offers citizenship based on religion communities from Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh who entered India on or before December 31, 2014.

2) It was passed to amend the citiznship amendment act of 1971.

3) The amendment reduces the residency requirement from 12 years to 5 years.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

a) 1 only
b) 2 and 3 only
c) 1 , 2 and 3 only
d) None

2. Consider the following statements regarding The Model Code of Conduct (MCC):

1) It has statutory backing and hence is enforceable by any law.

2) It comes into effect immediately after this announcement and remains in force until the announcement of election results.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

a) 1 only
b) 2 only
c) Both 1 and 2
d) Neither 1 nor 2

3. Which of the following statements regarding the Preventive Detention is incorrect?

a) If a person is arrested or detained under a law providing for preventive detention, then the protection against arrest and detention under Article 22 (1) and 22 (2) shall not be available.

b) A person may be taken to preventive custody only for 3 months at the first instance.

c) Recently The Supreme Court overturned the Telangana High Court decision on preventive detention.

d) All correct

2. INTERNATIONAL RELATION

1. ABU DHABI MINISTERIAL DECLARATION (ADMD)

Why in news: 13th Ministerial Conference (MC13) of WTO concluded with the adoption of Abu Dhabi Ministerial Declaration (ADMD)

About Declaration

- Members committed to preserve and strengthen the ability of the multilateral trading system, with **the WTO at its core.**
- Declaration underlines the centrality of the development dimension in the work of the WTO to achieve **the UN 2030**
- Agenda and its **Sustainable Development Goals.**
- WTO also agreed to further extend the moratorium on imposing import duties on e-commerce trade for two more years.

2. INDIA-EFTA DEAL

Why in news: After 15 years of negotiations, India recently signed a Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA) with the European Free Trade Association (EFTA).

- **The EFTA today includes four non-EU countries — Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland.**

About European Free Trade Association (EFTA)

- It is an intergovernmental organization set up for the promotion of free trade and economic integration to the benefit of its **four Member States – Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland** – and the benefit of their trading partners around the globe.
- Maintaining and developing the EFTA Convention, which regulates economic relations between the four EFTA States.

- **India and EFTA:**
- India's exports to EFTA countries during 2022-23 stood at **USD 1.92 billion, while imports were at USD 16.74 billion**.
- The bilateral trade between India and EFTA stood at USD 18.65 billion in 2022-23.
- Switzerland is the **largest trading partner of India followed by Norway.**
- In fact, India has a trade deficit with Switzerland, largely due to gold imports.
- India-European Free Trade Association signed a **Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA) in March 2024.**
- Participating in the Intergovernmental Negotiations on Security Council Reform, India has presented a detailed model on behalf of the **G4 nations for United Nations Security Council** Reform.
- This includes adding six new permanent and four or **five non-permanent members to better reflect the geopolitical realities** of today's world. The proposal aims to make the Council more representative, legitimate, and effective.

3. G4 PROPOSED MODEL

Why in news: New Members: It proposes that the Security Council's membership increase from the **modern-day 15 to 25-26, by adding 6 permanent and 4 or 5 non-permanent members.**

- **Regional Representation:** Among the 6 new permanent members, two each are proposed to be from **African states and Asia Pacific states**, one from **Latin American and Caribbean states; and one from Western European and Other states.**
- **Flexibility in Veto:** The G4 model offered flexibility at the veto, even as the new **permanent members would**, as a precept, have the same duties and obligations as current permanent members, **they shall not workout the veto until a choice on the problem** has been taken throughout an assessment.
- **Permanent Members aren't Specified: G4 model** does not specify which member states will occupy the new permanent seats.
- This selection can be made by the General Assembly in a democratic and inclusive election.
- **G4 nations—Brazil, Germany, Japan, and India.**

OTHER INTERATINAL NEWS

1. France has made history by **becoming the first nation globally to anchor the right to abortion within its constitution**. This decision represents a significant advancement in the protection of reproductive rights, sparking a mix of applause and criticism across different spectrums of society.
2. **Sweden formally became the 32nd** member of **NATO** after completing its accession process in Washington.
3. The Indian Consulate in Dubai has introduced a new insurance package called the Life Protection Plan (LPP) for Indian blue-collar workers in the United Arab Emirates **(UAE). This plan aims to provide financial benefits to the families of the workers in case of natural or accidental deaths.**
4. Asif Ali Zardari took oath as Pakistan's 14th President following his overwhelming victory in the presidential **election**
5. **President Mahmoud Abbas of the Palestinian Authority (PA)** has appointed Mohammad Mustafa as the new Prime Minister. Mustafa, a U.S.-educated economist, is one of the leading Palestinian business figures with a track record of overseeing Gaza's reconstruction efforts under Hamas' rule**.**
6. **Vaughan Gething, who** currently serves as the Economic Minister of Wales, has been elected as the new leader of
7. The Welsh Labour Party. His victory marks a historic milestone as he becomes the first ever Black person to **lead a European country.**
8. Thailand's lower house of Parliament has passed a groundbreaking bill to legalize same-sex marriage, marking a significant step towards equality in Southeast Asia.
9. Florida Governor Ron DeSantis has signed a bill that prohibits minors under 14 from having social media accounts. The law requires parental permission for 14- and
10. 15-**year-olds to create accounts on platforms like Meta, TikTok,** and others. All social media users in Florida must **submit** identification documents to verify their ages. Popular video sharing platform **TikTok is facing a potential ban in the United States** after the House of Representatives passed a

bill recently. The move, initiated by US politicians, wants TikTok parent ByteDance to sell its US operations to American owners.

About ByteDance

- **ByteDance**, founded in Beijing in 2012 by Zhang Yiming, is known for creating numerous digital products, including the AI-powered news aggregator Jinri Toutiao. The company has more than **110,000 employees** globally and is valued at $268 billion.

11. On **March 24, 2024, the United Nations General Assembly unanimously adopted the first global resolution on Artificial Intelligence (AI).**

12. The resolution, sponsored by the **United States and co-sponsored by 123 cou**ntries, including **Russia, China, and Cuba**, aims to ensure that the powerful new technology benefits all nations, respects human rights, and is safe, secure, and trustworthy.

13. Iceland's southern region has been **plunged into a state of emergency following the fourth volcanic eruption on the Reykjanes** Peninsula since December.

14. **French President Emmanuel** Macron has announced plans to introduce new legislation that will legalize "aid in dying" for adults facing end-of-life illnesses. This landmark decision follows a report from last year indicating strong public **support for end-of-life options in France.**

- Several European countries have already legalized various forms of assisted dying:

- Switzerland and Portugal allow assisted suicide.

- The Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, and Spain permit euthanasia under specific circumstances.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. SELECT THE PAIR OF G4 COUNTRIES?
a) Brazil, Germany, India and Japan
b) Brazil, Germany, India and CHINA
c) Argentina, Japan, Turkey and India
d) Brazil, Pakistan, Turkey and India

2. Consider the following statements
1) It is an intergovernmental organization set up for the promotion of free trade and economic integration to the benefit of its four Member States
2) The EFTA today includes four non-EU countries — Iceland, FINLAND, Norway, and Switzerland.

Which of the statements given above are correct?
a) 1 only
b) 2 only
c) Both 1 and 2
d) Neither 1 nor 2

3. With the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), consider the following statements:
1) NATO is a military alliance established by the Washington Treaty.
2) Its headquarters is located in Switzerland.
3) Sweden formally became the 32nd member of NATO.

Which of the statements given above are correct?
a) 1 and 2 only

b) 2 only
c) 1 and 3 only
d) 1 , 2 and 3 only

3. ECONOMY

1. PROJECT GAIA

Why in News: Central banks unveiled Project Gaia to evaluate climate financial risks.

About Project Gaia

- It is collaboration between the Bank for International **Settlements Innovation Hub Eurosystem Centre, Bank of Spain,** etc.
- It leverages generative **artificial intelligence (AI)** particularly **Large Language Models(LLMs)** to facilitate the analysis of climate-related risks in the financial system.

Benefits

- Can examine firm carbon emissions, green bonds, and **optional net-zero** commitment disclosures. Enhanced accessibility to climate-related disclosures, **Efficient data extraction, Harmonised climate metrics**, Scalability and reliability.

2. AGRITECH-STARTUPS FUND

Why in News: NABARD is set to launch ₹**1000-crore** blended fund for **Agritech-startups Fun**d will bolster technology-**driven agri-startups and rural** enterprises.

- Also, it will invest in startups facing challenges in scaling up operations due to limited access to equity and debt instruments to create new forward and backward linkages in the rural ecosystem.

- **Agritech startups are individuals or segments** of companies using technology in field of agriculture leading to increase in productivity, efficiency, and output.
- **Services Provided by Agritech-startups**:
- Promotes Smart Agriculture
- Farming as a service
- Big data analytics

3. PATENTS (AMENDMENT) RULES, 2024

Why in news: Patents (Amendment) Rules, 2024 notified by the **Department For Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT).**

- The Indian Patent (Amendment) Rules, 2024 (Rules) have been notified and made effective by the Department **for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT),** Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India **on March 15, 2024, with an intent** to:
- Expedite and streamline the prosecution of patent applications**; Allow flexibility on certain previously non-extendable deadlines through extension fees;** Simplify the requirements for corresponding foreign filing particulars as well as working statements; and Curb the filing of frivolous pre-grant oppositions.

Key Provisions:-

- Introduced **New 'Certificate of Inventorship'** to acknowledge the contribution of inventors in the patented invention.
- Time limit for filing request for examination has been **reduced from 48 months to 31 months.**
- Renewal fee has been **reduced by 10% if paid** in advance through electronic mode for a period of **at least 4 years.**

- Frequency to file the statements of working of patents has been reduced from once in a financial year to once in every three financial years.
- Rules will support the other initiatives for promoting Patents, such as National Intellectual property rights (IPR) Policy 2016, it includes:
  - National **Intellectual Property Awareness Mission (NIPAM)**
  - **Patent Facilitation Programme**
  - Expand Knowledge Capacity & Skill Building through initiative like Scheme for Pedagogy & Research in **IPRs for Holistic Education and Academia (SPRIHA).**
  - Establishment of Centre of Excellence in Intellectual **Property and Patent Analysis Management System (PAMS)** by Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology **(MeitY).**

4. TEN GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION(GI)

Why in News: The government announced Geographical Indication (GI) tag for ten products.
State Product and Description

- **Odisha:** Cuttack Rupa Tarakasi (Silver Filigree)
- It was incorporated into jewellery around 3500 BCE in Mesopotamia where it is practiced even today as Telkari work.
- It reached Cuttack from Persia through Indonesia.
- **West Bengal:** Banglar muslin which is a traditional handloom craft made of cotton.
- **Andhra Pradesh:** Narasapur crochet lace products were brought by missionaries to Narsapur.

- Madhya Pradesh: Ratlam Riyawan Lahsun (Garlic)

Assam: Majuli Mask and Majuli Manuscript Painting.

Tripura: Risa Textile.

Telangana: Hyderabad Lac Bangles.

Gujarat: Kutch rogan craft,Ambaji White Marble,

- Formed when limestone is re-crystallised under the earth's crust.

5. NATIONAL URBAN COOPERATIVE FINANCE AND DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION (NUCFDC)

Why in News: Union Minister of Cooperation inaugurated **National Urban Cooperative Finance and Development Cooperation (NUCFDC)**

- NUCFDC will be an Umbrella Organization (UO) for **Urban Cooperative Banks (UCBs)** in India and will be allowed to operate as a Self-**Regulatory Organisation for the sector.**

About NUCFDC

- UO for UCBs was recommended by **Vishwanathan Committee on Primary (Urban)** Co-operative Banks constituted by RBI.
- In **2019, RBI** accorded regulatory approval to National Federation of Urban Co-operative Banks and Credit Societies Ltd (**NAFCUB) for formation of an UO for the UCB sector.**
- NUCFDC is registered with RBI as non-deposit taking **NBFC and UCBs** can subscribe to its capital on voluntary basis.
- **Key objectives:** Expand numbers of credit societies and UCBs, facilitate dialogue between banks and regulators, extend liquidity to UCBs, set up IT infrastructure for shared use of members to enable them widen their range of services, etc.

Urban Cooperative Banks (UCBs)

o Refer to primary cooperative banks **located in urban and semi-urban areas.**

o Registered as cooperative societies under either respective State Cooperative Societies Act or **Multi State Cooperative Societies Act, 2002.**

o **Dual control:** RBI regulates and supervises banking functions **under Banking Regulation Act, 1949.**

o State/Central Registrar of Cooperative Societies exercises supervision over managerial, administrative and, other matters

5. SWACHHATA GREEN LEAF RATING (SGLR) INITIATIVE

o **Why in News**: The Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation (Jal Shakti Ministry), in collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism, launched SGLR for the tourism industry.

o Bison Resorts, Madhya Pradesh obtained the first Five Swachhata

o Green Leaf Rating Certificate of Recognition.

About SGLR

o It is a type of **rating system**, which evaluates various **tourist facilities** based on their adherence to specific hygiene and sanitation standards.

o Aim: Revolutionize sanitation practices within the country's flourishing tourism industry.

o It aligns with **the Travel for LiFE (TFL) program under Mission LiFE.**

6. E-KISAN UPAJ NIDHI PLATFORM

Why in News: Ministry of Consumer Affairs, **Food & Public Distribution launches 'e-Kisan Upaj Nidhi'**

About e-Kisan Upaj Nidhi platform

• It is a digital gateway of **Warehousing Development and Regulatory Authority (WDRA).**

• The initiative with its simplified digital process can ease the procedure of farmers' storage at any registered WDRA **warehouse for a period of 6 months at 7% interest per annum.**

• This digital intervention is poised to mitigate distress sales by providing farmers with viable post-harvest storage options.

About Warehousing Development and Regulatory Authority (WDRA)

• It was established under the Warehousing **(Development and Regulation) Act, 2007** and it consists of one Chairperson and two full time Members.

• **Mission of WDRA**

• It is to establish **a negotiable warehouse receipt system in the country.**

• It will make **warehouse receipts a prime tool** of **trade and facilitate finance against** it, enable banks to improve the quality of their lending portfolio and enhance their interest in lending against goods deposited in warehouses.

• This will **help foster scientific warehousing of goods, increase liquidity in rural areas**, improve supply chains, enhance grading and quality of goods and **there by ensure higher returns to depositors.**

8. FINCARE SMALL FINANCE BANK'S MERGER WITH AU SMALL FINANCE BANK

Why in news: The Reserve Bank of India sanctions Fincare Small Finance Bank's merger with AU Small Finance Bank, **effective April 1 under Section 44A of the Banking Regulation Act.**

Merger Details

- All branches of Fincare Small Finance Bank will operate as branches of AU Small Finance Bank post-merger.
- The board of AU Small Finance Bank, in its meeting on **Oct. 29, approved the scheme of amalgamation.**
- Shareholders of Fincare Small Finance Bank will receive **579 equity shares** of AU Small Finance Bank for **every 2,000 shares held.**
- **Regulatory Approvals**
- The RBI's approval follows the clearance from the **Competition Commission of India (CCI).**
- CCI stated that the merger involves Fincare and AU, **with AU being the merged entity. Shareholders of Fincare will receive shares in the merged entity.**

ECONOMY

1. The Small Industries Development Bank of India (**SIDBI) has secured $24.5 million** from the Green Climate Fund (GCF) for its inaugural anchored project, the Avaana sustainability Fund (ASF), valued at $120 million. This funding marks a significant milestone in climate finance and sustainability initiatives within India.

2. In an effort to advance **cancer care in India**, Axis Bank has pledged a significant contribution of **₹100 crore** to the National Cancer Grid (NCG), in collaboration with Tata Memorial Centre. This partnership aims to bolster research, **innovation, and digital** health adoption in oncology over the next five years

3. **Airtel Payments Bank**, in collaboration with **Noise and Mastercard,** introduces a pioneering solution for contactless payments through the **Airtel Payments Bank** Smart Watch. This innovative wearable aims to revolutionize digital transactions, offering convenience and accessibility to urban customers.

4. In a strategic collaboration with the **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI),** Federal Bank introduces 'Flash Pay,' a revolutionary **RuPay smart key chain facilitating contactless NCMC (National Common Mobility Card) payments**. This innovative solution enables users to tap and pay at metro stations and PoS terminals, ensuring swift transactions with enhanced security

5. The **Modi government has allocated Rs 6212.03 crore** to **Regional Rural Banks** (RRBs) as part of the recapitalization scheme on **March 6. RRBs, established in 1975** and owned by the Indian government, function at the regional level across various states.

6. Axis Bank has announced the introduction of **digital US dollar fixed deposits (FDs) for NRI customers at the IFSC Banking Unit**

(IBU) at **GIFT City, Gujarat**. The bank has become the first to offer a digital journey for opening deposits at GIFT City.

7. **Moody's, the global credit** rating agency, has raised its GDP forecast for **India in 2024** to 6.8%, reflecting a positive economic outlook. This revision is based on India's position as the fastest-growing economy among **G20 nations, supported by robust** growth prospects and policy continuity.

8. **Crisil Ratings** predicts India's economy to expand by **6.8% in FY25**, with significant growth potential driven by domestic reforms and cyclical factors. **By 2031, India aims to double its economy to $7 trillion** and achieve upper-middle-income status

9. UBS anticipates a moderation in India's real GDP growth for fiscal years **2025 and 2026, projecting rates of 7% and 6.8%**, respectively.

10. Fitch Ratings has raised India's growth forecast **for FY25 to 7%, up from the previous estimate of 6.5%.** The upgrade is attributed to robust domestic demand and sustained growth in business and consumer confidence, following a **strong 8.4% expansion in Q3FY24.**

- Morgan Stanley has increased its GDP growth forecast for India for the financial **year 2024-25 (FY25) to 6.8%,** up from the previous estimate of 6.5%. The firm also revised its growth forecast for the ongoing financial year, FY24, to 7.9%.

- The government of India has announced plans to sell up **to 7% of its stake in NLC India, formerly known as Neyveli Lignite** Corp, through an Offer for Sale (OFS). This move aims **to raise between Rs 2,000 crore and Rs 2,100 crore**, contributing to the government's disinvestment goals.

11. The Department of Science and Technology (DST), in collaboration with T-Hub, has launched the **Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence Technology Hu (MATH)** in Hyderabad. This initiative aims to accelerate AI innovation, facilitate job creation, and foster a supportive ecosystem for AI and ML startups.

12. **Big Bang Boom Solutions (BBBS), a homegrown IDEX** (Innovations for Defence Excellence) startup, clinches a major order exceeding **Rs 200 Crores for its state-of-the-art anti-drone technology**. Signed by the **Ministry of Defence (MoD) with BBBS,** this contract marks the largest under the IDEX initiative, aimed at benefiting the Indian Army and the Indian Air Force.

13. Adani Green Energy announced the **operationalisation of an additional 126 MW capacity in its 300 MW** wind power project in Gujarat. This comes after the earlier **operationalisation of 174 MW,** marking a significan milestone for the company.

14. The **Adani Group has announced the start** of the **first phase of the world's largest**

single-location copper manufacturing plant at **Mundra in Gujarat.** The facility, owned by Kutch Copper (a subsidiary of Adani Enterprises Ltd), will help reduce India's dependence on copper imports and support the energy transition.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. **Consider the following statements with reference to the 'e-Kisan Upaj Nidhi' Platform:**
1) **It is a digital platform of the Warehousing Development and Regulatory Authority.**
2) **It helps to mitigate distress sales of crops by providing farmers with viable post-harvest storage options.**
3) **Farmers store at any registered WDRA warehouse for a period of 6 months at 5% interest per annum.**

   Which of the statements given above is/are incorrect?
   a) 1 and 2 only
   b) 2 only
   c) 3 only
   d) 1 , 2 and 3 only

2. Consider the following statements regarding **National Urban Co-operative Finance and Development Corporation Limited (NUCFDC):**
   a) It is an umbrella organization for the Urban Cooperative Banks (UCB)
   b) It ensures specialized function and services to cooperative banks and address challenges faced by UCBs.

   Which of the above statements is/are correct?
   a) 1 only
   b) 2 only
   c) Both 1 and 2
   d) Neither 1 nor 2

4. ENVIRONMENT

1. SEAWEED

Why in news: Indonesia is pioneering large-scale cultivation projects in **East Lombok**, with support and collaboration from India.

About Seaweed:
- It is a common name for species of marine plants and algae that grow in the ocean as well **as in rivers, lakes, and other water bodies**.
- Most are medium-sized and come in colours of **red, green, brown, and black.**
- **Properties:** Low in calories due to its high content of fibre and water, but rich in minerals absorbed from seawater, and not a major source of protein.
- Potential Benefits: Weight control, prebiotic food source for beneficial gut bacteria, antioxidant, etc.

2. GREAT INDIAN BUSTARD (GIB)

Why in news: SC considers lifting the ban on transmission lines through GIB habitats.

Protection status
- IUCN status: **Critically Endangered**
- Schedule 1 and 4 of wildlife protection act. Appendix 1 of CITES.
- Covered under species recovery program.

Characteristics
- An **agro-grassland bird endemic** to Indian subcontinent. Omnivorous bird.

- Other bustard species found in India: lesser **florican and Bengal florican**.

- **Habitat:** Mainly confined to Rajasthan, Gujarat, and few tracts of Andhra Pradesh.

- Rajasthan has the highest population.

- Ministry Of Environment, **Forest And Climate Change (MoEFCC) notifie**s Battery Waste Management (Amendment) Rules, 2024.

- The rules have been changed **by MoEFCC as per the powers conferred by the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986**

3. BATTERY WASTE MANAGEMENT RULES, 2022

Why in news: New rules are to amend the Battery Waste Management Rules, 2022.

Amendments

- Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) shall fix the highest and lowest price for Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) certificates.

- It shall be **equal to 100% and 30%, r**espectively of the environmental compensation leviable on the obligated entities for **non-fulfilment of EPR.**

- EPR strategy holds producers responsible for the end-of-life consequences of their goods.

- The **exchange price of the EPR certificate** between registered entities through the portal shall be between the highest and lowest prices.

- CPCB shall prepare and recommend guidelines for the imposition and collection of environmental compensation in cases of non-compliance with rules.

Objectives of Battery Waste Management

- Promoting **circular economy by recycling** and ensuring environmentally sound management of waste batteries.

- Promoting **new industries and entrepreneurship** in the collection and recycling/refurbishment of waste batteries.

- Implementing the polluter pays principle through EPR Reducing the dependency on new raw materials and saving natural resources.

4. BIOTRIG SYSTEM

Why in News: Researchers find that **Bioenergy Trigeneration (BioTRIG) becomes t**echnically feasible for pyrolysis.

- Pyrolysis is a process of thermal decomposition of organic matter in the absence of oxygen.

- Pyrolysis can convert carbonaceous materials **like waste biomass (crop residues, food waste and animal manure)** into **biochar and bio-oil and generate synga**s.

- These **pyrolysis products (bioenergy trigeneration)** can provide three major **benefits to rural communities in India -**

  o Biochar can improve soil quality.

  o Bio-oil can be used for electricity generation.

  o Syngas can be used as a clean efficient cooking fuel.

5. 'CAVUM CLOUD'

Why in News: NASA shares picture of the **'Cavum cloud'** formed above the Gulf of Mexico and off the coast of Florida.

About Cavum Cloud

- They are also called **hole-punch clouds or fallstreak holes.**
- They are formed when planes fly through banks of altocumulus clouds, Altocumulus clouds are mid-level clouds that have **supercooled (below the freezing point of water but still liquid)** water droplets.
- As air moves around the plane, a process called adiabatic expansion can make the droplets freeze into ice crystals.
- The ice crystals eventually grow heavy and fall out of the sky, **leaving a hole in the cloud layer**.

6. GREEN HYDROGEN PLANT

Why in News: Union Minister of Steel inaugurated **India's 1st Green Hydrogen** Plant in Stainless Steel Sector.

- It will pave the way for sustainable steel production.

About the plant

- It will be the world's first off-grid Green Hydrogen plant for the stainless steel industry Also **the world's first Green Hydrogen** plant with rooftop & floating solar.
- This project is also a state-of-the-art green hydrogen facility.
- Target: To reduce carbon emissions considerably by around **2,700 Metric Tonnes per annum.**
- It is aligned with **India's National Green Hydrogen Mission.**

7. PAPIKONDA NATIONAL PARK

Why in news: In a bird survey held by **IISER-Tirupati in Papikonda National Park (Andhra Pradesh),** more than 200 bird species have been sighted.

About Papikonda National Park (PNP)

- Located in northern Eastern Ghats, is spread over the **Papi Hills and straddles the Godavari river.**
- It is an Important Bird and Biodiversity Area.
- A unique dwarf breed of goat known locally as **the "kanchu mekha" originates in this region.**
- **Forest type:** Dry Mixed Teak Forests, dry mixed deciduous forests, and moist mixed deciduous forests
- **Fauna: Gaur, Tiger, Leopard, Hyena, sambar, barking deer, Black-bellied Tern etc.**

8. ZERO CARBON BUILDINGS ACTION PLAN

Why in news: Nagpur's ZCBAP aims at developing all buildings to **be net zero carbon by 2050**.

- Zero carbon buildings are buildings that improve their lifecycle environmental performance through measures that reduce embodied, operational and end-of-life GHG emissions without compromising visual and thermal comforts.
- ZCBAP in Nagpur has been developed jointly with implementing partners of Zero Carbon Building Accelerator (ZCBA) project.
- ZCBA project was launched by World Resources Institute (WRI) **in 2021** along with its global partners.
- **Nagpur is one of six global cities (other in Kenya, Costa Rica, Turkey, and Colombia)** where ZCBA project is being implemented.

Nagpur's ZCBAP builds upon national policy frameworks and

initiatives supporting building decarbonization, which include:

India's Nationally Determined Contributions

India's Long-Term Low-Carbon Development Strategy

Energy Conservation Building Code, 2017

Green Building Rating Systems such as Indian Green Building Council (IGBC), Green Rating for Integrated Habitat

Assessment (GRIHA) and

Eco-Niwas Samhita 2018

- Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change notified Living Animal Species (Reporting and Registration) Rules, 2024 Rules were notified under Section **63 of Wild Life (Protection) Act (WPA), 1972 for the purpose of Section 49M of the WPA, 1972.**
- Section 49 M provides for registration of possession, transfer, and birth and reporting of death of living scheduled animal species which are listed in **Appendices of CITES or Schedule IV of WPA, 1972**.
- Section 49M was added through Wild Life (**Protection) Amendment Act, 2022**.

Key highlights of Rules

- Application for registration of possession: Mandatory electronic registration for any possession of **any animal species within 6 months.**
- Reporting and registration of birth: Report birth of an offspring of animal species and apply for **registration within a period of 7 days**.

- Reporting and registration of transfer within 15 days.
- Maintenance of stock for people involved in captive breeding through regular health check-up **of animals, inform any escape of the animal species,** etc.

9. ETHANOL

Why in News: Ethanol 100 fuel was launched by the Petroleum Ministry.

- **About Ethanol 100:**
- A cleaner and greener alternative to gasoline
- It is a blend **of 92 to 94 percent ethanol,** 4 to 5 percent motor spirit to provide colour to flame and **1.5 percent** Co-solvent higher saturated alcohol.

Significance:

- It produces lower emissions of greenhouse gases, a reduction **by around 63% on well to wheel basis.**
- Its high-octane rating makes it suitable for high performance **engines, ensuring enhanced** efficiency and power output.
- Significant reductions in foreign exchange savings.

10. MASS BLEACHING EVENT

Why in News: 5th Mass bleaching event hits **Great Barrier Reef (GBR) in 8 years**

- Before this event, GBR has suffered mass coral bleaching in **1998, 2002, 2016, 2017, 2020, and 2022.**
- Bleaching occurs when healthy corals become stressed by spikes in **ocean temperatures, causing them to expel algae** living in their

tissues, which drains them of their vibrant colours.

Causes of Mass Bleaching events

- Climate change induced warming. For Example, Current underwater **heatwave** is most intense in southern GBR, which is most affected by bleaching.

- Rising frequency of **El Nino increases** frequency and severity of mass-bleaching events.

- Lack of wind and currents may result in less mixing of w**ater layers, clearer seas, and deeper penetration of solar irradiance**, which can intensify bleaching.

- **Other causes:** Extremely low tides, Pollution, Overexposure to sunlight etc.

- GBR stretches for more **than 2,300 kilometres** along the **northeast coast of Australia.**

- It is the **world's largest coral reef** complex, located in Pacific Ocean.

- It was declared a **World Heritage Site in 1981.**

- This reef structure is composed of and built by billions of tiny organisms, known as coral polyps.

11. GOLDEN LANGUR

Why in news: According to latest survey, there are around 7,396 Golden langurs in India.

About Golden langur

Protection Status:

- IUCN: **Endangered**

- CITES: Appendix I

- Wildlife Protection Act: Schedule-I

Characteristics:

- Belong to a large group of Old World monkeys called the **colobines (leaf-eating** primates

having a **ruminant-like multi-chambered stomach).**

- **Coat colour varies** seasonally becoming cream colored in summer and dark golden in winter.

- They are **diurnal and arboreal in nature and live in troop (3-15)**.

- Habitat: Endemic to subtropical and temperate **broadleaf forests in Assam (Brahmaputra River Valley) and Bhutan.**

12. CAPTIVE ELEPHANT (TRANSFER OR TRANSPORT) RULES, 2024

Why in news: Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (**MoEFCC) notified Captive Elephant (Transfer or Transport) Rules, 2024.**

- MoEFCC notified rules in exercise of powers conferred **under Wildlife (Protection) Act (WPA) 1972.**

Key highlights of rules

- Application for transfer of captive elephants shall be made to **Deputy Conservator of Forests (DCF)** having jurisdiction over area where elephant is registered.

On receipt of application, DCF shall

- Obtain a certificate of a veterinary practitioner;

- Conduct inquiry and physical verification of facility where elephant is presently and proposed to be housed;

- Forward application/report to Chief Wildlife Warden (CWW) within fifteen days.

- Transfer within state: After report examination, **CWW permit** or reject transfer of captive elephants within seven days.

- **Transfer outside of states:** CWW of donor state shall forward application to CWW of recipient state within fifteen days.

- **Terms and conditions for transfer:** Owner is **no longer able to maintain elephant;** No transfer unless genetic profile of animal has been entered in **electronic monitoring application of MoEFCC; etc.**

- **Validity**: Elephant transfer shall be effected within a period not exceeding **three months from date of grant of permission.** Transport permit shall not be more than one month.

Conservation status:

- IUCN status: Endangered

- CITES status: Appendix I

- **WPA, 1972 Schedule I**

1. **Consider the following statements:**

   1) **Cavum clouds** are formed when aeroplane passes through layers of cumulus clouds

   2) It is viewed as a circular feature when seen directly beneath but **may appear oval shaped when viewed from a distance.**

   Which of the above the statements are correct?

   a) 1 only
   b) 2 only
   c) Both 1 and 2
   d) Neither 1 nor 2

   Consider the following statements:

   1) **Nasik launched India's first city-specific Zero Carbon Buildings Action Plan (ZCBAP).**

2) **It aims to contribute to India's 'Net Zero' target by 2050**

   Which of the above the statements are incorrect?

   a) 1 only
   b) 2 only
   c) Both 1 and 2
   d) Neither 1 nor 2

5. SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

1. **Star Dunes**
- Scientists unveiled the first in-depth study of Earth's **magnificent desert star dunes revealing the internal structure.**
- The study focused on a star dune in Erg Chebbi (eastern **Morocco) called Lala Lallia, meaning "highest sacred point".**

About Star Dunes
- Formed in areas with complex wind regimes, which means winds blowing from different directions.
- They make up just under 10% of the dunes in Earth's deserts and are the tallest ones.
- **Earth's largest star dunes are found in the Badain Jaran desert (China).**
- **They also have been spotted on Mars and Saturn's moon Titan**

2. **UNCOVER Program**
- Researchers, as part of the James Web Space Telescope (JWST) **UNCOVER program, finds a** clue about the end of 'dark ages' in early universe.
- Dark ages refer to a period when sources of light were cloaked in a dense fog of neutral hydrogen gas.
- It was followed by **'epoch of reionization'** that arose because of arrival of first stars and galaxies.
- **UNCOVER (Ultra-deep NIRCam and**

NIRSpec Observations
- **Before the Epoch of Reionization) aims at addressing two core**

JWST science goals:
- Identifying first-light galaxies during the Dark Ages, Studying the ultra-low luminosity galaxies that were responsible for reionization.

3. **Google's DeepMind team introduces "Genie," a** Groundbreaking AI platform poised to transform the gaming industry and creative endeavors.
4. T**his innovative project signifies a fusion of cutting-edge technology and** imaginative potential, offering the capability to craft interactive 2D video games from single image prompts or text descriptions**.**

5. **Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC) in Kerala, Union Minister Rajeev Chandrasekhar, responsible for Electronics & IT, Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, and Jal Shakti,** articulated India's potential as a global semiconductor hub.

6. ISRO chief S Somnath informed at the **National Space Science Symposium (NSSS 2024)** that the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) is preparing to launch the next lunar mission **Chandrayaan-4**.

- **This mission will include five spacecraft modules. transferred a first-of-its-kind vaccine technology to BioMed Pvt. Ltd., a company specializing in vaccine**

manufacturing. **This revolutionary technology involves a recombinant** vector vaccine specifically designed to combat the classical swine fever virus in pigs and wild boars.

- **It fills a significant gap in India's vaccine landscape.**

6. SCHEMES

SCHEMES	INFORMATION
'POSHAN UTSAV: CELEBRATING NUTRITION'	- **Bill Gates, Co-Chair of the Bill and Melinda** Gates Foundation (BMGF), lauded the **"Poshan Utsav Book,"** a unique resource that revives ancient Indian nutritional traditions. He called it a **"great example"** of using local knowledge and cultural practices to promote healthy eating across diverse communities. - The event also saw the **launch of the Cartoon Coalition,** a team of India's most beloved cartoon characters, including **Chacha Chaudhary, Suppandi,** **Shambhu**, and even Elmo! - The **Poshan Utsav stands as a beacon of hope,** showcasing India's multi-pronged approach to combating malnutrition. By combining ancient wisdom, **cutting-edge technology,** and the power of beloved cartoon characters, the country is paving the way for a **"Suposhit Bharat"** (well-nourished India) for future generations.
THE HAJ SUVIDHA APP	- Union Minister Smriti Irani launched the Haj Suvidha App, offering vital services for pilgrims. The accompanying Haj Guide, in 10 languages, educates on pilgrimage nuances and App utilization. - **Haj Suvidha App Launch** - **Purpose:** To streamline the Haj pilgrimage experience

	• by offering direct access to essential services. • Features: Training modules, Flight details, Accommodation information, Emergency helpline, Health services • Implemented by BISAG-N under the guidance of the Union Minister for Minority Affairs. • **Haj Guide-2024 Release** • **Objective:** To educate pilgrims about various aspects of the **Haj pilgrimage and promote the effective utilization** of the Haj Suvidha App. • **Languages:** Published in 10 languages for widespread accessibility		• innovation in defence tech with grants up to Rs 25 crore • Promote innovations in critical and **strategic defence technologies.** • Up **to Rs 25 crore** for research, development, and innovation in defence technology • **Rs 750 crore allocated for 2023-24 to 2025-26.** • Develop approximately 30 deep-tech critical and strategic technologies.
ADITI SCHEME	• At DefConnect 2024, Rajnath Singh unveiled **ADITI(Acing Development of Innovative Technologies with iDEX (ADITI)** scheme.), aiming to foster	**UNNATI – 2024 SCHEME**	• **Uttar Poorva Transformative Industrialization Scheme, 2024 (UNNATI – 2024).** • This scheme, spearheaded by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, **aims to invigorate industrial development in the North East Region, fostering economic growth and job creation.** • Total outlay of **Rs. 10,037 crore for 10**

	years, with an additional **Rs. 300 crore** for implementation and institutional arrangements. • Approximately **2180 applications expected, generating around 83,000** direct employment opportunities during the scheme period, alongside significant indirect employment.	**for a period of three years from FY 2023-24 to FY 2025-26,** with a budget allocation of 349.73 crores. • **Objective:** To stop deaths of Sewers and Septic Tank Workers (SSWs) and to promote mechanization of cleaning operations with a vision **to reduce hazardous cleaning and ensure the safety of sanitation workers.** • It is launched as **a joint initiative** of **the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (MoSJE)** and the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA).
NAMASTE SCHEME	• Ministry **of Social Justice & Empowerment (MoSJE**) has formulated a scheme "National Action for Mechanized **Sanitation Ecosystem" (NAMASTE).** The process of extending the Scheme to all the **Urban Local Bodies (ULBs)** of the country has been initiated. • The NAMASTE scheme will be implemented by the National **Safai Karamcharis Finance and Development Corporation (NSKFDC)**	• **Implementing agency:** National Safai Karamchari Financial **Development Corporation (NSKFDC) would be the implementing agency for NAMASTE.**
		• The **IndiaAI Mission** is a strategic **initiative**

INDIAAI	that aims to catalyze **AI innovation, democratize** computing access, provide startup capital, ensure ethical AI, and drive inclusive growth in India's AI ecosystem. • Approved with an outlay of Rs **10,372 crore for the next five years.** • Under the India AI Mission [to be implemented by the **'IndiaAI' Independent Business Division (IBD) under Digital India Corporation (DIC)],** the Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY) will look - • To establish a computing capacity of **more than 10,000 graphics processing units (GPUs) and** • To help develop foundational models trained on datasets covering major Indian languages for priority sectors like healthcare, agriculture, and		governance.
		'MAHTARI VANDAN YOJANA,'	• The scheme aims to provide financial assistance to women in the state. • **PM Modi disbursed the first installment of Rs 1,000 to** 70,12,417 women in Chhattisgarh. • The state government has **allocated Rs 655.57 crore** for this purpose. • PM Modi assured regular **monthly transfers of Rs 1,000** to eligible beneficiaries under the scheme. • Under the Mahtari Vandan Yojana, approximately **70 lakh women in Chhattisgarh** will **receive Rs 1,000 every month.**
		THE REVAMPED PHARMACEUTICALS TECHNOLOGY UPGRADATION ASSISTANCE (RPTUAS) SCHEME	• The Department of Pharmaceuticals, Ministry of Chemicals and **Fertilizers is announcing** the **Revamped Pharmaceuticals Technology**

	Upgradation Assistance (RPTUAS) Scheme. • It is a significant step in government's efforts to help upgrade the technological capabilities of our pharmaceutical industry and ensure its alignment with the global standards. • **Expanded Eligibility Criteria:** It expanded eligibility to cover any pharmaceutical manufacturing facility in need of quality and technological upgrades and having a **yearly revenue of less than 500 crores**. • **Preference to MSME**: Micro, **Small, and Medium-Sized Enterprises (MSMEs)** have the preference to **assist smaller firms** in meeting standards for high-quality production. • Assistance for Adherence to **New Guidelines:** It		accommodates a wider variety of technology **advancements in compliance with** updated Schedule-M and WHO-GMP guidelines. • Infrastructure Development: Improvements to testing **labs, clean Room facilities,** HVAC systems, utilities, etc. are **all eligible** activities. • **Incentive Structure: Pharmaceutical units** that achieve turnover criteria can get incentives **of up to Rs. 1 crore per unit** under the Dynamic Incentive Structure. The incentive structure varies **according to turnover, motivating** growth at various scales of enterprises. • Integration of State Government Schemes: **It permits integration with programmes** run by state governments, opening the door to

	more top-up assistance.		initiative under its **Aspirational Blocks Programme** on March 13, 2024.
POSHAN PAKHWADA	• The Ministry of Women and Child Development will **organize Poshan Pakhwada nationwide** from March 9 to March 23, 2024. This 15-day celebration aims to spread awareness about nutrition, dietary practices, and women's health.		• This initiative aims to bolster local economies and promote grassroots entrepreneurship, ultimately fostering self-reliance and sustainable growth.
	• The **main focus theme's for activities**		• Prof. Ramesh Chand, Member, **NITI Aayog, unveiled the logo for 'Aakanksha'** under the 'Vocal for Local' initiative.
	• and awareness during Poshan Pakhwada 2024 will be:		• The initiative aims to consolidate indigenous local products from **500 Aspirational** Blocks under the brand **'Aakanksha'.**
	• **Poshan Bhi Padhai Bhi (PBPB)** – Promoting better Early Childhood Care & Education (ECCE)		• The '**Vocal for Local'** initiative aims to create a conducive ecosystem for local businesses, **fostering economic empowerment and self-sufficiency.**
	• Tribal, Traditional, Regional, Local dietary practices – **Sensitizing about nutrition**		
	• Health of pregnant women & Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) practices		
	• **NITI Aayog** launched the '**Vocal for Local'**		• The Ministry of Heavy Industries, Government of India,

in **collaboration with the Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance, introduces** the Electric Mobility Promotion **Scheme 2024 (EMPS 2024)**. • This scheme aims to expedite the uptake of **electric vehicles (EVs) within the country**, fostering a sustainable and **eco-friendly transportation** ecosystem while bolstering the EV manufacturing sector. • A total fund allocation of **INR 493.55 crore** designated for providing incentives to eligible **e-2W and e-3W vehicles.** • Eligible EV Categories: • Two Wheelers (e-2W): Including electric motorcycles and scooters. • Three-wheelers (e-3W): Encompassing registered e-rickshaws, e-carts, and L5 category e-3W. • This includes Information, Education	& Communication (IEC) activities and fees for Project Management Agency, **amounting to INR 6.45 crore.**

7. STATES NEWS

STATES	INFORMATION
Telangana	1. The Telangana state government has issued a directive for **the adoption of the One Time Scheme (OTS) across all urban local bodies (ULBs)**, including the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC). This initiative is geared towards alleviating the financial strain faced by property owners who are grappling with mounting **arrears interest on property tax payments.** 2. **21-foot statue of Rajput king Maharana Pratap** was installed and unveiled at Maharana Pratap Chowk in **Begum Bazaar, Hyderabad**. It is claimed to be the first of its kind in Telangana. 3. Telangana Chief Minister A

	Revanth Reddy has announced the launch of the **Indiramma Housing Scheme starting** March 11. The scheme aims to provide housing solutions to the economically disadvantaged segments of society. • Individuals owning a plot of land will receive **Rs. 5 lakh for constructing a new house on their plot**. • Homeless individuals will be provided with Rs. 5 lakh along with a house plot for construction.		• The collaboration between the **National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) and Bajaj Finserv** aims to revolutionize skill development in **Odisha and across India.**
ODISHA	• Union Minister of Education and Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, **Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, inaugurated Project ODISERV** in **Sambalpur, Odisha**, marking a significant step towards preparing young graduates **for employment opportunities in the financial services sector**. • This initiative is poised to empower the youth, enhance their employability, and fulfill their career aspirations.	**UTTAR PRADESH**	1. **'MYUVA Scheme' :** In Uttar Pradesh, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has launched an initiative **to support young entrepreneurs called "Mukhyamantri Yuva Udyami Vikas Abhiyan (MYUVA)."** • This program offers interest-free loans to help young people kickstart their business ventures with projects valued up to Rs 5 lakh. • Financial Allocation: A substantial budget of Rs 1,000 crore has been allocated for the fiscal year 2024-25 to support the implementation of the scheme. 2. Uttar Pradesh, **under the leadership of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath,** has achieved a milestone by becoming the first state in the country to issue **five**

	crore **Ayushman cards.** This accomplishment underscores the state government's commitment to ensuring the health and well-being of every citizen.		4. The Uttar Pradesh police force is set to adopt the advanced **Trinetra app 2.0, a cutting**-edge digital platform that promises to revolutionize **crime prevention and investigation in the state.**

- The state **of Uttar Pradesh has issued 50,017,920 Ayushman cards, benefiting 74,382,304** individuals.

3. Uttar Pradesh government, led by Chief **Minister Yogi Adityanath,** has announced a **complete waiver of electricity bills for private tube wells owned by farmers, effective from April 1, 2023.** This decision, announced, aims to alleviate the financial burden on the state's farmers, enhancing their agricultural productivity and overall well-being.

- The Uttar Pradesh government has earmarked a substantial sum of **₹1,800 crore in the 2024-2025 budget**. This allocation underscores the government's commitment to supporting the agrarian sector, a vital component of the state's economy.

5. The Trinetra app 2.0 offers seamless accessibility via Android and iOS mobile applications.

BIHAR

- India's **first National Dolphin Research Center (NDRC)** was officially inaugurated by **Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar.**

- This landmark facility, built at a cost of **Rs 30 crore, is situated on the banks** of the Ganges River within the Patna University campus.

- A 3-day mega event of National Horticulture Fair 2024 organised at ICAR-Indian Institute of Horticultural **Research, Hesaraghatta, Bengaluru** from 5th March 2024 concluded on 7th March 2024, with the gracious presence of Ms. **Shobha Karandlaje,** Union Minister of State for Agriculture a**nd Farmers' Welfare, Govt. of**

India.

- The fair themed on **"Nextgen technology led horticulture for sustainable development"** will feature cutting edge technologies in horticultural sector.

1. Located **in Thiruvananthapuram,** KTCT Higher Secondary School, **under the aegis of Kaduvayil Thangal Charitable Trust**, has become the first educational institution in **Kerala to employ an AI-powered teacher.**

2. This initiative stems from the **Atal Tinkering Lab (ATL) project by NITI Aayog**, launched in 2021 to enhance extracurricular activities in schools across India.

3. **Jharkhand Chief Minister Champai Soren** has launched a pioneering initiative, the '**Vidhwa Punarvivah Protsahan Yojana'** (Widow Remarriage Incentive Scheme).

4. This scheme, a first in India, aims to support and encourage widows to embark on a new journey of companionship by providing a financial incentive of **Rs 2 lakh** to those who choose to remarry.

- Bichom, carved out of West and East Kameng, has been declared the **27th district of Arunachal Pradesh**. Chief Minister **Pema Khandu** led the inauguration ceremony, marking a significant milestone for the region.

KARNATAKA	1. The **Bengaluru Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) has received the first set of six** train coaches for its upcoming driverless metro line, called the Yellow Line. **This 18.8 km-long line, connecting RV Ro**ad and Bommasandra, will be the first in India to have a **driverless train system.**
HIMACHAL PRADESH	- CM Sukhvinder Sukhu introduced the "Indira Gandhi **Pyari Behna Sukh Samman Nidhi Yojna,"** initiating a monthly stipend of ₹1,500 for women aged

	18 to 60, commencing in the upcoming fiscal year. • Amounting to an annual **expenditure of ₹800 crore**. The initiative aims to cover over **five lakh women,** offering them much-needed financial assistance. • **all girls above 18 years of age would receive ₹18,000** per annum under the initiative.		empowerment of women • The Maharashtra Cabinet has announced **its decision to rename Ahmednagar district as 'Ahilya Nagar'.** The renaming is in honor of the 18th-century Maratha queen Ahilyabai Holkar. The approved changes include: • **Curry Road to Lalbaug** • **Sandhurst Road to Dongri** • **Marine Lines to Mumbadevi** • **Cotton Green to Kalachowki** • **Charni Road to Girgaon** • **Dockyard Road to Mazgaon** • **King Circle to Tirthakar Parshivnath** • **Mumbai Central Station as Nana Jagannath Shankarsheth** Station.
MAHARASHTRA	1. The state of Maharashtra has announced **its fourth women's policy,** which aims to promote the holistic development of women. • Maharashtra **is the first state in India to introduce a women's policy.** • The new policy covers various aspects related to women's empowerment, such as: 1) Health and nutrition 2) Education and skills development 3) Women's safety and prevention of violence against women 4) Promoting gender equality 5) Economic and social		2. The Union Minister for Education, **Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, Shri Dharmendra** Pradhan, inaugurated a Management Education Center jointly established **by IIM Mumbai and IIM Sambalpur in Angul.** • **Collaboration:** It is a joint

	initiative between IIM Mumbai and **IIM Sambalpur, two prestigious management** institutions in India.	**TAMIL NADU**	• The Tamil Nadu government has launched the **'Neengal Nalama' (Are you fine?) scheme**, a beneficiary outreach program aimed at reviewing the implementation of **flagship schemes and addressing** the grievances of the public. • As part of the scheme, **the Chief Minister launched a web portal** where beneficiaries can express their opinions and provide feedback on the welfare projects of **the Tamil Nadu government**. • This initiative **aims to improve government services by eliciting views** from beneficiaries through direct interaction with ministers, senior officials, and district collectors.
ASSAM	• Assam's CM **Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma inaugurated a 50 MW** Solar Project in Sonitpur, developed by SJVN Green Energy Limited, **in Sitalmari village.** • The 50 MW Solar Project, costing **Rs. 291 crores,** will generate 101 million units of green energy in its first year. • Over **25 years, it's expected to produce around 2,319** million units of energy. • Assam Power Development Corporation Limited will receive this energy at **Rs. 3.92** per unit, enhancing state energy security and sustainability.	**ODISHA**	1. To empower and support women **employees in the state, the Odisha government** led by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has announced an additional **10 days of casual leave for women working** in various

government departments. This decision aims to recognize the multitude of responsibilities women shoulder and provide them with greater flexibility to strike a better work-life balance.

- Previously, **all government employees in Odisha** were entitled to **15 days of casual leave (CL) per y**ear. However, with this latest announcement, women employees will now receive a total **of 25 days of CL** annually.

2. Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik inaugurated India's first indoor **athletics stadium and indoor aquatic centre at the Kalinga stadium** in Bhubaneshwar.

-
- It has facilities to host national and international athletic events.
- The stadium, built at an estimated cost of **Rs 120 crore,** can accommodate 120 athletes for full-time coaching.
- It also has a classroom for studies, medical facilities,

and a dedicated pantry for athletes.

- Italian company Mondo SpA has set up a **10,000 sq. meter track in the stadium.**
- The stadium has facilities for long jump, triple jump, **100m and 200m race tracks**, pole vault, and shot put events.

JHARKHAND	- for the first time, the district of Simdega in Jharkhand is hosting the Pusa Krishi Vigyan Mela, a national-level agricultural science fair. The event, organized by the Indian Agricultural Research Institute, Pusa (New Delhi), is being held at the **Albert Ekka Stadium from March 10th to 12th**, marking a significant stride towards realizing the vision of a prosperous farmer community. - The mela aims to encourage the adoption of modern agricultural techniques and **entrepreneurship among farmers**
	Union Minister **Shri Rajeev Chandrasekhar,**

	responsible for **Electronics and IT, Skill Development,** Entrepreneurship, and Jal Shakti, inaugurated India's first **FutureLABS center** at C-DAC **Thiruvananthapuram.** Named the **"Centre for Semiconductor Chips & Systems for Strategic Electronics,"** this pioneering initiative aims to catalyze an ecosystem for next-generation chip design, manufacturing, and research.		o Sorghum (jowar) and moth seeds to **100,000 farmers**.
	• The Rajasthan government has decided to distribute free seeds of millets and coarse grains to the state's farmers. This move aims to boost millet production in the state. • **Seeds to be Distributed** • The State government will provide free mini kits of various seeds to farmers: o Maize seeds to **1.2 million farmers** o Pearl millet (bajra) seeds to 800,000 farmers o Mustard seeds to **700,000 farmers** o Moong seeds to **400,000 farmers**	**ALLAHABAD**	• The **Allahabad High Court's Lucknow** bench has declared the UP Board of **Madarsa Education Act of 2004** as unconstitutional. • The court ruled that the act violated the principle of secularism, as well as several articles of the Constitution, **including Articles 14, 21, and 21-A. Additionally**, the court found that the act also contravened Section 22 of the **University Grants Commission Act of 1956.** • The court has directed the Uttar Pradesh government to provide **regular school education to students** enrolled in madarsas (Islamic seminaries). The ruling states that these students should be accommodated **in primary, high school, and intermediate** education boards of the state.

8. DEFENSE AND SPACE

MULTIPLE INDEPENDENTLY TARGETABLE RE-ENTRY VEHICLE (MIRV) TECHNOLOGY	• The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has successfully conducted the maiden flight test of the **locally developed Agni-5 missile** with **multiple independently targetable re-entry vehicle (MIRV) technology.** • This new capability allows the weapon system to deliver multiple nuclear warheads **against different targets spread across hundreds of kilometers**, further enhancing India's strategic deterrence capability. • The test, codenamed **"Mission Divyastra" (divine weapon).** • <u>**Agni-5 Missile Capabilities**</u> • The Agni-5 missile, which uses a **three-stage solid-fueled** engine, has a range of more **than 5,000 kilometers.** It is equipped with **indigenous avionics systems** and high-accuracy sensor packages,		ensuring that the **re-entry vehicles reach** their target points within the desired accuracy. • The warheads can be propelled **independently, with targets 200-500 kilometers** apart.
		EXERCISE CUTLASS EXPRESS – 24 (CE-24)	• The Indian Navy recently took part in a **major maritime** exercise called **Exercise Cutlass Express – 24 (CE-24).** This exercise was held in **Port Victoria, Seychelles** from 26 February to 08 March 2024. • **Exercise Cutlass Express** is a multinational maritime exercise sponsored by the U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) and led **by U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa/U.S. Sixth Fleet.** • The main goal of this exercise is to promote maritime security and cooperation in the **strategic waters of the East African coast and the Western Indian Ocean.**
		THE "SECURITY	• The naval forces of China, Iran, and Russia launched

BELT-2024"	• a joint exercise near the Gulf of Oman, aimed at safeguarding regional maritime security. • Theme: **"Jointly Building Peace and Security"**.		**since 2001.**
'NAUSENA BHAWAN'	• Indian Navy Gets Its Own Headquarters Named **'Nausena Bhawan'** • The newly constructed Nausena Bhawan located at **Delhi Cantonment.**	**"EX TIGER TRIUMPH – 24"**	• A joint military exercise called **Tiger Triumph-24** between India and the United States started on March 18 and will continue until March 31. • This exercise is taking place on **the Eastern Seaboard (East Coast) of India.** • The main purpose of this exercise is **to improve cooperation between the two countries' armed** forces for humanitarian **assistance and disaster relief operations**.
"Exercise Lamitiye – 2024"	• An Indian Army contingent has departed for Seychelles today to participate in the **Tenth edition of the Joint Military** Exercise **"LAMITIYE-2024"** between the Indian Army and Seychelles Defence Forces (SDF). • The exercise will be conducted in **Seychelles from 18-27** March 2024. • 'LAMITIYE' means **'Friendship' in the Creole language.** • It is a **biennial (happening every two years)** training event between the Indian **Army and Seychelles Defence Forces.** • The exercise has been **conducted in Seychelles**		• The Indian Army has set up a specialized technology unit called **Signals Technology Evaluation and Adaptation Group (STEAG)** to research and evaluate **next-generation communication** technologies. • **Purpose of STEAG** • STEAG will focus on studying and adapting technologies like: o Artificial Intelligence o 5G and 6G networks

	o Machine Learning o Quantum Technologies • The aim is to develop advanced communication capabilities for **defence applications and future warfare.**	**EXERCISE SAMUDRA LAKSAMANA**	bilateral maritime exercise **between India and Malaysia**, is currently underway from February 28 to March 2, 2024, off the coast of **Visakhapatnam.** • The primary aim of **Exercise Samudra Laksamana is to bolster the bonds of friendship and cooperation between the two naval forces.** • By engaging in a series of harbour and sea-based activities, the exercise seeks to improve mutual understanding, share knowledge and best practices, and refine the **operational skills of both navies.**
SEA DEFENDERS-2024	• Recently, the maritime security exercise 'Sea Defenders-2024' was held between the **Indian Coast Guard (ICG)** and the United States Coast Guard (USCG) at **Port Blair,** Andaman and Nicobar Islands. • The Exercise included a variety of scenarios including a **Pollution Response Demonstration,** in which Indian Coast Guard ships and aircraft showcased their expertise **in responding to oil spills** and other environmental hazards at sea. • It also simulated Visit **Board Search and Seizure (VBSS) Operations** for inspecting vessels suspected of illegal activity.	**NEW NAVAL BASE**	• The Indian Navy is set to inaugurate a new naval base,**INS Jatayu, on Minicoy Island,** marking a significant step in bolstering security infrastructure in the strategically vital Lakshadweep Islands. • The three forces of India - **Army, Navy, and Air Force** - are going to
	• **Exercise Samudra Laksamana,** a significant		

	conduct the biggest exercise **called 'Bharat-Shakti' at Asia's largest** field firing range located in **Jaisalmer district of Rajasthan.** • Bharat Shakti is a significant **tri-Service exercise showcasing the firepower of the Army, Air Force, and Navy.** • The three Indian Services will showcase the capability **of indigenously manufactured weapons and platforms during the exercise.** • **Only indigenous weapon** systems developed in India will be included in this exercise.
IMT TRILAT-2024 EXERCISE	• **TRILAT-2024 Maritime Exercise** • The Indian Navy is all set to participate in the second edition of the **India-Mozambique-Tanzania Trilateral Exercise (IMT TRILAT-2024), a joint maritime exercise scheduled from 21-29 March 202**4. • The Indian Naval Ships **INS Tir and INS Sujata** will represent India in this

	trilateral exercise. • The **IMT TRILAT-2024 exercise** aims to strengthen cooperation and interoperability between the Indian Navy and its counterparts from Mozambique and Tanzania in various maritime operations and procedures.
OPERATION INDRAVATI	• **Operation Indravati** • Against the backdrop of new attacks being **launched by armed gangs in the suburbs of Port-au-Prince,** the country has launched **"Operation Indravati"** to evacuate **Indian nationals from Haiti.** • They are being evacuated to **the Dominican Republic.**

9. SUMMITS

URBAN FRAME SURVEY (UFS)	• The **Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI)** has inked an initial pact with National Remote

	Sensing **Centre under ISRO to digitalise Urban Frame Survey** using the Bhuvan Platform. • This collaboration is aimed at **transforming Urban Frame Survey (UFS)** from analogue **to digital mode and help MoSPI to** achieve the targets of updating urban frame regularly in a timely manner. • **NSSO (FOD) under MoSPI** has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with NRSC under the **Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO)** to facilitate UFS in a digital mode using the **Geo ICT tools and techniques** of Bhuvan Platform.		conducive to innovation, promoting **job creation, and inspiring young talent to develop** innovative solutions. • **DPIIT-led workshop on seed funds** provided strategic insights for early-stage startups. • India to host SWG's second meeting in November 2024**, aiming to accelerate regional** economic development. • Previous Startup India **initiatives for SCO** included virtual mentorship programs and physical forums to enhance startup ecosystems.
URBAN FRAME SURVEY (UFS)	• The fourth edition of the **Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)** Startup Forum was organized on 19th March 2024 in New Delhi. • The initiative focused on broadening startup interactions among the SCO Member States, fostering an environment	**BHARAT STEAM BOILER EXPO 2024**	• The **First Bharat Steam Boiler Expo 2024** recently took place in the **vibrant city of Guwahati,** marking a significant milestone for aspiring candidates preparing for government exams in various sectors. • This **expo showcased cutting-edge technologies** and innovations in steam boilers, a crucial component across diverse

	• industries, including teaching, policing, banking, **railways, defense, and civil services like PSCS to IAS.** • This pioneering expo is the result of a collaborative effort among industry stalwarts including **Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Oil India Ltd (OIL), Numaligarh Refinery Ltd (NRL), Brahmaputra Cracker and Polymer Ltd (BCPL), Assam Petro Chemicals Ltd, and NTPC Ltd.**		along with their respective counterparts, to discuss strategic and security-**related issues, as well as diplomatic matters**. • India conducts **'2+2' dialogues** with key strategic partners: the US, **Australia, Japan, and Russia.** • The US holds the oldest and most significant '2+2' talks partnership with India.
'2+2' DEFENCE AND FOREIGN MINISTERIAL DIALOGUE	• **India and Brazil** conducted their first-ever '2+2' defence and foreign ministerial dialogue, discussing cooperation in key areas. • The talks focused on expanding **cooperation in various areas, including energy, critical minerals, technology, and counter-terrorism.** • The **'2+2' defence and foreign ministerial dialogue** involves the participation of the **defence and foreign** ministers of two countries,	**STARTUP MAHAKUMBH 2024**	• The **Startup Mahakumbh 2024,** an innovative initiative spearheaded by leading industry organizations including **ASSOCHAM, Nasscom,** Bootstrap Incubation & Advisory Foundation, TiE, and Indian Venture and Alternate Capital Association, is poised to bring together more than **1,000 startups, 50 unicorns, 500 incubators, and 5,000** delegates from 23 nations. Supported by the Department for **Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT),** this three-day

		NAME	APPOINTMENT
	event aims to promote innovation and collaboration across various sectors, with distinguished personalities such as **Amitabh Kant, Sivasubramanian Ramann, and Falguni Nayar** participating. • Central. • **Theme: 'Bharat Innovates**	**DALJIT SINGH CHAUDHARY**	IPS Officer Daljit Singh Chaudhary Named NSG's(National Security Guard)New Director General
		BRAJESH MEHROTRA	The Bihar government made a significant announcement, appointing senior **IAS officer Brajesh Mehrotra a**s the new chief secretary of the state.
'**MEGHAYAN-24**'	• The METOC seminar '**Meghayan-24**' was conducted by the School of **Naval Oceanology & Meteorology (SNOM)** and the Indian Naval **Meteorological Analysis Centre (INMAC) at the Southern Naval Command** on March 28, 2024. It was organized in commemoration of World Meteorological Day, with the **theme 'At the Frrontline of Climate Action' set by the World Meteorological** Organization (WMO) for 2024.	**SUMAN KUMARI**	Sub-Inspector Suman Kumari has etched her name in history as the first woman sniper of **the Border Security Force (BSF).**
		ARNAB BANERJEE	Arnab Banerjee, the Managing Director & CEO of CEAT Ltd., has been elected as the new Chairman of the Automotive Tyre Manufacturers' Association (ATMA).
		MUSTAFA SULEYMAN	Microsoft named British AI pioneer **Mustafa Suleyman** as the head of its AI division. Suleyman, who co-founded **Google's DeepMind**, will now report directly to Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella.
		JUSTICE RITU RAJ AWASTHI	**Justice Ritu Raj Awasthi** has taken oath as the new judicial member of the **Lokpal (ombudsman)** on 27 March 2024.
		MARIAM MAMMEN	**Mariam Mammen** Mathew has been designated as the chairperson of the **Digital News Publishers Association (DNPA)** for a tenure of two years, effective

10. APPOINTMENTS

	April 1, 2024		Director at NHPC Limited.
ABHAY THAKUR	Senior Indian diplomat **Abhay Thakur** has been appointed as the country's next ambassador or top envoy to Myanmar.	**DEVENDRA JHAJHARIA**	Devendra Jhajharia, a two-time Paralympic gold medalist, has been elected as the new President of the Paralympic Committee of India (PCI).
B SAIRAM	**B Sairam** has been appointed as the new Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Northern Coalfields Limited (NCL).	**AS RAJEEV**	**AS Rajeev** was appointed as Vigilance Commissioner in the Central Vigilance Commission by the Honourable President of India on 9th February 2024.
HANSHA MISHRA	**Hansha Mishra**, an officer of the Indian Audit and Accounts Service (IA&AS) from the 2010 batch, has been appointed as Director in the **Union Public Service Commission (UPSC), Delhi**.	**KISHOR MAKWANA**	**Kishor Makwana** has assumed the charge of Chairman of the National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC) in New Delhi.
SHEETAL DEVI	Arjuna Awardee **Sheetal Devi** Named ECI's **National PwD Icon** at Inclusive Cricket Match.	**MR. DEEPAK BALLANI**	The Indian Sugar & Bio-energy **Manufacturers Association (ISMA)** has appointed Mr. Deepak Ballani as its new Director General.
NIDHU SAXENA	Nidhu Saxena as the Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer (MD & CEO) of Bank of Maharashtra.	**M V RAO**	The **Indian Banks' Association (IBA)** has elected **M V Rao,** Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of the Central Bank of India, as its new Chairman.
KAMAL KISHORE	General António Guterres has appointed **Kamal Kishore of India** as the new Assistant Secretary-General and Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction.	**ARVIND KAPIL**	**Poonawalla Fincorp**, a leading non-banking financial company (NBFC), has appointed **Arvind Kapil** as its new Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer.
GYANESH KUMAR	Gyanesh Kumar, Sukhbir Sandhu Appointed as **New Election Commissioners**	**RAHUL SINGH**	Senior bureaucrat **Rahul Singh** has been appointed as the chairperson of the **Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE).**
RAJENDRA PRASAD GOYAL	Rajendra **Prasad Goyal**, NHPC's Finance Director, now takes on the role of Chairman and Managing		

VINAY KUMAR	**Vinay Kumar** Appointed as New Indian Ambassador to Russia
NAVNEET KUMAR SEHGAL	Retired **bureaucrat Navneet Kumar Sehgal** has been appointed as the new chairperson of the Prasar Bharati Board.
CP RADHAKRISHNAN	Jharkhand Governor **CP Radhakrishnan** has been given the additional responsibility as the in-charge governor of **Telangana.**
S ANJAY KUMAR SINGH	Sanjay Kumar Singh Nominated As Next Director (Projects) Of NHPC Limited

11.   BOOKS

BOOKS	AUTHOR
"Swallowing the Sun"	Lakshmi Murdeshwar Puri
FIH Odisha Hockey Men's World Cup 2023'	Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik released the coffee table book
"The Gems of Indian Art"	Harish Khullar's
"The Conspiracy"	Gotabaya Rajapaksa
"Sagar Parikrama"	Shri Parshottam Rupala, release a book
'Phool Bahadur'	Is the first Magahi novel, which has been translated **into English by** 'Abhay K'.

S. Raman	From A Car Shed To The Corner Room & Beyond"
Madhumita Murgia.	"Code Dependent: Living in the Shadow of AI" .

12. OBITUARIES

OBITUARIES
1. Kapildev Prasad**, a renowned artisan and** Padma awardee for his contributions **to the handloom industry and the revival of Bababuti sarees, passed away in** Basavanbigha village**, Bihar Sharif.** 2. Sadi Mohammad, **a legendary Rabindra Sangeet singer, has** passed away at the age of 70**. His death has cast a grim shadow in the cultural sphere of the country.** 3. **The former member of the** National Commission for Scheduled Castes **and Scheduled Tribes and prominent Buddhist Monk of** Ladakh, popularly known as Lama Lobzang, **passed away this morning at his residence in New Delhi.** • Daniel Kahneman, **a psychologist who never studied economics but pioneered the field of** behavioural economics**, has passed away at the age of 90.** • Despite not having formal training in economics**, Kahneman's groundbreaking work** exploring the psychology of decisionmaking earned him the **Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences in 2002.**

13. SPORTS

SPORTS

1. The scenic town of Shimla has become the centre stage for **the first-ever Asian River Rafting Championships,** officially

2. opened on March 4th, 2024, by Chief **Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu.**

3. Union Minister **Anurag Singh Thakur** grandly inaugurated the Sansad Khel Mahakumbh 3.0 at the Luhnu Cricket

4. Ground in Bilaspur on March 5, 2024. Chief Guests Indian cricket team captain Rohit **Sharma and Indian cricket team coach Rahul** Dravid graced the occasion as chief guests.

5. Indian badminton stars **Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty** have won the **BWF French Open men's doubles title,** defeating Chinese Taipei's Lee Jhe-Huei and Yang PoHsuan in the final.

6. Mumbai won the **Ranji Trophy 2024 after beating Vidarbha by 169 runs at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai.**

7. The **Election Commission of India (ECI)** and the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) organized an exhibition cricket match to **promote voter education and inclusivity.**

8. The match was played between the **Indian Deaf Cricket Association (IDCA) Team** and the Delhi & District Cricket Association (DDCA) team on March 16, 2024**, at Karnail Singh Stadium in New Delhi.**

9. Ace table tennis player Sharath **Kamal** will be the Indian team's flagbearer for the upcoming **Paris 2024 Olympics**. The announcement was made by the Indian Olympic Association (IOA).

10. IIT Madras is set to host the prestigious '6th **Shaastra Rapid FIDE Rated Chess** Tournament' on March 30 and 31, 2024. The tournament, sanctioned by the International **Chess Federation (FIDE), will draw the** participation of esteemed players from across the globe, including Grandmasters, International Masters, and Women Grandmasters.

11. The **Hockey India Awards 2023** were held in New Delhi on March 31, 2024 to celebrate the outstanding Indian hockey players from the previous calendar year.
    - Mens Player of the Year: **Hardik Singh.**
    - Womens Player of the Year: **Salima Tete.**
    - Hockey India Lifetime Achievement Award: **Ashok Kumar**
    - Goalkeeper of the Year: **PR Sreejesh** was felicitated with the prestigious Hockey India Baljit Singh Award for Goalkeeper of the Year.
    - **Defender of the Year:** Harmanpreet Singh won the Hockey India Pargat **Singh Award for Defender of the Year.**
    - Midfielder of the Year: **Hardik Singh** also won the Hockey India **Ajit Pal Singh** Award for Midfielder of the Year.
    - Forward of the Year: Abhishek was awarded the Hockey India **Dhanraj Pillay Award for Forward of the Year.**

14. AWARDS

AWARDS

1. **Dr. Pradeep Mahajan**, the Founder and Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of StemRx Hospital and Research. Centre, along with StemRx Bioscience Solutions, has been **awarded the prestigious Maharashtra Bhushan Award 2024**

2. On the occasion of the **48th Foundation Day** of the **Indian Civil Accounts Service**, the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting has been honored with the Award for Best Performance in Accounts during the Financial Year 2023- 24.

3. Legendary **golfer Tiger Woods** has been selected to receive the Bob Jones Award, the highest honour bestowed by the **United States Golf Association (USGA).**

4. **Yatin Bhaskar Duggal,** a promising talent from Haryana, has emerged triumphant as the winner of the esteemed **National Youth Parliament Festival, 2024.**

5. Renowned filmmaker **Zoya Akhtar** and British Indian chef **Asma Khan** were honored at the annual **'India-UK Achievers' awards in London.** The event celebrated Akhtar's acclaimed work in cinema and Khan's contributions to culinary arts.

6. **Sahitya Akademi**, the esteemed **National Academy of Letters** in India, is marking its 70th anniversary this year, and in honor of this milestone, the **annual 'Sahityotsav' has** transformed into **the world's largest literary festival.**

7. India has been awarded the prestigious **'Measles and Rubella Champion'** Award by The Measles and Rubella **Partnership.** This award recognizes India's exemplary efforts in preventing measles and rubella diseases.

8. **Ratan Tata**, former chairman of Tata Sons, has been **bestowed with the prestigious PV Narasimha** Rao Memorial Award. He received the award for his outstanding philanthropic contributions.
   The award ceremony took place in Mumbai on March 15, 2024.

9. Riken Yamamoto, a Japanese architect from Yokohama, has been named the winner of **the 2024 Pritzker Architecture Prize, widely regarded as the** highest honour in the field of architecture.

10. **Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi** has **created history** by becoming the **first non-Bhutanese to receive the 'Order of the Druk Gyalpo', Bhutan's highest civilian award. He received this prestigious honour from Bhutan's King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck during his two-day state visit to Thimphu.**

11. **The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** has been honored with the prestigious Aviation Week Laureates **Award for its remarkable achievements in the Chandrayaan-3 mission. Sripriya Ranganathan,** Deputy Ambassador at the Indian Embassy in the US, accepted the award on behalf of ISRO.

THE OSCARS 2024 CEREMONY TOOK PLACE AT THE DOLBY THEATER IN LOS ANGELES, WITH JIMMY KIMMEL HOSTING FOR THE FOURTH TIME

CATEGORY	WINNER
Best Supporting Actress	Da'Vine Joy Randolph, "The Holdovers"
Best Animated Short	"War Is Over!"
Best Animated Feature	"The Boy and the Heron"
Best Original Screenplay	"Anatomy of a Fall"
Best Adapted Screenplay	"American Fiction"
Best Makeup and Hairstyling	"Poor Things"
Best Production Design	"Poor Things"
Best Costume Design	"Poor Things"
Best International Feature	"The Zone of Interest"
Best Supporting Actor	Robert Downey Jr., "Oppenheimer"
Best Visual Effects	"Godzilla Minus One"
Best Film Editing	"Oppenheimer"
Best Documentary (Short Subject)	"The Last Repair Shop"
Best Documentary Feature	"20 Days in Mariupol"
Best Cinematography	"Oppenheimer"
Best Short Film (Live Action)	"The Wonderful Story of Henry Sugar"
Best Sound	"The Zone of Interest"
Best Score	"Oppenheimer"
Best Song	"What Was I Made For?" from "Barbie"
Best Actor	Cillian Murphy, "Oppenheimer"
Best Director	Christopher Nolan, "Oppenheimer"
Best Actress	Emma Stone, "Poor Things"
Best Picture	"Oppenheimer"

PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI PRESENTED THE FIRST-EVER NATIONAL CREATORS AWARD AT THE BHARAT MANDAPAM IN NEW DELHI.

WINNER	AWARD
Jaya Kishori	Best Creator for Social Change

Winner	Category
Kabita Singh (Kabita's Kitchen)	Best Creator in Food Category
Drew Hicks	Best International Creator
Kamiya Jani	Favourite Travel Creator
Ranveer Allahbadia (BeerBiceps)	Disruptor of the Year
RJ Raunac (Bauaa)	Most Creative Creator-Male
Shraddha Jain	Most Creative Creator (Female)
Aridaman	Best Micro Creator
Nishchay	Best Creator in Gaming Category
Ankit Baiyanpuria	Best Health and Fitness Creator
Naman Deshmukh	Best Creator in Education Category
Jahnvi Singh	Heritage Fashion Icon
Malhar Kalambe	Swachhta Ambassador
Gaurav Chaudhary	Best Creator in Tech Category
Maithili Thakur	Cultural Ambassador of The Year
Pankhti Pandey	Favourite Green Champion
Keerthika Govindasamy	Best Storyteller
Aman Gupta	Celebrity Creator

15. MISCELLANEOUS

IMPORTANT DAYS IN MARCH 2024	
DATE	EVENT
1st March	Zero Discrimination Day
1st March	World Civil Defence Day
1st March	Self Injury Awareness Day (SIAD)
1st March	World Civil Defence Day
2nd March	Employee Appreciation Day
3rd March	World Wildlife Day
3rd March	World Hearing Day
4th March	National Safety Day
8th March	International Women's Day

8th March	Ramakrishna Jayanti
10th March	CISF Raising Day
12th March	Mauritius Day
14th March	Pi Day
15th March	World Sleep Day
15th March	World Consumer Rights Day
16th March	National Vaccination Day
18th March	Ordnance Factory Day
20th March	International Day of Happiness
20th March	World Oral Health Day
21st March	World Forestry Day
21st March	World Down Syndrome
21st March	World Poetry Day
22nd March	World Water Day
23rd March	World Meteorological Day
24th March	World Tuberculosis (TB) Day
27th March	World Theater Day

1. India and the ADB signed a $23 million loan agreement for **Promoting Research and Innovation through Development of Fintech Institute at GIFT-City Project.**
2. GIFT-City in Gujarat is India's International Financial Services **Centre.**
3. Highlights of project
4. It will establish an International Fintech Institute (IFI) in **partnership with globally reputed institutes and universities.**
5. It will strengthen fintech education, boost **start-up success rates, and drive fintech research and innovation.**
6. Emphasis on market-driven fintech skills programmes. **Create the enabling** environment for private sector investment.
7. Loan agreement between India and t**he Asian Development Bank (ADB) for Fintech**
- **A case of Lyme disease was reported in Ernakulam district (Kerala)**
  About Disease
- **Pathogen:** Bacteria Borrelia burgdorferi, and Borrelia mayonii Infects humans **by: Bite of deer ticks (or black-legged ticks).**
8. Symptoms: Fever, headache, multiple areas of rash (called **erythema migrans), heart block, numbness or recurring episodes of arthritis.**
9. Treatment: Doxycycline or amoxicillin antibiotics Regions affected: Mainly USA, Europe and some parts of **Asia.**
10. Ministry of Information and Broadcasting launched **PB-SHABD (Prasar Bharti - Shared Audio Visuals** for Broadcast and **Dissemination) Initiative.**

About PB-SHABD

- **A news service launched by Prasar Bharati to support the daily news needs of the Indian media industry.**
11. It will be **Offering its** services of cost for the first year as an **introductory offer and will provide news stories in all major Indian languages across fifty categories.**
12. Prasar Bharati is India's public broadcaster, which has **Doordarshan and Akashvani** operating under its aegis.
   - **Darien Gap has emerged as one of the world's most dangerous and fastest-growing border crossings for illegal immigration.**

13. This route is taken when people **migrate from South America to North America.**

- **About Darien Gap**
- Connects northern Colombia and southern Panama.
- Part of the Isthmus of Panama.

14. Geological Survey of India (GSI) emphasises preserving GHS at **Pandavula Gutta in Jayashankar Bhupalpally District (Telangana).**

- Older than the Himalayan hills, Pandavula Gutta features prehistoric rock paintings in Green, red, yellow and white **pigments.**
- **Paintings have swastika symbols, circles and squares, and animals like Bison, Antelope, Tiger, Leopard**

15. At a glittering event recently held in Noida, organized **by The Times Group, Vijay Jain,** the Managing Director of Star Estate, was awarded the **prestigious Times Power Icon 2024 Award.**

16. MethaneSAT, launched aboard a SpaceX Falcon9 rocket, is a satellite designed to track and measure methane emissions globally.

17. **Operation SANKALP:** Launched by the **Indian Navy in December 2023,** the operation **completed 100 days,** operating in key areas including the **Gulf of Aden, Arabian Sea, and off the East Coast of Somalia.** Its objective is to safeguard India's maritime interests, counter maritime threats, combat piracy resurgence, and curb narcotics trade in the Indian Ocean Region.

18. The 2024 Tyler Prize for Environmental Achievement will be awarded to Johan Rockstrom for his work on the Planetary **Boundaries framework.**

RJ Raunac (Bauaa)	Most Creative Creator-Male
Shraddha Jain	Most Creative Creator (Female)
Aridaman	Best Micro Creator
Nishchay	Best Creator in Gaming Category
Ankit Baiyanpuria	Best Health and Fitness Creator
Naman Deshmukh	Best Creator in Education Category
Jahnvi Singh	Heritage Fashion Icon
Malhar Kalambe	Swachhta Ambassador
Gaurav Chaudhary	Best Creator in Tech Category
Maithili Thakur	Cultural Ambassador of The Year
Pankhti Pandey	Favourite Green Champion
Keerthika Govindasamy	Best Storyteller
Aman Gupta	Celebrity Creator

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. 'ADITI scheme', recently seen in the news, is associated with which sector?
1. **Defence sector**

2. Which state recently launched the India's first government-backed OTT Platform?
2. **Kerala**

3. The world's first large-scale mechanized tropical seaweed farm in which country?
3. **Lombok, Indonesia**

4. Which country's parliament has approved a controversial anti-LGBTQ bill, the Human Sexual Rights and Family Values Bill?
4. **Ghana**

5. In March 2024, India renewed the agreement to export electricity to (country) for 3 months until the end of June 2024.
5. **Nepal**

6. The Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) mandated two-factor Aadhaar authentication for accessing the Central Record keeping Agency (CRA) system, which will be effective from
6. **1st April 2024**

7. Which company has emerged as the first company in India to obtain the Aluminium Stewardship Initiative (ASI) Performance Standard V3 Certification?
7. **Bharat Aluminium company limited**

8. Who has recently (in March '24) took over as the 41st National President of the Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) Ladies Organisation (FLO) for the year 2024-2025?
8. **Joyshree Das Verma**

9. In March 2024, Bassirou Diomaye Diakhar Faye was elected as the president of (country).
9. **Senegal**

10. Which bank has recently (in March '24) introduced digital opening of United States dollar Fixed Deposits (FD) for Non-Resident Indian (NRI) customers?
10. **Axis Bank**

11. Which company has recently (in March' 24) introduced a first-of-its-kind Down Payment EMI (Equated Monthly Instalment) solution for online retail?
11. **PayU Payments Private Ltd**

12. According to the "Insurance 100 2024" report who emerged as the world's strongest insurance brand?
12. **Life Insurance Corporation of India and brand value 0.04% to USD 9.8 billion**

13. Saksham portal has launched by the Election Commission of India (ECI) to facilitate easier voting for whome?
13. **Persons with Disabilities (PwDs)**

14. When was the Earth Hour 2024 observed across the globe?
14. **23rd March 2024**

15. Which platform is being used for the digitization of the Urban Frame Survey (UFS) by the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) and the National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC)?
15. **Bhuvan Platform**

16. Which entity developed and constructed India's first hydrogen fuel cell ferry?
16. **Cochin Shipyard**

17. Which state government has unveiled a fully-funded universal life insurance plan?

17. **Nagaland**

18. On which date every year 'World Seagrass Day' is celebrated?

18. **1 March**

19. How much lump sum budgetary support has been provisioned for the International Big Cat Alliance for the next five years?

19. **Rs 150 crore**

20. Where will India's First Hydrogen-Powered Ferry be used for service?

20. **Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh**

21. Which ministry introduced the Harit Nauka initiative?

21. **Ministry of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways**

22. Which Former Canadian PM died recently?

22. **Brian Mulroney**

23. Where was the India Digital Summit 2024 organized?

23. **Mumbai**

24. Which fertilizer plant was dedicated to the nation by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in March 2024?

24. **Sindri Fertilizer Plant**

25. At which place is Sindri Fertilizer Plant located?

25. **Sindri of Dhanbad (Jharkhand)**

26. In which state of India Project ODISERV launched?

26. **Odisha**

27. Which corporation launched Project ODISERV?

27. National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC)

28. NSDC with which private bank collaborated to launch project ODISERV?

28. **Bajaj Finserv Ltd**

29. With whom has Coal India Limited (CIL) partnered to support PM Gati Shakti Mission?

29. **Signed an MoU with Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Mumbai and Sambalpur.**

30. Which state issued maximum Ayushmaan cards under "Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana?

30. **Uttar Pradesh**

31. With which country did India organize 'Exercise Samudra Laksamana' in February 2024?

31. **Malaysia at Visakhapatnam**

32. India organizes joint military exercise "Harimau Shakti" with which country every year?

32. **Malaysia**

33. How much will it cost to install a 3 KW plant under 'PM-Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana'?
   Rs.1.54 lakh

33. Where will INS Jatayu(naval base) be commissioned?

- **Minicoy, Lakshadweep**

34. A new variety of sea slug mollusk was discovered by the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) from which beach?

- **On the sea coast of Odisha and West Bengal**

35. Where was DefConnect 2024 organized?

- **Maneksha Center, New Delhi**

36. Who was honored with the 'India-UK Achievers' award in March 2024?

- **Zoya Akhtar and Asma Khan**

37. Who is going to become the first woman sniper of BSF?

- **Suman Kumari**

38. Where was India's first 1st Green Hydrogen Plant in the Steel Sector inaugurated?

- **Hisar, Haryana**

39. Who took oath as the new Prime Minister of Pakistan in March 2024?

- **Shahbaz Sharif**

40. At which place was Sansad Khel Mahakumbh 2.0 organized?

- **Basti of Uttar Pradesh**

41. How many sports have been included in 'Sansad Khel Mahakumbh 3.0'?

- **Five: Volleyball, Kabaddi, Cricket, Basketball and Athletics**

42. Recently, which institute has developed a drowning detection robot?

- **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Mandi and Palakkad**

43. Who won the first Sangeet Natak Akademi Award?

- **Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar Karaikudi**

44. Who was selected to the United States Golf Association (USGA) in March 2024?

- **Tiger Woods**

45. What has global rating agency Moody's estimated India's GDP growth for 2025?

- **6.4% has been imposed.**

46. At which place was the National Horticulture Fair 2024 organized in March 2024?

- **Bengaluru**

47. On what theme was the National Horticulture Fair 2024 organized?

- **'Nextgen Technology-led Horticulture for Sustainable Development**

48. Where is India's first 1st underwater metro?

- **Kolkata**

49. Which country is known as the 'Land of Quiet Mornings'?

- **South Korea is known as the 'Land of Quiet Morning'.**

50. Which country has been included in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in March 2024?

- **Sweden**

51. After Sweden joining NATO, what is its total membership now?

- **Sweden joined the alliance on 7 March 2024 as the 32nd member.**

52. Which country had joined NATO just before Sweden?

- **Finland joined the alliance in 2023 as the 31st member.**

53. Name the present Secretary General of NATO?

- **Jens Stoltenberg**

54. Who was selected as the 'Cultural Ambassador of the Year' under the National Creator Award' 2024?

- **Playback singer Maithili Thakur**

55. Who was selected as the 'Best Creator' in the field of social change under the 'National Creator Award' 2024?

- **Jaya Kishori**

56. Who has been honored with the 'IAA Golden Compass Award' in March 2024?

- **Srinivasan Swami**

57. Where is the Sela tunnel located?

- **Arunachal Pradesh**

58. Who constructed the Sela Tunnel?

- **BRO**

59. Which Indian writer was awarded with the 'Erasmus Prize 2024'?

- **Amitav Ghosh**

60. Which are the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) countries?

- **Switzerland, Iceland, Norway, and Liechtenstein.**

61. Which film won the best feature film award at the 96th Oscars?

- **Oppenheimer**

62. Who won the best actor award at the 2024 Oscar film awards?

- **Cillian Murphy**

63. Who won the best actress award at the 2024 Oscar film awards?

- **Emma Stone for the film Poor Things**

64. Who assumed the post of Chairman of National Scheduled Castes Commission (NCSC) in March 2024?

- **Kishor Makwana**

65. Which airport was given the title of 'Best Airport' in the Asia-Pacific region in March 2024?

- **Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport**

66. Where is the World's First 3d printing mosque situated?

- **Saudi**

67. With which country has the Central Government approved the 'Food Security Agreement' in March 2024?

- **Bhutan**

68. Who has been appointed as the new Chairman of CBSE in March 2024?

- **Rahul Singh**

69. Who has been appointed as the Director General of National Clean Ganga Mission in March 2024?

- **Rajeev Kumar Mittal**

70. Who was appointed Under Secretary in the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) in March 2024?

- **AP Das Joshi**

-

71. What is India's rank in the recently released Human Development Index?

- **134**

72. Who was appointed as the Prime Minister of Palestine in March 2024?

- **Mohammad Mustafa**

73. Which company has been conferred the ET Corporate Excellence Award 2023 Company of the Year Award?

- **India's largest commercial bank, State Bank of India.**

74. Who has been conferred the ET Corporate Excellence Award 2023 Businesswoman of the Year Award?

- **Hina Nagarajan, CEO & MD, Diageo India**

75. Who has been conferred the ET Corporate Excellence Award 2023 Entrepreneur of the Year Award?

- **Ramesh Juneja, Chairman, Mankind Pharma & Rajeev Juneja, VC & MD, Mankind Pharma**

76. Who was appointed the Chairman of Prasar Bharati in March 2024?

- **Navneet Kumar Sehgal**

77. With which country is India participating in the joint military exercise 'Lamitiye-2024'?

- **Seychelles**

78. Where was the final of the Women's Premier League (WPL) 2024 played?

- It was played at 'Arun Jaitley Stadium' in Delhi

79. Who was given the 'Powerful Striker of the Season' award in the WPL 2024?

- **Georgia Wareham (Powerful Striker of the Season (Trophy and Rs 5 lakh)**

80. Who was given the 'Emerging Player of the Season' award in the WPL 2024?

- **Shreyanka Patil (Emerging Player of the Season – Trophy and Rs 5 lakh)**

81. Who was given the 'Purple Cap for most wickets in the season' award in the WPL 2024?

- **Shreyanka Patil (Purple cap, cap and Rs 5 lakh for most wickets in the season)**

82. Who was awarded the 'Orange Cap for most runs in the season' in the WPL 2024?

- **Ellyse Perry (Orange Cap, cap and Rs 5 lakh for most runs in the season)**

83. Where was the Global Spirituality Conference organised in India in 2024?

- **It was held in the world's largest meditation centre, Kanha Shanti Vanam, Hyderabad, Telangana.**

84. Who organised the Global Spirituality Conference?

- **The Union Ministry of Culture, in association with the Heartfulness Institute,** organised the Global Spirituality Conference.

85. What was the theme of the Global Spirituality Conference?

- **The Theme of the Global Spirituality**

86. Who has been declared 'National Disability Icon' by the Election Commission of India in March 2024?

- **Ms Sheetal Devi para archer**

87. Who has recently broken the 16 year old national record in the men's 10,000-metre race?

- Gulveer Singh . He ran the race in 27 minutes 41.81 seconds.

88. At which place 'Startup Mahakumbh' is being organized in March 2024?

- New Delhi

89. With which country India organized 'Tiger Triumph – 24' in March 2024?

- **The United States (Visakhapatnam and Kakinada coasts in Andhra Pradesh.)**

90. Who became the First Black leader of a European country Wales?

- **Vaughan Gething**

91. According to the 6th Annual World Air Quality Report, which city is the most polluted city?

- **Begusarai**

92. Who has been selected for the Sangita Kalanidhi Award 2024 in March 2024?

- **TM Krishna**

93. Who has been selected for the Nritya Kalanidhi Award 2024 in March 2024?

- **Dr Neena Prasad**

94. Who has been selected for the Sangita Kala Acharya Award 2024 in March 2024?

- **Mridangam player Parasala Ravi and singer Geeta Raja**

95. Which state police launched the digital platform 'Trinetra' App 2.0 in March 2024?

- **Uttar Pradesh Police**

96. At what position has India been placed in the annual '**World Happiness Report' 2024?**

- **India ranks 126th among 143 countries in the World Happiness Report**

97. Recently, who has been appointed as the Ambassador of India to Russia?

- **Vinay Kumar**

98. When will the Earth Hour be observed in 2024? **23 March**

99. Who has been inducted into the 'World Billiards Museum's Hall of Fame' in March 2024?

- **Pankaj Advani**

100. Recently, which country became the first Spanish-speaking nation to recognize Indian Pharmacopoeia (IP)?

- **Nicaragua**

101. Where was the first Bharat Steam Boiler Expo 2024 held?

- **Guwahati, Assam**

102. Recently, RBI has imposed a penalty of Rs 1.40 crore on which bank?

- **Bank of India**

103. Which country recently performed the first transplant of a genetically modified kidney from a pig into a living human?

- **US**

104. Eturnagaram Wildlife Sanctuary, recently seen in the news, is located in which state?

- **Telangana**

105. Which Indian state hosts the largest population of leopards according to the report?

- **Madhya Pradesh**

105. Where was the first indigenously manufactured electrolyser commissioned by L&T?

- **Hazira, Gujarat**

106. By whom was 'BhashaNet Portal' launched in March 2024?

- **National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI) and Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology**

106. Gaia space telescope was launched by?

- European Space Agency

108. What is the code name of the operation launched by the Indian government to rescue stranded Indians from Haiti?

- **Operation Indravati**

109. Who is the original author of the first Magahi novel 'Phool Bahadur' translated into English?

- **Jayanath Pati**

110. Who has recently translated the Magahi novel 'Phool Bahadur' into English?

- **Abhay k**

111. Which Arab country has decided to participate in the Miss Universe 2024 competition in March 2024?

- **Saudi Arabia Rumi Alqahtani will represent Saudi Arabia**

112. Where is the World's first Om-shaped temple located?

- **Pali, Rajasthan**

113. Nobel laureate Daniel Kahneman passed away in March 2024. He was a citizen of which country?

- **Israeli-American citizen**

114. What is the name of the operation launched by the Indian Navy to ensure maritime security in the Indian Ocean?

- **Operation Sankalp**

115. Who was honored with the 'International Culture

Award' in March 2024?

- **Professor Meena Charanda**