

PRACTICE **MOCK**



February 2022 - Week 4

# WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

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## NATIONAL AFFAIRS

1. A bilateral air exercise named **Eastern Bridge-VI** has been organized between the **Indian Air Force (IAF)** and **Royal Air Force of Oman (RAFO)** at Air Force Station **Jodhpur** in Rajasthan. The exercise will provide an opportunity to enhance operational capability and interoperability between the two Air Forces.
2. **Four police stations** in **New Delhi** have been designated as **'Eat Right Campus'** by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) for providing nutritious and wholesome meals daily to police personnel at their canteens and mess.
  - The premises in Delhi are recognised as "Eat Right Campus" under the **"Sehatmand Delhi Programme"**.
  - Sehatmand Delhi Programme was launched as a part of "Eat Right India", which is a flagship mission of FSSAI.
3. The **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Roorkee** has recently launched the 'KISAN' mobile app for dissemination of Agromet Advisory Services under the Gramin Krishi Mausam Sewa (GKMS) project. The app provides farmers with easy access to weather forecasts and weather-based Agro-metrological Advisory Bulletins for all six blocks of Haridwar district (Uttarakhand) through phones.
4. **India** has been elected for the new chairmanship of the International Rubber Study Group (IRSG). India has succeeded Cote d'Ivoire.
  - **KN Raghavan** the head of the Indian delegation to IRSG and the Executive Director of the Indian Rubber Board, will serve as **Chairman of IRSG** for the next two years.
5. The Union Government has approved the continuation of the Central Sector Umbrella Scheme of **Border Infrastructure and Management (BIM)** during the 15th Finance Commission cycle from 2021-22 to 2025-26 at a cost of **Rs. 13,020 crore**.
  - The BIM scheme will help in the creation of infrastructures such as border fence, border floodlights, technological solutions, border roads and border outposts (BOPs), and company operating bases to secure India's borders with Pakistan, Bangladesh, China, Nepal, Bhutan, and Myanmar.
  - The Ministry of Home Affairs is responsible for the improvement of BIM.
6. Union Minister of Culture G Kishan Reddy has inaugurated the conference on Indian Temple Architecture titled "DEVAYATANAM- An Odyssey of Indian Temple Architecture" at **Hampi, Karnataka**.

- The two-day international conference has been organized by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI).
7. The Government of India (GoI) has constituted a high-level inter-ministerial task force to study the impact of sanctions against **Russia** by the USA, the European Union, the UK, Japan, Canada, Taiwan, and New Zealand.
- The task force includes secretaries and other senior officials from across Ministries and Departments such as External Affairs, Defence, Finance, Home, Commerce & Industry, and Petroleum and Natural Gas.
8. The **Ministry of Education** has launched a campaign named '**Bhasha Certificate Selfie** to encourage cultural diversity and promote multilingualism and foster the spirit of Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat (EBSB). It aims to promote the Bhasha Sangam mobile app, developed by the Ministry of Education and MyGov India.
- **Note:** Bhasha Sangam mobile app was launched on **31<sup>st</sup> October 2021**. Using the app, people can learn 100+ sentences of daily use in as many as 22 scheduled Indian languages.
9. Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya along with Dr. Bharti Pravin Pawar, Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare has launched the "**ICMR/ DHR Policy on Biomedical Innovation & Entrepreneurship**" for Medical Professionals, Scientists and Technologists at Medical, Dental, Para-Medical Institutes/Colleges.
- This policy will ensure multi-disciplinary collaboration, promote start-up culture and develop an innovation led ecosystem at Medical Institutes across India by promoting Make-in India, Start-Up-India and Atmanirbhar Bharat initiatives of the Government of India.
  - This policy is in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's motto of "Innovate, Patent, Produce, and Prosper."
10. The **28<sup>th</sup>** edition of the **DST-CII India-Singapore Technology Summit 2022** has been held virtually under the theme "Building Economies for the Future".
- The summit has been attended by Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; Minister of State (Independent Charge) Earth Sciences; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr. **Jitendra Singh**, and Singaporean Minister for Transport and Minister-in-charge of Trade Relations, Mr. **S Iswaran**.
  - It has been organized by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) in partnership with the Department of Science & Technology.



- 11. Defence Accounts Department (DAD)** of Ministry of Defence has signed an MoU with **CSC e-Governance Services India Limited**, a special purpose vehicle (SPV) under Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, to onboard pension services under the System for Pension Administration (Raksha) (SPARSH) initiative across more than 4 lakh Common Service Centres (CSCs) across India.
- DAD has also signed an MoU with **Kotak Mahindra Bank** to set up service centres across 14 branches located in areas with high ex-servicemen density.
- 12.** The Union Government of India has announced the purchase of **44.4 million tonnes** of wheat and **4.29 million tonnes** of rabi-grown rice during **2022-23** under the minimum support price (MSP) programme.
- The state-wise procurement target of wheat: Punjab (13.2 MT), Madhya Pradesh (12.9 MT), Haryana (8.5 MT), Uttar Pradesh (6 MT), and Bihar (1 MT).
  - Food Corporation of India (FCI) in collaboration with state government-owned agencies will procure wheat from farmers in the key producing states, including Punjab, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh during April-June.
- 13.** The signature tune for "**Vande Bharatam**" composed by Grammy Award winner **Ricky Kej** and Oscar contender **Bickram Ghosh** has been released by the Minister of State for Culture & External Affairs Meenakashi Lekhi. The 'Vande Bharatam' song was produced for Vande Bharatam, Nritya Utsav of Ministry of Culture presented at Rajpath, New Delhi for the national Republic Day event 2022.
- 14.** The Government of India, amidst the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, has launched '**Operation Ganga**' to **evacuate around 15,000 Indians in Ukraine**. A dedicated Twitter account named 'OpGanga' Helpline has also been set up to assist Operation Ganga.
- As per the data by the Ministry of External Affairs, around 20,000 Indians are stuck in Ukraine. 4,000 were able to come to India before the invasion of Ukraine by Russia.
- 15.** As per the recent data released by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), **Tamil Nadu** has achieved the first position in overall installed renewable energy capacity in India surpassing Karnataka.
- As of 31<sup>st</sup> January 2022, Tamil Nadu's total installed renewable capacity stood at **15,914 MW** as compared to Karnataka's total clean energy capacity of 15,795 MW.
  - Tamil Nadu's total solar capacity has increased to **4,894 MW** (includes ground-mounted, rooftop, and off-grid capacity) as of 31<sup>st</sup> January 2022, from 2,575 MW as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019, while wind capacity has increased to 9,857 MW from 8,969 MW during the period.

16. Union Minister for Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Giriraj Singh has launched the **Rural Connectivity Geographic Information System (GIS) Data** in Public Domain in India Habitat Centre, New Delhi.
- This includes GIS data for 8 lakh rural facilities as points, 10 lakh habitations and 25 lakh km of rural roads which have been collected and digitised using the GIS platform developed for the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) scheme.
17. The Union Minister for Ports, Shipping & Waterways, and AYUSH, Sarbananda Sonowal has inaugurated the **“Nikarshan Sadan Dredging Museum”** at the DCI campus in **Visakhapatnam**.
- The museum is built by the Dredging Corporation of India (DCI).
  - The museum displayed models of different types of dredgers, historical milestones, and vintage photos of this dredging behemoth from the Eastern Port of Vizag City.
18. The Central Government has approved the continuation of the **Immigration Visa Foreigners Registration & Tracking (IVFRT) Scheme** for five years from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026 with an outlay of **Rs. 1,364.88 crore**.
19. The first batch of three MH-60R Multi-Role Helicopters, contracted by the Indian Navy from the United States, is scheduled to arrive in India by mid-July 2022 in Kochi, Kerala.
- India had signed a **USD 2.4 billion** deal for procuring 24 MH-60R Multi-Role Helicopters (MRH) from the USA in 2020.
20. The **Shyama Prasad Mukherji Rurban Mission (SPMRM)** has observed its **6<sup>th</sup> anniversary** on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2022. So far, the Ministry of Rural Development has approved **296 clusters** under it.
21. The Acquisition Wing of the **Defence Ministry** has signed a contract with **Bharat Electronics (BEL)** for the retro-modification of Commander Sight of Battle Tanks-T-90.
- BEL will supply 957 commander thermal imager cum day sights for T-90 tanks of the Indian Army.
  - The total outlay of the contract is **Rs 1,075 crore**.

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22. The third edition of the joint military exercise “**Ex Dharma Guardian 2022**” has been conducted between **India and Japan** at Belagavi (Belgaum), Karnataka. The 15th Battalion the Maratha Light Infantry Regiment of the Indian Army and 30th Infantry Regiment of Japanese Ground Self Defence Forces (JGSDF) has participated in this 12 days long joint exercise.
23. The Government of India has organised a week-long science exhibition titled ‘**Vigyan Sarvatra Pujyate**’ from 22<sup>nd</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022 in **75 locations** across the country.
- The program is jointly organized by the Department of Science and Technology, Department of Biotechnology, Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, Ministry of Earth Sciences, Department of Atomic Energy, Department of Space, Indian Council of Medical Research, All India Council for Technical Education, and Defence Research Development Organisation.
  - The programmes have been grouped under **four themes**:
    - 1) From the annals of the history of S&T
    - 2) Milestones of Modern S&T
    - 3) Swadeshi Paramparik Inventions and Innovations
    - 4) Transforming Indias

*The exhibition will feature 75 expositions, 75 lectures, 75 films, 75 radio talks, 75 science literary activities, and more.*
24. Minister of External Affairs S Jaishankar has recently (Feb 2022) visited France to attend EU Ministerial Forum for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific. During the visit, the agreement on ‘**Roadmap on Blue Economy and Ocean Governance**’ has been signed between **India and France** with the aim to contribute to scientific knowledge and ocean conservation and ensure that the ocean remains a global common, based on the rule of law.
25. Union Minister of Science & Technology, Dr Jitendra Singh has chaired the District Development Coordination & Monitoring Committee (DISHA) meetings of several districts in Jammu & Kashmir. During the meeting, it has been decided to designate **Lavender** as a Doda brand product, to promote lavender under the ‘One District, One Product’ initiative. This will attract Agri- startups, entrepreneurs, and farmers.
26. The Government of India has observed the **3rd anniversary** of **Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN)** on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2022. It was launched on **24<sup>th</sup> February 2019** by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh.
- It is a central sector scheme under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.

- Under the scheme, the Centre transfers an amount of **Rs 6,000** per year, in three equal installments, directly into the bank accounts of all landholding farmers irrespective of the size of their landholdings.
- So far, 11.78 crore farmers have received benefits under this scheme. Rs 1.82 lakh crore have been distributed to the beneficiaries under this scheme. Out of this amount, Rs 1.29 lakh crore has been distributed during the COVID-19 pandemic. *The Centre has allocated **Rs 68,000 crore** for the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) in the Union Budget 2022-23.*

**27.** The Ministry of Education has approved the continuation of the **National Means-cum-Merit Scholarship (NMMSS)** during the 15th Finance Commission cycle for a period of five years i.e. from **2021-22 to 2025-26** with a financial outlay of **Rs. 1827.00 crore**.

- The government has also modified the eligibility criteria like increasing the income ceiling from the present **Rs.1.5 lakh** to **Rs.3.5 lakh** per annum.
- Under this scheme, 1 lakh scholarships of Rs.12, 000 per annum per student are awarded to all those selected students of class 9 every year.
- The renewal and continuation of the monetary scholarship are also done in classes 10 to 12 so that the students can pursue their education in government-aided, state government, and local body schools.
- Since its launch, a total of **22.06 lakh scholarships** worth Rs 1,783.03 crore have been sanctioned under this scheme.

**28. MATSYA 6000**, an indigenously developed manned **submersible vehicle**, will be ready as originally planned for its launch in **2024** for the **Samudrayaan Mission**.

- MATSYA 6000 is capable of carrying three people.
- It can reach a maximum depth of **6,000 metres**.

**29.** Indian Navy's multi-national exercise **MILAN 2022** has commenced in the 'City of Destiny', **Visakhapatnam**. The exercise aims to hone operational skills, imbibe best practices and procedures, and enable doctrinal learning in the maritime domain, through professional interaction between friendly navies.

**30.** The Union Minister of Rural Development Giriraj Singh has launched the **Ombudsperson App** for Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA).

- **Ministry of Rural Development** has developed the app for smooth reporting and categorization of grievances by Ombudsperson based on complaints he received from various sources viz. physical, digital, and mass media, related to the implementation of the Mahatma Gandhi NREG Scheme in the States/UTs.



31. India's first cable-stayed railway bridge named **Anji Khad Bridge** is being constructed in the Reasi district of Jammu & Kashmir. The bridge is situated over the Anji River.
- It will connect **Katra and Reasi**.
  - It is a part of the 111-kilometer long Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla rail link project.
  - The bridge will stand at a height of **331 meters** above the river bed – higher than the Eiffel Tower in Paris.
  - The total length of the bridge is **473.25 meters** and it is supported by 96 cables.
32. The Indian Navy has received the **12th P-8I aircraft** from the U.S.-based aerospace company Boeing. This is the fourth of four additional aircraft delivered under the options contract signed by the Ministry of Defence in 2016.
- P-8I is a long-range maritime reconnaissance and Anti-Submarine Warfare Aircraft, and a variant of the P-8A Poseidon used by the US Navy.
  - India was the first international customer of Boeing for this aircraft.
  - The Indian Navy inducted the first P-8I aircraft in 2013.
33. The Chief of Army Staff General MM Naravane, on behalf of the President of India Ram Nath Kovind, has presented the **President's Colours or the 'Nishan'** to **four parachute battalions** at Parachute Regiment Training Centre in Bengaluru.
- The four battalions are the 11 Para (Special Forces), 21 Para (Special Forces), 23 Para, and 29 Para battalions.
34. Union Ministry of Home Affairs has declared the Delhi headquarters of the **Security Printing and Minting Corporation of India Ltd. (SPMCIL)** as a **"prohibited place"** under Section 2 of the Official Secrets Act, 1923 to prevent the entry of unauthorised persons.
35. Bengaluru-based non-profit The/Nudge Foundation, and Ashirvad Pipes, in partnership with the Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India, have launched the **The/Nudge Prize-Ashirvad Water Challenge**.
- **Aim:** To support solutions that address population-scale water challenges.
  - The startup prize of **Rs.2.5 crore** invites startups and innovators to create solutions to provide clean drinking water to the underprivileged and rural households.
  - This program will run for **18 months**.

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## STATES AFFAIRS

36. **Assam** government has launched **India's first-night navigation mobile application** for ferry services on the Brahmaputra River in Guwahati, Assam. It is developed by the transport department in association with K Raju, the principal scientist of IIT Madras.
37. The union territory of **Jammu & Kashmir** has hosted the “**Janbhagidari Empowerment**” portal on a different server with higher bandwidth to provide easy and ready accessibility to the general public.
- The portal provides detailed insights to people into nature, status as well as several developmental works that are being executed in their areas.
  - The portal has also been linked with schemes like MGNREGA, Swachh Bharat Mission (Rural), Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban), PM Awas Yojana, and PM Gram Sadak Yojana, under execution in Government.
38. **Kerala** Government has recently organized the third edition of the 2-day ‘**Huddle Global 2022**’. During the event, the Kerala Startup Mission (KSUM) has entered into a collaboration with technology major Google to enable start-ups in the State to join a wider global network that provides mentorship and training.
39. The 48<sup>th</sup> edition of the **Khajuraho Dance Festival** has been organized in Khajuraho in the **Chhatarpur district of Madhya Pradesh**. It has been held from 20<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> February 2022.
- The Khajuraho Dance Festival was started in 1975.
  - It is being organized with the joint effort of Ustad Alauddin Khan Sangeet and Kala Akademi, Madhya Pradesh Sanskriti Parishad of Culture Department, Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board, Archaeological Survey of India, and District Administration Chhatarpur.
40. The “**Upper Bhadra Project**” has been given the national project status by the central government’s high-powered committee. This is the first project in **Karnataka** to get this status.
- This status of the national project will change the irrigation scenario of central Karnataka.
  - It will help the state in getting **Rs 12,500 crore** from the Centre.
41. The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), in collaboration with IIT Delhi, has successfully tested **India's first Quantum Key Distribution (QKD)** link between **Prayagraj and Vindhyachal** in Uttar Pradesh, a distance of more than 100 km.

- The technology has been developed by two DRDO facilities, the Centre for Artificial Intelligence and Robotics (CAIR), Bengaluru, and DRDO Young Scientists' Laboratory – Quantum Technology (DYSL-QT), Mumbai.
- 42. Chamba**, an Aspirational District of Himachal Pradesh, has become the **100th 'Har Ghar Jal' District**. Chamba is the fifth aspirational district to become 'Har Ghar Jal'. The other four Har Ghar Jal Aspirational districts are Bhadradri Kothgudem, Jayashankar Bhupalpalli, Komram Bheem Asifabad (all in Telangana), and Mewat in Haryana.
- Har Ghar Jal is a scheme initiated by the Government of India in 2019 to provide tap water to every rural household by 2024.
- 43.** The Delhi cabinet has approved the establishment of **India's first e-waste eco-park**. This park will recycle, refurbish, and dismantle e-waste in a safe and scientific manner. The park will be built on **20 acres** of land.
- The Delhi cabinet has also approved **Delhi Film Policy 2022**. This will be India's most progressive Film Policy, aiming to create jobs and boost the economy. A Rs 50 crore film fund will be introduced to support film producers. The Delhi government will also provide a subsidy, upto Rs 3 crore, if the film is shot in the national capital.

## INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

- 44. Israel** has successfully test-fired the 'C-Dome or Protective Dome' naval air defense system based on Iron Dome which is tested against rockets, cruise missiles, and Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV). It has successfully been tested for the first time from Israeli Navy Ship Sa'ar 6 'Magen' Class Corvette.
- 45.** The **World Economic Forum (WEF)** has recently collaborated with the **National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA)** to design the 'Sustainable Cities India' program.
- **Aim:** To enable cities to generate decarbonization solutions across sectors including energy and transport.
  - WEF and NIUA will adapt the Forum's **City Sprint process** and **Toolbox of Solutions** for decarbonization in the context of five to seven Indian cities across two years.
  - The City Sprint process is a series of multi-sectoral, multi-stakeholder workshops involving business, government, and civil society leaders to enable decarbonization, especially through clean electrification and circularity.
- 46.** Belgian ambassador in India François Delhaye along with Sandeep Chakravorty, Joint Secretary and Head of Europe West Division, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Government of India, has released a **special logo** to mark the **75th anniversary** of diplomatic relations

between the two countries. The logo is a peacock with national flags of both the national, symbolized, on either side of India's national bird.

- **Belgium** was among the first European countries to have bilateral relations with India.

**47. India and Nepal** have agreed to constitute a **Joint Hydro Development Committee** during the 9th meeting of Nepal-India Energy Secretary-Level Joint Steering Committee in Kathmandu, Nepal. The committee will have maximum three members from both the countries. The committee will explore the development of viable hydropower projects in Nepal with a focus on storage.

**48.** Russian President Vladimir Putin has recently recognized the Russian speaking regions of Donetsk and Luhansk in eastern Ukraine as independent states by signing documents declaring them no longer part of Ukraine.

- Donetsk and Luhansk are two states located in **eastern Ukraine**, which share a border with Russia.

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## REPORTS & INDICES

**49.** As per the estimates released by the Petroleum Planning and Analysis Cell (PPAC), under the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas, India's fuel demand is expected to grow **5.5%** in **FY23**.

- Fuel consumption in FY23 is estimated to rise to 214.5 million tonnes from the revised estimates of 203.2 million tonnes for FY22.
- In 2019-20, India had consumed 214.1 million tonnes of petroleum products such as petrol, diesel, and LPG.

**50.** India Ratings has lowered India's GDP forecast for FY22 to **8.6%** from the 9.2 percent forecast in the first advance estimate released on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2022. According to an India rating analysis, National Statistical Organisation (NSO) is likely to peg the FY22 real gross domestic product growth at Rs.147.2 lakh crore.

**51.** Rating agency Moody's Investors Service has raised India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) forecast to **8.4%** in FY23 from 7.9% estimated earlier.



- Moody's has estimated the Indian economy to grow at **9.3 percent** in FY22.
- It has also been estimated that the GDP growth forecast for **FY23** stands at **5.5%** and **6.5%** for **FY24**.

52. The 10<sup>th</sup> edition of the **International Intellectual Property Index 2022** has been released by the Global Innovation Policy Centre of the United States Chambers of Commerce (USCC).
- **The USA** has topped the index with **95.48%**, followed by the UK with 94.14%, and Germany with 92.46%.
  - **India** has been ranked **43<sup>rd</sup>** out of 55 countries on the International Intellectual Property Index. The overall score of India has increased from 38.40 percent (19.20 out of 50) in the ninth edition of this report to 38.64 percent (19.32 out of 50) in the 10<sup>th</sup> edition.
  - Out of the 53 economies included in both the ninth and tenth editions, 45 economies saw a net improvement in their scores. United Arab Emirates (UAE), Nigeria, and Peru had the largest improvements in score at 4.04%, 3.91%, and 2.76%, respectively.

## BUSINESS & ECONOMY

53. **Tata Power Renewable Energy Limited**, a 100 percent subsidiary of Tata Power, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Germany-based **RWE Renewable GmbH**, one of the world's leaders in offshore wind, to explore the potential for joint development of offshore wind projects in India.
54. **Adani Group** has signed a non-binding Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **Ballard Power Systems** for the commercialization of hydrogen fuel cells in various mobility and industrial applications in India.
55. Maharatna company of the Government of India, **Coal India Limited (CIL)** has been awarded the 'India's Most Trusted Public Sector Company' award at the Energy Meet 2022 & Excellence Awards of ASSOCHAM (The Associated Chambers of Commerce & Industry).
56. CIL has been honored for providing energy security to India and not allowing the situation of power crisis in the country by significantly increasing coal production and supply in the last few months to meet the increased demand for coal for the power sector.
57. **Bharti Airtel** has joined the SEA-ME-WE-6 undersea cable consortium to scale up its high-speed global network capacity and serve India's fast-growing digital economy.
- It shall be anchoring **20 percent** of the overall investment in the cable system.

- Through SEA-ME-WE-6, Airtel will be able to add **100 TBps** capacity to its global network.
  - Airtel will land the SEA-ME-WE-6 cable system in India at new landing stations in **Mumbai and Chennai.**
- 58.** The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has approved the acquisition of stakes in **ISMT Limited** by **Kirloskar Ferrous Industries Limited**. The proposed combination is notifiable under Section 5(a) of the Competition Act 2002.
- 59. Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd (BHEL)** has successfully commissioned India's first solar photovoltaic plant of 1.7-megawatt at **Bina** (Madhya Pradesh) in West Central Railway.
- It is the first Solar Power Plant on Indian Railways which feeds Traction Power directly.
  - The plant shall generate 1.8 Million units of electricity per year.
- 60. Bharti Airtel** has signed an agreement with Vodafone to buy an additional **4.7% stake** in Indus Towers. With the acquisition, Airtel's shareholding in Indus Towers will increase to 46.4 percent.
- At present, Vodafone holds about 28% stake in Indus Towers, and Bharti Airtel holds around 42%.
- 61.** BSES Yamuna Power Limited (BYPL), a subsidiary of Reliance Infrastructure, has **commissioned India's first 'Smart Managed EV Charging Station'** in **New Delhi**.
- It is supported by Nordic Innovation, an organization promoted by the governments of Nordic countries, and executed by Fortum Charge & Drive.
  - The management and operation of the Smart EV Charging Station will be under BYPL.
- 62.** Ideal Finance, a subsidiary of Mahindra and Mahindra Financial Services Ltd has announced the rebranding of its company as **Mahindra Ideal Finance Ltd (MIFL)**. The objective is to make MIFL one of the leading licensed finance companies (LFC) in Sri Lanka.
- 63. International Business Machines Corp. (IBM)** has announced to launch a **Cyber Security Hub** in Bengaluru, Karnataka to address the concerns of its clients across the Asia Pacific (APAC) region. The security hub will be one of the only two centres globally. The other one is in the USA.

64. The 25th meeting of the **Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC)** has been held in **Mumbai**, Maharashtra, under the Chairpersonship of Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.
65. During the meeting, the council discussed the different mandates of the FSDC as well as important macro-financial concerns that have arisen as a result of certain domestic and global developments. It also discussed operational issues relating to currency management.
66. The **International Air Transport Association (IATA)** has partnered with **Standard Chartered India** to launch its new payment platform named "IATA Pay" for the airline industry in India.
- IATA Pay in India is powered by Standard Chartered's **Straight2Bank Pay**, a payment platform that helps online merchants digitalize collections via multiple payment options through single global connectivity.
67. **LinkedIn** has launched **Creator Accelerator Program** in India to support creators in growing their communities on the platform. The 10-week incubator-style initiative will support 200 creators in growing their communities.
- The Creator Accelerator Program is part of LinkedIn's USD 25 million commitment to creators globally.
  - India is the second country to roll out the program, after its successful launch in the US in September 2021.
68. **EaseMyTrip** has partnered with **Toffee Insurance**, one of the fastest-growing InsurTech companies, to provide a first-of-its-kind, free-of-charge, full refund medical policy that provides innovative and tailored travel insurance solutions to its customers.

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## BANKING & FINANCE

69. **BoB Financial Solutions Limited (BFSL)**, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Bank of Baroda (BoB), has launched a co-branded RuPay contactless credit card named '**IRCTC BoB Rupay Card**' in collaboration with the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation Ltd (IRCTC).

- 70.** The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has reconstituted its Alternative Investment Policy Advisory Committee (AIPAC). The committee advises SEBI on a range of issues that impact further development of the Alternative Investment Fund (AIF) space.
- The committee has now **20 members**. The panel, constituted by SEBI in March 2015, earlier had 22 members.
  - The committee is chaired by Infosys co-founder **N R Narayana Murthy**.
- 71.** ICICI Bank has acquired a **9.49% stake** of Rs 19.99 crore in the Verve Financial Services (VFSPL) through the acquisition of 2,29,600 equity shares. Since the acquisition of shareholding is below 10%, regulatory approval is not required.
- 72. Mastercard**, as an extension of its flagship campaign 'Team Cashless India', along with **SBI Payments** has partnered with the Auto Rickshaw Association in Lucknow, All Assam's Restaurant Association (AARA) in Guwahati, local shopkeepers, and Boat Union in Varanasi to boost the digital payments infrastructure.
- 73. Paytm Payments Bank Limited (PPBL)** has recently become an official acquiring partner for 'e-RUPI' vouchers, which will be accessible at offline stores across India.
- It has also partnered with One97 Communications Limited (OCL), the company that owns Paytm, to improve its strong merchant base.
- 74.** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has cancelled the certificate of registration issued to **PC Financial Services Pvt Ltd**, which carries out lending operations through an app called Cashbean. It has been cancelled in exercise of the powers conferred under **Section 45-IA (6) (iv)** of the Reserve Bank of India Act 1934.
- Earlier, the Directorate of Enforcement (ED) seized bank/payment gateway funds worth Rs 288 crore from PC Financial Services through three seizure orders issued under the Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999 (FEMA).
- 75.** National Hydropower Generation Company (NHPC) has signed a pact with **HDFC Bank** to monetize return on equity of its **540-MW Chamera-I Power Plant** in Himachal Pradesh for 10 years. The amount of the securitization facility has been arrived Rs 1,016.39 crore or 5.24 percent per annum discounting rate linked with three-months Treasury bills (T-bills).
- 76.** The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has recently extended the time limit to segregate client-level funds and monitor collateral at stockbrokers from 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022 to **2<sup>nd</sup> May 2022**. This is the second time SEBI has extended the deadline for these rules. Earlier, it was supposed to be implemented from 1<sup>st</sup> December 2022.



- 77.** The **Union Bank of India**, in association with the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), has launched the '**Union MSME RuPay Credit Card**'. The aim is to provide simplified and digital delivery of finance to Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), to meet their business-related operational expenses.
- 78. IIFL Home Finance Ltd (IIFL HFL)** has signed a **USD 68-million** loan agreement with **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** to improve financial access to affordable green housing for lower-income groups in India.
- From this loan, 80 percent will be lent to women borrowers or co-borrowers and 20 percent will be allocated to financing mortgages for green-certified homes.
- 79.** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has announced to conduct a "**Sell/Buy Swap Auction**" of **USD 5 billion** in March 2022. This will lead to an inflow of the US dollar.
- RBI will conduct a spot sale to sell USD 5 billion to banks in exchange for rupees, through this auction on **10<sup>th</sup> March 2022**.
  - On **11<sup>th</sup> March 2024**, it will make a forward purchase from banks in two years. The forward purchase will help in reducing RBI's current foreign exchange reserves and increase its two-year forward USD purchases.
- 80.** Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) of India has acquired **1.50 lakh** equity shares or **0.085%** additional stakes of Capri Global Capital (CGCL). With this, LIC has increased its stake in CGCL from 4.959 percent to **5.044 percent**.
- 81. HDFC Bank** has partnered with **Indore Clean Energy Private Limited (ICEPL)** for the development of 550 tonnes/day of Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) to Compressed Biogas (CBG) plant - the largest Bio-CNG plant in Asia.
- ICEPL has a **20-year** concession agreement with Indore Municipal Corporation (IMC) for procurement of municipal solid waste and converting it to CBG.
- 82. Edelweiss General Insurance (EGI)** has partnered with **Ashv Finance**, a tech-led NBFC, to provide digital loan protection to MSMEs. EGI will offer health insurance cover to all the customers of Ashv Finance in all major cities across the country.
- 83. TripMoney**, the fintech arm of MakeMyTrip, has partnered with **SBM Bank** to launch a rupee-denominated secure credit card named 'TripMoney Global card'.
- The card is powered by Visa and can be used across over 150 countries.

- 84. South Indian Bank (SIB)** has introduced two new services by enabling “**SIBerNet**” and **SIB Express** to enhance both “remittances to” (outward remittances) and “remittances from” (inward remittances).
- The online outward remittance is enabled through Net Banking and inward remittances through National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI’s) Unified Payment Interface (UPI) mode.
- 85.** The board of the Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI Bank) has approved the reappointment of **Rakesh Sharma** as the managing director and chief executive officer (MD&CEO) of the bank for three years with effect from 19<sup>th</sup> March 2022.
- 86. Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)** has approved the tender for cleaning up rivers, Mula, Mutha, and Mula-Mutha (confluence of both rivers) of Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) area.
- The project will cost around **Rs. 1,000 crore** for the pollution abatement of rivers.
  - **Aim:** To improve the water quality by augmenting sewage collection systems and sewage treatment facilities in Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) area.
- 87.** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has directed Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs) to mandatorily implement '**Core Financial Services Solution (CFSS)**' by **30<sup>th</sup> September 2025** to provide a seamless customer interface as well as have a centralized database.
- Currently, RBI has directed the NBFCs - Middle Layer and NBFCs - Upper Layer with 10 and more 'fixed point service delivery units' as on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2022 to implement CFSS on or before 30<sup>th</sup> September 2025.
  - However, NBFC - Upper Layer shall ensure that the CFSS is implemented at least in **70 percent** of 'Fixed point service delivery units' on or before **30<sup>th</sup> September 2024**.
  - In the case of NBFC - Base Layer and NBFC - Middle and Upper Layers with fewer than 10 'Fixed point service delivery units', implementation of CFSS is not mandatory.
  - A 'fixed point service delivery unit' is a place of operation from where the business activity of non-banking financial intermediation is carried out by a NBFC and which is manned either by its own staff or outsourced agents.
- 88. New Development Bank (NDB)**, formerly referred to as the BRICS Development Bank, will become the first multilateral agency to open an office in Gujarat International Finance Tech City (GIFT). It will start its operation by the mid of May 2022.
- NDB has also announced to partner with the newly launched National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development (NBFID) to support crucial infrastructure projects in India.

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## AWARDS & RECOGNITION

**89. Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT)**, the premier Telecom R&D center of the Government of India, has won three awards at the 12th Annual Aegis Graham Bell Awards for its indigenously designed & developed innovative Telecom solutions in various categories. It has won three awards in the following categories:

- Indigenous Early Warning Platform for Disaster Management & Preparedness based on ITU's Common Alerting Protocol (CAP) in the "Tech for Social Good" category.
- C-DOT SAMVAD – A Unified Platform for Secure Messaging and Calling Solution.
- C-DOT Quarantine Alert System (CQAS) has won the first prize in the category of "Preventive Measures to combat Covid 19".

## BOOKS & AUTHORS

**90.** A new book titled "**The Great Tech Game: Shaping Geopolitics and the Destinies of Nations**" has been authored by **Anirudh Suri**. It is published by HarperCollins India. In this book, the author lays out a roadmap for how any country must develop its strategic plan to succeed in this technology-dominant era.

## PERSON IN NEWS

- 91.** The Government of India has recently appointed **Sanjay Malhotra**, the Secretary of the Department of Financial Services, as the Director on the Central Board of Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
- 92.** Takuya Tsumura has been appointed as the new President and CEO of Honda Cars India Ltd (HCIL) with effect from 1 April 2022. He has succeeded Gaku Nakanishi.
- 93.** Finance Ministry's Principal Economic Advisor, **Sanjeev Sanyal** has been appointed as a full-time member of the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM). The appointment is for a tenure of two years.

94. **KS Mani**, Chairman of Kerala Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation, known popularly by brand name Milma, has been elected to the Board of Directors of the **National Cooperative Dairy Federation of India (NCDFI)**.
95. **Hindustan Unilever (HUL)** has separated the positions of chairman of the board and the chief executive officer & managing director (CEO & MD), which will be effective from 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022.
- **Nitin Paranjpe** has been appointed as the Non-Executive Chairman of Hindustan Unilever.
  - Sanjiv Mehta will continue as CEO & MD.
96. Dish TV India's direct-to-home brand D2H has recently appointed Indian cricketer and Delhi Capitals captain **Rishabh Pant** as the new brand ambassador. He will feature in the brand's 360-degree communication for the next two years.
- In February 2022, Coca-Cola has appointed Bollywood actor **Shahrukh Khan** as the brand ambassador for Thums Up.
97. **Abhishek Singh**, CEO of Digital India Corporation, has been appointed as the President of the **National e-Governance Division (NeGD)**. He is a 1995-batch IAS officer from Nagaland cadre. He will hold the position in the rank and pay of Additional Secretary. He will continue to hold the additional charge of the post of Managing Director & CEO, Digital India Corporation.
98. The Appointments Committee of Cabinet has approved the appointment of **Madhabi Puri Buch**, a former SEBI Whole Time Member, as the new chairman of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) for an initial period of three years. She has succeeded **Ajay Tyagi**.

## OBITUARIES

99. The first tribal chief minister of **Odisha** and prominent tribal Congress leader **Hemananda Biswal** has passed away recently in Bhubaneswar, Odisha. He was born in Thakurpada village of Odisha on 1 December 1939.
100. Veteran Malayalam actress **Maheshwari Amma**, better known by her stage name **KPAC Lalitha**, has passed away recently in Thrippunithura in Ernakulam, Kerala. She was born on 25<sup>th</sup> February 1948 in Kayamkulam, Kerala.
- She published an autobiography, titled "**Katha Thudarum**" (Story to Be Continued), which won the Cherukad Award in 2013.



## SPORTS

**101.** International chess players woman FIDE masters (WFM) **Tanishka Kotia**, student of SRCC, and her sister **Riddhika Kotia**, student of Suncity School, have been appointed as brand ambassadors 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' scheme for the Gurugram district of Haryana.

**102. Sakibul Gani** of Bihar has become the first cricketer to score a triple century on his first-class debut against Mizoram at the Jadavpur University Campus ground, Jadavpur, Bengal. He scored 341 off 405 balls, hitting 56 fours and two sixes, in the Plate Group Ranji Trophy fixture against Mizoram.

**103.** The 2022 Beijing Winter Olympic Games has been held from 4<sup>th</sup> February to 20<sup>th</sup> February 2022 in Beijing, China. The closing ceremony of the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympic Games is held at National Stadium (known as the Bird's Nest) in Beijing.

- **Norway** has won the most medals for the second successive Winter Olympics, winning a total of 37 medals, including 16 golds.
- Germany has finished second with 27 medals overall, while China has finished third with 15 medals.

### **India's performance:**

India could not win any medal in the games. The Indian team in the game is represented by a male alpine skier, Arif Khan.

**104.** Indian Chess Grandmaster **R Praggnanandhaa** has defeated world no 1 Magnus Carlsen (Norway) in the eighth round of the Airthings Masters tournament, an online rapid chess tournament.

- With this, he has become the **3<sup>rd</sup> Indian**, after Vishwanathan Anand and P Harikrishna, to accomplish the rare feat of defeating Magnus Carlsen.

**105.** Indian Wushu player **Sadia Tariq** has won a gold medal in the junior tournament at the Moscow Wushu Stars Championship 2022 held in Moscow, Russia. She hails from Srinagar in Jammu & Kashmir.

**106.** The Mexican Open 2022 (also known as Acapulco title) has been held at Arena GNP Seguros in Acapulco, Mexico.

- **Men's Singles:** Rafael Nadal (Spain)
- **Men's Doubles:** Feliciano Lopez (Spain) and Stefanos Tsitsipas (Greece)

- 107.** The 8<sup>th</sup> edition of the Rio Open 2022 has been held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. It is a professional men's tennis tournament played on outdoor clay courts.
- **Men's Singles:** Carlos Alcaraz (Spain)
  - **Men's Doubles:** Simone Bolelli (Italy) and Fabio Fognini (Italy)
- 108.** Australian star **golfer Hannah Green** has won the 72 hole mixed-gender professional golf tournament at the TPS Murray River event in Australia. With this, she has become the first woman to win the Pro Mixed-Gender Event. She has won the 2019 Women's Professional Golfers Association (PGA) champion.
- 109.** The **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology** has recently launched the "**National Strategy on Additive Manufacturing**" to encourage collaboration between academia, government, and industry to make India a global hub for the design, development, and deployment of 3D printing.
- The strategy aims to achieve a market share of **5%** and contribute nearly **\$1 billion** to the GDP by **2025**.
- 110.** Indian weightlifter and 2020 Tokyo Olympics silver-medallist, **Mirabai Chanu** has won the gold medal in the 55kg weight category at the Singapore Weightlifting International 2022. She lifted 191kg (86kg+105kg) to stand on top of the podium in an uncompetitive field. The Singapore Weightlifting International is a qualifying event for the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham.
- India has won a total of **eight medals**, including six gold and a silver and bronze each in the championship.

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## IMPORTANT DAYS

- 111. World Thinking Day**, formerly Thinking Day, is observed annually on **22<sup>nd</sup> February** by the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS) across 150 countries. The day is observed to think about fellow brothers and sisters around the world, address their concerns and understand the true meaning of guiding.
- **Theme 2022:** "Our World, Our Equal Future: The Environment and Gender Equality"

- 112.** Central Excise Day is observed annually across India on **24<sup>th</sup> February** to commemorate the Central Excise and Salt Act, which was enacted on 24<sup>th</sup> February 1944. The day is observed to encourage the employees of the excise department to carry out the central excise duty in a better way.
- 113.** The **Apparel Export Promotion Council (AEPC)** has observed its **44th Foundation Day** on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2022. AEPC is the official body of apparel exporters in India, under the aegis of Ministry of Textiles, which provides invaluable assistance to Indian exporters as well as importers/ international buyers.
- 114.** The **Polio National Immunization Day 2022 (NID)**, commonly known as Pulse Polio Immunisation programme, has been observed across India on **27th February 2022** to give two drops of oral polio vaccine (OPV) to every child in the country under the age of 5.
- During the Polio NID, over 15 crore children will be covered across all 36 States and UTs in 735 districts
  - It has been launched by Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare Dr Mansukh Mandavia.
- 115.** **World NGO Day** is observed annually on **27<sup>th</sup> February** to recognise, celebrate and honour non-government and non-profit organisations. The day was first observed by the United Nations in 2014.
- 116.** **National Protein Day** is observed annually across India on **27<sup>th</sup> February** to educate people on the benefits of consuming protein-rich foods.
- The year 2022 marks the **third** year of National Protein Day celebration in India.
  - **Theme 2022:** Food Futurism
  - The day was first observed in 2020.
- 117.** **National Science Day** is observed annually on **28th February** to commemorate the discovery of the “Raman Effect”. The day is observed to create awareness on the importance of science.
- The government of India designated 28 February as National Science Day (NSD) in 1986.
  - On this day Sir **C.V. Raman** announced the discovery of the '**Raman Effect**' for which he was awarded the Nobel Prize in **1930**.
  - **Theme 2022:** Integrated Approach in S&T for Sustainable Future

**118. Rare Disease Day (RDD)** is observed annually on the **last day of February** to raise awareness for rare diseases and improve access to treatment and medical representation for individuals with rare diseases and their families. This year, the day falls on **28<sup>th</sup> February**.

- The day was first launched by European Organisation for Rare Diseases (EURORDIS) and its Council of National Alliances in 2008.
- **Theme 2022:** Share Your Colours

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