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March 2022 - Week 3

# WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

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## NATIONAL AFFAIRS

- Union Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Parshottam Rupala has addressed the **Saurashtra Maldhari Sammelan**, organised by Sahjeevan (Centre for Pastoralism), at Upleta in Rajkot district of Gujarat.
  - Theme of the Sammelan: "*Fostering Pastoralism in Saurashtra- Conservation and its Sustenance*"
  - The event focussed upon the conservation of threatened breeds of livestock, particularly the Halari breed of Donkey.
  - During the event, the book titled '**Pastoral Breeds of India**' has been released.
    - It is compiled by Sahjeevan andan "**APEKSHA (Expectations) PATRA**" shared by a group of Maldharis from Saurashtra & Kutch at the event.
- The Department of Pharmaceuticals, under the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers, has released the guidelines for the '**Strengthening of Pharmaceutical Industry (SPI)**' scheme.
  - The Centre has assigned a financial outlay of **Rs.500 crore** for the period of **5 years** (i.e. from FY 21-22 to FY 25-26).
  - In the Scheme, financial assistance to pharma clusters will be provided for the creation of Common Facilities.
  - The scheme has 3 sub-schemes:
    - Assistance to Pharmaceutical Industry for Common Facilities (APICF): Total outlay is Rs.178.40 crore

- Pharmaceutical Technology Upgradation Assistance Scheme (PTUAS): Total outlay is Rs.300.10 crore
  - Pharmaceutical & Medical Devices Promotion and Development Scheme (PMPDS): Total outlay is Rs.21.50 crore.
  - The scheme also aims to upgrade the production facilities of SMEs and MSMEs.
3. The Indian Coast Guard (ICR) has commissioned **ICGS ‘Saksham’**, the fifth Coast Guard Ship in the series of 105 M-Class offshore patrol vessels in Goa.
- ICGS Saksham was launched in December 2020.
  - It is the 5th and last Offshore Patrol Vessel designed and developed by **Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL)** for Coast Guard.
  - The vessel uses totally indigenous steering gear and gearbox.
4. The **36th edition** of the **International Geological Congress (IGC)** has been held in **New Delhi** under the theme “*Geosciences: The Basic Science for a Sustainable Future*”. It has been inaugurated by Union Minister of Coal, Mines & Parliamentary Affairs Shri Pralhad Joshi and 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 in the presence of Minister of State for Coal, Mines & Railways Shri Raosaheb Patil Danve and Minister of State for Communications Shri Devusinh Chauhan.
- It is a joint endeavour of the Ministry of Mines, Ministry of Earth Sciences, Indian National Science Academy and the Science Academies of Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka.
  - This edition of IGC will be releasing three commemorative Postage Stamps on the occasion along with the First Day Cover.
  - The present Congress, originally scheduled to be held during 2-8 March, 2020 was postponed due to Covid-19 pandemic.
- India had hosted the 22nd session of the IGC which was the first IGC on the Asian soil.
5. The third edition of ‘**Gender Samwaad**’ has been organized by the **Ministry of Rural Development** to generate awareness on the interventions of Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM) across India with a gender lens.
- The theme of Gender Samwaad 2022: ‘Promotion of food and nutrition security through women’s collectives’
  - It has been organized as a part of the Rural Development Ministry’s Iconic Week celebrations under Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav from 7th – 13th March 2022 during the week of International Women’s Day (8th March 2022).
  - The theme of Iconic Week celebrations is ‘Naye Bharat ki Naari’ (Women of New India).
6. The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has successfully carried out the ground testing of the newly developed **solid booster stage (SS1)** for its new launch vehicle Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV) at **Satish Dhawan Space Centre** at Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh. The remaining stages of SSLV (SS2 & SS3) have successfully gone undergone necessary ground tests and are ready for integration.

7. The Union Minister of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Bhupender Yadav and the Union Minister, Jal Shakti, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat along with the Minister of State, MoEF&CC, Ashwini Kumar Choubey, have jointly released the Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) on Rejuvenation of **thirteen** Major Rivers through Forestry Interventions.
- The budget outlay of 13 DPRs is **Rs. 19,342.62 crore**.
  - The 13 rivers include: Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Beas, Sutlej, Yamuna, Brahmaputra, Luni, Narmada, Godavari, Mahanadi, Krishna, and Cauvery.
    - Thirteen rivers collectively cover a total basin area of 18,90,110 sq. km that represents 57.45% of the geographical area of the country.
    - The length of 13 rivers including 202 tributaries within the delineated riverscapes is 42,830 km.
  - The DPRs are funded by National Afforestation & Eco-development Board, (MoEF&CC) and prepared by Indian Council of Forestry Research & Education (ICFRE), Dehradun.
8. Nagendra Nath Sinha, Union Rural Development Secretary, has hosted a webinar to promote the ‘**Captive Employer**’ initiative under the **Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana** (DDU-GKY).
- It is a first of its kind initiative to address the vision of a demand-based and dynamic skilling ecosystem that caters to the requirements of the industry while assuring sustainable placements for the rural poor youth of the country.
  - Under this initiative, post-training placement of candidates for at least six months with a minimum CTC of **Rs 10,000** has been assured.
  - The initiative is funded by the **Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD)**.
9. India’s first **Artificial Intelligence & Robotics Technology Park (ARTPARK)** has been launched in **Bangalore, Karnataka**. It is promoted by the Indian Institute of Science (IISc Bengaluru), with the seed capital of **Rs 230 crore** from the governments (Rs 170 crore from Centre and Rs 60 crore from the state government).
10. The ‘**Motor Vessel (MV) Ram Prasad Bismil**’ has become the longest vessel ever to sail on **Brahmaputra River**. The vessel has successfully completed the pilot run of heavy cargo movement from Haldia Dock in Kolkata after it anchored at Pandu port in Guwahati.
- The vessel along with two barges - DB Kalpana Chawla and DB APJ Abdul Kalam - were flagged off from the Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port in Haldia by Sarbananda Sonowal, Union Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways (PSW) on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2022.
  - The 90 meters long vessel is 26 meters wide, loaded with a draft of 2.1 meters.
11. Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has presented a budget of **Rs.1.42 lakh crore** for the Union Territory of **Jammu and Kashmir** for the year 2022-23 in Lok Sabha, New Delhi.
- She has also presented the supplementary demands for the year 2021-22 totalling **Rs 18,860.32 crore** for J&K.
  - The budget has projected **7.5%** growth in Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) of J&K.
  - The Budget 2022-23 for J&K in 2022-23 is 10% higher at Rs. 1,12,950 crore compared to the revised estimates (RE) of 2021-22.
12. Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari has inaugurated **India's first green hydrogen-based advanced fuel cell electric vehicle (FCEV)** named ‘**Toyota Mirai**’ in New Delhi.



- It has been launched by Toyota Kirloskar Motor Pvt Ltd and International Centre for Automotive Technology (ICAT) under a pilot project, to study and evaluate the performance of Toyota Mirai on Indian roads and climatic conditions.
- It is completely powered by a hydrogen fuel cell battery pack and capable of providing a range up to **650 km** in a single charge, with a refuelling time of five minutes.
- This is a first of its kind project in India which will create a Green Hydrogen based ecosystem in the country and help India to become '**Energy Self-reliant**' by **2047**.

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- 13.** The Indian Army has dedicated the '**Chair of Excellence**' in memory of **General Bipin Rawat**, India's first Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) as well as the 27th Chief of the Indian Army, on the eve of his 65th birth anniversary, at the **United Service Institution of India (USI)**. The chair will be open to Veterans of three Services and civilians having expertise in the field of National Security.
- 14.** Indian Railways have prepared a **National Rail Plan (NRP)** for India to create a 'future ready' Railway system by **2030**.  
**Key objectives of NRP:**
- To formulate strategies based on both operational capacities and commercial policy initiatives to increase modal share of the Railways in freight to **45%**.
  - **To reduce** transit time of freight substantially by increasing average speed of freight trains to 50Kmph.
  - As part of the National Rail Plan, **Vision 2024** has been launched for accelerated implementation of certain critical projects by 2024 such as 100% electrification, multi-tracking of congested routes, upgradation of speed to 160 kmph on Delhi-Howrah and Delhi-Mumbai routes, upgradation of speed to 130kmph on all other Golden Quadrilateral-Golden Diagonal (GQ/GD) routes and elimination of all Level Crossings on all GQ/GD route.
    - 58 Super critical Projects of a total length of 3750 kms costing **Rs.39,663 crore** and 68 Critical Projects of a total length of 6913 kms costing **Rs.75,736 crore**, have been identified for completion by **2024**.
  - To identify new Dedicated Freight Corridors and High Speed Rail Corridors.
  - To assess Locomotive requirement to meet twin objectives of 100% electrification (Green Energy).
- 15.** '**Green Triangle**' named after **Mahatma Gandhi** has been inaugurated in **Antananarivo, Madagascar** as part of the 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav' to commemorate India's 75th year of independence. Ambassador of India to Madagascar, Abhay Kumar has inaugurated the Green Triangle along with Mayor of Antananarivo Naina Andriantsitohaina.
- 16.** **Visakhapatnam railway station** has become the first station in the East Coast railway to implement 'One Station, One Product' concept of the Government of India. It will be running on a pilot basis for 15 days.
- **Etikoppaka toys** and handicraft products from the Etikoppaka village will be showcased and sold at the Vishakapatnam station.
  - The GI tag for Etikoppaka toys (Andhra Pradesh) was given in 2017.

17. Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Earth Sciences, **Dr Jitendra Singh**, has released **India's Arctic policy** titled 'India and the Arctic: building a partnership for sustainable development' in New Delhi.
18. **Thirteen (13) nations** are observers in the Arctic Council which include France, Germany, Italian Republic, Japan, The Netherlands, the People's Republic of China, Poland, India, the Republic of Korea, Spain, Switzerland, United Kingdom.
- India's Arctic policy is based on **six pillars**:
- Strengthening India's scientific research and cooperation
  - Climate and environmental protection
  - Economic and human development,
  - Transportation and connectivity
  - Governance and international cooperation
  - National capacity building in the Arctic region
19. Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has inaugurated a seven-storeyed **Flight Control System (FCS) Integration** facility at Aeronautical Development Establishment (ADE), a laboratory of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) in **Bengaluru**, Karnataka.
- It has been constructed in record 45 days, with in-house hybrid technology consisting of conventional, pre-engineered, and precast methodology.
  - The technology has been developed by DRDO with the support of Larsen & Toubro (L&T).
  - Design check and technical support have been provided by the teams of IIT Madras and IIT Roorkee.
20. The National Capital Regional Transport Corporation (NCRTC) has unveiled the coaches of India's first rapid rail for the **Delhi – Meerut corridor**. The Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) train will run on the Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut corridor and cover a distance of 82 km in just 55 minutes.
- The Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut RRTS corridor will minimise carbon dioxide emissions by 2,50,000 tonnes per year.
  - The entire 82-kilometre Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut RRTS route, which will have 25 stations in total, is now under construction, with two depots at Duhai and Modipuram and one stabling yard at Jungpura.
21. India's first 'World Peace Centre' will be established in **Gurugram**, Haryana. It will be established by Ahimsa Vishwa Bharti (AVB) Organization, founded by Acharya Dr Lokesh Muni. The construction work of about 25000 square feet will be completed in 2 years.
22. The city of **Mumbai** has announced its detailed plans to '**zero out carbon emissions by 2050**' and become the first South Asian city to set such a target.
- Note:** India has set a target to reach net zero emissions by 2070.

## STATES AFFAIRS

23. The government of **Delhi** has launched an online portal named "**My EV**" for the purchase and registration of electric autos in Delhi.
- The portal is developed by the Delhi government in collaboration with Convergence Energy Services Limited (CESL).
  - The portal is accessible to all users on the website of the Delhi government's transport department.

- The Delhi government will provide a **5% interest** subvention on loans on the purchase of electric autos under the Delhi Electric Vehicle Policy.
24. The IT Minister for Karnataka, C N Ashwath Narayan has launched India's first-ever digital water data bank 'AQUERIUM' in **Bangalore, Karnataka**.
- The Digital water data bank is a curated list of water data from all institutions and sources, that will help tackle some common development challenges.
  - This is an initiative of Bangalore-based AquaKraft Digital Ventures.
25. The state of **Kerala** has recorded the lowest Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) of **30** (per one lakh live births) in India during 2017-19. It was 43 during 2016-18.

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26. The **35<sup>th</sup> edition** of the **Surajkund International Crafts Mela** has been organized at Surajkund in the Faridabad district of **Haryana**. It has been started from 19<sup>th</sup> March to 4<sup>th</sup> April 2022.
- **Aim:** to promote the culture and talent and flawless craftsmanship by capturing the dash of colours and speed of the music.
  - The theme state for 2022 Surajkund International Crafts Mela is '**Jammu and Kashmir**'.
  - **Uzbekistan** is the partner Nation for the 35th Surajkund International Crafts Mela 2022.
  - It is organized jointly by the Surajkund Mela Authority & Haryana Tourism in collaboration with Union Ministries of Tourism, Textiles, Culture and External Affairs.
27. The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader **Bhagwant Mann** has taken oath as the **18th chief minister of Punjab**. Punjab Governor Banwarilal Purohit has administered the oath of office and secrecy to him at Khatkar Kalan, the ancestral village of legendary freedom fighter Bhagat Singh in Shaheed Bhagat Singh (SBS) Nagar district of Punjab.
- AAP party in Punjab has won *92 seats* out of **117 seats** of the legislative assembly in Punjab.
28. The state government of **Haryana** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **Welspun One Logistics Parks (WOLP)** for the development of Grade-A warehousing facilities across key micro-markets in the state. WOLP will invest around Rs.1500 crore.
29. '**Dol Jatra**' or '**Dol Purnima**', the festival of colours, is observed every year in the state of **West Bengal**. The festival is dedicated to Lord Krishna and Radha. It is celebrated on a full moon day.
- The day also marks the last festival of the year as per the Bengali calendar.
  - The day welcomes the spring season.
  - The Dol festival celebrates the love between Radha and Krishna, while the north-Indian Holi signifies the power and victory of good over evil.

30. The state of **Telangana** has become the first state in India to record its crop diversification patterns in the form of an index. According to the crop diversification index, 77 varieties of crops are grown in Telangana. Among 77 crops, only around 10 crops (mostly grains) are preferred for diversification.
- Top three districts in terms of crop diversification are Nirmal, Vikarabad & Sangareddy.
  - Bottom three districts in terms of crop diversification are Peddapalli, Karimnagar, and Suryapet.

## INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

31. **India** and **Sri Lanka** have signed a **Joint Venture and Shareholders Agreement (JVSHA)** to develop a **100-megawatt (MW)** Solar Power Plant at the eastern port district Trincomalee, Sri Lanka.
- Trincomalee Power Company Limited (TPCL) is a joint venture between National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) Limited from India and the Ceylon Electricity Board (CEB) from Sri Lanka.
32. The Government of India has issued a **USD 1 billion** line of credit (LoC) for Sri Lanka to aid in the import of food, necessary products, and medication. The **State Bank of India (SBI)** will provide an LoC of USD 1 billion to Sri Lanka.
33. The **2<sup>nd</sup> edition** of the **India-Indonesia Security Dialogue (IISD)** has been held in **Jakarta, Indonesia**. It has been co-chaired by National Security Adviser Ajit Doval and Coordinating Minister for Political, Legal and Security Affairs of Indonesia, Mohammad Mahfud.
- The IISD is a forum that brings the Coordinating Minister for Political, Legal, and Security Affairs of Indonesia and National Security Adviser of India together to discuss and enhance cooperation between the two countries on political and security issues.
  - *The first IISD was held in 2018.*
34. Exercise '**Cold Response 2022**' has been organized by the **North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)**. It has been held from 14<sup>th</sup> March to 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 in Norway.
- The exercise is held in Norway every other year for NATO allies and partners.
  - Around 30,000 troops from 27 countries are participating in the 2022 edition of the exercise, which includes around 220 aircraft and over 50 vessels.
35. The **International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)** has signed a new agreement with the **International Labour Organization (ILO)** to boost the aviation industry. The agreement is signed for five years and is renewable.

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## REPORTS & INDICES

36. According to the latest report of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) on Trends in International Arms Transfer 2021, **India** and **Saudi Arabia** have emerged as the largest arms importers of arms between 2017-21, each accounting for **11%** of all global arms sales.



- Egypt, Australia and China are the next three largest importers with respective shares of 5.7%, 5.4% and 4.8%.
- Russia (46%), France (27%), and the USA (12%) are the top three largest exporters of arms to India during the period.
- **Largest exporters:**
  - Russia (19%), France (11%), China (4.6%) and Germany (4.5%) are among the top 5 largest exporters respectively.
  - India has emerged as the **23rd** largest exporter during 2017-21, with a share of just 0.2% of the global exports.

- 37.** As per Bloomberg's recent data on Market capitalization, India has secured **5th position** in terms of market capitalization for the first time with **USD 3.21 trillion**, which is higher than that of the UK (\$3.19 trillion), Saudi Arabia (\$3.18 trillion), and Canada (\$3.18 trillion).
- The **USA** has topped the ranking with USD 47.32 trillion, followed by China, Japan, and Hong Kong.
  - The total world market capitalization stands at **USD 109.22 trillion**.

**Note:** Market capitalization (market cap) refers to the total market value of a publicly-traded company's outstanding shares of stock. It is calculated by multiplying the total company's outstanding shares by the current market price of one share.

- 38.** As per the recently released special bulletin on maternal mortality ratio (MMR) by the Registrar General of India, India's maternal mortality ratio (MMR) has improved to **103** in **2017-19**, from 113 in 2016-18.
- The state of **Kerala (30)** has the lowest MMR in India, followed by Maharashtra (38) and Telangana (56).
  - **Worst Performed States:** Uttarakhand (101) < West Bengal (109) < Punjab (114) < Bihar (130) < Odisha (136) < Rajasthan (141) < Chhattisgarh (160) < Madhya Pradesh (163) < Uttar Pradesh (167) < Assam (205).

- 39.** The 10<sup>th</sup> edition of the **World Happiness Report 2022** has been released by the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network. The report usually ranks 150 countries based on several factors such as real GDP per capita, social support, healthy life expectancy, freedom to make life choices, generosity and perceptions of corruption. This year, the report ranked **146 countries**.
- **Finland** has been named the world's happiest country for the fifth consecutive year, followed by Denmark, and Iceland.
  - **Afghanistan** has been ranked as the unhappiest nation, followed by Lebanon, and Zimbabwe.

- 40.** **Karnataka Bank** has been awarded the **Best MSME Bank of the Year** award among private sector Banks at the 8th MSMEs Excellence Awards Ceremony and Summit instituted by The Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) at New Delhi.

- 41.** As per the latest Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) released by the National Statistical Office (NSO), India's urban unemployment rate has increased to **12.6 percent** in the April-June quarter of 2021, compared to 9.3 percent in the January-March quarter of 2021. It was 20.8% in April-June 2020.
- In the 15-29 age group, **25.5 percent** of urban youth remained unemployed in April-June 2021 as against 34.7 percent in April-June 2020 and 22.9 percent in January-March 2021.

42. According to the data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO), the Consumer Price Index (CPI)-based retail inflation has increased by **6.07%** year-on-year in **February 2022**. It was 6.01 percent in January 2022. The rate of price rise in the food basket is 5.89 percent in February 2022.
- Whereas, the Wholesale price-based inflation has increased to **13.11%** in **February 2022** from 12.96% in January 2022.
43. Hurun India has released a report titled “**2022 M3M Hurun Global Rich List**”. As per the report, Reliance Industries Limited Chairman **Mukesh Ambani** has emerged as the **Richest Man in India and Asia** with a USD 103 billion net worth. He has become the only Indian to feature in the Top 10 2022 M3M Hurun Global Rich List. He has **ranked 9<sup>th</sup>** globally.
- Globally, **Elon Musk**, CEO of Tesla, has topped the list with USD 205 billion, followed by Jeff Bezos (Amazon), and Bernard Arnault (Louis Vuitton Moet Hennessy).
  - After Mukesh Ambani, Gautam Adani has ranked second with a wealth of USD 81 billion, Shiv Nadar and family third with a net worth of USD 28 billion, Cyrus Poonawalla fourth with wealth of USD 26 billion and Lakshmi Mittal fifth with USD 25 billion.
  - **Mumbai** has become the billionaire capital of India with **72 billionaires** followed by New Delhi with 51.
44. Deloitte has released a report titled '**Global Powers of Retailing 2022**'. As per the report, **Walmart** has topped the list, followed by Jeff Bezos-owned Amazon and the US-based Costco Wholesale Corporation.
- **Reliance Retail**, the consumer business arm of Reliance Industries Ltd, has **ranked 56<sup>th</sup>** on the list of top 250 global retailers.
  - Reliance Retail has secured **2<sup>nd</sup> position** on the list of top 50 fastest-growing retailers (FY2015-20). South Korean e-commerce brand Coupang topped the list.

## BUSINESS & ECONOMY

45. The **National Stock Exchange of India Ltd (NSE)** has tied up with **India Bullion and Jewellers Association Ltd (IBJA)** to launch the **Domestic Bullion Spot Exchange** as per the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) guidelines. It is the first time that a domestic bullion spot exchange is being set up under the aegis of SEBI.
46. **Larsen & Toubro (L&T)** has launched an **e-commerce platform** for B2B industrial products and services named ‘**SuFin**’. This platform will empower businesses, especially MSMEs, to enable them source their industrial supplies pan-India, digitally and cost-effectively.
47. The **Mahanadi Coalfields Limited (MCL)**, a unit of the Coal India Limited (CIL), has become the largest coal producer in India by producing **157 million tonnes (MT)** of coal in the financial year of 2021-22.
- MCL has despatched over **166 MT** dry fuel to the consumers, registering 22 percent growth over a previous financial year while it has also removed **195 MCuM** (million cubic meters) of over burden registering 19 percent growth over the last financial year.
  - As on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2022, MCL has produced 7.62 lakh tonne of dry fuel which is the highest in a day during the current financial year reaching 157.7 MT of coal production.
48. **Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Bengaluru-based company **SASMOS** to work together on advanced electronics, electrical and fibre optic

interconnections in the aerospace domain. Naini Aerospace Limited (NAeL), a subsidiary of HAL, is also a signatory to the MoU.

49. **JSW Cement**, India's leading green cement company, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with **Punjab Renewable Energy Systems Private Limited (PRESPL)** to use agricultural waste as biomass energy in its cement-manufacturing operations.
50. The **Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL)** has partnered with **UltraCash Technologies Pvt Ltd** to provide a voice-based digital payment facility that allows its BharatGas consumers, who do not have smartphones or internet, to book their LPG (Liquefied Petroleum Gas) cylinders and make the payment through '**UPI 123PAY**'.
  - This partnership will allow BharatGas customers to call a common number 080-4516-3554 from a non-internet phone and book BharatGas cylinder.
  - With this, BPCL has become the first company in India to offer digital payment to non-internet users.
51. Rating agency Moody's has lowered India's GDP forecast by 40 basis points to **9.1 percent** in **CY2022** as compared to 9.5% estimated earlier. This happened due to adverse effects of the Russia-Ukraine conflict on the global economy. It has projected India's GDP growth forecast for the **CY23** at **5.4 percent**.

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52. **Formula 1** and **Tata Communications** have jointly announced a multi-year strategic collaboration for end-to-end managed network services for video contribution globally. With this collaboration, Tata Communications will return to sports as the official broadcast connectivity provider for Formula 1 racing.
53. **Mahindra & Mahindra (M&M)** has increased its stake in **Carnot Technologies**, a vehicle monitoring technology company, to **52.69 percent** from the current 15.6 percent with an investment of around **Rs.14 crore**.
54. **Adani Group** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **Sri Lanka** for two large power projects in the Northern Province. These projects will be executed in two locations of Sri Lanka- **Mannar** and **Pooneryn**. The project aims to generate combined capacity of **500 MW**, at a cost of **USD 500 million**.
55. The **Cochin Shipyard Limited** has signed an agreement with **Dredging Corporation of India (DCI)** to build India's first indigenous dredger.
  - The vessel with a 12,000 cubic metre capacity, will cost around **Rs. 920 crore** and is expected to be completed within 34 months.
  - The Dutch dredging technology major, IHC Holland, will be technology partners in the project.

- 56. Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kharagpur** has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the **National Mineral Development Corporation Limited (NMDC)**, under the Ministry of Steel, to conduct drone-based mineral exploration.
- With this, NMDC has become India's **first** Central Public Sector Enterprise to conduct Drone-based geophysical surveys and hyperspectral studies for mineral exploration, setting a new benchmark in the field of mineral exploration.
- 57. Torrent Power** has signed a Share Purchase Agreement (SPA) and Shareholders Agreement (SHA) with Administrator of the Union Territory of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu (Holding Entity) and Dadra and special purpose vehicle (SPV) Daman and Diu Power Distribution Corporation Limited to acquire **51%** equity of **Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu Power Distribution Corporation Limited**.
- 58. The Border Roads Organisation (BRO)** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with state-owned warship building firm **Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE) Limited** worth around **Rs.60 crore** for the construction of **27** carriageway double lane galvanized modular bridges of 7.5 meters with Indian Road Congress (IRC) Load Class 70 in border areas. These bridges will be launched within 45 days of handing over the site by the units.
- 59. TCS BaNCS** has been selected by Singapore Exchange (SGX) to power the **NSE IFSC-SGX Connect** (Gift Connect) in a special economic zone in Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (Gift City).
- The NSE IFSC-SGX Connect will be powered by Tata Consultancy Services (TCS).
    - The first phase of the proposed initiative between the National Stock Exchange (NSE) and Singapore Exchange (SGX) will go live in **April 2022**, while it will become fully operational in another three to four months.
  - SGX has set up **SGX India Connect IFSC**, a special purpose vehicle at GIFT city to enable international access to Indian capital markets and create a larger liquidity pool of international and domestic participants.
  - TCS BaNCS will facilitate Nifty trading between India and Singapore.
- 60. Hindustan Aeronautics Limited** and **Safran Helicopter Engines (Safran)** have collaborated to set up a new facility of **Helicopter Engines MRO Pvt Limited (HE-MRO)**, a Joint Venture of HAL and Safran, at **Sattari**, near Panaji in **Goa**.
- The facility will be operational by the end of 2023 with a capacity to repair 50 engines a year and a full-capacity goal of 150 engines in upcoming years.
  - The facility will provide Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (MRO) services for Safran TM333 and HAL Shakti engines installed on HAL-built helicopters to increase the operational readiness of the Indian Armed Forces.
- 61. Hindustan Shipyard Limited (HSL)** has signed a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **Eker Group** of Norway and **Vaan Moto** of Kerala to explore opportunities in the field of manufacturing speed boats. Under this MoU, high-end boats are to be built with smart, flexible solutions with superior manoeuvrability that can be operated from the shore up to a maximum speed of 75 knots.



## BANKING & FINANCE

62. Bajaj Allianz General Insurance has extended the tenure of **Tapan Singhel**, the current Managing Director (MD) & Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the company, by another **five years** with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022. He has already completed 10 years as the MD & CEO of the company.
63. **Axis Bank**, India's third-largest private sector bank, has been awarded the **Asian Bank of The Year Award 2021** and **India Bond House** at the IFR Asia Awards 2021. The award acknowledges the bank's outstanding performance in equity and debt issuance, across all major products and segments.
64. The Government of India (GoI) has extended the deadline for startups to convert debt investments into equity shares by up to **10 years**. This measure will provide comfort to emerging enterprises. Earlier, convertible notes may be converted into equity shares for up to 5 years after the initial convertible note was issued.
65. **Razorpay** has acquired Pune-based **IZEaliant Technologies**, a leading Fintech startup that provides payments technology solutions for banks, for an undisclosed amount.
66. **ICICI Bank** has collaborated with **Emirates Skywards**, a loyalty programme of Emirates and flydubai, to launch a range of co-branded credit cards named '**Emirates Skywards ICICI Bank Credit Card**'. The cards will enable customers to earn reward points, called Skywards Miles, on travel, lifestyle and everyday spending. The cards award up to 2.5 Skywards Miles on every spend of Rs.100. The cards are powered by Visa as the network partner, and are available in three variants:
- 'Emirates Skywards ICICI Bank Emerald Credit Card'
  - 'Emirates Skywards ICICI Bank Sapphire Credit Card'
  - 'Emirates Skywards ICICI Bank Ruby Credit Card'
- Note:** ICICI bank is the first Indian bank to partner with Emirates Skywards.
67. The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has approved the acquisition of equity stake in **Future Generali India Insurance Company Limited (FGIIC)** by Generali Participations Netherlands N.V. (GPN). GPN has proposed to acquire **approx. 25%** of the equity share capital of FGIIC held by Future Enterprises Limited, pursuant to which GPN's aggregate (direct and indirect) shareholding in FGIIC will stand increased from 49% to approx. 74%.
68. The **Ujjivan Small Finance Bank** has launched industry-first digital based onboarding for its micro banking customers via "Ujjivan SFB Assisted" app. The app is designed to enable mobile number updation in real time basis.
69. The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has amended the **AIF (Alternative Investment Funds) Regulations 2021** for Category III AIFs. The new norms will be called as 'SEBI's AIF Regulations 2022'.  
**New Amendments:**
- Category III AIFs, such as private equity and hedge funds, to invest not more than **10%** of the NAV in the equity shares of a particular listed investee company.

- The large value funds for accredited investors of category III AIFs can invest up to **20%** of the investable funds in an investee company, directly or through investment in units of other AIFs.
- For investment in listed equity of an investee company, Category III AIFs may calculate the investment limit of 10% of either the 'investable funds' or NAV subject to certain conditions.

**70.** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has issued a new framework for microfinance lenders in exercise of the powers conferred by Section 21, Section 35A and Section 56 of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949; Chapter IIIB of the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934; and Sections 30A and Section 32 of the National Housing Bank Act, 1987.

- This new framework will be called the **Reserve Bank of India (Regulatory Framework for Microfinance Loans) Directions, 2022**, which will be effective from **1<sup>st</sup> April 2022**.
- It will be applicable to the following entities:
  - All Commercial Banks (including Small Finance Banks, Local Area Banks, and Regional Rural Banks) excluding **Payments Banks**;
  - All Primary (Urban) Co-operative Banks/ State Co-operative Banks/ District Central Co-operative Banks; and
  - All Non-Banking Financial Companies (including Microfinance Institutions and Housing Finance Companies).

**Microfinance loan:** *It is defined as a collateral-free loan given to a household having annual household income up to **Rs.3 lakh**. For this purpose, the household shall mean an individual family unit, i.e., husband, wife and their unmarried children.*

**71.** **RBI Innovation Hub (RBIH)**, a wholly owned subsidiary of Reserve Bank of India, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **IIT Madras Incubation Cell (IITMIC)** to develop the necessary ecosystem to support and expand FinTech startups in India.

**72.** **Kotak Mahindra Bank** has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Business France, the French national agency in charge of the development of exports and international investments in France, to provide support to companies in the Indo-French corridor.

**73.** The **U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)** has partnered with **Mastercard** to promote digital empowerment of women in India through 'Project Kirana'.

- **Project Kirana** was launched in November 2020.
- It is an initiative of USAID and Mastercard.
- It is a digital financial literacy program for **women entrepreneurs** that aims to increase revenue streams, expand financial inclusion, and enable the adoption of digital payments and other digital tools by women-owned-and-operated kirana shops.
- It is being implemented by DAI and ACCESS Development Services and is working in select cities of Uttar Pradesh.

**74.** The **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)** has planned to launch the 'on-device' wallet feature named '**UPI Lite**' for Unified Payments Interface (UPI) users to facilitate small ticket transactions. This feature will process transactions in complete offline mode i.e., debit and credit both offline.

- In the first phase, UPI Lite will process transactions in near offline mode that is debit offline and credit online and after that both transactions will be processed offline.
- The upper limit of any transaction done through UPI Lite will be **Rs 200**.
- The total limit of UPI Lite e balance for an 'on-device' wallet will be **Rs.2,000** at any point of time.

**75. Max Life Insurance Company** has launched the '**Max Life Smart Guaranteed Pension Plan**'. It is a non-linked, and non-participating single premium individual/group general annuity plan.

**76. Mahila Money** has launched '**Mahila Money Prepaid Card**' in partnership with **Transcorp** and **Visa** to support women entrepreneurs. The aim is to help women entrepreneurs use digital payments more effectively.

**77. The State Bank of India (SBI)** will set up an Innovation, Incubation, and Acceleration Centre (IIAC) at **Hyderabad**, Telangana to build in-house capability to bolster its current performance and drive higher top-line growth through innovation. It will be operational in six to nine months of onboarding a consultant.

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## AWARDS & RECOGNITION

**78.** The 75th edition of the **British Academy Film Awards (BAFTA) 2022** has been organized at the Royal Albert Hall in London, UK. The awards are presented annually to recognize the outstanding work in British Television. It is being given annually since 1955.

Category	Winners
Best Film	The Power of the Dog
Best Director	Jane Campion, The Power of the Dog
Best Actress in Leading Role	Joanna Scanlan, After Love
Best Actor in Leading Role	Will Smith, King Richard
Best Supporting Actress	Ariana DeBose, West Side Story
Best Supporting Actor	Troy Kotsur, CODA
EE Rising Star Award	Lashana Lynch
Outstanding British Film	Belfast
Outstanding Debut By A British Writer, Director, Or Producer	The Harder They Fall
Best Film Not In The English Language	Drive My Car
Best Documentary	Summer of Soul (Or, When The Revolution Could Not Be Televised)
Best Animated Film	Encanto

Best Short Animation	Do Not Feed the Pigeons, Vladimir Krasilnikov, Jordi Morera and Antonin Niclass
Best Short Film	The Black Cop, Cherish Oleka
Original Screenplay	Licorice Pizza, Paul Thomas Anderson
Adapted Screenplay	CODA, Sian Heder
Original Score	Dune, Hans Zimmer
Casting	West Side Story, Cindy Tolan

79. Indian-origin author **Manjeet Mann** has been shortlisted for her children's book '**The Crossing**', a tale of a little girl's friendship with an Eritrean refugee, for the UK's prestigious **Yoto Carnegie Medal 2022**. 'The Crossing' has previously won the 2022 Costa Children's Book Award.

- The other seven books on the 2022 shortlist include: 'October, October' by Katya Balen; 'Guard Your Heart' by Sue Divin; 'When the Sky Falls' by Phil Earle; 'Everyone Dies Famous in a Small Town' by Bonnie-Sue Hitchcock; 'Tsunami Girl' by Julian Sedgwick; 'Cane Warriors' by Alex Wheatle; and 'Punching the Air' by Ibi Zoboi and Yusef Salaam.

80. Professor **Narayan Pradhan**, a member of the faculty at the School of Material Sciences, Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science, Jadavpur, has been selected for the **31st GD Birla Award** for Scientific Research for his outstanding contribution in the field of material sciences. His research work focused on understanding the chemistry and physics of light-emitting semiconductor Nano crystals.

81. **Karolina Bielawska** from **Poland** has won the 70th edition of the **Miss World 2021** title held at San Juan, Puerto Rico. She has been crowned by Miss World 2019 Toni-Ann Singh of Jamaica.

- 1<sup>st</sup> Runner Up: Shree Saini of USA
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Runner Up: Olivia Yacé of Cote D'Ivoire

82. **Diébédo Francis Kéré** from Burkina Faso has won the **51st Pritzker Architecture Prize 2022**. She has become the first African and first Black architect to win this prize.

- *Balkrishna Doshi was the first Indian to win Pritzker Prize in 2018.*

83. Former India cricketer **Suresh Raina** has been honoured with the 'Sports Icon' award by the Government of Maldives at the Maldives Sports Awards 2022. He has been felicitated for his various achievements throughout his career. He is the first Indian player to score 6000 as well as 8000 runs in a Twenty20 career and the first-ever cricketer to reach 5,000 runs in IPL.

## BOOKS & AUTHORS

84. Sahitya Akademi, India's National Academy of Letters, has published a book-length poem titled '**Monsoon**' by Indian poet-diplomat **Abhay Kumar**. It is a poem of 150 stanzas of 4 lines each that commence its journey in Madagascar and follows the path of the monsoon and acts as a messenger to carry the poet's message from Madagascar to his beloved in Srinagar in the Himalayas.



85. A new book based on the life of Prime Minister Narendra Modi titled ‘**Modi @ 20: Dreams Meet Delivery**’ will be released on April 2022. The book is a compilation of chapters authored by eminent intellectuals and domain experts namely, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Minister of External Affairs S. Jaishankar, National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval, actor Anupam Kher, Olympic athlete P.V Sindhu and singer Lata Mangeshkar, etc.
- The book has been edited and compiled by BlueKraft Digital Foundation.
  - The book has been published by **Rupa Publications**.
86. A new book titled “**Rahul Bajaj: An Extraordinary Life**” has been authored by **Gita Piramal**. The book is based on the life of the late iconic industrialist Rahul Bajaj. The book is published by Penguin Random House.
- Other books by Gita Piramal:** ‘Business Legends’ and ‘Business Maharajas’
87. Padma Awardee Dr Tehemton Erach Udawadia has authored a book titled “More Than Just Surgery: Life Lessons Beyond the OT”. The book depicts the personal account of people, incidents, mentors, failures, and absurdities against the backdrop of surgery. The book is published by Penguin eBury Press.
88. Former Indian cricketer captain **Gundappa Viswanath** has penned his autobiography titled “**Wrist Assured: An Autobiography**”. It has been co-authored by senior journalist **R Kaushik**. The book is published by Rupa Publication. The 266-page long book traces the cricketing journey of Gundappa Vishwanath who played Test Cricket for India between 1969 and 1986.

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## PERSON IN NEWS

89. Games24x7, an online skill gaming company, has appointed cricketers **Shubman Gill** and **Ruturaj Gaikwad** as its new brand ambassadors for its My11Circle fantasy gaming platform. Both the cricketers will feature in multimedia campaigns by the company spanning across TV, digital and social media platforms.
90. Tata Sons Chairman **N Chandrasekaran** has been named as the Chairman of Air India. In February 2022, he was reappointed as chairman of Tata Sons for a second term of five years.
91. **Ranjit Rath** has been appointed as the next Chairman and Managing Director of **Oil India Limited (OIL)**. He will succeed Sushil Chandra Mishra, who will superannuate on 30th June 2022.
- He is currently serving as the CMD of Mineral Exploration Corporation Limited (MECL).
  - He was honoured with the prestigious National Geosciences Award 2016 from the President of India.
  - He also published several technical papers and participated in conferences in India and overseas including a co-authored book named “**Underground Storage Technologies**”.

92. The Baroda Asset Management India and BNP Paribas Asset Management India have partnered to form a joint venture named '**Baroda BNP Paribas Mutual Fund**'.
- Bank of Baroda will have a **50.1 percent** stake in the asset management company (AMC), while BNP Paribas Asset Management will hold the remaining **49.9 percent** stake.
  - **Suresh Soni** has been appointed the CEO of Baroda BNP Paribas Mutual Fund.
  - This new JV will offer 28 schemes across equity, hybrid, debt and overseas fund of fund categories.
93. **Suchitra K Ella**, Co-Founder and Joint Managing Director of Bharat Biotech International, has been appointed as the Chairperson of Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) Southern Region for the year 2022-23. **Kamal Bali** has been appointed as the Deputy Chairperson of CII Southern Region.
94. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has approved a three-month extension to **Rajeev Ahuja**, interim managing director & chief executive officer (MD&CEO) of RBL Bank, with effect from 25<sup>th</sup> March 2022.
95. The tenure of **Jay Shah** as the President of the Asian Cricket Council (ACC) has been extended by **one year i.e. till 2024**. He had succeeded Nazmul Hassan, Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president in January 2021.
- The ACC has also appointed Pankaj Khimji as the Vice President and Mahinda Vallipuram as Chairman of the Development Committee.
96. **Rajesh Gopinathan** has been re-appointed as the Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of **Tata Consultancy Services (TCS)** for a period of five years, from 21<sup>st</sup> February 2022 to 20<sup>th</sup> February 2027. He has been the CEO and MD of TCS since 2017.
- The company has also re-appointed **N Ganapathy Subramaniam** as the Chief Operating Officer and Executive Director from 21<sup>st</sup> February 2022 to 19<sup>th</sup> May 2024.

## OBITUARIES

97. Former President of Zambia, **Rupiah Banda** has passed away recently in Lusaka, Zambia due to cancer. He was born on 19<sup>th</sup> February 1937 in Gwanda, Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe). He served as the fourth president of **Zambia** from 2008 and 2011.
98. **Kumudben Manishankar Joshi**, the former **Governor of Andhra Pradesh**, has passed away recently at the Changa Dhanori village in Navsari district of Gujarat. She was born on 31<sup>st</sup> January 1934. She also served as the Union Deputy Minister of Information and Broadcasting from October 1980 to January 1982 and Union Deputy Minister of Health and Family Welfare from January 1982 to December 1984.
99. American wrestler **Scott Hall**, also popularly known as **Razor Ramon**, has passed away recently in Marietta in Georgia, USA. He was born on 20<sup>th</sup> October 1958 in St. Mary's County, Maryland, USA.
- He was best known for his tenures with the World Wrestling Federation (WWF, now WWE).
  - He was inducted into the WWE Hall of Fame as an individual wrestler in 2014, and again as a member of NWO in 2020.

- 100.** American solar astrophysicist **Eugene N. Parker**, a pioneer in the study of solar wind, and namesake of NASA's Parker Solar Probe, has passed away recently in Chicago, USA. He was born on 10<sup>th</sup> June 1927 in Houghton, Michigan, USA.
- NASA named its **Parker Solar Probe** in his honour in 2017.
  - He published his theory of the solar wind, in which the solar corona expands supersonically to the outer reaches of the solar system in 1958.

## SPORTS

- 101.** The 69<sup>th</sup> edition of the **German Open 2022** has been held at the Westenergie Sporthalle in Mülheim, Germany. The tournament has been organized by the German Badminton Association. It is an annual badminton tournament classified as BWF World Tour Super 300 event.

German Open 2022	
Categories	Winner
Men's Singles	Kunlavut Vitidsarn (Thailand)
Women's Singles	He Bingjiao (China)
Men's Double	Goh Sze Fei and Nur Izzuddin (Malaysia)
Women's Double	Chen Qingchen and Jia Yifan (China)
Mixed Doubles	Dechapol Puavaranukroh and Sapsiree Taerattanachai (Thailand)

- From India, **Lakshya Sen** has won the **silver** medal after losing to Kunlavut Vitidsarn of Thailand in the men's singles title.
- 102.** All India Chess Federation (FAIC) has announced that **India** will host the 44<sup>th</sup> edition of the **World Chess Olympiad 2022** in **Chennai**, Tamil Nadu. It was previously scheduled to be held in Moscow, Russia. It will be organized by the International Chess Federation (FIDE).  
**Note:** The 45<sup>th</sup> World Chess Olympiad 2024 will be held in Budapest, Hungary.
- 103.** Indian women's cricket team pacer, **Jhulan Goswami**, has become the first bowler in the world to take **250 wickets** in Women's One Day International (ODI). She has achieved the historic feat with the wicket of Tammy Beaumont in India's match against England in the ICC Women's World Cup 2022. Earlier, she had become the first cricketer to take 40 wickets in Women's World Cups. The second-highest wicket-taker in Women's ODIs is Australia's Cathryn Fitzpatrick who has taken 180 wickets.
- 104.** Indian cueist **Pankaj Advani** has won his **eighth title** at the **19th Asian 100 UP Billiards Championship 2022** by defeating Dhruv Sitwala in the final held in Doha, Qatar. With this, Pankaj Advani has won 24<sup>th</sup> international title and 8<sup>th</sup> Asian crown.
- 105.** Indian cricketer **Shreyas Iyer** has been awarded the ICC 'Men's Player of the Month' for February 2022. He has been awarded for his brilliant white-ball exploits during the home series against West Indies and Sri Lanka respectively last month.
- New Zealand all-rounder **Amelia Kerr** has been awarded the ICC 'Women's Player of the Month' for February 2022.

**106. Virat Kohli** has played his **100th Test match** under the captaincy of Rohit Sharma against Sri Lanka at **IS Bindra PCA International Stadium**, Mohali. With this, he has become the 12<sup>th</sup> Indian cricketer to achieve this feat.

- Indian cricket team has whitewashed Sri Lanka in both formats with the lead of 3-0 in the T20I series and 2-0 in the Test series.
- **Player of the series:**
  - **T20I:** Shreyas Iyer
  - **Test:** Rishabh Pant
- **Rohit Sharma** has become the first Indian captain to whitewash opposition in debut test series.
- **Jasprit Bumrah** has become the first Indian player to take a five-wicket haul on five different continents.

**107.** Ferrari driver **Charles Leclerc** of Monaco has won the Formula One Bahrain Grand Prix 2022 held in Sakhir, Bahrain. Ferrari driver Carlos Sainz of Spain has finished second, while Mercedes driver Lewis Hamilton of Britain has finished third. This is the first Formula One race of 2022.

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## IMPORTANT DAYS

**108. World Consumer Rights Day** is observed annually on **15<sup>th</sup> March** to safeguard consumer rights and to ensure that customers are not subjected to market exploitation or social injustice that may jeopardize their rights. The day was first observed in 1983.

**Theme 2022:** “Fair Digital Finance”

This day was chosen because it was on this day that U.S. President John Fitzgerald Kennedy mentioned four important consumer rights in his speech to Congress:

- Right to safety
- Right to be informed
- Right to choose
- Right to be heard

**Note:** National Consumers Rights Day is observed annually across India on 24<sup>th</sup> December.

**109.** The 193-member United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) has recently (March 2022) adopted a resolution to observe **15<sup>th</sup> March** annually as the **International Day to Combat Islamophobia**.

- The day was introduced by Pakistan’s permanent representative to United Nations (UN), **Munir Akram** on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) countries.
- It marks the day when a gunman entered two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand, killing 51 worshippers and wounding 40 others in the terror attack.

**110. National Vaccination Day** or National Immunisation Day is observed annually on **16<sup>th</sup> March** to spread awareness about the importance of vaccines. The day also marks the victory of India against polio disease.



This year, the day is important because the country started its biggest COVID-19 immunisation programme children between 15 to 18 years of age and booster dose for senior citizens.

- **Theme 2022:** "Vaccines Work for all"
- The day was first observed in 1995.
- India was declared polio-free in 2014.

**111. Global Recycling Day** is observed annually on **18<sup>th</sup> March** to help recognise, and celebrate, the importance recycling plays in securing the future of our planet.

- **Theme 2022:** Recycling Faternity
- The day was first observed in 2018.
- The day is an initiative of the Bureau of International Recycling (BIR) based in Brussels, Belgium.

**112. World Sleep Day** is observed annually on the **Friday** before the March equinox to raise awareness of the need for healthy sleep and eradicate sleep disorders. This year the day falls on **18<sup>th</sup> March 2022**.

- **Theme 2022:** "Quality Sleep, Sound Mind, Happy World."
- The day was first observed in 2008.
- It is organized by the World Sleep Day Committee of the World Sleep Society.

**113.** Union home minister Amit Shah has participated in the **83rd Raising Day** program of the **Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF)** on **19<sup>th</sup> March 2022**. The program has been organized at Maulana Azad Stadium in Jammu.

- CRPF came into existence in 1939, as Crown Representative's Police.
- It was renamed as CRPF on 28<sup>th</sup> December 1949.
- CRPF Raising Day is celebrated to mark the day when the then Home Minister Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel presented colours to the CRPF in 1950 after the enactment of the CRPF Act and the name of the force was changed to its present name.

**114. World Sparrow Day** is observed annually on **20<sup>th</sup> March** to create awareness about the house sparrow and the dangers it confronts. The day was first observed in 2010.

- **Theme 2022:** "I LOVE Sparrows"
- The day was established by Mohammed Dilawar, the founder of The Nature Forever Society.

**115. International Day of Happiness**, also known as World Happiness Day, is observed annually on **20<sup>th</sup> March** to spread awareness about the importance of happiness in our lives.

- **Theme 2022:** Build Back Happier
- The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), in 2011, adopted a resolution which recognised happiness as a "fundamental human goal" and called for "a more inclusive, equitable and balanced approach to economic growth that promotes the happiness and well-being of all peoples".
- The day was first observed in 2013.

**116. World Oral Health Day** is observed annually on **20<sup>th</sup> March** to spread global awareness of the issues around oral health and the importance of oral hygiene so that governments, health associations and the general public can work together to achieve healthier mouths and happier lives.

- The theme for World Oral Health Day 2021-2023 is: **Be Proud of Your Mouth.**

- The day was originally observed on 12th September in remembrance of FDI founder, Dr Charles Godon.
  - It was changed to 20th March in 2013.

**117. World Forestry Day**, also known as International Day of Forests, is observed annually on **21<sup>st</sup> March** to celebrate and raise awareness of the importance of all types of forests.

- **Theme 2022:** Forests and sustainable production and consumption
- The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 21st March the International Day of Forests in 2012.

**118. International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination** is observed annually on **21<sup>st</sup> March** to create awareness among people about the negative consequences of racial discrimination.

- **Theme 2022:** Voices for action against racism
- It is observed annually on the day the police in Sharpeville, South Africa, opened fire and killed 69 people at a peaceful demonstration against apartheid "pass laws" in 1960.

**119. World Down Syndrome Day** is observed annually on **21<sup>st</sup> March** to create public awareness about the syndrome and well-being of people with Down syndrome.

- **Theme 2022:** Inclusion Means
- The day was first observed in 2012.

Down syndrome is a condition in which the child is born with an extra 21st chromosome. The child born with this condition is likely to suffer thyroid or heart-related problems.

**120. International Day of Nowruz** is observed annually on **21<sup>st</sup> March** to promote values of peace and solidarity between generations and within families as well as reconciliation and neighbourliness.

- The word Nowruz means 'new day'.
- The day was first observed in 2010.
- The day is celebrated in many countries having significant Persian cultural influence like Iran, Iraq, India, Afghanistan and parts of Central Asia.
- It is celebrated by Kurds in Iraq and Turkey, as well as by the Iranis, Shias and **Parsis** in the Indian subcontinent and diaspora.

**121. Sangeet Natak Akademi**, an autonomous body under the Ministry of Culture, has organized '**Putul Utsav**', a puppet festival, on the occasion of **World Puppetry Day** (21<sup>st</sup> March).

- The theme of the festival is '**Azadi ke Rang, Putul Ke Sang**'.
- It has been observed in 5 cities – **Varanasi (UP), Hyderabad (Telangana), Angul (Odisha), New Delhi and Agartala (Tripura)**.

**122. World Poetry Day** is observed annually on **21<sup>st</sup> March** to honour poets, revive oral traditions of poetry recitals, promote the reading, writing and teaching of poetry, foster the convergence between poetry and other arts such as theatre, dance, music and painting, and raise the visibility of poetry in the media. UNESCO first adopted 21st March as World Poetry Day during its 30th General Conference in Paris in 1999.