

PRACTICE **MOCK**

May 2022 - Week 4

# WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

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## NATIONAL AFFAIRS

- Union Minister of State for Science and Technology Jitendra Singh has launched a single national portal for biotech startups and researchers in the country.
  - The portal is named **Biological Research Regulatory Approval Portal (BioRRAP)**.
  - It will serve as a single window clearance for startups and researchers seeking regulatory approval for biological research and development in the country.
  - The portal will strengthen interdepartmental synergies and bring accountability, transparency and efficacy in functioning of agencies regulating various aspects of biological research and issuing permission.

*At present, more than 2,700 biotech start-ups and over 2,500 biotech companies are working in the country. By the year 2025, the Indian biotechnology industry is expected to cross USD 150 billion.*

2. Just Transition Research Centre (JTRC) at **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kanpur** has inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Energy Security and Climate Change Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), Washington D.C., to work on just energy transition globally including in India.

This collaboration will engage with **Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, and Telangana** to enable them to access resources and connect with senior officials working on just transition in other countries.

3. Union Minister for Culture G Kishan Reddy has virtually inaugurated the statue of **Raja Ram Mohan Roy** at the Raja Ram Mohan Roy Library Foundation in Kolkata, West Bengal. It has been inaugurated to mark the **250<sup>th</sup>** birth anniversary of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, a social and religious reformer of the 19th century. The day also marks the 50th foundation day of Raja Ram Mohan Roy Library Foundation.

- Ministry of Culture has also announced to commemorate the yearlong celebration of the 250th Birth Anniversary of Raja Ram Mohan Roy from **22 May 2022** to **22<sup>nd</sup> May 2023**.

- **Raja Ram Mohan Roy:**

He was the **father of Modern India's Renaissance**. He was born on 22 May 1772 in an orthodox Brahman family at Radhanagar in Bengal. He founded the *Atmiya Sabha* in 1815, the *Calcutta Unitarian Association* in 1821, and the *Brahmo Sabha* in 1828 which later became the Brahmo Samaj. He established *Vedanta College* in 1825. He was given the title of 'Raja' by the titular Mughal Emperor of Delhi, Akbar II.

4. The Army Training Command has inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Rashtriya Raksha University (RRU) to develop a '**Wargame Research and Development Centre**' (**WARDEC**) in **New Delhi**. The project will be a first-of-its-kind simulation-based training centre in India that will use artificial intelligence (AI) to design virtual reality wargames. It will be used by the Army to train its soldiers and test their strategies through "metaverse -enabled gameplay".

5. The Government of India (GoI) has recently reconstituted an **Inter-State Council** with Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** as Chairman and Chief Ministers of all States and six Union ministers as members. Ten union ministers will be the permanent invitees to the Inter-State Council.

- The union ministers who were made members of the council are: Rajnath Singh, Amit Shah, Nirmala Sitharaman, Narendra Singh Tomar, Virendra Kumar, Hardeep Singh Puri, Nitin Gadkari, S Jaishankar, Arjun Munda, Piyush Goyal, Dhamendra Pradhan, Pralhad Joshi, Ashwini Vaishnaw, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Kiren Rijiju and Bhupender Yadav.

- The mandate of the council is to create a strong institutional framework to promote and support cooperative federalism in the country, activate the council and zonal councils by organising its regular meetings.

**Note:** The Constitution of India in **Article 263**, provided that an Inter-State Council (ISC) may be established "if at any time it appears to the President that the public interests would be served by the establishment of a Council".

**6.** Union Home Minister Amit Shah has inaugurated and laid foundation stone of various infrastructure projects worth **Rs.1180 crore** in **Arunachal Pradesh**. He termed Arunachal Pradesh as a "jewel in India's crown".

- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed between the Arunachal Pradesh government and the National Defence University (NDU) for the establishment of campus at Pasighat in the East Siang district
- 2,000 MW Lower Subansiri hydroelectric power project will be operational by 2023. Work on the 2,880 MW Dibang multipurpose project, the biggest in the world, will start soon
- He has laid the foundation of a 51-foot-bronze statue of **Sage Parshuram** at Parshuram Kund in Lohit district of Arunachal Pradesh.

The projects worth Rs 950 crore under the Non-Lapsable Central Pool of Resources (NLCPR), Rs 835-crore worth projects under North East Council (NEC) and Rs 825-worth initiatives under DoNER Ministry are operational in the state.

**7.** President Ramnath Kovind has recently (May 2022) visited Jamaica and Saint Vincent and Grenadines with his wife Savita Kovind.

**Visit to Jamaica** (Capital: Kingston):

- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed to facilitate close academic and training exchange for Foreign Service officers of Jamaica in India.
- Ambedkar Avenue, a road named after Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, has been inaugurated in Downtown Kingston.
- India-Jamaica Friendship Garden has also been inaugurated.

It is noteworthy that the year 2022 marks the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Jamaica.

**Visit to Saint Vincent and the Grenadines** (Capital: Kingstown):

- President Ramnath Kovind has renamed 'Calder Road' to '**India Drive-Bharat Marg**' in Kingstown.
- Two Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) on Exchange of Information and Assistance in Collection of Taxes, and on Refurbishment of Old Carter Community Centre have been signed.

It is noteworthy that **1<sup>st</sup> June** in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is declared as Indian Arrival Day, and **7<sup>th</sup> October** as Indian Heritage Day.



8. Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh has inaugurated India's first '**Lavender Festival**' at **Bhaderwah**, Jammu & Kashmir. Bhaderwah in the Doda district is the birthplace of India's purple revolution.

### **Purple or Lavender Revolution:**

It was launched in 2016 by the Union Ministry of Science & Technology through the Council of Scientific & Industrial Research's (CSIR) Aroma Mission. The aim is to support the domestic aromatic crop-based agro-economy by moving from imported aromatic oils to homegrown varieties. The 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of the Aroma Mission aimed to increase lavender cultivation to **1,500 hectares** till **2024**.

9. The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) has launched the **eighth edition** of **Swachh Survekshan (SS) – SS 2023** under Swachh Bharat Mission Urban 2.0. The theme of SS 2023 is '*Waste to Wealth*' for garbage free cities.
- The SS 2023 will give priority to the principle of **3 Rs- Reduce, Recycle and Reuse**.
  - Additional weightage has been given to source segregation of waste, enhancement of waste processing capacity of cities to match the waste generation and reduction of waste going to the dumpsites.
  - Indicators have been introduced with additional weightage on emphasizing the need for phased reduction of plastic, plastic waste processing, encourage waste to wonder parks and zero waste events.
  - **Ranking of Wards** within the cities is also being promoted through SS 2023.
  - The cities will be assessed on dedicated indicators on the issues of '*open urination*' (Yellow Spots) and '*open spitting*' (Red Spots), being faced by the cities.
  - The evaluation will be conducted in **4 phases**, instead of 3 phases in earlier editions.
10. **PARAM PORUL**, a state-of-the art Supercomputer, has been inaugurated at the **National Institute of Technology (NIT) Tiruchirappalli** under Phase 2 of the National Supercomputing Mission (NSM). It is a joint initiative by the Department of Science and Technology (DST) and the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).
- This system is based on Direct Contact Liquid Cooling technology so that it can obtain high-power usage effectiveness. This helps in reducing the operational cost.
  - The system has been equipped with a mix of CPU (Central Processing Unit) nodes, GPU (Graphics Processing Unit) nodes, High Memory nodes, High throughput storage and high-performance InfiniBand interconnect to cater the computing needs of various scientific and engineering applications.

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11. The Government of India (GoI) has set an ambitious target to construct **18,000 km** of national highways in 2022-23 at a record speed of 50 km per day. The government has also aimed to develop **2 lakh km** of National Highway Network by **2025**.

The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) and the National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd (NHIDCL) are primarily responsible for the construction of national highways and expressways across the country.

**Note:** NHAI has constructed a total length of 4325 km of National Highways in FY22.

12. The **Indian Naval Ship (INS) Nirdeshak**, the second of the four Survey Vessels (Large) (SVL), has been launched at Kattupalli, Chennai, Tamil Nadu. It has been built by **Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE)** in collaboration with L&T shipbuilding for the Indian Navy. The ship is designed to operate at cruise speed of 14 knots and maximum speed of 18 knots.

- The ship has taken its name from erstwhile Nirdeshak which was also an Indian Naval Survey ship and was decommissioned after 32 years of glorious service in December 2014.
- The contract for building four SVL ships was signed between Ministry of Defence (MoD) and GRSE, Kolkata on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2018.
- The first of class ship 'Sandhayak' was launched in December 2021 at GRSE, Kolkata.

13. The Government of India (GoI) has reconstituted the **Central Advisory Board on Archaeology (CABA)** for a period of **3 years**. It has been constituted to strengthen contacts between the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and those in the field of archaeological research.

- The board will include the **Culture Minister** as the chairperson and officials from the Culture Ministry and ASI, MPs, nominees of State governments, representatives of universities, scientists and experts on Indus Valley script among the members.
- The board will meet once a year and its functions would include advising the Centre on "matters relating to archaeology" referred to by its members.
- ASI will also set up a Standing Committee of the board to be chaired by the ASI DG.

14. Delhi Customs Zone, a field formation under the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs, has inaugurated project '**NIGAH**' at Inland Container Depots (ICD) Garhi Harsaru in Gurugram, Haryana.
- Project NIGAH is an initiative **to track container** by using ICTM (ICD Container Tracking Module) which will help in better visibility of the container movement inside the ICD. It will help Customs to expedite long standing containers and monitor timely clearances, thereby enhancing Ease of Doing Business along with ensuring lead preventive checks.
15. **Integral Coach Factory (ICF)**, Chennai will manufacture India's first Semi-High Speed Freight Trains named '**Gati Shakti**'. It will be introduced by December 2022. The trains will be capable of operating at a speed of 160km/hr carrying 16 coaches. The trains are constructed under 'PM Gati Shakti- National Master Plan for Multi-modal Connectivity' and are based on the concept of Vande Bharat trains.
- The Indian Railways is aiming to increase its share in freight transportation from the present 27 percent to **45 percent** by **2030**.
  - The Indian Railways has identified 74 new 'Gati-Shakti Multi-Modal Cargo Terminal (GCT) locations across the country, with 20 of them in the South Indian states under the 'Gati-Shakti Multi Model Cargo Terminal' policy.
16. Adani Hybrid Energy Jaisalmer One Limited (AHEJOL), a subsidiary of Adani Green Energy Limited (AGEL), has commissioned a **390 MW wind-solar hybrid power plant** at **Jaisalmer** in Rajasthan. It is India's first wind-solar hybrid power plant.
- The new plant has a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) with the Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI) with tariff at Rs.2.69 per kWh, well below the Average Power Procurement Cost (APPC) at the national level, delivering access to affordable, modern, and clean energy to all.
  - With this, AGEL now has an operational capacity of 5.8 GW (total 20.4 GW).
17. The **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)** has conducted a brainstorming session on Mission Digital India **BHASHINI** (BHASHa INterface for India) - the National Language Translation Mission (NLTM) with Researchers and Start-ups. The session is aimed to shape strategy for Digital India BHASHINI, which is India's Artificial Intelligence (AI) led language translation platform, and to integrate start-ups in innovation, development and consumption of technology.
18. Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has approved the proposal for the creation of a new **Defence Estates Circle** for **Uttarakhand** state. It will be establish at **Dehradun**. A sub-office at **Ranikhet** will also be set up under the administrative jurisdiction of Defence Estates

Dehradun to deal exclusively with six districts of Kumaon region of the state. This will facilitate the residents/ organisations in getting timely and quick access to various services of defence land management.

- Earlier, the entire defence land and cantonments in Uttarakhand were covered under two distinct Defence Estates Circles headquartered at Meerut and Bareilly in Uttar Pradesh.

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- 19.** Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated India's biggest Drone Festival - **Bharat Drone Mahotsav 2022** at Pragati Maidan, **New Delhi**. The two-day event has witnessed the participation of more than 1600 delegates, consisting of government officials, armed forces, central armed police forces, Public Sector Units (PSUs), foreign diplomats, private companies as well as drone startups.
- During the event, **Larsen & Toubro (L&T)** has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with **NewSpace Research & Technologies (NRT)**, a start-up based in Bangalore, to develop a new range of submarine-launched uncrewed aerial vehicles (UAVs).
  - India's first flying electric taxi "**ePlane e200**" has been showcased at the event.
- 20.** Prime Minister Narendra Modi has laid the foundation stone of **11 infrastructure projects** worth over **Rs.31, 500 crore** in Chennai, Tamil Nadu in the presence of Governor R N Ravi, Union Minister L Murugan and Chief Minister M K Stalin.
- He has inaugurated 1,152 houses constructed as part of the **Light House Project-Chennai**. It will be built at a cost of Rs.116 crore under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban.
  - He has laid the foundation stone of a Multi-Modal Logistic Park at Chennai worth around Rs.1430 crore.
  - The four-lane double-decker elevated road connecting **Chennai Port to Maduravoyal** (NH-4), of about 21 km would be built at a cost of over Rs.5,850 crore ensuring round the clock movement of cargo vehicles to Chennai port.
  - The 94 km long four-lane **Neraluru to Dharmapuri** section of NH-844 and 31 km long 2-lane with paved shoulders of Meensurutti to Chidambaram section of NH-227, at a cost of around Rs.3870 crore and Rs.720 crore respectively.
  - The 262 km long **Bengaluru-Chennai Expressway** will be built at a cost of over Rs.14,870 crore. It will pass through the states of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.



21. The **Ministry of AYUSH** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **Department of Biotechnology** to explore the possibility of cooperation, convergence and synergy to bring out the expertise under one platform towards evidence based biotechnological interventions in AYUSH sector.
22. The **National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE)** has launched an online portal to streamline the entire process of recognition of teacher education programmes in Higher Education Institutions and Teacher Education Institutions. The portal aims to provide an automated robust framework thereby enhancing accountability, transparency and ease of doing business. The applications for the recently launched four years Integrated Teacher Education Programmes will be processed on this portal.
23. The Supreme Court of India has recognised sex work to be a '**Profession**', whose practitioners are entitled to dignity and equal protection under the law. The three-bench judge led by **Justice L Nageswara Rao** directed an order passed after invoking special powers under Article 142 of the Indian Constitution.
- The court has stated that police should neither interfere nor take criminal action against adult and consenting sex workers. The child of a sex worker should not be separated from the mother on the ground that she is in the sex trade.
24. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has chaired the meeting of the **40th edition** of **PRAGATI**, the ICT based multi-modal platform for Pro-Active Governance and Timely Implementation, involving Centre and State governments.
- In the meeting, nine agenda items have been taken for review including eight projects and one Programme.
  - These **eight projects** have a cumulative cost of over **Rs. 59,900 crore**, concerning the 14 states viz Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Tripura, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Jharkhand.
  - Prime Minister has also reviewed 'National Broadband Mission' Programme.

During the 39th edition of PRAGATI, 311 projects having a total cost of 14.82 lakh crore have been reviewed.

25. The **United States of America (USA)** has surpassed China to become India's top trading partner in 2021-22. According to the data from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, the bilateral trade between the US and India has reached **USD 119.42 billion** in 2021-22 as against USD 80.51 billion in 2020-21. Exports to the USA has increased to USD 76.11 billion in

2021-22 from USD 51.62 billion in 2020-21, while imports has increased to USD 43.31 billion as compared to about USD 29 billion in 2020-21.

- In 2021-22, the **UAE** is India's third-largest trading partner with USD 72.9 billion. It is followed by Saudi Arabia (USD 42.85 billion) as 4th, Iraq (USD 34.33 billion) as 5th, & Singapore (USD 30 billion) as its 6th largest trading partner.

## STATES AFFAIRS

26. Captain **Abhilasha Barak** from **Haryana** has become the first woman officer to join the Army Aviation Corps as combat aviator after successful completion of the combat Army aviation course. She has been awarded the coveted 'wings' along with 36 Army pilots at a ceremony held at Combat Army Aviation Training School in Nashik, Maharashtra.
- The decision to include women in Army to fly helicopters came in the early 2021. Until then women officers were only assigned ground duties in army aviation.
27. **Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL)** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **Uttarakhand** government for a period of **5 years** to grow new and renewable energy projects in the state. The MoU intends to take forward Uttarakhand by balancing both in the field of renewable energy and ecological economy.
28. **Delhi Government** has recently inducted two robots into Delhi's firefighting fleet. These remote-controlled firefighting robots will be able to douse fires in narrow streets, warehouses, basements, stairs, and forests and enter places like oil and chemical tankers and factories. These robots will be capable of releasing high water pressure at the rate of 2,400 litres per minute.
29. The Government of Andhra Pradesh and Greenko Group have collaborated to set up the world's largest **Integrated Renewable Energy Storage Project (IRESP)** with a capacity to store **5230 MW** in the **Kurnool** district of Andhra Pradesh. It is a first of its kind single location energy storage project with wind and solar capacities. It is being implemented with an investment of over USD 3 billion comprising pumped storage (10,800 MWh of daily storage), solar (3,000 MW) and wind (550 MW).

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**30.** India has planned to build **10** hydropower projects totalling **6.8 gigawatts (GW)** in **Jammu and Kashmir** and **Himachal Pradesh** to fully utilize its share of waters under the 1960 Indus Water Treaty with Pakistan.

- **Hydropower projects:** 1,000 MW Pakal Dul project, 850 MW Ratle project, 624 MW Kiru project and 540 MW Kwar project, all in Jammu and Kashmir, 1,856 MW Sawalkot (J&K), 930 MW Kirthai-II (J&K), 500 MW Dugar (HP), 240 MW Uri-I Stage-II (J&K), and 260 MW Dulhasti Stage-II (J&K).
- **NHPC Limited** has undertaken the implementation of these projects with an estimated investment of **Rs. 68,000 crore**.

India has also planned to divert the waters of **Ujh**, which is one of the main tributaries of the Ravi that flows into Pakistan.

**31.** **Uttar Pradesh** minister for urban development and energy, A K Sharma, has launched the **SAMBHAV (Systemic Administration Mechanism for Bringing Happiness and Value) portal** for disposal of public grievances and monitoring programmes and schemes of the Urban and Energy departments of Uttar Pradesh. The portal will work as an Information and Communication Technology (ICT) platform for flagging grievances received from the public to the concerning officers who have been provided login IDs.

**32.** Redcliffe Labs, a unit of Redcliffe Lifetech in the U.S., has come up with its first commercial drone flight in the country's healthcare sector. The company has opened its commercial drone corridor between Uttarkashi and Dehradun in the state of Uttarakhand. With this, **Uttarakhand** has become the first Indian state to commence commercial drone services in healthcare.

**33.** Chief Minister of **Odisha** Naveen Patnaik has launched India's first **Olympic Values Education Programme (OVEP)** by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in the state to help children become active, healthy, and responsible citizens.

- OVEP has been launched in collaboration with the Department of School and Mass Education, the Government of Odisha and the Abhinav Bindra Foundation Trust.
- It will be implemented in 90 schools across two smart cities Bhubaneswar and Rourkela in the first phase.
- OVEP has been launched in 27 schools in Rourkela and 63 schools in Bhubaneswar.

**34. Kolkata** has become the first major metropolitan city in India to prepare a detailed register of biodiversity known as **People's Biodiversity Register (PBR)**. It has been prepared by the Biodiversity Management Committee (BMC), Kolkata.

- PBR contains complete documentation of biodiversity such as flora, fauna medicinal sources, land use and human activities etc. within a particular place such as a city.
- PBR documented 399 plant and 283 animal species at the Kolkata Municipal Corporation (KMC) headquarters.

*Chandigarh and Indore are other important cities that have prepared the document.*

**35.** The 4th edition of State-Level **Shirui Lily Festival 2022** has been observed recently in **Manipur**. The four-day long festival has been inaugurated by the Governor of Manipur La. Ganesan and the Chief Minister N. Biren Singh at Shirui Village Ground in Ukhrul district.

- This annual festival is organised by the Department of Tourism, Government of Manipur to create and raise awareness on Shirui Lily flower which is also the State Flower of Manipur.
- It is held around April and May as it is the blooming season of Shirui Lily.
- The flower is found in **Ukhrul district** of Manipur only and cannot be replanted anywhere in the world.

**36.** Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha and Union Minister Jitendra Singh have inaugurated the **north India's first Industrial Biotech Park** at **Ghatti** near Kathua district of Jammu & Kashmir. The park will act as a hub for the incubation of new ideas and will act as a robust platform to support the agri-entrepreneurs, start-ups, progressive farmers, scientists, scholars, and students not only from Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh but also from nearby states of Punjab, Haryana, and Himachal Pradesh. The park has a potential to produce 25 start-ups in a year.

**37.** The Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh Shivraj Singh Chouhan and the Union Minister of State for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Rajeev Chandrasekhar have inaugurated India's first '**Rural Tribal Technical Training**' program at the Centre for Research and Industrial Staff Performance (CRISP), **Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh**.

- The first phase will cover about 250 beneficiaries from 17 clusters of 17 selected districts from 6 states of India namely Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Odisha as a 'pilot project'.
- Under this, two-month training will provide employment opportunities to the youth to start their own business and employment opportunities in other sectors.



38. The Chief Minister of **Tamil Nadu** M.K. Stalin has launched the '**Kalaignarin All Village Integrated Agriculture Development Programme**' in the districts of Krishnagiri, Dharmapuri, and Erode. It will be implemented in all 12,525 village panchayats across the State during five years at a cost of Rs.227 crore.
39. The state government of **Uttarakhand** has constituted a 5-member expert committee to implement the **Uniform Civil Code (UCC)** in the state. The retired Supreme Court judge Ranjana Desai, who currently heads the Delimitation Commission of India is the Head of the committee. Other members of the committee are: Delhi High Court judge Pramod Kohli, ex-state chief secretaries Shatrughan Singh, Manu Gaud and Surekha Dangwal.
40. The Chief Minister of **Karnataka** Basavaraj Bommai has launched a new health and wellness app '**AAYU**' to address and help heal chronic diseases and lifestyle disorders through yoga and meditation. The app has been developed by Swami Vivekananda Yoga Anusandhana Samsthana (S-VYASA) in collaboration with RESET TECH, an AI-driven integrated health-tech platform. The app aims to reach and impact over five million chronic disease patients within a span of five years.

## INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

41. The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and Korea Forest Service (KFS) have organized the **XV World Forestry Congress** at Coex, Seoul, **South Korea**. The theme for 2022 is 'Building a Green, Healthy and Resilient'.
- **Seoul Declaration** has been adopted by 141 participant countries.
  - The declaration urges that responsibility for forests should be shared and integrated across institutions, sectors and stakeholders.
  - Investment in forest and landscape restoration globally needs to triple by **2030** to meet internationally agreed commitments and targets on restoring degraded land.

### World Forestry Congress:

It is held every six years. It has been providing a forum for inclusive discussion on the key challenges and way forward for the forestry sector. Indonesia hosted the first Congress in Asia in 1978.

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42. The 52<sup>nd</sup> **World Economic Forum (WEF) Annual Meeting 2022** has been held in Davos, Switzerland under the theme '*Working Together, Restoring Trust*'. It is the first global in-person leadership event since the start of the pandemic.

- The Indian delegation is led by Union Commerce & Industry Minister **Piyush Goyal**. It also included Union Petroleum and Gas Minister Hardeep Singh Puri, Union Health and Family Welfare Minister Mansukh Mandaviya, Chief Ministers (CMs) and other 6 senior ministers of six states: Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Telangana.

### Key Highlights:

- **India** has joined the US-led **First Movers Coalition**, a global initiative aimed at decarbonising the heavy industry and long-distance transport sectors responsible for 30 per cent of global emissions. Besides India, Denmark, Italy, Japan, Norway, Singapore, Sweden and the United Kingdom have also joined.
- According to a report by the WEF, investing broadly in the skills of the future for both today's and tomorrow's next-generation workforce can add **USD 8.3 trillion** in increased productivity to the global economy by **2030**.
- The Four more industrial clusters from Europe and the US have joined the '**Transitioning Industrial Clusters towards Net-Zero**' initiative. The four new industrial clusters are from the Netherlands, Belgium and the USA.
- WEF has launched the India chapter of the **Alliance of CEO Climate Action Leaders** to supercharge India's climate action and decarbonisation efforts.
- The Digital Cooperation Organization (DCO) and the World Economic Forum (WEF) have announced a new initiative to boost flows of digital foreign direct investments globally. Under the initiative, the DCO and WEF will launch **Digital FDI Enabling Projects** in countries around the world.
- WEF is building a "**Global Collaboration Village**" as the virtual future of public-private cooperation, in collaboration with Accenture and Microsoft. It will provide immersive spaces for stakeholders to come together and address critical global issues.

### Agreements signed with Indian states:

- **Andhra Pradesh** government has signed renewables investment pacts worth a total of around **\$16 billion** with three companies including Adani Green Energy, Greenko, Singapore's GIC sovereign wealth fund, and Aurobindo Realty & Infrastructure during the World Economic Forum at Davos.
- **Maharashtra** government has signed 23 *Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs)* worth over **30,000 crore** and also joined the World Economic Forum's **Global Plastic Action Partnership (GPAP)**, a growing list of global economies that will leverage the GPAP platform to drive localized solutions for the circular economy.

- ReNew Power has signed an MoU with the **Karnataka** government to invest **Rs 50,000 crore** in the state over the next seven years.
- **Telangana** has attracted investments worth over **Rs 4,200 crore**. The aim is to showcase Telangana as an investment destination for global companies and bringing investments to state. The Telangana pavilion at WEF, set up with a slogan "India welcomes the world, Telangana First Stop". The state has also signed an MoU with **Mastercard** to formalise a Digital State Partnership aimed at delivering world-class solutions that contribute to the rapid digitisation of the state's citizen services with a focus on small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs) and farmers.

**43. Kuwait** will build the world's largest Petroleum Research Centre by the end of 2022. It will be constructed at an estimated cost of around **USD 120 million** in al-Ahmadi, south of Kuwait City. It will have 28 laboratories. It will seek to develop improved production and refining techniques that can be used by the industry for different applications including the extraction of heavy crude and non-associated gas.

**44. The 7th India-Canada Joint Science and Technology Cooperation Committee (JSTCC)** meeting has been organized in Ottawa, Canada. The Joint Committee Meeting has been co-chaired by Dr. Srivari Chandrasekhar, Secretary at the Indian Department of Science and Technology (DST), and David Morrison, Deputy Minister of International Trade at Global Affairs Canada.

- During the meeting, two Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) have been renewed and signed by the Ministry of Science and Technology with Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) and National Research Council Canada (NRC), respectively, under India and Canada's agreement signed in 2005.

**45. The People's Republic of China** has hosted the **7th BRICS Culture Ministers' Meeting** under the theme "Establishing a Cultural Partnership Featuring Inclusiveness and Mutual Learning among BRICS". From the Indian side, Minister of State for Culture and External Affairs **Meenakshi Lekhi** has participated in the meeting through video conference.

- During the meeting, the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Agreement between the Governments of the BRICS States on Cooperation in the field of Culture (**2022-2026**) has been signed by the Ministers of Culture of all BRICS Nations. The aim is to strengthen the cultural cooperation and implement the BRICS Cultural Cooperation Agreement signed in 2015.

**46. The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and Boeing Company** have launched the **Starliner Space Capsule-OFT 2** from Space Launch Complex-41 on Cape

Canaveral Space Force Station in Florida, USA to carry astronauts to and from the International Space Station.

47. US President Joe Biden has launched the **Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF)** in Tokyo, Japan. It is an Indo-Pacific Economic Bloc led by the USA to counter China. The aim is to strengthen economic partnership among participating countries to enhance resilience, sustainability, inclusiveness, economic growth, fairness, and competitiveness in the Indo-Pacific region.
- The framework has **13 member states**, USA, Australia, Brunei, India, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. It accounts for **40%** of global gross domestic product (GDP).
48. **Belgium** has become the first country to make a 21-day compulsory quarantine for Monkeypox patients after four cases of the disease were reported.

#### **Monkeypox:**

It is a viral zoonotic disease that is transmitted from animals to humans. It is caused by monkeypox virus, a member of the Orthopoxvirus genus in the family Poxviridae. It was first reported in 1958, in monkeys in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and in humans in 1970, also in the DRC. It is endemic to Nigeria.

49. The Navies of **India** and **Bangladesh** have recently commenced the **4<sup>th</sup> edition** of the **Coordinated Patrol (CORPAT)** in the Northern Bay of Bengal. It is two-day exercise to strengthen mutual understanding and enhance interoperability between both the navies in countering transnational maritime threats at sea. It was first initiated in 2018.
- From the Indian Navy side, two indigenously built Ships - Kora, a guided-missile corvette, and Sumedha, an offshore patrol vessel, and from the Bangladesh side, Navy Ships BNS Ali Haider and BNS Abu Ubaidah have participated in the exercise. In addition, Maritime Patrol Aircraft of both navies have also participated.
50. **India** has hosted the **Shanghai Cooperation Organization Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (SCO-RATS) Summit 2022** in **New Delhi**. India's National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS) under NSA Ajit Doval has organized the SCO-RATS Summit 2022. The major focus of the discussions was to be on the situation in Afghanistan, especially in dealing with the threat from terrorist groups active in the Taliban-ruled country.
- **Note:** India assumed the chairmanship of the Council of Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure of SCO (RATS SCO) on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2021 for a period of one year.



- SCO-RATS is a permanent body of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). It facilitates coordination and interaction between the SCO member states in the fight against terrorism, extremism and separatism.

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**51.** The third edition of **Exercise Bongosagar**, a bilateral naval exercise between **India and Bangladesh**, has commenced at Port Mongla, Bangladesh. The exercise has been conducted in two phases: Harbour Phase at Port Mongla from 24-25 May, and Sea Phase in the Northern Bay of Bengal from 26-27 May. The aim of the exercise is to develop a high degree of interoperability and joint operational skills through the conduct of a wide spectrum of maritime exercises and operations between the two navies.

**Participants:**

From the Indian Navy side, *Indian Naval Ship Kora*, an indigenously built Guided Missile Corvette, and *Sumedha*, an indigenously built Offshore Patrol Vessel, and from the Bangladesh Navy side, BNS Abu Ubaidah and Ali Haider, both Guided Missile Frigates have participated in the exercise.

**Note:** The first edition of Exercise Bongosagar was held in 2019.

**52.** **Japan** has hosted the **QUAD Summit 2022** in Tokyo. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, US President Joe Biden, Japan PM Fumio Kishida, and newly-elected Australian PM Antony Albanese have participated in the Summit. This is the second in-person Quad Summit.

**Key Highlights:**

- QUAD countries has agreed to create an Earth observation-based monitoring and sustainable development framework to combat illegal, unregulated and unprotected (IUU) fishing. It will include sharing of space-based civil Earth observation data and a "**Quad Satellite Data Portal**" to aggregate links to respective national satellite data resources.
- To extend over 50 billion USD of infrastructure assistance and investment in the Indo-Pacific, over the next five years.
- **Quad Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Package (Q-CHAMP)** has been launched with mitigation and adaptation as its two themes.
- Quad Partnership on **Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR)** in the Indo-Pacific has been set up to strengthen collaboration and effectively respond to disasters in the region.
- To initiate the first-ever **Quad Cybersecurity Day** to help individuals across Quad, the Indo-Pacific region, and beyond to better protect themselves from cyber threats.
- **QUAD Fellowship** has been launched to promote people-to-people linkages between the four members of Quad. Every year, the fellowship will sponsor 25 students from each

Quad country to pursue higher studies and doctoral degrees at leading Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) universities in the United States.

**Note:** QUAD Summit 2023 will be hosted by Australia.

**53. Russia** has successfully test-fired its '**Zircon Hypersonic Cruise Missile**' from the Admiral Gorshkov frigate of the Northern Fleet in the Barents Sea of Arctic Ocean. The missile hits the sea target in the White Sea about 1,000 kilometres (540 nautical miles) away.

- The country had conducted the first Zircon test in October 2020.
- It is capable of flying at nine times the speed of sound and has a range of 1,000 kilometres (620 miles).

## REPORTS & INDICES

**54.** The Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Education has released the **National Achievement Survey (NAS) 2021** report. The objective of NAS 2021 is to evaluate children's progress and learning competencies as an indicator of the efficiency of the education system, so as to take appropriate steps for remedial actions at different levels. About 34 lakh students of 1.18 lakh schools in 720 districts from both rural and urban areas have participated in NAS 2021.

NAS is a comprehensive evaluation survey of children's learning competencies in Classes 3, 5, 8, and 10. It is conducted every **three years**.

- According to the survey report, the national average percentage of students for class third was 59%, which declined by 10 percentage points to 49% in class fifth. It further declined to 41.9% in class eighth and then 37.8% in class 10.
- The performance recorded a decline in almost all subjects. For instance, the mathematics score nationally was 57% in class third, dropping by almost 10 percentage points to 44% in fifth, and to 36% in class eighth, and 32% in class 10th.
- Similarly, the language score nationally was 62% in class third, and dropped to 52% in class fifth, and to 53% in class eighth.
- For science, the national score declined from 39% in class eighth to 35% in class 10.
- In terms of social-group wise performance, the average performance of SC/ST/OBC students remained low in almost all classes across the states, in comparison to the general category students.
- In gender-wise performance, the average performance of girls remained better than the boys in almost all subjects across the classes, both nationally and at state level.
- States such as Kerala, Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Punjab performed better than the national average.

The NAS 2021 was held on 12th November 2021 at all India level and covered Government Schools, Government Aided Schools and Private Unaided Schools. It has been conducted in **22 languages** in Language, Mathematics and EVS for Class 3 and 5; Language, Mathematics, Science and Social Science for Class 8 and Language, Mathematics, Science, Social Science and English for Class 10.

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has conducted NAS 2021. The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has designed an assessment framework and tools for NAS-2021.

- 55.** Tesla and SpaceX CEO **Elon Musk**, the world's richest man, has topped the list of the most highly compensated CEOs on the Fortune 500 in 2021. He received a salary of around **\$23.5 billion** (approximately Rs 1,82,576 crore) in 2021. He is followed by Tim Cook, who is the CEO of Apple, Jensen Huang, who is at the helm of NVIDIA, and Reed Hastings, who is the head of Netflix.
- 56.** Ratings agency Moody's Investors Service in its update to 'Global Macro Outlook 2022-23' has lowered its growth forecast for India for the calendar year 2022 by 30 basis points to **8.8 percent** from 9.1 percent earlier. For CY23, it has projected growth at 5.4%. For 2022 and 2023, it has projected inflation to be around 6.8 percent and 5.2 percent, respectively.
- 57.** The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has published its UNICEF Child Alert-May 2022 edition titled '**Severe wasting: An overlooked child survival emergency**'.
- As per the report, **India** has the world's most **5,772,472 children** below five years affected by severe wasting.
  - Indonesia has been ranked second with 812,564 children suffering from severe wasting.
  - South Asia remains the hub of severe wasting, with stats worse than sub-Saharan Africa. At least 7.7 million children in the region are affected.
  - Ready-to-use therapeutic food (RUTF) saved some five million lives in 2020, but 10 million severely wasted children went without it.

### **Severe wasting:**

It is also known as severe acute malnutrition. It is defined as low weight-for-height. It is caused by lack of nutritional diet and frequent occurrences of infections such as diarrhoea, measles, and malaria.

### **Ready-to-use therapeutic food (RUTF):**

It is considered the 'gold standard for wasting treatment'. It is a paste of peanuts, sugar, oil and milk powder and is manufactured in Kenya, Haiti, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Nigeria, India and Pakistan, and distributed primarily through UNICEF.

- 58.** As per the data released by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), India has recorded highest ever annual Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflow of **USD 83.57 billion** in FY22 as compared to USD 81.97 billion in FY21.
- FDI inflow in manufacturing sector has increased by 76 percent to USD 21.34 billion in FY22 as compared to USD 12.09 billion in FY21.
  - Computer software and hardware has emerged as the top recipient sector of FDI inflow with 25 percent share followed by Services Sector and Automobile Industry.
  - **Karnataka** has recorded the highest FDI inflow with 38 percent share of the total FDI inflow reported during FY22, followed by Maharashtra and Delhi.
  - **Singapore** is the top investing country with 27% of the equity inflows, followed by the USA (18%), and Mauritius (16%) in FY22.
- 59.** The list of World's 100 Most Influential People of 2022 has been released by Time Magazine, an American news magazine. The list has been divided into six categories: Icons, Pioneers, Titans, Artists, Leaders and Innovators.
- Supreme Court lawyer **Karuna Nundy** (Leaders category), business tycoon **Gautam Adani** (Titans category) and prominent Kashmiri human rights activist **Khurram Parvez** (Leaders category) have been named among the world's 100 most influential people of 2022 by TIME magazine.
  - The list also includes Apple CEO Tim Cook, American host Oprah Winfrey, US President Joe Biden, Russian President Vladimir Putin, Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, Chinese President Xi Jinping, etc.
- 60.** The World Directory of Modern Military Aircraft (WDMMA) has published the **Global Air Powers Ranking for 2022**.
- The **Indian Air Force (IAF)** has been ranked **third** in the Global Air Powers Ranking with a TrueValueRating (TvR) score of 69.4.
  - India has been ranked higher than the Chinese Aviation based armed forces (PLAAF), Japan Air Self-Preservation Power (JASDF), Israeli Aviation based armed forces, and French Air and Space Power.
  - As per the index, IAF has a total of 1,645 active aircraft in its inventory.
  - The US Air Force (USAF) has the highest TvR score of 242.9, followed by US Navy, Russian Air Force, US Army Aviation, and US Marine Corps. The list is followed by the Indian and Chinese (PLAAF) Air Force.



61. The World Economic Forum (WEF) has released the **Travel and Tourism Development Index 2021** under the theme 'Rebuilding for a Sustainable and Resilient Future'. The index assesses 117 economies based on 5 sub-indexes (Enabling environment; Travel and Tourism Policy and Enabling Conditions; Infrastructure; Travel and Tourism Demand Drivers; Travel and Tourism Sustainability), 17 pillars, and 112 individual indicators.

#### Key Highlights:

- **Japan** has topped the Index with a score of 5.2, followed by USA, and Spain.
- Chad has been positioned last in the index.
- **India** has been ranked **54<sup>th</sup>** in the index with a score of 4.2. In 2019, India had ranked at 46th position.

62. Dr Bibek Debroy, Chairman, Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM), has released the '**State of Inequality in India**' report. The report has been prepared by the **Institute for Competitiveness** and presents a holistic analysis of the depth and nature of inequality in India.

The report is based on the data derived from various rounds of the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), National Family and Health Survey (NFHS) and United Information System for Education Plus.

- An Indian earning a monthly wage of **Rs.25,000** is among top 10% earners in the country.
- Failure of triple down approach as incomes of the top 1% earners grew 15% during 2017-18 to 2019-20 while that of the bottom 10% declined 1%.
- Also, top 1% accounts for 6-7% of total incomes earned while top 10% accounts for one-third of all incomes earned.
- **Employment (2019-20):** Self-employed workers (45.78%), followed by regular salaried workers (33.5%) and casual workers (20.71%).
- The Gross Enrolment Ratio has also increased between 2018-19 and 2019-20 at the primary, upper primary, secondary and higher secondary.
- The results of NFHS-4 (2015-16) and NFHS-5 (2019-21) have shown that **58.6%** of women received antenatal check-ups in the first trimester in 2015-16, which increased to **70%** by 2019-21.
- Urban areas have a **44.4%** wealth concentration in the highest quintile (20%) compared to a meagre **7.1%** concentration in rural areas. Chandigarh has the highest wealth concentration, while Bihar has lowest wealth concentration.

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- 63.** Forbes magazine has released the 7th edition of the **Forbes 30 Under 30 Asia List 2022**, featuring 10 categories each honouring 30 individuals under the age of 30. The list has been edited by Rana Wehbe Watson. The honourees on the list represent 22 countries and territories across the Asia-Pacific region.
- **India** has topped the list in terms of the number of entries with **61**, followed by Singapore (34), Japan (33), Australia (32), Indonesia (30) and China (28).
  - The average age of the 2022 list is 26.8 and the youngest honouree on the list is 14-year old Japanese Olympics skateboarding gold-medalist Momiji Nishiya.

## GOVERNMENT SCHEMES & PROGRAMMES

- 64.** The Executive Committee of **National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG)** has approved **11 projects** with an estimated cost of approx. **Rs.660 crore** to develop Water Infrastructure Projects along the River Ganga. The decision has been taken in the 42nd Meeting of the Executive Committee under the chairmanship of Director General G. Ashok Kumar. The project includes:
- 'Interception, Diversion and Treatment Works for Saharanpur Town' for River Hindon, Uttar Pradesh
  - 'Rejuvenation of Chamunda Mai Pond' in Garh Mukhteshwar, Uttar Pradesh
  - 'Environmental Upgradation of Shivna River' in Mandsaur, Madhya Pradesh
  - 'Evaluation of Natural Farming Practices on Water and Energy Savings'
  - 'Implementation of Membrane-based soil-less agriculture' under Arth Ganga Framework
  - Two projects pertaining to crematoriums including 'Construction of Electric Crematorium' at Kalyani, West Bengal and 'Development of Cremation Ghat' at Paudi Garhwal, Uttarakhand are also approved.
  - In addition to this, two projects of River Front Development in Badrinath are also approved.
  - Two big projects for Septage Management in Uttarakhand and West Bengal are also approved in the meeting.
- 65.** The National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) has signed a two quadripartite agreements for development and management of sewage infrastructure at **Maheshtala** in West Bengal under Hybrid Annuity Mode. The total cost of the project is **Rs. 273.52 crore**.
- **First Agreement:** It is an Escrow agreement between NMCG, Kolkata Metropolitan Development Authority (KMDA), M/s. Maheshtala Waste Water Management Private Limited (MWWMPL) and Union Bank of India.
  - **Second Agreement:** It is the substitution agreement between NMCG, KMDA, MWWMPL and Oesterreichische Entwicklungsbank (Development Bank of Austria).

66. Maheshtala is situated on the east bank of River Ganga. This project aims to stop the flow of sewerage into River Ganga from the town. The major components of the project include a 35 MLD Sewage Treatment Plant (STP), 4 pumping stations, 6 diversion structures, Repair & Rehabilitation work, 15 years Operation and Maintenance etc.
67. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla has launched the second phase of "Suposhit Maa Abhiyan" from Kota, Rajasthan. In the second-phase, 3000 women will be given nutrition kits for 9 months with the help of public support and health check-up will be done every month.

### Suposhit Maa Abhiyan:

It was launched on **1<sup>st</sup> March 2020** from Kota, Rajasthan. The aim is to keep pregnant women and new-born healthy. Around 1000 kits of **17 kg** balanced diet were provided to 1,000 pregnant women in the first phase of the campaign. The diet includes millet flour, wheat, maize, gram, jaggery, large soybean, groundnut, ghee, dates, roasted gram, lentil, oatmeal and rice. The campaign covers not only pregnant women but also new-born babies. It is applicable only to one pregnant woman per family.

68. The National Health Authority (NHA) under its flagship scheme of Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM) has launched the revamped **Ayushman Bharat Health Account (ABHA) mobile application** (previously known as NDHM Health Records or PHR App). The ABHA app enables an individual to create an ABHA address (username@abdm), an easy to remember username that can be linked with the **14 digit** randomly generated ABHA number. The app will enable individuals to access their health records anytime and anywhere.
69. The Central Government has approved the New Guidelines of the **Micro & Small Enterprises Cluster Development Programme (MSE-CDP)**. The programme will be implemented during the 15th Finance Commission Cycle (2021-22 to 2025-26).

### Key guidelines:

- As per the new guidelines, the central government's grant for development of **Common Facility Centres (CFCs)** will be restricted to 70 percent of the cost of the project from Rs.5 crore to Rs.10 crore and 60 percent of the cost of project from Rs.10 crore to Rs.30 crore.
- In case of north-east and hill states, island territories and aspirational districts, the government's grant will be 80 percent of the cost of the project from Rs.5 crore to Rs.10 crore and 70 percent of cost of the project from Rs.10 crore to Rs.30 crore.
- For **Infrastructure Development (ID)**, the central government grant will be restricted to 60 percent of the cost of project from Rs 5 crore to Rs 15 crore for setting up of new industrial estate/flatted factory complex, while the grant will be 50 percent of the cost of

project from Rs 5 crore to Rs 10 crore for upgradation of existing industrial estate/ flatted factory complex.

### **Cluster Development Programme:**

It is the scheme of the Office of Development Commissioner in the **Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises**. It was renamed as Micro & Small Enterprises Cluster Development Programme (MSE-CDP) in 2007. The aim is to enhance the sustainability and growth of MSEs by addressing common issues such as improvement of technology, skills and quality, etc.

## **BUSINESS & ECONOMY**

**70.** The **Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC)** has become the first gas producer to trade domestic gas on the Indian Gas Exchange (IGX). The first online trade was made on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2022 by ONGC Director (Onshore) & In-charge Marketing Anurag Sharma on India's first automated national level IGX. The gas traded is from ONGC Krishna Godavari 98/2 block.

### **Indian Gas Exchange (IGX):**

It is India's first automated national level Gas Exchange to promote and sustain an efficient and robust Gas market and to foster gas trading in the country. It started operations on 15th June 2020 as Gas Trading Platform and has been operating as the Gas Exchange since 10th December 2020. It operates under the regulatory framework of Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB).

**71.** **Coal India Limited (CIL)** under the Ministry of Coal (MoC) has decided to divest **25 percent** stake in its unlisted arm Bharat Coking Coal Ltd (BCCL) and its subsequent listing on stock exchanges after getting further clearances.

**72.** The **Adani Green Energy** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the government of **Andhra Pradesh** at the World Economic Forum for an investment of **Rs.60,000 crore** in the state. The project is expected to provide employment opportunities to about 10,000 people directly and indirectly. The company will set up a 3,700 MW Hydro Storage Plant and 10,000 MW solar energy project in Andhra Pradesh.

**73.** Union Minister of Power and New and Renewable Energy, R.K Singh has conferred **NHPC Limited** with the first prize for the year 2020-21 and the second prize for the year 2018-19 for excellent implementation of **Rajbhasha** during the meeting of Hindi Salahkar Samiti.



- During the meeting, he has also released the latest issue of 'Rajbhasha Jyoti', NHPC's official language magazine and the book 'Bharatiya Sanskriti mein Prabandhan' written by Dr. Rajbir Singh, Group General Manager (Rajbhasha), NHPC.
- NHPC has also been awarded "Rajbhasha Kirti Puraskar" nine times by the Government of India for its excellent work in the field of implementation of Rajbhasha.

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74. The world's first '**Smart Manufacturing Competency Centre (SMCC)**' has been inaugurated in **Ahmedabad**, Gujarat. It has been launched by the NASSCOM Centre of Excellence-IoT & AI, in collaboration with the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) and the Department of Science and Technology (DST), and the government of Gujarat. This platform will enable every MSME in Gujarat to connect with the start-ups in the ecosystem for digitisation solutions. Manufacturers will be able to experience demos and success stories of large tech enterprises and start-ups.
75. The Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) has extended the deadline for submitting initial bids for the privatisation of **Ferro Scrap Nigam Ltd (FSNL)**, a 100% subsidiary of MSTC Ltd., under the **Ministry of Steel**. The deadline has been extended to 6<sup>th</sup> June 2022 from 5<sup>th</sup> May 2022.
- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) had accorded in-principle approval to divest entire stake in FSNL held through MSTC in October 2016.
76. The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has approved the sale of the government's remaining stake in Hindustan Zinc Ltd (HZL). The government currently holds a **29.54 percent** stake in HZL which is worth around Rs 37,000 crore. While Anil Agarwal-led Vedanta Group holds a 64.92 percent stake.
77. GIC, Singapore's sovereign wealth fund, will acquire a **7.5%** equity stake in Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail (ABFRL) for a cash consideration of Rs.2,195 crore. In the first tranche, GIC will invest Rs.770 crore, while the remaining Rs. 1,425 crore will be infused within 18 months. After the investment, Aditya Birla Group will hold a controlling stake of **51.9%** in the company.
78. The **United States of America (USA)** has signed an **Investment Incentive Agreement (IIA)** with **India** at Tokyo, Japan. It has been signed to keep pace with the additional investment support programmes, offered by the Development Finance Corporation (DFC), such as debt,

equity investment, investment guaranty, investment insurance or reinsurance, feasibility studies for potential projects and grants. This agreement is the legal requirement for DFC, to continue providing investment support in India.

- This IIA supersedes the Investment Incentive Agreement signed between both the countries in the year 1997.
- There have been significant developments since the earlier IIA was signed in 1997, such as the founding of a new organization called Development Finance Corporation (DFC).
- DFC or their predecessor agencies have been active in India since 1974 and have so far provided investment support worth **USD 5.8 billion** of which USD 2.9 billion is still outstanding.

**79. Fasal**, an agri-tech platform, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **India Meteorological Department (IMD)** for research in weather forecasting models. Under this MoU, Fasal and IMD will work closely on exchange of hourly short-range models for rainfall probability, rainfall amount, temperature, and humidity. This MoU will cover five districts in Karnataka, five districts in Maharashtra, one district in Telangana and two districts in Andhra Pradesh.

**80. Tata Capital Limited**, the financial services company of the Tata Group, has launched '**Loan Against Shares**', an end-to-end integrated digital financial offering. The aim is to provide customers with an easy and seamless experience. Under this facility, customers can avail of loans up to **Rs.5 crore** by pledging their dematerialised shares online, which is facilitated by National Securities Depository Limited (NSDL).

**81.** UK-based academic **Dr Swati Dhingra** has been appointed as an external member of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the Bank of England by Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak. She has been appointed for a period of **3 years**. She will replace current external member Michael Saunders on 9<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

- With this, she has become the **first Indian origin woman** to be appointed as a member of the Bank of England.

## BANKING & FINANCE

**82. HDFC Bank** has made rural banking a separate vehicle and has appointed **Anil Bhavnani**, who has been working with it for 19 years, to head the newly-carved rural banking vertical. The lender has planned to open 1,064 branches under the rural banking vertical in FY23 as against 1,000 branches opened in the last two fiscal years.

- HDFC Bank has also tied up with **Institute of Rural Management, Anand** to prepare its rural initiative strategy which will look at consumer behaviour, customer satisfaction, service design, and service delivery.
- The lender has also launched a '**Spot Offer**' on WhatsApp, to provide an in-principle home loan approval to home buyers within two minutes. This facility is developed in association with Congo AI.

**83.** The **State Bank of India (SBI)** has launched the '**Real-Time Xpress Credit**' on its Yono platform, allowing eligible customers to get personal loans of up to Rs.35 lakh. Under this, central, state government and defence salaried customers of SBI will no longer be required to visit the branch for availing a personal loan. It will enable customers to experience a digital, hassle-free, and paperless loan process.

**84. AU Small Finance Bank** has introduced two new products under its affluent banking programme, AU Royale – '**AU Royale Salary**' and '**AU Royale Business**' current account.

- The AU Royale Business Current Account offers family banking which allows grouping of business and family accounts.
- The AU Royale Salary Savings account offers family banking for up to five family members and exciting cashback of upto 1% on Signature Debit Card spends.

**85. Mahagram**, a technology-driven fintech company, has collaborated with **IndusInd Bank** to boost financial inclusion, encourage socio-economic development, mitigate the risks of a shadow economy, and accelerate the growth of a cashless society. The target is to add 15 million small merchants to the UPI QR in this fiscal year (2022-23).

**86. MUFG Bank**, a Japanese lender, will establish a branch at the **Gujarat International Financial Tec City (GIFT City)** in Ahmedabad for foreign currency-denominated lending business. This will be its sixth branch in India. At present, it has presence in Mumbai, Delhi, Bengaluru, Chennai and Neemrana.

**Note:** In March 2022, MUFG Bank announced to set up an investment fund totalling USD 300 million for start-ups in India.

**87. HDFC Securities** has launched a Robo-advisory platform for all mutual fund investments named '**HDFC Money**'. This platform is a 100 percent digital platform that doesn't involve opening or having a Demat Account. It will help investors to plan and execute with a more defined objective keeping risk and tenure in consideration.

88. **Stashfin**, a neobanking platform, has launched a credit line card especially for women called '**LiveBoundless**'. The new card offers dedicated cashback rewards, welcome credits, free ATM withdrawals, and other deals.

**Neo-bank:**

A neo-bank is a digital bank that does not have any branches. Instead of having a physical presence at a set location, neo-banking is entirely online.

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89. Northern Arc Capital, a financial services platform, has tied up with **Indian Bank** to help both institutions leverage synergies and offer customer-centric financial solutions to retail borrowers. This will enable the two financial institutions to collaborate, co-operate, co-lend loans, and widen their respective markets and customer base.

90. **India Post Payments Bank (IPPB)** has introduced **Aadhaar Enabled Payment System** service charges (AePS). AePS Issuer transaction charges will be in effect from 15<sup>th</sup> June 2022.

- According to RBI "AePS is a bank led model which allows online interoperable financial inclusion transaction at Point of Sale (PoS) (MicroATM) through the Business correspondent of any bank using the Aadhaar authentication. AePS allows you to do six types of transactions."
- IPPB has also signed a sub membership agreement with the Department of Post to facilitate NEFT/RTGS transactions for their customers with eligible accounts. A dedicated IFS code "**IPOS0000DOP**" has been created to facilitate inward/outward transactions, to and from DoP Customer accounts. This code will be exclusively used only for transactions in DoP Customer accounts.
- The senior functionaries of the Postal Department and IPPB brainstormed in an event called **AAROHAN 4.0** to strengthen the financial inclusion drive and to provide banking solutions to every citizen of the country. The two-day meeting has been organized in **Shimla, Himachal Pradesh**.

91. **HDFC Bank** has tied up with **Retailio**, India's largest B2B pharma marketplace, to launch a new range of co-branded credit cards primarily targeted at chemists and pharmacies in the merchant segment. It will cover over 1.4 lakh merchants in the first phase of its roll-out.

92. **UCO Bank** has entered into a co-lending agreement with **Paisalo Digital Limited**, a Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC), for agriculture business. The agreement aims to tap into



the Rs.8 lakh crore market of small-ticket loans for the 365 million under banked and under-serviced population.

**93. IDBI Bank** board has approved the appointment of **T N Manoharan** as the part-time chairman for a period of three years with effect from 9<sup>th</sup> May 2022, as approved by the Reserve Bank of India.

- MR Kumar will no longer continue to be the non-executive non-whole time Chairman of the bank with effect from 8<sup>th</sup> May 2022.
- In terms of the Articles of Association of the bank, Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) has nominated Raj Kumar, Managing Director of LIC as LIC nominee director on the board of the bank.

**94.** The Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC), India's largest insurer, has launched "**Bima Ratna**", a **non-linked, non-participating, individual, savings life insurance plan**. The new plan provides both protection and savings.

**Key features:**

- Bima Ratna plan can be purchased through Corporate Agents, Insurance Marketing Firms (IMF), Brokers, Common Public Service Centres (CPSC-SPV) and Point of Sales Person-Life Insurance (POSP-LI) engaged by these intermediaries' viz. corporate agents, insurance marketing firms (IMF) and brokers.
- Provides financial assistance to the policyholder's family in the case of the policyholder's untimely death during the policy term, as well as periodic payments on the policyholder's survival for predetermined periods of time to meet a variety of financial needs.
- The key features of the plan include Death benefits, Survival benefits, Maturity benefits, Guaranteed Additions, Settlement Options, Grace Period and Revival solutions among other things.
- The plan also addresses liquidity requirements through a loan facility.
- Premiums can be paid on a yearly, half-yearly, quarterly, or monthly basis (monthly premiums can only be paid through the National Automated Clearing House (NACH)) or by deductions from salary.

**95.** The **Securities & Exchange Board of India (SEBI)** has reviewed the regulatory framework for passive funds i.e. **Exchange-traded funds (ETFs)** and **index funds** through a Working Group (WG) amid growing popularity of such funds as an investment product for retail investors. The new framework will come into effect from **1<sup>st</sup> July 2022** and will be applicable to all existing ETFs and index funds.

**Key Highlights:**

- Debt ETFs/Index Funds could be based on indices comprising of corporate debt securities (Corporate debt indices) or government securities (G-secs), t-bills or a combination of both (hybrid debt indices).
- For Debt ETFs/ Index Funds, the AMCs (Asset Management Companies) must ensure the constituents of the index are aggregated at issuer level for the purpose of determining investment limits for single issuer, group, sector, etc.
- For an index with at least **80 percent** weight of corporate debt securities, a single issuer should not have more than 15 percent weight in the index in respect of AAA securities, not more than 12.5 percent in case of AA securities and not more than 10 percent in case of A and below rated securities.
- In case of a hybrid index with up to **80 percent** weight of corporate debt securities, a single issuer should not have more than 15 percent weight in the index in respect of AAA-rated securities. However, for AAA-rated securities of PSUs and AAA-rated securities of PFI (Public Financial Institution) issuers the limit will be 15 percent.
- Index should not have more than **25 percent** weight in a particular group, excluding securities issued by Public Sector Units (PSUs), (PFIs) and Public Sector Banks (PSBs).
- The minimum subscription amount at the time of New Fund Offer (NFO) for debt ETFs/ index funds and other ETFs/ index funds will be **Rs.10 crore** and **Rs.5 crore**, respectively.

**96. BoB Financial Solutions Limited (BFSL)**, a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Bank of Baroda (BoB), has launched the HPCL BoB co-branded contactless RuPay Credit Card in partnership with the **Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL)** and National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI). This card can be used across merchants and ATMs globally through the JCB network.

**97. PhonePe**, an Indian digital payments business backed by Walmart Inc., has planned to acquire wealth management firms WealthDesk for about \$50 million and OpenQ for around \$20 million.

## RBI IN NEWS

**98.** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has asked all banks to provide the option of **Interoperable Card-less Cash Withdrawal (ICCW)** at their Automated Teller Machines (ATMs). The aim is to curb frauds like skimming, card cloning, and device tampering.

- Withdrawal limits for ICCW transactions shall be in-line with the limits for regular on-us / off-us ATM withdrawals.
- National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has been advised to facilitate Unified Payments Interface (UPI) integration with all banks and ATM networks.

99. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has constituted a committee to evaluate the efficacy, adequacy and quality of customer service in banks, Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs), and other entities regulated by it.
- The six-member committee will be headed by former RBI deputy governor **B P Kanungo**.
  - **Other members:** A K Goel (Chairman IBA and MD & CEO, PNB), A S Ramasastri (former Director, IDRBT), Amitha Sehgal (Hon. Secretary, AIBDA), Rajeshri N Varhadi (Professor, University of Mumbai), and Anil Kumar Sharma (Executive Director, RBI).
  - The committee has to submit a report within three months from the date of its first meeting.
100. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has reduced the net worth requirement to get authorization for non-bank Bharat Bill Payment Operating Units (BBPOU) to **Rs.25 crore** from Rs.100 crore. The aim is to increase participation in the segment.
- Bharat Bill Payment System (BBPS) is an interoperable platform for bill payments and the scope and coverage of BBPS extends to all categories of billers who raise recurring bills.
101. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has announced new guidelines to permit **Qualified Jewellers** to import gold through the **India International Bullion Exchange IFSC Ltd. (IIBX)** or any other exchange approved by International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) and the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT).
- As per the new guidelines, banks may allow Qualified Jewellers to remit advance payments for **11 days** for import of gold through IIBX in compliance to the extant Foreign Trade Policy and regulations issued under IFSC Act.
  - The advance remittance for import of Gold should not be used in any way to import gold worth more than the advance remittance made.
  - In case the import of gold through IFSCA authorised exchange, for which advance remittance has been made, does not materialise, or the advance remittance made for the purpose is more than the amount required, the unutilised advance remittance shall be remitted back to the same bank within the specified time limit of 11 days.
  - Licenced dealers banks must perform all due diligence and guarantee that the remittances sent are only for bona fide import transactions through IFSCA-approved exchanges.

**Note:** Gold imports has declined by about 72 percent to USD 1.72 billion during April 2022, from USD 6.23 billion in April 2021.

**102.** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has cancelled the certificate of registration (CoR) of **Five Non-Banking Finance Companies (NBFCs)** due to irregular lending practices, including charging excessive interest rates and harassment of customers for loan recovery.

**5 NBFCs are:**

- **UMB Securities Ltd** (Bangalore, Karnataka)
- **Anashri Finvest Ltd** (Bangalore, Karnataka)
- **Chadha Finance Ltd** (New Delhi)
- **Alexcy Tracon Pvt Ltd** (Kolkata, West Bengal)
- **Jhuria Financial Services Pvt Ltd** (Guwahati, Assam)

The CoR of these NBFCs have been cancelled on account of violation of RBI guidelines on outsourcing and Fair Practices Code in their digital lending operations undertaken through third party apps which was considered detrimental to public interest.

**103.** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has released the '**Banknote Survey of Consumers**' report. The survey has covered 11,000 respondents from rural, semi-urban, urban and metropolitan areas, spanning 28 states and 3 union territories. The survey has also included 351 visually impaired respondents (VIR).

- Among bank notes, **Rs. 100 note** is the most preferred denomination for cash transactions whereas, **Rs. 2000** is the least preferred denomination.
- Among the coins, Rs. 5 was found to be the most preferred denomination whereas, Rs.20 was the least preferred denomination.
- The value and volume of banknotes in circulation increased by **9.9 percent** and **5 percent**, respectively, during 2021-22, compared with 16.8 percent and 7.2 percent, respectively, during 2020-21.
- Banknotes in circulation amounted to **13.05 lakh** in volume terms and **Rs.31,05,721 crore** in value terms in 2021-22, against 12.43 lakh notes in volume and Rs.28,26,863 crore in value in 2020-21.
- The watermark of Mahatma Gandhi's image followed by the windowed security thread were the most recognised security feature.
- Around 3 percent of the respondents were not aware of any banknote security feature.
- Overall, approximately seven out of 10 respondents were found to be satisfied with the new series of banknotes.
- Among the visually impaired, the majority were found to be aware of the quality of paper and the size of the banknotes.

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## AWARDS & RECOGNITION

**104. Tomb of Sand**, written by **Geetanjali Shree** and translated by **Daisy Rockwell**, has won the 2022 International Booker Prize for Translated Fiction. It is the first book originally written in any Indian language to win the International Booker Prize, and the first novel translated from Hindi to be recognised by the award.

- English translation of Geetanjali Shree's Hindi novel *Ret Samadhi (2018)* was published as *Tomb of Sand* in 2021. The book depicts the adventures of an 80-year-old woman who slips into a deep depression at the death of her husband, then resurfaces to gain a new lease of life.

**105. Anjali Pandey**, Engines and Components Business Unit Leader at Cummins India, has been honoured with the Committed Leader Award at CII EXCON 2022 in Bengaluru, Karnataka. She has been honoured for her efforts to create a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace.

**106. Kishore Jayaraman**, President of India and South Asia for **Rolls-Royce**, has been awarded an Honorary Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) by Her Majesty The Queen. He has received the award in recognition of his services to international trade and investment, with the main focus on promoting India-UK trade.

**107.** Radio Jockey **Umar Nisar** (RJ Umar) from south Kashmir has been conferred the '01 Greatest Content material Award' and the Immunization Champion award by UNICEF at the annual Radio4Child 2022 Awards in Mumbai, Maharashtra. He has been awarded for his work of providing awareness and countering rumours to reach audiences during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Subhash Ola**, an innovator from Rajasthan who has developed the technology of saving energy in boilers by recycling steam, has won the Amazon Smbhav Entrepreneurship Challenge 2022 and his enterprise "**Geniusenergy Critical Innovation Private Limited**" has won the Start-up of the Year award.

- Geniusenergy Critical Innovation, a start-up recognized by Govt. of India, was incubated by the National Innovation Foundation (NIF), an autonomous body of the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Govt. of India.
- Earlier, he was conferred with NIF's 8th Biennial National Grassroots Innovation and Outstanding Traditional Knowledge Award in the year 2015.

**108.** Bollywood actor **Nawazuddin Siddiqui** has been honoured with the Excellence in Cinema Award at the French Riviera Film Festival held in Cannes, France. He has been bestowed the honour by two-time Emmy winner American actor-producer, Vincent De Paul.

- 109.** Director of the ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute, **A Gopalakrishnan**, has won the VASVIK (Vividhlaxi Audyogik Samshodhan Vikas Kendra) Industrial Research Award for the year 2020 in the category of Agricultural Sciences and Technology. He has been awarded for his significant contribution towards the research works related to fish genetics. The award carries a cash prize of Rs.1.51 lakh and citation.
- The VASVIK research award is presented to scientists and researchers who have excelled in various fields including agricultural sciences.
- 110.** Documentary filmmaker, film historian and author **Sanjit Narwekar** has been conferred the coveted **V Shantaram Lifetime Achievement Award** for his contributions to the understanding of films during the 17th edition of the Mumbai International Film Festival (MIFF). The award carries a cash prize of Rs.10 lakh, a golden conch and a citation.
- The Union Minister for Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal, has inaugurated the 17th edition of MIFF, with Bangladesh as the 'Country of Focus' at the Nehru Centre in Worli, Mumbai.
- 111.** The World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus has announced six **Global Health Leaders Awards 2022** to recognize outstanding contributions to advancing global health, demonstrated leadership and commitment to regional health issues. The award has been announced during the 75th edition of the World Health Assembly in Geneva.

#### **Recipients of the Award:**

- **Dr Paul Farmer:** He was Chair of the Department of Global Health and Social Medicine at Harvard Medical School and co-founder of Partners in Health.
- **Dr Ahmed Hankir:** He is a British-Lebanese psychiatrist. He is Senior Research fellow at the Centre for Mental Health Research in association with Cambridge University and Academic Clinical Fellow in Psychiatry at the King's College London in the United Kingdom.
- **Ms Ludmila Sofia Oliveira Varela:** She is a youth sports advocate from Cabo Verde and player of the Cabo Verde national volleyball team.
- **Polio workers in Afghanistan:** Honoured 8 volunteer polio workers who were shot and killed by armed gunmen in Takhar and Kunduz provinces in Afghanistan on 24 February 2022.
- **ASHA (Accredited Social Health Activist Workers):** ASHA (which means hope in Hindi) are the more than 1 million female volunteers in India. They have been honoured for their crucial role in linking the community with the health system, and to ensure those living in rural poverty can access primary health care services, as shown throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

- **Mr Yōhei Sasakawa:** He is the WHO Goodwill Ambassador for Leprosy Elimination, and Japan's Ambassador for the Human Rights of People Affected by leprosy.

**112.** The Music Academy has announced the **Sangita Kalanidhi award** winners for the years 2020, 2021 and 2022. It is awarded to one person who has contributed to the field of Carnatic music. It is considered as the highest accolade in the field of Carnatic music

- **Neyveli R Santanagopalan**, a renowned vocalist and guru, will receive the Sangita Kalanidhi award for the year **2020**.
- Eminent mridangam artiste and guru, **'Tiruvarur' Bhakthavathsalam**, will receive the award for the year **2021**.
- Lalgudi violin duo, **G J R Krishnan** and **Vijayalakshmi** will receive the award for the year **2022**.

**Other awards announced by the Music Academy:**

- **Sangita Kala Acharya awards:** Kivalur N G Ganesan (2020), Dr Ritha Rajan (2021), and Dr R S Jayalakshmi (2022).
- **T T K Award:** Thamarakkad Govindan Namboodri (2020), Nemani Somayajulu (2021), and A V Anand (2022).
- **Musicologist award:** Dr V Premalatha (2020)
- **Nritya Kalanidhi Award:** Rama Vaidhyanathan (2020), Narthaki Nataraj (2021) and Bragha Bessell (2022).

The awards will be presented by Chief Minister M K Stalin while inaugurating the 96th Annual Conference and Concert on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2022.

**113.** Indian filmmaker **Shaunak Sen's** documentary **'All That Breathes'** has won the top documentary award or L'Oeil d'Or at the 75<sup>th</sup> Cannes Film Festival 2022. The 90-minute documentary depicts the story of siblings Mohammad Saud and Nadeem Shehzad, who have devoted their lives to rescuing and treating injured birds, especially the Black Kites.

**Other winners at 2022 Cannes Film Festival:**

- **Palme d'Or:** Triangle of Sadness, directed by Ruben Östlund
- **Grand Prix:** Stars at Noon, directed by Claire Denis and Close directed by Lukas Dhont
- **Jury Prize:** Eo, directed by Jerzy Skolimowski and Le Otto Montagne, directed by Charlotte Vandermeersch and Felix van Groeningen
- **Best Director:** Park Chan-wook for Decision to Leave
- **Best Actor:** Song Kang-ho for Broker
- **Best Actress:** Zar Amir Ebrahimi for Holy Spider
- **Best Screenplay:** Tarik Saleh (Boy from Heaven)
- **Camera d'Or:** Gina Gammell and Riley Keough for War Pony
- **Jury Special Award:** Tori and Lokita
- **Jury Special Award (documentary):** Mariupolis 2

The winners are selected by a nine-member jury headed by French actor **Vincent Lindon** and presented in a closing ceremony inside Cannes' Grand Lumière Theater. The jury also included Bollywood actress **Deepika Padukone**.

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## BOOKS & AUTHORS

**114. Ruskin Bond** has authored a new book titled '**Listen to Your Heart: The London Adventure**'. The book is published by Penguin Random House India (PRHI).

Ruskin Bond was born in Kasauli, Himachal Pradesh in 1934. His first novel, *The Room on the Roof*, which was written when he was seventeen, received the John Llewellyn Rhys Memorial Prize in 1957. He received the Sahitya Akademi Award for English writing in India in 1992, the Padma Shri in 1999, the Delhi government's Lifetime Achievement Award in 2012 and Padma Bhushan in 2014 for his contribution to literature.

## PERSON IN NEWS

**115. Vijay Shekhar Sharma** has been re-appointed as the Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Paytm for a tenure of **5 years**. His tenure will be from 19<sup>th</sup> December 2022 to 18<sup>th</sup> December 2027. **Madhur Deora** has been appointed as the Additional Director of the company for a tenure of 5 years from 20<sup>th</sup> May 2022, to 19<sup>th</sup> May 2027.

**116.** JSW Group has appointed **Gaurav Sachdeva** as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of JSW One Platforms, an e-commerce venture of the group.

**117.** Australia's Labour Party leader **Anthony Albanese** has been sworn in as the **31st Prime Minister of Australia**. He is the first Labour prime minister since 2013. He has succeeded Scott Morrison.

**118. Rhythm Mamania**, a 10-year-old girl from Worli, Mumbai, **Maharashtra**, has become one of the youngest Indian mountaineers to summit the Mount Everest Base Camp (EBC) in the Himalayan ranges in Nepal. She has joined young Indian climbers to climb the base camp. She has achieved a rare feat by completing the climb to the base camp at an altitude of **5,364 meters** in 11 days.



- 119.** The President of India Ramnath Kovind has appointed **Vinai Kumar Saxena**, currently serving as the chairperson of the Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC), as the new Lieutenant Governor (L-G) of Delhi. He has succeeded Anil Baijal.
- 120.** India's Union Health Secretary **Rajesh Bhushan** has been appointed as the chairperson of the Committee B at the 75th World Health Assembly (WHA) in Geneva, Switzerland.
- The WHA functions through two types of committees: committee A and committee B. Committee A primarily discusses technical and health matters, and the Committee B primarily discusses administrative and financial matters of the World Health Organization (WHO).
- 121.** An Indian representative **Anwar Hussain Shaik** has been appointed as the Chairperson of the Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) under the Council for Trade in Goods at the World Trade Organisation (WTO) after a gap of 10 years. He will take this role from Elisa Maria Olmeda de Alejandro from Mexico.
- TBT Committee work involves two broad areas: Review of specific measures and strengthening implementation of the TBT agreements.
- 122.** IT services major **Infosys** has re-appointed **Salil Parekh** as the CEO and MD of the company for the period of five years i.e. from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2022 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2027. This appointment is based on the recommendations of the Nomination and Remuneration Committee (NRC) and is subject to the approval of shareholders.
- 123.** The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the proposal for the appointment of **Vivek Kumar**, IFS (2004) as Private Secretary (PS) to Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He is currently the director of the Prime Minister's Office (PMO).

## OBITUARIES

- 124.** Former Albanian President **Bujar Nishani** has passed away recently due to the health problem. He was born on 29<sup>th</sup> September 1966 at Durres, Albania. He served as the **President of Albania** from 2012 to 2017. He was well known for his centre-right political affiliation from the leftist coalition.
- 125.** Indian politician **Shivaji Patnaik** has passed away recently in Bhubaneswar, Odisha. He was born on 10<sup>th</sup> August 1930 in Khordha district of Odisha. He was considered the architect of the formation of **Communist Party of India (Marxist)** in Odisha in 1961. He was elected from the Bhubaneswar Lok Sabha seat thrice in 1977, 1989 and 1991.

**126.** Legendary British jockey **Lester Keith Piggott** has passed away recently in Geneva, Switzerland. He was born on 5<sup>th</sup> November 1935 in Wantage, Berkshire, England. He was popularly known as "The Long Fellow". He was an 11-time champion and winner of 30 Classics, including a remarkable nine Epsom Derby victories.

## SPORTS

**127. Manchester City** Football Club have won 2021/22 Premier League title after defeating Aston Villa in the final game of the season. With this, the club have now won four Premier League titles and eight major trophies under Pep Guardiola since his arrival in the summer of 2016.

**128. Hockey Haryana** has won the 12th Hockey India Sub Junior Women National Championship 2022 after defeating Hockey Jharkhand in the final match held in Imphal, Manipur. Uttar Pradesh Hockey team has defeated Madhya Pradesh Hockey team to finish on the third place in the championship.

**129.** Indian Grandmaster **Rameshbabu Praggnanandhaa** has registered his 2nd win of season over the world champion Magnus Carlsen (Norway) at the Chessable Masters online rapid chess tournament. He defeated Magnus Carlsen for the first time in February 2022 at Airthings Masters, an online rapid chess tournament.

**130. Ding Liren (China)** has won the Chessable Masters online rapid chess tournament after defeating Rameshbabu Praggnanandhaa in the final round.

**131.** Netherlands Red Bull's driver **Max Verstappen** has won the 2022 Spanish Grand Prix held at the Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya in Montmeló, Spain. Mexican Sergio Perez (Red Bull) has finished second, and Britain's George Russell (Mercedes) has finished third in the competition.

**132.** Red Bull's **Sergio Perez (Mexico)** has won the 2022 F1 Monaco Grand Prix title held at the Circuit de Monaco, Monaco. He has won his first Formula One race of the season and the third of his career. Ferrari's Carlos Sainz has finished second and Red Bull's Max Verstappen has finished third in the race.

**133.** Punjab Kings opening batter **Shikhar Dhawan** has become the first player to hit 700 fours in the history of the Indian Premier League (IPL). He has achieved this feat during the IPL 2022 match between Punjab Kings and Sunrisers Hyderabad at the Wankhede Stadium,

Mumbai. He is followed by David Warner and Virat Kohli, with 577 and 576 fours, respectively.

**134.** The first **Bahrain Para-Badminton International Championships 2022** has been held from 16<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> May in Manama, Bahrain. The Indian para badminton team has finished with **23 medals (7 Gold, 3 Silver, and 13 Bronze)**. Gaurav Khanna is the Indian para-badminton Team Head National Coach.

<b>Gold Medal Winners List</b>	
<b>Event</b>	<b>Gold Medal Winners</b>
<b>Women Singles</b>	Nithya Sre
<b>Men's Singles SL3</b>	Pramod Bhagat
<b>Men's Singles SL4</b>	Tarun Dhillon
<b>Men's Doubles SL3-SL4</b>	Nitesh Kumar and Tarun Dhillon
<b>Mixed Doubles SL3-SU5</b>	Pramod Bhagat and Manisha Ramdas
<b>Women Doubles SL3-SU5</b>	Mandeep Kaur and Manisha Ramdas
<b>Men's Doubles SH6</b>	Sivarajan and Dhinakaran

**135.** The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has signed a new partnership with the Non-Fungible Tokens (NFT) platform, **FanCraze** as the official associate partner for the Women's T20 Challenge.

- The Women's T20 Challenge features three teams – the Supernovas, Trailblazers and Velocity. The tournament has started on 23<sup>rd</sup> May and will run until 28<sup>th</sup> May 2022 at Maharashtra Cricket Association (MCA) Stadium in Pune, Maharashtra.

### **Non-Fungible Tokens (NFT):**

It is a digital asset that represents real-world objects like art, music, in-game items and videos. They are bought and sold online, frequently with cryptocurrency, and they are generally encoded with the same underlying software as many cryptos.

- 136.** Indian boxer and Tokyo Olympics bronze medallist **Lovlina Borgohain** has been elected as chairman and voting member on the Board of Directors for the Athletes' Committee, the International Boxing Association (IBA). She has received the highest number of votes during the election held at the 2022 Women's World Championships.
- 137.** Indian boxer **Shiva Thapa** has also been elected as a member of the IBA Athletes Committee following the election held during the 2021 IBA Men's World Championships.
- 138. Hockey Association of Odisha** has won the 12th Hockey India Senior Women's National Championship title after defeating Hockey Karnataka in the final competition held in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh.
- 139. Gujarat Titans** has won the 15<sup>th</sup> edition of the 2022 Indian Premier League (IPL) title by defeating Rajasthan Royals in the final match held at the Narendra Modi Stadium, Ahmedabad. Hardik Pandya is the captain of Gujarat Titans.

**List of all Winners (2022 IPL):**

- Aramco Purple Cap Winner of the Season: **Yuzvendra Chahal** (27 Wickets)
- Aramco Orange Cap Winner of the Season: **Jos Buttler** (863 Runs)
- Player of the Match (Final): Hardik Pandya
- Upstox Most Valuable Player of the Season: Jos Buttler
- Punch Super Striker of the Match (Final): David Miller
- Dream11 Game Changer of the Match (Final): Hardik Pandya
- Unacademy Let's Crack It Sixes Award (Final): Yashasvi Jaiswal
- CRED Powerplayer of the Match (Final): Trent Boult
- Upstox Most Valuable Asset of the Match (Final): Hardik Pandya
- SwiggyInstamart Fastest Delivery of the Match (Final): Lockie Ferguson
- Rupay On The Go 4s of the Match (Final): Jos Buttler
- IPL 2022 Emerging Player of the Season: Umran Malik
- Unacademy Let's Crack It Sixes Award of the Season: Jos Buttler
- Punch Super Striker of the Season: Dinesh Karthik (SR – 183.33)
- Dream 11 Game Changer of the Season: Jos Buttler
- PayTM Fairplay Award: Gujarat Titans & Rajasthan Royals
- CRED Powerplayer of the Season: Jos Buttler
- SwiggyInstamart Fastest Delivery of the Season: Lockie Ferguson (157.3 KMPH)
- Rupay On The Go 4s of the Season: Jos Buttler
- Tata IPL Catch of the Season: Evin Lewis



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## IMPORTANT DAYS

- 140. International Day for Biological Diversity** is observed annually on **22<sup>nd</sup> May** to increase awareness and understanding of the issues of biodiversity. Biodiversity is essential for sustaining the balance of the planet. The day was first observed in 2001.
- **Theme 2022:** "Building a shared future for all life"
- 141. International Day to End Obstetric Fistula** is observed annually on **23<sup>rd</sup> May** to promote action towards treating and preventing obstetric fistula, a condition that affects many girls and women during childbirth in developing countries.
- **Theme 2022:** "End Fistula Now: Invest in Quality Healthcare, Empower Communities!"
- 142. World Turtle Day** is observed annually on **23<sup>rd</sup> May** to help people celebrate and protect turtles and tortoises and their disappearing habitats around the world. The day was started by a non-profit organization called American Tortoise Rescue (ATR). This organization was founded in 1990 and the World Turtle Day was first observed in 2001. The year 2022 marks the 22<sup>nd</sup> International World Turtle Day.
- **Theme 2022:** "Shellebrate" Asks Everyone to Love and Save Turtles
- 143. Commonwealth Day** is observed annually on the **second Monday of March** in most of the 54 countries of the Commonwealth, with the British queen delivering a speech on the radio.
- However, India and a few other countries celebrate it on **24<sup>th</sup> May**. The day commemorates the formation of the British Empire in India and other colonies of Britain.
  - **Theme 2022:** 'Delivering a Common Future'
- 144.** The United Nations (UN) has observed the **"International Week of Solidarity with the Peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories"** from **25<sup>th</sup> May to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2022**. The aim is to take effective measures to protect and guarantee the inalienable rights of the people of the Non-Self-Governing Territories to their natural resources, including land. The week was first observed in 2000.

- 145. World Thyroid Day** is observed annually on **25<sup>th</sup> May** to promote awareness and understanding of thyroid diseases, their symptoms, prevention, and treatments. The day was established in 2008 during the congress of the European Thyroid Association (ETA). The day also marks the anniversary of ETA's foundation in 1965. Blue paisley ribbon is the international symbol of thyroid awareness.
- **Theme 2022:** Thyroid and Communication
  - International Thyroid Awareness Week has been observed from 22<sup>nd</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> May 2022 under the theme "It's not you. It's your thyroid".
- 146. International Missing Children's Day** is observed annually on **25<sup>th</sup> May** to spread awareness about child abduction and educate the general public on the measures to protect and safeguard their children. The day was first observed in 2001.
- 147. Africa Day** is observed annually on **25<sup>th</sup> May** to commemorate the founding of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU). OAU was created on 25<sup>th</sup> May 1963 and was transformed and remodelled into the African Union (AU) on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2000. The year 2022 marks the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the African Union.
- **Theme 2022:** "Strengthening Resilience in Nutrition and Food Security on the African continent"
  - The African Union has designated 2022 as the 'Year of Nutrition'
- 148. World Hunger Day** is observed annually on **28<sup>th</sup> May** to highlight the importance of ending hunger. The day was founded by The Hunger Project in 2011 to call attention to the global food crisis. The year 2022 marks the 12<sup>th</sup> edition of World Hunger Day.
- **Theme 2022:** #EndHunger #YouthEndingHunger
- 149. World Menstrual Hygiene Day** is observed annually on **28<sup>th</sup> May** to spread awareness about the importance of good menstrual health and hygiene for all women and girls. The day was initiated by WASH united in 2013 to create a world where no one is held back because of their period by 2030. The day was first observed in 2014.
- The World Menstrual Hygiene Day annually coincides with the observance of the **International Day of Action for Women's Health (28<sup>th</sup> May).**
- 150. International Everest Day** is observed annually on **29<sup>th</sup> May** to celebrate the first summit of Mount Everest (8,849 metres) by New Zealand's Sir **Edmund Hillary** and Nepal's **Tenzing Norgay Sherpa**. The duo climbed Mount Everest on this day in 1953.

- Nepal government announced May 29 as the International Everest Day in honour of Tenzing Norgay. The day was observed for the first time in 2008, the year Edmund Hillary died.

**151. International Day of United Nations (UN) Peacekeepers** is observed annually on **29 May** to pay tribute to the uniformed and civilian personnel's invaluable contribution to the work of the Organization and to honour nearly 4,200 peacekeepers who have lost their lives serving under the UN flag since 1948, including 135 last year. The theme for this year's Day is "**People. Peace. Progress. The Power of Partnerships.**" The day was first observed in 2003.

- The first UN peacekeeping mission was established on **29<sup>th</sup> May 1948** when the Security Council deployed a small number of UN military observers to the Middle East to form the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) with the objective to monitor the Armistice Agreement between Israel and its Arab neighbours.

**152. World Digestive Health Day** is observed annually on **29<sup>th</sup> May** to focus upon a particular digestive disease and/or disorder in order to increase general public awareness of prevention, prevalence, diagnosis, management and treatment of the disease and/or disorder. It is organised by the World Gastroenterology Organisation (WGO) in collaboration with the WGO Foundation (WGOF). The day was launched in 2004 to mark the 45th anniversary of the creation of WGO.

- **Theme 2022:** "Colorectal Cancer Prevention: Getting Back on Track"

**153. World Vape Day** is observed annually on **30<sup>th</sup> May** to raise awareness about the alternatives to harmful tobacco products and highlights the relative safety of e-cigarettes and their potential as harm reduction and smoking cessation tools. The day was launched by the World Vapers' Alliance (WVA).

**154. World No Tobacco Day** is observed annually on **31<sup>st</sup> May** to inform the public on the dangers of using tobacco, the business practices of tobacco companies, what the World Health Organization (WHO) is doing to fight tobacco use, and what people around the world can do to claim their right to health and healthy living.

- **Theme 2022:** 'Tobacco: Threat to our environment'
- In 1987, the World Health Assembly passed a resolution calling for the celebration of World No Tobacco Day every year on 31 May.

**155.** The World Health Organization (WHO) has selected **Jharkhand** for the World No Tobacco Day (WNTD) Award-2022 for recognising its efforts in controlling tobacco consumption. State

Tobacco Control Cell of the Health Department has received the award on the occasion of **World No Tobacco Day (31<sup>st</sup> May)** in New Delhi.

- As per the Global Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS)-1 report, the tobacco prevalence rate in the state was 51.1 percent, of which 48 percent were smokeless users. The GATS-2 report, which was published in 2018, states that tobacco users came down to 38.9 percent in the state, of which 35.4 percent were smokeless users.

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