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July 2022 - Week 3

WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

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NATIONAL AFFAIRS

- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has approved **Taranga Hill-Ambaji-Abu Road new rail line** to provide connectivity and improve mobility.
 - The estimated cost of this project is **Rs.2798.16 crores** and will be completed by 2026-27.
 - The total length of the new rail line will be **116.65 km** and will be constructed by the Ministry of Railways.
 - The project will generate direct employment during construction for about 40 lakh man-days.

Ambaji & Taranga Hill:

- Ambaji (Gujarat) is one of the **51 Shaktipeeths** in India and a famous pilgrimage destination.
- Taranga Hill (Gujarat) houses the **Ajithnath Jain temple** (one of the 24 holy Jain Tirthankaras).

2. Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has announced that the Ministry of Defence (MoD) has set a target of **Rs.1.75 lakh crores** in defence production by **2025**, which includes exports of **Rs 35,000 crores**. It has been announced during a workshop organized by the Department of Defence Production in New Delhi. The Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs) will play a major role in achieving this goal with a contribution of 70 to 80 percent.

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3. The **National Conference of State Agriculture and Horticulture Ministers** has been organized in **Bengaluru**, Karnataka. It has been organized by the Union Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare in coordination with the Government of Karnataka to commemorate Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav.
- During the conference, Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Narendra Singh Tomar, launched **e-NAM (National Agricultural Market) Platform of Platform (PoP)**. This platform will be used for promoting trade & marketing of agricultural produce, to get better prices of agriculture commodities to farmers. It will also create an efficient "One Nation One Market" ecosystem.
 - He has also released an equity grant of over **Rs.37 crore** to **1,018** Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme that will benefit about 3.5 lakh farmers.
 - National Agriculture Market (eNAM) is a pan-India electronic trading portal that networks the existing Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMC) mandis to create a unified national market for agricultural commodities. Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC) is the lead agency for implementing eNAM under the aegis of the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare.
4. The Department of Consumer Affairs (DoCA), Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution, has formed a committee to develop a comprehensive framework on the '**Right to Repair**' in order to emphasize the LiFE (Lifestyle for the Environment) movement through sustainable consumption.
- The committee will be chaired by **Nidhi Khare**, Additional Secretary, Department of Consumer Affairs.
 - The aim is to empower consumers and product buyers in the local market, harmonize trade between the original equipment manufacturers and the third-party buyers and sellers, emphasize on developing sustainable consumption of products and reduction in e-waste.

The idea of LiFE was introduced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26), 2021 at Glasgow. He launched the concept of the **LiFE movement** (Lifestyle for Environment) in India in June 2022. This includes the concept of reusing and recycling various consumer products.

5. The '**First I2U2 (India, Israel, United Arab Emirates, and United States) Leaders' Virtual Summit 2022**' has been organized in July 2022. It has been hosted by Israel. It has been virtually attended by Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi, US President Joe Biden, Israeli Prime Minister Yair Lapid, and the UAE's President Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan. The objective is to discuss common areas of mutual interest, strengthen economic partnership in trade and investment in respective regions and beyond.

Key initiatives:

- The I2U2 group has announced to invest **USD 2 billion** to develop a series of integrated food parks across India that will incorporate state-of-the-art climate-smart technologies to reduce food waste and spoilage, conserve fresh water, and employ renewable energy sources.
- The I2U2 countries will advance a hybrid renewable project in **Dwarka, Gujarat**, consisting of **300 MW** of wind and solar capacity complemented by a battery energy storage system.

I2U2:

It was first mentioned in October 2021, following the **Abraham Accords** between Israel and UAE, to deal with issues concerning maritime security, infrastructure, and transport in the region. It has identified six areas of cooperation in water, energy, transportation, space, health, and food security.

6. Union Minister of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Narayan Rane has launched '**Repos Pay**', a 'Mobile Electric Charging' platform, and '**Phy-gital**', a Fintech Platform at the 'Fuelling India 2022' event held in Mumbai, Maharashtra.
- 'Repos Pay' is a platform where one can order a Mobile Electric Charging Vehicle on the app and charge their vehicle.
 - 'Phy-gital' is a **Fintech platform** that will bring credit to fuel consumers (Buy Now Pay Later) through Technology.
7. Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has launched indigenously built '**Y- 3023 Dunagiri**', Project 17A frigates onto the River Hooghly in Kolkata, West Bengal.

- 'Dunagiri' is the **fourth ship** of Project 17A Frigates.
- It is named after a mountain range in the state of **Uttarakhand**.
- It is the reincarnation of the erstwhile 'Dunagiri', the Leander Class ASW Frigate.
- It is built by **Garden Reach Shipbuilders Limited (GRSE)**.

There will be **seven frigates** built under P-17 A for the Indian Navy which will be equipped with advanced stealth capability, four at Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders (MDL), Mumbai, and three at Garden Reach Ship Builders Limited (GRSE), Kolkata. The first three ships under Project 17A are **INS Nilgiri, INS Himgiri, and INS Udaygiri**.

8. The Ministry of Defence (MoD) has set up an **apex committee** to conduct performance and efficiency audits of capital procurements, logistics, inventory, and maintenance of assets of the armed forces.
- The committee will be headed by the **Defence Secretary (Presently, Ajay Kumar, IAS)**.
 - The committee comprises Vice Chiefs of the three services, Secretary Defence (finance), Chief of Integrated Staff Committee (CISC), Controller General of Defence Accounts (CGDA) and Director General (acquisition), and other senior officials of the ministry, including representatives from the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
 - The committee will advise Defence Minister on measures for overall improvement in the strengthening of internal oversight and risk management framework in various aspects of the functioning of the ministry.
9. The Department of Consumer Affairs (DoCA), Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution, has launched "**Jagruti**", a mascot for empowering consumers and generating awareness of their rights.
- Jagruti will be projected as an empowered consumer who is spreading awareness about consumer rights & addressing solutions to the problems faced by the consumers.
 - It will be shown along with the tagline "**Jago Grahak Jago**" in all its media campaigns.
 - It will create awareness about various themes of the Department like provisions of the Consumer Protection Act 2019, Hallmarking, National Consumer Helpline toll-free number 1915, provisions of weights & measures Act, decisions of the Central Consumer Protection Authority, and testimonials by consumers on grievance redressal.
10. Indian Navy has decommissioned **INS Sindhudhvaj**, the Russian-built **Kilo-class submarine**, after serving for about 35 years in Visakhapatnam.
- INS Sindhudhvaj was commissioned in June 1987.

- It means flag bearer and its crest depicts the grey colour nurse shark.
- The kilo-class boats are called **Sindhgosh class submarines** after the addition of lead vessels.

Note: Currently, India has 15 conventional diesel-electric submarines, 7 of which are of the Russian Kilo class.

- 11.** India's first AI-powered **Digital Lok Adalat** by the **Rajasthan State Legal Services Authority (RSLSA)** has been unveiled during the 18th All India Meet of State Legal Services Authorities (SLSA) held in Jaipur, Rajasthan. It will be used to dispose of pending disputes or disputes that are at the pre-litigation stage.
- It has been launched by the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) Chairman **Uday Umesh Lalit**.
 - It has been designed and developed by its technology partner Jupitice Justice Technologies.
- 12.** Rajiv Gandhi Cancer Institute and Research Centre (RGCI) has installed the first-ever Made-in-India **Surgical Robotic System, "SSI-Mantra"**, devised by new-age Indian med-tech start-up SS Innovations. The ingenious SSI Mantra, a brainchild of robotic cardiac surgeon **Dr. Sudhir P Srivastava**, will be signifying the beginning of a new era of surgical procedures in India.

Rajiv Gandhi Cancer Institute and Research Centre (RGCI):

It is a visionary project of the Indraprastha Cancer Society and Research Centre. It aims to provide the best of oncological care to those who need it. It is based in New Delhi.

- 13.** The Union Minister of State for Science and Technology **Jitendra Singh** has inaugurated the '**ISRO System for Safe & Sustainable Operations Management' (IS4OM)** facility at Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) control centre, Bengaluru, Karnataka, for safeguarding space assets.
- IS4OM facility will perform a host of functions such as safeguarding India's space assets, protecting them from space debris, predicting the orbital movement of debris, predicting likely collisions and coordinating with global agencies for all of the above.
 - This facility is a part of the Space Situational Awareness (SSA) program to identify space debris and monitor them.

Space debris:

Space debris is any piece of machinery or debris left by humans in space. It can refer to big objects such as dead satellites that have failed or been left in orbit at the end of their mission, and to smaller things, like bits of debris or paint flecks that have fallen off a rocket. It moves at a speed of 27,000 km per hour in Low Earth Orbit (LEO) and hence the collision causes huge damage to around 3000 operational satellites in space.

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14. The Central Government has declared “Zero Coupon Zero Principal Instruments” (ZCZP) as **securities** for the purposes of the Securities Contracts (Regulation) Act, 1956.

Securities:

They are fungible and tradable financial instruments used to raise capital in public and private markets. There are primarily three types of securities: equity, debt, and hybrids.

“Zero-coupon zero principal instrument” (ZCZP):

It refers to an instrument issued by a **Not for Profit Organisation (NPO)** which shall be registered with the Social Stock Exchange (SSE) segment of a recognised Stock Exchange in accordance with the regulations made by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI). These are meant for NGOs and on it, NGOs are not required to pay principal or interest after the completion of the project.

15. The Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare (MoA&FW) has formed a committee to make Minimum Support Price (MSP) more effective and transparent and to promote zero-budget-based farming.
- It is a **29-member** committee.
 - It will be chaired by **Sanjay Agarwal**, former Agriculture Secretary.
 - There is no mention about the tenure of the panel by which it should submit the report.
 - It will study the practicality of giving more autonomy to the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACPC), and suggest measures to make it more scientific.

16. Union Minister of State Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions **Jitendra Singh** has launched the first unique model to standardize Civil Service training institutions. The

“**National Standards for Civil Service Training Institutions**” (NSCSTI) has been launched at Capacity Building Commission (CBC) headquarters in New Delhi.

- NSCSTI is developed by CBC to create a baseline for Central Training Institutes on their current capacity, for elevating their quality and capacity of training delivery and to harmonise standards for training.
- It will also set aspirations for training institutions to strive toward excellence.

He has also inaugurated the web portal and approach paper for the National standards.

Additional Information:

Recently, the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) has appointed former army training command Chief Lieutenant General **Raj Shukla** (retired) as a member. With his appointment, UPSC now has a Chairperson, and six members, against its sanctioned strength of 10.

- 17.** Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has launched **75** newly-developed Artificial Intelligence (AI)-Enabled Military products during the first '**AI in Defence**' (**AIDef**) **Symposium and Exhibition 2022**. AIDef has been organized by the Department of Defence Production, Ministry of Defence (MoD) in New Delhi.

Domains of the Launched 75 Products:

The domains include AI Platform Automation; Autonomous/Unmanned/Robotics systems; Block Chain-based Automation; Command, Control, Communication, Computer & Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance; Cyber Security; Human Behavioural Analysis; Intelligent Monitoring Systems; Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems; Logistics and Supply Chain Management, Operational Data Analytics; Manufacturing and Maintenance; Simulators/Test Equipment and speech/voice analysis using Natural Language Processing.

Three AI products developed by the DPSUs have dual-use applications and good market potential, namely:

- AI-enabled Voice Transcription or Analysis software developed by Bharat Electronics Limited.
 - Driver Fatigue Monitoring System developed by Bharat Earth Movers Limited.
 - AI-enabled evaluation of Welding defects in X-rays of Non-destructive Testing developed by Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers.
- 18.** Prime Minister Narendra Modi has unveiled the pilotless drone “**Varuna**”, India’s first human passenger drone during Naval Innovation & Indigenisation Organisation (NIIO) seminar ‘Swavlamban’ at Dr Ambedkar International Centre in New Delhi.
- It has been developed by a start-up ‘**Sagar Defence Engineering**’.

- It has the capacity of carrying one human inside.
- It has a range of **25 km**.
- It can carry 130 kg payload and has 25-33 minutes of flight time.

19. The Union Textile Secretary has unveiled the logo “**Jute Mark India**” which will act as a certification of authenticity for **Jute products** manufactured in India.

- The Jute Mark label will be attached with the jute products. It will contain a unique QR code.
- It will help in strengthening the domestic market and exports of jute products from India.

JMI scheme:

JMI scheme will offer a collective identity and assurance regarding the origin and quality of jute and jute products. An outlay of **Rs 485.58 crore** has been allocated for the scheme, to promote jute sectors during the financial year **2022-2026**. Kolkata-based **National Jute Board** is the nodal agency, for the promotion of jute and jute products in Indian and global markets.

20. The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has approved the increase in the proportion of voting rights held by the Canada Pension Plan Investment Board (**CPPIB**) in ReNew Energy Global plc. (**ReNew**).

Other approvals by CCI:

- CCI has approved the proposed combination involving the indirect subscription of over **30%** of the total number of issued shares of CitiusTech by Bain Capital Investors, LLC (Bain Capital) and Bain Capital Credit Member, LLC and Bain Capital Credit Member II, Ltd. (Bain Credit), which represents approximately half the economic interest in CitiusTech (Proposed Combination).

CCI has also approved the acquisition of **Ageas Federal Life Insurance Company Limited (AFLI)** by its group company Ageas Insurance International NV. Ageas currently has 49 percent shareholding in AFLI and it jointly controls the operations of AFLI along with the other shareholders viz., IDBI and Federal Bank.

21. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has unveiled ‘**SPRINT Challenges**’, aimed at giving a boost to the usage of indigenous technology in Indian Navy. It has been unveiled during Naval Innovation and Indigenisation Organisation (NIIO) seminar ‘Swavlamban’ in New Delhi.

- This collaborative project is named SPRINT: *Supporting Pole-Vaulting in R&D through iDEX (Innovations for Defence Excellence), NIIO and TDAC (Technology Development Acceleration Cell)*.
- NIIO, in association with the Defence Innovation Organisation (DIO), aims to induct at least **75** new indigenous technologies/products into the Indian Navy.

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STATES AFFAIRS

22. Ahmedabad city and the state of **Kerala** have been featured on TIME Magazine's List of World's Greatest Places of 2022. The two major tourist destinations in India have been listed among the top 50 extraordinary destinations to explore in the world.

- Kerala has been described as one of India's most beautiful states with spectacular beaches, lush backwaters, temples, and palaces. The state is known as "**God's own country**" for good reason.
- Ahmedabad is **India's first UNESCO World Heritage City**. The city is also known as Gujarat's Science City with an entertainment centre and theme park.

The list also includes Ras Al Khaimah, UAE; Park City, Utah; Seoul; Great Barrier Reef, Australia; The Arctic; Valencia, Spain; Trans Bhutan Trail, Bhutan; International Space Station; Bogota; Lower Zambezi National Park, Zambia; Istanbul and Kigali, Rwanda.

23. The Kerala Fiber Optic Network Limited (K-FON) project has received an Internet Service Provider (ISP) license from the Union Department of Telecommunications. The Department of Telecommunication has issued an order granting ISP Category-B Unified License to K-FON to officially provide Internet services.

With this, **Kerala** has become the first & only state in the country to have its own internet service.

K-FON:

It is an initiative of the Government of Kerala which aims at eliminating the digital gap. It is a joint project of Kerala IT Infrastructure Ltd (KSITIL) and Kerala State Electricity Board Ltd. It is supposed to make internet available in 30,000 government institutions, and 14,000 BPL families.

The objectives are:

- To create a core network infrastructure (information highway) with non-discriminatory access to all service providers so that they can augment their connectivity gap.
- To provide a reliable, secure, and scalable intranet connecting all government offices, educational institutions, hospitals, etc.
- To partner with Multiple System Operators, Telecommunication Service Providers, and Internet Service Providers for providing free internet to economically backward households.

24. The **Telangana** government has joined hands with the **United Nations Development Program (UNDP)** to add **Data in Climate Resilient Agriculture (DiCRA)** as the latest addition to the Digital Public Goods Registry. This is the first-of-its-kind digital initiative to drive climate action. DiCRA provides open access to both data as well as analytics derived through open software based on Artificial Intelligence (AI). It will help in strengthening food systems, food security, and Industries in India.

25. **Varanasi** in Uttar Pradesh has been named the first “**Cultural and Tourism Capital**” of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)” for 2022-23 under a new rotating initiative that seeks to promote people-to-people ties and tourism among member countries. The title will be awarded during India’s SCO Presidency from September 2022 to September 2023.

The Samarkand Summit of SCO is scheduled to be held in Samarkand, Uzbekistan from September 15-16 2022. After this initiative, India will take over SCO’s Presidency and will host the next Heads of the State summit.

Note: Kazakhstan has announced to launch a “visa-free policy for tourists from India and other countries”.

Additional Information:

SCO is a Eurasian political, economic and military organization aiming to maintain peace, security, and stability in the region. It was created in 2001. The SCO Charter was signed in 2002 and entered into force in 2003. Its secretariat is based in **Beijing, China**. The present Secretary-General is **Zhang Ming** of China. **Members:** Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, India, and Pakistan.

26. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated the **Bundelkhand Expressway** at Kaitheri village in Orai tehsil of Jalaun district in **Uttar Pradesh**.

- The **296 kilometres** long four-lane Bundelkhand Expressway has been constructed at a cost of around **Rs.14,850 crore** rupees under the Uttar Pradesh Expressways Industrial Development Authority (UPEIDA).
 - The foundation stone of the expressway was laid by PM Narendra Modi in February 2020 and the construction was completed in 28 months.
 - It passes through **seven districts** of UP. They are: Chitrakoot, Banda, Mahoba, Hamirpur, Jalaun, Auraiya and Etawah.
 - It extends from **NH-35** at Gonda village near Bharatkoop in Chitrakoot district to near Kudrail village in Etawah district, where it merges with the **Agra-Lucknow** expressway.
 - The expressway will have four railway bridges, 18 big bridges along with 286 small bridges.
- 27.** India's first underwater metro train in **Kolkata** under the Hooghly River for establishing metro connectivity between Howrah and Kolkata is underway and will be made fully functional by **2023**.
- It will cover a distance of **16.34-km**-long east-west corridor.
 - Out of the 16.34 km long east-west stretch, 520 metres will be under the river bed, and 10.8 km is underground.
 - The tunnel corridor is built 33 meters below the riverbed and will connect Kolkata to Howrah.
 - It is being constructed by Kolkata Metro Rail Corporation (KMRCL).
- 28.** Chief Minister of Uttarakhand **Pushkar Singh Dhami** has launched the **Uttarakhand police app** and **e-FIR service** in Dehradun. The police app is an integrated version of five online services provided by the State police.
- e-FIR app will help in lodging the FIRs related to vehicle theft anywhere in the state.
 - The Uttarakhand police app will have all of the online services including **Lakshya Nasha Mukt Uttarakhand, Meri Yatra, Gaura Shakti, traffic eye, and public eye** that the State police offers to the general public in the state.
 - Cyber hotline number **1930** and the emergency number **112** have also been added to this app.
- 29.** The **22nd edition** of the **Bharat Rang Mahotsav 2022** has been held in **New Delhi** to remember and pay tribute to Indian freedom fighters, under "Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav 2022". The event has been organized by the National School of Drama (NSD), New Delhi from 16th July-14th August 2022.
- **Objective:** To raise awareness about unsung heroes of India's freedom struggle who have not made to India's history.

- 30 plays will be showcased in different cities of India.
- It will be organized in 5 other cities of the country namely **Bhubaneswar, Varanasi, Amritsar, Bengaluru, and Mumbai.**

30. The **Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP)** has set up its first mountain-warfare training centre in North-East (NE) India, it's second overall, to skill its troops in high-altitude combat and survival tactics as part of their mandate to guard the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China.

- The new centre has been established in remote **Dombang**, abutting the LAC, and is located at a height of 10,040 ft in **Sikkim** which shares a 220 km front of the India-China LAC.

ITBP established the first school called **Mountaineering and Skiing Institute (M&SI)** during 1973-74 at Auli near Joshimath. The M&SI is located at a height of more than 9,000 feet in the Himalayan ranges of Uttarakhand and has trained thousands of ITBP, Army, Air Force, and other security personnel in this domain.

31. The **Andhra Pradesh** State Wildlife Department has launched the first-ever survey of blackbucks along a stretch of islands in the Godavari between Dowleswaram and Yanam with the goal of drawing up a conservation plan to protect the endangered species.

- The Gowthami, Vasista, Vainteya and Vridha Gowthami, in Konaseema and East Godavari districts are a major habitat for blackbucks.
- Bobbarlanka, located downstream Dowleswaram barrage, is home to a huge number of blackbucks.

Blackbuck (Antelope cervicapra):

- It is a species of antelope native to India and Nepal.
- It is the State Animal of **Punjab, Haryana, and Andhra Pradesh.**
- It is considered the fastest animal in the world next to Cheetah.
- It is found in Central- Western India (MP, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Punjab, Haryana, Maharashtra, and Odisha) and Southern India (Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu).
- **Status:** Schedule I of Wildlife Protection Act 1972, Least Concern (IUCN Red data book), and Appendix III (CITES).

32. The Chief Minister of **Assam**, Himanta Biswa Sarma, has introduced '**Swanirbhar Naari**', a scheme to empower & financially support the indigenous weavers of Assam & their families. This scheme covers around 31 hand-woman items belonging to various other communities in

the state. Under this scheme after the products are bought, the government will sell them both inside and outside of the state.

33. Himachal Pradesh has become the first state in India to connect all registered commercial vehicles equipped with Vehicle Location Tracking Device (VLTD) with Emergency Response Support System (ERSS). This system has been launched by the Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh Jai Ram Thakur at Peterhof, in Shimla.

- These vehicles can be tracked anywhere in India through VLTD.
- More than 9,423 vehicles have been registered and linked with ERSS.
- Now it will be monitored by both the police and the transport department in the state.
- The Vehicle Location Tracking Device with Emergency Panic Button System and Command Control Center has been connected with ERSS 112.

Emergency Response Support System (ERSS):

It is one of the key projects of the Ministry of Home Affairs under the Nirbhaya Fund. It is a Pan-India single number (112) based emergency response system for citizens in emergencies. It is capable of receiving emergency calls through voice call to 112, email, panic buttons activated calls and 112 India mobile App.

34. The Government of **Uttar Pradesh** has appointed **Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu India** as consultant to achieve the target of making the state a USD 1-trillion economy. The consultant will provide the required mission and departmental reforms will be made accordingly. The consultant will critically analyse the macro and micro-economic sectoral data around Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP), trade, investment, expenditure, savings, workforce participation, inflation, import & export, etc. to identify the strengths and weaknesses of UP's economy.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

35. The **James Webb Space Telescope (JWST)** of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has captured the distinct signature of water, along with evidence for clouds and haze, in the atmosphere surrounding a hot, puffy gas giant planet orbiting a distant Sun-like star. The observation, which is the most detailed of its kind to date, highlights Webb's unprecedented ability to analyze atmospheres hundreds of light-years away.

JWST has also released an astonishing view of Jupiter, its moons, and even its rings.

Additional Information:

The James Webb Space Telescope is the world's premier space science observatory. It is an international program led by NASA with its partners, ESA (European Space Agency) and CSA (Canadian Space Agency).

36. Sri Lankan politician and six-time Prime Minister, **Ranil Wickremesinghe** has been elected as the **9th President of Sri Lanka**. He secured 134 votes in the presidential election by the 225-member parliament. He will serve the remaining term of former President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, which ends in 2024.

Recently, **Dinesh Gunawardena** has been appointed as the 15th Prime Minister of Sri Lanka.

37. Prime Minister of Italy **Mario Draghi** has submitted his resignation to President Sergio Mattarella after the withdrawal of support of key coalition parties. He will remain the caretaker Prime Minister of **Italy** until a new Leader is appointed.
38. Wall Street veteran **Marty Chávez** has joined the board of Google parent Alphabet. His appointment marks the first change to the Alphabet board since 2020, when former Google Chief Executive Officer Eric Schmidt departed.
39. A **SpaceX Dragon** resupply spacecraft has left for the International Space Station (ISS) carrying science experiments aiming to help carry out climate science research in space. The Cargo Dragon spacecraft has launched the Falcon 9 rocket from NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida and is transporting 5,800 pounds of science experiments, crew supplies, and other cargo. This is SpaceX's 25th commercial resupply services mission to the ISS for NASA.

REPORTS & INDICES

40. The website of the **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)** has been ranked first under the Central Ministries Portal in National e-Governance Service Delivery Assessment.

Digital Police portal of the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) has been ranked **2nd** in the assessment under the Central Ministries Services Portal.

- The National e-Governance Service Delivery Assessment has been conducted by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) in association with its knowledge partners NASSCOM and KPMG in 2021.
- **Objective:** To improve the effectiveness of states and Union Territories and Central governments in the delivery of online services to citizens.

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All Government portals that were evaluated were divided into two main categories: States & Union Territories, and Central Ministry service portals.

Four main parameters of assessment:

- Accessibility
- Content Availability
- Ease of Use and Information Security
- Privacy for Central Ministry Portals

An additional three parameters were also used for the Central Ministry Services Portals: End Service Delivery, Integrated Service Delivery and Status and Request Tracking.

- 41.** The Ministry of Education has released the **7th Edition of National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) Rankings 2022**. It ranks colleges, universities, and research institutions and also provides an overall ranking of all of them combined. Institutes are ranked across seven subject domains, namely engineering, management, pharmacy, law, medical, architecture and dental. It is based on five parameters: **Teaching, Learning and Resources (TLR), Research and Professional Practice (RP), Graduation Outcomes (GO), Outreach and Inclusivity (OI), and Peer Perception.**

Key Highlights:

- **Overall national ranking: Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Madras**, is again the top higher educational institute in the country followed by the **Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru**, and **IIT Bombay**.
- **University:** IISc, Bengaluru tops the category.
- **Colleges:** Miranda College has achieved the 1st position amongst colleges for the 6th consecutive year, followed by Hindu College, Delhi and Presidency College Chennai.
- **Research Institution:** IISc, Bengaluru is ranked the best research institution followed by IIT Madras.

- **Engineering:** Among engineering institutions, IIT-Madras has remained number one.
- **Management:** Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Ahmedabad was ranked one followed by IIM Bengaluru.
- **Medical:** All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi has topped the list in Medical for the fifth consecutive year.
- **Pharmacy:** Jamia Hamdard has topped the list in Pharmacy subject for the fourth consecutive year.
- **Architecture:** IIT Roorkee has topped for the second time in Architecture subject.
- **Law:** National Law School of India University, Bengaluru has retained its first position in Law for the fifth consecutive year.
- **Dental:** Saveetha Institute of Medical and Technical Sciences, Chennai has topped the list in Dental subject.

The National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) was approved by the Ministry of Education (Erstwhile Ministry of Human Resource Development) in September 2015. It was first released in 2016.

42. Germany-based InterNations has released the **Expat Insider Rankings for 2022**. The Expat Insider 2022 survey report surveyed 11,970 respondents to evaluate their life abroad. These respondents represented 177 nationalities and lived in 181 countries or territories worldwide. A total of 52 countries have been ranked on the list.
- **Mexico** has topped the ranking, followed by Indonesia, and Taiwan.
 - Kuwait (52) has been ranked as one of the least-preferred destinations by expatriates.
 - **India** has been ranked **36** out of the 52 countries.
43. Indian industrialist **Gautam Adani** with a net worth of over **USD 114 billion** has secured the **fourth rank** on the Forbes' Real-Time Ranking of the World's Billionaires list. He has surpassed Microsoft founder Bill Gates, fifth rank with an estimated USD 102 billion net worth.
- **Elon Musk** has secured the first rank with USD 230 billion net worth, followed by Bernard Arnault of Louis Vuitton at the second spot and Amazon's Jeff Bezos at third on the list.
 - India's Reliance Industries (RIL) Mukesh Ambani has secured the tenth rank on the list with a net worth of USD 88 billion.
44. London-based Henley & Partners has released the **Henley Passport Index 2022**. The **Japanese passport** is the world's most powerful passport with a visa-free score of 193.

Singapore (192) & South Korea (192) have been ranked second, and Germany (190) & Spain (190) have been ranked third in the index.

- **Indian passport**, along with **Mauritius and Tajikistan**, has been ranked **87th** in the index with a visa-free score of 60.
- Pakistan's passport is the fourth-worst in the world, one rank below Yemen, and three ranks above Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan.

The Henley Passport Index is the original ranking of all the world's passports according to the number of destinations their holders can access without a prior visa. The ranking is based on exclusive data from the International Air Transport Association (IATA), which maintains the world's largest and most accurate database of travel information. It was launched in 2006.

45. The **third edition** of the **India Innovation Index 2021** has been released by NITI Aayog Vice Chairman Suman Bery in the presence of Member VK Saraswat, CEO Parameswaran Iyer, and Senior Adviser Neeraj Sinha, and Institute for Competitiveness Chairman Amit Kapoor. It has been prepared by NITI Aayog and the Institute for Competitiveness.

India's Performance on the Global Innovation Index

Year	GII Score	GII Rank	Total Countries
2017	35.50	60	127
2018	35.20	57	126
2019	36.58	52	129
2020	35.60	48	131
2021	36.40	46	132

India Innovation Index:

It is a comprehensive tool for the evaluation and development of the country's innovation ecosystem. It ranks the states and the union territories on their innovation performance to build healthy competition amongst them. It was first released in 2019.

The number of indicators has increased from 36 (in the India Innovation Index 2020) to 66 (in the India Innovation Index 2021). The innovation index is based on 7 pillars: **Human capital; Investment; Knowledge workers; Business environment; Safety and legal environment; Knowledge output; and Knowledge diffusion.**

Highlights of India Innovation Index 2021:**'Major States' category:**

- **Karnataka** has topped the index with a score of 18.01, followed by Telangana, and Haryana.

India Innovation Index

Major States		
States	III 2021	Rank
Karnataka	18.01	1
Telangana	17.66	2
Haryana	16.35	3
Maharashtra	16.06	4
Tamil Nadu	15.69	5
Punjab	15.35	6
Uttar Pradesh	14.22	7
Kerala	13.67	8
Andhra Pradesh	13.32	9
Jharkhand	13.10	10
West Bengal	12.98	11
Rajasthan	12.88	12
Madhya Pradesh	12.74	13
Gujarat	12.41	14
Bihar	11.58	15
Odisha	11.42	16
Chhattisgarh	10.97	17

'North East and Hill States' category:

- **Manipur** has topped the index with a score of 19.37, followed by Uttarakhand, and Meghalaya.

'Union Territories and City States' category:

- **Chandigarh** has topped the index with a score of 27.88, followed by Delhi, and Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

NE and Hill states			UT and City states		
States	III 2021	Rank	States	III 2021	Rank
Manipur	19.37	1	Chandigarh	27.88	1
Uttarakhand	17.67	2	Delhi	27.00	2
Meghalaya	16.00	3	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	17.29	3
Arunachal Pradesh	15.46	4	Puducherry	15.88	4
Himachal Pradesh	14.62	5	Goa	14.93	5
Sikkim	13.85	6	Jammu and Kashmir	12.83	6
Mizoram	13.41	7	Dadra and Nagar Haveli & Daman and Diu	12.09	7
Tripura	11.43	8	Lakshadweep	7.86	8
Assam	11.29	9	Ladakh	5.91	9
Nagaland	11.00	10			

46. NITI Aayog has released a report titled- '**Digital Banks: A Proposal for Licensing & Regulatory Regime for India**'. The report suggested setting up Digital Banks (DBs) and a licensing and regulatory framework for such Banks. The report assessment is based on an equal-weighted 'Digital Bank Regulatory Index' which comprises four factors, namely **Entry barriers; Competition; Business restrictions; and Technological neutrality**. The elements of these four factors are mapped against the five benchmark jurisdictions of Singapore, Hong Kong, the United Kingdom, Malaysia, Australia, and South Korea.

Digital Bank (DBs):

It will be defined in the Banking Regulation Act, 1949, and shall have its own balance sheet and legal existence. It will be different from the 75 Digital Banking Units (DBUs), announced by Finance Minister in Union Budget 2022-23. It will be subject to prudential and liquidity norms on a par with existing commercial banks.

Financial Inclusion (FI):

- India has made rapid strides in furthering Financial Inclusion (FI), catalysed by the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) and India Stack.
- The FI has been furthered by the Unified Payments Interface (UPI), which has witnessed extraordinary adoption.
- The FI has also resulted in Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) through apps such as PM-KISAN and extending microcredit facilities to street vendors through PM-SVANIDHI.

As per the report, Digital Business bank may be required to bring in **Rs.20 crore** of minimum paid-up capital in the restricted phase. Upon progression from the sandbox, a full-scale Digital Business bank will be required to bring in **Rs.200 crore**.

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PRACTICE MOCK

- 47.** The **India BioEconomy Report 2022**, based on the data on biotech sector's contribution to the economy, has been prepared by the Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (**BIRAC**). The report has been released by the Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology, Jitendra Singh. He has also launched a special **Biotech Ignition Grant call for North East Region (BIG-NER)** with the financial support of up to Rs 50 lakhs each to 25 startups and entrepreneurs from NER to develop biotech solutions.

Key Highlights of the report:

- As per the report, India's bioeconomy is likely to touch **USD 150 billion** by **2025** and over **USD 300 billion** by **2030**.
- India's Bioeconomy has reached over **USD 80 billion** in 2021 recording **14.1%** growth over USD 70.2 billion in 2020.
- The number of Biotech Start-ups in the country have increased from 50 to over 5,300 in the last 10 years.
- India is among the top three countries of South Asia and top 12 destinations for biotechnology in the world, with approximately 3 percent share in the global biotechnology industry.
- India has 2nd highest number of USFDA approved manufacturing plants outside the US.

GOVERNMENT SCHEMES & PROGRAMMES

- 48.** The Ministry of Commerce and Industry has authorized the continuation of the Scheme for **Rebate of State and Central Taxes and Levies (RoSCTL)** with the same rates as announced by the Ministry of Textiles for exports of apparel/garments and made-ups until **31st March 2024**. The aim is to increase exports and generate employment in the textile industry.

RoSCTL scheme:

- It was introduced in **March 2019** following the implementation of GST in 2017.

- It replaced the **RoSL (Rebate of State Levies)** scheme, a monetary incentive scheme under which Customs would deposit the rebate directly into the exporter's bank account.
- It aims to reimburse all embedded State and Central Taxes/Levies for exports of manufactured goods and garments.
- It compensates the State and Central Taxes and Levies in addition to the Duty Drawback Scheme on the export of apparel/ garments and Made-ups by way of rebate.

49. The **Ministry of Women and Child Development** has issued detailed guidelines for the 'Mission Shakti' scheme. The norms of 'Mission Shakti' will be applicable with effect from **1st April 2022**.

Mission Shakti scheme:

- The Government has launched 'Mission Shakti', an integrated women empowerment programme as an umbrella scheme for the safety, security, and empowerment of women for implementation during the 15th Finance Commission period 2021-22 to 2025-26.
- It has two sub-schemes: **'Sambal' and 'Samarthya'**.
- The "Sambal" sub-scheme is for the safety and security of women. In this, 100% funding will be provided by Central Government.
- The "Samarthya" sub-scheme is for the empowerment of women. It will be implemented with 60:40 funding between Centre and State Governments and UTs with legislature except North East & Special Category States where the ratio is 90:10. For UTs without legislature, 100% funding will be provided by the central government.

50. The Central Government will launch a nationwide campaign **"Har Ghar Tiranga"**. Under this campaign, citizens will be encouraged to raise the national flag at their residences. It has been launched as a part of Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav.

- The nodal ministry of the campaign is the **Ministry of Culture**.
- As part of the campaign, the Indian national flag will be flown atop more than 20 crore houses across the country from **13th to 15th August 2022** through public participation while government and private establishments will also be involved.

51. The Government of **Delhi** has observed '**Happiness Utsav**' to commemorate the fourth anniversary of its Happiness Curriculum for schools. The 15-day event aims at taking the Happiness Curriculum to the communities and spreading awareness about ways to attain happiness.

Life coach **Gaur Gopal Das** taught the nuances of happiness in a special session for students on the occasion at Kautilya Sarvodaya Bal Vidyalaya in Chirag Enclave.

BUSINESS & ECONOMY

52. NASSCOM Foundation has tied up with **Google** to set up “**DigiVaani Call Center**” in collaboration with a not-for-profit body **Indian Society of Agribusiness Professionals (ISAP)** to help women farmers scale up their businesses.

- The “DigiVaani Call Center” project is on a pilot basis currently and initially around 20,000 rural women entrepreneurs will be included across **six states** including *Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Haryana, and Rajasthan*.
- This call center will act as one place where rural women entrepreneurs will be able to call and get information about various schemes available for them, which can help them scale up their businesses, be it government schemes or any other information that can be of help for them.
- The call center has been established at the Delhi and Lucknow offices of ISAP.
- The call center project is being funded by Google, through its philanthropic arm Google.org.

53. The Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) has launched the **Knowledge Portal for Khadi** to provide design directions to the Khadi institutions. It has been developed by the Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Khadi.

- The portal has been inaugurated by **Preeta Verma**, CEO of KVIC.
- The CoE for Khadi has been set up by KVIC, Ministry of MSME at National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT) Delhi to support Khadi Institutions.

54. NHPC Limited has signed two Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the development of “**Pilot Green Hydrogen Technologies**” in **Leh and Kargil** districts of Union Territory of Ladakh that is in line to reduce carbon footprint in the region.

- As per MOU signed for the Leh district, NHPC shall consider the development of Pilot Green Hydrogen fuel cell-based Microgrid including Hydrogen production to meet the power requirement of the NHPC guest house at Nimmo Bazgo Power Station (Leh) within NHPC premises.
- As per MOU signed for the Kargil district, the hydrogen generated in Kargil will be used in fuel cells for mobility which will be capable to run two buses for up to 8 hrs in the local area of Kargil.

55. Athletics Federation of India (AFI) and **Reliance Industries Limited (RIL)** have signed a long-term partnership to provide world-class facilities to talented athletes, with a special

focus on **women**. This partnership will have a special focus on girl athletes and aim to bridge the gender divide and enable them to achieve their dreams.

- 56. Syngenta India**, a global agri-business major, has launched a unique biodiversity sensor project, claimed to be the first in the world, in partnership with the **Indian Institute of Technology, Ropar**, Punjab, (IIT-R), to study the behaviour of insects around farms, particularly bees and butterflies. The biodiversity monitoring will be done by a modem-like sensor that has cameras to capture real-time images of the bees and butterflies.
- The entity has also flagged off the **Drone Yatra** which will cover 10,000 km across the country. It will cover 13 states and spread awareness about drone spraying.
- 57. Flipkart** has signed a pact with the **Bihar State Skill Development Mission (BSDM)** to launch the initiatives of the Supply Chain Operations Academy (SCOA) in the state.
- **Objective:** To create a pool of skilled supply chain operations talent and impart relevant industry training and knowledge.
 - SCOA was launched in October 2021.
 - The training programme under SCOA has been designed and created by the Flipkart team to offer a holistic experience and training to candidates.
 - It provides 15 days of digital classroom training and 45 days of on-the-job apprenticeship at Flipkart supply chain facilities, for which the qualified candidates will be paid a stipend of Rs 17,500.
- 58.** Morgan Stanley has lowered India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) forecast by 40 basis points (bps) to **7.2%** for FY23 from 7.6%, and by 30 bps to **6.4%** for FY24 from 6.7% amid slower global growth.
- The inflation forecast for FY23 for India has fallen to 6.5% from 7% earlier. It expects it to average 5.3% in FY24.
 - It expects global growth to slow to **1.5%** Y-o-Y in the Quarter Ending (QE) December 2022 from 4.7% in QE December 2021.

Other GDP forecasts:

- The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) has lowered India's GDP forecast for **FY23** by 40 basis points to **7%** from 7.4% estimated earlier.
- The Asian Development Bank (ADB), has also lowered India's GDP growth forecast to **7.2 percent** for **FY23** from 7.5% estimated earlier. It has also lowered **FY24** growth forecast to **7.8 percent**, from 8 percent estimated earlier.

59. Snapdeal, an e-commerce platform based in New Delhi (Delhi), has become the first e-commerce marketplace to debut on the Open Network Digital Commerce (ONDC) platform. Snapdeal has signed the onboarding agreement with the network and will debut in August 2022.

- Recently, ONDC has expanded its pilot to **15 more cities**. They are Noida, Faridabad, Lucknow, Bijnor, Bhopal, Chhindwara, Kolkata, Pune, Chennai, Kannur, Thrissur, Udipi, Kanchipura, Pollachi, Mannar and Ramnathpuram.
- The network first began its pilot in April 2022 in Delhi, Bengaluru, Coimbatore, Bhopal and Shillong.

ONDC:

It is an initiative of the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. It aims to create new opportunities, curb digital monopolies and by supporting micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and small traders and help them get on online platforms.

60. Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited (RINL) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **Software Technology Parks of India (STPI)** and **STPINEXT** to set up the Industry 4.0 Centre of Excellence (CoE) for the promotion of innovation and start up activities for RINL and other industries in and around Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.

- The CoE has been named **"Kalpataru"**.
- The CoE will come up to over 6,000 square feet at Ukkunagaram.

61. JSW Steel has joined hands with US-based **Boston Consulting Group (BCG)** to meet its decarbonization goals. JSW Steel has an ambitious target of reducing its carbon emission by **42 percent** by **2029-30** versus the base year 2005. BCG will make use of its unique CO2 AI platform as well as its top-tier digital and analytics skills to help JSW Steel to achieve its target.

Note: The iron and steel industry globally accounts for around 8 percent of total carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions on an annual basis, whereas in India, it contributes 12 percent to the total CO2 emissions.

62. As per the latest data released by the Ministry of Commerce & Industry (MoCI), the foreign direct investment (FDI) equity inflow in the **research and development (R&D) sector** has increased to **\$343.64 million** in Calendar Year (CY) 2021, rising **516%** from \$55.77 million in CY 2020.

- **Karnataka** is the top FDI Equity recipient state in R&D during 2021 followed by Telangana and Haryana.
- **Singapore** is the top investing country in R&D during 2021 with 40 percent share of total FDI Equity in R&D followed by Germany (35 percent) and the USA (11 percent).
- **Daimler Truck Innovation Center** is the top FDI Equity inflow recipient company in R&D during 2021 with 35 percent share of total FDI Equity in R&D followed by Aragen Life Sciences Private Limited (34 percent) and Stelis Biopharma Private Limited (21 percent).

Note: FDI is permitted under **100 percent** automatic route in **R&D sector** subject to applicable laws/regulations, security and other conditions.

- 63. Maldives** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **India** for judicial cooperation to accelerate court digitization and boost prospects for IT companies & start-ups in both countries. Under this MoU, both sides will exchange knowledge, technology in judicial & other legal areas and further the objectives of 'Neighbouring First' policy.
- 64.** India has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **Namibia** to promote Wildlife Conservation and Sustainable Biodiversity Utilization. The MoU seeks to promote the conservation and restoration of cheetahs in their former range from which the species went extinct.

The MoU has been signed by Minister of Environment Forests and Climate Change, **Bhupender Yadav**, and the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Namibia, **Netumbo Nandi Ndaitwah**.

- As per the agreement with Namibia, India will get eight cheetahs in two batches of four.
- Cheetahs will be reintroduced into the **Kuno National Park** in Madhya Pradesh, with the first batch of cheetahs expected to arrive before **15th August 2022**.
- The translocation project is being managed by the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) as part of the Cheetah Translocation Project (CTP) under the Union Environment Ministry.

India is also expected to get 12 cheetahs from South Africa, for which a draft agreement has already been signed. In addition, 50 Cheetahs will be introduced in different National Parks in India over the course of 5 years.

- 65. Larsen & Toubro (L&T) Technology Services** has become the first technology company to publicly express its interest in the government's direct allocation of spectrum for captive 5G networks. The entity will obtain spectrum to set up a 5G non-public network to build use

cases on the technology. It has also entered into a partnership with network software provider **Mavenir** to deliver 5G automation services and speedy integration of open radio access network products.

Recently, India issued rules for non-telecom enterprises to acquire spectrum directly from the telecom department for setting up private 5G networks.

66. Vedanta Group has tied up with **Detect Technologies**, an IIT Madras-incubated startup, to implement safety incident detection by deploying T-Pulse HSSE Monitoring System, based on artificial intelligence (AI), across all of its business units. The technological stack offered by T-Pulse is centralised, scalable, and intended for plug-and-play implementation.

67. CSIR-CECRI (Central Electrochemical Research Institute) and **GODI** India have signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) to operate and maintain an advanced Lithium-ion cell manufacturing unit in **Taramani, Chennai**.

Hyderabad-based GODI India is the first Indian company to manufacture Made-in-India and Made-for-India Lithium-ion cells, which is certified by BIS (Bureau of Indian Standards).

68. NHPC Limited has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **Damodar Valley Corporation (DVC)** to explore the formation of a Joint Venture Company (JVC) for exploring and setting up hydropower and pump storage projects.

69. Indian Chamber of Commerce - North Eastern Initiative (ICC-NE) and **North Eastern Development Finance Corporation Ltd (NEDFi)** have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to work jointly towards promoting investment in Assam and other states of the region.

BANKING & FINANCE

70. Indian Bank has been awarded the Best Performing Bank Award in Tamil Nadu for the FY 2021-22 under the SHG Bank Linkage Programme category from National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD). The lender has been felicitated during the 41st Foundation Day of NABARD.

71. Quantum Mutual Fund has launched '**Quantum Nifty 50 ETF (Exchange Traded Fund) Fund of Fund (FoF)**', an open-ended fund of fund scheme investing in units of Quantum Nifty 50 ETF i.e. approximately equal to the price of 1/10th of the Nifty 50 Index.

Features of Quantum Nifty 50 ETF FoF:

- India's first-of-its-kind Nifty 50 ETF Fund of Fund
- No DEMAT account is required in this.
- SIP (Systematic Investment Plan) option is available.
- One-Stop-Shop for 12:20:80 Passive Asset Allocation.

72. Kotak Mahindra Bank has become the first private sector lender to be fully integrated with the new e-filing portal of the Income Tax department after the completion of its technical integration with the new e-filing portal. Customers, both Individual and corporate can pay direct taxes through the portal's e-pay tax tab using Kotak net banking.

Note: In October 2022, Kotak Mahindra Bank became the first scheduled private sector bank to receive approval as a collections partner for taxes.

73. Yes Bank has signed a binding term sheet with **JCF ARC LLC** and **JC Flowers Asset Reconstruction** for strategic partnership in relation to the sale of identified stressed loans of the bank. The JC Flowers ARC will be the base bidder for a proposed sale of an identified stressed loan portfolio of the bank aggregating to up to **Rs.48,000 crore**.

74. The **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the **Singapore government** to promote greater investment in the Asia and Pacific region and to recognize the importance of private sector finance as well as catalysing public sector resources for sustainable and inclusive development.

75. DBS Bank has been recognized as the '**World's Best SME Bank**' by Euromoney for the second time since 2018. The lender has also clinched three first-time awards at Euromoney's Awards for Excellence 2022: World's Best 'Financial Innovation of the year' 2022, Asia's Best Bank for Wealth Management 2022, and Asia's Best Bank for SME Award 2022.

Other winners:

- **Bank of America:** World's Best Bank 2022
- **Goldman Sachs:** World's Best Investment Bank 2022

76. Bank of India and the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) in association with K-fintech have launched a digital platform that allows customers to open National Pension System (NPS) accounts using mobile phones. K-fintech provides SaaS (Software as a Service) based end-to-end transaction management, channel management, and compliance solutions.

77. Federal Bank has launched its new online tax payment service in association with the **Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT)**. With this partnership, Federal Bank has become registered under **Tin 2.0 platform** of Income Tax Department. Now, there is no requirement of PAN/TAN registration/verification for taxpayers.

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PRACTICE MOCK

78. Go Digit General Insurance has launched '**Pay as you Drive**' (**PAYD**), an add-on feature for motor insurance Own Damage (OD) policies. With this, Digit Insurance has become India's first insurers to introduce the add-on for its customers.

- Those individuals who drive less than 10, 000 kilometres per year on average will receive discounts of up to 25%.
- Go Digit will use odometer reading, telematics data and annual kilometre opted to give this discount.

79. Karnataka Bank has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with **JCB India**, a manufacturer of earthmoving and construction equipment in India, to offer equipment finance to customers of JCB India.

Under this MoU, JCB India has nominated Karnataka Bank as its "preferred financier" where in Individuals/Contractors/Company /Partnership firms/LLP etc., can avail loans from the lender at competitive interest rates for purchasing a wide range of equipment from the product line of JCB India.

80. DBS Bank India has collaborated with **Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance Company** to provide life insurance solutions to the customers of DBS Bank. Under this collaboration, the new and existing customers from more than 550 branches of DBS Bank can choose from Bajaj Allianz Life's retail products including term, savings, retirement, and investment products.

81. Standard Chartered Bank has launched a co-branded credit card '**EaseMyTrip Standard Chartered Credit Card**' in association with the online travel tech platform **EaseMyTrip**.

- The credit card will provide a flat 20% instant discount on domestic and international hotel bookings.
- The card will provide a flat 10% instant discount on domestic and international flight bookings.

82. Recently, **IndusInd Bank** has collaborated with table reservation platform **EazyDiner** to launch a tailor-made co-branded credit card – '**EazyDiner IndusInd Bank Credit Card**'.
83. The Financial Services Institutions Bureau (FSIB), formerly Banks Board Bureau, has recommended **Rajkiran Rai G**, a former Managing Director (MD) of the Union Bank of India, for the position of MD at the **National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development (NaBFID)**.

NaBFID:

It is a newly created Development Finance Institution (DFI) that aims to support the development of long-term non-recourse infrastructure financing. The Government of India (GoI) has infused Rs.20000 crore into NaBFID.

84. The **State Bank of India (SBI)** has received approval from its Board of Directors to issue bonds to raise up to **Rs.11, 000 crore** in Basel III bonds in **FY23**. Of the total earmarked fund-raise, the approval is for additional tier-1 (AT-1) capital up to Rs 7,000 crore, subject to concurrence from the Government of India (GoI). The remaining Rs 4,000 crore will be in the form of tier-2 capital.

AT-1 bonds:

AT-1 bonds are a type of unsecured, perpetual bonds that banks issue to shore up their core capital base to meet the Basel-III norms. They have no maturity date but contain a call option at the end of 5 years. They are regulated by RBI.

85. The **New Development Bank (NDB)** has approved 5 new projects totalling **USD 875 million** for water, sanitation, ecotourism, and transport. This investment will support commitments by Brazil, China and India toward the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Brazil: NDB has approved **USD 300 million** that will contribute to connecting 592 thousand households to water supply and 727 thousand to sewage collection networks in the state of Sao Paulo.

China: NDB has approved **EUR 265 million** for the expansion of the Lanzhou Zhongchuan International Airport and **RMB 805 million** for the expansion of the Xi'an Xianyang International Airport.

India: NDB has approved **USD 79 million** for the Meghalaya Ecotourism Infrastructure Development Project which will lead to the establishment of 5 ecotourism circuits. The project includes the construction of 114km of roads and bridges.

- 86.** The Government of India (GoI) will provide a financing facility worth about **Rs.1600 crore (USD 200 million)** through the **World Bank** for the **Himachal Pradesh Power Sector Development Program**.
- The total cost of the HP Power Sector Development Program will be estimated as approx. **2000 crores** along with state equity.
 - The project will be completed in 5 years from 2023-2028.
- 87.** The **European Investment Bank (EIB)** has joined India-led **Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI)** to limit the destruction caused by climate change.
- The EIB will help CDRI to develop the research and knowledge-management capabilities of its members.
 - The EIB will offer advisory and financial support to CDRI members and ensure they can benefit from all relevant EU initiatives.

CDRI:

It was launched at the UN Climate Action Summit in 2019 at the initiative of India and allows its members to share knowledge and resources. It help countries to meet the UN Sustainable Development Goals' (SDGs) and expand universal access to basic services.

RBI IN NEWS

- 88.** The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** and **Bank Indonesia (BI)** have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to expand cooperation in payment systems, digital financial innovation, and anti-money laundering, and combating the financing of terrorism (AML-CFT). It has been signed in Bali on the sidelines of the G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Meeting to improve mutual cooperation.
- 89.** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has conducted the fifth round of the **Survey on Remittances for the year 2020-21**. As per the survey, the share of remittances from the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) region to India has declined from more than 50 percent in 2016-17 to around **30 percent** in 2020-21 amid COVID-19-induced economic stress.

- The US, the UK, and Singapore have emerged as important sources for the country for remittances, accounting for 36 percent of the total payments in 2020-21.
- The **USA** has surpassed the UAE as the top source country, accounting for 23 percent of total remittances in 2020-21.
- The share of the traditional remittance recipient states of Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and Karnataka, which had strong dominance in the GCC region, has almost halved in 2020-21, accounting for only 25 percent of total remittances since 2016-17.
- **Maharashtra** has emerged as the top recipient state surpassing Kerala.
- The majority of the remittances are routed through **private sector banks**, followed by public sector banks, and foreign banks, particularly from Singapore.
- India is the second cheapest remittance receiving market in the G20 group after Mexico.

India has remained the top recipient country, accounting for 12 percent of total global remittances, recording a marginal decline of 0.2 percent in 2020 and a growth of 8 percent in 2021.

Note: Remittances are the second major source of external financing for low and middle-income countries after foreign direct investment (FDI).

- 90.** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has decided to adopt a **four-tier** regulatory framework with differentiated regulatory prescriptions aimed at strengthening the financial soundness of the existing **Urban Cooperative Banks (UCBs)**.

Four-tier framework:

- **Tier I:** All unit UCBs and salary earners' UCBs, irrespective of deposit size, and all other UCBs with deposits of up to Rs.100 crore.
- **Tier II:** UCBs with deposits of more than Rs.100 crore and up to Rs.1000 crore.
- **Tier III:** UCBs with deposits of more than Rs.1000 crore and up to Rs.10,000 crore.
- **Tier IV:** UCBs with deposits of over Rs.10,000 crore.

Net-worth:

RBI has stipulated a minimum net worth of **Rs.2 crore** for **Tier 1 UCBs** operating in single district and

Rs.5 crore for all other UCBs (of all tiers).

Capital-to-Risk Weighted Assets Ratio (CRAR):

- RBI has retained the minimum CRAR requirement for Tier 1 UCBs at the present level of **9 percent**.
- For Tier 2, Tier 3 and Tier 4 UCBs, RBI has revised the minimum capital adequacy ratio of over 12 percent as on 1st March 2021.

91. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has signed its renewed Statement of Commitment (SoC) to the **FX (Foreign Exchange) Global Code ("Code")**. The code aims to facilitate effective transactions at competitive prices which reflect available market information for a diverse set of market participants.

FX Global Code:

It was initially launched on **25th May 2017**. It was subsequently reviewed holistically and the updated Code was published by the Global FX Committee on 15th July 2021. It has been developed under the auspices of the *Bank for International Settlements (BIS)*, Basel, Switzerland. It is being implemented across the world by the **Global FX Committee** in coordination with Local FX Committees in each jurisdiction.

RBI, along with the *Bank of Korea, the Hong Kong Monetary Authority, the Monetary Authority of Singapore, and the Reserve Bank of Australia*, jointly welcomed the publication of the code in 2017.

92. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has restricted **three cooperative banks** from conducting banking activity due to poor liquidity position. These include two banks from Maharashtra, the Nashik Zilla Girna Sahakari Bank Limited and the Raigad Sahakari Bank besides Karnataka-based Sri Mallikarjuna Pattana Sahakari Bank. The restrictions will remain in force for a period of **six months**.

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

93. Hyderabad-based **National Academy of Agricultural Research Management (NAARM)**, established by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), has bagged the Sardar Patel Outstanding ICAR Institute Award 2021 (in the Large Institute Category) for its overall performance.

Srinivasa Rao, Director of NAARM, has received the award from the Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Narendra Singh Tomar. The award carries a cash prize of Rs.10 lakh, a citation, and a plaque for SAUs, DUs, and for other ICAR institutes.

Other winners:

- Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) has won 2 ICAR Awards.
- CMFRI has won the Best Annual Report Award (2020) in the category of ICAR large institutes.
- Anusree M, a PhD scholar at CMFRI, has won the Jawaharlal Nehru Award for PG outstanding doctoral thesis in research in agricultural & allied services for 2021.

94. Malayalam filmmaker **KP Kumaran** has been honoured with **Kerala's** highest film award, the JC Daniel Award 2021. He has won the award for his contribution to the Malayalam film industry. The award comprises of a cash prize of Rs 5 lakh, a citation, and a plaque.

JC Daniel Award:

It was instituted in 1992. It is Kerala's highest award in Malayalam cinema. It is presented annually by the Kerala State Chalachitra Academy, a non-profit institution under the Department of Cultural Affairs, to commemorate the contribution of Indian filmmaker J. C. Daniel, who is often regarded as the "father of Malayalam cinema".

95. Raksha Niryat Ratna Awards 2020-21:

The award has been instituted in consonance with the MoD's vision to achieve Defence exports of **Rs.35,000 crores** by **2025** and provide a boost to the domestic industry. The following firms are awarded for achieving the highest exports in the defence segment in India for 2020-21.

- **Public-sector category:** Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), Bengaluru, Karnataka.
- **Private-sector category:** Indo-MIM, a leading global supplier of Metal Injection Molded (MIM) products, Bengaluru, Karnataka.

BOOKS & AUTHORS

96. A new book titled **"The Dharma of Justice in the Sanskrit Epics: Debates on Gender, Varna, and Species"** has been authored by **Ruth Vanita**. The book has been published by Oxford University Press. The book describes the reading of India's ancient texts that can reveal the greater continuity in our moral and ethical preoccupations that many suspects.

97. A new book titled **'The Architect of the New BJP: How Narendra Modi Transformed the Party'** has been authored by senior journalist **Ajay Singh**. The book has been published by

Penguin eBury Press. The foreword of the book is written by American academician Walter Andersen.

The book depicts how Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his organizational skills paved the way for his rise in the party and transformed the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) into an election-winning machine.

98. A new book titled **“The Resilient Entrepreneur - Strategies to set you up for Success”** has been authored by **Dhruti Shah**. The book has been launched in the presence of entrepreneurs from Singapore, India, and the USA. It is published by Ocean Reeve Publishing.
99. Chief Minister of Uttarakhand Pushkar Singh Dhami has released the book titled **'Beyond the Misty Veil, Temple Tales of Uttarakhand'** in English on the temples of Uttarakhand by **Aradhana Johri** (Senior IAS) at Mukhya Sevak Sadan in Dehradun. The book is based on the mythological temples of Devbhoomi Uttarakhand, informs about the culture and mythology of the country.

PERSON IN NEWS

100. The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has approved the appointment of **Ashish Kumar Chauhan** as the managing director and chief executive officer (CEO) of the National Stock Exchange (NSE). He has been appointed for a period of 5 years. He has succeeded **Vikram Limaye**.
101. President Ram Nath Kovind has accepted the resignation of West Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar who has been named as the ruling National Democratic Alliance (NDA) candidate for the vice presidential election. He has appointed **La Ganesan, Governor of Manipur**, to discharge the functions of the Governor of West Bengal, in addition to his own duties from the date he assumes charge of the office of the Governor of West Bengal until regular arrangements are made.

Note: *Article 153* of the Indian Constitution states that there shall be a Governor for each State. One person can be appointed as Governor for two or more States.

102. Union Minister for Labour & Employment **Bhupender Yadav** has represented India in the **8th BRICS Labour and Employment Ministers' Meeting 2022** held under the Chinese Presidency in Beijing, China. The Labour & Employment Ministers of the member countries Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa (BRICS) have participated in the meeting.

- During the meeting, the ministers discussed promoting Green Jobs for sustainable development, developing Skills for resilient recovery, and protecting Worker's Rights in new forms of employment.
- The Labour & Employment Ministers adopted the "Declaration of the Eighth BRICS Labour and Employment Ministers' Meeting 2022" during the meeting.

Additional Information:

BRICS is an acronym for the grouping of the world's leading emerging economies, namely Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa. It represents 41% of the global population, 24% of the global GDP and 16% of the global trade. It is based in Shanghai, China.

- 103.** Former Supreme Court judge, **Vineet Saran**, has been appointed to serve as the Ethics Officer and Ombudsman of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI). He has succeeded Justice (Retd) D. K. Jain, whose term ended in June 2022.
- 104.** Himachal Pradesh Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar has appointed the Additional Chief Secretary (Power & Industry) **R.D. Dhiman** as the new Chief Secretary of the state. He is a 1988 batch IAS officer of the Himachal Pradesh cadre. He has succeeded Ram Subhag Singh.
- 105.** **V K Singh**, Executive Director, Rural Electrification Corporation (REC) Ltd, has been appointed as Director (Technical), REC Limited with effect from 12th July 2022. REC Limited, formerly Rural Electrification Corporation Limited, is a public Infrastructure Finance Company in India's power sector. It was established in 1969.
- 106.** The Centre Government has appointed **Jayanti Prasad** as a Whole time Member of **the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI)** for a period of five years from the date of assumption of charge of the post i.e. with effect from the 5th July, 2022 or upto the age of 65 years or until further orders, whichever is the earliest.
- 107.** **Brijesh Gupta** has been appointed as the new Managing Director of **RattanIndia Power Limited**. Earlier, he held leadership positions in Adani Enterprises, Essar Group, Welspun and Atha Group.

RattanIndia Power is a private power generation company, with an installed capacity of 2,700 MW thermal power plants at Amravati and Nashik (1,350 MW at each location) in Maharashtra, with investments of Rs.18,615 crores (US\$ 2.5 billion).

108. Seif Ahmed of Egypt has been appointed as the Acting President of the **International Hockey Federation (FIH)** after **Narender Dhruv Batra (India)** has resigned as FIH president. He has also quit as Indian Olympic Association (IOA) chief.

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OBITUARIES

109. Renowned ghazal singer **Bhupinder Singh** has recently passed away in Mumbai due to suspected colon cancer and COVID-19-related complications. He was born in Amritsar, Punjab. He worked with Mohammed Rafi, R D Burman, Lata Mangeshkar, Asha Bhosle and Bappi Lahiri, among others.

His famous songs: "Naam gum jayega", "Hothon Pe Aisi Baat", "Beeti Na Beetai Raina", "Dil Dhoondta hai", "Kabhi kisi ko mukammal", "Do diwane shahar mein", "Karoge yaad to", "Kisi nazar ko tera intezaar aaj bhi", "Kaise Kahoon kuch kaina sakoon", "Thodi Si Zameen Thoda Aasman", "Meethe bol bole", "Baadalon se Kaat Kaat ke" and "Ek akela is Shehar Mein".

110. Noted artist **Achuthan Kudallur**, who earned fame by creating his own style of **abstract paintings**, has recently passed away in Chennai, Tamil Nadu. He was born in 1945 in Kerala. He received the Tamil Nadu State Lalit Kala Akademi Award in 1982 and the National Academy Award in 1988.

111. The veteran Malayalam actor and filmmaker **Pratap Pothen** has recently passed away in Chennai, Tamil Nadu. He was born on 13th August 1952 in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala. He appeared in Malayalam, Tamil and Telugu as well as Hindi films.

Famous Movies: Aaravam, Thakara, Chamaram, Aarohanam, Panneer Pushpangal, Thanmathra, etc.

112. Former Punjab Speaker and Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) leader, **Nirmal Singh Kahlon** has passed away at the age of 79. He served as the Minister of Rural Development and Panchayats State of Punjab from 1997 to 2002 and the Speaker of the Punjab Legislative Assembly from 2007 to 2012.

113. Eminent biologist, researcher and Director of Institute of Life Sciences (ILS), Bhubaneswar, **Dr Ajay Parida**, has recently passed away in Guwahati, Assam. He was born in 1963 at Bhagabanpur village in Jajpur district, Odisha. He implemented various developmental projects that focus on sustainable development models in coastal & dry land regions. He was awarded the **Padma Shri** in **2014** for his contribution to the field of Science & Technology.

SPORTS

114. P.V. Sindhu (India) has won the women's singles title at the **2022 Singapore Open**, a badminton tournament, by defeating Wang Zhiyi (China) in the final match held at Singapore Indoor Stadium in Singapore.

Anthony Sinisuka Ginting (Indonesia) has won the men's singles title at the tournament.

Other winners:

- **Men's doubles:** Leo Rolly Carnando & Daniel Marthin (Indonesia)
- **Women's doubles:** Apriyani Rahayu & Siti Fadia Silva Ramadhanti (Indonesia)
- **Mixed doubles:** Dechapol Puavaranukroh & Sapsiree Taerattanachai (Thailand)

115. Indian Grandmaster **R Praggnanandhaa** has won the Paracin Open 'A' chess tournament 2022 in Serbia. He has defeated Alexandr Predke, a Russian player in the competition. Alisher Suleymenov has finished third with 7 points after a tie with Al Muthaiah (India).

116. Recently, Indian Grandmaster **Aravindh Chithambaram** has won the **41st Villa De Benasque International Chess Open** held in Spain. He has defeated Robert Hovhannisyan (Armenia) and compatriot Raunak Sadhwani on the basis of a tie-break score here.

117. The **World Athletics Championships 2022** has commenced at Hayward Field in Eugene, **Oregon, USA**, from July 15–24, 2022. It is the eighteenth edition of the World Athletics Championships.

The World Athletics Council has selected the host country for 2023, 2024, 2025, and 2026.

- **2023:** Budapest, Hungary
- **2024:** Medulin and Pula, Croatia
- **2025:** Tokyo, Japan
- **2026:** Tallahassee, Florida

118. England all-rounder **Ben Stokes** has announced his retirement from the One Day Internationals (ODI) cricket. He played his 105th and final ODI against South Africa in Durham. He made his ODI & T20 International debuts in 2011 and his Test debut in 2013. He has scored 2919 runs in 104 ODIs and taken 74 wickets.

Other announcements:

- Bangladesh ODI captain **Tamim Iqbal** has announced his retirement from T20 Internationals.
- West Indies cricketer **Denesh Ramdin**, wicketkeeper & former West Indies captain, has announced his retirement from international cricket.
- West Indies batter **Lendl Simmons** has announced his retirement from international cricket.

119. Perodua Malaysia Masters 2022, a badminton tournament, has been held in Axiata Arena, Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia. It is categorized as one of the 7 Badminton World Federation (BWF) World Tour Super 500 events.

Category	Winners
Men's Singles	Chico Aura Dwi Wardoyo (Indonesia)
Women's Singles	An Se-young (South Korea)
Men's Doubles	Fajar Alfian, and Muhammad Rian Ardianto (Indonesia)
Women's Doubles	Chen Qingchen, and Jia Yifan (China)
Mixed Doubles	Zheng Siwei, and Huang Yaqiong (China)

120. The United States of America (USA) will host the **2028 Summer Olympic and Paralympic Games** in **Los Angeles**. The 2028 Los Angeles Olympics will take place from **14th July to 30th July 2028**. The Paralympic Games will take place from **15th August to 27th August 2028**.

- The LA28 (Los Angeles 2028) will feature more than 3,000 hours of live sport across 800 events in more than 40 sports.
- 15,000 athletes are expected to compete in the Olympic and Paralympic Games in Los Angeles.
- This will be the first time that Los Angeles will be hosting the Paralympic Games.
- Earlier, Los Angeles had hosted the Olympics in 1984 and 1932.

Note: The 2024 Summer Olympic Games will be held in Paris, France.

121. Viktor Axelsen (Denmark) has won the men's singles title at the **Petronas Malaysia Open 2022** by defeating Kento Momota (Japan) in the final match held in Axiata Arena, Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia.

- **Ratchanok Intanon (Thailand)** has won the women's singles title in the badminton tournament.

122. Tennis-player **Lleyton Hewitt (Australia)**, a two-time Grand Slam champion and former world number one, has been inducted into the **International Tennis Hall of Fame 2021**. He won his first ATP title in Adelaide in 1998. He won the 2001 US Open and 2002 Wimbledon title.

IMPORTANT DAYS

123. World Day for International Justice is observed annually on **17th July** to commemorate the momentous approval of the Rome Statute and the formation of the new International Criminal Justice System in 1998. The day also marks the strengthening system of international justice and to promote the rights of the victims.

On 17th July 1998, 120 countries came together to sign a treaty titled the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. The establishment came to be known as the **International Criminal Court (ICC)**, which came into force on **1st July 2002**.

124. Nelson Mandela International Day is observed annually on **18th July** to commemorate the birth anniversary of Nelson Mandela, a South African anti-apartheid activist who served as the first President from 1994 to 1999. The year 2022 marks the 104th birth anniversary of Nelson Mandela.

United Nations officially declared July 18 as Nelson Mandela International Day in November 2009.

- The day was first celebrated in **2010**.

- **Theme 2022:** "Do what you can, with what you have, where you are"

Nelson Mandela:

He was born in Transkei, South Africa in 1918. He was also known as the '*Gandhi of South Africa*'. He was a strong follower of Gandhi's teachings. He was felicitated with the **Nobel Peace Prize** in **1993**, **Bharat Ratna** in **1990** & International Gandhi Peace Price in 2001 for his peacemaking efforts.

- 125. International Moon Day** is observed annually on **20th July** to commemorate the anniversary of the first landing on the lunar surface by humans. Neil Armstrong was the first human to set foot on the Moon as part of the Apollo 11 Mission in 1969.
- The year 2022 marks the observance of the first International Moon Day.
 - The day has been organized in cooperation with United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA).
 - **Theme 2022:** 'Lunar Exploration Coordination & Sustainability'
- 126. World Brain Day** is observed annually on **22nd July** to increase public awareness and promote advocacy related to brain health. The day also commemorates the establishment of the World Federation of Neurology (22nd July 1957). The day was first observed in 2014.

Theme 2022: "Brain Health for All"

The 2022 WBD campaign will focus on five key messages globally:

- **Awareness:** Brain health is vital for mental, social, and physical wellbeing
- **Prevention:** Many brain diseases are preventable
- **Advocacy:** Global efforts are required for optimal brain health
- **Education:** Education for all is key for brain health
- **Access:** Equitable access to resources, treatment, and rehabilitation is essential for brain health

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- 127. World Chess Day** is observed annually on **20th July** to mark the establishment of the International Chess Federation (FIDE) in Paris in 1924. The idea to celebrate Chess Day was proposed by UNESCO and it has been celebrated as such since 1966. The year 2022 marks the observance of the 98th anniversary of FIDE.

Chess:

It was invented in India during the 5th century and was given the name 'Chaturanga'. It is played between two players. It is played on a square chessboard with 64 squares arranged in an eight-by-eight grid.

128. Pi Approximation Day is observed annually on **22nd July** (22/7) to honour the concept of "pi" which is represented by using the Greek alphabet 'n'. The day is also observed on 14th March (3.14) as the date lines up in the numbers when written in month-date format.

