

PRACTICE

MOCK



OCTOBER 2023

# BAZOOKA

## Monthly Current Affairs PDF

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## RBI Assistant Free Mock Test

### NATIONAL AFFAIRS

1. The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has successfully conducted the **Flight Test Vehicle Abort Mission-1 (TV-D1)** of **Gaganyaan Mission** from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in **Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh**.

The TV-D1 aimed to demonstrate its Crew Escape System (CES), whether the crew aboard the rocket could safely escape it in case it malfunctioned.

Gaganyaan is a space mission to demonstrate ISRO's human spaceflight capability by launching a human crew to an orbit of 400 km and bringing them safely back to earth.

GSLV Mk III, also known as LVM-3, will be used as a launch vehicle in Gaganyaan mission.

Orbital Module, Service Module and Crew Module will be used in the Gaganyaan Mission.

It is expected to take off in 2025.

2. The **Eastern Naval Command** of the Indian Navy has conducted the **Security Exercise Prasthan 2023** in **Kakinada, Andhra Pradesh**. The exercise has been conducted on the Rig ship Platinum Explorer of ONGC (Oil & Natural Gas Corporation) and RG Fixed Oil Platform of Vedanta Limited.

The exercise aims to rehearse responses in handling contingencies and checking the efficacy of security mechanisms at ODA.

It has witnessed the participation from multiple organisations, namely the Indian Navy, Coast Guard, Oil Operators, Port Authorities, the State Fisheries Department and Marine Police.

Assets from the Indian Navy comprised of INS Kora, INS Tihayu, four Immediate Support Vessels, Marine Commandoes, Explosive Ordnance Disposal Team and Helicopters.

ICG Ship Kanaklata Barua has also participated in the exercise.

The Exercise Prasthan is held every 6 months under the aegis of Indian Navy and involves the participation of all stakeholders in the maritime domain to ensure offshore security.

3. The **Competition Commission of India (CCI)** has secured membership in the **International Competition Network (ICN)** Steering Group at the 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Conference of the ICN, hosted by the Spanish National Markets and Competition Commission (CNMC) in Barcelona, Spain from 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> October 2023.

This is the **first** time that CCI has become a member of the ICN's apex body, a Steering Group and the membership is for **2 years**.

**International Competition Network (ICN):**

ICN is an informal, virtual network that seeks to facilitate cooperation between competition law authorities globally. It was established in 2001 after the publication of a Final Report of the International Competition Policy Advisory Committee to the US Attorney General and Assistant Attorney General for Antitrust. The ICN comprises 140 competition agencies from 130 countries.

4. Secretary, Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY), **S Krishnan** has launched the indigenous technology of '**2KW DC Portable Charger**' to help boost electric vehicle adoption.

The 2KW charger has been designed and developed by Centre of Excellence (CoE) at **IIT Madras Research Park** and industrial partner **Flowtrik Technologies** with funding by MeitY. These chargers sporting an efficiency of >95% and functioning at a maximum operating ambient of 50 Degree Celsius are built with over-load, over-voltage, reverse polarity and in-built EMI/EMC filter.

The chargers are designed to meet the new safety standard IEC 60950-11.

IEC 60950 is a safety standard for information technology equipment (ITE) that is published by the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC).

5. A joint bilateral training exercise "**Exercise Harimau Shakti 2023**", conducted between the **Indian Army** and **Malaysian Army**, has been commenced in **Umroi Cantonment, Meghalaya**.

The Malaysian Army contingent comprises troops from 5th Royal Battalion of Malaysian Army.

The Indian contingent is being represented by a Battalion of THE RAJPUT REGIMENT.

**Objective:** To enhance the level of defence co-operation between Indian Army and the Malaysian Army, which will also foster the bilateral relations between the two nations.

**Note:** The last edition of the Exercise Harimau-Shakti was conducted in Pulai, Kluang, Malaysia in November 2022.

**6. Hardeep Singh Puri**, Union Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas, has launched **India's first Reference Gasoline and Diesel Fuels** produced by **Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL)**.

Currently, reference fuels are being imported by India.

With this, IOCL becomes the **4<sup>th</sup> refiner in the world** to produce 'reference' grade petrol and diesel.

IOCL's Paradip refinery (Odisha) will produce 'reference' grade petrol and IOCL's Panipat refinery (Haryana) will produce 'reference' quality diesel.

Reference Gasoline fuels will be available in E0, E5, E10, E20, E85, E100 from Paradip Refinery. Reference diesel fuel shall be available in B7 grade from Panipat Refinery.

**Reference fuels:**

Reference fuels (Gasoline and Diesel) are premium high-value products, used for calibration and testing of vehicles by Automobile manufacturers and testing agencies like ICAT (International Centre for Automotive Technology) and ARAI (Automotive Research Association of India).

**7. India and the European Union (EU)** have conducted their **first joint naval exercise** in the **Gulf of Guinea**. The exercise followed the third meeting of the EU-India Maritime Security Dialogue held in Brussels, Belgium.

During the exercise, Indian Navy's **INS Sumedha**, an Offshore Patrol Vessel, has been joined by three EU Member States' ships in the Gulf of Guinea: Italian Navy Ship ITS Foscari, French Navy Ship FS Ventôse, and Spanish Navy Ship Tornado.

The exercise included a variety of activities, including tactical manoeuvres, boarding exercises, and flying exercises using the helicopters embarked on FS Ventose and INS Sumedha and the transfer of personnel between ships.

**Gulf of Guinea:**

Gulf of Guinea is the north easternmost part of the tropical Atlantic Ocean from Cape Lopez in Gabon, north and west to Cape Palmas in Liberia. The main river dispersing its waters in the gulf is the Niger River.

**INS Sumedha:**

INS Sumedha is the third ship of the indigenously built Saryu class Naval Offshore Patrol Vessels (NOPV). It was indigenously designed and built by Goa Shipyard Limited. It was commissioned into the Indian Navy on March 7, 2014. It is part of the Indian Navy's Eastern Fleet, based in Visakhapatnam.

8. India is set to host **"Bharat Tex 2024"**, world's biggest ever textiles event from **26<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> February 2024** at Bharat Mandapam & Yashobhoomi in **New Delhi**.

The event will be organized by a **Consortium of Textile Export Promotion Councils (EPCs)** with the support of the **Ministry of Textiles**.

This expo is the embodiment of India's 5F vision - ***Farm to Fibre to Factory to Fashion to Foreign***.

9. Union Defence Minister **Rajnath Singh** has inaugurated the **first** edition of **Indian Military Heritage Festival 2023** in **New Delhi**. The two-day festival aims to celebrate India's rich military culture and heritage that has evolved over the centuries, through conversations, art, dance, drama, storytelling and exhibitions.

During the event, he has also launched '**Project Udbhav**', a collaboration of Indian Army and United Service Institution of India, to promote indigenous discourse through exploration and integration of the country's ancient strategic acumen into contemporary military domain.

10. Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation **Amit Shah** has addressed the '**National Symposium on Cooperative Exports**' organized by the **National Cooperative Exports Limited (NCEL)** in **New Delhi**.

He has also released the logo, website, and brochure of NCEL and distributed membership certificates to NCEL members.

**National Cooperative Exports Limited (NCEL):**

The **Ministry of Cooperation** has set up a NCEL under Multi-State Cooperative Societies (MSCS) Act 2002 on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2023.

It is an umbrella body for cooperative sector exports and has an authorised share capital of Rs.2,000 crore, with Rs.500 crore as the initial paid-up share capital.

It covers agriculture and allied activities as well as handloom and handicraft items by enrolling many co-operatives under its fold with a target to double its revenue by 2025 from the current Rs.2,160 crore.

## **RBI Assistant Free Mock Test**

11. The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved the proposal of the Department of Fertilizers for fixing the **Nutrient Based Subsidy (NBS)** rates for **Rabi**



**Season 2023-24** (from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024) on Phosphatic and Potassic (P&K) fertilizers.

Year	Rs Per Kg			
RABI 2023-24 (from 1 <sup>st</sup> October 2023 to 31st March 2024)	<b>N</b> <b>(Nitrogen)</b>	<b>P</b> <b>(Phosphorus)</b>	<b>K</b> <b>(Potash)</b>	<b>S</b> <b>(Sulphur)</b>
	47.02	20.82	2.38	1.89

In the upcoming Rabi season 2023-24, an expenditure of Rs.22,303 crore is expected on NBS.

- 12.** Union Minister of Ayush Sarbananda Sonowal has unveiled the statue of **Vaidya Brihaspati Dev Triguna**, an Ayurveda practitioner and an expert in Pulse diagnosis, at the newly christened "Vaidya Brihaspati Dev Triguna Auditorium" at **All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA)** campus in New Delhi.

AIIA has observed its **6<sup>th</sup> Foundation Day** on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2023.

On this occasion, six MoUs have been signed between AIIA and different well-known institutions like Hindustan Salt, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and Heartfulness Institute.

AIIA has got a new molecular biology lab for advance research, Manuscript Unit and Center of Excellence Dakshya.

**Note:** AIIA was established on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2017 for the promotion and advancement of the knowledge and practice of Ayurveda, an ancient Indian system of medicine. It is based in New Delhi.

#### **Vaidya Brihaspati Dev Triguna:**

He was born in Punjab in 1920.

He was a Vaidya or Ayurveda practitioner and an expert in Pulse diagnosis (Nadi vaidyam in Ayurvedic terms).

He was awarded the **Padma Bhushan** in **1992** and the **Padma Vibhushan** Award in **2003**.

- 13.** Indian firm **Skyroot Aerospace** has recently unveiled its indigenously built **Vikram-1** rocket at the newly inaugurated its headquarters 'The MAX-Q Campus', located at the GMR Aerospace and Industrial Park in Hyderabad, Telangana.

#### **Vikram I rocket:**

- Vikram-1 is a multi-stage launch vehicle with a capacity to place around **300 kg** payloads in Low Earth Orbit.
- It is an all-**carbon-fibre-bodied rocket** that can place multiple satellites into orbit and features 3D-printed liquid engines.

- It is a solid fuelled rocket and planned to be launched in early **2024**.
- It will be able to deliver payloads weighing between **290-480kg**, to different orbits that are **500kms** above the earth.

Vikram-I will be Skyroot's second rocket, after the successful launch of the Vikram-S rocket on November 18, 2022.

**14. Indian Army Chief General Manoj Pande has virtually inaugurated the “Indian Army's first Vertical Wind Tunnel (VWT)” at the Special Forces Training School (SFTS) in Bakloh, Himachal Pradesh.**

The objective is to improve the training facilities for Special Forces and combat free fallers. A Vertical Wind Tunnel (VWT) is a facility that creates an artificial column of air at specific velocities. It serves several functions, such as:

- Free-fall Stimulation
- Parachute training
- Refining the skills of combat free fallers
- Replicate various CFF (Combat Free Fall) scenarios.

**15. The Indian Air Force (IAF) has inked a pact with an Indian manufacturer for the procurement of Automatic Weather Stations at 82 IAF locations. This technological enhancement will provide a major boost to Aerospace Safety by making available real time weather updates during flying operations and training.**

**16. The Government of India (GoI) has appointed the Boston Consulting Group (BCG), a global management consulting firm, to help prepare a Vision 2047 document that will set India's medium-term goals and priorities for becoming a developed economy in the next 25 years.**

The vision document, expected to be unveiled by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, will outline an economic strategy towards becoming a middle-income nation by leveraging India's strengths in industry, services, agriculture, trade and human capital while improving the governance systems and access to public goods.

**17. The United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres has announced the formation of a 39-member High Level Multistakeholder Advisory Body on Artificial Intelligence (AI) in New York, USA.**

The Indian experts on the 39-member UN global advisory body on AI are Secretary-General's Envoy on Technology **Amandeep Singh Gill**; co-founder of iSPIRT Foundation **Sharad Sharma** and Lead Researcher at Hugging Face, India **Nazneen Rajani**.

The board will support the international community's efforts to govern AI and its members' list comprises experts from the government, private sector, research community, civil society, and academia.

- 18.** The **2<sup>nd</sup> edition** of annual **Indian Space Conclave (ISC 2023)** has been held at Manekshaw Centre in **New Delhi**, Delhi. The conclave has been organized by **Indian Space Association (ISpA)**.

It has been co-hosted by Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre (IN-SPACe), an autonomous agency in the Department of Space (DOS).

**Objective:** to provide a platform for organizations and stakeholders interested in enhancing India's space capabilities and plans.

**Guest of Honour:** Thierry Matthau, Ambassador of France to India

During the event, A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed between **ISpA** and the **French Aerospace Industry Association (GIFAS)** to enhance understanding of space industry capabilities and exploring business opportunities between France and India.

- 19.** The fourth and final meeting of the **G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors (FMCBG)** under the Indian Presidency has been held in **Marrakech, Morocco**.

The meeting has been held on the sidelines of the Annual Meetings of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank Group (WBG).

The meeting has been organised in two sessions covering the global economy, strengthening Multilateral Development Banks (**MDBs**) and crypto assets.

In this meeting, the G20 FMCBGs unanimously adopted the **G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Communique**.

The FMCBG communique draws guidance from the G20 New Delhi Leaders Declaration (NDLD) and benefited significantly from the consensus that was reached at the Leaders' Summit held in September 2023.

The G20 FMCBGs have also adopted a **roadmap for regulating crypto assets** proposed by the Financial Stability Board (FSB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The roadmap focuses on regulations rather than an outright ban to prevent crypto assets from destabilising the world economy.

### **G20 (Group of Twenty):**

The G20 was founded in 1999 after the Asian financial crisis as a forum for the Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors to discuss global economic and financial issues. It plays an important role in shaping and strengthening global architecture and governance on all major international economic issues.

It comprises **19 countries** (Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Türkiye, United Kingdom and United States), the **European Union**, and the **African Union**.



20. The **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** has inaugurated the **third edition** of **Global Maritime India Summit 2023** in **Mumbai, Maharashtra** via video conferencing. The summit provides an excellent platform for attracting investment in the country's maritime sector.

The three-day summit has discussed key issues of the maritime sector including ports of the future; decarbonisation; coastal shipping and inland water transportation; shipbuilding; repair and recycling; finance, insurance & arbitration; maritime clusters; innovation & technology; maritime safety and security; and maritime tourism, among others. During the summit, PM Narendra Modi has unveiled the '**Amrit Kaal Vision 2047**', a strategic blueprint for the Indian maritime blue economy. These initiatives aim to enhance port facilities, promote sustainable practices, and encourage international collaboration in the maritime sector.

He has dedicated to the nation and laid the foundation stone for projects worth more than **Rs.23,000 crores** that are aligned with the 'Amrit Kaal Vision 2047' for the Indian maritime blue economy.

He has laid the foundation stone of **Tuna Tekra all-weather deep draft terminal**, to be built at a cost of more than Rs.4,500 crores at Deendayal Port Authority in Gujarat. This state-of-the-art greenfield terminal will be developed in PPP mode.

He has also dedicated more than **300 Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs)** worth more than 7 lakh crore for global and national partnerships in the maritime sector.

**Note:** The first Maritime India summit was held in 2016 in Mumbai while the Second Maritime Summit was held virtually in 2021.

21. **Indian Air Force (IAF)** has successfully test-fired its Surface-to-Surface version of the **BrahMos missile** in the vicinity of the Eastern Seaboard Archipelago. The test mission has accomplished all the predefined objectives.

Previously, BrahMos Missile Regiment of **Indian Army** tested a land-attack variant of the extended-range BrahMos supersonic cruise missile (BrahMos ER) from the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

#### **BrahMos ER:**

The BrahMos ER is developed by BrahMos Aerospace. It is a Joint Venture between **India (DRDO)** and **Russia (NPO Mash)** for the development, production, and marketing of the supersonic cruise missile.

It operates on the "Fire and Forgets" principle i.e. it does not require further guidance after launch.

It can be launched from submarines, ships, aircraft or from land platforms.

BrahMos ER is an improved variant of the basic BrahMos missile, with a range of around 450 to 500 kilometres, compared to 290 kilometres for the baseline version.

BrahMos is named for the rivers Brahmaputra and Moskva.

- 22.** The Indian Army's **3/5 Gorkha Rifles** (Frontier Force) team has won a gold medal at the **Cambrian Patrol Competition 2023**, International Military Exercise hosted in **Wales, United Kingdom**.

The Indian Army also won a gold medal at the same exercise in 2021.

The 67 Punjab Regiment of Pakistan Army has received the silver medal.

Cambrian Patrol Exercise is considered a test of endurance and team spirit and is known as the Olympics of Military Patrolling.

The competition involved 111 teams, including 38 international ones, completing a challenging 60 km course in less than 48 hours.

- 23.** The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved the **Productivity Linked Bonus (PLB)** equivalent to **78 days' wages** for the financial year **2022-23** to all eligible non-gazetted **Railway employees** namely *Track maintainer, Loco Pilots, Train Managers (Guards), Station Masters, Supervisors, Technicians, Technician Helpers, Pointsman, Ministerial Staff and other Group 'C' staff*.

**Railway Protection Force (RPF) and Railway Protection Special Force (RPSF)** personnel are not covered in this bonus allocation.

The Cabinet has approved the payment of PLB of **Rs.1968.87 crore** to 11,07,346 railway employees.

Railways loaded a record cargo of 1,509 million tonnes and carried nearly 6.5 billion passengers.

**Other Cabinet approval:**

The Cabinet has approved to release an additional instalment of **Dearness Allowance (DA)** to Central Government employees and Dearness Relief (DR) to pensioners with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2023 representing an increase of **4%** over the existing rate of **42%** of the Basic Pay/Pension, to compensate against price rise.

This increase is based on the recommendations of the 7th Central Pay Commission.

The combined impact on the exchequer on account of both Dearness Allowance and Dearness Relief would be Rs.12,857 crore per annum. This will benefit about 48.67 lakh Central Government employees and 67.95 lakh pensioners.

- 24.** The **Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS)**, the National Standard Body of India, has approved **IS17017 (Part 2 / Sec 7): 2023**, India's first ever indigenously developed AC and DC Combined Charging connector standard for light electric vehicles (LEVs).

This is also the **world's first-ever** combined AC and DC charging connector standard for light electric vehicles and is designed and engineered in India, which can become the benchmark globally for LEVs.

The new standard is based on **Ather Energy's** charging connector.

NITI Aayog, the Department of Science and Technology, ARAI, EV makers, and the Bureau of Indian Standards have collaborated to develop a national standard.

A combined AC and DC charging connector ensures that a hybrid, cost-efficient infrastructure emerges for all forms of charging, whether fast or slow, for light electric vehicles.

25. The **51<sup>st</sup> meeting** of the **Executive Committee (EC)** of the **National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG)** has been held under the chairmanship of **G. Asok Kumar**, Director General, National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG).

During its 51<sup>st</sup> meeting, **seven projects** worth around **Rs.285 crore** are approved.

**Approved projects:**

For sewerage management, three projects are sanctioned, two in West Bengal and one in Uttarakhand. This includes:

- A 13.8 MLD Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) with co-treatment of 18.52 KLD septage and allied works at an estimated cost of Rs.92.83 crore to stop the untreated discharge into River Jalangi in Krishnanagar Municipal Town of West Bengal.
- The other project pertains to integrated Septage Management for Bansberia Municipality by creating a 15 KLD capacity Faecal Sludge Treatment Plant (FSTP).
- Another FSTP of 50 KLD is approved at a total cost of Rs.12.65 crore in Bahadrabad, Haridwar, Uttarakhand.

26. The EC has also approved the extension of **Composite Ecological Task Force (Ganga Task Force)** to continue assisting the rejuvenation of River Ganga.

In addition, one company of **Territorial Army** to the GTF is also approved for rejuvenation of River Gomti, a tributary of River Ganga. The total cost of the project is Rs.134.86 crore.

For wetland conservation, a proposal envisaging effective management of Kalewala Jheel in Muzaffarnagar, Numaiya Dahi Jheel (Kheduva Taal) in Prayagraj and Dahtal Reoti wetland in Ballia District are also approved.

Another proposal to develop **Ganga Vatika Park** in Dhalwala, Uttarakhand is also approved.

27. The Paris-based **World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH)** has approved **India's** self-declaration of freedom from **Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI)** in specific poultry compartments on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2023.

The Department of Animal Husbandry & Dairying has submitted a self-declaration of freedom from HPAI in 26 poultry compartments to WOA. These poultry compartments are in four states of India, namely Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, and Chhattisgarh. This recognition by WOA signifies India's commitment to international biosecurity standards and will contribute to enhancing the export potential of Indian poultry and poultry products, including meat and eggs.

During the 2022-23 fiscal year, India exported poultry and poultry products to 64 countries, generating revenue of **USD 134 million**.

**Note:** India is the third-largest producer of eggs and the fifth-largest producer of poultry meat globally.

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI), also known as Bird Flu, was first detected in India in **Maharashtra** in **February 2006**.

Avian influenza refers to disease in birds caused by infection with avian (bird) influenza (flu) Type A viruses. 4 strains have caused concern i.e., H5N1, H7N9, H5N6, and H5N8. H1N1 flu, sometimes called swine flu, is a type of influenza A virus.

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- 28.** Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology, **Dr Jitendra Singh**, has introduced the state-of-art latest **National Survey Network**.

The **Survey of India** will oversee the operation of this advanced "**Continuously Operating Reference Stations**" (**CORS**) Network throughout the country.

The Survey of India has set up more than 1,000 CORS stations across India.

CORS-based precision services will find applications in various sectors, including agriculture, mining, construction, transport, and civil aviation, opening new avenues for innovation and research.

The CORS data will contribute to scientific research in fields such as upper atmosphere studies, space weather, meteorology, plate motion, seismology, and hydrology.

- 29.** Union Minister for Education and Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, **Dharmendra Pradhan**, has launched the **IndiaSkills 2023-24** at an event held at Kaushal Bhawan, New Delhi.

He has also felicitated the winners of the **46<sup>th</sup> WorldSkills Competition** (WSC 2022 Special Edition- WSC2022SE), which was conducted from September to November 2022 across Europe, North America, and East Asia comprising over 1,000 competitors from 58 countries in 61 skills.

The competition was hosted by 15 countries in more than 20 cities.

India has participated in 50 skills and secured the **11<sup>th</sup> position** in the WSC2022SE with 2 Silver Medals, 3 Bronze Medals, and 13 Medallions for Excellence.

China has secured the 1<sup>st</sup> position, followed by South Africa and Chinese Taipei.

### **WorldSkills Competition:**

It is the largest skill competition in the world, held once every two years. It is conducted by WorldSkills International, which has 86 member countries. These competitions provide both a benchmark for high performance and an objective way to assess vocational excellence. The duration of the competition is 4 days spanning 16 to 22 hours.

- 30.** The **Ministry of Civil Aviation** has notified the **Amendments to the Aircraft Rules, 1937** to promote safety and ease of doing business in aviation regulation.

These amendments align India's aviation regulations with the International Civil Aviation Organization's (ICAO) Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) and international best practices.

**Key amendments:**

- The validity of Airline Transport Pilot License (ATPL) and Commercial Pilot License (CPL) holders' licenses has been extended from 5 years to **10 years**.
- The amendment clarified the definition of "**light**" to include various sources and extended the government's jurisdiction **from 5 kilometers to 5 nautical miles** around an aerodrome.
- **Rule 118**, pertaining to the validation of foreign licenses, has been **removed** to align regulations with the evolving needs of the aviation sector.
- The amendment has introduced **flexibility in recency and competency** requirements for Air Traffic Controller License holders, allowing for simulated exercises, emergencies, and skill assessments.

- 31.** The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved the increase in the **Minimum Support Prices (MSP)** for all mandated **Rabi Crops for Marketing Season (RMS) 2024-25**.

The increase is in line with the **Union Budget 2018-19** announcement of fixing the MSP at a level of at least 1.5 times of the All-India weighted average Cost of Production.

**Minimum Support Prices for all Rabi crops for Marketing Season 2024-25**  
(Rupees per quintal)

S. No.	Crops	MSP RMS 2024-25
1	Wheat	2275
2	Barley	1850
3	Gram	5440
4	Lentil (Masur)	6425
5	Rapeseed & Mustard	5650



6	Safflower	5800
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The increase in Minimum Support Prices (MSP) is based on the price policy recommendations by the **Commission for Agricultural Costs & Prices (CACP)**. MSP is a form of market intervention announced by the Government of India at the beginning of the sowing season to insure farmers against any sharp fall in farm prices.

**32. The inaugural India-UK 2+2 Foreign and Defence Dialogue has been held in New Delhi.**

Indian delegation has been co-chaired by Piyush Srivastava, Joint Secretary Europe West, Ministry of External Affairs and Vishwesh Negi, Joint Secretary, International Cooperation, Ministry of Defence.

The UK delegation has been co-chaired by Ben Mellor, India Director, Indian Ocean Directorate, FCDO and Lt. General Rob Magowan, Deputy Chief of Defence Staff, Finance and Military Capability, Ministry of Defence.

Both sides have discussed possibilities for further collaboration particularly in areas of trade and investment, defence, critical and emerging technologies, civil aviation, health, energy, culture and strengthening peoples connect.

**2+2 dialogue:**

It is a format of meeting on the foreign and defense aspects by India and its allies on strategic and security issues. It involves discussion either at the level of senior officials or ministers. It enables the partners to better understand and appreciate each other's strategic concerns and sensitivities while building a strategic relationship.

**Note:** India has already established 2+2 dialogues with the US, Australia, Japan, and Russia.

**33. The Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated the 141<sup>st</sup> International Olympic Committee (IOC) Session at the Jio World Centre in Mumbai, Maharashtra.**

- India is hosting the IOC session for the **second time** and after a gap of about 40 years.
- The IOC's 86th session was held in New Delhi in 1983.

The Session provides an opportunity for interaction and knowledge sharing among the various stakeholders related to sports.

The Session embodies the nation's dedication to fostering global cooperation, celebrating sporting excellence, and furthering the Olympic ideals of friendship, respect, and excellence. The session has been attended by President of the International Olympic Committee, **Thomas Bach** and other members of IOC, along with prominent Indian sports personalities and representatives from various sports federations, including the Indian Olympic Association (IOA).

**Note:** The IOC session serves as a key meeting of the members of the International Olympic Committee (IOC). The important decisions regarding the future of Olympic Games are made at the IOC Sessions.

- 34.** The **Indian Navy** has recently (in Oct'23) conducted a two-day coastal security exercise called "**Sagar Kavach**" in Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, and Puducherry to assess the efficacy and robustness of the coastal security mechanism while dealing with asymmetric threat emanating from the sea.

The exercise has been executed under the aegis of the **Vice Admiral Rajesh Pendharkar** who is the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief Eastern Naval Command, FOCINC (East) who also exercises the authority of Commander-in-Chief, Coastal Defence (East).

About 2,500 personnel from the Indian Navy, coast guard, state and the union territory administration, marine Police, fisheries, customs, intelligence agencies, lighthouses, ports, and forest have participated in the exercise.

- 35.** Union External Affairs Minister **Dr S. Jaishankar** has unveiled the bust of **Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore** at the International Friendship Park in Bac Ninh province, **Vietnam**.

He has arrived in Vietnam, for his four-day visit and is welcomed by his counterpart Bui Thanh Son.

During his visit, he has co-chaired the 18<sup>th</sup> Joint Commission Meeting in Hanoi, Vietnam. He has also visited the historical Tran Quoc Pagoda in Hanoi.

**Note:** Vietnam issued a commemorative postage stamp in honour of Rabindranath Tagore in 1982.

- 36.** Union Minister for Education **Dharmendra Pradhan** has launched a web portal '**Apna Chandrayaan**' having activity-based support material such as quiz, puzzles, etc. for school students on Mission Chandrayaan-3.

This portal has been developed by the **National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT)** under the aegis of the Department of School Education & Literacy (DoSEL), Ministry of Education, with the aim of enhancing learning and promoting space exploration among students.

The portal features activity-based support material such as interactive quizzes, puzzles for school students in Foundational, Preparatory, Middle, and Secondary level on Mission Chandrayaan-3.

He has also released 10 special modules on Chandrayaan-3, offering a comprehensive overview of its various facets - including scientific, technological, and social aspects, as well as the emotional journey and team spirit of the scientists involved.

- 37.** The Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) has approved **India's first humanized CD19-targeted Chimeric Antigen Receptor T cell (CAR-T cell) Therapy** product called '**NexCAR19 (Actalycabtagene autoleucel)**' to treat **cancer**.

CAR T-cell therapy has been approved for **leukaemia** (cancers arising from the cells that produce white blood cells) and **lymphomas** (arising from the lymphatic system). It is developed by **Immunoadoptive Cell Therapy (ImmunoACT)**, an IIT Bombay incubated company, in collaboration with Tata Memorial Centre (TMC).

CAR T cell therapy is a type of cellular immunotherapy treatment that uses **T cells** that are genetically altered in a lab to enable them in locating in destroying cancer cells more effectively.

T cells are immune cells that attack infection causing pathogens (viruses, bacteria, fungi and parasites) and harmful cells, like cancer cells.

### **Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSO):**

It is the Central Drug Authority for discharging functions assigned to Central Government under Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940. It works under the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare.

38. The Union Minister for Power and New & Renewable Energy, **R. K. Singh**, has launched a brand-new **EV-Ready India Dashboard** ([evreadyindia.org](http://evreadyindia.org)) in New Delhi.

The dashboard is developed by policy and industry experts at think tank **OMI Foundation**. The dashboard is a free digital platform focussed on near real-time Electric Vehicle adoption and forecasts, associated battery demand, charging density, and market growth trends. The EV-Ready India dashboard has forecast a **45.5%** Compounded Annual Growth Rate (**CAGR**) in electric vehicles between calendar year (CY) 2022 and CY 2030, increasing from annual sales of 6,90,550 electric two-wheelers (E2Ws) in 2022 to 1,39,36,691 E2Ws in 2030.

### **Key Features of the EV-Ready India Dashboard:**

- The dashboard presents **consolidated sales data** for all 34 Vahan states and Union Territories, and the additional Telangana for the policymakers and industry.
- The dashboard shows forecasts on EV adoption, and associated battery demand till **2030**, allowing both policymakers and industry alike to strategize and execute their clean mobility goals.
- The dashboard presents **state-wise projections**, in a first-of-its-kind approach.
- For the end user, i.e., the (potential) buyer of EVs, the dashboard shows **financial benefits of EV ownership**, including potential savings on upfront costs, operating and maintenance costs, etc.
- It also includes a **comprehensive repository of all policies and regulations** covering all value chains of the EV ecosystem.

- The dashboard presents a comprehensive overview of charging infrastructure covering both charging stations and points across the country.
- The dashboard shows the **density of charging points** with respect to EVs on the road.
- By tracking and benchmarking investments across EV value chains such as vehicle manufacturing, battery technology, battery recycling or urban mining, etc., and research and development, the dashboard maps the contributions to India's economic growth and job creation.
- The dashboard measures India's journey towards net zero by tracking emissions avoided due to accelerated EV adoption.
- The dashboard presents **news and blogs on EV adoption** and data-driven decision-making.

**39.** The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has hosted the **8<sup>th</sup> BRICS International Competition Conference (BRICS ICC) 2023** in **New Delhi** from 11<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> October 2023.

The theme of the conference is '*New Issues in Competition Law and Policy – Dimensions, Perspectives, Challenges.*'

**Objective:** To discuss various emerging issues and challenges in competition enforcement in BRICS countries and take forward the agenda of cooperation among the BRICS competition authorities.

The conference has witnessed the participation of more than 600 delegates from the competition authorities of BRICS and non-BRICS nations, competition law experts, non-government advisors and domestic invitees.

The conference, hosted biennially by the BRICS competition authorities, provides a platform for promoting cooperation, experience sharing and mutual learning amongst the competition authorities of BRICS countries.

**40.** **India** has been re-elected as the **President** of the Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (**AIBD**) General Conference (GC) for the **3<sup>rd</sup>** consecutive term.

Previously, India served as President of AIBD GC in 2018 – 2021 and 2021 – 2023. India is set to lead the international organization and will leverage itself as the broadcasting and media hub across the Asia Pacific.

**Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD):**

AIBD was established in 1977 under the auspices of UNESCO. It is a unique regional inter-governmental organisation.

It currently has 92 member organisations across 44 countries, including 26 Government Members (countries) represented by 48 broadcasting authorities and broadcasters, and 44 Affiliates (organisations) of which represented by 28 countries and regions in Asia, Pacific, Europe, Africa, Arab States and North America.

India is one of the founding members of AIBD and **Prasar Bharati**, India's public service broadcaster is the representative body of the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, Govt. of India at AIBD.

- **Secretariat:** Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

- 41.** The Union Minister for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying **Parshottam Rupala** inaugurated the **16<sup>th</sup> Agricultural Science Congress (ASC)** at Hotel Le Meridien, **Kochi, Kerala**.

The ASC has been held for the first time in Kerala.

The ASC is organised by the National Academy of Agricultural Sciences (**NAAS**) and hosted by the ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (**CMFRI**).

**Objective:** To generate a scientific discourse around transforming India's agri-food systems into sustainable enterprises to facilitate its benefit for generations to come.

The Congress has discussed 10 thematic areas, including all issues related to agriculture and allied areas and sustainability issues on land and water, agricultural production systems, products, agricultural machinery, climate action, economics, renewable or alternative energy, precision farming, alternative farming systems, coastal agriculture, next-generation technologies, etc.

The theme of the Congress is **"Transformation of Agri-Food Systems for Achieving Sustainable Development Goals"**.

#### **Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI):**

The ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) was established by the Government of India on 3rd February 1947 under the Ministry of Agriculture and later shifted to the ICAR in 1967.

**Headquarters:** Kochi, Kerala

- 42.** Indian Air Force (IAF) Chief Air Chief Marshal (ACM) **Vivek Ram Chaudhari** has unveiled a new Ensign for the Indian Air Force (IAF) during the Air Force Day (8<sup>th</sup> October 2023) parade held at Air Force Station Bamrauli in Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh.

This is the first Air Force Day Parade commanded by a woman officer, GP Capt. Shaliza Dhami. She is also the first woman officer of the IAF to command a combat unit.

- The IAF Crest has the national symbol, the Ashoka lion on the top with the words "सत्यमेव जयते" in Devanagari below it.
- Below the Ashoka lion is a Himalayan eagle with its wings spread, denoting the fighting qualities of the IAF.



- A ring in light blue colour encircles the Himalayan eagle with the words "भारतीय वायु सेना".
- The motto of the IAF "नभः स्पृशं दीप्तम्" is inscribed below Himalayan eagle in golden Devanagari. The IAF motto has been taken from verse 24, Chapter 11 of the **Bhagavad Gita** and means "Radiant Thou Touchedst Heaven" or in other words "Touching the sky with Glory".

### **Indian Air Force:**

It was officially established on **8 October 1932** by the British Empire as the Royal Indian Air Force. The name was changed to Indian Air Force in 1950. The Indian Air Force is divided into 7 Commands. The President of India is the Commander-in-chief of the IAF. It is headquartered in New Delhi.

- 43.** Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the **9th G20 Parliamentary Speakers' Summit (P20)** at Yashobhoomi Convention Centre, **New Delhi**. The summit has been hosted by the Parliament of India under the broader framework of India's G20 Presidency.

The theme of the 9<sup>th</sup> P20 Summit is '**Parliaments for One Earth, One Family, One Future**'. The Speakers of Parliaments of G20 members and invitee countries have attended the event. The Pan-African Parliament has also participated in the P20 Summit for the first time after the African Union became a member of G20 at the New Delhi G20 Leaders' Summit on 9-10 September 2023.

The thematic sessions during this P20 Summit have focussed on the following four subjects: Transformation in People's Lives through Public Digital Platforms; Women-led development; Accelerating SDGs; and Sustainable Energy Transition.

### **G20 (Group of Twenty):**

The G20 was founded in 1999 after the Asian financial crisis as a forum for the Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors to discuss global economic and financial issues. It plays an important role in shaping and strengthening global architecture and governance on all major international economic issues.

It comprises **19 countries** (Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Türkiye, United Kingdom and United States), the **European Union**, and the **African Union**.

- 44.** The **Ministry of Culture** has organized the curtain raiser event for the **India Art Architecture Design Biennale (IAADB '23)** at the National Gallery of Modern Art, Delhi along with the Logo launch for the Biennale.

Notably, the Ministry of Culture is hosting its inaugural India Art Architecture Design Biennale from **9<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> December 2023**, with events scheduled in **Delhi, Mumbai, and Bengaluru**. The Biennale will serve as a precursor to India's participation in the Venice Biennale 2024, fostering a comprehensive dialogue among practitioners and professionals in the realms of art, architecture, and design.

The Biennale aims to bring traditional grassroots artists and contemporary designers, curators, architects, and thought leaders to the forefront, transcending age, gender, and genre boundaries.

- 45.** The Minister of State, Ministry of Development of Northeastern Region (MDoNER), **B.L. Verma** has launched “**Data Analytics Dashboard**” and “**Poorvottar Sampark Setu**” portal in New Delhi.

“MDoNER Data Analytics Dashboard” has the data of 112 schemes across 55 Departments and Ministries. It will help in:

- Data driven decision making;
- Ease of operations;
- Centralized monitoring;
- Policy level decision tool;
- Information integration.

It will monitor NER (North Eastern Region) Aspirational districts, North East border districts and the most backward districts in NER.

The “Poorvottar Sampark Setu” portal, is a powerful tool designed to streamline and enhance monitoring of Fortnightly visits of Union Ministers to NER. The portal generates a curated list of Ministers who can be nominated for visit to NER in the upcoming months.

- 46.** The Pharmacopoeial Discussion Group (PDG) has announced the **Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission (IPC)** as a PDG member on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2023 during PDG Stakeholder’s meeting held in Hyderabad, Telangana.

The PDG will now bring together the European Pharmacopoeia (Ph. Eur.), the Japanese Pharmacopoeia (JP), the United States Pharmacopeia (USP) and Indian Pharmacopoeia (IP) to harmonize global pharmacopoeial standards.

The objective is to reduce manufacturers' burden of having to perform analytical procedures in different ways, using different acceptance criteria, in order to satisfy pharmacopoeial requirements that vary across regions.

**Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission (IPC):**

IPC is an Autonomous Institution of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. It was formed in **2009**. It publishes the Indian Pharmacopoeia (IP) and regularly updates the standards of drugs imported, manufactured stocked or exhibited for sale or distributed in India.

Pharmacopoeia refers to book/monograph published by a government, or recognised organisation to provide standards of strength and purity for therapeutic drugs.

**Pharmacopoeial Discussion Group (PDG):**

It was formed by the US, EU and Japan in 1989 and World Health Organization joined as observer in 2001. It works to harmonize pharmacopeial standards in the member countries/regions.

47. The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved the amendment of the Second Schedule of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 (MMDR Act) for specifying rate of royalty in respect of 3 critical and strategic minerals, namely, **Lithium, Niobium and Rare Earth Elements (REEs)**.

With this approval, the royalty for Lithium will be **3%** of London Metal Exchange price, Niobium will be **3%** of Average Sale Price (ASP) (both primary and secondary sources) and REEs will be **1%** of ASP of rare earth oxide.

This will enable the Central Government to auction blocks for Lithium, Niobium, and REEs for the first time.

Prior to the amendment, the Second Schedule of the MMDR Act 1957 mandated a royalty rate of 12% of ASP for all minerals not specifically provided a royalty rate.

Mineral Royalty is economic rent due to the sovereign owner (government) in exchange for the right to extract mineral substances.

48. The Chennai-based **KCP – Heavy Engineering (KCP HE)** has delivered the first **Integrated Air Drop Test – Crew Module structure (IADT-CM)** to the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) for the purpose of assessing technology readiness for the **Gaganyaan** spacecraft, India's inaugural human space flight program.

This is the first IADT-CM out of two orders by ISRO to KCP while the second IADT-CM is set to be delivered by March 2024.

The first IADT-CM, weighing 3,120 kg and made of aluminium and steel, is fabricated at KCP's Thiruvottiyur facility.

It will be used for parachute system, pyros, avionics, and buoyancy augmentation system testing.

The CM structure simulates the Gaganyaan crew module, and the Integrated Air Drop Test will validate the deceleration system using an Indian Air Force helicopter at an altitude of 3.6 to 4 km.

The Gaganyaan Mission aims to send a crew of two to three members on a 3-day mission to a 400 km orbit, returning safely to Indian sea waters.

49. Cabinet approvals on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2023:

- The Cabinet has approved the establishment of an autonomous body **Mera Yuva Bharat (MY Bharat)** to focus on Youth led development. MY Bharat will be launched on **31st October, 2023** on National Unity Day.
- Cabinet has approved the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Economy, Finance and Industrial and Digital Sovereignty of the **French Republic** on cooperation in the field of **Digital Technologies**.

- Cabinet has approved an MoU signed on **11<sup>th</sup> August 2023** between the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Digital Transformation Technology of the Republic of **Trinidad and Tobago** on cooperation in the field of sharing successful **Digital Solutions** implemented at Population Scale for Digital Transformation.
- Cabinet has approved an MoU signed on **28 July 2023** between the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Information and Communications Technology of **Papua New Guinea** on cooperation in the field of sharing successful **Digital Solutions** implemented at Population Scale for Digital Transformation.

**50.** Union Information and Broadcasting Minister **Anurag Thakur** has launched the trailer of '**KTB-Bharat Hain Hum Animation Series**' in New Delhi. This is the first time Ministry of I&B has launched an animated series, aimed at people of India in general and children of the country in specific.

This series will present the story of the freedom fighters and their struggle for Independence in a unique way.

This animated series, consisting of two seasons, is produced by **Central Bureau of Communication**, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and **Graphiti Studios**.

This is the first time the Central Bureau of Communication, an expenditure body, is entering into the domain of earning revenue.

The series consists of 52 episodes, 11 minutes each, featuring stories from Indian Freedom struggle from 1500s to 1947.

The series is hosted by the iconic animated characters **Krish, Trish and Balti boy (KTB)**.

The series has been created by the creator duo of Munjal Shroff and Tilakraj Shetty from Graphiti Studios.

The series is being produced in the following **12 Languages**: Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Gujarati, Punjabi, Bengali, Assamese, Odia and English.

The series will also be dubbed in the following international languages: French, Spanish, Russian, Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, and Korean.

The Bharat Hain Hum Animation Series will commence in Doordarshan, Amazon Prime Video and Netflix from 15th October 2023.

## **RBI Assistant Free Mock Test**

**51.** The **Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO)** has successfully performed a 16-second **Trajectory Correction Maneuvers (TCM)** for its **Aditya L1** spacecraft.

Aditya L1 is on a 110-day journey to reach the Sun-Earth Lagrangian point 1 (L1), marking one of the longest space missions undertaken by an Indian spacecraft since the 2013-2014 Mars mission.

TCM are essential for deep space missions to ensure that the spacecraft follows the planned trajectory accurately. ISRO's Mars Orbiter Mission, for example, underwent three TCMs to ensure it reached its intended distance of 500 km (plus or minus 60 km) from Mars.

- 52.** The **Indian Navy** has introduced a '**360 Degree Appraisal Mechanism**' to evaluate officers' suitability for promotion. This is a transformative initiative that aims to promote professional and personal development while fostering a more comprehensive understanding of an officer's leadership abilities.

Under the existing system, senior officers provide periodic Confidential Reports, which follow a traditional top-down approach and may not fully capture an officer's influence on subordinates.

Under the new system, an officer's professional knowledge, leadership attributes, suitability in war/crisis, and potential for higher ranks will be assessed through large-scale surveys from peers and subordinates.

The collected data will be analysed by a specially nominated Board of Officers, led by a Flag Officer.

- 53.** The **Ministry of Commerce & Industry** has introduced a significant initiative to issue system based automatic '**Status Holder**' certificates under the **Foreign Trade Policy (FTP) 2023**.

Now certificate will be provided by the **IT system** based on available Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics (**DGCIS**) merchandise export electronic data and other risk parameters.

The exporter will not be required to apply to the office of Directorate General of Foreign Trade (**DGFT**) for a Status Certificate.

The Status Holder certification program provides credibility to the Indian exporters in the international markets. In addition, it provides certain other privileges including simplified procedures under FTP 2023 and priority custom clearances on self-declaration basis, exemption from compulsory negotiation of documents through banks, exemption from filing Bank Guarantee for FTP schemes etc.

The new system will recognize **20,000 exporters** as Status Holders under FTP 2023, from the earlier number of 12,518 exporters.

This is also aligned with the goal of achieving a USD 2 trillion export target by 2030.

**Note:** Status Holders are business leaders who have excelled in international trade and have successfully contributed to the country's foreign trade.

- 54.** Prime Minister of India **Narendra Modi** hosted **Samia Hassan**, President of **Tanzania**, who recently (Oct'23) visited India and become the first head of state to visit India from the African continent after the African Union became a member of the G20 at the 18<sup>th</sup> G20 Summit held in New Delhi.



Both the leaders announced the elevation of Indo-Tanzania relationship to the level of **'Strategic Partnership'**. This will help the two countries to jointly work on issues like maritime security, defence cooperation, development partnership, trade and investment among others.

Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between India & Tanzania for Cooperation in the field of:

- Sharing successful digital solutions for digital transformation.
- Setting up of an Industrial Park in Tanzania.
- Maritime Industry
- Navies on Sharing White Shipping Information
- Cultural Exchange Programme

Tanzania has decided to join the flagship Indian programmes like the International Big Cat Alliance (**IBCA**) and the Global Biofuel Alliance (**GBA**).

Both sides agreed on a **five-year** roadmap to significantly expand **defence** engagement.

Both sides agreed to cooperate under the framework of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (**IORA**) to ensure a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable Indian Ocean Region.

Notably, the President of Tanzania **Samia Hassan** has been conferred an **honorary doctorate** by **Jawaharlal Nehru University**, becoming the **first woman** to be bestowed with the honour for her pivotal role in fostering stronger India-Tanzania relations, promoting economic diplomacy, and achieving success in regional integration and multilateralism.

**Note:** IIT-Madras will open a campus in Zanzibar, Tanzania.

- 55.** The 2023 edition of the **Annual Joint Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) Exercise (AJHE)**, '**CHAKRAVAT 2023**', has been hosted by the **Indian Navy** at **Goa** from 9<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> October 2023.

It involves participation of all three Services, Paramilitary Forces, as well as several disaster response organisations, NGOs, academic institutions, and international organisations.

This exercise synergises efforts at the national level among all stakeholders, as well as witness participation from eight countries (*Mauritius, Comoros, Seychelles, Tanzania, Sri Lanka, Mozambique, Madagascar, and Maldives*) of the Indian Ocean Region.

The exercise has witnessed participation from various national agencies namely, National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), National Institute for Disaster Management (NIDM), Indian Army, Indian Navy, Indian Air Force, Coast Guard, Indian Metrological Department (IMD) and other organizations.

The CHAKRAVAT 2023 logo shows crests and logos of all participating agencies and flags of all nations subsumed into one single entity to signify that HADR will hinge on joint and integrated action by all agencies.

**Note:** The first edition of the Annual Joint Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) Exercise (AJHE) was held in 2015 and has been conducted by the Indian Army, Indian Navy (IN) and Indian Air Force (IAF) in rotation since 2016.

56. The **Territorial Army (TA)** has inducted its first batch of **Mandarin-trained officers** to support the regular Indian Army efforts to enhance expertise in the Chinese language.

Five Chinese language interpreters were inducted into the TA in August 2023 after an extensive selection process on the basis of Mandarin proficiency and officer-like-qualities and are now posted in forward areas along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) to assist in border personnel meetings with the People's Liberation Army (PLA).

**Territorial Army (TA):**

Territorial Army (TA) is a second line of defence after the regular Indian Army. TA was raised by the Britishers in 1920 through Indian Territorial Act of 1920.

After Independence **Territorial Army Act** was passed in 1948 and the Territorial Army was formally inaugurated by the first Indian Governor General C Rajagopalachari on **09 October 1949**.

- The duties of the TA include relieving the Regular Army from static duties, while also providing assistance to civil authorities in times of natural calamities and tragedies.
- They also help civil administration with providing essential services in areas where state machinery is stretched or there are security threats.

57. The Indian government has launched '**Operation Ajay**' to evacuate Indian national from **Israel-Hamas conflict zone**. As per the Ministry of External Affairs, around 18,000 Indians are currently residing in Israel.

The special chartered flights and the Indian Navy ships is being used to repatriate citizens from Israel and Palestine.

A 24-hour control room in New Delhi is monitoring the situation in Israel and Palestine.

On 7 October 2023, Palestinian militant groups led by Hamas launched a large-scale invasion against Israel. Part of the Gaza-Israel conflict, the war began with a militant invasion of Israel from the Gaza Strip named Operation Al-Aqsa Storm. The Israeli counteroffensive was named Operation Iron Swords.

58. The **Supreme Court of India** has allowed the appointment of an **interpreter** to translate through **sign language** for **hearing-impaired lawyers**. This will ensure that hearing-impaired lawyers and litigants, can fully comprehend and participate in judicial proceedings.

On 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2023, a bench headed by the Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud heard Sarah Sunny through sign-language interpreter Saurav Roy Chowdhury in a case related to the rights of persons with disabilities (PwD).

With this, **Sarah Sunny**, a Bengaluru-based hearing-impaired advocate, has become India's first practising deaf lawyer to make her case heard by the Supreme Court. She is the second deaf advocate in India after Saudamini Pethe (Mumbai).

She hails from Kottayam, Kerala.

- 59.** The **13<sup>th</sup> Indo-Pacific Armies Chiefs Conference (IPACC)** has been held at the Manekshaw Centre in **New Delhi**. This biennial event has been jointly hosted by the **Indian Army** and the **US Army Pacific**.

The event has convened Army Chiefs from 30 nations in the Indo-Pacific region. The central theme of this conference is *"Together for Peace: Sustaining Peace and Stability in the Indo-Pacific Region."*

This conference provides an opportunity for Army Chiefs and senior-level leaders from land forces, primarily in the Indo-Pacific region, to exchange ideas and views on security and contemporary issues.

As part of 13th IPACC, a Chief's Round Table Conference has been held on the theme "Together for Peace: Sustaining Peace and Stability in the Indo-Pacific Region".

**General Manoj Pande**, Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) Indian Army, has also held bilateral meetings with Chiefs of the armies of the participating countries.

Both countries have also co-hosted the **47<sup>th</sup> IPAMS** (Indo-Pacific Armies Management Seminar) and the 9<sup>th</sup> Senior Enlisted Leaders Forum (**SELF**).

- 60.** The Indian Air Force (IAF) has inducted the first of six state-of-the-art '**Dornier Do-228**' **aircraft**, manufactured by **Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)**, a Navaratna status Public Sector Undertaking under the Ministry of Defence.

This upgraded version of the aircraft boasts new engines, composite propellers, advanced avionics, and a modern glass cockpit.

In March 2023, the Ministry of Defence signed a contract with HAL to manufacture these aircraft with a budget of Rs.667 crore.

**Dornier Do-228 aircraft:**

This 19-seater aircraft is a highly versatile multi-purpose light transport aircraft. It has been developed specifically to meet the manifold requirements of utility and commuter transport, third level services and air-taxi operations, coast guard duties and maritime surveillance.

- 61.** **Dr Jitendra Singh**, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions, has launched the **Intelligent Grievance Monitoring System (IGMS) 2.0 Public Grievance portal** and Automated Analysis in Tree Dashboard portal of the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG).

- IGMS 2.0 dashboard has been implemented by **IIT Kanpur** following a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with DARPG on December 14, 2021, for upgrading Centralised Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS) (CPGRAMS) with Artificial Intelligence capabilities.

- The Dashboard provides instant tabular analysis of Grievances Filed & Disposed, State-wise & District-wise Grievances Filed & Ministry-wise data.
- The Dashboard will also help the officials identify the root cause of the grievance.

**62.** Tata group owned **Air India** has successfully acquired **India's first Airbus A350-900 aircraft** through a finance lease transaction with **HSBC** via the Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (**GIFT City**), India's first International Financial Services Centre (IFSC).

The transaction has been facilitated by AI Fleet Services Limited, a subsidiary of Air India. The airline has ordered six A350-900 planes and five of them are scheduled for delivery through March 2024.

Air India is India's first scheduled carrier to have acquired an aircraft from an entity registered in GIFT City.

**63.** The **78<sup>th</sup> session** of the **United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)** has been held at the United Nations headquarters in New York City, the USA from 18<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

President of the 78<sup>th</sup> UNGA is **Dennis Francis (Trinida & Tobago)**.

**Theme 2023:** "Rebuilding trust and reigniting global solidarity: Accelerating action on the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals towards peace, prosperity, progress and sustainability for all."

External Affairs Minister **S. Jaishankar** has represented India at the session.

During this session, **India and Japan** have agreed to strengthen economic cooperation including high-speed railway project.

The **United Nations-India** has signed a Letter of Intent (LoI) with the **Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation** to collaborate on various initiatives, which includes food security, global health, climate change and initiating a new partnership to enhance Indian South-South Cooperation.

**United Nations General Assembly (UNGA):**

It is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations. Each of the 193 Member States of the United Nations has an equal vote.

UNGA appoints a Security General on the recommendation of the Security Council.

It discusses, debates, and makes recommendations on subjects pertaining to international peace and security, including development, disarmament, human rights, international law, and the peaceful arbitration of disputes between nations.

**64.** The **Ministry of Defence (MoD)** has released the **fifth Positive Indigenisation** list of **98 items**, such as certain categories of combat vehicles and drones, sensors, weapons and

ammunitions, to give more exposure to domestic industry and reduce dependence on imports of the military hardware.

The list is prepared by the Department of Military Affairs.

The list lays special focus on import substitution of components of major systems which are being developed and is likely to translate into firm orders in the next five to ten years.

**Key items include:**

Futuristic Infantry Combat Vehicle, Articulated All-Terrain Vehicles, Remotely Piloted Air Borne Vehicles upto 25 Km with 2Kg Payload for Army, Naval Shipborne Unmanned Aerial System, Medium Upgrade Low Endurance Class Tactical Drone, Electric Light Vehicle for Army, Medium Range Precision Kill System for Artillery, and Next Generation Low Level Light Radar for Army.

**Other initiatives launched:**

- Minister of Defence Rajnath Singh has launched **76 challenges** for the industry under 10th Defence India Start-up Challenges (DISC 10) and DISC 10 PRIME of Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) and five problem statements under iDEX for Fauji at Swavlamban seminar 2023.
- Two INDUS X challenges under 'INDUS-X Mutual Promotion of Advanced Collaborative Technologies' (IMPACT) challenges jointly finalised by iDEX and United States Department of Defence (US DoD) have also launched.
- He has also launched '**SBI NAVECash Card**', a one-of-its-kind dual-chip debit card developed by the State Bank of India (SBI) and the Indian Navy. The card can be used in online mode as well as in offline mode while at sea with no direct connectivity with the bank.

- 65.** The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved a proposal of Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, Ministry of Jal Shakti to complete the balance works of **North Koel Reservoir Project** at a revised cost of **Rs.2,430.76 crore (central share: Rs.1,836.41 crore)** as against the balance cost of Rs.1,622.27 crore (central share: Rs.1,378.60 crore) approved earlier in August, 2017.

The project would provide additional annual irrigation to 42,301 ha in the four drought prone districts of **Jharkhand and Bihar**.

**North Koel Reservoir Project:**



It is an inter-State major irrigation project with command area lying in the two States of Bihar and Jharkhand. The project comprises a dam on North Koel River near Kutku village (District Latehar, Jharkhand), a barrage 96 km downstream of the dam (at Mohammadganj, District Palamu, Jharkhand), Right Main Canal (RMC) and Left Main Canal (LMC) taking off from the barrage.

66. The Government of India has notified the constitution of the **National Turmeric Board** to promote the development and growth of the turmeric industry in India.

**Composition:**

- The Board shall have a **Chairperson** to be appointed by the **Central Government**.
- The Board shall have members from the Ministry of AYUSH, Departments of Pharmaceuticals, Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, and Commerce & Industry of the Union Government.
- The Board will also include rotating **senior State Government** representatives from **three** states.
- Representatives from select national/state institutions involved in turmeric research and industry.
- Representatives from turmeric farmers and exporters to represent the interests of the community.
- The Board shall have a **Secretary** to be appointed by the **Department of Commerce**.

**Key facts:**

India is the largest producer, consumer and exporter of turmeric in the world.

In the year 2022-23, an area of 3.24 lakh ha was under turmeric cultivation in India with a production of 11.61 lakh tonnes (over 75% of global turmeric production).

The largest producing states of Turmeric are **Maharashtra, Telangana, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu**.

India has more than **62% share** of world trade in turmeric.

It is expected that turmeric exports will reach **USD 1 Billion** by **2030**.

67. The **Ministry of Tourism** has inaugurated the **46<sup>th</sup> edition** of the **Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) Travel Mart 2023** held at the International Exhibition-cum-Convention Centre (IECC), Pragati Maidan in **New Delhi**.

This is the **first time India hosted the PATA Travel Mart**.

The Mart has been held from October 4th to 6th, 2023.

The Mart aims to provide an opportunity for members to highlight unique places, create networks, learn, and socialise for delegates from all over the world, and for business to expand.

**Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA):**

PATA is a not-for-profit membership association that acts as a catalyst for the responsible development of travel and tourism to, from, and within the Asia Pacific region. It was founded in 1951.

- **Headquarters:** Bangkok, Thailand
- **Chairman:** Peter Semone

## **RBI Assistant Free Mock Test**

**68.** The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved a bill, namely, the **Central Universities (Amendment), Bill, 2023** to amend the Central Universities Act, 2009 for setting up of **Sammakka Sarakka Central Tribal University** at **Mulugu district** in the state of **Telangana** as provided in the 13<sup>th</sup> Schedule to the Andhra Pradesh Re-organisation Act, 2014.

**Rs.889.07 crore** has been allocated for this purpose.

The Central Tribal University would be named after Sammakka-Sarakka, a mother-daughter duo revered among the local tribal community.

**Sammakka Saralamma Jatara:**

Mulugu district of Telangana holds a biennial festival, the Sammakka Saralamma Jatara, which is considered among the largest gatherings of tribal people in the world.

The event commemorates the battle of the 13<sup>th</sup>-century mother-daughter duo (Sammakka-Sarakka) against the local rulers in protest the imposition of taxes on the Koya people.

The Jatara begins at Medaram village, and the rituals are conducted by the Koya priests, in accordance with their customs and traditions.

**69.** **India and Bangladesh** have commenced the **11<sup>th</sup> edition** of annual joint military exercise, **SAMPRITI**, in **Umroi, Meghalaya**. This exercise, alternately organised by both countries, signifies strong bilateral defence cooperation initiatives.

**Participants:**

- The Bangladesh contingent comprises 170 personnel, led by Brigadier General Mohammed Mafizul Islam Rashed, Commander of 52 Bangladesh Infantry Brigade. The lead unit from the Bangladesh Army side is 27 Bangladesh Infantry Regiment.

- Indian contingent mainly comprises troops from a battalion of RAJPUT Regiment.

Brigadier SK Anand, Commander of a Mountain Brigade is leading the Indian contingent.

The Validation Exercise will be conducted on 14th and 15th October 2023 in Darranga Field Firing Range, Assam.

**Note:** The SAMPRITI exercise was launched in Jorhat, Assam in 2009.

- 70.** The World Health Organization (WHO) has recommended a new vaccine, **R21/Matrix-M**, for the prevention of **malaria** in children. This vaccine has been developed by the **University of Oxford** and the **Serum Institute of India**.

The R21 vaccine is the second malaria vaccine recommended by WHO, following the RTS,S/AS01 (Mosquirix) vaccine, which received a WHO recommendation in 2021.

The R21 and RTS,S vaccines act against *P. falciparum*, the deadliest malaria parasite and the most prevalent on the African continent.

- 71.** The **Ministry of Information & Broadcasting (MIB)** has introduced key amendments to the **Cable Television Network Rules of 1994**, thereby introducing a procedure for the renewal of Multi-System Operator (MSO) Registrations.

Additionally, an enabling provision has been inserted in the Rules for the sharing of infrastructure by the Cable Operators with Broadband Service providers to promote internet penetration to the last mile.

#### Key amendments:

- MSOs shall apply for the registration or renewal of registration online at the **Broadcast Seva Portal** of MIB.
- MSO registrations shall be granted or renewed for a period of **ten years**.
- A processing fee of **Rs.1 lakh** will be applicable for the renewal of registration.
- The application for renewal of registration shall be within a window of **seven to two months** before the expiry of the registration.

An MSO (Multiple System Operator) is a cable television service operator. It operates multiple cables and direct broadcast satellite television systems.

- 72.** Union Minister for Education, Dharmendra Pradhan, has launched the **Bharatiya Bhasha Utsav** and inaugurated the two-day Technology & **Bharatiya Bhasha Summit** in **New Delhi**.

The summit aims to facilitate a seamless transition from the current education ecosystem to one rooted in Bharatiya languages, in line with the NEP (National Education Policy)-2020 vision and to set the course for a technologically enriched future for Bharatiya languages in education.

The summit is jointly organized by the Ministry of Education (MoE), Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE), and their constituent institutions.

The summit, organized as part of the Bharatiya Bhasha Utsav, encompasses three pivotal thematic sessions:

- Technology FOR Bharatiya Languages;
- Technology IN Bharatiya Languages;
- Technology THROUGH Bharatiya Languages

The Government of India has proposed to celebrate the birthday of renowned Tamil poet and freedom fighter **Mahakavi Chinna Swami Subramania Bharati** as **Bharatiya Bhasha Divas (11 December)**.

The **Bharatiya Bhasha Utsav**, which started on **28<sup>th</sup> September 2023**, will run for 75 days and will culminate on **11<sup>th</sup> December 2023**.

- 73.** President Droupadi Murmu has given assent to the '**Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam 2023**' (Women's Reservation Bill 2023), officially titled as the Constitution (128<sup>th</sup> Amendment) Bill, 2023, on **28<sup>th</sup> September 2023**.

The Bill was introduced by **Union Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal** in the Lok Sabha on **19<sup>th</sup> September 2023**. It was passed by the Rajya Sabha on **21<sup>st</sup> September 2023**.

Now, it will be officially known as the **Constitution (106<sup>th</sup> Amendment) Act**.

It shall come into force on such date as the central government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, appoint.

- 74.** The Act provides **33 percent** reservation (one-third of the total seats) to women in the Lok Sabha, State Legislative Assemblies, and National Capital Territory (NCT) of Delhi, becoming the first Bill to be passed in the new Parliament building.

The seats already reserved for **Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes** will also come within the purview of women's reservation.

The bill cannot be enacted into law until the year 2026. The bill can only become effective after a process known as "delimitation" is carried out in the country.

**Note:** The first Women Reservation Bill was introduced in the Parliament in 1996.

#### **Key features of the Bill:**

- The Bill inserted **Article 330A** to the constitution, which borrows from the provisions of Article 330, which provides for reservation of seats to SCs/STs in the **Lok Sabha**. The Bill

provided that reserved seats for women may be allotted by rotation to different constituencies in states or Union Territories. In the seats reserved for SCs/STs, the Bill sought to provide one-third of the seats to be reserved for women on rotational basis.

- The Bill inserted **Article 332A**, which mandates the reservation of seats for women in every **state Legislative Assembly**. Additionally, one-third of the seats reserved for SCs and STs must be allocated for women, and one-third of the total seats filled through direct elections to the Legislative Assemblies shall also be reserved for women.
- **Article 239AA** to the constitution grants special status to the **Union Territory of Delhi** as national capital with regards to its administrative and legislative functioning. **Article 239AA (2)(b)** is amended by the bill accordingly to add that the laws framed by parliament shall apply to the NCT of Delhi.
- The Bill inserted **Article 334A**. The reservation will be effective after the census conducted after the commencement of this Bill has been published. Based on the census, delimitation will be undertaken to reserve seats for women. The reservation will be provided for a period of 15 years. However, it shall continue till such date as determined by a law made by Parliament.
- The seats reserved for women will be rotated after each delimitation, as determined by a law made by Parliament.

**75.** The **Defence Accounts Department (DAD)**, under the administrative control of the Ministry of Defence, and headed by the Controller General of Defence Accounts (CGDA), has observed its **276<sup>th</sup> Annual Day** on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2023.

During the occasion, Minister of Defence Rajnath Singh has launched several digital initiatives of DAD in New Delhi.

**Key digital initiatives:**

- **'SARANSH'** (Summary of Accounts, Budget and Expenditure for Raksha Mantralaya): It aims to reflect a more accurate and objective view of the defence financial data across India on payment, accounting, budgeting etc. by leveraging data analytics on the different databases of various IT systems running in DAD.



- **'BISWAS'** (Bill Information and Work Analysis System): It provides real-time detailed analysis of bill processing, with interactive visualisations of granular data flowing through the various office automation systems for a Controller office.
- **e-Raksha Awaas**: It is a centralised and comprehensive software package developed to streamline and optimize the process of generating timely rent and allied charges for rentable buildings within the Defence Services and facilitating the prompt remission of rent and allied charges to Government Accounts.

**76.** Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has also presented the **Raksha Mantri Awards for Excellence 2023** to five teams for exhibiting exemplary initiatives in implementing key department projects:

- For adoption of new paradigms of training methodology;
- Implementation of Computer Based Testing (CBT) systems in the conduct of SAS Examinations in Defence Accounts Department;
- Implementation of SARANSH Raksha Mantralaya Dashboard;
- Implementation of Dolphin 2.0, a nation-wide system for management of pay and allowances for JCOs/Other Ranks of the Indian Army;
- Development of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for field offices of the Department.

**Note: Pay and Accounts Office (PAO)-Bharti** is a digital initiative of the Defence Accounts Department (DAD). It was launched in 2022. Through this, Armed Forces personnel will be able to get real-time data related to pay & allowances and claims. Personnel can also register their complaints.

## STATES AFFAIRS

**77. Kerala** has become the **first state in India** to have **hallmarking centres** in all of its **14 districts**. This feat was achieved after the inauguration of a hallmarking centre in Adimali, Idukki district in Kerala.

This will make Kerala a hub of gold business and will strengthen its claim to being the most reliable market across the country.

The gold business in Kerala is worth more than Rs.1,00,000 crore with annual sales of around 250 tonnes.

### Hallmarking:

Hallmarking is a system that aims to certify the purity of gold and silver jewellery/artefacts in India.

The hallmarking system is managed by the BIS, which is the National Standard Body of India founded under the 'Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) Act 2016'.

**Hallmark Unique Identification (HUID) number**, launched in 2021, is a 6-digit Alphanumeric code. Each piece of jewellery will have HUID at the time of hallmarking and it will be unique for every piece of jewellery.

- 78.** The indigenously built state of the art **Air Traffic Management Automation System (ATMAS)** has been inaugurated at the **Biju Patnaik International Airport** in **Bhubaneswar, Odisha**.

The ATMAS has been jointly developed by the Airports Authority of India (AAI) and Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL).

The ATMAS will help to improve the safety, efficiency, and capacity of air traffic management in India.

- 79.** Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated the **17 km priority section** of the **Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS)** Corridor at Sahibabad RapidX station in Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh.

He has also flagged off the **Namo Bharat RapidX** train connecting Sahibabad to Duhai Depot, which marks India's first RRTS.

The Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut RRTS being developed at a cost of more than **Rs.30,000 crore** and will connect Delhi to Meerut in less than an hour of travel time going through the urban centres of Ghaziabad, Muradnagar, and Modinagar.

The foundation stone for Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut corridor was laid by the Prime Minister on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2019.

#### **Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS):**

- RRTS, also known as Namoo Bharat, is a new rail-based, semi-high-speed, high-frequency commuter transit system.
- It is indigenously manufactured with a designed speed potential of **180 kmph** and operational speed potential of **160 kmph**.
- The train set was created by **Alstom**, a French company that makes coaches, in its engineering centre in Hyderabad.
- Namoo Bharat was made at an **Alstom plant** in **Gujarat**.
- 8 RRTS corridors have been identified for development in the NCR.
- **Implementing Agency:** *National Capital Region Transport Corporation (NCRTC)*, a joint venture of Union government and the Governments of Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. It comes under the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.

**Note:** The entire 82.15 km RRTS corridor is projected to be fully operational by June 2025.

- 80.** The Chief Minister of Uttarakhand, **Pushkar Singh Dhami**, has launched the **Nanda Gaura Yojana (NGY) Portal**, an online facility to be annually available to about 50,000 girls who are permanent residents of Uttarakhand.

The scheme aims to **improve the gender ratio and education of girls**.

Under this scheme, eligible parents will get **Rs.11,000** at the time of birth of the girl child and later the girl child will receive **Rs.51,000** on clearing class XII.

- 81.** Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Amit Shah has inaugurated **India's first liquid Nano Di-Ammonia Phosphate (DAP) plant** of the Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative Limited (IFFCO) at **Kalol** in **Gandhinagar, Gujarat**.

It has been set up at a cost of Rs.300 crore.

DAP liquid is an efficient source of Nitrogen (8%) and Phosphorus (16%), which helps in overcoming their deficiencies in the soil.

The plant will produce 42 lakh bottles of green technology Nano DP.

**Note:** In May 2022, PM Narendra Modi inaugurated IFFCO's world's first Nano Urea Liquid in Kalol.

- 82.** **Kasaragod district of Kerala** has become the **first district in India** to officially designate its own tree, flower, bird and species. The decision is a testament to the region's rich biodiversity and natural heritage.

The official tree of the district is **'Kanjiram'** (*Strychnos nux-vomica* Linn), a species deriving its name from 'kasara', meaning wormwood, from which the name of the district originates.

**District's flower: 'Periya Polathali'** (Malabar River lilly, *Crinum malabaricum*)

**District's bird: 'Vellavayaran Kadal Paranthu'** (White-bellied sea eagle, *Haliaeetus leucogaster*)

**District's creature: 'Palappoovan Aamma'** alias **'Beeman Aamma'** (Cantor's Giant Softshell Turtle, *Pelochelys cantorii* gray)

- 83.** Prime Minister Narendra Modi has released three books, **'Ashtadhyayi Bhashya'**, **'Rambhadracharya Charitam'** and **'Bhagwan Shri Krishna ki Rashtraleela'**, during a programme organized at at Tulsi Peeth in Chitrakoot, Madhya Pradesh.

These books are written by **Jagadguru Rambhadracharya** of Tulsi Peeth.

Tulsi Peeth is a religious and social service institution which was established by Jagadguru Rambhadracharya in 1987 and is one of the leading publishers of Hindu religious literature. Jagadguru Rambhadracharya was awarded **Padma Vibhushan in 2015** in the field of Literature and Education.

**Note:** 'Ashtadhyayi' is a Sanskrit treatise on grammar written in 6<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> century BC by the Sanskrit grammarian Panini.

- 84.** Prime Minister Narendra Modi has launched **511 Pramod Mahajan Grameen Kaushalya Vikas Kendras** in **Maharashtra** via video conferencing. These Kendras are established across 34 rural districts of Maharashtra.

These Kendras will conduct skill development training programs across various sectors to provide employment opportunities to rural youth.

Each Kendra will train about **100 youngsters** in at least two vocational courses.

The training will be provided by empanelled industry partners and agencies under the National Skill Development Council.

- 85.** The Urban Development Department of the Government of **Uttar Pradesh** has set up the Urban Road Infrastructure Development Agency (**URIDA**) to implement the Chief Minister Green Road Infrastructure Development Scheme (Urban) (**CM Grids Scheme**) on the ground.

In October 2023, the UP cabinet approved the CM Grids Scheme worth **Rs.500 crore** to construct roads of international standards in all cities.

The URIDA office will be established on the premises of the Directorate of Local Bodies, Lucknow, UP.

- 86.** Swedish telecommunication company, **Ericsson**, has announced to set up a **6G Research & Development (R&D) Centre** in **Chennai, Tamil Nadu**. This 6G R&D centre in India will be the 3<sup>rd</sup> such centre of Ericsson. The other 2 are in Sweden and the USA.

At present, Ericsson has R&D centres at Chennai, Bengaluru (Karnataka), and Gurugram (Haryana).

Ericsson was started by Lars Magnus Ericsson in 1876.

**Note:** On 5<sup>th</sup> October 2023, Nokia announced to set up a 6G lab in Bengaluru, Karnataka

- 87.** Commodore Sunil Kaushik has launched the vessel, the **25T Bollard Pull Tug** named '**Mahabali**' at M/s Shoft Shipyard Pvt Ltd, in Bharuch, Gujarat.

These Tugs are built under the classification rules of Indian Register of Shipping (IRS).

The availability of Tugs will provide impetus to Operational commitments of Indian Navy by facilitating assistance to Naval ships and submarines during berthing and un-berthing, turning, and manoeuvring in confined waters.

The Tugs will also provide afloat firefighting assistance to ships alongside, and at anchorage, and will have capability to conduct limited Search and Rescue Operations.

88. The government of **Rajasthan** has launched the '**iStart Talent Connect Portal**' under iStart Rajasthan, the flagship initiative of the Rajasthan Government in collaboration with Jaipur-based startup Hyrefox.

The portal has been launched during the Bhamashah Techno Hub, Jaipur, Rajasthan.

The portal will allow the companies to hire potential talents and let them post job opening details and connect with job seekers.

89. The **Baiga** Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG) has become the **second** to get habitat rights under the Forest Rights Act (FRA) 2006 in the state of **Chhattisgarh**.

Kamar PVTG received habitat rights in August 2023.

Habitat rights recognition provides the community concerned rights over their customary territory of habitation, socio-cultural practices, economic and livelihood means, intellectual knowledge of biodiversity and ecology, traditional knowledge of use of natural resources, as well as protection and conservation of their natural and cultural heritage.

**Baiga Tribe:**

- The Baiga Tribe reside in Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Bihar, Odisha, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh.
- Traditionally, the Baiga lived a semi-nomadic life and practised slash-and-burn cultivation. Now, they are mainly dependent on minor forest produce for their livelihood.
- They practice a form of shifting cultivation called, "Bewar."
- Mahua is an important aspect of Baiga's food and drink.
- Tattooing is an integral part of Baiga culture, every age and body part has a specific tattoo reserved for the occasion.

**Note:** Out of 75 PVTG in India, only three have habitat rights- the **Bharia PVTG** in Madhya Pradesh was the first, followed by the Kamar tribe and the Baiga tribe in Chhattisgarh.

90. **Goa** Chief Minister Pramod Sawant has launched the '**Swayampurna e-bazaar**', an online platform that supports self-help groups, local artisans and women of Goa to sell their products across India.

The Swayampurna e-bazaar is an extension of the successful Swayampurna Chavath Bazar, an online food delivery portal integrated with the Swiggy app for delivering food products produced by local Goa people.

91. Union Minister of State for Skill Development & Entrepreneurship and Electronics & IT, **Rajeev Chandrasekhar**, has inaugurated a project named "**Heartland Tripura**", in



partnership with **Deloitte India** and the National Institute of Electronics and Information Technology (**NIELIT**), Agartala, to boost employment & employability in the state.

This project will deliver a specific set of skill development certification courses through NIELIT, Agartala for the state.

In the pilot phase of this project around 350 graduates are expected to receive training and employment opportunities, subject to fulfilling laid out assessment criteria.

- 92.** The Union Minister for Tribal Affairs Arjun Munda has inaugurated '**Aadi Mahotsav**' National Tribal Festival in **Jamshedpur, Jharkhand**. The festival has been organized by the Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India Limited (TRIFED) of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs from 7 to 16 October 2023.

Aadi Mahotsav, an annual celebration of tribal entrepreneurship, craft, culture, cuisine, and commerce, serves as a vital platform to display the rich and diverse heritage of tribes from across the nation.

This year the festival highlights the talents of 336 tribal artisans and artists, including Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) and Van Dhan Vikas Kendra (VDVK) beneficiaries.

This event features 30 artisans' stalls, around 11 VDVKs' stalls and 5 cuisine stalls from Jharkhand.

- 93. Assam** Chief Minister **Himanta Biswa Sarma** has introduced an upgraded version of its poverty alleviation scheme called '**Orunodoi 2.0**'. The new scheme has been launched with the distribution of Orunodoi Cards to additional beneficiaries, marking a significant step in empowering disadvantaged sections of society.

Orunodoi 2.0 aims to extend the reach of the poverty alleviation program.

Approximately 7.30 lakh new beneficiaries will be included in the program, bringing the total number of beneficiaries to 26 lakh.

As part of Orunodoi 2.0, 26 lakh women will receive Rs.1250 per month, with the funds being directly credited to their bank accounts on the 10th of every month.

**Note:** 'Orunodoi' or Arunodoi Scheme was launched by Assam government on 2nd October 2020.

- 94.** The Chief Minister of Karnataka, **Siddaramaiah**, has unveiled the emblem of '**Karnataka Sambhrama-50**' to mark the golden jubilee of renaming the Mysore State as Karnataka on **1<sup>st</sup> November 1973**.

To mark 50 years of renaming the government of Karnataka decided to hold year-long celebrations from 1<sup>st</sup> November 2023 to 1<sup>st</sup> November 2024.

The celebration will be titled "**Hesarayitu Karnataka, Usiragali Kannada.**"

**Note:** Karnataka observes 1<sup>st</sup> November as Karnataka Rajyotsava Day.

- 95.** The **Government of Punjab** has launched the '**Hope Initiative**' to curb the drug menace in the state. This is the first of its kind mass movement against drugs which will break the backbone of this menace.

This is the initiative of Amritsar Police.

Under this Initiative, a three-pronged strategy of pray, pledge and play is being used.

As part of the initiative, Amritsar Police has also organized gully cricket competitions.

- 96.** **Odisha** Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has launched the "**Location Accessible Multi-modal Initiative**" (**LAccMI**) scheme in Malkangiri district of Odisha.

LAccMI was announced in the Odisha State budget 2023-24.

The scheme aims to offer reliable and affordable public transit (bus service) throughout Odisha, with a focus on rural areas.

The project is being implemented in Odisha with a budget of Rs.3718 crore over the next three years, from 2023-24 to 2025-26.

- 97.** **Kongali**, also known as **Kati Bihu**, is an auspicious harvest festival and is annually observed across the state of **Assam** with joy and happiness. This year, the festival falls on **18<sup>th</sup> October 2023**. It is observed on the first day of the Kati month in the Assamese calendar and usually falls during mid-October.

During this festival, people light lamps outside their homes and create pathways with bamboo to welcome their ancestors. People also worship the Goddess Lakshmi and Tulsi plant for a good harvest.

**Note:** People of Assam celebrate three kinds of Bihu - Bhogali Bihu in January, Rongali Bihu in April, and Kongali Bihu in October.

- 98.** The **Indian Army (Siachen Warriors)**, in collaboration with the Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (**BSNL**), has established the first-ever **BSNL base transceiver station (BTS)** on the world's highest battlefield, **Siachen Glacier** in Ladakh.

This will provide mobile communication services to soldiers at an altitude of over 15,500 feet. BTS sends and receives radio signals from mobile devices to a cellular network is known as a base transceiver station (BTS).

- 99.** The **Mahila Thana** (women's police station) of **Bhopal (Madhya Pradesh)** has become **India's first women-centric police station** to be certified with the International Organization for Standardization (**ISO 9001:2015 certificate**).

With this recognition, the Mahila Police Station aims to enhance public confidence in its ability to deliver effective policing services and promptly address the concerns of citizens. The ISO certificate is issued for 3 years.

With this, Mahila Thana has become the **2<sup>nd</sup> ISO-certified police station** in Bhopal. In May 2023, Misrod police station became the first ISO 9001:2015 certified police station of Bhopal.

## **RBI Assistant Free Mock Test**

- 100.** Union Health & Family Welfare Minister **Mansukh Mandaviya** has unveiled the **Nagaland Institute of Medical Sciences and Research (NIMSR)** in **Kohima, Nagaland**.

NIMSR is the **first Medical College** in Nagaland after 60 years of statehood.

NIMSR Kohima aims at providing holistic medical education to MBBS students enrolled under NIMSR, comprehensive hospital based and community outreach health care services to patients through various Health Care Programs, extra and intramural research facilities. NIMSR Kohima is affiliated to Nagaland University.

It received the Letter of Permission for admission of 100 MBBS seats (85 seats for the students of Nagaland and 15 seats for the students of other states) from academic year 2023-2024 from the National Medical Commission (NMC), in April 2023.

- 101.** Secretary, Ministry of Electronics, and Information Technology (MeitY), S Krishnan, has inaugurated the **Robotic Process Automation (RPA) Lab** at the National Institute of Electronics & Information Technology (NIELIT), **Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh** during 26th All India Director's Meet of NIELIT.

The state-of-art RPA lab has been built under the **Future Skill PRIME Project** funded by MeitY with an objective to upskill/reskill manpower in emerging technology of RPA.

This is the first-of-its-kind lab in Uttar Pradesh under Future Skill PRIME Project, which has been established to bridge the gap between Industry and Academia.

During the event, **NIELIT & DDU Gorakhpur University** have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to conduct Employment-oriented training in in future skill technology.

### **Robotic Process Automation (RPA):**

RPA, also known as software robotics, uses intelligent automation technologies to perform repetitive office tasks of human workers. It combines Application Programming Interface (APIs) and user interface (UI) interactions to integrate and perform repetitive tasks. RPA trains algorithms using data so that the software can perform tasks in a quicker, and more efficient way.

**Note:** Future Skill PRIME Project of MeitY aims to create an up-skilling and reskilling ecosystem in 10 emerging technologies, such as AI, IOT, block chain etc.

- 102.** Union Ports, Shipping and Waterways Minister **Sarbananda Sonowal**, along with Tamil Nadu Public Works Minister EV Velu, has virtually flagged off a new international ferry service between **India and Sri Lanka**.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has also addressed the event.

- The ferry is named '**Cheriyapani**'.
- The ferry service will be operated between the port town of **Nagapattinam in Tamil Nadu** and **Kankensanthurai**, a resort hub in Jaffna district of northern **Sri Lanka**.
- The high-speed ferry will cover a distance of about 60 nm (110 km) between Nagapattinam and KKS in around 3.5 hours, depending on sea conditions.
- The vessel can accommodate up to 150 passengers, apart from a 14-member crew.
- The vessel is operated by the Shipping Corporation of India (SCI).

**103.** The **second spaceport** of **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)**, which will be dedicated exclusively for Small Satellite Launch Vehicles (SSLVs), will come up in about two years at **Kulasekarapattinam** in Thoothukudi district of **Tamil Nadu**.

This launch pad will be used only by the private sector.

A small space manufacturing park will also come up near the spaceport in Kulasekarapattinam.

At present, ISRO has one space station i.e., the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota.

#### **Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV):**

SSLV is a 3-stage launch vehicle capable of launching approximately 500kg satellites in 500-km planar orbit. The key features of SSLV are low cost, with low turnaround time, flexibility in accommodating multiple satellites, launch-on-demand feasibility, and minimal launch infrastructure requirements.

**104. Odisha** Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has launched the **Mission Shakti Scooter Scheme** to provide mobility support to self-help group members and strengthen women's empowerment in the state.

The state government will provide interest-free loan up to **Rs.1 lakh** to Mission Shakti members to buy scooters.

The government will pay **Rs.528 crore** towards the interest of the loan availed by the Women Self-Help Group (WSHG) members.

Under the scheme, more than 2 lakh members of WSHGs will be benefited.

#### **Mo Odisha Nabin Odisha:**

The Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik has also launched the **"Mo Odisha Nabin Odisha"** scheme to strengthen the infrastructure with focus on every village and every Panchayat in the state. Under the scheme, every Panchayat will get Rs.50 lakh for development of digital infrastructure, strengthening of Odia culture and conservation of Jaganath culture.

Total **Rs.3397 crore** would be spent in the state for implementation of 90,723 projects in 6794 Gram Panchayats.

**105. 'Bathukamma'** means '*Mother Goddess come Alive*', is an annual festival observed predominantly in **Telangana** and in some parts of **Andhra Pradesh**.

- This is a **floral festival** observed by women only.
- The festival starts on Bhadrapada Amavasya, also known as Mahalaya Amavasya or Pithru Amavasya, and ends on Ashwayuja Ashtami, popularly known as Durgashtami.
- It is celebrated for nine days which culminates on Pedda Bathukamma panduga or Chaddula Bathukamma festival.
- Bathukamma festival indicates the beginning of Sharath rathu.

In 2023, the Bathukamma festival has been observed from 14th October to 23rd October.

**106.** The state government of **Tamil Nadu** has announced a new **Tax Arrears Conciliation Scheme (Samadhan scheme)** with waivers and concessions for settling pending tax dues of about Rs.25000 crore.

The scheme will be in force between 16<sup>th</sup> October 2023 to 15<sup>th</sup> February 2024.

The Samadhan scheme classifies tax dues into five categories based on the outstanding amounts:

- Below Rs.50,000
- Between Rs.50,000 and Rs.10 lakh
- Between Rs.10 lakh and Rs.1 crore
- Between Rs.1 crore and Rs.10 crore
- Above Rs.10 crore

The scheme presents a complete waiver of tax arrears, interest, and penalties for assessment years with dues under Rs.50,000.

**107.** Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sharma has unveiled a **35-feet** statue of Ahom general **Lachit Borphukan**, and a **Swahid Smarak** (Martyr's Column) at Bir Lachit Borphukan Park inside Narengi Military Station in Guwahati, Assam.

**Lachit Borphukan:**

He was the general of the **Ahom Kingdom**. He is best known for fighting off the **Mughals (Ruler Aurangzeb)**, defeating them in the Battle of Saraighat in 1671 on the banks of the Brahmaputra near Guwahati.

**108.** The Chief Minister of **Uttar Pradesh** Yogi Adityanath has officially designated the **Gangetic Dolphin** as the state's aquatic animal. This species is found in the Ganga, Yamuna, Chambal, Ghaghra, Rapti, and Gerua rivers in Uttar Pradesh.

**Gangetic Dolphin (Platanista gangetica):**



Gangetic Dolphin has a long thin snout, rounded belly, stocky body and large flippers. It feeds majorly on fishes. Its eyes lack lens, and as a result, this species is also referred to as the "**blind dolphin**".

They are found in the **Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna** and **Karnaphuli-Sangu** River systems of Nepal, India, and Bangladesh.

They have a highly developed bio-sonar system that facilitates them to hunt for fish even in murky waters.

They cannot breathe in the water and must surface every 30-120 seconds. Because of the sound it produces when breathing, the animal is popularly referred to as the '**Susu**'.

Gangetic Dolphin is listed as **Endangered** in the IUCN Red List.

**Note:** Gangetic Dolphin was notified as India's National Aquatic Animal in 2010.

The scientific name of Ganges dolphin is *Platanista gangetica*.

- 109.** The Cabinet of **Maharashtra** has approved the '**Lek Ladki**' (**Beloved Daughter**) scheme to provide financial aid to families with girl children. It is an initiative designed to prevent girls from dropping out of school due to financial constraints in their families.

This scheme was announced in the budget session of March 2023.

As per the decision, a family with a yellow and saffron ration card will receive **Rs.5000** after the birth of a girl child, **Rs.6000** after she is enrolled in standard first, **Rs.7000** after the sixth standard, **Rs.8000** after standard 11 and **Rs.75,000** after completing 18 years of age

This scheme will be implemented for girls born from **1<sup>st</sup> April 2023**.

If a family welcomes one or two girls or one boy and one girl after 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023, the girl child will be eligible for the Lek Ladki scheme.

In the case of twin girls born during a second delivery, both children will qualify for this scheme.

- 110.** **Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMIA)** of **Mumbai, Maharashtra** has become the **first in Asia** to commission a **Disabled Aircraft Recovery Kit (DARK)** with high pressure lifting bags (HPLB). The aim is to help stranded aircraft.

The DARK facility comprised high pressure lifting bags of superior durability but requiring minimal manpower and providing a more efficient aircraft recovery process compared with the conventional low-pressure counterparts.

DARK can quickly recover large commercial and transport aircraft, including the world's biggest aircraft, the Boeing 777-300ER, and others that may be involved in runway excursions or other incidents.

- 111.** Researchers have discovered a new species of colourful **dragonfly** in **Wayanad, Kerala**.

The new species, also known as 'Red-rumped Hawklet', is given the scientific nomenclature

**"*Epithemis wayanadensis*."** It is named after its habitat "the Wayanad plateau".

This newfound species is distinguished by its darker pigmentation, a restricted red coloration on the abdomen, and the absence of the yellow antehumeral stripe.  
This is the first instance of an Indian dragonfly being documented with genetic evidence substantiating morphological distinctions.

- 112.** Milton Dick, speaker of the Australian Parliament, and Philip Green, the country's new High Commissioner in Chennai, has announced that **Australia** will be a partner country for the **Tamil Nadu Global Investors Meet (TNGIM) 2024**.

**Other partner countries (TNGIM 2024) are:** Singapore, Japan, France, and South Korea.  
TNGIM 2024 will be held in Chennai on 7th and 8th January 2024.

TNGIM 2024 will bring together investors, thought leaders, policymakers, and academia to shape a future leadership role for the State as we progress towards a trillion-dollar economy in a sustainable and inclusive environment.

**Tamil Nadu Global Investors Meet:**

It is a business summits organized by the Government of Tamil Nadu to facilitate both domestic and foreign investments in the State. This summit have played a pivotal role in fostering economic growth and development in the region. The first summit was organized in 2015.

- 113.** Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL) has established **South Asia's first-of-its-kind Aircraft Recovery Training School** on the premises of **Kempegowda International Airport** in **Bengaluru, Karnataka**.

This institution is dedicated to providing specialised aircraft recovery hands-on training, equipped with state-of-the-art Disabled Aircraft Recovery Equipment (DARE).

BIAL, through a strategic partnership with KUNZ GmbH Aircraft Equipment, Germany, will offer Disabled Aircraft Recovery Training under the Trainair Plus programme recognised by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

- 114. Rajasthan** Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot has announced the formation of three new districts namely, **'Malpura', 'Sujargarh', and 'Kuchaman'** in Rajasthan during the Gau Seva Sammelan in Jaipur, Rajasthan.

This aims to enhance administrative efficiency while law and order will be strengthened. With this, the total number of districts in Rajasthan has now increased to **53**.

- 115.** The Geographical Indication Registry, under the Ministry of Commerce, and Industry, has awarded geographical indication (GI) tags to a collective of 8 distinct products.

GI Tag Products	State/UT	Description
<b>Yak Churpi</b>	<b>Arunachal Pradesh</b>	Churpi is a dairy product derived from the milk of Arunachali Yak breed, primarily found in the West Kameng and Tawang.

Khaw Tai (Khamti Rice)	Arunachal Pradesh	Khamti Rice is a sticky rice variety cultivated in the Namsai district.
Tangsa Textile	Arunachal Pradesh	Tangsa textile originates from the Tangsa tribe in the Changlang district.
<b>Rasabali</b>	<b>Odisha</b>	It is a sweet dish offered to Baladevjew. It is originated in the Baladevjew Temple of Kendrapara. It is one of the Chapana bhoga of Jagannath temple.
<b>Kaladi</b>	<b>Jammu &amp; Kashmir</b>	It is a popular Dogra cuisine with its origins in Udhampur district's Ramnagar.
Basohli Pashmina	Jammu & Kashmir	It is an age-old traditional craft of Kathua district. It is famous for its exceptional softness, fineness and feather-like weight.
Udangudi Panangkarupatti	Tamil Nadu	It is a specific type of palm jaggery or gur originating from Tirunelveli district.
Goa Cashew	Goa	The Goa cashew has a unique identity and taste due to the overall climatological impact of Goa and traditional farming practices.

### **Geographical Indications (GI):**

GI are the form of intellectual property rights that protect the products or goods that originate from a specific geographical region and have distinctive qualities or reputations associated with that region.

GI can be applied to agricultural, handicraft, industrial, or food products.

GI tags are valid for 10 years, and after this period, they can be renewed.

**116.** Kerala Governor Arif Mohammed Khan has inaugurated the **16th edition** of **cOcOn**, the two-day international hacking and cybersecurity conference at Hotel Grand Hyatt in **Kochi, Kerala**.

- The conference has been organised by the **Kerala Police** in association with Information Security Research Association (ISRA), The Society for the Policing of Cyberspace (POLCYB), a not-for-profit society based in British Columbia, Canada, UNICEF, ICMEC, WeProtect, and a host of other agencies.
- The motto of the 2023 edition is '**Connect | Collaborate | Contribute.**'
- The conference aims to provide a platform to discuss, showcase, educate, understand and spread awareness on the latest trends in information, cybercrimes, and hi-tech crimes.
- It also aims at providing a common platform for security forces, government, industrial leaders, start-ups, students, and professionals to get hands-on exposure to the latest technological advancements in the field.

c0c0n, previously known as Cyber Safe, is the longest running conferences in the area of Information Security and Hacking.

- 117.** Prime Minister Narendra Modi has performed bhoomi poojan of '**Veerangana Rani Durgavati Smarak aur Udyaan**' in **Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh** during the **500th** birth anniversary of **Rani Durgavati**.

It will be built at a cost of about **Rs.100 crore** and will be spread over an area of about 21 acres.

It will showcase an impressive 52-foot-high bronze statue of Rani Durgavati. It will have a magnificent museum highlighting the history of the Gondwana region including the valour and courage of Rani Durgavati.

**Rani Durgavati:**

- Rani Durgavati was the ruling queen of Gondwana in the mid-16th century. She is remembered as a brave, fearless and courageous warrior who fought for freedom against the Mughals.
- She was born on 5 October 1524 in Chandel Dynasty of Mahoba in Banda, UP and was married to Dalpatshah of Gond Dynasty of Garha-Katanga in 1542.
- She took reins of the Gond Dynasty in 1550 after Dalpatshah's death as the guardian of her son Veer Narayan.
- 'Tarikh-i-Firishta' mentions Durgavati defeated Baz Bahadur, the ruler of Malwa, who had attacked her kingdom between 1555 and 1560.
- During her reign, Akbar attacked the Gond Empire under the leadership of Asaf Khan. When Rani heard about the attack, she decided to defend her kingdom with all her might. While fighting them in battle, she is believed to have stabbed herself with her dagger to not surrender to the Mughal forces.

**Note:** 24th June is observed as 'Balidan Divas' every year in the honour of Rani Durgavati. In 2018, the Indian Coast Guard commissioned the 3rd Inshore Patrol Vessel (IPV) named 'ICGS Durgavati' at its district headquarters in Visakhapatnam.

- 118. The Uttarakhand** Employment and Skill Development department has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **Microsoft** to provide training related to the digital skills to the students. The MoU also supports digital training for under-privileged groups.

The department has also signed an MoU with **IIT Roorkee** to utilize the technical expertise of IIT Roorkee for the development of skill capacity of the state's manpower.

These MoUs are signed during the Uttarakhand Youth Mahotsav 2023 program organized at Parade Ground in Dehradun, Uttarakhand.

**119.** Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of multiple projects worth about **Rs.5000 crore** in **Jodhpur, Rajasthan**.

The projects include:

- 350-bed Trauma Centre and Critical Care Hospital Block at AIIMS, Jodhpur.
- 7 Critical Care Blocks under Pradhan Mantri – Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission (PM-ABHIM).
- New Terminal Building at Jodhpur Airport.
- He dedicated IIT Jodhpur campus, and infrastructure upgrades to the Central University of Rajasthan.
- He also laid the foundation stone of multiple road development projects and dedicated two other rail projects including the doubling of the **145 km long Degana-Rai Ka Bagh**, and the **58 km long Degana-Kuchaman City** rail lines.
- He has flagged off **Runicha Express** which will connect **Jaisalmer to Delhi**. It will pass through Jodhpur, Degana, Kuchaman City, Phulera, Ringas, Shrimadhampur, Neem Ka Thana, Narnaul, Ateli, and Rewari.
- He has also flagged off a new **heritage train** connecting **Marwar Junction to Khambli Ghat**

**120.** The state government of **Arunachal Pradesh** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **Norwegian Geotechnical Institute (NGI)** to explore harnessing geothermal potential through hot springs available in the state.

The MoU aims to provide a facilitating mechanism for both to work together on mutually agreed, progressive and supportive activities. It also aims further development in the field of Geotechnics and Rock Engineering by dealing with complex sub-surface geological and geotechnical issues faced by the state.

**121.** Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha has launched an **e-cabinet system** at Agartala, the capital of Tripura to promote digital infrastructure development and digitization of government services and information.

With this, **Tripura** has become the **4<sup>th</sup> state** in India (after Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, and Arunachal Pradesh) and **2<sup>nd</sup>** state in northeast to implement the e-cabinet system.



eCabinet is a powerful tool for State Governments to conduct Cabinet meetings electronically.

It has been developed by the National Information Centre (NIC).

It is modelled on the e-cabinet system of Uttarakhand.

**122. Chhattisgarh** Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel has launched the **“Chief Minister Construction Workers Pension Assistance Scheme.”** The scheme provides construction workers, who are registered for ten years and have completed 60 years of age, pension assistance of **Rs.1500 per month** for life.

He has also inaugurated the bio-ethanol demonstration plant in Godhi, Durg district to promote biofuel.

**123. Uttarakhand** Chief Minister **Pushkar Singh Dhami** has visited London and Birmingham, the United Kingdom to invite Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) and industrialists for the upcoming **Uttarakhand Global Investor Summit** to be held in Dehradun in December 2023 to achieve the goal of a strong Uttarakhand.

During his visit, the Uttarakhand government has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with various companies for investment proposals worth more than **Rs.12,500 crore**. Among various MoUs, Uttarakhand government has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) worth **Rs.2000 crore** with ropeway construction firm **Poma Group** to boost eco-friendly tourism in the state.

**124.** Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated **India's first high-tech sports training centre for Divyangjan**, named after former Prime Minister **Atal Bihari Vajpayee**, in **Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh**.

The centre has been inaugurated on Mahatma Gandhi's birthday (2<sup>nd</sup> October 2023).

This centre aims to provide equal opportunities in sports, enhance talent, and encourage participation in various sports disciplines.

Divyangjan from all over the country can practice and train in the Atal Bihari Training Center for Divyang Sports.

**125. Prime Minister Narendra Modi** has laid the foundation stone and dedicated to the nation multiple development projects worth more than **Rs.8000 crores** in important sectors like power, rail and health in **Nizamabad, Telangana**.

The projects include:

- Dedication of 800 MW Unit of phase 1 of Telangana Super Thermal Power Project of NTPC
- Rail projects include the new Railway Line connecting Manoharabad and Siddipet; and the electrification project between Dharmabad - Manoharabad and Mahabubnagar - Kurnool.
- He has laid the foundation stone of 20 Critical Care Blocks (CCBs) across the state under Pradhan Mantri - Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission.

- He has also flagged off Siddipet - Secunderabad - Siddipet train service.

**126.** The **Indian Army** has commenced the **Jammu and Kashmir Special Scholarship Scheme 2023** as part of **Operation Sadbhavana**. The aim is to provide educational opportunities to underprivileged yet dedicated students.

Indian Army has identified 146 students from different districts of the valley and will be sponsoring the education of these students with an amount of Rs.1.2 lakhs each. This initiative has a goal to bridge the gap between privileged and underprivileged students by offering scholarships and financial aid to those who exhibit exceptional potential and dedication in the field of education.

**Operation Sadbhavana (Goodwill):**

It is a unique humane initiative undertaken by Indian Army in the Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh to address aspirations of people affected by terrorism, sponsored, and abetted by Pakistan.

**127.** **Delhi** Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal has launched a **15-Point 'Winter Action Plan'** to combat air pollution in the national capital during winter season.

The Pusa bio decomposer, developed by the Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI), which prevents stubble burning will be sprayed on 5,000 hectares of farmland in 2023 against 4,400 hectares in 2022.

The government will deploy 530 water sprinklers to prevent dust pollution and 385 teams will check vehicles' pollution certificates and prevent the plying of overage cars.

13 major pollution hotspots have been identified, each with its own action plan, prepared a war room and formed 13 special teams to focus on reducing pollution levels.

**128.** **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** has laid the foundation stone and dedicated to the nation various development projects worth about **Rs.7,000 crore** in **Chittorgarh, Rajasthan**.

The projects include the Mehsana - Bhatinda - Gurdaspur Gas Pipeline, the LPG Plant of HPCL at Abu Road, additional storage at the Ajmer Bottling Plant, IOCL, Railway and Road projects, tourism facilities at Nathdwara and the permanent campus of Indian Institute of Information Technology, Kota.

**129.** **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** has laid the foundation stone and dedicated to the nation various development projects worth around **Rs.19,260 crores** in **Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh**.

The projects include the dedication of Delhi-Vadodara Expressway, Grih Pravesh of over 2.2 lakh houses built under PMAY and dedication of houses constructed under PMAY - Urban, laying the foundation stone for Jal Jeevan Mission projects, 9 health centers under Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission, dedication of academic building of IIT Indore and laying

the foundation stone for hostel and other buildings on campus and a Multi-Modal Logistics Park in Indore.

- 130. Andhra Pradesh** Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy has launched the '**Jagananna Aarogya Suraksha**' program to provide health protection and support to the people of the state.

The five-phase program will provide treatment at the doorstep of the needy. The Aarogya Suraksha camps, which form a part of the 'Jagananna Aarogya Suraksha' programme, will be conducted for 45 days.

## **RBI Assistant Free Mock Test**

- 131.** Telangana Municipal Administration and Urban Development Minister K Tarakarama Rao has inaugurated '**Healthway Cycling Track**', *India's first solar roof cycling track*, in **Hyderabad**.

The **23-km** track has two stretches: a pink line of 8.5 km from Nanakramguda to Telangana State Police Academy and a blue line of 14.5 km from Kollur to Narsingi with five different access points.

It is a three-lane track that is 4.5 meters wide, with one meter of green space on either side and will be open 24×7.

A total of **16,000 solar panels** are installed to generate 16 megawatts (MW) of power which will be utilized to light up the track at night and provide protection to cyclists from the sun, rain, and other weather conditions.

- 132.** MyGov chief executive officer **Akash Tripathi**, a 1998 batch Indian Administrative (IAS) Officer from Madhya Pradesh cadre, has been assigned additional charge as **CEO** of the **India Semiconductor Mission (ISM)**. The appointment will be effective from 9<sup>th</sup> October 2023.

He will succeed **Amitesh Kumar Sinha** whose tenure ends on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2023.

### **India Semiconductor Mission (ISM):**

ISM is a specialized and independent Business Division within the Digital India Corporation that aims to build a vibrant semiconductor and display ecosystem to enable India's emergence as a global hub for electronics manufacturing and design.

ISM was set up in 2021 with a financial commitment of USD 10 billion under the Digital India Corporation of the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (Meity).

ISM acts as the nodal agency for the Semiconductor Fab Scheme and Display Fab Scheme.

- 133. Himachal Pradesh** chief minister **Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu** has formally launched the "**Mukhyamantri Sukh Ashraya Yojana**" from the Ridge in Shimla that aims to provide comprehensive support to orphans, specially abled children, destitute women, and elderly individuals in the state.

Under the Sukh Ashraya Yojana, approximately 2,700 newly identified orphans living with relatives will get monthly financial assistance of **Rs.4,000** until the age of 27 years. With this, **Himachal Pradesh** has become the **first state in India** to enact a law aimed at supporting orphan children and other vulnerable sections of society.

**134. Assam** Chief Minister **Himanta Biswa Sarma** has launched the “**Mukhya Mantri Lok Sewak Arogya Yojana**” (**MMLSAY**) to provide government employees and retirees in the state with cashless health insurance.

The main objective of this scheme is to provide Financial Health coverage of **Rs.5 lakhs** per year per family to the beneficiaries.

**Eligibility:**

- The MMLSAY scheme is only applicable to the Residents of Assam State.
- The age of Employees must be at least 18 years of Age.
- The applicants must belong to Government Jobs.
- The family of the beneficiaries will also benefit under this scheme.
- Any Applicant Enrolled in another similar Scheme will not be able to benefit from this Scheme.

The scheme will start from **1<sup>st</sup> April 2024** and the cashless treatment will be available at leading hospitals across India from **2<sup>nd</sup> October 2024**.

**135. Madhya Pradesh** Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has virtually inaugurated **India's largest pumped storage project in Madhya Pradesh**. The project is being developed by Greenko Group, India's largest energy storage company.

The project, which is located in the Khemla block, **Neemuch district**, Madhya Pradesh, has a capacity of **1440 megawatt (MW)**, with storage for 7.5 hours and is now being expanded to **1920 MW** with storage of 6 hours to provide a storage of nearly 11 Giga watt hours (GWh) daily.

The overall investment will be Rs.11,500 crore over the next 3 years.

**136. Prime Minister Narendra Modi** has laid the foundation stone and dedicated to the nation multiple development projects worth about **Rs.27,000 crore** in **Jagdalpur, Bastar, Chhattisgarh**.

**Key projects:**

- **NMDC Steel Ltd's Steel Plant** at Nagarnar in Bastar district. It is built at a cost of more than **Rs.23,800 crores**. The steel plant is a greenfield project that will produce high-quality steel.

- A new rail line between Antagarh & Taroki and a rail line doubling project between Jagdalpur and Dantewada.
- He has laid the foundation stone of the Boridand – Surajpur rail line doubling project and the redevelopment of Jagdalpur Station under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme.
- He has also flagged off the Taroki – Raipur DEMU Train Service.
- He has dedicated to the nation a road upgradation project from 'Kunkuri to Chhattisgarh - Jharkhand Border section' of National Highway – 43.

## INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

**137.** The **Japanese Maritime Self-Defence Force (JMSDF)** in partnership with the Acquisition Technology & Logistics Agency (**ATLA**), a division of the Japanese Ministry of Defence, has successfully test-fired a medium-caliber maritime electromagnetic railgun from an offshore platform.

With this, Japan has become the **first nation** to launch an **Electromagnetic Railgun** from an offshore vessel.

Japan Railgun is a medium-sized electromagnetic railgun. It can shoot a 320 g (or 0.7 lb) 40 mm steel bullet at a speed of around 2,230 m/s (Mach 6.5).

**138.** **Pakistan Army** has successfully conducted a training launch of the **Ghauri Weapon System**, a medium-range, road mobile, ballistic missile system indigenously developed by Pakistan to test the operational and technical readiness of Army Strategic Forces Command (ASFC).

### **Ghauri Weapon System:**

- It can carry both conventional and nuclear warheads and has a reported range of approx. 1,300 to 1,500 kilometres.
- The missile system aims to strengthen deterrence and enhance strategic stability in the region through "the operationalization of Full Spectrum Deterrence in the overall construct of Credible Minimum Deterrence."

**139.** China's Chinese Manned Space Agency (CMSA) has launched its 30<sup>th</sup> flight mission **Shenzhou-17** (also known as 'Divine Vessel') along with three astronauts to the Tiangong Space Station.

The spaceship, atop a **Long March-2F carrier rocket**, blasted off from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in northwest China.

The three-team astronaut is being headed by Tang Hongbo, who is on his first return mission to the space station.



**Other crew members:** Tang Shengjie and Jiang Xinlin.

- 140.** The **National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)** of the United States has sent a spacecraft named '**Psyche**' on a six-year journey to explore metal-rich asteroid Psyche, orbiting the Sun between Mars and Jupiter.

**Mission Goals of Psyche:**

- To understand a previously unexplored building block of planet formation: iron cores.
- For the first time, examine a world made not of rock and ice, but metal.
- To look inside terrestrial planets, including Earth, by directly examining the interior of a differentiated body, which otherwise could not be seen.

The spacecraft has been launched from NASA's Kennedy Space Centre in Cape Canaveral, Florida on a planned journey of 2.2 billion miles (3.5 billion km) through space. The spacecraft is folded inside the cargo bay of a SpaceX Falcon Heavy rocket.

NASA expects the spacecraft, roughly the size of a small van, to reach the asteroid in August 2029.

- 141.** **Egypt** has become the first country to achieve "**gold tier**" status on the path to elimination of **Hepatitis C**, as per the World Health Organization (WHO's) criteria.

This means that Egypt has fulfilled the programmatic requirements that facilitate the reduction of new hepatitis C infections and deaths to levels that position the country to end the hepatitis C epidemic.

Egypt has diagnosed 87% of people living with Hepatitis C and provided 93% of those diagnosed with curative treatment, exceeding the WHO gold tier targets of diagnosing at least 80% of people living with hepatitis C and providing treatment to at least 70% of diagnosed people.

**Hepatitis C:**

It is a viral infection that affects the liver. It can cause both acute (short term) and chronic (long term) illness.

Transmission: Reuse or inadequate sterilization of medical equipment, especially syringes and needles in healthcare settings.

There is no vaccine for hepatitis C, but it can be treated with antiviral medications.

- 142.** The **Israel Defence Forces** has launched '**Operation Iron Swords**' in response for **Hamas**, a Palestinian militant organization, attack on the Israeli territory on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2023. This operation targets attackers who have entered Israel and are conducting attacks on civilians and defense forces.

The retaliation has led to significant casualties in Gaza strip, with at least 198 killed and 1,610 wounded.

Hamas is calling its attack as **Operation 'al-Aqsa Flood.'** This attack is a result of Israel's desecration of the Al-Aqsa mosque on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, a site sacred to both Judaism and Islam in the Old City of East Jerusalem.

It is the first direct conflict within Israel's boundaries since the 1948 Arab-Israeli War.

### **Al-Aqsa Mosque:**

It is considered as the third holiest by the Muslims, after Mecca and Medina. It is from here Prophet Muhammad is believed to have 'ascended to heaven'.

The compound is revered by the Jews as the place where the First and Second Temples, believed to have been constructed almost 3,000 years ago, stood. In its current form, the Second Temple is believed to have been first opened in 516 BCE and expanded by King Herod between 20-18 BCE. The holiest site in Judaism, it was eventually destroyed by the Romans in 70 CE, with only a portion of the Western wall remaining standing.

Palestinians view this site as a symbol of national aspirations, while some Israelis see it as a statement of sovereignty.

In 1967, after the Six-Day War, Israel captured the Sinai Peninsula, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, thereby seizing control of the Al-Aqsa complex from its Arab neighbours. Under international law, this area is considered occupied territory, while Israel sees it as disputed territory.

- 143.** The **European Union (EU)** lawmakers has approved new standards for companies issuing green bonds to help investors pick sustainable companies and avoid greenwashing or misleading climate-friendly claims.

These standards introduce the **"European Green Bond"** label, representing a first of its kind initiative in the world.

Companies who want to label their bonds as "green" in the EU would have to disclose information about how the bond's proceeds would be used.

At least 85% of funds raised would have to be allocated to activities in line with the EU's taxonomy of sustainable activities.

**Note:** Europe is the world's biggest issuer of green bonds, accounting for more than half of global volume in 2021, though issuance is still only 3% to 3.5% of the overall bond market.

The European Union (EU) is a political and economic union of 27 countries. It promotes democratic values and is a powerful trade bloc.

### **Greenwashing:**

Environmentalist **Jay Westerveld** coined the term **"greenwashing"** in 1986. Greenwashing is the practice of making brands appears more sustainable than they actually are. It may involve marketing strategy, misguided publicity stunts, or simply changing the packaging of an existing product while continuing to use unsustainable ingredients or practices.

**144.** Spanish startup **PLD Space** has successfully launched the first-ever private **European rocket** into orbit named "**Miura 1.**" The first launch of the Miura 1 took place from a site in southwest Spain. The flight lasted 306 seconds.

Miura 1 reached a maximum altitude of 46 kilometres, before falling back down to Earth and splashing into the Atlantic Ocean.

- Miura 1, named after a famous breed of bull in Spain's bullfighting tradition, is a suborbital microlauncher that has been privately developed in Europe.
- It is designed with a two-fold mission: delivering commercial payloads to space and back, and enabling research and technology development in microgravity conditions.
- It is the first European rocket that's designed to be recoverable.

**145.** **Amazon** has launched the first two prototype satellites '**KuiperSat-1**' and '**KuiperSat-2**' to Low Earth Orbit (LEO) at the height of 500 kilometres (11 miles) as part of "**Protoflight**" mission of **Project Kuiper**.

The satellite has been launched by the United Launch Alliance's (ULA) **Atlas 5 rocket** from Space Launch Complex-41 at Cape Canaveral Space Force Station, Florida, United States of America.

The mission aims to test Amazon's first pieces of technology in space as the e-commerce and web services giant looks to deploy 3,236 more satellites in the next few years and offer broadband internet globally.

Amazon has vowed to invest USD 10 billion into its Kuiper project, which was announced in 2019.

**Project Kuiper:**

Project Kuiper is an initiative to launch a constellation of Low Earth Orbit satellites that will provide low-latency, high-speed broadband connectivity to unserved and underserved communities around the world.

**146.** The **Eternal Gandhi Museum Houston (EGMH)**, North America's first Gandhi Museum has been opened in **Houston**, Texas, the United States of America (USA).

The museum aims to promote and preserve the legacy of Mahatma Gandhi, who is called the apostle of peace.

The 13,000 square-foot museum's architecture is based on Mahatma Gandhi's twenty-four-spoke Chakra spinning wheel which he used to seek independence from colonial rule.

The museum has interactive and engaging exhibits, portraying the tale of Gandhi's life in three parts: "His Journey," "Our Journey" and "My Journey".

Outer walls of the semi-circular museum show various peace activists including Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King Jr., Betty Williams and more.

There is also a statue of Mahatma Gandhi in front of the museum.

**147. Sri Lanka** will hold the chairmanship of the **Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)** from **2023 to 2025**. The country has taken over the chairmanship during the 23rd Council of Ministers' Meeting held on October 11, 2023, in Colombo.

During the meeting, the member states of IORA hold discussions on collaboration in various sectors, including trade and investment, maritime safety and security, fisheries management, disaster risk management, and the blue economy, among others.

**Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA):**

IORA is an inter-governmental organisation which was established on 7 March 1997. It is the Council of Foreign Ministers (COM) which meets annually.

**Secretariat:** Cyber City, Ebene, Mauritius

**Members (23):** India, Australia, Bangladesh, Comoros, France, Indonesia, Iran, Kenya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritius, Mozambique, Oman, Seychelles, Singapore, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Thailand, UAE, and Yemen.

**148. Iran's** Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (**IRGC**) has successfully launched a military imaging satellite named '**Nour 3**' from the Shahrud spaceport of Iran into the orbit.

The satellite has been launched by the three-stage Qased carrier which has been developed by the IRGC.

Nour 3 will be used to collect data and images for IRGC's intelligence purposes.

**149. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)** has launched a '**YouthHub**' platform in India to connect young people to future job opportunities, especially girls and marginalised youth.

The platform, which functions as a digital ecosystem, has been jointly launched by UNICEF Executive Director, **Catherine Russell** and UNICEF India National Ambassador, **Ayushmann Khurrana**.

The YouthHub app is a 'one-stop' application that integrates diverse platforms, tools, and resources, which aggregates curated economic opportunities for young people.

This platform is co-created by YuWaah at UNICEF, PwC India, Capgemini, and the Children's Investment Fund Foundation (CIFF).

## REPORTS & INDICES

**150.** As per the latest report from S&P Global Market Intelligence, **India** will surpass Japan and become the **third-largest global economy**, with a projected GDP of **USD 7.3 trillion** by **2030**. India will also become the **Asia's second** largest economy.

As per the report, India's gross domestic product (GDP) is expected to grow between 6.2 percent and 6.3 percent in the fiscal year ending in March 2024.

The report forecasts that India's nominal GDP, measured in USD terms, will rise from \$3.5 trillion in 2022 to \$7.3 trillion by 2030.

As of now, the United States remains the world's largest economy with a GDP of \$25.5 trillion, representing a quarter of the world's GDP. China holds the second-largest spot with a GDP of approximately \$18 trillion, nearly 17.9 percent of the world GDP.

Japan follows as the third-largest economy with a GDP of \$4.2 trillion, and Germany is fourth with a GDP of \$4 trillion.

Presently, India is the fifth-largest economy in the world with a GDP of USD 3.7 trillion.

**151.** As per the State Bank of India (SBI) research paper titled "*PM SVANidhi: Strengthening the Country's Social Fabric by Empowering Grassroot Market Mavericks*", **75%** of beneficiaries of the PM Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (**PM SVANidhi**) scheme come from non-general category.

The research has been carried out by **Soumya Kanti Ghosh**, the Group Chief Economic Advisor of SBI.

- The report states nearly 75 percent of its beneficiaries come from the non-general category with the **OBCs** accounting for **44 percent**.
- The report states that the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes account for 22 percent of the total disbursement of PM SVANidhi scheme and 43 percent of the total beneficiaries are women.
- The research report said the PM SVANidhi scheme has seamlessly connected marginalised urban micro-entrepreneurs, breaking down community barriers along the way.
- The persistence ratio (first and second loans repaid) is increasing, which indicates the scheme's need and popularity, and also incentivisation of those who are paying back the loans.
- Till date, around 70 lakh loans have been disbursed in all three tranches, benefiting over 53 lakh street vendors, with the total value exceeding 9,100 crore rupees.
- Over 65 percent of the borrowers under the scheme are in the 26-45 age group.

### **PM SVANidhi scheme:**

**Launched:** 2020

The scheme is a Central Sector Scheme i.e. fully funded by Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs with the following objectives:

- To facilitate working capital loan up to Rs.10,000;



- To incentivize regular repayment;
- To reward digital transactions

The vendors, availing loan under the scheme, are eligible to get an interest subsidy @ 7%.

**152.** The '**International Migration Outlook 2023**' has been released by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

**Key findings:**

- **India** has witnessed the **highest migration flows** to OECD countries in 2021 and 2022.
- In terms of nationalities, **0.13 million Indian citizens** acquired the nationality of an OECD country in 2021.
- In 2021, for the second consecutive year, India, with 0.41 million new migrants, was the top country of origin.
- **China** has secured the **2<sup>nd</sup> position** with 227,000 new migrants, followed by Romania (215,000); Ukraine (189,000); and Germany (119,000).
- In terms of workers, migration flows from India (+172 percent), Uzbekistan (+122 percent) and Turkey (+240 percent) rose sharply, making them primary countries of origin after Ukraine.

**OECD:**

It is an international organisation of 38 countries committed to democracy and the market economy. Its members are typically democratic countries that support free-market economies.

It was established on December 14, 1960, by 18 European nations, plus the United States and Canada.

The OECD maintains a so-called "black list" of nations that are considered uncooperative tax havens.

**Headquarters:** Paris, France

**153.** The **Financial Action Task Force (FATF)** in its review published on 27<sup>th</sup> October 2023 has announced the removal of several countries from its 'grey list.' These countries include the **Cayman Islands, Panama, Jordan, and Albania.**

This development is a testament to the significant progress these nations have made in enhancing their anti-money laundering (AML)/ counter-terrorism financing (CFT) systems, ultimately addressing the strategic deficiencies identified by FATF.

**Bulgaria** has been added to the Grey list.

The Cayman Islands, a British Overseas Territory, was added to the list in 2021 as a result of strategic deficiencies in their AML/CFT regime, which raised concerns among the international community.

- **Capital:** George Town

### **Grey List:**

Countries that are considered safe haven for supporting terror funding and money laundering are put in the FATF grey list. This inclusion serves as a warning to the country that it may enter the blacklist.

The "grey list" is also known as the "increased monitoring list".

- 154.** The **International Energy Agency (IEA)** has published a report titled '**Gas 2023 Medium-Term Market Report**'. As per it, **India's** natural gas demand is expected to rise by **4%** in **2023** calendar year and will continue to increase at an average annual rate of about 8% till 2026.

This growth will be driven by power, petrochemical and fertiliser sectors.

In India, an increase of over **20 billion cubic metres (bcm)** of natural gas is expected for 2022-2026 period.

The **global gas demand** is expected to increase by **1.6%** annually from 2022 to 2026, down from the previous average of 2.5% per year from 2017 to 2021.

The global LNG capacity is expected to expand by **25%** between 2022 and 2026,

The **United States (US)** will retain its position as the world's largest LNG exporter.

Overall gas demand in Asia Pacific, Europe and North America is forecast to decline by 1% annually through 2026.

- 155.** A new report titled "**The High Cost of Cheap Water,**" has been released by the **World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)** on World Food Day (16<sup>th</sup> October). The report presents the first-ever annual estimate of the economic value of water and freshwater ecosystems.

### **Key findings:**

- A global water crisis is mounting, posing a threat to USD 58 trillion in economic value (about 60% of the World's GDP), food security, and sustainability.
- Water and freshwater ecosystems provide both direct and indirect benefits, with direct economic benefits amounting to over USD 7 trillion annually.
- The unseen benefits of water ecosystems, such as purifying water, enhancing soil health, storing carbon, and protecting against extreme weather events, are estimated at around USD 50 trillion annually.
- The world has lost a third of its wetlands since 1970, and freshwater wildlife populations have seen an average 83% decline.

- There is a lack of awareness and understanding of the importance of water resources, the report refers to it as water blindness.
- The unsustainable agricultural practices, accounting for over 70% of freshwater use, are a primary threat to rivers and floodplains.
- The excessive fertilizer uses leads to diffuse pollution affecting surface and groundwater.

**156.** According to the 15th annual **Mercer CFA Institute Global Pension Index (MCGPI 2023)**, India has slipped to **45<sup>th</sup> position** out of 47 countries as compared to 41<sup>st</sup> position out of 44 countries in 2022 and 40<sup>th</sup> out of 43 countries in 2021.

India's score has improved marginally from 44.4 in 2022 to **45.9** in **2023**.

The **Netherlands** has topped the index with a score of 85, followed by Iceland (83.5) and Denmark (81.3).

**Argentina** has been ranked **47<sup>th</sup>** in the index with a score of 42.3.

Global Pension Index 2023 compares 47 retirement income systems, with the inclusion of Botswana, Croatia and Kazakhstan, with regard to adequacy, sustainability and integrity.

These 47 retirement income systems represent 64% of the world's population.

The Index is made up of three sub-indices, including adequacy, sustainability, and integrity, to measure each retirement income system against more than 50 indicators.

**157.** In accordance with the latest (October 2023) **Economic Outlook Survey** released by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), the Indian economy is estimated to grow by **6.3 percent** in **FY24** with a minimum and maximum growth estimate of **6.0 percent** and **6.6 percent**, respectively.

The median growth forecast for agriculture has been put at **2.7 percent** for 2023-24, industry and services sector, on the other hand, are anticipated to grow by **5.6 percent** and **7.3 percent**, respectively, in the current financial year (FY23-24).

CPI-based inflation has a median forecast of 5.5 percent for 2023-24 with a minimum and maximum range of 5.3 percent and 5.7 percent, respectively.

**158.** **India's fiscal deficit** for the tenure April to August of the financial year 2023-24 is at **Rs.6.42 trillion**, 36 percent of the full-year target of Rs.17.87 trillion. This is according to the data released by the Controller General of Accounts (CGA).

In the same period in FY23, the fiscal deficit was 32.6 percent of the full-year target.

India aims to narrow its fiscal deficit to 5.9 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) by the end of the financial year 2023-24, against 6.4 percent in FY23.

- The primary deficit, which shows fiscal deficit without the interest payment, stood at

**Rs.2.75 trillion**, 38.9 percent of the full-year target of Rs.7.06 trillion.

- The revenue deficit stood at **Rs.2.84 trillion**, 32.7 percent of the full-year target of Rs.8.70 trillion.
- The corporate tax collections have increased over 15 percent year-on-year to **Rs.2.39 trillion**.
- The total expenditure during the period is **Rs.16.72 trillion**. It is 37.1 percent of the annual goal, higher than the Rs.13.90 trillion in the same period last year.
- The total receipts during the period is **Rs.10.29 trillion**. It is 37.9 percent of the annual goal.

**159.** Hurun India and 360 Wealth have released the **360 ONE Wealth Hurun India Rich List 2023**. A total of 1,319 individuals from 138 cities feature on the Hurun 2023 list which uses August 30 as the base date to assess fortunes.

The list states that India has 259 billionaires, a 4.4 fold increase in 12 years.

- Reliance Industries chairman **Mukesh Ambani** has become the richest Indian in the list with a net worth of Rs.8,08,700 crore.
- Gautam Adani has secured the second spot on the list with a net worth of Rs.4,74,800 crore, followed by Cyrus Poonawalla, Shiv Nadar and Gopichand Hinduja.
- **Radha Vembu** of Zoho has surpassed Falguni Nayar to become the richest self-made Indian woman, while Zepto's **Kaivalya Vohra** is the youngest on the list.

The Hurun India Rich List 2023 has also identified **professional managers** who have built an impressive net worth. Professional managers in this list consist of individuals who joined a business after it has been founded and helped it grow.

- **Jayshree Ullal**, President and CEO of Arista Networks, has been named the richest Indian professional manager with a net worth of Rs.20,800 crore.
- Thomas Kurian of Oracle has secured the 2<sup>nd</sup> spot with a net worth of Rs.15,800 crore, followed by Ajaypal Singh Banga, President of World Bank, with a net worth of Rs 7,600 crore, Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella (Rs.7500 crore), and Nikesh Arora of Palo Alto Networks (Rs.7400 crore).

**160.** The **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** in its October 2023 **World Economic Outlook (WEO)** report has raised India's **FY24** GDP projection marginally by 0.2 percent to **6.3 percent**.

IMF in July 2023 had estimated India's GDP forecast at 6.1 percent for 2023-24.

The growth in India is projected to remain strong at 6.3 percent in both 2023 and 2024, with an upward revision of 0.2 percentage points for 2023, reflecting stronger-than-expected consumption from April to June.

IMF expects retail inflation of India to rise to 5.5% in FY24 before easing to 4.6% in FY25.

The global real GDP growth in 2023 has remained unchanged at 3.0% but has declined 2024 forecast by 0.1 percentage point to 2.9% from its July 2023 forecast.

- 161.** The National Sample Survey Office (NSSO), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI), has released its **19<sup>th</sup> quarterly Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) bulletin for April-June 2023 (Q1FY24).**

**Activity Status- Usual Status:** The activity status of a person is determined based on the activities pursued by the person during the specified reference period. When the activity status is determined based on the reference period of last 365 days preceding the date of survey, it is known as the usual activity status of the person.

**Activity Status- Current Weekly Status (CWS):** The activity status determined based on a reference period of last 7 days preceding the date of survey is known as the current weekly status (CWS) of the person.

Indicators ('Usual Status') (persons of age 15 years and above)		2017-18 (%)	2022-23 (%)	Indicators ('Current Weekly Status') (persons of age 15 years and above)		2017-18 (%)	2022-23 (%)
Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR)	Total	49.8	57.9	LFPR	Total	48.4	54.6
	Rural	50.7	60.8		Rural	48.9	56.7
	Urban	47.6	50.4		Urban	47.1	49.4
	Male	75.8	78.5		Male	75.1	77.4
	Female	23.3	37.0		Female	21.1	31.6
Worker Population Ratio (WPR)	Total	46.8	56.0	WPR	Total	44.1	51.8
	Rural	48.1	59.4		Rural	44.8	54.2
	Urban	43.9	47.7		Urban	42.6	46.0
	Male	71.2	76.0		Male	68.6	73.5
	Female	22.0	35.9		Female	19.2	30.0
Unemployment Rate (UR)	Total	6.0	3.2	UR	Total	8.7	5.1
	Rural	5.3	2.4		Rural	8.4	4.4
	Urban	7.7	5.4		Urban	9.5	7.0
	Male	6.1	3.3		Male	8.7	5.1
	Female	5.6	2.9		Female	9.0	5.1

### **PFLS:**

The National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) launched Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) in April 2017. The objective of PLFS is primarily twofold:



- To estimate the key employment and unemployment indicators (viz. Worker Population Ratio, Labour Force Participation Rate, Unemployment Rate) in the short time interval of three months for the urban areas only in the 'Current Weekly Status' (CWS).
- To estimate employment and unemployment indicators in both 'Usual Status' (ps+ss) and CWS in both rural and urban areas annually.

**LFPR** is defined as the percentage of persons in labour force (i.e. working or seeking or available for work) in the population.

**WPR** is defined as the percentage of employed persons in the population.

**UR** is defined as the percentage of persons unemployed among the persons in the labour force.

**162.** The **16<sup>th</sup> Global Hunger Index (GHI) 2023**, a tool for comprehensively measuring and tracking hunger at global, regional, and national levels, has been published by Concern Worldwide (Ireland), in partnership with Welthungerhilfe (Germany). The index focuses on 4 main parameters:

- Undernourishment
- Child wasting
- Child stunting
- Child mortality

The GHI score is calculated on a 100-point scale reflecting the severity of hunger - zero is the best score (implies no hunger) and 100 is the worst.

The first GHI report was published in 2006.

According to the GHI 2023 report, **Belarus, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Chile, China** are among the top ranked countries (i.e., low level of hunger) and Yemen, Madagascar, **Central African Republic (125<sup>th</sup>)** are the bottom.

The GHI 2023 score for the world is **18.3**, considered moderate, showing minimal improvement since 2015.

**South Asia and Africa (South of Sahara)** are the world regions with highest hunger levels.

**India's performance:**

- India has been ranked **111<sup>th</sup>** out of 125 countries, as against 107<sup>th</sup> in 2022.
- Neighbouring countries, such as Pakistan (102nd), Bangladesh (81st), Nepal (69th), and Sri Lanka (60th), scored better than India.
- India's GHI score 2023 stands at **28.7**, categorized as "serious" on the GHI Severity of Hunger Scale.
- **Highest child wasting rate** (under five age who have low weight for their height) in world at **18.7 percent**, reflecting acute under nutrition.

- **Rate of undernourishment** (caloric intake is insufficient) stood at **16.6 percent** and **under-five mortality** (children who die before their fifth birthday) at **3.1 percent**.

**163.** The **10<sup>th</sup>** edition of the **Kantar BrandZ Top 75 Most Valuable Indian Brands Report** has been released by Wire & Plastic Products (WPP) and Kantar.

As per the report, **Tata Consultancy Services (TCS)** has retained its top position as **India's most valuable brand** for the second consecutive year with a brand value of **USD 43 billion**.

HDFC Bank and Infosys have occupied 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> position with a brand value of USD 33,612 and USD 24,170 respectively.

India's top 75 brands has a combined brand value of USD 379 billion, a decline of 4% from 2022.

**PhonePe (21<sup>st</sup> rank)** has become India's leading digital payment application.

The automotive category produced the two fastest risers: TVS (51<sup>st</sup> rank) and Mahindra Rise (47<sup>th</sup> rank).

**164.** **JP Morgan Chase & Co.** will include **India** in its **Government Bond Index-Emerging Markets (GBI-EM) index** from **June 2024**. This move is expected to widen the investor base and potentially lead to an appreciation of the Rupee.

- JP Morgan has identified 23 Indian government bonds with a combined nominal value of USD 330 billion as eligible for inclusion in the GBI-EM.
- India's weight is expected to reach the maximum weight threshold of 10% in the GBI-EM Global Diversified, and approximately 8.7% in the GBI-EM Global index.
- India's local bonds will become part of the GBI-EM index and its suite of indices, which serve as benchmarks for approximately USD 236 billion in global funds.

**JP Morgan GBI-EM:**

It is a benchmark index that tracks the performance of local-currency-denominated Sovereign Bonds issued by emerging market countries. It is designed to provide investors with a representative measure of the fixed income market within emerging market economies. It Includes government bonds issued by various emerging market countries.

**165.** Times Higher Education (THE) has announced the results of the **2024 edition** of **World University Rankings**. THE has considered 1,904 universities across 108 countries and regions for 2024 rankings.

- **The University of Oxford (UK)** has topped the rankings, followed by Stanford University and MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) of the USA in second and third places.

- The **Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bangalore** has ranked No.1 among Indian institutions. The institute has been featured in the **201-250** band of the ranking.
- Anna University, Jamia Millia Islamia, Mahatma Gandhi University and Shoolini University of Biotechnology and Management Sciences are in the 501-600 band of the ranking.
- In 2023, 75 institutes from India are featured on the list.
- The USA is the most represented country on the list with 169 institutions, followed by Japan (119 institutions). India is the fourth-most represented country on the list.

### **Times Higher Education (THE):**

THE, formerly The Times Higher Education Supplement, is a British magazine reporting specifically on news and issues related to higher education.

- **Headquarters:** London, UK
- **CEO:** Paul Howarth

**166.** The **World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)** has published the **16<sup>th</sup> edition** of the **Global Innovation Index (GII) 2023**. The index ranks 132 economies. The GI is a reliable tool for governments across the world to assess the innovation-led social and economic changes in their respective countries.

This year, NITI Aayog, in collaboration with CII and WIPO, has hosted the India Launch of GI 2023.

- **Switzerland** has topped the index with a score of 67.6, followed by Sweden (score 64.2) and the USA (score 63.5).
- **Bottom countries:** Angola ranks 132<sup>nd</sup> (score 10.3), Niger ranks 131<sup>st</sup> (score 12.4), and Burundi ranks 130<sup>th</sup> (score 12.5).
- **India** has been ranked **40<sup>th</sup>** with a score of 38.1. In 2015, India stood at 81st spot. India leads the lower middle-income group, performing strongly in every innovation pillar except for Infrastructure.
- China is ranked 12th while Japan is 13<sup>th</sup>.

Only five economies host 80 percent of all the world's unicorns, namely, the United States (54 percent), China (14 percent), **India (6 percent)**, the United Kingdom (4 percent) and Germany (2 percent).

Out of a total unicorn valuation of USD 3.8 trillion in 2023, US unicorns account of USD 2 trillion, followed by China at USD 736 billion and India at **USD 193 billion**.

**167.** As per the Ookla Speedtest Global Index (August 2023 edition), the **United Arab Emirates (UAE)** has topped the index (among 145 countries) with the median download speeds of 210.89 Mbps.

UAE is followed by **Qatar** with the download speed of 192.71 Mbps and **Kuwait** with the download speed of 153.86 Mbps.

**Bottom countries:** Cuba (145th); Afghanistan (144th); Sudan (143rd); Yemen (142nd); Venezuela (141st)

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

**India** has jumped **72 places** and has been ranked **47th** in the index with the median download speeds of **50.21 Mbps**.

India was ranked 119<sup>th</sup> in the Speedtest Global Index 2022.

India's download speed performance has seen 3.59 times increase since the introduction of 5G, with median download speeds improving to 50.21 Mbps in August 2023, from 13.87 Mbps in September 2022.

India is ahead of some G20 nations like Mexico (90th), Turkey (68th), the UK (62nd), Japan (58th), Brazil (50th place), and South Africa (48th place).

**168.** **India's unemployment rate** has declined to a 12-month low of **7.09%** in **September 2023** from 8.1% in August 2023 despite the poor monsoon. This is according to the latest data by the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE).

**Rural areas: 6.20%** (Female: 8.01% and Male: 5.94%)

**Urban areas: 8.94%** (Female: 18.57% and Male: 7.57%)

## **RBI Assistant Free Mock Test**

### **GOVERNMENT SCHEMES & PROGRAMMES**

**169.** The **Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhyuday Yojana (PM AJAY)** is a merged scheme of 3 Centrally Sponsored Schemes implemented since 2021-22 with an aim to reduce poverty of the Scheduled Caste (SC) community.

The 3 Centrally Sponsored Schemes were:

- Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana (PMAGY)
- Special Central Assistance to Scheduled Castes Sub Plan (SCA to SCSP)
- Babu Jagjivan Ram Chhatrawas Yojana (BJRCY)

**Nodal Ministry:** Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment

#### **Components:**

- Development of Scheduled Caste (SC) dominated villages into "Adarsh Gram"
- Grants-in-aid for State/Districts-level projects for socio-economic betterment of SCs.

- Construction of hostels in higher educational institutions and schools that are funded by the Centre /State /UT Governments.

**Achievements during FY 2022-23:**

- Under the Adarsh Gram component, a total of 1260 villages have been declared as Adarsh Gram during the current FY 2023-24.
- A total of 9 new hostels have been sanctioned under the Hostel component of the scheme.
- Perspective plan for 7 States have been approved under Grant-in-aid component during the current financial year.

**170.** The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved the inclusion of **Jamrani Dam Multipurpose Project of Uttarakhand** under the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana-Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme (**PMKSY-AIBP**) of the Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation.

The Cabinet has approved central assistance of **Rs.1,557.18 crore** to Uttarakhand for completion of the project at an estimated cost of **Rs.2,584.10 crore** by **March 2028**.

The project envisages construction of a dam near Jamrani village on Gola River, a tributary of Ram Ganga River in Nainital district of Uttarakhand. The dam extends its 40.5 km (about 25.17 mi) stretch to the existing Gola Barrage.

The AIBP component of PMKSY deals with creation of irrigation potential through major and medium irrigation projects.

So far, six projects have been covered under the AIBP component of PMKSY after 2021-22.

The Jamrani Dam Multipurpose Project is the **seventh project** to be included under AIBP.

**Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana (PMKSY):**

PMKSY was launched during the year 2015-16 with the objective of increasing access to water on the farm and expanding cultivable area under assured irrigation, improving efficiency of water use in the field, implementing sustainable water conservation practices etc.

The Government of India had in December 2021 approved the implementation of PMKSY during 2021-26 with an overall outlay of Rs.93,068.56 crore (central assistance of Rs.37,454 crore).

**171.** The Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare, Dr Mansukh Mandaviya, has inaugurated new facilities at the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (**NIMHANS**) in Bangalore, Karnataka and launched the new logo of **Tele-MANAS**.

The new facilities at NIMHANS include the Platinum Jubilee Auditorium and Academic facility, New Administrative Office complex, and Centre for Brain and Mind.



He has also awarded the top three states in India certificate of appreciation with memento for achieving the highest number of calls in the National Tele Mental Health Programme (Tele MANAS).

- **Large states category:** Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, and Uttar Pradesh
- **Smaller states category:** Telangana, Jharkhand, and Kerala
- **Northeast states category:** Assam, Mizoram and Manipur
- **Union Territories category:** Jammu and Kashmir, Delhi and Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu

### **Tele MANAS:**

The Tele Mental Health Assistance and Networking Across States (Tele MANAS) is a national tele-mental health program which aims to provide mental health to all because it is a universal human right.

**Nodal ministry:** Ministry of Health & Family Welfare

It was announced in **Union Budget 2022-23** and launched in October 2022.

**172.** The **Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying (DAHD)** under the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying (MoFAHD) has launched the '**A-HELP (Accredited Agent for Health and Extension of Livestock Production)** program in Jharkhand.

DAHD has initiated this remarkable initiative through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between DAHD and National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) under the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD).

### **A HELP Program:**

- It is an initiative of the **Union Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying and the Ministry of Rural Development.**
- 'A-HELP' are community-based **women activists**, who assist veterinarians in local departmental activities help livestock farmers to take loans for entrepreneurship development, fill out applications, mark the ear tagging of animals and register them in the INAF portal and help with insurance etc.
- They assist in implementing various schemes and in providing information to the farmers at the grassroots level.
- They will give vital contributions to preventing various infectious diseases of animals, artificial insemination under the Rashtriya Gokul Mission (RGM), tagging animals and animal insurance.

A-HELP has already been initiated across 6 states including Bihar, Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and Jharkhand, and one Union Territory (UT) Jammu and Kashmir (J&K).

**173.** The **National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC)**, working under the aegis of the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE), has tied up with **Coca-Cola India** to launch the **Superpower Retailer Program** under the **Skill India Mission**.

The program is being piloted in the state of **Odisha**.

The program will provide 14 hours of quality retail training through the Skill India Digital Portal to 1.40 crore retailers of the country.

The initiative focuses on enabling retailers by focusing on building their capacity and capability in today's modern retailing sector. It aims to provide training to small and micro retailers, equipping them with the knowledge and skills needed to better understand consumer behaviours and their preferences.

The program will offer industry-specific skills such as customer management, inventory and stock management, financial management etc.

The program aims to upskill retailers across key states over three years.

**National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC):**

NSDC was incorporated on July 31, 2008, under section 25 of the Companies Act, 1956. It was set up by Ministry of Finance as Public Private Partnership (PPP) model. The Government of India through Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE) holds 49% of the share capital of NSDC, while the private sector has the balance 51% of the share capital.

- **Headquarters:** New Delhi
- **Director & Manager:** Ved Mani Tiwari

**174.** The **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)** has introduced an initiative '**Green Credit Program (GCP)**' ahead of COP28 of UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) to be held from 30 November to 12 December 2023 in Dubai, UAE.

GCP is notified under **Environment (Protection) Act, 1986** and reflect the ideas of **LiFE** (Lifestyle for Environment) mission to promote sustainable lifestyle and environmental conservation.

- GCP aims to incentivise environmental positive actions across diverse sectors by various stakeholders like communities through **market-based mechanisms** and generate Green Credit (GC).
- GC is tradable and made available for trading on a domestic market platform.
- In its initial phase, GCP focuses on **water conservation and afforestation**.
- GCP is independent of the carbon credit programme under Carbon Credit Trading Scheme, 2023 made under Energy Conservation Act, 2001.

- The **Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE)** is responsible for the implementation, management, monitoring, and operation of GCP.

**Sectors identified in GCP:** Tree Plantation; Water Conservation; Sustainable Agriculture; Water Management; Air Pollution Reduction; Mangrove Conservation and Reduction; Ecomark label development; and Sustainable building & infrastructure.

- 175.** The **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)** has introduced an initiative '**Ecomark scheme**' ahead of COP28 of UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) to be held from 30 November to 12 December 2023 in Dubai, UAE.

This scheme is notified under **Environment (Protection) Act, 1986** and reflect the ideas of **LiFE** (Lifestyle for Environment) mission to promote sustainable lifestyle and environmental conservation.

- Ecomark Scheme replaces the previous Notification of **1991**.
- It provides accreditation and labelling for **household and consumer products** that meet specific environmental criteria while maintaining quality standards as per Indian norms.
- It is administered by the **Central Pollution Control Board** in partnership with the **Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS)**.
- The scheme aims to raise consumer awareness of environmental issues, encourage eco-conscious choices, and motivate manufacturers to transition to eco-friendly production.

- 176.** The **Department of Land Resources (DOLR)**, Ministry of Rural Development has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **National Remote Sensing Center (NRSC)** to monitor the **Watershed Development Component** of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana 2.0 (**WDC-PMKSY**) projects through high-resolution satellite data.

This MoU aims to restore the ecological balance by harnessing, conserving, and developing degraded natural resources such as soil and water.

Watershed Development refers to the conservation, regeneration and judicious use of all the natural resources particularly land, water, vegetation, and animals and human development within the watershed.

A watershed is a geo-hydrological unit draining to a common point by a system of drains.

**Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY):**

PMKSY was launched in 2015 by the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare to improve farm productivity and ensure better utilization of the resources in the country. It is a centrally sponsored scheme.

The scheme components are:

**Component:** Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme (AIBP)

**Component:** Har Khet Ko Pani (HKKP)

- **Implemented by:** Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation (Ministry of Jal Shakti)

**Component:** Watershed Development

- **Implemented by:** Department of Land Resources (Ministry of Rural Development):

**Component:** Per Drop More Crop

- **Implemented by:** Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare (Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare)

**177.** Union Minister of Women and Child Development, Smriti Zubin Irani, has launched the **“Protocol for Management of Malnutrition in Children”**. This is the first such protocol by the government.

The Protocol for Management of Malnutrition in Children has been jointly prepared by the **Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD)** and the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoH&FW)**.

The protocol will be a core component of the efforts by MoWCD to reduce malnutrition through Mission Saksham Anganwadi and Nutrition 2.0.

**Key highlights:**

- The protocol provides detailed guidelines for the identification and management of malnourished children at the **Anganwadi level**. The identification of malnourished children and their treatment is an integral aspect of Mission Poshan 2.0
- After the identification of children through growth monitoring data, appetite tests will be done on all Severe Acute Malnutrition (**SAM**) children for medical complications.
- SAM children who fail the appetite test will be referred to **Nutritional Rehabilitation Centres (NRC)**, which will also be linked to medical centres.
- The protocol uses the concept of **‘Buddy Mother’** which was first used in the state of **Assam**. Under this, the mother of a healthy baby guides the mother of a malnourished child at an Angandwadi centre every week.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines ‘severe acute malnutrition’ (SAM) by very low weight-for-height or a mid-upper arm circumference less than 115 mm, or by the presence of nutritional oedema.

At present, there are **7.7%** SAM children in India.

**178.** The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi, has approved the establishment of an autonomous body **Mera Yuva Bharat (MY Bharat)**.

**Mera Yuva Bharat:**

- The primary objective of Mera Yuva Bharat (MY Bharat) is to make it a whole Government platform for youth development.
- It is an autonomous body which will benefit the youth in the age group of **15-29 years**, in line with the definition of 'Youth' in the National Youth Policy.
- In the case of programme components specifically meant for adolescents, the beneficiaries will be in the age group of **10-19 years**.
- It will help in setting the focus of the Government on Youth Led development and to make the Youth "active drivers" of development and not merely "passive recipients".
- Under the new arrangement, with access to resources & connection to opportunities, youth would become community change agents and nation builders allowing them to act as the Yuva Setu between the Government and the citizens.
- It will be launched on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023 on National Unity Day.

**179.** The **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment** has launched the scheme '**SHRESHTA**.' This scheme is known as ***Scheme for residential education for students in High school in Targeted Areas***.

**Objective:** To uplift the socio-economic status of the **Scheduled Castes (SC)** peoples by providing high quality education to their children in best private residential schools in the country.

The admission will be provided in **Class 9** and **Class 11** of CBSE affiliated private schools. The scheme is being implemented in two Modes:

- One is SHRESHTA schools (Best CBSE/State Board affiliated Private Residential Schools)

Under this, each year a specified number of meritorious SC students in States/UTs will be selected through the National Entrance Test for SHRESHTA (**NETS**) to be conducted by the **National Testing Agency (NTA)** and admitted in the best private residential schools affiliated by CBSE/State Board in classes 9th and 11th for completion of education till 12th standard.

Government has targeted that every year around **3000 students** belonging to SC category will be admitted to Class 9 and Class 11 under this system.

The specified admissible fees for each class are as follows: 9th: Rs.1,00,000; 10th: Rs.1,10,000; 11th: Rs.1,25,000; 12th: Rs.1,35,000.

Students from the SC community who come from a marginalized income group with an annual income of up to **Rs.2.5 lakh** is eligible.



- Second Mode is NGO/VO operated Schools/Hostels (EXISTING COMPONENT), (Guidelines hereinafter applicable only for Mode 2 of the Scheme), Schools/Hostels run by VOs/NGOs and other organizations having higher classes (up to class 12) and who have been receiving Grant-in-aid will be continued, subject to satisfactory performance.

**180. Union Minister for Education Dharmendra Pradhan** has introduced the '**CRIIO 4 GOOD**', a new online, life skills learning module, to promote gender equality among girls and boys.

This initiative, in collaboration with the **International Cricket Council**, **UNICEF** (United Nations Children's Fund), and the Board of Control for Cricket in India (**BCCI**), has been introduced at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad.

**'CRIIO 4 GOOD':**

It is an online initiative launched to promote **gender equality** among girls and boys through a series of **eight cricket-based animation films**. These films teach young boys and girls essential life skills while encouraging their participation in sports. The programme is in three languages: English, Hindi, and Gujarati. The themes of the eight modules are: leadership, problem-solving, confidence, decision-making, negotiation, empathy, teamwork, and goal setting. The program aligns with the **New Education Policy** (NEP) 2020.

**181.** Prime Minister Narendra Modi has launched '**Sankalp Saptah**', a unique week-long programme for Aspirational Blocks in India, at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi, Delhi.

He has also launched the **Aspirational Blocks Programme Portal** and inaugurated the exhibition showcased on the occasion.

- 'Sankalp Saptah' is linked to the effective implementation of the **Aspirational Blocks Programme (ABP)**.
- It has been observed from **3<sup>rd</sup> October to 9<sup>th</sup> October 2023** in all of the 500 Aspirational Blocks.
- The themes for the first six days include 'Sampoorna Swasthya', 'Suposhit Pariwaar', 'Swachhta', 'Krishi', 'Shiksha', and 'Samridhi Diwas'.
- The last day of the week i.e., October 9, 2023, was celebration of the work conducted during the entire week, as 'Sankalp Saptah – Samavesh Samaroh'.

**Aspirational Blocks Programme (ABP):**

The Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the nationwide programme on **7<sup>th</sup> January 2023**. It aims to improve governance at the block level in order to enhance the quality of life of citizens. It is being implemented in 500 Aspirational Blocks across 329 districts in the

country. It was announced in the Union Budget 2022-23. It is based on the Aspirational District Programme (ADP).

## **RBI Assistant Free Mock Test**

### **BUSINESS & ECONOMY**

**182. Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL)** has delivered the **Third Stealth Destroyer** of Project 15B Class Guided Missile Destroyer i.e. **Yard 12706 (IMPHAL)** to the Indian Navy.

The ship has been designed by the Indian Navy's Warship Design Bureau (**WDB**).

IMPHAL is the first Naval Warship being commissioned with accommodation of Woman officers and sailors.

The ship is constructed using Indigenous Steel DMR 249A and is amongst the largest Destroyers constructed in India, with an overall length of 164 meters and a displacement of over 7500 Tons.

The ship is armed with supersonic Surface-to-Surface 'Brahmos' missiles and 'Barak-8' Medium Range Surface to Air Missiles.

The ship is fitted prominently with the Hull mounted Sonar Humsa NG, Heavy weight Torpedo Tube Launchers and ASW Rocket Launchers.

The ship can accommodate a crew of 312 persons, has an endurance of 4000 Nautical Miles and can carry out a typical 42 day mission with extended mission time in out of area operation.

The ship is equipped with two helicopters onboard to further extend its reach.

The ship is propelled by a powerful Combined Gas and Gas Propulsion Plant (COGAG), consisting of four reversible Gas Turbines, which enables it to achieve a speed of over 30 knots (approx. 55 Kmph).

The indigenous content in P15B Class Destroyers is **72%**.

**Note:** The first Ship of P15B (**Visakhapatnam**) was commissioned on 21 Nov 2021. The second ship (**Mormugao**) was commissioned on 18 Dec 2022. The third ship (**IMPHAL**) has been delivered to Indian Navy on 20 Oct 2023. The fourth ship (**Surat**) was launched on 17 May 2022 and is at an advance stage of outfitting.

**183. NLC India Limited**, a Navratna Central Public Sector Undertaking, under the Ministry of Coal, has incorporated a wholly owned subsidiary **NLC India Green Energy Limited (NIGEL)** specially focusing on taking up all Renewable Energy initiatives.

The subsidiary is expected to establish RE projects to the capacity of 6 GW by 2030.

CMD of NLC **Prasanna Kumar Motupalli** is also the Chairman of NIGEL.

- 184.** The **Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS), Andhra Pradesh** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **National Cadet Corps (NCC)** to enrol NCC students as Youth Red Cross (YRC) volunteers in the state of Andhra Pradesh.

The MoU is the first of its kind to be signed by the IRCS, Andhra Pradesh.

As an YRC Volunteer, NCC students will extend services during emergencies in the state.

- 185.** The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has approved proposed combination involving re-balancing of the existing cross-shareholdings between Renault and Nissan.

The proposed combination, inter alia, relates to the re-balancing of the existing cross-shareholdings between **Renault S.A. (Renault)** and **Nissan Motor Co. Ltd. (Nissan)** (Rebalancing) and certain changes to the shareholding of two of their joint ventures in India, i.e., Renault Nissan Automotive India Private Limited (RNAIPL) and Renault Nissan Technology & Business Centre India Private Limited (RNTBCI).

- 186.** The **Karnataka Forest Department**, in collaboration with the **Wildlife Trust of India**, has launched the **Hostile Activity Watch Kernel (HAWK)** system, a specialised software platform to monitor all aspects of forest and wildlife crime.

The system is supported by digital services company NTT Data.

The system will help the department monitor activities such as the death of wildlife, suspected criminal activities, and the movement of suspicious vehicles.

HAWK has been an official system of the Kerala Forest Department since it was launched in 2019.

- 187.** The **Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL)**, a Navratna Public Sector Undertaking, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **Safran Aircraft Engines** to develop industrial cooperation in ring forging manufacturing for commercial engines.

HAL will produce LEAP (Leading Edge Aviation Propulsion, powering the Airbus A320 Neo family and Boeing 737 Max) engine forgings at its foundry and forge facility in Bengaluru.

- 188.** The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) signed in July 2023 between the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan on **Japan-India Semiconductor Supply Chain Partnership**.

The MoC intends to strengthen cooperation between India and Japan towards enhancement of semiconductor supply chain, recognizing the importance of semiconductor for the advancement of industries and digital technologies.

The MoC shall come into effect from the date of signature of the Parties and shall be remain in force for a period of five years.

**189. Skyroot Aerospace Private Limited**, a Hyderabad (Telangana) -based space startup, has signed two Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) with two **France**-based Space firms **Promethee Earth Intelligence** and **ConnectSAT**.

**First MoU:**

Skyroot has signed an MoU with **Promethee** for satellite launch services onboard Vikram rockets for the Japetus earth observation constellation.

**Second MoU:**

Skyroot has signed an MoU with **ConnectSAT** and Expleo to provide launch services for "OSIRIS", a constellation of African satellites for connectivity and monitoring services, onboard Skyroot's Vikram rockets.

As part of the MoU, Expleo provides reconfigurable software for ConnectSAT's Internet of Things (IoT) satellite.

**Note:** Skyroot launched India's first privately built rocket 'Vikram-S' under the mission "Mission Prarambh" (the beginning) in 2022.

**190. REC Limited** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **National Informatics Center Services Inc. (NICSI)**, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India for various Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Digital Transformation services under National Informatics Centre (NIC).

This MoU will benefit the REC ecosystem by facilitating exploration of latest technology in emerging areas like IoT, Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, Data Analytics, Blockchain, Cyber Security etc.

**Additional Information:**

REC Limited is a '**Maharatna**' company under the administrative control of the Ministry of Power, Government of India, and is registered with RBI as non-banking finance company (NBFC), Public Financial Institution (PFI) and Infrastructure Financing Company (IFC). It was incorporated in 1969.

- **Corporate office:** Gurugram, Haryana
- **Registered office:** New Delhi

**191. Indian Oil Corporation**, the nation's biggest oil firm, will invest **Rs.1,660.15 crore** as equity in **IndianOil NTPC Green Energy Pvt Ltd**, a newly set up joint venture with energy NTPC Ltd, for setting up renewable power plants.

Indian Oil and NTPC Green Energy Ltd, (a wholly owned subsidiary of NTPC Ltd) had formed a 50:50 joint venture company, IndianOil NTPC Green Energy Pvt Ltd, in June 2023 to set up renewable energy projects to meet 24X7 power requirements of refineries of the IOC.

**192.** The Department of Public Enterprise (DPE) under the Ministry of Finance has granted **Navratna status** to **Ircon International Limited (IRCON)** and **RITES Limited**, both are Central Public Sector Enterprise under the **Ministry of Railways**.

IRCON and RITES Limited have become the **15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> Navratnas**, respectively.

**'Navratna' status:**

Navratna Company has the authority to invest up to **Rs.1,000 crore** without explicit government approval.

The status of Navratna is granted based on various parameters, such as:

- CPSEs which are Miniratna I
- Have obtained 'excellent' or 'very good' MoU rating in three of the last five years and
- Having composite score of **60 or above** in selected performance indicators.

The status is conferred by the **Ministry of Finance**.

**193.** The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has approved the following acquisition involving **Hitachi Astemo Limited (HAL)**, a Japanese public limited company that manufactures auto parts for automobiles and two-wheeled motor vehicles in India.

- CCI has approved the acquisition of **20% voting rights** in HAL by **JICC-01 Limited Partnership**, along with certain control rights, board representation, and other rights.
- CCI has approved the acquisition of an additional **6.6% voting stake** in HAL by **Honda Motor Company Limited (HMCL)**. With this, 40% of the voting rights in HAL is held by HMCL.
- CCI has approved the acquisition of **49% stake** in **Hitachi Astemo Electric Motor Systems (HAEMS)** by HAL. With this HAL holds the 100% shareholdings of HAEMS.

**194.** Tata Motors Limited (TML) has entered into share purchase agreements to sell a **9.9% stake** in **Tata Technologies Ltd (TTL)** for an aggregate consideration of **Rs.1,613.7 crore**. TPG Rise Climate is the lead investor for this transaction.

**195. ICAR-IARI** (Indian Council of Agricultural Research- Indian Agricultural Research Institute) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **IIT Kanpur** to support incubators and startups.

The MoU has been signed between Pusa Krishi, ICAR-IARI and Start-up Incubation & Innovation Centre (SIIC), IIT Kanpur.

Both sides will provide vital support to incubators and startups, fostering their growth and success.

**196. Data Patterns (India) Limited**, a vertically integrated Defence and Aerospace electronics solutions provider, has inked a Licensing and Transfer of Technology (**ToT**) agreement with the **Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACE)** to provide Data Patterns with miniature SAR Radar capability.



The technology has been developed at the Space Applications Centre (**SAC**), Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).

The technology is the forerunner of ISRO's upcoming high-resolution Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) satellite, the NISAR ((NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar) and made available for ToT to the industry by IN-SPACe.

The technology will enable SAR radar development by Data Patterns, complementing the large portfolio of Radars already available from the company.

- 197.** The Government of India (GoI) has proposed to sell up to **7% stake** in **Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO)** via offer for sale (OFS). This includes selling 3.5 percent of the company, with an option to sell an additional 3.5 percent if the offer is oversubscribed.

The floor price for the sale has been set at Rs.79 apiece.

At the end of the September 2023 quarter, central government held 81.81 percent stake in HUDCO.

The stake sale will help the government to achieve the minimum public shareholding norm set out by the capital market regulator, the exchange filing said.

Minimum public shareholding norms require listed companies to maintain a public float of at least 25 percent.

- 198.** The Ministry of Defence (MoD) has signed a contract worth **Rs.313.42 crore** with **Cochin Shipyard Limited** for Mid Life Upgrade and Re-Powering of the **Indian Naval Ship (INS) Beas**.

INS Beas will join the active fleet of the Indian Navy with a modernized weapon suite and upgraded combat capability after completion of Mid Life Upgrade and Re- Powering in 2026. INS Beas is the first of Brahmaputra Class Frigate to be re-powered from Steam to Diesel Propulsion.

The project will involve more than 50 MSMEs and will lead to generation of employment for more than 3500 personnel.

- 199.** The Ministry of Defence (MoD) has signed a contract for the construction of one **Training Ship** for the **Indian Coast Guard** with **Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL)** at a cost of **Rs.310 crore**.

This is the first dedicated training platform with integral helicopter capabilities.

This will provide basic sea training to 70 Coast Guards and other international under-trainee officers to prepare on the multi-dimensional maritime aspects of Coast Guard life.

This training ship with advanced and modern high-tech surveillance and monitoring systems will provide profound and expertise to the Indian Coast Guard cadets on the challenges at sea.

- 200.** The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, has approved the project on **Green Energy Corridor (GEC) Phase-II – Inter-State Transmission System (ISTS)** for 13 GW Renewable Energy Project in **Ladakh**.

The project is targeted to be set up by FY 2029-30 with total estimated cost of **Rs.20,773.70 crore** and Central Financial Assistance (CFA) @ 40 percent of the project cost i.e. **Rs.8,309.48 crore**.

**Power Grid Corporation of India Limited** will be the implementing agency for this project. The state-of-the-art Voltage Source Converter (VSC) based High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) system and Extra High Voltage Alternating Current (EHVAC) systems will be deployed. The transmission line for evacuating this power will pass through Himachal Pradesh and Punjab up to Kaithal in Haryana, where it will be integrated with the National Grid. It will also be connected to Leh-Alusteng-Srinagar line to provide power to Jammu & Kashmir. This project will set up 713 km transmission lines (including 480 km HVDC line) and 5 GW capacity of HVDC terminal each at Pang (Ladakh) and Kaithal (Haryana). The project will contribute to achieving the target of 500 GW of installed electricity capacity from non-fossil fuels by year 2030. This project is in addition to InSTS GEC Phase-II, which is already under implementation in the States of Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh for grid integration and power evacuation of approx. 20 GW of RE power.

- 201.** The **Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR)**, in collaboration with the **Savitribai Phule Pune University (SPPU)**, has launched an ambitious initiative titled **Universalization of Traditional Indian Knowledge System (UTIKS)** at Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE), Manipal, in Karnataka.

The aim is to disseminate traditional Indian knowledge across the world and to make present-day Indian citizens aware of their roots and culture. This platform will serve as an authentic single-window source for introductory-level knowledge on a range of subjects under the Traditional Indian Knowledge System.

- 202.** **India and Italy** have inked an agreement to promote engagement in various **defence domains**, including security and defence policy, research and development, industrial co-development, co-production and setting up of joint ventures.

The agreement has been signed during the official visit of India's Defense Minister, **Rajnath Singh**, to Italy, in the presence of his Italian counterpart **Guido Crosetto** in Rome. During the discussions, particular emphasis was placed on fostering defense industrial cooperation. This includes encouraging interactions between Indian start-ups and Italian defense companies to leverage the strengths of both nations. India and Italy elevated their bilateral relationship to a strategic partnership in March 2023 during the visit of **Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni** to India.

**203.** The Government of India (GoI) has signed two Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) in **ocean sciences and medical product regulation** with **Dominican Republic**.

The MoUs have been signed during a meeting between Raquel Pena Rodriguez, the Vice President of Dominican Republic, and India's Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankhar in New Delhi.

**First MoU:** Between India's CSIR-NIO (National Institute of Oceanography) and the Dominican Republic's National Institute of Maritime Affairs for scientific cooperation in ocean sciences.

**Second MoU:** Between the Union Health & Family Welfare Ministry's Central Drugs Standards Control Organisation and the Drug Regulatory Authority of Dominican Republic on medical product regulation.

**204.** The **Space Applications Centre (SAC)** of the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Ahmedabad-based **Nav Wireless Technologies Pvt Ltd** (NavTech) to use light-based high-speed communication for satellite communication in space.

SAC will use high speed secure quantum key communication using light from base station to satellite in space & terrestrial communication.

The MoU has been signed for a tenure of three years.

Nav Wireless Technologies is the first company in India to provide this technology to SAC, ISRO.

**205. India and Saudi Arabia** have signed a Memorandum of Understanding in the fields of electrical interconnection; exchange of electricity during peak times and emergencies; co-development of projects; co-production of green / clean hydrogen and renewable energy.

The MoU also aims to establish secure, reliable, and resilient supply chains of materials used in green / clean hydrogen and the renewable energy sector.

The MoU has been signed between the Union Minister for Power and New & Renewable Energy, Government of India, R.K. Singh and the Minister of Energy, Government of Saudi Arabia, Abdulaziz bin Salman Al-Saud.

The MoU has been signed on the side-lines of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Climate Week 2023 held in Riyadh.

**206.** The **Automotive Research Association of India (ARAI)** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Guwahati** to establish the **Common Engineering Facility Center** titled "Digital Twin Center for Emerging Automotive Systems" in Hub and Spoke model.

The Common Engineering Facility Center (CEFC) is being established under Capital Goods scheme Phase II of the Ministry of Heavy Industries (MHI) by ARAI along with Industry Partner named Micelio Mobility Pvt Ltd.

The CEFC will enable "SAMARTH Udyog Bharat 4.0", for the benefit of the industry at large, and more specifically MSMEs and Start-ups by creating digital twin for the different systems across industries.

The entire facility is being established in Hub and Spoke manner with:

**Hub:** Pune

**Spoke1:** Bengaluru

**Spoke 2:** Guwahati

The Digital Twin Center will help the MSMEs and Start-ups in experimenting, experiencing, up-skilling and finding solutions using this domain for their needs.

**Automotive Research Association of India (ARAI):**

ARAI is an autonomous body under the aegis of the Ministry of Heavy Industries. It was established in 1966. It is a prime Testing and Certification Agency notified by Government of India under Rule 126 of Central Motor Vehicle Rules, 1989.

- **Headquarters:** Pune, Maharashtra
- **Director:** Reji Mathai

**207.** The **Assam Skill Development Mission (ASDM)** under the Skill, Employment & Entrepreneurship Department, Government of Assam has inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **Indian Army** to upskill ex-servicemen and their dependents.

The MoU will empower ex-servicemen and their dependents to get remunerative employment and self-employment.

**208.** The **Indian Railways** has inked a supply contract with the Indo-Russian joint venture **Kinet Railway Solutions** for manufacturing Vande Bharat trains. As per the contract, Kinet Railway Solutions will manufacture **120 Vande Bharat trains**, along with maintenance services for 35 years.

**209.** The International Air Transport Association (IATA) has assigned a three-letter code for the upcoming **Greenfield airport** at **Jewar** in **Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh**.

The three-letter code is '**DXN**.'

The code symbolises the airport's proximity to Noida, Delhi and western Uttar Pradesh.

**International Air Transport Association (IATA):**

IATA is the trade body for the world's airlines, representing some 300 airlines or 83 percent of total air traffic. It was founded in Havana, Cuba on 19<sup>th</sup> April 1945.

- **Head office:** Montreal, Canada
- **Director-General:** Willie Walsh

**210.** **India & Argentina** have signed a **Social Security Agreement (SSA)** to ensure professionals and workers retain benefits and contributions made toward social security, promoting easier mobility between countries.

The agreement has been signed by India's Ambassador to Argentina Dinesh Bhatia and Argentina's Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Worship Santiago Cafiero in the presence of Argentine Minister of Labour, Employment and Social Security Raquel Kisper de Olmos.

The SSA applies to legislation in India concerning old age, survivor's pension, and permanent, total disability pension for employed persons as well as to legislation in Argentina concerning contributory benefits of the Social Security System.

- 211.** The **World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA)** and the **World Health Organization (WHO)** have signed a four-year Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to allow experts from both international organizations to collaborate and share information on issues where anti-doping and public health intersect.

The MoU will run until **1 October 2027** and provides a framework of cooperation between WHO and WADA to further their goals.

It also aligns with the **United Nations Sustainable Goal 3: Ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages.**

- 212.** The board of the **Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL)**, a public sector enterprise, has approved two joint ventures with **EverEnviro Resource Management Pvt Ltd** and **GPS Renewables Pvt Ltd** to set up compressed biogas (CBG) plants.

The two joint ventures will be formed with IOCL or one of its subsidiaries and the two partners will have an equal stake of 50 per cent each in the newly formed joint venture. The board's decision is subject to approvals from the NITI Aayog, and the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) among others.

- 213.** The **Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)**, under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, and **Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya (GSV)** have inked a pact for advancing the **PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan**.

Under this MoU, the GSV will be the nodal agency across the country to design, develop and deliver courses and curriculum related to PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan and National Logistics Policy at various centres in different states.

**Note:** PM Gati Shakti was launched in October 2021. It is designed as a National Master Plan for Multi-modal connectivity.

**Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya (GSV):**

GSV, a newly created Central University, is India's first University in the Transportation and Logistics sectors. It was founded in 2022 by the Act of the Parliament.

GSV subsumes the previously existing National Rail and Transportation Institute (NRTI). It is mandated to work across railways, shipping, ports, highways, roads, waterways, aviation, etc.

- **Headquarters:** Vadodara, Gujarat



**214.** The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has approved the proposed acquisition of 100% shareholding of Lanco Amarkantak Power Limited (LAPL) by PFC Projects, REC Limited, SJVN Limited and Damodar Valley Corporation (DVC).

LAPL is an unlisted public limited company engaged in power generation in India. In another transaction, the CCI has approved Kedaara Capital Fund III LLP's acquisition of 1.74 percent stake in Lenskart Solutions Private Limited (LSPL).

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### **BANKING & FINANCE**

**215. HDFC Bank** has introduced a digital banking platform named '**XpressWay**'. The platform aims to offer a swift, paperless, and self-service banking experience to the bank's customers.

XpressWay offers a wide array of digital services, from Net banking to Permanent Account Number (PAN) updates and instant address changes through Aadhaar. XpressWay is part of HDFC Bank's digital ecosystem, known as 'HDFC Bank NOW'.

**216.** The **US International Development Finance Corporation (DFC)** has committed **USD 30 million** to **Dalmia Polypro Industries** for building a plastic recycling facility in **Maharashtra**.

Dalmia will raise the money from external commercial borrowing (ECB) route to fund the new recycling facility in Nashik.

The facility will have a recycling capacity of 1,71,000 metric tonne per year and help Dalmia Polypro develop food-grade recycled materials and applications.

The facility will produce high quality recycled PET (rPET), PP (rPP) and HDPE (rHDPE) flakes and granules and will be partially powered by renewable energy and biofuel.

**217.** The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a **USD 175 million** loan to enhance road connectivity and climate resilience in the state of **Madhya Pradesh**. The project aims to upgrade about 500 kilometres of state highways and major district roads to a standard two-lane feature in Madhya Pradesh.

The project will build better, safer, and more climate-resistant roads in MP to connect rural areas to growth centres and industrial corridors.

**Yes Bank** has acquired 2.4 crore additional shares of J C Flowers Asset Reconstruction (**JC Flowers ARC**) and raised its stake to **9.9 percent**.

The bank acquired 24,643,558 equity shares of JC Flowers ARC at Rs.29.68 per equity share, having face value of Rs.10 at a premium of Rs.19.68 per unit for an amount aggregating to Rs.731,420,804.

**218. Kotak Mahindra Bank** has received approval from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to acquire **100%** of the issued and paid-up capital in Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh) based **Sonata Finance Private Limited** for a cash consideration of **Rs.537 crore**.

After the completion of the transaction, Sonata will become a 'wholly owned subsidiary of the Bank'.

Sonata Finance was set up in 2006. It is a Microfinance company registered as non-banking finance company- Microfinance institutions (MFI) (Non-deposit taking).

**Note:** Headquarters of Kotak Mahindra Bank is in Mumbai, Maharashtra.

**219. HDFC ERGO General Insurance** has launched '**Optima Secure**', a health insurance policy that offers four times the coverage at no extra cost. The policy covers medical expenses incurred within India and comes with an optional global health cover.

One can buy this policy until 65 years of age.

Families and individuals can choose coverage from Rs.5 lakhs to Rs.2 crore, with different options available.

This policy can be issued for a period of 1,2 or even 3 years.

**220. The State Bank of India (SBI)** has appointed former Indian cricketer and former Captain of Indian's Men's cricket team **Mahendra Singh Dhoni (MS Dhoni)** as its official brand ambassador to strengthen its connection, especially with the younger population.

MS Dhoni will play a pivotal role in various marketing and promotional campaigns of SBI.

**221. Google** has partnered with the **Fintech Association for Consumer Empowerment (FACE)** to take down illegal digital lending apps on Play Store in India.

FACE is an industry association and self-regulatory organization for digital lenders.

Under this partnership, FACE will support Google with market intelligence to inform detection and enable swift action against predatory personal loan apps in India that are non-compliant with Play Store's policies.

This partnership contributes to the goals of Google's new safety initiative, **DigiKavach**, which aims to protect people from increasingly sophisticated financial scams perpetrated by online criminals by collaborating with industry experts.

**222. The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)** has empanelled **12 entities**, including Ernst & Young LLP (EY), KPMG Assurance and Consulting Services LLP, to provide digital forensic services to its search team for onsite data acquisition during search and seizure operations.

This empanelment will be valid for **2 years**.

The other empanelled entities are Baker Tilly Business Advisory Services, Cybermate Forensics & Data Security Solutions, Cyint Technologies, ECS Info Tech, Innifu Labs, Mahen

Technologies, Nangia & Co LLP, Netrika Consulting India, Pelorus Technologies and Systools Software.

The entities will be required to provide onsite and offsite assistance to the search team and onsite data acquisition during search and seizure operations.

**223. Kotak Mahindra Bank** has partnered with National E-Governance Services Limited (**NeSL**) to issue its first electronic Bank Guarantee (**e-BG**) on the latter's platform.

This association will enable the digitisation of Trade, thus helping eliminate paper-based issuance of Bank Guarantees.

**National E-Governance Services Limited (NeSL):**

National E-Governance Services Limited (NeSL) is India's first Information Utility registered with the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) under the provisions of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016 (IBC). The company has been set up by leading banks and public institutions.

- **Administrative office:** Bengaluru, Karnataka
- **Registered office:** Mumbai, Maharashtra
- **MD & CEO:** Debajyoti Ray Chaudhuri

**224. Zerodha Fund House**, a joint venture between Zerodha Broking and Smallcase Technologies, has launched its maiden funds schemes: **Zerodha Nifty LargeMidcap 250 Index Fund** and **Zerodha ELSS Tax Saver Nifty LargeMidcap 250 Index Fund**.

Both are open-ended, passive, index equity mutual fund schemes with the minimum amount of investment being Rs.100 and Rs. 500, respectively.

The schemes will replicate the Nifty LargeMidcap 250 Index, with the ELSS having a mandatory lock-in period of 3 years.

The 250 stocks of the Nifty LargeMidcap 250 Index are the combination of the universe of stocks forming part of the Nifty 100 Index and Nifty Midcap 150 Index.

The Nifty LargeMidcap 250 Index, which covers approximately 84% of the full market capitalisation aims to reflect the performance of the large and midcap companies listed on NSE with 50% weight allocated to each segment.

**225. The Asian Development Bank (ADB)** has approved a **USD 400 million** policy-based loan to India for **Subprogram 2** of the Sustainable Urban Development and Service Delivery Program.

The program aims to support the government's urban reform agenda for improving the quality of urban life through the creation of high-quality urban infrastructure, assured public services, and efficient governance systems.

Subprogram 1 approved in 2021 established national-level policies and guidelines to improve urban services.

Subprogram 2 is supporting investment planning and reform actions at the state and urban local body (ULB) levels.

**226. Bank of Baroda (BoB)**, one of India's leading public sector banks, has introduced the **bob LITE Savings Account**, a Lifetime Zero Balance Savings Bank Account, as a part of its "BOB Ke Sang Tyohaar Ki Umang" festive campaign.

Salient features of the bob LITE Savings Bank Account:

- The account can be opened by any resident individual, including minors above the age of 10 years.
- The account provides a lifetime free **RuPay Platinum Debit Card**.
- The Quarterly Average Balance (QAB) to be maintained is based in the locality. QAB will be: **Rs.3000** for Metro/Urban branches; **Rs.2000** for Semi Urban branches; and **Rs.1000** for Rural branches.
- The account offers 30 free cheque leaves in a financial year.

**227. Zaakpay**, the payment gateway arm of **MobiKwik**, has received in-principle authorisation from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to operate as a **payment aggregator**. This authorisation will allow Zaakpay to onboard new merchants onto its platform, facilitating quick and easy processing of online payments.

**Payment aggregator:**

It is a third-party that manages and processes merchants' online transactions with consumers, allowing merchants to be more hands-off in their payment process. A payment aggregator allows merchants to accept a diverse range of payment options without the upfront work, whether payment is by credit card, debit card, e-wallet, or bank transfer.

**228. Escrowpay**, a fintech company into escrow banking, has secured **India's first digital escrow regulatory fintech authorization** from the International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA), GIFT City, Gandhinagar, Gujarat.

The authorization will provide secured and efficient financial solutions to 70 million Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in India.

**Escrow:**

Escrow is a financial arrangement in which a third-party, known as an escrow agent, holds money or property on behalf of two other parties that are in the process of completing a transaction.

**229. AU Small Finance Bank** has launched its inaugural Green Fixed Deposit (FD) known as **Planet First – AU Green Fixed Deposit**, where the proceeds are committed to supporting environmentally-conscious initiatives.

The Green Fixed Deposit has been unveiled on **25<sup>th</sup> October 2023**, last Wednesday of October, a day synonymous with Sustainability Day.

**Key features of Planet First – AU Green Fixed Deposit:**

- Interest rate of up to **8.50%**.
- Minimum investment of **Rs.5,000**.
- Tenure options from **2 to 5 years**.
- Range of interest payment options include monthly, quarterly, and cumulative (at maturity)

**230. RBL Bank** has launched a zero-balance digital banking product known as the **GO Savings Account**, featuring a subscription-based approach. The account has a subscription-based model means it will replace minimum balance requirement, thus, finishing the hassle of maintaining a minimum balance.

**Key features:**

- Competitive interest rates of up to 7.5% per annum.
- Vouchers valued at Rs.1500 for premier brands.
- Comprehensive cyber insurance cover, accident, and travel insurance up to Rs.1 crore and free CIBIL report.

**231. IndusInd Bank** has tied up with **Viamerica Corporation** to provide digital inward remittances to Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) in the USA. This tie up will enable NRIs to send money to their beneficiaries in India through IndusInd Bank's digital remittance platform **Indus Fast Remit (IFR)**.

IFR will allow NRIs to send money to India either through auto debit payment mode or through the overseas Bank account.

Through IndusInd Bank Vostro relationship, Viamerica Corporation will credit the beneficiary's account in India using the Reserve Bank of India (RBI's) Rupee Drawing Arrangement (RDA) scheme.

**232. ICICI Bank** has introduced '**iFinance**', a one-stop solution for viewing savings and current accounts across multiple banks.

This feature is available on the Bank's digital platforms, namely the iMobile Pay app, Retail Internet Banking (RIB), Corporate Internet Banking (CIB), and InstaBIZ, the Bank's mobile app for businesses, by leveraging the Account Aggregator ecosystem.

'iFinance' gives a dashboard with a single view of all accounts.

The dashboard provides great convenience to consumers by allowing them to exercise more control over their expenses and monitor their accounts in real-time.



**233.** The **India Post Payments Bank (IPPB)** has signed an agreement with the **Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI)** to promote extension of formal financial services and other support services to MSMEs, especially enterprises in rural and remote areas of the country.

Under this pact, SIDBI provides credit to small businesses, while IPPB provides banking transaction services.

Both entities will undertake joint programs to upgrade the skills of Dak Sevaks.

Both entities have also announced a hackathon for innovation in financial services in rural areas and also a Swavalamban Challenge Fund to promote rural livelihood enterprises.

**234.** The **SBI Funds Management Limited (SBIFML)** has received approval from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to acquire up to a **9.99%** paid-up share capital in **IndusInd Bank**.

This acquisition will allow the company to also hold 9.99% voting rights in the bank.

The holding of SBIFML in IndusInd Bank should not exceed 9.99 % of the paid-up share capital or voting rights of the Bank at all times.

The RBI has given SBIFML one year time (till 10th October 2024) to buy the shares of IndusInd Bank.

**SBI Funds Management Limited (SBIFML):**

SBIFML is a joint venture between State Bank of India (SBI) and AMUNDI Asset Management (France), a wholly owned subsidiary of Amundi India Holding. SBI holds 63% stake and AMUNDI Asset Management holds 37%.

- **Headquarters:** Mumbai, Maharashtra
- **MD & CEO:** Shamsheer Singh

**235.** The **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** has joined hands with the Government of **West Bengal** to conduct a study on the development of economic corridors in the state.

The ADB will provide technical expertise and funding for the projects.

The study aims at strategizing economic development across the nodes of Andal-Panagarh, Kharagapur-Goaltore-Salboni and growth centres such as Siliguri, Dankuni and Kalyani with urban-industrial logistics-skills-energy-social sector convergence.

**236.** **Bharti Group**, through its holding company Bharti Life Ventures Private Limited (BLVPL), has entered into a binding agreement with its joint partner **AXA** (France) to acquire its **49% stake** in **Bharti AXA Life Insurance**.

Through this acquisition, BLVPL will own 100% stake in the Bharti AXA Life Insurance.

The transaction is expected to be completed by December 2023.

**237.** The **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** has approved a **USD 181 million** loan to build quality infrastructure and services toward improving urban livability and mobility in the peri-urban areas of Ahmedabad city in Gujarat.

- The Ahmedabad Peri-urban Livability Improvement Project will construct 166 kilometres (km) of water distribution network, 126 km of climate-resilient stormwater drainage, 300 km of sewerage systems, and four sewage treatment plants, providing residents of Ahmedabad's surrounding areas with quality urban infrastructure and services.
- The project is also supporting 10 junction improvements along the existing Sardar Patel Ring Road to improve connectivity of peri-urban areas to Ahmedabad city.

**238. Tiger Logistics (India) Ltd** has joined hands with **ICICI Bank** to help exporters and importers to track shipment, get information on freight rates and ease documentation process.

This partnership will facilitate integrated banking and end-to-end logistics for exporters and importers.

This partnership will integrate the ICICI Trade Emerge platform with Tiger Logistics' proprietary digital freight booking and management platform FreightJar.

**239. Bank of India** has collaborated with **REC Limited**, a Maharatna company, to co-finance **Rs.30,000 crore** worth of projects in the power, infrastructure, and logistics sectors over the next **5 years**.

REC Limited provides long-term loans and other finance to the power sector. The firm had a loan book of Rs.4.54 lakh crore as of the June 2023.

**240. BLS E-Services Limited**, a subsidiary of BLS International Services Limited, has announced a significant milestone in its mission to expand financial access across India. The company has entered into a Master Business Correspondent Agreement with **Kotak Mahindra Bank** to redefine the financial landscape and foster inclusive growth.

The agreement has been signed for an initial period of 3 years, with the possibility of extension for an additional year.

This holistic approach to financial inclusion will be initially launched at 1000 strategically selected locations across Punjab, Haryana, Gujarat, Maharashtra, and Karnataka, fostering economic empowerment and growth in these regions.

**241. Sberbank** has become the **first Russian bank** to register with the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) as a foreign portfolio investor (FPI) for a **Category I FPI licence**.

FPIs with category I licence have to follow less lenient beneficial ownership disclosures, can subscribe to overseas derivative instruments which have Indian stocks as underlying and also enjoy certain taxation benefits.

Category I FPI registration is only granted to government or government related foreign investors or regulated entities such as banks, sovereign wealth funds, investment trusts, pension funds, asset management companies.

Till now, Alfa Capital Management, First Asset Management, Igor Noskov, and Vesvolod Rozanov have been granted FPI registrations.

**Note:** Sberbank received approval from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in May 2010 to set up a branch in India and commenced its banking business from **January 2011**.

**242. Cashfree Payments**, a firm specialising in API banking solutions, has collaborated with **Global Trade Plaza**, a global B2B marketplace, to simplify cross-border payments for Indian exporters.

The collaboration aims to facilitate international trade promotion by allowing Indian exporters to collect payments in over 15 foreign currencies.

The funds received will be converted into Indian Rupees and transferred to local Indian bank accounts within 48 hours.

The exporters will also receive auto-generated foreign inward remittances advice (e-FIRA).

**243.** The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has updated **Anti-Money Laundering** guidelines. The development comes after the government amended the Prevention of Money Laundering (Maintenance of Records) (PMLA) Rules in September 2023.

**New guidelines:**

- The partners holding a **10 percent stake** in a firm will come under the definition of beneficial owners. Earlier, the requirement was 15 percent.
- The Principal Officer would act as a central reference point in facilitating reporting of suspicious transactions to the authorities.
- Names, designation, and addresses of 'Principal Officer' shall be intimated to Financial Intelligence Unit – India (**FIU-IND**).

**Financial Intelligence Unit – India (FIU-IND):**

FIU-IND is responsible for coordinating efforts of intelligence, investigation and enforcement agencies in efforts against money laundering and terror financing.

It comes under the Ministry of Finance.

**244.** The **Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI)** has released new guidelines for '**Bima Vahaks (BV)**'. The guidelines aims to establish women centric

distribution channel that focuses on enhancing insurance inclusion and awareness in every village.

It also aims to improve the accessibility and availability of insurance in every nook and corner of the country.

The new guidelines is a part of IRDAI's strategy to achieve its 'Insurance for All goal'.

**New guidelines:**

- As per the new guidelines, every insurer shall endeavour to engage individual Bima Vahaks and/or corporate Bima Vahaks with the focus to progressively achieve coverage of every Gram Panchayat. Bima Vahaks shall be deployed in each Gram Panchayat before **31 December 2024**.
- There is **no restriction on the number of insurers** a Bima Vahak is allowed to work with.
- A Bima Vahak would be legal persons registered in accordance with the respective laws and engaged by an insurer. An individual Bima Vahak could be any individual appointed by an insurer or appointed by a corporate Bima Vahak.
- The Bima Vahaks, both corporate and individual, will be authorised to undertake activities like the collection of proposal information and know-your-customer (KYC) documents and coordinate claims-related services.
- Every insurer would have to make available optional modes for payment of premiums by prospects or policyholders.

**245. Axis Bank** has launched its digital bank proposition called '**open by Axis Bank**' in its latest advertising campaign '**Open 2023**' that focuses on the Bank's digital capabilities.

The Open 2023 campaign highlights the top 15 features of the Bank's digital offerings. 'open by Axis Bank' is a future-ready mobile application underscores the Bank's pivot towards enhanced digital offerings.

**246. The State Bank of India (SBI)** has launched a '**Mobile Handheld Device**' for its financial inclusion customers in a bid to enhance accessibility and convenience.

In its first phase, the device will provide five core banking services that account for 75 percent of transactions conducted at CSP (Customer Service Point) outlets. These include cash withdrawals, cash deposits, fund transfers, balance inquiries, and mini statements.

**247. REC Limited**, the Maharatna Central Public Sector Enterprise under the Ministry of Power, has launched a mobile application, exclusively for current and future investors in REC's **54EC Capital Gain Tax Exemption Bonds**.

The app named '**SUGAM REC**' will offer investors with complete details of their investment in REC 54EC Bonds.

### **Section 54EC Bonds:**

Section 54EC Bonds are a type of fixed income financial instruments which provide tax exemption under capital gains to investors, under Section 54EC of the Income Tax Act. These bonds allow an assessee/investor to save income tax on long-term capital gain by investing the gains.

The investment into these bonds has to be made within 6 months from the date of long-term capital gain. They have a fixed lock-in period of **5 years** and can be either held in Physical or Demat form.

They are issued by various institutions managed by the Government of India to finance specific capital projects.

**248.** The **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** has approved a **USD 200 million** loan to strengthen flood and riverbank erosion risk management along the 650 kilometers (km) long main stem of the Brahmaputra River in **Assam**.

- The Flood and River Erosion Management Agency of Assam will lead, manage, and coordinate the project activities.
- The Water Resources Department of the Government of Assam will implement the works and the Assam Agroforestry Development Board will use nature-based solutions.
- The Brahmaputra Board, the Assam State Disaster Management Authority, and the Assam Inland Water Transport Development Society will be partner agencies of the project.

The project will benefit about 1 million people and increase crop production over 50,000 hectares.

**249.** The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has appointed **12 General Managers (GMs)** as **Executive Directors (EDs)** of various **Public Sector Banks (PSBs)**.

<b>Appointee</b>	<b>GM (Previous Post)</b>	<b>ED (New Post)</b>
Sanjay Rudra	Bank of Maharashtra	Union Bank of India
Vijaykumar N Kamble	Bank of Maharashtra	UCO Bank
Bhavendra Kumar	Canara Bank	Canara Bank
Bibhu Prasad Mahapatra	Punjab National Bank	Punjab National Bank
<b>Ravi Mehra</b>	Punjab & Sindh Bank	<b>Punjab &amp; Sind Bank</b>



Rajiv Mishra	Union Bank of India	Bank of India
Brajesh Kumar Singh	Bank of Baroda	Indian Bank
Rohit Rishi	Indian Bank	Bank of Maharashtra
<b>Lal Singh</b>	Union Bank of India	<b>Bank of Baroda</b>
<b>Shiv Bajrang Singh</b>	Bank of India	<b>Indian Bank</b>
<b>Mahendra Dohare</b>	Punjab National Bank	<b>Central Bank of India</b>
Dhanaraj T	Indian Bank	Indian Overseas Bank

**250.** The **Christ University, Pune** has inked a pact with the **India Meteorological Department (IMD)** to collaborate in the field of weather and climate sciences.

This **five-year pact** has been inked between Mrutyunjay Mohapatra, director general, IMD, and Fr Lijo Thomas, director, Christ University, Lavasa, during the Stakeholder Consultation Workshop on the National Framework for Climate Services (**NFCS**) in India.

The scope of this pact extends to human resource training, development, research and publications in climate sciences.

It will facilitate the **capacity-building programme**, one of the main goals of the proposed NFCS.

#### **National Framework for Climate Services (NFCS):**

NFCS - India is proposed under Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS). It is premised on strengthening the production, availability, delivery and application of science-based climate monitoring and prediction services. The nodal agency for formulation and implementation of the national framework in India will be IMD.

Switzerland, China, Germany and UK have also launched the NFCS.

**251. Star Health & Allied Insurance** has introduced a **surrogacy cover and oocyte donor cover** to its popular women-centric policy namely '**Star Women Care Insurance Policy**' at no extra charge for policyholders.

The policy will offer inpatient hospitalisation coverage under the surrogacy cover for post-partum delivery complications to the surrogate mother for up to 36 months.

The oocyte donor coverage will indemnify inpatient hospitalisation expenses for complications arising from assisted reproductive treatment for a period of 12 months.

The surrogate mother cover and oocyte donor cover is valid for adults aged between **25 years to 35 years**. In both these covers, the proposer has to be one of the intending couple. The sum assured is available up to **Rs.1 crore**.

Under the policy, a newborn will gain health cover of up to **25 percent** of the sum insured from Day 1 and 100 percent of sum insured from the next subsequent year onward. The policy also has a Start Mother Cover feature which covers the hospital room rent of the insured mother if the insured child is less than 12 years old and is hospitalised in the intensive care unit (ICU).

**252. ManipalCigna Health insurance Company Limited** (formerly known as CignaTTK Health Insurance Company Limited) has launched '**ManipalCigna Accident Shield**'.

This new advanced personal accident plan provides comprehensive coverage for Accidental Death (AD), Permanent Total Disablement (PTD), and Permanent Partial Disablement (PPD), ensuring that policyholders are safeguarded against a wide array of accidents.

The plan comes in three variants:

- Classic Plan
- Plus Plan
- Pro Plan

**253. The India Infrastructure Finance Company Limited (IIFCL)** has sanctioned loans worth **Rs.8,800 crore** to develop airports and civil aviation infrastructure in India.

The IIFCL has already sanctioned loans of around Rs.4000 crore.

IIFCL is one of the major financiers of airports in India and has supported airports with a total project outlay of about Rs.74,000 crore.

**254. Axis Bank** has launched **India's first numberless credit card** in collaboration with fintech startup **Fibe** (formerly known as EarlySalary) for tech-savvy *Generation Z* (people born between 1996 and 2010) of India.

The card, '**Fibe Axis Bank Credit Card**', is powered by RuPay.

It allows the customer to link this credit card to Unified Payments Interface (UPI).

It offers enhanced security as it doesn't have a card number, expiry date, or CVV printed on it, reducing the risk of identity theft.

**255. The Mahindra Last Mile Mobility (MLMML)**, a subsidiary of Mahindra and Mahindra, has received **Rs.300 crore** as the first tranche of its investment from the **International Finance Corporation (IFC)** for its electric vehicle division.

This investment is IFC's first in an EV maker in India.

With this transaction, MLMML will no longer be a wholly-owned subsidiary of Mahindra and Mahindra with effect from 9<sup>th</sup> October 2023, while it continues to be a subsidiary of the company.

In March 2023, IFC agreed to invest Rs.600 crore in the company housing the last mile mobility division of the Mahindra Group, valuing it at up to Rs.6,020 crore.

**256. Federal Bank** has launched the Unified Interface Payments (**UPI**) integration for **Non-Residential Indian (NRI)** clients through its mobile banking platform, **FedMobile**. The aim is to enhance banking convenience for its NRI clients.

With the integration of UPI, NRI clients can now make payments seamlessly using their Non-Residential External (NRE) accounts in regions where traditional payment methods may be limited.

The plan has been approved by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) for NRIs from countries including Singapore (+65), Australia (+61), Malaysia (+60), Canada (+1), Hong Kong (+852), Oman (+968), Qatar (+974), United States of America (+1), Saudi Arabia (+966), United Arab Emirates (+971), and United Kingdom (+44).

**257. Paysharp**, a Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in-principle approved **payment aggregator**, has received **ISO / IEC 27001: 2022 certification**, an international standard in information security management systems.

**ISO/IEC 27001: 2022:**

- It is an international standard on how to manage information security.
- The standard was originally published jointly by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) in 2005 and then revised in 2013 and 2022.
- The framework specifies the requirements for establishing, implementing, maintaining, and continually improving an (ISMS) information security management system within the context of the organization.

**258. Navneet Munot**, the Managing Director and CEO of HDFC Asset Management, has been elected as the **Chairman** of the **Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI)**. He will take over the charge from A Balasubramanian, CEO of Aditya Birla Sun Life Asset Management, on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2023.

**Anthony Heredia**, MD and CEO of Mahindra Manulife Mutual Fund, has been elected as its Vice-Chairman.

**Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI):**

AMFI is an association of all the Asset Management Companies of SEBI registered mutual funds in India. It was incorporated on August 22, 1995, as a non-profit organisation. As of now, 44 Asset Management Companies that are registered with SEBI, are its members. It is headquartered in **Mumbai**, Maharashtra.

**259.** Ministry of Finance, Department of Economic Affairs, has increased the **interest rates** on the 5 Year Recurring Deposit (RD) scheme by 20 basis points to **6.7%** from 6.5% for the **3rd Quarter for the Financial Year 2023-24 (1<sup>st</sup> October 2023 to 31st December 2023)**.

Instruments	Rates of interest (%) (Q1 of FY24)	Rates of interest (%) (Q2 of FY24)	Rates of interest (%) (Q3 of FY24)	Compounding
Savings Deposit (SD)	4.0	4.0	4.0	Annual
1 Year Time Deposit (TD)	6.8	6.9	6.9	Quarterly
2 Year Time Deposit (TD)	6.9	7.0	7.0	Quarterly
3 Year Time Deposit (TD)	7.0	7	7	Quarterly
5 Year Time Deposit (TD)	7.5	7.5	7.5	Quarterly
5 Year Recurring Deposit (RD)	6.2	6.5	6.7	Quarterly
5 Year Senior Citizens Savings Scheme (SCSS)	8.2	8.2	8.2	Paid Quarterly
5-year Monthly Income Scheme (MIS)	7.4	7.4	7.4	Paid Monthly
5 Year National Savings Certificate (NSC)	7.7	7.7	7.7	Annual
Public Provident Fund (PPF) Scheme	7.1	7.1	7.1	Annual
Kisan Vikas Patra (KVP)	7.5 (will mature in 115 months)	7.5 (will mature in 115 months)	7.5 (will mature in 115 months)	Annual
Sukanya Samriddhi Account Scheme (SSAS)	8.0	8.0	8.0	Annual

**260. Kotak Mahindra Asset Management Company Limited (KMAMCL)**, in collaboration with the **Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE)**, has launched an investor education and awareness initiative named **'Seekho Paiso ki Bhasha.'**

This initiative aims to promote financial literacy among CBSE teachers in affiliated schools nationwide.

In this initiative, **75,000 educators** (50% of them being women educators) will be inculcated with the financial knowledge.

The initiative will be taken care by 500 skilled trainers from the Centre for Investment Education and Learning (**CIEL**), Mumbai.

## **RBI Assistant Free Mock Test**

**261. Karnataka Bank** has launched the “Door -Step Gold Loan” facility named “**KBL-Swarna Bandhu**” for its customers, a unique product for gold loans with end-to-end digitization.

This facility has been launched in partnership with SahiBandhu, a leading aggregator platform for gold loans backed by The Manipal Group.

SahiBandhu will act as a Corporate Business Correspondent and a Lending Service Provider.

**262. The International Finance Corporation (IFC)**, a unit of the World Bank Group, has received approval from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to acquire up to **9.7%** of the paid-up share capital or voting rights of the **Federal Bank**, subject to the conditions specified therein.

IFC currently holds a 1.34 percent stake in the bank.

**263. The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)** has extended the deadline for **Demat account holders** to provide a nomination. SEBI has also extended the deadline for physical security holders to submit PAN, nomination and KYC details.

The deadline has been extended to **31<sup>st</sup> December 2023** from 30th September 2023.

SEBI has also instructed stock exchanges, depositories, RTA (Registrar and Transfer Agents) and listed companies to take necessary steps to implement the provisions of this circular, and to monitor the compliance of this circular.

### **Demat Account:**

A “Demat account” is an acronym for “Dematerialised account”. This account is used by an investor to hold shares and securities in an electronic form. When an investor buys or sells securities, the changes are reflected electronically in the Demat Account.

SEBI has also extended the deadline for **mutual fund** account holders till **1<sup>st</sup> January 2024**, to nominate a beneficiary or opt out of it by submitting a declaration form, failing which their folios will be frozen.

**264. The Asian Development Bank (ADB)** has approved the capital management reforms that unlock **USD100 billion** in new funding over the next decade to address overlapping, simultaneous crises in **Asia and the Pacific**, including climate change.

The reforms are introduced through an update of ADB’s Capital Adequacy Framework (CAF).



This will expand ADB's annual new commitments capacity to more than \$36 billion, an increase of approximately \$10 billion, or about 40%.

**Asian Development Bank (ADB):**

The Asian Development Bank (ADB), a multilateral development bank established on 19 December 1966, is headquartered in Mandaluyong City, Metro Manila, **Philippines**. ADB is committed to achieving a prosperous, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable Asia and the Pacific, while sustaining its efforts to eradicate extreme poverty.

**Members:** 68 members (49 are from within Asia and the Pacific and 19 outside)

**President:** Masatsugu Asakawa

**265. Groww Mutual Fund** has launched the **Groww Nifty Total Market Index Fund**, *India's first Total Market Index Fund*. The fund will track the Nifty Total Market Index and provide potential returns that correspond to the total returns of the index.

**Anupam Tiwari** (Fund Manager) will be managing the fund.

The Nifty Total Market Index consists of 750 stocks across large, mid, and small-cap segments.

The fund will be open for subscription from 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2023 to 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023.

**266. SBI Life Insurance**, a private life insurer in India, has signed a bancassurance pact with the **State Bank of Sikkim (SBS)** to make insurance solutions accessible to the residents of Sikkim.

Bancassurance is an agreement between a bank and an insurance company, through which the insurer can sell its products to the bank's customers.

State Bank of Sikkim (SBS) is headquartered at Gangtok, Sikkim.

**267. World Bank** has released the **India Development Update (October 2023)**. As per IDU, **India's Gross Domestic Products (GDP)** growth for the Financial Year **2023-24** is retained at **6.3%** and for the Financial Year **2024-25** the growth rate will be at **6.4%**.

- India was one of the fastest-growing major economies in FY22/23 at 7.2%. India's growth rate was the second highest among G20 countries and almost twice the average for emerging market economies.
- However, service sector activity is expected to remain strong with growth of **7.4%** and investment growth is also projected to remain robust at **8.9%**.
- The fiscal consolidation is expected to continue in FY23/24 with the central government fiscal deficit projected to continue to decline from 6.4% to 5.9% of GDP.
- Public debt is expected to stabilize at 83% of GDP.

- The current account deficit is expected to narrow to 1.4% of GDP, and it will be adequately financed by foreign investment flows and supported by large foreign reserves.

### **India Development Update (IDU):**

IDU is a companion piece to the South Asia Development Update. It is a biannual report of the World Bank that examines economic developments and prospects in the South Asia region and analyses policy challenges faced by countries.

**268. NPCI International Payments Limited (NIPL)**, a wholly owned subsidiary of the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), has tied up with **Al Etihad Payments (AEP)** for Domestic Card Scheme (DCS) implementation in the UAE.

AEP is an indirect subsidiary of the Central Bank of UAE (CBUAE).

NIPL and AEP will work together to build, implement, and operationalize UAE's national domestic card scheme.

The DCS solution is based on the principles of sovereignty, speed to market, innovation, digitization, and strategic independence.

The DCS solution provided by NIPL consists of a RuPay stack and value-added services like fraud monitoring services and analytics.

**269. The Warehousing Development Regulatory Authority (WDRA)** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **Bank of India (BoI)** to facilitate low interest rate loans to farmers and traders.

The MoU has been signed with the intent of promoting awareness to fund against **e-NWRs** (electronic Negotiable Warehouse Receipt).

eNWR is a digital warehousing receipt issued by registered warehouses regulated and governed by WDRA.

**270. Yes Bank** has become **India's first bank** to issue an '**Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) Network Gift Card**'. The card is powered by Rupay Network.

The card is issued in collaboration with the ONDC, a government-backed initiative to democratize digital commerce in India.

The card can be loaded with up to Rs.10,000.

**Note:** Omnicard is the first company to issue ONDC Network Gift Cards (in Sep'23).

**271. IndusInd Bank** has unveiled a customer centric digital banking application, '**INDIE**', to empower customers with an all-in-one digital financial solution. INDIE offers a unique ability to personalise the customers' financial products.

The app offers the best of IndusInd Bank such as choice of account number, a high-interest-bearing savings account that provides up to 6.75% p.a. return, and fixed deposits that offer exclusive returns of up to 7.85% p.a.

**272. Outlook Group** has launched a retirement planning event “**Outlook Money 40After40**” in association with **IDFC FIRST Bank** to spread awareness and create conversations around retirement planning.

It is a two-day event and expo, which will be held at Jio World Convention Centre in Mumbai on January 23-24, 2024.

It aims to help individuals interact, understand, and reach solutions that are suitable for them for a fulfilling retired life.

**273.** The **National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF)** has entered a collaboration with the **Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC)** to launch a **USD 600 million (Rs.49 billion) India-Japan Fund (IJF)** with JBIC and Government of India (GoI) as anchor investors.

India Japan Fund will focus on investing in environmental sustainability and low carbon emission strategies.

Out of USD 600 million, the Indian Government will contribute **USD 294 million (49%)** and JBIC will contribute **USD 306 million (51%)**.

This marks NIIF's first bi-lateral fund.

The Fund will be managed by NIIF Limited (NIIFL) and JBIC IG (a subsidiary of JBIC) will support NIIFL in promoting Japanese investments in India.

**274. HDFC Pension Management Company Limited**, a subsidiary of HDFC Life Insurance Company Limited, has launched a first-of-its-kind '**National Pension System (NPS) Preference Index**' on 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of **NPS Diwas** which was observed on **1<sup>st</sup> October 2023**.

It has also released **NPS Preference Index Study** which is the industry first spotlight on NPS. The survey results shows that the NPS Preference Index is currently **54 out of 100**. This means that the NPS is at moderate level.

The aim of the survey is to assess consumers' views on retirement and their awareness, interest, and contemplation of the NPS.

#### **National Pension System (NPS):**

NPS is a voluntary, defined-contribution pension scheme. It was launched in India in 2004. It is open to all Indian citizens between the ages of 18 and 70. It is regulated by the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA). It operates through a unique identification number called the Permanent Retirement Account Number (PRAN).

## **RBI Assistant Free Mock Test**

## RBI IN NEWS

**275.** The Reserve Bank of India has approved the appointment of **Ashok Vaswani** as the next Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of **Kotak Mahindra Bank** for a period of three years.

The appointment is with effect from the date of taking charge, which shall not be later than January 1, 2024.

He was CEO of Citigroup Asia Pacific, and more recently, CEO of Barclays.

Dipak Gupta, currently the managing director and CEO of Kotak Mahindra Bank, will carry out the chief executive duties until 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI), in consultation with the Government of India (GoI), has expanded the range of products offered through RBI Retail Direct portal by allowing retail investors to subscribe to Floating Rate Savings Bonds, 2020 (Taxable)-FRSB 2020 (T).

Previously, the retail investors are allowed to invest in central government securities, treasury bills, state government securities, and sovereign gold bonds through the Retail Direct Portal. The subscription of bonds will be in the form of cash (up to Rs.20,000 only)/drafts/cheques or any electric mode.

### **Floating Rate Savings Bonds (FRSB):**

FRSB 2020 (T) are interest-bearing, taxable, non-tradeable bonds, issued by the **central government**, which are repayable on the expiration of **seven years** from the date of issue. RBI officially pays 35 basis points above the NSC (National Savings Certificate) rate, offering an **8.05%** interest rate.

The interest on the bonds will be payable at **half-yearly intervals** on January 1<sup>st</sup> and July 1<sup>st</sup> every year.

There is no option to pay interest on a cumulative basis.

**276.** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has announced the results of 2nd edition of its global hackathon - **"HARBINGER 2023 – Innovation for Transformation"** with the theme **"Inclusive Digital Services"**.

For the problem statement 'Innovative, easy-to-use, digital banking services for differently abled (Divyaang)', **Ezetap Mobile Solutions Pvt Ltd** (Now acquired by Razorpay), India, is the winner, with a solution DrishtiPay that facilitates effortless Card/UPI payments for the visually challenged.

For the problem statement 'RegTech solutions to facilitate more efficient compliance for Regulated Entities (REs)', the winner is **WeavAir, Singapore** which provides efficient data collection and analytics to facilitate compliance by regulated entities, facilitating financial institutions to improve their regulatory reporting and risk management.

For the problem statement 'Exploring use cases/solutions for CBDC-R transactions, including transactions in offline mode', the winner is **Dygnify Ventures Pvt. Ltd**, India whose mobile application runs on encrypted SMS rails for CBDC-retail transactions without needing internet.

The winners have been awarded with the cash prize of Rs.40 lakh.

- 277.** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has directed **CICs (Credit Information Companies)** and Credit Institutions (CIs) to introduce a **compensation framework** for delay in updating or rectification of credit information of borrower.

CIs and CICs have been given six months to put in place the necessary systems and processes to implement the 'Framework for compensation to customers for delayed updation/rectification of credit information'.

As per the framework, a CIC shall pay compensation of **Rs.100** per calendar day to the complainant if the complaint could not be resolved within a period of **30 days** from the date of the initial filing of the complaint by the complainant with a CI/ CIC.

The complainant can approach the RBI Ombudsman in case of wrongful denial of compensation by CIs or CICs.

**Credit Information Companies (CICs):**

CICs maintain credit information of borrowers which can be accessed by banks and other lenders. They collect information from banks, credit card companies and non-bank financial institutions. The lending institutions refer to CICs credit report to decide borrowers' creditworthiness.

CICs are licensed by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

Credit Information Bureau (India) Limited (CIBIL), Equifax, Experian, and CRIF Highmark are some of the major credit information companies in India.

- 278.** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has cancelled the **Certificate of Registration (CoR)** of Tamil Nadu-based **Ind Bank Housing Limited**, a Housing Finance Company (HFC) with effect from 21<sup>st</sup> September 2023.

This decision has been taken by RBI in exercise of its powers conferred on it under **Section 29A (6)** of the National Housing Bank (NHB) Act 1987.

With this, Ind Bank Housing Limited cannot transact the business of Housing Finance Institution and a Non-Banking Financial Institution (NBFC) as defined in NHB Act, 1987 and RBI Act 1934, respectively.

- 279.** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed a monetary penalty of **Rs.5.39 crore** on **Paytm Payments Bank** for non-compliance with certain provisions of the RBI's Know Your Customer (KYC) Directions, 2016.



RBI has also found non-compliance with certain provisions related to 'RBI Guidelines for Licensing of Payments Banks', 'Cyber security framework in banks' and 'Securing mobile banking applications including UPI ecosystem'.

This decision has been taken by RBI in exercise of its powers conferred on it under Section 47A (1) (c) read with Section 46 (4) (i) of the Banking Regulation (BR) Act 1949.

This penalty will not affect any transaction or agreement entered into by the bank with its customers.

**280.** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has proposed the introduction of **Card-On-File Tokenisation (CoFT)** facility at **the issuer-bank level**. This means that credit/debit card users will be able to generate card tokens on their bank's website or app.

At present, a CoFT token can only be created through merchant's application or webpage. The new step aims to eliminate the duplication of tokenization process at each app along with increased transaction security, resulting in reduced card-data-related frauds.

CoFT was launched by RBI in 2021 and is being implemented from **1<sup>st</sup> October 2022**.

**Card Tokenisation:**

It is a data security measure that involves substituting a customer's credit card details with a non-sensitive equivalent, known as a token. It replaces the 16-digit credit or debit card number with a unique token. It allows secure online purchases without exposing sensitive details like card number, card verification value (CVV), etc.

Tokenisation is predominantly used in card transactions to enhance security by preventing hackers from accessing sensitive card details.

**281.** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed a penalty of **Rs.12.19 crore** on **ICICI Bank** and **Rs.3.95 crore** on **Kotak Mahindra Bank** for non-compliance of certain regulatory norms.

The penalty on **ICICI Bank** has been imposed for contravention of norms related to 'Loans and Advances-Statutory and Other restrictions' and 'Frauds classification and reporting by commercial banks and select FIs'.

The penalty on **Kotak Mahindra Bank** has been imposed for contravention of directions related to "Managing Risks and Code of Conduct in Outsourcing of Financial Services by banks", "Recovery Agents engaged by Banks", "Customer Service in Banks", and "Loans and Advances – Statutory and Other Restrictions".

This penalty has been imposed in exercise of powers vested in RBI conferred under the provisions of Section 47A (1)(c) read with Sections 46 (4)(i) of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949.

**282.** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has launched a **pilot program** for the wholesale segment of its Central Bank Digital Currency (**CBDC**) in the interbank **call money market**.

The nine banks, including **four public sector banks** and **five private sector banks**, are participating in the e-rupee call money pilot program.

The operational process for the e-rupee pilot remains the same, except for the settlement, which will now be carried out using the CBDC instead of the real-time gross settlement (RTGS) used in trades on the Clearing Corp of India Limited (CCIL).

The settlements will be in T+0 mode, indicating that trades will be settled on the same day. State Bank of India, Bank of Baroda, Union Bank of India, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Yes Bank, IDFC First Bank and HSBC were part of the wholesale CBDC in government securities pilot program.

Most participating banks remain the same from the wholesale e-rupee pilot for the government securities market with Federal Bank replacing HSBC in the call money pilot.

### **Additional Information:**

The introduction of CBDC was announced in the **Union Budget 2022-23** by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

The RBI rolled out a pilot in the retail version of the CBDC on **December 1, 2022**, and the wholesale version of the CBDC on **November 1, 2022**, to settle secondary market transactions in government securities.

The e-rupee is in the form of a digital token that represents legal tender.

The e-rupee in wholesale and retail circulation stood at **Rs.16.39 crore** at the end of **2022-23**, according to the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Handbook of Statistics on the Indian Economy 2022-23.

The denomination of the e-rupee most in circulation is Rs.500, followed by Rs.200 and Rs.100, data showed.

**283.** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed monetary penalties on RBL Bank, Union Bank, and Bajaj Finance due to violation of certain norms in October 2023.

**RBL Bank** has been fined **Rs.64,00,000** for its failure to obtain an annual declaration in Form B from one of its major shareholders within the stipulated time frame of one month after the close of the financial years ending on March 31, 2018, March 31, 2019, and March 31, 2020. The bank has also neglected to provide certificates to RBI confirming the 'fit and proper' status of one of its major shareholders by the end of September in these respective financial years.

**Union Bank of India** has incurred a penalty of **Rs.1 crore** for its failure to comply with specific directions. The bank had sanctioned a term loan to a corporation without conducting necessary due diligence on the viability and bankability of the projects.

**Bajaj Finance** has been imposed a penalty of **Rs.8,50,000** due to the company's non-compliance with the 'Monitoring of Frauds in NBFCs Directions, 2016,' a set of guidelines issued by the RBI.

**284.** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has approved the merger of **North-East Small Finance Bank** and Bengaluru-based fintech credit and payments start-up **Slice**.

Following the merger, Slice will become the **first fintech company** to transform into a Small Finance Bank (SFB).

All Slice entities, including its NBFC licence, will be merged with the combined banking entity.

The merger will be effective only after the final approval from the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT).

**285.** The **Reserve Bank Innovation Hub (RBIH)**, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), and **Digital India Bhashini Division (DIBD)** have collaborated to explore and develop innovative solutions that foster linguistic inclusivity in the financial services sector.

The aim is to make financial services more accessible and user-friendly for everyone, regardless of the language they speak.

Under this collaboration, Bhashini has planned to launch RBI's **Public Tech Platform** for frictionless credit in multiple languages.

Digital India Bhashini Division is a Division under Digital India Corporation, section 8 Company under Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).

**286.** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has announced its **4th bi-monthly monetary policy**. The RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das-led Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meeting on 4-6 October 2023 and has decided to keep the rates unchanged.

MPC has also decided to remain focused on withdrawal of accommodation to ensure that inflation progressively aligns to the target, while supporting growth.

The decisions made align with the goal of achieving a medium-term target for the consumer price index (CPI) inflation rate, which is 4% with a band of +/- 2 percent.

The target for **FY24 GDP growth** has remained at **6.5%**.

During the meeting, RBI has announced to double the gold loan limit under bullet payment scheme for Urban Cooperative Banks (UCBs).

Policy rates as of October 2023	
<b>Repo rate</b>	6.50%
<b>Reverse Repo Rate</b>	3.35%
<b>Marginal Standing Facility (MSF) Rate</b>	6.75%
<b>Standing Deposit Facility (SDF) Rate</b>	6.25%
<b>Bank Rate</b>	6.75%
Reserves Ratio as of October 2023	
<b>Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR)</b>	4.50%
<b>Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR)</b>	18%

**Note:** The next meeting of the RBI Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) is scheduled to be held during December 6-8, 2023.

#### **Additional Information:**

**Monetary Policy Committee** is a **statutory body** under the **Reserve Bank of India Act 1934**. It is headed by the **RBI Governor** including **5 members** (2 officials of the RBI and 3 external members nominated by the Government of India). It meets **4 times** in a year.

Current Monetary Policy Committee structure is:

- **Shaktikanta Das:** RBI Governor as a Head

- **Other members:** Dr. Shashanka Bhide, Dr. Ashima Goyal, Prof. Jayanth R. Varma, Dr. Rajiv Ranjan, and Dr. Michael Debabrata Patra.

**287.** The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has appointed **Muneesh Kapur** as the new **Executive Director (ED)** with effect from October 3, 2023. As Executive Director, he will look after the Department of Economic and Policy Research.

Earlier, he served as the Adviser-in-Charge, Monetary Policy Department and Secretary to the Monetary Policy Committee.

He also served as Adviser to Executive Director, International Monetary Fund during 2012-15.

**288.** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has formed an external **Working Group (WG)** on the **Expected Credit Loss (ECL)** framework for loan loss provisioning.

The Working Group will be chaired by **Prof. R. Narayanaswamy**, former Professor, IIM Bangalore and shall consist of domain experts from academia and industry as well as representatives from select banks as given below:

- Prof. Sanjay Kallapur, ISB, Hyderabad
- Shri Rajosik Banerjee, KPMG
- Shri S Srinivasa Rao, SBI
- Shri Rajendra Khandelwal, ICICI Bank
- Shri Susanta Baishya, HDFC Bank
- Shri Adish Yadav, Canara Bank
- Shri Pravinkumar Taparia, Saraswat Co-operative Bank
- Shri Sridharan N, Equitas Small Finance Bank

This group aims to obtain independent insights on the intricate details related to the substantial shift involved.

The group's mandate includes outlining the principles banks must follow when creating credit risk models for evaluating and quantifying expected credit losses.

They are tasked with proposing the elements banks need to address when determining credit risks, drawing from guidelines in IFRS 9 and principles established by the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision.

The group will advise on the methodology for independent external validation of these models and based on thorough data analysis, will propose prudential floors for provisioning.

**Expected Credit Loss (ECL):**

Under this practice, a bank is required to estimate expected credit losses based on forward-looking estimations rather than wait for credit losses to be actually incurred before making corresponding loss provisions.

As per the proposed framework, banks will need to classify financial assets (primarily loans) as Stage 1, 2, or 3, depending on their credit risk profile, with Stage 2 and 3 loans having higher provisions based on the historical credit loss patterns observed by banks.

**289.** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in exercise of its power, under **Section 35A** of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949, has directed **Bank of Baroda (BoB)** to suspend, with immediate effect, any further onboarding of their customers onto the '**bob World**' mobile application.

The action on the bank is based on certain material supervisory concerns observed in the manner of onboarding of their customers onto this mobile application.

Any further onboarding of customers of the bank on the "bob World" application will be subject to rectification of the deficiencies observed and strengthening of the related processes by the bank to the satisfaction of RBI.

**290.** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has decided to extend the '**Prompt Corrective Action (PCA)**' framework for non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) to **government NBFCs** (except those in base layer) with effect from **1st October 2024**.

This will be based on the audited financials of these NBFCs as on **31<sup>st</sup> March 2024**, or thereafter.

Some of the major government non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) include Power Finance Corporation (**PFC**), REC Limited, Indian Railway Finance Corporation (**IRFC**) and Industrial Finance Corporation of India (**IFCI**).

**Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) framework:**

The PCA Framework for non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) was introduced on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2021.

**Objective:** To enable supervisory intervention at the appropriate time and requires the supervised entities to initiate and implement remedial measures in a timely manner so as to restore their financial health.

The corrective actions include:

- Restriction on dividend distribution/remittance of profit;
- Restriction on branch expansion;
- Discretionary actions related to governance, capital, profitability and business.

**NBFCs layers:**

The **Base layer** is categorised as those non-deposit-taking NBFCs, **below the asset size of Rs.1000 crore**.

The Middle layer comprises all deposit-taking NBFCs and non-deposit-taking NBFCs with assets exceeding Rs.1,000 crore.

The Upper layer includes NBFCs specifically identified by the RBI as warranting enhanced regulatory requirements based on a set of parameters and scoring methodology. The top 10 eligible NBFCs in terms of asset size will always reside in the upper layer, regardless of other factors.



The Top layer should ideally remain empty but could be populated if RBI perceives a substantial increase in potential systemic risk from specific NBFCs in the upper layer.

**291.** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has appointed **K N Madhusoodanan** as the Part-Time Chairman of **Dhanlaxmi Bank** for a period of 3 years with effect from 26<sup>th</sup> September 2023. He has been an Independent Director on the Board of the Bank with effect from 9<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

He has succeeded G Subramonia Iyer who resigned in December 2021.

**292.** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has issued the *RBI (Prudential Regulations on Basel III Capital Framework, Exposure Norms, Significant Investments, Classification, Valuation and Operation of Investment Portfolio Norms and Resource Raising Norms for All India Financial Institutions) Directions, 2023*.

These newly issued directions will come into effect on **1<sup>st</sup> April 2024**.

These guidelines will be applicable to the five All India Financial Institutions (AIFIs) viz.

- Export-Import Bank of India (**EXIM**) Bank
- National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (**NABARD**)
- National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development (**NABFID**)
- National Housing Bank (**NHB**)
- Small Industries Development Bank of India (**SIDBI**)

These new directives enforce Basel III standards and regulations for AIFIs, covering capital, exposure, investments, valuation, and resource raising norms.

## **RBI Assistant Free Mock Test**

### **AWARDS & RECOGNITION**

**293.** **Narges Mohammadi**, jailed Iranian women's rights campaigner and the 2023 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, has been conferred with the **19<sup>th</sup> Mother Teresa Memorial Award for Social Justice (2023)** by the Harmony Foundation, a Mumbai (Maharashtra)-based non-governmental organization (NGO).

The award ceremony is scheduled to take place on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2023 in Mumbai, Maharashtra.

**Note:** Harmony Foundation hosts the Mother Teresa Memorial Awards for Social Justice. This is a platform to acknowledge and recognize the extraordinary work of individuals or organizations who aim to promote peace, harmony and social justice. It was instituted in 2005.

**294.** The **Udhampur Military Station** in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir has bagged the '**Best Green Military Station**' award. The award has been presented by Army Chief Gen Manoj Pande at the Army Commanders' Conference (ACC) 2023 held from 16<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> October 2023 in New Delhi.

The award recognises the station's environmental efforts and highlights the commitment of the Indian Army to strive for excellence.

**Dehradun Military Station** has secured the "Second Best" award while **Bikaner Military Station** has been awarded with "Best Transformative Station" award.

The '**671 Army Aviation Squadron (R&O)**' has been awarded with the 'COAS Flight Safety Trophy' for the year 2022-23.

**Army Commanders' Conference 2023:**

ACC 2023 is the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of the conference. It is an apex-level biannual event. It is an institutional platform for deliberations at the conceptual level, facilitating important policy decisions for the Indian Army.

**295.** **Dhordo**, a village located in the Kutch district of **Gujarat**, has been honoured with the **Best Tourism Village 2023** title by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (**UNWTO**).

- Dhordo has received this title at the Best Tourism Village - 2023 award ceremony organised by the UNWTO at the historic city of Samarkand in Uzbekistan.
- This award is given to villages that are doing exceptional work in terms of rural development, maintenance of the original landscape, cultural heritage and diversity, local values and food traditions.
- Dhordo is well-known for being the gateway to the Great Rann of Kutch. This is also the same village where Rann Utsav was launched back in 2005.
- This year, Rann Utsav is scheduled to start on Nov 10, 2023, and it will go on till Feb 25, 2024.

**296.** **Madla village** from **Madhya Pradesh's** Panna district has been selected for the UNWTO's Best Tourism Villages **Upgrade Programme**.

The UNWTO, in this third edition, selected 54 villages from a pool of nearly 260 nearly 260 applications. An additional 20 villages have joined the Upgrade Programme, with all 74 villages now forming part of the UNWTO Best Tourism Villages Network.

**297.** The Chief Justice of India (CJI) **D Y Chandrachud** has been felicitated with the **2022 'Award for Global Leadership'** by the Center on the Legal Profession, Harvard Law School, the USA.

He has been recognized for his lifetime service to the legal profession in India and around the world.

D Y Chandrachud was appointed as 50<sup>th</sup> CJI in 2022 with a tenure of 2 years (till November 2024).

**Note:** Dana Remus who is the former White House Counsel is announced as the recipient of the 'Award for Global Leadership' for the year 2023.

**298.** The **Department of Pension and Pensioners' Welfare (DoPPW)** has hosted the **Anubhav Awards 2023** ceremony in Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi to felicitate the awardees for their write-ups for the year 2023.

**Dr Jitendra Singh**, Union Minister for Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions, has presented the awards to **4 individuals** from 8 different ministries, departments, and organizations and **9 jury certificates** have been awarded for the first time to foster broader participation.

The awards recipients have received medals, certificates, and a cash prize of Rs.10,000.

On the occasion, Dr Jitendra Singh has launched the National Digital Life Certificates (DLC) Portal for Nation-wide DLC Campaign 2.0, Integrated Pensioners' Portals with Punjab National Bank (PNB) and Bank of Baroda and unveiled a Compendium of clarifications/ case studies.

He has also chaired the All-India Pension Adalat.

**Anubhav Portal:**

DoPPW had launched Anubhav Portal in March 2015. The portal provides an online system for the retiring/retired employees to submit and showcase their commendable work done; to share their experiences of working in the Government and to give suggestions for improvement in governance.

**299.** President of USA **Joe Biden** has honoured the 21 innovators, including 2 Indian American scientists: **Dr Ashok Gadgil and Dr Subra Suresh**, with the National Medals in the fields of science and technology.

- Dr Subra Suresh, Professor Emeritus and former dean of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, has been honoured with the **National Medal of Science**.
- Dr Ashok Gadgil, a professor at the University of California, Berkeley and a senior scientist of the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, has been honoured with the **National Medal for Technology and Innovation**.

The National Medal of Science, established in 1959, is an honour bestowed by the President of the **United States** to individuals in science and engineering who have made important contributions to the advancement of knowledge in the fields of behavioral and social sciences, biology, chemistry, engineering, mathematics and physics.

The National Medal of Technology and Innovation, instituted in 1985, is an honour granted by the President of the **United States** to American inventors and innovators who have made significant contributions to the development of new and important technology.

**300. UST**, a digital transformation solutions company, has won the '**Mahatma Awards 2023 for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Excellence in the Community Initiative**' category.

UST has been recognized for sustainable and impactful contributions to CSR in areas such as education, health, livelihood, environment, and disaster relief.

'Adopt-a-School' programme, a CSR initiative by UST, has impacted over 32,000 students in India and Mexico.

UST supports over 104 schools, promoting accessible, quality education for all. Its initiatives include medical support for those with disabilities and habitat restoration projects in Kerala.

**Mahatma Award:**

Mahatma Award is founded by Amit Sachdeva, also known as CSR man of India, in 2017 as his tribute to Mahatma Gandhi and to spread his message of selfless services, peace and love across the world. 'Mahatma Award' honor and acknowledge and inspire social impact leaders, activists and change makers across the world.

**Presented by:** Aditya Birla Group

**301. General Manoj Pande**, the Chief of Army Staff, has presented the prestigious '**President's Colours**' to the **Third Battalion** of the **Naga Regiment** during the Colour presentation parade held at Kumaon Regimental Centre, Ranikhet in Uttarakhand.

The President's Colour has been received by Col Lalit Chandra Kandpal, the Commanding Officer of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion of the Naga Regiment.

The Naga Regiment's 3<sup>rd</sup> battalion was created on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2009 in Haldwani, situated in the Kumaon Hills, which were home to the Kumaon and Naga regiments.

The first battalion of Naga Regiment was raised in Ranikhet in **1970**.

**President's Colour:**

It is also called 'Nishan'. It is the highest honour that can be bestowed upon any military unit of India. It is an emblem that is worn by all unit officers on the left-hand sleeve of their uniform.

Indian Navy was the first Indian Armed Force, to be awarded the President's Colour by then President Dr Rajendra Prasad on 27<sup>th</sup> May 1951.

**302. Guidance**, the nodal agency for investment promotion under the Department of Industries, Investment Promotion and Commerce, government of **Tamil Nadu**, has received the **United**

**Nations Promotion Award 2023** for excellence in scaling up energy transition investments at the 8th World Investment Forum held at Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates (UAE).

Guidance is South Asia's only Investment Promotion Agency to get the U.N. Award in 2023. The award has been given for facilitating the First Solar investment project with a fully vertical integrated photovoltaic thin film solar module manufacturing facility, notably through green incentives and higher training incentives for women. This project will facilitate access to low-cost solar panels and contribute to more sustainable cities in India.

**World Investment Forum:**

The biennial World Investment Forum is organised by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) since 2008. It monitors the mainstreaming of sustainable development goals by Investment Promotion Agencies and conducts regular surveys.

- 303.** American actor and producer **Michael Douglas** will be bestowed with the **Satyajit Ray Lifetime Achievement Award** at the **54th International Film Festival of India (IFFI)** to be held in **Goa** from 20<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> November 2023.

Michael Douglas is best known for his roles in "Wall Street (1987)", "Basic Instinct (1992)", "Falling Down (1993)", "The American President (1995)", "Traffic (2000)" and "Behind the Candelabra (2013)."

He has also produced a number of critically acclaimed films, such as "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest (1975)", "The China Syndrome (1979)", and "The Game (1999)".

He was awarded the honorary Palm D'Or at the Cannes Film Festival in 2023.

**Note:** The Satyajit Ray Lifetime Achievement Award, instituted in the 30th International Film Festival of India (IFFI) in 1999, is presented to individuals whose exceptional contributions have significantly enriched and elevated the world of cinema.

- 304.** The **Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel 2023** (Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences) has been awarded to **Claudia Goldin (USA)**, a professor of Economics at Harvard University, for having advanced our understanding of **women's labour market outcomes**.

She has provided the first comprehensive account of women's earnings and labour market participation through the centuries. Her research revealed the causes of change and the main sources of the remaining gender gap.

The prize will be awarded on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2023, the death anniversary of Alfred Nobel.

The prize includes a gold-plated green gold medal, a diploma, and a monetary award of

**Swedish kronor (SEK) 11.0 million** (\$986,000).



Notably, the Nobel Foundation has raised the Nobel Prize amount for 2023 by extra 1 million SEK i.e. from 10 million SEK to 11 million SEK.

**Additional Information:**

The Nobel Prize was first awarded in **1901**. It is named after Swedish inventor **Alfred Nobel**. It is awarded annually to individuals or organizations who do exceptional work in the fields of physics, chemistry, literature, peace, physiology or medicine and economics. Economics award wasn't created by Nobel Foundation, but by Sweden's central bank in 1968.

**305.** The **Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Ltd (MRPL)** has won the 'Best Innovation in Refinery' award presented by the Union Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas.

MRPL has secured the award for 2022-23 for the second consecutive year. The award has been presented to a team led by the Managing Director of MRPL, Sanjay Varma, during the Energy Technology Meet 2023 held in New Delhi.

**Additional Information:**

Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Limited (MRPL) is Category 1 schedule 'A' Miniratna, Central Public Sector Enterprise (CPSE) under the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas. It is located in Mangaluru city, in Dakshina Kannada district of Karnataka. It is a subsidiary of Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC).

**306. NTPC Limited** has been recognized as one of the **"World's Best Employers 2023"** in the Forbes World's Best Employers list 2023 released on 10th October 2023.

NTPC has been ranked **261st** out of top 700 companies in the World ranking and is the **only Indian Public Sector Undertaking (PSU)** to figure in the list.

This recognises NTPC's progressive and "People before PLF (Plant Load Factor)" approach, excellence in development and management of its Human Resources through continuous process improvement, creating a caring, learning and engaging workplace, employee well-being and care and creating a meaningful, collaborative employee experience by putting the needs of employees first and adopting people practices aligned strategically to business needs.

Forbes has partnered with market research firm Statista to create the 7th annual list of the World's Best Employers in 2023.

**307.** The **2023 Nobel Prize in Physics** has been awarded to **Pierre Agostini (USA), Ferenc Krausz (Hungary), and Anne L'Huillier (France)** for their experimental methods that generate attosecond pulses of light for the study of electro dynamics in matter.

They have demonstrated a way to create extremely short pulses of light that can be used to measure the rapid processes in which electrons move or change energy.

These brief pulses of light can be used to provide images of what occurs inside atoms and molecules.

**Note:** An attosecond is a unit of time in the International System of Units (SI) equal to  $1 \times 10^{-18}$  of a second (one quintillionth of a second). It is so short that there are as many in one second as there have been seconds since the birth of the universe.

The prize will be awarded on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2023, the death anniversary of Alfred Nobel. The prize includes a gold-plated green gold medal, a diploma, and a monetary award of **Swedish kronor (SEK) 11.0 million** (\$986,000).

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**308.** The **2023 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine** has been awarded to Hungarian scientist **Katalin Kariko** and U.S. scientist **Drew Weissman** for their discoveries concerning nucleoside base modifications that enabled the development of effective mRNA vaccines against COVID-19.

COVID-19 vaccines made by Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna are built on mRNA research. Messenger RNA (mRNA) is a molecule that carries instructions to a cell for making proteins. Once the protein is synthesised, immune system escalates a response against it. In Covid-19 vaccines, protein being synthesised is Sars-CoV-2's spike.

The prize will be awarded on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2023, the anniversary of Alfred Nobel's death. The prize includes a gold-plated green gold medal, a diploma, and a monetary award of **Swedish kronor (SEK) 11.0 million** (\$986,000).

Notably, the Nobel Foundation has raised the Nobel Prize amount for 2023 by extra 1 million SEK i.e., from 10 million SEK to 11 million SEK.

**309.** The **Nobel Prize in Literature 2023** has been awarded to **Jon Fosse (Norway)** for his innovative plays and prose which give voice to the unsayable. He has been honoured for his body of work written in Norwegian Nynorsk (Norwegian language) including several plays, novels, poetry collections, essays, children's books and translations.

The Nobel Prize in Literature has been awarded 116 times to 120 Nobel laureates between 1901 and 2023.

The prize will be awarded on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2023, the death anniversary of Alfred Nobel. The prize includes a gold-plated green gold medal, a diploma, and a monetary award of **Swedish kronor (SEK) 11.0 million** (\$986,000).

Notably, the Nobel Foundation has raised the Nobel Prize amount for 2023 by extra 1 million SEK i.e. from 10 million SEK to 11 million SEK.

**310.** The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences has decided to award the Nobel Prize in Chemistry 2023 to **Moungi G. Bawendi (USA), Louis E. Brus (USA) and Alexei I. Ekimov (USA)** for the discovery and development of **quantum dots**, nanoparticles so tiny that their size determines their properties.

These smallest components of nanotechnology now spread their light from televisions and LED lamps and can also guide surgeons when they remove tumour tissue, among many other things.

Quantum dots are tiny particles or nanocrystals of a semiconducting material with diameters in the range of 2-10 nanometers (10-50 atoms).

The prize will be awarded on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2023, the death anniversary of Alfred Nobel.

The prize includes a gold-plated green gold medal, a diploma, and a monetary award of

**Swedish kronor (SEK) 11.0 million** (\$986,000).

Notably, the Nobel Foundation has raised the Nobel Prize amount for 2023 by extra 1 million SEK i.e., from 10 million SEK to 11 million SEK.

**311.** The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences has decided to award the **Nobel Peace Prize for 2023** to **Narges Mohammadi**, an Iranian human rights activist, and scientist, for her fight against the oppression of women in Iran and her fight to promote human rights and freedom for all.

She protested in Iran against the killing of a young woman named Mahsa Amini while she was in the custody of Iran's morality police. The protests' motto, '*Zan – Zendegi – Azadi* (*Woman – Life – Freedom*)', suitably expresses the dedication and work of Narges Mohammadi.

She is the **second Iranian woman** to be awarded the Nobel Prize after Shirin Ebadi (2003).

She has also been awarded other prominent prizes in the West for her work, such as the 2023 PEN/Barbey Freedom to Write Award in May 2023 and the 2023 UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize.

Her book '**White Torture**' was published in 2022.

The Nobel Prize will be awarded on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2023, the death anniversary of Alfred Nobel.

The prize includes a gold-plated green gold medal, a diploma, and a monetary award of

**Swedish kronor (SEK) 11.0 million** (\$986,000).

Notably, the Nobel Foundation has raised the Nobel Prize amount for 2023 by extra 1 million SEK i.e., from 10 million SEK to 11 million SEK.

**312.** Mathematician **Ruixiang Zhang (China)**, an Assistant Professor at the University of California, Berkeley, USA, has been chosen as the recipient of the **2023 SASTRA Ramanujan Prize** for his outstanding contributions in mathematics from analytic number theory, combinatorics, and Euclidean Harmonic Analysis to geometry.

The annual cash prize of **USD 10,000** will be given at an international conference in Number Theory during 20-22 December 2023 at SASTRA University in Kumbakonam (birthplace of mathematician Srinivasa Ramanujan) of Thanjavur district, Tamil Nadu.

**SASTRA Ramanujan Prize:**

The award is instituted by the Shanmugha Arts, Science, Technology & Research Academy (SASTRA) in 2005. The award includes a cash prize of USD 10,000. The age limit for the prize has been set at 32 influenced by Ramanujan's achievements in his brief life of 32 years.

- 313.** Tamil writer **Ambai**, born as **C.S. Lakshmi** in Coimbatore, has been awarded the **Tata Literature Lifetime Achievement Award 2023**. She has made remarkable contributions to Tamil fiction, particularly in the short story genre.

*'Ambai' is the pen name of C.S. Lakshmi.*

She won the **Sahitya Akademi award** for her short story collection *Sivappu Kazhutthudan Oru Patchaiparavai (A Red-Necked Green Bird)* in 2021.

Her debut short story collection, *Sirakukal Muriyum*, was released in 1976.

- 314.** The President of India, **Droupadi Murmu**, has presented the **National Service Scheme (NSS) Awards** for the year **2021-2022** at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi.

The award has been given to **52 persons** to recognize their outstanding contributions towards voluntary community social services.

**NSS Awards:**

The awards, instituted by the Union Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, are presented every year to recognize their voluntary service. It was instituted during 1992-93.

The awards included 3 categories namely Universities/+2 Councils; NSS units and their Programme Officers; and NSS Volunteers.

**National Service Scheme (NSS):**

The National Service Scheme (NSS) is a Central Sector Scheme of Government of India, Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports. It was launched in 1969. It provides opportunity to the student youth of 11th & 12th Class of schools at +2 Board level and student youth of Technical Institution, Graduate & Postgraduate at colleges and University level of India to take part in various government led community service activities & programmes.

The motto of National Service Scheme is 'NOT ME BUT YOU'

- 315.** The Directorate of Rural Sanitation, Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir, has nominated country's highest gallantry awardee, the Param Vir Chakra recipient, **Captain Bana Singh**, a dedicated and decorated former soldier, as the ambassador for the **"War Against Waste"** initiative in **Jammu & Kashmir**.

The "War Against Waste" initiative aims to address the pressing issues of waste management and environmental conservation in rural Jammu & Kashmir.

**Captain Bana Singh:**

- He served in the 8<sup>th</sup> J&K Light Infantry (JAK LI).

- He led the team that wrested control of the highest peak on the Siachen Glacier in Kashmir from Pakistani forces as part of Operation Rajiv in 1987. The recaptured post was renamed as the 'Bana Top' in his honour.
- He was awarded India's highest wartime gallantry medal "Param Vir Chakra" in 1988.

**316. Sudha Murty**, the renowned author, philanthropist, and wife of Infosys co-founder NR Narayana Murthy, has become the **first woman** to be honoured with the **Global Indian Award** by the Canada India Foundation (CIF).

She has been honoured at Indo-Canadian gala event held in Toronto, Canada. The award is presented to her by Indian High Commissioner to Canada Sanjay Kumar Verma. **CIF Global Indian Award:**

The CIF Global Indian Award is the most prestigious Indo-Canadian award given to an outstanding individual who has helped India become a global economic and political power. The award winner receives USD 50,000 to donate to a charity of their choice.

## **RBI Assistant Free Mock Test**

### **BOOKS & AUTHORS**

**317.** Union Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas, Hardeep Singh Puri, has launched a new book titled ***'The Reverse Swing: Colonialism to Cooperation'*** authored by **Ashok Tandon**, a veteran journalist and political commentator.

The book is published by **Prabhat Prakashan**.

The book features stories on the relationship between India and the United Kingdom (UK), India's colonial past and its resurgence and the current journey through the Amrit Kaal.

**318.** The book titled ***"The Lords of Wankhede: Tales Between Two Titles"*** has been co-authored by former Indian cricketer **W.V. Raman** and senior journalist **R. Kaushik**. The book has been launched in Bengaluru, Karnataka.

**Published by:** Rupa Publications.

The book explains the changes that occurred in Indian cricket between 1983 and 2023, and reflects on the events that influenced the growth of cricket in India.

**319. Raghuram Rajan**, former Governor of the Reserve Bank of India, and Economist **Rohit Lamba** have authored a new book titled ***"Breaking the Mould: Reimagining India's Economic Future."***

The book is published by Penguin Business and will be released in December 2023.



The book examines crucial policy choices relevant to every Indian, offering valuable insights on economic development.

- 320.** Tamil Nadu IT Minister Palanivel Thiaga Rajan has released a book on ChatGPT for the use of professionals in various fields. The book titled ***"The Professionals Handbook to ChatGPT"*** is authored by **Pattabhi Ram V and Dungar Chand U Jain**.

The book covers 27 work areas and is a handy tool for finance professionals. It is published by ReadWrite Productions.

#### **ChatGPT:**

It is an artificial intelligence-powered language model. It is developed by the USA-based Open AI. It was launched in November 2022. It uses natural language processing to create humanlike conversational dialogues.

- 321. BlueKraft Digital Foundation** has launched a book on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's monthly radio programme Mann ki Baat. The book has been titled ***'Igniting Collective Goodness: Mann Ki Baat @ 100'***.

This is the third book in the series, all of which capture the journey to a distinct milestone of Mann Ki Baat.

The first book was published following the culmination of 26 episodes and was released in May 2017 by the then-President of India.

The book is published by **Westland Publications Limited**.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Mann Ki Baat, a popular program on All India Radio, was started on October 3, 2014. The 30-minute program completed 100 episodes on April 30, 2023.

- 322.** Noted author and activist **Sivasankari** has been presented with the prestigious **Saraswati Samman** for the year 2022 for her memoir written in Tamil, ***'Surya Vamsam'***, at the National Museum in Delhi.

She is the **32nd recipient** of Saraswati Samman.

Her 2019 memoir, Surya Vamsam, unfolds in two volumes: the first is the metamorphosis from a child to a young writer, and the second is the life and times of an acclaimed author spreading her wings.

#### **Saraswati Samman:**

The Saraswati Samman, given annually for outstanding literary works in 22 Indian languages in the last 10 years, is among the highest recognitions in the field of Indian literature. It was instituted by the KK Birla Foundation in 1991. It carries a plaque, a citation, and a cash prize of Rs.15 lakh.

The first Saraswati Samman was given to **Harivanshrai Bachchan** for his four volume autobiography, '*Kya Bhooloon Kya Yaad Karoon, Needa Ka Nirman Phir, Basere Se Door and Dashdwar se Sopan Tak.*'

## RBI Assistant Free Mock Test

### PERSON IN NEWS

**323. Sanjay Kumar Jain**, an officer of the Indian Railway Traffic Service (IRTS) of the 1990 batch, has been appointed as the next Chairman & Managing Director (**CMD**) of the **Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC)**.

He currently holds the position of Principal Chief Commercial Manager (PCCM) in the Northern Railway.

The CMD position at IRCTC had remained vacant since January 2021, following the retirement of Mahendra Pratap Maal.

Presently, Seema Kumar has been serving as the Acting CMD of IRCTC.

**324.** HP has appointed former Apple executive **Ipsita Dasgupta** as Senior Vice President (SVP) and Managing Director (MD) of HP's India market with effect from 30<sup>th</sup> October 2023. She will succeed Gurpreet Singh Brar.

She will report to David McQuarrie, HP chief commercial officer.

She will be responsible for all the aspects of HP's strategy and Profit & Loss (P&L) in India, Bangladesh, & Sri Lanka.

**325. Mahendra Singh Dhoni** (MS Dhoni), former captain of the Indian Cricket team, has been named the brand ambassador of PepsiCo India's potato chips brand **Lay's**. He will feature on the 'No Lay's, No Game' campaign of Lay's and promote the match-viewing experience with Lay's chips.

**326.** The tenure of **Amitava Mukherjee** as the Chairman-cum-Managing Director (CMD) of NMDC Limited has been extended from 20th November 2023 up to **19<sup>th</sup> November 2024** or till the appointment of a regular incumbent or until further orders.

He is the Director (Finance) of NMDC who has been holding additional charge as the CMD since March 2023.

This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> extension given to him on his additional charge. Earlier, the government extended his tenure in July 2023 till 19<sup>th</sup> November 2023.

**327.** South Korea-based Mirae Asset Financial Group has appointed **Swarup Anand Mohanty** as the **Vice Chairman** of Mirae Asset Investment Managers (India) Private Limited (**Mirae AMC**) with effect from 24<sup>th</sup> October 2023.

Prior to the appointment, he was serving as the Director and Key Personnel of AMC. He has been serving as the CEO of the AMC since 2016.

With this, he has become the **first non-Korean person** to be appointed as the VC within Mirae Asset Financial Group.

His Royal Highness (HRH) **Sultan Ibrahim Sultan Iskandar**, the Ruler of the southern Malaysian state of Johor, has been appointed as the **17<sup>th</sup> King of Malaysia**, also known as Yang di-Pertuan Agong (YDPA) XVII, for a term of 5 years, which will begin on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2024.

He will replace incumbent Sovereign Al-Sultan Abdullah ibni Sultan Ahmad Shah, Ruler of Pahang state, who has been serving as the 16<sup>th</sup> King since 2019. His tenure is set to end on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

**328. Robert Fico** has been elected as the new **Prime Minister of Slovakia**. He will succeed Ludovit Odor who has been serving as the Interim PM of Slovakia since 15<sup>th</sup> May 2023 after the resignation of Eduard Heger as PM.

This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> time Robert Fico will serve as the PM of Slovakia, after having served from 2006 to 2010 and from 2012 to 2018.

He is the current head of the ruling pro-Russian party Slovak Social Democracy (SMER-SD).

**329. Leon Topalian**, President & CEO of Nucor Corporation, has been elected as the **45<sup>th</sup> Chairman** of the **World Steel Association (worldsteel)**. He has been elected for a one-year period starting October 2023. He succeeded Choi Jeong-Woo.

**T.V. Narendran**, CEO & MD of Tata Steel Limited, and Choi Jeong-Woo, CEO of POSCO Holdings, have been elected as the Vice-Chairman of the World Steel Association.

Bollywood Actor **Rajkumar Rao** has been named as the '**National Icon**' for voter awareness and education by the **Election Commission of India (ECI)**.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed with Rajkumar Rao for a period of **3 years** at an event organized at New Delhi in the presence of Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar and Election Commissioners Anup Chandra Pandey and Arun Goel.

This MoU aims to harness the influence and popularity of Rajkumar Rao to encourage citizens, especially youth across the nation to actively participate in the electoral process.

**Note:** In August 2023, former Indian cricketer and Bharat Ratna awardee Sachin Tendulkar became the National Icon for ECI.

**330.** Switzerland-based luxury watchmaker **Rado** has roped in Indian bollywood actor **Katrina Kaif** as its newest **Global Brand Ambassador**. She is featured in Rado's campaign emphasizing its dedication to crafting timepieces that combine timeless materials with enduring style.

Indian actor Hrithik Roshan is one of the global brand ambassadors of Rado since 2011. Rado was established in 1917 and came to India in 1995.

**331.** Former businessman **Christopher Luxon** from the conservative party has been elected as the **42<sup>nd</sup> Prime Minister of New Zealand**.

In the recently concluded elections, he has won 50 seats and its preferred coalition partner, ACT New Zealand, won 11, securing a majority of one seat in the 121-seat parliament. He will succeed outgoing Prime Minister **Chris Hipkins**, who succeeded Jacinda Ardern in January 2023.

Previously, he held senior roles at global consumer goods firm Unilever and delivered consistent profits running Air New Zealand from 2012 to 2019.

**332.** The Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry has appointed **Amardeep Singh Bhatia**, additional secretary in the Commerce and Industry ministry, as the new **Chairman of Tea Board**.

His appointment will be effective from 12<sup>th</sup> October 2023 as an additional charge for a period of six months.

He will hold the charge till such time the post is filled up on a regular basis or until further orders.

**Saurav Pahari** will remain the deputy chairman of the Tea Board.

**333.** **Daniel Noboa**, a businessman and a member of National Democratic Action, has won the 2023 General Election of **Ecuador** defeating Luisa Gonzalez of the Citizen Revolution Movement.

With this victory, Daniel Noboa becomes the youngest ever President elect of Ecuador. He will succeed the outgoing President Guillermo Lasso on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2023.

**334.** Chairman & Managing Director, National Dairy Development Board (NDDB), **Dr Meenesh Shah**, has been elected to the **Board of International Dairy Federation (IDF)** during the General Assembly of IDF.

He is the Member Secretary of the Indian National Committee and a member of the Standing Committee on Dairy Policy and Economics.

**335.** **Justice Siddharth Mridul** has been appointed as the new **Chief Justice of the Manipur High Court**. The Supreme Court collegium headed by Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud had on July 2023 recommended the appointment of Delhi High Court judge Justice Siddharth

Mridul as the chief justice of the Manipur High Court, amid the ethnic turmoil in the border state.

Justice MV Muralidaran, who is presently the Acting Chief Justice of the Manipur High Court, has been transferred to Calcutta High Court.

**336. Arindam Bagchi**, presently Additional Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs, has been appointed as India's permanent representative to the United Nations (UN) and other international organisations in Geneva.

He is a 1995-batch Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officer.

He will succeed the incumbent Indian envoy to the UN in Geneva, Indra Mani Pandey, who assumed the role in July 2020.

**337.** The President of India Droupadi Murmu has appointed former Jharkhand Chief Minister and BJP national vice-president **Raghubar Das** as the new **Governor of Odisha**. He has been appointed in place of Ganeshi Lal.

He is the 26<sup>th</sup> Governor of Odisha.

He was the first non-tribal Chief Minister of **Jharkhand** from 2014 to 2019.

His appointment will take effect from the date he assumes the charge of the office.

**Note:** The Governor of a State is appointed by the President by warrant under his hand and seal under Article 155.

**338.** The President of India Droupadi Murmu has appointed **Indra Sena Reddy Nallu**, a national secretary of the BJP, and a former MLA in Andhra Pradesh, as the new **Governor of Tripura**.

He has been appointed in place of Satyadeo Narain Arya.

His appointment will take effect from the date he assumes the charge of the office.

**Note:** The Governor of a State is appointed by the President by warrant under his hand and seal under Article 155.

**339. Ajay Jhunjhunwala**, Managing Director (MD) of JR Agro Industries Pvt Ltd, Lucknow, has been re-elected as the **President** of the **Solvent Extractors' Association of India (SEA)** for 2023-24.

Sanjeev K Asthana, COO of Patanjali Foods Ltd, Noida, and Angshu Mallick, MD and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Adani Wilmar Ltd, Ahmedabad, have been elected as Vice-Presidents of SEA.

**340. Nandini Azad**, President of the Chennai-based Indian Cooperative Network for Women (ICNW), has been elected to the board of the **International Raiffeisen Union (IRU)**, one of the oldest cooperative bodies in the world responsible for evolving a global policy on cooperatives in agriculture and other allied sectors, for the second term.



In 2018, she got elected to the IRU, becoming the first Indian as well as the first woman to be appointed to the assignment.

At present, she is also serving as the Chairperson of the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA)- Asia Pacific (AP) Committee on Women.

**Other appointments:**

- **Guy Hoffmann** from Banque Raiffeisen Luxembourg has been elected as the new IRU President, succeeding Franky Depickere from Cera.
- National Cooperative Union of India (NCUI) President **Dileepbhai Sanghani** has been re-elected unopposed as the director on the board of IRU.

**International Raiffeisen Union (IRU):**

The International Raiffeisen Union (IRU) is a voluntary organization of worldwide national cooperative organizations which work on the ideas of Friedrich Wilhelm Raiffeisens principles i.e., self-responsibility, self-democracy & self-administration.

- **Members:** 53
- **Headquarters:** Bonn, Germany

**341. Pankaj Bohra**, a chartered accountant from Ahmedabad, has assumed the role of National President of the Indo-American Chamber of Commerce (IACC). He is currently serving as the senior partner at Pankaj Bohra & Co., Chartered Accountants.

He has become the first person from Gujarat to assume charge as President of IACC. He has succeeded Lalit Bhasin.

**Indo-American Chamber of Commerce (IACC):**

IACC is the apex bi-lateral Chamber synergizing India-US Economic Engagement. It was set up in 1968. Its main aim is to promote bilateral trade and investments between India and the USA. IACC has 14 offices in India and 27 offices in USA.

**342. K.N. Shanth Kumar**, Director of The Printers (Mysore) Pvt. Ltd., has been elected as the Chairman of the Press Trust of India (PTI) for a one-year term.

He has replaced Aveek Sarkar, who served as Chairman for two consecutive terms. This marks his **second term** as the Chairman of PTI, the previous one being from 2013 to 2014.

PTI has also elected Praveen Someshwar, the Chief Executive Officer of Hindustan Times, as the Vice-Chairman.

**343. Mohamed Muizzu** of the Progressive Party of Maldives (PPM) has been elected as the new **President of Maldives**. He will swear in on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2023.

He has defeated incumbent President **Ibrahim Mohamed Solih** (2018-2023) of the Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP) by securing 54% of the votes.

**344. Lieutenant General Raghu Srinivasan** has assumed the role of the **28<sup>th</sup> Director General** of the Border Roads Organization (**BRO**). He assumed the charge following the superannuation of Lt Gen Rajeev Chaudhry.

Previously, he was holding the appointment of Commandant, College of Military Engineering, Pune.

**345.** The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved the re- appointment of **Nitin Gupta** as the Chairman of the **Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT)** for a tenure of 9-month with effect from 1st October 2023.

His tenure has been extended till June 30, 2024.

**346.** The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved the extension of **Amit Agarwal's** tenure as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the **Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI)** for a period of 1 year starting from 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2023 up to 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2024, or until further orders, whichever is earlier.

He assumed charge as the CEO of UIDAI in June 2023 following the retirement of Saurabh Garg.

**347. Vice Admiral Tarun Sobti**, AVSM, VSM, has assumed the role of Deputy Chief of Naval Staff on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2023. He has succeeded Vice Admiral Sanjay Mahindru who retired after more than 38 years of illustrious service on 30 Sep 2023.

He was commissioned into the Indian Navy on 1<sup>st</sup> July 1988 and is a Navigation and Direction Specialist.

He was awarded the Vishisht Seva Medal in 2020 and Ati Vishisht Seva Medal in 2022.

**348. Anirban Mukherjee**, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of PayU India, has been promoted to the role of **global CEO of PayU**. He will join the Prosus leadership team and report directly to Ervin Tu, Prosus and Naspers Interim CEO.

He will succeed **Laurent Le Moal**.

**349.** Ministry of Finance has appointed **Ramaswamy Narayanan** as the Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of the General Insurance Corporation of India (**GIC Re**). His appointment is effective from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2023 and up to the date of his superannuation (i.e. 30<sup>th</sup> September 2025) or until further orders, whichever is earlier.

He has succeeded **Devesh Srivastava**, who retired from the post on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

**350.** The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the extension of the tenure of **SBI Chairman Dinesh Kumar Khara** till **28<sup>th</sup> August 2024**. He was appointed as the Chairman of the State Bank of India (SBI) on October 7, 2020, for a period of three years. He is given the extension till he turns 63.

As per the current norms, a person can hold the post of SBI Chairman up to the age of 63. ACC has also extended the tenure of **Ashwini Kumar Tewari** as the **Managing Director (MD) of SBI** for 2 years beyond **27<sup>th</sup> January 2024**.

## **RBI Assistant Free Mock Test**

### **OBITUARIES**

**351.** Former **Indian cricketer**, legendary left-arm spinner and Padma Shri awardee, **Bishan Singh Bedi**, has passed away at the age of 77. He was born on 25<sup>th</sup> September 1946 in Amritsar, Punjab.

He played **Test cricket** for India from **1966 to 1979** and formed part of the famous Indian spin quartet.

He played a total of 67 Tests and took 266 wickets.

He was awarded the **Padma Shri** award in **1970** and the **C. K. Nayudu Lifetime Achievement Award** in **2004**.

**352.** Noted academician, singer and lyricist **Birendra Nath Datta** has passed away at the age of 88 in Guwahati, Assam. He was born on 1<sup>st</sup> March 1935 in Nagaon, **Assam**.

- He started his academic career as a lecturer at the B Borooah College in 1957 in Assam and later served in various colleges of Assam. He retired as the esteemed Head of the Department (HOD) of Folklore Research at Gauhati University in 1995.
- He was awarded the **Padma Shri** in **2009** for literature and education.
- He received the **12<sup>th</sup> Jagaddhatri-Harmohan Das Literary award** in **2010**.
- He received the Tagore Ratna Award of Sangeet Natak Akademi in 2012.
- **Books written by him:** "Sankar Madhavar Manisha Aru Asomar Sanaskritic Uttaradhikar"

**353.** Noted former England football player **Sir Bobby (Robert) Charlton** has passed away at the age of 86. He suffered dementia in 2020. He was born on 11 October 1937 in Ashington, Northumberland, England.

He was a member of the England team that won the 1966 FIFA World Cup.

He debuted for **Manchester United** football club from 1956 to 1973 in 758 matches and scored 249 goals.

He represented England national football team from 1958 to 1970 in 106 international matches and scored 49 goals.

**354. Babanrao Dhakne**, an Indian politician who was a member of the 9th Lok Sabha, has passed away at the age of 86. He was born on 10<sup>th</sup> November 1937 in Akola, Ahmednagar in Maharashtra.

He represented the Beed constituency of Maharashtra and was a member of the Janata Dal. He served as the **Union State Minister for Energy Resources** (1990-1991) under the primership of **Chandra Shekhar** (8<sup>th</sup> Prime Minister of India 1990-1991). He was the 1<sup>st</sup> person of the Vanjari Community of Maharashtra to become the member of the 9<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha.

**355. Li Keqiang**, a Chinese economist and politician who served as the **premier** of the **People's Republic of China** from 2013 to 2023, has passed away in Shanghai, China. He was born on 1st July 1955 in Hefei, Anhui, China.

He stepped from the post of Premier in March 2023 and was succeeded by Li Qiang, the incumbent Premier of China.

**Note:** Premier is the second-highest position in China's political system after the President.

**356.** The poster girl of Kerala's adult literacy programme, **Karthayyani Amma**, has passed away in Alappuzha, Kerala. She was born in 1922 in Cheppad, Haripad in the state of Kerala.

At the age of 96, she topped the **Aksharalaksham ("Million Letter") literacy examination** of the Kerala State Literacy Mission securing the highest mark (98/100).

She was the oldest person to take the test in her district.

She became a Commonwealth of Learning Goodwill Ambassador in 2019.

She was honoured with the **Nari Shakti Puraskar** award, the highest civilian award for a woman, by the Government of India in **2020**.

**357. Dahyabhai Karunashankar Shastri**, a renowned Indian Sanskrit scholar and founder of Brahmarshi Sanskrit Mahavidyalaya, Nadiad (Gujarat), has passed away at the age of 98 in Nadiad, Gujarat. He was born on 26<sup>th</sup> February 1926 in Mehsana, **Gujarat**.

He was a distinguished Sanskrit scholar in India, holding titles like Vyakaranacharya, Sahitacharya, and Hindi Visharad.

**Padma Shri:** 2016

**358. Louise Gluck**, a renowned poet who won a Nobel Prize for Literature in 2020, has passed away at the age of 80 in Cambridge, Massachusetts, the USA. She was born on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 1943 in New York City, the USA.

**Notable works:** *"The Triumph of Achilles (1985)"*, and *"The Wild Iris (1992)"*

**Awards:**

- Pulitzer Prize for Poetry (1993)
- Bollingen Prize (2001)
- U.S. Poet Laureate (2003–2004)
- National Book Award (2014)
- National Humanities Medal (2015)
- **Nobel Prize in Literature (2020)**

In her lifetime, she published 12 collections of poetry and several volumes of essays. She became the 16<sup>th</sup> woman to win a Nobel Prize for Literature.

**359.** Indian bureaucrat, politician, and writer, **Dr Manohar Singh Gill**, has passed away in New Delhi at the age of 87. He was born on 14 June 1936 in undivided Punjab. He was a 1958 batch of the Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer of Punjab cadre.

He served as the **11<sup>th</sup> Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) of India** from **1996 to 2001** succeeding T. N. Seshan.

His major achievement was the introduction of **Electronic Voting machines** which curbed malpractices to a large extent. He was awarded the **Padma Vibhushan (2000)** for his work in this post.

He also served as the Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports from 2008 till 2011 and as the Minister of Statistics and Programme Implementation in 2011.

At the 300-year anniversary of the Khalsa, he was awarded the "Nishan-e-Khalsa".

**Books authored by him:** *'Himalayan Wonder: Travels in Lahaul and Spiti'* (1972) and *'Tales from the Hills: Lahaul's Enduring Myths and Legends'* (2014).

**360.** Nobel Peace Prize winner, **Martti Ahtisaari**, has passed away in Helsinki, Finland at the age of 86. He was born on June 23, 1937, in the eastern town of Viipuri, which is now in Russia.

He served as the **10<sup>th</sup> President of Finland** between 1994 and 2000.

He was awarded the **Nobel Peace Prize in 2008** for his important efforts, on several continents and over more than three decades, to resolve international conflicts.

He helped reach peace accords related to Serbia's withdrawal from Kosovo in the late 1990s, Namibia's bid for independence in the 1980s, and autonomy for Aceh province in Indonesia in 2005.

**361. Ghulam Nabi Khayal**, an Indian poet and essayist from Jammu & Kashmir, has passed away at the age of 84 in Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir. He was born on 4<sup>th</sup> March 1939 in Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir.

He authored 30 books in Kashmiri, Urdu and English.



He was the winner of Sahitya Akademi Award in 1975 but he returned the award as a sign of protest. He became the first Kashmiri to return the literary award as a sign of protest in the valley.

**Major works:** "Chinar Rang", "Kashmir, The Burning of a Paradise", "Iqbal aur Tehreek-e-Azadi-e-Kashmir", "Fikr-e-Khayal", etc.

**362. Ashwin Dani**, former non-executive director of **Asian Paints**, has passed away on 28 September 2023 at the age of 79. He was born on 26<sup>th</sup> September 1944 in Mumbai, Maharashtra.

He is the son of Suryakant Dani, one of the co-founders of Asian Paints.

He joined Asian Paints in 1968 as a senior executive and moved through successively senior positions such as director of R&D, works director, whole-time director, and vice chairman.

He served as the Non-Executive Chairman on the board of Asian Paints from 2018 to 2021.

## SPORTS

**363.** Grand Master **Nodirbek Yakubboev (Uzbekistan)** has won the **Qatar Masters Open 2023** title held at Lusail Sports Arena, Qatar from 11<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> October 2023. He has defeated his Uzbekistani namesake GM Nodirbek Abdusattorov 2-0 in a blitz playoff.

Indian GM S.L. Narayanan has secured third place in the tournament.

International Master (IM) **Vaishali Rameshbabu** (India) has secured the women's champion title while IM Divya Deshmukh (India) and Woman International Master (WIM) Alua Nurmanova (Kazakhstan) has secured the second and third highest ranks among women players.

**364.** Indian Badminton player **Unnati Hooda** has won the **women's singles title** in the **Abu Dhabi Masters 2023 badminton tournament** held at the ADNEC Marina Hall, Abu Dhabi, UAE. She has defeated Samiya Imad Farooqui (India) in the finals.

The tournament has been organized by UAE Badminton Federation with sanctions from the Badminton World Federation (BWF).

**Men's singles:** Mads Christophersen (Denmark)

**Men's doubles:** Goh Sze Fei and Nur Izzuddin Rumsani (Malaysia)

**Women's doubles:** Ashwini Ponappa and Tanisha Crasto

**Mixed doubles:** Mads Vestergaard and Christine Busch (Denmark)

**365. Max Verstappen**, the Belgian-Dutch driver of Red Bull, has won the **Formula 1 (F1) United States Grand Prix 2023** held at the Circuit of The Americas in Austin, Texas, The United States of America (USA) from 20-22 October 2023.

This marks Max Verstappen's **50<sup>th</sup> career win** in the F1 and he joins Lewis Hamilton (103), Michael Schumacher (91), Sebastian Vettel (53), and Alain Prost (51) in the 50-win club.

This also marks Max Verstappen's 15<sup>th</sup> win out of 17 races of the 2023 season, in this 15 he won 11 races in row.

McLaren Driver Lando Norris of the United Kingdom (UK) has finished second place while Ferrari driver Carlos Sainz (Spain) has finished third place in the podium.

**366.** The Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) has appointed former Sri Lankan Cricket Captain **Kumar Chokshanada Sangakkara** as the new Chair of MCC's **World Cricket Committee (WCC)**. He is the current Director of Cricket of the Rajasthan Royals and the Head Coach of their IPL team.

He will succeed former England captain Mike Gatting, who has held the post since 2017. Earlier, he served as the President of the MCC from 2019-21.

Former England Cricketer **Mark Charles Jefford Nicholas** will serve as the new **President of MCC**.

**World Cricket Committee (WCC):**

WCC was established by the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) in April 2006. It is an independent body comprised of current and former international cricketers and umpires from across the globe. It meets twice yearly to discuss the prevalent issues in the game. It acts as a complementary body to ICC and its constituent nations.

**367.** A 17-year-old Grandmaster **Raunak Sadhwani** (Nagpur, Maharashtra) has won the **FIDE World Junior Rapid Chess Championship 2023** in the open section held in Sardinia, Italy.

- He scored 8.5 over 11 rounds to win the Championship ahead of Arseniy Nesterov of Russia, who scored 8.
- He is the ninth youngest player in history and the fourth youngest Indian to be awarded the title.
- It is noteworthy that Raunak Sadhwani became a grandmaster at the age of 13.

In the girl section, **Govhar Beydullayeva** of Azerbaijan has won the FIDE World Junior Rapid Chess Championship 2023 with a score of 9.

**368.** **Puma India** has signed Indian cricket fast bowler **Mohammed Shami** as its brand ambassador. He will endorse Puma's footwear, apparel, and accessories through various activities and campaigns.

Puma has also created a new bowling spike with a mid-sole designed to support fast bowlers. Puma has already onboarded Virat Kohli, Usain Bolt, Neymar Jr, Sunil Chhetri, MC Mary Kom, Harmanpreet Kaur, Harleen Deol, and Avani Lekhara as its brand ambassadors.

**369.** Five sports are included in the **2028 Los Angeles Games** after gaining the approval of the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

Each host city, under IOC rules, can request the inclusion of several sports for their edition of the Games.

**Baseball/ softball, cricket, flag football, lacrosse and squash** have been officially included as additional sports on the programme for the Olympic Games Los Angeles 2028.

Flag football and squash will be making their Olympic debut in Los Angeles 2028, while, baseball and softball, cricket and lacrosse will make a comeback to the event.

Cricket has been played in the Olympics only once before, in Paris in 1900, when England defeated France.

Lacrosse was included on the programme at St Louis 1904 and London 1908.

**370.** Indian badminton player **Ayush Shetty** has won the **bronze medal** in the **Badminton World Federation (BWF) World Junior Championships 2023** held from 25<sup>th</sup> September to 8<sup>th</sup> October 2023 in Spokane, the USA.

He has lost to Alwi Farhan of Indonesia, who has won the Gold medal by defeating Hu Zhe An of China (silver) in the 23<sup>rd</sup> edition of the BWF World Junior Championships finals.

**Note:** Saina Nehwal won the Gold medal in 2008 and silver in 2006 while India's Sankar Muthusamy Subramanian won silver in 2022 in Spain.

**371.** The **International Olympic Committee (IOC)** with the Olympic Museum has joined hands with the **Reliance Foundation** to promote Olympic Values Education Programme (**OVEP**) through sport among children starting with the Mumbai region and soon expanding it across the state of Maharashtra.

The agreement will focus on grade-specific activities in selected schools, sessions between athletes and students to promote physical activity and raising awareness to promote Olympism and Olympic values.

**Olympic Values Education Programme (OVEP):**

OVEP is an initiative led by the Olympic Museum that advances the IOC's Olympism 365 strategy. It aims to increase access to sport and bring the health and societal benefits of physical activity to communities across the globe.

OVEP was first launched in India in 2022 with the Abhinav Bindra Foundation in the Indian state of Odisha.

**372.** India has finished **fourth** in the medal tally with **107 medals** at the **Hangzhou Asian Games 2022** held in Hangzhou, China from September 23 to October 8. This includes **28 Gold, 38 Bronze and 41 Silver**. This feat has surpassed India's previous best of 70 medals at the 18th Asian games in Jakarta, Indonesia.

This is the 19th edition of the Asian Games 2022.

India has won the highest number of medals in the **Shooting** event with **22 medals** (7 Gold, 9 Silver, and 6 Bronze). It is followed by Athletics (29 medals) and Archery (9 medals).

With this, **74 Indian players** have secured their place to participate in the **Paris 2024 Olympics**.

**China** has topped the list with **383 medals** followed by Japan (188), and Republic of Korea (190).

Medals were contested across 61 disciplines, including non-Olympic ones such as kabaddi, sepaktakraw, cricket, Go board game and newcomers like breaking, sport climbing and e-sports.

Motto of Asian games 2022 is 'Heart to heart, @ Future'.

**Note:** 20th Asian Games will be held in Japan in 2027.

No.	Athletes	Sport	Event	Medal
1	Team India	Shooting	Women's 10m air rifle team	Silver
2	Team India	Rowing	Men's lightweight double sculls	Silver
3	Team India	Rowing	Men's pair	Bronze
4	Team India	Rowing	Men's eight	Silver
5	Ramita Jindal	Shooting	Women's 10m air rifle	Bronze
6	Team India	Shooting	Men's 10m air rifle team	Gold
7	Team India	Rowing	Men's four	Bronze
8	Team India	Rowing	Men's quadruple	Bronze
9	Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar	Shooting	Men's 10m air rifle	Bronze
10	Team India	Shooting	Men's 25m rapid fire pistol team	Bronze

11	Team India (Defeated Sri Lanka)	Cricket	Women's T20 cricket	Gold
12	Neha Thakur	Sailing	Girl's Dinghy - ILCA4	Silver
13	Eabad Ali	Sailing	Men's Windsurfer - RS:X	Bronze
14	Team India	Equestrian	Team dressage	Gold
15	Team India	Shooting	Women's 50m rifle 3 positions team	Silver
16	Team India	Shooting	Women's 25m pistol team	Gold
17	Sift Kaur Samra	Shooting	Women's 50m rifle 3 positions	Gold
18	Ashi Chouksey	Shooting	Women's 50m rifle 3 positions	Bronze
19	Team India	Shooting	Men's skeet team	Bronze
20	Vishnu Saravanan	Sailing	Men's dinghy ICLA7	Bronze
21	Esha Singh	Shooting	Women's 25m pistol	Silver
22	Anantjeet Singh Naruka	Shooting	Men's skeet	Silver
23	Naorem Roshibina Devi	Wushu	Women's 60kg sanda	Silver
24	Team India	Shooting	Men's 10m air pistol team	Gold



25	Anush Agarwalla	Equestrian	Individual dressage	Bronze
26	Team India	Shooting	Women's 10m air pistol team	Silver
27	Team India	Shooting	Men's 50m rifle 3 positions team	Gold
28	Team India	Tennis	Men's doubles	Silver
29	Esha Singh	Shooting	Women's 10m air pistol	Silver
30	<b>Palak Gulia</b>	<b>Shooting</b>	Women's 10m air pistol	Gold
31	Team India	Squash	Women's team	Bronze
32	Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar	Shooting	Men's 50m rifle 3 positions	Silver
33	Kiran Baliyan	Athletics	Women's shot put	Bronze
34	Team India	Shooting	Mixed team 10m air pistol	Silver
35	Team India (Rohan Bopanna and Rutuja Bhosale)	Tennis	Mixed doubles	Gold
36	Team India	Squash	Men's team	Gold
37	Karthik Kumar	Athletics	Men's 10,000m	Silver
38	Gulveer Singh	Athletics	Men's 10,000m	Bronze
39	Aditi Ashok	Golf	Women's golf	Silver
40	Team India	Shooting	Women's trap team	Silver

41	Team India	Shooting	Men's trap team	Gold
42	Kynan Chenai	Shooting	Men's trap	Bronze
43	Nikhat Zareen	Boxing	Women's 50kg	Bronze
44	Avinash Sable	Athletics	Men's 3000m steeplechase	Gold
45	Tajinderpal Singh Toor	Athletics	Men's shot put	Gold
46	Harmilan Bains	Athletics	Women's 1500m	Silver
47	Ajay Kumar Saroj	Athletics	Men's 1500m	Silver
48	Jinson Johnson	Athletics	Men's 1500m	Bronze
49	Nandini Agasara	Athletics	Women's heptathlon	Bronze
50	Murali Sreeshankar	Athletics	Men's long jump	Silver
51	Seema Punia	Athletics	Women's discus throw	Bronze
52	Jyothi Yarraji	Athletics	Women's 100m hurdles	Silver
53	Team India	Badminton	Men's team	Silver
54	Team India	Roller skating	Women's speed skating 3000m relay	Bronze
55	Team India	Roller skating	Men's speed skating 3000m relay	Bronze
56	Team India	Table tennis	Women's doubles	Bronze

57	Parul Chaudhary	Athletics	Women's 3000m steeplechase	Silver
58	Priti Lamba	Athletics	Women's 3000m steeplechase	Bronze
59	Ancy Sojan	Athletics	Women's long jump	Silver
60	Team India	Athletics	Mixed 4x400m relay	Silver
61	Team India	Canoe Sprint	Men's canoe double 1000m	Bronze
62	Preeti Pawar	Boxing	Women's 54kg	Bronze
63	Vithya Ramraj	Athletics	Women's 400m hurdles	Bronze
64	Parul Chaudhary	Athletics	Women's 5000m	Gold
65	Mohammed Afsal	Athletics	Men's 800m	Silver
66	Praveen Chithravel	Athletics	Men's triple jump	Bronze
67	Tejaswin Shankar	Athletics	Men's decathlon	Silver
68	Annu Rani	Athletics	Women's javelin throw	Gold
69	Narender Berwal	Boxing	Men's +92kg	Bronze
70	Team India	Athletics	Mixed team race walk	Bronze
71	Team India	Archery	Mixed team compound	Gold

72	Team India	Squash	Mixed team	Bronze
73	Parveen Hooda	Boxing	Women's 57kg	Bronze
74	Lovlina Borgohain	Boxing	Women's 75kg	Silver
75	Sunil Kumar	Wrestling	Greco-Roman 87kg	Bronze
76	Harmilan Bains	Athletics	Women's 800m	Silver
77	Avinash Sable	Athletics	Men's 5000m	Silver
78	Team India	Athletics	Women's 4x400m relay	Silver
79	Neeraj Chopra	Athletics	Men's javelin throw	Gold
80	Kishore Jena	Athletics	Men's javelin throw	Silver
81	Team India	Athletics	Men's 4x400m relay	Gold
82	Team India	Archery	Women's compound team	Gold
83	Team India	Squash	Mixed doubles	Gold
84	Team India	Archery	Men's compound team	Gold
85	Saurav Ghosal	Squash	Men's singles	Silver
86	Antim Panghal	Wrestling	Women's 53kg	Bronze
87	Team India	Archery	Women's recurve team	Bronze
88	<b>HS Prannoy</b>	<b>Badminton</b>	Men's singles	Bronze
89	Team India	Sepaktakraw	Women's regu	Bronze

90	Team India	Archery	Men's recurve team	Silver
91	Sonam Malik	Wrestling	Women's 62kg	Bronze
92	Kiran Bishnoi	Wrestling	Women's 76kg	Bronze
93	Aman Sehrawat	Wrestling	Men's freestyle 57kg	Bronze
94	Team India	Bridge	Men's team	Silver
95	Team India (Defeated Japan)	Hockey	Men's team	Gold
96	Aditi Swami	Archery	Women's compound individual	Bronze
97	<b>Jyothi Surekha Vennam</b>	<b>Archery</b>	Women's compound individual	Gold
98	Ojas Pravin Deotale	Archery	Men's compound individual	Gold
99	Abhishek Verma	Archery	Men's compound individual	Silver
100	Team India (Defeated Chinese Taipei)	Kabaddi	Women's kabaddi	Gold
101	Team India (Chirag Shetty and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy)	Badminton	Men's doubles	Gold
102	Team India	Cricket	Men's team	Gold



	(Defeated Afghanistan)			
103	Team India (Defeated Iran)	Kabaddi	Men's kabaddi	Gold
104	Team India (Defeated Japan)	Hockey	Women's team	Bronze
105	Deepak Punia	Wrestling	Men's freestyle 86kg	Silver
106	Team India	Chess	Men's team	Silver
107	Team India	Chess	Women's team	Silver

### **Asian Games:**

Asian Games are the oldest and most prestigious event on Olympic Council of Asia calendar. It is recognised by International Olympic Committee and is second largest multi-sport event after Olympics. Like Olympic Games, they are held every four years.

The first and ninth edition were held in New Delhi in 1951 and 1982 respectively.

**373. Ojas Pravin Deotale** has become the **first Indian archer** to win **three Gold medals** in the Hangzhou Asian Games 2022. The events include men's individual, men's compound team event along with Abhishek Verma and Prathamesh Jawkar, mixed team event along with Jyothi Surekha Vennam.

Indian archer **Jyothi Surekha Vennam (Vijaywada)** has also won three gold medals at the Asian Games 2022 archery events. The events include women's individual, women's compound team event along with Aditi Swami and Parneet Kaur, and mixed team event.

**374. Jannik Sinner** of **Italy** has won the men's singles title at the **China Open 2023** by defeating Daniil Medvedev of Russia in the final held at the Beijing Olympic Green Tennis Center, Beijing, China from 28<sup>th</sup> September to 4<sup>th</sup> October 2023.

**Iga Swiatek** of Poland has won the women's singles title at the China Open 2023 by defeating Liudmila Samsonova of Russia.

This is the 22<sup>nd</sup> edition of the China Open (1993 to 2023).

China Open is an annual men's and women's professional tennis tournament held in Beijing, China.

**375. Max Verstappen**, the Belgian-Dutch driver of Red Bull, has won the **2023 Qatar Grand Prix**, a Formula One motor race, held at the Lusail International Circuit in Lusail, Qatar.

With this, he has won the consecutive F1 World Championship in 2023, 2022, & 2021. Oscar Piastri, the Australian driver of McLaren, has secured the second place and Lando Norris, the British driver of McLaren, has secured the third place. This is the seventeenth round of the 2023 Formula One World Championship and the fourth Grand Prix weekend of the season to utilise the sprint format.

## **RBI Assistant Free Mock Test**

**376.** The International Cricket Council (ICC) has named former Indian cricket player **Sachin Tendulkar** as the '**Global Ambassador**' for the Men's Cricket One Day International (ODI) World Cup 2023.

He has unveiled the World Cup Trophy before the inaugural match between the England and New Zealand on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2023.

### **Other ambassadors of ICC ODI World Cup 2023:**

West Indies legend Vivian Richards, South Africa's AB de Villiers, England World Cup-winning skipper Eoin Morgan, Australia's Aaron Finch, Sri Lanka spin great Muttiah Muralitharan, New Zealand's Ross Taylor, India's Suresh Raina and ex-captain Mithali Raj and Pakistan all-rounder Mohammad Hafeez

### **ICC Men's World Cup 2023:**

The 13<sup>th</sup> edition of the ICC Men's World Cup 2023 will be held from 5<sup>th</sup> October to 19<sup>th</sup> November 2023 at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad. A total of 48 matches will be played across 10 venues.

**Mascot:** **Blaze** (female mascot: Bowler) and **Tonk** (male mascot: Batsmen)

**377.** Indian athlete **Kiran Baliyan** has become the **first Indian woman** to win an Asian Games medal in **shot put event** in 72 years. She won a **bronze medal** in the women's shot put event at the **Asian Games 2022** in Hangzhou, the People's Republic of China. She threw the iron ball to a distance of 17.36m in her third attempt.

It is India's first medal in athletics at the Asian Games 2022.

Olympic champion Gong Lijiao of China and her compatriot Song Jiayuan clinched gold and silver with best throws of 19.58 and 18.92, respectively.

**Note:** In the 1951 Asian Games held in Delhi, Barbara Webster, an athlete of Anglo-Indian heritage hailing from Bombay, won the bronze medal in women's shot put.

**378.** **Indian women's cricket team**, led by Harmanpreet Kaur, has won their **maiden gold medal** in the Asian Games 2022 after defeating **Sri Lanka** by **19 runs** in the final match held in Hangzhou in China's eastern Zhejiang province.

India Women has successfully defended 116 to beat Sri Lanka Women by 19 runs. Sri Lankan team has won a silver medal and Bangladesh has won a bronze medal in the tournament.

### **2022 Asian Games:**

Asian Games 2022 (19<sup>th</sup> edition) is a continental multi-sport event. It has been held from 23 September to 8 October 2023 in Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province, China.

The official motto of the 2022 Asian Games: **"Heart to Heart, @Future"**.

The three mascots of the 2022 Asian Games: **Congcong, Chenchen and Lianlian**.

## **RBI Assistant Free Mock Test**

### **IMPORTANT DAYS**

**379. International Day of Older Persons** is observed annually on **1<sup>st</sup> October** to raise awareness about the challenges and issues faced by the elderly across the globe. The year 2023 marks the observance of the 33rd anniversary of the International Day of Older Persons. The day was first observed in 1991.

**Theme 2023:** "Fulfilling the Promises of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights for Older Persons: Across Generations"

**380.** The **Military Nursing Service (MNS)** has observed its **98<sup>th</sup> Raising Day** across India on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2023.

The Military Nursing Service (MNS) in India was setup in March 1888. It later transformed into the permanent Nursing Service on 1<sup>st</sup> October 1926, and designated as Indian Military Nursing Service (IMNS). The force took its present form on 15 September 1943. The mission of MNS is 'Excellence in patient care' both in peace and war.

**381.** The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) has observed its **7<sup>th</sup> Annual Day** on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2023 to commemorate the establishment of the IBBI.

During the occasion, an annual publication, *"IBC: Evolution, Learnings and Innovation"*, has been released.

This publication offers a multifaceted perspective on the origin of the IBC, judicial interpretations, practical implementation, institutions under the IBC, technological improvements, learnings from real word case studies and potential next generation reforms. It is a collection of 31 thought-provoking articles.

A research publication, *"Navdrishti: Emerging Ideas on IBC"* has also been released.

### **Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI):**

It was established on **1<sup>st</sup> October 2016**. It is responsible for implementation of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC), 2016. It aims for reorganisation and insolvency resolution of

corporate persons, partnership firms and individuals in a time bound manner for maximization of the value of assets, to promote entrepreneurship, availability of credit and balance the interests of all the stakeholders.

**382.** The **National Pension System Diwas (NPS Diwas)** is observed annually on **1<sup>st</sup> October** to promote pension and retirement planning among the citizens of India and enjoy financial independence post-retirement. The day is observed by the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA). The day was first observed in 2021.

As on 25th August 2023, the number of subscribers under the National Pension System (NPS) and Atal Pension Yojana (APY) together have grown to more than 6.62 crore and the total Asset Under Management (AUM) has reached Rs.10 lakh crore.

**383.** India has observed the **119<sup>th</sup>** birth anniversary of **Lal Bahadur Shastri** on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2023. He served as the second Prime Minister of India from 1964 to 1966.

- He was born on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1904 in Mughalsarai, Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh.
- He participated in the freedom movement since 1930.
- He gave the slogan '**Jai Jawan Jai Kisan**'.
- He was minister in the Union Cabinet from 1951 to 1956 when he resigned taking responsibility for the railway accident and later from 1957-1964.
- He was the first person to be posthumously awarded the **Bharat Ratna (1966)**.

**384.** The **International Day of Non-Violence** is observed annually on **2<sup>nd</sup> October** to commemorate the birth anniversary of **Mahatma Gandhi**, a leader of India's freedom movement and a pioneer of the philosophy of Non-Violence. The objective of the day is to spread awareness about the idea of non-violence through education.

The day was proposed by Iranian Noble Laureate Shirin Ebadi. The day was first observed in 2007.

The year 2023 marks the **154<sup>th</sup>** birth anniversary of him.

#### **Mahatma Gandhi:**

He was born on 2nd October 1869, in Porbandar, Gujarat. He played an important role in the independence of India. He successfully led India's non-violent movement against the British which in turn inspired many civil rights movements across the world. He believed in religious pluralism. He wanted India to be a secular nation and he fought to make it a reality.

His major writings include: The Story of My Experiments with Truth, **The Moral Basis of Vegetarianism**, and **Peace: The Words and Inspiration of Mahatma Gandhi** (Me-We), Hind Swarajya, Mangalprabhat, From Yeravda Mandir: Ashram Observances, **The Good life**, Conquest of Self, etc.

**385. World Habitat Day** is observed annually on the **first Monday of October** to address the problems of rapid urbanisation and its impact on the environment and human poverty. In 2023, the day falls on **2nd October**.

The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) has declared the first Monday of October to be celebrated as World Habitat Day every year in 1985. The day was first observed in 1986.

**Theme 2023:** "Resilient urban economies. Cities as drivers of growth and recovery"

**386. Breast Cancer Awareness Month** is observed annually in the month of **October** (1<sup>st</sup> October to 31<sup>st</sup> October) to spread awareness about the impact of breast cancer.

The '**Pink ribbon**' is an international symbol of breast cancer awareness.

October has been designated as "**Pink Month**" to raise awareness of breast cancer.

**387. World Animal Day** is observed annually on **4<sup>th</sup> October**. The day marks the feast day of Francis of Assisi, who was regarded as the patron saint of animals. It is also known as 'Animal Lovers Day'. It is also celebrated to raise the status of animals and help improve welfare standards across the world.

The day was observed for the first time in 1925 by cynologist Heinrich Zimmermann to address the plight of animals and initiate work towards their protection both in the wild and domestic world.

**Theme 2023:** "Great or Small, Love Them All"

**388. World Space Week** is observed annually on **4<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> October**. It is an international celebration of science and technology, and their contribution to the betterment of the human condition.

These dates commemorate two events:

- **October 4, 1957:** Launch of the first human-made Earth satellite, Sputnik 1, thus opening the way for space exploration.
- **October 10, 1967:** The signing of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies.

The United Nations General Assembly declared in 1999 that World Space Week will be held each year from October 4-10.

The World Space Week 2023 theme is "**Space and Entrepreneurship.**"

**389. Wildlife Week** is annually observed across India from **2<sup>nd</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> October** to raise awareness of the importance of wildlife and its conservation in India. The annual observance coincides with the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi (2<sup>nd</sup> October), who championed the principles of Ahinsa (non-violence) and compassion toward all living beings.



The year 2023 marks the observance of the **69<sup>th</sup> Wildlife Week**.

**Theme 2023:** *"Partnerships for wildlife conservation"*

The first Wildlife Week was observed in 1957.

**Note:** World Wildlife Day is annually observed across the globe on 3<sup>rd</sup> March.

**390. International Teachers Day** is observed annually on **5<sup>th</sup> October** to focus on appreciating, assessing and improving the educators of the world and to provide an opportunity to consider issues related to teachers and teaching.

The day is observed since 1994 to commemorate the adoption of the 1966 International Labour Organization (ILO)/United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) recommendation concerning the status of teachers.

**Theme 2023:** *"The teachers we need for the education we want: The global imperative to reverse the teacher shortage"*.

**391. World Cerebral Palsy Day** is observed annually on **6<sup>th</sup> October** to bring together people living with cerebral palsy as well as their families, supporters and organisations from all over the world. It also raises awareness of the condition.

The day was first observed in 2012.

**Theme 2023:** *"Together Stronger."*

**392. World Cotton Day** is observed annually on **7<sup>th</sup> October** to show the enduring positive impact on Cotton and raise awareness of the importance of cotton and cotton-related products.

The year 2023 marks the observance of the 5<sup>th</sup> World Cotton Day.

The initiative of World Cotton Day was born in **2019**, when four cotton producers in sub-Saharan Africa– Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad and Mali, known as the Cotton Four, proposed the World Trade Organization a World Cotton Day celebration on October 7.

**Theme 2023:** *"Making cotton fair and sustainable for all: from farm to fashion"*.

**393. Indian Air Force Day** is observed annually on **8<sup>th</sup> October** to pay respect and honour to our brave Indian Air Force who protects the country and makes people feel safe and secure.

The year 2023 marks the observance of the **91<sup>st</sup> Anniversary** of the Indian Air Force.

**Theme 2023:** *'IAF - Air Power Beyond Boundaries'*

#### **Indian Air Force:**

It was officially established on **8 October 1932** by the British Empire as the Royal Indian Air Force. The name was changed to Indian Air Force in 1950. The Indian Air Force is divided into 7 Commands. The President of India is the Commander-in-chief of the IAF.

The present Indian Air Force Air chief Marshall is **Vivek Ram Chaudhari**.



**394. World Post Day** is observed annually on **9<sup>th</sup> October** to raise awareness of the role of the postal sector in people's and businesses' everyday lives and its contribution to the social and economic development of countries.

The day also marks the establishment of the **Universal Postal Union** in 1874 in Bern, Switzerland. The day was first declared as the World Post Day by the UPU Congress held in Tokyo, Japan, in 1969.

**Theme 2023:** "Together for trust: Collaborating for a safe and connected future"

**395. The National Postal Day** is observed annually on **10<sup>th</sup> October** to commemorate the role played by the Indian postal department for the past 150 years, which was founded in 1854 by Lord Dalhousie.

**396. World Mental Health Day** is observed annually on **10<sup>th</sup> October** to create awareness of mental health issues around the world and to mobilize efforts in support of mental health. The day was first observed in **1992**.

The day is a global initiative supported by the World Health Organization (WHO), World Federation for Mental Health (WFMH), and its member organizations.

The **green ribbon** is a symbol of mental health.

**Theme 2023:** "Mental Health is a Universal Human Right"

**397. The Indian government**, in partnership with the Indian Drugs Manufacturers' Association (IDMA), has designated **10<sup>th</sup> October** to be observed annually as **National Current Good Manufacturing Practice Day (cGMP Day)**.

**Theme 2023:** "cGMP: Transforming Healthcare"

The day was proposed by Dr. Girish Pai K, Coordinator of the Centre for cGMP, at Manipal College of Pharmaceutical Sciences.

The day aims to address the issue of substandard drugs in the Indian pharmaceutical industry, which has tarnished its reputation.

The recent incidents involving Indian cough syrups causing harm in other countries have prompted the government to make Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) guidelines mandatory for all drug manufacturers.

The GMP rules align with the standards set by the World Health Organization (WHO)

The day also raise awareness about GMP guidelines and their vital role in ensuring pharmaceutical product quality.

**Note:** There are around 10,500 drug manufacturing units in India, out of which only 2,000 have WHO GMP certification.

**Indian Drug Manufacturers' Association (IDMA):**

IDMA was established in 1961. It is the industry association of leading pharmaceutical companies based out of India.

- **Headquarters:** Mumbai, Maharashtra

- **Secretary-General:** Daara B. Patel

**398. International Day of the Girl Child** is observed annually on **11<sup>th</sup> October** to spread awareness of issues facing girls internationally surrounding education, nutrition, child marriage, legal and medical rights.

The year 2023 marks the observance of the **11th anniversary** of the International Day of the Girl Child.

United Nations General Assembly has declared 11<sup>th</sup> October as the International Day of the Girl Child on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2011. The day was first observed in **2012**.

**Theme 2023:** "Invest in Girls' Rights: Our Leadership, Our Well-being"

**399. World Arthritis Day** is observed annually on **12<sup>th</sup> October** to spread awareness about arthritis, an inflammatory condition that causes pain and stiffness in joints that can worsen with age. The most common type of arthritis is osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis.

The day was first observed in **1996** by the Arthritis and Rheumatism International (ARI).

**Theme 2023:** "Living with an RMD (Rheumatic and Musculoskeletal Disease) at all stages of life"

**400. World Sight Day** is celebrated every year on the **Second Thursday of October** to raise awareness of eye health amongst individuals, families and communities.

In 2023, the day falls on **12<sup>th</sup> October**.

**Theme 2023:** "Love Your Eyes at Work"

The day is organized by the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB) in cooperation with the World Health Organization (WHO). The day was first observed in 2000.

**401.** The United Nations **International Day for Disaster Reduction** is observed annually on **13<sup>th</sup> October** to promote a global culture of risk awareness and disaster reduction.

The International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR) was first observed on 10<sup>th</sup> October 1990. In 2009, the UN General Assembly had decided to change the name to International Day for Disaster Reduction and designated 13<sup>th</sup> October as the official date for the day. Since 2010, the day is observed on the 13<sup>th</sup> October every year.

**Theme 2023:** "Fighting inequality for a resilient future"

**402. National Cinema Day** has been observed on **13<sup>th</sup> October 2023**. The day was initially conceived by the Multiplex Association of India (MAI) in 2022. The MAI initiated National Cinema Day to commemorate the reopening of cinema halls post the Covid-19 pandemic.

In 2022, the day was observed on 23<sup>rd</sup> September.

**403. International E-Waste Day** is observed annually on **14<sup>th</sup> October** to promote the correct disposal of e-waste throughout the world with the aim to increase re-use, recovery and recycling rates. The day was first observed in **2018** by the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Forum.

The year 2023 marks the sixth edition of the day.

**Theme 2023:** "You can recycle anything with a plug, battery or cable!"

**404. World Student's Day** is observed annually on **15<sup>th</sup> October** to commemorate the birth anniversary of the former President of India, Late Dr **APJ Abdul Kalam**.

The year 2023 marks the **92nd** birth anniversary of him.

**A.P.J Abdul Kalam:**

He was born on 15 October 1931 at Dhanushkodi, Rameswaram, Tamil Nadu. His full name was Avul Pakir Jainulabdeen Abdul Kalam. He was known as the '**Missile Man of India**'. He played a crucial role in the Pokhran-II nuclear tests in 1998.

He became the President of India in 2002.

**Awards/Honours:** Bharat Ratna in 1997, Padma Vibhushan in 1990, and Padma Bhushan in 1981.

**Major works:** India 2020: A Vision for the New Millennium, Wings of Fire, Ignited Minds: Unleashing the Power within India, Transcendence: My Spiritual Experiences with Pramukh Swamiji, A Manifesto for Change: A Sequel to India 2020, etc.

**405. Global Handwashing Day** is observed annually on **15<sup>th</sup> October**. The day is dedicated to advocate handwashing with soap as an easy, effective, and affordable way to prevent diseases and save lives.

The day was founded by the Global Handwashing Partnership.

The first Global Handwashing Day was held in **2008**.

The 2023 Global Handwashing Day theme is "**Clean hands are within reach.**"

**406. The Central Electricity Authority (CEA)**, the organization under the Ministry of Power, Government of India, which provides technical and policy support to the government and to all other stakeholders in the power sector, has observed its **50<sup>th</sup> Foundation Day** on October 15, 2023.

On the occasion, the union Power minister R.K. Singh has released a compendium compiled by Central Electricity Authority, on Electricity Rules notified by Ministry of Power under Electricity Act, 2003.

**Central Electricity Authority (CEA):**

CEA is a Statutory Body constituted under erstwhile Electricity (Supply) Act, 1948 (replaced by Electricity Act, 2003).

**Composition:** Not more than fourteen Members (including its Chairperson) of whom not more than eight shall be full-time Members to be appointed by Central Government.

**Headquarters:** New Delhi

**Chairman:** Ghanshyam Prasad

**407. National Security Guard (NSG)** annually celebrate its Raising Day on 16<sup>th</sup> October to mark the establishment of NSG (also known as Black Cats) on **16<sup>th</sup> October 1984**.

The year 2023 marks the observance of **39<sup>th</sup> Raising Day** of National Security Guard (NSG).

**National Security Guard (NSG):**

The National Security Guard (NSG) is a counter-terrorism unit of India under the Ministry of Home Affairs. It was founded on 16 October 1984, following Operation Blue Star, for combating terrorist activities and protect states against internal disturbances. It was formally established through under the **National Security Guard Act, 1986**.

- **Headquarters:** New Delhi

**408. World Food Day** is observed annually on **16<sup>th</sup> October** to highlight the millions of people worldwide who cannot afford a healthy diet and the need for regular access to nutritious food. The day is observed to commemorate the date of the founding of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in 1945. The day was first observed in 1981.

**Theme 2023:** 'Water is life, water is food. Leave no one behind'

**409. International Day for the Eradication of Poverty** is observed annually on **17<sup>th</sup> October** to spread awareness of the need to eradicate poverty and destitution around the world, particularly in developing countries.

The year 2023 marks the **31<sup>st</sup>** anniversary of the declaration by the United Nations General Assembly, in its resolution 47/196 of 22 December 1992, to observe 17 October as the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty. The day was first observed in 1987.

**Theme 2023:** "Decent Work and Social Protection: Putting dignity in practice for all"

**410. World Osteoporosis Day** is observed annually on **20<sup>th</sup> October** to create and raise global awareness of the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of osteoporosis and metabolic bone disease. The day is organized by the International Osteoporosis Foundation (IOF). The day was first observed in 1996.

**Theme 2023:** "Build Better Bones"

**411. National Police Commemoration Day**, also known as Police Martyrs Day, is observed annually on **21<sup>st</sup> October** to remember and honour the brave policemen who have laid down their lives in the line of duty.

The day also commemorates the day in 1959, when twenty Indian soldiers were attacked by Chinese troops in the Hot Springs area of Ladakh, in which ten Indian policemen lost their lives and seven were imprisoned.

**412. International Stuttering Awareness Day** is observed annually on **22<sup>nd</sup> October** to create and raise public awareness of the millions of people who have a speech disorder of stuttering or stammering. The day was first observed in **1998**.

Stuttering is a communication disorder which involves disruptions or disfluencies in a person's speech.

**Theme 2023:** "One Size Does NOT Fit All"

**413. International Snow Leopard Day** is observed annually on **23<sup>rd</sup> October** to spread awareness on conservation and protection of snow leopards. The day came into existence on 23 October 2013, with the adoption of the Bishkek Declaration by 12 countries on the conservation of snow leopards.

**414. United Nations Day** is observed annually on **24<sup>th</sup> October** to mark the anniversary of the coming into force of the United Nations Charter in 1945. The year 2023 marks the **78<sup>th</sup> anniversary** of the United Nations and its founding Charter.

The United Nations, which is an intergovernmental organization, was set up on 24<sup>th</sup> October 1945. It is headquartered in New York; USA and the current Secretary-General is **António Guterres**.

**415. World Polio Day** is observed annually on **24<sup>th</sup> October** to spread awareness for polio vaccination and eradication of polio. The day was established by Rotary International over a decade ago to commemorate the birth of **Jonas Salk**, who led the first team to develop a vaccine against poliomyelitis.

24<sup>th</sup> October 2023 marks the **22<sup>nd</sup> observance** of World Polio Day.  
The first World Polio Day was observed in 2022.

**416. The Raising Day of the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP)** is annually observed on **24<sup>th</sup> October** to mark the establishment of the ITBP, a Central Armed Police Force functioning under the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), in 1962.

The day also recognise the services and achievements of the ITBP and honour the brave hearts who have made the ultimate sacrifice for the country.

The year 2023 marks the observance of the **62<sup>nd</sup> Raising Day** of ITBP.

**Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP):**

ITBP is a Central Armed Police Force functioning under the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India. It was raised on 24<sup>th</sup> October 1962 during the India-China War and is a border guarding police force specializing in high altitude operations.

ITBP was initially raised under the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) Act, 1949. However, in 1992, parliament enacted the ITBPF Act, and the rules were framed in 1994.



- **Headquarters:** New Delhi
- **Director General:** Anish Dayal Singh

**417.** The United Nations (UN) **Global Media and Information Literacy Week** is annually observed across the globe from **24 to 31 October 2023** to spread awareness of media and information literacy (MIL) and to celebrate the progress made towards achieving MIL for all.

24 to 31 October 2023 marks the observance of the **12<sup>th</sup> Global Media and Information Literacy Week**.

**Theme 2023:** "Media and Information Literacy in Digital Spaces: A Collective Global Agenda"

The International Conference of the 2023 Global MIL Week has been co-organized by

**UNESCO** and the Government of The Hashemite Kingdom of **Jordan**.

The United Nations General Assembly had approved celebrating this week in the year 2021.

**418.** The **Accession Day of Jammu and Kashmir** with the Union of India is observed annually on **26<sup>th</sup> October**. It was on this day in 1947 that the then Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir, Hari Singh signed the Instrument of Accession to become part of India. The day became an official public holiday in J&K for the first time in 2020 after the abrogation of Articles 370 and 35A on 5th August 2019.

**419. World Day for Audio-visual Heritage** is observed annually on **27<sup>th</sup> October** to spread awareness of the significance and preservation risks of recorded sound and audio-visual documents. It is a key initiative for both UNESCO and the Coordinating Council of Audio-visual Archives Associations (CCAAA). The day was first observed in 2006.

**Theme 2023:** "Your Window to the World".

**420. International Animation Day** is observed annually on **28<sup>th</sup> October** to celebrate the art of animation and recognise the artists, scientists and technicians behind animation. The year 2023 marks the observance of the 22nd International Animation Day.

International Animated Film Association (ASIFA) declared 28<sup>th</sup> October as the International Animation Day in 2002.

**421. International Internet Day** is observed annually on **29<sup>th</sup> October** to celebrate the usage of the internet for the first time. The day marks the sending of the first electronic message which was transferred from one computer to another in 1969. The day was first observed in 2005.

**422. World Stroke Day** is observed annually on **29<sup>th</sup> October** by the World Stroke Organization (WSO) to increase awareness and drive action on stroke around the world. The day focuses on the **Precious Time campaign** which aims to raise awareness about stroke symptoms and



the benefits of acting FAST (Facial drooping, Arm weakness, Speech difficulty and Timely emergency service) to identify a stroke and access emergency medical care.

The World Stroke Day was established by the World Stroke Congress in **2004**. The day was first observed in 2006.

**Theme 2023:** Together we are #GreaterThan Stroke

A stroke is a non-communicable condition where the blood supply to the brain is disrupted, resulting in oxygen starvation, brain damage and loss of function. It is most frequently caused by a clot in an artery supplying blood to the brain, a situation known as ischemia.

**423. National Unity Day** is observed annually on **31<sup>st</sup> October** to commemorate the birth anniversary of the Iron Man of India, **Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel**. This year marks the **148<sup>th</sup>** birth anniversary of him.

- The Indian government in **2014** declared October 31st as the National Unity Day or Rashtriya Ekta Diwas.
- The *Statue of Unity* (182 meters) at Kevadiya in Narmada district of Gujarat was built in his honour in 2018.

**424. The Vigilance Awareness Week** is observed annually across India during the week in which the birth anniversary of **Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel (31<sup>st</sup> October)** falls.

The week is observed by the **Central Vigilance Commission (CVC)** to promote integrity, transparency, and ethical practices, emphasizing the crucial role of vigilance in preventing corruption and ensuring accountability within organizations.

The Vigilance Awareness Week 2023 is observed from **30<sup>th</sup> October to 5<sup>th</sup> November 2023**.

The 2023 theme of Vigilance Awareness Week is **"Say no to Corruption; commit to the Nation."**

Important Day	Date/Month	Theme for 2023	Remark
International Coffee Day	1 <sup>st</sup> October	Promoting the right to a safe and healthy working environment in the coffee supply chain	The day was first observed in 2015.
National Voluntary Blood Donation Day	1 <sup>st</sup> October		
World Vegetarian Day	1 <sup>st</sup> October		
Vegetarian Awareness Month	1 <sup>st</sup> October to 1 <sup>st</sup> November		
International Day of Older Persons	1 <sup>st</sup> October	Fulfilling the Promises of the Universal	

		Declaration of Human Rights for Older Persons: Across Generations	
National Pension System Diwas	1 <sup>st</sup> October		The day was first observed in 2021.
National Wildlife Week	2 <sup>nd</sup> to 8 <sup>th</sup> October	Partnerships for wildlife conservation	The year 2023 marks the 69 <sup>th</sup> National Wildlife Week.
World Day for Farmed Animals (WDFA)	2 <sup>nd</sup> October		
International Day of Non-Violence	2 <sup>nd</sup> October		The year 2023 marks the 154 <sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.
World Habitat Day	First Monday of October (2nd October 2023)	Resilient urban economies. Cities as drivers of growth and recovery	
World Space Week	4 <sup>th</sup> to 10 <sup>th</sup> October	Space and Entrepreneurship	
World Animal Day	4 <sup>th</sup> October	Great or Small, Love Them All	
International Teachers Day	5 <sup>th</sup> October	The teachers we need for the education we want: The global imperative to reverse the teacher shortage	
Breast Cancer Awareness Month	1 <sup>st</sup> to 31 <sup>st</sup> October		
World Cerebral Palsy Day	6 <sup>th</sup> October	Together Stronger	
World Smile Day	First Friday of October (6 <sup>th</sup> October 2023)		The day was first observed in 1999.
World Cotton Day	7 <sup>th</sup> October	Making cotton fair and sustainable for all: from farm to fashion	The day was first observed in 2019.

Important Day	Date/Month	Theme for 2023	Remark
Indian Air Force Day	8 <sup>th</sup> October	IAF - Air Power Beyond Boundaries	Indian Air Force has observed its 91st Raising Day on 8th October 2023.
World Dyslexia Day	8 <sup>th</sup> October	Uniquely You	
World Hospice and Palliative Care Day	Second Saturday of October (14 <sup>th</sup> October 2023)	Compassionate Communities: Together for Palliative Care	
World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD)	Second Saturday of May (13 <sup>th</sup> May 2023) and Second Saturday of October (14 <sup>th</sup> October 2023)	Water: Sustaining Bird Life	
World Post Day	9 <sup>th</sup> October	Together for trust: Collaborating for a safe and connected future	
Indian Foreign Service Day	9 <sup>th</sup> October		Indian Foreign Service was established on 9 <sup>th</sup> October 1946.
National Postal Week	9 <sup>th</sup> to 13 <sup>th</sup> October 2023		
National Post Day	10 <sup>th</sup> October		
World Mental Health Day	10 <sup>th</sup> October	Mental Health is a Universal Human Right	
World Day Against the Death Penalty	10 <sup>th</sup> October		
National Current Good Manufacturing Practice Day (cGMP Day)	10 <sup>th</sup> October	cGMP: Transforming Healthcare	
International Day of Girl Child	11 <sup>th</sup> October	Invest in Girls' Rights: Our Leadership, Our Well-being	The day was first observed in 2012.

World Arthritis Day	12 <sup>th</sup> October	It's in your hands, take action	
World Sloth Bear Day	12 <sup>th</sup> October		IUCN Red List status of Sloth Bear is 'Vulnerable'.
International Day for Disaster Reduction	13 <sup>th</sup> October	Early Warning	
World Sight Day	Second Thursday of October (12 <sup>th</sup> October 2023)	Love Your Eyes at Work	
International E-Waste Day	14 <sup>th</sup> October	You can recycle anything with a plug, battery or cable!	The day was first observed in 2018.
World Standard Day	14 <sup>th</sup> October	Shared Vision for a Better World – Standards for Sustainable Development Goals” (incorporating SDG3)	The day was first observed in 1970.
World Egg Day	Second Friday of October (13 <sup>th</sup> October 2023)	Eggs for a healthy future	
World Student's Day	15 <sup>th</sup> October		The day commemorate the birth anniversary of the former president of India, Late Dr APJ Abdul Kalam.
International Day of Rural Women	15 <sup>th</sup> October		The day was first observed in 2008.
Global Handwashing Day	15 <sup>th</sup> October	Clean hands are within reach	The day was first observed in 2008.

Important Day	Date/Month	Theme for 2023	Remark
World Food Day	16 <sup>th</sup> October	Water is life, water is food. Leave no one behind	The day was first observed in 1981.

International Day for the Eradication of Poverty	17 <sup>th</sup> October	Decent Work and Social Protection: Putting dignity in practice for all	
World Trauma Day	17 <sup>th</sup> October		The day was created in New Delhi in 2011.
Global Dignity Day	Third Wednesday of October (18 <sup>th</sup> October 2023)		
Bone & Joint Action Week	12 <sup>th</sup> to 20 <sup>th</sup> October		
World Osteoporosis Day	20 <sup>th</sup> October	Build Better Bones	
International Chefs Day	20 <sup>th</sup> October		
World Statistics Day	20 <sup>th</sup> October		
National Solidarity Day	20 <sup>th</sup> October		
National Police Commemoration Day	21 <sup>st</sup> October		
Global Iodine Deficiency Disorders Prevention Day	21 <sup>st</sup> October		
International Stuttering Awareness Day	22 <sup>nd</sup> October	One Size Does NOT Fit All	

Important Day	Date/Month	Theme for 2023	Remark
International Snow Leopard Day	23 <sup>rd</sup> October		
International Lead Poisoning Prevention Week	Last Week of October (22 <sup>nd</sup> to 28 <sup>th</sup> October 2023)		The year 2023 marks the <b>11<sup>th</sup></b> International Lead Poisoning Prevention Week. The focus of campaign 2023 is " <i>End Childhood Lead Poisoning</i> ".
World Development Information Day	24 <sup>th</sup> October		
International Day of Diplomats	24 <sup>th</sup> October		The day was proposed by Indian poet-diplomat Abhay K.
United Nations Day	24 <sup>th</sup> October		The year 2023 marks the 78th anniversary of

			the United Nations and its founding Charter.
World Polio Day	24 <sup>th</sup> October		
Disarmament Week	24 <sup>th</sup> to 30 <sup>th</sup> October		
Global Media and Information Literacy Week	24 <sup>th</sup> to 31 <sup>st</sup> October	"Media and Information Literacy in Digital Spaces: A Collective Global Agenda"	
World Sustainability Day	4th Wednesday of October (25 <sup>th</sup> October 2023)		
World Dwarfism Day	25 <sup>th</sup> October		
Accession Day of Jammu & Kashmir	26 <sup>th</sup> October		
World Day for Audio-visual Heritage	27 <sup>th</sup> October	Your Window to the World	
Indian Army Infantry Day	27 <sup>th</sup> October		The year 2023 marks the 77 <sup>th</sup> Infantry Day.
World Occupational Therapy Day	27 <sup>th</sup> October	Unity through community	
International Animation Day	28 <sup>th</sup> October		
World Stroke Day	29 <sup>th</sup> October	Together we are #GreaterThanStroke	
International Internet Day	29 <sup>th</sup> October		
International Day of Care & Support	29 <sup>th</sup> October		
International Open Access Week	Last week of October (23 <sup>rd</sup> to 29 <sup>th</sup> October 2023)	Community over Commercialization	
National Unity Day	31 <sup>st</sup> October		The day commemorates the birth anniversary of the Iron Man of India,



			Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. This year marks the 148th birth anniversary of him.
World Savings Day (World Thrift Day)	31 <sup>st</sup> October	Conquer your tomorrow	In India, due to the death of the late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi on 31 <sup>st</sup> October 1984, the World Savings Day is observed on 30 <sup>th</sup> October.
World Cities Day	31 <sup>st</sup> October	Financing sustainable urban future for all	The day was first observed in 2014.
Vigilance Awareness Week	30th October to 5 <sup>th</sup> November 2023	Say no to Corruption; commit to the Nation	The week is observed across India by the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC).

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