



WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS PDFs



November 2024



A Complete and Comprehensive Current Affairs
Quick Revision PDFs For Every Aspirants.

NATIONAL AFFAIRS / GOVERNMENT SCHEME

1. Key Highlights of Spain's PM Pedro Sanchez's Visit to India October 28-29, 2024.

At the invitation of Narendra Modi, Prime Minister (PM) of India, Pedro Sánchez, PM of Spain, along with his spouse Begona Gomez, visited India from 28th to 29th October 2024.

- PM Modi and Spain PM Pedro Sánchez discussed a range of bilateral issues during delegation-level talks held at the Laxmi Vilas Palace in Vadodara, Gujarat.

Key Points:-

- (i) India & Spain signed several MoUs related to rail transport, customs, finance mechanisms for investment, and cultural exchanges.
- (ii) Spain's PM Pedro Sanchez inaugurated the Fourth Spain-India Forum in Mumbai, Maharashtra, on 29th October 2024.
- (iii) The theme of the forum was "Spain-India Partnership amid Geopolitical and Technological Challenges: New Horizons, New Possibilities."

2. RPF and MoWCD Unveil Updated Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to Safeguard Vulnerable Children.

On 25th October 2024, the Railway Protection Force (RPF), in collaboration with the Ministry of Railways (MoR) and the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD), launched the revised Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to protect vulnerable children on railway premises across the nation. The launch event took place at Rail Bhawan in New Delhi.

- The comprehensive SOP outlines a detailed framework for safeguarding children who come into contact with Indian Railways.

- This revised SOP strengthens MoR's commitment to preventing child exploitation and trafficking, offering a safety net for vulnerable children.

Key Points:-

- (i) During the event, Indian Railways and MoWCD also announced the expansion of Child Help Desks (CHDs) at major railway stations, enhancing the support network for children in need.
- (ii) RPF highlighted the importance of reinforcing Anti-Human Trafficking Units (AHTUs) and urged states like Assam, Gujarat, Haryana, Punjab, Chhattisgarh, and Madhya Pradesh (MP) to set up these units at their railway stations to prevent trafficking and improve passenger safety.

3. 17th Urban Mobility India Conference & Expo takes place in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.

Bhupendra Patel, Chief Minister (CM) of Gujarat, inaugurated the 17th Urban Mobility India (UMI) Conference & Exhibition (2024) at the Mahatma Mandir Convention Centre in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.

- The theme of the 2024 conference is 'Standardization and Optimization of Urban Transport Solutions'.
- The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) organized the UMI 2024 in collaboration with the Institute of Urban Transport (India) and with the support of the Government of Gujarat and Gujarat Metro Rail Corporation (GMRC) Limited. The event was held from 25th October to 27th October 2024.
- During the closing ceremony, the winners of the 'Best Practices Project in Urban Transport' were awarded to state and city authorities in a total of 9 categories.

Key Points:-

(i) Bhubaneswar (Odisha) was awarded the title of the 'City with the Best Public Transport System' at the Urban Mobility India (UMI) Conference & Exhibition 2024.

(ii) This marks the sixth time (2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 & 2023) an Odisha government initiative, led by Capital Region Urban Transport (CRUT), has earned national recognition as one of the top urban mobility programs.

4. Rajnath Singh, MoD Minister, Unveils ADITI 3.0 Challenge and DISC 13 at Swavlamban 3.0.

Union Minister Rajnath Singh, Ministry of Defence (MoD) launched two significant initiatives aimed at bolstering indigenous defence technologies: the 3rd edition of Acing Development of Innovative Technologies with iDEX (ADITI 3.0) challenge and the 13th Defence India Start-up Challenges (DISC 13).

- The initiatives were launched during Swavlamban 3.0 held at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi, organized by the Naval Innovation and Indigenisation Organisation (NIIO).

- The ADITI (Acing Development of Innovative Technologies with iDEX) 3.0 challenge aims to foster innovation in defence technology by encouraging startups and enterprises to develop cutting-edge solutions.

- The 13th edition of the Defence India Startup Challenge (DISC) includes 7 challenges across AI, Military Communication, and Autonomous Systems, proposed by the Indian Army, Navy, and Air Force to modernize defense operations.

Key Points:-

(i) The previous editions of the Swavlamban

initiative garnered over 2,000 proposals, leading to the development of 155 challenges and facilitating the completion of 171 contracts worth more than Rs 700 crore.

(ii) It has successfully collaborated with 213 Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and startups through the iDEX initiative, promoting self-reliance in defence manufacturing.

(iii) The Defence Minister also recognized winners of previous Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) challenges and Hackathon participants, underscoring the government's commitment to fostering innovation in defence.

5. Australia named "Country of Focus" for International Film Festival of India (IFFI 2024).

The Ministry of Information & Broadcasting (MIB) has announced Australia as the "Country of Focus" for the 55th edition of the International Film Festival of India (IFFI 2024), which will be held in Panaji, Goa, from 20th to 28th November 2024.

- The "Country of Focus" is a key feature of IFFI, offering a dedicated platform to showcase the best contemporary films from the selected nation.

Key Points:-

(i) This recognition celebrates the significant contributions of Australian cinema to the global film industry, highlighting its rich storytelling traditions, vibrant film culture, and innovative cinematic techniques.

(ii) Seven Australian films, spanning a diverse range of genres—including critically acclaimed dramas, powerful documentaries, visually stunning thrillers, and light-hearted comedies—will be featured at IFFI 2024.

(iii) Founded in 1952, IFFI is one of Asia's premier film festivals, offering filmmakers a prestigious

platform to present their works. The festival is held annually in Goa to celebrate the best in world cinema.

6. Meluri Officially Declared as the 17th District of Nagaland.

On November 4, 2024, Meluri officially became the 17th district of Nagaland, following a notification from the Governor of Nagaland, La. Ganesan.

- This transition elevates Meluri from a sub-division of Phek district to an independent district.

- Meluri includes 31 villages covering an area of 1011 square kilometers (km²), with four administrative headquarters, such as the industrial town of Wazeho and the International Trade Centre (ITC) in Avangkhu, Nagaland.

Key Points:-

(i) Meluri, primarily inhabited by the Pochury Naga tribe, is located near the international border with Myanmar.

(ii) It is the fifth district established in Nagaland in the past three years, as part of the state government's efforts to improve administrative efficiency.

(iii) In 2021, the state government created Tseminyu district by splitting Kohima, and Chümoukedima and Niuland districts by dividing Dimapur.

7. 7th Session of ISA (International Solar Alliance) Assembly Held in New Delhi from November 3 to 6, 2024.

The 7th Session of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) was conducted from 3rd to 6th November

2024 in Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi with ministers from 29 countries.

- Ministers, mission heads, and delegates from 120 Member and Signatory Countries (103 Member and 17 Signatory Countries), along with partner organizations and stakeholders, participated in the event.

- The aim of the event was to enhance solar energy deployment across its Member Countries, particularly in regions with limited energy access.

Key Points:-

(i) In its 7th Assembly session, ISA elected Ashish Khanna from the Republic of India as its 3rd Director General.

(ii) The 7th session of the ISA Assembly in New Delhi has elected India as President and France as Co-President for a period of two years from 2024 to 2026.

(iii) The Assembly elects the President and Co-President with due consideration to equitable geographical representation. The four regional groups of ISA Members include Africa; Asia and the Pacific; Europe and Others; and Latin America and the Caribbean.

8. Ministry of Coal organizes Star Rating Awards Ceremony & Stakeholder Consultation on MDOs.

The Ministry of Coal successfully hosted an event in New Delhi, Delhi, which included the Star Rating Awards Ceremony for Coal & Lignite Mines, a Stakeholder Consultation on MDOs, and the release of the Coal Directory of India.

- The event was graced by Union Minister Gangapuram Kishan Reddy, Ministry of Coal, as the Chief Guest, with Union Minister of State Satish Chandra Dubey, Ministry of Coal, serving as the Guest of Honour.

- A total of 43 coal mines earned a 5-star rating for the year 2022-23, recognizing exceptional performance in mining operations, environmental practices, and worker safety.

- Of these, 4 mines secured the first position, 2 the second, and 6 the third.

Key Points:-

(i) Neyveli (Tamil Nadu) based NLC India Limited mines achieved top scores and received the 5-star rating in the survey of lignite and coal-based open-cast mines in India for the year 2022-23.

(ii) The Ministry of Mines also presented "Adarsh Karmayogi Awards" to 13 employees who completed over 100 courses on the iGOT Karmayogi portal.

9. DA&FW Issues Operational Guidelines for Central Sector Scheme 'NAMO DRONE DIDI'.

The GoI has approved the Central Sector Scheme 'Namo Drone Didi' for providing drones to Women SHGs under DAY-NRLM, with an outlay of Rs 1261 Cr.

- This aims to provide drones to 14500 selected Women SHGs from 2024-25 to 2025-2026 for providing rental services to farmers for agricultural purposes like the application of liquid fertilizers and pesticides.

- DA&FW, under MoA&FW, has released the Operational Guidelines for this scheme.

Key Points:-

(i) Namo Drone Didi will be governed at the Central level by the Empowered Committee of the Secretaries of DA&FW; DRD, MoRD; DoF, MoC&F; MoCA; and MoWCD.

(ii) The Implementation and Monitoring Committee will be headed by Caralyn Khongwar Deshmukh,

Additional Secretary, MoRD. The committee will have representation from all stakeholders.

(iii) Under the scheme, CFA at 80% of the cost of drones and accessories/ancillary charges up to Rs 8 lakhs will be provided to women SHGs for the purchase of drones as a package.

10. Himachal pardesh 's Durgesh Aranya Zoological Park to Become India's First IGBC-Certified Zoo.

Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu, CM of HP, announced that Durgesh Aranya Zoological Park, located in the Bankhandi area of Kangra's Dehra constituency in HP, will be the 1st zoo in India to receive certification from the Indian Green Building Council (IGBC).

- This certification highlights the commitment to sustainable infra and eco-friendly practices, setting a new benchmark for conservation and environmental responsibility across India.

- This initiative aligns with the gov's vision to develop Kangra as a model for eco-tourism, reinforcing its reputation as the "Tourism Capital" of HP.

Key Points:-

(i) The zoo's development is progressing in phases. The 1st phase, covering 25 ha, has a projected cost of Rs 230 cr and is set for completion by Q3 2025.

(ii) The entire park, with a budget of Rs 619 cr, will boost tourism in Kangra and neighboring areas, creating an eco-friendly attraction.

(iii) The CZA has approved 34 enclosures at Durgesh Aranya Zoo to house 73 species, including Asiatic lions, hog deer, crocodiles, gharials, monitor lizards, and native birds.

11. DoPPW(Department of Pensions and Pensioners) Issues New Guidelines on Family Pension Eligibility for Daughters.

DoPPW under MOPPG&P has issued new guidelines on maintaining records for family members of govt pensioners.

- As per the new guidelines, a daughter's name cannot be removed from the list of family members eligible for a govt servant's family pension.
- According to the CCS (Pension) Rules, 2021, the term "family" includes unmarried, married, and widowed daughters, which also includes step-daughters and adopted daughters.
- GoI (Col) has clarified that once a govt employee includes his daughter's name on Form 4, she is officially recognised as a family member, irrespective of her pension eligibility.

Key Points:-

- (i) The revised guidelines state that unmarried, widowed, or divorced daughters over 25 years of age may also receive a family pension only if their siblings are either above 25 or financially independent. However, disabled children are given priority entitlement to the pension.
- (ii) Female govt employees or pensioners involved in ongoing divorce proceedings, or those who have filed cases against their husbands under relevant protective acts, may request family pension benefits for their children in the event of their death.
- (iii) As per the new guidelines, if no eligible child exists at the time of a woman's death, the family pension will be received by the surviving widower. Initially, the pension will be given to the widower if they are the legal guardian of any minor or disabled children.

12. India-Vietnam 5th Joint Military Exercise VINBAX-2024 Conducted in Haryana.

The 5th edition of the Vietnam-India Bilateral Army Exercise (VINBAX-2024) is being conducted at Ambala, Haryana and Chandimandir Military Station in Panchkula District of Haryana from Nov 4 to 23, 2024, marking a significant step in enhancing defense ties between India and Vietnam.

- Aim of VINBAX-2024 is to strengthen joint military readiness, particularly in areas crucial to UN peacekeeping missions.
- Troops will focus on engineering tasks and medical team deployment under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, involving Peacekeeping Ops.
- VINBAX is an annual training exercise instituted in 2018, with the first edition held in Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh (MP).

Key Points:-

- (i) VINBAX-2024 is designed as an intense field training exercise, focusing on technical coordination and shared best practices.
- (ii) This year, VINBAX has expanded its scope, with participation from both the Army and Air Force of India and Vietnam for the first time, reflecting deeper commitment to bilateral cooperation.
- (iii) It includes a 48-hour Validation Exercise, featuring a Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) demonstration and equipment exhibition.

13. According to CWC Report, Himalayan Glacial Lakes Expanded Over 10% in Area from 2011 to 2024.

According to the CWC's report, glacial lakes and other water bodies across the Himalayan region

witnessed an overall increase of 10.81% in areas, from 5.33 lakh ha in 2011 to 5.91 lakh ha in 2024 due to climate change, which indicates towards increased risk of GLOFs.

- As per the report, the total inventory area of glacial lakes in India has increased by 33.7%, i.e., from 1,962 ha in 2011 to 2,623 ha in 2024 (September).
- The report has identified 67 lakes in India that experienced an over 40% expansion in surface area, placing them in the high-risk category for potential GLOFs.
- The report cautioned that the rapid expansion of these GLOFs, attributed to increased melting of glaciers due to increasing temperatures in the region, could lead to severe consequences for downstream communities, infrastructure, and biodiversity.

Key Points:-

- (i) The report emphasized the importance of continuous monitoring of glacial lakes, even smaller lakes, due to their potential for sudden, catastrophic GLOFs.
- (ii) The CWC report highlighted the transboundary risks posed by expanding glacial lakes in neighbouring countries, including Bhutan, Nepal, and China.

14. The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade has amended the Bicycle Retro-Reflective Devices (Quality Control) Order, 2020.

The DPIIT under MoC&I has amended the Bicycle Retro-Reflective Devices (Quality Control) Order, 2020, notified on 9th July 2020, which came into effect on 1st July 2023.

- The QCO on Bicycle Retro-Reflective Devices (Quality Control) Amendment Order, 2024 is part of several initiatives for quality ecosystem development,

attracting investments, and fostering entrepreneurial talent, with a focus on product quality.

- The Order introduces relaxations, including exemptions for importing 200 bicycle reflectors for R&D by manufacturers and for importing bicycle reflectors by Indian bicycle manufacturers for export purposes, subject to specific conditions.

- This will promote growth in performance, durability, and dependency.

Key Points:-

DPIIT has been issuing QCOs since 1987, covering 81 QCOs for over 330 products under the BIS Act.

15. Assam Launches Mission Basundhara 3.0 to Grant Land Rights to Indigenous Communities.

Assam Chief Minister (CM) Himanta Biswa Sarma launched Mission Basundhara 3.0 in Guwahati to provide land rights to indigenous people, digitize land-related services, and publish maps for the benefit of the state's residents.

- The CM also launched the Revenue Department's Digidoc, a digital directory for non-registrable and optional registrable documents, aimed at streamlining services, reducing processing time, and improving public convenience, accessibility, and efficiency.
- Under this phase, members of Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), Adivasi communities, Tea Tribes, and Gorkhas will be recognized as "sons of the soil" and exempt from proving three-generation ancestry to obtain land rights.
- The premium rate for city dwellers has been reduced to 3% of the zonal valuation.

Key Points:-

- (i) Mission Basundhara 3.0 will be the final phase

of the initiative, with no plans for a Mission Basundhara 4.0.

(ii) Mission Basundhara 1.0, launched in 2021, resolved 8 lakh applications in 9 months.

(iii) Mission Basundhara 2.0, launched in 2022, granted land rights to over 2 lakh indigenous people within 1 year.

16. Cabinet Approves PM-Vidyalaxmi Scheme to Offer Financial Assistance to Meritorious Students.

On 6th November 2024, the Union Cabinet, chaired by PM Narendra Modi, approved the PM Vidyalaxmi Scheme, a new CSS, aimed at providing financial assistance to meritorious students.

- This initiative ensures that financial constraints do not prevent anyone from pursuing higher education.
- Under the scheme, any meritorious student admitted to QHEIs will be eligible for collateral-free, guarantor-free loans from banks and FIs to cover tuition fees and other course-related expenses.

Key Points:-

(i) The GoI has allocated Rs 3,600 crore for the scheme from FY25 to FY31, benefiting an estimated 7 lakh new students through interest subvention during this period.

(ii) The CCEA, chaired by PM Narendra Modi, also approved an equity infusion of Rs 10,700 crore for FCI to support its working capital requirements for FY25.

17. MSDE Reconstitutes Central Apprenticeship Council (CAC) for 3 Years to Strengthen Apprenticeship Training Programs.

The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) has reconstituted the Central Apprenticeship Council (CAC) for a three-year term, effective from October 17, 2024.

- This move is in accordance with the powers granted under Sec 24(1) and (2) of the Apprentices Act, 1961 (52 of 1961) and Rules 3 and 4 of the CAC Rules, 1962.
- The reformed council will focus on driving reforms to enhance apprenticeship training and increase industry participation in on-the-job training.

Key Points:-

(i) Union Minister of State (Independent Charge, IC), Jayant Chaudhary, MSDE will chair the council, with Rajya Sabha member Vikramjit Singh Sahney as the vice-chairman of the council.

(ii) The new CAC will have 54 members, an increase from 46 in the 2019 council, including representatives from industry associations, PSUs, state governments, and independent experts.

(iii) There will be representation from PSUs such as Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL), Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC), and Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), among others.

18. IIM Shillong Partners with SIDBI to Launch Entrepreneurship Training and Incubation Programme.

Indian Institute of Management Shillong has joined hands with the Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) to foster entrepreneurship in the Northeast.

- Through its Foundation for Incubation and Enterprise (IIMSFIE), IIM Shillong signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with SIDBI, aiming to launch an entrepreneurship training and incubation program.

- The partnership introduces the Skill to Enterprise Model (STEM) Programme, which will equip aspiring entrepreneurs with the necessary skills, knowledge, and mentorship to build sustainable businesses.

Key Points:-

- (i) The initiative will offer an 18-month entrepreneurship training programme for 30 selected participants, combining classroom learning, hands-on experience, and incubation support.
- (ii) IIM Shillong's director, Prof DP Goyal, highlighted that this collaboration is key to supporting innovative startups and driving regional economic growth.
- (iii) SIDBI's North East Zone General Manager, Bhanu Prakash Verma, echoed this sentiment, emphasising their commitment to nurturing young entrepreneurs in the region.

INTERNATIONAL

1. 27th Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting Concludes in Apia, Samoa.

The 27th Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM 2024) was held in Apia, Samoa from 24th to 26th October 2024. Samoa, with support from Australia, hosted the event.

- The theme for CHOGM 2024 was "One Resilient Common Future: Transforming our Common Wealth."
- 2024 marks the 75th anniversary of the Commonwealth and the first CHOGM hosted by a Pacific island country.
- It also marks His Majesty King Charles III's first CHOGM as Head of the Commonwealth.

Key Points:-

- (i) The Indian delegation, led by Union Minister

Kiren Rijju, Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs (MOPA), Government of India (GoI), participated in the Executive Session of CHOGM 2024.

- (ii) Commonwealth countries adopted their first ocean declaration during the summit amidst growing calls from some of Britain's former colonies for reparatory justice related to the trans-Atlantic slave trade.

2. The increase in MGNREGA person days from Rs 1660 crore (FY07-FY14) to Rs 2923 crore (FY15-FY25) gave a new direction to rural employment.

As per data from the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), rural employment under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005 (MGNREGA) has seen significant growth over the past decade. From the Financial Year 2006-07 (FY07) to FY14, a total of 1,660 crore person-days were generated. In contrast, from FY15 to FY25, this number surged to 2,923 crore person-days.

- This marks an increase of approximately 76.1% in person-days generated over the two periods.
- According to NREGASoft, in FY 2023-24, states/UTs deleted a total of 102.20 lakh job cards, while in FY 2024-25 (as of October 26, 2024), deletions had dropped to 32.28 lakh.

Key Points:-

- (i) MoRD also reported that Aadhaar seeding has been completed for about 13 crore active workers, representing 99.3% of total active workers. This process has helped reduce transaction rejections caused by frequent account changes.
- (ii) The budget allocation for MGNREGA has risen to ₹86,000 crore in FY 2024-25, up from ₹33,000 crore in FY 2013-14.
- (iii) The minimum average notified wage rate has

increased by 7% in FY25.

3. Brazil Becomes the Second BRICS Nation to Opt Out of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

Brazil has officially decided not to join China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). With this decision, Brazil becomes the second BRICS country, following India, to decline participation in this major infrastructure project.

- Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, via his Special Adviser for International Affairs, Celso Amorim, stated that Brazil aims to strengthen its relationship with China while avoiding formal treaty commitments to the BRI.
- Brazil plans to utilize elements of the BRI framework to align its infrastructure projects with Chinese investment funds, without formally joining the initiative.

Key Points:-

- (i) BRICS originally consisted of Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa. New members, including Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), have been added.
- (ii) The BRI, also known as the One Belt One Road or the New Silk Road, is a global development strategy launched by China in 2013. It seeks to improve connectivity and cooperation across countries in Asia, Europe, and Africa.
- (iii) The BRI is one of the largest infrastructure and investment projects in history, with total investment estimates ranging from USD 4 trillion to USD 8 trillion.

4. The 16th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP) Took Place in Cali, Colombia.

The 16th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP 16) was held from 21st October to 1st November 2024 in Cali, Colombia.

- Union Minister of State for Environment, Forests, and Climate Change (MoEFCC), Kirti Vardhan Singh, delivered India's national statement on biological resource conservation during the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Convention on Biological Diversity in Cali, Colombia, on 29th October 2024.
- India made a significant contribution to global wildlife conservation by establishing the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) to protect the world's seven major big cat species and preserve ecosystems and biodiversity.
- The UN COP 16 summit agreed to establish a subsidiary body to include Indigenous peoples in future decisions regarding nature conservation.

Key Points:-

- (i) The theme of the conference was "Peace with Nature."
- (ii) The main goal of the conference was to assess progress on the 2022 Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KM-GBF), which aims to protect 30% of global land and sea areas and restore 30% of degraded ecosystems by 2030.
- (iii) The World's First Global Ecosystems Atlas was launched at the 16th Conference of the Parties (COP 16) to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) on 22nd October 2024.

5. Union Minister Piyush Goyal's Visit to Saudi Arabia

Key Highlights from 29th to 30th October 2024.

Union Minister Piyush Goyal, Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoC&I), visited the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia from 29th to 30th October 2024. He participated in the 8th Future Investment Initiative (FII8) and co-chaired the 2nd Ministerial Meeting of the Economy and Investment Committee in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

- The Union Minister held engagements with Saudi ministers, including the Ministers of Energy, Industry and Mineral Resources, and Investment. These discussions centered on collaborative efforts in trade, energy, and technology, concluding with actionable agreements to enhance trade and investment flows.
- The 8th FII took place from 29th to 31st October 2024 in Riyadh, with the theme "Infinite Horizons: Investing Today, Shaping Tomorrow."
- Union Minister Piyush Goyal unveiled the One District, One Product (ODOP) Wall at the Indian Embassy in Riyadh, showcasing unique products from various Indian districts.

Key Points:-

- (i) Union Minister Piyush Goyal participated in the Plenary Session of the 8th FII, alongside global representatives from governments and industries.
- (ii) The event successfully secured over USD 70 billion in investment agreements.
- (iii) The ODOP initiative, part of India's "Vocal for Local" campaign, highlights regional craftsmanship and promotes India's rich cultural heritage through high-quality, distinctive products.

6. Key Highlights of CDS General Anil Chauhan's Official Visit to Algeria (October 31 - November 03, 2024).

CDS General Anil Chauhan visited the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria from 31st October to 3rd November 2024. This visit followed the President of India, Smt Droupadi Murmu's visit to Algeria in October 2024.

- General Chauhan met Algeria's military leaders to discuss enhancing defence cooperation, strategic interests, capacity building, training, and technology exchange.
- On 1st November 2024, CDS General Chauhan attended the military parade and ceremony as the Guest of Honour.
- The event was organised to commemorate the 70th anniversary of Algeria's Glorious Revolution of 1st November, 1954.

Key Points:-

- (i) On 3rd November 2024, CDS General Anil Chauhan and General Saïd Chanegriha, Chief of Staff of PNA, Algeria, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on bilateral defence cooperation in Algeria.
- (ii) This marks a significant milestone in bilateral military cooperation between India and Algeria and sets the foundation for long-term collaboration across various sectors.

7. Over One-Third of Tree Species at Risk of Extinction, According to IUCN's First Global Tree Assessment.

According to the first comprehensive Global Tree Assessment published as an update to the International Union for Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species on 28th October 2024, nearly 38% of the world's tree species are now at risk of extinction—meaning over one in three tree species face this threat.

- The key findings of the assessment were announced at the 16th Conference of Parties (COP 16) to the

Convention on Biological Diversity, currently being held in Cali, Colombia.

- The latest assessment reveals that at least 16,425 of the 47,282 tree species assessed are at risk of extinction.

Key Points:-

(i) The report underscores the exacerbating effect of climate change on extinction risks, particularly in tropical regions, driven by rising sea levels and more frequent severe storms.

(ii) The global assessment recommends several conservation practices to help prevent extinctions, such as habitat protection and restoration, ex-situ conservation through seed banks, and botanic garden collections.

8. India Joins ARIN-AP Steering Committee, Assumes Presidency, and Will Host AGM in 2026.

India has joined the Steering Committee of ARIN-AP to combat economic crimes and enhance asset recovery.

- Enforcement Directorate(ED), representing India in this network, investigates money laundering and foreign exchange law violations.
- The platform allows ED to obtain and share intelligence informally, enabling formal actions through bilateral or multilateral agreements.

Key Points:-

(i) India will assume the Presidency of the network in 2026 and host its Annual General Meeting(AGM) in 2026.

(ii) India can now contribute to ARIN-AP's decision-making and administrative responsibilities, advancing its mission to combat economic crimes and support asset recovery

globally.

(iii) This alignment reflects India's commitment to international cooperation on financial crimes and supports its broader strategic goals under the G-20, especially the Nine Point Agenda on fugitive economic offenders and asset recovery.

9. The Election Commission of India signs MoU on Electoral Cooperation with Uzbekistan's Central Election Body.

The Election Commission of India (ECI) signed an 'electoral cooperation' agreement with Uzbekistan's central poll body - Central Election Commission during a visit of Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Rajiv Kumar to Tashkent as an international observer for the upcoming elections.

- Polls in Uzbekistan were held on 27th October 2024.
- The MoU aims to further strengthen and deepen the interaction between the two Election Management Bodies (EMBs) for the mutual benefit of their democracies.
- The two bodies have a history of mutual cooperation, with officials from each country serving as observers in each other's elections, such as Uzbekistan's delegation observing India's Lok Sabha elections earlier this year.

Key Points:-

(i) Both commissions actively participate in global electoral forums such as the Association of World Election Bodies (A-WEB) and the Association of Asian Election Authorities (AAEA), facilitating knowledge sharing and best practices in electoral management.

(ii) This MoU is part of a broader effort by ECI, which has established agreements with over 30 EMBs worldwide, enhancing its role in

international electoral cooperation.

BANKING & FINANCE

1. India-UAE Partnership Boosts Digital Payments, Trade, and Launches JAYWAN Card.

India and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) have strengthened their strategic partnership through various initiatives aimed at boosting economic, financial, and technological cooperation. NPCI, through its subsidiary NIPL, and Al Etihad Payments launched the JAYWAN card scheme during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's UAE visit in early 2024, enhancing digital payments between India and UAE.

- Union Minister Piyush Goyal, Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI), highlighted ongoing efforts to integrate India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI) with the UAE's Arabian Automated Network for Instant Payments (AANI) during a press conference following the 12th meeting of the India-UAE High-Level Joint Task Force on Investment (HLJTFI) in Mumbai, Maharashtra.

- This integration will enable over 3 million Indians residing in the UAE to conduct cross-border transactions seamlessly.

Key Points:-

- (i) The UAE has pledged nearly USD 2 billion to establish food parks in India, enhancing food security for the UAE and creating job opportunities for Indian farmers.
- (ii) Following the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), trade between India and the UAE reached USD 84 billion in FY 2023-24, with a notable reduction in the trade deficit from USD 22 billion to USD 12 billion.
- (iii) Additional initiatives include the opening of Invest India and UAE investment offices in each

other's countries and the development of Bharat Mart, a major retail and logistics hub spanning over 100,000 square meters (m²) in Dubai, UAE.

2. RBI introduces 6 amendments to KYC guidelines.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has introduced six amendments to the Master Direction - Know Your Customer (KYC) Direction, 2016 (as amended from time to time), effective from November 6, 2024.

- Regulated Entities (REs) are required to adhere to the terms of the Master Direction on KYC to carry out Customer Due Diligence (CDD) for their customers.

- The reason for the amendment in KYC rules is to coordinate with the recent changes in the Money Laundering (Record Maintenance) Rules, 2005 and to include the implementation of Section 51A of the UAPA, 1967. Additionally, some existing instructions have also been amended to make the rules more effective and appropriate.

Key Points:-

- (i) The Six Amendments include the implementation of Customer Due Diligence (CDD) at the Unique Customer Identification Code (UCIC) level, allowing KYC-compliant customers to access services without repeat CDD. High-risk account definitions now require intensified monitoring, and "periodic updation" replaces "updation" for clarity on KYC updates.
- (ii) REs must update individual and legal entity KYC data with the Central KYC Records Registry (CKYCR) within seven days, which will notify reporting entities of changes. UAPA procedures have updated the Central Nodal Officer's designation from 'Additional Secretary' to 'Joint Secretary,' and references to "section" are now "paragraph" for consistency in legal language.

3. SBI Secures Rs 5,000 Crore Through AT-1 Bonds Offering 7.98% Interest.

Mumbai (Maharashtra)-based State Bank of India (SBI) has raised Rs 5,000 crore through its first Basel III compliant Additional Tier 1 (AT-1) bond issuance for the current financial year (FY2025), offering a coupon rate of 7.98%.

- The tenor of these SBI's AT-1 bonds is perpetual, with a call option after 10 years and each anniversary date thereafter.
- The issue attracted bids over 3.5 times the base issue size of Rs 2,000 crore. A total of 108 bids were received, reflecting participation from a diverse group of qualified institutional bidders.

Key Points:-

- (i) The participants included provident funds, pension funds, insurance companies, mutual funds, Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs), and banks.
- (ii) The bonds are rated AA+ with a stable outlook by CRISIL (Credit Rating Information Services of India Limited) and CARE (Credit Analysis and Research Limited) Ratings.
- (iii) AT-1 bonds are debt instruments issued by banks to raise funds and strengthen their capital base.

4. SEBI Prohibits OCAL and Its Promoters from Securities Markets Amid Fund Diversion Allegations.

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has barred Onelife Capital Advisors Limited (OCAL) and its promoters, Pandoo Naig and Prabhakara Naig, from participating in securities markets until further notice due to alleged fund diversion and misrepresentation of the company's financial records.

- SEBI has prohibited the Naigs from serving as directors or key managerial personnel in any listed company that plans to raise funds from the public or any SEBI-registered intermediary until further notice.
- OCAL's methods involve various regulatory violations, including hidden transactions among related parties without proper disclosures or approvals, diversion of funds as loans to related parties, and failures in corporate governance.

Key Points:-

- (i) According to SEBI, the questionable activities of OCAL and its promoters were overlooked or even approved by supposed watchdogs both within and outside the company, including compliance officers, audit committee members, and statutory auditors.
- (ii) The order followed an October 2022 complaint to SEBI about alleged fund diversion and financial misrepresentation by FCHL and OCAL. NSE also investigated OCAL based on their internal alerts.
- (iii) OCAL and the Naigs are promoters of the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) listed entity Family Care Hospitals Limited (FCHL).

5. RBI released the 43rd half-yearly report on the management of foreign exchange reserves.

On 29th October 2024, the RBI released its 43rd Half-Yearly Report on the Management of Foreign Exchange Reserves (MFER) for the period from Apr to Sept 2024.

- According to the report, India's FX reserves position as of 18th Oct 2024 was projected at USD 688.27 bn, consisting of USD 598.24 bn in FCA, Gold worth USD 67.44 bn, SDRs of USD 18.27 bn, and RTP of USD 4.32 bn.

- The RBI's latest report indicates that FER increased from USD 646.42 bn as of 31st Mar 2024 to USD 705.78 bn as of 30th Sept 2024.
- The report shows that India's FER, on a BoP basis excluding valuation effects, increased by USD 5.2 bn during Apr-June 2024, compared to an increase of USD 24.4 bn during the same period last year.

Key Points:-

- (i) As per the report, RBI's net forward asset (payable) stood at USD 14.58 bn as of 30th Sept 2024.
- (ii) The report also revealed that India's net IIP, which includes both external financial assets and liabilities, was negative at USD 368.3 bn as of 30th June 2024, an improvement from the negative net IIP of USD 379 bn as of 30th June 2023. This indicates that external liabilities exceed external assets in both periods.

6. RBI approves Pranav Chawda as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of JP Morgan Chase Bank India.

RBI has approved Pranav Chawda's appointment as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of JP Morgan Chase & Co's domestic banking unit, JP Morgan India, for a three-year term.

- He succeeds Prabhdev Singh, who resigned in June 2024, prior to completing his tenure.
- In this role, Chawda will also oversee the corporate banking division, aligning with the bank's strategy to integrate its commercial and corporate banking services.

Key Points:-

- (i) Chawda joined JP Morgan in 2019 as the head of client banking and specialized industries, focusing on mid-sized companies based in India.

- (ii) JP Morgan India's centers in Mumbai (Maharashtra), Bengaluru (Karnataka), and Hyderabad (Telangana) offer global operational support.

7. RBI Sets Rs 300 Crore Net Worth Requirement for Entities Seeking CCP Authorisation.

The RBI announced that any entity seeking authorisation or recognition as a CCP should have a net worth of at least Rs 300 crore at the time of submitting its application.

- RBI has updated its regulations from June 2019 regarding capital requirements and governance frameworks for CCPs.
- The revised regulations apply to both domestic CCPs authorised by RBI and foreign CCPs recognised under the PSS Act, 2007.
- CCP is a system provider that uses novation to interpose between system participants in transactions for settlement. CCP becomes the buyer to every seller and the seller to every buyer to settle transactions.

Key Points:-

- (i) Every authorised CCP must submit an audited net worth certificate from the statutory auditor within 6 months of the financial year's closure.
- (ii) The authorised CCP must be a public company limited by shares, with shares held by users of its services. If a person ceases to be a user, the CCP must ensure their shares are divested.

8. IFC Commits USD 400 Million to Bajaj Finance, Targeting a Fourfold Increase in Climate Loans by 2027.

The USA-based International Finance Corporation (IFC), a member of the World Bank Group, will

provide a USD 400 million loan to Pune-based BFL, a leading NBFC.

- This loan is part of BFL's USD 1 billion fundraising initiative, aiming to expand access to climate finance for EVs and EECGs in India.

Key Points:-

(i) The investment will boost competitiveness in the climate finance sector, align with national climate goals, and enhance financial inclusion across India.

(ii) This will help BFL enable greater usage of EVs and energy-efficient consumer goods, support more women-owned micro-borrowers, and contribute to India's inclusive and low-carbon future.

9. TATA American International Group (AIG) Launches 5 New Health Insurance Riders.

TATA AIG GI Co. Ltd launched 5 new insurance plans to enhance its retail health insurance offerings. This addresses rising medical costs and changing consumer needs.

- These include coverage for mental well-being, OPD expenses, female health, cancer care, and unlimited restoration of sum insured. Each rider offers 60+ benefits.
- The riders, EmpowerHer, Mental Wellbeing, CanCare, OPD Care, and Flexi Shield offer comprehensive coverage to policyholders.

Key Points:-

(i). Mental Wellbeing introduces preventive mental health screenings and rehab services. EmpowerHer focuses on female health issues like infertility and gynaecological concerns.

(ii) CanCare offers enhanced cancer protection,

while OPD Care and Flexi Shield help cover outpatient costs and protect against escalating medical expenses.

10. SEBI Permits Indian Mutual Fund to Invest in Overseas Funds with Exposure to Indian Securities.

On 4th November 2024, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) permitted Indian Mutual Funds (MFs) to invest in overseas Mutual Funds (MFs) or Unit Trusts (UTs) that allocate a specific portion of their assets to Indian securities.

- The total exposure to Indian securities by these overseas MF/UTs must not exceed 25% of their net assets.
- The initiative aims to simplify investment in overseas MF/UTs, enhance investment transparency, and help MFs diversify their global investment portfolios.
- This direction was introduced by SEBI via a circular issued under Section 11(1) of the SEBI Act, 1992, and Regulations 43(1) and 77 of the SEBI (Mutual Funds) Regulations, 1996.

Key Points:-

(i) SEBI mandates that all investor contributions to overseas MFs/UTs be combined into a single investment vehicle, with no separate side vehicles.

(ii) Overseas MFs must operate as a "blind pool," ensuring that all investors have equal and proportionate rights in the fund without separate portfolios.

(iii) If the exposure to Indian securities exceeds the 25% limit, an observance period of six months will be given from the date the breach is publicly disclosed. During this period, Indian MFs are prohibited from making new investments in the

overseas MF/UT. Investments may resume once the exposure falls below the 25% limit.

11. CCI Approves Fortis Healthcare Limited's Acquisition of Additional 31.52% Stake in Agilus Diagnostics Limited.

On 29th October 2024, the Competition Commission of India (CCI) approved the proposal of Fortis Healthcare Limited (FHL), a multi-specialty hospital chain in India, to acquire an additional 31.52% stake in Agilus Diagnostics Limited (Agilus).

- Following the transaction, FHL's shareholding in Agilus will increase from the current 57.68% to 89.2%.

Key Points:-

- (i) CCI also approved the proposed combination which involves the merger of Diligent Power Private Limited (DPPL) into DB Power Limited (DBPL), a wholly-owned subsidiary of DPPL, and the reorganization of Decore Thermal Power Private Limited (DTPPL) through the buyback of certain securities.
- (ii) CCI approved the proposed combination involving the acquisition of additional stake in ThoughtWorks Holding, Inc. by London-based Apax Partners Limited Liability Partnership (AP Funds) and Temasek Holdings (Private) Limited (Temasek).

12. Asian Development Bank (ADB) Issues First Biodiversity and Nature Bond Worth USD 100 Million.

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has issued its first biodiversity and nature-focused bond worth USD 100 million to fund essential conservation projects across Asia and the Pacific.

- The bond was unveiled at the 16th Conference of the Parties for the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP 16) in Cali, Republic of Colombia.

- The 10-year bond was issued under ADB's Theme Bonds for Sustainable Development program in collaboration with its Environment group.

- ADB's theme bonds for sustainable development attract private capital to support the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), providing investors with a secure option backed by ADB's AAA credit rating.

Key Points:-

- (i) In 2021, ADB, along with nine other multilateral development banks, issued the Joint Statement on Nature, People, and Planet at the Glasgow Climate Community of Practice (CoP), reaffirming their commitment to environmental sustainability.
- (ii) In 2023, ADB launched the Nature Solutions Finance Hub and the Natural Capital Fund with the Global Environment Facility (GEF), supporting innovative conservation efforts.
- (iii) ADB is preparing to launch its Environment Action Plan 2024-2030: Towards a Nature Positive Asia and the Pacific.

MOUs and Agreement

1. Indian Railways Signs MoU with Switzerland for Technical Collaboration.

The Indian Railways (IR), under the Ministry of Railways (MoR), has entered into a renewed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Federal Department of the Environment, Transport and Communications (DETEC) of Switzerland to foster enhanced technical cooperation between the two nations.

- The MoU aims to strengthen collaboration in key areas such as technology sharing, track maintenance, management, and construction, aligning with the Indian government's commitment to modernizing the railway system.
- Swiss companies will provide specialized machinery, materials, and consultancy services for tunneling projects.
- The initial MoU, signed on August 31, 2017, for five years, focused on cooperation in areas such as Traction Rolling Stock, Electric Multiple Units (EMU), Passenger and Freight Cars, Tilting Trains, Railway Electrification, Train Scheduling, Railway Station Modernization, Multimodal Transport Solutions, and Tunneling Technology.

Key Points:-

- (i) The agreement, finalized through video conferencing, was jointly approved by the Ministry of Railways (MoR) and the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), focusing on strengthening technical cooperation between India and Switzerland.
- (ii) The event saw the participation of Mridul Kumar, Ambassador of India to Switzerland, and Albert Roesti, head of DETEC, Switzerland.

SPORTS**1. India Clinches 24 Medals at Japan Para Badminton International 2024.**

Indian Para badminton players won a total of 24 medals (6 gold, 9 silver, and 9 bronze) at the Badminton World Federation(BWF) Japan Para Badminton International 2024 held from 22nd to 27th October 2024 in Tokyo, Japan.

- Sivarajan secured 2 golds – 1 in men's singles SH6 class and 1 in men's doubles with Sudarsan Saravanakumar Muthusamy.

- Sukant won a gold in men's singles (SL4) and silver in men's doubles (SL3-SL4) with partner Dinesh Rajaiah, while Naveen Sivakumar and Surya Kant Yadav secured bronze medals.

Key Points:-

- (i) In men's doubles (MD SL3-SU5), Umesh Vikram Kumar and Surya Kant Yadav won gold, while Sukant Kadam and Dinesh Rajaiah won silver.
- (ii) Reigning Paralympic champ Nitesh Kumar secured silver after losing to Japan's Daisuke Fujihara in the SL3 finals.
- (iii) Manisha Ramdass won gold in women's SU5, while Neeraj secured two silvers in women's SL3 and mixed doubles (SL3-SU5) with Surya Kant Yadav.

2. Max Verstappen of Red Bull wins Brazilian Grand Prix after starting from 17th position.

Dutch-Belgian Red Bull driver Max Verstappen won the F1 Brazilian GP 2024 despite starting 17th at the Interlagos Circuit in São Paulo on 3rd Nov 2024.

- This win marks Max Verstappen's 4th straight F1 title.
- It marked his 8th win of the 2024 season, with Esteban Ocon and Pierre Gasly of Alpine Renault securing 2nd and 3rd places, respectively.

Key Points:-

- (i) Max Emilian Verstappen is a Dutch and Belgian racing driver, competing for Red Bull Racing under the Dutch flag in F1.
- (ii) Verstappen has won 3 F1 World Drivers' Championships, from 2021 to 2023 with Red Bull, and has secured 62 GP wins in 10 seasons.

(iii) As of the 2024 São Paulo GP, Verstappen has 62 race wins, 40 pole positions, 33 fastest laps, and 111 podiums in F1.

3. Armaan Bhatia and Harsh Mehta Clinch Maiden India Masters Pickleball Championship Men's Doubles Title.

India's top doubles pickleball players, Armaan Bhatia and Harsh Mehta defeated the USA's Roman Estareja and Mitchell Hargreaves (Australia) to win the maiden Men's Doubles Title at the PWR DUPR India Masters Pickleball C'ship at DLTA Stadium in New Delhi, Delhi.

- This marks Armaan Bhatia's 3rd title of the event. He has also won the Men's Singles and Mixed Doubles titles.

- Armaan Bhatia won the Men's singles title and received a cash prize of ₹40,000.

- Sofia Sewing won the Women's singles title and received a cash prize of ₹40,000.

Key Points:-

(i) The PWR DUPR India Masters, a PWR700 pickleball event, took place from 24-27 Oct 2024, in Delhi, featuring 750 players.

(ii) This marks the 1st fully owned and operated event by PWR following the successful launch of the PWR World Tour in July 2024 in Dubai, UAE.

(iii) Pickleball is one of the fastest-growing racquet sports worldwide.

4. New Zealand Dominates India with 3-0 Clean Sweep in 2024 Test Series.

The New Zealand NZ tour of IND 2024 was a 3-Test series held from 16th Oct - 5th Nov 2024

under the captaincy of Rohit Sharma (IND) and Tom Latham (NZ).

- The 1st Test was held from 16th Oct to 20th Oct at Mangalam Chinnaswamy Stadium, Bengaluru.

- The 2nd Test match was held from 24th Oct to 30th Oct at Maharashtra Cricket Association Stadium, Pune.

- The 3rd Test was held from 1st Nov to 5th Nov at Wankhede Stadium, Mumbai.

Key Points:-

(i) IND scored a new low mark after being bowled out for 46, their lowest Test score ever at home.

(ii) Virat Kohli joined an elite group of cricketers by scoring his 9,000th run in Tests during day three of the Test against NZ.

(iii) Rishabh Pant scored the fastest half-century against NZ (50-run mark in just 36 balls) during the 3rd and final Test of the 3-match series at Wankhede Stadium.

5. MS Dhoni Named Brand Ambassador for Jharkhand Assembly Elections.

Former Indian cricket captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni has been appointed as Jharkhand's brand ambassador for the upcoming elections.

- Dhoni has given the Election Commission consent to use his photo for the assembly elections, Chief Electoral Officer K Ravi Kumar said.

- "Mahendra Singh Dhoni has given his consent to the Election Commission to use his photo. We are in touch with him for other details. Mahendra Singh Dhoni will work for the mobilization of voters..." said Kumar addressing a press conference held in Jharkhand's Ranchi on Friday.

Key Points:-

(i) Dhoni will work to increase awareness among voters under the SVEEP (Systematic Voters Education and Electoral Participation) program. The poll body is hoping to capitalize on Dhoni's appeal and popularity to increase enthusiasm, especially among voters to vote in greater numbers.

(ii) A total of forty-three constituencies will go to polls in the first phase on November 13.

6. Chirag Chikkara Wins Gold as India Bags Nine Medals at U-23 Wrestling World Championships 2024.

Indian wrestler Chirag Chikkara clinched gold in the men's freestyle 57kg category, defeating Abdymalik Karachov of Kyrgyzstan in the finals of the 7th UWW U23 World Wrestling C'ships 2024 held from 21-27 Oct in Tirana, Albania.

- The 18-year-old became the second Indian men's wrestler and third overall to win gold at the U23 World C'ships.

- Aman Sehrawat (57kg) was the first Indian to win gold in 2022, while Reetika Hooda claimed gold in the women's 76kg category in 2023. In 2018, Ravi Kumar Dahiya secured a silver medal in the 57kg category.

- India bagged a total of nine medals, comprising one gold, one silver, and seven bronze, placing the nation fourth in the team standings with 82 pts, behind Iran (158), Japan (102), and Azerbaijan (100).

Key Points:-

(i) Vicky won bronze in men's 97kg, becoming the first Indian to medal in a heavyweight category at the U23 C'ships.

(ii) With four medals in men's freestyle wrestling, India finished fourth in this segment behind Iran, Japan, and Azerbaijan.

(iii) In the Greco-Roman category, India placed

12th, earning a single bronze in the 55kg category.

AWARDS

1. Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar Receives Fiji's Highest Civilian Honour.

The Republic of Fiji has conferred its highest civilian award, the 'Honorary Officer of the Order of Fiji', on Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, the renowned spiritual leader, humanitarian, and founder of The Art of Living Foundation.

- The award was presented by Fiji's President, Ratu Wiliame M. Katonivere, in recognition of Sri Sri Ravi Shankar's dedication to promoting peace and unity globally.

- He becomes the sixth person to receive this prestigious award worldwide.

Key Points:-

(i) During his visit to Fiji, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar engaged with key Fijian leaders, including Deputy Prime Minister Viliame Gavoka and United Nations (UN) Resident Coordinator Dirk Wagener.

(ii) Born on May 13, 1956, in Tamil Nadu, India, Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar established The Art of Living Foundation in 1981. The foundation is a global non-governmental organization (NGO) committed to improving the quality of life for people worldwide.

2. AFC Awards 2023: Son Heung-min and Ellie Carpenter Named Asia's Top International Players.

On 29th October 2024, Tottenham Hotspur and South Korea forward Son Heung-min (32 years old) was honored as Asia's International Player of the Year by the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) during its annual award ceremony held at the iconic

Grand Peace Palace at Kyung Hee University in Seoul, South Korea.

- Matildas fullback and Australian player, Ellie Carpenter, who plays for French club Lyon, won the inaugural Asian International Women's Player of the Year Award.
- Akram Afif, a 27-year-old player from Qatar, was conferred with the AFC Player of the Year award for 2023.
- Kiko Seike, a 28-year-old player from Japan, was named as the AFC Women's Player of the Year award for 2023.

Key Points:-

- (i) Park Youn-Jeong, a former South Korean center-back player, was conferred with the AFC Coach of the Year (Women) award for 2023.
- (ii) Japan's Go Oiwa won the AFC Coach of the Year (Men) award for 2023.
- (iii) The All India Football Federation (AIFF) was honored with the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) President's Recognition Award for Grassroots Football (Silver) at the AFC Annual Awards 2023 in Seoul, South Korea.

3. Indian actor Darasing Khurana honored with the Mahatma Gandhi Leadership Award in the UK.

Indian actor and philanthropist Darasing Khurana honored with the "Mahatma Gandhi Leadership Award" for raising mental health awareness as 'Commonwealth Year of Youth Champion' at the University of Oxford's Ashmolean Museum in the UK.

- Darasing Khurana recognized for his significant contributions to the arts and unwavering commitment to social causes.

- He served as the keynote speaker at the Global Mental Health Summit 2024, held at the Oxford Union, University of Oxford, UK.

Key Points:-

- (i) He attended the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Apia (Samoa), where he moderated a session on mental health.
- (ii) In 2024, he was also honored with the "International Personality of the Year 2024" award by AsiaOne magazine.

4. Shiv Nadar Tops the 11th Edelgive Hurun India Philanthropy List.

The 11th edition of the Hurun India Philanthropy list was released by the EdelGive Foundation in partnership with Hurun India on 7th Nov 2024, with Shiv Nadar (79) and his family retaining the title of India's Most Generous for the 3rd time in 5 years.

- Shiv Nadar donated Rs 2,153 crore during FY 2023-24.
- The 2nd spot was occupied by Mukesh Ambani, CMD of Reliance Industries Ltd, who donated Rs 407 crore. The 3rd spot went to the Bajaj family with a donation of Rs 352 crore.
- Rohini Nilekani (69), co-founder and director of EkStep, was named India's most generous woman with a donation of Rs 154 crore, leading the list of women philanthropists.

Key Points:-

- (i) Nikhil Kamath, co-founder of Zerodha, was recognized as one of the youngest philanthropists at 38.
- (ii) This edition saw 96 new entrants, bringing the total to 203 philanthropists who donated Rs 8,783 crore in 2023-24. The top 10 contributed Rs 4,625

crore, 53% of the total donations on the list.

(iii) Donations by new entrants amounted to Rs 1,556 crore.

5. Harmanpreet Singh named FIH Men's Player of the Year 2024 and PR Sreejesh wins Goalkeeper of the Year.

On 8th Nov 2024, Indian men's hockey team captain Harmanpreet Singh and former goalkeeper PR Sreejesh won FIH Men's Player of the Year and Men's Goalkeeper of the Year, respectively, during the 49th FIH Statutory Congress held in Muscat, Oman.

- **Winners were determined through a voting process involving an expert panel, national hockey associations, fans, and media.**
- **Harmanpreet Singh had previously won the FIH Men's Player of the Year award in 2020-21 and 2021-22.**
- **He won this title with 63.84% of the votes, while Joop de Mol (Netherlands) finished 2nd with 16.10% of the vote share.**

Key Points:-

- (i) PR Sreejesh, known as "The Wall of India," won his 3rd FIH Men's Goalkeeper of the Year award. He had earlier won this title in 2021 and 2022.
- (ii) He secured over 62% of the votes, while Olympic Gold medallist Pimrin Blaak (Netherlands) finished 2nd with 22% of the votes.

6. Collins Dictionary Named 'Brat' as 2024 Word of the Year.

Collins Dictionary, a printed and online dictionary published by HarperCollins in Glasgow (Scotland),

has named "Brat", redefined by British singer Charli XCX, as the Collins Word of the Year for 2024.

- **Originally known as a term for a misbehaving child, "brat" has transformed into a symbol of confidence, independence, and hedonism.**
- **Previous Collins' Word of the Year includes "AI" (2023); "Permacrisis" (2022); "NFT" (2021).**
- **The 2024 shortlisted words include Delulu (unrealistic expectations), Looksmaxxing (enhancing appearance), Brainrot (obsessive preoccupation), Era (life phases), Anti-tourism (authentic travel), and Romantasy (romantic fantasy escapism).**

Key Points:-

- (i) Collins Dictionary noted that "brat" has become more than a word. It's a cultural phenomenon with an impact that resonates across music, politics, and social identity.
- (ii) This transformation began with Charli XCX's hit sixth album Brat, which became a global sensation and inspired the phrase "brat summer", a style and lifestyle embraced by fans.

7. Thiruvananthapuram Becomes First Indian City to Win Global Award for Sustainable Urban Development.

The Thiruvananthapuram Municipal Corporation in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, has become the 1st Indian city to win the Global Award for Sustainable Development in Cities, also known as the Shanghai Award.

- **The award ceremony took place on 2nd Nov 2024, in Alexandria, Egypt, coinciding with World Cities Day 2024.**
- **The award was received by Thiruvananthapuram's Mayor, Arya Rajendran, along with the CEO of Smart City Thiruvananthapuram Ltd., Rahul Sharma.**

Key Points:-

(i) This year, 5 global cities were selected for the award, including Agadir (Morocco), Melbourne (Australia), Doha (Qatar), and Iztapalapa (Mexico), alongside Thiruvananthapuram.

(ii) The Global Award for Sustainable Development in Cities, launched by UN Habitat and Shanghai Municipality, recognizes cities advancing sustainable practices aligned with the 2030 Agenda and New Urban Agenda, focusing on SDG 11 to create inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable cities.

8. Spain shines at the 68th Ballon d'Or as Rodri and Aitana Bonmatí secure the prestigious men's and women's awards.

The 68th Ballon d'Or (2024) award ceremony was held on 28th October 2024 at the Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris, France.

● **Rodrigo Hernández Cascante (Rodri), a midfielder for Manchester City and Spain, claimed the 2024 Men's Ballon d'Or (Golden Ball Award).**

● **Aitana Bonmatí Conca, a midfielder for Barcelona FC and Spain, won the Women's Ballon d'Or (Ballon d'Or Féminin) for the second consecutive year, having also won it in 2023.**

Key Points:-

(i) Rodri earned the prestigious award due to his pivotal role for both 'Manchester City' and 'Spain' during the '2023/24 season'.

(ii) Aitana Bonmatí retained her status as the "No. 1 women's player" after leading 'Barcelona' to victory in the "Spanish League, "Spanish Cup, and 'Champions League'.

(iii) The Ballon d'Or, established in 1956 and presented annually by the French magazine

"France Football," is the most prestigious award in football, recognizing outstanding achievements and exceptional talent based on performance during the last season.

IMPORTANT DAYS**1. International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict on 6 November 2024.**

The United Nations (UN)'s International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict is observed annually on November 6th to raise awareness about the impact of war and conflict on the environment.

● **November 6th, 2024, marks the 23rd observance of the International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict.**

Key Points:-

(i) The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) adopted Resolution A/RES/56/4 on November 5, 2001, declaring November 6th as the International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict.

(ii) The first International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict was observed on November 6, 2002.

2. National Cancer Awareness Day is Observed on 7 November 2024.

National Cancer Awareness Day is observed annually across India on November 7 to raise awareness about the prevention, detection, and treatment of various types of cancer.

● **NCAD aims to educate the public on early detection, promoting healthy lifestyle choices, and improving access to quality cancer care.**

- NCAD was initiated in India in September 2014 by Dr. Harsh Vardhan, the former Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare.

- A committee was formed, and it was declared that November 7 of every year would be observed as NCAD to raise awareness about early detection and the avoidance of cancer-causing behaviors.

Key Points:-

- (i) The first NCAD was observed on November 7, 2014.
- (ii) A study by ICMR-NCDIR projects a 13.5% rise in cancer cases in Northeast India by 2025, with an estimated 57,131 cases, including 30,985 in males and 26,146 in females.
- (iii) According to data from the National Cancer Registry Programme, over 800,000 new cancer cases are expected each year, with tobacco-related cancers accounting for 35-50% of all cancers in men and 17% in women.

3. International Day of Radiology was celebrated on 8 November 2024.

International Day of Radiology (IDOR) or World Radiography Day was annually observed across the globe on 8 Nov to honor the vital role of radiographers and radiological technologists in healthcare and to celebrate their contributions to diagnosing and treating countless medical conditions.

- IDOR was created to mark the anniversary of the discovery of X-rays by Wilhelm Conrad Röntgen, a German physicist and the winner of the 1st Nobel Prize in Physics (1901), in 1895.

- 8th Nov 2024 marked the observance of the 13th IDOR.

- IDOR was established in 2011 as a follow-up to EDOR.

Key Points:-

- (i) The theme for IDOR 2024 is "Radiographers: Seeing the Unseen."
- (ii) IDOR was established in 2011 as a follow-up to the European Day of Radiology (EDOR).
- (iii) The 1st and only IDOR took place on Feb 10, 2011, organized by ESR to honor the death anniversary of Wilhelm Conrad Röntgen (Feb 10, 1923).

4. World Urbanism Day is celebrated on 8 November 2024.

World Urbanism Day (WUD), also known as World Town Planning Day (WTPD), is annually observed across the globe on 8th November to recognize and promote the role of planners and planning in developing healthy, sustainable communities.

- The International Society of City and Regional Planners (ISOCARP) promotes the observance of this day.

Key Points:-

- (i) The theme for WTPD 2024 is "Homes Start with Planning"
- (ii) WTPD was initially proposed in 1949 by Late Prof. Carlos Maria della Paolera of the Univ. of Buenos Aires (Argentina).
- (iii) In India, WTPD is organized by the New Delhi-based Institute of Town Planners India (established in 1951).

5. 136th Birth Anniversary of CV Raman is celebrated on 7th November 2024.

7th November 2024 marks the celebration of the 136th Birth Anniversary of Indian physicist Sir C. V. Raman, known for his work in light scattering.

- He won the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1930 "for his work on the scattering of light and for the discovery of the effect named after him 'Raman Effect'".
- The Raman effect is a phenomenon in which light changes its wavelength when it interacts with matter.
- He was honoured with India's highest civilian award, the Bharat Ratna in 1954.

Key Points:-

- (i) C. V. Raman was born on 7th November 1888 in Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu .
- (ii) He began his career as an Asst. Accountant Gen. in the Indian Fin. Service but stayed associated with scientific research.
- (iii) He also served as the Dir. of the Indian Inst. of Science (IISc) in Bangalore (Karnataka).

6. World Science Day for Peace and Development is celebrated on 10 November 2024.

The United Nations (UN)'s World Science Day for Peace and Development is annually observed across the globe on 10th November to highlight the role of science in society and the need to engage the general people in discussion about rising scientific concerns.

- 10th November 2024 marks the observance of the 23rd edition of World Science Day for Peace and Development.
- The 2024 observance was held under the aegis of the International Decade of Sciences for Sustainable Development (2024-2033).

Key Points:-

- (i) The theme of World Science Day for Peace and Development 2024 is "Youth at the Forefront".
- (ii) In 2001, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), proclaimed the 10th November of every year as the World Science Day for Peace and Development.
- (iii) The first-ever World Science Day for Peace and Development was observed on 10th November 2002.

7. National Legal Service Day is celebrated on 2 November 2024.

National Legal Service Day (NLSD) is annually observed across India on 9th Nov to promote legal awareness and ensure equitable access to justice, particularly for marginalized communities.

- 9th Nov 2024 marks 30th observance of NLSD.
- Legal Services Authorities Act was passed in Oct 1987 under Art 39A of the Indian Constitution.

Key Points:-

- (i) Following the initiative of Dr. Justice A.S. Anand at the 1st Annual Meet of the State Legal Services Authorities which took place on 12th Sept 1998 at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi, 9th Nov is celebrated every year by Legal Service Authorities.
- (ii) The 1st ever NLSD was celebrated on 09th Nov 1995.

8. National Education Day (NED) Observed Annually on 11 November to Honour Maulana Abul Kalam Azad.

National Education Day (NED) is celebrated every year across India on 11 November to commemorate the birth anniversary of Maulana

Abul Kalam Azad, the first Minister of Education (MoE) in independent India.

- The day emphasizes the importance of quality education and skill development opportunities.
- 11 November 2024" marks the "136th birth anniversary" of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, born on 11 November 1888.
- In "2008, the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), now known as the Ministry of Education (MoE), declared "11 November" as National Education Day.

Key Points:-

- (i) The first-ever National Education Day was observed on 11 November 2008.
- (ii) In "1912, he began publishing a weekly Urdu journal called "Al-Hilal", which was banned by British authorities.
- (iii) He served as the "President of the Indian National Congress (INC)" twice, in "1923" and "1940

DEFENCE

1. The 9th India-Indonesia Joint Exercise 'GARUD SHAKTI' was held in Jakarta, Indonesia.

A contingent of the Indian Army (IA) participated in the 9th edition of the India-Indonesia Joint Special Forces Exercise, GARUD SHAKTI, from Nov 1 to Nov 12, 2024 in Cijantung, Jakarta, Indonesia.

- It provides an opportunity to share best practices, achieve common security goals, and strengthen bilateral relations.
- To enhance mutual understanding, cooperation, and interoperability between both forces through joint tactical drills and discussions, strengthening bilateral military ties.

- The exercise was initiated in 2012 as a Joint Military Exercise between India and Indonesia. It is held alternately in India and Indonesia.

Key Points:-

- (i) The exercise GARUD SHAKTI - 24 involved 25 Indian personnel from the Parachute Regiment (SF) of the Indian Army and 40 members of Indonesia's SF Kopassus.
- (ii) The exercise included planning and executing special ops, with an emphasis on advanced SF skills.
- (iii) The 8th edition of GARUD SHAKTI exercise was held in Indonesia in 2022.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

1. India's Indigenous Handheld Anti-Drone Gun 'Vajra Shot' Unveiled with 4 Km Range

The Vajra Shot, an innovative handheld anti-drone gun developed by Big Bang Boom Solutions, a technology startup based in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India, was showcased at 'Swavlamban 2024' – Indian Navy's Naval Innovation and Indigenisation Organisation (NIIO) Seminar organized by the Indian Navy (IN) at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi.

- It has been deployed in the Indian Army (IA) and the Indian Air Force (IAF).

Key Points:-

- (i) The Vajra Shot can detect and jam drone signals at a distance of up to 4 kilometers (Km).
- (ii) Weighing only 3.5 kilograms (Kg), the gun is designed for portability and ease of use, allowing soldiers to carry it comfortably during missions.
- (iii) The device boasts a long battery life, providing up to 9 hours of uninterrupted operation.

2. China Launches Shenzhou-19 with Three New Crew Members to Join its Tiangong Space Station.

On 30th October 2024, China successfully launched its Shenzhou-19 spaceship with three astronauts on board, including two men and one woman, for a six-month mission to its Tiangong Space Station (TSS) in low Earth orbit.

- The spacecraft was launched aboard a Long March-2F carrier rocket from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Centre in northwest China.
- This mission marks the 33rd flight of China's manned space program and the 4th crewed mission during the application and development phase of the TSS.
- China launched its first crewed mission in 2003, becoming the third country to do so after Russia (formerly the Soviet Union) and the United States.

Key Points:-

- (i) The new crew includes Mission Commander Cai Xuzhe, who previously flew to space on the Shenzhou-14 mission in 2022.
- (ii) The spaceship is tasked with performing a fast, automated rendezvous and docking with the front port of the TSS core module "Tianhe" in about 6.5 hours, forming a combination of three modules and three spacecraft.
- (iii) The crew will conduct 86 space research and technology experiments across a variety of fields, including space life science, microgravity fundamental physics, and space material science.

3. NASA Unveils Prototype Telescope for First Space-Based Gravitational Wave Observatory.

The United States-based National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has unveiled the prototype for six telescopes, known as the

Engineering Development Unit Telescope, which is designed to study gravitational waves in outer space.

- The telescope was manufactured and assembled by L3Harris Technologies in Rochester, New York, USA.
- The telescope was developed as part of a collaborative mission with the European Space Agency (ESA), called the Laser Interferometer Space Antenna (LISA). The mission involves a triangular formation of three spacecraft and is expected to launch in the mid-2030s.

Key Points:-

- (i) The telescope was developed as part of a collaborative mission with the European Space Agency (ESA), called the Laser Interferometer Space Antenna (LISA). The mission involves a triangular formation of three spacecraft and is expected to launch in the mid-2030s.
- (ii) Each spacecraft will be equipped with two telescopes to detect infrared laser beams from the other spacecraft. A gravitational wave will be identified when one of the spacecraft alters its characteristic pattern.
- (iii) The prototype is made from an amber-colored glass-ceramic material called Zerodur, manufactured by Schott in Mainz, Germany.

4. Scientists Uncover Hidden 6th Ocean 700 km Beneath Earth's Surface.

Scientists have revealed the discovery of a vast underground 6th ocean, located around 700 km below Earth's mantle, three times larger than all surface oceans combined.

- Unlike surface oceans, this reservoir consists of water trapped within the crystalline structure of a blue mineral called ringwoodite.

- The discovery was made using seismic data from thousands of earthquakes, revealing this hidden water storage.

Key Points:-

- The study was led by geophysicist Steven Jacobsen, who contributed to identifying the unique characteristics of this underground ocean.
- This reservoir's defining feature is water locked within the molecular structure of ringwoodite, differing from liquid water.
- The finding challenges existing theories about Earth's water reservoirs and offers new insights into the planet's water cycle and geological processes.

5. ISRO Launches India's First Analog Space Mission in Leh, Ladakh.

India's first Mars and Moon analog mission launched in Leh, Ladakh, aims to simulate life in interplanetary habitat. The mission is a collaboration between ISRO, AAKA Space Studio Private Limited, University of Ladakh, IIT Bombay and LAHDC.

- Supports India's space exploration goals, esp. Gaganyaan program for sending astronauts to space.
- Other space agencies and private entities are conducting analog missions too. NASA's Analog Missions Project and AATC in Poland focus on human physiology, operational training, and tech testing in simulated extraterrestrial environments.

Key Points:-

- (i) Ladakh was chosen for its environmental similarities to Mars and Moon, with extreme temp shifts (15°C to -10°C), high altitude (3,500 meters), and low oxygen (40% of sea level).

- (ii) Ideal for testing life support, thermal insulation, and rover mobility, with rocky, sandy soil resembling Martian and lunar regolith.

- (iii) The mission includes a compact inflatable habitat, Hab-1, with facilities like a hydroponics farm, kitchen, and sanitation. It features airlocks, EVA zones, circadian lighting, and environment monitoring to simulate a self-sustaining habitat.

BOOKS & AUTHORS**1. Financial Expert Ajay Thakur Releases New Book "Vision to Victory: Unleashing India's SME Platform."**

Financial expert Ajay Thakur launched his new book titled "Vision to Victory: Unleashing India's SME platform." The book was published by Invincible Publications Pvt. Ltd. (INPPL).

- The book covers topics like the power of belief, growth of SME platforms, and recovery after COVID-19, featuring inspiring success stories of SMEs that flourished post-listing on exchange SME platforms.

Key Points:-

- (i) SMEs form the backbone of India's economy, generating over 45% of the industrial output and contributing nearly 30% to the nation's employment.
- (ii) Ajay Thakur, a financial expert with nearly 26 years of capital market experience, has played a key role in establishing and developing the SME platform at the BSE.

OBITUARY**1. Justice KS Puttaswamy, Petitioner Behind Right to Privacy Case, Passes Away.**

Justice KS Puttaswamy, former Judge of Karnataka High Court and the key petitioner in the "Right to

Privacy" matter, passed away at the age of 98. He was born in February 1926 in Kolar, Karnataka.

- He became an advocate in 1952 and became a judge in the Karnataka High Court in 1977, serving there until his retirement in 1986.
- He was later appointed as the first Vice Chairperson of the Central Administrative Tribunal, Bengaluru (Karnataka).
- He also led the Backward Classes Commission of Andhra Pradesh (AP).

Key Points:-

(i) The right to privacy, protected under Article 21 of the Indian Constitution, was declared a fundamental right by the Supreme Court in 2017, emphasizing its role in personal liberty and dignity. It encompasses personal information, communication, decisions, movements, personal choices, partners, and eating habits.

(ii) Articles 12 to 35 in Part III of the Indian Constitution outline Fundamental Rights, including the right to equality, which ensures equality before the law, prohibits discrimination based on religion, race, caste, sex, or place of birth, and guarantees equality of opportunity in employment matters.