



# WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS PDFs



## November 2024



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

## NATIONAL AFFAIRS / GOVERNMENT SCHEME

### 1. "Dr. Jitendra Singh Releases ICMR-INDIAIB Survey Data on Diabetes in Jammu".

On October 20, 2024, Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh, from the Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST), released data related to the 'ICMR-India Diabetes INDIAB' survey. This survey is the world's largest of its kind, aimed at assessing the prevalence of diabetes in India, including Jammu and Kashmir (J&K). The event took place in Jammu, J&K.

- The study was conducted by the Madras Diabetes Research Foundation (MDRF) in collaboration with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and the Department of Health Research, under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoH&FW).
- The Jammu phase surveyed 1,520 participants from both urban and rural areas, providing valuable insights into the region's health landscape.
- According to the survey, the overall prevalence of hypertension, general obesity, and abdominal obesity in Jammu was found to be 27.1%, 41.7%, and 62.7%, respectively.

#### Key Points:-

- (i) The ICMR-INDIAB study indicates that 10.8% of the population in the Jammu region is affected by prediabetes, highlighting the urgent need for action against the rising burden of NCDs in the area.
- (ii) The overall disease burden in the Jammu region, covering its 10 districts, is 18.9%, with 26.5% in urban areas and 14.5% in rural areas—higher than the national average.
- (iii) The Indian government plans to establish nearly 150,000 health and wellness centers across the country to prevent and control NCDs like diabetes, hypertension, and certain types of

cancer.

### 2. MoHUA and NHB Host National Workshop on PMAY-U 2.0; Launch Unified Web Portal & Sign MoUs with 147 Lending Institutions.

On 14th November 2024, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) in partnership with National Housing Bank (NHB) organised a national workshop on Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - Urban 2.0 (PMAY-U 2.0) Interest Subsidy Scheme (ISS) vertical in New Delhi (Delhi).

- During the workshop, NHB signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) with 147 different Primary Lending Institutions (PLIs) for implementation of ISS.
- Union Minister Manohar Lal, MoHUA; Sanjay Shukla, Managing Director (MD) of NHB, along with senior officials from MoHUA attended the workshop.
- More than 250 participants from various Banks, Housing Finance Companies (HFCs), PLIs and other financial institutions attended the workshop.

#### Key Points:-

- (i) Union Minister highlighted the key features of PMAY-U 2.0 and the ISS vertical. He called upon all the financial institutions to become active partners of providing 'housing to all', a milestone of DEVELOPED INDIA by the year 2047.
- (ii) During the workshop, Srinivas Katikithala, Secretary of MOHUA, delivered the inaugural address and shared about the progress of PMAY-U scheme, one of the world's largest affordable housing programmes.
- (iii) The MOHUA launched a unified web portal at the PMAY-U 2.0 workshop to streamline the execution of the scheme. This portal simplifies the application process, allows beneficiaries to track their application status, and facilitates faster



approval and subsidy release. Accessible to all stakeholders, it will also aid in monitoring and evaluating the progress of the PMAY-U 2.0 scheme.

### 3. PM Narendra Modi Inaugurates the First Bodoland Mahotsav in New Delhi.

Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi inaugurated the first-ever Bodoland Mohotsav at the KD Jadhav Wrestling Stadium, New Delhi (Delhi). The two-day event was held from 15th to 16th November 2024. The event focuses on promoting the language, literature, and culture of the Bodo community.

- The theme of Bodoland Mohotsav is 'Peace and Harmony for Prosperous Bharat', emphasizing the cultural, linguistic, and educational legacy of the Bodo community and other communities within the Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR), Assam. It highlights the community's journey of peace and progress since the 2020 Bodo Peace Accord.

- The event saw the presence of notable leaders, including Governor of Assam Lakshman Prasad Acharya, President of the All Bodo Students' Union (ABSU) Dipen Boro, and Chief Executive Member (CEM) of the BTR Pramod Boro. Chief Minister (CM) of Assam Himanta Biswa Sarma virtually attended the event.

#### Key Points:-

(i) Addressing the gathering, PM Modi extended his greetings on Kartik Purnima, Dev Deepavali, and the 555th Prakash Parva of Guru Nanak Dev Ji (first Sikh Guru). He also commemorated Janjatiya Gaurav Divas, which honors the 150th birth anniversary of Bhagwan Birsa Munda.

(ii) PM Modi referred to the North Eastern Region (NER), including Assam, as India's Ashtalakshmi (eight forms of prosperity) and emphasized the

government's commitment to resolving border disputes and promoting peace in the region.

(iii) The Central Government (CG)'s special package of Rs 1,500 crore and the Assam Government's special package to boost Bodoland's growth.

### 4. EPFO Marks 72nd Foundation Day with Key Releases and Award Ceremony.

On November 15, 2024, Union Minister Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya, Ministry of Labour & Employment (MoL&E), inaugurated an event to mark the 72nd Foundation Day of the Employees' Provident Fund Organization (EPFO) at the Dr. Ambedkar International Centre, New Delhi, Delhi.

- EPFO's transformative role in managing savings and enhancing social security was highlighted during the event.

- Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya highlighted EPFO's transformative journey as a cornerstone of social security in India. He emphasized the need to enhance service delivery, strengthen IT (Information Technology) system, grievance management, and a member-centric service model.

- The number of contributing establishments exceeded 7.8 lakh, with over 7.6 crore members.

#### Key Points:-

(i) The event was attended by key officials, including Ms. Sumita Dawra, Secretary, MoL&E; Ramesh Krishnamurthi, Central Provident Fund Commissioner (CPFC); and Ashok Kumar Singh, Director General (DG) of Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC), among others.

(ii) During the event, the Bhavishya Nidhi Awards 2024 were also presented by Union Minister Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya to recognize exceptional

contributions across various categories.

### 5. SC Permits Light Motor Vehicle (LMV) Licence Holders to Drive Transport Vehicles up to 7,500 kg

The Supreme Court (SC) of India has ruled that drivers holding a Light Motor Vehicle (LMV) licence can drive transport vehicles with an unladen weight of up to 7,500 kilograms (kg) without requiring additional authorisation under the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988.

- A five-judge Constitution Bench, headed by former Chief Justice of India (CJI) Dhananjaya Yeshwant Chandrachud, reviewed the provisions of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988.

- The Bench clarified that additional requirements under the Act are applicable only for vehicles exceeding 7,500 kg, such as medium and heavy goods or passenger vehicles.

#### Key Points:-

Road safety remains a critical public health issue globally, with over 1.7 lakh fatalities in road accidents reported in India during 2023.

### 6. DoP Launches Commemorative Stamp to Support Sickle Cell Eradication by 2047.

On November 15, 2024, the Department of Posts(DoP), Ministry of Communications (MoC) launched a Special commemorative Postage Stamp of denomination Rs 5 on "Sickle Cell Eradication - 2047" initiative. It was unveiled by Madhya Pradesh (MP) Governor Mangubhai Patel and MP Chief Minister Mohan Yadav.

- The stamp honors MP's initiative to combat the high prevalence of sickle cell anemia, particularly in tribal regions, with the goal of eradicating the disease by 2047.

- The stamp features artwork symbolizing awareness and eradication of sickle cell anemia, emphasizing its impact on tribal communities.

- It displays the slogan "Sickle Cell Eradication - 2047", aligning with the mission's goal to eliminate this hereditary disease by the centenary year of India's independence.

#### Key Points:-

(i) Sickle Cell Disease (SCD) is a genetic disorder that affects hemoglobin in red blood cells. The mutation produces abnormal hemoglobin known as hemoglobin S, causing red blood cells to become stiff and sticky, which can lead to various health complications.

(ii) Launched in 2023 by Prime Minister (PM) of India Narendra Modi in MP, the Sickle Cell Eradication Mission aims to tackle the widespread prevalence of sickle cell disease in tribal areas.

(iii) It is part of the National Health Mission (NHM), aims to eliminate sickle cell genetic transmission by the year 2047. It is supported by the National Sickle Cell Anemia Eradication Mission (NSCAEM).

### 7. Ayushman Bharat Vay Vandana Card reaches over 10 lakh enrollments within 3 weeks of its launch.

According to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) official data, as of 17th November 2024, over 10 lakh senior citizens aged 70 and above have enrolled for the newly launched Ayushman Bharat: Vaya Vandana Card (AB-VVC), which enables them to avail free healthcare benefits under Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY).

- This achievement comes within 3 weeks of the AB-VVC's rollout by Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi on the occasion of Dhanvantari Jayanti and Ayurveda

Day (29th October 2024) at the All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA) in New Delhi, Delhi.

- All senior citizens aged 70 years and above, irrespective of their socio-economic status, will receive health coverage of up to Rs 5 lakh per family.
- Senior citizens from families already covered under AB PM-JAY will receive an additional top-up of Rs 5 lakh exclusively for themselves, separate from the rest of the family. Those who are not part of the existing scheme will receive Rs 5 lakh per annum on a family basis.

**Key Points:-**

(i) Senior citizens who are already enrolled in public health schemes such as Central Government Health Scheme (CCHS), Ex-Servicemen Contributory Health Scheme (ECHS), or Ayushman Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) will have the option to either continue with their existing scheme or they can choose AB PM-JAY.

(ii) Senior citizens aged 70 and above, who are enrolled under private health insurance policies or Employees' State Insurance (ESI) scheme, will be eligible to avail the benefits of AB PM-JAY.

(iii) Over 4 lakh women aged 70+ have enrolled in AB-VVC, with over ₹9 crore authorized for treatments benefiting 4,800 senior citizens. Procedures include coronary angioplasty, hip replacement, cataract surgery, and stroke care.

**8. DoP Releases Special Cover to Commemorate 121st Anniversary of MVC.**

In November 2024, the Department of Posts (DoP) under the Ministry of Communications (MoC), Chennai City North Division commemorated the 121st anniversary of Madras Veterinary College (MVC) by releasing a special cover on India Posts

at the MVC Vepery campus in Chennai, Tamil Nadu (TN).

- The special cover released signifies the rich heritage and the achievements made by MVC and also features the image of the iconic building along with cancellations based on the institution's logo.
- The MVC was founded on October 1, 1903, as the 3rd veterinary college in India and was also recognized as the Southern Regional Postgraduate Institute.
- It became the first veterinary college in India to affiliate with a university, Madras University, in 1935. In 1989, it became a constituent unit of Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal Sciences University (TANUVAS), the first standalone veterinary university in India and Southeast Asia.

**Key Points:-**

The university ranked 12th among all institutions in the agriculture and allied sectors category and ranked 1st among all state veterinary universities in India in the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) 2023.

**9. The 1st Sagarmanthan - The Great Oceans Dialogue Held in New Delhi to Promote Global Maritime Cooperation.**

The 1st edition of 'Sagarmanthan - The Great Oceans Dialogue', South Asia's largest Maritime Thought Leadership summit, was held from November 18-19, 2024, at ITC Maurya in New Delhi, Delhi.

- It was organized by the Ministry of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways (MoPSW), Government of India (GoI) in partnership with New Delhi-based global think tank, Observer Research Foundation (ORF), to foster Global Maritime Cooperation.

- The inaugural session featured speeches by Union Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways (MoPSW) Sarbananda Sonowal, Greece's Minister of Maritime Affairs Christos Stylianides, Maldives' Minister of State for Fisheries Dr. Amzath Ahmed, Argentina's Rio Negro Representative Maria Lorena Villaverde, MoPSW Secretary TK Ramachandran, and ORF President Samir Saran.

- The Dialogue featured participants from 60 countries across the globe, with more than 1700 participants including ministers, former heads of state and government, journalists, and experts.

#### Key Points:-

- (i) Sagarmanthan provides a global platform for leaders and policymakers to discuss critical maritime topics like the blue economy, global supply chains, maritime logistics, and sustainable growth, aiming to create a future-ready maritime ecosystem.
- (ii) The event focuses on four main themes: New Frontiers, Blue Growth, Green and Blue, and Coasts and Communities, addressing challenges and opportunities in ocean governance.

#### 10. AIM, supported by Capgemini India, launches the 4th Cohort of Community Innovator Fellows.

The Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) of NITI Aayog (National Institution for Transforming India) in partnership with Capgemini India launched its fourth cohort of Community Innovator Fellows (CIFs), aimed at fostering grassroots innovation and empowering local innovators to create sustainable solutions for their communities.

- The program, implemented by SRF Foundation in collaboration with AIM and Capgemini, includes 15 fellows hosted at Atal Community Innovation Centers (ACICs) that provide a supportive environment for

innovators from diverse backgrounds. These centers offer essential skills in entrepreneurship and sustainable development.

- The CIF initiative focuses on addressing community-specific challenges through local, sustainable solutions.

#### Key Points:-

- (i) The program includes a 1-year intensive training with mentorship on entrepreneurship, life skills, and UN SDGs (United Nations Sustainable Development Goals)-aligned solutions.
- (ii) Each Fellow receives a grant of Rs 1 lakh from Capgemini India to scale their innovative solutions.
- (iii) AIM's broader mission is to foster innovation and entrepreneurship at the grassroots level, particularly in underserved regions, driving progress toward SDGs 2030.

#### 11. Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan Form Joint Committee for Cheetah Project.

The Governments of Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan have formed a 10-member joint corridor management committee between the two states in response to incidents of cheetahs from Madhya Pradesh (MP) straying into neighboring Rajasthan. The committee aims to create and manage a cheetah corridor between the two states, ensuring the safe movement of cheetahs.

- The committee was formed following incidents of cheetahs straying from MP into Rajasthan in December 2023 and May 2024.

- The panel, co-chaired by the Principal Chief Conservators of Forests (PCCFs) (wildlife) from MP and Rajasthan, has been tasked with identifying the "Cheetah Conservancy Landscape."

**Key Points:-**

- (i) The committee will discuss and formulate a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the two states.
- (ii) The primary focus will be on conserving these felines, creating appropriate habitats, and supporting the future relocation of cheetahs from MP's Kuno National Park (KNP) and Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary (GSWS).

**12. Bengaluru Tech Summit (BTS 2024): 27th Edition Held at Bengaluru Palace, Karnataka.**

The 27th edition of the Bengaluru Tech Summit (BTS 2024) was jointly organized by Karnataka's Electronics, Information Technology (IT), and Biotechnology Department and the Software Technology Parks of India (STPI) from 19th to 21st November 2024 at Bengaluru Palace, Bengaluru, Karnataka.

- The central theme of BTS for the 2024 event was 'Unbound'.
- The Karnataka government launched its Global Capability Centres (GCC) policy, becoming the first Indian state to initiate such a policy. The GCC Policy 2024-2029 aims to position the state as a prime location for innovation and technological excellence.

**Key Points:-**

- (i) To develop a matchmaking platform for industry-academia collaboration. Providing 50% reimbursement of domestic patent filing fees, up to Rs. 2 lakhs.
- (ii) A dedicated platform or operational help desk for GCCs to share their needs, requirements, pain points, or ask questions, etc., will be developed.
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- (iii) Fund to set up 'GCC Immersive Hubs' to

demonstrate innovation and Research and Development (R&D) conducted in the state, on a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) mode.

**13. DIPAM Introduces Revised Capital Restructuring Guidelines for Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs).**

The Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM), Ministry of Finance (MoF), has issued revised capital restructuring guidelines for Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) to enhance operational flexibility, shareholder returns, and value creation, reflecting market and regulatory changes since May 2016.

- These guidelines, effective from Financial Year 2024-25 (FY25), exclude Public Sector Banks (PSBs), insurance companies, and entities restricted under Section 8 of the Companies Act, 2013.
- The guidelines will also apply to subsidiaries of CPSEs, where the parent CPSE holds more than 51% stake.
- CPSEs must pay a minimum annual dividend of 30% of Profit After Tax (PAT) or 4% of net worth, whichever is higher (previously 5% of net worth).

**Key Points:-**

- (i) CPSEs with a net worth of ₹3,000 crore, cash reserves over ₹1,500 crore, and trading below book value for six months may consider share buybacks. Additionally, CPSEs should issue bonus shares to enhance liquidity if their reserves are 20 times their paid-up equity capital.
- (ii) Listed Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) with market prices exceeding 150 times the face value for 6 months may split shares, subject to a 3-year gap between splits, and can distribute interim dividends quarterly or biannually, ensuring 90% of the projected annual dividend is



paid before the September AGM.

(iii) The Committee for Monitoring of Capital Management and Dividend by CPSEs (CMCDC), chaired by DIPAM Secretary, will oversee capital management and restructuring discussions.

#### 14. Union Minister Jitendra Singh Unveils "VISION" Initiative to Support Underprivileged Students.

Union Minister of State(MoS) (Independent Charge-IC) Dr. Jitendra Singh, Ministry of Science & Technology (MOST) inaugurated the "Viksit Bharat Initiative for Student Innovation and Outreach Network" (VISION) in New Delhi, Delhi.

- This initiative is designed to promote education, skill-building, and innovation among underprivileged children. The program aims to bridge the gap between urban and rural students by providing access to mentorship, resources, and training opportunities.
- The Union Minister highlighted the transformative power of technology and stated that initiatives like VISION can fuel similar revolutions by making opportunities accessible to all.
- The Union Minister emphasized how VISION will help students from remote areas participate in the growing startup ecosystem, ensuring equal opportunities for all. He highlighted India's rise as a global startup hub, with the number of startups increasing from 350 in 2014 to over 1.67 lakh in 2024, placing India as the 3rd-largest startup ecosystem globally.

##### Key Points:-

- (i) Dr. Jitendra Singh praised the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 for its flexibility, allowing students to explore a variety of subjects and unconventional career paths.
- (ii) He linked VISION to the broader goal of Vision

India 2047, which aspires to position India as a leader in education, technology, and economic growth.

(iii) He introduced the Bio-E3 policy, focusing on using biotechnology to drive growth, generate employment, and protect the environment, while India's biotech startups grew rapidly from 50 in 2014 to nearly 9,000 in 2024.

#### 15. President Murmu Inaugurates 125th Birth Anniversary Celebrations of Dr. Harekrushna Mahtab.

On 21st November 2024, Droupadi Murmu, President of India, inaugurated the 125th birth anniversary celebration of Utkal Keshari Dr. Harekrushna Mahtab in New Delhi, Delhi. The celebration was organised by the Ministry of Culture (MOC).

- Dr. Harekrushna Mahtab is a leader of the Indian National Congress (INC), a notable figure in the Indian independence movement, and a former Chief Minister (CM) of Odisha.
- The 125th birth anniversary of Dr. Harekrushna Mahtab will be celebrated with year-long events across India, highlighting his significant contributions to the Indian freedom struggle, the development of Odisha, and his impact on the literary world.
- A special exhibition on Dr. Harekrushna Mahtab's life, organized by Lalit Kala Akademi, and a short film showcasing his legacy were featured at the event.

##### Key Points:-

- (i) Union Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, MoC; Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, Ministry of Education (MoE); and Mohan Charan Majhi, Chief Minister (CM) of Odisha, were present during the event.
- (ii) President Droupadi Murmu released a



commemorative stamp of Rs.5 and a commemorative coin of Rs.125 to mark Dr. Mahtab's 125th birth anniversary.

(iii) She also released three notable works: Harekrushna Mahtab: A Monograph in Odia by Baishnaba Charan Samal, published by Sahitya Akademi; Gaon Majlis, the English translation by Tarun Kumar Sahu of Dr. Mahtab's Sahitya Akademi Award-winning Odia essays; and Gaon Majlis, the Hindi translation of the same work by Sujata Shiven.

#### 16. NITI Aayog Report Recommends Adding Coking Coal to Critical Minerals List.

The National Institution for Transforming India (NITI) Aayog's report titled 'Enhancing Domestic Coking Coal Availability to Reduce the Import of Coking Coal' recommended that the Government of India (GoI) include coking coal in its list of critical minerals to enhance domestic production and reduce reliance on imports.

- The report emphasizes the strategic importance of coking coal for India's steel industry and overall economic growth. It meets all the criteria to declare coking coal as a 'critical mineral' for India.

- The report suggested amending the Coal Bearing Areas (CBA) Act, 1957, to allow the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) under Public-Private Partnership (PPP) mode to remain a deemed lessee of Jharkhand even after majority shares are transferred to the private sector.

- Steel is essential for infrastructure and industry, making a stable coking coal supply vital for job creation and economic stability in India.

#### Key Points:-

(i) India imports about 85% of its coking coal, which is higher than that of the European Union

(EU) (approximately 62%). India has 5.13 billion tonnes of prime coking coal and 16.5 billion tonnes of medium-quality coking coal, yet its production is underutilized.

(ii) In the Financial Year 2023-24 (FY24), Integrated Steel Plants (ISPs) imported 58 million tonnes (MT) of coking coal, incurring a cost of over Rs 1.5 lakh crore. Despite this significant import, public sector washeries operated at less than 32% capacity, whereas private sector washeries operated at over 75% capacity, highlighting inefficiencies in the public sector.

(iii) The report calls for fully leveraging India's proven reserves to meet the growing demand from steel mills, which consume approximately 70 million metric tons annually.

#### 17. President Droupadi Murmu Attends 6th Sahitya AajTak 2024 in New Delhi.

On 23rd November 2024, Droupadi Murmu, President of India, graced the 6th edition of Sahitya AajTak, a prestigious literary festival organised by India Today Group at the Major Dhyani Chandra National Stadium in New Delhi, Delhi.

- She conferred the AajTak Sahitya Jagriti Lifetime Achievement Award on Padma Bhushan awardee Gulzar (Real name: Sampooran Singh Kalra), the legendary poet, lyricist, and filmmaker, in recognition of his exceptional contributions to Indian literature and cinema.

- She also presented the prestigious Aaj Tak Sahitya Jagriti Samman Awards, recognising the outstanding contributions of established luminaries and emerging talents in the literary award.

#### Key Points:-

(i) These awards were introduced in 2023 by India Today Group in collaboration with the Jagriti

Foundation as part of "Sahitya AajTak".

(ii) The recipient of the prestigious AajTak Sahitya Jagriti Lifetime Achievement Award received a cash prize of Rs 11 lakh, a commemorative plaque, and a citation.

(iii) While, other winners received monetary prizes ranging from Rs 50,000 to Rs 1 lakh alongside commemorative plaques and citations.

Temple in Mustang District to pay tribute to General Bipin Rawat, India's first Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), where a memorial bell, 'Bipin Bell,' was installed in his honor in 2023.

(iii) During his visit, he dedicated new health centers and announced an increase in the number of Ex-Servicemen Contributory Health Scheme (ECHS) empanelled hospitals, in addition to the addition of 2 ECHS polyclinics, one each at Butala and Dungadhi.

### 18. General Upendra Dwivedi's 20-24 November 2024 Nepal Visit Strengthens India-Nepal Defence Ties.

General Upendra Dwivedi, Chief of the Army Staff (COAS), made a 5-day visit to Nepal from 20th to 24th November 2024. The visit aimed to bolster the close defence cooperation between India and Nepal and explore new avenues of collaboration between the two nations.

- He was accompanied by Sunita Dwivedi, chair of the Army Wives Welfare Association (AWWA) of the IA.
- General Upendra Dwivedi was honoured with the Guard of Honour and Honorary Rank of General of the Nepali Army by Ram Chandra Paudel, President of Nepal, at Sheetal Niwas, Kathmandu.
- General Upendra Dwivedi interacted with Indian Ambassador to Nepal, Naveen Srivastava, and held discussions on mutual interests with Nepal's Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli and Defence Minister Manbir Rai.

#### Key Points:-

(i) The central theme of the visit was "Strengthening India-Nepal ties." General Upendra Dwivedi, COAS, called on General Ashok Raj Sigdel, COAS, Nepali Army, and discussed aspects of mutual interest and avenues to strengthen bilateral defence cooperation.

(ii) General Upendra Dwivedi visited the Muktinath

### 19. MOST launches Operation Dronagiri with GDI, marking a milestone in the National Geospatial Policy.

On 13th November 2024, The Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST) launched Operation Dronagiri, a pilot project under the National Geospatial Policy (NGP) 2022 to illustrate the possible applications of geospatial technologies and innovations in improving the quality of life of citizens and ease of doing business.

- Abhay Karandikar, Secretary, Department of Science and Technology (DST), launched the project at the Foundation for Innovation and Technology Transfer (FITT), Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi.
- Operation Dronagiri is an effort of DST in advancing geospatial data, developing geospatial infrastructure, geospatial skills and knowledge, as well as standards in executing the policy.
- The Geospatial Data Sharing Interface (GDI), launched alongside Operation Dronagiri, plays a crucial role in supporting the initiative by enabling seamless data sharing, access, and analysis. It enhances applications in urban planning, environmental monitoring, disaster management, and other sectors, driving efficient decision-making and geospatial integration.

#### Key Points:-

(i) In Phase 1 of Operation Dronagiri, pilot projects will launch in Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Assam, Andhra Pradesh, and Maharashtra, showcasing geospatial data and technology integration in Agriculture, Livelihoods, Logistics, and Transport sectors.

(ii) Several government departments, industries, corporates, and startups will collaborate in the first phase to implement it on a national level.

(iii) The activities under Operation Dronagiri will be overseen by the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Tirupati Navavishkar I-Hub Foundation (IITTNIIF).

## 20. According to WEF & MoCA Report, Advanced Air Mobility Can Drive Growth and Connectivity in India.

The Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA), Government of India (GoI), in collaboration with the World Economic Forum (WEF), has prepared the report titled 'Skyways to the Future: Operational Concepts for Advanced Air Mobility in India'. As per the report, Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) represents a transformative approach to transportation, particularly in densely populated regions like India.

- The sector shows strong growth, with 1,000+ aircraft and 100,000+ daily flights projected in 15 years.

- The WEF report presents a 3-stage plan for the growth of Urban Air Mobility (UAM) in India over the next 15 years.

### Key Points:-

(i) According to the report, the sector shows strong growth, with 1,000+ aircraft and 100,000+ daily flights projected in 15 years.

(ii) AAM technologies like air taxis or Electric Vertical Take-Off and Landing (eVTOL) and Short Take-Off and Landing (STOL) are designed to

provide on-demand transport services.

(iii) The report highlights that integrating AAM into India's transport infrastructure could drive significant economic benefits, including job creation and improved access to services like healthcare.

## 21. Finance Ministry Launches PLI Scheme for Top Executives of Public Sector Banks.

The Ministry of Finance (MoF) has launched a revised Performance-Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme with an aim to reward and motivate employees for significant value creation for various stakeholders.

- The previous PLI scheme was restricted only to Whole-Time Directors (WTDs) - Managing Director (MD) & Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) and Executive Directors.

- The revised scheme also applies to senior executives in the rank of Chief Manager and above.

- This revision will reduce the existing wide compensation disparity between senior executives of Public Sector Banks (PSBs) and private sector banks (PvSBs).

### Key Points:-

(i) The PLI ceiling for MD & CEO and Executive Directors of nationalised banks and Chairman and Managing Directors (CMD) and Deputy Managing Directors (DMD) of State Bank of India (SBI) has been fixed at 100% of their annual basic pay.

(ii) On the other hand, the PLI ceiling for senior executives in the rank of Chief General Manager (CCM) and General Manager (GM); and Deputy General Manager (DGM) and Assistant General Manager (AGM) has been fixed at 90% and 80%, respectively, of their annual basic pay.



(iii) For Chief Manager, this ceiling has been set at 70%.

## INTERNATIONAL

### 1. According to the CCPI 2025 report, India ranks 10th, a drop from 7th position in 2023.

According to the Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI) 2025, India ranked at 10th position with an overall score of 67.99 on a list of over 60 countries assessed for efforts to fight climate change, dropping from 7th position in 2023. This latest ranking of India is mainly attributed to its low per capita emissions and rapid deployment of renewable energy.

- The CCPI 2025 was released at the 29th Conference of Parties (COP29) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) held in Baku, Azerbaijan.

- The index left the first three places empty as no country performed well enough across all index categories to achieve an overall "very high" rating. The index is topped by Denmark (score of 78.37) ranked at 4th position, followed by the Netherlands (score of 69.60) and the United Kingdom (UK) with an overall score of 69.29 ranked at 5th and 6th positions, respectively.

- The latest edition of the CCPI has tracked the climate performance of 63 countries and the European Union (EU), which together generated over 90% of global Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions.

#### Key Points:-

(i) The UK and India are the only two Group-20 (G20) countries ranked among the high climate performers in the CCPI 2025.

(ii) The UK and India are the only two Group-20 (G20) countries ranked among the high climate

performers in the CCPI 2025. Among G20 countries, 14 received a low or very low rating. The CCPI 2025 showed that South Korea (63rd), Russia (64th), and Saudi Arabia (66th) remain in the G20's worst-performing countries with an overall very low rating.

(iii) The overall rank of the EU has dropped by 1 place, from 16th position in 2023 to 17th position in 2024 with an overall score of 63.76, maintaining an overall medium ranking.

### 2. FAO Alerts of Rising Global Hunger, with 152 Million More People Affected Since 2019.

According to the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)'s "World Food and Agriculture: Statistical Yearbook 2024", despite rising food production, global hunger continues to worsen, with 152 million more people facing hunger in 2023 compared to pre-pandemic levels in 2019.

- This report was released at the 5th United Nations World Data Forum (UNWDF 2024) held in Medellín, Colombia from November 12-15, 2024.

- This alarming trend indicates the rising challenge of achieving the United Nations (UN) mandated Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2 of Zero Hunger by 2030.

#### Key Points:-

(i) As per the report, hunger affected 9.1% of the global population in 2023, which is more than the 7.5% estimated for 2019.

(ii) Over the last two decades, global agricultural value has increased by 89% in real terms, reaching USD 3.8 trillion in 2022.

(iii) The global production of primary crops reached 9.6 billion tonnes in 2022, up by 56% compared to 2000. Staple crops like sugarcane, maize, wheat and rice together accounted for

approximately 50% of global crop production.

### 3. Hindalco Ranked as 'World's Most Sustainable Aluminium Company' by S&P Global CSA.

According to the S&P Global Corporate Sustainability Assessment (CSA) rankings 2024, Mumbai (Maharashtra) based Hindalco Industries Limited, a firm of the Aditya Birla Group, has been ranked as the 'world's most sustainable aluminium company' for the 5th consecutive year.

- As of 30 October 2024, it attained a total score of 87 points, reflecting a 9-point increase from 2023.
- It reached the 100th percentile in nearly all areas of the three dimensions of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG).
- With this ranking, Hindalco retains its membership in the S&P Global's Dow Jones Sustainability Indices (DJSI).

#### Key Points:-

- (i) Hindalco became the only aluminium company to join the S&P Global's DJSI World Index. It first joined the index in 2021.
- (ii) It cut its greenhouse gas emissions by 19.54% from the Financial Year 2011-12 (FY12) baseline and is on course to run 30% of its operations on renewable energy by 2030. It recycled 85% of its operational waste in FY24, with three of its units achieving zero-waste-to-landfill certification.
- (iii) DJSI World Index represents the top 10% of the largest 2,500 companies in the S&P Global Broad Market Index (GBMI), selected based on long-term economic performance and ESG criteria.

### 4. According to UN Report, India Faces Challenges in Effectively Implementing Gender Response Budgeting.

According to the United Nations (UN) report titled "Charting New Paths for Gender Equality and Empowerment: Asia-Pacific Region Report on Beijing +30 Review", India struggles with the limited effectiveness of its Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) due to the lack of sex-disaggregated data and the exclusion of key programmes that benefit women.

- The report was published jointly by the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) and UN Women at the 'Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on the Beijing+30 Review' held in Bangkok, Thailand.
- The report has suggested that the Government of India (GoI) should enhance the Gender Budget Statement and establish robust monitoring mechanisms through the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD) and Ministry of Finance (MoF) to strengthen the quality of GRB.
- It has recommended integrating GRB considerations during the budget prioritization phase and promoting local governments to adopt GRB practices. These practices would help to achieve the ultimate goal of ensuring the participation of the most vulnerable groups of women in planning and budgeting processes.

#### Key Points:-

- (i) During the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference, the GoI informed that there has been a 218% decadal increase in gender budgeting in the country.
- (ii) Preetam B. Yashwant, Joint Secretary, MoWCD, who represented India at the conference, highlighted that the GoI has allocated USD 37 million for gender budgeting for Financial Year 2024-25 (FY25).
- (iii) India, at a separate side event at the conference, demonstrated that India's

implementation of Beijing SDG is guided by the women-led development model by highlighting the leadership of women in Panchayati Raj Institutions and Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) due to 33% reservation, as well as the collective efforts of Self-Help Groups (SHGs), which have significantly contributed to their financial empowerment.

### 5. Armenia Becomes the 104th Full Member of the International Solar Alliance (ISA).

On November 21, 2024, Randhir Jaiswal, Official Spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), announced that the Republic of Armenia became the 104th full member of the International Solar Alliance (ISA).

- Armenia's full membership in the ISA is effective from November 15, 2024, while the corresponding agreement was signed on November 16, 2023, in Yerevan, Armenia.
- Vahagn Afyan, the Ambassador of Armenia to India, handed over the ISA Instrument of Ratification to Abhishek Singh, the Head of the Department of Economic Diplomacy and Multilateral Economic Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) in New Delhi.
- By 2030, ISA aims to mobilize 1000 billion investments for the massive deployment of solar energy as a treaty-based intergovernmental organization.

#### Key Points:-

- (i) ISA was launched by the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, and the former President of France, Francois Hollande, during the COP21 Paris Climate Conference held in November 2015.
- (ii) The main objective of ISA is to promote solar energy deployment and reduce dependence on fossil fuels among member countries situated

between the Tropic of Cancer and Tropic of Capricorn.

- (iii) ISA became the first international intergovernmental organization to be headquartered in India.

### 6. Gabon Voters Approve New Constitution in Recent Referendum.

The voters of Gabon have approved a new constitution in a referendum with preliminary results indicating that 91.8% of participants supported the proposed changes.

- The voter turnout was reported at approximately 53.5%, according to Gabon's Interior Minister Hermann Immongault.
- This referendum marks a significant step in Gabon's political landscape following the military coup that ousted President Ali Bongo Ondimba in August 2023.
- Candidates must be exclusively Gabonese, requiring at least one Gabon-born parent and a Gabonese spouse. This provision effectively disqualifies Ali Bongo Ondimba and his children from future candidacy due to his marriage to a French national.

#### Key Points:-

- (i) The new constitution introduces a limit of two terms for the presidency, with each term extended from five to seven years.
- (ii) The role of prime minister has been abolished, centralizing executive power within the presidency.
- (iii) The constitution prohibits family members from succeeding a president, aiming to prevent dynastic rule and ensure a more democratic transfer of power.



### 7. According to UNICEF's SOWC 2024 Report Global Child Population Projected to Stabilize at 2.3 Billion by 2050.

According to the State of the World's Children (SOWC 2024) report, which is a global flagship report of United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), titled "The Future of Childhood in a Changing World," the global child population will stabilize at around 2.3 billion by 2050, with a significant shift in regional distributions.

- As per the report, South Asia will remain one of the regions in the world with the largest child populations, along with Eastern and Southern Africa, as well as West and Central Africa.
- The report was released on the occasion of World Children's Day (20th November, 2024) in New Delhi, Delhi.
- Child survival and life expectancy: Globally, newborn survival rates increase by 4 percentage points from the 2000s to over 98%.

#### Key Points:-

- (i) The chances of a child surviving to the age of 5 have risen to 99.5%, reflecting a 1 percentage point increase since the 2000s. Additionally, life expectancy has significantly improved, with girls' life expectancy increasing from 70 years in the 2000s to 81 years, and boys' life expectancy rising from 66 years to 76 years.
- (ii) The report has projected that children are expected to be exposed to extreme weather conditions at significantly higher rates by the 2050s compared with those in the 2000s: Nearly 8 times more children are estimated to be exposed to extreme heatwaves, 3.1 times more to river floods, 1.7 times more to wildfires, 1.3 times more to droughts, and 1.2 times more to tropical cyclones.
- (iii) As per the report, 23% of global children are

projected to live in 28 low-income countries in the 2050s compared to 11% in the 2000s.

### 8. Union Minister S. Jaishankar Inaugurates SIU Dubai Campus and Launches Book "Why Bharat Matters".

In November 2024, Union Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), inaugurated the first overseas campus of Symbiosis International University (SIU) at Dubai Knowledge Park, United Arab Emirates (UAE), marking a key moment in India-UAE relations.

- The event was attended by Sheikh Nahyan bin Mubarak Al Nahyan, UAE's Minister of Tolerance and Coexistence, and highlighted the university's full accreditation by the UAE Ministry of Education.
- The Dubai campus offers programs in management, technology, and media, fostering 21st-century skills and promoting the philosophy of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" – the world is one family.
- He also launched his book titled "Why Bharat Matters" in English at the Mohammed Bin Rashid Library in Dubai, UAE.

#### Key Points:-

- (i) The book was published by Rupa Publications India Private Limited. It was originally published in Hindi in December 2023.
- (ii) The book touches upon global transformations, India's internal progress, and the importance of self-reliance in assessing global challenges.

### 9. Diamond Jubilee celebrations were organized at the United Nations Headquarters in New York on the occasion of 75th year of Hindi Diwas.

On 22 November 2024, the Permanent Mission of India to the United Nations (UN) hosted a

significant event in New York, United States of America (USA), to mark the 75th anniversary (Diamond Jubilee) of Hindi Diwas, emphasizing the global significance of Hindi.

- Hindi Diwas is annually celebrated on September 14th to commemorate the adoption of Hindi as an official language of India in 1949.
- The celebration also brought together representatives from over 40 countries, including Permanent Representatives (PRs), Deputy PRs, UN officials, academics, and members of the Indian diaspora.
- A delegation of Members of Parliament (MPs) from India, including Birendra Prasad Baishya, Pradan Baruah, Sushmita Dev, Akshay Yadav, Sandhya Ray, Tejasvi Surya, and Bansuri Swaraj, attended the event.

#### Key Points:-

- (i) MP Birendra Prasad Baishya highlighted the inclusion of Hindi in the UN's Multilingualism Resolution, a significant achievement attained in September 2024.
- (ii) The PR of India, Ambassador to the UN, Parvathaneni Harish, emphasized Hindi's role in national integration, with global representatives, including the PRs of Mauritius and Nepal, highlighting its cultural significance and shared heritage. The Deputy PR of the Republic of Suriname noted its presence in schools, and the Deputy PR of the Republic of Guyana praised its cultural impact.
- (iii) The event also featured competitions in essay writing, poetry, and recitation in Hindi, with winners receiving certificates and cash prizes.

#### 10. The 11th ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting Plus held in Vientiane, Lao PDR.

The 11th Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Defense Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus) was held from 20th to 22nd November 2024 in Vientiane, Lao PDR. The meeting exchanged views on regional and international security issues to strengthen security and defense cooperation for peace, stability, and development in the region.

- The meeting was chaired by Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister of Laos General Chansamone Chanyalath.
- The 11th ADMM-Plus forum consisted of 10 ASEAN countries, 8 Plus countries (dialogue partners), and Timor Leste.
- The 8 dialogue partners include India, China, Russia, Japan, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, and the United States of America (USA).

#### Key Points:-

- (i) Defence Minister Rajnath Singh held a series of important bilateral meetings with his counterparts from Laos and Malaysia on 20th November 2024, aiming to strengthen defence cooperation and address regional security concerns.
- (ii) In a meeting with Laos Defence Minister General Chansamone Chanyalath, both parties discussed ways to further enhance bilateral defence cooperation. He also invited the Laos minister to Aero India 2025, scheduled to take place in Bengaluru in February 2025, to boost Defence Industry Cooperation between India and Laos.

### BANKING & FINANCE

#### 1. SEBI Instructs QSBs to Provide UPI Mechanism and 3-in-1 Trading Facility to Investors Starting 1st February 2025.

On 11th November 2024, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) directed all

Qualified Stock Brokers (QSBs) to offer either the facility of trading in the secondary market using the Unified Payments Interface (UPI)-based block mechanism to their clients, similar to the Application Supported by Blocked Account (ASBA) facility, or the 3-in-1 trading account facility to their investors.

- This new direction for QSBs will come into effect from 1st February 2025.
- SEBI defines QSBs as entities which, by virtue of their size and scale of operations, can impact investors and the securities market.

#### Key Points:-

- (i) As per SEBI's directions, these QSBs are now required to offer one of these facilities, in addition to the current mode of trading.
- (ii) Trading Members (TMs) are classified as QSBs based on various parameters such as the size and scale of their operations, including the number of active clients, the total assets held by clients with the TM, the end-of-day margin of all clients, and the trading volume of the TM.
- (iii) A UPI block mechanism will enable clients to trade in the secondary market based on blocked funds in their bank accounts instead of transferring the funds upfront to the trading member.

## 2. According to RBI report, MCs need major reforms to enhance revenue sources.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) report titled 'Own Sources of Revenue Generation in Municipal Corporations: Opportunities and Challenges' emphasizes the need for comprehensive reforms in municipal corporations (MCs) to improve their own revenue generation.

- It highlights the importance of tax reforms, rationalizing user charges, and strengthening collection mechanisms to address financial inefficiencies.
- The report analyzed the budgetary data of 232 MCs, covering over 90% of India's total municipal corporations.
- While MCs show surplus revenue accounts, they rely heavily on transfers from higher governments, limiting their financial autonomy.

#### Key Points:-

- (i) MCs' revenue receipts rose by 20.1% YoY (Year-on-Year) to Rs 1.7 trillion in FY24, up from Rs 1.42 trillion in FY23 and Rs 1.37 trillion in FY22.
- (ii) The share of own resources in municipal revenue receipts increased to 61.9% in FY24 (Budget estimates), up from 59.7% in FY23 (Revised estimates).
- (iii) Revenues, impacted during 2020-21, recovered in FY22-23, but remain concentrated, with the top 10 MCs accounting for 58% of total municipal revenue.

## 3. Deutsche Bank to Invest Rs 5,113 Crore in India Operations for Expansion.

Germany-based investment bank and financial service company, Deutsche Bank announced the investment of an additional Rs 5,113 crores into its India operations to support its expansion efforts.

- The new capital investment represents a 33% increase in the capital buffer compared to 2023, raising the regulatory capital of Deutsche Bank's India branches to nearly Rs 30,000 crores.



- The largest capital investment in India aims at expanding various business sectors such as corporate banking, investment banking, and private banking.

**Key Points:-**

(i) The bank confirmed its commitment to support India's growth with a focus on sectors like digital transformation, sustainable finance, technology, and infrastructure development.

(ii) The Bank invested Rs. 2,700 crores into its India operations in 2020 and Rs. 3,800 crores in 2019.

**4. SBI Partners with APIX to Launch Innovation Hub at Singapore Fintech Festival.**

Mumbai (Maharashtra)-based State Bank of India (SBI) launched the 'SBI Innovation Hub' in partnership with APIX, a platform connecting financial institutions and fintechs, during the Singapore Fintech Festival (SFF 2024) held from 6th to 8th November 2024 in Singapore.

- SBI Innovation Hub will offer a platform for fintechs, startups, and innovators worldwide to design next-generation financial solutions to meet the digital needs of SBI's customers.
- This initiative aims to drive financial innovation, digital transformation, and advance financial inclusion.

**Key Points:-**

(i) The Hub allows participants to leverage SBI's 250+ financial service Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) to develop and customize solutions within a secure Sandbox environment.

(ii) This platform will enable fintechs and startups to gain recognition, compete for official partnerships, and reach millions of users across India through structured challenges, hackathons,

and partnership opportunities.

**5. RBI Includes 10-Year Sovereign Green Bonds in Non-Resident FAR Investment.**

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has added 10-year Sovereign Green Bonds (SGrBs) to the list of specified securities for non-resident investors under the Fully Accessible Route (FAR). This move will help raise capital to fund sustainable initiatives for public sector projects.

- This decision follows the inclusion of Indian Government Securities (G-Secs) in JPMorgan Chase's Emerging Markets Bond Index Global Diversified (CBI-EM GD), Bloomberg's EM Local Currency Government indices, and FTSE Russell's Emerging Markets Government Bond Index (EMCBI).
- SGrBs will be issued by the Government of India (GoI) in the second half of the Financial Year 2024-25 (FY25). These bonds will be classified as 'specified securities' under FAR.

**Key Points:-**

(i) The GoI plans to issue Rs. 20,000 crore in green bonds in four tranches, consisting of two 10-year bonds and two 30-year bonds, each valued at Rs. 5,000 crore.

(ii) The FAR, introduced in 2020, allows Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs), Non-Resident Indians (NRIs), and other eligible investors to buy specified government securities without investment limits.

(iii) The RBI has issued a total of Rs. 36,000 crore in green bonds since 2022-23.

**6. SBI Unit to Raise Rs 2000 Crore for Climate Fund.**

A unit of India's largest lender, State Bank of India, is planning to raise Rs 20 billion (\$237 million) through its third climate fund, according to sources familiar with the matter.

- **SBI Ventures Ltd. intends to raise the money from multilateral institutions after receiving approval from the company's board, the sources said, requesting anonymity due to the confidential nature of the information.**

#### **Key Points:-**

- (i) The fund will invest in small and mid-sized companies focused on recycling waste, reducing emissions, and other related initiatives, and will also seek equity partnerships, the sources added.
- (ii) State Bank of India and SBI Ventures have not yet commented on the matter.

### **7. IndusInd Bank Joins Forces with UNICEF to Enhance Climate Resilience.**

On November 21, 2024, IndusInd Bank and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) formalised a partnership aimed at enhancing disaster resilience and climate risk management through the initiative 'Disaster Resilient Communities and Climate Risk-Informed Efficient Administrative Systems'.

- **This initiative is part of IndusInd Bank's flagship Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) program, the Holistic Rural Development Program (HRDP), which incorporates a Climate Action component designed to elevate the standard of living and economic empowerment in Aspirational Districts.**

- **The program specifically targets improved natural resource management and income generation in five districts: Dharashiv (Maharashtra), Begusarai (Bihar), Virudhunagar (Tamil Nadu), Baran (Rajasthan), and Bahraich (Uttar Pradesh).**

#### **Key Points:-**

- (i) In addition to IndusInd Bank and UNICEF, the program involves key stakeholders such as the CSR Trust for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in India, Tufts Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI), Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Gandhinagar, Gorakhpur Environment Action Group (CEAC), and Mission Samriddhi.
- (ii) Key initiatives within the program include the development of real-time monitoring systems, early warning mechanisms, and advisory services aimed at mitigating climate risks such as droughts, floods, and heatwaves.
- (iii) These measures are designed to build long-term climate resilience and empower communities to adapt to environmental challenges.

### **8. RBI Revokes License of The Durga Co-operative Urban Bank.**

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has cancelled the licence of the Durga Cooperative Urban Bank Limited, Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh (AP), which had been operational for 95 years.

- **This decision follows the bank's failure to meet regulatory capital requirements and operational standards as per the Banking Regulation Act, 1949.**
- **With the cancellation of its licence, Durga Cooperative Urban Bank is prohibited from conducting banking activities, including accepting and repaying deposits, effective from the close of business on November 12, 2024.**

#### **Key Points:-**

- (i) The RBI has instructed the Commissioner for Cooperation and the Registrar of Cooperative Societies, Andhra Pradesh, to initiate a winding-up

order and appoint a liquidator for the bank.

(ii) Depositors are eligible for compensation up to Rs 5 lakh from the Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC).

### 9. SEBI Removes 1% Mandatory Security Deposit Requirement for Public Issues.

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) issued a circular under Section 11(1) of the SEBI Act, 1992, which empowers SEBI to protect investor interests, regulate the securities market, and promote its development.

- The circular abolished the earlier requirement mandating issuer companies to deposit 1% of the public issue size with stock exchanges before launching a public issue. This change was formalized through an amendment to Regulation 38(1) of the SEBI (Issue of Capital and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2018 (ICDR Regulations) on 17th May 2024.

- As per the new regulations, SEBI has issued a significant update following an amendment to the ICDR (Issue of Capital and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations. The amendment resulted in the withdrawal of the previously outlined process for issuing a No Objection Certificate (NoC) for the release of the 1% security deposit for public issues.

- Stock exchanges are now required to establish a joint Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the release of any 1% security deposits for processing pending refunds of deposits made under the previous framework.

#### Key Points:-

(i) SEBI has directed stock exchanges to notify all listed companies of the changes and publish the circular on their respective web portals.

(ii) Additionally, the stock exchanges are required

to amend bye-laws, rules, and regulations as necessary to align with the new framework.

### 10. J&K Bank Introduces Virtual ATM Service in Collaboration with Paymart India.

On 22nd November 2024, The Jammu and Kashmir Bank Limited (J&K Bank) launched the virtual Automated Teller Machine (vATM) facility in collaboration with Paymart India Private Limited.

- The innovative technology platform aims to provide access to technology for the financial empowerment of people, especially in rural areas with a deficiency of ATMs, and to promote digital convenience for its customers.

- The platform was inaugurated by the bank's Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Baldev Prakash in the presence of Amit Narang, Director and CEO of Paymart India Pvt Ltd.

#### Key Points:-

(i) The primary goal of the collaboration and development of the vATM facility is to create an accessible and customer-centric banking ecosystem.

(ii) Through these vATMs, customers in ATM-deficient locations can have banking services delivered to their doorsteps. The services offered by these virtual ATMs are user-friendly, hassle-free, and secure.

(iii) The vATM facility enables customers to withdraw cash easily by generating digital tokens through the bank's mobile application, mPay Delight+, at enrolled merchants of Paymart India.

### 11. RBI Hosts High-Level Policy Conference for Central Banks from the Global South in Mumbai.



The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) hosted the "High-Level Policy Conference of Central Banks from the Global South" in Mumbai, Maharashtra from November 21 to 22, 2024. The conference was inaugurated by RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das.

- The theme of the conference is "Building Synergies across the central banking fraternity of the Global South."
- The focus of the conference was on sharing experiences and perspectives on issues of contemporary relevance to foster mutually beneficial partnerships for a more prosperous, stable, and sustainable future for the Global South.

#### Key Points:-

- (i) Participants, Central bank governors, deputy governors, and officials from 18 Global South countries attended, along with senior RBI officials, including Directors of the RBI Central Board and Deputy Governors.
- (ii) RBI@90 Initiative: This event was part of RBI's 90th-anniversary celebrations, under its flagship program, RBI@90, marking the third international conference in this series.
- (iii) Global Conference on 'Digital Public Infrastructure and Emerging Technologies' held in Bengaluru, Karnataka in August 2024.

#### 12. RBI Infuses Rs 25,000 Crore into System Liquidity via Variable Repo Rate (VRR) Route.

On 22nd November 2024, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) infused funds worth Rs 25,000 crore through a Variable Repo Rate (VRR) into the banking system as the weighted average call rate, a parameter for short-term borrowing costs, increased by 23 basis points (bps) above the policy repo rate (6.50%) to 6.73%.

- This move aims to ensure that recent overseas outflows from local debt and equity do not drive up banks' cost of funds.
- This marked the second such auction that the RBI has conducted after changing its stance from withdrawal of accommodation to neutral.
- As per RBI data, surplus liquidity, as measured by absorption of funds by the RBI, has declined to a one-month low of Rs 84,154.75 crore.
- RBI aims to keep liquidity surplus at roughly 1% to 1.2% of Net Demand and Time Liabilities (NDTL) to ensure that the call rates do not move away from the repo rate.

#### Key Points:-

- (i) As of November 2024, RBI received bids worth Rs 35,420 crore from banks against the notified amount of Rs 25,000 crore, reflecting the need for funds, while the Indian Rupee (INR) depreciated by nearly 0.5% to Rs 84.45 against 1 USD, and foreign investors sold USD 4 billion from Indian stocks and bonds.
- (ii) VRR: It acts as a means to infuse short-term liquidity into the banking system. It is a process through which RBI allows banks to borrow at a rate determined by the market, generally lower than the Repo rate, for a maximum period of 14 days.
- (iii) Repo rate: It is the rate at which RBI lends money to commercial banks in the event of any shortfall of funds. It is an important part of RBI's monetary policy to keep inflation under control.

#### 13. Punjab National Bank Signs the Partnership for Carbon Accounting Financials (PCAF) Agreement.

New Delhi (Delhi) based Punjab National Bank (PNB) has become a signatory to the Partnership for Carbon Accounting Financials (PCAF),

reaffirming its commitment to climate responsibility and sustainability.

- This move aligns with PNB's broader agenda of transparency in climate-related financial practices.
- By joining PCAF, PNB commits to using global standards for measuring and disclosing Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions linked to its lending and investment activities.
- PNB disclosed its financed emissions in the Financial Year 2023-24 (FY24) Business Responsibility and Sustainability Report (BRSR) using the PCAF Standard.

#### Key Points:-

- (i) The decision supports the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) draft framework on climate-related financial risk disclosures, effective from FY26 for all banks.
- (ii) As a PCAF signatory, PNB gains technical support, industry training, and India-specific emission data to improve its GHG management and reporting. It will also participate in international working groups and share knowledge through workshops and webinars on sustainable finance.
- (iii) Union Bank of India was the first major Indian bank to sign the PCAF.

#### 14. RBI Grants Approval for CBI to Enter Insurance Sector in Partnership with Generali Group.

The RBI, on November 21, approved the Central Bank of India's entry into the insurance business through a joint venture with the Generali group under Future Generali India Insurance Company and Future Generali India Life Insurance Company.

- This approval is subject to continuous compliance with conditions set by the RBI and approval from the

sectoral regulator IRDAI, according to a filing made by the bank on Friday.

- This approval follows the Committee of Creditors' decision to sell Category 1 assets of Future Enterprises' stake in FGILICL, and FGIICL declaring the State-owned lender as the successful bidder in August. In October, the Competition Commission of India also approved the proposed combination.

#### Key Points:-

- (i) M.V. Rao, MD and CEO of Central Bank of India, mentioned in an investor call last month that the bank had received the CCI approval to acquire 25.18% of equity shares in the life insurance division of Future Generali and 24.91% in the non-life division.
- (ii) Upon completion of the process, the bank will have two more joint ventures in addition to the existing ones in home finance and financial services.

#### 15. ICICI Prudential Life Insurance Introduces 'Increasing Income' Feature with 5% Annual Annuity Product.

ICICI Prudential Life Insurance has launched the industry's first 'Increasing Income' feature in its regular pay annuity product, ICICI Pru Guaranteed Pension Plan Flexi. This feature offers a 5% annual increase in the annuity pay-out, helping retirees manage inflation and maintain their standard of living.

- The Increasing Income feature allows policyholders to receive a guaranteed income stream that rises every year, ensuring that retirees' purchasing power is preserved over time.
- As inflation diminishes the value of fixed incomes, this feature enables retirees to sustain their standard of living despite rising costs.

**Key Points:-**

- (i) The ICICI Pru Guaranteed Pension Plan Flexi with this new feature provides retirees with both financial security and flexibility. The plan lets customers make affordable long-term contributions and build a sufficient retirement corpus while ensuring a consistent income that grows each year.
- (ii) With India progressing toward a developed economy and expected interest rate reductions, ICICI Prudential Life sees the current high-interest rate environment as an ideal opportunity for customers to lock in annuity rates and secure a permanent, guaranteed income for life.

**SPORTS****1. Indian Boxer Mandeep Jangra Wins WBF Super Featherweight World Title.**

Mandeep Jangra, a 31-year-old professional boxer from Haryana, clinched the World Boxing Federation (WBF) Super Featherweight World Title by defeating Britain's Conor McIntosh in the Cayman Islands.

- He began his professional boxing career in 2021 and has achieved remarkable success since.

**Key Points:-**

- (i) Mandeep Jangra has an impressive record, winning 11 out of 12 fights, including 7 victories by knockout.
- (ii) He previously secured a silver medal at the 2014 Commonwealth Games held in Glasgow, Scotland.

**2. India Wins 4-Match T20 Series 3-1 Against South Africa in 2024 Tour.**

The Indian men's cricket team, captained by Suryakumar Yadav, won the Twenty 20 Internationals (T20Is) series 3-1 by defeating the South African men's cricket team, captained by Aiden Markram.

- The Indian team toured from 8th to 15th November 2024 and played 4 T20I matches.
- Sanju Samson made the 3rd century of his career (109 not out off 56 balls) in the fourth T20I between India and South Africa.
- Arshdeep Singh became India's second-highest wicket-taker in men's T20Is after India's win against South Africa.

**Key Points:-**

- (i) India defeated South Africa by a record 135 runs in the 4th and final T20 International at the Wanderers Stadium in Johannesburg. With the win, India secured the four-match series 3-1.
- (ii) India scored a total of 283 runs for 1, due to centuries scored by Tilak Varma (120 not out off 47 balls) and Sanju Samson (109 not out off 56 balls), and then stopped South Africa at 148 in 18.2 overs.
- (iii) Sanju Samson becomes the first cricketer to score three T20I centuries in a year.

**3. India Submits "Letter of Intent" to IOC to Host 2036 Olympics.**

India took a significant step toward potentially hosting the 2036 Olympic and Paralympic Games. On October 1st, the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) officially submitted a Letter of Intent to the International Olympic Committee's (IOC) Future Host Commission, sources told news agency IANS.

- This action follows repeated expressions of interest from Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who sees the Games as a potential boon for the nation.
- "Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of hosting the Olympic and Paralympic Games in India in 2036 has taken a significant step forward," a source stated.
- They added, "This monumental opportunity could bring substantial benefits, fostering economic growth, social progress, and youth empowerment across the country."

**Key Points:-**

(i) India's top sports administrators, including IOA President PT Usha, were at the Paris Olympics earlier in the year to lobby for the country's selection. There have been reports that India would push for the inclusion of indigenous disciplines like yoga, kho kho, and kabaddi if the bid is successful.

(ii) The Sports Authority of India's Mission Olympic Cell (MOC) has even presented a report on the measures needed for a successful bid to new sports minister Mansukh Mandaviya.

**4. Magnus Carlsen Clinches Both Rapid and Blitz Titles at Tata Steel Chess Tournament 2024.**

Five-time world champion Grandmaster (GM) Magnus Carlsen (Norway) won both the rapid and blitz titles at the 6th edition of the Tata Steel Chess India Rapid and Blitz 2024 tournament, held from 13th to 17th November 2024, at the Dhono Dhanyo Auditorium in Alipore, Kolkata, West Bengal.

- Carlsen won the blitz title by defeating Vidit Gujrathi (India) in the final round to record three straight wins and end with 13 points.
- He won the Rapid title by defeating Daniil Dubov (Russia) in the Open Category with 7.5 points.

- Pragnanandhaa Rameshbabu and Wesley So (USA) scored 5.5 points each, securing 2nd and 3rd place according to tie-breaks.

**Key Points:-**

(i) In the women's category, GM Nana Dzagnidze (Georgia) secured 2nd place with 5.5 points while the Indian grandmaster Vantika Agrawal remained in 3rd with a total of 5 points.

(ii) In the women's section, Valentina Gunina (Russia) finished second with 11 points. Aleksandra Goryachkina (Russia) and India's Vantika Agrawal secured 3rd place with 9.5 points each.

(iii) Magnus Carlsen has won the world title in 2013 and has successfully defended it four times (2014, 2016, 2018, and 2021). He also claimed the 2024 Champions Chess Tour Chessable Masters title in February 2024. As of November 2024, he is on the top of the FIDE (International Chess Federation) ratings.

**5. Rafael Nadal Announces Retirement from Tennis Following Davis Cup Exit.**

Spanish tennis legend Rafael Nadal (38 years old) retires from professional tennis after Spain lost to the Netherlands in the Davis Cup quarterfinals. He has ended his 23-year long career with 22 Grand Slam titles.

- He is second in terms of the greatest number of Grand Slam titles, only behind Novak Djokovic (Serbia), who currently has the most major titles with 24. Roger Federer (Switzerland) has 20 Grand Slam titles to his name.
- He defeated Djokovic in the 2010 US Open final and became the youngest man in the Open Era to achieve the Career Grand Slam at 24, and the first man to win majors on three different surfaces in the same year.



**Key Points:-**

- (i) Rafael Nadal started his professional career in 2001 at just 15 years of age.
- (ii) In 2004, he claimed his first ATP Tour title and led Spain to win the Davis Cup over the USA.
- (iii) Nadal surpassed his joint-record with Djokovic and Federer for the greatest number of Grand Slam men's singles titles at the 2022 Australian Open and became one of four men in history to complete the double Career Grand Slam in singles.

**6. India triumphs over China in the final to win Women's Asian Champions Trophy 2024.**

The Indian women's hockey team won the Women's Asian Champions Trophy (ACT) 2024 by defeating the People's Republic of China (PRC) 1-0 in the final held at the Rajgir Hockey Stadium in Bihar. This marks India's 3rd Women's ACT title.

- **The 8th edition of Women's Asian Champions Trophy (2024) was held from 11th to 20th November 2024 in Bihar.**
- **China secured the 2nd spot while Japan beat Malaysia 4-1 to finish 3rd in the Women's ACT 2024.**

**Key Points:-**

- (i) Deepika Kumari scored the winning goal for the Indian women's hockey team on home soil and finished as the tournament's top goal scorer with a tally of 11.
- (ii) This marks India's third ACT title, after victories in 2016 and 2023, making them the most successful team in the tournament's history.
- (iii) With this title win, India has now equaled South Korea for the most Women's Asian Champions Trophy titles, with 3 titles each.

**7. George Russell Triumphs at the 2024 Las Vegas Grand Prix.**

Mercedes' racer George Russell (the United Kingdom (UK)) won the 2024 Las Vegas Grand Prix (GP) (officially known as the Formula 1 (F1) Heineken Silver Las Vegas Grand Prix 2024) held on 23rd November 2024 at the Las Vegas Strip Circuit in Nevada, the United States of America (USA).

- **Mercedes' Lewis Hamilton (Britain) finished 2nd and Ferrari's Carlos Sainz Jr. (Spain) finished 3rd.**
- **This marks George Russell's 2nd title of the 2024 season. He previously won the Austrian Grand Prix 2024 held in June 2024.**

**Key Points:-**

- (i) George Russell made his F1 debut at the Australian Grand Prix 2019 and achieved his first win at the 2022 São Paulo Grand Prix.
- (ii) As of the 2024 Las Vegas Grand Prix, Russell has achieved 3 race wins, 4 pole positions, 8 fastest laps, and 15 podiums in F1 and will remain at Mercedes until at least the end of the 2025 season.
- (iii) Verstappen has previously won the F1 World Drivers' Championship titles in 2021, 2022, and 2023 with Red Bull. He has also won 62 Grands Prix in 10 seasons.

**8. Prajnesh Gunneswaran Announces His Retirement from Professional Tennis.**

In November 2024, Prajnesh Gunneswaran, an Indian former tennis player who earned a bronze medal in singles tennis at the 2018 Jakarta Asian Games, announced his retirement from professional tennis at the age of 35.

- He was the sixth Indian male athlete to win a medal in tennis at the Asian Games.

- Prajnesh Gunneswaran, who turned professional in 2010, reached a career-high ATP ranking of No. 75 in 2019 and a career-high doubles ranking of No. 248 in 2018.

- He won two Association of Tennis Professionals (ATP) Challenger singles titles, 8 International Tennis Federation (ITF) titles in singles, and 1 ITF title in doubles.

#### Key Points:-

(i) He also won national titles in every age group from under-12 to under-18.

(ii) Throughout his career, he participated in all four Grand Slam tournaments, though he was unable to advance past the first round.

(iii) His best performance came at the Australian Open, where he competed in 2019 and 2020.

## AWARDS

### 1. CHIAL Honored for Aviation Innovations at Saudi Airport Excellence Awards 2024.

GMR Hyderabad International Airport Limited (GHIAL) in Hyderabad, Telangana, achieved international recognition for its innovative advancements in aviation at the Airport Excellence Awards during the Saudi Airport Exhibition 2024.

- The awards ceremony, held on 12th November 2024, at the Riyadh International Convention and Exhibition Center (RICEC) in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, honored GHIAL for its exceptional digital solutions and passenger-centric technologies.

- GHIAL's Digital Twin secured top honors in the Innovation & Technology and Facility Management categories, while its Smart Shopping Trolley was

recognized as the runner-up in the Airport Revenue Management category.

#### Key Points:-

The Smart Shopping Trolley is designed to make airport navigation easier for travelers. Featuring interactive maps, real-time flight updates, and digital advertising displays, it provides a seamless wayfinding experience while promoting targeted advertisements. This innovative approach improves customer satisfaction and generates additional revenue for airport retailers.

### 2. Victoria Kjaer Theilvig from Denmark Wins Miss Universe 2024 Title.

Maria Victoria Kjær Theilvig (21) from Denmark has been crowned Miss Universe 2024 at the 73rd edition of Miss Universe 2024 pageant held at the Arena in Mexico City, Mexico. This marks Denmark's first-ever victory in the global beauty pageant. The edition witnessed the participation of 125 contestants.

- She was crowned by Nicaragua's Sheynnis Palacios, Miss Universe 2023.

- Miss Nigeria, Chidimma Adetshina, secured the 2nd spot as 1st Runner-up, while Miss Mexico, Maria Fernanda Beltran, finished in 3rd place as 2nd Runner-up.

- India was represented by Rhea Singha from Gujarat, who made it to the top 30 finalists.

#### Key Points:-

(i) The event was hosted by Mario Lopez, Miss Universe 2012 Olivia Culpo, Zuri Hall, and Miss Universe 2018 Catriona Gray.

(ii) The pageant was opened with an energetic performance by mariachi musicians and Black Eyed Peas singer, Taboo, who performed

"Mexicana," a special song created for the event by Emilio Estefan (Cuban-American musician).

(iii) Miss Malta Beatrice Njoya, at 40, became the oldest contestant in the pageant's history, and Miss Egypt Logina Salah made history as the first contestant with vitiligo.

### 3. Indian Musicians Ricky Kej and Anoushka Shankar Nominated for 67th Grammy Awards 2025.

Indian music composer and environmentalist Ricky Kej and Anoushka Shankar, British-American sitarist and Indian musician, have been nominated at the 67th Grammy Awards. This was announced by the Recording Academy based in California, USA.

- A three-time Grammy winner, Ricky Kej has earned his 4th nomination for his album "Break of Dawn" in the Best New Age, Ambient, or Chant Album category.
- Anoushka Shankar received a nomination in the same category for her album "Chapter II: How Dark It Is Before Dawn", marking her 11th Grammy nomination.
- She received a second nomination for her collaboration on British multi-instrumentalist and vocalist Jacob Collier's song "A Rock Somewhere," which also includes vocalist Varijashree Venugopal, marking her first nomination.

#### Key Points:-

(i) Other nominees in the same category include "Warriors of Light" by Radhika Vekaria and "Triveni" by entrepreneur and musician Chandrika Tandon, created in collaboration with flautist Wouter Kellerman and cellist Eru Matsumoto.

(ii) The 67th Grammy Awards are set to be held on 2nd February 2025, in Los Angeles, California, USA.

### 4. Ashoka University's Professor Projit Bihari Mukharji Receives 2024 Pfizer Award.

Professor Projit Bihari Mukharji of Ashoka University, Sonapat, Haryana has received the 2024 Pfizer Award for his book "Brown Skins, White Coats: Race Science in India, 1920-66" published in 2023 by University of Chicago Press.

- The award, presented by the History of Science Society (HSS), recognizes his significant work exploring the intersection of race, science, colonialism, and nationalism in India.
- Professor Projit Bihari Mukharji's book sheds light on the entanglement of scientific practices with racial ideologies during the colonial era.
- His research focuses on the history of science and medicine in modern South Asia. He is also the author of other notable works, including Nationalizing the Body (2009) and Doctoring Traditions (2016).

#### Key Points:-

(i) The Pfizer Award, established in 1958 by Pfizer, Inc., recognizes exceptional books on the history of science.

(ii) The award consists of a medal and USD 2,500.

(iii) The award recognizes the book published in English during a period of three calendar years immediately preceding the year of competition.

### 5. Coal India Limited Wins Green World Awards 2024.

Coal India Limited (CIL), a 'Maharatna' enterprise under the Ministry of Coal, Government of India, has been honored with the prestigious Green World Environment Award 2024 in the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) category and named Green World Ambassador.

- The award recognizes CIL's significant contributions through the Thalassemia Bal Sewa Yojna, which provides permanent curative treatment for over 600 Thalassemia patients via stem cell (Bone Marrow) transplants/BMT.
- The award was received by Director (Personnel/IR), CIL, Vinay Ranjan at The Orangery, Kensington Palace, London, United Kingdom (UK).
- CIL pioneered CSR in 2017 by funding Thalassemia treatments through BMT, offering up to Rs 10 lakh for patients across India.

**Key Points:-**

- (i) The initiative partners with 17 leading hospitals nationwide.
- (ii) The award was presented by The Green Organization, an independent environmental group established in 1994 to promote global environmental and CSR best practices.
- (iii) Coal India Limited (CIL), the state-owned coal mining corporate established in 1975, is headquartered in Kolkata, West Bengal. CIL produces over 80% of India's coal and is responsible for 70% of coal-based power generation, meeting 40% of the nation's primary commercial energy needs.

**6. PM Modi Receives Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Global Peace Award at AIAM Launch in Maryland, USA.**

Narendra Modi, Prime Minister (PM) of India was honored (in absentia) with the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Global Peace Award for Minority Upliftment. The award was jointly presented by Washington Adventist University and Association of Indian American Minorities (AIAM) to PM Modi.

- The award recognized PM Modi's efforts toward inclusive development and minority welfare.

- The award is named after Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., an American, known for his contributions to the American Civil Rights Movement, and it honors his lasting legacy in promoting equality, justice, and human rights.
- The event emphasized PM Modi's commitment to upholding India's secular constitution and promoting global recognition for the nation.

**Key Points:-**

- (i) Members of India's minority communities voiced their support for the government's inclusive policies, condemning attempts to create communal divides and reaffirming their commitment to national unity and progress.
- (ii) Chairman of AIAM Jasdip Singh emphasized AIAM's role in advancing PM Modi's vision of a "Viksit Bharat" (Developed India) by 2047.
- (iii) Satnam Singh Sandhu, convener of the Indian Minorities Federation, highlighted the transformation of India under PM Modi's leadership and applauded the "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas" (Together with all, Development for all) policy, noting that it has fostered communal harmony and created an atmosphere of equal opportunity for all.

**7. Marijke Fleuren Receives International Hockey Federation (FIH) Honorary Member Award.**

Former Euro Hockey President and former Fédération Internationale de Hockey (FIH - International Hockey Federation) Executive Board (EB) Member Marijke Fleuren (Netherlands) was honoured with the FIH Honorary Member Award by FIH President Tayyab Ikram during the 49th FIH Statutory Congress held in Muscat, Oman.



- Marijke Fleuren, the Chair of the FIH Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, has been involved in FIH in different roles since 1999.

- She has served for 12 years as the President of the European Hockey Federation (EuroHockey) since 2011.

#### Key Points:-

(i) During the event, FIH launched FIH Women in Hockey Empowerment Project, a transformative platform designed to uplift and engage female players, coaches, officials, and leaders in Hockey.

(ii) As part of the inaugural Project, the Laureus Sport for Good Foundation has awarded FIH a grant to help change the future of sport for girls by leveraging Body Confident Sport.

(iii) This is a first-of-its-kind, evidence-based set of coaching tools co-created by Nike and Dove which provides coaches with the materials to increase body confidence, body image and self-esteem in girls.

### 8. Upamanyu Chatterjee's "Lorenzo Searches for the Meaning of Life" Wins the 2024 JCB Prize for Literature.

On November 23, 2024, Upamanyu Chatterjee's book "Lorenzo Searches for the Meaning of Life" won the 7th Edition JCB (Joseph Cyril Bamford Excavators Limited) Prize for Literature. The book, published by Speaking Tiger Books, follows protagonist Lorenzo Senesi's journey of self-discovery and faith.

- The award ceremony was held at JCB India's headquarters in Ballabgarh, Faridabad, where Upamanyu Chatterjee received a cash prize of Rs 25 lakh, along with a trophy titled "Mirror Melting," designed by Delhi artist duo Thukral and Tagra.

- In 2023, "Firebird" by Perumal Murugan, translated from the Malayalam by Janani Kannan, won the prestigious award.

- The award was presented on behalf of JCB Chairman, Lord Bamford, by Deepak Shetty, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Managing Director (MD) of JCB India.

#### Key Points:-

(i) Upamanyu Chatterjee's novel emerged as the winner from a shortlist of six books, which included Sanatan by Sharankumar Limbale, translated by Paromita Sengupta; Chronicle of an Hour and a Half by Saharu Nusaiba Kannanari, The One Legged by Sakyajit Bhattacharya, translated by Rituparna Mukherjee; and Maria, Just Maria by Sandhya Mary, translated by Jayasree Kalathil.

(ii) The jury included author-translator Jerry Pinto (Chair), art historian-curator Deepthi Sashidharan, scholar-writer-translator Tridip Suhrud, filmmaker-writer Shaunak Sen, and artist Aquí Thami.

(iii) The JCB Prize for Literature, established in 2018 by Joseph Cyril Bamford Excavators Limited (JCB), is awarded annually to celebrate Indian literature and its diverse storytelling styles. With a prize of Rs 25,00,000 (USD 30,000) and a unique sculpture, it is regarded as "India's most valuable literature prize."

### 9. Ashok Gopal Wins NIF Book Prize 2024 for "BR Ambedkar: A Biography".

In November 2024, the New India Foundation announced writer Ashok Gopal has won the Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay National Innovation Foundation (NIF) Book Prize 2024 for his biography "A Part Apart: The Life and Thought of BR Ambedkar".

- He will be honoured at the Bangalore Literature Festival in Bengaluru, Karnataka.
- The award carries a cash prize of Rs 15 lakh, a trophy, and a citation.

**Key Points:-**

- (i) The book was published by Navayana and it delivers a vivid account of Ambedkar's life journey from facing systemic oppression to shaping India's constitution as an advocate for marginalised communities.
- (ii) In 2023, Akshaya Mukul won the award for his biography of writer Agyeya, titled 'Writer, Rebel, Soldier, Lover: The Many Lives of Agyeya'.

**10. HCL, MECL, and JNARDDC under Ministry of Mines recognized for performance during National Learning Week.**

Hindustan Copper Limited (HCL), Mineral Exploration and Consultancy Limited (MECL), and Jawaharlal Nehru Aluminium Research Development and Design Centre (JNARDDC), under the Ministry of Mines (MoM), were honoured for their exceptional performance during the National Learning Week (NLW), a nine-day nationwide initiative promoting learning and development, held from 19th to 27th October 2024.

- The awards were presented by Union Minister of State (MoS) Dr. Jitendra Singh, Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions (MoPP&P).
- The award ceremony was organized by the Capacity Building Commission (CBC) at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi, Delhi.
- This recognition highlights the Ministry's commitment to Mission Karmayogi, a flagship program of the Government of India for the training of civil servants.

**Key Points:-**

- (i) The Ministry of Mines has consistently been assessed among the top-performing ministries by CBC for its exceptional implementation of Mission Karmayogi.
- (ii) HCL, MECL, and JNARDDC each received an award, competing with all central government organizations across India in achieving the "Minimum 4-hour Learning Goal," a target set by CBC where each employee of an organization had to complete at least 4 hours of Integrated Government Online Training (iGOT) courses during NLW.

**11. Daniel Barenboim and Ali Abu Awwad Awarded the Indira Gandhi Peace Prize 2023.**

Daniel Barenboim, a world-famous pianist and conductor, and Ali Abu Awwad, a Palestinian peace activist, were honored with the most prestigious "Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament, and Development 2023" award on Indira Gandhi's 106th birth anniversary for their contribution towards peace and non-violence in the Israel-Palestine conflict.

- The awardees were selected by a jury headed by former Chief Justice of India (CJI) T S Thakur.
- The award was presented virtually on Indira Gandhi's birth anniversary (19th November) and was attended by Chairperson of Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust Sonia Gandhi, former Vice President of India M Hamid Ansari, current head of the jury and former National Security Advisor (NSA) Shivshankar Menon, Justice T S Thakur, and Mariam C.
- He received many awards and prizes, including six Grammy awards, an honorary Knight Commander of the Order of the British Empire, and the Grand Cross of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany.

**Key Points:-**

- (i) Ali Abu Awwad (52) is a prominent Palestinian peace activist who has worked in peace-building in Israel and Palestine for many years.
- (ii) He created the Palestinian non-violence movement Taghyeer, which envisions a democratic, independent Palestinian society based on freedom, dignity, and security.

**INDEX****1. MoS Dr. Jitendra Singh Unveils Grievance Redressal Assessment and Index (GRAI) 2023.**

On 18th November 2024, Union Minister of State (MoS) (Independent Charge, IC) Dr. Jitendra Singh, Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions (MOPPG&P), launched Grievance Redressal Assessment and Index (GRAI) 2023 during the National Workshop on "Effective Redressal of Public Grievances" held at Vigyan Bhawan, in New Delhi, Delhi.

- The Workshop was organised by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG), MOPPG&P.
- The 1st edition of GRAI 2022 was released on 21st June 2023.
- It was conceptualized and designed by the DARPG, GoI based on the recommendation of the Parliamentary Standing Committee, MoPPG&P.

**Key Points:-**

- (i) GRAI 2023 assessed 89 Central Ministries and Departments, ranking them based on a comprehensive index across four key dimensions: efficiency, feedback, domain expertise, and organizational commitment, evaluated through 11 indicators.
- (ii) While addressing the event, Union MoS Dr.

Jitendra Singh highlighted a significant achievement in public grievance redressal, announcing that the average grievance resolution time has been reduced from 30 days to 13 days and is expected to decrease further.

**2. According to the Network Readiness Index 2024, the USA leads, and India is ranked 49th.**

The Network Readiness Index 2024, published by Portulans Institute (PI) and Saïd Business School at the University of Oxford, has ranked the United States of America (USA) as the world leader in network readiness for the 3rd consecutive year with an overall score of 78.96.

- Singapore was ranked 2nd (76.94) followed by Finland on 3rd (75.76), Sweden on 4th (74.99), and Republic of Korea on 5th spot (74.85) respectively.
- India is ranked 49th globally with a total score of 53.63. Among the lower-middle-income countries, India is ranked 2nd only to Vietnam (45th).

**Key Points:-**

- (i) The NRI Index provides a framework for evaluating the effects of Information Communication & Technology (ICT) on society and the development of nations.
- (ii) The 2024 edition of the Network Readiness Index focuses on the theme "Building a Digital Tomorrow: Public-Private Investments and Global Collaboration for Digital Readiness." It highlights the importance of public-private partnerships in shaping our increasingly interconnected world.
- (iii) The NRI was first published in 2002. Until 2016, it was part of the Global Information Technology Report (GITR) published by the World Economic Forum (WEF), Cornell University, and INSEAD (Institut Européen d'Administration des Affaires). However, in 2019 it was redesigned and

started being published by PI.

## IMPORTANT DAYS

### 1. World Day for the Prevention and Healing of Child Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Violence is Observed on 18 November 2024.

World Day for the Prevention of and Healing from Child Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Violence is annually observed across the globe on 18th November to raise awareness about child abuse and violence.

- It aims to prevent abuse, protect children, and support the recovery and healing of survivors.
- 18th November 2024 marks the 3rd observance of the World Day for the Prevention of and Healing from Child Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Violence.
- Around the world, approximately 120 million females below 20 years have experienced various forms of forced sexual contact.

#### Key Points:-

- (i) On 7th November 2022, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) adopted a resolution A/RES/77/8 and proclaimed the 18th November of every year as the World Day for the Prevention of and Healing from Child Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Violence.
- (ii) Sexual violence in high and middle income countries indicates that the prevalence ranges from 8% to 31% among girls and 3% to 17% among boys under the age of 18.
- (iii) The sexual abuse and exploitation of children is a violation of human rights and a public health problem with significant consequences for global health and development.

### 2. National Naturopathy Day is celebrated on 18 November 2024.

National Naturopathy Day is annually observed across India on 18th November to promote mental and physical health through "Naturopathy," a form of healthcare that combines modern treatment with traditional methods.

- 18th November 2024 marks the observance of the 7th National Naturopathy Day. This annual observance is led by the Ministry of AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, Sowa Rigpa, and Homoeopathy).
- The theme of the 7th National Naturopathy Day is "Naturopathy for Healthy Aging and Longevity."

#### Key Points:-

- (i) On 29th October 2024 (Ayurveda Day), PM Modi laid the foundation stone for CRIYNs in Raipur, Chhattisgarh, and Khorda, Odisha. Plans are underway for similar institutes in Assam, Andhra Pradesh (AP), and Kerala.
- (ii) During the event, the winners from the YOGATECH Challenge, which recognized innovative startups blending yoga with modern technology, were felicitated. 15 startups across categories such as devices, IT solutions, and props and accessories made it to the finals.
- (iii) The International Conference on Naturopathy was organized by CCRYN from November 18-19, 2024, in Nagamangala. This acts as a platform to unite healthcare professionals, researchers, practitioners, students, and enthusiasts from diverse fields to discuss, share, and explore evidence-based practices in Naturopathy.

### 3. World Television Day is celebrated on 21 November 2024.



United Nations (UN's) World Television Day (WTD) is annually observed across the globe on November 21 to acknowledge the significant role and impact of television in our daily lives.

- The day celebrates television as a symbol of communication and globalization in today's world.
- 21st November 2024 marks the observance of the 28th WTD.
- On 17th December 1996, the UN General Assembly (UNGA) adopted the resolution A/RES/51/205 and proclaimed November 21 of every year as World Television Day.

#### Key Points:-

- (i) The first ever WTD was observed on 21st November 1997.
- (ii) The National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences (NATAS) awarded the inaugural "Excellence in Production Technology" Emmy to The Santa Clauses Season Two.
- (iii) This award was presented during the 75th Technology & Engineering Emmy Awards held at New York City in the United States of America on World Television Day, November 21, 2024.

#### 4. World Fisheries Day is celebrated on 21 November 2024.

World Fisheries Day (WFD) is annually observed across the globe on 21st November to highlight the importance of sustainable fisheries and the need to protect aquatic ecosystems and the livelihoods of fishing communities.

- 21st November 2024 marks the 27th World Fisheries Day.
- On 21st November 1997, the working fishermen and women representing the World Forum of Fish

Harvesters & Fish Workers met in New Delhi, Delhi, and established the World Fisheries Forum (WFF).

- During the meeting, representatives from 18 countries signed a declaration advocating for the global adoption of sustainable fishing practices and policies.

#### Key Points:-

- (i) To commemorate WFD 2024, the National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB) and the Department of Fisheries (DoF) hosted events at Sushma Swaraj Bhawan, New Delhi, in the presence of MoFAH&D and Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Shri Rajiv Ranjan Singh.
- (ii) The theme for this year is "India Blue Transformation: Strengthening Small-scale and Sustainable Fisheries."
- (ii) The first ever WFD was observed on 21st November 1998.

#### 5. World Heritage Week is celebrated on 19 to 25 November 2024

World Heritage Week (WHW) is annually observed across India from November 19 to 25 to promote the heritage and the culture of monuments and important sites for their conservation.

- WHW recognises and celebrates heritage sites that have been recognised by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).
- The theme of WHW 2024 is "Discover and Experience Diversity".

#### Key Points:-

- (i) WHW began with a special event held at the Sitaram temple in Soronji, Uttar Pradesh (UP).
- (ii) WHW events are annually organised by the

Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) under the Ministry of Culture (MOC), various Museums, and other heritage-conscious organisations across India.

(iii) In India, WHW is a part of the promotion activities by the Government of India (GoI) to promote India's unique heritage for the benefit of present and future generations.

#### **6. First-Ever UN's World Conjoined Twins Day is celebrated on 24 November 2024.**

The first-ever United Nations (UN's) World Conjoined Twins Day (WCTD) was observed across the globe on 24th November to raise awareness about conjoined twins, support their well-being, and promote their social inclusion.

- The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) passed resolution A/RES/78/313 on 1st July 2024 to declare November 24th as WCTD.

- It was proposed by Saudi Arabia in collaboration with Bahrain, Morocco, Qatar, and Yemen.

- Saudi Arabia hosted the first-ever International Conjoined Twins Conference on November 24-25, 2024, in Riyadh (Saudi Arabia).

#### **Key Points:-**

(i) The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) passed resolution A/RES/78/313 on 1st July 2024 to declare November 24th as WCTD.

(ii) It was proposed by Saudi Arabia in collaboration with Bahrain, Morocco, Qatar, and Yemen.

(iii) Conjoined fetuses are a rare form of identical twins who share a placenta and amniotic sac, occurring when the embryo splits between 13 and 15 days after conception.

#### **7. World Toilet Day is celebrated on 19 November 2024.**

World Toilet Day (WTD) is annually observed across the globe on 19 November to draw attention to the public health, environmental, and dignity challenges posed by inadequate sanitation. The day also highlights the need to provide safe and secure toilets for all.

- In 2001, the World Toilet Organisation (WTO), a global non-profit organisation established to improve toilet and sanitation conditions across the globe, declared 19th November as World Toilet Day (WTD).

- The WTO was established by Jack Sim, a philanthropist from Singapore, on 19th November 2001.

- On 24 July 2013, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) adopted the resolution (A/RES/67/291) and declared 19th November of every year as "World Toilet Day."

#### **Key Points:-**

(i) The first ever UN-recognised WTD was observed on 19th November 2013.

(ii) The World Health Organization (WHO) stated that unsafe water, sanitation, and hygiene are responsible for approximately 1,000 deaths of children under the age of 5 every day in 2023 and improved sanitation could save 1.4 million lives annually.

(iii) Around 2.2 billion people still lack safely managed drinking water, and 2 billion lack basic hygiene services, including 653 million with no facilities at all.

#### **8. International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women is celebrated on 25 November 2024.**

The United Nations (UN) International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women is annually observed across the globe on 25 November to raise global awareness about the issue of violence against women and highlight the importance of efforts to prevent such violence.

- 25th November 2024 marks the 25th International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.
- Globally, female genital mutilation has increased by 15% over the past eight years.

#### Key Points:-

- (i) Around 1 in 3 women globally have experienced either physical or sexual violence from an intimate partner, or sexual violence from a non-partner, at some point in their lives - 1 in 4 adolescent girls is abused by their partners.
- (ii) 16% to 58% of women worldwide experience technology-facilitated gender-based violence, with Generation Z and Millennials being the most impacted.
- (iii) In conflict, war, and humanitarian crises, 70% of women experience gender-based violence.

## DEFENCE

### 1. Indian Army Deploys 550 Asmi Machine Pistol in Northern Command.

Indian Army (IA) has introduced 550 units of the indigenously developed "Asmi" machine pistol in the Northern Command. This is a part of the efforts toward fulfilling the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' (self-reliance).

- The 100% Made-in-India weapon was developed by Colonel Prasad Bansod of the IA in collaboration with the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO). It was manufactured by Lokesh Machines in Hyderabad, Telangana.

- The 'Asmi' (which means 'pride and self-respect') is a robust, compact, and reliable weapon designed for close-quarter battles and specialized operations. Its unique semi-bullpup design enables single-handed operation, functioning both as a pistol and a submachine gun.

#### Key Points:-

- (i) The design of the 'Asmi' incorporates advanced materials and technologies, featuring an aircraft-grade aluminum upper receiver, a carbon fiber lower receiver, and 3D-printed components.
- (ii) Its lightweight design, 8-inch barrel, and high-capacity magazine enhance its modern capabilities for mission-specific needs.
- (iii) With an estimated production cost of under Rs 50,000 per unit, the 'Asmi' is set to strengthen domestic security forces and has the potential to enter international markets.

### 2. Indian Army Carries Out 'Sanyukt Vimochan 2024' Exercise in Gujarat.

The Indian Army (IA) successfully conducted the Multilateral Annual Joint Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) Exercise, 'Sanyukt Vimochan 2024,' from 18th to 19th November 2024 at Ahmedabad and Porbandar, Gujarat.

- IA, Indian Navy (IN), and Indian Air Force (IAF) carried out a 9-day joint military exercise, 'Poorvi Prahar,' at Mechuka in Arunachal Pradesh (AR) from 10th to 18th November 2024, showcasing their advanced combat readiness.
- General Upendra Dwivedi, Chief of the Army Staff (COAS), led this important event, which brought together participants from the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), Gujarat State Disaster Management Authority (GSDMA), India Meteorological Department (IMD), Federation of

**Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI), and the Indian Armed Forces.**

- The event commenced on 18th November 2024 with a Tabletop Exercise (TTX) based on the theme 'Cyclone in the Coastal Region of Gujarat.'

**Key Points:-**

(i) IA, IN, and IAF carried out a 9-day joint military exercise, 'Poorvi Prahar,' at Mechuka in Arunachal Pradesh (AR) from 10th to 18th November 2024, showcasing their advanced combat readiness.

(ii) The exercise showcased advanced military hardware like the M-777 Howitzer and Prachand helicopters, emphasizing intelligence gathering, surveillance, and reconnaissance. It focused on rapid force mobilisation, redeployment, efficient operational logistics, and precision strikes using advanced weaponry to enhance mission execution capabilities.

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

### 1. China's J-35 Becomes the Second 5th-Generation Fighter.

In November 2024, China unveiled its fifth-generation stealth fighter jet, the Shenyang J-35, during the 15th China International Aviation and Aerospace Exhibition in Zhuhai, China.

- With this, China became the second nation in the world, after the United States of America (USA), to possess more than one fifth-generation fighter jet.

**Key Points:-**

(i) The J-35 is a twin-engine, single-seat supersonic stealth fighter developed by China for multirole missions.

(ii) It represents the country's second fifth-generation fighter, following the J-20.

(iii) The J-35's design closely resembles the U.S. Lockheed Martin F-35, with the main difference being that the J-35 is equipped with two engines, while the F-35 has a single engine.

### 2. SpaceX Successfully Launches GSAT-20 Satellite from India into Space.

On 19th November 2024, SpaceX's Falcon-9 rocket successfully launched India's Geosynchronous Satellite (GSAT)-N2 (or GSAT-20) from the Space Launch Complex 40 (SLC-40) at Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Florida, United States of America (USA).

- The satellite was developed by NewSpace India Limited (NSIL), the commercial arm of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).

- This marks the first collaboration between NSIL and SpaceX for a satellite launch.

- The satellite launch cost between USD 60-70 million, with NSIL paying nearly Rs 500 crore for the launch.

**Key Points:-**

(i) GSAT-N2 or GSAT-20 is a 4,700 kilograms (kg) satellite, heavier than any other indigenous rockets of India. The satellite has a mission life of 14 years and will provide internet and communication services across India, including remote regions.

(ii) The satellite features a Ka-Band high-throughput communication payload with a capacity of 48 Gbps (Gigabit per second), enhancing data transmission capabilities.

(iii) The satellite is equipped with 32 user beams, of which 8 narrow spot beams cover the Northeast region, while 24 wide spot beams cater to the rest of India.



### 3. DRDO Successfully Conducts Flight Trial of India's First Long-Range Hypersonic Missile.

The Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) of India successfully conducted the flight-trial of India's first long-range hypersonic missile off the coast of Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Island, Odisha.

- This missile can carry various payloads over 1,500 km, enhancing India's military range. It is developed by DRDO.
- A hypersonic missile travels at speeds above Mach 5 (five times the speed of sound), roughly a mile per second. Unlike ballistic missiles, they are highly maneuverable, making them difficult to detect and intercept.
- There are two main types: Hypersonic Glide Vehicles (HGVs), launched by rockets and gliding to the target, and Hypersonic Cruise Missiles (HCMs), powered by air-breathing scramjet engines.

#### Key Points:-

- (i) It has been developed through extensive research in various DRDO laboratories, particularly at the Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Missile Complex in Hyderabad, Telangana.
- (ii) While Russia and China are leading in hypersonic missile development, the U.S. is also making progress in this field. Other countries like France, Germany, Japan, and Israel are also involved in hypersonic weapon development.

### 4. Blue Origin's 28th Space Mission Marks Milestone with Emily Calandrelli as the 100th Woman in Space.

On November 22, 2024, Blue Origin, the United States of America (USA) based launch service provider, successfully completed its 9th human spaceflight and the 28th flight for the New Shepard

program (NS-28). This suborbital journey carried 6 tourists into space aboard the New Shepard rocket from Launch Site One in West Texas, USA.

- The astronaut crew included Emily Dawn Calandrelli, an advocate for STEM education; Sharon Hagle & Marc Hagle, a couple on their second Blue Origin mission; Austin Litteral, whose participation was sponsored by Whatnot, a livestream shopping platform; J.D. Russell, a former game warden and entrepreneur; and Hank Wolfond, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of a Canadian investment firm.
- Till November 2024, the program has flown 43 humans above the Kármán line, the internationally recognized boundary of space.
- Emily Dawn Calandrelli, known as 'TheSpaceGal', is an Emmy-nominated television host, a bestselling author, and content creator. She became the first American woman to be the sole host of a nationally broadcast science series.

#### Key Points:-

- (i) Emily Calandrelli became the 100th woman space traveler.
- (ii) She was the 10th woman to fly on a suborbital spaceflight above the Kármán line and the 21st woman to reach space on a suborbital trajectory, including the astronauts who soared higher than the United Nations (UN) recognized altitude of 50 miles (80 kilometers, km) on Virgin Galactic's SpaceShipTwo (SS2) rocket plane.
- (iii) She was now among the 94 men and women who have seen Earth from above 50 miles high.

### 5. Pixxel launches 'Fireflies' hyperspectral satellite constellation.

Bengaluru (Karnataka) based space start-up Pixxel, which specializes in hyperspectral imaging

and Earth observation, has introduced "Fireflies", a constellation of six next-gen hyperspectral satellites. The Fireflies are set to be launched in 2025.

- The Fireflies will offer unmatched precision with their native 5-meter resolution, more than 150 spectral bands, and a 40-kilometre (km) wide swath that enables the constellation to access any part of the globe on a daily basis.
- This will deliver critical data like early detection of crop diseases, pinpointing water stress, real-time deforestation monitoring, and tracking ocean pollution.

#### Key Points:-

- (i) Fireflies is built to capture the world and provide clarity and detail needed to make impactful decisions for a better future.
- (ii) Pixxel has also planned to expand the constellation to 24 satellites.

### 6. DRDO's SSPL Develops SiC Wafers and GaN HEMT-Based MMIC Technology.

New Delhi (Delhi) based Solid State Physics Laboratory (SSPL), a Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) unit, has developed indigenous technologies for manufacturing Silicon Carbide (SiC) wafers and fabricating Gallium Nitride (GaN) High Electron Mobility Transistors (HEMTs), along with Monolithic Microwave Integrated Circuits (MMICs).

- These advancements are crucial for next-generation defense systems, aerospace, and clean energy sectors.
- The 4-inch SiC wafers enable high-efficiency power electronics, while GaN HEMTs (up to 150 watt(W)) are essential for high-frequency and high-power applications like radars and electronic warfare.

#### Key Points:-

- (i) The MMIC, capable of 40W for X-band frequencies, supports microwave communication and satellite systems.
- (ii) These technologies offer improved efficiency, reduced size, and enhanced performance, making them vital for military systems, 5G/satellite communications, and renewable energy applications.
- (iii) Gallium Arsenide Technology Enabling Centre (GAETEC) facility in Hyderabad (Telangana) has successfully initiated limited production of GaN/SiC MMICS, contributing to India's self-reliance in semiconductor technology, aligning with the 'Atma Nirbhar' Bharat initiative.

### 7. ISRO Signs Agreement with Australian Space Agency (ASA) for Gaganyaan Mission Launch.

On November 20, 2024, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) formalised an Implementation Agreement (IA) with Australian Space Agency (ASA) for strengthening the cooperation in space activities between both countries.

- This initiative enables collaboration between both space agencies on crew and crew module recovery efforts for the Gaganyaan mission (India's first human spaceflight program).
- India and Australia are enduring strategic partners, working closely and committed to exploring current and future collaborative activities.
- The IA was signed by DK Singh, Director, Human Space Flight Centre (HSFC) on ISRO's side at Bengaluru, India and Jarrod Powell, General Manager, Space Capability Branch, on ASA's side at Canberra, Australia.

#### Key Points:-

(i) The name Gaganyaan has its roots in Sanskrit, translating to 'sky and vehicle.' The primary objective of this mission is to launch a team of astronauts into space, where they will travel at an altitude of 400 km above Earth in Low Earth Orbit (LEO) for a three-day expedition before returning by landing in the Indian Ocean.

(ii) The launch of the mission is expected to be in 2026. Under the Gaganyaan programme, ISRO will carry out four missions, which include three uncrewed space missions and one crewed mission.

(iii) The first uncrewed mission is scheduled to take place in 2024-25, and the first crewed mission is scheduled in 2025-27.

## BOOKS & AUTHORS

### 1. Thomas Mathew Releases New Biography "Ratan Tata: A Life".

Retired bureaucrat Thomas Mathew has authored a new book titled "Ratan Tata: A Life", a comprehensive biography of the visionary leader Ratan Tata.

- Published by HarperCollins India, the book delves into Tata's extraordinary journey from his isolated childhood and early role in the Tata Group to his impactful tenure as chairman of Tata Sons.

#### Key Points:-

(i) The biography is enriched with insights from over 130 interviews, capturing stories of individuals whose lives were touched by Tata's leadership and legacy.

(ii) It highlights Ratan Tata's transformative influence on the Indian business landscape and beyond, making it a must-read for those inspired by his journey.

### 2. Kushal Pal Singh & Aparna Jain Release New Book 'Why the Heck Not?'.

In November 2024, a new inspirational book titled 'Why the Heck Not?' was launched by Kushal Pal (KP) Singh, the Indian billionaire real estate developer, Chairman Emeritus and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Delhi Land & Finance (DLF) Limited, alongside co-author Aparna Jain at the Lodhi Hotel in New Delhi.

- The book was published by Penguin Random House Limited.

- This motivational book presents a blueprint for success, drawing from KP Singh's life lessons, enriched by Aparna Jain's leadership expertise.

#### Key Points:-

The book chronicles the inspiring journey of how KP Singh rose to become one of India's leading business figures, highlighting the power of resilience, calculated risk-taking, and embracing opportunities while staying true to one's morals and ethics.

A) परणा जैन B) रतन टाटा C) किरण मजूमदार-शॉ D) नीता अंबानी

### 3. President of India Unveils Three Key Publications of the Supreme Court of India.

President Droupadi Murmu on Tuesday launched three publications of the Supreme Court in the presence of Chief Justice of India (CJI) DY Chandrachud, CJI-designate Justice Sanjiv Khanna, Justice BR Gavai, and Union Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal.

- The President launched three publications namely Justice for the Nation: Reflections on 75 years of the Supreme Court of India, Prisons in India: Mapping Prison Manuals and Measures for Reformation and

**Decongestion, and Legal Aid through Law Schools: A Report on the working of Legal Aid Cells in India.**

- Addressing the gathering, CJI said the three publications of the Supreme Court released by the President are of seminal importance.

**Key Points:-**

Of the three publications, one is a collection of essays which analyse the jurisprudence of the court since its foundation and the remaining two are studies which assess the functioning of legal-aid cells in universities and the state of prisons, respectively," said the CJI.

## OBITUARY

### 1. Renowned Mridangam Scholar Varadarao Kamalakara Rao Passes Away at 88.

Varadarao Kamalakara Rao, a world-renowned Mridangam scholar and disciple of Palghat Mani Iyer, passed away at the age of 88 in Rajahmundry, Andhra Pradesh (AP). Born on June 8, 1936, in Andhra Pradesh, Rao dedicated his life to the art of Mridangam, leaving behind a rich legacy.

- He was a recipient of several prestigious awards, including the Central Sangeet Natak Akademi Award and the President's Medal, awarded by then-President Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan.
- His performances transcended borders, with notable appearances at the United Nations (UN) Hall in New York, USA.
- Rao also featured in numerous All India Radio national music programs and special broadcasts on Doordarshan, contributing significantly to Indian classical music on a global stage.

**Key Points:-**

## ENVIRONMENT

### 1. King Cobra Discovered in Western Ghats Officially Named Ophiophagus Kaalinga.

Eshwar Khandre, Cabinet Minister for Forest, Ecology and Environment, Government of Karnataka, officially named the king cobra found in the Western Ghats as 'Ophiophagus Kaalinga'.

- The specific name "Kaalinga" derives from Kannada, meaning "dark," reflecting the snake's coloration and cultural significance in Karnataka.
- It features a blackish-brown body adorned with pale bands and a lighter creamy yellow belly. It is recognized for its impressive size, often exceeding 10 feet in length.

**Key Points:-**

- (i) This announcement was made following extensive research led by wildlife biologist P. Gowri Shankar and his team, which identified the distinct genetic lineage of this snake, previously classified under a single species.
- (ii) Alongside Ophiophagus Kaalinga, the other identified species include Ophiophagus hannah (the northern king cobra), Ophiophagus bungarus (the unda king cobra), and Ophiophagus salvatana (the Luzon king cobra).

### 2. Guru Ghasidas-Tamor Pingla Declared India's 56th Tiger Reserve.

On November 18, 2024, Union Minister for Environment, Forests, and Climate Change, Bhupender Yadav notified the Guru Ghasidas-Tamor Pingla protected area in Chhattisgarh as India's 56th tiger reserve.

- The new reserve becomes India's 3rd largest tiger reserve behind the Manas Tiger Reserve (MTR) in



**Assam and the Nagarjunasagar-Srisaillam Tiger Reserve (NSTR) in Andhra Pradesh (AP).**

- It is the 4th tiger reserve in Chhattisgarh after Achanakmar, Indravati, and Udanti Sitanadi.
- The Guru Ghasidas-Tamor Pingla Tiger Reserve is located across the Manendragarh-Chirmiri-Bharatpur, Korea, Surajpur, and Balrampur districts of Chhattisgarh.

**Key Points:-**

- (i) The reserve spans a total area of 2,829.38 square kilometers (sq km), with 2,049.2 sq km designated as the core area. It is contiguous to the Sanjay Dubri Tiger Reserve in Madhya Pradesh (MP).
- (ii) The reserve has a buffer zone of 780.15 sq km, which helps reduce human-animal conflicts and provides wildlife the space they need to thrive.
- (iii) A total of 753 species, including 365 invertebrates and 388 vertebrates, have been documented in the Guru Ghasidas-Tamor Pingla Tiger Reserve by the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI).