

A House Journal of **APTI PLUS**



APTI PLUS

Academy for Civil Services Pvt. Ltd.

WBCS GAZETTE



JUNE 2023

A MONTHLY CURRENT AFFAIRS FOR ASPIRANTS OF WBCS EXAMINATION

PAGE

03	WEST BENGAL
05	NATIONAL
08	INTERNATIONAL
13	ECONOMICS
18	DEFENCE AND SECURITY
19	SCIENCE
24	SPORTS
25	GEOGRAPHY AND ENVIRONMENT
27	OBITUARIES
28	APPOINTMENTS
29	AWARDS
31	IMPORTANT DAYS
33	BOOKS & AUTHOR
34	BOOSTER DOSE
41	PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Table of
CONTENTS

APTI PLUS
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Our Super Achievers in WBCS 2020

GROUP A

MONOJIT CHOWDHURY
RANK 2

MRINMOY MAJI
RANK 45

ABHIK PATLA
RANK 46

ARGHYA BHATTACHARYA
RANK 54

BANANI MAJUMDER
RANK 83

CHANDAN SAHA
RANK 101

DEBNATH MAHATA
RANK 111

AMIT TAMANG
RANK 115

JAGONNATH BISWAS
RANK 161

SUBRATA DAS
RANK 166

GROUP C

ABHISEK SINHA
RANK 22

HIMEL SAHA
RANK 24

SAYANTA GANGULY
RANK 38

SK MD JASIMUDDIN
RANK 53

MORTAJA AHAMED
RANK 63

NEHA RAI
RANK 71

SUBHADIP MITRA
RANK 132

GROUP B

UDAYAN
RANK 13

RAJARSHI
RANK 22

WEST BENGAL

West Bengal to implement NEP

- The government of West Bengal has announced its decision to implement the National Education Policy (NEP) in the state.
- The NEP is a comprehensive framework for transforming the education system in India, covering school, higher, technical and vocational education.
- The NEP aims to achieve universal access, quality, equity, inclusion and innovation in education.
- The West Bengal government has said that it will adopt the NEP with some modifications to suit the local context and needs. The government has also formed a task force to oversee the implementation process and to ensure coordination among various stakeholders.

Highlights of New Education Policy 2020

- The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 replaced the National Policy on Education 1986.
- It aims at ensuring Universal Access at All Levels of schooling from pre-primary school to Grade 12.
- It Ensures quality early childhood care and education for all children between 3-6 years.
- It introduced a New Curricular and Pedagogical Structure (5+3+3+4).
 - 5 years of foundational stage (for ages 3 to 8).
 - 3 years of preparatory stage (for ages 8 to 11 or classes 3 to 5).
 - 3 years of middle stage (for ages 11 to 14 or classes 6 to 8).
 - 4 years of secondary stage (for ages 14 to 18 or classes 9 to 12).
- No strict separations between arts and sciences, between curricular and extracurricular activities, and between vocational and academic streams.
- To establish a National Mission on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy.
- Reform in Assessment of Board Exams. Setting up a new National Assessment Centre, PARAKH (Performance Assessment, Review, and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development).
- Setting up of the State School Standards Authority.
- Increasing Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education to 50%.
- Setting up of Multidisciplinary Education and Research Universities.
- Setting up of the National Research Foundation.
- Teacher Education - 4-year integrated stage-specific, subject-specific Bachelor of Education.
- All higher education institutions (HEIs) will be restructured into 3 categories:
 - Research universities focus equally on research and teaching.
 - Teaching universities focus primarily on teaching.
 - Degree-granting colleges primarily focused on undergraduate teaching.
- The Centre and the States will work together to increase public investment in the Education sector to reach 6% of GDP at the earliest.

MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCES IS NOW MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

<p>FOR SCHOOLS From 10+2 to 5+3+3+4: Current 10+2 structure in which policy covered schooling from Class 1 to 10 (age 6-16) and then Class 11-12 (age 16-18) gives way to 5 years of foundational education, 3 of preparatory, 3 of middle & 4 years of secondary schooling</p> <p>Multi-Stream: Flexibility to choose subjects across streams; all subjects to be offered at two levels of proficiency</p> <p>Diluted Board: Board exams to test only core competencies; could become modular (object and subjective) and will be offered twice a year</p> <p>Multilingual: 3-language policy to continue with preference for local language medium of instruction till class 8</p> <p>Bag-Less Days: School students to have 10 bag-less days in a year during which they are exposed to a vocation of choice (i.e. informal internship)</p>	<p>FOR COLLEGES SAT-Like College Test: National Testing Agency to conduct common college entrance exam twice a year</p> <p>4-Year Bachelor: 4-year multi-disciplinary bachelor's programme to be preferred; mid-term dropouts to be given credit with option to complete degree after a break</p> <p>No Affiliation: Over next 15 years colleges will be given graded autonomy to give degrees, affiliation with universities to end, so would deemed university status</p> <p>Fee Cap: Proposal to cap fee charged by private institutions of higher learning</p> <p>Going Global: Top-rated global universities to be facilitated to come to India, top Indian institutions to be encouraged to go global</p>
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Kolkata teen wins 'Best Diplomat' award in Dubai

- K. Adhyaa, a 15-year-old student of Modern High School for Girls in Kolkata, won the 'Best Diplomat' award at the Best Diplomats in Dubai.
- She represented India among 162 delegates from over 60 countries who took part in the global event organised by a New York-based diplomatic simulation company. "
- She gave a presentation on how Artificial Intelligence (AI) can help in the development of Afghanistan, negotiated with other delegates on various global issues such as climate change and advocated for cross-border technology transfer.

Foundation Day

- West Bengal Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee expressed her strong disapproval of Raj Bhavan's "unilateral" move to mark Bengal's "Foundation Day" on 20th June.
- The chief minister of West Bengal, Banerjee, argued that the state did not have a specific date of foundation and that celebrating June 20 as such would be insensitive and divisive.
- She cited the historical fact that on June 20, 1947, two separate votes were held in the Bengal assembly, one for those who wanted to join India and another for those who wanted to join Pakistan.
- She said that West Bengal was formed in 1947 after a partition that caused immense suffering and violence to millions of people. She said that the people of West Bengal had never celebrated or commemorated the partition, but rather saw it as a tragic outcome of communal forces

The advertisement is a blue and yellow graphic for APTI PLUS. It features the APTI PLUS logo at the top right. The main text reads 'WBCS ADVANCED BATCH 2024' in a large white circle. To the right, it says 'ADVANCED LEVEL CLASSES BY EXPERT FACULTY & TOPPERS'. Below this, there are four icons with corresponding text: an hourglass for 'DURATION 280 HOURS', a person at a computer for 'MOCK TESTS FOR PRE & MAINS', two people talking for 'FREE INTERVIEW GUIDANCE', and a magazine for 'CURRENT AFFAIRS DISCUSSION' and 'MONTHLY MAGAZINE'. At the bottom, it provides contact information: 'For details please call: 88203 41777, 81007 65577' and 'or log on to: www.aptiplus.in'.

NATIONAL

Ahmednagar was renamed 'Ahilya Nagar'

- The 18th-century Maratha queen Ahilyabai Holkar, who ruled from Maheshwar (in Madhya Pradesh), was honoured by Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde. He announced that Ahmednagar city would be renamed 'Ahilya Nagar' in her memory.
- The CM said he was "respecting the public demand" for the change, which coincided with the 298th birth anniversary of the queen. This is the latest in a series of renaming proposals by the government, which had earlier approved to call Aurangabad 'Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar' and Osmanabad 'Dharashiv'.
- Ahilyabai Holkar was married Khande Rao, the son of Malhar Rao Holkar, who was the army commander to Peshwa Bajirao. After Khande Rao died in the Battle of Kumbher in 1754, Ahilyabai took over the reins of Malwa and proved to be an able and benevolent ruler.
 - She separated the state treasury from the personal wealth of the royal family. She used her own inheritance and land holdings to meet her expenses.
 - She rebuilt the Kashi Vishwanath Temple in Varanasi in 1780. She also contributed to the restoration of the Somnath Temple in 1783, along with other Maratha leaders.

"Ahmednagar City" to be renamed "Ahilya Nagar"

- The chief minister of Maharashtra announced that "Ahmednagar City" would be renamed "Ahilya Nagar".
- Ahilyabai Holkar was an 18th-century ruler of the Holkar dynasty, who established her capital at Maheshwar in present-day Madhya Pradesh. She was known for her administrative skills, religious tolerance, patronage of arts and culture, and benevolence towards her subjects.
- The process of renaming places in India involves various steps and authorities, such as the state governments, the central government, the Survey of India, the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Ministry of Railways and the Ministry of External Affairs.
- The proposals for renaming have to be approved by all these agencies before they are officially notified and implemented.

Nyaya Vikas Portal

- The Nyaya Vikas Portal was launched to track the implementation of Centrally Sponsored Schemes.
- The portal provides a dashboard that shows the progress of the scheme on various parameters such as the number of court halls and residential units available, the number of projects sanctioned, the number of projects completed, the number of projects under construction and the number of projects pending.
- The portal also provides a map view that shows the location and status of each project across the country. The portal generates various reports such as state-wise reports, district-wise reports, project-wise reports and progress reports that can be downloaded by the users.

Nyaya Vikas

The Department of Justice has been implementing the Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) for Development of Infrastructure Facilities for Districts and Subordinate Judiciary since 1993-94.

Under the Scheme, the central assistance is provided to the State Government / UT Administrations for construction of court halls and residential units for Judicial Officers / Judges of District and Subordinate Courts. The funds sharing pattern under the Scheme for Center and State is 60:40 in respect of States other than North Eastern and Himalayan States. The funds sharing pattern is 90:10 in respect of North Eastern and Himalayan States; and 100% in respect of Union Territories.

This portal has been created for monitoring the implementation of this Scheme.



Kamala Sohonie

- Google Doodle, on June 18, featured Kamala Sohonie, which marks her 112th Birth anniversary. She was an Indian biochemist and the first Indian woman who received a PhD in any science-related field.
- In legumes, she discovered various proteins and thus contributed to the nutrition of children.
- She discovered a mitochondria protein which has a significant role in cellular respiration.
- She also helped in the development of an economic dietary supplement, a drink named Neera, which is made using extracts from Palm. It contributed to the better health of malnourished tribal children and pregnant women, as this drink is a good source of natural vitamin C.
- She was given Rashtrapati Award for the creation of the Neera drink.

Vande Bharat Express

- The Northeast region of India has received its first Vande Bharat Express, which was flagged off by Prime Minister Narendra Modi from Guwahati to New Jalpaiguri.
- This is the third Vande Bharat train to operate in West Bengal, and it will cut down the travel time between the two cities to 5 hours and 30 minutes.
- Along with the launch of the train, Prime Minister Modi also inaugurated a Diesel Electric Multiple Unit and a Mainline Electric Multiple Unit shed at Lumding in Assam.

AIIMS Nagpur

- AIIMS Nagpur, the first among all AIIMS, has been accredited by the National Accreditation Board for Hospitals (NABH). This accreditation is a prestigious recognition of the quality of healthcare provided by the hospital.
- The NABH evaluates hospitals on various criteria such as patient care, safety, and organizational efficiency. AIIMS Nagpur has met these standards by demonstrating its excellence in all aspects of its functioning.

UCC Detect System

- The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has issued a direction to all access providers to implement an artificial intelligence and machine learning-based system to detect unsolicited commercial communication (UCC) from unregistered telemarketers (UTMs).
- The UCC detect system is designed to identify and take action against the entities who send commercial messages or calls without registering as per the Telecom Commercial Communication Customer Preference Regulations, 2018 (TCCCPR-2018).
- The UCC detection system will also share intelligence with other access providers using distributed ledger technology (DLT) platform. The direction aims to curb UCC which causes inconvenience and fraud to the customers.

Soul of Steel Himalayan Endurance Challenge

- The 'Soul of Steel Himalayan Challenge' is a unique event that aims to test the physical and mental limits of participants in the high-altitude mountains of Uttarakhand, India.
- The challenge is backed by the Indian Army and CLAW Global, a group of special forces veterans who provide training and guidance to the participants.
- The challenge was inaugurated by the Defence Minister of India, Rajnath Singh, on January 14, 2023, at Dehradun. The final phase of the challenge began on June 10 and will end on June 18, 2023.
- The participants will compete as teams of three along a rugged course of 65 km through glaciers, ice walls, rock faces and snow-capped peaks at an altitude of 17,000 feet.
- The challenge is also aimed at promoting tourism and development in the border areas of Uttarakhand by showcasing the potential of the Himalayas.

SAGAR SAMRIDDHI

- The Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways (MoPSW) Shri Sarbananda Sonowal has launched a new online system called 'SAGAR SAMRIDDHI' to monitor the dredging activities in the ports and waterways of the country.
- The system aims to promote the 'Waste to Wealth' initiative of the Ministry by utilizing the dredged material for various purposes.

- The system has been developed by the National Technology Centre for Ports, Waterways and Coasts (NTCPWC), which is the technological arm of MoPSW.

National Training Conclave

- The first-ever National Training Conclave was inaugurated by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi at the International Exhibition and Convention Centre, Pragati Maidan, New Delhi.
- The Karmayogi Mission aims to enhance the skills, attitude and approach of the government personnel so that they can serve the nation with satisfaction and happiness, and thereby improve the governance system naturally.

Prime Minister's Museum and Library Society

- The Prime Minister's Museum and Library Society is the new name of the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, which was established in honour of Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India.
- The name change was announced more than a year after the inauguration of the 'Pradhan Mantri Sanghralaya' or the Prime Minister's Museum at the Teen Murti Complex, where the library is located.
- The renaming decision was made at a special meeting of the NMML Society, chaired by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, who is also the Vice-President of the Society.

Knowledge Sharing Platform

- The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has announced the launch of a 'Knowledge Sharing' platform, a digital initiative to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and best practices among experts and stakeholders in the field of road design, construction, road safety, environment sustainability and related domains.
- The platform, which is hosted on the NHAI website, aims to foster a culture of innovation and collaboration within the authority and with the public, who can contribute their ideas and insights on various topics related to the development of national highways.

Web portal for cattle transportation

- The web portal for cattle transportation is a new initiative by the Assam Government to curb the illegal movement of cattle in the state.
- The portal allows the online registration and verification of cattle transporters and vehicles.
- The portal aims to ensure the welfare of the animals and prevent their smuggling across borders.

Pengal Pathukaaptu Thittam

- The TN police have launched a new initiative called 'Pengal Pathukaaptu Thittam' (Women Safety Scheme) to ensure the safety of women who travel alone at night in Chennai city, TN.
- The scheme allows women who work night shifts to avail of the service of a police patrol vehicle to drop them home between 10 pm and 7 am.
- The scheme aims to prevent crimes against women and provide them with a sense of security and confidence.



INTERNATIONAL

India joins global laboratory network for vaccine tests

- India is now a member of the Centralised Laboratory Network (CLN), a group of 15 facilities in 13 countries that collaborate to evaluate vaccines for pandemics and epidemics.
- The CLN is part of the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), which is the largest global initiative to standardise methods and materials for vaccine testing.
- The network also aims to quickly and accurately identify the best vaccine candidates against emerging infectious diseases.
- The expanded network will help build regional capacity and infrastructure for outbreak preparedness.

Community Spirit Index

- The Community Spirit Index, which ranks 53 cities from various countries based on the friendliness and unfriendliness of their inhabitants, has recently released its findings.
- According to the index, Toronto and Sydney are the friendliest cities in the world for non-natives, while New Delhi and Mumbai are among the most unfriendly ones.
- Other cities that scored high on the index are New York, Dublin, Copenhagen, Montreal and Manchester. On the other hand, some of the cities that scored low on the index are Accra, Marrakech, Kuala Lumpur, Rio de Janeiro and Delhi.

Global Competitiveness Index

- The International Institute for Management Development (IMD) has released its annual report “Global Competitiveness Index” of 64 economies around the world. The report evaluates various factors that affect the ability of a country to foster an environment where enterprises can achieve sustainable growth, generate jobs and increase welfare for its citizens.
- According to the Index, Denmark, Ireland and Switzerland took the top three places.
- India rose three spots to rank 40th, breaking its previous streak of ranking 43rd for three consecutive years.
- The report attributed India's improvement to its government efficiency, which improved in terms of public finance, institutional framework and business legislation. However, India still needed help in terms of business efficiency, infrastructure and economic performance.

Sakhalin-1 project in Russia

- ONGC Videsh has announced a major recovery in its oil production from the Sakhalin-1 project in Russia. The company said that the output from the project has resumed to its normal level of around 200,000 barrels per day (bpd), as per a presentation made by its officials.
- ONGC Videsh has a 20% stake in the Sakhalin-1 project. It is one of the largest foreign investors in Russia's oil and gas sector.
- ONGC Videsh's parent company is Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC)
- ONGC is India's largest oil and gas producer and contributes about 70% of the country's domestic production. The company is also diversifying into renewable energy sources such as solar and wind power.



Health action plan for indigenous people

- On May 29, 2023, a resolution was adopted by the member states of the World Health Organisation (WHO) at the Seventy-sixth World Health Assembly, which aims to accelerate action on the health of indigenous peoples globally.

- The resolution, titled "Health of Indigenous Peoples", proposes developing a "Global Plan of Action for the Health of Indigenous Peoples", which will be presented to the Seventy-ninth World Health Assembly in 2026 for consideration.
- The Global Plan of Action will be based on the principles of human rights, equity, and cultural diversity, and will provide a framework for WHO and its member states to work with indigenous peoples and other stakeholders to address their health needs and challenges.

Regional Office of the Universal Postal Union (UPU)

- The Union Cabinet has approved to establish a Regional Office of the Universal Postal Union (UPU) in New Delhi to undertake UPU's development cooperation and technical assistance activities in the region by agreeing with UPU.
- Universal Postal Union is a specialized agency of the United Nations (UN) that coordinates postal policies among member nations, in addition to the worldwide postal system.
- The UPU's headquarters are located in Bern, Switzerland.

Kosovo

- The occurrence of violent clashes in Kosovo between ethnic Serbs and the Albanian-led government's police forces.
- Kosovo is a small, landlocked country in the Balkans in southern-eastern Europe. It shares borders with Albania, North Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia.
- Kosovo has a population of 1.8 million people, with 92% Albanians, 6% Serbians, and the rest comprising Bosniaks, Gorans, Turks, and Roma.



Atlantic Declaration

- The United States and Britain announced a new strategic pact to strengthen the "special relationship" between the two countries. The leaders adopted an "Atlantic Declaration" to enhance industry ties in defence and renewable energy.
- The pact aims to counter the threats posed by Russia, China, and economic instability.
- The declaration acknowledges the challenges to international stability posed by authoritarian states, disruptive technologies, non-state actors, and transnational issues like climate change.
- The goal is to boost cooperation between the US and the UK to tackle these challenges effectively.

Global Slavery Index (GSI) 2023

- The Global Slavery Index is a study of modern slavery.
- It is published by the Walkfree Group of Mindaroo's Foundation, a human rights organization.
- This is the fifth edition of the GSI and it is based on the 2022 estimates.
- In its report, Walk Free reported that 6 million people are living in modern slavery, out of which, India is home to 11 million.

Gender Gap Report

- India was ranked 127 out of 146 countries in the 17th Edition of the annual Gender Gap Report, 2023.
- The Global Gender Gap Report is an index designed to measure gender equality. It was first published in 2006 by the World Economic Forum.
- The Report's Gender Gap Index ranks countries according to the calculated gender gap between women and men in four key areas: Health, Education, Economy, and Politics to gauge the state of gender equality in a country.
- The index ranked India's neighbours Pakistan at 142, Bangladesh at 59, China at 107, Nepal at 116, Sri Lanka at 115 and Bhutan at 103.

- Iceland is the most gender-equal country in the world and the only one to have closed more than 90% of its gender gap.

Asia Pacific Plant Protection Commission (APPPC)

- India has been unanimously elected as the chair of the Standing Committee on Integrated Pest Management (IPM) of the Asia Pacific Plant Protection Commission (APPPC) for the biennium 2023-24. The election took place during the 32nd Session of the APPPC held in Bangkok, Thailand.
- APPPC is an intergovernmental organization that aims to promote cooperation and coordination in plant protection among its 25 member countries.
- It was established in 1956 under the auspices of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and is one of the nine regional plant protection organizations recognized by the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC).



Global Liveability Index

- The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) has released its highly anticipated list of the 'Most Liveable Cities in the World 2023.'
- The ranking evaluates cities based on five metrics: healthcare, culture, environment, education, and stability.
- Vienna, Austria, has been named the best city to live in for the second consecutive year, praised for its stability, infrastructure, education, healthcare, and cultural offerings.

Global Competitiveness Index

- The International Institute for Management Development (IMD) has released its annual report "Global Competitiveness Index" of 64 economies around the world.
- The report evaluates various factors that affect the ability of a country to foster an environment where enterprises can achieve sustainable growth, generate jobs and increase welfare for its citizens.
- According to the Index, Denmark, Ireland and Switzerland took the top three places.
- India rose three spots to rank 40th, breaking its previous streak of ranking 43rd for three consecutive years.
- The report attributed India's improvement to its government efficiency, which improved in terms of public finance, institutional framework and business legislation. However, India still needed help in terms of business efficiency, infrastructure and economic performance.

Global Startup Ecosystem Report

- Bengaluru, India's Silicon Valley, has risen two places to rank 20th in the Global Startup Ecosystem Report (GSER) 2023, published by Startup Genome.
- The report provides a comprehensive overview of the state of startup ecosystems around the world, based on six key factors: performance, funding, market reach, connectedness, talent and knowledge.
- According to the report, New York City and London are tied for the second spot, behind Silicon Valley, which remains the undisputed leader of the global startup scene.
- Among the emerging ecosystems, Pune has made a significant leap from the 51-60 range in 2022 to the 31-40 range in 2023, reflecting India's rapid digital transformation and innovation potential.

Migration and Development Brief

- According to the World Bank's latest Migration and Development Brief, the growth of remittance inflows to India could slow down to a mere 0.2% in 2023, after reaching a record high of \$111 billion in 2022.

- The World Bank cites two main reasons: slower growth in the advanced economies that host most of the Indian migrants, and a high base effect from the previous year.
- Some positive factors that could support remittance inflows to India in the medium term, such as the diversification of migration destinations, the adoption of digital technologies for remittance transfers, and the resilience of informal channels.

Henley Private Wealth Migration Report

- According to the Henley Private Wealth Migration Report 2023, India is projected to experience a net outflow of 6,500 high-net-worth individuals (HNWIs) in 2023. This represents a decline from the 7,500 HNWIs who left India in 2022.
- This makes India the country with the second-highest outflow of HNWIs in the world, trailing only China (net loss of 13,500). According to the findings, the United Kingdom (3,200) and Russia (3,000) are ranked third and fourth, respectively.
- The top three destinations for HNWI migration in 2023 are expected to be the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom.
- According to the evaluation, the high net-worth individual population is expected to grow by 80% by 2031, making India one of the world's fastest-growing wealth markets during this period. This expansion will be fueled mostly by the country's burgeoning financial services, healthcare, and technology industries.
- The report's findings suggest that India is still a desirable destination for HNWIs, despite the recent decline in outflows

Global DPI Summit

- The Global DPI Summit was inaugurated by the Union Minister of State in Electronics and IT on 28th June 2023.
- The Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) Summit was a platform for dialogue and collaboration among policymakers, practitioners, innovators, and researchers on various aspects of DPI, such as design principles, governance models, interoperability standards, data protection, inclusion, and innovation.
- The summit showcased some of the successful DPI initiatives from India and other countries, such as India Stack, Aadhaar, UPI, CoWIN, e-RUPI, DigiLocker, e-NAM, eVIN, etc.
- During the summit, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between India and three countries namely Armenia, Sierra Leone, and Suriname on sharing India Stack i.e. successful digital solutions implemented at a population scale.
 - India Stack is a set of open APIs that enable the creation of digital services for identity verification, paperless

Cruise Vessel MV Empress

- India has launched its first international cruise vessel "MV Empress".
- The ship can accommodate up to 1,800 passengers and 700 crew members, departed from Chennai on June 17 and reached Colombo on June 19.
- The cruise offers a variety of amenities and entertainment options for the guests, including a casino, a spa, a theatre, a swimming pool, and several restaurants and bars.
- The cruise aims to promote cultural exchange and cooperation between India and Sri Lanka, as well as showcase the beauty and diversity of both countries.
- MV Empress is expected to boost the economy and create employment opportunities in the region.

India - Iraq Joint Commission Meeting

- The 18th Session of the India - Iraq Joint Commission Meeting (JCM) took place in New Delhi, hosted by Shri Hardeep Singh Puri, the Indian Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas and Housing & Urban Affairs.
- H.E. Mr Hayan Abdul Ghani Abdul Zahra Al Sawad, the Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister for Energy Affairs and Minister of Oil attended the meeting as the co-chair.
- The JCM discussed various aspects of bilateral cooperation and explored new avenues for partnership.

Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Summit

- India hosted the 22nd Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Summit on July 4, 2023, in a virtual format.

- The Summit was attended by the leaders of the eight SCO Member States - China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan - as well as the Observer States of Iran, Belarus and Mongolia.
- The Summit was held under the theme of 'Towards a SECURE SCO', where SECURE stands for Security, Economy and Trade, Connectivity, Unity, Respect for Sovereignty and Territorial Integrity and Environment.

International summit on AI safety

- The United Kingdom hosted the first global summit on artificial intelligence on July 13, 2023, bringing together experts, policymakers, industry leaders and researchers from around the world.
- The summit aimed to foster collaboration and innovation in the field of AI, as well as to address the ethical, social and economic challenges and opportunities posed by the rapid development of this technology.
- The summit featured keynote speeches, panel discussions, workshops and exhibitions, covering topics such as AI for good, AI and human rights, AI and the environment, AI and health, AI and education, AI and security, and AI and the future of work

Mutual Recognition Arrangement

- India and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) have entered into a Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) for Authorized Economic Operators (AEO).
- This agreement was signed during the 141st/142nd sessions of the World Customs Organization's (WCO) Customs Co-operation Council meeting in Brussels, Belgium.
- The objective of this arrangement is to enhance trade facilitation, improve the ease of doing business, and attract investments.

Mutual Legal Assistance Treaties

- India and Belgium have agreed to cooperate in criminal matters by signing Mutual Legal Assistance Treaties (MLATs).
- These treaties require both countries to honour each other's requests for search warrants and summons against fugitives who are wanted by their respective law enforcement agencies.
- The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) is the central authority for implementing court orders under the MLATs.

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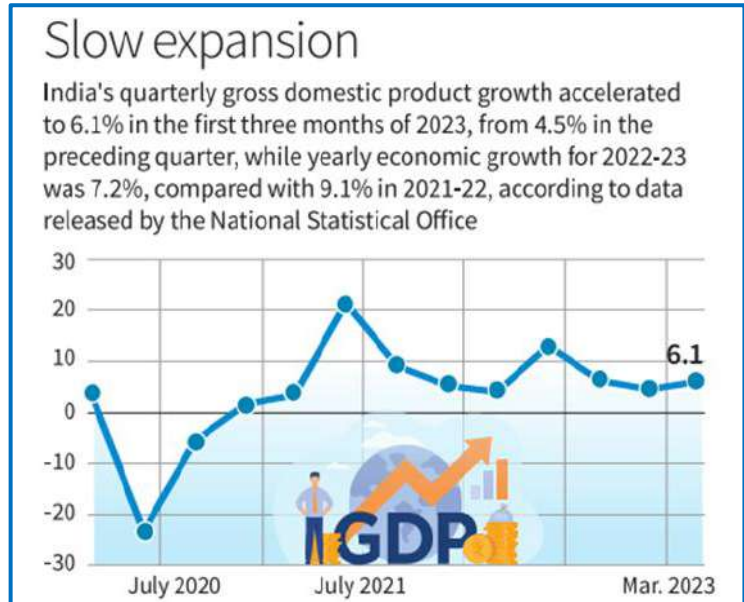
"I am thankful APTI PLUS Academy. The Faculty staff all are very cordial and supporting."
Debnath Mahata

IAS IAN

ECONOMICS

GDP expanded 6.1% in 2022-23's last quarter

- India's economy grew faster than expected in the last quarter of 2022-23, reaching a 7.2% annual growth rate, according to the latest data from the National Statistical Office (NSO).
- This was mainly driven by strong performance in the agriculture and services sectors, which offset the slowdown in manufacturing. However, the recovery remains uneven and consumption is still weak.
- The National Statistical Office (NSO) is a central agency under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation. It develops and maintains standards for statistics in India, covering data collection, processing and dissemination.
- The NSO has three divisions: the Central Statistical Office (CSO), the Computer Center and the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO).
- The NSO produces the monthly Index of Industrial Production (IIP), conducts the Annual Survey of Industries (ASI) and provides data on the organized manufacturing sector.



World's largest grain storage plan

- The government has announced a plan to build the largest grain storage network in the cooperative sector by combining various schemes from different ministries related to agriculture, food and consumer affairs.
- The plan will be piloted in 10 districts across the country under the supervision of the Ministry of Cooperation, headed by Amit Shah, the Home and Cooperation Minister.
- The plan aims to provide modern and adequate storage facilities for farmers at the local level through Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS), which are vital for the rural economy.
- The plan will also help farmers get a fair price for their crops by allowing them to sell to PACS at the Minimum Support Price (MSP) and receive the rest of the payment after PACS sells the grains in the market.
- The government said that this plan will ensure food security and benefit millions of farmers associated with cooperatives.

Per Capita Income

- Telangana is the leader in per capita income among all the States in India, with ₹3.08 lakhs per person, compared to the national average of ₹1.72 lakhs. This is the main finding of a report on the economic progress of Telangana in the last ten years, published by the State government.
- The Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) of Telangana has more than doubled from ₹5.05-lakh crore in 2014-15 to ₹12.93-lakh crore in 2022-23, contributing 5% to the national GDP.

GST Collections

- The Ministry of Finance has announced that the gross GST revenue collected in June 2023 is ₹1,61,497 crore, which is a 12% increase compared to the same month last year.
- This is the fourth consecutive month that the GST collections have crossed ₹1.5 lakh crore mark, indicating a sustained recovery of the economy from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mo Ghara

- The Odisha government has launched a new housing scheme called 'Mo Ghara' (My House) to provide credit-linked financial assistance to the lower and lower-middle-income households of rural Odisha for completing or upgrading their houses.
- The scheme was approved by the Odisha cabinet and aims to cover around 4 lakh families who have been left out of the existing housing schemes.
- The beneficiaries can avail of housing loans up to Rs 3 lakh with a repayment period of 10 years and a moratorium period of 1 year.

Non-Performing Assets (NPAs)

- Bank of Maharashtra (BoM) has achieved the best performance in reducing bad loans among all banks with a total business of more than ₹3 lakh crore in the fiscal year 2022-23.
- Its net non-performing assets (NPAs) dropped to 0.25%, the lowest among its peers, including private sector banks.
- HDFC Bank came second with a net NPA of 0.27%.

RBI bi-monthly policy

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced its second bi-monthly policy review for the fiscal year 2023-24 on June 8. The central bank maintained a status quo on the key policy rates.
- The repo rate, the rate at which the RBI lends money to commercial banks, remained unchanged at 6.5%.
- The reverse repo rate, the rate at which the RBI borrows money from commercial banks, stayed at 6.25%.
- The marginal standing facility (MSF) rate and the bank rate were kept at 6.75%.
- The growth outlook for the Indian economy for 2022-23 was estimated at 6.5%, with a strong rebound in the first quarter of 8%. This was supported by a revival in consumption and investment demand, an improvement in external trade, and a robust performance of the agriculture sector.
- Banks will be allowed to issue RuPay prepaid forex cards to their customers for international transactions.

'Ladli Bahna' Scheme

- The Mukhyamantri Ladli Bahna Yojana is a novel initiative by the Government of Madhya Pradesh (MP) to empower women financially.
- The scheme aims to provide a monthly allowance of 1000 rupees to every woman in the age group of 23-60 years.
- The scheme also seeks to enhance the economic autonomy, health and nutrition status, and decision-making power of women in the state.

ANTARDRIHSTI

- The Financial Inclusion Dashboard 'ANTARDRIHSTI' is a new initiative by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to measure and enhance the access and usage of financial services in the country.
- The dashboard was launched by RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das as part of the central bank's commitment to promote financial inclusion and literacy.
- It collects and displays various indicators of financial inclusion, such as bank accounts, credit, digital payments, financial education, and grievance redressal.
- It aims to provide a comprehensive and transparent view of the status and progress of financial inclusion in India, as well as to identify the gaps and challenges that need to be addressed.

CITIIS 2.0

- The Union Cabinet chaired by the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has approved the City Investments to Innovate, Integrate and Sustain 2.0 (CITIIS 2.0).
- CITIIS 2.0 is a program conceived by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) in partnership with the French Development Agency (AFD), Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW), the European Union (EU), and National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA).
- The program will run for a period of four years, i.e., from 2023 to 2027.

Mission on Advanced and High-Impact Research (MAHIR)

- The Government of India has initiated a National Mission to support and promote cutting-edge and impactful research in various fields. The mission is named “Mission on Advanced and High-Impact Research (MAHIR)”.
- It is a national initiative launched by the Ministry of Power and the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy in June 2023.
- The mission aims to leverage emerging technologies in the power sector through indigenous development and collaboration.

Ishad mango

- The Ishad mango, a native variety of Ankola taluk in Uttara Kannada district of Karnataka, has recently received the coveted geographical indication (GI) tag.
- The Ishad mango is known for its thin skin, fleshy pulp and small seed. It has a sweet taste and a pleasant aroma. It is also called the Oriental mango, as it was once canned and exported to various countries under this name. The fruit has been cultivated for over 400 years in Ankola and its surrounding area.
- The GI tag will help protect the identity and uniqueness of the Ishad mango, as well as promote its cultivation and marketing.

Mission EVOLVE

- SIDBI, India's leading financial institution for MSMEs, has launched mission EVOLVE (Electric Vehicle Operations and Lending for Vibrant Ecosystem) in partnership with NITI Aayog, World Bank, Korean-World Bank and Korean Economic Development Cooperation Fund (EDCF).
- The mission aims to provide affordable and accessible financing solutions for MSMEs in the EV sector.
- Through mission EVOLVE, SIDBI will offer EV loans with competitive interest rates and flexible repayment options. The loans will also include telematics services that can help lower the cost of financing and generate data for other financial products.
- The initiative is aligned with SIDBI's vision to support India's goal of achieving 30 per cent EV penetration by 2030 or EV30@30.

IS 18267: 2023

- The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has announced a new standard for food serving utensils made from agricultural by-products, such as leaves, stems, and husks. The standard, IS 18267: 2023, aims to reduce plastic waste and promote sustainable development in the country.
- The standard provides clear and consistent guidelines for both manufacturers and consumers on the quality and safety requirements of these utensils.
- The standard covers various aspects of biodegradable utensils, such as raw materials, manufacturing methods, performance, and hygiene.
- It specifies the types of agri by-products that can be used for making plates, cups, bowls, etc., such as leaves and sheaths of bananas, palm, areca nuts, etc.

NANDI portal

- The Union Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying inaugurated NANDI (NOC Approval for New Drug and Inoculation System) portal at Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi. The portal was developed by the Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying (DAHD).
- The NANDI portal aims to facilitate the process of granting No Objection Certificates (NOC) for veterinary drugs and vaccines in India.
- It allows online submission of applications for NOC for veterinary drugs and vaccines by manufacturers or importers.

Araku Coffee and Black Pepper Achieve Organic Certification

- The Girijan Co-operative Corporation (GCC), Visakhapatnam, has obtained organic certification from APEDA for its Araku coffee and black pepper crops.
- Araku Coffee is a speciality coffee grown in the Araku Valley, which has a unique microclimate and soil conditions.

- APEDA was established in 1986 under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India.
- APEDA is responsible for the development and promotion of exports of various agricultural and processed food products, such as fresh fruits and vegetables, meat and poultry, dairy products, cereals, honey, floriculture, etc.

'Accelerator Programme' by FAO

- Farmers Fresh Zone (FarmersFZ), a startup from Kerala, India, has been chosen for the 'Accelerator Programme' by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations (UN).
- This programme aims to support and scale up innovative agri-food solutions around the world. FarmersFZ is one of the 12 selected startups that will receive mentorship, training, and access to potential investors and partners from FAO.
- FarmersFZ connects rural farmers with urban consumers, delivering fresh, high-quality, and pesticide-free vegetables within a day of harvesting.

Sovereign Gold Bonds (SGBs)

- The Government of India has announced the issuance of Sovereign Gold Bonds (SGBs) for the financial year 2023-24. These bonds are denominated in grams of gold and offer an attractive alternative to holding physical gold.
- They pay a fixed interest rate of 2.5% per annum on the initial investment, payable semi-annually.
- They have a maturity period of 8 years, with an option of premature redemption after 5 years.
- They can be used as collateral for loans from banks and other financial institutions.
- They can be traded on stock exchanges and post offices, subject to market conditions and availability.

Dugdh Sankalan Sathi Mobile App

- The Union Minister of Heavy Industries launched the "Dugdh Sankalan Sathi Mobile App".
- It is developed by the National Dairy Development Board (NDDB).
- It aims to provide a digital platform for dairy farmers, cooperatives, milk unions and processors to access real-time information and services related to milk procurement and quality testing.
- It will enable dairy farmers to register themselves with their nearest cooperative society or milk collection centre and receive timely information on milk price, fat content, payment details, animal health and breeding services, and other schemes and benefits offered by the government and NDDB.
- It will allow farmers to track their milk samples and get instant feedback on quality parameters through SMS or QR code scanning.

Geographical Indication tag

- Seven products of Uttar Pradesh got a Geographical Indication tag (GI tag). These products are –
 - Amroha Dholak
 - Mahoba Gaura Patthar Hastashlip:
 - Mainpuri Tarkashi
 - Sambhal Horn Craft
 - Baghpat Home Furnishings
 - Barabanki Handloom Product and
 - Kalpi Handmade Paper
- UP has got 48 GI-tagged goods and is just behind the state of Tamilnadu (55 GI-tagged goods).
- A geographical indication or GI is a sign used on products that have a specific geographical origin and possess qualities or a reputation that are due to that origin.
- Geographical Indications are part of the intellectual property rights that come under the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property.
- In India, Geographical Indications registration is administered by the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act of 1999.
- This tag is valid for a period of 10 years following which it can be renewed.
- Geographical indications are typically used for agricultural products, foodstuffs, wine and spirit drinks, handicrafts, and industrial products.

CHAMPIONS 2.0 Portal

- The Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) has recently launched a new portal called CHAMPIONS 2.0, which aims to provide a comprehensive platform for the MSME sector to address their challenges and opportunities.
- The CHAMPIONS 2.0 portal is a significant initiative to support the MSME sector, which contributes to about 30% of India's GDP, 48% of exports, and employs over 110 million people.
- The portal aims to enhance the competitiveness, productivity, and resilience of MSMEs in the post-pandemic scenario and help them achieve the vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat.

Atal Bhujal Yojana extended for 2 more years

- Atal Bhujal Yojana, a water scheme aimed at improving groundwater management, has been extended by two years by the National Level Steering Committee (NLSC).
- The scheme, which was supposed to end in 2025, will now continue till 2027 to compensate for the delays caused by the covid-19 pandemic and to enhance community engagement in water conservation.
- The NLSC reviewed the progress of the scheme and urged the state officials to expedite all the related activities.
- The World Bank has praised the scheme for its significant role in promoting water use efficiency.

'Gruha Jyothi' Scheme

- The 'Gruha Jyothi scheme' is a new initiative by the Karnataka Government to provide free electricity to eligible households.
- The scheme aims to reduce the burden of electricity bills and improve the quality of life of the people. Under the scheme, households can avail of free power for up to 200 units per month.
- To enrol in the scheme, households need to register on the Seva Sindhu portal, where a dedicated page for the scheme is available.
- The scheme will be effective from August 1, 2023, and the beneficiaries will receive a 'zero bill' if they consume within their limit.

Didi Café

- A new initiative to empower women and provide affordable food options is being launched by the Uttar Pradesh government. The 'Didi Cafe' project will set up canteens in 17 cities across the state, where women's self-help groups will run the operations and serve meals, snacks, and other amenities.
- The 'Didi Cafe' aims to create employment opportunities for women and cater to the needs of low-income customers in urban areas.

Food Storage Scheme

- The government has sanctioned Rs 1 lakh crore for the implementation of the world's largest food storage scheme in the co-operative sector.
- The scheme aims to create 700 lakh tonnes of grain storage capacity in the co-operative sector by 2027.
- An inter-ministerial committee will be formed to oversee the scheme, which will be executed in collaboration with the ministries of agriculture, consumer affairs, food grains and public distribution, and food processing industries.
- The cabinet has also approved the second phase of City Investments to Innovate, Integrate and Sustain for Integrated Urban Management, which will promote urban resilience and sustainability.



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SALT LAKE: 88203 41777 ELGIN ROAD: 81007 65577

DEFENCE AND SECURITY

Combined Maritime Forces

- The United Arab Emirates has withdrawn from a U.S.-led maritime coalition tasked with securing tense Gulf waterways that are vital to the global oil trade.
- Combined Maritime Forces is a multinational naval partnership to promote security, stability and prosperity.
- This is 34 members grouping commanded by a U.S. Navy Vice Admiral.
- The maritime forces are based in Bahrain and undertake counter-terrorism, counter-piracy and regional cooperation.
- It is a flexible organization and members are not bound by either a political or military mandate.
- India has in the past cooperated with CMF on various occasions.



Exercise Ekantha

- Indian Navy and Marine Commandos of Maldives conducted the sixth edition of India-Maldives Exercise Ekantha from the 4th of June to the third of July.
- It is an exercise to ensure interoperability in diving and special operations between the navies of two countries.
- It is held annually. Its fifth edition was held in Oct 2022.
- Armies of India and Maldives also conduct Exercise EKUVERIN.

Fattah Missile

- Iran claimed that it had created a hyper-sonic missile capable of travelling at 15 times the speed of sound.
- The new missile - called 'Fattah,' means 'Conqueror' in Farsi.
- The missile can acquire a speed of 5 times the speed of light and has a range of over 1400 Km.

Varunastra

- The Navy test-fired an indigenously designed and developed heavyweight torpedo, Varunastra, with a live warhead against an undersea target.
- It was designed and developed by the Naval Science and Technological Laboratory in Visakhapatnam under the Defence Research and Development Organisation.
- It can achieve speeds over 74 km/h, weighs around 1.5 tonnes and can carry 250 kg of conventional warhead.

Project Akashteer

- Automated Air Defence Control & Reporting System 'Project Akashteer' to automate the air defence systems was launched.
- Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) and the Ministry of Defence had signed a contract for the procurement of Automated Air Defence Control & Reporting System 'Project Akashteer' worth Rs 1,982 crore.
- Project Akashteer is a new automation initiative under which a range of new systems, mostly indigenous, are being inducted, with new technologies factoring in the new realities.
- It will build a comprehensive air defence picture for the monitoring, tracking and shooting down of air defence assets.

- It will enable monitoring of low-level airspace over the battle areas of the Indian Army and effectively control the Ground Based Air Defence Weapon Systems.

Exercise Ekuverin

- The 12th edition of the joint military exercise “Ex Ekuverin” between the Indian Army & the Maldives National Defence Force has commenced at Chaubatia, Uttarakhand from 11 to 24 June 2023.
- Ekuverin means ‘Friends’. It is a bilateral annual exercise conducted alternatively in India and Maldives.
- The 12th edition of the exercise is aimed at enhancing interoperability in Counter Insurgency/ Counter Terrorism Operations under the UN mandate

Exercise ‘Agneyastra 1’

- The Indian Army conducted a massive military exercise, codenamed Agneyastra 1, in eastern Ladakh to showcase its firepower and combat readiness.
- Agneyastra, which means firearms, was a display of the Indian Army's strength and resolve in the face of any adversary.

Exercise Khaan Quest

- Multinational Peacekeeping Joint Exercise “Ex Khaan Quest 2023” featuring participation from military contingents and observers from over 20 countries has commenced in Mongolia today.
- The Multinational Peacekeeping Joint Exercise “Ex Khaan Quest 2023” is held every year.
- The military contingents and observers from over 20 countries participated in the event.
- The exercise is co-sponsored by Mongolian Armed Forces (MAF) and the United States Army Pacific Command (USARPAC).
- The Indian Army is represented by a contingent from the GARHWAL RIFLES.

INDUS X

- India-United States Defence Acceleration Ecosystem (INDUS X) launched in Washington DC, U.S.
- The INDUS X event was co-organised by Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX), the Ministry of Defence, and the US Department of Defence (DoD) and hosted by US-India Business Council (USIBC).
- INDUS X factsheet released for operationalising the ‘Defence Innovation Bridge’ under Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technologies (iCET).
- 15 Indian start-ups and 10 US start-ups, from multiple domains of maritime, AI, autonomous systems, and space, showcased their technologies to Indian and US stakeholders.

Exercise 'Tiger Shark 40'

- The Joint Bangladesh-United States (US) Naval drill Exercise ‘Tiger Shark 40’ commenced at BNS Nirvik in Chattogram.
- The training exercise involved the Special Forces of Bangladesh Army & Navy and US Special Forces and was supervised by Commodore Swords Command.
- The objective of the exercise was to enhance the strategic capabilities of both countries and to exchange technical and procedural knowledge.

SCIENCE

Chollima1 rocket

- North Korea's attempt to launch a spy satellite into orbit failed as the Chollima-1 rocket plunged into the sea shortly after liftoff.
- The launch, which was widely condemned by the international community as a violation of UN resolutions, was seen as a provocation by Pyongyang amid stalled nuclear talks with the US.
- The rocket, named after a mythical winged horse, was supposed to carry a reconnaissance satellite that could monitor military activities in the region. However, according to US and South Korean officials, the

rocket malfunctioned and broke apart in mid-air, crashing into the waters off the east coast of North Korea. No debris or damage was reported on land or at sea.

Shenzhou 16

- China sent its first civilian astronaut into orbit, as it launched the Shenzhou-16 mission to its Tiangong space station.
- Shenzhou 16 is a Chinese spaceflight to the Tiangong space station, launched on 30 May 2023 on board a Shenzhou spacecraft.
- It carries two People's Liberation Army Astronaut Corps (PLAAC) taikonauts and a payload specialist from Beihang University.

Spear phishing

- According to the latest report by Barracuda Networks Inc., as many as 53 per cent of organisations studied in India were victims of spear phishing in 2022.
- Spear phishing is a form of phishing attack directed at specific companies or individuals. Cybercriminals disguise themselves as legitimate entities to extract sensitive data from their victims in the form of phishing emails or malicious links.
- While phishing is a random attempt at targeting as many contacts as possible, spear phishing is a focused attack on one particular target or to extract a specific piece of data.

KSS-III Batch-II Submarine

- South Korea has come up with a special proposal to provide its advanced KSS-III Batch-II submarine to India.
- The KSS-III, the largest submarine to ever be built by South Korea, is being developed in two phases, Batch-I and Batch-II.
- The Batch-II series, which has been offered to India, include a more advanced combat management system, sonar system, and firepower due to additional vertical launchers (VLS).
- It will be equipped with lithium-ion batteries, which will reportedly make it capable of cruising at higher speeds with a greater period of underwater endurance, life expectancy, and durability.
- Additionally, the submarines will be equipped with Air Independent Propulsion (AIP) technology that will allow them to operate without access to atmospheric oxygen. That means it can stay in the water for a long time.

Fixed-dose combinations (FDC) medicines

- Fourteen fixed-dose combinations (FDC) medicines found to lack therapeutic relevance have been banned by the Central Government through a gazette notification.
- According to the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO), FDCs refer to products containing one or more active ingredients used for a particular indication(s). A medicine that combines two or more active drugs in a single dosage form such as a tablet or capsule.
- Fixed ratio combination products are acceptable only when the dosage of each ingredient meets the requirement of a defined population group and when the combination has a proven advantage over single compounds administered separately in a therapeutic effect, safety or compliance.

Foot rot" Disease

- Several farmers across the country have observed "foot rot" disease on Basmati rice saplings in nurseries. Paddy seeds are first planted in nurseries, and the saplings are transported to the fields after a month.
- Basmati rice is a highly valued aromatic rice variety that is cultivated in India and other countries. However, it is susceptible to a fungal disease called foot rot, which can cause severe losses in yield and quality.
- Foot rot is caused by "Fusarium verticillioides", a soil and seed-borne pathogen that infect the saplings in the nurseries and later in the fields. The symptoms of foot rot include pale yellow and elongated saplings that eventually dry up and die.

- The disease can also appear after transplantation when the infected plants grow taller than normal and then wilt. It can be managed by using disease-free and treated seeds, destroying the infected saplings, and applying fungicides or biocontrol agents.

Norovirus

- Nearly 200 people have been sickened with norovirus on the Celebrity Summit cruise ship.
- Norovirus is a highly contagious virus that is also sometimes referred to as the 'stomach flu' or the 'winter vomiting bug'.
- The disease is transmitted by direct contact with an infected person, contaminated food or touching a contaminated surface, and putting unwashed hands in the mouth. The infection is caused and spread through contaminated food and water.
- The norovirus infection generally lasts for one to two days. However, it can cause dehydration in very young and old people, and in some patients, their bodies will remain weak for one more week after contracting the infection.
- No vaccines are available for the disease. As of now, there is no specific medication to treat people infected with norovirus.

Millisecond Pulsars

- Indian astronomers have discovered two new Millisecond Pulsars (MSP)
- MSPs are dense, tiny neutron stars, which are formed when a massive star (for example, the Sun) collapses.
- They are named pulsars because they emit pulses of radiation at regular intervals.
- Millisecond pulsars emit radiations every few milliseconds.

Skin Bank


- A skin bank – a first for North India – was inaugurated in Delhi's Safdarjung Hospital.
- Skin bank is a facility where the skin is taken from an eligible donor and processed and stored under appropriate temperature for up to 5 years.
- The stored skin can be used for Deep burns, chemical burns, electrical burns and radiation burns.
- India has 16 skin banks – with seven in Maharashtra, four in Chennai, three in Karnataka, and one each in Madhya Pradesh and Odisha.

Rugose Spiralling Whitefly

- Recently, 'Rugose Spiralling Whitefly' – an invasive insect which attacks palms, coconut and banana trees among others – has been spotted in Pune city. The pest not only affects the productivity of coconut trees, it also impacts the nutritional value of the fruit.
- Rugose spiralling whitefly (RSW) is a serious pest of ornamental and fruit plants that can cause significant damage and yield loss.
- RSW is difficult to control because of its high reproductive rate, wide host range, and resistance to some insecticides. It can spread rapidly through wind or human-mediated transport of infested plants.
- It is native to Central America and the Caribbean but has spread to other regions of the world, such as Florida, Hawaii, Africa and Asia. It was first reported in India in 2016, in Kerala, and has since been detected in Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Maharashtra.

SPIRALLING OUT OF CONTROL

<p>▶ The Rugose Spiralling Whitefly derives its name from its egg-laying pattern</p>	<p>▶ It is a tiny insect measuring up to 2 mm in length</p>
<p>▶ It sucks out sap from under the leaves, inducing stress on the host plant from the loss of water and nutrients</p>	
<p>▶ The honeydew excreted by the fly attracts ants and encourages the growth of fungus, thus affecting the plant</p>	



Chiral Bose-Liquid

- The chiral Bose-liquid state is a novel quantum state of matter that was recently discovered by researchers.

- Its state is different from the usual states of matter, such as solid, liquid, or gas, that we encounter in everyday life. It only emerges at very low temperatures or at the atomic scale, where matter behaves in strange and unexpected ways.
- It was created by using a device that consists of two layers of semiconducting material. When the two layers are brought very close together, a local imbalance occurs, meaning that there are not enough holes for all the electrons to fill.
 - This triggers the formation of the chiral Bose-liquid state, where electrons form patterns that are resistant to changes in spin and coordinate their movements with each other.
- The word “chiral” describes anything that cannot be superimposed on its mirror image. For example, your left hand and your right hand are chiral, because they are not identical.

Cholederm

- Cholederm is a collagen-based biomaterial that can be used for wound healing, skin regeneration, and cosmetic applications. It is the most abundant protein in the animal kingdom and plays a vital role in maintaining the structure and function of various tissues.
- It has been developed indigenously by a team of researchers from the National Institute of Animal Biotechnology (NIAB).
- It has several advantages over conventional animal-derived products. It is safe, biocompatible, and biodegradable. It has high tensile strength, elasticity, and stability.
- It can promote wound healing by providing a scaffold for cell migration and tissue regeneration. It can also enhance skin quality by stimulating collagen synthesis and reducing wrinkles.

Solar Ultraviolet Imaging Telescope (SUIT)

- A team of researchers from the Inter-University Center for Astronomy and Astrophysics (IUCAA) in Pune has developed a special space telescope called the Solar Ultraviolet Imaging Telescope (SUIT).
- SUIT is designed to observe the Sun in the ultraviolet (UV) wavelength range, which is not accessible from the ground due to atmospheric absorption.
- By studying the UV emission from the Sun, SUIT will help reveal the dynamics and heating of the solar chromosphere and corona, the outer layers of the Sun that are responsible for producing solar flares, coronal mass ejections, and other phenomena that can affect Earth's climate and technology.
- SUIT is one of the seven instruments that will be onboard the ADITYA-L1 mission, India's first dedicated solar observatory in space. It will orbit around the L1 point, a stable location between the Earth and the Sun that offers a continuous view of the solar disk.

GEMCOVAC-OM

- India has achieved a major milestone with the approval of its first homegrown mRNA vaccine, GEMCOVAC-OM.
- The vaccine, developed by Pune-based Gennova Biopharmaceuticals Ltd, received the green light from the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI).
- It is a modified version of GEMCOVAC-19, the country's first mRNA vaccine against COVID-19. Both vaccines use messenger RNA (mRNA) technology, which instructs the body's cells to produce a harmless spike protein that mimics the coronavirus and triggers an immune response.
- It has been designed to target the Omicron variant, which has multiple mutations in its spike protein that make it more transmissible and potentially more resistant to existing vaccines.

World's First X-Ray of a Single Atom

- Scientists have captured the world's first X-ray of a single atom, revealing its chemical state and elemental identity.
- This technique, called synchrotron X-ray scanning tunnelling microscopy (SX-STM), combines high-energy X-rays with a sharp metal tip to detect the X-ray signal of just one atom at a time.
- The researchers demonstrated this method on an iron atom and a terbium atom, both embedded in molecular hosts.
- This discovery opens new possibilities for studying matter at the smallest level and understanding its properties and interactions.

Homo Naledi

- A recent study has proposed that Homo naledi, an extinct human species with small brain size, was capable of complex behaviours such as creating rock art and performing ritual burials.
- The study relies on indirect and circumstantial clues, such as the presence of ochre and bones in deep caves, rather than direct proof of artistic or symbolic activities.
- The study has been met with scepticism and criticism from other experts, who argue that the evidence is insufficient and inconclusive.
- The study also faces methodological and ethical challenges, such as dating the fossils and obtaining permission from local communities.

Betelgeuse

- Betelgeuse is one of the brightest stars in the night sky and a prominent feature of the constellation Orion. However, in recent years, it has been exhibiting unexpected behaviour that has puzzled astronomers and sparked many hypotheses.
- It is a red supergiant star that is nearing the end of its life and may explode as a supernova in the near future. But its exact fate is uncertain, as it has been dimming and brightening irregularly and unpredictably.
- Some scientists have suggested that this could be due to dust clouds obscuring the star's light, while others have proposed that it could be a sign of internal changes in the star's structure or nuclear reactions.

Foucault Pendulum

- One of the most striking features of India's new Parliament building is a Foucault pendulum that swings from the ceiling to the floor.
- It symbolizes the connection between India and the cosmos, as it demonstrates the rotation of the Earth.
- The Foucault pendulum was invented by French physicist Léon Foucault in 1851, and it was the first device to show the Earth's rotation without relying on astronomical observations.
- The pendulum in the Parliament Building has a brass bob that moves along a circular path on the floor, which is marked with 24 segments representing the hours of the day.
- The pendulum takes about 32 hours to complete one full rotation.



CHANDAN SAHA
RANK 101 (Gr. A)
WBCS 2020

“Firstly I am thankful to APTI Plus for giving me such opportunity, APTI Plus Academy is providing a very good facility for preparing civil service, here I am participated for WBCS mock interview. All the faculty members are very cordial and supportive. They also provide a very good study material for WBCS interview purpose. Over all I am happy & satisfied for their per behaviour.”

Thank You again for their effort.”
Chandan Saha



SPORTS

French Open 2023

- Novak Djokovic made history by claiming his 23rd Grand Slam trophy at the French Open 2023, surpassing Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal in the all-time list.
- He defeated Casper Ruud, the surprise finalist from Norway, in four sets, 6-4, 6-3, 3-6, 6-2.

List of Winners French Open 2023:

Title	Winner	Runner up
Men's Singles	Novak Djokovic	Casper Ruud
Women's Singles	Iga Świątek	Karolina Muchova
Men's doubles	Ivan Dodig and Austin Krajicek	Sander Gille and Joran Vliegen
Women's doubles	Hsieh Su-Wei and Wang Xinyu	Taylor Townsend and Leylah Fernandez
Mixed doubles	Miyu Kato and Tim Pütz	Bianca Andreescu and Michael Venus

ICC World Test Championship 2023

- Australia secured the World Test Championship trophy with a dominant 209-run win over India in the gripping WTC Final at The Oval.
- Travis Head and Steve Smith's brilliant hundreds in the first innings gave Australia a strong advantage in the Test.
- Australia made history on Sunday, June 11 as they became the first men's team in world cricket to win an ICC world title in all three formats.
- **Player of the Match:** Travis Head (163 runs in 1st innings, 18 runs in 2nd innings).

Flanders Cup 2023

- The Flanders Cup 2023 athletics meet, also known as the International Antwerp Athletics Gala, witnessed a stellar performance by top Indian sprinter Amlan Borgohain, who clinched two gold medals in the men's 100 and 200-meter races.
- Borgohain, who holds the national record of 10.25 seconds in the 100-meter event, clocked 10.70 seconds to become the fastest man of the meet.
- In the women's 100m hurdles, Sapna Kumari secured a silver medal after finishing second behind Belgium's Amber Vanden Bosch with a timing of 14.10 seconds.

"Bharat in Paris" campaign

- Union Sports Minister Anurag Singh Thakur inaugurated the "Bharat in Paris" campaign with a mini-marathon at Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in New Delhi.
- The campaign is an initiative of the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) to raise awareness and encourage sports participation across India ahead of the Paris Olympics games.
- The 2024 Olympics will be held from 26 July to 11 August in France, in Paris.

CAVA Women's Challenge Cup

- The NSC-CAVA Women's Volleyball Challenge Cup, a prestigious international tournament hosted by Nepal Volleyball Association, concluded with India emerging as the champion.
- India beat Kazakhstan in a thrilling final match at the National Sports Council's Covered Hall in Tripureshwor, Kathmandu, showcasing their skills and teamwork.
- The tournament featured eight teams from Asia and Africa and was aimed at promoting volleyball in the region and fostering friendship among the participating countries.

World Squash Championship 2023

- Egypt has retained the World Squash Championship 2023 title after defeating Malaysia 2-1 in a thrilling final in Chennai, India.
- The Egyptian team, led by world number one Nour El Sherbini, showed their dominance and experience in the crucial moments of the match, while the Malaysian team, featuring world number two Nicol David, fought hard but fell short.
- Malaysia settled for the silver medal, the best result in the history of the event.
- The bronze medal was shared by hosts India and Japan, who both reached the semi-finals for the first time.

Intercontinental Cup

- India lifted the Intercontinental Cup trophy for the second time after defeating Lebanon 2-0 in the summit clash at the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.
- India won the first edition of the tournament in 2018 by beating Kenya in the final.

Asian Fencing Championships

- Bhavani Devi, an Olympian and India's top fencer has made history by clinching the bronze medal at the Asian Fencing Championships 2023 in China.
- She defeated the reigning World Champion Misaki Emura of Japan in a thrilling quarterfinal match, 15-10, becoming the first Indian to reach the last four of the prestigious event.
- She narrowly missed out on a silver medal, losing to Zaynab Dayibekova of Uzbekistan in a close semifinal encounter, 15-14.

GEOGRAPHY and ENVIRONMENT

Indian Mouse Deer

- A rare Indian mouse deer or spotted Chevrotain has been seen in the Kanger Valley National Park in Chhattisgarh.
- It is the smallest deer in India and is highly nocturnal.
- It is found mainly in rainforests of South Asia and Southeast Asia.
- The conservation status of Indian mouse deer, according to IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources), is Least Concern.



Shanan Hydropower Project

- The 99-year lease on the British-era 110 MW Shanan hydropower facility located near Jogindernagar in the Mandi district of Himachal Pradesh, which is currently under the jurisdiction of the Punjab Government, will end in March 2024.
- The project harnesses the power of the Uhl River, a tributary of the Beas River, and generates 110 MW of electricity. The project consists of a dam, a powerhouse, a reservoir and a network of canals and tunnels. The project is also a source of irrigation and drinking water for the surrounding areas.
- The project was leased to the Punjab Government for 99 years by Raja Joginder Singh Bahadur, the then-ruler of Mandi state. The lease agreement will expire in March 2024, and both Himachal Pradesh and Punjab are claiming their rights over the project.

Anak Krakatau volcano in Indonesia

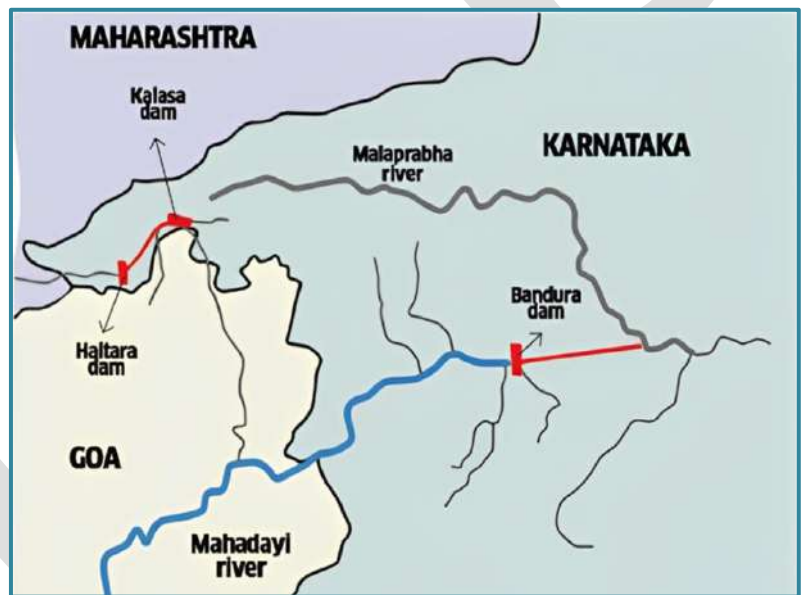
- Anak Krakatau volcano, located in Indonesia's Sunda Strait, erupted several times in June 2023.
- The eruption sent ash as high as 3 kilometres into the air.
- It was the longest eruption since the volcano's explosive collapse in 2018, which triggered a deadly tsunami.

Cyclone Biparjoy

- Cyclone Biparjoy made landfall near Jakhau port in Gujarat's Kutch district.
- Landfall refers to a tropical cyclone reaching the coast after being over water. It signifies the movement of the storm's centre or eye over the land.
- Cyclone Biparjoy is classified as a "very severe cyclonic storm." Potential damages include extensive damage to kutcha houses, disruption of power and communication, minor disruption of transportation, threat from flying debris, and flooding of escape routes.

Kalasa-Banduri project

- The Karnataka government has submitted a revised proposal to the National Wildlife Board (NWB) and the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) for obtaining clearance to use 26.92 hectares of forest land for the Kalasa-Banduri project
- The Kalasa-Banduri project is a long-pending initiative of the Karnataka government to divert water from the Mahadayi River to four drought-prone districts of the state: Belagavi, Dharwad, Bagalkot and Gadag.
- The project involves constructing barrages on two tributaries of the Mahadayi River, namely Kalasa and Banduri, and channelling the water through pipelines.



Treaty to protect marine life on high seas

- The high seas, which make up about 50% of the Earth's surface and are outside of national jurisdiction, are home to a rich diversity of marine life. However, this biodiversity is under threat from overfishing, pollution, climate change and other human activities.
 - To address this challenge, the United Nations (UN) has adopted the first-ever treaty to protect marine life on the high seas.
- The treaty will create a new body to oversee the conservation of ocean life and designate marine protected areas on the high seas.
- The treaty is based on the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, which entered into force in 1994 before marine biodiversity was widely recognized as a concept.

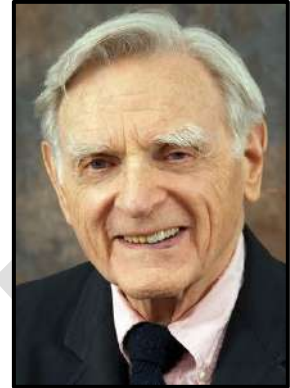
Wind Energy Adoption

- The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, Government of India celebrated the Global Wind Day on 15th June with a day-long event in New Delhi.
- The Secretary of the Ministry, Bhupinder Singh Bhalla, highlighted the Government's commitment to reach 500 GW of renewable energy capacity by 2030.
- India is among the global leaders in wind energy generation, ranking fourth in wind power capacity.
- Rajasthan, Gujarat and Tamil Nadu Emerge as Top Achievers in Wind Energy Adoption.
- Wind energy is vital for India's ambition to have 50% of its electric power installed capacity from non-fossil fuel-based energy sources by 2030 and to achieve Net Zero by 2070.

OBITUARIES

John B Goodenough

- John B Goodenough died on June 25 at the age of 100.
- He was an American materials scientist, a solid-state physicist, and a Nobel laureate in chemistry.
- He is widely credited with:
 - The identification and development of the lithium-ion battery.
 - For developing the Goodenough-Kanamori rules in determining the sign of the magnetic superexchange in the material.
 - For seminal developments in computer random-access memory (RAM)



Vellayani Arjunan

- Vellayani Arjunan, a renowned scholar, linguist, academician and writer, died at the age of 90 in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala.
- He served as the head of the Department of Modern Indian Languages at Aligarh Muslim University, where he made significant contributions to the promotion of the Malayalam language and culture.

Ved Kumari Ghai

- Ved Kumari Ghai, a renowned Sanskrit scholar and academician, died in Jammu & Kashmir (J&K). She was 91 years old.
- She was a recipient of several awards and honours for her contributions to Sanskrit literature and education.
- She authored several books and articles on various aspects of Sanskrit language and culture. She was also a patron of various cultural and social organizations in Jammu & Kashmir.

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APPOINTMENTS

Ravi Sinha

- India has a new chief of its external intelligence agency, the Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW). Ravi Sinha, a senior IPS officer of the Chhattisgarh cadre, was appointed as the new R&AW chief on June 19, 2023. He succeeded Samant Goel, who completed his tenure on June 30, 2023.
- Sinha is a 1988 batch Indian Police Service (IPS) officer who has served in various capacities in the police and intelligence departments. He is currently the Special Secretary in the Cabinet Secretariat, which oversees the functioning of R&AW and other intelligence agencies.
- He is known for his operational skills and expertise in neighbouring countries, especially Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka. He has also been instrumental in infusing modern technology into the field of intelligence collection and analysis.
- Sinha will have a tenure of two years as the R&AW chief.

Aarti Holla-Maini

- Indian-origin satellite industry expert Aarti Holla-Maini was appointed as Director of the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA) in Vienna, Austria.
- It works to establish or strengthen the legal and regulatory frameworks for space activities and assists developing countries in using space science and technology for sustainable socioeconomic development.
- The Office was established in 1958 to assist and advise the ad hoc Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS), which was established by the UN General Assembly to discuss the scientific and legal aspects of exploring and using outer space to benefit humankind.

Dennis Francis

- Dennis Francis, the ambassador of Trinidad and Tobago to the UN, has been elected as the 78th President of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA).
- He will take over from Csaba Korosi of Hungary in September 2023, when the 78th session of the UNGA begins.

Swaminathan Janakiraman

- Swaminathan Janakiraman, the Managing Director of the State Bank of India (SBI), has been appointed as the Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC). He will serve in this position for 3 years.
- He will join the other 3 deputy governors of the RBI, namely Michael D Patra, T Rabi Sankar and Rajeshwar Rao.
- He will fill the vacancy created by the retirement of Mahesh Kumar Jain, whose term as the Deputy Governor of the RBI ends on June 22, 2023.

Amit Agrawal

- Amit Agrawal, a senior officer of the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), took over as the new Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI), the agency responsible for issuing Aadhaar cards to Indian citizens.
- He replaced Saurabh Garg, who retired from the post. Before becoming the CEO of UIDAI, Amit Agrawal was serving as an Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), where he oversaw various digital initiatives of the government.

Petteri Orpo

- Petteri Orpo, the conservative party leader, has become Finland's new prime minister after winning a parliamentary vote.
- He led his party to victory in the April polls and had to overcome difficult coalition talks to form a government.

- The parliament endorsed him as prime minister with 107 votes for, 81 against and 11 absent.
- President Sauli Niinisto formally appointed him to the post.

Kyriakos Mitsotakis

- Kyriakos Mitsotakis, the leader of the conservative New Democracy (ND) party, has been re-elected as the Prime Minister of Greece for another four years.
- He first took office in July 2019 after defeating the leftist Syriza party. In the latest election, his party won more than 40% of the vote and secured a majority.

AWARDS

National Florence Nightingale Awards

- President of India Smt. Droupadi Murmu conferred the **National Florence Nightingale Awards for the years 2022 and 2023 to the nursing professionals** at the Rashtrapati Bhavan.
- 2 people from West Bengal get this Award: Rita Mondal and Abishmita Ghosh.
- The National Florence Nightingale Award was instituted by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India in the year 1973.
- The Award was constituted as a mark of recognition for the meritorious services rendered by the nurses and nursing professionals to society.
- The award is given to outstanding Nursing personnel employed in Central, State/UTs, Private, Missionary and Voluntary Organizations.

National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF)

- Minister of State for Education and External Affairs, released the India Rankings 2023, which implements the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF).
- The framework was approved by the erstwhile Ministry of Human Resource Development (now, the Ministry of Education) and launched by the Minister in 2015.
- According to the rankings, the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Madras has maintained its position as the top engineering college in the country for the fifth year in a row.
- The Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru has emerged as the best university and also secured the second place in the "overall" category, which includes all types of institutions.

Gandhi Peace Prize

- The Gandhi Peace Prize is an annual award given by the Government of India to individuals or organisations that have made outstanding contributions towards social, economic and political transformation through non-violence and other Gandhian methods.
- The prize was instituted in 1995 on the occasion of the 125th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, the father of the nation and the apostle of peace.
- This year, **the prize for 2021 has been conferred on Gita Press**, Gorakhpur, a renowned publishing house of Hindu religious texts and literature.
- The decision was taken by a jury headed by the Prime Minister of India, who praised Gita Press for its commendable work over the last 100 years towards furthering social and cultural transformations among the people.

Order of the Nile

- President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi of Egypt conferred Prime Minister Narendra Modi with the prestigious 'Order of the Nile,' Egypt's highest civilian award.
- The 'Order of the Nile' is the highest civilian award bestowed by Egypt. It represents a significant honour and recognition of exceptional individuals who have made outstanding contributions in their respective fields.
- Prime Minister Modi became the first Indian to receive the 'Order of the Nile.'

Governor of the Year award


- Shaktikanta Das, the governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), received the prestigious 'Governor of the Year award for 2023 from Central Banking Awards 2023 in London.
- The award acknowledged his leadership as the RBI head in controlling inflation and effectively managing India's banking system amid challenges like the COVID pandemic and global instability.
- He became the second Central Bank governor to receive this honour after Raghuram Rajan, who got the award in 2015.
- Central Banking is a renowned economic research journal that publishes analyses and insights on central banking issues.

PEN Pinter Prize

- British children's writer and performance poet Michael Rosen has been awarded the prestigious PEN Pinter Prize 2023.
- He is a writer from the UK and will receive the award alongside another award 'Writer of Courage'.



Testimonial



MONOJIT CHOWDHURY
RANK 2
WBCS (EXE.) 2020

Hello Everyone !!

I am Monojit Chowdhury and have qualified WBCS 2020 with rank 2 in my first attempt.

This journey was long and tough. I wish aspirants like me who are struggling their ways to be civil servants all the best. Apti Plus is helping them in their journey in a big way through their intensive guidance programme.

Stay firm and keep walking the distance. Team Apti Plus is doing a great job.

Good luck !!

Yours truly
Monojit Chowdhury

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Milk Day

- World Milk Day is an annual celebration that takes place on June 1st to recognize the importance of milk and dairy products for nutrition, health and livelihoods.
- The day was established by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations in 2001 and has since been observed by more than 80 countries around the world.
- World Milk Day aims to spread awareness about the importance and benefits of milk consumption, acknowledge the efforts of dairy farmers, processors, and consumers, and facilitate dialogue and exchange of views during the summer meet.
- The theme of World Milk Day 2023 is "Enjoy Dairy".

Telangana Statehood Day

- Telangana Statehood Day is celebrated on June 2 every year to mark the formation of the state of Telangana in 2014.
- It is the youngest state in India, carved out of the erstwhile Andhra Pradesh after a long and complex political struggle.

World Environment Day

- World Environment Day is celebrated globally by millions of people every year on June 5.
- Since 1973, World Environment Day has been the largest global platform for environmental public awareness and discussions on the need to protect our environment, led by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).
- The theme for 2023 is under 'Beat Plastic Pollution' campaign which is 'Ecosystem Restoration'.

World Food Safety Day

- Every year on June 7th, there is a commemoration of World Food Safety Day to raise awareness of the safety and quality of food across the world. Along with endangering the economic stability of nations, poor food has a grave effect on people's health and well-being.
- The World Health Organisation (WHO) and the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations (UN) work together to mark World Food Safety Day and raise awareness of the negative effects of contaminated water and food on health worldwide. This day is commemorated to raise awareness of and take precautions against food-borne diseases.
- The theme of World Food Safety Day 2023 is "Food Standards Save Lives."

World Oceans Day

- The ocean covers over 70% of the planet. World Ocean Day is an international day and is celebrated, as a life source to humans, on 8 June every year. It reminds everyone of the major role the oceans have in everyday life.
- The theme for World Oceans Day 2023 is Planet Ocean: tides are changing.

World Day Against Child Labour

- Every year on June 12th, the World Day Against Child Labour is observed. This is a day to raise awareness and take action against the exploitation and abuse of children at work.
- The World Day Against Child Labour was initiated by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in 2002. The ILO is a specialized agency of the United Nations that promotes social justice and decent work for all.
- The ILO has adopted two conventions to protect children from harmful work: Convention No. 138 on the minimum age for employment and Convention No. 182 on the worst forms of child labour.
- The theme for the 2023 World Day Against Child Labour is "Week of Action against Child Labour".

Global wind day

- Global wind day is a worldwide celebration of the benefits and potential of wind energy. It takes place every year on June 15 and aims to raise awareness and educate people about how wind power can transform our energy system and reduce our dependence on fossil fuels.
- Wind energy is a clean, renewable and affordable source of electricity that can create jobs, stimulate economic growth and protect the environment.

World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought

- Desertification and drought are serious environmental problems that affect millions of people around the world. The United Nations has designated 17 June as the World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought to raise awareness of these issues and promote solutions to prevent and reverse them.
- This year, the theme of the World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought is "Her land. Her rights". The theme calls for ensuring women's equal access to land and other assets, which can improve their livelihoods, resilience, and empowerment.

World Sickle Cell Awareness Day

- World Sickle Cell Awareness Day is observed on June 19th each year to raise awareness about sickle cell disease (SCD) and its impact on individuals, families and communities worldwide.
- This year the theme of World Sickle Disease Day is 'Building and strengthening global sickle cell communities, formalizing newborn screening and knowing your sickle cell disease status'.
- Sickle cell disease is a genetic blood disorder characterized by abnormal red blood cells that take on a crescent or sickle shape and these irregularly shaped cells can cause blockages in blood vessels, leading to a variety of health complications.

World Refugee Day

- World Refugee Day is an annual observance on the 20th of June to increase public awareness and solidarity with the millions of people who have been forced to flee their homes due to war, persecution, or human rights violations.
- The date of June 20th was chosen by the United Nations General Assembly in 2000, as a tribute to the courage and resilience of refugees around the world.
- The theme for World Refugee Day 2023 is "Hope away from home", which reflects the aspirations and challenges of refugees who seek safety, dignity, and a new start in a foreign land.

International Yoga Day

- The International Day of Yoga is a global celebration of the ancient practice of yoga, which aims to promote physical, mental and spiritual well-being.
- The United Nations General Assembly declared June 21 as the International Day of Yoga in 2014, following a proposal by the Indian Prime Minister. Since then, millions of people across the world have joined in various events and activities to mark this occasion.
- The **theme for the International Day of Yoga 2023 is 'Yoga for Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' or 'Yoga for the Welfare of All as One World-One Family'**. This theme reflects the universal message of yoga, which is to foster harmony and peace among all living beings and nature.

World Hydrography Day

- On the occasion of World Hydrography Day, which is celebrated every year on June 21, the Union Defence Minister visited the hydrography ship South Jetty, Indian Naval station Kochi.
- The theme for World Hydrography Day 2023 is "Hydrography - Underpinning the Digital Twin of the Ocean".
- Hydrography is the science of measuring and describing the physical features of the Earth's oceans, seas, lakes, rivers, and canals.
- Hydrographic surveys are used to collect data on the depth, bottom type, currents, tides, and other characteristics of water bodies. This data is used for a variety of purposes, including navigation, safety, environmental protection, and resource management.

Olympic Day

- Olympic Day is celebrated on 23rd June every year as a global celebration of sport, health, and unity.
- The day commemorates the founding of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) by Pierre de Coubertin on 23rd June 1894.
- The theme for this year's Olympic Day is 'Let's Move,' emphasizing the importance of daily physical activity.

United Nations Public Service Day

- **On June 23**, the world celebrates the United Nations Public Service Day, a day to honour the public servants who dedicate their lives to serving the common good.
- Public servants play a vital role in promoting democracy, human rights, peace, and social justice.
- The United Nations Public Service Day aims to raise awareness of the importance of public service, recognize the achievements and innovations of public servants, and inspire young people to pursue public service careers.

MSME Day

- On the occasion of International MSME Day, the Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSME) is celebrating 'Udyami Bharat-MSME Day' on 27th June 2023 at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.
- During this programme, the Ministry of MSME has launched various initiatives for the growth and development of MSMEs such as the CHAMPIONS 2.0 Portal and Mobile App for Geo-tagging of Cluster Projects and Technology Centers.
- During the programme results for 'MSME Idea Hackathon 2.0' was declared and 'MSME Idea Hackathon 3.0' for Women Entrepreneurs was launched.

International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking

- International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, or World Drug Day, is marked on **June 26 every year** to strengthen action and cooperation in achieving a world free of drug abuse.
- It aims to raise awareness about the importance of treating people who use drugs with respect and empathy; providing evidence-based, voluntary services for all; offering alternatives to punishment; prioritizing prevention; and leading with compassion.
- The theme for this year is "People First: stop stigma and Discrimination, strengthen Prevention."

Statistics Day

- Every year, on June 29, Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis, known as the father of modern statistics, is commemorated on his birth anniversary.
- He is revered as the pioneer of modern statistics in India, having established the Indian Statistical Institute, influenced the formation of the Planning Commission, and introduced methodologies for conducting extensive surveys.
- The theme of Statistics Day, 2023 is "Alignment of State Indicator Framework with National Indicator Framework for Monitoring Sustainable Development Goals".

BOOKS & AUTHOR

Book "Nalanda"

- Poet-diplomat Abhay K's book 'Nalanda', published by Penguin Random House India, explores the history of the ancient seat of learning in Bihar.
- The book, written by the award-winning poet and writer Abhay K, is titled Nalanda and is a highly anticipated book that offers readers an enlightening journey through time and history.
- In the book, Abhay K reveals the extraordinary journey of the fabled Mahavihara of Nalanda—the world's first university—through meticulous research and a captivating narrative.

Book "Ringside"

- Shashi Tharoor, a renowned author and politician, has recently unveiled his latest book, "Ringside", authored by Dr Vijay Darda.
- This insightful book explores the intriguing link between politics and sports, highlighting the profound impact that sportsmanship can have on individuals and society at large.
- Dr Vijay Darda, the writer of "Ringside", is acclaimed for his thorough research and captivating writing style. His partnership with Shashi Tharoor offers a captivating narrative that merges the spheres of sports and politics, inviting readers to examine the complexities of both domains and their interrelatedness.

BOOSTER DOSE

- Article 299 of the Constitution of India deals with the contracts made by the government of India or any of its states. It lays down the rules and procedures for making and executing such contracts, as well as the liability of the parties involved.
- The Guarani Tribes are one of the oldest and most diverse indigenous groups in Brazil, South America. They are opposing a new bill by the Government of Brazil that would limit their rights to their ancestral lands.
- Bonn Climate Change Conference 2023 was held in Germany.
- The government allowed the import of pet Coke as a fuel for the production of graphite anode material for lithium-ion batteries. The import of pet Coke for fuel is prohibited for other purposes.
- Bilateral meeting between Defence Minister Rajnath Singh of India and visiting U.S. Secretary of Defence Lloyd Austin.
- A draft of the cybersecurity agreement called Delhi Declaration was announced by Lieutenant-General Rajesh Pant (retd.), the National Cybersecurity Coordinator at the G20 business event held in Delhi.
- The Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) working on a pension scheme that will offer minimum assured returns to subscribers. The scheme will require higher premium payments from subscribers who want higher returns, according to PFRDA Chairman.
- Operation Bluestar, an Indian Army operation of June 1984, completes 39 years. It was carried out by storming Golden Temple in Amritsar, the shrine of the Sikh community, to flush out separatist elements led by Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale.
- The development and intensification of a cyclonic storm named "Biporjoy" in the east-central and southeast Arabian Sea.
- Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) has successfully launched a groundbreaking pilot study on vehicles using E27 fuel and Ethanol Blended Diesel Fuel. HPCL has become the first Oil Marketing Company in India to initiate such a comprehensive research program, in line with the "Roadmap for Ethanol Blending in India by 2025.
- Gita Press, Gorakhpur conferred the Gandhi Peace Prize 2021.
- India gifted the indigenously-built in-service missile corvette INS Kirpan to Vietnam to enhance its naval capabilities.
- The President of India, Smt Droupadi Murmu, and the President of Suriname, Chandrikapersad Santokhi, participate in a cultural festival in Paramaribo to mark the commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the arrival of Indians in Suriname.
- According to a new UN assessment, factors such as excessive inflation, an unclear macroeconomic outlook, and debt hardship are hindering the world from meeting the United Nations-mandated Sustainable Development Goal 7 by 2030. SDG 7 aims to "ensure equitable access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all."
- President Smt Droupadi Murmu's visit to Serbia on June 7, 2023. First visit by an Indian President to Serbia.
- The Prime Minister has chaired the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) and approved the hike in the Minimum Support Prices (MSP) for all mandated Kharif Crops for Marketing Season 2023-24.
- European regulators have approved the region's first vaccine for respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), which causes thousands of hospitalisations and deaths annually.
- The Union Minister of Steel and Civil Aviation held a press conference on the theme 9 years of Government's "Seva, Sushasan and Gareeb Kalyan" focusing on the Steel sector.

- For the year 2023 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) award, Michel Batisse Award, will be received by the Director of the Gulf of Mannar Marine National Park for his efforts in Biosphere Reserve Management.
- Prime Minister Modi is expected to launch National Sickle Cell Anaemia Elimination Mission on June 27 from Madhya Pradesh.
- The Kerala government officially launched the Kerala Fibre Optical Network (KFON).
- The Reserve Bank of India has recently announced a new initiative to boost the liquidity and credit availability for MSMEs by allowing insurance companies to participate in the trade receivable discounting system (TReDS), an online platform for financing trade receivables.
- The Kilauea volcano on Hawaii's Big Island erupted.
- A White House summit between US President Joe Biden and UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak. The leaders adopted an "Atlantic Declaration" to boost industry ties in defence and renewable energy.
- Some cities in North America, like Montreal, Toronto and New York, are impacted by the 400 fires burning in Canada. They are engulfed in heavy smog due to these wildfires which is posing a serious risk to the health.
- New Generation Ballistic Missile 'Agni Prime' was successfully flight-tested by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of Odisha.
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) released its monetary policy statement on June 8, in which it stated that it has decided to keep the policy repo rate under the liquidity adjustment facility (LAF) unchanged at 6.50%. The policy repo rate is the rate at which the RBI lends money to commercial banks in case of any shortfall of funds.
- The Financial Services Institution Bureau (FSIB), an autonomous body of the Government of India that selects top executives for public sector banks and insurers, has announced the names of the new heads for two leading insurance companies: "N Ramaswamy" for General Insurance Corporation of India (GIC Re) and "M Rajeswari Singh" for National Insurance Company (NIC).
- The Joint Bangladesh-United States (US) Naval drill Exercise 'Tiger Shark 40' started at BNS Nirvik in Chattogram.
- Indian astronomers have discovered two new Millisecond Pulsars (MSP). They are dense, tiny neutron stars, which are formed when a massive star (for example, the Sun) collapses.
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has approved the First Loss Default Guarantee (FLDG) framework, a new lending model that enables fintech firms to partner with banks and NBFCs.
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has announced a new initiative to issue RuPay Prepaid Forex cards to customers who want to travel abroad and make payments in foreign currencies. The RBI will also enable RuPay cards to be issued in other countries, expanding the network of RuPay cardholders.
- SAGAR SAMRIDHI is an online dredging monitoring system which will accelerate the 'Waste to Wealth' initiative of the Union Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways (MoPSW).
- The destruction of the Kakhovka Dam has led to a fast-moving disaster with long-term environmental consequences in Ukraine.
- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, IPCC, highlights that The Arctic sea ice is decreasing day by day. If global emissions will continue to increase and led to temperatures beyond 4.5°C, the first sea-ice-free summer will happen much before 2050.
- Automated Air Defence Control & Reporting System 'Project Akashteer' to automate the air defence systems was launched.
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has recently issued a circular that allows banks to settle loans under a compromise with willful defaulters and fraudsters. This means that banks can accept a partial payment from these borrowers and write off the remaining amount as a loss.
- Punjab, one of the leading states in paddy production in India, has set an ambitious target of bringing 5 lakh acres under the direct seeded rice (DSR) method this kharif season.
- Anak Krakatau volcano, located in Indonesia's Sunda Strait erupted.
- The Discovery of a Neolithic-era tool in the Dharmapurai district of Tamilnadu holds significance to the ancient history of India and the world.
- Global Slavery Index (GSI)2023 was released by Walkfree Group of Mindaroo's Foundation.
- Mayon Volcano in the Philippines has been spewing lava down its slopes, raising concerns of a violent and life-threatening explosion.

- Honduras President Xiomara Castro's formal request for the country's admission to the New Development Bank (NDB) led by BRICS.
- Indian Navy Organises Special Event 'Ocean Ring Of Yoga' On International Yoga Day.
- Union Home Minister Amit Shah requested states to prepare a disaster management plan for areas where seven new nuclear installations are becoming operational. States were advised to collaborate with the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) in creating the roadmap.
- The Ishad mango, a native variety of Ankola taluk in Uttara Kannada district of Karnataka, has recently received the coveted geographical indication (GI) tag.
- The Indian team's participation in the Special Olympics World Games in Berlin, Germany.
- The Tamil Nadu government has withdrawn the general consent given to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to investigate the cases in the state without prior permission from it. This means that the CBI will have to seek the state government's approval before taking up any case in Tamil Nadu.
- A report on a peace conference held in Oslo, Norway, where representatives from the Taliban met with Indian and Pakistani special envoys, as well as officials from other countries and international diplomats.
- The Defence Acquisition Council approved the procurement of 31 armed MQ-9 Reaper Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) from General Atomics, USA.
- Indian Navy is conducting "Julley Ladakh" (Hello Ladakh), an outreach programme to Ladakh to increase awareness about the service in the pristine state and to engage with youth and civil society there.
- The Government of India has announced the issuance of Sovereign Gold Bonds (SGBs) for the financial year 2023-24. These bonds are denominated in grams of gold and offer an attractive alternative to holding physical gold.
- The Union Government has recently discontinued the sale of wheat and rice under the Open Market Sale Scheme (OMSS) to state governments, except for some northeastern, hilly, and calamity-hit states.
- The Prime Minister has lauded the new initiative of celebrating 'Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana' as a 'God Bharai' ceremony in Dausa, Rajasthan. The 'God Bharai' ceremony is a traditional ritual that celebrates the impending arrival of a child and blesses the mother-to-be.
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP's) 2023 Gender Social Norms Index (GSNI) was released.
- According to a recent report by the World Bank, India's remittance inflows are expected to grow by a meagre 0.2% in 2023, a sharp contrast to the robust 24% growth recorded in 2022, when India received a record-high \$111 billion from its diaspora.
- The right to change one's name is a fundamental right guaranteed by Article 21 of the Indian Constitution, which guarantees the right to life and personal liberty. Recently, two Indian High Courts confirmed this privilege, allowing persons to change their names on educational diplomas.
- The discovery of a natural arch formation during coal exploration in the Kenduadihi block of Sundargarh district in Odisha.
- The India-US Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology (iCET) and the collaborative efforts between India and the United States in high-technology areas.
- The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) has recently released the National Time Release Study (NTRS) 2023 report, which measures the efficiency and effectiveness of India's cross-border trade processes.
- In a major boost to the dairy sector in India, the Union Minister of Heavy Industries launched the "Dugdh Sankalan Sathi Mobile App".
- The Indian Navy and the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully carried out the transfer of command-and-control capabilities of the TAPAS Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV).
- In LEED Zero certified green building projects India got first rank in the world in LEED Zero certified green building projects.
- Pune-based Gennova Biopharmaceuticals announced that its mRNA COVID-19 booster vaccine - GEMCOVAC-OM - against the Omicron variant of SARS-CoV-2 received emergency use authorization (EUA) from the office of the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI).
- World Sickle Cell Awareness Day is observed on June 19th each year.
- Shri Hardeep Singh Puri hosts H.E. Mr Hayan Abdul Ghani Abdul Zahra Al Sawad at the 18th India-Iraq Joint Commission Meeting (JCM) in New Delhi.
- At Al-Hakim Mosque (Egypt) there will be a meeting between Indian PM Modi and Egypt's President El-Sisi.

- A series of service disruptions experienced by users of Microsoft Azure, OneDrive and Outlook were the result of a major Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) attack.
- The Punjab Assembly on Tuesday amended the Sikh Gurdwaras Act, 1925 to free the broadcast of Gurbani from Sri Harmandir Sahib from the alleged monopoly of PTC, a television channel linked to the family of Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD).
- The 20th Foundation Day of the National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI) was celebrated on June 19, 2023. It is a non-profit organization that was established in 2003 under the Companies Act 2013 to facilitate improved internet services in the country.
- India was ranked 127 out of 146 countries in the 17th Edition of the annual Gender Gap Report, 2023.
- On June 21, 2023, the world witnessed a historic event at the United Nations headquarters in New York. The Prime Minister of India led a yoga session for the first time at the UN, on the occasion of the 9th International Yoga Day, and created a Guinness World Record for the participation of people of most nationalities in a yoga event.
- World Hydrography Day is celebrated every year on June 21.
- The government of India recently launched the Gati Shakti portal, a digital platform that aims to integrate various infrastructure projects and schemes across the country.
- The Bonn Climate Conference was recently finalized in Germany.
- Many European institutions have formed the Einstein Telescope (ET) Collaboration to build a next-generation gravitational wave observatory deep beneath the surface of the Earth.
- Larsen and Toubro (L&T) and Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) have signed a deal to manufacture two Air Independent Propulsion (AIP) modules for the Indian Navy's Kalvari class submarines.
- India has been unanimously elected as the chair of the Standing Committee on Integrated Pest Management (IPM) of the Asia Pacific Plant Protection Commission (APPPC) for the biennium 2023-24. The election took place during the 32nd Session of the APPPC held in Bangkok, Thailand.
- Larsen and Toubro (L&T) and Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) have signed a deal to manufacture two Air Independent Propulsion (AIP) modules for the Indian Navy's Kalvari class submarines.
- India-United States Defence Acceleration Ecosystem (INDUS X) launched in Washington DC, U.S.
- As part of his first state visit to the United States, Prime Minister Narendra Modi gifted First Lady Jill Biden a lab-grown diamond.
- The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras will set up its first International campus in Zanzibar, Tanzania.
- The Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) has recently launched the Grievance Redressal Assessment and Index (GRAI) 2022, a comprehensive framework to assess and rank the performance of central ministries and departments on public grievance redressal.
- The government is in the process of integrating 'Child Helpline 1098' with the Emergency Response Support System 112 (ERSS-112) helpline of the Ministry of Home Affairs.
- The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has decided to pull the plug on the X-57 Maxwell test aircraft at the end of the year.
- The World Health Organization (WHO) announced that Belize, a Central American nation, has achieved a significant reduction in malaria cases. From 10,000 cases in 1994, Belize successfully reached zero indigenous cases of malaria in 2019.
- Maharashtra Chief Minister (CM) Shri Eknath Shinde has launched Asia's largest, ambitious and historic cluster development scheme in Thane, Maharashtra.
- President of Egypt, Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, conferred the 'Order of the Nile' upon Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- INS Sunayna visited Mombasa, Kenya from 20-23 Jun 23 towards strengthening bilateral ties with maritime neighbours on the theme of Ocean Ring of Yoga.
- The Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSME) is celebrating 'Udyami Bharat-MSME Day' on 27th June 2023 at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.
- The Union Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying inaugurated NANDI (NOC Approval for New Drug and Inoculation System) portal at Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi. The portal was developed by the Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying (DAHDD).

- Banks are preparing their systems to track purchases made with foreign credit cards and mobilise tax collected at source (TCS) on outgoing remittances in anticipation of the Reserve Bank of India's Liberalised Remittances Scheme (LRS) 20% tax taking effect on 1st July.
- A Skin bank – a first for North India – was inaugurated in Delhi's Safdarjung Hospital.
- Indian-origin satellite industry expert Aarti Holla-Maini will take over as Director of the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA) in Vienna.
- To facilitate and accelerate the adoption of energy-efficient technologies and practices in the industry, the Union Ministry of Power has established a dedicated Centre of Excellence called UTPRERAK, which stands for Unnat Takniki Pradarshan Kendra.
- The Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) has recently launched a new portal called CHAMPIONS 2.0, which aims to provide a comprehensive platform for the MSME sector to address their challenges and opportunities.
- British children's writer and performance poet Michael Rosen has been awarded the prestigious PEN Pinter Prize 2023.
- The government of India has designated 29th June every year as "Statistics Day".
- Montana has become the first United States (US) state to ban the popular social media app TikTok.
- Sourav Ganguly becomes Brand Ambassador of Tripura Tourism.
- The Indian Agricultural Research Institute, popularly known as the Pusa Institute and the harbinger of Green Revolution, scales to the pinnacle of the crest of the ranking by the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) for the year 2023 under the category of Agriculture and Allied sectors.
- Union Health Minister Dr Mansukh Mandaviya released the fifth State Food Safety Index in New Delhi.
- Algeria, Guyana, the Republic of Korea, Sierra Leone and Slovenia will join the premier body for maintaining international peace and security, starting in January, serving for two years.
- A report by Mercer's Cost of Living has positioned Mumbai as the most expensive city in India for expatriates.
- NTPC Limited, India's largest power generation company, has climbed 52 positions to secure the 433rd rank in Forbes' "The Global 2000" List for 2023.
- Northeast's first Vande Bharat Express will connect Guwahati to New Jalpaiguri.
- The National Level Steering Committee (NLSC) has decided to extend Atal Bhujal Yojana for additional two years. Its original end year was 2025.
- All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Nagpur has become the first of all AIIMS to receive National Accreditation Board for Hospitals (NABH) accreditation.
- The Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways and Ayushofficially introduced the new guidelines for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) called "Sagar Samajik Sahayyog."
- The Union Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways (MoPSW) and Ayush Shri Sarbananda Sonowal launched 'SAGAR SAMRIDDHI' - the online dredging monitoring system - to accelerate the 'Waste to Wealth' initiative of the Ministry.
- The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has won the bid to host the 2025 World Conservation Congress (WCC) of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).
- The first-ever National Training Conclave aimed at strengthening the training infrastructure for civil servants across the country starts in New Delhi.
- The second summit of the Supreme Audit Institutions (SAIs) of the G20 countries was held in Panaji, Goa.
- The Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, named after India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, has been renamed the Prime Minister's Museum and Library Society.
- India is participating in the Annecy International Animation Festival (AIAF) for the first time in France.
- To strengthen defence cooperation between India and ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations), India would launch an initiative on "women in United Nations Peacekeeping (UNPK) operations."
- The Union government proposes to sell up to a 3% stake in state-owned coal in India through an offer for sale (OFS).
- The Union Cabinet authorised the City Investments to Innovate, Integrate, and Sustain (CITIIS) 2.0 programme, which would encourage a circular economy in 18 smart cities chosen through a competition.
- The Union Cabinet approved the establishment of a Regional Office of the Universal Postal Union (UPU) in New Delhi.
- Surat achieved a significant milestone on International Yoga Day by breaking the Guinness World Record for the largest gathering of people participating in a yoga session at a single location.

- Tata Power Company has emerged as India's most 'attractive employer brand', followed by Amazon and Tata Steel, revealing the findings of Randstad Employer Brand Research (REBR) 2023.
- Odisha Chief Minister (CM) Shri Naveen Patnaik announced the launch of the 'Mo Ghara' (My House) a credit-linked housing scheme to provide financial assistance to people of states for completing or upgrading their houses.
- India has secured the 67th position in the world economic forum's (WEF) energy transition index.
- The Maharashtra cabinet has approved a tourism policy named '_Aai' for the introduction of women-run bike-taxi services in selected tourist destinations.
- Odisha Chief Minister (CM) Shri Naveen Patnaik launched 'Odisha for Artificial Intelligence' (AI) and 'Artificial Intelligence (AI) for Youth' initiatives.
- The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) has launched the Field Assessment for Swachh Survekshan (SS) 2023.
- US President Joe Biden and UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak reached an agreement known as the —Atlantic Declarationl to strengthen economic ties between their countries.
- The Maharashtra Chief Minister Shri Eknath Shinde announced that the Ahmednagar district in the state will be renamed 'Ahilya Nagar'.
- IIT Bombay has been ranked 1st in India and 149th in the world in QS (Quacquarelli Symonds) World University Rankings.
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) became a net seller of US dollars in fiscal year 2023, after being a net purchaser for three consecutive years.
- Razorpay has launched India's fastest one-step UPI (unified payments interface) payment solution, 'Turbo UPI' that allows customers of online merchants to make UPI payments directly without getting redirected to a third-party UPI app during checkout.
- Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) announced that Ikano Bank AB in Sweden has selected the TCS BaNCS Global Banking SaaS Platform for its pan-Europe core banking transformation.
- Yubi, an online debt marketplace that connects borrowers and lenders for various credit products, announced its partnership with Indian Bank to extend digital supply chain financing solutions to small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs).
- According to the global livability index 2023, Austria's capital Vienna has been named the world's "most livable city" for 2023.
- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a \$295 million loan to widen and upgrade around 265 kilometres of state highways, improving transport connectivity and safety in the state of Bihar in India.
- The World Bank has approved a loan worth USD 300 million to help expand and improve the quality of education in government-run schools in Chhattisgarh.
- The global credit ratings agency "Moody" projected that the Indian economy is expected to clock a 6-6.3% growth in the June quarter, and flagged risks of fiscal slippage arising from weaker-than-expected government revenues in the current fiscal.
- The government has decided to allow two thousand Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS) to open Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Jan Aushadhi Kendras across the country.
- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) chaired by the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi approved the continuation of the Central Sector Scheme of "Exploration of Coal and Lignite scheme" with an estimated expenditure of Rs. 2980 crore from 2021-22 to 2025-26 co-terminus with the 15th Finance Commission cycle.
- The Centre has approved a new metro line between HUDA City Centre and Cyber City in Gurugram, with a branch line to Dwarka Expressway.
- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has launched its India Country Partnership Strategy (CPS) 2023-2027: Catalyse Robust, climate-resilient, and inclusive growth to accelerate the structural transformation and job creation, promoting climate-resilient growth and deepening social and economic inclusiveness.
- State-owned Bank of Maharashtra (BoM) has emerged as the top performer among public sector lenders in terms of loan and deposit growth in percentage terms during 2022-23.
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das, launched a Financial Inclusion Dashboard 'ANTARDRIHSTI'.
- Global Alliance for Mass Entrepreneurship (GAME) has received in-principal approval from the Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) for designing and structuring a sustainable and scalable Non-Banking Finance Company (NBFC) Growth Accelerator Program (NGAP).

- Bank of Maharashtra (BoM) has emerged as the best bank as far as management of bad loans is concerned with its net non-performing assets (NPAs) falling as low as 0.25% during the financial year ended March 2023.
- According to the RBI's annual report 2022-23, India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth for 2023-24 is projected at 6.5% for FY24 amid softer global commodity and food prices, and good rabi crop prospects, among others
- The Government of India (GoI) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) have signed a USD 130 million loan agreement for the Himachal Pradesh subtropical horticulture, irrigation and value addition project to increase agricultural productivity, improve access to irrigation and promote horticulture agribusinesses to raise farmers income in Himachal Pradesh (HP), India.
- Punjab National Bank (PNB) has become the first public sector bank to introduce an Interactive Voice Response (IVR)-based Unified Payment Interface (UPI) solution - UPI 123PAY, aligning with the Digital Payment Vision 2025 towards a cashless and cardless society.
- Insurance Regulator Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) came out with draft guidelines for 'Bima Vahaks (BV)', which seeks to set up a dedicated distribution channel at the level of gram panchayats to enhance insurance coverage and create awareness.
- The governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), Shaktikanta Das was honoured with the title of 'Governor of the Year' for 2023 by Central Banking Awards 2023 in London.
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has reported a 14.4% increase in the number of counterfeit Rs 500 notes (new design) during the year 2022-23.
- Kiwi, a ground-breaking credit card platform, has launched its all-inclusive "Credit on Unified Payments Interface (UPI)" customer solution.
- The market regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has cancelled the registration of brokerage firm Karvy Stock Broking Ltd (KSBL) for mis-utilising clients' funds and securities.
- The fiscal deficit of the government decreased from 6.71% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to 6.4% of GDP in 2022-23.
- The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has identified SBI Life Insurance Company Limited (SBI Life) as the acquirer-insurer of the business of the beleaguered Sahara India Life Insurance Co. (SILIC).
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has launched the '100 Days 100 Pays' campaign to trace and settle the top 100 unclaimed deposits of every bank in every district within 100 days.
- State-owned Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with HDFC Bank for providing financial solutions to Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).
- The Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) Monetary Policy Committee headed by RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das in its second bi-monthly monetary policy meeting of FY24 has kept the repo rate unchanged at 6.5%.
- Mumbai is India's costliest city for Expatriates.
- Namo Shetkari Mahasanman Yojana was launched by Maharashtra in line with PM Kissan Samman Nidhi Yearly amount to be given to farmers is 12000.
- Pipavav port in Gujarat topped the Indian port list in Global Container Performance Index.
- Austrian artist Gustav Klimt last painting 'dame mit facher' or 'Lady with a Fan'.
- Meira Paibis also called as Mother of Manipur or Women torch bearers of Manipur serve as the conscience keeper of Manipur.
- India's first insurance plan for diabetics was launched by Bajaj Allianz.
- Multilateral Naval Exercise KOMODO held in Indonesia.INS Satpura participated from India.
- Fino Payments Bank tied up with Hubble Money company to introduce India's and the world's first spending account to manage the finances of the customers
- 14th June is celebrated as world blood donors day. Theme of this year was ' Give blood, give plasma, share life, share often'.
- Indian Overseas Bank launched 'My Account My Name' to help customers to choose any easy-to-remember 7-digit character account name.
- Brand ambassador of Hyundai Motor India Limited- Hardik Pandya
- Indian women's Junior hockey team defeated South Korea to win their first women's Junior Asia Cup.
- 13th June is observed as International Albinism awareness day. The theme was ' Inclusion is strength'.
- New Director General of BSF- Nitin Agarwal

- Astrome Technology Pvt Ltd signed a contract with Indian Army for Tactical LAN Radio.
- The new president of Latvia- Edgars Rinkevics.
- Algeria, Guyana, South Korea, Sierra Leone, and Slovenia were elected as new non-permanent members of the UNSC for a term of 2years.
- World's largest and fastest wind tunnel JF-22 constructed in Beijing.
- Amrit Dharowar yojana and MISHTI yojana launched by PM to revive wetlands and mangroves across India.
- Nand Baba Milk Mission scheme launched in Uttar Pradesh.
- USA to rejoin UNESCO after 4 years. It withdrew membership due to Palestine membership.
- The Nova Kakhovka dam disaster happened in Ukraine.
- First Muslim woman Federal woman judge of USA- Nusrat Chowdhury.
- Estonia legalises same-sex marriage.
- Oman first foreign government to promote itself through yoga.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Q1. Which of the following person was recently appointed as the Director of the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA) in Vienna, Austria?

- A) Antonio Guterres
- B) Simonetta Di Pippo
- C) Aarti Holla-Maini
- D) Rahul Kausik

Answer: C

Explanation: The United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA) is a UN agency that promotes international cooperation in the peaceful uses and exploration of space. The current Director of UNOOSA is Aarti Holla-Maini, who was appointed by the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres in July 2023. She is the first woman from India to hold this position. She succeeds Simonetta Di Pippo, who served as Director from 2014 to 2023.

Q2. Which of the following country hosted the Special Olympics World Games 2023?

- A) Germany
- B) Australia
- C) United Kingdom
- D) Japan

Answer: A

Explanation: The Special Olympics World Games 2023 were held in Berlin, Germany, from June 17 to June 24. The event featured more than 7,000 athletes from 170 countries competing in 24 sports. The games aimed to promote inclusion, diversity and respect for people with intellectual disabilities.

Berlin was chosen as the host city because of its rich history, culture and accessibility.

Q3. Which Egypt's highest state honour was awarded to the Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi by the President of Egypt during his official visit to Egypt?

- A) Order of the Nile
- B) Order of Merit
- C) Order of Excellence
- D) Order of the Pharaoh

Answer: A

Explanation: The correct answer is A) Order of the Nile. This is the highest state honour of Egypt, which is awarded to heads of state or government for their exceptional contributions to the nation. Prime Minister Narendra Modi received this honour from President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi during his visit to Egypt in June 2023. The award recognizes his efforts to strengthen the bilateral relations between India and Egypt, as well as his leadership in promoting peace and stability in the region.

Q4. International Olympic Day is observed on _____.

- A) 11th June
- B) 17th June
- C) 21st June
- D) 23rd June

Answer: D

Explanation: International Olympic Day is celebrated annually on June 23rd, to commemorate the anniversary of the founding of the

International Olympic Committee (IOC) in 1894. The day aims to promote the Olympic values of excellence, friendship and respect, as well as to encourage participation in sports across the world. The first Olympic Day was held in 1948 and since then it has grown into a global movement that reaches millions of people in over 200 countries.

Q5. Where was North India's first Skin Bank inaugurated?

- A) Safdarjung Hospital, New Delhi
- B) AIIMS, New Delhi
- C) Charan Singh Hospital, Punjab
- D) Gangamal Hospital, Haryana

Answer: A

Explanation: A new facility for skin donation from deceased persons was launched on Tuesday at Safdarjung Hospital in Delhi, the first of its kind in North India. The skin bank will help treat patients with severe burns and other skin-related conditions. India has 16 such facilities across the country, with Maharashtra having the highest number of seven, followed by Chennai with four, Karnataka with three, and Madhya Pradesh and Odisha with one each.

Q6. Who is appointed as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI)?

- A) Sumit Modi
- B) Amit Agarwal
- C) Rajiv Kumar Singh
- D) Rahul Tripathi

Answer: B

Explanation: Amit Agarwal has been appointed as the CEO of UIDAI, the nodal agency for Aadhaar, for a tenure of three years. UIDAI is responsible for issuing and managing the 12-digit biometric identification number that covers more than 1.3 billion Indians.

Q7. Who is appointed as the chief of the RAW in June 2023

- A) Subhojit Tagore
- B) Nagendra Nath
- C) Ravi Sinha
- D) Rahul Sood

Answer: C

Explanation: Ravi Sinha was appointed as the chief of the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), India's external intelligence agency. He served in various capacities in the RAW, including as the

head of its counter-terrorism wing and as the station chief in a neighbouring country. He is known for his expertise in handling sensitive operations and strategic affairs.

Q8. What is the name of India's first international cruise ship?

- (A) MV Empress
- (B) MV Ganga Vilas
- (C) M.V. Mumbai
- (D) Goa Cruise

Answer: A

Explanation: The MV Empress is the first international cruise that operates from Chennai, offering a scenic and comfortable journey to Sri Lanka. The cruise features luxurious amenities, cultural activities, and entertainment options for travellers who want to explore the beauty and diversity of the island nation.

Q9. What is the theme of Yoga Day in 2023?

- A) Yoga for Swaasthe and Kalyaan
- B) Yoga for Peace and Harmony
- C) Yoga for Happiness
- D) Yoga for Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam

Answer: D

Explanation: Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam is a Sanskrit phrase that means "the world is one family". It is derived from the ancient Hindu scriptures, the Upanishads, and reflects the universal spirit of yoga. Yoga is not just a physical exercise, but a way of life that promotes harmony, compassion and unity among all living beings. The theme of Yoga Day in 2023 is to celebrate this vision of yoga and to spread its message across the world.

Q10. Which of the following country has won the Intercontinental Cup 2023?

- A) China
- B) Japan
- C) India
- D) Bangladesh

Answer: C

Explanation: In the Intercontinental Cup 2023, India, emerged victorious with a 2-0 scoreline against Lebanon. The Indian men's football team displayed a dominant performance throughout the tournament, winning all three group matches and keeping a clean sheet in the final.

Q11. Who launched the 'ANTARDRIHSTI' portal?

- A) Prime Minister's Office
- B) Union Finance Minister of India
- C) Reserve Bank of India
- D) Union Ministry of Defence

Answer: C

Explanation: The 'ANTARDRIHSTI' portal is a platform that provides information and analysis on various aspects of the Indian economy, such as inflation, growth, fiscal and monetary policy, banking and financial stability. The portal was launched by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), as part of its efforts to enhance transparency and communication with the public. The portal aims to foster economic literacy and awareness among various stakeholders, such as students, researchers, media and policymakers.

Q12. World Environment Day is observed on ____.

- A) 1 June
- B) 5 June
- C) 15 June
- D) 22 June

Answer: B

Explanation: The theme for World Environment Day on 5 June 2023 was #BeatPlasticPollution, a campaign that aimed to raise awareness and find solutions to the problem of plastic waste. Plastic is a material that does not decompose easily and can harm the environment and wildlife. The campaign encouraged people to reduce, reuse and recycle plastic and to choose alternatives whenever possible.

Q13. Recep Tayyip Erdogan was re-elected as President of ____.

- A) Kenya
- B) Thailand
- C) Sudan
- D) Turkey

Answer: D

Explanation: Recep Tayyip Erdogan has been re-elected as the President of Turkey for another five-year term. He secured a narrow victory over his main opponent, Kemal Kilicdaroglu, in the second round of voting. Erdogan has been in power since 2003, first as prime minister and then as president since 2014.

Q14. Who is the author of a book titled "Ringside"?

- A) Amitav Ghosh
- B) Vikram Seth
- C) Dr Vijay Darda
- D) Chetan Bhagat

Answer: C

Explanation: Dr Vijay Darda, the Editorial Board Chairman of Lokmat Media Group and a former MP has authored a book titled "Ringside" that chronicles his experiences and insights from his political career. The book was launched by Dr Shashi Tharoor, a Congress MP and a celebrated writer, who praised Darda's candid and engaging style of narration.

Q15. Telangana Formation Day is celebrated on June 2 every year. The state of Telangana was formed in which year?

- A) 2010
- B) 2012
- C) 2014
- D) 2016

Answer: C

Explanation: Telangana Formation Day is celebrated on June 2 every year, marking the day when the state of Telangana was formed in 2014. The Andhra Pradesh Reorganization Act 2014 bill was passed in the Parliament in February 2014 for the formation of the Telangana state. The bill was then passed by the President of India on March 1, 2014, and the state of Telangana was finally formed on June 2.

Q16. Which AIIMS has becomes the first AIIMS to receive the National Accreditation Board for Hospitals and Healthcare Providers (NABH) accreditation?

- A) AIIMS Delhi
- B) AIIMS Ranchi
- C) AIIMS Raipur
- D) AIIMS Nagpur

Answer: D

Explanation: AIIMS Nagpur has achieved a remarkable feat by becoming the first AIIMS in the country to receive the prestigious NABH accreditation. This accreditation is a testimony to the high quality of healthcare services provided by AIIMS Nagpur. The NABH accreditation is an internationally recognized benchmark for excellence in healthcare. It is a rare distinction that only a handful of private hospitals in Nagpur have attained.

Q17. The Prime Minister of India launched MISHTI to revive mangroves across the country. What is the full form of MISTHI?

- A) Mangrove Initiative for Sustainable Habitats and Tangible Incomes
- B) Mangrove Investment for Shoreline Habitats and Tangible Incomes
- C) Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Horticulture and Tangible Incomes
- D) Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats and Tangible Incomes

Answer: D

Explanation: Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated MISHTI, which stands for Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats and Tangible Incomes, and it will focus on enhancing the protection and management of the mangrove forests along the Indian coast. Mangroves are vital for biodiversity, climate resilience and livelihoods of coastal communities.

Q18. Which state government has launched the Fibre Optic Network project?

- A) Gujarat
- B) Karnataka
- C) Kerala
- D) Punjab

Answer: C

Explanation: The Kerala Fibre Optic Network (KFON) project was inaugurated by the Chief Minister of Kerala, Pinarayi Vijayan, at the Shankaranarayanan Thambi Hall of the State Legislative Assembly. The project is a landmark initiative to provide internet access to all citizens of the State at affordable rates. It aims to offer free internet to more than 20 lakh poor families as part of the government's vision of digital empowerment and social justice.

Q19. World Food Safety Day is celebrated on ____.

- A) 5 June
- B) 7 June
- C) 9 June
- D) 11 June

Answer: B

Explanation: Food safety is a vital issue that affects everyone, from producers to consumers. That is why World Food Safety Day, celebrated on 7 June every year, aims to raise awareness and promote action on food safety standards at all levels of the food chain. The theme for 2023 is

"Food Standards Save Lives", highlighting the role of international standards in ensuring the quality, safety and sustainability of food products.

Q20. Which Indian state advised women to apply for Shakti smart cards to avail the free travel in state-run buses?

- A) Kerala
- B) West Bengal
- C) Punjab
- D) Karnataka

Answer: D

Explanation: The Shakti smart card scheme is a new initiative by the Karnataka government to provide free travel for women in state-run buses. The scheme will benefit lakhs of women commuters across the state. To avail of the scheme, women need to apply for the Shakti smart card online or offline and show it to the bus conductor while boarding. The scheme aims to empower women and enhance their mobility and safety.

Q21. Who has won the French Open 2023 men's singles title?

- A) Novak Djokovic
- B) Rafael Nadal
- C) Roger Federer
- D) Carlos Alcaraz

Answer: A

Explanation: Serbian tennis player Novak Djokovic has claimed his 23rd Grand Slam title by winning the French Open 2023 men's singles final. He defeated Norway's Casper Ruud in three sets, 7-6 (1), 6-3, 7-5, at Roland Garros. Djokovic showed his dominance and resilience throughout the match, overcoming a tough opponent and a hostile crowd.

Q22. India and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) have signed a loan agreement worth USD 130 million to boost agricultural productivity in which state?

- A) Gujarat
- B) Punjab
- C) Haryana
- D) Himachal Pradesh

Answer: D

Explanation: The Government of India and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) for a \$130 million loan to support the development of horticulture in Himachal Pradesh. The loan will

help enhance the productivity and profitability of horticultural crops, such as fruits, vegetables and flowers, by improving irrigation infrastructure, farm management practices and market linkages.

Q23. Which of the following organisations has started the EVOLVE (Electric Vehicle Operations and Lending for a Vibrant Ecosystem) programme in collaboration with NITI Aayog to fund MSMEs in the EV space?

- A) National Green Tribunal
- B) Union Finance Ministry
- C) Union Ministry of Road Transport & Highways
- D) SIDBI

Answer: D

Explanation: The mission EVOLVE is a new initiative by the Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) to support the growth and development of the electric vehicle (EV) sector in India. The mission aims to provide financial and technical assistance to EV manufacturers, suppliers, service providers and end-users. The mission also seeks to create a vibrant ecosystem for EV adoption and innovation in the country.

Q24. Which of the following states has emerged as top achievers in Wind Energy?

- A) Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh
- B) Rajasthan, Gujarat and Tamil Nadu
- C) Karnataka, Rajasthan and Haryana
- D) Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Odisha

Answer: B

Explanation: India is a leader in wind energy, with three states standing out for their achievements. Rajasthan, Gujarat and Tamil Nadu have emerged as top performers in installing and utilizing wind power, according to the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy. The ministry organized an event in New Delhi on Global Wind Day to celebrate the success of wind energy and explore ways to further enhance its adoption across the country.

Q25. World Day to combat desertification and drought is observed every year on 17 June. What is the theme of 2023?

- A) Rising from drought together
- B) Land-degradation neutrality
- C) Don't let our future dry up
- D) Her Land, Her Rights

Answer: D

Explanation: World Day to combat desertification and drought is a global event that takes place

every year on 17 June. It aims to inform the public about the serious risks that desertification and drought pose to the environment, human health, and food security. The theme for 2023 is Her Land, Her Rights, which focuses on the role of women in land management and conservation. Women are often the most affected by land degradation, but also the most active agents of change.

Q26. Who won the Gandhi Peace Prize in 2021?

- A) NGO Pratham
- B) Gita Press Gorakhpur
- C) Clean India Mission
- D) Jal Shakti Ministry

Answer: B

Explanation: Gita Press, Gorakhpur, is the recipient of the Gandhi Peace Prize for 2021. The award honours the remarkable work of the press in promoting social, economic, and political change through peaceful and Gandhian means. Gita Press, Gorakhpur, has been publishing and distributing religious and spiritual literature since 1923, spreading the message of peace and harmony among people.

Q27. Indian Army is participating in multinational peacekeeping Joint Exercise Ex Khaan Quest 2023 in which country?

- A) Turkey
- B) Mongolia
- C) Iran
- D) Qatar

Answer: B

Explanation: The multinational peacekeeping Joint Exercise Ex Khaan Quest 2023 is underway in Mongolia, with the participation of the Indian Army. The exercise aims to enhance interoperability and cooperation among the participating nations.

Q28. Which city created a new Guinness World Record with the participation of more than 1.5 lakh people in the Yoga Day event?

- A) Delhi
- B) Surat
- C) Faridabad
- D) Patna

Answer: B

Explanation: On Yoga Day, Surat City in Gujarat achieved a new Guinness World Record for the biggest yoga session at a single venue with 1.53 lakh participants. The event was organised by the

Surat Municipal Corporation and various yoga organisations. The participants performed various yoga asanas and pranayamas for an hour under the guidance of trained instructors.

Q29. What is the rank of India in the Global Gender Gap Index 2023 released by the World Economic Forum (WEF)?

- A) 102
- B) 114
- C) 121
- D) 127

Answer: D

Explanation: The World Economic Forum (WEF) has released the Global Gender Gap Report, which measures the progress of 146 countries in closing the gap between women and men in four areas: economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, health and survival, and political empowerment. The report shows that India has improved its rank from 135 in 2022 to 127 in 2023, but still lags behind many other countries in gender equality. Iceland remains the top performer in the index, followed by Norway and Finland.

Q30. Which ministry launched the CHAMPIONS Portal?

- A) Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
- B) Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship
- C) Ministry of Commerce and Industry
- D) Ministry of Science and Technology

Answer: A

Explanation: CHAMPIONS 2.0 is a new portal launched by the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) to support the MSME sector in India. It offers a one-stop solution for the MSMEs to access various schemes, programs, resources and opportunities offered by the government and other stakeholders. The portal aims to empower MSMEs to overcome their challenges and grow their businesses.

Q 31. Which of the following organization has released the Global Competitiveness Index?

- A) World Bank
- B) Asian Development Bank
- C) International Development Bank
- D) International Institute for Management Development

Answer: D

Explanation: The report "Global Competitiveness Index" by the International Institute for Management Development (IMD) ranks 64 economies based on how well they create conditions for businesses to thrive, create jobs and improve welfare. The report considers various factors that influence the competitiveness of a country. The Index shows that Denmark, Ireland and Switzerland are the most competitive economies in the world. India improved its ranking by three positions and reached the 40th spot.

Q32. Consider the following statements about GI tags:

1. These are provided by Geographical Indications Registry, Delhi.
2. UP tops the list in GI-Tagged Products.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: D

Explanation: The GI Registry is an authority that grants Geographical Indication (GI) tags to products that have a specific geographical origin and possess qualities or a reputation that are due to that origin. The GI Registry is located in Chennai, Tamilnadu.

Tamilnadu is the state with the highest number of GI-tagged products in India, with 55 products. Uttar Pradesh is the second state with the most GI-tagged products.

Q33. Which tribunal was formed to resolve the water dispute between Karnataka and Goa over Kalasa-Banduri Project?

- A) Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal
- B) Krishna Water Disputes Tribunal
- C) Mahadayi Water Disputes Tribunal
- D) Narmada Water Disputes Tribunal

Answer: C

Explanation: The Kalasa-Banduri Project is a plan to divert water from the Mahadayi River to meet the drinking water needs of some districts in Karnataka. However, Goa, the lower riparian state, has opposed this project, claiming that it would affect its ecology and agriculture. To resolve this conflict, the central government set up the Mahadayi Water Disputes Tribunal in 2010.

Q34. Consider the following statements:

1. Ex Khaan Quest 2023 is a bilateral exercise between India and Mongolia.
2. In 2023, Indian Army was represented by a contingent from the LADAKH SCOUTS.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
- B) 2 only
- C) Both
- D) None of the above

Answer: D

Explanation: The exercise "Ex Khaan Quest 2023" is an annual event that aims to enhance the peacekeeping capabilities of the participating countries. The event is hosted by Mongolia and involves military contingents and observers from over 20 countries. The Indian Army has sent a contingent from the GARHWAL RIFLES to join the exercise.

Q35. Which of the following has published IS 18267: 2023 "Quality assurance for food Serving Utensils Made from Agri By-Products Specification"?

- (a) Union Finance Ministry
- (b) Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change of India
- (c) Bureau of Indian Standards
- (d) NITI Aayog

Answer: C

Explanation: A new standard IS 18267: 2023 has been published by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) for food serving utensils made from agri by-products. This standard aims to reduce plastic pollution and promote sustainability by providing clear and consistent quality requirements for manufacturers and consumers. The standard covers various aspects of the utensils, such as material, shape, size, weight, appearance, performance, safety and labelling.



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