



# WBCS GAZETTE

**March  
2023**



- ➔ Moai Statue
- ➔ Exercise Cobra Warrior
- ➔ Women's Premier League (WPL) 2023
- ➔ OSCARS 2023

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**MRINMOY MAJI**  
**RANK 45**



**ABHIK PATLA**  
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## Congratulation Toppers!

## WEST BENGAL

### Pathashree-Rastashree

- West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee inaugurated the flagship project named 'Pathashree-Rastashree' in Singur, WB.
- The aim is to strengthen road infrastructure and enhance connectivity to villages.
- The project was announced by state finance minister Shri Chandrima Bhattacharya while presenting the Budget in the West Bengal Legislative Assembly on February 15, 2023.
- Under the new scheme, around 12,000 km of roads will be developed or reconstructed in 29,475 villages of WB.
- Under the scheme, 8,767 roads have been approved which will benefit 22 districts of WB.

### Sasthipada Chattopadhyay Passed away

- Sasthipada Chattopadhyay, a well-known Bengali novelist and short story writer, died at the age of 82 in Howrah, West Bengal.
- In 2017, the Sahitya Akademi awarded him the Bal Sahitya Puraskar for his contribution to Bengali children's literature.
- In 2017, the West Bengal government awarded him the 'Bangla Akademi Award' for his contribution to children's literature.



### Kurmu Community

- Train services were affected in parts of West Bengal as a result of the Kurmi community's rail-blockade agitation.
- Kurmi is a non-elite tiller caste in India's lower Gangetic plain, particularly in the southern regions of Awadh, eastern Uttar Pradesh, and parts of Bihar.
- The Kurmis earned praise from Mughal and British administrations for their remarkable work ethic, superior tillage and manuring, and gender-neutral society.
- The Kurmi community is now categorised as Other Backward Classes in Odisha, West Bengal, and Jharkhand, with the Odisha government additionally recognising the community as Socially and Educationally Backward Classes.
- State Governments of Jharkhand and West Bengal have consistently suggested that this community be added to the ST list.

### Matua Maha Mela

- West Bengal hosted the Matua Dharma Maha Mela 2023 from March 19 to March 25.
- The All India Matua Mahasangha is in charge of organising the celebration, which is a much-anticipated occasion for the Matua community, a subset of lower-class AVARNA Hindus who fall under the Namasudra Scheduled Caste category.
- The Matua Dharma Maha Mela honours the customs and way of life of the community, which were established by Shree Shree Harichand Thakur and enhanced by Guruchand Thakur and Boro Ma.
- The celebrations feature a variety of cultural acts, including readings of poetry, music, and traditional dances. Attendees can also take part in religious rituals, such as praying to Shri Shri Harichand Thakur Ji and other spiritual figures.

### Matua Community

- West Bengal and Bangladesh both have sizable populations of the Matua community.
- The Matua sect was founded by Shree Shree Harichand Thakur in the nineteenth century.
- The lower-class AVARNA Hindus, especially those from the Namasudra Scheduled Caste, connected with the sect's teachings because they stressed the value of compassion, equality, and social justice.
- After Bangladesh was created their sizable population fled to India. Many people have not yet obtained Indian citizenship.

# NATIONAL

## Grievance Appellate Committee

- The Union Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology has launched the Grievance Appellate Committee (GAC) portal under the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Regulations, 2021.
- The Grievance Appellate Committee (GAC) platform will allow users who are unsatisfied with the processes followed by social media companies to handle their concerns regarding material removal requests to access the government-formed commission.
- The committee will include a chairperson and other members appointed by the central government.
- Anyone who believes they have been treated unfairly by a decision issued by a social media network grievance officer may file a complaint with the grievance appeal committee within 30 days of getting information from the grievance officer.

## National Youth Parliament Festival.

- The Speaker of Lok Sabha addressed the inaugural 4<sup>th</sup> session of the National Youth Parliament Festival (NYPF) on 2nd march 2023 in the Central Hall of Parliament, New Delhi.
- The National Youth Parliament Festival is organized to hear the voice of the youth. It is based on the idea given by the Prime Minister in his Mann Ki Baat Address in 2017.
- The theme of the 2023 National Youth Parliament Festival is "Ideas for a Better Tomorrow: India for the World".
- Youth Parliaments are conducted at three levels:
  - District Youth Parliament (DYP) will be conducted through virtual mode at the District level.
  - State Youth Parliament (SYP) will be conducted in virtual mode. The youth selected from the District Youth Parliament will participate at the State level in SYP.
  - National Youth Parliament (NYP): The youth selected from the State Youth Parliament will participate at the National level in NYP in New Delhi.
- The winners of earlier National Youth Parliament Festivals at the National level may not be eligible to take part in the 4th edition of National Youth Parliament Festivals 2023.

## Punchhi Commission

- The Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has decided to start the process of seeking the states' comments on the Punchhi Commission's report on Centre-state relations.
- In April 2007, the Indian government established a Commission on Centre-State Relations under the leadership of Justice Madan Mohan Punchhi, a former chief justice of India, to examine the new challenges in Centre-State relations while taking into account the changes that have occurred in India's polity and economy.
- The Commission examined and reviewed how the existing arrangements between the Union and States were functioning, as well as various court rulings regarding the powers, duties, and responsibilities in all areas, including legislative relations, administrative relations, the role of governors, emergency provisions, financial relations, economic and social planning, Panchayati Raj institutions, and sharing of resources, such as inter-state river water.
- The Commission presented its seven-volume report to the government in March 2010.

**CONGRATULATIONS MONOJIT!!!**

Our Mains Test Series Student  
has reached the sky

**Monojit Chowdhury**

RANK 2, WBCS 2020

You make us Proud. Best wishes for your future.



## National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR)

- The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) celebrated its **18th Foundation Day on 2nd March 2023**. The Union Minister for Women and Child Development and Minority Affairs, Smt. Smriti Zubin Irani was the Chief Guest of the event.
  - The Minister also launched the “Child Rights Champions World” a dedicated feature on NCPCR’s website on child rights literacy.
- NCPCR is a statutory body established under the Commission for Protection of Child Rights (CPCR) Act, 2005. Under the act, a Child is defined as a person in the 0 to 18 years age group.
- It is under the administrative control of the Ministry of Women and Child Development.
- It aims to ensure that all Laws, Policies, Programmes, and Administrative Mechanisms are in harmony with the Child Rights perspective as enshrined in the Constitution of India and also the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Composition: This commission has a chairperson and six members of which at least two should be women. All of them are appointed by the Central Government for 3 years.
- The salary and allowances payable to, and other terms and conditions of service of, the Chairperson and Members, shall be such as may be prescribed by the Central Government.

## Punjab to Curb Gun Culture

- The state government of Punjab has cancelled the 813 gun licenses across the state in a bid to curb the “gun culture” in the state.
- Following the murders of prominent individuals, the opposition has been pressuring the Punjab administration over "worsening" peace and order.
- The Punjab government issued an ordinance prohibiting all public displays of weapons and songs that glorify violence.
- In Punjab, it is now unlawful to carry or display a weapon at a religious facility, a marriage ceremony, or any other gathering. In the upcoming days, random inspections will be conducted in various locations.
- The state has previously taken several similar actions, including the latest step to suspend licences.

## Whip

- The Supreme Court said that the "whip" binds Members of a House, and if any MLAs within a political party that is part of a ruling coalition indicate they do not wish to support the alliance, the MLAs will be disqualified.
- The office of ‘whip’ is mentioned neither in the Indian Constitution nor in the Rules of the House nor a Parliamentary Statute. It is based on the conventions of the parliamentary government.
- Every political party, whether ruling or Opposition has its whip in the Parliament.
- He is appointed by the political party to serve as an assistant floor leader. He is charged with the responsibility of ensuring the attendance of his party members in large numbers and securing their support in favour of or against a particular issue.
- He regulates and monitors their behaviour in the Parliament. The members are supposed to follow the directives given by the whip. Otherwise, disciplinary action can be taken.

### Functions of Whip

- He maintains order among party representatives in the House.
- He is tasked with making sure that his party's members show up in big numbers and win their support for or opposition to a certain cause.
- He observes the indications of discontent among Parliamentarians and alerts the appropriate party leaders.
- He serves as the party's unifying force and is in charge of preserving the internal party structure in the Parliament.
- He is essential to the effective and efficient running of the business on the House floor.

## Foreign Contribution Regulation Act

- The Center for Policy Research's Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) licence has been suspended by the Union Government (CPR).
- The FCRA was enacted in 1976 to regulate foreign money into the country through independent organizations.
- The Foreign Contribution Regulation Act was amended by the Indian Parliament in 2010. To effectively regulate the foreign contribution by individuals or associations or companies.

**Anti-defection law**

- The Supreme Court in the political dispute between former Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray and incumbent Eknath Shinde declared that the anti-defection law remains in force even if a political party group breaks out and manages to gain control of a majority of the party.
- Defection by legislators occurs in many democracies. It can be argued that they can undermine the stability of the government, which is dependent on the support of the majority party's own elected legislators and/or a coalition of those elected to represent other parties.
- The anti-defection law aims to punish legislative members (MPs/MLAs) for changing political parties. The 52nd Amendment Act of 1985 added the 10th Schedule to the Constitution. This act is commonly referred to as the 'anti-defection law'.
- The 52nd Amendment Act provided for the disqualification of the members of Parliament and the state legislatures on the ground of defection from one political party to another. However, it also allowed mergers with another political party without inviting the penalty for defection.
- The 91st Amendment Act of 2003 made one change in the provisions of the 10th Schedule. As per the 1985 Act, a 'defection' by one-third of the elected members of a political party was considered a 'merger'. But the 91st Constitutional Amendment Act, 2003, amended this and now at least two-thirds of the members of a party have to be in favour of a "merger" to bypass the anti-defection act.
- Any question regarding disqualification arising out of defection is to be decided by the presiding officer of the House.

**Anti-Defection Law**

The anti-defection law came into being with the **inclusion of the Tenth Schedule in the Constitution in 1985, through the 52nd Amendment Act**

According to the law, if a member of Parliament or state legislature **gives up his membership of a political party or votes or abstains from a vote contrary to the directions of his party, he can be disqualified**

The 1985 Act allowed for one-third or more of the **elected members of a party to merge with another party without being disqualified**

Since an amendment in 2003, the **minimum number required for a merger is two-thirds of the elected members of a party**

The law has been criticised for impinging on the **rights of elected representatives to take a position different from their party's**

The law has not been very **effective in curbing defections**

**Appointments of Election Commissioner**

- A five-judge Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court held unanimously that the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and Election Commissioners must be chosen by a high-power committee consisting of the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, and the Chief Justice of India (ECs).
- Currently, the central government has the authority to choose members of the Election Commission. The Supreme Court has now granted the judiciary and the opposition a voice in the matter, stating that the CEC and ECs must be selected by the President on the recommendation of a committee made up of the prime minister, the leader of the opposition in the Lok Sabha, and the Chief Justice of India.
- The Election Commission of India is a permanent constitutional body under Article 324 of the Indian constitution.
- The Commission supervises the conduct of elections to the Parliament and Legislature of every State and elections to the offices of the President and Vice-President of India.
- It consists of the Chief Election Commissioner and two Election Commissioners. Originally, there was only Chief Election Commissioner, there were no Election Commissioners.



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SUBRATA DAS  
**RANK 166**

**Congratulations Toppers!**

Our Super Achievers in  
**WBCS 2020**

### VAIBHAV Fellowship scheme

- On the occasion of National **Science Day (28th February)**, the Union Minister of State Science & Technology launched the VAIBHAV Fellowship scheme for the Indian Diaspora abroad.
- The fellowship offers NRI researchers an opportunity to work for a minimum of one month to a maximum of two months a year with a research institution or an academic institution in India.
- The duration of the fellowship is three years with the government offering the researchers an amount of up to Rs 37 lakh for the entire period.
- The Fellowship aims to improve the research ecosystem of India's higher educational institutions by facilitating academic and research collaborations with the best institutions in the world through the mobility of researchers from overseas institutions to India.
- Researchers from institutions featuring in the top 500 QS World University Rankings will be eligible for the fellowship.
- Due to this Scheme best of Diaspora minds will collaborate with domestic Minds to deliver world-class projects and products.

### Sisupalgarh

- The Archaeological Department of the Government of India have recently excavated a site called "Sisupalgarh" near Bhubaneswar in Orissa and unearthed the remains of a township which flourished between 300 B.C. and the 4th century A.D.
- Sisupalgarh is the only fortified site in India having eight gateways. The water management system of the city was unique.

### Hallmark Unique Identification (HUID) number

- From April 1, the sale of gold jewellery will not be allowed without a Hallmark Unique Identification (HUID) number.
- The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), which operates gold and silver hallmarking schemes in India, defines hallmarking as the "accurate determination and official recording of the proportionate content of precious metal in precious metal articles." So, it is a "guarantee of purity or fineness" of precious metal articles.
- Hallmarking in India is available for the jewellery of only two metals – gold and silver.
- A HUID number is a six-digit alphanumeric code. It is given to every piece of jewellery at the time of hallmarking and is a unique identifier for each gold item.
- The jewellery is stamped with the unique number manually at the Assaying & Hallmarking centre.



### Right to Health Bill

- The **Rajasthan** Assembly's recently completed budget session restarted discussion about the Right to Health Bill.
- If the bill is approved, hospitals, clinics, and laboratories that are both publicly and privately operated must offer free and reasonably priced medical services.
- The Bill is opposed by private hospital doctors who claim it was quickly drafted, ignores practical considerations, and could tighten standards in an industry that is already overly regulated.
- The Right to Healthcare Bill, 2022 was introduced to the State Legislature by the Rajasthan State government in September 2022. Patients and healthcare professionals are given rights under the Bill, which also obliges the government to uphold these legal rights and requires the establishment of grievance redressal systems.
- Residents of Rajasthan will be entitled to free examinations, medications, diagnostics, emergency transport, and care at all public health facilities, as well as reasonably priced surgeries. The Bill views healthcare as a public good rather than as a means of profit.
- 20 rights are outlined in clause 3 of the bill, including the right to informed consent, the right to information (in the form of medical records and documentation) regarding diagnosis and treatment, and the right to treatment free from caste, class, age, gender, and other discrimination.
- The obligation for providing adequate medical services is transferred to the government under Section 4 of the Bill. The government is "obligated" to allocate funding, establish institutions, and create grievance redressal procedures.



- The government must create a human resource policy for the health sector under section 4, which calls for a fair distribution of physicians, nurses, and other healthcare professionals throughout all levels of the system.

### Deepak Verma Committee

- The Supreme Court has expanded the authority and jurisdiction of a powerful committee headed by its former judge, Justice Deepak Verma, to carry out the necessary investigations and gather information regarding the **import, transfer, procurement, rescue, and rehabilitation of wild animals** throughout India, including those kept in captivity.
  - Earlier only Tripura and Gujarat were within the committee's jurisdiction.
- The Court said that the Chief Wildlife Wardens of the States would now be added to the committee as members. All current and future complaints regarding the matter would be investigated by the committee.
- The Committee may also consider requests for approval, disagreements, or complaints relating to the transfer or import of wild animals into India, the acquisition of those animals by any rescue or rehabilitation facility, or the welfare of those animals by zoos, with the assistance and cooperation of all departments and authorities throughout India.
- The committee will be free to suggest transferring ownership of captive animals or seized wild animals to any willing rescue centre or zoo for their urgent welfare, treatment, and rehabilitation.

### ATL Sarthi

- A comprehensive self-monitoring framework 'ATL Sarthi' was introduced by the NITI Aayog's Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) to support the Atal Tinkering Labs (ATL).
- **Aim:** To improve the effectiveness of ATLS and achieve the desired goals, ATL Sarthi was launched.
- **Objectives:** To encourage young minds' curiosity, creativity, and imagination as well as to inculcate skills like a design-thinking mindset, computational thinking, adaptive learning, physical computing, etc.,
- It seeks to offer a framework for monitoring and evaluating progress towards bettering ATL performance.
- In the first phase, AIM has provided funding for 10,000 schools to open Atal Tinkering Laboratories (ATLS).

### Poshan Pakhwada

- The 5th Poshan Pakhwada was observed by the Ministry of Women and Child Development from March 20 to April 3, 2023, with several events taking place across the country
- **Poshan Pakhwada is observed for 15 days in March.** Similar to this, September is recognised nationwide as Rashtriya Poshan Maah.
- All States/UTs, frontline employees, relevant Ministries, as well as the general people, have so far shown a great deal of excitement and participation in the Poshan Maah and Pakhwada celebrations.
- "Nutrition for All: Together Towards a Healthy India" is the theme of the Poshan Pakhwada 2023.
- This year, Poshan Pakhwada will concentrate on promoting "Shree Anna: the mother of all grains", as a useful tool to combat malnutrition, in light of the declaration of 2023 as the International Year of Millets.
- The following major themes will be highlighted during the Poshan Pakhwada activities:
  - Promoting and popularising Shree Anna and millets for nutritional well-being by setting up campaigns to link millet-based foods with supplemental nutrition, home visits, diet consultation camps, etc.
  - Swasth Balak Spardha: Celebrate and honour the "Swasth Balak" or Healthy Child per established standards by encouraging a healthy spirit of competition for good nutrition, good health, and well-being.
  - Promote Saksham Anganwadis: Campaigns will be run to raise awareness and promote Saksham Anganwadis as centres for better nutrition delivery and early childhood care and education, with updated infrastructure and services.

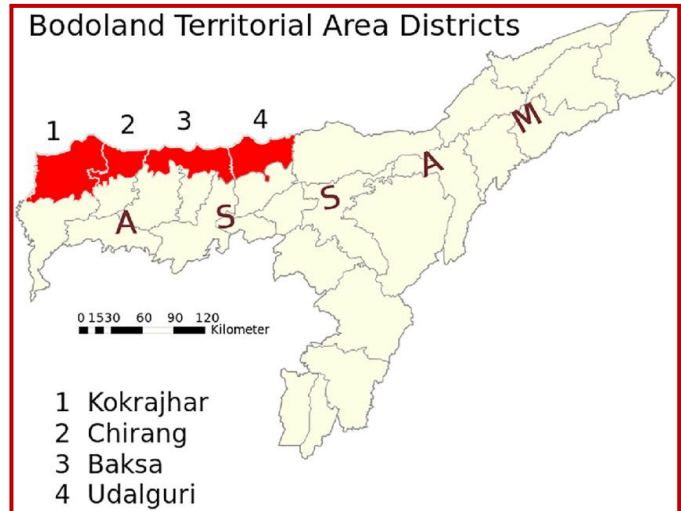
### Vedic Heritage Portal

- Union Home Minister said the government was securing the knowledge of India's ancient scriptures and manuscripts for the future through technology.
- The portal has been created by the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA). The IGNCA **comes under of Ministry of Culture.**
- The portal is a one-stop solution for common users and researchers seeking any information regarding Vedic heritage.
- It gives detailed information about oral traditions, a textual traditions in form of published books/manuscripts, or implements
- The audio-visual recording of four Vedas has been uploaded on the Vedic Heritage portal.

- This portal has over 18 thousand mantras of the four Vedas with a duration of over 550 hours.

### **Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC)**

- The Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) of Assam is to start its **Mission Happiness programme throughout the Bodoland Territorial Area (BTR).**
- The Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) was created under the 6th Schedule of the Indian Constitution following the Memorandum of Settlement between the Bodoland Liberation Tiger Force (BLTF), the Government of India, and the Government of Assam.
- It is an autonomous region within Assam. It consists of four districts (Kokrajhar, Chirang, Baksa, and Udalguri) that are situated by the foothills of Bhutan and Arunachal Pradesh on the north bank of the Brahmaputra river.
- The BTC is made up of 40 elected members and an additional six that the Assam Governor appoints.
- The Bodoland Territorial Council's executive and legislative authority derives from the provisions of the Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution as well as the 2003 and 2020 Bodoland Peace Agreements.
- The Bodoland Territorial Council has the authority to levy taxes, fees, and tolls on a variety of items, including land, buildings, animals, vehicles, boats, goods entering the region, transportation by ferry or bridge, sanitation, employment, and income, as well as general taxes for the upkeep of roads and schools.
- According to Article 244, the administration of the tribal areas in the four northeastern states of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, and Mizoram is covered by the sixth schedule of the Indian Constitution.
- These Autonomous Councils have been given extensive civil and criminal judicial powers, including the ability to set up village courts, among other things. The relevant High Court has jurisdiction over these councils.



### **Hike in wage rates under MNREGS**

- The Centre has notified a hike in wage rates under its rural job guarantee programme, the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MNREGS), for the 2023-24 financial year.
- Haryana will get the highest daily wage at Rs 357 per day and Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh the lowest at Rs 221.

### **Karnataka abolished the religious quota**

- The Karnataka government has abolished the 4% Muslim reservation in the Other Backward Classes (OBC) category and divided it 4% equally between the two major communities in the state, the Veerashaiva Lingayats and the Vokkaligas, at 2% each.
- The 4% reservation granted to Muslims under Category 2B was abolished by the Cabinet along with their exclusion from the OBC group.
  - Vokkaligas and Veerashaiva Lingayats have received an equal share of this.
- Following the adjustment, the reserve quantum for Vokkaligas and other members of the group increased from 4% to 6% and for Veerashaiva Lingayats and other members of the group from 5% to 7%.
- The Cabinet also suggested internal reservation for the 101 SCs (with this 17% reservation given to SCs in Karnataka). Internal reservations were based on the recommendation made by the A. J. Sadashiva Commission.
- This change has to be approved by the Union Government.

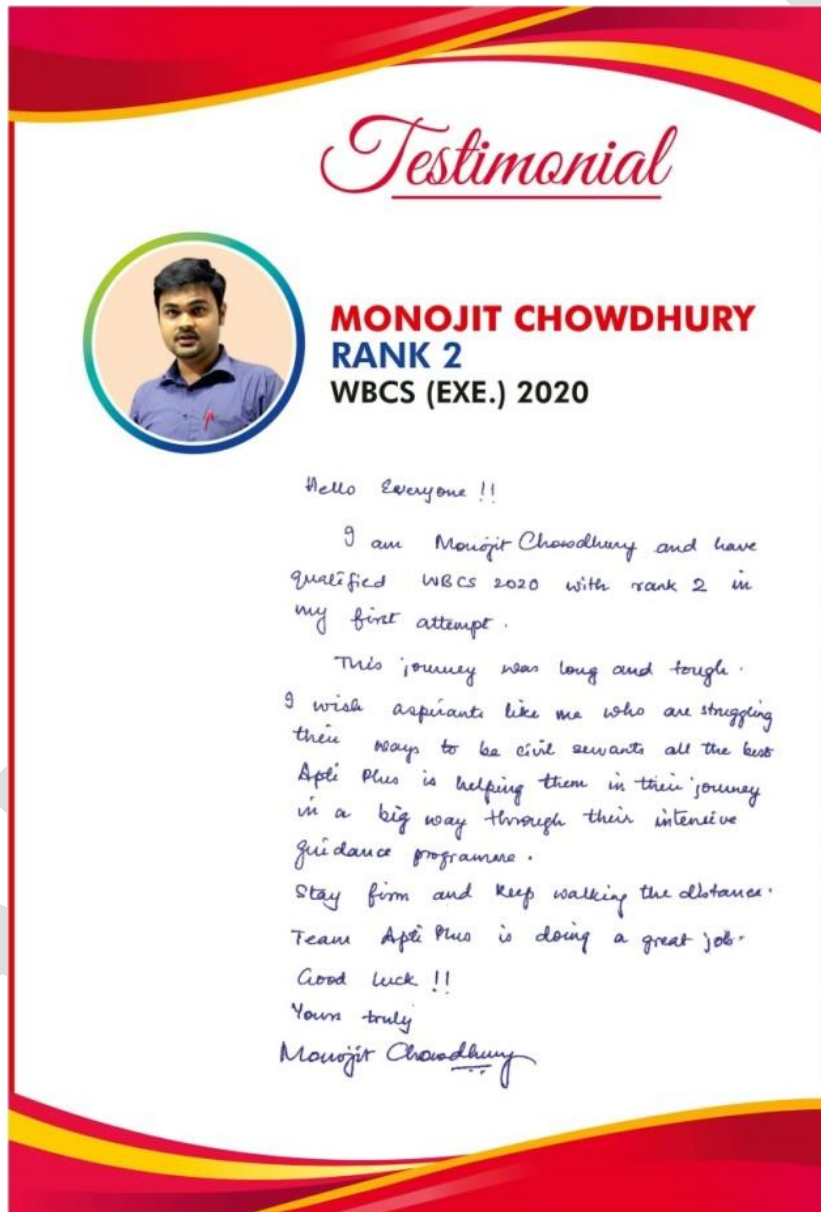
### **Foundational Literacy and Numeracy Assessment Test (FLNAT)**

- On March 19, 2023, the first Foundational Reading and Numeracy Assessment Test were held. Participants range in age from 15 years old to over 80 years old.
- The FLNAT part of the New India Literacy Plan was held on March 19, 2023, in ten States and UTs of the nation to evaluate the fundamental reading, writing, and numeracy abilities of the neo-literates.
- Youth and college students participated as volunteer instructors to plan teaching and learning activities.
- More than 22.70 lakh students took the Foundational Literacy and Numeracy Assessment Test (FLNAT) to pass and be deemed literate.


- Madhya Pradesh saw the most number of students (9, 25,854).
- In cooperation with NIOS, Foundational Reading and Numeracy Assessment Tests will be administered twice a year to certify learners.

### Kangra Tea

- Himachal Pradesh's Kangra Tea got a European Union Geographical Indication Tag (GI tag).
- The tag will help Kangra tea to get an opportunity to enter the European market. Kangra tea received the Indian GI tag in 2005.
- 'Kangra tea' is a type of tea derived from the leaves, buds and tender stems of the Camellia sinensis species as cultivated in the Kangra valley of Himachal Pradesh.



*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

# INTERNATIONAL

## Moai Statue

- On the tiny, remote island in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, archaeologists have discovered moai statue. The enormous stone figure was hidden beneath a dry lake bed.
- Moai are monolithic human figures carved by the Rapa Nui people on Easter Island between the years 1250 and 1500.
- Moai are carved from volcanic tuff (solidified ash). The average height of the moai is about 4 m, with the average width at the base around 1.6 m. These massive creations usually weigh around 12.5 tonnes each.
- Almost all moai have overly large heads, which comprise three-eighths the size of the whole statue - which has no legs.
- Easter Island is an island and special territory of Chile. It is located in the southeastern Pacific Ocean. It is a volcanic high island. It is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



## Borneo

- Indonesia is moving its capital from Jakarta to Borneo.
- Jakarta is home to about 10 million people and three times that number in the greater metropolitan area. It has been described as the world's most rapidly sinking city, and at the current rate, it is estimated that one-third of the city could be submerged by 2050.
  - The main cause is uncontrolled ground water extraction, but it has been exacerbated by the rising Java Sea due to climate change.
  - Its air and groundwater are heavily polluted, it floods regularly and its streets are so clogged that it's estimated congestion costs the economy \$4.5 billion a year.



## World Bank's index of working women

- In the World Bank's index of working women, India gets a score of 74.4.
- India's score on a World Bank index on the life cycle of a working woman dropped to 74.4 out of a possible 100 due to rules influencing working women's income and pensions that do not guarantee equality with Indian males.
- India outperformed the South Asian region's average score of 63.7 but fell short of Nepal, which achieved the best score in the area (80.6).
- Only 14 of the 190 countries have received a score of 100 out of 100; Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Latvia, Luxemburg, The Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, and Sweden.
- India remains behind other countries in terms of legislation governing women's wages, pensions, and ability to work after having children, barriers to women beginning and running their businesses, and differences in property and inheritance between men and women.
- The participation of women in the workforce in India has remained low. In 2019, 21% of women were either working or looking for work, compared to 32% in 2005.



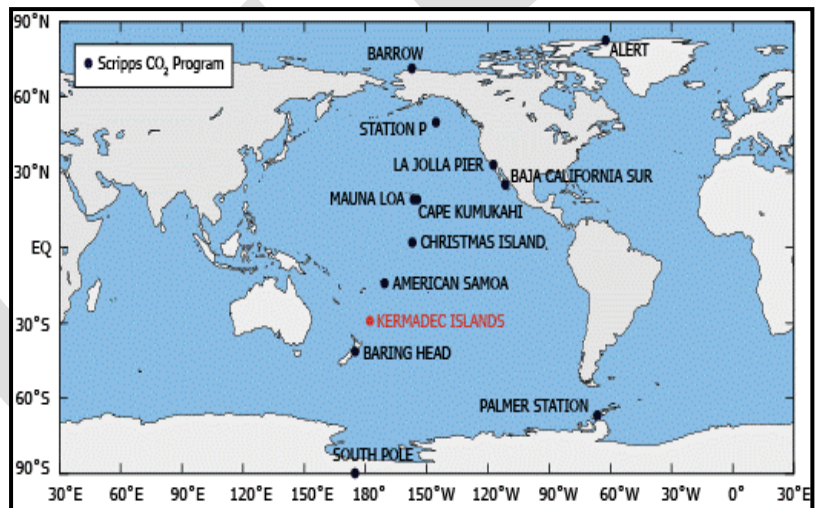
- India's female labour force participation (FLFP) rate is the lowest among the BRICS countries and is also lower than some of its neighbours in South Asia such as Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.

### International Criminal Court

- The International Criminal Court recently issued a warrant for arrest against Russian President Vladimir Putin. The reason is his alleged involvement in the abduction of children from Ukraine.
- It was created two decades ago as a standing body under the Rome Statute of 1998. The Rome Statute entered into force in 2002
- Many democracies have joined the ICC, including close US allies like Britain. But the US has not joined. Russia is also not a member
- It is an independent international organization and is not part of the UN system
- It is the first permanent treaty-based court established to help end impunity for the most serious crimes of concern to the international community.
- Role: To investigate war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity
- Location: The court is based in The Hague, Netherlands.
- The court does not have the power to arrest sitting heads of state or bring them to trial. It must rely on other leaders and governments to act as her sheriffs around the world.

### Kermadec Islands

- An earthquake of magnitude 6.9 struck the Kermadec Islands region in New Zealand.
- The Kermadec Islands are a subtropical island arc in the South Pacific Ocean 800–1,000 km northeast of New Zealand's North Island, and a similar distance southwest of Tonga.
- The islands are part of New Zealand.



### Raisina Security Dialogue

- India hosted the second conference of intelligence and security chiefs and top officials from around the world, called the Raisina Security Dialogue, on March 1 which saw participation from over 26 countries.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi and National Security Adviser Ajit Doval addressed the conference.
- The security conference is organised by the country's external intelligence agency, the Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW) and the National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS) that reports to Mr Doval.
- The conference was held for the first time in April 2022, a day before the start of Raisina Dialogue, India's flagship conference on "geopolitics and geo-strategy" organised by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) in collaboration with Observer Research Foundation (ORF).
- The conference comes a year after the war in Ukraine that is still ongoing and the global attention fixed on it, while India has been flagging other global issues including Afghanistan.

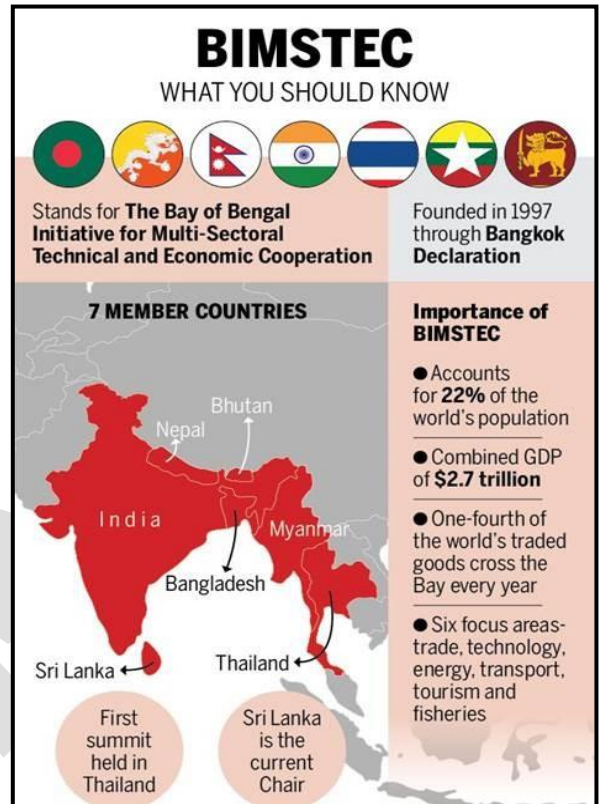
### QS Global University Rankings

- In the QS Global University Rankings by Subject, 44 Indian courses are ranked among the top 100.
- India has improved In the Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University Rankings by Subject, with 44 courses provided in the nation's colleges and universities that are listed in the top 100 worldwide in their respective subject areas.
- According to the Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) Global University Rankings, 355 of the programmes (including 44 in the top 100) offered by Indian universities made it to the top 100. There were 299 entries in the last round, including 35 in the top 100.
- The rankings cover 54 academic subjects, and Indian universities perform well in the areas of computer science, chemistry, biology, business studies, and physics.
- Some of the programmes that appeared in the QS World University Rankings 2023 by subject include the sociology programme at JNU, which came in at number 68, and the mathematics programme at IIT Bombay, which came in at number 92.

- According to the QS, India produced 1.3 million academic articles between 2017 and 2022, ranking fourth internationally behind China (4.5 million), the United States (4.4 million), and the United Kingdom (1.4 million).
- 44% of the 355 programmes offered by Indian universities are from the 11 designated Institutions of Eminence (IoE).

### BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting

- Minister of State for External Affairs participated in the 19th BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting virtually.
- The meeting was hosted by Chair Thailand.
- During the meeting, the Ministers approved several documents including rules of Procedure for Core BIMSTEC Mechanisms, Sectoral BIMSTEC Mechanisms and BIMSTEC's External Relations for submission to the 6th BIMSTEC Summit.
- The meeting also approved the draft Host Country Agreement between India and the BIMSTEC Secretariat for establishing BIMSTEC Centre for Weather and Climate in India.
- The Meeting also approved the Terms of Reference for an Eminent Person's Group on the Future Directions of BIMSTEC.
- The Terms of Reference were finalized under the special scheme for institution building announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the 5th BIMSTEC Summit in Colombo.
- Besides BIMSTEC Bangkok Vision 2030 was also approved and will be launched at the 6th BIMSTEC Summit.
- The Meeting also gave its nod to the Administrative and Disciplinary Rules of the Secretariat and amended Financial Rules and Regulations of the BIMSTEC Secretariat. It will enable expenditure by the Secretariat throughout the financial year with an approved Budget.



### Critical Minerals Investment Partnership

- India and Australia have reached a major milestone in working towards investment in critical minerals projects to develop supply chains between the two countries.
- The Union Minister for Coal, Mines and Parliamentary Affairs and Minister for Resources and Northern Australia held bilateral talks and announced the Partnership has identified five target projects (two lithium and three cobalt) on which to undertake detailed due diligence
- Ministers from the two countries have also agreed to deepen cooperation and extend their existing commitments to the India- Australia Critical Minerals Investment Partnership.
- Investments under the Partnership will seek to build new supply chains underpinned by critical minerals processed in Australia, which will help India's plans to lower emissions from its electricity network and become a global manufacturing hub, including for electric vehicles.
- Australia produces almost half of the world's lithium, is the second-largest producer of cobalt and is the fourth-largest producer of rare earth.
- Australia confirmed that it would "commit A\$5.8 million to the three-year India-Australia Critical Minerals Investment Partnership".

### Global Terrorism Index

- Afghanistan is the country most affected by terrorism for the fourth year in a row, despite assaults and deaths decreasing by 75% and 58%, respectively, according to the tenth Global Terrorism Index (GTI) study.
- India rated 13th on the index, a small improvement over the previous year.
- The Institute for Economics and Peace publishes the World Terrorism Index each year.
- The Global Terrorism Index rates 163 nations based on four variables that are weighted over five years. These four parameters are the number of terrorist occurrences per year, the number of terrorist fatalities per year, the number of terrorist injuries per year, and the overall property damage inflicted by terrorism per year.

## Bhutan

- Bhutan become the seventh nation to graduate from the United Nations' (UN) list of Least Developed Countries (LDC.)
- Least Developed Countries (LDC) are developing countries listed by the UN that exhibit the lowest indicators of socioeconomic development.
- The concept first originated in the late 1960s and was codified under UN resolution 2768 passed in November 1971.
- According to the UN, an LDC is defined as "a country that exhibits the lowest indicators of socioeconomic development, with low levels of income, human capital and economic diversification, high levels of economic vulnerability, and a population that is disproportionately reliant on agriculture, natural resources, and primary commodities."

## World Happiness Report 2023

- India ranked 125th in the Sustainable Development Solutions Network's World Happiness Report, which ranks the level of happiness in more than 150 countries worldwide.
- World Happiness Day is celebrated on March 20; to mark the occasion, the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network released the World Happiness Report.
- Many standards, including both domestic and foreign factors, are used in the reports to quantify overall happiness. The study measures peoples' levels of happiness based on their replies to questions on their current levels of life satisfaction from a national survey sample of people.
- Despite progress, India still has a very low position in the survey, and several of its smaller neighbours are placed higher.
- The rankings are based on factors such as; GDP per capita, social support, low levels of corruption, compassion in a community where people watch out for one another, and the freedom to make important life decisions.
- **Key Highlights of the Report**
  - COVID-19 and other key problems had a considerable impact on the triannual review of 2020–2022 that became the 2023 World Happiness Report.
  - Finland was ranked first for the sixth year in a row, followed by Denmark, Iceland, Israel, and the Netherlands.
  - Afghanistan, which is governed by the Taliban, came in last place and has the lowest levels of happiness. Lebanon, Zimbabwe, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and other places are also near the bottom of the list.
  - India's ranking has improved from 136 (in 2022) to 125 (in 2023), however, it is still lower than its neighbours Bangladesh, Nepal, and China.
  - India has consistently placed low in the index while having the fastest-growing economy in the world, and some have even questioned how It could place lower than nations that are experiencing crises.
  - Russia and Ukraine have been at war for more than a year, but when it comes to happiness, the two nations – 70th-ranked Russia and 92nd-ranked Ukraine – are ranked higher than India.
  - The report claims that between 2020 and 2021, compassion increased in both nations. In 2022, compassion increased significantly in Ukraine but decreased in Russia.



## Australia-India education qualification recognition mechanism

- The announcement of the "Australia-India education qualification recognition mechanism" was made by Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese. Also, he introduced the new "Maitri" scholarship, which will allow Indian students to study in Australia for up to 4 years.
- A "system for the recognition of educational qualifications between Australia and India" was announced by the Australian Prime Minister. He added that Deakin University, located in Geelong, will be the first foreign institution to establish a branch campus in India.
- According to the new mechanism, degrees awarded in Australia will now be recognised in India, and vice versa.

- PM Albanese stated that this new mechanism ensures that whether you are an Indian student studying in Australia or have studied there, your hard-earned degree will be recognised when you return home. He further said that your Indian certificate would be recognised in Australia.
- This agreement is expected to make it easier for Indians to go to Australia for both education and work and vice-versa.
- At Present, this mechanism will not apply to professional qualifications. Engineering, medical, and legal graduates' professional registrations will continue to fall outside the scope of this agreement.

**A. 'Maitri' Scholarship**

- Maitri scholarship was announced for Indian students studying in Australia. It will provide financial assistance to Indian students in Australia for four years.
- It is a part of the wider Maitri (friendship) programme that seeks to boost cultural, educational and community ties between Australia and India.
- The \$ 11.2 million Maitri Scholarships Program will attract and support high-achieving Indian students to study at Australian universities.

**B. Foreign university in India**

- Australian Prime Minister announced that the Deakin University of Australia will open its independent campus in Gujarat's GIFT City, making it the first foreign institution to enter India.
- In the QS World University Rankings, Deakin is ranked 266th and is one of the top 50 young universities in the world.
- According to the Times Higher Education World Rankings, the university is ranked between 250 and 300.

**Electoral Democracy Index 2023**

- According to the V-dem Democracy report 2023, India ranks 108th in the Electoral Democracy Index. India's ranking dipped from the 100th position in 2022 to 108th this year.
- Denmark ranked first with the highest comprehensive score of 0.89 in the LDI, followed by Sweden, Norway, Switzerland, and Estonia.
- The US ranked 23 in the LDI while Canada and the UK occupied the 24th and 20th spots, respectively.
- The Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) report is based on the global dataset on democracy with over 31 million data points for 202 countries from 1789 to 2022.

**World's Greatest Places of 2023**

- Mayurbhanj and Ladakh in India, selected for their endangered tigers and old temples, as well as their adventures and food, are two of the 50 sites featured in TIME Magazine's selection of the World's Best Places in 2023.
- The Mayurbhanj area of Odisha and the Union Territory of Ladakh both made TIME Magazine's list of the "World's Best Places of 2023."
- Tampa, Florida was ranked first.

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<b>MONOJIT CHOWDHURY</b>	<b>CHANDAN SARA</b>	<b>DEBNATH MAHATA</b>	<b>AMIT TAMANG</b>
<b>RANK 2</b>	<b>RANK 101</b>	<b>RANK 111</b>	<b>RANK 115</b>
	<b>JAGANNATH BISWAS</b>	<b>SUBRATA DAS</b>	
	<b>RANK 161</b>	<b>RANK 166</b>	



# ECONOMICS

## Pradhan Mantri-Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission (PM-ABHIM)

- The World Bank is lending up to \$1 billion to help India with preparedness for future pandemics as well as to strengthen its health infrastructure.
  - Through this financing, the bank will support India's flagship Pradhan Mantri-Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission (PM-ABHIM), launched in October 2021, to improve the public healthcare infrastructure across the country.
- In the Budget speech of FY 21-22, the 'Prime Minister Atmanirbhar Swasth Bharat Yojana' (PMASBY) scheme was renamed as PM - Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission (PM-ABHIM).
- The measures under the scheme focus on developing capacities of health systems and institutions across the continuum of care at all levels viz. primary, secondary and tertiary and on preparing health systems in responding effectively to current and future pandemics/disasters.
- The Mission targets to build an IT-enabled disease surveillance system by developing a network of surveillance laboratories at block, district, regional and national levels.
- It also focuses on strengthening health units at the Points of Entry, for effectively detecting, investigating, preventing, and combating Public Health Emergencies and Disease Outbreaks.

## MSME Competitive (LEAN) Scheme

- The Union Minister for MSME (Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises) launched the MSME Competitive (LEAN) Scheme.
- According to the Minister, LEAN aims to give India's MSMEs a road map to global competitiveness and has the potential to grow into a national movement. He mentioned that LEAN would work to transform manufacturing into top producers in addition to attempting to increase quality, productivity, and performance.
- MSME Competitive (LEAN) Scheme is an extensive effort to raise MSMEs' understanding of LEAN Manufacturing techniques, motivate and reward them for achieving LEAN levels, and inspire them to become MSME Champions.
- Objective: The primary objective of the Lean Manufacturing Competitiveness Scheme (LMCS) is to increase manufacturing competitiveness in the MSME Sector. To find and get rid of waste and streamline a system, lean manufacturing uses lean techniques.
- As part of the programme, MSMEs will adopt LEAN manufacturing tools such as 5S, Kaizen, KANBAN, Visual Workplace, Poka Yoka, etc. under the skilful direction of trained and competent LEAN Consultants to achieve LEAN levels such as Basic, Intermediate, and Advanced.
  - By adopting a LEAN approach, MSMEs can significantly lower waste, boost productivity, enhance quality, work safely, grow their markets, and eventually become competitive and profitable.
- Under the scheme, Government would cover 90% of implementation costs for coaching and consulting fees to support MSMEs For MSMEs located in the Northeast, owned by Women/SC/ST, and a part of SFURTI clusters, an additional 5% contribution will be made.
- Lean manufacturing refers to a set of principles that lean thinkers utilise to reduce waste through kaizen and increase production, quality, and lead time.

## PM-MITRA

- The Government of India announced the sites for setting up of 7 PM Mega Integrated Textile Regions and Apparel (PM MITRA) Parks for the Textile industry. The Parks will come up in Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra.
- In 2021, the Ministry of Textiles (MoT) launched PM Mega Integrated Textile Regions and Apparel Parks (MITRAs) Scheme to strengthen the Indian textile industry by way of enabling the scale of operations, reduce logistics costs by housing the entire value chain at one location, attracting investment, generate employment and augment export potential.
- PM MITRA is inspired by the 5F vision of the Prime Minister. The '5F' Formula encompasses - Farm to fibre; fibre to factory; factory to fashion; fashion to foreign.
- It aspires to fulfil the vision of building an Aatmanirbhar Bharat and to position India strongly on the Global textiles map.

- PM MITRA Parks offer an opportunity to create an integrated textiles value chain right from spinning, weaving, processing/dyeing and printing to garment manufacturing at 1 location.
- These parks are envisaged to be located at sites which have inherent strengths for the textile industry to flourish and have the necessary linkages to succeed.
- The scheme envisages leveraging the Public Private Partnership model for fast-paced implementation in a time-bound manner.
- PM MITRA Parks are a major step forward in realising the Government's vision of making India a global hub for textile manufacturing and exports. It is expected that these parks will enhance the competitiveness of the textiles industry by helping it achieve economies of scale as well as attract global players to manufacture in India.

### Dearness Allowance

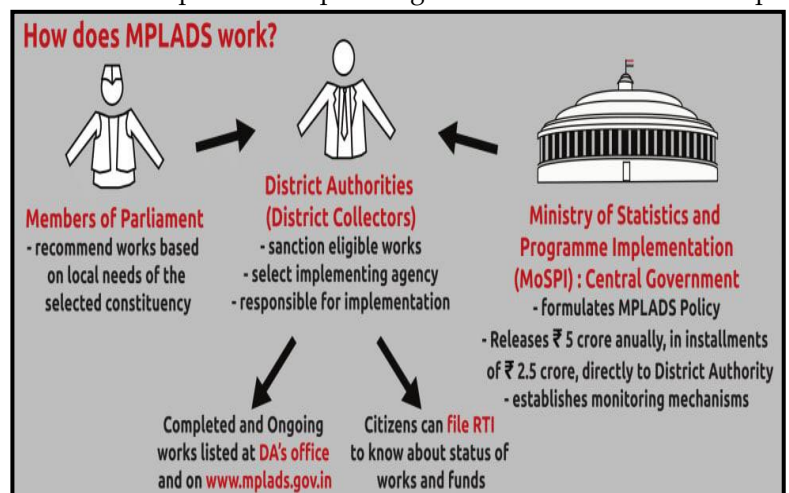
- The Union Cabinet has decided to increase the Dearness Allowance by four per cent to 42% for central government employees and pensioners.
- The Dearness Allowance (DA) is a calculation of inflation and allowance paid to government employees and pensioners in India, Bangladesh and Pakistan.
- Dearness Allowance is calculated as a percentage of an Indian citizen's basic salary to mitigate the impact of inflation on people.
- The DA for the central government employees is calculated based on the latest Consumer Price Index for Industrial Workers (CPI-IW). The Labour Bureau, a wing of the Labour Ministry, publishes the CPI-IW data every month.
- There is a set formula to calculate the Dearness Allowance of central government employees and pensioners.

### Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Vikas Yojna

- Under the Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Vikas Yojna (PMJVM) Government is providing Rs 15 lakh per Van Dhan Vikas Kendra (VDVK) to encourage livelihood activities of tribal people across the country.
- The Van Dhan Vikas Program is an initiative of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs. It aims to give tribal people a means of livelihood by using the Van Dhan forest's resources.
- It largely falls under the purview of the Minimum Support Price (MSP) and the Creation of a Value Chain System for Selling Minor Forest Products (MFP).
- The programme makes an effort to modernise the traditional knowledge and skill sets of tribe members at each level and transform them into sustainable economic activity.
- Under the Van Dhan Scheme, TRIFED will assist in the development of MFP-led multi-purpose Van Dhan Vikas Kendras in the tribal areas. These centres will have a collection of 10 SHGs that each house 30 indigenous MFP gatherers.
- Each Kendra would act as a central location for shared resources for buying and enhancing locally available MFPS and skill-based handicrafts. TRIFED provides technical support as well as instruction.
- The Van Dhan Vikas Program was created especially for tribal people. Each Van Dhan Vikas Kendra consists of 15 tribal Self Help Groups serving up to 300 beneficiaries.

### MPLAD Scheme

- The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation has published updated guidelines to broaden the scope of the Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS) Scheme.
- According to the Revised Guidelines, Members of Parliament (MPs) now have more freedom to select the projects they want to pursue through the MPLAD Program, as long as such projects result in the production of long-lasting public assets that benefit society as a whole.
  - The MPs will not have to wait for the Ministry to release the funds before suggesting new projects as they would be given yearly drawing limitations at the start of each fiscal year, subject to certain requirements.



- All stakeholders involved in the fund flow process, including the district authorities, the Central and State Government agencies, and the MPs, will be able to track the status of funds and do work in real-time due to an IT platform that will be used for the process.
- MPLADS is an ongoing Central Sector Scheme which was launched in 1993-94.
- The Scheme allows the Members of Parliament (MP) to recommend developmental works such as drinking water, education, public health, sanitation, roads etc, in their constituencies.
- The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation is responsible for the policy formulation, release of funds and monitoring of the implementation of the Scheme.
- MPs have to recommend at least 15% of the MPLADS funds of the year for areas inhabited by the Scheduled Caste population and 7.5% of Funds for areas inhabited by the Scheduled Tribes population.
  - Lok Sabha Members can recommend works within their Constituencies.
  - Elected Members of the Rajya Sabha can recommend works within the State of Election.
  - Nominated Members of both the Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha can recommend works anywhere in the country.
- All works should meet locally felt infrastructure and development needs, to create durable assets in the constituency.

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## DEFENCE and SECURITY

### Exercise Cobra Warrior

- An Indian Air Force contingent of 145 Air Warriors has participated in Exercise Cobra Warrior at the Royal Air Force's Waddington Air Force Base in the United Kingdom.
- The Exercise Cobra Warrior is a multilateral air exercise that will include Air Forces from Finland, Sweden, South Africa, the United States of America, and Singapore.
- The objective of the exercise is to take part in fighter aircraft engagements and learn from the best practises of other Air Forces.
- The IAF participated in the exercise with five Mirage 2000 fighters, two C-17 Globemaster IIIs, and one IL-78 mid-air refueller aircraft.

### Exercise Shinyuu Maitri

- The Indian Air Force (IAF) is participating in Exercise Shinyuu Maitri with the Japan Air Self-Defence Force (JASDF).
- The exercise is being organised on the side-lines of the Indo-Japan Joint Army Exercise, Dharma Guardian, which is being conducted at Komatsu, Japan.
- The IAF contingent is participating in Exercise Shinyuu Maitri 23 with one C-17 Globemaster III aircraft.
- The exercise allows the respective subject matter experts to interact and study each other's operational philosophies and best practices.
- The exercise shall also enhance mutual understanding and interoperability between the IAF and the JASDF.

### INS Trikand

- INS Trikand is participating in the International Maritime Exercise/ Cutlass Express 2023 (IMX/CE-23) held in the Gulf region from 26 Feb to 16 Mar 23.
- Participants from over 50 nations and international maritime agencies with the common aim of enhancing maritime security and keeping sea lanes in the region safe for maritime commerce.
- IMX/CE-23 is one of the largest multinational maritime exercises in the world.
- IMX 23 is a U.S. Naval Forces Central Command (NAVCENT)-led maritime exercise held across territorial and international waters across the Middle East, and Cutlass Express is an annual U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa (NAVEUR-NAVAF) exercise that includes East African and West Indian Ocean partner nations.

### FRINJEX-23

- The maiden joint military exercise, FRINJEX-23, between the Indian Army and French Army was conducted at the Pangode military station, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala on March 7 and 8.
- It is for the first time that both countries are engaging in this format with each contingent comprising a Company Group.
- The French contingent is part of the French Marine Regiment on board the DIXMUDE mission.
- The exercise is aimed at enhancing inter-operability, coordination, and cooperation between both forces at tactical the level.
- The exercise will have the largest contingent fielded by the Thiruvananthapuram-based Indian Army unit and the French 6th light armoured brigade.
- The theme for the exercise is based on "Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Operations in a Contested Environment".

### Exercise La Perouse

- The third edition of the multilateral exercise La Perouse was conducted in the Indian Ocean Region from 13 to 14 March 2023.
- It witnesses the participation of personnel, ships and integral helicopters of the Royal Australian Navy, French Navy, Indian Navy, Japanese Maritime Self-Defence Force, Royal Navy and the United States Navy.
- Indigenously built guided missile frigate INS Sahyadri and fleet tanker INS Jyoti will be participating in this edition of the exercise.
- The biennial exercise La Perouse is conducted by the French Navy and is aimed at enhancing maritime domain awareness and optimising maritime coordination amongst the participating navies in the Indo-Pacific Region.

- The two-day exercise provides an opportunity for like-minded navies to develop closer links in planning, coordination and information sharing for seamless maritime operations.
- The exercise will witness complex and advanced naval operations including surface warfare, anti-air warfare, air defence exercises, cross-deck landings and tactical manoeuvres.
- Participation of the Indian Navy in the exercise showcases the high levels of synergy, coordination and interoperability between the friendly navies, and their commitment to a rules-based international order in the Indo-Pacific region.

### SIPRI Report

- India remained the world's largest arms importer for the five years between 2018 and 2022 even though its arms imports dropped by 11% between 2013-2017 and 2018-2022, according to the Swedish think tank Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI).
- As per the latest SIPRI data, among the top 10 arms exporters for the period 2018 to 2022, India was the biggest arms export market to three countries – Russia, France and Israel – and the second largest export market to South Korea.
- For the same period, India remained the largest arms importer followed by Saudi Arabia.
- Russia accounted for 45% of India's imports followed by France (29%) and the U.S. (11%).
- India's tensions with Pakistan and China largely drive its demand for arms imports.
- With an 11% share of total global arms imports, India was the world's biggest importer of major arms from 2018 to 2022, a position it held for the period 1993 to 2022.
- SIPRI is an independent international institute dedicated to research into conflict, armaments, arms control and disarmament. Established in 1966, SIPRI provides data, analysis and recommendations, based on open sources, to policymakers, researchers, media and the interested public.

### Exercise Bold Kurukshetra

- The Singapore Army and Indian Army participated in the 13th edition of Exercise Bold Kurukshetra, a bilateral armour exercise at Jodhpur Military Station, India.
- For the first time in the exercise series, both armies participated in a command post Exercise, which involved Battalion and Brigade level planning elements and computer wargaming.
- The ten-day-long joint training fostered a common understanding of mechanised warfare in emerging threats and evolving technologies, developing interoperability through a computer simulation-based Wargame using joint operational and tactical procedures controlled through a joint command post.
- Exercise Bold Kurukshetra is conducted under the ambit of the bilateral arrangement for the joint Army Training and exercises between the Singapore Army and the Indian Army.
- First conducted in 2005, this exercise underscores the strong and long-standing bilateral defence relationship between both countries and enhances cooperation between the two armies.
- Both defence establishments also interact regularly through high-level visits, policy dialogues, courses and other professional exchanges.




### Medium Range Surface-to-Air Missile (MRSAM)

- The Indian Navy on March 7 carried out a successful test-firing of a Medium Range Surface-to-Air Missile (MRSAM) from frontline warship INS Visakhapatnam.
- The MRSAM has been jointly developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and the Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) and produced at Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL), reflecting the Navy's commitment to Atmanirbhar Bharat
- The network-centric and most advanced sleek missile has been developed by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) in collaboration with public and private sector enterprises.
- With a strike range of nearly 100 km, the 4.5-meter-long supersonic quick-reaction missile weighs around 2.7 tonnes and can carry a payload of 60 kg.
- Each MRSAM unit comprises one command and control system, multi-functional surveillance tracking radar, threat alert radar, mobile launcher, combat management system and mobile power and radar power systems apart from the missile.
- It has been developed with cutting-edge technology to neutralise airborne threats like jets, subsonic and supersonic cruise missiles, anti-tank systems and rockets.
- The air version of the MRSAM system has already been handed over to Indian Air Force (IAF).
- Travelling at a speed of Mach 2, it can achieve high degrees of manoeuvrability at the terminal phase.

### DEFENCE SHIELD

- > Medium-range surface-to-air missile (MR-SAM) developed by DRDO & Israeli Aerospace Industries
- > To be produced in bulk by defence PSU Bharat Dynamics
- > Designed to track & intercept enemy aircraft, drones, missiles & helicopters
- > Advanced version of Israeli Barak-I anti-missile defence systems, which have a 9km range & were fitted on 14 Indian warships several years ago



MISSILE CHARACTERISTICS			
Interception Range	Length	Weight	Payload
70km	4.5metre	270kg	60kg

NAVY	IAF
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Project sanctioned in Dec 2005 at initial cost of <b>₹2,606 crore</b></li> <li>&gt; Tested for first time on Nov 2014</li> <li>&gt; Already fitted on 3 Kolkata-class destroyers</li> <li>&gt; Will also be fitted on at least 12 under-construction warships (aircraft carrier INS Vikrant, 4 Visakhapatnam-class destroyers &amp; 7 stealth frigates)</li> <li>&gt; Will cost over <b>₹1,200 crore</b> for each warship</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Project sanctioned in Feb 2009 at cost of <b>₹10,076 crore</b></li> <li>&gt; Tested for first time on Thursday</li> <li>&gt; IAF to induct initial 9 MR-SAM squadrons from 2017-18 onwards</li> </ul>
	<p><b>ARMY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Project contract in final stages (estimated cost <b>₹14,000-crore</b>)</li> <li>&gt; Army initially wants 1 regiment, with four batteries (16 launchers)</li> </ul>

### TROPEX

- Indian Navy's major Operational level exercise TROPEX for the year 2023, conducted across the expanse of IOR over a duration of four months from Nov 22 - Mar 23, culminated this week in the Arabian Sea.
- The overall exercise construct included the Coastal Defence exercise Sea Vigil and the Amphibious Exercise AMPHEX. Together, these exercises also witnessed significant participation from the Indian Army, the Indian Air Force and the Coast Guard.
- Theatre Level Operational Readiness Exercise (TROPEX) is an inter-service military exercise involving the participation of the Indian Army, Air Force, Navy and Coast Guard.
- The exercise generally commences at the beginning of each year and lasts a month.
- It is generally carried out in three phrases: independent workup phase, joint workup phase and tactical phase.
- The exercise is designed to test the combat readiness of the Indian naval units, as well as the Indian Air Force, Indian Army and the Indian Coast Guard.
- It also seeks to strengthen interoperability and joint operations in a complex environment.
- Beginning in 2005, the exercise has been held annually, except for 2016 and 2018.

### Exercise Sea Dragon

- A P8I aircraft of the Indian Navy arrived at Guam, USA to participate in 'Exercise Sea Dragon 23', the third edition of the coordinated multi-lateral ASW exercise for Long Range MR ASW aircraft, conducted by the US Navy.
- The complexity and scope of these exercises have increased steadily over the past years to include advanced ASW drills.
- Ex Sea Dragon 23 will test the capabilities of participating aircraft in tracking simulated and live underwater targets, whilst also sharing mutual expertise.
- The Exercise would witness representation by an Indian Navy P8I, along with P8A of the US Navy, P1 from the Japanese Maritime Self Defence Force, CP 140 from the Royal Canadian Air Force and P3C from the RoKN.

- The Exercise aims to achieve high levels of synergy and coordination between the friendly navies, which is based on their shared values and commitment to an open, inclusive Indo-Pacific.
- Participating nation: Six Indo-Pacific nations participated in a multi-lateral anti-submarine warfare exercise that includes the navies of India, Australia, America, Canada, Japan and South Korea.


### INS Androth

- INS Androth, the second in the series of Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW SWC), was commissioned in Kolkata.
- It is built by Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE).
- It is 77.6 meters long and 10.5 meters wide, with a draft requirement of just 2.7 meters.
- It is powered by three diesel propellers, these ships can reach a top speed of 25 knots
- It is to conduct anti-submarine warfare, low-intensity maritime operations, and mine clearance operations in coastal waters.
- The ship is also capable of full-scale surveillance of coastal waters and various surface platforms and coordinates ASW and aircraft operations.
- They will carry light torpedoes, ASW missiles and mines, a close-in weapon system (30mm gun) and a 16.7mm fixed remote-controlled gun.

### AFINDEX-2023

- The 2nd edition of the joint military exercise “The Africa-India Field Training Exercise (AFINDEX-2023)” was held at the Foreign Training Node, Aundh, Pune.
- AFINDEX-2023 was held from 16 to 29 Mar 2023.
- A total of 25 nations of the African continent with 124 participants and Indian troops from the SIKH, MARATHA and MAHAR Regiments participated in the multinational exercise.
- The exercise aimed to build positive military relations, imbibe each other’s best practices and promote the ability to operate together while undertaking the execution of Humanitarian Mine Action and Peace Keeping Operations under the UN mandate.
- This joint exercise will enable the armies to learn and adopt methodologies and tactics while conducting such operations.

*Testimonial*



**DEBNATH MAHATA**  
**RANK 111**  
**WBCS (EXE.) 2020**

আমি (দেবনাথ মাহতা) WBCS-2020 গ্রুপ-A সেবিসে -এ West Bengal Co-operative Service-এ Selected হয়েছি।  
আমার জার্নয় কে APTI Plus গুট হেল্প করেছে।

Debnath Mahata  
19.02.2023

# SCIENCE

## Radio Galaxy

- A team of astronomers has discovered several 'elusive dying radio galaxies' using some of the world's most powerful radio telescopes, including the Giant Metrewave Radio Telescope (GMRT) located in Khodad, Pune.
- A radio galaxy is a galaxy with giant regions of radio emission extending well beyond its visible structure.
- Radio-loud active galactic nuclei (radio galaxies and radio-loud quasars; hereafter RLAGN) are a subset of the active galaxy population in which accretion onto the central supermassive black hole of a galaxy generates a relativistic jet of charged particles (electrons, positrons, and/or protons) and magnetic field.

## Hayabusa2

- Japan's explorer Hayabusa 2 has made an exciting discovery on the asteroid Ryugu. Samples that the mission collected from here are rich in organic molecules, which could serve as the building blocks of life.
- Hayabusa 2 is an asteroid sample-return mission operated by the Japanese state space agency JAXA. It is a successor to the Hayabusa mission, which returned asteroid samples for the first time in June 2010.
- Its mission has now been extended through at least 2031 when it will rendezvous with the small, rapidly-rotating asteroid 1998 KY26.
- Hayabusa 2 carried multiple science payloads for remote sensing and sampling, and four small rovers to investigate the asteroid surface and analyze the environmental and geological context of the samples collected.

## Erythritol

- New research by Cleveland Clinic, published in Nature Medicine, has shown that Erythritol, a popular artificial sweetener, is associated with an increased risk of heart attack and stroke.
- Erythritol is a type of sugar alcohol that is commonly used as a sugar substitute in foods and beverages.
- Unlike traditional sugars, it has no calories and does not raise blood sugar levels.
- It is also believed to have a lower glycemic index than other sweeteners, meaning it may not have as strong an impact on insulin levels.
- Erythritol is 60-70% as sweet as sucrose (table sugar).
- Japanese companies pioneered the commercial development of erythritol as a sweetener in the 1990s.

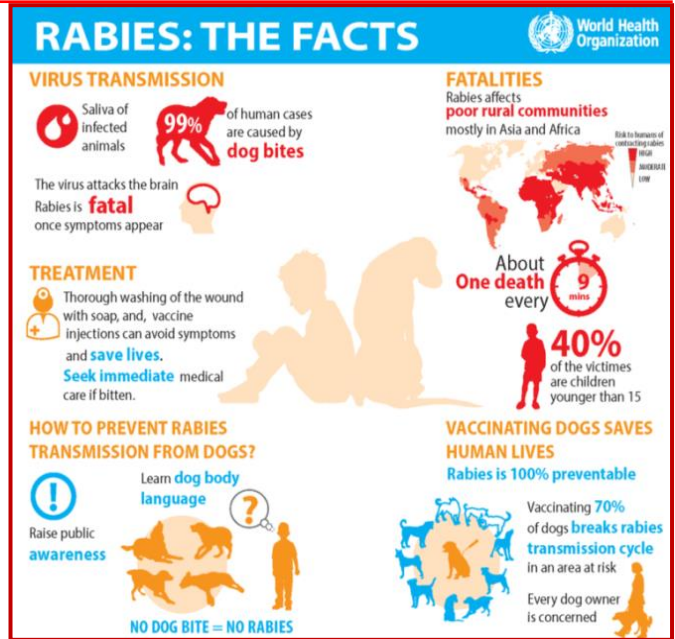
## REACHOUT Programme

- The Ministry of Earth Sciences is implementing an umbrella programme called Research, Education and Training Outreach (REACHOUT) to strengthen capacity.
- The Ministry of Earth Sciences is strengthening its capacity through the Research, Education and Training Outreach (REACHOUT) programme.
- It includes the following sub-schemes:
  - Research and Development (R&D) in Earth System Science (RDESS): Supporting a range of R&D initiatives in the primary elements of various Earth System Sciences that are issue- and need-based and that would aid in achieving the country's objectives.
  - International Training Centre for Operational Oceanography (ITCOcean): Form efficient alliances with international organisations to exchange cutting-edge knowledge in Earth science and technology and to provide aid to underdeveloped nations.
  - Program for Development of Skilled manpower in Earth System Sciences (DESK): Develop a skilled and qualified workforce in the earth sciences with the aid of domestic and foreign academic institutions.
- The programme is being implemented for the entire country.



### National Rabies Control Programme

- To prevent and control rabies, the Central Government has started the National Rabies Control Programme (NRCP). According to information obtained from the National Center for Disease Control (NCDC), the strategies of the program are as follows:
  - Rabies vaccine and rabies immunoglobulin are provided through national free drug programmes.
  - Training on rabies prevention and control, surveillance, and intersectoral coordination, as well as proper animal bite management.
  - Strengthening surveillance of animal bites and rabies death reporting.
  - Creating awareness about rabies prevention.



## SPORTS

### Women's Premier League (WPL) 2023

- The Mumbai Indians defeated the Delhi Capitals by seven wickets in the final of the Women's Premier League (WPL) 2023 in Mumbai's Brabourne Stadium.
- Meg Lanning, Delhi Capital Caption was named the WPL 2023 Orange Cap winner. Lanning scored 345 runs in nine matches this season, with an excellent average of 49.29.
- Hayley Matthews of the Mumbai Indians received the Purple Cap for her outstanding performance in the WPL 2023 final. Matthews finished the tournament with a total of 16 wickets.

#### List of Award Winners of Women IPL 2023

Orange cap	Meg Lanning
Purple Cap	Hayley Matthews
A powerful striker in the tournament	Sophie Devine
Emerging Player of the season	Yastika Bhatia
Fairplay award	Mumbai Indians and Delhi Capitals
Catch of the season	Harmanpreet Kaur

### Santosh Trophy

- Karnataka beat Meghalaya to win Santosh Trophy after 54 years
- This is the first trophy for Karnataka, having previously won four times as the princely state of Mysore.

# ENVIRONMENT

## World Air Quality Report 2022

- According to the 'World Air Quality' report produced by the Swiss business IQAir, India dropped from 5th to 8th most polluted nation in the world in 2022.
- Lahore, Pakistan, has the most pollution, followed by Hotan, China.
- Rajasthan's Bhiwadi is ranked third among the top 50 most polluted cities in the world. Delhi is ranked fourth.
  - The amount of pollution in Delhi has decreased by 8%.
- According to the study, the PM2.5 level in the most polluted Indian cities is 53.3.
- India has 39 of the top 50 most polluted cities in the world.
- The transportation industry in India is responsible for 20-35% of the country's PM2.5 pollution. Other factors in air quality degradation include the usage of biomass fuels, industrial facilities, and coal-fired power stations.

Rank	10 most polluted countries in the world
1	Chad
2	Iraq
3	Pakistan
4	Bahrain
5	Bangladesh
6	Burkina Faso
7	Kuwait
8	India
9	Egypt
10	Tajikistan

## Tropical cyclone Freddy

- Tropical cyclone Freddy is one of the longest-lasting tropical cyclones according to the World Meteorological Organisation.
- Freddy cyclone affected the Mascarene Islands, Madagascar, and Mozambique in February 2023, and is currently weakening after making its second landfall in Mozambique.



## Methane Global Tracker report

- The Methane Global Tracker report is an annual report published by the International Energy Agency (IEA).
- According to the report, fossil fuel corporations emitted 120 million metric tonnes of methane into the atmosphere in 2022, which was only marginally lower than the historic highs recorded in 2019.
- According to the report, affordable and easily available technology may eliminate 75% of methane emissions from the energy industry. Implementing such measures will cost less than 3% of the oil and gas industry's net profits in 2022, yet fossil fuel firms have failed to take significant action on the matter.
- The energy sector accounts for around 40% of overall average methane emissions from human activity.
- Methane is a greenhouse gas that is responsible for 30% of global warming since preindustrial times, behind only carbon dioxide.
- According to a United Nations Environment Programme research, methane is 80 times more effective at warming than carbon dioxide over 20 years.
- Methane accounts for approximately one-fifth of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and is approximately 25 times more effective than carbon dioxide in trapping heat in the atmosphere.
- Methane is short-lived, compared with carbon dioxide.
- Landfills, oil and natural gas networks, agricultural operations such as animal raising, coal mining, stationary and mobile combustion, wastewater treatment, and some industrial processes are all human sources of methane emissions.

### 'Indian States' Energy Transition' Report

- The report, titled 'Indian States' Energy Transition,' is prepared by the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis (IEEFA) and EMBER.
- The report examined 16 states, which account for 90% of India's yearly electricity demand.
- The investigation focused on four dimensions. The report develops a grading system to assess the performance of different states in the transition to renewable energy.
- Karnataka is the only state that performed well in all four parameters of the clean energy transition examined in this study. According to the report, it also has supportive policies and political pledges for a smoother transition.
  - Karnataka did the best in terms of decarbonizing its electricity industry, with the greatest percentage of renewables (48%).
- Rajasthan is second only to Karnataka in terms of renewable energy, accounting for 29% of the state's power mix.
- The Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis (IEEFA) is a non-profit organisation based in the United States. It researches the energy market, trends, and policy concerns. The objective of the Institute is to hasten the transition to a varied, sustainable, and prosperous energy economy.

### Mount Merapi

- Indonesia's Mount Merapi erupted with avalanches of searing gas clouds and lava, forcing authorities to halt tourism and mining activities on the slopes of the country's most active volcano.
- Mount Merapi, is an active stratovolcano located on the border between the province of Central Java and the Special Region of Yogyakarta, It is the most active volcano in Indonesia and has erupted regularly since 1548.
- Merapi is the youngest in a group of volcanoes in southern Java. It is situated at a subduction zone, where the Indo-Australian Plate is subducting under the Sunda Plate.
- It is one of at least 129 active volcanoes in Indonesia, part of the volcano is located in the Southeastern part of the Pacific Ring of Fire – a section of fault lines stretching from the Western Hemisphere through Japan and South East Asia.



Get Admission & start your journey

# WBCS CLASSROOM PROGRAMME

A promotional image for the WBCS Classroom Programme. It features a woman with long dark hair, wearing a light blue shirt, holding a book titled "WBCS Indian Polity" with the APTI PLUS logo. The background is dark purple with a large, stylized "APTI PLUS" watermark.

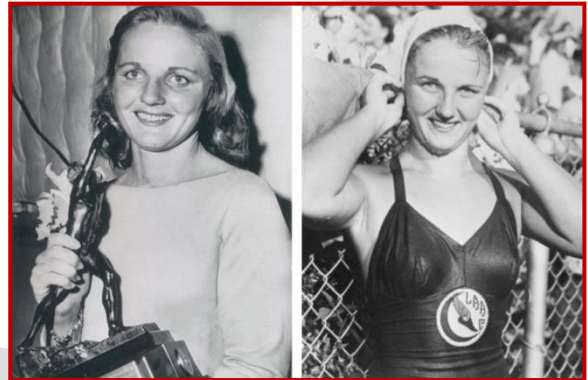
## OBITUARIES

### Fontaine Passed away

- Just Fontaine, the French football legend who scored a World Cup record 13 goals in a single tournament in 1958, has died at the age of 89.
- Between 1953 and 1960, he scored 30 goals in 21 internationals for France.

### Pat McCormick Passed away

- Patricia Joan Keller McCormick, the first diver to win the women's 3-metre springboard and 10-metre platform competitions at successive Olympics, died at the age of 92 in California, United States of America (USA).
- From 1946 until 1956, McCormick won 26 U.S. national titles, ranking second all-time among American women.
- She was the second woman to receive the James E. Sullivan Award for the greatest amateur athlete in the United States, following swimmer Ann Curtis in 1944.



### Aziz Mushabber Ahmadi Passed away

- Aziz Mushabber Ahmadi, a former Chief Justice of India (CJI), died at the age of 90 in New Delhi, Delhi, India.
- In 1932, Judge Ahmadi was born in Surat, Bombay Presidency, British India (now Maharashtra).
- In December 1988, he was appointed to the Supreme Court of India.
- He was appointed as India's 26th Chief Justice (1994-1997)

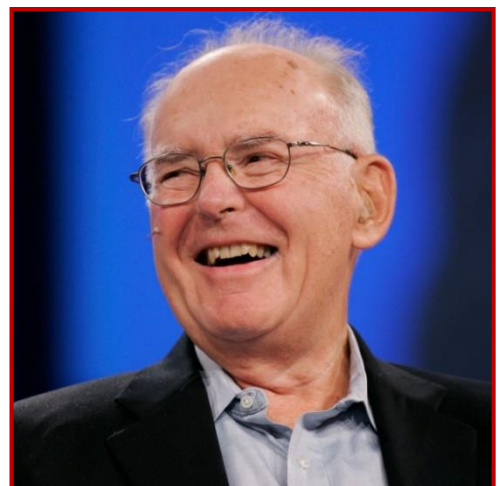


### Kenzaburo Oe Passed away

- Kenzaburo Oe, a literary titan in Japan and Nobel Prize recipient died at the age of 88 years.
- Kenzaburo Oe was a prominent and controversial Japanese novelist. His novels, short tales, and essays placed him at the intersection of the personal and the political.

### Gordon Moore Passed away

- Gordon Earle Moore, co-founder of Intel Corporation and a pioneer in the semiconductor industry and Silicon Valley, died at the age of 94 in Hawaii, United States (US).
- Moore's law, which states that the number of transistors in an integrated circuit (IC) doubles around every two years, was suggested by him.
- In July 1968, Moore and Robert Noyce created Intel. He was executive vice president until 1975 when he was named president of Intel.
- Moore has given more than \$5.1 billion to charity causes through his foundation, which he founded with his wife Betty over two decades ago.



### Satish Kaushik passed away

- Satish Kaushik, a veteran Bollywood actor-writer-director, died at the age of 67.
- He appeared in almost 100 films.
- In 1983, he made his Bollywood debut with the film Masoom.
- He also won the Filmfare Best Comedian Award in 1990 for Ram Lakhan and again in 1997 for Saajan Chale Sasural.



## APPOINTMENTS

### Rashmi Shukla

- Senior Indian Police Service (IPS) officer Rashmi Shukla has been appointed Director-General of the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB).
- The Special Service Bureau (now Sashastra Seema Bal) was thus conceived in November 1962 and eventually created in March 1963.
- The sole objective of achieving 'Total security preparedness in the remote border areas for performing a 'stay-behind' role in the event of a war.



### Shaliza Dhama

- Group Captain Shaliza Dhama has been selected by the Indian Air Force to lead a front-line combat unit in the Western area.
- In the Western sector of the IAF bordering Pakistan, Group Captain Dhama will be the first female officer to command a missile squadron. She is currently assigned to a frontline command headquarters' operations division.
- She is a helicopter pilot who was appointed in 2003 and has spent more than 2,800 hours in the air.
- She has operated the helicopters Chetak and Cheetah.
- She is a certified flying instructor and the first female officer in the Indian Air Force to command a Chetak unit.
- She conducted many flood rescue operations in addition to several search-and-rescue missions while piloting a helicopter.



### Deepak Mohanty

- The Central government has appointed Deepak Mohanty as the new Chairperson of the PFRDA.
- The government announced that Mohanty will hold the highest PFRDA position until he turns 65 years old or until further orders, whichever comes first.
- He formerly held the position of Executive Director of the RBI, where he was responsible for the management of risk, internal audit and inspection, financial stability, monetary policy, economic analysis, and statistics.
- Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority is the statutory authority created by parliamentary legislation to oversee, promote, and guarantee the National Pension System (NPS).
- It is administered by the Directorate of Financial Services, Ministry of Finance.
- It is responsible for appointing several intermediary organisations, including



Central Record Keeping Agency (CRA), Pension Fund Managers, and others.

- It also manages the Atal Pension Yojana (APY) in addition to developing, promoting, and regulating the pension market under the NPS.

### **Vo Van Thuong**

- Vo Van Thuong was elected as the new President of Vietnam.
- Vietnam's National Assembly elected Vo Van Thuong as the country's new President, in a reshuffle of the country's top leadership amid an anti-graft campaign.

## **AWARDS**

### **BBC Indian Sportswoman of The Year Award 2022**

- Mirabai Chanu, a silver medalist in weightlifting at the Tokyo Olympic Games, has been named the 2022 'BBC Indian Sportswoman of the Year' following a popular poll.
- After winning the title in 2021, the 28-year-old weightlifter from Manipur became the first athlete to win it twice in a row.
- The BBC Indian Sportswoman of the Year Award was started in 2019 to recognise Indian sportswomen who have made a name their own on the international stage.

### **BBC Para Sportswoman of the Year Award 2022**

- Table tennis player Bhavina Patel was named 'BBC Para Sportswoman of the Year,' a new category this year.
- She became the first Indian paddler to win a silver medal at the 2020 Paralympics in Tokyo.
- Bhavina also won gold at the Commonwealth Games in 2022.

### **'BBC Lifetime Achievement Award' 2022**

- Pritam Siwach, the former captain of the Indian women's hockey team, received the 'BBC Lifetime Achievement Award' for her contributions to Indian sports and for motivating future generations of athletes.
- Siwach was the first woman hockey coach to get the Dronacharya Award, India's top national coaching honour.

### **BBC Emerging Player of the Year 2022**

- Nitu Ghanghas, a boxer, has been named the BBC Emerging Player of the Year.
- She has two youth world titles and a Commonwealth Games medal.
- She won gold in the least weight category at the Commonwealth Games in 2022.

### **BBC Changemaker of the Year Award 2022**

- The 'BBC Changemaker of the Year Award' was awarded to the women's lawn bowls team of Lovely Choubey, Rupa Rani Tirkey, Pinki and Nayanmoni Saikia, who won gold at the 2022 Commonwealth Games, India's first-ever medal in the sport.

### **National Photography Awards**

- The 8th National Photography Awards were awarded in New Delhi by the Union Minister of State for Communication and Broadcasting.
- During the ceremony, 13 prizes were given out, six in each of the Professional and Amateur categories. The theme for the Professional category was "Life and Water," while the theme for the Amateur category was "Indian Cultural Heritage."
- Lifetime Achievement Award awarded to Ms Sipra Das.
- Professional Photographer of the Year Award to Shri Sasi Kumar Ramachandran.

### **Porter Prize 2023**

- In a significant achievement towards recognizing efforts in the health sector and especially COVID management, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), the Government of India received the Porter Prize 2023.
  - The prize was announced during The India Dialog at Stanford University.

- Porter Prize is named after Michael E. Porter, an economist, researcher, author, advisor, speaker, and teacher. He has brought economic theory and strategy concepts to bear on many of the most challenging problems facing corporations, economies, and societies, including market competition and company strategy, economic development, the environment and healthcare.

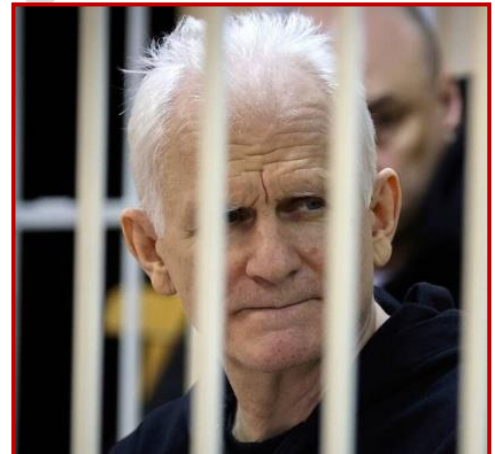
### Pritzker Prize

- David Alan Chipperfield, a British architect and urban planner, has received the Pritzker Architecture Prize.
- He is a London-based architect with offices in four other nations and has worked in cities across Asia and Europe as well as in the United States, including Davenport, Iowa, and Anchorage, Alaska.
- Chipperfield's work spanned more than 100 projects over four decades and included residences, civic, academic, and urban planning buildings as well as a recent addition to Berlin's prestigious Museum Island complex.
- In 1985, he established David Chipperfield Architects in London. The company later added locations in Berlin, Shanghai, Milan, and Santiago de Compostela, Spain.
- In 1985, he established David Chipperfield Architects in London. The company later added locations in Berlin, Shanghai, Milan, and Santiago de Compostela, Spain.
- Chipperfield, the 52nd recipient of the Pritzker Architecture Prize, was also given a bronze medallion in addition to a \$100,000 grant.



### Ales Bialiatski

- A court sentenced Nobel Peace Prize winner and human rights activist Ales Bialiatski to 10 years in prison for financing protests and other crimes, in a case that rights groups say was politically motivated.
- The Nobel Prize prize for 2022 was awarded to human rights advocate Ales Bialiatski from Belarus, the Russian human rights organisation Memorial and the Ukrainian human rights organisation Centre for Civil Liberties.
- Ales Bialiatski was one of the initiators of the democratic movement that emerged in Belarus in the mid-1980s.
- Bialiatski is also credited with founding the organisation Viasna (Spring) in 1996 in response to the controversial constitutional amendments that gave the president dictatorial powers.
  - Over time, Viasna evolved into a "broad-based human rights organisation that documented and protested against the authorities' use of torture against political prisoners".



### OSCARS 2023

- On March 12, 2023, the 95th Academy Awards ceremony was held in Los Angeles to recognise movies released in 2022. Jimmy Kimmel, a stand-up comedian hosted the ceremony.
- The movie "Everything Everywhere All At Once" won about seven Oscars. The movie portrays a Chinese immigrant getting involved in a grand adventure where she must protect many selves in parallel universes from the evil force wishing to ruin the multiverse.
- The first award of the evening was given to "Pinocchio" for "Best Animated," making director Guillermo del Toro the first person in Oscar history to win Best Picture, Best Director, and Best Animated Feature.
- The star of "Everything Everywhere All At Once," Ke Huy Quan, won the Oscar for "Best Supporting Actor" in 2023.
- The Oscar for Best Documentary Short Film went to India's "The Elephant Whisperers".
- The "Naatu Naatu" song from the "RRR" movie won the Oscar award for the Best Music (Original Song) category.

Award	Winner
Best Picture	"Everything Everywhere All at Once" (Daniel Kwan, Daniel Scheinert and Jonathan Wang, producers)
Best Director	Daniel Kwan and Daniel Scheinert, "Everything Everywhere All at Once"
Best Actress	Michelle Yeoh, "Everything Everywhere All at Once"
Best Actor	Brendan Fraser, "The Whale"
Best Supporting Actress	Jamie Lee Curtis, "Everything Everywhere All at Once"
Best Supporting Actor	Ke Huy Quan, "Everything Everywhere All at Once"
Original Screenplay	"Everything Everywhere All at Once" (Daniel Kwan and Daniel Scheinert)
Original Song	"Naatu Naatu," by M.M. Keeravaani and Chandrabose ("RRR")
Animated Short	"The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse" (Charlie Mackesy and Matthew Freud)
Costume Design	"Black Panther: Wakanda Forever" (Ruth E. Carter)
Visual Effects	"Avatar: The Way of Water" (Joe Letteri, Richard Baneham, Eric Saindon and Daniel Barrett)
Documentary Feature	"Navalny" (Daniel Roher, Odessa Rae, Diane Becker, Melanie Miller and Shane Boris)
Documentary Short	"The Elephant Whisperers" (Kartiki Gonsalves and Guneet Monga)

### Sangita Kalanidhi Award 2023

- The Madras Music Academy executive committee unanimously decided to present the Sangita Kalanidhi Award 2023 to Bombay Jayashri and Vasanthalakshmi Narasimhachari.
- The Sangita Kalanidhi Award is considered the most prestigious honour in Carnatic music. The Madras Music Academy conferred the honour.
  - Carnatic music is commonly linked with southern India, especially the state of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu. But it is also popular in Sri Lanka.
- Bombay Jayashri (Carnatic singer) has been selected for the Music Academy's Sangita Kalanidhi Award in
  - She is a trained dancer, a veena player, and an expert in Hindustani music.





- She is honoured with a Padma Shri for her lyrical and meditative singing style.
- She has been teaching music to underprivileged kids and promoting social causes through her art.
- Vasanthalakshmi Narasimhachari will be awarded the Nritya Kalanidhi dancing award. She is an expert in both Bharathanatyam and Kuchipudi.
  - "Bharatanatyam" has its roots in Tamil Nadu. It reflects South Indian religious themes and spiritual ideals, primarily those of Shaivism and generally of Hinduism.
  - Kuchipudi originates from Andhra Pradesh. It is a dance-drama performance that has its origins in the Natya Shastra, an old Hindu Sanskrit scripture.


### Vyas Samman 2022


- Hindi writer Dr Gyan Chaturvedi's novel "Pagalkhana" has been selected for the 32nd Vyas Samman 2022.
- It was Instituted by the KK Birla Foundation in 1991, the annual Vyas Samman is given to an outstanding Hindi literary work by an Indian citizen published during the last 10 years.

### Luis Caffarelli

- Argentine-American "Luis Caffarelli" received the Abel Prize in mathematics.
- He is a professor at the University of Texas, USA.
- He is an expert in "partial differential equations," which may be used to explain everything from population growth to water flow.
- Partial differential equations are widely used in engineering, physics, economics, and biology; they represent how various variables change concerning one another.








**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 interviews. 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



## IMPORTANT DAYS

### National Safety Day

- National Safety Day 2023 is observed on March 4, 2023.
- National Safety Day is a national occasion celebrated throughout India to raise awareness of the significance of safety.
- The theme of National Safety Day 2023 is "Nurture young minds - Create a safety culture."

### National No Smoking Day

- The objective of the day is to encourage people to stop smoking and raise their awareness of its negative consequences.
- The first National No Smoking Day was held in 1984, and it is currently held on the second Wednesday of March to urge people to stop smoking.
- According to the experts, this initiative has shown to be quite effective, with at least one out of every 10 persons quitting smoking on National No Smoking Day.

### CISF Raising Day

- India celebrates the 54th anniversary of CISF (Central Industrial Security Force) Raising Day on March 10, 2023.
- CISF provides security to over 356 industrial units, government infrastructure projects and facilities and establishments located all over India.
- The CISF was established on March 10, 1969, by the CISF Act of the Indian Parliament.

### National Vaccination Day

- National Vaccination Day is observed on March 16, 2023.
- The theme for National Vaccination Day 2023 is "Vaccines Work For Everyone."
- The day is celebrated annually since 1995 on the 16th of March every year.

### Ordnance Factories Day

- Ordnance Factories Day is celebrated on March 18, 2023.
- It is observed throughout India to mark the establishment of the first Ordnance Factory in colonial India in Cossipore, near Kolkata, in 1801.

### Zero Discrimination Day 2023

- Zero Discrimination Day 2023 is observed on March 1, 2023.
- This year's Zero Discrimination Day, under the theme "Save lives: Decriminalise," UNAIDS is emphasising how decriminalising critical communities and individuals living with HIV saves lives and advances the end of the AIDS pandemic.
- On March 1, 2014, the first Zero Discrimination Day was honoured and celebrated.
- UNAIDS started Zero Discrimination Day.

### International Civil Defense Day

- International Civil Defense Day was observed on March 1, 2023.
- The theme for this year is "The Role of information technology in risk assessment".
- In 1958, the International Association of Geneva Zones was renamed as the International Civil Defense Organization (ICDO) and given a new status as a non-governmental organisation with goals such as establishing cooperation and coordination between national civil defence organisations, undertaking and promoting studies and research on population protection issues, and facilitating the exchange of experience and coordination of efforts in disaster prevention, preparedness, and response.
- Representatives from ICDO member nations adopted the current version of the organization's constitution in 1972, and it went into effect on March 1, 1972.

### World Hearing Day

- World Hearing Day was observed on March 3rd, 2023.

- The theme of World Hearing Day 2023 is "Ear and hearing care for all!" Let's make it happen."
- To preserve healthy hearing throughout life, WHO focuses on the importance of safe listening.
- By ear and hearing care, it is possible to maintain healthy hearing throughout one's life.

### World Wildlife Day

- World Wildlife Day is observed on March 3, 2023.
- The theme of World Wildlife Day 2023 is "Partnerships for wildlife conservation."
- The day aimed at drawing attention to the protection of some of the most critically endangered wild animals and plants.
- It honours the day the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora was signed.
- Thailand proposed World Wildlife Day to the United Nations General Assembly on December 20, 2013, to raise public awareness about the world's wild animals and plants.

### International Women's Day 2023

- Every year on March 8, the world celebrates International Women's Day as a central focus for the women's rights campaign.
- The day promotes awareness about issues such as gender equality, abortion access, and violence and abuse against women. The day also serves as a unifying force for women's equality.
- "DigitALL: Innovation and technology for gender equality," is the theme of International Women's Day 2023.
- **History**
  - International Women's Day was originally observed in the early 1900s. Women's Day was first observed on February 28, 1909, when 15,000 women marched through New York City demanding shorter working hours, higher pay, and voting rights.
  - The second International Conference of Working Women, convened in Denmark in 1910, proposed an International Women's Day on March 9, 1911.
  - The United Nations (UN) started celebrating International Women's Day in 1977, and it was officially decided that the day would be widely observed every year on March 8.

### World Consumer Rights Day

- World Consumer Rights Day is observed all over the world on March 15th, 2023.
- Consumers International has declared that the theme of World Consumer Rights Day 2023 is "Fair Digital Finance."
- The day is observed to enhance consumer rights awareness and promote consumer protection. It is an occasion to highlight the significance of safeguarding consumers, supporting their rights, and assuring them access to safe and affordable products and services.

### World Sleep Day

- World Sleep Day is celebrated on March 17, 2023.
- The theme for World Sleep Day 2023 is "Quality Sleep, Sound Mind, Happy World."
- It is organised by the International Sleep Society's World Sleep Day Committee and seeks to reduce the societal cost of sleep difficulties via better prevention and management of sleep disorders.

### World Oral Health Day

- World Oral Health Day is celebrated on March 20, 2023.
- This year, the International Dental Federation (FDI) announced the three-year theme (2021-2023), "Be Proud of Your Mouth," for World Oral Health Day (WOHD).

### International Day of Happiness

- The International Day of Happiness is celebrated on 20 March 2023.
- It was established by the United Nations General Assembly on 28 June 2012.
- The International Day of Happiness aims to make people around the world realize the importance of happiness in their lives.
- The theme for the 2023 International Day of Happiness is "Be Mindful. Be Grateful. Be Kind."
- In 2011, the idea was introduced to the United Nations by the advisor Jayme Illien.

### World Sparrow Day

- Every year on March 20, people celebrate World Sparrow Day.
- It is designated to raise awareness about sparrow conservation and protection, as their numbers are declining globally. The first commemoration of the day occurred in 2010.
- The goal of the day is to educate people about the value of sparrows in the ecosystem, their role in pollination, and their importance in pest control.
- Sparrows are known to be an indicator of a region's environmental health, and their decreasing numbers are cause for concern.
- World Sparrow Day is observed in a variety of ways around the world, including bird-watching, building birdhouses, and educational programmes.

### World Poetry Day

- World Poetry Day is observed worldwide on March 21, 2023.
- UNESCO suggested and endorsed the day in 1999, during its 30th General Conference in Paris, to "provide fresh recognition and encouragement to national, regional, and worldwide poetry movements."

### World Forest Day

- The International Day of Forests, also known as the World Day of Forests, is celebrated every year on March 21 to raise awareness of the importance of forests and trees for the survival of humanity and its planet.
- The history of the International Day of Forests goes back to 1971 when the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) celebrated the World Day of Forests.
  - In 2011, the United Nations declared 2011-2020 as the International Decade of Forests. The goal is to encourage sustainable management, conservation and development of all types of forests.
  - In 2012, the International Day of Forests was established.
- On the International Day of Forests, organizations and individuals around the world organize events and activities to raise awareness of the importance of forests and promote sustainable forest management practices.
- The day also provides an opportunity to celebrate the beauty and diversity of the world's forests and recognize the important role they play in our lives.
- **The theme for 2023 is 'Forests and Health'.**

### World Water Day 2023

- The world celebrates World Water Day on March 22, 2023.
- It is an international event held every year on March 22nd to emphasise the importance of freshwater across the world.
- **The theme of World Water Day 2023, is "Accelerating change".**
- The concept for this international day dates back to 1992 when the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development was held in Rio de Janeiro. The United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution declaring 22 March to be International Day for Water, to be marked starting in 1993.
- These celebrations help to reinforce the importance of water and sanitation policies in poverty alleviation, economic growth, and environmental sustainability.

### World Meteorological Day

- Every year on March 23, World Meteorological Day (WMD) is observed to honour the founding of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). The day symbolises the importance of how human behaviour and the atmosphere of the Planet are intertwined.
- Since 1961, several themes have been used to honour this day. It highlights the significant contribution of the meteorological division to the security and well-being of the nations.
- **The Theme for WMD 2023 is 'The Future of Weather, Climate and Water across Generations.'** It emphasises the effects of climate change and actions to safeguard the environment for future generations.

### World Tuberculosis (TB) Day

- World Tuberculosis Day, is observed on 24 March all over the world.
- Its objective is to increase public awareness of the worldwide TB pandemic and efforts to eradicate the disease.
- The theme for World Tuberculosis Day 2023 is "Yes! We Can End TB!" This theme focuses on supporting high-level leadership, speedier implementation of new WHO guidelines, higher funding, and the adoption of innovative approaches to battle the TB pandemic.

- Dr Robert Koch reported the discovery of Mycobacterium tuberculosis, the bacteria that causes tuberculosis, on March 24, 1882. Later, March 24 was recognised as World Tuberculosis Day, a day to educate the public on the global effect of tuberculosis.

### International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade

- The International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade is celebrated on 25th March.
- The day recognizes and recalls people who suffered and died as a result of the transatlantic slave trade, which has been described as "the biggest violation of human rights in history," with over 15 million men, women, and children victims over 400 years.

### Earth Hour

- Millions of people across countries celebrated Earth Hour on 25th March and switched off their electrical appliances to promote awareness around energy conservation and climate change. The initiative encourages people to turn off lights for an hour from 8:30 pm to 9:30 pm local time.
- 'Earth Hour' is an annual global event that takes place on the last Saturday of March, and this year, on March 25 at 8.30 pm local time, millions of supporters from more than 190 countries participated.
- The event encourages individuals to turn off all lights and electrical appliances at their homes and offices for an hour to promote awareness of climate change challenges and energy conservation.
- This symbolic act, known as the 'lights off' moment, unites people worldwide in a show of support for the planet and serves as a reminder of the environmental issues facing us.

### World Theatre Day

- World Theatre Day is celebrated on 27th March 2023.
- "Theatre and a Culture of Peace" is the theme of World Theatre Day 2023.
- World Theatre Day recognises the significance of the performing arts, which continue to move, entertain, educate, and transform us.

### International Day of Zero Waste

- The first International Day of Zero Waste is celebrated on March 30, 2023, by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and UN-Habitat.
- The objective is to increase public understanding of how effectively managing urban trash, practising responsible consumption and production, and reaching zero waste all contribute to sustainable development.
- It strives to advance environmentally friendly patterns of production and consumption, encourages society's transition to circularity, and increases understanding of how zero-waste programmes advance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- Initiatives aimed at reducing waste and preventing it together can help address the triple planetary problem, save the environment, increase food security, and boost human health and well-being.
- A zero-waste strategy involves ethically producing, using, and discarding things in a closed, circular system. This implies that we reduce pollution to the air, land, and water and reuse or recover resources as much as we can.

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## BOOKS & AUTHORS

### Book 'COACHING BEYOND: My Days with the Indian Cricket Team'

- A book titled 'COACHING BEYOND: My Days with the Indian Cricket Team' authored by R. Kaushik & R. Sridhar.
- The book covers Virat Kohli's journey, Rishabh Pant's development and the team's progression towards the number one Test ranking.

### Book "Bipin: The Man Behind the Uniform"

- Rachna Biswat Rawat has written a book titled "Bipin: The Man Behind the Uniform".
- The book focuses on the life, personality, and principles of General Bipin Rawat, India's first Chief of Defence Staff.
- General Bipin Rawat was one of India's most notable military leaders until he tragically died in a helicopter crash in 2021.

## BOOSTER DOSE

- Proton beam therapy (PBT) is an advanced form of radiotherapy, with radiation treatment delivered by accelerated proton beams rather than X-rays.
- Two Australian government universities, Deakin University and the University of Wollongong, will be the first foreign education institutions to set up campuses in GIFT City, Gujarat.
- United Nations (UN) members have agreed on a unified treaty to protect biodiversity on the high seas.
- International Women's Day 2023 was observed on March 8 under the theme "DigitALL: Innovation and technology for gender equality".
- As a part of its ongoing initiative **National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT)** was providing potable water in six islands of Lakshadweep using **Low-Temperature Thermal Desalination (LTTD) technology**.
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has granted an 'Infrastructure Finance Company (IFC)' status to Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA).
- **India has proposed to launch a mega global alliance under its leadership to protect big cats and assured support over five years with guaranteed funding of \$100 million (over Rs 800 crore).**
- The U.N.'s World Meteorological Organisation has come up with a new Global Greenhouse Gas Monitoring Infrastructure that aims to provide better ways of measuring planet-warming pollution and help inform policy choices.
- The MSP of Raw Jute has been fixed at Rs.5050/- per quintal for 2023-24 seasons.
- NASA announced that it is partnering with the Italian Space Agency ASI to build and launch MAIA, or the Multi-Angle Imager for Aerosols missions.
- The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has removed the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA) from the jurisdiction of three police stations in the Wokha and Zunheboto districts of Nagaland, while one more police station in Arunachal Pradesh has been declared as a "disturbed area" under the Act.
- Government extends the LPG cylinder subsidy under the Ujjwala programme by one year.
- India and the United States signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) that will pave the way for **creating a semiconductor sub-committee under the Commercial Dialogue** between the U.S. Department of Commerce and India's Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) and the Ministry of Commerce.
- Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) recently released the Landslide Atlas of India, a detailed guide identifying landslide hotspots in the country.
- A three-judge Bench of the Supreme Court clarified that a **person who "is or continues to be" even a "mere member" of a banned organisation is liable to be found criminally liable under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA)** for acting against the sovereignty and integrity of India.
- The United States National Aeronautics and Space Administration announced DAVINCI+ and VERITAS missions to the planet in 2028-30 under its Discovery Program.

- The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has introduced interchange fees of up to 1.1% on merchant UPI transactions done using prepaid payment instruments from April 1.
- A UK-based startup claims to have developed Biotransformation technology that can alter the state of plastics and make them biodegradable without leaving behind any microplastics.
- The four astronauts who have been selected for India's first Human Space Flight Programme or the Gaganyaan have completed the first semester of crew training.
- As part of the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative, Hyderabad-based Svaya Robotics has developed India's first indigenous quadruped (four-legged) robot and exoskeleton for the defence sector.
- The Regional Conference on "Drug Trafficking and National Security" was held in Bengaluru (Karnataka), under the leadership of the Union Home Minister.
- The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has just launched its latest report on the climate crisis.
- A butterfly park established by the forest department in a village near the India-Bangladesh international border in the South Tripura district is now attracting tourists from all over the country and Bangladesh.
- The ground station of the India-Bhutan Satellite, which has been built in Thimpu, has been inaugurated.
- Every year on March 15, International Consumer Rights Day is observed to promote consumer protection and increase global knowledge of consumer rights. World Consumer Rights Day 2023 theme is "Empowering consumers through clean energy transitions."
- Russian President Vladimir Putin's announcement that he intends to deploy tactical nuclear weapons on the territory of Belarus appears to be another attempt to raise the stakes in the conflict in Ukraine.
- The Global Millets Conference was inaugurated by PM Modi at Subramaniam Hall, PUSA New Delhi.
- The Bar Council of India (BCI) has allowed foreign attorneys and law firms to practise law in India.
- The Gujarat government has **proposed a second home for Asiatic lions in Gujarat at Barda Wildlife Sanctuary, about 100km away from their present home at Gir National Park,**
- Japan and South Korea agreed to resume regular visits between their leaders and take steps to resolve a trade dispute during a highly anticipated summit in Tokyo, in what Japan's Prime Minister called a "big step" to rebuild the two nations' security and economic ties as they try to overcome a century of difficult history.
- The Kerala government recently announced the State's first waste-to-energy project.
- The Indian Patents Office rejected an application of Johnson and Johnson (J&J) seeking an extension of its patent on the anti-Tuberculosis (TB) drug Bedaquiline beyond July 2023, when it is set to expire.
- **Three States have commenced joint action to stop illegal sand mining in the National Chambal Sanctuary, situated at the trijunction of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh, which is known for its population of critically endangered gharials.**
- The Central Government has given **full exemption from basic customs duty on all drugs and food for special medical purposes imported for personal use for the treatment of all Rare Diseases**
- India's net direct tax collections growth, which stood at about 17% for this year by early March, is expected to moderate to 15% for the full financial year 2022-23- Finance Ministry.
- A Supreme Court bench headed by the Chief Justice of India (CJI) directed all high courts to set up RTI websites within 3 months.
- **A new catfish species discovered in Arunachal Pradesh has been named 'Exostoma Dhritiae' after Dhriti Banerjee, the first woman director of the ZSI,** as a mark of honour for her contributions to research on the fauna of the country.
- The Tamil Nadu Prohibition of Online Gambling and Regulation of Online Gaming Bill was once again adopted by the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly.
- A four-member appellate tribunal is likely to be set up in each state to streamline and expedite the dispute resolution process concerning Goods and Services Tax (GST).
- An Inter-Ministerial delegation from India led by the Department of Commerce participated in the second Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) negotiating round in Bali, Indonesia.
- The Odisha government has declared the Gandhamardan Hill Range in Bargarh and Balangir district as a Biodiversity Heritage Site (BHS), three decades after a highly successful people's resistance against bauxite mining there.
- Union Home Minister said the government would move forward to open a corridor to the Sharda Peeth in Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir (PoK) on the lines of the Kartarpur corridor.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the **new International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Area Office and Innovation Centre** in India at a programme in Delhi's Vigyan Bhawan.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled the "Bharat 6G Vision Statement". India is gearing up to roll out high-speed 6G communication services by 2030.
- The International Monetary Fund (IMF) confirmed a \$3 billion bailout plan for Sri Lanka's struggling economy.

- Nowruz is celebrated by the ethnic Iranian population every year in various parts of the world. **The Parsi community in India, which follows Zoroastrianism, celebrated Nowruz on March 21, marking the beginning of the New Year.**
- India marked **'Shaheed Diwas'** to mark the death anniversary of **Bhagat Singh, Shivaram Hari Rajguru and Sukhdev Thapar**, the revolutionary leaders who were hanged at the Lahore Central Jail in Lahore on March 23, 1931.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi urged citizens to work collectively towards tuberculosis (TB) elimination in the spirit of Jan Bhaagidari on a war footing and inaugurated the One World TB Summit 2023.
- **In the 50th year of 'Project Tiger' in India, the Centre is considering translocating a few big cats to Cambodia, where the species have become extinct in the last decade.**
- The Marburg virus disease outbreak has killed five people in Tanzania, Africa.
- The Union government has capped the maximum rate of GST compensation cess that would be levied on pan masala, cigarettes and other forms of tobacco. As per the amendment, the maximum GST compensation cess rate for pan masala will be 51% of the retail sale price per unit.
- Saudi Arabia has agreed to join the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) as a "dialogue partner, the latest indication of closer political ties with China.
- Russia's navy fired supersonic anti-ship missiles at a mock target in the Sea of Japan.
- The National Green Tribunal (NGT), in March 2023, imposed a penalty of Rs 10 crore on the Kerala government for failing to protect the Vembanad and Ashtamudi lakes, which are included in the Ramsar list of wetlands.
- The United States has organised the Summit for Democracy as a virtual meeting "to revitalise democracy at home and combat autocracies abroad."
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the "longest railway platform in the world" at Shri Siddharoodha Swamiji Hubballi Station of Karnataka.
- The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has specified a comprehensive group standard for millets.
- The Ministry of Power has mandated new coal or lignite-based thermal plants to either set up renewable energy capacity equivalent to at least 40 per cent of the thermal plant's capacity or procure that much supply of green energy under renewable purchase obligation.
- The First India-Bangladesh cross-border oil pipeline will be virtually inaugurated by PM Modi and Bangladesh PM Hasina on March 18.
- The 'Learning Science via Standards' initiative has been launched by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) for students.
- A new initiative called 'beggar-free city' has been started in Nagpur, Maharashtra.
- NITI Aayog has released the Task Force report titled "Production and Promotion of Organic and Bio fertilisers with Special Focus on Improving Economic Viability of Gaushalas".
- The response from the Election Commission (EC) through RTI has disclosed that over 60% of India's 94.5 crore voters in India have linked their Aadhaar numbers to their voter IDs.
- The government has stated that the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 will apply to trade in cryptocurrency or virtual assets.
- PM Modi and his Australian counterpart Anthony Albanese inaugurated the friendship hall of Fame in Ahmedabad, Gujarat.
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the NITI Aayog hosted a hackathon with young people from across the world to contribute ideas and innovations to promote sustainable living and climate-positive behaviour as part of the Government of India's Mission LiFE.
- President Droupadi Murmu inaugurated the 7th International Dharma-Dhamma Conference in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh.
- Union Ministry of Health & Family Welfare receives Porter Prize 2023. The award was announced at 'The India Dialogue' organized by the Institute for Competitiveness (IFC) at Stanford University's US Asia Technology Management Center (USATMC).
- India recently proposed to launch International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) to protect big cats and assured support over five years with guaranteed funding of \$100 million.
- The Ministry of Ports, shipping and Waterways has sanctioned seven floating jetty projects situated on the Gurupura River and Netravati River in Karnataka.
- State Bank of India (SBI) has launched a new retail term deposit scheme called Amrit Kalash Deposit.
- Bureau of India Standards (BIS) has prohibited the sale of hallmarked gold jewellery or gold artefacts without a 6-digit alphanumeric Hallmark Unique Identification Number (HUID) after 31st March 2023.



- PM Modi inaugurated the new International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Area Office & Innovation Centre in India.
- Indian Air Force (IAF) Group Captain Ms Shalija Dhami has become the first woman officer of the IAF to be given command of a frontline combat unit.
- The Indira Gandhi Tulip Garden, Asia's largest tulip garden, opened to the public, nestled between Dal Lake and the Zabarwan hills in Srinagar.
- Mr Arun Subramanian became the first Indian American to become the Judge of the Manhattan Federal District Court of New York.
- Union Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways (MoPSW) and Ayush Shri Sarbananda Sonowal has said India aims at becoming a 'Global Hub for Green Ship' building by 2030 with the launch of the Green Tug Transition Programme (GTTP).
- India hosted the first meeting of the Governing Board of BIMSTEC Energy Centre (BEC) in Bengaluru, Karnataka.
- The Indian Army and Indian Air Force (IAF) have conducted a 96-hour multi-domain air and land exercise, 'Vayu Prahar', in the eastern sector, as India & China remain in a stand-off at the Line of Actual Control (LAC).
- India and Australia signed a 'Framework Mechanism for Mutual Recognition of Qualifications' that will help ease the mobility of students and professionals between the two countries.
- The novel 'Pookkuzhi' by Tamil writer Perumal Murugan, translated as 'Pyre' in English by Anirudh Vasudevan, has made a place in the International Booker Prize 2023 longlist.
- Uttarakhand will set up India's 1st government 'Mother Milk Bank' in the state.
- The World Bank has approved a loan of USD 108 million (Rs 8,896,517,496) for the Assam Integrated River Basin Management Project (AIRBMP) to improve its disaster preparedness and flood forecasting capabilities in Assam.
- The Centre has notified a hike in wage rates under the rural job guarantee programme for the 2023-24 financial year with Haryana having the highest daily wage at ₹357 per day and Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh the lowest at ₹221.
- Delhi has been ranked fourth on the list of the world's 50 most polluted cities.
- In the 95th Academy Awards ceremony, India's 'Naatu Naatu song' from SS Rajamouli's film RRR made history by becoming the first Indian film to win an Oscar for best original song.
- Denmark is the first country in the world to open an underwater burial site for Carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) and also import the gas from other countries.
- Bhutan became the 7th nation to graduate from the United Nations (UN) list of Least Developed Countries (LDC).
- Kerala becomes the first State to use robotic scavengers to clean manholes.
- Attukal Pongala, arguably the largest festival of women in the world, began at the Attukal Bhagavathy Temple in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala.
- The Odisha government has approved Rs 500 crore to launch a new scheme Livelihoods Cluster Development initiative for tribal people under the 'Mukhya Mantri Janajati Jeebika Mission.'
- The 2023 Marconi Prize has been awarded to Hari Balakrishnan, the Fujitsu Professor of Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence in the Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).
- The Rajasthan government approved the setting up of India's first Behavioural lab at Jaipur, Rajasthan, India.
- The Bumchu Festival was celebrated in the Tashiding Monastery, located in the state of Sikkim. Bumchu Festival is the Tashiding holy water vase ritual which is a unique and important occasion that draws travellers from all over the world.
- Rajasthan Chief Minister (CM) Shri Ashok Gehlot has announced the formation of 19 new districts and 3 new divisions in the state.
- Sipra Das awarded with Lifetime Achievement award at the 8th National Photography Award ceremony.
- Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport has received the award for the Best Airport in India and South Asia, a report by the international air transport rating organisation Skytrax.
- The Ministry of Tourism has won the Golden & Silver Star in the 'TV/Cinema Commercials International and Country International' Category.
- West Bengal is on top, and Uttar Pradesh is at bottom of the index for literacy among children below 10 years.
- The government of Maharashtra has decided to launch the second phase of the Jalyukt Shivar project. It is a scheme that targets drought-prone areas by Undertaking water conservation measures.
- The 13-day tulip festival organised by the New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) was held in New Delhi.
- India ranks 108th in the Electoral Democracy Index of the V-dem Democracy Report 2023.
- According to the report, titled "Celebrity Brand Valuation Report 2022: Beyond the Mainstream" Actor Ranveer Singh has become the 'Most valued celebrity of 2022',

- Bengaluru Wins First-Ever Partnership for Healthy Cities Award for effectively enforcing smoke-free Laws at Global Summit.
- Birsa Munda Hockey Stadium Gets Recognised As World's Largest Fully Seated Hockey Stadium By the Guinness Book Of World Records.
- British architect and urban planner Sir David Chipperfield have won the 2023 Pritzker Architecture Prize.
- India's first PM Mega Integrated Textile Region and Apparel (PM MITRA) Park for the textile industry was launched at E. Kumaralingapuram in the Virudhunagar district of Tamil Nadu.
- Rajasthan becomes the first state in India to pass the 'Right to Health (RTH) Bill' in the Assembly.
- The World Bank will provide USD 1.78 billion in assistance to Turkey to help with relief and recovery efforts after devastating earthquakes in Turkey and neighbouring Syria.
- Kochi Metro becomes the first in the country to accept digital currency for parking.
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed a penalty of Rs 5 lakh on Housing Development Finance Corporation Limited (HDFC) for non-compliance with certain provisions issued by the National Housing Bank (NHB).
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has allowed banks from 18 different countries to open Special Vostro Rupee Accounts (SVRAs) for settling payments in Indian rupees (INR).
- Egypt officially became a member of BRICS' New Development Bank (NDB) which includes India, Brazil, Russia, China, and South Africa as member countries.
- Nationalist Democratic Progressive Party (NDPP) of Nagaland leader Shri Neiphiu Rio was sworn in as the Chief Minister (CM) of Nagaland for the 5th time in Kohima, Nagaland.
- Ms Salhoutuono Kruse, the National Democratic Progressive Party (NDPP) candidate from the Western Angami seat, became the first woman to be sworn in as a minister in Nagaland's history.
- The Indian Navy carried out a successful test-firing of a Medium Range Surface Air Missile (MRSAM) from the frontline warship Indian Naval Ship (INS) Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh(AP).
- UN inks first 'High Seas Treaty' in a bid to protect ocean bodies of the world.
- Australia won the ICC Women's Twenty20 World Cup 2023 title.
- Mumbai Indians has won the inaugural Women's Premier League 2023. They defeated Delhi Capitals by seven wickets at the Brabourne Stadium in Mumbai.
- Female Cheetah Sasha brought From Namibia to Madhya Pradesh's Kuno National Park, passed away.
- 'World's first' bamboo crash barrier installed on Maharashtra highway.

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## PRACTICE QUESTIONS

**Q1. The Deakin University of Australia will establish a campus in which Indian state?**

- (a) Uttar Pradesh
- (b) Kerala
- (c) Gujarat
- (d) Tamil Nadu

**Q2. Who has been appointed as the Director General of the Sashtra Seema Bal?**

- (a) Rashmi Shukla
- (b) Punam Kumari
- (c) Pawan Dayal Singh
- (d) Manoj Lal

**Q3. What was the theme of World Wildlife Day 2023?**

- (a) Recovering Key species for ecosystem restoration.
- (b) Partnerships for wildlife conservation.
- (c) Life inside water
- (d) Climate change

**Q4. Which Country participated in Exercise Shinyuu Maitri with the Indian Air Force (IAF)?**

- (a) Australia
- (b) Russia
- (c) Japan
- (d) United Kingdom

**Q5. Vo Van Thuong has been elected as the new President of which country?**

- (a) South Korea
- (b) Japan
- (c) Vietnam
- (d) Singapore

**Q6. The President of India Droupadi Murmu has inaugurated the 7th International Dharma Dhamma Conference in which city?**

- (a) Bengaluru
- (b) New Delhi
- (c) Bhubaneswar
- (d) Bhopal

**Q7. Who has won the BBC Indian Sportswoman of the Year award for 2022?**

- (a) Mirabai Chanu
- (b) Lovlina Borgohain
- (c) Karnam Malleswari
- (d) Mary Kom

**Q8. Which of the following state has won the Santosh Trophy after 54 years?**

- (a) Tripura
- (b) West Bengal
- (c) Assam
- (d) Karnataka

**Q9. According to the V-dem Democracy Report 2023, the rank of India in the Electoral Democracy Index?**

- (a) 100th
- (b) 101st
- (c) 108th
- (d) 110th

**Q10. Which of the following airports has been named one of the cleanest in Asia-Pacific by the Airport Council International (ACI)?**

- (a) Indira Gandhi International Airport, Delhi
- (b) Cochin International Airport, Kochi
- (c) Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport, Ahmedabad
- (d) Mangaluru International Airport, Mangaluru

**Q11. International Women's Day is observed every year on which day?**

- (a) 5 March
- (b) 6 March
- (c) 7 March
- (d) 8 March

**Q12. Satish Kaushik passed away recently at the age of 67. He was related to;**

- (a) Writer
- (b) Politician
- (c) Actor
- (d) Historian

**Q13. Which of the following city has started an initiative called 'beggar-free city'?**

- (a) Bengaluru
- (b) New Delhi
- (c) Hyderabad
- (d) Nagpur

**Q14. Who has won the Pritzker Architecture Prize 2023?**

- (a) David Chipperfield
- (b) Anne Lacton
- (c) Francis Henry
- (d) David Adjaye

**Q15. Which of the following metro becomes the first to accept digital currency for parking?**

- (a) Bengaluru Metro
- (b) Delhi Metro
- (c) Kochi Metro
- (d) Kolkata Metro

**Q16. Who has been awarded the Vyas Samman 2022?**

- (a) Jayathmika Lakshmi

- (b) Yaduraya Wodeyar  
(c) Gyan Chaturvedi  
(d) Pramoda Devi Wadiyar

**Q17. According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute's (SIPRI) 2023 report, Which country was the world's leading arms importer in 2022?**

- (a) India  
(b) Ukraine  
(c) Russia  
(d) Pakistan

**Q18. World Consumer Rights Day is observed every year on which day?**

- (a) 15 March  
(b) 16 March  
(c) 17 March  
(d) 18 March

**Q19. As per the World Air Quality Report, which of the following is the most polluted city in India?**

- (a) Kolkata  
(b) Delhi  
(c) Bhiwadi  
(d) Mumbai

**Q20. Who has been appointed as the Chairman of the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA)?**

- (a) Pradeep Kharola  
(b) Deepak Mohanty  
(c) R Venkataramani  
(d) Mukul Rohatgi

**Q21. TIME magazine has revealed its yearly list of the "World's Best Destinations" for 2023; how many Indian cities have been included?**

- (a) 3  
(b) 2  
(c) 4  
(d) 5

**Q22. International Day of Forests is observed every year on which day?**

- (a) 22 March  
(b) 21 March  
(c) 20 March  
(d) 23 March

**Q23. Who has won the Abel Prize for maths?**

- (a) Luis Caffarelli  
(b) Ovidiu Savin  
(c) Weinan Henry  
(d) Carlos Kenig

**Q24. Mumbai Indians defeated which of the following team to win the first Women's Premier League Championship title.**

- (a) Delhi Capitals  
(b) UP Warriors  
(c) Chennai Super Kings  
(d) Gujarat Giants

**Q25. Gordon Moore passed away recently at the age of 94 years. He was the co-founder of which company?**

- (a) Intel  
(b) IBM  
(c) Google  
(d) Microsoft

## ANSWER KEY

Question number	Answer Key
1.	C
2.	A
3.	B
4.	C
5.	C
6.	D
7.	A
8.	D
9.	C
10.	A
11.	D
12.	C

13.	D
14.	A
15.	C
16.	C
17.	A
18.	A
19.	C
20.	B
21.	B
22.	B
23.	A
24.	A
25.	A



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