

WBCS GAZETTE

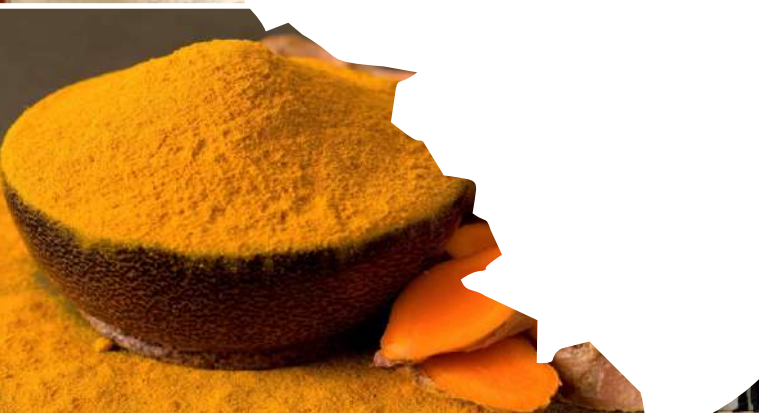
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Academy for Civil Services Pvt. Ltd.
CREATING CIVIL SERVANTS FOR THE NATION

DECEMBER 2023



A MONTHLY CURRENT AFFAIRS FOR ASPIRANTS OF WBCS EXAMINATION



CONTENT

WEST BENGAL SPECIAL

Kolkata as the safest city	4
Rabindranath Tagore Literary Prize	4

NATIONAL

5th Global Ayurveda Festival	4
Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan (PM JANMAN)	4
Ayushman Arogy Mandir	5
NCRB (National Crime Records Bureau) report for 2022	5
Garba of Gujarat	5
Gajraj System	6
Nari Adalat	6
YUVAi	6
National Transit Pass System (NTPS)	6

INTERNATIONAL

UAE Declaration on New Global Climate Finance Framework by COP-28	7
Phase-II of the Leadership Group for Industry Transition (LeadIT 2.0)	8
Champion Green Credits at COP28	8
Loss and Damage Fund	8
Codex Alimentarius Commission	8
International Maritime Organisation (IMO)	9
Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023	9
Gulf of Aden	10
Angkor Wat Temple	10
Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS)	10
Asian Development Bank (ADB)	11
Migration and Development Brief	11
JT-60SA	11

China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)	12
UN peacekeeping mission	12
World's Deepest lab	12
International Year of Camelids	12
Angola	13

ECONOMICS

Logistics Ease Across Different States (LEADS) Report	13
Lakadong Turmeric	13
Bandhan Bank	14
eSvarna	14
Payments Infrastructure Development Fund (PIDF)	14
Growth for the Indian economy	14
Sukanya Samridhi Scheme (SSY)	14

DEFENCE & SECURITY

Operation Prosperity Guardian	15
SAMAR Air Defence Missile System	15
Solid-Fuel Missiles	16
INS Kochi	16
Flying Wing Technology Demonstrator	16
INS Imphal	16
Central Industrial Security Force (CISF)	17
Agni-1 Missile	17
Table-Top Exercise	17
Exercise VINBAX	17
Defence Acquisition Council (DAC)	18

SCIENCE

Noma	18
Amrit Technology	18

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CONTENT

SPORTS

Grandmaster	19
Raturaj Gaikwad	19
IBA Junior World Boxing Championship 2023	19
Vijay Hazare Trophy in 2023	19

OBITUARIES

Henry Kissinger	20
-----------------	----

APPOINTMENTS

Praveen Keshav Vohra	20
Andry Rajoelina	20
Donald Tusk	20
Abdelfattah Elsis	21
Sanjiv Khanna	21
Akshata Krishnamurthy	21
Kanchan Devi	21
Samir Shah	22

AWARDS

National Sports Awards 2023	22
Rijul Maini	23
Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace	23
Savita Ladage	24
V R Lalithambika	24
Kabir Bedi	24

BOOKS & AUTHOR

Book 'Welcome to Paradise'	25
Book 'Zeba: An Accidental Superhero'	25

IMPORTANT DAYS

BSF Raising Day	25
World AIDS Day	26
National Pollution Control Day	26
International Day for Abolition of Slavery 2023	26
International Day of Persons with Disabilities	27
World Soil Day	27
International Anti-Corruption Day	27
International Human Rights Day	27
National Mathematics Day	28
National Farmers' Day	28
Good Governance Day	28

IMPORTANT GK FACTS IN NEWS	28
-----------------------------------	----

BOOSTER DOSE	33
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PRACTICE QUESTIONS	46
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WEST BENGAL SPECIAL

Kolkata as the Safest City

- According to the latest report released by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), **Kolkata has emerged as the safest city in India for the third year in a row.**
- The report, which covers various aspects of crime and law enforcement in the country, shows that **Kolkata has the lowest rate of violent crimes, sexual offences, cybercrimes, and property crimes among the 19 major cities of India.**
- The report attributes the low crime rate in Kolkata to various factors, such as the socio-cultural diversity, the strong community bonding, the high literacy rate, the active participation of civil society groups, and the proactive measures taken by the state government and the police administration.

Rabindranath Tagore Literary Prize

- **Poet-critic Sukrita Paul Kumar received the sixth Rabindranath Tagore Literary Prize** for her collection, 'Salt & Pepper: Selected Poems'.
- She was awarded USD 5,000, a Tagore statue and a certificate for her literary contribution.
- **Nobel laureate Abhijit Banerjee got the Rabindranath Tagore Literary Prize for social achievement.**
- The award, established in 2018 by US-based publisher Peter Bundalo, promotes world peace, literature, art, education and human rights. It also honours works that advance human rights and world peace with the Social Achievement Prize.



NATIONAL

5th Global Ayurveda Festival

- The 5th Global Ayurveda Festival (GAF 2023) was a five-day event held from December 1st to 5th, 2023, in **Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala.**
- It was a platform to celebrate India's ancient healing wisdom of Ayurveda and explore its potential in addressing emerging healthcare challenges.
- **The festival's theme was "Emerging Challenges in Healthcare and a Resurgent Ayurveda."** It brought together experts from around the world to discuss the role of Ayurveda in promoting holistic health and well-being.



Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan (PM JANMAN)

- **The PM JANMAN initiative aims to uplift the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)** by addressing their critical needs and enhancing their welfare and empowerment.
- The scheme has a total outlay of Rs. 24,104 crore, with funding shared between the Centre and the States in a 64:36 ratio.

- This initiative aligns with the 2023-24 Budget announcements, introducing the Pradhan Mantri PVTG Development Mission. The PM-JANMAN scheme will be executed over the next three years under the Development Action Plan for the Scheduled Tribes (DAPST), with an allocation of Rs. 15,000 crore.
- The scheme targets the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups, which include 75 communities across 18 States and the Union Territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

Ayushman Arogy Mandir

- The Indian government has decided to **rename the existing Ayushman Bharat Health and Wellness Centres (AB-HWCs) as 'Ayushman Arogy Mandir' with the tagline 'Arogyam Parmam Dhanam'**. This means "Health is the greatest wealth" in Sanskrit.
- Translating the full title into state languages where needed, while transliterating the tagline into respective state languages. Estimated cost of ₹3,000 per centre for the renaming process.
- Over 1.6 lakh AB-HWCs provide comprehensive primary healthcare services, including maternal and child health services, essential drugs, diagnostics, and screenings. Successfully shifting the healthcare paradigm from illness-centric to wellness-focused, with a focus on preventive healthcare.

NCRB (National Crime Records Bureau) report for 2022

- The NCRB (National Crime Records Bureau) report for 2022 is a comprehensive compilation of crime statistics from across India. It covers various categories of crimes, such as crimes against women, cybercrimes, crimes against Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs), suicides, and more.
- **Crimes against women increased by 4% compared to 2021**, with 4,45,256 cases registered in 2022. Major sections included cruelty by husbands/relatives, kidnapping/abduction, and assault on women to outrage modesty.
- **Cybercrime reporting surged by 24.4%, with 65,893 cases registered.** Fraud, extortion, and sexual exploitation were among the top reported cybercrimes.
- A 4.2% increase was observed in reported suicides in 2022 (1,70,924 cases) compared to 2021. Reasons included family problems, illness, and marriage-related issues.
- **States like Kerala, Puducherry, and West Bengal had high chargesheet rates**, but it doesn't necessarily mean these states are more crime-prone. It reflects the police reaching the stage of framing charges against accused individuals.

Garba of Gujarat

- The inscription of 'Garba of Gujarat' on the Representative List



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of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) of Humanity by UNESCO during the 18th meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage held in Kasane, Botswana, from 5th to 9th December 2023.

- **'Garba of Gujarat' becomes the 15th ICH element from India to join the UNESCO list**, signifying its cultural significance and role in fostering social inclusivity.
- The Evaluation Body praised 'Garba of Gujarat' with outstanding supporting material, recognizing its ability to promote unity in diversity and social equality among communities.

Gajraj System

- **The "Gajraj System" will utilize artificial intelligence to detect elephants near railway tracks.** This will likely involve cameras and sensors that can identify the presence of elephants and send alerts to railway authorities.
- The system will initially be installed on 700 kilometres of railway routes passing through elephant habitats. This prioritizes areas with the highest risk of collisions, like forest areas in Assam, West Bengal, Odisha, Kerala, Jharkhand, and parts of Chhattisgarh and Tamil Nadu.
- **The goal of the Gajraj System is to prevent elephant deaths on tracks by providing early warnings** and allowing for timely interventions like slowing down trains or diverting them.

Nari Adalat

- The government to introduce Nari Adalat in a phased manner, prioritizing areas with high demand or facing specific challenges related to women's safety and empowerment.
- **In the first phase, Assam and Jammu & Kashmir have been selected for implementation.** Specific districts within these states have been chosen based on potential need and feasibility.
- Nari Adalat aims to **address women's concerns at the local level by providing a quick and accessible platform** for resolving minor disputes and grievances related to harassment, family matters, property rights, and other social issues.
- Nari Adalat often involves women themselves serving as jury members, fostering a sense of community ownership and empowering them to actively participate in finding solutions for issues affecting their lives.

YUVAi

- The Youth for Unnati and Vikas with AI (YUVAi) program is gearing up for a prominent appearance at the ongoing Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (GPAI) Summit in New Delhi.
- **The program equips students from classes 8 to 12 across India with essential AI skills**, preparing them for a future heavily influenced by this technology.
- YUVAi's innovative approach emphasizes human-centric design and responsible use of AI, empowering students to become ethical creators and users of AI solutions.
- This program results from a successful collaboration between the National e-Governance Division of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) and Intel India, showcasing their commitment to providing quality AI education.

National Transit Pass System (NTPS)

- The Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav has officially launched the pan-India system, marking a significant step towards streamlined management of forest produce movement.

- **NTPS is envisioned as a unified "One Nation-One Pass" regime, eliminating the need for multiple permits across different states** and simplifying the process for producers, farmers, and transporters.
- This system aims to contribute to the ease of doing business by minimizing bureaucratic hurdles and delays associated with transporting timber, bamboo, and other forest produce.
- NTPS features desktop and mobile applications for easy registration and permit applications, enhancing user convenience and accessibility.



INTERNATIONAL

UAE Declaration on New Global Climate Finance Framework by COP-28

- The **UAE Declaration on New Global Climate Finance Framework by COP-28** is a landmark document that was adopted at COP28 in Dubai, UAE on December 1, 2023.
- The declaration outlines a new vision and strategy for mobilizing and delivering climate finance to support the implementation of the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- **The declaration recognizes the urgency and scale of the climate challenge**, and the need to align public and private finance flows with low-emission and climate-resilient development pathways.
- The declaration reaffirms the commitment of developed countries to provide \$100 billion per year by 2020 and through 2025 and to set a new collective quantified goal for the post-2025 period.
- **CoP28, or the 28th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change**, was held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. It brought together nearly 200 countries to discuss and negotiate ways to address climate change.



CoP28

- **UNFCCC is an international environmental treaty adopted in 1992, at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.** Its objective is to "stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system."
- **The UNFCCC has 198 Parties, including 197 states and the European Union.** It is the parent treaty of the Kyoto Protocol, which established legally binding emission reduction targets for developed countries, and the Paris Agreement, which aims to limit global warming to well below 2 degrees Celsius, preferably to 1.5 degrees Celsius, compared to pre-industrial levels.
- **The UNFCCC is governed by the Conference of the Parties (COP),** which meets annually to review the implementation of the Convention and to make decisions on new actions. The COP is supported by a Secretariat based in Bonn, Germany.

Phase-II of the Leadership Group for Industry Transition (LeadIT 2.0)

- **India and Sweden Co-Host Phase-II of Leadership Group for Industry Transition at COP-28 in Dubai** on December 1, 2023. This initiative signifies a renewed commitment to driving industrial transformation towards a low-carbon future.
- Launched in 2019 at the UN Climate Action Summit in New York, LeadIT is a global platform that brings together governments, industries, researchers, and think tanks to accelerate the transition of heavy industry sectors like steel, cement, chemicals, and paper towards sustainable practices.

Champion Green Credits at COP28

- On December 1, 2023, at COP28 in Dubai, **Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India and President Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan of the United Arab Emirates co-hosted a high-level event on the Green Credits Programme.** This innovative initiative marks a significant step forward in the global fight against climate change.
- The Green Credits Programme is a market-based incentive scheme that **aims to reward individuals and organizations for taking positive environmental actions.** These actions go beyond just carbon emission reduction and encompass a wider range of sustainability efforts.
- Participants in the program earn **Green Credits** for their verified environmental actions. These credits can then be traded on a dedicated platform, similar to carbon credits, providing financial rewards for their efforts.


Loss and Damage Fund

- The **Loss and Damage Fund** is a mechanism established by the **United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)** to address the **adverse impacts of climate change on developing countries** that are particularly vulnerable to the effects of global warming.
- The fund aims to provide financial and technical support for activities that enhance resilience, reduce risk, and promote recovery from climate-related disasters.
- It supports the development of innovative approaches and solutions to cope with the irreversible and permanent losses and damages caused by climate change, such as sea level rise, desertification, and biodiversity loss.

What is "loss and damage"?

The phrase refers to costs already being incurred from climate-fuelled weather extremes or impacts, like rising sea levels

- Climate funding so far has focused on cutting CO2 emissions, while a third of it went towards helping communities adapt to future impacts
- Loss and damage funding is expected to cover the cost of damage that countries cannot avoid or adapt to
- A report by 55 vulnerable countries estimated that their combined climate-linked losses in the last two decades totalled



\$525 billion, or 20% of their collective GDP. This could go upto \$580 billion per year by 2030

- Vulnerable countries and campaigners argue that rich countries that caused the bulk of climate change with their historical greenhouse gas emissions should pay

Source: Reuters

Codex Alimentarius Commission

- **India's unanimous election to the Executive Committee of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC)** is a significant achievement for the country and its food safety efforts.
- The Codex Alimentarius Commission is an **intergovernmental body established by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Health Organization**

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS MANDATE



PROTECT

the health of consumers



ENSURE

fair practices in food trade



PROMOTE

coordination of all food standards work

(WHO) to develop international food standards, guidelines and codes of practice to protect the health of consumers and ensure fair practices in the food trade.

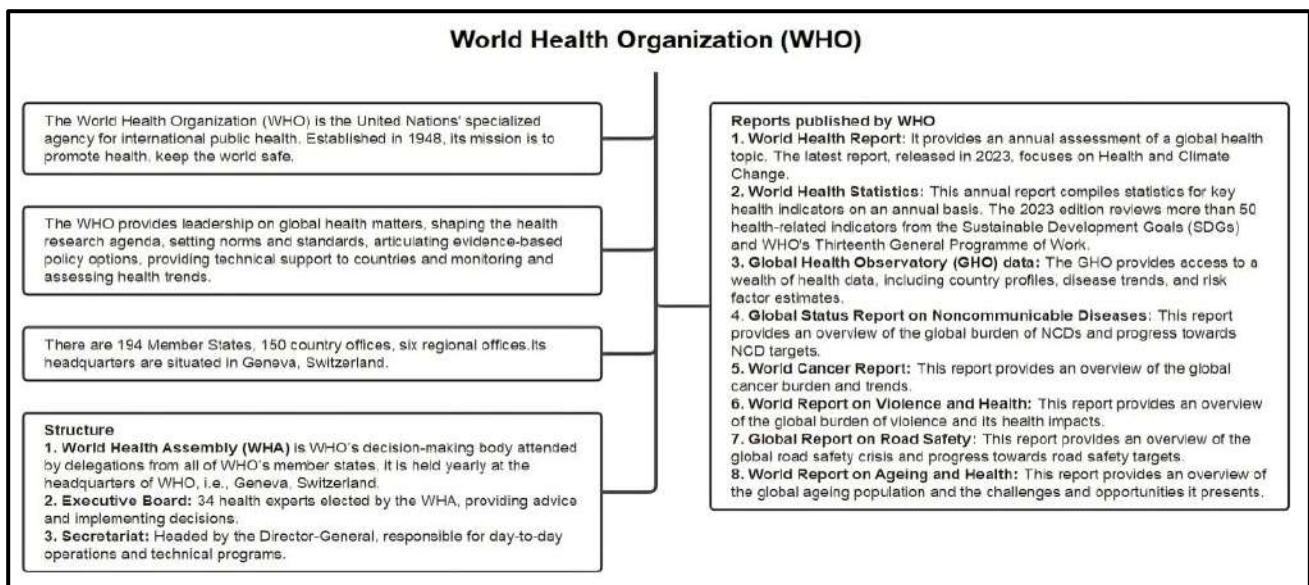
- The Commission promotes coordination of all food-related work undertaken by international governmental and non-governmental organizations.
- The Codex Alimentarius, or "food code", is a collection of standards, guidelines and codes of practice adopted by the Commission. It aims to facilitate international trade in food while ensuring its quality and safety for consumers.

International Maritime Organisation (IMO)

- India has been re-elected to the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Council with the highest vote tally, further solidifying its position as a leading maritime power.
- India secured the highest vote tally among the ten states with the "largest interest in international seaborne trade, receiving 157 out of 167 votes. This is a significant increase from its previous tally of 133 votes in 2019.
- The IMO is a specialized agency of the United Nations responsible for regulating the shipping industry. It sets international standards for maritime safety, security, and environmental protection, ensuring safe and smooth international trade through the world's oceans.

Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023

- The World Health Organization (WHO) published its Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023, indicating a global reduction in road traffic deaths annually worldwide from 2010 to 2021, with 108 UN member nations reporting a decline.
- Road traffic deaths decreased by 5% globally, amounting to 1.19 million fatalities annually between 2010 and 2021.
- The road fatality rate declined from 18 per 100,000 people in 2010 to 15 per 100,000 in 2021, representing a 16% decline in the road traffic death rate since 2010.
- In India, the total number of road traffic fatalities increased from 1.34 lakh in 2010 to 1.54 lakh in 2021, marking a 15% rise.



Gulf of Aden

- The Indian Prime Minister discusses the heightened security threat to maritime vessels in the Gulf of Aden and the Arabian Sea with Saudi Arabia's Prime Minister.
- The Gulf of Aden is a deepwater gulf of the Indian Ocean, situated between Yemen on the north, Djibouti on the west, and Somalia to the south.
- It's a vital waterway for shipping, especially for Persian Gulf oil, making it an integral part of the world economy.
- **Approximately 11% of the world's seaborne petroleum passes through the Gulf of Aden** on its way to the Suez Canal or regional refineries.



Angkor Wat Temple

- **The ancient temple complex of Angkor Wat in Cambodia has been officially recognized as the eighth wonder of the world**, after winning a global vote organized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).
- **The ancient temple complex, built in the 12th century by the Khmer Empire**, is a masterpiece of architecture, art and engineering. It covers an area of over 400 square kilometres and features stunning sculptures, bas-reliefs and towers.
- UNESCO praised the Angkor Wat temple as "a unique testimony to a civilization that disappeared, but also as an exceptional example of cultural interchange and harmonious coexistence of different religions".
- Angkor Wat temple joins the list of other wonders of the world, such as the Great Wall of China, the Taj Mahal, the Colosseum and the Pyramids of Giza.

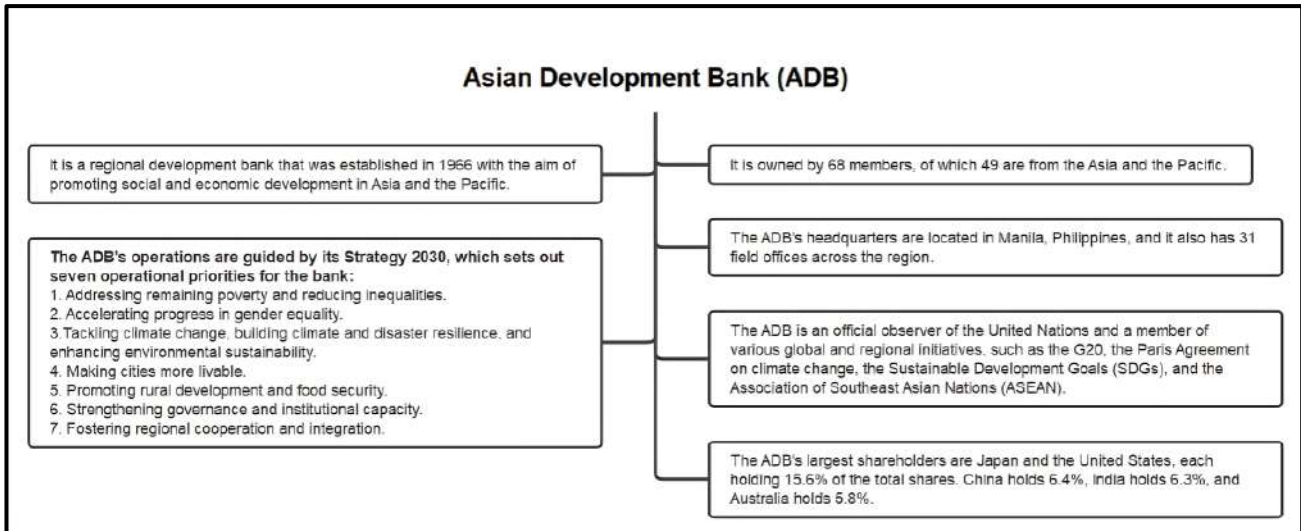


Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS)

- **The Royal Thai Navy hosted the 8th IONS Conclave in Bangkok**, December 19-22, 2023.
- Thailand assumed the IONS Chair for two years, India's flag became official, and India co-chaired key working groups on Maritime Security and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR).
- The Republic of Korea Navy joined as an 'Observer,' increasing IONS' strength to 34 nations.
- India to host the 9th IONS Conclave in 2025, taking Chairmanship from 2025-27, emphasizing commitment to Indian Ocean maritime cooperation.
- **IONS founded in 2008, fosters regional maritime cooperation**, serving as a forum for security discussions and relationship building.
- **IONS is a voluntary initiative** that organises workshops and competitions for maritime security cooperation.

Asian Development Bank (ADB)

- The Government of India and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) have partnered in a \$200 million loan agreement aimed at enhancing Uttarakhand's power supply infrastructure through the Uttarakhand Climate Resilient Power System Development Project.
- The initiative aims to modernize the power system network, enabling better integration and transmission of renewable energy sources to load centres. This modernization will help reduce power outages and technical losses.
- ADB will aid in the capacity development of the Power Transmission Corporation of Uttarakhand Limited and the Uttarakhand Power Corporation Limited. This includes leadership courses, project management programs, and collaborating on formulating an energy transition roadmap to support Uttarakhand's low-carbon transition.



Migration and Development Brief

- According to the latest Migration and Development Brief from the World Bank, remittances to low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) increased by 3.8% in 2023, a slower pace than the previous two years.
- In 2023, remittance flows to LMICs reached an estimated \$669 billion, supported by resilient labour markets in advanced economies and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries.
- The top five remittance recipient countries in 2023 are India (\$125 billion), Mexico (\$67 billion), China (\$50 billion), the Philippines (\$40 billion), and Egypt (\$24 billion).

JT-60SA

- The world's biggest and most advanced nuclear fusion reactor, JT-60SA, is officially up and running in Japan's Ibaraki Prefecture. This joint initiative between the European Union and Japan marks a major leap forward in the pursuit of clean, limitless energy.
- Standing six stories tall and housed in a hangar north of Tokyo, JT-60SA boasts a donut-shaped



"tokamak" vessel.

- **JT-60SA's inauguration is a landmark moment in the quest for sustainable energy solutions.** Its success hinges on international collaboration, cutting-edge technology, and a shared vision for a cleaner future.

China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)

- **Italy's decision to withdraw from China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)** is a significant development with potential ramifications for both nations and the wider geopolitical landscape.
- After being the only G7 nation to join in 2019, Italy has officially notified China of its withdrawal, solidifying Prime Minister Meloni's long-held criticism of the project.
- Critics, including Italy, view BRI as a tool for China to expand its economic and political influence globally, potentially compromising national sovereignty and creating debt burdens for partner countries.
- China's large investments in BRI projects have raised concerns about potential debt traps for participating countries, with data showing significant bailouts for struggling nations.

UN Peacekeeping Mission

- The **Mali government's request to withdraw the UN mission** marks a significant shift, as it reflects dissatisfaction with the UN mission's effectiveness in addressing growing violent extremism.
- Mali has grappled with an escalating Islamic extremist insurgency since 2012, despite initial successes in pushing back rebels with French intervention.
- The UN peacekeeping mission refers to the deployment of military and civilian personnel by the United Nations to conflict zones with the consent of the host country.
- **Primary goals include maintaining ceasefires, protecting civilians, facilitating humanitarian aid, and supporting political processes for lasting peace.** Since its inception in 1948, the mission has evolved to address diverse conflicts, from traditional inter-state wars to civil wars and complex crises involving non-state actors.

World's Deepest Lab

- **China has opened the world's deepest and most spacious underground laboratory,** according to Xinhua news agency. The physics laboratory is located 2,400 metres below the surface in Sichuan Province.
- **One of the main goals of the lab is to detect dark matter, a mysterious substance that makes up about 85% of the matter in the universe but remains invisible to current telescopes.** The reduced cosmic interference in the lab could lead to groundbreaking discoveries in this area.
- It can also be used for research in neutrino physics, geophysics, and other fields that require a clean and shielded environment.

International Year of Camelids

- The **United Nations declares 2024 as the International Year of Camelids.**
- By designating 2024 as the International Year of Camelids, the UN acknowledges the immense significance of camels, llamas, alpacas, vicuñas, and guanacos for communities across dryland and mountainous regions.
- This initiative aims to raise public and policymaker awareness about the diverse contributions of camelids. These animals provide various resources like food, fibre, and transportation, playing an essential role in the livelihoods of countless pastoralist families.

- Camelids thrive in harsh environments and contribute to climate resilience. Highlighting their role can encourage their conservation and incorporation into adaptation strategies for climate change.

Angola

- **Angola has announced its decision to leave the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)** after failing to reach an agreement on oil production quotas with the cartel.
- OPEC, or the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, is an intergovernmental body that coordinates the oil policies of its 13 member states.
- OPEC aims to ensure the stability of oil markets, secure a fair return for its producers, and provide an efficient and regular supply of petroleum to consumers. OPEC was founded in 1960 and is headquartered in Vienna, Austria.



ECONOMICS

Logistics Ease across different States (LEADS) Report

- **The Logistics Ease Across Different States (LEADS) perception survey conducted by the Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry** sheds light on the logistics challenges faced by Indian states and their performance in this crucial aspect.
- Landlocked states have shown improvement in various parameters, including road quality, terminals, cost of logistics, and availability of skilled workforce compared to 2019.
- **Despite improvements, a significant portion of the country's exports (70%) is contributed by only five states:** Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Maharashtra, and Telangana. This concentration creates income and job generation gaps between landlocked and coastal states.
- States like Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, and Chhattisgarh received lower scores on road and terminal quality. Jharkhand, in particular, scored below average across all indicators.

Lakadong Turmeric

- **The Geographical Indication (GI) tag awarded to Lakadong turmeric** ensures official recognition and protection for the distinctive qualities of turmeric grown in the Lakadong area of Jaintia Hills, Meghalaya.
- It is renowned for its exceptionally **high curcumin content**. Curcumin is the active compound in turmeric that is believed to have various health benefits, including anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties.
- It is characterized by its **deep orange-yellow colour**, which is indicative of its high curcumin content. This colour is often associated with the quality and potency of turmeric.
- It is **known for its strong and aromatic fragrance**. This aromatic quality is another indicator of its purity and potency.

Bandhan Bank

- **Bandhan Bank has been authorized by the Reserve Bank of India** to handle the disbursement of pensions for retired employees of the Ministry of Railways.
- The bank will be using **electronic Pension Payment Orders (e-PPOs) for the disbursement of pensions** on behalf of the Ministry of Railways.
- **Indian Railways, with a workforce of nearly 12 lakhs**, is the largest employer in the country. Bandhan Bank's authorization allows it to disburse pensions to all retired employees of the Ministry of Railways.
- The authorization grants Bandhan Bank access to a significant number of retirees, estimated at around 50,000 on average every year, from various offices, including 17 zonal railways and 8 production units of Indian Railways.

eSvarna

- **IndusInd Bank is the first bank in India to launch a corporate credit card on the RuPay network** and integrate UPI functionality into a corporate credit card. This gives them a significant first-mover advantage in this segment.
- **The UPI integration makes the card more convenient for corporate employees**, as they can use it for both credit card transactions and UPI payments through a single card. This can simplify expense management for both employees and companies.
- The RuPay network is becoming increasingly popular in India, and this card will give corporate employees access to a wider range of merchants where they can use their cards.

Payments Infrastructure Development Fund (PIDF)

- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has extended the Payments Infrastructure Development Fund (PIDF) scheme till December 31, 2025**. This is a positive development for India's digital payments infrastructure, as it will help to increase the adoption of digital payments in smaller cities and towns.
- The PIDF scheme was launched in 2021 with the objective of providing financial assistance to banks and non-bank financial companies (NBFCs) for the deployment of point-of-sale (PoS) terminals and other payment acceptance infrastructure in tier-3 to tier-6 cities and the northeastern states of India.

Sukanya Samridhhi Scheme (SSY)

- The SSY interest rate has been increased by 20 basis points (bps) to 8.2% for the January-March 2024 quarter.
- **It is a small savings scheme launched by the Government of India in 2015** to encourage people to save for the education and marriage of their girl children. The scheme is open to all Indian citizens, with the minimum age of the girl child being 10 years or less at the time of opening the account. The account can be opened by any parent, guardian, or grandparent of the girl child.
- **The minimum contribution to the scheme is Rs. 250 per month, and the maximum is Rs. 1.5 lakh per year**. The account can be opened with a minimum deposit of Rs. 250, and subsequent deposits can be made in multiples of Rs. 50.
- The account matures after 21 years from the date of opening. At maturity, the account holder will receive the entire balance, including the interest accrued.
- The contributions to the Sukanya Samridhhi Scheme are eligible for deduction under Section 80C of the Income Tax Act, 1961.

Growth for the Indian economy

- The **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** projecting a **6.3% growth for the Indian economy** in both FY24 and FY25 is certainly an interesting development with several nuances to consider:
- The IMF's praise for India's macroeconomic policies and reforms highlights the country's efforts towards fiscal prudence and financial stability, which are crucial for sustained economic growth.
- The IMF acknowledges that India could achieve even higher growth with greater contributions from labour and human capital. This suggests opportunities for further reforms and investments in these areas to unlock India's full economic potential.

International Monetary Fund (IMF)

- It is an international organization that was established in 1944 at the Bretton Woods Conference in New Hampshire, United States. **The IMF is headquartered in Washington, D.C., and has 190 member countries.**
- The IMF's mission is to promote global financial stability, encourage international trade, and reduce poverty around the world. The IMF achieves its mission by providing financial assistance to member countries that are facing economic difficulties, and by providing technical assistance and training to help member countries improve their economic policies.
- The IMF is governed by a Board of Governors, which is made up of representatives from each of the IMF's member countries. The Board of Governors elects a Managing Director, who is the chief executive officer of the IMF. **The current Managing Director is Kristalina Georgieva, who was elected in 2019.**



DEFENCE & SECURITY

Operation Prosperity Guardian

- The **United States has announced the creation of a new multinational task force called Operation Prosperity Guardian to combat Houthi rebel attacks** on international maritime trade in the Red Sea.
- The task force involved the navies of 10 countries: Bahrain, Canada, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Seychelles, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the United States.
- The Houthis have been launching attacks on merchant vessels in the Red Sea, forcing companies to re-route their shipping lanes.
- The Houthis are a Shia Islamist political and military organization that emerged in Yemen, in the 1990s. The Houthis possess a well-equipped and experienced military force, including ground troops, drones, and ballistic missiles.

SAMAR Air Defence Missile System

- The **Indian Air Force successfully test-fires its SAMAR air defence missile system.**
- The system, created using refurbished Russian-origin air-to-air missile systems, is a short-range, quick-reaction surface-to-air missile system.
- It involves a twin-turret launch platform that can launch two missiles in single or salvo mode.
- It **operates at a speed range of 2 to 2.5 Mach with a 12-kilometre engagement range.**

- It is designed to engage low-flying aerial threats, including fighter planes, helicopters, and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs).

Solid-Fuel Missiles

- **North Korea's recent test-firing of a solid-fuel intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM)** has raised alarms in the international community.
- **Unlike liquid-fuel missiles, which require lengthy fueling processes,** solid-fuel missiles can be stored and launched quickly, maximizing surprise and minimizing vulnerability.
- **Solid fuel is less prone to leaks and corrosion,** demanding less maintenance and upkeep compared to liquid fuels. Their compact and stable nature makes them easier to transport and deploy, increasing deployment flexibility.
- **Solid-fuel missiles operate through the rapid combustion** of a special mixture called solid propellant. This mixture typically comprises Fuel, Oxidizer, and Binding Agent.

INS Kochi

- Indian destroyer INS Kochi evacuated a Bulgarian sailor with a gunshot wound from the hijacked MV Ruen off the coast of Somalia.
- **INS Kochi is a stealth guided-missile destroyer of the Indian Navy,** built under Project 15A.
- It is equipped with advanced weapons and sensors, such as the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile, the Barak 8 long-range surface-to-air missile, the MF-STAR multi-function active phased array radar, and the HUMSA-NG sonar.
- **It also has a COGAG propulsion system,** a combat management system, and a network of digital systems.
- It can operate two helicopters and has a complement of 40 officers and 350 sailors.

Flying Wing Technology Demonstrator

- **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) conducted a successful flight trial of the Autonomous Flying Wing Technology Demonstrator** in Karnataka's Chitradurga.
- It is an indigenous high-speed flying-wing Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) developed by DRDO's Aeronautical Development Establishment.
- **The aircraft prototype features a complex arrowhead wing platform** made of lightweight carbon prepreg composite material developed within the country.
- **This high-speed UAV can autonomously land without relying on ground radars,** infrastructure, or a pilot, enabling take-off and landing from any surveyed runway coordinates.



INS Imphal

- **INS Imphal was Commissioned as India's newest stealth destroyer,** part of the Visakhapatnam class, showcasing indigenous technology and combat capabilities.
- **Over 75% indigenous content, housing BrahMos missiles and advanced weaponry developed by Indian firms,** reflecting self-reliance in defence.
- Advanced stealth features, speeds up to 56 km/h, and designed for nuclear, biological, and chemical warfare scenarios.

- Constructed at Mazagon Dock Limited, notable for efficiency. Named after Imphal, paying homage to Manipur's role in India's freedom movement.

Central Industrial Security Force (CISF)

- Following a security breach in the Lok Sabha, the Union Home Ministry has decided to deploy the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) to take over the security of the Parliament complex.
- The CISF is a **paramilitary force** that provides security cover to vital installations of the country, such as airports, seaports, nuclear power plants, space facilities, and heritage monuments. It also protects VIPs and provides disaster management and firefighting services.
- The CISF was **established in 1969 as a part of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) but became an independent organization in 1983**. It has a strength of over 1.5 lakh personnel and is headed by a Director General who reports to the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Agni-1 Missile

- India successfully conducted a training **launch of the Short-Range Ballistic Missile (SRBM) Agni-1 from APJ Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of Odisha**.
- It was developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) as part of the Integrated Guided Missile Development Program (IGMDP).
- It is a single-stage, solid-fueled missile with a range of about 700 to 1200 kilometres.
- **It can carry a payload of up to 1,000 kilograms**, which could include a conventional warhead or a nuclear warhead.



Table-Top Exercise

- The **Indian Army conducted** a five-day Table-Top Exercise (TTX) **for women officers from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) member countries**. The exercise took place from December 4th to 8th, 2023, **at the prestigious Manekshaw Centre in New Delhi, India**.
- It was specifically designed to cater to the needs and challenges faced by women peacekeepers. It aimed to provide them with a platform to share their experiences, learn from each other, and enhance their skills in various aspects of peacekeeping operations.
- **The TTX was organized by the Centre for United Nations Peacekeeping (CUNPK) in India**, which is a premier training institution for peacekeeping personnel.
- **The exercise was attended by women officers from all ten ASEAN member countries: Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam**.

Exercise VINBAX

- The 4th edition of the Joint Military Exercise VINBAX, held from December 11th to 21st, 2023, **in Hanoi, Vietnam**.
- This annual exercise, alternating between the two countries, fosters collaboration, interoperability, and knowledge sharing in peacekeeping operations.
- It strengthens the understanding and interoperability between the Indian and Vietnamese forces. It promotes knowledge sharing and exchange of best practices in peacekeeping operations.

- **VINBAX was initiated in 2018, with the first edition held in Jabalpur, India.** The previous exercise was conducted at Chandimandir Military Station in India in August 2022.

Defence Acquisition Council (DAC)

- The Defense Acquisition Council (DAC) approves the acquisition of an indigenously developed aircraft for the armed forces. It is a crucial decision-making body **within the Ministry of Defence**.
- It was **established in 2001 following recommendations after the Kargil War in 1999**. These recommendations aimed at reforming the national security system and enhancing defence preparedness.
- The council is **chaired by the Minister of Defence**, who leads discussions, deliberations, and decision-making processes related to defence acquisitions and policies.
- It consists of senior officials from the Ministry of Defence, the Armed Forces, and other relevant stakeholders involved in defence acquisition and policymaking.



SCIENCE

Noma

- **Noma, a gangrenous infection** that causes severe facial disfigurement and often death, has been officially **recognized as a neglected tropical disease (NTD) by the World Health Organization (WHO)**.
- The disease, which mainly affects children under 6 years old in sub-Saharan Africa, is associated with poor nutrition, lack of oral hygiene, compromised immunity, and extreme poverty.
- The WHO hopes that by adding noma to its list of NTDs, it will raise awareness and mobilize resources to prevent and treat this devastating condition.

Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs)

- They are a group of 20 or so conditions that mainly affect impoverished communities in tropical and subtropical regions. **They are often called "neglected" because they receive less attention and funding for research, development, and control compared to other diseases like HIV/AIDS or malaria.**
- They are **caused by a variety of pathogens, including viruses, bacteria, parasites, fungi, and toxins.** They can be transmitted through insects, water, soil, and other means.
- They disproportionately affect the poorest and most marginalized populations, including women and children. They can trap people in a cycle of poverty by hindering their ability to attend school, work, and earn a living.
- Many NTDs can be controlled or even eliminated with affordable interventions, such as mass drug administration, vector control, and improved sanitation.

Amrit Technology

- AMRIT is a **water purification technology developed by IIT-Madras** that can remove arsenic and metal ions from water.
- It uses nano-sized iron oxyhydroxide particles that bind to arsenic and other contaminants when water flows through them. AMRIT can be used for both household and community purposes.
- It has been approved by the former Standing Committee of the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation as one of the best technologies for water and sanitation.



SPORTS

Grandmaster

- **Vaishali Rameshbabu and Rameshbabu Pragganandhaa, the sister-brother duo, both achieved the prestigious title of Grandmaster in chess, the highest honour awarded by FIDE, the International Chess Federation.**
- A Grandmaster is the most prestigious title awarded by FIDE, recognizing exceptional proficiency in chess. It's a testament to a player's strategic understanding, tactical ability, and consistent performance against elite competition
- Once awarded, the Grandmaster title is held for life, unless a player engages in unethical behaviour or cheating, leading to potential revocation by FIDE.



Ruturaj Gaikwad

- Ruturaj Gaikwad has achieved a remarkable milestone in men's T20 cricket by becoming **the fastest Indian to score 4,000 runs in the format.**
- He reached the landmark in the fourth T20I against Australia at the Shaheed Veer Narayan Singh International Stadium in Raipur.
- Gaikwad's 4,000 runs in just 116 innings make him the fastest Indian to reach this milestone, surpassing the previous record held by Virat Kohli. This achievement showcases his consistent performance and immense talent in the T20 format.



IBA Junior World Boxing Championship 2023

- India had a remarkable performance at the IBA Junior World Boxing Championship 2023, held in Yerevan, Armenia.
- The Indian contingent secured three gold, five silver and one bronze medals on the final day of the event.
- **The gold medalists were Akansha in the 70 kg category, Pari in the 48 kg category, and Nisha in the 52 kg category.** Vini and Srishti Sathe won silver medals in the 52 kg and 63 kg categories respectively.
- In the boys' category, Jatin clinched the silver medal in the 54 kg category. Hardik Panwar, Ameesha Kereta and Prachi Tokas also won silver medals in the 80 kg, 54 kg and 80 kg categories respectively.

Vijay Hazare Trophy in 2023

- **Haryana created history by lifting their maiden Vijay Hazare Trophy in 2023, defeating Rajasthan by 30 runs in the summit clash at the Saurashtra Cricket Association Stadium in Rajkot.**
- Haryana were unstoppable throughout the tournament, winning all their matches and showcasing their all-round prowess.



OBITUARIES

Henry Kissinger

- Henry Kissinger, a U.S. diplomat during the Cold War, passed away at the age of 100.
- **He was known for his role in shaping the foreign policy** of the United States and its relations with China, the Soviet Union, and other countries.
- **He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1973** for his efforts to end the Vietnam War.
- He also faced criticism for his involvement in controversial actions such as the bombing of Cambodia, the coup in Chile, and the support of dictators.
- He leaves behind a legacy of achievements and controversies that will continue to be debated by historians and scholars.



APPOINTMENTS

Praveen Keshav Vohra

- **Air Marshal Praveen Keshav Vohra has taken over as the Senior Air Staff Officer (SASO) of Western Air Command** of the Indian Air Force on 01 December 2023.
- He is an alumnus of the National Defence Academy and was commissioned as a fighter pilot in the Indian Air Force in 1987.
- He has served across the length and breadth of our nation having flown over 3500 Hr, primarily on Mig-21 variants and the Mig-29 aircraft.
- He was also one of the founder members of the Indian Air Force's Formation Aerobatic Team on the indigenous Kiran MK-II aircraft, the 'Suryakirans'.



Andry Rajoelina

- In November 2023, **Andry Rajoelina was re-elected as the President of Madagascar** in a controversial election marked by a low turnout and an opposition boycott.
- Rajoelina won 59% of the vote, but the election was marred by accusations of irregularities and voter intimidation. Ten out of the 13 presidential candidates boycotted the election, urging their supporters to stay home. This led to a historically low turnout of just 46%.
- Rajoelina's re-election is likely to deepen the political divide in Madagascar. The country has a long history of political instability, and this latest election is unlikely to bring an end to that.



Donald Tusk

- **In December 2023, the Polish Parliament voted to elect Tusk as the new Prime Minister**, marking his return to the position he previously held from 2007 to 2014.

- Tusk is a seasoned politician with extensive experience, having previously served as Prime Minister and President of the European Council. His return brings stability and a fresh perspective to the Polish political scene.



Abdelfattah Elsis

- **President Abdelfattah Elsis** was declared the winner of the **Egyptian Presidential Elections** on December 18, 2023, securing a third term in office. The National Elections Authority announced that Elsis garnered 89.6% of the vote with a turnout of 66.8%.
- Elsis's win was a decisive one, marking a continuation of his leadership since 2014.
- The results have been met with mixed reactions from the international community, with some expressing concerns about human rights and political opposition in Egypt.



Sanjiv Khanna

- **The President of India has appointed Justice Sanjiv Khanna**, the senior-most judge of the Supreme Court, as the Executive Chairperson of the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA).
- The National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) is a statutory body established under the Legal Services Authorities Act 1987.
- **The main objective of NALSA is to provide free legal services to the weaker sections of society** and to organize Lok Adalats for amicable settlement of disputes.
- NALSA organizes Lok Adalats at various levels, which are alternative dispute resolution mechanisms where cases are settled through conciliation and compromise.



Akshata Krishnamurthy

- **Akshata stands as the first Indian to operate a Mars rover for NASA**, marking a significant milestone for Indian representation in the global space exploration field.
- Equipped with a PhD from the prestigious Massachusetts Institute of Technology, she brings exceptional expertise and knowledge to her NASA role.
- **Akshata's accomplishment paves the way for future generations of aspiring Indian scientists** and engineers who dream of contributing to space exploration.
- Being among the few Indians to secure a full-time opportunity at NASA demonstrates her immense talent and perseverance in navigating a typically underrepresented landscape.



Kanchan Devi

- **Kanchan Devi, a 1991-batch Indian Forest Service Officer of the Madhya Pradesh cadre**, has been appointed as the Director General (DG) of the Indian Council of Forestry Research Education (ICFRE).
- **She is the first woman officer to occupy this position in the history of the council**, which is under the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change.

- The ICFRE, based in Dehradun, is the country's foremost organization for guiding the Government of India, the state governments and other stakeholders such as farmers, industries and academicians on matters related to forestry research and technologies.



Samir Shah

- Samir Shah, a 71-year-old media executive with Indian roots**, has been appointed as the new chair of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC).
- Shah, who was born in Aurangabad and migrated to the U.K. in 1960, has previously served as a non-executive director of the BBC and has extensive experience in the media industry.



AWARDS

National Sports Awards 2023

- The National Sports Awards 2023 have been announced by the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports. The awards will be presented by the President of India on 09th January 2024.

Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award 2023

Name of the sportsperson	Discipline
Shri Chirag Chandrashekhar Shetty	Badminton
Shri Rankireddy Satwik Sai Raj	Badminton

Arjuna Awards for outstanding performance in Sports and Games 2023

Name of the sportsperson	Discipline	Name of the sportsperson	Discipline
Shri Ojas Pravin Deotale	Archery	Ms Ritu Negi	Kabaddi
Ms Aditi Gopichand Swami	Archery	Ms Nasreen	Kho-Kho
Shri Sreeshankar M	Athletics	Ms Pinki	Lawn Bowls
Ms Parul Chaudhary	Athletics	Shri Aishwarya Pratap Singh Tomar	Shooting
Shri Mohammed Hussamuddin	Boxing	Ms Esha Singh	Shooting
Ms R Vaishali	Chess	Shri Harinder Pal Singh Sandhu	Squash
Shri Mohammed Shami	Cricket	Ms Ayhika Mukherjee	Table Tennis
Shri Anush Agarwalla	Equestrian	Shri Sunil Kumar	Wrestling
Ms Divyakriti Singh	Equestrian Dressage	Ms Antim	Wrestling
Ms Diksha Dagar	Golf	Ms Naorem Roshibina Devi	Wushu
Shri Krishan Bahadur Pathak	Hockey	Ms Sheetal Devi	Para Archery
Ms Pukhrambam Sushila Chanu	Hockey	Shri Illuri Ajay Kumar Reddy	Blind Cricket
Shri Pawan Kumar	Kabaddi	Ms Prachi Yadav	Para Canoeing

Dronacharya Award for outstanding coaches in Sports and Games 2023

A. Regular Category:

Name of the Coach	Discipline
Shri Lalit Kumar	Wrestling
Shri R. B. Ramesh	Chess
Shri Mahaveer Prasad Saini	Para Athletics
Shri Shivendra Singh	Hockey
Shri Ganesh Prabhakar Devrukhkar	Mallakhamb

B. Lifetime Category:

Name of the Coach	Discipline
Shri Jaskirat Singh Grewal	Golf
Shri Bhaskaran E	Kabaddi
Shri Jayanta Kumar Pushilal	Table Tennis

Dhyan Chand Award for Lifetime achievement in Sports and Games 2023:

Name of the sportsperson	Discipline
Ms Manjusha Kanwar	Badminton
Shri Vineet Kumar Sharma	Hockey
Ms Kavitha Selvaraj	Kabaddi

Rijul Maini

- Rijul Maini, a medical student from Michigan, won the title of Miss India USA 2023 in a pageant held in New Jersey, USA.
- The 24-year-old Indian-American has a passion for surgery and wants to inspire women to pursue their dreams.
- She competed against 25 other contestants and impressed the judges with her talent, poise and confidence.



Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace

- The Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development for 2023 has been **awarded jointly to Daniel Barenboim and Ali Abu Awwad for their efforts in promoting peace and understanding between Israel and the Arab world.**
- Barenboim is an internationally acclaimed classical pianist and conductor known for his performances with leading orchestras worldwide. He founded the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra and the Barenboim-Said Akademie to bring together youth from Israel, Palestine, and other Arab and North African countries, fostering unity and understanding through music.
- **Awwad is an eminent Palestinian peace activist dedicated to a non-violent resolution** of the Israel-Palestine conflict. Awwad's peace-building efforts led to the creation of Taghyeer, a Palestinian non-



violence movement launched by over 3,000 Palestinians in 2016. It focuses on social development needs and advocates for a non-violent path to end the Occupation.

- The **Indira Gandhi Peace Prize** was instituted in 1986 in memory of Indira Gandhi, the former Prime Minister of India, who was assassinated in 1984. The prize carries a cash award of 2.5 million Indian rupees and a citation.

Savita Ladage

- Professor Savita Ladage from the Homi Bhabha Centre for Science Education, Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), has been awarded the prestigious **Royal Society of Chemistry's (RSC) Nyholm Prize for Education** in recognition of her outstanding contributions to chemistry education.
- The Royal Society of Chemistry's Nyholm Prize acknowledges her remarkable dedication to chemistry education. It places her among a group of esteemed individuals who have made significant contributions to the field.
- The award, comprising £5,000, a medal, and a certificate, reflects her outstanding commitment and influence in this domain.



V R Lalithambika

- **Dr. V R Lalithambika**, the former director of the Human Spaceflight Program at the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), was conferred with the prestigious **Légion d'honneur** by France. This award recognises her significant contributions to enhancing the space cooperation between France and India.
- She received the award from Mr. Thierry Mathou, the Ambassador of France to India, on behalf of the French government.
- The Légion d'honneur is the highest civilian honour bestowed by the French Republic, established by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1802. It is awarded to individuals who have rendered exceptional service to France, regardless of their nationality.



Kabir Bedi

- The '**Order of Merit**' is one of the highest civilian honours in Italy, and it has been recently bestowed upon veteran actor Kabir Bedi for his remarkable achievements in the entertainment industry.
- Kabir Bedi has a long and illustrious career in cinema, spanning across Indian and international projects.
- He has received this honour as a recognition of his outstanding contributions to the world of cinema and his global appeal as a distinguished actor.





BOOKS & AUTHORS

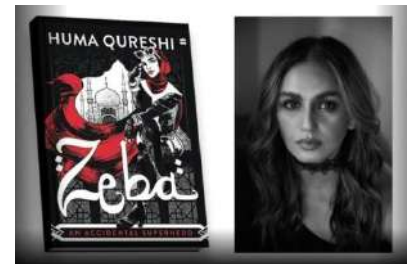
Book 'Welcome to Paradise'

- The renowned author and columnist **Twinkle Khanna** launched her new book, '**Welcome to Paradise**,' at a star-studded event in Mumbai.
- The book is a collection of humorous and insightful essays on various topics, ranging from parenting to politics.
- Khanna, who is known for her witty and candid style of writing, said that she wanted to share her experiences and perspectives with her readers in a fun and engaging way.



Book 'Zeba: An Accidental Superhero'

- **Huma Qureshi**, a well-known Bollywood actor, has ventured into the literary world with her **first novel**, '**Zeba: An Accidental Superhero**'.
- The novel is a fantasy fiction that explores a fictional kingdom and its political turmoil, as well as the journey of Zeba, a young girl who discovers her superpowers and uses them to overthrow an evil king.
- The novel spans from 1992 to 2019 and draws inspiration from real-world events and issues. Qureshi launched her novel at the 12th edition of the Bangalore Literature Festival (BLF), where she shared her insights and experiences as a writer.



IMPORTANT DAYS

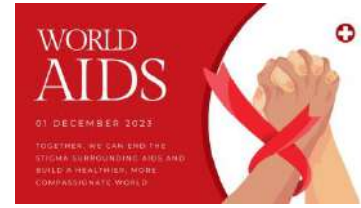
BSF Raising Day

- The **Border Security Force (BSF) Raising Day** is an **annual celebration on December 1st in India**, commemorating the foundation of this elite paramilitary force in 1965.
- Established in the aftermath of the Indo-Pakistani War of 1965, the BSF has evolved into the world's largest border-guarding force.
- The BSF is the primary border guarding force of India, responsible for securing the land borders with Pakistan and Bangladesh, as well as assisting in internal security and counter-insurgency operations.
- The **motto of the Border Security Force (BSF)** is "**जीवन पर्यन्त कर्तव्य**," which translates to "**Duty Unto Death**" in English.



World AIDS Day

- **World AIDS Day observed annually on December 1st**, aims to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS, commemorate those who have lost their lives to the disease, show support for people living with HIV, and advocate for continued efforts in prevention, treatment, and research.
- **The theme for World AIDS Day 2023 is "Let Communities Lead"**, highlighting the crucial role that communities play in the fight against AIDS.
- According to the latest data from the United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), 7 million people were living with HIV worldwide in 2020, and 1.5 million people died from AIDS-related illnesses.



National Pollution Control Day

- **Every year, December 2nd is marked as National Pollution Control Day** to create awareness about the harmful effects of pollution and the need to prevent it.
- The day also remembers the victims of the Bhopal gas tragedy, one of the worst industrial disasters in history that occurred in 1984.
- **The theme for National Pollution Control Day 2023 is "Sustainable Development for a Clean and Healthy Planet"**. This theme highlights the link between environmental conservation and sustainable development. It urges us to adopt eco-friendly practices to achieve sustainable development and secure a healthy planet for future generations.

International Day for Abolition of Slavery 2023

- **The International Day for the Abolition of Slavery, observed on December 2**, aims to raise awareness and mobilize action against the various forms of slavery that persist in the world today.
- An estimated 150 million children are engaged in child labour, and more than 40 million people are subjected to modern slavery, such as trafficking, sexual exploitation, forced marriage, and child soldiering.
- **The theme of this year's commemoration is "Fighting slavery's legacy of racism through transformative education."** It highlights the need to address the root causes of slavery, such as racism, discrimination, and inequality, and to promote education that fosters respect for

An advertisement for WBCS Mains Test Series 2023. The background is blue with a white wave-like shape. The text 'WBCS MAINS TEST SERIES 2023' is written in white and yellow. To the right, '16 TESTS' is written in yellow and white. At the bottom, there are two price options: '₹1,999 [Online]' and '₹2,999 [Offline]'. The bottom right corner features an illustration of a person standing next to a large document and a pencil.

human rights, diversity, and social justice.

International Day of Persons with Disabilities

- The **2023 International Day of Persons with Disabilities**, also known as **World Day of the Handicapped**, is a global observance that aims to raise awareness and support for people with different kinds of disabilities.
- The United Nations General Assembly declared this day in 1992 to promote the respect, rights and well-being of persons with disabilities.
- The theme for the **2023 International Day of Persons with Disabilities** is **“United in action to rescue and achieve the SDGs for, with and by persons with disabilities”**. This theme highlights the importance of working together to ensure that people with disabilities are not left behind in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

World Soil Day

- **World Soil Day (WSD)**, celebrated every year on **December 5**, is an opportunity to raise awareness and appreciation of the importance of soil for our survival and well-being.
- The theme for **World Soil Day 2023** is **‘Soil and Water, a Source of Life’**, highlighting the interlinked nature of these two essential resources.
- World Soil Day is a global initiative that invites everyone to take action to protect and conserve soil and water. By adopting sustainable soil management practices, we can enhance the quality and quantity of water, improve food security and nutrition, combat climate change, and preserve biodiversity.

International Anti-Corruption Day

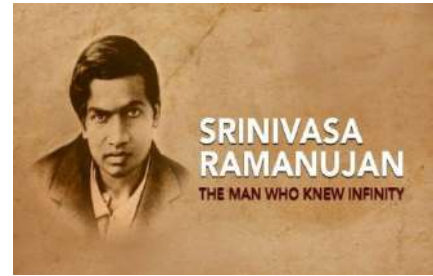
- Every year, on **December 9**, people around the world observe **International Anti-Corruption Day (IACD)** to highlight the negative effects of corruption on society, development and progress.
- Corruption is a widespread problem that undermines trust, justice and democracy in many countries. By raising awareness and taking action, we can fight against this evil and promote integrity, transparency and accountability.
- According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the theme for this year’s celebration of **International Anti-Corruption Day** is **‘UNCAC at 20: Uniting the World Against Corruption.’**

International Human Rights Day

- **Human Rights Day** is observed annually on **December 10** to mark the anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the UN General Assembly in 1948.
- This day serves as a reminder and a call to action for all actors in the global and local community to respect and uphold human rights in their policies and practices.
- The theme for **Human Rights Day 2023** is **“Freedom, Equality and Justice for All”**, which reflects the core values and principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the human rights treaties that followed.

National Mathematics Day

- **National Mathematics Day 2023 is observed on the 22nd of December 2023** to honour the legacy of Srinivasa Ramanujan, one of the greatest mathematicians of India and the world.
- Ramanujan was born in 1887 in Tamil Nadu and showed remarkable talent in mathematics from a young age. He had little formal education, but he developed many original theorems and formulas in various branches of mathematics.
- Ramanujan went to Cambridge in 1914 and worked with Hardy and other eminent mathematicians. He made significant contributions to number theory, infinite series, partitions, and other fields. He was elected as a member of the London Mathematical Society in 1917 and a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1918. He was one of the youngest and the first Indian to receive these honours.
- **Ramanujan died in 1920 at the age of 32 due to ill health.** His work has inspired many mathematicians and scientists, and his notebooks contain many unsolved problems that are still being explored.



National Farmers' Day

- National Farmers' Day is a special day to celebrate the contributions of the farmers who feed the nation.
- **It is celebrated on December 23 every year**, which coincides with the birth anniversary of Chaudhary Charan Singh, a former prime minister who championed the cause of farmers.
- **The theme for 2023 is 'Delivering Smart Solutions for Sustainable Food Security and Resilience'**. This theme highlights the need for innovative and sustainable practices to ensure food security and resilience in the face of climate change and other challenges.

Good Governance Day

- **Good Governance Day is an annual event celebrated in India on 25 December**, the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.
- The day was first observed in 2014 to honour his contributions to the nation and to promote good governance practices among the citizens and the government.
- The day aims to spread awareness about the importance of accountability, transparency, efficiency and responsiveness in public administration.



IMPORTANT GK FACTS IN NEWS

- **Nagaland Statehood Day is celebrated on December 1st every year.** It marks the anniversary of Nagaland's official inauguration as the 16th state of the Indian Union in 1963.
- **Tele MANAS is a telemedicine platform that connects patients with mental health professionals.** It allows users to access online consultations, therapy sessions, and self-help resources. It aims to provide affordable and accessible mental health care for everyone.

- **UDAN (Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik)** is a regional air connectivity scheme launched by the Government of India in 2016. It aims to make air travel affordable and accessible for the common man by connecting unserved and underserved airports across the country.
- **PM e-VIDYA** is a digital platform launched by the Prime Minister of India to provide online education to students across the country. It aims to ensure continuity of learning during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. PM e-VIDYA offers access to high-quality content, interactive sessions, assessments, and feedback through various channels such as TV, radio, web, and mobile apps.
- The **National Centre for Sustainable Coastal Management (NCSCM)** is an autonomous institution under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) of the Government of India. It was established in 2011 with the vision to manage the Indian coast sustainably.
- The **Namami Gange Programme** is an Integrated Conservation Mission, approved as a Flagship Programme by the Union Government of India in June 2014 with a budget outlay of ₹20,000 crore (US\$2.5 billion) to accomplish the twin objectives of effective abatement of pollution, conservation and rejuvenation of National River Ganga.
- **Mission Amrit Sarovar** is a crucial initiative launched by the Indian government in April 2022 to address the growing water crisis and promote sustainable water conservation practices. The ambitious goal of this mission is to develop or rejuvenate at least 75 Amrit Sarovars (ponds) in each district across the country, totalling around 50,000 Amrit Sarovars nationwide.
- **Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY)** is a national mission launched by the Government of India in 2015 to achieve the targets of "Har Khet Ko Pani" and "More Crop Per Drop". The mission aims to enhance irrigation coverage, improve water use efficiency, and promote sustainable water management practices in the country.
- **Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY)** is a crop insurance scheme launched by the Government of India in 2016. The scheme aims to provide financial support to farmers in case of crop failure due to natural calamities, pests and diseases. The scheme covers all food crops, oilseeds and commercial crops.
- **PM GatiShakti** is a national infrastructure master plan that aims to integrate various modes of transport and logistics in India. The plan was launched by Prime Minister in 2021, with a vision to create a seamless, efficient and sustainable infrastructure network for the country. It is expected to boost

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economic growth, generate employment opportunities, reduce logistics costs and enhance connectivity across regions.

- The **Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY)** is a flagship scheme for the development of the fisheries sector in the country. The scheme aims to enhance fish production, create employment opportunities, improve the livelihoods of fishers and fish farmers, and ensure food and nutritional security.
- **One District One Product (ODOP)** is a scheme that aims to promote the traditional and indigenous industries of each district in India. It provides financial and technical support to the artisans and entrepreneurs who produce unique products that reflect the local culture and heritage.
- **Atal Tinkering Labs (ATLs)** are a nationwide initiative launched by the Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), an arm of NITI Aayog, under the Innovation in Science Pursuit for Inspired Research (INSPIRE) program of the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India.
- The **Miyawaki Plantation Method** is a unique afforestation technique named after Japanese botanist Akira Miyawaki. It aims to quickly develop dense, multi-layered forests on degraded land by mimicking the natural forest ecosystem.
- The **National Green Hydrogen Mission** is an initiative by the Indian government to promote the production and use of green hydrogen, which is hydrogen, derived from renewable energy sources. The mission aims to reduce India's dependence on fossil fuels, lower greenhouse gas emissions, and create new opportunities for economic growth and innovation.
- **Hanukkah**, also known as the Festival of Lights, is a joyful eight-day Jewish holiday that commemorates the rededication of the Second Temple in Jerusalem after its desecration by the Seleucid Empire in the 2nd century BCE.
- The **"Adopt a Heritage 2.0" Program** is an initiative of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism to encourage private sector participation in the conservation and maintenance of India's cultural heritage. Under the program, eligible entities can adopt heritage sites or monuments and undertake various activities such as cleanliness, landscaping, signage, visitor facilities, etc.
- The **Monument Mitra Scheme** is an initiative of the Ministry of Tourism, to promote the conservation and development of heritage sites in the country. The scheme aims to involve private and public sector companies, as well as individuals, in adopting monuments and providing amenities and facilities for tourists.
- The **Agartala-Akhaura railway project** is a 15.054-kilometer (9.335-mile) railway line connecting Agartala, the capital of the northeastern Indian state of Tripura, with Akhaura Junction railway station in Brahmanbaria district of Bangladesh.

- **The Pradhan Mantri Development Initiative for North-East Region (PM-DevINE)** is a new central sector scheme launched by the Government of India in October 2022. It **aims to accelerate infrastructure and social development in the northeastern states of India.**
- **The Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (GPAI)** is an international initiative aimed at **guiding the responsible development and use of artificial intelligence (AI)** in a manner that respects human rights and democratic values.
- **The National Institution for Transforming India (NITI Aayog)** has released the **first Delta Ranking of the Aspirational Districts Programme (ABP) on its website.** The ranking measures the progress made by the districts in six key areas: health and nutrition, education, agriculture and water resources, financial inclusion, skill development, and basic infrastructure.
- **The Indian and Korean governments** have inaugurated the **Electronic Origin Data Exchange System (EODES), a digital platform that allows the verification of the origin of goods imported from either country.** The EODES aims to facilitate trade and reduce the time and cost of customs clearance for importers and exporters.
- **Ayushman Bharat Yojana** is a flagship health insurance scheme launched by the Government of India in 2018. It aims to provide free or subsidized health coverage to over 500 million poor and vulnerable citizens. The scheme covers hospitalization expenses up to Rs. 5 lakh per family per year for secondary and tertiary care.
- **Smart Cities Mission (SCM)** is a scheme to develop 100 cities that have **core infrastructure, a clean and sustainable environment, and a decent quality of life for their citizens.** The scheme was launched in 2015 and aims to use smart solutions based on technology, social, economic, physical and institutional aspects of the city.
- **Project ARTHA Ganga** is an initiative launched by the Government of India in 2019 as a part of the Namami Ganga Program. The project **aims to promote sustainable and viable economic development** along the banks of the Ganga River.
- **The Atal Pension Yojana (APY)** is a government-sponsored pension scheme aimed at **providing financial security to the unorganized sector workers in India.** Launched in 2015 by former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, it offers guaranteed minimum monthly pensions ranging from Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 5,000 after the age of 60.
- **The Vibrant Villages Programme (VVP)** was launched by the Indian government to **bring comprehensive development to villages along the northern border with China,** specifically in the states of Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Uttarakhand, and Ladakh.
- **The Pro Bono Legal Service Programme (PLSP)** is an ambitious initiative by the Department to **bridge the gap between the vast legal needs of marginalized communities and the available legal resources,** promoting a culture of **pro bono** (free) legal service across the country.

- **The term "Fragile Five" refers to a group of emerging economies that are considered to be vulnerable to external shocks, such as changes in global interest rates, commodity prices, or investor sentiment.** The five countries are Brazil, India, Indonesia, South Africa, and Turkey. They share some common features, such as large current account deficits, high inflation, political instability, and dependence on foreign capital inflows.
- **The Marginal Cost of Funds Lending Rate (MCLR) is a benchmark interest rate used by banks in India to determine the lending rates for various loans,** such as home loans, personal loans, and business loans. Introduced by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in 2016, the MCLR replaced the earlier base rate system for banks.
- **Asola Bhatti wildlife sanctuary is a protected area in the Delhi National Capital Region.** It is home to a rich diversity of flora and fauna, including many endangered and endemic species. The sanctuary is managed by the Delhi Forest Department and the Conservation Education Centre of the Bombay Natural History Society.
- **Pressmud is a by-product of the sugar industry that consists of a mixture of soil, organic matter, and lime.** It can be used as a soil conditioner, a fertilizer, or a source of biogas. Pressmud has several benefits for agriculture, such as improving soil structure, increasing water retention, enhancing nutrient availability, and reducing soil erosion.
- **Buxa Tiger Reserve is a national park and wildlife sanctuary located in the Alipurduar district of West Bengal.** It covers an area of 760 square kilometres and is home to many endangered species of flora and fauna, including the Bengal tiger, Asian elephant, clouded leopard, and Himalayan black bear. The reserve also has a rich cultural heritage, as it was the site of a historic fort and a detention camp during the British Raj.
- **Satpura National Park is a wildlife sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh.** It is home to many endangered species, such as the Bengal tiger, the Indian leopard, the sloth bear, and the gaur. The park also offers scenic views of the Satpura Range, which is part of the Deccan Plateau. Satpura National Park is a popular destination for nature lovers, wildlife enthusiasts, and adventure seekers.
- **The Koya tribe is one of the largest tribal groups in India, mainly inhabiting the states of Telangana, Andhra Pradesh and Chhattisgarh.** They are known for their rich cultural heritage, traditional practices and indigenous knowledge. The Koya tribe speaks a Dravidian language called Koya, which has several dialects.
- **The Banni Grasslands are a semi-arid region in the Kutch district of Gujarat.** They are known for their rich biodiversity, especially of grasses and herbs, and for their pastoral communities that practice animal husbandry. The grasslands are also home to several endangered species, such as the Indian wild ass, the blackbuck, and the great Indian bustard.

- **Nagzira National Park is a wildlife sanctuary in Maharashtra**, that is home to a variety of animals, birds, reptiles and fishes. It is one of the five tiger reserves in the state and has a rich biodiversity. The park is named after a snake temple located in the middle of the forest. The park offers jeep safaris, trekking routes and a museum for visitors to explore and appreciate nature.
- **Pangalokha Wildlife Sanctuary is the largest wildlife reserve in Sikkim**. It is located at the tri-junction of Sikkim, Bengal and Bhutan, and is linked to the forests of Neora Valley National Park and Haa district in Bhutan. It is home to red pandas, snow leopards, black bears and many migratory birds. The sanctuary also has several high-altitude lakes, such as Lake Tsongmo, which are biodiversity hotspots.
- **The Yellow Sea is a marginal sea of the Western Pacific Ocean located between mainland China and the Korean Peninsula**. It is one of four seas named after common colour terms, and its name is descriptive of the golden-yellow colour of the silt-ridden water discharged from major rivers.
- **Udanti Sitanadi Tiger Reserve is a protected area in the state of Chhattisgarh**. It covers an area of 1,872.18 square kilometres and is home to a variety of wildlife, including tigers, leopards, sloth bears, wild dogs, gaur, sambar, chital, nilgai and four-horned antelopes. The reserve aims to conserve the biodiversity and habitat of the region, as well as to promote eco-tourism and environmental education.
- **The Chandra river is one of the two headwaters of the Chenab river, which flows in India and Pakistan**. It originates from the snow-covered Himalayas in the Lahaul and Spiti districts of Himachal Pradesh, India. It joins the Bhaga river at Tandi, forming the Chenab. The Chandra river passes through a cold desert region and is fed by several glaciers. The scenic Chandra Tal lake is located near its source.



BOOSTER DOSE

- **Cyclone Michaung, a moderate tropical cyclone, formed in the Bay of Bengal during the 2023 North Indian Ocean cyclone season**. It developed from a low-pressure area in the Gulf of Thailand, crossed into the Bay of Bengal, and became a deep depression on December 2, 2023.
- Air Marshal Makarand Ranade assumed the appointment of Director General (Inspection and Safety) [DG (I&S)] at Air HQ New Delhi on 01 December 2023.
- **GST Revenue collection for November 2023, at ₹1,67,929 lakh crore**.
- Rakesh Asthana, former Delhi police commissioner, is appointed as a special monitor of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC).
- **The SBM-GOBARDhan Biogas Conference was held at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi**, to promote the Compressed Biogas (CBG) sector and the principles of Waste to Wealth and Circular Economy. The conference aimed to showcase the potential of CBG as a clean and sustainable energy source from organic waste.
- **The Minister of State for Rural Development & Steel opened the SARAS Food Festival in New Delhi**. The festival showcases the culture

and taste of different regions through the food prepared by the SHG Didi.

- **The 6th ICC India Arbitration Day was held on December 2nd, 2023, in Delhi,** commemorating both the day itself and the **Centenary of the ICC International Court of Arbitration (ICC Court).**
- **Andry Rajoelina was re-elected as the President of Madagascar** in a controversial election marked by a low turnout and an opposition boycott.
- **Raksha Rajya Mantri Shri Ajay Bhatt attended the United Nations Peacekeeping Ministerial Meeting in Accra, Ghana,** from December 5-6, 2023. The meeting was hosted by the Department of Peace Operations, UN, and the Republic of Ghana.
- **On December 3, 2023, the International Day of Persons with Disabilities,** the President of India, Smt Droupadi Murmu, presented the National Awards for the Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities for the year 2023 in New Delhi.
- **India has secured another term as a member of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO),** the UN agency that regulates global shipping. India's re-election reflects its strong commitment to maritime safety, security and environmental protection.
- **In India, Navy Day is celebrated on December 4th** to commemorate the daring attack on Karachi harbour by the Indian Navy during the 1971 Indo-Pakistani War. This operation, codenamed 'Trident,' successfully crippled the Pakistani Navy and played a pivotal role in securing India's victory.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently unveiled a grand **statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj at Rajkot Fort in Sindhudurg, Maharashtra,** on December 4, 2023.
- **Indian Naval Ship (INS) Sumedha recently undertook a successful mission deployment at Antsiranana, Madagascar,** from December 4th to 6th, 2023. This visit served multiple purposes, strengthening ties between India and Madagascar while bolstering maritime security in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).
- The delivery of Sandhayak (Yard 3025) to the Indian Navy on December 4, 2023, is a significant milestone for India's maritime capabilities and marks the beginning of a new era in its hydrographic survey capabilities.
- The India Internet Governance Forum IIGF'23, held in New Delhi on December 5, 2023, was a significant event for India's digital landscape.
- The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) celebrated its 66th Foundation Day on December 5th, 2023, at Gift City Club, Gandhinagar, Gujarat.
- **At the 23rd World Congress on Safety and Health at Work in Sydney, Australia, the "ISSA Vision Zero 2023" Award was given to the Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC).** The award recognizes the "Vision Zero" approach, which aims to prevent accidents at work places by combining safety, health and well-being at all levels of work.
- **A new Deeptech Startup Accelerator Program, SAMRIDHI, was launched by the Governor of Punjab** and Administrator of Chandigarh, Shri Banwarilal Purohit. SAMRIDHI aims to foster innovation in agriculture and water technology by

providing support to startups under the National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems (NM-ICPS).

- National Consumer Rights Day 2023 is a day to raise awareness and promote the rights and responsibilities of consumers in India. It is celebrated on the 24th of December every year, as it marks the anniversary of the Consumer Protection Act, 1986, which came into force on this date.
- At the IPL auction in Dubai, **Australian pacer Mitchell Starc made history by becoming the highest-paid player ever in the league.** He was snapped up by Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) for a whopping Rs 24.75 crore.
- The **Gram Manchitra application is a GIS-based tool developed by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj** to support the Gram Panchayat in spatial planning. The application enables the Gram Panchayat to access various spatial data layers, such as administrative boundaries, natural resources, infrastructure, and socio-economic data.
- The Indian government has decided to rename the existing Ayushman Bharat Health and Wellness Centres (AB-HWCs) as 'Ayushman Arogy Mandir' with the tagline 'Arogyam Parmam Dhanam'. This means "Health is the greatest wealth" in Sanskrit.
- The **India Ageing Report 2023**, a collaborative effort by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the International Institute of Population Sciences (IIPS), focuses on the **welfare of senior citizens in India.**
- The **Logistics Ease Across Different States (LEADS) perception survey conducted by the Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry** sheds light on the logistics challenges faced by Indian states and their performance in this crucial aspect.
- **Garba is a traditional dance form from Gujarat, that celebrates the nine nights of Navratri. It has been inscribed on the UNESCO Intangible Heritage List** in recognition of its cultural significance and diversity. The inscription aims to safeguard and promote this vibrant expression of identity and community.
- The government of India has launched a new initiative to provide affordable wheat flour to the citizens. The scheme, named 'Bharat Atta', aims to ensure the availability of quality wheat flour at a maximum retail price of ₹ 27.50 per kilogram.
- The 11th Divya Kala Mela, a nationwide exhibition showcasing the craftsmanship and products of Divyang (differently abled) entrepreneurs and artisans, was inaugurated in Patna on December 8th, 2023.
- **The first-ever Khelo India Para Games, a national-level sports event for persons with disabilities, kicked off in New Delhi** with a festive mood. The event's mascot, Ujjwala, a cheerful and energetic girl who loves sports, was seen cheering and motivating the participants and spectators.
- The Kannada film industry suffered a great loss with the passing of legendary actress **Leelavathi**. She was 85 years old.
- The Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) has released the 'Guidelines for Prevention and Regulation of Dark Patterns, 2023' to protect consumers from deceptive and manipulative online practices. The guidelines define dark patterns as "design choices that influence or coerce users to make decisions

that are not in their best interest or that they would not have made otherwise".

- The World Association of Investment Promotion Agencies (WAIPA) has announced that India will be the host country for its 27th World Investment Conference, which will take place in New Delhi in 2024. The conference will bring together investment promotion professionals, policymakers, business leaders and experts to discuss the latest trends and challenges in attracting and facilitating foreign direct investment.
- **Italy won the Admiral's Cup 2023, the prestigious sailing competition held at the Indian Naval Academy in Ezhimala.** The Italian team, displayed remarkable skill and strategy in the challenging waters of the Arabian Sea, edging out the defending champions France by a narrow margin.
- The AI Gamechangers Award at the Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (GPAI) Summit 2023 is a prestigious recognition for the most innovative and impactful applications of artificial intelligence in various domains. The award aims to showcase the best practices and achievements of AI researchers, developers, and practitioners who are advancing the state of the art and contributing to the common good of humanity.
- YUVAi-Youth for Unnati and Vikas with AI is a joint venture of the National e-Governance Division (NeGD), Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY), Government of India and Intel India. The programme aims to empower the youth with essential AI skills and prepare them for emerging opportunities in the digital economy.
- **The NAMO Drone Didi scheme is a new initiative launched by the central**

government to empower rural women by providing them with training and employment opportunities in the drone sector. The scheme aims to create a network of women drone operators who can offer various services such as crop monitoring, disaster management, aerial photography, and delivery of essential items.

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 'Viksit Bharat @2047: Voice of Youth' initiative, a platform for young Indians to share their vision and aspirations for the nation's development in the next 25 years. The initiative, launched on the occasion of the 76th anniversary of the Quit India Movement, aims to engage the youth in various sectors and domains, such as education, health, environment, innovation, and governance.
- **A joint military exercise between India and Vietnam, named VINBAX-2023, was held in Hanoi, the capital of Vietnam.** The Indian armed forces contingent, comprising 150 personnel from the army, navy and air force, arrived in Hanoi on Sunday. The exercise will focus on enhancing interoperability and cooperation in counter-terrorism humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations.
- **National Energy Conservation Day 2023** was celebrated on **December 14, 2023**, in India. It's an annual event organized by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) under the Ministry of Power to raise awareness about the importance of conserving energy and showcase the nation's achievements in energy efficiency and conservation.
- **Donald Tusk was elected as Prime Minister of Poland on December 11, 2023**, after eight years of rule by the conservative Law and Justice party. This marks his return to the position he held from 2007 to 2014.

- The Cabinet has given its approval to the MoU between India and Tanzania on Cooperation in the field of sharing successful Digital Solutions implemented at the Population Scale for Digital Transformations. It aims to enhance bilateral cooperation and exchange of best practices in the areas of e-governance, digital health, digital education, and digital agriculture.
- **The Union Cabinet has given its nod to a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the United States of America and the Republic of India.** The MoU aims to enhance cooperation and collaboration in various fields of mutual interest, such as trade, security, health, education and environment. The MoU is expected to strengthen the strategic partnership between the two countries and foster bilateral ties.
- **The Union Cabinet has given its nod to a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) between India and Saudi Arabia on enhancing collaboration in the areas of Digitization and Electronic manufacturing.** The MoC aims to foster bilateral cooperation and exchange of best practices in these domains, as well as to promote joint ventures and investments. The MoC is expected to boost the development of the digital economy and create employment opportunities in both countries.
- **The Cabinet has given its nod to a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Italy on Cooperation in the field of Industrial Property Rights.** The MoU aims to enhance bilateral cooperation and exchange of best practices in the protection, utilization and enforcement of intellectual property rights. The MoU will also facilitate the development of a conducive environment for innovation and creativity in both countries.
- **Cabinet approves declaration of Surat Airport as an International Airport.**
- The Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan (PM-JANMAN) is a flagship mission of the Government of India launched on November 15, 2023, with a budget of ₹24,000 crores. The mission aims to achieve inclusive development for 75 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) who have been left out by the schemes of various Ministries/Departments.
- On December 16, 2023, Rashtrapati Bhavan welcomed His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, the Sultan of Oman, who was received by the President of India, Smt Droupadi Murmu. The President expressed her appreciation for the Sultan's visit and the bilateral relations between India and Oman.
- **President Abdelfattah Elsisy was declared the winner of the Egyptian Presidential Elections on December 18, 2023, securing a third term in office.** The National Elections Authority announced that Elsisy garnered 89.6% of the vote with a turnout of 66.8%.
- SATHEE Portal (Self-Assessment, Test and Help for Entrance Examination) is a government initiative launched by the Department of Higher Education under the Ministry of Education in India. It aims to provide high-quality, accessible education to students preparing for competitive exams like JEE, NEET, and various state-level engineering and other examinations.
- The Union Cabinet approved the signing and ratification of the Migration and Mobility Agreement between India and Italy.

- The Union Cabinet of India, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for cooperation in broadcasting between Prasar Bharati, India's public broadcaster, and Radio Televisyen Malaysia (RTM), Malaysia's national broadcaster.
- The **India-U.S. Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) Dialogue held in New Delhi** showcased the joint commitment of India and the United States to collaborate on mitigating illicit financial risks within the global financial system.
- **The World Health Organization (WHO) published its Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023**, indicating a global reduction of 5% in road traffic deaths annually worldwide from 2010 to 2021, with 108 UN member nations reporting a decline. However, India witnessed a 15% increase in road traffic fatalities during the same period.
- The negotiations between India and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) for a Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA) have faced hurdles due to concerns raised by EFTA members, particularly Switzerland, on specific issues.
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- The Government of India and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) have partnered in a \$200 million loan agreement aimed at enhancing Uttarakhand's power supply infrastructure through the Uttarakhand Climate Resilient Power System Development Project.
- SGBS Unnati Foundation (SUF) became the first entity to list on the NSE Social Stock Exchange. SUF is a not-for-profit organization (NPO) that was incorporated in 2011 and has trained over 45,000 youth. A social stock exchange is a platform that allows investors to buy and sell shares of companies that have a positive social or environmental impact.
- According to the latest Migration and Development Brief from the World Bank, remittances to low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) increased by 3.8% in 2023, a slower pace than the previous two years.
- A chit fund is a type of investment scheme in which a group of people agree to contribute a fixed amount of money periodically and take turns to receive the entire sum. **Chit funds are a popular option for saving and borrowing money in India**, especially among the low-income groups. However, chit funds are also prone to fraud and mismanagement, and hence they need to be regulated by the law.
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illicit financial risks within the global financial system.

- **'Gajraj' is a software developed by Indian engineers that uses optical fibre cable (OFC) to detect and warn the locomotive pilot of any possible threat on or near the railway tracks.** The software can sense vibrations, temperature changes, and sound waves caused by human or animal activity, and send real-time alerts to the pilot through a wireless device. 'Gajraj' aims to enhance the safety and security of rail operations in India.
- **North Korea's recent test-firing of a solid-fuel intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM)** has raised alarms in the international community. **Unlike liquid-fuel missiles, which require lengthy fueling processes,** solid-fuel missiles can be stored and launched quickly, maximizing surprise and minimizing vulnerability. **Solid fuel is less prone to leaks and corrosion,** demanding less maintenance and upkeep compared to liquid fuels.
- The 16th India-Germany Military Cooperation Sub Group (MCSG) meeting held in New Delhi on December 5-6, 2023, focused on strengthening bilateral defence collaboration, emphasizing strategic partnerships, and fostering technological exchanges between the two nations.
- The report from the **Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) titled 'The State of Food and Agriculture 2023'** brings attention to the substantial hidden costs associated with unhealthy diets and the consumption of ultra-processed foods, outlining key findings and proposing strategies to address this global concern. The report sheds light on the immense **hidden costs associated with our global agrifood systems,** surpassing \$10 trillion, particularly impacting middle-income countries like India where these costs amount to nearly 11% of the GDP.
- The ancient temple complex of Angkor Wat in Cambodia has been officially recognized as the eighth wonder of the world, after winning a global vote organized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).
- **Vaishali Rameshbabu and Rameshbabu Pragganandhaa, the sister-brother duo, both achieved the prestigious title of Grandmaster in chess,** the highest honour awarded by FIDE, the International Chess Federation.
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the Bank of England (BoE) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) focused on cooperation and information exchange concerning the Clearing Corporation of India Limited (CCIL).
- **A new partnership between India and Sweden to accelerate the transition of their industries to low-carbon and circular models was announced at the COP28 World Climate Action Summit in Dubai.** The partnership is part of the LeadIT 2.0 initiative, which aims to foster global collaboration and innovation for a green industrial revolution.
- On December 1, a statue of Iyothee Thass Pandithar, a Dalit leader and anti-caste activist, was inaugurated by the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin at Gandhi Mandapam in Chennai. The statue is a tribute to the Tamil Nadu government's recognition of his contributions to the Dalit movement and social justice.
- **Anthrobots are a new class of bioengineered robots that use human tracheal cells as building blocks.** These cells can self-organize into complex structures that mimic biological

tissues and organs. One of the most remarkable applications of anthrobots is their ability to facilitate neuronal regeneration and repair in damaged nervous systems. This breakthrough opens up new possibilities for treating neurological disorders and injuries with bioengineered robots.

- A respiratory illness known as **White Lung Syndrome is affecting children in both China and the United States**. The illness is characterized by white patches on the lungs and symptoms such as cough, fever, fatigue, and, in younger children, sneezing, runny nose, watery eyes, wheezing, vomiting, and diarrhoea.
- Mount Merapi in Indonesia's West Sumatra region recently erupted, shooting white-and-grey ash plumes into the air for more than 3,000 meters (approximately 9,800 feet).
- **The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) report, titled "The True Cost of Food: Measuring the Environmental and Social Costs of Food Production and Consumption,"** reveals the staggering hidden costs associated with our current agri-food systems. These costs, totalling over \$10 trillion annually, encompass a wide range of environmental and social impacts.
- The Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) bagged the International Social Security Association (ISSA) Vision Zero 2023" Award at the 23rd World Congress on Safety and Health at Work in Sydney, Australia.
- **Panchayat Development Index (PDI)** is a comprehensive assessment tool developed by the **Union Ministry of Panchayati Raj**. The Index aimed at **evaluating and measuring the progress made by grassroots-level institutions**, specifically Panchayats, in

achieving localized Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aligned with the broader UN Agenda for Sustainable Development by 2030.

- At the COP28 climate meeting, a group of 22 countries announced their commitment to increase the global nuclear-installed capacity by three times by 2050. This is part of their effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and achieve net-zero targets.
- **India has offered a \$250 million loan to Kenya to help upgrade its agriculture industry.** The line of credit is part of India's efforts to strengthen its ties with African nations and boost its trade and investment in the region. The loan will support Kenya's efforts to improve its food security, productivity and value addition in the agricultural sector.
- **India is the first country to participate in the IMO Green Voyage2050 Project**, an important initiative that helps developing countries reduce GHG emissions from ships. This project is a key step for a greener and more sustainable maritime transport sector.
- The Reserve Bank of India's recent decision to maintain the repo rate at 6.5%, marks the fifth consecutive time the Monetary Policy Committee has chosen to keep it unchanged.
- India has been ranked seventh in climate performance during 2022- the report Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI) 2024.
- The National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) signed a Memorandum of Common Purpose (MoCP) with the Mississippi River Cities and Towns Initiative (MRCTI), representing 124 cities/towns along the Mississippi River in the United States.

- YUVAi, a collaborative initiative of the National e-Governance Division (NeGD) and Intel India, aims to equip Indian school students (class 8-12) with essential AI skills, fostering human-centric design and problem-solving capabilities for real-world challenges.
- **The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations recently released a report titled "Regional Overview of Food Security and Nutrition 2023: Statistics and Trends,"** painting a concerning picture of food access and nutritional well-being in India and the broader Asia Pacific region.
- At the 28th Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 28), leaders from Kenya, Colombia and France launched the **Global Expert Review on Debt, Nature and Climate.**
- Six new countries and a United Nations agency are joining the ENACT Partnership. The new partners include France, the United States of America, Belgium, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Pakistan, and the UN Environment Programme, including its World Conservation Monitoring Centre.
- **Barracuda, the fastest solar-electric boat in India,** stands as a remarkable feat of engineering and innovation, designed and built by a team of students from the Indian Institute of Technology Madras.
- The Global Status Report on Road Safety by the World Health Organization (WHO) provides a comprehensive assessment of road traffic deaths worldwide and the progress made in reducing them.
- **The Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development for 2023 has been awarded jointly to Daniel Barenboim and Ali Abu Awwad** for their efforts in promoting peace and understanding between Israel and the Arab world.
- According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), Zambia is facing a severe anthrax outbreak that affects both humans and animals.
- **The Prime Minister inaugurated the Surat Diamond Bourse, a landmark achievement for the diamond industry.** The Surat Diamond Bourse is the world's largest corporate office complex, located in Khajod village near Surat. It covers 35.54 acres and costs Rs 3,400 crore to build. It beats the Pentagon, which was the world's largest office building for eight decades.
- Professor Savita Ladage from the Homi Bhabha Centre for Science Education, Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), has been awarded the prestigious Royal Society of Chemistry's (RSC) Nyholm Prize for Education in recognition of her outstanding contributions to chemistry education.
- The "Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra" is a nationwide campaign launched by the Government of India to promote the development and progress of the country.
- India's Uma Sekhar was elected to the governing council of the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT) in an election.
- The Rhine River is one of the most important waterways in Europe. It flows from the Swiss Alps to the North Sea, passing through six countries and several major cities. The river has been a source of trade, culture, and history for centuries. It is also home to diverse wildlife

and scenic landscapes. The Rhine River is a natural treasure that deserves protection and appreciation.

- The World Health Organization (WHO) has officially added noma to its list of neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) to raise global awareness, stimulate research, secure funding, and intensify efforts to combat the disease.
- The United Nations has declared 2024 the International Year of Camelids. Camelids are **members of the biological family Camelidae**, the only currently living family in the suborder **Tylopoda**. The seven extant members of this group are: **dromedary camels, Bactrian camels, wild Bactrian camels, llamas, alpacas, vicuñas, and guanacos**.
- The Kempegowda International Airport Terminal 2 (T2) in Bengaluru won the world special prize for interiors at UNESCO's 2023 Prix Versailles.
- **The India Skills Report 2024 highlights Kerala as the most preferred state to work in**, based on the findings of a survey conducted by talent assessment agency Wheebox in collaboration with various organizations such as the All India Council for Technical Education, Confederation of Indian Industry, and Association of Indian Universities.
- The Strait of Gibraltar is a channel that connects the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea. It separates Europe from Africa, with Spain and Gibraltar on the north side and Morocco and Ceuta on the south side. The Strait of Gibraltar is about 58 km long and 13 km wide at its narrowest point. It is an important passage for shipping and navigation, as well as for the exchange of water between the two seas.
- A new AI tool that can help tackle climate change was unveiled at the COP28 summit by NASA and IBM. The tool, named watsonx.ai, is a powerful and versatile system that can analyze large amounts of data, generate insights, and provide solutions for various environmental challenges. Watsonx.ai is based on the open-source AI platform Hugging Space, which allows anyone to access, share, and collaborate on AI projects.
- **Good Governance Day in India, observed on 25th December**, commemorates the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, emphasizing the promotion and awareness of principles and practices of good governance essential for national development and welfare.
- Every year, on December 22, India observes its National Mathematics Day in honour of Srinivasa Ramanujan, regarded as one of the greatest mathematicians to ever grace the planet.
- India celebrates National Consumer Day on 24th December every year to mark the enactment of the Consumer Protection Act 1986. **The theme of World Consumer Rights Day 2023 is "Empowering Consumers Through Clean Energy Transitions."** All consumers must have the power and knowledge to protest against market abuses and social injustices that try to undermine those rights in any way.
- **Veer Bal Diwas is a solemn day observed on 26th December** annually to honour the martyrdom of Baba Fateh Singh and Zorawar Singh, the brave sons of the tenth Sikh Guru, Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji.
- The President of India has appointed Justice Sanjiv Khanna, the senior-most judge of the

Supreme Court, as the Executive Chairperson of the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA).

- The peace accord signed by the pro-talks faction of the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) with the governments at the Centre and the state of Assam marks a significant milestone in efforts to bring an end to decades of insurgency in the region.
- **The Amplifi portal is a platform that collects and displays data on various aspects of urban life in India. It aims to provide useful information for academic, policy, and planning purposes.** The portal covers 150 cities from 258 urban local bodies (ULB) that have participated in the project. The data includes indicators such as diesel consumption and water quality testing results.
- The Indian Ocean Region (IOR) witnessed a landmark event when the Indian Navy hosted the first MAHASAGAR, a virtual meeting of Maritime Heads for Active Security And Growth for All in the Region. The meeting brought together leaders from navies and maritime agencies of key coastal countries to discuss a common maritime strategy for addressing shared challenges.
- **The French government awarded V R Lalithambika, the former head of ISRO's Human Spaceflight Program, with the Légion d'honneur.** She was recognized for her significant role in enhancing the space cooperation between France and India. The Légion d'honneur is the highest civilian honour in France, created by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1802. It is given to individuals who have rendered exceptional service to France, regardless of their nationality.
- **Arshia Sattar, a renowned author and translator of Indian epics, received the Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters from the French government.** This is a prestigious award that recognizes her contributions to literature and culture. She is the first Indian woman to receive this honour.
- **The renowned author and columnist Twinkle Khanna launched her new book, 'Welcome to Paradise,' at a star-studded event in Mumbai.** The book is a collection of humorous and insightful essays on various topics, ranging from parenting to politics. Khanna, who is known for her witty and candid style of writing, said that she wanted to share her experiences and perspectives with her readers in a fun and engaging way.
- **Nepal's first same-sex marriage took place in the Lamjung district, where a trans-woman and a gay man legally wed.** The historic event happened five months after the Supreme Court of Nepal recognized the right of same-sex couples to marry.
- **Henry Kissinger, a U.S. diplomat during the Cold War, passed away at the age of 100.** He was known for his role in shaping the foreign policy of the United States and its relations with China, the Soviet Union, and other countries. He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1973 for his efforts to end the Vietnam War.
- To reduce school dropout, the **Bihar government has initiated a scheme called Mission Daksh (Dynamic Approach for Knowledge and Skill).** The scheme provides special classes in Hindi, Mathematics, and English for weak students of classes 3-8 in the state.

- **Angkor Wat temple, a majestic and ancient monument in Cambodia**, has been recognized as the eighth Wonder of the World. This remarkable achievement reflects the cultural and historical significance of the temple, as well as its architectural and artistic excellence
- **The 2023 World Digital Competitiveness Ranking (WDCR) by the International Institute for Management Development (IMD) ranked India 49th out of 64 economies in terms of digital capabilities.** The report highlighted India's strength in cybersecurity awareness but also pointed out its weaknesses in technology adoption and future preparedness.
- **The Oxford University Press has announced that "rizz" is its word of the year**, a term that Gen Z uses to describe someone who is successful, influential, or fashionable. The word is often applied to celebrities and other public figures, such as "rizz actors" or "rizz influencers".
- **Ruturaj Gaikwad has set a new record for the fastest Indian to score 4,000 runs in men's T20 cricket.** He reached this milestone in only 116 innings. He achieved this feat in the fourth T20I against Australia at the Shaheed Veer Narayan Singh International Stadium in Raipur.
- The Snow Leopard Brigade's Captain Geetika Koul is the first woman medical officer of the Indian Army to serve at Siachen, the world's highest and toughest battlefield.
- **Huma Qureshi, a well-known Bollywood actor, has ventured into the literary world with her first novel, 'Zeba: An Accidental Superhero'.** The novel is a fantasy fiction that explores a fictional kingdom and its political turmoil, as well as the journey of Zeba, a young girl who discovers her superpowers and uses them to overthrow an evil king.
- **Aarogya Maitri Aid Cube, the world's first portable hospital, was launched in Gurugram.** The cube is a modular and scalable unit that can be deployed in remote areas or disaster zones to provide medical care. The cube is equipped with telemedicine facilities, oxygen concentrators, ventilators, and other essential devices. The cube can be assembled in less than an hour and can accommodate up to 12 patients at a time.
- **The Uttar Pradesh Municipality has approved a proposal to change the name of Firozabad district to Chandra Nagar.** The name change is aimed at honouring the contribution of Chandrashekhar Azad, a freedom fighter who was born in the district. The proposal will now be sent to the state government for final approval.
- **India won their first women's test match against Australia** on December 24, 2023, with an important eight-wicket victory at Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai.
- Dean Elgar, the former captain of the South African cricket team, has just announced his retirement from international cricket.
- According to a new report by the United Nations, **Myanmar has become the world's largest opium producer in 2023, surpassing Afghanistan.** The report attributes this to the country's ongoing civil war, which has led to a rise in poppy cultivation for the third year in a row.
- New vice chief of naval staff - Dinesh Tripathi
- Executive director of Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India - Jitesh John

- The new president of FICCI - Anish Shah
- **Sourav Ganguly was appointed as the tourism brand ambassador of Tripura.**
- World Radio Communication Conference 2023 appoints UAE Mohammed Al Ramsi as chairman.
- **33rd Vyas Samman awarded to Pushpa Bharti for 'Yaadein Yaadein aur Yaadein'.** The award was first awarded in 1991. The award is given by the Kk Birla Foundation.
- Padmapani Lifetime Achievement Award awarded to Javed Akhtar.
- **2023 Nansen refugee award from UNHCR - Abdullahi Mire**
- Time magazine athlete of the year - Lionel Messi
- Sahitya Akademi's Premchand fellowship was awarded to Bhutanese author Tshering Tashi for his work in the field of creative non-fiction.
- Mahalaxmi scheme launched in Telangana. The scheme deals with free travel for women in RTC bus service.
- New chief minister of Chhattisgarh- Vishnu Deo Sai
- The new chief minister of Madhya Pradesh- Dr Mohan Yadav
- New chief minister of Rajasthan- Bhajan Lal Sharma
- New chief minister of Mizoram- Lalduhoma
- **Bengaluru to get India's largest circular railway expanding 287 kilometres.**
- 5th global Ayurveda Festival held at Thiruvananthapuram. The theme was Emerging challenges in healthcare and resurgent Ayurveda.
- Mission Daksh launched in Bihar to minimize school dropout.
- Nepal became the first country in South Asia to register same-sex marriage.
- **Oxford word of the year 2023 - "Rizz"**
- World's deepest and largest underground laboratory launched by China. It is located in Jinping Mountain.
- The Military Literature Festival is to be held in Amritsar.
- India's 84th grandmaster Vaishali Rameshbabu.
- China launched the world's first methane-powered rocket "Zhuque 2".
- **The chief guest of India's Republic Day 2024 is French President Emmanuel Macron.**



PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Q1. What was the official theme of World AIDS Day 2023?

- A) End AIDS by 2030: Unite for Action
- B) HIV Testing: Knowledge is Power
- C) Let Communities Lead
- D) Achieving Equity: Ending AIDS for All

Q2. Which of the following best describes the function of a voltmeter in an electrical circuit?

- A) Measures electric current
- B) Measures voltage difference
- C) Measures resistance
- D) Measures power

Q3. Which of the following tools is used to measure atmospheric pressure?

- A) Barometer
- B) Hydrometer
- C) Manometer
- D) Thermometer

Q4. Which of the following is used to measure the volume of a liquid accurately?

- A) Beaker
- B) Graduated cylinder
- C) Erlenmeyer flask
- D) Test tube

Q5. What is the theme for National Pollution Control Day 2023?

- A) "Combatting Pollution for a Greener Tomorrow"
- B) "Sustainable Development for a Clean and Healthy Planet"
- C) "Preserving Nature for Future Generations"
- D) "Eco-Friendly Practices for Environmental Stability"

Q6. What process is used to separate a mixture of substances based on differences in their boiling points?

- A) Filtration

- B) Distillation
- C) Decantation
- D) Chromatography

Q7. What is the function of a Bunsen burner in a laboratory?

- A) To measure temperature
- B) To sterilize equipment
- C) To provide a flame for heating substances
- D) To conduct electricity

Q8. Which of the following is an example of a homogeneous mixture?

- A) Salad
- B) Granite
- C) Air
- D) Soil

Q9. Which instrument is used to measure the intensity of light?

- A) Spectrophotometer
- B) Thermocouple
- C) Hygrometer
- D) Tachometer

Q10. What is the primary focus of "Operation Prosperity Guardian", recently making headlines?

- A) Combating drug trafficking in the Caribbean Sea
- B) Addressing piracy in the Gulf of Guinea
- C) Countering Houthi rebel attacks on maritime trade in the Red Sea
- D) Aiding in humanitarian relief efforts in the Mediterranean Sea

Q11. Which organelle is responsible for the production of energy in eukaryotic cells?

- A) Golgi apparatus
- B) Mitochondria
- C) Endoplasmic reticulum
- D) Nucleus

Q12. What is the main function of the mitochondria in a cell?

- A) Synthesis of proteins
- B) Storage of genetic information
- C) Cellular respiration and energy production
- D) Transport of materials within the cell

Q13. What type of bond forms between atoms when electrons are shared unequally?

- A) Ionic bond
- B) Covalent bond
- C) Metallic bond
- D) Van der Waals bond

Q14. What is the primary function of an interferometer in physics?

- A) Measuring the speed of light
- B) Studying the behavior of waves
- C) Measuring electrical resistance
- D) Analyzing particle collisions

Q15. What is the function of the ribosomes in a cell?

- A) Protein synthesis
- B) Lipid synthesis
- C) DNA replication
- D) Energy production

Q16. What is the Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle related to in quantum mechanics?

- A) Uncertainty in the position and momentum of a particle simultaneously
- B) Uncertainty in the speed of light in a vacuum
- C) Uncertainty in the charge of a particle
- D) Uncertainty in the wave-particle duality

Q17. What phenomenon occurs when an object moving through a fluid experiences a force opposite to its direction of motion due to fluid friction?

- A) Drag
- B) Inertia
- C) Buoyancy
- D) Thrust

Q18. What is the principle that explains the bending of light as it passes from one

medium to another with a different optical density?

- A) Huygens' Principle
- B) Fermat's Principle
- C) Snell's Law
- D) Fresnel's Law

Q19. Which of the following best defines the term 'isotope' in chemistry?

- A) Atoms with different numbers of protons but the same number of neutrons
- B) Atoms with the same number of protons but different numbers of electrons
- C) Atoms with the same number of neutrons but different numbers of protons
- D) Atoms with the same atomic number but different atomic masses

Q20. What purpose does MCLR serve in the banking industry?

- A) It regulates the stock market
- B) It determines the inflation rate
- C) It serves as a benchmark for loan interest rates
- D) It sets the maximum credit card limit

Q21. What is the primary function of a spectrometer in analytical chemistry?

- A) Measuring wavelengths of light emitted by atoms
- B) Analyzing the mass of compounds
- C) Determining the melting point of substances
- D) Measuring the electrical conductivity of solutions

Q22. What law of physics describes the relationship between the electric current flowing through a conductor and the voltage across it?

- A) Ohm's Law
- B) Coulomb's Law
- C) Faraday's Law
- D) Hooke's Law

Q23. What is the name given to the study of fossils to determine the history of life on Earth and the evolutionary relationships between organisms?

- A) Paleontology

- B) Anthropology
- C) Geology
- D) Archaeology

Q24. Which scientific law states that the total pressure exerted by a mixture of gases in a closed container is the sum of the partial pressures of each gas in the mixture?

- A) Dalton's Law
- B) Boyle's Law
- C) Charles's Law
- D) Avogadro's Law

Q25. What is the term for the process by which plants absorb water from the soil and release it into the atmosphere through their leaves?

- A) Osmosis
- B) Photosynthesis
- C) Transpiration
- D) Absorption

Q26. Which of the following battles marked the end of the Maratha Empire's prominence?

- A) Battle of Plassey
- B) Battle of Buxar
- C) Third Battle of Panipat
- D) Battle of Talikota

Q27. The Treaty of Bassein (1802) was signed between the British East India Company and which Indian ruler?

- A) Tipu Sultan
- B) Raja Ranjit Singh
- C) Peshwa Baji Rao II
- D) Nana Saheb

Q28. The Indian ruler who established the Gupta Empire and is considered the 'Father of Indian Coinage' was:

- A) Samudragupta
- B) Chandragupta I
- C) Skandagupta
- D) Chandragupta II

Q29. The leader of the Red Shirt Movement in Kerala during the 1930s was:

- A) EMS Namboodiripad

- B) K. Kelappan
- C) A.K. Gopalan
- D) K. Madhavan

Q30. When was the Asian Development Bank established?

- A) 1966
- B) 1975
- C) 1989
- D) 2000

Q31. The Rowlatt Act was passed in which year?

- A) 1916
- B) 1919
- C) 1922
- D) 1925

Q32. Who was the Viceroy of India when Queen Victoria was proclaimed Empress of India in 1877?

- A) Lord Curzon
- B) Lord Canning
- C) Lord Ripon
- D) Lord Lytton

Q33. The first Indian to clear the Indian Civil Services Examination was:

- A) Gopal Krishna Gokhale
- B) Dadabhai Naoroji
- C) Surendranath Banerjee
- D) Satyendranath Tagore

Q34. The first woman to become the Chief Minister of an Indian state was:

- A) Indira Gandhi
- B) Sucheta Kripalani
- C) Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit
- D) Mamata Banerjee

Q35. The August Offer was made by the British in which year?

- A) 1940
- B) 1942
- C) 1945
- D) 1947

Q36. The leader who initiated the 'Bhoodan Movement' in India was:

- A) Vinoba Bhave
- B) Jayaprakash Narayan
- C) Baba Amte
- D) Acharya Dayanand

Q37. The term 'Dyarchy' was introduced in India under the:

- A) Government of India Act, 1919
- B) Indian Councils Act, 1861
- C) Government of India Act, 1935
- D) Indian Independence Act, 1947

Q38. The founder of the Servants of India Society was:

- A) Gopal Krishna Gokhale
- B) Dadabhai Naoroji
- C) Raja Ram Mohan Roy
- D) Bipin Chandra Pal

Q39. The Viceroy of India during the Second Round Table Conference was:

- A) Lord Mountbatten
- B) Lord Irwin
- C) Lord Reading
- D) Lord Willingdon

Q40. The 'Chapel Movement' was associated with:

- A) Education reforms in India
- B) Religious conversion in India
- C) Social reforms among Indian Christians
- D) Anti-British protests

Q41. The Western Ghats form the western edge of the Deccan Plateau. What are they also known as?

- A) Sahyadri
- B) Nilgiri
- C) Cardamom Hills
- D) Anaimalai Hills

Q42. The Loktak Lake, known for the floating phumdis, is in which Indian state?

- A) Manipur
- B) Meghalaya
- C) Nagaland
- D) Mizoram

Q43. The Indian state with the longest coastline is:

- A) Gujarat
- B) Kerala
- C) Tamil Nadu
- D) Maharashtra

Q44. The Dachigam National Park, known for its population of Hangul (Kashmir stag), is situated in:

- A) Jammu and Kashmir
- B) Himachal Pradesh
- C) Uttarakhand
- D) Punjab

Q45. Which ministry launched the Amplifi 2.0 portal?

- A) Ministry of Finance
- B) Ministry of Rural Development
- C) Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs
- D) Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

Q46. What was the primary objective of the MAHASAGAR initiative?

- A) Enhancing naval warfare capabilities in the Indian Ocean
- B) Conducting joint military exercises with neighbouring countries
- C) Organizing virtual meetings among maritime leaders for regional security and growth
- D) Establishing a naval base in the Indian Ocean Region

Q47. Who was honoured with the Légion d'honneur award for their contributions to space collaboration between France and India?

- a) V R Lalithambika
- b) Rakesh Sharma
- c) Kailasavadivoo Sivan
- d) Sunita Williams

Q48. Welcome to Paradise book is written by which personality?

- A) Ravina Tondon
- B) Twinkle Khanna
- C) Sashi Tharoor
- D) Sudha Murty

Q49. Which country becomes the first country in South Asia to register same-sex marriage?

- A) Nepal
- B) Bangladesh
- C) Sri Lanka
- D) Myanmar

Q50. Which countries' women officers participated in the Indian Army's Table-Top Exercise (TTX)?

- A) BRICS nations
- B) G7 countries
- C) ASEAN member countries
- D) European Union (EU) nations

Q51. Which state government has launched "Mission Daksh" to minimize school dropout?

- A) Tripura
- B) West Bengal
- C) Assam
- D) Bihar

Q52. Angkor Wat temple has become the eighth Wonder of the World. It is located in which country?

- A) Cambodia
- B) India
- C) Bhutan
- D) Vietnam

Q53. Which word has been chosen by the Oxford University Press as its word of the year for 2023?

- A) Peace
- B) Rizz
- C) Artificial Intelligence
- D) Situationship

Q54. Who has become the first Indian woman to bag the Qatar WISE Prize 2023?

- A) Anshika Singh
- B) Safeena Husain
- C) Vasudha Gupta
- D) Ipsita Dasgupta

Q55. Who is the author of the novel titled 'Zeba: An Accidental Superhero'?

- A) Anushka Sharma
- B) Huma Qureshi
- C) Priyanka Chopra
- D) Katrina Kaif

ANSWERS

1. Answer: C

Explanation: On December 1st every year, people around the world commemorate World AIDS Day to increase awareness of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)/Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) and pay tribute to those who have lost their lives to it. World Aids Day was established in 1988 by the World Health Organisation (WHO) to mark the day. The theme for World AIDS Day 2023 is 'Let communities lead.'

2 Answer: B

Explanation: A voltmeter is a device that can measure the voltage difference between two points in an electrical circuit. The voltage difference is the amount of electric potential energy that each unit of electric charge has at one point compared to another point. A voltmeter can help determine if a circuit is working properly, or if there is a problem with the power source, the wires, or the components. A voltmeter has two probes that are

connected to the circuit at the points where the voltage difference is to be measured. The voltmeter displays the voltage difference in units of volts on a scale or a screen. The correct answer to the question is B) Measures voltage difference.

3. Answer: A

Explanation: Atmospheric pressure is the force exerted by the weight of the air above a given point on the Earth's surface. It varies with altitude, temperature, and weather conditions. To measure atmospheric pressure, we need a device that can compare the pressure of the air inside a container with the pressure of the air outside. One such device is a barometer, which consists of a sealed tube filled with mercury or another liquid. The height of the liquid column in the tube indicates the atmospheric pressure. A hydrometer is used to measure the density or specific gravity of a liquid. A manometer is used to measure the pressure of a gas or a liquid in a

closed system. A thermometer is used to measure the temperature of a substance. Therefore, the correct answer is (a) Barometer.

4. Answer: B

Explanation: The volume of a liquid is the amount of space that it occupies. To measure the volume of a liquid accurately, we need to use a device that has markings for different levels of the liquid. A beaker, an Erlenmeyer flask and a test tube are not suitable for this purpose, because they have wide openings and irregular shapes that make it difficult to read the exact level of the liquid. The best device for measuring the volume of a liquid accurately is a graduated cylinder, which has a narrow opening and a uniform shape that allows us to read the level of the liquid at the bottom of the meniscus.

5. Answer: B

Explanation: December 2nd is marked as National Pollution Control Day to create awareness about the harmful effects of pollution and the need to prevent it. The day also remembers the victims of the Bhopal gas tragedy, one of the worst industrial disasters in history that occurred in 1984. The theme for National Pollution Control Day 2023 is "Sustainable Development for a Clean and Healthy Planet". This theme highlights the link between environmental conservation and sustainable development. It urges us to adopt eco-friendly practices to achieve sustainable development and secure a healthy planet for future generations.

6. Answer: B

Explanation: Distillation is a process that involves heating a liquid mixture to vaporize the more volatile component and then condensing the vapour to obtain the pure substance. This method can separate a mixture of substances based on differences in their boiling points since the substance with the lower boiling point will vaporize first and be collected as distillate. For example, distillation can be used to separate ethanol from water, since ethanol has a lower boiling point than water. Filtration is a process that separates a solid from a liquid by passing the mixture through a porous medium that retains the solid. Decantation is a process that separates a liquid from a solid or another immiscible liquid by carefully pouring off the upper layer. Chromatography is a process that separates a mixture of substances based on their different affinities for a stationary phase and a mobile phase.

7. Answer: C

Explanation: A Bunsen burner is a common device used in laboratories to produce a controlled flame for heating substances. It consists of a metal tube connected to a gas source, with an adjustable valve to regulate the gas flow and the size and temperature of the flame. The flame can be either luminous (yellow) or non-luminous (blue), depending on the amount of air mixed with the gas. A Bunsen burner can also be used to sterilize equipment, such as inoculating loops or glass slides, by exposing them to the high temperature of the flame. However, a Bunsen burner is not used to measure temperature or to conduct electricity, as these are not its functions.

8. Answer: C

Explanation: A homogeneous mixture is a type of mixture in which the composition is uniform throughout. This means that the different components of the mixture are not distinguishable by the naked eye or by simple physical methods. An example of a homogeneous mixture is air, which is a mixture of gases such as nitrogen, oxygen, argon, and carbon dioxide. Air has the same properties and appearance in any sample, regardless of where it is taken from. Therefore, air is a homogeneous mixture. The other options, salad, granite, and soil, are examples of heterogeneous mixtures, which have different compositions and properties in different parts of the sample.

9. Answer: A

Explanation: A spectrophotometer is an instrument that measures the amount of light absorbed or transmitted by a sample at different wavelengths. It can be used to determine the concentration of a substance, the purity of a compound, or the colour of a material. A thermocouple is a device that converts heat into electricity. It can be used to measure temperature, heat flux, or thermal conductivity. A hygrometer is an instrument that measures the humidity or moisture content of the air. It can be used to monitor weather conditions, indoor comfort, or industrial processes. A tachometer is an instrument that measures the rotational speed of a shaft or a wheel. It can be used to measure engine speed, vehicle speed, or angular velocity.

10. Answer: C

Explanation: Operation Prosperity Guardian has gained attention due to its establishment to counter Houthi rebel attacks on international maritime trade routes in the Red Sea region.

11. Answer: B

Explanation: One of the main functions of eukaryotic cells is to produce energy for various cellular processes. The organelle that is responsible for this function is the mitochondria. Mitochondria are membrane-bound structures that contain their DNA and ribosomes. They are involved in the process of cellular respiration, which converts glucose and oxygen into ATP, the energy currency of the cell. The other organelles listed are not directly involved in energy production. The Golgi apparatus is responsible for modifying, sorting and packaging proteins and lipids. The endoplasmic reticulum is responsible for synthesizing proteins and lipids. The nucleus is responsible for storing and expressing genetic information.

12. Answer: C

Explanation: The mitochondria are organelles that perform a vital role in the cell. They are responsible for cellular respiration and energy production, which means they convert oxygen and nutrients into adenosine triphosphate (ATP), the main source of energy for the cell. The mitochondria have their DNA and can replicate independently of the cell. The other options are incorrect because the synthesis of proteins is mainly done by the ribosomes, the storage of genetic information is mainly done by the nucleus, and the transport of materials within the cell is mainly done by the endoplasmic reticulum and the Golgi apparatus.

13. Answer: B

Explanation: When atoms share electrons unequally, they form a type of covalent bond called a polar covalent bond. This means that one atom has a slightly negative charge and the other has a slightly positive charge, creating a dipole. An example of a polar covalent bond is the bond between hydrogen and oxygen in water. Ionic bonds, metallic bonds and van der Waals bonds are different types of bonds that involve either transferring electrons, delocalizing electrons or inducing temporary dipoles.

14. Answer: B

Explanation: An interferometer is a device that uses the interference of waves to measure physical quantities or phenomena. The most common type of interferometer in physics is the optical interferometer, which uses light waves to measure distances, angles, refractive indices, and other properties of matter. One of the most famous applications of optical interferometers was the Michelson-Morley experiment, which measured the speed of light in different directions and disproved the

existence of the luminiferous aether. Another example of an optical interferometer is the LIGO detector, which uses laser beams to detect gravitational waves from distant cosmic events. Therefore, the correct answer to the question is b) Studying the behaviour of waves.

15. Answer: A

Explanation: Ribosomes are tiny structures found in all living cells. They are responsible for making proteins from amino acids, which are the building blocks of life. Proteins are essential for many cellular functions, such as growth, repair, signalling, and defence. Therefore, the correct answer to the question is a) Protein synthesis. The other options are not the main functions of ribosomes. Lipid synthesis is done by the endoplasmic reticulum, DNA replication is done by enzymes called DNA polymerases, and energy production is done by the mitochondria.

16. Answer: A

Explanation: The Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle is one of the fundamental concepts in quantum mechanics. It states that there is a limit to how precisely we can measure the position and momentum of a particle at the same time. The more we know about one, the less we know about the other. This is not due to any flaw in our instruments, but rather a reflection of the nature of reality at the quantum level. The principle also applies to other pairs of physical quantities, such as energy and time, or angular momentum and orientation. The answer to the question is (a) Uncertainty in the position and momentum of a particle simultaneously.

17. Answer: A

Explanation: A fluid exerts a force on any object that moves through it. This force is opposite to the direction of motion of the object and is called drag. Drag reduces the speed of the object and affects its motion. The amount of drag depends on the shape, size, and speed of the object, as well as the viscosity and density of the fluid. Some examples of drag are air resistance, water resistance, and friction. The correct answer is a) Drag.

18. Answer: D

Explanation:

- The principle that explains the bending of light as it passes from one medium to another with a different optical density is C) Snell's Law.
- Huygens' Principle: Huygens' Principle describes how waves spread out from a source, but it doesn't specifically explain the change in direction when entering a different medium.

- **Fermat's Principle:** Fermat's Principle states that light will take the path that minimizes the time it takes to travel between two points. While this principle explains the bending of light in some instances, it's not as widely applicable as Snell's Law for explaining refraction generally.
- **Snell's Law:** Snell's Law states that the ratio of the sines of the angles of incidence and refraction is equal to the ratio of the refractive indices of the two media. This law accurately predicts the amount of bending for any medium and incident angle, making it the primary principle for explaining refraction.
- **Fresnel's Law:** Fresnel's Laws describe the reflection and refraction of light at boundaries between materials with different refractive indices, but they focus on the amplitudes and phases of the reflected and refracted waves, not the overall direction change.

19. Answer: D

Explanation: Isotopes are atoms that have the same number of protons, which determines their identity as a chemical element, but different numbers of neutrons, which affects their mass. The atomic number of an atom is the number of protons it has, and the atomic mass is the sum of the protons and neutrons. Therefore, isotopes have the same atomic number but different atomic masses. For example, carbon-12 and carbon-14 are isotopes of carbon. They both have 6 protons, but carbon-12 has 6 neutrons and carbon-14 has 8 neutrons. The correct answer to the question is option d.

20. Answer: C

Explanation: The Marginal Cost of Funds Lending Rate (MCLR) is a benchmark interest rate used by banks in India to determine the lending rates for various loans, such as home loans, personal loans, and business loans. Introduced by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in 2016, the MCLR replaced the earlier base rate system for banks. MCLR is calculated based on various components such as the marginal cost of funds, negative carry-on account of cash reserve ratio (CRR), operating costs, and the tenor premium. Banks review their MCLR periodically, often on a monthly or quarterly basis, to adjust lending rates in response to changes in their cost of funds or other external factors.

21. Answer: A

Explanation: A spectrometer is a device that can separate and measure the different wavelengths of light that are emitted by atoms or molecules when they are

excited by an external energy source. In analytical chemistry, a spectrometer can be used to identify the elements or compounds present in a sample based on their characteristic emission spectra. A spectrometer can also measure the intensity of the emitted light, which can be related to the concentration of the analyte. A spectrometer is not used to analyze the mass of compounds, determine the melting point of substances, or measure the electrical conductivity of solutions. Therefore, the correct answer is a) Measuring wavelengths of light emitted by atoms.

22. Answer: A

Explanation: One of the fundamental principles of electrical engineering is the law that relates the electric current, the voltage, and the resistance in a circuit. This law is known as Ohm's Law, and it states that the current is proportional to the voltage and inversely proportional to the resistance. Mathematically, this can be expressed as $I = V/R$, where I is the current in amperes, V is the voltage in volts, and R is the resistance in ohms. Ohm's Law can be used to analyze and design simple circuits, such as resistors, batteries, and LEDs. The other laws mentioned in the question are not relevant to this topic. Coulomb's Law describes the force between two electric charges, Faraday's Law describes the induction of electric voltage by a changing magnetic field, and Hooke's Law describes the relationship between the force and the deformation of a spring.

23. Answer: A

Explanation: One of the ways that scientists can learn about the past life on our planet and how different organisms evolved is by studying fossils. Fossils are the preserved remains or traces of living things that existed millions or even billions of years ago. The scientific discipline that focuses on fossils and their significance for understanding the history of life and the evolutionary relationships between organisms is called palaeontology. Paleontology is not to be confused with anthropology, geology, or archaeology, which are different fields of study that deal with human cultures, physical structures of the Earth, and ancient civilizations, respectively.

24. Answer: A

Explanation: This is a question about the behaviour of gases in a closed container. The answer is (a) Dalton's Law, which states that the total pressure exerted by a mixture of gases in a closed container is the sum of the partial pressures of each gas in the mixture. The partial pressure of a gas is the pressure that it would exert if it

occupied the whole container by itself. The other laws are not relevant to this question. Boyle's Law relates the pressure and volume of a gas at a constant temperature. Charles's Law relates the volume and temperature of a gas at constant pressure. Avogadro's Law relates the volume and number of moles of a gas at constant temperature and pressure.

25. Answer: C

Explanation: One of the functions of plants is to regulate the water cycle on Earth. They do this by taking up water from the soil through their roots and transporting it to their leaves. There, the water evaporates from the surface of the leaves and enters the atmosphere as water vapour. This process is called transpiration, and it is the correct answer to the question. Osmosis is the movement of water across a semi-permeable membrane, such as the cell membrane. Photosynthesis is the process by which plants use light energy to convert water and carbon dioxide into sugars and oxygen. Absorption is a general term for the uptake of substances by cells or tissues.

26. Answer: C

Explanation: The Maratha Empire was a powerful and influential political entity in India that rose to prominence in the 17th century under the leadership of Shivaji. The Marathas expanded their territory through a series of conquests and alliances and challenged the Mughal Empire for supremacy. However, their decline began with a decisive defeat in the Third Battle of Panipat in 1761, where they faced a combined army of Afghans, Rohillas and Nawabs of Oudh. The battle resulted in heavy casualties for the Marathas and shattered their morale and unity. Although they continued to resist the British East India Company in the subsequent wars, they never regained their former glory and influence. The Battle of Plassey, the Battle of Buxar and the Battle of Talikota were all significant events in Indian history, but they did not mark the end of the Maratha Empire's prominence.

27. Answer: C

Explanation: The Treaty of Bassein (1802) was a significant agreement that marked the decline of the Maratha Empire and the rise of the British East India Company in India. The treaty was signed between the Company and Peshwa Bajirao II, the nominal head of the Maratha confederacy. According to the treaty, the Peshwa ceded large parts of his territory to the British, accepted their protection and sovereignty, and agreed to pay an annual tribute. In return, the British promised to

restore him to his throne in Pune, which had been usurped by his rivals. The treaty also stipulated that the Peshwa would not enter into any alliance with other Indian powers and that he would maintain a subsidiary force of British troops in his dominions. The treaty was a humiliating blow to the prestige and autonomy of the Maratha state and paved the way for its eventual annexation by the British in 1818.

28. Answer: B

Explanation: The Gupta Empire was one of the most influential and prosperous dynasties in ancient India. It was founded by Chandragupta I, who is regarded as the 'Father of Indian Coinage' for his extensive and innovative use of gold and silver coins. He also expanded his realm by marrying Kumaradevi, the daughter of the Licchavi king. His son and successor, Samudragupta, further consolidated the empire through military conquests and cultural patronage. He was followed by Chandragupta II, who defeated the Shakas and the Hunas and ushered in a golden age of art, literature, science and religion. Skandagupta was the last great ruler of the Gupta Empire, who defended it from foreign invasions and maintained its stability and prosperity.

29. Answer: C

Explanation: The Red Shirt Movement was a popular uprising in Kerala, India, that challenged British colonial rule and the feudal system of the local landlords. The movement was led by a group of radical socialists and communists, who wore red shirts as a symbol of their solidarity and defiance. One of the most prominent leaders of the movement was A.K. Gopalan, who later became a founding member of the Communist Party of India. He organized mass protests, strikes, and boycotts against the oppressive policies of the British and the landlords, and mobilized thousands of peasants, workers, and students to join the struggle for freedom and social justice. He was arrested several times and faced brutal repression from the authorities, but he never gave up his fight for the rights of the oppressed. He is widely regarded as one of the greatest revolutionaries in Kerala's history.

30. Answer: A

Explanation: The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is an organization that was founded in 1966 to support the social and economic development of countries in Asia and the Pacific. The ADB is owned by 68 members, 49 of which are from the region. The ADB provides loans, grants, technical assistance, and equity investments to

its members and partners for various projects and initiatives. The ADB's headquarters are located in Mandaluyong, Metro Manila, Philippines, and it has 31 field offices around the world. The ADB's main goals are to eradicate extreme poverty, promote inclusive and resilient growth, and address climate change and environmental challenges in the region.

31. Answer: B

Explanation: The Rowlatt Act was a controversial law that was passed by the British colonial government in India in 1919. The act gave the authorities the power to arrest and detain anyone suspected of sedition or anti-British activities without a trial. The act was widely opposed by the Indian nationalists, who saw it as a violation of their civil rights and an extension of wartime repression. The act sparked protests and strikes across the country, which culminated in the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, where British troops fired on unarmed civilians in Amritsar, killing hundreds of people. The Rowlatt Act was one of the factors that led to the rise of the non-cooperation movement and the demand for complete independence from Britain.

32. Answer: D

Explanation: One of the most significant events in the history of British India was the proclamation of Queen Victoria as the Empress of India in 1877. This marked the culmination of the British Raj, or rule, over the Indian subcontinent. The person who was responsible for organizing this grand ceremony and implementing the imperial policies of the British crown was the Viceroy of India, the highest-ranking official in the colonial administration. The Viceroy of India at that time was Lord Lytton, who served from 1876 to 1880. He was a controversial figure who faced criticism for his handling of the Great Famine of 1876-78, his suppression of the Indian press, and his involvement in the Second Anglo-Afghan War. However, he was also praised for his cultural initiatives, such as promoting Indian literature and arts and hosting the first Delhi Durbar, or imperial assembly, where Queen Victoria was proclaimed Empress of India.

33. Answer: D

Explanation: The Indian Civil Services Examination was a prestigious and competitive test that was introduced by the British Raj in 1855 to recruit Indians for administrative positions. The first Indian to pass this exam was Satyendranath Tagore, a Bengali scholar and reformer who was also the elder brother of the famous poet Rabindranath Tagore. Satyendranath Tagore cleared the exam in 1863 and became the first Indian to

join the elite Indian Civil Service. He served in various capacities in different parts of India, such as Bombay, Ahmedabad, Indore, and Baroda. He was also an advocate of women's education and social reform. He retired in 1897 and died in 1923.

34. Answer: B

Explanation: The first woman to become the Chief Minister of an Indian state was Sucheta Kripalani. She was elected as the leader of the Uttar Pradesh state in 1963 and served until 1967. She was a prominent figure in the Indian independence movement and the Indian National Congress party. She also participated in the Quit India Movement and the Non-Cooperation Movement against British colonial rule. She was known for her administrative skills, social reforms and political vision.

35. Answer: A

Explanation: The August Offer was a proposal made by the British government to the Indian National Congress in 1940, during the Second World War. It offered some concessions to the Indian nationalists, such as the expansion of the executive council, the recognition of India's right to frame its constitution, and the promise of dominion status after the war. However, it also had some limitations, such as the veto power of the viceroy, the exclusion of the Muslim League from the negotiations, and the refusal to accept the demand for complete independence. The August Offer was rejected by most of the Indian leaders, who saw it as a ploy to divide and rule the Indian masses.

36. Answer: A

Explanation: The 'Bhoodan Movement' was a voluntary land reform initiative that aimed to redistribute land from the wealthy landlords to the landless peasants in India. The movement was started by Vinoba Bhave, a disciple of Mahatma Gandhi and a prominent social activist. Bhave walked across the country, appealing to the landowners to donate a portion of their land to the poor. He called this act of donation 'Bhoodan', which means 'land gift' in Hindi. The movement gained momentum in the 1950s and 1960s, and received support from other leaders such as Jayaprakash Narayan, Baba Amte and Acharya Dayanand. The movement is considered to be one of the largest peaceful land reform movements in history and a remarkable example of non-violent social change.

37. Answer: A

Explanation: Dyarchy was a system of dual governance that was implemented in British India through the Government of India Act, 1919. Under this system, the provincial subjects were divided into two categories: reserved and transferred. The reserved subjects, such as defence, finance and foreign affairs, were administered by the Governor and his executive council, who were nominated by the British Crown. The transferred subjects, such as education, health and local government, were administered by the Governor and his ministers, who were elected by the provincial legislative councils. Dyarchy aimed to introduce a measure of self-government and to satisfy the demands of the Indian nationalists. However, the system proved to be ineffective and unpopular, as it created a division of responsibility and authority between the British and Indian officials. The Government of India Act 1935 replaced dyarchy with provincial autonomy, which gave more powers to the Indian provinces.

38. Answer: C

Explanation: The Servants of India Society was an organization founded in 1905 by Gopal Krishna Gokhale, a prominent leader of the Indian National Congress and a social reformer. The society aimed to train and inspire Indians to devote their lives to the cause of the country's welfare and upliftment. The society's members, known as Servants, pledged to work for the common good of India, regardless of caste, creed, religion or region. The society also engaged in various educational, social and political activities, such as running schools, libraries, newspapers and journals, promoting female education, fighting against untouchability and supporting the Swadeshi movement. Some of the notable members of the society were Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Mahatma Gandhi, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, Sarojini Naidu and Rabindranath Tagore. The correct answer to the question is A) Gopal Krishna Gokhale.

39. Answer: D

Explanation: One of the important events in the history of India's struggle for independence was the Second Round Table Conference, which took place in London from September to December 1931. The conference was attended by representatives of various Indian political parties and groups, as well as the British government. The main agenda of the conference was to discuss the future constitutional framework of India and the degree of autonomy and self-government that could be granted to the Indian provinces. The Viceroy of India during this period was Lord Willingdon, who succeeded Lord Irwin

in April 1931. Lord Willingdon was a staunch imperialist and a hardliner who opposed any concessions to the Indian nationalists. He was also responsible for arresting Mahatma Gandhi and other Congress leaders in January 1932, after they launched the Civil Disobedience Movement following the failure of the conference.

40. Answer: C

Explanation: The 'Chapel Movement' was a term used to describe the social and religious activities of Indian Christians in the 19th and early 20th centuries. The movement aimed to promote education, health, and social justice among the Christian community, as well as to spread the gospel to other Indians. The movement was influenced by the missionary work of British and American churches but also developed its indigenous leadership and identity. The movement was involved in various educational reforms, such as establishing schools, colleges, and seminaries for Indian Christians. It also advocated for religious conversion, especially among the lower castes and tribal groups, who faced discrimination and oppression in the Hindu society. The movement also supported social reforms, such as abolishing child marriage, widow remarriage, female infanticide, and caste discrimination among Christians. The movement also participated in some anti-British protests, such as the Non-Cooperation Movement and the Quit India Movement, but its main focus was on spiritual and social transformation rather than political independence.

41. Answer: A

Explanation: The Western Ghats are a mountain range that runs along the western coast of India. They are also known as Sahyadri, which means "the benevolent mountains" in Sanskrit. The Western Ghats are one of the eight "hottest hotspots" of biological diversity in the world, and they host a variety of flora and fauna, some of which are endemic to the region. The Western Ghats also influence the climate of India, as they intercept the monsoon winds and cause heavy rainfall on their western slopes.

42. Answer: A

Explanation: One of the most unique features of India's natural landscape is the Loktak Lake, located in the northeastern state of Manipur. This lake is famous for its floating islands, called phumdis, which are made of organic matter and support a rich biodiversity. The largest phumdi, known as Keibul Lamjao, is home to the endangered sangai or brow-antlered deer, which is the

state animal of Manipur. The Loktak Lake also provides livelihoods for many local fishermen and farmers, who use the phumdis for fishing and agriculture. The lake is considered a wetland of international importance and is protected under the Ramsar Convention. However, it also faces many threats from pollution, encroachment, and hydroelectric projects. The conservation and management of this unique ecosystem are crucial for the preservation of its natural and cultural heritage.

43. Answer: A

Explanation: The Indian state with the longest coastline is a common question in geography quizzes and competitive exams. The correct answer is (a) Gujarat, which has a coastline of 1,600 km, followed by Andhra Pradesh with 974 km, Tamil Nadu with 906 km, and Maharashtra with 720 km. Kerala has a coastline of only 580 km, which makes it the fifth longest in India. The total length of India's coastline is 7,516.6 km, which includes the mainland, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, and the Lakshadweep Islands.

44. Answer: A

Explanation: The Dachigam National Park is a wildlife sanctuary located in the state of Jammu and Kashmir in India. It covers an area of 141 square kilometres and is home to a variety of flora and fauna, including the endangered Hangul or Kashmir stag. The park is divided into two zones: the lower Dachigam and the upper Dachigam. The lower Dachigam is accessible throughout the year, while the upper Dachigam is only open from May to September.

45. Answer: C

Explanation: Amplifi 2.0 is an initiative by the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs in India, aimed at streamlining the implementation of various urban development programs. The Amplifi 2.0 portal serves as a platform to facilitate the monitoring and tracking of infrastructure projects under schemes like the Smart Cities Mission, Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT), and Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban (PMAY-U).

46. Answer: C

Explanation: The Indian Ocean Region (IOR) witnessed a landmark event when the Indian Navy hosted the first MAHASAGAR, a virtual meeting of Maritime Heads for Active Security And Growth for All in the Region. The meeting brought together leaders from navies and maritime agencies of key coastal regions to discuss a common maritime strategy for addressing shared

challenges. The Indian Navy's initiative MAHASAGAR, which was completed in one year, is a remarkable achievement in fostering virtual cooperation among Maritime Heads for the benefit of everyone in the region.

47. Answer: A

Explanation: The French government awarded V R Lalithambika, the former head of ISRO's Human Spaceflight Program, with the Légion d'honneur. She was recognized for her significant role in enhancing the space cooperation between France and India. The French Ambassador to India, Thierry Mathou, presented her the award on behalf of France. The Légion d'honneur is the highest civilian honour in France, created by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1802. It is given to individuals who have rendered exceptional service to France, regardless of their nationality.

48. Answer: B

Explanation: The renowned author and columnist Twinkle Khanna launched her new book, 'Welcome to Paradise,' at a star-studded event in Mumbai. The book is a collection of humorous and insightful essays on various topics, ranging from parenting to politics. Khanna, who is known for her witty and candid style of writing, said that she wanted to share her experiences and perspectives with her readers in a fun and engaging way.

49. Answer: A

Explanation: Nepal's first same-sex marriage took place in the Lamjung district, where a trans-woman and a gay man legally wed. The historic event happened five months after the Supreme Court of Nepal recognized the right of same-sex couples to marry. The newlyweds are Maya Gurung, a 35-year-old trans-woman, and Surendra Pandey, a 27-year-old gay man, who registered their marriage in Dordi Rural Municipality, according to PTI. The president of Blue Diamond Society, Sanjib Gurung, confirmed the news.

50. Answer: C

Explanation: The Indian Army conducted a five-day Table-Top Exercise (TTX) for women officers from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) member countries. The exercise took place from December 4th to 8th, 2023, at the prestigious Manekshaw Centre in New Delhi, India. The TTX was organized by the Centre for United Nations Peacekeeping (CUNPK) in India, which is a premier training institution for peacekeeping personnel. The

exercise was attended by women officers from all ten ASEAN member countries: Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.

52. Answer: D

Explanation: To reduce school dropout, the Bihar government has initiated a scheme called Mission Daksh (Dynamic Approach for Knowledge and Skill). The scheme provides special classes in Hindi, Mathematics, and English for weak students of classes 3-8 in the state. A teacher will mentor only five students who struggle with reading, writing, and basic arithmetic. More than 60,000 schools in the state have successfully conducted Daksh classes from 3.30 pm to 4.15 pm. About five lakh teachers have taught over 25 lakh students.

52. Answer: A

Explanation: Angkor Wat temple, a stunning religious monument in Cambodia, has earned the unofficial title of the Eighth Wonder of the World. This title is often given to remarkable creations that rival the seven Wonders of the World. Angkor Wat temple is the world's largest religious structure, covering 1,200 square metres of exquisite basreliefs. It also holds the Guinness World Records for this feat. The temple was built in the

12th century by the Khmer Emperor Suryavarman II as a Hindu temple dedicated to Lord Vishnu.

53. Answer: B

Explanation: The Oxford University Press has announced that "rizz" is its word of the year, a term that Gen Z uses to describe someone who is successful, influential, or fashionable. The word is often applied to celebrities and other public figures, such as "rizz actors" or "rizz influencers".

54. Answer: B

Explanation: Safeena Hussain, the founder of 'Educate Girls,' received the WISE Prize worth 5 lakh USD for her work in bringing 14 lakh out-of-school girls in Indian villages back to formal education. The Qatar Foundation presented her with the prize at the 11th Edition of the World Innovation Summit for Education (WISE) Summit in Doha earlier this week. The prize is one of the most prestigious awards in education.

55. Answer: B

Explanation: Huma Qureshi, a well-known Bollywood actor, has ventured into the literary world with her first novel, 'Zeba: An Accidental Superhero'. The novel is a fantasy fiction that explores a fictional kingdom and its political turmoil, as well as the journey of Zeba, a young girl who discovers her superpowers and uses them to overthrow an evil king.

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