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## **INTERNATIONAL NEWS**

### **Emirates Unveils World's First Robotic Check-In Assistant**

Dubai-based airline Emirates has unveiled its latest innovation, the world's first robotic check-in assistant named Sara. The system is part of a new City Check-in and Travel Store that is set to launch in Dubai's financial district. Sara will match customers' faces with scanned passports, check passengers in, and guide them to the luggage drop area. The facility, which opened on Thursday, April 27, allows customers to drop their luggage as early as 24 hours and up to 4 hours before their flight, arriving at the airport at their leisure. Passengers can check-in via self-check-in kiosks, at dedicated desks with Emirates agents, or with the help of Sara.

The robot is equipped with facial recognition technology and can print boarding passes, making the check-in process more efficient. Sara is also portable and can move around to assist those who need help.

### **World Bank (WB) approves financing of USD 1.25 billion for three new projects in Bangladesh**

The World Bank (WB) has approved a financing of USD 1.25 billion for three new projects in Bangladesh to help Bangladesh achieve greener and more resilient development and greater inclusion. The financing was approved after the meeting of the Bank to discuss a new Country Partnership Framework (CPF) for Bangladesh (2023-27)

Out of the three projects, USD 500 million Program on Agricultural and Rural Transformation for Nutrition, Entrepreneurship, and Resilience (PARTNER) project will help promote diversification, food safety, entrepreneurship, and climate resilience in the agri-food systems. The USD 500 million First Green and Climate Resilient Development Credit will help the country's transition to green and climate-resilient development. The USD 250 million Sustainable Microenterprise and Resilient Transformation (SMART) project will help transform the micro-enterprise sector into a more dynamic, less-polluting, resource-efficient, and climate-resilient growth sector. The CPF will support Bangladesh's goal to achieve upper-middle-income country status by 2031 by helping the country address key barriers to higher and sustainable growth. It will help develop a diversified and competitive private sector to create more and better jobs; promote socio-economic inclusion to expand opportunities for all; and address climate and environmental vulnerabilities, said WB.

### **Zimbabwe to Introduce Gold-Backed Digital Currency**

The Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe, or RBZ, plans to introduce a gold-backed digital currency as legal tender to help stabilize the local currency, the Zim dollar. The tokens will be a form of electronic money backed by the country's gold reserves, which will be held by the central bank. The RBZ wants people holding Zim dollars to be able to exchange their money for the gold-backed token to help them hedge against the volatility of the local currency.

The Zimbabwean economy operates on a dual currency structure, with the Zimbabwean dollar and the U.S. dollar in use. The U.S. dollar currently dominates and accounts for

about 70% of domestic transactions, according to the RBZ. In an effort to halt the collapse of the Zimbabwean dollar and reduce the demand for the U.S. dollar, the RBZ introduced gold coins in July 2022.

A year ago, 1 U.S. dollar was worth about 150 Zim dollars, and it's now worth closer 1,000 Zim dollars,

### **Shahabuddin Chuppu takes oath as Bangladesh's 22nd President**

Mohammed Shahabuddin Chuppu, a retired judge and former commissioner of the Anti-Corruption Commission, took the oath as the 22nd President of Bangladesh, with Parliament Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury administering the oath of office to Shahabuddin.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Cabinet members and hundreds of distinguished guests attended the oath-taking ceremony, which was held in the historic Durbar Hall of the Bangabhaban, the presidential palace, Xinhua news agency reported.

Outgoing President Md Abdul Hamid congratulated the newly-elected President, a ruling Bangladesh Awami League (AL) party nominee who was elected unopposed on February 13.

Hamid's second and last tenure expired on Monday.

### **Oliver Dowden appointed as UK's new deputy prime minister**

Oliver Dowden, a long-term ally of Rishi Sunak, has been appointed as the new deputy prime minister following Dominic Raab's resignation over a damning report into his conduct.

Oliver Dowden has been the MP for Hertsmere, in Hertfordshire, since 2015. Before becoming an MP, Dowden worked for PR firm Hill & Knowlton and as former prime minister David Cameron's deputy chief of staff.

He was appointed Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster on October 25, 2022, before being appointed Secretary of State in the Cabinet Office in February 2023.

Mr Dowden is a key ally of Rishi Sunak, and was a vocal backer for Mr Sunak in both Tory leadership contests last year.

Over the years, the newly chosen deputy prime minister was previously Minister without Portfolio, Cabinet Office between September 2021 and June 2022. Before that, he was Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media, and Sport between February 2020 and September 2021.

His career harks back even earlier, with other roles in the Cabinet Office, such as paymaster general and minister, and parliamentary secretary.

### **New York City tops the list of world's wealthiest cities 2023. Henley & Partners Report**

New York has taken the crown of being the world's richest city, yet again, with the most millionaires in 2023, according to a report. The city has 3,40,000 millionaires, according to global wealth tracker Henley & Partners.

The city is followed by Tokyo and San Francisco Bay Area with resident millionaire populations of 290,300 and 285,000, respectively.

The report covers 97 cities across nine regions worldwide (Africa, Australasia, CIS, East Asia, Europe, the Middle East, North America, South Asia, and Southeast Asia) and includes most of the world's top wealth hubs.

The US dominated the list with four of its cities - New York, The Bay Area, Los Angeles and Chicago - making it to the list. China has two of its cities (Beijing and Shanghai) in the list.

London has dropped to fourth place on this year's list with 258,000 resident high-net-worth individuals (HNWIs), followed by city-state Singapore with 240,100. In 2000, London was the top city in the world for millionaires, but it has slipped down the list over the past 20 years.

Note: From Delhi To Bengaluru: 5 Indian Cities also Make It To The List Of World's Wealthiest Cities 2023.

### **Syria becomes world's largest 'narco-state'**

Syria has witnessed a troubling transformation into the world's foremost narco-state, as its economic survival now depends heavily on the production and export of Captagon, also known as the "poor man's coke".

As per a report by ANI, This highly addictive amphetamine has become the primary lifeline of the country's economy, generating more than 90% of its foreign currency. The pervasive presence and profitability of Captagon in Syria have raised concerns about the devastating impact of drug trafficking on the country's social fabric, health, and security. Collins Dictionary provides a definition of a "narco-state" as a nation where a significant portion of the economy is reliant on the illicit trade of narcotic drugs,

Note - Captagon, a banned illicit drug recognized by the UNODC (2021), is a synthetic stimulant that combines amphetamine and caffeine. Originally introduced by a German pharmaceutical company in 1961 for medical purposes such as treating conditions like attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, narcolepsy, and depression, Captagon was later found to be highly addictive and detrimental to mental and physical health, leading to its prohibition.

### **China's first satellite offering high-precision rainfall monitoring launched**

China's first satellite allowing scientists to monitor the Earth's precipitation from space, Fengyun-3G (FY-3G), was sent into space on April 16. It is one of only three such satellites in the world. The satellite, which is dedicated to measure precipitation on Earth, will help Chinese scientists to predict precipitation more accurately. With a lifespan of six years, the FY-3G is developed by an institute of China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation, and its ground system will be built and operated by the China Meteorological Administration.

The 20th member of the Fengyun series, the FY-3G will highlight the strength of China's low-orbit meteorological satellite constellation and significantly improve the early warning capability for global rainstorms, said Chen Zhenlin, head of the central meteorological observatory.

Qian Bin, the chief designer of the FY-3G, said the satellite adopts a low-inclination orbit, with an inclination of 50 degrees. It will provide precipitation data mainly within the range of 50 degrees north latitude to 50 degrees south latitude.

In the next six months, FY-3G will undergo in-orbit tests and meet the challenges of meteorological disasters such as rainstorms and typhoons in the upcoming flood season, according to the meteorological administration.

China currently has eight Fengyun meteorological satellites in orbit, providing data and services to 126 countries and regions.

### **Bangladesh: Dhaka records highest temperature in 58 years**

The extraordinary heat wave in Bangladesh continues over large parts of the country with the meteorological department predicting its continuation over the next few days. Capital city Dhaka had its hottest day on Saturday in 58 years with the temperature rising to 40.4 degrees Celsius. It is the highest temperature since 1965 when the highest temperature was recorded at 42 degrees Celsius.

The mid-western city of Chuadanga recorded a maximum temperature of 42.2 degrees on Saturday. Overall, Bangladesh experienced its highest temperature of 44.5 degrees at Jashore in 1964. On Saturday, a severe heatwave was experienced in several districts of Bangladesh including Dhaka, Faridpur, Manikganj, Bagerhat, Pabna, Jashore, Chuadanga, and Kushtia.

### **US, Philippines launch largest joint military exercises**

The United States and the Philippines have launched their largest joint military exercises in decades, with over 17,600 military personnel taking part in the drills. The annual drills, called Balikatan, a Tagalog term for shoulder-to-shoulder, will run until April 28 and involve live-fire exercises, including a boat-sinking rocket assault in the South China Sea and the Taiwan Strait. The drills are seen by experts as a challenge to China's dominance in the region. "Through this exercise, the Philippine and US forces will sharpen our inter-operability, increase our proficiency and complement our capabilities through collaboration, ensuring we are prepared to respond to real-world challenges together," First US Marine Aircraft Wing commander Major-General Eric Austin said at Tuesday's opening ceremony in Manila. The US has been strengthening its alliances in the Indo-Pacific to counter China's aggressive actions in the region, including those against Taiwan.

The drills include 12,200 US military personnel, 5,400 Filipino forces, and 111 Australian soldiers. America's warships, fighter jets, Patriot missiles, HIMARS rocket launchers, and anti-tank Javelins will be showcased, according to US and Philippine military officials. The Balikatan exercises will also test the allies' capabilities in combined arms live-fire, information and intelligence sharing, communications between maneuver units, logistics operations, and amphibious operations. The exercises will include military helicopters landing on a Philippine island off the northern tip of the main island of Luzon, nearly 300 kilometers (180 miles) from Taiwan. Philippine military officials said that the exercises were aimed at bolstering the country's coastal defense and were not directed at any country.

### **China conducts mid-course missile interception test**

China said it carried out a successful ground-based mid-course missile interception test in an apparent sign of progress in its ability to bring down weapons incoming from space.

The Defence Ministry says the operation was carried out late Friday night within Chinese territory and achieved "the desired test objective."

The test was "defensive in nature and not targeted against any country," the ministry said, giving no other details such as whether it actually struck an object, how many interceptors were fired and where they landed.

Such systems, which consist of ground-based interceptor missiles and a huge array of radars and fire control systems, aim to bring down ballistic missiles, including ICBMs carrying nuclear or other warheads, while they are flying in space mid-course on the way to their targets.

Referred to by the US as ground-based mid-course defence, or GMD, such systems are hugely complex and expensive to build, test and maintain

### **US, Japan, South Korea to hold missile defence exercises**

The United States, Japan and South Korea said in a joint statement they discussed the regularisation of missile defence and anti-submarine exercises to deter and respond to North Korea's nuclear and missile threats. The announcement was made at the 13th Defence Trilateral Talks held on Friday in Washington DC to exchange assessments of the security environment on the Korean Peninsula and broader region, as well as to consult on concrete ways to deepen trilateral security cooperation.

### **Ghana becomes first country to approve Oxford's malaria vaccine**

Ghana has made history by becoming the first country to approve a highly effective malaria vaccine developed by scientists at the University of Oxford in the UK. The vaccine, called R21/Matrix-M, has exceeded the World Health Organization's target of 75% efficacy, making it a significant milestone in the fight against malaria.

The mosquito-borne disease kills more than 600,000 people each year, most of them children in Africa, and scientists have been trying for years to develop vaccines. This is the first time a major vaccine has been approved first in an African country before rich nations,

The first malaria vaccine, Mosquirix from British drugmaker GSK, was endorsed by the WHO last year after decades of work. But a lack of funding and commercial potential thwarted the company's capacity to produce as many doses as were needed.

GSK has committed to producing up to 15 million doses of Mosquirix every year through to 2028, well under the roughly 100 million doses a year of the four-dose vaccine the WHO says is needed, long term, to cover around 25 million children.

Ghana, Kenya and Malawi were all involved in the pilot program for the roll-out of Mosquirix, and have begun introducing it more widely in recent months.

Since it began in 2019, 1.2 million children across the three countries have received at least one dose of the Mosquirix vaccine

The WHO said last month that, in the areas where the vaccine has been given, all-cause child mortality has dropped by 10 per cent, a sign of its impact. The research has also found that the effectiveness of GSK's vaccine is approximately 60 percent, and significantly wanes over time, even with a booster dose.

### **Juice mission blasts off to Jupiter to look for signs of life**

The European Space Agency (ESA) has launched a new space mission to study the moons of Jupiter. On 14 April 2023, the Jupiter Icy Moons Explorer (Juice) mission blasted off from French Guiana, on the north-eastern shoulder of South America. The discovery of sub-surface saltwater oceans on Jupiter's moons has pushed them high up the list of solar system venues to explore for signs of life and habitability. If hydrothermal vents – found on ocean floors all over Earth – exist on the Jovian moons, they may provide enough warmth for life to thrive in the darkness. Juice will spend eight years winding its way to its destination hundreds of millions of miles from Earth. Its route to Jupiter will be far from direct, drawing on multiple gravity assists around Earth and Venus to propel it towards its goal. On arrival in 2031, the spacecraft will survey Jupiter and its icy moons with a suite of 10 advanced instruments.

Among the questions scientists hope to answer is why Jupiter's Great Red Spot is shrinking, why its third largest moon, Io, is the most volcanically active body in the solar system, and whether there could be, or has ever been, life on Jupiter's ocean-bearing moons.

### **TCG Anadolu, Turkey's Largest Warship and World's 1st Drone Carrier**

Turkey commissioned its largest warship in a much-anticipated inauguration ceremony. The TCG Anadolu, being touted as the world's first Unmanned Combat Aerial Aircraft (UCAV) carrier, saw the prototype of the latest Bayraktar TB3 sitting on its deck.

On the day of the inauguration, the prototype of Turkey's recent UAV from the Bayraktar family, the latest Bayraktar TB3, was lifted off to the carrier's flight deck. A video of the startling maneuver was published online. The Bayraktar TB3 is set to become operational from this deck by 2024.

This development comes weeks after Selcuk Bayraktar, the CTO of Baykar Technologies, shared pictures of the Bayraktar TB3 on the production line. According to the reports, the TB3 will fly alongside the Bayraktar Kizilelma, a carrier-capable "unmanned fighter jet" which will become operational by 2025.

### **SpaceX launches NASA's TEMPO air quality monitoring instrument**

NASA's high-resolution air pollution monitoring instrument TEMPO lifted atop a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket from the Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Florida at 10 AM IST on Friday.

The Tropospheric Emissions: Monitoring of Pollution (TEMPO) instrument is on its way to a geostationary orbit where it will monitor major air pollutants across North

America. TEMPO will take important scientific observations, including that of ozone, nitrogen oxide, sulphur dioxide and formaldehyde levels.

TEMPO is a payload on the satellite Intelsat 40E. The satellite separated from the rocket about 32 minutes into launch. It will only begin its science activities in late May or early June, according to NASA.

Using TEMPO data, scientists will be able to study rush hour pollution, the potential for improved air quality alerts, the impact of lightning on the ozone layer, the movement of pollution from forest fires and volcanoes and even the effects of fertiliser application. "The TEMPO mission is about more than just studying pollution – it's about improving life on Earth for all. By monitoring the effects of everything from rush-hour traffic to pollution from forest fires and volcanoes, NASA data will help improve air quality across North America and protect our planet," said NASA Administrator Bill Nelson,

### **China Begins 3-Day Military Drills In Retaliation To Taiwan President's Meet With US House Speaker**

The People's Liberation Army (PLA)'s Eastern Theatre Command announced that China will hold three days of military exercises around Taiwan from Saturday. Taiwan's defence ministry said that it detected 42 Chinese aircraft and eight warships around the island. The drills began on Saturday after Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen returned from a trip to the United States.

China will hold "combat readiness patrols" and exercises around the Taiwan Strait and to the north, south, and east of Taiwan "as planned", the PLA announced in a brief statement without offering other details, as quoted by news agency Reuters.

According to CNN's report, the Eastern Theater Command called the drills "a serious warning against the Taiwan separatist forces' collusion with external forces, and a necessary move to defend national sovereignty and territorial integrity."

The exercises, dubbed "United Sharp Sword," would feature "combat-ready patrols and exercises in and around the Taiwan Strait, and to the north, south and east of Taiwan and the sea and airspace as planned," Senior Colonel Shi Yi of the People's Liberation Army's (PLA) Eastern Theater Command said in a statement, as quoted by the report. The drills would focus on China's "capabilities to seize control of sea, air, and information under the support of our joint combat system," as per the PLA.

### **North Korea Tests Second Underwater Nuclear Drone In Two Weeks**

North Korea has tested another underwater nuclear drone in a recent demonstration of its military power and show of strength. This comes just around two weeks after North Korea fired two short-range ballistic missiles on March 27 in its flurry of weapons tests, said South Korea's military. North Korea conducted a test of the nuclear-capable unmanned underwater weapon Haeil-1 from April 4 to April 7, reported news agency Reuters. It said the drones cruised 1,000 km for about 71 hours and hit the target. North Korea had fired two short-range ballistic missiles on March 27 in its flurry of weapons tests, said South Korea's military. The launch was conducted after reports surfaced that Seoul and Washington were involved in a joint amphibious landing

exercise. This took place just days after the completion of their largest joint military drills in over five years.

#### **Volodymyr Zelensky awarded Poland's highest honour**

Ukraine's president Volodymyr Zelensky has been awarded the Order of the White Eagle, Poland's highest distinction, for his services to security, resilience and the defense of human rights.

Presenting the Order, Poland's president Andrzej Duda said: "There is no doubt that you, Volodymyr Zelensky, are exceptional.

"It is hard to hide the tears of emotion seeing your service to your motherland. You have not abandoned either Ukraine or your compatriots.

"You are a model of state and national leadership."

The Order of the White Eagle is the oldest and highest decoration of the Republic of Poland, awarded for great civil and military merits for the country. It is awarded to the most eminent Poles and the highest-ranking representatives of foreign countries. According to the Chancellery of the President of the Republic of Poland, Zelenski received the award in recognition of his merits in deepening relations between Poland and Ukraine, for his activities for security, and his steadfastness in defending human rights.

#### **NASA announces four-member team of astronauts for first crewed voyage around moon**

NASA has announced a team of four astronauts who will fly around the Moon next year for a 10-day mission. The team was announced during an event in Houston, Texas, that was streamed live yesterday.

The team has three American and one Canadian astronaut, including a woman and an African American ever assigned as astronauts to a lunar mission.

Reid Wiseman be the commander while Victor Glover will pilot the mission, Christina Koch and Canada's Jeremy Hansen will serve as mission specialists.

Ms Koch and Mr Glover will set history as the first woman and first black person, to go to the vicinity of the Moon. Mr Hansen will be the first non-American to fly to the Moon.

#### **'MF Hydra': World's first liquid hydrogen-powered ferry**

MF Hydra, the world's first liquid hydrogen-powered ferry operated by Norwegian company Norled, is breaking ground as it starts sailing on zero-emission hydrogen with a blessing from the Norwegian Maritime Authority. is a hybrid that uses both batteries and liquid hydrogen fuel cells.

The ferry is put into operation today, 31 March, running on zero-emission hydrogen and marking a historic day, both for Norled and for Norway as a leading shipping nation, Norled's CEO Heidi Wolden said. The company officials also said it has been carrying out system tests at the quay in Hjelmelands since the turn of the year. In recent weeks, the company has been running sea trials and received the final approvals from the Norwegian Maritime Authority (NMA).

MF Hydra is now set to sail on the triangular route between Hjelmeland-Skipavik-Nesvik in Norway,

The ferry has a length of 82.4 meters and can carry up to 300 passengers and 80 vehicles. With its two 200 kW fuel cells, two 440 kW generators, and two Shottel thrusters, it can travel at a speed of 9 knots

### **South Korea, US, Japan To Hold Anti-Submarine Drills As North Korea Vows To Expand Arsenal**

The navies of South Korea, the US, and Japan are all set to hold two days of anti-submarine exercises starting from Monday in order to counter the evolving nuclear and missile capabilities of North Korea, South Korea's defence ministry said, as reported by the news agency Reuters.

The drills will take place in international waters off South Korea's southern Island of Jeju, involving a US carrier strike group led by USS Nimitz, which arrived last week in the southeastern city of Busan. According to Reuters, the drills came after North Korea unveiled new, smaller nuclear warheads last week and vowed to produce more weapons-grade nuclear materials to expand its arsenal.

According to the ministry, The trilateral drills which will take place this week will use a mobile anti-submarine warfare training target to improve the capabilities needed to detect, track and destroy underwater threats coming from North Korea, as reported by Reuters. These countries last held anti-submarine drills in September amid North Korea's unprecedented number of missile tests.

### **IMF approves 15.6 billion dollar support package for Ukraine**

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has approved a 15.6 billion US dollar support package for Ukraine to assist with the conflict-hit country's economic recovery. The loan is part of a broader 115 billion US dollar international support package to help the country meet urgent funding needs. Of the total amount approved by the IMF, 2.7 billion dollar is being made available to Ukraine immediately and the rest of the funds are due to be released over the next four years. Extended Fund Facility is the first major financing programme approved by the IMF for a country involved in a large-scale war.

The Russian invasion has devastated Ukraine's economy, causing economic activity to shrink by about 30 percent last year, War has destroyed capital stock and promoted poverty.

The 48-month Extended Fund Facility program approved by the Fund's Board amounts to approximately \$15.6 billion. It is part of the IMF's \$115 billion total support package, which includes debt relief, grants, and loans by multilateral and bilateral institutions.

If the current conflict were to continue into 2025, it would raise Ukraine's financial needs from \$115 billion to around \$140 billion, said the IMF.

### **Finland Becomes 31st NATO Member After Turkey's Approval**

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said Turkey's unanimous vote allowed Finland to become the alliance's 31st member. "I welcome the vote by the Turkish Grand National Assembly to ratify Finland's membership in NATO. All 30 NATO allies have now ratified the accession protocol," he said on Friday.

"I have just spoken with [Finnish] President Sauli Niinistö to congratulate him on this historic occasion. Finland will formally join our alliance in the coming days," he added. "Their membership will make Finland safer and NATO stronger." With Finland joining, Russia failed to prevent a further extension of NATO. Finland shares a border of 1309 kilometers, or 813 miles, with Russia.

Finland ended its neutrality and sought to join NATO, citing security concerns, after Russia invaded Ukraine in February last year. Yet Turkey and Hungary have declined to approve Sweden's application.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan claims Sweden protects "terrorists," but rights activists say they are peaceful political opponents of the Turkish leader.

Ankara seeks the extradition of dozens of Kurdish and other suspects it accuses of ties to outlawed militants and a failed 2016 coup attempt.

## **NATIONAL NEWS**

### **PM Narendra Modi inaugurates 91 new 100W FM Transmitters of AIR**

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi today commissioned Low Power FM Transmitters of capacity of 100 Watt at 91 locations. These transmitters have been installed in 84 districts of 20 states. With this the network of transmitters with All India Radio has increased from 524 to 615. The addition will further boost the coverage of AIR to 73.5% of the population of the country.

Clear sound quality and easy availability of FM receiver equipped mobile phones has increased the demand of FM radio service in the country. In another major step towards meeting this demand and capacity building of the organisation, Government has further approved installation of 63 more FM transmitters in the country.

The Prime Minister congratulated All India Radio on this momentous occasion.

Speaking about the significance of the addition, the Prime Minister said that today marks a significant step in the expansion of FM services by All India Radio in the direction of becoming All India FM. He underlined that the beginning of 91 FM transmitters by All India Radio is like a present for 85 districts and 2 crore people of the nation.

### **ITC becomes India's 6th valuable company, overtakes Infosys**

FMCG giant ITC has now overtaken the market capitalisation of Infosys to become India's sixth most valuable company on the stock exchanges.

ITC's market cap stands at Rs. 5.111 Lakh crore ( As of April 24 2023 ) while the market cap of Infosys ( 7th place ) stands at Rs. 5.08 Lakh crore ,

To become the country's 5th most valuable company, ITC will need some gas as rival FMCG firm Hindustan Unilever (HUL) currently commands an m-cap of Rs 5.88 lakh crore.

ITC's market capitalisation ranking improved two spots in three sessions as the share price hit a high of Rs 413.45 on Monday before closing the session at Rs 411.35. At the end of Monday's trade, ITC's m-cap stood at Rs 5.11 lakh crore while Infosys' valuation stood at Rs 5.08 lakh crore.

### **Arjun Vajpai Summits Mt. Annapurna, becomes first Indian man to do so**

Indian professional mountaineer Arjun Vajpai, roped in as a Fit India Champion earlier this year has become the first Indian man to summit Mt. Annapurna 1, which is also the 10th highest mountain in the world at 8,091 metres (26,545 ft) above sea level in Nepal.

Arjun made the climb to the 7x8000m summits on April 17 and has now become the first Indian mountaineer to scale 7x8000m peaks. Mt. Annapurna happens to be the most dangerous mountain out of the 14x8000m Summit Mountains.

Bestowed the title of a Fit India Champion, Arjun is already a record holder by becoming one of the youngest mountaineers to climb Mount Everest.

This year, Mt. Annapurna lived up to its reputation for being one of the most difficult and dangerous mountains. While Arjun summited Mt. Annapurna and was back at Camp 4, two Indian climbers were missing by that point and one fellow climber from Ireland died at Camp 4. On the morning of April 18, Arjun and his team decided that the mountain was unsafe for descending all the way up to the Base Camp. They had run out of resources at the lower camps while several attempts were made to find the missing climbers. Arjun was eventually brought back to base camp with the help of a long-line helicopter.

### **Finance Ministry approves Navratna status to Rail Vikas Nigam Limited**

Union Minister Nirmala Sitharaman Ministry of Finance ( MoF ) gave its approval to upgrade Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL) to Navratna Central Public Sector Enterprise (CPSE). RVNL, a public sector undertaking under the Ministry of Railways, will be the 13th Navratna amongst CPSEs.

RVNL is currently categorised as a Miniratna Central Public Sector Enterprise. Incorporated in 2003, RVNL is engaged in the planning, development, and implementation of railway infrastructure projects. The discussions regarding the upgrade to Navratna status was initiated on the back of multiple orders that RVNL recently won from the National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) and the Railways. According to the Department of Public Enterprises (DPE) RVNL, a public sector undertaking under the Ministry of Railways (MoR), has become the 13<sup>th</sup> Navratna amongst CPSEs.

#### **About: Navratna CPSE in India -**

The term 'Navratna' refers to a select group of top-performing CPSEs that have been granted greater autonomy and financial powers by the Indian government in recognition of their superior performance.

The term 'Navratna', meaning nine gems, is used metaphorically to suggest that these companies are like the nine precious gems that shine brightly in the crown of Indian PSEs.

### **Indo – UK joint military exercise “AJEYA WARRIOR-23 being conducted at Salisbury Plains**

The 7th edition of joint military exercise “AJEYA WARRIOR-23” between India and the United Kingdom is being conducted at Salisbury Plains, United Kingdom from 27 April to 11 May 2023. Exercise AJEYA WARRIOR is a biennial training event with the United Kingdom which is conducted alternatively in the United Kingdom and India, the last edition was held at Chaubatia, Uttarakhand in October 2021.

Soldiers of the 2 Royal Gorkha Rifles from the United Kingdom and Indian Army soldiers from the BIHAR Regiment are participating in the exercise. The Indian Army contingent arrived at Brize Norton on 26 April 2023 by an Indian Air Force C-17 aircraft with indigenous weapons and equipment.

**Aim** - The aim of the exercise is to build positive military relations, imbibe each other's best practices and promote the ability to operate together while undertaking company-level sub-conventional operations in urban and semi-urban environments under UN mandate, in addition to developing inter-operability, bonhomie, camaraderie, and friendship between the two armies.

The scope of this exercise involves a Command Post Exercise (CPX) at the Battalion level and Company level Field Training Exercise (FTX). During the exercise, participants will engage in a variety of missions testing their operational acumen in various simulated situations; showcasing and refining their tactical drills, and learning from each other's operational experience.

### **CCEA approves ₹1,570 crore for 157 new nursing colleges**

In a move aimed at strengthening the country's nursing workforce, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), on Wednesday approved setting up of 157 new nursing colleges in co-location with the existing medical colleges established since 2014. The government will spend ₹1,570 crore on the initiative.

This will further ensure quality, affordable, and equitable nursing education in India, particularly in underserved districts and states/union territories ,

**Aim** - The initiative aims to address the geographical and rural-urban imbalances in the healthcare sector, which have led to the skewed availability of nursing professionals and impacted healthcare services in underserved areas. The establishment of these nursing colleges will provide a significant boost to the availability of qualified human resources in healthcare. This is also being done as a part of the national mandate for Universal Health Care (UHC) and will help in attainment of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). Reforms in regulatory structure for nursing education to meet with the emerging requirements in the sector are also under consideration.

The government has been focusing on ensuring quality healthcare workforce with substantial increase in their numbers. The government has increased the number of medical colleges and subsequently increased MBBS seats in the last few years. There is a substantial increase of around 71% in medical colleges from 387 before 2014 to 660 as of now.

### **J&K LG Manoj Sinha inaugurates newly constructed 576 residential accommodations for PM Package Employees**

Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha inaugurated newly constructed 576 residential accommodations for PM Package Employees at Baramulla, Bandipora, Ganderbal and Shopian yesterday. Speaking on the occasion, the Lieutenant Governor said, the inauguration is a testimony to government's commitment to create adequate facilities for the prosperity of employees.

Mr. Sinha said, the Government is sensitive to the issues of the Kashmiri migrant families and understands their pain. He said, the government is working with the right intent to complete the construction of residential accommodations on priority. He said, the administration has taken various initiatives to expedite the process of construction of housing units for PM Package employees and two thousand more flats will be completed by December this year.

### **Three new wildlife conservation reserves in Rajasthan**

On Earth Day 2023, Rajasthan's Forest Department announced three new conservation reserves that will protect the rare and endangered wildlife of Rajasthan. These three new wildlife conservation reserves are Sorsan in Baran, Khichan in Jodhpur, and Hamirgarh in Bhilwara.

The Rajasthan Forest Department has set the conservation bar quite high with these new additions. Here's how:

The grasslands of Sorsan in Baran will be a safe home for the Great Indian Bustard, a species that's on the verge of extinction. As per the reports, only 200 of these Critically Endangered birds are left in the world.

Sorsan will not only protect the Great Indian Bustard, but will also protect blackbucks, the state animal of Rajasthan, whose numbers have declined drastically due to excessive hunting, habitat loss and rampant deforestation.

Every year, Khichan in Jodhpur, hosts thousands of migratory Demoiselle cranes. Now, with the tag of conservation reserve, Khichan will be a safe home to these birds who come to this part of the country to winter.

Khichan is also India's first conservation reserve for Demoiselle cranes.

When areas are marked as conservation areas, It becomes mandatory for any developmental projects to get clearance as per the Forest Conservation Act, 1990. Any developmental projects within the conservation area need to get the approval of the National Board for Wildlife, and State Board of Wildlife.

With these three new additions, now there are 26 wildlife conservation reserves in Rajasthan. Some of the well-known conservation reserves are Bisalpur Conservation Reserve in Tonk, Jodbeed Gadhwala Bikaner Conservation Reserve in Bikaner, Khetri Bansyal Conservation Reserve in Jhunjhunu, and Jawai Bandh Leopard Conservation Reserve in Pali.

### **PM Modi Flags Off Kerala's First Vande Bharat Train From Thiruvananthapuram Central Station**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday flagged off Kerala's first Vande Bharat Express train from Thiruvananthapuram Central Station. The high-speed train will run between Thiruvananthapuram and Kasargod. As indicated by Prime Minister's Office, the Vande Bharat train will cover 11 regions to be specifically Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam, Kottayam, Ernakulam, Thrissur, Palakkad, Pathanamthitta, Malappuram, Kozhikode, Kannur and Kasargod. The Vande Bharat train between Thiruvananthapuram and Kasargod will cover a distance of around 588 kilometres in around eight hours. PM Narendra Modi also laid the foundation of different rail projects including the redevelopment of Thiruvananthapuram, Kozhikode, Varkala Sivagiri rail line stations; extensive improvement of the Thiruvananthapuram region, including Nemon and Kochuveli, as well as an increase in the sectional speed of the Thiruvananthapuram-Shoranur section.

### **PM Narendra Modi flagged off India's first water metro in Kochi**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who is on a two-day Kerala visit, flagged off India's first water metro that connects 10 islands around Kochi through battery-operated electric hybrid boats for seamless connectivity with the city.

Water Metro provides a distinctive urban transportation system that offers a comparable level of convenience and travel experience to traditional metro systems. This mode of transit is particularly valuable in cities such as Kochi.

ABOUT THE KOCHI WATER METRO - The metro project will start with eight electric hybrid boats developed under Cochin Shipyard Limited. The Kerala government and the German company KfW are funding this dream project. It consists of 38 terminals and 78 electric boats.

The KWM service will launch in the first phase from the High Court-Vypin and Vyttila-Kakkanad terminals. The tickets for the boat trip start at Rs 20. For frequent travellers, there are weekly and monthly passes available.

Using a Kochi One Card, one can travel on both Kochi Metro Rail and Kochi Water Metro. The Kochi One App allows users to digitally purchase tickets.

### **Operation Kaveri: INS Sumedha With 278 Indians Onboard Departs Port Sudan For Jeddah.**

The first batch of Indians stranded in Sudan were evacuated under Operation Kaveri on Tuesday. INS Sumedha departed Port Sudan for Jeddah with 278 people onboard. Foreign Minister S Jaishankar said on Monday that India has launched Operation Kaveri to rescue its citizens stranded from war-torn Sudan. Jaishankar said the government was "committed to assist all our brethren in Sudan". The government said it was focusing on the safety of over 3,000 Indian citizens presently located throughout Sudan.

India said on Sunday that it had positioned two transport aircraft of the Indian Air Force in the Saudi Arabian city of Jeddah and a naval ship at a key port in Sudan as part of its contingency plans to bring back stranded Indians. According to the MEA, there

are risks and logistical challenges associated with overland movement, and Sudanese airspace remains closed to all foreign aircraft. It stated that the security situation in Sudan remained "volatile" despite reports of intense fighting emanating from a variety of locations in Khartoum, the nation's capital.

For the past 12 days, the Sudanese army and a paramilitary group have been engaged in bloody combat, reportedly killing over 400 people.

### **NHAI to develop 10,000 kms of 'Digital Highways' in India by 2025**

The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) is set to develop around 10,000 kilometres of Optic Fibre Cables (OFC) infrastructure across India by the fiscal year 2025, an official statement has said.

State-owned NHAI's special purpose vehicle National Highways Logistics Management Limited (NHLML) will be handling the project of implementing the network of "digital highways" by developing integrated utility corridors along the national highways to develop Optic Fibre Cables infrastructure.

As per the report, around 512 km on the Hyderabad-Bangalore corridor and 1,367 kms on the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway have been identified by the authority to carry out the pilot tracks for the development of digital highways.

The OFC network will facilitate internet connectivity to remote regions across India and will assist in accelerating country's shift to the modern-age telecommunication technologies like 5G & 6G. The 246-km Delhi-Dausa-Lalsot section of the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway was recently inaugurated. The track features 3-meter dedicated utility corridor which will be used for the purpose of laying optical fibre cables. This will play the key role for rolling-out 5G facility in the region.

### **DRDO, Indian Navy conducts successful trial of interceptor missile from naval platform**

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and the Indian Navy successfully conducted a maiden flight trial of a sea-based interceptor missile off the coast of Odisha in Bay of Bengal,

The purpose of the trial was to engage and neutralise a hostile ballistic missile threat, thereby elevating India into the elite club of nations having Naval BMD capability,

Note: An interceptor missile is a light high-speed fast-climbing fighter missile designed for defense against raiding bombers or missiles.

### **PM Modi to release Rs 100 coin to mark 100 episodes of Mann Ki Baat**

The government will release a new Rs 100 coin this Sunday, April 30, to commemorate the 100th episode of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's radio show Mann Ki Baat. The coins will be minted under the authority of the central government.

The new coin of Rs 100 will be 44 mm in size. It is made from four metals – silver (50 percent), copper (40 percent), nickel (0.5 percent) and zinc (0.5 percent).

The face of the coin will bear the Lion Capital of Ashoka Pillar in the centre. 'Satyamev Jayate' will be inscribed below it. On its left side, the word 'Bharat' in Devanagari script will be inscribed, while on the right side, 'India' in English will be written.

The coin will also bear the Rupee symbol "₹" and the denominational value "100" will be mentioned in the international numerals below the Lion Capital.

### **IGGL completes Asia's largest underwater hydrocarbon pipeline**

Asia's largest underwater hydro-carbon pipeline, below the river Brahmaputra connecting Jorhat and Majuli in Assam has been completed by the Indradhanush Gas Grid Limited (IGGL), the company's CEO Ajit Kumar Thakur said on Saturday. The challenging task of laying a 24-inch diameter hydrocarbon pipeline beneath the mighty Brahmaputra river by Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) method was completed on Friday, marking the completion of a major milestone in the construction of the North East Gas Grid (NEGG) connecting North East India to the National Gas Grid. The total length of the pipeline in this single HDD crossing is 4,080 metre across the main water channel of Brahmaputra river. This is the longest river crossing by any hydrocarbon pipeline of size 24-inch diameter and above in Asia and the second longest in the world

### **Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik launches India's first heavy lift logistics drone**

Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik launched the first of its kind heavy lift logistics drone, made by Odisha-based start-up 'BonV Aero', which has the capacity to transport 50kg over 10kms.

BonV Aero is an IIT Mandi, AIC CV Raman Global University Odisha and NITI Aayog-backed venture building Electric Aerial Vehicles for Cargo transportation.

The Chief Minister was present at the opening day of 'Odisha Skill Conclave 2023', where he also took a trial of the drone.

Start-up has successfully done a trial of this 'RM001' Electric Aerial Vehicle carrying 50-kilogram cargo at the altitude of 8000 to 10,000 feet in the Tawang of Eastern Command of the Indian Army forward post in Arunachal Pradesh and next a high altitude trial on 14,000 to 16,000 feet will be done," informed Co-founder and CEO of BonV Aero Satyabrata Satapathy.

And, In its next phase, the startup aims to develop its flagship platform 'RM002' that can transport 200 kilograms of freight over 40 kilometres,

These multi-utility Air vehicles are beneficial in the disaster response and the movement of any kind of cargo/ goods where surface logistics are either unfavourable or time-consuming consuming, if we talk about Odisha which is highly disaster-prone see the Cyclone and Flood on regular bases, it can be useful in that situation, it is also many times cheaper the current alternatives, so it will help to improve accessibility and efficiency of logistics solutions, especially in the remote and Hilly terrains, - Satyabrata Satapathy, the co-founder and CEO of BonV Aero said.

### **West Bengal tops list of States with most ponds and reservoirs: First-ever water-body census**

India has 24.24 lakh water-bodies like ponds, and lakes, with West Bengal accounting for the most (7.47 lakh) and Sikkim the least (134), water-bodies according to the report of the first census of waterbodies released by the Ministry of Jal Shakti recently.

The report states, "24,24,540 waterbodies have been enumerated in the country, out of which 97.1% (23,55,055) are in rural areas and only 2.9% (69,485) in urban areas. The census defines a waterbody as "all natural or man-made units bounded on all sides with some or no masonry work used for storing water for irrigation or other purposes (example industrial, pisciculture, domestic/drinking, recreation, religious, ground water recharge etc)"

Waterbodies are usually of various types known by different names like reservoirs, ponds and bundhies etc. A structure where water from ice-melt, streams, springs, rain or drainage of water from residential or other areas is accumulated or water is stored by diversion from a stream, nala or river will also be treated as water-body, state the report. The waterbodies census was conducted along with the 6th Minor Irrigation Census for 2017-18. The results of the census have been released recently.

#### **Andhra CM Lays Foundation Stone For Rs 4,362 Crore Mulapeta Port In Srikakulam**

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy laid the foundation stone for the Rs 4,362 crore Mulapeta greenfield port in Srikakulam district, which is expected to be completed within two years.

Besides the port, the Chief Minister also laid the foundations for a fishing harbour at Budagatlapalem, life irrigation project from Gotta barrage to Hira Mandalam reservoir and taking forward the works of Mahendra Tanaya river.

"I am proud to say that these four projects will change the face of Srikakulam district in the coming days," Reddy said addressing a public meeting at Naupada village, adding that the district is endowed with a 193 kilometre long coastline out of the southern state's total 974 km coastline.

#### **Assam and Arunachal Pradesh sign agreement to settle boundary dispute**

The governments of Assam and Arunachal Pradesh have signed an agreement for the settlement of an inter-state boundary dispute between the two States.

This important agreement was signed by the Chief Minister of Assam Himanta Biswa Sarma and Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu in presence of Union Home Minister Amit Shah in New Delhi on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2023,

Today's agreement between the two States will end the dispute relating to 123 villages along the border and it has been done keeping in view the historical perspective, demographic profile, administrative convenience, proximity to the border, and the aspirations of the residents. Both the state governments have agreed that this agreement will be final with regard to these disputed villages and neither of the States will make any new claim related to any area or village in the future. After the agreement, a detailed survey will be carried out by the Survey of India to determine the boundaries of both states.

#### **EC first time introduces Vote from Home option in Karnataka Assembly election**

In Bengaluru, the Vote from Home option has been chosen by around 8900 persons who are above 80 years old or people with disability. The Election Commission has

introduced this option for the first time in the Karnataka Assembly election to encourage electoral participation in Urban areas.

AIR correspondent reports, this is a first of its kind initiative by the Election Commission to introduce the Vote from Home option for those who cannot visit the polling booth due to age factor or due to disability. Such citizens had to submit a 12D form before April 17th at the booth-level office to avail the option. Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike will create a temporary polling booth at the residences of such voters opting to vote from home.

The officials will visit such homes four or five days in advance before the polling day of May 10. A Presiding officer, booth level officer, police personnel, and a videographer will visit such homes under intimation to the candidates contesting the election in such constituencies in Bengaluru. An envelope with the ballot paper will be given to the voter who votes in secrecy and puts it in the envelope. The envelope is sealed with the videographer recording the entire exercise. There are over two lakh voters in Bengaluru above the age of 80 or with a disability but not all have opted to vote from home.

#### **Two-day Millet Mahotsav to begin in Jodhpur, Rajasthan**

In Rajasthan, a two-day Millet Mahotsav will begin at Jodhpur today, April 20. During this period there will be interactive sessions between industry experts and micro food processing enterprises, SHGs, and FPOs engaged in food processing. Agri-food processing business opportunities, various schemes, incentives, and millets will also be discussed at the event.

An exhibition is also being set up at the Millets Fair being organized by the Union Ministry of Food Processing Industries at CAZRI in which various millet-based products besides processing machinery will be displayed. Union Minister of Jal Shakti Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Union Minister of State for Food Processing Industries Prahlad Singh Patel, and Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Kailash Chaudhary will be present at the closing ceremony tomorrow.

#### **Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar launches SATHI Portal & Mobile App**

Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister Narendra Singh Tomar has launched the SATHI (Seed Traceability, Authentication and Holistic Inventory) Portal and Mobile App to deal with the challenges of seed production, quality seed identification, and seed certification. It has been developed on the theme of Uttam Beej - Samriddh Kisan. On this occasion, Mr. Tomar said that the government is constantly trying to overcome the challenges and difficulties faced by agriculture sector through various schemes and programmes and SATHI portal is a revolutionary step. Mr. Tomar said that seeds, pesticides, fertilizers and irrigation play a major role in agriculture. Inferior quality or spurious seeds affect the growth of agriculture and it also affects production.

**Kerala adopts Water Budget to tackle problem of summer water shortage, - The first of its kind in the country.**

With an abundance of rivers, streams, backwaters and a good amount of rainfall contribute to the lush greenery in Kerala, many parts of which yet face acute water scarcity when it comes to the summers. And this has led to the state adopting a Water Budget — the first of its kind in the country.

The details of the first phase of the Water Budget in the state covering 94 grama panchayats in 15 block panchayats were unveiled on Monday by Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan.

At the event, Vijayan said that the state was witnessing a reduction in water availability and therefore a water budget would be helpful in properly utilising the resource and preventing wastage.

Water experts welcomed the initiative and said it would help the state ascertain the demand and supply of the precious liquid resource and apportion it accordingly, as the problem was not one of availability, but of management.

The usage of water, so has to be regulated in accordance with its availability in an area. That is where the water budget comes in. It would lead to awareness among the public against unnecessary wastage of water and through that we can achieve water conservation.

**DRDO Industry Academia Centre Of Excellence Inaugurated At IIT Hyderabad**

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) Industry Academia Centre of Excellence (DIA-CoE) has been inaugurated at the Indian Institute of Technology -Hyderabad. This is the biggest such facility in the country. DRDO Chairman Dr Samir V Kamat inaugurated the facility at the campus of the IIT-Hyderabad at Sangareddy in Telangana. Speaking on the occasion, he said the centre will take up futuristic projects towards long-term directed research needed for DRDO. He said the DIA CoE IITH is the largest centre among all 15 CoEs in the country and DRDO team will work with IIT-H to identify the target projects in each of these domains and execute to complete in a period of 3-5 years.

The research cell, which marked the beginning of the collaboration between DRDO and IITH three years ago, has now been transformed into a Centre of Excellence. The CoE will have seven verticals of technology projects that will be undertaken at DIA-CoE at IITH. IITH director.

**Bihu makes it to the Guinness Book of World Record**

Assam's Bihu dance on Thursday made it to the Guinness World Records with a performance by 11,304 dancers and drummers performing the traditional 'Bihu' dance and playing the 'dhol' at a single venue, the Sarusajai Stadium in Guwahati.

The Guinness World Records adjudicator handed over both certificates to the chief minister in presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday evening, when the dance performance was repeated at the same venue. Sarma's office tweeted with the hashtag ModijiCelebratesBihu, "A sight to behold! Hon PM Shri @narendramodi Ji joins

the beautiful cultural extravaganza as many dance together on the beats of #Bihu in #Assam. LARGEST BIHU DANCE IN A SINGLE VENUE.”

Bihu is a vibrant folk dance form and symbolises Assam’s culture and identity. The attempt to enter the record book for the largest Bihu at one venue was initially scheduled for April 14 with the Prime Minister in attendance but since the Guinness certificate would be handed over a day later, the mega dance performance was organised on Thursday,

### **President Murmu inaugurated the National Panchayat Awards Week**

As India advances towards National Panchayati Raj Day 2023, which is celebrated on April 24, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj is celebrating National Panchayat Awards Week during April 17- 21, 2023, as part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav 2.0.

President Droupadi Murmu inaugurated ‘National Conference on Incentivization of Panchayats-cum-Award Ceremony’ on April 17 and flagged off the National Panchayat Awards Week. The five-day event is expected to witness the participation of more than 1,500 delegates from across the country.

The Awardee Panchayats will be felicitated, and the award money will be transferred digitally to the Awardee Panchayats on this occasion. The various categories of National Panchayat Awards–2023 are as followed:

- Deen Dayal Upadhyay Panchayat Satat Vikas Puraskar (DDUPSVP) for the performance under individual LSDG themes
- Nanaji Deshmukh Sarvottam Panchayat Satat Vikas Puraskar (NDSPSVP) for the aggregate performance under all 9 LSDG themes and green initiative related Special Categories
- Gram Urja Swaraj Vishesh Panchayat Puraskar
- (iv) Carbon Neutral Vishesh Panchayat Puraskar

A booklet on ‘Best Practices on Works of Awardee Panchayats’ would be released by Union Minister Giriraj Singh, Union Minister of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj and the first copy of the booklet will be presented to the President.

### **Rajasthan's Nandini Gupta Crowned As Femina Miss India 2023**

Femina Miss India World 2023 is Nandini Gupta of Rajasthan. Shreya Poonja of Delhi joined her as the first runner-up, and Thounaojam Strela Luwang of Manipur took second place. Nandini, 19, is from Kota, one of the largest teaching centres for engineering and medical students in the nation. The beauty with brains, Nandini has a degree in business management and is committed to overcoming obstacles. This year's first runner up was Delhi native Shreya Poonja, and the second runner up was Thounaojam Strela Luwang.

The big finale of the 59th season of the most renowned pageant in India was held in a historic ceremony at the Indoor Stadium, Khuman Lampak, in Imphal, Manipur, the stunning city that served as the ideal setting for the mesmerising event.

### **SSC GD Exam to be held in 13 regional languages**

In a new milestone, the Ministry of Home Affairs has decided to conduct the Constable (General Duty) examination for Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) in 13 regional languages, in addition to Hindi and English.

With this decision, now the languages for the Constable GD exam will include Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Marathi, Malayalam, Kannada, Tamil, Telugu, Odia, Urdu, Punjabi, Manipuri and Konkani apart from English and Hindi.

The landmark initiative has been taken to give a major push to the participation of local youth in the CAPF and encourage regional languages. Due to the decision, it is expected that more candidates will appear for the exams in their native or regional language, increasing their chances of being chosen.

For facilitating the conduct of the exam in multiple languages in addition to English and Hindi, the Ministry of Home Affairs and Staff Selection Commission (SSC) would sign an addendum to the existing MoU.

The Staff Selection Commission's Constable GD exam is one of its flagship tests, drawing thousands of applicants from all over the nation. The conduct of the exam in 13 regional or native languages will be seen in effect from January 1, 2024, onwards.

### **Andhra Pradesh's Jagan Mohan Reddy most wealthiest CM in India**

A total of 29 of the incumbent chief ministers are crorepatists in India with Andhra Pradesh's Jagan Mohan Reddy having the highest assets totaling ₹510 crore, according to poll affidavits analyzed by the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR).

The report stated that West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee has the lowest total assets of about ₹15 lakh,

Out of the 30 CMs analyzed, 29 (97 percent) are crorepatists with the average assets being ₹33.96 crore for every CM, the ADR said.

The top three chief ministers in terms of assets are Andhra Pradesh's Jagan Mohan Reddy (over ₹510 crore), Arunachal Pradesh's Pema Khandu (over ₹163 crore), and Odisha's Naveen Patnaik (over ₹63 crore), according to the ADR.

The three CMs with the lowest declared assets are – West Bengal's Mamata Banerjee (over ₹15 lakh), Kerala's Pinarayi Vijayan (over ₹1 crore), and Haryana's Manohar Lal (over ₹1 crore), the ADR said.

After analyzing the self-sworn poll affidavits of all the 30 current chief ministers of states and union territories, the ADR and Election Watch (NEW) said that have arrived at this conclusion.

There are 28 state chief ministers and two union territories -- Delhi and Puducherry -- also have chief ministers. The Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir does not have a chief minister currently.

### **Telangana CM KC Rao to Unveil 125-Ft Tall Statue of B R Ambedkar In Hyderabad**

Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrasekhara Reddy will unveil the 125-ft tall statue of B R Ambedkar in Hyderabad on April 14 to celebrate on a grand scale the birth anniversary of the architect of the Constitution. Flower petals would be showered from a

helicopter on the statue paying floral tributes to Ambedkar. His grandson Prakash Ambedkar is invited as the sole chief guest at the event

The Chief Minister previously said that the statue to be inaugurated by him will be India's tallest statue of Ambedkar. It has been built next to the State Secretariat, opposite to Buddha statue, and located beside the Telangana Martyrs Memorial. He said it will inspire people every day and motivate the entire State administration. Arrangements are made to ensure that over 35,000 people from all 119 constituencies attend the Ambedkar statue unveiling meeting with 300 people from each constituency. As many as 750 state-run Road Transport Corporation buses will be operated to bring the public to the event.

### **PM Modi Inaugurates Northeast's 1st AIIMS**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday dedicated to the nation newly built AIIMS Guwahati on the first day of Assam's spring festival - Rongali Bihu. It is pertinent to note that the hospital is the first AIIMS in northeast India. PM Modi inspected the campus of AIIMS Guwahati and subsequently inaugurated it and three medical colleges at Nalbari, Nagaon and Kokrajhar. As per an official PMO release, the operationalization of AIIMS, Guwahati will mark a momentous occasion for the state of Assam and the entire Northeast region.

Notably, the foundation stone of this Hospital was also laid by the Prime Minister in May 2017, the release added. AIIMS Guwahati is a state-of-the-art hospital with a capacity of 750 beds including 30 AYUSH beds and has been built at a cost of more than Rs 1120 crores.

The Prime Minister also laid the foundation stone of the Assam Advanced Health Care Innovation Institute (AAHII). A AHII, to be built at a cost of about Rs. 546 crore, will facilitate cutting-edge inventions and R&D in medicine and healthcare, identify the nation's unique problems related to health and promote the development of new technologies for solving those problems

### **The Bharat Gaurav Tourist train tour on Ambedkar Circuit flagged off from New Delhi today, 14 April**

The Bharat Gaurav Tourist train tour on Ambedkar Circuit was flagged off on April 14 by Shri G. Kishan Reddy, Minister of Tourism, Culture and DONER, & Dr. Virendra Kumar, Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment today from Hazrat Nizamuddin Railway Station. Passengers of the Yatra will visit prominent places associated with the life of Baba Saheb B R Ambedkar

The special Bharat Gaurav Tourist Train will be on an eight-day tour starting from Hazrat Nizamuddin Railway Station with visits covering the important places associated with the life of Baba Saheb Ambedkar including New Delhi, Mhow, Nagpur and Buddhist sites like Sanchi, Sarnath, Gaya, Rajgir and Nalanda.

To popularise this special initiative, a group of stakeholders including tour operators, tour guides, journalists, Buddhist associations, Gautam Buddha University members and Yuva Tourism Club members, have been invited for a first-hand experience of this specially organised trip.

### **World's 'most criminal countries' ranking: India behind US, UK at 77 spot**

World of Statistics has shared the ranking of the world's "most criminal countries". On the list, Venezuela has been ranked top, followed by Papua New Guinea (2), Afghanistan (3), South Africa (4), Honduras (5), Trinidad (6), Guyana (7), Syria (8), Somalia (9) and Jamaica (10), respectively.

India stood at 77 spots while the US and UK were ahead of India in the criminal ranking country. The USA was at 55th number and the UK at 65th rank, according to the World of Statistics.

Turkey, Germany, and Japan were among the least criminal countries, ranking at 92nd, 100th, and 135th ranks.

Overall crime rate is calculated by dividing the total number of reported crime of any kind by the total population, then multiplying the result by 100,000 – Because the crime rate is typically reported as 'X' number of crime per 100,000 people.

### **Solar Energy Corporation Gets Miniratna Category-I Status**

State-owned Solar Energy Corporation of India Ltd (SECI) has got the status of Miniratna Category-I Central Public Sector Enterprise (CPSE). A communication to this effect has been issued by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, a ministry statement said on Wednesday.

SECI has been accorded the status of Miniratna Category-I Central Public Sector Enterprise (CPSE) on Monday, 10th April, 2023, it stated. Incorporated in the year 2011, SECI is the primary implementing agency for renewable energy schemes/projects of the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy towards fulfilment of India's international commitments.

Till date, SECI has awarded Renewable Energy (RE) project capacities of over 56 GW. SECI is also active in setting up of projects through its own investments as well as for other public sector entities as Project Management Consultant (PMC). SECI enjoys highest credit rating of AAA by domestic rating agency ICRA.

### **Prime Minister Modi flagged off Rajasthan's first Vande Bharat Express train**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagged off the Rajasthan's first Vande Bharat Express train today via video conferencing. Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw and Rajasthan Governor Kalraj Mishra attended the programme.

The inaugural train will run between Jaipur and Delhi Cantt. railway station. The regular service of the train will start between Ajmer and Delhi Cantt. Tomorrow (13 April), with stops at Jaipur, Alwar and Gurgaon. The train will improve the connectivity to major tourist destinations in Rajasthan, including Pushkar and the Ajmer Sharif Dargah, among other places that draw visitors in bulk around the year.

The new Vande Bharat Express will cover the distance between Delhi Cantt. and Ajmer in 5 hours 15 minutes. The fastest train on the same route, Shatabdi Express, takes 6 hours 15 minutes from Delhi Cantt. to Ajmer. That means, the new Vande Bharat Express will be faster by 60 minutes as compared to the present fastest train running on the same route.

The Ajmer-Delhi Cantt. Vande Bharat Express will be the world's first semi-high-speed passenger train on high-rise overhead electric (OHE) territory.

Today, more than 500 school students will be given the opportunity to travel free of cost in the inaugural special Vande Bharat train.

### **Sehore Sharbati wheat and various handicraft products from Madhya Pradesh gets GI tag**

Madhya Pradesh's popular Sharbati wheat, also called The Golden Grain, has bagged the Geographical Indication (GI) tag. Efforts were on to get it the GI tag for a very long time. While Sehore district is the largest producer of Sharbati wheat in the country, Madhya Pradesh is its largest producer and exporter.

Flour made from Sharbati wheat is considered to be of the highest quality in the country. Farmers also get the highest level of prices for the most productive sharbati wheat in the district.

As the name suggests, Sharbati variety wheat is slightly sweeter in taste probably due to the presence of slightly more amount of simple sugars like glucose and sucrose as compared to other wheat varieties.

Recently, several handicraft products of Madhya Pradesh also received the GI tags, including wrought iron crafts of Dindori, batik print of Ujjain, handmade carpet of Gwalior, stone craft of Bhedaghat in Jabalpur and handloom sarees and fabrics of Waraseoni.

### **Exercise Cope India 23 between the Indian Air Force, United States Air Force begins**

Exercise Cope India 23 has started between the Indian Air Force (IAF) and the United States Air Force (USAF) on Monday. This 11 days exercise is being held at Air Force Stations Arjan Singh (Panagarh), Kalaikunda and Agra. The exercise aims at enhancing mutual understanding between the two Air Forces and sharing their best practices, Both sides will field the C-130J and C-17 aircraft, with the USAF operating an MC-130J, as well. The exercise also includes the presence of Japanese Air Self Defence Force aircrew, who will participate in the capacity of observers.

This exercise is being held after a gap of 4 years because of Covid – 19 pandemic, The previous edition of the exercise was held in 2019 at air basis in Kalaikunda and Panagarh.

### **HM Amit Shah to launch Vibrant Villages Program in Kibithoo border village in Arunachal Pradesh**

Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Amit Shah will be on a two-day visit to Arunachal Pradesh from April 10, On the first day of the visit, he will launch the 'Vibrant Villages Programme' in Kibithoo, a border village in the Anjaw district of Arunachal Pradesh. He Minister will also inaugurate nine Micro Hydel Projects of the Arunachal Pradesh government constructed under the "Golden Jubilee Border Illumination Programme" in Kibithoo. These electricity projects will empower people living in border villages.

The Union Home Minister is also to inaugurate the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) projects to augment infrastructure at Likabali (Arunachal Pradesh), Chapra (Bihar), Nooranad (Kerala) and Vishakapatnam - Andhra Pradesh. He will also interact with ITBP personnel at Kibithoo. An exhibition of the products made by women members of Self-Help Groups of border districts will also be organized. Mr. Shah will visit exhibition stalls to acquaint with and appreciate the efforts of women of border villages. Tomorrow, the Union Home Minister will visit Namti field and pay homage at the Walong War Memorial.

### **President Murmu presents National Grassroots Innovation Awards and also inaugurated the FINE-2023**

President Droupadi Murmu on Monday presented NIF's 11th Biennial National Grassroots Innovation and Outstanding Traditional Knowledge Awards at the Rashtrapati Bhavan Cultural Center (RBCC). She also inaugurated the Festival of Innovation and Entrepreneurship (FINE)-2023 at Sports Ground near RBCC - Rashtrapati Bhavan Cultural Center.

Addressing the award ceremony, the President said that citizens at the grassroots level have the potential to come up with science and technology based innovative solutions and serve the nation to the best of their abilities. The National Innovation Foundation (NIF) plays a vital role in encouraging and supporting such innovators. She said that NIF has created a database of more than 32,5000 technical ideas, innovations and traditional knowledge practices from more than 625 districts of the country. She was also happy to note that NIF has recognized 1093 grassroots innovators and school students at the national level in its various award ceremonies.

### **Ayush Minister Sarbananda Sonowal inaugurated Yoga Mahotsav in Dibrugarh**

Sarbananda Sonowal, the Union Minister for AYUSH, inaugurated the International Yoga Mahotsav at the Dibrugarh University Playground to mark the upcoming International Day of Yoga 2023, which is just 75 days away.

Union Ayush minister Sarbananda Sonowal stressed that every household should practice yoga to lead a healthy and peaceful life.

Addressing the gathering on the occasion of the Yoga Mahotsav at Dibrugarh today, Mr. Sonowal thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for popularising Yoga globally. He also announced to set up a 100 bedded yoga and naturopathy hospital at Dibrugarh.

MoU has also been signed between Dibrugarh University and Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga for promotion of Yoga among students.

Last year, 125 Cr people participated in yoga practices, and this year the plan is to make it even bigger.

### **UP gets World's first Asian King Vulture Conservation and Breeding Center**

Uttar Pradesh has set up a state-of-the-art Jatayu Conservation and Breeding Center (JCBC) for the critically endangered Asian king vulture, the first of its kind in the world. It is located in the Maharajganj district of Uttar Pradesh and is spread over 1.5 hectares. The JCBC is designed to maintain a sustainable population of Asian king

vultures by breeding them in captivity and releasing them into the wild. The Asian king vulture is protected under the Wildlife Protection Act and is listed as critically endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List. The use of diclofenac in veterinary medicine in India has led to a population decline in recent years, and the JCBC aims to have at least 40 vultures in captivity over 15 years to ensure the sustainable conservation of the species. The Forest Department has partnered with the Bombay Natural History Society for technical guidance.

**Wildlife Protection Act:** The Wildlife Protection Act is a law enacted in India in 1972 with the primary objective of protecting the wildlife and their habitats in the country. The Act prohibits hunting, poaching, capturing or killing any wild animal listed under Schedules I to IV of the Act, without prior permission from the authorities

### **PM, Modi launched International Big Cats Alliance (IBCA) in Karnataka.**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday launched the International Big Cats Alliance (IBCA) during his visit to Karnataka. He also released a commemorative coin on the completion of 50 years of Project Tiger. PM Modi and other dignitaries gave standing ovation to Tiger at the inaugural session of commemoration of 50 years of Project Tiger.

During the programme, he released the publication 'Amrit Kaal Ka Vision for Tiger Conservation', a summary report of 5th cycle of Management Effective Evaluation of Tiger Reserves. He also released a summary report of All India Tiger Estimation (5th cycle).

After the launch, PM Modi said, - Project Tiger leads the way in the protection and conservation of big cats. It is part of Indian culture to protect nature. The success of Project Tiger is a matter of pride not only for India but for the whole world. India has completed 75 years of independence; and at the same time, 75% of the world's tiger population is in India.

PM Modi had also met Bomman and Bellie, the couple who featured in the Oscar-winning documentary 'The Elephant Whisperers'. He said, "The Elephant Whispers documentary that won an Oscar also reflects our legacy of the wonderful relationship between nature and creatures

### **Union Minister of MoSJ&E, Dr Virendra Kumar Inaugurated Second Composite Rehabilitation Centre (CRC) in M.P**

Union Minister of MoSJ&E, Dr Virendra Kumar Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment, inaugurated and dedicated the services of Composite Regional Centre (CRC) for Skill Development, Rehabilitation and Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) on 8<sup>th</sup> April at Old Tehsil Bhavan, Mahalangate in Chhatarpur, Madhya Pradesh. During inauguration program attended by senior officials of Central and State Government Dr Virendra Kumar stressed the needs to provide continuous and planned services to the persons with disabilities with skill development in different domain areas. He appreciated the efforts of the Ministry in making accessible environment in buildings and public places. He also said that CRC will become a hub for innovation, education, and meet the needs for manpower and research to enable a

better and quality life for persons with disabilities so that persons with disabilities will be able to contribute to the development of society.

It is also planned to bring together experts from diverse fields of rehabilitation of persons with disabilities under one roof and accelerate the services, create breakthroughs and tackle some of the most pressing challenges facing society today by persons with various types of disabilities in and around Chhatrapur. The program was blessed by Shri Om Prakash Sakhlecha, Minister of Science and Technology, Medium Small-Scale Industries, and Minister in-charge Chhatrapur District, Govt. of Madhya Pradesh. Speaking during the function Shri Om Prakash Sakhlecha, said that there is need towards meeting the demands of participation of persons with disabilities in "Atma nirbhar Bharat". He thanked the Union Minister of MoSJ&E, Dr Virendra Kumar Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment for his efforts in starting the CRC-Chhatrapur in Madhya Pradesh. Guest of honour will be Shri Pradyumn Singh, MLA, Badamalhera, Nagrik Apurthi Nigam, Shri Rajesh Prajapati, MLA Chandla, Shri Rajesh Shukla, MLA Bhijawar.

#### **Ukraine Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister on India visit**

Ukraine's Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Emine Dzhaparova is on a four-day official visit to New Delhi, starting today. ( From April 9 – 12 ) In her first visit since the Russian invasion began in February 2021, the Ukrainian minister will meet delegates of the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). Dzhaparova is also expected to extend an invitation to Prime Minister Narendra Modi to visit Ukraine.

Dzhaparova will hold talks with Verma, during which both sides are expected to discuss bilateral relations and exchange views on current situation in Ukraine and global issues of mutual interest. Dzhaparova will also call on Minister of State for External Affairs and Culture Meenakshi Lekhi and meet Deputy National Security Adviser Vikram Misri. In a telephonic conversation with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in October last year, Prime Minister Modi said there could be "no military solution" and that India was ready to contribute to peace efforts.

"Over the last 30 years of establishing diplomatic relations, bilateral cooperation between the two countries has made significant progress in the areas of trade, education, culture and defence," the MEA said. "The visit will be an occasion to further mutual understanding and interests,

#### **Anti-submarine rockets developed by 2 Pune labs successfully tested from INS Chennai**

The Extended Range Anti Submarine Rocket (ER-ASR) designed by two Pune-based facilities of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) was successfully test-fired for the first time from Navy's INS Chennai earlier on April 3. DRDO officials said the rocket has been designed to replace the existing Russian-origin Rocket Guided Bombs (RGBs).

The ER-ASR was designed and developed by Pune-based Armament Research and Development Establishment (ARDE) and High Energy Materials Research Laboratory (HEMRL). It is designed to intercept submarines at specific depths.

The rocket system will be deployed in anti-submarine operations and will be fired from an indigenised rocket launcher mounted onboard various Indian naval ships. ER-ASR can be fired in single or in salvo mode depending on the tactical mission requirements. DRDO officials said the maiden successful test from the ship is a step towards enhancing the capability of the Indian Navy in anti-submarine warfare and towards achieving 'Atma Nirbharta' in defence.

DRDO officials said that ER-ASR has been designed to replace the existing Russian origin RGB rockets which are already fitted in ships. While the RGB has a range of five kilometers, the ER-ASR can achieve a range over eight kilometers.

### **Indian Rafale to participate in French Military exercise with NATO**

In a first, Indian Rafale combat aircraft are likely to participate in a multinational wargame codenamed Orion which is being hosted by France involving many of its NATO and other important allies.

The aircraft likely to take part in the exercise are likely to be from the Western Air Command of the force which has the Golden Arrows squadron as part of it, they said.

The exercise is taking place in France with the Russia-Ukraine war in the backdrop where NATO led by US is opposing the Russian moves against Ukraine.

The Rafales of the IAF have earlier participated in wargames with foreign countries which took place within India including the ones with French Air Force in Jodhpur codenamed Desert Knight.

The French Air Force would be taking part in the wargames with its NATO and other allies with their Rafale and Mirage-2000 fighter aircraft.

### **PM Modi Inaugurates New Integrated Terminal Building Of Chennai Airport**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday inaugurated a series of new projects in the aviation and railway sectors. The PM inaugurated the state-of-the-art integrated terminal building set up at a total outlay of Rs 2,437 crore at the Chennai airport.

After the inauguration, PM Modi inspected the arrangements made in the airport. PM Modi and CM Stalin also shared warm gestures during the inauguration.

The PM was accompanied by Union Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia and Union Minister of State L Murugan. Tamil Nadu CM Stalin was also present at the event.

The new terminal, equipped with 108 immigration counters, is spread across 2.20 lakh sq metres and would cater to the growing air traffic in Tamil Nadu. "With the annual passenger handling capacity of 35 million passengers, the modern facility at the Chennai Airport will improve air travel experiences for all," the Ministry of Civil Aviation said.

Prior to the visit, the state witnessed protests by Congress against PM Modi visiting the city. The Congress members held black flags and said slogans like 'Go Back Modi' at Valluvar Kottam in Chennai.

The PM also flagged off the special Vande Bharat Express between Chennai and Coimbatore, the first such service connecting two Tamil Nadu cities.

### **PM Narendra Modi In Telangana Flags Off Secunderabad-Tirupati Vande Bharat Express**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday flagged off the Secunderabad-Tirupati Vande Bharat Express in Telangana where he is also set to lay the foundation stone of projects worth over Rs 11,300 crore. PM Modi also participated in a public meeting at Parade Ground before heading to Tamil Nadu.

The Secunderabad-Tirupati Vande Bharat Express, connecting Hyderabad with the abode of Lord Venkateswara, is the second Vande Bharat train to be started from Telangana within a short span of three months.

According to a statement by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), the train will reduce the travel time between the two cities by almost three and a half hours and will be particularly beneficial for pilgrim passengers. As One can reach Tirupathi from Hyderabad in about 8 hour 30 minutes by this train,

"The redevelopment of the Secunderabad Railway Station, to be done at a cost of Rs. 720 crore, is being planned such that it will undergo a massive makeover with world-class amenities and aesthetically designed iconic station building. The redeveloped station would be having double-level spacious roof plaza with all passenger amenities in one place along with multi-modal connectivity for providing seamless transfer of passengers from rail to other modes among others," the PMO statement mentioned.

### **PM Modi Flags Off Chennai-Coimbatore Vande Bharat Express**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagged off the 13th Vande Bharat Express train which will operate between Chennai and Coimbatore at Chennai MGR Central Railway Station on Saturday. The newly-inaugurated Vande Bharat Express will operate between the two cities on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

The express train is likely to cover the distance in 5.50 hours which is 1.20 hours faster than the normal train. The train will operate at a speed of 130 Km/h.

The PM was accompanied by Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin and Governor RN Ravi.

### **President Droupadi Murmu Takes Sortie On IAF's Sukhoi 30 MKI Fighter Aircraft In Assam**

President Droupadi Murmu on Saturday took a sortie on the Indian Air Force's Sukhoi 30 MKI fighter aircraft in Assam. She arrived at Tezpur Air Force Station and was accorded Guard of Honour on her arrival.

On Friday, she inaugurated the 'Gaj Utsav 2023' at the Kaziranga National Park to mark 30 years of Project Elephant, After the inauguration, the President witnessed cultural performances Bhortal, Jhumur and Bihu dance forms conducted by Assamese artists at Kohora. President Murmu also interacted with the people of Assam on the sidelines of the event.

About the Aircraft - The Sukhoi Su-30MKI is a twinjet multirole air superiority fighter developed by Russia's Sukhoi and built under licence by India's Hindustan Aeronautics Limited for the Indian Air Force. A variant of the Sukhoi Su-30, it is a heavy, all-weather, long-range fighter.

### **PM participates in 125th Anniversary celebrations of Sri Ramakrishna Math**

The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi participated in the 125th Anniversary celebrations of Sri Ramakrishna Math at Vivekananda House in Chennai, Tamil Nadu today. Upon arriving at the venue, the Prime Minister paid floral tributes and performed puja and meditation in Swami Vivekanand's room. The Prime Minister also released a book on Holy Trio on the occasion.

Started in Chennai in 1897 by Swami Ramakrishnananda, the Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission are spiritual organizations engaged in various forms of humanitarian and social service activities.

Addressing the gathering, the Prime Minister expressed happiness to be present on the occasion of the 125th anniversary of Ramakrishna Math's service in Chennai and said that he deeply respects Ramakrishna Math in his life. Expressing his affection and love for Tamilians, the Tamil language, the Tamil culture and the vibe of Chennai, the Prime Minister mentioned visiting Swami Vivekanand's house in Chennai where he stayed after returning from his trip in the West. He remarked that meditating in this house was a very special experience for him and he now feels inspired and energized. The Prime Minister expressed happiness about the outreach of ancient ideas to younger generations through technology.

### **KSINC launches solar-powered tourist vessel**

Sooryamshu, a double-decked solar tourist boat from the stable of the Kerala Shipping and Inland Navigation Corporation (KSINC).

The ₹3.95-crore vessel that can carry up to 100 passengers was built at a yard in Sri Lanka and is among the few in Kochi whose safety and allied features are certified by the Indian Register of Shipping (IRS). It has a diesel generator to provide backup in case need arises. There is an air-conditioned conference hall-cum-DJ floor in the lower deck and a cafeteria-cum-dining area in the upper deck. There is also a lift to help differently abled and aged people to reach the upper deck and back,

KSINC plans to use the Sooryamshu for two tour packages. The first one, named the Kadamakkudy package, will offer tourists sightseeing and kayaking for Rs. 799.

Kadamakkudy is a group of 14 islands situated within 10 kilometers of Kochi city. The second package will take tourists to the Matsyafed farm in the Ernakulam district, where they can enjoy kayaking, paddling, fishing, and savoring exclusive seafood offered by the farm.

### **TVS SCS wins UK defence ministry contract for supplying Land Rover spares**

TVS Supply Chain Solutions (TVS SCS), an integrated supply chain solutions provider, on Thursday announced it has won a UK government contract for providing spares and accessories for the Land Rover Wolf, a military vehicle.

The contract is from the UK Ministry of Defence (MOD), acting through its agent, Babcock Land Defence. This two-plus one-year agreement will see TVS SCS use its accredited inventory management, procurement and supply chain expertise to ensure the optimum availability of spares for the legacy vehicle platform.

The Land Rover Wolf fleet has been in service with the UK defence ministry since the mid-1990s. TVS SCS, along with the post design services contractor, will support the availability and upkeep of the platform.

“This business win is a testament to TVS SCS’ strong position in providing supply chain capability to support several of the UK MOD’s vehicle platforms. We continue to thrive on our expertise and believe in the power of adding value to our customers in every possible way,” said Ravi Viswanathan, managing director at TVS Supply Chain Solutions.

#### **President Droupadi Murmu inaugurates Gaj Utsav at Kaziranga in Assam**

President Droupadi Murmu said that human society will be benefited through elephant conservation and it would also help in addressing the climate change issue.

Inaugurating the Gaj Utsav -2023 at the Kaziranga national park, President Murmu said that elephant doesn’t hurt anyone without any reason. She said that the onus is with the human to solve the man-elephant conflict.

Lauding the Oscar-winning documentary Elephant Whisperers, she said that the documentary has perfectly portrait the love for nature. She mentioned that elephant is the symbol of progress in our country and it is the duty of our countryman to protect them.

Stating that like human elephant also loves to stay together as a family, she urged forest officials and concerned departments to take the needful step to reunite wild elephants if someone went missing from their family.

#### **Andaman & Nicobar Command Conducts Joint Military Drill KAVACH**

The Andaman and Nicobar Command conducted joint military exercises ‘KAVACH’ involving assets of the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard.

The joint forces carried out multi-domain exercises including amphibious landing, air-landed operations, heliborne operations and rapid insertion of Special Forces. It showcased a coordinated approach to surveillance, networked and synergized operations, aimed at achieving greater interoperability

The exercises had included multi-faceted maritime operations by synergised employment of amphibious assault ships, surveillance platforms, execution of maritime air strikes and complex manoeuvres at sea.

In 2021, a similar large-scale joint-services amphibious exercise AMPHEX – 21 was conducted in the Andaman and Nicobar group of islands between January 21 and 25 and Ex KAVACH formed a part of it.

#### **Amit Shah Unveils 54 Feet Hanuman Statue In Gujarat On Hanuman Jayanti**

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday unveiled a 54 feet tall statue of Lord Hanuman at Sarangpur temple in Gujarat’s Botad district on the occasion of Hanuman Jayanti. The festival, which celebrates the birth of Lord Hanuman,

Shah was in the state to attend an event to mark the BJP’s 44th foundation day.

The statue is built in the backyard of the Sarangpur temple in an area of 1,35,000 square feet. The temple is dedicated to Lord Kastbhanjan, a form of Hanuman.

The giant statue weighs around 30,000 kilogram and is visible from a distance of seven kilometre. Five different metals were used in its construction and the total diameter of the statue is 754 feet. The internal structure is made of steel.

According to reports, 3D printers, 3D routers, and CNC machines were used in its construction. The statue has been made to withstand earthquakes.

### **Kerala tops GI tag list in FY 2022-23**

Kerala has topped the list of states in the country with most number of products securing the Geographical Indication (GI) tag in financial year 2022-23, a data shared by the GI Registry said,

Attappady Aattukombu Avara, Attappady Thuvvara, Onattukara Ellu, Kanthalloor Vattavada Veluthuli, Kodungallur Pottuvellari were picked for the GI recognition tag as per the data released by the registry.

Besides the 6 products from Kerala, Mithila Makhana (aquatic fox nut) from Bihar was selected for GI recognition followed by Alibag white onion from Maharashtra. Tandur Redgram from Telangana the local variety of pea, Ladakh Raktsey Karpo Apricot from Ladakh and Gamosa handicrafts from Assam were also chosen for the honours.

The Geographical Indication relates to particular location and product manufactured from that region, In order to function as a GI, a sign must identify a product as originating in a given place.

### **Anurag Thakur Signs Collaboration Agreement Between I&B Ministry And Amazon**

Ministry of Information & Broadcasting inked a partnership with Amazon India. The ministry in a press release said that the Letter of Engagement (LoE) will lead to a multidimensional partnership between the various organisations under the Ministry and various verticals of Amazon.

These include the National Film Development Corporation (NFDC), Prasar Bharati, Publications Division, and the media training institutions of the Film and Television Institute of India (FTII) and Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute (SRFTI) on the government's side. On Amazon's side, the LoE involves the participation of Amazon Prime Video, Alexa, Amazon Music, Amazon e-marketplace, and IMDb.

Speaking at the launch of the partnership, Anurag Thakur said that the agreement will reduce the struggle period for talent from film institutes. He said the partnership would help strengthen industry-academia linkages through provisions for scholarships, internships, masterclasses, and other opportunities for students at the Film and Television Institute of India and Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute of India.

### **Sheenu Jhavar Becomes The First Woman President Of TiE Rajasthan**

TiE Rajasthan announced Dr. Sheenu Jhavar as its new President for two year term 2023-2025. She is the first woman in the 21 years history of TiE Rajasthan to assume this responsibility. Dr. Jhavar took charge from Dr. Ravi Modani who was successfully leading the chapter since 2021. During the biennial leadership transition ceremony, Dr. Jhavar informed that India has the third largest number of unicorns in the world, and within India - Jaipur stands as the first tier 2 city, at an overall 7th position as per Start

up Blink report. This is a matter of great pride for all of us. TiE Rajasthan has been contributing to this ecosystem since the last 21 years. Our Past Presidents- Mahavir Sharma, Atul Kapur, Dr. Ajay Data, Manuj Goyal, Rajneesh Bhandari, Rajesh Mundra, Siddharth Agarwal, Chirag Patel, and Dr. Ravi Modani have made a great visible impact. She also introduced her core committee members Anil Agarwal, Archana Surana, Ashish Mangal, Nishant Patni, Parijat Agarwal, Puneet Mittal, Raj Bagri, Rajeev Lakhota, Sanjay Yadav, Sharvik Shah, Siddharth Shah, Vijay Khemka, and Vikram Ahuja who will help her with her new responsibilities.

As I take over as President for the next two years, I plan to carry on this legacy by more focus on the startups, and work with other ecosystem partners, added Dr. Jhavar.

### **10th Edition of Indian – Sri Lanka Bilateral Maritime exercise SLINEX-2023 begins in Colombo**

The 10th Edition of the annual Indian – Sri Lanka Bilateral Maritime exercise SLINEX-2023 begins in Colombo today 3rd April. The exercise is being conducted in two phases of three days each, the Harbour Phase followed by Sea Phase. The Indian Navy will be represented by INS Kiltan and INS Savitri while Sri Lanka Navy will have SLNS Vijayabahu and SLNS Samudura. In addition, the Indian Navy Chetak helicopter and Dornier Maritime Patrol Aircraft along with Sri Lanka Air Force Dornier and BEL 412 helicopters would also participate in the exercise. The exercise will also have the Special Forces of the two navies participate together.

SLINEX-2023 will aim to enhance inter-operability, improve mutual understanding and exchange best practices and procedures in multi-faceted Maritime operations between both Navies. The Harbour Phase would include sports fixtures, yoga sessions and cultural events which would provide an opportunity for personnel from both navies to learn from each other, and re-enforce shared values as well as build bonds of friendship and camaraderie.

### **PM Modi inaugurates Diamond Jubilee Celebrations of CBI in New Delhi**

About: Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) - The Central Bureau of Investigation was established by a resolution of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India dated 1st April 1963. So it has been 60 years of the agency.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurates the diamond jubilee celebrations of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on April 3. at 12pm. The event took place at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi,

He also released a Postage Stamp and Commemorative Coin marking the Diamond Jubilee Celebration year of CBI. PM Modi also launched the Twitter handle CBI.

On the occasion, the Prime Minister conferred the President's Police Medal to 18 officers of CBI for their distinguished Service. He also gave away Gold Medal to three officers for Best Investigating Officers. The Prime Minister also inaugurated newly constructed office complexes of CBI at Shillong, Pune and Nagpur. National Security Advisor Ajit Doval, Union Minister Jitendra Singh and Senior officials of CBI were also present at the event.

### **Eravikulam National Park gets a fernarium: first in a hill station**

Eravikulam National Park in Munnar, India, has recently established a Fernarium, which is a unique garden that showcases a wide variety of ferns. The Fernarium is the first of its kind in the hill station and has already planted 52 varieties of ferns. The goal is to increase the number of ferns in the park to cover all 104 varieties found in the area. The Fernarium has been set up near the orchidarium and will be open to the public from April 20. The park officials hope that this new attraction will provide visitors with awareness about the park's biodiversity.

The Fernarium at Eravikulam National Park is more than just a collection of plants. It is also a vital tool for conservation and education. The Fernarium showcases the unique ecology of the area and helps visitors understand the importance of preserving the habitat of the endangered Nilgiri tahr. The Fernarium will also serve as a resource for researchers and botanists to study the different fern varieties found in the park. The Fernarium is a fascinating place for plant lovers and nature enthusiasts. It provides a peaceful environment to observe the different fern varieties up close. Visitors can learn about the different types of ferns and their ecological significance. The Fernarium is also a great place for photography, with the beautiful and unique foliage of the ferns making a perfect backdrop.

### **Chhattisgarh's Nagri Dubraj rice variety gets geographical indication GI tag**

The Geographical Indication Registry earlier this week granted Chhattisgarh's aromatic rice, Nagri Dubraj, a geographical indication (GI) tag facilitating the brand to get a unique identity and a wide market. Union Agriculture Minister, Narendra Singh Tomar in a tweet, said the Morena and Rewa Mango (both Madhya Pradesh) and Nagri Dubraj have been given GI tags. It will give a new identity to the products in the national and international market, Tomar added.

The authorities in Chhattisgarh have been making efforts to get the GI tag for Nagri Dubraj for a long time. The Indira Gandhi Agricultural University played a crucial role in getting the rights as it has been in constant correspondence with the authorities concerned, a state government spokesperson said. It is produced by a women's self-help group, the spokesperson added.

The women's self-help group "Maa Durga Swasahayata Samuh" of Nagri in Dhamtari district has been harvesting Dubraj and had applied to the GI tag. Last year, Chief Minister (CM) Bhupesh Baghel promised to take initiative, stating that he will ensure the "fragrance" of Dubraj returns to the farmers' fields. The Nagri Dubraj is known as the Basmati of Chhattisgarh because of its fragrance.

### **PM Modi to flag off Bhopal-Delhi Vande Bharat Express today : April 1**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to flag off the new Bhopal-Delhi Vande Bharat Express on April 1 from the Rani Kamalapati station in Madhya Pradesh's Bhopal. "PM Modi will be visiting Madhya Pradesh. During his visit to Bhopal on April 1, he will give a big gift to the people of the state in the form of Vande Bharat Express," The 11th Vande Bharat Express train is said to cover a 708 km distance in around seven hours, and 45 minutes.

According to reports, the train may run from Bhopal's Rani Kamlapati station to Hazrat Nizamuddin station instead of New Delhi railway station - to save time by half an hour. The train will depart from Rani Kamlapati Railway Station at 5:55 am, make a five-minute stop at Agra Cantt Railway Station, and proceed to New Delhi at 1:45 pm. During return, the Vande Bharat express will depart from New Delhi at 2.45 pm and will reach the last stop Rani Kamlapati railway station at 10.45 pm. The train will provide a faster, comfortable, and convenient travel experience to rail users, the official release said. It is also set to boost tourism, and promote economic development in the region.

### **Anji Khad bridge, India's first cable stayed rail bridge**

The Anji-Khad rail bridge, India's first cable-stayed rail bridge, is ready. The first bridge of its kind is made of 96 cables in total. Anji-Khad rail bridge will connect Katra to Reasi in Jammu and Kashmir. The bridge has been made using cutting-edge technology and is designed to withstand harsh weather conditions. The new bridge will help boost country's economic growth and tourism industry.

Indian Railways has achieved another milestone despite difficult geographic conditions in the state of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K). All 96 cables on the first cable-stayed bridge of India, the Anji Khad bridge, have been fully installed in a record time of 11 months. It is constructed over the Anji river, a tributary of the Chenab river between Katra and Reasi. The total length of the structure is 473.25 meters and its height (from the river bed to the formation) is 196 meters.

Earlier, an arch bridge design was proposed for the Anji Khad bridge, similar to the Chenab Bridge arch design. However, it was rejected and a new cable-stayed design was approved. A panel led by an ex-railway board chairman has suggested that the site is not suitable for an arch bridge (concerns over the geological stability of the region).

### **Abhilash Tomy completes the Golden Globe Race, finishing second; makes maritime adventure history**

India's Abhilash Tomy made history by securing the second spot in the Golden Globe (GGR) race on Saturday. Abhilash Tomy's boat Bayanat reached the French coast on Saturday at 10.30 am IST, after sailing for 236 days. The 44-year-old is the first Indian and Asian to finish the Golden Globe race. South Africa's 40-year-old sailor Kirsten Neuschaffer, who finished in first place on Thursday night, was given a grand reception by the organizers. Kirsten took a few hours to cover the last 2–3 nautical miles as the sea suddenly became windless. About: The Race - The non-stop round-the-world race, which is the longest and slowest race in the world, began on September 4, 2022, with 16 participants. The event expects the participants to use technology that existed before 1968 and none of the modern cutting edge navigation equipment.

The race has only three participants remaining as the others retired midway due to technical failures or accidents. Each participant uses a simple yacht with hull lengths ranging between 32 and 36ft. Abhilash, who took part in the race the previous edition in 2018 as well, had to retire midway after getting injured in the rough seas in the Indian Ocean. He was stranded, injured, in the ocean for three days until an aircraft

picked him up. The season had 18 participants but only five of them could finish the race.

### **CM K. Chandrasekhar Rao inaugurated new Dr. B R Ambedkar Telangana State Secretariat**

Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao formally inaugurated the new secretariat constructed at a cost of Rs 616 crore and equipped with state-of-art facilities. The CM will start working in his chamber in the new building complex at 1.20 pm the same day. All the departments will start functioning from the new premises State Chief Secretary A Santhi Kumari recently instructed all the department officials to shift their offices from the current BRK Bhavan to the allotted floors in the new Secretariat. About three departments are being accommodated on each floor

At the recent BRS Formation Day meeting, the CM said that on the occasion of the inauguration of the new secretariat, public representatives and officials should reach there by 12.45 pm on Sunday. Ministers should occupy their chambers between 1.58 pm and 2.04 pm, he added.

KCR, who will open the Telangana state Secretariat Complex named after Br Ambedkar, has laid the foundation stone for the construction of a new secretariat building here at the existing location near Hussain Sagar lake in June 2019.

The new Secretariat building is also close to two more historical structures – 125 feet statue of the architect of Indian Constitution author Dr. BR Ambedkar, which was unveiled on April 14, coinciding with Ambedkar Jayanti and Martyrs memorial to remember the sacrifices of Telangana martyrs which are coming up alongside of the famous Hussain Sagar lake in Hyderabad.

## **SPORTS**

### **SCG unveils gates named after Tendulkar and Lara**

The Sydney Cricket Ground has unveiled a set of gates named after Sachin Tendulkar and Brian Lara on Monday. They join Donald Bradman, Alan Davidson and Arthur Morris, all New South Wales (and Australia) legends in being honoured thus at the iconic SCG.

April 24 was chosen as the date to unveil the gates to mark Tendulkar's 50th birthday, and also the 30th anniversary of Lara's 277 at the SCG, his first Test century, though that Test was played in January 1993.

The gates were unveiled by SCG and Venues NSW Chairman Rod McGeoch AO, and CEO Kerrie Mather, as well as Cricket Australia CEO Nick Hockley.

Sachin Tendulkar's record at the SCG is simply remarkable, while Brian Lara's maiden Test century remains one of the most celebrated innings by a visiting player, Both players continue to hold a deep affection for the SCG and they remain hugely popular whenever they visit Sydney.

### **Star Sports signs Rishabh Pant as brand ambassador**

Star Sports, the official television broadcaster of IPL 2023, has signed India cricketer Rishabh Pant as its latest 'Believe Ambassador'. The Network said it also has other

current cricketers as its 'Believe Ambassadors' like Hardik Pandya, Ravindra Jadeja, KL Rahul, and Shreyas Iyer.

With this, Star Sports has expanded its roster from two ambassadors in 2017 to six now with Virat Kohli continuing his association. The company said that the ambassadors represent different parts of the country as well as different IPL teams and it will work closely with them to grow the popularity of the sport

About: Rishabh Pant - Rishabh Rajendra Pant is an Indian international cricketer who plays for the Indian cricket team as a wicket-keeper batter. Having played all formats for India, he is best known for his consistency to score runs in Test cricket.

### **Gary Ballance Retires from All Forms of International Cricket**

The former England Test batter Gary Ballance has announced his retirement from cricket, just three months after resuming his international career with Zimbabwe. Ballance, 33, played 23 Tests and 16 one-day internationals for England but last featured for the team in 2017 as he battled loss of form and struggles with mental health.

He was also caught up in the Yorkshire racism scandal, apologising last year to Pakistan-born Azeem Rafiq for "racist" language he had used towards his former teammate at the county club.

He initially made his debut for Zimbabwe and played for them under a two-year contract. He later went on to play for England and appeared in 23 Test matches. Additionally, he played one Test, one T20I, and five ODIs for Zimbabwe, during which he scored five Test hundreds, including a score of 137 against the West Indies.

### **Harmanpreet Kaur becomes first Indian woman to be named Wisden Cricketer of the Year**

The Indian cricket team captain Harmanpreet Kaur created history, as she became the first-ever woman from the country to be named among the Wisden Cricketers of the Year - a tradition dating back as far as 1889. Harmanpreet Kaur is the only woman in the list which comprises of England's Matthew Potts and Ben Foakes, New Zealand's Daryl Mitchell and Tom Blundell for their exploits in the English summer. Harmanpreet made her way into the list, thanks to her century at the Canterbury which led the India to their first ODI series win in the English soil since the year 1999. The Indian captain smashed a stunning 111-ball-143, in the second ODI of the series where the women in blue whitewashed the hosts.

The 34-year-old followed this up by leading India to a silver medal in cricket's return to the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham where they lost to Australia in the final despite her fighting half-century.

### **Suryakumar Yadav named the Wisden Leading T20 Cricketer of the Year**

Team India's explosive batter Suryakumar Yadav received a special honor. Surya has been included in the 2023 edition of Wisden Cricketers' Almanack as the Leading T20 Cricketer of the Year.

Suryakumar Yadav made his T20 International debut for India in 2021 at the age of 30. He hit the first ball of his international cricket career for a six, bouncer bowled by England star Jofra Archer

Last year, He was in tremendous form in T20 Internationals, hitting a total of 68 sixes, He scored the maximum 1164 runs in 31 innings of T20 International matches, with help of 2 centuries and 9 half-centuries. That includes a 48-ball T20 ton against England at Nottingham and a 49-ball T20 ton against New Zealand at Mount Maunganui.

At present, Suryakumar Yadav remains at number one position in the ICC T20 men's rankings with 906 rating points. Suryakumar's cricket journey has not been very easy. He made his debut for the national team after playing domestic cricket for 10 years.

### **Aman Sehrawat clinches India's first gold medal at Asian Wrestling Championships**

Aman Sehrawat clinched India's first gold medal at the Asian Wrestling Championships 2023 in Astana, Kazakhstan. Sehrawat topped the podium in men's 57 kg freestyle category on the penultimate day of the competition. He defeated Kyrgyzstan's Almaz Smanbekov 9-4 to win the gold medal. Aman Sehrawat's victory in Astana ensured the men's freestyle 57kg gold medal stayed with India for the fourth year running.

This was Aman Sehrawat's second podium of the year. Last year, Sehrawat was the first Indian wrestler to win gold at the Under-23 world championships in Spain.

With two freestyle medals India's tally rose to 13 in the competition. The Greco-Roman wrestlers won four medals while the women's wrestlers bagged seven.

### **India's Antim Pangal clinches silver at Asian Wrestling Championships in Astana, Kazakhstan**

India's Antim Pangal has won the silver medal at the 2023 Asian Wrestling Championships after losing to Japan's Akari Fujinami in the 53-kg category in Astana, Kazakhstan.

Fujinami, the reigning world champion, successfully defended her Asian crown in a comfortable fashion. The 19-year-old led 4-0 in the opening minute before closing out the match in the first round.

Four other Indian wrestlers including Anshu Malik (57kg), Sonam Malik (62kg), Manisha (65kg) and Reetika (72kg) added to India's medal tally by winning their bronze medal bouts.

### **Nisha Dahia wins Silver in Asian Wrestling Championships in Kazakhstan**

India's Nisha Dahiya won silver at the Asian wrestling championships in Astana, Kazakhstan yesterday. This is the biggest-ever medal of her career in the women's 68kg category.

Nisha, on a fine injury comeback, reached the final but fell to Japan's Ami Ishii 10-0 and finished as a runner-up. Nisha had defeated China's Feng Zhou 7-6 in the semi-finals.

Another Indian wrestler, Priya Malik clinched a bronze in 76 kg category. She defeated Japan's Mizuki Nagashima in the repechage round. Overall, India have won six medals so far.

### **Indian GM Gukesh wins title at World Chess Armageddon Asia & Oceania event**

Teenaged Indian Grandmaster D Gukesh stunned former world rapid champion Nodirbek Abdusattorov of Uzbekistan in the final to win the World Chess Armageddon Asia & Oceania event

After a missed chance in game 1, Gukesh lost the next game against Abdusattorov to use his “extra life” and start the match all over again. The first game of the ‘new’ match was a draw after a perpetual check from Gukesh. He won the next game to emerge champion.

Both Gukesh and Abdusattorov have earned a spot at the Armageddon’s Grand Finale held in September.

The 16-year-old Indian won in a field that included former world classical champion Vladimir Kramnik, Daniil Dubov, Yangyi Yu (China), Vidit Gujrathi and Karthikeyan Murali (both India) and Param Maghsoodloo (Iran), apart from Abdusattorov.

### **MS Dhoni, Yuvraj Singh among 5 Indian cricketers to be awarded MCC lifetime membership**

Five top Indian cricketers - Mahendra Singh Dhoni, Yuvraj Singh, Suresh Raina, Mithali Raj, and Jhulan Goswami - were given life membership in the prestigious Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC).

The MCC has named 19 new Honorary Life Members, with eight Test-playing nations represented. The London-based club, which established the rules of the game, bestows honorary life membership on some of the game's greatest men and women.

This year's list includes five former players from India and England, as well as players from Australia, Bangladesh, New Zealand, Pakistan, South Africa, and the West Indies. Eoin Morgan, England's 2019 ODI World Cup-winning captain, Jenny Gunn, Laura Marsh, and Anya Shrubsole, who were part of England's 2017 Women's ODI World Cup triumph, and flamboyant batsman Kevin Pietersen, who won the Ashes four times and was Player of the Tournament in England's 2010 ICC Men's World T20 win, are among the five former England players to receive the honour.

Jhulan Goswami, who bowled out from internationals in the England v India Women's One-Day International at Lord's last year, is the leading wicket-taker in Women's ODIs whilst Mithali Raj heads the run-scoring list with 7,805 in 211 innings.

MS Dhoni and Yuvraj Singh were both integral parts of the India side which won the 2007 ICC Men's World T20 and the 2011 ICC Men's World Cup, and Suresh Raina scored over 5,500 ODI runs across a 13-year career.

### **Daniil Medvedev wins fourth title of year with Miami Open triumph over Jannik Sinner**

Daniil Medvedev beat Italy's Jannik Sinner 7-5 6-3 to win the Miami Open on Sunday for his fourth title of the year and 19th overall.

The jubilant fourth seed pumped his fist after pounding an unreturnable serve on match point to seal the win on a hot and humid day at Hard Rock Stadium in South Florida.

The Russian was playing in his fifth consecutive final after triumphs in Doha, Rotterdam and Dubai before finishing runner-up to Carlos Alcaraz at Indian Wells two weeks ago. Medvedev said he was fortunate that Sinner had to come through a physical, three-set battle in the semi-final on Friday night against top seed Alcaraz.

### **Satwik-Chirag Create History; Become First Indian Pair To Win Gold At Asia Championships In 58 Years**

The pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy-Chirag Shetty created history by winning India's first gold in men's doubles at the Badminton Asia Championships. at the Sheikh Rashid Bin Hamdan Indoor Halli in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

This is India's first-ever gold medal in doubles at the event. India's only gold at the tournament came back in 1965, when Dinesh Khanna won the top prize in men's singles.

Satwik-Chirag beat the Malaysian pair of Ong Yew Sin and Teo Ee Yi in an intense three-set clash. The Indian duo found themselves under massive pressure after losing the first set but responded in style and kept hold of their nerves to seal a 16-21 21-17 21-19.

Badminton Association of India (BAI) President Himanta Biswa announced a big prize of Rs. 20 Lakhs to the duo for their historic triumph

### **Carlos Alcaraz beats Stefanos Tsitsipas to retain title of Barcelona Open**

The World No 2 Carlos Alcaraz retains Barcelona Open title without dropping a set, beats Stefanos Tsitsipas 6-3 6-4 in Sunday's final; as he claimed a third trophy of the 2023 season. Dusan Lajovic and Holger Rune also claim ATP Tour titles, at Srpska Open in Bosnia and Herzegovina and BMW Open in Munich respectively.

Alcaraz may end up as the favourite for the French Open, which runs from May 28 to June 11, with world No 1 Novak Djokovic and 14-time Roland Garros champion Rafa Nadal nursing elbow and hip injuries respectively. Nadal has not played since the Australian Open in January and does not know when he will return to action, while Djokovic - beaten by fellow Serb Dusan Lajovic in the quarter-finals of the Srpska Open on Friday - has withdrawn from next week's Madrid Open.

## **SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

### **ISRO Launches PSLV-C55 With 2 Singaporean Satellites For Earth Observation From Sriharikota**

Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) launches its PSLV-C55 with two Singaporean satellites for Earth observation, from Sriharikota. The PSLV-C55/TeLEOS-2 Mission - the PSLV has placed both satellites in the intended orbit. As per ISRO chief S Somanath. The PSLV-C55 mission is a dedicated commercial mission through NSIL, with TeLEOS-2 as the primary satellite and Lumelite-4 as a co-passenger satellite. The TeLEOS-2 is a synthetic aperture radar satellite developed by the Defence Science and Technology Agency (DSTA) and ST Engineering for the Government of Singapore. It carries a Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) payload, providing all-weather day and night coverage and capable of imaging at 1 metre full polarimetric resolution for Singapore. Lumelite-4

is an advanced 12U satellite developed for the technological demonstration of the High-Performance Space-borne VHF data Exchange System (VDES) by the Institute for Infocomm Research and Satellite Technology and Research Centre of the National University of Singapore.

In December 2015, ISRO successfully placed the TeLEOS-1 satellite in the PSLV-C29 mission along with five other satellites of Singapore into a 550 km circular orbit

CRED launches P2P UPI payments on its app

Fintech major CRED has launched peer-to-peer UPI payments on its app, allowing CRED members to transact with CRED members or non-members by searching their contact list and adding phone numbers, or UPI ids.

The service will be limited to CRED members. To become a CRED member, one needs to have 750 or above credit score. "While UPI has created a revolution in digital payments with a focus on utility, CRED seeks to move beyond being transactional- creating an elevated UPI experience for members. This experience hinges on making payments instant, secure, and rewarding

The new payment experience has been introduced after the launch of Scan & Pay in October 2022. As scan and pay gain traction, CRED expects the number of merchants to grow. Now with the launch of P2P UPI payments, CRED members will have multiple payment options including offline payments (UPI P2P, Scan & Pay, Tap to Pay), online merchant payments (CRED Pay, CRED flash) and bill payments.

### **Himachal Pradesh creates India's first DNA database for unidentified bodies**

Himachal Pradesh has become the first Indian state to develop a DNA database for unidentified bodies, according to media reports. The process of creating this database had started in April 2022. So far, the database holds records of 150 DNA samples of unidentified bodies.

The database comes as a relief to those families which keep running from pillar to post with photographs and other details in a hope to find bodies of their loved ones. The database with DNA details will help massively in such cases, Assistant Director (DNA), Directorate of Forensics Services, Junga, Vivek Sahajpal told media.

It would be easy to match DNA details stored in database with DNA samples of relatives. This will lead to the right identification of bodies within seconds, he added. The database would also assist in criminal investigation of heinous crimes, identification of disaster victims, missing persons, repeated offenders, etc.

### **BrokerApp, A New Face Of The Real Estate World**

Neeraj Sharma, a leading businessman in the real estate business, has launched India's first social media platform for brokers called BrokerApp, a cutting-edge mobile application designed exclusively for real estate brokers.

The app can be a revolutionary platform in the world of real estate as it comes with various features such as free property listing, access to high slabs, a global presence with a wide network of real estate agents, intelligent search to find brokers, projects, and more. The app is available for Android and iOS users, and users can download it from their respective App / Google Play store.

When asked the founder, Neeraj Sharma about this app, he said- "We're thrilled to launch BrokerApp and provide brokers with a powerful tool to grow their businesses. Our goal is to make the process of buying and selling in the real estate market as seamless as possible, and BrokerApp is a big step in that direction. In the upcoming time, we are expecting BrokerApp to become one of the world's best real estate apps." BrokerApp has set a very high benchmark in its launch event for sure but we're yet to see how it performs in the market and whether the realtors and real estate agents will grow with the help of the app or not.

### **LIGO India, a major breakthrough initiative to probe Gravitational Wave**

On the path of establishing India's efforts towards becoming a developed nation, the central government has given a nod to set up Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory (LIGO), the country's biggest facility to probe the universe through the detection of gravitational waves. Science and Technology is a key aspect of the progress and development of any nation and LIGO is one such initiative in realising a major scientific breakthrough in India.

Gravitational waves are ripples in space-time created by some of the Universe's most destructive and energetic processes or produced by cataclysmic events such as colliding black holes, massive stars exploding and colliding neutron stars. In his general theory of relativity, Albert Einstein predicted the existence of gravitational waves, which encapsulates the understanding of how gravitation works.

About LIGO - LIGO is the world's most powerful observatory and a large-scale Physics experiment carried out to detect Gravitational waves. It is a planned Gravitational-Wave Observatory that will operate as part of a worldwide network to capture and measure gravitational waves coming straight from space.

### **PhonePe launches shopping app for ONDC, marking e-commerce new entry**

Fintech firm PhonePe on Tuesday launched a shopping app that will run on ONDC, the open e-commerce network launched by the government.

Pincode is meant for hyperlocal commerce and is available on Google Play Store and App Store. It presently can be used in Bengaluru and will launch in other cities later. Pincode marks Walmart-backed PhonePe's entry in the e-commerce segment. It will connect consumers with their neighborhood stores, giving the convenience of online ordering, discounts and instant refunds and returns. "Pincode is a brand-new shopping app and offers a revolutionary new approach to e-commerce, which puts all the local stores and sellers at the heart of the digital shopping growth story. Pincode is built on the ONDC network, which allows us to generate demand for merchants digitized by various seller platforms in an inclusive manner, while creating new opportunities for growth and driving innovation at scale," said Sameer Nigam, chief executive officer and founder of PhonePe.

PhonePe said the app will offer consumers a wide selection of products and brands by well-known national brands, as well as locally manufactured groceries, apparel, footwear, and accessories.

Pincode will bring shopkeepers and small merchants to e-commerce and create employment. PhonePe said it believes that ONDC can foster the rapid growth of a new hyperlocal ecommerce business model. Apart from local buyers and sellers, such a model will also benefit other ecosystem participants like the last mile logistics and inventory management players.

### **ISRO Successfully Conducts Autonomous Landing Of Its Reusable Launch Vehicle Prototype**

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) on Sunday, April 2, successfully conducted the autonomous landing test or air-drop landing experiment of the space agency's reusable launch vehicle prototype. The mission, called RLV LEX, was performed in collaboration with the Defence Space Research Organisation (DRDO), and the Indian Air Force (IAF), in the early hours of Sunday at the Aeronautical Test Range (ATR), Chitradurga, Karnataka.

The mission marks the first time a winged body has been carried to an altitude of 4.5 kilometres by a helicopter and released for carrying out an autonomous landing on a runway.

ISRO conducted the first experimental mission of its Reusable Launch Vehicle - Technology Demonstrator (RLV-TD) on May 23, 2016, from Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota. As part of this experimental mission, critical technologies such as autonomous navigation, guidance and control, and the reusable thermal protection system were successfully demonstrated.

### **Indigenous Anti Tank Guided Missile, Amogha-III tested successfully**

Bharat Dynamics (BDL) has successfully conducted a field firing test of its latest 3rd generation man-portable Anti Tank Guided Missile (ATGM), Amogha-III. This indigenous missile has been developed under Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme (IGMDP).

The test which was conducted last weekend fulfilled all mission objectives, and BDL announced this through their official Twitter handle.

Amogha-III ATGM boasts a fire-and-forget capability, requiring no external intervention following launch. Developed by BDL's Research and Development Division, the missile also features a dual-mode IIR Seeker with a range of 200 to 2500 meters.

Assisted by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), Amogha-III showcases a tandem warhead, consisting of two separate explosive charges that are detonated in sequence. The first charge, known as the precursor charge, penetrates the target's armour, creating a hole for the second charge, the main charge, to detonate inside, maximizing damage inflicted on the target.

### **MIT Engineers has developed Synthetic nanoparticle and polymer injections could stop internal bleeding**

A combination of synthetic nanoparticles and a polymer could offer a new way to stop internal bleeding, according to the creators of the system.

Developed by engineers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), the two-component system can be injected into the body and help form blood clots at the sites of internal injury.

The materials, which mimic the way that the body naturally forms clots, could offer a way to keep people with severe internal injuries alive until they can reach a hospital. In a mouse model of internal injury, the team showed that the components performed significantly better than haemostatic nanoparticles that were previously developed.

### OBITUARY

#### **Boxing Champion, Padma Shri Awardee Kaur Singh passes away**

Boxing champion Kaur Singh breathed his last on Thursday, April 27 in Haryana's Kurukshetra at the age of 74. He had been undergoing treatment for quite some time due to multiple health issues.

Singh garnered loads of laurels in his career. He won six gold medals in international competitions, which included the Asian Games in 1982. He won gold in heavyweight boxing at the Asian Games.

In the same year, Singh got the prestigious Arjuna Award, followed by the Padma Shri in 1983. Thereafter, in 1988, he won the Vishisht Seva Medal, also.

Back on January 27, 1980, Singh also took part in an exhibition match with the legendary Muhammad Ali that took place in New Delhi.

Earlier in April, the Punjab government announced that life stories of four great sportsmen will be included in school curriculum. Textbooks of Class 9 and 10 will have their stories. Singh is one of the four players along with Balbir Singh Sr, who represented India in three Olympics, athlete Milkha Singh and Gurbachan Singh Randhawa, who was India's very first Arjuna Awardee.

#### **Uttarakhand Minister Chandan Ram Das passes away**

Uttarakhand's Minister for Transport and Social Welfare Chandan Ram Das died of a heart attack on Wednesday in Bageshwar. The 65-year-old was brought to the district hospital this afternoon after he complained of suffocation in the chest, Bageshwar's Chief Medical Officer DP Joshi said.

He was shifted to the ICU as his condition worsened. Despite all efforts, he could not be saved. The minister could not be taken to some other hospital in an air ambulance as his condition did not allow it.

The BJP leader represented Bageshwar in four consecutive assemblies since 2007, but he became a minister for the first time in the Pushkar Singh Dhami's cabinet.

**About: Chandan Ram Das** - Chandan Ram Das was an Indian politician of the Bharatiya Janata Party. Das was a member of the Uttarakhand Legislative Assembly from the Bageshwar constituency in Bageshwar district from 2007 until his death.

#### **Malayalam actor Mamukkoya passes away at the age of 76**

Popular Malayalam actor Mamukkoya passed away on Wednesday, April 26, at a private hospital in Kozhikode. According to reports, he breathed his last at around 1.10 pm. He

was 76 years old. On Monday, April 24, he collapsed at a football tournament in Malappuram district. He was rushed to the hospital and was put on a ventilator. On April 24, Mamukkoya was in Malappuram where he inaugurated the Poongod Janakeeya Sevens Football Tournament. The actor complained of uneasiness and, reportedly, collapsed on the football field.

Mamukkoya was rushed to the hospital and was being treated at the Intensive Care Unit (ICU). He was put on a ventilator. On April 26, Mamukkoya breathed his last an hour ago, according to hospital authorities. Mamukkoya's sudden demise left the entire Malayalam film industry in a state of shock.

About: Mamukkoya - Mamukkoya made his acting debut in the theatre in 1979. Before that, he worked in a timber mill in Kozhikode. In his four-decade-long career, Mamukkoya acted in over 450 Malayalam films. He also appeared in a French film titled Flammens of Paradise.

The veteran actor was known for the use of the Mappila dialect and his impeccable comedy timing. He won two Kerala State Film Awards for his performances in Perumazhakkalam and Innathe Chintha Vishayam.

#### **Ex Odisha MP And 3 Time MLA Trilochan Kanungo passes away at 82**

Veteran politician and former Jagatsinghpur MP Trilochan Kanungo passed away while undergoing treatment at a private hospital in Bhubaneswar. He was 83. and is survived by his wife, son and three daughters. His younger brother Panchanan Kanungo is a Congress politician.

The three-time MLA and one-time MP was undergoing treatment at a private hospital in Bhubaneswar since March 30. After battling for life for over three weeks, Kanungo breathed his last.

Trilochan Kanungo was a former chairman of Cuttack Municipality and ex-chairperson of the state finance commission.

Born on November 24, 1940 at Badamulei village in Cuttack district, Mr Kanungo was residing in Sheikh Bazaar area of Cuttack city for the last few years.

#### **Former Punjab CM & senior Shiromani Akali Dal leader Parkash Singh Badal passes away**

Parkash Singh Badal, former Chief Minister of Punjab and senior leader of Shiromani Akali Dal passed away in Mohali last evening, April 25. He was 95. Mr. Badal, a five-time chief minister, was admitted to the intensive care unit of a private hospital on Sunday following a complaint of difficulty in breathing.

Parkash Singh Badal was born on December 8, 1927, in Abul Khurana near Malout. He entered the state Assembly from Malout in 1957 as the Congress nominee and in 1969, entered the Assembly from Gidderbaha seat on the SAD ticket. He was elected as MLA for 11 times, losing only twice.

Badal became the Chief Minister for the first time in 1970. He was the youngest Chief Minister and headed a coalition government. But the government did not complete its term. Later, he became the Chief Minister four times, from 1977 to 1980, 1997 to 2002,

2007 to 2012, and 2012 to 2017. In 1977, he briefly joined Morarji Desai's government as the Agriculture minister at the Centre.

#### **Lucknow's Famous Nawab Jafar Mir Abdullah Passes Away**

A well-known personality and Lucknow's famous Nawab Jafar Mir Abdullah passed away on Tuesday at the age of 73. He breathed his last at the city's Vivekananda Hospital. According to reports, Nawab Mir Jafar was suffering from a prolonged illness and was being treated at the hospital. - He was undergoing dialysis here.

He is survived by his brother Nawab Masood Abdullah and three daughters: Shirin, Nishat and Manrukh. Nawab Masood announced his death on social media after which condolences poured in from across the globe.

Abdullah acted in several movies, including Umrao Jaan, Gadar, Gulabo Sitabo, Ishaqzade and Madam Chief Minister, etc.

Born in 1951, Abdullah had worked as a medical representative for about two decades when he left his job to continue his father's business of selling antiquities. He was also awarded with the Yash Bharti Award in 2016.

#### **Veteran Actor Uttara Baokar Passes Away At 79**

Veteran film and television actor Uttara Baokar passed away in Pune. She was 79. Sources close to the actor's family told news agency PTI that she left for the heavenly abode following a prolonged illness. Baokar, who was ailing since the last year, breathed her last at a hospital on Tuesday. Her last rites were performed on Wednesday morning, reported PTI.

Baokar, who studied acting at the National School of Drama (NSD), played various roles in different plays such as 'Padmavati' in 'Mukhyamantri', 'Mena' in 'Mena Gurjari', 'Desdemona' in Shakespeare's 'Othello', mother in playwright Girish Karnad's 'Tughlaq', among others. She also worked in TV shows as well namely 'Udaan', 'Antara', 'X Zone', 'Rishtey Kora Kaagaz', 'Nazarana', 'Jassi Jaissi Koi Nahin', 'Kashmakash Zindagi Ki' and 'Jabb Love Hua'.

Additionally, She won the National Film Award for Best Supporting Actress for Mrinal Sen's 'Ek Din Achanak'.

#### **Keshub Mahindra passeS away at the age of 99**

Keshub Mahindra, former chairman of Mahindra & Mahindra, passed away at the age of 99 on Wednesday April 12. He served as the chairman of the flagship company of the Mahindra Group for 48 years between 1963 and 2012. After that, he was the chairman emeritus of the firm.

Recently, Forbes revealed that he was India's oldest billionaire, with a net worth of \$1.2 billion.

Under Mahindra, the company went under a great deal of diversification. When he started working there in the company in 1947, its main business was manufacturing the iconic Willys Jeeps. Now, the group is a conglomerate with interests spanning automobile, energy, software services, real estate, hospitality and defence.

About: Keshub Mahindra - Born on October 9, 1923, in Shimla, Mahindra completed his graduation from Wharton at the University of Pennsylvania, USA. In 1945, his father, JC Mahindra, co-founded the company. In 1947, Keshub joined the company and assumed the role of chairman in 1963.

### **Theatre veteran Jalabala Vaidya passes away**

Jalabala Vaidya, legendary theatre actor, died in Delhi on Sunday after a battle with respiratory ailments, said her daughter and theatre director Anasuya Vaidya Shetty. She was 86.

Born in London to Indian author and freedom fighter Suresh Vaidya and English classical singer Madge Franckeiss, Jalabala Vaidya started out as a journalist, writing for various national newspapers and magazines in Delhi.

She was awarded the Sangeet Natak Akademi's Tagore Award, the Delhi Natya Sangh Award, the Andhra Pradesh Natya Akademi Honour, Honorary Citizenship of the City of Baltimore, USA, and in February, the Delhi Government's Varisht Samman for her lifelong contribution to the performing arts.

Jalabala Vaidya was briefly married to well-known journalist and columnist, C.P. Ramachandran, but soon after, met and married her lifelong partner in the arts and life, poet-playwright Gopal Sharman.

She co-founded the Akshara National Classical Theatre in New Delhi with Sharman. It is an exquisite arts complex and much-loved hub of theatre performances, designed and built by Sharman, where she played the lead role in more than 20 plays, including 'Full Circle', 'Larflarflarf', 'The Ramayana', 'Let's Laugh Again', 'The Bhagavad Gita', 'The Cabuliwala', 'Gitanjali', 'The Strange Case of Billy Biswas', etc.

### **Jharkhand Education Minister Jagarnath Mahto Passes away at 56**

Jharkhand minister Jagarnath Mahto died on Thursday at a hospital in Chennai where he was undergoing treatment, a senior doctor of the health facility said. He was 56.

Jagannath Mahto was an Indian politician and cabinet minister from Jharkhand. He represented the Dumri. Vidhan Sabha constituency as a Jharkhand Mukti Morcha MLA Mahto died from complications of a lung transplant on 6 April 2023,

Mr Mahto, the four-time JMM MLA from Dumri in Giridih district, was taken to Chennai in October 2020, where he had undergone the transplant as his lungs were damaged due to the COVID-19 infection, a health department official said

The minister had returned to Ranchi after eight months in June 2021,

The Jharkhand government declared mourning for two days from April 6 in honour of Mr Mahto, during which no official ceremony would be held.

According to a state government notification, the cabinet meeting scheduled this evening was cancelled.

### **Former cricketer Salim Durani passes away at the age of 88**

Salim Durani, the debonair India cricketer of the 1960s with a movie star looks, a puckish sense of humour, and a penchant for hitting monstrous sixes on demand, died

on Sunday. He was 88. His death was confirmed by sources close to the family. He had been living with his younger brother, Jahangir Durani, in Jamnagar, Gujarat.

The Kabul-born Durani, who packed a punch with his bat and was also a handy left-arm orthodox bowler, played 29 Tests and was instrumental in India defeating England 2-0 in the historic five-match Test series in 1961-62, picking up eight and 10 wickets in the team's victories at Calcutta and Madras.

Durani, known for his fine dressing style and swagger, scored just one century though he had seven fifties in the 50 innings he played for the country, scoring 1,202 runs.

### **Malayalam novelist and short story writer Sarah Thomas passes away at 88**

Renowned Malayalam writer and Kerala Sahitya Akademi Award winner Sarah Thomas passed away in Thiruvananthapuram on Friday, March 31. The 88-year-old, whose wide repertoire of literary works includes at least 17 novels and more than a hundred short stories, had been suffering from age-related ailments for a while. She was at her daughter's residence in Nandavanam when she breathed her last.

Condoling the writer's demise, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said, "Sarah Thomas raised Malayalam literature to new levels of expressionism. Through her, Malayalam experienced nuanced reflections of the inner lives of people across caste and class hierarchies. Her works had projected and upheld the feminine identity even before the feminist ideology began to gain traction in Malayalam literature."

Sarah is best known for her novel Narmadipudava, for which she was presented with the Kerala Sahitya Akademi Award in 1979. Narmadipudava is the tale of a Tamil Brahmin widow, tied to the shackles of caste and gender traditions in Kerala. Her 1982 novel Daivamakkal, its protagonist a Dalit medical student, is considered a seminal work in Kerala's Dalit literature. It has been translated to English as Children of God by Sosanna Kuruvilla. In 2010, Sarah won a second Kerala Sahitya Akademi Award for her contribution to Malayalam literature.

## **APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS**

### **Siddhartha Mohanty Appointed As LIC Chairman**

The government has appointed Siddhartha Mohanty as chairman of Life Insurance Corporation of India till June 2024, Chairman He will be the managing director and chief executive officer of the insurance behemoth from June 2024 till June 2025. Siddhartha Mohanty had been serving as interim chairman of the corporation from March 14, 2023.

Financial Services Institutions Bureau (FSIB) recommended Siddhartha Mohanty's name for the post of chairman. The decision regarding the appointment of Mohanty as the LIC chairman was taken by the Appointments Committee of Cabinet (ACC) headed by PM Narendra Modi.

**About: Siddhartha Mohanty** - Siddhartha Mohanty is a postgraduate in political science and also holds a degree in law. Siddhartha Mohanty also holds a postgraduate degree in business management and is a licentiate from the Insurance Institute of India. In a career spanning over three decades in the corporation, Mohanty has made his mark in the areas of Marketing, HR, Investments and Legal.

### **Jet Airways CEO-designate Sanjiv Kapoor quits**

Sanjiv Kapoor, the CEO-designate of Jet Airways, has left the company just a year after joining the grounded carrier. Mr Kapoor joined Jet Airways in April last year.

The consortium that is working to revive the airline said in a statement today it will oversee CEO-designate responsibilities until a suitable replacement is found.

The Jet Airways management committee in January asked Mr Kapoor not to use the title of CEO till the troubled airline's ownership was completely transferred to a consortium of lenders.

He continued as CEO-designate till he quit the airline.

Monday will be his last working day, Jalan Kalrock Consortium (JKC) said in the statement .

### **RBI approves re-appointment of N Kamakodi as CUB MD & CEO**

The Reserve Bank of India has given its consent for the re-appointment of N Kamakodi as Managing Director and CEO of private sector bank City Union Bank, the Tamil-Nadu-based lender said on Wednesday. The tenure of his re-appointment would be for a period of three years with effect from May 1, 2023.

Dr. N. Kamakodi is serving as MD & CEO of the Bank from May 2011. He joined the Bank as DGM in the year 2003 was elevated to the post of GM in 2005 and later as Executive Director in 2006. He has excellent academic background and also acquired hands on experience on the overall operations of the Bank, He has a degree in Bachelor of Technology in Chemical Engineering, an MBA from Chinese University of Hong Kong, Ph.D. in e-Banking and a CAIIB.

**About: City Union Bank** – The City Union Bank Limited is an Indian private sector bank headquartered in Kumbakonam, Tamil Nadu. The bank was initially named Kumbakonam Bank Limited, and was incorporated on 31 October 1904

### **Hari Hara Mishra takes charge as CEO of Association of ARC**

Hari Hara Mishra has taken charge as the Chief Executive Officer of the Association of Asset Reconstruction Companies.

The Association, which is the voice of all Asset Reconstruction Companies (ARCs), has been active for more than eight years. Currently, there are 28 ARCs registered with Reserve Bank of India.

Mishra, who worked with State Bank of India from 1982 to 2004, Officer, has been associated with Asset Reconstruction Sector since those formative days (2004) till date, in various ARCs in executive and director level roles.

“ARCs are passing through a difficult phase in terms of trust deficit with various stakeholders. My primary goal will be to restore the confidence in the functioning of ARCs by focussing on win-win strategy and value unlocking for all players in the broader ecosystem,” he said.

**About: ARC** - An Asset Reconstruction Company is a specialized financial institution that buys the NPAs or bad assets from banks and financial institutions so that the latter

can clean up their balance sheets. In other words, ARCs are in the business of buying bad loans from banks.

#### **Nasscom appoints Microsoft India head Anant Maheshwari as chairperson**

The National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM) has appointed Microsoft India's president Anant Maheshwari as its Chairperson for the year 2023-24, promoting him from his previous tenure as vice-chairperson. He has taken the reins from Krishnan Ramanujam, who heads business and technology services at Tata Consultancy Services.

The advocacy group also appointed Rajesh Nambiar, Chairman and MD, Cognizant India as its Vice Chairperson for the current year. The apex organisation for technology services in India also updated its executive council for the 2023-24, one-third of which is made of women.

Nasscom said that through the appointment of its new leadership and council, it aims to spearhead India's goal of doubling the technology industry to \$500 billion by 2030 from a current valuation of \$245 billion.

#### **Shreekant Bhandiwad named as the new Chairman of KVGB**

Shreekant M Bhandiwad has taken charge as the new Chairman of Karnataka Vikas Grameena Bank (KVGB). Prior to his joining as Chairman of KVGB, Bhandiwad was heading the Patna circle of Canara Bank.

A postgraduate in agriculture, he has worked as an Agricultural Extension Officer in rural branches of Canara Bank and also worked as a consultant in Agricultural Consultancy Services of Canara Bank at the Head Office.

A native of Dharwad, Bhandiwad carries with him an experience of 29 years in Canara Bank. He has worked in states such as Haryana, Rajasthan, Bihar and Karnataka in various capacities such as branch in-charge, regional head and circle head. Besides this, he was Deputy Managing Director of Canfin Homes Ltd for a period of three years.

P Gopikrishna, the earlier Chairman, repatriated to Canara Bank as Circle Head, Bengaluru. A statement said that the bank's business increased from ₹24,775 crore to ₹33,100 crore during Gopikrishna's tenure.

#### **Udai Tambar, Indian-origin CEO on racial justice advisory board New York**

Udai Tambar, an Indian-origin CEO involved in youth development services in the US, is among 15 experts appointed as members of the newly-formed racial justice advisory board in New York City.

Tambar, the CEO and President of New York Junior Tennis and Learning (NYJTL) was named as a member of the advisory board on implementation of the Racial Justice Charter Amendments, launched last week by Mayor Eric Adams and Mayor's Office of Equity Commissioner Sideya Sherman.

The board will help ensure that New York City continues to lead the nation in innovative, racial equity work and carries out the city's newly enshrined charter changes, according to a statement by the Mayor's office.

Tambar most recently served as Vice President of Community Health at Northwell Health and is currently the President & CEO of NYJTL, the largest nonprofit youth tennis and education programme in the US.

He has devoted much of his career to serving youth, including serving as Chief of Staff and Director of Youth & Children Services for the NYC Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services and as the Executive Director for South Asian Youth Action (SAYA!), which provides comprehensive youth development services for NYC's under-resourced South Asian community.

#### **A Madhavarao set to be next CMD of Bharat Dynamics Ltd**

A Madhavarao is set to be next Chairman & Managing Director (CMD) of Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL), a PSU under the Ministry of Defence. He has been recommended for the post by the Public Enterprises Selection Board (PESB) panel on Monday. Presently, he is serving as Director (Technical) in the same organisation. Madhavarao has been recommended for the post of CMD of BDL from a list of five candidates, who were interviewed by the PESB selection panel. Out of five candidates, two candidates were from Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) and one each from BDL, Indian Navy and Indian Air Force.

Madhavarao is an alumnus of various educational institutes and universities. He has a B. Tech in Electrical Engineering, an ME in Electronics & Telecommunication, an MSc in Defence Studies, an MBA in Finance with a Master's degree in Management Studies

#### **Shantanu Roy to become new CMD of BEML Limited**

Public enterprises selection board (PESB) has recommended Mr Shantanu Roy for the post of Chairman and Managing Director of 'Schedule 'A' Company under the Ministry of Defence, BEML Limited. Currently, he is serving as the Director (Mining & Construction Business) in the same company.

PESB interviewed two others in the selection meeting including Anil Jerath, Director (Finance), BEML Limited, and Sanjay Som, Executive Director, BEML Limited.

Mr. Roy is an Electrical Engineering graduate from NIT Raipur. and an MBA in Financial Management, He has served as Executive Director of BEML Limited, responsible for the international business division, strategy & new initiatives, coordination, and northern region operations, before assuming his current position in February 2023. As a six sigma black belt certified professional, he is well-versed in various models of project financing, mechanisms and processes for financial closure of large projects, international laws, arbitration rules, international legal & arbitration cases, and statutory & legal compliances.

#### **Vodafone Idea reappoints Kumar Mangalam Birla non-executive director**

Kumar Mangalam Birla has rejoined the board of Vodafone Idea (Vi) as an additional non-executive director. The company's board of directors approved his appointment, which took effect on April 20. It also accepted the resignation of non-executive director K K Maheshwari from the board.

Birla had stepped down from the post of non-executive chairman of the company in August 2021 barely two months after offering his entire stake to a public sector or a domestic finance company. Birla handed over the reign to group veteran Himanshu Kapania. Ravinder Takkar took charge as non-executive chairman replacing Kapania last August.

Birla's appointment on the board signals the group's commitment to the company as it continues its efforts to find an investor. The company which is yet to clear vendor dues has also been in talks with banks for raising fresh capital. Raising funds is crucial for the company to make fresh network investments and arrest subscriber loss. The company also continues to bleed and in Q3 FY 2023 posted a net loss of Rs 7,990 crore.

### **RBI approves appointment of Kaizad Bharucha as deputy MD of HDFC Bank**

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has approved the appointment of Kaizad Bharucha as the deputy managing director of HDFC Bank for three years from April 19, 2023, The RBI also approved Bhavesh Zaveri's appointment as HDFC Bank's executive director for a period of three years, with effect from April 19.

HDFC Bank, which is India's largest private sector lender, had recommended the two appointments to the central bank back in November 2022. It is appointing a deputy managing director five years after Paresh Sukthankar resigned.

Bharucha has more than 35 years of experience in banking and he has been associated with HDFC Bank since 1995. Before his new assignment, Bharucha was executive director responsible for wholesale banking. He previously worked at SBI Commercial and International Bank.

Zaveri, before being appointed as executive director, was group head—operations, cash management & ATM product. He joined HDFC Bank in 1998 in an operations function and moved up the ladder. Zaveri worked for Oman International Bank and Barclays Bank before that.

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#### **Tata appoints Randhir Thakur as CEO and MD of TEPL**

Former Intel Foundry Services President Randhir Thakur has been appointed Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director of Tata Electronics Pvt Ltd.

Randhir Thakur has worked with Intel for more than 5 years and has been a global innovator in the semiconductor industry. According to the company, he has over 40 years' experience in global manufacturing and research and development.

He has previously held leadership and technical positions at Applied Materials Inc., SanDisk Corp, as well as STEAG Electronic Systems and Micron Technology Inc.

About: Tata Electronics - Tata Electronics Pvt Ltd (TEPL) was founded in 2020 as a greenfield venture of the Tata group with expertise in manufacturing precision components and has a roadmap that extends to semiconductor fabrication and packaging segments.

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#### **Karnataka Bank appoints Sekhar Rao as interim MD and CEO**

Karnataka Bank said that it has appointed Sekhar Rao as interim managing director and CEO following the completion of the term of the incumbent CEO.

Mahabaleshwara M S, the incumbent managing director and Chief Executive Officer (MD & CEO) of Karnataka Bank, demitted the office on April 14, after successful completion of his second term of three years, the bank said in a regulatory filing.

Rao, Executive Director, assumed charge as an interim MD and CEO with effect from April 15, 2023, in terms of RBI approval dated April 12, 2023, it said.

He has been appointed for a period of three months or till the appointment of regular MD and CEO whichever is earlier.

## **PTC India appoints 3 former IAS officers as independent directors**

Power trading solutions provider PTC India has appointed three retired officers of the Indian Administrative Service (IAS) as independent directors of the company. The company has also appointed Mahendra Kumar Gupta as a nominee director of NHPC. In a statement, PTC India informed about the appointments of Rashmi Verma, Jayant Dasgupta and Narendra Kumar as independent directors of the company with effect from Thursday. The appointments are subject to the approval of the shareholders, it stated. Rajib K Mishra, Chairman & Managing Director, PTC India, said: "We are delighted to welcome the three new independent directors having credible experience and impeccable career record."

Rashmi Verma, a former IAS officer from 1982 batch, has 36 years of experience in various sectors, including tourism and textiles.

In over 37 years of experience, Dasgupta, a 1981-batch retired IAS officer, has served as chief adviser to Bihar State Planning Board and ambassador to the World Trade Organisation. He also served as secretary, Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister.

Narendra Kumar, a retired IAS officer from 1988 batch, has served as Financial Commissioner, Government of NCT of Delhi, and Managing Director of Delhi State Financial & Development Corporation.

## **Aparesh Kumar Singh, the new chief justice of Tripura High Court**

Justice - Aparesh Kumar Singh, a justice of the Jharkhand high court, has been appointed as the chief justice of the Tripura high court with effect from the date he assumes charge of his office.

On January 25, the collegium approved the nomination of Justice Jaswant Singh, a judge of the Orissa high court, as chief justice of the Tripura high court. However, a week after Justice Singh's appointment, on February 19, 2023, Justice Singh announced his retirement from the service. The collegium then recommended that Justice Aparesh Kumar Singh be appointed chief justice of the Tripura high court. Since Justice Indrajit Mahanty retired from the Tripura High Court on November 10 of last year, the position of chief justice has been vacant.

About: Tripura High Court - The Tripura High Court was set up in March, 2013, along with the full-fledged High Courts in Meghalaya and Manipur. All the northeastern states, excluding Sikkim, were earlier under the Guwahati High Court.

## **VLCC appoints Vikas Gupta as CEO with immediate effect**

Beauty and skincare brand VLCC has appointed Vikas Gupta as CEO with immediate effect.

The announcement comes after investment firm Carlyle, a global investment firm, announced a strategic partnership with VLCC through the acquisition of a majority stake in the company in December 2022.

Prior to joining VLCC, Gupta was the CEO of SuperStore by Nykaa. Before that he was the chief customer and marketing officer for Flipkart between 2019-21, VLCC said in its release.

Gupta started his career as a management trainee with Hindustan Unilever (HUL) in 1998 and spent 21 years with Unilever, leading brand marketing for Lux, Dove, Dirt Is Good brands and was executive director of home care for Unilever Indonesia, VLCC. Amit Jain, managing director and head, Carlyle India Advisors said, "We are excited to welcome Vikas as the Group's CEO. He brings multi-decadal, global experience in building leading consumer brands and digital platforms.

#### **Anshuman Singhanian and Arnab Banerjee are new ATMA office bearers**

Anshuman Singhanian, Managing Director, JK Tyre & Industries Ltd has been elected as the new Chairman of Automotive Tyre Manufacturers' Association (ATMA), the national industry body for the automotive tyre sector in India. Arnab Banerjee, Managing Director & CEO of CEAT Ltd, takes over as Vice-Chairman of ATMA.

Singhanian, the new ATMA Chairman, is a graduate from Oxford Brookes University, UK and an alumnus of London Business School. He has held several positions in Planning, Production, Product Development, Quality Control, Stores and Purchase, Finance as well as Sales and Marketing. Being a tech-savvy person, he has played a key role in implementing the latest technologies in the manufacturing process at JK Tyre.

#### **Kalikesh Singh Deo takes charge as NRAI president**

The Governing Body of the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) unanimously approved the handing over of charge of the sporting body to Kalikesh Narayan Singh Deo on Thursday, after president Raninder Singh went on a long leave of absence. Kalikesh Narayan Singh Deo, who held the position of Senior Vice-President, took over as the President of the National Rifle Association of India NRAI

The move is in accordance with Rule 19 of the Rules and Regulations of the NRAI constitution.

Kalikesh Singh Deo, 48, is a member of the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) and a former Member of Parliament in the Lok Sabha from Bolangir. He completed his school at Dehradun's Doon School and graduated from St Stephens College in New Delhi. He was serving as the senior vice-president of the federation since getting elected to the post on 18 September, 2021.

#### **Seshagiri Rao retires, steps down from JSW Steel board after 24 years**

Seshagiri Rao (65), joint managing director and group chief financial officer, JSW Steel, has stepped down from the board after 24 years, on superannuation.

JSW Steel informed the stock exchanges on Wednesday that Seshagiri Rao, joint managing director and group chief financial officer (CFO), ceased to be a wholetime director of the company with effect from April 6. This was on completion of his term approved by the shareholders at the 26th annual general meeting of the company held on July 23, 2020 (April 6, 2020 to April 5, 2023).

Rao superannuated from the services of the company and consequently stepped down from the board, the company said.

However, he would be associated with the group in an advisory role. The company mentioned that he ceased to be a director with effect from April 6, but would continue to be associated with the group as 'Group CFO'.

#### **Tata International appoints Rajeev Singhal as Chief Operating Officer**

Tata Group's trading and distribution arm Tata International on Tuesday announced the appointment of Rajeev Singhal as its Chief Operating Officer.

He assumed office from April 1, 2023 and will report to Tata International Ltd Managing Director Anand Sen, the company said in a statement.

All vertical heads will report to Singhal, who moved from Tata Steel to Tata International and has experience of over 35 years, it added.

Prior to his latest role, he was Vice President of Marketing and Sales for Flat Products at Tata Steel.

"I believe that his strategic insights and operational expertise will be invaluable as we continue to drive growth and expand our presence. I am confident that under his leadership, Tata International will scale to greater heights in all aspects of the business," Sen said.

#### **RS Sodhi roped in by Reliance Retail to spearhead grocery business**

Reliance Retail, the retail arm of Reliance Industries (RIL), has hired RS Sodhi, former MD of Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation (GCMMF),.

Sodhi is expected to help Reliance Retail build its grocery vertical, especially in the fruits and vegetable space, besides helping its consumer brands segment. The company has been aggressively increasing its presence in the segment. Recently, it has launched a wide range of products, from beverages under the Campa brand to home items.

The conglomerate had earlier hired former Coca-Cola India chairman T Krishnakumar.

Sodhi is an industry veteran who worked with GCMMF for 41 years. He stepped down from his role in January. He was then the managing director (MD) of the federation.

Before that, he was the general marketing manager in the 2000s.

For more than three decades, Sodhi worked under the direct guidance of Verghese Kurien, the father of the White Revolution. He obtained a bachelor's degree in agri-engineering from CTAE, Udaipur, and he is among the first-batch alumni of the Institute of Rural Management, Anand (Irma).

During the pandemic, Amul launched over 100 stock-keeping units under Sodhi's leadership.

#### **Sanjay Gupta has been appointed the chairperson of IESA**

Sanjay Gupta has been appointed as the chairperson of India Electronics and Semiconductor Association (IESA) for FY24 after elections on April 5 to pick a new leadership team for the organization.

Gupta is the president and chief executive officer of Spark Minda. The newly elected members of IESA's executive council are Anku Jain (of MediaTek), Hitesh Garg (NXP), and V Veerappan (Tessolve). The other members include Sudhir Naik (EInfoChips), Ashok Mishra (Reliance Jio), and Manoj Kumar (STMicro).

IESA represents the country's electronics system design and manufacturing (ESDM) industry and it has more than 260 members.

The new council will make IESA's strategy for the electronics and semiconductor industry's growth. "This role offers a unique opportunity to contribute to the growth of this sunrise sector in India and accelerate the government's Make in India initiative," said Gupta.

"IESA will continue to drive strategic partnerships between industry, academia, and government to unlock the full potential of this sector along with supporting start-ups and emerging players in the industry," he said. Gupta, an engineer, has more than 28 years of experience in strategy, innovation, technology, research and development, operations and management.

### **Suzuki Motorcycle India announces appointment of Kenichi Umeda as new MD**

In an official statement released on Tuesday, Suzuki Motorcycle India Pvt Ltd (SMIPL) declared the appointment of Kenichi Umeda as the company's new Managing Director. Umeda takes over from Satoshi Uchida, who has completed his tenure as the Managing Director of SMIPL.

With the appointment of Kenichi Umeda as the new Managing Director of Suzuki Motorcycle India, he will take on the crucial responsibility of expanding and consolidating the company's position in both the domestic and international markets. Umeda's extensive experience of more than 27 years in the industry, gained from various global markets, will be a valuable asset to the company, as stated in the official announcement.

According to Umeda, India holds a significant place in Suzuki's global market, and the company has always aimed to provide its customers with innovative and evolving products that cater to their changing requirements. As the new Managing Director of Suzuki Motorcycle India, Umeda plans to continue this legacy and prioritize the delivery of customer-centric solutions, as stated in the official statement.

### **Ex-Israel envoy Ron Malka appointed Adani's Haifa Port chief, Mahua Moitra reacts**

Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra lashed out after Israel's former ambassador to India, Ron Malka, on Sunday announced he has assumed charge as the executive chairman of the Haifa Port Company. The port company is owned by a consortium of Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Ltd (APSEZ) and Gadot Group.

"Israel's former envoy to India appointed Adani's Haifa port chairman! This man screamed from rooftops about how clean Adani's Israeli dealings were. Condemned filmmaker Nadav Lapid for criticising Bollywood Hindutva propaganda film. Adani Hamam Mein toh Saare

### **Neeraj Nigam new RBI executive director**

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has appointed Neeraj Nigam as executive director (ED) with effect from April 3, 2023. He was the regional director of RBI's Bhopal office.

As executive director, Nigam will look after the consumer education and protection department, financial inclusion and development department, legal department and secretary's department.

"Shri Nigam has, over a span of more than three decades, served in Regulation and Supervision, Human Resource Management, Premises, Currency Management, Bank Accounts and other areas in the Reserve Bank, in its Central Office as well as Regional Offices," RBI said in a statement, adding that he holds a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from Barkatullah University in Bhopal.

### **Sudha Shivkumar is now president of FICCI women's wing**

Chennai-based Sudha Shivkumar took over as the 40th President of FICCI Ladies Organisation (FLO), the oldest women-led and women-centric business chamber of Southeast Asia.

As the 40th National President of FLO, Shivkumar will focus on empowering women by facilitating an enabling environment that promotes entrepreneurship, industry participation and economic development of women.

"Development of entrepreneurship among women has been central to FLO's philosophy and mission. Taking this vision forward my focus during her tenure would be to transform the power of woman's voices into forward thinking economic initiatives by changing perceptions and influencing policies," Shivkumar said.

Shivkumar is a lawyer and investment banker by profession. Her career spans over 32 years. She has worked for large organisations and mutual funds, managing international portfolios and spearheading non-profit ventures, all while keenly mentoring and inspiring women from all walks of life.

Shivkumar completed her bachelor's degree in English from the University of Madras. She specialised in Corporate and Bankruptcy laws to build her expertise in these fields and completed a Master of Applied Finance with specialization in Investment Banking from Macquarie University, Sydney, with distinction.

For 13 years, Shivkumar headed a leading non-banking reputed finance company, following which she led the operations of a South-India-based mutual fund with assets under management of Rs 25,000 crore. For seven years, she handled a Rs 350-crore portfolio of an international group of high net worth individuals.

### **Vice Admiral Sanjay Jasjit Singh takes charge as Vice Chief of Navy**

Vice Admiral Sanjay Jasjit Singh took charge as the Vice Chief of Naval Staff, After assuming charge, Vice Admiral Sanjay Jasjit Singh paid homage to the bravehearts at the National War Memorial and reviewed the Guard of Honour at South Block in New Delhi on Sunday.

Vice Admiral Sanjay Jasjit Singh graduated from the National Defence Academy, Pune, and was commissioned in 1986 in the executive branch of the Indian Navy, In his career spanning 37 years, he has served on most class of ships of the Indian Navy and has held a range of command, training and staff appointments, including Assistant Chief of Naval Staff (CSNCO), flag officer sea training, flag officer Commanding Western Fleet, Commandant Naval War College, and Controller Personnel Services. Prior to

taking over as the Vice Chief of Naval Staff, he was Deputy Chief of Integrated Defence Staff (Operations).

He holds MSc and MPhil in Defence and Strategic Studies from Madras University, MA in Defence Studies from Kings College, London, and MA (History), MPhil (Pol) and PhD (Arts) from Mumbai University. In recognition of his distinguished service, the flag officer was awarded the Nao Sena Medal in 2009, and Ati Vishisht Seva Medal in 2020.

### **Govt appoints Debadatta Chand as Managing Director of Bank of Baroda**

The government on April 29 announced the appointment of Debadatta Chand as Bank of Baroda's (BOB) Managing Director (MD), said BOB. Currently, Debadatta Chand is serving as the bank's Executive Director.

Chand succeeds Sanjiv Chadha, whose term was roughly extended for five months till June 30 by the government. The original term of Chadha ended on January 19 of this year.

Central Government has appointed Shri Debadatta Chand (DoB: 31.01.1971), Executive Director, Bank of Baroda, as Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, Bank of Baroda for a period of three years with effect from the date of assumption of office on or after 01.07.2023, or until further orders, whichever is earlier,

### **Govt appoints Rajneesh Karnatak as Bank of India MD and CEO**

Rajneesh Karnatak has been chosen by the country's government as the managing director MD and CEO of the Bank of India (BOI). He will succeed Atanu Kumar Das, whose term as CEO ended recently.

Karnatak is the Union Bank of India's Executive Director at present. According to the announcement, he would serve as MD & CEO of Bank of India for a term of three years beginning on the day of assumption of office or until further instructions.

## **IMPORTANT DAYS**

### **World Veterinary Day**

World Veterinary Day is celebrated on the last Saturday in April annually, with an aim to raise awareness about veterinarians and their utmost devotion to animal health, welfare, and public health. This event is observed to honour and recognise the tireless efforts and perseverance to protect the health and safety of both animals and the populace.

This event is celebrated to honour the endeavours of veterinary professionals globally in augmenting animal health and welfare. World Veterinary Day also brings the global veterinary community together and helps them in getting the proper assistance. The World Veterinary Day (WVD) was first founded on April 29, 2000, by the initiative of the World Veterinary Association (WVA). Since then, every year, on the last Saturday of April, WVD is celebrated with a different theme selected that stresses a distinct aspect of veterinary medicine

Theme - The theme of World Veterinary Day for 2023 is 'Promoting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusiveness in the Veterinary Profession'. The well-being of all veterinarians is enhanced when diversity, equity, and inclusion are promoted and applied.

### **World Day for Safety and Health at Work**

Every year on April 28, World Day for Safety and Health at Work is celebrated. The day is dedicated to promoting awareness and reducing occupational diseases and accidents worldwide. The emphasis is on the creation and upkeep of the Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) management system.

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) first observed World Day in 2003 with the objective of avoiding workplace accidents and diseases. The day overlaps with the International Day of Remembrance for the Dead and Injured Workers, which has been observed by the labour movement since 1996.

The day has significance in increasing awareness of ways to make work safe and healthy, as well as the necessity to enhance the political profile of occupational safety and health.

The primary goal for this day is to maintain high standards of safety and health, which should be distributed equitably throughout all sectors of society.

This year's World Day for Safety and Health at Work 2022 theme is "A safe and healthy working environment as a fundamental principle and right at work". The focus of the theme is to provide highlights on fostering excellent workplace health through a safe and healthy work environment.

### **International Girls in ICT Day**

International Girls in ICT Day is an annual event celebrated on the fourth Thursday of April to encourage and empower girls and young women to explore and pursue careers in the field of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). This year, it is being observed on April 27 with the theme "Digital Skills for Life". Despite the significant role of ICT in our lives, a relatively small percentage of women globally opt for higher education in ICT-related fields, according to the International Telecommunication Union (ITU).

International Girls in ICT Day was declared by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) on April 8, 2011, to encourage women to pursue careers in information and communication technologies. The Day has been celebrated globally since its inception, with over 11,400 events held in 171 countries and more than 3,77,000 girls and young women participating.

### **Freedom Day : in South Africa**

Freedom Day is an annual celebration held on April 27 in South Africa. The day reminds South Africans of the immeasurable sacrifices made by individuals and nations to break them away from the chains of unjust segregation by a selected few. It reminds them of the efforts of their national heroes, particularly Nelson Mandela. He is regarded as a champion of freedom, not only in South Africa but the entire world. It is a day that not only marks the emancipation of South Africans from apartheid but also returned their essential human rights in 1994.

Following the abolition of the decades-long segregation in South Africa, Freedom Day was marked on April 27, 1994, as a multiracial election. Until then, basic human rights

and privileges were denied to black South Africans by the few ruling Whites. From then on, April 27 became a symbol of freedom for South Africans. It also commemorates the efforts of national heroes like Nelson Mandela. The struggles and sacrifices of Mandela, other key figures like Desmond Tutu, and many others, brought South Africans the freedom they were long deprived of in their land.

### **World Intellectual Property Day**

World Intellectual Property Day is observed annually on April 26. The event was established by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) in 2000 to "raise awareness of how patents, copyright, trademarks and designs impact on daily life" and "to celebrate creativity, and the contribution made by creators and innovators to the development of economies and societies across the globe". April 26 was chosen as the date for World Intellectual Property Day because it coincides with the date on which the Convention Establishing the World Intellectual Property Organization entered into force in 1970. World Intellectual Property Day is WIPO's largest intellectual property (IP) public outreach campaign

WIPO, a self-funded specialized agency of the United Nations, plays a crucial role in establishing a fair and accessible global intellectual property system. In the year 2000, the member states of WIPO agreed to observe World Intellectual Property Day on April 26th every year to celebrate the establishment of the WIPO Convention in 1970. The Convention aims to bridge the gap between intellectual property as a legal or business concept and its impact on people's lives. By observing this day, WIPO hopes to increase awareness of the importance of intellectual property rights and encourage innovation and creativity across the globe.

### **International Delegate's Day**

Every year on April 25th, International Delegate's Day is observed to pay tribute to the delegates who are an integral part of the United Nations (UN) and play a significant role in its functioning.

Delegates bring the United Nations to life. Without them, this Organization would not be what it is. They negotiate agreements and coordinate with their home countries. Some form alliances, others struggle for compromises. In that way, they embody the multilateralism, which the UN stands for.

The delegates represent their countries in meetings at the United Nations. Unless a politician of higher rank is present, the delegates speak and vote on behalf of their country at the UN General Assembly, and other fora, such as the UN Security Council. The delegates are appointed by their countries. Hence, they follow the interests of the government they serve.

International Delegate's Day marks the anniversary of the first day of the San Francisco Conference, also known as the United Nations Conference on International Organization. On 25 April 1945, delegates from fifty countries came together for the first time in San Francisco. Coming together after the devastation of the second world war, their aim was to set up an organization that would restore world peace and impose rules on the post-war world order.

### **World Malaria Day**

World Malaria Day is an occasion to highlight the need for continued investment and sustained political commitment for malaria prevention and control. It was instituted by WHO Member States during the World Health Assembly of 2007.

The theme for World Malaria Day 2023 is "Time to deliver zero malaria: invest, innovate, implement", emphasizing the urgency to invest resources, innovate strategies and implement actions towards achieving the goal of zero malaria

About: Malaria - Malaria is an acute febrile illness caused by Plasmodium parasites, which are spread to people through the bites of infected female Anopheles mosquitoes. It is preventable and curable.

### **National Panchayati Raj Day: India**

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Government of India in collaboration with the Government of Madhya Pradesh is commemorating National Panchayati Raj Day (NPRD) on 24th April, 2023 at Rewa in Madhya Pradesh as a major event as part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (AKAM) – Samaaveshi Vikaas (Inclusive Development) adopting Whole-of-the-Government approach.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be the Chief Guest at the national function to be organised at Special Armed Forces Ground, Rewa, Madhya Pradesh. He will address all the Gram Sabhas and Panchayati Raj Institutions of the country today at National Panchayati Raj Day celebrations in Rewa, Madhya Pradesh. The Prime Minister will also lay the foundation stone and inaugurate projects worth more than 17 thousand crores. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will virtually attend the house warming ceremony of 4 lakh 11 thousand beneficiaries of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana at the function.

Madhya Pradesh Governor Mangubhai Patel, Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Central Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Minister Giriraj Singh, several Union ministers and MP government ministers will also participate in the programme.

### **International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace**

The International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace is celebrated annually on 24 April. It seeks to reaffirm the UN Charter and its principles of resolving disputes among countries through peaceful means. The Day acknowledges the use of multilateral decision making and diplomacy in achieving peaceful resolutions to conflicts among nations, It was established on 12 December 2018 through resolution A/RES/73/127 and was first observed on 24 April 2019.

What is multilateralism: Multilateralism is a philosophy or approach to international relations that emphasizes the need for cooperation and coordination among multiple countries and international organizations to address global issues and achieve common goals. It involves the idea that no single country can solve complex global problems such as climate change, international trade.

### **World Immunization Week 24-30 April 2023**

World Immunisation Week (WIW) is a global healthcare event, typically celebrated every year in the last week of April between 24th and 30th, intending to promote vaccine usage and protect people of all ages from infectious diseases.

The World Health Organisation (WHO), in association with various international and local groups, joined hands together in this worldwide event to protect local communities from vaccine-preventable diseases and provide education by conducting various campaigns and activities. The WIW 2023 activities focus on emphasising the importance of having vaccines and immunisation in addition to aiding the governments in providing the necessary technical assistance and information required to launch effective immunisation programmes.

Infectious diseases caused by viruses or bacteria that can be prevented through vaccination are known as vaccine-preventable diseases (VPDs). These VPDs are still one of the major culprits for causing deaths in children under the age of 5 years.

Immunisation can help curb VPDs in children and other infectious diseases in adults, including polio, diphtheria, tetanus, COVID-19 etc.

World Immunization Week 2023 Theme: This year 2023, the World Immunisation Week theme is "The Big Catch-Up" where the World Health Organization is collaborating with its partners to swiften the progress in countries' back to on track, so that more people, especially children, are shielded from avoidable diseases.

### **English Language Day**

English Language Day coincides with both the birthday and death day of William Shakespeare and World Book Day that is 23 April . The English language is one of the most popular languages used across the world. The day prospects the development, history, culture, and achievements associated with the language.

English is the most widely spoken language or a "world language". Therefore, it is known as the lingua franca of the modern era. Along with French, English is also the working language of the United Nations (UN). English Language Day is the result of a 2010 initiative by the Department of Global Communications. It established language days for each of the Organisation's six official languages.

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#### **The language days are as follows:**

- Arabic (18 December)
- Chinese (20 April)
- English (23 April)
- French (20 March)
- Russian (6 June)
- Spanish (23 April)

The main purpose of the UN's language days is to observe multilingualism and cultural diversity. The days also promote the equal use of all six official languages throughout the Organisation.

At the UN, the Language days aims to entertain and to inform about the goal of raising awareness and respect for the history, culture, and achievements of each of the six working languages among the UN community.

### **Basav Jayanti: 2023**

In memory of Lord Basavanna's birthday, Lingayats in the states of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and Maharashtra observe the festival known as Basava Jayanti. The birth of Lord Basavanna, who is regarded as the founder of the Lingayat community, is celebrated to commemorate the beginning of a new era known as the Basavanna or Basaveshwar era.

In Karnataka, where Basavanna has a sizable following, Basava Jayanti has been proclaimed a state holiday. People from different cities and villages in Karnataka celebrate it grandly. People come to the Lord Basaveshwar temples on this day to offer prayers. It's a significant day, particularly for farmers. The practice of Lingayat committees organising various events is widespread in Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh. On Basava Jayanti, people exchange pleasantries and sweets. Many people choose to travel to Kudalasangama, which holds numerous cultural and spiritual events over a week-long period for the Basav Jayanti celebration.

### **International Mother Earth Day**

On April 22, people unite to celebrate International Mother Earth Day. The day is to focus on the responsibility to rebuild our troubled relationship with nature. It recognizes that "the Earth and its ecosystems are our home" and that "it is necessary to promote harmony with nature and the Earth."

The term Mother Earth is used because it "reflects the interdependence that exists among human beings, other living species and the planet we all inhabit."

The day is named International Mother Earth Day because Mother Earth, as it says in the resolution, is "A common expression for planet earth in a number of countries and regions, which reflects the interdependence that exists among human beings, other living species and the planet we all inhabit."

History: International Mother Earth Day was established in 2009, by the United Nations General Assembly under Resolution A/RES/63/278. The Resolution was introduced by The Plurinational State of Bolivia and endorsed by over 50 member states.

This Day also recognizes a collective responsibility, as called for in the 1992 Rio Declaration, to promote harmony with nature and the Earth to achieve a just balance among the economic, social and environmental needs of present and future generations of humanity.

### **National Civil Services Day**

National Civil Services Day 2023: It is observed on April 21 every year to acknowledge the work of officers who are engaged in various public service departments in the

country. This day is also a reminder for civil servants to run the administrative machinery of the country collectively and with a dedication to serving the citizens. And there is no official theme to celebrate this day. As we know Civil Service is the service that is responsible for the public administration of the government of the country. Why is 21 April celebrated as National Civil Services Day: Its origin is related to the year 1947 when on 21st April Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel, Home Minister of Independent India addressed the probationary officers at the All India Administrative Service Training School at Metcalfe House, Delhi. He delivered a powerful speech and empowered the Civil Servants to adopt the true role of national service leaving behind the past experience. In his speech he referred to civil servants as the 'steel frame of India'. The first such function was held in Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi on 21 April 2006. And from then April 21 has been celebrated as National Civil Service Day.

### Chinese Language Day

Chinese Language Day is observed annually on April 20. The event was established by the UN Department of Public Information in 2010, seeking "to celebrate multilingualism and cultural diversity as well as to promote equal use of all six of its official working languages throughout the organization"

Language Days at the United Nations seek to celebrate multilingualism and cultural diversity as well as to promote equal use of all six official languages throughout the Organization. Under the initiative, UN duty stations around the world celebrate six separate days, each dedicated to one of the Organization's six official languages. Why 20th April: The date for the Chinese day was selected from Guyu ("Rain of Millet"), which is the 6th of 24 solar terms in the traditional East Asian calendars, to pay tribute to Cangjie.

Facts –

- Chinese is one of the oldest languages still in use
- Chinese is the most commonly used mother tongue
- It's the only modern pictographic language
- It's considered one of the hardest languages to learn
- Chinese has different calligraphy styles

### World Liver Day

World Liver Day (WLD) is a global healthcare event commemorated every year on the 19th of April with the intent to raise awareness about liver disease in the general public. The activities conducted on this health awareness day are organised with the associations of various international and local governing groups. World Liver Day focuses on activities pertaining to educating people about the severity, early detection and prevention of liver diseases.

Being the second largest and most vital organ in the human body, the liver plays several functions that include but are not limited to metabolism, digestion, immunity, filtration of toxins, and storage of vitamins, minerals, glucose etc. Although the liver has the unique characteristic of self-healing, where it can regrow or regenerate after

being damaged up to 60 to 70%, any abnormalities in the liver might lead to serious health complications.

World Liver Day 2023 Theme - This year, 2023, the World Liver Day theme is "Be Vigilant, Do Regular Liver Check-Up, Fatty Liver Can Affect Anyone." The theme focuses to emphasise the practise of regular liver check-ups, as fatty liver can affect anyone, irrespective of the risk factors such as obesity (overweight), insulin resistance (diabetes), and excess consumption of alcohol. Recent studies in India have shown 75% of non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD; liver disease caused in patients who drink little or no alcohol) is observed in patients with low body mass index (<25 kg/m<sup>2</sup>).

### **World Heritage Day / International Day For Monuments and Sites**

The International Day for Monuments and Sites also known as World Heritage Day is an international observance held on 18 April each year around the world with different types of activities, including visits to monuments and heritage sites, conferences, round tables and newspaper articles.

The International Day for Monuments and Sites was proposed by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) on 18 April 1982 and approved by the General Assembly of UNESCO in 1983. The aim is to promote awareness about the diversity of cultural heritage of humanity, their vulnerability and the efforts required for their protection and conservation

World Heritage Day highlights a different theme each year that centers around a specific aspect of cultural heritage. The 2022 theme was "Heritage and Climate," while the 2023 theme is "Heritage Changes." The latter theme provides an opportunity to address issues related to understanding traditional knowledge and knowledge systems in the context of climate action. It also emphasizes the role of cultural heritage in supporting fair protection for vulnerable communities in climate action and responding to the UN Decade of Action.

### **World Hemophilia Day**

World Hemophilia Day is a global healthcare event celebrated on the 17th of April every year, started by the World Federation of Haemophilia (WHF) with the intention to raise a call for the government authorities and local policymakers for the provision of a better treatment and care in addition to promote better control and prevention with haemophilia.

A rare severe, inherited haemorrhagic disorder, haemophilia is caused by malfunction of factor VIII and factor IX protein (factors required for blood clotting/ coagulation), leading to an abnormality in blood coagulation. Although people of all races and ethnicities can be diagnosed with haemophilia, men are more likely to be affected because the ailment is connected to the X chromosome. There is a 50% probability that a boy whose mother carries the haemophilia gene will also be affected by haemophilia, and her daughter being 50% risk of being carrier. Hence, haemophilia is more common in males, despite the fact that it can affect females causing difficulties with menstruation and childbirth.

This year 2023, World Hemophilia Day 2023 Theme is "Access for All: Prevention of bleeds as the global standard of care", a call to local authorities and healthcare policymakers to emphasise the prevention, protection and availability of effective treatment care to all the persons affected with haemophilia.

### **World Voice Day**

World Voice Day (WVD) is a worldwide annual event that takes place on April 16 devoted to the celebration of the phenomenon of voice. The aim is to demonstrate the enormous importance of the voice in the daily lives of all people. Voice is a critical aspect of effective and healthy communication, and World Voice Day brings global awareness to the need for preventing voice problems, rehabilitating the deviant or sick voice, training the artistic voice, and researching the function and application of voice. A goal of World Voice Day is to encourage all those who use their voice for business or pleasure to learn to take care of their voice, and know how to seek help and training, and to support research on the voice.

This celebration started in Brazil in 1999 as the Brazilian National Voice Day. It was the result of a mixed initiative of physicians, speech-language pathologists and singing teachers that belonged to the former association 'Sociedade Brasileira de Laringologia e Voz – SBLV' (Brazilian Society of Laryngology and Voice), under the presidency of Dr. Nedio Steffen. This Brazilian initiative was followed by other countries, such as Argentina and Portugal, and the Brazilian National Voice Day became the International Voice Day. In the United States, the American Academy of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery officially recognized this celebration in 2002 and in that year the event obtained the name 'World Voice Day'.

### **World Art Day**

Each year, on 15 April, World Art Day celebrations help reinforce the links between artistic creations and society, encourage greater awareness of the diversity of artistic expressions and highlight the contribution of artists to sustainable development. It is also an occasion to shine a light on arts education in schools, as culture can pave the way for inclusive and equitable education.

The World Art Day, a celebration to promote the development, diffusion and enjoyment of art, was proclaimed at the 40th session of UNESCO's General Conference in 2019.

Some of the most popular types of art include painting, sculpting, drawing, photography, and calligraphy. These art forms can be used in professional applications, such as architecture, fashion design, wood crafts, and jewelry design. Along with visual arts, there are also the performing arts. Examples of the performing arts include dance, theater, and music.

### **Himachal Pradesh celebrates its 75th formation day**

The 75th anniversary of the formation of Himachal Pradesh is being celebrated across the State today (15 April). This day is celebrated to glorify the State's creation. This time the State level function will be held at Kaza in the tribal Lahul-Spiti district.

Chief Minister Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu is presiding over the State level function being held for the first time in 75 years in Kaza. On this occasion, the Chief Minister will hoist the national flag and inspect the parade and take the salute from the march past. Cultural teams from various districts of the State will present colourful programmes along with the presentation of Spiti's Chham dance. During the function, the Chief Minister will also honour the people who have rendered excellent services in various fields.

It may be recalled that Himachal Pradesh came into existence on the 15th of April 1948 as a Chief Commissioner's State. With this, Himachal Pradesh was created as a province of India. Later on the 25th of January 1950, Himachal was made a 'C' category State. After this, on the 1st of November, 1956, Himachal Pradesh was declared a Union Territory. In 1966, the hilly areas of Punjab were included in Himachal Pradesh. On the 18th of December 1970, Parliament passed the Himachal Pradesh Act and on the 25th of January 1971, Himachal Pradesh came into existence as a full-fledged State and became the 18th State of the country.

### **Ambedkar Jayanti**

Ambedkar Jayanti or Bhim Jayanti is observed on 14 April to commemorate the memory of B. R. Ambedkar, Indian politician and social reformer. It marks Ambedkar's birthday who was born on 14 April 1891. His birthday is also referred to as 'Equality Day' by some in India.

Ambedkar Jayanti processions are carried out by his followers at Chaitya Bhoomi in Mumbai and Deeksha Bhoomi in Nagpur. It is a customary for senior national figures, such as the President, Prime Minister and leaders of major political parties, to pay homage at the statue of Ambedkar at the Parliament of India in New Delhi. It is celebrated throughout the world especially by dalits, adivasi, labour workers, women and also those who embraced Buddhism after his example. In India, large numbers of people visit local statues commemorating Ambedkar in procession with lot of fanfare. In 2020, the first online Ambedkar Jayanti was celebrated in the world. Since 2015, It has been a public holiday in most Indian states all government institutions including schools and universities are closed on this day.

### **Bohag Bihu or Rongali Bihu**

Bohag Bihu or Rongali Bihu is one of the biggest festivals of Assam and marks the first day of Hindu unisolar calendar, and the beginning of Assamese new Year. The 7-day festival will be celebrated from April 14, 2023 (Friday) to April 20, 2023 (Thursday) this year. Bihu is celebrated thrice in a year. Bohag Bihu marks the beginning of the seeding period and falls in the second week of April every year. The other two - Kati Bihu and Magh Bihu are celebrated in October and January respectively. Rong means joy in Assamese and Rongali Bihu is the time for joy and happiness for Assamese community as they celebrate each day of the festival with great fervour and enthusiasm. Bohag Bihu signals the start of the seeding season. During Bohag Bihu celebrations, traditional musical instruments like dhol, pepa, gogona, toka, taal are played and young men and women dance to the traditional tunes. The first day of the Hindu solar

calendar is celebrated in states of Punjab as Baisakhi, Tamil Nadu as Puthandu, Vishu in Kerala, Pohela Baisakh in West Bengal and so on. While the traditions of the spring harvest festival across the country differ slightly, the spirit remains the same.

### **104 Years Of Jallianwala Bagh Massacre**

More than a century ago on April 13, 1919, India witnessed its deadliest massacre when General Reginald Dyer's forces opened fire on an unarmed crowd which had gathered in Jallianwala Bagh of Amritsar to protest against the Rowlatt Act. Between 400 to 1,000 people were murdered and over 1,200 injured before the soldiers ran out of ammunition after around ten minutes of fire.

The Rowlatt Act was a repressive law passed by the British colonial government in the same year which gave them the power to imprison anyone suspected of sedition without trial. The Act sparked massive outrage among people and thousands of protesters had gathered in the Jallianwala Bagh on April 13, 1919 to oppose the law. Hundreds of people were killed when Dyer and his forces invaded the venue and blocked the sole exit, trapping the crowd inside.

After the incident, General Dyer was removed from the duty after the Hunter Commission submitted its report. He died July 23, 1927, due to a cerebral haemorrhage. Dyer reportedly said on his deathbed, "So many people who knew the condition of Amritsar say I did right...but so many others say I did wrong. I only want to die and know from my Maker whether I did right or wrong."

In 1951, the government of India built a memorial to honour the victims of the massacre. Today, India marks the 104th anniversary of the dreadful day.

### **World Sarcoidosis Awareness Day**

On April 13th, World Sarcoidosis Day draws attention to this inflammatory disease. It takes place during Sarcoidosis Awareness Month, every April. The rare disease is characterized by the growth of tiny collections of inflammatory cells in any part of your body, generally the lungs and lymph nodes. Even today, the cause of Sarcoidosis is unknown, but experts believe it might result from the body's immune system responding to a particular substance, perhaps infectious agents, chemicals, or dust. As it is too often misdiagnosed, the day aims to better understand how Sarcoidosis impacts people.

In April 2008, the Foundation for Sarcoidosis Research declared Sarcoidosis Awareness Month. Eleven years later, the organization launched World Sarcoidosis Awareness Day in conjunction with the April observance. They hosted the first World Sarcoidosis Awareness Day on April 13th, 2019.

### **International Day for Human Space Flight**

Every year on April 12th, International Day for Human Space Flight celebrates the first human space flight anniversary. It's also a day to reaffirm the importance of space science and technology.

In 1957, the Soviet Union launched the first human-made satellite was launched into outer space. The satellite was called Sputnik I. Four years later, another historic event

took place. On April 12th, 1961, Yuri Gagarin carried out the first human space flight. Gagarin was a Soviet citizen, pilot, and cosmonaut. His space capsule, Vostok 1, was the first to complete an orbit of Earth. His journey around the earth took over 108 minutes. Gagarin's journey marked an important milestone in the Space Race.

Other important space exploration milestones include -

June 16, 1963 – Valentina Tereshkova was the first woman to orbit the earth.

July 20, 1969 – Neil Armstrong became the first human to set foot upon the moon.

July 17, 1975 – The U.S. and the Soviet Union achieved the first international human mission in space.

### **National Safe Motherhood Day**

Every year National Safe Motherhood Day is celebrated on April 11 with an aim to raise awareness of good healthcare and safety of all mothers or expecting mothers. It is an initiative undertaken by the government of India, aimed at reducing maternal and neonatal death rates.

The annual observance of National Safe Motherhood Day started with the efforts of the White Ribbon Alliance India (WRAI), which works to draw the attention of the government towards the importance of good healthcare facilities for mothers, especially during pregnancy.

The WRAI's main objective was to spread awareness about the importance of healthcare habits and the availability and accessibility of healthcare programmes for women during pregnancy, childbirth, and post-natal care.

Thus, due to WRAI's continuous efforts, the Indian government declared April 11 as National Safe Motherhood Day in 2003. The day also marks the birth anniversary of Kasturba Gandhi, the wife of Mahatma Gandhi, and a great freedom fighter and social reformer.

Since then, the day has been observed by people with various awareness programmes and events being conducted throughout the nation.

### **196th birth anniversary of Jyotirao Govindrao Phule**

The nation is remembering renowned social reformer, thinker, writer and anti- caste activist Mahatma Jyotiba Phule on his 196th birth anniversary. Jyotiba Phule, who played a significant role in eradicating untouchability and promoting girl education, was born on April 11, 1827. Rajasthan government has declared a public holiday across the state on the occasion. It has been an optional holiday till now. Effective 2023, 11 April will be a compulsory state government holiday in Rajasthan.

About Jyotirao Govindrao Phule: Jyotirao Govindrao Phule was born in Maharashtra. Belonging to Mali caste, which the varna system classified as Shudra, Phule's family was employed in farming and gardening. He dedicated his life towards education and upliftment of oppressed, eradication of untouchability and the caste system. Jyotiba Phule and his wife, Savitribai Phule, strongly promoted the women's education in India. They were the first to facilitate schooling for women in India in Pune around 173 years ago.

### World Parkinson's Day

Every year on April 11th, World Parkinson's Day raises awareness for this progressive nervous system disorder. It's also a day to help the general public understand the reality of this disease for those who have it.

According to recent statistics from the Parkinson's Foundation, over 10 million people in the world have this disease. This neurodegenerative disorder occurs when neurons in the brain break down or die. When these nerve cells die, it reduces dopamine levels in the brain. Dopamine is a neurotransmitter that sends messages from one nerve cell to another. Low dopamine levels cause abnormal brain activity, which results in impaired movement. This is why tremors are usually the first symptom of Parkinson's disease.

The first World Parkinson's Day (WPD) was held in April 1997. It was set up by the European Parkinson's Disease Association (now known as Parkinson's Europe) and co-sponsored by the World Health Organisation (WHO). The date commemorates the birthday of Dr James Parkinson.

Each year there are now many World Day celebrations around the world as people come together on 11 April to raise awareness of Parkinson's. Activities include online awareness campaigns, webinars, conferences, wellbeing events, fundraisers and much more.

### World Homeopathy Day

World Homeopathy Day is celebrated on April 10 to commemorate the birth anniversary of the founder of homeopathy, German physician Samuel Hahnemann. Samuel Hahnemann, a distinguished scholar and doctor from France, is the founder of homeopathy. He was born in Paris on April 10, 1755. While desperately trying to earn a living during his first 15 years as a doctor, he made a discovery. He held that in order to treat a patient's sickness, the ingredients that cause the disease's symptoms must be administered. This year will be the 268th birth anniversary of Samuel Hahnemann. World Homeopathy Day is observed to comprehend the difficulties and potential solutions for advancing homeopathy. The day seeks to raise awareness of homeopathy as a medical system and work towards increasing its rate of success.

In India, World Homeopathy Day is celebrated under the aegis of the Ministry of AYUSH, Government of India. Homeopathy is considered one of India's most popular medical systems. These medicines are safe to use as it is claimed that they rarely cause side effects.

On the occasion, Central Council for Research in Homoeopathy, CCRH under the Ministry of AYUSH is organising a scientific convention in New Delhi. Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar will inaugurate the scientific convention. The theme of this convention is 'Homoeoparivar- Sarvajan Swasthya, One Health, One Family'.

### Easter Sunday: 2023

Easter also called Pascha or Resurrection Sunday, is a Christian holiday that celebrates the belief in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. In the New Testament of the Bible, the

event is said to have occurred three days after Jesus was crucified by the Romans and died in roughly A.D. 30.

The name "Easter" is believed to have originated from the Old English word "Ēastre," which was the name of a pagan festival celebrating the arrival of spring. The Christian holiday of Easter was established in the 4th century and was intended to replace the pagan celebration with a Christian one.

Easter is significant to Christians because it represents the victory of Jesus Christ over sin and death. It is seen as a symbol of hope, renewal, and new beginnings.

### **World Health Day**

World Health Day is celebrated on April 7 every year to raise awareness about global health issues and to promote healthy living. The day was first celebrated by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 1950, to mark the organization's founding, which took place on April 7, 1948.

The World Health Organization will observe its 75th birthday - WHO's 75th anniversary year is an opportunity to look back at public health successes that have improved quality of life during the last seven decades. It is also an opportunity to motivate action to tackle the health challenges of today and tomorrow.

The main objective of World Health Day is to promote awareness and action on a specific health theme that is of concern to people worldwide. Over the years, World Health Day has highlighted a range of issues, including mental health, maternal and child care, food safety, and the need for universal health coverage. The day provides an opportunity for governments, organizations, and individuals to come together to discuss global health challenges and to take action to address them.

Every year, the WHO selects a theme that highlights a particular health issue that requires urgent attention. The WHO has chosen "Health for All" as the theme for its 75th anniversary, and is planning numerous campaigns and awareness programs to facilitate discussions on global health.

### **Pandit Ravi Shankar's 103rd birth anniversary**

The 103rd birth anniversary of the legend Bharat Ratna - Pandit Ravi Shankar is being celebrated on April 7. World-renowned composer and sitar player Pandit Ravi Shankar is regarded as one of the greatest ambassadors of Indian music.

Pandit Ravi Shankar was a globally recognised maestro of Indian classical music.

Through his collaborations with musicians across the world, he was the first to create a huge fan base among Western audiences for Indian classical music.

In his eight-decade long career, he became a worldwide music icon, and he was labelled the "godfather of world music" by George Harrison of The Beatles.

Born in Varanasi on April 7, 1920, Shankar spent his youth performing across India and Europe as a member of his brother's dance troupe.

### **BJP foundation day**

The BJP will be celebrating its 43rd Foundation Day on April 6 with great fervour and enthusiasm. The saffron party has come a long way since its inception on April 6, 1980,

emerging as the largest political party in the world, having the maximum number of MPs, MLAs and councillors in the country.

In fact, the BJP's journey was recently summed up by Prime Minister Narendra Modi after inaugurating an extension of the BJP headquarters.

"BJP started its journey from just two Lok Sabha seats and reached 303 in 2019. In many of the states, we get more than 50 per cent votes," he had said. "From north to south and from east to west, the BJP is the only pan-India party today," PM Modi further said.

The BJP was officially created on April 6, 1980. However, its ideological origins can be traced back to 1951 when Shyama Prasad Mukherjee broke away from Nehru's Congress and formed the Bhartiya Jana Sangh (BJS). The BJS, whose motto was the preservation of Hindu identity and culture, was formed in collaboration with the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS)

### **International Day of Sport for Development and Peace**

In 2013, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 6 April as the International Day of Sport for Development and Peace, to celebrate the contribution of sports and physical activity to education, human development, healthy lifestyles and a peaceful world.

Sport is a compelling tool to promote peace, tolerance, and understanding, bringing people together across boundaries, cultures, and religions. Its values such as teamwork, fairness, discipline, and respect are understood all over the world and can be utilized in the advancement of solidarity and social cohesion.

Sport has historically played an important role in all societies, be it in the form of competitive sport, physical activity or play. But one may wonder: what does sport have to do with the United Nations? In fact, sport presents a natural partnership for the United Nations (UN) system, including UNESCO:

Sport and play are human rights that must be respected and enforced worldwide; Sport has been increasingly recognized and used as a low-cost and high-impact tool in humanitarian, development and peace-building efforts, not only by the UN system but also by non-governmental organizations (NGOs), governments, development agencies, sports federations, armed forces and the media.

Sport can no longer be considered a luxury within any society but is rather an important investment in the present and future, particularly in developing countries. The theme for the International Day of Sport for Development and Peace for the year 2023 is "Scoring for People and the Planet." The theme is applicable for celebrations of this event across the globe.

### **National Maritime Day: India**

The National Maritime Week begins on March 30 and culminates in the celebration of National Maritime Day on April 5, The first event of the National Maritime Day or the inaugural ceremony was celebrated in 1964 with an aim to increase awareness about the economy and global trade. The main agenda behind the celebration is symbolizing the necessity of protection, safeguard, and Defence our maritime zone.

Maritime is one of the efficient, secure, and ecologically method of moving goods from one side of the world to the other. It is a day of thanking the people who spend months at the sea contributing to the majority of India's trade and commerce activities on a worldwide scale. It is important to maintain a secure navigational channel and routes for the nation's trade and overall growth.

This day is an appreciation day for people who have made significant contributions to the Indian maritime sector. An award ceremony is held on India's National Maritime Day during which the Varuna Award is given to few people. The award is a statue of Lord Varuna and a Citation, is the name of this honour.

### **International Day of Conscience**

The United Nations General Assembly observes the International Day of Conscience to recognise the significance of the human conscience, every April 5. An essential intellectual characteristic that sets humans apart from the rest of the animal kingdom is the conscience.

Conscious of the need for the creation of conditions of stability and well-being and peaceful and friendly relations based on respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion, the General Assembly declared 5 April the International Day of Conscience.

The task of constructing a culture of peace requires comprehensive educational, cultural, social and civic action, in which each person has something to learn and something to give and share. It addresses all ages and all groups; it is an open-minded global strategy with a specific purpose, namely, to make a culture of peace inseparable from culture per se and to take root in people's hearts and minds. Peace is not only the absence of differences and conflicts. It is a positive, dynamic, participatory process linked intrinsically to democracy, justice and development for all by which differences are respected, dialogue is encouraged and conflicts are constantly transformed by non-violent means into new avenues of cooperation.

### **Babu Jagjivan Ram Birth Anniversary**

Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi has paid tributes to Babu Jagjivan Ram Ji on his birth anniversary.

Babu Jagjivan Ram, popularly known as Babuji, was a freedom fighter and politician who championed the cause of social justice. He was born on April 5, 1908, in Chandwa village, in Shahabad district (now Bhojpur) of Bihar.

During British Rule, Babu Jagjivan Ram played an active role in India's freedom movement as a member of the Indian National Congress. After independence, he served as a Union minister

Jagjivan Ram was India's Defence Minister during the Indo-Pak war of 1971. He also served as Minister of Labour, and Minister of Communications under the governments of Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi. He was the Deputy Prime Minister between 1977 and 1979.

Babu Jagjivan Ram passed away on July 6, 1986, leaving behind a legacy of social and political activism. He is remembered as one of India's most respected and influential

leaders, who dedicated his entire life for the cause of social justice and upliftment of the backward sections of the society

#### **International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action: 4 April**

Every year on April 4, the world observes the International Day of Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action, with the aim of creating awareness about the dangers of explosive mines and generating support for efforts aimed at eliminating them. In 2023 the United Nations Mine Action Service will acknowledge the day under the campaign / theme "Mine Action Cannot Wait", highlighting decades of contamination in Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Viet Nam, as well as draw attention to recent explosive ordnance contamination. This campaign makes it clear that the eradication of all landmines cannot wait. Whether it is new contamination in Colombia, Myanmar, Ukraine or Yemen, or old contamination, in Cambodia, Iraq or Viet Nam, clearance must be completed by mine action actors and States Parties of the Mine Ban Convention. It is a human problem. The over-arching goal will be to bring attention to areas of the world that remain contaminated after many years, and where generations have changed their lives to avoid the threat.

#### **Mahavir Jayanti; 2023**

Also known as Mahavir Janma Kalyanak, the day celebrates the birth of Lord Mahavir, the twenty-fourth and the last Tirthankara of the present Avasarpini, It is one of the most important religious festivals of the Jain community. He was born on the 13th day of Shukla Paksha in the month of Chaitra. Mahavir Jayanti celebrates the birth of a great Tirthankara of Jainism. He is known to be a teacher who propagates the dharma in Jainism. This festival is being celebrated this year on April 4, 2023. Mahavir Jayanti has a great significance among Jain people. they celebrate this day with great enthusiasm and fervor. This day is dedicated to the Lord Mahavir, a Jain saint who is known amongst the most famous saints. It is known that Mahavira's mother had certain auspicious dreams when she was pregnant. The Svetambara Jains believe that she saw 16 dreams, while the Digambara Jains believe she saw 14 dreams while she was pregnant. Lord Mahavir is regarded as one of the holiest and most accomplished missionaries of peace and harmony. Lord Mahavir, the 24th and final Tirthankara of the Jain religion. In remembrance of the great saint, several stories about Saint Mahavir are told to youngster President Droupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi greeted the people on the occasion of Mahavir Jayanti.

#### **Holy Monday 2023**

The Christian population over the globe is celebrating, Holy Monday today. It is the second day of Holy Week in Western Christianity, following Palm Sunday, and the third day of Holy Week in Eastern Christianity, following Lazarus Saturday and Palm Sunday.

Holy Monday, according to the Bible, is the day after Jesus was welcomed with palm fronds and the day before Judas resolved to betray him. Let's learn more about its background and importance.

Holy Week, the week leading up to Easter begins on Holy Monday, also known as Great and Holy Monday. On this day, Jesus Christ proceeded on foot from Bethany to Jerusalem. The gospels claim that on this day, Jesus Christ cursed the fig tree, purified the temple, and answered those who questioned his authority.

Holy Monday's roots go back to the start of Lent. St. Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria, and St. Epiphanius of Constantia coined the phrase "Holy Week" for the first time in the fourth century, thus establishing the holiday. Whereas, in the third century only Good Friday and Holy Saturday were honoured as holy days.

### **World Autism Awareness Day**

Autism is a permanent neurological condition that generally shows its first appearance in the infancy period. Regardless of gender, race, or socioeconomic status, this condition can develop in the early age of life. The exact cause of autism is still unknown, however, some people with this condition have a genetic cause.

World Autism Awareness Day is an internationally recognized day annually on April 2, encouraging Member States of the United Nations to take measures to raise awareness about autistic individuals throughout the world

Every year, World Autism Awareness Day is observed to create awareness among people about a developmental disability of the brain called autism. The day is recognised to provide global opportunities to increase understanding and acceptance of people suffering from autism spectrum disorder (ASD). World Autism Awareness Day, is observed under a specific theme. The theme for the World Autism Awareness Day 2023 is "Transforming the narrative: Contributions at home, at work, in the arts and in policymaking"

### **Odisha Day or Utkala Dibasa**

Odisha day or Utkala Dibasa is celebrated on April 1. On this day in 1936, the state of Odisha came into being after its separation from Bengal province. It started with six districts but today it has 30 districts within its boundary.

From that day onwards, Utkala Divas is celebrated to honour the struggle of its people to have a separate state and promote unity among the citizens. Odisha day is celebrated as a restricted holiday and is also known as Vishuva Milan.

The whole state involves itself in the celebration of its foundation day. The celebrations are marked with cultural programs and events across the state. It also includes seminars and exhibitions focusing on the land's rich heritage and tradition. Odisha day is a very big occasion for all Odias globally.

### **RBI Foundation Day**

The Reserve Bank of India was established[ on 1 April 1935 in Kolkata, following the Reserve Bank of India Act of 1934. Though privately owned initially, it was nationalised in 1949 and since then fully owned by the Ministry of Finance, Government of India

The Reserve Bank of India, chiefly known as RBI, is India's central bank and regulatory body responsible for regulation of the Indian banking system. It is under the ownership of Ministry of Finance, Government of India. It is responsible for the control, issue and maintaining supply of the Indian rupee. It also manages the country's main payment systems and works to promote its economic development.

### **SUMMITS AND MOU'S**

#### **Himachal Pradesh government signs MoU with Oil India to develop new renewable energy sources**

To explore the state's solar potential, the Himachal Pradesh government on Wednesday signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Oil India Ltd to establish a framework for cooperation in harnessing and developing new and renewable energy sources in the state.

The pact was signed by Harikesh Meena, Director (Energy), on behalf of the state government, and Pankaj Kumar Goswami, Director (Operations), Oil India Ltd, in the presence of Chief Minister Sukhvinder Sukhu.

The Chief Minister said the company would explore the possibilities of setting up floating solar power plants in water reservoirs, besides establishing ground mounted solar power projects.

He said the Oil India can also set up a plant for producing green hydrogen and green ammonia on a pilot basis.

Himachal Pradesh has abundance in green energy and opportunity in producing green hydrogen, and the state government has taken various initiatives to harness this potential, the Chief Minister said, as he asked Oil India to send a team of experts next week to inspect the sites for implementing these projects.

#### **Defence Minister Rajnath Singh to hold bilateral meetings with his counterparts of SCO member countries in New Delhi**

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will hold bilateral meetings with his counterparts of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, SCO member countries in New Delhi today. During the meeting, bilateral defence-related issues and other matters of mutual interest will be discussed. Mr Singh will chair the SCO Defence Ministers Meeting in New Delhi tomorrow. Defence Ministers of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan will participate in the meeting. India has invited Belarus and Iran, currently observers in SCO, to participate in the SCO Defence Ministers' Meeting. Defence Minister of Pakistan would be participating virtually. The Ministers will discuss matters related to regional peace and security, counter-terrorism efforts within SCO and an effective multilateralism.

India has ancient civilizational, cultural and spiritual ties with the SCO member countries. India's membership of SCO in 2017, was therefore, a reaffirmation of New Delhi's keenness to deepen these historic ties. India considers SCO as an important regional group to promote multilateral, political, security, economic and people-to-people interactions in the region.

**About: SCO** - Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is an intergovernmental organization established in 2001. The SCO membership includes Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan besides India.

#### **Prasar Bharati's conclave to celebrate 100 episodes of PM Modi's Mann Ki Baat**

Prasar Bharati is hosted a national conclave on "Mann Ki Baat@100" to celebrate 100 episodes of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's monthly radio programme Mann Ki Baat, in New Delhi today., April 26. The inaugural session of the Conclave will be graced by Vice President Jagdeep Dhankar and Minister of Information and Broadcasting and Youth Affairs and Sports Anurag Singh Thakur.

Briefing the media, Information and Broadcasting Secretary Apoorva Chandra said, the inaugural session will be followed by 4 sessions highlighting the wide-ranging themes of the Prime Minister's interactions during Mann Ki Baat. Each session will be facilitated by an eminent panel.

The valedictory session of the event will be graced by Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah, Railways Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, Information and Broadcasting and Youth Affairs and Sports Minister Anurag Singh Thakur and Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary. The Secretary said, a commemorative postage stamp and coin on 100 episodes of Mann Ki Baat will be unveiled to mark this event. The 100th episode of this coveted programme will be broadcast this Sunday on over 1000 radio stations, including private FM stations, community radios, and various TV channels.

#### **Indian apex exporters body sign MoU with Business Russia to promote trade & FDI**

Apex exporters body FIEO on Monday said it has signed an MoU with Business Russia to promote trade and investments between the two countries.

It said the two organizations will cooperate to arrange exhibitions, buyers-sellers' meetings, workshops, seminars and encourage enterprises to work in tandem with their counterparts for joint ventures.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was inked during a visit of a 50-member delegation of the agro and food processing sector to Moscow.

The delegation is "exploring opportunities in diverse business ventures such as ready-to-eat meals, fish meal, animal feed, soyabean apart from conventional products," said N K Kagliwal, Board Member of FIEO. Director General Ajay Sahai said that exporters, importers and bankers on both the sides have to do a little extra work to resolve the issues.

"A direct exchange rate between rupee and ruble will help streamline the process in a big way," Sahai said. He added that huge trade deficit is a concern, but it is also an opportunity to push exports from India to Russia. "We have to diversify exports to automobiles and auto components, electronics, medical devices, solar cells, textile, food and agriculture etc," he said. (Federation of Indian Export Organisations).

### **First G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank governors meeting to begin in Bengaluru: April 24**

The First G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors (FMCBG) meeting begin today in Bengaluru. The two-day meeting, under the G20 Indian Presidency, is jointly chaired by Union Finance Minister Smt Nirmala Sitharaman and Governor, Reserve Bank of India (RBI), Dr Shaktikanta Das.

The 1st G20 FMCBG meeting will see the participation of Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors of the G20 members, invitee members and heads of International Organisations. The meeting will be deliberated on issues such as strengthening multilateral development banks to address shared global challenges of the 21st century, financing for resilient, inclusive and sustainable cities of tomorrow. Issues of Digital Public Infrastructure for advancing financial inclusion and productivity gains will also be discussed. The sessions will also cover issues related to global economy, global health, and international taxation.

### **SAIL-BSL signs MoU with Telecommunications Consultants India Limited (TCIL)**

SAIL-Bokaro Steel Plant (BSL) has entered into an MoU with Telecommunications Consultants India Limited (TCIL) to explore potential of application of 5G/ IT/ Telecom and other wireless communication technologies in SAIL-Bokaro Steel Plant including SAIL's Mines & Collieries, Central Coal Supply Organization and the SAIL Refractory Unit in Jharkhand. The MoU was signed at SAIL's Bokaro Steel Plant on 21st April, 2023. From SAIL- BSL side B.K.Tiwari, Executive Director (Works) and from TCIL side Ms Alka Selot Asthana, Executive Director (IT & Telecom) signed the MOU in the presence of senior officials from both the organizations.

SAIL-BSL has taken this initiative of becoming the first PSU in the country to take initiative for setting up a dedicated 5G network with the help of TCIL which will pave way for application of 5G/ IT / Telecom technologies in Steel manufacturing. Besides steel plant, this partnership will also be useful in providing innovative solutions in SAIL Mines and Collieries in Jharkhand, Smart Cities etc.

### **EAM Dr S Jaishankar co-chairs 5th India-Guyana Joint Commission**

External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar co-chaired the 5th India-Guyana Joint Commission Meeting with Foreign Minister Hugh Todd. In a tweet, he said, there was comprehensive discussions on agriculture, energy, health and pharmaceuticals, ayurveda and wellness, defence cooperation, human resources, technology and innovation and infrastructure development.

Dr Jaishankar also witnessed exchange of agreements in Migration and Mobility and Air Connectivity. The External Affairs Minister also addressed the India-Guyana Business Round Table. He also called on Prime Minister of Guyana Mark Phillips.

### **13th Joint Trade Committee meeting of India and Thailand**

India and Thailand held their 13th Joint Trade Committee meeting in New Delhi, co-chaired by the Director General of the Department of Trade Negotiations from Thailand, Auramon Supthaweethum and the Joint Secretary of the Department of

Commerce from India, Indu C. Nair. This physical meeting marked the revival of the JTC after a 17-year hiatus.

Thailand is an important trading partner of India in ASEAN, with a total trade value of USD 16.89 billion in 2022-23, accounting for 13.6% of India's total trade with ASEAN. India's gems and jewelry, mechanical machinery, auto and auto components, and agricultural products, especially marine products, are crucial to Thailand.

During the meeting, the co-chairs reviewed the current status of bilateral trade and highlighted the need for identifying new potential products and priority sectors to expand trade between the two countries. They also discussed various market access issues and technical barriers faced by their exporters and agreed to address them through sustained bilateral discussions. India raised the restrictions it faced in exporting marine, poultry, and meat products to Thailand.

### **PM Modi inaugurated The first Global Buddhist Summit in New Delhi**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the first Global Buddhist Summit in New Delhi today, April 20. The Ministry of Culture in collaboration with the International Buddhist Confederation will host the two-day Summit. The theme of the Summit is Responses to Contemporary Challenges: Philosophy to Praxis. This global Summit will mark the significance and importance of India in Buddhism, as Buddhism was born in India.

The prime vision of the Summit is to look into the teachings of the Shakyamuni Buddha that have been continuously enriched over the centuries with the practice of Buddha Dhamma. Delegates from about 30 countries will participate in the event and around 171 delegates from foreign countries and 150 delegates from Indian Buddhist organizations will take part. Eminent scholars, Sangha leaders, and Dharma practitioners from all over the world will attend the Conference. For the first time, prominent Buddhist monks from various countries will visit India and take part in the Summit. The discussions will be held on how to deal with contemporary challenges, with the help of Buddhist philosophy and thought. The summit will also be a medium to enhance the cultural and diplomatic relationships with other countries.

Prime Minister highlighted that in this Amrit Kaal, India has taken new initiatives on many subjects and the biggest inspiration for this is Lord Buddha. He said India has given Buddha to the world, and not war. He further stated that Buddha had given the solution centuries ago to the war and unrest that the world is suffering from today. He said Lord Buddha's way is the way for the future.

### **Union Minister of Steel Shri Jyotiraditya M. Scindia to inaugurate India Steel 2023 in Mumbai**

The Union Ministry of Steel, in association with the Department of Commerce, Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry, and industry chamber FICCI is organising India Steel 2023, a conference and International Exhibition on the steel industry, from April 19-21, 2023, at the Mumbai Exhibition Centre in Goregaon, Mumbai. The event aims to bring together industry leaders, policymakers, and experts to discuss the latest developments, challenges, and opportunities in the steel industry.

The inaugural session of India Steel 2023 on April 19th 2023 will be addressed by Shri Jyotiraditya M. Scindia, Union Minister of Civil Aviation and Steel, Government of India, Shri Fagga Singh Kulaste, Minister of State for Steel & Rural Development, Government of India, Shri Nagendra Nath Sinha, Secretary, Ministry of Steel, senior Government officials and distinguished speakers including, Mr Subhrakant Panda (President, FICCI), and Ms Soma Mondal (Chairperson, SAIL and Chair, FICCI Steel Committee), among others. During the event, an exhibition showcasing the latest products and innovations in the steel sector will also be held concurrently.

### **2nd Health Working Group meeting commence in Goa**

The second Health Working Group meeting under the Indian G20 presidency will begin today in Goa. The three-day meeting will be concluded on Wednesday.

More than 180 delegates from 19 G20 member countries, 10 invited states, and 22 International Organizations are participating in the meeting.

Shri Lav Agarwal, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, briefed the media ahead of the 2nd Health Working Group Meeting. He highlighted health priorities and India's leadership role in the Global South. The 2nd Health Working Group meeting of G20 will have discussions on the Priorities which include Health Emergencies Prevention, Preparedness and Response, Strengthening Cooperation in Pharmaceutical Sector with a focus on Access and Availability to safe, effective, quality, and Affordable Medical Countermeasures and Digital Health Innovations and Solutions to Aid Universal Health Coverage and Improve Healthcare Service Delivery. Several cultural programmes infused with flavours of Goan culture have been planned for the event to showcase India's rich diversity and culture based on the Indian philosophy of 'Atithi Devo Bhava'.

In a significant milestone, India assumed the presidency of the G20 on 1st December 2022. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi unveiled the theme 'One Earth, One Family, One Future', based on India's philosophy of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' and reiterated that G20 India Presidency will be inclusive, action-oriented and decisive.

### **5-day Army Commanders' Conference to discuss emerging security scenarios and other matters begins**

The first edition of the biannual Army Commanders conclave 2023 will be conducted in Hybrid format from today. The five-day conference will continue till the 21st of April. On the first day, today, Army Commanders and other senior functionaries will meet virtually. They will then travel to Delhi for balanced physical meetings on matters which require detailed deliberations. Our Correspondent reports that the Chief of Defence Staff, the Chief of the Naval Staff, and the Chief of the Air Staff will also address the Army Commanders conference.

Army Commanders Conference is an apex-level biannual event that is an institutional platform for conceptual-level deliberations, culminating in making important policy decisions for the Indian Army. The forum will review the progress on the activities charted out as part of 'Year of Transformation-2023' along with progress on Agnipath Scheme and digitisation and automation initiatives. During the conference, apex

leadership will also brainstorm current and emerging security scenarios and review the operational preparedness of the Indian Army. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will address the conference on Wednesday.

### **India to hold G20 Meeting of Agricultural Chief Scientists (MACS) in Varanasi from 17-19 April**

The first three-day G20 summit of the Agriculture Working Group under India's G20 Presidency begins at Varanasi from 17-19 April. The event will be witnessing participation of representatives from the 20 leading countries of the world and delegates from other partner countries.

In order to ensure a grand rollout of the G20 events, the government of the state of Uttar Pradesh has made complete arrangements. The three-day event will send out a message endorsing nutritious foods, food security and environment-friendly farming to keep the entire world healthy,

The G20 Meeting of Agricultural Chief Scientists (MACS) is being organized at Varanasi by the Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE), Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.

### **Global Conference on Compressed Biogas In New Delhi, to highlight on green fuel**

A two-day 'Global Conference on Compressed Biogas (CBG)' under the theme "Towards Progressive Policy Framework for a Robust CBG Foundation and Growth" is being held on April 17 and 18, 2023, in New Delhi. The Indian Federation of Green Energy (IFGE) and CBG Producer Forum are organising the event with support from the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas.

Union Minister for Petroleum, Natural Gas, Housing, and Urban Affairs, Hardeep Singh Puri, will inaugurate the conference. Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari, will also take part as the chief guest

The objective of the CBG Conference is to apprise the industry of the initiatives taken by the government for the development of Compressed Biogas Industry and to identify the areas where policy modifications are required.

CBG has a higher calorific value and properties similar to CNG and can be utilised as an alternative green renewable that can replace CNG in automotive, industrial, and commercial areas, given the abundance of biomass availability within the country.

### **India signs MoU with World Food Programme for sending wheat to Afghanistan**

India signed an MoU (Memorandum of Understanding) with World Food Programme (WFP) to send 10,000 metric tonnes of wheat to the people of Afghanistan. The signing ceremony between the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and the United Nations (WFP) was held in Mumbai. The WFP assured that it had the required infrastructure on the ground to ensure speedy wheat delivery to Afghanistan's most vulnerable sections. The WFP has a massive supply chain and logistics infrastructure in Afghanistan that could help in ensuring that the food supply reaches those who need it the most and no one is excluded. The MoU also ensures that the assistance is coordinated and delivered in an

effective and efficient manner, and that it reaches the most vulnerable sections of the Afghan population.

The WFP is a humanitarian organization that is part of the United Nations system. It was established in 1961 and has its headquarters in Rome, Italy. The WFP is the world's largest humanitarian agency focused on combating hunger and promoting food security.

#### **NHAI signs MoU with Nagarjunasagar-Srisailem Tiger Reserve to enable FAST tag**

National Highway Authority of India has signed an MoU with the Nagarjunasagar-Srisailem Tiger Reserve, spread across Andhra Pradesh and Telangana to facilitate seamless and efficient entry process for vehicles entering into the forest area.

Road Transport and Highways Ministry said, the initiative aims to provide FASTag based payment system at Forest entry points. It will extend the benefit of collection of Ecosystem Management Coordination fee through FASTag at various entrance points of the Tiger Reserve.

The Ministry said, with this, visitors can avoid long queues and delays. This partnership between Indian Highways Management Company Limited and the Forest Department is a significant step towards promoting sustainable tourism and preserving natural resources by curbing vehicular emissions at the forest entry points.

#### **12th Session Of India-Spain Joint Commission For Economic Cooperation In New Delhi**

The 12th Session of the India-Spain Joint Commission for Economic Cooperation (JCEC) took place on April 13. In New Delhi, During the meeting, the two sides discussed a range of issues related to economic cooperation between the two countries, Both sides celebrated this Golden Jubilee edition of India-Spain Joint Commission mechanism which was established in 1972. During the past 50 years, a remarkable enhancement of bilateral trade and investment has taken place. With an investment of USD 3.7 Bn, 250 Spanish Companies are active in India and 40 Indian Companies are present in Spain working in different sectors such as IT, Pharma, Renewable Energy, Automobiles, Infrastructure etc.

Ms. Xiana emphasised the importance of India-Spain relationship and the Spanish partnership in India's development stories. Spanish side has reaffirmed the further cooperation in the various sectors including in the field of Civil Aviation such as Automation, Surveillance and NavAids, High Speed Railways, Railways networking, Signalling, Traffic management etc.

Both sides also agreed for further cooperation in the field of Renewable Energy, Shipping, Ports, Tourism, Infrastructure, Food Processing, Pharmaceuticals, Technology, Innovation, and Defence sector.

#### **Second W20 meet begins under India's G20 Presidency in Jaipur**

A two-day Second Women 20 International Meeting has started today (April 13) in Jaipur, Rajasthan. Women 20 is an official G20 engagement group, and the meeting is focusing on the theme of "Women-Led Development: Leveraging Women's Untapped Potential to Accelerate an Inclusive and Sustainable Future. Addressing the inaugural

session, Sherpa of India in G 20 Amitabh Kant said that women led development is the key priority of India because we see women as drivers of prosperity and inclusive development. He said that women must set the agenda of development and they should be agents of growth.

Talking to the media, Mr. Amitabh Kant said that India has set new dimensions in digital inclusion. Women's bank accounts were opened, those accounts were linked with Aadhaar, and money for various schemes is being directly transferred to their accounts. A large number of women are also getting loans under Mudra Yojana. This has empowered women. He said that these experiences are being shared in the meeting so that other countries also get the benefit of this experience.

### **RRI signs MoU with Indian Navy for developing secure maritime communications using Quantum Technology**

Quantum technologies will soon be used to develop secure maritime communications in a joint effort by the Raman Research Institute (RRI) and the Indian Navy.

RRI, an autonomous institute of the Department of Science and Technology (DST), inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Weapons and Electronics Systems Engineering Establishment (WESEE), the R&D establishment of the Indian Navy, during a ceremony held in New Delhi recently. The MoU, which is for a period of five years, was signed between Professor Tarun Souradeep, Director, RRI, and Vice Admiral Sandeep Naithani, Chief of Materiel, Indian Navy.

Under this agreement, RRI's Quantum Information and Computing (QuIC) lab will lead the research efforts towards developing quantum key distribution techniques.

### **Three-day International Conference on Defence Finance and Economics to begin in New Delhi: April 12**

The Defence Minister of India Mr, Rajnath Singh will inaugurate a three-day International Conference on Defence Finance and Economics in New Delhi, starting 12 April.

The conference will provide a unique platform to policymakers, academicians and government officials to share their insights and experiences on Defence Finance and Economics in the present evolving security challenges.

Delegates from USA, UK, Japan, Australia, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Kenya will participate in the conference.

Ministry of Defence said, the objective of the conference is to disseminate the best practices, experiences and expertise of various countries. It will also facilitate collaborations with foreign governments, international institutions and global leaders in promoting government's vision of Aatmanirbharta in the Defence sector.

### **FM Nirmala Sitharaman to attend Spring Meetings of IMF-World Bank**

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will be on an official visit to the USA, beginning April 10, 2023 for attending the annual spring meetings of the World Bank Group (WBG) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), along with G20 meetings.

These meetings are scheduled to take place from April 10 to April 16, 2023, in the WBG and IMF Headquarters in Washington DC. The spring meetings will be attended by finance ministers and central bankers from across the world.

She will be also hosting the Second G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors (FMCBG) meeting under India's G20 Presidency. Sitharaman and Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das, will jointly chair the 2nd G20 FMCBG meeting on April 12-13, 2023.

The focus of these sessions will be to deliberate on issues such as addressing food & energy insecurity, managing global debt vulnerabilities, strengthening Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs), mobilising finance for climate action, advancing financial inclusion, and accelerating progress on international tax and financial sector issues. The meeting will take stock of the progress made on outcomes envisaged under India's G20 Finance Track agenda.

#### **IIT Kanpur to host Youth20 consultation on April 5,6**

The India Institute of Technology Kanpur (IITK) will be hosting the Youth20 (Y20) consultation under G20 presidency of India on April 5 and 6, 2023. Over 1,200 youth delegates across India will be attending the event. IIT Guwahati held the Y20 summit where over 250 international delegates attended the event from February 6 to 8, 2023. Out of the five core themes, the Y20 consultation at IITK will be catering to two themes- "Future of Work: Industry 4.0, Innovation, and 21st Century Skills" and "Health, Well-being and Sports: Agenda for Youth". Uttar Pradesh additional chief secretary for sports Navneet Sehgal has been invited as the chief guest and is likely to address the participants on April 6, 2023.

The Y20 consultation, under the aegis of ministry of youth affairs and sports, is a pan-India activity in the run up to the final Y20 Summit that will be held in Varanasi. The discussions from the consultation aims to bring young people together to connect, share ideas and experiences, and deliberate on finding solutions to pressing global concerns.

#### **Bhutanese King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck met Prime Minister Modi in New Delhi**

King of Bhutan, Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck met Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi, The meeting began at 11:15 a.m. Later, the visiting dignitary met the President Droupadi Murmu at Rashtrapati Bhawan. According to the sources the meeting started at 5 p.m. The King also visited Rajghat to lay a wreath at Mahatma Gandhi's Samadhi at 10:45 a.m.

Last evening, External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar called on King Wangchuck in New Delhi. In a tweet, Mr Jaishankar said, the King's vision for Bhutan's future and for strengthening the unique partnership with India is deeply appreciated.

The Bhutanese King is on a three-day visit to India, from April 3- 5. He arrived in the Capital yesterday – April 3 He was received by External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar at the airport. The King of Bhutan is accompanied by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and External Trade, Dr. Tandi Dorji and senior officials of Bhutan government.

The visit is in keeping with the long-standing tradition of regular high-level exchanges between the two countries. In a tweet, Dr Jaishankar said, his visit will further strengthen the close and unique India-Bhutan partnership.

The visit would provide an opportunity to both sides to review the entire gamut of bilateral cooperation and to further advance the close bilateral partnership, including economic and development cooperation.

### **Inaugural session of the 2nd G-20 Tourism Working Group Meeting held at Siliguri in West Bengal**

The Inaugural session of the 2nd Tourism Working Group Meeting under G20 hosted by the Ministry of Tourism was held at Siliguri, West Bengal today morning – April 2, The inaugural session was addressed by Union Minister for Tourism, Culture and DoNER Shri G.Kishan Reddy and Minister of State for Minority Affairs, Shri John Barla. Shri Raju Bista, Member of Parliament, Darjeeling was also present in the session.

In his opening remarks, Union Minister for Culture, Tourism and DoNER Shri G.K Reddy welcomed all the participants to the beautiful town of Siliguri. He opined that Siliguri possesses a rare combination of Diversity, Culture, Tradition, and beauty. Known as The Gateway to the Northeast,

The aim of the National Adventure Tourism strategy is to place India among the top Adventure Tourism Destinations of the World , and the vision is to make India a one trillion dollar tourism economy by 2047: Shri G.Kishan Reddy

### **PM Modi addresses joint commanders' conference in Bhopal**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is on a day's visit to Bhopal. He is attending the Joint Commanders' conference of the three services which is being held at Kushabhau Thackeray International Convention Center in Bhopal. The theme of the conference is 'Ready, Resurgent, Relevant'. Commanders of the three services and senior officials of the Ministry of Defense are participating in the conference. Commanders of the three services and senior officials of the Ministry of Defense are participating in the conference.

## **AWARDS AND RECOGNITION**

### **Indian-American Neeli Bendapudi receives 2023 Immigrant Achievement Award**

Indian-American Neeli Bendapudi, the president of Penn State University receives the American Immigration Council's 2023 Immigrant Achievement Award, The award recognises "individuals or organisations that exhibit a commitment and dedication to our heritage as a nation of immigrants and to the struggle for fair and humane immigration policies in the United States

About: Neeli Bendapudi - Neeli Bendapudi was raised in India and she moved to the University of Kansas in the United States for her doctoral studies. She planned to launch her career in academics as an educator. Bendapudi did her Bachelors in English and her MBA from Andhra University in Visakhapatnam, India. She then did her doctorate in Marketing from University of Kansas.

Bendapudi was appointed the 19th President of Penn State University in 2022. Earlier, she was the President of University of Louisville from 2018 to 2021.

#### **14th Dalai Lama Gets 1959 Ramon Magsaysay Award In Person After 64 Years**

The 1959 Ramon Magsaysay Award was presented to Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama at his residence here by members of the award foundation personally after 64 years

It was the first international award given to "His Holiness for Community Leadership in recognition of his leadership of the Tibetan community's gallant struggle in defense of the sacred religion that is the inspiration of their life and culture" by the Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation in the Philippines in August 1959, the Dalai Lama's office said.

Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation president Susanna B Afan and Foundation Trustee Emily A Abrera met with the Dalai Lama, the Nobel Peace laureate, to personally present the 1959 Ramon Magsaysay Award after 64 years.

**About: Ramon Magsaysay Award** - The Ramon Magsaysay Award, often called the "Nobel Prize of Asia", is an annual award established to perpetuate former Philippine President Ramon Magsaysay's example of integrity in governance, courageous service to the people, and pragmatic idealism within a democratic society, the Dalai Lama's office said. The prize was established in April 1957 by the trustees of the Rockefeller Brothers Fund based in New York City with the concurrence of the Philippine government.

#### **Alessandra Korap from Amazon wins Goldman Environment Prize**

Munduruku leader Alessandra Korap has been awarded the prestigious Goldman Environmental Prize for her work fighting against illegal mining and large-scale projects aimed at facilitating soybean exports in the Tapajos River Basin.

The Goldman Environmental Prize is a prize awarded annually to grassroots environmental activists, one from each of the world's six geographic regions: Africa, Asia, Europe, Islands and Island Nations, North America, and South and Central America. The award is given by the Goldman Environmental Foundation headquartered in San Francisco, California. It is also called the Green Nobel. The Goldman Environmental Prize was created in 1989 by philanthropists Richard and Rhoda Goldman.

#### **Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban) UP honoured with HUDCO Award**

Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban) Uttar Pradesh has been awarded the country's prestigious HUDCO Award for the year (2022-2023).

Manoj Joshi, Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India, presented the award to Neha Sharma, State Mission Director, Uttar Pradesh, at a program organized on the 53rd Foundation Day of Housing and Urban Development Corporation Limited (HUDCO). New Delhi

This award has been given in the Best Practices to Improve the Living Environment 2022-23 category for cleanliness. One lakh rupees was also given to the UP government as a reward.

It is noteworthy that this campaign was conducted by the Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban) Uttar Pradesh from January 14 to 24. In this, 75 tourist and historical places of the state were included. A special cleanliness drive was launched at these places.

#### **Breast surgeon Dr Raghu Ram receives Telugu Association of London award**

Leading surgeon Dr Raghu Ram Pillarisetti has received lifetime achievement award by the Telugu Association of London.

Dr Raghuram is the founding director of AKIMS-Ushalakshmi Centre for Breast Diseases in Hyderabad. He is one of the youngest recipients of the award and the only person of Indian origin living outside of the UK to have been conferred the honour.

The award was presented to him during the glittering Ugadi 2023 celebrations organised by the Telugu Association of London (TAL) in London. Representing over 10,000 Telugu speaking people in and around London, TAL is the largest Telugu Charity Organisation in the UK.

#### **Ratan Tata receives highest Australian civil honour**

Industrialist and Tata Sons' chairman emeritus Ratan Tata has been conferred with the Order of Australia, the highest Australian civil honour. Australian Ambassador to India Barry O' Farrell confirmed the development on Twitter over the weekend and hailed Tata as "a titan of business, industry and philanthropy". He said Tata's contributions have made a significant impact in Australia.

The Order of Australia honour comes a month after the industrialist was appointed as an Honorary Officer in the General Division of the Order of Australia (AO) for his service to foster Indo-Australia ties, specifically in trade, investment, and philanthropy. Known for his humility, Ratan Tata took charge as the chairman of the group in March 1991 and stepped down in 2012.

About: Order of Australia - The Order of Australia is an honour that recognises Australian citizens and other persons for outstanding achievement and service. It was established on 14 February 1975 by Elizabeth II, Queen of Australia, on the advice of the Australian Government.

#### **Wing Commander Deepika Misra is first IAF woman officer to receive gallantry award**

Wing Commander Deepika Misra was conferred the Vayu Sena medal by Indian Air Force (IAF) chief Air Marshal VR Chaudhari, making her the first woman Air Force officer to receive a Gallantry award. She was among 58 personnel who received the gallantry award during the investiture ceremony held in the national capital.

Wing Commander Deepika Misra is a trained helicopter pilot, qualified flying instructor and an instrument-rated instructor and examiner.

On August 2, 2021, Deepika Misra was tasked to undertake humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations in response to flash floods in northern Madhya Pradesh. Despite the odds of deteriorating weather, strong winds and the nearing sunset time,

Deepika Misra negotiated the challenging weather and was the first and only respondent to reach the affected area the same evening.

### **Utsa Patnaik selected for Malcolm Adiseshiah Award 2023**

Utsa Patnaik, a renowned economist of national and international repute, has been selected for the Malcolm Adiseshiah Award 2023.

The award is given every year by the Malcolm & Elizabeth Adiseshiah Trust. The prestigious national award honours outstanding social scientists selected by a national-level jury specially constituted for this purpose, from the nominations received. This year, the jury unanimously selected Prof. Utsa Patnaik, according to a press release.

The award will be given with a citation and a prize money of ₹2 lakh at a function to be held in Chennai. The date of this event will be announced shortly by the Trust.

About: Utsa Patnaik - She is a renowned economist of national and international repute who has made seminal contributions to the fields of agrarian studies, political economy, history of economic thought, and colonialism and imperialism.

She has authored several books and articles on various topics related to development economics, such as agrarian relations, peasant movements, food security, poverty alleviation, fiscal policy, trade policy, debt crisis, globalization, neoliberalism, capitalism, socialism, Marxism-Leninism-Maoism (MLM), Indian economic history, and world economic history.

### **Raj Subramaniam presented with Pravasi Bharatiya Samman**

Raj Subramaniam, the Indian-American CEO of global transportation giant FedEx, has been presented with the prestigious Pravasi Bharatiya Samman, the highest civilian award given by India to persons of Indian origin and Indian diaspora.

Subramaniam, 55, was presented with the award by India's Ambassador to the US Taranjit Singh Sandhu at a ceremony at the India House on Saturday since he could not travel to India early this year to receive the award.

About : Raj Subramaniam – Raj Subramaniam is the president and CEO of FedEx Corporation, one of the world's largest transportation companies. His international leadership experience and keen business insights have contributed immensely to the success of FedEx.

About : Pravasi Bharatiya Samman - The Pravasi Bharatiya Samman is an award presented by the Government of India to individuals of Indian origin and diaspora who have made significant contributions in their respective fields and have enhanced India's image in the international community.

### **Shri Amit Shah presented "Maharashtra Bhushan" award for the year 2022 to Dr. Appasaheb Dharmadhikari**

Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation, Shri Amit Shah presented "Maharashtra Bhushan" award for the year 2022 to Dr. Appasaheb Dharmadhikari in Raigarh, Maharashtra today, On this occasion, Chief Minister of Maharashtra Shri Eknath Shinde, Deputy Chief Minister Shri Devendra Fadnavis and many other

dignitaries were present. This is the first time that two persons from the same family have been honored with this award.

Appasaheb Dharmadhikari is a renowned social reformist. He inherited a reputation from his late father Nanasaheb Dharmadhikari. The Nanasaheb Dharmadhikari Pratishtan runs several social welfare activities such as child rites class, health camp, blood donation camp, de-addiction, area cleaning, tree plantation, environment conservation, refilling of wells, distribution of educational materials are carried out. His work continues uninterruptedly. Taking note of his work, Appasaheb was also honored with the Padma Shri.

Taking note of this social work of Appasaheb, D. Y. Patil University awarded an honorary doctorate degree to Dharmadhikari. Former Governor Vidyasagar Rao appointed him as the state's cleanliness ambassador. In 2017, the central government conferred the civil honor of Padma Shri. The European International Institute honored Appasaheb with the Living Legend Award. Considering his career so far, the state government has selected him for the Maharashtra Bhushan Award.

#### **All India Management Association's (AIMA) 13th Managing India Awards ceremony**

Kumar Mangalam Birla, chairman of Aditya Birla Group, won the prestigious 'Business Leader of the Decade' award at All India Management Association's (AIMA) 13th Managing India Awards ceremony on Tuesday. The annual event to facilitate the titans of the industry, held in New Delhi, also recognised contributions of several other leaders and institutions.

Birla, who is credited for taking control of the diversified group and successfully consolidating its operations since his early days, won the award for his contributions to the Indian industry over the last decade. Tata Steel Chairman T V Narendran was facilitated with 'AIMA-JRD Tata Corporate Leadership' award. Leading engineering services company ABB India bagged the 'MNC in India of the Year' award.

Rahul Kanwal, News Director, India Today and Aajtak and Executive Director of Business Today, won the award for his 'Outstanding Contribution to Media' in the latest edition of AIMA Managing India Awards. National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), an umbrella organisation for operating retail payments and settlement systems in India, was recognised for 'Outstanding PSU of the Year' award.

#### **Nilesh Sambare Receives Maratha Udyog Ratna Award 2023**

Nilesh Bhagwan Sambare, the founder of Jijau Educational and Social Foundation, was recently honored with the "Maratha Udyog Ratna" award at the "Maratha Entrepreneurs Conference 2023". The conference was organized by the "Maratha Entrepreneurs Development and Guidance Institute Maharashtra State". Nilesh Sambare received the award for his noteworthy achievements in the industry sector and his dedicated work in remote areas like Palghar.

Nilesh Sambare, also known as Appa, received the "Maratha Udyog Ratna" award for his noteworthy achievements in the industry sector and his dedicated work in underprivileged communities in Palghar.

The award was presented by prominent entrepreneurs from Maharashtra, including Suresh Haware, Purushottam Khedekar, Nirmalkumar Deshmukh, Dr. Sachin Bhadane, and Vijay Ghogare.

About: Jijau Educational and Social Organization - The Jijau Educational and Social Organization is a non-profit group with a focus on uplifting underprivileged communities in five districts of India, namely Palghar, Thane, Raigad, Ratnagiri, and Sindhudurg. Nilesh Sambre founded the organization in 2008, and it has been providing education, healthcare, employment, and agriculture-related assistance using its own funds for the past 14 years, without accepting any donations.

### **Indian-American mathematician CR Rao awarded International Prize in Statistics**

Calyampudi Radhakrishna Rao, a prominent Indian-American mathematician and statistician, will receive the 2023 International Prize in Statistics, the equivalent to the Nobel Prize in the field, for his monumental work 75 years ago that revolutionised statistical thinking.

Rao's work, more than 75 years ago, continues to exert a profound influence on science, the International Prize in Statistics Foundation said in a statement.

Calyampudi Radhakrishna Rao, born in Karnataka in 1920, is an Emeritus Eberly professor in the statistics department at Pennsylvania State University. He played a significant role in establishing the Indian Statistical Institute in Kolkata and has been associated with the institute since 1941. Rao holds PhD and ScD degrees from Cambridge University.

In addition to being awarded the Padma Bhushan in 1968 and the Padma Vibhushan in 2001, Rao was the recipient of the SS Bhatnagar Prize in 1963 and was elected a fellow of the Royal Society in 1967. He also received the Wilks Medal of the American Statistical Association in 1979 and the US National Medal of Science in 2002.

### **Adani Green Receives 'Platinum Award' For Positive Impact On Environment**

The renewable arm of the Adani Group, Adani Green Energy Ltd (AGEL), has received the 'Platinum Award' by Grow Care India Environment Management Awards 2022 for outstanding achievement in the environment management category. The award recognised the company's outstanding contributions, commitments, and actions that have a positive impact on the environment, Adani Green said in a statement.

The award was conferred by the Minister of State Rural Development Fagga Singh Kulaste.

Grow Care India is a non-profit organisation pledged to concede and honor marvelous performance in environment, occupational health and safety, human resources, and other issues like risk management, innovation ideas /projects, corporate ethics, and eco-innovation.

The NGO had invited nominations from companies and their units demonstrating the highest level of commitment and concern in environmental management, as well as organisations willing to enhance and improve their own performance.

### **India-Born Madhur Jaffrey Wins James Beard Foundation's 2023 Lifetime Achievement Award**

Madhur Jaffrey, an India-born British-American, was honoured with the James Beard Foundation's 2023 Lifetime Achievement Award, becoming the first South Asian to receive the prestigious award since its inception in 1990. The foundation's Lifetime Achievement Award is given to an individual whose lifetime body of work has had a positive and long-lasting impact on the way we eat, cook, and/or think about food in America, according to its official website.

"Jaffrey first captured attention as an actress in the film Shakespeare Wallah, winning the Silver Bear for Best Actress at the Berlin Film Festival in 1965," according to the foundation's press release. An Invitation to Indian Cooking, her first cookbook, was published in 1973 and was inducted into the James Beard Foundation's Cookbook Hall of Fame in 2006. She has since published over 30 award-winning cookbooks, cementing her reputation as the "Godmother of Indian Cooking."

Madhur Jaffrey's Ultimate Curry Bible, Curry Easy, and Madhur Jaffrey's World Vegetarian are among her bestselling books. She has also worked as a food consultant at the now-defunct Dawat, which was regarded as one of New York City's best Indian restaurants. Jaffrey said of her award, "It's a wonderful pinnacle to my career, and I'm overjoyed."

Jaffrey, along with the other winners, will be honoured at the Restaurant and Chef Awards ceremony on June 5 at the Lyric Opera of Chicago.

### **RANKING**

#### **India ranks 4th on list of countries with largest military spending in the world: SIPRI**

India's military spending was up 6 per cent year-on-year to \$81.4 billion in 2022, making it the fourth highest spender after the US, Russia, and China, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI).

While Beijing spent an estimated \$292 billion in 2022, Moscow's military expenditure stood at \$86.4 billion during the same period. However, the US outpaced other countries in terms of defence spending with a bill of \$877 billion, according to the report.

Saudi Arabia rounded the top five with an annual expenditure of \$70 billion. Total military spending surged to \$2,240 billion in 2022.

India slipped a spot from last year in terms of military spending. Meanwhile, the US remains the world's largest military spender equalling the expenditure of nearly 10-15 countries. China also slipped from the second spot having spent nearly \$400 billion, with some amount remaining undeclared.

Russia rose to the second spot in these rankings owing to the war with Ukraine. In what is the first war of attrition since the Second World War in Europe, Ukraine has spent nearly 40 per cent of its GDP on defence, according to the report.

#### **India reaches 38th spot on World Bank's Logistics Performance Index**

India has reached the 38th spot on World Bank's Logistics Performance Index. In 2014, India was ranked 54th. It climbed 16 places from 2014 to 2022. Prime Minister

Narendra Modi termed it an encouraging trend, powered by government reforms and focus on improving logistics infrastructure. In a tweet, he said these gains will reduce costs and make country's businesses more competitive.

#### **Union Bank of India secures 1st Rank in EASE reforms index for Q3 FY-23**

Union Bank of India, for the first time, secures 1st rank as per the report on EASE Reforms Index for Q3 FY 2022-23 published by Indian Banks' Association (IBA). Enhanced Access & Service Excellence (EASE) is an initiative by the DFS (GOI) as part of the PSB Reforms Agenda and is currently under its fifth iteration which focuses on Enhanced Digital experience, Data - driven, Integrated and Inclusive Banking. Union Bank of India has been doing well in areas related to building analytics capabilities for retaining and deepening relationships, effective credit monitoring, comprehensive digital collection management system, fraud resilience and cyber security, adopting modern technology capabilities for integrated banking experience, customer centric digital offerings, employee development and better governance measures which resulted the Bank to continue its momentum and for the first time Bank secures 1st position among all PSBs for adopting various reforms prescribed for Public Sector Banks.

The performance of PSBs is measured on five themes under EASE 5.0, in which, Union Bank of India has set the benchmark under the four themes i.e., "Digitally - enabled customer offerings", 'Big data and analytics', 'Modern Technology Capabilities' and "Employee development and Governance" by securing 1st rank amongst PSBs.

#### **Mumbai ranked 19th spot globally among cities with world's best public transport**

Mumbai secured 19th spot globally to rank among cities with world's best public transport. Germany's Berlin was ranked as the city with the best public transport system globally, followed by Czech Republic's capital Prague, while Mumbai secured the 19th spot and was the top-ranked Indian city, according to the survey published by the London based 'Time Out'. a media outlet that focuses on hospitality business and labels itself as a global brand 'dedicated to city life'.

The list that has been released by Time Out, the publisher of global city guides. The publisher polled 20,000 people in 50 cities to find out how they feel about their local mass transit systems.

The list showed a not-so-surprising pre-dominance of Asian cities in the list for best public transport system. European cities also took a chunk of the accolades, with Germany's capital city Berlin topping the list.

#### **WBPDC ranked No.1 power generation company for FY'23,**

State-run West Bengal Power Development Corporation (WBPDC) has ranked best performing power generation company in the country for the financial year 2022-23. This is according to a list published by the Central Electricity Authority - CEA, Ministry of Power.

Three thermal power plants of WBPDC have established their places in the top five ranks in terms of its performance and efficiency (as measured by the plant load factor

or PLF). Bakreswar power plant of WBPDCCL has been ranked number one (PLF- 92.38 per cent) out of total 205 thermal power plants operating in the country, said an official press statement.

Santalalidih has been ranked second (PLF-91.37 per cent) followed by Sagardighi plant at fifth position (PLF-89.39 per cent) nationally.

WBPDCCL has registered record gross generation of 31.85 billion units with a growth of 35 per cent over last two years. It has witnessed a superior performance in the areas of availability, PLF, Specific Oil Consumption (SOC) and auxiliary power consumption (APC). Due to this, profitability has increased three fold. Major turnaround has also been observed in other two plants at Kolaghat and Bandel.

### **BOOKS AND AUTHORS**

#### **PM Modi revealed the book - Saurashtra-Tamil Sangamprashastih**

During the closing ceremony of 'Saurashtra Tamil Sangam', Prime Minister Modi unveiled the book 'Saurashtra Tamil Sangam Prashasti' written by Somnath Sanskrit University on Wednesday. On this occasion, Modi addressed through video conference. 'These programs help in uncovering the ancient relationships between the people of different parts of the country. Modi's vision is to instill the spirit of Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat in the people through these programs. That is why Kashi Tamil Sangam was organized first. This Saurashtra Tamil Sangam will take forward the culture and heritage between Gujarat and Tamil Nadu. Centuries ago, many migrated to Tamil Nadu from the Saurashtra region of Gujarat. With this Saurashtra Tamil confluence, the people of Saurashtra in Tamil Nadu have a chance to reconnect with their ancient culture.

### **BANKING AND ECONOMY**

#### **Razorpay joins ONDC to offer payment reconciliation service for buyer, seller apps**

Fintech unicorn Razorpay has said that it will be joining the Open Network for Digital Commerce ecosystem (ONDC).

The Bengaluru based company will launch a payment reconciliation service for network participants (NPs) like buyers, sellers, and logistic partners, thereby streamlining the payment processes on ONDC, and providing them with an integrated single view of all their transactions.

Through this solution, Razorpay will facilitate ease of transacting on ONDC by timely routing settlement information for a given transaction and assisting Network Participants (NPs) with settling funds. This is a foolproof solution that validates transactions and maintains audit trails to support documentation that will inform any dispute or discrepancy that may arise.

With ONDC open network approach, where the buyers and sellers do not need to necessarily be on the same platform to be able to do a business transaction, ONDC will enable SMEs to access a larger buyer universe.

### **Canara Bank has partnered with Reserve Bank of India innovation hub**

Canara Bank, in collaboration with Reserve Bank Innovation Hub (RBIH), has announced the launch of "Digitalised Submission of Form 15G/15H" as one of customer friendly services adding to our pursuit of "Customer Delight".

Form 15G (Individual and HUF) and Form 15H (Individual-Senior Citizen) are self-declaration forms that an individual submits to the bank requesting not to deduct TDS on interest income as their income is below the basic exemption limit. For this, providing PAN is compulsory.

At the start of every financial year, especially in the first few weeks of April, several citizens - especially senior citizens - make their 15G & 15H submissions to their banks. Presently, our Bank is accepting submission of these forms through online Banking/ Mobile banking which requires knowledge and access to Mobile / Internet Banking. Many Senior citizens are not conversant with Internet / Mobile banking applications. They stand in long queues all day to make submissions of these Tax waiver forms in the bank branches.

RBIH (Reserve Bank Innovation Hub) identified the problem, consulted several Banks for potential solutions and then, conceptualised and created a blueprint to address the above issue.

### **PFC approves 633 crores loan for 5000 passenger EVs and 1000 cargo EVs**

Power Finance Corporation Ltd (PFC), a Maharatna company and the leading NBFC in Indian power sector, has sanctioned a loan of ₹633 crores to Gensol Engineering Ltd (GEL) for purchase of 5000 passenger Electric Vehicles (EVs) and 1000 cargo EVs. The passenger EVs will be leased to Blusmart Mobility Pvt. Ltd (BMPL) to expand its fleet of ride-hailing cabs. The first tranche of the loan has been disbursed, and the first lot of EV cabs has hit the roads of Delhi.

The cabs were flagged off by Shri Ajay Tewari, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Power and Shri Ravinder Singh Dhillon, CMD, PFC at a function yesterday. Rajiv Ranjan Jha, Director (Projects), Shri Manoj Sharma, Director (Commercial), Smt. Simmi R. Nakra, CVO and Shri Anmol Singh Jaggi (CEO and co-founder, Blusmart Mobility) and other Senior Officers were present on the occasion.

### **RBL Bank launches digital fixed deposit for New- to-Bank customer**

RBL Bank has launched an innovative Digital Fixed Deposit (FD) scheme available to new-to-bank customers. Now customers can book the Digital FD within minutes, without visiting the bank branch or opening a savings account with the bank. The digital FD offers investors an interest rate of up to 7.8% and a duration of 15 months to 725 days,

Benefits of the digital FD:

- The ability to track and administer FD digitally is just one of the many advantages of the online FD, which also includes inbuilt insurance coverage and a simple method for starting a savings account.

- The investor of FD may choose to purchase insurance protection through a Hospital Daily Cash Benefit policy, which provides daily cash benefits for medical costs.
- To access their fixed deposit receipts online, customers should download the RBL Bank MoBank App.

### **South Indian Bank introduces 2 flexible savings accounts for NRIs**

For NRI customers, South Indian Bank has introduced SIB SEAFARER and SIB PULSE, two flexible saving accounts. With these products, NRIs now have the option to keep either deposits or the required minimum amount in their savings accounts. Healthcare personnel and mariners both now have access to flexible savings accounts, which proves that South Indian Bank has been working to streamline banking requirements and offer top-notch customer service.

Speaking on the launch, Mr. Murali Ramakrishnan, Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer (CEO), South Indian Bank, said, "It has been our constant endeavour to provide our customers with banking products that fulfil their needs. Accordingly, our flexible savings products will offer targeted NRI segments with convenient avenues to park their savings. We are confident that SIB SEAFARER & SIB PULSE will lay the foundation for more such products in the banking domain. I'm sure these products will create a new & universal template for the way NRI depositors transact with banks."

About: SIB - leading private sector bank South Indian Bank is located in Kerala and has a presence across the country. There are 932 branches, 1154 ATMs, 121 CDMs/CRMs, and a representative office for South Indian Bank in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. A leader in technology-based banking, South Indian Bank provides a wide range of digital products and services.

### **Chennai Metro launches Singara Chennai Card in association with SBI**

Chennai Metro Rail Ltd on Friday launched the Singara Chennai Card (NCCM – National Common Mobility Card) in association with SBI, as banking partner. Currently, the Singara Chennai cards can be used in Chennai metro stations, and at other metros that accept RuPay NCCM cards, including the MMRDA Mumbai Line 2A & 7; Bangalore Metro; Delhi Metro Airport Line; Kanpur Metro; and for BEST Buses in Mumbai and Kadamba Transport Buses in Goa.

In future, consumers would be able to use the card for travel on buses, suburban railways, for toll, parking, smart city and retail shops, in many parts of the country.

### **ICICI Bank to offer EMI facility for UPI transactions above Rs 10,000**

ICICI Bank has introduced an equated monthly instalment (EMI) facility for UPI payments made by scanning QR code. The facility will be available for customers who are eligible for the bank's 'buy now pay later' scheme – PayLater.

Customers can pay transaction amount above Rs 10,000 in the form of instalments in three, six, or nine months. The EMI facility for PayLater will shortly be extended for online shopping as well, the bank said in a statement. The facility can be availed of

across a host of categories such as electronics, groceries, fashion apparel, travel, and hotel bookings.

Bijith Bhaskar, Head- Digital Channels & Partnership, ICICI Bank, said "We have seen that maximum payments these days are made through UPI. In addition, we have observed that customers are increasingly opting for UPI transactions from PayLater, the Bank's 'buy now, pay later' service.

ICICI Bank introduced PayLater facility in 2018 to enable customers to buy small ticket items immediately in a completely digital and paperless manner. PayLater facility enables customers to shop online, pay bills, and pay to any merchant UPI ID at physical stores instantly.

### **Kotak General Insurance ties up with actyv.ai to sell insurance products to MSMEs**

Kotak Mahindra General Insurance has announced its partnership with actyv.ai to offer bitesized insurance products to new-age micro, small and medium enterprises. Kotak General Insurance will leverage actyv.ai's AI-powered platform to provide insurance solutions to support the business sustainability of small businesses, the company said in a press statement.

Through actyv.ai's technology stack and Kotak General Insurance's customized insurance products, this partnership will offer innovative insurance products to the enterprise and close to one lakh supply chain partner ecosystem to focus on driving growth without worrying about business risks,

Kotak's head of multi-line business Jagjeet Singh Siddhu said his company was excited to join hands with actyv.ai to offer small OTC products like shopkeeper policy, critical illness and personal accident policy via end-to-end digital platform. "We believe that technology plays a vital role in selling BFSI products to masses and businesses. This partnership will offer basic insurance to the last mile of the industrial value chain like never before."

### **Odisha Receives Investment Intent Of Rs 26,000 Cr As Patnaik Meets Japanese Industrialists**

Odisha received investment intent of Rs 26,000 crore in various sectors as Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik met Japanese industrialists in Tokyo on Wednesday.

The investment intent was received in sectors such as logistics, steel, Green Hydrogen, and IT/ITeS.

An MoU for collaboration in the skill development sector was also signed between Nihon-Utkal and IIIT, Bhubaneswar, an official release issued by the chief minister's office said.

The business meeting was attended by representatives of more than 200 leading companies in Japan and the Indo-Pacific region.

They were offered an opportunity to explore various avenues of collaboration with the state government and local companies in Odisha,

Patnaik also held a meeting with the senior leadership of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), who iterated their commitment to supporting infrastructure development in Odisha.

Addressing the business meeting, Patnaik said, "Odisha is one of the fastest-growing states in India. We are fast emerging as a major industrial destination in India because of our natural resources and strategic location."

### **More than 408.2 mn loans amounting to Rs 23.2 trn sanctioned under PMMY**

The Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) sanctioned more than 408.2 million loans amounting to Rs 23.2 trillion till March 24, 2023, said the finance ministry on its 8th anniversary on Saturday.

PMMY aims to facilitate easy collateral-free credit of up to Rs 10 lakh to micro-entrepreneurs for income-generating activities.

Under the scheme, loans have been divided into three categories based on the need for finance and the stage in maturity of the business. These are Shishu (loans up to Rs 50,000), Kishore (loans above Rs 50,000 and up to Rs 5 lakh), and Tarun (loans above Rs 5 lakh and up to Rs 10 lakh).

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said PMMY has played a vital role in funding the unfunded and ensuring a life of dignity as well as prosperity for countless Indians.

"Today, as we mark eight years of Mudra Yojana, I salute the entrepreneurial zeal of all those who benefitted from it and became wealth creators," he added.

Approximately 69 per cent of the total loans have been sanctioned to women entrepreneurs & 51 per cent loans have been sanctioned to SC/ST and OBC categories of borrowers.

Union Minister for Finance & Corporate Affairs Nirmala Sitharaman said the scheme has helped in the generation of large-scale employment opportunities at the grassroots level and also has proved to be a game changer while boosting the Indian economy.

### **IMF Chief says India and China will account for half of global economic growth in 2023**

The International Monetary Fund said that the world economy is expected to grow at less than 3 per cent this year, with India and China expected to account for half of global growth in 2023.

International Monetary Fund (IMF) managing director Kristalina Georgieva warned that a sharp slowdown in the world economy last year following the raging pandemic and Russia's military operation of Ukraine would continue this year.

In a statement, Georgieva said the period of slower economic activity will be prolonged, with the next five years witnessing less than 3 per cent growth.

However, she said some momentum comes from emerging economies – Asia especially is a bright spot. India and China are expected to account for half of the global growth in 2023. But others face a steeper climb.

### **India-Nepal to sign pact to help travellers make digital payments with Indian e-wallets**

In a major step to boost tourism and trade, the Indian and Nepalese governments are set to sign an agreement in which tourists travelling between the two countries will no

longer have to carry currency notes. They can simply make payments by scanning quick response (QR) codes.

Nepalese and Indian tourists travelling between the two countries would be able make digital payments using Indian e-wallets like BharatPe, PhonePe, Google Pay, and Paytm. Both countries have chalked out an agreement for this purpose, and the document is awaiting signatures from both countries' officials, including Nepalese Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda'.

The move is expected to ease payment transactions for Nepalese and Indian traders, as well as for tourists visiting Nepal. Additionally, the QR codes used for transactions will also help businesses between the two countries.

A year ago, both countries had already signed a technical agreement to enable the use of Nepalese e-wallets in India and Indian e-wallets in Nepal. Nepal's gateway payments service provider, Gateway Payments Service Private Limited, and India's National Payment Corporation of India have signed this agreement.

#### **RBI MPC meet: RBI keeps repo rate unchanged at 6.5%**

The RBI monetary policy committee (MPC) decided to keep the policy repo rate unchanged at 6.50 per cent and other policy rates were also kept unchanged. "The monetary policy committee decided unanimously at 6.50 per cent with a readiness to act if the situation so warrants," Das said. The RBI Governor also said that the withdrawal of accommodation and that the repo rate hike has been paused only for this meeting.

Repo rate is the rate at which the central bank of a country (Reserve Bank of India in case of India) lends money to commercial banks in the event of any shortfall of funds. Repo rate is used by monetary authorities to control inflation.

In the event of inflation, central banks increase repo rate as this acts as a disincentive for banks to borrow from the central bank. This ultimately reduces the money supply in the economy and thus helps in arresting inflation.

The central bank takes the contrary position in the event of a fall in inflationary pressures. Repo and reverse repo rates form a part of the liquidity adjustment facility.

#### **Mahila Samman Savings Certificates, 2023 - Small savings, big benefits for Nari Shakti**

On 1st April 2023, the Ministry of Finance issued the Gazette Notification for Mahila Samman Savings Certificates, 2023 which has been made available in 1.59 lakh Post Offices with immediate effect. Keeping the financial independence of women in focus, the scheme was proposed in Union Budget 2023-24.

The Union Budget 2023-24 outlined the vision of Amrit Kaal which envisions a prosperous and inclusive India. To realise the vision, the fruits of development must reach each and every citizen of India and especially women. The savings scheme is seen as a significant step towards financial inclusion and empowerment of women, including girls.

Interest rates on all the small savings schemes, except Savings Deposit and PPF, have been upwardly revised with effect from 1st April 2023. The two-year tenure scheme offers a fixed interest of 7.5% interest compounded quarterly. It has flexible

investment and partial withdrawal options with a maximum ceiling of Rs. 2 lakh. The scheme is valid for a two-year period upto 31st March 2025.

National Savings (Monthly Income Account) Scheme, 2019 has been amended through National Savings (Monthly Income Account) (Amendment) Scheme, 2023 and the maximum investment limit has been raised from Rs.4,50,000 to Rs. 9 lakh for a single account and from Rs. 9 lakh to Rs. 15 lakh for a joint account with effect from 1st April 2023. Likewise, the Senior Citizen Savings Scheme, 2019 has been amended through Senior Citizens Savings (Amendment) Scheme, 2023 and the maximum investment limit has been raised from Rs. 15 lakh to Rs.30 lakh.

### **India and Malaysia can now trade using Indian rupee ( INR )**

India and Malaysia can now use the Indian rupee to settle trade in addition to other currencies, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Saturday.

The move follows the decision by the Reserve Bank of India in July last year to allow the settlement of international trade in Indian currency.

"Trade between India and Malaysia can now be settled in Indian Rupee (INR) in addition to the current modes of settlement in other currencies," the MEA said.

The MEA said the RBI's initiative is aimed at facilitating the growth of trade and supporting the interests of the global trading community in the Indian rupee

India International Bank of Malaysia (IIBM), based in Kuala Lumpur, has operationalised this mechanism by opening a special Rupee Vostro account through its corresponding bank in India that is Union Bank of India.