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## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### Canada clears world's 1st plant-based C-19 vaccine

- Canada became the first country in the world that has authorized the use of a plant-based C-19 vaccine. The two-dose vaccine of Medicago Inc. (a biopharma company owned by Mitsubishi Chemical and Philip Morris), can be given to adults who are aged between 18 to 64, but little data is available on the shots received by people aged 65 and above.
- The decision to authorize the vaccine was based on a study conducted on 24,000 adults that showed the efficacy rate of the vaccine is 71% at preventing C-19 – although the tests were conducted before the omicron variant emerged. Covifenz is the name given to this vaccine. Canada agreed to buy 20 million doses of this plant-based vaccine, with an option to purchase 56 million additional doses.

### NDB first multilateral agency to open office in Gift City

- New Development Bank (NDB) will become the first multilateral agency to open an office in the Gujarat International Finance Tech City (GIFT). New Development Bank (NDB) has received the approval for the same and will open the office in May 2022 in GIFT City. The Indian office will help identify suitable projects and try to create a pipeline of potential financing for the bank. NDB also expects to partner with the newly launched National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development (NBFID) to support crucial infrastructure projects in India.
- NDB was set up by the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) with the objective of mobilizing resources for infrastructure and sustainable development projects in the BRICS as well as other emerging markets in 2014. It became operational in 2015 and is headquartered in Shanghai, China. All the founding members equally own the bank.

### Air Force Pulls Out Of Multilateral Air Exercise In UK Amid Ukraine Crisis

- The Indian Air Force (IAF) has decided not to send its aircraft in the multilateral air exercise 'Cobra Warrior-22' in the United Kingdom, due to the deepening crisis in Ukraine, arising out of the Russian military attack in that country. The exercise is scheduled to take place from March 6 to 27, 2022, at Waddington in the United Kingdom. The announcement by the IAF comes just three days after it confirmed its participation in the drills.
- The announcement by the IAF came hours after India abstained from voting on a UN Security Council resolution on the Russian military aggression against Ukraine. India retained the option of reaching out to all relevant sides to find a middle ground and foster dialogue and diplomacy to resolve the crisis.

### Russia-Ukraine Border Conflict

- The Russia-Ukraine Border Conflict, have been simmering for more than two months, with diplomatic efforts to resolve the issue showing little sign of progress. Russia has more than 100,000 troops on its border with Ukraine, sparking Western warnings of an imminent invasion. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Secretary-General Jens



Stoltenberg, meanwhile, voiced concerns that Russia continues to build up troop numbers along Ukraine's borders, including in Belarus.

- The Border conflict in Ukraine began with protests in the capital city of Kiev in November 2013 against Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich's decision to reject a deal for greater economic integration with the European Union. After a violent crackdown by state security forces unintentionally drew an even greater number of protesters and escalated the conflict, President Yanukovich fled the country in February 2014.
- In March 2014, Russian troops took control of Ukraine's Crimean region, before formally annexing the peninsula after Crimeans voted to join the Russian Federation in a disputed local referendum. Russian President Vladimir Putin cited the need to protect the rights of Russian citizens and Russian speakers in Crimea and southeast Ukraine. The Border conflict heightened ethnic divisions, and two months later pro-Russian separatists in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions of eastern Ukraine held a referendum to declare independence from Ukraine.

#### **Israeli Defense Forces Successfully Test Naval Version Of Iron Dome Missile Defense System**

- Israel successfully tested a new naval air defence system "C-Dome," to be used on the Israeli Navy's Sa'ar 6-class corvettes. C-Dome is the naval version of the Iron Dome, an all-weather air defence system of Israel to intercept and destroy short-range rockets and missiles, from the Gaza Strip. The successful test further strengthens the missile defence systems of the Israeli Navy to safeguard the maritime assets of the State of Israel.
- The systems that we are developing as part of Israel's multi-tier missile defence array enable us to operate against Iranian proxies in the region and defend against their weapon systems, which are constantly being upgraded. The C-Dome is to become part of Israel's multilayer missile defence system — which includes weapons capable of intercepting everything from long-range missiles to short-range rockets.

#### **Russia wants to 'turn Ukraine into a broken country'**

- Russian President, Vladimir Putin has recognised the independence of separatist regions in eastern Ukraine – Donetsk and Luhansk. Putin's announcement paved the way for Russia to openly send troops and weapons to the long-running conflict pitting Ukrainian forces against Moscow-backed rebels. Russian-backed rebels have been fighting Ukrainian troops in Donetsk and Luhansk since 2014, with regular violence despite a ceasefire agreement.
- Putin signed decrees recognizing the Donetsk and Luhansk regions' independence, eight years after fighting erupted between Russia-backed separatists and Ukrainian forces, and called on lawmakers to approve measures paving the way for military support.

#### **India, Oman begin 'Eastern Bridge-VI' air force exercise**

- The Indian Air Force (IAF) and Royal Air Force of Oman (RAFO) have organised a bilateral air exercise named Eastern Bridge-VI from February 21 to 25, 2022 at Air Force Station Jodhpur in Rajasthan. Eastern Bridge-VI is the sixth edition of the exercise. The exercise will provide an opportunity to enhance operational capability and interoperability between the two Air Forces.



- Participation of IAF and RAFO in this exercise will promote professional interaction, exchange of experiences and enhancement of operational knowledge, besides strengthening bilateral relations between the two countries. Various senior dignitaries are planning to visit Air Force Station Jodhpur during this exercise.

### **UK's researchers found 180-Million-Year-Old Fossil of 'Sea Dragon'**

- United Kingdom researchers have found colossal 180-million-year-old fossilised remains of an Ichthyosaur, popularly known as a 'sea dragon'. The researchers show one of the most significant discoveries in the region as the fossil is the biggest and most complete skeleton of its kind found in the United Kingdom. Ichthyosaurs resembled dolphins in body shape and became extinct around 90 million years ago, after first appearing 250 million years ago.
- Joe Davis of the Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust discovered it during the routine draining of a lagoon island at the Rutland Water reservoir in February 2021. The first ichthyosaurs, which are called sea dragons because they tend to have very large teeth and eyes, were discovered by the fossil hunter and palaeontologist Mary Anning in the early 19th century. The specimen is currently being treated by a specialist paleontological conservator, a process that will take 12-18 months.

### **Mali conflict: Macron announces troops to leave after nine years**

- French president, Emmanuel Macron has announced that France and its European partners will start the military withdrawal from Mali after more than nine years fighting a jihadist insurgency. France first deployed troops against jihadists in Mali in 2013 under the Socialist president François Hollande. The decision has been taken due to a breakdown in France's relations with the ruling junta government in the country. The heart of this military operation will be shifted from Mali to Niger.
- In recent years, jihadists have taken over swaths of territory in the former French colony, exploiting political turmoil, poverty and the weakness of local authorities. Critics of French strategy in Mali have long accused policymakers in Paris of focusing on the military force at the expense of politics. The withdrawal applies to 2,400 French troops in Mali and a smaller European force of several hundred, which was created in 2020 to reduce the burden on French forces.

### **Nepal to become first country to deploy India's UPI platform**

- Nepal will be the first country to adopt India's UPI system, which will play a pivotal role in transforming the digital economy of the neighbouring country, the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI). NPCI International Payments Ltd (NIPL), the international arm of NPCI, has joined hands with Gateway Payments Service (GPS) & Manam Infotech to provide the services. GPS is the authorized payment system operator in Nepal. Manam Infotech will deploy Unified Payments Interface (UPI) in Nepal.
- The collaboration will serve the larger digital public good in Nepal and bolster interoperable real-time person-to-person (P2P) and person-to-merchant (P2M) transactions in the neighbouring country. Nepal shall be the first country outside of India to adopt UPI as the



payments platform driving the digitalization of cash transactions and furthering the vision and objectives of the Nepal Government and Nepal Rastra Bank as the Central bank.

### **Bangladesh, US air forces to conduct joint exercise in Dhaka, Sylhet**

- The air forces of Bangladesh and the United States will conduct a joint tactical airlift exercise 'Cope South 22'. The six days exercise has been sponsored by Pacific Air Forces (PACAF). The bilateral exercise will be held at Bangladesh Air Force (BAF) Kurmitola Cantonment, Dhaka; and Operating Location-Alpha, Sylhet, Bangladesh.
- The goals of the Pacific Air Forces-sponsored bilateral tactical airlift exercise include improving interoperability with the Bangladesh Air Force and supporting the armed forces of Bangladesh's long-term modernisation efforts in order to maintain regional stability. The goal of the exercise is bolstering bilateral ties between the two countries through tactical airlift sorties and subject-matter expert exchanges.

### **WHO Launches Quit Tobacco App. Here Is How The First-Of-Its-Kind Initiative Works**

- World Health Organization (WHO) South-East Asia Region (SEAR) has launched a 'Quit Tobacco App'. This application helps people to give up the use of tobacco in all forms, including smokeless and other newer products. The App was launched by Dr Poonam Khetrpal Singh, Regional Director, WHO-SEAR, during WHO's year-long 'Commit to quit' campaign, is the latest tobacco control initiative by the WHO South-East Asia Region.
- The app, the first such by WHO, and the first that targets all forms of tobacco, helps users to identify the triggers, set their targets, manage cravings, and stay focused to quit tobacco. Tobacco is the world's leading cause of preventable death and kills nearly 8 million persons every year. It claims 1.6 million lives in the WHO South-East Asia Region which is amongst the largest producers and consumers of tobacco products.

### **German President Steinmeier reelected for second term**

- German President, Frank-Walter Steinmeier has been re-elected for a second term of five years by a special parliamentary assembly. This is also the final term for Steinmeier, which he won with 71% of the vote. The special assembly was made up of the members of parliament of the lower house and representatives of Germany's 16 states. Steinmeier was first elected as the president on February 12, 2017, with 74% of the vote.
- Before first becoming president in 2017, Steinmeier, 66, served two stints as Chancellor Angela Merkel's foreign minister and earlier was chief of staff to Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder. Germany's president has little executive power but is considered an important moral authority. After a messy parliamentary election result in 2017, Steinmeier helped prod politicians to form a new coalition government rather than holding out for a new vote.

### **Instagram announces 'Take a Break' feature to encourage breaks from social media**

- Instagram has announced the launch of 'Take a Break' in all countries, including India, to empower people to make informed decisions about the way they are spending their time. This feature will be promoted in India through a campaign, in partnership with 'We The



Young', called 'Break Zaroori Hai'. 'Take a Break' was first launched in the US, UK, Ireland, Canada, New Zealand and Australia, and it is now available for everyone globally.

- 'Take a Break' is a feature that will show up for people, as they have been scrolling for a certain amount of time. They will be asked to take a break from Instagram and suggest that they set reminders to take more breaks in the future.
- They will also be shown expert-backed tips to help them reflect and reset. To make sure that young people are aware of this feature, they will be shown notifications suggesting they turn these reminders on.
- The 'Take a Break' reminders build on Instagram's existing time management tools including Daily Limit, which lets people know when they've reached the total amount of time they want to spend on Instagram each day, and offers the ability to mute notifications from Instagram.

### **NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg to lead Norway central bank**

- The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) chief, Jens Stoltenberg will take over as Norway's central bank Governor at the end of the year. The appointment comes amid escalating tensions between the West and Russia. Western nations fear Moscow has plans to invade Ukraine, which aspires to join the NATO alliance.
- But Mr Stoltenberg, a 62-year-old trained economist, insisted that he would stay on as NATO Secretary-General until the end of his term in October. Norway's central bank determines monetary policy but also manages the country's enormous sovereign wealth fund, the biggest in the world.

### **Winter Olympics host China welcomes Year of Tiger with quiet celebrations amid COVID-19 outbreaks**

- China is celebrating the Spring Festival, it's the most important annual festival as it entered the Lunar new "Year of the Tiger". Last year was celebrated as the Lunar Year of the Ox. According to the Chinese Zodiac calendar, the Year of the Ox has ended and the Year of the Tiger has begun from February 1, 2022, and will end on January 21, 2023.
- In Chinese culture, the tiger symbolizes bravery, vigor and strength and it is believed that it can lift people from adversity and usher in final auspiciousness and peace. Each year is named after one of 12 signs of the Chinese zodiac in a repeating cycle. This year, Spring Festival celebrations coincide with the Beijing Winter Olympics.

### **Australia to rename islands to Honor Queen Elizabeth on platinum jubilee**

- Australia will rename Aspen Island in Canberra's Lake Burley Griffin as part of June 2022 national and community events to celebrate 70th anniversary of the accession of Queen Elizabeth II to the British throne, Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison said on Saturday.
- "Seventy years of service is a truly immense achievement, and we are proud to join with other Commonwealth nations to celebrate this milestone... Aspen Island in Canberra's Lake Burley Griffin, the home of the National Carillon, will be renamed Queen Elizabeth II.



- According to Morrison, celebrations will include opening of new Queen Elizabeth Water Gardens, the lighting of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Beacon in Canberra, the release of commemorative stamps and coins, as well as illuminating monuments all around Australia.

#### **Chinese Ministry Launches Five-Year Plan to Become Global Robotics Hub**

- China has announced a five-year roadmap to achieve its goal of becoming a global robotics innovation hub by the year 2025. China's Ministry of Industry and Information Technology revealed operating income from the country's robotics industry is expected to grow by around 20% per year between 2021 and 2025. From 2016 to 2020, the sector expanded at an average growth rate of 15%. Last year, operating income surpassed 100 billion yuan (\$15.69 billion) for the first time.
- To achieve its goal by 2025 of becoming a worldwide robotics innovation centre, China has proposed a strategy concentrating on improvements to essential components such as servo motors and control panels. As per the 2021 World Robot Report, South Korea, Singapore, and Japan were the top three most automated countries in Asia-Pacific.

#### **Honduras: Xiomara Castro sworn in as first female president**

- In Honduras, the Freedom and Refoundation Party (Libre) member Xiomara Castro has been sworn in as the first female President of the country. The 62-year-old Castro replaces President Juan Orlando Hernández, as 56th President of Honduras. Hernández has held the position for eight years from 27 January 2014 to 27 January 2022. Castro announced part of her cabinet Thursday, with her son Hector Zelaya as private secretary and Jose Manuel Zelaya — her husband's nephew — as defence minister.
- The oath was sworn before Judge Karla Romero, flanked by Castro's choice of Congress president, Luis Redondo, who draped the presidential sash over his new boss before a crowd of some 29,000. The guests included US Vice President Kamala Harris, King Felipe VI of Spain and Taiwan Vice President William Lai.

### **NATIONAL NEWS**

#### **C-19 Reports via ICMR approved Laboratories 2022**

- C-19 tests should only be done at ICMR-approved laboratories, as cyber fraudsters are exploiting the pandemic by impersonating workers of lesser-known labs and issuing false reports.
- The ICMR has released the list of the laboratories that are approved for the testing procedure. You can find the details of the ICMR approved laboratories here [ICMR approved laboratories](#).
- As many residents are opting for private labs for various C-19-related tests due to excessive traffic at civic and state-run hospitals.
- Many of them use their mobile phones, laptops, and computers to make appointments at neighbouring private labs online, allowing cyber thieves to take advantage of them.



#### **Delhi Cabinet approves e-waste eco park**

- The Delhi Cabinet has approved setting up India's first of its kind electronic-waste eco-park. It has also agreed to devise 'Delhi Film Policy 2022', as a thrust to promote tourism. The electronic waste eco-friendly park is to be built on 20 acres of land in Delhi. Nearly, 2 lakh tonnes of e-waste are thrown by Delhi every year. This eco-park will recycle, refurbish and dismantle e-waste in a scientific and safe way.
- This eco-park will act as an Integrated Facility, by engaging in dismantling, segregating, refurbishing, material-wise storage, testing and plastic recycling. It will also have precious metal extraction facilities, especially from Printed Circuit Boards (PCBs) through high-end technologies.
- The Delhi Film Policy 2022 is to promote tourism in Delhi, making the National Capital- a Brand. It will also make it a hub for modern film-making, meeting European Standards.
- The government is to create an 'e-Film Clearance Portal' and provide aid of Rs 3 crores for film production. It has also decided to incentivize hiring locals in the cinema industry.

#### **27th Chief of the Army Staff: M M Naravane will retire shortly**

- In April, 2022, General Manoj Mukund Naravane will be retiring from the post of 27th chief of the Indian Army. General M M Naravane will be leaving behind a strong legacy that would be clear only with time. He worked as an Army Chief without any showoff or publicity, even though he was directly responsible for many important strategic decisions and tactics that will be changing the shape of the Army's outlook in the coming years.
- General MM Naravane (PVSM, AVSM, SM, VSM, ADC) has done his schooling from Pune's Jnana Prabodhini Prashala. He is an alumnus of the National Defence Academy (NDA) and the Indian Military Academy (IMA). Gen. Naravane was commissioned in the Sikh Light Infantry Regiment in June 1980. He is also an alumnus of the Defence Services Staff College, Wellington and Higher Command Course. He has a Master's Degree in Defence Studies, M.Phil Degree in Defence and Management Studies, and is at present pursuing his Doctorate.

#### **Mansukh Mandaviya launches ICMR/DHR Policy on Biomedical**

- For medical professionals, scientists, and technicians in medical, dental, and paramedical institutes, the Union health ministry has launched the ICMR/ DHR Policy on Biomedical Innovation and Entrepreneurship. By promoting the Government of India's Make-in-India, Start-Up-India, and Atmanirbhar Bharat initiatives, it would assure multidisciplinary collaboration, promote start-up culture, and establish an innovation-led ecosystem at medical institutes across the country."
- "This Policy will ensure multi-disciplinary collaboration, promote start-up culture, and develop an innovation led ecosystem at Medical Institutes across the country by promoting Make-in-India, Start-Up-India, and Atmanirbhar Bharat initiatives," said Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare, speaking at the policy launch. This policy is in line with Prime Minister Harper's motto of "Innovate, Patent, Produce, and Prosper."



**Kochi airport to become power-positive with new solar plant from March 6**

- The Cochin International Airport Limited (CIAL) is set to commission a 12 MWp solar power plant on March 6 near Payyannur in Kannur district of Kerala. With the commissioning of the new solar power plant, CIAL will get the status as a power positive airport, from its current status of being a power-neutral airport. In 2015, CIAL became the world's first airport to be fully powered by solar energy.
- The power plant boasts of 12 megawatt capacity on a 35-acre land where CIAL introduced a concept of terrain-based installation where the geographical characteristics of the area are retained and no changes are made in the gradient of the land.

**Ministry of Education launches Bhasha Certificate Selfie campaign**

- The Ministry of Education has launched a campaign titled 'Bhasha Certificate Selfie'. The aim of this campaign is to promote the Bhasha Sangam mobile app, launched by the Ministry under the aegis of Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat to encourage cultural diversity and promote multilingualism. Bhasha Sangam mobile app was launched on October 31, 2021, by Minister of Education and Skill Development Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, to lay emphasis on the promotion of Indian languages.
- The app has been developed by the Ministry of Education and MyGov India and allows users to learn 100+ sentences of daily use in as many as 22 scheduled Indian languages. The 'Bhasha Certificate Selfie' initiative is encouraging people to upload their selfie with the certificate using the hashtag #BhashaCertificateSelfie.

**'Operation Ganga': Evacuating Indians from Ukraine**

- The government of India has launched an evacuation mission named Operation Ganga to evacuate Indian nationals from Ukraine due to the Russia-Ukraine tension. Due to the ongoing tension between Ukraine and Russia, Ukraine has been declared as a no-fly zone by the authorities for the safety and security of the nations. Due to this many Indian nationals were left stranded in Ukraine. To help the Indian citizens come back to the country, the government of India decided to conduct a special evacuation mission named Operation Ganga. The government will bring back Indian nationals via flight.

**Sri G. Kishan Reddy inaugurates the conference on Indian Temple Architecture titled "DEVAYATANAM"**

- Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) of Ministry of Culture, Government of India is organizing a two-day international conference 'Devayatanam – An odyssey of Indian temple architecture on 25th – 26th February 2022 at Hampi, Karnataka. The Union Minister for Culture, Tourism and DoNER, G Kishan Reddy inaugurates the conference.
- The conference aims to deliberate upon the philosophical, religious, social, economic, technical, scientific, art and architectural aspects of the temple. It also intends to initiate a dialogue on the evolution and development of the various styles of temple architecture such as the Nagara, Vesara, Dravida, Kalinga and others.



**Third India-Japan joint exercise 'EX DHARMA GUARDIAN-2022' to be held at Belagavi from Feb 27**

- The third edition of the joint military exercise "EX DHARMA GUARDIAN-2022" between India and Japan will be conducted from 27 February to 10 March 2022, at Belagavi (Belgaum), Karnataka. The 15th Battalion the Maratha Light Infantry Regiment of the Indian Army and 30th Infantry Regiment of Japanese Ground Self Defence Forces (JGSDF) are participating in this 12 days long joint exercise.
- The military exercise will focus on operations in Jungle & Semi-Urban/Urban terrains.
- The exercise aims at enhancing the inter-operability and foster mutual understanding between the two Armies.
- Exercise DHARMA GUARDIAN is an annual military training event, being conducted in India since 2018.

**Boeing delivers 12th P-8I patrol aircraft to Indian Navy**

- The Indian Navy has received the 12th anti-submarine warfare aircraft P-8I from the US-based aerospace company Boeing. This is the fourth of four additional aircraft, for which the contract was signed in 2016. The Ministry of Defence had signed a contract for eight P-8I aircraft in 2009. However, later in 2016, it signed a contract for four additional P-8I aircraft.
- In May 2021, the US State Department approved the proposed sale of six P-8I patrol aircraft and related equipment, a deal estimated to cost 2.42 billion dollars.
- P-8I is a long-range maritime reconnaissance and Anti-Submarine Warfare Aircraft, and a variant of the P-8A Poseidon used by the US Navy. India was the first international customer of Boeing for this aircraft. The Indian Navy inducted the first P-8I aircraft in 2013. The P-8I aircraft is a variant of the P-8A Poseidon aircraft that Boeing developed as a replacement for the US Navy's ageing P-3 fleet.

**Central Government launched "Janbhagidari Empowerment" portal in the Union Territory of JK**

- The Central Government launched the "Janbhagidari Empowerment" portal in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, in line with the government's digital mission. The portal was hosted on a different server with higher bandwidth, in order to provide easy and ready accessibility to the general public.
- This intervention comes amid concerns related to the slow speed or bandwidth issues related to the portal. This has led to disenchantment among users despite its great value as an information platform. After the movement of this portal on a different server, it has started to open quickly enough, and thus the whole experience of visiting the portal has improved. About 70 thousand people have accessed the portal until now. With the increase in bandwidth, the portal is likely to receive more hits in near future.

**SAAF and National Cross Country Athletics Championship to be held in Kohima on March 26**

- Nagaland is all set to host the South Asian Athletic Federation (SAAF) cross country championship and 56th National Cross-Country athletics championships from 26th of next month in Kohima. Meanwhile, the official mascot of the South Asian Cross Country Championships and 56th National Cross Country is a joyous happy running 'Hornbill'. The



name of the Mascot is Akimji – a connotation of the word AMBITION derived from Sumi dialect of Naga tribe which exemplifies the ambition of the new generation of Naga youth.

- This event is going to be perhaps Nagaland's biggest sporting event in our 50 plus years of statehood and expressed optimism that the event will propel the image of Nagaland and the state's sporting dream towards national and international platforms. On this occasion, the official team Nagaland kit was also launched.

### **Union Minister Giriraj Singh launches Rural Connectivity GIS Data in Public Domain**

- Giriraj Singh, who is the Union Minister for Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, has released the Rural Connectivity GIS Data in Public Domain. This data includes the GIS data for more than 8 lakh rural facilities which have been collected and digitised using the GIS platform developed for the PM-GSY scheme. Other than Giriraj Singh, other Union Ministers like Faggan Singh Kulaste and Sadhvi Niranjan Jyoti, were also present at the release event.
- An estimate is that more than 6.90 lakh km of roads have been constructed, which connects 1,61,508 habitations with an expenditure of about 2.69 lakh crores of Indian rupees.
- Speed of the construction of rural roads under the PMGSY has seen massive growth during the last few years and the use of new technology has been emphasized which has resulted in a saving of about 5000 crores of Indian rupees.
- The data which has been made available in the public domain can be beneficial to the startups, entrepreneurs, businesses, civil society, academics and other government departments to build products, conduct research, and plan investments for a quicker disaster response.

### **IAF to participate in multi-nation air exercise 'Ex Cobra Warrior 22' in UK**

- Indian Air Force will participate in a multi-nation air exercise named 'Exercise Cobra Warrior 22' at Waddington, in the United Kingdom from March 06 to 27, 2022. IAF Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas will participate in the exercise along with fighter aircraft of the UK and other leading Air Forces. Five Tejas aircraft will fly to the United Kingdom. IAF C-17 aircraft will provide the necessary transport support for induction and de-induction.
- The exercise is aimed at providing operational exposure and sharing best practices amongst the participating Air Forces, thereby enhancing combat capability and forging bonds of friendship. This will be a platform for LCA Tejas to demonstrate its manoeuvrability and operational capability.

### **Centre organise week-long 'Vigyan Sarvatra Pujiyate' Science exhibition at 75 locations across country**

- The Government of India has organised a week-long science exhibition titled 'Vigyan Sarvatra Pujiyate' from February 22 to 28, 2022, as part of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav commemoration. It will be conducted simultaneously at 75 locations across the country through a hybrid model. The inaugural programme was held at Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi on the 22nd of February.
- The exhibition will celebrate science and technology (S&T) and display the country's scientific legacy and technology prowess. The exhibition will culminate on February 28,



2022, which coincide with the National Science Day, commemorated in remembrance of Nobel Laureate Sir C.V. Raman's path-breaking discovery of the Raman Effect in 1930.

#### **Lavender designated as brand product of J&K's Doda district, the birthplace of Purple Revolution**

- The Union Minister of Science & Technology, Dr Jitendra Singh, chaired the District Development Coordination & Monitoring Committee (DISHA) meetings of several districts in Jammu & Kashmir recently. A key decision taken during the meeting was to designate Lavender as a Doda brand product, to promote lavender under the 'One District, One Product' initiative of the Modi Government.
- Doda district in J&K is the birthplace of India's Purple Revolution or the cultivation of Lavender. Though, Lavender cultivation is practised in almost all the 20 districts of Jammu & Kashmir.
- Purple Revolution (Lavender cultivation) was launched under the Aroma Mission of the Union Ministry of Science & Technology. The AROMA mission is implemented by the Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR) through its Jammu-based laboratory, the Indian Institute of Integrative Medicines (IIIM).
- The Mission's objective is the cultivation of important medicinal and aromatic plants domestically to empower domestic farmers and support India's aromatic crop-based agro-economy by reducing imports of aromatic oils and increasing homegrown varieties. The Lavender crop is however a native to Europe.

#### **Railway Ministry Shares Glimpse Of India's First-ever Cable-stayed Rail Bridge In J&K**

- The Indian Railways has shared new images of the country's first cable-stayed bridge on the Anji river in Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi district. The under-construction Anji Khad bridge, part of the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) project, will connect Katra and Reasi areas through rail links. The bridge will stand at a height of 331 metres above the river bed – higher than the Eiffel Tower in Paris. The total length of the bridge is 473.25 metres and it is supported by 96 cables.
- The Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla rail link is deemed to be one of the most difficult projects undertaken in the Indian subcontinent. The bridge has been designed to withstand storms and strong winds. Given the complex geology of the high-altitude region, constructing the bridge is very challenging. The Railways has divided the 272-km rail link into three subsections.

#### **48th Khajuraho Dance Festival begins in Madhya Pradesh**

- Madhya Pradesh Governor, Mangu Bhai Patel has inaugurated the 48th 'Khajuraho Dance Festival-2022' at world-famous tourist destination Khajuraho on the occasion of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav'. The event will be organized till 26 February. This year a 5-km 'Dil Khel Ke Ghoomo' marathon was also organized under the banner of 'Safe Tourism Project for Women' at the event. It aims to create a sense of security among women in tourist destinations with the slogan 'Hindustan Ke Dil Mein Aap Safe Hain'.
- This dance festival is being organized with the joint effort of Ustad Alauddin Khan Sangeet and Kala Akademi Madhya Pradesh Sanskriti Parishad of Culture Department, Madhya



Pradesh Tourism Board, Archaeological Survey of India and District Administration Chhatarpur. It is the topmost festival of the country focusing on Indian classical dance forms, and is well known nationally and internationally.

- Ambassadors and High Commissioners of 8 countries attended the family function to witness the performances of the 48th Khajuraho Dance Festival. These include ambassadors and high commissioners from Korea, Argentina, Vietnam, Brunei, Finland, Malaysia, Thailand and Lao.

#### **India's first Biosafety level-3 mobile lab launched in Nashik**

- Union Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare, Bharati Pravin Pawar has inaugurated India's first Biosafety level-3 containment mobile laboratory in Nashik, Maharashtra. The mobile laboratory will help to investigate newly emerging and re-emerging viral infections, by specially trained scientists from ICMR. The newly launched lab will be able to access remote and forested areas of the country, to investigate outbreaks using samples from humans and animal sources.
- Union Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare Bharati Pravin Pawar inaugurated the laboratory and said that the Biosafety Level-3 mobile laboratory is a significant value addition to the government's efforts to strengthen healthcare infrastructure through the Pradhan Mantri Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission.

#### **Himachal Pradesh gets 1st Biodiversity Park at Mandi's Bhulah valley**

- Himachal Pradesh gets the first biodiversity park to make its contribution towards the conservation of endangered Himalayan herbs. This park is set to come up at Mandi's Bhulah valley. With the cost of Rs 1 crore, the biodiversity park is set up under the National Mission on Himalayan Studies (NMHS) by HP's forest department. The aim of the park is to link tourism activities along with extending new opportunities for researchers to conduct in-depth exploration of various medicinal herbs found in the Himalayas that are on the verge of extinction.
- Biological diversity is a precious resource intended for the continued existence of mankind, and hence, conserving biodiversity is concerned with restoring the equilibrium between humans & the atmosphere.

#### **GoI, World GOI Signed USD 115 million loan agreement for REWARD Project**

- The Government of India, the State Governments of Karnataka and Odisha and the World Bank have signed a \$115 million (INR 869 crore) Rejuvenating Watersheds for Agricultural Resilience through Innovative Development (REWARD) Programme. This programme will help national and state institutions adopt improved watershed management practices to help increase farmers' resilience to climate change, promote higher productivity and better incomes.

#### **Delhi Police introduces app for 'Smart Card Arms License', becomes first in country to do so**

- Union Home Minister Amit Shah has launched the 'Smart Card Arms License' and 'Shastra App' of the Delhi Police, on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the Delhi Police. In order



to provide techno-friendly digital services to the citizens of the national capital. According to Delhi Police, the smart card, with inherent security features, is easy to carry and handle. The card will be printed in-house after verification of data of the arms license holders.

- The Delhi Police Licensing Unit has introduced 'Smart Card Arms License', to replace the existing bulky arms license booklet. With this Delhi Police has become the first police force in the country to introduce such a smart card service.
- The Smart Card Arms License is easy to carry with inherent security features. It will be printed in the house after verification of data of arms license holders.

### **Career Counselling Workshop 'Pramarsh 2022'**

- Minister of State for Culture & Parliamentary Affairs, Arjun Ram Meghwal has launched 'Pramarsh 2022', a mega career counselling workshop, for the students of the Bikaner District region in Rajasthan. More than one lakh students from thousands of private & government schools of Bikaner district and mainly from rural areas participated in this workshop. It is the first such incidence in India that more than 1 lakh students participated in Career Counselling in one Workshop.
- The "Pramarsh 2022" workshop is an extension of the effort to bridge the industry-academia gap and impart the knowledge about various choices available to the student, to help them make a more informed decision.
- The Workshop was organised jointly by The National Institute of Career Services (NICS), under the Ministry of Labour & Employment and Bengaluru-based educational start-up Edumilestones, with support from the Directorate of Education, Rajasthan.

### **Water taxi services between Mumbai and Belapur flagged off**

- Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways & AYUSH, Sarbananda Sonowal virtually flagged off the 'Most Awaited' Water Taxi for citizens of Mumbai, Maharashtra. The Water Taxi services will commence from the Domestic Cruise Terminal (DCT) and will also connect nearby locations at Nerul, Belapur, Elephanta island and JNPT. The service promises a comfortable, stress-free journey, is time-saving and promotes eco-friendly transport."
- The Ministry also informed that the newly constructed Belapur jetty, built at a cost of Rs. 8.37 crore was funded in the 50-50 model under the Sagarmala scheme of the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways. "The new jetty will enable movement of vessels to locations like Bhaucha Dhakka, Mandwa, Elephanta and Karanja.

### **Caravan tourism kick-starts in Kerala with first park in Vagamon**

- Kerala's first Caravan park is all set to come up in Vagamon, a scenic hill station located in the Idukki district. The park, as part of the state governments new Caravan Tourism policy, would be thrown open to travellers. Caravan Tourism was introduced by the state Tourism department as a safe means for holidaying at a time when people are unable to step out or travel due to the outbreak of COVID-19.
- To meet the rising demands and preferences of tourists in the post-pandemic world, Kerala had announced a comprehensive, stakeholder-friendly Caravan Tourism Policy, promising the visitors safe, customized and closest-to-nature travel experience. Under the initiative,



there will be two types of caravans. In one model, two guests shall be accommodated, while the other is for a family of four, department sources said.

### India's Largest Career Counselling Project Paramarsh Launched In Bikaner

- Minister of State for Culture & Parliamentary Affairs, Arjun Ram Meghwal has launched 'Paramarsh 2022', a mega career counselling workshop, for the students of the Bikaner District region in Rajasthan. More than one lakh students from thousands of private & government schools of Bikaner district and mainly from rural areas participated in this workshop. It is the first such incidence in India that more than 1 lakh students participated in Career Counselling in one Workshop.
- The "Paramarsh 2022" workshop is an extension of the effort to bridge the industry-academia gap and impart the knowledge about various choices available to the student, to help them make a more informed decision.
- The Workshop was organised jointly by The National Institute of Career Services (NICS), under the Ministry of Labour & Employment and Bengaluru-based educational start-up Edumilestones, with support from the Directorate of Education, Rajasthan.

### Kunsnyom Scheme Launched By LAHDC

- Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC), Leh has launched Kunsnyoms scheme for differently-abled persons. Kunsnyoms meant Equal for All, Fair for All, aims inclusive and accessible Ladakh. Under the new scheme, Leh Hill council is providing assistive devices, technologies to needy people at 90 per cent subsidy.
- Launching the new scheme, LAHDC Leh Chief Executive Councillor and Chairman, Mr Tashi Gyalson and his executive councillors have handed over 28 tri scooters, battery-run wheelchairs, walking aids and other aids required for the special needs of the individuals. After becoming Union Territory, financially empowered with sufficient allocations of budget, the Hill Councils in Ladakh are utilizing the funds for welfare schemes.

### 54 apps of Chinese origin banned in India

- The government of India has banned 54 apps of Chinese origin citing security concerns. The apps include Sea Ltd.'s marquee game Free Fire and other apps related to tech firms like Tencent, Alibaba and NetEase. The apps were banned by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology are re-branded versions of apps banned by India in 2020. Free Fire is often compared with PUBG. It is among the world's most popular mobile games.
- Under Section 69A of the Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000 provides government power to issue directions for blocking public access of any information through any computer resource. This section allows the government to block websites.

### Social Justice and Empowerment Ministry to launch a Scheme for Economic Empowerment of DNTs (SEED)

- Union Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment, Dr Virendra Kumar has launched a central sector scheme named the Scheme for Economic Empowerment for DNTs, (SEED) at Dr Ambedkar International Centre, New Delhi. The total financial outlay for SEED Scheme is



approximately Rs 200 crore to be spent over a period of 5 years starting Financial Year 2021-22 to 2025-26.

- The objective of SEED is the welfare of De-notified, Nomadic and Semi Nomadic tribal Communities (DNT/NT/SNT), which are the most neglected, marginalized and economically and socially deprived communities.

### **Dabur Becomes India's First 'Plastic Waste Neutral' FMCG Company, Recycles 100% Plastic Sold As Product Packaging**

- Dabur India has become the first Indian consumer goods company to become completely plastic waste neutral. It has done this by collecting, processing and recycling around 27,000 metric tonnes of post-consumer plastic waste during FY21-22. Dabur has achieved the landmark of surpassing its plastic packaging usage with recycling. Dabur's Plastic Waste Management initiative was launched in 2017-18 as part of the Plastic Waste Management (PWM) Rule.
- Dabur has also announced the beginning of a new 'Save the Environment' campaign in Himachal Pradesh to raise community awareness about how to manage home plastic waste. They have also been working with school children in towns and villages as part of this commitment, educating them about different forms of garbage and the benefits of sorting them at the source. They have been assisting government schools by providing waste bins, sanitary facilities, and IEC (Information, Education, and Communication) materials.

### **Jaisalmer Desert Festival , Desert Fair Festival 2022**

- The renowned Jaisalmer Desert Festival, also known as Maru Mahotsav of the Golden City started from 13 to 16 February 2022 at Pokaran village in Jaisalmer, Rajasthan. It is a four-day-long annual event started with a colorful grand procession followed by Miss Pokaran and Mister Pokran competitions. Regional folk dances such as Kalbelia, Kachhi Ghodi, Gair will be performed.
- Rajasthan Minority Affairs Minister, Shale Mohammad flagged off the event. The festival is celebrated amidst the beautiful dunes of the Thar Desert in the Sam dunes (42 kilometres from Jaisalmer).

### **Ministry of Tribal Affairs helps rekindle Telangana's State Festival of Medaram Jathara with added vigour**

- The Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India, has sanctioned Rs. 2.26 Crores for Medaram Jathara 2022 Festival in Telangana. In 2022, the festival is being held from February 16 to 19, 2022. Medaram Jathara is the second-largest fair in India, after the Kumbh Mela. Medaram Jathara is conducted in honour of the Goddesses Sammakka and Saramma. It was declared a State Festival in 1998.
- The four-day tribal festival is celebrated once in two years in the month of "Magha" (February) on the full moon day, in Medaram Village of Mulugu district in Telangana. The festival is organised by the second-largest Tribal Community of Telangana, the Koya tribe, in collaboration with the Tribal Welfare Department, Government of Telangana.



## **Indian FM Sitharaman launches first colour souvenir coin on 'Panchtantra'**

- Finance Minister, Nirmala Sitharaman has launched the first colour souvenir coin on 'Panchtantra' on the occasion of the 17th foundation day of Security Printing and Minting Corporation of India Limited (SPMCIL). The finance minister in her address stressed on upskilling and acquiring new skills, and up-gradation to meet the technology-driven economy. Further, she emphasized on ramping up the quality of products and to brand SPMCIL as lead producers of currency and other sovereign products.

## **Governor Manoj Sinha launches QR code-based mechanism for certification, labelling of handmade carpets of J&K**

- Jammu and Kashmir lieutenant governor, Manoj Sinha has launched a QR code-based mechanism for certification and labelling of handmade carpets of the union territory. With the QR-based application, which is the first of its kind in the country, customers can check and verify the authenticity and other requisite details of carpets produced in Jammu and Kashmir, read an official statement from the administration. Manoj Sinha also felicitated UT's awardees of Handicrafts & Handloom. J&K Handicrafts are repositories of India's creative traditions that are serving as a cultural expression.
- The Jammu and Kashmir government has introduced Export Incentive Scheme. Under this scheme, the incentive of 10 per cent of the total volume of GI certified Handicrafts and Handloom products exported to any country, with a maximum reimbursement of up to Rs 5 crores, shall be provided to eligible exporters registered with the Department of Handicrafts and Handloom.

## **Indore's Central Jail gets its own FM radio channel 'Jail Vaani'**

- In Madhya Pradesh, the Central Jail of Indore has started its own radio channel 'Jail Vaani-FM 18.77'. Through this radio channel, the jail inmates will get to know about the happening in the world. The radio channel will also provide the jail inmates with information on health and social issues.
- The radio station will act as a medium for prisoners to tell their own stories and also to share their experiences. The aim is to inform jail inmates about what is happening across the world. Jails with such innovative measures adopted for the reform of prisoners will certainly act as correctional institutions.

## **Centre approves continuation of police modernisation scheme for 5 yrs with Rs 26,275 crore**

- The Government has approved the continuation of the Scheme of Modernization of State Police Forces (MPF Scheme) for five years from 2021-22 to 2025-26. Total Central financial outlay for five years is Rs. 26,275 crores. The scheme is being implemented by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) since 1969-70.
- The objective of the scheme is to gradually reduce the dependence of the State Governments on the Army and the Central Armed Police Forces to control internal security and law and order situations by equipping the State Police Forces adequately and strengthening their training infrastructure.



- The focus of the scheme is to build cutting edge level police infrastructure by the construction of secure police stations, training centres, police housing (residential), equipping the police stations with the required mobility, modern weaponry, communication equipment and forensic set-up etc.

#### **17th Mumbai International Film Festival to be held from May 29-June 5**

- The 17th edition of the Mumbai International Film Festival for Documentary, Short Fiction and Animation films (MIFF-2022) is scheduled to take place from 29 May to 4 June, 2022 at the Films Division complex, Mumbai. Those films which were completed between September 1, 2019, and December 31, 2021, are eligible. The best documentary of the festival will receive a Golden Conch and 10 lakh in a cash award. As India is celebrating Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav, the current edition has instituted a special award for the best short film on the theme India@75.
- The programme is organized by the Films Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting since 1990, with support from the Government of Maharashtra, and focuses on documentary, short fiction and animation films. It is the oldest and largest festival for non-feature films in South Asia.

#### **Union Minister Nitin Gadkari inaugurates 14.5 km long rail-cum-road-bridge over Ganga river at Munger in Bihar**

- The Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari and Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar jointly inaugurated the 14.5-kilometre long 'Rail-cum-Road-Bridge' in Bihar. The much-awaited bridge is constructed over the River Ganga on NH 333B in Bihar's Munger region. The cost of the 'Rail-cum-Road-Bridge' project is Rs 696 crore. The new bridge will reduce travel time, give a boost to tourism, agriculture as well as generate employment opportunities.
- One of Bihar's major tourist and pilgrimage sites, the city of Munger is well known for its rich ancient history, culture, education and commerce. With the construction of this Rail-cum-Road-Bridge, the distance from Munger to Khagaria will be less than 100 kilometres and also, the distance from Munger to Begusarai will be less than 20 kilometres.

#### **President Ram Nath Kovind inaugurates politically significant Durbar Hall at Raj Bhavan**

- President of India, Ram Nath Kovind has inaugurated the Durbar Hall at Raj Bhavan, situated at Malabar Hill, Mumbai. While retaining the heritage features of the old court hall, the new hall has been given additional features such as a balcony and a sea view gallery. Durbar Hall has political importance as it has been associated with oath-taking ceremonies of the Governors, chief ministers of the state.
- Earlier, the inauguration of Durbar Hall was scheduled on December 8, 2021, but it was postponed due to the sudden demise of General Bipin Rawat, chief of defence staff in a helicopter crash.



#### **Army holds 1st hackathon to boost cyber warfare**

- Indian army has conducted a first-of-its-kind Hackathon named “Sainya Ranakshetram”. The hackathon was conducted in the Military College of Telecommunication Engineering (MCTE), Mhow under the overall guidance of the Shimla-based Army Training Command (ARTRAC), one of the seven commands of the Indian Army.
- The event was conducted from 01 October 2021 to 31 December 2021 under the name of “Sainya Ranakshetram”, in collaboration with the Rashtriya Raksha University.
- The virtual event witnessed the participation of over 15,000 participants and comprised a number of challenges based on Secure Coding, Software Defined Radio exploitation and Cyber Offensive skills. Further, the main highlights of the event included participants competing with each other in cyberspace against simulated threats.
- Additionally, the event also hosted a plethora of training sessions and sessions by experts for the participants. Cyber enthusiasts from across India were the cynosure in the entire event.

#### **Maharashtra's Health Minister announces "Hope Express" will be launched to prevent cancer**

- Maharashtra's Health Minister, Rajesh Tope has announced that “Hope Express” will be launched in the state to prevent cancer. This is the first such machine in India. He was speaking at the launch of a state-of-the-art Mosaic-3D radiation machine at a private hospital in Kolhapur. The State Health Minister also promised to take initiative to start Hope Express in every district of the state through district planning.
- The State Health Minister also promised to take initiative to start Hope Express in every district of the state through district planning. He also inaugurated the Oncoprime Cancer Center online at the Hattarki Hospital in Gadchिंगलज. The centre will benefit patients in rural areas.

#### **NABARD launches JIVA to promote natural**

- National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) has launched the ‘JIVA programme’ to promote natural farming under its existing watershed and wadi programmes in 11 states. To effectively implement the principles of agroecology long-term sustainability and transform the pre-existing social and natural capital towards efficient farming.
- JIVA is an agroecology-based programme, an amalgamation of several projects under the watershed programme of NABARD and will be implemented in 11 states covering five agroecological zones, which are in ecologically fragile and rain-fed areas.

#### **IAF to show off 'Made in India' Tejas fighter jets at Singapore Air Show 2022**

- The 44-member contingents of the Indian Air Force (IAF) has reached the Changi International Airport in Singapore on February 12, 2022, to participate in the ‘Singapore Air Show-2022’, which is scheduled to be held from February 15 to 18, 2022. Singapore Air Show is a biennial event that provides a platform for the Global Aviation Industry to showcase its products.



- The IAF will showcase its indigenous Tejas MK-I ac during the event. It will also interact with counterparts from RSAF (Royal Singapore Air Force) & other participating contingents.
- The Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas will display low-level aerobatics to showcase its superior handling characteristics and manoeuvrability.

### **SMILE Scheme 2022 for Transgenders & Beggars Rehabilitation**

- The Union Minister for Social Justice & Empowerment, Dr Virendra Kumar has launched the Central Sector scheme titled “SMILE”. SMILE stands for Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise. The new umbrella scheme aims to provide welfare measures to the Transgender community and the people engaged in the act of begging. The scheme will give the necessary legal protection, social security and a promise to a secured life to the targeted group. The Ministry has allocated Rs. 365 crore for the scheme for five years from 2021-22 to 2025-26.

### **Government Approves to continued RYSK Scheme for another 5 years**

- The Central Government of India has decided to continue the scheme of “Rashtriya Yuva Sashaktikaran Karyakram (RYSK)” for another 5 years from 2021 -22 to 2025-26 with an outlay of Rs. 2,710.65 crore. To develop the personality and leadership qualities of the youth and to engage them in nation-building activities. Beneficiaries of this scheme are the youth in the age group of 15 to 29 years (according to the definition of ‘youth’ in the National Youth Policy, 2014).

### **India to assist Sri Lanka launch its model of Aadhaar**

- India has agreed to provide a grant to Sri Lanka to implement a ‘Unitary Digital Identity framework’, apparently modelled on the Aadhaar card. The Rajapaksa government will “prioritise” the implementation of the Framework as a national-level programme. The initiative follows bilateral talks between President Gotabaya Rajapaksa & Prime Minister Narendra Modi in December 2019.
- It is expected to introduce a personal identity verification device based on biometric data, a digital tool that can represent the identities of individuals in cyberspace, and the identification of individual identities that can be accurately verified in digital and physical environments by combining the two devices.
- While India has confirmed support for Sri Lanka’s effort to transition to a digital identity system, there is no official information yet on the value of the grant, and whether it would include technological support or training. Queried on the specifics of the agreement, Colombo-based official sources said the terms of the agreement are “being worked out”.

### **Government inks MoU with British Council**

- The Government of Telangana and the British Council, an international organisation for educational opportunities and cultural exchange, have signed a 3-year MoU to renew the partnership in education, English and arts. To facilitate research between institutions and assist to expand higher education globally, to offer global opportunities for the youth of Telangana.



- Under the extended 3-year MoU, the British Council has also signed an agreement with the Research and Innovation Circle of Hyderabad (RICH) to work closely to engineer new partnerships between universities, research institutions and centres of excellence in the UK and in Telangana.

### **Indigenous & Ahead of Schedule: It Is Saksham**

- India's Goa Shipyard Ltd delivered the 5th and final vessel of the 5 Coast Guard Offshore Patrol Vehicle (CGOPV) Project ahead of contractual schedule. The vessel was named ICGS 'Saksham'. The point to be underlined- all 5 vessels have been delivered before time to the Indian Coast Guard. The contract for 5 CGOPVs was signed by GSL with the Ministry of Defence on 26 August 2016.
- All the five CGOPVs will be the most advanced patrol vessels in service with the coast guard. Also, the 2,400 tonnes vessels are fitted with additional features including quick response boats for rescue and anti-piracy and gunnery simulators. The hull is designed to provide fuel efficiency, crew comfort and enhanced sea keeping qualities. With computerised control systems, they are the most advanced patrol vessels in service with the Coast Guard. It has an indigenous content of about 70% and weighs around 2400 tonnes.

### **Power Minister Launches Powerthon-2022 for Enabling**

- Union Minister of Power, R K Singh has launched Powerthon-2022, a hackathon competition to find technology-driven solutions to solve the complex problems in power distribution and to ensure quality and reliable power supply. The competition will bring together qualified mentors with TSPs, innovators, and other participants to create teams for efficient electricity networks. He also encouraged technologists to come forward not only with solutions to existing problems but also with other problem statements and ideas for reliable power supply.
- Technology Solution Providers (TSPs), start-ups, educational institutions, research institutes, equipment manufacturers, state power utilities and other state and central power sector entities, shall be briefed on the current challenges/ problem statements faced across the power distribution sector and invited to showcase their technology-driven solutions to solve the complex problems.
- The hackathon will task participants to find innovative solutions based on advanced emerging technologies like artificial intelligence, machine learning, blockchain and the Internet of Things on nine themes that have been identified after various discussions with 14 discoms across nine states.

### **Union Minister Shares First Glimpse Of Surat's Bullet Train Station**

- The Mumbai-Ahmedabad bullet train project will be India's first bullet train route. While Surat city will get India's first bullet train station. National High-Speed Rail Corporation Ltd (NHSRCL) will be constructing this project that is scheduled to be completed by December 2024. The cost of the project is estimated to be more than Rs 1 lakh crore of which Rs 88,000 crores will be funded by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). Of the



508.17-kilometre Mumbai-Ahmedabad bullet train project, 155.76 km is in Maharashtra, 384.04 km in Gujarat and 4.3 km in Dadra and Nagar Haveli.

#### **UNEP signs MoU with Maharashtra govt for implementing climate change actions**

- The United Nation Environment Programme (UNEP) has signed an MoU with the Maharashtra government to support its 'Majhi Vasundhara' campaign. It is an initiative towards sustainable use of energy and environmental development. The literal meaning of 'Majhi Vasundhara' is 'My Earth'. It is an initiative of the Environment and Climate Change Department, Government of Maharashtra.
- 'Majhi Vasundhara' is an initiative of the Government of Maharashtra's Environment and Climate Change Department to empower citizens with knowledge on the impacts of climate change and environmental issues and to encourage them to make a conscious effort towards improvement of the environment. To empower citizens with knowledge on the impacts of climate change and environmental issues and to encourage them to make a conscious effort towards the improvement of the environment.

#### **Gujarat unveils new IT policy to generate 1 lakh direct jobs**

- Chief Minister of Gujarat, Bhupendra Patel has announced a new IT/ITeS policy for the next five years. This policy will provide financial incentives up to Rs 200 crore to the entities willing to incur capital expenditures. It will also generate employment of about 1 lakh youths. It also seeks to increase IT-ITeS exports from the current Rs 3000 crores annually to 25,000 crores over the next five years. Its operative period will start from the day of notification to 31st March 2027.
- The policy launched at a formal event at a club in GIFT City in Gandhinagar replaces the 2016-2021 policy that had set an ambitious target to increase exports up to USD two billion (Rs 13,000 crore), IT turnover to USD 15 billion (Rs 75,000 crore) and create 10 lakh direct jobs. The policy provides support for both capital (CAPEX) and operational (OPEX) expenditures. "This is a unique model that gives flexibility to industries to plan their expenditures and addresses the viability concerns.

#### **India's first biomass-based hydrogen plant coming up in MP**

- India's first commercial-scale biomass-based hydrogen plant will come up at the Khandwa district of Madhya Pradesh. Every day this plant will produce one tonne of hydrogen, from 30 tonnes of biomass feedstock. The plant is being put up by a joint venture of Watomo Energies Ltd and Biezel Green Energy with an investment of Rs 24 crore.
- The company owns the technology for a 'thermally accelerated anerobic digestion (TAD) reactor' that can produce hydrogen, methane and biochar from biomass. Biezel Green will own 50 per cent in the yet-to-be-named joint venture; the other 50 per cent will come from interested farmers.

#### **RPF has launched a nationwide "AAHT operation" to combat human trafficking**

- Indian Railway Protection Force has launched a nationwide operation to curb human trafficking. As part of "Operation AAHT", special teams will be deployed on all long-distance



trains/routes with a focus on rescuing victims, particularly women and children, from the clutches of traffickers. The Railways, which operate about 21,000 trains across the country daily, is the most reliable mode of transportation for the traffickers who often moved their victims on long-distance trains.

- The RPF that rescued more than 2,000 women and children between 2017-21 from the clutches of traffickers intensified the crackdown on human trafficking with the increasing number of cases. The National Crime Records Bureau registers about 2,200 cases of Human Trafficking cases on an average each year.

### Age-old Kanchoth festival celebrated in J&K's Baderwah

- The ancient festival of Kanchoth is annually celebrated, mainly by the Nag followers, during the Shukla Paksha of Magh month which usually falls in January or February. The festival is celebrated with religious fervour across the Chenab valley region of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K).
- The 3-day festival is celebrated by married women who pray for the long life of their husbands. Kanchoth or Gauri Tritiya is widely celebrated in hilly Kishtwar, Ramban and Doda of Jammu province. The festival is celebrated across Baderwah (also known as mini-Kashmir), Kotli, Mathola, Ghata, Khakhal, Gupt Ganga, Chinnot, Kapra, Bhalra, Bheja, Chinchora and other regions.

### PMKSY scheme extended till FY'26 with Rs 4600 crore outlay

- The 'Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana (PMKSY)' has been extended till March 2026 with an allocation of Rs 4,600 crore. The scheme is administered by the Ministry of Food Processing Industries. The scheme aims for the overall growth and development of the food processing sector. In May 2017, the Central Government had launched SAMPADA (Scheme for Agro-Marine Processing and Development of Agro-Processing Clusters) with an allocation of Rs 6,000 crore. The scheme was renamed as PMKSY in August 2017.
- The scheme will boost the growth of the food processing sector but also help in providing better prices to farmers and creating huge employment opportunities. PMKSY is an umbrella scheme incorporating ongoing schemes of the ministry like Integrated Cold Chain and Value Addition Infrastructure, Food Safety and Quality Assurance Infrastructure, Infrastructure for Agro-processing Clusters, Creation /Expansion of Food Processing and Preservation Capacities and Operation Greens.

### NITI Aayog, USAID to collaborate in healthcare

- Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog, and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) have announced a new partnership under the Sustainable Access to Markets and Resources for Innovative Delivery of Healthcare (SAMRIDH) initiative. It aims to improve access to affordable and quality healthcare for vulnerable populations in tier-2 and tier-3 cities, and rural and tribal regions. It aims to mobilize a capital pool of \$100+ million from the private sector and bilateral organizations. It leverages this fund to offer both grant and debt financing provision to support the expansion of market-based health solutions.



- AIM and SAMRIDH have announced a Call for Proposals for healthcare innovators and entrepreneurs in India. Through this initiative, they will focus on innovations across the healthcare landscape.
- This new partnership announced will enhance SAMRIDH's efforts to reach vulnerable populations, leveraging AIM's expertise in innovation and entrepreneurship.
- The collaboration would focus on innovations across the healthcare landscape with the common goal to mount an effective response to the ongoing third wave of C-19 and build health system preparedness for future infectious disease outbreaks and health emergencies.

#### **India becomes first country to administer DNA-based vaccine**

- India has become the first country in the world to administer a DNA vaccine against C-19. The ZyCoV-D which is the World's first plasmid DNA vaccine has been produced by Ahmedabad-based vaccine manufacturer Zydus Cadila and it was administered for the first time in Patna. It is a Painless and Needleless vaccine given at intervals of 28 days and 56 days. It is the second India-made vaccine to get emergency authorization in India after Bharat Biotech's Covaxin.
- The Indian government approved emergency use authorisation for Zydus Cadila's DNA vaccine earlier this year, citing initial results from Phase III clinical trials that showed approximately 66 per cent efficacy for symptomatic cases.

#### **C-19: Bengal starts open-air classroom 'Paray Shikshalaya'**

- West Bengal government has launched an open-air classroom programme Paray Shikshalaya (Neighbourhood Schools) for primary and pre-primary students. Under the 'Paray Shikshalaya' project, primary and pre-primary students of government schools will be taught in open spaces. The state government will also provide mid-day meals to the students of 'Paray Shikshalaya'. The para teachers and primary school teachers would be part of this project. They will provide elementary education to children of Class 1-5.

#### **KVIC cancels license of oldest Khadi Institution "Khadi Emporium" Mumbai**

- Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) has cancelled the "Khadi Certification" of its oldest Khadi Institution named Mumbai Khadi & Village Industries Association (MKVIA). This MKVIA was running the popular "Khadi Emporium" at Metropolitan Insurance House, Mumbai since 1954. KVIC has cancelled the license of MKVIA as the latter had started selling fake Khadi products, which was against the "zero-tolerance" policy of KVIC against the sale of spurious/non-Khadi products.
- The action came after KVIC found that the said Khadi Emporium at D.N. Road was selling non-Khadi products in the guise of genuine Khadi. During a routine inspection, KVIC officials collected samples from the Emporium that were found to be non-Khadi products.
- KVIC issued a legal notice to MKVIA for flouting the norms of the "Khadi Certificate" and "Khadi Mark Certificate" issued by the Commission. With the cancellation of the registration, Khadi Emporium ceases to be a genuine Khadi Outlet and is no longer permitted to sell Khadi products from the Emporium.



- KVIC is also contemplating legal action against the MKVIA for criminal breach of trust and cheating the public at large by misusing the credibility and popularity of brand Khadi.

#### **Narendra Modi inaugurated 50th Anniversary Celebrations of Hyderabad-based ICRISAT**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated the 50th Anniversary celebrations of the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) in Patancheru, Hyderabad. During the occasion, PM also inaugurated two research facilities of ICRISAT, which were Climate Change Research Facility on Plant Protection and Rapid Generation Advancement Facility.
- These two facilities are dedicated to the smallholder farmers of Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. Prime Minister also unveiled a specially designed logo of ICRISAT and launched a commemorative stamp issued on the occasion. Its objective is to conduct agricultural research for rural development, in Asia & sub-Saharan Africa.

#### **Indian diplomats to boycott Beijing Winter Olympics**

- The 2022 Winter Olympics has kicked off on February 04, 2022, in Beijing, China and will continue till February 20, 2022. The Opening Ceremony was held at Beijing's National Stadium, also known as the Bird's Nest. However, India had announced the diplomatic level boycott of the Beijing Winter Olympics opening and closing ceremony. This means that no Indian officials will attend the opening and closing ceremony. However, the country has sent one of its athletes, Arif Khan (skier), to attend the event.
- China has picked a Chinese soldier (Qi Fabao) as Olympic torchbearer, who was involved in the Galwan incident on June 15, 2020, which had resulted in the death of 20 Indian soldiers, including a Colonel.

#### **Republic Day parade: Uttar Pradesh wins best tableau award**

- The tableau of Uttar Pradesh has been picked as the best tableau among the 12 States/UTs which participated in the Republic Day parade on January 26, 2022. The theme of the tableau of Uttar Pradesh was 'One District One Product and Kashi Vishwanath Dham'. A total of 12 states and union territories had participated in the Republic Day parade on January 26. The second place went to Karnataka for its tableau based on 'cradle of traditional handicrafts' while the third position went to Meghalaya for its tableau based on 'Meghalaya's 50 years of Statehood and its tribute to women-led cooperative societies & SHGs'.
- Best marching contingent among three Services: Indian Navy
- Best marching contingent among CAPF/other auxiliary forces: Central Industrial Security Force (CISF)
- The tableaux of the ministry of education and the ministry of civil aviation have been declared as joint winners in the category of central ministries and departments. The theme of the tableau of the ministry of education and the ministry of skill development and entrepreneurship was 'National Education Policy. The tableau of the ministry of civil aviation was based on the theme 'Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik'.



### **PM Modi unveils 216-foot tall 'Statue of Equality' in Hyderabad commemorating Sri Ramanujacharya**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has dedicated to the nation 216-foot tall 'Statue of Equality' in Hyderabad to commemorate the 11th-century Bhakti saint Ramanujacharya. The statue has been conceptualised by Chinna Jeeyar Swami of Sri Ramanujacharya Ashram. The inauguration of the statue is a part of the 12-day Sri Ramanuja Sahasrabdi Samaroham, the ongoing 1000th birth anniversary celebrations of the Bhakti saint. A 3D presentation on the life and teachings of the saint will also be showcased during the event.
- The statue is made of 'panchaloha', a combination of five metals- gold, silver, copper, brass, and zinc. It is among one of the tallest metallic statues in sitting positions in the world.
- The 216-foot tall 'Statue of Equality' statue is mounted on a 54-foot high base building, called 'Bhadra Vedi'.
- The floors of the building are dedicated to a Vedic digital library and research centre, ancient Indian texts, a theatre, an educational gallery detailing works of Sri Ramanujacharya.

### **5th Scorpene submarine, 'Vagir', begins maiden sea trials**

- The Indian Navy's brand-new submarine, the fifth of the six French-designed Scorpene-class submarines named "Vagir", sailed out on its first sea sortie and will now undergo rigorous trials before it is delivered to the Navy later this year. The submarine-designated "Yard 11879" during its construction by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) in collaboration with the Naval Group of France will be named "Vagir" after it is commissioned into service.

### **US regains top spot as India's trade partner in 2021**

- The United States was India's top trading partner in the calendar year 2021 with a trade of \$112.3 billion. The US is followed by China on second. The value of trade between India and China was \$110.4 billion. In 2020, China was India's top trading partner and the US was in the second rank. In 2019 USA was India's top trading partner and China was on second.

### **Aravalli Biodiversity Park in Gurugram declared as India's first OECM site**

- The Aravalli Biodiversity Park in Gurugram, Haryana, has been declared as India's first "other effective area-based conservation measures" (OECM) site. This was informed by the Union ministry of environment, forest and climate change on the occasion of World Wetlands Day. The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) gives OECM tag to those areas that are not protected but support rich biodiversity. The tag designates the area as a biodiversity hotspot on the international map.
- OECM is a status for a place that has achieved effective in-situ conservation of biodiversity outside protected areas like forests. The park, which once was an abandoned mining pit, was transformed into a lush green forest patch in 10 years. Now, it has about 400 native species of plants.



## **Andhra Pradesh Social activists builds Gandhi Mandiram and Smruthi Vanam at Srikakulam**

- In Andhra Pradesh, a few social activists have built a temple for Mahatma Gandhi (Gandhi Mandiram) and Smruthi Vanam (memorial park) for our great freedom fighters' at the Municipal Park in Srikakulam.
- The statue of Mahatma Gandhi at Gandhi Mandiram along with the statues at Smruthi Vanam were unveiled on the eve of Gandhiji's death anniversary, on January 30, 2022 as a tribute to the Father of Nation and freedom fighters.
- The new initiative will inculcate patriotism among the youths by remembering the sacrifices of freedom fighters.
- The Gandhi temple has been built at an estimated cost of Rs 20 lakh with the help of donors

## **India's first geopark to be set up in Jabalpur district of Madhya Pradesh**

- India's first geological park is being set up at Lamheta village of Jabalpur district in Madhya Pradesh.
- The approval to set up the geopark has been granted by the Geological Survey of India (GSI).
- The estimated cost of setting up the project is Rs 35 crore.

## **Spituk Gustor Festival observed in Ladakh**

- The annual Spituk Gustor Festival was observed in Ladakh on January 30 and 31, 2022, to celebrate the culture and traditional heritage of the Union Territory.
- The term Gustor literally means 'Sacrifice' in the Tibetan language.
- The two-day festival is celebrated by various monasteries of the UT such as Thiksey, Spituk, Korzok and Karsha.
- The Spituk Gustor festival is marked by different kinds of rituals, ceremonies, music & Cham Dance.
- Cham Dance is a colourful mask dance performed by the monks of the Spituk monastery, located in Leh district, in their best robes depicting different deities.

## **Centre approves 9544 Cr grant to Jharkhand under Jal Jeevan Mission**

- 315 water supply schemes of Rs. 9,544 Crore approved under Jal Jeevan Mission for Jharkhand. These schemes will provide tap water supply to about 8 lakh rural households in 4,424 villages of the State.
- On 15th August 2019, at the time of launch of Jal Jeevan Mission, only 3.45 lakh (5.83%) rural homes in Jharkhand had tap water supply. In 28 months, despite C-19 pandemic and lockdown disruptions, the State has provided tap water connection to 6.73 lakh (11.38%) households. As on date, out of 59.23 lakh rural household in the State, 10.18 lakh (17.20%) are getting tap water supply in their homes.

## **UP's Jhansi Railway Station Gets A New Name, Called Veerangana Laxmibai Station**

- Yogi Adityanath, Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh has announced that the government of UP has renamed the Jhansi Railway Station, in Jhansi, UP as "Veerangana Laxmibai Railway



Station” after Rani Laxmibai. The announcement was made by UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. A notification to this effect has been issued by the UP government and the Railways has started preparations to implement the change. Earlier the Mughalsarai Railway station was renamed as Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya junction and the Faizabad Railway station as Ayodhya Cantt.

#### **Sikkim Governor renamed Jawaharlal Nehru Road as ‘Narendra Modi Marg’**

- Governor of Sikkim, Ganga Prasad, has named a new road Narendra Modi Marg. The Governor viewed the road under Kabi Lungchok from Kyongsala, 4th mile. This is an alternative to Jawahar Lal Nehru Marg. The National Monument at National Highway 310 was built by Border Roads Organization. It will be easier for Indian tourists to reach Nathula Border. The stretch, constructed by Border Roads Organisation, has reduced the distance between Gangtok and Tsomgo lake by 15 km.

#### **Union Budget 2022-23 is being presented by Union Finance Minister**

- Union Finance Minister, Nirmala Sitharaman is presenting the Union Budget 2022 for the 4th time in a row. She will be presenting the financial statements and tax proposals for the fiscal year 2022-23 (April 2022 to March 2023). A Made in India tablet has replaced the traditional ‘Bahi Khata’ as Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman leaves the Finance Ministry’s office to go to the Parliament to present the Budget.
- The Economic Survey 2021-22 was released on 31st January 2022 by the Chief Economic Advisor of India, V Anantha Nageswaran. The government sees the Indian economy growing at 8-8.5 per cent in the financial year 2022-23 (FY23).

##### **Key highlights of the Union Budget 2022-23:**

- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, while presenting the Budget, said that the country is expected to grow at 9.27 per cent.
- Two parallel tracks for the next 25 years: public investments in infrastructure and a budget that is inclusive and futuristic.
- PM Gati Shakti plans one of the four pillars of growth. 25,000 km of national highways to be built in 2022-23.
- 400 new-generation Vande Bharat trains with higher efficiency and better facilities for passengers will be developed in the next three years. Over 2,000 km of rail network to be brought under the indigenous world-class technology KAWACH, for safety and capacity augmentation.
- 7 focus areas: PM Gati Shakti, Inclusive Development, Productivity Enhancement, Sunrise Opportunities, Energy Transition, Climate Action and Financing of investments.

### **SPORTS**

#### **Ladakh Scouts Regimental Centre lifts Second LG Cup Ice Hockey Championship 2022**

- The finals of the 15th CEC Cup Men’s Ice Hockey Championship, 2022 were played between the teams of ITBP and Ladakh Scouts at the Ice Hockey Rink which is at NDS Sports Complex in Leh. It was a very competitive game and full effort was put in by both the teams, but



there's only one winner. The Ladakh Scouts won in the end and they lifted the 15th CEC Cup Men's Ice Hockey Championship 2022.

- Ladakh Lieutenant Governor RK Mathur has presented the trophies to the finalists in both men's and women's categories of this edition of LG Cup Ice Hockey Championship. Prizes were presented, and the chief guest praised the players and officials at the end. The tournament was organised by the Department of Youth Services and Sports in Leh in collaboration with the Leh-based "Ladakh Winter Sports Club."

### **RAFAEL NADAL WINS 15TH CONSECUTIVE MATCH IN 2022 TO CLAIM MEXICAN OPEN WIN OVER CAMERON NORRIE**

- In tennis, Rafael Nadal (Spain) beat British number one Cameron Norrie 6-4 6-4 to win the singles title of Mexican Open 2022 (also known as Acapulco title). This is the 91st ATP title of his career and the third title of the season. This is the fourth time that Rafael Nadal has won the Mexican Open title, after winning the previous ones in 2005, 2013 and 2020. Men's double title winners are Feliciano Lopez (Spain) and Stefanos Tsitsipas (Greece).

### **India secures 8 medals at Singapore Weightlifting**

- India concluded its campaign at the Singapore Weightlifting International 2022 with eight medals, including six golds and a silver and bronze each. Each of the eight Indian lifters who registered for Singapore International won medals and secured their spots at the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games, scheduled to be held in July-August. India now has total of 12 weightlifters qualified for the Commonwealth Games 2022 in Birmingham.

### **India's Sadia Tariq wins gold medal in Moscow Wushu Stars Championship**

- Indian Wushu player Sadia Tariq has won a gold medal in the junior tournament at the Moscow Wushu Stars Championship 2022. The 15-year-old Sadia Tariq hails from Srinagar in Jammu & Kashmir. The Wushu Stars Championship is being held in Moscow, Russia from February 22 to 28. From India, 38 players, including 23 junior and 15 senior participated in the championship.
- Earlier in the day, former Sports Minister and Athens Olympics medalist Rajyavardhan Rathore took to social media and laud the gold-winning effort from Sadia. Prime Minister Narendra Modi also took to social media to wish the young Wushu champion.

### **At 16, India's big chess hope scales first peak, beats his own hero and World No 1 Magnus Carlsen**

- India's teen chess Grandmaster, Rameshbabu Pragganandhaa has created history as he defeated world number one chess champion, Magnus Carlsen, of Norway in an online chess tournament. The Airthings Masters is the first of the nine events of the 2022 Meltwater Champions Chess Tour, being held from February to November 2022.
- The 16-year-old Pragg achieved the feat in the eighth round of the Airthings Masters, an online rapid chess tournament, in 39 moves with black pieces. Pragg is also only the third Indian grandmaster to win against Magnus Carlsen apart from Viswanathan Anand and Pentala Harikrishna.



### **Beijing 2022 concludes, passes Winter Olympics to Milano-Cortina 2026**

- The closing ceremony of the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympic Games was held on February 20, 2022, at National Stadium (known as the Bird's Nest) in Beijing. The 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing, China, was held from 4 to 20 February 2022. The Games featured a record 109 events across 15 disciplines in 7 sports. The venues of the Games were distributed across three zones- Beijing, Yanqing and Zhangjiakou. The Presidency of the Games was formally handed over to Milan and Cortina d'Ampezzo, in Italy, to host the 2026 Winter Olympics.
- Norway has topped the medal table for the second successive Winter Olympics, winning a total of 37 medals, including 16 golds. This is a new record for the most amount of gold medals won at a single Winter Olympics.
- Germany finished second with 27 medals overall, while the host nation China finished third with 15 medals.

### **70th Senior National Volleyball Championship: Haryana Men's**

- Haryana team defeated the Indian Railway 3-0, to win the Men's title in Senior National Volleyball Championship 2021-22. Similarly, in the women's category, the Kerala team defeated the Indian Railway 3-1, to lift the trophy. The 70th Senior National Volleyball (Men & Women) Championship 2021-22 was held at the Biju Patnaik Indoor Stadium, KIIT Deemed to be University, Bhubaneswar.
- Achyuta Samanta, Founder of KIIT (Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology) & KISS (Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences) attended the event and handed over the trophies to the winners.

### **Club World Cup: Champions League holders Chelsea become eighth European winners**

- English club, Chelsea has defeated Brazilian club Palmeiras, 2-1, to win the 2021 FIFA Club World Cup final. Chelsea has won the FIFA Club World Cup for the first time. The decisive goal was scored by Kai Havertz with 3 minutes of extra time to go. Kai Havertz' nerveless 117th-minute penalty settled a gruelling Club World Cup final. The final was held at Mohammed bin Zayed Stadium, Abu Dhabi.
- Chelsea completed a full house of major trophies since Roman Abramovich took over the club in 2003: Champions League, Europa League, Super Cup, Premier League, FA Cup, League Cup and Community Shield.
- Chelsea became the third English team to win the Club World Cup after Manchester United and Liverpool.

### **South Africa's Keegan Petersen, England's Heather Knight ICC Players Of The Month For January**

- South Africa's Test sensation Keegan Petersen and England women's team captain Heather Knight were voted ICC Players of the Month for January 2022. In the men's category, South African batter Keegan Petersen was a sensation during the home Test series against India. He ended the series as the highest run-scorer with 276 runs and was named the Player of the Series.
- For the women's award, England skipper Knight beat off competition from Sri Lanka captain Chamari Athapaththu and West Indies star Deandra Dottin to be named ICC Player of the



Month for January 2022. Knight captained England in the one-off Ashes Test against Australia in Canberra and finished as the highest run-getter.

### **ESPNcricinfo awards 2021: Rishabh Pant wins 'Test Batting Award', Kane Williamson is 'Captain of Year'**

- In the 15th Edition of ESPNcricinfo Awards, India's wicketkeeper-batsman, Rishabh Pant wins the 'Test Batting' award by scoring 89 not out, helped India to win the Border Gavaskar Trophy 2021 by (2-1) and shattered Australia's unbeaten record at Gabba after 32 years. Rishabh Pant was the top scorer of the series for the Indian team, scoring (274 runs).
- New Zealand skipper Kane Williamson was adjudged 'Captain of the Year'.
- The Test bowling award went to Kyle Jamieson (New Zealand) for his 5 wickets leaving just 31 runs, which helped New Zealand in becoming the first World Test champions (2019-2021).
- England fast bowler Ollie Robinson was named Debutant of the Year.
- Saqib Mahmood's 4 for 42 in a nine-wicket win over Pakistan got him the top ODI bowling prize.
- Jos Buttler won the T20I batting award.
- The ODI batting and T20I bowling awards went to Pakistan. Fakhar Zaman won the top batting prize. Shaheen Afridi won the T20I bowling award for his annihilation of India in the 10-wicket win for Pakistan at the T20 World Cup.

### **Gujarat Titans unveiled as name for new Ahmedabad franchise**

- Gujarat Titans is the official name of the new Ahmedabad franchise owned by CVC Capital as Hardik Pandya is all set to lead the franchise in the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2022. The naming of the Ahmedabad franchise comes days after Lucknow, owned by RPSG Group, announced its official name as Lucknow Super Giants. The Lucknow team will be led by KL Rahul.
- Debuting in the 15th season of the IPL, the Gujarat Titans will pay tribute to the state's rich cricketing legacy, which has seen it produce countless Indian international cricket legends over the years.
- The franchise is inspired by the opportunity to represent and build on this deep cricketing heritage, as well as build on its future success on the pitch.
- Gujarat Titans drafted in Hardik Pandya as their captain for Rs 15 crore and Afghanistan leg-spinner Rashid Khan for Rs 15 crore. They also got young India opener, Shubman Gill, for Rs 8 crore.

### **AFCN 2022: Senegal beat Egypt in penalty shoot-out to win maiden title**

- Senegal has defeated Egypt in the Africa Cup of Nations championship winning the continental championship for the first time on penalty kicks at Olembe Stadium in Yaoundé, Cameroon. Sadio Mane scored the winning spot-kick as Senegal claimed a first-ever Africa Cup of Nations title with a 4-2 penalty shootout victory over seven-time winners Egypt. The final had ended 0-0 after extra time.



- Senegal had lost two finals previously, including at the last African Cup in Egypt in 2019, when Mané was left inconsolable. This time he delivered the winning moment.

#### **AFC Asian Cup: China makes stunning revival to beat S. Korea, wins 9th title**

- China PR (People's Republic) defeated South Korea (Korea Republic), 3-2, to win the AFC Women's Asian Cup India 2022 final title at the D.Y. Patil Stadium in Navi Mumbai. This is the record-extending 9th AFC Women's Asian Cup title won by China. India is hosting the 20th edition of the football AFC Women's Asian Cup India 2022 from January 20, 2022, to February 06, 2022. China now qualifying for the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup to be held in Australia and New Zealand.

#### **Suranga Lakmal Signs Two-Year Deal With Derbyshire After Announcing Retirement From International Cricket**

- Veteran Sri Lankan fast bowler Suranga Lakmal has announced to retire from international cricket, after Sri Lanka's upcoming tour of India. The 34-year-old right-arm fast bowler and right-handed batsman aim to join the English county club Derbyshire after retirement. The Derbyshire County Cricket Club has signed up Lakmal on a two-year contract. Lakmal has represented Sri Lanka in 165 international matches across formats, in his international career spanning over 12 years.

#### **International Olympic Committee approves three urban sports for 2028 Los Angeles Olympics**

- International Olympic Committee (IOC) has approved a proposal to include Surfing, Skateboarding and Sport Climbing for the 2028 Summer Olympics Games that will be organized in Los Angeles, United States. The 2028 Summer Olympics are officially known as the Games of the XXXIV Olympiad, or Los Angeles 2028 is a forthcoming event scheduled to take place from July 21 – August 6, 2028, in Los Angeles, California, US.
- The 2024 Summer Olympics Games will be organized in Paris, France. With this Paris becomes only the second city to host 3 Summer Olympic games. Surfing, Skateboarding and Sport Climbing had made their Olympic debut in Tokyo Olympics 2021 and will also be included in the "additional" list for Paris in 2024. Boxing, weightlifting and modern pentathlon also have the chance to be included in upcoming Olympics games.

#### **Foundation stone for World's third-largest cricket stadium laid in Jaipur**

- Rajasthan Chief Minister, Ashok Gehlot and BCCI President Sourav Ganguly laid the foundation stone of the world's third-largest cricket stadium in Jaipur. The International Cricket Stadium in Jaipur will be the second-largest cricket stadium in India and the third-largest in the world. The new international stadium will be built by the Rajasthan Cricket Academy (RCA) on the Jaipur-Delhi bypass, over 100 acres of land in Jaipur. The stadium will have a seating capacity of 75,000 spectators.
- Currently, Narendra Modi Stadium (former Motera Stadium) in Ahmedabad is the world's largest stadium with a capacity of 132,000 spectators.
- The second-largest stadium is Australia's Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) which has a capacity of 1,00,024 spectators.



#### **U19 World Cup 2022 Final: India Beat England In Final To Win 5th Title**

- India defeated England by four wickets to clinch a record-extending fifth title at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium, Antigua. India added the fifth title to their collection, having previously won the trophy in 2000, 2008, 2012, 2018. Yash Dhull becomes the fifth Indian captain to win the title after Mohammad Kaif, Virat Kohli, Unmukt Chand and Prithvi Shaw. Earlier, England opted to bat after winning the toss but they were shot out by India for 189 in 44.5 overs. India chases down the target of 190 with 2.2 overs to spare.
- India's Raj Angad Bawa was announced Player of the Match of the ICC Under19 World Cup 2022 Final between India and England. The Indian all-rounder picked 5/31, the best bowling figures for any final in the history of the championship and also scored crucial 35 runs with the bat to help his team in its 4 wicket win.
- South Africa's Dewald Brevis who broke all records to score 506 runs in only six innings, the most for any batter in any Under19 World Cup ever, was named Player of the Series for his record-breaking showing.

#### **New Zealand's All rounder cricketer Daryl Mitchell named the ICC Spirit of Cricket Award 2021**

- New Zealand cricketer, Daryl Mitchell has been named the winner of the International Cricket Council (ICC) Spirit of Cricket Award 2021. This award is given to him for his gesture of refusing to take a single in the high-pressure 2021 ICC Men's T20 World Cup Semi-Finals against England as he felt he had "obstructed" the way of bowler Adil Rashid at the Sheikh Zayed Stadium in Abu Dhabi. He has become the 4th New Zealand player to win the award after Daniel Vettori, Brendon McCullum and Kane Williamson.
- The ICC Spirit of Cricket Award is annually awarded by the ICC to recognise the player most notable for "upholding the 'Spirit of the Game'".

#### **Neeraj Chopra nominated for Laureus World Breakthrough of the Year Award 2022**

- Tokyo Olympics gold medallist, Neeraj Chopra has been nominated for the prestigious 2022 Laureus World Breakthrough of the Year Award. The other 5 nominees are Daniil Medvedev (Australian Open runner-up), Emma Raducanu (British tennis star), Pedri (Barcelona and Spain footballer), Yulimar Rojas (Venezuelan athlete) and Ariarne Titmus (Australian swimmer). The winners will be revealed in April following a vote by the Laureus World Sports Academy, made up of 71 sporting greats.

#### **Chennai Super Kings Becomes India's First Unicorn Sports Enterprise; Surpasses Market Cap of Parent Entity**

- Chennai Super Kings (CSK), has become the country's first sports Unicorn with its market cap having touched a high of Rs 7,600 crores and its share in the grey market trading in the Rs 210-225 price band. The Mahendra Singh Dhoni-led CSK, which won its fourth IPL title in Dubai last year, now has a market cap more than its parent entity, India Cements. India Cements' market cap stood at Rs 6,869 crores.



- Two key reasons which have led CSK's market cap to go past its parent entity are the team winning its fourth IPL title in Dubai, and two new franchises being added to the upcoming season at record prices.

### **PR Sreejesh becomes first Indian man to win World Games Athlete of the Year Award**

- Indian men's hockey player PR Sreejesh has won the World Games Athlete of the Year award for 2021. He is the second Indian after Rani Rampal to win this award. In 2020, Indian women's hockey captain Rani Rampal became the first Indian to win the honour for her performances in 2019.
- A total of 24 athletes from 17 countries were nominated for the annual awards based on individual or team performance. Alberto Ginés López of Spain and wushu player Michele Giordano of Italy are the runner-ups. In the FIH Stars Awards in October, Sreejesh was named the goalkeeper of the year for 2021.

### **Argentina won 6th Pan Am Women Cup Hockey Championship, beat Chile 4-2**

- Argentina defeated Chile, 4-2 to win its 6th women's field hockey championship title at the 2022 Women's Pan American Cup. The Women's Pan American Cup is the quadrennial international championship of the Americas organized by the Pan American Hockey Federation.
- The 2022 Women's Pan Am Cup was the sixth edition of the championship. It was held from January 19 to 29, 2022 in Santiago, Chile. With this win both Argentina and Chile have sealed automatic qualification spots at the FIH Hockey Women's World Cup, Spain and Netherlands 2022.

## **SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

### **C-19 Vaccine: Corbevax gets DCGI nod for emergency use in 12-18 year olds**

- The Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) has approved the Corona Vaccine Biologicals E Ltd's Corbevax for children in the age group of 12 to 18 years. Hyderabad-based pharmaceutical company Biological E Ltd said its coronavirus vaccine Corbevax, is also India's third homegrown vaccine. Bharat Biotech's Covaxin is being given to children aged 15 to 18 years from January 3.
- Corbevax is called a protein subunit and currently, we have an example of the hepatitis B vaccine which is also similarly a protein subunit vaccine. Corbevax and the other vaccine in India, we have Covovax from Serum Institute.

### **Vedanta-Foxconn JV to manufacture semiconductors in India**

- The Indian mining major Vedanta has tied up with Taiwanese electronics manufacturing company, Hon Hai Technology Group (better known as Foxconn) to form a joint venture (JV) for manufacturing semiconductors in India. Anil Agarwal, the non-executive Chairman of Vedanta, will be the Chairman of the JV company.
- This is the first JV in the electronics manufacturing sector after the government announced a Rs 76,000 crore production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme for semiconductor and display



manufacturing, to create an ecosystem of local production of semiconductors in India. Vedanta will be the majority shareholder in the JV while Foxconn will hold minority share.

#### **The International Space Station to be retired and crashed into**

- According to NASA, the International Space Station will continue its operation until 2031 and then crash into an uninhabited area in the Pacific Ocean known as Point Nemo. It will be replaced with three free-flying space stations to continue the work after ISS's retirement. NASA also selected Houston-based Axiom Space to provide the ISS's first commercial module.
- For over two decades, the International Space Station (ISS) has been orbiting Earth at a speed of about eight kilometres per second, while an international crew of astronauts and cosmonauts onboard conducted groundbreaking scientific investigations that have thrown open the doors for deep space exploration. But now NASA has announced that the spacecraft will cease operations in 2031, after which it will fall out of orbit and plunge into the waters of the South Pacific Ocean.

#### **Swarajability: India's first AI-based job portal for persons with disabilities launched**

- The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT-Hyderabad) has launched the beta version of 'Swarajability', a job portal powered by artificial intelligence that helps people with disabilities acquire relevant skills and find jobs. The platform will analyse the profiles of the job seekers and suggest the skills they would require to become eligible. A platform that addressed this challenge would help this vulnerable section of the population.
- The institute has developed the platform in association with Youth4Jobs, Visual Quest and Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. While IIT-H offers its expertise in AI, Visual Quest India has developed the platform. Youth4Jobs provides skilling services to job seekers. The project is funded by Kotak Mahindra Bank. There are 21 million persons with disabilities in the country. About 70 per cent of them are either unemployed or underemployed.

#### **India's most powerful supercomputer Param Pravega launched - Indian Institute of Science**

- The Indian Institute of Science (IISc.), Bengaluru, has installed and commissioned Param Pravega, one of the most powerful supercomputers in India. It is also the largest supercomputer in an Indian academic institution. Param Pravega has a total supercomputing capacity of 3.3 petaflops (1 petaflop equals a quadrillion or 10<sup>15</sup> operations per second).
- The supercomputer has been designed by the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC). It has been developed under the National Supercomputing Mission (NSM), a joint initiative of the Department of Science and Technology (DST) and Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), and implemented by C-DAC and IISc.

### **OBITUARY**

#### **Freedom Fighter And Social Worker Shakuntala Choudhary Passes Away At 102**

- Noted freedom fighter and Gandhian social worker, Shakuntala Choudhary has passed away. She was 102-year-old. She was popularly known as 'Shakuntala Baideo'. She was felicitated



with the Padma Shri award in 2022 by the Government of India. She hailed from Kamrup in Assam and was known for her commitment and devotion to the popularization of the Gandhian way of life. She worked for the well-being of villagers, especially women and children.

### **Ravish Tiwari, Express chief of national bureau, passes away**

- Senior journalist, Ravish Tiwari has passed away. He was the national bureau chief of Indian Express. He was popular for his political news reporting. Before this, he had also served as Senior Assistant Editor at Economic Times, Associate Editor at India Today and Senior Assistant Editor at the Indian Express. He had done his graduation from IIT Bombay and master's from the University of Oxford.

### **Indian football legend Surajit Sengupta dies at 70**

- The former India footballer Surajit Sengupta, who played as a midfielder, has passed away due to C-19 complications. He was 71. At the club level, Sengupta had been associated with Kolkata's three big clubs, Mohun Bagan (1972-1973, 1981-1983), East Bengal (1974- 1979) and Mohammedan Sporting (1980). He was part of the Indian national team that won a bronze medal in the 1970 Asian Games, held in Bangkok, Thailand.

### **Noted Kannada writer and poet Chennaveera Kanavi died at 94**

- Channaveera Kanavi, an iconic poet and writer in the Kannada language, has passed away. He was 93. He was often referred to as 'Samanvaya Kavi' (Poet of Reconciliation). Kanavi received the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1981 for his work Jeeva Dhwani (Poetry).
- Born on June 18, 1928, at Hombal village in Gadag district (erstwhile undivided Dharwad district) to Sakkreppa 'Master', a teacher, and Parvathamma, Mr Kanavi bloomed into a poet at Karnatak College under the guidance of then principal V.K. Gokak, a Jnanpith Award winner. He joined the publication wing of Karnatak University as secretary. He served the university for 31 years and retired as director of the publication wing in 1983.

### **Veteran Bengali singer Sandhya Mukherjee dies at 90**

- Legendary Bengali singer, Sandhya Mukherjee has passed away at the age of 90 years due to cardiac arrest. Her full name was Geetashree Sandhya Mukhopadhyay. She had recently refused to accept the Padma award from the central government that was awarded in January 2022. She told him that Padma Shree is not an award that should be conferred on a veteran like her. It would be demeaning for her to accept it.
- She was born in Kolkata in 1931, Sandhya Mukherjee recorded her first song in 1948 for the Hindi movie Anjaan Garh. The music was composed by Rai Chand Boral. She sang under the direction of famous composers such as S D Burman, Roshan and Madan Mohan.

### **Legendary singer and music composer Bappi Lahiri dies at 69**

- Veteran singer and composer, Bappi Lahiri has passed away at the age of 69. He was lovingly called Bappi Da in the industry is known for delivering iconic songs in several films



of the late 1970s-80s like Chalte Chalte, Disco Dancer, and Sharaabi. His last Bollywood song was Bhankas for the 2020 film Baaghi 3.

- The singer is known for his gold chains. His real name was Alokesh Lahiri. He joined BJP in 2014. He was declared a BJP candidate from Srerampur (Lok Sabha constituency) in West Bengal for the 2014 Indian general election and lost.

### **Rahul Bajaj, former chairman of Bajaj Auto, passes away at 83**

- Noted industrialist and former chairman of Bajaj Auto, Rahul Bajaj, has passed away, due to pneumonia and a heart problem. He was awarded the third-highest civilian award Padma Bhushan in 2001. He was the chairman emeritus of the Indian conglomerate Bajaj Group, the parent company of Bajaj Auto. He stepped down as the non-executive chairman of Bajaj Auto in April 2021 and transferred the responsibility to Niraj Bajaj.

### **France's Nobel winner for co-discovery of HIV virus dies aged 89**

- Luc Montagnier, a French virologist who shared a Nobel Prize in 2008 for discovering the virus that causes AIDS, passed away. He was 89. The discovery of H.I.V. began in Paris on Jan. 3, 1983. That was the day that Dr. Montagnier (pronounced mon-tan-YAY), who directed the Viral Oncology Unit at the Pasteur Institute, received a piece of the lymph node that had been removed from a 33-year-old man with AIDS.

### **Former Astronomer Professor R Rajamohan passed away**

- Professor R Rajamohan, who was an astronomer at the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA), Bengaluru, for decades, passed away. He is best known for his Kalki Project, which aimed to discover asteroids using the 48-cm Schmidt telescope in Kavalur VBO and discovered a new asteroid, number 4130, from India. This was the first asteroid discovered in India in 104 years.

### **Former Greek president Christos Sartzetakis dies aged 92**

- Former Greek President Christos Sartzetakis has passed away at the age of 92 years due to respiratory failure in Athens, Greece. He was a Greek jurist and a judge of the Supreme Court, who resisted against the militants during the 1967-1974 Rule of the Colonels. He served as the President of Greece for a four-year term (1985 to 1990), after getting nominated by the socialist PASOK party.

### **Senior politician BJP's first torchbearer in Lok Sabha, C Janga Reddy passes away**

- Veteran Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader, Chandupatla Janga Reddy has passed away in Hyderabad following health issues. He was a native of Warangal and a former MLA in Andhra Pradesh. He is best known for his time as a Member of Parliament in the 8th Lok Sabha in 1984, which also marked the BJP's debut in the Lok Sabha, following Indira Gandhi's assassination.
- Reddy was one of the only two BJP MPs who got elected to the Lok Sabha in 1984 in 543 Parliament constituencies. The other was A K Patel. He was elected to the Legislative Assembly in undivided Andhra Pradesh thrice.



### **Veteran actor Ramesh Deo passes away at 93**

- Prominent film personality Ramesh Deo, known for playing a diverse range of roles, in Marathi and Hindi movies, passed away due to a heart attack. During his career spanning several decades, the multi-faceted film personality has acted in over 450 Hindi and Marathi feature films, apart from working in several television shows and commercials.
- The evergreen Marathi actor is known for playing notable roles in 1956 'Andhala Magto Ek Dola' and 1971 cult classic 'Anand', 1962 'Aarti', 1974 'Aap Ki Kasam,' celebrated his 93rd birthday on January 30.
- Deo, who made his acting debut in the form of a cameo in the 1951 Marathi film 'Paatlaachi Por' has worked in more than 200 Hindi films, 100 Marathi films and several Marathi dramas with over 200 showings in his long career.
- He also produced feature films, television serials and several ad films. In January 2013, the 'Nivdung' actor received the Lifetime Achievement Award at the 11th Pune International Film Festival (PIFF).

### **'Nightingale' Lata Mangeshkar passes away at 92**

- Legendary singer Lata Mangeshkar has passed away at the age of 92 after suffering a multi-organ failure. The Bharat Ratna awardee was admitted to the hospital after being diagnosed with pneumonia and tested positive for the coronavirus disease in January. She is survived by her 3 sisters – Usha Mangeshkar, Asha Bhosle, Meena Khadikar and brother Hridaynath Mangeshkar.
- She began her career as a singer back in 1942 and never looked back. She recorded innumerable songs in over 36 Indian and foreign languages.
- She gave us musical gems such as Aye Mere Watan Ke Logo, Lag Jaa Gale, Yeh Kahan Aage Hain Hum and Pyar Kiya To Darna Kya, among others.
- Having led an eventful and rich life of several milestones, Lata Mangeshkar was conferred with the Dadasaheb Phalke Award in 1990. For her contribution to Indian music, she also was bestowed with Padma Bhushan in 1969 and Bharat Ratna in 2001.

### **Additional Solicitor General Rupinder Singh Suri passes away**

- Senior advocate and Additional Solicitor General (ASG) Rupinder Singh Suri has passed away.
- Mr Suri was appointed as the ASG in on 30 January 2020 for a period till 29 June 2023.
- Suri was designated as a senior advocate in 2009.
- He had also served as the President of the Supreme Court Bar Association and the Supreme Court Advocates on Record Association.

### **Andhra minister Mekapati Goutham Reddy passes away at 50**

- Andhra Pradesh Industries Minister Mekapati Goutham Reddy has passed away. The 50 years old Minister returned to India from Dubai Expo. Reddy, was a two-time MLA from the Atmakur Assembly constituency in the Nellore district in Andhra Pradesh. He was the



Minister for Industries, Commerce, and Information Technology in Andhra Pradesh Government.

#### **Renowned Malayalam Actor Dies At 74**

- Veteran Malayalam film and stage actress, KPAC Lalitha has passed away at 74. In a career spanning five decades, she starred in over 550 films in Malayalam and Tamil. Born as Maheswari Amma in Kayamkulam of Alappuzha, the actress had joined K.P.A.C (Kerala People's Arts Club), a prominent drama troop in Kerala.
- Lalitha won two National Film Awards for Best Supporting Actress along with four Kerala State Film Awards. She got the national award for the character in 'Amaram' in 1999 and for 'Shantham' in 2000. She also held the position of the Chairperson of Kerala Sangeetha Nataka Academy for five years.

### **APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS**

#### **Madhabi Puri Buch appointed first woman chairperson of Sebi**

- Former ICICI Banker, Madhabi Puri Buch has been appointed as the new Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) chairman, replacing Ajay Tyagi. She is the first woman chief of SEBI and also the first non-IAS to head the regulatory body. She has over three decades of experience in the financial markets and was SEBI whole-time member (WTM) between April 5, 2017, and October 4, 2021. During her tenure at SEBI, she handled portfolios such as surveillance, collective investment schemes and investment management.
- Buch is an alumna of the Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Ahmedabad and has a graduate degree in mathematics from St Stephen's College, New Delhi. She has nearly three decades of financial market experience.
- She started her career in 1989 with ICICI Bank where she worked in corporate finance, branding, treasury and loans, before moving to ICICI Securities. She was also a consultant to the New Development Bank, set up by the BRICS bloc of nations.

#### **Twitter India Appoints Samiran Gupta To Lead Public Policy For Twitter In India**

- Samiran Gupta will lead microblogging platform Twitter's public policy and philanthropy efforts in India and South Asia. Prior to joining Twitter, Gupta was the head of stakeholder engagement in South Asia for ICANN (Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers).
- Gupta was associated with The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), a non-profit organisation. He served there for seven years. He was also briefly the firm's head of stakeholder engagement for the South Asia market. The news of the appointment comes almost a year after the former Public Policy Director for India and South Asia Mahima Kaul resigned.

#### **D2H ropes in Rishabh Pant as its brand ambassador**

- Dish TV India, has announced the appointment of Indian cricketer Rishabh Pant as brand ambassador. Pant will feature in the brand's 360-degree communication for the next two years. This investment in the D2H brand is going to make it even stronger. The close affinity



between D2H brand and Rishabh Pant as brand ambassadors will enable deeper engagement of D2H with its TG.

- Rishabh has quickly developed into a distinctive entertainer on the cricket field, with his boundless energy behind the stumps and innovation in shot-making. He brings a spark each time he enters the field and appeals to the huge 18-35 age group across the country, our core audience.

#### **Abhishek Singh to take over as CEO, NeGD**

- 1995-batch IAS officers and Digital India Corporation CEO, Abhishek Singh as new National e-Governance Division chief. The 1995-batch IAS officer from Nagaland cadre will hold the position in the rank and pay of Additional Secretary. The officer will proceed to carry the extra cost of the put up of Managing Director & Chief Government Officer, Digital India Company. The 1995-batch IAS officer from Nagaland cadre will maintain the place within the rank and pay of Extra Secretary.

#### **Rakesh Sharma reappointed as MD&CEO of IDBI Bank for a period of 3 years**

- Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI Bank) has informed the stock exchanges that its board has approved the reappointment of Rakesh Sharma as the managing director and chief executive officer of the bank for a period of three years, effective March 19, 2022. Sharma's reappointment as the MD&CEO of the bank has received the banking regulator, Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) nod.
- Sharma was previously the MD&CEO of Canara Bank and retired from this position in July 2018. Prior to that, he served as the MD&CEO of Laxmi Vilas Bank from March 2014 to September 2015. He was previously associated with the State Bank of India (SBI).

#### **Nitin Paranjpe to be HUL's non-executive Chairman**

- Hindustan Unilever Ltd (HUL) has announced the separation of the position of Chairman of the Board and the CEO & Managing Director of the company. Nitin Paranjpe has been appointed as the Non-Executive Chairman of the company with effect from March 31, 2022. He is currently serving as Chief Operating Officer of Unilever, the parent company of HUL. Sanjiv Mehta will continue to be the Chief Executive Officer & Managing Director (CEO & MD) of the company.
- The Board accepted the recommendation made by the NRC and has appointed Paranjpe as a Non-Executive Chairman. The appointment is subject to approval of the shareholders which the Company will seek as per applicable regulations.

#### **Centre nominates Sanjay Malhotra as a Director of Central Board of RBI**

- The Centre government has nominated Sanjay Malhotra, Secretary, Department of Financial Services (DFS), Ministry of Finance, as a Director on the Central Board of Reserve Bank of India (RBI). The nomination of Malhotra, a 1990 batch IAS officer of Rajasthan cadre, is effective from February 16, 2022, and until further orders.



- Prior to his appointment as DFS Secretary, Malhotra was the Chairman and Managing Director of REC Ltd. He succeeded Debashish Panda, who completed his term on January 31, 2022.

#### **K.N. Raghavan new Chairman of ISRG**

- Executive Director of the Indian Rubber Board, K.N. Raghavan has been elected the new Chairman of the International Rubber Study Group (IRSG). He will officiate as Chairman of the group for the next two years. He will preside over the meeting of the heads of delegation scheduled for March 31 at Singapore.
- India, being both a producer and a consumer of rubber, will be in a good position to protect the interests of both producers and consumers in the IRSG -the only international commodity body approved by the Common Fund for Commodities for development financing in the rubber sector.
- International Rubber Study Group (IRSG), an intergovernmental organisation of natural and synthetic rubber producing and consuming countries. IRSG is the only forum for natural rubber (NR) and synthetic rubber (SR) producers and consumers to discuss matters affecting the world rubber industry and act as an interface between government and the Industry. International Rubber Study Group Members: Cameroon; Cote d'Ivoire; European Union; India; Nigeria; Russia; Singapore; Sri Lanka.

#### **Takuya Tsumura to take over as new President & CEO of Honda Cars India**

- Japanese auto major Honda Motor Co. Ltd. has announced the appointment of Takuya Tsumura as the new President & CEO of Honda Cars India Ltd (HCIL) with effect from 1 April 2022. The appointment comes as part of the management changes announced annually by the company.
- Tsumura will take over from Gaku Nakanishi, who moves from India to regional headquarters in Asia and Oceania region – Asian Honda as General Manager, Automobile Business for the region. Tsumura has been associated with Honda Motor for more than 30 years. He has worked in several international markets including Thailand, Australia, China, Japan, Turkey, Europe and Asia & Oceania regions. Tsumura was in-charge of South Asian countries, including India from 1997 to 2000.

#### **IOC Athletes' Commission re-elect Terho as chair, Walker elected as second vice-chair**

- International Olympic Committee (IOC) Athletes' Commission re-elected ice hockey player Emma Terho of Finland as its Chair and table tennis player Seung Min Ryu of the Republic of Korea as its First Vice-Chair. The commission also elected cyclist Sarah Walker of New Zealand as the second VC of the Commission.
- Emma Terho is a five-time Olympian and former captain of the Finland women's ice hockey team. She will be the head of the Commission until the Olympic Games Paris 2024.

#### **Chetan Ghate succeeds Ajit Mishra as director of the Institute of Economic Growth**

- The Institute of Economic Growth has appointed Chetan Ghate as the new director succeeding Ajit Mishra. He was a member of the Reserve Bank of India's first monetary



policy committee between 2016-2020, is the winner of the 2014 Mahalanobis Memorial gold medal for the best research economist in the country under the age of 45. He is currently an external affiliate of the Centre for Research in Macroeconomics and Macro-Finance at Swansea University (Wales, UK).

- Ghate has a Ph.D in economics from Claremont Graduate University, California in 1999. His research areas include macroeconomics, monetary economics, economic growth and the Indian macro-economy.
- Ghate has been a professor of economics at the Indian Statistical Institute (ISI), Delhi for over 18 years. He is also a member of the advisory committee of the national accounts system (ACNAS) in the ministry of statistics and programme implementation.

#### **Bihar ropes in Manoj Tiwari as brand ambassador to promote Khadi**

- Bhojpuri singer and BJP MP, Manoj Tiwari will be the brand ambassador of Khadi and other handicrafts of Bihar. He will be the “brand ambassador” for Khadi and other handicrafts of Bihar, state minister Syed Shah Nawaz Hussain announced. Manoj Tiwari will promote the use of Khadi fabric, which was popularized by Mahatma Gandhi during India’s Independence movement. Tiwari, who has lent his voice to innumerable foot-tapping numbers, including the “Gangs of Wasseypur” chartbuster “Jiya ho Bihar ke lala”.

#### **IAS Officer Vineet Joshi appointed as new CBSE chairman**

- IAS Vineet Joshi has been appointed as the new Chairman of the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE). He replaces IAS Manoj Ahuja, who has been appointed as the Officer on Special Duty (OSD) in the Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare. Mr Joshi, a 1992-batch IAS officer of the Manipur cadre, is an Additional Secretary, Department of Higher Education, under the Ministry of Education. He is also the Director-General of the National Testing Agency (NTA). In 2010 as well he got the responsibility of CBSE chairman.

#### **ICAI elects CA Debashis Mitra as President and CA Aniket Sunil Talati as Vice-President**

- Debashis Mitra has been elected as the President of The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) for the year 2022-23. Mitra, who is serving his third term in ICAI Council, has been in the accounting profession for more than 34 years. Apart from being a Chartered Accountant, he is also a Cost Accountant and a Company Secretary. He holds a master’s degree in commerce and is also a law graduate as well as a qualified Information Systems Auditor.
- Aniket Sunil Talati has been elected as Vice President of the institute, which has more than 3.40 lakh members and over 7 lakh students.
- Talati, who has a master’s degree in commerce, served as Chairman of Ahmedabad Branch of ICAI for the year 2014-15 and as Secretary, WIRC for the year 2017-18.

#### **Tata Group appoints former Turkish Airlines chairman Ilker Ayci as new Air India MD and CEO**

- Ilker Ayci has been appointed as the new CEO and MD of Air India. He will assume his responsibilities on or before 1st April 2022. Ilker Ayci is a former chairman of Turkish



Airlines. Ilker is an aviation industry leader who led Turkish Airlines to its current success during his tenure there.

- Ayci was born in Istanbul in 1971. After graduating from the Department of Political Science and Public Administration at Bilkent University, he served as a researcher in the Department of Political Sciences at Leeds University in the U.K.
- Starting his career in 1994, he was assigned several positions in Kurtisan Ilaclar A.S., Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, Universal Dis Ticaret A.S., respectively, and then he served as a general manager in Basak Sigorta A.S. between 2005-2006, and then in Gunes Sigorta A.S. between 2006 and 2011.

### **Chairman of SC-appointed panel on Char Dham all-weather road resigns**

- Veteran environmentalist Ravi Chopra has resigned as chairman of the Supreme Court's High Powered Committee (HPC) on the Char Dham project. His belief that the HPC could protect this fragile (Himalayan) ecology has been shattered. The Supreme Court on December 14 allowed double-lane widening of roads for the project in view of "security concerns."
- In his resignation letter to the secretary-general of the Supreme Court on January 27, Chopra referred to the apex court's December 2021 order that accepted the wider road configuration to meet defence needs, instead of what the HPC had recommended and the SC accepted in its earlier order in September 2020. In 2018, the project was challenged by an NGO for its potential impact on the Himalayan ecology due to felling trees, cutting hills and dumping excavated material. In 2019, the SC formed the HPC Chopra to examine the issues, and in September 2020, accepted his recommendation on road width etc.

### **Actor Pankaj Tripathi invests in agritech startup Krishi Network**

- Cultino Agrotech Pvt Ltd, which runs agritech app Krishi Network has roped in film actor Pankaj Tripathi as a brand ambassador, with a view to reaching out to farmers to its app. Tripathi's background as a farmer resonates with the platform's aim to aid farmers to grow their profits by offering them solutions to critical decisions. The app is currently available in Hindi, Marathi, Punjabi, and English, and is planned to be launched in other languages soon.
- The startup plans to use the fresh funds to boost their artificial intelligence-based technology platform across India. Founded by IIT Kharagpur alumni Ashish Mishra and Siddhant Bhomia, Krishi Network leverages the growing rural internet penetration to create a platform that eases information accessibility for farmers and enables them to generate higher profits from their land.

### **Justice Munishwar Nath Bhandari Appointed As Chief Justice Of Madras High Court**

- According to the Law Ministry, Justice Munishwar Nath Bhandari has been appointed Chief Justice of the Madras High Court. Justice Bhandari had taken over as the Acting Chief Justice of the Madras High Court after the transfer of Justice Sanjib Banerjee to the Meghalaya High Court in November last year. The Law Ministry also notified the appointment of a total of 13



advocates and three judicial officers as judges of Andhra Pradesh, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh High Courts.

- While three advocates each were appointed to the Orissa and Madhya Pradesh High Courts, seven advocates were elevated to the Andhra Pradesh High Court. Three judicial officers were appointed as judges of the Madhya Pradesh High Court.

#### **Tata Sons reappoints N Chandrasekaran as Executive Chairman for five years**

- The board of Tata Sons Pvt Ltd has approved the re-appointment of N Chandrasekaran as the Executive Chairman of the company for the second five years term. Chandrasekaran's current tenure as the chairman was to expire at the end of February 2022. He joined the board of Tata Sons in 2016 and took over the role as Chairman in 2017.
- Chandrasekaran's tenure in the last five years saw several mergers and acquisitions by the group in the steel, aviation and digital sectors and a complete exit from the cellular telephony industry. One of the first tasks of Chandra, as he is popularly known, was to get rid of Tata Teleservices which lost around Rs 60,000 crore in paying back bank loans apart from paying the AGR dues till date. Tatas sold the mobile phone business to Bharti Airtel while retaining debt and other liabilities of the company.

#### **Kishore appointed as new SSC Chairman**

- Senior bureaucrat S. Kishore has been appointed as Chairman, Staff Selection Commission (SSC). According to an order issued by the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT), the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the appointment of Kishore to the post in the rank and pay of Secretary to Government of India by temporarily upgrading the post and keeping the Recruitment Rules of the post in abeyance. Presently, he is serving as Special Secretary, Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

#### **Pradip Shah appointed Pfizer India chairman**

- Pfizer India has appointed Pradip Shah as the chairman of its board following the resignation of RA Shah. He is the ex-managing director and a founding member of Crisil. Prior to founding Crisil, he assisted in founding HDFC in 1977. He has also served as a consultant to USAID, the World Bank, and the Asian Development Bank.
- Pradip is a director on the board of several reputed companies. He is also a member of various prestigious committees/commissions. He is presently the Chairman of Indasia Fund Advisors. He holds an MBA from the Harvard Business School and is also a chartered accountant and a cost accountant.

#### **Sanjay Malhotra appointed DFS Secretary in Finance Ministry**

- Sanjay Malhotra has been named as Secretary in the Department of Financial Services in the Ministry of Finance. He is a 1990 batch IAS officer of the Rajasthan cadre. Before this, Sanjay Malhotra was Chairman and Managing Director of REC Ltd. He has succeeded Debashish Panda, who completed his term as DFS Secretary on January 31, 2022.



- Malhotra has an exhaustive power sector experience. The reforms-based result-linked power distribution sector scheme to be applicable till 2025-26 aims to reduce India's AT&C loss to 12-15% and gradually narrow the deficit between the cost of electricity and the price at which it is supplied to 'zero' by 2024-25.

#### **MediBuddy ropes in Amitabh Bachchan as brand ambassador**

- MediBuddy, one of India's largest digital healthcare platforms, has signed legendary Bollywood star Amitabh Bachchan as the official brand ambassador. As part of the deal, Bachchan will be seen endorsing various services available on the platform, while highlighting the need to prioritise one's health.
- With the deal in place, MediBuddy is looking at further amplifying its reach across India. Leveraging the veteran actor's popularity, especially across tier II and tier III cities, the brand aims to position itself as a household name.

#### **Santishree Pandit appointed first woman VC of JNU**

- The Ministry of Education (MoE) has appointed Santishree Dhulipudi Pandit as the new Vice-Chancellor of Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU). She is the first women Vice-Chancellor of JNU. The 59-year-old Pandit has been appointed for a period of five years. Pandit replaces M Jagadesh Kumar, who has been appointed as Chairman of the University Grants Commission (UGC). Before this appointment, Pandit was serving as the Vice-Chancellor of Savitribai Phule University in Maharashtra.

#### **History Professor Dinesh Prasad Saklani is the new NCERT director**

- Professor Dinesh Prasad Saklani has been appointed as the new Director of the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT). He has replaced Hrushikesh Senapaty, who finished his term a year ago. The new director has been appointed for a period of five years with effect from the date of assumption of charge of the post, or till he attains the age of 65 years, or until further orders, whichever is earlier.
- Professor Saklani has been awarded with Distinguished Academy Award by Punjab Kala and Sahitya Academy, Jalandhar for Historical writing in 2005. The new director is a member of the Academic Council of Uttarakhand Open University, Haldwani. Professor Saklani is also a life member in the Indian History Congress; Uttarakhand History and Culture Association and of Book Club IAS Shimla.

#### **Sonali Singh given charge of Controller General of Accounts**

- The Government of India has appointed Sonali Singh to hold the additional charge of the Controller General of Accounts (CGA), under the Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance, with effect from February 01, 2022. She has been appointed in place of Dipak Dash, who superannuated on January 31, 2022.
- Sonali Singh is a 1987 batch officer of the Indian Civil Accounts Service (ICAS). She is serving as the Additional Controller General of Accounts since October 2019. Prior to that, she had also served as Additional Secretary at Central Vigilance Commission.



#### **JNU VC M Jagadesh Kumar appointed as UGC head**

- The government of India has appointed JNU (Jawaharlal Nehru University) Vice-Chancellor, M Jagadesh Kumar as the new Chairman of the University Grants Commission (UGC). He has been appointed for a period of five years or till he attains the age of 65 years, whichever is the earliest. The post of the UGC Chairman was vacant since December 07, 2021, after Prof D P Singh resigned upon attaining 65 years of age. He was appointed in 2018.
- Hailing from Mamidala village in Telangana's Nalgonda district, 60-year-old Kumar holds a masters degree and a PhD from IIT-Madras. He also completed his post-doctoral research at the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, University of Waterloo, at Ontario, Canada. He was a professor at the Department of Electrical Engineering at IIT-Delhi before being appointed as the JNU vice-chancellor in January 2016. He continued teaching at IIT-Delhi while serving as the JNU VC.

#### **IndiGo Appoints Co-founder Rahul Bhatia As Managing Director**

- The low-cost Indian airline, IndiGo has appointed its co-founder and promoter Rahul Bhatia as the Managing Director (MD) of the company with immediate effect. He is the first-ever MD of Indigo, because before this the company never had a managing director. Ronojoy Dutta is the CEO of the Indigo.
- The board of directors, during its meeting, unanimously approved the appointment of Bhatia as the managing director with immediate effect, subject to the approval of the shareholders. IndiGo is back in the black with a net profit for the December quarter at Rs 130 crore. The profit comes after the airline posted a loss for a series of straight quarters.

#### **G A Srinivasa Murthy appointed director of Defence Research and Development Laboratory**

- Senior scientist GA Srinivasa Murthy has been appointed director of Defence Research and Development Laboratory (DRDL) of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) in Hyderabad. He joined DRDL in the year 1987 and made significant contributions in the area of structural dynamics, ground resonance testing, electrical integration and checkout for various projects of the missile complex.
- G A Srinivasa Murthy completed his BE in Electronics and Communication Engineering from Andhra University in 1986 and pursued his ME in Digital Systems from Osmania University in Hyderabad.

#### **Lt Gen GAV Reddy Succeeds Lt Gen KJS Dhillon As head of Defence Intelligence Agency**

- Lieutenant General GAV Reddy has been appointed as the Director-General of the Defence Intelligence Agency. He will replace Lieutenant General KJS Dhillon.
- The post of the director general is held on a rotation basis between the three Armed services- the Indian Army, Indian Navy, and Indian Air Force
- The Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA) is an intelligence agency responsible for providing and coordinating defence and military intelligence to the Indian Armed Forces. It was formed in 2002.



### **VK tripathi appointed as chairman and CEO of Railway board**

- The Indian Railways has appointed VK Tripathi as chairman and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Railway Board. He is currently working as the general manager of North-Eastern Railway, Gorakhpur.
- Tripathi's appointment has been approved by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) and he is currently General Manager, North-Eastern Railway. He will replace Suneet Sharma, a 1982 batch IRSME officer.
- A career railway officer, Tripathi did his B.Tech (Electrical Engineering) from Roorkee and joined the railways through the Indian Railway Service of Electrical Engineers (IRSEE) batch of 1983.
- His first posting was as an assistant electrical engineer for the Northern Railway.

### **Asheesh Pandey joins Bank of Maharashtra as executive director**

- Shri Asheesh Pandey joined as Executive Director, Bank of Maharashtra (BoM) today on 31st December, 2021. Prior to joining BoM, Shri Asheesh Pandey was Chief General Manager & Chief Operations Officer (COO) at Union Bank of India (UBI). Shri Asheesh Pandey has a progressive professional career spanning more than 24 years and over these years have handled a diversified portfolio ranging from Credit, Credit Monitoring, Treasury & Merchant Banking, Foreign Transactions & Joint Ventures, Marketing & Customer Relationships and Banking Operations.
- Shri Asheesh Pandey is a Mechanical Engineer (Hons) with Post Graduation in Management (Hons) with specialisation in Finance & Marketing.

### **Online travel company EaseMyTrip has appointed actors Vijay Raaz and Varun Sharma as its brand ambassadors**

- Bollywood actors Vijay Raaz & Varun Sharma have been named as brand ambassadors for EaseMyTrip.com (Easy Trip Planners Ltd), an online travel company based in India. EaseMyTrip founded by Nishant Pitti and Rikant Pitti in 2008 was started as the Business-to-Business (B2B) portal and entered into the business-to-consumer (B2C) segment in 2011.
- Raaz and Sharma will be coming together as a duo for the first time for any brand campaign. The actors with their mass appeal and strong connection with the audience will complement the brand's image. The company added that the actors are admired by fans for their genuine and down-to-earth personalities and their ability to make their acts memorable. They are also known for their impeccable comic timing and both actors have created a niche in the market.

## **IMPORTANT DAYS**

### **Central Excise Day 2022: 24th February**

- Central Excise Day, which is observed on February 24 commemorates the Central Excise and Salt Act which was enacted on 24th February 1944. This annual event is celebrated to highlight the essential role played by the Central Excise Department in the industrial development of the country.



- The purpose of celebrating the day is to inform the common public of the country about the importance of the Central Board of Excise and Customs (CBEC). Several events are organized by the central board on this day, which includes seminars, workshops, educational and cultural programmes, awareness programmes, competitions, and award ceremonies.

#### **Central Excise Day 24 February 2022**

- Central Excise Day of India is celebrated every year on February 24. The day is being celebrated to honour the service of the Central Board of Excise and Custom (CBEC) to the country. The day is celebrated to honour the officers associated with CBEC and their services. The day is celebrated to commemorate the legislation of the Central Excise and Salt act on 24 February 1944.
- The central excise day is celebrated to raise awareness about the contribution of the central excise officers among the general public of the country.

#### **International Mother Language Day 2022 : 21<sup>st</sup> February**

- The International Mother Language Day (IMLD) is observed annually on the 21st of February. The day aims to raise awareness regarding linguistic and cultural diversity and to promote multilingualism. The 2022 theme is "Using technology for multilingual learning: Challenges and opportunities". The UN mentioned in its statement that this year's theme raises the potential role of technology to advance multilingual education and support the development of quality teaching and learning for all.
- International Mother Language Day was proclaimed by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in November 1999. The UN General Assembly welcomed the proclamation of the day in its resolution of 2002.

#### **World Day of Social Justice 2022: 20<sup>th</sup> February 2022**

- World Day of Social Justice is celebrated annually all over the world on 20 February. The International Labour Organization unanimously adopted the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization on 10 June 2008. Social justice is an underlying principle for peaceful and prosperous coexistence within and among nations. World Day of Social Justice 2022 Theme: Achieving Social Justice through Formal Employment.
- The International Labour Organization unanimously adopted the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization on 10 June 2008. This is the third major statement of principles and policies adopted by the International Labour Conference since the ILO's Constitution of 1919. It builds on the Philadelphia Declaration of 1944 and the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work of 1998. The 2008 Declaration expresses the contemporary vision of the ILO's mandate in the era of globalization.

#### **Soil Health Card Day 2022: 19th February**

- Every year India observes the Soil Health Card Day on 19 February to commemorate the launch of the Soil Health Card (SHC) Scheme, and create awareness about the benefits of the scheme. 2022 marks the seventh year of the launch of the SHC Scheme. The scheme



aims at issuing soil health cards to all farmers every two years. Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the Soil Health Card (SHC) Scheme on 19th February 2015 at Suratgarh in Rajasthan.

- The card would provide details about the nutritional deficiencies in the soil so that the farmers can supplement the soil with suitable fertilizers and increase the yields. The scheme has been introduced to assist State Governments to issue Soil Health Cards to all farmers in the country. It provides information to farmers on the nutrient status of their soil along with recommendations on the appropriate dosage of nutrients to be applied for improving soil health and its fertility.

### **World Pangolin Day 2022 : 19th February**

- World Pangolin Day is celebrated on the “Third Saturday of February” every year. In 2022, the annual World Pangolin Day is being celebrated on 19 February 2022. It marks the 11th edition of the event. The day aims to raise awareness about these unique mammals and speed up conservation efforts. Pangolin numbers are rapidly declining in Asia and Africa.

### **World Radio Day 2022: 13rd February**

- World Radio Day is celebrated on 13 February each year to recognize radio as a powerful medium, which brings people together from every corner of the globe, to promote diversity and help build a more peaceful and inclusive world. The day was Proclaimed in 2011 by the Member States of UNESCO and adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2012 as an International Day, February 13 became World Radio Day (WRD).

### **International Epilepsy Day 2022: 14th February**

- International Epilepsy Day is observed every year on the Second Monday of February across the world. In 2022, International Epilepsy Day falls on February 14, 2022. International Epilepsy Day seeks to raise awareness and educate the general public on the true facts about epilepsy and the urgent need for improved treatment, better care, and greater investment in research.
- The day is organised jointly by the International Bureau for Epilepsy (IBE) and the International League Against Epilepsy (ILAE) to raise awareness about epilepsy and highlight the kinds of problems faced by victims, their friends and family. Epilepsy is a neurological disorder that makes a person go through sudden and recurrent episodes of sensory disturbances.

### **'Anti-Smuggling Day' 11 February To Strike Better Coordination Between Agencies: FICCI CASCADE**

- The FICCI's Committee Against Smuggling and Counterfeiting Activities Destroying the Economy (CASCADE) has taken the initiative to launch Anti-Smuggling Day, which will be marked on 11 February every year. The inaugural Anti-Smuggling Day is being observed on February 11, 2022.



- Anti-Smuggling Day will gather momentum and bring together policymakers, international institutions, enforcement agencies, industry members, media, and consumers for their commitment to take action to fight against the global menace of smuggling.
- 'Anti-Smuggling Day' will represent a major step in the fight against the global menace of smuggling.
- With no country immune to the impact of smuggling and no single sector can be said to be an exception, this day will highlight the mounting hazard of smuggling. It will not only call for attention for creating awareness on this issue, but will also evaluate what more needs to be done at a national and international level in mitigating this challenge.

### **National Deworming Day 2022: 10th February**

- National Deworming Day is observed on February 10, to make people aware of the importance of deworming, particularly for children from 1 to 19 years of age, who are the most vulnerable. The Day was launched by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in 2015. The main aim of the Day is to raise awareness on intestinal worms and to attain complete eradication of Soil-Transmitted Helminths in children. Around 24% of the world's population is infected with soil-transmitted helminths (worms).
- Parasitic worms are a menace to society, both for people and animals. It is impossible to prevent worm infestation since children come in contact with soil while playing outside. Worm infestations can reduce the quality of life in children, stunt their physical growth and mental development.
- This may lead to poor productivity in schools, affect their attendance and hamper their education and future. Hence, timely and proper deworming of children is a necessity. Intestinal worms are found in the gastrointestinal tract and they damage the body.

### **National Productivity Day 2022: 13th February**

- National Productivity Day is observed every year in India on February 12. The objective of the National Productivity Council is to stimulate and promote productivity and quality consciousness across all sectors in the country. The main observance of the day is to encourage all stakeholders in the implementation of productivity tools and techniques with contemporary relevant themes.
- The day is celebrated by the National Productivity Council (NPC) to promote productivity culture in India. National Productivity Council (NPC) under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry Government of India is a premier institution for propagating productivity movement in India. NPC works for providing solutions towards accelerating productivity, enhancing competitiveness, increasing productivity.

### **International Day of Women and Girls in Science 2022: 11th February**

- International Day of Women and Girls in Science is observed globally on 11 February. The 7th International Day of Women and Girls in Science Assembly, taking place on 11 February 2022, aims to recognize the role of women and girls in science, not only as beneficiaries but also as agents of change, including in view of accelerating progress towards the achievement of SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation). The Day is implemented by UNESCO



and UN-Women in collaboration with institutions and civil society partners that aim to promote women and girls in science.

- The 2022 theme of the Day is “Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion: Water Unites Us”.

#### **World Unani Day 2022:11th February**

- World Unani Day is observed on February 11 every year to mark the birth anniversary of “Hakim Ajmal Khan”, an eminent Indian Unani physician. The first Unani Day was celebrated in 2017 at the Central Research Institute of Unani Medicine (CRIUM), Hyderabad. The main objective is to spread the awareness in masses and action about healthcare delivery through the Unani system of medicine worldwide through its preventive and curative philosophy.
- The Unani system of medicine has a long and impressive record in India. It was introduced in India by the Arabs and Persians sometime around the eleventh century.
- It has the largest number of Unani educational, research and health care institutions.
- The Unani system of medicine originated in Greece. Its foundation was laid by Hippocrates.
- The system owes its present form to the Arabs who not only saved much of the Greek literature by rendering it into Arabic but also enriched the medicine of their day with their own contributions.

#### **World Pulses Day 2022:10 February**

- The United Nations designated World Pulses Day is observed every year on 10 February. The day has been established by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations to recognize the importance of pulses (dry beans, lentils, dry peas, chickpeas, lupins) as a global food. This year World Pulses Day’s theme: “Pulses to empower youth in achieving sustainable agrifood systems”.
- In 2018, the UN General Assembly decided to mark 10 February as World Pulses Day. The first WPD was held on February 10, 2019. On 20 December 2013, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution (A/RES/68/231) proclaiming 2016 as the International Year of Pulses (IYP). The celebration of the year, led by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), increased the public awareness of the nutritional and environmental benefits of pulses as part of sustainable food production.

#### **International Day of Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation 6 February 2022**

- International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female is observed on 6th February globally. This day is sponsored by the United Nations for their efforts to eradicate female genital mutilation. It was first introduced in 2003. This year theme of International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female: Accelerating Investment to End Female Genital Mutilation.
- Female genital mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures that involve altering or injuring the female genitalia for non-medical reasons and is recognized internationally as a violation of the human rights, the health and the integrity of girls and women. Girls who undergo female genital mutilation face short-term complications such as severe pain, shock, excessive bleeding, infections, and difficulty in passing urine, as well as long-term consequences for their sexual and reproductive health and mental health.



## **World Interfaith Harmony Week: February 01-07**

- The World Interfaith Harmony Week is observed annually during the first week of February, which means from February 01 to 07.
- The observation aims to promote harmony between all people regardless of their faith.
- World Interfaith Harmony Week was designated by the UN General Assembly in 2010.
- It was proposed by King Abdullah II of Jordan at the United Nations in 2010.
- Theme in 2022 is Faith and spiritual leadership to combat stigma and conflict during pandemic recovery.

## **DRDO celebrates its 64th foundation day on 1st January 2022**

- Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) is celebrating its 64th foundation day today. It was on this day in 1958 when DRDO was formed to make India strong and self-reliant in terms of science and technology and especially in military technologies.
- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh today wished to all Defence Research and Development Organisation, DRDO scientists and personnel on their 64th Raising Day. In a tweet, Mr Singh said, they are working tirelessly towards strengthening India's defence capabilities and making the country self-reliant in defence sector. He hoped that the DRDO scientists and personnel will keep serving the nation with the same zeal.
- In the span of 63 years the organization has transformed the landscape of defence research and development in the country. Talking exclusively to All India Radio, the Chairman of DRDO Dr G. Satheesh Reddy said that the last year was the year of major breakthroughs and accomplishments even under the difficult situation posed due to C-19.

## **Indian Coast Guard celebrates 46th Raising Day on 01 Feb 2022**

- Indian Coast Guard is celebrating its 46th Raising Day on 01 Feb 2022. As the fourth largest Coast Guard in the world, the Indian Coast Guard has played a significant role in securing the Indian Coasts and enforcing regulations in the Maritime Zones of India. The ICG was formally established on February 1, 1977, by the Coast Guard Act, 1978 of the Parliament of India. It operates under the Ministry of Defence.
- From a modest beginning with just 07 surface platforms in 1978, ICG has grown into a formidable force with 158 ships and 70 aircraft in its inventory and is likely to achieve targeted force levels of 200 surface platforms and 80 aircraft by 2025. One of the primary duties of the Indian Coast Guard is prevention of smuggling through maritime routes in its area of responsibility. In the last one year, it has seized drugs and contraband worth nearly four thousand crore rupees.

## **SUMMITS AND MOU'S**

### **India and France adopt road map on 'blue economy'**

- India and France have inked a roadmap to enhance their bilateral exchanges on the blue economy and ocean governance. Dr S Jaishankar is on a three-day visit to France, from February 20 to 22, 2022, to attend EU Ministerial Forum for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific scheduled for February 22. The agreement on 'Roadmap on Blue Economy and Ocean



Governance' was signed between India's External Affairs Minister Dr. S Jaishankar's and his French counterpart Jean-Yves Le Drian.

- The partnership will help to explore the potential for collaboration in marine science research for a better understanding of oceans and ensure that the ocean remains a global common, a space of freedom and trade, based on the rule of law.
- The scope of the roadmap will encompass maritime trade, the naval industry, fisheries, marine technology and scientific research, integrated coastal management, marine eco-tourism, inland waterways, and cooperation between competent administrations on civil maritime issues.
- India and France underscored that fisheries are a vital economic sector and play a decisive role in food security and livelihood security, particularly for coastal populations.

### **Education ministry approves continuation of RUSA scheme till 2026**

- The Ministry of Education has approved the continuation of the Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) scheme till 31st March 2026 with an expenditure of 12,929.16 crores. The new phase of the scheme would support around 1,600 projects. Out of Rs 12,929.16 crores of expenditure, the centre will share Rs 8,120.97 crores, and the state will share Rs 4,808.19 crores.
- The new phase of the scheme has been designed to implement some of the recommendations of the New Education Policy (NEP). Under the new phase of the scheme, State Governments will support Gender inclusion, Equity Initiatives, Enhance employability through vocationalisation and skill upgradation.

### **TransUnion CIBIL partners Ficci on MSME consumer education program**

- TransUnion CIBIL has partnered with the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) to launch a unique nationwide MSME consumer education program to support MSME. This program will kick off with MSME clusters in Maharashtra, Assam and Tripura and aims to reach thousands of MSMEs across key MSME clusters in India.
- The program objective is to empower MSMEs with knowledge on how to build a good credit history and CIBIL Rank to avail easier and faster access to finance. TransUnion CIBIL is committed to supporting banks and credit institutions in the sustainable growth of their MSME portfolios while improving reach and driving access to finance for MSMEs.
- In addition to offering MSME lenders solutions like CIBIL Rank and commercial credit reports for astute lending, TransUnion CIBIL also publishes insights reports like the MSME Pulse in association with SIDBI and the recent Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) analysis report to support policymakers and the industry with market insights on the MSME sector.

### **TERI's World Sustainable Development Summit 2022 to begin on 16th Feb**

- The Prime Minister, Narendra Modi has delivered the inaugural address at The Energy and Resources Institute's (TERI) World Sustainable Development Summit. Mr Luis Abinader, President of the Dominican Republic, Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali, President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana, Ms Amina J Mohammed, Deputy Secretary-General, United Nations



and Union Minister Shri Bhupender Yadav were among those present on the occasion. The 21st edition of WSDS is scheduled from 16th-18th February 2022.

- The theme for this year's summit is Towards a Resilient Planet: Ensuring a Sustainable and Equitable Future.
- The Prime Minister recalled that Environment and sustainable development have been key focus areas for him all through his 20 years in office, first in Gujarat and now at the national level.
- The Prime Minister informed about the LED bulbs distribution scheme that has been running for over seven years, has helped save more than 220 billion units of electricity and 180 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions per year.

### **NCB organises Darkathon -2022**

- The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) is organising a "Darkathon-2022" to find solutions to counter drug trafficking through the darknet. The initiative aims at involving students, youth and technical experts to find effective solutions to unravel the anonymity of darknet markets. The agency recently smashed three groups of drug peddlers that were operating on the network that is accessed through encryption software which enables anonymity of users.
- The prize money for the first winner is Rs 2.50 lakh, the runner-up would get Rs 2 lakh and the third winner Rs 1.50 lakh. The consolation prize for the 4th and 5th place is Rs 25,000 each. The online registration will continue till March 31 through <https://ncb.cyberchallenge.in>.

### **Twitter adds Paytm as payment provider to boost Tips usage in India**

- Twitter Inc has partnered with Paytm's payment gateway to improve the support for its 'Tips' feature in India. With this partnership, Twitter users will be able to use the payments facility of Paytm, including its Paytm digital wallet, Paytm Postpaid (buy-now-pay-later service), debit and credit cards, and net banking. The feature was announced last year and is one of the company's many efforts to introduce monetisation on the platform.
- Using the Tips feature, users can send payments to their favourite content creators on Twitter. Tips is available since November to all Twitter users above 18 years of age in India. It is available in Indian languages including Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Marathi and Tamil.

### **Power Minister RK Singh, Angus Taylor chairs 4th India-Australia Energy Dialogue**

- The 4th India-Australia Energy Dialogue was co-chaired by Union Minister for Power and New & Renewable Energy, RK Singh and Australian Energy and Emissions Reduction Minister Angus Taylor. Energy Transition was a major area of discussion in the dialogue and both the Energy Ministers. Energy Transition activities in their respective countries with a focus on renewables, energy efficiency, storage, EVs, critical minerals, mining etc.
- The need of Climate Finance was also highlighted by India for meeting the Energy Transition goals of developing countries. Both the countries signed a Letter of Intent (LoI)



for working towards reducing the cost of new and renewable energy technologies and scaling up their deployment to reduce global emissions.

- Apart from the power sector, there are many desirable areas of cooperation agreed under the other JGWs like reducing costs of Green Hydrogen; cooperation in the sphere of coal-based energy security and resource deployment; investment opportunities in the minerals sector; exploring the potential for an LNG Partnership, among other areas.

#### **PM Modi to address high-level segment of One Ocean Summit**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has addressed the high-level segment of the One Ocean Summit. The high-level segment of the summit will also be addressed by several other heads of states and governments including Germany, the United Kingdom, South Korea, Japan and Canada.
- The One Ocean summit is organised by France from 9-11 February in Brest in cooperation with the United Nations and the World Bank. The objective of the summit is to mobilise the international community to take tangible action towards preserving and supporting healthy and sustainable ocean ecosystems.

#### **Ministry of Culture to organize first of its kind Global Summit on 'Reimagining Museums in India' on 15-16 February**

- The Union Ministry of Culture will organize a first-of-its-kind Global Summit on 'Reimagining Museums in India' on February 15-16, 2022. The summit will be inaugurated by Union Culture Minister G. Kishan Reddy. The Global Summit is being organised in partnership with Bloomberg. It will be held online for two days and is open for public participation. The summit will see participation from 25 museologists and museum professionals who will speak on reimagined priorities and practices for Museums.
- The virtual summit will be conducted with four broad themes: Architecture and Functional Needs, Management, Collections Curation & Conservation practices) and Education and Audience Engagement.

#### **IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw Kicks Off NITI Aayog's Fintech Open Summit**

- NITI Aayog, in collaboration with PhonePe, AWS and EY, has organized a three-week-long virtual summit, 'Fintech Open', from 7–28 February. The summit was inaugurated by Union Minister for Railways, Communications, and Electronics and IT, Ashwini Vaishnaw in the presence of NITI Aayog Vice-Chairman Dr Rajiv Kumar. A first-of-its-kind initiative, Fintech Open will bring together regulators, fintech professionals and enthusiasts, industry leaders, the start-up community, and developers to collaborate, exchange ideas and innovate.
- An open platform is created using public investment, wherein numerous private entrepreneurs, start-ups and developers can join to create new solutions. For example, today, 270 banks are connected with the UPI and many entrepreneurs and start-ups have provided solutions that have helped increase the country's fintech adoption rate—which is the highest globally at 87%.



#### **Sonata Software ties up with Microsoft in its launch**

- A global IT Services, and Technology Solutions Company, Sonata Software has announced its partnership with Microsoft for its launch of 'Microsoft Cloud for Retail'. The company has been a partner with Microsoft for over three decades. The 'Microsoft Cloud for Retail' collaboration is expected to further strengthen the relationship. Sonata Software delivers solutions for retailers worldwide, leveraging world-class IPs, in-house migration and modernisation tools.
- The partnership with Microsoft Cloud for Retail will further enhance our capabilities, with its emphasis on leveraging data, elevating the shopping experience, building real-time, sustainable supply chains, and empowering store associates. The Sonata Connected Retail solution is available through Microsoft AppSource. Sonata Software is a Microsoft Gold Partner and is a member of the Microsoft Inner Circle for Business Applications.

#### **Govt signs deal to develop clean energy tech in Kerala**

- Kerala Government has signed an MoU with the Social Alpha's Energy Lab – "Clean Energy International Incubation Centre (CEIIC)" to support innovative and clean energy technology programmes in Kerala. The Government of Kerala signed this agreement through Kerala Development & Innovation Strategy Council (KDISC) and Energy Management Centre (EMC).
- The EMC Kerala represents the Power Department agencies including the Kerala State Electricity Board, Electrical Inspectorate and ANERT (Agency for New and Renewable Energy Research and Technology). To establish a clean energy incubation centre to boost green energy development and energy conservation activities in Kerala.

#### **SBI-NCF-IGNCA sign MoU for Development of Atmanirbhar Bharat Centre for Design at Red Fort, Delhi**

- The State Bank of India (SBI) has signed a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Indira Gandhi Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) and National Culture Fund (NCF) of the Ministry of Culture, for Development of Atmanirbhar Bharat Centre for Design (ABCD) at L1 Barrack, Red Fort, in Delhi. The main objective of Project ABCD is to highlight, promote and celebrate the products that have the Geographical Indication sign to give a boost to Economic Value Addition to GI products from India.
- The ABCD project will be implemented by IGNCA, an autonomous organization under the Ministry of Culture through the ministry's NCF fund. SBI will sponsor the project under CSR with a contribution of Rs. 10 crores for the implementation of the ABCD Project.

#### **'India-ASEAN Digital Work Plan 2022' Approved In 2nd ASEAN Digital Ministers Meeting**

- India and ASEAN nations have approved a work plan titled India-ASEAN Digital Work Plan 2022, during the second ASEAN Digital Ministers' (ADGMIN) Meeting held virtually. The ADGMIN meeting was co-chaired by Devusinh Chauhan, Minister of State for Communications, Government of India, and Admiral Tin Aung San, Myanmar's Minister of Transport and Communications.



- India and ASEAN will jointly work to develop a system to combat the use of stolen and counterfeit mobile handsets, and a WiFi Access network interface for nationwide public internet.
- The plan also includes capacity building and knowledge sharing in emerging areas in Information and Communication Technologies such as Internet of Things, 5G, Advanced Satellite Communication and Cyber Forensics.

### India, Israel to create 150 villages-of-excellence around 29 joint agriculture projects

- The Government of India has joined hands with the Government of Israel to create 150 'Villages of Excellence' in 12 States of the country, to help farmers to adopt the latest technology in the farm sector. Israel would provide Technical assistance and other expertise to make agriculture a more profitable business.
- The 150 villages that are located around CoEs will be converted into 'Villages of Excellence.' Out of which, 75 villages are being taken up in the first year to commemorate the 75th year of India's independence. Already, the Israeli government has established 29 Centres of Excellence (CoEs) in 12 states.

## AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

### Dadasaheb Phalke International Film Festival Awards 2022 Announced

- The prestigious ceremony of Dadasaheb Phalke International Film Festival Awards 2022 was held on February 20. The event was held in Mumbai and the best performances from last year were honoured in the event this time. This year Dadasaheb Phalke International Film Festival Awards 2022 celebrated the opulence of Indian Cinema and also commemorated the 75 years of Independence or Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav.
- Best Film, Best Actor, Best Actress, Best Supporting Role, and Best Negative Role, were among the other titles that were given to the personalities of the Indian film fraternity.

#### Winners of Dadasaheb Phalke International Film Festival Awards 2022:

- Film of the Year Award: Pushpa: The Rise
- Best Film Award: Shershaah
- Best Actor Award: Ranveer Singh for film 83
- Best Actress Award: Kriti Sanon for film Mimi
- Outstanding Contribution to Films: Asha Parekh
- Critics Best Actor Award: Sidharth Malhotra
- Critics Best Actress Award: Kiara Advani
- Best Actor in Supporting Role Award: Satish Kaushik for film Kaagaz
- Best Actress in Supporting Role Award: Lara Dutta for film Bell-Bottom
- Best Actor in Negative Role Award: Aayush Sharma for film Antim: The Final Truth
- People's Choice Best Actor Award: Abhimanyu Dasani
- People's Choice Best Actress Award: Radhika Madan
- Best Debut Award: Ahan Shetty for film Tadap
- Best Playback Singer Male Award: Vishal Mishra
- Best Playback Singer Female Award: Kanika Kapoor
- Critics Best Film Award: Sardar Udham Singh



- Best Director Award: Ken Ghosh for film State of Siege: Temple Attack
- Best Cinematographer Award: Jayakrishna Gummadi for film Haseena Dilruba
- Best International Feature Film Award: Another Round
- Best Short Film Award: Pauli
- Best Actor in Web Series Award: Manoj Bajpayee for The Family Man 2
- Best Actress in Web Series Award: Raveena Tandon for Aranyak
- Best Web Series Award: Candy
- Best Actor in Television Series Award: Shaheer Sheikh for Kuch Rang Pyar Ke Aise Bhi
- Best Actress in Television Series Award: Shraddha Arya for Kundali Bhagya
- Television Series of the Year Award: Anupama
- Most Promising Actor in Television Series Award: Dheeraj Dhoopar for Kundali Bhagya
- Most Promising Actress in Television Series Award: Rupali Ganguly for Anupama

#### **IBA's 17th Annual Banking Technology Awards 2021**

- Indian Banks' Association (IBA) has announced the IBA's 17th Annual Banking Technology Awards 2021. In total South Indian Bank has won 6 awards in the event. This year's IBA Awards celebrating "Next Gen Banking" has recognized technologies and practices in the banking industry that have demonstrated a high degree of innovation over the past year.

#### **Karnataka Bank bags awards at tech conference**

- Karnataka Bank has bagged three awards at the 17th Annual Banking Technology Conference and Awards: 2020-21 Next-Gen Banking, instituted by Indian Banks' Association (IBA). The bank has won the awards under categories: Best Technology Bank of the Year; Best Fintech Adoption; and Best Use of AI/ML & Data Analytics — all runner-ups.
- With this focus on technology and digital transformation, the bank endeavours to emerge as 'Digital Bank of Future' all the while retaining its core values and identity built on more than 98 years of purposeful banking history.

#### **RailTel Corp wins 'Plaque Shield' ICAI Awards for Excellence**

- RailTel has bagged the ICAI award for excellence in financial reporting for the year 2020-21 in Public Sector Entities Category. The company was adjudged as the winner in the category "plaque". Financial Reporting includes the preparation and presentation of financial information. Effective Financial Reporting plays a significant role in accelerating the economic growth of a country as the information provided through annual reports enables the management and other relevant stakeholders in taking various effective business, investment, regulatory decisions.
- The award was given by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI), the premier accounting body which has been holding the annual competition for these awards since 1958. This award has been instituted with a view to promote better standards in the preparation and presentation of information in the financial statements.



## ICICI Bank's Sandeep Bakhshi is Business Standard Banker of the Year

- Sandeep Bakhshi has been named the Business Standard Banker of the Year 2020-21. He is the managing director (MD) and chief executive officer (CEO) of ICICI Bank. The winner was chosen by a jury of 5 members chaired by former Reserve Bank of India deputy governor S S Mundra. For 2020-21, ICICI Bank reported a net profit of Rs 16,193 crore against Rs 7,931 crore during the previous financial year.
- Banks with an asset size of Rs 50,000 crore and above as of March 2021.
- 10 per cent or more growth in profits prior to provisioning in the past one-, two- and three-year periods. Only 10 banks qualified, and that was further brought down to seven.

## Nitin Gadkari to receive Late Madhavrao Limaye award

- Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari will be facilitated for the first time with the 18th late Madhavrao Limaye award in the category of Karyakram Khaasdar (Efficient Member of Parliament) for the year 2020-21. This award will be facilitated by Nashik Public Library, Sarvajanik Vachanalay. Earlier, the award was given to Karyaksham Aamdaar, an efficient Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) from Maharashtra.
- The Sarvajanik Vachanalay annually selects one of the members of Vidhan Parishad (Lok Sabha), Vidhan Sabha (Rajya Sabha) for the Efficient MLA or Member of Parliament (MP) Award. The award has been instituted in the memory of Limaye by his daughter Dr. Shobha Nerlikar. The award consists of Rs 50,000 in cash and a memento.

## RANKING

### USCC-GIPC's International IP Index 2022 - India Ranked 43rd

- India has improved its overall IP score from 38.4 per cent to 38.6 per cent, and the country is ranked 43 out of 55 countries on the International Intellectual Property Index 2022. This index was released by the Global Innovation Policy Center of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. In July 2021, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Commerce released a Review of the Intellectual Property Rights Regime in India. This review is a welcome development and offers a comprehensive and detailed study of the strengths and weaknesses of India's national IP environment.

### India among top 5 economies for ease of starting new business

- The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) 2021/2022 report, unveiled at the Dubai Expo, India is among the top five easiest places to start a new business. The survey of Indian respondents, who answered questions on their entrepreneurial activity, attitudes to enterprise and view of their local entrepreneurial ecosystem, found that 82% think it is easy to start a business, placing India fourth globally. It was topped by Saudi Arabia and followed by Netherlands & Sweden.
- India has topped amongst low-income economies (according to GDP per capita) on different Entrepreneurial Framework Conditions such as Entrepreneurial Finance, Ease of Access to Finance, Government Policy: Support and Relevance; and Government Support:



Taxes and Bureaucracy; while Government Entrepreneurial Programmes was ranked second highest.

### **Democracy Index 2021: India ranked 46th**

- India has ranked 46th position in the 2021 Democracy Index's global ranking, according to The Economist Intelligence Unit. With the highest score of 9.75, Norway topped the Democracy Index 2021 by Economist Intelligence. The list was published on February 10, 2022. India scored 6.91 to rank 46th on the list. Our neighbour Pakistan has been placed further below in the hybrid regime with a rank of 104.

### **J&K, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Tripura topped in attacks on journalists in 2021**

- The India Press Freedom Report 2021 was recently released by the Rights and Risks Analysis Group. According to the report, 13 media houses and newspapers were targeted in the country, 108 journalists were attacked, and 6 journalists were killed. Jammu and Kashmir, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Tripura topped the list of States and Union Territories where journalists and media houses were targeted in 2021.
- 24 journalists were attacked physically, obstructed, threatened, and harassed for doing their work. All these attacks were made by public officials. This includes police attacks as well. 17 of these attacks were police attacks. 44 FIRs were registered against journalists in 2021. Of this 21 were registered under Section 153 of IPC.

### **India leads in digital skills readiness: Salesforce Global Index**

- Salesforce, a leading player in Customer Relationship Management (CRM), published the Global Digital Skills Index 2022 which highlights the growing global digital skills crisis and the need for action. India has scored 63 out of 100, leads the digital skills readiness, and has the highest readiness index among the 19 countries. The average global readiness score was 33 out of 100.
- The 2022 Global Digital Skills Index, is based on a survey on around 23000 workers across 19 countries about digital skills, including their impact on the future of work, concerns about job readiness, and the significance of continuous learning.
- Three major skills gaps were identified in the 2022 global index: The everyday skills gap, The generational skills gap, and The leadership and workforce skills gap.

### **India's unemployment rate drops to 6.57% in Jan, lowest since March 2021: CMIE**

- The unemployment rate in India in January 2022 fell sharply to 6.57%, according to the data from the economic think-tank, the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE). This is the lowest rate witnessed since March 2021. In December 2021, the unemployment rate rose to a four-month high of 7.91%, compared to 6.97% in November. CMIE is a Mumbai-based independent non-government entity that serves both as an economic think-tank as well as a business information company.
- Telangana recorded the lowest unemployment rate in January at 0.7%.
- This was followed by Gujarat at 1.2%, Meghalaya at 1.5%, Odisha at 1.8% and Karnataka at 2.9%.



## **Maharashtra has highest number of SC entrepreneurs**

- Maharashtra has topped India's list in the number of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) owned by entrepreneurs from the Scheduled Castes with as many as 96,805 enterprises. Tamil Nadu with 42,997 enterprises and Rajasthan with 38,517 units occupy the second and third slots, according to the data furnished by the Office of the Development Commissioner in the Union Ministry of MSME.
- The fourth, fifth and sixth slots belong to Uttar Pradesh (36,913 units), Karnataka (28,803 enterprises) and Punjab (24,503 units) respectively. Generally, the proportion of enterprises owned by Scheduled Caste entrepreneurs in the overall national tally of MSMEs is 6%.

## **BOOKS AND AUTHORS**

### **Book 'The Great Tech Game' Authored by Anirudh Suri**

- Indian author, Anirudh Suri has come out with his new book titled "The Great Tech Game: Shaping Geopolitics and the Destinies of Nations." It has been published by HarperCollins India. In this book, the author lays out a roadmap for how any country must develop its own strategic plan to succeed in this technology-dominant era.
- In this book, the author provides a coherent framework outlining the key drivers that will determine the ability of a nation to succeed in this technology-dominant era. He lays out a roadmap for how any country must develop its own strategic plan for success. Leaders must develop a new set of capabilities to understand and take advantage of these trends and create enabling environments for their nations to not be left behind. A particularly challenging aspect will be the ability of countries to define and manage the roles of state and non-state actors in a global race for technological leadership and success.

### **Book 'The Founders: The Story of Paypal' authored by Jimmy Soni**

- A new book titled "The Founders: The Story of Paypal and the Entrepreneurs Who Shaped Silicon Valley", authored by author Jimmy Soni and published by Simon & Schuster released soon. It highlights the story of multinational digital-payments company PayPal and how it covered the journey of a start-up that turned into one of the most successful companies of all time, worth over USD 70 billion today. It also offers colourful anecdotes about famous people like Elon Musk, Peter Thiel, and Reid Hoffman.

### **Book 'A Nation To Protect' authored by Priyam Gandhi Mody**

- The book titled "A Nation To Protect" authored by Priyam Gandhi Mody was launched by Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya. The book highlights the role of PM Narendra Modi during the Covid crisis in the past two years. The book documents the Centre's leadership in this unprecedented time and how it tided the nation through the crisis.
- During the launch, Union minister Mansukh Mandaviya said he believed that 'A Nation to Protect' describes the reality as it unfolded during the last two years. "We have seen what happens when there is a true leadership with a vision," said Mandaviya referring to PM Modi.



**Book titled “Dignity in a Digital Age: Making Tech Work for All of Us” authored by Ro Khanna**

- A new book titled “Dignity in a Digital Age: Making Tech Work for All of Us” has authored by Ro Khanna released. The book highlights the effects of changing lifestyle patterns of Americans due to technological progress. It also mentioned about the digital divide i.e., unequal access to technology and revenue, as it is one of the most pressing issues faced by the United States. Ro Khanna is an Indian-American who is a US Congressman representing the California district that includes the Silicon Valley region.

**Book ‘How to Prevent the Next Pandemic’ authored by Bill Gates**

- A book titled ‘How to Prevent the Next Pandemic’ has authored by Bill Gates will be published this year in May 2022. In the book Bill Gates has written about specific steps that can only stop future pandemics but, in the process, provide better health care for everyone around the world.
- His last book, “How to Avoid a Climate Disaster: The Solutions We Have and the Breakthroughs We Need”, was released in February 2021. The book, to be published by Penguin Random House internationally and Knopf in the US.

**Book “India–Africa Relations: Changing Horizons” authored by Rajiv Bhatia**

- Ambassador Rajiv Kumar Bhatia, a Distinguished Fellow, Foreign Policy Studies Programme at Gateway House, has authored a new book (his 3rd book) titled “India-Africa Relations: Changing Horizons” which explores the emergence and assertion of Africa as a significant actor and stakeholder in global affairs and the transformation of the relationship between India and Africa.
- The book also provides a detailed exploration of India–the Africa partnership in all its critical dimensions. The book describes the historical backdrop and shared colonial past to focus on and contextualise the evolution of the India – Africa engagement.

**Novel ‘Atharva’: The Origin’ authored by Ramesh Thamilmani**

- Virzu Studios in association with MIDAS Deals Pvt Ltd has released the motion poster of its upcoming graphic novel, Atharva – The Origin. Cricketer Mahendra Singh Dhoni has been portrayed as the superhero Atharva in this graphic novel. The motion poster features a rugged looking Dhoni, giving fans a glimpse into the world of Atharva and also a sneak peek into the first look of him as a superhero.
- The graphic novel authored by Ramesh Thamilmani features over 150 lifelike illustrations which present the gripping, racy narrative. It is produced by Vincent Adaikalaraj and Ashok Manor. Reportedly, the makers are also planning to make a web-series based on the novel.

**Book ‘Golden Boy Neeraj Chopra’ authored by Navdeep Singh Gill**

- A short biography of Indian athlete Neeraj Chopra has titled ‘Golden Boy Neeraj Chopra’ authored by sports author Navdeep Singh Gill has been released. Neeraj Chopra won a Gold medal in Javelin Throw at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. The biography on Tokyo Olympics-2021 gold medalist Neeraj Chopra was released by the chairperson of Punjab Kala Parishad



Surjit Patar and president of Punjabi Sahit Akademi Lakhwinder Singh Johal, amid the presence of the author and his family members.

- The book has 72 pages and covers the life history and achievements of Neeraj Chopra right from his childhood to the Tokyo Olympics. The book very aptly covers his sporting techniques, numerous awards and contemporaries in different chapters with coloured photos in each chapter.

#### **Coloniality, Civilisation, Constitution' authored by J Sai Deepak**

- A Trilogy book series titled, 'India, That is Bharat: Coloniality, Civilisation, Constitution' is authored by J Sai Deepak and published by Bloomsbury India. The 1st part was released on 15th August 2021, is set to launch the 2nd part in June 2022. Whereas, the 3rd and last parts will be released in June 2023.
- It is the first part of a comprehensive trilogy, which examines the impact of European 'colonial consciousness' (or 'coloniality'), on Bharat (India). It highlights how colonialism changes the socio-religious culture, history, education, language and racial patterns in India.
- India, That Is Bharat, the first book of a comprehensive trilogy, explores the influence of European 'colonial consciousness' (or 'coloniality'), in particular its religious and racial roots, on Bharat as the successor state to the Indic civilisation and the origins of the Indian Constitution.

### **BANKING AND ECONOMY**

#### **BSE to introduce T+1 stock settlement from Feb 25**

- India has become the second country after China to implement the T+1 stock settlement mechanism in a phased manner from 25 February. The system will be starting with select stocks and then gradually adding others to the fold. Instruction regarding this was issued by SEBI on January 01, 2022. Before this, the settlement period of stocks in India was T+2, i.e. two days after the actual buy/selling of stock.
- T means the trade/transaction day i.e. the day on which stock is brought/sold. and here T+1 means that the actual stock settlement will happen on the next day i.e. +1 day. Ex: You buy a stock on Monday, you will get it in your Demat account Tuesday.

#### **GDP Growth Likely To Be Around 8.3% In FY22: Brickwork Ratings**

- Brickworks Ratings has revised downwards India's GDP growth forecast to 8.3 per cent in the current fiscal 2021-22 (FY22). Earlier in January 2022, the rating agency had estimated this between 8.5-9 per cent. Brickwork Ratings is one of the seven Sebi-registered credit rating agencies (CRA).
- The latest growth indicators suggest a loss of economic momentum in recent months. The rapid spread of Covid in January 2022 led to renewed restrictions on economic activities, dampening the revival process, particularly in contact-intensive sectors.



#### **Union Bank, NPCI launch credit card for MSME borrowers**

- The Union Bank of India has launched the 'Union MSME RuPay Credit Card' in association with the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI). It is a first of its kind initiative in the industry, to provide simplified and digital delivery of Finance to Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), to meet their business-related operational expenses.
- The dedicated card for MSMEs will be available to eligible borrowers of the Union Bank of India. The Union MSME RuPay Credit Card was launched by Union Minister for Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises, Shri Narayan Rane on February 25, 2022, at the two days MSME Conclave being held in Sindhudurg district of Maharashtra.

#### **Reserve Bank asks NBFCs to implement core financial services solution by Sept 2025**

- The Reserve Bank of India recently directed to all the non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) – in the middle and upper layers with 10 or more 'Fixed point service delivery units' as of October 1, 2022 must implement Core Financial Services Solution (CFSS) by September 30, 2025, similar to the Core Banking Solution (CBS) used by banks.
- According to an RBI notification released on 23rd of February 2022, "The CFSS will enable seamless customer interface in digital offerings and transactions relating to products and services with anywhere/anytime facility, enable integration of NBFC functions, provide centralised database and accounting records, and be able to generate suitable MIS, both for internal purposes and regulatory reporting."
- The time frame for upper and middle layer NBFCs has been stipulated by September end 2025, the RBI directed the NBFC-UL to ensure that the CFSS is implemented in at least 70 % of 'Fixed point service delivery units' on or before September 30, 2024.
- CFSS deployment is voluntary for base layer NBFCs and middle and upper layer NBFCs with fewer than 10 fixed point service delivery units.

#### **India may grow at 9.5% in 2022: Moody's**

- Moody's has revised India's economic growth estimates in the Current Year 2022 upwards to 9.5 per cent from 7 per cent on stronger than expected recovery after a lockdown in 2020 and Covid-19's Delta wave in 2021. It maintained a forecast for 5.5 per cent growth in CY2023. In its update on Global Macro Outlook 2022-23 today, Moody's said sales tax collection, retail activity and Purchasing Managers Index suggest solid momentum. However, high oil prices and supply distortions remain a drag on growth for India.

#### **RBI to conduct sell/buy swap auction for \$5 bn**

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has announced a US Dollar/Rupee two-year sell-buy swap auction with a view to elongating the maturity profile of its forward book and smoothening the receivables relating to forwarding assets. The Central bank will undertake a sell/buy swap auction of \$5 billion, which will enable access to a wider set of market participants.
- RBI will conduct a spot sale to sell USD 5 billion to banks in exchange of rupees, through this auction on March 10, 2022. On March 11, 2024, it will make a forward purchase from banks in two years. The forward purchase will help in reducing RBI's current foreign exchange reserves and increase its two-year forward USD purchases.



## **RBI cautioned People against using car pooling app sRide**

- Reserve bank of India (RBI) has cautioned the public against carpooling app sRide. The caution against sRide App, stating that this firm was operating a semi-closed pre-paid instrument, without receiving authorization from the central bank, under Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007.
- sRide Tech Private Limited is a registered company, with a registered office in Gurgaon, Haryana. This company is operating a semi-closed (non-closed) pre-paid instrument (wallet) through its 'sRide' carpooling app. Thus, RBI cautioned that persons dealing with the app will be doing at their own risk.
- sRide app is a carpooling mobile application, that connects people within the community to share rides. The app help users in sharing the cost of travel, increasing mobility, reducing travel time, and building communities. The app also helps in using existing infrastructure, reducing parking needs, traffic and emissions for cities and organisations.

## **India Ratings pegs FY22 GDP growth at 8.6% on data revision**

- India Ratings has revised downwards its GDP growth forecast for 2021-22 to 8.6 per cent from the consensus 9.2 per cent projected earlier. According to an India rating analysis, National Statistical Organisation (NSO) is likely to peg the FY22 real gross domestic product growth at Rs 147.2 lakh crore. This translates into a GDP growth rate of 8.6 per cent, down from the 9.2 per cent forecast in the first advance estimate released on January 7, 2022.
- The major reason for the likely downward revision is the upward revision of FY21 GDP to Rs 135.6 lakh crore in the first revised estimate of national income for FY21, which was released on January 31, 2022.

## **Alternative investment policy: Sebi rejigs panel**

- Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) has reconstituted its alternative investment policy advisory committee, which advises the capital markets regulator on a range of issues that impact further development of the (Alternative Investment Fund) AIF space. The committee has now 20 members. The panel, which was constituted by Sebi in March 2015, earlier had 22 members. Till now, the committee has submitted three reports on the AIF industry.
- The committee is chaired by Infosys co-founder N R Narayana Murthy. Apart from Murthy, the committee includes members from Sebi, Ministry of Finance, AIF players and industry associations.
- Gopal Srinivasan, chairman and managing director, TVS Capital Funds; Gopal Jain, co-founder and managing partner, Gaja Capital; Vipul Roongta, managing director and CEO, HDFC Capital Advisors; and Renuka Ramnath, chairperson, Indian Private Equity and Venture Capital Association (IVCA) are among the members of the panel, as per Sebi.

## **RWE and Tata Power to develop offshore wind projects in India**

- Tata Power has collaborated with Germany-based RWE Renewable GmbH to explore the potential for joint development of offshore wind projects in India. A Memorandum of



Understanding (MoU) in this regard was signed between Tata Power Renewable Energy Limited, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Tata Power, and RWE, one of the world's leaders in offshore wind. This is in line with Government of India's announcement of achieving 30 gigawatts (GW) of offshore wind installations by 2030.

- India is an unexplored and highly attractive market to develop opportunities for offshore wind as it has a large coastline of about 7,600 kilometres. RWE and Tata Power Renewable Energy possess complementary strengths and will enable the establishment of a competitive offshore wind market in India.

#### **Undersea cable push: Airtel joins SEA-ME-WE-6 consortium; Jio's IAX project to land in Maldives**

- Telecom operator, Bharti Airtel Ltd has announced that it has joined South East Asia–Middle East–Western Europe 6 (SEA-ME-WE-6) undersea cable consortium, in a bid to scale up its high-speed global network capacity and serve India's fast-growing digital economy. It shall be anchoring 20 per cent of the overall investment in the cable system. Through SEA-ME-WE-6, Airtel will be able to add 100 TBps capacity to its global network. The telco will land the SEA-ME-WE-6 cable system in India at new landing stations in Mumbai and Chennai. Apart from Airtel, there are 12 other global members in the consortium.

#### **SBI, BoB, PNB and Canara Bank pick up stake in IDRCL**

- State Bank of India (SBI), Punjab National Bank (PNB), Bank of Baroda (BoB), Union Bank of India (UBI), Canara Bank, and Bank of Maharashtra (BoM) have announced their subscription to the shares of India Debt Resolution Company Ltd (IDRCL). Public Sector Banks (PSBs) and Public FIs will hold a maximum of 49% in stake of IDRCL while the remaining stake will be with private-sector lenders. The NARCL has been incorporated under the Companies Act, and public sector banks will hold 51 per cent in NARCL.

#### **India's FY22 GDP Growth Seen At 8.8% Says SBI Ecowrap**

- State Bank of India (SBI) Research Report, Ecowrap, has revised downwards the gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate of India for FY22 (2021-22) to 8.8 percent. Earlier this was estimated at 9.3 per cent. The report projects the GDP to grow at 5.8 per cent in the third quarter (Q3) of FY2021-2022 (October-December).
- The country's economy expanded by 8.4 per cent in the second quarter of 2021-22, to cross pre-pandemic levels. However, the GDP growth in the July-September period was slower than the 20.1 per cent expansion in the previous quarter.

#### **RBI allows NBFCs time till September 30 to comply with new NPA norms**

- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has extended the deadline for non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) to comply with new Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) classification norms (the norms are issued by RBI in November 2021) to September 2022 from the earlier deadline of March 2022. As per the 'Prudential norms on Income Recognition, Asset Classification and Provisioning pertaining to Advances – Clarifications', which was issued by RBI on November 15, 2021, the loan accounts that are classified as NPAs could be upgraded as 'standard' assets only if entire arrears of interest and principal are paid by the borrower.



- Currently, RBI has clarified that, the definition of 'out of order' as applicable to all loan products being offered as an OD facility, including those not meant for business purposes and/or which entail interest repayments as the only credits.
- The '90 days period' for determination of the 'out of order' status of a Cash credit/Overdraft (CC/OD) account should be inclusive of the day for which the day-end process is being run.

### **JP Morgan is first bank to enter the metaverse with virtual lounge**

- JPMorgan has become the world's first bank to set up shop in the metaverse. The largest bank in the US has opened a lounge in the blockchain-based world Decentraland. Users can create their virtual avatars, build virtual spaces and roam in the lounge christened 'Onyx Lounge' after its suite of Ethereum-based services. The lounge also features a digital image of the bank's CEO Jamie Dimon.
- Metaverse is a virtual universe where users can do multiple activities like socialising, shopping or even attending events through their avatar. Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR) headsets are becoming more pocket-friendly, and both technologies have together contributed to a significantly enhanced user experience.

### **Jio Platforms picks up 25% stake in US-based Platforms**

- Jio Platforms has picked up a 25% stake in US-based deep-tech startup company TWO Platforms for \$15 million. Two Platforms is an artificial reality company that focuses on building interactive and immersive AI experiences. The two companies have joined hands to fast track the adoption of new technologies and build disruptive technologies such as AI, metaverse and mixed realities.
- TWO's platform enables real-time AI voice and video calls, digital humans, immersive spaces and lifelike gaming. It plans to bring its interactive AI technologies first to consumer applications followed by entertainment and gaming, as well as enterprise solutions including retail, services, education, health and wellness. The platform was founded by Indian-origin computer scientist Pranav Mistry.

### **SEBI makes separation of chairperson and MD, CEO roles voluntary; experts evaluate stance**

- Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) board has decided to make provision for separation of the roles of chairperson and MD/CEO as 'voluntary' against 'mandatory' earlier. The market regulator had in June 2017 set up a committee on corporate governance under Uday Kotak with a view to seek recommendations to further enhance corporate governance norms for listed companies.
- One of the recommendations that the Committee came out with was the separation of the roles of chairperson and MD/CEO of listed companies. This was proposed to provide a better and more balanced governance structure by enabling more effective and objective supervision of the management. The Sebi board, in its meeting in March 2018 approved the proposal for the top 500-listed entities. Later the deadline for compliance was extended by two years in January 2020.



### **Yes Bank launched 'Agri Infinity' programme**

- Private sector lender, Yes Bank has launched an 'Agri Infinity' programme for digital financing solutions in the food and agriculture sector ecosystem by mentoring entrepreneurial ventures in this field. Agri-fintech start-ups working on financial innovations across the food and agriculture value chain are eligible to apply under this programme and can work with Yes Bank for digital solutions.
- Through the initiative, a select cohort of startups will not only receive mentoring by veteran bankers for experiential co-development but also get access to YES BANK's digital banking infrastructure and network, collaborative opportunities to pilot new solutions and fundraising advisory. Those involved in originations, farmer on-boarding, farmer KYC, credit scoring, risk assessment, monitoring and mitigation, disbursement and recovery solutions and cash management system, among others, can apply.

### **SIDBI launches 'waste to wealth creation' programme in Bengal**

- Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) has launched the 'Waste to Wealth Creation' programme for women in the Sundarbans in West Bengal. In this, the women will make ornaments and showpieces from the fish scales. SIDBI will extend benefits to 50 women indirectly generating revenues from alternate livelihoods.
- Under this programme, Later, these women are expected to become a trainer for replicating and disseminating the knowledge among other aspirants. This is a part of mission Swavalamban of SIDBI that aims to support artisans to become sustainable.

### **Centre cuts agri-cess on crude palm oil**

- With a view to provide further relief to consumers and to keep in check any further rise in the prices of domestic edible oils, the Centre has reduced the agri-cess for Crude Palm Oil from 7.5 per cent to 5 per cent. The current basic rate of import duty of zero per cent on Crude Palm Oil, Crude Soyabean oil, and Crude Sunflower Oil up to the 30th of September this year. This will give relief to consumers and prevent a further rise in the price of domestic edible oils.
- The 12.5 per cent import duty on refined palm oils, 17.5 per cent on refined soyabean oil, and 17.5 per cent on refined sunflower oil will continue in effect until September 30, 2022. Furthermore, under the Essential Commodities Act of 1955, the government has set stock limit levels on edible oils and oilseeds up to June 30th of this year.

### **Indias retail inflation accelerates to 6.01% in January, hits 7-month high**

- India's retail inflation, as measured by the consumer price index (CPI), accelerated to 6.01% in the month of January, breaching the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) tolerance band of 6%, albeit marginally. The surge in inflation print was driven by higher consumer goods and telecom prices along with a comparatively low rate a year ago.
- Inflation, as measured by the consumer price index (CPI) was 5.66% in the preceding month of December. The Central bank's monetary policy has been given the mandate to maintain



annual inflation at 4% until March 31, 2026, with an upper tolerance of 6% and a lower tolerance of 2%.

### **ABG Shipyard, its directors booked by CBI in Rs 22,842-cr bank fraud case**

- Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has booked ABG Shipyard for an alleged Rs 22,842-crore financial fraud. ABG Shipyard is the flagship entity of ABG Group. It has cheated a consortium of 28 banks and financial institutions of Rs. 22,842 crore. This is the biggest bank fraud case ever registered by the CBI. The case pertained to funds gotten and misused during the 2012-17 period. Rishi Agarwal, the then CMD of ABG Shipyard has been named in the FIR.
- This consortium was led by ICICI Bank. Of this, ABG Shipyard owes Rs. 7,089 crore to ICICI Bank, Rs. 3,639 crores to IDBI Bank, Rs. 2,925 crores to State Bank, Rs. 1,614 crores to Bank of Baroda, and Rs. 1,244 crore to Punjab National Bank, among others. The Funds given by these banks were used by the executives of ABG Shipyard for purposes other than for which they were given and they were engaged in diversion of funds, misappropriation and criminal breach of trust. The same has been revealed in a report submitted by M/s. Ernst & Young LP.

### **RBL Bank partners with Creditas Solutions to automate collections**

- RBL Bank has partnered with Creditas Solutions for its 'Neo Collections' platform. The bank will utilise the SaaS-based platform to accelerate efficiency in collections across the loan cycle. The platform is built to automate strategies for reaching out to customers individually in an empathetic manner and motivate them to repay loans.
- The platform can also determine the best course of action for every customer by offering customised payment plans to service debt, schedule an EMI plan or opt for payment resolution options. The Neo Collections Platform, a Do It Yourself (DIY) debt management platform, will help our customers seamlessly monitor, manage and pay their dues.

### **Sebi revamps advisory committee on Investor Protection and Education Fund**

- Securities and Exchange Board of India has restructured its advisory committee on Investor Protection and Education Fund (IPEF), under the chairmanship of G Mahalingam. The advisory committee on IPEF is an eight-member committee that will take G Mahalingam, former Whole Time Member of SEBI, as its new Chairperson. Members of Committee: Vijay Kumar Venkataraman, Mrin Agarwal, A Balasubramanian, M G Parameswaran, GP Garg, N Hariharan and Jayanta Jash.
- In 2013, the committee was established by the SEBI to find out ways and means to best utilize the investor protection and education fund. Earlier the committee was headed by Abraham Koshy, former professor of Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad (IIM-A), Gujarat.
- The committee is mandated to recommend investor education and protection activities for the utilization of the SEBI Investor Protection and Education Fund (IPEF).



## **RBI reopens allotment of investment limit under the Voluntary Retention Route**

- The Reserve Bank of India had introduced the Voluntary Retention Route (VRR) for investments by Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) in debts in 2019 with an investment limit of Rs 1,50,000 crore. Out of this, around Rs, 1,49,995 crore have been availed so far in three tranches. Now RBI has increased this investment limit in VRR from Rs. 1,50,000 crore to Rs. 2,50,000 crore.
- The investment limit under VRR has been increased to Rs 2,50,000 crore.
- The investment limit available for fresh allotment shall accordingly be Rs 1,04,800 crore (net of extant allotments and adjustments); and shall be allotted under the VRR-Combined category.

## **RBI kept the repo rate unchanged at 4.0 Percent**

- The Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) headed by Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das kept the repo rate unchanged at 4 per cent for the 10th consecutive time while maintaining an 'accommodative stance' as long as necessary. The reverse repo rate will continue to be 3.35 per cent. The central bank had last revised the policy rate on May 22, 2020, in an off-policy cycle to perk up demand by cutting the interest rate to a historic low.
- Reserve Bank of India conducted the 6th and the last Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meeting for 2021-22 between February 8-10, 2022. The next meeting of the MPC is scheduled during April 6-8, 2022.

## **India in global gold buying spree; RBI 2nd largest buyer of yellow metal**

- The largest buyer, the Central Bank of Thailand, bought 90 metric tonnes of gold while RBI bought 77.5 metric tonnes taking its total gold reserve to 754.1 tonnes at the end of December 2021. When it comes to gold buying, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) emerged as the second-largest buyer of yellow metal among the world's Central Banks in 2021. As per Goldhub, India's official gold reserves is the ninth-largest in the world. Goldhub is the official website of the World Gold Council that maintains all the data regarding precious metals.
- At the end of December 2021, RBI gold reserves stood at 754.1 tonnes, which amounts to 6.22 per cent of India's forex reserves. As per RBI data, India's total reserves at the end of December 31, 2021, stood at \$633.61 billion, including gold reserves worth \$39.405 billion.

## **Razorpay acquires majority stake in Malaysian fintech startup Curlec**

- Razorpay has expanded into South-East Asia with the acquisition of a majority stake in a Malaysian fintech firm Curlec, valuing the company between \$19-20 million. Razorpay expects to complete the full acquisition in the next one-and-a-half years. The Kuala Lumpur-based, Curlec builds solutions for recurring payments for businesses. This marks Razorpay's fourth acquisition overall and its first in the international markets.
- This acquisition will allow us to quickly ramp up and start scaling in Southeast Asia as a market. Curlec has been powering recurring payments for multiple companies in the



Malaysian market. With them as part of this team, we will have a local team that understands the nuances of the market in Malaysia and Southeast Asia at large.

#### **PM CARES Fund corpus triples to Rs 10,990.17 crore in FY 2020-21**

- The total corpus under the PM CARES Funds in 2020-21 was Rs 10,990.17 crore. While Rs 3,976.17 crore was spent from the fund in 2020-21, according to the latest audited statement of PM CARES Funds. As on March 31, 2021, the Fund had an unspent balance of Rs 7,013.99 crore. The government has used a part of the money to buy medical equipment, including ventilators, to boost the battle against the C-19 and has also provided relief to migrants.
- The highest amount was spent on Procurement of 6.6 crore doses of C-19 vaccine i.e. Rs 1,392.82 crore. The Fund was established on March 27, 2020. PM CARES fund is a dedicated national fund with the primary objective of dealing with any kind of emergency or distress situation like posed by the C-19 pandemic. Prime Minister is the ex-officio Chairman of the PM CARES Fund. The fund was set up as a public charitable trust “keeping in mind the need for having a dedicated national fund with the primary objective of dealing with any kind of emergency or distress situation, like posed by the C-19 pandemic, and to provide relief to the affected”.

#### **RBI to observe February 14-18, 2022 as Financial Literacy week 2022**

- The Reserve Bank of India will observe February 14-18, 2022 as Financial Literacy week 2022. Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has been conducting Financial Literacy Week (FLW) every year since 2016 to propagate financial education messages on a particular theme across the country. Banks have been advised to disseminate the information and create awareness among its customers and the general public. The theme of Financial Literacy week 2022 is: “Go Digital, Go Secure”. The theme is aligned with one of the strategic objectives of the National Strategy for Financial Education: 2020-2025.

#### **Cyber Insurance to Fight Against Online Frauds: Features of ICICI Lombard Airtel Payments Bank Insurance**

- ICICI Lombard General Insurance has partnered with Airtel Payments Bank to offer cyber insurance to customers of the bank. This Cyber Insurance policy provides financial protection to customers against potential financial fraud relating to banking, credit or debit card; identity theft; phishing or email spoofing etc. Airtel Payments Bank customers can purchase this cyber insurance policy within minutes using the Airtel Thanks app.
- The insurance comes with zero waiting period and allows users to make multiple claims multiple times during the policy tenure, within the limits of the insured amount opted for.
- The policy will provide a 90-day discovery period followed by a seven-day reporting period.
- This means that if the insured discovers an unauthorised transaction processed from their card or account on the 90th day from the transaction date, they can still report it in the next seven days to the issuing bank or mobile wallet company.



### **Kotak General Insurance and CARS24 offer Motor Insurance for used cars**

- Kotak Mahindra General Insurance Company has signed an agreement with Cars24 Financial Services Private Limited (CARS24 Financial Services) to provide motor insurance services to used car buyers. Under the partnership, used car buyers from Cars24 will be directly provided with Kotak General Insurance's comprehensive motor insurance plans.
- The partnership will provide a trustworthy and faster way to avail of motor insurance with a fully digital insurance process. Customers can also avail of cashless claims servicing at Kotak General Insurance's platform of garages and enable convenient claim settlement services.

### **Asian Development Bank lends record USD 4.6 bn loans to India in 2021**

- As per the data official released by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), it provided a record USD 4.6 billion in sovereign lending to India in 2021. This included USD 1.8 billion towards coronavirus disease (C-19) pandemic response. The ADB's regular funding programme to India is made to support transport, urban development, finance, agriculture, and skills building. The ADB's project portfolio in 2021 reflected the Indian government's focus on transforming cities into economically vibrant and sustainable communities.
- The USD 4.6 billion was committed by ADB for 17 loans. The USD 1.8 billion C-19-related assistance included USD 1.5 billion for vaccine procurement and USD 300 million to strengthen primary health care in urban areas and the country's future pandemic preparedness.

### **Export Import Bank of India, Sri Lanka sign \$500-million loan agreement**

- Export-Import Bank of India (Exim Bank) on behalf of the government of India, extended a line of credit of \$500 million to the government of the socialist republic of Sri Lanka for financing the purchase of petroleum products. The fund will be used by the Island nation for the purchase of petroleum products. With the signing of this new LOC agreement, the total LOC extended by Exim Bank to Sri Lanka till date has reached 10, taking the total value of LOCs extended to USD 2.18 billion.
- With the signing of this LoC agreement, Exim Bank has now in place 276 lines of credit, covering 61 countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), with credit commitments of around \$27.84 billion, available for financing exports from India. Besides promoting India's exports, Exim Bank's LoCs enable the demonstration of Indian expertise and project execution capabilities in emerging markets.

### **RBI cancels licence of Nashik-based Independence Co-operative Bank**

- The Reserve Bank of India has cancelled the license of Independence Co-operative Bank Ltd., Nashik, Maharashtra w.e.f February 03, 2022. The major reason for the cancellation of the license by RBI is that bank does not have adequate capital and earning prospects. This means that it does not comply with the provisions of Section 11(1) and Section 22 (3) (d) read with Section 56 of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949.



- The bank has stopped operation from the close of business on February 3, putting depositors of the bank in trouble. They would however receive up to Rs five lakh from Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC), after the bank's liquidation.
- RBI has told the Commissioner for Cooperation and Registrar of Cooperative Societies in Maharashtra to issue an order for winding up the bank and appoint a liquidator. As per the data submitted by the bank, more than 99 per cent of the depositors are entitled to receive the full amount of their deposits from DICGC.

#### **CRISIL projects India's GDP growth for FY22 at 9.2% and for FY23 at 7.8%**

- Rating Agency CRISIL has made the following projections for the GDP growth rate of India:
- For 2021-22 (FY22) = 9.2%
- For 2022-23 (FY23)= 7.8%

#### **LIC ranked 10th most valued insurance brand globally: Brand Finance**

- As per a brand valuation report released by Brand Finance, Life Insurance Corporation has been ranked at 10th in the list of insurance brands globally. Ping An Insurance of China is at the top.
- LIC is the only Indian insurance company in the top 10 list. LIC has a valuation of USD 8.656 billion (around Rs 64,722 crore).
- As per Brand Finance, the market value of LIC will become Rs 43.40 lakh crore (USD 59.21 billion) by 2022, and Rs 58.9-lakh crore (USD 78.63 billion) by 2027.
- It must be noted that LIC was ranked as 206th most valuable brand in 2021 by Brand Finance.

#### **Patanjali and PNB launches co-branded contactless credit cards in partnership with RuPay**

- Patanjali Ayurved Ltd and Punjab National Bank (PNB) have launched a co-branded contactless credit card in partnership with the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI).
- The cards will be offered on the RuPay Platform of NPCI.
- The co-branded Rupay contactless credit cards are available in two variants which includes PNB RuPay Platinum and PNB RuPay Select.

#### **Government approves continuation of Scheme of Assistance to National Sports Federations with an outlay of Rs. 1575 crore**

- Central Government has approved the continuation of Scheme of Assistance to National Sports Federations (NSFs) for XV Finance Commission Cycle (2021-22 to 2025-26). The outlay of this scheme for the next five years will be Rs. 1575 crore.
- This scheme is managed by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports and it is the main source of funding for the preparation of national teams for all major national and international competitions including the Olympic Games.



**Tata Steel arm to buy govt stake in Neelachal Ispat for Rs 12,100 crore**

- Tata Group company, Tata Steel Long Products Ltd's (TSLP) has acquired Odisha-based Neelachal Ispat Nigam Ltd (NINL) for Rs 12,100 crore. Neelachal Ispat Nigam Ltd (NINL) is a steel plant located in Kalinganagar in Odisha and was shut in March 2020 due to continued losses. It has a capacity of 1.1 million tonnes a year. This is the 1st instance of privatisation of a public sector steel manufacturing enterprise in India.
- NINL is a joint venture of four central public sector companies — Minerals and Metals Trading Corporation (MMTC), National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC), Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) and MECON — and Odisha government entities OMC and IPICOL. NINL's plant has been shut since March 2020. The Odisha government has 32.47 per cent stake in NINL through IPICOL and OMC, whereas the MMTC holds the 49.78 per cent share.

