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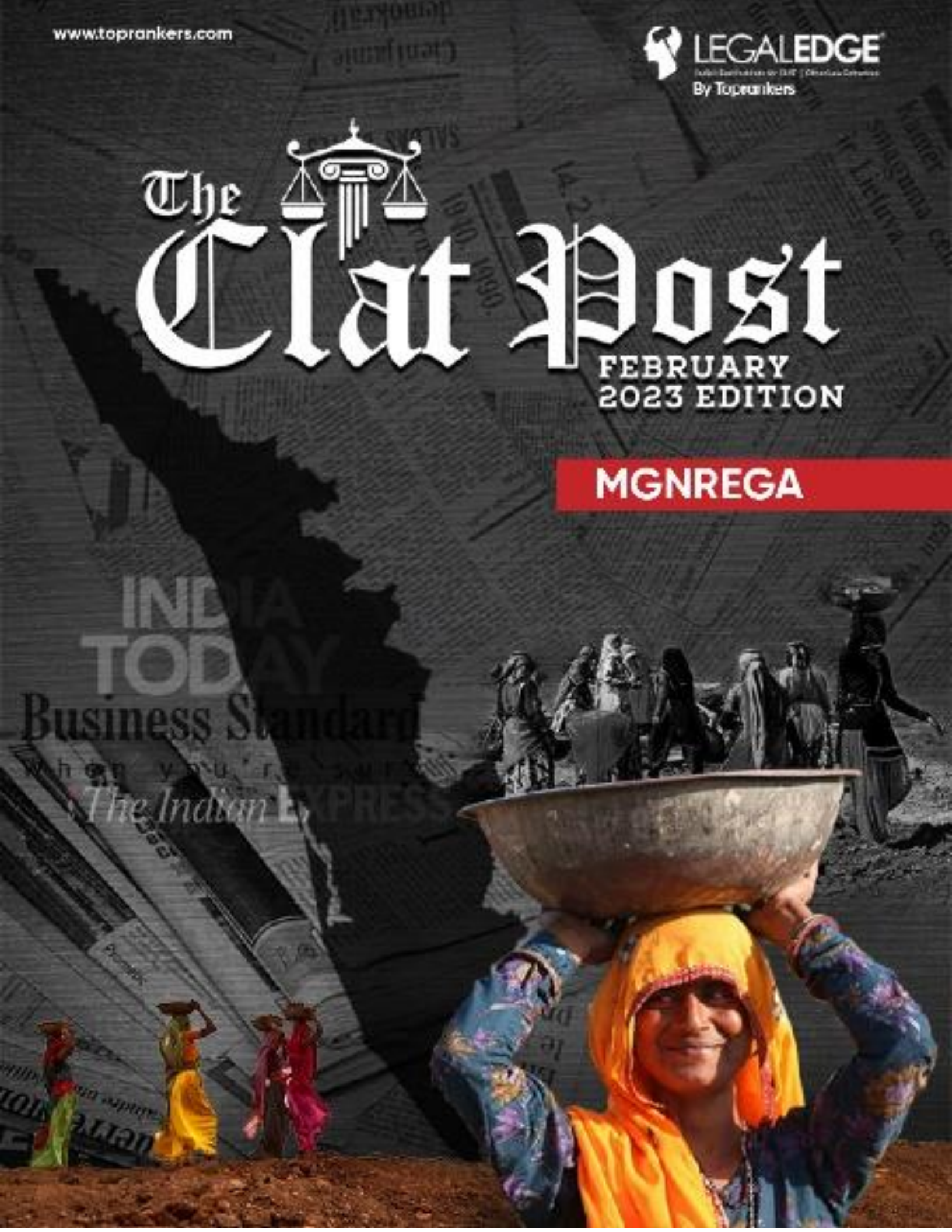
MGNREGA



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TOPIC GALAXY February, 2023

KERALA ANNOUNCES MENSTRUAL LEAVE

Key Highlights:

Kerala Government announced menstrual leave for female students in all state universities under the Department of Higher Education as part of the government's "commitment to realize a gender-just society".

- A n girl of age 18 years and above is eligible to avail of 60 days of menstrual leave in a year.
- With this, the attendance percentage of girl students is sealed at 73% as against the usual 75%.

Practices Worldwide:

Menstrual leave policies are not uncommon in many countries around the world, including Japan, Indonesia, South Korea, Taiwan, and Italy.

- In Japan, menstrual leave has been in place since 1947, and female employees can take up to three days off per month for menstrual cramps.
- In Indonesia, female employees are entitled to two days of menstrual leave per month, while in South Korea, female employees can take one day of menstrual leave per month.
- Taiwan allows female employees to take three days of menstrual leave per year, while Italy has no set policy but allows female employees to take sick leave for menstrual-related issues.

Situation in India:

The issue of menstrual leave and menstrual hygiene in India has been a topic of discussion for several years.

- In 1992, Bihar became the first state to introduce period leave for working women. However, the stigma around menstruation remains a significant challenge in the country.
- The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare implemented the Menstrual Hygiene Scheme in 2011, which aimed to increase access to sanitary napkins for adolescent girls in rural areas. Despite the scheme's implementation, many girls and women in India still lack access to adequate menstrual hygiene products.
- The Menstruation Benefits Bill was first introduced in Parliament in 2017, which sought to provide paid menstrual leave to female employees in both the public and private sectors. In 2022, the bill was introduced in the Arunachal Pradesh Assembly but was eventually withdrawn as the subject was deemed unsuitable for discussion in the "holy" institution.
- The recent announcement by the Kerala government to grant menstrual leave for female students in all state universities under the Department of Higher Education is a significant step towards addressing the issue of menstrual hygiene and reducing the stigma around menstruation. However, the government must also negotiate the challenges that come with implementing such policies while ensuring that the goals of gender justice and equality are met.

World Health Organisation Commentary:

According to the World Health Organization, around 50% of adolescent girls in India lack adequate knowledge about menstrual hygiene management.

- Additionally, around 23% of girls drop out of school once they start menstruating due to a lack of proper facilities and support.
- The lack of menstrual hygiene products and facilities in schools and public spaces not only affects the health and well-being of women and girls but also their education and employment opportunities. It is crucial for the government to prioritize menstrual hygiene management and provide adequate facilities and support to ensure that women and girls can manage their periods with dignity and without hindering their daily lives.

Significance:

The decision by the Kerala Government to grant menstrual leave for female students is a step towards promoting gender equality and recognizing the unique challenges faced by women.

- It may also help to reduce the stigma and taboo surrounding menstruation, which is still prevalent in many parts of the world.
- However, the decision also highlights the need for further discussion and debate on the topic of menstrual leave and its potential impact on women in the workforce.

Concerns:

The decision has faced criticism for reinforcing gender stereotypes and hindering the participation of women in the workforce.

- It is argued that menstrual leave may lead to discrimination against women in the workplace, as employers may prefer to hire men instead of women who are entitled to menstrual leave.
- Additionally, menstrual leave may not be a viable option for all women, especially those who cannot afford to miss work due to financial constraints.

1. Which state in India recently announced menstrual leave for female students in state universities?
   (a) Kerala (b) Tamil Nadu
   (c) Maharashtra (d) Uttar Pradesh

2. What is the eligibility criteria for availing menstrual leave in Kerala state universities?
   (a) 30 days in a year
   (b) 45 days in a year
   (c) 60 days in a year
   (d) 90 days in a year

3. When did Bihar introduce period leave for working women?
   (a) 1990
   (b) 1992
   (c) 1995
   (d) 1998

4. What is the Menstrual Hygiene Scheme?
   (a) A scheme to increase access to sanitary napkins for adolescent girls in rural areas
   (b) A scheme to promote menstrual leave for women in the workforce
   (c) A scheme to provide tax exemptions for menstrual products
   (d) A scheme to improve menstrual hygiene in urban areas

5. What is the Menstruation Benefits Bill?
   (a) A bill that seeks to increase access to menstrual products in urban areas
   (b) A bill that seeks to promote menstrual leave for women in the workforce
   (c) A bill that seeks to provide tax exemptions for menstrual products
   (d) A bill that seeks to provide benefits for women during menstruation

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

1. (a) The article mentions that Kerala recently announced menstrual leave for female students in state universities.
2. (c) The article mentions that a girl of age 18 years and above is eligible to avail of 60 days of menstrual leave in a year.
3. (b) The article mentions that Bihar introduced period leave for working women in 1992.
4. (a) A scheme to increase access to sanitary napkins for adolescent girls in rural areas
   The Menstrual Hygiene Scheme seeks to increase access to sanitary napkins for adolescent girls in rural areas.
5. (d) A bill that seeks to provide benefits for women during menstruation
   The Menstruation Benefits Bill seeks to provide benefits for women during menstruation.

KEN-BETWA LINK PROJECT (KBLP)

Introduction:

- The Ken-Betwa River Interlinking Project (KBRIP) is a proposed project by the Government of India, aimed at linking the Ken River in Madhya Pradesh with the Betwa River in Uttar Pradesh.
- The project involves building a dam, a canal, and a tunnel, with the aim of providing irrigation to drought-prone areas, generating hydroelectric power, and providing drinking water to the population.

Background:

- The idea of interlinking rivers was first proposed in the 19th century, but gained traction in the 1970s when the National Water Development Agency was established to carry out feasibility studies.
- The KBRIP was first proposed in 2005, and was declared a national project in 2012.
- The project has faced significant opposition from environmentalists, as well as concerns over its feasibility and cost.

Project Details:

- The KBRIP involves building a 230-km canal from the Ken River to the Betwa River, passing through the Panna Tiger Reserve.
- The project also involves building a dam on the Ken River, which will create a reservoir with a capacity of 2.66 billion cubic meters. The project involves building a 77-metre tall and a 2-km wide Dhaudhan dam (to be built within Panna Tiger Reserve).
- A 2.4-km tunnel will be constructed to divert water from the reservoir to the Betwa River.
- The project is expected to irrigate 6.35 lakh hectares of land in the Bundelkhand region of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, and provide drinking water to 62 lakh people.

Benefits:

- The KBRIP is expected to provide irrigation to drought-prone areas, which will help increase agricultural productivity and reduce the dependence on monsoon rains.
- The project will also generate 103 MW of hydroelectric power, which will help meet the energy needs of the region.
- The project will provide drinking water to the population, which is currently facing a shortage of water.

Environmental Concerns:

- The KBRIP has faced significant opposition from environmentalists, who argue that it will have a negative impact on the Panna Tiger Reserve.
- The canal will pass through the reserve, which is home to several endangered species, including tigers, leopards, and antelopes.
- The project will also involve the felling of around 4 lakh trees, which will have an impact on the biodiversity of the region.

Feasibility Concerns:

- The KBRIP has also faced concerns over its feasibility and cost.
- The estimated cost of the project is around Rs. 44,605 crore, and there are concerns over the ability of the government to finance such a large project.
- There are also concerns over the availability of water in the Ken River, which is already facing water scarcity.

About National Perspective Plan:

- The Ken-Betwa River Interlinking Project is part of the National Perspective Plan (NPP) for water resources development, which aims to interlink rivers across India.
- The NPP was first proposed in 1980, and was updated in 2002 to include 30 river links.
- The NPP aims to address the issue of water scarcity in various regions of India, by diverting water from surplus areas to deficit areas.
- The NPP has faced significant opposition from environmentalists and some state governments, who argue that it will have a negative impact on the environment and the livelihoods of people in the affected areas.

About Ken and Betwa River:

- The Ken River is a tributary of the Yamuna River, and flows through the states of Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh.

- The Betwa River is a tributary of the Yamuna River, and flows through the states of Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh.
- The Ken River has a total length of 427 km, and flows through the Panna Tiger Reserve.
- The Betwa River has a total length of 590 km, and is an important source of water for irrigation in the region.
- Both rivers are facing issues of water scarcity, due to a combination of factors, including deforestation, overuse of water, and climate change. The KBRIP is aimed at addressing these issues by diverting water from the Ken River to the Betwa River.

Conclusion:

- The Ken-Betwa River Interlinking Project is a proposed project aimed at providing irrigation, generating hydroelectric power, and providing drinking water to the population.
- The project has faced significant opposition from environmentalists, who argue that it will have a negative impact on the Panna Tiger Reserve, as well as concerns over its feasibility and cost.
- The project is currently under review by various government bodies, and it remains to be seen whether it will be implemented in its current form.

6. What is the aim of the Ken-Betwa River Interlinking Project?
   (a) To increase tourism in the Panna Tiger Reserve
   (b) To address water scarcity in the Bundelkhand region
   (c) To reduce the population of tigers in the Panna Tiger Reserve
   (d) To increase the level of pollution in the Betwa River

7. What is the capacity of the reservoir created by the dam on the Ken River?
   (a) 1.66 billion cubic meters
   (b) 2.66 billion cubic meters
   (c) 3.66 billion cubic meters
   (d) 4.66 billion cubic meters

8. What is the length of the canal that will be constructed as part of the Ken-Betwa River Interlinking Project?
   (a) 130 km
   (b) 230 km
   (c) 330 km
   (d) 430 km

9. What is the aim of the National Perspective Plan for water resources development?
   (a) To interlink rivers across India
   (b) To promote tourism in the river basin areas
   (c) To reduce the population of endangered species
   (d) To increase the level of pollution in the rivers

10. What is the relationship between the Ken and Betwa rivers and the Yamuna River?
    (a) The Ken and Betwa rivers are both tributaries of the Yamuna River
    (b) The Ken River flows into the Betwa River, which then flows into the Yamuna River
    (c) The Betwa River flows into the Ken River, which then flows into the Yamuna River
    (d) The Ken and Betwa rivers are not connected to the Yamuna River

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

6. (b) To address water scarcity in the Bundelkhand region
   The main aim of the Ken-Betwa River Interlinking Project is to provide irrigation, generate hydroelectric power, and provide drinking water to the population in the Bundelkhand region, which is facing water scarcity.
7. (b) 2.66 billion cubic meters
   The dam on the Ken River is expected to create a reservoir with a capacity of 2.66 billion cubic meters.
8. (b) 230 km
   The Ken-Betwa River Interlinking Project involves constructing a 230-km canal from the Ken River to the Betwa River, passing through the Panna Tiger Reserve.
9. (a) To interlink rivers across India
   The National Perspective Plan for water resources development aims to interlink rivers across India, with the aim of addressing the issue of water scarcity in various regions.
10. (a) The Ken and Betwa rivers are both tributaries of the Yamuna River
    Both the Ken and Betwa rivers are tributaries of the Yamuna River, which is one of the major rivers in India.

SUPREME COURT'S ORDER ON ADVANCE MEDICAL DIRECTIVES AND PASSIVE EUTHANASIA

Introduction:

- The Supreme Court has removed "insurmountable obstacles" for the implementation of advance medical directives of terminally-ill patients to withdraw medical treatment and die with dignity.
- The order simplifies certain directions of an earlier Constitution Bench and allows passive euthanasia.
- The treating doctor and the hospital play central roles in implementing the order.

Advance Medical Directives:

- An advance medical directive (AMD) is a legal document that specifies the medical treatment one wishes to receive or not receive in case one becomes terminally ill and unable to communicate.
- The 2018 judgment required AMD to be signed by two independent witnesses and counter-signed by a Judicial Magistrate.
- The current order says AMD need to be signed by the executor/patient and independent witnesses in the presence of a notary or gazetted officer who would record his/her satisfaction that the AMD was voluntary and executed without coercion.
- Copies of the AMD would be handed over to the close relatives, the family physician, and a competent officer of the municipal corporation or panchayat concerned.
- The AMD, if the executor chooses, may be made part of the digital health records.

Process of Implementing AMD:

- The treating doctor at the hospital would ascertain the genuineness of the AMD, compare it with the copy in the digital health records, consult with the relatives about the option that withdrawal of care would be the "best choice".
- The hospital would then form a primary medical board with the treating doctor and two specialists who would verify the patient's condition within 48 hours.
- Then a secondary medical board would be constituted with the Chief Medical Officer of the district nominating the members. This board would again re-ascertain the patient's condition within 48 hours and give its findings on whether or not to withdraw medical care or life support.
- The hospital would then have to convey the findings of both the primary and secondary board along with the consent of the relatives to the Judicial Magistrate before giving effect to the AMD.
- In case, the boards refuse to give effect to the AMD, the person named in it or the treating doctor or the hospital could approach the High Court concerned.

Process without AMD:

- The treating doctor could inform the hospital, which would constitute a primary medical board.
- The board would meet with the patient's family or next friend or guardian and discuss consent. The meeting should be recorded in writing.
- Then the same course of action as followed in cases in which there is an AMD would follow.

Role of Hospital, Doctors, and Judiciary:

- The treating doctor and the hospital have to ascertain the genuineness of the AMD and the patient's condition.
- The medical boards would have to verify the patient's condition and decide on whether or not to withdraw medical care or life support.
- The Judicial Magistrate would have to be informed of the findings of the boards and the consent of the relatives before giving effect to the AMD.
- The Chief Justice of the High Court would constitute a Division Bench, which can set up an independent committee of expert medical doctors in case the boards refuse to give effect to the AMD.
- The order has been directed to be circulated to all the Health Secretaries, Registrar Generals of High Courts, and Chief Medical Officers in States and Union Territories.

History of Euthanasia in India:

- Euthanasia has been a topic of debate in India for several years, with arguments both for and against the practice.
- In 1994, the Indian Supreme Court passed a landmark judgment in the case of Aruna Shanbaug, a nurse who had been in a vegetative state for several years following a brutal sexual assault. The judgment of Aruna Shanbaug was delivered in the year 2011 by the Supreme Court of India. The court rejected the plea to allow active euthanasia for Shanbaug, but it did allow passive euthanasia in certain cases, under strict guidelines.
- In 2018, the Supreme Court of India passed another landmark judgment in the case of Common Cause v. Union of India, allowing passive euthanasia and the use of advance directives. The court held that the right to die with dignity is a fundamental right under the Constitution of India.
- The court set out guidelines for the implementation of advance directives, which were later simplified in the recent 2022 judgment.
- The history of euthanasia in India is still evolving, and there are ongoing debates and discussions on the issue.

Conclusion:

- The Supreme Court's order has removed the difficulties faced in implementing AMD and passive euthanasia and has provided a clear process for hospitals, doctors, and judiciary to follow.
- The order recognizes the right to die with dignity for terminally-ill patients who are beyond cure or hope.

11. What is the process of implementing an AMD as per the recent Supreme Court order?
(a) The AMD needs to be counter-signed by a Judicial Magistrate
(b) The treating doctor needs to verify the AMD
(c) The executor and independent witnesses need to sign the AMD in the presence of a notary or gazetted officer
(d) The AMD needs to be approved by the Chief Medical Officer of the district

12. What is the composition of the primary medical board as per the recent Supreme Court order?
(a) Treating doctor and one specialist
(b) Treating doctor and two specialists
(c) Chief Medical Officer and two specialists
(d) Judicial Magistrate and two specialists

13. In which year was the Aruna Shanbaug judgment delivered by the Supreme Court of India?
(a) 2005 (b) 2011
(c) 2015 (d) 2018

14. What is the role of the Chief Justice of the High Court in case the primary and secondary medical boards refuse to give effect to the AMD?
(a) Constitute a Division Bench
(b) Approve the AMD
(c) Form an independent committee of expert medical doctors
(d) Dismiss the case

15. Who needs to sign the advance medical directive according to the recent Supreme Court order on passive euthanasia?
(a) Executor/patient (b) Treating doctor
(c) Judicial Magistrate (d) Family physician

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

11. (c) The executor and independent witnesses need to sign the AMD in the presence of a notary or gazetted officer As per the recent Supreme Court order, the AMD needs to be signed by the executor/patient and independent witnesses in the presence of a notary or gazetted officer who would record his/her satisfaction that the AMD was voluntary and executed without coercion.

12. (b) Treating doctor and two specialists
As per the recent Supreme Court order, the hospital would form a primary medical board with the treating doctor and two specialists who would verify the condition of the patient within 48 hours.

13. (b) 2011
The Aruna Shanbaug judgment was delivered by the Supreme Court of India in the year 2011.

14. (a) Constitute a Division Bench
In case the primary and secondary medical boards refuse to give effect to the AMD, the person named in it or the treating doctor or the hospital could approach the High Court concerned. The Chief Justice of the High Court would constitute a Division Bench, which can set up an independent committee of expert medical doctors in the fields of general medicine, nephrology, neurology, oncology, radiology, and critical care.

15. (a) (Executor/patient)
As per the recent Supreme Court order on passive euthanasia, the advance medical directive needs to be signed by the executor/patient and independent witnesses in the presence of a notary or gazetted officer who would record his/her satisfaction that the AMD was voluntary and executed without coercion.

REPUBLIC DAY

Introduction:
India's Republic Day is a national holiday that is celebrated every year on January 26th. It marks the day when India's Constitution came into effect in 1950, marking the country's transition from a British colonial government to an independent republic. Republic Day is one of three national holidays celebrated in India, alongside Independence Day (August 15th) and Gandhi Jayanti (October 2nd).

History of Republic Day:
- After India gained independence from the British Raj on August 15th, 1947, the nation lacked a permanent constitution, and its laws were based on the colonial Government of India Act 1935, which had been altered.
- On August 29th, 1947, a motion was introduced calling for the formation of a Drafting Committee to design a permanent constitution, with Dr. B R Ambedkar as its chairman.
- The committee drafted a constitution and submitted it to the Constituent Assembly on November 4th, 1947. Before adopting the Constitution, the Assembly met for about 166 days in public sessions lasting 2 years, 11 months, and 18 days.
- After extensive deliberation and some amendments, the 308 members of the Constituent Assembly signed two handwritten versions of the document (one in Hindi and one in English) on January 24th, 1950.
- It went into force two days later, on January 26th, 1950, across the entire country. Dr. Rajendra Prasad began his first tenure as President of the Indian Union on that day. Under the new Constitution's transitional provisions, the Constituent Assembly became the Indian Parliament.

Celebrations of Republic Day:
- The main celebration is held in the national capital, New Delhi, at the Rajpath before the President of India.
- The day begins with a large parade that showcases India's cultural diversity and military might. The parade features floats from each of India's 28 states, along with performances by school children and the military's various branches.
- The President of India, as the head of state, hoists the national flag and gives a speech to the nation on the eve of Republic Day.
- The parade also includes displays of India's military strength, including tanks, missile systems, and fighter jets, as well as cultural performances by various groups.
- After the parade, awards and honors are presented to citizens who have made significant contributions to the country.
- Other cities and towns across India also hold their own parades and celebrations, often featuring similar displays of cultural diversity and military might.

Reasons for Choosing 26th January as Republic Day
- The Indian National Congress passed a resolution of "Purna Swaraj" or complete self-rule on December 19, 1929, at its Lahore session.
- The Congress party declared January 26, 1930, as "Independence Day" for the Indians, and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru hoisted the tricolor on the banks of the Ravi river in Lahore.
- This day was celebrated as Poorna Swaraj day for the next 17 years.
- When the Constitution of India was adopted on November 26, 1949, it was decided to enforce the document on a day associated with national pride, which was January 26, and thus the Republic Day was born.

Significance of Republic Day:
- Republic Day celebrates the adoption of the Indian Constitution and the establishment of India as a sovereign, democratic republic.
- It represents the ideals of justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity enshrined in the Constitution, which is the supreme law of the land.
- It also celebrates India's cultural diversity and military strength, showcasing the country's achievements since gaining independence from colonial rule.

16. When was the resolution of Purna Swaraj passed by the Indian National Congress?
(a) 26th January, 1929
(b) 19th December, 1930
(c) 26th November, 1949
(d) 26th January, 1950

17. Who was the President of Congress party when the tricolor was hoisted on the banks of the Ravi river in Lahore?
(a) Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel
(b) Mahatma Gandhi
(c) Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru
(d) Subhash Chandra Bose

18. Who hoists the national flag on Republic Day?
(a) The President of India
(b) The Prime Minister of India
(c) The Chief Justice of India
(d) The Speaker of Lok Sabha

19. For how many years was 26th January celebrated as Poorna Swaraj day?
(a) 10 years (b) 15 years
(c) 17 years (d) 20 years

20. Who became the first President of the Indian Union `on the day the Constitution came into force?
(a) Dr. B.R. Ambedkar
(b) Jawaharlal Nehru
(c) Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel
(d) Dr. Rajendra Prasad

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

16. (b) 19th December, 1929
The Indian National Congress passed the resolution of Purna Swaraj on 19th December, 1929.

17. (c) Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru
Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was the President of Congress party when the tricolor was hoisted on the banks of the Ravi river in Lahore.

18. (a) The President of India
The President of India hoists the national flag on Republic Day.

19. (c) 17 years
26th January was celebrated as Poorna Swaraj day for the next 17 years after the Congress party declared it as "Independence Day" on 26th January, 1930.

20. (d) Dr. Rajendra Prasad
Dr. Rajendra Prasad became the first President of the Indian Union on 26th January, 1950, the day the Constitution came into force.

INDUS WATERS TREATY

Introduction:

- The Indus Water Treaty is a water-sharing agreement between India and Pakistan, signed on September 19, 1960.
- It was brokered by the World Bank, and it outlines the sharing of the waters of the Indus River system.
- The treaty is considered one of the most successful water-sharing agreements in the world, despite tensions between India and Pakistan.
- India has recently issued a notice to Pakistan seeking a review and modification of the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT).
- The notice was sent after Pakistan's "intransigence" in resolving disputes over the Kishanganga and Ratle hydropower projects in Jammu and Kashmir.

Background:

- The Indus River system originates in Tibet and flows through India and Pakistan before emptying into the Arabian Sea.
- The Indus River and its tributaries are a vital source of water for both India and Pakistan.
- The water dispute between India and Pakistan dates back to the Partition of India in 1947, which led to the division of the Indus River system
- It was brokered by the World Bank to share the water of the Indus River system, which comprises six rivers.
- The treaty gives control of the three eastern rivers (Sutlej, Beas, and Ravi) to India and the three western rivers (Indus, Jhelum, and Chenab) to Pakistan.
- The treaty also establishes a mechanism for resolving disputes between the two countries.

Dispute over Kishanganga and Ratle hydropower projects:

- The Kishanganga and Ratle hydropower projects are located in Jammu and Kashmir, which is a disputed territory between India and Pakistan.
- Pakistan has raised objections to the design of the projects, alleging that they violate the Indus Waters Treaty.
- In 2015, Pakistan requested the appointment of a Neutral Expert to examine its technical objections to the projects. However, Pakistan retracted this request the following year and proposed a Court of Arbitration to adjudicate on its objections.
- India argued that Pakistan's request for a Court of Arbitration violated the graded mechanism of dispute resolution in the Treaty.
- In August 2016, Pakistan approached the World Bank seeking the constitution of a Court of Arbitration under the relevant dispute redressal provisions of the Treaty.
- Instead of responding to Pakistan's request for a Court of Arbitration, India moved a separate application asking for the appointment of a Neutral Expert.
- In March 2022, the World Bank decided to resume the process of appointing a Neutral Expert and a Chairman for the Court of Arbitration.

India's notice to Pakistan:

- India's notice to Pakistan cites Pakistan's "intransigence" in resolving the disputes over the Kishanganga and Ratle projects.
- India claims that Pakistan has contravened the graded mechanism of dispute settlement envisaged by Article IX of the IWT.
- India has sought a review and modification of the IWT to ensure a more effective and comprehensive mechanism for resolving disputes.
- India has also asked Pakistan to stop work on the Ratle hydropower project until the dispute is resolved.

Salient features of the treaty:

- The treaty divides the Indus River system into two parts: the eastern rivers (Sutlej, Beas, and Ravi) and the western rivers (Indus, Jhelum, and Chenab).
- India has unrestricted rights to use the waters of the eastern rivers for non-consumptive purposes, such as irrigation and hydroelectric power generation.
- Pakistan has unrestricted rights to use the waters of the western rivers.
- The treaty also allows India to use a limited amount of water from the western rivers for domestic and agricultural purposes.
- The treaty established the Permanent Indus Commission (PIC), a bilateral commission that is responsible for implementing and managing the treaty.

Benefits of the treaty:

- The Indus Water Treaty has helped to prevent major conflicts over water resources between India and Pakistan.
- It has allowed both countries to make the best use of the water resources available to them, thereby benefiting millions of people.
- The treaty has helped to maintain the ecological balance of the Indus River system by ensuring that water is used in a sustainable and responsible manner.

Challenges to the treaty:

- The treaty has been challenged by both India and Pakistan in recent years due to changing circumstances.
- India has sought to build hydroelectric power plants on the western rivers, which Pakistan has objected to.
- Pakistan has accused India of violating the treaty by reducing the flow of water to Pakistan during times of drought.
- Climate change and the melting of the Himalayan glaciers, which feed the Indus River system, could also pose a threat to the treaty in the future.

Conclusion:

- The Indus Water Treaty is a significant achievement in the field of water sharing between two countries.
- The treaty has withstood the test of time and has helped to prevent major conflicts between India and Pakistan.
- However, changing circumstances and the impact of climate change may pose challenges to the treaty in the future, which will require both countries to work together to address.

21. What is the Indus Water Treaty?
(a) A treaty between India and Pakistan to share the water of the Indus river system
(b) A treaty between India and China to share the water of the Brahmaputra river system
(c) A treaty between India and Bangladesh to share the water of the Ganges river system
(d) A treaty between India and Nepal to share the water of the Koshi river system

22. What are the two rivers mentioned in the article that are a point of dispute between India and Pakistan?
(a) Brahmaputra and Ganges
(b) Koshi and Sutlej
(c) Indus and Chenab
(d) Yamuna and Beas

23. What did Pakistan request in 2015 to resolve its technical objections to the Kishanganga and Ratle HEPs?
(a) Court of Arbitration
(b) Appointment of a Neutral Expert
(c) Direct negotiation with India
(d) Mediation by the United Nations

24. Which of the following rivers is NOT covered by the Indus Waters Treaty?
(a) Chenab (b) Jhelum
(c) Satluj (d) Yamuna

25. Which of the following dispute resolution mechanisms is NOT available under the Indus Waters Treaty?
(a) Negotiation (b) Mediation
(c) Arbitration (d) Litigation

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

26. (a) The Indus Water Treaty is a water-sharing agreement between India and Pakistan signed in 1960 to share the water of the Indus river system.
27. (c) The two rivers mentioned in the article that are a point of dispute between India and Pakistan are the Kishanganga (a tributary of the Jhelum river) and Ratle (on Chenab River) hydropower projects.
28. (b) In 2015, Pakistan requested the appointment of a Neutral Expert to examine its technical objections to the Kishanganga and Ratle HEPs.
29. (d) The Indus Waters Treaty only covers the six rivers that flow from the Himalayas - Indus, Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Beas, and Sutlej.
30. (d) The Indus Waters Treaty provides for three mechanisms for dispute resolution - negotiation, mediation, and arbitration. However, litigation is not an option under the treaty.

ADITYA L1 MISSION

Introduction:
Aditya L1 is India's first dedicated scientific mission to study the Sun.

- The mission aims to put a satellite in orbit around the Lagrangian point L1 of the Sun-Earth system. The satellite will observe the Sun's corona, the outermost part of its atmosphere, and the solar wind, a stream of charged particles emanating from the Sun.

Purpose:

- Aditya L1's main purpose is to study the Sun's corona, which is about a million times fainter than the Sun's surface.
- This makes it difficult to study from the Earth's surface due to atmospheric interference.
- The corona is also the origin of the solar wind, which affects the Earth's magnetosphere and can cause space weather events that impact communication and navigation systems on Earth.

Scientific Objectives:
The scientific objectives of the Aditya L1 mission are:

- Study the variability of the solar corona and its dynamics in various time scales, including the short-term variations associated with the eruptive phenomena on the Sun.
- Study the origin and acceleration of the solar wind and its magnetic field structure.

- Provide observations to help understand the dynamical processes of the transition region and chromosphere, and their role in the heating and acceleration of the solar corona.
- Provide near-real-time information about the space weather conditions in the Sun-Earth system.

Satellite Characteristics:

The Aditya L1 satellite will have the following characteristics:

- It will be placed in orbit around the L1 Lagrangian point, which is about 1.5 million km from the Earth towards the Sun.
- The satellite will carry seven instruments to observe the Sun's corona, chromosphere, transition region, and heliosphere.
- The satellite will have a launch mass of around 400 kg and will be launched using the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV).
- The satellite's mission duration is expected to be five years.

Significance:

Aditya L1 is significant for several reasons:

- It will be India's first dedicated scientific mission to study the Sun and will contribute to the country's space research capabilities.
- The mission will provide valuable scientific data on the Sun's corona, which will help improve our understanding of the Sun-Earth system and space weather.
- Aditya L1 will also provide near-real-time information about the space weather conditions, which is important for satellite communication, navigation, and other space-based activities.
- The mission will involve collaboration between various Indian research institutions, including the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA), and the Inter-University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics (IUCAA).

History of Aditya L1

The Aditya-1 mission was intended to simply observe the sun's corona. In solar physics, the cause of Corona heating up to such high temperatures is still a mystery.

- The satellite was launched on the Aditya-1 mission into an 800 km low earth orbit.
- Later, ISRO intended to orbit the satellite around the Lagrangian Point in a halo (L1). 1.5 million km separate Earth from L1.
- The benefit of uninterrupted, continuous observation of the Sun is offered at this site.
- As a result, the mission was changed to the Aditya L1 mission.

Timeline of the Mission

Aditya L1 is India's first solar mission that will study the sun's corona and solar storms. The mission was first announced in 2008, and since then, it has undergone several phases of development.

Here is a brief history of the Aditya L1 mission:

- 2008: The Aditya L1 mission was first announced by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). The primary objective of the mission was to study the sun's corona, which is the outermost layer of the sun's atmosphere, and solar storms.
- 2009: ISRO formed a team of scientists and engineers to develop the Aditya L1 mission. The team conducted several studies and simulations to understand the challenges and requirements of the mission.
- 2010: The first concept design of the Aditya L1 mission was presented. The mission was proposed to be a satellite that would orbit the L1 Lagrangian point, which is a stable point between the Earth and the sun.
- 2012: ISRO approved the Aditya L1 mission for development. The mission was scheduled to be launched in 2015.
- 2015: The Aditya L1 mission was delayed due to technical issues. ISRO decided to rework the mission's design to make it more reliable and efficient.
- 2016: ISRO signed an agreement with NASA to collaborate on the Aditya L1 mission. NASA agreed to provide the Aditya L1 mission with one of its instruments, the Helioseismic and Magnetic Imager (HMI), which is currently onboard NASA's Solar Dynamics Observatory (SDO).
- 2018: ISRO started the development of the Aditya L1 mission's payloads and instruments.
- 2020: ISRO announced that the Aditya L1 mission is scheduled to be launched in the first half of 2022.
- 2022: The Aditya L1 mission was successfully launched on December 19, 2022, from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh.

The Aditya L1 mission is a significant achievement for ISRO as it is India's first mission to study the sun. The mission is also significant in the context of global space exploration as it is one of the few missions dedicated to studying the sun's corona and solar storms.

31. What is the main objective of the Aditya L-1 mission?
(a) Studying the corona of the Sun
(b) Studying the Sun's magnetic field
(c) Studying the Sun's atmosphere
(d) Studying the Sun's interior

32. What is the distance of L1 from Earth?
(a) 1.5 million km (b) 1 million km
(c) 2 million km (d) 3 million km

33. What is the previous name of Aditya L-1 mission?
(a) Aditya-1 (b) Aditya-2
(c) Aditya-3 (d) Aditya-4

34. At what altitude was Aditya-1 supposed to be placed?
(a) 800 km (b) 1000 km
(c) 1200 km (d) 1500 km

35. What is the significance of placing the satellite at L1?
(a) Observing the Sun continuously without any disturbance
(b) Observing the Earth's atmosphere
(c) Observing the Moon's surface
(d) Observing the stars

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

31. (a) Studying the corona of the Sun. The Aditya L-1 mission is primarily aimed at observing the Sun's corona, which is still a mystery in solar physics.
32. (a) 1.5 million km. L1 is located at a distance of 1.5 million km from Earth, which provides the advantage of observing the Sun continuously without any disturbance.
33. (a) Aditya-1. The Aditya L-1 mission was previously named Aditya-1, which was planned to observe only the corona of the Sun in a low Earth orbit.
34. (a) 800 km. The Aditya-1 mission was planned to place the satellite in an 800 km low Earth orbit to observe the Sun's corona.
35. (a) Observing the Sun continuously without any disturbance. Placing the satellite at L1 provides the advantage of observing the Sun continuously without any disturbance, which is crucial for studying the Sun's corona.

16TH FINANCE COMMISSION

Introduction

The government will soon kick off the process to set up the Sixteenth Finance Commission, with the Finance Ministry likely to notify the terms of references for the constitutional body, tasked with recommending the revenue sharing formula between the Centre and States and their distribution among States, towards the latter half of this year.

Background of the Finance Commission:

The Finance Commission was first established under Article 280 of the Constitution of India in 1951.

- Its primary objective was to address the regional imbalances in the distribution of resources between the central government and the state governments.
- The Finance Commission was also responsible for making recommendations on the distribution of tax revenues between the centre and the states. Since its inception, the Finance Commission has played a crucial role in ensuring the fair distribution of resources among the states.

Constitutional Provisions on Finance Commission:

Article 280 of the Constitution of India provides for the establishment of the Finance Commission.

- The Finance Commission is a quasi-judicial body and is mandated to submit a report to the President of India every five years.
- The report contains recommendations on the distribution of taxes between the centre and the states.
- The Finance Commission is also responsible for reviewing the financial position of the state governments and making recommendations on how the resources of the central government can be distributed to the state governments.

Qualifications of Members:
The Finance Commission is a five-member body, and its members are appointed by the President of India.

- The qualifications for membership of the Finance Commission are specified in Article 280(2) of the Constitution of India.
- The members of the Finance Commission must have the following qualifications:

1. Experience in public affairs, especially in finance and administration;
2. Knowledge of economics;
3. Experience in fiscal matters; and
4. Experience in the financial administration of the central or state government.

Significance of the Finance Commission:
The Finance Commission plays a crucial role in promoting fiscal federalism in India.

- It ensures that the resources of the central government are distributed among the states in a fair and equitable manner.
- The Finance Commission also helps in addressing the regional imbalances in the distribution of resources between the central government and the state governments.
- The recommendations of the Finance Commission have a significant impact on the fiscal policies of the central and state governments.
- The Finance Commission is also instrumental in promoting the decentralization of power in the country.
- It gives the state governments greater autonomy in managing their finances and promoting economic development in their respective states.
- The Finance Commission also helps in promoting the welfare of the people of the country by ensuring that the resources of the central government are used to meet the needs of the people in the different states.

Recommendations of the Finance Commission:
The recommendations of the Finance Commission have a significant impact on the fiscal policies of the central and state governments.

- The Finance Commission makes recommendations on the distribution of taxes between the centre and the states.
- The recommendations of the Finance Commission are based on the principles of equity, efficiency, and transparency.
- The Finance Commission also makes recommendations on the grants-in-aid that are given to the state governments by the central government.
- These grants-in-aid are intended to support the state governments in meeting their development objectives.

About the 15th Finance Commission
The 15th Finance Commission was constituted on November 27, 2017, under the chairmanship of N. K. Singh, a former member of Parliament and former bureaucrat.

- The Commission was formed to make recommendations for the distribution of taxes between the Union and State governments for the period 2021-22 to 2025-26.
- It is the latest Finance Commission that has been constituted under Article 280 of the Constitution.
- The members of the Commission include Ajay Narayan Jha, Anoop Singh, Ashok Lahiri, and Ramesh Chand.

Conclusion:
In conclusion, the Finance Commission is a crucial constitutional body that plays a critical role in promoting fiscal federalism in India. Its recommendations have a significant impact on the fiscal policies of the central and state governments. The Finance Commission ensures that the resources of the central government are distributed among the states in a fair and equitable manner. The Finance Commission also helps

36. When was the first Finance Commission set up in India?
(a) 1947 (b) 1950
(c) 1951 (d) 1952

37. Which article of the Constitution provides for the Finance Commission?
(a) Article 280 (b) Article 370
(c) Article 390 (d) Article 480

38. How many members are there in the Finance Commission?
(a) 3 (b) 5
(c) 7 (d) 9

39. Who appoints the Chairman and members of the Finance Commission?
(a) President of India
(b) Prime Minister of India
(c) Chief Justice of India
(d) Speaker of Lok Sabha

40. What is the term of the Finance Commission?
(a) 3 years (b) 4 years
(c) 5 years (d) 6 years

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

36. (c) The first Finance Commission was set up in 1951.
37. (a) Article 280 of the Indian Constitution provides for the Finance Commission.
38. (b) The Finance Commission has five members.
39. (a) The President of India appoints the Chairman and members of the Finance Commission.
40. (c) The term of the Finance Commission is five years.

PURSE SIENE FISHING

Introduction
On January 24, 2023, the Supreme Court allowed purse seine fishing outside the territorial waters of Tamil Nadu, imposing stringent conditions to regulate the extent of purse seine fishing outside the 12-nautical-mile limit off Tamil Nadu. The decision was made because the court believes that "everybody should survive."

Conditions for purse seine fishing outside territorial waters
The Supreme Court has allowed purse seine fishing only twice a week, on Monday and Thursday, between 8 am and 6 pm on the same day. The timings may vary due to sea conditions and weather, and the boats may return late, and docking time would cross the 8 pm mark. Only vessels registered under the marine fishing regulation law would be allowed to do purse seine fishing. Tracking devices should be installed in these boats, and the fishing crew must mandatorily carry identity cards.

Overview of Purse Seine Fishing:
Purse seine fishing is a method of fishing that uses a large net, called a purse seine, to encircle a school of fish. The net is then closed at the bottom, trapping the fish inside. The net is then hauled up onto the fishing vessel, and the fish are sorted and processed. This fishing method is commonly used for pelagic fish species, such as tuna, sardines, herring, and mackerel.

Types of Purse Seine Fishing:
There are two main types of purse seine fishing: the traditional method and the modern method. The traditional method uses a smaller net and is typically used by small-scale fishermen. The modern method uses a larger net and is typically used by commercial fishing vessels.

Environmental Impact of Purse Seine Fishing:
Purse seine fishing has a significant impact on the environment. One of the main concerns is the bycatch of non-target species. When the net is hauled up onto the fishing vessel, it can contain not only the target species but also other species that were caught accidentally. This can include sharks, dolphins, and sea turtles. These species can be injured or killed during the fishing process.

Another concern is the impact on the marine ecosystem. The use of large fishing vessels and nets can disrupt the natural migration patterns of fish and other marine species. This can have a significant impact on the food chain and the overall health of the ecosystem.

Sustainability of Purse Seine Fishing:
There are concerns about the sustainability of purse seine fishing. Overfishing can deplete fish stocks, and this can have a significant impact on the fishing industry and the communities that rely on it.
To ensure the sustainability of purse seine fishing, it is important to implement regulations and management strategies that protect fish stocks and the marine ecosystem.

Regulations and Management Strategies:

There are several regulations and management strategies that are used to ensure the sustainability of purse seine fishing. These include:

I. Fishing quotas - This is a limit on the amount of fish that can be caught in a specific area.
II. Closed seasons - This is a period of time when fishing is not allowed in a specific area to allow fish stocks to recover.
III. Minimum size limits - This is a regulation that specifies the minimum size of fish that can be caught. This is done to ensure that immature fish are not caught and that the fish population can continue to reproduce.
IV. Gear restrictions - This includes regulations on the size and type of fishing gear that can be used. This is done to reduce bycatch and ensure that the fishing gear does not damage the marine ecosystem.
V. Marine protected areas - These are areas where fishing is not allowed to protect the marine ecosystem and fish stocks.

Tamil Nadu's objection

Tamil Nadu had vehemently objected to purse seine fishing, even beyond the 12 nautical mile border. The State referred to a 1993 decision of the Supreme Court in State of Kerala versus Joseph Antony, which had upheld the ban on purse seine fishing beyond the territorial waters as it affected the livelihood of traditional fishermen. The mouth of purse seine net is one hectare and it would drag out anything and everything from the bowels of the sea. The livelihood of small fishermen operating within the territorial waters would be put at risk," the State argued.

Opposition to the judgement

One of the primary ecological arguments against purse seine nets is that they tend to draw not only the targeted fish but also at-risk varieties, including turtles. It is prohibited by Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Puducherry, Odisha, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Daman and Diu and Andaman and Nicobar Islands in their respective territorial waters of up to 12 nautical miles. States like Gujarat, Andhra, Goa, Karnataka, West Bengal have not imposed any such ban on purse seine fishing.

Detailed judgment

The court has allowed purse seine fishing because it believes that "everybody should survive." Senior advocate Gopal Sankaranarayanan, for purse seine fishermen, had argued that there had not been any prohibition on purse seine fishermen operating beyond territorial waters for the past 30 years. The fishing season for south Tamil Nadu started two weeks ago and will go on for another four weeks. The season for north Tamil Nadu will start in two weeks, and some relief from the court was urgently needed.

The Fisheries Department of the Union government had recommended the lifting of the ban on purse seine fishing in a report submitted by an expert committee on November 15. The expert panel had refused to accept that purse seine fishing caused "serious resource depletion." It had recommended purse-seiners to fish territorial waters and the Indian Exclusive Indian Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) subject to certain conditions.

41. What is purse seine fishing?
(a) Fishing using small nets
(b) Fishing using large nets
(c) Fishing using fishing rods
(d) Fishing using harpoons

42. Which state had vehemently objected to purse seine fishing?
(a) Gujarat (b) Kerala
(c) Tamil Nadu (d) Andhra Pradesh

43. What is the maximum frequency of purse seine fishing allowed by the Supreme Court?
(a) Twice a week (b) Thrice a week
(c) Four times a week (d) Every day

44. What is the time limit for purse seine fishing set by the Supreme Court?
(a) 6 am to 8 pm (b) 8 am to 6 pm
(c) 8 am to 8 pm (d) 10 am to 5 pm

45. Who had recommended the lifting of the ban on purse seine fishing in a report submitted to the Union government?
(a) Tamil Nadu government
(b) An expert committee on fisheries
(c) Ministry of Environment and Forests
(d) Indian Council of Agricultural Research

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

41. (b) Fishing using large nets.
Purse seine fishing is a method of fishing that uses large nets to catch schools of fish in deep waters.

42. (c) Tamil Nadu.
Tamil Nadu had strongly opposed purse seine fishing, even beyond the 12 nautical mile border, citing that it would affect the livelihood of small fishermen operating within the territorial waters.

43. (a) Twice a week.
The Supreme Court has allowed purse seine fishing outside the territorial waters of Tamil Nadu, but with stringent conditions. Purse seine fishing would be allowed only twice a week, on Monday and Thursday.

44. (b) 8 am to 6 pm.
Purse seine fishing is allowed only between 8 am and 6 pm on the same day.

45. (b) An expert committee on fisheries.
The Fisheries Department of the Union government had recommended the lifting of the ban on purse seine fishing in a report submitted by an expert committee on November 15.

MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE ACT (MGNREGA)

Introduction

The Narendra Modi government has slashed the budget for the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) scheme to Rs 60,000 crore in 2023-24.

- This, after record outlays during 2020-21 to 2022-23, which also saw a significant step-up in employment under the scheme that guarantees a minimum 100 days of unskilled manual wage work in a financial year (April-March) to every rural household on demand.
- The Rs 60,000 crore provided for the programme, launched in February 2006 by the previous United Progressive Alliance (UPA) regime, would be the lowest since 2017-18.

About MGNREGA

- MGNREGA is a social welfare scheme launched by the **Indian government in 2005.**
- It aims to provide a legal guarantee of **100 days of wage employment** in a financial year to every rural household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work.
- The scheme was **renamed after Mahatma Gandhi in 2009** to commemorate his vision of rural development and employment generation.

Salient features of MGNREGA:

- It covers all rural households in India, and priority is given to the most vulnerable sections such as women, Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), and persons with disabilities.
- The minimum wage rates are notified by the Central Government and revised annually.
- The scheme has a provision for unemployment allowance if employment is not provided **within 15 days of registration.**
- The works undertaken should be for creating durable assets and must be of public interest.
- The scheme has provisions for social audits and grievance redressal mechanisms to ensure transparency and accountability.
- The scheme provides a unique opportunity for rural development and employment generation, especially during periods of rural distress.

Impact of MGNREGA:

- **MGNREGA** has been instrumental in providing employment and wage security to millions of rural households across the country.
- As of 2022-23, **there are 15.4 crore active** workers under the MGNREGA.

- The scheme has helped in reducing distress migration, and in many cases, it has improved the economic conditions of rural households.
- MGNREGA has been particularly beneficial for women, who constitute more than half of the total workforce under the scheme.
- The scheme has also helped in creating **durable assets such as rural roads, water conservation structures, and community assets.**

Positive Aspects of MGNREGA

Legal Right to Work:

MGNREGA has been designed to provide a legal right to work to rural adults. This is a significant improvement over earlier employment guarantee schemes, which were supply-based and did not provide a legal guarantee to work.

Gender Empowerment:

The scheme aims at providing at least one-third of the benefits to women, which has helped in improving the status of women in rural areas. The scheme has been successful in empowering women by providing them with employment opportunities and financial independence.

Wages:

MGNREGA mandates that wages must be paid according to the statutory minimum wages specified for agricultural laborers in the state under the Minimum Wages Act, 1948. This has helped in providing fair wages to rural workers and improving their standard of living.

Decentralized Planning:

MGNREGA has emphasized strengthening the process of decentralization by giving a significant role to Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in planning and implementing these works.

- The act mandates Gram sabhas to recommend the works that are to be undertaken, and at least 50% of the works must be executed by them. This has helped in improving the participation of the local community in the decision-making process, which has resulted in better implementation of the scheme.

Issues Associated with Implementation of MGNREGA

Delay and Insufficiency in Funds Dispersal:

Most states have failed to disburse wages within 15 days as mandated by MGNREGA. This has turned the scheme into a supply-based program and subsequently, workers had begun to lose interest in working under it. The delay in payment of wages is a consequence of insufficient funds, which has been acknowledged by the Ministry of Finance.

Caste-Based Segregation:

There were significant variations in delays by caste. While 46% of payments to SC (Scheduled Caste) workers and 37% for ST (Scheduled Tribes) workers were completed in the mandated seven-day period, it was a dismal 26% for non-SC/ST workers. The negative impact of caste-based segregation was felt acutely in poorer States such as Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Odisha, and West Bengal.

Ineffective Role of PRI:

With very little autonomy, gram panchayats are not able to implement this act in an effective and efficient manner. There is a lack of technical expertise, financial resources, and administrative capacity at the local level, which has led to a delay in the implementation of projects.

Large Number of Incomplete Works:

There has been a delay in the completion of works under MGNREGA, and inspection of projects has been irregular. Also, there is an issue of quality of work and asset creation under MGNREGA. This has resulted in a large number of incomplete works, which has led to a wastage of resources.

Fabrication of Job Cards:

There are several issues related to the existence of fake job cards, the inclusion of fictitious names, missing entries, and delays in making entries in job cards. This has led to a lack of transparency in the implementation of the scheme and has resulted in corruption.

Challenges and Way Forward:

- The implementation of MGNREGA has been marred by various challenges such as delays in payment, corruption, inadequate monitoring, and poor quality of assets.
- The allocation of funds for the scheme has also been inadequate, and there have been concerns about the sustainability of the scheme in the long run.
- To address these challenges, there is a need for better convergence between MGNREGA and other rural development programs, effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, and greater involvement of local communities in the implementation of the scheme.
- The government should also consider increasing the allocation of funds for the scheme and revising the wage rates in line with inflation and local conditions.
- The potential of MGNREGA to promote sustainable rural development and employment generation is enormous, and concerted efforts are needed to ensure its effective implementation and long-term sustainability.

46. What is the time limit for providing work under MGNREGA?
(a) 7 days (b) 15 days
(c) 30 days (d) 60 days

47. Which act mandates Gram Sabhas to recommend the works that are to be undertaken under MGNREGA?
(a) The Right to Information Act, 2005
(b) The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005
(c) The National Food Security Act, 2013
(d) The Forest Rights Act, 2006

48. What percentage of the works under MGNREGA must be executed by Gram Sabhas?
(a) 10% (b) 25%
(c) 50% (d) 75%

49. What is the minimum number of days of work guaranteed under MGNREGA?
(a) 50 days (b) 100 days
(c) 150 days (d) 200 days

50. Who is eligible to demand work under MGNREGA?
(a) Only women (b) Only men
(c) Only rural youth (d) Any rural adult

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

46. (b) 15 days
` MGNREGA provides a legally-backed guarantee for any rural adult to get work within 15 days of demanding it, failing which an 'unemployment allowance' must be given.

47. (b) The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005
The act mandates Gram Sabhas to recommend the works that are to be undertaken under MGNREGA and at least 50% of the works must be executed by them.

48. (c) 50%
The act mandates Gram Sabhas to recommend the works that are to be undertaken under MGNREGA and at least 50% of the works must be executed by them.

49. (b) 100 days
MGNREGA guarantees 100 days of work in a financial year to every rural household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work.

50. (d) Any rural adult
MGNREGA provides a legally-backed guarantee for any rural adult to get work within 15 days of demanding it, failing which an 'unemployment allowance' must be given.

LITHIUM DISCOVERY IN INDIA: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Introduction:

Lithium is a rare and highly reactive metal that is widely used in various industries, especially in batteries for electric vehicles. With the global demand for electric vehicles (EVs) increasing rapidly, the need for lithium has also been growing at an unprecedented pace.

- In this context, the recent discovery of lithium reserves in India's Reasi district of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) has opened up new opportunities for the country to become self-sufficient in this critical mineral.
- However, there are also some associated challenges and concerns related to the mining of lithium, especially in the ecologically fragile Himalayan region.

Lithium Reserves in India:

- According to recent reports, India has found 5.9 million tonnes of lithium reserves in the Reasi district of Jammu & Kashmir, which may be the seventh-largest deposit of the rare element, accounting for roughly 5.7% of all the reserves in the world.
- The lithium reserves in J&K are said to be of a higher grade 550 parts per million (ppm) against the average 220 ppm making them highly lucrative.
- It is noteworthy that this may not be the first discovery of lithium reserves in India, as around 1,600 tonnes of lithium reserves were found in Mandya, Karnataka, but there hasn't been any commercial supply of the metal from that site till now.
- Besides, the government is also running a Lithium exploration program in several other states, including Arunachal Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Jammu & Kashmir, and Rajasthan.

Uses of Lithium:

- Lithium is used in various industries, including ceramics, glasses, greases, pharmaceutical compounds, air conditioners, and aluminium production.
- However, its most significant use is in batteries due to its highest energy storage capacity per kilogram. Its high energy storage capacity combined with its extremely lightweight makes it a perfect choice for electric car makers like Tesla.
- Lithium is also used in the medical sector and in electronics that power our phones, solar panels, and other renewable technologies needed for the transition to clean energy.

Global Lithium Market:

- Currently, India is dependent on imports for its lithium requirements. In fiscal 2022, India imported lithium and lithium-ion worth almost ₹14,000 crores.
- However, the demand for lithium is likely to explode in the future, given the increasing adoption of EVs globally.
- With 50% of the deposits concentrated in three South American countries—Argentina, Bolivia, and Chile—the lithium triangle is where the majority of the world's lithium reserves are located.
- China, on the other hand, has an advantage over other nations and is in charge of 75% of the world's lithium refining.
- The proliferation of EVs could mean India becoming dependent on China. J&K's reserves, however, provide a major opening for India to be self-reliant.

Opportunities for India:

- The discovery of lithium reserves in India could usher in a new era not only for India but also for the world.
- With the demand for EVs increasing, the debate over global reserves of lithium has been gaining momentum. At the current rate of carbon emissions, the world will need at least 2 billion (200 crores) EVs, and according to the World Economic Forum (WEF), there could be a lithium shortage as soon as 2025.
- India's lithium reserves, therefore, provide a significant opportunity for the country to become self-sufficient and reduce its dependence on imports. Moreover, the local production of lithium could also create new job opportunities and boost the country's economy.

51. What is the main use of lithium?
(a) Ceramics and glasses
(b) Aluminium production
(c) Pharmaceuticals
(d) Batteries

52. Which region of the world has the majority of lithium reserves?
(a) North America (b) Europe
(c) South America (d) Asia

53. What is the advantage of lithium for electric car makers like Tesla?
(a) Its high energy storage capacity
(b) Its low weight
(c) Its low cost
(d) Its availability in India

54. What was the value of lithium and lithium ion imports in India in fiscal 2022?
(a) ₹14,000 crores (b) ₹5,000 crores
(c) ₹20,000 crores (d) ₹10,000 crores

55. Which state in India had previously discovered lithium reserves?
(a) Jammu & Kashmir (b) Karnataka
(c) Andhra Pradesh (d) Rajasthan

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

51. (d) Batteries.
Lithium is primarily used in batteries due to its high energy storage capacity.
52. (c) South America.
50% of the world's lithium reserves are located in Argentina, Bolivia, and Chile.
53. (a) Its high energy storage capacity combined with its low weight make it a perfect choice for electric car makers like Tesla.
54. (a) ₹14,000 crores.
India imported lithium and lithium ion worth almost ₹14,000 crores in fiscal 2022.
55. (b) Karnataka.
Around 1,600 tonnes of lithium reserves were found in Mandya, Karnataka.

PRADHAN MANTRI PVTG (PARTICULARLY VULNERABLE TRIBAL GROUPS) DEVELOPMENT MISSION

Introduction
- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced a special programme targeting PVTGs in the budget.
- The programme has a budget outlay of ₹15,000 crore over the next three years.

What are Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups or PVTGs?
- PVTGs are those that depend on hunting for food, have pre-agriculture level technologies, zero or negative population growth, and extremely low levels of literacy.
- The Central government began to identify the most vulnerable tribal groups as a separate category in 1975, establishing 52 such groups.
- The list was expanded in 1993, when another 23 groups were added, for a total of 75 PVTGs out of 705 Scheduled Tribes spread across 17 states and one Union Territory (UT) in the country (2011 census).

Importance of Focus on PVTGs
- Tribal population makes up for 8.6% of the total population in India.
- PVTGs are more vulnerable among the tribal groups.
- More developed and assertive tribal groups take a major chunk of the tribal development funds because of which PVTGs need more funds directed for their development.
- In 1973, the Dhebar Commission created Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs) as a separate category, who are less developed among the tribal groups.
- In 2006, the Government of India renamed the PTGs as PVTGs.

Characteristics of PVTGs
- PVTGs have some basic characteristics - they are mostly homogenous, with a small population, relatively physically isolated, absence of written language, relatively simple technology and a slower rate of change etc.
- Among the 75 listed PVTG's the highest number are found in Odisha.

Pradhan Mantri PVTG Development Mission

- The mission aims to improve the socio-economic conditions of PVTGs.
- It will saturate PVTG families and habitations with basic facilities such as safe housing, clean drinking water, and sanitation.
- The mission aims to provide improved access to education, health, nutrition, road, and telecom connectivity, and sustainable livelihood opportunities.

Conclusion

- The Pradhan Mantri PVTG Development Mission announced in the budget has the potential to significantly improve the quality of life for PVTGs in India.
- The focus on PVTGs is important to ensure that the most vulnerable tribal groups receive the necessary resources and attention for their development and upliftment.

56. What does PVTG stand for?
(a) Particularly Vital Tribal Group
(b) Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group
(c) Particularly Valuable Tribal Group
(d) Particularly Vicious Tribal Group

57. When was the category of PVTGs created by the Government of India?
(a) 197 (b) 1993
(c) 2006 (d) 2021

58. What is the percentage of tribal population in India?
(a) 2.6% (b) 5.6%
(c) 8.6% (d) 10.6%

59. Which state has the highest number of PVTGs?
(a) Maharashtra (b) Odisha
(c) Uttar Pradesh (d) Tamil Nadu

60. What are the basic characteristics of PVTGs?
(a) Highly developed, large population, well-connected, written language, and complex technology
(b) Homogenous, small population, physically isolated, absence of written language, and simple technology
(c) Heterogeneous, large population, well-connected, written language, and complex technology
(d) Homogenous, large population, physically isolated, written language, and simple technology

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

56. (b) Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group
Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG) are those tribal groups that are identified by the Government of India as the most vulnerable among the tribal groups.

57. (a) 1975
In 1975, the Government of India created the category of PVTGs to identify the most vulnerable tribal groups as a separate category.

58. (c) 8.6%
Tribal population makes up for 8.6% of the total population in India.

59. (b) Odisha
Among the 75 listed PVTG's, the highest number are found in Odisha.

60. (b) Homogenous, small population, physically isolated, absence of written language, and simple technology
PVTGs have some basic characteristics - they are mostly homogenous, with a small population, relatively physically isolated, absence of written language, relatively simple technology, and a slower rate of change.

TURKEY AND SYRIA HIT BY DEVASTATING EARTHQUAKE

Introduction:
On February 6th, 2023, a powerful earthquake struck the border region between Turkey and Syria, causing widespread destruction and loss of life. The earthquake, which had a magnitude of 7.2, was one of the strongest to hit the region in recent years, and its impact has been felt across a wide area.

Causes of the Earthquake:
The earthquake was caused by the movement of the Anatolian plate, which is one of the most active tectonic plates in the world.

- The Anatolian plate is part of the larger Eurasian plate, which is constantly shifting and causing seismic activity in the region.
- The earthquake was also triggered by the presence of numerous faults in the area, including the Dead Sea Transform Fault, which runs through Syria and Jordan, and the East Anatolian Fault, which runs through eastern Turkey.

Tectonics in the Eastern Mediterranean Region:
The interactions between the African, Arabian, and Eurasian tectonic plates and the Anatolian tectonic block are the main tectonic forces in the Eastern Mediterranean region, which includes Turkey, Syria, and Jordan.

- Turkey is located on the Anatolian tectonic plate, which is bounded by the East Anatolian Fault (EAF) in the southeast and the North Anatolian Fault (NAF), which runs from west to east throughout the nation.
- The meeting of the Eurasian and Anatolian tectonic plates is believed to be "especially catastrophic," and it occurs at the NAF line.
- The Anatolia Block's translational motion toward Eurasia and Africa is largely accommodated by the NAF, a right-lateral strike-slip structure in northern Turkey.
- The EAF is the tectonic boundary between the Anatolian Plate and the northward-moving Arabian Plate. It runs 650 kilometers from eastern Turkey into the Mediterranean.
- In addition to these faults, the Aegean Sea Plate, which is submerged beneath southern Greece and western Turkey in the eastern Mediterranean Sea, also contributes to seismic activity in the area.
- Turkey and the neighbouring territories experience earthquakes mostly as a result of the intricate interactions between these plates and faults, which have led to a zone of high seismic activity.

Why Turkey is Prone to Earthquakes?
Turkey is particularly susceptible to earthquakes because of its placement on the Anatolian tectonic plate and its closeness to a number of significant faults.

- A third of Turkey is at high risk for earthquakes, including the areas around the main cities of Istanbul and Izmir and East Anatolia.
- Nearly 95 percent of Turkey's land mass is prone to earthquakes.
- Recent large earthquakes in Turkey have been attributed to the NAF, notably the 1999 earthquake in Izmit, which killed over 17,000 people, and the 2011 earthquake in Van, which killed around 600 people.
- The EAF is a substantial contributor to seismic activity and was the cause of the Bingöl earthquake in 1976, which claimed more than 3,000 lives.
- The destructive force of earthquakes, like the one that struck on February 6, 2023, is also influenced by their shallow depth.
- Because they release more energy close to the surface, shallow earthquakes are more likely to cause substantial damage.
- The risk of earthquakes to infrastructure and human life has also increased as Turkey's population and urbanisation have grown.

61. Which tectonic plate is Turkey located on?
(a) North American Plate
(b) South American Plate
(c) African Plate
(d) Anatolian Plate

62. What is the name of the fault line where the recent earthquake in Turkey occurred?
(a) San Andreas Fault
(b) North Anatolian Fault
(c) Pacific Ring of Fire
(d) Mid-Atlantic Ridge

63. What type of earthquake was the recent earthquake in Turkey?
(a) Normal Fault (b) Reverse Fault
(c) Strike-Slip Fault (d) Thrust Fault

64. What percentage of Turkey's landmass is prone to earthquakes?
(a) 5% (b) 25%
(c) 50% (d) 95%

65. Which tectonic plates are involved in the North Anatolian Fault?
(a) African and Arabian Plates
(b) Arabian and Eurasian Plates
(c) Eurasian and Indian Plates
(d) North American and Eurasian Plates

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

61. (d) Turkey sits on the Anatolian tectonic plate.
62. (b) The earthquake occurred along the North Anatolian Fault.
63. (c) The recent earthquake in Turkey was a strike-slip fault.
64. (d) According to one estimate, almost 95% of Turkey's land mass is prone to earthquakes.
65. (b) The North Anatolian Fault is the meeting point of the Arabian and Eurasian tectonic plates.

WINDFALL TAX

Introduction:

- Windfall taxes designed to tax the profits a company derives from an external, unprecedented event
- Governments levy a one-off tax retrospectively over and above the normal rates of tax on such profits
- One area where such taxes have routinely been discussed is oil markets, where price fluctuation leads to volatile or erratic profits for the industry
- Rationale for governments worldwide to introduce windfall taxes: redistribution of unexpected gains, funding social welfare schemes, and supplementary revenue stream for the government.

Reasons for levying Windfall Taxes:

- Prices of oil, gas, and coal have seen sharp increases since late last year and in the first two quarters of the current year, although they have reduced recently
- Pandemic recovery and supply issues resulting from the Russia-Ukraine conflict shore up energy demands, in turn driving up global prices
- The rising prices meant huge and record profits for energy companies while resulting in hefty gas and electricity bills for household bills in major and smaller economies
- The levies came as refiners made major gains by boosting fuel exports to countries that were in a deficit like Europe, which has now boycotted oil imports from Russia
- The U.N. chief urged all governments to tax these excessive profits "and use the funds to support the most vulnerable people through these difficult times."
- Calls to introduce windfall taxes found support in organizations like the IMF, which released an advice note as to how such a tax should be levied

Issues with Imposing Windfall Tax:

- Uncertainty in the Market: Windfall taxes are imposed retrospectively and are often influenced by unexpected events, they can brew uncertainty in the market about future taxes
- Populist in Nature: It is believed that such taxes are populist and politically opportune in the short term
- Reduces Future Investment: Introducing a temporary windfall profit tax reduces future investment because prospective investors will internalize the likelihood of potential taxes when making investment decisions
- Not Defined Precisely: It is not defined what exactly constitutes true windfall profits and how it can be determined what level of profit is normal or excessive

- Who should be taxed? It is not defined who should be taxed - only the big companies responsible for the bulk of high-priced sales or smaller companies as well— raising the question of whether producers with revenues or profits below a certain threshold should be exempt.

Examples of Windfall Tax:

- In 2010, Australia introduced a 40% tax on the profits of mining companies which were earning "super profits" due to high commodity prices
- In 2011, the UK government introduced a one-off windfall tax on oil and gas profits following the high oil prices during the Arab Spring
- In 2016, China imposed a windfall tax on coal companies due to rising coal prices
- In 2022, India imposed a windfall tax on crude oil and natural gas produced from fields given before 2011 in order to boost revenues

66. What is the estimated collection from the windfall tax in the current fiscal year ending March 31?
(a) Rs 25,000 crore (b) Rs 30,000 crore
(c) Rs 20,000 crore (d) Rs 35,000 crore

67. How often is the windfall profit tax levy reviewed?
(a) Every week (b) Every month
(c) Every quarter (d) Every year

68. Which of the following is one of the reasons for the impositions of windfall taxes?
(a) Funding social welfare programmes
(b) Redistribution of unforeseen gains when high prices benefit producers at the expense of consumers
(c) An additional source of revenue for the government.
(d) All of the above

69. Which of the following is/are Incorrect?
(a) Windfall taxes are unconstitutional.
(b) Windfall taxes are advised against by the International Financial Organisations.
(c) Windfall taxes are aid in inflation.
(d) All of the above

70. When does a country impose windfall taxes?
(a) They are imposed when the producers make unforeseen gains when high prices benefit producers at the expense of consumers.
(b) They are imposed when the country is going through high inflation.
(c) They are imposed when the producers are facing loses.
(d) Both b and c

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

66. (a) Rs 25,000 crore. Explanation: The Revenue Secretary has estimated the collection from windfall tax to be Rs 25,000 crore in the current fiscal year.

67. (b) Every fortnight. Explanation: The windfall profit tax levy is reviewed every fortnight and rates are moderated based on international oil prices.

68. (d) Governments around the world have introduced windfall taxes for a variety of reasons, including funding social welfare programmes, redistribution of unforeseen gains when high prices benefit producers at the expense of consumers, and as an additional source of revenue for the government.

69. (d) Windfall taxes for imposed by various governments and are not unconstitutional. International Organisations such as world bank and IMF promote windfall taxes when corporation make unforeseen gains at the expense of consumers and they do not aid in inflation.

70. (a) An "unearned, unplanned rise in revenue through no additional labour or expense" is what is meant by the definition of a windfall. Governments often impose a windfall tax, sometimes known as a one-time tax, retroactively in addition to the regular rates of tax on such earnings.

SEALED COVER JURISPRUDENCE

Introduction

The Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud firmly refused the 'suggestions' offered by the government in a sealed cover on the formation of a proposed committee to enquire into the Hindenburg report on the Adani Group.

- This signals the Supreme Court's acute awareness of how 'sealed cover jurisprudence' has begun to threaten the very credibility of the judicial institution.

About Sealed Cover Jurisprudence

Sealed Cover Jurisprudence (SCJ) refers to the practice of presenting sensitive or confidential information to a court or tribunal in a sealed envelope or cover.

- It is used to ensure privacy, prevent interference with an ongoing investigation, and protect state affairs.

Historical Origins of Sealed Cover Jurisprudence

Service or administrative cases were the first to employ sealed cover jurisprudence. Service records and promotion assessments of individual personnel were received in sealed covers to avoid harm to the reputation of officers.

- The court has also received confidential documents in sexual assault cases to protect the identity of survivors.

Legal Basis of Sealed Cover Jurisprudence

The Supreme Court derives its power to use sealed cover jurisprudence from Rule 7 of Order XIII of the Supreme Court Rules 2013 and Section 123 of the Indian Evidence Act of 1872.

- Rule 7 of Order XIII allows the Chief Justice or the court to direct that certain information be kept under a sealed cover or considers it of confidential nature.
- Section 123 of the Indian Evidence Act of 1872 protects official unpublished documents relating to state affairs.

Circumstances for Using Sealed Cover Jurisprudence

Sealed cover jurisprudence is used when information is connected to an ongoing investigation or involves personal or confidential information whose disclosure may result in violation of an individual's privacy or breach of trust.

- The information can be kept confidential if its publication is not considered to be in the interest of the public.

Issues Related to Sealed Cover Jurisprudence

Lack of Transparency:

As the evidence or arguments offered in the sealed cover are not available to the public or other parties, sealed cover jurisprudence can reduce transparency and accountability in the legal process.

Disparate Access:

Because those who have access to the information included in the sealed cover may have an advantage over those who do not, the application of sealed cover jurisprudence might lead to an uneven playing field.

Limited Opportunity to Respond:

The parties who are not privy to the information included in the sealed cover could not have the chance to reply to or contest the facts or claims made therein, which can impair their capacity to properly argue their case.

Risk of Abuse:

Parties that want to hide material that isn't really confidential or who want to use it to get an unfair advantage in court might abuse sealed cover jurisprudence.

Interference with Fair Trial:

Because the parties might not have access to all the pertinent information or arguments that are taken into account throughout the decision-making process, the use of sealed cover jurisprudence can interfere with the right to a fair trial.

Arbitrary Nature:

Instead of being a standard procedure, sealed covers depend on the individual judges' need to support a position in a given case. This renders the exercise haphazard and random.

SC's Observations over Sealed Cover Jurisprudence

P. Gopalakrishnan vs The State of Kerala case (2019): The SC held that disclosure of documents to the accused is constitutionally mandated, even if the investigation is ongoing and documents may lead to a breakthrough in the investigation.

INX Media case (2019): The Supreme Court criticized the Delhi High Court for basing its decision to deny bail to a former Union Minister on documents submitted by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in a sealed cover. It held the action as against the concept of fair trial.

Cdr Amit Kumar Sharma v Union of India case (2022): The SC said, "the non-disclosure of relevant material to the affected party and its disclosure in a sealed cover to the adjudicating authority...sets a dangerous precedent. The disclosure of relevant material to the adjudicating authority in a sealed cover makes the process of adjudication vague and opaque".

Recent Uses of Sealed Cover Jurisprudence

- In recent times, the government has produced a wide range of documents in sealed covers, including status reports, notes, and alleged evidence collected during investigations into terror and money-laundering cases.
- Court-appointed committee reports have also been accepted in sealed covers, as seen in the BCCI case.
- The apex court has received sealed cover documents in various high-profile cases, such as the Rafale jets' purchase deal, Assam National Register of Citizens case, Ayodhya title dispute, Gujarat Police 'fake' encounter case, Narendra Modi biopic release case, in the sexual harassment case concerning then Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi, the electoral bonds case, Bhima Koregaon case, and the anticipatory bail plea for former union finance minister P. Chidambaram.
- Sealed cover has risen to the status of 'due procedure' in these cases.

71. What is sealed cover jurisprudence?
(a) A legal process where court orders the government to seal all documents related to a case
(b) A legal process where confidential documents related to a case are submitted to the court in a sealed envelope
(c) A legal process where the court seals the records of the trial proceedings
(d) A legal process where the court directs the government to appoint a special officer to maintain the confidentiality of a case

72. What is the purpose of sealed cover jurisprudence?
(a) To keep the public informed about the confidential information related to a case
(b) To protect the identity of the victim in sexual assault cases
(c) To ensure that the sensitive information related to a case is not leaked or misused
(d) To expedite the legal proceedings of a case

73. Which section of the Indian Evidence Act supports the basis of Sealed Cover Jurisprudence?
(a) Section 123 (b) Section 124
(c) Section 127 (d) Section 133

74. Supreme Court rules of which of the following years govern Sealed Cover Jurisprudence?
(a) 2009 (b) 2011
(c) 2013 (d) 2017

75. What is the significance of sealed cover jurisprudence?
(a) It allows the court to make decisions based on confidential information
(b) It protects the privacy of individuals involved in certain cases
(c) It ensures due process and fairness in legal proceedings
(d) All of the above

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

71. (b) Sealed cover jurisprudence refers to a legal process where confidential documents related to a case are submitted to the court in a sealed envelope.
Sealed cover jurisprudence refers to a practice where the court accepts confidential documents related to a case, submitted by the government or any other party, in a sealed envelope or cover to protect the sensitive information.

72. (c) The purpose of sealed cover jurisprudence is to ensure that the sensitive information related to a case is not leaked or misused.
Sealed cover jurisprudence is primarily used to protect confidential information related to a case. It ensures that sensitive information is not

leaked or misused by anyone who is not authorized to access it.

73. (a) Section 123
The Supreme Court derives its power to use sealed cover jurisprudence from Rule 7 of Order XIII of the Supreme Court Rules 2013 and Section 123 of the Indian Evidence Act of 1872.

74. (c) 2013 The Supreme Court derives its power to use sealed cover jurisprudence from Rule 7 of Order XIII of the Supreme Court Rules 2013 and Section 123 of the Indian Evidence Act of 1872.

75. (d) Sealed cover jurisprudence is significant because it allows the court to make decisions based on confidential information, protects the privacy of individuals involved in certain cases, and ensures due process and fairness in legal proceedings.

VOSTRO ACCOUNTS AND HOW THEY FACILITATE TRADE

Last week, government officials informed that 20 Russian banks, including Rosbank, Tinkoff Bank, Centro Credit Bank and Credit Bank of Moscow have opened Special Rupee Vostro Accounts (SRVA) with partner banks in India.

- All major domestic banks have listed their nodal officers to sort out issues faced by exporters under the arrangement.

About Vostro Accounts:

- A Vostro account is an account that one bank holds for another bank in the former's domestic currency. It is an integral offshoot of correspondent banking that facilitates wire transfer, conducts business transactions, accepts deposits, and gathers documents on behalf of the other bank.
- The term Vostro is derived from the Latin word "vostro" which means "yours" in English. In the banking context, the Vostro account is the bank account that belongs to another bank, and hence the name "your account."
- The Vostro account system has been in use for many years as an international banking mechanism that facilitates transactions between banks from different countries. Domestic banks use it to provide international banking services to their clients who have global banking needs. It helps domestic banks gain wider access to foreign financial markets and serve international clients without having to be physically present abroad.
- Vostro accounts are established based on an agreement between two banks, and the account is maintained by the domestic bank on behalf of the foreign bank. The foreign bank has no direct access to the account but relies on the domestic bank to conduct all transactions related to the account.
- The domestic bank that holds the Vostro account has the responsibility of ensuring that the account is managed in compliance with the rules and regulations of the country where the account is located. The bank must also ensure that the foreign bank is aware of any restrictions or limitations that may apply to the account.
- Vostro accounts are used for a variety of purposes, including facilitating international trade, settling payments, and providing access to foreign currency markets. They are also used by foreign banks to hold funds on behalf of their customers who are doing business in the country where the Vostro account is located.

Eligibility Criteria of Banks

- Banks from partner countries are required to approach an authorized domestic dealer bank for opening the SRVA.
- The domestic bank would then seek approval from the apex banking regulator providing details of the arrangement.
- The domestic banks must ensure that the correspondent bank is not from a country mentioned in the updated Financial Action Task Force (FATF) Public Statement on High Risk & Non-Co-operative jurisdictions.
- Financial parameters pertaining to the corresponding bank must be put forth for perusal.

Purpose of SRVA

- The framework could largely reduce the "net demand for foreign exchange, the U.S. dollar in particular, for the settlement of current account related trade flows".
- The framework would also reduce the need for holding foreign exchange reserves and dependence on foreign currencies, making the country less vulnerable to external shocks.
- Indian exporters could get advance payments in INR from overseas clients.
- In the long-term, promote INR as an international currency once the rupee settlement mechanism gains traction.

Comparison with existing system:

- The Special Rupee Vostro Account (SRVA) framework is an additional arrangement to the existing system that uses freely convertible currencies and works as a complimentary system. For perspective, freely convertible currencies refer to currencies permitted by rules and regulations of the concerned country to be converted to major reserve currencies (like U.S. dollar or pound sterling) and for which a fairly active market exists for dealings against major currencies. The existing systems thus require maintaining balances and position in such currencies.
- Under the existing system, Indian importers and exporters have to rely on foreign banks and correspondent banks for the settlement of their transactions, which is mainly dominated by the U.S. dollar as the vehicle currency. This necessitates the need for holding foreign exchange reserves and dependence on foreign currencies, making the country vulnerable to external shocks.
- On the other hand, the SRVA framework has the potential to largely reduce the "net demand for foreign exchange, the U.S. dollar in particular, for the settlement of current account related trade flows". The invoicing, exchange rate, and settlement of all exports and imports under this framework must be denominated and invoiced in Indian National Rupee (INR). This means that Indian importers and exporters can transact in their domestic currency, reducing their dependence on foreign currencies and making them less vulnerable to external shocks.
- Moreover, Indian exporters can get advance payments in INR from overseas clients, which will promote the use of INR as an international currency. It will also encourage foreign banks to maintain their accounts in INR, thus reducing the demand for foreign exchange and making it easier for Indian banks to access foreign financial markets and serve international clients without having to be physically present abroad.

76. What is the purpose of the Special Rupee Vostro Account (SRVA) arrangement?
(a) To increase dependence on foreign currencies
(b) To reduce the net demand for foreign exchange, especially the US dollar
(c) To decrease the number of domestic banks involved in international banking services
(d) To make Indian exporters dependent on advance payments in foreign currencies

77. What are Vostro accounts?
(a) Accounts that foreign banks hold for domestic banks in their domestic currency
(b) Accounts that domestic banks hold for foreign banks in their domestic currency
(c) Accounts that foreign banks hold for domestic banks in a foreign currency
(d) Accounts that domestic banks hold for foreign banks in a foreign currency

78. What is the function of the SRVA framework?
(a) To facilitate wire transfer
(b) To conduct business transactions
(c) To accept deposits
(d) All of the above

79. Which currencies are freely convertible currencies?
(a) Currencies permitted by rules and regulations of the concerned country to be converted to major reserve currencies
(b) Currencies permitted by rules and regulations of the concerned country to be converted to Indian National Rupee
(c) Currencies that are not permitted by rules and regulations of the concerned country to be converted to major reserve currencies
(d) Currencies that are not permitted by rules and regulations of the concerned country to be converted to Indian National Rupee

80. What is the eligibility criteria for banks to open an SRVA?
(a) Banks from partner countries must approach an authorised domestic dealer bank
(b) The domestic bank must seek approval from the apex banking regulator providing details of the arrangement
(c) Correspondent banks must not be from countries mentioned in the updated Financial Action Task Force (FATF) Public Statement on High Risk & Non-Co-operative jurisdictions
(d) All of the above

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

76. (b) To reduce the net demand for foreign exchange, especially the US dollar
As per the Economic Survey (2022-23), the framework of SRVA can reduce the net demand for foreign exchange, especially the US dollar, for the settlement of current account related trade flows.

77. (b) Accounts that domestic banks hold for foreign banks in their domestic currency
A vostro account is an account that domestic banks hold for foreign banks in the former's domestic currency, in this case, the rupee.

78. (d) All of the above The SRVA framework entails invoicing, exchange rate and settlement, which are important components that facilitate wire transfer, conduct business transactions, and accept deposits.

79. (a) Currencies permitted by rules and regulations of the concerned country to be converted to major reserve currencies
Freely convertible currencies refer to currencies permitted by rules and regulations of the concerned country to be converted to major reserve currencies (like U.S. dollar or pound sterling) and for which a fairly active market exists for dealings against major currencies.

80. (d) All of the above
Banks from partner countries are required to approach an authorised domestic dealer bank for opening the SRVA. The domestic bank would then seek approval from the apex banking regulator providing details of the arrangement. Domestic banks must also put forth for perusal, financial parameters pertaining to the corresponding bank. Correspondent banks must not be from countries mentioned in the updated Financial Action Task Force (FATF) Public Statement on High Risk & Non-Co-operative jurisdictions.

Passage: 1

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday named [1] largest unnamed islands of Andaman & Nicobar Islands after India's Param Vir Chakra awardees. The ceremony was organised on the occasion of Parakram Diwas, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's birth anniversary.

In a press release, the Prime Minister's Office said, "Giving due respect to the real-life heroes of the country has always been accorded the highest priority by the Prime Minister. "
Mr. Modi participated in the ceremony through video conference and unveiled a model of the national memorial dedicated to Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose that's to be built on Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Dweep.

Home Minister Amit Shah was present in Port Blair at the culmination of a seven-day event organised by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) in honour of Netaji. Mr. Shah said that the 126th birth anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose is being celebrated as 'Parakram Divas' across the country.
Stating that the identity of the Andaman was associated with the symbols of slavery instead of the memories of the freedom struggle, Mr. Modi said, "Even the names of our islands had the imprint of slavery."
https://www.livemint.com/news/india/pm-modi-to-name-21-unnamed-islands-of-andaman-and-nicobar-after-param-vir-chakra-awardees-11674434702248.html#:~:text=The%20Government%20had%20declared%20January,awardees%20today%20via%20video%20conferencing.

81. Which of the following has been replaced by [1] in the above passage?
(a) 24 (b) 21
(c) 20 (d) 22

82. What was the event organised by the Ministry of Home Affairs in honour of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose?
(a) A seven-day celebration of the 126th birth anniversary of Netaji
(b) An exhibition showcasing the life and legacy of Netaji
(c) A ceremony to award posthumous Param Vir Chakra to Netaji
(d) A meeting of political leaders to discuss Netaji's contributions to India's freedom struggle

83. Which island group is partly a part of the Andaman Islands?
(a) Little Andaman (b) Great Nicobar
(c) Barren Island (d) Coco Islands

84. Which is the highest peak in Andaman Nicobar Islands?
(a) Saddle Peak (b) Barren Island
(c) Narcondam Island (d) Ross Island

85. Which islands were renamed as 'Shaheed Island' and 'Swaraj Island' during the Prime Minister's visit to Andaman and Nicobar Islands?
(a) Ross Island and Neil Island
(b) Neil Island and Havelock Island
(c) Havelock Island and Ross Island
(d) Swaraj Island and Shaheed Island were not renamed.

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

81. (b) Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday named the 21 largest unnamed islands of the Andaman & Nicobar Islands after 21 Param Vir Chakra awardees.
82. (a) A seven-day celebration of the 126th birth anniversary of Netaji. The Home Minister of India, Amit Shah, was present in Port Blair at the culmination of the seven-day event.
83. (a) The given information mentions that the Andaman Islands are divided into three main islands i.e. North, Middle, and South, and Little Andaman is part of the Andaman Islands.
84. (a) The given information mentions that Saddle peak (737 m) in North Andaman is the highest peak in Andaman Nicobar Islands.
85. (b) Neil Island and Havelock Island. Explanation: During his visit to the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, the Prime Minister renamed Neil Island and Havelock Island as 'Shaheed Island' and 'Swaraj Island,' respectively.

Passage 2.

Vagir is among the six submarines being built by the Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL), Mumbai, in collaboration with the French M/s Naval Group under Project 75. The Indian Navy on Monday commissioned the fifth diesel-electric Kalvari-class submarine Vagir. It is among the six submarines being built by the Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL), Mumbai, in collaboration with the French M/s Naval Group. Four of these submarines have already been commissioned into the Navy and a sixth will be commissioned next year.

"The induction of Vagir is another step towards the Indian Navy consolidating its position as a builder's Navy, as it also reflects MDL's capabilities as a premier ship and submarine building yard", the government said in a press release.

According to a government press release, Vagir represents stealth and fearlessness, as it comes with features like an advanced acoustic absorption technique.
"Vagir will boost the Indian Navy's capability to further India's maritime interests and is capable of undertaking diverse missions including anti-surface warfare, anti-submarine warfare, intelligence gathering, mine laying and surveillance missions", the government release said.
https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/ins-vagir-commissioned-details-significance-8399083/

86. Which of the following statements is true about INS Vagir?
(a) It is the fourth submarine of Project 75 Kalvari class.
(b) It is equipped with some of the best sensors in the world.
(c) It has a state-of-the-art anti-aircraft missile system.
(d) It was built by a Russian shipyard.

87. Which of the following statements is true about the weapons package of INS Vagir?
(a) It houses surface-to-air missiles.
(b) It includes a nuclear warhead.
(c) It has wire-guided torpedoes and sub-surface to surface missiles.
(d) It is not designed for offensive purposes.

88. Which of the following is a feature of INS Vagir's superior stealth capabilities?
(a) High radiated noise levels
(b) Hydro-dynamically optimized shape
(c) Poor acoustic absorption techniques
(d) Lack of ability to attack the enemy

89. When was the first Vagir submarine commissioned into the Indian Navy?
(a) 3rd December 1973
(b) 7th June 2001
(c) 28th February 2023
(d) 5th August 1995

90. What is INS Vagir named after?
(a) A deep-sea plant
(b) A deadly deep-sea predator
(c) A famous Indian explorer
(d) A river in India

86. (b) It is equipped with some of the best sensors in the world.
INS Vagir is equipped with some of the best sensors in the world.

87. (c) It has wire-guided torpedoes and sub-surface to surface missiles.
The INS Vagir has a formidable weapons package that includes wire-guided torpedoes and sub-surface to surface missiles.

88. (b) Hydro-dynamically optimized shape
INS Vagir has superior stealth features such as advanced acoustic absorption techniques, low radiated noise levels, and hydro-dynamically optimized shape.

89. (a) 3rd December 1973
The first Vagir submarine was commissioned into the Indian Navy on 3rd December 1973.

90. (b) A deadly deep-sea predator
INS Vagir is named after the Sand Fish, a deadly deep-sea predator of the Indian Ocean.

Passage 3

India has become the latest country to develop its own operating system (OS) in a bid to reduce its reliance on foreign software and enhance its digital sovereignty.

Dubbed BharOS, the OS, based on the Android Open-Source Project (AOSP), was built by the Indian Institute of Technology in Madras and funded by the Indian government.

Featuring stronger privacy safeguards, the OS will not have default apps installed, giving users more control and flexibility to choose the apps they want from third-party app stores, including private organisational app stores. Developers can also collaborate with device manufacturers to roll out BharOS for mainstream release, with the ability to side-load apps.

While BharOS has been applauded as a step towards achieving Indian prime minister Narendra Modi's vision of a developing a "strong, indigenous, and self-reliant digital infrastructure", it has seen its fair share of proponents and sceptics.

Nityesh Bhatt, chairperson and professor from the Institute of Management at Nirma University, said as the value proposition of BharOS is security and privacy, "it may be immensely beneficial for many government, educational, research and commercial organisations with stringent integrity and confidentiality requirements".

https://www.computerweekly.com/news/365530492/India-launches-homegrown-BharOS

91. What is BharOS, the indigenous mobile operating system developed by an IIT Madras-incubated company, focused on?
(a) Gaming
(b) Privacy and Security
(c) Entertainment
(d) Social Networking

92. What is the Native Over the Air (NOTA) update feature of BharOS?
(a) It allows users to access private cloud services through private 5G networks
(b) It automatically installs security updates and bug fixes
(c) It provides access to a curated list of safe apps
(d) It lets users download and use pre-installed apps

93. What does NDA stand for in the context of BharOS?
(a) Non-Disclosure Agreement
(b) No Default Apps
(c) National Digital Archive
(d) National Defense Academy

94. What is the purpose of the DuckDuck Go partnership with BharOS?
(a) To provide users with access to social media platforms
(b) To offer a privacy-focused browser as the default browser in BharOS
(c) To provide users with access to cloud storage services
(d) To offer a search engine for BharOS users

95. What is the total number of apps that users can download on BharOS through its Private App Store Services (PASS)?
(a) Unlimited (b) 10,000
(c) 1,000 (d) 100

Bhopal 7676564400 | Indore 9109108422 | Jabalpur 9109108423 | Jodhpur 9109108419 | Raipur 9109108417 | Bilaspur 9109108416 | Ranchi 9109108418
Delhi 9891906520 | Gurugram 09717289708 | Kanpur 8576066660 | Prayagraj 6306330553
E: support@toprankers.com W: www.toprankers.com | FOLLOW US ON:

91. (b) Privacy and Security.
The BharOS is focused on privacy and security, and that it is a contribution towards the idea of a self-reliant India or 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' by creating a secure OS environment for India-based users.

92. (b) It automatically installs security updates and bug fixes.
The BharOS would offer Native Over the Air (NOTA) updates, meaning that security updates and bug fixes will be automatically installed rather than users having to check for updates and implementing them on their own.

93. (b) No Default Apps. The BharOS has a No Default Apps (NDA) setting, which means that users do not have to keep or use pre-installed apps in this mobile operating system.

94. (b) To offer a privacy-focused browser as the default browser in BharOS.
The BharOS makers are looking to partner with DuckDuck Go for its default browser. DuckDuck Go is a privacy-focused browser with several privacy-centric features like anonymous browsing mode and Privacy Grade.

95. (d) BharOS will use Private App Store Services (PASS) to examine and curate apps that are safe for users. Users will be able to use other apps as long as they meet BharOS' PASS standards, but the system will only offer a limited selection of apps for download.

Passage 4

Many referred to the Adani-Hindenburg Research affair as a 'Lehman moment'. The allegations by a self-confessed 'short seller', the US-based Hindenburg Research, of the Adani Group's "brazen stock manipulation and accounting fraud" continue to rattle the share prices of the conglomerate's companies. It has kept the investors, regulators, the government and the judiciary, engaged all this while.

The share prices of the Adani Group companies had jumped dramatically over the last two years, but few paid any attention. Mutual funds, strangely, ignored to even partake in this wealth creation opportunity. Top fund managers couldn't fathom why and how share prices of these companies were rising, touching astronomical valuations. But then, there was the country's biggest domestic institutional investor, the state-owned insurer LIC, which acquired shares in five Adani companies continuously over the last nine quarters till December 2022.

The jury is still out on whether the Adani-Hindenburg Research affair is a Lehman moment. In the classical sense, it is not. The broad-based markets in India didn't witness any pressure when Adani stocks tanked. The collapse of Adani is not a systemic risk, it doesn't bring down the Indian financial sector; even for LIC, the exposure to Adani is less than 1 per cent of its portfolio. Will there be more unravelling in this case? Nobody is sure.
https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/amid-2008-meltdown-how-short-selling-survived-a-ban-8466748/

96. What is short selling?
(a) Buying shares with the expectation of a rise in their value.
(b) Borrowing shares and selling them with the expectation of a fall in their value.
(c) Lending shares to other investors.
(d) Buying shares and holding them for a long period of time.

97. Which of the following is NOT a financial market regulator in India?
(a) Reserve Bank of India
(b) Securities and Exchange Board of India
(c) Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India
(d) National Payments Corporation of India

98. Which regulator is responsible for regulating and supervising credit rating agencies in India?
(a) Reserve Bank of India
(b) Securities and Exchange Board of India
(c) Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India
(d) Ministry of Finance

99. When was the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) established?
(a) 1991 (b) 1992
(c) 1993 (d) 1994

100. When was the Hilton Young Commission established?
(a) 1922 (b) 1926
(c) 1938 (d) 1940

96. (b) Borrowing shares and selling them with the expectation of a fall in their value. Short selling involves borrowing shares from someone else, selling them in the market with the hope that their price will fall, and then buying them back at a lower price to return them to the original owner, thereby earning a profit.

97. (d) National Payments Corporation of India
The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) is a payment system regulator in India, while the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), and Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) are financial market regulators.

98. (b) Securities and Exchange Board of India
The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) is responsible for regulating and supervising credit rating agencies in India.

99. (b) 1992 SEBI was established in 1992 as a statutory regulatory body for regulating the securities market in India.

100. (b) 1926 The Hilton Young Commission was established in 1926 to study and make recommendations on the Indian financial system. Based on its recommendations, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) was established on April 1, 1935.

Passage 5.

Continuing New Delhi's efforts to re-establish the variety of the feline population, a group of 12 cheetahs was brought from South Africa last week and put into quarantine enclosures in the Kuno National Park in the central state of Madhya Pradesh.

The big cats arrived after a 10-hour flight from Johannesburg. They will join eight brought from Namibia last year. The South African cheetahs are between 18 months and four years of age.

The intercontinental movement of the creatures, first from Namibia and now from South Africa, is part of India's ambitious restoration initiative called 'Project Cheetah'.

"Another milestone for Project Cheetah. India has shown an example to the world by proving that an ecological wrong can be balanced by an action that is in ecological harmony," said environment minister Bhupinder Yadav, before releasing the cheetahs into their enclosures.

"The cheetah reintroduction into India is a bold step in terms of conservation and one that is desperately needed if we are to have any chance of saving this species from extinction," tweeted Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari.

Before the arrival of the felines, expert teams from Namibia and South Africa – the countries with the largest cheetah populations in the world – trained Indian forest officers and wildlife experts on handling, breeding, rehabilitation, medical treatment and conservation of the animals.
https://www.rfi.fr/en/science-and-technology/20230226-south-african-cheetahs-arrive-to-start-new-lives-in-india

101. What is the main objective of the Action Plan for Introduction of Cheetah in India?
(a) To introduce a new species of big cat in India
(b) To revive the grasslands and their biomes and habitats
(c) To increase the number of tigers in India
(d) To promote hunting of cheetahs in India

102. What is the name of the accreditation tool developed by tiger and protected area experts?
(a) Tiger Reserves Accreditation (TRA)
(b) Conservation Assured | Tiger Standards (CA|TS)
(c) Protected Area Standards (PAS)
(d) Global Tiger Standards (GTS)

103. What is the name of the body that launched the Action Plan for Introduction of Cheetah in India?
(a) National Tiger Conservation Authority
(b) Wildlife Trust of India
(c) Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change
(d) Wildlife Institute of India

104. When was the proposal to introduce African Cheetahs from Namibia into the Indian habitat lifted by the Supreme Court?

(a) 2020 (b) 2019
(c) 2021 (d) 2018

105. When was the cheetah declared extinct in India?
(a) 1950 (b) 1952
(c) 1960 (d) 1970

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

101. (b) To revive the grasslands and their biomes and habitats The main objective of the Action Plan for Introduction of Cheetah in India is to reintroduce cheetahs in India to revive the grasslands and their biomes and habitats.
102. (b) Conservation Assured | Tiger Standards (CA|TS) Conservation Assured | Tiger Standards (CA|TS) is an accreditation tool developed by tiger and protected area experts.
103. (c) Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change
The Action Plan for Introduction of Cheetah in India was launched by the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change.
104. (c) 2021
The proposal to introduce African Cheetahs from Namibia into the Indian habitat was lifted in 2021 after a seven-year-long stay.
105. (b) 1952.
The cheetah was declared extinct in India in 1952 due to hunting, diminishing habitat and non-availability of enough prey.

Passage 6

India has made significant progress in recent years, thanks to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision. Keeping this in mind, the theme for the Republic Day celebrations is based on Modi's vision of Jan Bhagidari. Other Republic Day celebration events will include Republic Day 2023, Vande Bharatam 2.0, Veer Gatha 2.0, the Military Tattoo and Tribal Dance Festival, and others. Here's everything you need to know about the occasion.

The six-day mega-event Bharat Parv 2023 will be held at the Red Fort in Delhi from the 26th to the 31st of this month. Some of the best Republic Day Parade tableaux will be displayed during the event. There will also be cultural performances by Zonal Cultural Centers, as well as cultural troupes from States and Union Territories, a pan-Indian food court, and a crafts bazaar with 65 handicraft stalls.

The Bharat Parv 2023 event will be launched on January 26th and will be open to the public from 5:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. According to the ministry, it will be open to the general public from 12 p.m. to 10 p.m. beginning January 27th. The physical event is being held after a two-year hiatus at the lawns and Gyan Path in front of the Red Fort.

The Bharat Parv 2023 event will include a food festival, a handicraft mela, folk and tribal dance performances, cultural troupe performances, and the illumination of the Red Fort. During the event, Dekho Apna Desh, Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat, the G-20, and Mission LIFE will be branded and promoted.
https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/republic-day-2023-live-updates-26th-january-parade-74th-republic-day-of-india-101674691202557.html

106. When was the first Bharat Parv event held?
(a) 2015 (b) 2016
(c) 2017 (d) 2018

107. Which ministry has been designated as the nodal ministry for the Bharat Parv event?
(a) Ministry of Home Affairs
(b) Ministry of Tourism
(c) Ministry of Culture
(d) Ministry of External Affairs

108. In which year was the Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat initiative launched?
(a) 2013 (b) 2014
(c) 2015 (d) 2016

109. What is the objective of the Dekho Apna Desh initiative?
(a) To promote international tourism to India
(b) To create awareness among citizens about the rich heritage and culture of India
(c) To promote local artisans
(d) To promote sustainable tourism in India

110. What is the LiFE concept?
(a) A concept to promote global health
(b) A concept to promote sustainable agriculture

(c) A concept to promote sustainable fashion

(d) A concept to promote an environmentally conscious lifestyle

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

106. (b) 2016 The first Bharat Parv event was held in 2016.
107. (b) Ministry of Tourism The Ministry of Tourism has been designated as the nodal ministry for the Bharat Parv event.
108. (c) 2015 The Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat initiative was launched in 2015.
109. (b) To create awareness among citizens about the rich heritage and culture of India.
The objective of the Dekho Apna Desh initiative is to create awareness among citizens about the rich heritage and culture of India.
110. (d) A concept to promote an environmentally conscious lifestyle
The LiFE concept promotes an environmentally conscious lifestyle that focuses on 'mindful and deliberate utilization' instead of 'mindless and wasteful consumption'.

Passage 7

M-Sand is artificial sand produced from crushing hard stones into small sand-sized angular shaped particles, washed and finely graded to be used as construction aggregate. It is an alternative to river sand for construction works.

NCL is all set to start production of M-Sand and the move is aimed at maximising the utilisation of natural resources and minimising the adverse impact of mining.

Eyeing business diversification while focusing on the ecological balance, the company has set up a sand manufacturing plant using its over burden as a raw material.

This pro-environment move of the company will help in conserving river bed erosion and preserve aquatic ecosystems, as per the statement.

Recently, NCL received the consent to operate which paves the path towards commercial production and auction of M-Sand which is likely to begin next month.
Due to high demand, regular supply and complete ban on sand mining to protect the river ecosystem during monsoon, it has become very necessary to find an alternative to river sand. The 'Sand Mining Framework' (2018) prepared by the Ministry of Mines envisages alternative sources of sand obtained in the form of sand (M-Sand) manufactured from crushed rock fines (crusher dust) from overburden (OB) of coal mines . During 'opencast mining', the top soil and rocks are removed as waste and the broken rock (overburden or OB) is dumped in the dump to extract the coal.
https://m.economictimes.com/industry/indl-goods/svs/metals-mining/coal-india-subsidiary-ncl-to-start-m-sand-production/articleshow/96884848.cms

111. What is the classification of sand as per The Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulations) Act, 1957 (MMDR Act)?
(a) Major mineral (b) Precious mineral
(c) Minor mineral (d) Radioactive mineral

112. Which ministry issued the "Sustainable Sand Mining Management Guidelines 2016" in India?
(a) Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change
(b) Ministry of Mines
(c) Ministry of Home Affairs
(d) Ministry of Rural Development

113. What is the main source of sand in India?
(a) Deserts
(b) Mountains
(c) Rivers and coastal areas
(d) Quarries

114. In which state of India has sand mining led to a decline in the water level of the Luni River?
(a) Rajasthan (b) Gujarat
(c) Maharashtra (d) Tamil Nadu

115. What are the benefits of using manufactured sand in construction projects?
(a) Cost-effectiveness, consistency, and reduced water consumption
(b) Improved seismic stability, increased durability, and enhanced heat insulation
(c) Reduced construction time, increased load-bearing capacity, and improved aesthetic appeal

(d) Greater weather resistance, improved acoustic insulation, and reduced risk of foundation settlement

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

111. (c) Minor mineral Sand is classified as a minor mineral under The Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulations) Act, 1957 (MMDR Act).

112. (a) Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change
The Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change (MoEFCC) issued "Sustainable Sand Mining Management Guidelines 2016" to promote scientific sand mining and environmentally friendly management practices.

113. (c) Rivers and coastal areas Rivers and coastal areas are the main sources of sand in India.

114. (a) Rajasthan In the state of Rajasthan, sand mining has led to a decline in the water level of the Luni River, affecting the drinking water supply of nearby villages.

115. (a) Cost-effectiveness, consistency, and reduced water consumption
Using manufactured sand can be more cost-effective than using natural sand, can have a consistent grain size and shape, and can help to reduce the amount of water required for construction projects.

Passage 8

Andhra Pradesh lost its capital Hyderabad to Telangana when the erstwhile state was divided into two in 2013-2014. Under the Andhra-Telangana Reorganization Act, the centre promised to provide adequate funds to Andhra Pradesh to develop a new capital. Andhra Pradesh chief minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy on Tuesday said the state capital will be shifted to Visakhapatnam and he will have his office in the coastal city while inviting investors for Global Investment Summit (GIS) to be held there in March first week. "Here I am to invite you to Visakhapatnam, which is going to be our capital in the days to come. I myself would also be shifting over to Visakhapatnam in the months to come," he told the investors at the meeting. This comes four months after the Supreme Court stayed the Andhra Pradesh high court order directing the state government to complete the works in Amaravati by March 2023.
It was in [1] when then state chief minister N Chandrababu Naidu declared Amaravati as the state capital and acquired 33,000 acres of land from farmers to build the new capital city. Andhra Pradesh lost its capital Hyderabad to Telangana when the erstwhile state was divided into two in 2013-2014. Under the Andhra-Telangana Reorganization Act, the centre promised to provide adequate funds to Andhra Pradesh to develop a new capital.
https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/visakhapatnam-to-be-andhra-pradesh-s-new-capital-city-cmreddy-101675165624739.html

116. Which of the following will replace [1] in the above passage?
(a) 2014 (b) 2015
(c) 2017 (d) 2018

117. According to the Andhra Pradesh government, what is the rationale behind having multiple state capitals?
(a) To promote the growth of different regions of the state
(b) To reduce the cost of development
(c) To address the issue of farmer suicides in the state
(d) To create a more balanced distribution of power among different regions

118. What is the name of the Act under which the Andhra Pradesh Capital Region Development Authority was established?
(a) Andhra Pradesh Decentralisation and Inclusive Development of All Regions Act, 2020
(b) Andhra Pradesh Capital Region Development Authority Act, 2014
(c) Andhra Pradesh Repeal of the Decentralisation and Inclusive Development of All Regions Act, 2021
(d) Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly Act, 2020

119. Under which article of the Indian Constitution did the Andhra Pradesh High Court issue a directive to the state government and the Capital Region Development Authority?
(a) Article 356 (b) Article 226
(c) Article 123 (d) Article 368

120. Which provision of the Andhra Pradesh Capital Region Development Authority Act, 2014 provides for the regulation of development activities within

the jurisdiction of the Capital Region Development Authority?

(a) Section 10(1)(c)(i) (b) Section 4(2)(b)
(c) Section 8(1)(a) (d) Section 6(1)(d)

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

116. (b) 2015 It was in 2015 when then state chief minister N Chandrababu Naidu declared Amaravati as the state capital and acquired 33,000 acres of land from farmers to build the new capital city.

117. (a) To promote the growth of different regions of the state
According to the Andhra Pradesh government, having multiple state capitals will allow the development of several regions of the state and hence leading to inclusive growth.

118. (b) Andhra Pradesh Capital Region Development Authority Act, 2014
The Andhra Pradesh Capital Region Development Authority Act, 2014 is the Act under which the Andhra Pradesh Capital Region Development Authority (APCRDA) was established.

119. (b) Article 226 The Andhra Pradesh High Court issued a directive to the state government and the Capital Region Development Authority under Article 226 of the Indian Constitution, which empowers high courts to issue writs for the enforcement of fundamental rights and for any other purpose.

120. (a) Section 10(1)(c)(i)
Section 10(1)(c)(i) of the Andhra Pradesh Capital Region Development Authority Act, 2014 provides for the regulation of development activities in accordance with the development plans and regulations, and to bring aesthetics, efficiency and economy in the process of development within the jurisdiction of Capital Region Development Authority.

Passage 9

Aero India-2023 is being held at the [1]. The grand event is expected to showcase India's growth in aerospace and defence capabilities. The key features this time during the biennial exhibition is the Karnataka Pavilion which will showcase to the participants the opportunities available in the state.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated Aero India-2023 in Bengaluru on Monday. The grand event is expected to mesmerise the audience with sorties, aerobatic performances & mid-air formations. The event will showcase India's growth in aerospace and defence capabilities. The focus of Aero India-2023 this time will be on putting on display indigenous equipment / technologies and forging partnerships with foreign companies, in line with 'Make in India, Make for the World' vision.

It will be the biggest ever event till date and is likely to witness the participation of 98 countries, the Defence Ministers of 32 countries, Air Chiefs of 29 countries and 73 Chief Executive Officers of global and Indian original equipment manufacturers.

As many as 809 defence companies, including Medium, Small and Micro Enterprises (MSMEs) and startups, will showcase the advancement in niche technologies and growth in aerospace and defence sectors.

The major exhibitors include Airbus, Boeing, Dassault Aviation, Lockheed Martin, Israel Aerospace Industry, BrahMos Aerospace, Army Aviation, HC Robotics, SAAB, Safran, Rolls Royce, Larsen & Toubro, Bharat Forge Limited, Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) and BEML Limited.

https://www.zeebiz.com/economy-infra/aviation/news-aero-india-show-2023-inauguration-bengaluru-aero-india-2023-dates-theme-venue-tickets-exhibitor-list-live-streaming-schedule-f35-tickets-booking-pm-modi-221773

121. Which of the following has been replaced by [1] in the above passage?
(a) Yelahanka Air Force Station at Bengaluru
(b) Western Air Command at New Delhi
(c) South Western Air Command at Gandhinagar
(d) Central Air Command at Prayagraj

122. What is the theme of Aero India 2023?
(a) Wings of the Future
(b) The runway to a billion opportunities
(c) Innovations in Aerospace Technology
(d) Connect, Develop and Grow

123. What is an ALUAV designed to do?
(a) To provide aerial reconnaissance, surveillance, and intelligence gathering capabilities to the military.
(b) To transport cargo and personnel to remote locations.

(c) To provide internet connectivity to rural areas.
(d) To monitor air pollution and weather patterns.

124. Which aircraft is the ALUAV designed to be launched from?
(a) F-35 stealth aircraft (b) Sukhoi Su-30MKI
(c) C130J aircraft (d) Dassault Rafale

125. What is the DTTI?
(a) A bilateral program between India and the United States aimed at deepening their defence ties through cooperation in military technology development and trade.
(b) A program to promote regional stability by building a strong defence partnership between India and China.
(c) A platform to enhance international cooperation in space exploration and technology development.
(d) An initiative to facilitate collaboration in civil aviation and airport infrastructure development.

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

121. (a) Yelahanka Air Force Station at Bengaluru.
Aero India-2023 is being held at the Yelahanka Air Force Station, Bengaluru.

122. (b) The runway to a billion opportunities.
The theme of Aero India 2023 is "The runway to a billion opportunities," which focuses on showcasing India's growth in aerospace and defence capabilities.

123. (a) To provide aerial reconnaissance, surveillance, and intelligence gathering capabilities to the military.
An Air-Launched Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (ALUAV) is a type of drone or unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) that is launched from an aircraft, typically a military transport plane. It is designed to provide aerial reconnaissance, surveillance, and intelligence gathering capabilities to the military.

124. (c) C130J aircraft.
The Air-Launched Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (ALUAV) is being developed to be launched from the C130J aircraft.

125. (a) A bilateral program between India and the United States aimed at deepening their defence ties through cooperation in military technology development and trade. The Defence Trade and Technology Initiative (DTTI) is a bilateral program between India and the United States aimed at deepening their defence ties through cooperation in military technology development and trade.

Passage 10

The Rajasthan government's proposed right to health bill has landed in deep controversy due to objections from the private healthcare sector, which is dishonouring as a part of the protests the provision of cashless treatment under existing state-run schemes. The draft bill has been criticised as a hasty job that overlooks ground realities and suffers from lacunae that the Ashok Gehlot government is apparently resisting taking note of.

The bill has been in the pipeline for some months now. It was tabled in the state assembly in September 2022 but referred to a select committee subsequently because the Opposition and doctors' fraternity wanted it be debated thoroughly. On February 15, the select committee deferred its scheduled meeting as private doctors threatened to step up their stir against the bill. Earlier, the state government had expressed its resolve to push ahead with passage of the bill.

A key contentious point in the bill is that no medical facility—whether government or private—can deny a patient 'emergency' care. The bill, however, falls short of defining 'emergency condition' and how the cost of treatment is to be reimbursed to private hospitals. Private doctors and private medical institutions feel the bill will give extraordinary powers to designated government officials to enter their premises and harass them.
https://www.indiatoday.in/india-today-insight/story/will-rajasthans-right-to-health-bill-do-more-harm-than-good-2336156-2023-02-17

126. What is the recommended public health funding by the National Health Policy, 2017?
(a) 1.3% of GDP (b) 2.5% of GDP
(c) 3% of GDP (d) 4% of GDP

127. What is the cashless health service amount stipulated under the Mukhya Mantri Chiranjeevi Yojana in Rajasthan?
(a) Rs. 1 lakh (b) Rs. 2 lakhs
(c) Rs. 3 lakhs (d) Rs. 5 lakhs

128. Which article of the Indian Constitution guarantees the fundamental right to life and personal liberty?
(a) Article 2
(b) Article 38
(c) Article 21
(d) Article 47

129. Which international convention grants the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being to humans?
(a) Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)
(b) International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
(c) Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
(d) Convention on the Rights of the Child

130. Which organization has recommended setting of standards for the Rajasthan Model of Public Health?
(a) World Health Organization
(b) Indian Institute of Health Management Research
(c) United Nations
(d) Indian Public Health Association

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

126. (b) 2.5% of GDP
The National Health Policy, 2017 recommends that public funding on health should be increased to at least 2.5% of GDP.

127. (d) Rs. 5 lakhs The Mukhya Mantri Chiranjeevi Yojana in Rajasthan stipulates cashless health services up to Rs. 5 lakh to every family in the State.

128. (c) Article 21. The Article 21 of the Constitution of India guarantees a fundamental right to life & personal liberty.

129. (a) Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948). The passage states that India is a signatory of the Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) by the United Nations that grants the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being to humans including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services.

130. (b) Indian Institute of Health Management Research.
The IIHMR has recommended setting of standards in accordance with the resources available in the State to match with the rights of patients as well as the service providers

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Passage 11

The ICET dialogue was a result of an understanding between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Joe Biden to create the mechanism led by the two national security councils in [1].

At the inaugural dialogue of the initiative on critical and emerging technologies (ICET) in Washington DC on Tuesday, India and the United States (US) unveiled an ambitious roadmap to position each other as "trusted technology partners", deepen the defence relationship with a focus on co-production and co-development, and institutionalise a standing mechanism to overcome regulatory barriers and export controls, particularly on the American side.

A government of India statement said that ICET aimed to position the two countries as "trusted technology partners by building technology value chains and support the co-development and co-production of items".

According to the Indian statement on ICET, in the field of defence manufacturing, the two sides agreed to focus on "joint production of key items of mutual interest". The US also committed to expeditious review of the license application submitted by General Electric to produce jet engines in India for the indigenously manufactured Light Combat Aircraft. The statement said that a "new Innovation Bridge" will be created to connect defence startups on both sides.
https://m.economictimes.com/news/defence/inaugural-icet-dialogue-will-accelerate-us-strategic-technology-partnership-with-india-us-nsa-sullivan/articleshow/97473737.cms

131. Which of the following has been replaced by [1] in the above passage?
(a) May 2021 (b) May 2022
(c) January 2021 (d) January 2022

132. Who is the current National Security Advisor of India?
(a) Ajit Doval (b) Amit Shah

(c) Rajnath Singh (d) Nirmala Sitharaman

133. Which organization oversees political, economic, energy and security issues of strategic concern in India?
(a) National Security Agency (NSA)
(b) National Security Council (NSC)
(c) Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)
(d) Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)

134. What is the Quad?
(a) An informal grouping of four countries
(b) An international organization of countries that produce oil
(c) A military alliance of four countries
(d) None of the above

135. How many areas of cooperation have been identified under the iCET initiative?
(a) Four (b) Five
(c) Six (d) Seven

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

131. (b) May 2022
The iCET initiative was launched by India and the US in May 2022.

132. (a) Ajit Doval
The current National Security Advisor of India is Ajit Doval.

133. (b) National Security Council (NSC)
The National Security Council (NSC) of India oversees political, economic, energy and security issues of strategic concern in India.

134. (a) An informal grouping of four countries
The Quad is an informal grouping of four countries, Australia, Japan, India and the United States.

135. (c) Six Under the iCET initiative, six areas of cooperation have been identified, including scientific research and development, quantum and artificial intelligence, defence innovation, space, advanced telecom, and semiconductors.

Passage 12

Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Odisha, the states with a large tribal population, have an estimated [1] of country's total 12lakh sickle cell disease (SCD) patients. East Vidarbha in Maharashtra is considered to have the highest concentration of around 50,000 SCD patients in one single region.

Among the four East Vidarbha districts, Nagpur is a hotspot with a majority of the high-risk community population residing here, more than Gadchiroli, Bhandara and Yavatmal.

Following the announcement of a new mission to eliminate the genetic blood disorder by [2] in the Union Budget on Wednesday, experts feel besides tribal population the project needs to focus on pre-marriage youths which is the vulnerable group.
https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/nagpur/tribals-states-account-for-75-scd-patients-marriageable-youths-most-vulnerable/articleshow/97534581.cms

136. Which of the following will replace [1] in the above passage?
(a) 50% (b) 60%
(c) 75% (d) 80%

137. What is Sickle Cell Disease (SCD)?
(a) SCD is an infectious disease caused by bacteria
(b) SCD is a genetic disorder that causes chronic anaemia and painful episodes
(c) SCD is a type of cancer that affects blood cells
(d) SCD is a type of lung disease that causes difficulty breathing

138. What is the current treatment for Sickle Cell Disease?
(a) Surgery (b) Blood transfusions
(c) Antibiotics (d) Physical therapy

139. What is the National Health Mission's role in tackling Sickle Cell Disease?
(a) To provide treatment to patients with the disease
(b) To prevent the spread of the disease through awareness campaigns
(c) To support the states in their efforts to prevent and manage the disease
(d) To conduct research on the disease

140. Which of the following will replace [2] in the above passage?
(a) 2030 (b) 2040
(c) 2047 (d) 2050

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

136. (c) 75% Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Odisha, the states with a large tribal population, have an estimated 75% of country's total 12lakh sickle cell disease (SCD) patients. East Vidarbha in Maharashtra is considered to have the highest concentration of around 50,000 SCD patients in one single region.

137. (b) Sickle Cell Disease is a chronic genetic disorder that affects red blood cells causing chronic anaemia, acute painful episodes, organ infarction and chronic organ damage, and a significant reduction in life expectancy.

138. (b) Blood transfusions can help relieve anaemia and reduce the risk of pain crises in sickle cell disease. Hydroxyurea, a medication, and bone marrow or stem cell transplantation are other treatment options.

139. (c) The National Health Mission is supporting the states in their efforts to prevent and manage sickle cell disease.

140. (c) 2047 Following the announcement of a new mission to eliminate the genetic blood disorder by 2047 in the Union Budget on Wednesday, experts feel besides tribal population the project needs to focus on pre-marriage youths which is the vulnerable group.

Passage 13

Very soon a new Indo-American robotic bird in the sky will accurately monitor Joshimath-like land slippage and landslide events across the Himalayas, help in saving lives. It is a unique satellite fine-tuned for day and night viewing and the big mission objective is to mitigate the risk of disasters.

India and America have jointly made a one of kind satellite that will image the Earth using RADARS like never before. Called the NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar satellite (NISAR), estimates suggest just the satellite costs over one billion dollars to make and is touted to be the most expensive earth imaging satellite ever to be made in the world. A 2017 statement by NASA said the whole 3-5 year mission will cost over $ 1.5 billion.

In a first, the jointly made Indo-US satellite will be launched later this year from Sriharikota. In a big milestone event on February 1, 2023, the chairman of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) Shri S Somanath will flag the departure of the massive instruments that will travel from the world-famous Jet Propulsion Laboratory at Pasadena to India.
https://www.news9live.com/opinion-blogs/joshimath-in-mind-india-gets-ready-to-launch-worlds-most-expensive-satellite-a-joint-isro-nasa-bird-called-nisar-au2209-2040162

141. What is the weight of the NISAR satellite?
(a) 2,800 grams (b) 2,800 kilograms
(c) 2,800 pounds (d) 2,800 tonnes

142. What are the two different radar frequencies used by NISAR?
(a) S-band and X-band
(b) L-band and P-band
(c) C-band and S-band
(d) L-band and S-band

143. Which of the following is not a launch vehicle used by ISRO for its satellite missions?
(a) Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV)
(b) Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV)
(c) Reusable Launch Vehicle (RLV)
(d) Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV)

144. Which space agency has provided the L-band radar and GPS for NISAR?
(a) ISRO (b) NASA
(c) ESA (d) JAXA

145. What is the name of India's first interplanetary mission launched by ISRO in November 2013?
(a) Chandrayaan-1 (b) Mangalyaan
(c) Aditya-L1 (d) Cartosat-2

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

141. (b) 2,800 kilograms. The NISAR satellite is a 2,800 kilograms satellite consisting of both L-band and S-band Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) instruments, which makes it a dual-frequency imaging radar satellite.

142. (d) L-band and S-band. NISAR uses two different radar frequencies (L-band and S-band) to measure changes in our planet's surface less than a centimeter across.

143. (c) Reusable Launch Vehicle (RLV)
ISRO has used several launch vehicles for its satellite missions, including the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV), Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV), and Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV). However, the Reusable Launch Vehicle (RLV) is a concept being developed by ISRO, and it has not yet been used for any satellite missions. The RLV is designed to be a fully reusable launch vehicle, which would reduce the cost of space missions by eliminating the need to build a new launch vehicle for each mission.

144. (b) NASA. NASA has provided the L-band radar, GPS, a high-capacity solid-state recorder to store data, and a payload data subsystem for NISAR.

145. (b) Mangalyaan, also known as the Mars Orbiter Mission, was launched by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) in November 2013. It was India's first interplanetary mission, and its aim was to study the Martian atmosphere and search for evidence of methane gas. It was a major milestone for ISRO and made India the first country to successfully enter Mars orbit on its first attempt.

Passage 14

Responding to the US's allegation that China has sent a surveillance balloon over American airspace, Beijing on Friday responded by saying it was for weather research and was pushed by the wind and that it regrets that the airship strayed.

In a statement late Friday, the Chinese Foreign Ministry said the balloon a was civilian airship used mainly for meteorological research. The ministry said the airship has limited steering capabilities and "deviated far from its planned course" because of winds.

On Thursday, a senior American defense official told Pentagon reporters that the U.S. has "very high confidence" that the object spotted over U.S. airspace in recent days was a Chinese high-altitude balloon and that it was flying over sensitive sites to collect information. One of the places the balloon was spotted was Montana, which is home to one of the nation's three nuclear missile silo fields at Malmstrom Air Force Base. The official spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive information.
https://www.livemint.com/news/world/a-weather-device-china-on-balloon-spotted-over-american-airspace-11675434163977.html

146. What was the name of the US military project involving high-altitude spy balloons after World War II?
(a) Project Genetrix
(b) Project Geemon
(c) Project HighFly
(d) Operation SkyEye

147. Which of the following statements is true about air space according to international law?
(a) Air space includes outer space and is subject to national appropriation.
(b) Air space belongs to the government controlling the territory below it.
(c) The Outer Space Treaty of 1967 defines the altitude at which outer space begins and air space ends.
(d) Air space is not regulated by any international treaties.

148. What is the Paris Convention on the Regulation of Aerial Navigation (1919)?
(a) An international treaty on the regulation of outer space activities.
(b) An international treaty on the regulation of air pollution.
(c) An international treaty on the regulation of aerial navigation.
(d) An international treaty on the regulation of maritime transportation.

149. What is the Chicago Convention (1944) related to air space?
(a) It regulates the use of air space by military aircraft.
(b) It regulates the use of air space by commercial aircraft.
(c) It establishes the principle of air space sovereignty.
(d) It defines the altitude at which outer space begins and air space ends.

150. Under the 1944 Chicago Convention, what is the requirement for aircraft registered in other contracting states to fly into another state's territory for commercial non-scheduled flights?
(a) They need to obtain diplomatic permission.
(b) They need to provide detailed information about their passengers and cargo.
(c) They need to pay a fee to the state.
(d) They are allowed to fly into the territory without prior diplomatic permission.

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

146. (a) Project Genetrix After World War II, the US military began using high-altitude spy balloons for reconnaissance purposes, leading to the development of Project Genetrix. This project involved the use of large, helium-filled balloons equipped with cameras and other sensors, which were launched from sites across the United States and floated across the Pacific Ocean to collect intelligence on the Soviet Union and other potential adversaries. While the balloons proved to be an effective means of surveillance, they were eventually phased out in favor of more advanced technologies such as satellites and unmanned drones.

147. (b) Air space is the space above a particular national territory and is treated as belonging to the government controlling the territory. It is not the same as outer space, which is declared to be free and not subject to national appropriation by the Outer Space Treaty of 1967. However, the treaty does not define the altitude at which outer space begins and air space ends.

148. (c) An international treaty on the regulation of aerial navigation.
The Paris Convention on the Regulation of Aerial Navigation is an international treaty that establishes the principle of air space sovereignty. It was signed in 1919 and subsequently ratified by many countries. The treaty regulates the use of air space by aircraft and establishes the principle that each state has the right to regulate the use of its air space.

149. (b) It regulates the use of air space by commercial aircraft.
The Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation, signed in 1944, regulates the use of air space by commercial aircraft. The contracting states agree to permit aircraft registered in the other contracting states and engaged in commercial non-scheduled flights to fly into their territory without prior diplomatic permission and to pick up and discharge passengers, cargo, and mail.

150. (d) They are allowed to fly into the territory without prior diplomatic permission.
Under the 1944 Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation, contracting states agree to permit aircraft registered in the other contracting states and engaged in commercial non-scheduled flights to fly into their territory without prior diplomatic permission.

Passage 15

The Supreme Court on Friday referred to a larger nine-judge bench to decide the plea against the practice of excommunication in the Dawoodi Bohra community.

A five-judge Constitution bench headed by Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul said the nine-judge bench constituted to decide the correctness of the Sabarimala judgment will also decide the practice of excommunication in the Dawoodi Bohra community. The bench also comprising Justices Abhay S Oka, Vikram Nath, JK Maheshwari had earlier heard the parties in the case who urged the court to wait for a nine-judge bench decision in the Sabarimala matter or refer the present case also to a nine-judge bench.

The nine-judge bench is seized of the Sabarimala case with respect to the entry of women into the Sabarimala hill shrine in Kerala. It is also considering three other cases involving women's rights with regard to religious practices.

During the hearing, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta appearing for Maharashtra had told the bench that this case should be tagged along with the Sabrimala case before the nine-judge bench.
https://firstindia.co.in/news/delhi/Sc-refers-plea-against-practice-of-excommunication-in-dawoodi-bohra-community-to-9-judge-bench

151. What was the year when the petition challenging the practice of excommunication in the Dawoodi Bohra community was first filed and is still pending?
(a) 1986 (b) 1996
(c) 2006 (d) 2016

152. Who is the current leader of the Dawoodi Bohra community?
(a) His Holiness Dr Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin
(b) His Holiness Dr Syedna Taher Fakhruddin
(c) His Holiness Dr Syedna Mohammed Burhanuddin
(d) His Holiness Dr Syedna Abdeali Saifuddin

153. What is the main language of the Dawoodi Bohra community?
(a) Urdu (b) Arabic
(c) Lisan al-Dawat (d) Gujarati

154. Which act was enacted to stop the practice of excommunication in certain communities?
(a) The Prevention of Excommunication Act, 1949
(b) The Excommunication Prevention Act, 1949
(c) The Community Resources Act, 1949
(d) The Religious Freedom Act, 1949

155. What are the consequences of excommunication in the Dawoodi Bohra community?
(a) Not being allowed to access a mosque belonging to the community
(b) Not being allowed to a burial dedicated to the community
(c) Both A and B
(d) None of the above

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

151. (a) 1986 The petition (Central Board of Dawoodi Bohra Community & Anr. v. State of Maharashtra & Anr) has been pending since 1986.
152. (a) The current and the 53rd leader of the Dawoodi Bohra community is His Holiness Dr Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin.
153. (c) Yhe main language of the Dawoodi Bohra community is Lisan al-Dawat, a dialect of Gujarati with inclusions from Arabic and Urdu.
154. (a) The Bombay Prevention of Excommunication Act, 1949 was enacted to stop the practice of excommunication prevalent in certain communities.
155. (c) The given information mentions that excommunication in the Dawoodi Bohra community includes not being allowed to access a mosque belonging to the community, and not being allowed to a burial dedicated to the community.

IMPORTANT ONE LINERS FOR OLETs

NATIONAL

ECI hosts 2nd International Conference on 'Use of Technology and Elections Integrity' in New Delhi
Election Commission of India (ECI) is hosting the 2nd International Conference on the theme 'Use of Technology and Elections Integrity' at New Delhi on 23-24 January, 2023. ECI is leading the Cohort on Elections Integrity which was established as a follow up to the 'Summit for Democracy'.
'Summit for Democracy', was an initiative of US President and hosted in December 2021.

Govt switches bonds with RBI in a cash-neutral deal
The Indian government bought back bonds maturing in 2024 from the Reserve Bank of India, while also issuing bonds maturing in 2032 worth a similar quantum. The government bought back 6.18% bonds maturing in 2024 worth 226.10 billion rupees ($2.78 billion) at a price of 98.62 rupees while it issued 8.28% 2032 bonds worth 210.26 billion rupees to the RBI at 106.05 rupees.

Vedanta Cairn Oil and Gas appoints Nick Walker as CEO
Vedanta Cairn Oil & Gas, India's largest private oil and gas exploration and production company, announced it has appointed Nick Walker as Chief Executive Officer, effective January 5, 2023. Before this appointment, Walker was President and Chief Executive Officer at Lundin Energy, a large European independent E&P companies.

Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik inaugurates 'International Craft Summit
Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on Friday inaugurated an 'International Craft Summit' in Jajpur. This is the first-of-its-kind craft summit featuring a confluence of pioneering craftspeople, culture, and art enthusiasts. International delegates from 15 countries have arrived in Jajpur to engage with local artisans and other stakeholders, informed the government

President Draupadi Murmu confers Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar

- President, Draupadi Murmu conferred this year's Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar to the awardee children and their parents in New Delhi on January 24, 2023.
- The prizes were given to 11 youngsters for their outstanding achievements in six categories: art, culture, bravery, innovation, social service, and sports. Six boys and five girls from 11 states and union territories received awards.
- Each awardee got a medal, a one lakh rupee cash prize, and a certificate from the President.

After Co-Win, Govt Launches U-WIN To Digitise Universal Immunisation Programme
Named U-WIN, the programme to digitise India's Universal Immunisation Programme (UIP) has been launched in a pilot mode in two districts of each state and Union Territory.
The platform will be used to register and vaccinate every pregnant woman, record her delivery outcome, register every newborn delivery, administer birth doses and all vaccination events thereafter.

Punjab CM Bhagwant Mann launches Schools of Eminence Project
Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann launched Schools of Eminence in Mohali and said it is a revolutionary step for ensuring golden future of the students. Inspired by Delhi's Schools of Specialized Excellence, in the first phase, 117 existing government schools will be upgraded as 'Schools of Eminence'.

IndiGrid to acquire 100% stake in Khargone Transmission for Rs 1497 crore
India Grid Trust will acquire a 100 per equity stake in Khargone Transmission at an enterprise value of about Rs 1,497.5 crore. The acquisition will be for a cash consideration of an enterprise value not exceeding Rs 1,497. 5 crore. The Khargone Transmission was incorporated on November 28, 2015. The transmission project was awarded by the Ministry of Power for 35 years.

Business 20 inception meeting began in Gujarat; Minister Piyush Goyal asks businesses to adopt sustainable & green business

Several policymakers, including Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal besides business leaders and senior executives represented businesses of the G20 countries are participating in the three-day B20 India inception meeting. The Business 20 is amongst the most prominent official engagement groups in G20. The three day B20 inception meeting was held in Gandhinagar.

India's first Stack Developer Conference to be held in New Delhi

- The first India Stack Developer Conference will be hosted in New Delhi on January 25, 2023. The conference will focus on strategies and techniques to increase global acceptance of India's digital goods.
- Over 100 digital leaders from industry, government, start-ups and unicorns, and academia will attend the conference.
- G20 delegates and the G20 Secretariat have also been invited to the Conference.

Nagaland: 3rd edition of annual Orange festival 2023 underway in Kohima

In Nagaland, the third edition of the annual Orange festival 2023 is being organised in collaboration with the department of Horticulture, Agriculture, Rural Development, Land Resources and Kohima Smart City at Rusoma village, Kohima district. It is conceptualised to recognise and celebrate the hard work of the orange growers while facilitating them the market linkage.

Balkrishna Doshi, pioneer of modernist architecture in India, passes away

- Dr Balkrishna Vithaldas Doshi, who is widely revered for his contribution in the field of architecture, has passed away. He was 95.
- For his outstanding contribution to the field of architecture, he was conferred with Pritzker Prize in 2018 and the coveted Padma Shri in 1976.
- The Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) has announced that Indian architect Balkrishna Doshi will be the recipient of the 2022 Royal Gold Medal

Republic Day 2023

- The 74th Republic Day Parade begins at 10:30 AM from Vijay Chowk and head towards Lal Quila. The Parade ceremony commence with the visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to the National War Memorial.
- He lead the nation in paying solemn tributes to the brave hearts by laying a wreath. After that, the national flag unfurled followed by the national anthem with a 21-gun salute using 105-mm Indian Field Guns.

Sh. Banwari Lal Purohit inaugurates North India's largest floating Solar project of 2000kWp at Water Works in Chandigarh

- Banwari Lal Purohit inaugurated North India's largest floating Solar project of 2000kWp at Water Works in Chandigarh. He also inaugurated a 500kWp floating Solar Project with Fountains at Dhanas Lake in Chandigarh.
- Both projects have been designed and executed by CREST (Chandigarh Renewable Energy and Science and Technology Promotion Society).

President approves conferment of 106 Padma Awards

President Droupadi Murmu approved conferment of 106 Padma Awards including three duo cases for 2023.

The list comprises six Padma Vibhushan, nine Padma Bhushan and 91 Padma Shri awardees. A total of 19 awardees are women and the list also includes two persons from category of Foreigners/NRI/PIO/OCI and seven Posthumous awardees.

Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya launched World's first intranasal COVID-19 vaccine

- Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Health Minister, launched the world's first intranasal COVID-19 vaccine, iNNCOVACC, in New Delhi on January 27, 2023.
- Bharat Biotech International Limited (BBIL) created it in conjunction with Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance (BIRAC).
- The vaccine was unveiled in the presence of Dr. Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of State (IC) for Science and Technology, and other authorities.

India elected as Vice-chair at the 12th session of FAO's Intergovernmental Technical Working Group (ITWG) on Animal Genetic Reso

In the recently concluded 12th Session of the Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on Animal Genetic Resources at Rome. India was elected as Vice-chair and represented Asia & Pacific region. In 12th Session of ITWG, implementation of the Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources, monitoring of AnGR diversity and preparing the 3rd Country Report were reviewed.

Naresh Lalwani has been appointed as new General Manager of Central Railway

- Naresh Lalwani has been appointed General Manager of Central Railway. He is a senior officer from the 1985 batch of the Indian Railway Engineering Service.
- He was Senior Deputy General Manager and Chief Vigilance Officer of Western Railway before becoming General Manager of Central Railway.
- He succeeded Ashok Kumar Misra, General Manager of Western Railway, who was also in charge of Central Railway.

National Child Science Congress to begins in Ahmedabad with more than 1400 delegates

- The 30th National Child Science Congress began in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. The five-day event organized at Science City will conclude on 31st January. The program will be hosted by the Gujarat Council on Science and Technology, the Gujarat Council of Science City, and SAL Education. More than 1400 delegates including child scientists, teachers will attend the congress.

EPFO launches massive outreach programme in all districts through revamped 'Nidhi Aapke Nikat' programme

Employees' Provident Fund Organisation, EPFO, launched a massive outreach programme in all the districts through a revamped 'Nidhi Aapke Nikat' programme for expanding its presence across the country.
The aim of this programme is to reach all the districts on 27th of every month and strengthen the relationship between the organization and its stakeholders.

NITI Aayog's AIM, CBSE, and Intel India Collaborate to Bring Change in Education Sector

- NITI Aayog, Central Board of Secondary Education -Ministry of Education, and Intel India have collaborated to bring a change in the education sector by embedding future skills such as AI and Tinkering in the formal curriculum.
- The larger aim is to align the NEP 2020's guidance to increase the pace of tech integration for youth, the need to bridge the future skills gap in the country, and optimize the current infrastructure (ATLs, etc.) towards making India AI-ready.
- Together, they launched the AIoT Integration in School Curriculum in September 2022 and initiated a pilot

First edition of the SCO Film Festival begins in Mumbai

Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting and Youth Affairs and Sports Anurag Singh Thakur and Minister of State (External Affairs and Culture)Meenakshi Lekhi inaugurated the 5-day SCO Film Festival at NPCA, Mumbai.
The film festival is being organized by the National Film Development Corporation (NFDC) in association with SCO Council of Heads of States.

Two-Day Inception Meeting Of Startup-20 Begins In Hyderabad

A two-day inception meeting of the Startup-20, the new engagement group of G20 initiated by India, has begun in Hyderabad. Union Tourism Minister G Kishan Reddy, G-20 Sherpa Amitabh Kant, Startup-20 Chair Chintan Vaishnav, Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, DIPTYCH secretary Anurag Jain, G-20 Secretariat JS Asish Sinha JS participated while about 180 delegates from G-20 member countries and nine special invitee countries besides stakeholders including Startups, investors and innovators attended the inaugural meeting.
The Union Minister asked the delegates to visit tourist places in India and places of cultural importance during startup meetings. Speaking on the occasion, G-20 Sherpa said the country has achieved considerable growth in the field of startups due to massive disruption in the fields of Science & Technology. This has led to the development of Digital identity and digital public platforms, he added.

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan launches Ladli Bahina Scheme.
Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said his government will launch a new scheme to provide Rs 1,000 per month to women from financially poor background in the state, where the Assembly polls are due this year-end.

Indian Air Force orders inquiry to find the cause of accident of two fighter planes at Morena
Indian Air Force orders inquiry to determine the cause of accident of two fighter planes at Morena. In Madhya Pradesh Morena district, two Indian Air Force fighter aircraft crashed in the Pahadgarh area. As per reports, Sukhoi-30 and Mirage 2000 aircraft have crashed. Details are awaited.

Odisha Minister Naba Kishore Das, Who Was Shot In Chest, Dies In Hospital
Naba Kisore Das was shot in the chest when he was on his way to attend a programme. New Delhi: Naba Kisore Das, Odisha health minister who was critically injured after being shot at by a police officer, has died in hospital. The officer, who has been arrested, was undergoing treatment for mental illness, reports said.

President Droupadi Murmu to grace opening of Gardens of Rashtrapati Bhavan in Udyan Utsav 2023 President Droupadi Murmu will grace the opening of the Gardens of Rashtrapati Bhavan – Udyan Utsav 2023 today. Among several other attractions, the visitors will be able to see specially cultivated tulips of twelve unique varieties which are expected to bloom in phases. This time the Gardens will be open for about two months. The Gardens will open for the general public on the 31st of January and will remain open till the 26th of March except on Mondays which are maintenance days. From the 28th of March to the 31st of March, the Gardens will be open for special categories.
The garden will open for farmers on the 28th of March, for differently-abled persons on the 29th of March, for personnel of Defence Forces, Paramilitary Forces, and Police on the 30th of March, and for women including tribal women's Self Help Groups on the 31st of March.

First G20 International Financial Architecture Working Group meeting
The first G20 International Financial Architecture Working Group meeting under the G20 Indian Presidency will be held today and tomorrow in Chandigarh. Briefing the media persons at Chandigarh, Anu P Mathai, Economic Advisor, Department of Economic Affairs said that International Financial Architecture Working Group is one of the important workstreams under the G20 Finance Track with a focus on strengthening the international financial architecture. It also aims to address multiple challenges faced by vulnerable countries.

Odisha finance minister Niranjan Pujari has been allotted the Health and Family welfare department
A statement from the Chief Minister's Office confirmed the appointment and said, "With approval of governor Prof Ganeshi Lal, chief minister Naveen Patnaik allocated health and family welfare department to finance minister Niranjan Pujari."

PM Pranam Yojana for promotion of alternative fertilizers
Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in Budget 2023, announced the launch of "PM Pranam Yojana" for the promotion of alternative fertilizers and balanced use of chemical fertilizers. Finance Minister in her speech said, "PM Programme for Restoration, Awareness, Nourishment and Amelioration of Mother Earth' (PM Pranam) will be launched to incentivize States and Union Territories to promote alternative fertilizers and balanced use of chemical fertilizers."

Initiatives For Green Growth And Clean Energy.
To achieve India's goal of net zero carbon emission by 2070, Sitharaman announced a Rs 35,000 crore outlay towards the country's transition to cleaner energy besides listing out initiatives related to green fuel and green farming.

Legendary Filmmaker K Viswanath Passes Away At 92 .
Filmmaker Kasinadhuni Viswanath died in the wee hours of Friday at a private hospital in Hyderabad. The director was under treatment for quite some time due to age-related ailments and was recently admitted to a hospital where he breathed his last.

BJP to contest on 20 seats in Nagaland State.
"We will contest on 20 out of 60 seats in Nagaland. Rest of the seats have been given to our alliance partner NDPP. We'll contest on all 60 seats in Meghalaya. Our tagline is 'M Power Meghalaya' means Modi-powered Meghalaya and a double-engine government will be formed there," the party informed.

First G20 Sustainable Financial Working Group meeting to begin in Guwahati
Union Minister for Ports, Shipping, Waterways and AYUSH, Sarbananda Sonowal will inaugurate the 1st Sustainable Financial Working Group (SFWG) meeting under India's G20 Presidency on Thursday in Guwahati with the theme 'One Earth. One Family. One Future' and with the motto "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam".

PM Modi To Visit Poll-Bound Karnataka On Feb 6 To Inaugurate Slew Of Projects.
Prime Minister Narendra Modi is expected to visit Karnataka to inaugurate multiple projects in the poll-bound state on Monday. During his visit, PM Modi is scheduled to inaugurate India Energy Week 2023 at Bengaluru, lay the foundation stone of various development initiatives and dedicate the HAL helicopter factory at Tumakuru to the nation.

BMC Presents Rs 52,619.07 Cr Budget, Focus On Pollution Control Measures, Electronic Vehicles.
The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) presented its annual Budget for the financial year 2023-24 on Saturday with a total estimated amount of Rs 52,619.07 crore. According to ANI, it s 14.52 percent higher than the Budget estimate for 2022-23 which was Rs 45,949.21 crore.

Popular Playback Singer Vani Jayaram Passes Away In Chennai.
Vani Jayaram has sung over 10,000 songs including devotionals and private albums. She has also performed several solo concerts across the world. She has also sung in 19 Indian languages including Tamil, Hindi, Kannada, Telugu, Malayalam, Marathi, Odia, Bengali and Tulu. On the Republic Day, she was also announced as the recipent of Padma Bhushan 2023, the third-highest civilian award in the Republic of India.

Govt Hikes Windfall Profit Tax On Domestically Produced Crude Oil, Exports Of Diesel & ATF.
The Centre has hiked windfall profit tax levied on domestically-produced crude oil and export of diesel and aviation turbine fuel in line with firming international oil prices, as per an official order, reported PTI. The tax on crude oil produced by companies such as Oil and Natural Gas Corporation of India has been increased to Rs 5,050 per tonne from Rs 1,900 per tonne, the order dated February 3,

Green hydrogen hubs to be established in Kochi.
The Budget presented by Finance Minister K.N. Balagopal on Friday announced a road map for setting up green hydrogen hubs in Kochi and Thiruvananthapuram in the next two years. A scheme of ₹200 crore has been announced for viability gap funding/grant/equity support to set up the green hydrogen hubs.

3 HC Chief Justices, 2 Senior Judges To Take Oath In Supreme Court Today.
The Supreme Court of India will welcome five new judges on Monday, increasing its strength to 32, as three Chief Justices of high courts, Justice Pankaj Mithal, Justice Sanjay Karol, and P V Sanjay Kumar, take their oaths of office. The two other senior high court judges to be administered the oath by the Chief Justice of India are Justice Ahsanuddin Amanullah of the Patna High Court and Justice Manoj Misra of the Allahabad High Court.

West Bengal: TMC Factions Clash Over Madrassa Panel Election In Malda, Several Injured.
Malda's Ratua was transformed into a battlefield on Sunday during the High Madrassa Management Committee elections as two factions of the Trinamool Congress clashed in the Batna area of Ratua.
The clash ensued as two factions of the ruling party fielded candidates separately for six seats in the Batna High Madrassa. The issue had already created tension in the area in the run up to the polls.

Air Vistara Fined Rs 70 Lakh For Not Operating Minimum Mandated Flights In Northeast: DGCA .

DGCA has imposed a Rs 70 lakh fine on Air Vistara for not operating minimum number of mandated flights to underserved areas of country's northeast, as reported by the news agency ANI.

Vina Rani, Delhi zoo's eldest white tigress, is no more.
The Seventeen-year-old Vina Rani, the oldest white tigress at the National Zoological Park (also known as the Delhi Zoo), died due to complications from old age at her enclosure on Monday evening, It was the zoo's oldest white tigress, according to a communication issued by the zoo director. The tigress, Vina Rani, had been "off-feed" from February 4, the communication said, referring to a loss of appetite.

PM Modi To Visit Poll-Bound Tripura On February 11 & 13, To Address 2 Election Rallies.
Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be on a visit to poll-bound Tripura on February 11 and February 13 where he will address two election rallies, sources told ABP News. On February 11, Modi is scheduled to hold poll campaigns in Gomati and Dhalai districts of the north eastern states while he will address an election campaign in capital city Agartala on February 13.

SC Dismisses Petitions Challenging Victoria Gowri's Appointment As Madras High Court Additional Judge.
Supreme Court on Tuesday dismissed the petitions challenging Victoria Gowri's appointment as Madras High Court Judge. The oath-taking ceremony started while the hearing in the top court was still underway.
Despite the opposition from the lawyers to her appointment, the Centre on Monday notified the appointment of advocate Lakshmana Chandra Victoria Gowri as an additional judge of the Madras High Court.

PM Modi Wears Blue Sadri Jacket In Parliament. Here's What Is Special About It.
Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday attended the Budget Session of the Parliament wearing a jacket made of material recycled from plastic bottles. He was seen wearing a light blue "sadri" jacket as he sat in the Rajya Sabha in the morning. The Prime Minister chose the outfit to promote phasing out of single-use plastic under the 'Unbottled' initiative of Indian Oil.

Urban-20 City Sherpas' Meeting Under G20 Begins In Ahmedabad.
A two-day Urban-20 City Sherpas' meet that aims to focus on promoting solidarity among cities to find common solutions that are in sync with the overall objectives of the G20 began here on Feb - Thursday.

Tamil Nadu To Expand Free Brseakfast Scheme For Primary School Students In April.
While Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin had informed the state Legislative Assembly that the free breakfast scheme was a major success and that the government was keen to expand it. The government sources told IANS that the scheme would be expanded catering to more schools in April 2023.

Rajasthan: Large Quantity Of Explosives Found In Dausa Ahead Of PM Modi's Visit.
One person has been arrested after large quantities of explosives were found in Rajasthan's Dausa district ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's scheduled visit on February 12. Taking stock of the security preparations ahead of the Prime Minister's visit, Dausa Police arrested the accused who was allegedly transporting the explosives near Khan Bhankari Road in the district.

PM Narendra Modi Addresses UP Global Investors Summit, Hails Uttar Pradesh For Good Governance.
Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Uttar Pradesh Global Investors Summit 2023 in Lucknow Today in the presence of UP Governor Anandiben Patel, CM Yogi Adityanath and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and addressed the gathering present there. Speaking at the occasion the Prime Minister praised the Uttar pradesh government for "good governance" and "stability" in the state.

2 More Judges Appointed To Supreme Court, Top Court Gets Full Bench Strength Of 34 Judges.
Union Law Minister Kiren Rijiju on Friday announced that President Droupadi Murmu appointed Chief Justices of Gujarat and Allahabad High Courts as Judges of the Supreme Court. With this, the top court now has full bench strength of 34 judges. Rajesh Bindal, the Chief Justice of Allahabad HC, and Aravind Kumar, the Chief Justice of Gujarat HC, have been appointed to the apex court.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi Inaugurates Dawoodi Bohra Community's Arabic Academy In Mumbai's Marol.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 10th Feb inaugurated a new campus of an educational institute by the Dawoodi Bohra community during in Mumbai, The new campus of Aljamea-tus-Saifiyah, or the Saifee Academy, the primary educational college of the Dawoodi Bohra community, is in Marol, a suburb of Mumbai.

PM Narendra Modi flags off two Vande Bharat trains from Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus in Mumbai.
Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday flagged off two Vande Bharat trains, one between Mumbai and Solapur and another between Mumbai and Shirdi. The inauguration ceremony was held in Mumbai, with Union Railways minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, Maharashtra chief minister Eknath Shinde and deputy chief minister Devendra Fadnavis in attendance

PM Narendra Modi To Visit Bengaluru On Feb 13 To Inaugurate 14th Edition Of Aero India 2023.
Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to visit poll-bound Karnataka again on Feburary 13 (Monday). to inaugurate 14th edition of Aero India 2023 at Air Force Station in Bengaluru. Aero India 2023, the biennial air show and aviation exhibition, will be held from 13-17 February. Hailed as Asia's largest air show, the Aero India show is organised by the Defence Ministry.

PM Narendra Modi inaugurated Dawoodi Bohra community's Arabic Academy in Mumbai.
"I'm not here as Prime Minister, but as part of the family. Visiting you is like visiting my family. Please don't refer to me as PM or CM. I'm your family member," he said while addressing the community members.

G20 International Food Festival begins in Delhi.
The New Delhi Municipal Corporation (NDMC) is organizing the G20 food festival which aims at people to enjoy the delicacies of member countries and guest countries. Delhi's civic body has invited 29 countries to participate in the G20 food festival. An NDMC official said that the focus will be on unique Indian cuisines and it will create awareness of various international cuisines and knowledge about nutritional health and food preparation.

PM NarendraModi To Inaugurate First Section Of Delhi-Mumbai Expressway In Rajasthan's Dausa.
Prime Minister Narendra Modi will dedicate to the nation the Delhi-Dausa-Lalsot stretch, the first completed section of the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway on Sunday. The 246-kilometre section has been developed at a cost of over Rs 12,150 crore. The operationalisation of this stretch will reduce the travel time from Delhi to Jaipur from 5 hours to around 3.5 hours and provide a major boost to economic development of the entire region

Ramesh Bais appointed as the new Maharashtra governor,
Ramesh Bais has been appointed as the new Governor of Maharashtra; the President of India has accepted the resignation of Bhagat Singh Koshyari as Governor of Maharashtra. Ramesh Bais was the tenth Governor of Jharkhand, succeeding Draupadi Murmu.

Earthquake Of Magnitude 4.0 Strikes Nagaon In Assam.
An Earthquake of Magnitude:4.0, Occurred on February 12, 2023, 16:18:17 IST, Lat: 26.10 & Long: 92.72, Depth: 10 Km, in Nagaon, Assam, As of now, there are no details regarding any impact or damage from the 4.0 magnitude earthquake.

Rajya Sabha Adjourned Till March 13 After Oppn Demand Over Adani Issue.
Union Minister Piyush Goyal on Monday said that the Opposition comes to Parliament with the motive of not letting dialogues happen peacefully after Rajya Sabha was adjourned following a ruckus by the Opposition over the Adani issue. "The opposition leaders didn't let the Rajya Sabha function smoothly. It is indirectly a disrespect of the Chair. Many members were passing comments.The opposition comes to the parliament with the motive of not letting dialogues happen peacefully.

Delhi to have India's first National Metro Rail Knowledge Centre.
The first National Metro Rail Knowledge Centre is in the process of development in New Delhi. The Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) has awarded the contract, for the design and construction of the facility, to GA Infra Private Limited. The National Metro Rail Knowledge Centre will be an essential facility and act as a hub of resources for the metro's growth story.

AMRITPEX 2023 Inaugurated by Communications Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw.

The Minister for Communications, Electronics & Information Technology and Railways, Ashwini Vaishnaw inaugurated AMRITPEX 2023 – National Philatelic Exhibition. This five-day Mahakumbh of Stamps is being celebrated from 11th February to 15th February 2023 and is being organized as a part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav Celebrations. The Minister of State for Communications, Devusinh Chauhan, Secretary, Department of Posts, Vineet Pandey, Director General Postal Services, Alok Sharma, and other dignitaries were present on the occasion.

RBI's financial literacy week starts form 13 to 17 February, 2023.
RBI's 'Financial Literacy Week' started on 13th and will last till February 17, 2023. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has been conducting this every year since 2016 to propagate financial education messages on a particular theme among members of public across the country. Last year, RBI observed 'financial literacy week' from February 14 to February 18, 2022. The central bank held an event to propagate financial education messages on the theme of "Go Digital Go Secure". The theme selected for 2023 year'S FLW is "Good Financial Behaviour - Your Saviour" which will be observed between February 13 and 17, 2023.

Mumbai ranks second most polluted city in the world according to Swiss air tracking index IQAir.
Mumbai was the second most polluted city in the world between January 29 and February 8, according to the Swiss air tracking index IQAir (a real-time worldwide air quality monitor).

Strict Anti-Copying Law comes into force in Uttarakhand.
The country's strictest Anti-Copying Law has come into force in Uttarakhand. Governor Lieutenant General Gurmeet Singh has approved the Uttarakhand Competitive Examination (Measures for Prevention and Prevention of Unfair Means in Recruitment) Ordinance 2023. In view of this, the Anti-Copying Law is being described as the biggest anti-copying law in the country. This comes after the UKPSC paper leak which led to cancellation of exam for around 1.4 lakh government job aspirants.

TRIFED Aadi Mahotsav Festival.
Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi will inaugurate the national Aadi Mahotsav on 16th February, 2023 at Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium, New Delhi. This was announced at a media briefing by the Union Minister of Tribal Affairs, Shri Arjun Munda in New Delhi. Ministers of State for Tribal Affairs, Ms Renuka Saruta was also present on the occasion.

Mumbaikars gear up to ride on India's first double-decker AC electric bus.
The Brihanmumbai Electric Supply & Transport, also known as 'BEST', inducted India's first air-conditioned double decker bus into its fleet on Monday. The agency has placed an order of 200 such unique electric double-decker air-conditioned buses with manufacturers 'Switch'.

Tamil Nadu Government's Electric Vehicle Policy 2023, Eyes Rs 50,000 Cr Investments.
The Tamil Nadu government on Tuesday unveiled its electric vehicle (EV) policy 2023 which aims to garner investments to the tune of Rs 50,000 crore and generate 1.50 lakh jobs, in a boost to the EV industry. Chief Minister M K Stalin formally released the new policy in the presence of government officials at the Secretariat here

Actor Javed Khan Amrohi passes away in Mumbai.
Actor Javed Khan Amrohi passes away in Mumbai, he died due to lung failure Javed Khan Amrohi appeared in films like Lagaan, Andaz Apna Apna, Chak De India, Coolie No 1, Hum Hain Rahi Pyaar Ke, Laadla, Ishq among many others. He was also seen in TV shows Mirza Ghalib and Nukkad.

Army gets its first set of offensive swarm drone system, IAF next.
This delivery for the Army may possibly be the world's first operational high density swarming Unmanned Aerial System induction for military applications.

3.6 Magnitude Earthquake Jolts J&K's Katra.
Tremors were felt in Jammu and Kashmir's Katra early morning on Friday, as a 3.6 magnitude earthquake hit the area at 5.02 am as per the National Centre for Seismology. The depth of the earthquake was 10 kilometres under the surface.

BCCI Chief Selector Chetan Sharma Resigns After Viral Sting Operation: Report.

After a sting operation of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) chief selector Chetan Sharma went viral, where he allegedly talked about Virat Kohli's captaincy woes and other issues, he has tendered his resignation from the coveted post. As per ANI sources, Chetan Sharma sent his resignation to BCCI Secretary Jay Shah who has accepted it.

Actor Shahnawaz Pradhan Passes Away At the age of 56, After A Heart Attack.
After having a heart attack on February 17, actor Shahnawaz Pradhan passed away. He was 56. While attending a social event, he collapsed after complaining of terrible chest pain. He was sent to Kokilaben Dhirubhai Ambani Hospital immediately, but the doctors there were unable to save his life.

World's First Om-Shaped Lord Shiva Temple Expected To Be Ready By 2024 In Rajasthan.
The Om-shaped Lord Shiva temple is soon going to be ready in the Jadan Village of Rajasthan's Pali, after nearly three decades since the laying of the foundation stone. This would be the first such temple in the world. The Om-shaped or the 'Om Aakar' temple is being constructed across a sprawling 250 acres of land in Jadan. Over 400 people worked on the construction of the temple.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman Chairs 49th Meeting Of GST Council.
The 49th meeting of the GST Council is being Chaired by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman after the presentation of the union budget earlier this month. The meeting is also being attended by Minister of State Pankaj Chaudhary, Finance Ministers of States and UTs, and senior officers of the government.

Ujjain Breaks UP's World Record As 18.82 Lakh Diyas Illuminate City On Shivratri.
The country celebrated Mahashivratri on February 18, with great enthusiasm. From visiting the Shiva temples to the magnificent aarti in Varanasi and also the Sand Art Crafting at Juhu Beach, the festival was celebrated with devotion and fervour. Twitter and Instagram were flooded with wishes and posts amidst long hours of fasting. But, the most interesting bit of the entire celebration lay in Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh. The city lit up with 18.82 lakh oil lamps, providing an outstanding view, and setting a New Guinness World Record. This took place primarily along the banks of the Kshipra river and drew over 20,000 volunteers.

Nitin Gadkari Laid Foundation Stone of The First Divyang Park of Maharashtra.
Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari laid the Foundation Stone of the world's largest and unique Divyang Park – Anubhuti Inclusive Park in Nagpur, Maharashtra. On the occasion, he informed that the park is being developed keeping in mind the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to build an inclusive society. Instead of sympathy, this park will show empathy, hence this park has been named Anubhuti Divyang Park.

Former Meghalaya Home Minister HDR Lyngdoh Passes Away,
Meghalaya Elections 2023: Former Meghalaya Home Minister HDR Lyngdoh passed away on Monday following a heart attack. Lyngdoh was a United Democratic Party (UDP) candidate from the Sohiong assembly in East Khasi hills. As per ANI, the polls in the state will now be conducted in 59 out of 60 constituencies. According to ANI, Lyngdoh passed away after he suddenly collapsed during election campaigning. He was then rushed to a hospital. Lyngdoh had lost the 2018 polls which he had contested on a Congress ticket.

AAP's Shelly Oberoi Elected Delhi Mayor, Becomes First Woman To Hold Post After A Decade.
After a long tussle between the Aam Aadmi Party and the Bharatiya Janata Party, AAP's Shelly Oberoi has been elected as the new mayor of Delhi on Wednesday. The mayoral election was held following the intervention by the Supreme Court. The election took place after three failed attempts by the municipal body to hold the election to the top post.

Actress And TV Host Subi Suresh Dies At 41.
Popular Malayalam actress, television host and stage-show performer, Subi Suresh died at a private hospital in Kochi on Wednesday, family sources said. She was 41 and was reportedly under treatment for liver related ailments for some time. Known for her slapstick roles, and spontaneous on-stage dialogue delivery, Suresh had a huge fan-following among audiences in small and big screens.

18th World Security Congress Begins in Jaipur.
A 3-day long 18th UIC World Security Congress jointly organised by the International Union of Railways (UIC), Paris and the Railway Protection Force (RPF) began on 21 February. Theme of this year's Congress is "Railway Security Strategy: Responses and Vision for Future". The World Security Congress is a globally recognized security platform that brings together representatives from member Railway Organizations, delegates of UIC, policy makers, senior law-enforcement officials from State Polices and Railway Protection Force to discuss the current security challenges and deliberate on innovative solutions in the Railway Sector.

Kalinga Literary Festival 2023 To Kick Off From Feb 24.
Over 500 speakers across a vast array of nationalities from the fields of literature, cinema, media and politics will asemble to deliberate on the theme of "India and the World" at the annual Kalinga Literary Festival (KLF), which will take place from February 24-26 in Odisha's Bhubaneswar.

Earthquake Of 4.4 Magnitude Shakes Delhi-NCR And Parts Of UP
An earthquake of magnitude 4.4 jolted parts of Delhi, NCR and Uttar Pradesh on Wednesday. Mild tremors were felt in many areas of Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Haryana and Delhi-NCR. The intensity was measured at 4.4 on the Richter scale and the epicentre has been located in Haridwar.

Ministry Of Education Asks All States, UTs To Make 6 Years Minimum Age For Class 1 Admission.
The minimum age for admission in Class 1 will soon be set to six years. The Ministry of Education has directed all states and Union Territories to fix the minimum age for admission in Class 1 as six years, officials said on Wednesday.

Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde named as the Shiv Sena chief.
Eknath Shinde, the chief minister of Maharashtra, was elected as the Shiv Sena's supreme leader during the party's national executive meeting. The Election Commission of India (ECI) recognised his faction as the true Shiv Sena and gave him the "bow and arrow" insignia during the first national executive meeting following that recognition. The MLAs, MPs, and other Sena leaders who had joined Shinde after he split from the group headed by former chief minister Uddhav Thackeray were present at the meeting.

Former Income Tax Chief Commissioner TCA Ramanujam passes away.
TCA Ramanujam, Retired Chief Commissioner of Income Tax; Advocate, an erudite Sanskrit scholar and a columnist with businessline, passed away on Tuesday. He was 88. He is survived by his son, Arvind Rangarajan, and daughter, TCA Sangeetha. Ramanujam had been to Tirupati on Saturday and returned to Chennai the next day to deliver the keynote address at the Ananthalwar festival. He complained of uneasiness and was admitted at a private hospital where he died on Tuesday at 11.30 pm, said Sangeetha.

Former Karnataka Chief Minister and BJP Leader BS Yediyurappa retire from active politics.
Former Karnataka Chief Minister and BJP Leader BS Yediyurappa has announced his retirement from active politics. He announced his retirement in his last speech in the state assembly. He said, "I have decided to retire from active politics but will work till my last breath to make BJP win. My only aim is to bring BJP back to power and I am sure it will happen.'

Former Supreme Court Judge Abdul Nazeer Takes Oath As Andhra Pradesh Governor.
Former Supreme Court judge Justice S. Abdul Nazeer was sworn in as Governor of Andhra Pradesh on Friday. AP High Court Chief Justice Prashant Kumar Mishra administered the oath of office to Justice Nazeer at a ceremony held at Raj Bhavan in Vijayawada. Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, ministers, TDP chief N. Chandrababu Naidu, judges, and top officials attended the ceremony. The leaders and representatives greeted the new Governor following the oath of office.

Mumbai's Churchgate railway station to be renamed after India's first RBI Governor.
The Churchgate railway station in Mumbai will soon be renamed after the first governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) CD Deshmukh (Chintaman Dwarakanath Deshmukh). The station will be called 'Chintamanrao Deshmukh station'.

UP's Flying Institute IGRUA Ties Up With Flight Simulation Technique Centre To Train Student Pilots.

Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Uran Akademi (IGRUA), India's flying institute, has partnered with Flight Simulation Technique Centre (FSTC), based in Gurugram, to offer specialized training to student pilots, officials said. The training will focus on preparing aviators for flying Airbus A 320, Boeing 737, and ATR 72 aircraft, making them industry-ready.

Uttarakhand govt inks deal for ropeway at Yamunotri Dham.
The Uttarakhand government has signed a contract to construct a 3.38 km ropeway from Janki Chatti in Kharsali to Yamunotri Dham. To be built at a cost of Rs 166.82 crore, the ropeway will cut down the travel time from the current 2-3 hours to just 20 minutes. At present pilgrims have to trek for 5.5 km to reach Yamunotri Dham from Kharsali.

PM Narendra Modi Inaugurated Barisu Kannada Dim Dimava Festival.
Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 'Barisu Kannada Dim Dimava cultural festival at Talkatora Stadium in Delhi on 25th February 2023. Prime Minister Modi addressed the gathering on the occasion. 'Barisu Kannada Dim Dimava' cultural festival is being organized to celebrate Karnataka's culture, traditions, and history..

PM Narendra Modi to inaugurate Shivamogga airport in Karnataka on Feb 27.
Prime Minister Narendra Modi will embark on his fifth visit to poll-bound Karnataka this year on Monday to inaugurate Shivamogga airport and lay foundation for various development projects in Belagavi. According to an official statement, the Prime Minister will undertake a walkthrough and inspect the airport in Shivamogga. Inauguration and laying of the foundation stone of multiple projects in the district is also part of the programme. The new airport has been developed at a cost of around Rs 450 crore.

Manish Sisodia Arrest.
Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia who was arrested last night by the Central Bureau of Investigation over alleged scam in liquor policy in the national capital will undergo a medical test before being produced in the court today – 27 Feb at 1 pm. Sisodia will undergo the medical test at 10 am today. The deputy CM will have the medical examination done at the CBI headquarters for security reasons.

Maharashtra observes 56th death anniversary of Vinayak Damodar Savarkar.
People of Maharashtra are observing today : 26 Feb the 56th death anniversary of great revolutionary and freedom fighter Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, popularly known as Veer Savarkar. The Governor of state Ramesh Bais, Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and Deputy Chief Minster Devendra Fadnavis extended their tributes to the great social reformer.

Earthquake Of Magnitude 4.3 Jolts Rajkot In Gujarat.
A 4.3 magnitude earthquake rattled the Gujarat district of Rajkot on Sunday afternoon, according to the National Center for Seismology (NCS). The quake struck at 3:21 pm at a depth of 10 kilometres.

INTERNATIONAL

Thai shuttler Kunlavut Vitidsarn wins India Open Badminton title
Thai shuttler Kunlavut Vitidsarn won the India Open title. He defeated World No.1 Denmark's Viktor Axelsen in the men's singles final of the India Open Badminton Championship 22-20, 10-21 and 21-12 today at K. D. Jadhav Indoor Stadium in New Delhi. Korean sensation An Seyoung won the Women's singles final. She beat World No.1 Japanese Akane Yamaguchi 15-21, 21-16, 21-12.

Chris Hipkins sworn in as 41st Prime Minister of New Zealand

- Chris Hipkins was sworn in as the 41st Prime Minister of New Zealand in Wellington by the country's governor-general, Cindy Kiro on January 25, 2023.
- Chris Hipkins stated after formally assuming office that this was the greatest honor and responsibility of his life, and he was looking forward to the challenges ahead.
- Jacinda Ardern resigned as Prime Minister of New Zealand last week.

NASA to Test Nuclear-Powered Rocket by 2027 that will Make Space Travel Faster

- The United States space agency NASA has said the country plans to test a spacecraft engine powered with nuclear fission by 2027, an advancement seen as key to long-haul missions including a manned journey to Mars.
- NASA will partner with the US military's Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) to develop the nuclear thermal propulsion engine and launch it into space, NASA administrator Bill Nelson said

Indian And Australian Scientists Develop Artificial Synapse For Brain-Like Computing

A team of Indian and Australian scientists have developed brain-like computing using scandium nitride (ScN), a semiconducting material that is highly stable and compatible with Complementary Metal-Oxide-Semiconductor (CMOS) technology.

In the current era of artificial intelligence, brain-like computing can help meet the increasing computational demands.

Toyota names Koji Sato new CEO as Akio Toyoda takes chairman role

Koji Sato, the automaker's 53-year-old chief branding officer, who is also president of Toyota's luxury brand Lexus, will take over as chief executive from April 1, as Akio Toyoda becomes chairman.

The current chairman Takeshi Uchiyamada will drop his chairman title but remain on the board.

Microsoft Invests $10 Billion in ChatGPT Maker OpenAI

Microsoft Corp. is investing $10 billion in OpenAI, whose artificial intelligence tool ChatGPT.

The deal will give a boost to Microsoft's Azure cloud, while providing OpenAI with additional specially designed supercomputers to run its complex AI models and fuel its research.

Azure will remain the exclusive cloud provider for OpenAI, the company said.

Indian-American astronaut Raja Chari nominated as US Air Force Brigadier General

Indian-American astronaut, Raja J Chari, 45, has been nominated by US President Joe Biden for an appointment to the grade of Air Force Brigadier General.

Chari is currently serving as the Crew-3 commander and astronaut at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Johnson Space Center, Texas.

MoU signed with South Africa to introduce 12 African Cheetahs into India annually; first batch to be flown in next month

India and South Africa on Friday signed a Memorandum of Understanding to introduce 12 African Cheetahs annually over the next eight to ten year.

In terms of the agreement, an initial batch of 12 cheetahs will be flown from South Africa to India next month.

The cats will join eight Cheetah brought in India from Namibia last year.

President of the 77th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, Csaba Korosi arrived in New Delhi

President of the 77th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, Csaba Korosi arrived in New Delhi today on a three-day visit to India. This is his first bilateral visit to any country since he assumed UNGA Presidency in September last year. The External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said in a tweet that this is an opportunity to exchange views on global challenges that the United Nations is currently seized with.

During the visit, Mr. Korosi will hold talks with External Affairs Minister Dr. S Jaishankar on key multilateral and regional issues of mutual interest. He has outlined a few priorities for his UNGA Presidency. These include standing firm on the basic principles of the United Nations Charter and making significant and measurable progress in sustainability

Tohoku University's Professor Gets Among The Winners Of The 2023 Japan Prize

Masataka Nakazawa, a specially-appointed professor at Tohoku University's International Research Institute of Disaster Science (IRIDeS), has been named a co-winner of the 2023 Japan Prize in the field of Electronics, Information and Communication.

He shares the honour with Kazuo Hagimoto, chief researcher at the National Institute of Information and Communications Technology. The award recognises their contributions to global long-distance, high-capacity optical fiber networks through the development of semiconductor laser pumped optical amplifiers.

Georgia Institute Of Technology Experts Head-Up With Tech Research With $2.3B Qcells Solar Power Investment .

The state of Georgia is at the epicenter of what may be the largest investment in clean energy manufacturing in U.S. history, and Georgia Tech is poised to play a key role in an investment that is slated to create thousands of jobs and boost solar power infrastructure in our state and beyond.
Qcells, a solar power company, plans to build a $2.3 billion manufacturing complex just north of Atlanta in Cartersville to not only make state-of-the-art components for solar panels, but also to build complete panels used in a variety of settings, from houses to large-scale commercial and industrial solar arrays.
Manu Jain Resigns from Xiaomi after 9 – Year stint .
Manu Kumar Jain on Monday quit handset maker Xiaomi. He has been credited with establishing the brand's smartphone category and he was working as the vice president of Xiaomi Global

BBC accused of "waging an information war" against Russia and other independent global powers.
The Russian Foreign Ministry has accused the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) of "waging an information war" not only against Russia but also against other global centres of power that pursue an independent policy. The comments were made by the ministry's spokesperson, Maria Zakharova, in response to the recent release of a controversial two-part BBC documentary about Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

US. is preparing a military aid of more than $2 billion for Ukraine.
The aid is expected to include longer-range rockets for the first time, other munitions, and weapons, two US officials told Reuters on Tuesday.
According to the officials, the weapons aid is expected to be announced as soon as this week. The aid is also expected to include support equipment for Patriot air defense systems, precision-guided munitions, and Javelin anti-tank weapons, officials further stated, as reported by Reuters

Australia Radiation Alert: Tiny Radioactive Capsule Missing For Over 2 Weeks Found After 6-Day Search.
After a “relentless search”, the team looking for a radioactive capsule lost in Western Australia around two weeks ago is learnt to have found it. The 8mm by 6mm capsule that had triggered a radiation alert and posed a "significant public health risk" was part of a secure device on a truck travelling from a mine site to Perth and believed to have fallen from it during transportation somewhere along the Great Northern Highway, the longest one in Australia. It was spotted by the side of the road south of the town of Newman, The Guardian reported.

India Asks Australia To Remain Vigilant On Khalistani Elements, Rejects Referendum .
The Ministry of External Affairs said New Delhi has raised the matter with Canberra even as voting for a separate Sikh homeland ‘Khalistan’ was carried out on January 29.
Former UK PM Boris Johnson's Brother Resigns As Director Of Adani-Linked Firm **.**

Lord Jo Johnson, younger brother of former British prime minister Boris Johnson, has resigned his non-executive directorship of a UK-based investment firm linked with the now-withdrawn Adani Enterprises Follow-on Public Offer (FPO)

Mail Threatening Talibani Terror Attack In Mumbai.
The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Friday received an email from an unidentified person, claiming to be a member of the Taliban, threatening to carry out a terror attack in Mumbai. NIA with Mumbai Police has launched a joint probe into the matter.

PM Modi To Inaugurate India Energy Week In Bengaluru On Feb 6.
Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be in Karnataka on February 6 to participate in programmes organised in Bengaluru and Tumakuru including India Energy Week, a G20 event. According to a statement issued by the Karnataka Information Department, the Prime Minister will inaugurate India Energy Week at Bengaluru International Exhibition Centre, near Madavara on February 6 morning.

India's G20 Presidency: Gujarat's Rann Of Kutch To Host First Tourism Working Group Meet.
The TWG meeting, which will be attended by Union Minister G Kishan Reddy, will be the second G20 event in the state after the 'Business 20 Inception' programme held in Gandhinagar last month, he said.

Indian Railways to run Hydrogen-powered trains at heritage routes by December.
Hydrogen trains, as the name suggests run on hydrogen fuel cells. These are much more environmentally friendly than traditional diesel engines. Hydrogen fuel cells convert hydrogen and oxygen which then produces the electricity that is used to power the train's motors. They will run on India's narrow gauge heritage routs by Dec 2023.

Pakistan Blocks Online Encyclopedia Wikipedia For Refusing To Remove Blasphemous Content.
Pakistan has blocked Wikipedia, the online encyclopedia, after it refused to remove offensive or blasphemous material, according to media reports on Saturday. The blacklisting of Wikipedia comes days after the Pakistan Telecom Authority (PTA) degraded Wikipedia services for 48 hours, threatening to block it if the content deemed 'blasphemous' was not deleted,

NSA Ajit Doval To Meet His UK Counterpart Tim Barrow In London.
Ajit Doval will meet his UK counterpart Tim Barrow in London today – 4 Feb for the annual strategic dialogue, with the British state broadcaster BBC attempting to rake up the 2002 Gujarat riots and target Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and the UK becoming a hotbed of the so-called Khalistan movement and Pakistan-sponsored movement to keep the Kashmir issue alive,

US Shoots Down Chinese 'Spy' Balloon, Beijing Threatens 'Repercussions'
The United States military shot down the suspected Chinese spy balloon that was flying in its skies for the last several days, reported Associa ted Press (AP). The balloon was shot down off the Carolina coast.
There was no delay in response from China on the shooting down of the balloon which threatened 'repercussions'. Beijing said that it reserved the right to "take further actions" and criticised the US for "an obvious overreaction and a serious violation of international practice," AP added.

Former Pakistan President, General (Retd) Pervez Musharraf passed away in Dubai
Pakistan President Arif Alvi has expressed condolences on the death of Pervez Musharraf, The chiefs of Pakistan's army, navy and air force expressed condolences on the former military ruler's death, the public relations wing of the military said, reported Reuters.

Centre starts process to ban 138 betting apps, 94 loan lending apps with Chinese links.
In a major crackdown, the Central government has initiated the process to ban and block 138 betting apps and 94 loan lending apps with Chinese links on an `urgent` and `emergency` basis, top government sources said on Sunday. Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) is learnt to have taken the decision based on the recommendations of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA).
Magnitude 7.8 earthquake hits Turkey.
The quake's depth is 24.1 kilometers (14.9 miles), located 23 kilometers (14.2 miles) east of Nurdagi, Gaziantep province, according to the USGS.
Strong aftershocks have been felt. Another earthquake of 6.7 magnitude struck at a depth of 9.9 kilometers about 11 minutes after the first quake, some 32 kilometers (20 miles) northwest of the epicenter, the USGS said

India, France, UAE Establish Trilateral Cooperation Initiative. .
The foreign ministers of the three nations have formally announced a trilateral initiative which will focus on solar and nuclear energy, as well as the fight against climate change and the protection of biodiversity, particularly in the Indian Ocean region.

Ricky Kej Wins Third Grammy,
Music composer Ricky Kej, based out of Bengaluru, has won his third Grammy Award for the album 'Divine Tides'. Music composer Ricky Kej, based out of Bengaluru, has won his third Grammy Award for the album 'Divine Tides'.
Second Earthquake Strikes Turkey And Syria.
Another earthquake of magnitude 7.6 struck the Elbistan district in Kahramanmaraş Province in southern Turkey, the country's Anadolu news agency reported on Monday. The earthquake also hit neighbouring Syria, The epicentre of the

first earthquake, which was 7.8 in magnitude, was near the city of Gaziantep in southern Turkey. Thousands were killed in the first earthquake that hit at 4.17 am - local time.

Rashtriya Swatantra Party decides to withdraw from Nepal's ruling coalition.
Nepal's Rashtriya Swatantra Party (RSP) has decided to withdraw from the newly-formed government led by Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' with ministers resigning en-masse as the rift widened in the ruling coalition. The announcement to this effect was made by the RSP President - Rabi Lamichhane.

Third Quake Hits Turkey In 24 Hours,
Another earthquake of magnitude 6.0 strikes central Turkey, says USGS. This is the third earthquake in Turkey after two powerful earthquakes in less than 24 hours.

India To Send Search & Rescue, Medical Teams Along With Relief Material To Turkey.
Search & Rescue Teams of NDRF and Medical Teams along with relief materials would be dispatched immediately. Relief material will be dispatched in coordination with the Turkey government and Indian Embassy in Ankara and the Consulate General office in Istanbul.
Two teams of NDRF comprising 100 personnel with specially trained dog squads and necessary equipment are ready to be flown to the earthquake-hit area for search and rescue operations, PMO said in a statement. Medical Teams are also being readied with trained doctors and paramedics with essential medicines.

Indian-American Natasha Perianayagam Named World's Brightest For 2nd Consecutive Year.
Indian-American schoolgirl Natasha Perianayagam was named in the "world's brightest" students list for the second consecutive year by the US-based Johns Hopkins Center For Talented Youth, based on the results of above-grade-level tests of over 15,000 students across 76 countries She also took the Johns Hopkins Center For Talented Youth (CTY) test in Spring 2021, when she was a Grade 5 student
Russia To Soon Complete Delivery Of Third Regiment Of S-400 Missile Systems To India Russia will soon complete the supplies of the third regiment of the S-400 Triumf surface-to-air missile systems to India as both sides are committed to the contract, Russian Ambassador Denis Alipov has said. - Russia has already completed supplies of the first two regiments of the missile systems.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan declares state of emergency for three months for earthquake-hit regions.
Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Tuesday declared a state of emergency for three months across ten provinces ravaged by the earthquakes which killed thousands of people in the country.
In a televised address, the Turkish President said, a state of emergency is being declared to ensure that the rescue and recovery work can be carried out quickly. President Erdogan said, they are declaring ten cities impacted by the devastating earthquakes in Southern Turkiye as a disaster zone.

Ukrainian President Zelensky Visits UK, To Meet King Charles III, Address Parliament.
Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky will meet Britain's King Charles III and UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak on his second overseas trip since Russian troops invaded his country nearly a year back Downing Street also announced that Zelensky will meet UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and the military chiefs, and address the parliament.

Indo-American Congressman Ami Bera Elected Key House Foreign Affair Subcommittee Ranking Member.
Indian American Congressman Ami Bera has been elected as Ranking Member of a key House Foreign Affairs Sub Committee that handles the Indo-Pacific region. Last November, Bera, 57, was re-elected as a member of the US House of Representatives from the Sixth Congressional District of California. He is the senior-most Indian American lawmaker in the House that now has five such lawmakers in the 118th Congress.

Operation Dost, - India's massive humanitarian aid for Turkey-Syria earthquake.

The Turkey-Syria earthquake led to the collapse of over 11,000 buildings and structures across both countries, while the rescue operations to help those who are stuck in the rubble are difficult due to the onslaught of the biting cold and sub-zero temperatures in several areas.
In an effort to help those hit by the earthquake, the Indian government is extending a hand of friendship to both countries in the form of massive humanitarian aid, with multiple jets flying off to the countries carrying relief material.

Australia Orders Review Into Chinese-Made Cameras In Defence Offices Amid Security Fears.
Amid the US-China spy balloon row, the Australian government on Thursday said that it will examine surveillance technology used in offices of the defence department, following reports that Chinese-made cameras installed there posed a security risk.

Singapore To Discard COVID-19 Border Safety Measures, Will Take Its Disease Alert To 'Lowest
Singapore will scrap all COVID-19 border safety measures from next Monday when the country steps down its disease alert to its lowest level. This is due to the improving pandemic situation globally and the low impact of imported cases on Singapore's healthcare capacity said the Ministry of Health (MOH) on Thursday. Singapore will also step down its disease alert to its lowest level since the COVID-19 pandemic started three years ago, with face masks no longer mandatory on local public transport as well as at some healthcare and residential care settings from Monday.

Legendary Songwriter Burt Bacharach Dies At The Age Of 94.
US media reported on Thursday that legendary American pop songwriter Burt Bacharach, whose prodigious work created a chart-topping soundtrack for the 1960s and 1970s, has died in Los Angeles at the age of 94.

Google Doodle celebrates PK Rosy, the first female lead in Malayalam film.
Google dedicated a doodle to PK Rosy, Malayalam cinema's first lead female actor, on her 120th birthday. A page dedicated to her on Google mentions that she was born on February 10, 1903, in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala.

South Africa declares 'State of Disaster' over electricity crisis..
In order to speed up the government's reaction to an ongoing energy crisis, South African President Cyril Ramaphosa proclaimed a state of Disaster. He also promised to designate a minister in his office who will concentrate on increasing the supply of power.

World Government Summit 2023 to begin on February 13 in Dubai.
The World Government Summit 2023 is set to begin on February 13th in Dubai. The Summit will be held under the theme of "Shaping Future Governments". It will bring together global thought leaders, global experts, and decision makers to share and contribute to the development of tools, policies, and models that will be critical in shaping future governments.

Former Judge Mohammad Shahabuddin Chuppu to become the next president of Bangladesh.
Former judge and Awami League leader, Mohammad Shahabuddin Chuppu, is poised to become the next president of Bangladesh, as his party which secured a majority in the parliament has chosen him as their candidate for the upcoming presidential election. The announcement was made by the party's General Secretary, Obaidul Quader, on Sunday (February 12),

Anil Kapoor And Aditya Roy Kapur Feature On John le Carre's Novel The Night Manager.
Bollywood actors Anil Kapoor and Aditya Roy Kapur have featured on the cover of the new edition of British-Irish author John le Carre's novel 'The Night Manager', on which their upcoming eponymous streaming show is based. This is the first time ever that an Indian show has featured on an international bestseller.

Russia's Rosoboronexport To Offer New Joint Venture Defence Projects To India.
Not just the US, Russia is also vying to grab its share of the 'Make In India' pie by offering a raft of projects under this programme of the Narendra Modi government, according to Russia's state-owned Rosoboronexport**.** Rosoboronexport, a permanent exhibitor at Aero India, is the organiser of Russia's collective display at the Aero India 2023 at the Yelahanka Air Force Station in Bengaluru.

World's Biggest Aircraft Deal Between Air India And Airbus Shows Strengthening India-France Ties: PM Modi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and French President Emmanuel Macron launched the Air India-Airbus partnership via video conference on Tuesday. Speaking on the occasion, PM Modi said the deal reflected the strengthening relations between India and France. "This important deal reflects the deepening ties between India and France, as well as the successes and aspirations of India's civil aviation sector. Whether it is the issue of security and stability in the Indo-Pacific region, or global food security and health security, India and France together are making a positive contribution," PM Modi said.

Cyclone Gabrielle hits New Zealand, Declares State Of Emergency As Massive Storm Causes Floods, Landslides.

New Zealand declared a national state of emergency on Tuesday. The decision comes after cyclone Gabrielle caused widespread flooding, landslides, and huge ocean swells, as reported by the news agency Reuters. This has happened only for the third time in its history. The cyclone has forced people to evacuate and some people are left stranded on rooftops.

Marburg Disease Outbreak

The World Health Organization recently confirmed the Marburg disease outbreak in Equatorial Guinea. Patients suffering from the disease experience diarrhoea, vomiting, and stomach pain. Also, there is bleeding in severe cases. An e-bola-related virus is causing the disease. The Spread of the disease is epidemic; meaning the disease is widespread

Rishi Sunak Promises To Do 'Whatever It Takes' To Defend UK From 'Spy' Balloons.

According to the BBC, Prime Minister of the UK, Rishi Sunak said that his government will do "whatever it takes" to keep the country safe from spy balloons. He added that a "quick reaction alert force" of RAF Typhoon jets was on stand-by 24/7 to "police our airspace" The issue of the 'spy' balloon seems to have become a matter of international concern with now the United Kingdom putting the military on alert to review the security after the US shot down a series of flying objects recently.

Magnitude 6.1 quake strikes off New Zealand coast.

A magnitude 6.1 earthquake struck New Zealand near Wellington on Wednesday at a depth of 48 km (30 miles), government seismic monitor Geonet said. The earthquake's epicentre was 50 km from the town of Paraparaumu, according to Geonet. A Reuters witness felt a strong shaking that lasted several seconds in the capital of Wellington. New Zealand lies on the seismically active "Ring of Fire", a 40,000-km arc of volcanoes and ocean trenches girdling much of the Pacific Ocean.

Air India: The record plane deal, a game-changer.

Air India's record deal for 470 planes from Airbus and Boeing has happened at a time when the carrier plans to become "a world-class proposition", in the words of N Chandrasekaran, chairman of Tata group, which owns the airline.

The World Bank chief David Malpass to step down early.

World Bank chief David Malpass has announced his resignation nearly a year early. He ending a tenure at the head of the development lender that was clouded by questions over his climate stance. The veteran of Republican administrations in the United States was appointed to the role in 2019 when Donald Trump was president and previously served as Under Secretary of the Treasury for international affairs. Malpass's term would have originally ended in 2024.

Rolls-Royce Announced Order of Trent XWB-97 Engines from Air India.

British engineering company Rolls-Royce on Tuesday announced that it has received an order from Air India for 68 Trent XWB-97 engines, in addition to an option for 20 more.

Former Italian PM Silvio Berlusconi Acquitted In 'Bunga-Bunga' Bribe Case.

Former Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi has been acquitted of the charges of bribing witnesses to lie about his notorious "bunga-bunga" parties, reported BBC. Apart from him, 28 other defendants have also been acquitted.
Italy's PM Giorgia Meloni hailed his acquittal as "excellent news that puts an end to a long legal case that also had important repercussions on Italian political and institutional life". Berlusconi's Forza Italia party is a part of the Meloni-led coalition government.

Neal Mohan, the new Indian American CEO of YouTube.

An Indian-American, Neal Mohan will become the next Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Alphabet-owned YouTube following Susan Wojcicki's announcement that she will be stepping down from her role as the head of the video-sharing platform. Neal Mohan has been serving as the chief product officer for YouTube since 2015. Prior to this, Mohan had worked at the online search giant Google, which he had joined in 2008.

MoU between India , Chile in Agricultural Sector.

he Union Cabinet approved signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Chile for cooperation in the field of agriculture and allied sectors. The MoU will come in force upon its signature and will remain effective for 5 years from the date of execution after which it will be automatically renewed for another 5 years.

US Treasury Secretary Yellen To Visit India Next Week For G20 Meetings.

US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen would travel to India next week to participate in the G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Ministerial. During the visit, her priority will be the war in Ukraine and addressing the challenges for building a stronger, more resilient, and global economy, as reported by the news agency PTI. "In these engagements, Yellen will join with allies in holding Russia accountable for its illegal invasion of Ukraine, and partner with countries to mitigate the spillover effects of the war.

EAM S Jaishankar Calls On Aus PM Albanese To Discuss Bilateral Strategic Ties.

External Affairs minister S Jaishankar on Saturday met Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese at the latter's official residence in Sydney and apprised him of the recent developments related to the strategic partnership between both the countries. The meeting comes ahead of the Australian PM's scheduled trip to India next month as the two countries seek to finalise a trade deal following the interim agreement signed in April 2022.

Israeli Missile Strikes Residential Building In Syria's Damascus : 15 Dead.

At least 15 people, including civilians, were killed in an Israeli rocket strike that hit a residential building in Damascus's Kafr Sousa neighbourhood early on Sunday, reported AFP quoting the Syrian Observatory for human rights. The Israeli airstrikes targeted a heavily guarded security complex close to Iranian installations, witnesses and officials told Reuters.

North Korea Confirms Testing Ballistic Missile.

North Korea tested a Hwasong-15 intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) on Saturday in a "sudden launching drill" that confirmed its readiness for "mobile and mighty counterattack" against hostile forces, as per the state news agency KCNA. North Korea on Saturday afternoon launched a long-range ballistic missile into the sea off Japan's west coast. The launch came after North Korea warned of a strong response to South Korea and US' upcoming drills.

Biden Announces $500 Million Aid Package And More Arms Supplies To Ukraine During Surprise Visit.

US President Joe Biden on Monday announced new military aid and a fresh round of sanctions on Russia during his surprise visit to Ukraine to meet with President Volodymyr Zelensky. This is Biden's first visit to a war zone as president. Biden announced an aid package worth $500 million that would include artillery ammunition, more javelins and howitzers.

North Korea Fires Ballistic Missile Towards South Korea's Eastern Waters.

North Korea launched an unspecified ballistic missile on Monday, the South Korean military said. This is North Korea's second missile launch in less than 48 hours and a day after joint US-South Korean drills, as reported by the news agency AFP. "North Korea fired an unspecified ballistic missile toward the East Sea on Monday," Seoul's Joint Chief of Staff said, according to the official Yonhap news agency, referring to the body of water also known as the Sea of Japan.

Russian President Announces Suspension Of Participation In Last Remaining Nuclear Treaty With US

President Vladimir Putin said on Tuesday that Russia would withdraw from the New START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty) pact with the United States, which limits the two countries' strategic nuclear arsenals. The New START treaty was signed in Prague in 2010, went into effect the following year, and was renewed for five years in 2021, shortly after US President Joe Biden took office.

It restricts the amount of strategic nuclear warheads that the US and Russia can deploy, as well as the use of land-based and submarine-based missiles and bombers to deliver them.

Magnitude Earthquake Hits Tajikistan Near China Border

An earthquake of magnitude 7.2 on the Richter scale struck Tajikistan at around 8:37 a.m. (0037 GMT), at a depth of 10 km (6 miles), reported Chinese state television CCTV on Thursday. The epicentre was located about 82 kilometres from the nearest border with China and was strongly felt in Kashgar and Artux in the western part of the Xinjiang region,

World Thinking Day.
Scouts and Girl Guides across 150 countries celebrate World Thinking Day. It's a day of international friendship and a time to stand up for causes that could improve the lives of girls around the globe.
Observed by 10 million Girl Guides and Girl Scouts worldwide, World Thinking Day has a different theme each year. In 2023, the theme is "Our World, Our Peaceful Future: The environment, peace, and security." To earn your World Thinking Day Award, you will explore environmental problems and learn how you can work with nature to create a more peaceful and secure future for girls everywhere. Check out the activity guides below to get involved and learn about how you can make a difference in the world.

National California Day.
We celebrate National California Day on February 22. It is a day to commemorate the Golden State of the United States of America. California is one of the western states in the U.S. It is also the most populous state and the third-largest state by area. California has a rich history that witnessed native American life, European exploration, Spanish colonization, the Mexican era, the Gold Rush, and U.S. statehood. California is one of the most popular destinations, famous for monuments like the Golden Gate Bridge, places like Disneyland and Hollywood, and last but not least, for events like Coachella.

Scouts Founder's Day.
Scouts Founder's Day on February 22 honors Lord Baden-Powell and his wife, Olave, the first Chief Girl Guide. Scouts Founder's Day is known as Founders Day throughout the world. It's a time for Scouts and Guides to reaffirm their oaths together and contemplate how Scouting's century-old values are still relevant in today's fast-paced world.

UAE Hosts First I2U2 Vice-Ministerial Meeting.
The vice ministers of I2U2 countries – Israel, India, the United States and the United Arab Emirates on Wednesday focused on potential partnerships in the fields of food security, energy, water, space, transport, health, and technology. The I2U2 business forum, held in Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), brought together senior private and public sector representatives from the four countries to discuss opportunities for cooperation between the business communities.

World Bank announces $2.5 billion in additional Ukraine aid on war anniversary.
The World Bank announced $2.5 billion in additional grant financing from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to support Ukraine's budget and maintain essential services.
The latest financing under the World Bank's Public Expenditures for Administrative Capacity Endurance in Ukraine(PEACE) project lifts the total to $20.6 billion and will support salaries in core government functions and sectors such as healthcare and education while allowing Kyiv to pay pensions and support internally displaced people.

Pakistan receives $700 mln funds.
Pakistan's Finance Minister Ishaq Dar said his country has received $700 million funds from the China Development Bank. The deposit comes as Pakistan has been struggling with its external debt and has barely enough dollars to cover less than three weeks' worth of imports.

India-Germany Agreement to build 6 submarines for $5.2 billion.
German Chancellor Olaf Scholz's visit to India on February 25–26 will focus on advancing a $5.2 billion agreement between Germany and India to jointly construct six conventional submarines in India. The naval project is a Western military manufacturing power's most recent effort to wean New Delhi off of its reliance on Russian military hardware.

Earthquake Of 5.5 Magnitude Hits Central Turkiye, 37th Tremor In 66 Hours.
This is the 37th felt earthquake in Central Turkey in the last 66 hours, European-Mediterranean Seismological Centre said. According to news agency Reuters, the quake occurred at a depth of 10km. Saturday's quake comes just weeks after the border areas of the country were devastated by by a larger earthquake that killed more than 50,000 people and destroyed thousands of homes.

Los Angeles Sees Rare Snow Storm And Heavy Rain, Causing Large Power Outages.
Heavy snowfall was witnessed in southern California, including hills around Los Angeles which saw the first blizzard in generations while flooding threatened other places. Snow and high winds brought down power lines, resulting in power outages for more than 100,000 customers in California,

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Indian Army launched a joint training exercise Cyclone-1 with Egypt

- The first-ever combined exercise between the Indian Army's special forces and the Egyptian Army, dubbed "Exercise Cyclone-I," has been underway at Jaisalmer, Rajasthan, since January 14, 2023.
- The exercise intends to strengthen bilateral defense cooperation by focusing on the exchange of professional skills and interoperability of Special Forces in a desert environment while conducting counter-terrorism, reconnaissance, raids, and other special operations.

For ISRO's Aditya L1 project, IIA handed over Visible Line Emission Coronagraph payload

- The Visible Line Emission Coronagraph (VELC) payload for the Aditya-L1 mission was handed over to ISRO by the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA) on January 26, 2023.
- The event was organized at the Centre for Research and Education in Science and Technology (CREST) Campus at Hosakote, near Bengaluru.
- The VELC payload was conceived and built on the CREST site. At URSC, the payload would be integrated with the satellite.

IISc launches new research programme
The Indian Institute of Science (IISc) in collaboration with Brunel University London has launched a £100,000 (₹1,00,00,000) programme for joint research projects in areas of combustion, manufacturing, design and energy.
The Brunel–IISc International Collaboration Programme was announced on 1 February during a visit by Brunel's Vice-Chancellor and President Professor Andrew Jones to IISc's campus in Bengaluru. The programme is being rolled out in support of the universities' aim to build long-term research and educational collaboration.

111 Payloads, 105 Space Debris 'Identified As Indian Objects' Orbiting Earth.
Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology Dr Jitendra Singh said Thursday a total of 111 payloads and 105 space debris, which have been identified as Indian objects, are orbiting the Earth as on January 20, 2023, as per USSPACECOM, which tracks and catalogues such objects also , ISRO has carried out 21 collision avoidance manoeuvres of Indian Operational Space assets in 2022.

Hunting For Rare Toad, Scientists Discover A Voiceless Species Of Frog.
Researchers have discovered a previously unknown species of frog, which is unique in itself because it is voiceless. The team has described the Ukaguru spiny-throated reed frog (Hyperolius ukaguruensis) in the journal PLOS One. (Image Source : Christoph Liedtke/University of Cincinnati)

Microsoft Launches ChatGPT-Powered Bing Search, Edge Browser.
Microsoft on Tuesday launched a new version of its Bing search engine and Edge browser. The new AI-powered Bing search engine and Edge browser aim to deliver better search, more complete answers, a new chat experience, and the ability to generate content, the company said in its blog. "Today, we're launching Bing and Edge powered by AI copilot and chat, to help people get more from search and the web," said Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella.

India Emerges As Second Biggest Market For LinkedIn As Users Cross 100 Million Mark.
Microsoft-owned professional network LinkedIn on Wednesday announced that it has crossed 100 million members in India. The country has witnessed a 56 per cent growth in its member base over the last three years and has cemented its position as the second-largest market for LinkedIn globally.
The largest share of LinkedIn members in India come from software & IT, followed by manufacturing, corporate services (consulting, accounting and HR), finance and education industries.

Coming soon: QR Code based coin vending machine at railway stations, malls, markets across 12 cities in India

The Reserve Bank of India on Wednesday said it will launch a pilot project on QR code-based coin vending machine. Giving details, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said that the RBI will start the project to launch QR code based coin vending machines and added that the machines will be launched to promote distribution of coins, and enhance the accessibility to coins.

ISRO to make 2nd attempt to launch new mini-vehicle SSLV tomorrow.
Isro will make a second attempt to launch its newly-developed mini-PSLV or Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV), which can carry a maximum payload of 500kg to space, from Sriharikota on Friday morning.In its maiden flight on August 7 last year, the SSLV had failed to place the satellites in their desired.

Twitter Suffers Massive Outage, Users Get Message They Have Exceeded Daily Tweet Limit Twitter suffered a massive outage where its users were unable to tweet, send direct messages and use other features. This was the largest outage ever that Twitter has suffered. "Twitter may not be working as expected for some of you. Sorry for the trouble. We're aware and working to get this fixed," Twitter's support account tweeted.

Space Dust, Including That From Moon, Could Protect Earth From Climate Change,
Space dust, including that launched from the Moon, can protect the Earth from climate change by acting as a sunshield, a new study suggests. Greenhouse gases emitted due to various human activities form a blanket around Earth, and trap the Sun's energy. This increases Earth's temperature gradually, and is one of the reasons behind global warming. In order to avoid the trapping of heat by greenhouse gases, a fraction of the sunlight must be intercepted before it reaches Earth, according to the study.

Quad Nations begins Public Campaign To Improve Cyber Security.
The commencement of a public campaign to strengthen cyber security in these four countries has been announced by The Quad, a plurilateral structure made up of India, Australia, Japan, and the US.

ISRO launches SSLV-D2 rocket with 3 satellites lifts off from Sriharikota .
ISRO launches Small Satellite Launch Vehicle-SSLV-D2- from Satish Dhawan Space Centre at Sriharikota to put three satellites EOS-07, Janus-1 & AzaadiSAT-2 satellites into a 450 km circular orbit.

NASA to launch 'Mars mission' on Blue Origin's New Glenn.
Jeff Bezos-led Blue Origin scored a big contract from the American space agency, Nasa, to launch a mission to Mars. The private space company was given its first interplanetary NASA contract to launch the mission to study the magnetic field around the Red Planet. The expected launch date for the mission is 2024.

Saudi Arabia To Send Its First Woman Astronaut Into Space In Second Quarter Of 2023.
This is the latest attempt by the kingdom to change its ultra-conservative image. The official Saudi Press Agency announced on Sunday that Rayyana Barnawi and fellow Saudi male astronaut Ali Al-Qarni will embark on a mission to the International Space Station (ISS) "during the second quarter of 2023.

Lexi': India's first AI assistant powered by ChatGPT.
Lexi, a ChatGPT-powered AI chatbot, has arrived in India. Velocity, a financial technology firm, launched the chatbot to assist e-commerce owners by presenting them with business information in a simplified manner. Velocity insights, Velocity's proprietary analytics platform, has been linked with the chatbot.

World's First Cloud-Built Demonstration Satellite Launched JANUS-1 Successfully.
LOS ALTOS, Calif., Feb. 10, 2023 /PRNewswire/ -- Antaris, creator of the most advanced software platform for space, announced today that the world's first satellite fully conceived, designed and manufactured using the company's end-to-end cloud platform has successfully reached orbit. JANUS-1 rode on the Indian Space Research Organization's (ISRO) SSLV-D2 rocket, which was launched from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre of India under a commercial arrangement with New Space India Limited (NSIL). The satellite features five payloads from a range of global providers, which will be commissioned and begin nominal operations in the coming days.

These Silicon Nanowires Can Produce Hydrogen From Water And Sunlight.

A team of researchers has engineered silicon nanowires that can produce hydrogen from water and sunlight. Hydrogen is a greener alternative to fossil fuels. The nanowires, developed by researchers from University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, can split water into oxygen and hydrogen gas, and hence, convert sunlight into electricity.

Special 'Protein Toolbox' Developed By IIT Guwahati Can Convert Skin Cells To Heart Cells.
Researchers from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Guwahati have developed a special 'Protein Toolbox' which can be used to convert skin cells into heart cells, and hence, fix a damaged heart. Known as a 'Recombinant Protein Toolbox', it comprises six special proteins, and can be used to regenerate damaged heart tissues.

India's lunar mission Chandrayaan-3 achieves another milestone.
In a boost to India's lunar mission, Chandrayaan-3 has successfully underwent EMI-EMC (Electro-Magnetic Interference/ Electro-Magnetic Compatibility). The EMI-EMC test is conducted for satellite missions to ensure functionality of the satellite subsystems in the space environment and their compatibility with the expected electromagnetic level.

Artifact, the AI-powered news app from Instagram's co-founders,
Instagram's co-founders are throwing open the doors to their new personalized news app, Artifact. Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger's new app launched last month with a waitlist, but now anyone on iOS or Android can download Artifact to try it for themselves.

This Natural Dietary Supplement Can Have A Therapeutic Effect On Brain,
A naturally occurring dietary supplement called nicotinamide riboside (NR) can enter the brain and have a therapeutic effect on the organ, according to a new study published in the journal Aging Cell. The research marks the first time it has been determined that NR can enter the brain. Christopher Martens, assistant professor of kinesiology and applied physiology at the Delaware Center for Cognitive Aging Research, and Dr Dimitrios Kapogiannis, a senior investigator at the National Institute on Aging, made this discovery.

APPOINTMENS & RESIGNATIONS

Five Judges Appointed To Supreme Court, Says Law Ministe .
Centre clears appointments of 5 new Judges for Supreme Court - Pankaj Mithal (Rajasthan HC chief justice), Sanjay Karol (Patna HC chief justice), PV Sanjay Kumar (Manipur HC chief justice), Ahsanuddin Amanullah (Patna HC judge) &Manoj Misra (Allahabad HC judge).

Justice Chakradhari Sharan Singh Becomes New Chief Justice Of Patna High Court.
Justice Chakradhari Sharan Singh, the senior-most judge of the Patna High Court, was on Saturday appointed the Acting Chief Justice, according to a notification released by the Union government.

Lt Gen MV Suchindra Kumar to be new Vice Chief of Army Staff.
Lt Gen MV Suchindra Kumar has been appointed as the new Vice Chief of Army Staff, while incumbent Lt Gen B S Raju will take charge as South Western Army Commander, Lt General MV Suchindra Kumar has also served important staff appointments, including Additional Director General Military Intelligence and Director General Military Intelligence at Integrated Headquarters of Ministry of Defence (Army)

Rajan Amba appointed as MD of Jaguar Land Rover India.
Rajan Amba, VP of Sales, Marketing & Customer Care, Tata Motors, has been appointed as the Managing Director of Jaguar Land Rover India. He will take charge on March 1, 2023. Amba replaces Rohit Suri, who announced his retirement earlier this year. Prior to joining Tata Motors, Amba was the Chief Operating Officer at Carat Lane. He also held several top managerial posts at Titan and Nike.

Brigadier BD Mishra (Retd) Takes Oath As New Lieutenant Governor Of Ladakh.
Brigadier BD Mishra (Retd.) was sworn in as the next lieutenant governor (LG) of Ladakh on Sunday. N. Kotiswar Singh, Chief Justice of the High Court of J&K and Ladakh, administered the oath of office at the Raj Niwas in Leh. Mishra, a former governor of Arunachal Pradesh, is the second LG of Ladakh after Radha Krishnan Mathur, who resigned after three years in office, from 31 October 2019 to 11 February 2023, following Ladakh's secession from Jammu and Kashmir.

BVR Subrahmanyam, the new NITI Aayog CEO.
The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the appointment of Shri BVR Subrahmanyam, IAS (Retd.) as Chief Executive Officer, NITI Aayog, vice Shri Parameswaran Iyer, upon his appointment as Executive Director, World Bank Headquarters, Washington DC, USA, for two years from the date of assumption of the charge of the post or until further orders, a statement released by the government said.

Parameswaran Iyer New Executive Director, World Bank.
Parameswaran Iyer, who was working as Niti Aayog CEO since June 2022, has been appointed as Executive Director, World Bank headquarters, Washington DC, USA for a tenure of three years.

Rajesh Rai appointed as CMD of ITI Limited
Rajesh Rai has been appointed as Chairman & Managing Director (CMD) of ITI Limited, a PSU under the Department of Telecommunications, According to an order issued from the Personnel & Training (DoPT) on Monday, the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved the appointment of Rajesh Rai for a period of five years with effect from the date of his assumption of charge of the post, or till the date of his superannuation, or until further orders, whichever is the earliest. Presently, he is serving as General Manager in Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL).

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

New Goa Manohar International Airport wins best sustainable greenfield airport award
GMR Goa International Airport (GGIAL), a subsidiary of GMR Airports Infrastructure, has won 'Best Sustainable Greenfield Airport' award under aviation sustainability and environment at ASSOCHAM's 14th International Conference-cum-Awards for Civil Aviation 2023. The award was presented for "excellent initiatives" taken by GGIAL in implementing sustainability.

Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar-2023 announced
For the year 2023, Odisha State Disaster Management Authority (OSDMA) and Lunglei Fire Station (LFS), Mizoram, both in the Institutional category, have been selected for the Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar-2023 for their excellent work in Disaster Management.

Siddharth Sharma appointed CEO of Tata Trusts, Aparna Uppaluri as COO
Tata Trusts has appointed Siddharth Sharma as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Trusts and Aparna Uppaluri as the Chief Operating Officer (COO).
Their appointment will come into effect from 1 April 2023.
Sharma, the chief sustainability officer at Tata Sons, will succeed N Srinath, who stepped down from the CEO's post in 2022 following his retirement.

Shamalbhai B Patel re-elected as chairman of Amul
Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation that markets milk and dairy products under the Amul brand announced the appointment of Shamalbhai B Patel as its chairman and Valamjibhai Humbal as vice chairman. Shamalbhai B Patel is the chairman of Sabarkantha District Cooperative Milk Producers Union Ltd., Sabar dairy and associated with dairy cooperatives of Gujarat.

The Elephant Whisperers has been nominated for Best Documentary Short in Oscar Awards 2023

- The Oscar nominations were announced on January 24, 2023, and India received three nominations for the 95th Academy Awards.
- The Elephant Whisperers, a 41-minute short by Kartiki Gonsalves, was also nominated for Best Documentary Short.
- SS Rajamouli's RRR received only one nomination in the Best Original Song category for "Naatu Naatu," despite the fact that it has a big fan base in the United States. The film did not receive nominations for Best Picture or Best Director.
- All That Breathes by Shaunak Sen was nominated for Best Documentary Feature Film.

President approved 412 Gallantry Awards for Defence personnel
President Droupadi Murmu has approved 412 Gallantry awards and other Defence decorations to Armed Forces personnel and others. These include six Kirti Chakras, including four posthumous, and 15 Shaurya Chakras including two posthumous. These include one Bar to Sena Medal (Gallantry), 92 Sena Medal, including four posthumous, one Nao Sena Medal (Gallantry), 7 Vayu Sena Medal.

University Of Auckland's Summer Lab Awarded For Excellence In Entrepreneurial Education Summer Lab, a four-week University of Auckland experience highlighting innovation and entrepreneurship education, is enjoying its day in the sun after winning a United States Association of Small Business and Entrepreneurship award (USASBE).
This year, the University of Auckland is the only institute outside North America to take out a USASBE award after Summer Lab won the Entrepreneurship Education Excellence award for innovation in co-curricular education.

VP Nandakumar, Manappuram Finance gets Hurun India award.
Managing Director & CEO, Manappuram Finance Ltd, VP Nandakumar has bagged the Hurun India's award for his remarkable achievements in the world of business. He received The Hurun Industry Achievement Award 2022 from top Hurun India officials at a function held in Mumbai. Adi Godrej, chairman, Godrej Group, Cyrus S. Poonawalla, Managing Director, Serum Institute of India Ltd, Kris Gopalakrishnan, co-founder, Infosys Ltd and Sanjiv Goenka of RPG Group were the earlier recipients of this award.

Mrf's Mammen Gets Atma Lifetime Achievement Award.
MRF Ltd. Chairman and Managing Director K.M. Mammen was presented the ATMA Lifetime Achievement Award by Maruti Suzuki India MD & CEO Hisashi Takeuchi at the Automotive Tyre Manufacturers' Association (ATMA) Annual Conclave 2023 in New Delhi. It is noted that Mammen has been at the helm of every landmark achievement that has brought MRF to the milestone of over INR 19,000 crore turnover and in its ranking, of being amongst one of the top tyre companies in the world.... Read more at: https://currentaffairs.adda247.com/mrfs-mammen-gets-atma-lifetime-achievement-award.

BRIT Awards 2023: Harry Styles Leads Winners' List Bagging Album of the Year, Song of the Year And Best Pop/R+B Act.
The former One Direction singer, 29, also scooped Album of the Year, Song of the Year and Best Pop/R+B Act, and is making headlines for dedicating his Artist of the Year trophy to a string of female artistes who weren't nominated, after the BRITs was slammed for the all-male nominees line-up for the trophy after the category went gender-neutral,

Appasaheb Dharmadhikari awarded with Maharashtra Bhushan award.
The state government of Maharashtra has announced that renowned social worker, preacher and reformer Dattatreya alias Appasaheb Dharmadikari will be honoured with Maharashtra Bhushan award for the year 2022. The Maharashtra Bhushan award comprises a medal, a citation and Rs 25 lakh, which will be conferred to Appasaheb at a function later in the year. Appasaheb was honoured with Padmashri in 2017.

Karnataka Bank awarded 'Prathista Puraskar'.
Karnataka Bank was awarded with 'Prathista Puraskar' under 'Digidhan Awards 2021-22' by Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), government of India for achieving target with highest percentage in BHIM-UPI transactions in private sector bank category. Labelled as 'KBL-NxT', the bank is currently undertaking an accelerated digital drive under its transformation journey 'KBL VIKAAS 2.0'. This award is an ideal tribute to the founding fathers of this great institution as Karnataka Bank is stepping into its 100th year of its fruitful existence.".

German Film 'All Quiet On The Western Front' Creates Buzz With Seven Wins at BAFTA Awards.
The German epic film "All Quiet on the Western Front" dominated the BAFTA Awards in London on Sunday night with a record-breaking seven wins, including for Best Director, Best Film and Best Film Not in the English Language. The previous record was held by 1988 film "Cinema Paradiso", which won five BAFTA Awards.

Rafael Nadal Backs Fellow Nominee Lionel Messi To Win 2023 Laureus Sportsman Award.
Tennis superstar Rafael Nadal has backed Lionel Messi to win the 2023 Laureus Sportsman Of The Year Award. He said that the 2022 FIFA World Cup winner deserves the honour. Notably, Laureus announced the nominees for various categories and the Sportsman and Sportswoman of the year shortlist list includes both Nadal and Messi among other athletes like Kylian Mbappe, Iga Swiatek, Tiger Woods and Mikaela Shiffrin.

JSW Group chairman Sajjan Jindal wins EY entrepreneur of the year award 2022.
Sajjan Jindal, the chairman and managing director of JSW Group, was awarded as the EY Entrepreneur of the Year (EOY) 2022. The seven-member jury led by former ICICI Bank chairman K V Kamath selected Jindal as the EOY 2022 winner for his "exceptional entrepreneurial journey in scaling the global conglomerate with presence in steel, cement, infrastructure, energy, and paints to revenues of US$22 billion.

RRR wins Best International Film at HCA Awards.
RRR has made the country proud again. The SS Rajamouli-directed movie has won in multiple categories at the recently-held Hollywood Critics Association Awards.
RRR hit screens in 2022.
RRR is directed by SS Rajamouli.
RRR stars Jr NTR and Ram Charan.
BUSINESS
Bill Gates Buys Stake in Heineken for $902 Million.
Bill Gates has acquired a minority stake in Heineken Holding NV, the controlling shareholder of the world's second-largest brewer, for about $902 million. The Microsoft founder and philanthropist picked up 3.8% of Heineken Holding, according to a filing by the Dutch regulator AFM. He bought 6.65 million shares in Heineken Holding, in his individual capacity, and another 4.18 million shares through the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Trust.

BOOKS & AUTHOR

Westland Books To Publish Late Actress Sridevi's Official Biography.
Westland Books on Wednesday announced publishing of the official biography of superstar Sridevi. Titled "Sridevi: The Life of a Legend", the book draws a complete portrait of the actor, who ruled the commercial cinema space in the '80s and '90s. It is written by debutant author Dhiraj Kumar and will be released this year, informed the publishing house

IMPORTANT DAYS

Parakram Diwas 2023 celebrates as Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Birth Anniversary Parakram Diwas 2023:

- Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Jayanti or Netaji Jayanti is a national event celebrated in India as Parakram Diwas on January 23 to mark the birth of prominent Indian freedom fighter Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose.
- This year nation celebrates 126th birth anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. For the first time, Netaji Jayanti was celebrated as Parakram Divas in 2021 on the occasion of his 124th birthday.
- In West Bengal, Jharkhand, Tripura, and Assam, it is a recognised holiday.

National Girl Child Day
National Girl Child Day is marked on January 24 to celebrate the girl child. The day, an initiative of Ministry of Women and Child Development, has been celebrated in India every year since 2008. It was celebrated for the first time with an aim to raise awareness about the inequalities faced by girls and women in society at various levels.

International Day of Education
The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 24 January as the International Day of Education with an aim to emphasise the role of education for peace and development. The theme for 2023 is 'To Invest in People, Prioritize Education.' UNESCO has dedicated this year's International Education Day to women of Afghanistan who are being deprived of their right to education.

13th National Voters' Day (NVD)
The theme for this year's NVD, 'Nothing Like Voting, I Vote for Sure' is dedicated to voters which conveys individual's feeling and aspiration towards participation in the electoral process through power of their vote.
Since 2011, National Voters' Day has been celebrated on January 25 every year, to mark the foundation day of the Election Commission of India.
National Tourism Day 2023

India is celebrating National Tourism Day on January 25. The day is marked annually in order to raise awareness about the importance that the tourism industry plays in the country.
In 2022, the National Tourism Day was part of the 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav', the 75-week grand celebration marking 75 years of Indian Independence.

International Customs Day

- The World Customs Organisation (WCO) marks International Customs Day on 26th January every year. The occasion commemorates the WCO's maiden session held in 1953.
- The day is dedicated to spreading awareness about the role Customs authorities play in the seamless movement of goods across borders and their importance in the cross-border regulatory apparatus.
- Every year, such authorities of WCO's member administrations organise events to celebrate International Customs Day

International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust
International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust is observed on January 27. It is the anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp. The United Nations Holocaust memorial ceremony in the United Nations General Assembly Hall will be under the theme 'Home and Belonging' for 2023.

Data Privacy Day
January 28 is celebrated as Data Privacy Day (DPD) across the world.
The objective of the day is to sensitize individuals and disseminate privacy practices and principles. It encourages everyone to own their privacy responsibilities to create a culture of privacy.
The theme for this year is 'Think Privacy First'.

Indian News Paper Day
A A day set aside to honour the beginning of newspapers in India is known as Indian Newspaper Day. This day is intended to raise awareness of Indian newspapers. Indian Newspaper Day, which is observed on January 29th each year, is today. However, there is no theme to observe this important occasion.

National Puzzle Day
January 29 is *National Puzzle Day*, the perfect day to do a little brain exercise. Whether it's a crossword, jigsaw, or Sudoku, puzzles engage our brain in more ways than one. Scientists have discovered that when we work on a jigsaw puzzle, we utilize both sides of the brain, improving memory, cognitive function and problem solving skills in the process. By utilizing puzzles, people can stimulate the brain improve a number of skills.

Martyrs Day or Shaheed Diwas
30 January is celebrated as Martyr's Day or Shaheed Diwas every year in the memory of Mahatma Gandhi and the sacrifice of three revolutionaries of India. As, of 30 January, 1948, the 'Father of Nation' was assassinated. And on 23rd March 3 heroes namely Bhagat Singh, Shivaram Rajguru, and Sukhdev Thapar of the nation were hanged to death by the British.

World Leprosy Day
World Leprosy Day is observed on the last Sunday of January to focus on the target of zero cases of leprosy-related disabilities in children. As we know disabilities do not occur overnight but happen after a prolonged period of undiagnosed disease.

1 February – Indian Coast Guard Day
On 1st February, the Indian Coast Guard celebrates its foundation day. This year, the Indian Coast Guard is celebrating its 46th Raising Day. Indian Coast Guard has played a significant role in securing the Indian Coasts and enforcing regulations within the Maritime Zones of India

World Wetlands Day
Every year on 2nd February, World Wetlands Day is celebrated internationally. This day marks the date of the adoption of the Convention on Wetlands on 2 February 1971, in Ramsar, Iran. It was first celebrated in 1997.

RA Awareness Day
RA Awareness Day is Rheumatoid Arthritis Awareness Day and is observed on 2 February to spread awareness for patients suffering from rheumatoid arthritis.

Feed the Birds Day
Every year February 3rd is observed as Feed the Bird Day. This day reminds all of us to feed the birds, who find it difficult to survive during winters because of lack of food.

World Cancer Day
It takes place every year on 4 February. World Cancer Day aims to prevent millions of deaths each year by raising awareness and education about cancer, and pressing governments and individuals across the world to take action against the disease.

National Weather Person's Day.
The National Weather Service explained the holiday — celebrated on Feb. 5 — as a day commemorating the birth of John Jeffries in 1744. Jeffries, one of America's first weather observers, began taking daily weather observations in Boston in 1774 and he took the first balloon observation in 1784.

Guru Ravidas Jayanti 2023.
Every year on the full moon day of the month of Magha, Sant Ravidas Jayanti is observed. Ravidasji's birth anniversary, or Ravidas Jayanti, is observed on **February 5** this year.

International Development Week.
International Development Week (IDW) is celebrated from 6 February to 12 February and this year marks the 30th anniversary of International Development Week in Canada. This day informs about different roles and career paths in the international development sector.

Lata Mangeshkar Death Anniversary: More Than 5,000 Songs In 36 Languages — A Career Like No Other.
The legendary singer Lata Mangeshkar, fondly known as The Nightingale of India, was a musical force to reckon. February 6, 2023 marks the first death anniversary of the veteran singer , The legendary singer died due to multiple organ failure, the doctors said.

Ballet Day
Ballet Day is every year on February 7, and we can't wait to celebrate this elegant and theatrical dance form. When the ethereal outfits, passionate dancers, and classical music come together, it uplifts the spirit like no other form of artistic expression. The grace in ballet is undeniable and we tend to forget the unbelievable athleticism and strength needed to achieve that. Female ballerinas can carry three times their body weight while dancing on the tip of their big toe. Male ballerinas are capable of lifting one and a half tons during a single performance. These are just one of several reasons why ballet leaves us starstruck so let's tip our hats this Ballet Day.

E-Day
Whip out your TI-87 calculator this e-Day, February 7, and spot the little button that bolsters logarithmic and exponential functions on the daily. While you may not be too familiar with e, you're surely acquainted with its more famous cousin, pi. Just like pi, e is an inexplicably recurring number in the world of mathematics. It has a never-ending chain of decimal points, the beginning of which is 2.718281828, and on and on it goes. This holiday is celebrated on 2/7 for the obvious reason that the date holds the same digits as e rounded to the nearest tenth.

Birth anniversary of Dr.zakir Hussain,
Dr. Zakir Husain, (**8 February 1897 – 3 May 1969**) was an Indian educationist and politician who served as President of India from 13 May 1967 until his death on 3 May 1969.

National Deworming Day : India

The National Deworming Day is being observed on 10 February across the country. Children and adolescents in the age group of 1 to 19 years are being administered a single dose of a safe medicine Albendazole in all states and Union Territories on the occasion.
The objective of the day is to deworm children and adolescents to reduce the prevalence of parasitic worms in the intestine. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare initiated the observation of the National Deworming Day. The first National Deworming Day in India was observed on 10 February 2015.

World Pulses Day.
World Pulses Day is observed on 10th February. It is organized to create awareness among people to get nutritional food including pulses.
It is a global event and is celebrated on 10 February to highlight the importance of pulses as a worldwide food. The day recognizes the significant role that pulses play in achieving the comprehensive, far-reaching, and people-centred set of universal and transformative goals.

International Day of Women and Girls in Science.
It is observed on 11 February to recognize the role of women and girls in science, not only as beneficiaries but also as agents of change. Therefore, the day focuses on achieving full and equal access to and participation in science for women and girls. Also, to achieve gender equality and empowerment of women and girls.

World Day of Sick.
Every year on February 11th, World Day of the Sick offers a way for the Catholic Church to come together and pray for those who are suffering from sickness. It's also a day to remember the caregivers and hospital chaplains who look after those who are ill.
World Unani Day.
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.

India celebrates National Productivity Day every year on February 12 to mark the foundation day of the National Productivity Council (NPC). The NPC's mission is to promote awareness towards increasing the productivity of the country.
Darwin Day.
Darwin Day is a celebration to commemorate the birthday of Charles Darwin on 12 February (12 February 1809). The day is used to highlight Darwin's contributions to science and to promote science in general. Darwin Day is celebrated around the world.

National Women's Day: India / Sarojini Naidu Birth Anniversary.
Every year 13 February is celebrated as National Women's Day only in India. But, very few people know why Women's Day is celebrated on February 13. As on this day prominent freedom fighter and poetess Sarojini Naidu was born. She is also known as the 'Nightingale of India' because of her poems. Sarojini Naidu played an active role in the Indian National Movement for the independence of the country.

World Radio Day.
World Radio Day is observed on 13 February every year to remember the special power of Radio which brings people together and provides vital information. It touches the lives of people across the world. In 2023, the theme for World Radio Day is "Radio and Peace" which aims to focus on the importance of independent radio to foster peace and prevent conflict.

International Epilepsy Day
International Epilepsy Day, is observed each year on the 2nd Monday of February International Epilepsy Day is an annual event organized by the International Bureau for Epilepsy (IBE) and the International League Against Epilepsy (ILAE) to raise awareness about epilepsy and its impact on individuals, families and communities around the world.

International Book Giving Day.

International Book Giving Day, celebrated every year on February 14, is a day to do exactly what the day says — give books. This special holiday is celebrated by book lovers all over the world. It is a day to share your love of books with someone — especially children — who might not have access to as many books as you do. It's not a coincidence that International Book Giving Day falls on the same day as Valentine's Day — it is a day of love after all. International Book Giving Day is about two things — a love of books and a love for fellow human beings.

Black Day : India
As on February 14, 2019, a terror attack was carried out in Pulwama in Jammu and Kashmir by a suicide bomber resulting in the death of 40 CRPF personnel in Pulwama.

World Hippo Day.
Drought has led to habitat loss, and the hunting and poaching of hippos, both for their meat and ivory teeth, is also a major threat. World Hippo Day reminds us to celebrate and value these mud-loving mammals, in the hope that they'll be around for many more years to come.

National Flag of Canada Day.
On February 15, 1965, Canada's red and white maple leaf flag was raised for the very first time on Parliament Hill. On the same day in 1996, National Flag of Canada Day was declared. - Our national flag is a symbol that unites Canadians and reflects the common values we take pride in — equality, freedom and inclusion.

International Childhood Cancer Day.
International Childhood Cancer Day is observed on February 15 every year and all over the world. The day raises awareness of childhood cancer and honors all the children and families experiencing the effects of the disease. It acknowledges their pain and difficulties, giving them space to process and grieve.

World Anthropology Day 2023.
World Anthropology Day is a holiday that falls on the third Thursday of February — it takes place on February 16 this year. The day is set aside to celebrate the field and share information about anthropology with the public. Anthropology can be explained as the scientific study of humanity. It covers human behavior, biology, and how human societies function. It considers past and present information and looks to explore the future. Anthropology helps explain the origins of humans and what makes us unique as a species. It helps us understand how our world works, why we behave the way we do, and how we influence our environments.

National Almond Day,
National Almond Day is a reason for foodies to celebrate! It's generally believed and agreed by historians (and food historians in particular) that almonds were one of the earliest cultivated foods by mankind. Almonds are mentioned as far back in history as the Bible!

Innovation Day.
Innovation Day is commemorated on February 16 to recognize the role that new knowledge plays in making a country more advanced and powerful. This day is a great way to not only make the existing crop of scientists feel valued and appreciated, but it also inspires young people to pursue a career in technology and innovation. This special day celebrates the achievements of the scientific community and opens the doors to new technologies, inventions, and careers for the younger generation.

Global Tourism Resilience Day.
he United Nations General Assembly has adopted a resolution from Jamaica to declare the first-ever Global Tourism Resilience Day on 17th February 2023, in an effort to future-proof the sustainability of tourism. The move to mark the day annually was supported by more than 90 countries.

World Human Spirit Day.
So many of our statements nowadays end with 'the world as we know it'. World Human Spirit Day is a celebration of the fact that what we know about our own world is limited and superficial. It is a day to wonder at our achievements on this planet as humans, and to contemplate the endless possibilities we have as spirits.

Random Act of Kindness Day.

One can never go wrong with kindness, and there can never be too much of it. The idea behind Random Act of Kindness Day is to cultivate feelings of kindness and brighten up someone's day. Every small act of kindness is significant. It may seem like it doesn't accomplish much but, just like the domino effect, one act of kindness can lead to more positive outcomes. Don't hold back from uplifting others with compliments and compassion on this day.

Taj Mahotsav or Taj Festival.

Taj Mahotsav Agra, one of the most eagerly awaited festivals, is celebrated from 18th to 27th February every year at Shilpgram near the Eastern gate of "Taj Mahal".This 10 days long carnival is actually a vibrant platform that gives you information of India where you can find India's rich arts, crafts, cuisine, dance and music. Taj Mahal is the most beautiful historical place of India which tells about incredible India. Taj Mahotsav is organized by UP Tourism and it is a source to increase Indian Tourism.

World Pangolin Day.

World Pangolin Day is observed annually on the third Saturday in February and takes place on February 18 this year. The day aims to celebrate pangolins, raise awareness and recommit international N.G.O.s to the fight against the global capturing of pangolins in Africa and Asia.

Shivaji Jayanti.

Shivaji Jayanti, also known as Shiv Jayanti and Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Jayanti, is a grand celebration that honors the birth of the great Maratha warrior, Shivaji Maharaj. From cultural programs to parades, the festival is a feast for the senses and a great chance to immerse yourself in the rich tradition and legacy of Maharashtra.

World Whale Day.

World Whale Day is celebrated every year on the third Sunday in February and this year, it takes place on February 19. This day seeks to appreciate these aquatic creatures that are an important part of the ecosystem. World Whale Day, was founded in Maui, Hawaii in 1980 to honor humpback whales, which swim off of the coast of this tropical island. This day was started as an idea by Greg Kauffman, founder of the Pacific Whale Foundation, to raise awareness about the threat of extinction faced by humpback whales.

International Tug of War Day

Tug of War Day is celebrated on February 19 every year. The day is dedicated to honouring one of the easiest sports, Tug of War. This game is a competitive sport that is beneficial for muscle development, and it is a lot of fun to play. The Tug of War is played all over the world.

Mizoram State Day.

Mizoram State Day is on February 20. The day marks the formation of Mizoram as a state. The region is a state in north-eastern India and shares a border with countries like Bangladesh and Myanmar. Are you wondering why this particular name was chosen for the state? Well, it's because the inhabitants of the region are called Mizo. Based on the history, the British were particularly interested in the region's resources such as tea and milk when they took over India. Hence, the state was officially formulated once India gained independence. To honor the day and the struggle of the residents, start celebrating now!

World Day of Social Justice.

World Day of Social Justice is observed annually on February 20. Internationally, the world is plagued with unfortunate issues that prohibit millions of individuals from living a fair life. Many of the world's population, through no fault of their own, are deprived of basic facilities, such as homes, jobs, healthcare, education, nutrition, and more.

President's Day : United States

On the third Monday in February, the United States celebrates the federal holiday known as Presidents Day. The day takes place during the birth month of the country's two most prominent presidents, George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. While the day once only honored President George Washington on his birthday, February 22nd, the day now never lands on a single president's birthday.

National Love Your Pet Day

On February 20th, pet lovers everywhere observe National Love Your Pet Day. This holiday focuses on giving extra attention to our pets. The day encourages pampering our pets and focusing on the special relationship pets hold in our lives.

International Mother Language Day.
International Mother Language Day is a worldwide annual observance held on 21 February to promote awareness of linguistic and cultural diversity and to promote multilingualism. First announced by UNESCO on 17 November 1999, it was formally recognized by the United Nations General Assembly with the adoption of UN resolution in 2002. Mother Language Day is part of a broader initiative "to promote the preservation and protection of all languages used by peoples of the world" as adopted by the UN General Assembly on 16 May 2007 in UN resolution which also established 2008 as the International Year of Languages. The idea to celebrate International Mother Language Day was the initiative of Bangladesh. In Bangladesh, 21 February is the anniversary of the day when the people of Bangladesh (then East Bengal of Pakistan) fought for recognition for the Bengali language. It is also celebrated in West Bengal, India.

Diesel Engine Day.
Diesel Engine Day is celebrated annually on February 23. The invention of this engine is credited to Rudolf Diesel, an engineer, who was granted a patent for the diesel engine on February 23, 1893. He came up with the engine after setting out to improve the efficiency of the Otto engine, a large, single-cylinder, four-stroke engine developed back in the 1870s. Did you know that diesel engines today, power all sorts of things including heavy construction machinery, farm tractors, trucks, marine vessels, buses, and locomotives? They are even turned into power generators at offices, airports, and hospitals. It is simply impossible to imagine our current world without this unique power system.

International Dog Biscuit Appreciation Day
No one quite knows the origin of this wagtastic holiday, but we all know that dogs love these treats. Created in the mid-19th century by American James Spratt, the cake-like biscuit comprised of meat, grains and vegetables have evolved over time, but are still dogs favorite reward. So lets raise a baked treat to International Dog Biscuit Appreciation Day on February 23 and our companions who love them.

World Understanding and Peace Day
World Understanding and Peace Day takes place on February 23 every year. This day is actually a commemoration of the first meeting of Rotary that was held. This meeting of businessmen, which aimed to be a space where their backgrounds didn't matter, started the chain of events that led to the formation of Rotary International. An international organization dedicated to humanitarian service as well as peace and goodwill throughout the world, Rotary International began in Chicago, U.S. The date of the first meeting has since become World Understanding and Peace Day, which is part of the World Understanding Month celebrations in February.

Digital Learning Day
Digital Learning Day is celebrated annually on the last Thursday of every February. This year, it takes place on February 23. This day is an ongoing initiative led by the Alliance for Excellent Education (All4Ed) to engage students and empower educators through the effective use of digital tools.

Central Excise Day : India.
Central Excise Day is observed in India on 24 February every year to encourage the employees of the excise department to carry out the central excise duty in a better way to prevent corruption in the manufacturing business and to carry out the best possible exercise services in India.

Flag Day Mexico.
Flag Day, or 'Día de la Bandera' as it's known in Mexico, is celebrated on February 24 every year, since it was first established. For those who did not know, the modern-day Mexican flag depicts an eagle atop a cactus, eating a snake. This fascinating emblem stems from an Aztec legend where this sight was witnessed by the Aztecs and taken to be a sign from the gods. As a result, they built their empire on that spot, and today, that spot is Mexico City, the capital of Mexico.

Estonia Independence Day.

Independence Day in Estonia is a public holiday on February 24 each year. Independence Day is also Estonia's national day that marks the anniversary of the Declaration founding the Republic of Estonia on this day in 1918. Estonia is a country in Northern Europe that borders the Baltic Sea and the Gulf of Finland. Home to more than 1,500 islands, Estonia's diverse topography spans rocky beaches, old-growth forests, and many lakes.

International Stand Up to Bullying Day

International Stand Up to Bullying Day is observed twice a year in February and November. In February, it is on the last Friday of the month while in November, the day takes place on the third Friday of the month. It will next be observed on February 24. The observations in February are a part of the Anti-Bullying Week that aims to create empathy and end bullying and harassment. It's observed by schools, workplaces, and organizations in more than 25 countries.

International Sword Swallowers Day.

The International Sword Swallowers Day, which takes place on the last Saturday in February, is the day for you. This year, it will be held on February 25. Sword swallowers, a.k.a. those guys who pass long, pointy, sharp instruments through their mouths into their stomachs, often don't get the same level of fame and respect as other entertainers. This holiday was specially created to recognize and appreciate sword swallowers while educating people about their contribution to the world.

Kuwait Liberation Day.

Kuwait Liberation Day is observed annually on February 26. This holiday remembers the day Kuwait was liberated from Iraqi occupation in 1991. The Liberation was the U.S. marshaled military operation — Operation Desert Storm, to recoup Kuwait from Iraq after the 1991 bombing of Iraq.

RANKING

Mukesh Ambani Overtakes Gautam Adani as Richest Indian in the world.

Adani Group stocks have been under stress since Hindenburg in its research report last week questioned the accounting and corporate governance practices of the conglomerate. Reliance Industries chairman and Managing Director Mukesh Ambani has been named the richest Indian in the world, according to the Forbes Real Time Billionaires' list, reported news agency ANI.

Australian Open 2023: Aryna Sabalenka beats Elena Rybakina to secure title

Aryna Sabalenka registered an incredible 4-6, 6-3, 6-4 come-from-behind win over Elena Rybakina to win her maiden Australian Open title. The Australian Open crown is also Sabalenka's maiden Grand Slam title. Stay updated with Times of India to get all the live updates of Australian Open 2023 Women's Singles Final between Elena Rybakina and Aryna Sabalenka.

SPORTS

Suryakumar Yadav creates history, becomes first Indian men's player to clinch T20I Player of the Year Award

Suryakumar Yadav has etched his name in the history books and become the 1st-ever Indian cricketer to be bestowed with the ICC Men's T20 Cricketer of the Year award. Suryakumar pipped the likes of Sikandar Raza, Sam Curran and Mohammad Rizwan to bag the top honour.

The right-handed batsman piled up 1164 runs in 31 matches last year. He batted with a strike-rate of 187.43.

England's Ben Stokes and Nat Sciver win ICC annual awards

England Test captain Ben Stokes and England all-rounder Nat Sciver are among the winners in the International Cricket Council's annual awards.

All-rounder Stokes has been named Men's Test Cricketer of the Year while Sciver won the Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy for ICC Women's Cricketer of the Year.

Nikhat Zareen to represent mining PSU NMDC as its brand ambassador
Hyderabad-based Navratna mining PSU NMDC Limited has signed a memorandum of agreement (MoA) with World Boxing Champion, Nikhat Zareen to represent NMDC as its brand ambassador.

The company in a statement said that Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games Gold Medalist Nikhat Zareen represents the strength, courage, agility and national pride that goes with the brand of NMDC. She also represents the hopes and aspirations of New India and NMDC must become a part of her journey to the 2024 Olympics. NMDC is wholeheartedly extending its support to her as she trains and prepares for the Olympics 2024.

Khelo India Youth Games to commence on 30th January in Madhya Pradesh
The next Khelo India Youth Games will kick start on the 30th of this month in Madhya Pradesh in which multiple Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) Development athletes will participate. This elevates the magnitude of the games as the TOPS athletes, who are international achievers already, will inspire the grassroots-level athletes to up the ante and provide a tough contest.

Germany beat Belgium 5-4 in penalty shootout to win FIH Men's Hockey World Cup in Bhubaneswar
In the FIH Hockey World Cup, Germany have lifted the World Cup after 17 years beating Belgium 5-4 in a penalty shootout, after the game ended 3-3 in the final at the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar. Germany now have won the World Cup three times, first in 2002 and second in 2006.

Murali Vijay announced retirement from all forms of cricket
Murali Vijay Retirement: Indian cricket team's veteran opener Murali Vijay announced retirement from all forms of cricket, Monday. Vijay played his last international match for the national team in December 2018, against Australia in Perth. The red-ball specialist represented India in 61 Tests, 17 ODIs and nine T20 matches.
For India, Murali Vijay scored 3982 runs, including 12 centuries and 15 half-centuries at an average of 38.28 in 61 Tests, 339 runs in 17 ODIs and 169 runs in nine T20 matches

A massive setback for the Australian cricket team .
Mitchell Starc's latest announcement confirmed that he will most probably return to action in India vs Australia 2nd Test, set to be played in Delhi from February 17 to 21.

Fit Again - Ravindra Jadeja to join the India squad in Nagpur.
After testing his match-fitness with a successful return to action in the Ranji Trophy, star all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja is set to join the India squad in Nagpur this week, ahead of the first Test against Australia, which begins on February 9. Jadeja played for Saurashtra in their final group-stage match against Tamil Nadu last week in Chennai and bowled 41.1 overs and bagged a seven-for in the second innings. Since undergoing surgery in his right knee in September, it was his first match.

Women's Premier League: Jhulan Goswami Roped In By Mumbai As Bowling Coach. Legendary Indian pacer Jhulan Goswami has been roped in by the Mumbai based franchise ahead of the inaugural season of the Women's Premier League (WPL) this year. The development was reportedly confirmed by former BCCI President and current Director of the Delhi Capitals who said that while even the Delhi side had offered Jhulan a role, she was going to Mumbai.

Legendary Sprinter Usain Bolt refuted all reports of him being BROKE.
Legendary sprinter Usain Bolt, fastest man on the planet years after his retirement, lost at least $12 million which he had in his account with a Jamaican investment firm, reportedly leaving him on the verge of being bankrupt. The billion dollar fraud affected over 40 clients, with Bolt being one of the high-profile victims. Soon after the fraud, rumors started circulating about Bolt's account balance inexplicably dwindling from $12 million to just $12,000

IND vs NZ, 3rd T20 Men in Blue register their biggest-ever win in T20I in terms of runs.
While India opted to bat first and posted 234/4 with the help of Shubman's highest-ever score by an Indian in T20Is- an unbeaten 126* off 63- they later bowed out the Kiwis for 66, they defeated New Zealand by 168 runs in the third and final T20I at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad on Wednesday.

England's win in the third and final ODI put a massive dent in South Africa's hopes of qualifying for this year's World Cup.

England's 59-run win in the third and final ODI put a massive dent in South Africa's hopes of qualifying directly for this year's ICC Mens Cricket World Cup. Skipper Jos Buttler (131 off 127 balls) and Dawid Malan (118 off 114 balls) shared a 232-run partnership for the fourth wicket after the hosts had reduced England to 3/14 in the sixth over. That helped the visitors put up a massive 346/7 in their 50 overs. Archer collected his best ODI bowling figures of 6-40 in just his second international appearance back from a long injury break as South Africa were bowled out for 287 in 43.1 overs.

South Africa beat India by 5 wickets in the final of the Women's T20 Tri-Series.
South Africa beat India by 5 wickets in the final of the Women's T20 Tri-Series in South Africa in what was a low-scoring contest at the Buffalo Park, East London. While the visitors had opted to bat first, they got off to a poor start losing both their openers within the first 7 overs with just 21 runs on the board.

BCCI is finding it difficult to book hotel for the auction, For WPL .
The inaugural season of the Women's Premier League (WPL) is all set to get underway next month. However, the player's auction before the first season of the much-anticipated tournament hasn't yet taken place. While it is being reported that the WPL Auction will take place either on February 11 in New Delhi or February 13 in Mumbai, there is still no clarity on where the bidding war will actually take place between the five teams- Ahmedabad, Mumbai, Delhi, Lucknow, and Bengaluru And now a fresh report has emerged which suggest that the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) is finding it difficult to book hotel for the auction owing to the ongoing wedding season in India.

Around 1,000 cricketers have sign up for the WPL auction.
Days before the Women's Premier League Auction set to happen in the second week of February, a recent media report suggests that around 1,000 cricketers have given their names for the auction. It should be noted that 5 teams are participating in the competition- Ahmedabad, Mumbai, Delhi, Lucknow, and Bengaluru. This means that around 100-120 players will be picked by the franchises.

Joginder Sharma Retires: India's 2007 T20 World Cup Hero Bids Adieu To All Forms Of Cricket .
India's 2007 T20 World Cup hero Joginder Sharma has announced his retirement from all forms of cricket on Friday. The right-arm pacer who was handed over the final over of the T20 World Cup final against Pakistan in the inaugural edition of the T20 World Cup by the then captain MS Dhoni took to social media to announce the decision.

Australian PM To Attend IND vs AUS 4th Test In Ahmedabad.
Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Australian PM Anthony Albanese will attend the fourth and final Test of Border-Gavaskar Trophy 2023. As per reported by the Times of India, the leaders of both the nations will witness India vs Australia 4th Test at Ahmedabad's picturesque Narendra Modi Stadium - largest cricket stadium of the world.

India maul Bhutan 12-0 in SAFF U-20 Women's Championship.
The players scored a hat-trick each after coming in as substitutes as India mauled 12-0 in their opening match of the SAFF U-20 Women's Championship on Friday

Mumbai vs Ahmedabad On March 4 Likely To Be The Tournament Opener .
Even though the official schedule for the first season of the tournament is yet to be released, a tentative schedule doing the rounds among the concerned authorities of the competition has listed Mumbai vs Ahmedabad as the opening match of the T20 league.

Dipa Karmakar Banned For 21 Months For Use Of Prohibited Substance .
The International Testing Agency confirmed on Saturday that Indian gymnast Dipa Karmakar has been sanctioned with a 21-month period of ineligibility after testing positive for the prohibited substance higenamine .

Nagal Brings India Back With Close Win After Yuki's Defeat : Davis Cup .
Sumit Nagal fought fire with fire to bring India back in the Davis Cup World Group Play-off tie against Denmark, winning the second singles after Yuki Bhambri was outplayed in the opening match here Friday. It was always a tall task for Bhambri to counter world number nine Holger Rune and there was no surprise as Denmark's top singles player raced to a 6-2 6-2 win to put the hosts up 1-0.

Sports Minister Anurag Thakur Launches Khelo India Winter Games Mascot, Theme Song .

Khelo India Winter Games will be taking place in Gulmarg, Jammu, and Kashmir from Feb 10-14. On Saturday, Union Minister Anurag Thakur took part in the official launch of the mascot, anthem & jersey of the Games with Lt Governor Manoj Sinha.

All-Round Bhut Takes Five-For As Saurashtra Beat Punjab To Enter Semi-Final.
Needing 252 to win, Punjab started the day at 52 for 2 and were all out for 180 in 89.1 overs with veteran Mandeep Singh's 45 being the highest score. Mandeep, a veteran of 13 seasons, failed to show any intent and his selfish, ultra-defensive 128-ball stay put Punjab in a hole.

Aussies Suffer A Major Blow As Josh Hazlewood Ruled Out Of 1st Test Of Border-Gavaskar Trophy.
The much-awaited Border-Gavaskar Trophy is just a few days away and Australia suffered a huge blow as Josh Hazlewood will not play the first Test that is set to take place from February 9 in Nagpur. The report further mentioned that he is doubtful for the second Test also. Hazlewood is still recuperating from an Achilles injury on his left leg that he sustained during Sydney Test against South Africa last month.

UAE Set To Host Asia Cup, Venue To Be Finalised In March.
The Asian Cricket Council will decide on an alternate venue for the Asia Cup ODI tournament in March after BCCI secretary Jay Shah and PCB chairman Najam Sethi had their first formal meeting in Bahrain on Saturday. The Asia Cup was initially allotted to Pakistan and was scheduled in September this year but Shah, who is also the ACC chairman, had announced last October that India will not travel to Pakistan.

Ravindra Jadeja sheds light on recovery from knee surgery.
After a knee surgery and five months away from international cricket, a fully fit all-rounder is all in readiness to don the national jersey again in the upcoming marquee Border-Gavaskar Trophy, starting February 9 in Nagpur.

SAFF Under-20 Women's football: India Bangladesh match ends in goalless draw in Dhaka.
In SAFF Under 20 Women's football championship, the match between India and Bangladesh ended in a draw in Dhaka. Both teams played well but could not score a single goal.

The Formula E World Championship to be head in India for the first tine.
Hyderabad will host India's first ever E-Prix on **February 11**. The Formula E World Championship heads to India for the first time this week, with the inaugural E-Prix in Hyderabad. The electric mobility revolution is certainly unfolding rapidly across the globe and India is no different. With Indian brands such as Tata and Mahindra launching EV ranges and the government taking proactive steps to push the electric infrastructure across the country, this is a good time for the premier all-electric racing championship in the world to come to India.

Women's Premier League To Be Held In Mumbai From March 4-26.
The much-awaited inaugural season of the Women's Premier League (WPL) will be played from March 4 to 26 in Mumbai. The Brabourne Stadium and the DY Patil Stadium will host all the matches with the tournament opener expected to be played between Gujarat Giants and Mumbai Indians-owned franchise.

Aaron Finch, Australia's T20I Captain, Announces Retirement From International Cricket.
Australia's T20I captain Aaron Finch has announced his retirement from international cricket. Finch famously the Aussies to their first and only ICC Men's T20 World Cup trophy in 2021. The right-handed batter led the Kangaroos in 76 T20Is and 55 ODIs before he calling time on his international career. Overall, the 36-year-old represented the Aussies in 254 international matches across all formats- five Tests, 146 ODIs and 103 T20Is.

Women's T20 World Cup: Darcie Brown's Spell, Lower-Order Batting Helps Australia Beat India In Warm-up.
The Indian Women's team faced a defeat to Australia in their first-warm match. The Women In Blue first allowed Australia to escape from a precarious 79/8 in the 16 over to post a modest 129/8 and then batted poorly to lose the match by 43 runs.

Gary Ballance achieves rare feat, becomes second player to score centuries for two countries.

The 33-year-old's century was the fifth of his Test career, but his first for Zimbabwe after officially moving to represent the country of his birth in late 2022.And on his Zimbabwe Test debut against West Indies, Ballance has written himself into the history books. The 33-year-old's outstanding 137* means he is just the second player in the history of the game to have scored Test centuries for two different countries, following in the footsteps of former Australia and South Africa international Kepler Wessels.

LeBron James Breaks Kareem Abdul-Jabbar NBA Scoring Record.

Los Angeles Lakers LeBron James has overtaken the long-standing NBA scoring record, held by former Lakers icon Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, against the Oklahoma City Thunder on Wednesday morning (Tuesday night in the US). 38-year-old James, in his 20th season, with his 38,388th point became the NBA all-time score leader, breaking Abdul-Jabbar's 38,387 points previous long-standing record.

Women's T20 World Cup: Richa Ghosh Shines As India Beat Bangladesh In Warm-Up Fixture.

Richa Ghosh smashed an attacking unbeaten 91 as India defeated Bangladesh by 52 runs in a warm-up match ahead of the Women's T20 World Cup

Opting to bat, India made an imposing 183 for 5 riding on Ghosh's exploits with the bat and then restricted Bangladesh to 131 for 8.

Ind vs Aus: Suryakumar Yadav Makes Debut In First Test Of Border-Gavaskar Trophy.

India's Mr 360, Suryakumar Yadav has made his Test debut for India in the first test match against Australia in the Border-Gavaskar Trophy. Talented wicketkeeper/batter KS Bharat to got the Test cap. With Surya making his way into the playing XI, the Punjab-based batter Shubman Gill missed out.

Border Gavaskar Trophy will start on February 9 in Nagpur.

The latest edition of the Border Gavaskar Trophy will kick start on February 9 in Nagpur. While Team India aim to retain the trophy after a historic win in Down Under, Australia will look to win their first Test series in India since 2004-05. Instituted in 1996 and named after legendary batters Allan Border and Sunil Gavaskar, the Border Gavaskar Trophy has had its moments of glory, where history was rewritten, records were shattered, and careers were molded

Indian Golfer Aditi Ashok Won Kenya Ladies Open Title 2023.

Indian Olympian Aditi Ashok won the 2023 Magical Kenya Ladies Open Title with a final-round score of 74. This is the fourth Ladies' European championship of Aditi Ashok overall. Her first LET title comes after winning the Fatima Bint Mubarak Ladies Open in Abu Dhabi in 2017. She finished with a score of 12-under 280 at the Vipingo Ridges after shooting a final round of 67-70-69-74.

Ravichandran Ashwin becomes the fastest Indian to take 450 Test wickets.

Ravichandran Ashwin picked up his 450th Test wicket during the first Border-Gavaskar Trophy game between India and Australia at the Vidarbha Cricket Association Stadium in Nagpur. He achieved the feat when he bowled Alex Carey in the 54th over. He also became the fastest Indian to scale the landmark, going past former leg-spinner Anil Kumble. Ashwin took 89 Tests to reach the milestone as compared to Anil Kumble who took 93 Tests.

3rd edition of Khelo India National Winter Games begins at Gulmarg.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday stated that Khelo India National Winter Games in Gulmarg will bolster the sporting culture in Jammu and Kashmir, and congratulated the athletes participating in the event.

IND vs AUS 1st Test India Beat Australia By An Innings And 132 Runs.

Rohit Sharma's men have outplayed the Australians by innings and 132 runs in the first Test of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy in Nagpur. The Kangaroos lost 10 wickets in a single session, Indian bowlers bowled out Australia for 91 runs. With this win, India are 1-0 ahead in the series.

Ravindra Jadeja Fined, For Applying Cream On Finger In 1st Test Vs Australia.

India's spinner Ravindra Jadeja has been fined 25 percent of his match fee for breaching Level 1 of the ICC Code of Conduct during the first Test against Australia in Nagpur on Thursday . He applied some cream without umpire's consent.

Women's T20 World Cup: Harmanpreet Fit To Play Against Pakistan; Smriti Doubtful Injured .
On the eve of India's opening match in the Women's T20 World Cup against Pakistan, batting coach Hrishikesh Kanitkar on Saturday said that captain Harmanpreet Kaur is fit to play in Sunday's highly-anticipated game. At the same time, Kanitkar also mentioned that vice-captain and left-handed opener Smriti Mandhana is 'most likely' going to miss out on India's tournament opener due to a finger injury which is not related to fracture.

India Win Silver And Bronze In Women's Pole Vault In Asian Indoor Championships
Pavithra Vengatesh and Rosy Meena won a silver and a bronze respectively in the women's pole vault event of the Asian Indoor Athletics Championship here on Saturday. Vengatesh and Meena cleared 4m and 3.90m respectively in the final, which was won by Mayu Nasu of Japan.

Vedaant Madhavan,, Wins Seven Medals At Khelo India Youth Games.
Indian swimming's latest sensation Vedaant Madhavan lived up to the hype and expectations and clinched as many as seven medals at the Khelo India Youth Games. Vedaant, who is the son of actor R Madhavan, secured the pole position in 100m, 200m and 1500m. Other than Vedaant, swimmer Apeksha Fernandes was also impressive and matched Vedaant's tally of medals. In fact, while Vedaant managed to win 5 gold medals and 2 silver medals in these games, Apeksha won 6 golds and a silver along with surpassing her personal best record

The 3rd Test Of Border-Gavaskar Trophy Shifted From Dharamshala to Indore.
The third Test between India and Australia is set to be moved from the picturesque HPCA Stadium in Dharamsala to Indore due to concerns about the surface. The Indian board (BCCI) has reportedly taken the decision to shift the match from the Himalayas after an unfavourable report of the venue.

India women's cricket team beat Pakistan by seven wickets.
India team scored 151/3 chasing Pakistan's 149/4 .
Jemimah Rodrigues scored a superb unbeaten fifty off 38 balls, stitched a fifty-run solid stand with Richa Ghosh (31*) to help India register a thrilling win with 6 balls remaining.

WPL 2023 Auction: RCB Ropes In Smriti Mandhana For Huge Rs 3.40 Cr
India's explosive left-hander batter Smriti Mandhana entered the auction with a Base price of 50 lakhs. Royal Challengers Bangalore and the Mumbai Indians were the two teams who went in to rope her. Bangalore won the bid and got Mandhana for a whopping amount of 340 Lakhs. also ,
Mumbai Indians Bags Harmanpreet Kaur For 1.80 Crore.

FIFA Club World Cup Final: Real Madrid beat Al Hilal to win record fifth Club World Cup.
Real Madrid has won the Club World Cup for a record-extending fifth time after beating Saudi Arabia's Al-Hilal 5-3 in the final in Rabat, Morocco. Vinícius Júnior scored twice and assisted Karim Benzema to lead Real Madrid to its record-extending eighth Club World Cup title by beating Saudi Arabia's Al-Hilal 5-3. Madrid last won the tournament in 2018. It also lifted the trophy in 2014, 2016 and 2017. Madrid also won three Intercontinental Cups in 1960, 1998 and 2002 — a match between European and South American champions, which merged with the Club World Cup in 2005.

WPL 2023: Check The Top 5 Most Expensive Players At The Auction.
1. Smriti Mandhana - 3.60 Crore by Royal Challengers Bangalore
2. Ashleigh Gardner - 3.20 Crore by Gujarat Giants
3. Natalie Sciver - 3.20 Crore by Mumbai Indians
4. Deepti Sharma - 2.60 Crore by Delhi Capitals
5. Jemimah Rodrigues - 2.20 Crore by the Delhi Capitals

Eoin Morgan, England's World Cup-winning captain, announces retirement from all forms of cricket.

England's Cricket World Cup-winning captain called time on his international career in June 2022. Eoin Morgan, who led England to their first-ever ICC Men's Cricket World Cup title in 2019, has announced his retirement from professional cricket with immediate effect.

Sania Mirza to be the mentor of RCB in Women's Premier League.
Indian tennis icon Sania Mirza, who played her last Grand Slam at the Australian Open last month, was roped in by the Royal Challengers Bangalore team as its mentor in the upcoming Women's Premier League.

FIFA confirms US, Mexico, Canada automatically in 2026 World Cup.
The U.S. men's national team, along with Mexico and Canada, will automatically qualify for the 2026 FIFA World Cup. The 2026 FIFA World Cup will be the 23rd FIFA World Cup, the quadrennial international men's soccer championship contested by the national teams of the member associations of FIFA. The tournament will be jointly hosted by 16 cities in three North American countries: Canada, Mexico, and the United States.

Women's T20 World Cup : IND beat WI by 6 wickets, join ENG in top 2 of Group 2 table.
A disciplined bowling performance from Team India bowlers kept the Windies down to 118/6 in 20 overs. Opener Stafanie Taylor top-scored for West Indies with a 40-ball 42 while Shemaine Campbelle contributed 30. Deepti Sharma was the most successful bowler for India with three wickets for 15 runs while Pooja Vastrakar and Renuka Singh got one apiece. Chasing 119 to win, India lost their top three batters within the first seven overs, making it a tricky run-chase. However, the duo of Harmanpreet Kaur and Richa Ghosh once again joined hands in the middle and stitched a brilliant fifty-run partnership to take India to victory.

IIT Indore Students Awarded with Global Best M-GOV Awards by Egyptian President.
The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Indore Students won AED 1 million by winning the gold medal at the World Government Summit in Dubai. Niyati Totala and Neel Kalpeshkumar Parikh of The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Indore, were awarded the prestigious medal by Egyptian President Abel Fattah Al-Sisi.

UEFA Champions League: Benfica Ease Past Brugge To Secure First-Leg Win In Round Of 16.
João Mário converted a penalty and David Neres made a cool finish which earned Benfica a comfortable win at Club Brugge in the first leg match in the Round of 16 stage of the Champions League. Roger Schmidt's Benfica took a major step towards the Champions League quarterfinals following a 2-0 victory as they will take a two-goal advantage back to Lisbon.

India's Asian Games Gold-Medal Winning Footballer Tulsidas Balaram Dies At 87.
Tulsidas Balaram, India's Asian Games gold-medal winning footballer and Olympian, has passed away aged 87 after a prolonged illness. The same has been confirmed by sources close to his family, as reported by news agency PTI. A widower, Balaram, was living in a flat on the banks of the river Hooghly in Uttarpara.

Cheteshwar Pujara became the 13th cricketer to play 100 Test matches for India.
Cheteshwar Pujara got felicitated at Arun Jaitley Stadium in Delhi. "It is an honour to receive this cap from you (Sunil Gavaskar), legends like you have inspired me (On getting the cap from Sunny G). I wanted to play for India as a youngster but I never thought I'd get to 100 Test matches. Test cricket is the ultimate format for me, it challenges you just like life. To all the youngsters, I'd encourage y'all to work hard to play Test cricket for India. I'd like to thank my wife, my family, everyone in BCCI and all my teammates who've supported me throughout this journey, " Pujara said.

BCCI Chief Selector Chetan Sharma Resigns After Viral Sting Operation.
The BCCI chief selector Chetan Sharma resigned after a sting operation went viral, as per ANI. Sharma was in Kolkata for the Ranji Trophy final and sent his resignation on Friday morning and it has been accepted immediately by the BCCI. According to the sting operation, he alleged that former India captain Virat Kohli attempted to defame the then-president of BCCI, Sourav Ganguly, as he believed Ganguly was to blame for his removal as captain of the One Day International (ODI) team."No player or selector will be comfortable on sharing a cordial relationship even with well-meaning journalists after this sting as the trust factor has been compromised," a senior BCCI source told PTI on conditions of anonymity.

IPL 2023 Schedule Announced: T20 Tournament To Begin On March 31.
The much-awaited schedule of the Indian Premier League 2023 has been announced and it is the defending champions Gujarat Titans who will face face the Chennai Super Kings in the opening fixture of the competition at the Narendra

Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad. The last league match will be played on May 21. There will be a total of 70 league matches this year with the first match on double-header days set to commence on 03:30 pm (IST). The evening matches have been given a 07:30 pm (IST) start time.

Badminton Asia Mixed Team Championships 2023: India Enter Semifinals After Sensational Comeback, Ensure First-Ever Medal In Continental Tournament.
India staged a remarkable comeback to down Hong Kong 3-2 and qualify for the semifinals of the Asia Mixed Team Badminton Championships and ensure a first-ever medal in the continental tournament here on Friday. Down 0-2, the Indians showed great fighting spirit as the doubles pair of Dhruv Kapila and Chirag Shetty and PV Sindhu levelled the scores after reverses in the first two matches.

South Africa Test Captain: Temba Bavuma Becomes First Black African To Lead Proteas In Test Cricket.
Cricket South Africa (CSA) have appointed Temba Bavuma as their new Test captain replacing Dean Elgar at the helm of affairs in red-ball cricket. While Bavuma has retained his position as the captain of the ODI team, his first assignment as a full-time leader in the game's purest format will be the forthcoming series against West Indies. With this announcement, the 32-year-old became the first Black African to lead South Africa in Test match cricket.

WPL 2023: Royal Challengers Bangalore Appoint Smriti Mandhana As Team's Captain.
On Saturday, Royal Challengers Bangalore appointed Smriti Mandhana as the skipper of the women's team ahead of the inaugural Women's Premier League (WPL) 2023. Virat Kohli and current RCB captain Faf du Plessis announced on RCB's social media handles. "Now it's time for another No. 18 to lead a very special RCB team in WPL. Yes, we are talking about Smriti Mandhana. Go on Smriti. You have the support best team and best fans in the world," - Kohli said.

IND vs ENG, Women's T20 World Cup 2023 England defeat India by 11 runs.
India vice-captain Smriti Mandhana's half-century (52 off 41 balls) and an entertaining 34-ball 47 from Richa Ghosh went in vain as India lost their ICC Women's T20 World Cup group match to England by 11 runs on Saturday. India restricted England to 151 for seven with medium pacer Renuka Singh (5/15) registering her best bowling figures in the format after India opted to bowl. Her five-wicket haul gave India hope that they could defeat the Heather Knight-led side, but Sarah Glenn (2/27 in 4 overs) and Sophie Ecclestone's (1/11 in 3 overs) restrictive bowling didn't allow Indian batters play their strokes freely.

Saurashtra beats Bengal By Nine Wickets To Bag Second Ranji Trophy Title.
Left-arm pacer Jaydev Unadkat claimed a match haul of nine wickets, including 6/85 in the second innings, as Saurashtra thrashed Bengal by nine wickets in the Ranji Trophy final here on Sunday.

Brief Scores Bengal 174 and 241 in 70.4 overs (Manoj Tiwary 68, Anustup Majumdar 61; Jaydev Unadkat 6/85, Chetan Sakariya 3/76). Saurashtra: 404 and 14/1 in 2.4 overs. Saurashtra won by nine wickets.

India Beat Australia In 2nd Test of The Border–Gavaskar Trophy.
The Indian team outplayed the Australians by six wickets in the second Test and took a 2-0 lead in the four-match series in another three-day finish on Sunday. India got the target of 115 after they restricted the Kangaroo's batters for 113 in their second innings. India completed the chase in 26.4 overs on the third day of the match.

Virat Kohli Breaks Sachin Tendulkar's All-Time Record, Becomes Quickest To Score 25,000 Runs In International Cricket.
India batter Virat Kohli scaled another historic milestone in his career, becoming the fastest batter to score 25,000 runs in international cricket. He did so on Day 3 of the second Test against Australia in New Delhi. In the process, Kohli surpassed his idol and the Master Blaster, Sachin Tendulkar, who had reached the landmark in 577 matches. Virat, on the other hand, did so in 549 matches. Following Virat and Sachin are the likes of Ricky Ponting (588), Jacques Kallis (594), Kumar Sangakkara (608) and Mahela Jayawardene (701).

Women's T20 World Cup: Hayley Matthews' All-Round Show Steers West Indies To Thrilling Win Over Pakistan.
West Indies registered a thrilling three-run win over Pakistan in their Women's T20 World Cup face-off to keep their dim hopes of a semifinal qualification alive at the Boland Park, Paarl on Sunday. Opting to bat first, the Windies had

posted 116/6 with the help of useful knocks from Rashada Williams (30 off 34) and Hayley Matthews (20 off 21) with S Campbelle (22), Chinelle Henry (11) and Shabika Gajnabi (13) also chipping in with the bat

India Beat Ireland To Reach T20 WC Semis In Rain-Affected Match.
India women's cricket team qualified for Women's T20 World Cup semi-final after winning the rain-affected match against Ireland women's cricket team at St. George Park in Gqebera on Monday, February 20. India secured a 5-run win vs Ireland on the D/L method. Smirit Mandhana, who was dropped thrice by Ireland fielders during the match, starred with the bat as she played a heroic 87-run knock off 56 balls -- her career best score, highest score by an Indian women's batter in T20Is.

No Jasprit Bumrah In the Team For 3rd And 4th Test Matches Vs Australia.
Ranji stalwart Jaydev Unadkat has made it into the Indian red-ball side after missing the 2nd Test against Australia. Jasprit Bumrah has still not been added to the squad as he is still recuperating from the back injury.

Josh Hazlewood Ruled Out Of The Border-Gavaskar Trophy.
Australia's speedster Josh Hazlewood has been ruled out of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy due to an Achilles injury. Australia coach Andrew McDonald confirmed the same. The pacer will be flying back to Australia for his rehabilitation. Hazlewood confirmed the same as he sustained a left Achilles niggle at last month's Test against South Africa.

Ben Stokes breaks the record for the most number of sixes ever hit in a Test match.
England Test captain Ben Stokes became the player to hit the most number of sixes in the history of Test cricket, surpassing England coach and former New Zealand cricketer Brendon McCullum in the match against New Zealand.

Tata Group Bags Title Rights For Inaugural Women's Premier League.
BCCI Secretary Jay Shah, Tuesday, announced Indian multinational conglomerate Tata Group as the official title sponsors for the inaugural Women's Premier League beginning in Mumbai on March 4.
It will be played across two venues in Mumbai, Brabourne Stadium and DY Patil Stadium.

Women's T20 World Cup: England Script History, Thrash Pakistan By 114 runs
England smashed the highest score in the history of the Women's T20 World Cup and won by the biggest margin ever seen at the tournament, hammering Pakistan by 114 runs, here on Tuesday. The England batters warmed up for the knockout stages with a thrilling display, smashing Pakistan's attack to all corners of Newlands as they reached 213/5 in their 20 overs, Pakistan ended their tournament in disappointing fashion, managing to avoid being bowled out, but finishing on 99/9.

Sania Mirza Indian star retires from tennis.
The 36-year-old Sania, who turned Pro in 2003, walks out of competitive tennis with six Grand Slam titles, including three women's doubles with Swiss legend Martina Hingis. She won two of her three mixed doubles with compatriot Mahesh Bhupathi (2009 Australian Open and 2012 French Open). She won the US Open trophy with Bruno Soares.

Indian boxing team appoints new foreign coach.
Dmitry Dmitruk was roped in by the Boxing Federation of India (BFI) as India's foreign coach on a two-year contract. Renowned coach Dmitruk was known for his work with the Irish national team and its youth teams in the past. He served as the high-performance coach in Ireland for the last 12 years.

UEFA Champions League: Real Madrid Come Back From Behind To Beat Liverpool, Napoli Ease Past Frankfurt
Real Madrid came back from behind to beat Liverpool in a sensational comeback. The La Liga giants were 0-2 down at one stage but Vinicius Junior and Karim Benzema scored two goal each to aid Madrid to a convincing win in the end. The fixture at Anfield started on a positive note for the hosts as Darwin Núñez put the Reds in the lead in just the 4th minute of the match. It all seemed to be going Liverpool's way as Mohammed Salah doubled the lead in the 14th minute to put the Liverpool fans into ecstasy. But not for the first time in Champions League history, did Madrid find a way to stage a comeback.

SUMMIT'S & MOU'S

Uber signs MoU with Tata Motors to bring 25,000 EVs in India.
Marking a key milestone in sustainable mobility in India, Uber has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Tata Motors to bring 25,000 electric vehicles onto the platform. This agreement is both in alignment with India's vision to reach net zero by 2070 and Uber's commitment to 100% zero-emission vehicle rides by 2040. This deal between a ride-hailing app and India's top carmaker is the largest EV commitment ever of this kind. In a statement, Uber said that Tata Motors will begin deliveries of "XPRES-T EVs to Uber fleet partners in a phased manner starting this month."

Bharat Electronics signs MoU with ADA, DRDO to jointly support Indian Air Force.
Bharat Electronics Ltd (BEL), the government-owned aerospace and defense electronics company, in an exchange filing on February 21, announced it has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA) under DRDO, to develop and provide a supportive infrastructure for the Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA).

Poet V Madhusoodanan Nair to receive Jnanappana award.
V Madhusoodanan Nair, noted writer, and teacher, has been selected for this year's Jnanappana Puraskaram, instituted by Guruvayur Devaswom in memory of 'Poonthanam Namboothiri', the ardent devotee of Guruvayoorappan, who wrote Jnanappana.

Aiden Markram named as new Sunrisers Hyderabad captain.
Sunrisers Hyderabad have decided to go with South African batter Aiden Markram as their new captain for the upcoming IPL 2023 season. Markram has attained tremendous success with the SRH's sister franchise, Sunrisers Eastern Cape, and led them to the inaugural SA 20 title recently. The 29-year-old will now take over from Kane Williamson, who was let-go by the franchise and went on to join defending champions Gujarat Titans during the IPL 2023 auction.

14-Year old Tilottama Sen wins Bronze in the women's 10m Air Rifle at ISSF World Cup 2023.
Indian teen Tilottama Sen won the bronze medal in the women's 10m Air Rifle at ISSF World Cup 2023 in Cairo in Egypt. The 14-year-old Tilottama Sen won the second bronze for India, fifth overall after ending the top eight ranking round with a score of 262. She missed out on the gold medal match by a narrow possible margin of 0.1. Great Britain's Seonaid Mcintosh won gold and Switzerland's Olympic Champion Nina Christen came second to win silver.

IND vs AUS, Women's T20 World Cup 2023 Semifinal: Australia win by five runs.
Australia have beaten India by 5 runs in the first semifinal of the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2023 at the Newlands, Cape Town to knock the Women in Blue out of the tournament. The win has taken the Aussies into yet another final, having previously won all their summit clashes

MOU's
University of Auckland and Tata Memorial Hospital sign MoU for cancer care.
Waipapa Taumata Rau, University of Auckland, New Zealand, and Tata Memorial Hospital (TMH), Mumbai, the largest and the most renowned cancer care hospital and research centre in India, have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to engage in long-term cooperation in cancer care. The MoU aims to explore ways to enhance cancer care using digital health. The two countries have a long history of cooperation in healthcare and this partnership builds on an already strong relationship. The University of Auckland is strongly committed to finding solutions to some of the most pressing global health issues in partnership with leading institutions.

At UAE's defence expo, an Abu Dhabi defence firm signs an MOU with India's HAL.
At the International Defence Expo and Conference on Wednesday, Hindustan Aeronautics (HAL), an aerospace company in India, and EDGE, the top defence company in the UAE, inked a Memorandum of Understanding, The agreement is inked to investigate potential areas of collaboration, such as the collaborative development of missile systems and unmanned aerial vehicles (drones).

Pat Cummins Won't Play The Third Test Against India, Steve Smith To Lead The Side.
Australia skipper Pat Cummins will not be taking part in the third Test against India. He returned to Australia as his mother is ill. Steve Smith will be leading the side for the Indore Test, starting from March 1. Steve Smith was in Dubai with his wife and has now joined the Australian team on Thursday. He already led the side in 34 Tests between 2014 and 2018 and during the 2017 series, he amassed three centuries.

Spain's Sergio Ramos announces international retirement.
Paris Saint-Germain's and former Real Madrid defender Sergio Ramos has announced that he is retiring from international football after a record 180 appearances for Spain. The 36-year-old, who will be 37 in March, published a letter on Thursday night, in which he confirmed he would no longer be available for the Spanish national side -- nearly two years after he made his last appearance on March 31, 2021, as a substitute against Kosovo.

South Africa Reach Women's T20 World Cup Final With Upset Win Over England.
Openers Laura Wolvaardt (53) and Tazmin Britz (68) struck entertaining half-centuries to take South Africa to 164 for four in the second semifinal at Newlands. he game went down to the wire thanks to the efforts of Ismail (3/27) and Khaka (4/29), who both came up with momentum changing overs. The 2009 champions England ended with 158 for eight in 20 overs.

ISL 2022-23: Chennaiyin End Season With Thrilling 4-3 Win Over NorthEast United.
Goals from skipper Anirudh Thapa, Rahim Ali Kwame Karikari and Sajal Bag powered Chennaiyin FC to an action-packed 4-3 victory against NorthEast United FC in their final league game of the Indian Super League (ISL) 2022-23 season at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium here on Friday.

MoU's
MoU signed bertween CSC Academy and NIELIT.
CSC Academy, a subsidiary of Common Service Centre e-Governance Services India Limited, and NIELIT (National Institute of Electronics and Information Technology) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to enhance digital literacy and skill development in India. The MoU aims to establish a long-term partnership between the two organizations to jointly develop and implement initiatives that promote digital literacy and create employment opportunities for the youth of India.

Australia Defeat South Africa, Seal Their Sixth Women's T20 World Cup Title.
Defending champions Australia continue their enviable dominance in Women's cricket as they defeated South Africa by 19 runs in AUS vs SA ICC Women's T20 World Cup final on Sunday at Cape Town's jam-packed Newlands Stadium. By the virtue of tonight's win, Australia won their sixth T20 World Cup title. This is the second time Australia have done a hat-trick when it comes to World Cup wins in T20 World Cups (2010, 2012, 2014 and 2018, 2020, 2023). For the first time, a men's or women's team has scored a title hat-trick for the second time in an ICC tournament.

Armand Duplantis Sets New Pole Vault World Record In Third Attempt To Clear The Height.
Sweden's Armand Duplantis shattered his own pole vault world record in a World Athletics Indoor Tour Silver meeting in Clermont-Ferrand in France. While the previous record set by the Olympic champion was of 6.21 metres, he added one more centiremetre to the tally and cleared the 6.22 metres mark at the All-Star Perche.

BANKING AND ECONOMY

India's Services Exports to Cross the Goal of 300bn $ in this Financial Year

- The country's services exports are doing "extremely well" and going by the current trend these outbound shipments would register about 20 per cent growth in this fiscal and cross the USD 300 billion target despite global economic uncertainties, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal has said.
- He said that on the merchandise front also, exports are so far registering healthy growth despite the world being under recession, huge inflationary pressure, and overstocking of various commodities.
- With all these stress, where every global leader is talking of "very" tough times, India's exports rose 9 per cent year-on-year during April-December 2022-23

UN slashes India's economic growth forecast by 20 bps to 5.8% for 2023
The United Nations pared down India's growth forecast by 20 basis points to 5.8 per cent for 2023 calendar year, citing higher interest rates and risks of recession in the developed world weighing on investment and exports. The report has projected global trade to contract 0.4 per cent and the world economy to grow at 1.9 per cent in 2023.

Sitharaman has set a record of being the sixth minister to present five consecutive Budget. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, who arrived at the Rashtrapati Bhavan wearing a red colour saree to call on President Droupadi Murmu, will present Union Budget 2023-24 on Wednesday. Sitharaman has set a record of being the sixth minister to present five consecutive Budget. She has joined a select league of leaders likes of Manmohan Singh, Arun Jaitley and P Chidambaram.

Budget 2023 Taxation and more.
FM Sitharaman proposes to increase income tax rebate limit to Rs 7 lakh under new tax regime.
Govt to reduce customs duty on shrimp feed to promote exports: FM Sitharaman
Taxes on cigarettes hiked by 16 percent
Basic import duty on compounded rubber increased to 25 percent from 10 percent.
Basic customs duty hiked on articles made from gold bars
Customs duty on kitchen electric chimney increased to 15 percent from 7.5 percent.
Customs duty on parts of open cells of TV panels cut to 2.5 percent.
Govt proposes to reduce customs duty on import of certain inputs for mobile phone manufacturing. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman proposed increase in the agriculture credit target in the Budget 2023 to Rs 20 lakh crore, with an emphasis on industries such as animal husbandry, dairy and fishery. She also proposed a sub-scheme of PM Matsya Sampada Yojana with a targeted investment of Rs 6,000 crore.

FY24 nominal GDP growth assumed at 10.5%.
"Nominal GDP for BE 2023-2024 has been projected at Rs 3,01,75,065 crore (Rs 301.75 lakh crore) assuming 10.5 percent growth over the estimated Nominal GDP of Rs 2,73,07,751 crore (Rs 273.08 lakh crore) as per the First Advance Estimates of FY 2022-23," the Budget documents said.

The Railway Ministry has been allocated 2.40 lakh crore.
In the Budget 2023, the Railway Ministry has been allocated 2.40 lakh crore. The amount allocated in this year's budget is 9 times of what was allocated in 2013

The Education Budget 2023 saw the highest-ever allocation for the education sector.
With Rs 1.12 Lakh Crore. School Education and Higher Education allotment increased by 8 and 7.9%, respectively.The Union Budget 2023 allocated a total of 1,12,898.97 crore to the education sector. The Education Budget 2023 saw an increase of 8621.25 crore in its allocation, compared to 104,277.72 crore in the previous year.

Budget and More
The Government has also enhanced the outlay for Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana by 66 per cent to over 79 thousand crore rupees.
The Defence Ministry has been allocated 5.94 lakh crore rupees in Budget 2023-24. This is 13.18 percent of the total budget, and a jump of 13 percent over previous year.

The Government has also decided to continue the 50-year interest free loan to state governments for one more year to spur investment in infrastructure and to incentivize them for complementary policy actions, with a significantly enhanced outlay of 1.3 lakh crore rupees.

SBI Gave Loans Worth $2.6 Billion To Companies Of Adani Group .
State Bank of India (SBI) gave loans worth as much as $2.6 billion to the Adani Group of companies, reported Bloomberg citing a person familiar with the matter. According to the report, the person said that SBI's loans to companies in the Adani conglomerate are about half of what is allowed under the rules.

SBI Chairman said lending to Adani Group projects is with regard to one having tangible assets and adequate cash flows.
State Bank of India (SBI) on Friday said its overall exposure to the Adani Group is at 0.88 per cent of the book or around Rs 27,000 crore. After the country's largest lender reported a 62 per cent growth in its net profit at Rs 15,477 crore during the December 2022 quarter, SBI chairman Dinesh Khara said that the bank has not given any loans against shares to the group, reported PTI.

Pakistani Rupee Continues Speedy Crash Against USD, Suffers Another Big Fall .
According to Pakistan media Geo News, since the start of this year, the rupee has depreciated by 44.92 against the US dollar.
The Pakistani rupee (PKR) has continued a speedy crash against the US dollar with another big fall as the greenback was traded at a record high price of 276.58 PKR in the interbank market, the central bank announced.
Modi Govt Likely To Increase Dearness Allowance By 4% .
The central government is likely to increase dearness allowance (DA) for its over one crore employees and pensioners by four percentage points to 42 per cent from existing 38 per cent as per the agreed formula for the purpose.

Telangana Finance Minister Harish Rao Presents Rs 2.90 Lakh Crore Budget.
Telangana Finance Minister T Harish Rao presented the budget in the Assembly on Monday. He commented that Telangana focuses on both development and welfare in the state. The Finance Minister presented an Rs 2,90,396 crores budget with a Revenue Expenditure of Rs 2,11,685 crore while capital expenditure was Rs 37,525 crores.

RBI repo rate hike
RBI hikes repo rate: RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das released the Monetary Policy statement on Wednesday, February 8, 2023. The Monetary Policy 2023 includes an increase in the repo rate by 25 basis points The RBI has increased the repo rate by a cumulative 250 basis points to 6.50 per cent since May this year.

New Leave Encashment Rule: Non-Govt Employees To Gain Rs 20,000 Per Year,
Revenue secretary Sanjay Malhotra said those outside the government stand to gain at least Rs 20,000 annually due to the change in tax rules for leave encashment
The Union Budget announced several measures to offer relief to salaried individuals and the common man. Finance Minister (FM) Nirmala Sitharaman proposed to raise tax exemption on leave encashment on the retirement of non-government salaried employees to Rs 25 lakh from Rs 3 lakh. "In line with the increase in government salaries, I am proposing to increase this limit to Rs 25 lakh," the FM said.

Reliance To Invest Rs 75,000 Crore In UP In 4 Years.
At UP Global Investor Summit 2023 in Lucknow, Mukesh Ambani said, "Reliance to invest Rs 75,000 crore in next four years in UP across telecom, retail and new energy business...Reliance will set up 10 GW of renewable capacity in Uttar Pradesh, start bio-energy business in state."

Adani company gives up bid to acquire DB Power.
Gautam Adani-led Adani Power said on Wednesday an agreement signed last year to acquire DB Power, which operates a thermal power plant in Chhattisgarh, for an enterprise value of Rs 7,017 crore, has expired. The date to complete the process was extended four times after the initial deal was signed in August 2022. "We wish to inform that the long stop date under the memorandum of understanding (MoU) dated August 18, 2022, has expired," Adani Power said in a stock exchange notice on Wednesday, but did not provide details as to whether the date will be extended or the agreement will be renegotiated

LEGAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

1. The Union government notified the formation of three Grievance Appellate Committees (GACs) that will address user complaints against social media and other internet-based platforms. These panels will also be empowered to oversee and revoke content moderation-related decisions taken by these platforms. Each of the three GACs will have a chairperson, two whole-time members from different government entities and retired senior executives from the industry for a term of three years from the date of assumption of office. The First Panel will be chaired by the chief executive officer of the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre under the Ministry of Home Affairs. The Second Panel will be chaired by the joint secretary in charge of the Policy and Administration Division in the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. The Third Panel will be chaired by a senior scientist at the Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY). GACs will deal with two categories of disputes: Violation of law and rights of users including the right to free speech and privacy. Contractual dispute between a platform's community guidelines and a user.

   Source:
   https://indianexpress.com/article/technology/centre-sets-up-three-grievance-committees-to-take-up-user-complaints-against-social-media-platforms-8410109/

2. Armenia appealed to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) to order Azerbaijan to dissolve the road blockade isolating Nagorno-Karabakh. Armenia appealed to the courtwith a demand to apply interim measures and oblige Azerbaijan to open the Lachin corridor – now blocked for fifty-one days – ensuring the free movement of people and vehicles, and restore the electrical supply to Nagorno-Karabakh. Nagorno-Karabakh is within Azerbaijan but had been under the control of ethnic Armenian forces since 1994 when a separatist war ended. The conflict can be traced back to the pre-Soviet era when the region was at the meeting point of Ottoman, Russian and the Persian empires. The self-declaration of independence by Nagorno-Karabakh in September 1991 in the backdrop of an imminent collapse of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) resulted in a war between Azerbaijan and Nagorno-Karabakh — supported by Armenia.

   Source:
   https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/armenia-urges-united-nations-court-to-order-azerbaijan-to-end-road-block/article66450024.ece

3. The Supreme Court's 5-Judge Constitutional bench presided by Justice K M Joseph has ruled that armed forces can take action against their officers for adulterous acts, while stating the decriminalization of adultery does not apply to Armed Forces. The SC clarified that in the 2018 judgment, the SC was concerned only with the validity of Section 497 of the IPC and Section 198(2) of the CrPC dealing with adultery, and had "no occasion whatsoever to consider the effect" with respect to the Army, Navy and Air Force Acts. The Bench delivered the final Order in the case, clarifying that the Joseph Shine Judgment did not apply to members of the armed forces who are accused of 'conduct unbecoming' and dismissed the application. In September 2018 Joseph Shine Judgment, the SC struck down Section 497 of the IPC that criminalised adultery, ruling that it was unconstitutional and violated women's right to equality in treating them as inferior to their husbands.

   Source:
   https://indianexpress.com/article/india/decriminalisation-of-adultery-doesnt-apply-on-armed-forces-rules-sc-8416241/

4. The Supreme Court has rejected a petition to bar candidates from contesting from more than one constituency in the general or assembly elections, calling it a matter of "parliamentary sovereignty" and "political democracy". A bench, headed by Chief Justice of India Dhananjaya Y Chandrachud, held that there is no manifest arbitrariness in the relevant provision in the Representation of People

Act (RPA) that may warrant an intervention by the court in this matter, which, it said, falls "squarely within the legislative domain" and "realm of policy". The plea had challenged the constitutionality of Section 33(7) of the Representation of Peoples Act, 1951, citing that it is unreasonable for creating extra burden on the public exchequer as by-elections will invariably follow because candidates have to give up one seat in case, they win on both the seats.

Source: https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/sc-junks-plea-to-stop-candidates-from-contesting-from-two-seats-101675363892872.html

5. The Government of India has launched the e-Courts Integrated Mission Mode Project in the country for computerization of District and subordinate courts with the objective of improving access to justice using technology. As part of the National e-Governance Plan, the project is under implementation since 2007 for Information and Communications Technology (ICT) development of the Indian Judiciary. e-Courts project is being implemented in association with e-Committee Supreme Court of India and the Department of Justice. Phase III of the e-Courts Project: Draft Vision Document for e-Courts Project Phase III has been finalized and approved by eCommittee, Supreme Court of India. It mentions a judicial system that is more affordable, accessible, cost-effective, predictable, reliable, and transparent for every individual who seeks justice or is part of the delivery of justice in India.

Source:
https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=1896034

6. The recent data presented by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) revealed that the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) is currently functioning with less than 50% of its sanctioned strength.
NCST: It was set up in 2004 by amending Article 338 and by inserting a new article 338A in the Constitution through the 89th Constitution Amendment Act, 2003. Hence, it is a constitutional body. By this amendment, the erstwhile National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes was replaced by two separate Commissions namely: the National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC), and the NCST. Article 338A inter-alia gives powers to the NCST to oversee the implementation of various safeguards provided to Scheduled Tribes (STs) under the Constitution or under any other law for time being in force or under any other order to the Government and to evaluate the working of such safeguards.

Source:
https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/ncst-functioning-with-less-than-50-of-sanctioned-strength-ministry-in-ls/article66478216.ece

7. The Supreme Court (SC) division bench headed by Justice KM Joseph observed that there is a growing consensus around hate speech and stressed there is no scope for hate crimes on the basis of religion in a secular country like India. And, it is the primary duty of the State to protect citizens from hate crimes. Hate crime is neither well defined in the Indian legal framework nor can it be easily reduced to a standard definition due to the myriad forms it can take. However, Hate speeches are dealt under IPC under Sections 153A, 153B, 295A, 298, 505(1) and 505(2) that declares that word, spoken or written, that promotes disharmony, hatred, or insults on basis of religion, ethnicity, culture, language, region, caste, community, race etc., is punishable under law.

Source:
https://indianexpress.com/article/india/no-scope-for-hate-crimes-on-basis-of-religion-in-secular-country-such-as-india-sc-8427939/

8. A portion of a speech delivered by the opposition leader in the Lok Sabha on February 7th, 2023 was expunged from the records of Parliament by the Speaker's orders. The decision of what parts of a speech are to be expunged lies with the Presiding Officer of the House. Under Article 105(2) of the Indian Constitution, Members of Parliament enjoy immunity from court proceedings for their statements in Parliament. However, their speeches are subject to the discipline of the Rules of Parliament, the "good sense" of its Members, and the control of proceedings by the Speaker. Rule 380 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of

Business in Lok Sabha gives the Speaker the discretion to expunge any words or expressions used in debate that are considered defamatory, indecent, unparliamentary, or undignified.

Source: https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-politics/rahul-gandhi-parliament-expunged-8432402/

9. MeitY recently issued orders to block 138 online betting platforms and 94 money lending apps on an "urgent" and "emergency" basis under Section 69 (A) of the IT Act, 2000. Some of the sites and apps were allegedly linked to China and contained "material prejudicial to the sovereignty and integrity of India". Over the past 3 years, there have been several complaints of extortion/harassment from people who borrowed small amounts through such money-lending apps, often at exorbitantly high interest rates. Section 69 of the IT Act allows the govt. to issue content-blocking orders to online intermediaries such as Internet Service Providers, telecom service providers, web hosting services, search engines, online marketplaces, etc. provided such a content is deemed a threat to India's national security, sovereignty, or public order.

Source: https://www.entrepreneur.com/en-in/news-and-trends/government-blocks-138-betting-and-94-loan-apps-report/444360#:~:text=The%20ministry%20of%20electronics%20and%20information%20technology%20(MeitY)%20has%20started,according%20to%20reports%20citing%20sources.

10. Recently, the SC (Supreme Court) asked the SEBI (Securities and Exchange Board of India) and the government about the existing regulatory framework in place to protect Indian middle-class investors. Assuring the SEBI that it does not intend to go on a "witch-hunt" and is more interested in an 'open dialogue", a three-judge Bench led by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud flagged the court's concern for Indian investors and highlighted the need to protect them from such sudden market volatility in the future. This comes after the Adani Group was accused of stock manipulation and accounting fraud by the American firm Hindenburg Research. Earlier, a number of small investors lost lakhs of crores due to rapid market volatility following a collapse in the value of the shares of the Adani Group. The stock markets sometimes experience sharp and unpredictable price movements, either down or up. These movements are often referred to as a "volatile market" and can occur over a period of days, weeks, or months.

Source: https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/hindenburg-report-on-adani-group-sc-calls-for-protecting-indian-investors-from-sudden-market-volatility/article66493548.ece

11. Supreme Court sought response from Centre on a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) that contends that not electing a Deputy Speaker to the 17th (present) Lok Sabha, since 2019, is "against the letter and spirit of the Constitution". The post has also been lying vacant in the five state Assemblies including Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, and Jharkhand. Article 93 says that the House of the People (Lok Sabha) shall, as soon as may be, choose two members to be Speaker and Deputy Speaker so often as the offices become vacant. However, it does not provide a specific time frame. Article 178 contains the corresponding position for Speaker and Deputy Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of a state. Courts usually don't intervene in the procedural conduct of Parliament. However, Experts argue that the courts do have jurisdiction to at least inquire into why there has been no election to the post of Deputy Speaker since the Constitution does envisage an election "as soon as may be".

Source: https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-law/the-missing-dy-speaker-the-post-and-what-the-constitution-says-8445357/

12. Uttarakhand Governor gave his assent to the Uttarakhand Competitive Examination (Measures for Control and Prevention of Unfair Means in Recruitment) Ordinance, 2023 to prevent the use of unfair means in exams. The ordinance has provisions for fines up to Rs 10 crore and life

imprisonment for the guilty. The ordinance is aimed at preventing offences related to obstructing the sanctity of examinations, use of unfair means, leakage of question papers, and other irregularities. It covers public examinations for recruitment to posts under the state government, autonomous bodies run by the government, and authorities, corporations, and institutions operated with grants of the state government. The offences are cognizable, non-bailable, and non-compoundable. The law is expected to prevent irregularities in recruitment exams and ensure that they are conducted transparently and fairly.

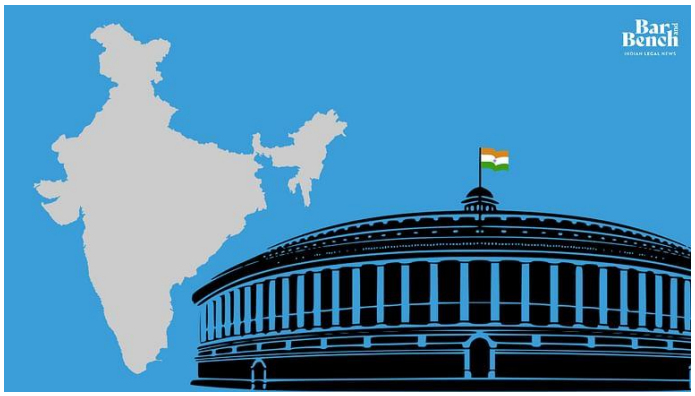
Source: https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/fine-of-rs-10-crore-life-term-what-is-uttarakhands-new-anti-cheating-law-8443033/

1. https://www.barandbench.com/news/litigation/parliament-empowered-convert-state-one-union-territories-enacting-law-supreme-court

Parliament empowered to convert State into one or more Union Territories by enacting law: Supreme Court

The bench noted that Article 3 says that parliament may, by law, form new States and alter areas, boundaries or names of the existing States, and this power extends to UTs.

The Supreme Court on Monday held that as per the Constitution of India, the parliament is empowered to convert an existing State into one or more Union Territories (UT) by enacting a law to that effect [***Haji Abdul Gani Khan v Union of India***].



A bench of Justices **Sanjay Kishan Kaul** and **AS Oka** made the observation in its judgment which dismissed the petition challenging notifications for the delimitation of assembly constituencies in the Union Territory (UT) of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K).

"*On a conjoint reading of Articles 3,4 and 239A, we find that:- a) Parliament by making a law can convert an existing State into one or more Union territories,*" said the court.

The bench noted that Article 3 says that parliament may by law form new States and alter areas, boundaries or names of the existing States, and this power extends to UTs.

"*Explanation I makes it amply clear that the power of Parliament under Clause (a) of Article 3, to make a law to form a new State or to alter a boundary of a State includes a power to make a law to form a new Union Territory,*" the judgment underscored.
Further, the Court highlighted Article 4 (2) which clarifies that no law made by Article 3 would be considered an amendment to the Constitution for the purposes of Article 368.
Thus, even if laws made by parliament, creating a body of legislature for Union territories of Puducherry and J&K has the effect of amending certain parts of the Constitution, it would not be considered an amendment to the Constitution for purposes of Article 368.

The top court also rejected the argument of the petitioners regarding violation of provisions contained in Article 170 (3), while clarifying that it does not deal with the legislatures of UTs at all.

"Articles 239A and 239AA which are included in Part VIII of the Constitution are the Articles that deal with the creation of a body to function as legislature and Council of Ministers for certain Union Territories."

The Court went on to consider that as per Section 13 of the J&K Reorganisation Act, Article 239A became applicable to the UT and as per Article 239A (2), law contemplated under the provision would not be viewed as an amendment to the Constitution for purposes of Article 368.

With this reasoning, the apex court concluded that the parliament was empowered to create a body of legislature for Union territories of Puducherry and J&K.

"*Accordingly, sub-Section (2) of Section 14 of the J&K Reorganisation Act provides that there shall be a Legislative Assembly for the Union Territory of J&K.*"

While dismissing the petition, the Court said that it has not ruled upon the validity of the J&K Re-organisation Act, 2019 which is pending before it in a batch of petitions challenging abrogation of Article 370 of the Constitution.

The Court also said that the position of north-eastern States of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur and Nagaland with respect to conduct of delimitation exercise cannot be compared to that of the newly-created UT of J&K.

2. https://www.barandbench.com/news/litigation/service-notice-email-not-valid-supreme-court-registrar

Service of notice through email not valid: Supreme Court Registrar

As per the Surpeme Court Rules, notice must be sent by registered post to respondents.

Service of notice through e-mail is not valid service as per rules, the Supreme Court Registrar has said [***Hardev Ram Dhaka v Union of India***].

In proceedings being held before Registrar **H Shashidhara Shetty**, notice served to respondents through e-mail was found to be an invalid service as per rules.

"As per office report, notice was served upon respondent Nos.2 and 3 through e-mail, which is not valid service, as per rules. Hence, counsel for the petitioner is granted two weeks' time to take fresh steps and file fresh particulars in respect of respondent Nos.2 and 3. Dasti, in addition, is allowed as prayed for," the registrar said.

The top court had in 2010 decided to experiment with email notices to respondents to reduce lags resulting from the traditional method of serving notices.

During the Covid-19 lockdown, several courts including the Supreme Court had allowed for summons and notices to be served through email, fax and instant messaging applications like WhatsApp.

As per the Supreme Court Rules, notice must be sent by registered post to respondents.

3. https://www.barandbench.com/news/supreme-court-hearings-to-be-transcribed-live

Supreme Court hearings to be transcribed live for the first time

Live transcription has been launched on an experimental basis in the court room of Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud.

In a first, the Supreme Court of India will use Artificial Intelligence (AI) and technology driven by Natural Language Processing for live transcription of its hearings.

Live transcription has been launched on an experimental basis at 10:30 AM in the court room of Chief Justice of India (CJI) **DY Chandrachud**. The CJI is heading a Constitution Bench which is hearing the case related to the power struggle in Maharashtra.

A screen displaying the live transcription of court proceedings has been placed in Court Room 1, facing the lawyers. It is also understood that the Supreme Court will make transcripts of oral arguments available on its website.

The transcription service is being done by TERES, a company which has been providing this facility to arbitration practitioners.

In her plea calling for live-streaming of important cases, Senior Advocate **Indira Jaising** had earlier suggested allowing audio transcripts of hearings for archival. In January this year, a Bench headed by CJI Chandrachud had taken these suggestions on record.

4. *https://www.barandbench.com/news/when-can-dna-test-ordered-ascertain-paternity-child-supreme-court-lays-down-guidelines*

When can DNA test be ordered to ascertain paternity of child? Supreme Court lays down guidelines

The Court said that the right of children to not have their legitimacy questioned frivolously is an essential attribute of their right to privacy.

The Supreme Court on Monday held that DNA test in children to ascertain their paternity in matrimonial disputes, should be done only in exceptional cases when it becomes indispensable to resolve the controversy.

A division bench of Justices **BV Nagarathna** and **V Ramasubramanian** observed that the right of children to not have their legitimacy questioned frivolously is an essential attribute of their right to privacy.

"Children have the right not to have their legitimacy questioned frivolously before a Court of Law. This is an essential attribute of the right to privacy. ***Courts are therefore***

required to acknowledge that children are not to be regarded like material objects, and be subjected to forensic/DNA testing, particularly when they are not parties to the divorce proceeding. It is imperative that children do not become the focal point of the battle between spouses," the Court said.

Hence, the Court laid down the factors to be considered while deciding the question of whether a DNA Test of a minor child should be ordered at the behest of either parent.

The Court laid down the following principles of law dealing with the presumption of legitimacy of a child born during wedlock under section 112 of Evidence Act and the circumstances under which this presumption can be rebutted through evidence:

(a) The object behind the presumption of legitimacy laid down under Section 112 qua a child born during the wedlock read with Section 4 of the Indian Evidence Act, 1872, is to prevent an unwarranted enquiry as to the paternity of the child whose parents at the relevant time had "access" to each other.

(b) For rebutting the presumption of legitimacy under Section 112 of Indian Evidence Act, 1872, the party questioning the legitimacy of the minor child is required to prima facie show "non-access" to other party. Further, if no plea has been raised as to "non-access", the DNA Test may not be directed.

(c) That a direction to conduct a DNA Test of a minor child should be viewed from the prism of the child, keeping in mind the best interest of the child.

(d) Such a direction should be ordered by the Court rarely, and only in exceptional and deserving cases, where such a test becomes indispensable to resolve the controversy.

(e) An adverse inference under Section 114(h) of Evidence Act cannot be drawn against the petitioner-wife who in her capacity as mother and natural guardian is refusing the DNA Test of the minor child and is protecting the interest of the child.

The petitioner-wife was represented by Senior Advocate **Huzefa Ahmadi** and advocates **Sanyat Lodha, Aakashi Lodha, Sanjana Saddy** and **Hima Bhardwaj**.

The respondent-husband was represented by Senior Advocate **Kapil Sibal**.

The Court was hearing an application filed by the wife in a divorce petition challenging orders of a family court and the Bombay High Court that had allowed DNA test on their minor child at the behest of the husband.

The question was whether the High Court and the family court had made an error in ordering the DNA test of the minor child in response to the application filed by the husband in the divorce proceedings.

He sought DNA test to ascertain paternity of the second child in order to prove his claim of adultery on the part of the wife.

"The short question in the present appeal is as to how a Court can prevent the law's tidy assumptions linking paternity with matrimony, from collapsing, particularly when parties are routinely attempting to dislodge such presumptions by employing modern genetic profiling techniques," the Court noted.

The counsel representing the petitioner-wife pointed out that the courts below routinely directed DNA tests without considering the presumption of legitimacy under Section 112 of the Indian Evidence Act, the legal principles established in the case of *Goutam Kundu v. State of West Bengal & Anr*, and the fundamental rights of the child, including their best interests, right to privacy, identity and autonomy.

On the other hand, counsel for the respondent-husband contended that the orders under challenge were based on an unimpeachable appreciation of the facts of the case and did not warrant any interference. He further contended that the appeal was filed by the petitioner to mask her adulterous conduct.

Furthermore, he contended that in the present case, the most material piece of evidence to establish the allegations of adultery was the DNA test, and that the same cannot be shut out on the ground of sensitivity or privacy.

The Court began its judgment by saying,

"Under the Indian legal spectrum, a husband is strongly presumed to be the father of a child born to his wife. Thus, there is a strong presumption regarding the paternity of a child. This presumption can be overcome only by evidence precluding any procreative role of the husband, such as by showing that the husband and wife had no access to each other at the relevant time of possible conception. In the absence of proof of non-access, the law considers the husband's paternity to be conclusively established if they cohabited when the child was likely to have been conceived."

It ruled that the dispute was between the parties to the marriage and that the rights and best interests of the child could not be sacrificed to enable one of the parties to have the benefit of a fair trial.

"The lis in these cases is between the parties to a marriage. The lis is not between one of the parties to the marriage and the child whose paternity is questioned. To enable one of the parties to the marriage to have the benefit of fair trial, the Court cannot sacrifice the rights and best interests of a third party to the lis, namely, the child," the Court said.

Specifically with regard to the case, the Court noted that the husband himself had categorically claimed that he was in possession of call recordings/transcripts and the daily diary of the appellant-wife, which may be summoned in accordance with law to prove the infidelity of the appellant.

"Therefore, it seems to us that the respondent is in a position to attempt to make out a case based on such evidence, as to adultery/infidelity on the part of the appellant," the Court said.

Hence, it ruled that a DNA test would not be the only way in which the truth of the matter can be established.

The Court, therefore, allowed the appeal by the wife and set aside the order of the family court and Bombay High Court which had allowed DNA test.

"However, this shall not preclude the respondent-husband from leading any other evidence to establish the allegations made by him against the appellant in the petition for divorce," the Court said.

The Court also clarified that Section 112 does not provide protection for the alleged adulterous behavior of the wife.

"We are not suggesting for a moment that Section 112 acts as a shield even for the alleged adulterous conduct on the part of the wife. All that we say is that anything that would destroy the legal effect of Section 112 cannot be used by the respondent, on the ground that the same is being done to achieve another result," it said.

5. *https://www.barandbench.com/news/litigation/supreme-court-issues-fresh-directions-implementing-law-prohibiting-manual-scavenging*

Supreme Court issues fresh directions for implementing law prohibiting Manual Scavenging

The Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment was asked to place on record an affidavit containing information on questions raised by the Court.

The Supreme Court on Wednesday issued directions towards implementation of the *Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013* and the *Employment of Manual Scavengers and Construction of Dry Latrines (Prohibition) Act, 1993. (Dr Balram Singh v. Union of India and ors)*

A Bench of Justices **S Ravindra Bhat** and **Dipankar Datta** appointed Advocate K Parameshwar Amicus Curiae in the matter.

The following directions were issued to the Central government:

(I) the respondent – Union shall place on record the steps taken pursuant to the judgment of this Court, viz.-a-viz. The Status of implementation of the 2013 Act i.e. Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and Their Rehabilitation Act, including the steps towards rehabilitation of such persons falling within the definition of 'Manual Scavengers'.

(II) Steps taken towards abolition/demolition of Dry Latrines, statewise.

(III) Status of Dry Latrines and Safai Karamcharies in Cantonment Boards and Railways.

(IV) Employment of Safai Karamcharies in Railways and Cantonments Boards whether directly or indirectly i.e. through Contractors or otherwise.

(V) Statewise set up of Municipal Corporation and the nature of equipment (as well as the description of technical equipment), deployed by such bodies to mechanize sewage cleaning.

(VI) The feasibility of developing internet based solutions for real time tracking of sewage deaths and action taken by their concerned authorities including the appropriate Government towards payment of compensation and rehabilitation of families.

The Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment was asked to place on record an affidavit containing information on these issues within six weeks. The matter will be taken up next on April 12, 2023.

The National Commission for Safai Karamcharis, the National Commission for Scheduled Castes, and the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes were added as respondents.

The petitioner-in-person in the matter, Dr Balram Singh, had sought directions for implementation of the two Acts.

The Supreme Court at the outset referred to its decision in *Safai Karamchari Andolan And Others v. Union of India And Others*, where guidelines for compliance with the 2013 Act were issued.

In that order, among other things, the Court had sought rehabilitation, cash assistance, and residential plots for existing manual scavengers. Stipends were also to be provided to their families so they could be trained in alternative professions, and the government was asked to identify and phase out the practice from railway tracks.

Further, the government was directed to clamp down on sewer deaths, issue ₹10 lakh compensation to the next of kin in such cases, and make it illegal to enter sewers without safety equipment.

With respect to the claims in the present plea, and since the directions sought were in public interest, the Court has proceeded to be apprised of the steps taken for enforcement of provisions of the two Acts.

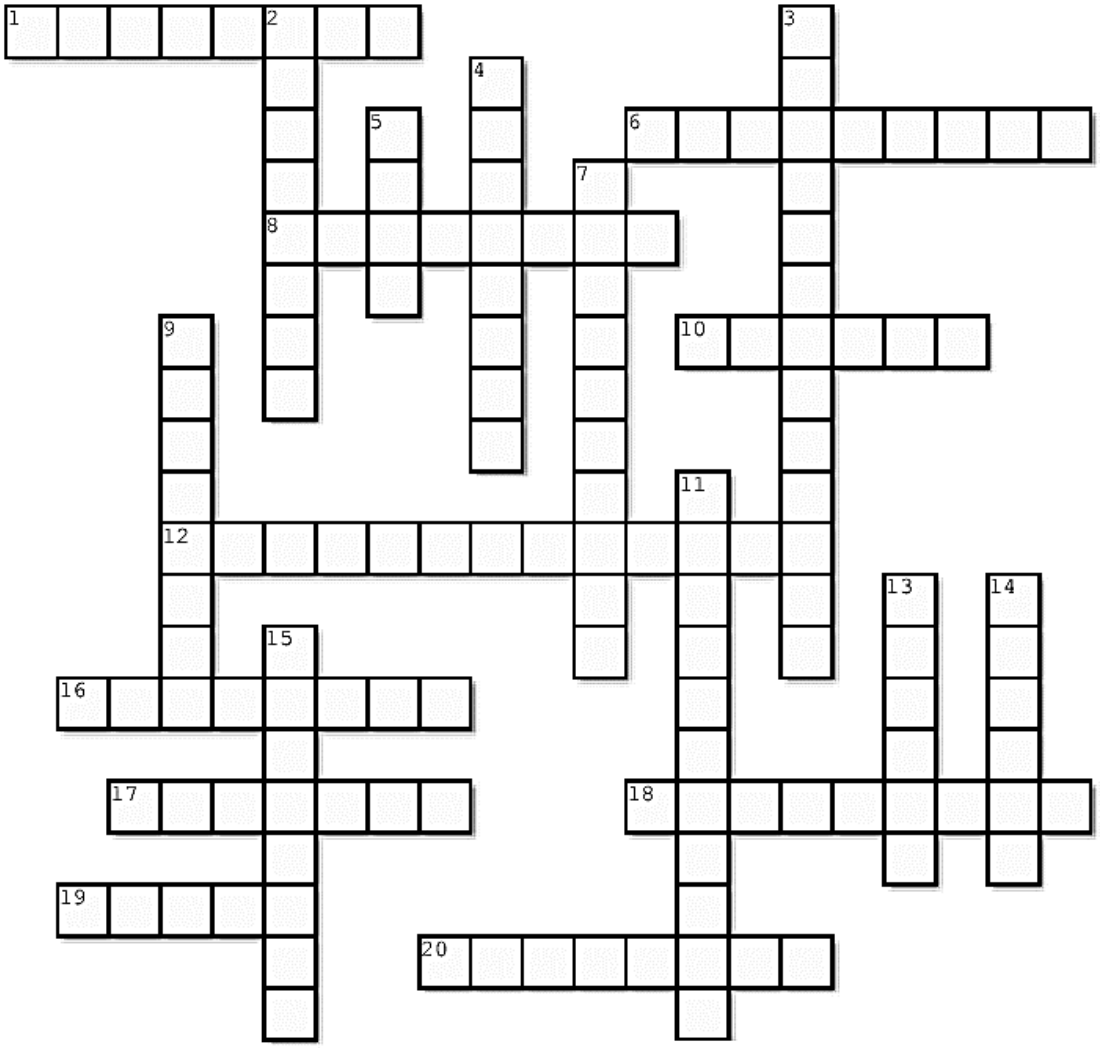
Replying to a question in the Rajya Sabha, the Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment had in July 2021 stated that no deaths have been reported due to manual scavenging in the last five years.

Interestingly, at the time, at least three High Courts in the country - those of Karnataka, Orissa and Madras - were hearing cases related to manual scavenging, and deaths of people who entered manholes to clean them.

Additional Solicitor General **Aishwarya Bhati**, with Advocates Gurmeet Singh Makker, Ruchi Kohli, Shradha Deshmukh, and Swarupama Chaturvedi appeared for the respondents.

LEGAL CROSSWORD

COMPLETE THE CROSSWORD PUZZLE BELOW



Across	Down
1. Transaction in which a new contact is agreed by all parties to replace an existing contract. 6. in readiness 8. prevented from denying 10. a body 12. Confinement to a state correctional institute or prison. 16. A wrong or inaccurate name or term. 17. Tort of wrongfully holding goods which belong to someone else 18. having two chambers 19. elsewhere 20. compensation made by one member of an unmarried couple to the other after separation	2. Spoken words which are defamatory because they have a double meaning. 3. the theory or philosophy of law 4. An order of a court to a person to appear and give evidence before it. 5. Ban or order not to allow something to become law, even if it has been passed by a parliament 7. writ by which orders passed by an inferior court is quashed 9. retired after long service 11. The Manner in which a case is settled or resolved 13. Voluntarily giving up or removing the conditions 14. warning 15. the country that a person treats as their permanent home

CROSSWORD ANSWER KEY

1. Novation
2. Innuendo
3. Jurisprudence
4. Subpoena
5. Veto
6. Impromptu
7. Certiorari
8. Estoppel
9. Emeritus
10. Corpus
11. Disposition
12. Incarceration
13. Waiver
14. Caveat
15. Domicile
16. Misnomer
17. Detinue
18. Bicameral
19. Alibi
20. Palimony