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IMPORTANT ONE LINERS FOR OLETS

NATIONAL

DGCA Penalizes Air India ₹30 Lakh For 80-Year-Old Passenger's Demise

- On February 12, upon arriving at Mumbai airport from New York on an Air India flight, an 80-year-old passenger, who had pre-booked a wheelchair, chose to walk due to the unavailability of one.
- The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) is the regulatory body in the field of Civil Aviation, primarily dealing with safety issues.

'Tawi Festival' In Jammu to kick off on March 1, 2024, For Four Days

- Jammu & Kashmir Rural Livelihoods Mission (JKRLM) SHGs prepare for their debut at the 4-day 'Tawi Festival' in Jammu.
- The initiative, in collaboration with the Amar Mahal Museum and Library (AMML), is designed to provide a platform for these women to exhibit their talents and achieve economic empowerment.

Zoological Survey of India Names New Marine Species after President Droupadi Murmu

- The Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) has identified and named a new species of marine head-shield sea slug discovered along the West Bengal and Odisha coasts. Named Melanochlamys droupadi.

About Zoological Survey of India:

Headquarters: Kolkata;

Founded: 1 July 1916;

Director: Dr. Dhriti Banerjee;

Founder: Government of India.

Telangana Government Introduces One-Time Scheme

- The Telangana state government has issued a directive for the adoption of the One Time Scheme (OTS) across all urban local bodies (ULBs), including the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC).

Nagaland assembly adopts resolution on FMR; asks Centre to reconsider decision

- The Nagaland legislative assembly has unanimously adopted a resolution against the central government's decision to fence the Indo-Myanmar border and suspend the Free Movement Regime (FMR) agreement with Myanmar.

Exercise Samudra Laksamana: Strengthening Indo-Malaysian Maritime Cooperation

- Exercise Samudra Laksamana, a significant bilateral maritime exercise between India and Malaysia, is currently underway from February 28 to March 2, 2024, off the coast of Visakhapatnam.

Sarbananda Sonowal Inaugurates First Made-in-India ASTDS Tug

- Sarbananda Sonowal, Union Minister of MoPSW & AYUSH, virtually inaugurated the 60T bollard pull tug named 'Ocean Grace' and the Medical Mobile Unit (MMU) on March 2, 2024.
- The Ocean Grace is the first Make-in-India ASTDS Tug developed by Cochin Shipyard Limited under MoPSW.

Telangana Government Announces Launch of Indiramma Housing Scheme

- Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy has announced the launch of the Indiramma Housing Scheme starting March 11.
- The first phase will witness the approval of 3,500 houses in each Assembly constituency, catering to a significant number of beneficiaries.

Chapchar Kut Festival Celebrated Across Mizoram

- Chapchar Kut, the grandest festival in Mizoram, resonated throughout the state with vibrant traditional customs and jubilant festivities.

Neolithic Child Burial Site Unearthed in Chengalpattu, Tamil Nadu

- A groundbreaking archaeological discovery has been made in Chettimedu Pathur village, approximately 77 kilometres from Chennai, Tamil Nadu.
- Researchers from the Department of Ancient History and Archaeology at the University of Madras have unearthed a child burial site dating back to the Neolithic period, around 2500 BCE to 3000 BCE.

About Tamil Nadu:

Chief Minister: M. K. Stalin;

Capital: Chennai;

Governor: R. N. Ravi.

India's first indigenous Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor at Kalpakkam, Tamil Nadu

- PM Modi marked the beginning of a new era in India's nuclear energy sector by witnessing the "Core Loading" at the Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor (PFBR) in Kalpakkam, Tamil Nadu.

Uttar Pradesh Leads in Issuing 5 Crore Ayushman Cards under Ayushman Bharat PMJAY

- Uttar Pradesh, under the leadership of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, has achieved a milestone by becoming the first state in the country to issue five crore Ayushman cards.
- The state of Uttar Pradesh has issued 50,017,920 Ayushman cards, benefiting 74,382,304 individuals.

Cuttack Rupa Tarakasi, Banglar muslin get GI tag

- The Cuttack Rupa Tarakasi, more widely known as Silver Filigree, has recently been awarded the Geographical Indication (GI) tag by the Geographical Indications Registry in Chennai.

Minister Hardeep S Puri Inaugurates 201 CNG Stations & GAIL's First Small Scale LNG Unit

Source: News on AIR

- Minister Hardeep Singh Puri, overseeing Petroleum and Natural Gas as well as Housing and Urban Affairs, dedicated 201 CNG Stations and India's inaugural Small Scale LNG Unit of GAIL.
- The event, graced by numerous dignitaries, underscored the government's pledge to elevate the share of natural gas in the primary energy basket to 15% by 2030.

Himachal Pradesh Announces "Indira Gandhi Pyari Behna Sukh Samman Nidhi Yojna"

Source: Mint

- Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Sukhu has announced a groundbreaking initiative aimed at empowering women in the state.
- Under this scheme, eligible women will receive a monthly stipend of ₹1,500, amounting to an annual expenditure of ₹800 crore.

India's IN-SPACE Inaugurates Satellite & Payload Technical Centre in Ahmedabad

Source: The Indian Express

- Union Minister of State for Science and Technology Jitendra Singh inaugurated a pioneering technical center in Ahmedabad, representing a significant advancement in India's space sector. Established by the Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACE).
- Situated at IN-SPACE headquarters in Bopal, Ahmedabad.

Shri Dharmendra Pradhan Inaugurates Management Education Center at NALCO, Angul

Source: PIB

- The Union Minister for Education, Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, inaugurated the Centre of Management Education jointly established by IIM Mumbai and IIM Sambalpur.
- The inauguration took place at the NALCO Training Institute in Angul, Odisha, amidst the presence of Shri Sridhar Patra, CMD, NALCO.

Kerala to launch India's first government-backed OTT platform

- Kerala, renowned for its cultural richness and cinematic brilliance, is set to make history in the digital entertainment landscape with the launch of CSpace, India's maiden government-backed Over-The-Top (OTT) platform.

About Kerala:

Chief Minister: Pinarayi Vijayan;

Capital: Thiruvananthapuram;

Indian Armed Forces to Conduct Mega 'Bharat-Shakti' Exercise in Jaisalmer

- The three forces of India – Army, Navy, and Air Force – are going to conduct the biggest exercise called 'Bharat-Shakti' at Asia's largest field firing range located in Jaisalmer district of Rajasthan. PM Modi's Likely Visit Prime Minister Narendra Modi may visit Pokhran on March 12, 2024.
- Top officers of the three forces, including Chief of Defense Staff General Anil Chauhan, will participate in the Bharat-Shakti exercise to be held on March 12 in Pokhran.

Bengaluru to Get India's First Driverless Metro Train

- The Bengaluru Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) has received the first set of six train coaches for its upcoming driverless metro line, called the Yellow Line.
- This 18.8 km-long line, connecting RV Road and Bommasandra, will be the first in India to have a driverless train system.

Bichom Becomes Arunachal Pradesh's 27th District

Source: The Hindu

- Bichom, carved out of West and East Kameng, has been declared the 27th district of Arunachal Pradesh.
- Chief Minister Pema Khandu led the inauguration ceremony, marking a significant milestone for the region.

PM Modi Unveils Bronze Statue of Ahom General Lachit Borphukan in Assam's Jorhat

Source: The Indian Express

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled a 125-foot bronze statue of the legendary Ahom general, Lachit Borphukan, at his burial site in eastern Assam's Jorhat district.
- Chief Minister of Assam's Himanta Biswa Sarma accompanied the Prime Minister during the program.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi Virtually Inaugurates Sela Tunnel

Source: Hindustan Times

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi, during the Viksit Bharat Viksit North East programme in Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh on March 09, 2024, virtually dedicated the Sela Tunnel project to the nation.
- Constructed by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) at an altitude of 13,000 feet, the tunnel is situated on the road from Tezpur, Assam, to Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh's West Kameng district.

UGC Introduces SheRNI, Helping Female Scientists And Faculty Connect

Source: Times of India

- The University Grants Commission's (UGC) Information and Library Network (INFLIBNET) Centre unveiled a groundbreaking initiative, known as the 'She Research Network in India' (SheRNI).
- The SheRNI database currently hosts profiles of 81,818 women faculty members, showcasing their vast contributions to the field of science.

J&K Police Launches "Operation Kamdhenu" to Combat Cattle Smuggling

Source: Kashmir Life

- In Jammu and Kashmir, the police have initiated “Operation Kamdhenu” to curb the rampant issue of cattle smuggling in the Jammu, Samba, and Kathua (JSK) police ranges.
- Manoj Sinha is the second Lieutenant Governor of the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

Union Minister Arjun Munda Inaugurates National Dairy Mela and Agricultural Exhibition in Jharkhand**Source: PIB**

- The 3-day National Dairy Mela and Agricultural Exhibition at Chaibasa in Jharkhand was inaugurated by Union Minister of Tribal Affairs, Agriculture, and Farmers Welfare, Shri Arjun Munda.
- Organized by the National Dairy Research Institute, Karnal, Haryana, this event marks the first of its kind in Jharkhand, aimed at fostering the comprehensive development of livestock and agriculture in tribal areas.

PM Modi Launches Mahtari Vandan Yojana in Chhattisgarh**Source: News on AIR**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually launched the ‘Mahtari Vandan Yojana’ in Chhattisgarh from Kashi, Uttar Pradesh.
- PM Modi disbursed the first installment of Rs 1,000 to 70,12,417 women in Chhattisgarh.

Tamil Nadu CM Stalin Announces Non-Implementation of CAA

- Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin on Tuesday, March 12, 2024, announced that the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA), whose rules were notified by the Union Home Ministry on March 11, will not be implemented in the state.
- The decision comes amid growing concerns that the CAA goes against minorities and Sri Lankan Tamils living in camps in Tamil Nadu.
- The CAA, passed by the Parliament in 2019.

Andaman & Nicobar Command’s Historic All-Women Maritime Surveillance Mission

- Coinciding with International Women’s Day and the 40th anniversary of INAS 318, the Andaman & Nicobar Command achieved a significant milestone by conducting its first-ever all-women maritime surveillance mission.

Tamil Nadu Launches ‘Neengal Nalama’ Scheme to Review Implementation of Welfare Programs

- Tamil Nadu government has launched the ‘Neengal Nalama’ (Are you fine?) scheme, a beneficiary outreach program aimed at reviewing the implementation of flagship schemes and addressing the grievances of the public.
- Under the ‘Neengal Nalama’ scheme, people will be directly contacted by the Chief Minister, Chief Secretary, Department Heads, Department Secretaries, and District Collectors.

About Tamil Nadu:

Chief Minister: M. K. Stalin;

Capital: Chennai;

Governor: R. N. Ravi.

Dr Mansukh Mandaviya launches Credit Assistance Program for Jan Aushadhi Kendras

- Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Minister for Chemicals and Fertilizers and Health and Family Welfare, spearheaded the inauguration of a credit assistance program aimed at bolstering Jan Aushadhi Kendras across India.
- The program, initiated through a collaboration between SIDBI and PMBI.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi Inaugurates India’s First Automobile In-Plant Railway Siding

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled the inaugural automobile in-plant railway siding at Suzuki Motor Gujarat Private Limited, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Maruti Suzuki India Limited (MSIL).
- Managing Director & CEO of Maruti Suzuki India Limited: Mr. Hisashi Takeuchi

Union Minister Inaugurates “National Speed Breeding Crop Facility” At NABI

- Dr. Jitendra Singh, the Union Minister of Science & Technology, inaugurated the “National Speed Breeding Crop Facility” at NABI (National Agri-Food Biotechnology Institute), Mohali.
- The facility serves all Indian states, with a focus on North Indian states like Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, and Jammu & Kashmir.

NITI Aayog’s ‘Vocal for Local’ Initiative: Empowering Grassroots Entrepreneurship

- NITI Aayog launched the ‘Vocal for Local’ initiative under its Aspirational Blocks Programme on March 13, 2024.
- Prof. Ramesh Chand, Member, NITI Aayog, unveiled the logo for ‘Aakanksha’ under the ‘Vocal for Local’ initiative.

GOI Approves Electric Vehicle Policy to Boost Local Manufacturing

- The Indian government made a landmark announcement on March 15, approving a comprehensive scheme aimed at positioning India as a global hub for electric vehicle (EV) manufacturing.
- This policy, designed by the Ministry of Commerce & Industry, seeks to entice significant investments from renowned global EV manufacturers into the Indian market.

Electoral Bonds: BJP Tops the List with Highest Receipt

- The Electoral Bonds scheme, introduced in 2018, allows individuals and entities to make donations to political parties without revealing their identities. The Election Commission of India (ECI) has recently released data.
- According to the data released by the ECI, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) encashed electoral bonds worth a staggering ₹6,060.5 crore between April 12, 2019, and January 24, 2024.

Rajasthan Government to Distribute Free Millet Seeds to Farmers

- The Rajasthan government has decided to distribute free seeds of millets and coarse grains to the state’s farmers. This move aims to boost millet production in the state.
- Rajasthan has a 26% share in the total millet production of the country.
- Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi was launched on February 24, 2019.

Kashmir Hosts First Formula-4 Car Racing Event along Dal Lake

- The beautiful Dal Lake in Kashmir witnessed an exciting event on March 18. Formula-4 car racing was held for the first time in the region.

About Jammu & Kashmir:

Capitals: Srinagar (May–October); Jammu (November–April)

Districts: 20

Union territory: 31 October 2019

Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik Inaugurates India’s First Indoor Athletics and Aquatic Centres

- Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik inaugurated India’s first indoor athletics stadium and indoor aquatic centre at the Kalinga stadium in Bhubaneswar.

About Odisha:

Capital: Bhubaneswar

Governor: Raghubar Das

Election Commission launches ‘Mission 414’ campaign in Himachal Pradesh to boost voter turnout

- The Election Commission has launched a special campaign in Himachal Pradesh to boost voter turnout in 414 polling stations with less than 60% voting during the last Lok Sabha polls.

About Election commission of India:

Founded: 25 January 1950

Headquarters: New Delhi

India-US Joint Military Exercise “EX TIGER TRIUMPH – 24”

- A joint military exercise called Tiger Triumph-24 between India and the United States started on March 18 and will continue until March 31. This exercise is taking place on the Eastern Seaboard (East Coast) of India.
- They had last met in November 2023 for the India-US Ministerial 2+2 Dialogue in New Delhi.

About US:

Capital: Washington, D.C.

Speaker: Mike Johnson (Republican Party)

Attorney general: Merrick Garland

Meta’s Plan to Combat Misinformation in 2024 Lok Sabha Elections

- Meta unveils its strategy to tackle the growing threat of AI-generated fake content that could influence the electoral process.
- Meta will establish an India-specific Elections Operations Centre staffed by experts.

Tamil Nadu Makes History with India’s Second Privately Developed Rocket

- Tamil Nadu is set to witness a historic event as one of its space startups, Agnikul Cosmos Private Limited, prepares to launch its first rocket, Agnibaan Sub Orbital Technology Demonstrator (SOrTeD), from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh.
- This launch will also be India’s first semi-cryogenic engine-powered rocket launch, showcasing advancements in propulsion technology.
- Agnikul Cosmos Private Limited, founded in 2017 by Srinath Ravichandran, Moin SPM, and Satya Chakravarthy, became the first company in India to collaborate with the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) under the IN-SPACe initiative.

India’s First Battery Storage Gigafactory to Start Operations in J&K

- GoodEnough Energy has announced that it will start operations at India’s first battery energy storage gigafactory in the northern region of Jammu and Kashmir by October 2023.
- India has set a goal to become net zero by 2070.

PM Modi Inaugurates State-of-the-Art Medical Facility in Thimphu

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Bhutanese counterpart Tshering Tobgay jointly inaugurated a modern hospital in the Bhutanese capital, Thimphu.
- In a significant gesture, the King of Bhutan conferred the prestigious ‘Order of the Druk Gyalpo’ on PM Modi, making him the first foreign Head of Government to receive this honor.
- India and Bhutan established diplomatic relations in 1968, and their relationship is guided by the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation signed in 1949 and revised in 2007.

About Bhutan:

Capital: Thimphu;

King: Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck;

Currencies: Bhutanese Ngultrum, Indian Rupee;

Official language: Dzongkha.

Election Commission’s Saksham App Revolutionizes Voting Accessibility

- The Election Commission has introduced the Saksham App. This initiative aims to address the needs of voters above 85 years of age and Persons-with-Disabilities (PWDs) with a 40 percent benchmark disability, allowing them to cast their votes from the comfort of their homes.

Chandigarh set to host international film festival

- Five-day Cinevesture International Film Festival (CIFF) will be held from March 27 to 31 at Cinepolis in Jagat Mall, Sector 17.
- Showcasing a diverse array of cinematic masterpieces from around the globe, the festival promises to captivate audiences with its eclectic mix of films spanning various genres and themes.
- Actor Boman Irani will inaugurate the event and Cannes winner French film The Taste of Things will be the inaugural film of CIFF.
- Three student films from SUPVA (Rohtak) will also be screened in the festival.

ASI Begins Excavation in MP to Find India's Oldest Temple

- The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) is conducting excavations at two mounds in Nachne village, located in the Panna district of Madhya Pradesh.
- The excavation sites are situated just 30 meters away from two ancient temples – a Gupta-era Parvati temple and the Chaumukh Nath temple built by the Kalachuri dynasty. These temples, known as the Nachna Hindu temples.

About Archaeological Survey of India (ASI):

Director General: Yadubir Singh Rawat;

Headquarters: New Delhi, India;

ASI Established: 1861

World's First Om-Shaped Temple Inaugurated in Rajasthan

- The World's first-ever temple designed in the iconic Om shape has been inaugurated in the village of Jadan, Pali district of Rajasthan. This architectural masterpiece, spanning across 250 acres.
- The 'Om Aakar' temple, following the Nagara style commonly seen in North India.

INTERNATIONAL

Ghana Parliament Passes Anti-LGBTQ Bill

- Ghana's parliament has approved a controversial anti-LGBTQ bill, the Human Sexual Rights and Family Values Bill, which awaits presidential assent.

About Ghana:

Capital: Accra;

Currency: Ghanaian Cedi;

President: Nana Akufo-Addo

Tuvalu Appoints Feleti Teo as New Prime Minister

- Tuvalu has named Feleti Teo, the former Attorney General, as the Pacific Island nation's new prime minister.

About Tuvalu:

Capital: Funafuti;

Continent: Oceania;

Official languages: Tuvaluan, English;

Currencies: Australian Dollar, Tuvaluan dollar.

Iran launches 'Pars 1' satellite into orbit from Russia

- Iran's venture into space exploration and satellite deployment continues with the launch of the "Pars 1" satellite, facilitated by Russia from the Vostochny Cosmodrome.

About Iran:

Capital: Tehran;

Official language: Persian;

President: Ebrahim Raisi.

France Pioneers Constitutional Protection for Abortion Rights

- France has made history by becoming the first nation globally to anchor the right to abortion within its constitution.
- About France

Capital: Paris;

President: Emmanuel Macron;

Prime minister: Gabriel Attal;

Official language: French.

Hungary Parliament Elects New President: Tamas Sulyok

Source: Hungry Today

- Hungary's parliament appoints Tamás Sulyok as president following the previous head's resignation over a controversial pardon.
- Budapest is the national capital of Hungary.

India & South Korea to Boost Cooperation in New Tech & Semiconductors

- India aims to enhance its strategic partnership with South Korea by expanding cooperation into new and critical areas, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar announced during the 10th India-South Korea Joint Commission Meeting in Seoul.
- Co-chairing the meeting with his South Korean counterpart, Cho Tae-yul, Jaishankar.

Panama Officially Joins International Solar Alliance

- Panama has officially become the 97th member of the International Solar Alliance (ISA). This milestone was announced by Randhir Jaiswal, the spokesperson for the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).

About International Solar Alliance

Founders: Narendra Modi, François Hollande;
President: R. K. Singh;
Founded: 30 November 2015.

Sardar Ramesh Singh Arora: Pakistan's First Sikh Minister in Punjab

Source: Hindustan Times

- Sardar Ramesh Singh Arora, a three-time member of the Provincial Assembly (MPA) in Pakistan, has become the first Sikh minister in the Punjab province.
- The cabinet in Punjab was formed by the newly elected Pakistan Muslim League (PML-N) government led by Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif.

Sea6 Energy Launches World's First Large-Scale Mechanized Tropical Seaweed Farm

Source:

- Sea6 Energy, a pioneer in the Blue Economy, has launched the world's first large-scale mechanized tropical seaweed farm off the coast of Lombok, Indonesia.
- The one-square-kilometer seaweed farm is a significant milestone in establishing the scalability of sustainable tropical seaweed cultivation for various industrial applications.

Asif Ali Zardari Sworn in as Pakistan's 14th President

- Asif Ali Zardari took oath as Pakistan's 14th President following his overwhelming victory in the presidential election.
- Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa administered the oath at Aiwan-e-Sadr, the Presidential Palace.
- Zardari succeeded Dr. Arif Alvi.
- This marks Zardari's second term as President, making him the first civilian to hold the position twice in Pakistan's history.

President Abbas Named Mohammad Mustafa as New Palestinian PM

- President Mahmoud Abbas of the Palestinian Authority (PA) has appointed Mohammad Mustafa as the new Prime Minister.

UK tests a laser weapon that can hit a coin from a kilometer

- Britain has recently conducted successful test firings of its DragonFire Laser Directed Energy Weapon (LDEW).

Vladimir Putin secures another Six-Year Term in Russian Election

- Russian President Vladimir Putin clinched victory in the recent election with a commanding lead of 76.1% of the vote, as per preliminary results.
- Putin is set to become Russia's longest-serving leader in over two centuries, surpassing Josef Stalin if he completes his term.

Vladimir Putin secures another Six-Year Term in Russian Election

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- Putin is set to become Russia's longest-serving leader in over two centuries, surpassing Josef Stalin if he completes his term.

Vinay Kumar Appointed as New Indian Ambassador to Russia

- Vinay Kumar named as the next Ambassador of India to Russia. Kumar is currently serving as the Ambassador of India to Myanmar.
- Russia has been a longstanding partner of India, with diplomatic ties between the two countries forming a cornerstone of India's foreign policy.

- Kumar will replace Pavan Kapoor, who has been appointed as the new Secretary (West) in the MEA, as India's envoy in Moscow.

Nepal Declares Pokhara as Its Tourism Capital

- The government of Nepal has officially declared Pokhara, a city in the Gandaki province, as the tourism capital of the Himalayan nation.
- Pokhara, known for its natural beauty and adventure tourism, has long been recognized as a tourism hub in Nepal.

About Nepal:

Capital: Kathmandu;

Currency: Nepalese Rupee;

Prime Minister: Pushpa Kamal Dahal;

President: Ram Chandra Paudel.

Vaughan Gething Becomes First Black Leader of a European Country

- Vaughan Gething, who currently serves as the Economic Minister of Wales, has been elected as the new leader of the Welsh Labour Party.
- His victory marks a historic milestone as he becomes the first ever Black person to lead a European country.

New Zealand Bans Disposable E-Cigarettes and Vapes

- The New Zealand government has announced a ban on disposable e-cigarettes or vapes. The move comes less than a month after the country repealed a law that aimed to phase out tobacco smoking.
- Along with the ban, New Zealand will also raise fines for retailers and individuals who sell vapes or e-cigarettes to minors under 18 years of age.

Microsoft named British AI pioneer Mustafa Suleyman as the head of its AI division

- Microsoft named British AI pioneer Mustafa Suleyman as the head of its AI division. Suleyman, who co-founded Google's DeepMind, will now report directly to Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella.

Simon Harris, Ireland's Youngest PM in the Making

- Simon Harris, a prominent figure in Irish politics, has emerged as the sole candidate in the race to become Ireland's next prime minister following the unexpected departure of Leo Varadkar.
- At 37 years old, Harris is poised to become the youngest prime minister in Ireland's history.

US Surgeons Perform First Pig-to-Human Kidney Transplant

- In a groundbreaking medical achievement, surgeons from Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston have performed the first pig-to-human kidney transplant. A 62-year-old man with end-stage renal disease received a new kidney from a genetically modified pig.

PepsiCo to invest \$400 million more in two new plants in Vietnam

- PepsiCo, the U.S. food and beverage giant, has committed to investing an additional \$400 million in Vietnam.
- This decision was made public during a visit by delegations from over 60 U.S. enterprises, including Suntory PepsiCo Vietnam Beverage, to Vietnam last week.

Luis Montenegro Named Portugal's Prime Minister

- After eight years of Socialist rule in Portugal, Luis Montenegro, leader of the centre-right Democratic Alliance (AD), has been appointed as the new prime minister.
- Montenegro's appointment marks the return of a centre-right leader to the prime minister's office after more than eight years.

Saudi Arabia Sends First Contestant to Miss Universe Pageant

- Rumi Alqahtani, a 27-year-old model and influencer from Saudi Arabia will be the first participant from the country in the Miss Universe competition.
- This will be the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's first appearance in the Miss Universe pageant.
- The Miss Universe pageant 2024 will be held in Mexico.

Thailand's Historic Move: Legalizing Same-Sex Marriage

- Thailand's lower house of Parliament has passed a groundbreaking bill to legalize same-sex marriage, marking a significant step towards equality in Southeast Asia.

Bassirou Diomaye Faye Wins Senegal's Presidential Election

- Bassirou Diomaye Faye, an anti-establishment figure, has won the Senegalese presidential election with 54.28 per cent of the votes in the first round.
- At 44 years old, Faye is set to become Africa's youngest elected president and the first opponent to win in the first round since Senegal's independence from France in 1960.

About Senegal:

Capital: Dakar

President: Macky Sall

Currency: West African CFA franc

Official language: French

UN Appoints Saudi Arabia to Lead Women's Rights Forum despite Criticism

- Saudi Arabia has been chosen to chair the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), despite widespread criticism due to its poor record on women's rights.
- The appointment of Saudi Ambassador Abdulaziz Alwasil has sparked outrage from human rights groups.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

DRDO Successfully Tests Very Short-Range Air Defence System (VSHORADS)

- The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has conducted two successful flight tests of the Very Short-Range Air Defence System (VSHORADS) missile on February 28th and 29th, 2024.
- VSHORADS, a Man Portable Air Defence System (MANPAD), has been designed and developed indigenously by the Research Centre Imarat (RCI) in collaboration with other DRDO laboratories and Indian industry partners.

About DRDO:

Founded: 1958

Headquarters: New Delhi

Agency executive: Sameer V. Kamat, Chairman

Indian Scientists Create Eco Wound Dressings with Banana fibers

- The Institute of Advanced Study in Science and Technology (IASST), an autonomous institute affiliated with the Department of Science and Technology, have successfully converted banana pseudo stems—commonly regarded as agricultural waste.

INAS 334 Squadron to Welcome MH 60R 'Seahawks' Into the Indian Navy

- The Indian Navy is poised to achieve a significant milestone on March 6, 2024, with the commissioning of the MH 60R Seahawk helicopter at INS Garuda, Kochi.
- The Seahawks squadron will be designated as INAS 334.

Google Unveils Genie AI: Revolutionizing Video Game Creation

- Google's DeepMind team introduces "Genie," a groundbreaking AI platform poised to transform the gaming industry and creative endeavors.
- This innovative project signifies a fusion of cutting-edge technology and imaginative potential, offering the capability to craft interactive 2D video games from single image prompts or text descriptions.

INS Jatayu Commissioned By Indian Navy at Lakshadweep

- Indian Navy took a significant stride in fortifying its operational prowess with the commissioning of its new base, INS Jatayu, at Minicoy island of Lakshadweep.
- Ceremony of INS Jatayu was graced by Navy Chief Admiral R Hari Kumar.

DST and T-Hub Launch AI-ML Hub in Hyderabad

Source: The Hindu

- The Department of Science and Technology (DST), in collaboration with T-Hub, has launched the Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence Technology Hub (MATH) in Hyderabad.
- The MATH initiative targets to generate over 500 AI-related jobs by 2025.

India to Construct a 10,000-GPU Supercomputer for Self-Sufficient AI Advancement

Source: Hindustan Times

- The Indian government, led by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has approved a new \$1.24 billion investment for the IndiaAI mission.

DRDO Successfully Tests Agni-5 Missile with MIRV Technology, Mission Divyastra

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has successfully conducted the maiden flight test of the locally developed Agni-5 missile with multiple independently targetable re-entry vehicle (MIRV) technology.
- The test, codenamed "Mission Divyastra" (divine weapon.)

About DRDO:

Founded: 1958;
Headquarters: DRDO Bhavan, New Delhi;
Agency executive: Sameer V. Kamat, Chairman, DRDO.

Launch of 'Agray' and 'Akshay' Fifth and Sixth Ship of ASW SWC (GRSE) Project

- On 13th March 2024, a significant milestone was achieved in the Indian Navy's shipbuilding program with the launch of 'Agray' and 'Akshay', the 5th and 6th ships of the 08 x ASW (Anti-Submarine Warfare) Shallow Water Craft (SWC) Project.
- These ships are being built by M/S Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE) in Kolkata for the Indian Navy.
- The launch ceremony was presided over by Air Chief Marshal V R Chaudhari, Chief of the Air Staff, Indian Air Force.

Indian Army contingent departing for the joint military exercise "Exercise Lamitiye - 2024"

- The Tenth edition of the Joint Military Exercise "LAMITIYE-2024" between the Indian Army and Seychelles Defence Forces (SDF).
- The exercise will be conducted in Seychelles from 18-27 March 2024.
- 'LAMITIYE' means 'Friendship' in the Creole language.
- The exercise has been conducted in Seychelles since 2001.

NASA to Carry 'Message in Bottle' To Europa, One of Jupiter's Moon in October

- In October 2024, NASA will embark on its Europa Clipper mission, aiming to explore Jupiter's moon Europa in search of signs of life.

About NASA:

Founder: Dwight D. Eisenhower
Headquarters: Washington, D.C., United States
Founded: 29 July 1958, United States

Indian Army Inducts First Apache 451 Aviation Squadron

- The Indian Army has raised its first squadron, the 451 Aviation Squadron, to operate the newly acquired AH-64E Apache attack helicopters.
- The squadron was formally established on March 15 at Jodhpur.

Guyana Inks Deal to Purchase Indian-Made Dornier Aircraft

- The Indian defence industry is expanding its reach to the Caribbean region.
- The Guyana Defence Force (GDF) plans to purchase two aircraft from India with a loan of \$23.27 million from the Export-Import Bank of India.
- Guyana will acquire two Dornier 228 aircraft made by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) of India.

About Guyana:

Capital: Georgetown
President: Irfaan Ali
Prime minister: Mark Phillips

Indian Army's New Tech Unit STEAG

- The Indian Army has set up a specialized technology unit called Signals Technology Evaluation and Adaptation Group (STEAG) to research and evaluate next-generation communication technologies.

Tech Mahindra, IBM collaborate to drive digital adoption

- Tech Mahindra and IBM have joined forces to inaugurate a Synergy Lounge in Singapore, aimed at accelerating digital adoption for enterprises across the Asia-Pacific region.

Army deploys advanced anti-drone defense systems along China border

- In response to escalating tensions along the northern borders with China, the Indian Army has initiated significant enhancements to its air defence capabilities.
- Central to this strategic maneuver is the deployment of cutting-edge Integrated Drone Detection and Interdiction Systems (IDD&IS), developed domestically in collaboration between the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and Bharat Electronics.

ISRO's START 2024 Program to Inspire Youth in Space Science

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) will conduct the Space Science and Technology Awareness Training (START) 2024 program during April and May.
- ISRO is inviting Expression of Interest (EOI) from educational institutes, universities, and colleges within India offering UG and PG courses in physical sciences and technology to host START-2024.

Indian Army Kicks Off Annual Army Commanders' Conference in Hybrid Format

- The Indian Army is organizing the first Army Commanders' Conference for the year 2024 in a hybrid mode.
- The virtual segment of the conference is scheduled for 28th March 2024, followed by the physical mode in New Delhi on 1st and 2nd April 2024.
- The conference will be chaired by the Chief of the Army Staff (COAS), General Manoj Pande.

APPOINTMENT & RESIGNATIONS

IPS Officer Daljit Singh Chaudhary Named NSG's New Director General

- Daljit Singh Chaudhary, a 1990 batch IPS officer, has been appointed as the Director General (DG) of the National Security Guard (NSG).

Anurag Agarwal Appointed as Head of Parliament Security

- IPS officer Anurag Agarwal has been appointed as the new head of Parliament security.

RBI Appoints S. Ravindran as Part-Time Chairman of Tamilnad Mercantile Bank

- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has taken a significant step by appointing S. Ravindran as the part-time chairman of Tamilnad Mercantile Bank Ltd. (TMB).

About Tamilnad Mercantile Bank:

Ltd Headquarters: Thoothukudi;

Tamilnad Mercantile Bank Ltd CEO: K V Rama Moorthy (Sept 2017-);

Tamilnad Mercantile Bank Ltd Founded: 11 May 1921.

BPCL Teams Up With Neeraj Chopra as Brand Ambassador for 'Speed' Petrol

- Bharat Petroleum Corporation (BPCL), one of India's leading petroleum companies, has recently announced its partnership with Olympic and World Javelin Champion Neeraj Chopra.
- G. Krishnakumar is the Chairman and Managing Director of BPCL.

Sub-Inspector Suman Kumari Makes History as BSF's First Female Sniper

- Sub-Inspector Suman Kumari has etched her name in history as the first woman sniper of the Border Security Force (BSF).

About BSF:

Founder: Khusro Faramurz Rustamji;

Founded: 1 December 1965;

Director General: Nitin Agarwal, IPS.

Brajesh Mehrotra appointed as new chief secretary of Bihar

- The Bihar government appointed senior IAS officer Brajesh Mehrotra as the new chief secretary of the state.

About Bihar:

Capital: Patna;

Chief Minister: Nitish Kumar;

Bird: House sparrow;

Flower: Marigold;

Formation: 22 March 1912

Future Generali India Life Insurance Appoints Alok Rungta as Managing director & CEO

Source: Zee Business

- Alok Rungta has been appointed as the Managing Director and CEO of Future Generali India Life Insurance, effective April 1st, pending regulatory approvals.

Slice Appoints Nayanthara as Brand Ambassador

Source: Amazon

- Slice, the popular mango-flavored drink, has recently announced the appointment of acclaimed actress Nayanthara as its latest brand ambassador.
- It is originally introduced by PepsiCo in 1984.

- In India, PepsiCo reintroduced Slice in 2008 as a mango-flavored fruit drink under the brand Tropicana Slice.

SAP Appoints New President and MD for Indian Subcontinent

- German technology giant SAP has made a significant leadership change in the Indian Subcontinent region. Manish Prasad has been appointed as the new president and managing director for the region, succeeding Kulmeet Bawa.

Rajendra Prasad Goyal Assumes Additional Charge as Chairman & MD Of NHPC Limited

Source: The Print

- Rajendra Prasad Goyal, Director (Finance) of NHPC, has recently assumed the additional charge of Chairman and Managing Director of NHPC Limited.

Nayab Singh Saini to Succeed Manohar Lal Khattar as Haryana's New Chief Minister

- Nayab Singh Saini, an influential leader from the Other Backward Classes (OBC) community, has been appointed as the new Chief Minister of Haryana.

About Haryana:

Capital: Chandigarh

Governor: Bandaru Dattatreya

Kishor Makwana Assumes Charge as Chairman of National Commission for Scheduled Castes

- Kishor Makwana has assumed the charge of Chairman of the National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC) in New Delhi. Shri Luv Kush Kumar has also taken charge as a Member of the NCSC.
- National Commission for Scheduled Castes was founded in 19 February 2004.

AS Rajeev Appointed as Vigilance Commissioner in the Central Vigilance Commission

- AS Rajeev was appointed as Vigilance Commissioner in the Central Vigilance Commission by the Honourable President of India on 9th February 2024.
- He took the oath as Vigilance Commissioner on 11th March 2024 before the Central Vigilance Commissioner, who was authorized by the President of India under the Central Vigilance Commission Act, 2003.
- Central Vigilance Commission was founded in February 1964;
- Central Vigilance Commission HQ is located in New Delhi.

ISMA Appoints Deepak Ballani as New Director General

- The Indian Sugar & Bio-energy Manufacturers Association (ISMA) has appointed Mr. Deepak Ballani as its new Director General.
- ISMA HQ located in New Delhi.
- ISMA Established in 1932.

Nayab Singh Saini is the 11th Chief Minister of Haryana

- The Current Cabinet Ministers of Haryana 2024 consist of 10 Cabinet Ministers and 4 Ministers of State including the Chief Ministers of Haryana.
- Nayab Singh Saini is the 11th and current Chief Minister of Haryana and this is his first term as the Chief Minister of Haryana.

Sanjay Kumar Singh Nominated As Next Director (Projects) Of NHPC Limited

- Sanjay Kumar Singh is poised to step into the role of Director (Projects) at NHPC Limited, following a commendation by the Public Enterprises Selection Board (PESB) panel on March 12.
- Currently serving as Chief General Manager at SJVN Limited, Singh emerges as the recommended candidate from a pool of twelve contenders.
- Founded in 1975 under the Companies Act, 1956, NHPC has expanded its portfolio to include solar and wind energy ventures.

Gyanesh Kumar, Sukhbir Sandhu Appointed as New Election Commissioners

- The Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led three-member committee has appointed Gyanesh Kumar and Sukhbir Singh Sandhu as new Election Commissioners.

About Election Commissioner of India:

HQ: Delhi

Established: 25th January 1950.

B Sairam is the New Chairman and Managing Director of NCL

- B Sairam has been appointed as the new Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Northern Coalfields Limited (NCL). NCL is the Singrauli-based flagship Subsidiary of Coal India Limited.

Navneet Sehgal Appointed as Prasar Bharati Board Chairman

- Retired bureaucrat Navneet Kumar Sehgal has been appointed as the new chairperson of the Prasar Bharati Board.
- The position had been vacant for four years after A Surya Prakash retired in February 2020 after turning 70, the upper age limit for the post.
- Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar on Friday chaired a meeting to appoint the chairman of the nation's public broadcaster.

Poonawalla Fincorp Appoints Arvind Kapil as MD & CEO

- Poonawalla Fincorp, a notable NBFC, has chosen Arvind Kapil, a seasoned retail banking expert from HDFC Bank, as its new Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer.
- Kapil will commence his five-year term on June 24, 2024, succeeding Abhay Bhutada, who opted for early retirement.

CP Radhakrishnan Gets Additional Charge as Telangana Governor

- Jharkhand Governor CP Radhakrishnan has been given the additional responsibility as the in-charge governor of Telangana.
- This comes after Tamilisai Soundararajan resigned from her constitutional post as the Telangana Governor.

Kiren Rijju gets additional charge after Pashupati Kumar Paras resigns from Union cabinet

- Pashupati Kumar Paras, former Union minister and president of the Rashtriya Lok Janshakti Party (RLJP), resigned from the Union Cabinet following his party's exclusion from the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) seat-sharing arrangement in Bihar for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections.
- In response, President Droupadi Murmu accepted his resignation and appointed Kiren Rijju with an additional charge as the Minister of Food Processing Industries.

Arvind Kapil Takes Over as Poonawalla Fincorp CEO

- Poonawalla Fincorp, a leading non-banking financial company (NBFC), has appointed Arvind Kapil as its new Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer.
- He will be replacing the current MD and CEO Abhay Bhutada, who is taking early retirement.

Ashwani Kumar Elected as New President of FIEO

- Ashwani Kumar, Partner at Victor Forgings in Jalandhar, has been unanimously elected as the new President of the Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO).

Naveen Jindal Takes Over as President of Indian Steel Association

- Naveen Jindal, Chairman of Jindal Steel and Power, has been unanimously elected as the President of the Indian Steel Association (ISA) by the apex committee, which is the governing body of the ISA.

- Sajjan Jindal is the Chairman and Managing Director of JSW Steel.
- TV Narendran is the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Tata Steel.

M V Rao Elected as New Chairman of Indian Banks Association

- The Indian Banks' Association (IBA) has elected M V Rao, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of the Central Bank of India, as its new Chairman.
- Dinesh Kumar Khara is the Chairman of State Bank of India (SBI)
- S L Jain is the Managing Director and Chief Executive of Indian Bank
- N Kamakodi is the Managing Director and Chief Executive of City Union Bank
- Madhav Nair, the Country Head and Chief Executive of the Bank of Bahrain and Kuwait, was unanimously elected as the Honorary Secretary of the IBA.

Govind Dholakia Appointed New Chairman of Surat Diamond Bourse

- The Surat Diamond Bourse (SDB) has appointed Govind Dholakia, a Rajya Sabha MP from Gujarat, as its new chairman.

Supreme Court Appoints Committee for Great Indian Bustard Preservation

- Great Indian Bustard (GIB) population from extinction caused by collisions with high-powered power cables in Gujarat and Rajasthan.
- A bench led by Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud, JB Pardiwala, and Manoj Misra has appointed an expert committee.
- The committee is expected to propose additional measures and submit a report to the Supreme Court by July 31st.

Hansha Mishra appointed as Director of UPSC

- Hansha Mishra (IA&AS) has been selected for the appointment as Director in the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC).
- According to an order issued from the Department of Personnel & Training (DoPT), she has been selected for the appointment under the Central Staffing Scheme for a period of five years from the date of taking over charge of the post or until further orders, whichever event takes place earlier.

Neeraj Chopra Named Eveready's New Brand Ambassador

- Eveready Industries India (EIL), a leading battery brand, has announced a partnership with Neeraj Chopra, the reigning Olympic gold medalist and World no. 1 in men's javelin throw, as its new brand ambassador.
- Indian Diplomat Abhay Thakur Appointed as Next Envoy to Myanmar
- Senior Indian diplomat Abhay Thakur has been appointed as the country's next ambassador or top envoy to Myanmar.
- This was announced by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) on March 26.

New Chiefs Appointed to Lead NIA, NDRF, and BPR&D

- The Indian government has announced crucial appointments in key security agencies, including the National Investigation Agency (NIA), National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), and the Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D).

New Members Sworn In at Lokpal of India

- Justice Ritu Raj Awasthi has taken oath as the new judicial member of the Lokpal (ombudsman) on 27 March 2024.
- The oath was administered by Justice AM Khanwilkar, the Chairman of the Lokpal of India.
- The institution of the Ombudsman was first established in Sweden in 1809.
- The concept gained popularity globally after being adopted by New Zealand and Norway in 1962.

Nidhu Saxena Appointed as MD & CEO of Bank of Maharashtra

- The central government has approved the appointment of Nidhu Saxena as the Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer (MD & CEO) of the Bank of Maharashtra.
- This appointment will be effective for a period of three years starting from 27 March 2024.

Indian Expert Kamal Kishore to Lead UN's Disaster Risk Reduction Efforts

- The United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres has appointed Kamal Kishore of India as the new Assistant Secretary-General and Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction.
- He will lead the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR).
- Mr. Kishore will succeed Mami Mizutori of Japan, whom the Secretary-General thanked for her service.

Justice Mohammad Yousuf Wani Sworn in as Additional Judge of J&K and Ladakh High Court

- Justice Mohammad Yousuf Wani was administered the oath of office as an Additional Judge of the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.
- The oath was administered by Chief Justice N. Kotiswar Singh in Srinagar.

Pavan Davuluri Appointed to Lead Microsoft's Windows and Surface Teams

- Microsoft has named Pavan Davuluri as the new head of its combined Windows and Surface teams.
- This move comes after the previous leader, Panos Panay, left for Amazon last year.

Kotak Bank appoints Jaideep Hansraj as President of 'One Kotak

- Kotak Mahindra Bank has appointed Jaideep Hansraj, the current MD and CEO of Kotak Securities, as the Group President – One Kotak, effective from April 1, 2024.

About Kotak Mahindra Bank:

CEO: Ashok Vaswani (1 Jan 2024)

Founder: Uday Kotak

Founded: 21 November 1985

Headquarters: Mumbai

Senior Bureaucrat Rahul Singh Appointed New CBSE Chief

- Senior bureaucrat Rahul Singh has been appointed as the chairperson of the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), as part of a senior-level bureaucratic reshuffle effected by the Centre.
- Rahul Singh will succeed Nidhi Chhibber, who has been named Advisor in the Niti Aayog.

Telangana Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan Resigns

- Tamilisai Soundararajan, the Governor of Telangana, has resigned from her position on Monday, March 18, 2024. According to sources, she is likely to contest the Lok Sabha elections from the state of Tamil Nadu.
- She has also resigned from her role as the Lieutenant Governor of the UT of Puducherry. She has sent her resignation letter to the President of India, Droupadi Murmu.

Appointment of Mariam Mammen Mathew as DNPA Chairperson

- Mariam Mammen Mathew, CEO of Manorama Online, has been appointed as the Chairperson of the Digital News Publishers Association (DNPA) for a two-year term starting April 1, 2024.
- She succeeds Tanmay Maheshwari, Managing Director of Amar Ujala.

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

Dr Pradeep Mahajan receives Maharashtra Bhushan Award 2024

- Dr. Pradeep Mahajan, the Founder and Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of StemRx Hospital and Research Centre, along with StemRx Bioscience Solutions, has been awarded the prestigious Maharashtra Bhushan Award 2024.

Ministry of I&B Honored For Outstanding Accounting Performance

- On the occasion of the 48th Foundation Day of the Indian Civil Accounts Service, the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting has been honored with the Award for Best Performance in Accounts during the Financial Year 2023-24.
- The prestigious award ceremony took place at Vigyan Bhawan, Delhi, on March 1, 2024.

Yatin Bhaskar Duggal Wins First Prize in National Youth Parliament Festival 2024

- Yatin Bhaskar Duggal, a promising talent from Haryana, has emerged triumphant as the winner of the esteemed National Youth Parliament Festival, 2024.
- First Prize: Yatin Bhaskar Duggal (Haryana)
- Second Prize: Vaishna Pitchai (Tamil Nadu)
- Third Prize: Kanishka Sharma (Rajasthan)

Zoya Akhtar, Asma Khan Honored at 'India-UK Achievers' Awards in London

- Renowned filmmaker Zoya Akhtar and British Indian chef Asma Khan were honored at the annual 'India-UK Achievers' awards in London.
- The event celebrated Akhtar's acclaimed work in cinema and Khan's contributions to culinary arts.
- It was launched to celebrate bilateral educational relations between India and the UK.

India Receives 'Measles and Rubella Champion' Award

Source: News on AIR

- India has been awarded the prestigious 'Measles and Rubella Champion' Award by The Measles and Rubella Partnership. This award recognizes India's exemplary efforts in preventing measles and rubella diseases.
- The award was presented on March 6th, 2024, at the American Red Cross Headquarters in Washington D.C., USA.
- Ambassador Sripriya Ranganathan, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of India, received the award on behalf of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India.

PM Narendra Modi Presents National Creators Award

Source: Mint

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi presented the first-ever National Creators Award at the Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi.

Sudha Murty Nominated to Rajya Sabha

Source: The economic times

- President Droupadi Murmu nominated author and philanthropist Sudha Murty to the Rajya Sabha.
- Sudha Murty is an Indian educator, author, philanthropist, and the former chairperson of the Infosys Foundation.
- She is also a member of the public healthcare initiatives of the Gates Foundation.
- Murty has established the Murty Classical Library of India at Harvard University.

Miss World 2024, Krystyna Pyszkova from Czech Republic Wins the Crown

Source: India.com

- Krystyna Pyszkova from the Czech Republic was crowned as the new Miss World 2024 at a grand event in Mumbai, India. The previous Miss World 2022, Karolina Bielawska from Poland, crowned her successor in a magnificent ceremony.
- First Runner-Up: Yasmina Zaytoun of Lebanon
- Miss World Asia and Oceania: Yasmin Azaytoun of Lebanon
- Miss World Europe: Krystyna Pyszková of Czech Republic
- Miss World America and Caribbean: Aché Abrahams of Trinidad and Tobago
- Miss World Africa: Lesego Chombo of Botswana
- The Miss World Humanitarian Award was given to Nita Ambani for her work at the Reliance Foundation, a non-profit organization.

Oscars 2024 Announced:

Source: The Economic Times

- The Oscars 2024 ceremony took place at the Dolby Theater in Los Angeles, with Jimmy Kimmel hosting for the fourth time. The film "Oppenheimer" emerged as the big winner, earning 13 nominations and taking home prestigious awards, including Best Director, Best Actor, and Best Picture.
- Cillian Murphy's performance in the title role of "Oppenheimer" earned him the Best Actor award.

Delhi Airport Clinches ACI-ASQ's Best Airport in Asia-Pacific Title for 6th Straight Year

- Delhi Airport has once again asserted its dominance in the aviation sector by securing the prestigious title of 'Best Airport' in the Asia-Pacific region for the sixth consecutive year.
- The Airport Service Quality (ASQ) Best Airport award for 2023 was conferred upon Delhi Airport in the category of over 40 Million Passengers Per Annum (MPPA) by the Airports Council International (ACI).

Smt. Droupadi Murmu Conferred Honorary Doctorate by University of Mauritius

- On March 12, 2024, President Droupadi Murmu was conferred with the honorary degree of Doctor of Civil Law by the University of Mauritius.
- This prestigious honor demonstrates the depth of bilateral ties between India and Mauritius.
- In 1901, Mahatma Gandhi inspired Indian indentured workers in Mauritius to educate themselves, leading to their political and social empowerment.

Sangeet Natak Akademi Awards 2022-23 Announced

- The President of India conferred the Sangeet Natak Akademi Awards for the years 2022 and 2023 to 94 eminent artists (including two joint awards) in the field of performing arts.
- In addition to the awards, the prestigious Sangeet Natak Akademi Fellowship (Akademi Ratna) was bestowed upon 7 eminent artists (one joint fellowship) during the ceremony.
- The Sangeet Natak Akademi is the apex body in the field of performing arts in India. Established in 1953.

Chameli Devi Jain Award 2024 for Outstanding Woman Media Person

- The prestigious Chameli Devi Jain Award 2024 for Outstanding Woman Media Person of the Year has been given jointly to two remarkable journalists:
- Greeshma Kuthar – Independent Journalist
- Ritika Chopra – Indian Express
- The Chameli Devi Jain Award for Outstanding Woman Media Person of the Year was set up by The Media Foundation in 1980.
- The first award was given in 1982, and since then, it has been presented annually.

Ratan Tata Awarded PV Narasimha Rao Memorial Award for Philanthropy Work

- Ratan Tata, former chairman of Tata Sons, has been bestowed with the prestigious PV Narasimha Rao Memorial Award.
- He received the award for his outstanding philanthropic contributions.
- The award ceremony took place in Mumbai on March 15, 2024.
- On February 9, 2024, the nation's highest civilian honor, the Bharat Ratna, was posthumously conferred upon former Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao.

Indian Youth Uday Bhatia and Manasi Gupta Receive 'Diana Memorial Award'

- Uday Bhatia and Manasi Gupta from India were honored with the prestigious 'Diana Memorial Award' on 14 March 2024.
- This award is given every two years in memory of Princess Diana.

Raksha Mantri Trophy for Best AFMS Hospitals 2022

- The Raksha Mantri Trophy for the Best and Second Best Command Hospitals of the Armed Forces Medical Services (AFMS) for the year 2022 was awarded on 19th March 2024 in New Delhi.
- Command Hospital (Southern Command), Pune was judged as the Best Command Hospital, while the Command Hospital (Central Command), Lucknow was the Second Best for 2022.
- The trophies were presented by Lt Gen Daljit Singh, Director General Armed Forces.
- The Raksha Mantri Trophy was instituted in 1989 to recognize excellence in healthcare services by Armed Forces Hospitals.

Prabha Varma Bags 33rd Saraswati Samman for 'Roudra Sathwikam'

- Noted Malayalam poet and author Prabha Varma has been selected for the prestigious 33rd Saraswati Samman for the year 2023.
- He won the award for his novel in verse 'Roudra Sathwikam' published in 2022.
- The Saraswati Samman, instituted by the K.K. Birla Foundation in 1991, is one of the highest literary honors in India.
- Last year's 32nd awardee was Tamil writer Sivasankari for her novel 'Surya Vamsam'.

T M Krishna Awarded Prestigious Sangita Kalanidhi

- Thodur Madabusi Krishna, a renowned Carnatic musician, has been chosen as the Sangita Kalanidhi awardee for 2024.
- This award, considered the Oscar equivalent for Carnatic music, is given away by the Music Academy in Chennai.
- The awardees will receive their honors at the Music Academy's annual events in December 2024 and January 2025.

PM Modi Honoured with Bhutan's 'Order of the Druk Gyalpo' Award

- Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has created history by becoming the first non-Bhutanese to receive the 'Order of the Druk Gyalpo', Bhutan's highest civilian award.
- He received this prestigious honour from Bhutan's King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck during his two-day state visit to Thimphu.
- The 'Order of the Druk Gyalpo' is a lifetime achievement award and is considered the pinnacle of Bhutan's honour system.
- PM Modi is the first non-Bhutanese to receive the 'Order of the Druk Gyalpo', he is also the first foreign head of government to get this prestigious award.

Bina Agarwal and James Boyce awarded the first "Global Inequality Research Award"

- Bina Agarwal and James Boyce have been awarded the first "Global Inequality Research Award" for their significant contributions to understanding global inequalities, specifically in the areas of social and environmental inequalities.

Aviation Week Laureates Award Was Given To ISRO for Chandrayaan-3

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has been honored with the prestigious Aviation Week Laureates Award for its remarkable achievements in the Chandrayaan-3 mission.

Indian Scientist Prof Jayant Murthy Honoured with Asteroid Name

- Professor Jayant Murthy, an esteemed astrophysicist, has been recognized for his remarkable contributions to the field by having an asteroid named after him – (215884) Jayantmurthy.
- Originally discovered in 2005 by MW Buie at the Kitt Peak National Observatory in Arizona, USA, and previously known as 2005 EX296, this asteroid orbits the Sun between Mars and Jupiter every 3.3 years.

About International Astronomical Union:

President: Debra Elmegreen;

Headquarters: Paris, France;

Founded: 28 July 1919;

General Secretary: Piero Benvenuti.

HSL bags 3 Governance Now 10th PSU Awards

- Hindustan Shipyard Ltd (HSL) has once again been recognised for its excellence in the maritime industry.
- The shipyard has received three awards at the Governance Now 10th PSU Awards ceremony held in New Delhi on Friday.
- Two awards were presented to HSL in the categories of "CMD Leadership" and "Innovation in Refining Technology." HSL's Director (Shipbuilding) Cmde Kunjumon E Mathew received the awards on behalf of HSL. These awards reflect HSL's commitment to embracing technological innovation.

Michel Talagrand Awarded the 2024 Abel Prize

- The Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters has awarded the 2024 Abel Prize to Michel Talagrand of the French National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS), Paris, France.
- Talagrand received the prestigious prize "for his groundbreaking contributions to probability theory and functional analysis, with outstanding applications in mathematical physics and statistics."
- The common theme in Michel Talagrand's pioneering discoveries is working with and understanding the random processes

Allu Arjun's Wax Statue at Madame Tussauds Dubai

- Allu Arjun, the popular Telugu actor has been honoured with a wax statue at the renowned Madame Tussauds Museum in Dubai.

Vijay Jain Bags Times Power Icon 2024 Award

- At a glittering event recently held in Noida, organized by The Times Group, Vijay Jain, the Managing Director of Star Estate, was awarded the prestigious Times Power Icon 2024 Award.
- Founded in 2012, Star Estate is a fastest-growing Real Estate enterprise

BOOK & AUTHOR

Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik releases book titled 'FIH Odisha Hockey Men's World Cup 2023'

- Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik released the coffee table book titled 'FIH Odisha Hockey Men's World Cup 2023'.
- The book, a publication by Sportstar, the esteemed sports magazine of The Hindu Group, encapsulates the essence and excitement of the 15th FIH Odisha Hockey Men's World Cup held in 2023.
- FIH Hockey Men's World Cup 2023 was a monumental event for Odisha, hosting the prestigious tournament at two prime locations: Bhubaneswar and Rourkela.

A book on Indian modern art "The Gems of Indian Art" launched

Source: The Economic Times

- The launch of "The Gems of Indian Art", a comprehensive documentation of Harish Khullar's extensive collection of 20th-century Indian modern and contemporary art.
- This near-300-page book was unveiled by Ministers Shri Nitin Gadkari, Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal, and Shri S.P.S. Baghel, marking a pivotal moment in India's art scene.

Parshottam Rupala release Book on Sagar Parikrama at Rajkot, Gujarat

- Union Minister for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry, and Dairying, Shri Parshottam Rupala, release a book and video titled "Sagar Parikrama" at the Engineering Association in Rajkot, Gujarat.
- The event graced by the presence of the Union Minister for States of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry, and Dairying, Dr. Sanjeev Kumar Balyan, Dr. L. Murugan, and other dignitaries.

'Phool Bahadur' – The First Magahi Novel in English

- Dibrugarh University International Literary Festival held on 19-21 March 2024.
- The English translation of the first Magahi novel, 'Phool Bahadur'. The translation was done by Abhay K, a renowned writer from Nalanda, Bihar.
- 'Phool Bahadur' was originally written by Jayanath Pati and published in 1928.
- Published by Penguin Random House India, 'Phool Bahadur' is a delightful novel set in the town of Biharsharif in Nalanda district of Bihar.

A book titled "From A Car Shed To The Corner Room & Beyond" by S. Raman

- S. Raman's autobiography, "From A Car Shed To The Corner Room & Beyond," offers a first-person account of his remarkable journey from a clerk at SBI to becoming the Chairman and Managing Director of Canara Bank and a full-time Member of SEBI.
- The book explores the intricate dance between personal integrity, professional challenges, and systemic issues in the financial world.

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Wildlife Day 2024, Date, Theme, History and Significance

- World Wildlife Day, celebrated annually on March 3, serves as a poignant reminder of the urgent need to protect and preserve the world's fauna and flora.
- The inception of World Wildlife Day traces back to a proposal made by Thailand to the United Nations General Assembly in 2013.
- The theme for World Wildlife Day 2024, "Connecting People and Planet: Exploring Digital Innovation in Wildlife Conservation,"

World Hearing Day 2024: 3rd March

- Observed every year on March 3, World Hearing Day 2024 fall on a Sunday.
- The theme for this year, as designated by the World Health Organization (WHO), is "Changing mindsets: Let's make ear and hearing care a reality for all."
- Initiated by WHO in 2007, World Hearing Day was formerly known as International Ear Care Day. The renaming to World Hearing Day occurred post-2016.

National Safety Day 2024: 4 March

- National Safety Day is celebrated each year on March 4. In India, this date also signals the commencement of National Safety Week, extending the focus on safety measures beyond just a day.
- The theme for National Safety Day 2024, "Safety for a Sustainable Future".
- National Safety Day in India traces back to the establishment of the National Safety Council (NSC) on March 4, 1966.

Geological Survey of India Celebrates 174th Foundation Day

- The Geological Survey of India (GSI) commemorated its 174th Foundation Day on March 4th, 2024.
- In Kolkata, the festivities kicked off with an inaugural ceremony led by Shri Janardan Prasad, Director General of GSI.

About Geological Survey of India:

Founded: 4 March 1851

Founder: Thomas Oldham

Headquarters: Kolkata, West Bengal, India

Formed: 4 March 1851; 172 years ago

Government agency executive: Shri Janardan Prasad

Parent Government agency: Ministry of Mines

Dissociative Identity Disorder Awareness Day 2024: March 5th

- Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID), formerly known as Multiple Personality Disorder is characterized by two or more distinct personality states. This disorder is observed annually on March 5th.
- Dissociative Identity Disorder Awareness Day, first observed in 2012 by the Ivory Garden.

International Women's Day 2024: 8 March

- International Women's Day (IWD) is an annual global event celebrated on March 8th each year. It serves as a focal point for recognizing the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women worldwide.
- International Women's Day 2024 falls on March 8th, marking a global celebration of women's achievements and a call to action for gender equality.
- The United Nations has chosen the theme 'Invest in Women: Accelerate Progress' for International Women's Day 2024.

Poshan Pakhwada 2024 from 9th to 23rd March

Source: News on AIR

- The Ministry of Women and Child Development will organize Poshan Pakhwada nationwide from March 9 to March 23, 2024. This 15-day celebration aims to spread awareness about nutrition, dietary practices, and women's health.
- During the last Poshan Pakhwada in March-April 2023, over 4 crore sensitization activities were conducted. These focused on promoting Shree Anna (fortified rice).
- POSHAN Abhiyaan was launched in 2018.

Launch of Digital Exhibition "Subhash Abhinandan" on 134th Foundation Day of National Archives of India

Source: PIB

- On the occasion of the 134th Foundation Day of the National Archives of India, Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs and Culture, Arjun Ram Meghwal, will inaugurate a digital exhibition titled "Subhash Abhinandan" in New Delhi on March 11th.
- Organized by the National Archives of India, the exhibition commemorates the life of Subhash Chandra Bose, featuring 16 sections covering key aspects from his birth to the present day.

International Day of Women Judges 2024

Source: The Quint

- The International Day of Women Judges is celebrated every year on 10 March. This year, it falls on Sunday. The day is dedicated to recognizing the contributions of women judges worldwide and promoting women's participation in decision-making for achieving equality and democracy.
- The theme for this year's celebration is "Women in Justice, women for justice," promoting the full and equal participation of women at all levels of the judiciary.

CISF Raising Day 2024

Source: The Quint

- CISF Raising Day is celebrated every year on March 10. This day marks the establishment of the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) in 1969.
- CISF is under the Ministry of Home Affairs.
- Its Headquarter is located in New Delhi, India.

National Commission for Protection of Child Rights Celebrates 19th Foundation Day

- On March 12, 2024, the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) celebrated its 19th Foundation Day at the Jacaranda Hall, Indian Habitat Centre, New Delhi.

About National Commission for Protection of Child Rights:

Founded: 2007;

Headquarters: New Delhi, India;

Chairman: Priyank Kanoongo.

NIELIT & ITI Egypt Sign MoU to Improve Skills, Jobs, & Global Collaboration

- On the 12th of March, 2024, an MoU was signed between the National Institute of Electronics and Information Technology (NIELIT) of India and the Information Technology Institute (ITI) of Egypt.
- This significant event took place in Cairo, Egypt.

International Day of Action for Rivers 2024: 14th March

- The International Day of Action for Rivers is observed annually on March 14th. This year, on Thursday, March 14, 2024, the theme is "Water for All," emphasizing the fundamental right of every individual to access clean water.
- The International Day of Action for Rivers has its roots in the First International Meeting of People Impacted by Dams, held in Curitiba, Brazil, in March 1997.

World Kidney Day 2024: 14th March

- It is observed on the second Thursday of March every year. This year World Kidney Day is observed on 14th March.
- The 2024 World Kidney Day campaign theme is Kidney Health for All – Advancing Equitable Access to Care and Optimal Medication Practice.
- World Kidney Day was first observed in 2006 with the slogan ‘Are Your Kidneys ok?’.

Celebrating Pi Day 2024: 14 March

- Pi (π) is an important symbol in Mathematics, Statistics, and Physics. It represents the ratio of the circumference of a circle to its diameter. This ratio is a constant value of approximately 3.14.
- The constant value of Pi was first calculated by the renowned Mathematician Archimedes of Syracuse. In 1737, Leonhard Euler introduced the symbol of Pi.
- The first Pi Day was celebrated in 1988 by American physicist Larry Shaw.

Ordnance Factories Day 2024 in India

- Ordnance Factories Day is observed every year on March 18th.
- In 1775, the Board of Ordnance was formed in Fort William, Kolkata. Later, in 1787, a gunpowder factory was established in Ishapore.

French Language Day 2024: 20 March

- On March 20th, the United Nations celebrates French Language Day. This is one of the six official languages celebrated by the UN each year.
- French Language Day commemorates March 20, 1970.
- The UN introduced Language Days in 2010 to celebrate its 6 official languages
- The OIF’s theme is “The Francophonie of the Future”

International Day of Happiness 2024:

- The International Day of Happiness is celebrated every year on March 20th.
- On July 12, 2012, the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution, this resolution declared March 20th as the International Day of Happiness.

World Sparrow Day 2024:

- World Sparrow Day is an annual observance held every year on March 20th to raise global awareness about the household sparrow and its alarming population decline.
- The idea of World Sparrow Day was conceived by the Nature Forever Society (NFS) of India and the Eco-Sys Action Foundation based in France.
- The first World Sparrow Day was marked in 2010.

World Forestry Day 2024:

- Every year, we celebrate World Forestry Day on March 21st. In 2024, it falls on a Thursday.
- The United Nations General Assembly established World Forestry Day in 2012.
- The theme for 2024 is “Forests and Innovation: New Solutions for a Better World.”

International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination 2024

- On 21st March every year, we observe the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.
- The theme for 2024 is “A Decade of Recognition, Justice, and Development: Implementation of the International Decade for People of African Descent”.
- This year’s theme is linked to the International Decade for People of African Descent, which spans from 2015 to 2024.

World Water Day 2024:

- Every year on March 22, we celebrate World Water Day to recognize the importance of freshwater.
- This year, the occasion holds extra significance amid the ongoing Bengaluru water crisis.
- The idea of World Water Day was first proposed in 1992 at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro. Later that year, the United Nations General Assembly declared March 22 as World Water Day.
- The theme for World Water Day 2024 is 'Water for Peace'.

Bihar Diwas 2024:

- Bihar Diwas 2024, celebrated on 22nd March 2024 in India, holds immense historical and cultural significance for the state of Bihar. It commemorates the founding of Bihar as a separate state in 1912, marking its separation from the Bengal Presidency.
- The inception of Bihar Diwas dates back to 2010, when the state government initiated the celebrations to honor Bihar's 112th statehood anniversary.

About Bihar:

Established on March 22, 1912

Governor: Rajendra Arlekar

Chief Minister: Nitish Kumar

Deputy Chief Ministers: Samrat Chaudhary, Vijay Kumar Sinha

Shaheed Diwas 2024:

- Shaheed Diwas 2024 falls on March 23, 2024, commemorating the day when three iconic freedom fighters – Bhagat Singh, Shivaram Rajguru, and Sukhdev Thapar – were martyred by the British Government.
- Their most notable action was the bombing of the Central Legislative Assembly in Delhi on April 8, 1929, accompanied by the iconic slogan "Inquilab Zindabad" (Long Live the Revolution).

World Meteorological Day 2024

- Every year on March 23rd, the World Meteorological Day is celebrated. This day marks the establishment of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) in 1950.
- The WMO is a specialized agency of the United Nations.
- The theme for World Meteorological Day 2024 is "At the Frontline of Climate Action".
- In 1950, on March 23rd, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) was founded.

World Tuberculosis Day 2024

- World Tuberculosis (TB) Day is an annual observation celebrated on March 24th.
- Tuberculosis (TB) is an infectious disease that mainly affects the lungs.
- It is caused by a type of bacteria called Mycobacterium tuberculosis.
- The theme for World TB Day 2024 is "Yes! We can end TB".
- The first World TB Day was officially observed in 1983, and it has become an annual event since then.

International Day for the Right to the Truth 2024

- Every year, on March 24, the International Day for the Right to the Truth concerning Gross Human Rights Violations and for the Dignity of Victims is observed.
- The date of March 24 was chosen to commemorate Monsignor Óscar Arnulfo Romero, who was assassinated on March 24, 1980.

The Chipko Movement: A 50-Year Legacy of Environmental Protection

- The Chipko Movement originated in the Uttarakhand region of the Himalayas in early 1973. The name "Chipko" means "to hug" in Hindi.
- While the modern Chipko Movement began in 1973, its roots can be traced back to the 18th century, when the Bishnoi community in Rajasthan stood up to protect trees.
- In 1973, environmentalist and social activist Chandi Prasad Bhatt led the first Chipko protest near the village of Mandal.

World Theatre Day 2024:

- World Theatre Day is a special day celebrated every year on March 27 to honour the art of theatre.

- The International Theatre Institute (ITI) started World Theatre Day in 1961.

Good Friday 2024: 29th March

- On March 29th, 2024, Christians around the globe will solemnly observe Good Friday 2024, a pivotal day in the Christian calendar. Good Friday, also known as Holy Friday or Great Friday, commemorates the crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

World Piano Day 2024: 28th March

- World Piano Day, celebrated annually on the 88th day of the year.
- World Piano Day traces its roots back to 2015 when it was officially established to celebrate the piano's magnificence.

International Day of Zero Waste 2024

- On December 14, 2022, the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution to have an International Day of Zero Waste celebrated every year on March 30th.

RBI Celebrates 90 Years of Service on Foundation Day 2024

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI), the nation's central banking institution, is entering its 90th year on April 1st, 2024.
- The RBI was established on April 1, 1934, following recommendations from the Royal Commission on Indian Currency and Finance to maintain the country's monetary stability.
- Its operations commenced on April 1, 1935, with Sir Osborne Smith as the first Governor.
- The Central Office of the RBI was initially in Kolkata but was shifted to Mumbai in 1937.

Utkal Diwas 2024, A Celebration of Odisha's Rich Culture and Heritage

- Utkal Diwas, also known as Odisha Day or Utkala Dibasa, is a significant annual celebration held in the Indian state of Odisha. It is observed on 1st April every year to commemorate the formation of the state of Odisha on April 1, 1936.

About Odisha:

Capital: Bhubaneswar;

Chief Minister: Naveen Patnaik

Arnab Banerjee Elected as New ATMA Chairman

- Arnab Banerjee, the Managing Director & CEO of CEAT Ltd., has been elected as the new Chairman of the Automotive Tyre Manufacturers' Association (ATMA).
- Arnab Banerjee joined CEAT in 2005 as the Vice President-Sales and Marketing.

OBITUARIES

Brian Mulroney, Former Canadian Prime Minister, Passes Away at 84

- Brian Mulroney, the former Canadian Prime Minister known for his transformative policies and complex legacy, has died at the age of 84.

Veteran Congress Leader and Former UP Governor Aziz Qureshi Passes Away

- Aziz Qureshi, a seasoned Congress leader and former Governor of Uttar Pradesh, who passed away at the age of 83.

Padma Shri Awardee Arun Sharma passed away at 90.

- Padmashree Dr. Arun Kumar Sharma, who passed away at the age of 90 at his residence in Raipur, Chhattisgarh.

Renowned Artisan and Padma Awardee Kapildev Prasad Passes Away

- Kapildev Prasad, a renowned artisan and Padma awardee for his contributions to the handloom industry and the revival of Bababuti sarees, passed away in Basavanbigha village, Bihar Sharif.

Admiral Laxminarayan Ramdas, Former Indian Navy Chief, Dies At 90

- Admiral Laxminarayan Ramdas, the former Chief of Naval Staff of the Indian Navy (1990-1993), breathed his last peacefully at the age of 90 on March 15.
- Became the 13th Chief of Naval Staff (CNS) on November 30, 1990.

Prominent Tribal Leader Lama Lobzang Passes Away at 94

- The former member of the National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and prominent Buddhist Monk of Ladakh, popularly known as Lama Lobzang, passed away this morning at his residence in New Delhi.
- When the National Commission became constitutional through an amendment of Article 338 of the constitution, he was appointed anew as its member for two terms from 1995 to 1998 and 1998 to 2001.

Popular Tamil Actor Lakshmi Narayanan Seshu Passes Away at 60

- Lakshmi Narayanan Seshu, a beloved figure in the Tamil entertainment industry passed away at 60. He is known as Lollu Sabha Seshu.

Legendary Actor Louis Gossett Jr. Passes Away at 87

- Louis Gossett Jr., the first Black man to win the Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor, has sadly passed away at the age of 87.
- His most notable achievement was winning the Best Supporting Actor Oscar in 1983 for his role as a Marine drill instructor in the film "An Officer and a Gentleman."

RANKS & REPORTS

Happiest Country in the World 2024

Source: Deccan Herald

- The World Happiness Report, produced by the United Nations, assesses global happiness levels using data primarily gathered from the Gallup World Poll.
- In 2024, Finland retains its title as the world's happiest country with a score of 7.804.
- India ranks 126th out of 146 countries in the World Happiness Report, with a score of 4.036.
- Surpassing India in happiness are neighboring countries such as Nepal, Bangladesh, and China.

India Tops Global Arms Imports, SIPRI Report

- According to the latest data from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), India was the world's top arms importer for the period 2019-2023. India's arms imports witnessed a 4.7% increase compared to the 2014-2018 period.
- The United States, the world's largest arms supplier, saw a 17% growth in arms exports between 2014-2018 and 2019-2023.

India's Human Development Index ranking 134 out of 193 countries: A Detailed Analysis

- India's position in the United Nations Human Development Index (HDI) for 2022 improved slightly, ranking 134 out of 193 countries with an HDI value of 0.644.
- India has shown progress in reducing gender inequality, ranking 108 out of 166 countries in the Gender Inequality Index (GI) 2022.

Tamil Nadu Tops Illegal Trade in Shark Body Parts

- Tamil Nadu dominates the illegal trade in shark body parts, comprising nearly 65% of seizures between January 2010 and December 2022, as per a recent analysis by TRAFFIC and WWF-India.
- TRAFFIC and WWF-India conducted a comprehensive study titled 'Netted in illegal wildlife trade: Sharks of India'.
- WWF India was established in 1969.

V-Dem Institute's Democracy Report 2024: India's Decline into Electoral Autocracy

- The V-Dem Institute's Democracy Report 2024 highlights India's continued descent into electoral autocracy since its downgrade in 2018.
- V-Dem Established in 2014 by Staffan Lindberg, a Swedish political scientist.

India's ranking on the DHL Connectedness Index

- India climbs to 62nd in 2023 from 67th in 2022 on the DHL Connectedness Index.
- Singapore, the Netherlands, and Ireland lead the global rankings as the most connected countries, reflecting their robust participation in international trade and commerce.

Begusarai Tops Global List of Most Polluted Cities

- The city of Begusarai in Bihar is the most polluted city in the world, according to the World Air Quality Report 2023 released by IQAir, a Switzerland-based organization.
- The report states that out of the top 100 most polluted places globally, 83 are from India. After Begusarai, Guwahati is the second most polluted, followed by Delhi at third place and Mullanpur (Punjab) at fourth.
- At a national level, India ranks third behind Bangladesh and Pakistan among the five most polluted countries in the list of 134 nations.
- India's PM2.5 level of 54.4 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ is more than 10 times higher than the WHO annual guideline, the report highlighted. PM2.5 refers to hazardous fine particulate matter.

WMO Report Highlights Record-breaking Climate Change Indicators in 2023

- The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) released its State of the Global Climate 2023 report, revealing unprecedented levels of climate change indicators.
- The global average near-surface temperature in 2023 was $1.45 \pm 0.12^\circ\text{C}$ above the 1850-1900 average, making it the warmest year on record.

Global Trade Overview 2023 and 2024 Outlook: UNCTAD Report

- The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) has released its Global Trade Update report, outlining the state of global trade in 2023 and projections for 2024.
- Merchandise exports in India grew by 5% in the last quarter of 2023 compared to the same period in the previous year.

Hurun Research Institute Report: Mumbai Surpasses Beijing as Asia's Billionaire Capital

- Mumbai has overtaken Beijing as Asia's billionaire capital, according to the latest report from the Shanghai-based Hurun Research Institute.
- Mumbai boasts 92 billionaires, securing its position as Asia's third billionaire capital, trailing behind New York (119) and London (97).

SPORTS

Pro Kabaddi League Season 10, Puneri Paltan Clinches Maiden Title

- The 10th edition of the Pro Kabaddi League (PKL) concluded with Puneri Paltan emerging as champions for the first time, after a closely contested final against Haryana Steelers.

Tiger Woods Honored with USGA's Prestigious Bob Jones Award

Source: Hindustan Times

- Legendary golfer Tiger Woods has been selected to receive the Bob Jones Award, the highest honour bestowed by the United States Golf Association (USGA).
- The Bob Jones Award will be formally presented to Woods on June 12th during the week of the U.S. Open held at Pinehurst Resort's famed Course No. 2 in North Carolina.

Asian River Rafting Champions Take on the Sutlej River

Source: Tribune India

- Scenic town of Shimla has become the centre stage for the first-ever Asian River Rafting Championships, officially opened on March 4th, 2024, by Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu.

About Himachal Pradesh:

Capitals: Shimla (summer), Dharamshala (winter);

Chief Minister: Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu;

Districts: 12;

High Court: Himachal Pradesh High Court.

Khelo India Medal Winners Now Eligible for Government Jobs

- Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT), in collaboration with the Department of Sports, has introduced significant reforms in the recruitment, promotion, and incentive mechanisms for athletes.
- The updated guidelines, effective from a memorandum issued on March 4, are designed to offer enhanced incentives, transparency, and inclusivity.

Sansad Khel Mahakumbh 3.0 Inaugurated in Bilaspur, Himachal Pradesh

- Union Minister Anurag Singh Thakur grandly inaugurated the Sansad Khel Mahakumbh 3.0 at the Luhnu Cricket Ground in Bilaspur on March 5, 2024. Chief Guests Indian cricket team captain Rohit Sharma and Indian cricket team coach Rahul Dravid graced the occasion as chief guests.
- It was launched in 2018.
- In the first Sansad Khel Mahakumbh 1.0, more than 1400 teams and 42,700+ youth showcased their talents in various sports. Over Rs 20 lakh in prize money was awarded.

England's James Anderson Joins Elite 700 Test Wickets Club

Source: Hindustan Times

- England's James Anderson claimed his 700th Test wicket by dismissing India's Kuldeep Yadav in Dharamshala on the morning of Day 3 of the final Test against India.
- This historic milestone makes Anderson the third bowler to reach the 700-wicket mark in Test cricket.
- Muthiah Muralidaran has 800 wickets.
- Shane Warne has 708 wickets.

Minister Hardeep S Puri Inaugurates 5th ONGC Para Games

Source: News on AIR

- Hardeep Singh Puri, Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas and Housing & Urban Affairs, inaugurated the 5th ONGC Para Games, praising para-athletes for their unwavering determination.
- The event took place at Thyagaraj Stadium, New Delhi with the presence of Shri Pankaj Jain, Secretary.

- India demonstrated para-sports excellence with 19 medals at Tokyo Paralympics 2020.

Satwik-Chirag Win BWF French Open Men's Doubles Title

Source: The Economic times

- Indian badminton stars Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty have won the BWF French Open men's doubles title, defeating Chinese Taipei's Lee Jhe-Huei and Yang Po-Hsuan in the final.
- Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty won the French Open men's doubles title
- This is their second French Open title after previously winning in 2022.

Yashasvi Jaiswal, Sutherland Named ICC Players of the Month for February 2024

- Yashasvi Jaiswal, the young Indian opener, has been named the ICC Men's Player of the Month for February 2024.
- Annabel Sutherland of Australia claimed the ICC Women's Player of the Month award for February 2024.

Max Verstappen Triumphs at Saudi Arabian Grand Prix

- Red Bull's Max Verstappen clinched victory at the Saudi Arabian Grand Prix, starting from pole position.
- It marked Red Bull's second consecutive one-two finish in the 2024 Formula One season.

Mumbai Wins Ranji Trophy 2024 after Beating Vidarbha

- Mumbai won the Ranji Trophy 2024 after beating Vidarbha by 169 runs at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai. This was their 42nd Ranji Trophy title.

Arjuna Awardee Sheetal Devi Named ECI's National PwD Icon at Inclusive Cricket Match

- The Election Commission of India (ECI) and the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) organized an exhibition cricket match to promote voter education and inclusivity.
- Ms. Sheetal Devi, a renowned Para-archer and Arjuna Awardee, was announced as the National Icon in the PwD category.
- The event was graced by the presence of Chief Election Commissioner Shri Rajiv Kumar and Election Commissioners Shri Gyanesh Kumar and Shri Sukhbir Singh Sandhu.

RCB conquer Delhi Capitals by 8 wickets, clinch maiden title

- Royal Challengers Bangalore defeated Delhi Capitals by eight wickets in the Women's Premier League 2024 final, on Sunday in New Delhi.
- Deepti Sharma won the MVP award for her outstanding all-round performance, scoring 295 runs at an average of 98.33 and taking 10 wickets at an average of 21.70.

Carlos Alcaraz Tops Daniil Medvedev to Repeat As Indian Wells Champion

- In the final of the Indian Wells ATP tournament on Sunday, Carlos Alcaraz of Spain defeated Daniil Medvedev of Russia in straight sets, with a score of 7-6 (7/5), 6-1.
- Alcaraz became the first player to win back-to-back Indian Wells titles since Novak Djokovic did it from 2014 to 2016.

Sharath Kamal to be Indian Flagbearer at Paris Olympics 2024

- Ace table tennis player Sharath Kamal will be the Indian team's flagbearer for the upcoming Paris 2024 Olympics. The announcement was made by the Indian Olympic Association (IOA).
- Ranked World No. 88, Kamal has won the national table tennis championship a record 10 times. He has also claimed 13 medals at the Commonwealth Games (CWG), including seven golds.
- Joining Kamal in the spotlight is MC Mary Kom, who has been named as the chef de mission for the Paris 2024 Summer Games.
- Mary Kom is the first female boxer in history to have captured six world titles.

Nayana James Shines at Indian Open Jumps Competition

- In the women's long jump event at the 3rd Indian Open Jumps Competition, Nayana James from Kerala recorded a personal best mark of 6.67m to secure the gold medal.
- Her jump stood out as no athlete threatened the 2024 Paris Olympics qualification mark on the day.
- Nayana's distance was 16cms off Anju Bobby George's National record and 19cms behind the Paris mark.

Sathiyam Gnanasekaran Creates History at WTT Feeder Beirut 2024

- Indian star paddler G. Sathiyam has achieved a remarkable feat by becoming the first-ever Indian to win a men's singles trophy at a WTT Feeder Series event. This historic moment took place in Beirut, Lebanon.
- This men's singles title at the WTT Feeder event in Beirut marks Sathiyam's first success at a WTT event.
- It is also his first singles title at an international ranking event since the ITTF Czech International Open 2021.

Virat Kohli Becomes First Indian to Score 12,000 T20 Runs

- Former Indian cricket captain Virat Kohli has etched his name in history by becoming the first Indian cricketer to score 12,000 runs in the T20 format.
- Virat Kohli also holds the record for the highest runs in IPL of all time. He has scored 7,284 runs in 239 matches and 230 innings at an average of 37.24 and a strike rate of 130.02.

Ferrari's Carlos Sainz clinched victory at the Australian Grand Prix

- Australian Grand Prix, Carlos Sainz of Ferrari emerged victorious, marking a remarkable comeback just two weeks after undergoing appendicitis surgery.
- The race was filled with drama, including the first retirement in two years for Red Bull's reigning world champion Max Verstappen.

Haryana Crowned Champion at Boxing Sub Junior National Championship

- Haryana clinched the team titles in both the Boy's and Girls categories with an impressive combined haul of 19 medals at the Boxing Sub Junior National Championship.

PR Sreejesh and Camila Caram Appointed Co-Chairs of FIH Athletes Committee

- The International Hockey Federation (FIH) has appointed former Indian men's hockey team captain and goalkeeper PR Sreejesh and Chile's Camila Caram as co-chairs of the FIH Athletes Committee.
- The Fédération Internationale de Hockey sur Gazon (FIH) was founded by Paul Léautéy on January 7, 1924.
- In 1982, the International Federation of Women's Hockey Associations merged with the FIH.
- The FIH has 140 member countries.
- The headquarters of FIH is located in Lausanne, Switzerland.
- The current FIH President is Tayyab Ikram.

Rohan Bopanna and Matt Ebden Triumph at Miami Open

- The top-seeded duo of Rohan Bopanna from India and Matthew Ebden from Australia won the Men's Doubles Title at the Miami Open, a prestigious ATP Masters tennis tournament.
- This Miami Open triumph marks the second title of the season for Bopanna and Ebden. Earlier this year, they won the Australian Open in Melbourne.

Sharfuddoula Becomes Bangladesh's First ICC Elite Umpire

- Sharfuddoula has created history by becoming the first Bangladeshi umpire to be appointed to the ICC Elite Panel of Umpires.
- The 47-year-old Sharfuddoula has been a part of the International Panel since 2006, with his first international appointment coming in 2010 when he officiated an ODI between Bangladesh and Sri Lanka in Mirpur.

MS Dhoni Scripts History in T20 Cricket

- Dhoni achieved a remarkable feat, becoming the first wicketkeeper to record 300 dismissals in T20 cricket.

SUMMITS AND MOUS

NTPC Green Energy Ltd Partners with MAHAGENCO to Develop Renewable Energy Parks in Maharashtra

- NTPC Green Energy Limited (NGEL) partners with Maharashtra State Power Generation Company Limited (MAHAGENCO) to develop Renewable Energy Parks in Maharashtra.

MoSPI Signs MoU with ISRO on Urban Frame Survey using Bhuvan

- National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) has partnered with the National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC) under the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) to digitize the Urban Frame Survey (UFS) using advanced Geo ICT tools and techniques through the Bhuvan Platform.

India and Nicaragua Sign Historic MoU on Pharmacopoeia Recognition

- India and Nicaragua have forged a significant partnership in the field of pharmaceutical regulation through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Pharmacopoeia recognition.
- India's Ambassador to Nicaragua, Dr. Sumit Seth, and Nicaragua's Minister of Health, Dr. Martha Reyes, signed the MoU on Pharmacopoeia cooperation between the two nations.
- Global Recognition is established in 1955.

About Nicaragua:

Capital: Managua;
 Currency: Nicaraguan Córdoba;
 President: Daniel Ortega;
 Continent: North America.

Google Partners with Shakti to Combat Online Misinformation and Deepfakes

- Google has taken a significant step to bolster the fight against online misinformation by announcing its support for Shakti, a consortium of news publishers and fact-checkers.
- Shakti emerges as a pan-India network, orchestrated by DataLEADS in collaboration with the Misinformation Combat Alliance.

About Google:

Founders: Larry Page, Sergey Brin
 Parent organization: Alphabet Inc.
 Founded: 4 September 1998, Menlo Park, California, United States
 Google CEO: Sundar Pichai (2 Oct 2015–)

BIMSTEC Faculties Exchange Programme in Dhaka Aims to Boost Mutual Cooperation

- In Dhaka, a pioneering five-day exchange program unites diplomats and faculties from seven BIMSTEC countries to enhance cooperation among Foreign Service academies.
- BIMSTEC comprises seven South Asian and Southeast Asian nations – Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Thailand
- BIMSTEC was founded in 1997.

REC Limited Partners With UNISED to Support Education of Children in Siddharthnagar, Uttar Pradesh

- REC Limited, a prominent Maharatna Central Public Sector Enterprise under the Ministry of Power and a leading Non-Banking Finance Company, has recently joined hands with the Unit of Science and Educational Development (UNISED) to bolster educational initiatives in Siddharthnagar district, Uttar Pradesh.
- Formalization of collaboration through MoA between REC Foundation and UNISED occurred in a ceremony in New Delhi.

Karnataka and World Economic Forum Join Forces to Establish AI Centre

- Karnataka state government, in a strategic alliance with the World Economic Forum (WEF), has announced the establishment of a cutting-edge AI centre in the state.

The First Bharat Steam Boiler Expo 2024 in Guwahati

- The inaugural Bharat Steam Boiler Expo 2024 has officially commenced in Guwahati, Assam.
- Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Oil India Ltd (OIL), Numaligarh Refinery Ltd (NRL), Brahmaputra Cracker and Polymer Ltd (BCPL), Assam Petro Chemicals Ltd, and NTPC Ltd.

About World Economic Forum:

Chairperson: Børge Brende;

Founder: Klaus Schwab;

Headquarters: Cologny, Switzerland;

President: Børge Brende;

Founded: 24 January 1971.

NPCI and IISc Partner for Deep Tech Research

- National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has forged a strategic partnership with the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore, to conduct joint research on Blockchain and Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology.
- This collaboration aims to establish the “NPCI-IISc Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Deep Tech Research & Development”.
- Established in 1909, IISc is India’s premier institute for advanced scientific and technological research.

NIGEL Inks PPA with GUVNL for 600 MW Solar Project

- NLCIL has emerged victorious in securing a 600 MW Solar Power Project tender within the GSECL Khavda Solar Park, initiated by GUVNL through a competitive bidding process.
- The wholly owned subsidiary of NLCIL, NIGEL, has entered into a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) with Gujarat Urja Vikas Nigam Limited (GUVNL) for the planned 600 MW Solar Power Project at Khavda Solar Park in Bhuj District, Gujarat.

Tripartite MoU signed among USOF, Prasar Bharati and ONDC

- The Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) under the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has entered a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Prasar Bharati, under the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, and the Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC).

Google Collaborates with ECI for Voter Information and Combats Misinformation Ahead of Elections

- Google has partnered with the Election Commission of India (ECI) to provide authoritative information on voting processes for the upcoming general elections.

About Google:

Founders: Larry Page, Sergey Brin;

Parent organization: Alphabet Inc.;

CEO: Sundar Pichai (2 Oct 2015–);

Founded: 4 September 1998, Menlo Park, California, United States.

Max India’s subsidiary partners with IIT Delhi for senior citizen care

- Max India Ltd announced a strategic partnership between its subsidiary, Antara Assisted Care Services Limited, and the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (IIT Delhi).

Startup Mahakumbh 2024:

- Startup Mahakumbh 2024, a groundbreaking initiative led by industry giants such as ASSOCHAM, Nasscom, Bootstrap Incubation & Advisory Foundation.
- This three-day event, supported by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT).

- Central Theme: 'Bharat Innovates'

Tamil Nadu Signs MoU to Implement PM SHRI School Scheme

- The Tamil Nadu government has agreed to implement the PM SHRI Schools (PM Schools for Rising India) scheme by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Ministry of Education, Government of India.
- Launched by the Government of India after approval from the Union Cabinet on September 7, 2022.

SANY India signs MoU with J&K Bank to give finance solution to their customers

- SANY India, a top construction equipment manufacturer, has forged a strategic partnership with J&K Bank to fuel growth and development opportunities in the region.

YES Bank Partners with Indian Olympic Association for Paris Olympics

- YES Bank has forged a strategic partnership with the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) to become the Official Banking Partner for Team India at the Paris Olympics 2024.
- YES Bank introduces the 'Milkar Jitayengey' campaign.

India and Brazil Conduct Inaugural '2+2' Dialogue

- India and Brazil recently held their inaugural '2+2' defence and foreign ministerial dialogue.
- The dialogue took place in Delhi, underscoring India's commitment to fostering closer ties with Brazil.

About Brazil:

President: Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva

Capital: Brasília

CBI, Europol sign Working Arrangement for cooperative relations

- The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and Europol have entered into a significant Working Arrangement aimed at combating crime and fostering cooperation between the two agencies.
- Europol Executive Director Catherine De Bolle and CBI Director Praveen Sood signed the Working Arrangement in a virtual event held on March 21.
- The signing ceremony took place simultaneously in New Delhi and the Hague.

AUKUS Partnership to Build Australia's SSN-AUKUS Submarines

- The United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia have forged the AUKUS partnership to bolster trilateral security and construct nuclear-powered submarines for the Royal Australian Navy.
- Collaboration between Australia's ASC and UK-based BAE Systems to construct submarines.

HPCL and Tata Join Forces to Build Nationwide EV Charging Network

- Tata Passenger Electric Mobility (TPEM), a unit of Tata Motors, has announced a strategic partnership with Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) to establish a nationwide network of 5,000 public charging stations for electric vehicles (EVs) by the end of 2024.
- TPEM and HPCL have signed an MoU to formalize their collaboration in building the charging infrastructure.

Ambani and Adani Join Forces: Reliance Buys Stake in Adani's Power Project

- In a remarkable move, two of India's richest businessmen, Mukesh Ambani and Gautam Adani, have joined forces for the first time.
- Reliance Industries, owned by Ambani, has acquired a 26% stake in a power project owned by Adani's company in Madhya Pradesh.

IIM Mumbai and Starburst Collaborate to Boost ASD Startups

- India's Aerospace, New Space, and Defence (ASD) industry, the Indian Institute of Management Mumbai (IIM Mumbai) partners with Starburst, a prominent European Aerospace, New Space, and Defence (ASD) accelerator.

- Prof. Manoj K Tiwari, Director of IIM Mumbai, and Mr. Francois Chopard of Starburst solidified the partnership through a signing ceremony at IIM Mumbai on March 26, 2024.

SIA-India and ABRASAT Sign MoU to Boost Space Sector Advancements

- The SatCom Industry Association of India (SIA-India) and ABRASAT, the Brazilian Satellite Communications Association, have joined forces to propel advancements in the space sector.
- This strategic partnership aims to foster collaboration and drive innovative ventures and technological cooperation between India and Brazil.

BANKING & ECONOMY

Amit Shah Launches National Urban Cooperative Finance and Development Corporation Limited (NUCFDC)

- Home Minister Amit Shah inaugurated the National Urban Cooperative Finance and Development Corporation Limited (NUCFDC) in New Delhi.

Policybazaar Insurance Brokers, PB Fintech's subsidiary, Receives IRDAI Approval for Composite Insurance Broker License

- PB Fintech's subsidiary, Policybazaar Insurance Brokers, has secured approval from the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) to transition from a direct insurance broker to a composite insurance broker.
- PB Fintech records first-ever net profit of Rs 37.2 crore in Q4, compared to a net loss of Rs 87 crore in Q3FY23.
- Revenue from operations surges 43% YoY to Rs 871 crore for the December quarter.

Flipkart Introduces Its Digital Payments Solution, Flipkart UPI

- Ecommerce giant Flipkart has made a significant move in the digital payments space by introducing its own UPI services, Flipkart UPI, in partnership with Axis Bank.

Goa Airline Fly91 Receives Air Operator Certificate (AOC) From DGCA

- Fly91, a regional airline headquartered in Goa, has reached a significant milestone in its journey with the issuance of its Air Operator Certificate (AOC) by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) under the Ministry of Civil Aviation.

Airbus Collaborates with IIM Mumbai to Elevate Aviation Training Standards

- Airbus, a prominent name in the aviation industry, has announced a significant partnership with the esteemed Indian Institute of Management Mumbai (IIM Mumbai) to deliver high-quality aviation training to professionals.

About Airbus:

Chief Executive Officer Guillaume Faury;

Headquarters: Leiden, Netherlands;

Founded: 10 July 2000.

Government Approves Dearness Allowance Hike and Other Benefits for Employees and Pensioners

- The Union Cabinet has sanctioned a 4% increase in Dearness Allowance (DA) and Dearness Relief (DR) for central government employees and pensioners, effective from January 1.

RBI and Bank Indonesia Sign MoU to Promote Local Currency Use

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and Bank Indonesia (BI) have inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aimed at bolstering the utilization of local currencies – the Indian Rupee (INR) and the Indonesian Rupiah (IDR) – for cross-border transactions.
- MoU, signed in Mumbai by RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das and Bank Indonesia Governor Perry Warjiyo.

India Becomes Second-Largest Mobile Phone Producer Globally

Source: The Economic times

- At the end of the decade from 2014 to 2024, India has emerged as the world's second-largest producer of mobile phones.
- According to the India Cellular and Electronics Association, the mobile phone sector has transformed from being 78 percent import-dependent in 2014 to achieving 97 per cent self-sufficiency by 2024. Only 3 per cent of the total mobile phones sold in India are now imported.

Majuli Mask Making and Manuscript Painting Receive GI Tags

Source: The Indian Express

- Majuli, the largest river island in the world, has received two prestigious Geographical Indication (GI) tags from the Indian government for its traditional crafts – Majuli mask making and Majuli manuscript painting.
- Masks have been made in Majuli since the 16th century
- Sudha Murty is known for her novel – ‘Dollar Bahu’.
- Murty is married to the co-founder of Infosys, Narayan Murty.

RBI Directs Federal Bank and South Indian Bank to Stop Issuing New Co-Branded Credit Cards

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has issued notices to Federal Bank and South Indian Bank, directing them to halt the issuance of new co-branded credit cards. The two banks informed the stock exchanges about this development.
- According to market sources, the common link between the two banks is likely to be OneCard, a co-branded metal card issuer.

PM Modi Lays Foundation Stone of three Semiconductor Facilities worth 1.25 Lakh Crore

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated three semiconductor projects virtually, with a combined investment of approximately Rs 1.25 Lakh Crore.
- The three facilities include a semiconductor fabrication unit in Dholera, Gujarat, an Outsourced Semiconductor Assembly and Test (OSAT) facility in Morigaon, Assam, and another OSAT facility in Sanand, Gujarat.

Reliance to buy 13% of Paramount’s stake in Viacom18 for Rs 4,286 crore

- Reliance Industries, India’s largest private company, has announced its acquisition of Paramount Global’s entire 13.01% stake in Viacom 18 Media for Rs 4,286 crore (\$517 million).

Adani Green Energy operationalises 126 MW wind power plant in Gujarat

- Adani Green Energy announced the operationalisation of an additional 126 MW capacity in its 300 MW wind power project in Gujarat. This comes after the earlier operationalisation of 174 MW.
- Food regulator FSSAI certifies nearly 100 jails as ‘Eat Right Campus’
- The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has certified nearly 100 jails across the nation as ‘Eat Right Campus,’ a part of its broader Eat Right India movement.

India’s forex reserves jump to over two-year high of \$636.1 bn

- India’s foreign exchange reserves witnessed a significant surge, marking a third consecutive increase in the week ended March 8, 2024. This surge propelled the reserves to reach a two-year high of \$636.1 billion.

Tata Sons Announces Sale of 0.6% Stake in TCS for over ₹9,300 Crore

- Tata Sons, aiming to alleviate its debt, plans to sell 0.65% equity in Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) for ₹9,362.3 crore. This move precedes a potential IPO, with related stocks rallying.

About TCS:

Founders: Faquir Chand Kohli, J. R. D. Tata

CEO: K. Krithivasan (1 Jun 2023–)

Headquarters: Mumbai

Founded: 1 April 1968

Axis Bank commits ₹100 crore to Enhance Cancer Care through National Cancer Grid

- In an effort to advance cancer care in India, Axis Bank has pledged a significant contribution of ₹100 crore to the National Cancer Grid (NCG), in collaboration with Tata Memorial Centre.

About Axis Bank:

CEO: Amitabh Chaudhry (1 Jan 2019)

Founded: 1993, Ahmedabad

Headquarters: Mumbai

Mineral Production in the Country Grows by 5.9% during January 2024

- In January 2024, the index of mineral production in the mining and quarrying sector stood at 144.1, indicating a 5.9% increase compared to January 2023.

GRID-INDIA Achieves Miniratna Status

- Grid Controller of India Limited (GRID-INDIA) has achieved a significant milestone by being conferred with the status of Miniratna Category-I Central Public Sector Enterprise (CPSE).
- This recognition was bestowed upon by the Ministry of Power, Government of India.
- Established in 2009, GRID-INDIA holds the crucial mandate of overseeing the seamless and uninterrupted operation of the Indian Power System.

All-India Consumer Price Index Numbers for Agricultural and Rural Labourers – February, 2024

- In February 2024, the All-India Consumer Price Index (CPI) for Agricultural Laborers and Rural Laborers remained stable, with figures of 1258 and 1269, respectively, based on the 1986-87=100 index.
- The CPI-AL and RL for March 2024 will be disclosed on April 19, 2024.

Iconic Indian Brand Amul Launches Fresh Milk in the US

- Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation (GCMMF), the organization behind the iconic Amul brand, is set to launch its fresh milk products in the United States for the first time.
- Within a week, GCMMF will introduce four variants of fresh milk in the US market.

About Amul:

Founders: Verghese Kurien, Tribhuvandas Kishibhai Patel;

Headquarters: Anand;

Founded: 14 December 1946;

Chairman: Shamalbhai B Patel.

Federal Bank Launches 'Flash Pay' in Partnership with NPCI for Contactless Payments

- National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), Federal Bank introduces 'Flash Pay,' a revolutionary RuPay smart key chain facilitating contactless NCMC (National Common Mobility Card) payments.

Modi Government Allocates Rs 6212.03 Crore for Strengthening Regional Rural Banks

- The Modi government has allocated Rs 6212.03 crore to Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) as part of the recapitalization scheme on March 6. RRBs, established in 1975 and owned by the Indian government.

India's GDP to grow by 6.8% in FY25: S&P Global

- S&P Global released its Economic Outlook Asia-Pacific Q2 2024 report, offering insights into the region's economic landscape.
- S&P Global raises India's GDP growth forecast for FY25 to 6.8%, a 40 basis points increase, contrasting with the government and central bank's projection of 7%.
- Forecasts a slowdown in China's GDP growth to 4.6% in FY25 from 5.2% in FY24.

S&P Global Ratings Forecasts 75 Basis Points Repo Rate Cut in India in 2024-25

- S&P Global Ratings anticipates a repo rate reduction of up to 75 basis points by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) during the fiscal year 2024-25.
- The agency also foresees similar rate adjustments in Indonesia, New Zealand, and the Philippines.

RBI Grants Payment Aggregator Licences to Innoviti Payments and Concerto Software

- Innoviti Payments and Concerto Software have received payment aggregator (PA) licences from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
- Innoviti operates the PA 'Innoviti Link', serving 2,500 online merchants, while Concerto Software's gateway 'Vegaah' joins the league of authorized PA solutions.

LIC: World's Strongest Insurance Brand

- In the latest Brand Finance Insurance 100, 2024 report, Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) solidifies its position as the strongest insurance brand worldwide, maintaining a stable brand value of Rs 816 billion.
- With a Brand Strength Index score of 88.3 and an AAA brand.
- LIC India demonstrates remarkable performance, recording the highest first-year premium collection of Rs 39,090 crore in the fiscal year 2022-23.

India's Transition from Minimum Wage to Living Wage

- India aims to replace its minimum wage system with a living wage framework by 2025.
- Despite the passage of the Code on Wages in 2019, implementation remains pending.
- Stagnant national wage floors since 2017 have led to disparities in wage payments, particularly affecting the vast unorganized sector where 90% of India's workforce is employed.

IRDAI Identifies LIC, GIC Re, and New India Assurance as D-SIIs

- The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has designated three insurers as Domestic Systemically Important Insurers (D-SIIs) for the year 2023-24.
- These insurers, namely Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC), General Insurance Corporation of India (GIC Re), and New India Assurance Co Ltd.

NTPC Secures USD 200 Million Loan from JBIC for Renewable Projects

- State-owned power giant NTPC has finalized an agreement with the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) to obtain foreign currency loans totaling USD 200 million (JPY 30 billion or approximately Rs 1,650 crore).

Competition Commission of India (CCI) Approves Acquisition of Lanco Amarkantak Power Limited by Adani Power Limited

- On March 26, 2024, the Competition Commission of India (CCI) granted approval to Adani Power Limited, a subsidiary of the Adani Group, for the complete acquisition of Lanco Amarkantak Power Limited.
- This acquisition involves the transfer of 100% equity share capital of Lanco Amarkantak Power Limited to Adani Power Limited.
- Statutory body responsible for enforcing the Competition Act, 2002, constituted in March 2009.

Indian-British Writer's Book on AI Shortlisted for Women's Prize

- The inaugural Women's Prize for Non-Fiction has announced its shortlist of six books, including "Code Dependent: Living in the Shadow of AI" by Indian-British journalist and commentator Madhumita Murgia.
- The book explores the impact of artificial intelligence on human society.

Kotak Mahindra Bank Acquires Sonata Finance

- In a strategic move, Kotak Mahindra Bank has successfully acquired Sonata Finance Private Limited (Sonata) for a total consideration of approximately Rs. 537 crore.
- This acquisition grants Kotak Mahindra Bank full ownership of Sonata.
- Sonata Finance is a Non-Banking Finance Company – Micro Finance Institution (NBFC-MFI) registered with the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

Income Tax Department Imposes ₹564.44 Crore Penalty on BoI

- Bank of India (BoI) has disclosed the receipt of an order from the Income Tax Department, Assessment Unit, concerning the Assessment Year (AY) 2018-19.
- The order imposes a penalty of ₹564.44 crore on various disallowances made by the bank.

India's Foreign Exchange Reserves Reach Record High

- India's foreign exchange reserves have soared to a new peak, reaching \$642.631 billion in the week ending March 22, marking the fifth consecutive week of increase, according to the latest data from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

HDFC Bank to Divest 100% Stake in Education Arm: Shares in Focus

- HDFC Bank, a leading private sector lender in India, is pursuing the sale of its entire stake in HDFC Education and Development Services.