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## To Our Readers

Dear Readers,

It is with a sense of great delight and pleasure that we are presenting the March issue of your favourite magazine **Pratiyogita Darpan**. As usual, present issue of the magazine contains useful material relevant to competitive examinations. Our editorial board and the team of highly qualified and experienced authors take painstaking efforts to present the study material, keeping in view the requirements of our esteemed readers. We are sure that if you read it intelligently and wisely, it will go a long way in equipping you with knowledge to face the gruelling battle of the examination and bring you the desired success.

We always try to understand the demands and requirements of our readers, their suggestions and changes in the pattern and content of the competitive examinations. We make all efforts to include them, as far as possible, in successive issues of the magazine. It gives us great satisfaction to know that our readers have unanimously endorsed the utility of the magazine.

In the present issue, a number of core articles on important national and international events, contributed by reputed authors, have been given. Some of the representative articles in the present issue of this magazine are : 10th Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit 2024; Pench Tiger Reserve (PTR) in Maharashtra Becomes India's First Dark Sky Park; Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik Inaugurates Malkangiri Airport; FIFA Awards 2023; ICC Awards 2023; Padma Awards 2024; Former Bihar CM Karpoori Thakur Honoured with Bharat Ratna Posthumously; BWF Malaysia Open 2024; BWF India Open 2024; Australian Open 2024.

The most important section of the Magazine contains a number of question papers selected from various competitive examinations. They have been solved with relevant hints in short, but clear-cut explanations. All efforts are made to provide error-free solutions. A careful study of and practice session with these papers will be very useful to face any competitive examination.

The columns **Divya Darpan**, **Compendium**, **Test Your Knowledge**, **Memorable Points** and **Concentric Quiz** have been widely appreciated as trusted tools for the benefit of our readers. An intelligent study and memorizing of their content will be highly useful in solving questions in any future examination.

**Pratiyogita Darpan** gives you the best guidance and reading material. It is upto you to make the best use of it for a bright success in any competitive examination.

**Read Pratiyogita Darpan regularly and intelligently. It gives you the power to master your career and shape your destiny.**

With best wishes for your brilliant success and bright future.  
Sincerely yours,

**RAHUL JAIN**  
(Editor)

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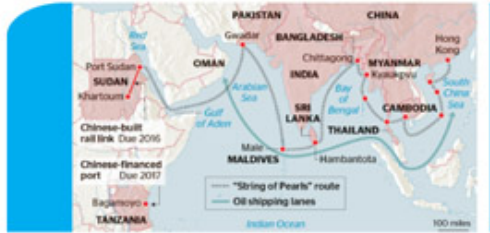
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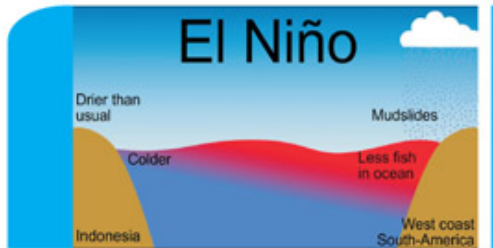
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The views and opinions expressed in Pratiyogita Darpan are those of the authors & contributors and don't necessarily reflect those of the publisher or the editor.

The best motto, the best ethical principle in life is to strive to be good within margin of human possibility. A person who is good of heart and mind is also externally good and relishes doing good to one and all. The selfish person can never be good. Hence, the first condition to be good is to be selfless to the maximum extent possible. Since we live in the world of imperfect individuals, perfection is not possible to achieve by anyone. Only God is perfect. But a good person partakes of the attributes of God, say, godliness. We have a short sojourn on this planet earth and everybody's life is rounded with a sleep (death), is it not proper for us to lead a good, pious, right and ethical life. The powers and pelf of this world will remain here when we leave the world. We will go empty-handed to the other world. But the good dead of people will go with them, while the so-called Great who hoarded immense wealth and power went away with their hands spread, with nothing on their palms. Alexander, the Great who had conquered lots of territories belonging to others; Soloman, one of the richest persons both, went empty-handed while saints like Swami Dayanand and Swami Vivekanand left behind a rich legacy of goodness and morality and went away with their hands full of goodness and beauty, something allied to goodness. Therefore, the best principle to cherish in life is to be good, to do good and serve others.

**Goodness is in your nature  
To be good is your birth right.**

To spread goodness is in your power. You want to look like a good man, and also welcome to be called a good man. Everybody wants to be so. But very few of us try to become a really good man.

Let us first ask ourselves whom we call good men and what we expect of a good man. The answer is simple. A good man is first of all a gentleman, and a gentleman is he who does not inflict pain on others or does not give any cause for offence to any one. On the other hand, he tries to be helpful and useful to all whom he comes into contact with. If you expect others to be good to you, then be helpful to others. Do unto others, as you want to be done by them. As you sow, so shall you reap. Ask your innerself—am I a good person? You would immediately know where you stand.

When you join some service—be it as an administrator, you would like to be a good officer, but people will call you good only when you do a good turn to persons who come to you to redress their grievances.

A great author has written that the secret of sound sleep is good work. He had made it a point to do a good work to atleast one person everyday, and felt satisfied when he went to sleep. You can also experience it by doing good work. So many persons suffer from insomnia because they do not do good work and do not enjoy the pleasure of self-satisfaction.

What accompanies a person when he or she goes to the other world? No money, no riches, no property, but only his goodness, and at the same time, only goodness remains and lasts forever. Even the richest of persons King Soloman, and the conqueror of the conquerors, Alexander, the Great, had to go empty-handed. But servants of the people like Swami Dayanand and Mahatma Gandhi had their hands full with goodness, when the world bade them good bye for the last time.

God is called good, because He is good to all beings, and likes all. You also begin to like all and be good to all; you too, will be called good. The first step is to like and love your own self, because you are a good person, but outwardly and inwardly you will at once experience that God and goodness will be standing beside you because goodness is next to Godliness.

Some people might think that God wants them to do some things that they do not really want to do or like doing. I think they are right to some extent. We want to go the way of pleasures, while He wants us to take the path of the 'good'. The great poet of all times, Rabindra Nath Tagore, has written that God had been good to me by rejecting many of my prayers, for pleasant things and thus left me with good things and goodness. Those who followed the path of the good, became good and great man like Mahatma Gandhi,

Mother Teresa, etc. God wants His creatures to become happy by becoming good and being good to others, and thereby change everything in life. When you ask to know God's will, you are really asking to be aware of what makes you happy. He will lead you to happiness by always reminding you to extend your love which implies being good to everyone you come in contact with.

There is a mistaken and deep rooted belief that the will of an individual and God's will can be separate. But that is not possible. You want to be happy, God wants you to be happy so the goal of the will is the same in both the cases. Then why bother to know God's will? Your will is God's will. Try to know your will and act accordingly. Trying to do good can never lead us to any wrong. We should always follow the dictates of our conscience, which is God's spark in us. If you feel miserable at some time it means you have taken an ego-decision and that you are not doing the thing with the idea of doing good and spreading goodness 'Be good and you would be love-some', says Mark Twain. You try to be good yourself and find the soul of goodness in everything and everybody you come across; then everyone will appear to be good and make yourself look good to everybody. As Bible says "A good man is covered with blessings from head to foot, but an evil man inwardly curses his luck."



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## The Consecration of the Grand Shree Ram Temple in Ayodhya

After a long wait of 500 years, a historic moment unfolded on January 22, 2024 as the newly constructed Ram Temple was consecrated in Ayodhya. This monumental event marked the culmination of decades of efforts, legal battles, and unwavering devotion.

The consecration of the grand Ram Temple in Ayodhya is not just a historic event; it is a testament to the faith, perseverance, and unity of the people of India. It represents the culmination of a long-cherished dream and the beginning of a new chapter in Ayodhya's history. As the temple stands tall, it serves as a symbol of hope, devotion, and the enduring spirit of a nation.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi threw open a magnificent new Ram Temple. Modi presided over the ceremony dedicated to the 51-inch black stone idol of the five-year-old god, or Ram Lalla, in front of a thousands-strong crowd comprising 8,000-odd guests comprising top industrialists, sportspersons, politicians, film stars, writers and journalists, and ascetics. Smt. Anandiben Patel, Governor of Uttar Pradesh; Yogi Adityanath, Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, Dr. Mohan Bhagawat, Sarsanghchalak of RSS, and Dr. Anil Mishra participated in Pran Pratishtha ceremony along with PM Modi in the sanctum sanctorum of the Ram Temple.

A total of 121 priests conducted the rituals and vedic scholar Ganeshwar Shastri David oversaw the proceedings.

Built in the traditional Nagara style of architecture with intricate carvings of deities adorning its white marble walls, the Ram temple spans 380 feet in length and 250 feet in width, with its tallest spire at 161 feet. Supported by 392 columns and accessible through 44 doors, the temple is built on the 2.77 acre plot which Hindus believe to be the birthplace of Lord Ram and which was locked away behind the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid dispute for 150 years, before the Supreme Court's landmark verdict in 2019.

## India Celebrates her Republic Day 2024

India had celebrated its 75th Republic Day on 26 January 2024 with the theme-'India-Mother of Democracy' and 'Viksit Bharat'. Each year, Republic Day is celebrated on January 26th to honor the day when the Constitution of India came into effect in 1950. India achieved independence from the British Empire on August 15, 1947. However, at that time, the country did not possess a constitution. The constitution was crafted approximately two weeks later by the Constituent Assembly of India, officially came into effect on January 26, 1950. Hence, when the Constitution of India was adopted on November 26, 1949, it was deemed fitting to celebrate and enforce this document on a day associated with national pride—January 26.

- The Republic Day parade commences from Rashtrapati Bhavan (the President's residence) and proceeds to India Gate.



- The President of India hoists the national flag, while all those in attendance sing the National Anthem, 'Jana Gana Mana'. Following this, a 21-gun salute is fired by the Indian Army Regiment of Artillery.
- The parade includes contingents from the Indian Army, Navy, and Air Force, all adorned in their official regalia.
- School children, army personnel, and NCC cadets join forces for special displays, tableaux, and exhibits representing each state.
- India also exhibits its military prowess during the event.

### Chief Guests at Republic Day Parade 2024 : French President Emmanuel Macron

- Chief Guest at Republic Day celebrations is the highest honour bestowed by a country in terms of protocol. The Chief Guest plays a central role in various ceremonial activities that have become an integral part of the event's fabric and lead-up.

### Highlights of Indigenous Defense Technologies at the Kartavya Path :

- **Swathi Weapon Locating Radar System** : The indigenously developed 'Swathi' weapon locating radar system took center stage at the Republic Day parade. A joint effort by DRDO and Bharat Electronics Ltd., this advanced radar system exemplifies India's capability in developing state-of-the-art defense technologies. The system is designed to accurately locate enemy weaponry, enhancing the nation's strategic defense capabilities.
- **Sarvatra Mobile Bridging System** : The Corps of Engineers showcased the 'Sarvatra' mobile bridging system. This mechanically-launched mobile bridge plays a crucial role in providing strategic mobility to the armed forces, showcasing India's commitment to robust infrastructure for military operations.
- **Drone Jammer and Radio Frequency Monitoring System** : The Corps of Signals presented the mobile drone jammer system and advanced radio frequency monitoring system. These technologies address modern threats, reflecting India's proactive approach in countering unmanned aerial vehicles and monitoring radio frequencies for enhanced security.
- **Indigenous Pinaka Multiple Rocket Launcher System** : The indigenously designed and manufactured Pinaka Multiple Rocket Launcher System added to the display of India's defense capabilities. This emphasizes the nation's commitment to self-reliance in defense technology.
- **Medium-Range Surface-to-Air Missile** : The parade also featured a medium-range surface-to-air missile with a surveillance range of 300 km and the ability to engage hostile aerial platforms within a range of 70 km. This missile system underlines India's focus on air defense capabilities, ensuring protection across various threat scenarios.
- **Multi-Function Radar System** : Further demonstrating India's capabilities, a multi-function radar system with a surveillance range of 300 km was displayed. This versatile radar system adds another layer to the country's airspace monitoring capabilities.

### L.K. Advani Gets Bharat Ratna

Lal Krishna Advani, the BJP stalwart who catapulted the party into national reckoning with his Rath Yatra for Ayodhya's Ram Temple in the early 1990s, has been conferred with the Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian award on February 3, 2024. Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi has announced about this development through his X post. In 2015, L.K. Advani was conferred with the Padma Vibhushan, India's second highest civilian honour.

Born in Karachi, L.K. Advani migrated to India after the Partition. He settled down in Bombay. He had joined the RSS in 1941 at the age of fourteen.

In 1951, he became a member of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh, which was founded by BJP icon Syama Prasad Mookerjee. The Jana Sangh was the political precursor to the BJP.

Advani became the member of the Rajya Sabha for the first time in 1970. He served four RS terms till 1989.

He first became the minister for information and broadcasting and leader of the house in Rajya Sabha in 1977.

He is one of the founding members of the BJP. He served as the president of the party three times. When the Atal Bihari Vajpayee formed a government in 1999, Advani served as the minister of home affairs and the deputy Prime Minister.



### India's New Hit-and-Run Law

On 25th December, 2023, President Draupadi Murmu gave her assent to the three new criminal code bills, namely Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam (BSA), and Bharatiya Nagrik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS). Transporters and commercial drivers have staged protest against the Section 106 (2) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023. This section aims to enhance the punishment for hit-and-run matters in India and protestors argue that while strict action in hit-and-run cases is necessary, the new law has several flaws that need reconsideration.

The new law comes in the backdrop of concerning figures related to road accidents in India. In 2022, India registered the highest count of road crash fatalities, exceeding 1.68 lakh deaths. This statistic translates to an average of 462 deaths daily.

### About Section 106 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023

- Section 106 (1) of the BNS says, "Whoever causes death of any person by doing any rash or negligent act not amounting to culpable homicide, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to five years, and shall also be liable to fine.
- Section 106 (2) states, "Whoever causes death of any person by rash and negligent driving of vehicle not amounting to culpable homicide, and escapes without reporting it to a police officer or a Magistrate soon after the incident, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description of a term which may extend to ten years, and shall also be liable to fine."

- Currently, under Section 304A of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), which will be replaced by the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, the punishment for causing death by negligence is two years imprisonment and fine, or both.
- The BNS also does not provide the relief provided under Section 134 in the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 which lays down the duty of a driver in case of an accident and requires him to secure medical attention for the injured person unless "it is not practicable to do so on account of mob fury or any other reason beyond his control."

### India's Oldest Living City Found in Vadnagar

Recently, a deep archaeological excavation at Vadnagar, shows evidence of a human settlement that is as old as 800 BCE contemporary to late-Vedic/pre-Buddhist Mahajanapadas or oligarchic republics. This joint study by a consortium of scientists from IIT Kharagpur, Archaeological Survey of India, Physical Research Laboratory, Jawaharlal Nehru University and Deccan College has found evidence of cultural continuity in Vadnagar, even after the Harappan collapse, thus making it likely that the 'Dark Age' was a myth.

#### Key Findings :

- The findings are significant as it plugs a gap in Indian archaeological history between 1,500 BCE and 500 BCE and points to a continuity in human settlement in India over 5,500 years.
- Excavation in several deep trenches revealed the presence of seven cultural stages (periods) :
  - ❑ Mauryans
  - ❑ Indo-Greeks (till 100 CE)
  - ❑ Indo-Scythian or Shakas known as Kshatrapa kings (till 400 CE)
  - ❑ Maitrakas (Gupta kingdom), Rashtrakuta-Pratihara-Chawada kings (till 930 CE)
  - ❑ Solanki kings (Chalukya rule till 1,300 CE)
  - ❑ Sultanate-Mughals (1680 CE)
  - ❑ Gaekwad/British
- One of the oldest Buddhist monasteries has also been discovered during excavation.
- The characteristic archaeological artefacts, potteries, copper, gold, silver and iron objects and intricately designed bangles have been found.
- They also found coin moulds of the Greek king Apollodatus during the Indo-Greek rule at Vadnagar.
- The period between the collapse of the Indus Valley Civilisation and the emergence of the Iron Age and cities like Gandhar, Koshal, and Avanti is often depicted as a Dark Age by archaeologists.
- Archaeological records are rare, the earliest one being the rock-inscription of Emperor Ashoka during the Mauryan period (320-185 BCE) at Sudarsana Lake, Girnar hill, Gujarat.

- The evidence makes Vadnagar the oldest living city within a single fortification unearthed so far in India.
- Some of recent unpublished radiocarbon dates suggest that the settlement could be as old as 1400 BCE contemporary to very late phase of post-urban Harappan period. If true, then it suggests a cultural continuity in India for the last 5500 years and the so-called Dark Age may be a myth.
- The excavation team said that the inference from the findings at Vadnagar was that cold arid/hyper-arid conditions could have triggered migration from the uninhabitable central Asia.

### Centre and Assam Sign Peace Pact with ULFA Faction

On 29th December, 2023, The Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), the Assam government and the pro-talks faction of the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) signed a memorandum of settlement. The group joined the peace talks in 2011 when it signed the suspension of operation (SoO) with the MHA and the Assam government. The other faction led by Paresh Baruah, known as ULFA-I, has not joined the peace process.

#### Key Points :

- The ULFA has agreed to renounce violence, disarm, disband the armed organisation, vacate their occupied camps, and participate in peaceful democratic process established by the law.
- 97 out of 126 Assembly seats in Assam would be reserved for indigenous people and the future delimitation exercise would follow this principle.
- The pact underlines a comprehensive package entailing an investment of ₹ 1.5 lakh crore for the all-round development of Assam.
- Further the pact include maintaining the territorial integrity of Assam through amicable settlement of boundary disputes with neighbouring States in the Northeast and continuation of the 'guidelines and methodology' adopted for the delimitation exercise conducted in 2023 in future delimitation processes.
- The pact seeks exemption for Assam from Section 3 of the Citizenship Act of 1955 dealing with people who have renounced Indian citizenship or whose citizenship has been terminated, to conditionally stop people of one constituency from being registered in another, and prepare an error-free National Register of Citizens, whose updated complete draft had put 19.06 lakh people out of 3.3 crore applicants on the rejection list.
- Constitutional safeguards would be ensured by protecting land rights and putting restrictions on migration from one constituency to another.

#### About ULFA

The ULFA was born during the anti-foreigners movement of 1979 demanding a sovereign State for the Assamese people after several Bengali speaking people crossed over to India post 1971 coinciding with the Bangladesh Liberation War.

## Climate Conference 2024 Organized by MoEFCC

On 12th January, 2024, the Climate Conference 2024, themed "Decoding the Green Transition for India, was organized in Mumbai by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India, under the Green Climate Fund Readiness Programme with Delivery Partner UNDP India and supported by Knowledge Partner Avaana Capital.

### Objectives of the Conference

The event focused on the pivotal role of the private sector, climate tech Start-ups and institutional investors in mobilizing financial resources and technical capabilities. The goal of the conference was to leverage government efforts, engage civil society and communities, and develop innovative climate services and adaptation technologies.

### Key Points of the Discussion :

- Members highlighted the global impact of extreme events due to climate change, and emphasized the need for immediate action, planning, and finance mobilization.
- Mention of Indian government actions, including the Green Credits Programme, Lifestyle for Environment (LiFE), the concept of ECOMARK labelling that has been reinvented for informed consumer choices.
- Emphasis on the importance of insurance and risk mitigation, mainstreaming climate startups, and up scaling them to industry and business models. It was also emphasized that actions like biomass utilization and waste management are considerable for climate action.
- Discussion tried to address the India's emerging issues of industrialization, urbanization, and growth, emphasizing five critical areas : renewable energy, energy storage, electric mobility, energy efficiency, and the circular economy.
- They highlighted the significance of promoting energy efficiency in micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) for cost savings and increased competitiveness.
- The role of MDBs, IFIs, and philanthropists in supporting high-risk climate projects and proposed a combination of public and private funds for enhanced returns and attracting substantial capital.
- They also highlighted the potential of green hydrogen and storage system.
- The Conference also highlighted Sustainability linked funds, risk-sharing facilities, and concessional financing.
- The Conference underscored India's roadmap to achieving net-zero by 2070, focusing on green transition investments to transform energy systems, reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, conserve natural resources, increase biodiversity, and enhance climate resilience in a socially just and inclusive manner.
- It delved into the current landscape of climate finance in India, exploring the roles of government, venture capitalists, corporates, and industry leaders.

- Discussions also centered on strategies to boost financing in the climate-tech ecosystem, emphasizing emerging solutions with disruptive potential.
- Overall, the event brought together stakeholders from diverse sectors to foster collaboration and partnership, promoting the development and adoption of sustainable, climate-resilient technologies and practices.

## The Telecommunications Act 2023

On 24th December, 2023, the Telecommunications Bill, 2023, received the assent of the President and the bill has now been enacted into law. The act will replace three archaic laws such as the Telegraph Act of 1885, the Indian Wireless Telegraphy Act of 1933 and The Telegraph Wires (Unlawful Possession) Act, 1950. It aims to consolidate the law for wireless networks and Internet service providers, and simplify the process of application for licences and permits for telecom operators.

### About Telecommunications Act, 2023

- The Act governs authorisation of telecommunication networks and services, provides for auctioning as well as administrative allocation of spectrum, and defines the mechanism for exercising the right of way for laying telecom infrastructure such as cables in public as well as private property.
- It also spells out emergency measures the government can take in the interest of national security and public safety such as intercept messages, suspend telecommunication services as well as take temporary possession of any telecommunication service or network.
- The Act also states that rules will be framed to protect consumers with the setting up of a 'Do Not Disturb' register to ensure they don't receive a specified class of messages without prior consent.

### Key Features :

- Requires prior authorization from the central government for telecommunication services, network operations, and possession of radio equipment.
- Spectrum to be assigned through auction, except for specified purposes allocated administratively.
- Grants powers for interception, monitoring, or blocking of messages on specified grounds related to public safety or emergencies.
- Suspension of telecom services under similar circumstances.
- Allows measures to protect users, including prior consent for specified messages and mechanisms for reporting malware.
- Mandates entities to establish online grievance redressal mechanisms.
- Entities laying telecom infrastructure can seek a right of way on public or private property on a non-discriminatory basis.
- Amends TRAI Act for appointments, allowing individuals with substantial professional experience to serve as Chairperson or members.

- Retains Universal Service Obligation Fund, renaming it Digital Bharat Nidhi, allowing its use for research and development.
- Specifies criminal and civil offences with associated penalties for unauthorized activities.
- Central government appoints adjudicating officers for inquiries and orders against civil offences, ensuring accountability.

### Concerns Over the Act

- According to critics, the new Telecommunications Act, 2023, is draconian and provides a legal architecture for mass surveillance and internet shutdowns.
- Most of the contentious provisions are contained in Chapter IV, which grants emergency powers to the Central government in the interest of public safety and national security.
- Section 19(f) empowers the Central government to notify “standards and conformity assessment measures” in respect of encryption and data processing in telecommunication, which has raised eyebrows given that most internet communication is increasingly being pushed towards encryption to evade national state surveillance programmes.
- All users have to be identified through the use of “verifiable biometric based identification as may be prescribed” by telecommunication service providers.
- No user shall furnish any false particulars or suppress material information. This could impede whistle-blowers as well as journalists who operate under anonymity. If users fail to comply, they will be charged a hefty penalty from ₹ 25,000 to ₹ 1,00,000 for some provisions.
- The government’s interest in breaking up encryption of WhatsApp and Signal has to be seen in the backdrop of a controversy over Israeli company NSO Group’s Pegasus spyware targeting 300 mobile phone numbers for illegal surveillance, including those of serving Ministers in the ruling government, Opposition leaders, lawyers, activists and journalists.
- It also allows the Central or a State government during a public emergency, including disaster management, and in the interest of public safety to take “temporary possession of any telecommunication service or network”.
- It can take over control and management of such services or networks. It can intercept messages on the pretext of “preventing incitement to the commission of any offence”, and direct suspension of telecommunication services in such circumstances like the shutdown of Internet seen in Manipur and Jammu & Kashmir.
- Press messages too can be intercepted or stalled in these circumstances.

### Telecom Industry on the New Law

- Digital Infrastructure Providers Association (DIPA) and Cellular Operators’ Association of India welcome uniformity across states.
- Indian Space Association appreciates the inclusion of satellite-based communication networks for spectrum allocation.

But the authority to suspend the internet has been granted without dwelling over procedural safeguards recommended by the Supreme Court as well as the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Information and Technology. It is feared that these measures will impact human rights as well as trust in digital services offered in the Indian market. The groups had, therefore, demanded that the bill be withdrawn in its current form while awaiting passage from parliament to get the assent of the President of India.

## Winter Session of Parliament

The Winter Session of Parliament which commenced on 4th December, 2023 has been adjourned on 21st December, 2023. The Session provided 14 sittings spread over a period of 18 days. Three landmark Bills relating to the criminal justice system to ensure victim-centric justice namely the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 and the Bharatiya Sakshya Bill, 2023 replacing the Indian Penal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 and the Indian Evidence Act, 1872 were passed by both the Houses of Parliament during the Session and got the assent by President of India.

This was the first full session held in the new Parliament building. A five-day Special Session had been held in September, during which the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha had ceremonially moved their sittings to the new building. The historic Women’s Reservation Bill was the first legislation to be passed in the new Parliament building.

### About Old Parliament Building

The 75-year history of the old Parliament building was also commemorated during the Special Session. That building will now be used as an additional space for parliamentary events, and a part of it will be converted into a museum to preserve the history of the iconic structure.

### Major Highlights :

- On 13th December, 2023, Parliament security was breached, two young men jumped into the shouted anti-establishment slogans. They were soon subdued by MPs and security. A case under anti-terror law Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) was registered against all of them. The matter is being investigated by anti-terror unit special cell.
- The Union Home Ministry has sanctioned the deployment of the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) for ensuring security in the Parliament complex.
- Hundred MPs from the Lok Sabha and 46 MPs from the Rajya Sabha have been suspended during the winter session of Parliament. This is the highest number of MPs suspended in a single session in the history of Parliament. The record number was due to the Opposition’s demand for a statement from the Home Minister over the security breach in Parliament. The highest number of MPs suspended from the Lok Sabha was previously 63 during the Eighth Lok Sabha, when Rajiv Gandhi was the Prime Minister.

## Some of the Major Bills Passed by Parliament During the Session Got the Nod of the President

- The Advocates (Amendment) Bill, 2023 seeks to repeal the Legal Practitioners Act, 1879 and incorporate the provisions of Section 36 of the Legal Practitioners Act 1879 in the Advocates Act, 1961.
- The Jammu & Kashmir Reservation (Amendment) Bill, 2023 seeks to change in nomenclature of 'weak and under-privileged classes (social castes) to 'Other Backward Classes' in the Jammu and Kashmir Reservation Act, 2004.
- The Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, 2023 seeks to provide nomination of not more than two members, one of whom shall be a woman from the community of Kashmiri Migrants and one member from Displaced person from Pakistan Occupied Jammu and Kashmir to the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly.
- The Central Universities (Amendment) Bill, 2023 provides for establishment of a Central Tribal University in Telangana.
- The Repealing and Amending Bill, 2023 seeks to Repeal 76 redundant and obsolete laws.
- The National Capital Territory of Delhi Laws (Special Provisions) Second (Amendment) Bill, 2023 seeks to extend the validity of the National Capital Territory of Delhi Laws (Special Provisions) Second Act, 2011 for a further period of three years from 01.01.2024 to 31.12.2026 thereby providing protection from punitive action to certain forms of unauthorised Developments in Delhi.
- The Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Bill, 2023 seeks to regulate the appointment, conditions of service and term of office of the Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners, the procedure for trans-action of business by the Election Commission and for matters connected therewith.
- The Press and Registration of Periodicals Bill, 2023 seeks to provide for press, registration of periodicals and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.
- The Telecommunications Bill, 2023 seeks to amend and consolidate the laws relating to development, expansion and operation of telecommunication services and telecommunication networks; assignment of spectrum; and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

## President of India Inaugurates Kaushal Bhawan

On 24th January, 2024, the President of India, Smt Droupadi Murmu inaugurated Kaushal Bhawan—a new building of the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship in New Delhi.

## About Kaushal Bhawan

The Kaushal Bhawan whose foundation stone was laid in March 2019 will provide office space for the Ministry as well as its associated organisations—the Directorate General of Training, the National Council for Vocational Education and Training and the National Skill Development Corporation. This state-of-the-art office building, equipped with modern facilities and infrastructure has been built with the aim of providing a safe, convenient and efficient work environment to usher in new work culture and give a fillip to Skill India Mission.

Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya inaugurates the country's 1st Healthy & Hygienic Food Street, 'PRASADAM,' at Neelkanth Van, Mahakal Lok, in Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh.

## 'PRASADAM', the Country's 1st Healthy & Hygienic Food Street

On 7th January, 2023, Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya inaugurated the country's 1st Healthy & Hygienic Food Street, 'PRASADAM,' at Neelkanth Van, Mahakal Lok, in Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh.

- It will connect common citizens in every corner of the country with pure and safe local and traditional food.
- To empower consumers to tackle adulteration, Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has released "The DART Book" to check common food adulterations at home with simple tests. Additionally, a mobile food testing van called Food Safety on Wheels (FSW) was launched to reach remote areas and conduct training and awareness activities, travelling from city to village to promote awareness campaigns and adulteration testing.

## 6 SAMARTH Curated Programs Launched by Karmayogi Bharat and NITI Aayog

Recently, Karmayogi Bharat, in association with NITI Aayog, has launched 6 SAMARTH Curated Training Programs on the iGOT Karmayogi Platform for State Government officials. These programs aim to elevate the skills and competencies of government officials, ensuring they are well-equipped to meet the evolving needs of governance.

- **SAMARTH Blocks : Building local Governance**—Tailored for citizen-facing officials and local administrators, it comprises 14 foundational courses and focuses on building skills crucial for effective local governance.
- **SAMARTH Zila : District-level challenges**—It aimed at district-level officials and it comprises 14 courses, is designed to equip learners with the knowledge and tools required to address district-level challenges and drive effective service delivery.
- **SAMARTH Rajya : Governance at the state level**—It is targeting state-level officials and comprises 14 courses that seek to equip learners with advanced skills required for steering governance at the state level.



- **SAMARTH Raja Sachiva : Empowering senior officials and state secretaries**—Tailored for senior officials and state secretaries, this program consisting of 14 courses, focuses on empowering learners with the expertise needed to navigate complex policy landscapes and drive transformative change.
- **SAMARTH Policy : Policy Formulation**—It comprises 5 courses delve into the intricacies of policy formulation, policy writing, insights, data analysis, and evaluation.
- **SAMARTH Procurement : Training in procurement guidelines**—Catering to officials involved in procurement processes, and comprises 9 courses to provide specialized training in procurement guidelines, rules, strategies, and considerations.

### About iGOT Karmayogi

It is a comprehensive online learning platform to guide government officials in their capacity-building journey. The portal combines six functional hubs for online learning, competency management, career management, discussions, events, and networking.

### INS Imphal Inducted into the Indian Navy

On 26th December, 2023, *INS Imphal*, a Project 15B stealth guided missile destroyer, was commissioned into the Indian Navy. *INS Imphal* is the third of the four 'Project 15 Bravo Visakhapatnam class' guided missile destroyers. The fourth will be named *INS Surat*. *INS Imphal* is among "the most technologically advanced guided missile destroyers in the world."



### About INS Imphal

- The ship measures 163 m in length, and 17m in breadth with a displacement of 7,400 tonnes and is amongst the most potent warships built in India.
- It is propelled by four powerful Gas Turbines, in a Combined Gas and Gas configuration, and is capable of speeds in excess of 30 knots.

- It is armed with sophisticated state-of-the-art weapons and sensors, including Surface-to-Surface Missiles, Surface-to-Air Missiles, Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) rocket launchers and Torpedo launchers, ASW helicopters, radars, sonar and Electronic Warfare systems.
- The ship is equipped to fight under Nuclear, Biological and Chemical warfare conditions.
- It is capable of launching the BrahMos cruise missile, the world's fastest supersonic cruise missile.
- It is 75% indigenous and consists of BrahMos Aerospace installed BrahMos missile on the ship. Torpedo tube launchers are of Larsen & Toubro (L&T). Rapid Gun Mount has been installed by Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd. (BHEL), and Medium Range missiles by Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL). In addition, many start-ups and MSMEs were involved in its construction.
- It is the first warship to be named after a city in the North-east, underscoring the importance and contribution of the region and Manipur to the Nation & the Indian Navy.

### HAL's Aero Engine Research & Development Centre in Bengaluru

On 29th December, 2023, a new design and test facility at the Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. (HAL) Aero Engine Research and Development Centre (AERDC) was inaugurated in Bengaluru.

- The new state-of-the-art facility houses special machines, advanced setups leveraging computational tools, in-house fabrication facility, spanning over 10,000 sq. metres, has been established under a modernisation plan.
- The AERDC is currently involved in the design and development of several new engines, including two strategic engines—Hindustan Turbo Fan Engine (HTFE) of 25 kN thrust for powering trainers, UAVs, twin-engine small fighter aircraft or regional jets, and Hindustan Turbo Shaft Engine (HTSE) of 1200 kN thrust for powering light and medium weight helicopters (3.5 to 6.5 tonnes in single or twin engine configuration).
- In addition, the newly developed facility has setups for testing air producer of Jaguar, Gas Turbine Starter Unit (GTSU), Auxiliary Power Units of IMRH and AMCA, Gas Turbine Electrical Generator (GTEG)-60 for AN 32 aircraft.
- Setups to carry out various critical tests for engine components.

### About AERDC

Hindustan Aeronautics Limited is an Indian public-sector aerospace and Defense Company established in 1940 with headquarters in Bengaluru and AERDC established in the 1960s, holds the unique distinction of being the only design house that has developed test beds for engines of both Western and Russian origin. The Centre has successfully developed & certified PTAE-7 engine, the first indigenous turbojet engine of India powering

Lakshya (unmanned aircraft), Gas Turbine Electrical Generator GTEG-60 for starting AN-32 aircraft, air starter ATS 37 & air producer for starting Adour-Mk 804E/811 on Jaguar aircraft, and Shakti engine for powering ALH to support Ad804/811 engine of Jaguar aircraft.

### State-of Art AI Supported Telemedicine Mobile Clinic for Remote Hilly Areas

On 14th January, 2024, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology, inaugurated state-of-the-art, Artificial Intelligence (AI) supported Telemedicine Mobile Clinic 'Aarogya-Doctors on Wheels' for remote hilly areas of Ramnagar region in Udhampur district of J&K.

The latest upgraded Tele Clinic is Artificial Intelligence-driven to provide healthcare facilities in far flung areas of the region, where such facilities are either not available or inadequately available.

'Aarogya' functions on the latest methodology wherein a patient can narrate his illness or complaint in his native language and the AI doctor understands the language and responds to the patient in the same language and afterwards the patient is connected to one of the leading super specialists in the country as this telemedicine hospital has been tied up with some of the leading hospitals in the country. Later, the patient's entire body profile and investigations are done. Within about 40 to 50 minutes, a patient is provided with the prescription and the treatment will be free-of-cost.

### 'SMART 2-0' Launched for Ayurveda Teaching Professionals

On 3rd January, 2024, the Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS) along with National Commission for Indian System of Medicine (NCISM) has launched 'SMART 2-0' (Scope for Mainstreaming Ayurveda Research among teaching professionals).

The objective of 'SMART 2-0' is to generate a tangible evidence to demonstrate efficacy and safety of Ayurveda interventions using interdisciplinary research methods and translating it into public health care. Under the 'SMART 1-0', around 10 diseases were covered with the active participation of teaching professionals from 38 colleges.

- The program will promote robust clinical studies in priority areas of Ayurveda with Ayurveda academic institutions/hospitals across the country through mutual collaboration.
- The study aims at safety, tolerability and adherence to Ayurveda formulations in the priority research areas of Bal Kasa, Malnutrition, Insufficient lactation, Abnormal Uterine Bleeding, Osteoporosis in post-menopausal women and Diabetes Mellitus II.

CCRAS is an apex organization for the formulation, co-ordination, development and promotion of research on scientific lines in Ayurveda, functioning under the Ministry of Ayush.

PD/March/2024/15

### Ministry of Education Launches PRERANA Program

Recently, Department of School Education & Literacy, Ministry of Education, has launched 'Prerana : An Experiential Learning program'.

#### About Prerana Program

- Prerana program will run from a Vernacular School, established in 1888, Vadnagar, district Mehsana, Gujarat. PM Modi is an alumnus of this school.
- It is a week-long residential program for 20 selected students (10 boys and 10 girls) of class IX to XII.
- It is an experiential and inspirational learning program for students with the best-in-class technology where heritage meets innovation.
- The curriculum prepared by IIT Gandhi Nagar is rooted in nine value-based themes: Swabhiman and Vinay, Shaurya and Sahas, Parishram and Samarpan, Karuna and Sewa, Vividhta and Ekta, Satyanishtha and Shuchita, Navachar and Jigyasa, Shraddha and Vishwas, and Swatantrata and Kartavya.

### Punganur Cow : The Indigenous Breed that was on the Verge of Extinction

Recently, the PM was seen feeding several Punganur cows with fodder on the eve of Makar Sankranti.

#### About Punganur Cow

- It is a rare breed, native to Punganur village in the Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh.
- It is among the world's dwarfest cattle breeds but yields highly nutritional milk; for example, it contains A2 milk, omega-3 fatty acids, calcium, potassium, and magnesium.
- It has cultural significance too. Even today, many temples in Andhra Pradesh, including the famous Tirupati Temple, use the milk of a Punganur cow for Ksheeraabhishekam (milk offerings to the deity).
- It has high resilience to drought and can adapt to low-quality feed.
- But, the FAO lists the breed as facing extinction due to cross-breeding being conducted by farmers.

### Ramsar Convention : Indore, Bhopal, Udaipur Selected for Wetland City Accreditation

Recently, Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change has submitted three nominations from India for Wetland City Accreditation of Indore (Madhya Pradesh), Bhopal (Madhya Pradesh) & Udaipur (Rajasthan) under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.

- These are the first three Indian cities for which nominations have been submitted for WCA based on the proposals received from respective State Wetlands Authorities in collaboration with the Municipal Corporations.

- The wetlands situated in and around these cities provide a plethora of benefits to its citizens in terms of flood regulation, livelihood opportunities, and recreational and cultural values.
- Sirpur Wetland (Ramsar Site in Indore), Yashwant Sagar (Ramsar site closer to Indore), Bhoj Wetland (Ramsar Site in Bhopal), and several Wetlands (Lakes) in and around Udaipur are lifelines to these cities.

### Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra

The center has launched 'Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra' that aims to display the achievements of the last nine years, which aligns with the two terms of the ruling government since 2014. It is a government initiative being undertaken across the country, to raise awareness about and track the implementation of flagship central schemes, such as Ayushman Bharat, Ujjwala Yojana, PM Surksha Bima, PM SVANidhi, etc. The programme is being undertaken with the active involvement of various Union ministries and state governments. It has four objectives : to reach out to the vulnerable who are eligible under various schemes but have not availed benefit so far, dissemination of information and generating awareness about schemes, interaction with beneficiaries of government schemes through their personal stories/ experience sharing, and enrolment of potential beneficiaries through details ascertained during the Yatra.

### Centre of Data for Public Good

Recently, in an initiative aimed at leveraging data for social good, the Foundation for Science Innovation and Development (FSID) within the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) announced the launch of the Centre of Data for Public Good (CDPG).

#### About CDPG

- CDPG will serve as a hub for multidisciplinary research, bringing together experts from academia, industry, and government to harness the power of data to benefit the public.
- With a focus on ethical data use, privacy, and responsible AI, the centre aims to develop solutions that positively impact areas such as smart cities, agriculture, logistics, geospatial and environmental sustainability etc.
- Emphasising collaboration and innovation, the centre is set to bring under its umbrella leanings from pioneering projects such as the India Urban Data Exchange (IUDX) and the Agricultural Data Exchange (ADeX).
- These projects, with their focus on urban and agricultural sectors, align seamlessly with the centre's mission. By incorporating these initiatives, the CDPG will leverage the expertise and resources of IUDX and ADeX, creating a collaborative environment that will accelerate the development and implementation of data-centric solutions.

### ANUBHAV Awards Scheme

Recently, the Department of Pension and Pensioners Welfare initiated the ANUBHAV Awards Scheme.

#### About ANUBHAV Awards Scheme 2024

It was launched by Department of Pension & Pensioners' Welfare in March 2015 for retiring/retired government employees to share their experience and showcase the significant achievements made during their service period. To participate, retiring Central Government employees are required to submit their Anubhav write ups, 8 months prior to retirement and up to 1 year after their retirement.

#### Rationale Behind the Scheme

This will create a wealth of institutional memory with replicable ideas and suggestions and become the foundation stone of good governance and administrative reforms in the future.

### Awards for Excellence in Public Administration 2023

Recently, the government has launched the Scheme for Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration 2023 designed to acknowledge, recognize and reward exemplary work done by civil servants across the country.

There will be two categories to recognize the contribution of civil servants :

- **Category 1 :** Holistic Development of Districts under 12 Priority Sector Programs, in this category 10 award would be conferred.
- **Category 2 :** Innovations for Central Ministries/ Departments, States, Districts, under this category 6 award would be conferred.

The Award winning nominations are presented in national fora under the "Abhinav Pahal" television series on Sansad TV, in the monthly National Good Governance Webinar Series and in Regional Conferences for Good Governance for replication good governance practices held in State capitals.

### News in Brief

#### Canada-based BKI Member Declared Terrorist by Centre

Recently, the Union Home Ministry has designated Lakhbir Singh Landa, a Canada-based member of the Babbar Khalsa International (BKI), an 'individual terrorist' under Section 35 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA). He is the 55th individual to be designated a terrorist under UAPA. He was involved in the terror attack through shoulder-mounted rocket propelled grenade (RPG) on the building of the Punjab Police's intelligence headquarters at Mohali, and has been involved in the supply of improvised explosive devices (IEDs), arms, sophisticated weapons and explosives from across the border to various modules for carrying out terrorist activities in Punjab. The BKI is also listed as a terrorist organisation at serial number 1 of the First Schedule, UAPA.

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# World

This Month

- ➔ *India and Russia Pact : Kudankulam Nuclear Plant*
- ➔ *India-Nepal Power Pact, MoU in Renewable Energy*
- ➔ *India Signs Bilateral Haj Agreement 2024 with Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*
- ➔ *Free Movement Regime to End at Myanmar Border*
- ➔ *Lithium Deal : Argentina, Australia and Chile*
- ➔ *Launching of GSAT-20 Satellite on SpaceX's Falcon-9*
- ➔ *India is Now Part of World's Largest Telescope Project : Square Kilometre Array Project*
- ➔ *Henley Passport Index : World's Most Powerful Passport in 2024*
- ➔ *India, Pakistan Exchange List of Nuclear Installations*
- ➔ *Drone Attacks on Merchant Ships and Maritime Security in India*
- ➔ *Migration and Mobility Agreement Between India and Italy*
- ➔ *President of UN General Assembly was on 5-Day Visit to India*
- ➔ *India and Malaysia Sign MoU for Cooperation in Broadcasting Between Prasar Bharati and Radio Televisyen Malaysia (RTM), Malaysia*
- ➔ *Iran : Over 100 Killed in Blasts Near Soleimani's Tomb During Memorial*
- ➔ *NITI Aayog & WFP Launch Compendium of Inspiring Stories on Millets Mainstreaming*
- ➔ *Indian-Thai Navy First Bilateral Exercise 'Ex-Ayutthaya'*
- ➔ *News in Brief*

## India and Russia Pact : Kudankulam Nuclear Plant

On 26th December, 2023, India and Russia signed agreements for future units of the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Project in the southern state of Tamil Nadu.

### About Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant

- The plant is being built in Tamil Nadu with the technical assistance of Russia and will be the biggest nuclear power station in India.
- It is being developed by the Nuclear Power Corporation of India (NPCIL).
- The construction began in March 2002. Since February 2016, the first power unit of the Kudankulam NPP has been steadily operating at its design capacity of 1,000 MW.
- Two 1,000 megawatt (MW) Pressurised Water Reactor (PWR) units based on Russian technology were constructed in phase one of the project. An additional four units are under construction in the second and third phases of the project.
- The power plant will have a combined capacity of 6,000 MW. The plant is expected to start operating at full capacity in 2027.

## India-Nepal Power Pact, MoU in Renewable Energy

On 4th January, 2024, during two-day visit of MEA Jaishankar to the Himalayan nation, India and Nepal signed a long-term agreement for the export of 10,000 MW power to India in the next 10 years and a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for cooperation in renewable energy was also signed by the Nepal Electricity Authority and National Thermal Power Corporation Limited, India. It was the 7th meeting of the Nepal-India Joint Commission.

### Key Points Discussed in Seventh Meeting of the Nepal-India Joint Commission

- The two sides reviewed all aspects of bilateral relations as well as areas of cooperation including connectivity, infrastructure development, economic partnership, trade, transit, investment, power, water resources, culture, tourism, sports, health and education.
- The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nepal mentioned about the issues of additional air entry routes and floods and inundation.
- External Affairs Minister Jaishankar and his Nepal counterpart N P Saud jointly inaugurated 3 cross-border transmission lines completed with India's help—132 kV Raxaul-Parwanipur, 132 kV Kushaha-Kataiya and New Nautanwa-Mainahiya line.
- The Nepal Academy of Science and Technology has signed a Service Agreement with New Space India Limited for the launch of the Munal Satellite.

## India Signs Bilateral Haj Agreement 2024 with Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

On 7th January, 2024, India and Saudi Arabia signed a bilateral agreement under which New Delhi has been allocated a quota of 1,75,025 pilgrims for the annual Haj pilgrimage in 2024.

## Highlights :

- A total quota of 1,75,025 pilgrims from India has been finalised for Haj 2024 with 1,40,020 seats being reserved for pilgrims to proceed through Haj Committee of India which will greatly benefit the common first-time pilgrims intending to undertake the Haj pilgrimage in 2024 whereas 35,005 pilgrims would be permitted to proceed through Haj Group Operators.
- India's digital initiatives in facilitating and promoting ease and convenience for the Haj pilgrims.
- Discussions also encompassed plans for the enhancement of medical facilities, ensuring the comprehensive well-being of all pilgrims.
- The initiative of the Government of India towards encouraging participation under the Ladies Without Mehram (LWM) category was discussed.

## Free Movement Regime to End at Myanmar Border

On 20th January, 2024, Home Minister Amit Shah announced that the Centre has decided to fence the entire length, *i.e.*, 1,643 km of the India-Myanmar border, which passes through the States of Arunachal Pradesh (520 km), Nagaland (215 km), Manipur (398 km), and Mizoram (510 km), to stop the free movement of people.

## About Free Movement Regime on the India-Myanmar Border

- In 2018, New Delhi implemented FMR as part of the Modi government's Act East policy, addressing growing Chinese influence in Myanmar and enhancing diplomatic ties.
- The FMR is a mutually agreed arrangement between the two countries that allows tribes living along the border on either side to travel up to 16 km inside the other country without a visa.
- The British drew the India-Myanmar border in 1826 without local consent, dividing ethnically and culturally identical people into two nations. The current border reflects this line, with strong familial ties across the region. In Manipur's Moreh region, there are villages where some homes are in Myanmar. In Nagaland's Mon district, the border actually passes through the house of the chief of Longwa village, splitting his home into two.
- The FMR also envisaged the promotion of localised border trade through customs stations and designated markets apart from helping the people of Myanmar access better education and healthcare facilities on the Indian side of the border.

## Main Reasons to end FMR

- **Movement and shelter for insurgent groups :**
  - Several insurgent groups such as the United National Liberation Front (UNLF), People's Liberation Army (PLA), and small groups of Kukis and Zomis have built camps in Sagaing Division, Kachin State, and Chin State in Myanmar.

- They took shelter there, obtained arms, trained cadres, and, most importantly, engaged in illegal activities such as smuggling drugs and selling weapons to raise funds. This is possible because of the porous borders and frequent misuse of FMR.

- **Illegal Migration :**

- The ongoing Manipur conflict revolves around the illegal migration of tribal Kuki-Chin peoples from Myanmar into India, with the Meiteis accusing them of forming a 'narco-terror network'.

## Lithium Deal : Argentina, Australia and Chile

Recently, India has entered into agreement with Argentina, Australia and Chile. The state-owned Khanij Bidesh India Ltd. (KABIL) has entered into a draft exploration and development agreement with Argentinian miner CAMYEN for acquisition and development of five-odd lithium blocks. The company has also entered into a non-disclosure agreement with Chilean miner ENAMI and Australia.

Latin American nations, primarily Chile and Argentina, account for 30–35 per cent of the world's supplies, being part of the world's 'Lithium Triangle', along with Bolivia, and the three together have more than half of the world's total lithium resources. Chile, which has 11 per cent of the world's lithium reserves, supplies 26 per cent of the requirements, while Argentina, with nearly one-fifth of the global resources, supplies about 6 per cent. Australia is among the other large lithium producers globally.

## Acquisition of Five Lithium Blocks in Argentina

- KABIL will start exploration and development of five lithium brine blocks, namely Cortadera-I, Cortadera-VII, Cortadera-VIII, Cateo-2022-01810132, and Cortadera-VI, covering an area of about 15,703 hectares.
- This is the first-ever lithium exploration and mining project undertaken by a government company in India.

## About KABIL and CAMYEN

Khanij Bidesh India Ltd. (KABIL)—a joint venture company focused on identifying, acquiring, developing, processing and making commercial use of strategic minerals in overseas locations for supply in India and Catamarca Minera Y. Energética Sociedad Del Estado (CAMYEN), a state-owned mining and energy company in the Argentine province of Catamarca.

## Launching of GSAT-20 Satellite on SpaceX's Falcon-9

The commercial arm of ISRO, New Space India Limited (NSIL) will launch GSAT-20 (renamed as GSAT-N2), on-board SpaceX's Falcon-9 during the second quarter of 2024.

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**UTTAR PRADESH JUDICIAL SERVICES RESULTS, 2023 - 107 SELECTIONS FROM RAHUL'S IAS OUT OF 302 TOTAL SELECTIONS (35.43%).**

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**PUNJAB JUDICIAL SERVICES RESULTS, 2023**

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### DELHI HIGHER JUDICIAL SERVICES RESULTS, 2022

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### HARYANA JUDICIAL SERVICES RESULTS, 2022 - 62 SELECTIONS OUT OF 122 TOTAL SELECTIONS

Rank 2 RINELA	Rank 3 AKASH SARDHA	Rank 4 DEEPA SINGHA	Rank 5 DEEPA SINGHA	Rank 6 SAVISHA CHADHA	Rank 8 NEHA SINGH	Rank 10 ANISHA GARG	Rank 13 ARSHAY KUMAR	Rank 15 AMRITH KAJUR	Rank 17 ANIL KAKKAR	Rank 22 ARSHAY ARORA	Rank 23 JYOSHNA SHARMA	Rank 25 BIRADISHA TIRPATI	Rank 28 DEEPIKA YADAV	Rank 31 LOIT AGGARWAL	Rank 33 LAKSHAY GARG	Rank 34 ANITA RAHJAN	Rank 35 VARUN BANDEL	Rank 37 SHALY KAN
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### BIHAR JUDICIAL SERVICES RESULTS, 2022 - 87 SELECTIONS OUT OF 214 TOTAL SELECTIONS

Rank 1 SHWANA BANDA	Rank 2 DIVYANSHU GUPTA	Rank 3 RAGHAV	Rank 4 SNEHA SINGH	Rank 5 PIYAL MEHTA	Rank 6 NAVYENDRA SINGH	Rank 11 NAVNET KUMAR	Rank 12 AKULI KAPOOR	Rank 13 RIYA SINGH	Rank 14 RISH KUMAR	Rank 15 ANUP SINGH SHARMA	Rank 18 SADAP MUSTAKA	Rank 19 ASHWANI KUMAR RAI	Rank 20 PIYUSH CHANILA	Rank 21 ASHWANTA DEEP	Rank 22 PRANALI PRAKASH	Rank 23 KARALDEEP KAUR	Rank 26 SHEKHAR KUMAR	Rank 27 SHEKHAR KUMAR	Rank 28 SHEKHAR KUMAR	Rank 29 SHEKHAR KUMAR	Rank 30 SHEKHAR KUMAR	Rank 31 SHEKHAR KUMAR	Rank 32 SHEKHAR KUMAR	Rank 33 SHEKHAR KUMAR
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### RAJASTHAN JUDICIAL SERVICES RESULTS, 2022

Rank 1 ANURAG	Rank 2 AJIT K. SHARMA	Rank 3 MUPOR PRYAKASH	Rank 4 ANURAG	Rank 5 NAPES KARAN	Rank 6 ATULYA SINGH	Rank 7 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 8 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 9 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 10 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 11 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 12 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 13 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 14 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 15 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 16 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 17 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 18 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 19 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 20 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 21 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 22 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 23 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 24 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 25 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 26 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 27 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 28 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 29 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 30 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 31 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 32 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 33 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 34 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 35 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 36 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 37 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 38 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 39 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 40 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 41 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 42 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 43 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 44 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 45 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 46 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 47 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 48 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 49 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 50 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 51 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 52 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 53 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 54 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 55 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 56 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 57 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 58 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 59 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 60 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 61 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 62 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 63 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 64 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 65 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 66 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 67 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 68 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 69 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 70 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 71 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 72 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 73 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 74 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 75 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 76 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 77 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 78 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 79 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 80 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 81 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 82 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 83 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 84 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 85 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 86 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 87 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 88 SALUNYA SINGH	Rank 89 SALUNYA SINGH
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### GUJARAT JUDICIAL SERVICES RESULTS, 2022

Rank 103 NABHIT RADA	Rank 11 NATYAN RAJESH JAIN	Rank 13 KIRTI SHARMA	Rank 17 RANVI SACHDEVIA	Rank 21 NAVYENDRA P. YADAV	Rank 22 SHEKHAR AGGARWAL	Rank 34 SHEKHAR K. K. ANUP	Rank 53 SHEKHAR P. KALA
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### U.P. HIGHER JUDICIAL SERVICES RESULTS, 2022

Rank 1 MAHALA BHALOTA	Rank 11 PRIYANKA SINGH	Rank 15 AJIT SINGH	Rank 20 JAYENDRA KUMAR	Rank 30 MOHAMMAD ANIS	Rank 33 DEEPIKA SINGH	Rank 35 DEEPIKA SINGH	Rank 40 SANGEETA MOGA	Rank 85 SHEKHAR MEENA	Rank 87 SHEKHAR SEN	Rank 96 SHEKHAR RATHORE	Rank 98 SHEKHAR PARIWARI
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### MADHYA PRADESH JUDICIAL SERVICES RESULTS, 2022

Rank 6 AKANKSHA GUPTA	Rank 8 SHEKHAR SETHI	Rank 9 KUNAL SONI	Rank 10 DOORU BAZENA	Rank 13 FARHAN SHARIF	Rank 16 DEBINA GOLOCHANA	Rank 17 NITESH KUMAR	Rank 18 SHEKHAR AGGARWAL	Rank 26 SHEKHAR GUPTA	Rank 29 SHEKHAR GUPTA	Rank 30 SHEKHAR GUPTA	Rank 33 SHEKHAR GUPTA	Rank 35 SHEKHAR GUPTA	Rank 40 SHEKHAR GUPTA
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### MANIPUR JUDICIAL SERVICES RESULTS, 2022

Rank 50 SHEKHAR SINGHA	Rank 55 SHEKHAR JAIN	Rank 57 SHEKHAR SHARMA	Rank 58 SHEKHAR BASOYA	Rank 62 SHEKHAR SETHI	Rank 70 SHEKHAR SETHI	Rank 73 SHEKHAR SETHI	Rank 76 SHEKHAR SETHI	Rank 88 SHEKHAR SETHI	Rank 90 SHEKHAR SETHI	Rank 92 SHEKHAR SETHI	Rank 96 SHEKHAR SETHI	Rank 98 SHEKHAR SETHI
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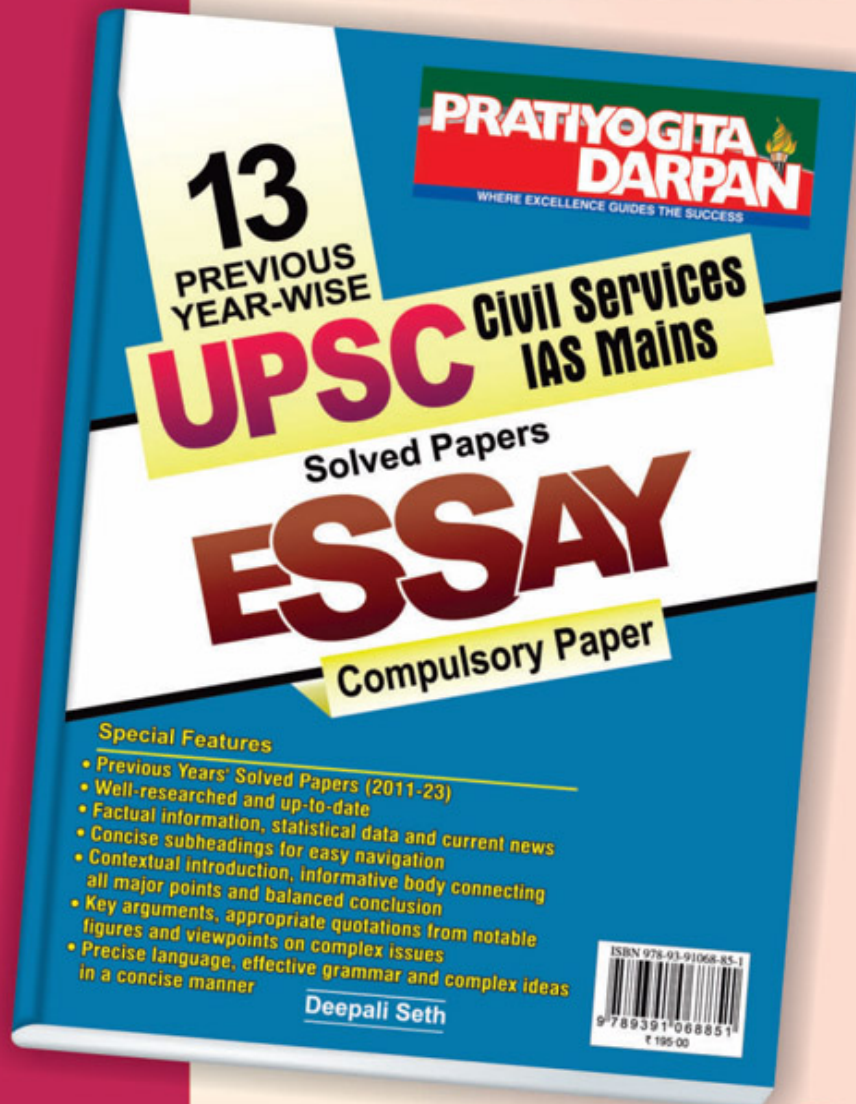
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### About GSAT-20

- GSAT-20 is a high throughput Ka-band satellite. Ka-band satellites deliver high-speed broadband internet connectivity and digital video and audio transmission.
- GSAT-20 offers Ka-band HTS capacity with 32 beams having pan-India coverage including in Andaman and Nicobar and Lakshadweep islands.
- GSAT-20, weighing 4,700 kg, offers HTS capacity of nearly 48Gpbs and has been specifically designed to meet the demanding service needs of remote/unconnected regions.

### About SpaceX's Falcon-9 rocket

- According to SpaceX, Falcon 9 is a reusable, two-stage rocket designed and manufactured by the Elon Musk-founded company for the reliable and safe transport of people and payloads into Earth orbit and beyond.
- Falcon 9 is the world's first orbital class reusable rocket.

### India is Now Part of World's Largest Telescope Project : Square Kilometre Array Project

Recently, India announced its decision to formally join the Square Kilometer Array (SKA) project.

#### About Square Kilometre Array Observatory

- SKAO, a multinational collaboration organization, was established in 2021.
- The Square Kilometre Array (SKA) project is an international effort to build the world's largest radio telescope, with eventually over a square kilometre (one million square metres) of collecting area.
- The SKAO is an array of thousands of antennas, to be installed in remote radio-quiet locations in South Africa and Australia, that will operate as one large unit meant to observe and study celestial phenomena.
- SKA observatory will provide deep insights into the early days of evolution of our galaxy, and the telescope will also search for signs of life outside Earth.
- These are aimed at advancing the scope of astronomical observations for improving the overall understanding of the universe and its evolution.
- India's main contribution to the SKA is in the development, and operation, of the Telescope Manager element, the 'neural network' or the software that will make the telescope work.
- NCRA, a unit of the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, which operates India's largest network of radio telescopes called the Giant Metrewave Radio Telescope (GMRT) near Pune, led an international team from nine institutions and seven countries to develop the software.
  - GMRT is the world's largest and most sensitive radio telescope operating within the 110-1,460 MegaHertz frequency range. This unique

telescope has, so far, yielded remarkable scientific results after studying pulsars, supernovae, quasars, galaxies and its observation time has always remained oversubscribed.

- It is the success of building and operating GMRT that landed NCRA this responsibility with the SKA.
- The SKA-India consortium comprises engineers and scientists from over 20 national-level research institutions which include : NCRA; Aryabhata Institute of Observational Sciences; Inter University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics, IIT-Kharagpur; IISER, Mohali and Thiruvananthapuram; TIFR; Raman Research Institute; Indian Institute of Science and Physical Research Laboratory.
- Countries have to sign, and ratify, the SKAO convention to formally become members. The Government's approval for joining the project, with a financial sanction of ₹ 1,250 crore, is the first step towards the ratification.
- There are 14 members : Australia, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Italy, New Zealand, Spain, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, The Netherlands and the United Kingdom.
- The SKA will bring together a wealth of the world's finest scientists, engineers and policy makers to bring the project to fruition.

### Henley Passport Index : World's Most Powerful Passports in 2024

Recently, the Henley Passport Index has released its list for 2024. India has improved its ranking and moved up to the 80th position from the previous year's ranking of 84, allowing citizens to travel visa-free to 62 countries.

- France, Germany, Italy and Spain, and Asia's Japan and Singapore sharing rank 1st in the list.
- The United States ranked at number 7.
- Ranking low on the index are Pakistan (101), Iraq (102), Syria (103) and Afghanistan (104).

#### About Henley Passport Index

- It is an annual list put together by Henley & Partners, a London-based global citizenship and residence advisory firm.
- The rankings are based on the analysis of data provided by the International Air Transport Association.
- It covers 227 destinations and 199 passports.

### India, Pakistan Exchange List of Nuclear Installations

On 1st January, 2024, India and Pakistan exchanged a list of their nuclear installations under a bilateral pact that prohibits the two sides from attacking each other's atomic facilities, continuing an annual practice that began in 1992.

The agreement was signed on December 31, 1988, and came into force on January 27, 1991. The pact mandates the two countries to inform each other of nuclear installations and facilities to be covered under the agree-

ment on January 1 of every calendar year. This is the 33rd consecutive exchange of such lists between the two countries.

## Drone Attacks on Merchant Ships and Maritime Security in India

Drone attacks on merchant ships from Houthi rebels in Yemen in the Red Sea as well as the Arabian Sea continued. Indian-crewed vessels headed to India were hit by drones, MV Chem Pluto and MV Sai Baba.

The Indian Navy currently has around 12 warships deployed in the Arabian Sea area for anti-piracy and maritime security duties and INS Visakhapatnam, undertaking anti-piracy patrol in the Gulf of Aden, acknowledged the distress call and intercepted the vessel MV Chem Pluto and saved it.

However, Operation Prosperity Guardian USA-military led operation is also continued in the region.



### About Gulf of Aden

Gulf of Aden is located in the Indian Ocean between Yemen on the south coast of the Arabian Peninsula and Somalia in Africa. The Red Sea opens into the Gulf of Aden, which joins the Arabian Sea and then the Indian Ocean, through Bab el-Mandeb. The Gulf of Aden is a vital waterway for shipping, especially for Persian Gulf oil, making it an integral waterway in the world economy. Approximately 11% of the world's seaborne petroleum passes through the Gulf of Aden on its way to the Suez Canal or to regional refineries.

## Migration and Mobility Agreement Between India and Italy

On 27th December, 2024, the Union Cabinet granted ex-post facto approval to sign and ratify the Migration and Mobility Agreement with Italy that allows Indian students temporary residence in the European nation for up to one year after studies to gather professional experience.

The Agreement would enhance people-to-people contacts, foster mobility of students, skilled workers,

business people and young professionals and strengthen cooperation on issues related to irregular migration between the two sides. The Agreement locks-in the current Italian visa regime including mechanisms for post study opportunities, internships, and professional trainings assuring an advantage for India under the existing labour mobility pathways under the Flows Decree.

### Key Provisions :

- Indian students wishing to gather initial professional experience, after completing academic/vocational training in Italy may be granted temporary residence in Italy for up to 12 months.
- The Italian side has detailed provisions related to Professional Training, Extracurricular Internships and Curricular Internships which allow Indian students/trainees to gain experience in Italian skill/training standards.
- For workers, the Italian side has reserved a quota of 5000, 6000 and 7000 non seasonal Indian workers for 2023, 2024 and 2025 under the current Flows Decree (Total reserved quota stands at 12000 for non-seasonal workers). Additionally, the Italian side has reserved a quota of 3000, 4000 and 5000 seasonal Indian workers for 2023, 2024 and 2025 under current Flows Decree (Total reserved quota stands at 8000 for seasonal workers).

## President of UN General Assembly was on 5-day Visit to India

From 22nd January to 26th January, 2024, President of the 78th Session of the UN General Assembly, Dennis Francis was on 5-day visit to India and also participated in as a state guest in the Republic Day Parade of Maharashtra on 26th January, 2024.

The theme of his Presidency of the 78th UNGA is 'Rebuilding trust and reigniting solidarity'.

### Key Points Highlighted by President of UNGA :

- He acknowledged India's significance in the United Nations, and expressed optimism about India's potential to secure a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council.
- He also expressed concerns about the out dated structure of the UNSC which is not able to reflect the current geopolitical scenario.
- He highlighted the council's inability to make crucial decisions for international peace and security, often due to geopolitical influences leading to the use of the veto.
- He mentioned that India has been a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for eight terms (16 years). India is a member of the G4, a group of nations that back each other to seek permanent membership in the UNSC. The countries advocate for reform in the UNSC.
- India, as a diverse democracy that is home to one-sixth of humanity, plays an "unparalleled role in our global mission" to create a safer, more equal, and sustainable world.



- He also applauded India's contribution in the Global south.
- He mentioned about India's stands that firmly committed to assisting the U.N. in the maintenance of international peace and security, building on its legacy of support to U.N. peacekeeping.
  - India has contributed well over 250,000 troops the largest number from any single country—regrettably, with many Indian peacekeepers having paid the supreme sacrifice while serving in UN missions.
  - India's policy of gender equality has resulted in the country becoming the third-largest troop contributor, and the first country to deploy a Female Formed Police Unit which was for the UN Mission in Liberia. The high standards of performance maintained by Indian troops and police officers deployed in UN peace Missions under challenging circumstances are highly regarded worldwide.

### About United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)

The UN General Assembly (UNGA) is one of the six principal organs of the UN and serves as the main policy-making organ of the Organization. Comprising all Member States, it provides a unique forum for multilateral discussion of the full spectrum of international issues covered by the Charter of the United Nations. Each of the 193 Member States of the United Nations has an equal vote.

The UNGA also makes key decisions for the UN, including :

- Appoints the Secretary-General on the recommendation of the Security Council.
- Elect the non-permanent members of the Security Council.
- Approve the UN budget.

Dennis Francis is the President of the 78th Session of the UN General Assembly and the theme of his Presidency of the 78th UNGA is 'Rebuilding trust and reigniting solidarity'.

### India and Malaysia Sign MoU for Cooperation in Broadcasting Between Prasar Bharati and Radio Televisyen Malaysia (RTM), Malaysia

Recently, the Union Cabinet has given its approval to the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed on 7th November, 2023. With this, the total number of MoUs signed by Prasar Bharati with different countries has increased to 46.

#### Significance of the MoU

- It has an immense potential to strengthen the cooperation in the field of broadcast, exchange of news, and audio-visual programmes as well as significantly augment India's friendly relations with the country.

- It will promote cooperation in public broadcasting in the field of radio and television between the countries.
- It will be crucial in distribution of content in other countries, in developing partnerships with international broadcasters with international broadcasters and exploring new strategies to address the demands of new technologies.
- The major benefits arising out of signing MoUs are exchange of programmes in the areas of culture, education, Science and technology, sports, news and other fields on gratis/non-gratis basis.

### About Prasar Bharati

It is an Indian state-owned public broadcasting, headquartered in New Delhi, India. It is a statutory autonomous body set up by an Act of Parliament and comprises the Doordarshan Television broadcasting and Akashvani, which were earlier media units of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

### Iran : Over 100 Killed in Blasts Near Soleimani's Tomb During Memorial

On 3rd January, 2024, Dozens of people have been killed and more than 200 others wounded in two explosions near the tomb of former Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) General Qassem Soleimani during a ceremony marking four years since his assassination. The Islamic state (IS) terror group claimed responsibility for the attack.

General Qaseem Soleimani was killed by the US in January 2020. He was a soldier during the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war, became the commander of the Quds Force, the foreign operational wing of the IRGC, in 1998 and was a sworn enemy of the Islamic State when he was alive.

He was instrumental in shaping Iran's forward defence doctrine, which sought to build regional strength through a network of Shia Militia Groups across West Asia.

Iran helped create Hezbollah, a Lebanese Shia movement, in the 1980s and it continued to nurture good ties with Iraqi Shia Organisations throughout the regime of Saddam Hussein.

The reason for frequent attacks is that the IS, which is a Sunni Salafi-Jihadist outfit, sees Iran, a Shia theocracy, both as an ideological rival and a battlefield enemy. For the IS, Shias are not real Muslims—they are apostates who follow shirk (idolatry). The IS also sees Iran as a formidable rival in the battlefield as Iran-backed militias played a key role in defeating the jihadists in parts of Syria and predominantly in Iraq.

### NITI Aayog & WFP Launch Compendium of Inspiring Stories on Millets Mainstreaming

On 12th January, 2024, a compendium featuring inspiring stories from India, Asia, and African countries on the mainstreaming of millets was launched in New Delhi by NITI Aayog and the World Food Programme (WFP).

## Key Highlights :

- It aims to foster capacity building and scaling up the best practices in the adoption of millets across the world.
- The compendium included the inspiring case stories to help countries to learn and invest in traditional climate resilient crops such as millet, like India has been doing, especially during the International Year of Millet (IYM).
- The initiative was started in July 2022, is a successful collaboration between NITI Aayog and WFP, emphasizing the importance of sharing experiences and expertise on millets.
- The compendium is expected to act as a reference for integrating millets into mainstream food systems, offering insights for making informed decisions and exchange through South-South Cooperation and policy dialogues.
- It also held discussion on the promotion of millets as a staple food, dietary diversification through millets and focused increase in investments and productivity.

## About Millet

Millets are one of the oldest foods known to humans. Millets were among the first crops to be domesticated in India with several pieces of evidence pointing to their consumption during the Indus valley civilization.

Millet is a common term to categorize small-seeded grasses that are often termed Nutri-cereals or Dryland-cereals and includes Sorghum (Jowar), Pearl Millet (Bajra), Finger Millet (Ragi), Little Millet (Kutki), Foxtail Millet (Kakun), Proso Millet (Cheena), Barnyard Millet (Sawa), Kodo Millet (Kodon) and other millets.

## Indian-Thai Navy First Bilateral Exercise 'Ex-Ayutthaya'

Recently, the Indian Navy and Royal Thai Navy (RTN) conducted a maiden bilateral exercise, named 'Ex-Ayutthaya', which symbolises the significance of 'Ayodhya' in India and Ayutthaya in Thailand, which holds historic legacies and has rich cultural ties. The 36th edition of the India-Thailand Coordinated Patrol (Indo-Thai CORPAT) was also conducted along with the maiden bilateral exercise.

The Indo-Thai Bilateral Exercise 'Ex-Ayutthaya' translates to 'The Invincible One' or 'Undefeatable', and symbolises the significance of two of the oldest cities, Ayodhya in India and Ayutthaya in Thailand, the historic legacies, rich cultural ties and shared historical narratives dating back to several centuries.

## News in Brief

### International Purple Fest 2024

From 3rd January to 13th January, 2024, International Purple Fest 2024 has been organised at Goa by the State Commissioner's

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Office for Persons with Disabilities in collaboration with the Directorate of Social Welfare, Government of Goa, and supported by the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India. The aim of the fest was to showcase the talents of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) through engaging performances in music, dance, and entertainment during the Opening Ceremony.

### Bhutan's Parliamentary Elections

Tshering Tobgay to become Prime Minister for a second time after his party the liberal People's Democratic Party (PDP) won nearly two-thirds of seats. The election was dominated by serious economic challenges that have called into question the Himalayan kingdom's long-standing policy of prioritising 'Gross National Happiness' over growth.

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### MLJK-MA and TeH Declared as Unlawful Associations Under UAPA

On 27th December, 2023, the Government of India has declared 'Muslim League Jammu-Kashmir (Masarat Alam faction) /MLJK-MA and 'Tehreek-e-Hurriyat, Jammu & Kashmir (TeH)' as an 'Unlawful Association' under Section 3(1) of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) 1967.

### India's First NH Steel Slag Road Section on NH-66 Inaugurated

On 13th January, 2024, India's first National Highway Steel Slag Road section on NH-66, connecting Mumbai to Goa was inaugurated.

#### About Steel Slag Road on NH-66 :

- The technology is being developed by the CSIR-Central Road Research Institute, converting waste from steel industries into a valuable resource for building robust and eco-friendly national highways.
- The bituminous steel slag road is constructed with 28% less thickness compared to conventional bituminous roads on NH-66.
- This technology helps the NHAI in constructing stronger and environment friendly national highways across the country.

### INS Cheetah, Guldar and Kumbhir Stalwart Ships Decommissioned

On 12th January, 2024, Indian Navy Ships Cheetah, Guldar and Kumbhir were decommissioned at Port Blair after rendering four decades of glorious service to the nation.

Cheetah, Guldar and Kumbhir were built at Gdynia Shipyard, Poland as Polnocny class Landing Ships and were commissioned into the Indian Navy in 1984, 1985 and 1986 respectively. Cheetah was based at Kochi and Chennai for brief periods, and Kumbhir and Guldar were based at Visakhapatnam. The ships were subsequently re-based at Andaman and Nicobar Command, where they served till their decommissioning.

### REC to Collaborate with NIIFL for Financing Renewable, Infra Projects

REC Limited, a Maharatna Central Public Sector Enterprise under the Ministry of Power and a leading NBFC, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the National Investment and Infrastructure Fund Ltd. (NIIFL) to collaborate on a suite of funding solutions for Renewable Energy Projects as well as large-scale infrastructure projects in India.

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Updates

# National and International

## ACRONYMS

- FORDA** — Federation of Resident Doctors Association
- IIFCL** — India Infrastructure Finance Company Limited
- NCLAT** — National Company Law Appellate Tribunal
- NMDA** — National Maritime Domain Awareness Centre
- UIDAI** — Unique Identification Authority of India

## APPOINTMENTS

### Raghuram Iyer Chief Executive of Indian Olympic Association

The Indian Olympic Association (IOA) appointed Raghuram Iyer as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) on January 4, 2024.

Raghuram Iyer, who was selected by the IOA Nomination Committee, has experience in sports management. He served as the CEO of Indian Premier League sides Rajasthan Royals, Lucknow SuperGiants and Rising Pune Supergiant and Indian Super League side ATK Mohun Bagan and Table Tennis outfit RPSG Mavericks.



Raghuram Iyer

IOA President P.T. Usha said "His appointment is a significant step towards the continued growth and success of Indian sports on the global stage."

### Vice Admiral Sanjay J. Singh Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief Western Naval Command

Vice Admiral Sanjay J. Singh took over as the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief (FOC-in-C) Western Naval Command (WNC) on January 3, 2024. He succeeded Vice Admiral Dinesh K. Tripathi. Prior to taking this charge Sanjay J. Singh served as the Vice Chief of Naval Staff at Naval Headquarters, New Delhi.



Sanjay J. Singh

Vice Admiral Sanjay is a graduate of the National Defence Academy, and was commissioned in the Executive Branch of the Indian Navy in 1986. He holds M.A., M.Phil and Ph.D. degrees. Vice Admiral Singh was awarded the Nau Sena Medal (2009), and Ati Vishisht Seva Medal (2020).

### Frederik X New King of Denmark

Frederik Andre Henrik Christian acceded to the throne of Denmark as Frederik X following his mother's abdication on January 14, 2024.

Frederik is the elder son of Queen Margrethe II and Prince Henrik. He became Crown Prince of Denmark following his mother's accession to the throne in 1972.

Queen Margrethe II announced her abdication during her annual live broadcast New Year's eve address on December 31, 2023 and officially signed a declaration of her abdication on January 14, 2024.

Frederik remained active in the defence services in the period 2002-03 served as staff officer at Defence Command Denmark.



Frederik X

### Dinesh K. Tripathi Vice Chief of Naval Staff

Vice admiral Dinesh K. Tripathi took over as Vice Chief of the Naval Staff on January 4, 2024. Prior to this he served as the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the Western Naval Command. He succeeded Vice Admiral Sanjay J. Singh. Vice Admiral Dinesh is an alumnus of Sainik School Rewa and the National Defence Academy. He joined Indian Navy in 1985.

He is a specialist in Communication and Electronic Warfare and has commanded INS Vinash, INS Kirch and INS Trishul. Vice Admiral Tripathi has been recognised with the Ati Vishisht Seva Medal (AVSM) and Nau Sena Medal (NM) for his duties.



Dinesh K. Tripathi

### Randhir Jaiswal MEA Spokesperson

Randhir Jaiswal, who hails from Bihar, assumed charge as the spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) on January 3, 2024 succeeded Arindam Bagchi. Jaiswal was serving as Consul General in New York from July 2020.

Jaiswal, a 1998 batch Indian Foreign Service Officer served in Cuba, South Africa, Portugal and at Indian's permanent mission to the United Nations in New York.



Randhir Jaiswal

### Nina Singh First Woman Head of Central Industrial Security Force (CISF)

Nina Singh, an Indian Police Service (IPS) Officer of 1989 batch took over as the first woman Director General of Central Industrial Security Force(CISF) on December 29, 2023. She served as Director General-in charge of CISF after her predecessor Sheel Vardhan Singh retired on August 31, 2023. She will remain the Director General until July 31, 2024, that the date of her superannuation. She was from Rajasthan cadre and first woman to hold the top police post of Director General in the state.

Nina Singh is from Bihar. She studied at the Patna Women's college and obtained Master's degree from Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) and Harvard University, USA. She co-authored research papers with Economics Nobel Laureates Abhijit Banerjee and Esther Dufflo at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA. She was Joint Director of Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) between 2013-2018.



Nina Singh

Nina Singh is a recipient of the police Medal for Meritorious Service and the President's Police Medal for distinguished service. Central Industrial Security Force is a Central Armed Police Force under the Ministry of Home Affairs. It provides security to atomic power plants, airports, major ports, oil fields and refineries and other Central Public Sector Undertakings.

### Anish Dayal Singh Director General of Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF)

Anish Dayal Singh, a 1988 batch Indian Police Officer of Manipur cadre was appointed as the Director General of Central Reserve Police Force up to December 31, 2024, that is the date of his superannuation.



Anish Dayal Singh

Indo - Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) chief Anish Dayal Singh was holding the additional charge of the CRPF following the retirement of incumbent S.L. Thaosan on November 30, 2023.

### Rahul Rasgotra ITBP Chief

Indian Police Service officer of 1989-batch of the Manipur cadre Rahul Rasgotra took charge from outgoing DG Anish Dayal Singh as the new Director General of the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) on January 1, 2024. Rasgotra served nearly three decades in the Intelligence Bureau (IB) as its special director. He will retire in September 2025.

The primary task of ITBP is to guard the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China apart from rendering a variety of duties in the internal security domain.



DEATHS

### British Actress Glynis Johns

Glynis Margaret Payne Johns died on January 4, 2024 at the age of 100 in Los Angeles, California, US.

Glynis was a British stage and movie actress, dancer, pianist and singer. She was the daughter of Welsh actor Melvyn Johns. She was best known for her role as Winifred Banks in Walt Disney's musical motion picture Mary Poppins and as Desiree Armfeldt in A Little Night Music.

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### Music Maestro Rashid Khan

Music Maestro Rashid Khan died on January 9, 2024 at the age of 55 in Kolkata. He was an Indian Hindustani Classical vocalist musician belonging to Rampur-Sahaswan Gharana. He was the grandson of gharana founder Inayat Hussain Khan. He was born in Sahaswan, Badaun in Uttar Pradesh.

Ustad Rashid Khan was awarded Padam Bhushan (2022) and Padam Shri (2006) and entailed Sangeet Natak Akademi Award in 2006.



Rashid Khan

Rashid Khan experimented with fusing pure Hindustani music with lighter musical genres. He also demonstrated his versatility by taking part in Jugalbandis, where he performed on stage alongside other musicians and sitarist Shahid Parvez.

Rashid Khan gave his voice to a number of songs in Hindi and Bengali films from 2004 to 2019. The most popular songs are 'Aage Jab Tum Saajna' in Jab We Met in 2007, 'Alha Hi Rahem' in My Name is Khan in 2010 and 'Bol ke Lab Azad Hain' in the film Manti in 2018.

### British Actor Tom Wilkinson

Tom Wilkinson (Thomas Geoffrey Wilkinson) died on December 30, 2023 at the age of 75, in London. He was known for his role on stage and screen. He acted in numerous films such as In the Name of the Father, The Patriot, Batman Begins, The Ghost Writer and Danial.

He won Golden Globe Award and Primetime Emmy Award for best supporting actor in the HBO limited series John Adams in 2009. Wilkinson received the BAFTA Award for best actor in a supporting role for The Full Monty (1997). He also received two Academy Award nominations for best actor for In The Bedroom (2001) and best supporting actor for Michael Clayton (2007).



Tom Wilkinson

### Brazilian Footballer Mario Zagallo

Brazilian football legend Mario Zagallo died on January 5, 2024 at the age of 92, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. He was the last surviving Brazilian player who participated in the 1958 World Cup final.

Mario Zagallo holds the record for 4 World Cup titles and 6 World Cup finals. He was the first person to win the FIFA World Cup as both a manager and a player, winning the competition in 1958 and 1962 as a player and in 1970 as manager. He won the 1994 FIFA World Cup as assistant manager.



Mario Zagallo

Zagallo coached the Brazilian team in 1974 and 1998. He was also a technical assistant in 2006. Zagallo received the FIFA Order of Merit in 1992 and 9th Greatest Manager of All Time by World Soccer Magazine in 2013.

## German Footballer Franz Beckenbauer

German football legend Franz Beckenbauer nicknamed 'Der kaiser' passed away on January 7, 2024 at the age of 78 in Austria.

Franz was one of three men along with Brazilian Mario Zagallo and French Didier Deschamps to have won the World Cup as a player and manager. He lifted the World Cup as captain in 1974, and as manager in 1990.

He is one of the nine players to have won the FIFA World Cup, European championship Cup and the Ballon d'Or. He worked for 34 years as a columnist for the tabloid Bild.



Franz Beckenbauer

## Poet Munnawar Rana

Urdu poet Munnawar Rana died on January 14, 2024 at the age of 71 in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh.

Munnawar Rana used to write in Urdu, Hindi and Awadhi languages. His Urdu ghazals have been translated into English by Tapan Kumar Pradhan.

He was awarded Sahitya Akademi Award for Urdu Literature in 2014. He returned the award about one year later due to rising intolerance and communalism in the country. He was also awarded Maati Ratan Samman by Shobha Sansthan for his services to Urdu literature in 2012.



Munnawar Rana

## Ex Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago Basdeo Pandey

Basdeo Pandey died on January 1, 2024 in Jacksonville, Florida, USA, at the age of 90.

Basdeo Pandey was a politician, lawyer, economics, trade unionist and actor who served as the fifth Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago from 1995 to 2005.

He was born on May 25, 1933, in Julien Village, Princes Town, British Trinidad and Tobago in an Indo-Trinidad family. His father was Harry Chote Sookchand Pandey. His grandfather were immigrant from British India who immigrated to from British India. His maternal grandmother was from Laxmanpur, a village in Azamgarh district, Uttar Pradesh. His visited the village in 1997 and met with extended members of the family and donated ₹ 1.5 million to help to develop the village.

Basdeo Pandey also acted in several roles, including films-Nine Hours to Rama, The Winston Affair and The Brigand of Kandahar. He was awarded the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman by the Ministry of Overseas India Affairs in 2005.

## Russian Poet Lev Rubinstein

Russian poet, essayist, journalist and social activist Lev Semyonovich Rubinstein died on January 14, 2024 at the age of 76 in Moscow, Russia.

Rubinstein was often associated with Moscow Conceptualists. Moscow Conceptualism was a Russian artistic movement in which the ideative concept of art superseded traditional artistic focuses. It is also a negative response to Russian Socialist Realism.

Rubinstein's writings have been translated into four English-language books : Complete Catalog of Comedic Novelties, Here I am : New Russian Writing, Thirty-five New Pages.

He was awarded the Literary Andrei Bely Prize in the nomination Humanitarian Research (1999) and Literary Prize NOS for his book Signs of Attention (2012).

## Classical Singer Prabha Atre

Indian classical vocalist Prabha Atre died on January 13, 2024 at the age of 91 in Pune, Maharashtra.

Atre belongs to Kirana Gharana, learnt from guru Suresh Babu Mane and Hirabai Badodkar. She acknowledged the influence of Amir Khan for Khyal and Bade Ghulam Ali Khan for Thumari. She also had training in Kathak dance.

She was famous for Khyal, Thumri, Dadra, Ghazal, Geet, Bhajans and Natya-sangeet. Atre played roles in Marathi theatre classics, which included Sangeet Natak like Sanhaya-Kallol, Maanaapamaan, Subhadra and Vidyadharan.

She composed books of music Swarangini and Swaranjane. Books on musical thoughts are Swaramayee, Suswaralee, Along the path of Music and Enlightening the Listener. She wrote a book of poetry Antah Swar in Marathi, Hindi and English.

She served as Professor and Head of the Department of Music, S.N.D.T. Women's University, Mumbai. She established some years ago Swaramayee Gurukul in Pune. Prabha Atre was awarded several awards including Padma Shri, Padma Bhushan, Padma Vibhushan and Sangeet Natak Akademi Award.



Prabha Atre

## AWARDS AND HONOURS

### Prof. B.R. Kamboj Honoured With M.S. Swaminathan Award

Chaudhary Charan Singh Haryana Agricultural University's Vice Chancellor Prof. B.R. Kamboj was honoured with the prestigious M.S. Swaminathan Award on January 2, 2023 at the International Conference on 'One Health One World,' held at Rajmata Vijayaraje Scindia Agricultural University at Gwalior in Madhya Pradesh. Thawar Chand Gehlot, the Governor of Karnataka, decorated Prof. Kamboj with this coveted honour given in recognition of his contributions as a scientist and extension specialist in the field of agronomy.

A special committee, constituted for the M.S. Swaminathan Award, selected Prof. B.R. Kamboj for his excellent achievements in the field of education, research, technology development and extension in agricultural science. Vice Chancellor, Prof. B.R. Kamboj is well aware of the common problems, needs and socio-economical conditions of the farmers. The agricultural recommendations put forth by Prof. Kamboj, stemming from his research work and collaborative extension activities with university scientists, have consistently proven to be highly advantageous for farmers.

Prof. Kamboj has published about 300 research papers and articles in national and international journals, books and technical magazines.

### **Savita Kanswal Gets Tenzing Norgay National Adventure Award 2022 Posthumously**

Mountaineer Savita Kanswal was honoured with the Tenzing Norgay National Adventure Award 2022 in Land Adventure posthumously as her father Radhe Shyam Kanswal received the award on behalf of his daughter from President Droupadi Murmu on January 9, 2024 in New Delhi. Savita Kanswal, a courageous mountaineer from Lothru village in the Bhatwari block of Uttarkashi district in Uttarakhand, made history by becoming the first Indian woman mountaineer to conquer both Mount Everest (8848 m) and Mount Makalu (8485 m) within an astonishing span of 16 days. Savita died on October 5, 2022, in an avalanche at Mount Draupadi Ka Danda-2 peak in Uttarakhand's Uttarkashi district.

### **President Droupadi Murmu Confers Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puruskar 2023**

President Droupadi Murmu on January 9, 2024 conferred the Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puruskar 2023 at a specially organised function at Rashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi. Odisha Mining Corporate Limited has been awarded the Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puruskar 2023 in the category of Encouragement to Sports through Corporate Social Responsibility. Jain Deemed to be University, Bengaluru has been awarded for the identification and nurturing of budding and young talent.

The six core awards which constitute India's National Sports Awards are the Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award or simply the Khel Ratna, the Arjuna Award, the Dronacharya Award, the Major Dhyan Chand Award, the Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Trophy, also called the MAKA Trophy, and the Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puruskar. Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puruskar is given to corporate entities, Sports Control Boards, NGOs, including sports bodies at the State and National level, who have played a visible role in the area of sports promotion and development.

### **FIFA Awards 2023; Lionel Messi and Aitana Bonmati Crowned Best FIFA Players Male and Female Respectively**

FIFA, the global football governing body conferred its annual football awards for 2023 on January 15, 2024 in various categories at a glittering award ceremony in London.

#### **FIFA Awards 2023; Major Winners :**

- **The Best FIFA Women's Player :** Aitana Bonmati (Spain / FC Barcelona)
- **The Best FIFA Men's Player :** Lionel Messi (Argentina/Paris Saint-Germain/Club Internacional de Fútbol Miami)
- **The Best FIFA Women's Goalkeeper :** Mary Earps (England / Manchester United)
- **The Best FIFA Men's Goalkeeper :** Ederson (Brazil / Manchester City FC)
- **The Best FIFA Women's Coach :** Sarina Wiegman (Netherlands / England Women's National Team)

- **The Best FIFA Men's Coach :** Pep Guardiola (Spain / Manchester City FC)
- **The FIFA Puskás Award :** Guilherme Madrugá (Brazil / Botafogo Futebol Clube)
- **The FIFA Special Award :** Marta
- **The FIFA Fair Play Award :** Brazil men's national team
- **The FIFA Fan Award :** Hugo Daniel 'Toto' Iniguez

#### **81st Golden Globe Awards 2024**

81st Golden Globe Awards 2024 were conferred on January 7, 2024 at a star-studded ceremony in Los Angeles, the USA for outstanding work in movie and Television fields. The award ceremony was hosted by comedian Jo Koy. *Oppenheimer* was the evening's big movie winner, with *Succession* and *The Bear* sweeping the TV categories.

#### **81st Golden Globe; Major Award Winners :**

##### **Film**

- **Best Motion Picture : Drama—***Oppenheimer*
- **Best Motion Picture : Musical/Comedy—***Poor Things*
- **Best Motion Picture : Animated—***The Boy and the Heron*
- **Best Motion Picture : Non-English Language—***Anatomy of a Fall* (France)
- **Best Performance by an Actor in a Motion Picture : Drama—**Cillian Murphy for *Oppenheimer*
- **Best Performance by an Actress in a Motion Picture : Drama—**Lily Gladstone for *Killers of the Flower Moon*
- **Best Performance by an Actor in a Motion Picture : Musical or Comedy—**Paul Giamatti for *The Holdovers*
- **Best Performance by an Actress in a Motion Picture : Musical or Comedy—**Emma Stone for *Poor Things*
- **Best Performance by a Supporting Actor in a Motion Picture :** Robert Downey, Jr. for *Oppenheimer*
- **Best Performance by a Supporting Actress in a Motion Picture :** Da'Vine Joy Randolph for *The Holdovers*
- **Best Director :** Christopher Nolan for *Oppenheimer*
- **Best Screenplay :** Justine Triet and Arthur Harari for *Anatomy of a Fall*
- **Best Original Score :** Ludwig Göransson for *Oppenheimer*
- **Best Original Song :** "What Was I Made For?" by Billie Eilish and Finneas O'Connell for *Barbie*

##### **Television**

- **Best Television Series : Drama—***Succession*
- **Best Television Series : Musical or Comedy—***The Bear*
- **Best Limited Series, Anthology Series, or Motion Picture :** *Beef*
- **Best Performance by an Actor in a Television Series : Drama—**Kieran Culkin for *Succession*
- **Best Performance by an Actress in a Television Series : Drama—**Sarah Snook for *Succession*
- **Best Performance by an Actor in a Television Series : Musical or Comedy—**Jeremy Allen White for *The Bear*

- **Best Performance by an Actress in a Television Series : Musical or Comedy**—Ayo Edebiri for *The Bear*
- **Best Performance by an Actor in a Limited Series, Anthology Series, or Motion Picture** : Steven Yeun for *Beef*
- **Best Performance by an Actress in a Limited Series, Anthology Series, or Motion Picture** : Ali Wong for *Beef*

### President Droupadi Murmu Confers Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar, 2024

President Droupadi Murmu conferred the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar, 2024 to nineteen exceptional children in New Delhi on January 22, 2024. The award was conferred upon 19 children selected from all regions of the country for their achievements in the field of Art and Culture, Bravery, Innovation, Social Service and Sports.

- 1 **Aaditya Vijay Bramhane** (posthumous) : Maharashtra—Bravery
- 2 **Anushka Pathak** : Uttar Pradesh—Art & Culture
- 3 **Arijeet Banerjee** : West Bengal—Art & Culture
- 4 **Armaan Ubhrani** : Chhattisgarh—Art & Culture
- 5 **Hetvi Kantibhai Khimsuriya** : Gujarat—Art & Culture
- 6 **Ishfaq Hamid** : Jammu & Kashmir—Art & Culture
- 7 **Md Hussain** : Bihar—Art & Culture
- 8 **Pendyala Laxmi Priya** : Telangana—Art & Culture
- 9 **Suhani Chauhan** : Delhi—Innovation
- 10 **Aryan Singh** : Rajasthan—Science & Technology
- 11 **Avnish Tiwari** : Madhya Pradesh—Social Service
- 12 **Garima** : Haryana—Social Service
- 13 **Jyotsna Aktar** : Tripura—Social Service
- 14 **Saiyam Mazumder** : Assam—Social Service
- 15 **Aaditya Yadav** : Uttar Pradesh—Sports
- 16 **Charvi A** : Karnataka—Sports
- 17 **Jesicca Neyi Saring** : Arunachal Pradesh—Sports
- 18 **Linthoi Chanambam** : Manipur—Sports
- 19 **R. Surya Prasad** : Andhra Pradesh—Sports

### Former Bihar CM Karpooi Thakur Honoured with Bharat Ratna Posthumously

Former Chief Minister of Bihar and eminent socialist leader Karpooi Thakur was conferred on the Bharat Ratna, India's highest honour posthumously on January 23, 2024 by President Droupadi Murmu. The award comes 35 years after his death—Karpooi Thakur died on February 17, 1988. Dubbed 'Jan Nayak' by many in the state, Thakur served as the Chief Minister of Bihar from December 1970 to June 1971, representing the Socialist Party, and from December 1977 to April 1979, heading the Janata Party in the state.

Born on January 24, 1924, Thakur championed the cause of the backward classes and during his tenure as Bihar CM, he introduced the 'Karpooi Thakur Formula' for providing quotas for backward classes in government jobs. The Bharat Ratna, the highest civilian award in the country, has been granted to 49 individuals so far, with 17 posthumously. Instituted in 1954, this award is open to anyone, regardless of race, occupation, position, or gender.

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### Padma Awards 2024 Announced

President Droupadi Murmu on January 25, 2024 approved conferment of 132 Padma Awards for the year 2024 including 2 duo cases (in a duo case, the Award is counted as one). Padma Awards—one of the highest civilian Awards of the country, are conferred in three categories, namely, Padma Vibhushan, Padma Bhushan and Padma Shri. The Awards are given in various disciplines/fields of activities, viz., art, social work, public affairs, science and engineering, trade and industry, medicine, literature and education, sports, civil service, etc. 'Padma Vibhushan' is awarded for exceptional and distinguished service; 'Padma Bhushan' for distinguished service of high order and 'Padma Shri' for distinguished service in any field. The Padma awardees list comprises 5 Padma Vibhushan, 17 Padma Bhushan and 110 Padma Shri Awards. 30 of the awardees are women and the list also includes 8 persons from the category of Foreigners/NRI/PIO/OCI and 9 Posthumous awardees.

#### Padma Awards 2024 : List of Awards Winners :

##### Padma Vibhushan (5)

1. Ms. Vyjayantimala Bali : Art—Tamil Nadu
2. Shri Konidela Chiranjeevi : Art—Andhra Pradesh
3. Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu : Public Affairs—Andhra Pradesh
4. Shri Bindeshwar Pathak (Posthumous) : Social Work—Bihar
5. Ms. Padma Subrahmanyam : Art—Tamil Nadu

##### Padma Bhushan (17)

6. Ms. M. Fathima Beevi (Posthumous) : Public Affairs—Kerala
7. Shir Hormusji N. Cama : Literature & Education - Journalism—Maharashtra
8. Shri Mithun Chakraborty : Art—West Bengal
9. Shri Sitaram Jindal : Trade & Industry—Karnataka
10. Shri Young Liu : Trade & Industry—Taiwan
11. Shri Ashwin Balachand Mehta : Medicine—Maharashtra
12. Shri Satyabrata Mookherjee (Posthumous) : Public Affairs—West Bengal
13. Shri Ram Naik : Public Affairs—Maharashtra
14. Shri Tejas Madhusudan Patel : Medicine—Gujarat
15. Shri Olanchery Rajagopal : Public Affairs—Kerala
16. Shri Dattatray Ambadas Mayalooalias Rajdutt : Art—Maharashtra
17. Shri Togdan Rinpoche (Posthumous) : Others—Spiritualism—Ladakh
18. Shri Pyarelal Sharma : Art—Maharashtra
19. Shri Chandreshwar Prasad Thakur : Medicine—Bihar
20. Ms. Usha Uthup : Art—West Bengal
21. Shri Vijaykanth (Posthumous) : Art—Tamil Nadu
22. Shri Kundan Vyas : Literature & Education—Journalism—Maharashtra

##### Padma Shri (110)

23. Shri Khalil Ahamad : Art—Uttar Pradesh
24. Shri Badrappan M : Art—Tamil Nadu
25. Shri Kaluram Baniya : Art—Madhya Pradesh
26. Ms. Rezwana Choudhury Bannya : Art—Bangladesh

27. Ms. Naseem Bano : Art—Uttar Pradesh
28. Shri Ramlal Bareth : Art—Chhattisgarh
29. Ms. Gita Roy Barman : Art—West Bengal
30. Ms. Parbati Baruah : Social Work—Assam
31. Shri Sarbeswar Basumatary : Others-Agriculture—Assam
32. Shri Som Datt Battu : Art—Himachal Pradesh
33. Ms. Takdira Begum : Art—West Bengal
34. Shri Sathyanarayana Beleri : Others-Agriculture—Kerala
35. Shri Drona Bhuyan : Art—Assam
36. Shri Ashok Kumar Biswas : Art—Bihar
37. Shri Rohan Machanda Bopanna : Sports—Karnataka
38. Ms. Smriti Rekha Chakma : Art—Tripura
39. Shri Narayan Chakraborty : Science & Engineering—West Bengal
40. Shri A. Velu Ananda Chari : Art—Telangana
41. Shri Ram Chet Chaudhary : Science & Engineering—Uttar Pradesh
42. Ms. K. Chellammal : Others-Agriculture—Andaman & Nicobar Islands
43. Ms. Joshna Chinappa : Sports—Tamil Nadu
44. Ms. Charlotte Chopin : Others-Yoga—France
45. Shri Raghuvveer Choudhary : Literature & Education—Gujarat
46. Shri Joe D Cruz : Literature & Education—Tamil Nadu
47. Shri Ghulam Nabi Dar : Art—Jammu & Kashmir
48. Shri Chittaranjan Debbarma : Others-Spiritualism—Tripura
49. Shri Uday Vishwanath Deshpande : Sports—Maharashtra
50. Ms. Prema Dhanraj : Medicine—Karnataka
51. Shri Radha Krishan Dhiman : Medicine—Uttar Pradesh
52. Shri Manohar Krishana Dole : Medicine—Maharashtra
53. Shri Pierre Sylvain Filliozat : Literature & Education—France
54. Shri Mahabir Singh Guddu : Art—Haryana
55. Ms. Anupama Hoskere : Art—Karnataka
56. Shri Yazdi Maneksha Italia : Medicine—Gujarat
57. Shri Rajaram Jain : Literature & Education—Uttar Pradesh
58. Shri Jankilal : Art—Rajasthan
59. Shri Ratan Kahar : Art—West Bengal
60. Shri Yashwant Singh Kathoch : Literature & Education—Uttarakhand
61. Shri Zahir I Kazi : Literature & Education—Maharashtra
62. Shri Gaurav Khanna : Sports—Uttar Pradesh
63. Shri Surendra Kishore : Literature & Education—Journalism—Bihar
64. Shri Dasari Kondappa : Art—Telangana
65. Shri Sridhar Makam Krishnamurthy : Literature & Education—Karnataka
66. Ms. Yanung Jamoh Lego : Others-Agriculture—Arunachal Pradesh
67. Shri Jordan Lepcha : Art—Sikkim
68. Shri Satendra Singh Lohia : Sports—Madhya Pradesh
69. Shri Binod Maharana : Art—Odisha
70. Ms. Purnima Mahato : Sports—Jharkhand
71. Ms. Uma Maheshwari D : Art—Andhra Pradesh
72. Shri Dukhu Majhi : Social Work—West Bengal
73. Shri Ram Kumar Mallick : Art—Bihar
74. Shri Hemchand Manjhi : Medicine—Chhattisgarh
75. Shri Chandrashekhhar Mahadeorao Meshram : Medicine—Maharashtra
76. Shri Surendra Mohan Mishra (Posthumous) : Art—Uttar Pradesh
77. Shri Ali Mohammed & Shri Ghani Mohammed\* (Duo) : Art—Rajasthan
78. Ms. Kalpana Morparia : Trade & Industry—Maharashtra
79. Ms. Chami Murmu : Social Work—Jharkhand
80. Shri Sasindran Muthuvel : Public Affairs—Papua New Guinea
81. Ms. G. Nachiyar : Medicine—Tamil Nadu
82. Ms. Kiran Nadar : Art—Delhi
83. Shri Pakaravur Chithran Namboodiripad (Posthumous) : Literature & Education—Kerala
84. Shri Narayanan EP : Art—Kerala
85. Shri Shailesh Nayak : Science & Engineering—Delhi
86. Shri Harish Nayak (Posthumous) : Literature & Education—Gujarat
87. Shri Fred Negrit : Literature & Education—France
88. Shri Hari Om : Science & Engineering—Haryana
89. Shri Bhagabat Padhan : Art—Odisha
90. Shri Sanatan Rudra Pal : Art—West Bengal
91. Shri Shankar Baba Pundlikrao Papalkar : Social Work—Maharashtra
92. Shri Radhe Shyam Pareek : Medicine—Uttar Pradesh
93. Shri Dayal Mavjibhai Parmar : Medicine—Gujarat
94. Shri Binod Kumar Pasayat : Art—Odisha
95. Ms. Silbi Passah : Art—Meghalaya
96. Ms. Shanti Devi Paswan & Shri Shivan Paswan\* (Duo) : Art—Bihar
97. Shri Sanjay Anant Patil : Others-Agriculture—Goa
98. Shri Muni Narayana Prasad : Literature & Education—Kerala
99. Shri K.S. Rajanna : Social Work—Karnataka
100. Shri Chandrashekar Channapatna Rajannachar : Medicine—Karnataka
101. Shri Bhagwatilal Rajpurohit : Literature & Education—Madhya Pradesh
102. Shri Romalo Ram : Art—Jammu & Kashmir
103. Shri Navjivan Rastogi : Literature & Education—Uttar Pradesh
104. Ms. Nirmal Rishi : Art—Punjab
105. Shri Pran Sabharwal : Art—Punjab
106. Shri Gaddam Sammaiah : Art—Telangana
107. Shri Sangthankima : Social Work—Mizoram
108. Shri Machihan Sasa : Art—Manipur
109. Shri Omprakash Sharma : Art—Madhya Pradesh
110. Shri Eklabya Sharma : Science & Engineering—West Bengal



111. Shri Ram Chander Sihag : Science & Engineering—Haryana
112. Shri Harbinder Singh : Sports—Delhi
113. Shri Gurvinder Singh : Social Work—Haryana
114. Shri Godawari Singh : Art—Uttar Pradesh
115. Shri Ravi Prakash Singh : Science & Engineering—Mexico
116. Shri Seshampatti T. Sivalingam : Art—Tamil Nadu
117. Shri Somanna : Social Work—Karnataka
118. Shri Kethavath Somlal : Literature & Education—Telangana
119. Ms. Shashi Soni : Trade & Industry—Karnataka
120. Ms. Urmila Srivastava : Art—Uttar Pradesh
121. Shri Nepal Chandra Sutradhar (Posthumous) : Art—West Bengal
122. Shri Gopinath Swain : Art—Odisha
123. Shri Laxman Bhatt Tailang : Art—Rajasthan
124. Ms. Maya Tandon : Social Work—Rajasthan
125. Ms. Aswathi Thirunal Gouri Lakshmi Bayi Thampuratty : Literature & Education—Kerala
126. Shri Jagdish Labhshanker Trivedi : Art—Gujarat
127. Ms. Sano Vamuzo : Social Work—Nagaland
128. Shri Balakrishnan Sadanam Puthiya Veetil : Art—Kerala
129. Shri Kurella Vittalacharya : Literature & Education—Telangana
130. Shri Kiran Vyas : Others-Yoga—France
131. Shri Jageshwar Yadav : Social Work—Chhattisgarh
132. Shri Babu Ram Yadav : Art—Uttar Pradesh

**Note :** \* In Duo case, the Award is counted as one.

### **Farokh Engineer and Ravi Shastri Get BCCI's Col. C.K. Nayudu Lifetime Achievement Awards; BCCI Other Awards Also Conferred**

#### **BCCI Awards; Major Winners :**

- **Col C.K. Nayudu Lifetime Achievement Award :** Ravi Shastri and Farokh Engineer (2019-20).
- **Polly Umrigar Award for Best Men's Cricketer of the Year :** Shubman Gill (2022-23), Jasprit Bumrah (2021-22), Ravichandran Ashwin (2020-21), Mohammed Shami (2019-20).
- **Best International Cricketer, Women :** Deepti Sharma (2019-20, 2022-23), Smriti Mandhana (2020-21, 2021-22).
- **Best International Debut, Men :** Mayank Agarwal (2019-20), Axar Patel (2020-21), Shreyas Iyer (2021-22), Yashasvi Jaiswal (2022-23).
- **Best International Debut, Women :** Priya Punia (2019-20), Shafali Varma (2020-21), S. Meghna (2021-22), Amanjot Kaur (2022-23).
- **Dilip Sardesai Award (2022-23) : Highest Runs:** Yashasvi Jaiswal; **Highest Wickets :** R. Ashwin.
- **Most Runs in ODIs – Women :** Punam Raut (2019-20), Mithali Raj (2020-21), Harmanpreet Kaur (2021-22), Jemimah Rodrigues (2022-23).
- **Most Wickets in ODIs – Women :** Poonam Yadav (2019-20), Jhulan Goswami (2020-21), Rajeshwari Gayakwad (2021-22), Devika Vaidya (2022-23).

- **Best Umpire in Domestic Cricket :** K.N. Ananthapadmanabhan (2019-20), Vrinda Rathi (2020-21), J. Madangopal (2021-22), Rohan Pandit (2022-23).
- **Best Performance in Domestic Tournaments :** Mumbai (2019-20).
- **Lala Amarnath Award: Best all-rounder in domestic limited-over competitions :** Baba Aparajith (2019-20), Rishi Dhawan (2020-21, 2021-22), Riyan Parag (2022-23).
- **Lala Amarnath Award : Best all-rounder in Ranji Trophy :** Manishankar Mura Singh (2019-20), Shams Mulani (2021-22), Saransh Jain (2022-23).
- **Madhavrao Scindia Trophy—Highest run-getter in Ranji Trophy :** Rahul Dalal (2019-20), Sarfaraz Khan (2021-22), Mayank Agarwal (2022-23).
- **Madhavrao Scindia Trophy: Highest wicket-taker in Ranji Trophy:** Jaydev Unadkat (2019-20), Shams Mulani (2021-22), Jalaj Saxena (2022-23).
- **M.A. Chidambaram Trophy—Highest wicket-taker in U19 Cooch Behar Trophy :** Harsh Dubey (2019-20), A.R. Nishad (2021-22), Manav Chothani (2022-23).
- **M.A. Chidambaram Trophy—Highest run-getter in U19 Cooch Behar Trophy :** P. Kanpillewar (2019-20), Mayank Shandilya (2021-22), Danish Malewar (2022-23).
- **M.A. Chidambaram Trophy—Highest wicket-taker in U23 Col Cok Nayudu Trophy :** Ankush Tyagi (2019-20), Harsh Dubey (2021-22), Vishal Jayswal (2022-23).
- **M.A. Chidambaram Trophy—Highest run-getter in U23 Col Cok Nayudu Trophy :** Parth Palawat (2019-20), Y.V. Rathod (2021-22), Kshitij Patel (2022-23).

### **ICC Awards 2023; Virat Kohli Named ICC Men ODI Cricketer of The Year**

The International Cricket Council (ICC) announced its annual awards in different categories for outstanding performances in international men and women cricket across formats on January 24, 2024.

#### **ICC Awards 2023 : In Brief :**

- **Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy for ICC Men's Cricketer of the Year 2023 :** Pat Cummins (Australia)
- **Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy for ICC Women's Cricketer of the Year 2023 :** Nat Sciver (England)
- **ICC Spirit of Cricket Award :** Zimbabwe players
- **ICC Men's ODI Cricketer of the Year 2023 :** Virat Kohli (India)
- **ICC Men's Test Cricketer of the Year 2023 :** Usman Khwaja (Australia)
- **ICC Women's ODI Cricketer of the Year 2023 :** Chamari Athapaththu (Sri Lanka)
- **David Shepherd Trophy for ICC Umpire of the Year 2023 :** Richard Illingworth (England)
- **ICC Emerging Women's Cricketer of the Year 2023 :** Phoebe Litchfield (Australia)
- **ICC Emerging Men's Cricketer of the Year 2023 :** Rachin Ravindra (New Zealand)
- **ICC Women's T20I Cricketer of the Year 2023 :** Hayley Matthews (West Indies)

- ICC Men's T20I Cricketer of the Year 2023 : Suryakumar Yadav (India)
- ICC Women's Associate Cricketer of the Year 2023 : Queentor Abel (Kenya)
- ICC Men's Associate Cricketer of the Year 2023 : Bas de Leede (Netherlands)

### 69th Filmfare Awards 2024; David Dhawan Gets Filmfare Lifetime Achievement Honour

69th Filmfare Awards, one of the most prestigious film awards in Hindi cinema were conferred in different categories at a glittering award ceremony in Gandhinagar, Gujarat on January 28, 2024.

#### 69th Filmfare Awards; Major Award Winners :

- **Best Film (Popular)** : 12th Fail directed by Vidhu Vinod Chopra.
- **Best Film (Critics)** : Joram
- **Best Actor in a Leading Role** : Ranbir Kapoor for Animal
- **Best Actress in a Leading Role** : Alia Bhatt for Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani
- **Best Actor (Critics)** : Vikrant Massey for 12th Fail
- **Best Actress (Critics)** : Rani Mukerji for Mrs. Chatterjee Vs. Norway and Shefali Shah for Three Of Us
- **Best Director** : Vidhu Vinod Chopra
- **Best Actor in a Supporting Role (Male)** : Vicky Kaushal for Dunki
- **Best Actor in a Supporting Role (Female)** : Shabana Azmi for Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani
- **Best Lyrics** : Amitabh Bhattacharya for Tere Vaaste-(Zara Hatke Zara Bachke)
- **Best Playback Singer (Male)** : Bhupinder Babbal (Arjan Vailly-Animal)
- **Best Playback Singer (Female)** : Shilpa Rao (Besharam Rang-Pathaan)
- **Best Story** : Amit Rai for OMG2
- **Best Screenplay** : Vidhu Vinod Chopra for 12th Fail
- **Lifetime Achievement Award** : David Dhawan



## DEFENCE

### DRDO Tested Robotic Mounted Gun System at Pokhran

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully tested the robotic mounted artillery system at the Pokhran firing range in Jaisalmer district of Rajasthan on January 5, 2024.

The robotic gun system or ATAGS comprises the artillery system mounted on an armoured truck which is capable of taking the ammunition, loading it and firing it on its own.

DRDO Advances Towed Artillery Gun System (ATAGS), is a towed 155 mm/52 calibre howitzer. It is developed for the Indian Army by Armament and Development Establishment (ARDE), Tata Advanced Systems and Kalyani Strategic Systems.

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### India-UAE Inaugural Military Exercise Desert Cyclone

The inaugural edition of joint military exercise between India and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) was conducted from January 2-15, 2024 in Rajasthan, India.

The aim of the exercise was to enhance interoperability by learning and sharing best practices in Urban Operations.

The inaugural Joint Air Force Exercise between India and the UAE was conducted in September 2008 at the Al-Dhafra base in Abu Dhabi.

India consistently takes part in the biennial International Defence Exhibition (IDEX) held in Abu Dhabi.

### DRDO Launched Assault Rifle 'Ugram' For Armed Forces

The first operational prototype of the assault rifle 'Ugram' was unveiled at the Armament and Combat Engineering Systems of the Defence and Development Organisation (DRDO) in Pune on January 8, 2024.

The 7-62 x 51 mm calibre assault rifle Ugram has an effective range of 500 metres and weighs less than 4 kilograms. The rifle has a 20 round magazine and fires in both single and full auto mode.

The rifle has been developed by Armament Research and Development Establishment (ARDE) of DRDO in collaboration with Hyderabad based Dvipa Armour India Private Limited.

Ugram will have to go through several internal tests, acceptance trials and user trials before it can be considered for induction.



## SPACE/AVIATION

### Japan Fifth Country to Reached on Moon

Japan's Smart Lander for Investigating Moon (SLIM) spacecraft successfully landed on the lunar surface on January 19, 2024. Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) confirmed SLIM successfully established signals after landing.

Japan joined Russia, the United States of America, China and India in reaching the lunar surface.

The SLIM launched in September 2024 is a cargo research mission. It carried a variety of scientific payloads including an analysis camera and a pair of lunar rovers.



## MEETING/CONFERENCE/ EXHIBITION

### All India Conference of Director Generals/ Inspector Generals of Police

58th All India Conference of Director Generals/ Inspector Generals (DG-IG Conference) of Police was held on January 5-7, 2024 at the Rajasthan International Centre, Jaipur in Rajasthan.

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi also participated in the conference. He emphasised the principles of Citizen First, Dignity First, and Justice First and urged the police to transition from danda to Data in their approach. He

stressed the importance of ensuring women's safety for fearless work anywhere, anytime. The Prime Minister concluded the conference by giving the Police Medal for Distinguished Services.

The participants deliberated on national security, emerging cyber threats, global counter-terrorism, counter-terrorism strategies and left wing extremism.

## SCIENCE/TECHNOLOGY

### New Antibiotic Zosurabalpin Developed to Target Drug-resistant Bacteria *Acinetobacter Baumannii*

Scientists from Harvard University and the Swiss health care company Hoffmann-La Roche said that the new antibiotic Zosurabalpin can effectively kill *Acinetobacter Baumannii*.

Bacteria *Acinetobacter* thrives in medical environments like hospitals and nursing homes. People at the highest risk of infections are those who have a catheter, who are on a ventilator or who have open wounds from surgery.

*Acinetobacter Baumannii* is a Gram-negative bacteria, meaning it is protected by inner and outer membranes, making it difficult to treat.

The aim of the scientists is to identify and fine-tune a molecule that could cross the double membranes and kill the bacteria. Zosurabalpin inhibits the growth of *Acinetobacter Baumannii* by preventing the movement of large molecules called Lipopoly saccharides to the outer membrane, where they are needed to maintain the membrane's integrity. This causes the molecules to accumulate inside the bacterial cell. Levels inside the cell become so toxic that the cell itself dies.

## DISEASES

### Zombie Deer Disease

Zombie deer disease, scientifically known as Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD), primarily affects deer, reindeer, sika deer, elk and moose.

This disease progressively deteriorates the brains of these animals, leading to dementia-like symptoms and eventual death. It may take over a year before an infected animal develops symptoms.

It has been found in some areas of North America, including Canada and the United States, Norway and South Korea.

The scientists are worried that this is a slow-moving disaster and is likely to spread to human beings as well. It is fatal, with no known treatments or vaccines. As per the United States Centre for Disease Control (CDC) it is a prion disease which can affect both humans and animals.

## GEOGRAPHY

### Earth Core Wobbles Every 8.5 Years

In a new study published in the Journal Nature Communications, researchers from China's Wuhan University

examined changes in Earth's rotational normal modes, especially focusing on the Inner Core Wobble (ICW).

This Inner Core Wobbling, caused by random forces acting on the inner core of the Earth, affects the Earth's rotation, and happens once every 8.5 years.

## DISASTERS/ACCIDENT

### Volcano Mount Merapi Erupted in Indonesia

Mount Merapi, Indonesia's most active volcano, began spewing lava on January 21, 2024, with ash clouds covering some towns on the Java island of Indonesia.

Mount Merapi is an active stratovolcano located on the border between the province of Central Java and the special Region of Yogyakarta, Indonesia. It is the most active volcano in Indonesia and has erupted more than 80 times regularly since 1548.

The International Association of Volcanology and Chemistry of the Earth's Interior has named Mount Merapi as a Decade Volcano since 1995 because of its high volcanic activity. Volcanoes in Indonesia are part of the Pacific Ring of Fire. Indonesia has around 130 active volcanoes and the most active volcanoes are Kelut and Mount Merapi.

### 7.1 Magnitude Earthquake in China

An earthquake with a magnitude of 7.1 occurred in the border region between Xinjiang of China and Kyrgyzstan on January 22, 2024. Multiple aftershocks were recorded, the strongest of them at 5.3 magnitude. Tremors were also felt in Delhi-NCR in India approximately 1400 kilometres away.

In nearby Kazakhstan an identical earthquake with a magnitude of 6.7 was also reported. The earthquake occurred at a depth of 27 kilometres in China's Xinjiang region, specifically 140 kms west of the city of Akasu. The epicentre of the earthquake was Uchturpan County, where temperatures have plummeted, reaching lows of negative 18 degrees Celsius.

### Earthquake Struck in Japan

The 7.5 magnitude earthquake struck Japan Sea coast on January 1, 2024 on the remote Noto Peninsula. Earthquake struck at a depth of 10 kilometres in the Noto Peninsula of Ishikawa prefecture.

The Japan Meteorological Agency immediately issued a tsunami warning along coastal regions of western Japan. The first waves reported in the city of Wajima in Ishikawa prefecture around 1.2 metres after 10 minutes. No damage was reported. The tsunami warning was later withdrawn.

The earthquake caused extensive damage on the Noto Peninsula, particularly in the towns of Wajima, Suzu and Noto. More than 150 fatalities and 323 missing individuals were reported in Ishikawa while over 600 were injured.

Japan is the most seismically active country in the world. The activity has been increasing around Noto since the end of 2020 and more than 500 small and medium earthquakes have hit there over the past three years.

### Plane Crashed in Afghanistan

A Dassault Falcon 10 Plane air ambulance crashed in Afghanistan near the border with Pakistan on January 20, 2024. This is the first fatal air accident since 2020.

According to the Russian Civil Aviation Authorities the aircraft was Russian registered and operating as an ambulance flight.

## ARCHAEOLOGY

### Palaeolithic Tools Discovered in Telangana

Palaeolithic tools or hand axes found in Mlugu district in Telangana. The quartzite tools were found in the sand bed of a stream that dried up after the flood.

The hand axes were found in the stream between Gurrevula and Bhupatipuram villages in Mulugu district. The stone axe measures 15.5 cm in length, 11 cm in width and 5.5 cm in thickness. The tools were used for cutting wood and killing animals for food.

According to palaeontologists Ravi Korisettar, the Stone axe belongs to the Lower Palaeolithic period and is about 30 lakh years ago. Palaeolithic age dates back to about 33 lakh years BC.

## HERITAGE/CULTURE

### Poila Boisakh Named West Bengal State Day, Tagore's Banglar Mati Declared State Song

The West Bengal government declared 'Poila Boisakh', the first day of the Bengali New year, as the 'State Day' will be called 'Bangla Divas' and the song 'Banglar Mati Banglar Jal...' written by Rabindranath Tagore as the State Song on December 29, 2023. The West Bengal Assembly passed a resolution to this effect on September 7, 2023.

The notification issued by the Chief Secretary said the one minute fifty nine seconds song to be played is compulsory at the start of any ceremony/function and the national anthem at the conclusion of the function.

### International Kite Festival in Ahmedabad

The 33rd edition of the International Kite Festival was organised in Ahmedabad, Gujarat from 8th to 14th January, 2024. The theme of this festival was 'One Earth, One Family, One Future'.

According to the Tourism Corporation of Gujarat, over 125 kite flyers from 68 countries including India participated in this festival.

Since 1989, the city of Ahmedabad has hosted the International Kite Festival as part of the official celebration of Uttarayan or Makar Sankranti. International Kite Day is observed on January 14, every year.

### Magh Bihu Festival in Assam

Magh Bihu, also known as Bhogali Bihu, is an auspicious festival celebrated in Assam, India in the month of January every year. This year, it was celebrated on January 16, 2024.

This festival is the Assamese version of Sankranti which is dedicated to Agni, the lord of Fire. Farmers expressed their gratitude for a bountiful harvest and offered sacrifices to the Gods.

Magh Bihu holds great significance among the Assamese people, making it a key festival in their culture. The festival captures the essence of Assamese culture, blending traditions, music, dance and rituals in a unique and joyful celebration.

## Winter Carnival in Manali

The Manali Winter Carnival in Himachal Pradesh started in 1977 and has become an annual feature since then. The carnival was celebrated this year from 2 to 6 January.

The winter carnival included cultural tableaux, local cuisines, folk and western music and dance, fashion shows, baby shows, magic shows, local games, winter games and winter Queen beauty pageant. The purpose of the winter carnival is to ensure the increase in tourist arrivals in Himachal Pradesh.

## PLACES IN THE NEWS

### Nashik

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 27th National Youth Festival in Nashik, Maharashtra on January 12, 2024, dedicating the event to Swami Vivekananda, an emblem of India's dynamic youth power, whose birth anniversary is annually celebrated as National Youth Day. During the inauguration, PM Modi paid homage to Rajmata Jijabai on her birth anniversary, recognizing her as a symbol of India's women's power and acknowledging Maharashtra's rich legacy as the home of remarkable personalities. Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Shri Eknath Shinde, Deputy Chief Ministers of Maharashtra, Shri Devendra Fadnis and Shri Ajit Pawar, Union Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs, Shri Anurag Singh Thakur and Union Minister of State for Sports and Youth Affairs, Shri Nisith Pramanik were present on the occasion among others.

The National Youth Festival is organized every year from 12th to 16th January, with the 12th of January being the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda. The host state for the Festival this year is Maharashtra.

### PM Modi Inaugurates Atal Setu, India's Longest Sea-bridge in Mumbai

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on January 12, 2024 inaugurated the ₹ 17,840 crore Atal Bihari Vajpayee Sewri-Nhava Sheva Atal Setu, the longest bridge as well as the longest sea bridge in the country connecting south Mumbai with Nhava-Sheva in Navi Mumbai. The six-lane trans-harbour bridge is 21.8 km long with a 16.5 km long sea-link. The bridge will provide faster connectivity to the upcoming Navi Mumbai International Airport and reduce the travel time between Mumbai and Pune. It will also improve connectivity between the Mumbai Port and the Jawaharlal Nehru Port. The foundation stone of the bridge had been laid by Prime Minister Modi in Dec. 2016.

### Vrindavan, Mathura

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on January 1, 2024 inaugurated Samvid Gurukulam Girls Sainik School, the first all-girls Sainik school with a strength of about 870 students Vrindavan, Mathura in Uttar Pradesh. The school has been launched under the initiative of establishing 100 new sainik schools in partnership with NGOs / private / state government schools in all States/ Union territories. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and senior officials of the state government were among those present during the inauguration of Samvid Gurukulam Girls Sainik School, Vrindavan.

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# Regional News

## ASSAM

### Former CJ Ranjan Gogoi Chosen for 'Assam Baibhav' Award

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on January 16, 2024 announced the Assam Baibhav, the highest civilian award in Assam to be conferred on Former Chief Justice of India and Rajya Sabha MP Ranjan Gogoi. This is the third year on which the awards will be given. "In the first year, we gave the Assam Baibhav award to Ratan Tata and last year we gave the award to Tapan Saikia. "Being the first judge from the North East to occupy the august office of Chief Justice of India, this award recognises his exceptional efforts to expand the delivery of justice and enrich our jurisprudence."

Mr. Gogoi became a nominated Rajya Sabha MP shortly after retiring as Chief Justice. A bench led by him had, in 2019, delivered the landmark verdict in the Ram Janmabhumi-Babri Masjid title dispute, in favour of the temple side. The award will be conferred on Mr. Gogoi on February 10, 2024.

## CHHATTISGARH

### CM Allocates Portfolios

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai on December 29, 2023 allocated portfolios to his cabinet.

1. **CM Vishnu Deo Sai** : General Administration, Mineral Resources, Energy, Public Relations, Commercial Tax (Excise), Transport and other departments.
2. **Deputy CM Arun Sao** : Department of Public Works, Public Health Engineering, Law and Legislative Affairs and Urban Administration.
3. **Deputy CM Vijay Sharma** : Home and Jail, Panchayat and Rural Development, Technical Education and Employment, Science and Technology Department.
4. **Brijmohan Agarwal** : School, Education, Higher Education, Parliamentary Affairs, Religious Affairs, Tourism and Culture.
5. **Ram Vichar Netam** : Backward Caste, SC, ST, OBC Development, Agriculture Development and farmer welfare.
6. **Dayal Das Baghel** : Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Protection.
7. **Kedar Kashyap** : Forest and climate change, water resources, skill development and cooperation.
8. **Lakhanlal Devangan** : Commerce, Industries and Labour.
9. **Shyam Bihari Jaiswal** : Health, Family Welfare, Medical Education.

10. **O.P. Choudhary** : Finance, Commercial Tax, Housing and Environment, planning and statistics.
11. **Lakshmi Rajwade** : Women and Child development and social welfare.
12. **Tank Ram Varma** : Sports, Youth welfare, revenue and Disaster management.

## GUJARAT

### 10th Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit 2024 Organized Successfully in Gandhinagar

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 10th edition of the Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit on January 10, 2024. Several leaders of countries like the United Arab Emirates, Mozambique, Timor-Leste, Czech Republic, Japan, Nepal, Estonia, Morocco and Vietnam were present at the event along with captains of industry and hundreds of people from India and abroad.

UAE President Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan was the Chief Guest of the inaugural event of the 10th Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit. PM Modi spoke about the achievements of his government in the last 10 years and said that he guaranteed that India would be the world's third largest economy in the next few years. "Every rating agency in the world is claiming that India will be the third largest economy in the world in the next few years.

The theme of this year's Summit is 'Gateway to the Future' and includes the participation of 34 partner countries and 16 partner organizations. The Summit is also being used as a platform by the Ministry of Development of North-Eastern Region to showcase investment opportunities in the North-Eastern regions. On this occasion, a book depicting the 20-year success story of Vibrant Gujarat was released by dignitaries.

## JAMMU & KASHMIR

### President of India Sets up Finance Commission for UTs Including Ladakh

President Droupadi Murmu on recommendations of the Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has constituted a Finance Commission for Union Territories of Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu, Ladakh and Lakshadweep on December 28, 2023. The Finance Commission which will be headed by a Chairperson and comprised one member and another part-time member.

- Anil Kumar Jha, a retired IAS officer has been nominated as Chairman of the Commission while Parshant Goyal, Principal Secretary Housing and Urban Development Department, Jammu & Kashmir will be the member. Dr. Amey Sapre, Associate

Professor, National Institute of Public Finance and Policy will be the part-time member of the Commission.

- The Chairman and Members of the Commission will hold office for a period of nine months with effect from January 1, 2024.
- The Commission will review financial position of Panchayats and Municipalities and recommend distribution between the administration of the Union Territories (for whom the Panel has been set up) and their respective Panchayats and Municipalities of the net proceeds of taxes, duties, tolls and fee leviable by the respective UT administration.

## KARNATAKA

### Shirshendhu Mukyopadhyaya Gets Kuvempu Rashtriya Puraskar 2023

On December 29, 2023 Shirshendhu Mukyopadhyaya, the renowned Bengali writer and novelist was honoured with the Kuvempu Rashtriya Puraskar 2023, a coveted literary recognition named after great Kannada poet Kuvempu. The national award, named in honour of the late Kannada poet Kuvempu, celebrates writers who have made significant contributions to any Indian language.

The award includes a cash prize of ₹ 5 lakh, a silver medal, and a citation. The award was conferred on Shirshendhu on December 29, Kuvempu's birth anniversary.

### Yuva Nidhi Scheme for Jobless Youth Launched in Karnataka

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy CM D.K. Shivakumar launched the Yuva Nidhi scheme, the fifth poll guarantee of the Congress for educated unemployed youth of Karnataka, in Shivamogga on January 12, 2024 offering unemployment monthly stipend of ₹ 3,000 to graduates and ₹ 1,500 to diploma holders in the state. The scheme offers financial aid to graduates and diploma holders who are yet to get a job, but only for a maximum of two years. Training will be provided to the graduates and diploma holders who register themselves on the skill connect portal of the State Government.

Sharanaprakash Patil, the minister responsible for implementing the 'Yuva Nidhi' Scheme, clarified that the assistance is applicable exclusively to graduates and diploma holders whose domicile is Karnataka. This condition ensures that the benefits of the Scheme are directed towards the state's residents. The 'Yuva Nidhi' Scheme joins the four previously launched guarantees, namely 'Shakti,' 'Anna Bhagya,' 'Gruha Jyoti,' and 'Gruha Lakshmi.' These guarantees cover a range of issues, from women's empowerment and food security to electricity access and financial assistance for women heads of families.

## MADHYA PRADESH

### CM Allocates Portfolios to Ministers

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav on December 30, 2023 allocated portfolios to 30 ministers of

his cabinet, keeping the home and a few other important ministries to himself. List of Ministers and their departments is as under :

1. **Chief Minister Mohan Yadav** : Home, General Administration Department (GAD), industrial policies and investment promotion, civil aviation besides all other departments not specifically assigned to any minister.
2. **Dy. Chief Minister Rajendra Shukla** : Health and medical education.
3. **Dy. Chief Minister Jagdish Deveda** : Finance.
4. **Kailash Vijayvargiya** : Urban development and housing (UDH).
5. **Prahlad Patel** : Panchayati Raj and rural development.
6. **Rao Uday Pratap Singh** : School education and transport.
7. **Rakesh Singh** : Public works department (PWD).
8. **Kunwar Vijay Shah** : Public asset management, Bhopal gas tragedy, relief and rehabilitation.
9. **Tulsi Silavat** : Water resources.
10. **Govind Singh Rajput** : Food, civil supplies and consumer protection.
11. **Vishwas Sarang** : Sports and youth welfare and cooperation.
12. **Pradyuman Singh Tomar** : Energy.
13. **Inder Singh Parmar** : Higher education, AYUSH, technical education and skill development.
14. **Karan Singh Verma** : Revenue,
15. **Sampatiya Uike** : Public health engineering (PHE),
16. **Edel Singh Kanshana** : Farmer welfare and agricultural development.
17. **Nirmala Bhuria** : Women and child development.
18. **Narayan Singh Kushwaha** : Social justice and disabled people's welfare, horticulture and food processing.
19. **Nagar Singh Chauhan** : Forest, environment and scheduled caste welfare.
20. **Rakesh Shukla** : New and renewable energy.
21. **Chetan Kashyap** : Micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME).

### Ministers of State (Independent Charges) :

1. **Krishna Gaur** : Backward class and minority welfare and semi-nomad welfare.
2. **Dharmendra Lodhi** : Culture, tourism and religious trust.
3. **Dilip Jaiswal** : Cottage and village industries.
4. **Gautam Tetwal** : Technical education, skill development and employment.
5. **Lakhan Patel** : Animal husbandry and dairy.
6. **Narayan Singh Panwar** : Fishermen welfare and fisheries department.

### Ministers of State :

1. **Narendra Shivaji Patel** : Public health and environmental welfare.
2. **Pratima Bagri** : Urban development and housing.
3. **Dilip Ahirwar** : Forest and environment.
4. **Radha Singh** : Panchayat and rural development.

## MAHARASHTRA

### Maharashtra Government Creates New Wildlife Habitat Named Atpadi Conservation Reserve in Sangli

The Maharashtra government in January 2024 declared a new wildlife habitat for the 'canid' wild dogs family in Sangli, as 'Atpadi Conservation Reserve'. Spanning a compact 9-48 sq. km, this reserve prioritizes the protection of the endangered 'canid' family, including wild dogs, wolves, jackals, and foxes. The Atpadi Conservation Reserve helps connect the Maini Conservation Area in the west with the Madhok Bird Sanctuary to its north-eastern boundary, which will make it a safe corridor for the wildlife thriving there.

The small new sanctuary hosts rich flora and fauna, comprising three types of forest cover: semi-evergreen, moist deciduous and dry deciduous, has 35 species of trees, 15 species of shrubs, 14 vines, 116 species of herbs and one parasitic plant. The Atpadi Conservation Reserve marks a significant step forward in conserving Maharashtra's precious biodiversity.

### Pench Tiger Reserve (PTR) in Maharashtra Becomes India's First Dark Sky Park

Pench Tiger Reserve (PTR) in Maharashtra in January 2024 earned the title of the first Dark Sky Park in India and fifth in Asia for protecting the night sky and preventing light pollution, making the facility ideal for astronomy enthusiasts. The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) emphasizes on the recognition of the intrinsic value of the night sky as a natural, cultural, and historical resource. The reserve has inaugurated a night observatory with the District Planning committee (DPC) fund. As part of the measures, more than 100 street and community lights in Wagholi, Sillari, Pipariya and Khapa villages of the Paoni UC Range buffer area have been replaced with lights facing the ground to mitigate light pollution.

The Dark and Quiet Skies for Science and Society Working Group, led by the International Astronomical Union, has recommended the establishment of 'Dark Sky Oases' by national and local governments. The Dark Sky Place certification focuses on lighting policy, dark sky-friendly retrofits, outreach and education, and monitoring the night sky.

Pench Tiger Reserve or Pench National Park is one of the premier tiger reserves of India and the first one to straddle across two states : Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. A dark-sky preserve is an area, usually surrounding a park or observatory, that restricts artificial light pollution. The purpose of the dark-sky movement is generally to promote astronomy.

The Indian Astronomical Observatory (IAO), a high-altitude astronomy station located in Hanle, and operated by the Indian Institute of Astrophysics, is India's first dark-sky preserve. Situated in the Western Himalayas at an elevation of 4,500 meters (14,764 ft), the IAO is one of the world's highest located sites for optical, infrared and gamma-ray telescopes.

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## MIZORAM

### Chief Minister Allocates Portfolios to His Cabinet Colleagues

1. **Lalduhoma (Chief Minister)** : Finance, Planning & Programme Implementation, Vigilance, General Administration, Political & Cabinet, Law & Judicial.
2. **K. Sapdanga (Minister)** : Home, Urban Development & Poverty Alleviation, Department of Personnel & Administrative Reforms, Disaster Management & Rehabilitation.
3. **Vanlalhlana (Minister)** : Public Works, Transport, Parliamentary Affairs.
4. **C. Lalsawivunga (Minister)** : Local Administration, District Council and Minority Affairs, Art & Culture, Animal Husbandry & Veterinary.
5. **Lalthansanga (Minister)** : Environment, Forests & Climate Change, Sericulture, Fisheries, Land Resources, Soil & Water Conservation.
6. **Dr. Vanlalhlana (Minister)** : School Education, Higher & Technical Education, Taxation, Information & Public Relations, Information & Communication Technology.
7. **P.C. Vanlalruata (Minister)** : Agriculture, Irrigation & Water Resources, Cooperation.
8. **Lalrinpuui (Minister)** : Health and Family Welfare, Social Welfare, Tribal Affairs, Women & Child Development, Tourism.
9. **F. Rodingliana Min (Minister of State)** : Power & Electricity, Commerce & Industries, Printing & Stationery.
10. **B. Lalchhanzova (Minister of State)** : Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Land Revenue & Settlement.
11. **Prof. Lalnilawma (Minister of State)** : Rural Development, Horticulture, Public Health Engineering.
12. **Lalnginglova Hmar (Minister of State)** : Labour, Employment Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, Sports & Youth Services, Excise & Narcotics.

## ODISHA

### Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik Inaugurates Malkangiri Airport

Malkangiri district got a major boost as far as connectivity is concerned as Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on January 9, 2024 inaugurated Malkangiri Airport. This strategic initiative is designed to enhance connectivity and foster development in the tribal-dominated areas, marking a crucial step forward in the region's progress.

### Puri Jagannath Heritage Corridor Project Open for Public on January 17, 2024

The 'Shree Mandir Parikrama', also known as the Jagannath Heritage Corridor Project, at Odisha's Puri's Lord Jagannath temple was inaugurated by Odisha CM Navin Patnaik on January 17, 2024. This initiative, completed by the Odisha Bridge & Construction Corporation (OBCC) and handed over to the Sri Jagannath

Temple Administration (SJTA), aims to enhance the visual appeal and surroundings of the iconic Jagannath Temple.

The project, valued at ₹ 3,700 crore, includes sub-projects like the redevelopment of the Shree Jagannath Temple Administration building, Srimandir reception center, Jagannath cultural center, Badadanda heritage streetscape, beachfront development, Puri Lake, and Musa river revival plan.

The Odisha government has declared January 17 as a public holiday in honor of the dedication of the Shree Jagannath Parikrama project in Puri. Government offices, schools, and colleges across the state will be closed on this day.

### Jaggery, Painting, Shawl Among 7 Odisha Products to get GI Tag

Lanjia Saura painting, Dungaria Kondh embroidered shawl and Khajudi Guda (jaggery) Dhenkanal Magji (food), Similipal Kai Chutney, Nayagarh Kanteimundi Brinjal and Koraput Kalajeera Rice were accorded the Geographical Indication (GI) tag by the Chennai-based GI Registry on January 4, 2024. With this, Odisha has received 25 GI tags to date.

## PUNJAB

### Punjab Becomes First State In India To Map All Accident-Prone Sites

Punjab became the first state in India to map all 784 accident black spots on the Mappls App, a navigation system developed by Map My India. This initiative comes as part of the preparations for the launch of Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann's flagship project, the 'Sadak Suraksha Force'. The Mappls App will provide voice alerts in Punjabi, warning motorists of upcoming blackspots with messages such as "Blackspot 100 meter di doori te hai" (Blackspot is 100 meters ahead), making Punjab the first state to map accident-prone sites as part of the Road Safety.

## RAJASTHAN

### 12 Cabinet Ministers, 5 Minister of State (Independent Charge), 5 Minister of State Inducted in Bhajan Lal Sharma's Cabinet

Bhajan Lal Sharma, a first-time MLA, was officially declared as the Chief Minister on December 12, with Diya Kumari and Prem Chand Bairwa appointed as his deputies.

#### Rajasthan New Government :

- **CM Bhajan Lal Sharma** : Home and Excise, Anti-Corruption Bureau, personnel, planning, general administration, policy formulation and information and public relations departments.
- **Deputy CM Prem Chand Bairwa** : Technical education, higher education, Ayurveda, and Transport and Road Safety.
- **Deputy CM Diya Kumari** : Finance, Tourism, Art and Culture, Public Works Department, and Women and Child Development.

#### Cabinet Ministers :

1. **Kirodi Lal Meena** : Agriculture, rural development and disaster management and civil defence.
2. **Madan Dilawar** : School Education, Panchayatiraj, Sanskrit education.
3. **Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore** : Trade & Industries, Information Technology & Communication, Skill, Planning & Entrepreneurship, and Youth Affairs and Sports, Soldier welfare.
4. **Gajendra Singh Khimsar** : Medical and Health, Medical and Health (ESI).
5. **Babulal Kharadi** : Tribal Area Development Department, Home Guards.
6. **Jogaram Patel** : Parliamentary Affairs, Law, legal Affairs, Legal Aids.
7. **Suresh Singh Rawat** : Water Resources, Water Resources Planning.
8. **Avinash Gehlot** : Social Justice & Empowerment.
9. **Joraram Kumawat** : Animal Husbandry & Dairy Department, Gopalan, Devasthan.
10. **Hemant Meena** : Revenue registration.
11. **Kanhaiya Lal Choudhary** : Public Health Engineering, Ground water.
12. **Sumit Godara** : Food & Civil Supplies Minister, Consumer Affairs.

#### Ministers of State (Independent Charge) :

1. **Sanjay Sharma** : Forest, Environment, Climate change, Science and Technology.
2. **Gautam Kumar** : Cooperation, Civil Aviation.
3. **Jhabar Singh Kharra** : Urban Development, Local Self government.
4. **Surendra Pal Singh T.T.** : Agricultural Marketing, Agriculture Irrigation Area Development & Water Utility and Minority Affairs Departments. (Resigned on 8th January, 2024 after losing the election)
5. **Heeralal Nagar** : Energy.

#### Ministers of State :

1. **Ottaram Dewasi** : Panchayati Raj, Rural Development, Disaster Management, Relief and Civil Defence.
2. **Manju Baghmar** : PWD, Women & Child Development, Children Empowerment.
3. **Vijay Singh Choudhary** : Revenue, Registration, Soldier Welfare.
4. **K.K. Bishnoi** : Trade & Commerce, Youth Affairs and Sports, Skill, Planning and Entrepreneurship, Policy formulation.
5. **Jawahar Singh Bedam** : Home, Gopalan, Animal Husbandry, Dairying, Fisheries.

## TELANGANA

### Chief Minister Allocates Portfolios to His Ministers

1. **Sri Anumula Revanth Reddy (Chief Minister)** : Municipal Administration and Urban Development, General Administration, Law & Order and all other unallocated portfolios.
2. **Sri Batti Vikramarka Mallu (Dy. Chief Minister)** : Finance & Planning, Energy.
3. **Sri Nalamada Uttam Kumar Reddy** : Irrigation & CAD, Food & Civil Supplies.



4. **Sri Damodar Rajanarasimha** : Health, Medical & Family Welfare, Science and Technology.
5. **Sri Komatireddy Venkat Reddy** : Roads & Buildings, Cinematography.
6. **Sri Duddilla Sridhar Babu** : Information Technology, Electronics & Communications, Industries & Commerce and Legislative Affairs.
7. **Sri Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy** : Revenue and Housing, Information & Public Relations.
8. **Sri Poonam Prabhakar** : Transport, BC Welfare.
9. **Smt. Konda Surekha** : Environment & Forests, Endowment.
10. **Smt. D. Anasuya Seethakka** : Panchayat Raj & Rural Development (including Rural Water Supply), Women & Child Welfare.
11. **Sri Tummala Nageshwara Rao** : Agriculture, Marketing, Cooperation and Handlooms & Textiles.
12. **Sri Jupally Krishna Rao** : Prohibition & Excise, Tourism & Culture and Archaeology.

## UTTAR PRADESH

### ISRO Scientist Dr. Ritu Karidhal Srivastava and Entrepreneur Naveen Tiwari Chosen For Uttar Pradesh Gaurav Samman

ISRO scientist Dr. Ritu Karidhal Srivastava and entrepreneur Naveen Tiwari were chosen for the Uttar Pradesh Gaurav Samman on January 23, 2024 by the Uttar Pradesh government for their outstanding achievements in their respective fields. The government will confer the 'Uttar Pradesh Gaurav Samman' on eminent ISRO scientist Dr. Ritu Karidhal Srivastava, who played a crucial role in the Chandrayaan Mission as the mission director of mission moon, and Naveen Tiwari, a noted entrepreneur from Kanpur, who is regularly featured on covers of magazines like Forbes and Fortune.

Dr. Ritu Karidhal Srivastava, who hails from Lucknow, played a crucial role in the development of India's Mars Orbiter Mission Mangalyaan. She also served as the deputy operations director for this mission. Mangalyaan was one of ISRO's greatest achievements, making India the fourth country in the world to reach Mars.

Eminent entrepreneur Naveen Tewari, a resident of Kanpur, has created two unicorns and given India its first unicorn. He has established the world's largest independent mobile ad tech platform, connecting local businesses in Uttar Pradesh and India with national and international audiences. His lock screen software is present on more than 40 crore smart phones globally.

### 'City of Nawabs' Making Futuristic Stride with Green Mobility, AI Drive :

Far from its rich heritage, cultural, and historical latitude, calendar year 2023 served as a springboard for Lucknow to leapfrog into a domain of cutting-edge Artificial Intelligence (AI) vision, powered by an e-mobility roadmap, thus contributing to the 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' (self-reliant) theme of the Government of India.

- A 40-acre land parcel has been identified, overlooking the Lucknow International Airport on the busy Lucknow-Kanpur highway.

- Lucknow's AI City will encompass a holistic value chain for investors operating in the spectrum of AI, Machine Learning (ML), blockchain, etc., spanning startups, data centres, data analytics, AI-based training, data forensics, etc.
- Nodal agency UP Electronics Corporation Limited (UPECL) has drafted an action plan for the development of an AI City in Lucknow, aiming to position the state capital as a leading Information Technology (IT) hub in Asia.
- To boost such high-tech projects, the UP government has partnered with leading educational and research organisations, including the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kanpur, Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Lucknow, and APJ Abdul Kalam Technical University (AKTU) Lucknow as knowledge partners.
- The state will give priority to developers whose annual turnover is in the region of ₹ 1,000 crore, and offer a range of incentives. This includes one-time capital expenditure support of 25 per cent, up to a maximum of ₹ 20 crore for the IT Park. For the IT City project, the developer will receive capex support of up to ₹ 100 crore.
- Additionally, 100 per cent stamp duty waiver, along with non-financial aid for lease rental, cloud service cost, electricity charges, and bandwidth expenses will be provided under the existing IT and ITES Policy.
- Commercial vehicle maker Ashok Leyland will invest over ₹ 1,000 crore in an integrated electric bus manufacturing plant in Lucknow. A memorandum of understanding (MoU) has been signed between the state and the multinational company.
- The proposed plant is likely to be set up at the site of the defunct Scooters India Limited (SIL) plant on the Lucknow-Kanpur highway. Initially, the plant will have the capacity to produce 2,500 e-buses per year, which will be gradually expanded to 5,000 vehicles over the next decade.
- Furthermore, Lucknow constitutes one of the six nodes of the UP Defence Manufacturing Corridor and is home to the prestigious BrahMos Missile Plant. The six nodes include Lucknow, Kanpur, Jhansi, Aligarh, Chitrakoot, and Agra.
- The BrahMos Plant is already under development, and once operational, the missiles produced will be supplied to the Indian defence forces. BrahMos is a joint venture between India's Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and Russia's NPOM.

### UP Govt. Distributes Loans Worth ₹ 1.72 Trillion in FY24 to Boost MSME Sector

The government of Uttar Pradesh has distributed loans worth ₹ 1.73 trillion in the current Financial Year (FY24) to boost the micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSME) sector. The MSME advances in the first nine months (April-December 2023) of FY24 jumped 172 per cent compared to the financial year target of about ₹ 1 trillion.

 Darpan



# Employment And Career News

## The New India Assurance Company Limited

Invites applications for recruitment of 300 Assistants in Class III cadre.

**Last Date for Submission of Online Applications :** February 15, 2024.

**Age Limit :** Minimum age-21 years; Maximum age-30 years, as on January 1, 2024. *i.e.*, candidates must have been born not earlier than January 2, 1994 and not later than January 1, 2003 (both days inclusive). Relaxation in the upper age limit will be given as per the government norms.

**Essential Educational Qualifications :** A candidate must possess the minimum qualification of Graduation in any discipline from a recognized University or any equivalent qualification recognized as such by the Central Government. The candidate should have passed in English as one of the subjects at SSC/HSC/Intermediate/Graduation level. Candidate should possess certificate in proof of passing the qualifying examination as on January 1, 2024. Knowledge of Reading, Writing and Speaking of

Regional Language of the State/UT against the vacancies for which a candidate wishes to apply, is essential. To ascertain the candidate's familiarity with the Regional Language of the State/UT, a language test will be conducted before final selection.

**Scheme of Examination :** The selection process will consist of online objective tests (Preliminary & Main Examination). Candidates qualifying in the Main Examination will be further shortlisted for Regional Language Test before the final selection.

The Preliminary Test will consist of 100 objective type questions based on English language (30 questions), Reasoning (35 questions) and Numerical Ability (35 questions). Successful candidates in the Preliminary Test will be invited for the Mains Part.

**How to Apply :** Candidates are required to apply online using the company's website

<http://www.newindia.co.in>

## National Testing Agency (NTA)

Invites online applications from eligible candidates for recruitment

of 'Junior Assistant and Shorthand clerk posts in various courts in Uttarakhand.

**Last Date for Submission of Online Applications :** February 22, 2024.

**Age Limit (As on January 1, 2024) :** Minimum-21 years and Maximum-35 years. Relaxation in the upper age limit will be given as per the government norms.

**Essential Educational Qualifications :** A candidate must hold a degree of any of the Universities approved by the government. Candidates must have good knowledge of English and Hindi. Candidates should have typing and shorthand speed as required in the detailed advertisement by NTA.

**Scheme of Examination :** There will be a written examination of objective type questions carrying 140 marks and Typing test of 60 marks. Successful candidates in the written part will move for the next phase of the selection procedure.

**How to Apply :** Candidates are required to apply online using the NTA website [www.exams.nta.ac.in](http://www.exams.nta.ac.in).

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## FORTHCOMING COMPETITIVE EXAMINATIONS, 2024

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|--|--|
| ● State Bank of India Junior Associates (Customer Support & Sales) Mains Exam., 2023 (Feb.)                                | ● Chandigarh Police Constable-IT Exam., 2024 (3 March)                           |
| ● Rajasthan SSC Junior Accountant and Tahsil Revenue Accountant Combined Direct Recruitment Exam., 2023 (11 Feb.)          | ● Madhya Pradesh P.S.C. State Service Main Exam., 2023 (11-16 March)             |
| ● Chhattisgarh P.S.C. State Services Preliminary Exam., 2023 (11 Feb.)   | ● Uttar Pradesh Polytechnic Joint Entrance Exam., 2024 (16-22 March)             |
| ● Haryana Civil Services Preliminary Exam., 2023 (11 Feb.)   | ( <b>Online Closing Date :</b> 20 Feb., 2024)                                    |
| ( <b>Online Closing Date :</b> 21 Feb., 2024)  | ● Rajiv Gandhi Navodaya Vidyalaya Entrance Exam., 2024 (For Class-VI) (17 March) |
| ● Uttar Pradesh PCS Review Officer/Assistant Review Officer Preliminary Exam., 2023 (11 Feb.)                              | ● Indian Air Force Agniveer Vayu Recruitment Exam., 2025 (17 March)              |
| ● Indian Air Force Common Admission Test (AFCAT), 2024 (16-18 Feb.)  | ● Rajasthan S.S.C. Animal Attendant Direct Recruitment Exam., 2023 (April-June)  |
| ● Uttar Pradesh Police Constable Recruitment Exam., 2024 (17-18 Feb.)  | ● National Defence Academy & Naval Academy Exam. (I), 2024 (21 April)            |
| ● SSC Central Armed Police Forces, SSF Constables (GD) and Rifleman (GD) Assam Rifles Exam., 2024 (20-29 Feb & 1-12 March) | ● Combined Defence Services Exam. (I), Exam., 2024 (21 April)                    |
| ● Rajasthan SSC Computer Direct Recruitment Exam., 2023 (3 March)  | ● Madhya Pradesh PSC State Services Preliminary Exam., 2024 (28 April)           |
|  | ● UPSC Civil Services/Indian Forest Services Preliminary Exam., 2024 (28 May)    |



# Sports World



## India-South Africa Test Series Ends in 1-1; India Wins Second Test

Touring Indian team won the second Test against South Africa by a 7-wicket margin at Newlands in Cape Town on January 4, 2024 and ended the two Test bilateral Series 1-1. With this win, Rohit Sharma became just the second Indian skipper after MS Dhoni to avoid a Test series defeat in South Africa. Prior to this series, India had lost seven and drawn one Test series in South Africa since 1992. Interestingly, this was also India's first-ever Test win in Cape Town. Rohit Sharma (17\*) and Yashasvi Jaiswal (28) scored bulk of the runs, in a 44 run opening-wicket stand in India's second innings, as India chased down the 79 run target in 12 overs in the historic second Test. It saw the Test finish inside four and a half sessions despite Aiden Markram scoring a combative century to steer the hosts to 176 runs.

Earlier South Africa won the first Test match against India by an innings and 32 runs as India were bundled out for 131 runs in their second innings on Day 3 on December 27, 2023 in Centurion.

## India Inflicts 3-0 T20I Series Whitewash Against Touring Afghanistan

Host India inflicted a thrilling 3-0 Series sweep against touring Afghanistan in a 3 T20I bilateral series by winning the third T20I in second super over at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru on January 17, 2024. India beat Afghanistan in third T20 International after two thrilling super overs. Chasing 212, Afghanistan too ended with the same score of 211.

India equalled Afghanistan's score of 16 in the first super over to stretch the match to another super

over, but the visitors could not chase down a target of 12 in the second super over as Rohit Sharma's side picked the required two wickets through Ravi Bishnoi.

Earlier India took 1-0 lead in the three T20I Series by winning the first T20I by six wickets at the Punjab Cricket Association (PCA) stadium in Mohali on January 11. India beat Afghanistan by 6 wickets in second T20I to secure unassailable lead in three-match series in Indore on January 14. Rohit Sharma led the Indian team as the skipper in the series.

## ICC Unveils its Men and Women Teams of the Year 2023 Across Formats

The International Cricket Council (ICC) in January, 2024 unveiled its Men and Women Teams of 2023 in Test, ODI and T20I formats. Australia's captain Pat Cummins who captured ICC World Test Championship last year under his leadership, was declared the captain of ICC Men's Test Team of the year 2023 while ICC did not declare its Women's Test Team. Indian skipper Rohit Sharma was declared the captain of ICC Men's ODI Team of the year while his teammate Suryakumar Yadav became skipper of ICC Men's T20I team of the year. Chamari Athapaththu from Sri Lanka was declared captain of ICC Women's team of the year in ODI and T20I both formats.

### ICC Teams of the Year 2023

**ICC Men's Test Team of the Year :** Usman Khawaja, Dimuth Karunaratne, Kane Williamson, Joe Root, Travis Head, Ravindra Jadeja, Alex Carey, Pat Cummins (Captain), Ravichandran Ashwin, Mitchell Starc, Stuart Broad.

**ICC Women's ODI Team of the Year :** Phoebe Litchfield, Chamari Athapaththu (Captain), Ellyse Perry, Amelia Kerr, Beth Mooney (WK), Nat Sciver-Brunt, Ash Gardner, Annabel Sutherland, Nadine de Klerk, Lea Tahuu, Nahida Akter.

**ICC Men's ODI Team of the Year for 2023 :** Rohit Sharma (Captain), Shubman Gill, Travis Head, Virat Kohli, Daryl Mitchell, Heinrich Klaasen, Marco Jansen, Adam Zampa, Mohammed Siraj, Mohammed Shami, Kuldeep Yadav.

**ICC Women's T20I Team of the Year :** Chamari Athapaththu (Captain), Beth Mooney (WK), Laura Wolvaardt, Hayley Matthews, Nat Sciver-Brunt, Amelia Kerr, Ellyse Perry, Ash Gardner, Deepti Sharma, Sophie Ecclestone, Megan Schutt.

**ICC Men's T20I Team of the Year :** Yashasvi Jaiswal, Phil Salt, Nicholas Pooran (WK), Suryakumar Yadav (Captain), Mark Chapman, Sikandar Raza, Alpesh Ramjani, Mark Adair, Ravi Bishnoi, Richard Ngarava, Arshdeep Singh.



## Germany Wins United Cup Tennis Championship

Germany defeated Poland 2-1 in the three rubber final to clinch the United Cup Tennis Championship as reigning Olympic champion Alexander Zverev defeated No. 9-ranked Hubert Hurkacz 6-7 (3), 7-6 (6), 6-4 in a three-hour epic of the Men's Singles rubber of the final at Ken Rosewall Arena in Sydney to help Germany level the final 1-1. Zverev partnered with Laura Siegemund to win the mixed doubles 6-4, 5-7, 10-4 in a super tiebreaker against Polish pair of Iga Swiatek and Hurkacz and handed Germany 2-1 title victory on January 7 in Sydney. Earlier, top-ranked woman Swiatek had given Poland an early 1-0 lead over Germany with a straight-sets win against Angelique Kerber of Germany in the first rubber of the Women's Singles.

Germany pipped host Australia in the semi-final to secure its place in the United Cup final this year.

## Australian Open 2024

Australian Open 2024, the first tennis grand slam of the year 2024 was organized successfully in January 2024 in Melbourne, Australia. Jannik Sinner from Italy clinched the Australian Open 2024 Men's Singles title beating Daniil Medvedev from Russia 3-6, 3-6, 6-4, 6-4, 6-3 in a nail-biting final on January 28, 2024 at Rod Laver Arena, Melbourne. It was Sinner's maiden Grand Slam title triumph. He defeated Novak Djokovic from Serbia in the semi-final to secure his place in the Australian Open 2024 final while Medvedev pipped Alexander Zverev in another semi-final. With the win, the 22-year-old Sinner became the youngest player to win the Australian Open men's singles title since a 20-year-old Novak Djokovic claimed his maiden Slam in Melbourne in 2008.



Jannik Sinner poses his Norman Brookes Challenge trophy for being the champion of the Australian Open 2024 Men's Singles title in Melbourne

Defending champion Aryna Sabalenka from Belarus prevailed over China's Zheng Qinwen in straight sets (6-3, 6-2) in the final on January 27 in Melbourne to retain the Australian Open 2024 Women's Singles title. Sabalenka is the first woman since Victoria Azarenka in 2012 and '13 to win back-to-back Australian Open titles, and the fifth since 2000 to win the championship here without dropping a set—a group that includes Serena Williams. Sabalenka defeated Coco Gauff from the USA in the semi-final to secure her seat in the Australian Open 2024 Summit clash. Sabalenka got the Daphne Akhurst Memorial Trophy, given to Australian Open Women's Singles champion.

Indian tennis player Rohan Bopanna created history on January 27 as he became the oldest grand slam champion after teaming up with his Australian partner Matthew

Ebden to defeat the Italian pair of Simone Bolelli and Andrea Vavassori in straight sets (7-6, 7-5) in the Men's Doubles final of the Australian Open 2024. This is Rohan Bopanna's second grand slam title after the 2017 French Open win with his Canadian partner Gabriela Dabrowski in mixed doubles.

Hsieh Su-wei of Taiwan and Poland's Jan Zielinski emerged the Australian Open Mixed Doubles champions they beat Desirae Krawczyk of the United States and Neal Skupski of Britain 6-7 (5), 6-4, 11-9 in the final.

Taiwan's Hsieh Su-Wei and Belgium's Elise Mertens won the Women's Doubles crown at the Australian Open on January 28 with an emphatic 6-1, 7-5 victory over Latvian-Ukrainian pairing Jelena Ostapenko and Lyudmyla Kichenok in the final.

The win earned the second seeds their second women's Grand Slam doubles crown after victory at Wimbledon in 2021 and made Hsieh the second-oldest woman to ever win a Grand Slam doubles title, behind Lisa Raymond. Thus Hsieh took two Australian Open titles this year.



## BWF Malaysia Open 2024; Anders Antonsen and An Se Young Clinch Singles Titles

Anders Antonsen from Denmark clinched the BWF Malaysia Open 2024 Men's Singles title as he prevailed over Shi Yu Qi from China in straight sets (21-14, 21-13) in the final on January 14, 2024 at Axiata Arena, Kuala Lumpur. It was Antonsen's first BWF Super 1000 title triumph. Shi Yu Qi defeated Viktor Axelsen from Denmark in the semi-final while Antonsen beat Lin Chun-Yi from Chinese Taipei in another semi-final.

An Se Young from South Korea emerged champion of the BWF Malaysia Open 2024 Women's Singles title with a 10-21, 21-10, 21-18 victory over Tai Tzu Ying from Chinese Taipei in the final. It was Young's fourth BWF Super 1000 title triumph. Young defeated China's Zhang Yi Man in the semi-final of the tournament.

Chinese duo Liang Wei Keng and Wang Chang defeated Indian pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty 9-21, 21-18, 21-17 in the final to win the Men's Doubles title of the Malaysia Open 2024 while Liu Sheng Shu and Tan Ning clinched the Malaysia Open 2024 Women's Doubles title beating Zhang Shu Xian and Zheng Yu 21-18, 21-18 in an all Chinese final.

The Malaysia Open 2024 Mixed Doubles title went to Japanese pair of Yuta Watanabe and Arisa Higashino as they registered a straight sets (21-18, 21-15) victory over South Korean pair of Kim Won Ho and Jeong Na Eun in the final.

## BWF India Open 2024; Shi Yu Qi and Tai Tzu Ying Win Singles Titles

China's Shi Yu Qi got the better of Hong Kong's Lee Cheuk Yiu in straight sets 23-21 and 21-17 in the final to win the Men's Singles Title at India Open 2024 on January 21, 2024 at the KD Jadhav Indoor Hall in New Delhi. Tai Tzu Ying from Chinese Taipei clinched the India Open 2024 Women's Singles title beating Chen Yu Fei from China 21-16, 21-12 in the final on January 21.

Earlier, Thailand's Dechapol Puavaranukroh and Sapsiree Taerattanachai claimed the Mixed Doubles title, defeating World No. 5 duo Jiang Zhen Bang and Wei Ya Xin of China 21-16, 21-16 in the final of India Open Super 750 badminton tournament.

South Korean pair of Kang Min Hyuk and Seo Seung Jae defeated local lads Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty 15-21, 21-11, 21-19 in the final to win the India Open Men's Doubles title while the Women's Doubles title of the tournament went to the Japanese pair of Mayu Matsomoto and Wakana Nagahara 21-12, 21-13.

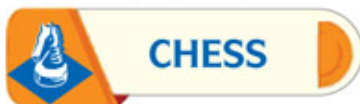
## BWF Indonesia Masters 2024; Anders Antonsen and Wang Zhi Yi Clinch Singles Titles

Anders Antonsen from Denmark clinched Indonesia Masters 2024 Men's Singles title, beating Canada's Brian Yang 18-21, 21-13, 21-18 in the final on January 28, 2024 in Jakarta. A fortnight ago, the former European champion Antonsen landed his maiden Super 1000 title when he won the Petronas Malaysia Open in Kuala

Lumpur. In the women's singles final of the Super 500 Indonesia Masters, China's Wang Zhi Yi saw off former world champion Nozomi Okuhara of Japan 21-14, 21-13 to win her first title on the circuit since 2019. Both the singles winners pocketed US \$ 31,500 (RM 150,000) each as prize money while the runners-up settled for US\$15,960 (RM75,000).

Local lads Daniel Marthin and Leo Rolly Carnando clinched the Indonesia Masters 2024 Men's Doubles title with a 21-12, 20-22, 21-11 victory over Danish duo Kim Astrup and Anders Rasmussen in the final.

Liu Shengshu and Tan Ning emerged champion of the Indonesia Masters 2024 Women's Doubles title beating Zhang Shuxian and Zheng Yu 10-21, 21-19, 22-20 in an all Chinese final. Mixed Doubles title of the tournament also went to China as Zheng Siwei and Huang Yaqiong pipped Japanese pair of Hiroki Midorikawa and Natsu Saito in straight sets (21-15, 21-16) in the final.



### Wei Yi Wins 86th Tata Steel Chess Masters 2024 Title

Chinese grandmaster Wei Yi claimed the Tata Steel Chess Tournament 2024 title for the first time on January 28, 2024 at Wijk aan Zee in the Netherlands beating Gukesh Dommaraju from India in a sensational tiebreak decider. In the final, the 24-year-old grandmaster Wei, 16th in the FIDE world ranking, defeated Gukesh with a draw with the black pieces and a victory with white. Anish Giri, Nodirbek Abdusattorov and D Gukesh finished joint runner up in this 86th edition of Tata Steel Chess Masters event.



### Raghuram Iyer Appointed CEO of Indian Olympic Association (IOA)

The Indian Olympic Association appointed Raghuram Iyer as its Chief Executive Officer on January 5, 2024. Iyer was selected unanimously for the post by the IOA Nomination Committee after thorough interviews and careful consideration of the short-listed candidates.

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Raghuram Iyer comes with a rich experience in the sports management field, having served as the CEO of Indian Premier League (IPL) sides Rajasthan Royals, Lucknow Super Giants and Rising Pune Supergiant. Iyer has also worked with Indian Super League (ISL) club ATK Mohun Bagan in football and Ultimate Table Tennis (UTT) franchise RPSG Mavericks.

One of the eligibility criteria for the post of CEO is that the candidate should be a "management professional with an experience of no less than 10 years as the CEO of a company/entity with an annual turnover of no less than ₹ 25 crore." Article 15-3 of the amended IOA constitution also says that "the CEO shall be proposed by a nomination committee comprising the IOA President, Chairman of the Athletes' Commission and one IOC member from India".

### Madhya Pradesh Emerges Overall Champion of the Inaugural Beach Games Held in Diu

The first-ever beach games were successfully organised at the pristine blue flag certified Ghoghla Beach in Diu from January 4 to 11, 2024. Many states took part in the games and Madhya Pradesh emerged the overall champion of the games with a staggering total of 18 medals, including an impressive haul of 7 golds, highlighting the depth of talent within its contingent. The competition witnessed 1404 young athletes from 28 states and Union Territories participating in a diverse array of disciplines. The morning and afternoon sessions, strategically scheduled for optimal weather conditions, provided a dynamic and engaging experience for the enthusiastic audience.

Maharashtra clinched 14 medals, including 3 golds, while Tamil Nadu, Uttarakhand, and hosts Dadra, Nagar Haveli, Diu & Daman secured 12 medals each. Notably, Assam secured 8 medals, with an impressive 5 golds.

Punjab

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Invites online applications from eligible candidates for recruitment

of 'Sub-Inspector, Fire fighting Officer Second rank officer and Others posts in Home Department.

**Last Date for Submission of Online Applications :** February 20, 2024.

**Age Limit :** The age of the candidates should not be less than 21 years and not more than 28 years as on July 1, 2024. Relaxation in the upper age limit will be given as per the government's norms.

**How to Apply :** Candidates are required to apply online using the website [ukpsc.net.in](http://ukpsc.net.in).

For more details log onto [psc.uk.gov.in](http://psc.uk.gov.in).

### Jharkhand Public Service Commission

Invites online applications for Jharkhand Combined Civil Services Competitive Examination 2023.

**Last Date for Submission of Online Applications :** February 29, 2024

**Age Limit :** Minimum-21 years and Maximum-35 years. Relaxation in the upper age limit will be given as per the government norms.

**Essential Educational Qualifications :** A candidate must hold a degree of any of the Universities approved by the government.

**Scheme of Examination :** Jharkhand Combined Civil Services Competitive Examination 2023 shall comprises of two phases : (1) Preliminary Examination and (2) Mains Examination. Combined Civil Services (Preliminary) Examination (Objective Type) will be for the selection of candidates for the Main (Written) Examination; and Combined Civil Services (Main) Examination (Written and Interview) for the selection of candidates for the various services and posts.

The Preliminary Examination shall comprises of two compulsory papers of 200 marks each, namely, General Studies-I and General Studies-II. All questions of compulsory papers will be of objective type (Multiple Choice Question). Successful candidates in the Preliminary Test and mains will be called for interview test.

**How to Apply :** Candidates are required to apply online using the Commission's website

[www.jpsc.gov.in](http://www.jpsc.gov.in)

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# Science & Technology

## World's First Fourth-Generation Nuclear Reactor Starts in China

On 6th December, 2023, China has started commercial operations at a new generation nuclear reactor that is the first of its kind in the world. In the comparison with previous reactors, the fourth-generation Shidaowan plant in China's northern Shandong province designed to use fuel more efficiently and improve its economics, safety and environmental footprint as China turns to nuclear power to try to meet carbon emissions goals. Fourth-generation reactors are intended to operate at higher temperatures than most of the reactors around the world today, which allows them to generate both electricity and hydrogen. The Generation IV International Forum (GIF) has identified six types of nuclear technology that represent the fourth-generation, and most countries in the framework are committed to producing at least one.

The 200 megawatt (MW) high-temperature, gas-cooled reactor (HTGCR) plant developed jointly by state-run utility Huaneng, Tsinghua University and China National Nuclear Corporation, uses a modular design. Modular plants refer to those of less than 300MW that can be constructed off site.

### Development of the First Fourth-Generation Nuclear Reactor

The facility, which began construction in 2012, features two 250 megawatt thermal reactors and a steam generator with an installed capacity of 200 megawatts, according to CNNC. Up to 93.4 per cent of the material used in the Shidaowan HTGR was domestically sourced.

### Significance of the Nuclear Reactor

Fourth-generation reactors aim to limit the environmental impact, nuclear waste burden, risk of nuclear meltdown, and opportunities for nuclear proliferation, according to the Gen IV International Forum (GIF), an international cooperative framework of major nuclear nations. The GIF, initiated by the US Department of Energy in 2000, represents 13 nuclear nations – including China, France, Japan and Russia—along with the European Union.

#### Key Facts :

- NuScale Power, previously expected to be the first US company licensed to build a small modular reactor, said this month it was terminating a planned 462MW project in Utah because of rising costs.
- China has a goal to produce 10% of electricity from nuclear by 2035 and 18% by 2060, but as of September this year had not met its 2020 target to install 58 gigawatts of nuclear capacity.
- China has also not signed a pledge by 20 countries at the COP28 climate conference taking place in Dubai to triple nuclear power capacity by 2050.

## India's Maiden Winter Scientific Arctic Expedition

On 18th December, 2023, Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) inaugurated India's first winter scientific expedition to the Arctic from the MoES headquarters in New Delhi. Indian scientific expeditions to the Arctic will allow researchers to conduct unique scientific observations during polar nights, where there is no sunlight for nearly 24 hours and sub-zero temperatures (as low as : 15 degrees Celsius). India's Arctic research base Himadri, where members of the Indian Arctic expedition will conduct observations and experiments. This will aid in expanding understanding of the Arctic zone in the areas of :



Himadri station (Arctic) during winter season.

1. Climate change,
2. Space weather,
3. Sea -ice and ocean circulation dynamics,
4. Ecosystem adaptations, etc.

#### Key Facts :

- Since 2008, India operates a research base in the Arctic named **Himadri**, which has been mostly hosting scientists during the summer (April to October). The decision to facilitate winter expeditions to the Arctic comes after an in-person review of India's Arctic activities at Himadri, Ny-Ålesund, Svalbard in the Norwegian Arctic, in June 2023.
- Arctic is an area of scientific, climatic, and strategic importance; hence, our scientists will have to play a vital role in addressing areas that affect life and survival on this planet". He encouraged and interacted with members of India's Arctic expedition who are set to depart from New Delhi for Himadri on December 19, 2023, and wished them a safe and productive stay.
- The first batch of the maiden Arctic winter expedition comprises researchers from the host NCPOR, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Mandi; Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Pune; and Raman Research Institute, Bengaluru.
- Indian scientific expeditions to the Earth's poles (the Arctic and the Antarctic) are facilitated under the PACER (Polar and Cryosphere) scheme of the MoES, solely through the aegis of the National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR), Goa, an autonomous institution of the MoES.

### Dynamic Ground Water Resource Assessment Report 2023

The Union Minister of Jal Shakti released the Dynamic Ground Water Resource Assessment Report for the year 2023 which was associated with Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) and States/UTs. Such joint exercises have been taken up earlier in 1980, 1995, 2004, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2017, 2020 and 2022. From 2022, the exercise is being carried out annually. As per the report, the total annual ground water recharge for the entire country is 449.08 billion cubic meters (BCM), marking an increase of 11.48 BCM compared to the previous year (2022) and annual ground water extraction for the entire country is 241.34 BCM. Out of the total 6553 assessment units in the country, 736 units have been categorized as 'Over-exploited'.

Ground Water Resource Assessment is carried out at periodical intervals jointly by State Ground Water Departments and Central Ground Water Board under the guidance of the respective State Level Committee on Ground Water Assessment at State Levels and under the overall supervision of the Central Level Expert Group (CLEG).

### The Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) Ban Common Cold and Flu Syrups for Children Below 4 Years

The Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) implemented a ban on a widely used anti-cold cocktail medicine combination for infants and children under four years of age. This decision stems from the recommendations of a Subject Expert Committee (SEC), which provides guidance to drug regulators on matters concerning drug approvals and trials in the pulmonary segment.

On 18th December, 2023, the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) issued a letter, instructing all manufacturers of the common cold fixed-dose combination (FDC) containing chlorpheniramine maleate IP 2 mg with phenylephrine HCL IP 5 mg per ml drops. The manufacturers are required to include a warning on the label and package insert, cautioning against the use of the combination in children below 4 years of age.

### Chlorpheniramine Maleate IP 2 mg with Phenylephrine HCL IP 5 mg

This combination medication is used to temporarily relieve symptoms caused by the common cold, flu, allergies, or other breathing illnesses (such as sinusitis, bronchitis). Antihistamines help relieve watery eyes, itchy eyes/nose/throat, runny nose, and sneezing. Decongestants help to relieve stuffy nose and ear congestion symptoms.

#### Key Facts :

- The DCGI has issued a letter to all State and Union Territory drug controllers, urging them to instruct manufacturers under their jurisdiction to prominently display the warning "FDC should not be used in children below 4 years of age" on not just the label and package insert but all promotional literature of the drug.
- The DCGI raised about the promotion of unapproved anti-cold drug formulations for infants, underscored the importance of notifying the regulatory office about any actions taken in this regard.

- This combination is manufactured by several companies including Glaxo SmithKline Pharmaceuticals Ltd's T-Minic, Glenmark Pharmaceuticals Ltd's Asciril Flu, Alembic Pharmaceuticals Ltd's Wikoryl AF, Wanbury Ltd. Coriminic, Wanbury Ltd. Coriminic QR and Ipca Laboratories Ltd's Solvin Cold AF.

### WHO Classify the New Sub Variant JN.1 of Covid-19 as Variant of Interest

The genetic material of the SARS-CoV-2 virus has experienced numerous changes, some of which have altered how easily it is transmitted, these changes, or mutations, occur when a virus replicates or makes copies of it. A virus that has mutated in this way is referred to as a **variant** and the recent variant is known as JN.1 of Covid-19. Those changes that are advantageous to the virus tend to spread more, meaning that variants harbouring them gradually replace other circulating variants over time. It is labelled a 'variant of interest' by the WHO. A 'variant of concern' meets these criteria, but also shows evidence of being more contagious, causing more severe disease or being less susceptible to public health measures, vaccines, diagnostic tests and/or therapeutics. In May 2021, the WHO began assigning variants of interest and variants of concern letters of the Greek alphabet. No new symptoms associated with infection due to JN.1 have come to the fore.

### What is the New Sub-Variant JN.1 of Covid-19 ?

JN.1 is a mutated variant of BA. 2-86. The BA. 2-86 has a total of 20 mutations on the spike protein, which was a big concern when it was first found out because the spike protein is what the virus uses to latch on to the cells of the host. JN.1 is said to have a single change from the BA.2.86. In October last week, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (US CDC) mentioned about a new variant called JN.1. "We are learning about a new variant called JN.1."

#### Key Facts :

- JN.1 was first detected in September 2023 in the United States and has been detected in 11 other countries. With this limited information, it is too early to tell whether it will spread more widely. Neither JN.1 nor BA. 2-86 is common in the United States right now, the US CDC has said. JN.1 makes up fewer than 0.1 per cent of COVID cases in the US right now.
- On this, the US CDC has an important update. "Even though BA. 2-86 and JN.1 sound very different because of the way variants are named, there is only a single change between JN.1 and BA. 2-86 in the spike protein," it says and explains that the spike protein is also part of a virus that vaccines target, meaning vaccines should work against JN.1 and BA. 2-86 similarly.

### World Malaria Report 2023

WHO releases World malaria report every year, provides a comprehensive and up-to-date assessment of trends in malaria control and elimination across the globe. This year's report includes, for the first time, a dedicated chapter focused on the intersection between climate change and malaria. Climate change is one of many

threats to the global response to malaria. Millions of people continue to miss out on the services they need to prevent, detect, and treat the disease. Malaria is an acute febrile illness caused by Plasmodium parasites, which are spread to people through the bites of infected female Anopheles mosquitoes. It is preventable and curable.

### India and Malaria

India and Indonesia accounted for about 94% of all malaria deaths in the WHO South-East Asia Region. Aligned with WHO's strategy, aims to eliminate malaria across India by 2030 and maintain malaria-free zones. 94% Death due to malaria are recorded from India and Indonesia.

### Countries with Most Casualties Due to Malaria

About 96% of malaria deaths globally were in 29 countries. Four countries accounted for just over half of all malaria deaths globally in 2022 which are as :

1. Nigeria (31%)
2. The Democratic Republic of the Congo (12%)
3. Niger (6%) and
4. The United Republic of Tanzania (4%)

### Vaccines Recommended by WHO

The report emphasizes notable progress in malaria prevention through the phased introduction of the WHO-recommended malaria vaccine, RTS,S/AS01, in African nations. In October 2023, WHO recommended a second safe and effective malaria vaccine, R21/Matrix-M.

#### Pathogen and Vector of Malaria

The pathogen of malaria is Plasmodium which has four species to cause malaria

1. Plasmodium falciparum,
2. P. vivax,
3. P. malariae, and
4. P. ovale

All undergo sporogonic development in the mosquito host where Development begins when a susceptible female mosquito ingests microgametocytes (male forms) and macrogametocytes (female forms) during blood feeding on an infected human.

The vector of malaria is the anopheline mosquito and the disease-causing organism is the malaria parasite. Humans and anopheline mosquitoes are both considered to be the parasite's hosts.

#### Key Facts :

- Globally in 2022, there were estimated 249 million malaria cases in 85 malaria endemic countries and areas (including the territory of French Guiana), an increase of 5 million cases compared with 2021. The main countries contributing to the increase were Pakistan (+ 2.1 million), Ethiopia (+ 1.3 million), Nigeria (+ 1.3 million), Uganda (+ 597000) and Papua New Guinea (+ 423000).
- In 2015, the baseline year of the Global technical strategy for malaria 2016–30 (GTS), there were an estimated 231 million malaria cases.
- Malaria case incidence declined from 81 per 1000 population at risk in 2000 to 57 in 2019. Following a

small increase of 3% in 2020, incidence rates have remained stable over the past 3 years. In 2022, malaria case incidence was 58 per 1000 population at risk.

- The proportion of cases due to P. vivax decreased from about 8% (20.5 million) in 2000 to 3% (6.9 million) in 2022.
- Twenty-nine countries accounted for 95% of malaria cases globally. Four countries : Nigeria (27%), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (12%), Uganda (5%) and Mozambique (4%) accounted for almost half of all cases globally.
- The WHO African Region, with an estimated 233 million cases in 2022, accounted for about 94% of cases globally.
- In 2022, India accounted for 66% of cases in the region. Almost 46% of all cases in the region were due to P. vivax. Sri Lanka was certified malaria free in 2016 and remains malaria free.
- Despite an overall decrease of 11.9% in estimated cases between 2021 and 2022 in the region, increases in cases and incidence were seen in Bangladesh, Indonesia, Myanmar and Thailand.

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## BOOKS & AUTHORS

1. Why Didn't You Come Sooner ? Compassion in Action: Stories of Children Rescue From Slavery  
—Kailash Satyarthi
2. Breaking the Mould : Reimagining Indian's Economic Future Reviews & Ratings  
—Raghuram G. Rajan, Rohit Lamba
3. WHY BHARAT MATTERS —S. Jaishankar
4. The RSS : 100 Years of Service, Dedication and Nation Building —Chinmaya Saxena, Ayushmann Singh
5. Anger Management : The Troubled Diplomatic Relationship between India and Pakistan —Ajay Bisaria

## IMPORTANT DAYS/WEEKS/YEARS

March 2024

### National

- March 3 National Defence Day  
 March 4 National Safety Day  
 March 18 Ordnance Factories Day

### International

- March 8 International Women's Day, United Nations Day for Women's Right & International Peace  
 March 15 World Consumer Rights Day  
 March 20 International Day of Happiness  
 March 21 World Forestry Day, International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination  
 March 22 World Water Day  
 March 23 World Meteorological Day  
 March 24 World Tuberculosis Day  
 March 27 World Theatre Day

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# Memorable Points

## NATIONAL

- Who has been nominated as the Chairman of the Supreme Court Legal Services Committee (SCLSC) recently ?  
—Justice B.R. Gavai
  - ✦ Supreme Court judge Justice B.R. Gavai has been nominated as the Chairman of the Supreme Court Legal Services Committee (SCLSC) as a notification was on December 29, 2023 issued by the Department of Justice about Justice Gavai's nomination as the Chairman of SCLSC. He replaced Justice Sanjiv Khanna on this post. The Supreme Court Legal Services Committee was constituted under Section 3A of the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987, to provide "free and competent legal services to the weaker sections of society", in cases falling under the top court's jurisdiction. The SCLSC consists of a sitting SC judge, who is the Chairman, along with other members possessing the experience and qualifications prescribed by the Centre.
- Who has been appointed the Chairman of the 16th Finance Commission ?  
—Arvind Panagariya
  - ✦ Former NITI Aayog Vice Chairman Arvind Panagariya was on December 31, 2023 appointed as the Chairman of the 16th Finance Commission by the Centre government. The 16th Finance Commission has a crucial role in recommending the devolution formulated for tax revenues between the Centre and states. According to an official order, the commission, under Panagariya's leadership, is expected to submit its report by October 31, 2025, covering a five-year period from April 1, 2026. The Finance Commission is constituted under Article 280 of the Constitution of India.
- Who assumed charge as the CMD of the Power Grid Corporation of India Ltd. ?  
—Ravindra Kumar Tyagi
  - ✦ Ravindra Kumar Tyagi on January 1, 2024 assumed charge as Chairman & Managing Director (CMD) of Power Grid Corporation of India (PGCIL) succeeding K. Sreekant, who was heading the organisation since August 2019. Prior to this, Mr. Tyagi was serving as Director (Operations) of the company. Tyagi, an Electrical Engineer from Punjab Engineering College (PEC), Chandigarh and M. Tech in Energy Studies from IIT Delhi, is also a 'Fulbright Scholar' from Carnegie Mellon University, USA. During his illustrious career spanning 33 years, his areas of proficiency include Asset Management, Engineering, Business Development (both domestic and overseas), Telecom, Load Despatch & Communication, NTAMC, DMS, among others. Notably, he has also served as the Head of POWERGRID's North Eastern Region.
- Where was the India International Science Festival (IISF) 2023 organized ?  
—Faridabad, Haryana
  - ✦ The India International Science Festival (IISF) 2023 was successfully organized from January 17 to 20, 2024 in Faridabad, Haryana to celebrate the achievements of India in the fields of science and technology. The central theme of the IISF 2023 was "Science and Technology Public Outreach in Amrit Kaal. It was the 9th edition of the event. Participants from around 22 countries including Australia, Cambodia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Japan etc attended the mega science event in Faridabad.
- Which hospital has been selected for the Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar-2024 ?  
—60 Parachute Field Hospital in Uttar Pradesh
  - ✦ 60 Parachute Field Hospital in Uttar Pradesh has been selected for the Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar-2024 for its excellent work in Disaster Management. The Centre government has instituted the annual award known as Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar to recognize and honour the invaluable contribution and selfless service rendered by individuals and organizations in India in the field of disaster management. The award is announced every year on 23rd January, the birth anniversary of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose. The award carries a cash prize of ₹ 51 lakh and a certificate in case of an institution and ₹ 5 lakh and a certificate in case of an individual. 60 Parachute Field Hospital, Uttar Pradesh, was established in 1942.
- Where was the 27th National Youth Festival organized ?  
—Nashik
  - ✦ Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 27th National Youth Festival in Nashik, Maharashtra on January 12, 2024, dedicating the event to Swami Vivekananda, an emblem of India's dynamic youth power, whose birth anniversary is annually celebrated as National Youth Day. The National Youth Festival is organized every year from 12th to 16th January, with the 12th of January being the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda. The host state for the festival this year is Maharashtra.
- Who was the Chief Guest of the Republic Day 2024 celebration in New Delhi this year ?  
—French President Emmanuel Macron
  - ✦ French President Emmanuel Macron witnessed India's 75th Republic Day celebrations in New Delhi as the Chief Guest on the grand occasion on January 26, 2024 in presence of President of India Droupadi Murmu, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other Indian leaders and dignitaries. President Macron is the sixth French leader to attend the Republic Day celebrations in New Delhi as the chief guest.

- Which business group won title sponsorship rights for IPL for five years ? —**TATA Group**
  - ✦ Tata Group has bagged the title sponsorship of the Indian Premier League (IPL) for 2024-28 for a 'record-breaking' \$300 million on January 20, 2024. Tata Group has been the title sponsor of both the men's IPL and the Women's Premier League, which took off last year. Backed by celebrity franchise owners and featuring the best players in international cricket, IPL has become the world's richest T20 tournament with an estimated brand value of \$ 8.4 billion. It has been a cash cow for the Indian cricket board (BCCI) with the 10-team league's 2023-27 media rights fetching \$ 6.2 billion.

## INTERNATIONAL

- Who has been re-elected the new Prime Minister of Bhutan ? —**Tshering Tobgay**
  - ✦ Former Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay has been re-elected as the Prime Minister of Bhutan for second time as People's Democratic Party (PDP) led-by Tobgay won nearly two-thirds of the seats in Bhutan Parliament on January 09, 2024. Tobgay's PDP "won the 2024 National Assembly general elections with victory over 30 seats" while the Bhutan Tendrel Party (BTP) took the remaining 17. Tobgay was the leader of the opposition in Bhutan's first Parliament when it was established in 2008, soon after the start of the reign of the present king. Tobgay holds a degree in mechanical engineering from the University of Pittsburgh and a master's in public administration from Harvard, then served as Prime Minister from 2013 to 2018.
- Who has been honoured with the International Sports Personality of the Year award for 2023 in Dubai ? —**Gianni Infantino**
  - ✦ FIFA President Gianni Infantino was on January 9, 2024 honoured with the International Sports Personality of the Year award for 2023 at Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Creative Sports Awards in Dubai. Inspired by Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum's love of sport, the awards were established in 2009, and recognize individual achievement in a broad range of sport-related fields. Mr. Infantino received the award in recognition of FIFA having developed football through various means, including Video Assistant Referee (VAR) technology, doping detection, and the monitoring of player injuries.
- Which currency has been declared the most powerful currency in the world by Forbes ? —**Kuwaiti Dinar**
  - ✦ Kuwaiti Dinar was declared the most valuable and powerful currency in the world by Forbes magazine in January, 2024. Bahraini Dinar and Omani Rial occupy second and third spots respectively, Forbes reported. According to the Forbes, the strength of the currency is determined by evaluating the number of goods and services which can be purchased with one unit of the national currency and foreign currency obtained in exchange. Kuwaiti Dinar was introduced in 1960 and has been consistently ranked as the world's most valuable currency. As per today's exchange rate, one Kuwaiti Dinar costs ₹ 270-10.
- Which drama series emerged winner in the 75th Primetime Emmy Awards recently ? —**Succession**
  - ✦ The 75th Primetime Emmy Awards, the US TV industry's highest honours, were announced in different categories on January 15, 2024. HBO's 'Succession', FX's 'The Bear' and Netflix's 'Beef' were among the biggest winners of the night. Best Drama Series Emmy went to 'Succession' while The Bear won the comedy Series honour. Sarah Snook for 'Succession' won the Emmy for Best Drama Lead actress and her co-actor Kieran Culkin won it in Drama Lead actor category. 'Beef' was adjudged the winner of the Emmy in Limited or Anthology Series class. Jeremy Allen White for 'The Bear' won the Emmy as Comedy lead actor and Quinta Brunson for 'Abbott Elementary' won in Comedy lead actress.
- Which company became second company to attain \$3 trillion market capitalization mark ? —**Microsoft**
  - ✦ Microsoft on January 25, 2024 became the second company ever to attain the \$ 3 trillion market capitalization mark in the world. Shares of Microsoft soared to a record high of \$ 405-63, marking a 1.7 per cent increase, pushing its market capitalization above \$ 3 trillion. It became the second company after Apple to achieve the historical feat.
- Which Indian cricketer won Pubity Male Athlete of The Year Award 2023 ? —**Virat Kohli**
  - ✦ Team India's star batsman Virat Kohli emerged as the winner of the Pubity Male Athlete of The Year Award 2023, defeating Argentine footballing great Lionel Messi on December 31, 2023 in a public poll. Virat Kohli was in contention with Lionel Messi, Novak Djokovic, Carlos Alcaraz, Lebron James, and Max Verstappen to win the Pubity Male Athlete of The Year Award. The finalists came down to between Kohli and Messi, with Kohli winning the award with over 5 lakh votes. He received 78% votes as compared to Messi's 28%.
- Which country won the United Cup Tennis Championship this year ? —**Germany**
  - ✦ Germany defeated Poland 2-1 in the three rubber final to clinch the United Cup Tennis Championship as reigning Olympic champion Alexander Zverev defeated No. 9-ranked Hubert Hurkacz 6-7 (3), 7-6 (6), 6-4 in a three-hour epic of the Men's Singles rubber of the final at Ken Rosewall Arena in Sydney to help Germany level the final 1-1. Zverev partnered with Laura Siegemund to win the mixed doubles 6-4, 5-7, 10-4 in a super tiebreaker against Polish pair of Iga Swiatek and Hurkacz and handed Germany 2-1 title victory on January 7 in Sydney.
- Who won FIFA Male Player of Year 2023 award recently ? —**Lionel Messi from Argentina**
  - ✦ Argentina superstar Lionel Messi on January 15, 2024 won the Best FIFA Men's Player Award for the 3rd time in the last 4 years, edging past Norwegian striker Erling Haaland in a closely-contested race. FIFA, the global football governing body conferred its annual football awards for 2023 on January 15, 2024 in various categories at a glittering award ceremony in London. Lionel Messi has been crowned The Best FIFA Men's Player 2023, retaining the title he won in 2022.



# Economic Scenario

- ➔ *Broadband Services to Each and Every Gram Panchayat is Still a Dream*
- ➔ *MSP for Copra (Milling & Ball) Announced for Calendar Year 2024*
- ➔ *Banks' Asset Quality Improves Despite Rise of Retail Loans*
- ➔ *SBI & HDFC Bank have to Set Aside Higher Capital for Loans*
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- ➔ *List of World's Top 10 Countries by Share in Global GDP*
- ➔ *India Ranked 35th for Leveraging Future Possibilities : UK on Top*
- ➔ *PM Modi Releases First Installation of Benefits to One Lakh People Under Tribal Welfare Scheme PM-JANMAN*
- ➔ *US has World's Most Powerful Military*
- ➔ *India Climbs Eight Places to 127 in Global Gender Index, 2023*
- ➔ *Net Direct Tax Collection Increased to ₹16-64 Lakh Crore*
- ➔ *States' Start-up Ranking 2022*

## Broadband Services to Each and Every Gram Panchayat is Still a Dream

Prime Minister's pet project of connecting 30,000 'uncovered villages' in 500 days, under the BharatNet project, has not taken off in most of the Gram Panchayats. The Union Cabinet on July 27, 2022, had approved the project 'Saturation of 4G mobile coverage of Uncovered Villages' across the country (around 30,000 villages) at a cost of ₹ 30,620-49 crore. The project was supposed to have been rolled out in 500 days (now already passed 514 days) by Bharat Sanchar Nigam (BSNL).

### BharatNet Project

The BharatNet Project was first approved by the Union Cabinet in October 2011 to connect more than six-lakh villages and 2-50 lakh Gram Panchayats (GPs). The Project is being executed by Bharat Broadband Network (BBNL), which is now part of BSNL, as a special purpose vehicle (SPV), and will be partnering with village level entrepreneurs (VLEs) to provide the connectivity. The project is delayed just like several other projects under the Universal Service Obligation Fund (under Department of Telecommunications), which is rechristened to 'Digital Bharat Nidhi' in the Telecommunications Act, 2023, for funding the projects.

Phase-II of BharatNet Project was approved in 2017 and funding for the project in both phases has been ₹ 42,068 crore (exclusive of GST, Octroi and local taxes).

As of December 11, 2023 Broadband connectivity has reached 2,08,635 GPs and 6,75,466 km of optical-fiber cable (OFC) has been laid. The Union Cabinet in August, 2023 also had approved ₹ 1-39 lakh crore budget for the project and till now Uttar Pradesh has received the highest budget allocation of ₹ 4,274-66 crore (up by 11-9 per cent as com-

pared to last year), followed by Maharashtra at ₹ 4,089-23 crore (up 11-4 per cent), Madhya Pradesh at ₹ 3,675 crore (up 10-2 per cent) and Gujarat ₹ 3,035-56 crore (up 8-4 per cent).

Additionally, 782,366 Fibre-To-The-Home (FTTH) connections are commissioned and 104,675 Wi-Fi hotspots are installed to ensure last-mile connectivity. Companies like Bharti Airtel and Reliance Jio are undertaking the projects in various locations of the country.

## MSP for Copra (Milling & Ball) Announced for Calendar Year 2024

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) on December 27, 2023 approved hike in minimum support prices (MSPs) for copra for 2024 season by ₹ 250-300 per quintal from current season.

The MSP for fair average quality of milling copra has been fixed at ₹ 11,160 per quintal up 3 per cent from ₹ 10,860 in 2023 and for ball copra at ₹ 12,000, up 2 per cent from ₹ 11,750 per quintal for 2023 season.

The approval is based on recommendations of the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices and views of major coconut growing States. The decision to hike the MSP would ensure a margin of 51-84 per cent for milling copra and 63-26 per cent for ball copra over the all India weighted average costs of production (A2+Family Labour).

The announced MSP of copra for 2023 season is in line with the principle of fixing the MSP at a level of at least 1-5 times all India weighted average cost of production as announced by the Government in the Budget 2018-19. In the last 10 years, the government has more than doubled the MSPs of milling copra and ball copra from ₹ 5,250 per quintal and ₹ 5,500 per quintal, respectively, in 2014-15.

National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India (Nafed) and National Cooperative Consumers' Federation (NCCF) will continue to act as nodal agencies for procurement of copra and de-husked coconut directly from farmers under Price Support Scheme (PSS) when market rates fall below MSPs.

Milling copra is used to extract oil, while ball/edible copra is consumed as a dry fruit and used for religious purposes. Kerala and Tamil Nadu are major producers of milling copra, whereas ball copra is produced predominantly in Karnataka.

MSPs for Copra (Milling and Ball) and De-husked copra are applicable for calendar year, while for other crops MSPs are either applicable for crop year or marketing season.

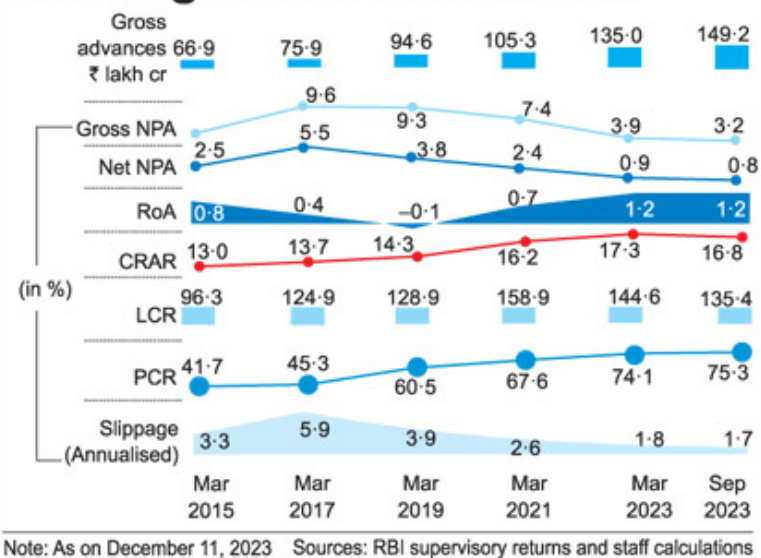
### Banks' Asset Quality Improves Despite Rise of Retail Loans

As per RBI's Financial Stability Report 2023, underlying asset quality of commercial banks has improved despite the sharp growth in retail lending. Between September 2021 and September 2023, banks' retail loans grew at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 25.5 per cent, which exceeded the headline credit growth of 18.6 per cent. Retail loans include housing loans, vehicle loans, loans against property, education loans, loans against FD, loans against shares, personal loans, credit cards, consumer durables and other retail loans. Pro-cyclicality refers to the tendency to overestimate future risk in times of crisis, while underestimating it in normal times.

The GNPA (gross non-performing assets) ratio of total retail advances improved to 1.6 per cent in September 2023 from 2 per cent in September 2022, whereas the special mention account/SMA (1+2) ratio rose marginally from 2.7 per cent to 2.8 per cent. The GNPA ratio of unsecured retail advances improved to 2 per cent in September 2023 from 2.5 per cent a year ago.

If principal or interest payment or any other amount wholly or partly overdue remains outstanding up to 30 days, a loan account is classified as

## Banking Sector Soundness



Special Mention Account (SMA)-0; 31-60 days-SMA-1; 61-90 days-SMA-2.

Accordingly, the RBI took proactive regulatory measures such as increase in risk weights on certain segments of consumer credit by banks and NBFCs as well as bank credit to NBFCs.

Adjusting for increase in risk weights, the CRAR (capital to risk-weighted assets ratio) of the banking system (PSBs/public sector banks + PVBs/private sector banks) is estimated to decline by 71 basis points (bps) to 16 per cent and CET (common equity tier) 1 may fall by 58 bps to 13.2 per cent, per RBI's assessment. The impact, however, varies among banks

The central bank assessed that further gains in earnings for scheduled commercial banks (SCBs) could be moderated by rising cost of funds – the average cost of funds of SCBs have risen by 80 bps from 4.4 per cent during Q4 (January-March): FY23 to 5.2 per cent in Q2 (July-September): FY24.

### Stress Test

The Central Bank said the stress test results reveal that SCBs are well-capitalised and capable of absorbing macroeconomic shocks even in the absence of any further capital infusion by stakeholders.

Under the baseline scenario, the aggregate CRAR of 46 major

banks is projected to slip from 16.6 per cent in September 2023 to 14.8 per cent by September 2024.

- CRAR may go down to 13.5 per cent in the medium stress scenario and to 12.2 per cent under the severe stress scenario by September 2024, which would also remain above the minimum capital requirements.
- No SCB would breach the minimum capital requirement of 9 per cent in the next one year.

Under the baseline scenario, the GNPA ratio of all SCBs may improve to 3.1 per cent by September 2024 from the current level of 3.2 per cent. However, if the macroeconomic environment worsens to a medium or a severe stress scenario, the ratio may rise to 3.6 per cent and 4.4 per cent.

### SBI & HDFC Bank have to Set Aside Higher Capital for Loans

State Bank of India, HDFC bank and ICICI bank have been declared as systemically important banks (D-SIBs) in India. State Bank of India (SBI) and HDFC Bank will be required to set aside higher capital for the loans they make with effect from April 1, 2025, in the backdrop of their balance sheets growing bigger.

The central bank has prescribed

higher additional Common Equity Tier (CET) 1 requirement for SBI and HDFC Bank at 0.80 per cent (against 0.60 per cent up to March-end 2025) and 0.40 per cent (0.20 per cent), respectively, as a percentage of their Risk Weighted Assets (RWAs). For ICICI Bank, the additional CET 1 requirement continues at 0.20 per cent. While ICICI Bank continues to be in the same bucketing structure as last year, SBI and HDFC Bank move to higher buckets.

The additional CET 1 requirement will be in addition to the capital conservation buffer.

Within the CRAR (capital to risk-weighted assets ratio) of 11.5 per cent for banks, the CET-1 is at 5.5 per cent. Beginning FY26 :

- If SBI wants to make a loan, it will have to back it up with 12.3 per cent of the loan amount as capital against 12.1 per cent now, going by the D-SIB prescription.
- If HDFC Bank wants to make a loan, it will have to back it up with 11.9 per cent of the loan amount as capital against 11.7 per cent now, going by the D-SIB prescription.

SIBs are perceived as banks that are 'Too Big To Fail (TBTF)'. This perception of TBTF creates an expectation of government support for these banks at the time of distress. Due to this perception, these banks enjoy certain advantages in the funding markets.

However, the perceived expectation of government support amplifies risk taking, reduces market discipline, creates competitive distortions, and increases the probability of distress in the future.

### National Transit Pass System (NTPS) : 'One Nation-One Pass'

Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change and Labour and Employment Bhupender Yadav on December 29, 2023 launched the National Transit Pass System (NTPS) pan-India to facilitate the seamless transit of timber, bamboo, and other forest produce across the country.

- Currently, the transit permits are issued for transportation of timber and forest produce based on state specific transit rules.
- The NTPS is envisioned as a 'One Nation-One Pass' regime, which will enable seamless transit across the country.
- This initiative will streamline the issuance of timber transit permits by providing a unified, online mode for tree growers and farmers involved in agro-forestry across the country, contributing to the ease of doing business.
- NTPS is designed for user convenience, featuring desktop and mobile applications for easy registration and permit applications.
- Transit permits will be issued for tree species which are regulated, while the users can self-generate No Objection Certificates for exempted species.
- Presently, 25 States and Union Territories have embraced the unified permit system, streamlining interstate business operations for producers, farmers, and transporters.

### Indian Economy to Grow at 7.3 per cent in FY 2023-24 : First Advance Estimates of NSO Predicts

The National Statistical Office (NSO) has projected the Indian economy to grow at 7.3 per cent in 2023-

2024—higher than the Reserve Bank of India's estimate of 7 per cent assuming an investment-led recovery in the world's fifth largest economy. The Indian economy grew 7.7 per cent in the first half (April-September) of FY24. In FY23, GDP expanded 7.2 per cent.

The estimated growth in gross value added (GVA) of 6.9 per cent for FY24 implies that growth under this metric has been assumed at 6.2 per cent in the second half of FY24, significantly lower than the imputed GDP growth for the same period.

The labour-intensive construction sector is likely to pick up pace with the NSO estimating 10.7 per cent growth in FY24. But the service sector, the largest component of GDP, is estimated to grow relatively slow at 7.7 per cent in FY24 against 9.5 per cent in FY23. The biggest component of services—trade, hotels, transport, and communication is projected to expand by 6.3 per cent due to a higher base. The other two components of the services sector—financial, real estate and professional services, and public administration are pegged to clock 8.9 per cent and 7.7 per cent growth, respectively, this financial year.

Details on the expenditure side of GDP reveals that investment is the main driver of growth in FY24. Growth in private consumption is expected to slow down in 2023-24 to 4.4 per cent, while government spending is projected to pick up pace, growing at 4.1 per cent.

### First Advance Estimates of National Income (2023-24)

Industry	% Share in GVA	
	Current Prices	at Constant Prices (2011-12)
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	18.0	14.4
<b>Primary Sector</b>	<b>18.0</b>	<b>14.4</b>
Mining & Quarrying	2.3	2.2
Manufacturing	14.2	17.7
Electricity, Gas, Water Supply & Other Utility Services	3.0	2.4
Construction	8.3	8.7
<b>Secondary Sector</b>	<b>27.9</b>	<b>31.0</b>
Trade, Hotels, Transport, Communication & Services related to Broadcasting	17.6	18.9
Financial, Real Estate & Professional Services	21.8	22.9
Public Administration, Defence & Other Services	14.7	12.8
<b>Tertiary Sector</b>	<b>54.1</b>	<b>54.6</b>
<b>GVA at Basic Prices</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

First Advance Estimates of National Income (2023-24)		
Industry	Percentage change in 2023-24 over 2022-23	
	at Current Prices	at Constant Prices (2011-12)
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	5.5	1.8
<b>Primary Sector</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>1.8</b>
Mining & Quarrying	5.8	8.1
Manufacturing	4.4	6.5
Electricity, Gas, Water Supply & Other Utility Services	9.2	8.3
Construction	9.6	10.7
<b>Secondary Sector</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>7.9</b>
Trade, Hotels, Transport, Communication & Services related to Broadcasting	5.8	6.3
Financial, Real Estate & Professional Services	9.9	8.9
Public Administration, Defence & Other Services	13.8	7.7
<b>Tertiary Sector</b>	<b>9.6</b>	<b>7.7</b>
<b>GVA at Basic Prices</b>	<b>8.0</b>	<b>6.9</b>

First Advance Estimate of National Income 2023-24 (₹ Lakh Crore)				
Item	2022-23 (PE)	2023-24 (IAE)	% change over Previous Year	
			2022-23	2023-24
<b>At Constant Prices (2011-12)</b>				
GVA at Basic Prices	147.65	157.82	7.0	6.9
Gross Domestic Product (GDP)	160.06	171.78	7.2	7.3
Net Domestic Product (NDP)	139.29	149.58	7.3	7.4
Gross National Income (GNI)	156.81	168.05	7.3	7.2
Net National Income (NNI)	136.04	145.84	7.4	7.2
Per Capita Income (₹)	98374	104550	6.3	6.3
<b>At Current prices</b>				
GVA at Basic Prices	247.43	267.12	15.4	8.0
Gross Domestic Product (GDP)	272.41	296.57	16.1	8.9
Net Domestic Product (NDP)	243.69	265.84	17.2	9.0
Gross National Income (GNI)	266.96	290.27	16.1	8.7
Net National Income (NNI)	238.24	259.27	17.2	8.8
Per Capita Income (₹)	172276	185854	16.0	7.9

Though growth in investment demand as represented by gross fixed capital formation (GFCF) is estimated to ease to 10.3 per cent, from 11.4 per cent in FY23, it will remain the mainstay of economic recovery—led by sustained focus of the central government on capex. With global growth remaining weak, the external sector remains a major drag on India's growth, with net exports contributing negatively to real GDP growth (at -3 percentage points).

**PM Inaugurates Ayodhya Dham Junction, Flags off Two New Amrit Bharat Trains & Six New Vande Bharat Trains**

The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi on December 30, 2023 inaugurated the redeveloped Ayodhya Railway Station and flagged off two new Amrit Bharat trains and six Vande Bharat trains. The country's first Vande Bharat Express train ran

from Kashi. Now 80 Vande Bharat Express trains are running on 40 routes in the country. Vande Bharat trains connect Kashi, Katra, Ujjain, Pushkar, Tirupati, Shirdi, Amritsar, Madurai, every such big center of faith.

Phase I of redeveloped Ayodhya Railway Station - known as **Ayodhya Dham Junction** Railway Station has been developed at a cost of more than ₹ 240 crore. The three-storey modern railway station building is equipped with all modern features like lifts, escalators, food plazas, shops for puja needs, cloak rooms, child care rooms, waiting halls. The station building is 'accessible for all' and 'IGBC certified green station building'.

Prime Minister flagged off a new category of superfast passenger trains in the country the **Amrit Bharat Express**. The Amrit Bharat train is an LHB push pull train with non air-conditioned coaches. Amrit Bharat Trains are Darbhanga-Ayodhya-Anand Vihar Terminal Amrit Bharat Express and Malda Town-Sir M. Visvesvaraya Terminus (Bengaluru) Amrit Bharat Express.

This train has locos at both ends for better acceleration. It provides improved facilities for rail passengers like beautiful and attractive designed seats, better luggage rack, mobile charging point with suitable mobile holder, LED lights, CCTV, public information system, among others. The Prime Minister also flagged off six new Vande Bharat Trains.

The Prime Minister also flagged off six new Vande Bharat Trains. These include Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra-New Delhi Vande Bharat Express; Amritsar-Delhi Vande Bharat Express; Coimbatore-Bangalore Cantt Vande Bharat Express; Mangalore-Madgaon Vande Bharat Express; Jalna-Mumbai Vande Bharat Express and Ayodhya-Anand Vihar Terminal Vande Bharat Express.

The Prime Minister also dedicated to the nation three railway projects worth ₹ 2300 crore to strengthen rail infrastructure in the region. The projects include the Rooma Chakeri-Chanderi third line project; Jaunpur-Tulsi Nagar, Akbarpur-Ayodhya, Sohawal-Patanga and Safdarganj-Rasauli

sections of the Jaunpur-Ayodhya-Barabanki doubling project; and doubling and electrification project of the Malhaur-Daliganj railway section.

### Government of India Constitutes Sixteenth Finance Commission

The Government of India, with the approval of the President of India, has constituted the Sixteenth Finance Commission, in pursuance to Article 280(1) of the Constitution on December 31, 2023.

Dr. Arvind Panagariya, former Vice-Chairman, NITI Aayog, and Professor, Columbia University will be the Chairman. Members of the Sixteenth Finance Commission would be notified separately. Shri Ritvik Ranjanam Pandey has been appointed as Secretary to the Commission. Detailed terms of reference for Sixteenth Finance Commission have also been spelt out in the notification issued on December 31, 2023.

The Sixteenth Finance Commission shall make recommendations as to the following matters, namely :

1. The distribution between the Union and the States of the net proceeds of taxes which are to be, or may be, divided between them under Chapter I, Part XII of the Constitution and the allocation between the States of the respective shares of such proceeds;
2. The principles which should govern the grants-in-aid of the revenues of the States out of the Consolidated Fund of India and the sums to be paid to the States by way of grants-in-aid of their revenues under article 275 of the Constitution for the purposes other than those specified in the provisos to clause (1) of that article; and
3. The measures needed to augment the Consolidated Fund of a State to supplement the resources of the Panchayats and Municipalities in the State on the basis of the recommendations made by the Finance Commission of the State.

The Sixteenth Finance Commission may review the present arrangements on financing Disaster Manage-

ment initiatives, with reference to the funds constituted under the Disaster Management Act, 2005 (53 of 2005), and make appropriate recommendations thereon.

The Sixteenth Finance Commission has been requested to make its report available by 31st October, 2025 covering a period of five years commencing on the 1st April, 2026 (2026-27 to 2030-31).

### Swachh Survekshan Awards 2023 : Indore, Surat 'Cleanest Cities' in India

Indore and Surat were declared the joint cleanest cities of India as part of the Swachh Survekshan Awards presented by President Draupadi Murmu on January 11, 2024.

- This was the seventh time that Indore won the accolade of the cleanest city in India.

- Varanasi and Prayagraj were adjudged cleanest Ganga Towns.
- Mhow Cantonment Board in Madhya Pradesh was given the award for cleanest cantonment town.

### PM Narendra Modi Inaugurates India's Longest Sea Bridge : Atal Setu

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on January 12, 2024 inaugurated the Mumbai Trans Harbour Link (MTHL). Named the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Sewri-Nhava Sheva Atal Setu, the 21.8 km-long, six-lane engineering marvel, of which 16.5 km is in the sea, has been built at a cost of ₹ 17,840 crore, and will cut the distance between the Mumbai island city and its satellite city Navi Mumbai shorter.

## ABOUT ATAL SETU

**Official name:** Atal Bihari Vajpayee Sewri-Nhava Sheva Atal Setu

**Length:** 22 km (16.5 km sea bridge and a 5.5 km elevated road)

**Project cost:** Close to ₹17,843 crore


**Connects:** Sewri, South Mumbai to Chirle, near Nhava Sheva

**Contractors:** L&T Ltd-IHI Infrastructure Systems Ltd. Consortium, L&T, DAEWOO Engineering & Construction Company Ltd. - Tata Projects Ltd. JV

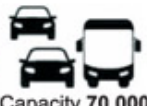
**Fuel saving:** Ten million litres per annum

\*Through open road system  
Source: News reports, company data, state agencies

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100 km/h



**Capacity** 70,000 vehicles/day

**Tolling** ₹250 per ride for cars, ₹400-830 for buses and ₹830-1,580 per ride for over-sized trucks\*

**DID YOU KNOW?**

- The bridge, as a concept, was first floated in 1970s
- Made of orthotropic steel decks (OSDs) to allow ship-passage underneath
- L&T used barges the size of a football ground to transport OSDs for the project
- 175,700 tonnes of reinforcement steel used, equivalent to 20 Eiffel Towers

- More than 17,000 people worked
- In 2010, plans for a MTHL metro were also considered
- In 2008, the Ambani brothers had bid to build the bridge through their respective companies
- JRD Tata chaired a Steering Group for the project, set up in 1981

### List of World's Top 10 Countries by Share in Global GDP

India ranks 5th among the top 10 countries in the world in terms of its share in the global Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The country holds a 3.288 per cent share in the world's GDP, as revealed by the Henley

PD/March/2024/55

Passport Index 2024. India's GDP is currently around USD 3.4 trillion making it the fifth largest economy in the world. The country is also the fastest growing major economy with a GDP growth of 7.6 per cent in the July-September quarter this year.

The current list of the top 10 countries in the world by share in global GDP is led by the United States, with China in the second position, and India securing the fifth spot.

Here is the list of the top 10 countries along with their share in global GDP as per Henley Passport Index 2024 :

1. United States (24-137 per cent)
2. China (18-359 per cent)
3. Japan (5-115 per cent)
4. Germany (4-41 per cent)
5. India (3-288 per cent)
6. United Kingdom (3-242 per cent)
7. France (3-062 per cent)
8. Italy (2-182 per cent)
9. Canada (2-058 per cent)
10. South Korea (1-875 per cent)

**India Ranked 35th for Leveraging Future Possibilities; UK on Top**

India has been ranked 35th on a global index of countries best placed for leveraging future possibilities while the UK topped the list released here on January 15, 2024. The study compared the factors that will help governments, investors and other private sector stakeholders leverage six global, transformational trends for growth and wellbeing across 70 countries.

These six global transformational trends are : Exabyte Economy (advanced digital technologies), Well being Economy (health prevention and wellness), Net Zero Economy (reduction of carbon emissions), Circular Economy (recycling and reuse), BioGrowth Economy (food and agriculture innovations), and Experience Economy (consumption of experiences instead of physical goods).

The combined business opportunity of all six trends is estimated at more than USD 44 trillion by 2030, more than 40 per cent of global GDP in 2023.

The Future Possibilities Index (FPI), a flagship global future trends study released by Newsweek Vantage and Horizon Group on sidelines of the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting, has Denmark, the US, the Netherlands and Germany in the top five after the UK.

Among large emerging markets, China is placed highest at 19th this year, followed by Brazil at 30th, India (35th) and South Africa (50th).

**PM Modi Releases First Installment of Benefits to One Lakh People Under Tribal Welfare Scheme PM-JANMAN**

PM Modi released ₹ 540 crore as the first installment of PM-JANMAN into the accounts of the beneficiaries on January 15, 2024.

PM-JANMAN was launched for the socio-economic welfare of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) on November 15, 2023 on the occasion of **Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas**. The first installment of ₹ 540 crore was released to beneficiaries of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin.

PM-JANMAN, with a budget of approximately ₹ 24,000 crore, focuses on 11 critical interventions through nine ministries and is aimed at improving socio-economic conditions of PVTGs by saturating PVTG households and habitations with basic facilities such as safe housing, clean drinking water and sanitation, improved access to education, health and nutrition, electricity, road and telecom connectivity, and sustainable livelihood opportunities.

**US has World's Most Powerful Military**

The world's most powerful military is that of the United States, followed by Russia and China in second and third place, respectively, **Global Firepower**, a website that keeps track of global defence information revealed. The rankings assess 145 countries and uses various factors to judge the best military. These include number of troops, military equipment that the countries have, financial stability and budgets of the

country as well as geographic location and available resources for use.

On the basis of these factors, a combined Power Index score is generated. Lower the score, stronger the military capabilities, as per the index.

The United States stands first among the top 10 militaries in the world. The US also leads globally in technological advancements, medical, aerospace, and computer/telecom sectors. As per the list, US possesses 13,300 aircraft, with 983 being attack helicopters. India holds the fourth position, as reported by Global Firepower.

**Top 10 Countries with the Most Powerful Militaries in the World**

Here are the top 10 countries as per the list :

1. United States
2. Russia
3. China
4. India
5. South Korea
6. United Kingdom
7. Japan
8. Turkiye
9. Pakistan
10. Italy

**Top 10 Countries with the Least Powerful Militaries in the World**

Here are the bottom 10 countries as per the list :

1. Bhutan
2. Moldova
3. Suriname
4. Somalia
5. Benin
6. Liberia
7. Belize
8. Sierra Leone
9. Central African Republic
10. Iceland

**India Climbs Eight Places to 127 in Global Gender Index, 2023**

India has ranked at 127 out of 146 countries in terms of gender parity an improvement of eight places from last year according to the World Economic Forum's annual Gender Gap Report, 2023.

- Global Gender Gap Report assesses gender gaps between women and men across : (i) Economic Participation and



Opportunities, (ii) Educational Attainment; (iii) Health and Survival; and (iv) Political Empowerment.

- The World Economic Forum (WEF) ranked India at 135 out of 146 countries in the Global Gender Gap Index in the report's 2022 edition.
- India has closed 64.3 per cent of the overall gender gap.
- However, India has reached only 36.7 per cent parity on economic participation and opportunity.
- In India, while there has been uptick in parity in wages and income, the share of women in senior positions and technical roles have dropped slightly since the last edition.
- The index ranked India's neighbours Pakistan at 142, Bangladesh at 59, China at 107, Nepal at 116, Sri Lanka at 115 and Bhutan at 103.
- Iceland is the most gender-equal country in the world for the 14th consecutive year and the only one to have closed more than 90 per cent of its gender gap.
- Iceland, Norway, Finland, New Zealand, Sweden, Germany, Nicaragua, Lithuania and Belgium are the top 10 ranking countries in Global Gender Gap Report 2023.
- UK stands at 15th place, while the USA at 43rd place.
- On political empowerment, India has registered 25.3 per cent parity, with women representing 15.1 per cent of parliamentarians the highest for the country since the inaugural report in 2006.
- India's ranking in four sub-indexes of the Gender Gap Index 2023 are : (i) Economic Participation and Opportunities : 142nd; (ii) Educational Attainment : 26th; (iii) Health and Survival : 142nd; (iv) Political Empowerment : 59th.
- Out of the 117 countries with available data since 2017, 18 countries including Bolivia (50.4 per cent), India (44.4 per cent) and France (42.3 per cent) have achieved women's representation of over 40 per cent in local governance.
- Compared to top scoring countries that register a 94.4 per

cent gender parity at birth, the indicator stands at 92.7 per cent for India (albeit an improvement over last edition) and below 90 per cent for Vietnam, China and Azerbaijan.

- Populous countries such as India, Turkey and China have less than seven per cent women ministers while those like Azerbaijan, Saudi Arabia and Lebanon have none.
- While no country has yet achieved full gender parity, the top nine countries have closed at least 80 per cent of their gap.
- For the 146 countries covered in the 2023 index, the Health and Survival gender gap has closed by 96 per cent, the Educational Attainment gap by 95.2 per cent, Economic Participation and Opportunity gap by 60.1 per cent, and Political Empowerment gap by 22.1 per cent.
- Closing the overall gender gap will require 131 years. At the current rate of progress, it will take 169 years for economic parity and 162 years for political parity.

### Net Direct Tax Collection Increased to ₹ 16.64 Lakh Crore

The key highlights of some of direct tax collection of central government statistics are as under :

1. Net Direct Tax Collections have increased by 160.52% from ₹ 6,38,596 crore in FY 2013-14 to ₹ 16,63,686 crore in FY 2022-23.
2. Gross Direct Tax Collections of ₹ 19,72,248 crore in FY 2022-23 have registered an increase of over 173.31% compared to Gross Direct Tax Collections of ₹ 7,21,604 crore in FY 2013-14.
3. Direct Tax to GDP ratio has increased from 5.62% in FY 2013-14 to 6.11% in FY 2022-23.
4. The Cost of collection has decreased from 0.57% of total collection in the FY 2013-14 to 0.51% of total collection in the FY 2022-23.
5. The total number of ITRs filed in FY 2022-23 stands at 7.78 crore showing an increase of 104.91% as compared to total number

of ITRs of 3-80 crore filed in FY 2013-14.

### States' Start-up Ranking 2022

Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh were the best performers in the 'States' Start-up Ranking for 2022' released by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) on January 16, 2024. The States' Start-up Ranking is a yearly capacity-building exercise created and released by DPIIT that evaluates all States and UTs in the country on their efforts to build an ecosystem conducive to start-up growth.

- The laggards, designated as 'emerging ecosystems', included Delhi, Chhattisgarh and J&K.
- States and UTs are classified into five categories—best performers, top performers, leaders, aspiring leaders and emerging start-up ecosystems—for the purpose of ranking.
- While Himachal Pradesh was the best performer amongst States' with population less than 1 crore (category 'B'), Gujarat, Kerala, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu topped the list of States with over 1 crore population (category 'A').
- Maharashtra, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan and Telangana were clubbed in the second rank of 'top performer' States in category 'A'. crore. In category 'B', Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya were judged as 'top performers'.
- The 'emerging ecosystems', which is the lowest rank in the report, included Delhi, Chhattisgarh and J&K for category 'A' and Chandigarh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu, Ladakh, Mizoram, Puducherry & Sikkim for category 'B'.

### Reform Areas Identified

- A total of 25 action points were used to map a combination of absolute, relative, and feedback-based grading in order to give a comprehensive picture of the state's or support UT's distinctive start-up environment.

*Continued on Page 84*

# ECONOMIC SCENARIO

*Present and the Future*

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**Indian Economy: A Review 2024**



**Union Interim Budget 2024-25**

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## Address by the Hon'ble President of India Smt. Droupadi Murmu to Parliament

Honourable President of India Smt. Droupadi Murmu addressed the joint budget session of the Parliament on January 31, 2024. This is her first address in the new Parliament building.

This year is the 75th year of adoption of our Constitution. During this period, Amrit Mahotsav, the celebration of 75 years of independence, was completed. During this campaign following initiatives have been taken :

- Amrit Kalash containing soil from every village of the country were brought to Delhi under the 'Meri Maati, Mera Desh' campaign.
- Over 2 lakh plaques were installed.
- More than three crore people took the oath of the 'Panch Pran'.
- More than 70,000 Amrit Sarovars were built.
- Construction of more than two lakh 'Amrit Vatikas' was completed.

It was during the Amrit Mahotsav that :

- A statue of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose was installed on 'Kartavya Path'.
- A museum dedicated to all the Prime Ministers of the country was inaugurated in Delhi.
- Shantiniketan and Hoysala Temple were included in the UNESCO World Heritage List.
- Veer Bal Diwas 26 December, was declared in the memory of 'Sahibzaade'.
- Birth anniversary of Bhagwan Birsa Munda was declared as 'Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas' (15 November).
- August 14 was declared as 'Vibhajan Vibhishika Smriti Diwas' to commemorate the horrors of partition.
- The past year (2023) has been full of historic achievements for India. During this period, there

were many moments which enhanced the pride of our countrymen.

- Amidst serious global crises, India emerged as the fastest-growing major economy, consistently maintaining a growth rate of over 7.5 per cent for two consecutive quarters.
- India became the first country to hoist its flag on the southern pole of the Moon.
- India successfully launched the Aditya Mission and its satellite reached a distance of 15 lakh kilometers away from Earth.
- Success of the historic G-20 Summit strengthened India's global standing.
- India won more than 100 medals for the first time in Asian Games and also won more than 100 medals in Para Asian Games.
- India got its largest sea-bridge, the Atal Setu.
- India got its first Namoo Bharat train and the first Amrit Bharat train.

Over the past 12 months, the Central government introduced several important legislations. These are laws that lay a strong foundation for the realization of vision of 'Viksit Bharat'.

- Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam after a wait of three decades. This has paved the way for ensuring greater participation of women in the Lok Sabha and the Legislative Assemblies.
- The government has continuously upheld its commitment to Reform, Perform and Transform.
- The criminal justice system rooted in the era of slavery is now history. Now, justice takes precedence over punishment. The nation has got a new Nyaya Sanhita based on the principle of 'Justice First'.
- The Digital Personal Data Protection Act will make the digital space more secure.

● 'Anusandhan National Research Foundation Act' will strengthen research and innovation in the country.

- The Jammu & Kashmir Reservation Act will ensure the right to representation to tribals there.
- Central University Act was amended. This paved the way for setting up a Sammakka Sarakka Central Tribal University in Telangana.
- 76 other old laws were also repealed.

Over the past 10 years, India has witnessed several such tasks being accomplished in the national interest, for which the people of the country were waiting for decades.

- For centuries, there was an aspiration to construct the Ram Mandir. Today it is a reality.
- Abrogation of Article 370 about the Jammu & Kashmir.
- A strict law against 'Triple Talaq'.
- A law to grant citizenship to persecuted minorities from neighbouring countries.

The government implemented One Rank One Pension, which was awaited for four decades. After implementation of OROP, the ex-servicemen have by now received approximately ₹ 1 lakh crore. For the first time, a Chief of Defence Staff has been appointed for India's defence forces.

Honourable President quoted the immortal lines of Utkalmani Pandit Gopabandhu Das which inspire the sentiment of boundless patriotism.

मिशु मोर देह ए देश माटिरे,

देशवासी चालि जाआनु पिठिरे।

देशर स्वराज्य-पथे जेते गाड़,

पूरु तहि पड़ि मोर मांस हाड़।

that is

"Let my body dissolve in the soil of this country, Let the countrymen ride on my back and go. All the potholes that are there in the country's path to independence, Let them all be filled with my flesh and bones."

In these lines the pinnacle of duty and the ideal of Nation-First are visible.

The achievements that are visible today are the outcome of the endeavours of last 10 years.

- According to NITI Aayog, in the last one decade of this Government, about 25 crore countrymen have been lifted out of poverty.
- This is something that instills great confidence among the poor. If the poverty of 25 crore people can be alleviated, then her poverty can also be alleviated.

Honourable President enlisted achievements of the Indian economy in the last 10 years:

- India transformed from 'fragile five' to a 'top five' economy.
- India's exports have increased from about \$ 450 billion to more than \$ 775 billion.
- FDI flows have doubled.
- Sales of Khadi and Village Industries products have increased by more than 4 times.
- The number of people filing Income Tax Return has increased from about 3-25 crore to about 8-25 crore *i.e.*, it has more than doubled.

Honourable President reminded the house that a decade ago :

- There were only a few hundred start-ups in the country which have grown to more than one lakh today.
- In December 2017, 98 lakh people used to pay GST, today their number is 1 crore 40 lakh.

In the last decade, the government has made good governance and transparency the main foundation of every institution. As a result of this, the country has witnessed major economic reforms.

- During this period, Insolvency and Bankruptcy code was enacted.
- The country now has One country One Tax law in the form of GST.
- In 10 years, Capital expenditure has increased 5 times to ₹ 10 lakh crore.
- Fiscal Deficit is also under control.

● Foreign exchange reserves crossed 600 billion US dollars.

● The banking system, which was in a very bad shape earlier, has today become one of the strongest banking systems in the world.

● NPAs of banks which used to be in double digits in the past are today around only 4 per cent.

● Make in India and Aatmanirbhar Bharat campaigns have become our strengths.

● Today, India is the world's second-largest producer of mobile phones.

● During the last decade, there has been a five-fold increase in mobile phone manufacturing.

● A few years ago, India used to import toys; today India is exporting Made in India toys.

● India's defence production has crossed ₹ 1 lakh crore.

● Today, every Indian feels proud on seeing the country's indigenous aircraft carrier INS Vikrant.

● The combat aircraft Tejas is becoming the strength of our air force.

● The manufacturing of C-295 transport aircraft is going to take place in India.

● Modern aircraft engines will also be made in India.

● Defence corridors are being developed in Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.

The government acknowledges the contribution of wealth creators and believes in the capabilities of India's private sector. The government is committed to creating a conducive environment for doing business in India, and the government is consistently working towards this goal.

● There has been consistent improvement in Ease of Doing Business.

● More than 40,000 compliances have been removed or simplified in the last few years.

● 63 provisions in the Companies Act and Limited Liability Partnership Act have been removed from the list of criminal offences.

● The Jan Vishwas Act has decriminalized 183 provisions under various laws.

India's MSME sector is also benefiting enormously from reforms. The government is working with full commitment to empower the MSMEs and small entrepreneurs.

● The definition of MSMEs has been expanded. Investment and turnover have been added in the new definition.

● Presently, approximately 3-5 crore MSMEs are registered on the Udyam and Udyam Assist Portal.

● Under the Credit Guarantee Scheme for MSMEs, guarantees of nearly ₹ 5 lakh crore have been sanctioned in the last few years.

Another significant reform of the central government is the creation of Digital India. Digital India has made life and business much easier in India. Today, the whole world acknowledges this as a great achievement of India. Even developed countries do not have a digital system like India has. It was beyond the imagination of some people that, even in villages, routine buying and selling will be done digitally.

● Today, 46 per cent of the world's total real-time digital transactions take place in India.

● Other countries of the world are also now providing the facility of transactions through UPI.

● Digital India has made banking more convenient and disbursement of loans easier.

● The trinity of Jan Dhan Aadhar Mobile (JAM) has helped curb corruption.

● Government has so far transferred ₹ 34 lakh crore through DBT.

● Thanks to Jan Dhan Aadhar Mobile (JAM), about 10 crore fake beneficiaries have been weeded out from the system.

● This has helped prevent ₹ 2-75 lakh crore from going into wrong hands.

● The facility of DigiLocker is also making life easier. More than 6 billion documents have so far been issued to its users.

- Digital Health IDs of around 53 crore people have been created under Ayushman Bharat Health Account.

Along with digital, there has been record investment in physical infrastructure. Today, infrastructure is being built in India, the kind of which every Indian used to dream about. In the last 10 years :

- Nearly 3-75 lakh kilometers of new roads have been built in the villages.
- The length of National Highways has increased from 90 thousand kilometers to 1 lakh 46 thousand kilometers.
- The length of four-lane national highways has increased 2-5 times.
- The length of the high-speed corridor was 500 kilometers earlier, is now 4 thousand kilometers.
- The number of airports has doubled from 74 to 149.
- The number of broadband users has increased 14 times.
- Nearly 2 lakh village panchayats of the country have been connected with optical fiber.
- 10,000 kilometers of gas pipeline has been laid in the country.
- The metro facility, limited to only 5 cities is now in 20 cities.
- India is very close to 100% electrification of railways.
- During this period, semi high-speed trains have been started for the first time in India.
- Today Vande Bharat trains are running on more than 39 routes.
- More than 1300 railway stations are being transformed under Amrit Bharat Station Scheme.

The government believes that the grand edifice of a 'Viksit Bharat' will be erected on 4 strong pillars. These pillars are : youth power, women power, farmers and poor. Their situation and dreams are similar in every part and every section of society in the country. The Central government is, therefore, working tirelessly to empower these four pillars. The government has spent a significant portion of the tax revenues to empower these pillars.

- 4 crore 10 lakh poor families have got their own pucca houses. About ₹ 6 lakh crore have been spent on this initiative.

- For the first time, piped water has reached about 11 crore rural families. Around ₹ 4 lakh crore are being spent for this.

- 10 crore Ujjwala gas connections have by now been provided.

- Since the outbreak of coronavirus pandemic, 80 crore countrymen are being given free ration. This facility has now been extended for another 5 years. An additional ₹ 11 lakh crore would be spent on this.

In the last few years, the world has witnessed two major wars and faced a global pandemic like Corona. Despite such global crises, the government has managed to keep inflation in the country under control, preventing additional burden on the countrymen. In the 10 years prior to 2014, the average inflation rate was over 8 per cent. However, the average inflation rate has been maintained at 5 per cent in the last decade. The government's endeavour has been to increase savings in the hands of ordinary citizens.

- Earlier, Income Tax in India was levied on income of ₹ 2 lakh and above. Today, there is no tax on income up to ₹ 7 lakh. Due to tax exemptions and reforms, Indian taxpayers have saved about ₹ 2-5 lakh crore in the last 10 years.

- In addition to the Ayushman Bharat scheme, the Central government is also providing free treatment in various hospitals. This has helped country's citizens save nearly ₹ 3 and a half lakh crore.

- Jan Aushadhi Kendras have helped the countrymen save about ₹ 28 thousand crore on purchase of medicines.

- Prices of coronary stents, knee implants, cancer medicines have also been reduced. Due to this, patients are saving approximately ₹ 27 thousand crore every year.

- The government is also running a programme to provide free dialysis to kidney patients. More than 21 lakh patients are availing

this facility every year. This has helped patients save ₹ 1 lakh every year.

- The government has spent nearly ₹ 20 lakh crore so that poor people continue to receive subsidized rations.

- Thanks to the LED bulb scheme, there has been a saving of over ₹ 20,000 crore in electricity bills.

- Under Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana and Suraksha Bima Yojana, poor people have received over ₹ 16,000 crore in claims.

The government is working at every level to strengthen Nari Shakti. This year's Republic Day Parade was also dedicated to women empowerment. The government has enlarged the role of daughters everywhere in water, land, sky and space. The government has made relentless efforts to enhance women's economic participation.

- Today about 10 crore women are associated with Self-help groups.

- Bank loans worth ₹ 8 lakh crore and financial assistance worth ₹ 40 thousand crore have been disbursed to these groups.

- The government is implementing a campaign to make 2 crore women Lakhpati Didis.

- 15 thousand drones are being provided to groups under NAMO Drone Didi scheme.

- Increasing maternity leave from 12 weeks to 26 weeks has greatly benefited lakhs of women of the country.

- The government has granted permanent commission to women for the first time in the Armed Forces.

- For the first time, women cadets have been given admission in Sainik Schools and National Defence Academy.

- Today, women are also fighter pilots and are also commanding naval ships for the first time.

- Out of more than 46 crore loans extended under Mudra Yojana, more than 31 crore loans have been given to women.

- Crores of women have become self-employed by availing benefits under this scheme.

The government is laying stress on making farming more profitable. Government's aim is to reduce the cost of farming while increasing profits. For the first time, central government has given priority to over 10 crore small farmers in the country's agricultural policy and schemes.

- Under the PM-Kisan Samman Nidhi scheme, farmers have received over ₹ 2 lakh 80 thousand crore so far.
- It is this government that has formulated the Agricultural Export Policy in the country for the first time. This has led to agricultural exports reaching up to Rupees 4 lakh crore.
- The government has established more than 1.75 lakh Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samridhhi Kendra.
- Schemes worth more than ₹ 38 thousand crore are being implemented in the fisheries sector, due to which fish production has increased from 95 lakh metric tonnes to 175 lakh metric tonnes *i.e.*, almost doubled in the last ten years.
- Inland fisheries production has increased from 61 lakh metric tonnes to 131 lakh metric tonnes.
- Exports in fisheries sector has more than doubled *i.e.*, increase from ₹ 30 thousand crore to ₹ 64 thousand crore.
- For the first time in the country, livestock farmers and fishermen have been given the benefit of Kisan Credit Card.

Studies conducted by various institutions in recent years have found that :

- Construction of 11 crore toilets and elimination of open defecation have prevented incidence of many diseases.
- As a result, every poor household in the urban area is saving up to ₹ 60 thousand per year on medical expenses.
- Supply of piped drinking water is saving lives of lakhs of children every year.
- Construction of pucca houses under the PM Awas Yojana has enhanced the social status and dignity of the beneficiary families.

- Education of children in families having 'pucca' houses has improved and has resulted in a decline in the dropout rates.
- Under the Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan, 100 per cent institutional deliveries are taking place in the country today. This has resulted in a sharp decline in maternal mortality rate.
- According to another study, incidence of serious diseases has reduced in the Ujjwala beneficiary families.

Central government has also cared for those who have so far been away from the development stream. During the last 10 years, thousands of tribal villages have been provided with electricity and road connectivity for the first time. Lakhs of tribal families have now started getting piped water supply. Under a special campaign, government is also providing 4G internet connectivity to thousands of villages inhabited largely by tribals. Establishment of Van Dhan Kendras and MSP on more than 90 forest produce have immensely benefitted the tribals.

For the first time, this government has focused on development of the particularly vulnerable tribal groups. PM JANMAN Yojana with an outlay of around ₹ 24 thousand crore has been launched for these groups. Generations of tribal families have been afflicted with sickle cell anemia. For the first time, a national mission has been launched to address this. So far, about one crore 40 lakh people have been screened under this mission.

The government has also launched the 'Suganya Bharat Abhiyan' for the 'Divyangjan'. Text-books in Indian Sign Language have also been made available. A law has also been enacted to give a respectable position to transgender persons in the society and protect their rights.

It is difficult to imagine daily life without Vishwakarma families. These families pass on their skills from generation to generation. However, due to lack of government support, the Vishwakarma companions were facing a difficult time. The government has also taken care of such Vishwakarma families. So far, more

than 84 lakh people have connected with the **PM Vishwakarma Yojana**.

For many decades, our friends working as street vendors were also left to their fate. The government has given them access to banking system through **PM SVANidhi Yojana**. So far, an amount of more than ₹ 10,000 crore has been given as loans. Reposing trust in them, government gave collateral-free loans. Cementing this trust, most of the people not only repaid the loan but also availed the next installment. Majority of the beneficiaries are Dalits, backward classes, tribals and women.

The government is guided by the mantra of "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas and Sabka Prayas", is committed to provide fair opportunities to every section of the society.

- For the first time, benefit of reservation has been extended to persons belonging to economically weaker sections of the general category.
- 27 per cent reservation has been introduced under central quota for OBCs in under graduate and postgraduate medical courses.
- Constitutional status has been granted to National Commission for Backward Classes.
- 5 places associated with Baba Saheb Ambedkar have been developed as **Panchteerth**.
- 10 museums dedicated to tribal freedom fighters are being built across the country.

The government has, for the first time, brought development to areas, which remained neglected for decades. The villages adjoining the borders were viewed as the last villages of the country. The government recognized them as the first villages of the country. In order to develop these villages, **Vibrant Village Programme** has been started.

Country's remote and far away islands like Andaman-Nicobar and Lakshadweep were also deprived of development. The government has developed modern facilities on these islands too. Roads, air connectivity and high speed internet facilities have been provided there. Just a few weeks ago, Lakshadweep was also connected with underwater optical fiber. This will benefit the local population as well as tourists.

Under the **Aspirational Districts Programme**, this government has laid emphasis on development of more than hundred districts of the country. In the wake of its success, the government has also launched the **Aspirational Blocks Programme**. Special focus is now being given on development of these blocks of the country which had lagged behind.

Today the world believes that only India can strengthen the global supply chain. That is why India is also today taking major steps in this direction. A strong network of MSMEs is being developed in the country.

The government has started PLI schemes for 14 sectors. Under this scheme, production of around ₹ 9 lakh crore has taken place so far. This has generated lakhs of new employment and self-employment opportunities in the country. PLI is also benefiting the electronic, pharma, food processing and medical devices sectors. Production has started in dozens of projects related to medical devices. Government has also developed 3 bulk drug parks in the country.

Today Made in India has become a global brand. Now, the world is much enthused about our Make in India policy. The world is appreciating the objective of "Atmanirbhar Bharat". Today companies from all over the world are excited about the emerging sectors in India. This is illustrated by investment in the semiconductor sector. Electronics and automobile sectors also stand to benefit significantly from the semiconductor sector.

The government is promoting green mobility in a big way. Lakhs of electric vehicles have been manufactured in the country in the last few years alone. The government has now taken steps even for manufacturing of big aircrafts in India. Crores of new jobs will be created in the manufacturing sector in the coming days.

Today world over, there is a special demand for products which are environment friendly. That is why the government is emphasizing on **Zero Effect Zero Defect**. The government is giving a lot of focus to green energy.

- In 10 years, non-fossil fuel based energy capacity has increased from 81 Gigawatt to 188 Gigawatt.
- During this period, solar power capacity has increased by 26 times.
- Similarly, Wind power capacity has doubled.
- India is placed at fourth position in the world in terms of Renewable Energy Installed Capacity.
- India is ranked fourth in Wind Power capacity.
- India is at fifth position in Solar Power capacity.
- India has set a target of achieving 50 per cent of its electric power installed capacity from non-fossil fuels by 2030.
- In the last 10 years, 11 new solar parks have been built. Today, work is in progress on 9 solar parks.
- Just a few days ago, a new scheme for solar rooftop installations has been launched. 1 crore families will be provided assistance under this scheme. This will also reduce people's electricity bills and surplus electricity generated will be purchased in the power market.
- Work is also being done at a very fast pace in the field of nuclear energy. The government has approved 10 new nuclear power plants.
- India is also progressing at a fast pace in the field of Hydrogen energy. So far, we have started two projects in Ladakh and Daman-Diu.
- The government has done unprecedented work in the field of Ethanol. The country has achieved the target of 12 per cent Ethanol blending. The target of 20 per cent ethanol blending is also going to be accomplished very soon. This will increase the income of our farmers. Till now, government companies have procured Ethanol worth more than ₹ one lakh crore. All these efforts will reduce dependence on foreign countries for our energy needs. Just a few days ago, oil production has started in a new block in the Bay of Bengal.

This is a big achievement for the country.

- The quantity of important minerals in the earth is limited. That is why the government is encouraging circular economy. India's first **'Vehicle Scrappage Policy'** also seeks to achieve this aim.
- It is also important to explore prospects of minerals through deep sea mining. **Deep Ocean Mission** has been started with this goal in mind. This mission will also better our understanding of marine life. India's 'Samudrayaan' is engaged in research on this.
- The government is engaged in making India a major space power in the world. It is a means to improve human life. Besides, this also attempts to increase India's share in the space economy. Major decisions have been taken to expand India's space programme. This has led to the formation of many new space start-ups. The day is not far when **India's Gaganyaan** will reach space.
- The government has made India one of the world's leading **digital economies**. This has provided employment to crores of youth. It is our endeavour that India remains at the forefront of the world in the fourth industrial revolution.
- The government is working on **Artificial Intelligence mission**. This will provide new opportunities to the youth of India. This will open avenues for new start-ups. This will bring revolutionary changes in the fields of agriculture, health and education.
- The government has also approved the **National Quantum Mission**. Quantum computing will develop a new age digital infrastructure. Now work is in progress to ensure that India remains ahead in this.

The government is continuously taking new initiatives for the education and skill development of India's youth. For this, a new National Education Policy was framed and is

being implemented rapidly. In the National Education Policy, emphasis has been laid on education in mother tongue and Indian languages. Teaching of subjects like engineering, medical, law has been started in Indian languages.

- To provide quality education to school students, my government is working on more than 14,000 'PM Shri Vidyalayas'. Out of these, more than 6000 schools have started functioning.
- The dropout rate in the country has reduced due to efforts of my government. The enrolment of girls in higher education has increased. Enrolment of Scheduled Caste students has increased by about 44%, that of Scheduled Tribe students by more than 65% and that of OBC by more than 44%.
- Under Atal Innovation Mission, 10,000 Atal Tinkering Labs have been established to promote innovation. More than 1 crore students are involved in it.
- There were 7 AIIMS and less than 390 medical colleges in the country upto 2014, while, in the last decade 16 AIIMS and 315 medical colleges have been established.
- 157 nursing colleges are also being established.
- In the past decade, the number of MBBS seats has more than doubled.

The government has laid emphasis on the development of pilgrimage destinations and historical sites across the country. This has now made pilgrimage in India easier. At the same time, there is a growing interest in the world towards heritage tourism in India. In the last one year 8.5 crores of people have visited Kashi. More than 5 crores of people have visited Mahakaal. More than 19 lakh people have visited Kedar Dham. In the 5 days of 'Pran Pratishtha' 13 lakh devotees have visited Ayodhya Dham itself. There is unprecedented expansion of facilities at pilgrimage sites in every part of India, East-West-North-South.

The sports economy is being strengthened to connect the country's youth with skills and employment.

The government has given unprecedented support to sports and sportspersons. Today India is moving towards becoming a great sporting power.

Along with the players, today The government is emphasizing on other areas related to sports. Today National Sports University has been established. Dozens of Centers of Excellence have been developed in the country. This will provide youth an opportunity to choose sports as a profession. All kinds of assistance is also being provided to the sports goods industry.

- In the last 10 years, India has successfully organized international sports events related to many sports.
- 'Mera Yuva Bharat' Organization has been formed to motivate our youth to contribute for building a 'Viksit Bharat' and to instill among them a sense of duty and spirit of service. So far, about 1 crore youth have joined this initiative.

In the last 10 years, another conventional way of thinking has been changed. Earlier, events related to diplomacy were confined to the corridors of Delhi. This government has ensured direct participation of the public in this also. We saw a great example of this during India's G-20 presidency. The way India connected the G-20 with the public was unprecedented. The world was introduced to the real potential of India through programmes held across the country. Jammu & Kashmir and North East witnessed such big international events for the first time.

The whole world appreciated the historic G-20 Summit held in India. The unanimous adoption of the **Delhi Declaration** even in a fractured environment is historic. India's vision from 'women led development' to environmental issues has become the basis of the declaration.

Our efforts to secure permanent membership of the African Union in the G-20 have also been appreciated. During this conference, the development of **India - Middle East - Europe Corridor** was announced. This corridor will further strengthen India's maritime capability. The launch of the **Global Biofuel Alliance** is also a

big event. Such steps are expanding India's role in solving global problems.

Today India responds strongly and takes initiatives for the humanity caught in crises. Wherever there is a crisis in the world today, India tries to respond promptly. My government has instilled new confidence in Indians working across the world. Wherever crisis occurred, we have evacuated every Indian safely through campaigns like **Operation Ganga, Operation Kaveri, Vande Bharat**.

The government has made continuous efforts to propagate the Indian traditions of Yoga, Pranayam and Ayurveda to the entire world. Last year, representatives of 135 countries did yoga together at the United Nations Headquarters. This is a record in itself. The government has set-up a new Ministry for development of Ayush. The World Health Organization's first Global Centre for Traditional Medicine is being established in India.

There come junctures in the history of civilizations, which shape the future for the coming centuries. There have been many such defining moments in the history of India also. This year, on January 22, the country witnessed a similar epochal moment. After waiting for centuries, Ram Lalla has now been enshrined in his grand temple in Ayodhya. This was a matter of aspirations and faith for crores of our countrymen and the resolution of this has been accomplished in a harmonious manner.

The dreams of the youth in schools and colleges today are completely different. It is the responsibility of all of us to leave no stone unturned to fulfil the dreams of the Amrit generation. Viksit Bharat will fulfil the dreams of our Amrit generation. For this, we all have to work together to achieve success in this endeavour.

Respected Atal ji had said :

अपनी ध्येय-यात्रा में,  
हम कभी रुके नहीं हैं।  
किसी चुनौती के सम्मुख  
कभी झुके नहीं हैं।

This government is moving ahead with the guarantee of fulfilling the dreams of 140 crore countrymen.

[Purpan](#)





# Indian Economy : A Review (2024)

Ministry of Finance on January 29, 2024 released the 'Indian Economy : A Review' which predicts that it is most likely that Indian economy will attain a growth rate of 7 per cent in FY 2023-24. Although, it is not the Economic Survey which is usually presented a day before the presentation of the regular budget, the report gives the overall picture of the economy. Since FY 2024-25 is an election year, so the government has presented the Interim Budget 2024-25 on February 1, 2024. The regular budget for FY 2024-25 will be presented in July, after the formation of the new government in the Centre. The Economic Survey is most likely to be presented along with the regular Budget in July 2024.

Key highlights of the report are following :

## 2014-2024 : Decade of Transformative Growth

The reforms that have taken during 2014-2023 have led to India emerging as the fastest-growing economy among G20 economies. In 2023-24, as per current estimates, it is estimated to have grown 7.3 per cent on top of the 9.1 per cent (FY2022-23) and 7.2 per cent (FY2023-24) in the previous two years, and the economy is generating jobs.

This impressive post-pandemic recovery has seen the urban unemployment rate decline to 6.6 per cent. Since May 2023, the number of net new subscribers to EPFO in the age group 18-25 years has consistently exceeded 55 per cent of the total net new EPF subscribers.

The government has extended the Pradhan Mantri Gharib Kalyan Anna Yojana for 80 crore citizens for five more years until December 2028. This is the largest ever welfare initiative in the world.

The government is building a road network and expanding rail and air networks at a record pace.

India built 74 airports in the first 67 years after independence. It

doubled that number in the last nine years.

The number of universities was 723 in 2014, and it increased to 1,113 in 2023. More girls are now in higher education than boys. The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) for girls is 28.5 in 2021-22 vis-à-vis 12.7 per cent in FY10. Total enrolment in higher education was 3.4 crore in 2014. It has gone up to 4.1 crore students in 2023. The government, despite the conflict in Ukraine and disrupted supplies, has managed crude oil purchases at the right price so that retail prices of petrol and diesel did not have to be increased for more than eighteen months.

The government gave a 50-year interest free loan of ₹ 1 lakh crore to states in FY23 and announced another ₹ 1.3 lakh crore of 50-year interest-free loan in FY24. From April to November 2023, the states utilised more than ₹ 97,000 crore out of the ₹ 1.3 lakh crore of interest-free loans under the Special Assistance to states for Capital Investment that the Centre budgeted for FY24.

Resultingly, the states are improving their infrastructure, like schools, rural roads, electricity provision, etc.

States' capital expenditure was up more than 47 per cent in the six months between April-September 2023 compared to April-September 2022.

## Drivers of India's Growth in the Last Decade

As the banking, non-banking, and nonfinancial sectors de-leveraged their balance sheets, the government undertook several reforms to strengthen the financial sector. These are :

- Recapitalisation and merger of Public Sector Banks (PSB).
- Amendment of the SARFAESI Act 2002.
- Enacting the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code 2016 (IBC).

These reforms have helped clean up the balance sheets of banks and

corporates. The IBC has improved the business environment by providing a mechanism for an honourable exit to honest business failures.

Further, to enhance the ease of living and ease of doing business, the taxation ecosystem in the country has undergone substantial changes in the post-2014 period. Tax policy reforms such as :

- Adopting a unified Goods and Services Tax (GST).
- Reducing corporate and income tax rates.
- Exemption of sovereign wealth funds and pension funds from taxes.
- Removing the Dividend Distribution tax.

These taxation reforms have reduced the tax burden on individuals and businesses and removed the distortory incentives from the economy.

The transformational GST has enhanced the tax base, reduced compliances, ensured a free flow of goods across states, and led to the formalisation of the economy.

The GST system has shown improved buoyancy over the pre-GST regime with consistently rising average monthly gross collections from ₹ 0.9 lakh crore in FY18 to ₹ 1.5 lakh crore in FY23.

The number of GST taxpayers increased from 66 lakhs at its introduction to 1.4 crore in 2022, with a larger number of smaller businesses entering the regime.

A major reform over the last nine years is the transition in the engagement of the government with the private sector for the development agenda. The private sector is now entrusted as a co-partner in development. Accordingly, the government's disinvestment policy has been revived. A New Public Sector Enterprise (PSE) Policy for Aatmanirbhar Bharat has been introduced to minimise the presence of the government in the PSEs to only a few strategic sectors.

**Production Linked incentives** (PLI) are being provided to firms to attract domestic and foreign investments and to develop global champions in the manufacturing industry.

Strategic sectors, such as defence, mining, and space, have been opened up to enhance business opportunities for the private sector.

The FDI policy has also been further liberalised, with most sectors now open for 100 per cent FDI under the automatic route.

Decriminalising minor economic offences under the Companies Act of 2013 has significantly enhanced the **ease of doing business** over the past years.

The government has also undertaken significant reforms over the past years to reduce policy uncertainty. Around 25,000 unnecessary compliances have been eliminated, and more than 1,400 archaic laws have been repealed. Abolishing the Angel tax and removing retrospective taxation reaffirm the government's commitment in this direction.

The progressive reforms introduced by the government for the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector have supported smaller businesses to recover from the impact of the pandemic and grow further. Some of these are :

- The Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS).
- Revision in the definition of MSMEs under the ambit of Aatmanirbhar Bharat.
- The introduction of TReDS to address the delayed payments for MSMEs.
- The inclusion of retail and wholesale trades as MSMEs.
- The extension of non-tax benefits for three years in case of an upward change in the status of MSME.

All these investment incentives and initiatives to ease business compliances and remove policy uncertainties have created an ecosystem for start-ups to nurture. The number of recognised start-ups has increased from 452 in 2016 to 1.14 lakh in October 2023.

The government has made large-scale public spending since 2014 to address the infrastructure and logistics bottlenecks that have been a

concern for investors for several decades. The effective Capital Expenditure by the Union government has risen from 2.8 per cent of GDP in the fiscal year ending March 2014 to 4.5 per cent in 2023-24 (BE).

Dedicated programs for road connectivity (Bharatmala), port infrastructure (Sagarmala), electrification, railways upgradation, and new airports/air routes (UDAN), among others, have enabled the modernisation of infrastructure. An overarching logistics ecosystem supports this enabling infrastructure through the National Logistics Policy 2022.

India's digitalisation reforms and the resulting efficiency gains in terms of :

- greater formalization
- higher financial inclusion
- more economic opportunities.

Digital infrastructure has enabled the creation of :

- digital identities
- improved access to finance
- access to markets
- reduced transaction costs
- improved tax collection.

### **Inclusive Growth Policies**

Alongside all these measures, it is also important to recall that inclusive growth policies have also been at the core of India's policy over the last decade :

- Over 10-11 crore women have been given free gas connections.
- 11.72 crore toilets have been built for the poor.
- 51.6 crore Jan Dhan accounts have been opened.
- 3.24 beneficiaries have been registered.
- 2.6 crore pucca houses have been built for the poor people.
- 6.27 crore hospital admissions have been done under the Ayushman Bharat Scheme.

### **Challenges Confronting the Indian Economy**

Finance Ministry's report enlisted certain challenges that Indian economy face in the current global and domestic socio-economic and political scenario.

**First**, in an increasingly integrated global economy, India's growth outlook is not only a function of its domestic performance but also a

reflection of the spillover effects of global developments. Increased geo-economic fragmentation and the slowdown of hyper-globalisation are likely to result in further friend shoring and on-shoring, which are already having repercussions on global trade and, subsequently, on global growth.

**Second**, the trade-off between energy security and economic growth versus energy transition is a multi-faceted issue having various dimensions : geopolitical, technological, fiscal, economic and social, and the policy actions being pursued by individual countries impacting other economies.

**Third**, the advent of Artificial Intelligence (AI) poses a big challenge to governments around the world due to the questions it poses to employment particularly in services sectors.

**Fourth**, domestically, ensuring the availability of a talented and appropriately skilled workforce to the industry, age-appropriate learning outcomes in schools at all levels and a healthy and fit population are important policy priorities in the coming years. A healthy, educated and skilled population augments the economically productive workforce.

### **WHAT MADE THE INDIAN ECONOMY RESILIENT ?**

Resilience is on display, not just in terms of economic growth. The unemployment rate has declined, and economic activity continues to rise, as is evident in the healthy performance of high-frequency indicators.

India's real GDP is estimated to grow at an average of 7.9 per cent between FY22 and FY24. Very few economies in the world, if any, have maintained the post-Covid recovery as consistently as the Indian economy has done.

The share of manufacturing in total Gross Value Added (GVA), in volume terms, increased from 17.2 per cent in FY14 to 18.4 per cent in FY18 under the impact of the Make in India mission of the government. Based on the advance estimates released recently, the share has stayed robust at 17.7 per cent in FY24 on the back of the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) schemes rolled out by the government.

The share of construction in total GVA, in volume terms, was 8.8 per cent in FY14. After countering a sharp increase in the prices of real estate and the pandemic, the share has almost recovered to reach 8.7 per cent in FY24.

The share of services in total GVA, in volume terms, has risen from 51.1 per cent in FY14 to 54.6 per cent in FY24, as the pandemic and unlocking of the economy thereafter led to a surge in non-contact services. The service sector now has a substantive digital face curated by the government's drive towards digitalisation, now embodied in the globally recognised India Stack.

### Resilience of Consumption Demand

The share of Private Final Consumption Expenditure (PFCE) in GDP at current prices increased from an average of 58.4 per cent in the eight years preceding the onset of the pandemic to 60.8 per cent in the last three years ending FY24.

PFCE has consequently emerged as a major growth driver post-Covid pandemic, playing a pivotal role in sustaining the economy amid external challenges brought in by geopolitical shocks, monetary tightening, and sluggish global demand.

The secured consumption base resulted from the robust increase in Per Capita Real Gross National Income (GNI) in the nine years preceding the onset of the pandemic. The Per Capita Real GNI registered a compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) of 5.3 per cent from FY12 to FY20.

Besides the structural reforms across various sectors, the government's emphasis on developing public digital infrastructure during the last few years has also been a game changer in enhancing the economic potential of individuals and businesses.

Digital payment systems like **Unified Payments Interface (UPI)**, which has one of the largest platforms in the world, have aided the growth of e-commerce. The Global Payments Report 2023 projects e-commerce in India to register a CAGR of 16 per cent between 2022 and 2026, mainly driven by ease provided by UPI.

### The All-inclusive Welfare Approach

The consumption base was sizeable also because of the increasing social and economic inclusiveness of rural India, seen in government-driven financial inclusion, improvement in physical connectivity, and augmentation of livelihoods, among others.

Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) provided access to low-cost bank accounts to a large unbanked population, and Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) eased the transferring of benefits of various government schemes directly to these bank accounts. This has narrowed the rural-urban divide and increased the aspirations of the rural population, leading to higher spending on aspirational goods.

The all-inclusive welfare approach of the government will further contribute to the increase of the consumption base through the expansion of the middle class. A study by the independent think tank People Research on India's Consumer Economy (PRICE) reports a substantial shift in the household income profile of India, with the middle class increasing from 432 million in 2021 to 715 million in 2031 and bulging up to nearly 1.02 billion in 2047.

### Enabling Investment-led Economic Growth

With numerous investment-boosting reforms and healthier balance sheets, private corporate investment has begun to crowd in, and banks are responding with greater credit disbursement. The non-food bank credit growth, net of personal loans, which had declined from above 20 per cent in 2008 to less than 10 per cent in FY 2016, has rebounded to reach 13 per cent in FY23.

The capital expenditure of the Public sector (including Union government capex, grants to the states for capital asset creation, and investment resources of the Central PSEs) has increased from ₹ 5.6 lakh crore in FY15 to ₹ 18.6 lakh crore in FY24. During this period, the surge in capital expenditure was 5.1 times, grants to states for capital asset creation went up by 2.8 times and

resources of PSEs increased by 2.1 times. To facilitate the upscaling of capex, the Union government rebalanced its fiscal expenditure, with capital spending rising from 12 per cent of total expenditure in FY18 to 22 per cent in FY24 (BE).

The Index of Industrial Production (IIP) data shows that the capital goods index and infrastructure/construction goods index saw robust growth of 12.9 per cent and 8.4 per cent, respectively, in FY23. The indices have carried forward their momentum thus far into FY24 and have grown by 7.5 per cent and 11.1 per cent, respectively, on a cumulative basis till November 2023.

### Agricultural Sector Policies Ensuring Food Security

The agricultural sector, which is estimated to constitute 18 per cent of India's GVA in FY24, is the bedrock of the nation's economy.

The sector grew at a higher average annual rate of 3.7 per cent from FY15 to FY23 compared to 3.4 per cent from FY05 to FY14. For the year FY23, the sector grew at 4.0 per cent as compared to the previous year. The total food grains production for FY23 was 329.7 million tonnes, marking a rise of 14.1 million tonnes compared to the previous year.

The average food grain production per year in million tonnes was 289 in FY15 to FY23, compared to 233 in FY05 to FY14.

Rice, wheat, pulses, Nutri/coarse cereals, and oilseeds witnessed record increases in production.

India's global dominance extends across agricultural commodities, making it the **largest producer of milk, pulses, and spices worldwide. Additionally, India ranks second-largest producer of fruits, vegetables, tea, farmed fish, sugarcane, wheat, rice, cotton, and sugar.**

The improved performance is also reflected in a substantial surge in agriculture exports, reaching ₹ 4.2 lakh crore in FY23, surpassing the previous year's records.

The policy initiatives, such as Pradhan Mantri Kisan Maandhan Yojana (PM-KMY : 12th Sept., 2019), Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN : 24th Feb., 2019), and Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima

Yojana (PMFBY : 18th Feb., 2016), have played a pivotal role in providing financial and income support to farmers.

PM-KISAN, supplements the financial needs of landholding farmers by transferring ₹ 6,000 per year in three equal four-monthly instalments. As of December 12, 2023, over ₹ 2.8 lakh crore have been transferred to more than 11 crore beneficiaries.

Additionally, the government provides pension benefits to 23.4 lakh small and marginal farmers enrolled under the PM-KMY.

The success of PMFBY, offering simple and affordable crop insurance against non-preventable natural causes, is evident from 55.5 crore farmer applications insured since 2016-17 and ₹ 1.5 lakh crore paid as claims.

The launch of the digital platform **e-NAM (National Agriculture Market)** in 2016 has facilitated the integration of Agriculture Produce Marketing Committees (APMC) mandis and has provided multi-faceted benefits to farmers, Farmer-Producer Organisations (FPOs), buyers and traders.

The number of markets linked to the e-NAM platform has increased from 250 in 2016 to 1,389 in 2023, facilitating the online trading of 209 agriculture and horticulture commodities. The e-NAM platform has witnessed the registration of over 1.8 crore farmers and 2.5 lakh traders, promoting market opportunities through a transparent price discovery system and online payment facility. Further, the value of trade on the platform has increased from ₹ 0.3 lakh crore in August 2017 to over ₹ 3 lakh crore in November 2023.

Financial assistance at 100 per cent of the drone cost and contingent expenditure has been provided for demonstrations on farmers' fields.

The government is taking steps to strengthen the cooperative movement by computerising Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS). The linkage of 62,318 functional PACS with NABARD through a single National Software Network reflects the commitment to improving the credit delivery systems in rural areas.

The government has also created **AgriStack**, a federated architecture

for effective planning, monitoring, policy-making, strategy formulation, and implementation of schemes.

The focus on enhancement in post-harvest infrastructure investment through the **Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF)** and **Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana (PMKSY)**, adoption of sustainable agriculture practices like the **Per Drop More Crop Component of the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayi Yojana (PMKSY-PDMC)** and promotion of Natural Farming to transform agriculture making it more resilient.

The **Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY)** launched during the Covid-19 outbreak to provide free food grains to about 81.4 crore beneficiaries (Antyodaya Anna Yojana households and Priority Households beneficiaries) under the PMGKAY have been extended for five years starting from January 1, 2024.

### Reform Push to the Indian Industry

Industrial growth accelerated to 7.1 per cent per annum from FY15 to FY19, compared to 5.5 per cent in the preceding five-year block of FY10 to FY14.

The Indian Industry is likely to record a robust 8 per cent growth per annum during the triennium ending March 2024, as indicated by the first advance estimates of National Accounts for FY24.

Under the PLI Scheme, involving an outlay of ₹ 1.97 lakh crore, 746 applications were approved till the end of December 2023, with 176 MSMEs being direct beneficiaries. The scheme witnessed over ₹ 1.07 lakh crore of investment, leading to production/sales of ₹ 8.7 lakh crore and employment generation of over 7 lakh.

The scheme has witnessed exports exceeding ₹ 3.4 lakh crore, with significant contributions from sectors such as **Large-Scale Electronics Manufacturing, Pharmaceuticals, Food Processing, and Telecom and networking products.**

Some of the most notable achievements under the PLI scheme included the :

- Sizeable increase in value addition in mobile manufacturing.

- Import substitution achieved in telecom sector.
- A significant reduction in the import of raw materials in the pharma sector.
- A jump in the turnover in the drones' sector.
- Considerable improvement in the domestic sourcing of raw materials in food processing.

The 1.14 lakh start-ups (as of October 2023) recognised by the government under the **Startup India** initiative have reported the creation of more than 12 lakh jobs.

The **Open Network for Digital Commerce** has recorded more than 6.3 million transactions in November 2023.

Regulatory reforms, including the decriminalisation of 3,600 compliances, have improved the ease of doing business.

The **Jan Vishwas Amendment Bill 2023**, passed by the Parliament, proposes to decriminalise 183 provisions across 42 Central Acts administered by 19 Ministries/Departments.

The Udyam portal and the **Udyam Assist Platform (UAP)** have helped consolidate the information on MSMEs, with 2.24 crore MSMEs registered on the Udyam portal and about 1.2 crore units registered on the UAP.

The **PM Vishwakarma**, introduced in September 2023, offering holistic end-to-end support to the artisans and craftspeople, has already attracted 48.8 lakh enrolments as of the end of December 2023.

Under the **Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana**, loans amounting to ₹ 25.98 lakh crore have so far been disbursed to non-corporate, non-farm small and micro enterprises.

The limit of credit guarantee under the Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro & Small Enterprises (CGTMSE) was raised from ₹ 2 crore to ₹ 5 crore in April 2023, and its corpus increased to enable additional credit.

The **Unified Logistics Interface Platform (ULIP)**, under the National Logistics Policy, is integrated with 35 systems of 8 different Ministries and has 699 industry players registered on it.

An NCAER Study published in December 2023 has shown that the logistics cost in the economy has declined by 0.8 to 0.9 percentage points of GDP between FY14 and FY22.

A report by Bernstein, "India's Promise : The Prosaic Path to Sustained Growth", highlights that there has been a significant reduction in logistics cost (as a per cent of total value) for trucks after the implementation of the GST, accompanied by a rise in the distance travelled per day.

Similarly, the average turnaround time (per day) at major ports has gone down from 4.2 days during FY04-FY14 to 2.9 days during FY14-FY22.

### **Digital Infrastructure and Delivery of Citizen-Centric Services**

The **India Stack** consists of three interconnected layers :

- I. The Identity Layer (Aadhaar).
- II. The Payments Layer (Unified Payments Interface, Aadhaar Payments Bridge, Aadhaar Enabled Payment Service).
- III. The Data Layer (Account Aggregator).

The value of transactions conducted on the UPI platform has increased multifold from ₹ 0.07 lakh crore in FY17 to ₹ 143.4 lakh crore in FY24 (April-December 2023).

The Data Layer transformed the authentication ecosystem in India and facilitated the KYC process, reducing the cost of conducting e-KYC from ₹ 1000 to ₹ 5.

The PMJDY, launched in 2014, put to great use the Indian Stack to enable direct benefit transfers straight into the bank account of the beneficiary using the Aadhar and the mobile connect. In an exemplary upscaling of public services, the PMJDY accounts have grown three-fold from 14.7 crore in March 2015 to 51.5 crore as of January 10, 2024. This has been accompanied by a rise in the average deposit per account.

DBT mode has so far (December 2023) transferred more than ₹ 33.6 lakh crore. The DBT has led to the removal of duplicate/fake beneficiaries and the plugging of leakages. As a result, a real savings of ₹ 2.7 lakh

crore (as of March 2022) has accrued to the government.

During the pandemic, the **Aarogya Setu and CoWin apps** helped to track and contain the spread of the virus and facilitate the vaccination of many people in a short period. Using this digital infrastructure,

PM e-VIDYA was another initiative launched with the use of digital technology to bridge learning gaps during the pandemic.

As per a report by Unicommerce on 'India E-Commerce Index 2023', the overall order volume witnessed a growth of 26.2 per cent in FY23, indicating a flourishing e-commerce landscape in India, supported by a 23.5 per cent rise in annual Gross Merchandise Value (GMV) as compared to FY22.

India's e-commerce market is expected to reach USD 163 billion by 2026, with online sales accounting for over 25 per cent of the sales across major non-grocery retail categories.

The **IMF's Working Paper on 'Stacking Up the Benefits : Lessons from India's Digital Journey'** highlights that as of March 2023, roughly 4.5 million individuals and companies have benefited from easier access to financial services through the Account Aggregator since it was first launched in August 2021.

Average monthly data consumption per wireless data subscriber increased almost 300 times to 18.4 GB in June 2023 from 61.7 MB in March 2014. India has the third lowest average data tariff per GB.

The India stack not only facilitated the GST rollout in 2017, but also evolved itself through the feedback loop. The GSTN served about 140 lakh active taxpayers in April 2023, up from 105 lakhs in April 2018.

The Bank for International Settlements noted in December 2019 that what India achieved with respect to its financial inclusion in the last eight to ten years had, on average, taken 47 years, going by the experience of other countries.

A report by ACI Worldwide (Real-time payments) highlights that India was a leader in Global Real-time payment transactions in 2022.

These are the digital pillars on which the services sector stands today.

### **Credit creation is back**

The growth in non-food bank credit at 15 per cent in FY23 was the highest in the last ten years. This would not have been possible without a significantly improvement in the banking sector's health. Even as credit growth surged, asset quality across all SCB groups kept improving, with GNPA's and NNPA's dropping to a multi-year low in September 2023.

Relative to gross advances, the GNPA's of SCBs rose almost five-fold from 2.2 per cent in FY11 to 11.2 per cent in FY18, as loans extended in the boom years of 2003-08 and again between 2012 and 2014 turned sour.

### **Evolving Financial Markets to Support the Investment Needs of a Growing Economy**

India's equity markets have outperformed major global markets. The Indian benchmark equity indices the BSE Sensex and the Nifty 50-delivered a CAGR of about 13.5 per cent in the period January 2014-December 2023.

The number of demat accounts in India increased to 13.9 crore at the end of December 2023 marking a 536 per cent growth from the total number of accounts as at the end of March 2014.

The number of retail investors participating in the cash market segment of the equity markets on the NSE rose by 3.8 times between FY18 and FY22.

The performance of Indian equity markets has enabled India to secure the second-largest weightage in the MSCI Emerging Markets index.

### **Safeguarding Macroeconomic Stability**

#### **Reigning in Inflation with Flexible Targeting**

The period between FY09 and FY14 was marked by high average retail inflation of 10 per cent and high levels of macro-vulnerability. Since the advent of flexible inflation-targeting within the band of 4 +/- 2 per cent under the Monetary Policy Framework Agreement in FY16, retail inflation averaged 4.2 per cent till FY20.

Inflationary pressures moderated in FY24 (April-December), with average retail inflation easing to 5.5 per cent. The decline was driven by benign trends in core (non-food, non-fuel) inflation, which gradually declined to a 49-month low of 3.8 per cent in December 2023. The overall retail inflation is now stable and within the notified tolerance band of 2 to 6 per cent.

### Human Resources : Dovetailing Growth with Capacitating Welfare

**A New Approach to Welfare :** The Union government's expenditure on social services has increased at a CAGR of 5.9 per cent between FY12 and FY23, while the capital expenditure on social services has grown by 8.1 per cent CAGR over the same period, indicating the creation of societal assets.

At the same time, programmes for universal access to basic amenities (such as Ujjwala Yojana, PM-Jan Aarogya Yojana, PM-Jal Jeevan Mission, and PM-AWAS Yojana, among others) have gained prominence. In contrast with short-term measures requiring repeated disbursement of scarce resources, such an approach not only builds social infrastructure for the decades to come but also enables individuals to climb up the standard-of-living ladder and utilise the opportunities accompanying high growth.

More recently, the 'One Nation One Ration Card' programme, allowing seamless portability of ration cards across states for migrant workers, represents the institutionalisation of digital goods in welfare.

The investment in child immunisation (as of October 2023, 5.1 crore children and 1.3 crore pregnant women have been vaccinated since 2014 under Mission Indradhanush) and sanitation (as of January 2024, 90 per cent of villages are Open Defecation Free (ODF) plus 50, while 100 per cent of villages attained ODF status in 2019 under Swachh Bharat Mission) self-selects the least privileged and yields positive externalities of lesser disease incidence due to cleaner practices, lesser school absenteeism due to illness, and greater nutrient absorption over the long run.

Another thoughtful policy, given the country's demography and occupation profile, is the accessibility of affordable social security schemes for the unorganised sector workers. The Atal Pension Yojana (APY), PM Jeevan Jyoti Yojana (PMJJY), and PM Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY) (all three launched in 2015) are success stories of an expanding social safety net equipped with universal bank account penetration.

While PM-JJY and PM-SBY were the first of their kind, the APY improved remarkably upon its predecessor, the Swavalamban Yojana. The subscriber base of the Atal Pension Yojana in December 2023 stands at 6.1 crore, 30 times the base of 20.7 lakh in FY15.

### How has the New Approach to Welfare Paid off

The following indicators confirm that welfare approach of the government has paid rich dividend :

#### Health of the People is Paramount Objective of the Government

- According to a NITI Aayog report, **13.5 crore Indians escaped multidimensional poverty** between 2015-16 and 2019-21.
- **Maternal mortality ratio** declined from 130 per lakh live births in 2014-16 to 97 per lakh live births in 2018-20.
- **Out-of-pocket health expenditure** declined from 62.6 per cent of total health expenditure (THE) in FY15 to 47.1 per cent of THE in FY20.
- **30.3 crore Ayushman Bharat cards** created and 6.2 crore hospital admissions (as of January 17, 2024).
- More than 1.6 lakh primary healthcare facilities upgraded to Ayushman Arogya Mandir (erstwhile AB-HWCs) (as of December 13, 2023).
- More than 17.4 crore patients availed e-Sanjeevani OPD services in Ayushman Arogya Mandir (as of November 3, 2023).
- 10,000 **Janaushadhi Kendras** across the country, selling medicines at 50-90 per cent cheaper rates compared to market rates (as of November 30, 2023)

- 16 per cent decline in TB incidence between 2015 and 2022, with 18 per cent reduction in mortality.
- One crore beneficiaries of **Janani Suraksha Yojana** in FY22.

### Move Towards 'Education for All'

- National Education Policy introduced in 2020 – structural reform in education.
- **National Curriculum Framework for Foundational Stage** (NCF FS) launched on 20th October, 2022. Based on this, Learning Teaching Material (Jadui Pitara) and Text-books have been launched in 2023.
- **PARAKH** (Performance Assessment, Review, and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development), launched in 2023 for setting norms and implementing activities related to student assessment.
- Scheme for 14,500 **PM-SHRI Schools** to emerge as model schools for NEP.
- **NIPUN Bharat Mission** for universal acquisition of foundational literacy and numeracy by 2026-27.
- Expansion of digital learning through **Swayam Prabha and MOOCs-200** channels with more than 13,000 contents produced for telecast in 31 languages.

### Large-scale Skilling

- 1.4 crore candidates trained under PM Kaushal Vikas Yojana since 2015 (as of December 13, 2023).
- **Skill India Digital platform** launched in September 2023, bringing all skill initiatives together.
- 26.9 lakh apprentices engaged under the **National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme** (as of September 30, 2023).
- **Craftsmen Training Scheme** for 1.1 crore persons at ITIs in 2014-22.
- Entrepreneurship Training for 2 lakh beneficiaries between April 2018 and March 2023.
- **PM Vishwakarma Scheme** launched in September 2023 to provide end-to-end support to

artisans and craftspeople, including skill upgradation, collateral-free concessional loans of up to ₹ 3 lakh.

### Entrepreneurship

- 1,14,902 DPIIT-recognized start-ups across 763 districts of the country (as of October 31, 2023).
- 44.5 crore loans worth ₹ 26.1 lakh crore were sanctioned under the MUDRA Yojana, with 68 per cent of accounts belonging to women entrepreneurs.
- Under PMSVANidhi, 82.3 lakh loans were sanctioned to over 58 lakh street vendors, with a total value exceeding ₹ 10,922.4 crore (as of January 11, 2024).
- Under DAY-NRLM, 9.5 crore women mobilised into 87.4 lakh Self-Help Groups under DAY-NRLM (as of December 2023).
- Under Stand-Up India, 2.1 lakh loans have been sanctioned, of which 84 per cent have been sanctioned to women entrepreneurs (as of November 24, 2023).

### Basic Amenities

- 11 crore toilets and 2.3 lakh community toilet complexes were constructed under Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen (as of January 11, 2024).
- 10.8 crore households provided tap water connection under Jal Jeevan Mission (as of January 11, 2024).
- Under PM-AWAS-Urban and PM-AWAS-Gramin, 79 lakh and 2.5 crore houses were constructed for the poor in the last 9 years (as of January 8, 2024 and January 11, 2024).
- 10 crore LPG connections provided under PM Ujjwala Yojana since 2016 (as of January 8, 2024).
- 21.4 crore rural households electrified under Saubhagya since 2015 (as of March 31, 2019).
- Digital India : 4.5 lakh common service centres set up in rural areas (as of November 30, 2023).

### Social Security

- 51.4 crore accounts opened under PM Jan Dhan Yojana (as of January 3, 2024).
- 18.5 crore and 41.0 crore enrolments under PM Jeevan Jyoti

Yojana and PM Suraksha Beema Yojana, respectively (as of November 15, 2023).

- Atal Pension Yojana (launched in 2015) total subscriber base has risen to 6.1 crore (as of December 31, 2023).
- Assured pension for 49.7 lakh unorganised workers enrolled under PM Shram Yogi Maandhan Yojana (as of December 31, 2023).

### Women-led Development : Tapping the Gender Dividend for India@100

The passage of the women's reservation Bill (Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam (NSVA)) in September 2023 is another milestone in the way of empowerment of the women after the successful implementation of 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment relating to the reservation of one third seats in Panchati Raj Institutions and Urban Local Bodies respectively.

Women-led SHGs have a positive, statistically significant effect on women's economic, social, and political empowerment, with positive effects on empowerment achieved through various pathways such as familiarity with handling money, financial decision-making, improved social networks, asset ownership and livelihood diversification.

The Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Rural Livelihood Mission (DAY-NRLM), which is the government's SHG programme covering nearly nine crore women through 83 lakh SHGs, has been empirically associated with women empowerment, self-esteem enhancement, reduced social evils; and additionally, medium impacts in terms of better education, higher participation in village institutions and better access to government schemes.

Recently, the government has targeted the creation of 2 crore 'Lakshpati Didis' (women with annual earnings of ₹ 1 lakh and more) through skilling SHG members with marketable skills such as plumbing, LED bulb making, and operation of drones and repair, etc.

Female participation has been quite encouraging in the wave of human capital formation through

Skill India Mission and Start-up and Stand-Up India.

Under the PM Kaushal Vikas Yojana, over 59 lakh women have been certified, which constitutes more than 40 per cent of the total certified as of June 2022.

Around 70 per cent of the loans have been sanctioned to women entrepreneurs under PM Mudra Yojana, and 80 per cent of the beneficiaries under Stand-Up India are women.

Realising the vision of Digital India, more than 53 per cent of the beneficiaries of the Prime Minister's Rural Digital Literacy Campaign (PMGDISHA) are women as of July 2023.

### India's External Sector : Safely Navigating Through Uncertainties

India's exports have been showing remarkable performance, logging record-high levels since FY22, with merchandise exports rising by more than 50 per cent and services exports by 120 per cent over the past decade (FY13 to FY23).

The highest-ever merchandise export of USD 451.1 billion was achieved in FY23.

Despite global shocks, India's merchandise trade balance improved markedly from a deficit of USD 189.2 billion in April-November 2022 to USD 166.4 billion in April-November 2023 as a result of the decline in imports.

In terms of absolute numbers, the pick-up in total exports (merchandise plus services) has been evident since FY22, when it reached USD 683.7 billion, followed by USD 781.4 billion in FY23. A comparison of the national account estimates for the previous two decades since FY04 indicates that, on average, the share of net exports to GDP improved from (-)4.1 to (-)2.6 during FY04-FY13 to FY14-FY24.

Service exports, with a CAGR of 7.1 per cent during FY12 to FY23, combined with the CAGR of remittances of 4.5 per cent during the same period, enabled India's current account balance to remain within a comfortable range, especially after FY14. The current account deficit (CAD) for H1 of FY24 dropped to

USD 17.5 billion from USD 48.8 billion during the same period in the previous year, declining by 64.1 per cent.

India is the largest recipient of worker remittances in the world, receiving USD 125 billion in the year 2023.

In the ten years between FY05 and FY14, India's cumulative FDI inflows were USD 305.3 billion. The cumulative nominal GDP in that period was USD 13.55 trillion. The FDI inflows were thus 2.2 per cent of GDP in that period.

In the nine years between FY15 and FY23, India received a cumulative FDI of USD 596.5 billion and the cumulative dollar GDP in that period was USD 23.8 trillion. The FDI inflows were thus 2.5 per cent of GDP in this period.

The foreign exchange reserves stood at USD 623.2 billion as of 29 December, 2023, covering imports of more than ten months.

India's external debt, placed at USD 635.3 billion by the end of September 2023, is considered comfortable and has been prudently managed over time. External debt as a ratio to GDP fell to 18.6 per cent at the end of September 2023 from 22.4 per cent at the end of March 2013.

### Climate Action : India's Climate Action Towards Building Resilience

India announced its first Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) at the UNFCCC in 2015. These NDCs included an ambition to :

- Reduce the emission intensity of India's GDP by 33 to 35 per cent by 2030 from the 2005 level.
- Achieve about 40 per cent cumulative electric power installed capacity from non-fossil fuel-based energy resources by 2030.
- Create an additional carbon sink of 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> eq. through additional forest and tree cover by 2030.

Against these goals, India has already met the targets of building non-fossil fuel-installed electricity capacity, reaching 43.9 per cent in November 2023 (up from 32.3 per cent 82 in 2014 and 30.4 per cent in

2004). The reduction in the emission intensity of the economy was 33 per cent by 2019 from 2005 level 184.

Further, an additional carbon sink of 1.97 billion tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> eq. has been created by 2019, which is higher than the 2005 level. The high pace of implementation formed the basis for updating the NDC in 2022 - which set a revised target of achieving 50 per cent cumulative electric power installed capacity from non-fossil sources, reduction in the emissions intensity of GDP by 45 per cent from 2005 levels and promoting a healthy and sustainable way of living through a mass movement for **LiFE – Lifestyle for Environment**.

The speedy implementation of the targets has been possible due to the ambitious expansion in the installed non-fossil fuel capacity in India, which has more than doubled in the last nine years, increasing from 80.3 GW in March 2014 to 187.06 GW in November 2023, an increase of around 106.76 GW as against an increase of only 46.2 GW between 2004-14. India's installed solar energy capacity has increased by more than 25 times, from 2.63 GW in March 2014 to 72.3 GW in November 2023.

The Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha Evam Utthan Mahabhiyan (PM-KUSUM), Unnat Jyoti by Affordable LEDs for All (UJALA), Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) are some of the recent major schemes introduced to promote energy efficiency. Cumulatively, more than ten crore LPG connections have been released under PMUY, and over 36.86 crore LED bulbs, 72.18 lakh LED Tube lights, and 23.59 lakh Energy efficient fans distributed under UJALA91, and over 1.30 crore LED Street Lights under SNLP92 have been installed across India.

### Outlook

In the next three years, India is expected to become the third-largest economy in the world, with a GDP of USD 5 trillion.

The government has, however, set a higher goal of becoming a 'developed country' by 2047.

In FY25, real GDP growth will likely be closer to 7 per cent.

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# Union Interim Budget 2024-25

With the 'mantra' of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, and Sabka Vishwas' and the whole of nation approach of 'Sabka Prayas', the Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman presented the Union Interim Budget 2024-25 in Parliament, on February 1, 2024. The key highlights of the Budget are as follows :

## PART 'A'

### Social Justice

- Development philosophy of the government covers all elements of inclusivity, namely, social inclusivity through coverage of all strata of the
  - Society and geographical inclusivity through development of all
  - Regions of the country.
- Government is working with an approach to development that is all-round, all-pervasive and all-inclusive. (सर्वांगीण, सर्वस्पर्शी और सर्वसमावेशी). It covers all castes and people at all levels. The government is working to make India a 'Viksit Bharat' by 2047.
- Prime Minister to focus on upliftment of four major castes, that is, 'Garib' (Poor), 'Mahilayen' (Women), 'Yuva' (Youth) and 'Annadata' (Farmer).

### 'Garib Kalyan, Desh ka Kalyan'

- Government assisted 25 crore people out of multi-dimensional poverty in last 10 years.
- DBT of ₹ 34 lakh crore using PM-Jan Dhan accounts led to savings of ₹ 2.7 lakh crore for the Government.
- PM-SVANidhi provided credit assistance to 78 lakh street vendors. 2.3 lakh have received credit for the third time.
- PM-JANMAN Yojana to aid the development of particularly vulnerable tribal groups (PVTG).
- PM-Vishwakarma Yojana provides end-to-end support to artisans and crafts people engaged in 18 trades.

### Welfare of 'Annadata'

- PM-KISAN SAMMAN Yojana provided financial assistance to 11.8 crore farmers.
- Under PM Fasal Bima Yojana, crop insurance is given to 4 crore farmers
- Electronic National Agriculture Market (e-NAM) integrated 1361 mandis, providing services to 1.8 crore farmers with trading volume of ₹ 3 lakh crore.
- Agricultural sector is poised for inclusive, balanced, higher growth and productivity. These are facilitated from farmer-centric policies, income support, coverage of risks through price and insurance support, promotion of technologies and innovations through start-ups.

### Empowering Amrit Peedhi, the Yuva

- Country's prosperity depends on adequately equipping and empowering the youth. The National Education Policy 2020 is ushering in transformational reforms. **PM ScHools for Rising India (PM SHRI)** are delivering quality teaching, and nurturing holistic and well-rounded individuals.
- The **Skill India Mission** has trained 1.4 crore youth, upskilled and reskilled 54 lakh youth, and established 3000 new ITIs.
- A large number of new institutions of higher learning, namely 7 IITs, 16 IIITs, 7 IIMs, 15 AIIMS and 390 universities have been set up.
- **PM Mudra Yojana** has sanctioned 43 crore loans aggregating to ₹ 22.5 lakh crore for entrepreneurial aspirations of our youth.
- Besides that, Fund of Funds, Start Up India, and Start Up Credit Guarantee schemes are assisting the youth. They are also becoming 'rozgardata'.

### Exemplary Track Record of Governance, Development and Performance (GDP)

- Besides delivering on high growth in terms of Gross Domestic Product, the Government is equally focused on a more comprehensive 'GDP', i.e., 'Governance, Development and Performance'.
- Government has provided transparent, accountable, people-centric and prompt trust-based administration with 'citizen-first' and 'minimum government, maximum governance' approach.

### Momentum for Nari Shakti

- 30 crore Mudra Yojana loans given to women entrepreneurs.
- Female enrolment in higher education gone up by 28%.
- In STEM courses, girls and women constitute 43% of enrolment, one of the highest in the world.
- Over 70% houses under PM Awas Yojana given to women from rural areas.
- Eighty-three lakh SHGs with nine crore women are transforming rural socio-economic landscape with empowerment and self-reliance. Their success has assisted nearly one crore women to become Lakhpati Didi already. They are an inspiration to others. Their achievements will be recognized through honouring them. Buoyed by the success, it has been decided to enhance the target for Lakhpati Didi from 2 crore to 3 crore.

### Economic Management

- The multipronged economic management over the past ten years has complemented people-centric

inclusive development. Following are some of the major elements.

- I. All forms of infrastructure, physical, digital or social, are being built in record time.
- II. All parts of the country are becoming active participants in economic growth.
- III. Digital Public Infrastructure, a new 'factor of production' in the 21st century, is instrumental in formalization of the economy.
- IV. Goods and Services Tax has enabled 'One Nation, One Market, One Tax'. Tax reforms have led to deepening and widening of tax base.
- V. Strengthening of the financial sector has helped in making savings, credit and investments more efficient.
- VI. GIFT IFSC and the unified regulatory authority, IFSCA are creating a robust gateway for global capital and financial services for the economy.
- VII. Proactive inflation management has helped keep inflation within the policy band.

**Interim Budget 2024-25 Highlights**

- No changes in direct and indirect tax rates
- Direct tax collection tripled, return filers increased by 2.4 times in the last 10 years
- Fiscal deficit for FY25 estimated to be 5.1 per cent of GDP, lower than the revised estimate (5.8%) in FY24
- Govt to borrow ₹ 14.13 lakh crore in next fiscal, lower than ₹15.43 lakh crore in FY24
- Nominal GDP growth for FY25 projected at 10.5%
- Gross tax revenue target for FY25 hiked 11.46% to ₹ 38.31 lakh crore from ₹ 34.37 lakh crore in FY24
- Direct tax collection target set at ₹ 21.99 lakh crore, while that of indirect tax set at ₹ 16.22 lakh crore
- Capital expenditure hiked 11% to ₹1,11,111 crore, to be 3.4% of the GDP
- Total receipts other than borrowings and the total expenditure estimated to be ₹ 30.80 and ₹ 47.66 lakh crore respectively
- Mop-up from central public sector enterprises disinvestment pegged at ₹ 50,000 crore for FY25, up from ₹ 30,000 crore in FY24
- Healthcare cover under Ayushman Bharat scheme to be extended to all ASHA workers, Anganwadi workers and helpers
- One crore households to obtain 300 units free electricity every month through rooftop solarisation
- Scheme to help middle class families living in rented houses to buy or build their own houses to be launched

Source: Budget 2024-25 documents  
KBK InfoGraphics

### Vision for 'Viksit Bharat'

- Our vision for 'Viksit Bharat' is that of "Prosperous Bharat in harmony with nature, with modern infrastructure, and providing opportunities for all citizens and all regions to reach their potential."
- With confidence arising from strong and exemplary trackrecord of performance and progress earning 'Sabka Vishwas', the next five years will be years of unprecedented development, and golden moments to realize the dream of developed India @ 2047. The trinity of demography, democracy and diversity backed by 'Sabka Prayas' has the potential to fulfill aspirations of every Indian.

### Strategy for 'Amrit Kaal'

- Government will adopt economic policies that foster and sustain growth, facilitate inclusive and sustainable development, improve productivity, create opportunities for all, help them enhance their

capabilities, and contribute to generation of resources to power investments and fulfil aspirations.

- Guided by the principle 'Reform, Perform, and Transform', the Government will take up next generation reforms, and build consensus with the states and stakeholders for effective implementation.
- Aligning with the 'Panchamrit' goals, the Government will facilitate sustaining high and more resource-efficient economic growth. This will work towards energy security in terms of availability, accessibility and affordability.

### PM Awas Yojana (Grameen)

- Despite COVID challenges, the target of three crore houses under PM Awas Yojana (Grameen) will be achieved soon.
- Two crore more houses to be taken up in the next five years.

### Housing for Middle Class

- Government will launch a scheme to help deserving sections of the middle class "living in rented houses, or slums, or chawls and unauthorized colonies" to buy or build their own houses.

### Rooftop Solarization and Muft Bijli

- 1 crore households to obtain 300 units free electricity every month through rooftop solarization.
- Each household is expected to save ₹ 15000 to ₹ 18000 annually.
- Charging of electric vehicles;
- Entrepreneurship opportunities for a large number of vendors for supply and installation;
- Employment opportunities for the youth with technical skills in manufacturing, installation and maintenance;

### Ayushman Bharat

- Healthcare cover under Ayushman Bharat scheme to be extended to all ASHA workers, Anganwadi Workers and Helpers.

### Medical Colleges

- Government plans to set up more medical colleges by utilizing the existing hospital infrastructure under various departments. A committee for this purpose will be set-up to examine the issues and make relevant recommendations.

### Cervical Cancer Vaccination

- Government will encourage vaccination for girls in age group of 9 to 14 years for prevention of cervical cancer.

### Maternal and Child Healthcare

- Various schemes for maternal and child care will be brought under one comprehensive programme for synergy in implementation.
- Upgradation of anganwadi centres under "Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2-0" will be expedited for improved nutrition delivery, early childhood care and development.

- The newly designed U-WIN platform for managing immunization and intensified efforts of Mission Indradhanush will be rolled out expeditiously throughout the country.

### Agriculture and Food Processing

- Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana has benefited 38 lakh farmers and generated 10 lakh employment.
- Pradhan Mantri Formalisation of Micro Food Processing Enterprises Yojana has assisted 2.4 lakh SHGs and 60000 individuals with credit linkages.
- After the successful adoption of Nano Urea, application of Nano DAP on various crops will be expanded in all agro-climatic zones.
- Building on the initiative announced in 2022, a strategy will be formulated to achieve 'atmanirbharta' for oil seeds such as mustard, groundnut, sesame, soybean, and sunflower. This will cover research for high-yielding varieties, widespread adoption of modern farming techniques, market linkages, procurement, value addition, and crop insurance.
- Implementation of Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) will be stepped up to : (1) enhance aquaculture productivity from existing 3 to 5 tons per hectare, (2) double exports to ₹ 1 lakh crore and (3) generate 55 lakh employment opportunities in near future.

### Research and Innovation for Catalyzing Growth, Employment and Development

- Prime Minister Shastri gave the slogan of 'Jai Jawan Jai Kisan'. Prime Minister Vajpayee made that 'Jai Jawan Jai Kisan Jai Vigyan'. Prime Minister Modi has furthered that to 'Jai Jawan Jai Kisan Jai Vigyan and Jai Anusandhan', as innovation is the foundation of development.
- A corpus of ₹ 1 lakh crore to be established with fifty-year interest free loan to provide long-term financing or refinancing with long tenors and low or nil interest rates.
- A new scheme to be launched for strengthening deep-tech technologies for defence purposes and expediting 'atmanirbharta'.

### Infrastructure

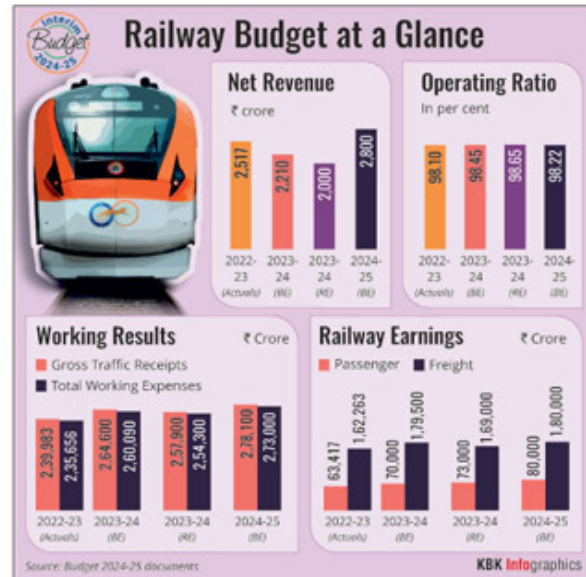
- Capital expenditure outlay for Infrastructure development and employment generation to be increased by 11.1 per cent to ₹ 11,11,111 crore, that will be 3.4 per cent of the GDP.

### Railways

- 3 major economic railway corridor programmes identified under the PM Gati Shakti to be implemented to improve logistics efficiency and reduce cost
  - Energy, mineral and cement corridors
  - Port connectivity corridors
  - High traffic density corridors
- Forty thousand normal rail bogies to be converted to Vande Bharat standards.

### Metro and NaMo Bharat

- In the light of a fast-expanding middle class and rapid urbanization is taking place. Metro Rail and NaMo Bharat can be the catalyst for the required urban transformation. Expansion of these systems will be supported in large cities focusing on transit-oriented development.



### Aviation Sector

- Number of airports in the country doubled to 149.
- Five hundred and seventeen new routes are carrying 1.3 crore passengers.
- Indian carriers have placed orders for over 1000 new aircrafts.

### Green Energy

- Viability gap funding for harnessing offshore wind energy potential for initial capacity of one giga-watt.
- Coal gasification and liquefaction capacity of 100 MT to be set up by 2030.
- Phased mandatory blending of compressed biogas (CBG) in compressed natural gas (CNG) for transport and piped natural gas (PNG) for domestic purposes to be mandated.
- Financial assistance for procurement of biomass aggregation machinery to support collection.
- Greater adoption of e-buses for public transport networks through payment security mechanism.
- For promoting green growth, a new scheme of bio-manufacturing and bio-foundry will be launched.
- For promoting climate resilient activities for **blue economy 2.0**, a scheme for restoration and adaptation measures, and coastal aquaculture and mariculture with integrated and multi-sectoral approach will be launched.

### Tourism Sector

- States to be encouraged to take up comprehensive development of iconic tourist centres including their branding and marketing at global scale.

- Framework for rating of the tourist centres based on quality of facilities and services to be established.
- Long-term interest free loans to be provided to States for financing such development on matching basis.
- To address the emerging fervour for domestic tourism, projects for post connectivity, tourism infrastructure, and amenities will be taken up on islands, including Lakshadweep.

### Investments

- FDI inflow during 2014-23 of USD 596 billion was twice of the inflow during 2005-14.

### Reforms in the States for 'Viksit Bharat'

- A provision of ₹ 75,000 crore as fifty-year interest free loan is proposed to support milestone-linked reforms by the State Governments.

Budget at a Glance				
(In ₹ crore)				
		2022-23 Actuals	2023-24 Revised Estimates	2024-25 Budget Estimates
1.	Revenue Receipts	2383206	2699713	3001275
2.	Tax Revenue (Net to Centre)	2097786	2323918	2601574
3.	Non Tax Revenue	285421	375795	399701
4.	Capital Receipts	1809951	1790773	1764494
5.	Recovery of Loans	26161	26000	29000
6.	Other Receipts	46035	30000	50000
7.	Borrowings and Other Liabilities	1737755	1734773	1685494
8.	Total Receipts (1+4)	4193157	4490486	4765768
9.	Total Expenditure (10+13)	4193157	4490486	4765768
10.	On Revenue Account of which	3453132	3540239	3654657
11.	Interest Payments	928517	1055427	1190440
12.	Grants in Aid for creation of Capital Account	306264	321190	385582
13.	On Capital Account	740025	950246	1111111
14.	Effective Capital Expenditure (12+13)	1046289	1271436	1496693
15.	Revenue Deficit (10-1)	1069926 (3-9)	840527 (2-8)	653383 (2-0)
16.	Effective Revenue Deficit (15-12)	763662 (2-8)	519337 (1-8)	267801 (0-8)
17.	Fiscal Deficit [9-(1+5+6)]	1737755 (6-4)	1734773 (5-8)	1685494 (5-1)
18.	Primary Deficit (17-11)	809238 (3-0)	679346 (2-3)	495054 (1-5)

### Revised Estimates (RE) 2023-24

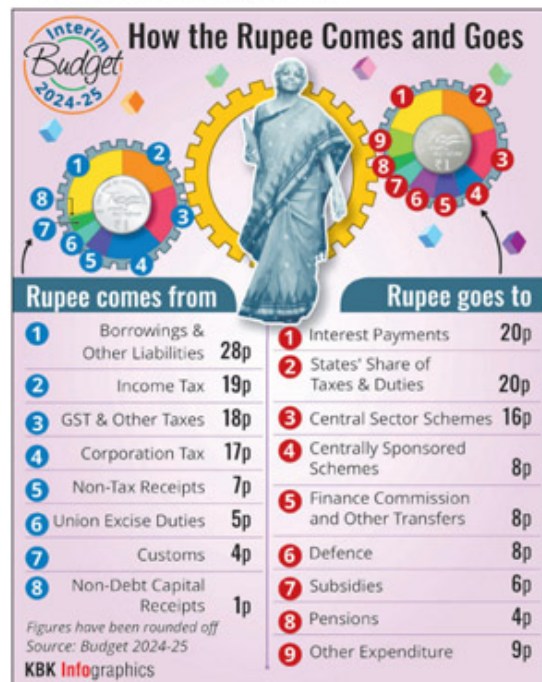
- RE of the total receipts other than borrowings is ₹ 27.56 lakh crore, of which the tax receipts are ₹ 23.24 lakh crore.
- RE of the total expenditure is ₹ 44.90 lakh crore.
- Revenue receipts at ₹ 30.03 lakh crore are expected to be higher than the Budget Estimate, reflecting strong

growth momentum and formalization in the economy.

- RE of the fiscal deficit is 5.8 per cent of GDP for 2023-24.

### Budget Estimates 2024-25

- Total receipts other than borrowings and the total expenditure are estimated at ₹ 30.80 and ₹ 47.66 lakh crore respectively.
- Tax receipts are estimated at ₹ 26.2 lakh crore.
- Scheme of fifty-year interest free loan for capital expenditure to states to be continued this year with total outlay of ₹ 1.3 lakh crore.
- Fiscal deficit in 2024-25 is estimated to be 5.1 per cent of GDP
- Gross and net market borrowings through dated securities during 2024-25 are estimated at ₹ 14.13 and ₹ 11.75 lakh crore respectively.



### PART 'B'

#### Direct Taxes

- FM proposes to retain same tax rates for direct taxes
- Direct tax collection tripled, return filers increased to 2.4 times, in the last 10 years
- Government to improve tax payer services
  - Outstanding direct tax demands upto ₹ 25000 pertaining to the period upto FY 2009-10 withdrawn.
  - Outstanding direct tax demands upto ₹ 10000 for financial years 2010-11 to 2014-15 withdrawn.
  - This will benefit one crore tax payers.
- Tax benefits to Start-Ups, investments made by Sovereign wealth funds or pension funds extended to 31.03.2025.
- Tax exemption on certain income of IFSC units extended by a year to 31.03.2025 from 31.03.2024.

Tax Revenue			
	(In ₹ crore)		
	2022-23 Actuals	2023-24 Revised Estimates	2024-25 Budget Estimates
<b>Gross Tax Revenue</b>	3054192	3437211	3830796
(a) Corporation Tax	825834	922675	1042830
(b) Taxes on Income	833260	1022325	1156000
(c) Wealth Tax	-9	—	—
(d) Customs	213372	218680	231310
(e) Union Excise Duties	319000	303600	318780
(f) Service Tax	431	500	100
(g) GST	849133	956600	1067650
– CGST	718523	811600	917650
– IGST	4748	—	—
– GST Compensation Cess	125862	145000	150000
(h) Taxes of Union Territories	8711	8331	9426
(i) Other Taxes	4460	4500	4700
<b>Less : NCCD transferred to the NCCF/NDRF</b>	<b>8000</b>	<b>8800</b>	<b>8440</b>
<b>Less : State's share</b>	<b>948407</b>	<b>1097342</b>	<b>1219783</b>
<b>Less : States' share adjustment for prior years in RE</b>		<b>7151</b>	
<b>1a Centre's Net Tax Revenue</b>	<b>2097786</b>	<b>2323918</b>	<b>2601574</b>

### Indirect Taxes

- FM proposes to retain same tax rates for indirect taxes and import duties.
- GST unified the highly fragmented indirect tax regime in India.
  - ❑ Average monthly gross GST collection doubled to ₹ 1.66 lakh crore this year.
  - ❑ GST tax base has doubled.
  - ❑ State SGST revenue buoyancy (including compensation released to states) increased to 1.22 in post-GST period (2017-18 to 2022-23) from 0.72 in the pre-GST period (2012-13 to 2015-16).
  - ❑ 94% of industry leaders view transition to GST as largely positive.
  - ❑ GST led to supply chain optimization.
  - ❑ GST reduced the compliance burden on trade and industry.
  - ❑ Lower logistics cost and taxes helped reduce prices of goods and services, benefiting the consumers.

### Tax Rationalization Efforts over the Years

- No tax liability for income upto ₹ 7 lakh, up from ₹ 2.2 lakh in FY 2013-14
- Presumptive taxation threshold for retail businesses increased to ₹ 3 crore from ₹ 2 crore
- Presumptive taxation threshold for professionals increased to ₹ 75 lakh from ₹ 50 lakh
- Corporate income tax decreased to 22% from 30% for existing domestic companies
- Corporate income tax rate at 15% for new manufacturing companies

Expenditure of Major Items			
	(In ₹ crore)		
	2022-23 Actuals	2023-24 Revised Estimates	2024-25 Budget Estimates
Pension	241599	238049	239612
Defence	399123	455897	454773
Subsidy—			
Fertiliser	251339	188894	164000
Food	272802	212332	205250
Petroleum	6817	12240	11925
Agriculture and Allied	125875	140533	146819
Commerce and Industry	44363	47350	45958
Development of North East	990	5892	5900
Education	98567	108878	124638
Energy	65717	54989	76302
External Affairs	16661	29122	22155
Finance	11551	23982	87642
Health	73551	79221	90171
Home Affairs	120932	133360	139328
Interest	928517	1055427	1190440
IT and Telecom	111629	95781	115752
Others#	101108	118020	123136
Planning and Statistics	4560	4475	6291
Rural Development	238396	238984	265808
Scientific Departments	24041	26651	32169
Social Welfare	40470	46741	56501
Tax Administration	207431	193695	203297
of which Transfer to GST Compensation Fund	163506	145000	150000
Transfer to States	273393	273985	286787
Transport	390508	524941	544039
Union Territories	65907	66676	63541
Urban Development	77310	69271	77524
Net additional resources transferred to (+)/met from (-) dedicated reserve funds	—	45100	-13990
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>4193157</b>	<b>4490486</b>	<b>4765768</b>

### Economy-then and Now

- In 2014 there was a responsibility to mend the economy and put governance systems in order. The need of the hour was to:
  - ❑ Attract investments
  - ❑ Build support to the much-needed reforms
  - ❑ Give hope to the people
- **The government succeeded with a strong belief of 'nation-first'**
- "It is now appropriate to look at where we were till 2014 and where we are now": FM
  - ❑ **The Government will lay a White Paper on the table of the house.**



# Environment, Ecology, Biodiversity and Climate Change Round-up

## WHO Launches ICD-11, Traditional Medicine Module 2

On 10th January, 2024, the World Health Organization (WHO) with the collaboration of Ministry of AYUSH launched ICD11 Traditional Medicine Module 2 at the India Habitat Centre (New Delhi) and preparations have started for its implementation. The data and terminology relating to diseases based on Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani Medicine have been included in the WHO ICD-11 classification. A Donor Agreement between the World Health Organization and the Ministry of Ayush was also signed earlier for this classification which will further strengthen and expand India's healthcare delivery system, Ayush insurance coverage, research & development and policy making system.



### About the WHO Disease Classification Series ICD-11

- The World Health Organization (WHO) released Eleventh Revision of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11) and ICD-11 is linked to the WHO non-proprietary names of pharmaceutical products.
- It can be used for causes of death, primary care, cancer registration, patient safety, dermatology, pain documentation, allergology, reimbursement, clinical documentation, data dictionaries for WHO guidelines, digital documentation of COVID-19 vaccination status and test results, and more.
- ICD-11 is designed to be used in multiple languages with a central translation platform that ensures

its features and outputs are available in all translated languages.

- It provides a common language that allows health professionals to share standardized information across the world.

#### Key Facts :

- Launching the ICD-11, TM Module-2 at the India Habitat Centre, Dr. Munjapara Mahendrabhai, Union Minister of State for Ayush and Women & Child Development said that there is a need to modernize Ayush medicine by integrating it with global standards in India as well as across the world.
- The Ministry of Ayush will prepare public health strategy in future, based on ICD-11, Module 2 and will implement it nationally and internationally.
- The inclusion of traditional medical terminologies in ICD-11 forms a link between traditional medicine and global standards.
- The strategy for the inclusion of TM Module 2 in ICD-11 was prepared from 2014 to 2023 and the first draft of the WHO strategy for Traditional Medicine for 2025 to 2034 has been prepared.

## Climate Conference 2024 Holds in India

On 12th January, 2024, the Climate Conference 2024 held in Mumbai (Maharashtra) organised by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India which aims to focused on the pivotal role of the private sector, climate tech Start-ups and institutional investors in mobilizing financial resources and technical capabilities. The Conference was organised under the Green Climate Fund Readiness Programme with Delivery Partner UNDP India and supported

by Knowledge Partner Avaana Capital.

The theme of Climate Conference 2024 is "Decoding the Green Transition for India"

#### Key Facts :

- India's emerging issues of industrialization, urbanization, and growth, emphasizing five critical areas: renewable energy, energy storage, electric mobility, energy efficiency, and the circular economy. He highlighted the significance of promoting energy efficiency in micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) for cost savings and increased competitiveness.
- The Conference underscored India's roadmap to achieving net-zero by 2070, focusing on green transition investments to transform energy systems, reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, conserve natural resources, increase biodiversity, and enhance climate resilience in a socially just and inclusive manner. It delved into the current landscape of climate finance in India, exploring the roles of government, venture capitalists, corporates, and industry leaders.
- The Conference also highlighted Sustainability linked funds, risk-sharing facilities, and concessional financing. Overall, the event brought together stakeholders from diverse sectors to foster collaboration and partnership, promoting the development and adoption of sustainable, climate-resilient technologies and practices.

## World Wetlands Day 2024

World Wetlands Day is celebrated every year on 2nd February. On 2nd February, 1971, it was the date of the adoption of the Convention on Wetlands, in the Iranian city of Ramsar on the shores of the Caspian

Sea. The Convention on Wetlands works to reverse wetland loss and degradation worldwide. The Standing Committee of the Convention has approved the themes for World Wetlands Day 2024 is Wetlands and human wellbeing

### Objective of the World Wetlands Day 2024

The chief objective is to highlight how all aspects of human well-being are tied to the health of the world's wetlands-physical, mental and environmental.



### Wetlands and Anthropogenic (People) Threat

Wetlands includes both fresh-water and marine and coastal ecosystems such as all lakes and rivers, underground aquifers, swamps and marshes, wet grasslands, peatlands, oases, estuaries, deltas and tidal flats, mangroves and other coastal areas, coral reefs, and all human-made sites such as fishponds, rice paddies, reservoirs and salt pans. Wetlands are at the highest rates of decline, loss and degradation. Anthropogenic (People) threat is the primary cause of current negative trends in global biodiversity and ecosystem as well as the adverse impacts of climate change. A key challenge is to change mind-sets of peoples globally to encourage governments and communities to value and prioritize wetlands.

#### Key Facts :

- 40 per cent of all plant and animal species associated (live or breed) with wetlands.
- Wetlands are disappearing three times faster than forests and are Earth's most threatened ecosystem. In just 50 years since 1970-35% of the world's wetlands have been lost.

### The Country's 1st Healthy & Hygienic Food Street, 'PRASADAM,' inaugurates in Madhya Pradesh

Union Minister for Health & Family Welfare inaugurated the country's 1st Healthy & Hygienic Food Street, 'PRASADAM,' at Neelkanth Van, Mahakal Lok, in Ujjain (Madhya Pradesh). "PRASADAM is tried to be connect common citizens of the country with pure and safe local and traditional food. On the same day, Union Minister for Health & Family Welfare and Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh (MP) jointly inaugurated :

- 17 civil works encompassing two Public Health Unit blocks,
- 54 Chief Minister Sanjeevni Health Clinics and
- Three Integrated Public Health Labs,
- Emergency Covid response package including 30 beds and wards
- Three Community Health Centres and eight Primary Health Care Centres.
- Mannhit app which is an initiative facilitating screening for mental health.

#### "Pradhanmantri Suryodaya Yojana"

On 22nd January, 2024, Prime Minister launched "Pradhanmantri Suryodaya Yojana" with the target of installing rooftop solar on 1 crore houses at his residence at Lok Kalyan Marg. This scheme for every household with a roof to reduce their electricity bills and to make them Aatmanirbhar for their electricity needs.

Pradhanmantri Suryodaya Yojana aims to provide electricity to low and middle-income individuals through solar rooftop installations, along with offering additional income for surplus electricity generation.

- About 1 in 8 people make their livelihoods from wetlands in ways that also deliver food, water supplies, transport and leisure.
- Wetlands safeguard the 60% of humanity along coastlines against storm surges, hurricanes and tsunamis.
- Over 2,400 Ramsar Sites are designated around the world which covers over 2.5 million square kilometres.

National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) under the Ministry of Jal Shakti, Government of India. Global River Cities Alliance launched with countries namely : India, Egypt, Netherlands, Denmark, Ghana, Australia, Bhutan, Cambodia, Japan and river-cities of The Hague (Den Haag) from the Netherlands, Adelaide from Australia, and Szolnok from Hungary and International funding agencies the World Bank, Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and knowledge management institution like KPMG entering into a partnership, widely expanding the reach of the existing River Cities Alliance (RCA), formed by NMCG in association with National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA) in 2021.

### NMCG Launches Global River Cities Alliance (GRCA)

The Global River Cities Alliance (GRCA) was launched at COP28 which was held in the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Dubai (United Arab Emirates), led by the

Continued on Page 107





# Divya Darpan

## Kochi-Lakshadweep Islands Submarine Optical Fibre Connection

### Context

Recently, Prime Minister Modi, inaugurated Kochi-Lakshadweep islands submarine optical fibre connection (KLI-SOFC) project in Kavaratti, Lakshadweep, among various developmental projects worth more than ₹ 1,150 crore covering a wide range of sectors including technology, energy, water resources, healthcare and education.

### Relevance

**Prelims :** About KLI-SOFC project.

**Mains :** GS PAPER-III : Infrastructure : Energy, Ports, Roads, Airports, Railways Etc.

Kochi-Lakshadweep Islands Submarine Optical Fibre Connection (KLI - SOFC) project was announced during the Independence Day speech at Red Fort in 2020. The project has now been completed and was inaugurated by the Prime Minister. Earlier, the only means of communication with the Lakshadweep Islands was through Satellite medium, which

had limited bandwidth capacity and was not able to meet the growing bandwidth demand. The need for digitally connecting the Lakshadweep Islands through a high capacity submarine cable link with the main land has been felt for most of the time. Hence, the Department of Telecommunications (DOT) took immediate action and conceptualized the Kochi-Lakshadweep Submarine OFC Project (KLI project).

### About KLI-SOFC Project

- In the Kochi-Lakshadweep Islands Submarine Cable (KLI) project, submarine cable connectivity from Mainland (Kochi) to eleven Lakshadweep Islands namely, Kavaratti, Agatti, Amini, Kadmat, Chetlat, Kalpeni, Minicoy, Androth, Kiltan, Bangaram and Bitra has been extended.
- The undersea cable link "will ensure 100 times faster Internet for the people of Lakshadweep."
- The collective 1,868 kilometres of cables will allow telecom companies and internet service providers to offer 4G, 5G and high-speed home broadband for the first time in the archipelago.



- The project is funded by Universal Services Obligation Fund (USOF), Department of Telecommunication.
- The cables have been laid by state-owned telecom BSNL, while the project was executed by Japanese firm NEC.
- Major activities related to the project include Marine Route Survey, Submarine Cable laying, Civil Construction of CLS stations, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of End Terminals (SLTE).

### About Optical Fibre

- Optical fibres are made of thin cylindrical strands of glass. The diameter of a typical fibre is close to the diameter of a human hair.
- These fibres can carry information, such as text, images, voices, videos, telephone calls, and anything that can be encoded as digital information, across large distances almost at the speed of light.
- A submarine optical fibre cable is a cable laid on the sea bed between land-based stations to carry signals across stretches of ocean and sea.

### How do Optical Fibres Work ?

- Light is an electromagnetic wave with a spectrum of frequencies. Visible light, X-rays, radio waves, and thermal radiation (heat) all lie on this spectrum. Humans see the world around us via sunlight, but it took us a long time to control and guide light through fibre optic cables – or 'light pipes' to send coded signals.
- Optical fibres works according to the total internal reflection principle.
- With proper adjustments, the light can be kept bouncing within the glass with very little escaping outside. This is how signals encoded as electromagnetic waves can be fed into one end of an optical fibre, and they will reflect and bounce many times between the glass walls as they traverse several kilometres bearing the information in the signals.
- A fibre optic communication system consists of three parts. A transmitter encodes information into optical signals (in the form of rapidly blinking light pulses of zeros and ones). An optical fibre carries the signal to its destination. There, a receiver



reproduces the information from the encoded signal.

- Optical waves allow a high data-transmission rate, up to several terabits per second in a single fibre. Unlike radio or copper-cable-based communication, fibre cables are also insensitive to external disturbances such as lightning and bad weather.

### Benefit of the KLI-SOFC Project

- The submarine connectivity project will have a vital role for the delivery of e-governance services at the doorstep of citizens, potential development of fisheries, coconut-based industries and high-value tourism, educational development in term of tele-education and healthcare in terms of telemedicine facilities.
- It will help in the establishment of numerous businesses, augment e-commerce activities and provide adequate support to educational institutes for knowledge sharing.
- Population of Lakshadweep Islands will be provided high speed wire line broadband connectivity.
- High speed broadband will be provided through FTTH and 5G/4G Mobile network.
- The bandwidth created under this project will be available to all Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) to strengthen their telecom services in the Lakshadweep Islands.

During the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic, the one thing that connected us virtually was the internet. Because of high-speed internet connections, we can now video chat with a friend, pay online, and attend classes or meetings from home. In the age of data and information the development of optical fibre is very significant for high speed internet connectivity. The project will also play a significant role in achieving the objective of 'Digital India' and 'National Broadband Mission' and for rolling out of various e-governance projects of Government of India in Lakshadweep Islands. Therefore, it will be helpful in overall development of the region like

improving in standards of living of the people in Island and will accelerate overall social and economic development in the region with providing varied opportunities.

### PIL in SC Challenges New Law on Appointment of CEC, ECs

#### Context

Recently, a PIL has been filed in SC challenging the new law on the appointment process for the Chief Election Commissioner and Election Commissioners.

#### Relevance

**Prelims :** About new law on appointment of CEC, ECs.

#### Mains : GS Paper-II :

- Appointment to various Constitutional posts, powers, functions and responsibilities of various Constitutional Bodies.
- Function of Judiciary.

The amendment is being made in the wake of the SC court ruling that the selection panel should comprise the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, and the Chief Justice of India. Until the Supreme Court ruling, Election Commissioners and Chief Election Commissioners (CECs) had been appointed by the President after recommendations by the government. But the CEC and Other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service, and Term of Office) Act, 2023, has diluted the Supreme Court judgement by replacing the Chief Justice of India with a Union Cabinet Minister. Petitioners argued that the exclusion of the CJI had 'nullified' the committee and compromised the independence of the appointment committee with the exclusion of the Chief Justice of India from the committee.

#### Key Changes in the Act :

- The move addresses the absence of a clause related to the appointment of Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and other Election Commissioners (ECs) in the existing act.
- According to the Act, the search committee, headed by the Law Minister and comprising two Union Secretaries, will shortlist

five names for consideration of the selection committee for appointment as the CEC and ECs.

- While dropping the CJI from the selection committee, the new law said Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners shall be appointed by the President on the recommendation of a Selection Committee consisting of—
  - (a) The Prime Minister—Chairperson.
  - (b) The Leader of Opposition in the House of the People—Member.
  - (c) A Union Cabinet Minister to be nominated by the Prime Minister—Member.
- In case there is no Leader of the Opposition in the Lower House, the leader of the single largest Opposition party in the Lok Sabha will be deemed to be the Leader of the Opposition.
- The selection panel will have the power to consider even those not shortlisted by the search committee.

#### Arguments Made by Petitioners

- **Dilution of SC judgement :** The new Act has diluted the Supreme Court judgement by replacing the Chief Justice of India with a Union Cabinet Minister.
- **Balance of power :** The Prime Minister and his nominee (Cabinet Minister) would always be the deciding factor; the Leader of Opposition is left with a minority vote even before the process begins.
- **Independence of the committee :** Institutions supporting constitutional democracy must have an independent mechanism for appointments of its heads and member. The Act is compromising free and fair elections with the exclusion of the Chief Justice of India from the committee.
- **SC Verdict :** The pivotal legal question placed for the court's consideration in the writ petition revolves around the constitutional inquiry of whether the Parliament or any legislative

assembly possesses the authority to promulgate a gazette notification or ordinance to nullify or amend a judgement previously rendered by the Supreme Court, particularly when the judgement emanates from a Constitution Bench.

### Supreme Court Judgement

- **PIL filed by Anoop Baranwal in 2015** : A Public Interest Litigation (PIL) filed by Anoop Baranwal in 2015 pleaded for the Supreme Court to issue directions to set up an independent, collegium-like system for the appointment of the CEC and ECs.
- **SC in March 2023** : The Supreme Court in this case, in March 2023, held that there has been a legislative vacuum due to the absence of any law by Parliament in the last 73 years (since the adoption of the Constitution) with respect to the appointment of the CEC and EC.
- **Independence of ECI** : The independence of the ECI is essential for ensuring free and fair elections that is paramount for a vibrant democracy. The Supreme Court drew reference to various other institutions supporting constitutional democracy that have independent mechanisms for the appointment of its head/ members like the National and State Human Rights Commission, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), Information Commission, Lokpal etc.
- **Dinesh Goswami Committee on Electoral Reforms (1990) and Law Commission in its 255th report on Electoral Reforms (2015)** : They had suggested that the CEC and ECs should be appointed by a committee consisting of the Prime Minister, the Chief Justice of India (CJI) and the Leader of the Opposition or the largest Opposition party in the Lok Sabha.
- **SC verdict on appointment process for CEC, EC** : Considering the recommendations, the Supreme Court, exercising its powers under Article 142 (to issue directions for doing

'complete justice' in any matter), laid down that the CEC and ECs shall be appointed by a committee consisting of the Prime Minister, the CJI and the Leader of the Opposition or the largest opposition party in the Lok Sabha.

### Appointment of Members to the Electoral Body Globally

- **South Africa** : The President of the Constitutional Court, representatives of the Human rights Court and gender equality is involved.
- **UK** : The House of Commons approves the candidates.
- **USA** : The appointment is by the President and confirmed by the Senate.

While the new act moves the appointment process from just an executive decision to a committee-based selection, it is still tilted in favour of an incumbent government. The Supreme Court had considered the recommendations of various committees and also the mechanism for appointment to certain independent bodies like the CBI (where the CJI is involved) before laying down its selection procedure. While it is the prerogative of Parliament to legislate on this subject, it may have been appropriate to retain the Chief Justice of India in the selection committee to ensure utmost independence. It would be laudable and instil a great deal of confidence in the public about the functioning of the Election Commission of India, if at least the selections under the new law are made by unanimous decisions by the proposed selection committee.

### Bangladesh Elections (2024) : Sheikh Hasina's Unopposed Victory

#### Context

Recently, National Elections were held in Bangladesh. The ruling Awami League and allies of the league won 225 (of the 300) seats in the elections. Thus, incumbent PM Sheikh Hasina won her 5th term.

#### Relevance

**Mains** : GS PAPER-II : India and its neighbourhood- relations.

### Concerns Regarding 2024 National Elections

#### Boycott of Elections by Opposition Party

- The main opposition party of Bangladesh, Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), boycotted the 2024 elections due to the fairness of the elections process.
- BNP has been boycotting the national elections since 2014. Also, BNP recently drove a campaign to bring back the caretaker system.
- Also, the leader of the main opposition party (BNP), Khaleda Zia, has been under house arrest since 2020. She was jailed in 2018 on the charges of corruption.
- Thus, practically, PM Sheikh Hasina won unopposed because of the FPTP electoral system even when witnessed with a lower voter turnout.

**Caretaker Government** system was introduced in 1990 to ensure free and fair elections, but it was repealed by Sheikh Hasina in 2011.

#### Low Voter Turnout

- Bangladeshi Election Commission (EC) informed that the voter turnout was about 40 per cent, which is comparatively lower for a democracy.
- Since the main opposition party (BNP) boycotted the elections, they are sceptical about the voter turnout terming it 'very high' because BNP declared a total strike (Hartal) for 48 hours, which could also affect the turnout.

#### Significance of 2024 General Election in Bangladesh

- 2024 general elections are crucial due to the Bangladesh's increasing economic and strategic position.
- Garment industry is a crucial source of foreign exchange earnings for Bangladesh. Under the perception of unfair or biased elections, restrictions may be imposed by the US and European Union, posing a challenge for foreign currency earnings of Bangladesh, as these countries imports significant readymade garments from Bangladesh.
- Rising inflation as well as living cost triggered protests in Bangla-

desh, along with diminishing dollar reserves due to soaring crude oil prices, which in turn weakened local currency (Bangladeshi Taka). Anti-incumbency due to such issues may further lead to civil unrest.

- Interestingly, India-Bangladesh relations improved at a faster pace after the incumbent PM Sheikh Hasina assumed power.

### India-Bangladesh Relations

India and Bangladesh shares a unique account of dynamic relations. Also, India has strategic interests in Bangladesh.

#### Culture

- Bangladesh is closely linked to India because it shares culture and ethnicity with the Indian state of West Bengal.
- The language of Bangladesh is slightly varied dialect of Bengali (of West Bengal) and it acts as a bridge between Eastern India, North Eastern India and Bangladesh.

#### India-Bangladesh Trade & Economy

- Bangladesh is India's sixth largest trading partner. Bilateral trade increased from \$ 2.4 billion in 2009 to \$ 10.8 billion in 2020-21.
- Additionally, Bangladesh is dependent on imports of critical industrial raw materials from India.
- India's connectivity infra projects with ASEAN and Bangladesh will propel the economic growth of Bangladesh too.
- The recently inaugurated Agartala-Akhaura project will cut down the travel time between Agartala and Kolkata. The project is expected to boost tourism, trade, and people-to-people exchanges between the two countries.
- Bilateral trade will get boosted after Bangladesh allowed India to use the Mongla and Chittagong ports (in Bangladesh).
- Trade and economic growth can further boost in Bangladesh because it is considering to join the India-Myanmar-Thailand highway project.

#### Strategic Interests

- Bangladesh is strategically located. It is the centre of geopolitical

tug-of-war specifically between India and China.

- Bangladesh is India's crucial ally for balancing China's growing regional economic and diplomatic influence, such as BRI initiative.

#### China-Bangladesh

- China is Bangladesh's largest trading partner with annual trade of more than \$ 25 billion.
- Also, Bangladesh is highly interested in BRI initiative of China after inauguration of Padma Rail Link Bridge.

#### Russia and Bangladesh

- Russia is financing a mega project, the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant (2,400-megawatt capacity), in Bangladesh.

#### Energy

- India exports 1,160 MW of electricity to Bangladesh.
- India is financing Maitree Super Thermal Power Project (STPP) through the Indian Concessional Financing Scheme loan (by EXIM Bank of India) in Khulna, Bangladesh.

#### Water Cooperation

- MoU signed regarding the distribution of the waters of the Feni River (originating in Tripura).
- Both countries are interested for interim agreement on sharing waters of 6 rivers—Manu, Mahuri, Khowai, Gomti, Dharla and Dudhkumar.
- MoU was signed for the withdrawal of water by both the countries from the Border River 'Kushiyara' during dry season.

### SC on Aligarh Muslim University's Minority Character

#### Context

SC is hearing a series of petitions related to the minority status of Aligarh Muslim University.

#### Relevance

**Prelims** : About the provisions related to Minorities

**Mains** : GS PAPER-II :

- Indian Constitution—historical underpinnings, evolution, features, amendments, significant provisions and basic structure.
- Government Policies & Interventions.

A seven-judge Bench of the Supreme Court started hearing the matter pertaining to Aligarh Muslim University's minority character. The legal dispute over AMU's minority status dates back to 1967 when the Supreme Court (in S. Azeez Basha and another versus Union of India), led by then Chief Justice of India K.N. Wanchoo, was reviewing changes made in 1951 and 1965 to the AMU Act of 1920. These amendments affected how the university was run. The 1920 Act said that the Governor General of India would be the head of the University. But in 1951, they changed it to replace 'Lord Rector' with 'Visitor,' and this Visitor would be the President of India. Further, a provision that said only Muslims could be part of the University Court was removed, allowing non-Muslims to join. Additionally, the amendments reduced the authority of the University Court and increased the powers of the Executive Council of AMU. As a result, the Court essentially became a body appointed by the 'Visitor'.

These alterations in the AMU's structure faced a legal challenge in the Supreme Court. The petitioners argued primarily on the grounds that Muslims established AMU and, therefore, had the right to manage it. It was while considering the challenge to these amendments that the top court held on October 20, 1967, that AMU was neither established nor administered by the Muslim minority.

#### About Aligarh Muslim University

AMU's origins can be traced back to the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental (MOA) College, established by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan in 1875 to help Muslims overcome educational backwardness and prepare for government services. In 1920, the institution was conferred university status and all assets of MOA College were transferred to it.

The India of the 19th century was characterised by a tectonic shift in the religious and social structure of the country, as reformers like Raja Rammohan Roy, Dayanand Saraswati, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and others endeavoured to overhaul the extant unjust systems. Among Hindus, this led to the Hindu Renaissance. And among Muslims, this produced the Aligarh Movement,

which sought to reform the Muslim community and bring about changes in the educational, social and political aspects of their lives.

After the British decided to reduce the usage of Persian in the functions of the state, Sir Syed felt that the salvation of the Muslims lay in the adoption of English and Western education.

Sir Syed himself was a product of the Mughal aristocracy, but his time in British service had made him cognisant of the importance of looking beyond traditional Islamic education. He began his quest by founding schools at Moradabad (1858) and Ghazipur (1863).

A Scientific Society was established in 1864 to translate Western knowledge into local languages and to instil a scientific temper among the people. Sir Syed also established the Muhammedan Civil Service Fund Association to sponsor travel of Muslims to London to take the ICS exam.

He dreamed of creating an educational institution along the lines of Oxford and Cambridge universities. Hence, Despite the various obstacles, Sir Syed finally succeeded in establishing MAO College in 1877.

### About Minority Character of an Educational Institution

Article 30(1) of the Constitution empowers all religious and linguistic minorities to establish and administer educational institutions. This provision reinforces the Union government's commitment to foster growth and development of minority communities by guaranteeing that it will not discriminate in giving aid on the basis of their being 'minority' institutions.

### Arguments Put by the Government

The AMU was not and cannot be a university of any particular religion or religious denomination. It said a university declared as an institution of national importance cannot be a minority institution.

### Legal Dispute Over Aligarh Muslim University so far

#### ● In 1981 :

- The SC ruling triggered nationwide protests from Muslims. In response, political authorities yielded

in 1981 and introduced an amendment to the AMU Act, explicitly affirming its minority status.

- The amendment introduced Section 2(1) and Subsection 5(2)(c), which stated that the university was 'an educational institution of their choice established by the Muslims of India' and 'subsequently incorporated' as the AMU.

#### ● In 2005 :

- The AMU implemented a reservation policy, reserving 50% of seats in postgraduate medical courses for Muslim candidates. This was challenged in the Allahabad High Court, which, in the same year, overturned the reservation and nullified the 1981 Act.

- The court reasoned that the AMU could not maintain an exclusive reservation because, according to the Supreme Court's verdict in the S. Azeez Basha case, it did not qualify as a minority institution.

- Subsequently, in 2006, a set of eight petitions, including one from the Union government, contested the High Court's decision before the Supreme Court.

#### ● In 2016 :

- The government informed the SC that it was withdrawing the appeal filed by the government, saying, "as the executive government at the Centre, we can't be seen as setting up a minority institution in a secular state."

#### ● In 2019 :

- On February 12, 2019, a three-judge Bench presided by the then CJI Ranjan Gogoi referred the matter to a seven-judge Bench.

#### ● In 2024 :

- Now, the seven-judge Bench, comprising Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud, has started hearing the case.

The SC is considering a reference on questions about the indices for treating an educational institution as a minority educational institution. Being "established by a person(s)

belonging to a religious or linguistic minority or its being administered by a person(s) belonging to a religious or linguistic minority" is one of the reasons an institution could be considered a minority educational institution before the Constitution Bench.

*Continued from Page 57*

- New reform areas identified for the states include Institutional support for entrepreneurship and innovation; equitable access to resources, funding and market incubation; mentorship support; enabling capacity building; future readiness; and focus on sustainability.

States Start-up Ranking Framework 2022 Results	
Category A States (Population more than 1 crore)	
Performance	States
Best Performer	Gujarat
	Karnataka
	Kerala
	Tamil Nadu
Top Performer	Maharashtra
	Odisha
	Punjab
	Rajasthan
Leader	Telangana
	Andhra Pradesh
	Assam
	Madhya Pradesh
	Uttar Pradesh
Aspiring leader	Uttarakhand
	Bihar
Emerging Ecosystems	Haryana
	Chhattisgarh
	Delhi
	Jammu & Kashmir
Category B States (Population less than 1 crore)	
Performance	States
Best Performer	Himachal Pradesh
Top Performer	Arunachal Pradesh
	Meghalaya
Leader	Goa
	Manipur
	Tripura
Aspiring Leader	Andaman and Nicobar Islands
	Na aland
	Chandigarh
Emerging Ecosystems	Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu
	Ladakh
	Mizoram
	Puducherry
	Sikkim

## “Positive outlook, perseverance and target-oriented hard work are the secrets of my success.”

Nidhi Goyal

Topper—Civil Services Exam., 2022 (202nd Rank)

‘Pratiyogita Darpan’ arranged an exclusive interview with Ms. Nidhi Goyal who has been selected in Civil Services Examination. She deserves high admiration and our heartiest congratulations on her glorious success. This important, thought-provoking and highly inspiring interview is being presented here in its original form.

**PD**—Achieving top slot in the coveted Civil Services Examination is no small feat; accept our heartiest congratulations on your splendid success.

**Ms. Nidhi**—Thank you so much

**PD**—‘Success is sweet’ were you confident of your success with top rank and how did you react to this news?

**Ms. Nidhi**—It was a surreal feeling but as people say UPSC is unpredictable so I was really not so sure of getting through.

**PD**—Today, IAS Toppers are icons and the top rankers are admired by all for their accomplishment. Before your success, what was your opinion about these toppers?

**Ms. Nidhi**—Since this journey is long and at times demotivating, I used to find some motivation in the success stories of toppers, they helped me maintain my perseverance.

**PD**—Any particular success story or any motivation that influenced your career journey to this consequence?

**Ms. Nidhi**—It is difficult to pinpoint any one success story, every story teaches you something.

**PD**—Were you preparing for other career opportunities as well while preparing for your ultimate goal?

**Ms. Nidhi**—I was not preparing for anything else but looking at how more unpredictable it is becoming, now. I also feel that one should have some backup plan

**PD**—In how many attempts have you achieved this success?

**Ms. Nidhi**—In my third attempt, I got selected for Indian Defence

Accounts Service based on CSE 2021. This was my 4th attempt, I got AIR 202 and have been selected for IRS this time.



“Genius is one per cent inspiration and ninety per cent perspiration.”

—Nidhi Goyal

**PD**—You achieved the desired success in this attempt; how do you visualize your previous attempts?

**Ms. Nidhi**—They were mixture of some mistakes and learning process.

**PD**—How were you able to stick to your study-schedules and keep your motivation high over such a long period of time?

**Ms. Nidhi**—It would be unrealistic to say that one can be motivated 365 days of the year. At times you feel hopeless and nothing seems to be working but at this time you should think why you started this preparation. It will help you to come out of that phase but just keep going.

**PD**—While making final choice for optional subject, what's important and what's not?

**Ms. Nidhi**—Two factors – your familiarity with the subject (may be your graduation subject) and your interest (whether you can study it for long period of time)

**PD**—What was your Optional Subject and give the basis of selecting the optional subject?

**Ms. Nidhi**—My optional subject was Commerce and accountancy; being my graduation subject, it was my first choice and picked it up as optional subject for Main Examination.

**PD**—What preference in services have you opted for and any particular reason for that priority?

**Ms. Nidhi**—IAS, IRS (IT), IRS (C&IT). Preference was given based on the work profile and my assessment of my interests and abilities.

**PD**—While the changing economic environment offers immense lucrative career opportunities in various sectors, still what kept you motivated towards Civil Services?

**Ms. Nidhi**—Surely now private sector offers immense career growth opportunities but I liked civil services.

**PD**—Can you recall the exact moment when you realized the importance of Civil Services? Finally, at what point of time did you make up your mind to make career in ‘Civil Services’?

**Ms. Nidhi**—When I was in the third year of my graduation, I decided to go for career in Civil Services.

**PD**—Was CSE your planned decision or your parents’ wish?

**Ms. Nidhi**—It was my own decision after assessing different career choices available.

**PD**—'Time Management' is a key factor; how did you manage things ?

**Ms. Nidhi**—Time Management in exam comes with practice only. One needs to practice mock-tests both for Prelims and Mains with an aim to complete them in given time-frame.

### Bio-Data

**Name**—Nidhi Goyal

**Father's Name**—Mr. Vishnu Goyal

**Mother's Name**—Mrs. Jyoti Goyal

**Educational Qualifications**—

**10th**—CBSE (10 CGPA)

**12th**—CBSE, (95-8%)

**B.Com. (H)**—Daulatram College Delhi University (9-054 CGPA)

**Previous Selections**—CSE 2021 got selected in IDAS.

**PD**—The first step is the most difficult; from where did you get the right advice ?

**Ms. Nidhi**—In today's time so much advice and tips are available on internet. Toppers talks and blogs can be a good source, take those points which are common in every topper strategy and further you reorient according to your own strengths and weaknesses.

**PD**—How did you plan your endeavor ? Were you concerned about the Cut-offs at each stage of the examination ?

**Ms. Nidhi**—Cut off is most relevant for Prelims since there is less time to prepare for mains if one waits till result. But now Prelims answer keys are becoming tricky so one should start preparing for mains without getting concerned with cut offs.

**PD**—Did you keep in mind some time-frame for the examination preparation and number of attempts ?

**Ms. Nidhi**—Everyone starts with a thought of 1 or 2 attempts but this exam sometimes takes a longer time.

**PD**—Did you relied upon the photocopies of the study material of some of the leading coaching institutes or it was based on standard textbooks ?

**Ms. Nidhi**—Mix of both.

**PD**—What is your opinion regarding the current affairs preparation. Were you fascinated by the stuff churned out from various institutes ?

**Ms. Nidhi**—Monthly magazines are helpful but they can't be the substitute newspaper which is a primary source for current affairs.

**PD**—What was your approach towards Paper I (General Studies) and Paper II (Aptitude Test) during Preliminary Examination preparation ? How much time and effort did you divide for each ?

**Ms. Nidhi**—For *GS Paper I* (General Studies) : Major preparation was for this paper. Going through all standard text books and revising them multiple times and doing a lot of mock test papers (atleast 40) would be most useful for it

For *GS Paper II* (Aptitude Test) : I didn't do anything much for this, just solved Previous Years' Questions, but looking at the rising difficulty level one should prepare it well using online sources and doing test papers.

**PD**—When we look at the Prelims cut-off, it gives an indication that it is falling each passing year; in your opinion what is wrong with Preparation style that candidates are finding it difficult to score high marks in Prelims ?

**Ms. Nidhi**—UPSC is changing its pattern and sometimes questions are little vague so that could be the reason for falling cut off.

**PD**—How did you manage to tackle the 'Negative Marking' in Prelims ?

**Ms. Nidhi**—It comes with practice of test papers to find your safe range of questions where negative marking can be managed.

**PD**—What shift did you adopt in your strategy for Main Examination (Written) ?

**Ms. Nidhi**—One should focus on answer writing (both on structure and content part).

It comes with practice of questions especially PYQs and focus should be on width of content more than depth.

**PD**—Was there any special effort for effective preparation for Essay Paper ?

**Ms. Nidhi**—Since marks vary a lot in Essay paper so one should prepare effectively for essay.

**PD**—How did you prepare yourself for Interview (Personality Test) ?

**Ms. Nidhi**—Personality test preparation revolves mostly around your DAF. In my prior attempt and this attempt, I faced interview Board of R.N. Chaubey sir and Manoj Soni sir.

This time, it lasted for about 30 minutes and questions were mostly around my commerce background.

### Personal Qualities

**Strong Points**—Positive outlook toward things.

**Weak Points**—Procrastination.

**Hobbies**—Reading novels and watching movies.

**PD**—In your opinion at which Educational Level should one start preparing for Civil Services and what should be the minimum period of time required to prepare ?

**Ms. Nidhi**—One can start preparing in third year of graduation and it will require at least 1 year to prepare for it

**PD**—What is the importance of medium of examination for exams like CSE ?

**Ms. Nidhi**—Any language in which you can express yourself well and you can find good content.

**PD**—Does the educational, financial and demographic status of the family of an aspirant have any impact on the preparation ?

**Ms. Nidhi**—It may ease your preparation a bit but ultimate result depends on your own hard work.

**PD**—What is the secret of your success ?

**Ms. Nidhi**—Perseverance, patience and positive outlook.

**PD**—To whom would you like to give the credit for your success ?

**Ms. Nidhi**—My parents.

**PD**—Any suggestion/advice you would like to give to the future aspirants.

**Ms. Nidhi**—Start preparation with a certain reason in your mind not just because of parents wish or someone else is doing it.

**PD**—Thank you very much and wishing you all the best for your future endeavours.

Florian

**“Discipline, consistency, planned approach and dedicated hard work are the secrets of my success.”**

**Karishma Sehdev**

**Topper—Uttar Pradesh Judicial Services Exam., 2022 (61st Rank)**

‘Pratiyogita Darpan’ arranged an exclusive interview with Ms. Karishma Sehdev who has been selected in Uttar Pradesh Judicial Services Exam., 2022. She deserves high admiration and our heartiest congratulations on her glorious achievement. This important, thought-provoking and highly inspiring interview is being presented here in its original form.

**PD**—Achieving top slot in the Judicial Services examination is no small feat; accept our heartiest congratulations on your splendid success.

**Ms. Karishma**—Thank you so much. I am thankful to get this opportunity to share my experiences.

**PD**—Were you confident of your success in this examination and how did you react to this news?

**Ms. Karishma**—I was confident that definitely I would clear this exam. I was elated when I saw my name in the merit list. I could not control tears in my eyes. There was reduction of memories in my mind. My hard work of four years had finally paid off.

**PD**—In how many attempts have you achieved this success?

**Ms. Karishma**—I had previously appeared for Bihar Judiciary (Mains), Haryana, JS (Mains) and MPJS (Mains). It was my first attempt for U.P. Judicial Services. Fortunately, I was able to succeed.

**PD**—How did you manage to tackle the ‘Negative Marking’ in Prelims?

**Ms. Karishma**—Attempt many mock papers for prelims so that you can analyse well the negative marking process. You only need to attempt the question you are fully sure of. For the doubtful questions, apply the elimination method. If the questions are totally unfamiliar, leave the questions I followed the above process.

**PD**—You achieved the desired success in this attempt; how do you visualize your previous attempts?

**Ms. Karishma**—The journey throughout the preparation is sometimes not enjoyable. When I had to

face failures in previous mains. I too had self-doubt, but with the support of my near ones, I could grow out of and started thinking positively that we should learn from our mistakes.



Nature loves sweat, weariness and self-sacrifice.

—Karishma Sehdev

**PD**—What shift did you adopt in your strategy for Mains (Written)?

**Ms. Karishma**—I had always focussed on answer writing practice. I used to dedicate daily two hours an answer writing. I analysed the previous years’ question papers and made a structure of almost all important topics. Divide your hours of study and give necessary importance to all papers. Answers should be presentable. Maintain good handwriting. I did as above.

**PD**—‘Time Management’ is a key factor while making preparations as well as in writing examination papers, be it Prelims or Main Examination. How did you manage things?

**Ms. Karishma**—Planned study hours is the most important factor. For prelims. I used to attempt daily mock papers. In mains, it was regular

writing practice in a time bound manner that I was able to manage the time during my preparations.

**PD**—How did you prepare yourself for Interview? When and which Board did you face? How did your interview go on, how much time it lasted and what were the questions asked during the Interview?

**Ms. Karishma**—There is no specific preparation for interview. I used to read the newspapers daily, read all previous 6 months Pratiyogita Darpan Magazine to keep in balance my current affairs.

My interview went good. It lasted for 15 minutes. I was asked questions related to TPA, Arbitration Act, CrPC, Law of Evidence and Current Affairs.

**PD**—Were you preparing for other career opportunities as well while preparing for your ultimate goal *i.e.*, Career in Judicial Services?

**Ms. Karishma**—But my ultimate goal was to clear judicial services. There was no plan B in my mind.

### Bio-Data

**Name**—Karishma Sehdev

**Father’s Name**—Shri Anil Sehdev

**Mother’s Name**—Mrs. Anjali Sehdev

**Date of Birth**—8-12-1995

**Educational Qualifications**—

**10th**—CBSE, Mother Divine Public School, Delhi (8-6 CGPA)

**12th**—CBSE, Mother Divine Public School, Delhi (85%)

**B.A./L-L.B.**—CPJ College, School of Law, Narela, Affiliated to GGSIPU (72-67%)

**L-LM**—USLLS, GGSIPU, Dwarka

*Continued on Page 97*

## “Continuity in devoted efforts and target-oriented deep study are the secrets of my success.”

Arpit Tyagi

Topper—Uttar Pradesh Judicial Services Exam., 2022 (70th Rank)

‘Pratiyogita Darpan’ arranged an exclusive interview with Shri Arpit Tyagi who has been selected in Uttar Pradesh Judicial Services Exam., 2022. He deserves high admiration and our heartiest congratulations on his glorious achievement. This important, thought-provoking and highly inspiring interview is being presented here in its original form.

**PD**—Achieving top slot in the Judicial Service Examination is no small feat; accept our heartiest congratulations on your splendid success.

**Shri Arpit**—Thank you very much.

**PD**—Were you confident of your success in this examination and how did you react to this news?

**Shri Arpit**—My mains and interview both went well; so I was optimistic about my result.

Yes, I was happy to witness the sense of satisfaction in my parents’ eyes, particularly that of my mother.

**PD**—In how many attempts have you achieved this success?

**Shri Arpit**—This was my first attempt of UP Judiciary.

**PD**—You must have read Judiciary Toppers’ interviews in newspapers/magazines; what inspired you the most? Any particular success story which influenced your journey to this result?

**Shri Arpit**—Yes, I did read toppers’ interviews. I was inspired by the fact that, despite all odds, they kept on doing hard work and ultimately achieved their desired goal. Sorry, I can’t recollect any particular success story.

**PD**—How did you manage to tackle the ‘Negative Marking’ in Prelims?

**Shri Arpit**—Firstly, I used to mark only those questions in which I was sure; thereafter in doubtful questions, I would eliminate incorrect answers keeping in mind the cutoff and number of seats in that examination.

**PD**—The first step is the most difficult; how to prepare? What to read? How much to read? Many

such questions come to your mind when you really get serious about Judicial Services Examination? From where did you get the right advice?



“Justice must not only be done, it must be seen to be believed.”

—Arpit Tyagi

**Shri Arpit**—Honestly speaking, my father was my first law teacher as he is himself in Judiciary. So I did not face difficulty as such, but one must focus on PYQ of respective states both for preliminary and mains examination. Now, there are various coaching classes available both online and offline. So one can choose (if one can afford) or else read standard text books of each subject as I did.

**PD**—What shift did you adopt in your strategy for Mains (Written)?

**Shri Arpit**—I would say that one strait jacket solution would be to write as much as possible and get it checked by your teachers or seniors, as well as solve as many Previous Years’ Questions (PYQ).

**PD**—Was there any special effort for effective preparation for Essay Paper? Which topic did you pick up this time and why did you choose this particular topic?

**Shri Arpit**—For Essay I divided them in to various topics like Science & Tech, Women empowerment, Nature, Spirituality, latest topics etc and jotted points from various newspaper, essay books, etc. This time, I picked essay on National Education Policy since I knew all pro and cons of it.

**PD**—‘Time Management’ is a key factor while making preparations as well as in writing examination papers, be it Prelims or Main Examination. How did you manage things?

**Shri Arpit**—Frankly speaking, I did not face issue of lack of time as such because I am a fast writer but one must beforehand calculate the amount of time to be dedicated to particular question according to its marks.

**PD**—How did you prepare yourself for Interview? When and which Board did you face? How did your interview go on, how much time did it last and what were the questions asked during the Interview?

**Shri Arpit**—Basically, in interview, Hon’ble members of Board will check your personality and not knowledge. They want to check your honesty, patience and integrity. For interview, one must start speaking and interacting with others or yourself before a mirror or just record yourself over phone so that you can communicate your opinion fluently. My interview took place on very 1st day itself but I do not know the name of Hon’ble Justice in my Board. My Interview went quite cordial and lasted for half an hour. They asked on various topics like UCC, Practical questions on Constitution, CrPC, Evidence Act.



## Bio-Data

**Name**—Arpit Tyagi

**Father's Name**—Shri Pramod Kumar

**Mother's Name**—Mrs. Pinki Tyagi

**Date of Birth**—February 13, 1997

**Educational Qualifications**—

**10th**—2011, ICSE, St. Francis College (LKO) (80-42%)

**12th**—2013, ISC, City Montessori School (LKO) (95-32%)

**B.Sc.**—2013-2016, University of Delhi, Kirorimal College (63-4%)

**L.L.B.**—2016-2019, University of Delhi, C.L.C. (Faculty of Law), D.U. (59-63%)

**L-L.M.**—2022, NIMS University, (71%)

**PD**—Were you preparing for other career opportunities as well while preparing for your ultimate goal *i.e.*, Judicial Services ?

**Shri Arpit**—No, from very beginning I was determined to serve public through Judiciary.

**PD**—While the changing economic environment offers immense lucrative career opportunities in various sectors, still what kept you motivated towards Judicial Services ?

**Shri Arpit**—Although economic consideration is an important aspect in today's world but it has never been a sole criteria on for me. I always looked it as a noble profession which has the potential to change life of an individual by rendering him justice with-in bounds of law. It is the judiciary that can keep checks and balances over different organs of the state so as to protect liberty of an individual. Even in our Dharma-shastra Justice is equivalent to truth which is as pious as Lord Shiva himself.

**PD**—In your opinion at which Educational Level should one start preparing for Judicial Services and what should be the minimum period of time required to prepare ?

**Shri Arpit**—Sincerely speaking, one must start preparing from 1st day of your LLB as that would help you in the end because it is not possible for an average student to prepare all subjects within a span of 1 year. I feel

that 2 years would be sufficient generally to prepare for this examination.

**PD**—What is the importance of medium of examination for exams like Judicial Service Examination ?

**Shri Arpit**—Usually, Northern states, in which Hindi is prevalent would, ask for two languages *i.e.* English and Hindi in language paper. Someone preparing for judiciary ought to have good command over both. In the state of UP you have option either to write papers in Hindi or English.

**PD**—Can you recall the exact moment when you realized the importance of Judicial Services ?

**Shri Arpit**—When I was in last year of my B.Sc.(H) Physics, I made up my mind to dwell in the field of law as I understood the importance of law in any society.

## Personal Qualities

**Favourite Person**—Apart from my father, it is Swami Vivekananda, Hon'ble CJI Dr. D.Y. Chandrachud.

**Strong Points**—My perseverance.

**Weak Points**—I am emotional.

**Hobbies**—Running, cycling, Trekking and reading autobiographies.

**PD**—Finally, at what point of time did you make up your mind to make career in 'Judicial Services' ?

**Shri Arpit**—I started preparing for judicial service from the 1st year of L-L.B.

**PD**—Did you keep in mind some time-frame for the examination preparation and number of attempts ?

**Shri Arpit**—Yes, I decided that I would give 3 attempts maximum wholeheartedly and would invest 3 to 4 years maximum.

**PD**—Was JSE your planned decision or your parents' wish ?

**Shri Arpit**—It was my decision supported by my parents.

**PD**—Does the educational, financial and demographic status of the family of an aspirant have any impact on the preparation ?

**Shri Arpit**—This is the age of digitilisation where every material is accessible and affordable at the click of a button. So I don't feel these

factors would play a very pivotal role. These are secondary, the primary concern should be to achieve our desired goal to serve the humanity.

**PD**—In your opinion, what role do the Competition Magazines play when you are preparing for an examination like Judicial Services Examination ?

**Shri Arpit**—Competition magazines, like Pratiyogita Darpan, plays a prominent role particularly while preparing current affairs with respect to National and International affairs.

**PD**—How do you find Pratiyogita Darpan ? Do you find it close to your expectations ?

**Shri Arpit**—As far as judicial service examination is concerned, I found it quite apt for preparing current affairs and understanding legal developments in and around the country.

**PD**—As a reader of PD, do you read Judicial Service Preparation related articles published in it and did you find these constructive ?

**Shri Arpit**—Yes, I do found legal articles that explained new legal developments very briefly and accurately. In fact, some facts and case laws in those articles were incorporated in my mains answers.

**PD**—What is the secret of your success ?

**Shri Arpit**—Positive attitude, Perseverance, writing practice and patiently working towards my goal.

**PD**—To whom would you like to give the credit for your success ?

**Shri Arpit**—Obviously, Almighty God, my Parents, teachers like Sushil Sharma sir, Adnan sir in equal measure.

**PD**—Any suggestion/advice you would like to give to the future aspirants.

**Shri Arpit**—Never flee away from failures, they are inevitable. Take them as a learning lesson to correct your approach and write more as much as you can for your mains.

**PD**—Thank you very much and wishing you all the best for your future endeavours.

Pratiyogita

# UPSC CSE 2024 : Success Requires Genuine Hard Work and Honest Efforts

—Atul Kapoor

Embarking on career journey educated and aspiring youth is fantasized by various career options available; as their career idea gets crystallized, with interest and capacities they attempt to translate career dreams into reality.

As hunt for career exploration begins, you have array of options available and from there you shortlist some jobs as career options.

Before you commit yourself for any career-choice, you need to do little research and accordingly set time deadlines and define outcome.

## Choosing the Right Profession from Diverse Career Possibilities

As a beginner, when one thinks about the career choices, almost all career options available fascinates and finalizing career goal becomes little confusing. Besides, diverse career possibilities and current job trends also impact the choice finally educated and aspiring youth make.

Before you make opinion about a particular career preference, you should look for range of careers that match up your skills and interest. While putting together all your plans, a particular field that fascinates you to work and spend whole life can become your career goal.

As the career idea gets crystallized, with curiosity and capacities one attempts to translate career decisions into reality.

While making final choice, you should be fully convinced that career in 'Civil Services' is the best suited for you.

## Explore the Most Suitable Option as Your 'Career Choice'

Broadly speaking, dreaming of a career in 'Civil services' mesmerize majority of the aspiring youth and the lure of post of Indian Administrative Services (IAS) really captivates their mind-space. Rather than limiting your future, tryst with Civil Services Examination may help you

discover career possibilities that you wouldn't have thought of otherwise.

It is not about what you do to become what you want, it is how passionately you follow your dreams and give it all that it requires and become genuinely deserving. Once you have preferred 'Civil Services' as career goal, you will develop feeling of commitment to do entirety that it necessitates and need to think strategically about the steps to accomplish your goal.

As it is said, "Goals setting is an intense process beyond just imagining, reaching somewhere or achieving something."

If you don't set Goals; your efforts will be without direction and it may take a long time before you really know the path you traverse will take you to the desired destination or not.

Understanding and accomplishing your career goal will be a lot easier if you create a career plan.

The notification for UPSC Civil Services Examination 2024 is round the corner and majority of candidates eyeing this opportunity must be serious about their plans. The notification is expected on 14th February, 2024 and the last date for filling the application is 5th March, 2024. The Prelims 2024 is scheduled for 26th May, 2024.

## Should I Think about 'IAS' as Career Goal ?

With dream to be a part of nation's growth, the educated and aspiring youth are alluding to be in obsession with the country's perceived to be the toughest examination that gives them scope to make career in the coveted Indian Administrative Service and many other top posts and services for which the 'Civil Services Examination' is conducted every year by UPSC.

Civil Services Examination is an opportunity for candidates to follow their dreams as most of the youngsters have aspirations and grow with

an ultimate goal to become 'Civil Servants'.

Among host of services and posts for which UPSC conducts Civil Services Examination every year IAS is top-of-mind career choice and majority of candidates put it uppermost in priority list.

The opportunity knocks the doors for these talented youngsters who dream for career in Civil Services and as the process begins with Civil Services Examination conducted every year by Union Public Service Commission (UPSC), the journey starts for a destination that is quite big.

## A Huge Craze

The Civil Services Examination is huge and the success-rate here is so less that it leaves many candidates astonished. The examination process is such that many candidates go on to grab top ranks in the first encounter; whereas for many, attempts after attempt, it is difficult to map the reasons for unpleasant results.

Over the years, UPSC has attracted a reputation for causing heart break as many candidates look around searching cause and occasionally, disagree with the outcome. The bright part is that every year many talented youngsters achieve success by showing grit and resolution and as I mentioned, some of them make it to the merit-list in very first attempt.

No denial. It is tough; but all the arguments that Civil Services examination is beyond reach of common aspirants are not genuine. After all there is something special that attracts youngsters in such a large number who dream to have career in 'IAS'.

As you initiate Civil Services Examination preparation, you are taking some steps that may eventually take you to the top. The destination that you have set for yourself – a career in 'Civil Services' is big and require diligent efforts to get hold of it.

Perceived to be the toughest and demanding, Civil Service Examination involves grueling exam-plan that requires serious planning and long-term approach to prepare effectively.

### **While Commencing IAS Preparation, First Speak up to Yourself**

Be it first attempt or next, candidates commence preparation with hope and take some concrete steps with a view that eventually these take them to their dream destination.

You have to embrace it as opportunity; no doubt, it is challenging, but no big accomplishment can be realized without facing obstacles and overcoming challenges.

It is not as simple as we put it here; the journey includes some diligent efforts one puts in during long preparation that comprise of gaining knowledge, being well aware of the things around, learning newer things and most important – understanding the intricacies involved.

If you don't speak your mind and converse with yourself by putting some essential questions while commencing preparation for Civil Services Examination, you will find it difficult to manage preparation for such a fierce competition.

Time and again, tell yourself why you started the journey in the first place and keeping your eyes on the purpose will always push you ahead.

Civil Services Examination is a big challenge that will test your mettle; so, be acquainted with the exam-plan, that will keep you moving in right direction and once successful, opportunities it offers.

The moment you do this exercise, you will initiate a process that has power to transform your life.

### **IAS Exam : 'Anybody can Achieve Anything'**

Yes, every year many candidates among you who are open, curious and eager to learn newer things, prove it right and accomplish the goals by achieving big success. It is a regular phenomenon and with the final result, every year, we get a glimpse of new stars who are rewarded for their genuine hard work and honest efforts.

During the journey, they are not afraid of making errors, taking missteps, asking numerous questions and seek guidance and advice from friends, seniors, experts and even successful candidates and take some clues from their experience and advice. To overcome the challenges and difficulties, they look for sincere feedback that brings them back on the right path.

A quote that I always tell UPSC-CSE aspirants, "Your journey is not the same as mine, and my journey is not yours, but if you meet me on a certain path, may we encourage each other." True state of affairs for youngsters having big dreams in mind and how beautifully it sums up the set-up, where despite diverse backgrounds candidates help each other and grow.

It is time to get inspired and for those who are going to face Civil Services Examination in near future by availing first attempt, they should pick the first lesson : First, try to change your attitude and think and act like a positive person with single aim of achieving success here.

And for those who could not succeed in last attempt/attempts, for them as well, it is a new beginning.

It is the time to take blessings of elders, teachers and senior candidates and pray god to get the required strength and focus so that you may emerge winner in the end.

On the strong plinth of basics, you have to put up a diligent effort with intense focus on adding knowledge and awareness, revising and bringing information up to date and making efforts to improve expression and presentation.

To get useful insights on IAS preparation you can watch my videos on YouTube also. Besides, I am sharing lots of information about Civil Services Exam preparation on [www.iasspassion.com](http://www.iasspassion.com) where I contribute regularly. You can follow me on Twitter handle @atulkpr to be acquainted with IAS Exam or to get your queries solved.

My aim and endeavour has always been to understand the emerging needs and try to address them to the best of my knowledge. So, you may connect with me through e-mail at [atul@pdgroup.in](mailto:atul@pdgroup.in) to share suggestions, comments or queries, if any.

### **Tips for an Effective Preparation**

- **Understand the exam pattern :** Scheme of examination and significance of each stage Preliminary Examination, Main Examination and Interview.
- **Read and re-read the complete syllabus :** Read and remember the syllabus, constituents, topics and focus on common themes both in Prelims & Mains syllabus.
- **Work out a strategy and study-plan :** A well planned strategy will make things manageable. Study-plan show be clear and detailed this will help you in time management.
- **Prepare seriously :** Preparation for Civil Services Examination begins much before you decide to appear in the exam. Now, with notification you have to study regularly, revise what you read and practice a lot.
- **Maintain consistency in preparation.**
- **Build conceptual clarity with NCERT Books :** For a solid foundation, NCERT Books are the best resource.
- **Be an avid reader of newspaper :** To stay updated, newspaper reading is must. Be abreast with the latest in current affairs, national and international news, happenings and events. What you read in newspaper, try to relate the news with the basic concepts that you read.
- **Understand the examiners' expectations with PYQs :** Analyze and understand the important areas with previous years' questions. Identify and spot the trend, practice will help you in managing time as well.
- **Stay motivated :** It is a long journey and requires consistent efforts.
- **Stay optimistic :** Being positive you will be able to achieve what you planned.
- **Stay Fit :** For an effective preparation your health – physical as well as mental are of prime importance. Take adequate sleep, keep some time for relaxation in between long study spells, and keep a balance with family life as well.

*Continued on Page 114*

Government of India's think tank NITI Aayog claims in a discussion paper titled 'Multidimensional Poverty in India since 2005-06' that 248.2 million people of India have come out of poverty between 2013-14 and 2022-23. The paper estimated that the share of the multidimensional poor in India's population declined sharply to 11.28 per cent in 2022-23 from 29.17 per cent in 2013-14. In 2019-21, it stood at 14.96 per cent.

The paper also showed that the pace of decline in poverty headcount ratio using the exponential method was much faster between 2015-16 and 2019-21 (10.66 per cent annual rate of decline) compared with the 2005-06 to 2015-16 period (7.69 per cent annual rate of decline). The analysis is based on 12 indicators spread over the three broad categories : health, education and standard of living.

### **National Multidimensional Poverty Index**

The Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) has been developed by Sabina Alkire and James Foster. It was adopted by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in their Human Development Report, 2010. It captures overlapping deprivations in health, education and living standards.

NITI Aayog in collaboration with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) developed the National Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) that offers a multidimensional perspective on poverty. It complements income poverty measurements because it measures and compares deprivations directly. The National MPI is a robust, and nuanced public policy tool that can be used monitor multidimensional poverty at the national, state, and district levels in India.

India's National MPI is a contribution towards measuring progress for target 1.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that aims to

reduce "at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions" by 2030.

The National Multidimensional Poverty Index is a Progress Review 2023, provides multidimensional poverty estimates for India's 36 States & Union Territories, along with 707 administrative districts across 12 indicators of the national MPI. These estimates have been computed using data from the 5th round of the NFHS (NFHS-5) conducted in 2019-21. It also presents the changes in multidimensional poverty between the survey periods of NFHS-4 (2015-16) and NFHS-5 (2019-21). It not only tells us how many are poor, that is the headcount ratio, but also gives us insights into how poor are the poor, that is the intensity of poverty, by following a holistic approach to poverty measurement.

### **Methodology**

The dual-cutoff approach of the Alkire-Foster (AF) methodology the one used in the Global MPI Report was considered suitable for the national context. MPI captures broad qualitative aspects of people's life across 3 dimensions : Health, Education, and Standard of living. The national MPI largely follows the global methodology. India's national MPI retained 10 indicators from the Global MPI and has added 2 new indicators, namely Maternal Health (in the dimension of Health) and Bank Account (in the dimension of Standard of Living).

Global MPI uses ten indicators covering three areas namely health, education and standard of living. Health dimension includes Nutrition and Child & Adolescent Mortality indicators, education dimension includes Years of Schooling and School Attendance indicators and standard of living dimension includes 6 household specific indicators namely, housing, household assets,

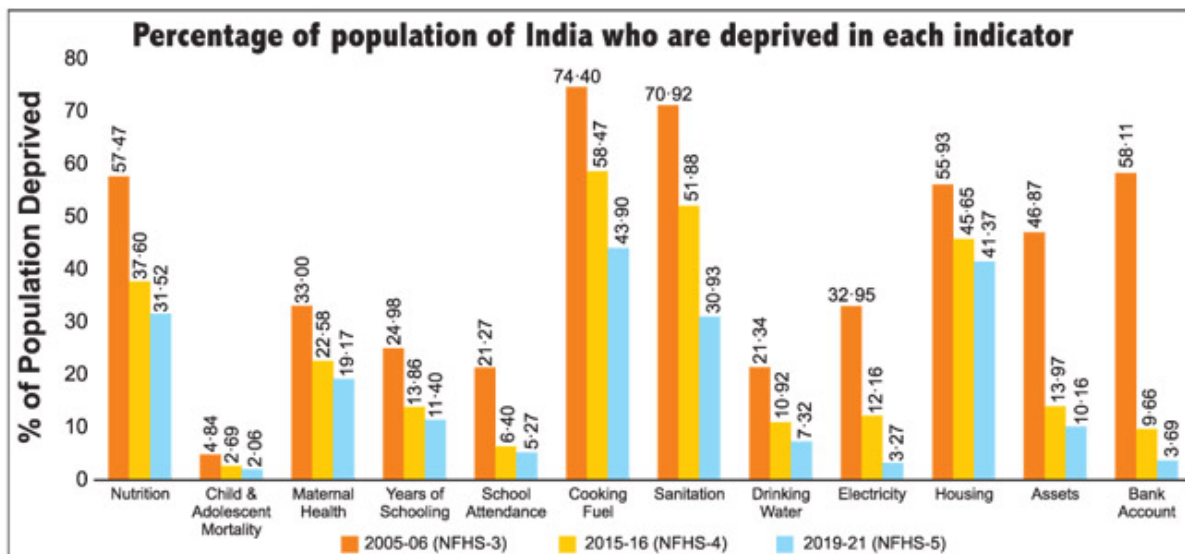
type of Cooking Fuel, access to Sanitation, Drinking water and Electricity.

The MPI assesses poverty at the individual level. If a person is deprived in a third or more of ten (weighted) indicators, the global MPI identifies them as 'MPI poor'.

The MPI is computed by multiplying the incidence of multidimensional poverty (H) and the intensity of poverty (A), denoted as  $MPI = H \times A$ . Incidence (H) shows the percentage of people who are multidimensionally poor, and Intensity (A) shows the percentage of weighted deprivations the average multidimensionally poor person suffers from. The MPI value for a given population, therefore, is the share of weighted deprivations faced by multidimensionally poor individuals divided by the total population. Hence, the MPI is known as the adjusted headcount ratio. MPI includes both the share of people in multidimensional poverty and the extent to which they are deprived.

### **Computation of MPI for 2013-14 and 2022-23**

NITI Aayog is of the view that a better understanding of the impact of various initiatives launched during the previous decade on poverty and deprivation can be obtained by comparing the estimates of poverty and deprivation in year 2013-14 with year 2022-23 even though the actual estimates for 2015-16 and 2019-21 clearly point to acceleration in rate of reduction in MPI after 2015-16 compared to 2005-06 to 2015-16. This requires interpolation of estimates for the year 2013-14 and extrapolation for the year 2022-23. Thus, 2013-14 figure was computed from the 2005-06 estimate using annual compound rate of 7.69% reduction. Similarly, 2022-23 estimate was projected by applying compound rate of reduction achieved during 2015-16 to 2019-21. This method involves a lower percentage points reduction in poverty each year which is consistent with experience



of the real world. This assumption entails a trajectory characterized by the same rate of decline rather than using a linear trend.

Based on the interpolation of the MPI estimates between 2005-06 and 2015-16 the headcount ratio for the year 2013-14 comes to 29.17%. Similarly, the proportion of multidimensional poverty for the year 2022-23 is projected to be 11.28% based on the trend rate of 10.66% decline per year between 2015-16 and 2019-21. With this, India is much ahead of the target of reducing poverty in all its dimensions by half, by the year 2030.

#### International Poverty Line

The World Bank defines the international poverty line at US \$ 2.15 (in 2017 Purchasing Power Parity [PPP] terms) a day to measure monetary poverty. The latest World Bank data indicates that the poverty headcount ratio at US \$ 2.15 a day (2017 PPP) decreased from 18.73% in 2015 to 11.9% in 2021 in India (Poverty and Inequality Platform, World Bank). With the ongoing rate of decline in India's Multidimensional Poverty, the country is expected to reach single digit level of poverty by the year 2024-25.

Consequently, the estimated absolute change in the headcount ratio over the 9-year period from 2013-14 to 2022-23 is 17.89 percentage points, which is equivalent to an approximately 24.82 crore individuals escaping multidimensional poverty.

#### MPI Decline in States

The fastest reduction in the number of multidimensional poor was observed in the States of Uttar

Pradesh followed by Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. Uttar Pradesh registered the largest decline in the number of poor with 5.94 crore people escaping multidimensional poverty during the last nine years followed by Bihar at 3.77 crore and Madhya Pradesh at 2.30 crore. It is also observed that the States with higher poverty incidence have witnessed higher reduction in headcount ratio poverty over the years, thus indicating that inter-state multidimensional poverty differentials across various States have declined over the years. The correlation between incidence of poverty during 2013-14 and percentage point reduction in poverty by 2022-23 was 0.939.

The Government of India has made remarkable progress in improving the lives of people, aiming to reduce poverty in all dimensions. Noteworthy initiatives like Poshan Abhiyan and Anemia Mukh Bharat have significantly enhanced access to healthcare facilities, leading to a substantial decrease in deprivation. Operating one of the world's largest food security programs, the Targeted Public Distribution System under the National Food Security Act covers 81.35 crore beneficiaries, providing food grains to rural and urban populations. Recent decisions, such as extending free food grain distribution under Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana for another five years, exemplify Government's commitment. Various programs addressing maternal health, clean cooking fuel distribution through Ujjwala

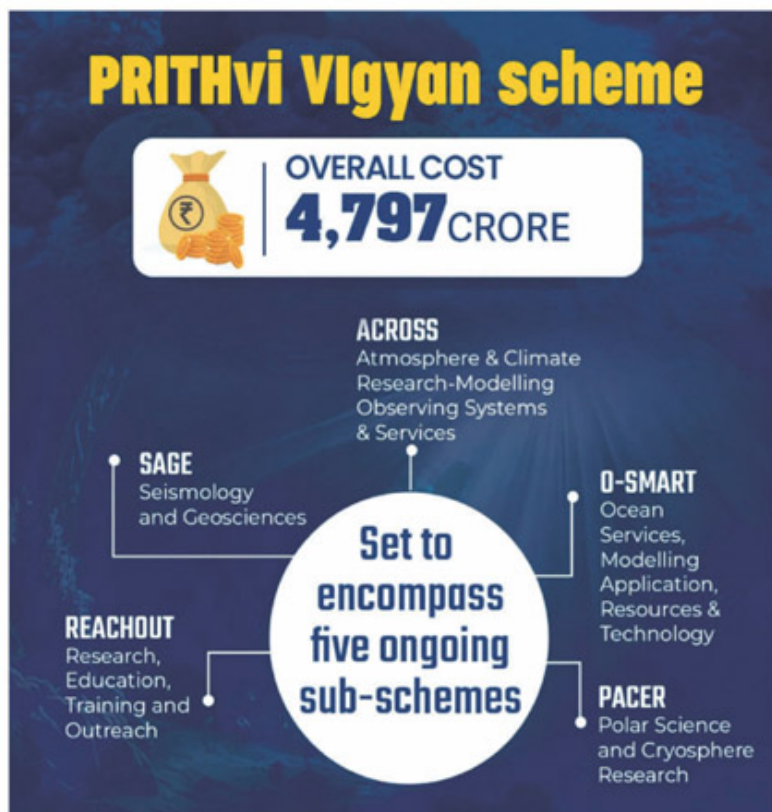
Yojana, improved electricity coverage via Saubhagya, and transformative campaigns like Swachh Bharat Mission and Jal Jeevan Mission have collectively elevated living conditions and overall well-being of people. Additionally, flagship programs like Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana and PM Awas Yojana have played pivotal roles in financial inclusion and providing safe housing for the underprivileged.

#### Indicatorwise Performance

While the performance of States varies, some States which were traditionally having high poverty have made remarkable progress in helping people escape poverty, thus reducing inter-state disparities in multidimensional poverty. With this, the fundamental problems in accessing basic services are getting resolved fast so that the country can look towards becoming a developed nation *i.e.*, Viksit Bharat @2047.

Readers are advised to scan the following QR Code to read the details of the table : "Statewise Headcount Ratio : % of Population who are Multidimensionally Poor."





The Union Cabinet on January 4, 2024 has approved the overarching scheme “PRITHvi Vigyan (PRITHVI)” of Ministry of Earth Sciences, for implementation during the period from 2021-26 at an overall cost of ₹ 4,797 crore.

The scheme encompasses five ongoing sub-schemes namely :

- I. “Atmosphere and Climate Research-Modelling Observing Systems & Services (ACROSS)”,
- II. “Ocean Services, Modelling Application, Resources and Technology (O-SMART)”,
- III. “Polar Science and Cryosphere Research (PACER)”,
- IV. “Seismology and Geosciences (SAGE)” and
- V. “Research, Education, Training and Outreach (REACHOUT)”.

**Objectives of the Prithvi Scheme**

- Augmentation and sustainance of long-term observations of the atmosphere, ocean, geosphere, cryosphere and solid earth to record the vital signs of the Earth System and change.
- Development of modelling systems for understanding and predicting weather, ocean and climate hazards and understanding the science of climate change.
- Exploration polar and high seas regions of the Earth towards discovery of new phenomena and resources.
- Development of technology for exploration and sustainable harnessing of oceanic resources for societal applications.

- Translation of knowledge and insights from Earth systems science into services for societal, environmental and economic benefit.

Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) is mandated to translate science to services for the society in providing services for weather, climate, ocean and coastal state, hydrology, seismology, and natural hazards; to explore and harness marine living and non-living resources in a sustainable manner for the country and to explore the three poles of the Earth (Arctic, Antarctic and Himalayas). These services include :

- weather forecasts (both on land and in the Oceans) and
- warnings for various natural disasters like tropical cyclones, storm surge, floods, heat waves, thunderstorm and lightning; alerts for Tsunamis and monitoring of earthquakes, etc.

The services provided by the Ministry are being effectively used by different agencies and state governments for saving human lives and minimising damages to the properties due to natural disasters.

The research & development and operational (services) activities of MoES are carried out by ten Institutes of MoES, viz.,

1. India Meteorological Department (IMD), New Delhi.
2. National Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecasting (NCMRWF), Noida.
3. Centre for Marine Living Resources and Ecology (CMLRE),
4. National Centre for Coastal Research (NCCR), Kochi.
5. National Centre for Seismology (NCS), Noida.
6. National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT), Chennai.
7. Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Service (INCOIS), Hyderabad.

*Continued on Page 109*

# India's Foreign Trade During April-December 2023

— Dr. Deepa Rawat

India's overall exports (Merchandise and Services combined) in April-December 2023\* are estimated to be USD 565-04 Billion, exhibiting a negative growth of (-)1.87 per cent over April-December 2022. Overall imports in April-December 2023\* are estimated to be USD 634-39 Billion, exhibiting a negative growth of (-)7.24 per cent over April-December 2022.

Trade During April-December 2023*			
		April-Dec. 2023	April- Dec. 2022
		(USD Billion)	(USD Billion)
Merchandise	Exports	317-12	336-3
	Imports	505-15	548-64
	Trade deficit	188-03	212-34
Services*	Exports	247-92	239-5
	Imports	129-24	135-29
	Trade surplus	118-68	104-21
Overall Trade (Merchandise + Services)*	Exports	565-04	575-79
	Imports	634-39	683-93
	Trade Balance	- 69-34	- 108-13

\* Note : (i) The latest data for services sector released by RBI is for November 2023. The data for December 2023 is an estimation, (ii) Data for April-December 2022 and April-September 2023 has been revised on pro-rata basis using quarterly balance of payments data.



## Merchandise Trade

- Merchandise exports for the period April-December 2023 were USD 317-12 billion as against USD 336-30 billion during April-September 2022.
- Merchandise imports for the period April-December 2023 were USD 505-15 billion as against USD 548-64 billion during April-December 2022.
- The merchandise trade deficit for April-December 2023 was estimated at USD 188-02 billion as against USD 212-34 billion during April-December 2022.

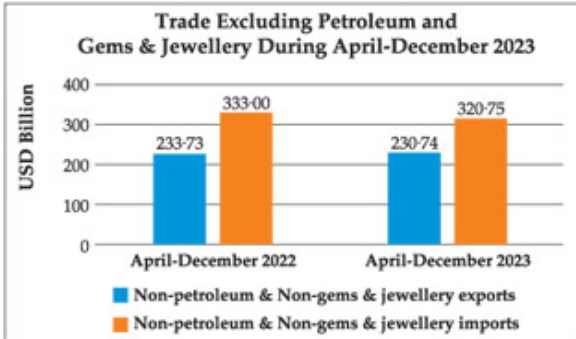
Merchandise Trade During April-December 2023



- Non-petroleum and non-gems & jewellery exports during April-December 2023 was USD 230-74 billion, as compared to USD 233-73 billion in April-December 2022.
- Non-petroleum, non-gems & jewellery (gold, silver & precious metals) imports were USD 320-75 billion in April-December 2023 as compared to USD 333 billion in April-December 2022.

## Trade Excluding Petroleum and Gems & Jewellery During April-December 2023

	April-Dec. 2023 (USD Billion)	April-Dec. 2023 (USD Billion)
Non-petroleum exports	255-05	262-72
Non-petroleum imports	376-53	390-01
Non-petroleum & Non-Gems & Jewellery exports	230-74	233-73
Non-petroleum & Non-Gems & Jewellery imports	320-75	333-00



## Services Trade

- The estimated value of services export for April-December 2023\* is USD 247-92 billion as compared to USD 239-50 billion in April-December 2022.

- The estimated value of services imports for April-December 2023\* is USD 129-24 billion as compared to USD 135-29 Billion in April-December 2022.
- The services trade surplus for April-December 2023\* is estimated at USD 118-68 billion as against USD 104-21 billion in April-December 2022.



- For April-December 2023, under merchandise exports, 14 of the 30 key sectors exhibited positive growth during April-December 2023 as compared to April-December 2022. These include Iron Ore (215.54%), Oil Meals (27.36%), Electronic Goods (22.24%), Ceramic Products & Glassware (18.75%), Fruits & Vegetables (16.29%), Tobacco (13.15%), Oil Seeds (9.4%), Meat, Dairy & Poultry Products (8.87%), Drugs & Pharmaceuticals (8.2%), Cereal Preparations & Miscellaneous Processed Items (7.07%), Cotton Yarn/Fabs./Made-Ups, Handloom Products etc. (6.03%), Spices (5.83%), Coffee (4.25%) and Cashew (0.13%).
- Under merchandise imports, 16 of the 30 key sectors exhibited negative growth in April-December 2023 as compared to April-December 2022. These include Cotton Raw & Waste (-62.22%), Silver (-52.65%), Sulphur & Unroasted Iron Pyrites (-39.37%), Fertilisers, Crude & Manufactured (-36.35%), Vegetable Oil (-27.72%), Coal, Coke & Briquettes, etc. (-27.72%), Pearls, Precious & Semi-Precious Stones (-25.92%), Organic & Inorganic Chemicals (-21.03%), Petroleum, Crude & Products (-18.93%), Textile Yarn Fabric, Made-Up Articles (-15.21%), Transport Equipment (-14.64%), Newsprint (-12.4%), Wood & Wood Products (-11.29%), Pulp and Waste Paper (-11.06%), Leather & Leather Products (-7.46%) and Artificial Resins, Plastic Materials, etc. (-3.13%).
- Services exports is projected to grow positively at 3.52 per cent during April-December 2023 over April-December 2022.
- India's trade deficit has shown considerable improvement in April-December 2023. Overall trade deficit for April-December 2023\* is estimated at USD 69.34 billion as compared to the deficit of USD 108.13 billion during April-December 2022, registering a decline of (-)35.87 per cent. The merchandise trade deficit during April-December 2023 is USD 188.02 billion compared to USD 212.34 billion during April-December 2022, registering a decline of (-)11.45 per cent.

### Quick Estimates for Selected Major Commodities for April-December 2023

#### Trade : Export

S. No.	Commodities	Values in Million USD		% Change
		Ap. 2022- Dec. 2022	Ap. 2023- Dec. 2023	
1.	Iron Ore	838-88	2647-02	215-54
2.	Oil Meals	963-44	1227-03	27-36
3.	Electronic Goods	16649-14	20351-77	22-24
4.	Ceramic Products & Glassware	2749-74	3265-32	18-75
5.	Fruits & Vegetables	2158-61	2510-28	16-29
6.	Tobacco	981-54	1110-58	13-15
7.	Oil Seeds	942-89	1031-53	9-40
8.	Meat, Dairy & Poultry Products	3040-31	3309-88	8-87
9.	Drugs & Pharmaceuticals	18854-67	20400-04	8-20
10.	Cereal Preparations & Miscellaneous Processed items	1951-02	2088-89	7-07
11.	Cotton Yarn / Fabs. / made-ups, Handloom Products etc.	8176-79	8669-81	6-03
12.	Spices	2750-22	2910-64	5-83
13.	Coffee	841-06	876-83	4-25
14.	Cashew	249-14	249-47	0-13
15.	Engineering Goods	79855-87	79508-18	- 0-44
16.	Carpet	1051-22	1037-93	- 1-26
17.	Tea	641-32	608-00	- 5-20
18.	Marine Products	6285-49	5852-31	- 6-89
19.	Man-made Yarn/Fabs./ Made-ups etc.	3678-33	3428-33	- 6-80
20.	Handicrafts excl. Handmade Carpet	1288-91	1183-16	- 8-20
21.	Plastic & Linoleum	6470-97	5928-97	- 8-38
22.	Rice	7999-55	73-18-59	- 8-51
23.	Mica, Coal & Other Ores, Minerals Including Processed Minerals	3818-97	3424-27	- 10-34
24.	Organic & Inorganic Chemicals	23006-26	20269-34	- 11-90
25.	Leather & Leather Products	3696-59	3253-29	- 11-99
26.	RMG of all Textiles	11842-04	10141-70	- 14-36
27.	Petroleum Products	73578-25	62074-89	- 15-63
28.	Gems & Jewellery	28992-05	24307-17	- 16-16
29.	Jute Mfg. Including Floor Covering	341-21	258-93	- 24-11
30.	Other Cereals	868-87	454-42	- 47-70
	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>314563-35</b>	<b>299698-57</b>	<b>- 4-73</b>
	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>336299-10</b>	<b>317121-33</b>	<b>- 5-70</b>

Notes : 1. Exports include Re-exports, 2. The figures for Dec. 2023 are provisional, 3. Grand total is inclusive of component 'other'.



**Quick Estimates for Selected Major Commodities  
for April-December 2023**

**Trade : Import**

S. No.	Commodities	Values in Million USD		% Change
		Ap. 2022- Dec. 2022	Ap. 2023- Dec. 2023	Ap. 2023- Dec. 2023
1.	Pulses	1356-45	2467-93	81-94
2.	Dyeing/Tanning/ Colouring Materials	2970-47	4021-73	35-39
3.	Gold	28387-67	35951-34	26-64
4.	Electronic Goods	58218-97	67227-95	15-47
5.	Professional Instrument, Optical Goods, etc.	5105-21	5732-40	12-29
6.	Chemical Material & Products	9259-57	10279-19	11-01
7.	Machinery, Electrical & Non-electrical	33512-21	36919-86	10-17
8.	Non-ferrous Metals	14970-98	16403-88	9-57
9.	Machine Tools	3282-50	3571-27	8-80
10.	Iron & Steel	16581-00	18005-45	8-59
11.	Fruits & Vegetables	2004-99	2176-92	8-58
12.	Medicinal & Pharmaceutical Products	6130-87	6243-11	1-83
13.	Project goods	765-82	774-89	1-18
14.	Metaliferrous ores & other minerals	7120-63	7143-27	0-32
15.	Artificial Resins, Plastic Materials, etc.	17710-20	17156-68	- 3-13
16.	Leather & Leather products	808-85	748-51	- 7-46
17.	Pulp and Waste Paper	1589-57	1413-78	- 11-06
18.	Wood & Wood products	5531-95	4907-63	- 11-29
19.	Newsprint	396-36	347-23	- 12-40
20.	Transport equipment	23159-69	19768-13	- 14-64
21.	Textile Yarn Fabric, made-up articles	2060-44	1746-98	- 15-21
22.	Petroleum, Crude & Products	158633-90	128611-64	- 18-93
23.	Organic & Inorganic Chemicals	26221-44	20708-11	- 21-03
24.	Pearls, Precious & Semi-precious Stones	23520-37	17424-45	- 25-92
25.	Coal, Coke & Briquettes, etc.	40529-02	29294-16	- 27-72
26.	Vegetable Oil	16102-22	11638-03	- 27-72
27.	Fertilisers, Crude & Manufactured	14142-24	9002-07	- 36-35
28.	Sulphur & Unroasted Iron Pyrites	282-34	9002-07	- 39-37
29.	Silver	5097-12	2413-25	- 52-65
30.	Cotton Raw & Waste	1320-01	498-75	- 62-22
	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>526773-06</b>	<b>482769-77</b>	<b>- 8-35</b>
	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>548640-22</b>	<b>505145-99</b>	<b>- 7-93</b>

**Notes :** 1. Imports include Re-exports, 2. The figures for Dec. 2023 are provisional, 3. Grand total is inclusive of component 'other'.

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**PD**—While the changing economic environment offers immense lucrative career opportunities in various sectors, still what kept you motivated towards Judicial Services ?

**Ms. Karishma**—I think having no other, plans was the most important for me. It was God's well and my family's support that kept me motivated during my preparation.

**Personal Qualities**

**Strong Points**—Good Listener, Discipline, Patience, Optimistic.

**Weak Points**—Overthinking.

**Hobbies**—Painting, Stone crafting, Brisk walking.

**PD**—Was Judicial Services your planned decision or your parents' wish ?

**Ms. Karishma**—It was whole heartedly my decision to prepare for judicial services. My family always motivated me. There was a time when there was continuous failures. But they never left hope. Their confidence in me helped me to continue my preparation.

**PD**—Does the educational, financial and demographic status of the family of an aspirant have any impact on the preparation ?

**Ms. Karishma**—All these factors come into mind especially when you are preparing for a long time. But believe me, no adversity can stop you if you are fully dedicated.

**PD**—How do you find Pratiyogita Darpan ? Do you find it close to your expectations ?

**Ms. Karishma**—I have been reading Pratiyogita Darpan Magazine since the first day of my preparation. It is a wonderful magazine for current affairs for those appearing for judicial services. It covers almost everything about general and current awareness.

**PD**—What is the secret of your success ?

**Ms. Karishma**—I have always been an honest, disciplined and consistent aspirant. There is no secret to success. But, these qualities are hard to follow but still keep doing it.

Even I had many reasons to quit sometimes but I always had 1 clear reason for keep working hard.

**PD**—To whom would you like to give the credit for your success ?

**Ms. Karishma**—If I have to give complete credit for my success, that would go to my best friend Varun who always helped me to pursue my dreams. His motivation times always supported me.

**PD**—Any suggestion/advice you would like to give to the future aspirants.

**Ms. Karishma**—Pursue your dreams to the fullest. Work hard. Don't quit. If God is making you wait, be prepared to receive more than what you have asked for.

**PD**—Thank you very much and wishing you all the best for your future endeavours.



# All India Survey of Higher Education 2021-22

## AISHE 2021-22 : KEY RESULTS

- ◆ A total of 1,168 Universities/University level Institutions, 45,473 Colleges and 12,002 Stand Alone Institutions were registered in AISHE 2021-22. Of them, 1,162 Universities, 42,825 colleges and 10,576 Stand Alone Institutions have responded in the survey.
- ◆ In all, 341 Universities/University level institutions have been established since 2014-15.
- ◆ Out of 1168 Universities registered, 685 are Government managed (Central Govt. 240, State Govt. 445), 10 are Private Deemed (Aided) and 473 are Private (Un-aided).
- ◆ There are 17 Universities exclusively for Women. It was 11 in 2014-15.
- ◆ In 2021-22, there are 18 Open Universities (1 Central University, 16 State Universities and 1 State Private University).
- ◆ Of the 1,162 Universities who responded in the Survey, there are 655 General, 192 Technical, 57 Agriculture & Allied, 79 Medical, 27 Law, 19 Sanskrit and 8 Language Universities. Remaining 125 Universities were of other specialized categories.
- ◆ In 2021-22, the registered Colleges are 45473. In 2014-15 there were 38498 Colleges registered with AISHE (an increase of 6975 Colleges).
- ◆ During 2021-22, 1677 Colleges have been registered with AISHE.
- ◆ Out of 42825 responded Colleges, 21.5% Colleges are Government Colleges, 13.2% are Private (Aided) and 65.3% are Private (un-aided).
- ◆ 10.4% Colleges (4470) that have responded in the survey are exclusively for Females.
- ◆ Colleges per district are widely distributed across the country. 10% Colleges out of total registered in AISHE 2021-22 are in the top 10 districts. The top 50 districts have 31.3% of total Colleges. Bengaluru Urban district has maximum Colleges (1106) followed by the Jaipur (703), Hyderabad (491), Pune (475), Prayagraj (398), Rangareddi (349), Bhopal (344), Ghazipur (333), Sikar (330, and Nagpur (326).
- ◆ College density *i.e.*, the number of Colleges per lakh eligible population (population in the age group 18-23 years) at All India Level is 30. The States/UTs, Karnataka (66), Telangana (52), Andhra Pradesh (49), Himachal Pradesh (47), Puducherry (53), and Kerala (46) have high number of Colleges per lakh population.
- ◆ Uttar Pradesh has maximum number of Colleges (8375), followed by Maharashtra (4692), Karnataka (4430), Rajasthan (3934), Tamil Nadu (2829), Madhya Pradesh (2742), Andhra Pradesh (2602), Gujarat (2395), Telangana (2083) and West Bengal (1514).
- ◆ Out of the total 42825 responded Colleges, 25719 Colleges (60.1%) are general in nature, 3713 College (8.7%) specialized in Education/Teacher Education, 2610 Colleges (6.1%) in Engineering & Technology, 1821 Colleges (4.3%) in Nursing, 1507 (3.5%) in Medical, 1171 Colleges (2.7%) in Art, 1042 Colleges (2.4%) in Pharmacy, 321 Colleges (0.7%) in Science and 612 Colleges (1.4%) in Sanskrit.
- ◆ Total enrolment in higher education has increased to nearly 4.33 crore in 2021-22 from 4.14 crore in 2020-21 (increase of 18.87 Lakh, 4.6%) and 3.42 crore in 2014-15 (an increase of 26.5%)
- ◆ Female enrolment in Higher Education increases to 2.07 crore (32% increase since 2014-15).
- ◆ Of the 4.33 crore students enrolled in 2021-22, 15.3% belong to Scheduled Caste, 6.3% belong to Scheduled Tribe, 37.8% are from Other Backward Class and remaining 40.6% students are from other communities.
- ◆ Enrolment of Scheduled Caste students has increased to 66.23 lakh in 2021-22 from 58.95 lakh in 2020-21. There is a 25.4% increase in SC enrolment during last 5 years (*i.e.*, since 2017-18). Overall increase in SC Student enrolment since 2014-15 is 44%.
- ◆ The enrolment of Scheduled Caste Female Students has increased to 31.71 lakh in 2021-22 from 29.01 lakh in 2020-21. 26.6% increase in SC Female enrolment is seen in last 5 years. The overall increase in SC Female Student enrolment since 2014-15 is 51%.
- ◆ In case of Scheduled Tribe students, the enrolment has increased to 27.1 lakh in 2021-22 from 24.12 lakh in 2020-21. 41.6% increase in ST enrolment is observed since 2017-18 and overall increase in ST Student enrolment since 2014-15 is 65.2%.
- ◆ The enrolment of Scheduled Tribe Female Students has increased to 13.46 lakh in 2021-22 from 12.21 lakh in 2020-21. Substantial increase of 47.6% in ST Female enrolment is observed during last 5 years and 80% increase since 2014-15.
- ◆ Enrolment of students from Other Backward Class has increased to about 1.63 crore in 2021-22 from 1.48 crore in 2020-21. There is 27.3% increase in OBC enrolment since 2017-18. Also, overall increase in OBC Student enrolment since 2014-15 is 45%.

## Student Enrolment in Higher Education

- ◆ Enrolment of OBC Female students has increased to 78.19 lakh in 2021-22 from 72.88 lakh in 2020-21. There is 27.2% increase in OBC Female enrolment since 2017-18 and overall increase in OBC Female Student enrolment since 2014-15 is 49.3%.
  - ◆ The Minority enrolment has increased to 30.1 lakh in 2021-22 from 21.8 lakh in 2014-15 (an increase of 38%). Female Minority enrolment has increased 42.3% since 2014-15 (15.2 lakh in 2021-22 from 10.7 lakh in 2014-15).
  - ◆ The total Student Enrolment in North East States is 12.02 lakh in 2021-22 as compared to 9.36 lakh in 2014-15. The Female enrolment in North East States is 6.07 lakh in 2021-22, higher than the Male enrolment of 5.95 lakh.
  - ◆ The top 6 States in terms of Student Enrolment are Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal and Rajasthan. They constitute 53.3% of the total Student Enrolment.
  - ◆ In the year 2021-22, Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education for age group 18-23 years has increased to 28.4, from 27.3 in 2020-21 and 23.7 in 2014-15 (as per population projection based on 2011 census.).
  - ◆ Female GER has increased to 28.5 in 2021-22 from 27.9 in 2020-21 and 22.9 in 2014-15. Female GER continues to be more than male GER for fifth consecutive year as per AISHE 2021-22.
  - ◆ SC student GER has increased to 25.9 in 2021-22 from 23.1 in 2020-21. There is also a significant improvement in GER from 2014-15 (18.9).
  - ◆ SC Female GER has increased to 26 in 2021-22 from 23.9 in 2020-21 and 18.1 in 2014-15.
  - ◆ ST student GER has increased to 21.2 in 2021-22 from 18.9 in 2020-21. There is also a significant improvement in GER from 2014-15 (13.5).
  - ◆ ST Female GER has increased to 20.9 in 2021-22 from 19.1 in 2020-21 and 12.2 in 2014-15.
  - ◆ Notably, Government Universities constituting 58.6% of total Universities, contribute 73.7% of total enrolment, Private Universities account for 26.3% of total enrolment.
  - ◆ Further, Government Colleges constituting 21.5% of total Colleges contribute 34.8% of total enrolment. Private (Aided) Colleges constituting 13.3% of total Colleges account for 20.6% enrolment, whereas the 65.2% Private (Un-aided) Colleges account for only 44.6% of total enrolment.
  - ◆ About 78.9% of the students are enrolled in undergraduate level courses and 12.1% are enrolled in postgraduate level courses.
  - ◆ Based on actual response at undergraduate level, enrolment is highest in Arts (34.2%), followed by Science (14.8%), Commerce (13.3%) and Engineering & Technology (11.8%).
  - ◆ Total Ph.D. enrolment has increased 81.2% in 2021-22 (2.13 lakh) from 2014-15 (1.17 lakh), Female Ph.D. enrolment has doubled in 2021-22 (0.99 lakh) from 2014-15 (0.48 lakh).
  - ◆ At postgraduate level, maximum students are enrolled in Social Science stream (21.1%) followed by Science (14.7%) based on actual response.
  - ◆ At Ph.D. level, enrolment is highest in Engineering & Technology (24.8%) followed by Science (21.3%) based on actual response.
  - ◆ Of the total enrolment in 2021-22, the number of Student enrolment in STEM for UG, PG, Ph.D. and M.Phil. levels is 98.5 lakh (25.6%) based on actual response. In Science stream Females have outnumbered Males.
  - ◆ Total number of foreign students enrolled in higher education is 46,878. The foreign students have come from 170 different countries.
  - ◆ In 2021-22, highest share of foreign students is from Nepal (28%), followed by Afghanistan (6.7%), United States (6.2%), Bangladesh (5.6%), UAE (4.9%), and Bhutan (3.3%). Top 10 coun-
  - tries constitute 64.7% of the total foreign students.
- ### Teaching and Non-Teaching Staff in Higher Education
- ◆ The total number of faculty/teachers in 2021-22 are 15.98 lakh, of which about 56.6% are male and 43.4% are female.
  - ◆ Number of teachers has increased by 46,618 in 2021-22 over 2020-21.
  - ◆ There is a marginal betterment of female per 100 male faculty from 75 in 2020-21 to 77 in 2021-22.
  - ◆ Female faculty/teachers have increased to 6.94 lakh in 2021-22 from 5.69 lakh in 2014-15 (an increase of 22% since 2014-15).
  - ◆ For Regular Mode, Pupil Teacher Ratio (PTR) in Universities and Colleges is 24 whereas PTR for Universities and its Constituent Units, in regular mode, is 18.
  - ◆ The number of non-teaching staff is 12,08,446 out of which about 56.3% are male and 43.7% are female. The average number of females per 100 male non-teaching staff is 78.
- ### Out-Turn (Pass-outs)
- ◆ The total number of pass-outs has increased to 1.07 Crore in 2021-22 as against 95.4 Lakh in 2020-21.
  - ◆ At the under graduate level, the highest out-turn is in Bachelor of Arts with 24.16 Lakh, followed by Bachelor of Science with 12.53 Lakh, Bachelor of Commerce with 11.08 Lakh and 8.47 Lakh in Bachelor of Engineering & Bachelor of Technology combined.
  - ◆ At Post-graduate level, the highest out-turn is in Master of Arts (7.02 Lakh), followed by Master of Science (3.56 Lakh), Master of Business Administration (2.32 Lakh) and Master of Commerce (1.9 Lakh).
  - ◆ In Diploma, the total number of pass-outs is 9.2 Lakh.
  - ◆ 32,588 students were awarded Ph.D. during 2021-22 with 18,464 males and 14,124 females. The highest number of Ph.D. was awarded in science 7,408 followed by Engineering & Technology 6,270.



# World Panorama

## India in the Indian Ocean : Challenges and Strategy

—Arunoday Bajpai

The Indian Ocean is the third largest ocean in the world after the Pacific and the Atlantic. It covers an area of 73.5 million kms and occupies approximately 20 per cent of the Earth's sea surface. It is bounded to the north by the Indian subcontinent; to the west and northwest by the east African coast and Arabian Peninsula, respectively; to the east by Thailand, the Malay Peninsula, Indonesia, and Australia; and to the south by the oceanic margin with the Southern Ocean. The India Ocean Region (IOR) is bounded by 38 countries, which account 37 per cent of the global population, but merely 10 per cent of global output. This gives much scope for growth and development.

### Strategic and Economic Importance of Indian Ocean

The Indian Ocean holds considerable economic and strategic importance. It contains two-thirds of the world's proven offshore oil reserves, one-third of the world's natural gas, 90 per cent of the world's diamonds, 60 per cent of the world's uranium and 40 per cent of the world's gold, making it potentially the single largest area of exploitable wealth in the world. An estimated 40 per cent of the world's offshore oil production comes from the Indian Ocean. The IOR is also important for global trade and energy supply as the key Sea Lanes of Communication (SLOC) pass through the Indian Ocean and its choke points. The Indian Ocean has seven important choke points, which enhance its strategic significance. They are the Mozambique Channel, the Bab-el-Mandeb, the Suez Canal, and the Strait of Hormuz in the Western end and the Malacca Straits, the Sunda Strait, and the Lombok

Strait in the Eastern end of the Indian Ocean. While Hormuz Strait links the Arabian Sea with Persian Gulf, The Bab-el-Mandeb links the Gulf of Aden to the Red Sea, which in turn is linked to the Mediterranean Sea by the Suez Canal. The Mozambique Channel lies between the Madagascar and Mozambique Coast in South-East Africa. At the Eastern end, the Malacca Strait links the Indian Ocean to the South China Sea; Sunda Strait and Lombok Strait link both the Indian Ocean and Java Sea (apart of the Indian Ocean). The IOR is crisscrossed by shipping lanes that run from east to west, through which over 100000 ships transit each year, carrying two-thirds of hydrocarbons, one-third of bulk cargo and half of the world's container traffic. Sea-borne access/exit to or from the ocean is through the above choke points.

### India's Interests in Indian Ocean

India Ocean plays a crucial role in India's security and economic development. This fact needs no emphasis. India is a regional power in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) and the security of its mainland and its islands territories is contingent on India's access and control over the IOR. The Indian Ocean evokes historical and mythological imagination across India as it has been a part of Indian life for centuries. The very name of this Ocean as 'Indian Ocean' underlines India's close association with it. India considers the Indian Ocean as its backyard and has been a net security provider in the IOR for decades. The IOR holds crucial strategic and economic importance for India. The security of India's 7500 km coast line and overseas territories like, Laksha-

dweep, Diu and Dadra Nagar Haveli in the west and Andaman Nicobar Islands in the east is contingent on the peace and stability in the IOR. India's entire maritime trade, constituting 45 per cent of her GDP in value terms, passes through the IOR. Also, India's 75 per cent energy supply comes through the Indian Ocean. The security of Sea Lane of Communications (SLOCs) is crucial for India's growth and security both. India needs the protection and sustainable of marine resources in its territorial waters, Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), and beyond. The IOR is abundant in oil, gas and other minerals as well as living marine resources. Fishing in the Indian Ocean now accounts for almost 15 per cent of the world's total output. The discovery of poly-metallic nodules in the sea-bed of the ocean has evoked keen interest among nations, including India. Underlying the importance of Indian Ocean, Alfred Thayer Mahan, a US maritime Strategist of 19th Century remarked, 'Whoever controls the Indian Ocean dominates Asia. This ocean is the key to the seven seas in the twenty-first century, the destiny of the world will be decided in these waters'.

### Indian Ocean : Chinese Inroads and Other Challenges

However, for last two decades or so, China has made deep strategic inroads in the IOR. In October 2023 Chinese vessel Shi Yan 6 was given permission to dock at the Colombo port for replenishment. In August 2023, the Chinese warship Hai Yang 24 Hao arrived in Sri Lanka on a two-day visit, in spite of the fact that India raised concerns to Sri Lanka. Earlier in August 2022, China ballistic missile and satellite tracking ship, 'Yuan Wang 5', visited the Sri Lankan port of Hambantota, amidst Indian protests. India has the apprehensions that these vessels may attempt to track Indian defence installations and other facilities. These are not the isolated events. In fact, they are part of China's

grand strategy to gain strategic hold in the Indian Ocean, which goes against the core interests of India. China has gained access to Pakistan's Gwader port, has established its first external naval base in Djibouti, has a gas economic and strategic presence in Maldives, has deep stakes in Sri Lanka through operation of Hambantota port, and the launch of the Colombo port city project and access to Myanmar's Kyaukpyiu port in the Indian Ocean. This is nothing but the implementation of China's earlier strategy of string of Pearls around India in the IOR. The security challenge posed by China in last two decades is in addition to the challenges faced by India like in Piracy, security of sea lanes of communication, smuggling and terrorism in the Indian Ocean Region.

## **Indian Strategy in Indian Ocean**

In view of the emerging challenges, India has evolved a three-pronged strategy to protect her vital interests in the IOR: National capacity Building, Regional Collaboration and Global Partnership:

### **(A) National Capacity Building**

The first component of India's maritime strategy in the Indian Ocean is domestic efforts and strategies. First, in view of her diversifying interests, India has changed her maritime doctrine in 2004, which expanded the role of Indian Navy to the entire Indo-Pacific region, beyond the Indian Ocean. This may have sobering impact on China as its vital interests are involved in the Pacific Ocean. Second, India has focused on strengthening her naval forces by acquiring new indigenously built second aircraft carrier Vikrant, building 5 new submarines under the project 75 and sharpening Navy's reconnaissance and domain awareness capabilities.

### **(B) Regional Cooperation with Littoral States**

The second component of India's maritime strategy is robust mechanisms for cooperation and collaboration with other regional players to address the security threats in the region. India has been trying to develop close defence ties with the regional littoral states like Sri Lanka,

Maldives, Mauritius and Seychelles, among others. This strategy has both bilateral and collective mechanisms of cooperation:

**1. Bilateral Cooperation :** The Indian Prime Minister made a historic visit in March 2015 to three countries: Sri Lanka, Seychelles and Mauritius to strengthen strategic cooperation. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's official visit to Seychelles was the first Prime Ministerial level visit from India in 34 years. Both countries assigned four Agreements: Renewable Energy Cooperation; MoU for Cooperation in the field of Hydrography; Protocol on Sale of Navigational Charts/Electronic Navigational Charts; Agreement on the Development of Facilities on Assumption Island. The Assumption Island located in the IOR hold crucial importance in the maritime security in the region. Besides, the Prime Minister also inaugurated the Coastal Surveillance Radar System (CSRS) Project, made announcement for the gifting of a second Dornier aircraft to Seychelles and 3-month gratis visa for Seychelles nationals for travel to India.

During Indian PM's visit to Mauritius in 2015, both countries have agreed for India developing infrastructure facilities mainly air and sea transport facilities on the Agaléga Islands of Mauritius. The Mauritian government is eager for India to continue routing its money through Mauritius, as it represents the nation's largest source of foreign direct investment. New Delhi can use this to India's advantage to gain logistical assistance from Mauritius.

The Indian Prime Minister Modi has visited Maldives two times in 2018 and 2019 to cement bilateral ties. During the last visit, both countries signed 6 agreements, which also include cooperation in the field of maritime security and capacity building. The agreements are: MoU on cooperation in the field of Hydrography; MoU on cooperation in the field of Health; MoU on establishment of Passenger cum Cargo service by sea; MoU for cooperation in Customs' capacity building; MoU between Maldives Civil Service Commission and NCGG, Mussoorie; and Technical Agreement on exchange of White Shipping Information between the

Navies of the two countries. A Coastal Surveillance Radar System was also inaugurated during this visit. However, with the change of government in Maldives in November 2023, the new Maldivian President Mohamed Muizzu has asked for the review of these agreements and withdrawal of India's 77 security persons posted in Maldives for operation of coastal facilities. Observers feel that Muizzu may follow the footsteps of his mentor Abdulla Yameen (President of Maldives 2013-18) and follow a pro-China foreign policy.

**2. Collective Regional Measures:** India has launched various collective regional mechanisms for strengthening her regional strategy:

**(a) Colombo Security Conclave (CSC):** The CSC was formed in 2011 as a trilateral maritime security grouping of India, Sri Lanka and the Maldives. Later Mauritius joined as a fourth member and Bangladesh and Seychelles joined as observers in the CSC. It aims to expand regional cooperation in the five areas namely Maritime Safety and Security, Countering Terrorism and Radicalization, Combating Trafficking and Transnational Organized Crime, Cyber Security, Protection of Critical Infrastructure and Technology, and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief.

**(b) SAGAR Initiative :** The Indian PM announced India's SAGAR (Security And Growth for All in the Region) Initiative during his visit to Mauritius in 2015. It aims at safeguarding India's maritime interests and promotion of cooperation among the littoral states and creating an environment of peace and stability in the IOR. It represents a nexus of maritime cooperation, maritime security, along with sustainable economic development. More specifically it strives for Enhancement of maritime security; Capacity Building through cooperation for smooth facilitation of economic trade and maritime security; promoting collective vision to deal with natural disasters and maritime threats like piracy, terrorism and emergent non-state actors; and Working towards sustainable regional development through enhanced collaboration.

(c) **IFC-IOR** : The India Navy has launched the Information Fusion Centre for the Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR) in 2018. The IFC-IOR has been established at Gurugram along with the Information Management and Analysis Centre. The IFC-IOR aims at strengthening maritime security in the region and beyond, by building a common coherent maritime situation picture and acting as a maritime information hub for the region. It would ensure that the entire region is benefitted by mutual collaboration and exchange of information and understanding the concerns and threats which are prevalent in the region.

(d) **The Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS)**, established in 2008 by the Indian Navy, is another regional mechanism for promoting India's maritime interest in the IOR. It acts as a forum for increase maritime security cooperation, providing a forum for discussion of regional maritime issues and promotes friendly relationships among the member nations. India-Sri Lanka-Maldives is a trilateral forum to promote maritime cooperation among the three countries.

(e) **Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)** : It is a regional association of littoral states of Indian Ocean. India is a member IORA. Founded in 1997, it aims, among other things for the strengthening maritime security in the region.

(f) **Indo-Pacific Ocean Initiative (IPOI)** : India launched IPOI at the 14th East Asian Summit in 2019. It aims to strengthen maritime boundaries and partnerships, focusing on free trade and sustainable resource usage. It encompasses seven thematic areas, including resource development, resilient infrastructure, security, and marine environment.

### **(C) Global Partnership**

India has developed robust global partnership with other stakeholder to maintain peace and stability in the Indian Ocean. In 2017, India, US, Japan and Australia established QUAD, which aims to ensure free and open Indo-Pacific within a rule based order in the region. The regular activities and meetings of QUAD have some balancing against China's assertiveness in the region. India also

conducts regular naval exercises known as Malabar with the members of QUAD. In addition India and other countries like France, Britain and Germany have come forward for strategic cooperation in the Indo-Pacific on the basis of a shared vision for the region.

### **Conclusion**

India Ocean holds considerable strategic and economic importance in the global geopolitics. It is crucial for India's security and development. India's all maritime trade passes through the IOR. India considers the IOR as its backyard. However, in last few decades, India has come to face many challenges in the IOR. Apart from ongoing challenges like Piracy, smuggling of drugs and arms,

terrorism, disasters, China's strategic outreach in last two decades has created new concerns for India. India is not a position to compromise with her core interests in the IOR. Hence India has evolved a three-pronged strategy to counter various threats including the one from China. As first component of her strategy in the Indian Ocean to strengthened her naval capabilities. Secondly India has developed cooperation and collaboration with regional players through bilateral initiatives as well as collective measures like SAGAR, CSC, IPOI, etc. At global level India has developed strategic partnership through mechanisms like QUAD for peace, stability and rule based order in the region. The strategy of India seems to be realistic and ambitious.

## **COP28 and India's Climate Strategy**

There is no doubt now that Climate Change is the foremost global challenge faced by the global community. The Six periodical Reports of the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) have ample evidence to demonstrate the fast nearing catastrophe, where climate change will produce irreversible changes in the climate that affect will many crucial aspects of human lives. The Sixth Report of IPCC, released in 2022 warns that if the global community does not move to zero-carbon emission by the year 2050, it would too late to reverse the damages caused by climate change. Against the target of 1.5°C rise in global average temperature over the pre-industrial age (1850), the global average temperature has already risen by 1.1°C. Thus, a very small window is left in the available carbon budget to address this challenge. It calls for comprehensive and urgent actions by global community.

Since early 1990s, systematic global efforts are being made to address this challenge. Following the 1992 Rio Summit the UN General Assembly passed the UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change), which forms the base of present day annual climate change negotiations known as Conference of Parties (COP). The first Cop

was held in Berlin, Germany in 1995. The UNFCCC fixed the target of 2 degree Celsius average global temperature above the pre-industrial era to be achieved through these negotiations, leading to global efforts. However, the target of 2°C was scaled down to 1.5°C during the Paris Climate Change negotiations in 2015. The Paris declaration also asked the members of UN to declare their targets and efforts to be undertaken as per their capacities, known as Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs). All nations have submitted their INDCs, but the implementations of the same is tardy and not on expected lines. This was revealed by the first Global Stocktake, released during COP28 in Dubai and undertaken by the UN Climate Centre. The Global Stocktake reviews the progress of the implementation of the global programmes by different countries in terms of the desired targets. The first ever global stocktake report highlights the gap between the declared climate measures by nations and the given targets for addressing climate change crisis.

### **COP28, Dubai, 2023**

It was in this background that the 28th round of Conference of parties (COP 28) was held in Dubai, UAE from 30 November, 2023 to 13 Decem-

ber, 2023. It was marred by many controversies and differences among the parties/nations over the issue of phasing out fossil fuels (Coal, Oil and Natural Gas), which are responsible for major addition in global carbon emission. The reason is that many countries are still dependent on the fossil fuels for their energy needs. To cap it all, the COP was held in UAE, which is a major producer of oil and gas and its economy is dependent on the oil production. In spite of these bickering, the COP28 was able to mobilize the climate resources of \$ 85 billion and produce 11 pledges by members on different aspects of climate change measures. The major highlights of the COP28 are given below :

**1. Tripling Renewable Energy targets :** The Conference pledged to enhance the renewable energy by threefold by the year 2030. It also resolved to double the energy efficiency by the year 2030.

**2. Transitioning Away Fossil Fuels :** On Fossil Fuels, the compromise was arrived which called for transitioning way from fossil fuels. This means countries have to gradually move away from fossil fuels by the year 2030 in just and orderly manner to achieve the target of net zero by 2050. It is known as 'Dubai Consensus'. It should be noted that the uses of fossil fuel consists of coal, oil and natural gas contributes to three-fourth of global greenhouse gas emission. While the issue of Coal was already in the previous negotiations since 2021 Glasgow meet, the issue of oil and gas was introduced for the first time during COP28. The natural gas is also considered mild pollutant, as its production adds to methane emission. A new development regarding fossil fuels was the signing of Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty by some Islands countries as they are faced with immediate threat of rise in sea levels. Colombia, an oil producing country has also signed this treaty, which seeks to ban use and production of fossil fuel.

**3. Phasing Out Coal :** There was no agreement on phasing out coal by the year 2030, in spite of persistent lobbying by Powering Past Coal Alliance (PPCA) led by the US, Canada and Britain. On the other hand India, China and Indonesia

opposed the phasing out or complete ban on coal by 2023 as these countries are highly dependent on thermal energy for their electricity needs. The US is largely dependent oil and just one-fifth on coal for energy. Thus, as a compromise, the target of Phasing Down coal was adopted during the conference. It should be noted that the PPCA was formed in 2017 during COP23 with initiative of Canada and Britain. Later many other European countries joined the alliance. The PPCA stands for the total ban on coal for energy production by the year 2030.

**4. First Global Stocktake Report :** The First Global Stocktake Report was also discussed and approved during the COP28 meet. This is permanent mechanism established during Paris climate Change meet in 2015 to review the global climate change efforts vis-a-vis the prescribed targets. The first report presented a gloomy picture of effectiveness of global efforts. It says that the global community needs 43 per cent of carbon reduction by the year over the 2019 levels, but the efforts undertaken so far are able to reduce just 5 per cent of carbon emission. The next report will be issued after 5 years.

**5. Operationalization of Loss and Damage Fund :** On the first day of COP, members decided to implement the Loss and Damage Fund of \$100 billion to help the poor countries to adapt to climate change crisis. The decision to establish this fund was taken during the COP27 meet in 2022. But so far commitment of \$762 million was received against the target of 100 billion. The poor countries are facing the problem of finance and technology to adopt measures to address the climate change crisis. The basic idea behind this fund is to compensate the poor countries for the losses they have suffered due to climate change crisis so far.

**6. Many Firsts :** The COP28 was comprehensive in its approach as it witnessed many Firsts during the conference. Some of these first time initiatives are mentioned below :

**(A) Climate Change and Health :** The issue of impact of climate change on human health was included for the first time in climate change negotiations. Climate change affects human health in many ways. **First**, the rising

temperature may lead to proliferation of new pathogen and diseases. Also the prolonged high temperature may generate heat stress among humans leading to strokes and fatigue. **Second**, the increasing air pollution may lead to pulmonary ailments including lung infection and hear failures. Thus, COP28 called for taking measures to minimize the impact of climate change on human health.

**(B) Climate Change and Food and Agricultural Practices :** It was also for the first time that the impact of agricultural and food practices was included in the agenda of climate change negotiations. According to estimates, the agricultural and food practices in the world contribute one-third of the carbon emission. Thus, the need was felt during the COP28 to promote and adopt those agricultural and food practices which was helpful in reducing the carbon emission. In fact, the issue of agriculture and food was not taken up in the agenda so far as it is closely related to the issue of food security in many countries. The other side of the coin is that climate change has also affected the food production in many countries to uneven or uncertain climate conditions. Thus, there is also need to adopt climate resilient practices to ensure food security across world.

**(C) Pledge of Oil Companies on Methane :** Methane is major constituent of greenhouse gases responsible for rise in global temperature. Agriculture, animal husbandry and industrial activities like gas production are the major sources of methane. The Methane pledge of COP2022 in Egypt calls for reduction of methane by 30 per cent over 2020 levels by the year 2030. Though the issue of methane was already in the agenda of climate change negotiations, it was for the first time that 29 major oil producing companies of the world made a pledge during COP28 to bring zero level of Methane by 2030 in the oil producing process. World largest oil producing company the Saudi Arabia's Aramco also signed this pledge. It should be noted that these oil producing companies contribute 40 per cent of the global oil production.

**(D) Establishment of Alterra Fund :** The host UAE announced the formation of Alterra Fund during the meet. This fund is meant to fill the

gap in climate finances by mobilizing funds of \$ 250 billion by the year 2030 from institutional investors and private companies. The UAE has initially announced the contribution of \$ 30 billion to launch this fund.

Thus, in spite of many differences among countries, the COP28 scored some tangible gains like the ambitious target of renewable energy, reduction of fossil fuels, mobilizing climate resources and expanding the ambit of climate agenda by including new issues of health and agriculture.

### India's Climate Change Strategy

India has been a frontline actor in the world in addressing the global climate change crisis. Both at domestic and global level, India has played a significant role in climate change measures and their implementations.

**India's Approach Based on Climate Justice :** India supports a comprehensive and inclusive climate change programme, which taking into account the needs and capacities of poor and developing countries. India has always represented the cause of Global South in the climate change negotiations. India has reiterated the principle of 'common but differentiated responsibilities' which is included in the UNFCCC. This principle calls for more contributions by the rich and developed countries in climate change measures as they are historically responsible for the present climate crisis. India has incorporated these concerns in her idea of 'Climate Justice' which was presented during the COP26 in 2021 at Glasgow, UK. The idea of climate justice takes into account the specific needs for the development and vulnerabilities of poor and developing countries.

#### (A) Domestic Measures

India's domestic climate change measures are comprehensive, ambitious and inclusive. The major domestic efforts are listed below :

**1. National Action Plan on Climate Change :** Way back in 2008, India launched the ambitious national Action Plan on climate change to launch climate change measures in mission mode approach. There are eight National Missions which form the core of the NAPCC. They focus on promoting the understanding of climate change, adaptation and

mitigation, energy efficiency and natural resource conservation. The eight missions are :

1. National Solar Mission
2. National Mission for Enhanced Energy Efficiency
3. National Mission on Sustainable Habitat
4. National Water Mission
5. National Mission for Sustaining the Himalayan Ecosystem
6. National Mission for a Green India
7. National Mission for sustainable Agriculture, and
8. National Mission on Strategic Knowledge for Climate Change.

All of these missions have been implemented and considerable progress has been scored by sincere implementation. The action plan has been extended up to year 2025-26.

**2. India's Ambitious INDCs :** India has already submitted her Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) plan under the Paris Climate change agreement, 2015. It the following targets :

- (a) Scaling up renewable energy up to 50 per cent of the total electricity by the year 2030.
- (b) Achieving the target of 45 per cent energy efficiency by the year 2030 over the level of 2005.
- (c) Creating an addition carbon sink of about 2.5 to 3.0 billion tonnes by the year 2030 through addition tree cover.
- (d) To put forward and further propagate an environment-friendly life style among people under the LIFE (Lifestyle for Environment) programme.
- (e) Other measures include enhancing investments in climate measures, mobilizing additional domestic and global funds and capacity building for climate change measures.
- (f) India has also announced the target of Zero-Emission to be achieved by 2070.

**3. Long Term Low Carbon Development Strategy :** In COP27 in 2022, India announced her Long term Low Carbon Development Strategy, which includes the following ambitious initiatives :

**First,** Rational utilization of natural resources with due regards to the energy security.

**Second,** Ambitious programme for enhancing the production of green hydrogen in the country. Also India announced the tripling the Nuclear power generation by the year 2030.

**Third,** India will increase the production and use of ethanol and other bio-fuel. India has fixed the target of 20 per cent mixing of ethanol in petrol by the year 2025. India has announced the promotion of electrical vehicles under new national strategy.

**Fourth,** India will promote climate resilient urban development under smart city initiative.

**Fifth,** within the framework of make in India programme India will promote clean energy transition in industrial development.

#### (B) Global Level Initiatives

India has taken a number of initiatives for climate change at global level :

**1. International Solar Alliance (ISA)** was launched in 2015 to promote solar energy. So far 110 countries have joined this initiative.

**2.** In order to address the vulnerabilities of Island countries, India launched Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) in 2019.

**3.** India with Sweden launched the Leadership Group for Industry Transition (Lead IT) in 2019, which aims at promoting clean energy transition in big industries.

**4. Global Fuel Alliance :** During the G-20 Summit India and other countries launched the Global Fuel Alliance, which will promote production and use of Bio-fuels across the world. Bio-fuels have low carbon emission and are environment friendly.

In brief, India has adopted an inclusive and comprehensive approach to address the climate change crisis. It is based on the notion of climate justice advanced by India. India has consistently represented the voice of Global South in climate change negotiations. India has also outlined and implemented ambitious plan both at domestic and international level to address the climate change crisis. India's newly announced Long Term Low Carbon Development Strategy, has the potential to make a desirable impact in moving towards a clean economy and an environment-friendly lifestyle. [Plugging](#)



# Developed Countries Dominate : World Trade Organisation

—Shrawan Kumar Singh

## Introduction

The global trade order is undergoing a transformation along with geopolitical events. The very concept of global trade is being rewritten, and new global alliances are emerging. Globalization, however, produces both winners and losers. Trade produces prosperity but also inequality. It can have devastating effects on the manufacturing sector if it is subjected to subsidized or dumped products and exchange rate manipulation.

The WTO is the legal and institutional foundation of largest multi-lateral trading system, has increasingly drawn the ire of the developing countries that view the organization as complacent because countries skirt the rules to get ahead. It has been a key site of struggle over global power relations. WTO is committed to improving free trade amongst its member countries, however, its role has been controversial—creating polarised views.

## Criticisms of the WTO

Various scholars have highlighted the weaknesses of the WTO :

1. Free Trade benefits developed countries more than developing countries. It is argued that WTO trade rules are like 'pulling away the ladder developed countries used to climb up.
2. Most favoured nation principle. Countries should trade without discrimination. But, this gives an unfair advantage to multinational companies and can have costs for local firms and the right of developing economies to favour their own emerging industries.
3. Failure to reduce tariffs on agriculture. Both the US and EU retain high tariffs on agriculture, this hurts farmers in developing economies who face tariff protection.

4. **Diversification** : Many of the existing industrialized nations used tariff protection when they were developing. Therefore, the WTO has been criticized for being unfair and ignoring the needs of developing countries.

5. **Environment** : In an era of global warming and potential environmental disaster, increasing GDP may be the least important. Arguably the WTO should do more to promote environmental considerations.

6. Free trade ignores cultural and social factors. Some criticize the WTO for enabling the domination of multinational companies which reduce cultural diversity and tend to swamp local industries and firms.

7. It is said that WTO structure enables the richer countries to win what they desire; arguably they benefit the most.

8. Trade rounds have been notoriously slow and difficult to reach an agreement.

9. WTO becoming overshadowed by the transatlantic trade and investment partnership (TIPP) agreements which fall outside the domain of WTO rules.

Developing countries have been completely sidelined by the economic and political interests of global powers. WTO failed to curb the speedy increase in the number of protectionist measures applied by G-20 countries in response to the global economic crisis over the past two years despite G-20 leaders' repeated affirmations of their 'unwavering' commitment to resist all forms of protectionist measures.

## Concerns of Developing Countries

The WTO has been long accused of being unfair to developing countries. Developing countries suffer more from the disruption of trade

agreements with other countries simply because they have less influence on the global economy. The WTO has been dominated by the US and other rich countries and developing countries continue to face following problems :

(1) India is now a signatory to a number of plurilateral and bilateral preferential or free trade agreements (FTA). As major WTO negotiations have stalled in recent years, many countries have turned to bilateral or plurilateral trade agreements.

(2) Despite the fact that international trade is more streamlined and interconnected than ever before, there are still a number of issues confront global trade. Given the contemporary scenario, the issues in world trade are multifold. The world trading system is in a state of flux characterized by new developments and uncertainties about global trade governance under the WTO.

(3) Developing countries are feeling the heat of rising tariffs and intellectual property theft and counterfeiting. When nations believe that other nations are stealing their trade secrets, the consequences can be severe. Despite the growing awareness around the issue and actions being taken to deal with it, intellectual property theft continues to be a major issue.

(4) Issues in the area of agri trade, OECD has rightly remarked that market distortions remain significant in this key area of global trade. "Agriculture and agro-food products overall face higher trade barriers than industrial goods. Tariffs applied to agricultural products are on average three times higher than for industrial goods. Agro-food products are facing non-tariff measures. These include quotas (banned for other products) as well as regulations which sometimes be more trade restrictive than necessary. Support to agricultural producers largely by developed coun-

tries remains high, with over two thirds provided via measures that distort production and trade strongly”.

(5) Trade in services which has evolved dramatically, as a result of technological advances, changing business practices, and deeper global integration. But multilateral rules are not keeping pace with changes in this sector. Similarly, following areas need proper regulations :

- (a) TBT – Technical Barriers to Trade
- (b) SPS – Sanitary + Phitosanitary
- (c) Private Standards
- (d) Custom Rules
- (e) Investments
- (f) Competition
- (g) Environment + climate change
- (h) Fragmentation of rules and regulatory cohesion

(6) Digitalisation is changing what and how of trade and is raising complex new issues for trade rules. Regulatory issues in global trade are continuing. Digital commerce allows firms of all sizes, anywhere in the world, to gain access to new markets. But many developing countries lack the necessary technical, regulatory, financial, and educational infrastructure and are at risk of being left behind.

(7) WTO does not have adequate rules to address the exchange rate issue. Multiple international bodies have highlighted that the global economy continues to face challenge of tightened financial conditions. Almost all countries are facing an unprecedented level of uncertainty and change in global trade.

### **Domination of Developed Countries**

The Western countries managed to get the moratorium on customs duties on e-commerce extended till up to March 31, 2024, which will greatly benefit their industry. At MC-2022, the WTO chose to side with the pharma lobby. An unworkable TRIPS waiver demonstrates that developing countries have no power at the WTO. The world expected the WTO to act on the right side of the pandemic history.

There has been a decisive shift to new non-trade issues, which include environment and sustainable development. These are important, but non-trade issues are dealt in other

global agencies. This shows a decisive shift of the WTO to non-trade issues of business interest to developed countries. The outcome of MC12 on most issues was low in content and high on legalese and rhetoric. The WTO continues to serve the interests of developed countries at the expense of everyone else. It needs to be more representative to justify its name. But, WTO's eroding credibility as a consensus builder is worrying.

The developed countries are advanced and less populated, whereas the developing countries is more populous and playing catch up with the developed world. This dichotomy is real and cannot be brushed under the carpet. The above points make it clear that the WTO will not be able to act in the interests of developing countries. It has been argued that the developed world deftly masks its own subsidies, while asking the rest to set their houses in order.

### **Intellectual Property Rights**

However, the WTO's failure to include diagnostics and therapeutics in the patent waiver deal along with vaccines drew strongest criticism. This so-called compromise largely reiterates developing countries' existing rights to override patents in certain circumstances. And it tries to restrict even that limited right to countries which do not already have capacity to produce COVID-19 vaccines. Put simply, it is a technocratic fudge aimed at saving reputations, not lives.

### **India and WTO Ministerial Conferences (MCs)**

The WTO Ministerial Conference is the highest decision-making body in the WTO and it can change the existing rules/create new rules which are binding in perpetuity on its 164 members. There has been a salient feature at MCs of WTO, a quid pro quo in the process of negotiation.

Right from the very beginning opinions are sharply divided on whether the outcome of MCs was a success or failed to tackle the issues at hand. At the MCs, the prevailing condition is such that India or for that matter any country, has to make compromises in other areas of the negotiations. One must not forget that a country's initial negotiating

position is aspirational in nature and the country's realistic expectations are pegged much lower than its initial demand. In this respect, it is important to keep in mind that the perspective from which decisions are viewed has an important bearing on the conclusions drawn.

As an interim measure to a permanent solution, a peace clause had been negotiated at MC9 in Bali (2013), prohibiting legal challenges to public stockholding (PSH), subject to certain conditions. The peace clause is mandated to continue till a permanent solution is worked out.

In fact, the Government of India has decided to make a case for G2G food exports from public stocks at the WTO Ministerial in Geneva. India has secured an indefinite peace clause on food procurement in November 2014 (a year after the Bali Ministerial) pending a permanent solution to food procurement. There should be no let up here.

The developed countries contend that India's price support and input subsidies are way above the WTO's threshold. According to the WTO's Agreement on Agriculture, subsidies to farm producers (with reference to an international benchmark) should not exceed 10 per cent of the value of a product. The problem arises from the basis of calculation of the global benchmark, and in the overestimation of product subsidy.

### **Urgent Need for WTO Reforms**

The WTO needs fundamental structural changes. A preferable global trading system should be able to build system focused on the economic and social well-being of developing countries. The WTO makes most of its decisions by consensus and achieving consensus between 164 countries is nearly impossible. But this shows another failure of the WTO: to break the link between market size and political weight that would give small and poor countries a voice in the trade negotiations. Scholars have expressed that as long as small and poor countries remain without a voice, the WTO has failed to live up to its promises, which reveals a wider systemic problem in the global community. True and lasting solutions to

global economic problems can only come when the model of global competitiveness between countries becomes one of genuine cooperation.

In the contemporary situation, because of the absence of global rules, it is crucial that governments take into account this situation at the multilateral level to focus beyond responses to past issues. The gaps in the rulebook call for reform and modernisation of the WTO, across both its monitoring and transparency and its negotiating functions.

In order to create an effective 21st century multilateral trading system, there is a need to strengthen the global trading system to help developing countries address trade-related constraints to growth. The foundations of the rules-based global trade regime remain firm but have been shaken, so reforms are needed. All countries should explore the untapped benefits that further trade reform can bring to the global economy. Advanced and developing countries alike will need help to smooth the transition from manufacturing to services.

In the contemporary scenario, the principal trade mechanism is mega-regional free trade agreements (FTAs). Increasingly, multilateralism is no longer at the heart of global trade, notwithstanding the 12th Ministerial Conference agreements of June 2022. FTAs continue to expand in number with the EU and East Asia leading the way. There's still lots of hope for the future of trade, despite various tensions. Thanks to increase in modern technology, international trade is still thriving. Export numbers continue to grow worldwide and new trade deals signed regularly.

The developing nations need long term hand holding to evolve, so that sooner than later negotiations are conducted at an equal footing. Structural changes in the WTO need to take cognisance of this.

### Conclusion

Today an increasing number of policy makers and stakeholders question the need for and benefits of the rules-based multilateral trading system. In this sense, it is no exaggeration to claim that the WTO is in an existential crisis, with both the functioning of the WTO's disputes

settlement system undermined, lack of progress in negotiations, and trade wars breaking out between leading members such as the US, China, and the EU.

In the 28 years since the WTO pledged (1995) to deliver pro-development changes, "developing countries have been completely sidelined by the global powers". There is a wider problem in the global economy and because of that true and lasting solutions can only come when the model of global competitiveness between countries becomes one of genuine cooperation. Angela Ellard (WTO deputy director-general) has asserted that "the US and India have agreed to resolve their seven outstanding disputes at the WTO.

This assumes significance as WTO reform takes centre stage ahead of the 13th ministerial conference in 2024. It is expected that disputes settlement body will become fully functional and accessible to all by 2024. India has suggested 34 operational changes to the WTO, which include resolving old issues before adding new ones, and a time-bound work programme to make dispute settlement more accessible for the developing countries. Discussion should concentrate on about what the WTO should be doing on substantive issues that are the most compelling issues of the time.

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*Continued from Page 79*

### Global River Cities Alliance (GRCA)—Introduction and Significance

GRCA is a unique alliance including more than 275 global river-cities in 11 countries, international funding agencies and knowledge management partners and is first of its kind in the world. The GRCA signifies a momentous step in global efforts toward river conservation and sustainable water management. Following this, partner countries are poised to coordinate post-COP activities, shaping the architecture of GRCA for effective implementation.

#### Key Facts :

- The significance of the River Cities Alliance (RCA), launched in 2021 to foster the sustainable

development of river cities with the collaboration between Namami Gange and the Mississippi River Cities and Towns Initiative (MRCTI), marked by the signing of a Memorandum of Collaboration (MoCP).

- RCA has expanded to include 143 member cities in India, including the city of Aarhus, Denmark and has emerged as a catalyst for key frameworks for sustainable urban river management. The efforts of RCA have received recognition and appreciation from international stakeholders.
- Starting with the world's largest sanitation intervention of Swatch Bharat Mission in which 100 million toilets in rural areas and 6 million in urban areas were built in 2014-2019 period;
- The starting of Namami Gange in 2014 to clean and rejuvenate the holy Ganga River, the program which has now become one of the top 10 World Restoration Flagships; launching of AMRUT and smart cities projects in 2015 for the improvement in urban water sector; formation of in Ministry of Jal Shakti in 2019; launching of "Jal Jeevan Mission" in 2019 to provide functional tap connections to every rural household and the "Jal Shakti Abhiyan : Catch the Rain" campaign in 2021; enactment of Dam Safety Act in 2021 etc., the initiatives are pioneering.

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# Climate System's Biggest Player-El Nino

—Bhupendra Prasad Joshi

Indian agriculture has witnessed remarkable growth over the past several decades, with foodgrain production surging from 51 million tons (MT) to 330 MT. At present contribution of agriculture to GDP is 17-20%. The Agriculture production mainly depends on southwest monsoon. Primarily the Indian sub-continent's rainy season is due to Southwest Monsoon, which falls during June to September of the year. During this time, the country receives nearly 75% of its annual rainfall. The irrigation facilities are very poor and mainly depend on SW monsoons. Many factors contribute to the onset and progress of SW monsoon winds. One of them is El Nino.

El Nino is a Spanish word. The term El Nino basically means 'the child'. El Nino tends to trigger intense and widespread periods of extreme ocean warming known as marine heat waves. It is a natural phenomenon wherein the ocean temperatures rise, especially in parts of the Pacific Ocean.

El Niño is one side of the climatic coin called the El Niño-Southern Oscillation, or ENSO. It's the heads to La Nina's tails. The term La Nina literally means 'little girl'. It is termed as opposite of the phenomenon of El Niño as it results in the 'cooling' of the ocean water in parts of the Pacific Ocean. Both of them also result in changes in atmospheric conditions along with oceanic changes.

Originally, the term El Niño applied to an annual weak warm ocean current that ran southwards along the coast of Peru and Ecuador at about Christmas time. However, over time the term has evolved and now refers to the warm and negative phase of the El Niño-Southern Oscillation and is the warming of the ocean surface or above-average sea surface temperatures in the central and eastern tropical Pacific Ocean.

Scientists have also found chemical signatures of warmer sea

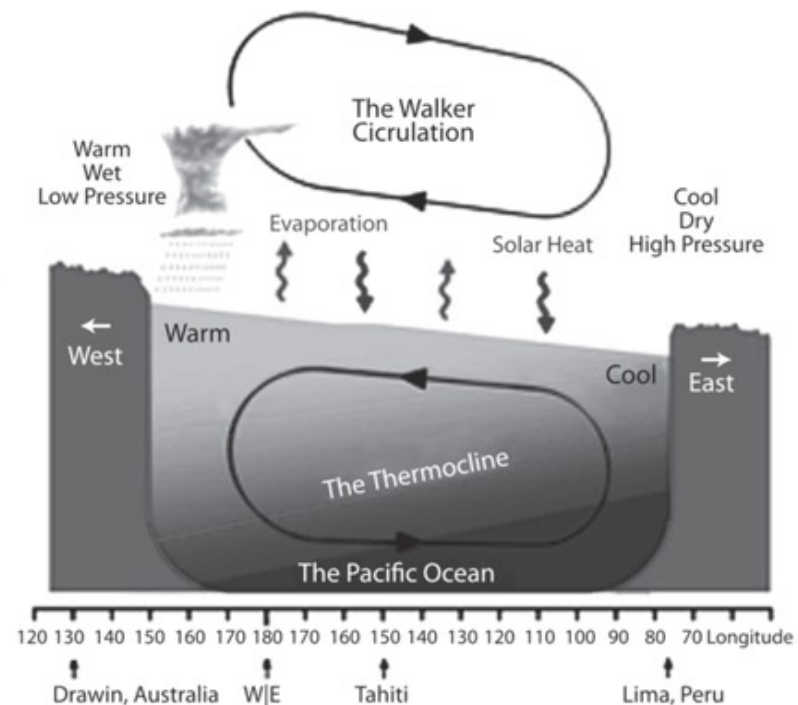
surface temperatures and increased rainfall caused by El Niño in coral specimens that are around 13,000 years old. Around 1525, when Francisco Pizarro made landfall in Peru, he noted rainfall in the deserts, the first written record of the impacts of El Niño. Modern day research and reanalysis techniques have managed to find at least 26 El Niño events since 1900, with the 1982-83, 1997-98 and 2014-16 events among the strongest on record.

The Oceanic Niño Index (ONI) is used to measure deviations from normal sea surface temperatures. The Oceanic Niño Index is a measure of the departure from normal sea surface temperature in the east-central Pacific Ocean and is the standard means by which each El Niño episode is determined, gauged, and forecast.

El Niño is accompanied by high air pressure in the western Pacific and low air pressure in the eastern Pacific. El Niño phases are known to last close to four years; however, records demonstrate that the cycles have lasted between two and seven years. During the development of El Niño, rainfall develops between September–November.

During El Niño, a swath of ocean stretching 6,000 miles (about 10,000 kilometers) westward off the coast of Ecuador warms for months on end, typically by 2 to 4 degrees Fahrenheit (about 1 to 2 degrees Celsius).

The warm water affects air currents that leave areas wetter or drier than usual. It can ramp up storms in some areas, like the southern US, while tending to tamp down Atlantic hurricane activity.



In this, parcels of air follow a closed circulation in the zonal and vertical directions. This circulation, almost consistent with observations, is caused by differences in heat distribution between ocean and land. It was discovered by Gilbert Walker.

A marine heat wave is just that : a 'wave' of extreme heat in the ocean, not dissimilar to an atmospheric heat wave on land. At their smallest, marine heat waves can inundate local bays and coves with hotter-than-normal water for a few days or weeks. Fierce marine heat waves like one in 2019 can wreak havoc on sea life off in the North American Pacific Coast.

Along the US West Coast during El Niño, surface winds that normally blow from the north tend to subside. This weakens evaporation and slows upwelling of colder, deeper water. That increases the chances of coastal marine heat waves.

Areas west of Japan and Korea tend to experience many fewer September–November tropical cyclone impacts during El Niño and neutral years.

In the Bay of Bengal east of India, interactions between El Niño and a tropical air flow pattern known as the Walker Circulation elevate the risk for marine heat waves.

The Walker circulation is caused by the pressure gradient force that results from a high pressure system over the eastern Pacific Ocean and a low pressure system over Indonesia. The Walker circulation causes an upwelling of cold deep sea water, thus cooling the sea surface. El Niño results when this circulation decreases or stops, as the impaired or inhibited circulation causes the ocean surface to warm to above average temperatures. A markedly increased Walker circulation causes a La Niña by intensifying the upwelling of cold deep sea water; which cools the sea surface to below average temperatures.

El Niño has the most direct impacts on life in the equatorial Pacific; its effects propagate north and south along the coast of the Americas, affecting marine life all around the Pacific. Changes in chlorophyll-a concentrations are visible in this animation, which compares phytoplankton in January and July 1998.

When El Niño conditions last for many months, extensive ocean warming and the reduction in easterly trade winds limits upwelling of cold nutrient-rich deep water, and its economic effect on local fishing for an international market can be serious.

A University of Cambridge Working Paper shows that while Australia, Chile, Indonesia, India, Japan, New Zealand and South Africa face a short-lived fall in economic activity in response to an El Niño shock The IMF estimates a significant El Niño can boost the GDP of the United States by about 0.5% (due largely to lower heating bills) and reduce the GDP of Indonesia by about 1.0%.

El Niño cycle is associated with increased risks of some of the diseases transmitted by mosquitoes, such as malaria, dengue fever, and Rift Valley fever. Cycles of malaria in India, Venezuela, Brazil, and Colombia have now been linked to El Niño. Outbreaks of another mosquito-transmitted disease, Australian encephalitis (Murray Valley encephalitis—MVE), occur in temperate south-east Australia after heavy rainfall and flooding, which are associated with La Niña events. A severe outbreak of Rift Valley fever occurred after extreme rainfall in north-eastern Kenya and southern Somalia during the 1997–98 El Niño.

India's monsoon rainfall for the year 2023 has hit a five-year low, marking the lowest since 2018 due to El Niño. According to the Latest projections from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's climate prediction center, the Northern Hemisphere may experience a 'strong' El Niño from March to May 2024 with a 1 in 3 chance of it being 'historically strong' (super El Niño).

Pran

*Continued from Page 94*

1. National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR), Goa,
2. Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Pune and
3. National Centre for Earth Science Studies (NCESS), Thiruvananthuram.

A fleet of oceanographic and coastal research vessels of the Ministry provide required research support for scheme.

Earth System Sciences deal with all the five components of the earth system and their complex interactions :

- I. Atmosphere,
- II. Hydrosphere,
- III. Geosphere,
- IV. Cryosphere, and
- V. Biosphere.

The Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) holistically addresses all the aspects relating to the Earth System Science. The overarching scheme of PRITHVI will holistically address all the five components of earth system to improve the understating of the Earth System Sciences and to provide reliable services for the country. Various components of PRITHVI scheme are inter-dependent and are carried out in an integrated manner through combined efforts of the concerned Institutes under MoES. The overarching scheme of Prithvi Vigyan will enable development of integrated multi-disciplinary earth science research and innovative programs across different MoES institutes. These integrated R&D efforts will help in addressing the grand challenges of weather and climate, ocean, cryosphere, seismological science and services and explore the living and non-living resources for their sustainable harnessing.

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# Unveiling Deepfake : Managing the Shadows of Synthetic Information

—Dr. Santhosh Mathew

“Deepfake is developing more rapidly than I thought. Soon, it is going to get to the point where there is no way that we can actually detect it anymore, so we have to look at other types of solutions.”

—Hao Li (Deepfake Pioneer)

Deepfakes are fake media made with deep learning technology, which have lately been a subject of increasing attention in the media, as it casts a shadow over the realm of digital-media, prompting concerns and sparking debates about its potential impact on various facets of society. The Deepfakes, in recent news events globally have shed light on the multifaceted implications of deep-fakes, from political controversies to privacy concerns. According to Maras & Alexandrou “Deepfakes are the product of artificial intelligence (AI) applications that merge, combine, replace, and superimpose images and video clips to create fake videos that appear authentic.”

Deepfakes are basically hyper-realistic falsification, fuelled by sophisticated artificial intelligence algorithms, that possess the ability to manipulate and fabricate audio-visual content to a point where distinguishing between reality and falsehood becomes a daunting task. It spreads manipulated images, videos, and audio that are published through internet and social media platforms with sophisticated computers and fake artificial intelligence-generated content. They are used as a weapon to fabricate news and conduct financial fraud. Deep fakes are superior to conventional photo-editing methods because they use machine learning algorithms. Deep learning technology, is a subfield of machine learning that uses neural net simulation on large data sets, and is the reason that it is popularly came to be known as deepfakes. Deepfake video shared on Twitter, appearing to show Russian President Vladimir

Putin declaring peace during Russia-Ukraine war is yet another example of Deepfake and its impact on socio-political context globally.

The combination of the terms ‘deep learning’ and ‘fake’ have led to the origin of the term ‘Deepfake’. According to MIT, the popularisation of the term ‘deepfake’ can be traced back to the year 2017, after a Reddit user, with the username ‘deepfakes’, posted explicit videos of celebrities.

Deepfake technology has rapidly evolved, enabling the creation of hyper-realistic videos and audio recordings that mimic real individuals. This technology employs machine learning algorithms, often based on neural networks, to analyse and replicate the subtle nuances of a person’s facial expressions, voice, and gestures. As a result, deepfakes can convincingly depict individuals saying or doing things they never did.

The famous portrait of US President Abraham Lincoln from 1865 contains the first instance of face manipulation in literature. The advancement of computer graphics technology has made it simple to manipulate faces in digital images. The development of facial manipulation technology has advanced significantly due to recent advancements in the field of deep learning. The current deepfake algorithms can be classified into two categories based on the distinct objectives of face manipulation algorithms : (1) face reenactment and (2) face swapping.

Deepfake are produced mainly by four main categories of people : (1) Deepfake hobbyist communities; (2) political actors, including foreign governments and various activists; (3) other malicious actors, which includes fraudsters; and (4) legitimate actors, including TV companies. People who participate in deepfake hobby communities are hard to find. It only took a few months for a newly

formed deepfake hobbyist community to reach 90,000 members after one user posted celebrity porn deep-fakes to Reddit in late 2017, while some enthusiasts concentrate on deepfakes with pornographic themes, others use celebrity cameos to create comedic effects in films where they never appeared.

## Advantages of Deepfake Technology

**Film Industries :** There are several ways that deepfake technology can help the film industry. For instance, it can be used to update film footage rather than reshoot it or to create digital voices for actors who have lost theirs due to illness. In post-production, filmmakers will have the ability to use advanced face editing and special effects to elevate amateur videos to professional levels, as well as recreate iconic movie scenes and make new films featuring actors who have passed away. Deepfake technology also makes it possible for films to be automatically and realistically voice-dubbed into any language, improving the viewing experience for a variety of audiences and enhancing their access to media for education. In an educational ad, David Beckham utilised voice and visual alteration technology to appear multilingual, shattering language barriers as part of a global malaria awareness campaign in 2019. Similar to this, deepfake technology can help people communicate more effectively during video conferences by translating speech while also changing mouth and facial gestures to improve eye contact and give the impression that everyone is speaking the identical language. Deepfake technology can be used in Film dubbing to produce realistic lip-syncing for actors who speak different languages, making the film more accessible and immersive for global audiences. For instance, deepfake technology was used to

create a video that launched a petition to end malaria, in which celebrities like Hugh Jackman, David Beckham, and Bill Gates spoke in various languages.

**Media Domain :** Deepfakes' technology allows for more telepresence in multiplayer games and virtual chat environments, as well as realistic-sounding and looking smart assistants and digital personas. This promotes improved online communication and interpersonal relationships.

**Education and Deep Learning :** Deepfake technology can help teachers deliver engaging lessons by bringing historical figures to life in the classroom or by creating interactive simulations of various scenarios. For instance, students studying the American Civil War could be taught about Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address via the use of a deepfake video of Lincoln.

Redeeming the application for Deep Learning, the advent of deep learning has made progress possible in areas like voice restoration and historical figure recreation. The potential advantages of deep learning are demonstrated by the ALS Association's voice cloning initiative and recreations of famous people and artists.

**Social and Medical Domains :** In the social and medical domains, technology can also be advantageous. By virtually 'bringing a deceased friend back to life', deepfakes can potentially assist a bereaved loved one in saying goodbye to their departed friend. This can help people cope up with the loss of a loved one. Moreover, it can be used to digitally reconstruct an amputee's limb or help transgender individuals better understand their preferred gender. Even interacting with a younger face that they may remember can be beneficial for Alzheimer's patients with deepfake technology. Additionally, researchers are investigating the application of GANs (Generative Adversarial Networks) in X-ray abnormality detection and their potential for generating virtual chemical molecules to expedite advances in materials science and medicine.

**Business and Economic Domain :** The potential of brand-applicable deepfake technology has businesses intrigued because it has the potential to significantly alter advertising and e-commerce. In order to showcase fashion ensembles on a diverse range of models with varying skin tones, heights, and weights, brands have the ability to hire super models who are not actually super models. Moreover, deepfakes enable super personal content in which users become models; the technology allows users to virtually try on clothes before making a purchase and creates tailored fashion advertisements that change based on the viewer, the time of day, and the weather. A clear potential application of the technology is the ability to try on clothing quickly online. It also enables users to virtually experience a wedding venue and try on a suit or bridal gown in addition to creating digital clones of themselves and bringing them with them to e-stores. Moreover, AI can produce distinctive artificial voices that set brands apart from products and companies.

### **Disadvantages and Challenges of Deepfakes Technology**

According to De Keersmaecker & Roets "spreading false information is easy, correcting the record and combating deepfakes are harder." Deepfakes, or synthetic media created by artificial intelligence (AI), have the potential to distort reality and manipulate public perception, they also hold promise in various fields including criminal forensics, filmmaking, education, and artistic expression. In the current scenario, this is more often used for deceptive purposes, to manufacture evidence, to harm someone's reputation, and to erode public confidence in poorly funded democratic institutions. Therefore, the difficulty and the challenge lies in using this technology responsibly, considering its effects in South Asian society.

PM Narendra Modi cautioned about how Deepfake generated by AI can lead to a big crisis and stoke discontent in society. He also urged the media to raise awareness about its misuse and educate people. He further mentioned about his own

experience of watching his own video of performing garba even though he has not done so since his school days.

**Political Manipulation :** One of the alarming trends associated with deepfakes is their potential to influence political narratives. Recent incidents have highlighted how malicious actors can use deepfake technology to create fabricated videos of political figures making controversial statements or engaging in unethical behaviour. These manipulated videos can be weaponized to sway public opinion, damage reputations, and even destabilize political environments. Non-state actors have the ability to incite people against states by using deepfakes. Elections and other democratic procedures can be subverted with the use of deepfakes.

**Erosion of Trust :** The proliferation of deepfakes poses a significant threat to trust in the digital age. With the ability to fabricate convincing content, individuals and institutions may find it increasingly challenging to authenticate the veracity of information circulating online. The erosion of trust extends beyond politics, affecting various sectors such as journalism, where the line between authentic reporting and manipulated content becomes blurred.

**Social Implications :** Beyond the realm of politics, deepfake technology raises ethical and social concerns. Instances of deepfake revenge porn, where individuals' faces are superimposed onto explicit content, have been reported, causing emotional distress, and raising questions about consent and digital privacy. The potential for misuse in personal relationships underscores the need for stringent measures to combat the dark side of synthetic media.

### **How to Check Deepfakes Video and Audio**

To handle deepfakes developing technologies for deepfake identification is known as detection has been developed. Social media companies have also initiated the concept of 'verified accounts' to foster trust.

**Big Tech's Countermeasures :** Large internet companies such as Microsoft, Google, and Meta have

denounced deepfake technology and are developing tools to identify it. To combat false information, Microsoft is specifically developing Microsoft Video Authenticator, a new anti-deep fake technology. One suggestion to counter deepfakes suggests using NFTs (Non-Fungible Tokens) as a potential fix.

**Technological Counter Measures :** In response to the growing threat of deepfakes, researchers and tech companies are actively developing counter measures. From deepfake detection tools to blockchain-based authentication systems, efforts are underway to equip individuals and organizations with the means to identify and mitigate the impact of synthetic media. However, the cat-and-mouse game between deepfake creators and those working to counter them remains dynamic.

**The Indian Perspective on Addressing Deepfakes :** The use of deep fake technology is not specifically prohibited or regulated by laws or regulations in India. There are laws in place that address some aspects of deepfakes, like publishing explicit material and defamation, such as Sections 67 and 67A of the Information Technology Act (2000). Defamation is criminalised under Indian Penal Code (1860) Section 500. If approved, the Personal Data Protection Bill (2022) might offer some defence against inappropriate utilisation of personal data, but it makes no mention of deepfakes. Given the possible effects on privacy, social stability, national security, and democracy, India needs to create a thorough legislative framework that targets deepfakes specifically. The government's concerns about the potential for bad actors to use advances in AI technology to conduct scams or discredit people impersonating them led to the creation of the official rules known as "The Administrative Provisions on Deep Synthesis for Internet Information Services." The regulators also acknowledge the potential applications of these technologies.

### **Global Perspectives and Initiatives to Counter Deepfakes**

**European Union :** The European Union updated its 2018 Code of

Practise on Disinformation in 2022 to curb the spread of false information via deepfakes.

**The United States :** In the US, there were roughly a dozen bills at the federal and state levels in 2019 that regulated deep fakes. The bipartisan Deepfake Task Force Act was introduced in the United States to support the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in combating deepfake technology. These laws cover everything from making it illegal to use a woman's likeness without her consent in a pornographic movie (Virginia Law) to regulating the proper use of a deceased person's data (New York Law) and handling cheap fakes (low-tech digital frauds that do not require artificial intelligence).

**China :** With effect from 10th January, 2023, China has implemented a comprehensive regulation on deep synthesis. The regulation mandates transparent labelling and traceability of deep synthesis content to combat misinformation. Individual consent is required, as is observance of the law and public morals. Establishing review procedures and working with authorities are requirements for service-providers. Regulations that forbid using deepfakes without subjects' consent or portraying or saying anything that might be deemed contrary to the interests of the country have been issued by the CAC (Cyber-space Administration of China).

**The South Asian Context :** South Asia, with its diverse cultures and complex geopolitical landscape, is not immune to the deepfake phenomenon. Recent incidents in the region have highlighted the susceptibility of political figures and public personalities to deepfake manipulation. The potential for deepfakes to exacerbate existing tensions and contribute to misinformation campaigns underscores the need for regional collaboration in addressing this evolving threat.

### **Way Forward-Solution**

**Media Literacy :** Media literacy is the most effective tool by which the flow of disinformation and deepfake could be controlled. Deepfakes are a threat, so it is up to us all to be vigilant Internet users, consider our

actions before sharing anything on social media, and contribute to the 'infodemic' solution. Social media fact-checking : AI-Powered Future engage social media platforms to invest in artificial intelligence (AI)-driven algorithms and tools that can automatically identify and flag potentially manipulated or deepfake content. This is known as social media fact-checking. To swiftly address and take action against the dissemination of false information through deepfakes, work with fact-checking organisations and harness the power of public-participation.

**Blockchain-based Deepfake Verification :** Make use of blockchain technology to establish an unalterable record of the creators of digital media and to guarantee transparency when authenticating it. This decentralised method discourages the production and spread of malevolent deepfakes by enabling people to track the origin and modification history of media.

**Policy to Mitigate the Impact of Deepfake :** Create a fund to assist people and institutions impacted by deepfakes.

**Act for the Deepfake Accountability (DAA) :** DAA can be implemented to address the issues raised by deepfakes and guarantee responsibility for their production, dissemination, and management.

**Penalties and Public Awareness Initiatives :** Legislation ought to penalise dishonest parties and shield people from the manipulation of their online personas. It is imperative to raise public awareness and promote digital and scientific literacy in order to stop the spread of deepfakes.

In conclusion, the rise of deepfake technology poses profound challenges in the context of South Asia as well as globally to the way we perceive and trust digital media. As the arms race between creators and detectors of synthetic media continues, society must remain vigilant and proactive in developing strategies to mitigate the impact of deepfakes. From technological innovations to robust legal frameworks, a multifaceted approach is necessary to navigate the shadows of synthetic media and preserve the integrity of information in the digital age.



# How Important Mountains are Needed for Our Ecological Balance

—Avdhesh Kumar



Mountains are an important source of water, energy and biological diversity. Furthermore, they are a source of such key resources as minerals, forest products and agricultural products and of recreation. As a major ecosystem representing the complex and interrelated ecology of our planet, mountain environments are essential to the survival of the global ecosystem. Mountain ecosystems are, however, rapidly changing.

They are susceptible to accelerated soil erosion, landslides and rapid loss of habitat and genetic diversity. On the human side, there is widespread poverty among mountain inhabitants and loss of indigenous knowledge. As a result, most global mountain areas are experiencing environmental degradation. Hence, the proper management of mountain resources and socio-economic development of the people deserves immediate action.

## COP28 and Mountains Ecological Balance Issue

- Mountains, high-latitude areas and the cryosphere are critical components of our planet's ecological balance. Recognizing their importance in the face of accelerating climate impacts, the COP28 UN Climate Change Conference highlighted the urgent need to bridge adaptation knowledge gaps in these regions.

### About COP28

- COP28 refers to the United Nations Climate Change Conference taking place in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, from 30 November until 12 December, 2023.
- UN Climate Change conferences (or COPs) take place every year, and are the world's only multilateral decision-making forum on climate change with almost complete membership of every country in the world.
- To put it simply, the COP is where the world comes together to agree on ways to address the climate crisis, such as limiting global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius, helping vulnerable communities adapt to the effects of climate change, and achieving net-zero emissions by 2050.
- More than 70,000 delegates are expected to attend COP28, including the member states (or Parties) of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Business leaders, young people, climate scientists, Indigenous Peoples, journalists, and various other experts and stakeholders are also among the participants.
- Officially, COP28 stands for the 28th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the UNFCCC.
- The 16th Focal Point Forum, held during COP28, shed light on the challenges faced by these areas and proposed concrete steps for intervention in 2024 under the Nairobi Work Programme

(NWP)—a network of over 450 organizations working to close knowledge gaps and scale up climate adaptation action in countries.

## The Importance of Mountains for Climate Action

- Mountains, with their rich biological and cultural diversity, play a crucial role for the livelihoods of millions of people.
- In 2010, almost 10% of the global population – around 671 million people – lived in high mountain regions, a number expected to grow to 736–844 million by 2050.
- With climate change significantly impacting these regions, access to context-specific knowledge is essential for mountainous countries to implement effective adaptation actions.
- Environmental changes in high mountain areas are evident and alarming.
- Central Asia, for example, has lost over 1000 glaciers in the last 50 years, glaciers in the Swiss Alps have experienced a 10% volume loss in just two years, and the lowest snow cover in the last 30 years was recorded in 2022 in the Alpine regions of the Danube, Po, Rhone and Rhine rivers.
- “We need to take care of mountains, high-latitude areas and the cryosphere, and these regions will, in turn, help us to take care of people and the planet,” said Stefan Uhlenbrook, Director of Hydrology, Water and Cryosphere at the World Meteorological Organization.

## Knowledge Gaps and Challenges

During the event at COP28, several knowledge gaps were highlighted :

- Observational knowledge gaps, particularly in understanding cryosphere variables like permafrost extent, glacier ice volumes and snow cover variation.
- Limited studies comparing past impacts and future risks across mountain regions.
- Gaps in the assessment of cost-benefits and long-term effectiveness of adaptation solutions.
- Cultural and livelihood erosion in the Arctic is forcing communities to relocate, leaving behind their land, culture and history.
- A representative of Bhutan, a landlocked country dependent on hydropower, highlighted the issues it faces due to the retreat of glaciers, and emphasized the need for finance to manage related loss and damage.
- They shared the country's experience implementing innovative finance mechanisms and community-led adaptation initiatives and stressed the importance of planning through concrete national adaptation plans (NAPs).
- "Mountains, high-latitude areas and the cryosphere are common resources shared by countries in some regions. Actors need to leverage this to identify common actions and interests to facilitate

#### International Mountain Day

- The United Nations General Assembly designated 11 December "International Mountain Day". As of 2003, it has been observed every year to create awareness about the importance of mountains to life, to highlight the opportunities and constraints in mountain development and to build alliances that will bring positive change to mountain peoples and environments around the world.
- The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is the coordinating agency for the preparation and animation of this celebration and is mandated to lead observance of it at the global level. The Mountain Partnership Secretariat in the FAO Forestry Division is responsible for coordinating this international process.

adaptation and sustainable development," said Tashi Pem, Director General at the Department of Environment and Climate Change, Bhutan.

#### Next Steps Under the Nairobi Work Programme

During the 16th Focal Point Forum on understanding and closing adaptation knowledge gaps in mountains, high-latitude areas, and the cryosphere held at COP28, countries, partners and experts expressed their interest to collaborate with the NWP, and outlined the areas which could be addressed going forward, as the work on mountains will be a priority under the NWP next year :

- **Evidence-based knowledge sharing** : Promoting successful adaptation cases and transboundary cooperation in mountainous regions.
- **Context-specific knowledge curation** : Developing tailored solutions for mountain regions, such as adapting global impact indicators to national and local contexts.
- **Strategic partnerships for action** : Co-designing solutions to tackle knowledge barriers, strengthening national, regional and international policy frameworks, including NAPs.
- **Creating an enabling environment** : Strengthening financial support for adaptation efforts in mountains, high-latitude are the cryosphere.
- Lorena Pérez Roa, Division of Environment, Climate Change and Oceans, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Chile, said : "We have learned from our country's experience that we can't simply resolve climate impacts on our own; we need to be inclusive, and inclusivity starts by addressing knowledge gaps and then transmitting the knowledge to all relevant actors."

#### Some Other Global Initiatives for Mountain Conservation

Recognizing the importance of mountains and the need for their conservation, several global initiatives and organizations are working towards protecting these ecosystems. Here are a few example :

- **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** : The SDGs include specific targets related to mountains, such as Goal 15 : Life on Land, which aims to protect and restore terrestrial ecosystems, including mountains.
- **Mountain Partnership** : The Mountain Partnership is an international alliance of governments, organizations, and communities dedicated to sustainable mountain development. It promotes policy advocacy, knowledge sharing, and capacity building for mountain regions.
- **International Mountain Day** : Observed annually on December 11th, International Mountain Day raises awareness about the importance of mountains and promotes sustainable development practices. It encourages governments, organizations, and individuals to take action for mountain conservation. Pharjan

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#### When it comes to Top Service Preference, 'IAS' is on Wish-list, but not for Everyone

Now a new trend is visible and many candidates keep first preference matching their aptitude and many such instances are getting observed.

Undoubtedly, Indian Administrative Service (IAS) is the top-most choice, but now it is common to find some candidates opting for Indian Police Services (IPS) or may be Indian Revenue Service (IRS) as first preference.

Yes, there is still some fascination for Indian Foreign Service (IFS) that used to be a craze decades ago.

We have seen top-rankers, otherwise eligible to get IAS, pick up post of their choice and remain happy with it.

Whatever your choices are, for all of you aspiring to appear in Civil Services Exam, the time has come to act on your dream and make efforts to convert it into reality.

In real terms authenticity of your dream is under check. How real your dream is and how much you have shown seriousness towards it. So, now all set to take the first step to convert your dreams in to reality.

Pharjan

## Role of Educational Institutions in Developing Human Values

—Dr. Bharat Singh Negi

'Education in Human Values' needs to be incorporated as an integral component of the entire educational system. This aspect had gained the attention of various high-powered Commissions and Committees in the Post-independence period. The Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) observed, "Religious and moral instructions do play an important role in the growth of character". The Education Commission (1964-66) recommended that "conscious and organized attempts need to be made for imparting education in social, moral, and spiritual values with the help, where possible of the ethical teachings of great religions". The National Policy on Education (1986) observed that at the stage of secondary education, "students should be provided a sense of history and national perspective and given opportunities to understand their constitutional duties and rights as citizens. Conscious internalization of healthy work-ethos and values of a humane and composite culture should be brought about through appropriately formulated curricula".

Erosion of values is a matter of concern to all those concerned with education. It is not only in India, deterioration in human values has attracted a lot of attention at international level, too (Nanzhao, 1996). It is in the educational circles that the action has to be planned and executed to provide opportunity to all to live effectively in a multi-cultural environment. The educational system and educationists are being fully aware of their role in regard to transmission of the values cherished in their culture. The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Human Resource Development (1999) observed, "It is disappointing that well concerted efforts made during the last four decades have failed to achieve the desired

results. Well chalked out plans and strategies for making our education value-oriented still remain on paper".

Values are viewed as socially approved goals and desires, those are internalized through the process of conditioning, learning or socialization and become subjective preferences, standards and aspirations (Kluckhohn, 1951). They are classified as physical, mental, emotional, economic, aesthetic, moral, religious, cultural and spiritual. Conceptually, 'values' refer to those guiding principles of life which are conducive to one's physical and mental health as well as to social welfare and adjustment and which are in tune with one's culture and environment. Psychologists have categorized values in terms of the domain of behaviour to which they refer. Allport, Vernon and Lindzey (1951) have offered a classification of values based on Spranger's (1928) 'Types of Men'. This includes— theoretical, economic, aesthetic, social, political and religious aspects of human life. This classification of values is the most popular among educational researchers. The word 'value' is being used in several contexts; e.g., moral, aesthetic, spiritual, economic and social values etc. with various shades of meaning. Zavalloni (1980) considered 'values' as orientations towards what is considered to be desirable or preferable by social factors. The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary (1993, Vol. 2) states that 'value' is worth, utility, desirability, and quality on which these depend. Although the word 'worth' is of Latin origin (e.g., 'Valere' in Latin and 'Valeur' in French), yet 'worth' has been regarded as an equivalent of value (Gupta, 1978). A 'value' says Webster (1984), is "a principle, standard or quality regarded as worthwhile or desirable".

Value education programmes are needed in all types of educational institutions. These may focus on life

experiences related to the immediate environment leading to moral judgement. The sources of content at school-level may be folk-tales, stories, poems and parables. Besides, biographies of great men may also be a useful source for inculcating proper values. In addition to these—music, drama and other co-curricular activities may also provide the messages more aptly. It is worth mentioning that an effective programme of value education must have a sound foundation of basic values, which are universally accepted. These may include—love for truth, righteousness, peace, love and non-violence. The eternal value of truth will lead to quest for knowledge and result in right conduct to fellow-beings as well as to the environment.

Growth of human values is now being emphasized as a very significant objective of the process of education. There is no doubt that the schools play a pivotal role for the inculcation of values. Schools through their various activities can make a deliberate attempt to propagate the desired and cherished values for the holistic development of an individual. It is quite important that during the teacher education programme, the teachers are introduced to the concept of value development and also made aware of the methods and techniques keeping in view the physical and psychological development of the students to promote the human values.

The University Grants Commission (UGC) has introduced a scheme of values education. This scheme aims to assist the universities and colleges in programmes, which will promote value education among teachers and students. The Commission in its meeting held on 25 May, 1995, while considering the Action Plan for Value-orientation of Education at the higher level, as prepared by the sub-group constituted by the

standing committee, felt that there was need to take a holistic approach in developmental issues. These should be integrated into the foundation course, which should also include issues like value education, human rights, environmental studies, population studies, gender-related issues etc. The Centre for Leadership and Human Values (IIM, Lucknow) recognizes the reality of leadership crisis in all forms of organizations—socio-cultural, and political. The first organized attempt at value education was initiated in IIT, Delhi in 1982, when as a sequel to a special lecture given by Late Prof. D.S. Kothari on 'Science and Human Value', a committee was constituted by the Director to look into the possibility of starting a formal course on human values for engineering students. The National Open School (NOS) has undertaken a project 'Education in Human Values', realizing the need to rejuvenate our educational system, with a view to inculcating values among learners and teachers in its accredited institutions. The NOS has set up a special Cell, 'Education in Human Values' in its Academic Department, the objective of this cell is to develop material for teachers facilitating their task of inculcating values among their learners. The reference library of National Resource Centre for Value Education, is being enriched continuously. Recently, some more literature (about 200 volumes) related to values, values in education, children's literature, life-skills, moral education, Indian cultural values, environmental education, social justice, human-rights, well-being, and the culture of excellence has been procured.

We have to inculcate human values. This is possible, when our teaching community realizes its duties, responsibilities, and obligations. It appears that teachers themselves have lost the excitement of a searching mind and therefore fail to inspire students. We teachers are also responsible for not transmitting the desired values, which are essential for all round development of an individual. Among the psychological factors affecting the child's adjustment, progress in learning, and academic performance none is as important as the teacher's behaviour

and his interaction with the pupils. A positive self-concept is essential for personal happiness, which is possible through the educational institutions responsible for value development.

Through developing human values we should develop the attitude towards cultural and natural heritage of India. Preservation of the cultural heritage is a great treasure to be valued. The Indian Constitution also highlights the need to value and preserve the rich cultural heritage of our composite-culture. Educational institutions have, therefore, great responsibility in preserving the best of our past as well as passing on the same to the future generations through developing human values. It is the sacred responsibility of all educational institutions to preserve the wisdom of Indian 'Rishis' and 'Munis' in order to develop human values.

Human values are not simply related to the welfare of human-beings, these should be considered equally significant for saving animals and plants. There should be proper ecological balance to maintain human values. The role of the educational institutions in preserving and conserving human values as related to the welfare of humanity; is to be encouraged, so that the students can understand properly about the changing scenario of the environmental hazards in relation to the changing value pattern of the modern democratic set up.

Education for peace should be covered in all institutions from primary to university levels. Both curricular and co-curricular activities should be utilized for understanding the need for peace. The crisis points out that world peace should be understood in higher classes. These may include ecological imbalances and pollution because of the over exploitation of resources. Discussions may also be held on topics like; discrimination, apartheid, oppression, conflicts, and exploitation at all levels. An individual is to be recognized as the central point of world peace. So, human values need to be implemented for maintaining global peace in all respects. Children should be helped to rise above the self. They should also be helped to understand relationships with the animal king-

dom, with plant kingdom and with the inanimate world. Importance of peace and harmony may also be understood. Children may also campaign against threats to world peace. Songs, stories, debates, discussion and dramas with humanistic themes may be used. Biographies of persons who have devoted themselves to peace will be inspiring. Use of slides, documentary, cultural exchange programme may also be quite helpful in developing human values.

To the students the bounds of the school and classrooms extend beyond the four walls and fully exploits the educational resources in the community like—museums, exhibitions, centers of science and arts, historical places, wildlife sanctuaries etc. Through the morning assembly, celebration of festivals, national days and birthdays of great men, functions and teachings of selected sermons from scriptures, yoga and meditation, the whole atmosphere is vibrant with values and the students imbibe the values from it unconsciously. The values are also reflected in school procedures, practices, programmes and other dealings.

In the educational institutions the role of the principal is to aid and support the processes of growth, which are taking place in the students at various levels—physical, mental, emotional and spiritual. Each child is born with a mission in his life and with special talents, which are peculiar to him. The purpose of education is to transform the inborn potentiality into an actuality so that by playing his role in life he may make his mission. The Principal is to conceive, plan, execute, organize and direct various facets of school life and take them to the culmination point by the optimum use of the human materials and financial resources for the realization of his goals. He is a role model for teachers. He has to set an example of excellence in academics, effectiveness in pedagogy, soundness in discipline and of harmony in inter-personal relationships. It is not a surprise that negativities like jealousy, hatred, rivalry, malice etc., cannot survive in this atmosphere of devotion and dedication. To make students humane; co-ordinated development of head, heart

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# Terms Explained for Competitive Examinations

## Kill Switch

Scientists have reportedly discovered a 'kill switch' that triggers the death of cancer cells. California experts from UC Davis Comprehensive Cancer Center in Sacramento said they identified a protein on a receptor that can be designed to kill cancer cells.

CD95 receptors, also known as Fas, are called death receptors. These protein receptors reside on cell membranes. When activated, they release a signal that causes the cells to self-destruct. The researchers have named it **CAR T-cell therapy**, which involves collecting T cells from the patient's blood and then genetically modifying them in a lab to produce receptors called chimeric antigen receptors (CARs). After modifying them, these cells are then injected back into the bloodstream of patient's body.

As of now, the therapy has shown promising efficacy against liquid cancer, leukaemia and other blood cancers. As per scientists, it has shown 'meagre success' against solid tumours such as breast, lung, and bowel cancer. Modulating Fas may also extend the benefits of Chimeric Antigen Receptor (CAR) T-cell therapy to solid tumors like ovarian cancer.

## Rat-hole Mining

Rat-hole mining is a method of manual drilling, which is carried out by skilled workers, most common in Meghalaya. Narrow pits are dug into the ground, usually just wide enough for one person to fit into. After digging the pits, the miner drops down into the holes using a rope and bamboo ladders. Once the pits are dug, miners descend using ropes or bamboo ladders to reach the coal seams. The coal is then manually extracted using primitive tools such as pickaxes, shovels, and baskets. Rat-hole mining is of two types :

1. **Side-cutting Procedure** : Narrow tunnels are dug on the hill slopes and workers go inside until they find the coal seam. The coal seam in hills of Meghalaya is very thin, less than 2 m in most cases.
2. **Box-cutting Procedure** : A rectangular opening is made, varying from 10 to 100 sq feet, and through that a vertical pit is dug, 100 to 400 feet deep. Once the coal seam is found, rat-hole-sized tunnels are dug horizontally through which workers can extract the coal.

This method is usually used to extract coals, and is considered extremely hazardous. It is illegal in many countries due to increasing cases of miners dying from asphyxiation, lack of oxygen and hunger.

## Auger Mining (Horizontal Drilling)

A horizontal auger machine or a directional drill is a specialised tool designed to drill horizontal bores or create underground tunnels without disturbing the ground. These machines are used to lay down water and gas pipes, and to dig a tunnel.

## Carbon Credits

Carbon credits, also known as carbon allowances, work like permission slips for emissions. When a company buys a carbon credit, usually from the government, they gain permission to generate one ton of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. With carbon credits, carbon revenue flows vertically from companies to regulators, though companies who end up with excess credits can sell them to other companies. Offsets flow horizontally, trading carbon revenue between companies. When one company removes a unit of carbon from the atmosphere as part of their normal business activity, they can generate a carbon offset. Other companies can then purchase that carbon offset to reduce their own carbon footprint.

The two terms are sometimes used interchangeably, and carbon offsets are often referred to as 'offset credits'. Still, this distinction between regulatory compliance credits and voluntary offsets should be kept in mind.

## Carbon Marketplace

It is a type of market where carbon credits are sold and purchased. When it comes to the sale of carbon credits within the carbon marketplace, there are two significant, separate markets to choose from :

1. One is a regulated market, set by 'cap-and-trade' regulations at the regional and state levels.
2. The other is a voluntary market where businesses and individuals buy credits (of their own accord) to offset their carbon emissions.

The regulatory market is mandated, while the voluntary market is optional.

When it comes to the regulatory market, each company operating under a cap-and-trade program is issued a certain number of carbon credits each year. Some of these companies produce less emissions than the number of credits they're allotted, giving them a surplus of carbon credits.

On the flip side, some companies (particularly those with older and less efficient and obsolete technology) produce more emissions than the number of credits they receive each year can cover. These businesses are looking to purchase carbon credits to offset their emissions because they must.

## Greenhouse Gases (GHGs)

**Greenhouse gases (GHGs)** : The atmospheric gases responsible for causing global warming and climatic change. The major GHGs are CO<sub>2</sub>, methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) and nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O). Less prevalent, but very powerful, GHGs include hydro-

fluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs) and sulphur hexafluoride (SF6).

### **Operation Prosperity Guardian (OPG)**

The US Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin announced the operation Prosperity Guardian during a trip to the Middle East in December 2023. In Bahrain, Austin announced Operation Prosperity Guardian. The previously announced multi-national security initiative Operation Prosperity Guardian (OPG) has now been set up and deployed to allow maritime commerce to pass through the Red Sea/Gulf of Aden and once again return to using the Suez Canal as a gateway between Asia and Europe. Operation Prosperity Guardian is bringing together multiple countries to include the United Kingdom, Bahrain, Canada, France, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Seychelles and Spain, to jointly address security challenges in the southern Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, with the goal of ensuring freedom of navigation for all countries and bolstering regional security and prosperity.

The OPG is a new multi-national security operation under the umbrella the Combined Maritime Forces and the leadership of Task Force 153, which focuses on security in the Red Sea. It will act against unwarranted attack by Iran supported Houthis of Yemen. It's a defensive coalition meant to reassure global shipping and mariners that the international community is there to help with safe passage.

### **Greenwashing**

Greenwashing is the process of conveying a false impression or misleading information about how a company's products are environmentally friendly. Greenwashing involves making an unsubstantiated claim to deceive consumers into believing that a company's products are environmentally friendly or have a greater positive environmental impact than they actually do.

The term originated in the 1960s, when the hotel industry devised one of the most blatant examples of greenwashing. They placed notices in hotel rooms asking guests to reuse

their towels to save the environment. The hotels enjoyed the benefit of lower laundry costs.

More recently, some of the world's biggest carbon emitters, such as conventional energy companies, have attempted to rebrand themselves as champions of the environment. **Products are greenwashed through a process of renaming, rebranding, or repackaging them.** Greenwashed products might convey the idea that they're more natural, wholesome, or free of chemicals than competing brands.

In addition, greenwashing may occur when a company attempts to emphasize sustainable aspects of a product to overshadow the company's involvement in environmentally damaging practices. **Performed through the use of environmental imagery, misleading labels, and hiding tradeoffs, greenwashing is a play on the term 'whitewashing',** which means using false information to intentionally hide wrongdoing, error, or an unpleasant situation in an attempt to make it seem less bad than it is.

### **Green Bond**

A green bond is a debt instrument issued by the central or state government or urban bodies to borrow money from investors with the commitment that the mobilised fund will be spent on climate or ecosystem-related activities.

### **RUDRA**

C-DAC, a division of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), had crafted India's first indigenous server Rudra I, as part of its initiative to create a supercomputing capacity in the country. RUDRA Server, an outcome of National Supercomputing Mission, is a secure, reliable server with the current generation of Intel Xeon scalable processor and supports accelerated computing also. With the provision of liquid cooling technology, it is aimed at achieving better energy efficiency, density, and architectural features to suit the requirements of various national missions.

### **Humboldt's Enigma**

Alexander von Humboldt (1769-1859)—a polymath who recorded

observations on various natural phenomena across the fields known today as geography, geology, meteorology, and biology. From his various studies, Humboldt suggested there was a relationship between temperature, altitude, and humidity on one hand and the occurrence patterns of species or their biodiversity – on the other. His example of choice was the Chimborazo mountain in Ecuador, which has today become an important illustration of mountain diversity.

The world's tropical areas receive more energy from the Sun because of the earth's angle of inclination. So the tropics have greater primary productivity, which then facilitates greater diversity : more ecological niches become available, creating more complex ecosystems and greater biological diversity.

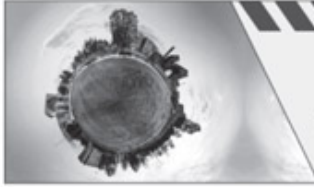
The proponents of Humboldt's enigma have held that the earth's tropical areas by themselves don't contain all the biodiverse regions, that many areas outside the tropics are highly biodiverse. These places are mountains.

Indeed, while we expect diversity to *decrease* away from the tropics, mountains have been an important exception. This is the essence of Humboldt's enigma. But scientific evidence has been hard to acquire, requiring the use of complex analytical methods and large datasets of various taxonomic groups and even then remains an incomplete exercise.

A simple way to think of Humboldt's enigma in India is to consider the biodiversity in our tropical areas, south of the Tropic of Cancer passing through Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh. These areas are supposed to be the most diverse in the country. The Western Ghats plus Sri Lanka biodiversity hotspot lies in this zone.

However, the eastern Himalaya are much more diverse. Some scientists have even suggested this part of the mountain range is the second-most diverse area of perching birds in the world. For river birds, the eastern Himalaya may be *the* most diverse.

*Continued on Page 131*



# Important Concepts in News

## Indian History, Art & Culture

### Nagara Style of Temple Architecture

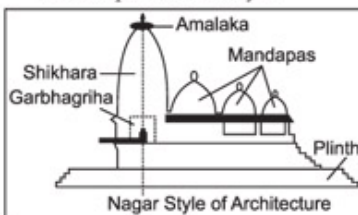
#### Reason for Discussion

The consecration ceremony of Ram temple located in Ayodhya was completed on 22 January, 2024. The Ram temple built in Ayodhya has been constructed in Nagara style.

#### Key Facts :

#### Nagara Style :

- Generally, three main styles of temple architecture are prevalent in India—Nagara, Dravida and Vesara.
- Among these, Nagara style temples are found in the areas from Himalayas to Vindhya Mountains, Dravidian style temples are found from Krishna River to Kanyakumari and Besar style temples are found from Vindhya Mountains to Krishna River.
- 'Nagar' is derived from the word Nagar. Temples of this style were first built in the city, it is called the city style of temple construction.
- 'Panchayat style' of construction has generally been adopted in the temples of this style.



- In the temples built in Nagara style, the Shikhara gradually becomes thinner towards the top as per its height and in the planning of the Shikhara, the external outline emerges in a very clear and impressive manner. Hence, it is also called Rekha Shikhar. Along with this, Amalak is established on the peak of the temples built in this style. It is

noteworthy that the vertical end of the spire ends in a horizontal fluted disc, known as Amlak.

- Shikhara in temples built in Nagara style were generally of three types :
  1. **Latina or Rekha-Prasad** : The base of this type of peak is square and the walls curve towards a point upwards.
  2. **Phamasana** : This type of Shikhara has a broad base and is smaller in height than the Latina Shikhara and they slope upwards in a straight line.
  3. **Vallabhi** : The base of such peaks is rectangular whose roof was in the form of domed chambers. They were also called wagon-vaulted roofs.
- In temples of this style, the main floor of the temple is rectangular with successive *Vimanas* on both sides of the middle due to which its overall shape becomes triangular. If there is one *Vimana* each on both the sides then it is called *Triratha*. The central part with two *Vimanas* each is called *Saptaratha* and the part with four *vimanas* each is called Navratha. These *vimanas* are built from the middle height till the final height of the temple.

#### Parts of Nagara Temples

According to Shilpashastra, there are eight main parts of Nagara temples :

- **Mool Aadhar** (Basic foundation) : On which the entire building is erected.
- **Masurak** : The part between the foundation and the walls.
- **Jangha** : Walls (especially the walls of the sanctum sanctorum)
- **Capote** : Cornice
- **Shikhar** : The top part of the temple or the upper part of the sanctum sanctorum.
- **Greeva** : Upper part of the head
- **Amalak** : The bottom part of the Kalash at the top of the peak.
- **Kalash** – top part of the peak

- Temples of this style, are divided into eight parts according to height—Mool (base), Garbhagriha Masarak (part between the foundation and walls), Jangha (wall), Kapot (cornice), Shikhar, Gal (neck), circular Amalak and Kumbh (Kalash with prongs),
- Nagara style temples have four chambers—Garbhagriha, Jagmohan, Natyamandir and Bhogmandir.
- By the 8th century, different new characteristics appeared in the Nagara style at different places and there was diversity in its design at some places. As we know, this style spread from the Himalayas in the north to Bijapur in the south. And it was from Punjab in the west to Bengal in the east. Therefore, the emergence of local diversity was not unexpected, yet the triangular base and the shape of the peak decreasing from bottom to top remained the same everywhere.
- Temples built in this style are also called 'Kalinga' in Odisha, 'Lat' in Gujarat and 'Parvatiya' in the Himalayan region.

#### Important Facts about Ram Temple, Ayodhya

- **Chief Architect** : Chandrakant B. Sompura
- **Manufacturing Company** : Larsen & Toubro (L&T)
- **Project Management Company** : Tata Consulting Engineers Ltd. (TCEL)
- **Design Consultants** : IIT Chennai, IIT Bombay, IIT Guwahati, CBRI Roorkee, SVNIT Surat, NGRI Hyderabad
- **Sculptors** : Arun Yogiraj (Mysore), Ganesh Bhatt and Satyanarayana Pandey.
- **Total Area** : 70 acres (70% green area)
- **Temple Area** : 2.7 acres
- **Dimensions of the Temple** : Length—360 feet, Width—235 feet. Height—161 feet
- **Architecture Style** : Nagara style

**Remissions of Punishment**

**Reason for Discussion**

Recently, the Supreme Court has nullified the Gujarat government's decision to grant Remission to 11 people found guilty in the gangrape of Bilkis Bano and the murder of seven of her family members during the 2002 riots that broke out after the Godhra incident in 2002.

**Key Facts :**

**Remission :**

- Remission means complete cessation of any punishment or punishment after completing a certain period of punishment. It is different in nature from both furlough and parole because remission involves a reduction in punishment rather than a break from prison life.
- Under remission of punishment, there is no change in the nature of punishment but the duration of punishment is reduced *i.e.*, the remaining punishment is for given.
- Under remission, the prisoner is given a fixed date on which he will be released and after that he will be a free man in the eyes of the law.

**Constitutional Terminology  
Related to Punishment**

- **Pardon** : To forgive completely (this technically means that the crime never happened).
- **Commutation** : Changing the nature of punishment like changing death penalty to rigorous imprisonment.
- **Remission** : Changing the period of punishment like changing 2 years rigorous imprisonment to 1 year rigorous imprisonment.
- **Respite** : Reduction of punishment due to special circumstances such as physical disability or pregnancy of women.
- **Reprieve** : The process of postponing any punishment for some time, such as postponing death sentence for some time.

- However, in case of violation of any of the conditions of remission, it can be canceled and the offender will have to spend the entire period for which he was originally sentenced.
- The remission system is defined under the Prison Act, 1894, which regulates prisoners in prison to assess their behaviour and consequently reduce the punishment.

**Constitutional Provisions Laws and Grounds that Govern Remission in India**

<b>Constitutional Provisions :</b>	
<b>Article 72</b>	The President can grant pardons, reprieves, respites or remissions of punishment or suspend, remit or commute the sentence of any person. This can be done for any person convicted of any offence in all cases where : (a) The punishment or sentence is by a court-martial. (b) In all cases where the punishment or the sentence is for an offence under any law relating to the Union government's executive power. (c) In all cases of death sentences.
<b>Article 161</b>	The Governor can grant pardons, reprieves, respites or remissions of punishment, or suspend, remit or commute the sentence. This can be done for anyone convicted under any law on a matter which comes under the State's executive power.
<b>Statutory Provisions :</b>	
<b>Prison Act, 1894</b>	Remission system has been defined under the Prison Act, 1894.
<b>Section 432 CrPC</b>	Section 432 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) provides the state governments the powers to remit sentence, since prisons is a state subject.
<b>Section 433A CrPC</b>	Puts restriction of minimum 14 years jail term for convicts, who have been awarded life imprisonment for crimes attracting the maximum punishment of death sentence.
<b>SC Judgements</b>	
<b>Kehar Singh Vs. Union of India (1989)</b>	SC observed that the courts cannot deny to a prisoner the benefit to be considered for remission of sentence. Denial of remission is against the principles of reformation and pushes the convict into a dark hole.
<b>State of Haryana Vs. Mahender Singh (2007)</b>	No convict has a fundamental right of remission. The State in exercise of its executive power of remission must consider each individual case, keeping in view the relevant grounds for remission.

**Bilkis Bano Case**

On 27 February, 2002, Sabarmati train was set on fire in Godhra in which 59 Kar Sevaks were killed. After this incident, communal violence broke out in Gujarat. During the riots, a pregnant woman, Bilkis Bano, was gang raped by some people in the crowd of rioters and killed seven members of her family including her three-year-old daughter.

After extensive legal proceedings, the case was investigated by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). In 2004, in view of the threat to Bilkis's life, the Supreme Court transferred the case from Gujarat to Mumbai Court and the Center Instructed the government to appoint a special public prosecutor. In 2008, a Mumbai court convicted 11 people of their involvement in the gang rape and murder, an important step towards getting justice for Bilkis Bano. But in August 2022, the Gujarat government granted amnesty to these 11 convicts due to which they were released. Later in January 2024, the Supreme Court quashed the Gujarat government's decision to grant immunity to 11 convicts involved in the gang rape of Bilkis Bano and the murder of seven of her family members during the 2002 riots in the state of Gujarat.



## Environment and Biodiversity

### National Clean Air Campaign-NCAP

#### Reason for Discussion

Recently, on the basis of a study, Climate Trends and Respirer Living Sciences have stated that most of the cities in India have failed to achieve the clean air targets of the National Clean Air Campaign (NCAP).

#### Key Facts :

- National Clean Air Program launched in January 2019 as a comprehensive initiative by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change in partnership with various ministries and states to improve air quality at city, regional and national levels.
- It is a focused and time bound plan to increase public participation for effective air quality management, implementation of various sectoral policies and strengthening monitoring.
- National Clean Air Program provides guidance to cities in preparing air quality management plans and policy formulation in various sectors.

#### Objective

- The National Clean Air Program aims to reduce the average particulate matter (PM) concentrations in 131 cities (non-attainment cities) by 40% by 2026. Initially a target of 20-30% reduction was set by the year 2024, later the target was extended to the year 2026.
- It is noteworthy that non-attainment cities are those cities which have not met the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for more than 5 years. PRANA (Portal for Regulation of Air-pollution in Non-Attainment cities) is a portal to monitor the implementation of NCAP.
- To develop effective and efficient ambient air quality monitoring networks across the country to ensure a comprehensive and reliable database.
- Enhance public awareness and capacity building measures by encouraging data dissemination and public outreach programs

for inclusive public participation and to ensure trained manpower and infrastructure on air pollution.

#### National Ambient Air Quality Standards-NAAQS

NAAQ are ambient air quality standards for identified pollutants notified by the CPCB under the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981. List of pollutants under NAAQS : PM10, PM2-5, SO<sub>2</sub>, NO<sub>2</sub>, CO, NH<sub>3</sub>, ozone, lead, benzene, benzo-pyrene, arsenic and nickel.

- Strict implementation of air pollution prevention, control and mitigation measures.
- Adoption of airshed approach to solve the problem of air pollution.
- Establish coordination between existing policies and programmes, including the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) and other government initiatives related to climate change.
- Establishment of certification agencies for monitoring equipment, source apportionment studies, specific regional interventions etc.
- Preparing city specific action plans.

#### Key Facts Related to the Study of Climate Trends and Respiratory Living Sciences :

- Of the 49 cities with continuous PM2-5 data over five years, only 27 cities saw a decline in PM2-5 levels while only four cities were able to meet or exceed the targeted reduction as per the National Clean Air Program (NCAP) targets.
- Some cities like Varanasi, Agra and Jodhpur saw a significant reduction in PM2-5 levels while other cities including Delhi saw a marginal decline (only 5-9%) in the standard levels with many cities reporting an increase in pollution load. The biggest improvement was seen in Varanasi with an average reduction of 72% in PM2-5 levels and 69% reduction in PM10 levels from 2019 to 2023.
- The Indo-Gangetic Plain (IGP) remains highly vulnerable to high particulate matter concentrations and about 18 of the top

20 most polluted cities with PM2-5 fall under this region. Outside the IGP, only Guwahati and Rourkela was among the 20 most polluted cities for PM2-5.

#### Particulate Matter (PM)

Particulate Matter or particle pollution is called such particles, which are a mixture of solid particles and liquid droplets present in the environment. The particles present in the air are so small that they are not visible to the naked eye. Some particles are so small that they can only be detected using an electron microscope. Particle pollution includes PM 2-5 and PM 10 which are very dangerous.

PM 2-5 refers to atmospheric particulate matter that has a diameter of less than 2.5 micrometers, which is about 3% of the diameter of a human hair. Commonly written as PM2-5, particles in this category are so small that they can be detected only with the help of electron microscope. These are even smaller than their PM10 counterparts. PM10 are those particles whose diameter is 10 micrometers and they are also called fine particles. Environmental experts say that PM 10 is also called respirable particulate matter.

- The availability and distribution of continuous ambient air quality monitors seriously affects annual pollutant concentrations. However, many Indian cities lack a sufficient number of such monitoring stations. While cities such as Mumbai and Delhi have many such stations, Whereas most Indian cities either do not have such stations or their number is very low (only four out of 92 cities have more than 10 such stations).
- Variation in pollution levels can be attributed to geographic location, diverse emission sources, meteorological effects, and interactions between emissions and meteorology, which require further investigation.

## Economy/Finance

### The Internationalization of the Currency

#### Reason for Discussion

Recently, for the first time, India paid in rupees for crude oil imported from UAE, paving the way for the Internationalization of Indian Currency.

## Key Facts :

### Internationalization of Currency

- Internationalization of a currency is a process that involves increasing the use of that currency in international exchange. This process involves promoting the local currency for import and export trade and then using it in capital account exchange followed by other current account exchange.
- In the context of internationalization of Rupee, it will make it possible for international settlement of trade in Indian Rupee in foreign trade, unlike other currencies including US Dollar.
- Also the purpose of internationalizing the rupee is to make it a more widely accepted currency in international trade and investment.

### Benefits of Internationalization of Rupee

- Internationalization of the rupee can reduce transaction costs of cross-border trade and investment operations by reducing exchange rate risk.
- When the rupee is internationalized, its exchange rate will become stable. Increased demand for the currency in global markets can help reduce volatility, making the rupee more predictable and reliable for international exchange.
- Reducing currency risk can reduce the cost of doing business and therefore help make exports more competitive in the global market.
- Internationalization of the rupee will not only increase India's geopolitical influence, but it can also strengthen economic ties with other countries, facilitate bilateral trade agreements and promote political ties.
- Internationalization of the rupee will help integrate the Indian financial system with the global financial system, thereby increasing investment and economic growth.
- By diversifying settlement currencies, India's economy can be strengthened against foreign exchange pressures, as well as

the demand for dollars can be reduced.

- If a large part of India's trade can be settled in terms of domestic currency then the need to maintain foreign exchange reserves may be reduced.

### Challenges in the Path of Internationalization of Rupee

- The Triffin dilemma situation in the path of internationalization of the rupee may manifest as a conflict between maintaining stability in India's domestic economy and meeting the global demand for the rupee. Balancing these conflicting demands without adversely affecting the economic stability of the country presents a challenge in the process of making the rupee an international currency.
- The Indian economy is not as large as some other economies, so the rupee is in less demand in global financial markets.

#### Triffin Dilemma

- The Triffin dilemma or Triffin paradox is a conflict of economic interests that arises between short-term domestic and long-term international objectives for countries whose currencies serve as global reserve currencies.
- The Triffin dilemma implies that there is a trade-off between the national and international roles of the reserve currency and that no single currency can perform both functions optimally.
- This dilemma was first identified in the 1960s by economist Robert Triffin, who pointed out that a country that issues a global reserve currency must be prepared to supply adequate liquidity to the remaining countries. But at the same time maintain the confidence of your currency in the world.
- If the country tries to pursue domestic policy goals such as full employment or price stability, it may create excess demand for its currency and lead to inflation or loss of competitiveness.
- On the other hand, if the country tries to maintain the value of its currency and avoid external imbalances, it may restrict the availability of its currency in the global market and lead to deflation or liquidity crunch.

- Opening of the Indian currency to international markets may increase its exchange rate volatility in the initial stages. Any such fluctuations in the rupee may impact trade and investment, thereby affecting economic stability.
- The rupee is not fully convertible, that is, there are restrictions on its convertibility for certain purposes such as capital exchange. This restricts the rupee's widespread use in international trade and finance.
- If internationalization of the rupee increases demand for the rupee in global markets, it will strengthen the rupee against other currencies. A stronger rupee could potentially reduce the cost of imports from countries like China and Russia, thereby affecting the trade balance.
- The Indian government has many controls on the rupee and these controls make it difficult to use the rupee as a global currency.

### Reforms that India can Adopt to Internationalize the Rupee

- Making the rupee more freely convertible.
- To encourage exporters/importers to transact in rupees.
- Sound fiscal management.
- Liberalized scheme for personal remittances.
- Removing restrictive clauses for employee stock options.
- Following the deep bond market.
- Signing of additional currency exchange agreements.
- Ensuring currency management stability and improving the exchange rate regime.

## Science and Technology

### Pompe Disease

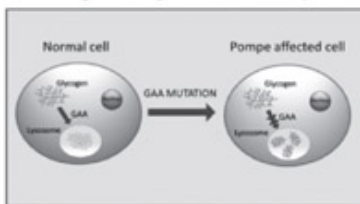
#### Reason for Discussion

Recently, India's first patient suffering from Pompe disease, Nidhi Shirol, died at the age of 24.

#### Key Facts :

- Pompe disease, also known as glycogen storage disease Type II (GSD2), is a genetic disease.

- Estimates of its prevalence range from 1 in 40,000 to 1 in 300,000 children.
- In this disease, a complex sugar called glycogen is produced in the body cells.
- This disease is caused by the deficiency of a digestive enzyme called acid alpha-glucosidase (GAA). This enzyme is important for breaking down glycogen into glucose inside the lysosomes of cells. GAA normally breaks down complex sugars in the body.



- Pompe disease is also known as lysosomal storage disease. Lysosomes are small, spherical, sac-like structures that contain several digestive enzymes enclosed in a membrane. They help in the digestion of foreign substances and worn-out organelles. They also provide protection against bacteria and viruses.
- Enzymes such as GAA (or acid maltase, hence the name acid

maltase deficiency) help break down these substances. Deficiency of the GAA enzyme leads to a buildup of glycogen within lysosomes. This buildup occurs in tissues, especially your heart and skeletal muscle cells, causing them to break down.

#### Symptoms and Effects

- The main feature of this disease is progressive muscle weakness. It affects both bone and smooth muscles, causing difficulty in mobility and daily activities. In this disease, due to weakness in the respiratory muscles, there is difficulty in breathing during physical exertion or while lying down.
- Children suffering from this disease may experience delay in sitting, crawling and walking. Although the extent of this delay may vary.
- Prolonged muscle weakness and low mobility can result in bone loss, which can lead to joint shrinkage and bone deformities.
- In some patients, Pompe disease has been seen to affect the heart muscle, leading to increased complications. Due to which symptoms like heartbeat, fatigue and chest pain appear.

#### Treatment

- There is currently no permanent treatment for Pompe disease, but short-term treatment options are available to relieve symptoms and improve the patient's quality of life.
- Enzyme replacement therapy (ERT) is a standard treatment, in which the missing enzyme is added to reduce glycogen formation. Phurpa

*Continued from Page 116*

and hand is achieved by a highly motivated, brilliant, and ingenious team of teachers. Work in laboratories—Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Home Science, Computer Science, transaction of curriculum in classrooms, employment of activity oriented methods, stressing learning more than teaching, judicious use of educational technology in administering knowledge both in scholastic and non-scholastic areas. Making use of Projects, Research Papers, Extension Lectures and full utilization of Media Centre having sections of books, audio and audio-video cassettes, CD Roms, give the students genuine grasp and understanding of the curriculum and broaden their mental horizon. These all are various ways on the basis of which we can develop human values through educational institutions.


It is to be summed up that the role of educational institutions through principals or teachers with proper support of the students, their parents, society, and proper planning, organizing, and implementing by the Government at various levels of educational institutions may be quite helpful in inculcating the human value in a positive way through the various institutions of learning. Proper and timely action should be taken in order to inculcate human values in education. It is to be stated that valuable points or suggestions may please be taken into consideration for further enhancement of human values through educational institutions, as erosion of the human values is taking place at all levels of society and education, that is an alarming situation to all the educational thinkers, policy-makers and planners at various levels of educational institutions. Phurpa

## POMPE DISEASE


- A rare genetic disorder, it is caused by a deficiency of the enzyme acid alpha-glucosidase.
- Though there is no cure for the disease, there are treatments to manage symptoms and improve the quality of life.

- It usually affects one in a million children.
- It is diagnosed by genetic and enzyme tests.
- Although there is no cumulative government data, about 50 individuals in India currently suffer from this condition.


### Symptoms




**Progressive muscle weakness**



**Difficulties in mobility**



**Respiratory complications**



**Cardiac complications**

- Joint contractures and skeletal deformities

- Delays in achieving motor milestones

Source: Organisation of Rare Disease India

- Pompe disease can cause hypertrophic cardiomyopathy, which is characterized by thickening of the heart muscle walls. This can impair the functioning of the heart and cause heart-related problems.
- Patients may face challenges in performing daily activities independently due to muscle weakness and respiratory problems. Assistive devices such as wheelchairs and respiratory support equipment may be necessary.



# Compendium

## Indian Polity and Constitution

- \* National Voters Day is observed in India on  
—January 25
- \* The powers of the President to grant pardons etc come under his  
—Judicial Powers
- \* Lakshadweep comes under the Judicial jurisdiction of  
—Kerala High Court
- \* Which Article of the Constitution of India empowers the High Courts in India to issue Constitutional writs like Habeas corpus, Certiorari, Mandamus etc. ?  
—Article 226
- \* Which Committee recommended for three tier Panchayati Raj System in India ?  
—Balwant Rai Mehta Committee
- \* National Panchayati Raj Day in India is observed on  
—April 24
- \* Which article of the Indian Constitution deals with the abolition or creation of the legislative councils in states ?  
—Article 169
- \* The feature of 'Single Citizenship' in the Indian Constitution is chiefly inspired from the  
—British Constitution
- \* The sixth rank on the table with respect to the rank and precedence of the persons in India is shared by  
—Chief Justice of India and Lok Sabha Speaker
- \* Which rank is held by the Judges of the Supreme Court on the table with respect to the rank and precedence of the persons in India ?  
—Ninth rank

## Indian National Movement

- \* Who was the Governor General of British India at the time of Rowlatt Act and Jalianwala Bagh Massacre ?  
—Lord Chelmsford
- \* In 1939 Subhas Chandra Bose was elected the President of the Indian National Congress with an election victory over  
—Pattabhi Sitharamayya
- \* Lord Pattick Lawrence, Stafford Cripps and A.V. Alexander were the members of the  
—Cabinet mission
- \* Which Indian leader played a key role in the foundation of the Central Bank, a swadeshi bank in India ?  
—Pherozeshah Mehta
- \* Which Indian leader was the writer of the book 'Gandhi and Anarchy' ?  
—C. Sankaran Nair

- \* Which Act provided for communal representation in British India ?  
—Minto-Morley Reforms, 1909
- \* When was the Raksha Bandhan Day observed by the Indians to protest the partition of Bengal by the British government ?  
—October 16, 1905
- \* Who was the President of the Indian National Congress at the time of Surat split in 1907 ?  
—Rash Behari Ghosh
- \* Who was the first British President of Indian National Congress ?  
—George Yule
- \* Acharya Narendra Deva, Jay Prakash Narayan and Minoo Masani were the prominent leaders of  
—The Congress Socialist Party

## History and Culture of India

- \* The hymns of the Sama Veda were recited by  
—Udgatri
- \* Mitakshara by Vijnyaneshwar is a famous commentary on  
—Yajurveda Smiriti
- \* Rajasekhara, the writer of the Karpuramanjari, graced the royal court of  
—Pratihara rulers
- \* Who is the writer of the travelogue Kitab ur Rehla ?  
—Ibn Battutah
- \* The famous battle of Talikota in 1565 is also referred to as the battle of  
—Rakshasa-Tagdi
- \* Who led the Kuka revolt in Punjab ?  
—Bhagat Jawahar Mal
- \* In Delhi sultanate, the news reporters and secret spies were called  
—Barids
- \* Which Mughal emperor was contemporary of Queen Elizabeth First of England ?  
—Emperor Akbar
- \* Which Act declared the Slavery system illegal in India in 1843 AD ?  
—India Act Five
- \* The Battle of Deorai near Ajmer was fought between Aurangzeb and Dara Shikoh in  
—1659

## Economic Affairs of India

- \* Which Bank has been named Bank of the Year in India for 2023 ?  
—Federal Bank
- \* Which Indian social activist has been named as International anti-corruption champion by the US government ?  
—Nikhil Dey
- \* Who has been named Time magazine's CEO of the Year 2023 ?  
—Sam Altman
- \* The biggest component of reserve money in India is  
—Currency in circulation

- \* Macroeconomics distinguishes between the real economy and —**Monetary economy**
- \* In India liquid funds are regulated by —**SEBI**
- \* The Saubhagya Scheme was related to the —**Household electrification**
- \* 'Surplus budget' is recommended during —**Economic depression**
- \* The main objective behind SIDBI was to —**Finance small scale industries**
- \* Balance in a current account is classified as —**Demand deposit**

## Geography (India and the World)

- \* Two days in a year when day and night are equal through-out the world are called —**Equinoxes**
- \* Which ocean is called an 'S' shaped ocean? —**Atlantic Ocean**
- \* Which Oceanic current flows southward in the name of Agulhas current? —**Indian Equatorial Current**
- \* A worldwide rise or fall in sea level is referred to as —**Eustasy**
- \* Tropical cyclone in Philippines are locally referred to as —**Baguio**
- \* Santa Ana is the name of local wind of —**California**
- \* Khetri, famous for copper mines in India is located in —**Rajasthan**
- \* Palkonda range is located in India in the —**Western Ghat**
- \* The Haflong lake is located in —**Assam**
- \* Shigar river is the tributary of —**Sindh river**

## Science & Technology

- \* A solution having pH equal to zero is known as —**Highly acidic solution**
- \* What is used to detect the presence of kinetic energy of radioactive particles? —**Cloud chamber**
- \* Waves used for telecommunications are called —**Infrared waves**
- \* Parkinson's disease is caused by the loss of nerve cells in the —**Cerebral Cortex**
- \* The Montoux test is done to detect —**Tuberculosis**
- \* The core of transformer is laminated so as to —**Reduce energy loss due to eddy current**
- \* Biotin is the chemical name of vitamin —**B7**
- \* Human body fats are stored in —**Adipose tissue**
- \* Which explosive material is also referred to as Nobel's Oil? —**Tri Nitro Glycerine (TNG)**
- \* Sulphuric acid is generally referred to as —**Oil of Vitriol**

## Agriculture

- \* 'Pennisetum glaucum' is the scientific name of —**Bajra**
- \* Koter spot disease of turnip is caused due to the deficiency of —**Calcium**
- \* Tangers is a cross of —**Mandarin and Sweet orange**
- \* What is the suitable method of vegetative propagation of apple? —**Shield budding and tongue grafting**
- \* In rice crop, new leaves turn into yellow white due to deficiency of —**Iron**
- \* Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel University of Agriculture & Technology is located in —**Meerut (Uttar Pradesh)**
- \* Little leaf disease of mango and brinjal is caused due to the deficiency of —**Zinc**
- \* Suitable temperature for barley cultivation is between —**10 to 15 degree Celsius**
- \* Contour farming is a biological method of —**Soil conservation**
- \* Growing the same crop every year on a certain field is called —**Mono-cropping**

## Environment, Biodiversity, Climate Change etc.

- \* What is India's rank on the Climate Change Performance Index 2023? —**7th rank**
- \* Who were honoured with the UN Global Climate Action Awards 2023? —**Michelle Zárate Palomec of Mexico and Sebastian Mwaaura of Kenya**
- \* Who is the writer of the book 'Desert Solitaire'? —**Edward Abbey**
- \* Influence of environment measures on other sectors like health, labour and education is called —**Domino effect**
- \* In the lake ecology, nutrient enrichment process is called —**Eutrophication**
- \* Who developed the hot spot concept in 1988? —**Norman Myres**
- \* Velavadar National Park is located in the state of —**Gujarat**
- \* Velavadar National Park is mainly famous for —**Black Buck**
- \* Plants growing in marsh area are called —**Helophytes**
- \* Dibru-Saikhowa National Park and Biosphere Reserve is located in —**Assam**

## Communication

- \* External communication refers to the relation of an administrative agency with —**The Public**
- \* In communication, the language is —**The Verbal codes**
- \* The media audiences are capable of —**Critical distance**
- \* Dependency model of Mass communication was presented by —**Ball-Rokeach and Defleur**
- \* Inductive argument proceeds from —**Particular to universal**
- \* Most often, the teacher-student communication is —**Utilitarian**
- \* Expressive communication is driven by —**Encoder's personality characteristics**
- \* The credibility of mediated message is attributed to —**Expertness of the source**
- \* A student helps a teacher to solve the problem while the teacher was delivering the lecture. He was —**An emphatic listener**
- \* A negative reaction to a mediated communication is described as —**Non-conformity**

## Sports and Games

- \* Which two Indian legends were inducted into the International Tennis Hall of Fame this year? —**Vijay Amritraj and Leander Paes**
- \* Which team won the Vijay Hazare Trophy 2023? —**Haryana**
- \* Who became the third female Chess Grandmaster of India? —**Vaishali Rameshbabu**
- \* Who has been named Time magazine's Athlete of The Year 2023? —**Lionel Messi from Argentina**
- \* Which team won the Football Club World Cup 2023? —**Manchester City**
- \* Who were honoured with the Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award for 2023? —**Chirag Shetty and Satwik Sairaj Rankireddy (Badminton)**
- \* A sumo wrestling ring in Japan is called —**Dohyo**
- \* The first Winter Olympic Games were organized in the year —**1924**
- \* 'Expedite System' is associated with —**Table Tennis**
- \* Roger Federer, Andy Murray, Rafael Nadal and Novak Djokovic are great players associated with the game of —**Lawn Tennis**

## Miscellany

- \* PM Narendra Modi inaugurated world's largest meditation centre in —**Varanasi**
- \* Who has been named PETA India Person of the Year 2023? —**Dia Mirza**
- \* Which city was declared the Safest City in India by NCRB this year? —**Kolkata**
- \* Who has been honoured with the 6th Rabindranath Tagore Literary Prize? —**Sukrita Paul Kumar**
- \* Who has been named Time magazine's Person of The Year 2023? —**Taylor Swift**
- \* Crude density of population is also known as —**Arithmetic density**
- \* Who is regarded as the pioneer of Atomic energy in India? —**Homi J. Bhabha**
- \* Web Crawler is also known as —**Web Spider**
- \* 'Jhumar', 'Phag', 'Dhamal', 'Loor' and 'Khor' are popular folk dances of —**Haryana**
- \* Who is the author of the book 'The Wonder That Was India'? —**A.L. Basham**

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## Current Objective Questions

# Trade And Industry

- An Indian-flagged crude oil tanker MV Saibaba in the Red Sea reportedly attacked by Houthi rebels from Yemen in Red sea. Which of the following may be an implication of it?
  - Turmoil in the Red Sea can practically render the Suez Canal unusable.
  - Ships will navigate around the Cape of Good Hope, a much longer but safer route.
  - Freight and shipping costs will increase, rendering both imports and exports more expensive.How many of the above statements is/are correct?
  - Only one
  - Only two
  - All the three
  - None of the above
- Which of the following factors lead to narrow down the current account deficit to 1 per cent of the gross domestic product in the second quarter (July-September) of FY 2023-24?
  - Healthy receipts from services exports.
  - Decent growth in private transfer receipts (mainly remittances).
  - Robust inflows in non-resident deposit.Correct code is:
  - Only I
  - Only I and II
  - Only II and III
  - All I, II, III
- Which of the following statements is incorrect about the 'Operation Prosperity Guardian'?
  - It is related to protect the cargo ships passing through Red Sea from the joints attacks by the HAMAS, Houthi rebels and Hijabullas.
  - It is a multi-national security initiative launched by the US
  - OPG will ensure safe passage for maritime trade through the critical Red Sea/Gulf of Aden that connects Asia with Europe and the US
  - The initiative is to respond to the Houthi rebel attacks on ships plying the Red Sea
- Consider the following statements in relation to Bharat Net Project:
  - The project was first approved in August 2014 to connect more than six lakh villages and 2.5 lakh Gram Panchayats by broad band connection
  - It is being implemented by Bharat Broadband Network, a Special Purpose Vehicle.
  - All the Gram Panchayats will be connected by 4G network
  - Funds for the project are being provided by Digital Bharat Nidhi.How many of the above statements is/are correct?
  - Only one
  - Only two
  - Only three
  - All four
- Consider the following statements in relation to recently announced Minimum Support Price (MSP) for Copra for the year 2024:
  - The MSP for fair average quality of milling copra has been fixed at ₹ 11,160/ quintal—up three per cent from ₹ 10,860 in 2023.
  - MSP for ball copra at ₹ 12,000, up two per cent from ₹ 11,750/quintal for 2023 season.Which of the above statements is/are correct?
  - Only I
  - Only II
  - Both I and II
  - Neither I nor II
- Which of the following statements is incorrect about Copra farming in India?
  - Kerala and Tamil Nadu are major producers of milling copra, whereas ball copra is produced predominantly in Karnataka.
  - Food Corporation of India acts as nodal agency for procurement of copra and de-husked coconut directly from farmers under Price Support Scheme (PSS) when market rates fall below MSPs.
  - Minimum Support Price for Copra is approved by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs
  - MSPs for milling copra, ball copra and De-husked copra are determined for calendar year
- AS per RBI's Financial stability Report 2023, Net Non-Performing Assets of India's commercial banks as on September 30, 2023 came down to:
  - 1.6%
  - 1.2%
  - 0.8%
  - 0.2%
- AS per RBI's Financial stability Report 2023, capital adequacy (capital to risk-weighted assets ratio (CRAR)) Ratio was ..... as on September 30, 2023.
  - 14.3%
  - 15.7%
  - 16.2%
  - 16.6%
- Which of the following statements is not correct?
  - All the commercial banks in India have been allowed to open digital banking Units
  - Regional Rural Banks, Payments banks and Local Area Banks cannot open digital banking units
  - Digital banking units can be set up in Tier 1 to Tier 6 cities
  - Currently, fintechs operating as neobanks offer digital banking services but they do so in partnership with non-banking financial companies (NBFCs)
- Consider the following statements in relation to Sixteenth Finance Commission:
  - The Government of India on October 31, 2023 has constituted the Sixteenth Finance

- Commission, in pursuance to Article 280(1) of the Constitution.
- II. Dr. Arvind Panagariya, former Vice-Chairman, NITI Aayog, and Professor, Columbia University has been appointed as its Chairman.
- III. The Sixteenth Finance Commission has been requested to make its report available by 31st day of October, 2025 covering a period of five years commencing on the 1st day of April, 2026.
- How many of the above statements is/are correct ?
- (A) Only one  
(B) Only two  
(C) All three  
(D) None of the above
11. Unusually high spurt in certain activities forced the RBI to increase the risk weights on unsecured retail loans distributed by the banks and NBFCs :
- I. Indian crypto currency market.  
II. Equity derivatives trading.  
III. Online games such as teen patti, rummy, ludo and cricket-related contests.
- How many of the above statements is/are correct ?
- (A) Only one  
(B) Only two  
(C) All three  
(D) None of the above
12. India's coffee exports in the calendar year 2023 scaled a new high in value terms at :
- (A) ₹ 9585 crore  
(B) ₹ 8723 crore  
(C) ₹ 6984 crore  
(D) ₹ 5255 crore
13. A Guaranteed Price Scheme has been launched by the government for the purchase of :
- (A) Soyabean  
(B) Tur Dal  
(C) Chana Dal  
(D) Mustard seeds
14. Consider the following statements about the 'Guaranteed Price Scheme' launched by the government on December 4, 2024 :
- I. A portal has been launched where Dal producing farmers can register themselves.  
II. Initially Tur Dal will be purchased by the NAFED and NCCF at Minimum Support Price.  
III. Payment will be made through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) directly to the accounts of the farmers.  
IV. The registered Tur farmers will receive an average rate in case the open market price remains higher than the MSP and that will be arrived through a scientific formula.
- How many of the above statements is/are correct ?
- (A) Only one (B) Only two  
(C) Only three (D) All four
15. Consider the following primary/secondary products of Odisha :
- I. Lanjia Saura painting  
II. Dungaria Kondh embroidered shawl  
III. Khajudi Guda (jaggery)  
IV. Dhenkanal Magji (food)  
V. Similipal Kai Chutney  
VI. Nayagarh Kanteimundi Brinjal  
V. Koraput Kalajeera Rice
- How many products given above have been accorded the Geographical Indication tag by the Chennai-based GI Registry ?
- (A) Only four (B) Only five  
(C) Only six (D) All seven
16. As per first advance estimates of national income for FY 2023-24 growth rate of real GDP is most likely to be :
- (A) 6.5% (B) 6.8%  
(C) 7.0% (D) 7.3%
17. Consider the following pairs in relation to the sectoral growth rate in FY 2023-24, as per first advance estimates released by the NSO on January 5, 2024 :
- I. Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Fisheries and Forestry : 3.8%  
II. Manufacturing : 6.5%  
III. Construction : 10.7%  
IV. Services : 7.7%
- How many of the above statements is/are correct ?
- (A) Only one (B) Only two  
(C) Only three (D) All four
18. Which of the following statements is correct about the 'Svyam Siddha' ?
- (A) It is a financial product of SBI to facilitate the loaning of women SHG members  
(B) It is a Yoga awareness programme  
(C) Marketing initiative for AYUSH medicines  
(D) An innovative teaching technique
19. As per NITI Aayog's study, how many people of India came out of multidimensional poverty between 2013-14 and 2022-23 ?
- (A) 248.2 million  
(B) 222.8 million  
(C) 208.3 million  
(D) 198.6 million
20. According to a discussion paper titled 'Multidimensional poverty in India since 2005-06', which state registered the biggest decline in the number of poor between 2013-14 and 2022-23 ?
- (A) Bihar  
(B) Madhya Pradesh  
(C) Uttar Pradesh  
(D) Rajasthan
21. Consider the following facts about the Multidimensional Poverty Index :
- I. It was developed by Sabina Alkire and James Foster in the year 2010.  
II. It was adopted by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in their Human Development Report.  
III. It captures overlapping deprivations in health, education and living standards.
- How many of the above statements is/are correct ?
- (A) Only one  
(B) Only two  
(C) All three  
(D) None of the above
22. Consider the following statements regarding the National Multidimensional Poverty Index as is being used by the NITI Aayog :



- I. NITI Aayog in collaboration with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) developed the National Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI).
- II. NMPI offers a multi-dimensional perspective on poverty.
- III. It complements income poverty measurements because it measures and compares deprivations directly.
- IV. The National MPI is a robust, and nuanced public policy tool that can be used monitor multidimensional poverty at the national, state, and district levels in India.
- How many of the above statements is/are correct ?  
 (A) Only one (B) Only two  
 (C) Only three (D) All four
23. The most critical 'chokepoints' in international shipping is/are :  
 I. Strait of Hormuz  
 II. Strait of Malacca  
 III. Bab el-Mandeb strait  
 How many of the above statements is/are correct ?  
 (A) Only one  
 (B) Only two  
 (C) All three  
 (D) None of the above
24. Consider the following facts about the direct tax collection of the central government :  
 I. Net Direct Tax Collections have increased by 160.52% from ₹ 6,38,596 crore in F.Y. 2013-14 to ₹ 16,63,686 crore in F.Y. 2022-23.  
 II. Gross Direct Tax Collections of ₹ 19,72,248 crore in F.Y. 2022-23 have registered an increase of over 173.31% compared to Gross Direct Tax Collections of ₹ 7,21,604 crore in F.Y. 2013-14.  
 III. Direct Tax to GDP ratio has increased from 5.62% in F.Y. 2013-14 to 6.11% in F.Y. 2022-23.  
 How many of the above statements is/are correct ?  
 (A) Only one  
 (B) Only two  
 (C) All three  
 (D) None of the above
25. The total number of Income Tax Returns filed in FY 2022-23 stands at :  
 (A) 7.78 crore (B) 8.24 crore  
 (C) 9.89 crore (D) 10.23 crore
26. Which of the following statements is incorrect about the 'Pradhan Mantri Suryodaya Yojana' ?  
 (A) The scheme was announced by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi just after the return from the Pran Pratishtha ceremony of the Ram Lalla idol at the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Temple in Ayodhya on January 22, 2024  
 (B) Under the scheme 1 crore households will get rooftop solar.  
 (C) The scheme will be implemented by the state government  
 (D) The scheme will not only reduce the electricity bill of the poor and middle class, but will also make India self-reliant in the field of energy
27. What percentage of total expenditure of Central and State governments was allocated to education during the FY 2022-23 (BE) ?  
 (A) 5.3% (B) 6.8%  
 (C) 8.3% (D) 9.5%
28. What percentage of total expenditure of central and state governments was allocated to health during the FY 2022-23 (BE) ?  
 (A) 6.9% (B) 5.1%  
 (C) 4.9% (D) 39%
29. Consider the following facts about the Methane emissions :  
 I. Methane constitutes about 19% global greenhouse gas emissions.  
 II. Paddy cultivation (8%), Livestock (32%) and Agri-wastes (18%) are major contributors to human - driven methane emissions.  
 III. World Bank has started an initiative to combat methane emission.  
 How many of the above statements is/are correct ?  
 (A) Only one  
 (B) Only two  
 (C) All three  
 (D) None of the above
30. Which of the following statement is incorrect about the Banni Grasslands ?  
 (A) India's second Cheetah conservation breeding centre is being established in Banni Grassland (Kutch district, Gujarat)  
 (B) Banni is renowned for the Banni breed of Buffalows  
 (C) Banni is world's largest grassland  
 (D) Banni hosts a unique coexistence of two ecosystems- wetlands and grasslands- within its boundaries
31. Venezuela has a dispute over oil and mineral rich border region of 160000 sq. km with which of the following countries ?  
 (A) Guyana  
 (B) Brazil  
 (C) Colombia  
 (D) None of the above
32. Who among the following was the Chief Guest at 75th Republic Day (2024) celebrations in New Delhi ?  
 (A) Rishi Sunak, Prime Minister of UK  
 (B) Emmanuel Macron, President of France  
 (C) Giorgia Meloni, Prime Minister of the Italian Republic  
 (D) Anthony Norman Albanese, Prime Minister of Australia
33. Maximum credit cards have been issued by which bank in India ?  
 (A) ICICI bank  
 (B) HDFC bank  
 (C) SBI cards  
 (D) Axis bank
34. Consider the following states :  
 I. Uttar Pradesh  
 II. Madhya Pradesh  
 III. Rajasthan  
 IV. Haryana  
 How many states given above has/have figured as 'Achievers' state in fifth edition of 'Logistics Ease Across Different State (LEADS) 2023' ?  
 (A) Only 1 (B) Only 2  
 (C) Only 3 (D) All 4
35. Consider the following statements in relation to diamond industry :  
 I. Russia is the world's largest producer of rough dia-

monds, mining nearly 42 million carats in the year 2022.

II. India is the world's largest cutting and polishing centre for diamonds, accounting for over 90% of polished diamond manufacturing globally.

Which of the above statements is/are correct ?

- (A) Only I
- (B) Only II
- (C) Both I and II
- (D) Neither I nor II

36. As per World Bank's poverty line of \$ 2.15 per capita (2017 PPP) poverty Headcount ratio in India fell from 18.73 per cent in 2015 to :

- (A) 11.9 per cent in 2021
- (B) 10.3 per cent in 2022
- (C) 9.4 per cent in 2023
- (D) 8.2 per cent in 2024

37. Multidimensional Poverty Index, as has been developed by the NITI Aayog does not explicitly include :

- (A) Drinking water facility
- (B) Housing Facility
- (C) Income of the household
- (D) Educational opportunities

38. Which of the following state was/were the 'best performers' category in the 'States Start-up Ranking 2022' ?

- I. Gujarat
- II. Karnataka
- III. Maharashtra
- IV. Andhra Pradesh

Correct code is :

- (A) Only I and II
- (B) Only III and IV
- (C) Only I and IV
- (D) Only II and III

39. Consider the following agencies :

- I. NITI Aayog
- II. Securities and Exchange Board of India
- III. Finance Commission of India
- IV. Competition Commission of India

How many of the above agencies have statutory status ?

- (A) Only one (B) Only two
- (C) Only three (D) All four

40. Which of the following has been rated the most valuable information technology services brand in the world in the 2024 Global 500IT services Ranking by Brand Finance ?

- (A) Tata Consultancy Services (TCS)
- (B) Accenture
- (C) Infosys
- (D) IBM

### Answers with Hints

1. (C) Turmoil in the Red Sea can practically render the Suez Canal unusable, a route that facilitates 12 per cent of global trade and around 20 per cent of India's trade flows. Major shipping companies have announced plans to reroute vessels away from the Suez Canal and the Red Sea. Instead, ships will navigate around the Cape of Good Hope, a much longer, but safer route. As a result, freight and shipping costs will increase, rendering both imports and exports more expensive.

2. (D)

3. (A) In the aftermath of Hamas-Israel conflict, Drone and rocket attacks on cargo ships with flags of Israel supporting countries in the Red Sea have led many of the world's biggest shipping companies to announce they will avoid the area. The attacks are made by the Houthis an Iran-backed rebel group which controls a large part of Yemen.

4. (C) The project was first approved in October 2011 to connect more than six lakh villages and 2.5 lakh Gram Panchayats by broad band connection.

5. (C) 6. (B)

7. (C) NNPA is estimated in relation to banks net advances / loans. It is equal to Gross Advances and loans of commercial banks minus assets kept as provisioning.

8. (D)

9. (A) Commercial banks (other than regional rural banks, payment banks and local area banks) with past digital banking

experience are permitted to open DBUs in tier 1 to tier 6 centres, unless otherwise specifically restricted, without having the need to take permission from the RBI in each case.

10. (C)

11. (C) The RBI on November 16, 2023 raised risk weights on riskier unsecured retail loans and credit cards by banks and NBFCs by 25 percentage points.

12. (A) India exported 377178 tonnes coffee in calendar year 2023 and earned US\$ 1161 million (₹ 9585 crore) foreign exchange. Total export of the coffee was 377178 tonnes in calendar year 2023 as compared to 398718 tonnes in 2022 (decline of 5.5%). In dollar terms the export of the coffee during 2023 was 4.5% higher than in 2022, while in rupee terms the export of coffee was 9.81% higher in the year 2023 as compared to 2022. Italy, Germany and Russia are the top three buyers of Indian coffee.

13. (B) 14. (D) 15. (D) 16. (D)

17. (C) Growth of GVA of agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Fisheries and forestry in the FY 2023-24 is most likely to be 1.8% which is the lowest in the last 4 years. Growth rate in this sector was highest at 6.8% during 2016-17, followed by 6.6% in 2017-18, 2.1% in 2018-19 6.2% in 2019-20, 3.0% in 2020-21, 4.1% in 2021-22, 4.0% in 2022-23 and 1.8% in 2023-24.

18. (A) State Bank of India introduced a specialized financial product, 'Svyam Siddha', exclusively tailored for SHG women entrepreneurs seeking loans up to ₹ 5 lakhs. This initiative is uniquely designed to alleviate the challenges associated with extensive documentation requirements for bank loan applications and reduce the Turn Around Time (TAT). The requirement of burden some documents like quotations and Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) has been dispensed with, allowing an easy application process where a simple loan application with KYC details can be submitted at local SBI bank branches. DAY-

- NRLM will facilitate the loan application process and oversee loan repayment through its dedicated field cadre.
19. (A) NITI Aayog's discussion paper title 'Multidimensional poverty in India since 2005-06' estimated that the share of the multidimensional poor in India's population declined sharply to 11.28 per cent in 2022-23 from 29.17 per cent in 2013-14. In 2019-21, it stood at 14.96 per cent.
  20. (C) Among states, Uttar Pradesh registered the biggest decline in the number of poor, with 59.4 million people coming out of multidimensional poverty in the past nine years. It was followed by Bihar (37.7 million), Madhya Pradesh (23 million), and Rajasthan (18.7 million).
  21. (C) 22. (D)
  23. (C) The Strait of Hormuz is a strait between the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman. It provides the only sea passage from the Persian Gulf to the open ocean. Strait of Malacca, waterway connecting the Andaman Sea (Indian Ocean) and the South China Sea (Pacific Ocean). It runs between the Indonesian island of Sumatra to the west and peninsular (West) Malaysia and extreme southern Thailand to the east and has an area of about 25,000 square miles (65,000 square km). The Bab-el-Mandeb, the Gate of Grief or the Gate of Tears, is a strait between Yemen on the Arabian Peninsula and Djibouti and Eritrea in the Horn of Africa. It connects the Red Sea to the Gulf of Aden and by extension the Indian Ocean.
  24. (C)
  25. (A) The total number of ITRs filed in FY 2022-23 stands at 7.78 crore showing an increase of 104.91% as compared to total number of IT ₹ 3.80 crore filed in FY 2013-14.
  26. (C)
  27. (D) Total expenditure of Central and State governments was ₹ 8008684 crore during the FY 2022-23 (BE), out of which ₹ 7527138 crore (9.5%) was allocated to education.
  28. (A) ₹ 548855 crore was allocated for health by central and state government during the FY 2022-23(BE) which was 6.9% (₹ 548855 crore) of their total expenditure.
  29. (C)
  30. (C) Banni is Asia's largest grassland.
  31. (A) Venezuela and Guyana are engaged in a bitter dispute over an oil- and mineral-rich territory -Essequibo which is spread about 160000 sq. kms. It is claimed by both.
  32. (B)
  33. (B) As per an information given by the HDFC bank, more than 2 crore credit cards of its are in operation. Thus, HDFC is the largest credit card issuer in India, followed by ICICI Bank, SBI Cards and Axix bank.
  34. (D) Under fifth LEADS 2023, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu are achievers states in Coastal states category; Haryana, Punjab, Telangana and Uttar Pradesh in Land locked state category; Assam, Sikkim and Tripura in North-East state category and Chandigarh Delhi in UT category have emerged as the 'Achievers'.
  35. (C) 36. (A) 37. (C)
  38. (A) Gijarat, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu were the best performers in the 'States' Start-up Ranking for 2022.
  39. (C) NITI Aayog is a think tank of the government of India and is an advisory body.
  40. (B) The brand value of Accenture was \$ 40.5 billion followed by TCS (\$ 19.2 billion), Infosys (\$ 14.2 billion and IBM (\$ 12.1 billion).

*Pragati*

*Continued from Page 118*

### **Indigenous Mobile Hospital (BHISHM)**

Two Arogya Maitri Disaster Management Cube-BHISHM, revolutionary mobile hospitals equipped

with cutting-edge technology, have been deployed in Ayodhya to bolster medical readiness and response capabilities during the 'Pran Prati-shtha' ceremony on January 22, 2024.

This cube is a part of the broader initiative named 'Project BHISHM'—Bharat Health Initiative for Sahyog, Hita and Maitri, is tailored to treat up to 200 casualties, emphasizing rapid response and comprehensive care. The Aid Cube is equipped with several innovative tools designed to enhance disaster response and medical support during emergencies. It integrates Artificial Intelligence (AI) and data analytics to facilitate effective coordination, real-time monitoring, and efficient management of medical services in the field.

The whole unit contains 72 easily transportable components that can be conveniently carried by hand, cycle, or even drone, providing unmatched flexibility. In the face of Mass Casualty Incidents (MCIs), where requirements range from basic aid to advanced medical and surgical care, the Aid Cube stands out with its ability to be deployed within an astonishing 12 minutes. This swift deployment capability is crucial, as it effectively bridges the crucial time gap from primary care to definitive care, potentially saving numerous lives in the golden hour of emergencies.

These cubes are robust, waterproof, and light, designed for various configurations, making them ideal for diverse emergency scenarios. From airdrops to ground transportation, the cube can be rapidly deployed anywhere, ensuring immediate response capability.

Advanced medical equipment, RFID-tagged for efficient repacking and redeployment, is a key feature of the Cube. The state-of-the-art BHISHM software system integrated into a provided tablet allows operators to locate items quickly, monitor their usage and expiry, and ensure readiness for subsequent deployments.

*Pragati*

# Current Questionnaire

- Indian Navy commissioned INS Imphal, at the Naval Dockyard in Mumbai on December 26, 2023. Which of the following statements is incorrect in this regard ?  
 (A) It is Indian Navy's latest indigenously built stealth-guided missile destroyer.  
 (B) INS Imphal joined the Eastern Naval Command  
 (C) BrahMos surface-to-surface missiles, medium-range surface-to-air missiles, anti-submarine indigenous rocket launchers, and 76mm super rapid gun mount are placed on this warship  
 (D) The ship is a part of Project 15B (Visakhapatnam class) and follows the lineage of indigenous destroyers like Project 15A (Kolkata class) and Project 15 (Delhi class)
- Consider the following pairs in relation to recently enacted and notified criminal laws :  
 I. Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023-Indian Penal Code (IPC), 1860.  
 II. Bharatiya Sakshya (BS), 2023 - Indian Evidence Act (IEA), 1872.  
 III. Bharatiya Nagrik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023-Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), 1898.  
 How many pairs given above is/are matched correctly ?  
 (A) Only one  
 (B) Only two  
 (C) All three  
 (D) None of the above
- Which of the following statements is not correct about the 'Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra' ?  
 (A) Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra is being led by Congress leader Rahul Gandhi  
 (B) Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra commenced on January 14, 2024 from Khongjom in Thoubal district (Manipur) and will culminate on March 20, 2024 in Mumbai  
 (C) The entire distance of Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra is being covers on foot or walking  
 (D) Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra will cover about 6200 kms distance passing through 15 states
- Gabriel Attal has been appointed the new Prime Minister of France. Which of the following statements is/are correct about him ?  
 I. He is the youngest Prime Minister of France.  
 II. He is the country's first openly gay Prime Minister.  
 Correct code is :  
 (A) Only I  
 (B) Only II  
 (C) Both I and II  
 (D) Neither I nor II
- What is 'Ugram' ?  
 (A) An assault rifle  
 (B) A Searching boat of Coast Guards  
 (C) An Air-to-Air missile  
 (D) A small battle tank
- According to Red lab, the consumer insights tank at Rediffusion, which of the following events/personalities has occupied first four places in 'Hits of the Year 2023 list' ?  
 (A) Chandrayan-3, G-20 summit, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Shah Rukh Khan  
 (B) G-20 Summit, Nari Shakti Vandan Vidheyak, Chandrayan-3, Prime Minister Narendra Modi  
 (C) Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Shah Rukh Khan, Virat Kohli, Mahua Moitra  
 (D) Chandrayan-3, G-20 Summit, Silkyara-Barkot Tunnel, Pradhan Mantri Narendra Modi
- Consider the following facts about XPoSat :  
 I. The XPoSat-like Aditya L-1, is a space observatory.  
 II. It carried two payloads-POLIX and XSPECT.  
 III. ISRO's PSLV-C58, carrying an XPoSat and 10 other satellites, lifted from the Sriharikota spaceport on January 1, 2024.  
 IV. XPoSat will offer insights into black holes.  
 V. India is second country after the US in the world to conduct experiments into such celestial bodies.  
 How many of the above statements are correct ?  
 (A) Only two (B) Only three  
 (C) Only four (D) All five
- Who among the following won the Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award for 2023 ?  
 I. Chirag Shetty (Badminton)  
 II. Satwik Sairaj Rankireddy (badminton)  
 III. R. Vaishali (Chess)  
 IV. Diksha Dagar (Golf)  
 Correct code is :  
 (A) Only I and II  
 (B) Only I, II and III  
 (C) Only II, III and IV  
 (D) All I, II, III and IV
- Which of the following won the Dhyan Chand Award for lifetime achievement 2023 ?  
 I. Manjusha Kanwar (Badminton),  
 II. Vineet Kumar Sharma (Hockey)  
 III. Kavitha Selvaraj (Kabaddi)  
 Correct code is :  
 (A) Only I and II  
 (B) Only I and III  
 (C) Only II and III  
 (D) All I, II and III
- Who among the following did not won the Dronacharya Award (regular category) for outstanding coaches, 2023 ?  
 (A) Lalit Kumar (Wrestling)  
 (B) RB Ramesh (Chess)  
 (C) Mahaveer Prasad Saini (Para athletics)  
 (D) Jayant Kumar Pushilal (Table Tennis)

11. Which of the following University has won the Maulana Abul Kalam Azad (MAKA) Trophy 2023 ?  
 (A) Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar  
 (B) Lovely Professional University, Punjab  
 (C) Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra  
 (D) Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi
12. Consider the following statements :  
 I. India's public distribution system is the largest such welfare programme in the world.  
 II. Fortified rice-rice enhanced with iron and vitamins is being distributed on pilot basis under PDS 'shope.  
 Which of the above statements is/are correct ?  
 (A) Only I  
 (B) Only II  
 (C) Both I and II  
 (D) Neither I nor II
13. Central government has adopted a unique water harvesting system—Taanka to be constructed near Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana units constructed in Arid Zones. This traditional system is prevalent in—  
 (A) Sonbhadra district (Uttar Pradesh)  
 (B) Bundelkhand region (Uttar Pradesh & Madhya Pradesh)  
 (C) Viddarvha (Maharashtra)  
 (D) Western Rajasthan
14. Which of the following film in Drama category won the best feature film award in 81st Golden Globe Awards ?  
 (A) 'Oppenheimer'  
 (B) 'The Zone of Interest'  
 (C) 'Anatomy of a Fall'  
 (D) 'Maestro'
15. Which of the following in comedy or musical category won the best feature film award in 81st Golden Globe Awards ?  
 (A) 'Barbie'  
 (B) 'The Holdovers'  
 (C) 'May December'  
 (D) 'Poor Things'
16. Consider the following pairs in relation to winners of 81st Golden Globe Awards :  
 I. Best Actor (Drama films)—Cillian Murphy, 'Oppenheimer'  
 II. Best Actress (Drama Films)—Lily Gladstone, 'Killers of the Flower Moon'  
 III. Best Actor (Comedy or musical films)—Paul Giamatti, 'The Holdovers'  
 IV. Best Actress (Comedy of musical films) Emma Stone, 'Poor Things'.  
 How many of the pairs given above is/are correct ?  
 (A) Only one (B) Only two  
 (C) Only three (D) All four
17. Who among the following won the best director award in 84th Golden Globe Awards ?  
 (A) Yorgos Lanthimos, 'Poor Things'  
 (B) Christopher Nolan, 'Oppenheimer'  
 (C) Martin Scorsese, 'Killers of the Flower Moon'  
 (D) Celine Song, 'Past Lives'
18. Which of the following statement is incorrect about the Manasana-maha ?  
 (A) It is a short film  
 (B) It has been produced in Marathi  
 (C) The film has won 513 awards across various film festivals across the globe  
 (D) The film has also been dubbed into Tamil, Malayalam, Hindi and Kannada languages
19. Who among the following did not participate in the 10th Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit 2024 held in Gandhinagar on 10-12 January, 2024 ?  
 (A) Dr. William Samoei Ruto, the President of the Republic of Kenya  
 (B) Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the President of United Arab Emirates (UAE)  
 (C) Filipe Jacinto Nyusi, the President of Mozambique  
 (D) Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa, the President of South Africa
20. Which state won the best performing state award in Annual Swakshata Sarvekshan Awards 2023 ?  
 (A) Chhattisgarh  
 (B) Madhya Pradesh  
 (C) Maharashtra  
 (D) Tamil Nadu
21. As per Swakshata Sarvekshan 2023, which of the following is the cleanest city in India ?  
 (A) Indore  
 (B) Surat  
 (C) Navi Mumbai  
 (D) Both (A) and (B) jointly
22. In the category of cities with a population of less than 1 lakh, which city won the first award in Annual Swakshata Sarvekshan 2023 ?  
 (A) Sasvad (Maharashtra)  
 (B) Patan (Chhattisgarh)  
 (C) Lonavala (Maharashtra)  
 (D) Chitrakoot (UP)
23. Consider the following facts about the Atal Bihari Bajpayee Sewri-Nhava Sheva Atal Setu :  
 I. It was inaugurated by the PM Narendra Modi on January 12, 2024.  
 II. The Atal Setu is a 21.8-kilometre-long bridge that connects Sewri in Mumbai and the Nhava Sheva area in Raigad district.  
 III. The Mumbai Trans Harbour Link has been built at a cost of ₹ 17,840 crore and is the longest sea bridge in the country.  
 How many of the above statements is/are correct ?  
 (A) Only one  
 (B) Only two  
 (C) All three  
 (D) None of the above
24. "Smart Lander for Investigating Moon" (SLIM) has been launched by :  
 (A) Japan (B) UAE  
 (C) The US (D) China
25. Which of the following statements is incorrect about the participation of tableaux in the Republic Day Pared ?  
 (A) It is mandatory for all the states/UTs to send their tableaux in the Republic Day Pared  
 (B) Central Ministries/Departments and State Governments send their tableaux in the Republic Day Pared

- (C) Only those tableaux can participate in the paret which are evaluated and approved by an expert committee appointed by the Ministry of Defence  
(D) Expert committee comprise prominent persons in the field of art, culture, painting, sculpture, music, architecture, choreography, etc.
26. Consider the following statements about the Genocide Convention :
- The Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide is an international human rights treaty that codified the crime of genocide for the first time.
  - The Genocide Convention was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 9, 1948, and has been in force since January 12, 1951.
- Which of the above statements is/are correct ?
- (A) Only I  
(B) Only II  
(C) Both I and II  
(D) Neither I nor II
27. Consider the following acts :
- Killing members of a group;
  - Causing serious bodily or mental harm;
  - Inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about their physical destruction;
  - Imposing measures intended to prevent births within a group;
  - Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group—committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group.
- How many of the above have been defined in the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide ?
- (A) Only two (B) Only three  
(C) Only four (D) All five
28. Which of the following statements is incorrect about the Square Kilometre Array Observatory (SKAO) ?
- (A) It is not a single telescope but an array of thousands of antennas  
(B) India is not involved in the development of SKA  
(C) It was established as an intergovernmental organisation in 2021  
(D) The countries have to sign, and ratify, the SKAO convention to formally become members
29. Consider the following facts about the Peregrine Mission 1 (TO2-AB) :
- It is Peregrine Lunar Lander.
  - It will carry scientific and other payloads to the Moon.
  - The scientific objectives of the mission are to study the lunar exosphere, thermal properties and hydrogen abundance of the lunar regolith, magnetic fields, and the radiation environment.
  - It will test advanced solar arrays.
  - Peregrine Mission 1 was selected through NASA's Commercial Lunar Payload Services (CLPS) initiative, in which NASA contracts with a commercial partner, in this case Astrobotic, that provides the launch and lander.
- How many of the above statements are correct ?
- (A) Only two (B) Only three  
(C) Only four (D) All five
30. Consider the Kavaratti, Agatti, Amini, Kadmat, Kiltan, Chetlat, Bitra, Andrott, Kalpeni and Minicoy Islands. These are the part of :
- (A) Maldives  
(B) Lakshadweep  
(C) Philippines  
(D) Mauritius
31. Bab al-Mandab Strait was in the news. It connects :
- (A) Red Sea and Mediterranean Sea  
(B) Persian Gulf and Arabian Sea  
(C) Gulf of Aden and Arabian Sea  
(D) Red Sea and Gulf of Aden
32. Karpoori Thakur, a prominent socialist leader and former Bihar Chief Minister was awarded Bharat Ratna posthumously in the year :
- (A) 1996 (B) 2001  
(C) 2016 (D) 2024
33. Which of the following statement is correct about the 'Project BHISHM' ?
- (A) BHISHM is an acronym for 'Bharat Health Initiative for Sahyog, Hita and Maitri'  
(B) Arogya Maitri Disaster Management Cube-BHISHM mobile hospitals have been deployed in Ayodhya during the 'Pran Pratishtha' ceremony  
(C) The Cube is tailored to treat up to 200 casualties, emphasizing rapid response and comprehensive care  
(D) All of the above
34. Consider the following countries :
- The United States
  - The Soviet Union
  - China
  - India
  - Japan
- How many of the above countries' space agencies have successfully landed their spacecraft on the surface of the Moon ?
- (A) Only two (B) Only three  
(C) Only four (D) All five
35. Who among the following has been awarded Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development 2023 ?
- (A) Music conductor Daniel Barenboim  
(B) Peace activist Ali Abu Awwad  
(C) Jointly to (A) and (B)  
(D) Neither (A) nor (B)
36. Consider the following pairs in relation to reforms in criminal laws enacted during the Winter session of the Parliament (2023) ?
- Indian Evidence Act- Bhartiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, 2023.
  - Indian Penal Code- Bhartiya Nyay Sanhita, 2023.
  - Criminal Procedure Code- Bhartiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023.
- Correct code is :
- (A) Only I  
(B) Only I and II

- (C) Only II and III  
(D) All I, II and III
37. Consider the following statements in relation to The Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service and term of office) Act, 2023 :
- A search committee headed by the cabinet secretary will suggest five names to the selection committee.
  - The Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners shall not be eligible for re-appointment.
  - The Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners shall be paid a salary which is equal to the salary of a Judge of the Supreme Court.
  - The Chief Election Commissioner shall not be removed from his office except in like manner and on the like grounds as a Judge of the Supreme Court.
- How many of the above statements is/are correct ?  
(A) Only one (B) Only two  
(C) Only three (D) All four
38. The Central Tribal Universities has been established in which state ?
- Madhya Pradesh
  - Andhra Pradesh
  - Telangana
- Correct code :  
(A) Only I and II  
(B) Only II and III  
(C) Only I  
(D) All I, II and III
39. Who among the following has advocated the creation of an All India Judicial Service (AIJS) Exam for the selection of Judges from across the country ?  
(A) President of India Droupadi Murmu  
(B) Vice-President of India Jagdeep Dhankhar  
(C) Prime Minister Narendra Modi  
(D) Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud
40. Project PRAYAS has been launched by :  
(A) University Grant Commission  
(B) All India Council of Technical Education  
(C) National Council of Educational Research and Training  
(D) International Organisation for Migration
41. 19th Summit of Non-Aligned Movement was held in which city?  
(A) Kampala (Uganda)  
(B) Cairo (Egypt)  
(C) Accra (Ghana)  
(D) Belgrade (Serbia)
19. India's rank in Henley Passport Index 2024 is :  
(A) 80th (B) 75th  
(C) 85th (D) 87th

### Answers with Hints

- (B) INS Imphal joined the Western Naval Command.
- (C)
- (C) The Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra, which will be undertaken mostly by bus with short stretches of walking or Padayatra, will cover 6713 kms across 110 district and 100 Parliamentary Constituencies in 15 States.
- (C)
- (A) Ugram, an assault rifle developed by the Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO) in collaboration with a private firm was launched on January 8, 2024. Ugram, developed at DRDO's Pune-based laboratory, is designed to meet the Indian Army's General Staff Qualitative Requirement of a rifle weighing less than four kg.
- (A) A 'Hit' is an event, personality, trend, technology or just a popular word that gained mass acceptance and found fame. Chandrayan-3, G-20 Summit, PM Narendra Modi, Shah Rukh Khan, AI, Silkyara Tunnel Rescue, Virat Kohli, International Year of Millets, Shubhaman Gill, India's win Asian Games are top ten hits of 2023.
- (D) The POLIX (Polarimeter Instrument in X-Rays), developed by the Raman Research Instt., studies the orientation (like, slant) of X-rays emitted by celestial bodies, to help infer knowledge about the bodies, while XSPECT (X-ray Spectroscopy Timing), developed by the UR Satellite Centre, will study how the spectrum of X-rays from the celestial bodies changes over time.
- (A) Major Dhyana Chand Khel Ratna Award for 2023 : Chirag Shetty and Satwik Sairaj Rankireddy (Badminton).
- (D)
- (D) Jayanta Kumar Pushilal (Table Tennis) won the Dronacharya Award (life-time category) for outstanding coaches, 2023.
- (A) 12. (C)
- (D) A taanka, otherwise called a tanka or kund, is a customary water reaping strategy, normal to the Thar desert locale of Rajasthan, India. A taanka is made out of a covered, underground, impermeable storage on shallow ground for the assortment of water.
- (A) 15. (D) 16. (D)
- (B) Deepak Reddy's short film in Telugu, Manasanamaha, has made it to the Guinness World Records for winning the most number of awards.
- (B) 19. (D)
- (C) Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh won the top three awards for Best Performing State in 2023.
- (D)
- (A) In the category of cities with a population of less than 1 lakh, Sasvad, Patan and Lonavala secured the top three spots.
- (C)
- (A) SLIM, Japan's Smart Lander for Investigating Moon, landed on the lunar surface on January 19, 2024. The JAXA mission aims to test highly accurate landings that can boost the science value of missions.
- (A) The Committee can also make revisions to models before they are chosen. Importantly, while the process is intended to be collaborative, the Committee has the final say on which tableaux are chosen and can mandate any changes they deem necessary.

26. (C) 27. (D)
28. (B) Since its inception in the 1990s, India has been participating in the development of SKA through the Pune-based National Centre for Radio Astrophysics (NCRA) and other institutes.
29. (D) A spacecraft developed by a private US company and carrying a bunch of scientific instruments from NASA, took off from Florida, hoping to become the first US spacecraft to land on the Moon in more than 50 years. The Peregrine lander module of the mission, as well as the Vulcan rocket that launched it, have both been built by private space companies in the US. The Mission is part of NASA's Commercial Lunar Payload Services (CLPS) initiative that seeks to involve private space sector in its ambitious Artemis programme.
30. (B) The tiniest Union Territory of India, Lakshadweep is an archipelago consisting of 12 atolls, three reefs and five submerged banks. It is a uni-district Union Territory with an area of 32 Sq. kms and is comprised of ten inhabited islands, 17 uninhabited islands attached islets, four newly formed islets and 5 submerged reefs. The inhabited islands are Kavaratti, Agatti, Amini, Kadmat, Kiltan, Chetlat, Bitra, Andrott, Kalpeni and Minicoy. Bitra is the smallest of all having only a population of 271 persons (Census 2011). The uninhabited island Bangaram has been enumerated during 2011 census operation and has a population of 61 persons.
31. (D) The Bab-el-Mandeb, the Gate of Grief or the Gate of Tears, is a strait between Yemen on the Arabian Peninsula and Djibouti and Eritrea in the Horn of Africa. It connects the Red Sea to the Gulf of Aden and by extension the Indian Ocean. Yemeni rebels are targeting ships which are passing from this small strait and belong to those countries which are in support of the Israel-Hamas conflict.
32. (D) Government of India has decided to confer the Bharat Ratna on the beacon of social justice, the great Jan Nayak Karpoori Thakur Ji on his birth centenary on January 24, 2024.
33. (D)
34. (D) Japan became the fifth country in history to reach the moon when one of its spacecrafts 'Smart Lander for Investigating Moon (SLIM) without astronauts successfully made a soft landing on the lunar surface early January 20, 2024. Japan follows the United States, the Soviet Union, China and India in reaching the moon.
35. (C) Music conductor Daniel Barenboim and peace activist Ali Abu Awwad on December 14, 2023 were jointly awarded the Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development 2023 for promoting amity among the Israeli and Palestinian people.
36. (D)
37. (C) A Search Committee headed by the Minister of Law and Justice and comprising two other members not below the rank of Secretary to the Government of India, shall prepare a panel of five persons for consideration of the Selection Committee, for appointment as the Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners.
38. (D) There is a functional tribal university at Amarkantak, Madhya Pradesh. Second Tribal University was established in Vijanagaram (Andhra Pradesh). The Parliament passed the Central Universities (Amendment) Bill, 2023, on December 12, 2023 paving way for establishment of a Central Tribal University in Telangana the third central varsity in the country focusing on tribal students. The Sammakka Sarakka Central Tribal University is being set up in, Mulugu, through an amendment to the Central Universities Act of 2009. The Thirteenth Schedule to the Andhra Pradesh Re-organisation Act, 2014 had provided for establishment of Central Tribal Universities for both Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.
39. (A) Article 312 of the Constitution provides for the establishment of All India Judicial Service (AIJS), which shall not include any post inferior to that of a District Judge. The constitutional provision enables creation of the AIJS at District Judge level. Notwithstanding anything in Chapter VI of Part VI or Part XI, if the Council of States has declared by resolution supported by not less than two-thirds of the members present and voting that it is necessary or expedient in the national interest so to do, Parliament may by law provide for the creation of one or more all-India services (including an all-India judicial service) common to the Union and the States, and subject to the other provisions of this Chapter, regulate the recruitment, and the conditions of service of persons appointed, to any such service.
40. (D) The PRAYAS, an acronym of Promoting Regular Assisted Migration for Youth and Skilled Professionals, was launched by the International Organisation for Migration in collaboration of Ministry of External Affairs. Project PRAYAS not only aligns with Government of India's priorities for the promotion of safe and orderly migration, but also aligns with Goal 10-7 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to facilitate orderly, safe, regular, and responsible migration and mobility of people. The project also adheres to the objectives of Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) and the Migration Governance Framework (MiGOF)
41. (A) 19th Summit of NAM was held on 19th-20th January, 2024 in the capital city of Uganda, Kampala, on the theme Deepening Cooperation for Shared Global Alliances. Indian delegation was led by Dr. S. Jaishanker, Minister of External Affairs.
42. (A) Recently, the Henley Passport Index released its 2024's ranking, placing India's passport at the 80th spot, allowing Indians to travel visa-free to 62 countries. In 2023, too, India's passport was ranked at the 80th spot, up five places from 2022. However, the number of visa-free destinations has jumped from 57 to 62 this year. Plupian



## Solved Paper

MADHYA PRADESH PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION (Pre.) EXAM., 2023

(Held on 17-12-2023)

# General Studies

Shift-I

- Which of the following is the correct order of agricultural practices ?  
(A) Soil preparation – Irrigation – Sowing – Harvesting  
(B) Soil preparation – Sowing – Irrigation – Harvesting  
(C) Sowing – Harvesting – Irrigation – Soil preparation  
(D) Soil preparation – Irrigation – Harvesting – Sowing
- Who declared the year 2024 as International Year of Camelids ?  
(A) UN (B) UNESCO  
(C) WHO (D) USA
- Which among the following is not a globally accepted National 'hot spot' of India ?  
(A) Himalayas  
(B) Naro Hills  
(C) Sundaland  
(D) Western Ghats
- Which among the following is a recent scientific mission of ISRO for comprehensive study of the Sun ?  
(A) Aditya-L1  
(B) Bhaskara-L2  
(C) Solar Mission-L1  
(D) Solar Orbiter
- Which of the following is not a National Nutrition Programme of the Government of India ?  
(A) National Iodine Deficiency Disorders Control Programme  
(B) National Programme for Prevention and Control of Fluorosis  
(C) National Iron Plus Initiative for Anaemia Control  
(D) National Oral Health Programme
- Which among the following is the most stable ecosystem ?  
(A) Forest ecosystem  
(B) Desert ecosystem  
(C) Marine ecosystem  
(D) Grassland ecosystem
- Which among the following is not a biodegradable pollutant ?  
(A) Paper  
(B) Food and Plant waste  
(C) Insecticides  
(D) Wood and Cellulose
- In an ecosystem, flow of energy declines as it passes from lower to higher trophic level. This is explained by the following—  
(A) First law of thermodynamics  
(B) Second law of thermodynamics  
(C) Newton's second law  
(D) Newton's third law
- Osteoclasts are associated with which of the following ?  
(A) Bone formation  
(B) Basal lamina secretion  
(C) Bone fracture  
(D) Muscle regeneration
- Green Muffler is related to pollution of—  
(A) Soil (B) Air  
(C) Noise (D) Water
- Which district in Madhya Pradesh showed the highest improvement in multi-dimensional poverty as per the report of Madhya Pradesh State Policy & Planning Commission (2023) ?  
(A) Barwani (B) Khandwa  
(C) Balaghat (D) Alirajpur
- How did Madhya Pradesh perform in the assessment of states for Business Reforms Action Plan 2020 ?  
(A) Madhya Pradesh was rated as 'Under Achievers'  
(B) Madhya Pradesh was rated as 'Top Achievers'  
(C) Madhya Pradesh was not rated in the assessment  
(D) Madhya Pradesh was rated as 'Achievers'
- Arrange the following districts of Madhya Pradesh in order of their decennial population growth rate during 2001–2011; as per the 2011 census. Arrange from the lowest to highest—  
(A) Anuppur, Mandsaur, Betul, Chhindwara  
(B) Anuppur, Betul, Chhindwara, Mandsaur  
(C) Betul, Chhindwara, Mandsaur, Anuppur  
(D) Betul, Anuppur, Chhindwara, Mandsaur
- What is the objective of Tanya Mama Economic Welfare Scheme (New Scheme) ?  
(A) Providing free education to Tribal women  
(B) Supplying low-cost equipment and working capital for new industries/business to BPL category beneficiaries of Scheduled Tribes  
(C) Funding infrastructure development in Tribal regions  
(D) Promoting sports among Tribal youth
- Which city in Madhya Pradesh has a cluster dedicated to the production of transformers and allied products ?  
(A) Indore (B) Gwalior  
(C) Bhopal (D) Jabalpur
- What is the maximum age limit of a High Court judge ?  
(A) 60 years (B) 62 years  
(C) 58 years (D) 56 years
- By which Amendment of the Indian Constitution have the municipal laws been updated ?  
(A) 71 (B) 72  
(C) 74 (D) 73
- Who was the Father of Local Self-Government in India ?  
(A) Lord Dalhousie  
(B) Lord Mountbatten

- (C) Lord Macaulay  
(D) Lord Ripon
19. Who decides whether a bill is a money bill or not in the State ?  
(A) Chief Minister  
(B) Governor  
(C) Speaker of the Vidhan Sabha  
(D) Law Minister
20. Who amongst the following was the first Speaker of the Madhya Pradesh Legislative Assembly ?  
(A) Bhagwantrao Mandloi  
(B) Dwarka Prasad Mishra  
(C) Shankar Dayal Sharma  
(D) Pandit Kunjilal Dubey
21. Which of the following Article of the Constitution of India is related to expenses of Public Service Commissions ?  
(A) Article 320 (B) Article 321  
(C) Article 322 (D) Article 323
22. When was new institution NITI Aayog' constituted in place of 'Planning Commission' ?  
(A) 31st March, 2014  
(B) 15th March, 1950  
(C) 1st January, 2015  
(D) 11th January, 2016
23. Who was the Chairman of the Twelfth Finance Commission ?  
(A) A.M. Khusro  
(B) Dr. C. Rangarajan  
(C) Dr. Vijay Kelkar  
(D) Y.V. Reddy
24. The Food Preservation Commission is a statutory body established under which of the following Acts ?  
(A) National Food Security Act, 2013  
(B) Food Security Act, 2011  
(C) Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006  
(D) Food Safety and Standards Act, 2011
25. The functions of the National Commission for Women are specified in—  
(A) Section 12 of the National Commission for Women Act, 1990  
(B) Section 15 of the National Commission for Women Act, 1990  
(C) Section 10 of the National Commission for Women Act, 1990  
(D) Section 3 of the National Commission for Women Act, 1990
26. Which of the following rights is not under the purview of the National Human Rights Commission ?  
(A) Rights relating to equality  
(B) Rights relating to education  
(C) Rights relating to life  
(D) Rights relating to liberty
27. The total number of members other than the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes is—  
(A) 1 Members (B) 2 Members  
(C) 3 Members (D) 3 Members
28. The Comptroller and Auditor General of India can hold his office for a maximum period of—  
(A) 4 years (B) 5 years  
(C) 6 years (D) 7 years
29. National Green Tribunal's (NGT) headquarters is situated at—  
(A) Kolkata (B) New Delhi  
(C) Mumbai (D) Chennai
30. The Union Public Service Commission constituted a committee in July 2000 to review the civil services examination under the chairmanship of—  
(A) Professor Sukhdeo Thorat  
(B) Professor Deepak Kumar Srivastava  
(C) Professor M. Jagadesh Kumar  
(D) Professor Yoginder Kumar Alagh
31. Where is the headquarters of Amateur Kabaddi Federation of India (AKFI) located ?  
(A) Bhopal (B) Gwalior  
(C) Jaipur (D) Delhi
32. Which of the following players were part of the Indian Women's Hockey team in Tokyo Olympics, 2020 ?  
(A) Sushila Chanu  
(B) Monika  
(C) Vandana Katariya  
(D) All of the above
33. Which player was awarded the Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award, 2022 ?  
(A) Manika Batra  
(B) Kamlesh Mehta  
(C) Sathiyam Gnanasekaran  
(D) Sharath Kamal
34. Who among the following was awarded Padma Vibhushan, 2023 in the field of Science and Engineering ?  
(A) Shri S.M. Krishna  
(B) Shri Dilip Mahalanabis  
(C) Shri Srinivasa Varadhan  
(D) Shri Narinder Singh Kapany
35. Which of the following is not correctly matched ?  
(A) Aryabhatta Research Institute of Observational Sciences—Nainital  
(B) College of Defence Management—Secunderabad  
(C) Central Institute of Indian Languages—Mumbai  
(D) Indian Institute of Science—Bengaluru
36. India played its first One Day International cricket match with which country and in which year ?  
(A) Australia—1977  
(B) England—1975  
(C) New Zealand—1975  
(D) England—1974
37. From which year did the celebration of 21st June as International Yoga Day begin ?  
(A) 2014 (B) 2015  
(C) 1016 (D) 2017
38. Who is the first Indian woman soldier skydiver ?  
(A) Shital Mahajan Rane  
(B) Manju  
(C) Anamika Sharma  
(D) Shweta Parmar
39. From the following industrialists, who is known as the 'Steel Man of India' ?  
(A) Lakshmi Mittal  
(B) Om Prakash Jindal  
(C) Jamshed J. Irani  
(D) Anil Agrawal
40. 'Governor of the Year' award at the Central Banking Awards 2023 was conferred upon the Governor of the central bank which country ?  
(A) United States of America  
(B) Canada  
(C) Indonesia  
(D) India

41. Which of the following is not an E-Procurement portal ?  
 (A) MP Tenders  
 (B) GeM  
 (C) MP Online  
 (D) MP LUN
42. Which of the following is a type of Internet connection that uses telephone lines ?  
 (A) DSL  
 (B) Cable  
 (C) Fiber Optics  
 (D) Satellite
43. Which of the following is an advantage of E-Commerce ?  
 (A) Ability to operate 24/7  
 (B) Limited reach  
 (C) Inability to personalize the shopping experience  
 (D) Higher operational costs
44. Which of the following is a type of cyber attack that involves tricking users into revealing sensitive information ?  
 (A) Phishing attack  
 (B) SQL Injection attack  
 (C) DOS attack  
 (D) None of the above
45. What is the purpose of a firewall in cyber security ?  
 (A) To allow unrestricted access to a network  
 (B) To block unauthorized access to a network  
 (C) To create a backup of a network's data  
 (D) None of the above
46. Flipkart, Alibaba, Amazon are examples of—  
 (A) C2B (B) C2C  
 (C) B2C (D) B2B
47. .... is the process by which the receiver interprets the symbols used by the source of the message.  
 (A) Listing (B) Decoding  
 (C) Encoding (D) Listening
48. Which of the following is not a web browser ?  
 (A) Internet Explorer  
 (B) Mozilla Firefox  
 (C) Google Chrome  
 (D) Yahoo
49. Chat GPT was developed by—  
 (A) Google (B) OpenAI  
 (C) Apple (D) Microsoft
50. Which electronic device was used in Second Generation Computers ?  
 (A) Vacuum tubes  
 (B) VLSI  
 (C) Transistors  
 (D) None of the above
51. Where is Tatipaka oil refinery located ?  
 (A) Tamil Nadu  
 (B) Gujarat  
 (C) Andhra Pradesh  
 (D) Maharashtra
52. Which of the following seas is near the 'Gaza Strip' ?  
 (A) Mediterranean Sea  
 (B) Red Sea  
 (C) Black Sea  
 (D) Caspian Sea
53. Match the following—  

	<b>Place</b>
(a)	Bailadila
(b)	Kendujhar
(c)	Balaghat
(d)	Kudremukh
	<b>State</b>
1.	Odisha
2.	Karnataka
3.	Chhattisgarh
4.	Madhya Pradesh

**Codes :**  

(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	1	2	3
(B)	3	1	4
(C)	3	1	2
(D)	1	3	4
54. Which of the following processes do not come under diastrophism ?  
 (A) Orogenic  
 (B) Heterogenic  
 (C) Earthquakes  
 (D) Plate Tectonics
55. Identify the correct sequence of states according to the highest to lowest literacy rate. (According to Census of India, 2011)—  
 (A) Kerala, Mizoram, Tripura, Goa  
 (B) Kerala, Tripura, Mizoram, Goa  
 (C) Kerala, Goa, Tripura, Mizoram  
 (D) Kerala, Mizoram, Goa, Tripura
56. Which of the following atmospheric layers is known for all changes in climate and weather ?  
 (A) Thermosphere  
 (B) Stratosphere  
 (C) Mesosphere  
 (D) Troposphere
57. Which of the following rivers rises from the Trimbak Hills in Nasik district ?  
 (A) Shetrunji (B) Bhadra  
 (C) Dhadhar (D) Vaitarna
58. Match the following pairs and identify the correct code—  
**Biosphere Reserve Area**  
 (a) Nokrek  
 (b) Manas  
 (c) Similipal  
 (d) Seshachalam  
**State**  
 1. Odisha  
 2. Meghalaya  
 3. Andhra Pradesh  
 4. Assam  
**Codes :**  

(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	2	4	1
(B)	2	1	4
(C)	2	4	3
(D)	4	2	1
59. The first successful attempt to tap underground heat was made in—  
 (A) Boise, Idaho (USA)  
 (B) Tel Aviv, Israel  
 (C) Tokyo, Japan  
 (D) Canberra, Australia
60. Which of the following is also called 'Molassis Basin' ?  
 (A) Manipur (B) Tripura  
 (C) Mizoram (D) Nagaland
61. In which session was the Congress divided into Moderates Extremists ?  
 (A) Bombay (B) Surat  
 (C) Calcutta (D) Nagpur
62. In the year 1948, which state came into existence after the merger or Bundelkhand and Baghelkhand ?  
 (A) Malwa Pradesh  
 (B) Vindhya Pradesh  
 (C) Baghel Pradesh  
 (D) Madhya Pradesh
63. How many principalities were merged in the 'Saurashtra Sangh' on 15th February, 1948 ?  
 (A) 220 (B) 221  
 (C) 222 (D) 223

64. Who among the following first coined the word 'Pakistan' ?  
 (A) Mohammad Ali Jinnah  
 (B) Choudhry Rehmat Ali  
 (C) Syed Ahmad Khan  
 (D) Mohammad Ashfaq Khan
65. In the first stage of the National Movement, which one among the following was not the demand of the Congress ?  
 (A) To increase the number of members of the Legislative Councils  
 (B) To increase the number of members of the public representatives in the Councils  
 (C) Separation of Executive and Judiciary  
 (D) Unification of Executive and Judiciary
66. Who among the following started 'Ganeshotsav' in Maharashtra ?  
 (A) Bipin Chandra Pal  
 (B) Govind Ranade  
 (C) Lala Lajpat Rai  
 (D) Bal Gangadhar Tilak
67. In which of the following year did Nadir Shah invade India ?  
 (A) 1736 A.D. (B) 1737 A.D.  
 (C) 1738 A.D. (D) 1739 A.D.
68. 'Aryamanjushrimulakalpa' is related to which of the following ?  
 (A) Mahayana (B) Hinayana  
 (C) Theravada (D) Vajrayana
69. In which of the following year was the freedom of press given by Lord William Bentinck ?  
 (A) 1832 A.D. (B) 1833 A.D.  
 (C) 1834 A.D. (D) 1835 A.D.
70. After conquering the Shakas, which of the following metal coins were introduced by Chandragupta-II ?  
 (A) Gold (B) Silver  
 (C) Copper (D) Bronze
71. Which position did Madhya Pradesh hold in copper production in India during the year 2021-22 ?  
 (A) Fourth (B) Second  
 (C) First (D) Third
72. Which of the following rivers of Madhya Pradesh flows in three states ?  
 (A) Ken (B) Sonar  
 (C) Mahi (D) Betwa
73. Which of the following characteristics is not correct in reference to the black soil of Madhya Pradesh ?  
 (A) Black soil is also known as cotton soil  
 (B) Black soil is highly retentive of moisture  
 (C) Black soil has high sand content  
 (D) Its structure is cloddish but occasionally friable
74. Purna river is a tributary of which of the following rivers ?  
 (A) Narmada (B) Tapi  
 (C) Sonar (D) Dhasan
75. Bijargarh hill is situated in which out of the following mountain ranges ?  
 (A) Satpura range  
 (B) Vindhya range  
 (C) Kaimur range  
 (D) Mahadeo range
76. Which of the following statements is not correct regarding the climate of Madhya Pradesh ?  
 (A) The climate of Madhya Pradesh is tropical  
 (B) The state comes under the monsoon climate  
 (C) Temperate climate is found in the southern part of the state  
 (D) The Tropic of Cancer passes through its central part
77. Which type of forests are not found in Madhya Pradesh ?  
 (A) Tropical wet deciduous forests  
 (B) Sub-humid hilly forests  
 (C) Thorny forests  
 (D) Alpine forests
78. Which of the following thermal power stations is situated at Chachai of Anuppur district ?  
 (A) Satpura power station  
 (B) Amarkantak power station  
 (C) Bansagar power station  
 (D) None of the above
79. Which of the following statements is not correct regarding the roadways of Madhya Pradesh according to Basic Road Statistics 2018-19 ?  
 (A) The length of the National Highways is more than 8,000 kms  
 (B) The length of the State Highways is more than 11,000 kms  
 (C) The length of the District roads is more than 50,000 kms  
 (D) The State ranks first in the country in road density
80. In the year 2020-21, which of the following districts holds the first position in the production of cotton in Madhya Pradesh ?  
 (A) Damoh (B) Khargone  
 (C) Mandla (D) Panna
81. The Electoral College for the election of the President consists of—  
 (A) Members of both houses of Parliament  
 (B) Members of both houses of Parliament and State Assemblies  
 (C) Elected members of both houses of Parliament and elected members of State Assemblies  
 (D) None of the above
82. The Directive Principles of State Policy are explained in Part IV-A of the Indian Constitution. This system has been taken from the Constitution of which country ?  
 (A) Britain  
 (B) South Africa  
 (C) U.S.A.  
 (D) Ireland
83. The Parliament is formed by which of the following ?  
 (A) Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha  
 (B) Lok Sabha and President  
 (C) Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha and President  
 (D) Prime Minister, Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha
84. When was the NABARD established ?  
 (A) 15th August, 1947  
 (B) 1st April, 1951  
 (C) 12th July, 1982  
 (D) 26th January, 1950
85. When was the Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) established ?  
 (A) April 1990  
 (B) January 1950  
 (C) August 1995  
 (D) May 2005
86. How many banks were nationalized in India in 1980 ?  
 (A) 4 (B) 6  
 (C) 14 (D) 20

87. Through which Amendment of the Constitution has the Right to Education become a Fundamental Right ?  
 (A) First Constitutional Amendment  
 (B) Forty-second Constitutional Amendment  
 (C) Forty-fourth Constitutional Amendment  
 (D) Eighty-sixth Constitutional Amendment
88. Article 51-A deals with Fundamental Duties. Currently how many Fundamental Duties are mentioned ?  
 (A) 10 (B) 11  
 (C) 12 (D) 15
89. By which Constitutional Amendment was the term 'Socialist' included in the Preamble ?  
 (A) First Constitutional Amendment  
 (B) Second Constitutional Amendment  
 (C) Forty-second Constitutional Amendment  
 (D) Forty-fourth Constitutional Amendment
90. Through which plan was the Constituent Assembly created ?  
 (A) Cripps Mission Plan  
 (B) Cabinet Mission Plan  
 (C) Simon Commission  
 (D) None of the above
91. Bhima Nayak was related to which Princely State ?  
 (A) Mandla  
 (B) Barwani  
 (C) Kishangarh  
 (D) Mudiya
92. When did tribal leaders, Sitaram Kanwar and Raghunath Singh Mandloi Bhilala join the Anti-British Revolution ?  
 (A) 1842 A.D. (B) 1857 A.D.  
 (C) 1927 A.D. (D) 1942 A.D.
93. Which folk dance is prevalent on the occasion of Deepawali in the regional areas of Sagar ?  
 (A) Moni Dance  
 (B) Mandalya Dance  
 (C) Fefariya Dance  
 (D) Danda Dance
94. Which other name was the religious place Chitrakoot also recognized by ?  
 (A) Jagatpuri (B) Ramsiya  
 (C) Brahmipuri (D) Kakanaya
95. Whose famous literary work in 'Mukul' ?  
 (A) Makhanlal Chaturvedi  
 (B) Bhavani Prasad Mishra  
 (C) Mukutdhar Pandey  
 (D) Subhadra Kumari Chauhan
96. 'Nohdora' ornamentation made of clay on the wall is the speciality of which tribe ?  
 (A) Bhil (B) Korku  
 (C) Saharia (D) Gond
97. Where is the historical Matangeshwar temple situated ?  
 (A) Ujjain (B) Maheshwar  
 (C) Khajuraho (D) Vidisha
98. Whose famous work is 'Ramchandrika' ?  
 (A) Padmakar (B) Bhushan  
 (C) Keshavdas (D) Bhavabhuti
99. On whom did Balkrishna Sharma Naveen write two kavyas—'Pranarpan' and 'Atmosarga' ?  
 (A) Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi  
 (B) Jai Shankar Prasad  
 (C) Prabhakar Machave  
 (D) Makhanlal Chaturvedi
100. When did the Thona-Luhari firing incident of Niwari district take place in the Freedom Movement ?  
 (A) 1922 (B) 1931  
 (C) 1939 (D) 1942
- and economic development as well as hold a strong cultural significance for communities around the world.
3. (B) Biodiversity refers to the variety of plant and animal species in a specific habitat. The two main factors that make up biodiversity are species similarity and species richness. India is famous for a rich and diverse ecosystem. Four of the world's 36 biodiversity hotspots are located in India : the Himalayas, the Western Ghats, the Indo-Burma region and Sundaland. Two of these, the Indo-Burma region and Sundaland, extend across South Asia.
4. (A) Aditya-L1 is India's first space-based solar mission to study the Sun from a substantial distance of 1.5 million kms. It was launched by the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) by the PSLV C-57 rocket into a halo orbit around the Sun-Earth Lagrange point 1 (L1). Aditya-L1 will provide uninterrupted views of the Sun for long period of time. This success will place ISRO in an exclusive space club alongwith NASA and ESA.
5. (B, D) National Nutrition Program—  
 ● National Iodine Deficiency Disorder Control Programme.  
 ● Mother's Absolute Affection (MAA) program for infant and young child feeding.  
 ● National Program for Prevention and Control of Fluorosis (NPPCF).  
 ● National Iron Plus Initiative for Anemia Control.  
 ● National Oral Health Programme.
6. (C) Marine ecosystem is the most stable ecosystem. It is stable to light and temperature due to its natural liquid nature (saline) with dissolved oxygen. An environment is considered stable when its structure and functions remain unchanged over a long period of time. It is one of the most productive ecosystems.
7. (C) DDT, plastic, polythene, bags, pesticides, insecticides, mercury, lead, arsenic, alumi-

### Answers with Hints

1. (B) The process of growing crops starts from the stage of preparing the soil by ploughing the land. After the soil is prepared, the seeds of the concerned crop are sown in it. After that it is irrigated. After the crop is ready, it is harvested. Therefore, the correct sequence of agricultural system is – soil preparation – sowing – irrigation – harvesting.
2. (A) The United Nations declared 2024 as the International Year of Camelids (IYC 2024). This year will highlight how camels are key to the livelihoods of millions of families in more than 90 countries. From alpacas to Bactrian camels, dromedaries, guanacos, llamas and vicuñas, camels contribute to food security, nutrition

- nium cans, synthetic fibres, glass items, Iron products and metal items like silver foil are non-biodegradable pollutants.
8. (B) The flow of energy decreases while moving from lower to higher trophic level. This is explained by the second law of thermodynamics. According to this law, energy decreases from one trophic level to the next because energy is lost in the form of metabolic heat during the transfer of energy. When food energy passes from producers to herbivores to carnivores, only 10% of the energy is transferred from one trophic level to the other.
  9. (A, C) Osteoclasts are a type of bone cells whose function is to break down bone tissue. This process is very important for the continuous repair and maintenance and reconstruction of bones in vertebrates. Besides these, cells are also helpful in controlling the amount of calcium in the blood. But the commission has considered the answer as option C.
  10. (B, C) Green muffler scheme involves the growing green plants along roadsides to reduce noise and air pollution.
  11. (D) According to the Madhya Pradesh State Policy and Planning Commission Report 2023, the number of 'multi-dimensional poor' persons in Madhya Pradesh has decreased from 36.57% to 20.63% in a period of five years. Maximum improvement in the state has taken place in Alirajpur (31.05%), Barwani (28.08%), Khandwa (27.38%), Balaghat (26.48%) and Tikamgarh (26.33%).
  12. (D) Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Punjab, Tamil Nadu and Telangana have been ranked as the top achieving states in the assessment of States/UTs based on the implementation of the Trade Reforms Action Plan for the year 2020. And Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh were included in the category of states achieving the target.
  13. (B) From lowest to highest order in terms of decennial population growth rate : Anuppur, Betul, Chhindwara, Mandasaur, Balaghat.
  14. (B) The objective of Tanya Mama Economic Welfare Scheme (New Scheme) will be to provide low cost equipment and working capital to the BPL category beneficiaries of Scheduled Tribes. The benefit of the scheme will be given for establishment of new industry/business etc.
  15. (B)
  16. (B) In India, judges of High Courts hold office till the age of 62 years and judges of the Supreme Court hold office till the age of 65 years.
  17. (C) By the 74th Constitutional Amendment in 1992, Part 9 (A) and Schedule 12 were inserted in the Indian Constitution to provide constitutional status to urban local government and mention the provisions related to it.
  18. (D) British Governor-General Lord Ripon was called the father of local self-government in India. Lord Ripon gave extensive rights and powers to local bodies in 1882. He introduced local self-government and laid the foundation of representative institutions in India.
  19. (C) In the context of states, it is decided by the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of the concerned state whether a bill is a money bill or not. It is noteworthy that the decision of the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly is final.
  20. (D) Pandit Kunji Lal Dubey was the first Speaker of Madhya Pradesh Legislative Assembly. He remained speaker from 1 November, 1956 to 7 March 1967.
  21. (C) Provisions related to Public Service Commission in the Constitution—
    - Article 315—Constitution of Public Service Commissions for the Union and the States of India.
    - Article 316—Appointment and tenure of members of the Union Public Service Commission as well as the State Public Service Commission.
    - Article 317—Removal and suspension of a member of either the Union Public Service Commission or the State Public Service Commission.
    - Article 318—Power to make rules for the conditions of service of members and employees of the Commission.
    - Article 319—Prohibition of members of the Commission from holding office if they cease to be members.
    - Article 320—Description of functions of Public Service Commissions.
    - Article 322—Expenses of Public Service Commissions.
    - Article 323—Report of Public Service Commissions.
  22. (C) The Government of India, through an executive resolution, on January 1, 2015, has replaced the Planning Commission, formed in 1950, with a new institution called NITI Aayog. It is the premier policy think tank of the Government of India and focuses on cooperative federalism.
  23. (B) The President constituted the Twelfth Finance Commission under the chairmanship of Dr. C. Rangarajan. The recommendations of the Twelfth Finance Commission were valid for the period 2005–10.
  24. (A) Food Preservation Commission is a statutory body of the government established under the National Food Security Act of 2013 which is responsible for exploring and formulating strategies for preservation of food. Section 16 of the National Food Security Act authorizes the states to establish Food Safety Commission as it comes under the State List. Its objective is to implement the guidelines of the National Food Security Act.
  25. (C) The functions of the National Commission for Women are specified in Section 10 of the National Commission for Women Act, 1990.

26. (\*) The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) in India is entrusted with the responsibility of safeguarding and promoting various human rights. Some of the rights falling under the purview of the NHRC include those related to life, liberty, equality, and dignity of the individual as guaranteed under the Constitution or embodied in the International Covenants and enforceable by courts in India.
27. (C) The National Commission for Scheduled Tribes has a Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson and three other Members. At least one other Member should be appointed from amongst women. The Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and other Members of the Commission are appointed by the President.
28. (C) The correct answer is 6 years, according to Article 148 The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) holds office for a period of six years or up to the age of 65 years, whichever is earlier.
29. (B) The National Green Tribunal was established on 18 October, 2010 under the National Green Tribunal Act 2010. New Delhi is the headquarters of the NGT and Bhopal, Pune, Kolkata and Chennai are the other four places of sitting of the tribunal.
30. (D) A committee was constituted by the Union Public Service Commission on 19 July, 2000 to review the existing Civil Services Examination. The broad terms of reference for this Committee were to examine the existing scheme, the systems of implementation of the Civil Services Examination and the scheme related to it, the necessary practical experience and to review the current requirements.
31. (D) Amateur Kabaddi Federation of India (AKFI) has its Head Office at Delhi. AKFI is the Apex Body to regulate the All forms of Kabaddi *i.e.*, National, Indoor, Beach and Circle Style.
32. (D) The India women's national field hockey team played in Tokyo Olympic 2020, consists of Rani Rampal (captain), Savita Punia (Vice-captain), Bichu Devi Kharibam, Deep Grace Ekka, Gurjit Kaur, Jyoti, Lalremsiami, Lilima Minz, Manpreet Kaur, Monika, Namita Toppo, Navjot Kaur, Navneet Kaur, Neha Goyal, Nikki Pradhan, Nisha, Rajni Etimarpu, Rajwinder Kaur, Reena Khokhar, Salima Tete, Sharmila Devi, Sonika, Sushila Chanu Pukhrabam, Udita, and Vandana Katariya.
33. (D) Tennis player Achanta Sharath Kamal was awarded the country's highest sports honour, "Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award 2022."
34. (C) The year of 2023 consists of 10 names from the field of science and engineering. Shri Srinivas Varadhan was awarded the highest civilian honour Padma Vibhushan.
35. (C) The Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL) is an Indian research and teaching institute located in Mysore, part of the Language Bureau of the Ministry of Education. It was established on 17 July, 1969.
36. (D) In men's limited overs cricket, India played its first ODI match in 1974 against England and its first T20I match in 2006 against South Africa.
37. (B) The International Day of Yoga has been celebrated across the world annually on June 21 since 2015, following its inception in the United Nations General Assembly in 2014.
38. (B) Lance Naik Manju became the first woman soldier sky diver of the Indian Army, after she jumped from 10,000 feet. She jumped off a ALH Dhruv Chopper to perform the sky dive that set a record.
39. (C) Jamshed J. Irani, known as Steel man of India, was awarded with Padma Bhushan Award for his contribution to the Steel industry.
40. (D) Reserve Bank of India's Governor Shaktikanta Das was awarded with 'Governor of the Year' award at Central Banking Awards 2023.
41. (C) Government e-Marketplace (GeM) is a national e-procurement portal of the Government of India and MP Tender and MP LUN is the e-Procurement portal of Madhya Pradesh Government. Whereas the objective of MP online is to provide real time online services to the institutions.
42. (A) DSL (Digital Subscriber Line) is a modem technology that uses existing telephone lines to transport high-bandwidth data, such as multimedia and video, to service subscribers. DSL provides dedicated, point-to-point, public network access.
43. (A) E-commerce offers numerous advantages including convenience, global reach, cost savings, and the ability to compare prices and products easily. It provides businesses with a larger customer base, allows for 24/7 sales, reduces overhead costs, and enables faster and more efficient transactions. Additionally, it allows consumers to shop from the comfort of their own homes.
44. (A) Phishing attack involves fraudulent attempts to obtain sensitive information, such as usernames, passwords, and credit card details, by disguising as trustworthy entities. SQL injection attack exploits security vulnerabilities in web applications to gain unauthorized access to a database. A denial-of-service (DoS) attack floods a system, server, or network with traffic to disrupt its normal functioning, making it inaccessible to users.
45. (B) A firewall serves to control the flow of data between connected networks, safeguarding against unauthorized access, preventing malware and other threats, and offering protection from unwanted access. It acts as a barrier, filtering incoming and outgoing traffic to ensure network security and defend against potential cyber threats and attacks.
46. (C, D) Flipkart is a domestic e-commerce B2C company that operates only in India, while Amazon operates worldwide and offers a wide range of products in different countries including India. Alibaba is generally a B2B business, although

there are rare suppliers that will sell one item at a time.

47. (B) Decoding is the process by which the receiver interprets the symbols used by the source of the message.  
Listing, refers to the process of creating a list of items or information, often for organizational or informational purposes. Encoding, involves the conversion of information into a specific format for transmission, storage, or processing, encoding is the process of developing and sending a message.  
Listening, is the act of paying attention to and processing auditory stimuli, such as spoken words or sounds.
48. (D) Yahoo is not a legitimate web browser. The other options, Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox, and Google Chrome, are all well-known web browsers used by millions of people to access and navigate the internet. Internet Explorer is developed by Microsoft, Mozilla Firefox is developed by the Mozilla Foundation, and Google Chrome is developed by Google.
49. (B) Chat GPT (Chat Generative Pre-trained Transformer) is a chatbot developed by Open AI and launched on November 30, 2022. Based on a large language model, it enables users to refine and steer a conversation towards a desired length, format, style, level of detail, and language.
50. (C) A second-generation computer period was from 1959–1965. This generation used transistors that were cheaper, lower power consumption, more compact in size, more reliable and faster than the first generation machines made from vacuum tubes.
51. (C) Tatipaka Oil Refinery, located in East Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh, was established on 3 September, 2001. This is ONGC's first oil refinery to produce petrochemical products. It is producing naphtha, kerosene, diesel and crude oil.
52. (A) The Gaza Strip, a small area situated between Israel, Egypt and the Mediterranean Sea, is also known as one of the most densely populated areas in the world. The Gaza Strip is an area approximately ten kilometers wide and 41 kilometers long and more than 20 lakh people live here.
53. (B) The Bailadila complex consists of two large surface mines, Bachelu and Kirandul. Bailadila mines are located in the state of Chhattisgarh. Balaghat copper mines are located in Balaghat district of Madhya Pradesh. Kudremukh mines are located in the Western Ghats of Karnataka. It is located in the Ballari-Chitradurga – Chikkamagaluru - Tumkuru belt. Keonjhar is one of the major mineral producing districts of Odisha. Iron ore, manganese ore, chromate, quartzite, bauxite, gold, pyrophyllite and limestone are the major minerals found in this district.
54. (B) All processes that move, lift or create parts of the Earth's crust come under the process of diastrophism. These include: orogenic processes affecting mountain building through great troughs and long and narrow belts of the Earth's crust; epeirogenic processes associated with the uplift or deformation of large portions of the Earth's crust; earthquakes with local relatively minor movements; Plate tectonics involves the horizontal movement of crustal plates.
55. (D) According to the 2011 census, the literacy rate of the following states is as follows—  
Kerala—94%  
Mizoram—91.33%  
Goa — 88.70%  
Tripura—87.22%
56. (D) Troposphere is the lower layer of the Earth's atmosphere. Humidity, water particles, dust particles, air fog and all seasonal phenomena occur in this layer. The troposphere starts from the Earth's surface and extends to a height of 8 to 14.5 kilometers. Temperature decreases with height in the troposphere. The tropopause is the line that separates the troposphere and stratosphere.
57. (D) Vaitarna River is one of the west flowing rivers in the area north of Mumbai and south of Tapi River. This river originates in the Sahyadri hill range at Trimbak in Nashik district of Maharashtra state and joins the Arabian Sea after traveling a distance of about 120 km towards west in Maharashtra.
58. (A) Nokrek Biosphere Reserve is located in the Meghalaya state of India. Manas National Park or Manas Wildlife Sanctuary is a national park located in Assam, India. Simlipal National Park is a national park and an elephant sanctuary located in Mayurbhanj district of Odisha state, India. The Seshachalam Biosphere Reserve is located in the Seshachalam hill range of the Eastern Ghats in southern Andhra Pradesh.
59. (A) The first successful attempt at using underground heat (in 1890) was in the city of Boise, Idaho (USA), where a network of hot water pipes was built to heat nearby buildings. This plant is still working.
60. (C) Mizoram is also known as the Molasses Basin as it is composed of unconsolidated deposits. In geology, 'Molasse Basin' is also used generically to refer to a synorogenic (formed contemporaneously with the orogeny) promontory basin of the type north of the Alps.
61. (B) In 1907, the session of the Indian National Congress was held in Surat in which the Congress got divided into two parts, called extremist party and moderate party. This is called Surat division. The 1907 session was presided over by Rash Bihari Ghosh.
62. (B) Vindhya province was formed in 'C' category among the states formed on 12 March, 1948. Vindhya province came into existence by merging the areas of Bundelkhand and Baghelkhand.
63. (C) Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel had created Saurashtra state by merging 22 princely states. Saurashtra state was earlier named United State of Kathiawar. It was formed by combining



more than 200 small and big princely states of Western India. It was only due to the continuous efforts of Sardar Patel and the influence of Mahatma Gandhi that the kings and Maharajas of Kathiawar princely state agreed to join it. At that time the number of local kings and elected Subas was 22, which joined the United Kingdom of Kathiawar on 24 January, 1948. And it was named United State of Saurashtra or Saurashtra in the year 1948.

64. (B) The word Pakistan was first used in 1933 by Chaudhary Rahmat Ali. At that time Chaudhary Rahmat Ali was a student of Cambridge University. The term Pakistan refers to "the five northern units of India, namely Punjab, North-West Frontier Province Kashmir, Sindh and Baluchistan."
65. (D)
66. (D) Ganeshotsav was started by Bal Gangadhar Tilak in the year 1893. According to the Hindu calendar this is a ten days festival from Chaturthi to Chaturdashi of Bhadrapada month. Ganeshotsav of Pune is world famous.
67. (D) In 1739 AD, Nadir Shah invaded India and looted Delhi. At that time the Mughal emperor Muhammad Shah was 'Rangeela'. Nadir Shah easily defeated Muhammad Shah's army in the Battle of Karnal on 13 February 1739. Nadir Shah took with him the Peacock Throne built by Shahjahan and the Kohinoor diamond. Apart from this, he also took gold worth ₹ 10 crore, jewelery worth ₹ 60 crore and coins worth ₹ 60 lakh.
68. (A&D) According to MPPSC both option (A) & (D) are correct. The book named 'Aryaman-jushrimulakalp' is a famous book of Mahayana and Varrayana Buddhist.
69. (D) William Bentic adopted a liberal approach towards newspapers and advocated their independence. He considered it 'the gateway to protection from discontent'. William Bentic wanted to free Indian newspapers. Due to the resignation of William Bentic on grounds of ill

health in 1835, the credit for lifting the ban on newspapers went to his successor Governor-General Charles Metcalf. Charles Metcalfe is called the liberator of the Indian press.

70. (B) Chandragupta-II 'Vikramaditya' was the son of Samudragupta. He defeated the Shakas and got the title of 'Vikramaditya' and 'Shakari' and also issued silver coins, these coins were called 'Rupak'.
71. (C) According to the Economic Survey 2022-23, Madhya Pradesh stood first in copper production in 2021-22. Madhya Pradesh produces more than 46 per cent of India's copper. The main mine of Madhya Pradesh is Balghat (Malanjkhand).
72. (C) Mahi River flows in three states of India, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Gujarat. The Betwa River, whose ancient name was Vetravati, is a river flowing in the Indian states of Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. The Ken River is a river flowing in the Bundelkhand region of the Indian states of Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. Sonar River is a river flowing in the Indian state of Madhya Pradesh. It originates from rainwater in Sagar district and, like most rivers of the Vindhya region, flows from south to north. It flows in Damoh district and merges with Ken river in Panna district.
73. (C) Black soil is formed by the breakdown of basalt rocks. This soil is also called regur soil or cotton soil. These are impermeable, deep and clay soil. It contains lime, iron, magnesium and potash but is low in phosphorus, nitrogen and organic matter. The black color of this

soil is due to titaniferous magnetite and organic matter (humus).

74. (B) Tapti River flows westwards parallel to the Narmada River. It falls into the Gulf of Khambhat near Surat in Gujarat. Its right bank tributaries are Waki, Gomai, Arunavati and Aner. And the left bank tributaries are Nesu, Arunavati, Bura, Panjhra, Bori, Girna, Waghur, Purna, Mona and Sipna. Narmada River is the longest river of Madhya Pradesh and is called the 'Lifeline of Madhya Pradesh'.
75. (A) The hill of Bijargarh is situated in the Satpura mountain range. The Satpura mountain range is situated between the Narmada and Tapti rivers. Western Satpura is called the hills of Rajpipla.
76. (C) Madhya Pradesh in Central India has a subtropical climate. Like most of north India it has a hot dry summer (April-June) followed by monsoon rains (July-September) and a cool and relatively dry winter. The average rainfall is about 1,370 mm (53.9 in). It decreases from east to west. The south-eastern districts have the heaviest rainfall, some places receiving as much as 2,150 mm (84.6 in), while the western and north-western districts receive 1,000 mm (39.4 in) or less.
77. (D) Alpine forests are not found in Madhya Pradesh. Alpine Forest are common in both the main Himalayan regions as well as the barren cold deserts of the Trans Himalaya. Low alpine grasslands are common with the vegetation not growing higher than 1.5 m. Climatic conditions vary from the sub-arctic to arctic, with snow covering the ground for over 5 months a year.

#### MP forest (Based on Geographical Features)

Type	Area	Major Tree
Tropical Moist Deciduous Forest	Sidhi, Mandala, Balaghat, Seoni, Umaria Anuppur, and Shahdol	Peepal, Rosewood, Sal, bamboo, etc.
Tropical Dry Deciduous Forest	Chhatarpur, Panna, Chhindwara, Damoh, Seoni, Sagar, Jabalpur, Betul, and Hoshangabad districts	Rosewood, Neem, Peepal, etc.
Tropical Thorn Forest	Sheopur, Nimar, Ratlam, Mandasaur, Tikamgarh, Datia, Gwalior, and Shivpuri districts	Babul, Sheesham, tendu, Keekar, neem

78. (B) Amarkantak Thermal Power Plant is located in Chachai, near Amlai railway station on Bilaspur-Katni section of SE Railway. It is situated at Anuppur district of Madhya Pradesh, India. The power plant is one of the Coal-fired power station of MPPGCL.  
Major Thermal Power Plant in Madhya Pradesh—
- Madhya Pradesh Amarkantak Thermal Power Plant.
  - Satpura Thermal Power Plant.
  - Sanjay Gandhi, Birsinghpur Thermal Power Plant.
  - Shri Singaji Thermal Power Station Dongalia.
79. (D) Road density is the ratio between the area of the total road network of the country and the land area of the country. In India, the distribution of roads is extremely uneven. With 375 kms, the highest road density is in Kerala.  
As per the report 'Basic Road Statistics in India-2018-19', India has a network of over 63, 31,757 kilometres of roads. Which is the second largest in the world. The State Highways constitutes 2-8 per cent of total road network in the country and the total length of State Highways as on was at 1,79,535. Maharashtra has the largest State Highways network in the country 17.83% (32005 Km) followed by Karnataka 10.85% (19473 km), Gujarat 9.33% (16746 km), Rajasthan 8.39% (15061 km) and Andhra Pradesh 7.52% (13500 km). These five States accounted for 53.9% of the total State Highways network in the country.
80. (B) Cotton is also known as white gold. Kargone district is one of the leading cotton producing districts. It is the primary cash crop of the district.  
Climate—Cotton is a crop of tropical and subtropical regions and requires an equally high temperature range between 21°C and 35°C.  
Soil—For good cotton plant growth, sandy loamy soil and deep black soil with adequate amount of bacteria is suitable.
- For rainy conditions proper water drainage is also required.
81. (C)
82. (D) Part 4-A of the Indian Constitution does not mention the Directive Principles but fundamental duties. Directive Principles of Policy are mentioned in Part 4 of the Indian Constitution between Articles 36 and 51. The Directive Principles were taken from the Constitution of Ireland. The Fundamental Duties were included in the Constitution in Part IV-A of the Constitution by the 42nd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1976, on the recommendations of the Swarn Singh Committee. Presently, a total of eleven fundamental duties (11th the 86th Constitutional Amendment Act, 2002) are listed in Article 51-A (Part IV-A) of the Constitution.
83. (C) Parliament is formed by the Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha and the President.
84. (C) NABARD was established on the recommendations of B. Sivaraman Committee on 12 July, 1982 to implement the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development Act 1981.
85. (A) The SIDBI (Small Industries Development Bank of India) is a wholly-owned subsidiary of IDBI (Industrial Development Bank of India), established under the special Act of the Parliament 1988 which became operative from April 2, 1990.
86. (B) Six scheduled commercial banks were nationalised in 1980. The banks which were nationalised in 1980 were Vijaya Bank Limited, Punjab and Sind Bank Limited, Oriental Bank of Commerce Limited, New Bank of India Limited, Corporation Bank Limited, Andhra Bank Limited. The first nationalization of banks in India took place on July 19, 1969, when the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi announced the nationalization of 14 commercial Indian banks with deposits of more than ₹ 50 crore.
87. (D) The Constitution (Eighty-sixth Amendment) Act, 2002 inserted Article 21-A in the Constitution of India to provide free and compulsory education of all children in the age group of six to fourteen years as a Fundamental Right in such a manner as the State may, by law, determine.
88. (B) The idea of fundamental duties is inspired by the Constitution of Russia (the Soviet Union). These were incorporated in Part IV-A of the Constitution by the 42nd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1976, on the recommendations of the Swarn Singh Committee. Originally 10 in number, one more duty was added through the 86th Constitutional Amendment Act, 2002. All eleven duties are listed in Article 51-A of the Constitution (the sole article in Part IV-A).
89. (C) The Preamble has been amended by the 42nd Constitutional Amendment Act (1976), which added three new words—socialist, secular and integrity.
90. (B) The Constituent Assembly was constituted in November 1946 under the scheme formulated by the Cabinet Mission Plan.
91. (B) Bhima Nayak sometimes spelled as Bhima Naik, was a resident of Dhaba Bawdi in the Barwani district of Madhya Pradesh. He was a prominent leader of the Bhils of Nimar.
92. (B) 93. (A) 94. (C)
95. (D) 'Mukul' (poetry collection) is the creation of Subhadra Kumari Chauhan. Some of his other major works are Tridhara, 'Bikhre Moti' (story collection), 'Jhansi Ki Rani' etc.
96. (D)
97. (C) The Matangeshvara temple is a Shiva temple in the Khajuraho town of Madhya Pradesh.
98. (C) 'Ramachandrika' was composed by Keshavdas in 1601 AD. In this the poet has described the story of Ram.
99. (A) Balkrishna Sharma was a 'new' Hindi poet. He is considered a poet of tradition and contemporaneity. His poetry is representative of the Romantic trend. 'Pranarpan' & 'Atmosarga' poems have been written by Ganesh Shankar Vidyardhi.
100. (C)

# All India Bar Examination (XVIII), 2023

(Held on 10-12-2023)

1. Which of the following is incorrect with respect to arbitration agreement as per the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996 ?
  - (A) Arbitration agreement may be written as well as oral
  - (B) Arbitration agreement may be in the form of a separate agreement
  - (C) Arbitration agreement may be in the form of an arbitration clause in a contract
  - (D) Arbitration agreement may be for all or certain disputes which may arise between the parties
2. In which of the following circumstances an arbitrator may not be challenged as per the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996 ?
  - (A) When a justifiable doubt as to his independence arises
  - (B) When a justifiable doubt as to his impartiality arises
  - (C) When he possesses the qualifications agreed by the party
  - (D) When he becomes ineligible as per the seventh schedule of the Act
3. When may two persons be said to be related to each other by half-blood in accordance with the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 ?
  - (A) When they are descended from a common ancestor by the same wife
  - (B) When they are descended from a common ancestor by different wives
  - (C) When they are descended from a common ancestress by different husbands
  - (D) When they are not descended from a common ancestor at all
4. Which of the following is generally not considered as a valid condition for a Hindu marriage as per the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 ?
  - (A) The parties should not have a spouse-living at the time of the marriage
  - (B) The parties should be within the degrees of prohibited relationship
  - (C) The parties should not be sapindas of each other
  - (D) The parties should not be suffering from epilepsy
5. Section 13(1) of the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 provides for the following :
  1. Grounds for restitution of conjugal rights
  2. Grounds for judicial separation
  3. Grounds for divorce
  - (A) 1 and 2
  - (B) 2 and 3
  - (C) 3 and 1
  - (D) Only 3
6. What is the meaning of the batil marriage in Muslim Law ?
  - (A) Valid marriage
  - (B) Void marriage
  - (C) Voidable marriage
  - (D) Irregular marriage
7. What is 'a contract of marriage which may be dissolved by the wife under a power delegated to her' called under the Muslim Law ?
  - (A) Talaq-us-sunnat
  - (B) Talaq-ul-biddat
  - (C) Talaq-i-tafweez
  - (D) Talaq-a-hasan
8. A Hindu boy and a Hindu girl may be married under the following law :
  1. The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955
  2. The Special Marriage Act, 1954
  - (A) Only 1 is correct
  - (B) only 2 is correct
  - (C) Both 1 and 2 are correct
  - (D) Neither 1 nor 2 is correct
9. Through which of the following Amendment Act the rights in the coparcenary property is made available to a girl child as well ?
  - (A) The Hindu Succession (Amendment) Act, 2002
  - (B) The Hindu Succession (Amendment) Act, 2004
  - (C) The Hindu Succession (Amendment) Act, 2005
  - (D) The Hindu Succession (Amendment) Act, 2006
10. What should be the age difference between the adoptive father and his adopted daughter for a valid adoption ?
  - (A) 15 years
  - (B) 18 years
  - (C) 21 years
  - (D) No specific age difference required
11. Which of the following case may be considered as the first reported case of PIL in India ?
  - (A) S.P. Gupta Vs. Union of India
  - (B) Hussainara Khatun Vs. State of Bihar
  - (C) M.C. Mehta Vs. Union of India
  - (D) Kalyaneshwari Vs. Union of India
12. Who among the following is considered as the father of PIL in India ?
  - (A) Justice S.R. Das
  - (B) Justice V.R. Krishna Iyer
  - (C) Justice P.N. Bhagwati
  - (D) Justice H.R. Khanna
13. Against which of the following a PIL cannot be filed ?
  - (A) Against a State Government
  - (B) Against Central Government
  - (C) Against a private party
  - (D) Against Municipal Corporation

14. In the light of the guidelines issued by the Supreme Court of India on which of the following issue a PIL cannot be entertained by the Court ?  
 (A) Bonded labour matters  
 (B) Petition from jail for premature release  
 (C) Matters pertaining to neglected children  
 (D) Petitions against police for refusing to register a case
15. In which of the following landmark case it was held that Principles of Natural Justice were applicable not only to judicial and quasi-judicial functions, but also to administrative functions ?  
 (A) A.K. Kraipak Vs. Union of India  
 (B) Ram Jawaya Kapoor Vs. State of Punjab  
 (C) Sonik Industries Rajkot Vs. Municipal Corporation Rajkot  
 (D) Maneka Gandhi Vs. Union of India
16. In which of the following judgement the Supreme Court had comprehensively reconsidered S.P. Sampath Kumar Vs. Union of India case ?  
 (A) J.B. Chopra Vs. Union of India  
 (B) L. Chandra Kumar Vs. Union of India  
 (C) R.K. Jain Vs. Union of India  
 (D) S.K. Sarkar Vs. Vinay Chandra Mishra
17. Who among the following defined administrative law as 'the law relating to the control of government power' ?  
 (A) Ivor Jennings  
 (B) Wade  
 (C) K.C. Davis  
 (D) Garner
18. What penalty is prescribed for persons illegally practising in courts under the Advocate Act, 1961 ?  
 (A) Imprisonment upto 3 months  
 (B) Imprisonment upto 6 months  
 (C) Imprisonment upto 9 months  
 (D) Imprisonment upto 12 months
19. Which provision of the Advocate Act, 1961 empowers the Bar Council of India to prescribe the standard of professional conduct and etiquette to be observed by advocates ?  
 (A) Section 42  
 (B) Section 42A  
 (C) Section 48A  
 (D) Section 49
20. Which of the following is incorrect according to the Bar Council of India Rules ?  
 (A) An Advocate can plead in any matter in which he is himself pecuniarily interested  
 (B) An Advocate shall appear in court at all times only in the prescribed dress  
 (C) An Advocate shall not stand as a surety for his client  
 (D) An Advocate shall not influence the decision of a court by any improper means
21. Which of the following authority acts as an appellate authority against the order made by the disciplinary committee of the Bar Council of India ?  
 (A) Chairman of the Bar Council of India  
 (B) Vice-Chairman of the Bar Council of India  
 (C) High Courts  
 (D) Supreme Court of India
22. In which of the following situations a one person company (OPC) will mandatorily get converted into either private or public company ?  
 (A) In case the paid-up share capital of an OPC exceeds twenty-five lakh rupees  
 (B) In case the paid-up share capital of an OPC exceeds fifty lakh rupees  
 (C) In case the paid-up share capital of an OPC exceeds seventy-five lakh rupees  
 (D) In case the paid-up share capital of an OPC exceeds one crore rupees
23. What is the minimum number of directors required for a public company as per the Companies Act, 2013 ?  
 (A) 2 (B) 3  
 (C) 5 (D) 7
24. In which of the following case the Supreme Court of India had explained the Precautionary Principle in details ?  
 (A) Vellore Citizens' Welfare Forum Vs. Union of India  
 (B) A.P. Pollution Control Board Vs. M.V. Nayudu  
 (C) Indian Council for Environmental Legal Action Vs. Union of India  
 (D) M.C. Mehta Vs. Kamal Nath
25. Which of the following is a landmark case on the public trust doctrine in the Environmental Law ?  
 (A) Vellore Citizens' Welfare Forum Vs. Union of India  
 (B) Olga Tellis Vs. Mumbai Municipal Corporation  
 (C) Indian Council for Environmental Legal Action Vs. Union of India  
 (D) M.C. Mehta Vs. Kamal Nath
26. In which of the following case Section 66A of the Information Technology Act, 2000 was struck down by the Supreme Court ?  
 (A) Shreya Singhal Vs. Union of India  
 (B) Kartar Singh Vs. State of Punjab  
 (C) K.A. Abbas Vs. Union of India  
 (D) Maneka Gandhi Vs. Union of India
27. In which of the following case an electronic record shall not be attributed to the originator as per the Information Technology Act, 2000 ?  
 (A) Electronic record sent by the originator himself  
 (B) Electronic record sent by an authorised person  
 (C) Electronic record sent by an automated system programmed by him  
 (D) Electronic record sent by an unauthorized person
28. What is the maximum period for which any woman shall be entitled to maternity benefit under the Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 ?  
 (A) 6 weeks (B) 8 weeks  
 (C) 12 weeks (D) 26 weeks
29. For what duration is a woman entitled to leave with wages for tubectomy operation as per the Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 ?  
 (A) 2 weeks (B) 4 weeks  
 (C) 6 weeks (D) 8 weeks

30. What should be the minimum number of workers originally employed in any factory for having at least one canteen in the factory as per the Factories Act, 1948 ?  
 (A) 100 workers  
 (B) 150 workers  
 (C) 200 workers  
 (D) 250 workers
31. Who among the following is not included in the definition of a workman as per the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947 ?  
 (A) A supervisor drawing monthly salary of 6,000  
 (B) A supervisor drawing monthly salary of 8,000  
 (C) A supervisor drawing monthly salary of 10,000  
 (D) A supervisor drawing monthly salary of 12,000
32. Who has defined tort as 'tortious' liability arises from the breach of duty primarily fixed by law; this duty is towards persons generally and its breach is redressible by an action for unliquidated damages ?  
 (A) Lindsell (B) Pollock  
 (C) Salmond (D) Winfield
33. Gloucester Grammar School case relates to which of the following important maxims ?  
 (A) Damnum sine injuria  
 (B) Injuria sine damno  
 (C) Ubi jus ibi remedium  
 (D) Volenti non fit injuria
34. Which of the following provision of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 relates to no fault liability ?  
 (A) Section 140 (B) Section 151  
 (C) Section 162 (D) Section 128
35. How many consumer rights are identified under the Consumer Protection Act, 2019 ?  
 (A) 2 (B) 4  
 (C) 6 (D) 8
36. Which of the following body constituted under the Consumer Protection Act, 2019 is authorised to render advice on promotion and protection of consumers' right under the Act ?  
 (A) Central Consumer Protection Authority  
 (B) Central Consumer Protection Council  
 (C) State Consumer Protection Authority  
 (D) State Consumer Protection Council
37. Which of the following provision of the Constitution of India states that no tax can be levied or collected except by authority of law ?  
 (A) Article 246 (B) Article 256  
 (C) Article 260 (D) Article 265
38. Which of the following would be the first previous year in case of a business or profession newly set up on 31st March, 2020 as per the Income Tax Act, 1961 ?  
 (A) Start from 1st April, 2019 and will end on 31st March, 2020  
 (B) Start from 31st March, 2020 and will end on 31st March, 2020  
 (C) Start from 1st April, 2020 and will end on 31st December, 2020  
 (D) Start from 1st January, 2020 and will end on 31st March, 2020
39. As per the Income Tax Act, 1961 a person is said to be resident of India in any previous year if he had been in India for a period of the following number of days in the previous year—  
 (A) 180 days (B) 182 days  
 (C) 184 days (D) 186 days
40. Income is defined under which of the following provision of the Income Tax Act, 1961 ?  
 (A) Section 2(31)  
 (B) Section 2(24)  
 (C) Section 2(9)  
 (D) Section 3
41. Which of the following is not a fraud as per the Indian Contract Act, 1872 ?  
 (A) A promise made without intention of performing it  
 (B) An active concealment of fact by one having knowledge of the fact  
 (C) Mere silence if not duty bound to speak  
 (D) Any act or omission law specifically declares to be fraudulent
42. Which of the following statement is correct if A, intending to deceive B, falsely represents that five hundred maunds of indigo are made annually at as factory, and thereby induces B to buy the factory ?  
 (A) Contract is void ab initio  
 (B) Contract is voidable at the option of A  
 (C) Contract is voidable at the option of B  
 (D) Contract is voidable at the option of A & B
43. Which of the following injunction can be granted only by the decree made at hearing and upon the merit of the suit ?  
 (A) Temporary injunction  
 (B) Perpetual injunction  
 (C) Mandatory injunction  
 (D) Prohibitory injunction
44. A stipulation in a bond for payment of compound interest on failure to pay simple interest at the same rate as was payable upon the principal is not a penalty within the meaning of which of the following provision of the Indian Contract Act, 1872 ?  
 (A) Section 73 (B) Section 74  
 (C) Section 75 (D) Section 76
45. What is the default interest payable under Section 63A of the Transfer of Property Act, 1882 ?  
 (A) 6% per annum  
 (B) 8% per annum  
 (C) 9% per annum  
 (D) No default rate prescribed
46. Which of the following is the time limit given under Section 17 of the Transfer of Property Act, 1882 ?  
 (A) Life of the transferee  
 (B) A period of 18 years from the date of transfer  
 (C) Either (A) or (B) whichever is longer  
 (D) Neither (A) nor (B)
47. Which of the following is not a negotiable instrument as per the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881 ?  
 (A) Promissory note  
 (B) Hundi  
 (C) Bill of exchange  
 (D) Cheque
48. In the light of Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, at what rate interest will be charged if the rate of interest is not mentioned on the negotiable instruments ?

- (A) 6% per annum  
(B) 10% per annum  
(C) 18% per annum  
(D) 20% per annum
49. Within what period from the date of publication of the declaration, if no award is made, the entire proceedings for the acquisition of land shall lapse as per the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013 ?  
(A) 6 months (B) 12 months  
(C) 18 months (D) 24 months
50. What is the minimum percentage of affected families that need to give their prior consent for acquiring land for private companies as per the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013 ?  
(A) 75% (B) 80%  
(C) 90% (D) 100%
51. Imagine an IPL team sets up a company to sell its own range of clothes. What type of intellectual property can the team use to show that the clothes are made by them ?  
(A) Patents  
(B) Geographical Indications  
(C) Trademarks  
(D) Registered designs
52. How long do patents usually last for ?  
(A) 10 years (B) 20 years  
(C) 25 years (D) 50 years
53. The concept of freedom of trade and commerce mentioned in the Indian Constitution is motivated from the experience of the following country ?  
(A) America  
(B) Australia  
(C) Ireland  
(D) United Kingdom
54. Which of the following writ is issued to enforce the performance of public duties by the authority ?  
(A) Mandamus  
(B) Quo warranto  
(C) Certiorari  
(D) Prohibition
55. Which of the following Constitutional Amendment Act had made the provision for publishing Hindi Translation of the Constitution ?  
(A) 52nd Amendment  
(B) 54th Amendment  
(C) 56th Amendment  
(D) 58th Amendment
56. Which of the following is the landmark judgment on the Colourable legislation ?  
(A) State of Bihar Vs. Kameshwar Singh  
(B) M. Karunanidhi Vs. Union of India  
(C) State of Karnataka Vs. Union of India  
(D) Keshavan Madhava Menon Vs. State of Bombay
57. Which of the following Constitutional Amendment Act was passed in light of the advisory opinion received in Re Berubari case ?  
(A) The Constitution (Fourth Amendment) Act, 1955  
(B) The Constitution (Seventh Amendment) Act, 1956  
(C) The Constitution (Ninth Amendment) Act, 1960  
(D) The Constitution (Eleventh Amendment) Act, 1961
58. Which of the following provision of the Constitution of India is relevant for solving questions of repugnancy between a Central law and a State law ?  
(A) Article 248 (B) Article 252  
(C) Article 254 (D) Article 256
59. What transition period was provided in the Constitution of India for changing official language of Union from English to Hindi ?  
(A) 5 years (B) 10 years  
(C) 15 years (D) 25 years
60. In which of the following case it was held that there could be no reservation on single post in the cadre ?  
(A) Chakradhar Paswan Vs. State of Bihar  
(B) K.C. Vasanth Kumar Vs. State of Karnataka  
(C) A.B.S.K. Sangh (Rly) Vs. Union of India  
(D) State of Kerala Vs. N.M. Thomas
61. Sexual harassment of a working woman at her place of work may also be considered as the violation of which of the following provision of the Constitution of India ?  
(A) Article 19(1)(b)  
(B) Article 19(1)(d)  
(C) Article 19(1)(e)  
(D) Article 19(1)(g)
62. Which of the following doctrine has been applied to resolve the conflict between Article 25(2)(b) and 26(b) of the Constitution of India ?  
(A) Doctrine of Harmonious construction  
(B) Doctrine of Casus Omissus  
(C) Doctrine of Liberal interpretation  
(D) Doctrine of Pith and substance
63. In which of the following situations Indian Penal Code, 1860 may not apply ?  
1. An offence committed by Indians outside India.  
2. An offence committed by any person on any ship registered in India.  
3. Any person committing offence targeting computer resources located in any country.  
(A) Only 1  
(B) Only 2  
(C) Only 3  
(D) Only 1 and 2
64. How many types of punishment are currently existing under the Indian Penal Code, 1860 ?  
(A) 3 (B) 4  
(C) 5 (D) 6
65. A and Z agree to fence with each other for amusement. In the course of such fencing, while playing fairly, A hurts Z severely. Which of the following offence is committed by A ?  
(A) Hurt  
(B) Attempt to murder  
(C) Grievous hurt  
(D) No offence
66. In which of the following situations right of private defence can not extend to causing death ?  
(A) In case when an assault is causing apprehension of murder

- (B) In case when assault is reflecting intention of committing rape  
(C) In case when assault is reflecting intention of causing simple hurt  
(D) In case when assault is reflecting intention of gratifying unnatural lust
67. For which of the following Section of the Indian Penal Code, 1860 the word benefit does not include pecuniary benefits ?  
(A) Section 89 (B) Section 155  
(C) Section 156 (D) Section 370
68. X intentionally pulls up a woman's veil without her consent intending to annoy her. As per the Indian Penal Code, 1860 which of the following offence he has committed ?  
(A) Hurt  
(B) Criminal force  
(C) Assault  
(D) Grievous hurt
69. What punishment is prescribed under the Indian Penal Code, 1860 for a person who maims any minor in order that such minor may be used for the purposes of begging ?  
(A) Imprisonment for 5 years and fine  
(B) Imprisonment for 7 years and fine  
(C) Imprisonment for 10 years and fine  
(D) Imprisonment for life and fine
70. X threatens to publish a defamatory libel concerning Y unless Y gives him money. Which of the following punishment may be given to X for the act committed by him as per the Indian Penal Code, 1860 ?  
(A) Imprisonment upto 2 years, or with fine or with both  
(B) Imprisonment upto 3 years, or with fine or with both  
(C) Imprisonment upto 5 years, or with fine or with both  
(D) Imprisonment upto 7 years, or with fine or with both
71. Which of the following sentence is an Assistant Sessions Judge authorised to pass as per the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 ?  
(A) Sentence of death  
(B) Sentence of imprisonment of life  
(C) Sentence of imprisonment for a term not exceeding ten years  
(D) Sentence of imprisonment for a term exceeding ten years
72. A person arrested by a private person for committing a non-bailable and cognizable offence shall be re-arrested by a police officer if such person comes under which of the following provisions of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 ?  
(A) Section 41  
(B) Section 41A  
(C) Section 42  
(D) Section 43
73. Under which of the following situation wife is not entitled for maintenance under Section 125 of the Code of Criminal Procedure 1973 ?  
(A) Husband presumes that wife is living in adultery  
(B) Voluntarily wife refuses to live with husband  
(C) Wife living separately as husband keeps a mistress  
(D) Wife is forcefully removed from the house
74. Which of the following procedure is dealt under Section 164-A of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 ?  
(A) Medical examination of the victim of rape  
(B) Attendance of witness by police officer  
(C) Recording of confession statement  
(D) Recording of first information report by police officer
75. Which of the following is incorrect with respect to diary of proceedings in investigation as per the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 ?  
(A) The statements of witnesses recorded during investigation shall be inserted in the diary  
(B) The diary shall be duly paginated  
(C) The diary may be used as evidence  
(D) Can be used by the police officers to refresh memory
76. In which of the following cases manner of committing offence is not required to be mentioned in the charge as per the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 ?  
(A) A is accused of the theft of a certain article at a certain time and place  
(B) A is accused of cheating B at a given time and place  
(C) A is accused of disobeying a direction of the law with intent to save B from punishment  
(D) A is accused of giving false evidence at a given time and place
77. Which of the following offences may be tried summarily as per the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 ?  
(A) Offence under Section 454 of the IPC  
(B) Offence under Section 504 of the IPC  
(C) Offence punishable with imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years  
(D) Offence punishable with life imprisonment
78. Which of the following Section of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 provides for reference to High Court ?  
(A) Section 275  
(B) Section 325  
(C) Section 383  
(D) Section 395
79. A person accused of the following offence may not be granted bail under Section 438 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 :  
1. Accused of offence under Section 376AB of the IPC.  
2. Accused of offence under Section 376DA of the IPC.  
3. Accused of offence under Section 376DB of the IPC.  
(A) 1 and 2 (B) 2 and 3  
(C) 3 and 1 (D) 1, 2 and 3
80. Which of the following act if done by any Magistrate, even in good faith without being empowered, shall vitiate the proceedings as per the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 ?  
(A) Tender a pardon under Section 306 of CrPC

- (B) Recall a case and try it under Section 410 of the CrPC  
 (C) Attaches property under Section 83 of the CrPC  
 (D) Hold an inquest under Section 176 of the CrPC
81. Which of the following is material for deciding the jurisdiction of the Civil Court in the light of the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908 ?  
 (A) Averments made in the plaint  
 (B) Averments made in the written statement  
 (C) Both (A) and (B)  
 (D) Neither (A) nor (B)
82. Which of the following cannot be considered as the suit of civil nature for Section 9 of the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908 ?  
 (A) Suit for recovery of voluntary payments or offerings  
 (B) Suit for rights of franchise  
 (C) Suit for specific reliefs  
 (D) Suit relating to rights of worship
83. Which of the following provision of the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908 makes the doctrine of res judicata applicable in representative suit ?  
 (A) Section 11, Explanation V  
 (B) Section 11, Explanation VI  
 (C) Section 11, Explanation VII  
 (D) Section 11, Explanation VIII
84. In which of the following situations a court will not issue summons for personal appearance to the defendant ?  
 (A) If defendant reside within the local limit of the court's jurisdiction  
 (B) If defendant resides within 40 miles from the court  
 (C) If defendant resides 250 miles away from the court in an area having public conveyance available  
 (D) Woman to whom Section 132 of the Civil Procedure Code, 1908 does not apply
85. In which of the following situation plaintiff is precluded from bringing a fresh suit as per the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908 ?  
 (A) Dismissal of suit where summons not served in consequence of plaintiff's failure to pay costs  
 (B) Dismissal of suit because neither party appeared  
 (C) Dismissal of suit because plaintiff did not appear  
 (D) Dismissal of suit because plaintiff did not apply for fresh summons within given time limit once it returned unserved
86. How many times at max may an adjournment be granted to a party during hearing of the suit as per the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908 ?  
 (A) Two times  
 (B) Three times  
 (C) Four times  
 (D) No limit prescribed
87. Which of the following Amendment Act made the provision in the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908 to produce a witness without a summons ?  
 (A) The Code of Civil Procedure (Amendment) Act, 1976  
 (B) The Code of Civil Procedure (Amendment) Act, 1999  
 (C) The Code of Civil Procedure (Amendment) Act, 2002  
 (D) Such provision does not exist
88. Which of the following is not included in the word costs as provided under the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908 ?  
 (A) The expenses of the witnesses incurred  
 (B) Legal fees and expenses incurred  
 (C) Fooding and lodging expenses incurred  
 (D) Any other expenses incurred in connection with the proceedings
89. What period is prescribed under the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908 for defendant to enter an appearance for filing address for service of notice on him in case of a suit where summary procedure is to be applied ?  
 (A) Seven days from the date of receiving of summons  
 (B) Ten days from the date of receiving of summons  
 (C) Fifteen days from the date of receiving of summons  
 (D) Thirty days from the date of receiving of summons
90. Under which of the following provisions of the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908 the appellate court may remit an issue for trial to lower court—  
 (A) Order XLI Rule 23  
 (B) Order XLI Rule 23-A  
 (C) Order XLI Rule 24  
 (D) Order XLI Rule 25
91. A is accused of the murder of B by beating him. Which of the following will not be considered as relevant fact forming part of the same transaction as per the Indian Evidence Act, 1872 ?  
 (A) Whatever said by A or B at the time of beating  
 (B) Whatever done by A or B at the time of beating  
 (C) Whatever said by standers at the time of beating  
 (D) Whatever said by A or B a day before the day of beating
92. Which of the following provisions of the Indian Evidence Act, 1872 says that the confession to police-officer shall not be proved against him ?  
 (A) Section 24 (B) Section 25  
 (C) Section 26 (D) Section 27
93. Under which of the following provision of the Indian Evidence Act, 1872 dying declaration may be admitted as evidence ?  
 (A) Section 25 (B) Section 29  
 (C) Section 32 (D) Section 37
94. Which of the following is correct according to the Indian Evidence Act, 1872 pertaining to proof of contents of the documents ?  
 (A) Contents of the documents shall be proved by primary evidence  
 (B) Contents of the documents may be proved by secondary evidence  
 (C) Contents of the documents shall be proved by both primary and secondary evidence  
 (D) Contents of documents may be proved either by primary or by secondary evidence
95. Which of the following is a correct statement as per the Indian Evidence Act, 1872 ?  
 (A) Leading questions may be asked in examination-in-chief



## Answers with Hints

- (B) Leading questions may be asked in cross-examination  
(C) Leading questions may be asked in re-examination  
(D) Leading question cannot be asked in cross-examination
96. In which of the following case did the Supreme Court of India clarify the admissibility of electronic record as evidence ?  
(A) *Anvar P.V. Vs. P.K. Basheer*  
(B) *State of Haryana Vs. Jai Singh*  
(C) *State of Maharashtra Vs. Natwarlal Damodardas Soni*  
(D) *State of Punjab Vs. Jagir Singh*
97. Which of the following is incorrect statement in the light of Indian Evidence Act, 1872 ?  
(A) Confession always go against a person making it  
(B) Admissions are conclusive as to the matters admitted  
(C) Admissions may operate as an estoppel  
(D) Confession is statement written or oral which is direct admission of suit
98. Which of the following Section of the Indian Evidence Act, 1872 is an exception to the hearsay rule ?  
(A) Section 32(1)  
(B) Section 32(2)  
(C) Section 32(3)  
(D) Section 32(5)
99. Which of the following is not a recognized alternate dispute resolution mechanism under the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908 ?  
(A) Arbitration  
(B) Conciliation  
(C) Lok Adalat  
(D) Negotiation
100. Which of the following is incorrect statement with respect to Lok Adalat ?  
(A) No court fee is required in Lok Adalat  
(B) Lok Adalat can deal with all civil & criminal matters  
(C) Award of Lok Adalat is a deemed decree  
(D) No appeal against the award of Lok Adalat is allowed
1. (A) Section 7(3) of the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996 mandates the arbitration agreement to be in writing.  
2. (C) Section 1 to Section 12 of the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996 states the grounds on which arbitrator can be challenged. It cannot be challenged when the arbitrator possess the qualification agreed by the parties.  
3. (B) Section 3 (c) of the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 defines half blood. It means when they are descended from common ancestor and different wives.  
4. (B) Section 5 of the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 provides the valid condition for marriage. It states that parties should not be within the prohibited degree of relationship with each other.  
5. (B) Section 13 (1) of the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 defines the ground of divorce and judicial separation.  
6. (B) Batil Marriage means a void marriage in Muslim Law.  
7. (C) Talaq-e-Tafweez is called as delegated talaq. Talaq-e-sunnat and Talaq-e-hasan are expressed form of talaq. Talaq-e-biddat is triple talaq.  
8. (C) A Hindu boy and girl can marry under both the laws.  
9. (C) Hindu Succession (Amendment) Act, 2005 grants the coparcenary rights to girl child.  
10. (C) Section 11 (iii) of the Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act, 1956 provides for the age difference of 21 years between adoptive father and adoptive daughter for a valid adoption.  
11. (B) Hussainara Khatoon case provides that speedy trial is a Fundamental Right guaranteed under Article 21 of the Constitution. M.C. Mehta case is related to Oleum Gas Leak which provided for Absolute Liability. Kalyaneshwari case provides for misuse of PIL cases. S.P. Gupta case is related to Judge's Transfer case.  
12. (C) Justice P.N. Bhagwati is known as father of PIL in India.  
13. (C) PIL cannot be filed against a private party. It can be filed against Government Bodies.  
14. (B) A PIL cannot be entertained in the matter on pre-mature release from the jail as such matters can be effectively dealt on the individual basis and is not a matter of public interest.  
15. (A) A.K. Kraipak case provides for applicability of principles of natural justice in administrative functions as well. Maneka Gandhi case was related to right of personal liberty. Ram Jawaya Kapoor case stated that since the agreements were not explicitly authorized by Parliament or supported by a statutory provisions and they did not pertain to the execution and maintenance of Constitution were deemed void. Sonik Industries case provides for the general principle that the mode of publication adopted is sufficient for persons affected by the rukes with reasonable diligence to be acquainted with them publication of the Rules has taken place in contemplation of the law.  
16. (B) In L. Chandra case, SC reconsidered the S.P. Sampath Kumar Case. This case provides for validity of Article 323A and 323B. In J.B. Chopra Case, SC held that Tribunal is substitute of High Court. R.K. Jain case stated that Annual Confidential Report is exempted from the domain of RTI Act, 2005. Vinay Chandra Mishra case is related to Contempt of Court case.  
17. (B) HWR Wade gave the definition of Administrative Law as the law relating to the control of governmental power.  
18. (B) Section 45 of the Advocates Act, 1961 provides for 6 month penalty.  
19. (D) Section 49 of the Advocates Act, 1961 prescribes the standard of professional conduct and etiquette to be observed by advocates.  
20. (A) Rule 9 of the Bar Council Rule bars the advocate from pleading in any matter in which he is himself pecuniarily interested.  
21. (D) Section 75 of the Advocates Act, 1961 provides that SC is the

- appellate authority from the decision of Disciplinary Committee of Bar Council of India.
22. (B) Rule 7 of Companies Incorporation Rule, 2014 provides that when paid up share capital of OPC exceeds 50 lakh, then it is converted into either private or public company.
  23. (B) Section 149 of the Companies Act, 2013 provides for a minimum of 3 directors for a public company.
  24. (A) In Vellore Citizen Welfare Forum case, SC explained the Precautionary Principle in details. A.P. Pollution Control Board case provides for making reference to expert bodies in environment related matters. Indian Council for Enviro-Legal Action provides for the concept of Polluter Pays. Kamal Nath case deals with Public Trust Doctrine.
  25. (D) In Vellore Citizen Welfare Forum case, SC explained the Precautionary Principle in details. Olga Tellis case is called slum dwellers case. Indian Council for Enviro-Legal Action provides for the concept of Polluter Pays. Kamal Nath case deals with Public Trust Doctrine.
  26. (A) In Shreya Singhal case, Section 66A was struck down. Maneka Gandhi case is related to Fundamental Right of Personal Liberty. Kartar Singh case is related to TADA. K.A. Abbas case is related to Fundamental Right of Freedom of Speech and Expression.
  27. (D) Section 11 of the IT Act, 2000) provides for the same.
  28. (D) Section 5 of the Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 provides for a maternity benefit for a maximum period of 26 weeks.
  29. (A) Section 9A of the Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 provides for the same.
  30. (D) Section 46 of the Factories Act, 1948 provides for the same.
  31. (D) Section 2 (s) of Industrial Dispute Act, 1947 provides that anyone withdrawing a salary exceeding 10000 will not be considered as workman.
  32. (D) The definition is given by Winfield.
  33. (A) Gloucester Grammar School case deals with Damnum Sine Injuria.
  34. (A) No fault liability is provided under Section 140 of the Motor Vehicle Act, 1988.
  35. (C) The Consumer Protection Act, 2019 provides for 6 consumer right-Right to Safety, Right to Choose, Right to be Informed, Right to Consumer Education, Right to be Heard, Right to Seek Redressal.
  36. (B) Section 5 of Consumer Protection Act, 2019 provides for the same.
  37. (D) Article 265 of the Constitution of India provides for the same.
  38. (B) The same is provided under Section 3 of the Income Tax Act, 1961.
  39. (B) Section 6 of Income Tax Act, 1961 provides that the person should be residing in India for a period of 182 days in the previous year.
  40. (B) Income is defined under Section 2(24) of the Income Tax Act, 1961.
  41. (C) Section 17 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872 defines Fraud and states that mere silence amounts to fraud when there is a duty to speak.
  42. (C) Section 19 of the India Contract Act, 1872 make the contract by fraud as voidable.
  43. (B) Section 37 of the Specific Relief Act, 1963 provides for Perpetual Injunction which can be granted only by decree made at hearing and upon merit of the suit.
  44. (B) Section 74 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872 provides for the same.
  45. (C) Section 63A of the Transfer of Property Act, 1882 provides for 9% interest in case of default in interest payment.
  46. (B) Section 17 of Transfer of Property Act, 1882 provides for a time limit of 18 years.
  47. (B) Hundi is not described as a negotiable instrument under the Negotiable Instrument Act, 1881.
  48. (C) Section 80 of Negotiable Instrument Act, 1881 provides for 18% interest when no amount is specified.
  49. (B) Section 25 of the 2013 Act provides for a period of 12 years.
  50. (B) Section 2(2) of the 2013 Act provides for 80% of affected families that need to give their prior consent for acquiring land for private companies.
  51. (C) Trademark protection is taken for the identity of the product.
  52. (B) Section 53 of the Patent Act, 1970 defines the term of Patent as 20 years from the date of filing of application.
  53. (B) The concept of Freedom of Trade and Commerce is motivated from Australia.
  54. (A) The writ of mandamus is issued to command the performance of public duty.
  55. (D) 58th Constitutional Amendment Act made the provision for publishing Hindi Translation of Constitution.
  56. (A) State of Bihar Vs. Kameshwar Singh is the landmark judgment on colourable legislation. It means that when a legislation is being enacted by government in the guise of having authority over the subject matter, even though it does not. M. Karunani-dhi case deals with challenging the imposition of President's rule in the state. State of Karnataka case deals with a challenge to the law authorizing Centre to order judicial inquiry against the CM. Keshavan Madhava Menon case is linked to following of constitutional safeguards during preventive detention cases.
  57. (C) 9th Constitutional Amendment was passed in the light of advisory opinion received in Re Berubari Case.
  58. (C) Article 254 establishes the doctrine of repugnancy between Central and State Law.
  59. (C) Section 1 of the Official Language Act, 1963 provides a period of 15 years for the transition.
  60. (A) Chakradhar Paswan case upheld the validity of reservation in promotion for SC and ST. K.C. Vasanth Kumar case upheld the validity of criminal defamation in India. A.B.S.K. Sangh case emphasized on equal pay for equal work. N.M. Thomas case

- affirmed the state's power to impose an obligation on children to maintain their parents.
61. (D) Article 19(1)(g) of the Constitution is violated due to sexual harassment at workplace.
  62. (A) Doctrine of Harmonious Construction is used to resolve the conflict between Article 25 (2)(b) and Article 26(b). Doctrine of Pith and Substance deals with the conflict between the laws made by legislature, then the court will answer it by looking at the subject matter. Liberal Interpretation means that the interpretation should not be strictly literal, there should be broad to meet the dynamic society. Cassus Omissus means that when there is no law with respect to particular matter, it should be governed by the case laws or judge made law.
  63. (C) Section 2, 3 and 4 of IPC, 1860 provides for jurisdiction of IPC. It is applied on offence committed on Indian soil and by Indian citizen. Hence, option (3) will be outside the domain of IPC.
  64. (C) The five punishments given to criminals in India are death penalty, life imprisonment, imprisonment, forfeiture of property and solitary confinement.
  65. (D) This was an accident that happened; hence, it will come under no offence. There was no intention to commit the offence.
  66. (C) Section 100 of IPC, 1860 provides the situation in right of private defence can be extended to causing death. Option C is not mentioned in it.
  67. (A) Section 89 provides for Act done in good faith for the benefit of child or insane person, by or by consent of, Guardian. Section 155 of IPC provides for Liability of the person for whose benefit riot is committed, Section 156 of IPC provides for Liability of agent or owner or occupier for whose benefit riot is committed. Section 370 deals with trafficking of person. Hence, in Section 89, the term benefit does not mean pecuniary benefit rather it means for the well being of the child or insane person.
  68. (B) The above mentioned offence fulfilled the ingredient of Criminal Force mentioned under Section 350 of IPC.
  69. (D) Section 363A of the IPC defines the punishment for above mentioned offence as imprisonment for life and fine.
  70. (B) The person is liable for offence of extortion under Section 383 of IPC and the punishment for same is mentioned under Section 384 of IPC which is imprisonment for 3 years or fine or both.
  71. (C) Section 28 of the CrPC, 1973 defines the sentence an Assistant Session Judge is authorized to pass.
  72. (D) Section 43 of the CrPC provides for re-arrest of such person arrested by a private person for committing non-bailable and cognizable offence.
  73. (B) Section 125 of CrPC states that when wife voluntarily leaves away from husband without any reasonable cause, then she is not entitled for maintenance.
  74. (A) The medical examination of victim of rape is provided under Section 164A of CrPC.
  75. (C) Section 172(2) of CrPC states that such diary of proceedings cannot be used as evidence but only to aid in inquiry or trial.
  76. (A) Section 213 of CrPC provides for the situations in which manner of committing offence must be stated. The Illustration of the same section provides for all the scenarios except option A.
  77. (C) Section 260(i) of CrPC provides that the offence can be tried summarily when the punishment for the offence does not exceed two years of imprisonment.
  78. (D) Section 395 of CrPC provides for reference to High Court.
  79. (D) Section 376AB, Section 376DA and Section 376DB of IPC are non-bailable and cognizable offence. Hence, bail under Section 438 of CrPC cannot be applied.
  80. (C) Section 416 of CrPC provides that if the Magistrate attaches the property under Section 83 without being empowered to do so, even in good faith, the proceeding will vitiate.
  81. (A) Order 7, Rule 11 of CPC provides that averments made in plaint is material to decide the jurisdiction of the Civil Court in the light of CPC.
  82. (A) Section 9 of the CPC does not recognize the suit for voluntary payments or offering as suit of civil nature.
  83. (B) Section 11 Explanation VI of CPC makes the doctrine of res judicata applicable in representative suit.
  84. (C) Order 5 of CPC and Section 132 of CPC provides for issuance of summon and bars the issuance of summon for personal appearance of defendant when the person is not residing in the jurisdiction of the court.
  85. (C) Order IX Rule 4 of CPC states that when plaintiff fails to appear in the court then the plaintiff is precluded from bringing a fresh suit.
  86. (B) Order XVII Rule 1 provides that a court can grant adjournment for a maximum of 3 times.
  87. (B) CPC (Amendment) Act, 1999 made the provision in CPC to produce witness without summons.
  88. (C) Section 35(1) of CPC provides that the food and lodging expense incurred will not be considered under costs.
  89. (B) Order 37 Rule 3 of CPC provides that within 10 days defendant needs to enter an appearance for filing address for service of notice on him in case of a suit where summary procedure is to be applied.
  90. (D) Order XLI Rule 25 of CPC provides that the appellate court may remit an issue for trial to lower court.
  91. (D) Illustration 1 to Section 6 of Evidence Act, 1872 provides that anything done before the day of beating is not a relevant fact.
  92. (B) Section 25 of the Indian Evidence Act, 1872 provides that the confession to police officer shall not be proved against him.
  93. (C) Section 32 of the Indian Evidence Act, 1872 provides for admissibility of dying declaration.

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(Held on 5-1-2024)

## General Studies

## Paper-II

## SECTION-I

Q. 1. Write short answer of the following questions :

(a) Critically examine the basic structure theory regarding the Indian Constitution. 8

(b) Is reservation for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) justified? Comment. 8

(c) Critically describe about the amendment process of the Indian Constitution. 8

(d) Explain how Preamble of the Indian Constitution provides a blueprint about the goals of the Constitution. 7

(e) Describe how caste census is going to influence the politics of Bihar? 7

**Ans. (a)** Within one year of the implementation of the Indian Constitution, the power of the Parliament to amend the Constitution was challenged in the Honourable Supreme Court in the case of *Shankari Prasad vs. Union of India*. In a series of various judicial decisions (*Shankari Prasad case*, *Sajjan Singh case*, *Golaknath vs. State of Punjab case*), the Hon'ble Supreme Court through its detailed interpretation in *Keshavananda Bharati vs. State of Kerala case* (1973) propounded the principle of basic structure of the Constitution.

Supreme Court has not defined the boundaries of the basic structure, but through its interpretation in various judicial decisions, some principles like democracy, republic, adult suffrage, secularism, rule of law, federal system, etc. have been declared as part of the basic structure. This principle serves as a safeguard against arbitrary amendments that might violate these core principles.

Critics argue that it gives excessive power to the judiciary, which challenges the democratic principle of

elected representatives shaping the Constitution. They also argue that 'Basic Structure' is subjective and subject to judicial discretion, raising concerns about its potential misuse.

However the principle of basic structure has played an important role in preserving the essence of the Indian Constitution, ensuring stability and maintaining the fundamental values, despite the power of parliamentary amendment. This remains the subject of ongoing scholarly and judicial debate, reflecting the delicate balance between constitutional flexibility and essential principles.

(b) The 103rd Constitution Amendment Act provides 10% reservation for Economical Weaker Sections (EWS) among general category candidates in higher education and government employment

The Honourable Supreme Court, while validating this Act, held that the EWS quota does not violate equality and the basic structure of the Constitution. Reservation is important not only for the inclusion of socially and economically backward classes in the society, but also for the deprived classes and the State has the power to classify persons for lawful purposes.

Proponents argue that it addresses socio-economic inequalities by providing opportunities to those facing financial challenges. Additionally, it ensures inclusivity and bridges the gap between privileged and underprivileged communities.

They believe that economic conditions can also become a hindrance in access to education and employment. Along with this, it will also help in gradually removing the stigma associated with reservation because reservation has historically been related to caste and often the

upper caste looks down on those who come through reservation.

Apart from the backward classes, there are many people or classes living in conditions stricken by hunger and poverty. The proposed reservation through constitutional amendment will give constitutional recognition to the poor from the upper castes.

(c) The Constitution is considered a dynamic and living document. The makers of our Constitution have given the Parliament the right to amend the Constitution under Article 368 of Part 20 of the Indian Constitution.

### The Amendment Process of the Indian Constitution

An amendment to the Constitution can only be initiated by introducing a bill in either House of Parliament, not State Legislature. The bill must be passed by a special majority of two-thirds of the members of the House present and voting. Each House must pass the bill separately.

If the bills seeks to amend federal provisions, it must also be ratified by half of the State Legislatures.

After the bill passed by both houses and in the case of federal bill (concerned state Legislature also), the bill is presented to the President for assent, making it a Constitutional Amendment Act.

### Critical Analysis

- There is no provision for a constitutional convention like the United States or any special institution like a Constitutional Assembly to amend the Constitution.
- Only the central legislature *i.e.*, Parliament has been authorized to amend the Constitution. State legislatures cannot initiate any Bill or proposal to amend the Constitution (except in the case

of creation and abolition of the Legislative Council).

- Major parts of the Constitution can be amended by Parliament alone with a special majority or a simple majority. In some cases, only the consent of the State Legislatures is required.
- The amendment process is similar to the legislative process.

The Constitution of any country is the product or result of its historical experience, immediate and possible circumstances. Our Constitution makers, showing their foresight, have transformed our Constitution into a wonderful balance of rigidity and flexibility in terms of the amendment process. The process is neither flexible enough to allow the ruling parties to make changes as per their wishes nor rigid enough to be unable to adapt to changing needs.

(d) Preamble is an introductory statement to a document that outlines the philosophy and purposes of the document. In a Constitution, the Preamble presents the ideas of its framers, their objectives, their historical experience, and the core values and principles of the nation. The Preamble describes the objectives that the Constitution seeks to establish and pursue.

Preamble The golden dreams seen by our political ancestors/freedom fighters in the context of nation building such as rule of law, democratic system, abolition of hierarchical system and establishment of egalitarian society, complete development of the individual and personal freedom, feeling of harmony and fraternity in the society. And presents an action plan to fulfill the objectives related to ensuring the integrity of the nation.

So with the aim of establishing an egalitarian society, it mentions three types of justice *i.e.*, social, economic and political justice.

In order to create ideal conditions for ensuring the overall development of an individual, five types of freedom have been described - freedom of thought, expression, belief, religion and worship and equality of status and opportunity. To ensure the unity and integrity of the nation and to realize unity in diversity, growth of mutual brother-

hood and love while accommodating diversity has been mentioned.

On the basis of the above analysis, it can be said that our Preamble reveals the ideas of our Constitution makers related to building the dream India and also presents an action plan for its fulfillment.

(e) The Bihar Caste Survey has found that the share of 'backward communities' in the population of Bihar is about 63%. In which extremely backward class is the largest class with 36% share. These findings have wide implications for state and national elections and identification of intended beneficiaries for various Welfare Schemes.

Caste has long been an important factor in Indian politics, shaping voting patterns, policy decisions and social dynamics. With the publication of caste census data in Bihar, a more accurate and detailed understanding of the social structure of the population has been obtained, which is likely to influence political strategies and alliances.

The findings (data) obtained from caste census can be helpful in formulating targeted policies and development initiatives, addressing the specific needs and concerns of different communities. Politicians can use this information to fulfill their election promises, appeal to specific caste groups and form coalitions across diverse social fabric.

Caste census may lead to restructuring of political alliances. Parties can realign themselves based on a new understanding of caste demography, building alliances that cater to the common interests and aspirations of particular caste groups. This could result in changes in power dynamics and impact the traditional voting blocks that have historically influenced Bihar politics.

Caste census highlights the inequalities prevalent at various levels, which will motivate political leaders to address issues related to social justice and inclusivity.

The main concern regarding the findings of caste census is that it may strengthen caste identity and may lead to political bias and influx of caste based politics. Despite these concerns, there is no denying the fact that accurate data on the population of different groups of the population

is essential to promote social justice and ensure equitable distribution of resources.

**Q. 2. (a) Discuss the institutional relationship between the President and the Prime Minister as per the Indian Constitutional text. Discuss their changing role in the present context. 38**

Or

**(b) "Indian federalism is fundamentally rooted in two simultaneous pursuits of nationhood : an embrace of state-based cultural diversities and a commitment to the larger Indian political community." Examine critically the nature of Indian model of federalism in the light of the above statement. 38**

**Ans. (a)** Article 52 of the Indian Constitution creates the post of President and under Article 53, all executive power is vested in the President. But in India, parliamentary system of governance has been adopted which is based on Westminster model. Under this model, while the President is the constitutional head and the formal executive head, the Prime Minister is the de facto executive head.

To understand the real position of the President and the Prime Minister, it seems more appropriate to look at Article 53, Article 74(1) and Article 75(3). While Article 53 vests all executive power in the President, Article 74(1) states that there shall be a Council of Ministers (with the Prime Minister as its head) for the aid and advice of the President and the President shall act only in accordance with such advice. The same Article 75(3) says that the Council of Ministers will be collectively responsible to the Lok Sabha.

Since the Prime Minister is the head of the Council of Ministers, he is the real executive head. The President usually appoints the leader of the majority party in the Lok Sabha as the Prime Minister and appoints other ministers on the advice of the Prime Minister. The President can dismiss any minister at any time at the behest of the Prime Minister. In this way the Prime Minister has control over the entire Council of Ministers.

The Prime Minister acts as a bridge between the President and the Council of Ministers. Under Article

78(b) of the Constitution, the duty of the Prime Minister is to inform the President of all the decisions of the Council of Ministers and to provide any other information that the President may ask for.

With the changing circumstances, the role of the Prime Minister and the President has also changed. Whereas in the past, during the coalition governments, the President had more chances to use options and discretionary powers, in the times of absolute majority government and due to the popularity of the Prime Minister (during the Prime Ministership of Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Mr. Narendra Modi), There has been a change in this situation.

The changing role of the Prime Minister in the present times is marked by increased executive authority, as seen in dimensions such as proactive policy initiatives, diplomatic engagements and crisis management. The post of Prime Minister has become the focal point of decisive leadership which is shaping the vision of the nation.

(b) The Indian model of federalism is intricately woven into the fabric of the nation, balancing the diversity of its states with a commitment to a unified political community. At its core, Indian federalism reflects a unique amalgamation of accommodating state-based cultural diversities and promoting a cohesive national identity.

With a vast and diverse tapestry of languages, religions and traditions, India's federal structure recognizes the importance of decentralization. States in India enjoy significant autonomy, especially in matters related to language, education and culture. This recognition of diversity is enshrined in the Constitution, which grants considerable powers to the states through the distribution of subjects under the Seventh Schedule.

At the same time, the commitment to a larger Indian political community is evident in the unity and integrity provisions of the Constitution. For example, President's rule allows the central government to assume control over a state in certain circumstances to ensure the maintenance of law and order and to protect the unity of the nation. This mechanism underlines a broad com-

mitment to broader Indian politics, even if it involves temporary intervention in the affairs of the states involved.

However, the Indian model of federalism has faced challenges and criticism. Issues such as reorganization of states, demands for greater autonomy and disputes over resources highlight the tension between recognizing cultural diversity and maintaining a strong national unity. Striking a delicate balance between these two goals remains an ongoing challenge, requiring constant dialogue and adaptation.

In conclusion, the nature of Indian federalism is complex, striking a delicate balance between celebrating state-based cultural diversities and maintaining a cohesive Indian political community. The success of this model depends on its ability to navigate these dual activities, promoting unity without suppressing the rich tapestry of India's cultural pluralism.

**Q. 3. (a) Discuss and analyze the fundamental principles of coalition politics in Bihar from the point of view of the fulfilment of the national interests specifically.** 38

Or

**(b) Elucidate and evaluate the local government and its working from the point of view of the empowerment of the Panchayat Raj and the City Institutions with the examples from the grassroot level in Bihar.** 19 + 19 = 38

**Ans. (a)** Coalition politics refers to the formation of alliances or partnerships among political parties to govern collectively. In the context of states, this approach is often employed to accommodate diverse interests and ensure stable governance. The basic principles of coalition politics revolve around dialogue, compromise and achievement of common goals.

Historically, Bihar has been a politically important state, having seen several coalition governments. The state's diverse socio-economic landscape, with a mix of rural agricultural communities and urban centres, often leads to a fragmented political landscape. Caste factor plays an important role, different parties align themselves on the basis of caste

to gain support. Therefore, coalition politics in Bihar is naturally a reflection of the complex caste equations that dominate the political fabric of the state.

The first basic principle of coalition politics in Bihar revolves around the need for inclusive representation. This inclusivity is not just an election strategy, but also a response to the social realities of Bihar.

Additionally, coalition politics in Bihar is inextricably linked to regional aspirations. Coalition governments, by nature, are more sensitive to regional demands because they include diverse parties representing different regions. This decentralized approach ensures that policies are tailored to address the specific concerns of different parts of Bihar, thereby contributing to the overall development of the state.

In terms of national interests, Bihar's role in the larger political scenario is important. The state's significant representation in the Lok Sabha, combined with its diverse demography, establishes it as a microcosm of India. Coalition politics in Bihar, when aligned with national interests, can contribute to more inclusive and representative governance at the national level. By accommodating the diverse needs and aspirations of Bihar's population, coalition governments in the state have the ability to influence national policies that resonate with the broader Indian population.

In conclusion, the fundamentals of coalition politics in Bihar are deeply rooted in the state's socio-economic dynamics, caste equation and regional aspirations. Although these principles contribute to more inclusive and region-specific governance, they require a delicate balance to align with national interests. The success of coalition politics in Bihar in terms of serving national interests depends on its ability to navigate the complex web of regional demands and formulate a collective vision for the broader welfare of the nation.

(b) Local self-government is the management of local affairs by local bodies whose members are elected by the local people. Its main objective is to ensure people's participation in governance along with decentralization of powers.

In Bihar, the Panchayati Raj system has been an important force in shaping local governance. This system is designed to promote participatory democracy, ensure better access to services and promote socio-economic development at the grassroots level.

Three-tier system of Panchayat Raj system is implemented in Bihar – Gram Panchayat, Panchayat Samiti, and Zilla Parishad. These institutions are responsible for local administration, planning and implementation of various development schemes. Empowering Panchayat Raj involves providing them with adequate resources, autonomy and training to discharge their functions effectively.

An example of empowerment can be seen in the implementation of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA) in Bihar. This Act guarantees 100 days of employment to every rural family and the responsibility for its implementation rests with Gram Panchayats.

Similarly, urban institutions like Municipal Corporations and Municipalities play an important role in urban administration. Strengthening these institutions includes devolution of financial powers, ensuring transparent and accountable governance and promoting citizen participation. For example, initiatives like the Swachh Bharat Mission in Bihar have seen active participation of urban local bodies, which has led to improvements in sanitation facilities and waste management.

However, challenges still exist. Limited financial autonomy and dependence on state governments for funds often hinders the effective functioning of local bodies. In Bihar, there have been cases of political interference and inadequate capacity-building measures, affecting the autonomy of panchayats and urban institutions.

To evaluate the functioning of local government in Bihar, it is important to assess the extent of citizen participation, transparency and impact of development schemes at the grassroots level. Although considerable improvement and progress has been made, there is still need for improvement in addressing

the governance challenges to further empower local bodies, enhance financial independence and ensure a more vibrant and effective local government system in the State.

## SECTION-II

**Q. 4. Write short answer of the following questions :**

**(a) Analyze the mechanism and characteristics of Indian monsoon system.** 8

**(b) What are the sources of energy of India ? Are they sufficient to meet domestic needs ? What are the possible alternative sources of energy for India ? Present a critical review.**

**(c) Discuss the state of tourism industry in India and analyze its future in the country.**

**(d) Describe the distribution of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe population in Bihar and comment on their level of socio-economic conditions.**

**(e) Divide India into major physiographic divisions and describe the region in which the land of Bihar State is included.**

**Ans. (a)** The mechanism of Indian monsoon is a complex meteorological phenomenon influenced by various factors. The monsoons are mainly seasonal winds that reverse their direction according to the change in season. The monsoon is characterized by the sudden increase in normal rainfall, known as the burst of the monsoon.

Monsoon occurs due to differential heating of the land and water. During the summer, the Intertropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ) moves over the Ganga plains. Due to coriolis force south-east winds start blowing in a south-westerly direction after crossing equator, and enter the Indian peninsula as the southwest monsoon.

Following are the main characteristics of monsoon :

- Monsoon winds are seasonal winds that blow according to the season.
- Due to the peninsular position of India, summer monsoon winds are divided into two parts – first, the Arabian Sea monsoon and second, the Bay of Bengal monsoon.

- In India, the direction of these winds is from south-west to north-east in the summer season and from north-east to south-west in the winter season.

- In the summer season, these winds are hot and humid as they blow from the sea to the land, whereas in the winter season, these winds are cold and dry as they blow from the land to the sea.

- Rainfall in India is mainly caused by monsoon winds. Most of the rainfall is received from the south-west monsoon winds.

- The rainfall received from the Indian monsoon is uncertain, that is, sometimes there is a difference in the timing and quantity of the monsoon.

These characteristics collectively define the unique and influential nature of the Indian monsoon, which shapes the climate, geography and livelihoods of the region.

**(b)** According to the India Energy Outlook Report 2021, more than 80% of India's energy needs are met by three fuels : coal, oil and solid biomass.

With time, urbanization and population increase will increase the demand for energy. The International Energy Agency estimates that India's energy demand is expected to grow by about 5% per year until 2040. India's final energy consumption increased by 50% from 2007 to 2017, with increases in all sectors, but the largest increases in the industrial and transport sectors.

As a result, demand for alternative sources of energy has also become popular. Notably, rooftop solar panels are becoming increasingly popular in India. This decentralized approach not only reduces dependence on traditional sources but also allows energy self-sufficiency. The top three states for solar energy production were Rajasthan, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. However, the country has a vast coastline and favourable wind conditions, making wind energy an excellent potential source of power.

The country also has a strong network of rivers, making hydro-electric energy an important potential source.

By investing in above renewable sources of energy, India can reduce its dependence on traditional fossil fuels, tackle environmental degradation and pave the way for a greener, cleaner future.

(c) The Indian tourism sector is one of the fastest growing economic sectors in the country, significantly impacting employment and driving regional growth, and by the year 2028, the Indian tourism and hospitality industry is expected to generate revenues of over \$59 billion is estimated.

India's outbound tourism market is growing and the estimated CAGR of the Indian tourism industry will be 11.4% by the year 2032. The tourism and hotel industry is currently the third largest source of foreign exchange for India.

The tourism industry is an important economic multiplier of the country and is becoming more important as the country aims to generate rapid economic growth and employment opportunities.

Generally one of the major factors driving the future of tourism in the country is the growing middle class and increased disposable income. It is noteworthy that India has also emerged as a popular medical tourism destination, with state-of-the-art hospitals and affordable healthcare attracting patients from all over the world, and with advancements in technology and the growing popularity of digital platforms, online travel in the country has increased.

However, challenges such as infrastructure development, safety and security and environmental sustainability need to be addressed to ensure continued growth of the tourism industry in India.

(d) The status of Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST) in Bihar is a complex and multi-dimensional issue, influenced by various government policies and social dynamics. According to the recently released caste survey data of Bihar, the Scheduled Caste population is 19.65% of the total population, while as per the 2011 census, the Scheduled Caste population is 15.91%.

More than 42% of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe families in

Bihar are poor. Only 5.76% of the Scheduled Castes surveyed in the recent survey have completed schooling. As a result, illiteracy rates among the SC and ST population in the state remain significantly lower than other communities. Poverty within these groups is also high due to lack of skill development opportunities and limited access to formal employment.

Historically, these communities have faced social discrimination and been denied land rights, limiting their economic opportunities. Although agricultural reforms including land distribution programs have been implemented, the issue of land ownership and agriculture still remains a significant challenge for these communities.

Additionally, the economic and living conditions of SC and ST households have experienced changes during the phase of rapid economic growth, indicating uneven reforms & there remains a need for continued attention to ensure their overall development and empowerment in the state.

(e) India's physiographic divisions showcase the remarkable diversity of its physical features, shaped by geological, hydrological, and atmospheric processes. India can be divided into the following physiographic divisions:

- The Northern and North-Eastern Mountains
- The Northern Plain
- The Peninsular Plateau
- The Indian Desert
- The Coastal Plains
- The Islands.

Bihar is located in the region.

● **Shiwalik Ranges and Terai Region** : The north-western part of Western Champaran in Bihar is home to the extension of the Shiwalik Ranges and its Terai Region, covering an area of 932 sq. km. This region represents the Tertiary Rock System in Bihar and is further subdivided into three parts, including the Ramnagar Doon.

● **The Ganga Plains** : Extending from Nepal in the north to the Chhotanagpur plateau in southern Bihar, the Ganga Plains play a significant role in the state's physiography. This region is characterized by the alluvial

deposits of the Ganga River, shaping the landscape and contributing to the state's agricultural significance.

- **Southern Plateau Region** : The southern plateau region adds to the diverse physiography of Bihar, featuring stable tablelands, dissected plateaus, and unique geological formations.

These physiographic divisions contribute to the rich and varied landscape of Bihar, reflecting the state's geological and geographical intricacies.

**Q. 5. (a) Explain the factors affecting the climate of Bihar. In what way and in how many parts the agro-climatic zone has been divided in the State ? How many seasons are found here in a year ? Discuss the effect of these seasons on agriculture.** 38

Or

**(b) How are cities classified by the Directorate of Population in India ? Throw light on the total population and their rate of growth as per 2011 Census of various classified cities. Discuss the population of Bihar as per 2011 Census and also throw light on the trend of working population in the State.** 38

**Ans. (a)** The climate of Bihar is influenced by many factors, including its location, topography, and proximity to the Himalayan Mountains. Some of the major factors affecting the climate of the state are: latitude and longitude, the state's topography is diverse, proximity to the Bay of Bengal which affects the monsoon winds and rainfall patterns in the state, the state has rivers including the Ganga, Son and Kosi. There is a vast network which affects the drainage system of the state and affects the rainfall patterns and anthropogenic factors such as human activities like deforestation, industrialization and urbanization also affect the climate of the state by altering the natural ecosystem. Bihar has been divided into four main agro-climatic zones on the basis of soil characteristics, rainfall, temperature and terrain.

The state is divided into four agro-climatic zones :

**1. Zone I—North-Western Alluvial Plain** : This zone includes



the districts of Begusarai, East Champaran, West Champaran, Darbhanga, Gopalganj, Madhubani, Muzaffarpur, Samastipur, Saran, Sheohar, Sitamarhi, Siwan and Vaishali.

**2. Zone II—North-Eastern Alluvial Plain :** This zone includes the districts of Araria, Bhagalpur, Katihar, Kishanganj, Madhepura, Purnia and Saharsa.

**3. Zone III A—South-eastern alluvial plains :** This zone includes the districts of Aurangabad, Gaya, Jehanabad, Kaimur, Lakhisarai, Nalanda, Nawada, Rohtas and Sheikhpura.

**4. Zone III B—South-Western Alluvial Plain :** This zone includes the districts of Bhojpur, Buxar, Jamui, Khagaria, Munger and Patna.

Although the state has four distinct seasons : summer, winter, monsoon and post-monsoon. The summer season usually lasts from March to May, which is suitable for cultivated crops such as watermelon and cucumber. While the winter season is from December to February, which is suitable for Rabi crops like wheat, barley and mustard. At the same time, the important monsoon season for agriculture is from June to September, which is important for Kharif crops like rice, maize and jute. After that, there is the post-monsoon season from October to November, during which the harvesting and sowing of crops is affected. These seasons play an important role in shaping agricultural practices and influencing the overall climate and environment in Bihar.

But the state's agriculture suffers from natural disasters, especially floods in North Bihar and drought in South Bihar due to climatic factors.

The seasonal dynamics of Bihar's agriculture underlines the importance of adapting crop cultivation to specific climatic conditions, thereby ensuring sustainable and productive agricultural practices throughout the year.

(b) Cities and towns are part of urban settlements. All places having a Municipality, Corporation, Cantonment Board or Notified Town Area Committee etc. declared by the law of the State are called statutory towns.

Places which fulfill the following criteria are called cities :

- Minimum population of 5,000;
- At least 75 per cent of the male main working population is engaged in non-agricultural activities; and
- Population density of at least 400 persons per square kilometer. yes.

Indian cities are classified into four tiers based on various factors including population, development and infrastructure. Tier 1 cities are the most developed, including metros such as Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Chennai, Delhi, Hyderabad, Kolkata and Mumbai. Property prices in tier 2 cities like Nashik are comparatively low and infrastructure development is ongoing. Tier 3 and Tier 4 cities like Banswara and Gangtok are characterized by developed infrastructure and basic amenities, Tier 4 cities have a population between 10,000 and 19,999. These classifications play an important role in urban development and resource allocation across India.

According to the 2011 census, India's urban population grew to 377 million during 2001–2011 with a growth rate of 2.76 per cent per annum and the level of urbanization across the country increased from 27.7 per cent in 2001 to 31.1 per cent in 2011.

According to the 2011 census, out of the total population of Bihar, 11.29% people lived in urban areas while 88.71% people lived in rural areas. The average sex ratio in urban areas of the state was 895 females per 1000 males.

Most of the urban population in Bihar lives in poverty, with little access to basic amenities or health care. According to the 2011 census, the urban poverty rate in Bihar was 47.53%, much higher than the national average of 28.61%. In terms of health, only 38% of households in urban areas have access to sanitation facilities, and more than half have access to safe drinking water.

The workforce participation rate in Bihar increased from 51.7% in 2001 to 55.3% in 2011, with the majority of the workforce engaged in agriculture and related activities.

Despite various challenges, there are some positive signs for the future of urban areas in the state. The state's economy has been growing at a rapid pace in recent years, and this is likely to continue as the government

continues to invest in infrastructure and development. The number of households with access to electricity has increased significantly in recent years.

**Q. 6. (a) Explain 'trickle-down' theory of economics, its major elements, benefits, limitations and criticisms in context to Indian planning.** 38

Or

**(b) Describe 'monsoon system of India', its nature, types, climate change, distribution, synonyms, east and west jet stream and feasibility.** 38

**Ans. (a)** The trickle-down theory of economics is a concept that has been widely debated and analysed in the context of various economies, including India. It is also known as Reaganomics or supply-side economics, this theory revolves around the idea that economic benefits provided to the rich and large corporations will eventually 'trickle down' to the rest of the population, leading to overall economic growth and There will be prosperity. During the state's Great Depression, U.S. President Herbert Hoover's stimulus efforts and President Ronald Reagan's use of income tax cuts were both described as 'trickle-down'.

**Key Elements of Trickle-Down Theory :**

- **Tax breaks and benefits :** The theory holds that tax breaks and benefits for corporations and the wealthy will stimulate economic growth and ultimately benefit everyone.
- **Less regulation and tax cuts :** Trickle-down economics involves less regulation and tax cuts for higher-income tax brackets as well as corporations.
- **Supply-side economics :** Trickle-down theory is associated with supply-side economics, which claims that all tax cuts lead to economic growth.

**Advantages of Trickle-Down Principle**

- **Economic growth :** Although the theory leads to economic growth because it encourages investment and entrepreneurship.
- **Job creation :** This theory suggests that by promoting policies that benefit the rich, such as tax

cuts, it encourages them to invest in businesses, thereby creating jobs.

- **Innovation and technological advancement** : According to this, by increasing the wealth of top earners, they will have more resources to invest in research and development, thereby creating new products and services that will benefit society as a whole.
- **Increase in tax revenues** : Proponents argue that the trickle-down principle can increase tax revenues in the long run. Lowering tax rates for the rich, the theory goes, would give them more incentives to work, invest, and expand their businesses. This, in turn, generates higher income and profits, resulting in increased tax revenues for the government.
- **Consumer benefits** : As the rich become richer, their increased spending power will benefit the entire economy, including middle and low-income groups.

#### Limitations and Criticisms of this Theory

It also faces several limitations and criticisms from the Indian perspective :

- **Unequal income distribution** : One of the main criticisms of the trickle-down theory is the significant income inequality in India. Despite experiencing economic growth, the benefits have not effectively reached the lower-income sections of the society.
- **Lack of inclusiveness** : According to this theory economic growth automatically provides better opportunities for all, but in the Indian context, this is not the case. Marginalized communities such as Dalits and Adivasis face discrimination and lack of access to education, health care, and employment opportunities, hindering their ability to benefit from economic growth.
- **Lack of employment generation** : Critics argue that this theory does not adequately address the issue of employment creation, especially in a country like India with high population density and large informal sector.

- **Lack of focus on social development** : This theory places significant emphasis on economic development and assumes that social development will happen automatically.

- **Weak regulation and governance** : The trickle-down theory assumes that the benefits of economic growth will be distributed fairly. However, weak regulation and governance in India has often allowed economic elites to exploit the system, leading to corruption, tax evasion and worsening income inequality.

- **Neglect of rural economy** : Trickle-down theory often gives priority to urban and industrial development over rural development.

- **Environmental concerns** : Trickle-down theory does not adequately address environmental sustainability and ignores negative externalities of economic growth such as pollution and resource depletion. India, facing significant environmental challenges, needs a more comprehensive approach that balances economic growth with environmental protection and sustainable development.

In the Indian context, the trickle-down theory has been the subject of intense scrutiny and debate. While its supporters argue that it can lead to economic growth and job creation, its critics highlight its limitations in addressing income inequality and effectively benefiting the poor. Understanding the relevance and application of the trickle-down theory in the Indian context requires a comprehensive analysis of its impact on different sectors of the population and the overall economy.

(b) The climate of India, like that of South and Southeast Asia, is hot and humid during the monsoon season.

The name monsoon is derived from the Arabic word *Mausin*, which means season. Monsoons are seasonal winds (periodic winds) that change direction as the seasons change. Monsoon is a seasonal wind pattern that flows from sea to land in summer and from land to sea in winter. Some scholars consider monsoon

winds to be large-scale land and sea winds.

Although two types of monsoon systems are seen in the Indian subcontinent :

**1. South-West Monsoon** : The south-west monsoon flows in the south-west direction after crossing the equator. The south-west monsoon is named after it. It results from an intense low pressure system forming over the Tibetan Plateau. The south-west monsoon brings heavy rain to most parts of India, with early rain causing a rapid drop in temperatures. When monsoon arrives in India, moisture-carrying winds blow accompanied by violent thunder and lightning.

It generally arrives in the coastal areas of Kerala, Karnataka, Goa and Maharashtra in the first week of June, while in the internal areas its effect is seen in the first week of July. Daily temperatures drop to 5°C to 8°C from mid-June to mid-July. However, as soon as they reach the Indian subcontinent, the south-westerly direction of these winds is modified by the relief and thermal low pressure over north-west India. And as these winds approach the mainland, they split into two branches : Arabian Sea branch & Bay of Bengal branch.

**2. North-East Monsoon** : North-east monsoon enters India from the north-east, in this type of monsoon the wind blows from sea to land. Moisture is brought from the Indian Ocean by monsoon winds. The Northeast Monsoon is limited to South India, bringing rain to Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Karaikal, Yanam, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Mahe and South Interior Karnataka from October to December. Low pressure systems and cyclones cause associated rainfall, also known as winter monsoon. This is the main rainy season of Tamil Nadu, with the state receiving 48% of the annual rainfall during these three months.

#### Impact of Climate Change on Indian Monsoon

- **Increased variability and erratic behaviour** : Climate change is causing greater variability in the spread of rainfall during the monsoon period, resulting in more localized, extremely heavy rainfall events in shorter periods of time.

- **Reduction in total rainfall :** Despite the perception of increased rainfall due to extreme events, Indian Government and international climate change assessments indicate that summer monsoon rainfall has actually decreased by 6% over the last 60 years. This reduction, coupled with increasing variability in rainfall patterns, poses significant challenges for the region.

- **Sensitivity to climate change :** The country faces serious challenges on various climate metrics, including sea level rise, melting Himalayan glaciers, increase in destructive cyclones and extreme heat waves.

These factors, combined with the changing nature of the monsoon, pose significant socio-economic challenges for the Indian subcontinent.

#### Distribution of Indian Monsoon

The average annual rainfall in India is about 125 cm, but there are large spatial variations.

- **High rainfall areas :** The highest rainfall occurs on the west coast, in the Western Ghats, as well as in the sub-Himalayan regions of the Northeast and the hills of Meghalaya. The rainfall here is more than 200 cm.
- **Moderate rainfall areas :** Southern parts of Gujarat, eastern Tamil Nadu, the north-eastern peninsula covering Odisha, Jharkhand and Bihar receive rainfall between 100-200 cm.
- **Low rainfall areas :** Western Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Haryana, Punjab, Jammu and Kashmir, eastern Rajasthan, Gujarat and Deccan plateau receive rainfall between 50-100 cm.
- **Areas of inadequate rainfall :** Parts of the peninsula, especially Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra, Ladakh and most of western Rajasthan receive less than 50 cm rainfall.

#### East and West Jet Stream

The jet stream is a high-speed stream of air found in the upper levels of the atmosphere, typically at altitudes of 10 to 15 kms. It flows from west to east, but there are actually two main jet streams: the

polar jet stream and the subtropical jet stream.

The polar jet stream is located close to the poles and forms at the boundary between cold polar air and warm air from lower latitudes. It moves in a wavy pattern with lows and peaks. As the name suggests, it commonly affects mid-latitudes, including Europe, North America, and Asia. The polar jet stream is responsible for most of the weather patterns in these regions, as it influences the speed and intensity of weather systems such as low and high pressure systems, and cyclones. On the other hand, the subtropical jet stream is located closer to the equator, typically around 20 to 30 degrees latitude. It is formed by the boundary between warm tropical air moving towards the pole and cold air coming from higher latitudes. The subtropical jet stream is stronger and more stable than its polar counterpart. Its flow is generally more consistent towards the east and plays an important role in the weather patterns of subtropical and mid-latitudes during some seasons.

Both jet streams are important in the global atmospheric circulation system, as they help transport heat and moisture around the world.

The Indian monsoon system is essential for the country's agriculture, water supply and overall economy. Its viability is critical to sustaining livelihoods and ensuring food security for a significant portion of the population. Understanding the dynamics of the monsoon system and its associated jet streams is important to predict and manage its impact on various sectors of the Indian economy.

#### SECTION-III

Q. 7. Write short answer of the following questions :

- (a) What is the role of computer in modern society ? 8
- (b) With suitable examples, discuss the relationship between technology and social development. 8
- (c) Discuss the role of science and technology in industrial development of Bihar. 7
- (d) Discuss how modern technology helped us during corona pandemic. 7
- (e) Write a note on the role of technology in sustainable development. 7

**Ans. (a)** A computer is an electronic device that is programmed to accept data (input), process it, and produce results (output).

The use of computers in modern society can be divided into several groups. As :

- **Role of the Computer in Business :** Word processing in computers enables us to prepare and edit letters, reports, and documents, apart from typing them manually in a few seconds.
  - **Role of computers in banking and financial sectors :** role in processing data related to savings accounts, fixed deposits, loans, investments, profitability analysis, etc. in organizations operating budgets, etc.
  - **Role of computers in industries :** Computers play an important role in industrial production in processing data collected from employees, customers, sales, product information, production schedules, etc.
  - **Role of computers in education :** Presently, matters like student registration, class scheduling, processing of examination results, and personal data storage of students and teachers are being implemented rapidly and effectively by computers to assist the administration.
  - **Role of computers in the medical field :** Currently, the application of computer-based tools or the use of information technology through telemedicine has helped doctors diagnose diseases.
  - **Role of computers in the legal field :** The use of computers helps lawyers, trainee lawyers, and law students find relevant data and get better service without wasting time.
  - **Role of computers in the administrative field :** At present, governments try to deliver more and more services to the public through e-governance, in which computers play a role as an important technical device. By using such computer tools, traffic flow can be managed effectively by detecting the direction of traffic.
- In conclusion, it can be said that in the present modern society, the role of computers ranges from small to big necessity.

(b) Society is a group of people who live together in a community that includes some form of government as well as some rules and an economy. In modern democratic countries, the government acts as the representative of this society. As a representative, the government runs various programs and schemes for the social and economic development of society, in the execution and delivery of which technology plays an important role.

Today, every work of ours depends on technology in some way or another. This is why the current relationship between technology and society is multidimensional.

### Relationship Between Technology and Social Development

- At present, with the development of information technology, social welfare-related schemes, financial assistance, information, etc. have become quick and easy.
- At present, the contribution of the IT industry to India's GDP is about 8% to 10%.
- Additionally, information technology (IT) plays a key role in each of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, providing the infrastructure needed to achieve them.
- Countries like India, where even today most of the population lives in villages. IT is also playing an important role in rural development.
- Now it has become easier to provide services, even to remote people, through IT.
- Increasing digital literacy in rural India is opening doors to new business possibilities.
- The growing awareness of digital technologies and solutions among the younger generation of farmers and Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) has given rise to the emergence of innovative business models across the entire agricultural value chain.
- These models cover various stages, including input, harvesting, processing, and distribution. As a result, this change not only curbs rural migration, but also attracts national and international investors, thereby accelerating development in these rural areas.

- Ensuring transparency and efficient information exchange has become possible through technology.
- The future trajectory of the relationship between technology and society is likely to be shaped by several key trends, including the adoption of automation and Artificial Intelligence (AI), the continued growth of the Internet and 5G networks, and the increasing importance of data.
- These technologies have the potential to improve efficiency, productivity, and the overall quality of life.
- Present-day medical technologies like X-rays, CT scans, and MRIs have revolutionized the way diseases are diagnosed and treated. Additionally, the development of medical robots and telemedicine has made health care accessible, especially in remote areas where health facilities are limited.

Technology has increased efficiency in various sectors, such as manufacturing and agriculture. For example, the use of automation, robotics, and machine learning has significantly improved productivity, reduced costs, and increased output. However, on the other hand, it has also given rise to some concerns, like the security of data, cybercrime, and the reduction in manual employment.

(c) Bihar is located in the eastern part of India. It is surrounded by Nepal in the north, West Bengal in the east, Uttar Pradesh in the west, and Jharkhand in the south. The state enjoys a unique location-specific advantage due to Bihar's proximity to the vast markets of eastern and northern India, access to ports such as Kolkata and Haldia, and access to raw material sources and mineral reserves from neighbouring states. Along with this, the use of science and technology has played a transformative role in the industrial development of the state. In the year 2023-24, Bihar's GSDP at current prices is estimated to be ₹ 8.59 trillion (US \$ 104.62 billion). It is noteworthy that between 2015-16 and 2023-24, the state's GSDP has grown at a CAGR (in ₹) rate of 11.03%. Bihar has made better use of sustainable agriculture technologies, sensors, and data

analytics to optimize crop yields. This is why Bihar is currently the fourth-largest producer of vegetables and the eighth-largest producer of fruits across the country. Food processing, dairy, sugar, manufacturing, and healthcare are among the fastest-growing industries in the state. Through Bihar Start Sub-Policy-2016 and the Skilled Youth Program, the target has been set to employ the youth of the state and make them self-reliant. In terms of manufacturing, automation and the implementation of advanced manufacturing technologies have modernized traditional industries.

For example, the textile sector in Bihar has seen a technological transformation with the introduction of automated looms and digital textile printing. With the aim of making industrial investment more convenient in the state, the Bihar Industrial Investment Promotion Policy 2016 has been implemented, incorporating many technical-based solutions. Apart from this, the presence of technology parks and research institutes in Bihar has fostered an ecosystem of innovation.

Under the 7th Nishchay (Opportunities Increase, Aage Badhe) of the Saat Nishchay Scheme, the establishment of a polytechnic institute for technical education in each district was announced.

(d) Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. The outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19) emerged when it was declared a global health emergency by the World Health Organization on December 31, 2019, due to a sharp increase in cases of pneumonia of unknown cause in Wuhan city, Hubei province, China. Soon, due to its rapid spread, a complete or partial lockdown was imposed in other countries around the world, including India.

With the lockdown, people's lifestyle completely shifted to a digital lifestyle, be it for work, education, entertainment, or purchasing daily essentials.

### New Technology and Support during COVID-19

- 'Arogya Setu', a mobile app, helped in tracking COVID-19 patients, providing information about patients, etc.

- Co-WIN, or COVID-19 Vaccine Intelligence Network, is an extension of the Electronic Vaccine Intelligence Network (eVIN). It was instrumental as a digital technology platform to effectively launch and scale up the COVID vaccine delivery system at the national level.
  - **Video conferencing** : A one-stop solution for any meeting during COVID-19 using apps like Zoom and Skype.
  - **Robotics** : Robots were deployed to take care of patients in isolation wards by providing them food, medicines, etc.
  - **Tele-medicine** : Through this technology, patients from remote places are being safely examined and treated by large modern hospitals. For example, Practo, Lybrate, 1 mg, etc.
  - **Autonomous vehicles and drones** : These are being used to deliver essential goods like medicines and food items.
  - **Virtual biometrics** : Facial and iris recognition solutions integrated with infrared thermometers are increasingly being used for rapid screening. They can also be used to track the movements of suspected infected individuals and quarantine them.
  - **Artificial Intelligence** : AI is helping to diagnose diseases and develop vaccine for the virus.
- (e) In the present time, technology has played an important role in the development of our society. Advances in technology have enabled us to improve our lives in a variety of ways. However, technology can also contribute to environmental degradation and social inequality. As such, there is a growing need for sustainable development. Sustainable development is defined as 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'. Technology can play an important role in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by enabling innovative solutions that address economic, social, and environmental challenges.
- Renewable energy sources, such as solar, wind, and hydropower, do not emit greenhouse gases and have the potential to provide a sustainable source of energy.

- Advances in technology have made renewable energy sources more efficient and cost-effective.
- Agriculture is a major contributor to environmental degradation, with the use of fertilizers, pesticides, and irrigation leading to soil erosion, water pollution, and the depletion of natural resources.
- However, technology can enable farmers to adopt more sustainable practices, such as zero-till farming and the use of genetically modified crops, which require fewer resources and are more resistant to pests and diseases.
- The transportation sector is a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution. However, advances in technology have enabled the development of electric vehicles, which have the potential to reduce emissions and improve air quality.
- As the world becomes increasingly urbanized, the need for sustainable urban development becomes ever greater.
- The technology can enable the development of smart cities, which use data and technology to optimize resource use, reduce waste, and improve the quality of life for residents.
- Additionally, the technology can enable the development of green buildings, which are designed to be energy-efficient and environmentally sustainable.

**Q. 8. (a) Misuse of technology and its wrong application lead to pollute the environment and cause climatic changes. Discuss with suitable examples, how misuse of technology has become a curse to the environment of India.** 36

Or

**(b) Nanotechnologies have a huge potential to revolutionise our life. Discuss the emerging applications of nanotechnology in human health.** 36

**Ans. (a)** Nowadays, technology has become an essential part of everyone's life. Today, there is no time or place where technology does not play a role. While technology has benefited us, it also has some social,

economic, and environmental side effects. Many scholars and environmentalists believe that the negative use of technology by people has caused irreparable damage to the environment.

### **Misuse of Technology : A Curse for the Environment**

- Following technological advancement, there has been a significant increase in the demand and consumption of machines and automobiles, followed by a significant increase in their production.
- Although machines and automobiles have while industrialization has been promoted, it has also increased anthropogenic carbon emissions into the atmosphere from cars, airplanes, power plants, and factories.
- Currently, India's per capita carbon dioxide emissions are 2 metric tons. The average global carbon emission was 4.7 metric tons. It is noteworthy that carbon dioxide persists in the atmosphere for about 50 to 200 years.
- For this reason, its effect lasts for a long time. Which is one of the main factors in climate change.
- Professor Brian Hoskins reported that CO<sub>2</sub> levels are the highest they have been in approximately 4.5 million years, with the primary components being the burning of fossil fuels and deforestation, another cause of increased global warming.
- Nitrogen oxides and other types of gaseous emissions from industries and emissions from vehicles are the major causes of poor water quality.
- The reason for increased toxicity in water bodies is that nitrogen deposition acts like fertilizer in water, which promotes the formation of algae, which in turn is harmful to water quality as it blocks oxygen for aquatic life. And creates eutrophic conditions for them.
- Another reason for poor water quality is the runoff of pesticides and plant food from farms into the water, polluting it and thus making it an unsuitable environment for aquatic life to survive.

- Technotrash, also known as electronic waste or e-waste, is used for unwanted electrical or electronic equipment, which is currently the fastest-growing type of waste.
- Technotrash thrown away with regular garbage usually ends up in landfills.
- Most electronics contain non-biodegradable materials, and heavy metals and toxic materials that leach into the ground can contaminate the water we drink, the plants we eat, and the animals living around the area.
- Apart from this, there is also a large increase in air pollution due to the increased use of technology because, due to technological progress, humans have started traveling more.
- The main pollutants include ozone, lead, nitrogen, and carbon monoxide, which are produced by the burning of fossil fuels.
- Another major part of the world's environmental degradation is caused by deforestation, where humans are clearing forests without thinking to expand cities, and due to the use of technology, trees are being wiped out in a short period of time.
- Technological products like phones and tablets have become indispensable to mankind, which is leading to growth. WiFi and internet connectivity result in high radiation generation and the continuous health problems associated with it, which also lead to the extinction of birds due to radiation in the environment.
- However, technology in itself is not negative or positive; rather, it is neutral.
- Its use makes it negative or positive.
- For example, the technologies used for birth control are considered a positive outcome of technology, as population is one of the most pressing issues globally.
- Another technical concept of geoengineering has attempted to remove CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere

and reduce the harmful effects of toxic substances.

- The implementation of bioremediation is one such exploration that uses microorganisms to remove pollutants to reduce the toxicity of metals in soil or water. The most important advantage of technology is the internet, which helps people connect globally, which leads to a free flow of information and increases awareness of knowledge.

In conclusion, it can be said that technology may not be able to fix all environmental issues, but when used correctly, it can definitely contribute to their improvement. Climate change, global warming, and pollution are not caused by technology, but by its mismanagement.

(b) Nanotechnology is a field of science and engineering that deals with the design and manufacturing of extremely small devices and structures.

Nanotechnology currently affects almost all areas of our lives, including manufacturing, electronics, computer and information technology, medicine, the environment and energy storage, chemical and biological technology, and agriculture. The scale of devices in nanotechnology ranges from 1 to 100 nanometers (nm).

#### **Nanotechnology is Helpful in Bringing Revolutionary Changes to Human Life**

- Nanomedicine in medicine and health care, imaging and diagnostic devices powered by nanotechnology, smaller and more portable systems in electronics and IT, nano-RAM, nano-optomechanical SRAM (static RAM), nanotechnology innovations to fuel production and efficiency of use in conventional energy sources.
- Applying solar paint to any surface will enable it to capture energy from the sun and convert it into electricity.
- Nanobatteries are used to help rechargeable lithiumion batteries last longer, such as by helping to detect and address environmental contaminants.
- Similarly, in the agricultural sector, nanofertilizers, hybrid

polymers, nanoemulsions, and nanoparticles based on titanium dioxide are used as antimicrobial agents.

#### **Application of Nanotechnology in the Human Health Field**

- Nanotechnology is currently being used in health care applications, such as the treatment and diagnosis of common and incurable diseases.
- The application of nanotechnology in health care has not only made health treatment easier but also more effective and efficient than before.
- For example, there are currently many nanotechnology devices, such as diabetes pads to control diabetes levels, nanotech detectors for heart attacks, and nanochips to check plaque in arteries.
- The use of nanocarriers for eye surgery, chemotherapy, etc. has brought revolutionary changes to the health sector.
- Currently, nanofibers are being used in artificial limb implants, tissue engineering, and artificial limb components for a large number of disabled people in India.
- Nanosponges can be used to absorb toxins and remove them from the bloodstream. Similar nanoflares are being used to detect cancer cells in the bloodstream.
- The term 'smart pills' refers to nano-scale electronic devices that can be shaped and designed like pharmaceutical pills, but are capable of performing more advanced functions such as sensing, imaging, and drug delivery.
- In the future, nanobots, which are micro-sized robots, can act as miniature surgeons.

However, there are some concerns with the use of nanotechnology, such as a lack of proper knowledge and expertise regarding the effect of nanoparticles on the biochemical pathways and processes of the human body, expensive procedures and treatments, and concerns about toxicity and the risks involved.

## General Studies-I

- Consider the following statements regarding 'Cryptocurrency':
  - Cryptocurrency is a centralized currency controlled by the Reserve Bank of India.
  - Transactions with cryptocurrency are recorded on a public digital ledger called the blockchain.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?

(A) Only 1  
(B) Only 2  
(C) Both 1 and 2  
(D) Neither 1 nor 2
- Consider the following countries:
  - Laos
  - Brunei
  - Thailand
  - Vietnam
  - Papua New Guinea
  - Philippines

How many of the above countries are members of the ASEAN grouping ?

(A) Only three (B) Only four  
(C) Only five (D) All six
- Consider the following statements regarding avian influenza:
  - Avian influenza viruses can not infect humans.
  - India follows a 'detect and cull' policy approach to controlling highly pathogenic avian influenza.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?

(A) Only 1  
(B) Only 2  
(C) Both 1 and 2  
(D) Neither 1 nor 2
- Which of the following countries share 'Amazon Rain Forests' ?
  - Brazil
  - Ecuador
  - Venezuela
  - Suriname
  - Peru

Select the correct answer using the code given below :

(A) Only 1 and 3  
(B) Only 2, 4, and 5  
(C) Only 2, 3, and 4  
(D) 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5
- Consider the following statements regarding 'Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC)':
  - CBDC is issued by the RBI in digital form, the same as the fiat currency.
  - It is a fungible legal tender, for which holders need not have a bank account.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?

(A) Only 1  
(B) Only 2  
(C) Both 1 and 2  
(D) Neither 1 nor 2
- Consider the following statements regarding copyright law in India:
  - It grants the creator of the original work the exclusive right to use, reproduce, distribute, perform, and display their work.
  - It protects transformative work, which is a modification of existing work or something built upon it to create something new and distinct.
  - Religious scriptures in the public domain are protected under copyright law in India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?

(A) Only 1  
(B) Only 1 and 2  
(C) Only 2 and 3  
(D) 1, 2 and 3
- Consider the following statements regarding the Automated Permanent Academic Account Registry (APAAR):
  - Under this, a unique APAAR ID will be provided for students in both private and government schools.
  - It is part of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.
  - It will be used to track the educational progress of students.
  - It will replace the Aadhaar IDs of students.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?

(A) Only 1 and 4  
(B) Only 2 and 4  
(C) Only 1, 2 and 3  
(D) Only 3
- Consider the following statements regarding the Constitution Bench in India?
  - A Supreme Court bench with strength of at least seven judges is called the Constitution Bench.
  - It is binding on the Chief Justice of India to be a part of a Constitution Bench.
  - It is formed when the Prime Minister of India has sought the Supreme Court's opinion on a question of fact or law.
  - It is formed when conflicting judgments have been delivered by at least two three-judge benches of the Supreme Court on the same point of law.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?

(A) Only 1  
(B) Only 1 and 4  
(C) Only 4  
(D) Only 3 and 4

9. With reference to 'Cyclone Formation, consider the following statements :

1. Extra-tropical cyclones can originate over land and sea.
2. Extra-tropical cyclones move from east to west, but tropical cyclones move from west to east.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?

- (A) Only 1
- (B) Only 2
- (C) Both 1 and 2
- (D) Neither 1 nor 2

10. Consider the following pairs :

- |                 |              |
|-----------------|--------------|
| <b>Festival</b> | <b>State</b> |
| 1. KatiBihu     | —Assam       |
| 2. Kharchi Puja | —West Bengal |
| 3. Yugadi       | —Karnataka   |

Which of the above-given pairs is not correctly matched ?

- (A) Only 1 and 2
- (B) Only 2
- (C) All 1, 2, and 3
- (D) Only 2 and 3

11. Which of the following are components of the capital expenditure ?

1. Acquiring fixed and intangible assets
2. Upgrading an existing asset
3. Expenses on payment of rent
4. Repayment of the loan
5. Interest payments on past debt.

How many of the above are part of capital expenditure ?

- (A) Only two
- (B) Only three
- (C) Only four
- (D) All five

12. Consider the following statements regarding the Teesta River :

1. It originates from a glacial lake, Khangchung Chho, in Tibet.
2. It flows through the Indian states of Sikkim and Assam only.
3. The River Rangeet is a tributary of the River Teesta.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?

- (A) Only 1
- (B) Only 1 and 2
- (C) Only 2 and 3
- (D) Only 1 and 3

13. The terms 'jus in bello, jus ad bellum', often seen in news, are in the context of :

- (A) Warfare
- (B) Artificial Intelligence
- (C) Medical Science
- (D) None

14. Which of the following statements is/are correct about 'Haiti' ?

1. Haiti is located in the north-central Caribbean.
2. It is positioned in the northern and western hemispheres of the Earth.

Select the correct answer using the code given below :

- (A) Only 1
- (B) Only 2
- (C) Both 1 and 2
- (D) Neither 1 nor 2

15. With reference to 'Psyche Mission, consider the following statements :

1. It aims to understand the iron core of the earth.
2. It was launched by Roscosmos and ISRO.

Which of the statements given above is/are not correct ?

- (A) Only 1
- (B) Only 2
- (C) Both 1 and 2
- (D) Neither 1 nor 2

16. Article 324 of the Indian Constitution deals with which of the following ?

- (A) Reservation of seats for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes in the House of the People
- (B) Supervision, direction and control of elections to be vested in an Election Commission
- (C) Power of Parliament to legislate with respect to a matter on the State List in the national interest
- (D) None

17. Which of the following tribal groups is or is not the inhabitants of the state of Arunachal Pradesh ?

1. Adi Tribe
2. Galos Tribe
3. Mikir Tribe
4. Nyishi Tribe
5. Banjara Tribe

Select the correct answer using the codes given below :

- (A) Only 1, 2, and 3
- (B) Only 3 and 5
- (C) Only 2, 4, and 5
- (D) None

18. Consider the following pairs :

- |                    |                    |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Hill range</b>  | <b>State</b>       |
| 1. Bodi Hills      | —Karnataka         |
| 2. Lushai Hills    | —Tripura           |
| 3. Abor Hills      | —Arunachal Pradesh |
| 4. Gawilgarh Hills | —Maharashtra       |

Which of the pairs given above are correctly matched ?

- (A) Only 1, 2, and 3
- (B) Only 1 and 2
- (C) Only 3 and 4
- (D) Only 2, 3 and 4

19. Consider the following features :

1. The presence of nominal and real executives.
2. Majority party rule.
3. The collective responsibility of the executive to the legislature.
4. The leadership of the Prime Minister or the Chief Minister.
5. Dissolution of the lower house (Lok Sabha or Assembly).

Which of the above features are part of the parliamentary form of government ?

- (A) Only 1, 2, 3 and 4
- (B) Only 2, 3, 4 and 5
- (C) Only 1, 3, 4 and 5
- (D) Only 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5

20. Consider the following Statements :

1. Being a Sovereign state, India can acquire foreign territories as per modes recognized by international law.
2. Indian Territory can be ceded to a foreign state only by amending the Constitution under Article 368.

Which of the Statement (s) given above is/are correct ?

- (A) Only 1
- (B) Only 2
- (C) Both 1 and 2
- (D) Neither 1 nor 2



21. Consider the following Statements :

1. In October 1953, Andhra Pradesh became the first state to be created on a linguistic basis.
2. The creation of Andhra intensified the demand for the creation of states on a linguistic basis and forced GOI to appoint States Reorganization Commission under the chairmanship of S. K. Dhar.

Which of the Statement(s) given above is/are correct ?

- (A) Only 1  
(B) Only 2  
(C) Both 1 and 2  
(D) Neither 1 nor 2

22. Consider the following statements regarding 'Treasury Bills' :

1. T-bills are short-term securities issued on behalf of the government by the RBI and are used to manage the short-term liquidity needs of the government.
2. T-Bills are issued on discount to face value, while the holder gets the face value on maturity.
3. T-Bills are issued by both the central government and state governments in India.

Which of the statements given above are correct ?

- (A) Only 1 and 2  
(B) Only 2 and 3  
(C) 1, 2 and 3  
(D) Only 1 and 3

23. Which of the following statements best describes fiscal consolidation ?

- (A) Strategy of the government to disinvest in public sector enterprises to meet deficit  
(B) Policies undertaken by governments to reduce their deficits and accumulation of debt stock  
(C) Scheduled bank action plan to recover the loans from non-performing assets  
(D) Government agenda to reform the loan disbursement mechanism of scheduled banks

24. Match the following pairs of term definitions :

**List-I**

- (a) Deflation (b) Disinflation  
(c) Stagflation (d) Reflation

**List-II**

1. Reduction in the rate of inflation.
2. General fall in the level of prices.
3. The combination of inflation and rising unemployment due to the recession.
4. Attempt to raise the prices to counteract the deflationary prices.

Select the correct answer using the code given below :

- |     | (a) | (b) | (c) | (d) |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| (A) | 1   | 2   | 3   | 4   |
| (B) | 2   | 1   | 3   | 4   |
| (C) | 2   | 1   | 4   | 3   |
| (D) | 1   | 2   | 4   | 3   |

25. Consider the following pairs :

- | <b>Islands</b>       | <b>Sea/Ocean</b> |
|----------------------|------------------|
| 1. Assumption Island | —Pacific Ocean   |
| 2. Spratly Island    | —East China Sea  |
| 3. Marshall Islands  | —Atlantic Ocean  |

Which of the pairs given above is correct ?

- (A) Only 2 (B) Only 1 and 3  
(C) Only 3 (D) None

26. Arrange the following capital cities from north to south :

1. Vientiane
  2. Hanoi
  3. Bangkok
  4. Phnom Penh
- Select the correct answer using the code given below :
- (A) 2, 1, 4, 3 (B) 2, 1, 3, 4  
(C) 1, 2, 4, 3 (D) 1, 2, 3, 4

27. Consider the following statements regarding the heat budget :

1. Roughly 50 per cent of the heat received from the sun is reflected back into space even before reaching the earth's surface.
2. The amount of radiation absorbed by the earth is called the albedo of the earth.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?

- (A) Only 1  
(B) Only 2  
(C) Both 1 and 2  
(D) Neither 1 nor 2

28. Consider the following statements regarding the collegium system :

1. The Collegium of Judges has been mentioned in the Constitution.
2. Collegium recommends the transfer of Chief Justices and other judges.

Which of the statements given above is/are not correct ?

- (A) Only 1  
(B) Only 2  
(C) Both 1 and 2  
(D) Neither 1 nor 2

29. **Directions :** In the following question, the assertion (A) and reason (R) have been put forward. Read both statements carefully :

**Assertion (A) :** There is a pressure and temperature difference across the earth.

**Reason (R) :** The earth neither warms up nor does it get cooled over a period of time.

Select the correct answer using the code given below :

- (A) Both assertion and reason are correct, and reason is the correct explanation of assertion  
(B) Both assertion and reason are correct, but reason is not the correct explanation of assertion  
(C) The statement of assertion is true, but reason is false  
(D) The statement of the assertion is false, but the reason is true

30. Which of the following are cold ocean currents ?

1. Oyashio current
2. Alaska current
3. Agulhas current

Select the correct answer using the code given below :

- (A) Only 1  
(B) Only 2 and 3  
(C) Only 1 and 3  
(D) 1, 2 and 3

31. Assam shares its borders with which of the following states or countries ?

1. Sikkim
2. Myanmar
3. Tripura
4. Meghalaya
5. Bhutan

- Select the correct answer using the codes given below :
- (A) Only 1, 3, 4 and 5  
 (B) Only 3, 4 and 5  
 (C) Only 2, 3, 4 and 5  
 (D) Only 1, 4 and 5
32. Consider the following statements regarding Firoz Shah Tughlaq :
1. He was the first ruler of the Tughlaq dynasty.
  2. He established Sarais for the benefit of merchants and other travelers.
  3. He constructed canals for the purpose of irrigation.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?
- (A) Only 2  
 (B) Only 1 and 3  
 (C) Only 2 and 3  
 (D) Only 1, 2 and 3
33. Consider the following statements about the Harappan agriculture system :
1. The bull was known to the people of Harappan civilization.
  2. Evidence of plough fields has been found at Harappan sites.
  3. Harappan agriculture was dependent on monsoons, and no irrigation facility was required.
- Choose the correct answer from the following codes :
- (A) Only 1 and 2  
 (B) Only 2 and 3  
 (C) Only 1 and 3  
 (D) 1, 2 and 3
34. Consider the following about Jain philosophy :
1. The principle of Ahimsa is derived from the Jain philosophy.
  2. Jains did not believe in the cycle of birth and death based on karma.
- Choose the correct answer from the following codes :
- (A) Only 1  
 (B) Only 2  
 (C) Only 1 and 2  
 (D) Neither 1 nor 2
35. Which of the following parties were established by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar ?
1. The Peasants and Workers Party of India.
  2. All India Scheduled Castes Federation.
  3. The Independent Labour Party.
- Select the correct answer using the codes given below :
- (A) Only 1 and 2  
 (B) Only 2 and 3  
 (C) Only 1 and 3  
 (D) 1, 2 and 3
36. A rainbow is produced when sunlight falls on drops of rain. Which of the following physical phenomena are responsible for this ?
1. Dispersion
  2. Refraction
  3. Internal reflection
- Select the correct solution using the codes given below :
- (A) Only 1 and 2  
 (B) Only 2 and 3  
 (C) Only 1 and 3  
 (D) 1, 2 and 3
37. Which of the following diseases can be transmitted from one person to another through tattooing ?
1. Mumps
  2. Hepatitis B
  3. HIV-AIDS
- Select the correct answer using the codes given below :
- (A) Only 1  
 (B) Only 2 and 3  
 (C) Only 1 and 3  
 (D) 1, 2 and 3
38. The surface of a lake is frozen in severe winter, but the water at its bottom is still liquid. What is the reason ?
- (A) Ice is a bad conductor of heat  
 (B) Since the surface of the lake is at the same temperature as the air, no heat is lost  
 (C) The density of water is at its maximum at 4°C  
 (D) None
39. Consider the following statements regarding Gandhar art :
1. Gandhara School was based on Greco-Roman norms, encapsulating foreign techniques and an alien spirit. It is also known as the Graeco-Buddhist School of Art.
  2. In all, the Buddha depicted in the Gandhara Art is shown making three types of hand gestures, and this is a remarkable feature of this art.
  3. Its development took place indigenously.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?
- (A) Only 1  
 (B) Only 1 and 3  
 (C) Only 2 and 3  
 (D) 1, 2 and 3
40. Consider the following statements :
1. Bharatnatyam is considered the mother art of most of the other classical dances in India.
  2. 'Kathak' means the one who tells a story.
  3. Kuchipudi derives its name from the Kuchipudi village of Andhra Pradesh.
- Which of the above statement is/are correct ?
- (A) Only 1 and 2  
 (B) Only 2 and 3  
 (C) Only 3  
 (D) 1, 2 and 3
41. Consider the following statements—
1. Nitisara—Kamandaka
  2. Nitishatak—Bhartrihari
  3. Kathasaritsagar—Bhasa
  4. Natyashastra—Bharata
- Which of the pairs given above is/are correct ?
- (A) Only 1, 2 and 3  
 (B) Only 2 and 3  
 (C) Only 3  
 (D) Only 1, 2 and 4
42. The temples constructed at Khajuraho are :
1. Jain Temples
  2. Vaishnavite Temples
  3. Saivite Temples
- Choose the correct option from the codes given below :
- (A) Only 1 and 3  
 (B) Only 2 and 3  
 (C) 1, 2 and 3  
 (D) Only 1 and 2

43. Match List-I with List-II and select the correct answer by using the codes given below :

**List-I**

- (a) Bharatnatyam  
(b) Kathakali  
(c) Mohiniattam  
(d) Odissi

**List-II**

1. Tamil Nadu  
2. Kerala  
3. Andhra Pradesh  
4. Odisha

**Codes :**

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	1	2	3	4
(B)	1	2	4	3
(C)	3	2	4	1
(D)	3	4	2	1

44. Consider the following statements :

1. Flute and Saxophone are wind instruments.  
2. Dhol, Tabla, Mridanga are percussion instruments.  
3. Piano, Sitar and Vina are chordophone.  
4. Ghungru and Jaltarangs are percussion instruments.

Which of the above statements is/are correct ?

- (A) Only 1 and 2  
(B) Only 2 and 3  
(C) Only 3 and 4  
(D) 1, 2, 3 and 4

45. Consider the following statements :

1. Chausath Yogini Temple is located in Khajuraho.  
2. Sudama Cave is located in Orissa.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?

- (A) Only 1  
(B) Only 2  
(C) Only 1 and 2  
(D) None

46. Which of the following are the sole border crossing between the Gaza Strip and Egypt ?

- (A) Rafah crossing point  
(B) Allenby Terminal  
(C) Rabin Border Crossing  
(D) Kerem Shalom Crossing

47. Consider the following statements :

1. The right to marry is not expressly recognised as a

fundamental right under the Indian Constitution.

2. The same sex couple, weather married or unmarried in not allowed to adopt children in India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?

- (A) Only 1  
(B) Only 2  
(C) Both 1 and 2  
(D) Neither 1 nor 2

48. Consider the following statements with reference to the 'India - Middle East - Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) :

1. It passes through the Red Sea.  
2. It connects Greece with India through Arabian Peninsula.  
3. It comprises laying down of the optical fibre cable for digital connectivity.

How many of the above statements are correct ?

- (A) Only one  
(B) Only two  
(C) All three  
(D) None

49. Consider the following countries :

1. UK                      2. France  
3. China                 4. India

Strategic Partnership Council (SPC) has been established by the Saudi Arabia with how many of the above countries ?

- (A) Only one    (B) Only two  
(C) Only three   (D) All four

50. Consider the following statements :

**Statement I :** Pacific Decadal Oscillation (PDO) alters the path of the jet stream and delivers storms across the eastern Pacific coast in the southern hemisphere.

**Statement II :** Pacific Decadal Oscillation (PDO) is characterised by the change in location of the cold and warm water masses.

Which one of the following is correct in respect of the above statements ?

- (A) Both Statement-I and Statement-II are correct and State-

ment-II is the correct explanation for Statement-I

(B) Both Statement-I and Statement-II are correct and Statement-II is not the correct explanation for Statement-I

(C) Statement-I is correct, but Statement-II is incorrect

(D) Statement-I is incorrect, but Statement-II is correct

51. The 'State of economy report' is released by :

- (A) Reserve Bank of India  
(B) Ministry of Finance  
(C) NITI AAYOG  
(D) Ministry of Commerce and Industry

52. Regarding Election Commission of India, consider the following statements :

1. Originally the commission had only one election commissioner.  
2. They enjoy the same status and receive salary and perks as available to Judges of the Supreme Court of India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?

- (A) Only 1  
(B) Only 2  
(C) Both 1 and 2  
(D) Neither 1 nor 2

53. Consider the following languages :

1. Gujarati  
2. Kannada  
3. Telugu

Which of the above has/have been declared as 'classical language's or language' by the government ?

- (A) Only 1 and 2  
(B) Only 3  
(C) Only 2 and 3  
(D) 1, 2 and 3

54. Which phrase generally defines the nature of 'hundi' mentioned in the sources of the post-Harsha period ?

- (A) An advice issued by the king to his subordinates  
(B) A dairy has to be maintained for daily accounting.  
(C) Bill of exchange  
(D) Feudal's orders to his subordinates

55. Which is the Neolithic site of north-eastern India ?  
 (A) Chirand (B) Senuar  
 (C) Sarutaru (D) Taradih
56. Consider the following statements :
1. Tridents are also found along with objects in megalithic tombs.
  2. In these graves, farming tools were buried with the deceased.
  3. Black and red pottery were more prevalent in Peninsular India.
- Which of the above statements is/are correct ?  
 (A) Only 1 and 2  
 (B) Only 1  
 (C) Only 1 and 3  
 (D) 1, 2 and 3
57. Which of the following statements are correct regarding the judicial system during the Sultanate period ?
1. Chief Qazi was the head of the judicial department.
  2. Muslim personal law, or Sharia, was followed in civil matters.
  3. Hindus were governed by their own personal law and their affairs were settled by Gram Panchayats.
- Choose the correct option from the codes given below :  
 (A) Only 1 and 2  
 (B) Only 2 and 3  
 (C) Only 1 and 3  
 (D) 1, 2 and 3
58. Consider the following statements in the context of the Pandya kingdom :
1. It was located in the far south and south-eastern parts.
  2. Its capital was Mahabalipuram.
  3. It was called the country of pearls.
  4. The society here was matriarchal.
- Which of the above statements is/are correct ?  
 (A) Only 1 and 2  
 (B) Only 2 and 3  
 (C) Only 1, 3 and 4  
 (D) 1, 2, 3 and 4
59. With reference to the curative petition, consider the following statements :
1. The concept of 'remedial petitions' in Indian law takes inspiration from American judicial decisions.
  2. Curative petitions are generally adjudicated by judges in private chambers.
  3. The Supreme Court is not bound to consider every curative petition presented by the convicts.
  4. Filing a review petition in the Supreme Court is permitted only if the curative petition has been rejected.
- How many of the above statements are correct ?  
 (A) Only one  
 (B) Only two  
 (C) Only three  
 (D) All four
60. Which of the following statements is/are correct regarding the electoral college of the Vice-President ?
1. It includes both elected and nominated members of Parliament.
  2. It does not include members of state legislative assemblies.
- Choose the correct option from the codes given below :  
 (A) Only 1  
 (B) Only 2  
 (C) Both 1 and 2  
 (D) Neither 1 and 2
61. Which of the following is not correctly matched ?  
 (A) Coulomb—Electric charge  
 (B) Electron—Volt Energy  
 (C) Ohm—Electric resistance  
 (D) Electron—Volt Frequency
62. In which of the following four chambered heart is found ?  
 (A) Birds  
 (B) Mammals  
 (C) Amphibians  
 (D) Both (A) and (B)
63. Which of the following makes a correct pair ?  
 (A) J&K—Bharatnatyam  
 (B) Assam—Lavani  
 (C) Giddha—Punjab  
 (D) Tamil Nadu—Kathak
64. Which of the following is correctly matched ?  
 (A) The functions of Public Service Commissions : Article 317  
 (B) Dismissal of members of Public Service Commissions : Article 320  
 (C) Provision of Public Service Commission for Union and States : Article 315  
 (D) Appointment and tenure of members of UPPSC : Article 312
65. Which justice is mentioned in the Preamble of the Indian Constitution ?  
 1. Political Justice  
 2. Social Justice  
 3. Economic Justice
- Which of the above statements is/are correct ?  
 (A) Only 1  
 (B) Only 2  
 (C) Only 2 and 3  
 (D) 1, 2 and 3
66. Which of the following committees is/are not related to Panchayati Raj ?  
 1. Balwant Rai Mehta Committee.  
 2. Ashok Mehta Committee.  
 3. Lakdawala Committee.  
 4. L.M. Singhvi Committee.
- Choose the correct option from the codes given below :  
 (A) Only 1  
 (B) Only 3  
 (C) Only 2 and 3  
 (D) 1, 2, 3 and 4
67. Which of the following is/are a constitutional institution in India ?  
 1. NITI Ayog  
 2. National Commission for Backward Classes  
 3. National Human Rights Commission
- Choose the correct option from the codes given below :  
 (A) Only 1  
 (B) Only 2  
 (C) Only 2 and 3  
 (D) 1, 2 and 3
68. Which of the following tribal arts and their states is correctly matched ?  
 1. Madhubani Art : Bihar  
 2. Saura Painting : Odisha

3. Gond Painting : Madhya Pradesh  
4. Maheshwari Masjid Sarees : Madhya Pradesh  
Which of the above statements is/are correct ?  
(A) Only 1 and 2  
(B) Only 2 and 3  
(C) Only 1, 2 and 3  
(D) 1, 2, 3 and 4
69. Which of the following is not correctly matched ?  
1. Public Accounts Committee—22 members.  
2. Praakkalan Committee—30 Members.  
3. Committee on Public Undertakings—30 Members.  
Which of the above statements is/are correct ?  
(A) Only 1 (B) Only 2  
(C) Only 3 (D) Only 1 and 2
70. Consider the following statements regarding Tuberculosis (TB):  
1. Most TB infections do not show any symptoms initially.  
2. It is a viral disease.  
3. TB affects only the lungs.  
4. The main symptoms of active TB are dizziness, joint pain.  
How many of the above statements are correct ?  
(A) Only one (B) Only two  
(C) Only three (D) All four
71. Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve which is included in World network of Biosphere Reserve is spread over the states of:  
1. Kerala  
2. Karnataka  
3. Tamil Nadu  
Select the correct option from below :  
(A) Only 1  
(B) Only 2  
(C) Only 1 and 2  
(D) 1, 2 and 3
72. Consider the following statement/s with reference to vegetation of India :  
1. The temperate Montane forests in Nilgiri Hills are called Shola forest.  
2. Deodar is a deciduous variety which grows mainly in the western part of the Himalayan range.  
Select the correct option from below :  
(A) Only 1  
(B) Only 2  
(C) Both 1 and 2  
(D) Neither 1 nor 2
73. Consider the following statements :  
1. Temperature > 22°C  
2. Rainfall > 200 cm  
3. Rosewood and Mahogany can be found in these forests.  
Which among the following regions has the forest with above characteristics ?  
(A) Western Ghats  
(B) Andaman and Nicobar  
(C) North Eastern Hills  
(D) All the above
74. Which of the following river of India flows in Rift valley ?  
1. Tapi River  
2. Narmada River  
3. Damodar River  
4. Godavari River  
Select the correct answer using the codes given below :  
(A) Only 1 and 2  
(B) Only 2  
(C) Only 1, 2 and 3  
(D) 1, 2, 3 and 4
75. Match the following rivers and their place of origin :  
**Rivers**                      **Place of Origin**  
1. The Chambal —Malwa plateau  
2. Godavari —Trimbak Hills  
3. Krishna —Brahmagiri Hills  
Which of the above is/are incorrect ?  
(A) Only 1 (B) Only 1 and 3  
(C) Only 2 (D) 1, 2 and 3
76. Consider the following statement(s):  
1. Extra-Peninsular rivers generally have large basin areas.  
2. River capturing is a common phenomenon in the peninsular river system.  
3. Most of the Indian rivers have consequent drainage system with dendritic pattern.  
Which of the above statement(s) is/are correct ?  
(A) Only 1 and 3  
(B) Only 1 and 2  
(C) Only 2 and 3  
(D) 1, 2 and 3
77. Consider the following statement(s):  
1. Tapi river lies to the south of Satpura.  
2. The Narmada and the Tapi river valleys are old rift valleys.  
Which of the following statements is/are correct ?  
(A) Only 1  
(B) Only 2  
(C) Both 1 and 2  
(D) Neither 1 nor 2
78. Which among the following rivers flow westward ?  
1. Tapi  
2. Periyar  
3. Sabarmati  
Select the correct answer using the codes given below :  
(A) Only 1 and 2  
(B) Only 2 and 3  
(C) Only 1 and 3  
(D) 1, 2 and 3
79. Which among the following are the right bank tributaries of Yamuna ?  
1. Chambal  
2. Betwa  
3. Ken  
Select the correct answer using the codes given below :  
(A) Only 1 and 2  
(B) Only 2 and 3  
(C) Only 1 and 3  
(D) 1, 2 and 3
80. Consider the following statement :  
1. Ganga comes into existence only when Alaknanda confluences with Bhagirathi at Devprayag.  
2. Gomati and Ghaghara are the right bank tributaries of Ganga.  
Select the correct statements using the codes given below :  
(A) Only 1  
(B) Only 2  
(C) Both 1 and 2  
(D) Neither 1 nor 2

81. Consider the following statements :
1. He was the first non-Congress PM to serve a full term.
  2. In his term, India successfully conducted three nuclear weapon tests in Pokhran.
  3. In his term, the Delhi-Lahore Bus service was started.
- The above-mentioned statements refer to which Prime Minister of India ?
- (A) Morarji Desai
  - (B) Charan Singh
  - (C) Atal Bihari Vajpayee
  - (D) Inder Kumar Gujral
82. With reference to the citizenship in India, consider the following statements:
1. A person born outside India and who has at least one Indian parent will be granted citizenship.
  2. If in the opinion of the central government, the applicant has rendered distinguished service to the cause of science, philosophy, art, literature, world peace or human progress will be granted citizenship.
  3. India has a national policy on granting asylum or refugee status.
  4. Certificate of naturalisation can be granted to a person who is not an illegal immigrant and has resided in India continuously for 3 months before making an application.
- How many of the statements given above are correct ?
- (A) Only one
  - (B) Only two
  - (C) Only three
  - (D) None
83. With reference to the sessions of Parliament in 2023, consider the following statements :
1. In the Budget session, the government faced the no-confidence motion.
  2. The maximum share of time spent was in the functioning of the Budget session.
  3. In special session, two intruders jumped into the Lok Sabha and set off canisters emitting coloured gas.
- How many of the statements given above are correct ?
- (A) Only one
  - (B) Only two
  - (C) All three
  - (D) None
84. With reference to the amendment to the constitution, consider the following statements :
1. Provisions related to Fundamental Rights can be amended by a simple majority.
  2. In special majority, the amendment Bill is passed in both Houses of Parliament by a majority of not less than two thirds of the members present and voting.
  3. There is no amendment that requires ratification by the legislatures of the states.
- How many of the statements given above are correct ?
- (A) Only one
  - (B) Only two
  - (C) All three
  - (D) None
85. The government has constituted a committee to explore the possibility of 'one nation one election' headed by :
- (A) Sunil Arora
  - (B) Ram Nath Kovind
  - (C) Justice B.P. Jeevan Reddy
  - (D) Manmohan Singh
86. With reference to Indian Rhinos, consider the following statements :
1. The Indian rhino is listed as vulnerable in the IUCN Red List.
  2. Indian Rhinos are only found in north-eastern India.
  3. Rhino horn is used in traditional Chinese medicine to cure a range of ailments.
  4. The number of Indian Rhinos has decreased as of a decade ago.
- How many of the statements given above are correct ?
- (A) Only one
  - (B) Only two
  - (C) Only three
  - (D) All four
87. Which of the following countries have launched "Smart Lander for Investigating Moon" or SLIM ?
- (A) China
  - (B) United States
  - (C) Russia
  - (D) Japan
88. With reference to the cervical cancer, consider the following statements :
1. It is caused by the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV).
  2. It is the second most prevalent common cancer in India.
  3. Cervavac is the first indigenous vaccine against cervical cancer.
- How many of the statements given above are correct ?
- (A) Only one
  - (B) Only two
  - (C) All three
  - (D) None
89. Scarborough Shoal, Ayungin Shoal and Spratly Islands were recently in the news. These islands are situated in :
- (A) Labrador Sea
  - (B) Coral Sea
  - (C) South China Sea
  - (D) Mediterranean Sea
90. Consider the following statements :
1. The administration of this country rejected to renew contracts for more than 5,000 employees hired this year.
  2. It is situated in the southern part of the South America.
  3. Inflation is expected to reach about 200% by the end of the year in this country.
- The above-mentioned statements refer to which country ?
- (A) Argentina
  - (B) Peru
  - (C) Chili
  - (D) Bolivia
91. Consider the following pairs :
- | Volcano in News | Location    |
|-----------------|-------------|
| 1. Dukono New   | New Zealand |
| 2. Santa Maria  | —Brazil     |
| 3. Kilauea      | —Italy      |
- How many of the pairs given above are correctly matched ?
- (A) Only one
  - (B) Only two
  - (C) All three
  - (D) None
92. The Teesta water-sharing agreement has been signed between :
- (A) India-China
  - (B) India-Bangladesh
  - (C) India-Bhutan
  - (D) India-Myanmar

93. Which of the following statements is/are correct about the Panchsheel Agreement ?

1. This agreement was signed in Beijing on April 29, 1954.
2. This agreement was made regarding mutual relations and trade between China's region Tibet and India.
3. This agreement was done between India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and China's first Prime Minister Chou En Lai.

Select the correct answer using the code given below :

- (A) Only 1 and 2  
(B) Only 2 and 3  
(C) Only 1 and 3  
(D) 1, 2 and 3

94. Which of the following statements is not correct about the Sikandar Lodi ?

- (A) Sikandar Lodi introduced 'Gaz-e-Sikandari', a scale for land measurement  
(B) Sikandar Lodi was the last Sultan of the Delhi Sultanate  
(C) Sikandar Shah Lodi was a contemporary of Mahmud Begada and Rana Sanga of Gujarat  
(D) He banned Muslim women from visiting the graves of saints and sages

95. What could be the main reason / reasons for the formation of African and Eurasian desert belt ?

1. It is under the influence of warm ocean currents.
2. It is located in the subtropical high pressure cells.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct in this context ?

- (A) Only 1 and 2  
(B) Only 2  
(C) Only 1  
(D) None

96. Consider the following sentences :

1. The 19th Asian Games was held in Hangzhou, China from September 23 to October 8 in year 2023.
2. India won total 107 medals including 28 gold, 38 silver and 41 bronze in 19th Asian Games.

3. Japan remains first in Asian Games 2023 rankings with 201 golds.

Which of the above statements is/are correct ?

- (A) Only 1 and 2  
(B) Only 2 and 3  
(C) Only 1 and 3  
(D) 1, 2 and 3

97. Which of the following statement(s) is/are not correct about Global Hunger Index ?

1. It is published by Concern Worldwide and Welthungerhilfe every October.
2. India's ranking is 111 out of 125 countries in the Global Hunger Index 2023.
3. Pakistan's ranking 81 out of 125 countries in the Global Hunger Index 2023.

Select the correct answer using the code given below :

- (A) Only 1 (B) Only 2  
(C) Only 3 (D) None

98. With reference to the Sultanate period, which of the following is not correctly matched ?

- (A) Ariz e-Mumalik  
—Head of military department  
(B) Diwan-e-Khairat  
—Charity Department  
(C) Diwan E kahi  
—Agriculture Department  
(D) Darul Shafa  
—Religious department

99. Which of the following writ(s) is/are given in Article 32 of the Constitution ?

1. Habeas Corpus
2. Mandamus
3. Prohibition
4. Quo Warranto

Select the correct answer using the code given below :

- (A) Only 1 and 2  
(B) Only 2 and 3  
(C) Only 3 and 4  
(D) All 1, 2, 3 and 4

100. Consider the following statements regarding Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) :

1. It is a statutory body established under the Securities and Exchange Board of India Act, 1992.
2. It promotes fair business practices and works towards

restricting fraudulent activities related to securities trading.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?

- (A) Only 1  
(B) Only 2  
(C) Both 1 and 2  
(D) Neither 1 nor 2

### Answers with Hints

1. (B) A cryptocurrency is a digital or virtual currency that uses cryptography for security. It is a decentralized currency, meaning it is not controlled by any government or institution. Hence, statement 1 is not correct. By using cryptocurrency, it is easy to transfer money without the involvement of banks or other financial institutions and the transactions with cryptocurrency are recorded on a public digital ledger called the blockchain. Hence, statement 2 is correct.

2. (C) The ASEAN was established on August 8, 1967, in Bangkok, Thailand, with the signing of the ASEAN Declaration (Bangkok Declaration). The 10 member states of ASEAN are : Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. Papua New Guinea is not a member state of ASEAN.

3. (B) Avian influenza, also known as bird flu, is a highly contagious viral disease that affects domestic and wild birds caused by infection with avian influenza A viruses. Bird flu viruses do not normally infect humans. But the direct contact with infected birds could lead to infection in humans, ranging from mild flu-like symptoms to eye inflammation. Thus, statement 1 is not correct.

India's approach to controlling highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) follows a "detect and cull" policy as outlined in the National Action Plan for Prevention, Control, and Containment of Avian Influenza.

4. (D) The Amazon rainforest is a wet broadleaf forest that takes

- up the majority of South America's Amazon basin and spreads across nine countries, namely Brazil, Ecuador, Venezuela, Suriname, Peru, Colombia, Bolivia, Guyana, and French Guiana. All countries given in the question shares 'Amazon Rain Forests'.
5. (C) India's CBDC, *i.e.*, the e-rupee, is issued by the RBI in digital form equivalent of a banknote and can be transferred electronically from one holder to another. It is the same as the fiat currency. It is a fungible legal tender, for which holders need not have a bank account. CBDC will appear as 'liability' (currency in circulation) on the RBI's balance sheet. Thus, statement 1 and 2 are correct.
  6. (B) Indian copyright law protects 'original work'—a creative and independently created expression fixed in a tangible medium. The law grants the creator or author of the work the exclusive right to "use, reproduce, distribute, perform and display their work. "Thus, statement 1 is correct. The law also protects transformative work, which is a creative or artistic work that takes existing material (text, music, or art) and significantly modifies, reinterprets, or builds upon it to create something new and distinct. Thus, statement 2 is correct. Copyright law does not apply to public-domain creative works like religious scriptures. Thus, statement 3 is not correct.
  7. (C) The Automated Permanent Academic Account Registry (APAAR)—under the new 'One Nation, One Student' scheme—was recently launched by the government. The government plans to implement a unique identification number for students in private and government schools, known as the Automated Permanent Academic Account Registry (APAAR) ID and it is part of the NEP 2020. Thus, statement 1 and 2 are correct. The APAAR ID, unique to each student, will track the educational progress, achievements and other particulars of specific students. Thus, statement 3 is correct. It will be linked to the student's Aadhaar ID but will not replace it. Thus, statement 4 is not correct.
  8. (C) A Supreme Court bench with strength of at least five judges is called the Constitution Bench. Thus, statement 1 is not correct. It is constituted whenever a matter of law arises that requires a provision of the Constitution to be interpreted, or there is a "significant legal question" and it is not binding on the CJI to be a part of a Constitution Bench. Thus, statement 2 is not correct. It is formed when the President of India has sought the Supreme Court's opinion on a question of fact or law under Article 143 of the Constitution. Thus, statement 3 is not correct. It is formed when two or three-judge benches of the Supreme Court have delivered conflicting judgments on the same point of law. Thus, statement 4 is correct.
  9. (A) Extra-tropical cyclones are also called wave cyclones, mid-latitude cyclones, or temperate cyclones. They can originate on land or at sea. Thus, statement 1 is correct.  
The extra-tropical cyclone affects a much larger area as compared to the tropical cyclone and it move from west to east, but tropical cyclones move from east to west. Thus, statement 2 is not correct.
  10. (B) Kati Bihu is an Assamese festival that marks the relocation of rice saplings and is known as Kongali Bihu. Thus, statement 1 is correct. Kharchi Puja also called the 'Festival of 14 Gods' is observed on the eighth day of the new moon in July or August every year. It is celebrated in the North-eastern state of Tripura. Thus statement 2 is not correct. Yugadi is also known as Ugadi is a Hindu festival that marks the New Year's Day for the States of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Karnataka in India. Thus, statement 3 is correct.
  11. (B) Capital expenditure is the money a corporate entity spends to buy, maintain, or improve its fixed assets, such as buildings, vehicles, equipment, or land. It includes money spent on acquiring fixed and intangible assets, upgrading and repairing an existing asset and repayment of the loan. Thus, statement 1, 2 and 4 are correct. Revenue expenditure implies administrative expenses such as rent, utilities, property taxes, and business travel incurred to meet the operational costs of running a business. Salaries of employees, interest payments on past debt, subsidies, pensions, etc. fall under the category of revenue expenditure. Thus, statement 3 and 5 is not correct.
  12. (D) The River Teesta originates from a glacial lake, Khangchung Chho, at an elevation of 5,280 m in northeastern Sikkim and it flows through Sikkim and West Bengal before entering Bangladesh, where it flows into the Brahmaputra. The Rangeet River is a tributary of the River Teesta, the largest river in Sikkim. Thus, statement 1 and 3 are only correct.
  13. (A) The terms 'jus in bello, jus ad bellum', often seen in news, are in the context of warfare due to the ongoing Hamas-Israel conflict. International humanitarian law, or jus in bello, provides the rules to be followed during an armed conflict. Just ad bellum : Under what conditions or when can countries use force in their international relations during war- It is regulated by the United Nations (UN) Charter.
  14. (C) Haiti is located in the north-central Caribbean, occupying the western third of the island of Hispaniola in the Greater Antilles archipelago and it is positioned in the northern and western hemispheres of the Earth. The country is bordered to the east by the Dominican Republic; to the west and south by the Caribbean Sea; and to the north by the Atlantic Ocean. Thus, both statements are correct.
  15. (B) Psyche Mission is launched by NASA from Kennedy Space Center in Florida. Thus, statement 2 is not correct. It has two main scientific objectives. To understand a previously un-



- explored building block of planet formation: iron cores and to look inside the terrestrial planets, including Earth, by directly examining the interior of a differentiated body, which otherwise could not be seen. As the composition of Psyche is very similar to Earth's own core, its study will also give an insight into Earth's violent history of collisions. Thus, statement 1 is correct.
16. (B) Article 330 deals with the reservation of seats for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes in the House of the People. Article 249 empowers the parliament to legislate with respect to a matter on the State List in the national interest. Article 324 deals with the superintendence, direction, and control of elections to be vested in an Election Commission.
17. (B)
18. (C) Bodi Hill is located in Tamil Nadu and Lushai Hill is located in Mizoram.
19. (D)
20. (C) Being a Sovereign state, India can acquire foreign territories as per modes recognized by international law, *i.e.*, cession (following treaty, purchase, gift, lease, or plebiscite), occupation (hitherto unoccupied by a recognized ruler), conquest, or subjugation. Thus, statement 1 is correct. As per Supreme Court, the power of Parliament to diminish the area of State (under Article 3) does not cover the cession of Indian Territory to a foreign country. Hence, Indian Territory can be ceded to a foreign state only by amending the Constitution under Article 368. Thus, statement 2 is correct.
21. (A) The creation of Andhra intensified the demand for the creation of states on a linguistic basis and forced GOI to appoint States Reorganization Commission under the chairmanship of Fazl Ali. S.K. Dhar was the chairman of Linguistic Provinces Commission set up by the Rajendra Prasad, the President of the Constituent Assembly on 17th June 1948 to recommend whether the states should be reorganised on linguistic basis or not. Thus, statement 2 is not correct.
22. (B) T-bills are short-term securities issued on behalf of the government by the RBI and are used to manage the short-term liquidity needs of the government. Thus statement 1 is not correct.
23. (B) 24. (B) 25. (D) 26. (B) 27. (D)
28. (A) The Collegium of Judges does not figure in the Constitution. It is the Supreme Court's invention. Thus, statement 1 is not correct. The Constitution says judges of the Supreme Court and High Courts are appointed by the President and speaks of a process of consultation. Therefore, collegium is a system under which judges are appointed by an institution comprising judges. Collegium also recommends the transfer of Chief Justices and other judges. Thus, statement 2 is correct.
29. (B) The earth receives almost all of its energy from the sun. But due to the uneven heating of the earth's surface there is a pressure and temperature difference across the earth and the earth in turn radiates back to space the energy received from the sun. As a result, the earth neither warms up nor does it get cooled over a period of time. Thus, both assertion and reason are correct, but reason is not the correct explanation of assertion.
30. (A) 31. (B)
32. (B) Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlaq or Ghazi Malik was the founder of the Tughluq dynasty. Sultan Firuz Shah Tughlaq, succeeded his Uncle Muhammad bin Tughlaq, reigned over the Sultanate of Delhi from 1351 to 1388. Thus, statement 1 is not correct. He was a great builder of cities, monuments, and public buildings. He worked majorly for the development of infrastructure in his kingdom. He established Sarais (Rest House) for the benefit of merchants and other travellers. He also constructed various canals for the purpose of irrigation from Yamuna to the city of Hissar, Sutej to the Ghaggar and Ghaggar to Ferozabad etc. Thus, statement 1 and 2 are correct.
33. (A) 34. (A) 35. (B) 36. (A)
37. (B) Mumps is a contagious disease caused by the mumps virus. It spreads through the air when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Thus, statement 1 is not correct. Tattooing involves piercing the skin with a needle and injecting coloured ink in different designs. If the needle or the surroundings is infected, then the chances of transmission of the hepatitis B and HIV-AIDS go up manifold. Thus, statement 2 and 3 are correct.
38. (C) It's because water has got anomalous expansion. It starts expanding at 4°C. So when water freezes, it starts floating and comes up to the surface, and hence liquid cold water remains below the layer of the ice surface. Frozen water, or ice, is lighter than liquid water.
39. (A) In all, the Buddha depicted in the Gandhara Art is shown making four types of hand gestures, and this is a remarkable feature of this art. Abhaya-mudra (Don't fear), Dhyana-mudra (meditation), Dharmachakramudra (a preaching in mudra) and Bhumisparshamudra (touching the earth). It was based on Greco-Roman norms, encapsulating foreign techniques and an alien spirit. Thus, statement 2 and 3 are incorrect.
40. (D)
41. (D) Kathasaritsagara ("Ocean of Rivers of Stories"), a series of tales assembled and recounted in narrative verse in the 11th century by the Sanskrit writer Somadeva. Thus statement 3 is not correct.
42. (C) Khajuraho, as we know, is the ancient capital of the Chandela Dynasty. The largest temples built by them are Kandariya Mahadev in Saivite, Ramachandra in Vaishnavite and Jinanatha in Jain.
43. (A) Andhra Pradesh-Kuchipudi, Ottam, Thedal, Mohiniattam, Kolattam  
Kerala - Kathakali, Kaikottikali

- Tamil Nadu – Bharatnatyam, Kolattam, Oyilattametc.  
Odisha – Odissi, Ghumara, Sambalpuri
44. (D)
45. (A) Sudama Caves are located at Jahanabad District in Bihar State. Thus, statement 2 is not correct.
46. (A) The Rafah Border Crossing or Rafah Crossing Point is the sole crossing point between Egypt and the Gaza Strip. It is located on the Gaza–Egypt border, which was recognized by the 1979 Egypt–Israel peace treaty.
47. (C) 48. (B)
49. (D) The India-Saudi Arabia Strategic Partnership Council was set up in 2019, making India the fourth country with which Riyadh formed such a partnership, after the UK, France, and China.
50. (D) Pacific Decadal Oscillation (PDO) is characterised by the change in location of the cold and warm water masses and this alters the path of the jet stream and delivers storms across the northern hemisphere across the United States.
51. (A) 52. (C) 53. (C)
54. (C) Hundi can be defined as a financial instrument or negotiable bill of exchange that was used to carry out trade and credit transactions during the medieval period in India.
55. (C) Sarutaru is a Neolithic site located in the Kamrup region of Assam. Among the options given above, Taradih, Chirand and Senuar are ancient sites located in Bihar.
56. (C) Along with the objects, tridents were also kept in megalithic tombs, which later became associated with Shiva. Hence, statement 1 is correct. In the megalithic tombs and in the tombs of peninsular India, farming tools were buried in less quantity; in these, there were more tools of war and hunting. This indicates that people did not practice advanced farming during the megalithic period. Hence, statement 2 is not correct. Many types of pottery were used in Peninsular India, which also includes red pottery. But black and red pottery was more popular among them. Hence, statement 3 is correct.
57. (D) During the Sultanate period, the Chief Qazi was the head of the judicial department. In civil matters, Muslim personal law, or Sharia, was followed, while Hindus were governed by their own personal law, and their cases were settled by village panchayats.
58. (C) The Pandya kingdom was located in the far south and a south-eastern part of the Indian peninsula. Its capital was Madura. Pandyas were first mentioned by Megasthenes, who called it the country of pearls. According to Megasthenes, the rule of the Pandya kingdom was in the hands of women, which shows that there was some matriarchal influence in the Pandya society.
59. (B) Article 137 of the Indian Constitution supports the concept of curative petitions. The origin of curative petitions in India can be attributed to the landmark 2002 Supreme Court case Rupa Ashok Hurra vs. Rupa Ashok Hurra. Ashok Hurra and others this innovation serves to prevent abuse of legal processes and correct serious miscarriages of justice. Hence, statement 1 is not correct. Curative petitions are generally decided by judges in their chambers, unless a specific request is made for a hearing in open court. Hence, statement 2 is correct. In India, a curative petition is a legal remedy available in specific circumstances, usually after a final judgement of the Supreme Court. It allows the party adversely affected by the decision to challenge it on grounds such as violation of natural justice, lack of fair hearing, fraud, or conflict with legal and equitable principles. Hence, statement 3 is correct. A curative petition may be filed after a review plea against the final conviction is dismissed. Hence, statement 4 is not correct.
60. (C) The electoral college for the election of the Vice President consists of : (1) both elected and nominated members of Parliament; and (2) does not include members of the State Legislative Assemblies.
61. (D) Electron Volt is unit a unit of Energy. Hertz is the unit of Frequency.
62. (D) Amphibians and reptiles have three-chambered hearts while fishes have two chamber heart. Birds and mammals have four-chambered hearts.
63. (C) Kathak dance—UP. Lavani—Maharashtra. Bharatnatyam—Tamil Nadu.
64. (C) Appointment and tenure of members of UPPSC : Article 316 Dismissal of members of Public Service Commissions : Article 317 The functions of Public Service Commissions : Article 320.
65. (D)
66. (B) Lakdawala committee is related to estimating Poverty Line in India. Lakdawala Committee was formed in 1993.
67. (B) NITI Ayog & National human rights commission is a non-constitutional body. It established in 1993. NITI Ayog formed in 2015. National Commission for Backward Classes is an Indian constitutional body under the jurisdiction of Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. It established in 1993.
68. (D)
69. (D) The Committee on Public Undertakings consists of not more than 22 Members, 15 elected by the Lok Sabha and 7 by the Rajya Sabha.
70. (A) TB is a bacterial infectious usually caused by Mycobacterium tuberculosis. Thus, statement 2 is not correct. Persons with latent TB infection do not feel sick and do not have any symptoms initially. Thus, statement 1 is correct. TB mainly affects the lungs but it can also affect other parts of the body. Thus, statement 3 is not correct. The main symptom of active TB is pain in the chest and coughing up blood or sputum etc. Thus, statement 4 is not correct.
71. (D)
72. (A) Deodar is an evergreen coniferous variety grows mainly in Western Himalaya.

73. (D) The Tropical evergreen forests are characterized with an annual precipitation of over 200cm and mean annual temperature above 22°C. These forests are well stratified. They have no definite time for shedding of leaves, flowering and fruition. Species found in these forests include rosewood, mahogany, aini, ebony etc. These forests are found in the western slope of the Western Ghats, hills of the North Eastern region and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
74. (C) 'Narmada River' lies between 'Satpura and Vindhya' range in Maharashtra, 'Tapti River' between 'Satpura & Anantha' hills Mahi River in another ranges and 'Damodar River' in 'Chota Nagpur' plateau.
75. (B) Chambal River originates from the Singar Chouri peak on the northern slopes of the Vindhyan range. The Godavari originates in Brahmagiri Mountain. The Krishna river's source is at Mahabaleswar near the Jor village in the extreme north of Wai Taluka, Satara District, Maharashtra.
76. (A) Stream capture, river capture, or stream piracy is a geomorphologic phenomenon occurring when a stream or river drainage system or watershed is diverted from its own bed, and flows instead down the bed of a neighboring stream. River capturing is a common phenomenon among the Himalayan Rivers.
77. (C)
78. (D) The two major west flowing rivers are the Narmada and the Tapi. The Sabarmati, Mahi and Luni are other rivers of the Peninsular India which flow westwards.
79. (D) 80. (A)
81. (C) Atal Bihari Vajpayee, three-time Prime Minister of India and a founding member of the Bharatiya Janata Party, was born on December 25, 1924. He was the first non-Congress PM to serve a full term. In May 1998, during Vajpayee's second term in office, India successfully conducted three nuclear weapon tests in Pokhran. These tests, codenamed Operation Shakti (literally, 'strength'), would cement India's capability to deploy nuclear weapons. The bus service launch was a key element in the efforts of the Indian and Pakistani governments to improve frosty and tense relations with Pakistan, especially in the aftermath of the 1998 Pokhran nuclear tests and the immediate Pakistani response of the Chaghai Hills tests.
82. (B) 83. (D) 84. (A) 85. (B)
86. (B) The Indian rhino is listed as vulnerable (better than endangered, worse than near threatened) in the IUCN Red List. Thus, statement 1 is correct. The Indian rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros unicornis*) is found only in the Brahmaputra valley, parts of North Bengal, and parts of southern Nepal. Thus, statement 2 is not correct. It has a single black horn. For centuries, rhino horn has been used in traditional Chinese medicine to treat a wide variety of illnesses ranging from reducing fevers to stopping nosebleeds and preventing strokes. Thus, statement 3 is correct. According to the State of the Rhino 2023, the expected number of greater one-horned rhinos is 4014, and the trend is upward. Hence, statement 4 is not correct.
87. (D)
88. (C) Cervical cancer is a type of cancer that affects the cells of the cervix. It is caused by the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV). Thus, statement 1 is correct. Cervical cancer is the second most prevalent common cancer in India. The country accounts for nearly one-fifth of the global burden of cervical cancer. Thus, statement 2 is correct. Cervavac—the first indigenous vaccine against cervical cancer—developed and manufactured by city-based Serum Institute of India (SII).
89. (C) 90. (A)
91. (D) **Volcano in News Location**
- Dukono —Indonesia
  - Santa Maria —Guatemala
  - Kilauea —United States
92. (B) The Teesta water-sharing agreement has been in the works since Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's Awami League government took office in 2009 and the two neighbours were set to sign an agreement during then-Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to Bangladesh in 2011.
93. (D) In April 1954, India accepted Tibet as a part of China and made an agreement with China, name 'Panchsheel'. The main points of this agreement are :
1. Not interfering in the internal affairs of another country.
  2. Not attacking each other's country.
  3. To follow the policy of peaceful coexistence.
  4. To promote mutual cooperation and benefits.
  5. All countries to respect the territorial integrity and sovereignty of other countries.
94. (B) Ibrahim Lodi was the last Sultan of the Delhi Sultanate. He ruled from 1517-1526. And he died after being defeated by Babur in the First Battle of Panipat in 1526.
95. (B) African and Eurasian desert belt is located in the subtropical high pressure cells. It is under the effect of cold currents, which leads to higher aridity.
96. (A) China led the Asian Games 2023 medal tally with 201 gold, ahead of Japan (52) and South Korea (42). Only four countries have won more than 100 medals in Hangzhou.
97. (C) In the Global Hunger Index 2023, Bangladesh and Pakistan ranked 81 and 102 respectively among 125 countries.
98. (D) China led the Asian Games 2023 medal tally with 201 gold, ahead of Japan (52) and South Korea (42). Only four countries have won more than 100 medals in Hangzhou.
99. (D) The Supreme Court under Article 32 and the High Court under Article 226 can issue 5 types of writs to enforce the fundamental rights of a person. In this, Habeas Corpus, Mandamus, Certiorari, Prohibition, Quo Warranto can be issued.
100. (C)



## Health and Intellect are the Two Blessings of Life

—Digvijay Kumar

Human life, or the life of any living being, is a mix of many things getting executed in a perfect order to carry on the life. Each of the things present in the life of a living being has got a purpose and so the purpose and the way it is used by the living being decides whether that thing is a blessing or a load in life. Among all the things present in life, health and intellect are the best blessings given by god to the humans or any thing being. Without health and intellect, life will serve no purpose and will be meaningless and existence itself will not there without these. Health decides the amount of time we will spend in life as living being and intellect decides the way we will spend this life. Without good health, there will exist no happiness, wealth, purpose to live, and so no interest in living the life. Without a good health, no one will be able to enjoy the wealth in life. And then, where does this wealth come from ? Or, all the pleasures and comforts in life, where do they come from or how do they come ? It all comes from the mind of human being. Only when the living being is able to think then the thoughts come and then as they grow strong, the urge to bring them into reality comes in the mind of human being. And to bring thoughts into reality comes only by efforts. The efforts are again guided and planned by the intelligence and brain of human being. Because of these efforts we get new things, pleasures, discoveries and make our life enjoyable. Thus, the intellect of human life is an important thing behind all this and along with health, it is one of the blessings in life.



Digvijay Kumar

If we look into our history, back ago when humans used to live in caves, did hunting of animals for food and when fire was not discovered. But even in those times, humans

learned to live in caves, thereafter gradually they started making some sort of arrangements from leaves and animal skin to hide their body and may be find comfort from the weather conditions. Living in colonies, they knew to kill animals, but also knew to save themselves. Thus, life and health have always been the first priority of every living being because of its importance. Then the intellect of human being helped him advance at a rapid pace. It is because of intellect of human being that after discovering fire, they learned to use it, discover many new uses of it, and then make weapons to hunt. The various great civilizations like the Indus Valley Civilization, Rome, Greece, Mesopotamia, these are all like wonders. But all these wonders are the work of human intellect. Thus, with the intellect, human has been able to achieve great things and keep progressing ahead in life, which for earlier ancient humans may have been nothing less than a magic. Therefore, intellect is nothing less than a blessing by god to living beings, especially humans, to create and explore many great things and achieve whatever he wants.

In today's world, those who are able to protect themselves from diseases, those who prefer fitness and exercise and keep their body and health in perfect order, they are able to live long and live happily. They are able to do anything, anytime they want, they don't feel any restrictions, can eat anything, can go anywhere and thus a sense of freedom in life is there. That's nothing less than a blessing. They indeed are blessed who live happily free from the pain of unhealthy lifestyle, otherwise there are so many people who are unfortunately not having a healthy life and every moment there is a worry of health in their life and seeing them, we realize how through the life is for those without a good health. Thus, health is a great blessing and to keep it maintained as a blessing is our responsibility, otherwise it never

takes long enough to lose this blessing and fall in the trap of unhealthy lifestyle. So, health and intellect together are very important in life and that's why people are always told to maintain a healthy life and education is always preferred to sharpen the intellect of brain.

There are many emotions filled in the heart and brain of human being. These emotions would be of no use if they are not used at the right time. Using his intellect, a person is able to express his emotions and feel it. It is the intellect of human being which uses emotions to make him feel attracted to things and other people. Thus, intellect is a very important thing in the life of humans. Without intellect, a person will not be able to feel the emotion of love and attachment and will may be not able to be attracted to other person, form a bond and understand the emotions of his partner. Humans without a good health will not be able to reproduce further. The population will then come into danger and survival of life and living beings will come to an end. Thus, health and intellect together in this way is a blessing that keeps the population of living being protected from extinction.

Anything that lessens physical strength enfeebles the mind and makes it less capable of discriminating between right and wrong and so lessens the intellect as well. We become less capable of choosing the good and have less strength of will to do that which we know to be right. By allowing ourselves to form wrong habits by not using the intelligence of brain, by keeping late hours, by gratifying appetite at the expense of health, we by the foundation for feebleness. By neglecting physical exercise, by overworking mind or body, we unbalance the nervous system. Thus, even then if we would want to do something good, we would not be able to do so because the body and brain will not support us. A healthy individual is more

likely to fulfil all of his goals, because he can easily focus on them and has the energy to complete them. This is why the proverb 'Health is Wealth' carries so much weight. A healthy lifestyle will push us to do better in life and motivates us to achieve higher targets.

Intelligence distinguishes man from the rest of the creations in this universe. If someone does not use his intelligence then he is said to be an animal. Intelligence gives human beings the ability to have ideas and invent new things. Technological advancements could not be possible without human intelligence. Advances in science in medicine solve many of the world's problems. Through medical discovery, a great deal of suffering is reduced. When human first time stepped on the moon, it remains one of the greatest achievements of human beings. No less than a wonder, no less than a magic. But if we see how it became possible, it was possible because of the intelligence of human being who put all his knowledge and imagination together into reality and made spacecraft, rockets, the space suits and all the things required and then being an astronaut requires best health and fitness. Thus, health and intellect are again one of the reasons behind achieving this greatest wonder. Health and intellect are the blessings which turn every imagination into reality in the life.

When a person is healthy, he is able to help others, earn wealth and enjoy the life. The life we are living today is a dream for those who are living a very miserable life, those who can't afford food or if they fall ill, they are left to the mercy of fate. Many even die unfortunately early in life and don't even live life to older stage. Thus, we should be always grateful for the body, health and intellect that we have and the life we live, because it's a blessing that we are having, but many don't have on this earth. Thus, if we don't put efforts as much possible to stay healthy and fit, it acts like a disrespect to the blessing of god given to us, which in no case is a good thing. And then another blessing is intellect. Intellect earns a person a great reputation, in the society. A doctor's intellect in

taking correct decisions helps him save the life of his patient and so earns him the reputation of life saver or angel of god. A soldier with his intellect forms many types of plans, war skills and fights the enemies of our nation and so earns a great respect. An engineer with his intellect develops great infrastructures, a policeman with his intellect ensures safety in the society and there are many other examples. Using the intellect for the benefit of society and nation not only develops our society, but also earns us a prideful and respectful life not everyone gets to live. Thus, a life of pride is a blessed life and behind this blessing intellect plays a great role, in fact, it is itself a blessing.

In short, healthy life and intellect are the highest blessings that must not be taken for granted. These are truly the source of all happiness. All the riches in the world will do us no good if there is an absence of a healthy lifestyle and intellect as these can never be bought with money. We are solely responsible for our health and using our brain, so for our well-being and happiness, it is better to switch to a healthy lifestyle and use the intellect that we have and with time we keep improving it to utilize the best out of our life and enjoy all the happiness and opportunities.

Florian

## Test Your Knowledge

### Answers with Hints

- (A) Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Egypt, Eritrea, Yemen and Djibouti share their borders with Red Sea which connects the Indian ocean to the Mediterranean sea via the narrow Suez Canal.
- (A) 3. (D)
- (B) Funds for MPLADs are transferred to respected local authorities.
- (A) Following the first General Election, held between 25 October 1951 and 21 February, 1952. First Lok Sabha was formed on 17 April, 1952.
- (B) The Chairman of the Cabinet Committee on Parliamentary Affairs is designated by the Prime Minister.
- (D)
- (C) The Monsoon Cup is an international yachting race held every year in the state of Terengganu, Malaysia. The race is held during monsoon season, making it a challenging race for sailors.
- (B)
- (C) At VVPAT unit printed slip is visible for seven seconds. Voter verifies his choice with it, before the slip falls into a box.
- (B) The SCLSC consists of sitting judge of the Supreme Court (Chairman), along with other members possessing the experience and qualifications prescribed by the central government. The Chairman and other members of SCLSC are nominated by the Chief Justice of India.
- (C) Under the tradition of matrilineal descent and property is traced through the mother's line.
- (B) Term of office of Rajya Sabha member is 6 years.
- (D) 15. (D)
- (C) Seventh Schedule contains the Union List, State List and the Concurrent List. While the validation of Certain Acts and Regulations are part of Ninth Schedule.
- (A) 18. (A)
- (B) Height of Mt. Everest is 8848 m (but it is in Nepal), followed by Mt. K<sub>2</sub> (8611 m), Kanchenjunga (8597 m) and Dhaulagiri (8172 m).
- (D) 21. (A)
- (C) Ohio river drains into the Gulf of Mexico.
- (D)
- (B) The ratio of stress to strain is always constant. If stress is increased, strain will also increase so that their ratio remains constant.
- (B) 26. (C) 27. (A) 28. (B) 29. (C)
- (C) 31. (D) 32. (A) 33. (D) 34. (B)
- (D) 36. (C) 37. (D)
- (A) The JN 1 variant is a descendant of BA 2-86 that has acquired the ability to transmit efficiently through an additional one or two mutations. It has the immune evasion of its parent but has now mutated to transmit more efficiently.
- (C) 40. (D)

Florian

**In Favour**

—Digvijay Kumar

Today's world is very fast moving and developing. Things are happening at a very rapid pace, and even if happening at a normal pace, then they are presented in such a way that it appears quite fast and easy. So it is the case with success. People now-a-days expect quick success at any cost, and expect the same from others, even from children. This has led to very high competition, and in children's creative minds as well. Especially in India, the education system has become so competitive and giving total attention to marks, children out of so high expectations, do join coaching institutions to fulfill expectations their family, school, friends demand from them. And this happens especially in youth stage. But this actually kills creativity of mind and the inner talent. Rote learning is promoted, but curiosity is suppressed. Pressure at coaching, schools, home, the youth is forced to learn 'what to think' and 'how to think'. The fear of failure among so many competitors makes the child feel that there is no place for creativity and inner talent because nobody is supporting it. What if his creativity, curious mind, curious ideas do no work? What if his inner talent will not earn him a job or a good career? He will end up with the tag of so-called 'loser' which the society does not like. Such an overthinking kills the inner talent and creativity of youths.

The population of India is growing very fast, but the opportunities are not growing at that pace. More or less, the seats for admission in top colleges for higher education are limited and almost same every year, but number of youth aspiring and applying for it is growing every year.



Digvijay Kumar

This increased competition is being taken as advantage by the coaching institutions. The coaching institutions do such a marketing that 'this particular coaching institution has given so many top rankers', 'so many students study at this institution', if you don't take coaching, you won't be able to survive this competition' and many more techniques. This all increases the fear in mind of parents and youth and they end up getting convinced that coaching is must, and no importance is given to creativity and inner talent of the person. Then coaching institutions, for purpose of making profit, take up so many students/youth in their class and in the rush of completing syllabus on time, there is not much time to focus on every single student individually and nourish his creativity and inner talent. The youth in this crowd has no choice, but to keep moving ahead with the institution. This way his creativity and the inner talent gets killed.

Consider the case of India. Every year millions of students are asked to follow the practice of attending tuitions, but to find a better future, youth has to face a bitter present. According to National Sample Survey Organisation, around 7-1 crore Indian students attend some form of private coaching and 10 to 11 per cent of a family's budget is eaten up by such tuitions. The private coaching industry is bigger than \$ 40 billion, which is about the state GDP of Odisha, as per an investigative journal on internet. According to a research, coaching in a Kota centre could well begin when the child is 13 years old. The child thus, would not attend a regular school with playgrounds, or read poems in a class, or be around caring teachers who aim at his/her holistic development. He/She will only focus on attending classes for a particular competitive exam of future. So the child, when he will grow into a youth, his creativity and inner talent would have got greatly diminished. So

coaching institutions are a well paved way for killing creativity and inner talent in a youth before it blooms.

Parents want a good future for their children (Whether small child, adolescent or a youth), and want to give them the best education. In schools, colleges, because of many students in a class, the race between time and syllabus, and the aim to bring good marks, many times it happens a student gets left behind or not able to understand properly what is taught at school/college. So to fill this gap and cover up this loss, tuitions/coaching are necessary and it is good also. But today the prices of such coachings are very high. Parents spend huge amount of money on their child's education, and many of these parents are those who cannot afford the amount yet take loans for this. This puts tremendous pressure on youth as students to study very hard or else the money invested on them would be wasted. The unsuccessful students feel dejected and guilt-ridden at a huge emotional and psychological cost. They lose that motivation to search their inner talent and creativity. It suppresses their creativity, the competition at coaching institutions gives to fear that the inner talent will not earn them the success the world expects out of them. This way the coaching institutions are killing inner talent and creativity of youths.

A World Bank publication (Dang and Rogers, 2008) theoretically explained that coaching institutions are not likely to add value to human capital and are only meant for signalling, which is what entrance tests measure. Tuitions or coaching, therefore, are not likely to increase much youth's human capital any more than self-practice does. Too much of pressure not only ends creativity but unfortunately sometimes ends life of student as well. The marks and ranking in coaching institutions are by no means a measure of success that our inner talent and creativity

will earn us in youth. And these are many examples. There are many comedians, actors, sports persons, singers, political leaders who may be were not so good at studies and coaching wouldn't have given much advantage. But realizing their talent, working upon them, they earned great success and became well famous, which academically may be they wouldn't have got. Had they left their talent and just focused in coaching competition, may be they would not have earned this much success in life. Every youth has got unique strengths different from each other. In simple facts and figures, suppose there are 10,000 seats for admission in a top govt. college. But 2 lakh students applied for it, out of which 1 lakh have taken coaching. Still, if only coached students are to be taken, then only 10,000 will get admission. Remaining 90,000 coached students will not. Overall, does this mean the remaining 1,90,000 students (out of 2 lakh) won't be successful. No ! It simply means they will excel in other fields. But then creativity and inner talents, got lost in the pressure of studying at coaching, school, home. Or its too late now to work on them. This can't come back. Someone who could have become an artist, a cricketer, musician, an athlete, a comedian or any other personality, was a actually just put into coaching with single aim of 'Study and get good marks'. This actually kills the creativity and inner talent of that youth.

There are many solutions possible as well. In schools, colleges, encouraging students to spend time in sports, art and craft, extra curricular activities and ensuring an all round development will help them rightly identify their inner talent and make them confident towards it. They will learn many skills/hobbies/creativity and constantly engaging in them will make sure even after facing tight schedule of coaching, these talent and creativity does not get killed, but stay with them for lifetime. Appreciating silliest of doubts of students or of young child will encourage his curiosity and creativity. And then providing free of cost or coaching at very low cost by Government will make sure atleast money does not become a pressure or burden

on their mind. If the human brain loses its creativity/curiosity, then there is no difference left between a human and a robot. And with students taking coaching, they are very busy with schedule. Eat, study, school, coaching, internet, study, sleep. Where is the time to play, travel, explore, make new friends, interact frankly with parents, show them creative works ?? and then, those taking coaching for any govt. exam or for a particular job, they have additional burden that they need to settle at earliest to take responsibilities of home, age is limited for exam, preparing for backup plan as well. They are completely cut off from making their mind creative or spend time on their talent. Thus, coaching may help get good marks and pass any exam with a good rank, but all this comes at the cost of killing creativity and inner talent of a young mind and youth age. Today's youth is the future of our nation tomorrow. The youth needs to think freely so that mind can explore all directions and decide the best. Studying is paramount, taking coaching is good, but coaching institutions need to ensure that none of it comes at the cost of killing creativity and talent of young mind. India being a country of vast youth population, if the youth is unhappy, the nation will become unhappy too. Be it coaching institutions, parents, teachers, friends, everyone needs to encourage the creativity and inner talent of the youth and they will surely excel in life with happiness. But the reality still remains true that coaching institutions are killing inner talent and creativity of youth. Lets change this to a positive bright future of youth, and wonders will happen.

### Against

—S. Karpaga Soubha Varshine

"To be like sun, you need to burn like sun." —APJ Abdul Kalam

In Today's fast moving world, everyone is aiming to reach few things and to achieve success. But being the most populous the opportunity of attaining a particular thing is possible for one person among a group of enthusiasts of same kind. Because of this situation, everyone in this world are ready to work day and night. For

instance, in our country, there are both urban and rural place. The students from urban have more exposure than rural. The concept of coaching Centre has picked it up so much and also a lot of students are going to coaching centres with a dream to study well and have a prosperous future.



S. Karpaga Soubha Varshine

It is just an extra effort towards their achievement of academic goals.

Coaching centres are actually advantages to the students as they not only provide professional teachers but also the necessary materials required for the preparation. More importantly they provide me a competitive environment to study acting regular test and also evaluate them on regular basis. These conditions cannot be simulator in the school where the method of teaching is completely different.

We can't say that coaching institutes are killing inner talent and creativity of youths. If it is true means then taking education in school also wrong. Why, a child can't impart the inner talent or the creativity skill which his/her parents have ? Then why the parents making his child to study in school ? There is many ways to learn by observing certain things and the lessons learnt from day to day life, isn't it ? well, coaching institutes are similar to schools, where teaching and approach method is different. If really these coaching institutes hinder our talents means then why our government brings many schemes and scholarships ? For instance there is a central sector scheme for SC, ST and OBC students which is under ministry of social justice and empowerment.

Coaching institutes are actually a place where knowledge sharing and creativity will take place. Also by interacting with other peers will enhance out thought process and make us to make something creativity. This can be compared with the candle : the coaching institutes are actually the environment or the atmosphere where as the trained faculties are the burning candle, who shows the path for the needy persons.

*Continued on Page 190*

- Which of the following is not including in wetlands ?  
(A) Marine and Coastal Wetlands,  
(B) Inland Wetlands, and  
(C) Human-made Wetlands  
(D) All of the above
- Wetlands are examples of :  
(A) In situ conservation  
(B) Ex situ conservation  
(C) Both (A) and (B)  
(D) None of the above
- The Convention on Wetlands is an intergovernmental treaty adopted :  
(A) 2 June, 1972  
(B) 2 January, 1976  
(C) 2 October, 1971  
(D) 2 February, 1971
- How many criteria declare to establish a Ramsar Sites ?  
(A) 7  
(B) 9  
(C) 5  
(D) 3
- The largest Ramsar Site in India :  
(A) Satkosia Gorge—Odisha  
(B) Keoladeo National Park—Rajasthan  
(C) Sunderbans Wetland—West Bengal  
(D) None of the above
- In which country the city of Ramsar is located ?  
(A) America  
(B) Italy  
(C) Iran  
(D) China
- Which Ramsar Site known as floating lake ?  
(A) Thane Creek (Maharashtra)  
(B) Loktak Lake (Manipur)  
(C) Ansupa Lake (Odisha)  
(D) Vaduvur Bird Sanctuary (Tamil Nadu)
- The network of Indian Ramsar Sites currently covers :  
(A) 1-33 million ha  
(B) 3-70 million ha  
(C) 1-54 million ha  
(D) 2-33 million ha
- Which country has the largest Ramsar Sites in Asia ?  
(A) India  
(B) China  
(C) Indonesia  
(D) Bangladesh
- First Ramsar Site of India :  
(A) Keoladeo National Park—Rajasthan  
(B) Sunderbans Wetland—West Bengal  
(C) Satkosia Gorge—Odisha  
(D) Both (A) and (B)
- Total number of Ramsar Sites in India :  
(A) 76  
(B) 46  
(C) 75  
(D) 70
- In which year, India signed the Ramsar Convention ?  
(A) 1980  
(B) 1985  
(C) 1990  
(D) 1982
- Which State has maximum number of Ramsar Sites ?  
(A) Gujarat  
(B) Goa  
(C) Delhi  
(D) Tamil Nadu
- The National Wetland Conservation Programme (NWCP) was initiated by the Government of India in :  
(A) 1985-86  
(B) 1988-89  
(C) 1995-96  
(D) 1989-90
- In which Ramsar Sites conserve the largest endangered marine mammal Dugong (Dugong dugon) ?  
(A) Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve  
(B) Keoladeo National Park  
(C) Satkosia Gorge  
(D) All of the above
- The world's first Ramsar Site was designated in 1974 :  
(A) The Cobourg Peninsula (Australia)  
(B) Rio Negro (Brazil)  
(C) Keoladeo National Park (India)  
(D) Queen Maud Gulf (Canada)
- Which of the following Ramsar Site is not include in urban wetlands ?  
(A) Dal Lake (Jammu & Kashmir)  
(B) Pong Dam (Himachal Pradesh)  
(C) Harike (Punjab)  
(D) Lonar Lake (Maharashtra)
- Which of the state has more than one Ramsar Sites ?  
(A) West Bengal  
(B) Bihar  
(C) Andhra Pradesh  
(D) Goa
- Which Ramsar Site is situated at the connection of two lakes ?  
(A) Lonar Lake (Maharashtra)  
(B) Pong Dam (Himachal Pradesh)  
(C) Tso Kar Wetland Complex (Ladakh)  
(D) Rio Negro (Brazil)
- How many Ramsar Sites are designated in Uttar Pradesh ?  
(A) 14  
(B) 16  
(C) 10  
(D) 20



# Concentric Quiz

ENTRY FORM

## Special on Wetland Conservation

**PRATIYOGITA  
DARPAN**

I have read and understood the rules of Concentric Quiz of Pratiyogita Darpan and agree to abide by them.

.....  
(Signature)

Last Date for Sending March 15, 2024

Name Mr./Miss/Mrs. .... Age .....

Full Address .....

State ..... Pin Code No..... Academic Qualification.....

Competition examination for which preparing .....

- How would you rate our magazine on a scale of 1 to 5?
- Topics/Features you would like to see in .....  
forthcoming issues .....
- No. of Questions Solved .....

## ANSWERS FORM

Q. No.	A	B	C	D	Q. No.	A	B	C	D	Q. No.	A	B	C	D	Q. No.	A	B	C	D
1.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	6.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	11.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	16.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	7.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	12.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	17.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	8.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	13.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	18.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	9.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	14.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	19.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	10.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	15.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	20.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Rules and Regulations

- All students or those appearing in competitive examinations can take part in this contest.
- Candidates taking part in quiz contest will necessarily have to send their entries by the fixed date. Entries are to be sent by ordinary post. Please mark your envelope 'Quiz-Pratiyogita Darpan' on the top left hand side.
- Answers given only on the Entry Form of the magazine will be admissible.
- In the form there are four squares against each question number. Contestants should put a Tick (✓) in the square for the answer they think is correct. Giving more than one answer to a question will disqualify it.
- Contestants should essentially write the number of questions they have solved.
- Marks will be deducted for wrong answers.
- The candidate sending the maximum number of correct answers will be given ₹ 1000 as first prize. Next two candidates after that will get ₹ 800 and ₹ 600 as second and third prize respectively. If there are more than one candidate eligible for a prize, the amount will be equally distributed among them.
- Write your name in English in Capital Letters. The name must be the one which appears in your bank account. Also, write the bank account number, IFSC code of the bank and your mobile phone number.
- The decision of the editor will be final and binding in all cases, and will not be a matter for consideration of any court and no correspondence will be entertained in this concern.
- Names of prize winners of Concentric Quiz along with the answers will be published in the next issue of Pratiyogita Darpan.
- Pratiyogita Darpan reserves the right to terminate or extend the period of quiz, or to accept or reject any or all the entries at their absolute discretion without assigning any reason.
- Pratiyogita Darpan is not responsible for any postal delays, transit losses or mutilation of entries.
- Last date for the receipt of the entries of CONCENTRIC QUIZ in the office of Pratiyogita Darpan, 2/11A, Swadeshi Bima Nagar, Agra-282 002 (U.P.) is March 15, 2024.



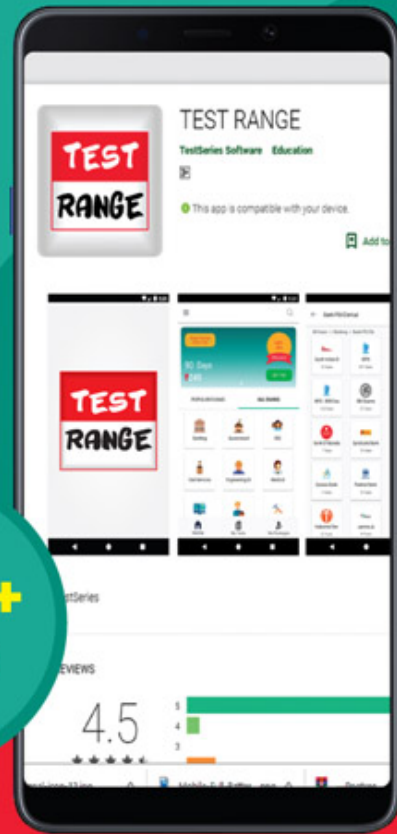
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## ESSAY COMPETITION

Topic : Use of Generative AI for Poverty Alleviation

Last Date : March 25, 2024

Cash Prizes : 1st : ₹ 1,500/- ; 2nd : ₹ 1,200/- ; 3rd : ₹ 1,000/-

## DEBATE COMPETITION

Topic : Making India a Developed Economy by 1947 is a Distant Dream

Last Date : March 25, 2024

Cash Prizes : ₹ 1,500/- (Each in favour/ against)

### Rules and Regulations :

- Duly signed hand written entries on Essay/Debate in maximum limit of 1500 words with relevant details must be sent by e-mails or by ordinary post.
- Only one entry on Essay / Debate will be accepted from one participant.
- Entries must be submitted with declaration mentioning "This is my original work and is unpublished elsewhere" and should have complete name, address, mobile no., passport size photograph alongwith bank account details /IFSC code.
- Prize money will be awarded through cheques alongwith certificates from Pratiyogita Darpan. The awarded entries will be published in the forthcoming issue of Pratiyogita Darpan.

### WIN ATTRACTIVE PRIZES

- Aspirants of UPSC, State PSC, Banking, SSC, Defence and other competitive Exams can win attractive prizes by sending us the Examination Papers (MCQ) with answers based on their memory.
- The first 3 winners sending the most correct answers will be awarded ₹ 600/-, ₹ 400/- and ₹ 250/- respectively for participating in.

### MEMORY RETENTION CONTEST

Pratiyogita Darpan

1, State Bank Colony, Near Khandari, Agra-Mathura Bye-Pass, Agra-5

## Essay Competition

Topic : Health and Intellect are the Two Blessings of Life

### Winners

#### First Prize Winner



Digvijay Kumar  
75/4A, Kalibari Marg  
New Delhi-110 001

#### Second Prize Winner



Priyadarshan Dilip Dabir  
C/o Arun K. Mahajan  
Flat No. 304, 3rd Floor  
Dombivili (West), Thane  
Maharashtra-421 202

#### Third Prize Winner



Saumya  
Pune  
Maharashtra

## RESULTS

### Debate Competition

Topic : Coaching Institutions are Killing Inner Talent and Creativity of Youth

### Winners

#### In Favour



Digvijay Kumar  
75/4A, Kalibari Marg  
New Delhi-110 001

#### Against the Topic



S. Karpaga Soubha Varshine  
Bharathidasan Street  
Krishna Nagar  
Puducherry-605 008

## Quiz Contest

(Special on Global Organisations)

### First Prize Winners

1. Pradipta Pal  
Murshidabad, West Bengal-742 138
2. Prathamesh S. Sinha  
Darjeeling, West Bengal-734 426
3. Shahida Parween  
Darbhanga, Bihar-846 004
4. Firdaus Jahan  
Darbhanga, Bihar-846 004

All these four contestants have scored equal marks in 'Concentric Quiz' on 'Global Organisations'. Hence, prize money is being distributed equally among them.

### Answers

1. (C) 2. (C) 3. (B) 4. (B) 5. (A)
6. (A) 7. (B) 8. (D) 9. (B) 10. (C)
11. (B) 12. (C) 13. (D) 14. (B) 15. (C)
16. (D) 17. (C) 18. (A) 19. (D) 20. (A)

- How many countries given below share boundaries with the red sea ?  
I. Egypt      II. Jordan  
III. Kuwait    IV. Oman  
V. Sudan  
Correct code is—  
(A) Only two    (B) Only three  
(C) Only four   (D) All five
- Which of the following states do not share its boundary with Myanmar ?  
(A) Assam      (B) Manipur  
(C) Mizoram    (D) Nagaland
- Consider the following pairs—  
I. Rashtriya Raksha University  
—Gandhinagar  
II. National Sports University  
—Imphal  
III. Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya  
—Vadodara  
IV. National Maritime University  
—Chennai  
How many of the above is/are matched correctly ?  
(A) Only one    (B) Only two  
(C) Only three   (D) All four
- Which of the following statements is incorrect about the Member of Parliament Local Area Development (MPLAD) Scheme ?  
(A) Member of Parliament can recommend development programmes involving spending of ₹ 5 crore every year  
(B) Funds are transferred into the accounts of MPs  
(C) Member of Lok Sabha can recommend development work only in his constituency  
(D) Member of Rajya Sabha can recommend development works in the state from which they are elected
- Which of the following statements is incorrect about the Lok Sabha ?  
(A) The Lok Sabha was duly constituted for the first time in 1950  
(B) At present total strength of the Lok Sabha is 543  
(C) The term of the Lok Sabha, unless dissolve, is five years from the date appointed for its first meeting  
(D) G.V. Mavalankar was the first speaker of the Lok Sabha
- Which of the following statements is/are correct about the Cabinet Committee on Parliamentary Affairs ?  
I. Prime Minister is the ultimate authority to constitute the Cabinet Committee on Parliamentary Affairs.  
II. Minister for Parliamentary Affairs is the ex-officio Chairman of the Cabinet Committee on Parliamentary Affairs.  
III. It consider the proposals to summon or prorogue the Houses of Parliament.  
IV. The Prime Minister may from time-to-time, modify the functions assigned to it.  
Correct code is—  
(A) Only I, II, III  
(B) Only I, III and IV  
(C) Only I and IV  
(D) All I, II, III and IV
- Consider the following statements about the Monsoons—  
I. Monsoons are most often associated with the Indian ocean.  
II. Monsoons always blow from cold to warm regions.  
III. Winter monsoons are less powerful than summer monsoons in Southeast Asia.  
IV. El Nino - fuelled Northeast monsoon caused the deluge in South Tamil Nadu in November-December 2023.  
How many of the above statements is/are correct ?  
(A) Only one    (B) Only two  
(C) Only three   (D) All four
- Monsoon Cup is associated with—  
(A) Football  
(B) Badminton  
(C) Yacht Race  
(D) Hockey
- Vipassana is derived from the teaching of the—  
(A) Mahavira  
(B) Gautam Buddha  
(C) Swami Vivekananda  
(D) Samarth Guru Ram Das
- Which of the following statements is incorrect about voter verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) ?  
(A) VVPAT is attached to the ballot unit of the Electronic Voting Machine (EVM)  
(B) VVPAT prints out a slip of paper with the Voter's selection indicated on it  
(C) Voter can take that slip along with him/her after casting the vote  
(D) In 2019 Lok Sabha General Election VVPAT facility was provided in all polling stations
- Which of the following statements is incorrect about the Supreme Court Legal Services Committee (SCLSC) ?  
(A) The Supreme Court Legal Services Committee has been constituted under Section 3A of the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987  
(B) Chairman to the SCLSC is nominated by the Government of India on the recommendation of the Chief Justice of India  
(C) The SCLSC provides free and competent legal services to the weaker sections of society  
(D) Supreme Court Judge B. R. Gavai is the current Chairman of the SCLSC
- Consider the following statements about the Lakshadweep—  
I. Lakshadweep is an archipelago consisting of 36 islands with an area of 32 sq km.

- II. Majority of its inhabitants are Muslim.
- III. Islamic society in Lakshdweep follows the tradition of matriliney.
- How many statements given above is/are correct ?
- (A) Only one  
(B) Only two  
(C) All three  
(D) None of the above
13. Which of the following statement is incorrect about the Rajya Sabha ?
- (A) Rajya Sabha is a permanent body and not subject to dissolution  
(B) Term of office of Rajya Sabha member is 5 year  
(C) One-third of its members retire every second year  
(D) 233 members of the Rajya Sabha are elected by the elected members of State / UT Assemblies through a system of proportional representation by means of a single transferable vote
14. Who among the following cannot be a member of the Delimitation Commission ?
- (A) Retired or sitting judge of the Supreme Court  
(B) Chief Election Commissioner or an Election Commissioner nominated by the Chief Election Commissioner ex-officio  
(C) State Election Commissioner of concerned State, ex-officio  
(D) Secretary General of Lok Sabha, ex-officio
15. Consider the following in relation to Fundamental Duties—
- I. To uphold and protect the sovereignty, unity and integrity of India.  
II. To value and preserve the rich heritage of our composite culture.  
III. To safeguard public property and violence.  
IV. To develop the scientific temper, humanism and the spirit of inquiry and reform.
- How many of the above is/are part of the Fundamental Duties ?
- (A) Only one (B) Only two  
(C) Only three (D) All four
16. Which of the following pairs is incorrect in relation to Schedules of the Constitution of India ?
- (A) Third Schedule—Forms of Oaths or Affirmation  
(B) Fourth Schedule—Allocation of seats in the Council of States  
(C) Seventh Schedule—Validation of certain Acts and Regulations  
(D) Eighth Schedule Languages
17. Which of the following was a saint of Nirguna sect. ?
- (A) Meera Bai  
(B) Guru Nanaka  
(C) Chaitanya Mahaprabhu  
(D) Tulsidas
18. Which of the following connects the ocean floor level with the continental level ?
- (A) Continental slope  
(B) Continental shelf  
(C) Epicontinental sea  
(D) Sea shelf
19. Which of the following is the highest peak of India ?
- (A) Mount Everest  
(B) Mount K<sub>2</sub>  
(C) Mount Kanchenjunga  
(D) Mount Dhaulagiri
20. Which of the following is not a cash crop ?
- (A) Cotton (B) Jute  
(C) Sugarcane (D) Rice
21. Which of the following is the largest agro-based industry in India ?
- (A) Cotton Textiles Industry  
(B) Sugar Industry  
(C) Jute Industry  
(D) Silk Industry
22. Which of the following pairs of main rivers and their draining end in North America is incorrect ?
- (A) The river draining into the Gulf of Mexico—Mississippi  
(B) River draining into the Atlantic Ocean—St. Lawrence  
(C) River draining into the Arctic Ocean—Ohino  
(D) River draining into the Pacific Ocean—Yukon
23. Which of the following is not a cold desert in the world ?
- (A) Arctic Polar desert  
(B) Gobi desert  
(C) Antarctic Polar desert  
(D) Great Victorian desert
24. According to Hooke's law of elasticity, if stress is increased, then ratio of stress to strain—
- (A) Becomes Zero  
(B) Remains the same  
(C) Decreases  
(D) Increases
25. Diazo coupling is used to prepare—
- (A) Pesticides  
(B) Dyes  
(C) Proteins  
(D) Analgesics
26. Which of the following scientists is/are associated with the development of theory of Acids and Bases ?
- I. Svante Arrhenius  
II. Thomas Lowry and J.N. Bronsted  
III. G. N. Lewis
- Correct code is—
- (A) Only 1  
(B) Only 2  
(C) All 3  
(D) None of the above
27. When a crystal of potassium permagnet is placed at the bottom of beaker, filled with water, the whole water turns into purple without stirring. This is an example of—
- (A) Diffusion  
(B) Distribution  
(C) Effusion  
(D) Intrusion
28. During summer days, water kept in an earthen pot (pitcher) becomes cool because of—
- (A) Osmosis  
(B) Evaporation  
(C) Diffusion  
(D) Transpiration
29. Which of the following is/are physical change ?
- I. Condensation of steam  
II. Burning of charcoal  
III. Making a fruit salad from raw fruits  
IV. Melting of wax
- Correct code is—
- (A) Only I and II  
(B) Only III and IV  
(C) Only I, III and IV  
(D) All I, II, III, IV

30. Consider the following pairs—  
 I. Law of conservation of Mass  
 —Antoine Lavoisier  
 II. Law of constant Proportions  
 —Joseph Proust  
 III. Law of multiple Proportions  
 —John Dalton  
 How many pairs given above is/are correct ?  
 (A) Only one  
 (B) Only two  
 (C) All three  
 (D) None of the above
31. Consider the following types of batteries—  
 I. Lithium Ion  
 II. Nickel cadmium  
 III. Nickel Metal Hydride  
 IV. Lithium Polymer  
 How many of the above is/are used in mobile phones ?  
 (A) Only one (B) Only two  
 (C) Only three (D) All four
32. Which of the following inert gas does not has 8 electrons in its outermost cell ?  
 (A) Helium (B) Neon  
 (C) Argon (D) Radon
33. Which of the following is not an equation of motion ?  
 (A)  $v = u + at$   
 (B)  $s = ut + \frac{1}{2} at^2$   
 (C)  $v^2 = u^2 + 2as$   
 (D)  $s = 2 ut + at^2$
34. Which keeps the earth in uniform circular motion around the sun ?  
 (A) Gravitational force between the sun and the moon  
 (B) Gravitational force between the sun and the earth  
 (C) Gravitational force between the Earth and the Mars  
 (D) None of the above
35. Which of the following is/are examples of doing work against gravity ?  
 (A) Lifting a baby from floor  
 (B) Lifting the weights by weightlifter  
 (C) Moving of the electric elevator with 4 men, upward  
 (D) All of the above
36. Consider the following—  
 I. The waves produced by moving one end of a long spring up and down rapidly, whose other end is fixed.
- II. The water waves formed on the surface of water in a pond.  
 Which of the above is/are examples of transverse waves ?  
 (A) Only I  
 (B) Only II  
 (C) Both I and II  
 (D) Neither I nor II
37. Which of the following is/are use of ultrasound ?  
 I. To monitor the development of fetus.  
 II. To break kidney stones into fine grains.  
 III. To measure the depth of sea.  
 IV. To clean hard to reach parts of an object.  
 Correct code is—  
 (A) Only I, II and III  
 (B) Only II, III and IV  
 (C) Only I, III and IV  
 (D) All I, II, III, IV and V
38. JN 1 was in the news. What it is ?  
 (A) A new variant of SARS-CoV-2  
 (B) An assault Rifle  
 (C) A horror film  
 (D) An investigation device to detect malaria parasite
39. Which of the following has two chambered heart ?  
 (A) Frog (B) Lizard  
 (C) Fish (D) Bird
40. Consider the following—  
 I. Germination of seeds  
 II. Movement of stomata  
 III. Flowering of plants  
 IV. Ripening of fruits  
 How many of the above is/are regulated by plant hormones ?  
 (A) Only one (B) Only two  
 (C) Only three (D) All four

[For Answer See Page 181]

Continued from Page 183

Taking up coaching is desirable but fully relying on that is not advisable. They will help us and show a direction, we are supposed to think how to proceed in which path. Obviously, we must use our knowledge to judge everything and proceed. Taking coaching for NEET, JEE or UPSC for some period is good in order to understand the syllabus and way of approaching the exam,

but sticking to them lifelong till achieving is not appreciated. Because after attaining the core thing, we must build ourself to shine in our unique way.

How we have private and government schools, we have paid and free coaching centres. Those who can afford they will approach where they need. Now-a-days few institutes make a full time business especially making the colourful advertisement and false results claiming for attracting the students' admission to their respective forum. Also keeping more pricing than the normal. If these are controlled along with some quality professors then this will help a lot for many students who aspire to achieve their success.

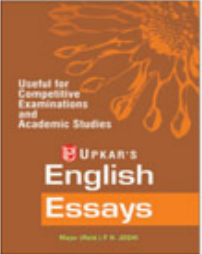
Irrespective of the place, the inner talent and creativity lies fully depends on a person and his interest towards his life. We can't blame if a person fails in an exam also we can't make institutes as a topmost priority on a person's success. They are a part which involves in enhancing the student's life. Therefore, Coaching institutes are not killing inner talent and creativity of youth's.

Florian

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# International Scenario

## Round The Half Year

### 18th India-Vietnam Joint Commission Meeting

External Affairs Minister officially visited to Vietnam from 15th to 18th October, 2023 at the invitation of Foreign Minister of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. On 16th October, 2023, S. Jaishankar visited to Vietnam and attended the 18th India-Vietnam Joint Commission meeting in Hanoi (Vietnam), jointly unveiled the commemorative stamps celebrating 50 years of establishment of diplomatic ties between India and Vietnam. The stamps depicting Kalaripayattu and Vovinam captures our shared affinity for sports and celebrates the strong cultural, social and people-to-people links between India and Vietnam.



External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and Vietnam Foreign Minister Bui Thanh Son during a meeting of the 18th India-Vietnam Joint Commission

### Jaishankar Unveils Mahatma Gandhi's Bust in Vietnam

On 17th October, 2023, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar unveiled Mahatma Gandhi's bust in Tao Dan Park of Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam and stated that he served as a political inspiration as well as a 'motivator of diplomacy' in current times beset by conflict and violence. Gandhi's statue in Ho Chi Minh City was a reaffirmation of the strong people-to-people ties, which are expressed from Yoga to culture and to arts and Buddhism. On 15th October, 2023, the EAM met Thich Thanh Nhieu of the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha at Phat Tich, unveiled the bust of Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore at the International Friendship Park in Bac Ninh province, and interacted with the members of the Indian community in Bac Ninh province.



### India and United Kingdom Holds First 2+2 Dialogue

On 16th October, 2023, the inaugural India-UK 2+2 Foreign and Defence Dialogue held in New Delhi (India), aims to discuss and review India-UK Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. The progress made in diverse areas of India-UK Roadmap 2030 including political exchanges, economic cooperation, defence and security, people to people ties, as well as regional and multilateral cooperation. Prime Minister of India invited British Prime Minister for a bilateral visit at an early for a more detailed discussion during G-20 Summit, and British Prime Minister accepted the invitation. India and the United Kingdom discussed the situation in the Indo-Pacific region which acquired a special significance because of the ongoing talks between the two sides for a Free Trade Agreement.



### Coastal Security Exercise-East Coast SAGAR KAVACH 02/23

A two-day Coastal Security Exercise Sagar Kavach 02/23 (Exercise Sagar Kavach 01-23 conducted in May 2023) was conducted by the Indian Navy in Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and the UT of Puducherry from 11th to 12th October, 2023, participated by the maritime security agencies. About 2500 personnel from the Indian Navy, Coast Guard, State and U/T Administration, Marine Police, Fisheries, Customs, Intelligence Agencies, Light Houses, Ports Forest etc., were engaged in the exercise.



The exercise was executed under the aegis of the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief Eastern Naval Command, FOCINC (East) who also exercises the authority of Commander-in-Chief, Coastal Defence (East).

### Exercise Sagar Kavach 01/23

A Coastal Security Exercise Sagar Kavach 01/23 was conducted in the UT of Lakshadweep from 3rd to 4th May, 2023. The exercise aimed to assess the efficacy and robustness of the coastal security mechanism of the islands while dealing with an asymmetric threat emanating from the sea. **INS Jamuna**, **INS Kalpeni** along with assets of the Indian Coast Guard, ICG and other coastal security agencies were deployed to maintain surveillance in the area.

## President of Tanzania on State Visit to India

President of the United Republic of Tanzania Samia Suluhu Hassan came on State Visit to the Republic of India from 8th to 10th October, 2023, invitation of President of the Republic of India. The Government of Tanzania also announced that they would be joining the international Big Cat Alliance and the Global Biofuel Alliance. Tanzania and India are maritime neighbours with a long history of trade and people to people linkages. Tanzania has an important place in India's vision of SAGAR, Security And Growth for All in the Region; and also coincides with the African Union vision for peace and security in Africa with focus on development of blue economy, ocean economy for accelerated economic growth.



President of Tanzania in President House along with Prime Minister and President of India

## Annual Joint HADR Exercise 2023 : CHAKRAVAT 2023

Annual Joint HADR Exercise 2023 (AJHE 2023) was hosted by Indian Navy at Goa from 9th to 11th October, 2023 and concluded with a Multi-Agency Capability Demonstration at Mole Berth, within the Port of Mormugao, to showcase drills on rescue and relief. Teams from NDRF, Indian Navy, Indian Air Force, Indian Coast Guard and State Fire Services, Goa participated in the demonstration. The first edition kicked off in 2015. This edition synergised efforts at the national level among all stakeholders, as well as witness participation from eight countries of the Indian Ocean Region.



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## The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Climate Week 2023

The Middle East and North Africa Climate Week (MENACW) is an annual event, held from 8th to 12th October in Riyadh (Saudi Arabia), hosted by the government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to reduce greenhouse gas emissions while adapting to the mounting fallout from the climate crisis. Four Regional Climate Weeks will be held this year to build momentum ahead of the UN Climate Change Conference COP28 in Dubai and the conclusion of the first global stocktake, designed to chart the way for fulfilling the Paris Agreement's key goals. MENACW 2023 is organized into four systems-based tracks, each focusing on specific themes :



1. Energy systems and industry.
2. Cities, urban and rural settlements, infrastructure and transport.
3. Land, ocean, food and water.
4. Societies, health, livelihoods, and economies.

### Organisational Agencies for MENACW 2023

1. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC),
2. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP),
3. United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP),
4. The World Bank,
5. The Islamic Development Bank,
6. The International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA),
7. The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and
8. The League of Arab States.

### Regional Climate Weeks

The following Regional Climate Weeks are confirmed for 2023 :

1. Africa Climate Week (ACW 2023), Nairobi, 4-8 September. Hosted by the government of Kenya, this event will be organised in parallel with the Africa Climate Summit (4-6 September), also hosted by Kenya.
2. Middle East and North Africa Climate Week (MENACW 2023), Riyadh, 8-12 October, and hosted by the government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

### Climate Weeks in Last Years

1. Africa Climate Week : It was held from 26th to 29th September, 2021 and hosted by Uganda.
2. MENA Climate Week : It was held from 28th to 31st March, 2022 and hosted by the UAE.
3. Asia-Pacific Climate Week : It was held from 6th to 9th July, 2021 and hosted by Japan.
4. Latin America and Caribbean Climate Week : It was held from 11th to 14th May, 2021 and hosted by the Dominican Republic.



- Latin America and the Caribbean Climate Week (LACCW 2023), Panama City, 23-27 October, hosted by the government of Panama. This event will be organised in parallel with the XXIII Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean (24-26 October, 2023).
- Asia-Pacific Climate Week (APCW 2023), Johor Bahru, 13-17 November, 2023, hosted by the government of Malaysia.

### The 28th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 28)

The 2023 UN Climate Change Conference will convene from 30th November to 12th December, 2023 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE). It will comprise :

- The 28th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 28);
- The fifth meeting of the COP serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA 5);
- The 18th meeting of the COP serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP 18);
- The 59th meeting of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI 59); and
- The 59th meeting of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA 59).

### The 18th G20 Summit Hosted by India

The 18th G20 Summit was hosted by India from 9th to 10th September, 2023 at 'Bharat Mandapam' (New Delhi) which was not attended by premiers of Russia, China and Spain. This is the first ever G20 Summit hosted by India. The 200 plus meetings in 60 cities represented an unprecedented footprint for G20 events. As a result, the Indian G20 Presidency was truly people-centric and emerged as a national endeavour.

The G20 is made up of 19 countries and the European Union. On the very first day of G20 Summit, Prime Minister of India announced that the African Union (including 55 countries) took the seat as a permanent member of the G-20 which is the second multi-nation grouping after the European Union. Now G20 is a group of 21 members and is called G21. The conclusion of the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor Agreement and the Global Biofuels Alliance during the Summit were also developments of considerable significance. On 9th September, 2023, three proposals were passed in G20 summit in New Delhi which are as follows :

- Green credit
- Global Bio fuel alliance
- Satellite mission



Bharat Mandapam, referred to as 'culture corridor, showcase diverse traditions of 29 countries, including India

### Green Credit

Green credit is an important green financial policy that requires financial institutions to take pollution control and environmental protection as an essential basis for credit decisions and to guide the green transformation of industrial structures through credit resource allocation (CRA) [3]. In 2012, the China Banking Regulatory Commission (CBRC) released the 'Green Credit Guidelines', which is an innovative practical policy for the Central government to use financial regulation tools in environmental governance.

### The G20 Launched Satellite Mission

The Indian government initiated G20 Satellite Mission for Environment and Climate Observation. This satellite will be developed with the help of NASA and ISRO, NASA ISRO Satellite also known as NISAR. The climate and weather change data obtained by the satellite will be shared with all the countries. Especially the data will be shared for all the countries included in the global South. In 2023, developed countries committed of USD 100 billion for climate finance for the first time.

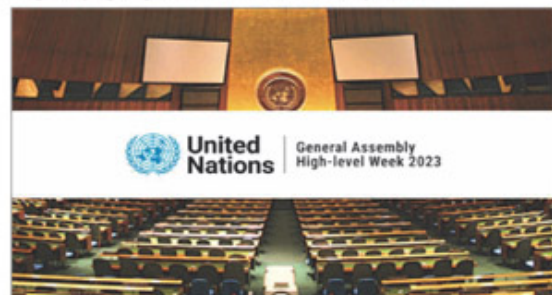
### Statue of Nataraj

- A 27-foot tall Nataraja statue is installed at Bharat Mandapam. The hollow bronze Nataraj statue is a symbol of the traditional sculpting technique [known as the lost-wax casting method (madhuchisht vidhan)] of the Chola period.
- The statue weighs around 18-20 tonnes which comes from Swamimalai in Tamil Nadu.

### 78th Session of the UN General Assembly

The 78th session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA 78) started from 5th September, 2023 in New York and General debate of the 78th UNGA was held from 19-26 September, 2023.

The 78th session of the General Assembly was conducted under the theme, "Rebuilding trust and reigniting global solidarity: Accelerating action on the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals towards peace, prosperity, progress and sustainability for all."



### Key Highlights :

- Council Approves Conclusions of EU Priorities :** The Council approved conclusions setting out EU priorities at the United Nations during the 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly. EU action at the United Nations in the coming year will be guided by the following overarching priorities :
  - Accelerating implementation of the SDGs.
  - Strengthening global governance in line with UN Secretary General's 'Our Common Agenda' proposals for reform and modernisation.

3. Building global partnerships to help achieve our common goals.
- **Twelve High Impact Initiatives** : The SDG Summit in September 2023 provides an opportunity to secure the breakthroughs and momentum needed to change course and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. The UN development system (UNDS) is fully committed to its success.
    1. Digital public infrastructure
    2. Energy compacts
    3. Food systems transformation
    4. Future gov
    5. Global accelerator
    6. Local 2030 coalition
    7. Nature driving economic transformation
    8. Power of data
    9. Spotlight initiative
    10. The SDG stimulus
    11. Transforming for trade
    12. Transforming education

### 20th ASEAN-India Summit 2023 and the 18th East Asia Summit (EAS)

On 7th September, 2023, the 20th ASEAN-India Summit was held in Jakarta (Indonesia), chaired by H.E. Joko Widodo, President of the Republic of Indonesia. The Summit was attended by ASEAN Member States. Prime Minister of India attended on 7th September, 2023 and agreed to deepen their comprehensive strategic partnership with concrete actions through practical implementation of the 'Plan of Action' to implement the ASEAN-India partnership for peace, progress and shared prosperity. Two Joint Statements, one on Maritime Cooperation, and the other on Food Security were adopted. In addition to India and ASEAN Leaders, Timor-Leste participated in the Summit as Observer.



#### Key Issues Discussed in ASEAN-India Summit :

- The central role of ASEAN in the Indo-Pacific and the alignment between India's Indo-Pacific Ocean's Initiative (IPOI) and ASEAN's Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP). Emphasis was placed on the timely review of ASEAN-India FTA (AITIGA).
- The discussion was aimed to focus on visions for Indo-Pacific between India and ASEAN, and underscored that ASEAN is the focal point of QUAD's vision.
- The discussion was aimed to focus on cooperative approach to address global challenges including terrorism, climate change and resilient supply chains for essential items including food and medicines, and for energy security.

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- The progress of ASEAN-India dialogue relations made in the implementation of the ASEAN-India Plan of Action to Implement the ASEAN-India Partnership for Peace, Progress and Shared Prosperity (2021-2025).

### The WHO Released a Report Titled Global Report on Hypertension during 78th Session of the UN General Assembly

WHO produced a Global report on hypertension. This comprehensive report features unsettling statistics underscoring the far-reaching consequences of uncontrolled hypertension – ranging from heart attacks, strokes and premature death to substantial economic loss. It is the first-ever report by the WHO on the worldwide implications of hypertension, commonly referred to as high blood pressure. The key highlights of reports are :

- Hypertension affects 1 in 3 adults worldwide. This common, deadly condition leads to stroke, heart attack, heart failure, kidney damage and many other health problems.
- India alone has an estimated 188.3 million adults aged 30-79 years grappling with hypertension. The prevalence of high blood pressure in India is slightly lower than the global average of 31%. To reach a 50% control rate, India needs to ensure that an additional 67 million people with hypertension receive effective treatment. If the progress scenario were achieved, 4.6 million deaths due to high blood pressure would be averted by 2040.
- The report shows approximately 4 out of every 5 people with hypertension are not adequately treated, but if countries can scale up coverage, 76 million deaths could be averted between 2023 and 2050.
- More than 40 low- and middle-income countries, including Bangladesh, Cuba, India and Sri Lanka, have strengthened their hypertension care with the HEARTS package, enrolling more than 17 million people into treatment programmes.
- Countries such as Canada and South Korea delivered comprehensive national hypertension treatment programmes, and both countries surpassed the 50% mark for blood pressure control in adults living with hypertension.



#### HEARTS—a WHO Programmes

Hypertension can easily be treated with safe, widely available, low-cost generic medications using programmes such as HEARTS. WHO's HEARTS technical package for cardiovascular disease management in primary health care and the Guideline for the pharmacological treatment of hypertension in adults provide proven and practical steps to deliver effective hypertension care in primary health care settings.

### The Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia Visited India Second Time

The Crown Prince and Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia visited India and attended G20 summit, hosted in India from 9th September to 11th

September, 2023 on the invitation of the Prime Minister of India. This was his second State Visit to India.



The Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud with President and Prime Minister of India during his visit of India.

### Highlights of the Visit :

- Both countries have a strong partnership in the area of energy. There is a vibrant Indian community of around 2.4 million in Saudi Arabia. Their contribution towards the development of the host country and role as bridges to deepen the multifaceted ties between the two countries is highly appreciated.
- The trade between both countries reached all-time high of USD 52.75 billion in FY 2022-23. India is Saudi Arabia's second largest trading partner whereas Saudi Arabia is India's fourth largest trading partner.
- The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia also facilitates Hajj pilgrimage of over 175,000 Indians every year.
- The two leaders co-chaired the first meeting of the India-Saudi Strategic Partnership Council which was set up with the signing of an Agreement by both leaders in October 2019.
- During the visit, the two leaders reviewed the work done under the Strategic Partnership Council and expressed satisfaction at the outcomes of the works of the two Ministerial Committees namely:
  - (a) The Committee on Political, Security, Social and Cultural Cooperation and their subcommittees and
  - (b) The Committee on Economy and Investments and their Joint Working Groups, which have deepened the strategic partnership between the two countries in diverse fields.

### The 30th Edition of the Singapore-India Maritime Bilateral Exercise (SIMBEX)

The 30th edition of the Singapore-India Maritime Bilateral Exercise (SIMBEX) was held in Singapore between the Singapore Navy (RSN) and the Indian Navy (IN) from 21st to 28th September, 2023. For the first time, both navies also deployed a submarine for the exercise. The submarine rescue joint standard operating procedures (JSOP) document was signed between both the navies. The 29th edition of SIMBEX was hosted by the Indian Navy from 26th to 30th October, 2022 at Visakhapatnam (India).

### SIMBEX-2023 Conducted in Two Phases

SIMBEX-2023 conducted in two phases-Harbour Phase or shore phase from 21st to 24th September, 2023, followed by a Sea Phase from 25th to 28th September, 2023. Harbour Phase held at RSS Singapura-Changi

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Naval Base while a sea phase in the southern reaches of the South China Sea within international waters.



The RSN Commander, Seventh Flotilla Colonel Fong Chi Onn (seated, right) and the IN Commodore Sumeet (seated, left) signed the Submarine Rescue Joint Standard Operating Procedures (JSOP)

The Harbour Phase witnessed professional interactions, cross-deck visits, subject matter expert exchanges (SMEE) and sports fixtures, aimed at enhancing interoperability and mutual understanding between the two navies. The Sea Phase involved complex and advanced air defence exercises, gunnery firings, tactical manoeuvres, anti-submarine exercises and other maritime operations.

### Chandrayaan-3 Landing on Moon : India Becomes First Country to Land on Moon's South Pole

The Chandrayaan-3 spacecraft's Vikram lander touched near the South Pole (The presence of frozen water on the moon is one of the main reasons) of the moon and becomes first country in the world for any space programme to land on the South Pole and the fourth to land on the moon. The lander and rover will be functional



for about two weeks, during which time researchers will explore several things which includes :

- The temperature of the lunar surface,
- Lunar seismic activity,
- The chemical composition of rocks and soil, and
- Any variation in the moon's thin atmosphere.



Luna 2 (the Soviet Union)



Surveyor 1 (USA)

### Other Countries to Land on Moon

India now has joined the US, Russia and China as the fourth country to successfully land on the lunar or moon surface. The summary of lunar programs are briefly described under :

- **Russia** : On 12th September, 1959, **Luna 2** was launched by the Soviet Union (now Russia) and the Soviet Union became the first country to make history on moon but because the hard-landing of spacecraft, Russia managed to soft-landing again on moon in 1966. In January 1959, the spacecraft **Luna 1** was launched at the Moon, but missed by around 3,700 miles and went into orbit between the Sun and Mars.
- **The United States of America** : On 2nd June, 1966, the US soft-landed **Surveyor 1** on the moon. The US already has 11 soft landings which is the most in the world. That's not all, US is the only country in the world to land twelve people on the moon through six space missions.
- **China** : In 2013, China became the third country to land **Chang'e 3** on the moon. On January 3, 2019, China became the first country to land a rover on the dark side of the moon.

### Chandrayaan-3 Mission in Chronological Manner

- **6th July, 2023** : The launch was scheduled for 14th July, 2023, at 14 : 35 hrs. IST from the Second Launch Pad, SDSC-SHAR, Sriharikota.
- **7th July, 2023** : Vehicle electrical tests completed. Citizens were invited to witness the launch from the Launch View Gallery at SDSC-SHAR, Sriharikota
- **14th July, 2023** : LVM3 M4 vehicle successfully launched Chandrayaan-3 into orbit. Chandrayaan-3, in its precise orbit, began its journey to the Moon. Health of the Spacecraft is normal.
- **1st August, 2023** : The spacecraft was inserted into the translunar orbit. The orbit achieved is 288 km x 369328 km. Lunar-Orbit Insertion (LOI) is planned for August 5, 2023.
- **5th August, 2023** : Chandrayaan-3 is successfully inserted into the lunar orbit. The orbit achieved is 164 km x 18074 km, as intended.
- **14th August, 2023** : The mission was in the orbit circularisation phase. The spacecraft is in 151 km x 179 km orbit.
- **17th August, 2023** : Lander Module was successfully separated from the Propulsion Module. Deboosting planned for August 18, 2023.
- **23rd August, 2023** : Chandrayaan-3 has successfully soft-landed on the south pole of moon.

### The 10th Edition Exercise Talisman Sabre 2023 : Australia's Largest Bilateral Military Exercise with US

The 10th edition of Exercise Talisman Sabre 2023 was held from 22nd July to 4th August, 2023 in Australia (HMAS-Canberra) in which more than 34,000 military personnel from 13 nations joined forces across sea, land, air, cyber and space. It is a two-week long militaries exercise between Australia and US. Besides the US and Australia, the partner countries also joined



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which were Canada, Fiji, France, Germany, Indonesia, Japan, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, South Korea, Tonga, and the United Kingdom.

Military personnel from India, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand also joined as observers at the exercise. India participated to take a political decision to counter against China on border disputes and other issues. For the first time exercises also took part around Norfolk Island.

### Exercise Talisman Sabre : History and Background

- **Type of Exercise** : Bilateral and Biennial exercise between United States and Australian troops.
- **The Inaugural or First Exercise** : In June 2005 (from 12th to 27th) in Shoalwater Bay, Rockhampton, Townsville, and the Coral Sea, with 16,000 US and Australian troops.
- **Objectives** : To enhance interoperability and develop strong relationships between participating military forces.

### The 27th Iteration of Exercise Malabar 2023

The 27th iteration of the Exercise Malabar 2023 was held in the Sydney (Australia) by Royal Australian Navy from 10th to 21st August, 2023. Australia hosted this exercise for the first time. It is an Indo-Pacific military exercise that seeks to deepen interoperability between participating regional partners. The exercise saw participation of Ships, Submarines and aircraft from the Indian Navy (IN), Royal Australian Navy (RAN), Japan Maritime Self Defence Force (JMSDF) and the US Navy (USN). Exercise MALABAR 23 was conducted in two phases, which included a harbour phase from 11-15 August, 2023 and a sea phase from 16-21 August, 2023.



### Phases of Exercise Malabar

Exercise Malabar was scheduled to be conducted in two phases. The **Harbour Phase** involved wide-ranging activities such as cross-deck visits, professional exchanges, sports fixtures and several interactions for planning and conduct of the Sea Phase.

The **Sea Phase** included various complex and high intensity exercises in all three domains of warfare, encompassing anti-surface, anti-air and anti-submarine exercises including live weapon firing drills. The exercise provides an opportunity to the Indian Navy to enhance and demonstrate interoperability and also gain from the best practices in maritime security operations from its partner nations.

### Historical Background

Malabar exercise commenced in 1992 as a bilateral exercise between Indian Navy and US Navy and includes four prominent navies in the Indo-Pacific Region. The 2020 edition witnessed the maiden participation of the Royal Australian Navy (RAN).

## WHO Launches Global Initiative on Digital Health (GIDH)

On 19th August, 2023, the World Health Organization (WHO) in association with India announced a new Global Initiative on Digital Health (GIDH) at the Health Minister's Meeting of the G20 Summit hosted by the Government of India. The new GIDH initiative (pronounced 'guide' for short) will operate as a WHO-managed network and platform to support the implementation of the Global Strategy on Digital Health 2020 to 2025.

### The GIDH Initiative Aims

The GIDH initiative aims to bring countries and partners together to achieve measurable outcomes by :

- Developing clear priority-driven investment plans for digital health transformation;
- Improving reporting and transparency of digital health resources;
- Facilitating knowledge exchange and collaboration across regions and countries to accelerate progress;
- Supporting whole-of-government approaches for digital health governance in countries; and
- Increasing technical and financial support to the implementation of the Global Strategy on Digital Health 2020–25 and its next phase.

### What is GIDH Network ?

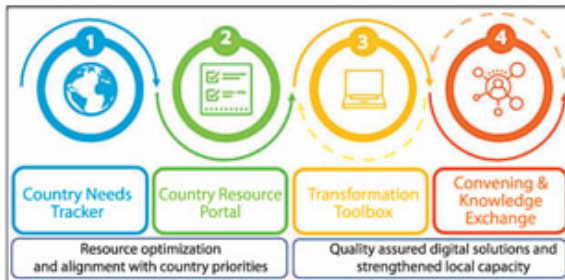
As a WHO Managed Network (Network of Networks), GIDH will address challenges such as duplication of efforts and 'products-focused' digital health transformation through a focus on four foundational pillars :

1. **Country Needs Tracker** : Facilitating digital health investments to be informed by country authorities.

2. **Country Resource Portal** : Identifying traditional as well as innovative resource opportunities, and promoting transparency, while reducing the risk of duplication for enabling a standards-based prospective and retrospective analysis of resourcing gaps in digital health.

3. **Transformation Toolbox** : Advocating for quality-assured tools and resources that strengthen country capacity and autonomy to manage the national digital health transformation.

4. **Convening and Knowledge Exchange** : Promoting strengthened collaboration and knowledge exchange across global, regional, and national networks in digital health.



### Key Facts :

- A lean GIDH Secretariat will be hosted in the WHO Department of Digital Health and Innovation, Science Division in WHO Headquarters with technical focal

points placed in the six WHO regional offices to strengthen alignment with country needs and priorities.

- An annual operating budget of an estimated USD 14 million will be needed to support the implementation of the four pillars, managed by the WHO Secretariat at global and regional level.

## 15th BRICS Summit Concludes in Johannesburg (South Africa)

The XV (15th) edition of BRICS Summit was held by South Africa from 22nd to 24th August, 2023 under the theme : "BRICS and Africa : Partnership for Mutually Accelerated Growth, Sustainable Development & Inclusive Multilateralism."



BRICS leaders pose for a group photograph

On 24th August, 2023 Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi participated in the BRICS-Africa Outreach and BRICS plus Dialogue, in Johannesburg South Africa. Brazil, India, China and South Africa extend their full support to Russia for its BRICS Chairmanship in 2024 and the holding of the XVI BRICS Summit in the city of Kazan, Russia.

### BRICS Expansion : 6 Members Included

The BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) decided to invite on expansion of the grouping by welcoming six new countries into the organisation which includes :

1. The Argentine Republic,
2. The Arab Republic of Egypt
3. The Islamic Republic of Iran,
4. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia,
5. The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, and
6. The United Arab Emirates.

All the 6 countries will become full members of BRICS from 1 January, 2024.

### Cambodia Parliament Elects Hun Manet as New Prime Minister

National Assembly of Cambodia has officially announced the name Hun Manet to be the country's new Prime Minister. He is the eldest son of outgoing premier Hun Sen. Currently, Hun Manet was working as a four-star general in Cambodia's military. In the Assembly election, he was elected by all 123 members of Cambodia's Lower House of Parliament.



Hun Manet

### Exercise Bright Star-23

The biennial and multilateral tri-service joint military exercise Bright Star 2023 was inaugurated from 27th August to 16th September, 2023 at Cairo (West) Air Base, (Egypt) in which 8,000 troops from 34 countries were involved. The Egyptian Armed Forces announced the

details of the Bright Star 2023, which aims to enhance military cooperation and combat common threats and risks. The training is the most essential and extensive joint exercise in the Middle East. The Bright Star is a global military training on Egyptian soil.



Logo and forces from different countries participated in the exercise

This is for the first time that Indian Air Force (IAF) contingent participated in Ex BRIGHT STAR-23 which also saw participation of contingents from the United States of America, Saudi Arabia, Greece and Qatar.

### 5th Edition of Biennial AUSINDEX Maritime Exercise Held at Sydney (Australia)

The 5th edition of biennial AUSINDEX maritime exercise between Indian Navy and Royal Australian Navy (RAN) was held from 22nd to 25th August, 2023 at Sydney (Australia). AUSINDEX included a series of complex exercises in all three domains of maritime operations. The exercise ended on a high note revalidating the common procedures and reaffirming the close linkages and interoperability between Indian Navy and RAN. The RAAF has invited India to attend air combat Exercise Pitch Black in 2016.

### Background

The inaugural Bilateral Maritime Exercise between India and Australia, AUSINDEX-15 was conducted off the East Coast of India from 11th to 19th September, 2015. The exercise was jointly inaugurated by Rear Admiral Jonathan Mead, Head Navy Capability Royal Australian Navy (RAN) and Rear Admiral Ajendra Bahadur Singh, Flag Officer Commanding Eastern Fleet on board INS Shivalik at Visakhapatnam.

### Prime Minister Narendra Modi's First Official State Visit to the US

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi made his first Official State Visit to the United States from 21st to 24th June, 2023 on the invitation of US President Joe Biden. It was the 6th visit to the United States for Narendra Modi as Prime Minister of India. PM Modi became the first Indian Prime Minister to address the joint session of the US Congress for second time. Prime Minister Narendra Modi met many



US President Joe Biden and First Lady of the United States Jill Biden welcomed Prime Minister Modi to the White House.

iconic business figures at Kennedy Centre for Performing Arts.

### The 9th International Day of Yoga

On 21st June, 2023, Prime Minister Narendra Modi led the 9th International Day of Yoga at the North Lawn area of UN Headquarters which was organized by the UN, under the theme 'Yoga for Vasudhaiv Kutumbakam' (Yoga for 'The World is One Family'). On 11th December, 2014, the United Nations proclaimed 21 June as the International Day of Yoga by resolution 69/131. The International Day of Yoga aims to raise awareness worldwide of the many benefits of practicing yoga.

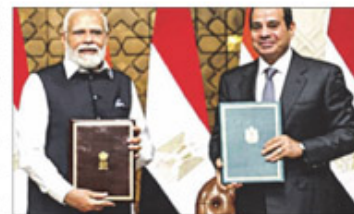


Ambassador of India to the UN, Ruchira Kamboj received Guinness World Record for the participation of people of most nationalities at UN Headquarters, in New York.

### Prime Minister Narendra Modi's First Official Visit to Egypt

Indian Prime Minister went on his first official visit to Egypt from 24 to 25 June, 2023 at the Presidential Palace upon invitation of El-Sisi. On 24th June, 2023, PM Modi met Egyptian Prime Minister Mostafa Madbouly to improve the bilateral relationship between the two countries. Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi was the Chief Guest at the Republic Day celebrations in New Delhi in January 2023.

Both the leaders decided to elevate the bilateral relationship to the level of strategic partnership during republic day visit of Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi. In Cairo, Modi visited Al-Hakim mosque and also visited the Heliopolis War Grave cemetery to pay tribute to the Indian soldiers who died during the First World War.



Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi sign a joint declaration to raise the level of cooperation between the two countries to strategic partnership.

### PM Narendra Modi Receives 'Order of the Nile' Award

On 25th June, 2023, Prime Minister Narendra Modi received highest Egyptian state honour 'Order of the Nile' award. The 'Order of the Nile' is conferred upon Heads of States, Crown Princes, and Vice-Presidents who offer Egypt or humanity invaluable services since 1915. This is the 13th such highest state honour that various countries across the world have conferred upon PM Narendra Modi. The 'Order of the Nile' is composed from a pure gold collar consisting of three-square gold units comprising Pharaonic symbols.

## Cambodian King on Maiden State Visit to India

Cambodian King Norodom Sihamoni visited India for first time on the occasion of 70th anniversary of diplomatic relations between India and Cambodia which were established in 1952. The Cambodian King visited along with 27-member high-level delegation, including the Minister of the Royal Palace and Minister of Foreign Affairs. This visit by the Cambodian King Norodom Sihamoni has taken place after almost 60 years (the last King Sihanouk—father of Norodom Sihamoni, came in 1963). King Norodom Sihamoni became king in October 2004, after long-serving King Sihanouk abdicated owing to health issues.



Cambodian King Norodom Sihamoni with President Droupadi Murmu (centre) and Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi during maiden tour of India.

General Facts about Cambodia	
Features	Facts
Geographic location	Part of the Southeast Asia and shares borders with : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Vietnam to the east</li> <li>● Laos in the northeast</li> <li>● Thailand in the west and north-west</li> <li>● A coastline at the Gulf of Thailand in the southwest</li> </ul>
Head of Government	Prime Minister : Hun Sen
Head of State	King : Norodom Sihamoni
Capital	Phnom Penh
Major language	Khmer language
Estimated Population (2023)	16,493,000
Form of Government	Constitutional monarchy with two legislative houses : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Senate</li> <li>● National Assembly</li> </ul>
Major ethnic group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Khmer (almost 95%)</li> <li>● Chinese (less than 1 %)</li> <li>● Vietnamese (less than 1%)</li> <li>● Others (almost 3%)</li> </ul>

## Germany Hosts Biggest Air Exercise : Air Defender of NATO Nations

On 12th June, 2023, biggest air drills—Air Defender of NATO nations was held from 12 June to 2 July, 2023 which is the largest deployment exercise the in history of NATO. Twenty-five nations joined in the two-week long 'Air Defender' exercise, with around 10,000 personnel and 250 aircrafts. The Planning for Air Defender began in 2018. Japan also participated at a large-scale air exercise by NATO members that began in Germany and reasserted that its partnerships extend even to the Indo-Pacific region. The three main hubs during Air Defender 23 are

Schleswig/Hohn, Wunstorf and Lechfeld. The exercises was conducted mainly in three airspaces over Germany. The exercise areas are based on areas that have been used by the Air Force for routine training for decades.

### What is Exercise : Air Defender ?

Air Defender 23 is the largest air force deployment exercise in history of NATO which was initiated by Germany in 2018. The goal is to exercise air operations with allied air forces. The focus is on optimizing and expanding cooperation among participating nations. The scenario is modelled on a NATO Article 5 assistance scenario.

### Nations Participating in Air Defender 23

Germany led the exercise and other nations were Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom, and United States.

## India Decides to Buy 31 MQ-9B Drones (Predator) from America

On 15th June, 2023, accorded to the Acceptance of Necessity (AoN), the Indian government approved the acquisition of 31 MQ-

9B Predator drones from US manufacturer General Atomics, valued at around \$ 3 billion. These are High Altitude Long Endurance (HALE) Remotely Piloted Aircraft



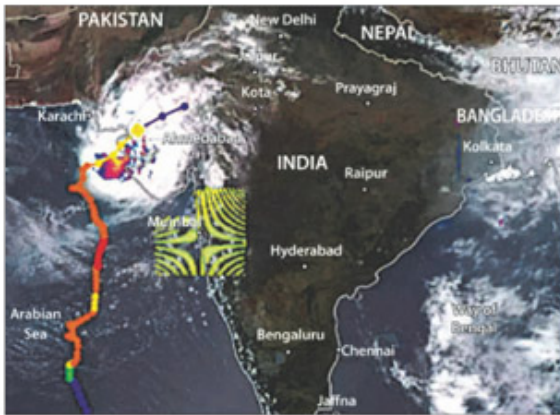
Systems (RPAS) for Tri-Services from the USA through Foreign Military Sale (FMS) route. The deal was initially approved by the US State Department. This agreement covers the production and delivery of 31 (1) 15 MQ-9B Sea Guardians and (2) 16 MQ-9B Sky Guardian drones. Both Sea Guardians and Sky Guardian drones will be used for maritime surveillance and monitoring to enhance the border security with China and Pakistan. It can conduct real-time searches and patrol above and below the ocean's surface.

Of the acquisition of 31 high-altitudes, long-endurance unmanned systems, only 10 (the first batch) drones are arriving without weapons. The drones are expected to provide major firepower to the Indian military amid increasing tensions with neighbours Beijing and Islamabad. In 2022, a top government official said that India had called off the \$ 3-billion agreement due to the Predator's 'prohibitive cost'.

### Cyclone Biparjoy

The name 'Biparjoy' was suggested by Bangladesh and the meaning of 'Biparjoy' is 'disaster' or 'calamity' in Bengali language. The naming of cyclones is done by countries on a rotational basis, with guidelines. Six Regional Specialised Meteorological Centres (RSMCs) and five regional Tropical Cyclone Warning Centres (TCWCs) are mandated for issuing advisories and naming

of tropical cyclones. Powerful winds, storm surges and lashing rains were forecast to hammer a 325 km (200-mile) stretch of coast between Mandvi in India's Gujarat state and Karachi in Pakistan.



The cyclonic storm 'Biparjoy' originated from the Arabian Sea and was moving northward, and then north-northeast wards and crossed Saurashtra and Kutch and adjoining Pakistan coasts between Mandvi (Gujarat) and Karachi (Pakistan) near Jakhau port (Gujarat) by 15th June. According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), the cyclonic storm Biparjoy made landfall near Jakhau port on 15 June, 2023. Indian government took review for the preparations to mitigate the impact of the cyclone.

### Mongolia Hosts Multinational Joint Exercise 'Ex Khaan Quest 2023'

On 19 June, 2023, The Indian Army contingent participated in the Multinational Peacekeeping Joint Exercise 'Ex Khaan Quest 2023' in Mongolia which was held from 19th June to 2nd July, 2023. Over 20 countries joined the exercise featuring participation from military contingents and observers in Mongolian. Mongolia President inaugurated the Exercise at the exercise location in Mongolia. The exercise is co-sponsored by Mongolian Armed Forces (MAF) with association of the United States Army Pacific Command (USARPAC).



The 14-day exercise was aimed at enhancing the interoperability of the participating nations, for sharing experiences and training uniformed personnel for the United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (UNPKO). The Indian Army is represented by a contingent from the GARHWAL RIFLES.

### India Participates First Time in Annecy International Festival

On 14th June, 2023 India is participating for the first time at the Annecy International Animation Festival (AIAF). An Indian delegation led by the Secretary, Information and Broadcasting, Apurva Chandra with eminent personalities of the animation industry have been showcasing India's prowess in creating animation and VFX content for global audiences at the AIAF. India is emerging as a preferred destination of VFX and animation content for global production houses. The animation and VFX market in India was pegged to be valued at ₹ 109 billion in 2021, with the VFX business alone amounting to ₹ 50 billion. This figure is expected to grow in upcoming years. India's participation at Annecy therefore assumes greater importance as the country showcases its abilities in the sector to international buyers.

### King Charles III and Queen Camilla Crowned at Westminster Abbey During the Coronation

King Charles III and Queen Camilla have been crowned at Westminster Abbey, marking the symbolic beginning of a new royal era in Britain, and an extraordinary moment for a man who has spent more than seven decades in waiting. In an elaborate and archaic ritual not seen in Britain since 1953, the king was anointed with holy oil and swore the Oath of Kings, before the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, placed St. Edward's crown on his head, to a cry of 'God save the king'. In front of 2,300 guests including more than 100 heads of state, the king also vowed to maintain the Protestant religion in the UK, and to preserve the rights of the Church of England, as set out in an act of parliament.



King Charles III and Queen Camilla during the coronation.

### Prime Minister's Visit to Australia

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi held a bilateral meeting with Mr. Anthony Albanese, Prime Minister of Australia on 24 May, 2023 at Admiralty House in Sydney, Australia. Both leaders recalled their productive 1st Annual Leaders' Summit held in March 2023 in New Delhi and reaffirmed their commitment to further broadening and deepening of the multifaceted India-Australia Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. Both leaders welcomed the signing of the India-Australia Migration and Mobility Partnership Arrangement.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Australian PM Anthony Albanese in Sydney, on 23 May, 2023.



ment (MMPA), which will further facilitate mobility of students, professionals, researchers, academics and others, including through a new skilled pathway named MATES (Mobility Arrangement for Talented Early Professionals Scheme) specifically created for India.

### G7 Summit Hosted by Japan, Prime Minister Modi Attends

G7 concluded its annual summit with the release of the G7 Hiroshima Leaders' Communiqué on May 21, 2023. Japan, this year's G7 President, hosted the Summit in Hiroshima, where the leaders of the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, and Japan, along with representatives from the European Union and other invited guests, met to discuss a range of pressing global challenges.



The Leaders' Communiqué featured commitments and statements on a range of topics including climate, health, food security, and technology. However, the war in Ukraine, nuclear nonproliferation, and economic security were the most prominent.

### The QUAD Summit 2023 in Japan

On May 20, 2023, President Joseph R. Biden, Jr., Prime Minister Anthony Albanese of Australia, Prime Minister Kishida Fumio of Japan, and Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India met in Hiroshima for the fifth convening of the QUAD Leaders' Summit. The QUAD is committed to supporting the region's development, stability, and prosperity to benefit the people of the Indo-Pacific. The leaders' ambitious efforts include major initiatives on infrastructure, maritime security, public-private partnership, climate, health, critical and emerging technologies, and space. The Leaders agreed to continue their regular dialogue and maintain the momentum of QUAD engagement. In this context, Prime Minister Narendra Modi invited QUAD Leaders to India for the next QUAD Summit in 2024.



Joe Biden, Anthony Albanese, Fumio Kishida and Narendra Modi at a QUAD nations meeting on the sidelines of the G7 Summit.

"The QUAD will continue to work for the global good, human welfare, peace and prosperity. I appreciate and congratulate Prime Minister Albanese for his successful Presidency of this Summit. In 2024, we would be happy to host the QUAD Leaders' Summit in India."

### Operation Karuna

India launched 'Operation Karuna' to assist Myanmar which has been devastated by Cyclone Mocha.

The ships are carrying emergency food items, tents, essential medicines, water pumps, portable generators, clothes, sanitary and hygiene items, etc. India extended a hand of friendship to the people of Myanmar affected by Cyclone Mocha, India continues to be the first responder in the region.



### Cyclone 'Mocha'

According to the IMD (Indian Meteorological Department), Cyclone Mocha that made landfall on May 14, 2023 in Myanmar has been categorized as an Extremely Severe Cyclonic Storm and as a 'Super Cyclone' by global weather website Zoom Earth. It became the strongest cyclone on earth so far in 2023 according to Typhoon Research Center in South Korea's Jeju National University. Yemen suggested the name 'Mocha', which is supposed to be pronounced as Mokha. The cyclone has been named after a Red Sea port city known for its coffee production. The city also gave its name to the popular beverage, café Mocha. The cyclone originated in the Bay of Bengal.

### Prime Minister Honoured with the Highest Civilian Award of Papua New Guinea

In a special ceremony at the Government House, H.E. Sir Bob Dadae, Governor-General of Papua New Guinea (PNG) conferred Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi with the Grand Companion of the Order of Logohu (GCL). This is the highest civilian award of PNG and recipients of the award are titled 'Chief'.

Prime Minister traveled to Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, where he hosted the 3rd Summit of the Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC III Summit) jointly with Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea, H.E. Mr. James Marape on 22 May, 2023. Launched in 2014, FIPIC involves India and 14 Pacific Island Countries (PICs), namely, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

During this visit, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi interacted with the alumni of the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) courses from across the Pacific Island Countries. The alumni included senior government officials, leading professionals and commu-

nity leaders who have received training in India under ITEC. They are contributing to their societies using the skills gained in India.

Prime Minister Modi had bilateral engagements in Papua New Guinea. This was the first visit by an Indian Prime Minister to Papua New Guinea.

### Prime Minister Narendra Modi Unveils Mahatma Gandhi Bust in Hiroshima

On 20 May, 2023, Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled the bust of Mahatma Gandhi in Hiroshima, Japan. The Mahatma Gandhi bust has been gifted by the Government of India to the city of Hiroshima as a symbol of friendship and goodwill between India and Japan, on the occasion of the visit of the Prime Minister for the G7 Summit from 19-21 May, 2023.

The 42 inches tall bronze bust has been sculpted by Padma Bhushan awardee Shri Ram Vanji Sutar. The bust site, adjacent to the Motoyasu River, is close to iconic A-Bomb Dome that is visited by thousands of people - locals and tourists alike every day. The location has been chosen as a mark of solidarity for peace and non-violence. Mahatma Gandhi dedicated his life to peace and non-violence. The location truly resonates with the principles and life of Gandhiji, which continue to inspire the world and its leaders.



The statue of Mahatma Gandhi was a gift by India to Japan and unveiled by PM Modi.

The statue is placed near the Motoyasu River in Hiroshima. It is near the A-Bomb Dome or Genbaku Dome or Atomic Bomb Dome and is a part of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park which was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1996.

### China Sends its First Civilian Astronaut into Space

On 30 May, 2023, China sent its first civilian astronaut into space as part of a crewed mission to the Tiangong Space Station. Gui Haichao, a payload expert took off from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in northwest China. Until now, all Chinese astronauts sent into space have been members of the People's Liberation Army. China plans to land astronauts on the moon by 2030, Gui Haichao is a professor at Beijing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics. Gui Haichao is China's first civilian to be sent into space.

Tiangong (it is third and permanent space station) is expected to remain in low Earth orbit at between 400 and 450 kilometres (250 and 280 miles) above the planet for at least 10 years—realising an ambition to maintain a long-term human presence in space. The t-shaped Chinese Space Station is expected to weigh about 66 tons, considerably smaller than the International Space Station, which launched its first module in 1998 and weighed about 450 tons.

Ang Liwei was a Chinese astronaut and the first person sent into space by the Chinese space program. In 1998 he was selected from more than 1,500 candidates to enter astronaut training for China's crewed spaceflight program. On 15 October, 2003, he lifted off from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Centre in the Gobi desert in China's Gansu province. A Chang Zheng 2F rocket boosted Shenzhou 5 into space, where Yang spent 21 hours and orbited Earth 14 times.

### Recep Tayyip Erdoğan Wins Second Term as Turkish President

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan won securing victory over his rival Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu after a presidential election, in a vote that reflected Turkey's stark and persistent political polarisation. The victory for Turkey's longest-serving leader affords him another term in office as president

With 99-43% of the votes counted, Turkey's supreme election authority announced on May 28, 2023 that Erdoğan had won 52-14% of the votes, while Kılıçdaroğlu received 47-86%. With a gap of more than 2 million votes between candidates, the votes yet to be counted would not change the result.

In August 2001, Tayyip founded a new, Islamist-rooted party with ally Abdullah Gul. In 2002, the AKP won a majority in parliamentary elections. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan became Prime Minister in 2003 for the first time and then has been the directly elected President since 2014. The championed Islamist causes and has been quick to outmanoeuvre political opposition.

Florian

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94. (D) Section 61 of the Indian Evidence Act, 1872 provides that contents of document may be proved either by primary or secondary evidence.
95. (B) Section 143 of the Indian Evidence Act, 1872 provides that leading question can be asked in cross examination.
96. (A) In Anwar P.V. case admissibility of electronic evidence was upheld. In Jai Singh case, provision of restoration of surplus land to landowners was struck down by the SC. In Natwarlal Damodardas Soni case, it was held that evidence of a hostile witness can be relied upon to the extent it supports the prosecution case. In Jagir Singh case, SC distinguished between culpable homicide and murder.
97. (B) Section 31 of IPC provides that Admission act as estoppels but not as conclusive proof of the matter admitted. Confession can be both in written and oral format and is always against the person making it unlike admission.
98. (A) Section 32(1) provides for statement made by victim which is an exception to hearsay evidence.
99. (D) Negotiation is not a recognized ADR mechanism under CPC, 1908.
100. (B) Lok Adalat can only deal with civil matters and only those criminal matters which are compoundable in nature.

Florian



### **BWF Denmark Open 2023**

Weng Hong Yang of China clinched the BWF Denmark Open 2023 Men's Singles title, beating Malaysian star Lee Zii Jia 21-12, 21-6 in the final on October 22, 2023 in Odense, Denmark.

Tokyo 2020 men's doubles gold medallists Malaysian duo Aaron Chia and Soh Wooi Yik clinched the Denmark Open 2023 Men's Doubles title with a 21-13, 21-17 victory in the final over Indonesian pair of Muhammad Shohibul Fikri and Bagas Maulana.

In Women's Doubles final, the world number one pair Chen Qing Chen and Jia Yi Fan of the People's Republic of China won the Denmark Open for the second consecutive time, beating the Japanese fifth seeded pair Matsuyama Nami and Shida Chiharu 21-16, 21-13.

### **Kiran George Wins Indonesia Masters Men's Singles Title 2023**

Young Indian badminton player Kiran George clinched the Indonesia Masters 2023 Men's Singles title, beating world No. 82 Koo Takahashi of Japan 21-19, 22-20 in the final on September 10, 2023 at Medan, North Sumatra in Indonesia. It was George's second BWF World Tour Super 100 badminton title. Kiran George won the Odisha Open last year, his maiden such title.

### **BWF China Open 2023; Viktor Axelsen and An Se Young Win Singles Titles**

Viktor Axelsen from Denmark clinched the BWF China Open 2023 Men's Singles title as he defeated local lad Lu Guang Zu 21-16, 21-19 in the final on September 10, 2023 in Changzhou, China. With the title triumph at the China Open 2023, a

BWF Super 1000 event, Viktor Axelsen has won all of the seven tournaments of this level on the BWF Tour. A BWF Super 1000 event is only second to the World Tour Finals on the BWF World tour and winning it is a fabulous achievement.

South Korean star shuttler An Se Young emerged champion of the BWF China Open 2023 Women's Singles title, beating Japan's Akane Yamaguchi 21-10, 21-19 in the final.

### **BWF Australian Open 2023; India's HS Prannoy Finishes Runner-Up in Men's Singles Event**

China's Weng Hong Yang clinched the BWF Australian Open 2023 Men's Singles title as he prevailed over Indian badminton star HS Prannoy 21-9, 21-23, 22-20 in the final on August 6, 2023 in Sydney. Prannoy had advanced to the Australian Open 2023 final after defeating fellow Indian Priyanshu Rajawat in straight games 21-18, 21-12 in the semi-final. Weng pipped Lee Zii Jia from Malaysia in another semi-final.

Beiwen Zhang of the USA clinched the BWF Australian Open Women's Singles title as she prevailed over South Korean shuttler Kim Ga Eun 20-22, 21-16, 21-8 in the final. Zhang's last BWF World Tour title came in 2018 in the India Open.

In the Women's Doubles final, Korean duo Kim So Yeong and Kong Hee Yong emerged victorious with a straight sets victory (21-18, 21-16) over Chinese pair of Tan Ning and Liu Sheng Shu. The BWF Australian Open 2023 Men's Doubles title also went to South Korea when Korean duo Kang Min Hyuk and Seo Seung Jae defeated Japanese pair of Yugo Kobayashi and Takuro Hoki 21-17, 21-17 in the final.

Chinese duo Feng Yan Zhe and Huang Dong Ping clinched the Mixed Doubles title of the event beating Japanese combination of Hiroki Midorikawa and Saito Natsu in the final.

### **BWF World Badminton Championship 2023**

Thailand's Kunlavut Vitidsarn emerged winner of the BWF World Badminton Championship Men's Singles title as he prevailed over Kodai Naraoka of Japan 19-21, 21-18, 21-7 in the final on August 27, 2023 at the Royal Arena, in Copenhagen, Denmark. With this title triumph, Kunlavut Vitidsarn made history becoming Thailand's first men's singles world champion. Kunlavut is now the sixth man to win both junior and Senior World Singles titles. He defeated India's H.S. Prannoy in the semi-final.

An Se Young from South Korea clinched the BWF World Badminton Championship Women's Singles title, beating Carolina Marin from Spain in straight sets (21-12, 21-10) in the final. An Se is the first woman shuttler from South Korea to win the World Singles title.

Chen Qingchen and Jia Yifan of China became the first pair in history to win three consecutive Women's Doubles World titles when they registered a facile victory over Indonesia's Apriyani Rahayu and Siti Fadia Silva Ramadhanti 21-16, 21-12 in straight sets in the final.

South Korean duo Kang Minhyuk and Seo Seung-jae won the BWF World Championship Men's Doubles title.

### **India's Lakshya Sen Wins BWF Canada Open 2023 Men's Singles Title**

Yonex Canada Open 2023 was successfully organized from July 4 to 9, 2023 in Calgary, Canada. Commonwealth Games gold medallist Lakshya Sen from India defeated reigning All England champion Li Shi Feng from China 21-18, 22-20 in the final to win the men's singles title at the Canada Open 2023 on July 9, 2023 in Calgary. The victory marks Lakshya's second BWF World Tour title, having already won the India Open in January 2022. Sen secured his place in the final with a commanding win over Japan's

Kento Nishimoto, world number 11, in the semifinal.

Japan's Akane Yamaguchi won the Canada Open 2023 Women's Singles title, beating Thailand's Ratchanok Intanon in the final.

### **BWF Korea Open 2023; Indian Duo Satwiksairaj and Chirag Shetty Win Men's Doubles Title**

Denmark's Anders Antonsen emerged champion of the BWF Korea Open 2023 Men's Singles title as he prevailed over Loh Kean Yew from Singapore 11-21, 21-11, 21-19 in the final on July 23, 2023 at Jinnam stadium in Yeosu, South Korea. In the Women's Singles final of the Korea Open 2023, local girl and second seed An Se-young triumphed over Taiwan's Tai Tzu Ying 21-9, 21-15 in the final, defending the title she won last year.

India's Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty won their second title in a row, beating world number one duo Faja Alfian and Muhammed Rian Ardianto of Indonesia 17-21, 21-13, 21-14 in the men's doubles final.

Chen Qing Chen and Jia Yi Fan from China won the Korea Open Women's Doubles title as they defeated local pair of Kim Soyeong and Kong Heeyong 21-10, 17-21, 21-7 in the final. The Mixed Doubles title of the tournament also went to China when Feng Yan Zhe and Huang Dong Ping defeated Jiang Zhen Bang and Wei Ya Xin 21-16, 21-13 in an all Chinese final.

### **BWF Indonesia Open 2023; Indian Duo Satwik-Chirag Win Men's Doubles Title**

The World and Olympic champion Viktor Axelsen from Denmark clinched the BWF Indonesia Open 2023 Men's Singles title beating local lad Anthony Sinisuka Ginting 21-14, 21-13 in the final on June 18, 2023 at Jakarta's Istora Senayan arena. Axelsen clinched the Indonesia Open 2023 for third time in a row. With this title victory, Axelsen joined the ranks of Indonesian greats-Ardy Wiranata (1990-92), Taufik Hidayat (2002-04) and Malaysian star Lee Chong Wei (2009-11) to win the Indonesia Open three consecutive times. It is Axelsen's ninth Super 1000 title victory.

Olympic champion Chen Yufei from China emerged champion of the BWF Indonesia Open 2023 Women's Singles title as she defeated Carolina Marin from Spain 21-18, 21-19 in the final on June 18. Like Axelsen, Chen won all of her matches in Jakarta in straight games.



**Satwik and Chirag with Indonesian Open 2023 Men's Doubles title.**

Olympic silver medallists Zheng Siwei and Huang Yaqiong from China thrashed Japanese pair of Watanabe Yuta and Higashino Arisa 21-14, 21-11 in the final to win the BWF Indonesia Open 2023 Mixed Doubles title.

In Women's Doubles Summit clash, fifth-seeded Baek Ha Na and Lee So Hee of the Republic of Korea defeated Japan's Fukushima Yuki and Hirota Sayaka in straight games 22-20, 21-10 to win the title.

Indian duo Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty scripted history as they defeated Malaysia's world champions Aaron Chia and Soh Wooi Yik 21-17, 21-18 in the final to clinch India's first BWF Super 1000 doubles success. They received US \$ 92,500 as the prize money for being the champions in the BWF Indonesia Open 2023.



### **Asian Athletics Championships 2023; Japan Emerges Overall Champion**

Asian Athletics Championships 2023 was successfully organized from July 12 to 16, 2023 at the Suphachalasai National Stadium in Bangkok, Thailand. Hundreds of athletes from Asian countries participated in the 25th edition of the mega athletics event of the Asian continent in different athletic events. The event was held after a gap of four years after the 2021 edition in Hangzhou, the People's Republic of China was cancelled due to COVID-19. Last time Doha hosted the Asian Athletics Championships in 2019.

Japan emerged the overall champion of the 25th Asian Athletics Championship 2023 by securing the top position on the medal table with total 37 medals including 16 gold and 11 silver medals. China finished second after Japan on the medal tally in terms of number of medals. China won total 22 medals including 8 gold and 8 silver medals.

India registered its strong presence on the medal tally by securing the third place after Japan and China with total 27 medals including 6 gold and 12 silver medals in its kitty.

### **19th World Athletics Championships 2023; USA Emerges Overall Champion**

The 19th edition of World Athletics Championships 2023 was

<b>19th World Athletics Championships 2023 : Top 10 Medal Winning Countries</b>					
Rank	Country	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
1	USA	12	8	9	29
2	Canada	4	2	0	6
3	Spain	4	1	0	5
4	Jamaica	3	5	4	12
5	Kenya	3	3	4	10
6	Ethiopia	2	4	3	9
7	Great Britain and NI	2	3	5	10
8	Netherlands	2	1	2	5
9	Norway	2	1	1	4
10	Sweden	2	1	0	3

successfully organized from August 19 to 27, 2023 at the National Athletics Centre in Budapest, Hungary. The United States of America emerged the overall champion of the World Athletics Championships 2023 by securing top position on the medal table with total 29 medals win including 12 gold and 8 silver medals.

Tokyo Olympics champion Neeraj Chopra won India's only medal in Budapest a gold in the men's javelin throw competition. The medal also meant Neeraj Chopra became the first Indian athlete to become a world champion. This remarkable feat by Neeraj was accomplished through a commanding javelin throw of 88.17 meters during the men's javelin final on August 27.



### India Wins Asia Cup (Men's) 2023 Title; Claims Title for Record Extending 8th Time

India men's cricket team led by skipper Rohit Sharma clinched the Asia Cup 2023 title beating host Sri Lanka by 10 wickets in the one-sided final on September 17, 2023 at R. Premadasa Stadium in Colombo. It was India's record extending 8th title victory in Asian men's cricket. Winning the toss, Sri Lankan team decided to bat first. But, Indian pacers led by Mohammed Siraj ripped apart the Sri Lankan batting line-up and restricted them on just 50 runs. Siraj took six wickets on just 21 runs cost to help his team get a splendid start in the final. Siraj was adjudged the Player of the final match.

India chased down 51 runs target in just 6.1 overs without losing any wickets with 263 balls to spare. This was India's biggest winning margin in terms of balls remaining. The previous best was against Kenya in 2001, where they chased down a target of 91 with 231 balls to spare.

- It was the 16th edition of the Asia Cup 2023 which was jointly organized by Sri Lanka and Pakistan from August 30 to September 17, 2023.
- Apart from the two finalists sides, Pakistan, Bangladesh,

Nepal and Afghanistan took part in this Asian cricket event.

- Indian spinner Kuldeep Yadav was declared Player of the Tournament.
- Rohit Sharma was the captain of the champion side while Dasun Shanaka was the captain of the Sri Lankan team.
- Winning the Asia Cup 2023, Rohit Sharma became the third India captain after Azharuddin and MS Dhoni, to win the Asia Cup twice. Rohit had won the Asia Cup in 2018 in the UAE before this one in Sri Lanka. Azhar won the title in 1991 and 1995 while Dhoni clinched it in 2010 and 2016.

### Dipendra Singh Airee Scores Fastest Half-century in T20 International Cricket; Team-mate Kushal Malla Scores Fastest Century in T20I in The Same Match

Nepal's Dipendra Singh Airee scored the fastest half-century in T20 International cricket on September 27, 2023 in a match against Mongolia in the Asian Games event in Hangzhou, China. He consumed only 9 deliveries to set the record of the fastest half-century in T20I and improved the previous one held by India's Yuvraj Singh made in the 2007 T20 World Cup against England. Airee scored 8 sixes and 1 doubles to get the record in just 9 balls. Dipendra remained unbeaten on 52 off 10 balls, his knock was studded with eight sixes.

Kushal Malla, who smashed an unbeaten century in just 34 balls, became the first cricketer from Nepal to score a ton in the T20 Cricket. Kushal Malla broke the record for the fastest men's T20I century held previously by a trio of players including India captain Rohit Sharma. Malla took just 34 deliveries to reach his century in Hangzhou, surpassing the 35-ball century efforts of Rohit and David Miller in 2017 and Sudesh Wickramasekara in 2019. In the group match of the ongoing Asian Games, Nepal put on a massive total of 314/3 against Mongolia. In reply, Mongolia were all out for 41 as Nepal claimed an emphatic 273-run victory.

### Ajit Agarkar Appointed Chairman of Indian Senior Men's Cricket Selection Committee

Former India all-rounder Ajit Agarkar was appointed as the Chairman of the Indian Senior Men's Cricket Selection Committee as the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) on July 4, 2023 made the announcement for his appointment. The BCCI, in a press release, announced that its Cricket Advisory Committee (CAC) consisting of Sulakshana Naik, Ashok Malhotra and Jatin Paranjape recommended Agarkar for the position of selector in the men's cricket selection committee. Agarkar, 45, takes over the post which has been lying vacant since February this year following Chetan Sharma's ouster after a sting operation carried out on him by a TV channel landed him in trouble.

### South Zone Wins Duleep Trophy 2023

South Zone clinched the Duleep Trophy 2023, one of the most prestigious trophies in the domestic Indian cricket, beating defending champions West Zone by 75 runs on July 16, 2023 at Chinnaswamy Stadium, in Bengaluru.

- Priyank Panchal was the skipper of the West Zone while Hanuma Vihari was the captain of the champion side South Zone.
- Vidwath Kaverappa *won* player of the match award for his 8-wicket haul in the final.

### 'Pakistan A' Clinches ACC Men's Emerging Teams Asia Cup 2023

Defending champion 'Pakistan A' cricket team successfully retained the Asian Cricket Council (ACC) Men's Emerging Teams Asia Cup 2023 by defeating India A by 128 runs in the finals at R. Premadasa Stadium, Colombo, Sri Lanka on July 23, 2023.

- It was the fifth edition of the tournament held from July 13 to 23, 2023 in Sri Lanka.
- The eight teams participated in the event including India A, Sri Lanka A, Bangladesh A, Afghanistan A, Oman A, Pakistan A, Nepal A and United Arab Emirates.

- The list of teams that won the Cup includes India (2013), Sri Lanka (2017), Sri Lanka (2018), Pakistan (2019) and Pakistan (2023).
- Nishant Sindhu from India was declared the Player of the Tournament.

### Australia Wins ICC World Test Championship 2023 Title; India Finishes Runner-up for Second Consecutive Time

Australia emerged champion of the ICC World Test Championship 2023 on June 11, 2023 as it trounced India by 209 runs on the fifth day of the final at the Oval in London.

Australia becomes the second team after New Zealand to win the coveted Mace for ICC World Test champions while it was second consecutive defeat for India in WTC finals.

- Pat Cummins was the skipper of Australian team while Rohit Sharma led the Indian squad as the captain.
- Australian batsman Travis Head was declared player of the final Test of the Championship for his great ton of 163 runs.
- Australia won the ICC Test Championship mace for the first time, and was also awarded the cash prize of US \$ 1.6 million, while India won US \$ 800,000 for being runner-up.



### Mohun Bagan Wins Durand Cup 2023 Title

Mohun Bagan Super Giant emerged champion of the Durand Cup 2023, the prestigious domestic football trophy as it prevailed over its arch rival East Bengal 1-0 in the final on September 3, 2023 at the Salt Lake Stadium in Kolkata. This title triumph ended Mohun Bagan's 23 year title drought and made it the most successful team in the event. With this victory, Mohun Bagan SG became the first team in Durand Cup history to win 17 titles. With 16 titles, East Bengal are the second-most successful team in the Durand Cup.

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Mohun Bagan's previous Durand Cup title came in 2000. They made it to the finals in 2004, 2009 and 2019 but lost on all three occasions.

Mohun Bagan's Australian forward Dimitri Petratos struck the only goal in the final and helped his team win the title.

It was the 132nd edition of the Durand Cup in which total 24 teams took part.

### Spain Emerges Champion of the FIFA Women's World Cup 2023

Spain emerged champion of the FIFA Women's World Cup 2023, its maiden world title in women's football, as it prevailed over England 1-0 in the final on August 20, 2023 at the Accor Stadium in Sydney, Australia. Spanish team skipper Olga Carmona scored the only and decisive goal of the final to help her team win the title.

Spain defeated Sweden 2-1 in the semi-final while England secured its place in the final with a 3-1 victory over host Australia in another semi-final. Sweden secured the third place in the tournament as it pipped Australia 2-0 in the match to decide the third place in the event.

Total 32 teams from across the globe took part in the mega football event which began on July 20, 2023. The teams were divided in 8 groups comprising 4 teams in each group. Host Australia was in Group B while champion Spain was in Group C.

### FIFA Women's World Cup 2023; Major Award Winners :

- Young Player of the Tournament : Salma Paralluelo, Spain

(Spain's 19-year-old star Salma Paralluelo was awarded Young Player of the Tournament after scoring as a substitute in both the semifinal and quarterfinal.)

- Golden Glove : Mary Earps, England
- Golden Boot : Hinata Miyazawa, Japan (Golden Boot for scoring a tournament-high five goals)
- Golden Ball : Aitana Bonmati, Spain

### India Wins SAFF Championship 2023

Indian men's football team emerged champion of the South Asian Football Championship, better known as SAFF Championship 2023 as the Indian team prevailed over Kuwait 5-4 in a thrilling penalty shootout at the Sree Kanteerava Stadium in Bengaluru on July 4, 2023. India won its ninth SAFF Championship 2023 in 14 editions. This was India's second silverware on the trot after clinching the Intercontinental Cup last month.

Both the finalists remained 1-1 in the regular time of the game. In regulation time, the newly-crowned AIFF Player of the Year Lallianzuala Chhangte (39') had equalised for India after Shabaib Al Khaldi (14') had given the Kuwait football team the early lead. Hajjeia was the captain of Kuwait team while Sunil Chhetri was the skipper of the Indian side.

### Manchester City Wins FA Cup 2023

Manchester City won FA Cup 2023 title as it prevailed over Manchester United 2-1 in the final on June 3, 2023 at Wembley Stadium. It was



Jubilant Spanish team after winning FIFA Women's World Cup 2023 in Sydney.



Manchester City team celebrates its Champions League 2022-23 title triumph.

the 7th time that Manchester City won the FA Cup. It is a double delight for the City as the side had also won the Premier League title this season.

### Manchester City Wins UEFA Champions League 2022-23 Title

Manchester City emerged champion of the UEFA Champions League 2022-23 title, beating Inter Milan 1-0 in the final on June 10, 2023 at Ataturk Olympic Stadium in Istanbul, Turkey. With the first UEFA Champions League title victory, Manchester City completed the prestigious treble as it had already won the Premier League and the FA Cup titles This season. Spanish midfielder Rodri's 68th-minute goal helped the Manchester City lift the coveted trophy of the European football. In being crowned champions of Europe, the City matched the treble achieved by Manchester United, another British club, in 1999 of lifting the Premier League, FA Cup and Champions League crowns in the same season.

### Zlatan Ibrahimovic Announces Retirement From Football

AC Milan's striker Zlatan Ibrahimovic from Sweden announced his retirement from professional football after he played season's final game against Hellas Verona on June 4, 2023.

### Uruguay Wins FIFA Under-20 World Cup 2023

Uruguay emerged champion of the FIFA Under-20 World Cup 2023 as it prevailed over Italy 1-0 in the final on June 11, 2023 at the Diego Maradona Stadium in La Plata, Argentina, ending a run of four consecutive title triumphs for European teams in the tournament. Luciano Rodríguez scored the only and decisive goal in the final for Uruguay to help the South American team secure its first FIFA Under-20 Football World Cup.

### India Emerges Champion of Intercontinental Cup 2023

India clinched the Intercontinental Cup 2023, a coveted football

title, beating Lebanon 2-0 in the final at the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar, Odisha on June 18, 2023. It was India's first win over Lebanon in 47 years. Indian captain Sunil Chhetri gave the hosts 1-0 lead in the first minute of the second half of the summit clash. Indian forward Lallianzuala Chhangte scored in the 66th minute and doubled India's lead.

This was the third edition of the Intercontinental Cup. The Indian football team upset Kenya to win the inaugural Intercontinental Cup in 2018 while North Korea clinched the crown in 2019 by beating Tajikistan.

### Barcelona Wins La Liga Football Crown 2023

Barcelona FC emerged winner of the La Liga title 2023 with a 4-2 victory over city rivals Espanyol on May 14, 2023. Barcelona has won its Spanish football league title for the first time since 2019 and 27th La Liga title overall. Real Madrid secured second position on the points table after Barcelona.

### Manchester City Wins Premier League 2023 Title

Manchester City won the English Premier League title for the third season in a row after second-placed Arsenal were defeated 1-0 on May 20, 2023. City were confirmed as champions for the fifth time in six seasons. Arsenal, who enjoyed an eight-point lead over City as recently as mid-March, needed at least a point to stay mathematically in the hunt, but went down 1-0 to Nottingham Forest on May 20.



Events	Winners	Runner-Up
Qatar GP 2023	Max Verstappen (Red Bull Team)	Oscar Piastri
US Grand Prix 2023	Max Verstappen (Red Bull Team)	Lando Norris (McLaren)
Italian Grand Prix 2023	Max Verstappen (Red Bull Team)	Sergio Perez
Singapore Grand Prix 2023	Carlos Sainz Jr (Ferrari team)	Lando Norris (McLaren)
Japanese Grand Prix 2023	Max Verstappen (Red Bull Team)	Lando Norris (McLaren)
Dutch Grand Prix 2023	Max Verstappen (Red Bull Team)	Fernando Alonso
Austrian Grand Prix 2023	Max Verstappen (Red Bull Team)	Charles Leclerc (Ferrari)
British Grand Prix 2023	Max Verstappen (Red Bull Team)	Lando Norris (McLaren)
Hungarian Grand Prix 2023	Max Verstappen (Red Bull Team)	Lando Norris (McLaren)
Spanish Grand Prix 2023	Max Verstappen (Red Bull Team)	Lewis Hamilton
Canadian Grand Prix 2023	Max Verstappen (Red Bull Team)	Fernando Alonso
Miami GP 2023	Max Verstappen (Red Bull Team)	Sergio Perez
Monaco Grand Prix 2023	Max Verstappen (Red Bull Team)	Fernando Alonso



### Europe Wins Ryder Cup 2023

Team Europe clinched the Ryder Cup 2023, beating Team USA by 16-5 to 11-5 on October 1, 2023 at the Marco Simone Golf and Country Club in Rome, Italy. Team Europe needed just four more points to take back the Ryder Cup after the Americans won in 2021 on the final day of the event. Tommy Fleetwood's birdie on the 16th hole topped Rickie Fowler and toppled the Americans on the final day of the Ryder Cup 2023. The host team has now won five straight Ryder Cups as the United States' futility on European courses continues. The Americans haven't won in Europe since 1993. It was the 44th edition of the Ryder Cup.

### Collin Morikawa Wins Zozo Championship Golf Title 2023

American golfer Collin Morikawa emerged champion of the Zozo Championship 2023 title at Accordia Golf Narashino Country Club in Inzai, Chiba, Japan on October 22, 2023 with a six stroke victory over his nearest rivals Eric Cole and Beau Hossler with a bogey-free 7-under 63 in the final round. With this Zozo championship title in 2023, Collin claimed his sixth Tour title and first since the 2021 British Open. Collin got \$ 1,530,000 as prize money and a trophy for this title triumph.

### Brooks Koepka Wins PGA Championship 2023

American golfer Brooks Koepka emerged champion of the PGA Championship 2023 for the third time, clinching his fifth major title on May 21, 2023 at Oak Hill Country Club in Rochester, New York. Koepka shot a three-under 67 in the final round of the 2023 PGA Championship to outlast Viktor Hovland and finish minus-nine for the tournament for a two-stroke win. With the win, Koepka has five major championships. He joins an elite list of golfers with five majors, which includes Byron Nelson and Seve Ballesteros.



Koepka with his PGA Championship 2023 trophy



### India Wins Inaugural Men's Hockey 5s Asia Cup

India emerged triumphant in the inaugural Men's Hockey 5s Asia Cup 2023 title as it prevailed over its arch rival Pakistan 2-0 in a penalty shootout in the final on September 2, 2023 in Salalah, Oman after both teams were locked at 4-4 in regulation time. With the win, India have booked their place in the FIH Men's Hockey 5s World Cup 2024. For India, Mohammed Raheel (19th and 26th minutes), Jugraj Singh (7th) and Maninder Singh (10th) were the goal scorers during the regulation time, whereas Gurjot Singh and Maninder Singh managed to beat the Pakistani goalkeeper in the shootout.

Abdul Rehman (5th), captain Abdul Rana (13th), Zikriya Hayat (14th) and Arshad Liaqat (19th) were on target for Pakistan in the regulation time in the final.

### Indian Men's Hockey Wins Asian Champions Trophy 2023

Indian men's hockey team emerged champion of the Asian Champions Trophy 2023, beating Malaysia 4-3 in the final on August 12, 2023 at

the Mayor Radhakrishnan Stadium in Chennai. With this fourth title victory in the tournament, India became the most successful team in the Asian Champions Trophy, ahead of three-time champions Pakistan.

Jugraj Singh (9'), Harmanpreet Singh (45'), Gurjant Singh (45') and Akashdeep Singh (56') scored the goals for India in the final while Abu Kamal Azrai (14'), Razie Rahim (18'), Aminudin Muhamad (28') netted for Malaysia in the match.

### India Wins Men's Hockey Junior Asia Cup 2023 Title

India emerged champion of the Men's Hockey Junior Asia Cup 2023 title as it defeated its archrival Pakistan 2-1 in the final on June 1, 2023 at the Salalah Sports Complex in Salalah, Oman. Angad Bir Singh (13th minute) and Arajjeet Singh Hundal (20th minute) scored for India while Pakistan managed to pull one back through Abdul Basharat (37th minute). This was India's fourth title, having earlier won the tournament in 2004, 2008 and 2015. Pakistan have won the tournament in 1987, 1992 and 1996.

In the semi-finals, India trounced the Republic of Korea 9-1 while Pakistan defeated Malaysia 6-2.

### Netherlands Wins FIH Hockey Pro League Title 2022-23

With their 4-2 win over Belgium on July 4, 2023, Netherlands men finished their season four campaign on 35 points, making them champions of the FIH Hockey Pro League 2022-23 season. With this win, Netherlands became the first team in the men's competition to win a second title, successfully defending their first title, won in the competition last year.

#### FIH Hockey Pro League 2022-23 : Team Rankings

No.	Team	Matches	Won	Lost	Draw	Points
1	Netherlands	16	10	2	4	35
2	Great Britain	16	8	3	5	32
3	Belgium	16	10	6	0	30
4	India	16	8	5	3	30
5	Spain	16	8	5	3	27
6	Germany	16	6	8	2	22
7	Australia	16	5	8	3	19
8	Argentina	16	3	7	6	18
9	New Zealand	16	0	14	2	3



## India Wins Women's Junior Asia Cup 2023

Indian women defeated the Republic of Korea 2-1 in a closely-fought final on June 11, 2023 in Kakamigahara, Japan to clinch its maiden Women's Junior Asia Cup 2023. For India, Annu (21') and Neelam (40') scored goals in the final while Seoyeon Park (24') scored the solitary goal for Korea in the summit clash. India had secured a spot in the FIH Women's Junior World Cup 2023 in Chile by reaching the final in Japan.

Host Japan beat China 2-1 to become the third team to qualify for the World Cup scheduled this year.



## Divya Deshmukh Wins Tata Steel Chess India Women's Rapid Chess Title 2023

India's Divya Deshmukh was crowned the women's rapid chess champion at the Tata Steel Chess 2023 in Kolkata, on September 2, 2023 as she defeated the second seed and compatriot Koneru Humpy with the black pieces to win the title with a score of 7 points out of 9 rounds ahead of the reigning world champion Ju Wenjun. Divya emerged on top of the points table with 7 points which she earned with 6 victories, 2 draws in 9 rounds. She suffered a loss in eight and penultimate round against IM Polina Shuvalova with the white pieces.

Ju Wenjun from China finished runner up in the event with 6.5 points and Russia's Polina Shuvalova finished third with a score of 5.5 points.

## Magnus Carlsen Wins FIDE Chess World Cup 2023; India's R. Praggnanandhaa Finishes Runner-Up

GM Magnus Carlsen from Norway clinched the FIDE Chess World Cup 2023 as he defeated GM Rameshbabu Praggnanandhaa from India 2.5-1.5 in the final in Baku on August 24, 2023. It was the first World Cup crown for Carlsen as the

32-year-old added the missing piece to his decorated trophy cabinet. With the silver medal finish at the Chess World Cup, Praggnanandhaa booked his berth at the Candidates Tournament, becoming only the second Indian to do so. In the third-place playoffs, GM Fabiano Caruana convincingly defeated GM Nijat Abasov in both rapid tiebreaks for a 3-1 victory and third place in the mega chess event.

## R. Praggnanandhaa Wins Super GM Chess Tournament 2023

Indian chess prodigy and Grandmaster R. Praggnanandhaa emerged champion in the V. Geza Hetenyi Memorial Super GM chess tournament 2023 on July 19, 2023 in Hungary by securing the top position on points table with 6.5 points in the 10-player event. After nine rounds of play, Praggnanandhaa ended up a point ahead of M. Amin Tabatabaei (Iran) and Russia's Sanan Sjugirov. Praggnanandhaa posted five wins, drew three games and suffered only one defeat in the tournament, at the hands of Amin Tabatabaei in the fifth round. In the final round, he secured a draw against Polish GM Radoslaw Wojtaszek with white pieces. The teenaged Indian GM now has a live rating of 2707.3.

## Vuppala Praneeth Becomes 82nd Chess Grandmaster from India

Telangana Chess player Praneeth Vuppala became India's 82nd Chess Grandmaster after he achieved the required 2500 FIDE rating points during the Baku Open tournament on May 13, 2023 as he defeated GM Hans Niemann of USA during the final round of Baku Open 2023 to clinch the Grandmaster title. Praneeth had already achieved three GM norms earlier. He clinched his first GM-norm and International Master (IM) title at the tournament in March 2022. He earned his second GM-norm at the Biel MTO in July 2022, followed by his final GM-norm nine months later at the second Chessable Sunway Formentera Open 2023.

He is the sixth Grandmaster from the Telangana State.



## Italian Open 2023; Daniil Medvedev and Elena Rybakina Win Singles Titles

Daniil Medvedev from Russia clinched the Italian Open 2023 Men's Singles title as he prevailed over Holger Rune from Denmark 7-5, 7-5 in the final on May 21, 2023 in Rome. It was Daniil's his sixth ATP Masters 1000 title, his fifth title of the 2023 season, and his maiden clay court trophy. It was 20th ATP title of Daniil. He pipped Stefanos Tsitsipas in the semi-final.

Elena Rybakina of Kazakhstan won the Italian Open Women's Singles title defeating Ukraine's Anhelina Kalinina 6-4, 1-0 in the final. It was Rybakina's second title of the year. With this title triumph, Rybakina won the fifth singles title of her career.

Hugo Nys and Jan Zielinski captured their first ATP Masters 1000 title as a team on May 21 when they defeated Dutchman Robin Haase and Botić van de Zandschulp 7-5, 6-1 in the final. Women tennis players, Storm Hunter and Elise Mertens won their first doubles title at the Italian Open by defeating top seeds Coco Gauff and Jessica Pegula 6-4, 6-4 in the final.

## Nicolas Jarry Wins ATP Geneva Open 2023

Unseeded Nicolas Jarry from Chile clinched the ATP Geneva Open 2023 Singles title on May 27, 2023 in Geneva as he outplayed Grigor Dimitrov [7-6 (1), 6-1] in the final. Jarry pipped Alexander Zverev in the semi-final. It was Jarry's third career ATP title, all of them coming at clay-court events in the lowest 250-level.

Jamie Murray and Michael Venus clinched the ATP Geneva Open Doubles title, beating Marcel Granollers and Horacio Zeballos [7-6(6), 7-6(3)] in the final.

**Results in Brief :****Wimbledon Open 2023**

Events	Winners	Runners-up	Score
Men's Singles	Carlos Alcaraz (Spain)	Novak Djokovic (Serbia)	1-6, 7-6(6), 6-1, 3-6, 6-4
Women's Singles	Marketa Vondrousova (Czech Republic)	Ons Jabeur (Tunisia)	6-4, 6-4
Men's Doubles	Neal Skupski (Britain) & Wesley Koolhof (Netherlands)	Marcel Granollers (Spain) & Horacio Zeballos (Argentina)	6-4, 6-4
Women's Doubles	Hsieh Su-Wei (Taiwan) & Barbora Strycova (Czech Republic)	Elise Mertens (Belgium) & Storm Hunter (Australia)	7-5, 6-4
Mixed Doubles	Mate Pavic (Croatia) & Lyudmyla Kichenok (Ukraine)	Joran Vliegen (Belgium) & Xu Yifan (China)	6-4, 6-7(9), 6-3

**French Open 2023**

Events	Winners	Runners-Up	Score
Men's Singles	Novak Djokovic (Serbia)	Casper Ruud (Norway)	7-6(1), 6-3, 6-5
Women's Singles	Iga Swiatek (Poland)	Karolina Muchova (Czech Republic)	6-2, 5-7, 6-4
Men's Doubles	Ivan Dodig (Croatia) and Austin Krajicek (USA)	Sander Gille and Joran Vliegen (Both from Belgium)	6-4, 6-1
Women's Doubles	Hsieh Su-Wei (Taiwan) and Wang Xinyu (China)	Leylah Fernandez (Canada) and Taylor Townsend (USA)	1-6, 7-6(5), 6-1
Mixed Doubles	Tim Putz (Germany) and Miyu Kato (Japan)	Bianca Andreescu (Canada) and Michael Venus (New Zealand)	4-6, 6-4, 10-6

**China Open 2023**

Events	Winners	Runners-up	Score
Men's Singles	Jannik Sinner (Italy)	Daniil Medvedev (Russia)	7-6 (2), 7-6 (2)
Women's Singles	Iga Swiatek (Poland)	Liudmila Samsonova (Russia)	6-2, 6-2
Men's Doubles	Ivan Dodig (Croatia) & Austin Krajicek (USA)	Wesley Koolhof (Netherlands) & Neal Skupski (UK)	6-7(12), 6-3, 10-5
Women's Doubles	Marie Bouzkova (Czech Republic) & Sara Sorribes Tormo (Spain)	Chan Hao-ching (Taiwan) & Giuliana Olmos (Mexico)	3-6, 6-0, 10-4

**2023 Rolex Shanghai Masters**

Events	Winners	Runners-up	Score
Singles	Hurbert Hurkacz (Poland)	Andrey Rublev (Russia)	6-3, 3-6, 7-6 (10/8)
Doubles	Marcel Granollers (Spain) & Horacio Zeballos (Argentina)	Rohan Bopanna (India) & Matthew Edben (Australia)	5-7, 6-2, 10-7

**US Open 2023**

Events	Winners	Runners-up	Score
Men's Singles	Novak Djokovic (Serbia)	Daniil Medvedev (Russia)	6-3, 7-6 (5), 6-3
Women's Singles	Coco Gauff (USA)	Aryna Sabalenka (Belarus)	2-6, 6-3, 6-2
Men's Doubles	Rajiv Ram (USA) & Joe Salisbury (UK)	Rohan Bopanna (India) & Matthew Edben (Australia)	2-6, 6-3, 6-4
Women's Doubles	Gabriela Dabrowski (Canada) & Erin Routliffe (New Zealand)	Laura Siegemund (Germany) & Vera Zvonareva (Russia)	7-6 (9), 6-3
Mixed Doubles	Anna Danilina (Kazakhstan) & Harri Heliövaara (Finland)	Jessica Pegula (USA) & Austin Krajicek (USA)	6-3, 6-4

## MISCELLANEOUS

### 19th Asian Games Organized Successfully in Hangzhou; China Emerges the Overall Champion With Top Spot on Medals Tally

19th Asian Games, also referred to as the Asiad, was successfully organized in Hangzhou, China from September 23 to October 8, 2023. Chinese President Xi Jinping officially opened the 19th Asian Games on September 23, 2023 at Hangzhou Olympic Sports Centre Stadium in the Eastern city of Hangzhou in a spectacular opening ceremony. International Olympic Committee President Thomas Bach and Syrian President Bashar al-Assad were the notable dignitaries in the opening ceremony. Approximately 12,000 athletes from 45 participating nations took part in the 40 sports events in 61 disciplines with total 483 golds at stake in the 19th Asian Games.

Tokyo Olympic bronze medalist in boxing Lovlina Borgohain and the captain of men's hockey captain Harmanpreet Singh led the historic 655-strong Indian delegation as the flag-bearer in the opening ceremony of Asian Games at Hangzhou Olympic Sports Center Stadium.

The 19th iteration of the Asian Games boasts a trio of mascots, all of which take the form of robots and collectively bear the name 'Memories of Jiangnan.' This nomenclature pays homage to a poem composed by the esteemed Tang dynasty poet Bai Juyi. These three robot mascots are affectionately known as Chenchen, Congcong, and Lianlian, each symbolizing the vibrant culture and rich heritage of Hangzhou.



19th Asian Games Mascots

Host China emerged the overall champion of the 19th Asian Games

### India's Gold Medal Winners in 19th Asian Games at Hangzhou

No.	Sport	Name	Medal
1.	Cricket (Men's team)	Team India	Gold
2.	Badminton (Men's doubles)	Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty	Gold
3.	Kabaddi (Men's kabaddi)	Team India	Gold
4.	Shooting (Men's 10m air rifle team)	Divyansh Singh Panwar, Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar and Rudranksh Patil	Gold
5.	Cricket (Women's T20 cricket)	Women's T20 cricket	Gold
6.	Equestrian (Team dressage)	Divyakriti Singh astride Adrenalin Firdof, Hriday Vipul Chhed (Chemxpro Emerald), Anush Agarwalla (Etro)	Gold
7.	Shooting (Women's 25 m pistol team)	Manu Bhaker, Esha Singh and Rhythm Sangwan	Gold
8.	Shooting (Women's 50 m rifle 3 positions)	Sift Samra	Gold
9.	Shooting (Men's 10 m air pistol team)	Sarabjot Singh, Shiva Narwal, and Arjun Singh Cheema	Gold
10.	Shooting (Men's 50 m rifle 3 positions team)	Aishwary Pratap Singh, Tomar, Swapnil Kusale and Akhil Sheoran	Gold
11.	Shooting (Women's 10 m air pistol)	Palak Gulia	Gold
12.	Tennis (Mixed doubles)	Rohan Bopanna and Rutuja Bhosale	Gold
13.	Squash (Men's team)	Team India	Gold
14.	Shooting (Men's trap team)	Kynan Chenai, Zoravar Singh Sandhu and Prithviraj Toindaman	Gold
15.	Athletics (Men's 3000m steeplechase)	Avinash Sable	Gold
16.	Athletics (Men's shot put)	Tajinderpal Singh Toor	Gold
17.	Athletics (Women's 5000 m)	Parul Chaudhary	Gold
18.	Athletics (Women's javelin throw)	Annu Rani	Gold
19.	Archery (Mixed team compound)	Jyothi Surekha Vennam and Pravin Ojas Deotale	Gold
20.	Athletics (Men's javelin throw)	Neeraj Chopra	Gold
21.	Athletics (Men's 4x400 m relay)	Anas Muhammed Yahya, Amoj Jacob, Muhammed Ajmal Variyathodi and Rajesh Ramesh	Gold
22.	Archery (Women's compound team)	Jyothi Vennam, Aditi Swami, Parneet Kaur	Gold
23.	Squash (Mixed doubles)	Dipika Pallikal, Harinder Pal Sandhu	Gold
24.	Archery (Men's compound team)	Abhishek Verma, Ojas Deotale and Prathamesh Jawkar	Gold
25.	Hockey (Men's team)	Team India	Gold
26.	Archery (Women's compound individual)	Jyothi Surekha Vennam	Gold
27.	Archery (Men's compound individual)	Ojas Pravin Deotale	Gold
28.	Kabaddi (Women's kabaddi)	Team India	Gold

in Hangzhou by securing the top spot on the medal tally with total 383 medals including 201 gold and 111 silver medals in its kitty. Japan secured the second spot on the medal tally with 188 medals including 52 gold medals.



**PR Sreejesh as flag bearer of the Indian delegation in Hangzhou at the closing ceremony of the 19th Asian Games.**

India's campaign at the 19th Asian Games in Hangzhou ended with 28 gold, 38 silver and 41 bronze to a total of 107 medals. This is the best-ever performance of the Indian contingent at the continental event. It was the first time in Asian Games history that India's medals tally crossed the three-figure mark. By doing so, India became the only fourth country after China, Japan and the Republic of Korea to win 100 or more medals in a single edition of the Asian Games.

The 19th Asian Games 2023 concluded on October 8, 2023 with a spectacular closing ceremony held at the Hangzhou Olympics Stadium in China. The event celebrated the love and unity between the participating countries, showcasing the cultural diversity and sporting excellence of the Asian nations. Renowned hockey player P.R. Sreejesh was the flag-bearer of the Indian contingent in the closing ceremony of the event. Raja

Randhir Singh, the interim President of the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA), handed over the Asian Games flag and its torch to the Japanese delegation as the 20th Asian Games will be hosted by Japan in Nagoya in 2026.

### Indian Contingent's Best Ever Performance in 4th Asian Para Games 2023

India created history at the 4th Asian Para Games 2023, ending the event with their best-ever performance of 111 medals in Hangzhou (China), held during 22-28 October, 2023. India's record-breaking medal, which is more than the 72 medals in 2018 (Jakarta), includes 29 gold medals, 31 silver and 51 bronze. In the overall leader board, India finished in 5th position which is also their best-ever standing.

India had sent its 303 athletes-191 men and 112 women to the fourth edition of the Asian Para Games, making it the country's largest contingent to the continental event. At the 2018 Asian Para Games, India had sent 190 athletes.

India competed in 17 out of 22 events, with first time participation in rowing, canoeing, lawn bowl, taekwondo, and blind football. India's track & field contingent accounted for 55 out of 111 medals, followed by para badminton (21 medals), chess (8 medals) archery (7 medals) and shooting (8 medals).

India finished fifth on the Asian Para Games 2023 behind hosts China (214 Gold medals, 167 silver medals and 140 bronze medals-total 521 medals), Iran (44 gold medals, 46

silver medals and 41 bronze medals-total 131 medals), Japan (42 gold medals, 49 silver medals and 59 bronze medals-total 150 medals and the Republic of Korea (30 gold medals, 33 silver medals and 40 bronze medals-total 103 medals).

The Indian contingent's 29 gold medals was a new record, and in 2014, they only won three gold medals. In 2023, India saw a clean sweep in club throw F51, javelin throw F46, rapid chess and discus throw F54/55/56 events. Meanwhile, India also bagged two medals across 19 events (10 in athletics, 7 in badminton, 1 each in power-lifting and shooting). Meanwhile, there were also first-ever medals in para rowing, para taekwondo and para canoe.

Women formed 37 per cent of the Indian contingent in Hangzhou, winning 40 medals out of the 111 haul. Indian athletes also created six world records, 13 Asian records and 15 Asian Para Games records. Winners of Gold medals in 4th Asian Para Games 2023 are following :

- Sumit Antil** [Men's Javelin, F64]- World Record : Reigning Paralympics champion Sumit Antil won gold medal at the Hangzhou Asian Para Games javelin throw F64 event in style with a new world record of 73.29 m.
- Sundar Singh Gurjar** [Men's Javelin, F46]-World Record : He threw the spear 68.60 m to go past the earlier world record of 67.79 m.
- Sheetal Devi** [Archery, Women's Compound Open] : Sheetal all of 16, is the only current female international archer to shoot with her feet. She won her third medal of the Games after partnering with Rakesh Kumar to bag gold in the compound mixed team event and a silver in the women's compound doubles along with Sarita.
- Pramod Bhagat** [Badminton, Men's Singles SL3] : Pramod, a two-time world champion, remains India's best-ever para badminton player.
- Avani Lekhara** [Para Shooting, Women's R2 10 m Air Rifle Stand - SH1] : The Paralympic champion added an Asian medal to her list of achievements as she

### 19th Asian Games at Hangzhou : Top 10 Countries on Medal Tally

Rank	Country	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
1	China	201	111	71	383
2	Japan	52	67	69	188
3	Republic of Korea	42	59	89	190
4	India	28	38	41	107
5	Uzbekistan	22	18	31	71
6	Chinese Taipei	19	20	28	67
7	IR Iran	13	21	20	54
8	Thailand	12	14	32	58
9	Bahrain	12	3	5	20
10	DPR Korea	11	18	10	39

### Medals Tally in 4th Asian Para Games 2023

Rank 2023	Country	Gold Medals	Silver Medals	Bronze Medals	Total Medals
1	China	214	167	140	521
2	Islamic Rep. of Iran	44	46	41	131
3	Japan	42	49	59	150
4	Republic of Korea	30	33	40	103
5	India	29	31	51	111
6	Indonesia	29	30	36	95
7	Thailand	27	26	55	108
8	Uzbekistan	25	24	30	79
9	Philippines	10	4	5	19
10	Hong Kong, China	8	15	24	47
11	Kazakhstan	8	12	21	41
12	Malaysia	7	15	17	39
13	Chinese Taipei	4	4	12	20
14	United Arab Emirates	4	4	3	11
15	Jordan	4	2	1	7
16	Iraq	3	7	4	14
17	Singapore	3	3	2	8
18	Sri Lanka	2	5	4	11
19	Saudi Arabia	2	4	3	9
20	Mongolia	2	3	3	8
21	Oman	2	2	0	4
22	Vietnam	1	10	9	20
23	Kyrgyzstan	1	2	1	4
24	Pakistan	1	0	0	1
25	Timor-Leste	0	1	0	1
26	Myanmar	0	0	3	3
27	Syrian Arab Rep.	0	0	2	2
28	Bahrain	0	0	1	1
28	Kuwait	0	0	1	1
28	Macao, China	0	0	1	1
28	Nepal	0	0	1	1
28	Qatar	0	0	1	1
28	Yemen	0	0	1	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>502</b>	<b>499</b>	<b>572</b>	<b>1573</b>

recorded a new **Asian Para Games record of 249-6** to take home the top prize.

6. **Prachi Yadav** [Para Canoe - Women's KL2] : Prachi won her second medal of the Asian Para Games, this time a gold. She had won silver on the opening day. She also became the first Indian to win a para canoe gold in the Asian Para Games.
7. **Dharmaraj Solairaj** [Men's Long Jump, T64] : He created a new **Asian and Para Games record of 6-80 m** to take top honours.
8. **Nishad Kumar** [Men's High Jump - T47] : Nishad won his career's first major gold medal at

the Asian Para Games. He had won silver at the Tokyo Paralympics as well as the 2023 World Para Athletics Championships.

9. **Haney** [Men's Javelin, F37] : Haney threw an **Asian Games record** distance of 55-97 m to win his first major medal.
10. **Suhas Yathiraj** (IAS) [Badminton, Men's Singles SL4] : Tokyo Paralympics silver medallist Suhas bettered his bronze from 2018 by winning gold in the men's SL4 final.
11. **Ankur Dhama** [Men's 1500 m, T11] : Ankur became the first Indian to win two gold medals in

a single edition of the Asian Para Games: he clinched the yellow metal in the men's T11 1500 m race as well as the T11 5000 m gold medal.

12. **Ankur Dhama** [Men's 5000 m - T11] : This was the first of two gold medals Ankur would win at the Games.
13. **Sidhartha Babu** [Shooting, R6 Mixed 50 m Rifle Prone SH1] : He won gold by securing an Asian Para Games Record score of 247-7.
14. **Rakshita Raju** [Women's 1500 m, T11]
15. **Neeraj Yadav** [Men's Discus Throw - F54/55/56] : Neeraj set a new **Asian record of 38-56 m** enroute his triumph.
16. **Sachin Khilari** [Men's Shot Put, F46] : Sachin threw the iron ball for an Asian Games record of 16-03 m.
17. **Pranav Soorma** [Men's Club Throw - F51] : India completed a clean sweep of the podium in the men's club throw [F51] and Pranav took top honours with a Games Record throw of 30-01 m.
18. **Shailesh Kumar** [Men's High Jump - T63] : Shailesh bagged the yellow metal with a new Games record of 1-82 m.
19. **Deepthi Jeevanji** [Women's 400 m - T20] : She won gold with a new Asian Para Games record timing of 56-69s.
20. **Raman Sharma** [Men's 1500 m, T38]
21. **Thulasimathi Murugesan** [Badminton, Women's Singles SU5]
22. **Praveen Kumar** [Men's High Jump - T64]
23. **Nitesh Kumar and Tarun Dhillon** [Badminton, Men's Doubles SL3/SL4]
24. **Nimisha** [Women's Long Jump, T47]
25. **Sheetal Devi and Rakesh Kumar** [Archery, Mixed Team Compound Open]
26. **Dilip Mahadu Gavit** [Men's 400 m - T47]
27. **Neeraj Yadav** [Men's javelin-throw - F55]
28. **Darpan Inani** [Chess, men's individual rapid VI-B1]
29. **Darpan Inani, Soundarya Pradhan, Ashwin Makwana** [Chess, team rapid VI-B1]

## India's Woman Sprinter Dutee Chand Gets 4 Years Ban For Doping Violation

India's fastest woman athlete Dutee Chand who has two Asian Games silver medals received, in August 2023, a four-year ban from the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) for failing two out-of-competition dope tests for selective androgen receptor modulators (SARMs) in December 2022. The international sprinter was provisionally suspended in January 2023 after the officials found 'anabolic agents/SARMs' in her urine samples. The substances are listed under the "WADA's 2023 prohibited list of non-specified substances." The ban on Dutee Chand will be effective from 3 January, 2023.

## Chennai Super Kings Emerges Champion of the Indian Premier League 2023 Title

Chennai Super Kings (CSK) led by skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni clinched the coveted BCCI-backed Indian Premier League (IPL) 2023 title for record-equalling fifth time as CSK defeated Gujarat Titans by 5 wickets in a rain-affected but thrilling clash on May 29, 2023 at Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad.

- It was the 16th edition of the Indian Premier League.
- Hardik Pandya was the skipper of the Gujarat Titans (GT) while Mahendra Singh Dhoni was the captain of the CSK.
- CSK's Devon Conway was named the Player of the final match for his blistering knock of 47 off 25 balls in the IPL 2023 final.
- Gujarat Titans' Shubman Gill was named the Most Valuable Player of the Tournament. He also won the Orange Cap for being the highest run-getter in the IPL 2023 with total 890 runs to his credit in the tournament.
- GT's Mohammad Shami claimed the Purple Cap of IPL for being the highest wicket-taker in the IPL 2023 with total 28 wickets to his credit.
- CSK got ₹ 20 crore as the prize money for being the champion while GT got ₹ 12.5 crore as a runner up.

- Shubman Gill also got the Game-changer of the Season award.
- Rajasthan Royals' Yashasvi Jaiswal was adjudged the Emerging Player of the Year.
- Delhi Capitals won the Fairplay of the Season award.
- Glenn Maxwell won the Super Striker of the Season award.

## Aadhav Arjuna Elected President of The Basketball Federation of India

Aadhav Arjuna, the President of the Tamil Nadu Basketball Association (TNBA), was elected as President of the Basketball Federation of India (BFI) in the election held at the Nehru Stadium in Chennai on July 5, 2023. Aadhav got 38 of the 39 votes, against the outgoing President K. Govindaraj. Kulvinder Singh Gill, a former player and the President of the Madhya Pradesh Basketball Association, was elected as the secretary general of BFI.

## Namdev Shirgaonkar Elected Unopposed as the President of India Taekwondo

Namdev Shirgaonkar was elected unopposed as the President of the executive committee of India Taekwondo on May 21, 2023 in Mumbai. Shirgaonkar, who holds a black belt in Taekwondo is also Secretary-General of Maharashtra Olympic Association (MOA). Kiarash Bahri (Coordinator-World Taekwondo) as well as (Observer-Asian Taekwondo Union-ATU) and Wanyong Lee (2nd Observer-Asian Taekwondo Union-ATU) and Prashant Desai (Observer-Paralympic Committee of India-PCI) got the elections conducted in a fair and transparent way.

## 4th Squash World Cup 2023 Held in Chennai; Egypt Retains the World Squash Title

4th Squash World Cup 2023 was successfully organised from June 13 to 17, 2023 in Chennai, India. Eight teams—host India, Australia, Colombia, Egypt, Hong Kong China, Japan, Malaysia and South Africa—competed for the title. Asian Games medallists Joshna Chinappa and Saurav Ghosal, alongside Tanvi Khanna and Abhay Singh, made up

the Indian team for the Squash World Cup 2023. Four teams including, India, the defending champion Egypt, Malaysia and Japan secured their places in the semi-final of the Squash World Cup 2023.

Malaysia defeated India in the semi-final while Egypt pipped Japan in another semi-final to secure their places in the final. Top-ranked Egypt defeated Malaysia 2-1 in the final to defend its title of the SDAT WSF Squash World Cup 2023 in Chennai on June 17, 2023. The third place of the event was shared jointly by host India and Japan.

## Gatka Martial Art Included in 37th National Games

In a bid to promote Gatka martial art at national level, Gatka has been officially included in the 37th National Games-2023, which are scheduled to take place in Goa in October this year. The Indian Olympic Association (IOA) will be organizing competitions for a total of 43 disciplines during this national event, in collaboration with the Government of Goa.

## Asian Weightlifting Championships 2023; India Bags Three Medals

The 2023 Asian Weightlifting Championships was successfully organized in Jinju, South Gyeongsang Province, South Korea from 5 to 13 May, 2023.

- Bindyarani Devi (women's 55 kg)—silver medal in overall.
- Bindyarani Devi (women's 55 kg)—silver medal in clean & jerk.
- Jeremy Lalrinnunga (men's 67 kg)—silver medal in snatch.

## ITTF World Table Tennis Championships 2023; China Sweeps All Five Gold Medals of the Event

ITTF World Table Tennis Championships 2023 was successfully organized in South Africa in May 2023. China dominated the ITTF World Table Tennis Championship 2023 by sweeping all the five gold medals at stake in the event.

- Men's Singles—Fan Zhendong
- Women's Singles—Sun Yingsha

 Darpan