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NATIONAL NEWS

Mines Ministry launches the first-ever auction of Critical and Strategic Minerals

- The first tranche e-auction of Critical and Strategic Minerals was launched by Union Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, Coal and Mines, Shri Pralhad Joshi.
- A total of 20 critical mineral blocks will be auctioned in the first tranche, out of which 16 mineral blocks are put up for a grant of Composite Licence and four mineral blocks for a grant of Mining Lease.
- In the very first auction launch of critical minerals, two lithium blocks have been offered. Once operational, they will help to cut down imports and build an Aatmanirbhar Bharat.
- The aim is to ensure sustainable development goals and to fulfil the Prime Minister's vision of Aatmanirbhar Bharat and further development of strategic sectors.

UNESCO names Kozhikode 'city of literature'

- The city of Kozhikode in Kerala was added to UNESCO's Creative Cities Network (UCCN). Gwalior from Madhya Pradesh was also among the 55 new cities to join the network.
- These cities have been handpicked to represent seven creative fields—crafts and folk arts, design, film, gastronomy, literature, media arts and music. Kozhikode was included in the category of literature and Gwalior in the category of music.
- The UCCN was created in 2004 to promote cooperation among cities that have identified creativity as a strategic factor for sustainable urban development. It now includes 350 cities in over a hundred countries.
- The network is aimed at leveraging the creative, social and economic potential of cultural industries.

Handcuffs should not be used for economic offenders, suggests parliamentary panel

- A parliamentary committee recommended that the people accused of economic offences should not be handcuffed. This is because the term 'economic offences' encompasses a wide range of offences — from petty to serious. Therefore, it may not be suitable for blanket application of handcuffing in all cases falling under this category.
- The committee suggested this while recommending changes to the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS). The rules for the use of handcuffs are outlined in Clause 43(3) of the BNSS.
- The Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS-2023) bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha on August 11,

along with the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS-2023) and the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam (BSA-2023) bills. The three proposed laws seek to replace the Code of Criminal Procedure Act, 1898, the Indian Penal Code, 1860 and the Indian Evidence Act, 1872, respectively.

NCERT to add content on electoral literacy in school textbooks

- The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) will update textbooks to include content on electoral literacy to familiarise school and college students with their future roles and duties as voters in the election process.
- An MoU on electoral literacy was signed recently between the Election Commission of India (ECI) and the Ministry of Education. With this, school and college students will soon learn about their future roles and duties as voters in the election process, as part of the curricular and extra-curricular interventions in educational institutions.
- The MoU is aimed at extending the ECI's flagship Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) in schools and colleges.

Key Points

National Voter Day	- January 25
Chief Election Commissioner of India	- Rajiv Kumar
NCERT President	- Dharmendra Pradhan, Union Minister of Education
NCERT Director	- Dr. Dinesh Prasad Saklan
NCERT Headquarters	- New Delhi

Doctors to get a unique ID in the national medical register by the end of 2024

- All doctors in the country will receive a unique identification number on the National Medical Register that is likely to be rolled out by the end of next year.
- The register will be a dynamic one where doctors can keep updating details of their qualifications, fellowships and other courses. The unique ID will be like a bank account where all information about doctors will be stored.
- The new register will allow doctors to seek licences to practise in multiple states. The data from state medical councils was used to create the current Indian Medical Register that will be replaced by this new register.
- A pilot for the assessment system has already been conducted in eight colleges across the country – four

private and four government. The National Medical Commission (NMC) is now in the process of consulting assessors and other stakeholders to finalise the process.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi elected the chairman of Shree Somnath Trust for a five-year term

- The Shree Somnath Trust (SST) has made a significant change by electing Prime Minister Narendra Modi as chairman for a five-year term instead of the usual one-year term.
- He was re-elected for his third term as chairman during a board meeting. This is the first time in the trust's history that a chairman has been elected for a five-year tenure.
- SST is the religious charitable trust which owns and manages the iconic Somnath temple near Veraval.
- PM Modi was appointed as the chairman of the trust in January 2021 after the demise of the then-chairman and former Gujarat chief minister Keshubhai Patel.

IIT Kanpur's innovative solution of artificial rains to tackle air pollution in Delhi

- IIT Kanpur offered a solution of artificial rain to address the toxic air in Delhi and nearby regions.
- Artificial rain, also known as cloud seeding, is a weather modification technique that can induce precipitation by changing processes within clouds.
- Cloud seeding involves introducing seeding agents, like silver iodide, into clouds to form water droplets. The seeding agents attract moisture and freeze, forming ice crystals that grow and eventually fall as precipitation.
- Artificial rain can be used to mitigate drought effects, enhance agriculture and suppress fires. However, it also raises environmental concerns, so regulations and safety measures are necessary. Several countries have implemented cloud seeding programmes, including China, the United States, the United Arab Emirates, India, and more.

IIT Kanpur established a Centre of Excellence called ATMAN to monitor air quality

- IIT Kanpur (IIT-K) has established a Centre of Excellence (CoE) called ATMAN (Advanced Technologies for Monitoring Air-quality iNdicators) to enhance air quality in urban and rural areas of India.
- The CoE aims to create indigenous low-cost sensors and utilise Artificial Intelligence/Machine Learning (AI/ML) to achieve self-reliance in air quality monitoring. It is supported by philanthropic entities such as Bloomberg Philanthropies and Open Philanthropy.
- It aims to translate sustainable technologies and business models into practical products and services accessible to millions globally.

- The ambient air quality monitoring of rural areas using indigenous technology AMRIT is a flagship project that will deploy a Sensor Ambient Air Quality Monitor (SAAQM) network with 1,400 nodes across rural areas in Bihar and UP. This initiative is the first of its kind to monitor air quality comprehensively in these regions, where data has been limited to cities and towns. The team will work with the authorities of Bihar and UP on AMRIT to enhance air quality action in these states.
- The Dynamic Hyper-local Source Apportionment (DHSA) is a cost-effective approach to source apportionment that is being pioneered in Lucknow and Kanpur in UP and will enable authorities to make decisions in their air quality action planning.
- The PM2.5 prediction and airshed management is a project that utilises micro-satellite imagery, sensor-based ambient air quality networks and machine learning to predict PM2.5 levels at finer resolutions.

IIT Madras opens up its first international campus on Zanzibar Island in Tanzania

- IIT Madras has opened its first international campus in Zanzibar, East Africa, marking a significant milestone for India and Tanzania.
- The campus offers Bachelor of Science and Master of Technology programmes in Data Science and AI with plans for a permanent campus in the future.
- The facility provides state-of-the-art classrooms, accommodation and dining, and welcomes students of all nationalities.

India's Aditya-L1 records the first-ever sight of solar flares

- ISRO's inaugural solar mission, Aditya L1, has achieved a significant milestone by capturing its first high-energy X-ray glimpse of solar flares.
- The High Energy L1 Orbiting X-ray Spectrometer (HEL1OS) aboard the Aditya-L1 spacecraft recorded the impulsive phase of solar flares during its initial observation period starting from around October 29.
- HEL1OS is currently undergoing fine-tuning and calibration operations to monitor the Sun's high-energy X-ray activity with fast timing and high-resolution spectra.
- The data collected by HEL1OS allows researchers to study explosive energy release and electron acceleration during the impulsive phases of solar flares.
- Aditya-L1 is India's first dedicated space mission for solar observations designed to study the Sun from an orbit around the L1 point. It carries seven payloads to observe different layers of the Sun, and is a fully indigenous effort showcasing India's expertise in space exploration.

Key Points

ISRO Headquarters	- Bengaluru, Karnataka
ISRO Director	- Sreedhara Somanath

Coconut Development Board (CDB) launches 'Hello Naariyal FoCT call centre' to support stakeholders in the coconut sector

- CDB has recently launched the Hello Naariyal call centre to support coconut farmers and improve coconut cultivation practices.
- The call centre is based in Kochi and has experts ready to address queries related to coconut cultivation. It will also extend its services to different districts to cater to the specific needs of coconut farmers in each region.
- CDB is a statutory body established under the Ministry of Agriculture.

IIT Ropar discovers rare metal tantalum in Sutlej River, Punjab

- Researchers from IIT Ropar in India have discovered tantalum, a rare metal, in the sand of the Sutlej River in Punjab.
- Tantalum is a remarkable metal with unique properties including high melting point and resistance to corrosion.
- It plays a crucial role in miniaturised capacitors for portable electronics and can also be a cost-effective substitute for platinum in various industries.
- Tantalum is biocompatible and used in surgical equipment and implants. The US Department of Energy also highlights its use in high-speed machine tools.

Gujarat declared ghol as the state fish

- The black-spotted croaker or the ghol fish, which is considered a fisherman's lottery was declared the state fish of Gujarat.
- The Gujarat government chose the ghol because of its economic value and its uniqueness.
- The fish is usually found in the Indo-Pacific region that stretches from the Persian Gulf to the Pacific Ocean.
- The declaration will enable Gujarat to be a part of its conservation efforts. Ribbon fish, pomfret and Bombay

Duck were the other species that were considered for designation as state fish.

IISR-Kozhikode develops a new high-yielding black pepper variety 'Chandra.'

- The ICAR-Indian Institute of Spices Research (ICAR-IISR), Kozhikode, has developed a high-yielding variety of black pepper named 'IISR Chandra'. Conventionally, new pepper varieties are created by crossing two existing varieties.
- However, IISR employed a different approach in the development of IISR Chandra. Initially, the varieties Chulamundi and Thommankodi were crossed to produce a hybrid variety. Subsequently, this hybrid was crossed with Thommankodi to retain all the desired parental traits.
- The 'IISR Chandra' variety has a long spike, compact setting and bold berries. It also showed optimal spike intensity greater than that of other existing varieties and can yield 7.5 kg pepper per vine.

Central government exempts CERT-In from the RTI Act

- The Central government has added the Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) to a list of organisations that are exempted from the ambit of the Right to Information Act (RTI), 2005.
- The Centre has used its powers given under Section 24(2) of the RTI Act to exempt CERT-In from the purview of the transparency law. However, the subsection does not apply to the information about the allegations of corruption and human rights violations, not to the cases where such allegations are made.
- The CERT-In is the national nodal agency for responding to computer security incidents as and when they occur. One of its primary objectives is enhancing security awareness among common citizens. It functions under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.

Key Points

Director General	- Sanjay Bahl
Headquarters	- New Delhi

GOVERNMENT SCHEMES**Prime Minister launches Mera Yuva Bharat (MY Bharat) platform on the National Unity Day**

- On October 31, 2023, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi launched the 'Mera Yuva Bharat (MY Bharat)' platform, an initiative to empower Indian youth.
- This autonomous body aims to support youth development and progress, fostering equal

opportunities and a sense of social responsibility among young individuals.

- MY Bharat aims to blend physical and digital engagement, connecting young people aged 10-19 years with programmes, mentors and local communities.
- The goal is to deepen their understanding of local issues, develop leadership skills, and encourage active

participation in finding solutions. This initiative aligns with India's vision of becoming a developed nation by 2047.

Jal Diwali -Water for Women, Women for Water Campaign launched

- The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) launched the 'Women for Water, Water for Women Campaign' in collaboration with the National Urban Livelihood Mission (NULM). Odisha Urban Academy is the knowledge partner. The campaign was also known as 'Jal Diwali' and took place from November 7-9, 2023.
- It was launched under the MoHUA flagship scheme – Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT).
- The campaign aims to provide a platform for the inclusion of women in water governance. They will be given first-hand knowledge about water treatment processes through visits to Water Treatment Plants (WTPs) in their respective cities.

Key Points

Union Minister of Housing & Urban Affairs
- Hardeep Singh Puri

Central government launches sale of 'Bharat' Atta at an MRP of ₹ 27.50/kg

- The Union Minister for Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Textiles and Commerce and Industry, Shri Piyush Goyal flagged off 100 mobile vans for sale of wheat flour (Atta) under 'Bharat' brand.
- The Atta will be available at an MRP not exceeding ₹ 27.50/kg.
- This is the latest among a series of steps taken by the GoI for the welfare of ordinary consumers. The launch of retail sale of 'Bharat' brand Atta will increase supplies in the market at affordable rates and will help in the continued moderation of prices of this important food item.
- 'Bharat' Atta will be available at all physical and mobile outlets of Kendriya Bhandar, NAFED and NCCF and will be expanded to other co-op/retail outlets.

Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA) launches CSR portal to improve transparency in CSR initiatives

- IREDA has recently introduced a dedicated Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) portal, emphasising transparency and accountability.
- The portal will facilitate transparency in receipt and disposal of CSR requests from various organisations and institutions. It will be accessible to all 24×7 with a

CSR policy and proposal checklist for examination of CSR requests.

- IREDA is a Mini Ratna (Category – I) Government of India enterprise under the administrative control of the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy.

Key Points

IREDA Headquarters - New Delhi
IREDA Chairman & MD - Pradip Kumar Das

Jharkhand government launches the 'Abu Bir Dishom Campaign'

- The Jharkhand government launched a special campaign named 'Abua Bir Dishom Abhiyan' to provide land title certificates to individuals and communities under the Forest Rights Act.
- It recognises and secures the rights of Scheduled Tribes and other Traditional Forest Dwellers to self-cultivation, habitation and various other activities within forest areas.

Key Points

Jharkhand Chief Minister - Hemant Soren
Jharkhand Capital - Ranchi

'AAINA Dashboard for Cities' portal launched

- The 'AAINA Dashboard for Cities' portal www.aaina.gov.in was made live by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) where Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) across the country can participate in this pioneering initiative to voluntarily submit their key data regularly, through a simple, easy-to-fill, data entry form on the portal.
- The primary objectives of the AAINA Dashboard are to help cities to see how they are faring vis-à-vis other cities, inspire them by pointing to possibilities and areas of improvement and providing opportunities to learn and engage with frontrunners.
- While not ranking the ULBs, the AAINA Dashboard would serve as a tool for comparing similarly placed cities and promoting peer learning among cities.
- The Dashboard will present the data submitted by the ULBs based on indicators across five broad pillars namely – Political & Administrative Structure, Finance, Planning, Citizen Centric Governance and Delivery of Basic Services.

STPI launches LEAP AHEAD initiative for startups to get access to investment, mentorship and global connect

- In the bid to support and accelerate the success of tech startups across India, the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY) launched the

LEAP AHEAD initiative, a collaboration of Software Technology Parks of India (STPI) and The Indus Entrepreneurs (TiE) Delhi-NCR.

- This initiative aims to support and accelerate the success of tech startups in India, particularly in the scaling, growth, diversification and expansion stages.
- Under this programme funding support of up to ₹ 1 Crore and a comprehensive three-month mentorship programmes will be provided.
- This initiative will provide startups with financial and knowledge support to establish and expand their businesses, through mentorship and co-investment opportunities.

Key Points

Union Minister of Electronics & Information Technology
- Ashwini Vaishnaw

Chief Justice of India (CJI) DY Chandrachud inaugurates Mitti Cafe in Supreme Court

- CJI DY Chandrachud inaugurated 'Mitti Cafe' within the Supreme Court premises. It is managed entirely by disabled individuals, including those who are visually impaired, have cerebral palsy and are paraplegic.
- 'Mitti Cafe' has already established 38 outlets across the country and provided six million meals during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The addition of 'Mitti Cafe' in the Supreme Court shows a commitment to inclusivity and serves as an inspiration for other institutions.

Uttar Pradesh government banned halal certified products

- The Uttar Pradesh government has banned the production, storage, distribution and sale of halal-certified products within the state.
- The ban includes various items such as dairy products, sugar, bakery goods peppermint oil, beverages, edible oil, certain medicines and cosmetic products. However, products for export are exempt from the ban.
- The ban was implemented due to concerns about the misuse of halal certification on non-meat products, leading to confusion and potentially violating government rules.
- Halal certification in India is done by government institutions like the FSSAI and the ISI, but private bodies have also issued halal certificates.

Key Points

Capital - Lucknow
Governor - Anandiben Patel
Chief Minister - Yogi Adityanath

Meghalaya launches 'Water Smart Kid Campaign' to foster water conservation awareness among young minds

- Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma launched the Meghalaya Water Smart Kid Campaign to educate children about water conservation under the Jal Jeevan Mission.
- Despite being one of the wettest places on earth, Meghalaya faces challenges in preserving its water resources.
- The state government has implemented various interventions and secured significant funding for water conservation. Meghalaya has been recognised as the 'best performer' under the Jal Jeevan Mission, with over 4 lakh household fixed water connections completed.

Key Points

Capital - Shillong
Governor - Phagu Chauhan

UP government launches Safe City Project to ensure women's safety

- The government of Uttar Pradesh has launched a Safe City Project to enhance the safety of girls and women in the state.
- Through the Safe City Project, the government will ensure surveillance through CCTV at the entry and exit points of 17 municipal corporations along with government and non-government schools, madrasahs, colleges and universities in Gautam Buddha Nagar.

Government launches 'AGNI' Initiative to promote innovations by Ayurveda practitioners

- Central Council for Research in Ayurveda Sciences (CCRAS), Ministry of Ayush has launched 'Ayurveda Gyan Naipunya Initiative' (AGNI) for physicians practicing in the field of Ayurveda.
- It aims to promote research for mainstreaming pragmatic Ayurveda practices through scientific validation and evidence-based appraisal.
- CCRAS under the Ministry of Ayush is an apex research organisation committed to undertaking, coordinating, formulating, development and promotion of research on scientific lines in Ayurveda.

Key Points

Union Minister of AYUSH - Sarbananda Sonowal

State Educational Achievement Survey 2023 – PARAKH successfully conducted

- The State Educational Achievement Survey by PARAKH was conducted to understand the baseline

performance in the development of the competencies at the end of the foundational, preparatory and middle stages.

- The successful completion of the State Educational Achievement Survey marks a significant achievement in the assessment of educational competencies among students at the block level in India at grades 3, 6 and 9.
- The primary objective of this survey is to assess the learning competencies of students at the end of each educational stage, i.e., foundational, preparatory and middle with a primary focus on Language and Mathematics.
- In line with the NEP 2020, the National Assessment Centre, PARAKH (Performance Assessment, Review, and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development) have been set up as a body for setting norms, standards, and guidelines for student assessment and evaluation for all recognised school boards of India.
- It will also guide the State Achievement Survey (SAS) and undertake the National Achievement Survey (NAS); monitor achievement of learning outcomes; and encourage and help school board to shift their assessment patterns towards meeting the skill requirements of the 21st century.

PM Narendra Modi launched 'Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra' and Pradhan Mantri Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups Development Mission

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched 'Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra' on the occasion of Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas. The focus of the Yatra will be on reaching out to people and create awareness and providing benefits of welfare schemes like sanitation facilities, essential financial services, electricity connections, access to LPG cylinders, housing for the poor, food security, proper nutrition, reliable healthcare, clean drinking water, etc.
- He also launched the first of its kind initiative –

'Pradhan Mantri Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PM PVTG) Development Mission'. These tribes stay in scattered, remote and inaccessible habitations, often in forest areas and hence a mission with a budget of about ₹ 24,000 crore, is planned to saturate PVTG families and habitations with basic facilities such as road and telecom connectivity, electricity, safe housing, clean drinking water and sanitation, improved access to education, health and nutrition and sustainable livelihood opportunities.

President of India Launches 'New Education for New India' of Brahma Kumaris in Odisha

- The President of India, Smt Droupadi Murmu, launched the 'New Education for New India' campaign by Brahma Kumaris in Sambalpur, Odisha.
- This campaign is envisaged to inculcate values and uplift the consciousness of the students for a better society.

Govt to introduce PM Kisan Bhai to break Traders' Monopoly

- The Indian government is preparing to launch a new initiative called the PM Kisan Bhai scheme to support small farmers in storing their produce until the market conditions are ideal.
- This groundbreaking scheme aims to give farmers more control over crop prices by breaking the monopoly of traders. It will allow farmers to decide when to sell their crops, retaining them for at least three months after harvest.
- The scheme will undergo a pilot phase in seven states and has two major components – Warehousing Rental Subsidy (WRS) and Prompt Repayment Incentive (PRI).
- The government aims to address constraints faced by farmers by incentivising the storage of produce in scientifically built warehouses and reducing interest rates on pledge finance.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

WHO declares 'Loneliness' as a pressing global health threat

- Loneliness has been declared a pressing global health threat with a mortality effect equivalent to smoking 15 cigarettes a day, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO).
- WHO has launched a new commission to foster social connection as a priority in all countries.
- The commission will analyse the relationship between social connection and health, and outline solutions to

building social connections at scale. It will run for three years and be co-chaired by US Surgeon General Dr Vivek Murthy and African Union Youth Envoy Chido Mpemba.

Key Points

WHO Headquarters - Geneva, Switzerland
 WHO Director General - Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus

Thailand announces visa-free entry for Indians to boost tourism

- Thailand has allowed visa-free entries for citizens of India and Taiwan. Indian and Taiwanese tourists can enter Thailand without a visa with a maximum stay of 30 days.
- This change is expected to stimulate the local economy and align with Thailand's commitment to revive tourism.

India and Italy sign the Mobility and Migration Partnership agreement to facilitate the movement of workers, students

- India and Italy signed the Mobility and Migration Partnership agreement to enable seamless movement of workers, students and professionals after External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar held a comprehensive and productive meeting with his counterpart Antonio Tajani.
- Dr. Jaishankar was in Italy on the last leg of his four-day visit to Portugal and Italy.
- The Indian community in Italy estimated at 1,80,000 is the third largest community of Indians in Europe after the UK and the Netherlands. As first-generation migrants, the majority of them are engaged in economic sectors such as agriculture, dairy farming, the leather industry, construction works and the service industry.

Widespread displacement crisis in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

- The conflict between M23 rebels and government-backed militias in North Kivu, DRC, has escalated since October causing a massive displacement crisis.
- The number of Internally Displaced People (IDPs) in the DRC has reached a record high of 6.9 million, mainly concentrated in the eastern provinces.
- One of the main reasons for this displacement is the M23 conflict, which has forced up to one million people to leave their homes in North Kivu.
- The M23 is accused of receiving support from Rwanda, although Rwanda denies these allegations.
- The security situation in North Kivu and Ituri has led to a rapid increase in humanitarian needs, with nearly 2,00,000 people fleeing their homes since October 1.

SpaceX launched its 29th mission to deliver research gear and equipment to the International Space Station (ISS)

- SpaceX's Cargo Dragon completed its 29th mission to the ISS on November 9, 2023. The timing of the launch was carefully synchronised with Earth's rotation to align with the orbital plane of the space station.
- The Dragon spacecraft successfully reached space and began autonomous flight. This mission is the second trip for capsule C-211.

- The main objective of this mission is to deliver research gear and equipment including a high-speed laser communications package.

Key Points

Space X headquarters	- Hawthorne, California
Founder, CEO, Chair, and CTO	- Elon Musk
President and COO	- Gwynne Shotwell

Mika becomes the world's first Artificial Intelligence (AI) humanoid robot CEO

- Mika, the world's first humanoid robot CEO, has been appointed by Hanson Robotics and Dictador, a spirit brand based in Cartagena, Colombia.
- Mika is a research project between Dictador and Hanson Robotics, a Hong Kong-based engineering and robotics company known for its development of human-like robots with AI for consumer, entertainment, service, healthcare and research applications.

Asia-Pacific Airlines aim for 5% green fuel usage by 2030

- The Association of Asia-Pacific Airlines (AAPA) announced a goal for its 14 member airlines, including Air India, to achieve 5% Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) usage by 2030 to address carbon emissions in the industry.
- The decision was announced at the association's 67th assembly of presidents, highlighting challenges such as limited SAF availability and cost.
- In May, India's Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas disclosed intentions to mandate 1% SAF use by domestic carriers by 2025. Earlier, the civil aviation ministry had also stated its plans to increase the blending of sustainable aviation fuel to 2% by 2026, and 5% by 2030.
- However, a mandate for airlines may not work well until the supply is ensured.

India-bound ship hijacked by Yemen's Houthi rebels in Red Sea

- A cargo ship called 'Galaxy Leader' has been hijacked in the Red Sea by Yemen's Houthi rebels. It had about 50 crew members on board, but it was not an Israeli ship.
- The ship, which is owned by a British company and is operated by a Japanese firm, was hijacked with Iran's guidance by the Yemenite Houthi militant.
- Onboard the vessel are 25 crew members of various nationalities including Ukrainian, Bulgarian, Filipino and Mexican. No Israelis were present onboard.

India sends the second round of aid to Gaza amidst Israel – Hamas conflict

- India is sending a second batch of aid to Gaza amidst the conflict. The aid includes 32 tonnes of supplies and

will be delivered to the El-Arish Airport in Egypt.

- This follows India's earlier contribution of 6.5 tonnes of medical assistance and 32 tonnes of disaster relief materials.
- The conflict has had a devastating toll on Gaza, particularly on Al-Shifa, the largest hospital in the region. The hospital is facing challenges due to power cuts and fuel shortages.

India and Australia discuss defence ties at 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue

- India and Australia held a 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue to step up defence cooperation and deepen the strategic relationship in sectors such as critical minerals and trade and investment.
- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar met Australian Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister Richard Marles and Foreign Minister Penny Wong as part of the second

India–Australia 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue.

- Ministers exchanged views on deepening multifaceted India–Australia ties, including in areas of defence and security, trade and investment, critical minerals, energy, climate change, S&T, space, education and people-to-people linkages. Regional and global issues are also on the agenda.

Israel officially designates Lashkar-e-Taiba as a terrorist organisation

- Israel has officially declared the Pakistan-based terror group Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) as a terrorist organisation, ahead of the 15th anniversary of the Mumbai attacks.
- The announcement coincides with Israel's ongoing military operation in the Gaza Strip in response to an attack by Hamas.
- Israel has been urging India to ban Hamas as well, but India has not done so.

ECONOMY AND FINANCE

Central Railways commissions the BPAC system in the Vasind–Asangaon section

- The Central Railway has commissioned the Block Proving by Axle Counter (BPAC) system in the Vasind–Asangaon section of the Mumbai Division.
- The BPAC system plays a pivotal role in maintaining the utmost safety of train operations. Specifically, it meticulously examines the last vehicle of a section, subsequently confirming the section's clearance before granting authorisation for another train to enter.
- Earlier, the BPAC system was exclusively deployed up to Vashind railway station within the Kalyan–Igatpuri section. However, the Railway Board has sanctioned the extension of BPAC operations from Khadavli to Igatpuri, and the work is in progress and will be completed soon.
- The Mumbai division has a BPAC system installed on the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT) to KALYAN section, CSMT-PANVEL Harbour line, CSMT-Goregaon line, Kalyan–Karjat section and Vasai–Panvel–Roha section.

RBI to directly regulate entities facilitating cross border payment transactions

- RBI will directly regulate all entities facilitating cross-border payment transactions for the import and export of goods and services.
- Such entities will be treated as Payment Aggregator-Cross Border (PA-CB).
- Currently, all Payment Aggregators (PA), which facilitate the processing of domestic transactions in online mode, come under the ambit of RBI regulations.

- RBI made it mandatory for the non-banks providing PA-CB services to have a minimum net worth of ₹ 15 crores at the time of applying to the RBI for authorisation and a minimum net worth of ₹ 25 crores by March 31, 2026.

- For new non-bank PA-CBs, it is mandatory for them to have a minimum net worth of ₹ 15 crore at the time of applying and should attain a minimum net worth of ₹ 25 crores by the end of the third financial year of grant of authorisation.
- The banks undertaking PA-CB activity need to fulfil the requirements for PA-CBs by April 30, 2024.
- Payment Aggregators act as a bridge between e-commerce sites and customers for payment transactions. PAs let e-commerce sites and merchants accept various instruments from customers to complete their payment obligations. This saves merchants from creating their systems. A common payment transaction by a customer involves PAs getting payment from customers, pooling, and transferring them to the merchants.

OneWeb India becomes the first Indian firm to get IN-SPACE approval for satellite broadband services

- OneWeb India, a subsidiary of the Bharti Group and part of the Eutelsat Group, has received approval from India's space regulator, IN-SPACE (Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre), to launch Eutelsat OneWeb's commercial satellite broadband services in India.
- This makes OneWeb India the first organisation to receive such authorisation, making it the only satellite

broadband services provider to secure all necessary regulatory approvals before its commercial launch.

- This approval aligns with India's goal of universal internet connectivity and the vision of Digital India.
- In addition to general approval, Eutelsat OneWeb has also obtained in-principle approval to establish and operate two gateways in Gujarat and Tamil Nadu, ensuring high-speed, low-latency internet connectivity across the country. However, the launch of commercial services depends on the government's allocation of satellite spectrum, following recommendations from the telecom regulator.

Key Points

IN- SPACe headquarters - Ahmedabad, Gujarat,
Union Minister of Space - Narendra Modi

Genesys International and Survey of India (SoI) partner to transform mapping in the country

- Genesys International and Survey of India (SOI) have collaborated to revolutionise India's map content. This partnership aims to create digital twins of major cities and towns, leveraging Genesys' all-India navigable maps, Genesys constellation of sensors and SOI's recently launched CORS network, which allows real-time high precision positioning of data.
- This collaboration will introduce the India Map Stack initiative and Genesys' expertise with SOI's technical infrastructure.
- This collaboration aligns with India's National Geospatial Policy 2022 and aims to promote self-reliance in geospatial data production.

Key Points

Surveyor General of India - Hitesh Kumar Makwana

RBI prescribe norms for the closure of District Central Co-operative Banks (DCCBs) branches

- DCCBs are now permitted to close un-remunerative branches without requiring prior permission from the central bank. However, approval will be necessary from the Registrar of Cooperative Societies in the respective state.
- The decision to close a branch should be made by the bank's board based on a thorough evaluation, properly recorded and minuted. A two-month notice should be provided to depositors and clients through local newspapers and direct communication. DCCBs must return the original license to the RBI's Regional Office when closing a branch.

PFRDA makes Penny Drop verification mandatory for NPS fund withdrawal

- PFRDA has introduced a new 'penny drop' verification process to make it easier for subscribers of the National Pension System (NPS) to access their funds. This move is aimed at ensuring the smooth and timely transfer of money.
- Penny Drop is a way for Central Recordkeeping Agencies (CRAs) to check the status of your savings bank account. They confirm that your bank account's name matches the name in your Permanent Retirement Account Number (PRAN) or the documents you have submitted. This new rule applies to NPS, Atal Pension Yojana (APY) and NPS Lite for various situations, including withdrawals, modifications to your bank account details, and more.
- PFRDA has made it clear that if the 'penny drop' verification doesn't succeed, your request for withdrawal or changes to your bank account details won't be approved. In such cases, the CRAs will work with the necessary offices to help you fix your bank account details through a defined process.
- Additionally, the PFRDA will inform subscribers about any 'penny drop' failures via mobile messages and emails, guiding them on the steps to take.

The first unit of SJVN's Naitwar Mori hydro project starts commercial operations

- The first unit of SJVN's 60 MW Naitwar Mori Hydro Electric Project (NMHEP) in Uttarakhand has started commercial operations. It is a run-of-the-river project located on river Tons, a major tributary of river Yamuna in Uttarkashi district in Uttarakhand with two generating units of 30 MW each.
- The project will generate 265.5 million units of electricity annually and the power will be evacuated through the 37 kilometres-long 220 KV Transmission Line from Bainol to Snail, constructed by SJVN itself.
- After the commissioning of the project, 12% free electricity will be supplied to the state of Uttarakhand as royalty.

More than 97% of 2,000 notes returned: RBI

- The RBI has updated the status of the withdrawal of 2,000 banknotes as of October 31, 2023.
- The initial goal of introducing these banknotes was to meet the currency needs of the economy after the withdrawal of 500 and 1,000 banknotes in 2016.
- More than 97% of the 2,000 banknotes in circulation as of May 19, 2023, have been returned.
- The remaining banknotes are still considered legal tender. The total value of 2,000 banknotes in circulation has significantly reduced from 3.56 lakh crore to 10,000 crores.

- The facility for deposit and exchange of these banknotes at bank branches ended on October 7, 2023. Individuals and entities can now deposit these banknotes at RBI Issue Offices or send them through India Post for credit to their bank accounts. The window for deposit and exchange of 2,000 banknotes is still open at the 19 Issue Offices of RBI. The public is encouraged to use the India Post service to avoid travelling to RBI Offices.
- The withdrawal of these banknotes is based on the observation that they were not commonly used for transactions, and there were enough other denominations in stock to meet currency needs.

SBI's branch was inaugurated in Sri Lanka by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman

- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman visited Sri Lanka's eastern port town of Trincomalee where she inaugurated a branch of the State Bank of India and appreciated its role in supporting corporates in international trade.
- Sitharaman, who is in the country on a three-day visit, started her day by visiting the main Hindu Temple in the multi-ethnic city to pay homage to it.
- During the Sri Lankan economic crisis, SBI's presence in Sri Lanka paved the way for a smooth extension of the Line of Credit worth USD 1 billion by India to Sri Lanka.
- Besides, SBI Sri Lanka continues to play a vital role by supporting corporates in international trade.

COLORS join forces to support the 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao' initiative to bring societal change

- COLORS, a leading Hindi GEC in India, has collaborated with the Ministry of Women and Child Development's 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao' initiative to tackle the issue of girl child abandonment. They have launched a new TV show called Doree to raise awareness about this social problem.
- As a part of the collaboration, COLORS will also promote the 24-hour emergency helpline for abandoned girl children (1098).
- COLORS is Viacom18's flagship brand in the entertainment industry and offers a wide range of emotional content to viewers.

Key Points

Union WCD Minister - Smriti Zubin Irani

Mundra becomes India's first port to handle 16.1 million tonnes of cargo

- Mudra Port, a flagship port of Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone (APSEZ), has achieved significant milestones in India's maritime industry. It handled

over 16.1 million metric tonnes of cargo in October 2023 and aims to reach 200 million metric tonnes by FY25.

- It is the largest port in the country with 102 MMT of cargo handled so far this year with a good 9% year-on-year growth. The port crossed the 100 MMT mark in 210 days, surpassing the record of 231 days last year.
- With its advanced infrastructure and diverse cargo types, Mudra Port plays a crucial role in facilitating trade and economic growth. Its strategic location and strong hinterland capacity further contribute to its efficiency.
- Mudra Port is located on the northern shores of the Gulf of Kutch near Mundra, Kutch district, Gujarat. Its ambitious target aligns with India's vision for enhanced logistics performance and higher seaborne trade.

HSBC India launches e-Bank guarantee services for MSMEs, and corporates to replace conventional paper-based bank guarantee

- Private Sector lender HSBC India and National E-Governance Services Ltd (NeSL) have introduced electronic bank guarantee services to streamline trade finance processes. The digital solution replaces traditional paper-based bank guarantees.
- The service is available to both MSMEs and corporate clients. e-Stamping and e-signing are incorporated for a complete digital transformation. The new solution provides instant access to bank guarantees and accelerates transaction cycles. It also offers enhanced security and efficiency.
- NeSL plays a role in verifying and authenticating debt information.

Axis Bank and IRMA sign an MoU to promote financial inclusion and literacy in India

- Axis Bank and the Institute of Rural Management Anand (IRMA) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to establish the Axis Bank Chair for financial inclusion at IRMA.
- This chair will operate for five years and focus on conducting research for policy development, fostering collaboration between industry and academia, promoting thought leadership, advocating for policy development and enhancing financial literacy.
- IRMA and Axis Bank will establish a Joint Advisory Committee to manage the chair's operations and evaluate its performance. The partnership also includes provisions for sponsoring two research associates.

IBM and AWS join hands to launch an innovation lab in Bengaluru

- It Giant IBM and Amazon Web Services (AWS) have jointly launched an Innovation Lab in Bengaluru, India,

with a focus on generative Artificial Intelligence (AI). The lab aims to accelerate innovation across industries such as Banking, Automotive, Manufacturing, Energy, Travel, and Healthcare.

- It is structured into experience zones showcasing different technology areas. The lab also promotes knowledge-sharing among clients and features a collaboration between technology and industry experts from IBM and AWS.

Sovereign green bonds for NRIs offer credit-risk-free returns in the long term

- The RBI has allowed NRIs to invest in the Government's Sovereign green bonds for the fiscal year 2023–24. All Sovereign green bonds issued in this fiscal year are designated as 'specified securities' under the Fully Accessible Route (FAR).
- This decision provides more investment opportunities for NRIs in environmentally focused bonds. The directives from the RBI are effective immediately, showing the urgency in implementing regulatory changes.
- The government plans to raise ₹ 20,000 crores through green bonds this year to support sustainable financing and environmental projects.
- Green bonds fund projects have direct environmental benefits, such as renewable energy, clean transportation and green buildings.
- The issuance of green bonds reflects a global shift towards sustainable financing and responsible investing.
- NRIs can now actively participate in financing eco-friendly initiatives by investing in Sovereign green bonds, aligning with the growing trend of environmentally conscious investments.

InterGlobe Enterprises ties up with US-based Archer for air taxi service

- InterGlobe Enterprises, a major shareholder in IndiGo, has partnered with Archer Aviation Inc. to introduce an all-electric air taxi service in India.
- Archer Aviation designs and develops electrical vertical takeoff and landing aircraft for use in urban air mobility networks.
- Through this MoU, the two companies aim to provide a revolutionary transportation solution for the country, improving urban mobility with safe, sustainable and low-noise electric air taxi service that is cost-competitive with ground transportation.

Samsung unveils its ChatGPT rival AI model, Samsung Gauss

- Samsung has introduced its groundbreaking generative AI model, Samsung Gauss, at the annual Samsung AI Forum in Seoul.

- The model, named after mathematician Carl Friedrich Gauss, aims to enhance consumer experiences using AI.
- Samsung Gauss has three components: Samsung Gauss Language, Samsung Gauss Code and Samsung Gauss Image, each with specific applications.
- Samsung Gauss Language improves work efficiency and consumer experience, while Samsung Gauss Code aids software development. Samsung Gauss Image enables transformative image generation and editing.
- The model is currently used to boost employee productivity and has the potential for diverse product applications.

Jio and OneWeb granted licenses for Satellite Internet Services

- Jio Satellite Communications and Bharti Enterprises-owned OneWeb have now received the licence from the government to provide broadband internet services to end users using satellite.
- These companies have secured pan-India Internet Service Provider (ISP) licenses, which are essential for delivering internet connectivity to end-users through satellite or mobile networks.
- An ISP licence is different from a Global Mobile Personal Communication by Satellite (GMPCS) service licence, which is the first and foremost requirement for companies looking to establish communication between satellite and earth station gateways for offering voice and data services through satellite technology.
- While GMPCS licence is mandatory, for offering broadband connectivity to end users, especially at homes or offices, the companies require other licences such as ISP.

India's economy to grow at 6.5% for 2024–25 – Goldman Sachs

- Goldman Sachs projects India's economy to grow at 6.5% in FY 2024–25, surpassing the projected 6.2% for the current fiscal year.
- The key driver for this growth is expected to be increased private-sector investment. The first half of 2024 is expected to be dominated by consumption spending, particularly due to the general elections.
- Subsidies and transfer payments are predicted to play a crucial role in driving growth during this period. In the second half of 2024, investment growth will be resurgent, especially from the private sector. The government's capital expenditure has been instrumental in overall investment growth, but it is anticipated to stimulate private investments.
- The government is expected to focus on capital spending but may decrease its growth rate in the next fiscal year. Industrial production related to

infrastructure spending has increased, but other manufacturing industries have lagged.

SEBI Chairperson launches IRRA platform to enhance investor risk reduction

- The Investor Risk Reduction Access (IRRA) is a platform that will act as a 'safety net' for investors in case of technical glitches faced by a trading member or a stock broker registered with SEBI.
- It will provide investors an opportunity to close open positions and cancel pending orders in case of disruption at the stock brokers' end.
- IRRA has been jointly developed by all the stock exchanges – BSE, NSE, NCDEX, MCX and Metropolitan Stock Exchange of India (MSE) and was launched by Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) Chairperson Madhabi Puri Buch.
- The platform was developed to reduce risks faced by investors in the eventuality of technical glitches at the trading member's end at both the primary site and disaster recovery site.

Blue Dart, India Post ink pact to provide parcel locker service at post offices

- Express logistics provider Blue Dart has set up a digital parcel locker service at post offices under a partnership with India Post.
- This service allows consignees to retrieve their shipments from digital parcel lockers at post offices, doing away with the need for personal receipts or signing for a package.
- These parcel lockers keep their contents secure and are easily accessible. When the recipient needs to retrieve a package from the locker, they can simply enter the assigned code and open the locker.

Key Points

India Post Headquarters - New Delhi
 Union Minister of Communication
 - Ashwini Vaishnav

Blod.in launches Blod+: India's first on-demand blood logistics platform for hospitals and blood banks

- Blod.in has unveiled its groundbreaking healthcare software and logistics platform, Blod+. This innovation aims to revolutionise blood management and delivery, addressing the alarming issue of blood wastage in healthcare facilities across the country.
- Blod+ surpasses industry norms, reducing the average sourcing time for blood from 6 hours to an average of 2 hours and 7 minutes.

- Blod+ also empowers blood banks to distribute blood and components more efficiently to hospitals in its network.

Asian Development Bank (ADB) grants \$6.5 million loan to boost Greenway's improved cookstoves in rural India

- ADB and Greenway Grameen Infra Private Limited signed a \$6.5 million senior secured loan to produce and distribute 1 million improved cookstoves to rural households in Madhya Pradesh and Odisha.
- The financing also includes a \$3.25 million first-loss liquidity reserve from the Climate Innovation and Development Fund (CIDF) administered by ADB.
- Compared to the typical traditional mud chulhas or indoor stoves, the improved stoves reduce fuel needs by 65% and smoke generated by 70%, significantly reducing black carbon and carbon monoxide emissions. This project will subsidise the cost of the new cookstoves for rural households, which use traditional inefficient means of cooking.
- The project will result in a total reduction of 22.9 million tons of carbon dioxide.

Key Points

ADB headquarters - Philippines
 ADB President - Masatsugu Asakawa

InCred Holdco becomes the second unicorn of 2023 after Zepto

- Mumbai-based InCred Holdings, the holding company of InCred Financial Services, has raised ₹ 500 crore in its latest round of Series D funding. The latest funding round values the company at nearly \$1.05 billion.
- The company is the second to become a unicorn this year following Zepto's entry into the \$1-billion club in August.

Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) and Amazon sign MoU

- An MoU was signed between IWAI and Amazon Seller Services Private Limited (Amazon) to promote cargo movement and transportation of customer shipments and products via inland waterways using river Ganga (National Waterway 1).
- The collaboration between IWAI and Amazon marks a significant stride in advancing the transportation of e-commerce cargo along our Inland Waterways.
- This partnership seeks to harness the efficiency and sustainability of water transport to optimise logistics, diminish environmental footprints and promote economic development.

Key Points

IWAI Headquarters	- Noida, Uttar Pradesh
Chairman	- Sanjay Bandopadhyay

India granted record 41,010 patents in 2023–24 so far: Piyush Goyal

- The Indian patent office has granted the 'highest' number of 41,010 patents till November 15 this fiscal year, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal has said.
- In the 2013–14 fiscal year, 4,227 patents were granted.
- According to a World Intellectual Property Organisation report, patent applications by Indians grew 31.6% in 2022, extending an 11-year run of growth unmatched by any other country among the top 10 filers.

Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) launches 'Sumpoorn' MSME Economic Activity Index with Jocata

- Jocata, a digital lending transformation platform, has collaborated with SIDBI to launch a one-of-its-kind MSME Economic Activity Index Sumpoorn.
- For the first time, this MSME-specific high-frequency indicator will capture the growth of MSME's.
- The currently available macro indices capture business expectations and rely on opinion or survey-based data.
- A team of credit experts, data scientists and senior economists have built and tracked the Index over the past four years ensuring its ability to accurately represent the MSME economy and capture the impact of macroeconomic conditions.

Key Points

SIDBI Headquarters	- Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh
SIDBI chairman and MD	- Sivasubramanian Ramann

Kerala tourism to launch multilingual microsites for boosting religious tourism

- Kerala tourism is boosting pilgrimage tourism with the launch of microsites to provide information on religious destinations.
- The plan is to introduce a microsite that is rich in facts and information in different languages, with primary attention on Sabarimala Temple.
- The Sabarimala microsite, funded with 61.36 lakh, will offer details in English, Hindi, Kannada, Tamil and Telugu. The microsites will also provide information on other religious places and temples along with updates on Sabarimala darshan.
- They aim to enhance the pilgrimage experience by offering comprehensive information, amenities and accommodations. These microsites make the spiritual journey more accessible and enjoyable for devotees.

India and ADB ink \$400 million deal for urban infrastructure development

- India has signed a \$400 million loan agreement with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to improve urban infrastructure.
- The loan supports national-level policies and guidelines to enhance urban services and delivery. It aligns with the government's urban sector strategy and supports initiatives like the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) 2.0.
- The programme focuses on urban water security, modernisation, comprehensive planning and financial sustainability.

DEFENCE**Sweden's Saab bags India's first 100% FDI in the defense project**

- India has approved Sweden's Saab for a new manufacturing facility, marking the first foreign company to receive 100% FDI in India's defense projects.
- Currently, India allows only 74% FDI in the defence sector under the automatic route. Beyond that, clearance can be obtained on a case-by-case basis. However, the clearance rules were relaxed in 2015, still, no foreign firm was able to get permission for 100% FDI in defence.
- The government has liberalised and allowed FDI under automatic routes up to 74% and up to 100% through government routes wherever it is likely to result in access to modern technology.
- Saab's new entity, Saab FFV India, will manufacture the Carl-Gustaf M4 rocket system, an important asset for the Indian armed forces. This will be the first time Saab will manufacture Carl-Gustaf M4 outside Sweden.
- In the fiscal year 2023, India received \$3.21 million in FDI in defense, a significant increase from previous years.

India and Bangladesh Navies conduct bilateral exercise BONGOSAGAR-23 and Coordinated Patrol CORPAT-23

- The fourth edition of bilateral Exercise BONGOSAGAR-23 and the fifth edition of Coordinated Patrol CORPAT-23 took place from November 7–9, 2023 in the Northern Bay of Bengal.
- Ships and aircraft from both navies undertook joint patrolling along the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL), and subsequently conducted maritime exercises to enhance interoperability.
- The exercise involved the Indian Navy and Bangladesh Navy with Indian Navy ships Kuthar, Kiltan, and Maritime Patrol Aircraft (MPA) Dornier, and Bangladesh Navy ships Abu Bakr, Abu Ubaidah and MPA.
- Activities included joint patrolling, maritime exercises and humanitarian assistance drills. These exercises enhance mutual understanding and cooperation between the two navies, showcase India's shipbuilding capabilities and demonstrate interoperability.

Indian Navy launches fourth Anti-Submarine Warfare Craft, named Amini

- India achieved a significant milestone in its naval capabilities with the successful launch of 'Amini,' the fourth Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASW SWC) Project.
- The ship was named 'Amini' to signify the strategic maritime importance accorded to the island of Amini at Lakshadweep, located about 400 km west of Kochi.
- The ASW SWC ships, belonging to the Arnala class, are designed to replace the existing Abhay class ASW

Corvettes of the Indian Navy. They will primarily engage in anti-submarine operations, low-intensity maritime operations and mine-laying operations.

- With a length of 77 metres, a displacement of 900 tons, and a maximum speed of 25 knots, these ships have an endurance of approximately 1800 nautical miles.
- The launch achievements demonstrate India's progress in indigenous shipbuilding and its commitment to a self-reliant India. The first ship of the ASW SWC project is expected to be delivered in early 2024, with over 80% indigenous content, promoting large-scale defense production and contributing to employment generation in the country.

Indian Armed Forces contingent departs for the Joint Military Exercise AUSTRAHIND-23

- The Indian Armed Forces contingent comprising 81 personnel departed for Australia to take part in the second edition of Joint Military Exercise AUSTRAHIND-23. The exercise will be conducted at Perth, Australia.
- Exercise AUSTRAHIND was instituted in 2022 and the first edition was conducted in Mahajan, Rajasthan. It is planned to be an annual training event to be conducted alternatively in India and Australia.
- The exercise aims to foster collaborative partnerships and share best practices between the two sides. The exercise will also promote inter-operability while undertaking multi-domain operations in Urban and Semi-Urban terrain under Chapter VII of the United Nations on peacekeeping operations.

PEOPLE IN NEWS/APPOINTMENTS

	Name	Designation
1	Lieutenant General Raghu Srinivasan	28th Director General (DG) of the Border Roads Organisation (BRO)
2	Anirban Mukherjee	Global CEO of PayU India
3	Ramaswamy N	Chairman and Managing Director of GIC Re
4	Dinesh Khara	SBI Chairman
5	Navneet Munot	Chairman of the Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI)
6	VJ Kurian	Chairman of South Indian Bank
7	Neeraj Chopra	Laureus Ambassador
8	Mohamed Muizzu	President of Maldives
9	Arindam Bagchi	India's Permanent Ambassador to UN in Geneva
10	Sanjay Kulshreshtha	Chairman and Managing Director of HUDCO
11	Mohammed Shami	Brand Ambassador of Puma
12	Ashok Vaswani	CEO of Kotak Mahindra Bank
13	Pankaj Bohra	National President of the Indo-American Chamber of Commerce (IACC)

	Name	Designation
14	Prof Sarang Deo	Member of WHO's TB Advisory Group
15	Sadhna Saxena Nair	Director General of Hospital Services (Armed Forces)
16	Sultan Ibrahim Iskandar	King of Malaysia
17	Tarun Sobti	Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff
18	Sanjay Kumar Jain	Chairman and Managing Director IRCTC
19	B K Mohanty	Director (Finance) of the IREDA
20	Sanjay Kulshrestha	Chairman & Managing Director of the HUDCO
21	Katrina Kaif	Brand Ambassador of Rado
22	Rajkumar Rao	National Icon of Election Commission
23	Mahendra Singh Dhoni	Brand Ambassador of Lays and Reliance Jio
24	Chetan Bhagat	Brand Ambassador of Henry Harvin Education
25	Raghubar Das	Odisha's Governor
26	Indra Sena Reddy Nallu	Tripura's Governor
27	Muneesh Kapur	RBI's Executive Director

DAYS AND THEMES

Date	Day	Theme
November 1	World Vegan Day	Celebrating for a Good Cause
November 1	All Saints' Day	
November 1	Rajyotsava Day (Karnataka Formation Day)	
November 2	International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists	Justice for Journalists: A Foundation for Freedom of Expression
November 5	World Tsunami Awareness Day	Fighting Inequality for a Resilient Future
November 6	International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict	Together for a More Sustainable and Peaceful Future
November 7	National Cancer Awareness Day	Close the Care Gap
November 8	World Radiography Day	Celebrating Patient Safety
November 9	National Legal Services Day	Access to Justice for All: Empowering the Marginalised through Legal Awareness
November 9	World Usability Day	Collaboration and Cooperation
November 10	World Science Day for Peace and Development	Building Trust in Science
November 11	National Education Day	Embracing Innovation
November 12	World Pneumonia Day	Championing the Fight to Stop Pneumonia
November 13	World Kindness Day	Be Kind Wherever Possible
November 14	World Diabetes Day	Access to Diabetes Care
November 14	Children's Day	
November 15	Jharkhand Foundation Day	
November 15	World Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease Day or World COPD Day	Breathing is Life – Act Earlier

Date	Day	Theme
November 16	International Day for Tolerance	Tolerance: A Path to Peace and Reconciliation
November 16	National Press Day	Media in the Era of Artificial Intelligence
November 17	International Students Day	Learning Beyond Borders: A Global Perspective
November 17	National Epilepsy Day	
November 18–24	World AMR Awareness Week 2023	Preventing Antimicrobial Resistance Together
November 19	World Toilet Day	Accelerating Change
November 19	International Men's Day	Zero Male Suicide
November 19	Women's Entrepreneurship Day	
November 19–25	World Heritage Week	
November 20	Universal Children's Day	For Every Child, Every Right
November 20	World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims	JUSTICE
November 21	World Television Day	Accessibility
November 23	Fibonacci Day	
November 25	International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women	
November 26	Constitution Day or Law Day	
November 26	World Sustainable Transport Day	Sustainable Transport, Sustainable Development
November 26	National Milk Day	
November 29	International Day of Solidarity with Palestinian People	

OBITUARIES (NATIONAL)

Name	Profession	Place
BN Goswamy	Art Historian	Chandigarh
Sanjay Gadhvi	Director	Mumbai
N Sankaraiah	Politician	
P B Acharya	Politician	
Zaverilal Mehta	Photo Journalist	Ahmedabad
S.S. Badrinath	Doctor and Ophthalmologist	Chennai
M. Fathima Beevi	Advocate and Judge	Kollam, Kerala
S Venkitaramanan	Former RBI Governor and Economist	
Subrata Roy	Businessman and Founder of Sahara India Pariwar	Mumbai, Maharashtra
Lala Kedarnath Aggarwal	Founder and Chairman of Bikanervala	
Prithvi Raj Singh Oberoi	Indian Hotelier and Executive Chairman of the Oberoi Group	Delhi
Chandra Mohan Garu	Actor	Hyderabad, Telangana
Gieve Patel	Poet	Pune
D B Chandregowda	Politician and Former Karnataka Assembly Speaker	
Sarat Barkotoky	Assam Former Minister and Retired Teacher	
Leela Omchery	Renowned Musician and Scholar	Kerala
Maheswar Mohanty	Politician and Former Odisha Assembly Speaker	

OBITUARIES (INTERNATIONAL)

Name	Profession	Place
A.S. Byatt	Author/ Novelist	
Thomas Kenneth Mattingly II	NASA's Astronaut	
Rosalynn Carter	Former US First Lady	

APPOINTMENTS (INTERNATIONAL)

Name	Designation
Colin Jackson	International Ambassador For 2023 Tata Steel Kolkata 25KS
Nicaraguas Sheynnis Palcios	72nd Miss Universe 2023
Pedro Sanchez	Prime Minister of Spain
Saima Wazed	WHO Regional Director for South-East Asia
Luc Frieden	Prime Minister of Luxembourg
Javier Milei	President of Argentina

APPOINTMENTS (NATIONAL)

Name	Designation
Anish Shah	President of Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI)
Ashok Vaswani	MD & CEO of Kotak Bank Board
Rajendra Menon	Chairman of Armed Forces Tribunal
Alok Sharma	Director of the Special Protection Group (SPG)
Rear Admiral Rajesh Dhankhar	Command of the Eastern Fleet, the Sword Arm of the Eastern Naval Command
Pankaj Tripathi	United Payments Interface (UPI) Safety Ambassador
Hitesh Kumar S. Makwana	Surveyor General of India, Survey of India
Anurag Agarwal	Additional Secretary & Financial Advisor in the Ministry of External Affairs
Rupinder Brar	Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Coal
Deepti Gaur Mukerjee	Additional Secretary in the Department of Health & Family Welfare
Heeralal Samariya	Chief Information Commissioner
Anandi Ramalingam	Information Commissioner
Vinod Kumar Tiwari	Information Commissioner
Rahul Sharma	Additional Secretary in the Cabinet Secretariat
Manmeet Kaur Nanda	Joint Secretary in the Cabinet Secretariat
Pallavi Jam Govil	Director General of Hydrocarbons
Sudeep Jam	Additional Secretary in the Ministry of New & Renewable Energy
Amit Kumar Ghosh	Additional Secretary in the Department of Social Justice & Empowerment
Niraj Verma	Administrator, Universal Service Obligation Fund
Abhishek Singh	Chief Executive Officer of the National e-Governance Division and Karmayogi Bharat
Shakil P. Ahamed	Additional Secretary & Financial Advisor in the Ministry of Textiles
Gitanjali Gupta	Additional Secretary in NITI Aayog

Name	Designation
Caralyn Khongwar Deshmukh	Additional Secretary in the Department of Rural Development
Ritvik Ranjanam Pandey	Officer on Special Duty for the Advance Cell of the 16th Finance Commission
Rajeev Kumar Mital	Additional Secretary & Financial Advisor in the Department of Atomic Energy
Srikant Nagulapalli	Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Power
Mahendra Singh Dhoni	Brand Ambassador of SBI
Deepesh Nanda	CEO & MD of Tata Power Renewable Energy
Atal Dullo	Chief Secretary of Jammu & Kashmir
Col Sunita	First Woman to Command Armed Forces Transfusion Centre
G.C. Murmu	Vice-chair of UN external auditors' panel
Sourav Ganguly	Brand Ambassador of West Bengal
Vinay Tonse	MD of State Bank of India
Koppu Sadashiv Murthy	Chief Managing Director of BHEL

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

Book	Author
Do Palkon Ki Chhavn Main	Dr. Hema Joshi
Thread by Thread	Shambhu Kumar
Pranab, My Father: A Daughter Remembers	Sharmishtha Mukherjee
Welcome to Paradise	Twinke Khanna
Cold Blooded Love	Girish Dutt Shukla
The Book of Life: My Dance with Buddha for success	Vivek Agnihotri
Tales from the Home of Wags & Wiggles	V Raghavan

INDEX AND RANKINGS

State Food Safety Index (SFSI) 2022–2023

- The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) released the State Food Safety Index (SFSI) 2022–2023 to assess the performance of Indian states and union territories in ensuring food safety. The index uses a benchmarking model to objectively measure food safety across all regions.
- The latest index introduced the new parameter 'Improvement in SFSI Rank,' which altered the weights of existing parameters and showed states' progress compared to the previous year.
- Most large Indian states, including Maharashtra, Bihar, Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh, saw a decline in their SFSI scores compared to 2019.
- After adjusting for the new parameter, 15 out of 20 states had lower SFSI scores in 2022–2023 compared to 2019.
- The availability of food testing infrastructure and trained personnel for testing food samples significantly decreased with the average score dropping from 13 to 7.

- Scores for compliance-related tasks also declined with Punjab and Himachal Pradesh receiving the highest scores and Jharkhand receiving the lowest.
- Tamil Nadu ranked first in consumer empowering initiatives followed by Kerala and Madhya Pradesh.
- The availability of human resources decreased across states with the average score dropping from 11 to 7.
- The average score for training and capacity building increased from 3.5 to 5.
- Punjab showed significant improvement in the 'Improvement in SFSI Rank' parameter, while limited progress was observed in 14 out of 20 large states.

India leads in workplace burnout: 59% report burnout symptoms, reveals survey

- McKinsey Health Institute survey in 2023 reveals India has the highest workplace burnout rate, with 59% of Indian respondents experiencing burnout symptoms.
- Younger workers aged 18 to 24, employees from smaller companies, and all workers who are non-managers reported higher burnout.

- Burnout is more prevalent among younger workers (18–24) and those in non-managerial roles or smaller companies.
- Cameroon, a country in Central Africa, reported the lowest rates of burnout symptoms at workplaces at 9%. The global average of burnout was 20% but cognitive, exhaustion and emotional impairment varied.
- Indian employees reported the highest level of workplace exhaustion at 62%, followed by Japan (61%). Switzerland reported the lowest level of workplace exhaustion at 22%.
- India ranked second in holistic employee health in the survey, behind Turkey. Japan has the lowest well-being score at 25%, while Turkey, India and China rank highest. Employees in larger companies and managerial roles have higher holistic health scores. Positive work experiences lead to better holistic health, innovation, and job performance.

Bengaluru tops in women-led startups, followed by Mumbai and Delhi

- India's startup landscape has seen significant growth and is now the third-largest hub in the world. Bengaluru is leading the way in women-led startups, with 1,783 ventures followed by Mumbai and Delhi.
- Karnataka is the first state in India to provide grants in aid of ₹ 50 lakhs to encourage women entrepreneurs.
- Other cities such as Noida, Kolkata and Ahmedabad also have notable contributions to women's entrepreneurship in India.

Indians form the third-largest illegal immigrant group in the US

- Indians constitute the third-largest illegal immigrant population in the United States, a recent study by the Pew Research Centre has revealed.
- The study, conducted by the Washington-based think tank, indicates that the country currently has over 7,25,000 Indians living illegally.
- The United States witnessed the largest influx of illegal migrants from neighbouring Mexico, followed by El Salvador (8,00,000) and India during 2017–2021.

India is the second favourite among Asian fund managers after Japan: BofA Global

- India is the second-favourite among fund managers in Asia with 28% being 'overweight' on the country and

55% on Japan, according to a survey by BofA Global Research.

- The percentage is a net of those who are 'overweight' in a country, which is the difference between the percentage of managers saying 'overweight' and those being 'underweight'.
- Indonesia has come a far third with only 8% of fund managers being 'overweight' on the country, and the fourth spot has gone to Singapore, while Taiwan has bagged 5% 'overweight'.

WHO confirms India's achievement in decreasing TB incidents

- The World Health Organisation's (WHO) 'Global TB Report 2023' praises India's efforts in combating tuberculosis (TB) and emphasises the progress made in case detection.
- India has achieved 80% treatment coverage for estimated TB cases, a significant increase from the previous year.
- India has successfully reduced TB incidence and mortality with a 16% decrease in incidence and an 18% decrease in mortality.
- The WHO has revised its TB mortality rates for India, acknowledging the country's achievements. Furthermore, India has reported the highest-ever notification of TB cases in 2022, surpassing pre-pandemic levels.
- The key initiatives driving progress include active case-finding drives, scaling up molecular diagnostics, decentralisation of screening services, and enhanced engagement with the private sector.

Women labour force participation rate reaches 37% in 2023

- Women's participation in India's workforce increased to 37% in 2022–23 from 23% in 2017–18. The unemployment rate decreased to 3.7% in 2022–23 from 6% in 2017–18.
- Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan highlighted the government's efforts to empower women in the workplace. The positive impact of government initiatives is seen through the Rozgar Mela, where appointment letters were distributed to 172 individuals.

EVENTS

India hosted the 33rd Conference of the WOA Regional Commission for Asia And Pacific in New Delhi

- India hosted the 33rd Conference of the WOA Regional Commission for Asia and the Pacific from November 13 to 16, 2023 at New Delhi.

- Union Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying Shri Parshottam Rupala inaugurated and concluded the ceremonies.
- Hosted by the Department of Animal Husbandry & Dairying, the conference attracted delegates from

36 member countries including India, senior officers from regional and international organisations and representatives from the private sector and private veterinary organisations in the region.

G20 Standards Dialogue kicks off during India's G20 Presidency

- The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) hosted the G20 Standards Dialogue 2023 in New Delhi. The theme of the dialogue is 'Zero Defect Zero Effect' and it aims to guide the world towards a sustainable future.
- Global perspectives on standards were shared by Sergio Mujica from ISO and Philippe Metzger from IEC. The event focused on promoting sustainability, regulatory excellence and stakeholder engagement.

India to host 2024 World Telecommunication Standardisation Assembly (WTSA)

- India will host the prestigious WTSA in 2024 showcasing advancements in 5G and 6G networks.
- India's hosting of the event highlights its growing importance in the global tech landscape. India has made significant strides in technology, including the development of the 5Gi standard for 5G networks.

17th Jaipur Literature Festival 2024 to begin on February 1

- The Jaipur Literature Festival, known as the "greatest literary show on Earth," is a yearly gathering of brilliant minds.
- The 17th edition will take place from February 1–5, 2024. It will feature 25 speakers, including notable names such as Akhil Katyal and Arundhati Subramaniam. The festival will be held at Hotel Clarks Amer, Jaipur, with the theme "Stories Unite Us," celebrating linguistic diversity by featuring various languages.

Sixth India-OPEC Energy Dialogue High-Level Meeting held in Vienna, Austria

- The sixth High-Level Meeting of the India-OPEC Energy Dialogue took place on November 9, 2023 in Vienna, Austria.
- The meeting focused on key energy issues with an emphasis on the availability, affordability and sustainability of energy markets globally.
- The parties recognised India's role in global economic growth and energy demand. They acknowledged India as the fastest-growing major developing economy and expressed commitment to further collaboration.

USI hosts UN Forum 2023 on Humanitarian Law and Peacekeeping

- The United Service Institution of India (USI) hosted the Annual UN Forum 2023 in New Delhi with the

theme International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and Peacekeeping.'

- It is organised in collaboration with the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Centre for UN Peacekeeping Operations, with a focus on addressing the challenges of contemporary conflicts and upholding IHL principles in UN peace operations.
- The forum aimed to foster discussion on the applicability and limitations of implementing IHL frameworks in peacekeeping, covering topics such as the protection of civilians, accountability for crimes against peacekeepers, gender-inclusive peacekeeping and leveraging technology for more effective operations.

International Conference on Plant Health Management 2023, in Hyderabad

- The International Conference on Plant Health Management (ICPHM) 2023 will be held in Hyderabad, India, from November 15–18.
- It was organised by the Plant Protection Association of India (PPAI), a 50-year-old institution promoting plant protection; the conference aims to foster innovation and sustainability in the field of Plant Health Management.
- It aims to explore global opportunities in research and entrepreneurship related to plant health, bringing together experts and stakeholders to discuss pressing issues and potential solutions.

ASEAN-India Millet Festival 2023 kicks off in South Jakarta, Indonesia

- The ASEAN-India Millet Festival 2023, organised by the Indian Mission to ASEAN and the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, took place in Indonesia from November 22 to 26.
- The festival aims to promote millets, culinary diversity and sustainable agriculture. It aligns with the International Year of Millets (IYM) and involves participants from Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.
- The festival includes a diverse Indian delegation, an exhibition, insights from experts, exhibitors and participants, live cooking workshops, panel discussions and contributions to raising awareness about millets.
- Food and Agriculture Organisation and United Nations have recognised 2023 as the International Year of Millets or IYM2023 for awareness about the health and nutritional benefits of millets.

AWARDS AND HONOURS

Suresh Wadkar honoured with Maharashtra's Lata Mangeshkar Award 2023

- The Maharashtra government has chosen Suresh Ishwar Wadkar to receive the Gansamragini Lata Mangeshkar Award for 2023, recognising his exceptional contribution to music.
- Suresh Wadkar, a Sangeet Natak Akademi laureate in 2018, has had a successful career in the music industry with hits in multiple languages and genres. The award includes a cash prize, commendation and memento, and will be presented at a later ceremony.

Kerala Responsible Tourism Mission earns global recognition from UNWTO

- Kerala's Responsible Tourism Mission has gained global recognition for its eco-friendly initiatives and has been included in the United Nations World Tourism Organisation's prestigious list of Case Studies.
- This accomplishment highlights the mission's commitment to sustainable travel and serves as an inspiration for promoting responsible tourism worldwide.
- The recognition by UNWTO reinforces the importance of responsible tourism and places Kerala on the international stage.

Four Indian women named in BBC 100 Women 2023 list

- The BBC recently released its list of BBC 100 Women for 2023, featuring inspiring women from different fields worldwide.
- The list is divided into four categories: Culture and Education, Entertainment and Sport, Politics and Advocacy, and Science, Health, and Tech.
- Four Indian women have been included on the list, namely Dia Mirza, Harmanpreet Kaur, Arati Kumar-Rao and Jetsunma Tenzin Palmo.
- Harmanpreet Kaur, the captain of the Indian Women's National Cricket Team, was recognised in the Entertainment & Sport category for her achievements and leadership.
- Dia Mirza, an actress, has been actively involved in social and environmental causes and has received several awards for her contributions.
- Jetsunma Tenzin Palmo, a renowned author and Tibetan Buddhist nun, is recognised for her work in education and culture.
- Arati Kumar-Rao, an independent photographer and environmental activist, focuses on documenting the impact of environmental degradation.

Falguni Shahs 'Abundance in Millets' nominated for the Best Global Music Performance at the Grammy Awards 2024

- Grammy-winning Indian vocalist and songwriter, Falguni Shah, has been nominated for Best Global Music Performance at the 2024 Grammy Awards for her song 'Abundance in Millets', featuring a speech by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- The song aims to raise awareness about millets and their potential to combat world hunger. Shah is a prominent advocate for millets and has been working to promote their cultivation and consumption worldwide.
- Falguni Shah, the first South Asian woman to win a Grammy, is renowned for her unique fusion of modern and Indian classical styles. She has performed at Carnegie Hall, alongside international artists such as A.R. Rahman and Ricky Martin, and for Michelle and Barack Obama at the White House.

NITI Aayog has appointed four distinguished fellows under the Fellowship Guidelines

NITI Aayog, a prominent policy think tank of the Indian government, has recently recruited four new Distinguished Fellows for one year. These individuals, renowned for their expertise in various domains, will greatly contribute to addressing crucial social, economic, and technical challenges in the country.

I. Prof. (Dr.) Anoop Singh: A Macroeconomics Expert

Dr. Anoop Singh, a distinguished member of the fifteenth Finance Commission, brings vast experience to NITI Aayog. He has held significant positions in the International Monetary Fund, including Director of the Asia Pacific Department. Known for designing IMF-supported programmes in emerging markets, he will provide valuable insights on India's fiscal architecture.

II. Dr. O.P. Agarwal: Urban Transport Specialist

Dr. O.P. Agrawal, a seasoned expert in urban transport, played a key role in formulating the national urban transport policy. With years of experience as the global Urban Transport Adviser at the World Bank, he will shape India's urban future through his expertise in transport economics and governance.

III. Dr. Ajai Chowdhry: Pioneer of the Electronics Industry

Dr. Ajai Chowdhry, a co-founder of HCL, has been instrumental in establishing India's electronics industry. As a leader in government committees, he has contributed to shaping the sector and promoting intellectual growth through educational initiatives. His role at NITI Aayog will continue to drive innovation.

IV. Sh. V. Lakshmikumaran: Legal Expert in Taxation

With 35 years of experience, Sh. V. Lakshmikumaran specialises in taxation and has successfully dealt with complex legal landscapes. He possesses a wealth of knowledge in international taxation, transfer pricing, GST and customs. His expertise will prove invaluable in addressing legal challenges in the economic landscape.

Indira Gandhi Peace Prize for 2022 presented to COVID-19 Warriors

- Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development for 2022 was jointly awarded to the Indian Medical Association (IMA) and Trained Nurses Association of India.
- The award recognises the efforts of COVID-19 warriors in India, including doctors, nurses, paramedics and support staff.

Perumal Murugan's 'Fire Bird' wins 2023 JCB Prize for Literature

- Tamil author Perumal Murugan's novel 'Fire Bird' has won the prestigious 2023 JCB Prize for Literature. It was translated from translated from the Tamil by Janani Kannan.
- The JCB Literary Prize includes a cash prize of ₹ 25 lakh for the author and an additional ₹ 10 lakh for the translator.
- Perumal Murugan is a prolific writer with an impressive body of work in Tamil including translations of ten of his novels into English.

Deepti Babuta becomes the first woman to bag Dhahan Prize for Punjabi literature

- Deepti Babuta has made history by becoming the first woman to win the prestigious Dhahan Prize, the

largest international literary award for Punjabi fiction.

- Her collection of short stories, titled 'Hunger Breathes Like This', was praised for its compelling storytelling.
- The award includes a cash prize of \$25,000 CAD and a trophy, and was presented during a ceremony in Surrey, Canada. This is the first time in the prize's 10-year history that a woman has received the top honour.

Time Magazine features Sheikh Hasina, World's Longest Serving Female Head of Govt

- Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, at 76 years old, is a prominent figure in global politics.
- She has been praised for guiding Bangladesh's growth from a jute producer to the fastest-expanding economy in the Asia-Pacific region.
- Hasina has served as the country's prime minister since 2009, winning more elections than iconic leaders like Margaret Thatcher and Indira Gandhi.

Pakistan-based startup She-Guard wins Top Climate Innovation competition

- Pakistan-based startup She-Guard has won the 'ClimateLaunchpad Asia-Pacific finals by showcasing their innovative biodegradable sanitary product.
- The startup aims to transform banana crop waste into affordable and eco-friendly sanitary napkins, addressing climate change, public health and solid waste management in Pakistan.
- ClimateLaunch Pad, organised by EIT Climate-KIC, is the world's largest green business competition for climate innovators.
- The Founder of She-Guard is Mehreen Raza.

SPORTS NEWS

National Basketball Association (NBA) ropes in Bhaane to drive its e-commerce platform in India

- The NBA and Bhaane have partnered to create NBAStore.in, an online store that offers a wide range of official NBA merchandise in India.
- The store includes jerseys, apparel, headwear, footwear, basketballs and accessories from popular brands like Nike, New Era, Mitchell & Ness, Wilson and NBA Fanwear by Suditi. The store aims to cater to the increasing demand for authentic NBA products in India.

Key Points

Founder & CEO of Bhaane -	Anand Ahuja
NBA Headquarters	- New York, US
NBA commissioner	- Adam Silver

David Willey announces retirement from International Cricket

- David Willey, the all-rounder of the England cricket team, has announced his retirement from international cricket at the age of 33. This comes after the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) decided not to offer him a central contract.
- He played his last international match for England at the World Cup 2023.

Sachin Tendulkar's statue unveiled at Wankhede Stadium

- The statue of Sachin Tendulkar was unveiled during the World Cup match between India and Sri Lanka at Wankhede Stadium, Mumbai. The statue pays tribute to the legendary batsman and is placed near the Sachin Tendulkar stand.
- The statue holds special significance as it is placed in Tendulkar's home ground, where he played his final match for India almost a decade ago.
- It was created by artist Pramod Kamble.

India beats Pakistan in penalty shootout, wins bronze at Sultan of Johor Cup 2023

- Indian junior men's hockey team won bronze at the Sultan of Johor Cup 2023 in an intense match against Pakistan.
- Mohith HS made two saves in the penalty shootout to help India beat Pakistan and clinch a bronze medal.
- Germany claimed the gold medal by defeating Australia in the final.

Angelo Mathews becomes first cricketer to get timed out

- The former Sri Lanka captain Angelo Mathews made history by becoming the first player to be timed out in an international cricket match.
- Mathews' delay in getting ready to face the next ball led to the Bangladeshi team appealing for a timed-out dismissal. The appeal was upheld by the umpires, in line with the Cricket World Cup 2023 playing conditions.
- Mathews' delay violated the rule that requires incoming batters to be ready within two minutes of dismissal. This dismissal will be remembered as a significant moment in cricket history, highlighting the importance of following the rules to maintain the integrity of the game.

Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar clinches gold medal in the 50 m Rifle 3P event

- Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar won the gold medal in the men's 50 m rifle three positions event at the Asian Shooting Championship 2023 with a score of 463.5.
- Tian Jiaming claimed silver with a score of 462.7, while Du Linshu took bronze with 450.3 points. Tomar was the only Indian shooter to make it to the top eight in the qualification round, finishing in fifth place with a score of 591.

India women beat Japan to claim Asian Champions Trophy

- Indian women's hockey team won gold in the Women's Asian Champions Trophy 2023 by defeating Japan. India remains unbeaten winning all seven matches.
- This is India's first title since December 2022 when the Janneke Schopman coached side claimed the FIH Nations Cup in Valencia to qualify for the Pro League.

Max Verstappen wins Brazilian Grand Prix 2023

- Max Verstappen dominated the Brazilian Grand Prix, leading from start to finish and securing a well-deserved victory.
- The race featured a thrilling battle between Perez and Fernando Alonso with the podium position decided by mere milliseconds.

Vidit Gujrathi, Vaishali R claim titles at FIDE Grand Swiss Chess Event

- Grandmaster Vidit Gujrathi and International Master R Vaishali won the open and women's titles, respectively, at the FIDE Grand Swiss 2023 to qualify for their respective Candidates 2024 events.

Maharashtra wins Raja Bhalindra Trophy for the first time since 1994

- Maharashtra won 80 gold medals, 69 silver medals and 79 bronze medals, bringing their total medal count to 228 at the 2023 National Games.
- They claimed the prestigious Raja Bhalindra Singh Rolling Trophy for the overall championship, a feat they hadn't achieved since 1994. With this victory, they also ended the Services Sports Control Board's (SSCB) reign at the top. SSCB has won the trophy at every edition since 2007.
- The Services Sports Control Board secured the second position with 126 medals, highlighting the importance of military sports programs. Haryana claimed third place with 192 medals.

ICC suspends Sri Lanka cricket's membership over government interference

- ICC suspended Sri Lanka Cricket's (SLC's) membership due to breaches of autonomy and government interference. The suspension follows poor performance in the ICC Cricket World Cup 2023.

New Zealand's Rachin Ravindra and West Indies' Hayley Matthews won ICC Player of the Month Awards

- Rachin Ravindra from New Zealand has won the ICC Men's Player of the Month award for his outstanding performances in the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023 group stages in India. He scored 406 runs at an average of 81.20, including a century and two half-centuries. His most memorable performance was scoring 116 in 89 balls against Australia.
- Hayley Matthews from West Indies has been named the ICC Women's Player of the Month for October. She had scintillating performances in the T20I series against Australia, scoring 310 runs at an average of 155 including two centuries. She also took six wickets.

Two Indian veterans and Sri Lanka's World Cup-winning batter were inducted into ICC's Hall of Fame

- The ICC recently announced the induction of three cricket legends into the Cricket Hall of Fame: Virender Sehwag, Diana Edulji and Aravinda de Silva.
- Sehwag is known for his explosive batting, Edulji has been a trailblazer for Indian women's cricket, and de Silva played a crucial role in Sri Lanka's 1996 World Cup win.

Virat Kohli breaks Sachin Tendulkar's record for the most centuries in an ODI

- Virat Kohli made history at the ongoing ICC Men's Cricket World Cup by becoming the first player in the world to score 50 One Day International (ODI) centuries.
- He has surpassed Sachin Tendulkar's record of 49 centuries establishing himself as the leading century-scorer in ODI cricket.
- Kohli's incredible performance at the World Cup also includes surpassing Tendulkar's record for the most runs in a single World Cup. He broke Tendulkar's 673-run mark set during the 2003 World Cup showcasing his consistency and dominance on the world stage.

Australia defeats India to lift the 13th Men's World Cup 2023

- Australia defeated India in the final of the ICC Cricket World Cup 2023 and won by six wickets at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad, Gujarat.
- Australian captain Pat Cummins won the toss and chose to bowl first. Australia's Travis Head was declared man of the match.
- Virat Kohli was awarded the Player of the Tournament and Indian bowler Mohammed Shami took the maximum number of wickets at the World Cup and was awarded with 'the Golden Ball Award.'
- Australia has previously won the World Cup titles in 1987, 1999, 2003, 2007 and 2015.

Pankaj Advani wins World Billiards Championship for record 26th time

- Pankaj Advani secured his 26th IBSF World Billiards Championship title in a remarkable comeback, defeating Sourav Kothari.
- Advani was initially trailing 26-180 but rallied to win convincingly with a score of 1000-416.

AIFF-FIFA talent academy launched in Bhubaneswar, Odisha

- The AIFF opened a world-class football academy in Bhubaneswar, Odisha and it was established under the FIFA Talent Development Scheme.
- This marks a significant milestone in Indian football and aims to nurture young talent. The FIFA Talent Development Scheme focuses on enhancing competitiveness and developing talent at grassroots levels.
- The inauguration ceremony featured Mr. Arsene Wenger, Chief of Global Football Development at FIFA, highlighting his commitment to football development.

Max Verstappen won the Las Vegas Grand Prix 2023

- Max Verstappen emerged as the winner of the action-packed Las Vegas Grand Prix, beating Charles Leclerc and Sergio Perez.
- Verstappen, a Belgian-Dutch racing driver, is the current Formula One World Champion for 2021, 2022 and 2023.

Indian Skydiver Shital Mahajan makes history near Mt. Everest

- Indian skydiver Shital Mahajan has made history by becoming the first woman to skydive from a helicopter near Mt Everest.
- She jumped from a height of 21,500 ft and skillfully landed at an altitude of 17,444 ft at Kalapatthar peak. This remarkable achievement breaks gender barriers in extreme sports and serves as an inspiration for aspiring adventurers.
- Shital Mahajan is a well-known skydiver with multiple records and was honoured with the Padma Shri award in 2001. She completed a series of high-altitude jumps in the Everest region, with her first leap from 17,500 ft. She also set a national record for the highest flag skydiving landing by a woman from 8,000 ft at Syangboche airport.