

CONTENTS

1. <i>National News</i>	3
2. <i>International News</i>	10
3. <i>Important Dates and Events</i>	14
4. <i>Sports News</i>	21
5. <i>Awards & Recognitions</i>	24
6. <i>Defence News</i>	27
7. <i>Science & Technology</i>	31
8. <i>Economy & Finance</i>	33
9. <i>Reports & Indices</i>	40
10. <i>Environment</i>	43
11. <i>Government Initiatives</i>	45
12. <i>Appointments/Person in News</i>	46
13. <i>Important Articles</i>	48
14. <i>Important MCQ for Competitive Exams</i>	57



NIMBUS
ACADEMY FOR IAS
तमसो मा ज्योतरिगमय ॥

CURRENT AFFAIRS

NATIONAL NEWS

RECENTLY, THE PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA FLAGGED OFF THE WORLD'S LONGEST RIVER CRUISE, MV GANGA VILAS IN VARANASI-

- The cruise will be managed by private operators, the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI), under the Ministry of Shipping, Ports and Waterways (MoPSW) has supported the project.
- It will explore forty historic sites on the banks of the river Ganga including, Mahabodhi temple, Hazarduari Palace, Katra Masjid, Bodh Gaya, Chandanagar church, Char Bangla Temple and more.
- Besides connecting National Waterway 1 (NW-1) which includes Ganga and National Waterway 2 (NW-2) on Brahmaputra, the cruise will cross 27 river systems.
- The Ganga - Bhagirathi-Hooghly River system between Haldia (Sagar) and Allahabad (1620 km) was declared as NW-1 in 1986.
- The 51 days cruise is planned with visits to 50 tourist spots including World Heritage Sites, National Parks, River Ghats, and major cities like Patna in Bihar, Sahibganj in Jharkhand, Kolkata in West Bengal, Dhaka in Bangladesh and Guwahati in Assam.



BBC DOCUMENTARY ON PM MODI COLONIAL MINDSET, PROPAGANDA PIECE- INDIA-

- India condemned the controversial BBC documentary series on Prime Minister Narendra Modi and referred to it as "propaganda work" that aims to forward a discredited thesis.
- Arindam Bagchi, a spokesperson for the External Affairs Ministry, stated during a weekly media briefing that this documentary show, which was based on some internal UK reports, exhibits a colonial mindset.
- During the Gujarat riots of 2002, the national broadcaster of the UK, BBC, aired a two-part series criticising PM Narendra Modi's time in office as Gujarat's chief minister. Following backlash, some platforms pulled the documentary.
- According to prominent UK citizen Lord Rami Ranger, the BBC damaged over a billion Indians severely.



PM MODI PAYS TRIBUTE NETAJI, TO NAME 21 ANDAMAN ISLANDS AFTER PARAM VIR CHAKRA AWARDEES-

- On Parakram Diwas, Prime Minister Narendra Modi participate in a ceremony to name 21 largest unnamed islands of Andaman & Nicobar Islands.
- The islands would be named after the 21 Param Vir Chakra awardees. The historic significance of the Andaman & Nicobar Islands and to honour the memory of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, Ross Islands was renamed as Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Dweep by the Prime Minister during his visit to the Island in 2018.

- PM Modi also inaugurate a model of a memorial dedicated to Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose virtually in Andaman to commemorate the freedom fighter's 126th birth anniversary.
- The model of the proposed memorial will be set up on Ross Island, which had been renamed as Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Dweep in 2018. It will have a museum, a cable car ropeway, a laser-and-sound show, a guided heritage trail through historical buildings and a theme-based children's amusement park, besides a resto lounge, according to officials.

EXPLANATION AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- **These islands have been named after the 21 Param Vir Chakra awardees-**

1. Major Somnath Sharma
2. Subedar and honorary Captain (then Lance Naik) Karam Singh, MM
3. 2nd Lt. Rama Raghoba Rane
4. Nayak Jadunath Singh
5. Company Havildar Major Piru Singh
6. Capt GS Salaria
7. Lieutenant Colonel (then Major) Dhan Singh Thapa
8. Subedar Joginder Singh
9. Major Shaitan Singh
10. CQMH. Abdul Hamid
11. Lt Col Ardeshir Burzorji Tarapore
12. Lance Naik Albert Ekka
13. Major Hoshiar Singh
14. 2nd Lt. Arun Khetrapal
15. Flying Officer Nirmaljit Singh Sekhon
16. Major Ramaswamy Parameswaran
17. Naib Subedar Bana Singh
18. Captain Vikram Batra
19. Lt Manoj Kumar Pandey
20. Subedar Major (then RifleMan) Sanjay Kumar
21. Subedar Major Retd (honorary Captain) Grenadier Yogendra Singh Yadav

INTERNATIONAL KITE FESTIVAL 2023 BEGINS IN AHMEDABAD, GUJARAT-

- The International Kite Festival 2023 has begun on 8 January in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. The festival, which is being organised after a gap of two years, was inaugurated by Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel.
- The previous edition was held in 2020 with 153 participants from 43 countries. The festival is being organised by Gujarat Tourism on the G20 theme of 'One Earth, One Family, One Future'. Apart from Ahmedabad, the International Kite Festival will also be organised in Surat, Vadodara, Rajkot, Dwarka, Somnath, Dhordo and Kevadia.
- After a gap of 2 years, the sky above the Sabarmati river in Ahmedabad will be decorated with colourful unique kites. More than 800 kite flyers from across India and the world will participate in the festival and display their unique creations. This year kite lovers from different countries will attempt to create a Guinness World Record for the maximum number of kite flyers at the same time.



- The 68 countries participating in the event include Australia, Canada, France, Russia, Germany, Greece, Israel, Egypt, Colombia, Denmark, New Zealand, Indonesia, Italy, Mexico, South Africa, Belgium, Bahrain, Iraq and Malaysia.
- The International Kite festival has many names, it is also known as Uttarayan or Makar Sankranti in Gujarat. This festival has been celebrated every year on January 14 since 1989.

AS PER THE MINISTER OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS THE INDIAN ROAD ACCIDENT SCENARIO, WITH 415 DEATHS AND MANY INJURED EVERY DAY, IS MORE SEVERE THAN COVID-19-

- Over 1.5 lakh people died from road accidents in 2021, and this has been the trend for several years.
- According to National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) data from 2021, driving under the influence of drugs/alcohol contributed to 1.9% of deaths from accidents.
- Further, nearly 90% of deaths on the road were due to speeding, overtaking, and dangerous driving. According to the World Bank's data from 2019, India ranked first among the top 20 countries for road accidents.

Causes-

- Infrastructural Deficits
- Negligence and Risks
- Distraction
- Weak Vehicle Safety Standards in India
- Lack of Awareness



JAIN COMMUNITY PROTESTS-

- The Jain community has been protesting over demands related to two holy sites – Sammed Shikhar on Parasnath hill in Jharkhand and Shatrunjaya hill in Palitana of Gujarat.
- In Jharkhand, the issue is about Parasnath hill being declared a tourist spot and an eco-sensitive zone without consulting the people from the Jain community, while in Gujarat, the row is over the vandalising of a shrine and related security concerns in Shatrunjaya Hill.



Parasnath Hills-

- Parasnath Hills are a range of hills located in Giridih district of Jharkhand. The highest peak is 1350 metres. It is one of the most important pilgrimage centre for Jains. They call it Sammed Sikhar. The hill is named after Parasnath, the 23rd Tirthankara.
- Some of the temples on the hill are believed to be more than 2,000 years old. The Santhals call it Marang Buru, the hill of the deity. They celebrate a hunting festival on the full moon day in Baisakh (mid-April).

Palitana and Shatrunjaya Hill-

- Shatrunjaya Hill is a sacred site containing hundreds of shrines in Palitana town, Bhavnagar District, Gujarat. The shrines were sanctified when Rishabha, the first Tirthankara of Jainism, gave his first sermon in the temple on the hilltop.

- It is one of the Jainism's holiest pilgrimage sites, the Shatrunjaya hill is an incredible hill studded with temples, built over 900 years.

C-295 TRANSPORT AIRCRAFT MANUFACTURING FACILITY-

- Recently, the Prime Minister of India laid the foundation stone for the C-295 transport aircraft manufacturing facility in Vadodara, Gujarat.
- Set up by Airbus Defence and Space and Tata Advanced Systems Limited (TASL).
- This is the first time a private sector company would be manufacturing a full aircraft in the country. This is a huge step forward for India in the global aircraft manufacturing domain.
- The C295 was originally produced by a Spanish aircraft manufacturer named Construcciones Aeronauticas SA.
- This company is now part of Airbus and the aircraft's manufacturing takes place at Airbus's plant in Spain.



- The C-295MW is a transport aircraft of 5-10 tonne capacity.
- Request For Proposal (RFP) was issued to global firms in May 2013 and the sole bid by Airbus and TASL was approved by the Defence Acquisition Council in May 2015.
- In September 2021, India signed a Rs 21,935 crore deal with Airbus Defence and Space to procure 56 C295 aircraft to replace the IAF's ageing Avro-748 planes, which entered service in the early 1960s.
- Of the 56 aircraft contracted, 16 will come in fly-away condition from Spain between September 2023 and August 2025.
- The remaining 40 will be manufactured here to be delivered between September 2026 and 2031 at the rate of eight aircraft per year.
- The C-295 is also a potential replacement for the AN-32 aircraft, the workhorse of the IAF with over 100 of them in service. The AN-32s will be in service upto 2032 and beyond.

SUPREME COURT UPHOLDS EWS QUOTA-

- Recently, the Supreme Court has upheld the validity of the 103rd Constitutional Amendment which provides 10% reservation for the Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) among forward castes in government jobs and colleges across India.

Majority View-

- The 103rd constitutional amendment cannot be said to breach the basic structure of the Constitution.
- The EWS quota does not violate equality and the basic structure of the constitution.

Reservation in addition to existing reservation does not violate provisions of the Constitution.

EWS QUOTA

Justice Dinesh Maheshwari	Justice Bela M Trivedi	Justice JB Pardiwala	CJI UU Lalit	Justice S Ravindra Bhat

UPHOLD EWS RESERVATION **DISSENTS**

- Reservations for EWS does not violate basic structure on account of 50% ceiling limit fixed by Mandal Commission because ceiling limit is not inflexible. 50% rule formed by the Supreme Court in the Indira Sawhney judgment in 1992 was “not inflexible”.

Minority View-

- Reservations were designed as a powerful tool to enable equal access. Introduction of economic criteria and excluding SC (Scheduled Castes), ST (Scheduled Tribe), OBC (Other Backward Classes), saying they had these pre-existing benefits is injustice.
- The EWS quota may have a reparative mechanism to have a level playing field and the exclusion of SC, ST, OBC discriminates against equality code and violates basic structure.
- Permitting the breach of 50% ceiling limit would become “a gateway for further infractions and result in compartmentalization (division into sections).

Economically Weaker Section (EWS) Quota-

- The 10% EWS quota was introduced under the 103rd Constitution (Amendment) Act, 2019 by amending Articles 15 and 16.
- It inserted Article 15 (6) and Article 16 (6).
- It is for economic reservation in jobs and admissions in educational institutes for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS).
- It was enacted to promote the welfare of the poor not covered by the 50% reservation policy for Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs) and Socially and Educationally Backward Classes (SEBC).
- It enables both the Centre and the States to provide reservations to the EWS of society.

WOMEN REPRESENTATION IN PARLIAMENT-

- Recently, the representation of women in parliament in New Zealand crossed the 50% mark.
- According to the Inter-Parliamentary Union, New Zealand is among a half-dozen nations in the world that can claim at least 50% female representation in their parliament by 2022.
- Other nations include Cuba, Mexico, Nicaragua, Rwanda and the United Arab Emirates. Globally, about 26% of lawmakers are women.

As per the latest Election Commission of India (ECI) data-

- As of October 2021, Women represent 10.5% of the total members of the Parliament.
- The scenario for women Members of Legislative Assemblies (MLAs) across all state assemblies in India is even worse, with the national average being just 9%.
- In the last 75 years of independence, women’s representation in Lok Sabha has not even increased by 10%.
- In electoral representation, India has fallen several places in the Inter-Parliamentary Union’s global ranking of women’s parliamentary presence, from 117 after the 2014 election to 143 as of January 2020.
- India is currently behind Pakistan (106), Bangladesh (98) and Nepal (43) and ahead of Sri Lanka (182).

EGYPT’S PRESIDENT TO BE CHIEF GUEST AT INDIA’S REPUBLIC DAY-

- Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al Sisi will be the chief guest at Republic Day in January 2023.
- He will be the first such guest since 2020, as plans for guests in 2021 and 2022 were cancelled due to COVID-19.
- The year 2022 is of particular significance since it marks the 75th anniversary of diplomatic relations between India and Egypt.
- Egypt has been invited as a 'Guest Country' during India's Presidency of G-20 in 2022-23.

- India and Egypt are two of the world's oldest civilizations which have enjoyed a history of close contact from ancient times.
- In modern times, Mahatma Gandhi and Saad Zaghloul shared common goals on the independence of their countries.
- The India-Egypt Bilateral Trade Agreement has been in operation since March 1978 and is based on the Most Favoured Nation clause and the bilateral trade has increased more than five times in the last ten years. Bilateral trade has expanded rapidly in 2021-22, amounting to 7.26 billion registering a 75% increase compared to FY 2020-21.
- The top Indian imports from Egypt were Mineral Oil/Petroleum, Fertilizers, Inorganic Chemicals and Cotton and main items of export to Egypt from India were Buffalo Meat, Iron & Steel, Light Vehicles and Cotton Yarn.
- India is the 3rd largest export market for Egypt, 6th largest trading partner and 7th largest exporter to Egypt.
- Egypt and India enjoy cordial defence relations. There was close cooperation between the Air Forces, with efforts at jointly developing a fighter aircraft in the 1960s. The first ever IAF-EAF Joint Tactical Air Exercise, Desert Warrior, was held in 2021.

RECENTLY, THE INDIAN PRESIDENT HAS RAISED THE ISSUE OF THE PLIGHT OF A LARGE NUMBER OF UNDERTRIALS HOLED UP IN THE PRISONS-

- An undertrial is a person who is currently on trial or who is imprisoned on remand whilst awaiting trial or a person who is on a trial in a court of law.
- The 78th Report of Law Commission also includes a person who is in judicial custody on remand during investigation in the definition of an 'undertrial'.
- As per NCRB (National Crime Report Bureau), over the last 10 years, the number of undertrials in jails has risen constantly and peaked in 2021.
- In 2020, about 76% of all prison inmates in the country were undertrials, of which about 68% were either illiterate or school dropouts.
- Delhi and Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) were found to have the highest ratio of undertrials in jails at 91%, followed by Bihar and Punjab at 85%, and Odisha at 83%.
- About 27% of all undertrials were found to be illiterate, and 41% had dropped out before Class X.

What are the Concerns-

- **Resourceless Prisoners-** There are many poor and resourceless undertrials who continue to be disproportionately arrested, routinely remanded to judicial custody in prisons. They are unable to seek and secure bail either because of lack of economic resources or because of fear of the social stigma outside.
- **Violence and Abuses in jail-** Prisons are often dangerous places for those they hold. Group violence is also endemic and riots are common. No conduct of the prison authority is criminalized, making authority act in negligence which could and do result in the death of inmates.
- **Health problems-** Most of the prisons face problems of overcrowding and shortage of adequate space to lodge prisoners in safe and healthy conditions.
- **Suffering of the Families and Social Stigma-** The family also faces social stigma and social exclusion, leading to circumstances propelling family towards delinquency and exploitation.

PRESIDENCY OF G20, SCO, UNSC IN 2022-

- December of 2022 began with India assuming the presidency of two global bodies — G20 on the first day of the month and UNSC on the second and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) in 2023 when

major powers are not even talking to each other and India alone, now the fifth largest economy, is interacting with each of them, presents a historic opportunity.

- New Delhi has said that while its G20 presidency is driven by the vision of “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam” (the world is one family), its presidency of the United Nations Security Council seeks to prioritise countering terrorism and reformed multilateralism.
- Leading with the “Five S’s” approach charted out by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Samman (Respect), Samvad (Dialogue), Sahyog (Cooperation), Shanti (Peace), and Samriddhi (Prosperity).

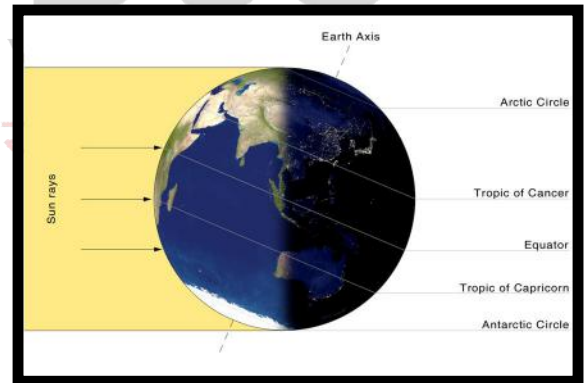


INDIA RANKED 48TH IN GLOBAL AVIATION SAFETY RANKINGS 2022-

- According to DGCA officials, India has jumped to the 48th position in the global aviation safety ranking by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).
- Four years ago, the country was ranked at the 102nd position. In the ranking, Singapore is at the top, followed by the UAE and South Korea at the second and third positions, respectively, the officials said. China is at the 49th place.

KASHMIR'S HARSHTEST WINTER PERIOD CHILLAI KALAN BEGINS-

- With the onset of winter solstice, one of the harshest winter periods of 40 days, called Chillai Kalan, has begun in Kashmir.
- Chillai Kalan is a Persian term meaning 'major cold'. The ongoing cold wave is said to reach its peak with Kashmir's mountains covered in snow for weeks, and the famous Dal Lake also reaching freezing point.
- Srinagar recorded the coldest night of the season. The minimum temperature in Srinagar recorded was minus 5.5 degrees Celsius, which is the lowest so far this season.
- While 'Chillai-Kalan' begins on December 21, it will end on



January 30. The cold wave continues even after that in Kashmir with a 20-day-long 'Chillai-Khurud' (small cold) and a 10-day-long 'Chillai-Bachha' (baby cold).

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

THE INDIAN DIASPORA-

- Recently, the Prime Minister inaugurated the 17th Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas convention in Madhya Pradesh on the occasion of Pravasi Bhartiya Diwas (PBD).
- Over the years, the convention, which began in 2003, has grown in size and scope, particularly since 2015, when the yearly convention became a biennial affair.
- The term diaspora traces its roots to the Greek diaspeiro, which means dispersion. The Indian diaspora has grown manifold since the first batch of Indians were taken to counties in the eastern pacific and the Caribbean islands under the 'Girmitiya' arrangement as indentured labourers.

Non-Resident Indians (NRI)-

- NRIs are Indians who are residents of foreign countries-
- She/he is not in India for 182 days or more during the financial year Or;
- If he/she is in India for less than 365 days during the 4 years preceding that year and less than 60 days in that year.

Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs)-

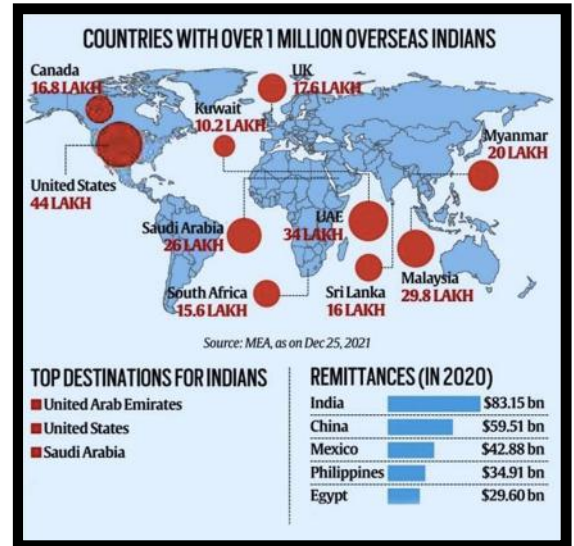
- PIO refers to a foreign citizen (except a national of Pakistan, Afghanistan Bangladesh, China, Iran, Bhutan, Sri Lanka and Nepal) who-
- At any time held an Indian passport, or who or either of their parents/ grandparents/great grandparents was born and permanently resided in India as defined in the Government of India Act, 1935 or who is a spouse of a citizen of India or a PIO.
- The PIO category was abolished in 2015 and merged with the OCI category.

Overseas Citizens of India (OCIs)-

- A separate category of OCI was carved out in 2005. An OCI card was given to a foreign national-
- Who was eligible to be a citizen of India on January 26, 1950
- Was a citizen of India on or at any time after January 26, 1950 or belonged to a territory that became part of India after August 15, 1947.
- Minor children of such individuals, except those who were a citizen of Pakistan or Bangladesh, were also eligible for OCI cards.

INDIAN-ORIGIN MANPREET MONICA SINGH SWORN IN AS 1ST FEMALE SIKH JUDGE OF USA-

- Indian-origin Sikh woman, Manpreet Monica Singh became the first ever female Sikh judge in the US after she was sworn in as a Harris county judge.
- Born and brought up in Houston, after her father immigrated to the US early in the 1970s, Singh currently lives in Bellaire with her husband and two children.
- In her career expanding over two decades, the newly appointed judge has been involved in numerous civil rights organizations at the local,



state, and national levels.

- An estimated 5,00,000 Sikhs live in the US, with 20,000 Sikhs living in the Houston area.
- The state's first South Asian judge, Indian-American Ravi Sandill called it a big moment for the Sikh community. Sandill was also presiding over the ceremony which happened in a packed courtroom.

INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF MILLETS-

- India has shared the vision to make International Year of Millets 2023 a 'People's Movement' alongside positioning India as the 'Global Hub for Millets'.
- India's proposal to observe an International Year of Millets in 2023 was approved by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) in 2018 and the United Nations General Assembly has declared the year 2023 as the International Year of Millets.
- This was adopted by a United Nations Resolution for which India took the lead and was supported by over 70 nations.

Objectives-

- Awareness of the contribution of millet to Food Security and nutrition.
- Inspire stakeholders to improve sustainable production and quality of millets.
- Focus on enhanced investment in research and development and extension services to achieve the other two aims.

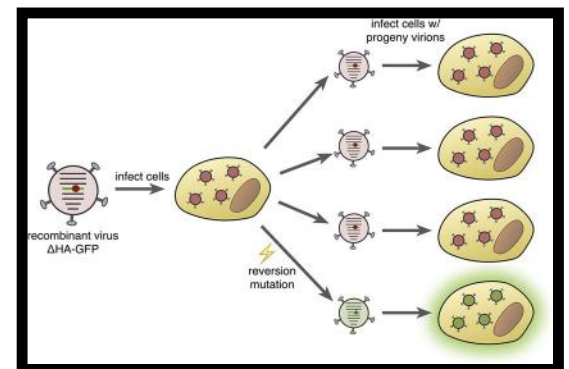
What is Millet-

- Millet is a collective term referring to a number of small-seeded annual grasses that are cultivated as grain crops, primarily on marginal lands in dry areas in temperate, subtropical and tropical regions.
- Some of the common millets available in India are Ragi (Finger millet), Jowar (Sorghum), Sama (Little millet), Bajra (Pearl millet), and Variga (Proso millet).
- The earliest evidence for these grains has been found in Indus civilization and was one of the first plants domesticated for food.
- India is the largest producer of millet in the world. It accounts for 20 % of global production and 80% of Asia's production.



BF.7 VARIANT OF THE CORONAVIRUS-

- The current surge in Covid-19 infections in China, is believed to be driven by the BF.7 sub-variant of Omicron that is circulating over there.
- The dominant virus strain in China is BF.7, a sub-variant of Omicron that has been in circulation for over a year now. There are over 500 Omicron sub-variants currently in circulation.
- BF.7 is the name for the BA.5.2.1.7, which itself has evolved from the BA.5 sub-variant. BF.7 is not unique to China.
- It accounted for over 5% of the cases in the US in October, 2022 and over 7% of the cases in the UK.
- When viruses mutate, they create lineages and sub-lineages—like the main trunk of the SARS-CoV-2 tree sprouting branches and sub-branches.
- When a virus multiplies, it doesn't always manage to produce an exact copy of itself. This means that, over time, the virus may start to differ slightly in terms of its genetic sequence.



- Any changes to the viral genetic sequence during this process is known as a Mutation.
- Viruses with new mutations are sometimes called Variants. Variants can differ by one or multiple mutations.
- When a new variant has different functional properties to the original virus and becomes established in a population, it is sometimes referred to as a New Strain of the virus. All strains are variants, but not all variants are strains.

RECENTLY, THIRD 'NO MONEY FOR TERROR' (NMFT) MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON COUNTER-TERRORISM FINANCING WAS HELD IN NEW DELHI, INDIA-

- The Prime Minister of India has strongly asked for avoiding any ambiguity in dealing with terrorism and also warned against nations that use terrorism as a tool of foreign policy.
- The "No Money for Terror" conference was started in 2018, as an initiative of the French government, to specifically focus on cooperation between countries to choke terror funding.
- In 2019, the conference was held in Australia.
- It was to be held in India in 2020 but was postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- It offered a unique platform for participating nations and organisations to deliberate on the effectiveness of the current international regime on Counter Terrorism Financing and the steps required to address emerging challenges.
- It was attended by delegates from 72 countries and 15 international organisations.



During the Conference, deliberations were held in four sessions with focus on:

- A. Global Trends in Terrorism and Terrorist Financing.
 - B. Use of Formal and Informal Channels of Funds for Terrorism.
 - C. Emerging Technologies and Terrorist Financing.
 - D. International Co-operation to Address Challenges in Combating Terrorist Financing.
- India urged the international community to take cognisance of threats emerging from regime change in Afghanistan, as the last one had led to 9/11 attacks.
 - The regime changes and the growing influence of Al Qaeda & Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) have emerged as a significant challenge to regional security.
 - In January 2009, in the wake of the 26/11 terrorist attack, the National Investigation Agency was established to deal with terrorist crimes.
 - In India, the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Amendment Act is the primary anti-terrorism law.
 - To gather information related to security, the National Intelligence Grid (NATGRID) has been established.
 - An operational hub has been created for the National Security Guard to ensure a rapid response to terrorist attacks.

LT GENERAL ASIM MUNIR APPOINTED AS NEW ARMY CHIEF OF PAKISTAN-

- Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif appointed Lieutenant General Asim Munir as the new army chief of the country, replacing incumbent General Qamar Javed Bajwa.
- Pakistan's military has directly ruled the country of 220 million people for nearly half of its 75-year history.



- Lieutenant General Sahir Shamshad will take charge as the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee.
- PM Sharif held a cabinet meeting earlier where he selected Munir from a list of six nominees for the top military post.
- Munir is currently posted at the army headquarters in Rawalpindi. He has served briefly as chief of the country's premier intelligence agency, the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI).

WORLD'S LARGEST ACTIVE VOLCANO MAUNA LOA ERUPTED IN HAWAII-

- Mauna Loa the world's largest active volcano erupted in Hawaii for the first time in four decades.
- It was the first eruption since 1984. The eruption began in Moku'aweoweo, the summit caldera of Mauna Loa, inside the Hawaii Volcanoes National Park.
- The residents at risk from Mauna Loa lava flows were advised to review preparedness and refer to Hawaii Country Civil Defence information for further guidance.
- The early stages of the Mauna Loa eruption were dynamic and the advances of lava changed rapidly.
- Hawaii's civil defense agency also helped meet across the island to help residents prepare for a possible emergency.
- Before the recent Mauna Loa eruption, it erupted 33 times, beginning from 1843. It is the most active volcano and covers half of the island.



IMPORTANT DATES AND EVENTS

NATIONAL GIRL CHILD DAY CELEBRATES ON 24 JANUARY 2023-

- On January 24, the nation celebrates National Girl Child Day. This day was established in 2008 by the Ministry of Women and Child Development.
- The goal of National Female Child Day is to highlight the prejudice and injustice that girl children face. To raise awareness of the injustices girls face in Indian society, the Ministry of Women and Child Development and the Indian government started it in 2008.
- The Ministry of Education will host a celebration with the theme "Self Defence Training for Girls."

STATEHOOD DAY OF MANIPUR, TRIPURA AND MEGHALAYA-

- Recently, on 21 January, the states of Manipur, Tripura and Meghalaya observed their 51st statehood day. The three states gained their statehood in 1972 under the North-Eastern Areas (Re-organisation) Act, 1971.
- A few days before India's Independence, the Maharaja of Manipur, Bodhachandra Singh, signed the Instrument of Accession with the Indian govt. on the assurance that the internal autonomy of Manipur would be maintained.
- Tripura accepted merger with the Indian Union on 15th November, 1949. Queen Kanchan Prabha, the then regent of Tripura (after the demise of King Bir Bikram) was instrumental in this merger.
- Meghalaya came into existence as an autonomous state within the state of Assam in April 1970 comprising the United Khasi and Jaintia Hills and the Garo Hills districts.



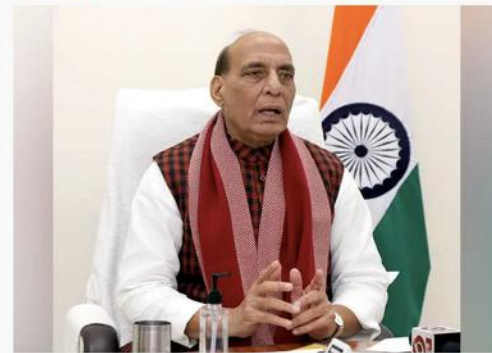
75TH INDIAN ARMY DAY OBSERVED ON 15 JANUARY 2023-

- Indian army day 2023 is celebrated on 15th January 2023 and it mark the 75th anniversary of the Indian army day.
- Every year on January 15, India celebrates its Army Day. It is the day on which Field Marshal Kodandera M. Cariappa (then a Lieutenant General) took over as the first Commander in Chief of the Indian Army from the last British Commander in Chief of India, General Fransis Bucher in the year 1949.
- Parades, medal presenting and other ceremonies are organized to celebrate the Army Day. With "Service before self" as its motto, the Indian Army is the largest component of the Indian Armed Forces.
- Originally, the Indian army was formed under the British rule on April 1, 1895 and was called as British Indian Army. After India got its independence in the year 1947, it was only on January 15, 1949, when the country got its first Indian chief.

7th Armed Forces Veterans Day celebrates on 14 January 2023

The Armed Forces Veterans Day is celebrated on 14th January since 1953, the First Indian Commander in Chief (C-in-C) of Indian Army- Field Marshal KM Cariappa, who led Indian Forces.

Sumit Arora • Published On January 14th, 2023



VISHWA HINDI DIWAS-

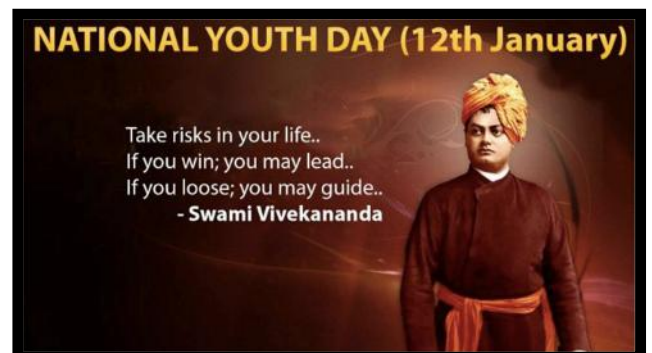
- Vishwa Hindi Diwas (VHD) or World Hindi Day (WHD) is celebrated every year on 10th January to promote the Hindi language all around the world.
- Whereas Hindi Diwas is celebrated on 14th September annually, which focuses largely on recognition of the Hindi language in India.
- It was first celebrated in 2006 to commemorate the anniversary of the first World Hindi Conference which was held in Nagpur on 10th January, 1975.
- It marks the day when Hindi was first spoken in the United Nations' General Assembly in 1949. It is also celebrated by Indian embassies located in various parts of the world.
- The World Hindi Secretariat building was inaugurated in Port Louis, Mauritius in 2018.
- The National Hindi Day is celebrated every year in India on September 14 to mark the day of adoption of Hindi as the official language by the Constituent Assembly of India in 1949. Hindi is also an eighth schedule language.

Government Initiatives to Promote Hindi-

- A. The Central Hindi Directorate was established in 1960 by the Government of India under the Ministry of Education.
 - B. Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) has established 'Hindi Chairs' in various foreign universities/institutions abroad.
 - C. LILA-Rajbhasha (Learn Indian Languages through Artificial Intelligence) is a multimedia based intelligent self-tutoring application for learning Hindi.
 - D. E-Saral Hindi Vakya Kosh and E-MahashabdKosh Mobile App, both initiatives of the Department of Official Language, aim to harness information technology for the growth of Hindi.
 - E. Rajbhasha Gaurav Puraskar and Rajbhasha Kirti Puraskar recognise contributions to Hindi.
- Hindi got its name from the Persian word Hind, meaning 'land of the Indus River'. Turk invaders in the early 11th century named the language of the region Hindi, 'language of the land of the Indus River'.
 - It is the official language of India, English being the other official language.
 - Hindi is also spoken in some countries outside India, such as in Mauritius, Fiji, Suriname, Guyana, Trinidad & Tobago and Nepal.
 - Hindi in its present form emerged through different stages, during which it was known by other names. The earliest form of old Hindi was Apabhramsa. In 400 AD Kalidas wrote a romantic play in Apabhramsa called Vikramorvashiyam.
 - The modern Devanagari script came into existence in the 11th century.

NATION CELEBRATES NATIONAL YOUTH DAY ON JANUARY 12-

- National Youth Day is celebrated every year on January 12 to mark the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda. Every year on this occasion, the government organises National Youth Festival in collaboration with one state willing to host from January 12 to January 16. This year Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the festival on January 12 in Huballi, Karnataka.
- The basic objective of National Youth Day is to bring the youth of the country together in an attempt to showcase their talents in various activities to cover almost all socio-cultural aspects of life, providing an opportunity to amateur young artists to express themselves and



interact with fellow artists and to further learn the new art forms from experts of various disciplines.

- The Centre said the festival is held to provide exposure to youths at a national level and this year's theme for the four-day programme is "Viksit Yuva – Viksit Bharat (Developed Youth – Developed India)".
- In the year 1985, the government had declared the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda, January 12, as 'National Youth Day'.
- Since then, all the centres of Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission have been celebrating the occasion through various programmes.
- Swami Vivekananda, born Narendranath Datta on January 12, 1863, was a disciple of Sri 19th-century Indian mystic Ramakrishna Paramhansa. He went on to become a key figure in the introduction of the Indian darsanas (teachings, practices) of Vedanta and Yoga to the Western world and was credited with raising interfaith awareness.
- Vivekanand was highly regarded as a major force in the contemporary Hindu reform movements in India and contributed to the concept of nationalism in colonial India.
- Famous for his famous speech in Parliament of World's Religions in Chicago, 1893, he focused on channelling the energy of the youth.

NATIONAL MATHEMATICS DAY (NMD) HAS BEEN CELEBRATED EVERY YEAR ON 22ND DECEMBER TO MARK THE BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF SRINIVASA RAMANUJAN-

- On the 125th birth anniversary of Ramanujan, NMD was announced by the then-Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in 2012.
- The day is celebrated annually with the aim to make people aware of the importance of mathematics and advancements and developments made in the field.
- Born on 22nd December, 1887 in Erode, Tamil Nadu. In 1903, he secured a scholarship to the University of Madras but lost it the following year because he neglected all other subjects in pursuit of mathematics.
- In 1911, Ramanujan published the first of his papers in the Journal of the Indian Mathematical Society.
- In 1913, he began a correspondence with the British mathematician Godfrey H. Hardy which led to a special scholarship from the University of Madras and a grant from Trinity College, Cambridge.
- **Formulas and Equations-** He gave several formulas to calculate the digits of Pi in many unconventional ways.
- **Game Theory-** He discovered a long list of new ideas to solve many challenging mathematical problems, which gave a significant impetus to the development of game theory.
- **Ramanujan's Book-** One of Ramanujan's notebooks was discovered by George Andrews in 1976 in the library at Trinity College. Later the contents of this notebook were published as a book.
- **Ramanujan number-** 1729 is known as the Ramanujan number. It is the smallest number which can be expressed as the sum of two different cubes in two different ways.
- **Death-** He died on April 26th, 1920, at the age of 32, just after returning to India after a long illness.

PRAVASI BHARATIYA DIVAS (PBD) IS CELEBRATED ON 9TH JANUARY TO MARK THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE OVERSEAS INDIAN COMMUNITY TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF INDIA-

- The Prime Minister inaugurated the 17th three-day Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention in Indore, Madhya Pradesh and a digital exhibition on the contribution of the diaspora in the freedom struggle. He also released a commemorative stamp, 'Surakshit Jaayen, Prashikshit Jaayen' on the occasion.
- 9th January was chosen as the day to celebrate PBD since it was on this day in 1915 that Mahatma Gandhi, the greatest Pravasi, returned to India from South Africa, led India's freedom struggle and changed the lives of Indians forever.

- This day came into effect in 2003, but in 2015 it was revised and was decided to be celebrated every two years. It was then a theme-based conference that was set up every year during the interim period.
- PBD Conventions are held once every two years.
- PBD 2023: The theme is "Diaspora: Reliable partners for India's progress in Amrit Kaal".
- On this day, the Government also confers Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award.
- It is the highest honour conferred on a Non-Resident Indian (NRI), Person of Indian Origin (PIO); or an organisation or institution established and run by NRI OR PIO, who have made significant contributions to a better understanding of India abroad, support India's causes and concerns in a tangible way.

NATIONAL MILK DAY-

- Department of Animal Husbandry is celebrating National Milk Day on 26th November 2022.
- National Gopal Ratna Awards 2022 are conferred as part of the celebrations.
- June 1 is observed as World Milk Day every year.
- The day celebrates the importance of milk in a person's life. And to promote the benefits related to the milk & milk industry and to create awareness among people about the importance of milk and milk products.
- 26th November 2022 commemorates 101st birth anniversary of Dr. Verghese Kurien, the "Father of White Revolution in India".
- Dr. Verghese Kurien (1921-2012), He is known as the 'Father of White Revolution in India'. He is famous for his 'Operation Flood', which is known as the world's largest agricultural program. He established 30 institutions that are run by various farmers and workers.
- He also played a key role in the establishment and success of Amul Brand.
- Because of his efforts only, India became the largest producer of milk in 1998, surpassing the U.S.
- He was honoured with several awards, including the Ramon Magsaysay Award (1963), Krishi Ratna (1986) and World Food Prize (1989). He is also the recipient of India's highest civilian awards- Padma Shri (1965), Padma Bhushan (1966) and Padma Vibhushan (1999).
- Operation Flood was launched on 13th January, 1970. It was the world's largest dairy development programme.
- The operation gave farmers direct control over the resources they create, helping them direct their own development.

About

Verghese Kurien, known as the "Father of the White Revolution" in India, was a social entrepreneur whose "billion-litre idea", Operation Flood, made dairy farming India's largest self-sustaining industry and the largest rural employment sector providing a third of all rural income. [Wikipedia](#)

Born: 26 November 1921, Kozhikode

Died: 9 September 2012, Mujibhai Patel Urological Hospital, Nadiad

Education: Loyola College, Michigan State University, [MORE](#)

Nickname: Milkman of India

Spouse: Molly Kurien

Children: Nirmla Kurien

Parents: Puthenparakkal Kurien

VIJAY DIWAS-

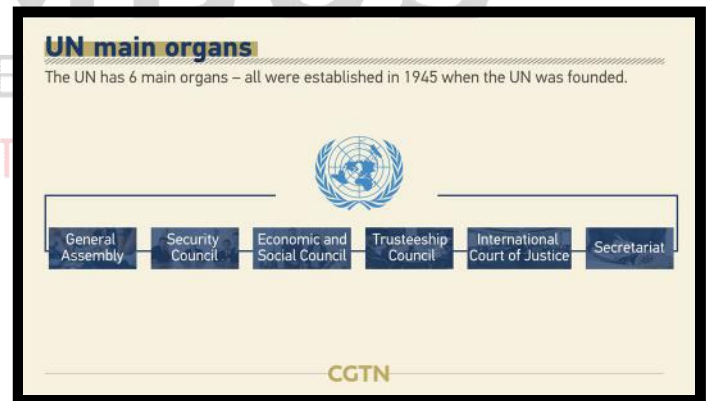
- Every year 16th December is observed by Indian Armed Forces and Bangladesh as Vijay Diwas (Bijoy Dibos) to mark India's victory over Pakistan in the 1971 war and the birth of Bangladesh as an independent nation.
- Pakistan right after India's independence consisted of East and West Pak where a major problem was the geographical disconnect between the two regions.
- Cultural conflicts and negligence of East Pak's administration were also challenges.

- In the mid-1960s, leaders such as Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (the founding father of Bangladesh), actively began protesting against the policies of West Pak which was followed by a brutal crackdown by the Pakistani military.
- On 15 May 1971, India launched Operation Jackpot to recruit, train, arm, equip, supply and advise Mukti Bahini fighters engaged in guerrilla warfare against the Pakistan military.
- On 3rd December 1971, India decided to go on a war with Pakistan to save Bengali Muslims and Hindus in East Pakistan. The war lasted for 13 days.
- After that, a written agreement between India, Pakistan and the provisional government of Bangladesh came into effect bringing an end to the Bangladesh Liberation War.
- 51 years ago, on 16th December, the largest surrender of military personnel took place since the end of World War II.
- The chief of the Pakistani forces surrendered unconditionally to the Indian Army and Mukti Bahini in Dhaka.



ON 1ST DECEMBER, INDIA ASSUMED THE MONTHLY ROTATING PRESIDENCY OF THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL (UNSC) FOR THE SECOND TIME IN ITS TWO-YEAR TENURE-

- On 1st December, India assumed the monthly rotating presidency of the UN Security Council (UNSC) for the second time in its two-year tenure as an elected member of the Council in 2021-22.
- India had earlier assumed UNSC presidency in August 2021.
- India will hold a “high-level open debate” on “Maintenance of International Peace and Security: New Orientation for Reformed Multilateralism (NORMS)” at the Security Council.
- The other signature event planned is the high-level briefing on the theme “Threats to International Peace and Security Caused by Terrorist Acts: Global Approach to Counter Terrorism — Challenges and Way Forward”.
- The Security Council was established by the UN Charter in 1945. It is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations.
- The other 5 organs of the United Nations are—the General Assembly (UNGA), the Trusteeship Council, the Economic and Social Council, the International Court of Justice, and the Secretariat.
- The UNSC and UNGA jointly elect judges to the International Court of Justice.
- The UNSC is composed of 15 members: 5 permanent and 10 non-permanent. Five permanent members: China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, and the United States.
- Ten non-permanent members: Elected for two-year terms by the General Assembly.
 - A. Five from African and Asian States
 - B. One from Eastern European States
 - C. Two from Latin American States



D. Two from Western European and other States

HUMAN RIGHTS DAY-

- Recently, The President of India graced and addressed the Human Rights Day celebration, organised by the National Human Rights Commission.
- Human Rights Day is observed by the international community every year on 10 December.
- It commemorates the day in 1948 the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights sets out a broad range of fundamental rights and freedoms to which all of us are entitled. It guarantees the rights of every individual everywhere, without distinction based on nationality, place of residence, gender, national or ethnic origin, religion, language, or any other status.
- Although the Declaration is not a binding document, it inspired more than 60 human rights instruments which together constitute an international standard of human rights.
- 2022 Theme- Dignity, Freedom, and Justice for All

INTERNATIONAL CHEETAH DAY-

- Every year, International Cheetah Day is celebrated on 4th December since 2010.
- Dr. Laurie Marker designated the day as International Cheetah Day in remembrance of Khayam, a cheetah she raised from a cub at Wildlife Safari in Winston, Oregon.
- The cheetah is one of the oldest of the big cat species, with ancestors that can be traced back more than five million years to the Miocene era.
- The cheetah is also the world's fastest land mammal that lives in Africa and Asia.
- A majority of the world's 7,000 cheetahs live in South Africa, Namibia and Botswana. Namibia has the world's largest population of cheetahs.
- The cheetah is the only large carnivore that got completely wiped out from India, mainly due to over-hunting and habitat loss. Eight Cheetahs have been recently reintroduced in India from Namibia to Kuno National Park.



THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA PAID FLORAL TRIBUTES TO DR. RAJENDRA PRASAD, THE FIRST PRESIDENT OF INDIA, ON HIS BIRTH ANNIVERSARY AT RASHTRAPATI BHAVAN ON 3RD DECEMBER 2022-

- Dr. Rajendra Prasad son of Mahadev Sahai, was born in Zeradei, Siwan, Bihar on 3rd December 1884.
- He joined the famed Calcutta Presidency College in 1902. In 1915, Prasad appeared in the examination of master's in law from the Department of Law, University of Calcutta, passed the examination and won a gold medal.
- In 1916, he commenced his legal career in the Patna High Court. He completed his Doctorate in Law from Allahabad University in 1937.



- While Gandhiji was on a fact-finding mission in Champaran district of Bihar to address grievances of local peasants, he called on Dr. Rajendra Prasad to come to Champaran with volunteers.
- Gandhiji's influence greatly altered many of his views, most importantly on caste and untouchability. The Champaran Satyagraha not only brought him closer to Mahatma Gandhi, but also changed the entire course of his life.
- Dr. Prasad officially joined the Indian National Congress in 1911, during its annual session held in Calcutta.
- Following the resignation of Subhash Chandra Bose as the President of the Congress in April 1939, He was elected President for the second time.
- In 1946, he joined the Interim Government of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru as the Minister of Food & Agriculture and gave the slogan of "Grow More Food".
- In July 1946, when the Constituent Assembly was established to frame the Constitution of India, he was elected its President.
- Two and a half years after independence, on 26th January 1950, the Constitution of independent India was ratified and he was elected India's First President.
- In 1962, after 12 years as President, Dr. Prasad retired, and was subsequently awarded the Bharat Ratna, the nation's highest civilian award.
- Dr. Prasad recorded his life and the decades before independence in many books, which includes:
 - A. Satyagraha at Champaran
 - B. India Divided
 - C. His autobiography "Atmakatha"
 - D. Mahatma Gandhi and Bihar, Some Reminiscences
 - E. Bapu ke Kadmon Mein
- Dr. Rajendra Prasad spent the last few months of his life in retirement at the Sadaqat Ashram in Patna. He died on 28th February 1963.

SPORTS NEWS

HOCKEY WORLD CUP 2023, NETHERLANDS RECORDS BIGGEST WIN IN HOCKEY WORLD CUP HISTORY-

- The three-time champion Netherlands defeated Chile's debutants by a score of a record-breaking 14-0 to qualify as the first team to the quarterfinals of the FIH Men's Hockey World Cup.
- The Netherlands finished at the top of Pool C with a maximum of nine points after racking up three victories in as many games.
- The largest margin of victory in a World Cup game was recorded by the third-ranked Netherlands against the 23rd-ranked Chile in the day's second play.
- World No. 1 Australia previously held the record for the largest margin of victory in a hockey World Cup match after thrashing South Africa 12-0 in New Delhi.
- The Netherlands advanced directly to the quarter final stage, however Malaysia and New Zealand from group C must play crossover matches to advance.
- A, B, C, and D, the four groups made up of the 16 teams, were each set to play three games against the other teams in their respective pools.
- The team that finishes first in the table will automatically proceed to the quarterfinals, per the rules.



FIH MEN'S HOCKEY WORLD CUP 2023 BEGINS IN CUTTACK-

- Men's Hockey World Cup, 2023 has begun with a spectacular opening ceremony in Cuttack that was witnessed by thousands of hockey lovers in attendance from across the country and abroad.
- Union Sports Minister Anurag Thakur, Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, International Hockey Federation president Tayyab Ikram and Hockey India chairman Dilip Tirkey were present at the glittering ceremony. 16 teams are participating in the global tournament.
- The matches will be held at two venues, Birsa Munda Hockey Stadium in Rourkela and Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar, from January 13 to January 29.
- While 20 matches will be played at Rourkela, 24 matches, including the final, will be held in Bhubaneswar.
- The state government has built a new hockey stadium in Rourkela ahead of the event. Odisha is hosting the international event for the second consecutive time, the previous one having been held in Bhubaneswar in 2018.



SANIA MIRZA ANNOUNCES HER RETIREMENT FROM PROFESSIONAL TENNIS

- Indian tennis player, Sania Mirza has announced her retirement from professional Tennis.
- She will retire at the WTA 1000 event in Dubai in February 2023.
- She became the first Indian to win a WTA singles title, when she won her hometown Hyderabad event in 2005.
- She broke into the top 30 by 2007 and reached her career-high ranking of world number 27.
- In 2015, she partnered up with Swiss legend Martina Hingis and won three Grand Slam doubles titles.



VICE PRESIDENT JAGDEEP DHANKHAR ATTENDS FIFA WORLD CUP INAUGURATION IN QATAR-

- Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar has joined the Emir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani and other dignitaries in the inauguration of FIFA World Cup in Qatar.
- Dhankhar is in Doha for a two-day visit to represent India at the inauguration of FIFA's showpiece event.
- Besides attending the inaugural ceremony of the Football World Cup, the Vice President will also interact with members of the Indian community during the visit.
- The 60,000-capacity Al Bayt Stadium in Al Khor will host the opening ceremony on 20 November 2022 just before the first match between host Qatar and Ecuador.



PT USHA BECOME FIRST WOMEN PRESIDENT OF INDIAN OLYMPIC ASSOCIATION-

- PT Usha was elected to become the president of the Indian Olympics Association (IOA).
- The Minister of Law and Justice of India announced on Twitter to congratulate the legendary Indian athletes. PT Usha becomes the first woman president of the IOA.
- She also expressed her intentions to run for IOA on 26th November 2022. She was the only contender for the election of the top position in the sports organization.
- PT Usha is one of the most accomplished athletes in India. She has won 11 medals including four gold at the Asian Games between 1982 and 1994.
- She also won four gold medals at the Seoul Asian Games in 1986. She has participated in 200m, 400m hurdles, and 4x400 relays.
- PT Usha submitted her candidacy papers for the position of president on 27th November 2022.



FIFA WORLD CUP QATAR 2022-

- Recently, Argentina won the FIFA (Fédération internationale de Football Association) World Cup 2022 held in Qatar by defeating France.
- The most prestigious tournament in the world - taking place quadrennially. First FIFA WC was held in Uruguay in 1930, Won by Uruguay.

- The trophy cup awarded from 1930 to 1970 was the Jules Rimet Trophy, named for the Frenchman who proposed the tournament. A new trophy called the FIFA World Cup was put up for competition in 1970.

FIFA announced a number of awards to recognize the great performance of players throughout the WC including-

- A. Golden Boot (Most number of Goals) - Kylian Mbappe (France)
 - B. Golden Glove - Emiliano Martinez (Argentina)
 - C. Golden Ball (Performer of the Tournament) - Lionel Messi (Argentina)
 - D. Young Player - Enzo Fernandez (Argentina)
 - E. FIFA Fair Play Award - England
- **FIFA WC Official Ball-** Al Rihla (means - 'the journey') - a reference to a travelogue written by Ibn Battuta, the 14th-century explorer. Pakistan produces more than 2/3rd of the world's footballs, with Sialkot being the hub of manufacturing.
 - La'eeb was the Official Mascot for FIFA WC 2022. 'La'eeb 'in Arabic translates to 'super-skilled player'.



CRISTIANO RONALDO SIGNS 200-MILLION EURO CONTRACT WITH SAUDI CLUB AL-NASSR-

- Famous Footballer, Cristiano Ronaldo has sensationally joined Saudi Arabian club Al-Nassr on a two and a half year deal worth 200 million euros per season.
- The news has been reported by renowned Spanish outlet Marca ahead of the Portugal captain's FIFA World Cup 2022 Round of 16 fixture against Switzerland.
- Earlier, Ronaldo's agent Jorge Mendes had spoken to a number of clubs including European giants like Bayern Munich, Chelsea, Atletico Madrid, etc., but no one showed any serious interest in the 37-year-old forward.
- Ronaldo's contract got terminated by Manchester United after a controversial bombshell interview with broadcaster Piers Morgan.
- The 37-year-old, during the interview had said that he felt betrayed by the Premier League club, and accused a few senior figures within the club for trying to force him out of Old Trafford.
- Ronaldo also criticised manager Erik ten Hag, and he was also suspended by him earlier in the season after he refused to come in as a substitute during a 2-0 victory over Tottenham.
- Al Nassr Football Club is a Saudi Arabian football club based in Riyadh.
- Formed in 1955, the club plays its home games at the Mrsool Park. Their home colours are yellow and blue. Al Nassr is one of the most successful clubs in Saudi Arabia, Victory championships are estimated at 27 championships at the level of all competitions.



AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

'RRR' WINS BEST FOREIGN LANGUAGE FILM AT CRITICS CHOICE AWARDS 2023

- India's 'RRR' directed by SS Rajamouli has won the Critics Choice Awards 2023 in the Best Foreign Language Film category and Best Song category for 'Naatu Naatu'

Television:

- **Best Actor:** Bob Odenkirk (Best Drama Series: Better Call Saul)
- **Best Actress:** Zendaya (Euphoria)

Film:

- **Best Actor:** Brendan Fraser (The Whale as Charlie)
- **Best Actress:** Cate Blanchett (Tár)
- **Best Director:** Daniel Kwan and Daniel Scheinert (Best Movie: Everything Everywhere All at Once)



RECENTLY, SRI LANKAN WRITER SHEHAN KARUNATILAKA WON THE BOOKER PRIZE 2022 FOR HIS NOVEL "THE SEVEN MOONS OF MAALI ALMEIDA", -

- Recently, Sri Lankan writer Shehan Karunatilaka won the Booker Prize 2022 for his novel "The Seven Moons of Maali Almeida", about a dead war photographer on a mission in the afterlife.
- The Booker Prize is the world's leading literary award for a single work of fiction.
- Founded in the UK in 1969, it was initially awarded to Commonwealth writers and now spans the globe, and it is open to anyone regardless of origin.
- Each year, the Booker Prize is awarded to what is, in the opinion of our judges, the best sustained work of fiction written in English and published in the UK and Ireland.
- The winning book is a work that not only speaks to our current times, but also one that will endure and join the pantheon of great literature.



DR. SUBRAMANIAM JAISHANKAR, FOREIGN MINISTER OF INDIA-

- Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, a former diplomat who served as 31st Foreign Secretary of India between 28 January 2015 – 28 January 2018, was inducted into Narendra Modi's cabinet as a Union Minister of External affairs in 2019.
- Prior to diving into Indian Political Sphere, he served as Indian Ambassador to the United States, China and the Czech Republic.
- In addition to this eminent portfolio, he also served as High Commissioner to Singapore (2007–09). Jaishankar also played a vital role in negotiating the Indo-US civilian nuclear agreement.



Dr. S. Jaishankar's Career Highlights-

- 2015- Jaishankar was appointed as Foreign Secretary of India on 29 January 2015.
- 2013- Jaishankar was appointed as India's Ambassador to United States in September 2013.
- 2012- Jaishankar became India's longest-serving ambassador to China, with a four and a half-year term.

- 2007- From 2007 to 2009, Jaishankar served as India's High Commissioner to Singapore.
- 2000- He was appointed India's ambassador to the Czech Republic.

INDIAN-ORIGIN LEO VARADKAR IS NEW PRIME MINISTER OF IRELAND-

- Indian-origin Leo Varadkar has returned for a second term as Ireland's Prime Minister as part of a job-sharing deal made by the country's centrist coalition government.
- His appointment was confirmed when he received the seal of office from President Michael D. Higgins, Ireland's head of state.
- This is the second time that Varadkar has been elected as Irish prime minister. He first became the Irish prime minister in June 2017.
- In June 2020, the Fine Gael party led by Varadkar formed a coalition government with Fianna Fail and Green Party, in which he served as deputy prime minister and Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment.
- Varadkar's rise to the top of Irish politics was remarkable in a country dominated by a strict, conservative Catholic morality well into the latter half of the last century. At 38, he became the country's youngest Taoiseach as well as its first openly gay head of government and first of Indian heritage.
- Varadkar was born in Dublin to an Irish mother who worked as a nurse and an Indian immigrant father, who was a qualified doctor.



NATIONAL SPORTS AND ADVENTURE AWARDS 2022-

- Recently, the Table tennis legend Achanta Sharath Kamal was bestowed with the Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna award for his outstanding performance in the Commonwealth Games, 2022 by the President as part of the National Sports and Adventure Awards 2022.
- Other awards given out include the Dronacharya Award, Dhyan Chand Award for Lifetime Achievement in Sports and Games, the Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puruskar, the Maulana Abul Kalam Azad trophy as well as the Tenzing Norgay National Adventure Award.
- Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award-
- Formerly known as the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna, it is the highest sporting award.
- It carries a cash prize of Rs 25 lakh, a medal and a scroll of honour.



Arjuna Award-

- It was instituted in 1961 by the Government of India to recognise outstanding achievement in national sports events.
- The award carries a cash prize of Rs 15 lakh, a bronze statue of Arjuna and a scroll of honour.

Dronacharya Award-

- It was instituted in 1985 by the Government of India to recognise excellence in sports coaching. It is given to coaches for doing outstanding and meritorious work on a consistent basis and enabling sportspersons to excel in international events.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Trophy-

- It was instituted in the year 1956-1957.
- It is for university-level sports performances.

Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puruskar-

- It was instituted in the year 2009.
- It is given to corporate entities (both in private and public sector), sports control boards, NGOs including sports bodies at the State and National level who have played a visible role in the area of sports promotion and development.

Tenzing Norgay National Adventure Awards-

- The awards are given every year to recognize the achievements of persons in the fields of adventure, to encourage young people to develop the spirit of endurance, risk-taking, cooperative teamwork and quick, ready and effective reflexes in challenging situations and to provide incentive to the young people for getting exposed to the adventure activities.



NIMBUS
ACADEMY FOR IAS
तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय ॥

DEFENCE NEWS

GLOBAL FIRE POWER INDEX, NO CHANGE IN TOP 4 MILITARY RANKINGS-

- The Global Firepower Index ranks the countries based on their potential military strength. India is ranked fourth in the index. The Global Firepower Index ranked 145 countries. The countries were evaluated based on prolonged offensive and defensive military campaigns.
- The Global Firepower Index is calculated using fifty individual factors from geography to logistical capability.
- It also includes manpower, land forces, airpower, natural resources, naval forces, logistics and financials.
- Under manpower, the factors considered are total population, paramilitary, reaching military age annually, active reserves and active services.
- Under equipment, the factors considered are trainer fleet, aircraft fleet strength, helicopter fleet, attack fleets, rocket projectors, tank strength, towed artillery, aircraft carriers, naval fleet strength, destroyers, submarines, coastal patrol craft, frigates, mine warfare craft, coastal patrol craft and tanker fleets.
- The finance factors include external debt, defence budget, reserves of foreign exchange and gold and purchasing power parity.
- The Global Firepower Index, 2022, puts the US at the top, Russia at the second spot, China at No. 3, and India at No. 4.

Position	Country	Score
1	United States	0.0712
2	Russia	0.0714
3	China	0.0722
4	India	0.1025
5	United Kingdom	0.1435
6	South Korea	0.1505
7	Pakistan	0.1694
8	Japan	0.1711
9	France	0.1848
10	Italy	0.1973

INDIAN NAVY CONDUCTS "AMPHEX 2023" MEGA EXERCISE IN ANDHRA-

- Indian Navy has carried out a six-day-long mega military exercise along with the Indian Army and the Indian Air Force near Kakinada in Andhra Pradesh. The "largest" biennial tri-services amphibious exercise AMPHEX 2023 was conducted from January 17 to 22.
- The exercise is to review the preparedness of the Indian Navy and the Army during the war, national calamities and coastal security enforcement. The exercise is being conducted near the Naval Enclave at Suryaraopeta village in Kakinada rural Mandal off Kakinada coast.
- The exercise took place amid growing concerns over China's increasing military forays into the Indian Ocean, a region considered as the backyard of the Indian Navy.
- The joint operations conducted during the exercise saw participation by a large number of troops from Indian Army, amphibious warships from Indian Navy and aircraft from the Indian Air Force.



CAPTAIN SHIVA CHOUHAN BECOMES FIRST WOMAN OFFICER TO BE DEPLOYED AT SIACHEN

- Captain Shiva Chauhan (Indian Army's Fire and Fury Corps) has become the first woman officer to be operationally deployed in Kumar Post (height: 15,632 feet) at the highest battlefield in the world-Siachen.
- She hails from Rajasthan.
- She led an arduous 508-km long 'Sura Soi 'Siachen Sappers cycling expedition from the Siachen War Memorial to Kargil War Memorial in July 2022.
- She got inducted to the Siachen Glacier on January 2 after an arduous climb.



THE DEFENCE MINISTRY HAS STARTED THE PROCESS FOR THE PROCUREMENT OF 100 MORE K9-VAJRA TRACKED SELF-PROPELLED HOWITZERS-


- The 100th gun was delivered to the Army in 2021.
- The K9 Vajra is a 155 mm, 52-calibre tracked self-propelled howitzer (a short gun for firing shells on high trajectories at low velocities) built in India by Larsen & Toubro (L&T) with technology transferred from South Korean defence major Hanwha Defense based on its K9 Thunder.
- The K9 Thunder platform is made of all-welded steel armour protection material.
- The K9 gun has been developed under the 'Buy Global 'programme of the Defence Procurement Procedure (DPP) where foreign companies are allowed to participate.
- The K9 Vajra was mainly bought for use in deserts, but the India-China standoff prompted them to be deployed in the mountains as well.
- To ensure that these systems performed optimally in the extreme cold weather conditions of the mountains, the Army also procured winterisation kits for the regiment deployed.

K9 Thunder
From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

The **K9 Thunder** is a South Korean 155 mm self-propelled howitzer designed and developed by the Agency for Defense Development and civil contractors including Dongyong Heavy Industries, Kia Heavy Industry, Pongsan Corporation, and Samsung Aerospace Industries for the Republic of Korea Armed Forces, and is now manufactured by Hanwha Defense.^[a] K9 howitzers operate in groups with the K10 automatic ammunition resupply vehicle variant.^[a]

The entire K9 fleet operated by the ROK Armed Forces is now undergoing upgrades to K9A1, and a further upgrade variant K9A2 is being tested for production. As of 2022, the K9 series has had a 52% share of the global self-propelled howitzer market, including wheeled vehicles, since the year 2000.^[a]

Contents (hide)	
1	Development
2	General characteristics
2.1	K10 ARV (Ammunition Resupply Vehicle)
2.2	K11 FDCV (Fire Direction Control Vehicle)
3	Operational history
4	Variants
4.1	K9A1
4.2	K9A2
4.3	K9A3
5	Exports
5.1	Turkey
5.2	Poland
5.3	Finland
5.4	India
5.5	Monrovia
5.6	Estonia
5.7	Australia
5.8	Egypt
5.9	Ongoing sales
5.9.1	United Kingdom
5.9.2	Romania
5.10	Failed bids
5.10.1	Denmark
6	Variants and upgrades



K9 Thunder

Type
Self-propelled artillery

Place of origin
South Korea

Service history

In service
K9: 1999–present
K9A1: 2018–present

Used by
See Operators

Wars
See Operators of
Yoonpung

Production history

Designer
Agency for Defense Development (main developer)
Dongyong Heavy Industry (frame and suspension)
Kia Heavy Industry (main armament)
Pongsan Corporation (ammunition)
Samsung Aerospace Industries (structure and production)

Designed
1989–1998

Manufacturer
Samsung Aerospace Industries (1998–2000)
Samsung Techno (2000–

HADR EXERCISE SAMANVAY 2022-

- Indian Air Force (IAF) is conducting the Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) Exercise 'Samanvay 2022' from 28th to 30th November 2022 at Air Force Station Agra.
- Exercise 'Samanvay' is an annual joint exercise involving various stakeholders from India and representatives from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries.
- It aims to assess the efficacy of institutional disaster management structures and contingency measures.
- Samanvay 2022 will promote a synergistic approach towards HADR by various national and regional stakeholders involved in Disaster Management including the Civil Administration, the Armed Forces, National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), etc.

- This multi-agency engagement is expected to contribute in the evolution of institutional frameworks for effective communication, interoperability, cooperation and their application for successful conduct of HADR.

NASEEM AL BAHR 2022-

- The Indian Naval Ship (INS) Trikand, INS Sumitra, and Maritime Patrol Aircraft (MPA) Dornier, participated in the 13th Edition of 'Naseem Al Bahr '(Sea Breeze).
- INS Trikand is a frontline frigate equipped with a versatile range of weapons and sensors. It is a part of the Indian Navy's Western Fleet, based at Mumbai.
- INS Sumitra, a multirole offshore patrol vessel is part of the Eastern Fleet of the Indian Navy, based at Visakhapatnam.
- Naseem Al Bahr is a bilateral maritime exercise between Indian Navy (IN) and Royal Navy of Oman (RNO).
- The exercise was conducted from 19th to 24th November 2022 off the coast of Oman and had three phases: harbour phase, sea phase and debrief.
- The first IN-RNO exercise was conducted in 1993. Year 2022 marks 30 years of IN-RNO bilateral exercises.
- India and Oman have traditionally enjoyed warm and friendly relations, sharing common cultural values. Naval exercises have added strength and substance to these bilateral ties.

What are India's other Bilateral Maritime Exercises?

- Thailand: **India-Thailand Coordinated Patrol (Indo-Thai CORPAT)**
- Indonesia: **Samudra Shakti**
- Singapore: **Singapore-India Maritime Bilateral Exercise (SIMBEX)**
- Qatar: **Zair-Al-Bahr**
- Bangladesh: **Bongosagar Exercise**
- Sri Lanka: **Sri Lanka-India Naval Exercise (SLINEX)**
- Japan: **Japan Maritime bilateral exercise (JIMEX), Maritime Partnership Exercise (MPX)**
- France: **VARUNA**

AGNI-5 BALLISTIC MISSILE-

- Agni-5 is an ingeniously built advanced surface-to-surface ballistic missile developed under the Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme (IGMDP). It is a fire-and-forget missile, which cannot be stopped without an interceptor missile.
- The missile has the capability of hitting targets beyond the range of 5000 km and is crucial for India's self-defense systems.
- The Agni missile class is the backbone of India's nuclear launch capability, as are Prithvi short-range ballistic missiles, submarine-launched ballistic missiles, and fighter aircraft.

Other Ranges of Agni Missiles-

- Agni I:** Range of 700-800 km.
 - Agni II:** Range more than 2000 km.
 - Agni III:** Range of more than 2,500 Km
 - Agni IV:** Range is more than 3,500 km and can fire from a road mobile launcher.
 - Agni-V:** The longest of the Agni series, an Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) with a range of over 5,000 km.
- Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme IGMDP was the brainchild of renowned scientist Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam.



- It was intended to attain self-sufficiency in the field of missile technology.
- The IGMDP formally got the approval of the Indian government in 1983.
- It brought together the country's scientific community, academic institutions, R&D laboratories, industries and the three defence services in giving shape to the strategic, indigenous missile systems.

The missiles developed under IGMDP are-

- Short-range surface-to-surface ballistic missile – Prithvi
- Intermediate-range surface-to-surface ballistic missile – Agni
- Short-range low-level surface-to-air missile – Trishul
- Medium-range surface-to-air missile – Akash
- Third generation anti-tank missile – Nag



NIMBUS
ACADEMY FOR IAS
तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय ॥

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

ISRO 'SHUKRAYAAN' MISSION TO PLANET VENUS REPORTEDLY SHIFTED TO 2031

- According to a report, the Shukrayaan I, the ISRO Venus mission may be delayed until 2031
- The mission was scheduled to launch in December 2024
- The concept was conceived in 2012
- After five years, the Department of Space received a 23% increase in the 2017–2018 budget and ISRO started preliminary investigations
- The best time to launch from Earth to Venus is once every 19 months or thereabouts
- If ISRO misses 2024, then ISRO has "backup" launch dates in 2026 and 2028



VIKRAM-S ROCKET LAUNCHED BY ISRO, INDIA'S FIRST PRIVATELY DEVELOPED ROCKET-

- Vikram-S Rocket, India's first privately developed rocket launched from the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) at the Sriharikota launchpad. The launch of Vikram-S Rocket by ISRO is a historic moment.
- The Vikram-S Rocket is developed by Hyderabad-based start-up Skyroot Aerospace Private Limited, and it is a 6-meter tall and hits a peak altitude of 89.5 kilometers.
- After five minutes of launch, the Vikram-S Rocket splashed into the Bay of Bengal. The mission was titled Prarambh.
- The Vikram-S Rocket is a single-stage solid fuelled, sub-orbital rocket developed over two years by incorporating advanced technologies that include carbon composite structures and 3D printer components.
- The Vikram-S Rocket is equipped with a gross lift-off mass of 545kg, and a payload mass of 80kg. Vikram-S carried three customer payloads which will map the measurement and validation of certain flight parameters and payload integration processes.
- The Skyroot firm was launched in June 2018 by two engineers Pawan Kumar Chandana and Naga Bharath Daka. The firm aims to open space for all, he is pushing the boundaries of today's techno. It is working towards a future where space becomes a part of our lives and claims that such a transition will transform humankind like never before.



MONKEYPOX DISEASE NAME CHANGED TO MPOX BY WHO-

- The World Health Organisation has changed the name of the disease Monkeypox to Mpx, as they receive complaints about the word Monkeypox conjuring up racist tropes and stigmatizing patients.
- The recommendation follows outbreaks that began about six months ago in Europe and the United States.
- Mpx has circulated in the rural development parts of Central Africa and West Africa for decades.

- WHO will adopt the term Mpox in its communications and encourages others to follow these recommendations.
- This decision was taken to minimize the ongoing negative impact of the current name and from the adoption of the new name.
- The WHO has promoted new criteria for naming infectious diseases.
- According to the recommendations, names should aim to reduce the unnecessary negative impacts on travel, tourism, or animal welfare.
- The criteria also avoid causing any offense to culture, social, national, regional, professional, or ethnic groups.
- The critics informed that Monkeypox reinforced ugly western stereotypes about Africa as a reservoir of pestilence and sexually transmitted pathogens.

ACCORDING TO THE MINISTRY OF EARTH SCIENCE, THE SAMUDRAYAAN MISSION IS EXPECTED TO BE REALISED BY YEAR 2026-

- The mission is aimed at sending three personnel to 6000-metre depth in a vehicle called 'MATSYA 6000' for the exploration of deep-sea resources like minerals.
- 'MATSYA 6000' vehicle is being designed and developed by National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT), Chennai under Ministry of Earth Sciences.
- It has an endurance of 12 hours under normal operation and 96 hours in case of emergency for human safety.
- It is India's first unique manned ocean mission and is a part of the Rs 6000-crores Deep Ocean Mission.
- The manned submersible will allow scientific personnel to observe and understand unexplored deep-sea areas by direct intervention.
- It will also boost the Central government's vision of 'New India' that highlights the Blue Economy as one of the ten core dimensions of growth. India has a unique maritime position, a 7517 km long coastline, which is home to nine coastal states and 1,382 islands.
- For India, with its three sides surrounded by the oceans and around 30% of the nation's population living in coastal areas and coastal regions play a major economic factor.
- **Deep Ocean Mission-** It was approved in June 2021 by the Ministry of Earth Sciences. It aims to explore the deep ocean for resources, develop deep-sea technologies for sustainable use of ocean resources, and support the Blue Economy Initiatives of the Indian Government.
- The cost of the Mission has been estimated at Rs. 4,077 crores over a five-year period and will be implemented in phases.



ECONOMY AND FINANCE

AMAZON BACK AS WORLD'S MOST VALUED BRAND, APPLE DOWN TO NO 2-

- Billionaire Jeff Bezos's e-commerce company Amazon has become the most valued brand, overtaking Apple, last year's topper.
- Amazon has reclaimed the top spot as the world's most valuable brand despite its brand value falling 15 per cent this year from \$350.3 billion to \$299.3 billion.
- According to brand valuation consultancy Brand Finance's report, "Global 500 2023", while Amazon is back at No 1, its brand value has fallen by over \$50 billion this year, with its rating slipping from AAA+ to AAA. This is as consumers evaluate it more harshly in the post-pandemic world.
- iPhone maker Apple slipped to the second slot to be ranked the world's second most valuable brand (brand value down 16% to \$297.5 billion from \$355.1 billion). This year's fall in brand value relates to a fall in forecast revenue with supply chain disruptions and a constrained labour market expected to limit the supply of its marquee hardware products.
 - A. Amazon- Worth \$299.3 billion
 - B. Apple- Worth \$297.5 billion
 - C. Google-Worth \$281.4 billion
 - D. Microsoft-Worth \$191.6 billion
 - E. Walmart-Worth \$113.8 billion
 - F. Samsung Group-Worth \$99.7 billion
 - G. ICBC-Worth \$69.5 billion
 - H. Verizon-Worth \$67.4 billion
 - I. Tesla-Worth \$66.2 billion
 - J. TikTok/Douyin-Worth \$65.7 billion
- From India, over 150-year-old Tata Group is the only brand to feature in the top 100. The conglomerate's brand value jumped up to 69 from 78 last year.
- However, reasons for the ranking going up were not available. Among Indian IT tech giants, Infosys jumped to the 150th slot from 158 last year. According to the report, Infosys has seen an 84% increase in its brand value since 2020.

NPCI ALLOWS NRE/NRO ACCOUNTS WITH INTERNATIONAL MOBILE NUMBERS TO USE UPI-

- The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has instructed members of the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) ecosystem to allow non-resident account types such as non-resident external (NRE)/ non-resident ordinary (NRO) accounts having international mobile numbers to get onboarded and transact through UPI.
- To begin with, NPCI will be enabling transactions from mobile numbers having country codes of Singapore, Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, Oman, Qatar, USA, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, and the United Kingdom, along with the current domestic country code. The government body has asked UPI participants, such as Paytm, Google Pay, and more to put in place a mechanism by April 30.

Non-Residential External (NRE) and Non-Resident Ordinary (NRO) Accounts are the two major categories of accounts available for you, as an NRI. They happen to be amongst the most popular options if you wish to save money in India.

What is the difference between NRE and NRO Accounts?

The following table summarizes the difference between NRE and NRO Accounts-

Basis	NRE Accounts	NRO Accounts
<i>Definition</i>	An account that helps you park your foreign earnings in India, in Indian denomination.	An Account that helps you park your earnings from India in Indian Denomination.
<i>Taxation</i>	Deposits in NRE accounts are Tax-Free, i.e. the principal amount, and the interest earned thereon, is exempt from tax.	The interest earned in NRO accounts is subject to TDS or Tax deductible at Source.
<i>Repatriability i.e. Transferability</i>	Money from NRE accounts is freely repatriable i.e. both the Principal amount and interest earned are freely and completely transferable.	Funds from the NRO Accounts can be repatriated post payment of applicable taxes with a limit of USD 1 million in a financial year.

- This is subject to the fact that the member banks have to ensure such types of accounts are only allowed as per extant Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA) regulations and adherence to the guidelines issued by the concerned regulatory departments of RBI from time to time.
- The UPI ecosystem members have to comply with NPCI's directions by April 30, 2023. Also, all necessary anti-money laundering/ combating of financing of terrorism checks and compliance validation as per the rules have to be ensured by the remitter and beneficiary banks.
- NPCI had been receiving requests from the UPI ecosystem as well as customers to allow non-resident accounts to transact through UPI. Hence, they decided to allow this so that the non-resident accounts having international numbers experience a seamless and instant journey of UPI. The new development will benefit many NRIs who visit India but prefer using their international number in the country.

FOREX RESERVES AT \$562.9 BN; FALL BY \$70 BN IN 2022-

- India's foreign exchange reserves fell by \$70.1 billion in 2022, data released by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) shows.
- The forex reserves stood at \$562.9 billion in the week ended December 30. The decline in the forex reserves is partly due to the RBI intervention in the currency markets to stave off volatility and partly on account of depreciation of other major currencies held by the central bank.
- The RBI net sold \$33.42 billion till September, Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman said. The RBI holds major currencies including pound sterling, yen and euro in its reserves, which are expressed in US dollar terms.
- Fall of The Rupee Through-out the Year-
- The rupee depreciated 10.2% against the US dollar in calendar year 2022.
- The rupee breached 80 against the dollar in September and has remained at Rs 81-82 levels since then.
- The rupee is likely to trade with an appreciating bias in the range of 81-83 against the dollar till March.
- Forex reserves had touched a high \$642.5 billion in September of 2021, falling to around \$631.5 billion towards the end of February 2022, when the Ukraine-Russia war started.
- RBI had said that FX reserves of \$564.1 billion as on December 9 are equivalent to 9.2 months worth of imports, lower than the projected 15 months of imports at the peak levels.

RECENTLY, THE SUPREME COURT HAS PASSED A VERDICT ON THE DEMONETISATION OF CURRENCY NOTES OF RS 500 AND RS 1,000 IN A MAJORITY 4-1 BY A FIVE-JUDGE CONSTITUTION BENCH-

Majority Ruling-

- The majority held that Centre's notification dated November 8, 2016 is valid and satisfies the test of proportionality. The RBI and the Centre had been in consultation with each other for six months prior to the November 8 notification issued under Section 26(2) of the RBI (Reserve Bank Of India) Act, 1934.
- The statutory procedure under Section 26(2) of the RBI Act was not violated merely because the Centre had taken the initiative to "advise" the Central Board to consider recommending demonetisation.
- On hasty decision, the court said such measures undisputedly are required to be taken with utmost



confidentiality and speed. If the news of such a measure is leaked out, it is difficult to imagine how disastrous the consequences would be.

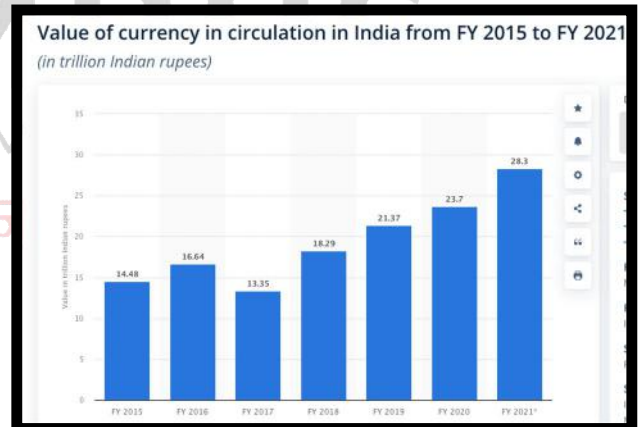
- Demonetisation was done for the “proper purposes” of eliminating fake currency, black money.

Minority Ruling:

- The government could have issued a notification under Section 26(2) of the RBI Act only if the RBI had initiated the proposal to demonetise by way of a recommendation.
- Therefore, the government’s notification issued under Section 26(2) of the RBI Act was unlawful.
- In cases in which the government initiates demonetisation, it should take the opinion of the RBI. The opinion of the Board should be “independent and frank”.
- If the Board’s opinion was in the negative, the Centre could still go forward with the demonetisation exercise, but only by promulgating an ordinance or by enacting a parliamentary legislation.
- Describing the Parliament as the “nation in miniature”, “without the Parliament, democracy will not thrive”.
- On 8th November 2016, the government announced that the largest denomination of Rs 500 and Rs 1000 were demonetised with immediate effect ceasing to be a legal tender.
- It is the act of stripping a currency unit of its status as legal tender or fiat money.
- It occurs whenever there is a change of national currency and the current form or forms of money is pulled from circulation and retired, often to be replaced with new notes or coins.

CURRENCY IN CIRCULATION-

- Nearly six years and two months after the government announced demonetisation in 2016, currency with the public is at a new high (74% increase from the days before demonetisation was announced).
- Cash in the system has been steadily rising, even though the government and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) pushed for a “less cash society”, digitisation of payments and slapped restrictions on the use of cash in various transactions.
- Currency in circulation refers to cash or currency within a country that is physically used to conduct transactions between consumers and businesses.
- Currency in Circulation includes notes in circulation, rupee coins and small coins. The RBI has the sole right to issue currency notes. The Government of India is the issuing authority of coins and supplies coins to the Reserve Bank on demand.



THE INDIAN RUPEE DEPRECIATED BY AROUND 10% AGAINST THE US DOLLAR AND THE RUPEE WAS THE WORST-PERFORMING ASIAN CURRENCY IN 2022-

- This decline was mainly on account of appreciation in the US currency on safe haven appeal amid fears of recession and inflation across many parts of the world and Russia-Ukraine war.
- During the year, the rupee fell to a lifetime low of 83.2 against the dollar. Compared to rupee, depreciation of other Asian currencies was to a lesser extent.
- During the year, the Chinese Yuan, Philippine Peso and Indonesian Rupiah fell around 9%. South Korean Won and Malaysian Ringgit declined by nearly 7% and 6%, respectively.

- However, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) heavily intervened in the forex market to defend rupee. Since the beginning of 2022, the country's foreign exchange reserves have fallen by USD 70 billion. It stood at USD 562.81 billion as of 23rd December 2022.
- Reserves have witnessed a bit of erosion but the central bank is now starting to again build up its reserves and that would act as a buffer in times of uncertainty.
- The US Fed aggressively raised interest rates by 425 basis point (bps) in 2022 in its fight against inflation.
- This led to a higher interest rate differential between the US and India, and investors pulled out money from the domestic market and started investing in the US market to take advantage of higher rates.
- In 2022, Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) pulled out Rs 1.34 lakh crore from the Indian markets – the highest-ever yearly net outflow.
- They withdrew Rs 1.21 lakh crore from the stock markets and Rs 16,682 crore from the debt market in 2022, putting pressure on the rupee.
- Russian invasion of Ukraine accentuated the FPI withdrawals with the global economic slowdown making inflows tougher.

What may be the Impact of Depreciation on the Indian Economy?

- **Positive:**
 - Weaker rupee should theoretically **give a boost to India's exports**, but in an environment of uncertainty and weak global demand, a fall in the external value of rupee may not translate into higher exports.
- **Negative:**
 - It poses **risk of imported inflation**, and may make it difficult for the central bank to maintain interest rates at a record low for longer.
 - India meets more than two-thirds of its domestic oil requirements through imports.
 - India is **also one of the top importers of edible oils**. A weaker currency will further escalate imported edible oil prices and lead to a higher food inflation.

UPI PROCESSES RECORD 7.82 BN TRANSACTIONS IN DECEMBER, ENDS 2022 ON A HIGH-

- India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI) processed a record 7.82 billion transactions in December, worth a total of INR 12.82tn (\$174.6bn).
- This represents an increase of 7.12% in volume and 7.73% in value compared to November. On a year-on-year basis, volume and value increased by 71% and 55% respectively.
- In 2022, UPI processed over 74 billion transactions worth INR 125.94tn. In 2021, it processed 38 billion transactions worth INR 71.54tn.
- This represents a YoY increase of 90% in volume and 76% in value.
- UPI reached 1 billion transactions in October 2019, 2 billion in October 2020, and 3 billion in January 2021.

National Payments Corporation of India
Umbrella organization
npci.org.in

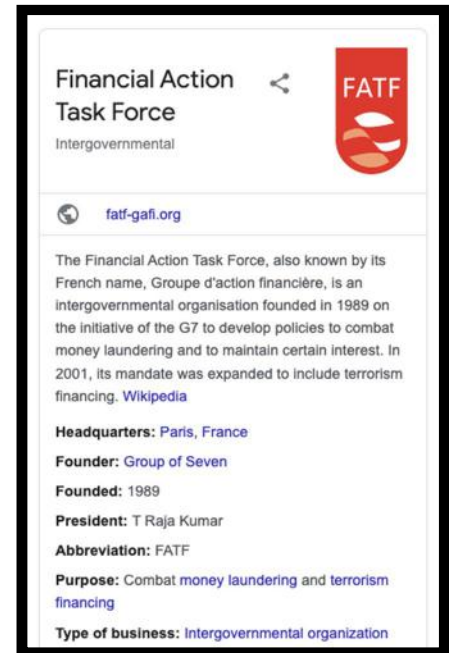
The National Payments Corporation of India is an umbrella organization for operating retail payments and settlement systems in India, is an initiative of Reserve Bank of India and Indian Banks' ... Wikipedia

Founded: 2008
Headquarters: Mumbai
Founders: Reserve Bank of India, Indian Banks' Association
Type of business: Section 8
Number of employees: 1001+
Subsidiaries: NIPPL

PAKISTAN REMOVED FROM FATF GREY LIST-

- Recently, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), the international watchdog on terror financing and money laundering, has removed Pakistan from the list of countries under "increased monitoring" (Grey List).
- India's other neighbour on the grey list, Myanmar, was moved to the "black list" due to actions by the military leadership after the 2021 coup.
- FATF is the global money laundering and terrorist financing watchdog. It also aims to counter the financing of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.
- It was set up in 1989 out of a G-7 meeting of developed nations in Paris.
- Its Secretariat is located at the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) headquarters in Paris.

- As of today, it is a 39-member body with 37 countries and two regional organisations: the European Commission, and the Gulf Cooperation Council.
- Indonesia is the only observer country of FATF.
- India joined with 'observer' status in 2006 and became a full member of FATF in 2010.
- India is also a member of its regional partners, the Asia Pacific Group (APG) and the Eurasian Group (EAG).
- The FATF Plenary (decision-making body of the FATF) meets tri-annually - in February, June and October, to take stock of "Mutual Evaluation Reports" (MERs) of the countries it reviews.
- If a country appears to have major deficiencies in its AML/CFT regime, it is put on a list of "jurisdictions under increased monitoring" - "grey list" and if it fails to address FATF concerns, it is put on a "high-risk jurisdictions" list - "black list".
- The Grey List includes countries that are considered safe haven for supporting terror funding and money laundering. It serves as a warning that the country may enter the blacklist.
- The Black List includes Non-Cooperative Countries or Territories (NCCTs) that support terror funding and money laundering activities. As of now, Iran, North Korea and Myanmar are the three black listed countries.
- The enlisted countries are subjected to increased financial structures, thus making it difficult for them to procure loans from the financial institutions affiliated to FATF (as observers) such as the IMF, World Bank etc.



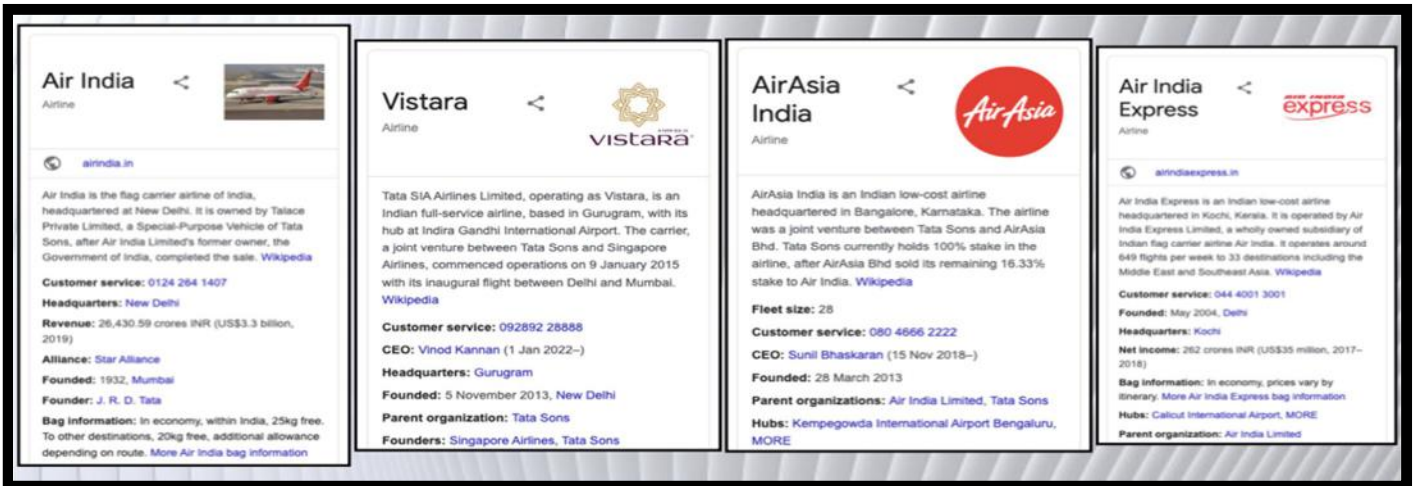
INDIA AND GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL-

- India and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) have agreed to pursue a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between the two regions and resume the negotiations.
- GCC is a union of six countries in the Gulf region — Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman and Bahrain. The council is the largest trading bloc of India.
- India has enjoyed centuries of good relations with countries like Iran, while smaller gas-rich nation Qatar is one of India's closest allies in the region.
- India shares good relations with most of the countries in the Gulf. The two most important reasons for the relationship are oil and gas, and trade.
- Qatar accounts for 41% of India's total natural gas imports. Two additional reasons are the huge number of Indians who work in the Gulf countries, and the remittance they send back home.
- As per a research paper published by the Reserve Bank of India, in the financial year 2020-21, remittances from the UAE to India were USD 15.40 billion, which is 18% of India's total inward remittances.
- India's exports to the GCC member countries grew by 58.26% to about USD 44 billion in 2021-22 against USD 27.8 billion in 2020-21.
- Bilateral trade in goods has increased to USD 154.73 billion in 2021-22 from USD 87.4 billion in 2020-21.
- GCC countries contribute almost 35% of India's oil imports and 70% of its gas imports.



VISTARA TO MERGE WITH AIR INDIA BY 2024-

- Singapore Airlines (SIA) and Tata Sons announced that they have agreed to merge Air India and Vistara, with SIA getting a 25.1 per cent stake in the merged entity at an investment of Rs 2,058.5 crore (\$250 million) in Air India as part of the transaction.
- The 25.1 per cent stake will be in an enlarged Air India group – it will have Air India, Vistara, AirAsia India and Air India Express – and the merger of all airlines is targeted for completion by March 2024, subject to regulatory approvals. The group is already in the process of merging Air India Express and AirAsia India into one entity that will provide low-cost flight options.



- SIA intends to fully fund this investment with its internal cash resources, which stood at \$17.5 billion as of 30 September 2022.
- This will take the fleet size to 218, putting together Air India's 113 with AirAsia India's 28, Vistara's 53, and Air India Express's 24. It will then be India's largest international carrier and second largest domestic carrier, Tata Sons said.

INDIA'S IMPORT DEPENDENCE ON CHINA-

- The recent Tawang skirmish has led to rising demands for severing trade ties with China. However, contrary to the demands, India's imports from China have seen a sharp increase post the Galwan Valley clash in 2020.
- China is India's second biggest trading partner after the US. In 2021-22, Indo-China bilateral trade was USD 115.83 billion - 11.2% of India's total merchandise trade of USD 1,035 billion (Indo-US trade - 11.54%).
- China as a trading partner stood at 10th position about 2 decades ago; this upward trend has begun since 2002-03.
- China was India's top trading partner in 2011-12, from 2013-14 to 2017-18 and in 2020-21.
- The major difference in India's trade with the US and China is that while India enjoys a trade surplus with the US (USD 32.85 bn - 2021-22), with China India has a trade deficit of USD 73.31 bn (2021-22), the highest for any country.
- While India's imports from China (between 2001-02 and 2021-2020) have increased from USD 2 bn to USD 94.57 bn, (in the same period) India's exports to China have increased from about USD 1 bn to only USD 21 bn.

The top commodities that India buys from China include-

- Electrical machinery and equipment and parts thereof
- Television image and sound recorders and reproducers and parts

- Nuclear reactors, boilers, machinery and mechanical appliances and parts of thereof
- Organic chemicals , Plastic and plastic articles , Fertilisers
- The most valued Chinese imports are-
- Personal computer (laptop, palmtop etc.) > monolithic integrated circuits-digital > lithium-ion > solar cells > urea

THE RESERVE BANK ANNOUNCES THE LAUNCH OF THE FIRST PILOT FOR RETAIL DIGITAL RUPEE (E ₹) ALSO CALLED CENTRAL BANK DIGITAL CURRENCY (CBDC)-

- On 1st November 2022, the RBI launched the digital rupee for the wholesale segment to settle secondary market transactions in government securities.
- The first phase of a pilot project that will cover select locations and banks in a closed user group (CUG) comprising participating customers and merchants.
- The pilot will initially cover the four cities of Mumbai, New Delhi, Bengaluru, and Bhubaneswar, where customers and merchants will be able to use the digital rupee (e- ₹), or e-rupee.
- According to the central bank, the pilot will test the robustness of the entire process of digital rupee creation, distribution and retail usage in real time.
- RBI defines the CBDC as the digital form of currency notes issued by a central bank. It is a sovereign or entirely independent currency issued by the central bank (in this case, RBI), in accordance with the country's monetary policy.
- Once officially issued, CBDC will be considered as a medium of payment and legal tender by all three parties - citizens, government bodies, and enterprises. Being government-recognised, it can be freely converted to any commercial bank's money or notes.
- As of July 2022, 105 countries were exploring CBDC. Ten countries have launched CBDC, the first of which was the Bahamian Sand Dollar in 2020 and the latest was Jamaica's JAM-DEX.

HURUN GLOBAL 500 RANKINGS: INDIA RANKED 5TH IN THE LIST OF VALUABLE COMPANIES-

- India, with 20 of the most valuable companies in the world, has moved into the fifth position among countries that are home to the world's top 500 firms.
- Last year, it ranked ninth with eight companies.
- The US continued to top the charts, according to the 2022 Hurun Global 500 list. The list, released by the Hurun Research Institute, is a compilation of the 500 most valuable non-state-controlled companies in the world. Companies were ranked according to their market capitalisation (for listed companies) and valuations for non-listed companies.
- Of the 20 Indian companies featuring on the list this year, 11 are based in Mumbai, four in Ahmedabad and one each in Noida, New Delhi, Bengaluru and Kolkata.
- With a \$202-billion valuation, Reliance Industries (RIL) topped the charts of Indian companies, while it ranked 34th in the world. It was followed by Tata Consultancy Services (\$139 billion) and HDFC Bank (\$97 billion).
- The list also saw the entry of four companies — Adani Transmission, Adani Green Energy, Adani Enterprises and Adani Total Gas — led by billionaire Gautam Adani, with a total valuation of \$173 billion.
- The other new entrants in the list from India include ITC (\$52 billion), Avenue Supermarts (\$33 billion), Axis Bank (\$33 billion), Bajaj Finserv (\$32 billion) and Larson & Toubro (\$32 billion).
- Interestingly, 50 per cent or 250 companies in the Hurun Global 500 companies have presence in India.
- Globally, Apple retained the title of the most valuable company in the world with a market cap of \$2.4 trillion and Microsoft came second (\$1.8 trillion), while Alphabet, the parent company of Google, displaced Amazon to take the third place.

- China came in second with 35 companies, followed by Japan (28) and the UK (21). India and Canada moved up to the fifth place with 20 companies each, adding eight and three companies, respectively, overtaking France and Germany.

RBI MONETARY POLICY 2022-

- The decision of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das headed six-member Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) has been announced. In the consecutive fifth hike this year, the RBI's Monetary Policy Committee has raised the repo rate by 35 basis points (bps) to 6.25 per cent with immediate effect, making loans expensive.
- The policy rate is now at the highest level since August 2018. The RBI has maintained policy stance at 'withdrawal of accommodation'.
 - A. Policy Repo Rate: 6.25% (Changed)
 - B. Standing Deposit Facility (SDF): 6.00% (Changed)
 - C. Marginal Standing Facility Rate: 6.50% (Changed)
 - D. Bank Rate: 6.50% (Changed)
 - E. Fixed Reverse Repo Rate: 3.35%
 - F. Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR): 4.50%
 - G. Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR): 18.00%



INDIA THE FIRST COUNTRY IN THE WORLD TO RECEIVE \$100 BILLION IN REMITTANCES-

- India will be the first country in the world to receive \$100 billion from remittances during 2022, the World Bank has said.
- Though remittances to the rest of the South Asian countries declined by 10%, it rose by 12% in India's case.
- Remittances to South Asian countries grew by 3.5% to \$163 billion in 2022.
- Worldwide, remittances are estimated at \$794 billion in 2022.
- South Asia receives the most remittances that are estimated at \$163 billion in 2022. India's share will be \$100 billion.
- Latin America and Caribbean comes second with \$142 billion.
- Remittances to India were enhanced by wage hikes and a strong labour market in the US and other member countries of OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development).
- The top five recipient countries for remittances in 2022 are expected to be India, establishing a benchmark of \$100 billion in the year, followed by Mexico, with a tally of \$60 billion (which replaced China in second position during 2021), and China, the Philippines, and the Arab Republic of Egypt.
- India had received \$89.4 billion in remittances in 2021, according to the World Bank, making it the top recipient globally last year also.

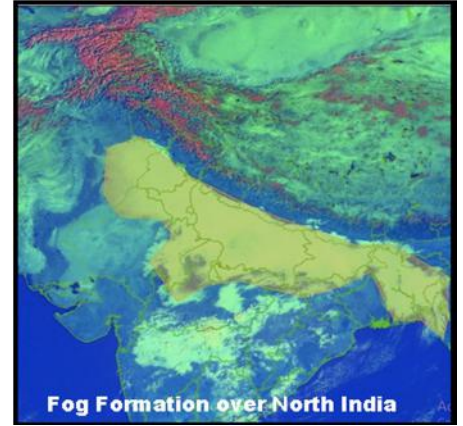
REPORTS & INDICES

DELHI AND OTHER PARTS OF NORTHWEST INDIA HAVE BEEN REELING UNDER A COLD WAVE SINCE THE BEGINNING OF 2023-

- The lowest minimum temperature recorded this month was 1.9 degrees Celsius on January 8, the second-lowest minimum temperature in January in 15 years.

Factors Responsible for this Cold Wave-

- Large Scale Fog- One of the major factors contributing to colder than normal temperatures over north India in January 2023 is the large-scale fog cover, according to India Meteorological Department (IMD).
- Foggy Nights- Foggy or cloudy nights are usually associated with warmer nights, but if the fog remains for two or three days, cooling begins even at night.
- Westerly Winds- Since there has not been any significant impact of western disturbances over the region, cold northwesterly winds have also been contributing to low temperatures.
- A cold wave is a rapid fall in temperature within 24 hours to a level requiring substantially increased protection to agriculture, industry, commerce, and social activities.



Cold Wave Conditions-

- For the plains, a cold wave is declared when the minimum temperature is 10 degrees Celsius or below and is 4.5 degrees Celsius (C) less than normal for two consecutive days.
- A "severe" cold day is when the maximum temperature is at least 6.5 notches below normal.
- For coastal stations, the threshold value of minimum temperature of 10 degree Celsius is rarely reached. However, the local people feel discomfort due to the wind chill factor which reduces the minimum temperature by a few degrees depending upon the wind speed.
- India's 'core cold wave zone' covers Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Odisha and Telangana.
- Absence of Cloud Cover in the Region: Clouds trap some of the outgoing infrared radiation and radiate it back downward, warming the ground.
- Snowfall in the upper Himalayas that has blown cold winds towards the region.
- La Nina: Prevailing La Nina conditions in the Pacific Ocean. La Nina is the abnormal cooler sea surface temperatures reported along the equatorial Pacific Ocean and it is known to favour cold waves. During La Nina years, the severity of cold conditions becomes intense. The frequency and area covered under the grip of a cold wave becomes larger.
- Western Disturbances: Western disturbances can cause cold waves in India. Western disturbances are weather systems that originate in the Mediterranean Sea and move eastward, bringing cold winds, precipitation and cloud cover to the northwest regions of India.

HENLEY PASSPORT INDEX 2023, JAPAN RETAINED ITS TOP POSITION-

- According to the latest Henley Passport Index, Japan has retained its position as the most favourable passport in the world, allowing visa-free entry to 193 global destinations.
- Japan tops for the fifth consecutive year. Singapore and South Korea came in a joint second on the ranking, followed by Germany and Spain, and then a slew of other European nations.

- The Indian passport was ranked 85th, giving visa-free entry to 59 destinations worldwide. In 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022, the country ranked at 82nd spot, 84th, 85th and 83rd respectively. Indian passport holders can travel visa-free to 59 destinations like Bhutan, Indonesia, Macao, Maldives, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Kenya, Mauritius, Seychelles, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Iran and Qatar. However, some countries require visa-on-arrival.

India's Neighbouring countries-

- 66. China (80 destinations), 100. Sri Lanka (42 destinations), 101. Bangladesh (41 destinations) 103. Nepal (38 destinations), 106. Pakistan (32 destinations)

Here's the list of the top 10 strongest passports in the world:

1. Japan (193 destinations)
2. Singapore, South Korea (192 destinations)
3. Germany, Spain (190 destinations)
4. Finland, Italy, Luxembourg (189 destinations)
5. Austria, Denmark, Netherlands, Sweden (188 destinations)
6. France, Ireland, Portugal, United Kingdom (187 destinations)
7. Belgium, New Zealand, Norway, Switzerland, United States, Czech Republic (186 destinations)
8. Australia, Canada, Greece, Malta (185 destinations)
9. Hungary, Poland (184 destinations)
10. Lithuania, Slovakia (183 destinations)

List of 10 countries that fall in the bottom 10:

100. Sri Lanka/Sudan (42)
101. Bangladesh/Kosovo/Libya (41)
102. North Korea (40 destinations)
103. Nepal, Palestinian territory (38 destinations)
104. Somalia (35 destinations)
105. Yemen (34 destinations)
106. Pakistan (32 destinations)
107. Syria (30 destinations)
108. Iraq (29 destinations)
109. Afghanistan (27 destinations)

STATE OF INDIAN DAMS-

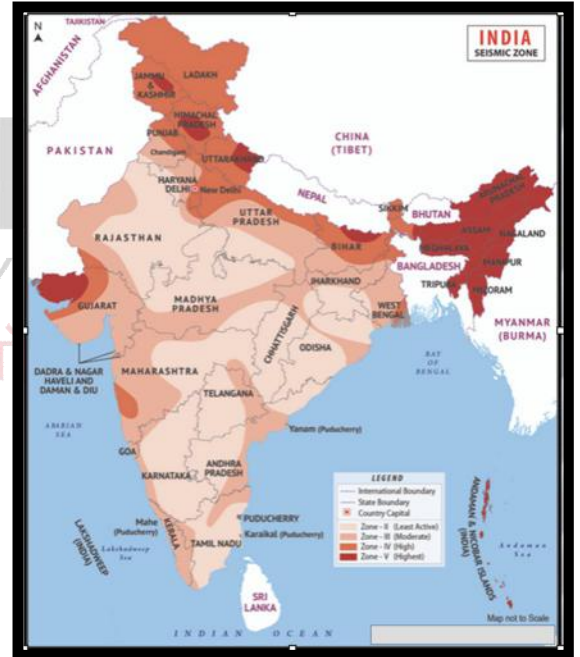
- According to a new study by the United Nations, around 3,700 dams in India will lose 26% of their total storage by 2050 due to accumulation of sediments which can undermine water security, irrigation and power generation in future.
- The study was conducted by the United Nations University Institute on Water, Environment and Health (UNU-INWEH), also known as the UN's think tank on water.
- Trapped sediment has already robbed roughly 50,000 large dams worldwide of an estimated 13 to 19% of their combined original storage capacity.
- It shows that 6,316 billion cubic metre of initial global storage in 47,403 large dams in 150 countries will decline to 4,665 billion cubic metre, causing 26% storage loss by 2050.
- The loss of 1,650 billion cubic metre storage capacity is roughly equal to the annual water use of India, China, Indonesia, France and Canada combined.
- In 2022, the Asia-Pacific region, the world's most heavily dammed region, is estimated to have lost 13% of its initial dam storage capacity. It will have lost nearly a quarter (23%) of initial storage capacity by mid-century.
- The region is home to 60% of the world's population and water storage is crucial for sustaining water and food security.
- China, meanwhile, the world's most heavily dammed nation, has lost about 10% of its storage and will lose a further 10% by 2050.
- India is ranked third in the world in terms of building large dams. Of the over 5,200 large dams built so far, about 1,100 large dams have already reached 50 years of age and some are older than 120 years.
- The number of such dams will increase to 4,400 by 2050 i.e., 80% of the nation's large dams face the prospect of becoming obsolete as they will be 50 years to over 150 years old.



ENVIRONMENT

JOSHIMATH LAND SUBSIDENCE-

- Due to land subsidence, Joshimath - a key transit point for tourists travelling to Badrinath and Hemkund Sahib - developed cracks, causing panic and protests among the local population.
- Joshimath has been declared a landslide-subsidence zone and over 60 families living in uninhabitable houses in the sinking town have been evacuated to temporary relief centres.
- Joshimath is a hilly town located on the Rishikesh-Badrinath National Highway (NH-7) in Chamoli district of Uttarakhand.
- The city serves as a tourist town as it acts as an overnight rest stop for people visiting Badrinath, Auli, Valley of Flowers, and Hemkund Sahib, among other important religious and tourist locations in the state.
- Joshimath is also of great strategic importance to the Indian armed forces and is home to one of the Army's most important cantonments.
- The town (fall in high-risk seismic Zone-V) is traversed by running streams with a high gradient from Vishnuprayag, a confluence of the Dhauliganga and the Alaknanda rivers.
- It is home to one of the four cardinal maths or monasteries established by Adi Shankara - Sringeri in Karnataka, Dwarka in Gujarat, Puri in Odisha and Joshimath near Badrinath in Uttarakhand.
- Cracks on walls and buildings were first reported in 2021, as Chamoli district of Uttarakhand experienced frequent landslides and flooding.
- As per reports, the Uttarakhand government's expert panel in 2022 found that several pockets of Joshimath are "sinking" owing to man-made and natural factors.
- According to the 1976 Mishra Committee report, Joshimath lies on a deposit of sand and stone, it's not on the main rock. It lies on an ancient landslide. The report added that undercutting by river currents of Alaknanda and Dhauliganga are also playing their part in bringing landslides.



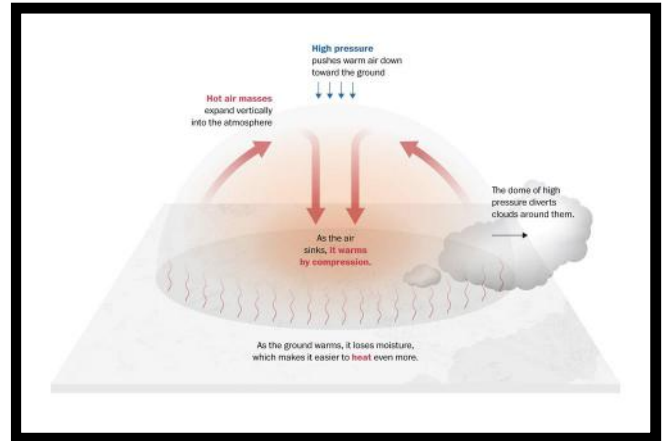
SEVERAL COUNTRIES IN EUROPE RECORDED THEIR HOTTEST JANUARY WEATHER EVER IN 2023 WITH TEMPERATURES 10 TO 20 DEGREES CELSIUS ABOVE AVERAGE-

- These included Poland, Denmark, the Czech Republic, the Netherlands, Belarus, Lithuania and Latvia.
- Experts said that the continent is experiencing an extremely warm spell because of the formation of a heat dome over the region.

- In 2021, a heat dome formed over western Canada and the US, causing deadly heat waves. Another heat dome settled over the US in September 2022 and raised temperatures to a new high.

Heat Dome-

- A heat dome occurs when an area of high-pressure traps warm air over a region, just like a lid on a pot, for an extended period of time.
- The longer that air remains trapped, the more the sun works to heat the air, producing warmer conditions with every passing day.
- Heat domes generally stay for a few days but sometimes they can extend up to weeks.

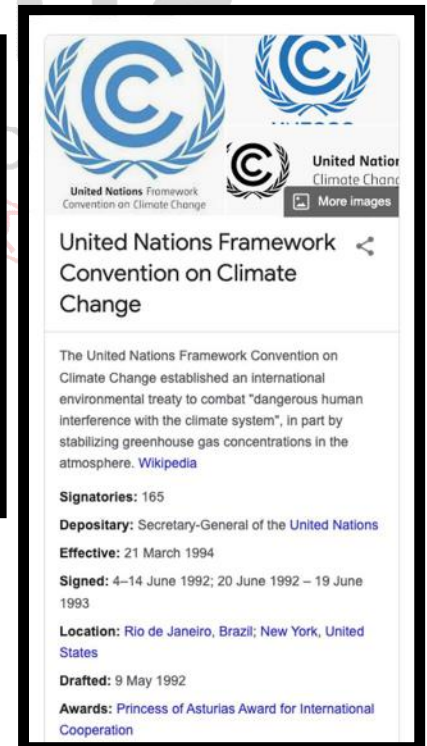


Causes of Formation of Heat Dome-

- Change in Ocean Temperature
- Change in Atmospheric Pressure
- Climate Change

AUSTRALIA'S GREAT BARRIER REEF TO BE LISTED AS A WORLD HERITAGE SITE-

- UN panel has recommended that Australia's Great Barrier Reef should be listed as a World Heritage site that is in danger.
- The UN also informed that the world's biggest coral reef ecosystem was significantly impacted by climate change and the warming of oceans.
- A report by UNESCO informed that the resilience of the Reef to recover from climate change impacts is substantially compromised.
- Australian Environment Minister Tanya Plibersek said that the government would push UNESCO to not list the reef as endangered because climate change was threatening all coral reefs across the world.
- The Australian government announced a billion-dollar package to protect the reef in January.



GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES

THE PRIME MINISTER STREET VENDOR'S ATMANIRBHAR NIDHI (PM SVANIDHI) SCHEME HAS BEEN EXTENDED BEYOND MARCH, 2022-

- The Prime Minister Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi) Scheme has been extended beyond March, 2022.
- Extension of lending period is till December 2024.
- 'SVANidhi Se Samridhi 'was launched in January 2021 to map the socio-economic profile of the PM SVANidhi beneficiaries and their families.
- The scheme was announced as a part of the Economic Stimulus-II under the Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan.
- It has been implemented since 1st June 2020, for providing affordable working capital loans to street vendors to resume their livelihoods that have been adversely affected due to Covid-19 lockdowns.
- A total of 13,403 vending zones have been identified so far.42 lakh street vendors are to be provided benefits under PM SVANidhi Scheme by December, 2024.
- It is a Central Sector Scheme i.e., fully funded by Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs with the following objectives-
 - A. To facilitate working capital loan;
 - B. To incentivize regular repayment; and
 - C. To reward digital transactions
- The scheme will open up new opportunities for street vendors to move up the economic ladder.
- The Scheme is available to all street vendors engaged in vending in urban areas.Earlier the Scheme was available to all street vendors engaged in vending on or before March 24, 2020.



PM MODI FLAGGED OFF SECUNDERABAD-VISAKHAPATNAM VANDE BHARAT EXPRESS

- PM Modi flagged off the Vande Bharat Express train that connects Secunderabad (Telangana) with Visakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh) on 15th January 2023.
- As per the Railway officials, it will cover a distance of around 700 km in 8 hours and 30 minutes.
- It is the eighth Vande Bharat Express to be introduced by Indian Railways.
- The first Vande Bharat train was launched in 2019, between New Delhi and Varanasi.
- It will enhance the ease of living, and benefit the economy.

APPOINTMENTS/PERSON IN NEWS

FORMER UNION MINISTER SHARAD YADAV PASSES AWAY

- Former Union Minister, Sharad Yadav has passed away at the age of 75 in Gurugram, Haryana.
- He had started his political career during the anti-emergency movement of the mid-1970s.
- He was first elected to the Lok Sabha at the age of 27 in 1974.
- He was elected from Uttar Pradesh's Badaun parliamentary seat in 1989.
- He was also elected from Bihar's Madhepura Lok Sabha constituency in 1991, 1996, 1999, and 2009.
- He had launched his own party Loktantrik Janata Dal.



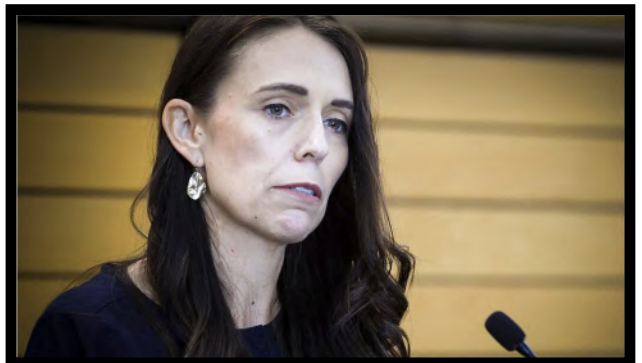
VIKRAM DEV DUTT NAMED AS NEXT DGCA DIRECTOR GENERAL-

- The appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the appointment of Vikram Dev Dutt as the next director general in the Directorate of General of Civil Aviation (DGCA). He will take over as the head of the aviation regulator on February 28, 2023. He will be succeeding the incumbent DGCA chief Arun Kumar. Earlier, Dutt had also served as the CMD of Air India. He had taken charge in January last year.
- In 2022, Dutt was appointed as the Chairman and Managing Director of Air India Ltd as part of a senior-level bureaucratic reshuffle effected by the Centre. Dutt is a 1993-batch IAS officer of AGMUT (Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, Mizoram and Union Territory) cadre. Kumar, a 1989-batch IAS officer, was leading the DGCA as its director general since July 2019.



NEW ZEALAND'S PM JACINDA ARDERN ANNOUNCES RESIGNATION-

- New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern, a global figurehead of progressive politics, shocked the country.
- She was re-elected for a second term in 2020, the victory buoyed by her government's "go hard and go early" approach to the Covid-19 pandemic, which saw New Zealand impose some of the world's strictest border rules, separating families and shutting out almost all foreigners for almost two years.
- Ardern won international acclaim for her empathetic handling of the 2019 Christchurch mosque massacre, in which 51 Muslim worshippers were killed and another 40 wounded.



- Ms. Ardern had faced a tough election campaign this year. Her Liberal Labour Party won re-election two years ago in a landslide of historic proportions, but recent polls have put her party behind its conservative rivals.
- Ms Ardern's resignation comes not long after she saw support for her party decreasing, with polls conducted last November showing only 33 per cent of respondents in support of Labour.
- Ms Ardern's approval rate also dropped, down to 29 per cent, which was the lowest since 2017, just before she was elected prime minister.
- In her campaign, she had pledged to tackle New Zealand's housing problems with a program called Kiwibuild in which 100,000 affordable homes were to be built.
- But by July last year, only about 1,300 homes had been constructed, with another 1,200 underway, according to the NZ government.
- Another issue that the country has been dealing with is the fallout of the pandemic and surging inflation.

MISS USA R'BONNEY GABRIEL CROWNED MISS UNIVERSE 2022





- Miss USA, R'Bonney Gabriel (28) has been crowned the Miss Universe 2022 at the 71st Miss Universe pageant organized in New Orleans, Louisiana.
- She is a model, fashion designer, and sewing instructor who prioritizes the environment in her work.
- She is also the first Filipino American to win Miss USA.
- Amanda Dudamel from Venezuela was the first runner-up, and Andreína Martínez from the Dominican Republic was the second runner-up.



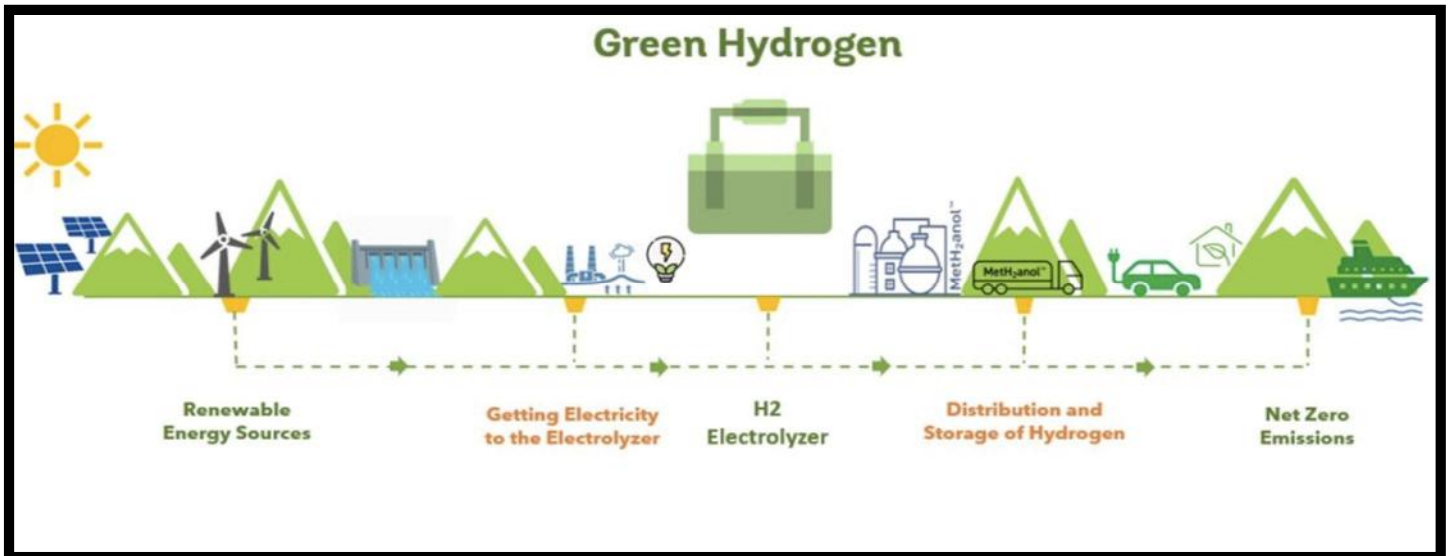
IMPORTANT ARTICLES & MAPS

MEDITERRANEAN REGION



Color	GREY HYDROGEN	BLUE HYDROGEN	TURQUOISE HYDROGEN*	GREEN HYDROGEN
Process	SMR or gasification	SMR or gasification with carbon capture (85-95%)	Pyrolysis	Electrolysis
Source	Methane or coal 	Methane or coal 	Methane 	Renewable electricity 

Note: SMR = steam methane reforming.
* Turquoise hydrogen is an emerging decarbonisation option.



AUTONOMY AT THE PANCHAYAT LEVEL

- More than three decades after the 73rd and 74th Amendment Acts, which gave constitutional status to local governments, State governments, through the local bureaucracy, continue to exercise considerable discretionary authority and influence over panchayats.
- In India, the powers of local elected officials remain seriously restricted by State governments and local bureaucrats in multiple ways, thereby diluting the spirit of the constitutional amendments seeking to empower local bodies.

Which are the Issues with the Functioning of the Panchayat?

Lack of Financial Autonomy:

- Gram panchayats remain fiscally dependent on grants (both discretionary and non-discretionary grants) from the State and the Centre for everyday activities.

Broadly, Panchayats have three main sources of Funds:

- Own sources of revenue: It constitutes a tiny proportion of overall panchayat funds. For Example: Local taxes, revenue from common property resources, etc.
- Grants in aid from the Centre and State governments: Access to discretionary grants for panchayats remains contingent on political and bureaucratic connections.

Discretionary or Scheme-Based Funds:

- One major issue with these funds in India is that they are often subject to mismanagement and corruption. This can occur when government officials misuse these funds for personal gain or when the funds are not used for the intended purpose.
- Even when higher levels of government allocate funds to local governments, sarpanchs need help accessing them. The slow transfer of approved funds to panchayat accounts stalls local development.

Time Consuming Process of Seeking Approvals:

- Governments also bind local governments through local bureaucracies.
- Approval for public works projects often requires technical approval (from the engineering department) and administrative approval from local officials of the rural development department, such as the block development officer.
- Sarpanches spend a substantial amount of time visiting government offices and meeting local bureaucrats, and waiting to be seen or heard.
- The ability of sarpanchs to exercise administrative control over local employees is also limited.

- In many States, the recruitment of local functionaries reporting to the panchayat, such as village watchmen or sweepers, is conducted at the district or block level.

Political Interference:

- Unlike elected officials at other levels, sarpanchs can be dismissed while in office.
- Gram Panchayat Acts in many States have empowered district-level bureaucrats, mostly district Collectors, to act against sarpanchs for official misconduct.
- For instance, the Telangana Gram Panchayat Act allows District Collectors to suspend and dismiss incumbent sarpanchs.
- Across the country, there are regular instances of bureaucrats deciding to dismiss sarpanchs from office which is not merely a legal provision.
- In Telangana, more than 100 sarpanchs have been dismissed from office in recent years.

Lack of Trained Personnel:

- Lack of trained personnel is a significant issue facing panchayats in India.
- Many panchayat members lack the necessary training and skills to effectively govern their communities.
- This can lead to poor decision-making, lack of accountability, and inefficiency in the functioning of panchayats.

Some reasons for this lack of training include:

- Limited access to training opportunities for panchayat members, particularly in rural and remote areas.
- Insufficient budget allocation for training and capacity building of panchayat members.
- Limited awareness among panchayat members about the importance of training and capacity building for effective governance.

Inadequate Participation:

- There is often low participation from citizens in panchayat meetings and decision-making processes.
- Some possible reasons include lack of awareness about the meetings, lack of trust in the government or local leaders, lack of time or resources for citizens to attend, or lack of interest in the issues being discussed.
- Additionally, some citizens may not feel that their voices will be heard or that their concerns will be addressed, which can discourage participation.

Corruption:

- Corruption is a major issue in many panchayats, with funds and resources being misused or embezzled.
- Local government officials, such as those in charge of land records and building permits, are often involved in corrupt practices, such as accepting bribes in exchange for services.
- This can lead to delays and increased costs for citizens, and can also contribute to the illegal acquisition of land and other resources.
- Additionally, corruption at the local level can impede economic development and the delivery of essential services, such as healthcare and education.

Gender Bias:

- Women and marginalized groups are often under-represented in panchayats and face discrimination in their participation and decision-making.
- One major barrier to women's participation in panchayats is societal attitudes that view women as inferior and less capable than men.
- This can lead to a lack of support for women who seek to become panchayat leaders and can make it difficult for them to gain the necessary skills and experience.
- Another barrier is the lack of reserved seats for women in the panchayat.
- Though India has introduced reservations for women in the Panchayat Raj Institutions, the reservation percentage varies from state to state and not all states have implemented it.

What are the Related Initiatives?

SVAMITVA Scheme:

- Survey of Villages and Mapping with Improved Technology in Village Areas (SVAMITVA) scheme was launched on National Panchayati Raj Day 2020 to enable economic progress of Rural India by providing “Record of Rights” to every rural household owner.

e-Gram Swaraj e-Financial Management System:

- e-Gram Swaraj is a Simplified Work Based Accounting Application for Panchayati Raj.

Geo-Tagging of Assets:

- The Ministry has developed “mActionSoft”, a mobile based solution to help in capturing photos with Geo-Tags (i.e., GPS Coordinates) for the works which have assets as an output.

Citizen Charter:

- In order to focus on the commitment of the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) towards its Citizens in respects of Standard of Services, the Ministry has provided platform to upload Citizen Charter document with the slogan “Meri Panchayat Mera Adhikaar – Jan Sevaayein Hamaare Dwaar”.

Revamped Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (2022-23 to 2025-26):

- The focus of the scheme of Revamped RGSA is on re-imagining Panchayati Raj Institutions as vibrant centers of local self-governance with special focus on Localization of Sustainable Development Goals (LSDGs) at grassroot level adopting thematic approach through concerted and collaborative efforts of Central Ministries and State Line departments and other Stakeholders with ‘Whole of Government and Whole of Society’ approach.

What should be the way Forward?

- Increasing Central and State Government Allocations to Panchayats:
- This can be done through the transfer of funds directly to the panchayats, rather than routing them through intermediaries.

Decentralizing Decision-Making:

- Panchayats should be empowered to make decisions about the allocation and use of funds, rather than having decisions made for them by higher levels of government.

Building Capacity of Panchayats:

- This can be done through training and capacity building programs for panchayat members and staff, to enable them to effectively manage financial resources and implement development projects.

Addressing Gender Biasness:

- Gender bias at the panchayat level in India can be addressed by providing training and resources for women seeking to become panchayat leaders, and addressing cultural attitudes that perpetuate gender inequality.

Increasing Transparency and Accountability:

- Transparency and Accountability issues can be addressed by Conducting regular meetings, Publicising information, Implementing an e-governance system, Whistleblower protection and through social Audit.

REMOTE VOTING FOR MIGRANTS

- In 2019, India’s latest general election, over 91% of its eligible citizens were registered with 67% of them coming out to vote, which is the highest voter turnout in the nation’s history. In 1951 in India’s first general election, only 17% were registered and 4% of them turned out to vote.
- It is, however, worrying that a third of the eligible voters, a whopping 30 crore people, do not vote. Among the many reasons, including urban apathy and geographical constraints, one prominent reason is the inability of internal migrants to vote for different reasons.
- The Election Commission (EC) had earlier formed a “Committee of Officers on Domestic Migrants” to address this issue. The Committee’s report submitted in 2016 suggested a solution in the form of “remote

voting". To further address this serious problem, the EC invited representatives from all recognised national and state political parties to discuss the legal, administrative, and statutory changes to resolve the issue.

What is Remote Voting?

- Remote Voting refers to all means which allow electors to vote from locations other than the polling station assigned to the location where they are registered to vote. The remote voting location can be either abroad or from within the country.
- It comprises both electronic voting and non-electronic voting mechanisms.

Why is there a Need for Remote Voting?

Enable Migrants to Vote:

- Voters migrate from the place of their registration to cities and other places for education, employment and other purposes. It becomes difficult for them to return to their registered polling stations to cast their vote.
- It was also noted that in villages like Dumak and Kalgoth in Uttarakhand, about 20-25% of registered voters are unable to cast their vote in their constituencies as they are had to move out of their village/state.

Decrease in Voting Turnout:

- During the 2019 General elections, nearly 300 million citizens out of a total of 910 million electors didn't cast their votes.

Increasing Registrations of Unorganised Workers:

- There are nearly 10 million migrant workers registered with the government's e-SHRAM portal. If the remote voting project is implemented, it will have far reaching ramifications.

Lack of Access to Vote:

- This fundamental right to access the vote is denied to migrant workers in two ways:
- First, a voter may only be enrolled to vote in the constituency in which they are 'permanent resident'.
- Second, they can only access their franchise through in-person voting at their registered constituency.

What are the Issues with Remote Voting?

Security and Integrity:

- Remote voting systems are vulnerable to hacking, fraud, and other forms of manipulation.
- This could lead to unreliable and inaccurate results and could undermine the integrity of the entire election.
- Elections always require a high level of security in order to protect voter privacy and the integrity of final results.

Accessibility of Remote Voting:

- Not all citizens may have access to the internet or the necessary technology to participate in online voting.
- Similarly, mail-in ballots may not reach certain remote areas or may not be delivered on time.
- Furthermore, not all citizens may be able to travel to embassies or consulates to vote.
- This could lead to disenfranchisement of certain groups of citizens and could skew the election results.

Veracity and Verification:

- Furthermore, a voter verification system that uses biometric software, such as facial recognition, could lead to false positives or negatives in voter identification, thus facilitating fraud or disenfranchising citizens.

Internet Connection & Malware Security:

- There is a dependency on voters having a reliable internet connection. Internet penetration and availability and use of e-government services in some countries are limited.
- Software errors or malware on voters' devices may also affect vote casting.

Affect Elections and Campaigning:

- In a playing field which is far from level, remote voting can theoretically provide an added edge to bigger parties and richer candidates who can campaign across the constituency and beyond.
- What is the State of Migrant Population in India?

- According to the 2011 Census, the number of internal migrants stands at 450 million, a 45% surge from the 2001 census.
- Among these, 26% of the migration (117 million) occurs inter-district within the same state, while 12% of the migration (54 million) occurs inter-state.
- Both official and independent experts admit that this number is underestimated.
- Short-term and circular migration could itself amount to 60-65 million migrants, which, including family members, could approach 100 million in itself. Half of these are inter-state migrants.

What can be the Way Forward?

Keeping Election Integrity:

- As part of the verification process, an online voting system must demonstrate that it has maintained election integrity and that no manipulation has occurred during the voting or tallying processes.

Acceptability of the Stakeholders:

- It is important that any system of remote voting has to take into account the confidence and acceptability of all the stakeholders of the electoral system – voters, political parties and election machinery.
- The acceptability of stakeholders is an important factor in determining the success of remote voting.
- For remote voting to be accepted by stakeholders, it must be seen as a viable and secure alternative to traditional in-person voting.
- They need to be convinced that it is a valid and legitimate way of voting and that the results will be accurate and fair.

Trust & Transparency:

- Even with all of the proper legal frameworks in place, using an online voting system would be pointless if the government or general public were not confident in its security, integrity, and accuracy.
- For this reason, a number of transparency measures have to be developed to help ensure the transparency of online voting technology, building trust in the final results.
- Secure Technology:
- The technology used for remote voting must be secure and tamper-proof to prevent hacking and manipulation of the voting process. This can include measures such as encryption, multi-factor authentication, and regular security audits.

Voter Verification:

- The remote voting process should include robust voter verification mechanisms to ensure that only eligible voters are able to cast their ballots.
- This can include methods such as voter ID verification, biometric authentication, or digital signature.

Auditing and Transparency:

- The remote voting process should be auditable and transparent, with clear rules and procedures in place for verifying the accuracy and integrity of the vote count.
- This can include the use of independent auditors and the publication of detailed vote counts and results.

Voter Education:

- Voter education and awareness campaigns are important to ensure that voters understand the process and can confidently and accurately cast their vote remotely.

Legal Framework:

- A clear and robust legal framework that outlines the rules, procedures and responsibilities for remote voting is necessary to ensure that the process is transparent and accountable.

RISE OF THE GIG ECONOMY IN INDIA

- The Gig Economy in India refers to the trend of individuals working temporary or flexible jobs, often through online platforms such as Uber, Ola, Swiggy, and Zomato. This type of work has grown in popularity in recent years as it offers more flexibility and independence for workers, and can be a cost-effective solution for businesses.
- However, there are also concerns about the lack of job security and benefits for gig economy workers. The gig economy in India is expected to continue to grow in the future, but it should also be backed by government regulations and policies to protect workers' rights and ensure fair treatment.

What is the Gig Economy?

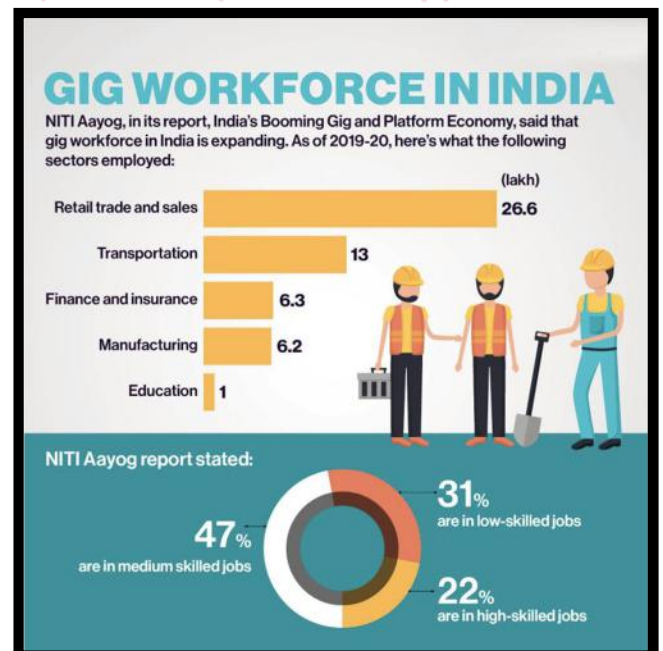
- A Gig economy is a free market system in which temporary positions are common and organisations contract with independent workers for short-term engagements.
- Gig Worker: A person who performs work or participates in a gig work arrangement and earns from such activities outside of traditional employer-employee relationship.
- According to a report by Boston Consulting Group, India's gig workforce comprises 15 million workers employed across industries such as software, shared services and professional services.

What are the Growth Drivers of the Gig Economy in India?

- **Rise of the Internet and Mobile Technology:** The widespread adoption of smartphones and the availability of high-speed internet has made it easier for workers and businesses to connect through online platforms, facilitating the growth of the gig economy.
- **Economic Liberalisation:** The Indian government's economic liberalisation policies have led to increased competition and a more open market, which has encouraged the growth of the gig economy.
- **Increasing Demand for Flexible Work:** The gig economy is particularly attractive for Indian workers who are looking for flexible work arrangements that allow them to balance their personal and professional lives.
- **Demographic factors:** The gig economy is also driven by the large and growing number of young, educated and ambitious Indians who are seeking to improve their livelihoods with side income generation.
- **Growth of E-commerce:** The rapid growth of e-commerce in India has led to a significant increase in demand for delivery and logistics services, which has in turn led to the growth of the gig economy in these sectors.

What are the Issues Associated with the Gig Economy in India?

- **Lack of Job and Social Security:** Many gig workers in India are not covered by labour codes and do not have access to benefits such as health insurance and retirement plans.
- Additionally, gig workers often do not receive the same level of protection as traditional employees in the event of injury or illness.
- **Digital Divide:** The gig economy heavily relies on technology and internet access, this creates a barrier for those who lack access to these resources, and further exacerbates income inequality.
- **Lack of Data:** There is a lack of data and research on the gig economy in India which makes it difficult for policy makers to understand its size, scope, and impact on the economy and workforce.



- **Exploitation by Companies:** Gig workers in India are often paid less than traditional employees and may not have the same legal protections.
- Some companies may also exploit gig workers by misclassifying them as independent contractors to avoid liability and avoid paying taxes.
- **Social Isolation:** Gig workers may not have the same social connections and support systems as traditional employees, as they often work independently and may not have a physical workplace.

What should be the Way Forward?

- **Clear Regulations:** The Indian government should establish clear regulations and policies for the gig economy to ensure that gig workers are protected and that companies are held accountable.
- **Social Security Blanket:** The government should ensure that gig workers have access to social security programs such as pension schemes and health insurance to ensure financial security for older workers.
- Also, gig workers should be granted the same labour rights as traditional employees, including the right to organise and form unions.
- **Education and Training:** The government should invest in education and training programs for gig workers to improve their skills and increase their earning potential.
- **Encourage Fair Competition and Innovation:** Government can encourage fair competition by having regulations that prevent companies from misclassifying workers as independent contractors and by enforcing fair trade practices.
- Also, the government can encourage innovation in the gig economy by providing tax incentives, funding and other support to companies that are creating new business models and technologies.
- **Linking Women Empowerment with Gig Economy:** There is a need to build the right physical and social infrastructure that supports the engagement of women in the gig workforce.

COP15 APPROVES HISTORIC BIODIVERSITY DEAL

Context

- In a historic UN Biodiversity agreement, over 190 countries agreed to protect 30% of the planet by 2030, while pledging to achieve 23 targets to reverse ecosystem degradation under four overarching goals for survival of the natural world.

United Nations Biodiversity Conference-

- The UN Biodiversity Conference is the regular meeting of the countries who have signed (and are therefore 'parties to') the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).
- CBD is an international agreement for conserving biodiversity with the vision of "living in harmony with nature by 2050".
- The convention was adopted in 1992 at the Rio Earth Summit.
- The first Conference of the Parties to the convention (COP 1) took place in Nassau, Bahamas in 1994.
- The COP is a venue for international governments to meet and review progress on the convention's goals, as well as to establish new measures to support them.
- The objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity include both social and economic aspects: o biological diversity conservation; o sustainable use of its components; and o fair and equitable sharing of biological diversity benefits.

What has been accomplished thus far-

- **Areas of progress in biodiversity conservation include:** o The incorporation of biodiversity values into national accounting systems;
- A decline in the rate of deforestation globally of about one-third in 2020 compared with the previous decade;
- The expansion of protected terrestrial and marine areas and areas of particular importance for biodiversity;

- An increase in available data and information on biodiversity;
- A doubling of financial resources available
- The conferences also resulted in the adoption of supplementary agreements, such as the o Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (2000), which governs the movement of living modified organisms from one country to another, and the o Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-Sharing (2010), which aims to ensure that the benefits of genetic resources – which refer to living organisms with perceived value – are managed or distributed in a fair and equitable manner.
- In addition to the Nagoya Protocol, the COP-10 adopted a ten-year framework for all countries to take action to save biodiversity.
- Officially known as “Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020”, it provided a set of 20 ambitious yet achievable targets collectively known as the Aichi Targets for biodiversity.

Countries that are signatories to the Convention-

- The Convention on Biological Diversity is signed by 196 countries (including India), with the United States conspicuously absent.
- Each country is required to develop National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) outlining how the principles of biological resource conservation and sustainable use will be incorporated into national policies.

Concerning the 15th Conference of Parties (COP15)-

- COP15 has been divided into two parts, the first of which will be held online in October 2021.
- The second instalment took place recently in Montreal, Canada.
- The COP15 was significant in that a new “post-2020 global biodiversity framework” was expected to be finalised, and it was.
- UN Secretary-General António Guterres has called this conference an opportunity to “call a ceasefire” on the human-inflicted destruction of ecosystems, which he has labelled a “suicidal war against nature”.
- Under the presidency of China, the 15th Conference of Parties (COP15) of the UN Biodiversity took place in Montreal, Canada from 7th December to 19th December, 2022.
- The parties have reached a historic deal that would represent the most significant effort to protect the world’s lands and oceans and provide critical financing to save biodiversity in the developing world.

Highlights of the Framework-

- The deal calls for raising \$200 billion by 2030 for biodiversity from a range of sources.
- As part of the financing package, the framework proposes increasing the amount of money going to poor countries to at least \$20 billion per year by 2025.
- By 2030, that figure would have risen to \$30 billion per year.
- As part of the agreement, countries agreed to reduce harmful government subsidies worth \$500 billion per year.
- The agreement also requires countries to monitor and report on a large set of headlines and other indicators related to progress toward the GBF’s goals and targets every five years or less.
- The next COP, COP16, will take place in Turkey in 2024.

IMPORTANT MCQ FOR COMPETITIVE EXAMS

1. Panthi dance is a famous folk dance of which state?
a) Rajasthan
b) Nagaland
c) Uttarakhand
d) Chhattisgarh
2. Tripoli is the capital of which country?
a) Libya
b) Botswana
c) Seychelles
d) Chile
3. Election Commission of India is celebrating _____ National Voters' Day on 25th January 2023.
a) 11th
b) 12th
c) 13th
d) 14th
4. _____ most followed international sports federation on social media
a) World Athletics
b) Fifa
c) Volleyball World
d) International Cricket Council
5. UT's Administrator, Banwari Lal Purohit inaugurates North India's largest floating Solar project in _____.
a) Delhi
b) Chandigarh
c) Jammu and Kashmir
d) Ladakh
6. When is the Statehood Day of Himachal Pradesh Celebrated?
a) 26th January
b) 15th March
c) 25th March
d) 25th January
7. Which State/UTs government is going to host its maiden SARAS Fair 2023 from 4 to 14 February 2023 ?
a) Jammu and Kashmir
b) Gujarat
c) Delhi
d) Punjab
8. What is the theme of International Day of Education 2023 ?
a) Recover and Revitalize Education for the COVID-19 Generation
b) Changing Course, Transforming Education
c) To invest in people, prioritize education
d) Learning for people, planet, prosperity and peace
9. The Atal Pension Yojana (APY) crossed 10 million for the first time in a calendar year in 2022, The scheme is available to any citizen of India with Age _____ Years.
a) 17- 35
b) 18- 60
c) 18-40
d) 21-60
10. Which police station was awarded as the number one police station in the country?
a) Kharsang Police Station, Arunanchal Pradesh
b) Jhilmili Police Station, Chhattisgarh
c) Sanguem Police Station, Goa
d) Aska Police Station, Odisha
11. In which of the following medium does sound travel fast?
a) Vacuum
b) Steel
c) Water
d) Air
12. Which Governor-General of India abolished the Sati practice?
a) Lord Auckland
b) Lord Dalhousie
c) Lord William Bentinck
d) Lord Harding
13. The three fundamental economic problems every human society must confront and resolve are
a) what, how and when
b) what, where and when
c) what, how, and for whom
d) how, where, and for whom
14. Coins are minted by Government of India at 4 mints in the country. Which one of the following is not among four mints ?
a) Dewas
b) Noida
c) Hyderabad
d) Kolkata
15. Which state has the longest Coastline in India ?
a) Maharashtra
b) Tamil Nadu
c) Kerala
d) Gujarat
16. Which of these is the Longest Tributary river of India ?
a) Ganga
b) Yamuna
c) Godavari
d) Saraswati
17. Who has recently broken MS Dhoni's record of hitting the most sixes in ODIs in India ?
a) Virat Kohli
b) Rohit Sharma
c) KL Rahul
d) Dinesh Karthik
18. Which of the following airport won the prestigious "Best

- Sustainable Greenfield Airport" award ?**
a) Cochin International Airport
b) Rajiv Gandhi International Airport
c) Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport
d) Goa Manohar International Airport
19. **Think-20 meeting under the G-20 has begun in which city of India ?**
a) Varanasi
b) New Delhi
c) Bhopal
d) Ahmedabad
20. **Which edition of National Disaster Response Force day is celebrated on January 19, 2023 by the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) ?**
a) 14th
b) 15th
c) 17th
d) 18th
21. **Name the world oldest person, who passed away recently.**
a) Lucile Randon
b) Kane Tanaka
c) Robert D Young
d) Jeanne Calment
22. **According to world bank, which South Asian country has weakest economy ?**
a) Bangladesh
b) Sri Lanka
c) Pakistan
d) Nepal
23. **Which country appointed Sonia Guajajara as the first Minister of Indigenous People?**
a) Bhutan
b) Bahamas
c) Brazil
d) Benin
24. **India is currently participating in an international tourism trade**
- fair. International Tourism Fair FITUR 2023 held in ?**
a) Madrid
b) Barcelona
c) Seville
d) Bilbao
25. **Which award is known as "Asia's Nobel Prize" ?**
a) Bharat Ratna
b) Vatan Lifetime Achievement Award
c) Ramon Magsaysay Award
d) None of the above
26. **Who among the following discovered the sea route to India via Cape of Good Hope ?**
a) Abel Tasman
b) Vasco Da Gama
c) John Cabot
d) Henry Hudson
27. **An EY report said, the Indian Economy is very likely to hit the \$26 trillion mark by year ____.**
a) 2043
b) 2044
c) 2045
d) 2047
28. **Subsidies are used to encourage __ of a commodity.**
a) consumption
b) production
c) saving
d) inflation
29. **Identify which of these is the largest National Park in India?**
a) Desert National Park
b) Hemis National Park
c) Gangotri National Park
d) Simlipal National Park
30. **Which state is known to have the largest forest cover in India as of 2021?**
a) Arunachal Pradesh
b) Maharashtra
c) Madhya Pradesh
d) Uttar Pradesh
31. **Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh has informed that by which year the entire country will be covered by the Doppler weather radar network to predict extreme weather events more accurately ?**
a) 2024
b) 2025
c) 2026
d) 2027
32. **The Indian district of _____ has become the country's first constitution literate district.**
a) Mumbai
b) Kochi
c) Dehradun
d) Kollam
33. **Who was appointed as the Deputy National Security Adviser in National Security Council Secretariat for a period of two years.**
a) Hem Dixit
b) Pankaj Kumar Singh
c) Roshan Kumar
d) Vipin Tiwari
34. **Which state government restored the old pension scheme?**
a) Himachal Pradesh
b) Andhra Pradesh
c) Arunachal Pradesh
d) Uttar Pradesh
35. **Which city is the 8th Vande Bharata Express train connecting Secunderabad to ?**
a) Thiruvananthapuram
b) Vishakhapatnam
c) Bengaluru
d) Varanasi
36. **In which district did the ASI discover two 1200-year-old miniature stupas ?**
a) Samastipur
b) Madhubani
c) Nalanda
d) Khagaria

37. In which state has the 'Jallikattu-2023' also known as Mattu Pongal recently started ?
a) Karnataka
b) Odisha
c) Tamil Nadu
d) Sikkim
38. What is the percentage of ethanol blending that the central government will start in petrol on April 1, 2023 ?
a) 20%
b) 15%
c) 25%
d) 30%
39. To reduce the temporary hardness of water, whatever ingredient is added to it ?
a) Calcium Chloride
b) Sodium bicarbonate
c) Calcium hydroxide
d) Sodium hydroxide
40. Which amendment act in India reduced the voting age from 21 to 18 ?
a) 73rd
b) 61st
c) 13th
d) 43rd
41. The fundamental concept of Economics about resources is that the resources are
a) equally distributed
b) unequally distributed
c) scarce
d) unlimited
42. Taxes are used to discourage _____ of a commodity.
a) consumption
b) production
c) saving
d) inflation
43. Wular Lake is one of the largest fresh water lakes in Asia. In which of these place is this lake located ?
a) Jammu and Kashmir
b) Uttarakhand
c) Himachal Pradesh
d) Assam
44. Which of these is the world's tallest statue ?
a) Statue of Adiyogi
b) Statue of Liberty
c) Statue of Equality
d) Statue of Unity
45. What is the theme for the 53rd edition of the World Economic Forum (WEF) annual meeting being held in Davos, Switzerland ?
a) Working Together, Restoring Trust
b) Cooperation in a Fragmented World
c) The Great Reset
d) Globalization 4.0: Shaping a Global Architecture in the Age of the Fourth Industrial Revolution
46. When did Prime Minister Narendra Modi announce the establishment of National Startup Day on January 16 ?
a) 2018
b) 2019
c) 2021
d) 2022
47. Uttar Pradesh emerged as the top destination for mobile gamers according to India Mobile Gaming Report 2022. Which of the following were the second and third states ?
a) Bihar and West Bengal
b) Tamil Nadu and Punjab
c) Maharashtra and Rajasthan
d) Himachal Pradesh and Odisha
48. The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has announced that Viacom 18 have grabbed the media rights for the upcoming Women's IPL for a whopping _____.
a) Rs 951 crore
b) Rs 1051 crore
c) Rs 1151 crore
d) Rs 1251 crore
49. ISRO 'Shukrayaan I' mission to planet Venus reportedly shifted to _____.
a) 2027
b) 2028
c) 2029
d) 2031
50. According to the Ministry of Defence, the 21st edition of "Varuna" the bilateral naval exercise between India and _____ commenced on the western seaboard.
a) China
b) USA
c) Germany
d) France
51. Which country population has dropped by 850K, declining for the first time since the Great Famine of 1961 ?
a) Canada
b) USA
c) India
d) China
52. United Nations Security Council (UNSC) listed Pakistan-based terrorist _____ as a global terrorist.
a) Mullah Omar
b) Zakiur Rehman Lakhvi
c) Hafiz Saeed
d) Abdul Rehman Makki
53. Which of the following is the longest river in Pakistan that originates from Lake Manasarovar ?
a) Chenab
b) Indus
c) Sutlej
d) Kabul
54. In which atmospheric layer are the communication satellites located ?
a) Thermosphere
b) Troposphere
c) Mesosphere
d) Stratosphere

55. Which of the following is entrusted with the task of receiving all money on behalf of the Government as also with the task of making payments on their behalf ?
a) State Bank of India
b) Reserve Bank of India
c) Ministry of Finance
d) Union Parliament
56. Who is known as the 'Father of Economics' ?
a) Adam Smith
b) Chanakya
c) Machiavelli
d) None of these
57. In which part of India is the "Lipulekh Pass" located ?
a) Jammu & Kashmir
b) Uttarakhand
c) Kerala
d) Himachal Pradesh
58. Which Indian River is also known as "Dakshin Ganga" ?
a) Godavari
b) Periyar
c) Kaveri
d) Krishna
59. BCCI in India has signed Kewal Kiran Clothing Ltd, maker of Killer jeans, as the official sponsor of the Indian cricket team, replacing which of the following ?
a) Dream 11
b) MPL
c) Pepsi Co
d) Paytm
60. Which of the following Indian song won the best song category in Golden Globe Awards 2023 ?
a) Mann Bharryaa 2.0
b) Chaka Chak
c) Naatu Naatu
d) Aabaad Barbaad
61. Union Home Minister Amit Shah has recently unveiled a 120 feet tall statue of a polo player in which state ?
a) Tripura
b) West Bengal
c) Assam
d) Manipur
62. What is the theme of World Hindi Conference 2023 ?
a) Hindi Jagat: vistar evam sambhavnayen
b) Vaishvik Hindi
c) Hindi - Traditional Knowledge to Artificial Intelligence
d) Hindi Vishwa Aur Bharatiy Sanskriti
63. Which country will receive \$100 million from the USA for flood recovery and reconstruction aid?
a) Afghanistan
b) Bhutan
c) Nepal
d) Pakistan
64. In which state or union territory was a temporary ban imposed on the plying of BS-III petrol and BS-IV diesel four-wheelers?
a) Delhi
b) Maharashtra
c) Gujarat
d) Chandigarh
65. In which city will the first Education Group of G-20 countries meet ?
a) Ajmer
b) Bikaner
c) Chennai
d) Ahmedabad
66. Tribal Bodies Step Up Demand To 'Free' Parasnath Hills From Jains in which among the following state ?
a) Jharkhand
b) Chhattisgarh
c) Uttar Pradesh
d) Haryana
67. Which element is used for the shiny trim on cars ?
a) Silicon
b) Aluminium
c) Chromium
d) Carbon
68. How many International airports are there in India ?
a) 15
b) 30
c) 35
d) 16
69. Which Indian public sector bank received RBI approval to hold special rupee vostro accounts of three banks from Sri Lanka ?
a) State Bank of India
b) Canara Bank
c) Indian Bank
d) Punjab National Bank
70. When was the Imperial Bank of India nationalized to form the State Bank of India ?
a) 1947
b) 1949
c) 1951
d) 1955
71. Porto-Novo is the capital of which country ?
a) South Korea
b) Namibia
c) Honduras
d) Benin
72. "Indira Gandhi Athletic Stadium" is situated in _____.
a) New Delhi
b) Andhra Pradesh
c) Kerala
d) Assam
73. PM Narendra Modi inaugurated the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas convention in Indore, who among the following was the chief guest of the convention ?
a) Ibrahim Mohamed Solih
b) Mahathir bin Mohamad
c) Mohamed Irfaan Ali
d) Prithvirajsing Roopun

74. World Hindi Day or Vishwa Hindi Diwas is celebrated on _____ every year to promote awareness about the language across the world.
a) 07th January
b) 08th January
c) 09th January
d) 10th January
75. Which of the following state government has begun caste surveys in different parts of the State ?
a) Uttar Pradesh
b) Bihar
c) West Bengal
d) Rajasthan
76. Who has been elected as the Speaker of the US House of Representatives ?
a) Mitch McConnell
b) Nancy Pelosi
c) Lauren Boebert
d) Kevin McCarthy
77. Squadron leader Avani Chaturvedi, the first female fighter pilot in the Indian Air Force (IAF), is scheduled to participate in the inaugural air exercise Veer Guardian, the exercise is set to take place in which country ?
a) USA
b) Australia
c) Japan
d) Russia
78. India's first-ever coal gasification plant is set to start urea production in 2024, the plant is located in which state/UT ?
a) Gujarat
b) Odisha
c) Andhra Pradesh
d) Jammu and Kashmir
79. Which country is planning to dispatch 159 containers of ammunition to Ukraine ?
a) Afghanistan
b) Bhutan
c) Pakistan
d) Australia
80. Which country surpassed Japan to become the 3rd largest auto market globally ?
a) India
b) America
c) Australia
d) Israel
81. A universal recipient belongs to the blood group
a) AB
b) O
c) B
d) A
82. Which of the following is a landlocked country ?
a) Turkey
b) Syria
c) Mongolia
d) Eritrea
83. Which one of the following is more effective in controlling prices in the long run ?
a) decrease in production
b) increase in production
c) decrease in the rate of interest
d) increase in the rate of employment
84. The law of demand states that
a) demand increases with increase in income
b) when income and prices rise, the demand also rises
c) when price falls, demand increases
d) when price increases, demand increases
85. What is the currency of Ukraine?
a) Kwacha
b) Ariary
c) Hryvnia
d) Krone
86. Gagron Fort, included in UNESCO World Heritage site, is located in which state ?
a) Punjab
b) Karnataka
c) Rajasthan
d) Gujarat
87. The Union Government has approved the National Green Hydrogen Mission with an initial outlay of how many rupees ?
a) 15,744 crore
b) 16,744 crore
c) 18,744 crore
d) 19,744 crore
88. The World Day of War Orphans is observed on _____ every year with an aim to raise awareness about children orphaned in wars.
a) January 2
b) January 3
c) January 4
d) January 6
89. Who among the following has been named India's 79th Grandmaster ?
a) Koustav Chatterjee
b) Pranesh M
c) Aditya Mittal
d) Pranav Anand
90. How many overseas Indian are awarded this year by the Indian government for the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards ?
a) 38
b) 53
c) 32
d) 27
91. _____ is all set to be the next Speaker of the Himachal Pradesh Assembly
a) Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu
b) Yash Pal
c) R V Arlekar
d) Kuldeep Singh Pathania

92. Union Cabinet approves naming of Mopa airport in Goa after _____.
a) Atal Bihari Vajpayee
b) Manohar Parrikar
c) Inder Kumar Gujral
d) H. D. Deve Gowda
93. Union Cabinet approves naming of Mopa airport in Goa after _____.
a) Atal Bihari Vajpayee
b) Manohar Parrikar
c) Inder Kumar Gujral
d) H. D. Deve Gowda
94. Which country planned to boost financial support to households moving away from the capital city Tokyo ?
a) Japan
b) Nepal
c) Nigeria
d) Fiji
95. Which animal gives both milk and eggs ?
a) Echidna
b) Platypus
c) Wombat
d) All of the above
96. India is the largest producer of
a) Cotton
b) Milk
c) Mangoes
d) All the above
97. Which of the following is not a direct tax ?
a) Sales tax
b) Income tax
c) Wealth tax
d) Estate duty
98. The Indian rupee is a legal tender in two other countries. One is Nepal. The other is
a) Pakistan
b) Sri Lanka
c) Bhutan
d) Afghanistan
99. "International Shooting Sport Federation" (ISSF) is headquartered in _____.
a) Montreal, Canada
b) Munich, Germany
c) New York, USA
d) Madrid, Spain
100. Gond Art is a traditional art form of which state ?
a) Madhya Pradesh
b) Arunachal Pradesh
c) Tripura
d) Rajasthan
101. According to the Coffee Board of India, the total export of coffee from India rose by how much percent to 4 lakh tonnes in 2022 ?
a) 1.50 %
b) 1.66 %
c) 2.66 %
d) 3.50 %
102. India's unemployment rate in December 2022 has been increased to a 16-month high at how much percent from 8% in November 2022 ?
a) 8.10%
b) 8.20%
c) 8.30%
d) 8.40%.
103. _____ becomes the first country in Asia and second in the world to launch Hydrogen powered Train.
a) Pakistan
b) India
c) China
d) Bangladesh
104. Which company has topped profit making public sector enterprises in 2021-22 ?
a) BPCL
b) HPCL
c) BHEL
d) ONGC
105. How many electric buses were launched in Delhi with support under the FAME India Phase II scheme of the Ministry of Heavy Industries ?
a) 100
b) 75
c) 25
d) 50
106. Defence minister Rajnath Singh has inaugurated the Siyom bridge. This bridge inaugurated in which of the following state ?
a) Rajasthan
b) Sikkim
c) Assam
d) Arunachal Pradesh
107. Who becomes the 1st women officer to be operationally deployed in Siachen ?
a) Captain Rani Singh
b) Captain Veera Tiwari
c) Captain Renuka Singh
d) Captain Shiva Chauhan
108. The Defence Ministry has started the process for the procurement of 100 more _____ tracked self-propelled howitzers which are built in India by Larsen & Toubro (L&T) using technology transferred from South Korean defence major Hanwha Defence.
a) Arjun
b) K9-Vajra
c) Karan
d) Krishan
109. Whose signature are present on Indian currency notes ?
a) Finance minister
b) RBI Governor
c) Prime minister
d) President
110. Which State/UT ended 149-year-old practice of 'darbar move' ?
a) Ladakh
b) Jammu and Kashmir
c) Uttar Pradesh
d) Madhya Pradesh

111. Fiscal Policy deals with the _____ and _____ decisions of the government
- Incomes and Expenditures
 - Taxation and Expenditures
 - Trading and Expenditures
 - None of These
112. Find out the incorrect among following
- When the government receives more than it spends, it has a surplus
 - If the government spends more than it receives it runs a deficit
 - On a broad generalization, excessive printing of money leads to inflation
 - None of These
113. What is the currency of Mexico?
- Euro
 - Peso
 - Pound
 - Franc
114. The "International Day of Mathematics" is observed on _____.
- July 21
 - April 10
 - March 14
 - May 22 h
115. Bangladesh launched its first metro rail service in the capital Dhaka in December 2022, which of the following country funded the metro rail project ?
- India
 - Russia
 - Japan
 - China
116. Who becomes becomes first person ever to lose \$200 billion?
- Mukesh Ambani
 - Gautam Adani
 - Bill Gates
 - Elon Musk
117. India and _____ exchange lists of nuclear assets and Prison inmates.
- Pakistan
 - China
 - Bangladesh
 - Sri Lanka
118. Who was sworn in as Brazil's president in the capital of Brasilia to assume office for the third time ?
- Prudente de Moraes
 - Deodoro da Fonseca
 - Floriano Peixoto
 - Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva
119. The 'Dhanu Yatra' festival, the largest open-air theatre festival began in which state recently ?
- Gujarat
 - Maharashtra
 - Odisha
 - Andhra Pradesh
120. Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari inaugurated Zuari bridge in which state/UT of India ?
- Jammu and Kashmir
 - Maharashtra
 - Goa
 - Karnataka
121. New Jalpaiguri, which was in the news related to Vande Bharat Express, is located in which state ?
- Assam
 - West Bengal
 - Andhra Pradesh
 - Gujarat
122. Which Union Ministry launched the 'Prajwala Challenge' ?
- Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs
 - Ministry of Rural Development
 - Ministry of Home Affairs
 - Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare
123. The oldest type of energy known to man is _____ ?
- Geothermal Energy
 - Solar Power
 - Wind Power
 - Tidal Power
124. The largest man made canal in the world is
- Suez Canal
 - The Grand Canal
 - Panama Canal
 - Rhine Canal
125. Three Presidency Banks viz., Bank of Madras, Bank of Bombay and Bank of Calcutta, were merged to form
- New Bank of India
 - Corporation Bank
 - Reserve Bank of India
 - Imperial Bank of India
126. There are how many printed currency presses in India ?
- 3
 - 4
 - 5
 - 6
127. In which state of India is the Shivalik Fossil Park located ?
- Goa
 - Himachal Pradesh
 - Tamil Nadu
 - Maharashtra
128. In which part of India is the "Majuli Island" located ?
- Ladakh
 - Assam
 - Odisha
 - Andhra Pradesh
129. The Goa Liberation day is celebrated every year on which day ?
- 17 December
 - 18 December
 - 19 December
 - 20 December
130. Who among the following actress has been awarded

- PETA India's 2022 Person of the Year title ?
a) Sonakshi Sinha
b) Alia Bhatt
c) Hema Malini
d) Jacqueline Fernandez
130. Which of the following team has won 9th Season of the Pro Kabaddi League title 2022 ?
a) Bengaluru Bulls
b) Jaipur Pink Panthers
c) Dabang Delhi
d) Telugu Titans
132. A BSF veteran Bhairon Singh Rathore passed away recently at the age of 81. He was the hero of which war ?
a) World War I 1914
b) India-China War 1962
c) Kargil War 1999
d) India-Pakistan War 1971
133. Recently Indian forces acquiring, which ballistic missile for striking targets at 150-500 Km.
a) Drishti
b) Shakti
- c) Yaayu
d) Pralay
134. The 48th GST Council meeting was held in which of the following city ?
a) Bengaluru
b) New Delhi
c) Guwahati
d) Ahmedabad
135. Indian-Origin Leo Varadkar has been re-elected as the Prime Minister of which country ?
a) Netherland
b) Mauritius
c) Ireland
d) Finland
136. According to Bloomberg 50 Report, who has topped the list of people whose wealth witnessed the maximum rise globally during this year ?
a) Bill Gates
b) Warren Buffet
c) Gautam Adani
d) Mark Zuckerberg
137. Telecom company Nokia belongs to which country ?
a) Denmark
b) USA
c) Sweden
d) Finland
138. Film and Television institute of India is located at
a) Pune (Maharashtra)
b) Rajkot (Gujarat)
c) Pimpri (Maharashtra)
d) Perambur (Tamilnadu)
139. Which of the following is correct
a) Reserve Bank of India Act, 1935
b) Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934
c) Reserve Bank of India Act, 1930
d) None of These
140. World Bank was comes into existence on
a) July, 1946
b) July, 1945
c) July, 1944
d) None of The Above

ANSWER KEY

1-d	2-a	3-c	4-d	5-b	6-d	7-a	8-c	9-c	10-d	11-b	12-c	13-c	14-a	15-d
16-b	17-b	18-d	19-c	20-d	21-a	22-c	23-c	24-a	25-c	26-b	27-d	28-b	29-b	30-c
31-b	32-d	33-b	34-a	35-b	36-c	37-c	38-a	39-c	40-b	41-c	42-a	43-a	44-d	45-b
46-d	47-c	48-a	49-d	50-d	51-d	52-d	53-b	54-a	55-b	56-a	57-b	58-a	59-b	60-c
61-d	62-c	63-d	64-a	65-c	66-a	67-c	68-c	69-c	70-d	71-d	72-d	73-c	74-d	75-b
76-d	77-c	78-b	79-c	80-a	81-a	82-c	83-b	84-c	85-c	86-c	87-d	88-d	89-b	90-d
91-d	92-b	93-b	94-a	95-b	96-d	97-a	98-c	99-b	100-a	101-b	102-c	103-c	104-d	105-d
106-d	107-d	108-b	109-b	110-b	111-b	112-d	113-b	114-c	115-c	116-d	117-a	118-d	119-c	120-c
121-b	122-b	123-a	124-a	125-d	126-b	127-b	128-b	129-c	130-a	131-b	132-d	133-d	134-b	135-c
136-c	137-d	138-a	139-b	140-c										