

## March 2023 Current Affairs Compendium

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## **INTERNATIONAL NEWS**

### **Sheikh Mansour Bin Zayed Al Nahyan appointed as the Vice-President of UAE**

The United Arab Emirates President, Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, has made a significant announcement regarding the country's leadership. With the approval of the UAE Federal Supreme Council, Sheikh Mansour Bin Zayed Al Nahyan has been appointed as the UAE Vice-President. The incumbent Vice president Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, will also continue in the same role. Sheikh Mansour has been a vital part of the UAE's political landscape since 2004, when he was appointed as Minister of Presidential Affairs. He has played a key role in overseeing the Presidential Court and the Ministry of Presidential Affairs, as well as chairing several government institutions, including the Ministerial Development Council and the Emirates Investment Authority.

The new Vice-President is also the Chairman of the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development and a member of the Abu Dhabi Supreme Petroleum Council. He has served on the boards of numerous investment institutions, including the National Archives, Abu Dhabi Development Fund, Board of Abu Dhabi Food Control Authority, and the Abu Dhabi Judicial Department.

### **Africa Announces Its Second Marburg Outbreak in Tanzania This Year**

On March 21, health officials announced a Marburg outbreak after the continent's first outbreak on February 25 reported by the World Health Organization. Marburg virus, a hemorrhagic fever virus, is often referred to as the 'cousin' of ebola which caused around 11,325 deaths from 2014 to 2016 in West Africa. According to the WHO, Equatorial Guinea's Ministry of Health and Social Welfare announced the mortality of several people with probable hemorrhagic fever on February 7, 2023. Real-time polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) testing on one sample yielded affirmative results for the Marburg virus on February 12, 2023, at the Institute Pasteur in Dakar, Senegal. Tanzania's national public health laboratory has declared that the outbreak first reported last week was caused by Marburg, according to Ummy Mwalimu, the country's health minister. One of the instances involves a household of five, and at least 161 individuals in close contact are being watched.

"We are working with the government to rapidly scale up control measures to halt the spread of the virus and end the outbreak as soon as possible," says WHO's regional director for Africa Matshidiso Moeti in a statement.

### **Humza Yousaf Elected Leader Of Scottish National Party**

Pakistani-origin Humza Yousaf has won the Scottish National Party leadership contest and is set to become Scotland's First Minister replacing Nicola Sturgeon. The 37-year-old son of Asian immigrants is set to become the first person of colour to serve as Scotland's first minister,

The Scot of Pakistani heritage, a Sturgeon loyalist, defeated Kate Forbes, the country's finance minister and Ash Regan, who quit the government in opposition to proposed changes to gender recognition,

"I will be a First Minister for all of Scotland. I will work every minute of every day to earn and to re-earn your respect and your trust," Yousaf said in his acceptance speech. Yousaf won 52% of the final votes cast, running on a platform dedicated to delivering Scottish independence, combating the cost-of-living crisis.

### **IAEA Board reappoints Rafael Grossi as director general**

The Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on Friday reappointed Rafael Grossi as the agency's director general for a second four-year term. The IAEA said in a statement that its 35-nation Board adopted the decision by acclamation at its quarterly meeting. The reappointment is subject to approval by the annual General Conference of the agency's all 176 member states in September. Grossi is slated to begin his second term in early December 2023.

"I'm deeply honored by the Board's unanimous decision to appoint me for another term in office, and very grateful for the confidence and trust member states continue to place in me as head of this truly remarkable organization," Grossi said.

"It comes at a time when we face many major challenges, and I'm fully committed to continue to do everything in my power to implement the IAEA's crucial mission in support of global peace and development," he added. Grossi has served as head of the United Nations nuclear watchdog since December 2019.

### **First Citizens Bank to Acquire Failed Silicon Valley Bank**

First Citizens BancShares will acquire Silicon Valley Bank, the California lender whose collapse this month sent shock waves across the financial sector.

The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation seized control of Silicon Valley Bank on March 10, after a run on deposits had left it insolvent. The F.D.I.C., which announced the deal late Sunday, has since been looking for a buyer for the bank, either in its entirety or in pieces.

Silicon Valley Bank was the country's 16th-largest bank when the government took it over. Its collapse was the largest bank failure in the United States since the 2008 financial crisis.

The deal for the bank, which became Silicon Valley Bridge Bank after the F.D.I.C. seized it, included the purchase of about \$72 billion in loans, at a discount of \$16.5 billion, and the transfer of deposits worth \$56 billion. Roughly \$90 billion in Silicon Valley Bank's securities and other assets were not included in the sale, and remained in the F.D.I.C.'s control.

### **Egypt Becomes A Member Of The BRICS New Development Bank**

Egypt on Wednesday, officially became a member of BRICS' New Development Bank (NDB) which includes India, Brazil, Russia, China, and South Africa as member countries. According to an update posted on the bank's official website, Cairo completed all the necessary procedures to become an eligible member on February 20, 2023.

BRICS' New Development bank was established in July 2014, after an intergovernmental agreement was signed by the partner nations at the sixth BRICS summit in Fortaleza.

"The membership shall be open to members of the United Nations, in accordance with the provisions of the Articles of Agreement of the New Development Bank.

Bank's aim is to provide funding and finance to the BRICS member states for infrastructure and sustainable development projects. New Development Bank drafted the General Strategy until 2022–2026 titled "Scaling Up Development Finance for a Sustainable Future." The vision of the bank is to evolve into a leading provider of solutions for infrastructure and sustainable development for emerging market economies and developing countries.

### **Ram Sahaya Prasad Yadav elected Nepal's Vice-President**

Ram Sahaya Yadav, a leader from the Madhes region, was elected the third Vice-President of Nepal, as voting for the top post concluded on Friday. Yadav secured 30,328 votes. The tenure of Nepal's outgoing Vice President, Nanda Bahadur Pun ended on March 18. Yadav, a candidate who had the backing of Nepal's eight-party ruling alliance, defeated Ashta Laxmi Shakya of the CPN-UML and Mamata Jha of the Janamat Party. The President's office announced that Nepal's newly-elected Vice President, Ram Sahaya Prasad Yadav, is scheduled to take the oath of office and secrecy on March 20 at 10 am - local time.

### **Singapore Changi Airport is named the World's Best Airport 2023 : Skytrax World Airport Award**

Singapore Changi Airport has been named as the World's Best Airport in 2023 in the World Airport Awards held at Passenger Terminal EXPO in Amsterdam, Changi Airport also won the awards for the World's Best Airport Dining and World's Best Airport Leisure Amenities.

The Hamad International Airport, Doha, in 2nd place and Tokyo Haneda Airport ranked 3rd.

### **Saudi Arabia launches new national airline**

Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman formally announced on Sunday the creation of a new national airline, Riyadh Air, with industry veteran Tony Douglas as its chief executive, as the kingdom moves to compete with regional transport and travel hubs.

Riyadh Air will serve more than 100 destinations around the world by 2030, making use of the kingdom's location between Asia, Africa and Europe,

### **Indonesia's Mount Merapi volcano erupts, covering villages in ash**

Indonesia's Mount Merapi, one of the world's most active volcanoes, erupted today, spewing out smoke and ash that blanketed villages near the crater. The volcano is located on Java Island, near Indonesia's cultural capital Yogyakarta. The volcano's last major eruption in 2010 had claimed more than 300 lives and forced the evacuation of some 280,000 people. Indonesia, which has nearly 130 active volcanoes, sits on the Pacific "Ring of Fire", where the meeting of continental plates causes high volcanic and seismic activity.

### **Silicon Valley Bank collapse, causes shockwaves across world**

The sudden collapse of Silicon Valley Bank (SVB) in the United States has caused shockwaves around the world. California-based Silicon Valley Bank, the 16th largest bank in the US, was closed on Friday (March 10) by the California Department of Financial Protection and Innovation which later appointed the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) as its receiver.

From Californian winemakers to startups on the other side of the Atlantic, businesses are attempting to handle their accounts after their bank abruptly closed down Friday.

According to reports, the financial crisis is causing anxiety for corporations as well as for all their employees whose paychecks can be affected by the commotion.

### **SpaceX Launches 40 OneWeb Satellites To Orbit From Florida**

SpaceX's Falcon 9 rocket launched 40 OneWeb satellites to low-Earth orbit from Cape Canaveral Space Force Station, Florida. This was the penultimate mission to complete the first generation (Gen 1) low-Earth orbit satellite constellation of OneWeb, a London-based satellite communications company backed by Bharti Enterprises.

OneWeb aims to enable global coverage in 2023, and its latest launch was the penultimate mission that would complete OneWeb's Gen 1 constellation to fulfil the goal.

The launch of 40 satellites by SpaceX on March 9 was OneWeb's 17th mission to date.

Later this month, OneWeb will launch more satellites with the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and New Space India Limited (NSIL), in order to complete the UK-based company's global footprint of Gen 1 satellites. If the launch with ISRO and NSIL is successful, there will be 582 OneWeb satellites in orbit.

### **Xi Jinping begins historic third term as China's president**

Chinese President Xi Jinping has been handed a norm-busting third term as President, making him China's most powerful leader in generations. The appointment by Beijing's rubber-stamp parliament comes after he locked in another five years as head of the Communist Party and the military.

China's Parliament on Friday unanimously endorsed an unprecedented third five-year term for President Xi Jinping,

### **Indonesia is moving its capital from Jakarta to Borneo.**

The city of Jakarta in Indonesia is facing issues such as congestion, pollution, earthquakes, and sinking into the Java Sea. Therefore, the Indonesian government is currently in the process of relocating the capital to the Island of Borneo. Indonesia plans to relocate its capital from Jakarta to Borneo, creating a "sustainable forest city" that aims to be carbon-neutral by 2045.

However, environmentalists warn that the development will lead to deforestation, threaten the habitat of endangered species such as orangutans and harm the homes of Indigenous communities. While the site is typically restricted, The Associated Press was granted access in early March to witness the construction progress. This article examines the reasons behind the relocation, the government's plans, and the concerns



of activists regarding the impact on the environment, endangered species, and Indigenous communities.

### **Ram Chandra Paudel elected as new President of Nepal**

Nepal: Ram Chandra Paudel was elected as the new president of Nepal on Thursday. Paudel secured 33 thousand 8 hundred and 2 electoral votes while his rival Subash Chandra Nembwang secured 15 thousand 5 hundred and 18 electoral votes, according to Nepal's Election Commission.

Poudel, a common candidate of the eight-party alliance that included Nepali Congress and Prime Minister 'Prachanda'-led CPN (Maoist Center), received the vote of 214 lawmakers of parliament and 352 provincial assembly members. With the support from eight political parties, 78-year-old Poudel's victory was certain. His rival Subas Chandra Nembwang had support of former prime minister KP Sharma-led CPN-UML.

### **Xi Jinping's right hand, Li Qiang to become China's next premier**

Xi Jinping has consolidated his power since the resignation of Premier Li Keqiang, who had served the maximum two terms allowed. Li had been sidelined in recent years by Xi, who elevated military and security services in support of the "great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation". Now, all eyes are now on Li Qiang, who is the favourite to replace Keqiang as Premier. Li is a crony of Xi's from his days in provincial government, having served as Xi's de facto chief of staff in Zhejiang province.

### **Arun Subramanian becomes first Indian-American to be Judge of Manhattan Federal District Court in New York**

Indian-American Arun Subramaniam has been confirmed as first South Asian District Judge for the Southern District of New York. Senate Majority Leader Senator Chuck Schumer confirmed the nomination of Mr. Subramanian by a vote of 58-37. Senator Schumer said that Subramanian dedicated his career to fighting for people. South District New York notably has one of the largest South Asian-American populations in the country.

### **White House backs bipartisan Bill that could lead to TikTok ban**

The White House endorsed a bipartisan bill that could give the President authority to ban or force a sale of TikTok, support that could hasten its passage and break a deadlock over how to handle privacy concerns around the popular Chinese-owned app. The bill introduced would give the President the ability to force the sale of foreign-owned technologies, applications, software or e-commerce platforms if they present a national security threat to US users.

### **China Gives Assurances For Sri Lanka's Debt Recast, Paves Way For \$2.9-Billion IMF Bailout**

China has given assurances that it will support Sri Lanka's debt restructuring, according to Bloomberg. This development has cleared the biggest hurdle for the island nation to secure a \$2.9-billion bailout from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Sri Lanka's

largest bilateral creditor gave written support for the debt restructuring via the Export - Import Bank of China on March 6, according to sources privy to the development. The letter meets the requirements of the IMF.

### **China to increase defense spending by 7.2%**

China is set to increase defense spending this year by 7.2% to 1.56 trillion yuan (\$230 billion), according to a draft released Sunday by the Ministry of Finance. China's defense budget grew by 7.1% last year to 1.45 trillion yuan, faster than the 6.8% increase in 2021 and 6.6% climb in 2020, according to official data.

### **China sets its lowest GDP growth target of around 5% for the year 2023**

China projected GDP growth target for year at 'around 5%' as the National People's Congress (NPC) – China's national legislature started Sunday, making a modest forecasting an effort to revive an economy battered by COVID-19 and Beijing's controversial zero-covid policy.

This was announced by the outgoing Premier Li Keqiang, as he delivered a government work report at the opening session of the 14th NPC, laying out economic priorities and a new budget, including plans for defense amid continued tensions with the West including in Taiwan strait and the war in Ukraine.

### **UK disappointed as Argentina withdraws from Falklands pact**

The UK government on Thursday insisted the Falkland Islands remained British as Argentina walked away from a cooperation pact and demanded new talks over their sovereignty.

Known as the Malvinas in Spanish, the UK-ruled islands were the subject of a short, but brutal war after Argentina invaded in 1982. Britain drove out the invading force after dispatching a naval armada.

### **NASA And SpaceX Launch Crew-6**

NASA's SpaceX Crew-6 was launched into space on March 2, 2023, at 5:34 UTC (11:04 am IST), for a long-duration mission on the International Space Station (ISS). Crew-6 includes NASA astronauts Stephen Bowen and Warren "Woody Hoburg", United Arab Emirates (UAE) astronaut Sultan AlNeyadi, and Roscosmos cosmonaut Andre y Fedyaev. They were launched to the ISS aboard a SpaceX Crew Dragon spacecraft, atop a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket from Launch Complex 39-A at NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida.

### **Singapore Airlines to get 25.1% stake in Air India Group**

Singapore Airlines' (SIA) deal with Tata Sons will inject a further \$267 million into Air India. It will give SIA a 25.1% stake in the Air India Group following its takeover by Tata and merger with Vistara Airlines. The November 2022 deal between SIA and Tata Sons to further inject \$267 million into Air India is one of the key strategic initiatives for future growth mentioned in the quarterly financial report.

## **NATIONAL NEWS**

### **Jaipur to get India's 2nd largest cricket stadium named after Anil Agarwal**

Vedanta's Hindustan Zinc Limited (HZL) signed an MoU with the Rajasthan Cricket Association for the development of the world's third-largest and India's second largest cricket stadium in the village of Chonp in Jaipur. Vedanta's HZL will spend INR 300 crore on the stadium, one of the largest corporate investments in India's sports infrastructure. The stadium would be named as Anil Agarwal International Cricket Stadium, Jaipur.

The highlights of the new stadium are -- it is the biggest cricket playing field in the world, is one of the world's biggest Cricket stadiums with a seating capacity of 75,000. (2nd largest in India and 3rd largest in the world), spread over 100 acres (4,04,685 sqm) biggest playing area and is well connected via Delhi-Jaipur Express Highway. The MoU was signed by Bhawani Shankar Samota, Honorary Secretary, Rajasthan Cricket Association and Arun Misra, CEO Hindustan Zinc in the presence of Dr. C.P. Joshi, Hon'ble Speaker, Rajasthan Vidhan Sabha and Chief Patron, RCA, Priya Agarwal Hebbbar, Chairperson, Hindustan Zinc and Non-Executive Director, Vedanta Ltd. and Vaibhav Gehlot, President, Rajasthan Cricket Association.

### **Weeklong National Maritime Celebrations begins with PM wearing the 'First Merchant Navy Flag'**

Gearing up for a week long celebration of National maritime Celebration from April 5, the 'First Merchant Navy Flag' was pinned on the lapel of the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi by the Union Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways and Ayush Shri Sarbananda Sonowal in presence of Sudhansh Pant, Secretary, Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways (MoPSW) and other senior officials in New Delhi today. An memento was also presented to the Prime Minister.

To mark the importance of the day government is celebrating by organising the National Maritime Week from 30.03.2023 to 05.04.2023 paying tribute to services of seafarers and celebrating the proud moment for India when the first Indian Steamship "S.S. LOYALTY" of M/s. Scindia Steam, Navigation Co. Ltd., Mumbai ventured into international waters on her maiden voyage from Mumbai to London (UK) in the year 1919 on this day and the same is marked as "National Maritime Day."

### **Defence Ministry signs more than Rs 9100 crore contracts for Akash Weapon System and Weapon locating Radars**

The Ministry of Defence signs contracts for the procurement of an improved Akash Weapon System and 12 Weapon Locating Radars, WLR Swathi (Plains) for the Indian Army at an overall cost of over 9,100 crore rupees. The contract for procurement of improved Akash Weapon System (AWS) for the 3rd and 4th Regiments of Army Air Defence, comprising live Missiles and Launchers with upgrades, Ground Support Equipment, Vehicles and Infrastructure was signed with Bharat Dynamics Limited, worth over eight thousand 160 crore rupees.

The AWS is a Short Range Surface Air Missile (SRSAM) Air Defence System, indigenously designed and developed by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).



To meet aerial threats, two additional Regiments of AWS with Upgradation are being procured for Indian Army for the Northern borders. Improved AWS has Seeker Technology, 360° Engagement Capability and improved environmental parameters.

### **India welcomes four cubs - born to Cheetah translocated from Namibia**

Happy news from the world of wildlife! India has been blessed with four cheetah cubs. Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav on Wednesday, March 29 shared that four cubs have been born to one of the cheetahs translocated to India on September 17, 2022. Cheetah Siyaya delivered the four cubs at Kuno National Park

The Union Environment Minister called the occasion a 'momentous event' in our wildlife conservation history during Amrit Kaal. Further, the Union Minister also congratulated the entire team of Project Cheetah for their relentless efforts in bringing back cheetahs to India and for their efforts in correcting an ecological wrong done in the past.

It is noteworthy that cheetah got extinct from India about 70 years ago. The wild cat was declared extinct from India in 1952.

### **Government of India launches National Rabies Control Programme (NRCP) for prevention and control of Rabies**

Ministry of Health & Family Welfare and Ministry of Fisheries Animal Husbandry & Dairying, Government of India jointly launched 'National Action Plan For Dog Mediated Rabies Elimination (NAPRE) from India by 2030'. The stray dog population control and management of the stray dogs is the mandate of the local bodies. The Central Government has framed the Animal Birth Control (Dogs) Rules, 2023 which is to be implemented by the local authority to control the population of stray dogs. The main focus of the rules is on anti-rabies vaccination of stray dogs and neutering of stray dogs as means of population stabilization.

Further, as per the directions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in its interim orders dated 18.11.2015 & 9.3.2016 in SLP No.691 of 2009, AWBI Vs P.E.S.T & Ors directed all the State Governments to implement the ABC (Dogs) Rules, 2001 diligently to control the stray dog population, to constitute the State Level Monitoring Committee & District Level Monitoring Committee to address the issues related to stray dogs in the respective local bodies. Accordingly, the Animal Welfare Board of India has also forwarded a revised module to all the State Governments regarding the proper implementation of the Animal Birth Control programme. In addition, the Animal Welfare Board of India has issued following advisories / guidelines for proper implementation of the Animal Birth Control Rules.

### **Odisha's historic Gandhamardan Hills declared as biodiversity heritage site**

Odisha's Gandhamardan Hill range, known as the "ayurvedic paradise," has been designated a "biodiversity heritage site." The hill system that spans both Bargarh and Bolangir districts was designated a biodiversity heritage site by the Department of Forestry, Environment, and Climate Change. Gandhamardan is home to 1,200 plant species, 500 animal species, and several varieties of trees, shrubs, herbs, and medicinal

plant species. The tag will aid in the long-term protection, conservation, and management of the species that are classified as endangered and endemic. After the Mahendragiri Hills in Gajapati and the Mandasaru Hills in the Kandhamal district, this is the third such hill to get the designation of a biological heritage site. According to a notification from the state forest and environment department, the designation was made in accordance with Rule 20(2) of the 2012 Odisha Biodiversity Regulations and Section 37 of the Biodiversity Act.

### **AFINDEX 2023: Second Africa-India joint military exercise another step towards Modi's idea of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam"**

The second Africa-India joint military exercise from 21-29 March is a key element to India's diplomatic ties with African countries. 24 African militaries were represented by their contingents or teams of observers. The inaugural event of the second edition of the Africa-India Field Training Exercise (AFINDEX 2023) began at the Foreign Training Node of the Indian Army located at the Aundh Military Station in Pune on March 21. The ten-day exercise focused on Humanitarian Mine Assistance and United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (UNPKF). The multinational military drill will promote the idea of Africa-India Militaries for Regional Unity (AMRUT) and will focus on incorporating the current dynamics of UNPKF through comprehensive discussions and tactical exercises. The collective effort will also focus on achieving the desired interoperability and cohesive operational ability of the troops from all participating nations. Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (Sanskrit: वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्) or "The World Is One Family" or all living beings on the earth are a family has been the favourite theme of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi all along. The theme and the logo for India's G20 Presidency are "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" or "One Earth-One Future." The Bhagvad Gita, calls the Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam the "Loftiest Vedantic Thought." This is what is expected to be achieved through the Second Africa-India joint military exercise.

### **Sasha, one of the female cheetahs brought to India from Namibia, has died**

Sasha was part of the first lot of eight cheetahs brought to India from Namibia last year, which were released into Kuno National Park by prime minister Narendra Modi on September 17. On January 22 this year, Sasha had been diagnosed with a kidney infection and had been treated by a global team of veterinarians. She initially showed signs of recovery, but continued to be kept in the quarantine enclosure to which she had regressed to after having spent a few weeks in a larger enclosure. Though Sasha had shown signs of recovery, she was being fed within the quarantine enclosure. However, her condition suddenly deteriorated, and she died on Monday (27 March) morning. Sources from the Cheetah Conservation Fund say that they suspect renal failure to be the cause of her death,

### **Shri Bhupender Yadav launches Aravalli Green Wall Project**

Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Shri Bhupender Yadav said that under Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi India is moving to revive the Aravallis

through various initiatives like single-use plastic ban, water conservation efforts and natural resources protection. Shri Yadav launched the Aravalli Green Wall Project, a major initiative to green the 5 km buffer area around the Aravalli Hill Range in four states at a function organised to celebrate the International Day of Forests at Tikli Village in Haryana. At the event, Shri Yadav unveiled the National Action Plan to Combat Desertification and Land Degradation Through Forestry Interventions and a FAQ on Agro-forestry published by Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education. The Union Minister also participated in a plantation drive. Speaking on this occasion, the Union Minister said that the Aravalli Green Wall Project will not only increase the green cover and biodiversity of the Aravalli through afforestation, reforestation and restoration of water bodies, but also improve the soil fertility, water availability and climate resilience of the region. He said that the project will benefit the local communities by providing them with employment opportunities, income generation and ecosystem services. He appreciated the efforts of the Haryana Forest Department and other stakeholders for their cooperation and support in implementing the project and reiterated the government's commitment to achieve the national goal of creating an additional 2.5 billion tonnes of carbon sink by 2030.

### **Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia, I&B Minister Anurag Thakur flag off first Delhi-Dharamshala Flight**

Union Minister for Civil Aviation Jyotiraditya Scindia and Minister for Information and Broadcasting Anurag Thakur today flagged off the first Indigo Airline Delhi-Dharamshala-Delhi flight in New Delhi.

Indigo airline will operate daily flights on this route.

Speaking on the occasion Mr. Thakur expressed his gratitude towards the Ministry of Civil Aviation for facilitating Indigo connectivity to Himachal Pradesh. He said, this flight will benefit half of the State population. He added that Indigo could not have become a truly national airline without flying to the hill state. Mr. Thakur credited Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the rapid expansion of airport infrastructure in the country. He said the number has gone from 74 to over 140 in a short span of time. He further said that it is due to the UDAN scheme that the people in Hawaii Chappal can travel in Hawaii Jahaz.

### **Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation, Shri Amit Shah inaugurates Gorata Martyr Memorial and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Memorial in Bidar, Karnataka**

Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation, Shri Amit Shah inaugurated Gorata Martyr Memorial and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Memorial and also unfurled the 103 feet high tricolor at Gorata ground in Bidar, Karnataka today. On this occasion, former Chief Minister of Karnataka Shri B. S. Yediyurappa and many other dignitaries were present.

Paying tributes to the country's first Home Minister Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Shri Amit Shah said that had Iron Man Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel not been there, Hyderabad and Bidar would never have become independent. This monument of Sardar Patel is a symbol of liberation of the people of Hyderabad-Karnataka-Marathwada from the cruel

rule of the Nizam. Shri Shah said that today is a very important day because in 1948, at this place, the Nizam killed hundreds of people for hoisting a two-and-a-half-foot tricolor and I am fortunate to hoist a 103-foot tall tricolor at the same place.

### **PM Narendra Modi inaugurated and lay the foundation stone for various development projects in Karnataka: 25 March 2023**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be on a day's visit to Karnataka on 25th of March 2023, Saturday where he will inaugurate and lay the foundation stone for various development projects. After arrival in Bengaluru, the Prime Minister will inaugurate Sri Madhusudan Sai Institute of Medical Sciences and Research at Muddenahalli in Chikballapur district.

Established by Sri Sathya Sai University for Human Excellence, the Institute will provide free medical education and offer free medical treatment to the poor. The Medical college has 100 MBBS seats. Later in the day, the Prime Minister will take part in a road show in Bengaluru and inaugurate a new metro line between Whitefield and K R Puram covering 13.71 kms built at a cost of around 4250 crore rupees. In the afternoon the Prime Minister will attend the closing ceremony of Vijaya Sankalpa yatra in Davangere. BJP state unit had taken up around 8000 kms long yatra across 224 assembly segments around the state as part of its pre poll campaign.

### **Agriculture minister launches 'DigiClaim' for claim disbursement through National Crop Insurance Portal**

Union Minister of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Narendra Singh Tomar launched National Crop Insurance Portal's digitised claim settlement module namely DigiClaim under the ambit of Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) today at Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi. "With the launch of the module, claims will be disbursed electronically, which will benefit the respective farmers of six states. Now, the automated claim settlement process will be an ongoing activity to ease all insured farmers' lives and provide them with a sustainable financial flow and support," the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare said,

With the launch of a DigiClaim Module, insurance claims totalling Rs 1260.35 crore have been disbursed on March 23, 2023, to insured farmers in the states of Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Uttarakhand and Haryana, and the process will continue as and when the claims are released," the ministry said. The minister also mentioned that to date Rs 1.32 lakh crore claim amount has been disbursed to the insured farmers under Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana. He also took special note of 'Meri Policy, Mere Haath' ongoing campaign and observed that the campaign has been monumental in enhancing the awareness around PMFBY at the grassroot level.

### **Tamil Nadu's 18th wildlife sanctuary to come up in Erode**

The Tamil Nadu Government will notify Thanthai Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary, spread over 80,567 hectares in the forest areas of Anthiyur and Gobichettipalayam taluks in

Erode district, as the 18th wildlife sanctuary in the state. It will include reserve forest areas in Anthiyur, Bargur, Thattakarai and Chennampatti.

Home to wild animals including tigers, elephants, leopards, wild boars, gaurs and deer, the sanctuary is close to Malai Mahadeshwara wildlife sanctuary, BRT Wildlife Sanctuary, Cauvery wildlife sanctuary in Karnataka and also act as a connecting point between Nilgiris Biosphere Reserve and Cauvery South Wildlife Sanctuary.

“The announcement is a big push to the ongoing conservation efforts,” environment, climate change and forests additional chief secretary Supriya Sagu said, adding that 21 species of mammals, 136 species of birds and 118 species of butterflies are found in the new sanctuary. Forest department officials have clarified that tribal people won't face any restrictions in doing their job in these areas.

#### **Haldwani to get a sports university: Uttarakhand CM Pushkar Singh Dhami**

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami announced the government will set up a sports university in the Kumaun region's Haldwani town. Dhami, who made the announcement on the occasion of completion of one year of the formation of his government, said there had been longstanding demands from several sports associations for such a university.

The international stadium of Haldwani will be upgraded into a sports university, he said. Earlier, the chief minister also held a meeting with the officials and discussed the proposed university. Dhami said there is no dearth of sporting talent in the state, and the university will give such talented people a chance to hone and display their skills further. Uttarakhand will hold several national level sports event in the coming year, he also said.

#### **Under U20, Urban Climate Film Festival to be held from today: March 24**

With the support of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, the French Development Agency (AFD), and the European Union, the Urban Climate Film Festival is to be held from March 24 to 26, 2023. The Urban Climate Film Festival will be inaugurated on March 24 in New Delhi. The inaugural session will be chaired by Amitabh Kant, G20 Sherpa. Notably, the Ambassadors of France and the European Union to India will also deliver the inaugural addresses.

Through the CITIIS programme and U20 engagement events, the National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA) is organising the first Urban Climate Film Festival. A curated selection of 11 films from 9 countries will be shown to create wider awareness of the impact of climate change on life in cities and engage the public in the dialogue on sustainable urban development.

#### **Objectives -**

1. Incorporate the powerful medium of film to enlighten audiences about the environmental, social and economic impacts of climate change on urban settlements
2. Initiate conversations about building climate-resilient cities and invite inputs from the public



3. Encourage citizens to undertake “environmentally responsible behaviours” in line with the U20 Priority Areas and the Prime Minister’s clarion call through the LiFE Mission.

### **Indian Navy Conducts Maritime Exercise 'Konkan 2023' With UK Navy**

Konkan 2023, a joint naval drill between the Indian Navy and the Royal Navy of Britain was organised over three days, from March 20 to 23, 2023. The maritime exercise demonstrated operational readiness, improved interoperability, and joint operations. The drill was conducted off the coast of Konkan in the Arabian Sea, and demonstrated the close ties and high operational readiness of both navies.

This exercise yielded excellent training value to personnel of both navies. During the exercise, a high degree of professionalism and zeal was demonstrated. The UK has been extended an offer to join India's Information Fusion Centre in Gurugram, and the two countries have agreed to significantly expand their maritime domain awareness cooperation. This workout regimen is extensive and trilateral joint movements are also part of it.

### **Sarbananda Sonowal inaugurates 'Sagar Manthan', the Real-time Performance Monitoring Dashboard of MoPSW**

Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways and Ayush Shri Sarbananda Sonowal virtually launched Real-time Performance Monitoring Dashboard of Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways 'Sagar Manthan' – Digital platform having all the integrated data related to the ministry and other subsidiaries. It was inaugurated in the presence of Shri Shripad Y. Naik, MoS, MoPSW; Shri Shantanu Thakur, MoS, MoPSW and other officials from the ministry.

This dashboard will transform the workings of various departments by improving well-coordinated real time information. This platform has been developed completely in-house under the guidance of Shri Sudhanshu Pant, IAS, Secretary, MoPSW in the span of less than 1.5 months efficiently. Speaking on the occasion Shri Sarbananda Sonowal said the launch of Sagar Manthan dashboard is a positive development towards Digital India vision of our Prime Minister. He said it will have a significant impact on the overall performance of organizations.

### **HM Amit Shah to inaugurate Vedic Heritage Portal in New Delhi today**

Union Home Minister Amit Shah will inaugurate the Vedic Heritage portal today (23 March) with the twin agenda of helping researchers in deeper understanding of the Vedic knowledge tradition and help the common people to have a general understanding of the ancient scriptures. The portal hosted by the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts will be launched during the week-long IGNCA Foundation Day celebrations that began on Sunday.

Member Secretary, IGNCA, Dr Sachchidanand Joshi said this portal will not only help researchers to develop a deeper understanding about our Vedic knowledge tradition, but also help common people to have a general understanding about the Vedas.

Vedas and Indian Knowledge system is not static but contemporary, Dr Joshi said. He also informed that IGNCA is working on a project “Vrihattar Bharat” wherein the cultural linkages of India with 40 other countries is being compiled. Some of the countries of this project are SouthEast Asian Nations like Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos, Mongolia and others.

### **Most silent ship INS Androth launched in Kolkata**

INS Androth, the second in the series of eight anti-submarine warfare shallow water craft (ASW SWC) built at Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE) was launched at a function on Tuesday.

Vice-Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi, Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Western Naval Command was the chief guest. The primary role of the 77 metres long, waterjet propelled ASW shallow water craft, capable of 25 knots speed is to conduct anti-submarine operations in coastal water, low intensity maritime operations and mine laying operations. These ships are also capable of full-scale sub-surface surveillance of coastal waters and various surface platforms. These ships can carry lightweight torpedoes, ASW rockets and mines, close-in weapons system (30mm gun) and 16.7mm stabilized remote controlled guns. Vice Admiral Tripathi stated, “The construction of specialized ships such as these for anti-submarine warfare is indeed in sync with the provisioning of a combat ready, credible cohesive and futureproof force, which is ready to face the existing and future challenges. I take this opportunity to congratulate GRSE for being the only DPSU shipyard for receiving the Raksha Mantri Award 2022, for designing the ASW Shallow Water Craft.”

### **Asia’s largest 4-metre liquid mirror telescope inaugurated in Uttarakhand**

Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; Minister of State (Independent Charge) Earth Sciences; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr. Jitendra Singh today - March 22, inaugurated Asia’s largest 4-metre International Liquid Mirror Telescope at Devasthal in Uttarakhand in the presence of the Governor of Uttarakhand Lt. Gen (Retd.) Gurmeet Singh

Speaking after the launch, Dr Jitendra Singh said, it is primarily the patronage, promotion and prioritization from Prime Narendra Narendra Modi that has enabled and emboldened the scientific fraternity to successfully try new initiatives, one after the other, in the field of science, technology and innovation, which are being rated as world class. Not only PM Modi has given us the motivation to move ahead but also given the freedom to explore hitherto lesser explored areas like Space which has been opened up for private players or India's oceans whose vast resources are waiting to be unfolded.

### **PM Narendra Modi inaugurates new ITU Area office & Innovation Centre in New Delhi**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurates the new International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Area office and Innovation Centre in India in New Delhi today afternoon

(22 March) . ITU is the United Nations specialised agency for information and communication technologies and its Headquarters is in Geneva.

India had signed a Host Country Agreement in March last year with ITU for the establishment of Area Office. The Area Office in India also envisaged to have an Innovation Centre, making it unique among other area offices of ITU. The Area Office, which is fully funded by India, is located on the second floor of the Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DoT) building at Mehrauli in the national capital. The programme will witness the participation of IT and Telecom Ministers of various Area Offices of ITU, the Secretary General and other senior officials of ITU, Heads of United Nations and other international bodies in India, Ambassadors, Industry Leaders, Start - up and MSME, leaders of Academia, students and other stakeholders.

The ITU Area Office will serve India, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Afghanistan and Iran, enhancing coordination among nations and fostering mutually beneficial economic cooperation in the region. During the programme, the Prime Minister will also unveil Bharat 6G Vision Document and launch the 6G Research and Development Test Bed. Bharat 6G vision document is prepared by the Technology Innovation Group that was constituted in November 2021 with members from various Ministries and Departments, research and development institutions, academia and Telecom Service Providers and industry to develop a roadmap and action plans for 6G in India. 6G Test bed will provide academic institutions, industries, start-ups, MSMEs and industry a platform to test and validate the evolving ICT technologies.

#### **Africa-India joint exercise AFINDEX- 2023 commences in Pune**

The inaugural event of the second edition of the Africa-India Field Training Exercise (AFINDEX 2023) began at the Foreign Training Node (FTN) of the Indian Army located at Aundh Military Station in Pune Tuesday. The 10-day exercise will focus on Humanitarian Mine Assistance and United Nations Peacekeeping Operations.

The multinational military drill will promote the idea of Africa-India Militaries for Regional Unity (AMRUT) and will focus on incorporating the current dynamics of UN Peacekeeping Forces (UNPKF) through practical and comprehensive discussions and tactical exercises, the Army has said. As many as 24 African militaries are being represented by their contingents or teams of observers in the exercise.

#### **Rajasthan CM announces creation of 19 new districts, 3 new divisions**

Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot announced his government's decision to form 19 new districts and three new divisions in the state, earmarking Rs 2,000 crore for development of infrastructure for them. This is the first time since 2008 that new districts are being carved out, taking the number of districts to 50 in the state. The three new divisions will be in Banswara, Pali and Sikar,

He said a high-level committee was formed to study the formation of new districts and the state government has received a report. "In this way, the state will now have 19 new districts," the chief minister said during a discussion on the Budget.

### Asia's largest Tulip Garden opens for public at Srinagar in J&K

In the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, Asia's largest Tulip Garden was thrown open to public at Srinagar yesterday. Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha attended the opening ceremony and invited people from all over the world to visit J&K and discover the mesmerising beauty of 16 Lakh tulip flowers and enjoy the warm hospitality of the people of Jammu Kashmir. The Lieutenant Governor said that last year, an unprecedented 3.60 lakh tourists visited the Tulip Garden and believed that the number will further increase this year.

### Varanasi to home UP's Third International Cricket Venue

Following Lucknow and Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh will now get its third international cricket stadium. The stadium will be constructed in Varanasi, which will begin in May - June of this year. Further, the construction of the stadium is expected to be completed by the end of 2024.

According to authorities, the state government has bought 31 acres of land in Varanasi's Rajatalab region for the international cricket stadium, which would be given over to the Uttar Pradesh Cricket Association (UPCA) and the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) by the end of this month. In this context, BCCI Honorary Secretary Jay Shah and BCCI Vice President Rajeev Shukla visited Varanasi earlier this week. Furthermore, the projected cricket stadium will cost roughly around Rs 300 crore to take shape and be built as per international standards. It is projected to have a seating capacity of 30,000 guests.

### J&K L-G lays foundation stone of 1st direct foreign investment project

J&K Lt. Governor Manoj Sinha laid the foundation stone of a mega-mall on Sunday in Sempora area of Srinagar district which is the first direct foreign investment project in the UT. The construction of the mega-mall will cost Rs 250 crore, Sinha told reporters. The Mall of Srinagar and allied projects with the Government of Dubai will fuel the economic growth of J&K and bring us closer to achieving the shared vision of strengthening bilateral trade and investment ties between India and UAE. This is a new dawn of limitless possibilities. We are taking forward Hon'ble PM's vision for development of J&K. Mall of Srinagar will have transformative impact on UT & boost infrastructure, employment generation and ease of living. This is to be one of the largest malls in the region, the mall will have over 500 shops," Sinha said while congratulating the people of J&K on the historic occasion.

### After BSF, ex-Agniveers will now get 10% reservation in CISF job

Former Agniveers will now get a 10% reservation in the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) job vacancies, the Union Home Ministry made the announcement after a week it notified a similar quota for them in BSF. After amending the rules under the CISF Act, 1968 (50 of 1968), the ministry also announced relaxation in the upper age limit depending on whether they are part of the first batch or subsequent batches of Agniveers.

The upper age limit shall be relaxable up to five years for candidates of the first batch of former Agniveers and up to three years for candidates of other batches, the ministry said, adding that ex-Agniveers will also be exempted from the physical efficiency test, PTI reported.

### **PM Modi with Bangladeshi counterpart Sheikh Hasina to inaugurate first cross-border energy pipeline**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and his Bangladesh counterpart Sheikh Hasina, will inaugurate the India-Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline today via video conference. This is the first cross-border energy pipeline between India and Bangladesh, built at an estimated cost of 377 crore rupees. Out of this, the Bangladesh portion of the pipeline, built at a cost of approximately 285 crore rupees, has been borne by the Government of India under grant assistance.

The Pipeline has the capacity to transport 1 Million Metric Ton Per Annum (MMTPA) of High-Speed Diesel (HSD). It will supply HSD initially to seven districts in northern Bangladesh.

### **External Affairs Minister Jaishankar inaugurates “Geoffrey Bawa: It is Essential To be There” Exhibition**

The historic exhibition which features the works of Sri Lanka's iconic architect the late Geoffrey Bawa, is jointly organized by the National Gallery of Modern Art in New Delhi, the High Commission of Sri Lanka in New Delhi and the Geoffrey Bawa Trust to mark the 75th anniversary of Indo-Lanka diplomatic relations, which falls this year.

A large number of invitees including diplomats, senior officials of the Government of India, academics, journalists, art lovers and professionals attended the ceremonial opening of the exhibition. Sri Lanka's High Commissioner to India Milinda Moragoda, Director of the National Gallery of Modern Art Tamsunaro Tripathi, and Trustee of the Geoffrey Bawa Trust Sanjay Kulatunga joined External Affairs Minister Jaishankar in inaugurating the exhibition.

### **Bihar the lowest literacy rate , Kerala manages to be on top with 94%**

According to the data shared by the Ministry of Education, Bihar has the lowest literacy rate of 61.8% , followed by Arunachal Pradesh at 65.3 % and Rajasthan 66.1 %, Kerala has the highest literacy rate in India at 94%, followed by Lakshadweep at 91.85% and Mizoram at 91.33%.

The literacy rate of women in India has increased by 68 per cent - up from 9 per cent at the time of Independence to 77 per cent at present, LiveMint reported. As per World Bank estimates, only 1 of 11 girls was literate during the period surrounding India's Independence, and Currently, only 84.7 per cent of males are literate in India.



### **Bengaluru honoured with 2023 Partnership for healthy cities award for Tobacco control efforts**

Bengaluru is among five global cities that have been recognised for achievements in preventing noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) and injuries, with the Indian tech city's efforts in tobacco control winning a \$150,000 award by a leading global initiative supported by the WHO.

Bengaluru was honoured with the 2023 Partnership for Healthy Cities Award, along with Montevideo in Uruguay; Mexico City, Mexico; Vancouver, Canada and Athens, Greece, at the inaugural Partnership for Healthy Cities Summit held in London, a statement by the World Health Organisation (WHO) said. The cities were recognised for positively impacting the health of their population and making sustainable and lasting strides toward NCD and injury prevention that can be replicated in other jurisdictions.

### **Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport adjudged best airport in South Asia:Skytrax**

Delhi airport has been adjudged the best airport in India and South Asia, according to international air transport rating organisation Skytrax. The Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) in the national capital has also moved up to the 36th position this year from 37th in 2022, according to a release.

The Delhi International Airport Ltd (DIAL), a GMR Airports Infrastructure Ltd-led consortium, is operating IGIA, which is also the country's largest airport. A release on Thursday said Delhi airport is the only Indian airport to feature on the prestigious list of top 50 airports across the world since 2020. Regionally, it has topped the list of best airports in South Asia as per Skytrax.

### **Indian Navy To Participate In US Anti-Submarine Warfare Exercise Sea Dragon 23**

The Indian Navy's P8I aircraft will be participating in the US-led anti-submarine warfare exercise (ASW), called the 'Sea Dragon', from March 15-30. The exercise will see more complex drills compared to the previous editions. The P8I aircraft of the Indian Navy arrived at Guam, US on March 14. Along with this aircraft, the multilateral ASW will also witness participation from P8A of the US Navy, P1 from the Japanese Maritime Self Defence Force, CP 140 from the Royal Canadian Air Force and P3C from the Republic of Korea Navy (RoKN).

This year, the 'Sea Dragon 23' exercise will test the capabilities of participating aircraft in tracking simulated and live underwater targets and simultaneously share mutual expertise, the Indian Navy

### **AAHAR 2023: Asia's biggest International Food and Hospitality Fair begins in Delhi**

Aahar 2023 organized with the support of the Union Ministry of Food Processing Industries, Agriculture and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA), and other bodies, will focus on unveiling the potential of the hospitality sector and exhibiting technologies, products and services to domestic and international buyers. Aahar is India's largest four-day culinary show where hoteliers and

restauranters, caterers and distributors come to source the best in culinary, hospitality and equipment and also gauge the market trends.

### **DRDO successfully conducts flight test of indigenous PTO, Shaft on LCA Tejas**

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has successfully conducted a maiden flight-test of the Power Take off (PTO) Shaft on Light Combat Aircraft (LCA Tejas) Limited Series Production (LSP) -3 aircraft in Bengaluru. The PTO shaft is indigenously designed and developed by the Combat Vehicles Research & Development Establishment (CVRDE), Chennai Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).

The PTO shaft was designed with a unique innovative patented 'Frequency Spanning Technique' which enables it to negotiate different operating engine speeds.

### **NMDC celebrates International Year of Millets at Business Women Expo 2023**

At the forefront of popularizing Millets, NMDC distributed the Superfood at the Business Women Expo 2023 in Hyderabad. In the backdrop of the International Year of Millets 2023, NMDC inspired women entrepreneurs to build Millet businesses and contribute to the food security of the nation. On behalf of the company, Shri K Praveen Kumar, ED (Personnel and Law) and Shri K Mohan, CGM (Personnel) distributed the Millets and interacted with the participants on its benefits for a healthier future. The United Nations (UN) General Assembly at its 75th session declared 2023 the International Year of Millets.

### **India 8th most polluted country in world, Swiss firm IQAir Report**

The Swiss firm IQAir released the 'World Air Quality' report which says that India is the world's eighth most polluted country in 2022, dropping from the fifth spot the previous year. The PM2.5 level of most polluted Indian cities stands at 53.3, according to the data. The two Indian cities in the ranking of the world's most polluted city are--- Bhiwadi, on Delhi's outskirts, which had pollution levels at 92.7, and Delhi followed close behind at 92.6.

The report said India and Pakistan experienced the worst air quality in the Central and South Asian region, where nearly 60% of the population lives in areas where the concentration of PM2.5 particles is at least seven times higher than WHO's recommended levels.

### **13<sup>th</sup> edition of India-Singapore Bilateral Armour exercise 'Bold kurukshetra' held in Jodhpur**

The Singapore Army and Indian Army participated in the 13th edition of Exercise Bold Kurukshetra, a bilateral armour exercise from 06 -13 March 2023 at Jodhpur Military Station, India.

For the first time in the exercise series, both armies participated in a command post Exercise, which involved Battalion and Brigade level planning elements and computer wargaming. Hosted by the Indian Army, the exercise involved soldiers from the 42nd Battalion, Singapore Armoured Regiment and an Armoured Brigade of Indian Army.

The ten-day long joint training that commenced on 05th March fostered common understanding of mechanised warfare in emerging threats and evolving technologies, developing inter-operability through a computer simulation-based Wargame using joint operational and tactical procedures controlled through a joint command post. Both contingents not only learnt about each other's operating drills and procedure, but also exchanged ideas and best practices being followed in a modern combat zone.

### **Surekha Yadav, Asia's 1st woman loco pilot who now becomes first female to operate Vande Bharat**

Asia's first woman loco pilot Surekha Yadav has added another feather to her cap as she became the first female to operate the newly-introduced semi-high speed Vande Bharat Express train. She piloted the semi-high speed train between Solapur station and Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT) in Mumbai on Monday.

The train departed Solapur station at right time on March 13 and reached CSMT five minutes before the scheduled arrival, a Central Railway release said, adding that on completion of a more than 450-km long journey, Yadav was felicitated at platform number 8 at CSMT.

### **Exercise La Perouse between navies of India, US, Japan, France, UK and Australia begins**

The two-day multi-lateral maritime exercise 'La Pérouse', involving the participation of personnel, ships and integral helicopters of Royal Australian Navy, French Navy, Indian Navy, Japanese Maritime Self Defence Force, Royal Navy and the United States Navy, kick-started in the Indian Ocean Region on March 13. "The third edition of the multilateral exercise La Perouse is scheduled to be conducted in the Indian Ocean Region from 13 to 14 March 2023," the Ministry of Defence said in a press release.

The biennial exercise La Perouse is conducted by the French Navy and aims to enhance maritime domain awareness and optimise maritime coordination amongst the participating navies in the Indo-Pacific region, the release stated.

### **Nitin Gadkari unveiled first methanol run buses in Bengaluru**

The first methanol-powered buses in Bengaluru unveiled by Union Minister for Road and Transport, Nitin Gadkari. The Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTCL), NITI Aayog, Indian Oil Company (IOC), and Ashok Leyland are working together to carry out the initiative, which aims to lower the level of pollutants. Methanol can be produced through the reaction of carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, and hydrogen, which are also known as syngas. The syngas can be produced from various sources such as natural gas, coal, or biomass.

### **PM Modi Inaugurates Bengaluru-Mysuru Highway**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his yet another visit to Karnataka on Sunday inaugurated the 10-lane Bengaluru-Mysuru Highway at Mandya. Besides inaugurating, the PM laid foundation stones for several key road projects too on Sunday at Mandya in Karnataka.

The 118-km long Bengaluru-Mysuru road project has been developed at a total cost of around Rs 8,480 crores. It will reduce the travel time between Bengaluru and Mysuru from around 3 hours to about 75 minutes and will act as a catalyst for socio-economic development in the region,

He also laid the foundation stone for Mysuru-Kushalnagar 4-lane highway. Spread over 92 kilometres, the project will be developed at a cost of around Rs 4,130 crores and will help halve the travel time from about 5 to only 2.5 hours.

### **Divya Kala Mela showcasing products & craftsmanship of Divyang entrepreneurs to open at Bhopal**

Divya Kala Mela is being organised from 12 March, to showcase the products and craftsmanship of Divyang entrepreneurs and artisans from across the country.

Governor Mangubhai Patel and Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment Dr. Virender Kumar and Minister of State Kumari Pratima Bhowmick will inaugurate the fair. About 150 Divyang artisans, artists and entrepreneurs from 21 states and union territories are participating in the Divya Kala Mela. Home decor, lifestyle, clothing, stationery, eco-friendly products, packaged food, toys, gifts, personal accessories, jewelry, bags, organic products, etc. will be available at the fair. There will also be cultural programs by Divyang and other artistes during the Mela. For the first time after Delhi and Mumbai, Divya Kala Mela is being organized in Madhya Pradesh.

### **PM Narendra Modi inaugurates world's longest railway platform in Hubballi-Dharwad**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday : 12 March inaugurated several development projects in Karnataka including the longest railway platform in the world in Hubballi-Dharwad. With the inauguration of the Hubballi railway platform, the city has registered its name in the Guinness Book of World Records for having the longest railway platform in the World at Shree Siddharoodha Swamiji station. The 1,507-metre-long platform has been built at a cost of about ₹20 crore

The Hubballi station is an important junction in Karnataka and a major hub of trade and commerce. It connects the railway lines towards Bengaluru (Davanagere side), Hosapete (Gadag side), and Vasco-Da-Gama/Belagavi (Londa side).

### **100 cities to bend-unbend for countdown to 9th International Day of Yoga**

The Ministry of Ayush along with Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga (MDNIY) is organizing Yoga Mahotsav 2023 from 13th to 14th March 2023 at Delhi's Talkatora Stadium. There will also be workshops on 15th March 2023 at MDNIY. Union Minister of Ayush Sarbananda Sonowal will inaugurate the Yoga Mahotsav 2023 and it will commemorate 100 days countdown to the 9th edition of International Day of Yoga (IDY) 2023.

Following the footprints, this year, Yoga Mahotsav-2023 is being organized to give a wider promotion and publicity to various dimensions of yoga and its utility. Mass yoga demonstrations/sessions will take place in 100 places in Delhi NCR to celebrate the

countdown and it will commence 100 Days, 100 cities, and 100 organizations activities across the nation.

### **Defence Ministry inks contract with HAL to procure 6 Dornier aircraft**

The defence ministry on Friday signed a ₹667-crore contract with state-run plane maker Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) for six Dornier-228 aircraft for the Indian Air Force (IAF) to boost its operational capabilities. "The aircraft is ideally suited for short haul operations from semi-prepared/short runways of the Northeast and island chains of India. The addition of the six aircraft will further bolster the operational capability of the IAF in the remote areas," it said.

### **Maharashtra will introduce 4th women's policy**

Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis on Wednesday informed the Legislative Council that the state will introduce the fourth women's policy to give more opportunities to women by considering the issues of women from all groups. On the occasion of International Women's Day, Deputy Speaker of the Legislative Council Neelam Gorhe tabled a proposal to provide equal and dignified positions to women in all sectors. While replying to the proposal, Mr Fadnis said that apart from education, and employment, the women's policy will consider other important aspects, including economic empowerment and gender equality. He also announced that the government will introduce a rehabilitation scheme for those above 18 years old girls from the orphanage.

### **Central Railway achieves 100 % electrification of broad gauge network**

The Central Railway has achieved 100 per cent electrification of its broad gauge network of 3,825 kilometers, which was resulting in an annual reduction of 5.204 lakh tonnes of carbon footprints. In a release, the CSMT-headquartered zonal railway said the 52-kilometre Ausa Road-Latur Road stretch in Solapur division was the last non-electrified section and its electrification was completed on the 23rd of February this year. This move helps in reducing carbon footprints of 5.204 lakh tonnes every year as well as savings of 1670 crore rupees. It will reduce fuel bills and help earn carbon credit.

### **Two-day G20 flower festival begins in New Delhi**

A two-day G20 Flower Festival is being organised at Delhi's Connaught Place from today, March 11. It is aimed at highlighting the vibrancy of G20 members and guest countries. Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav inaugurated the festival today which is being organised by the New Delhi Municipal Council at Central Park. G20 countries including Japan, Singapore, and the Netherlands are participating in it. Flower plants of different colours and varieties are being displayed in different forms and installations to showcase the diversity of the Indian subcontinent. The festival is also showcasing the painting and photographs of flowers of G20 member countries and guest countries. The timing of the festival is from 10 AM to 7 PM and entry is free for



the general public. The musical and cultural programmes are also planned at the site of the event.

### **PM Modi & Australian PM Antony Albanese witness fourth test match of Border Gavaskar trophy in Ahmedabad**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Australian counterpart Anthony Albanese are witnessing the fourth cricket test match of the Border Gavaskar cricket trophy at Narendra Modi cricket stadium in Ahmedabad today, March 9. On arriving at the stadium, Mr. Albanese was given a warm welcome by Indian PM Narendra Modi. Both the leaders handed over test caps to their respective test captains. Both Prime Ministers inaugurated the friendship hall of fame which showcases the rich history of India-Australia Cricket Contests.

### **Indian Navy's largest wargame TROPEX-23 concludes**

With the massive participation of India's primary naval and coastal security agencies, the Indian Navy's largest wargame TROPEX-23 culminated this week in the Arabian Sea. The theatre-level exercise was conducted over a period of four months from November 2022 to March 2023.

The four-month-long naval exercise witnessed the participation of over 70 Indian Navy ships, six submarines and 75 aircraft. The intense exercise, before coming to an end in the Arabian Sea, covered the Indian Ocean Region (IOR)

### **Dr Manik Saha to be sworn-in as CM of Tripura today; PM Modi and HM Amit Shah to attend the ceremony**

In Tripura, all arrangements are put in place for the swearing-in ceremony of senior BJP leader Dr. Manik Saha as the new chief minister of the state. Dr. Saha will be administered oath of office by Governor Satyadeo Narayan Arya. The second term of the BJP-led coalition government in Tripura will begin from today ( 8<sup>th</sup> March ) with the swearing-in ceremony of Dr. Manik Saha as the Chief minister. Apart from Dr. Saha, a number of council of ministers are also likely to be sworn-in.

### **Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri launches Swachhotsav under Swachh Bharat Mission Urban 2.**

In the run up to the Women's Day on Wednesday, Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri has launched Swachhotsav, 3 -week women-led swachhata campaign, under the Swachh Bharat Mission Urban 2.0. The campaign aims to recognize and celebrate the transition from women in sanitation to women-led sanitation. A series of events and activities will be organized across cities to celebrate women from all walks of life, who will provide leadership in making the mission of garbage free cities (GFC) a success.

### **India- France Joint Military Exercise FRINJEX-23 to begin at Thiruvananthapuram**

The maiden Joint Military Exercise FRINJEX-23 between Indian Army and French Army will be conducted at Pangode Military Station, Thiruvananthapuram in Kerala on March 7 – 8. For the first time, both the armies are engaging in this format with each

contingent comprising a Company Group each from the Thiruvananthapuram -based Indian Army troops and French 6th Light Armoured Brigade. The exercise is aimed at enhancing inter-operability, coordination and cooperation between both forces at tactical level.

### **Indian Navy Successfully Test-Fires Indigenous Medium Range Missile From INS Visakhapatnam**

The Indian Navy on Tuesday successfully carried out a test-firing of a Medium Range Surface to Air Missile (MRSAM) from frontline warship INS Visakhapatnam, the defence force tweeted on Tuesday March 7, As per the officials, the test firing has now validated the capability to engage the weapon as an anti-ship missile, it said.

### **Conrad K Sangma sworn-in as Chief Minister of Meghalaya**

In Meghalaya, Conrad K Sangma has been sworn-in as Chief Minister of the state, for the second consecutive term, in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other BJP senior leaders. Meghalaya Governor Chagu Chauhan has administered the oath of office and secrecy at a grand ceremony held at Shillong this morning

### **PM Narendra Modi to attend swearing in ceremony of Meghalaya & Nagaland Chief Ministers on Tuesday and that of Tripura on Wednesday**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will attend swearing-in ceremony of Meghalaya and Nagaland Chief Ministers on Tuesday and that of Tripura on Wednesday. The swearing-in ceremony of New Meghalaya government will be held at 11 am on Tuesday in Shillong, while that of Nagaland government at 1:45 pm in Kohima the same day. The new government of Tripura will be administered the oath in Agartala at 11 am. on Wednesday.

Nationalist Democratic Progressive Party( NDPP) Leader Neiphiu Rio and Assam Chief Minister and NEDA Convenor, Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma will meet the BJP central leaders in New Delhi today, ahead of the formation of new government in Nagaland.

### **Madhya Pradesh government launches Ladli Bahna scheme to make women financially independent**

The Madhya Pradesh government has launched a unique scheme to make women financially independent, In this scheme, named Ladli Bahna, each woman will be given Rs 1000 per month.

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan launched the ambitious Mukhyamantri LadliBahna Yojana through remote control at a function on his birthday

### **Union Minister Parshottam Rupala inaugurates Camel Product Processing Utilisation & Training Wing at ICAR-National Research Centre in Bikaner**

Yesterday, Parshottam Rupala, the Union Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying of India inaugurated the 'Camel Product Processing Utilization & Training Wing' at the ICAR Centre, Bikaner, Rajasthan. The Government of India established a project directorate on Camel at Bikaner (India) on 5th July, 1984 under aegis of Indian

Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), considering the importance of camel in the socio-economic development of arid and semi-arid zones, which got upgraded on September 20, 1995 to National Research Centre on Camel (NRCC).

ICAR is a Premier Research Centre and an autonomous organisation under the Department of Agricultural Research and Education, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of India.

### **Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri to launch Hydrogen-based advanced FCEV**

Union Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas Hardeep Singh Puri will launch Hydrogen-based advanced Fuel Cell Electric Vehicle (FCEV) in New Delhi today. - March 6, 2023  
The launch of the bus is an effort of the central government as part of its commitment toward cleaner energy and low-carbon pathways. The project is similar to the one launched earlier at Kevadia in Gujarat.

### **First edition of Naval Commanders' Conference 2023 begins onboard INS Vikrant**

The first edition of the Naval Commanders' Conference 2023 began onboard India's first indigenous aircraft carrier, INS Vikrant, The conference serves as a platform for Naval Commanders to discuss important security issues at the military-strategic level as well as to interact with senior government functionaries through an institutionalised forum.

The first phase of the Commanders' Conference is being held at sea, and for the first time, onboard INS Vikrant. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh addressed the Naval Commanders onboard INS Vikrant on the opening day

### **Mauganj To Become Madhya Pradesh's 53rd District, Says CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan**

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has announced the creation of a new Mauganj district out of the existing Rewa district. The new Mauganj district will be created with inclusion of four tehsils, including three existing tehsils — Mauganj, Hanumana and Naigarhi, while Dev Talab will be a new tehsil. With this, Madhya Pradesh now will have 53 districts by August 15.

### **PM Narendra Modi lauds the initiative of women of the self-help group from Khadki village of Burhanpur, MP**

The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi has praised the efforts of women of the self - help group from Khadki village of Burhanpur district of Madhya Pradesh to ensure tap connection to every house. Shri Modi called it an example for whole country.

### **1st Labour 20 (L20) meeting is scheduled to be held in Amritsar, Punjab**

The 1st Labour 20 (L20) meeting is scheduled to be held in Amritsar, Punjab, from 19 th to 20th March 2023. L20 is one of the engagement groups under G20. It comprises leaders and representatives of trade union centers of G20 countries who provide analyses and policy recommendations aimed at addressing labor-related issues.

Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS) is the lead national trade union centre for organising the L20 inception meeting under India G20 presidency. Apart from the meeting, the

participants of L20 meet would be taken to various excursion sites to show case the rich cultural heritage of Amritsar.

### **Indian Navy carries out successful precision strike by ship launched BrahMos missile in Arabian Sea**

Indian Navy today carried out a successful precision strike by ship launched BrahMos missile in the Arabian Sea. It was done with the indigenous seeker and booster designed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).

### **WalkforHealth", a mega walkathon by Health Ministry for women's health**

Committed for a healthier self, New Delhi celebrated a Mega walkathon event "WalkforHealth" on 5th March 2023. It was organised by the Union Ministry of Health & Family Welfare to mark the occasion of International Women's day on 8th March 2023. The rally was conducted from Vijay Chowk to Nirman Bhawan in New Delhi in order to promote physical and mental well-being. More than 500 participants including, doctors, nurses and staff of Central Government hospitals namely, Safdarjung Hospital, Ram Manohar Lohia (RML) Hospital and Lady Hardinge Medical College participated in the Walkathon.

### **Youth Affairs & Sports Minister Anurag Thakur to launch Yuva Utsava – India@2047 from Ropar in Punjab**

Youth Affairs and Sports and Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Singh Thakur will launch Yuva Utsava – India@2047 from Ropar in Punjab on 4th March, Saturday.

He will also launch the Dashboard of Yuva Utsav during the event. Yuva Utsava will be simultaneously hosted at Pratapgarh in Uttar Pradesh, Haridwar in Uttarakhand, Dhar and Hoshangabad in Madhya Pradesh, Hanumangarh in Rajasthan, Saraikela in Jharkhand, Kapurthala in Punjab, Jalgaon in Maharashtra, Vijayawada in Andhra Pradesh, Karimnagar in Telangana, Palakkad in Kerala and Cuddalore in Tamil Nadu.

### **President Droupadi Murmu to launch Catch The Rain 2023 Campaign in New Delhi**

President Droupadi Murmu will confer the Swachh Sujal Shakti Samman 2023, under various categories of the Swachh Bharat Mission – Grameen, Jal Jeevan Mission and National Water Mission, in New Delhi on 4th March 2023, Saturday.

During the function, the President will launch the Jal Shakti Abhiyan – Catch the Rain 2023 campaign with the theme of source sustainability for drinking water. She will also launch a video on 'Jal Shakti se Nari Shakti' and a commemorative stamp. The President will also release 'Swachh Sujal Shakti Ki Abhivyakti', which is a compendium of case stories from Swachh Bharat Mission – Grameen, Jal Jeevan Mission and National Water Mission.

### **Indian Railways to launch Bharat Gaurav train to northeast**

The Indian Railways is set to launch its first Bharat Gaurav train to the northeast on March 21 which will offer passengers a tour of the region, The train tour will start from

Delhi Safdarjung railway station on March 21, 2023 and will cover Guwahati, Sivasagar, Jorhat & Kaziranga in Assam, Unakoti, Agartala & Udaipur in Tripura, Dimapur & Kohima in Nagaland and Shillong & Cherapunji in Meghalaya in 15 days tour.

### **Prime Minister Narendra Modi to inaugurate Raisina Dialogue in New Delhi**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi to inaugurate the eighth edition of the Raisina Dialogue in New Delhi. Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni will join the inaugural session as the Chief Guest. The three-day Raisina Dialogue is India's flagship conference on geopolitics and geo-strategy. It is organized by the Ministry of External Affairs in collaboration with Observer Research Foundation. The theme of the 2023 Edition is "Provocation, Uncertainty, Turbulence: Lighthouse in the Tempest."

### **PM Narendra Modi Announces Establishment Of 'Startup Bridge' To Boost Strategic Partnership Between India & Italy**

In a bid to boost their bilateral ties to a strategic partnership, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday announced the establishment of a 'startup bridge' between India and Italy.

Addressing the media after a meeting with Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, PM Modi said new opportunities were opening up in India in the sector of co-production and co-development, such as renewable energy, green hydrogen, semiconductors, telecom and space, which can be beneficial for both the countries.

### **NTPC COMMISSIONS INDIA'S FIRST AIR COOLED CONDENSER AT NORTH KARANPURA SUPER CRITICAL PLANT IN JHARKHAND**

The project has been envisaged with Air Cooled Condenser (ACC) which has almost 1/3rd water footprint as compared to a conventional Water Cooled Condenser (WCC). This would result in water saving of around 30.5 mcm annually thus fulfilling the need of around 1.5 million people in the region annually.

NTPC has already taken a series of measures across its plant locations on sound water management. NTPC will further imbibe the 3 R's (reduce, reuse, recycle) for water conservation and management while carrying out its core business activity of power generation. NTPC Ltd, is a signatory to the prestigious UN Global Compact's CEO Water Mandate.

### **In a first, Uttarakhand to set up 'mother milk bank'**

There's hope for children whose mother dies during childbirth: the Uttarakhand health department plans to set up a 'mother milk bank,' the first such facility in the state. "The facility can bring nutritional elements of mother's milk to the newborn to a great extent," Health Minister Dr Dhan Singh Rawat said

### **Visakhapatnam Gears Up To Host Global Investors Summit On March 3, 4**

Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh is all set to host the Global Investors Summit (GIS) 2023 on March 3 and 4. The Summit is scheduled to be held at the Andhra University Engineering ground in Visakhapatnam. The two-day summit is expected to host over 20



business sessions and several industrial dignitaries are to be present at the summit. The GIS will focus on 13 sectors which will include aerospace, defense, automobile, food processing, electronics, IT, healthcare and medical equipment, textile, infrastructure, tourism, renewable energy, skill development, etc.

## **SPORTS**

### **Mumbai Indians beat Delhi Capitals to be crowned as the champions of the inaugural edition of the WPL (WPL-2023)**

Mumbai Indians, on Sunday, March 26, became the champions of the inaugural edition of the Women's Premier League (WPL) after beating Delhi Capitals (DC) by seven wickets at the Brabourne Stadium in Mumbai.

DC's innings can be segregated into two halves – The first 16 overs followed by the last four. In the first 16 overs, the Capitals found themselves in all sorts of strife. Barring Meg Lanning, no other batter looked secured in the middle. Just when Lanning was needed to stay until the end, she got run out after scoring 35 runs off 29 balls with five fours.

As far as the awards are concerned, there was complete dominance from MI, with Hayley Matthews dominating by taking home both the Most Valuable Player (MVP) award and the purple cap. Interestingly, Matthews went unsold in the first round of the auction before being picked up at the base price by MI in the accelerated round. And the Orange cap was begged by Meg Lanning.

### **Saweety Boora & Nitu Ghanghas Clinch Gold Medals For India At Women's World Boxing Championships**

Saweety Boora defeated Wang Lina of China in the 81kg category final to bag India's second gold medal at the ongoing Women's World Boxing Championships. The Indian pugilist registered a 4-3 win. It was a neck-and-neck battle between Saweety and China's Wang Lina, but the Indian star eventually beat the latter by a narrow margin.

Earlier on Saturday, Nitu Ghanghas outplayed Lutsaikhana Altansetseg of Mongolia in the 48kg category final by a unanimous 5-0 verdict to bag a gold medal. She became the sixth Indian woman pugilist to win a gold in the history of the tournament, before Saweety became the seventh to do so.

### **ISSF World Cup Shooting Championship: India win bronze**

Indian pair Narmada Nithin Raju and Rudranksh Balasaheb Patil won bronze medal as they beat China mix team by 16-8 in the 10m Air Rifle Mixed Team bronze medal match in ISSF World Cup shooting championship in Bhopal today.

Earlier Nithin and Rudranksh finished 3rd in qualification with 632 points. This is the third medal for India.

### **Asian Billiards title 2023**

India's Pankaj Advani retained his Asian Billiards title in the 100-up format, defeating fellow countryman Brijesh Damani 5-1 in the final played at Qatar Billiards and Snooker Federation (QBSF) Academy in Doha on Sunday, March 19. Advani, who is a 25-time

International Billiards and Snooker Federation (IBSF) world champion, defeated Damani with a scoreline of 100(51)-18, 100(88)-9, 86(54)-101(75), 100-26, 100(66)-2, 101(64)-59 in the final.

In the women's section, China's Bai Yulu won the title beating Panchaya Channoi of Thailand 3-0 in the final. This is the eighth Asian Billiards title in all for Advani, the Indian cue sports ace who has been bestowed the Arjuna Award in 2004, Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna in 2006, Padma Shri in 2009 and Padma Bhushan in 2018. Advani had won the same title last year at Doha.

### **ISSF World Cup Shooting Championship to begin today – 20<sup>TH</sup> March at Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh**

International Shooting Sports Federation- ISSF World Cup Shooting Championship is organised in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh from 20 to 27 March. The official opening ceremony will be held on 21 March while competitions begin on 22 March at Madhya Pradesh State Shooting Academy.

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan will formally inaugurate this event on 21 March. Around 325 shooters from 33 countries and more than 75 technical officials will participate in the World Cup Shooting Championship. The Championship is being organized in collaboration with the Government of Madhya Pradesh and the Rifle Federation of India. It is the 8th World Cup organised in India and the first international shooting tournament to be held outside New Delhi.

### **Tim Paine Announces Retirement From First-Class Cricket**

The Hobart-born Paine represented Tasmania over 18 years after debuting in 2005, playing 153 first-class matches. Former Australia test cricket captain Tim Paine has announced his retirement following the conclusion of Tasmania's Sheffield Shield first-class match against Queensland on Friday. Wicketkeeper Paine captained Australia in 23 tests between early 2018 and 2021, playing 35 tests overall. He became Australia's 46th test skipper after Steve Smith had his captaincy stripped in the wake of the ball-tampering scandal on Australia's 2018 tour of South Africa.

Paine, who debuted against Pakistan at Lord's in 2010, averaged 32.63 in test matches with a top score of 92 and made 157 dismissals behind the stumps. He also played 35 one-day internationals for Australia.

### **Archery Asia Cup 2023: Indian archers shine as they bagged 10 medals in the tournament**

Indian archers finished with a rich haul of 10 medals - five gold, four silver and one bronze - at the Asia Cup 2023 archery stage-1 world ranking tournament in Taoyuan, Chinese Taipei. In all, 16 Indian archers including eight men and eight women competed at the Asia Cup 2023 in Taoyuan. India topped the medal tally with 10 medals, while Taipei and Kazakhstan finished second and third.

### **Gianni Infantino re-elected as FIFA president**

Gianni Infantino, a contentious figure in the world of football, on Thursday secured a new term as FIFA president after an election in which he was the only candidate, Infantino, 52, got the post for another four years by acclamation at FIFA's 73rd Congress in the Rwandan capital of Kigali. All but a small number of FIFA's 211 national federations rose to applaud Infantino, making his re-election as head of football's governing body a formality.

Upon getting the crown, Infantino promised record revenues in the next four-year cycle of \$11 billion as he called for more football to be played around the world. He also appeared to acknowledge that he was not universally popular amid controversies, including the treatment of migrant workers in the run-up to last year's World Cup in Qatar and a failed plan to play the tournament every two years.

### **Ashleigh Gardner, and Harry Brook, seal ICC Player of the Month awards for February**

Australia's Ashleigh Gardner won the award in the women's category. She was instrumental in Australia's triumph in the recent Women's T20 World Cup and received the player of the tournament,

England's Harry Brook was voted the best men's player for the month of February after his amazing run of form. The English batter received his second POTM award after winning it earlier in December 2022.

### **Gianni Infantino re-elected FIFA president till 2027**

Gianni Infantino was re-elected as FIFA president until 2027 by acclamation, after highlighting his strong financial performance as a reason for keeping a CEO in their position for life. The decision was made by the congress of 211 member federations, who have seen their annual funding from FIFA increase from \$250,000 to \$2 million since Infantino's first win in 2016. Following the 2022 World Cup in Qatar, FIFA now has \$4 billion in reserves, and it conservatively predicts a record revenue of at least \$11 billion from the 2026 men's World Cup, which will be hosted in North America.

### **Sports Minister Anurag Singh Thakur to inaugurate IBA Women's World Boxing Championships**

The IBA Women's World Boxing Championships will begin in New Delhi today, March 15. Union Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports Anurag Singh Thakur will attend the opening ceremony at Indira Gandhi Sports Complex this evening.

International Boxing Association, IBA President Umar Kremlev, and Boxing Federation of India, BFI President Ajay Singh will also be present on the occasion. BFI is hosting the biggest boxing event till the 26th of March. The Championship is taking place in India for the third time after 2006 and 2018, the most for any country. The tournament will witness the participation of more than 350 boxers from around 74 countries. The Indian team of 12 boxers for the event includes 2020 Tokyo Bronze medallist, Lovlina Borgohain and the current world champion in the 50kg category, Nikhat Zareen.

### **India win the Border-Gavaskar Trophy 2-1 against Australia and also qualify for 2023 WTC Final**

India vs Australia: Australia played out a draw in the final Test in Ahmedabad but India took the series 2-1 and won the Border-Gavaskar Trophy for the fourth successive time. And India have also qualified for the World Test Championship final where they will face Australia at The Oval.

### **Bangladesh's historic T20 - series win against England**

Bangladesh might have lost their proud unbeaten record in ODIs but they have exacted emphatic revenge over England in the shorter format, winning the second T20 by four wickets and the series with a game to spare. This is a curiously lopsided England side, light on batters and so overblessed with bowlers – so much so that the 19th over was also Chris Jordan's first. Bangladesh started it needed 13 off 12 deliveries, and had the game wrapped up with seven to spare.

### **India beat world champions Germany 3-2 in FIH Pro League**

India stunned world champions Germany 3-2 in the FIH Pro League at Birsa Munda Hockey Stadium in Rourkela, Odisha, Indian skipper Harmanpreet Singh had given the home side the lead in the 30th minute through a penalty corner conversion. Sukhjeet Singh's second-half brace helped India to take an unassailable lead. He scored in the 31st and 42nd minutes and both goals came from field efforts. India were 3-0 up in the 42nd minute before Paul-Philipp Kaufmann and Michel Struthoff struck for Germany in the 44th and 57th minutes respectively. Sukhjeet Singh was adjudged player of the match.

### **Khelo India Dus Ka Dum tournament to be organized in 10 cities**

The Department of Sports, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports is set to organize the Khelo India Dus Ka Dum event from March 10 to 31, as a celebration for the International Women's Day 2023. This is the first time that such a sports initiative is being taken to celebrate the international event and the Union Ministry has sanctioned a total budget of Rs 50 Lakh for the tournament. Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports Anurag Singh Thakur shall be in attendance at the opening ceremony of the event on March 10 at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in the national capital.

### **Karnataka beats Meghalaya 3-2 to clinch Santosh Trophy football after 54 years**

Karnataka ended their 54-year wait to win the Santosh Trophy National Football Championship, beating Meghalaya 3-2 in a pulsating final at the King Fahd International Stadium in the Saudi Arabia capital, Riyadh. Egged on by vociferous support from the stands, Karnataka, who last played the senior national championships final 47 years back (1975-76), trumped the first-time finalists, breaching their defence at will and pumping in three goals in the first half to set the tone as well as settle the eventual outcome.

### **Indian Men's National Hockey Team Appoints South Africa's Craig Fulton as New Head Coach**

Craig Fulton, former South African Coach announced as the New Chief Coach of the Men's National Hockey Team of India. The Australian Graham Reid who exit after India's dismal show in the World Cup is replaced by him. He holds coaching experience of more than 25 years. Know how he emerged as a leading coach.

Men's National Hockey Team of India designates Craig Fulton as the new Chief Coach on March 03, 2023 (Friday). The team previously failed to lend the World Cup at home. Craig Fulton has replaced the Australian Hockey Player Graham John Reid who bid farewell after the country's disappointing show in the World Cup.

### **Manchester United win Carabao Cup final 2023**

Manchester United vs Newcastle Final Highlights, Carabao Cup: Manchester United's six-year wait for a trophy is over after beating Newcastle 2-0 to win the League Cup. United manager Erik ten Hag has wasted no time in guiding the club to silverware just 10 months after being hired.

### **Coming soon at Wankhede, a life-size Sachin Tendulkar statue**

Ten years after he retired from cricket, a life-size statue of Sachin Tendulkar will be installed inside the iconic Wankhede stadium in Mumbai where he played his final game for India. Cricket officials are hoping the statue will be unveiled during the 50-over World Cup later this year.

There are not many life-size statues of cricketers inside stadiums in the country. There are three separate such statues of the former big-hitting India great C K Nayudu at the Vidarbha Cricket Association Stadium, VDCA Stadium in Andhra and Holkar Stadium in Indore.

### **WPL 2023: Women To Get Free Entry To Matches In Inaugural Season**

The inaugural edition of the Women's Premier League is all set to commence in just three days time with the first match set to be played between Gujarat Giants and Mumbai Indians at the DY Patil Stadium in Navi Mumbai. In a major development, the tournament, comprising of 22 fixtures, has allowed free entry for women and girls. Meanwhile, for men and boys and tickets are being sold at a nominal price of Rs 100 and 400 as per details available on the ticketing website and app.

## **SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

### **ISRO deploys 36 OneWeb satellites in space in textbook mission**

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) on Sunday launched 36 OneWeb satellites into space on its heaviest launch vehicle - The LVM-III in a textbook mission. The spacecraft lifted off from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota to Low Earth Orbit with probes from the UK-based company.

The OneWeb constellation is a network of satellites around the planet that are aimed at providing broadband connectivity across the world. The UK company is implementing a constellation of Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellites. India's Bharti Enterprises serves as a major investor and shareholder in OneWeb.



The deployment complete the first constellation of 648 satellites around the planet by the UK company. The satellites are divided into 12 planes and operate at an altitude of 1200 kilometers above the planet.

### **NASA-ISRO Jointly Manufactures NISAR Earth Science Satellite**

In a significant development in the field of earth science, NASA and ISRO have come together to manufacture a satellite named NISAR (NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar). This earth science satellite has been designed to cater to various mission objectives, such as designing, developing, and launching Dual Frequency (L and S band) Radar Imaging Satellite, and exploring newer application areas using L & S Band microwave data, especially in surface deformation studies, terrestrial biomass structure, natural resource mapping, and monitoring and studies related to the dynamics of ice-sheets, glaciers, forests, oil slick, etc. According to Dr Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of State Science & Technology, NISAR satellite is configured with I-3K bus, and the instrument identified for SAR is based on the innovative Sweep SAR technique configured in both L and S band in polarimetric configuration for wide swath and high resolution. The satellite will orbit the Earth in a sun-synchronous orbit of 747 Km with an inclination of 98.4 degrees for a 12-day repeat cycle.

While NASA is delivering the L-Band SAR payload, high-precision GPS, and 12m unfurlable antenna, ISRO is delivering S-band SAR payload, spacecraft bus, and facilitating the launch. The total expenditure incurred on realization of NISAR satellite by ISRO as on February 2023 is Rs. 469.40 Crore, excluding launch cost.

### **'Ab-CoV' to help with development of drugs against new variants of COVID19**

Researchers at the Indian Institute of Madras have developed an online open-source database of coronaviruses' neutralizing antibodies that can also aid in the development of drugs against new variants of SARS-CoV-2.

The database, called Ab-CoV, contains detailed information about all COVID-related antibodies identified so far, including the source of each antibody, and the viral protein(s) and virus strains they recognize. It also encompasses crucial features such as binding affinity and neutralization profiles (IC50 and EC50) of antibodies.

Ab-CoV database includes 1,780 coronavirus-related antibodies including 211 nanobodies and contains more than 3,200 data points on half maximal inhibitory concentration (IC50), half maximal effective concentration (EC50) & binding affinity(KD).

### **Google unveils 'magic wand' for emails and documents**

Alphabet's Google on Tuesday unveiled a flurry of artificial intelligence (AI) tools for its email, collaboration and cloud software, taking aim at Microsoft days before its rival is expected to make a similar announcement. In a replay of last month's duelling chatbot launches by the tech giants, Alphabet touted a "magic wand" for its popular Google Docs software that can draft a marketing blog, training plan or other text, then revise its tone at users' discretion, a company official demonstrated to reporters. Alphabet also said its AI will be able to summarise message threads in Gmail, craft slide

presentations, personalise customer outreach and take meeting notes as part of its upgrade to Google Workspace, a product suite with billions of users on free and paid accounts.

### **2023 DW : This Asteroid Has A 'Small Chance' Of Impacting Earth In 2046, NASA Says.**

A new asteroid which NASA has been tracking has a "very small chance" of impacting Earth in 2046, according to the space agency's Planetary Defense Coordination Office. The asteroid, called 2023 DW, might hit Earth on Valentine's Day in 2046.

Asteroid 2023 DW has an average estimated diameter of 49.29 metres, and a mass of about eight kilograms, according to Jet Propulsion Laboratory's Center for Near Earth Object Studies. The velocity of the asteroid at the time of the likely impact will be 15.43 kilometres per second.

### **NASA hands over NISAR satellite to ISRO**

The US Space Agency NASA has handed over the Earth observation satellite 'NISAR' to Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) at its Bengaluru headquarters. NISAR is one of the crucial collaborations of ISRO and NASA. India and the US had agreed upon this mission during then-President Barack Obama's visit to India in 2015. The major scientific objectives of the NISAR mission are to improve understanding of the impact of climate change on Earth's dynamic ecosystem, land, and coastal processes, land deformations, and cryosphere.

### **Twitter Co-Founder Jack Dorsey's Bluesky Social Media App Turns Up On Apple AppStore**

Jack Dorsey, the co-founder and former CEO of Twitter, has launched a new social media platform called Bluesky. The new app, currently in the testing phase, is available to download for iOS users via Apple's App Store. The Twitter-funded microblogging platform is available as an invite-only beta as of now, and a public launch is expected to be announced soon.

## **OBITUARY**

### **Actor and former MP Innocent passes away at 75**

Veteran Malayalam actor and former member of Parliament Innocent Vareed Thekkethala passes away at 75 in a private hospital in Kochi on Sunday. After learning about the unfortunate event, several celebrities took to their social media handles and mourned the death of the late actor.

The actor, a cancer survivor was reportedly not keeping well for some time and was admitted to the hospital on March 3 with respiratory problems.

Saddened by the death, Prithviraj Sukumaran took to Twitter and wrote, "End of an iconic chapter in cinema history! Rest in peace Legend! #Innocent."

### **Intel co-founder Gordon Moore has passed away**

Gordon Moore, co-founder and former CEO of Intel, has passed away at 94. He was the last surviving member of the Intel Trinity, which also included his fellow founder

Robert Noyce and their first hire Andy Grove. Moore and Noyce previously worked with the co-inventor of the transistor, William Shockley, before helping found Fairchild Semiconductor. In 1968, the two struck out on their own and founded NM Electronics, which eventually became Intel.

### **Filmmaker Pradeep Sarkar passes away at 67**

Filmmaker Pradeep Sarkar, who was best-known for directing films like Parineeta, Helicopter Eela and Mardaani, has died at the age of 67. Director Hansal Mehta shared the news on his Twitter profile on Friday morning and he wrote: "Pradeep Sarkar. Dada.RIP." United by grief, Bollywood stars paid tribute to the filmmaker. Ajay Devgn, in his eulogy for Pradeep Sarkar, wrote: "The news of Pradeep Sarkar's demise, 'Dada' to some of us is still hard to digest. My deepest condolences. My prayers are with the departed and his family. RIP Dada." Actor Manoj Bajpayee retweeted Hansal Mehta's tweet and he wrote: "Ohh! That's so shocking! Rest in peace Dada."

Several members of the film industry showed up to pay their respects for the filmmaker and greet his grieving family. The veteran filmmaker made his feature directorial debut with Parineeta, that starred Vidya Balan, Saif Ali Khan and Sanjay Dutt. Among those who were in attendance at the crematorium in Mumbai for the funeral were Deepika Padukone, Vidya Balan with husband Sidharth Roy Kapur, Rani Mukerji, Dia Mirza, Vidhu Vinod Chopra, Rhea Chakraborty, Neil Nitin Mukesh, Gajraj Rao, Tahir Raj Bhasin and Sakshi Tanwar.

### **Indore's noted journalist and Padma Shri winner Abhay Chhajlani passes away**

Chhajlani was born on 4th August 1934 in Indore. He entered the field of journalism in 1955. In 1963, he took over as the executive editor and later remained the editor-in-chief of Nai Dunia for a long time. In the year 1965, he graduated from Thomson Foundation, Cardiff (UK), the world's premier Institute of Journalism. He was the first journalist to be selected for this training from the field of Hindi journalism.

He had prominently raised many major issues of the city. Along with this, he was also associated with sports. He was the President of Madhya Pradesh Table Tennis Association for a long time and then remained on the post of President for life. Lately, apart from serving as the chairman of the editorial board of Nai Dunia, he was also carrying out many important social responsibilities. Abhay Chhajlani was a three-time president of ILNA, the apex organization of Indian language newspapers. He was the president of the organization in 1988, 1989 and 1994. He was also the Vice President of the Indian Newspaper Society (INS) in 2000 and President in 2002.

### **Actor Sameer Khakhar who played role of Khopdi in 'Nukkad', Passed away at 71**

Actor Sameer Khakhar, best known for playing the lovable drunk Khopdi in the classic 1980s TV serial "Nukkad", died at a hospital here in the early hours of Wednesday due to multiple organ failure.

The actor, who was most recently seen in the Prime Video series "Farzi" and moved to the US in the 1990s for a few years to become a software developer, was 71. Sameer

Khakhar was admitted to MM Hospital in Borivali in suburban Mumbai on Tuesday morning following respiratory issues,

### **Veteran actor & director Satish Kaushik passes away**

Veteran actor and director Satish Kaushik passed away early this morning, - March 9. The 66-year old Satish Kaushik had acted in more than 100 films. Born on April 13, 1956, in Haryana, he acted in theatres before finding his break in Bollywood. Satish Kaushik started his Bollywood career with the film Masoom in 1983. As an actor, he was known for his roles as Calendar in the 1987 superhit film, Mr. India, and as Pappu Pagar in Deewana Mastana. Satish Kaushik also won the Filmfare Best Comedian Award in 1990 for Ram Lakhan and for Saajan Chale Sasural in 1997.

### **Former Chief Justice of India AM Ahmadi passes away at 90 at his home**

AM Ahmadi passed away on Thursday at his home here. Ahmadi was the chief justice from 1994 to 1997. Having begun his judicial career as a City Civil and Session Court judge in Ahmedabad, he was the only Chief Justice of India who started at the very lowest rank to rise to the highest position of the Indian judiciary.

### **Former diplomat, Padma Bhushan awardee Chandrashekhar Dasgupta is no more**

Chandrashekhar Dasgupta, former Indian diplomat and the recipient of Padma Bhushan, passed away on Thursday at 82. During his almost four-decade-long career, he served as the ambassador to the European Union, Belgium, Luxembourg and China. He joined the Indian Foreign Service (IFS) in 1962. He was the high commissioner to Singapore between 1981 and 1984 and Tanzania between 1984 and 1986. Dasgupta also held the vice-chair of the preparatory committees of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), popularly known as the Earth Summit, held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992.

## **APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS**

### **Hero MotoCorp appoints company insider Niranjan Gupta as new CEO**

Hero MotoCorp Ltd, India's biggest two-wheeler maker by volume, on Thursday named company insider Niranjan Gupta as its chief executive officer.

Gupta, currently chief financial officer at Hero MotoCorp, played a role in forming the bike maker's partnerships with Harley Davidson and electric-motorcycle maker Zero Motorcycles, the company said.

Pawan Munjal, Hero MotoCorp's current chief executive, will remain with the company as an executive chairman and full-time director on the board.

The development comes months after the company named Gupta as its head of strategy and M&A in December last year.

### **Tata Power re-appoints Praveer Sinha on positions of CEO, Managing Director**

Tata Power on Thursday said it has re-appointed Praveer Sinha as the company's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Managing Director.

His re-appointment to the top post is for a period of four years from May 1, 2023, to April 30, 2027, subject to the approval of the members of the company, Tata Power said in a regulatory filing.

"Based on the recommendation of the Nomination and Remuneration Committee, the Board, at its meeting held on March 30, 2023, approved the re-appointment of Praveer Sinha as the CEO & MD of the company," it added. His present tenure as a CEO and MD is scheduled to conclude on April 30, 2023.

"Under his current leadership, Tata Power is at the forefront of transforming itself from a century-old power utility company into a new-aged sustainable, technology-oriented and customer-centric green energy solutions company," the company said. A PhD from the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi, Sinha is a visiting Research Associate at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Boston, USA.

### **SpiceJet CMD Ajay Singh Takes Over As Assocham President**

SpiceJet's Chairman & Managing Director Ajay Singh has assumed charge as the President of Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) replacing Renew Power MD Sumant Sinha after the completion of his tenure. Sanjay Nayar, founder and Chairman of Sorin Investment Fund is the new Senior Vice-President of Assocham,

"I am taking over at times which are both exciting and challenging. As an economy, India stands out as a robust economy in the midst of global headwinds. Even when major economies of the world are facing the threat of recession, the Indian economy is growing between 6.5-7 per cent," Singh said.

He emphasised that the chamber would stay engaged with the government, Centre and states, leading academicians, economists besides corporate leaders to find solutions to the issues, which may crop up in a fast-changing global economic and political landscape.

### **NDTV Appoints Former SEBI Chairman U.K. Sinha And Business Leader Dipali Goenka As Independent Directors**

In line with the Adani Group's objective to ensure NDTV's independence and professionalism, U.K. Sinha and Dipali Goenka have been appointed Independent Directors of NDTV for a period of two years effective March 27, 2023, based on the recommendations of the Nomination and Remuneration Committee, and subject to the approval of shareholders and Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. U.K. Sinha has also been designated as Non-Executive Chairperson of NDTV.

### **Dilma Rousseff the New BRICS bank chief**

The Board of Governors of the New Development Bank (NDB) unanimously elected H.E. Mrs. Dilma Vana Rousseff as the President of the Bank, effective immediately, in full accordance with the Articles of Agreement of the New Development Bank and the procedures of the President election," the NDB said in a statement on Friday.

In a press statement earlier this month, NDB had said: "NDB President Marcos Troyjo will step down by March 24, 2023. The Board of Governors of the NDB will then elect a



new President nominated by Brazil, to fulfil the incumbent rotating mandate expiring on July 6, 2025. After the election, the new President takes office”.

### **Indian Woman Hockey Player Salima Tete Appointed AHF Athletes Ambassador**

National women’s hockey team midfielder Salima Tete was appointed as the AHF Athletes Ambassador from India for a term of two years, starting March 25.

Tete accepted the certificate and the position during the Asian Hockey Federation (AHF) Congress in Mungyeong, Korea.

Tete, who led the Indian women’s junior hockey team to a fourth-place finish at the 2021 FIH Women’s Junior World Cup in Potchefstroom, South Africa, is among four players from Asia to be appointed for the position.

As the AHF Athletes Ambassador, Tete, along with the other selected athletes from Asia, will play a leadership role in international representation, development, and advocacy of athletes.

She will also be working towards promoting awareness about athletes’ rights and welfare from the region. “I am honoured to be selected as one of the AHF Athletes Ambassadors. As athletes from Asia, we face a lot of challenges in our careers. This position will allow me to bring our voices to the front. I hope to make a positive impact on the lives of athletes from the region with this position,” Tete said in a Hockey India statement.

### **Rahul Roy-Chowdhury, Grammarly’s new Indian-origin CEO**

Rahul Roy-Chowdhury has been appointed as the CEO of Grammarly, the San Francisco - headquartered online text editing platform based on artificial intelligence.

The Indian-origin executive, who is currently serving as the global product head at the company, will take over as CEO from May 1.

On LinkedIn, Rahul Roy-Chowdhury said, “I joined Grammarly two years ago because of a deep belief in our mission to improve lives by improving communication. I’m honored to serve that mission in a new capacity as Grammarly’s CEO, starting May 1.” Before joining Grammarly in May 2021, Rahul Roy-Chowdhury worked at Google for 14 years where he served in multiple capacities, including vice-president of product management. He also spent two years as a product manager at Google’s office in Bengaluru between 2007 and 2009, following which he moved to California.

Rahul Roy-Chowdhury has an MBA from Stanford University and a Master’s degree in computer science from Columbia University. He has a BA in mathematics from Hamilton College in New York as well.

### **ICICI Bank veteran Anup Bagchi to take over as new MD and CEO of ICICI Prudential Life**

The life insurance company, ICICI Prudential Life Insurance has named Anup Bagchi as MD and CEO for 5 years, effective June 19, 2023. He will replace NS Kannan, who will superannuate from the services of the company on the completion of tenure of his appointment on June 18, 2023.

Anup Bagchi is presently Executive Director, ICICI Bank and non-executive director of the company. And, to ensure a seamless transition, Bagchi has been appointed Executive Director & Chief Operating Officer with effect from May 1, 2023. He is also on the board of ICICI Prudential Asset Management Company and Commerce Trade Services. Prior to this, Bagchi was the Managing Director and CEO of ICICI Securities.

#### **Lalit Kumar Gupta appointed as CMD of Cotton Corporation of India (CCI)**

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved the appointment of Lalit Kumar Gupta as Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Cotton Corporation of India (CCI), a PSU under the Ministry of Textile. According to an order issued from the Department of Personnel & Training (DoPT), Gupta has been appointed as CMD of CCI with effect from the date of his assumption of charge of the post for a period of five years, or till the date of his superannuation, or until further orders, whichever is the earlier.

Mr. Gupta has completed his MBA in Marketing from ITM Business School of Navi Mumbai. He is a Chartered Accountant (CA) of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI). He is also a member of the Institute of the Company Secretaries of India (ICSI). He has a rich experience in the Finance and related sector. Gupta has a very long association with Cotton Corporation of about 25 years. He joined CCI in August 1994.

#### **G Krishnakumar takes over as BPCL Chairman & Managing Director**

G Krishnakumar has taken over as the new chairman and managing director of Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL). G Krishnakumar, an electrical and electronics engineer from National Institute of Technology, Tiruchirappalli and a postgraduate in finance management from Jamnalal Bajaj Institute of Management Studies, Mumbai, was executive director in the company before his elevation.

Government headhunter, the Public Enterprise Selection Board (PESB) had, in December last year, picked up Krishnakumar over company's Director (Finance) Vetsa Ramakrishna Gupta, Director (Refineries) S Khanna, and Director (Marketing) Sukhmal Kumar Jain.

#### **India's KR Parvathy appointed as UN Resident Coordinator in Tajikistan**

India's Kavilmadam Ramaswami Parvathy, who has served in leading roles at the World Food Programme in Türkiye and Afghanistan, has been appointed by UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres as the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Tajikistan. Parvathy took up her new post as Resident Coordinator in Tajikistan Wednesday, following the appointment by the Secretary-General and confirmation from the host Government. Stéphane Dujarric, Spokesman for the Secretary-General, said at the daily news briefing. "We remain with full gender parity among our 130 Resident Coordinators," Dujarric said.

Parvathy brings more than 30 years of experience in development and humanitarian sectors, focusing on strategic planning, performance, risk management, people management, conflict analysis and humanitarian access negotiations.

### **Rajesh Gopinathan resigns from TCS, Succeeded by K Krithivasan**

Rajesh Gopinathan, CEO of TCS for six long years has resigned from the post. He is succeeded by TCS' BFSI unit president K Krithivasan.

Tata Consultancy Services, an Indian provider of IT services, announced in a regulatory filing that Rajesh Gopinathan, its chief executive officer, has resigned. He is succeeded by K Krithivasan, who was named CEO-designate on and stated that, subject to shareholder approval, he will take on the roles of CEO and managing director in the coming fiscal year.

### **Honeywell (HON) Appoints Veteran Vimal Kapur as New CEO**

Honeywell International HON announced that company veteran and current president and chief operating officer, Vimal Kapur, will succeed Darius Adamczyk as the new chief executive officer ("CEO"), effective Jun 1. Mr. Kapur was named the president and chief operating officer of Honeywell last July. As COO, he oversaw the Honeywell Accelerator program, which uses certain frameworks and toolkits to improve end-to-end processes, digital transformation and business outcomes. As CEO, Kapur will focus on "the incorporation of Accelerator and standardization of global business models to enable maximal performance in each business segment."

### **Indian-American Ravi Chaudhary to be the new Assistant Secretary of US Air Force**

The United States Senate has confirmed Indian-American Ravi Chaudhary as the Assistant Secretary of Defense for the Air Force, one of the top civilian leadership positions in the Pentagon. He previously served as a Senior Executive at the US Department of Transportation where he was Director of Advanced Programs and Innovation, Office of Commercial Space at the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). He was responsible for the execution of advanced development and research programs in support of the FAA's commercial space transportation mission. While at the transportation department, he also served as the executive director of the regions and centre operations, where he looked over the integration and support of aviation operations in nine regions.

### **Deepak Mohanty appointed as PFRDA Chairperson**

The Central government has appointed Deepak Mohanty, a former whole-time member of the Pension Fund Regulatory & Development Authority (PFRDA), as the new Chairperson of the PFRDA. Mohanty, also a former executive director of the Reserve Bank of India, will hold the top PFRDA post till attaining the age of 65 years or until further orders. It also appointed Mamta Shankar, an Indian Economic Service Officer (1993) to the post of Whole-Time Member (Economics) in PFRDA.

PFRDA regulates the National Pension System (NPS) which is mandatory for the Central government staff joining service since 2004. Most state governments have also made it mandatory for their staff joining the service since 2004 or 2005. Later, corporates and the general public were allowed to subscribe to NPS.

### **FDIC names former Fannie Mae chief Tim Mayopoulos as CEO of Silicon Valley Bank**

The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation on Monday named former Fannie Mae head Tim Mayopoulos as the chief executive officer of Silicon Valley Bank, a subsidiary of the defunct SVB Financial Group. He steps in after regulators shuttered the startup-focused lender on Friday after a run on its deposits that left it with a dearth of capital.

Mayopoulos served as the chief executive officer of mortgage financier Fannie Mae for more than six years before he joined fintech Blend. The collapse of SVB, the biggest bank to fail since the financial crisis of 2008, has crippled stocks and triggered concerns of a contagion throughout global markets.

### **RBI approves reappointment of Sumant Kathpalia as MD, CEO of IndusInd Bank**

IndusInd Bank said the central bank has approved the re-appointment of Sumant Kathpalia as MD and CEO for a period of two years from 24 March, 2023. The nod by RBI comes nearly six months after the IndusInd Bank's board of directors had cleared another term for Kathpalia, who has been the lender's MD & CEO since March 2020. At IndusInd Bank, he has been part of the management team for 15 years ago. He has been a key member of the top-level executive committee looking at IndusInd Bank- wide financial management, managing investor relations and evaluating inorganic growth opportunities.

### **Tech Mahindra appoints Mohit Joshi as MD & CEO**

Tech Mahindra announced Mohit Joshi, the former president of Infosys, as its managing director (MD) and chief executive officer (CEO) designate for a period of five years, effective from 20 December 2023.

Mohit Joshi will take over as MD & CEO when CP Gurnani retires on 19 December 2023. However, he will join Tech Mahindra well before that date to allow for sufficient transition time, said the company.

### **Govt appoints Siddhartha Mohanty as interim chairman of LIC**

Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) on Monday said that M R Kumar has completed his term as the Chairman. The government has approved the appointment of Siddhartha Mohanty as the interim Chairman of LIC for three months with effect from March 14, the insurer said last week.

The government is set to appoint a full-time chairman at LIC by June, a finance ministry official said, Mint reported. The official said the chairman would be selected from among candidates available within the life insurer and would serve a term of around a year.

### **B Gopkumar takes over Axis Mutual Fund as CEO Chandresh Nigam steps down**

Axis Asset Management Company has appointed B Gopkumar, the managing director and chief executive officer at Axis Securities, as the new CEO of leading fund house Axis Mutual Fund. Gopkumar takes over from Chandresh Nigam who has stepped down as the CEO of the company.

Axis MF has been plagued by the front-running scandal that came to light when the fund house sacked its chief dealer Viresh Joshi in May 2022 in a shocking case of

suspected front-running. This was followed by income tax raids at Joshi's premises and Joshi suing his former employer for wrongful termination.

### **Hindustan Unilever names Rohit Jawa as MD, CEO**

Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) major Hindustan Unilever Limited (HUL) announced Rohit Jawa as the new Managing Director and CEO of the company taking over from June 27, 2023. The present managing director & CEO Sanjiv Mehta will retire after a tenure of 10 years by the end of June the company stated. Rohit Jawa will join as CEO designate and whole-time director for HUL from April 1, 2023, and take over as the president of Unilever South Asia from the present Chief of Transformation based in London. He will join the Unilever Leadership Executive (ULE) on April 1, 2023.

### **S.S. Dubey takes charge as Controller General of Accounts (CGA)**

Shri S.S. Dubey took charge as the Controller General of Accounts (CGA). Shri Dubey is the 28th Controller General of Accounts (CGA), Ministry of Finance, Government of India. Shri Dubey, a 1989-batch Indian Civil Accounts Service (ICAS) officer, is appointed by the Government of India as the Controller General of Accounts (CGA) with effect from 6th March, 2023. Prior to taking charge as the CGA, Shri Dubey was Additional Controller General of Accounts, Public Financial Management System (PFMS).

### **Pramerica Life Insurance appoints Pankaj Gupta as MD and CEO**

Pramerica Life Insurance appointed Pankaj Gupta as the managing director and chief executive officer. Gupta was Group Head – Distribution Strategy & Alliances of HDFC Life. Pankaj succeeds Kalpana Sampat, who was the previous MD & CEO.

### **Manisha Saxena appointed director general of tourism**

Senior bureaucrat Manisha Saxena has been appointed as director general of tourism in the Union tourism ministry. Ms. Saxena is a 1996 batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer of Arunachal Pradesh-Mizoram-Goa-Union Territory (AGMUT) cadre.

### **Jishnu Barua becomes new chairperson of power regulator CERC**

Jishnu Barua has become the new chairperson of power regulator Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC). "Union Minister for Power R K Singh administered the oath of office and secrecy to Jishnu Barua, chairperson, Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC), here today,"

Barua was chief secretary of Assam from October 2020 to August 2022. Prior to this, he had been additional chief secretary to Assam looking after various departments of the state from August 2017 to October 2020.

### **IPS officer Rashmi Shukla appointed Director-General of Sashastra Seema Bal**



The Central government has appointed Rashmi Shukla, an IPS officer of the Maharashtra cadre as the Director General (DG) of Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB), she will be replacing Anish Dayal Singh.

The 1988 batch officer has previously headed the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) as Additional Director General and has been the former Chief of Maharashtra Intelligence Department.

### **Godrej Industries appoints Vishal Sharma as CEO-designate of its chemicals business**

Godrej Industries has announced the appointment of Vishal Sharma as CEO-designate of its chemicals business effective 1 March 2023. "As a part of the Leadership Team - Succession Planning, we are pleased to inform that we are announcing appointment of Mr. Vishal Sharma as the "Chief Executive Officer- Designate" (CEO-Designate) of GIL- Chemicals Business with effect from March 1, 2023,

### **Rajesh Malhotra appointed as Principal DG of PIB**

Senior Indian Information Service (IIS) officer, Rajesh Malhotra has been appointed as the principal director general of the Press Information Bureau (PIB), according to the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting. He succeeds Satyendra Prakash, who superannuated on Tuesday. He will be the principal spokesperson of the government of India.

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## **IMPORTANT DAYS**

### **World Backup Day**

World Backup Day on March 31st reminds us to protect our precious digital documents as we've become more reliant on technology.

There's always that one photo, video or memory that you took the time to save, yet for some reason, it's not yours anymore. Whether it was a lost or broken phone, a faulty hard drive or some other technological mishap, it can feel impossible to keep all your files in one piece.

Thankfully, the day before April Fools is World Backup Day, which saves us from being the punchline of a joke played by our own devices. It is the day when we finally stop saying, "I'll do it tomorrow," and make sure all our precious files find a safe space.

#### **WHAT IS BACKUP ?**

Answer - A backup is a second copy of all your important files — for example, your family photos, home videos, documents, and emails. Instead of storing it all in one place (like your computer), you keep another copy of everything somewhere safe.

### **International Day of Zero Waste**

On 14 December 2022, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution at its seventy-seventh session to proclaim 30 March as International Day of Zero Waste, to be observed annually. Türkiye, with 105 other countries, put forward the resolution. It follows other resolutions focused on waste, including "End plastic pollution: towards an internationally legally binding instrument", adopted at the United Nations Environment Assembly on 2 March 2022.

The International Day of Zero Waste aims to promote sustainable consumption and production patterns and raise awareness about how zero-waste initiatives contribute to the advancement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Humanity generates an estimated 2.24 billion tons of municipal solid waste annually, of which only 55 per cent is managed in controlled facilities. By 2050, this could rise to 3.88 billion tons per year. The waste sector is a significant contributor to greenhouse gas emissions in urban settings and biodiversity loss. Around 931 million tons of food is wasted each year, and up to 37 million tons of plastic waste is expected to enter the ocean annually by 2040.

In line with the theme for International Day of Zero Waste 2023 - 'Achieving sustainable and environmentally sound practices of minimizing and managing waste',

### **Rajasthan Day / Rajasthan Diwas**

Rajasthan, the Land of Kings is synonymous with heroism, royalty and honour. Historic tales of battles fought and romance of the riches adorn the walls of the state.

Established in the era marked with wartime ballads yet living in the modern period, the region is a travellers' destination.

30th March 2023, marks the 74th Foundation Day of the state. The state was formed this day in 1949. The history of the region dates back to around 5,000 years. Before being called Rajputana, the region was called 'Gujratha', the land protected by Gujjars. But it was during this time that Rajputana (the name adopted by the British to manage the dependencies in the region) was merged into India.

Rajasthan is the largest state in the country by area and covers 10.4% of India's total area. It shares its border with five major Indian states- Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat. Around 25% of the National Capital Region (NCR) falls in the state. Rajasthan provides access to around 40% of India's market in the neighbouring states and also serves as an indispensable medium of transport between North-Indian states and the ports on the Western coastline of India.

### **Swachhotsav-2023' was held at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi**

Under 'Swachh Bharat Mission' a special workshop under 'Swachhotsav-2023' was held at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi on the occasion of 'International Zero Garbage Day' on March 30th in the presence of Union Urban Development and Housing Minister Hardeep Singh Puri.

Commissioner of the Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation (NMMC) Rajesh Narvekar participated in the seminar on innovative initiatives for a waste-free city and presented three unique concepts on behalf of the NMMC. All the three innovative concepts presented by the Commissioner were appreciated at the national level. "Swachhotsav - 2023" has been organized at the national level to increase women's participation and leadership in cleanliness, in which Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation has enthusiastically participated. The Municipal Corporation has always used innovative concepts in cleanliness.

### **World Theatre Day**

World Theatre Day was initiated in 1962 by the International Theatre Institute (ITI). It is celebrated annually on 27 March by ITI Centres and the international theatre community. Various national and international theatre events are organized to mark this occasion. One of the most important of these is the circulation of the World Theatre Day International Message through which at the invitation of ITI, a figure of world stature shares his or her reflections on the theme of Theatre and a Culture of Peace. The first World Theatre Day International Message was written by Jean Cocteau (France) in 1962. It was first in Helsinki, and then in Vienna at the 9th World Congress of the ITI in June 1961 that President Arvi Kivimaa proposed on behalf of the Finnish Centre of the International Theatre Institute that a World Theatre Day be instituted. The proposal, backed by the Scandinavian centres, was carried with acclamation.

### Purple Day of Epilepsy

Celebrated annually on March 26, Epilepsy Awareness Day, or Purple Day, was created to increase the public's understanding of this brain disorder and to eliminate the fear and stigma surrounding it. With over 3.5 million people diagnosed with epilepsy in the U.S. and over 50 million worldwide, it is likely you know someone living with the day-to-day challenges epilepsy brings. The good news is epilepsy can be easily managed if diagnosed and treated correctly, so awareness and research are important.

Epilepsy is a chronic disorder of the brain that affects brain's ability to transmit electrical impulses which could lead to seizures. Epilepsy cannot be cured but can be managed with medication and a series of lifestyle changes. Controlling the triggers of the disorder can reduce the number of seizures one experiences. While not skipping medication is most important, there are certain lifestyle factors that can greatly reduce the risk of seizures. Not sleeping well is one of the most common triggers for seizures and one must develop a proper sleep routine and do regular exercise for sound sleep. A balanced diet with all the essential nutrients, reduced stress and leading a healthy social life can all prevent seizures.

### Independence Day of Bangladesh

The Independence Day of Bangladesh is celebrated every year on March 26. It is the national holiday of Bangladesh that commemorates the country's independence from Pakistan in 1971. On the morning of March 26, 1971, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman declared Bangladesh's independence from Pakistan, which were known at the time as East Pakistan and West Pakistan, respectively. The day is characterized by parades, speeches, fairs, and ceremonial events to commemorate that historic day in 1971.

### Earth Hour Day: March 25, 2023 8:30 PM - 9:30 PM

Earth Hour is a worldwide movement organized by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF). The event is held annually, encouraging individuals, communities, and businesses to turn off non-essential electric lights, for one hour, from 8:30 to 9:30 p.m. on the last Saturday of March, as a symbol of commitment to the planet. It was started as a lights-off event in Sydney, Australia, in 2007.

Occasionally, in years when Holy Saturday falls on the last Saturday of March, EarthHour is moved a week early rather than its usual date.

### **Himachal Pradesh CM Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu Urges People To Observe Earth Hour today: 25th March**

Chief Minister Thakur Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu appealed to the people of the state to be part of 'Earth Hour', to be observed under the theme 'The Biggest Hour for Earth' today 25<sup>th</sup> March, 2023. He said that it was an Endeavour of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) to raise awareness about the conservation of nature and climate change – the two biggest threats facing the planet today.

He urged the people of the State to switch off all non-essential lights on 25<sup>th</sup> March for one hour between 8.30 PM to 9.30 PM to support this mission.. He said this mission would go a long way in creating a better and healthy environment for future generations.

### **Amit Shah attends the 84th Raising Day CRPF as Chief Guest at Jagdalpur, Chhattisgarh: 25 March**

On 25 March CRPF is celebrated 84th Foundation Day. Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Minister Shri Amit Shah attended the 84th Raising Day celebrations of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) as the Chief Guest at Jagdalpur, Chhattisgarh, today. The Union Home Minister also took the salute of the parade on the occasion. Shri Amit Shah also inaugurated Prasar Bharati's news bulletin for the Bastar Division in the local language of Halbi.

In his address, Shri Amit Shah said that it is a matter of great joy for all of us as this day is being celebrated in Chhattisgarh for the first time after the establishment of CRPF and since the beginning of the problem of left wing extremism. He said that 763 CRPF personnel have made the supreme sacrifice during the drive to end Left Wing Extremism in Chhattisgarh. Today our fight against Left Wing Extremism is at a decisive stage, for which the martyred Jawans have made immense contribution.

### **World TB Day**

Each year, we recognize World TB Day on March 24. This annual event commemorates the date in 1882 when Dr. Robert Koch announced his discovery of Mycobacterium tuberculosis, the bacillus that causes tuberculosis (TB).

World TB Day is a day to educate the public about the impact of TB around the world. CDC, along with our partners and colleagues around the world share successes in TB prevention and control and raise awareness of the challenges that hinder our progress toward the elimination of this devastating disease.

World TB Day 2023, with the theme 'Yes! We can end TB!', aims to inspire hope and encourage high-level leadership, increased investments, faster uptake of new WHO recommendations, adoption of innovations, accelerated action, and multisectoral collaboration to combat the TB epidemic.

### Right to Truth Day

On 21 December 2010, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 24 March as the International Day for the Right to the Truth concerning Gross Human Rights Violations and for the Dignity of Victims.

The date was chosen because on 24 March 1980, Archbishop Oscar Arnulfo Romero of El Salvador was assassinated, after denouncing violations of human rights.

Each year, on 24 March, the International Day for the Right to the Truth Concerning Gross Human Rights Violations and for the Dignity of Victims is observed.

This annual observance pays tribute to the memory of Monsignor Óscar Arnulfo Romero, who was murdered on 24 March 1980. Monsignor Romero was actively engaged in denouncing violations of the human rights of the most vulnerable individuals in El Salvador.

### Kitty O'Neil's 77th Birth anniversary

Kitty O'Neil, a famous American stuntwoman and actress who was deaf from a young age, was commemorated by Google on her 77th birthday anniversary with a doodle featuring her in a yellow jumpsuit. She went on to become one of Hollywood's most famous stunt drivers. Google celebrated Kitty O'Neil's 77th birth anniversary with a doodle that depicted her in a yellow jumpsuit. Despite being deaf since childhood, she became a well-known stunt driver in Hollywood and held the women's absolute land speed record until 2019.

Kitty O'Neil was an American stuntwoman and actor who was born in Texas in 1946. She became deaf at a young age due to contracting multiple diseases. Despite this, she went on to become one of Hollywood's most recognized stunt drivers and performers, appearing as a stunt double in several movies and shows.

In 1976, O'Neil set the women's absolute land speed record driving a hydrogen peroxide-powered three-wheeled rocket car, reaching an average speed of 825.127 kmph, with a top speed of 999 kmph. This earned her the title of the "fastest woman in the world." She also set a women's high-fall record of 127 feet (39 m) while performing as a stunt double in the 1979 episode of the Wonder Woman TV series, which she would later break.

O'Neil died in 2018 at the age of 72 due to pneumonia. In 2019, she was honored with the Oscars in Memoriam award. A biopic about her life, called Silent Victory: The Kitty O'Neil Story, was released in 1979 and showcased her land speed record achievement.

A biopic named Silent Victory: The Kitty O'Neil Story, was released in 1979, and she received the Oscars in Memoriam award in 2019. She passed away in 2018 due to pneumonia at the age of 72.

### Martyr's Day or Shaheed Diwas: India

Every year on March 23, India observes Martyrs' Day or Shaheed Diwas to honor the brave soldiers who gave their lives for the country. This day serves as a reminder to be grateful for the sacrifices made by these soldiers to protect the country and its people.



Martyrs' Day has a historical significance as it marks the day in 1931 when Bhagat Singh, Shivaram Rajguru, and Sukhdev Thapar were hanged to death during the struggle for India's independence. Mahatma Gandhi, the father of the nation, is also remembered on Martyrs' Day. January 30th is observed as Martyrs' Day or Shaheed Diwas in memory of Gandhi, who was assassinated on that day.

### World Meteorological Day

World Meteorological Day takes place every year on 23 March and commemorates the coming into force on 23 March 1950 of the Convention establishing the World Meteorological Organization. It showcases the essential contribution of National Meteorological and Hydrological Services to the safety and wellbeing of society and is celebrated with activities around the world.

Our weather and climate and the water cycle know no national or political boundaries. International cooperation is essential. This philosophy has driven the work of the world's meteorological community since 1873 and will guide us as we translate science into services for society for present and future generations.

Since 1961, the World Meteorological Organization has been celebrating World Meteorological Day with a different theme selected for each year. The theme of World Meteorological Day 2023 is 'The Future of Weather, Climate and Water across Generations.' It underlines the impact of climate change and steps to protect the environment for the upcoming generations.

### World Water Day

World Water Day is an annual United Nations observance day held on 22 March that highlights the importance of fresh water. The day is used to advocate for the sustainable management of freshwater resources. World Water Day is a chance to remind ourselves that billions of people to this day live their lives without access to safe drinking water. As a fundamental human right, it is our job to conserve the water we do have as well as ensure access to those who need it.

As many different groups are overlooked when it comes to providing access to Earth's most precious resource, the United Nations has taken the stance that "water services must meet the needs of marginalized groups and their voices must be heard in the decision-making process." In order to guarantee no one is left behind, it is our job to educate ourselves on the laws and regulations that surround our water usage. The water challenges we face vary from region to region. By better understanding the challenges we face in conserving water, the more prepared we'll be to supply water in the future. "Accelerating the change to solve the water and sanitation crisis" will be the theme for World Water Day 2023.

### Bihar Diwas or Bihar Day

Bihar Diwas or Bihar Day is an annual commemoration on March 22, which marks the day in 1912 when the British partitioned the state of Bihar from the Bengal presidency. It is a public holiday across the state, with all offices, companies, and educational institutes under the central and state governments closed for the day.

In order to revive pride among its citizens, the Bihar government decided to mark the formation day with multicultural activities and programmes in 2010. The official celebration of this day, including various events and programs, began in 2011 and has continued ever since.

Each year, Bihar Diwas is celebrated with a distinct theme. In 2023, the theme of Bihar Day is "Yuva Shakti Bihar Ki Pragati," which translates to "Progress of Bihar through Youth Power." The theme highlights the crucial role that the youth of Bihar plays in driving the state's growth and development. This year's Bihar Day celebration aims to recognize and showcase the potential of Bihar's young population in transforming the state's future and creating a better tomorrow.

### **National Gallery of Modern Art organizes a Painting & Pottery workshop on the occasion of "World Down Syndrome Day"**

On the occasion of World Down Syndrome Day, (21, March) the National Gallery of Modern Art has organized a Painting & Pottery workshop today at its premises in New Delhi.

Director NGMA, Smt. Tamsunaro Jamir Tripathi interacted with the participants and their parents. She addressed the gathering and said that the Gallery is organizing events and exclusively curated shows for the differently abled children. Further, she said that NGMA is actively involving civil society for public awareness and establishing a voice for people with special needs, such as "Autism Week" and sign-language tours. These events align with the revised definition of museums: "Open to the public, accessible and inclusive, museums foster diversity and sustainability".

The workshop will give a platform to express themselves creatively and showcase their abilities and ideas. The pottery session is guided by Gurugram based Shaurya Mehrotra, potter and artist with down syndrome.

### **International Day of Forests**

The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 21 March the International Day of Forests in 2012 to celebrate and raise awareness of the importance of all types of forests. Countries are encouraged to undertake local, national and international efforts to organize activities involving forests and trees, such as tree planting campaigns.

The organizers are - The United Nations Forum on Forests and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), in collaboration with Governments, the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and other relevant organizations in the field.

International Day of Forests: The theme for each year is chosen by the Collaborative Partnership on Forests. The theme for 2023 is 'forests and health.' Forests cover one-third of the Earth's landmass. Around 1.6 billion people depend on forests for their livelihood, medicines, fuel, food, and shelter. Forests are also home to more than 80 percent of land animals, insects, and plants. There are 3 trillion trees in all the forests on Earth. Forests are defined as a large group of trees. In order to be considered an actual forest, trees have to cover at least 0.5 hectares.

### World Poetry Day

World Poetry Day is celebrated on 21 March, and was declared by UNESCO in 1999, "with the aim of supporting linguistic diversity through poetic expression and increasing the opportunity for endangered languages to be heard".

World Poetry Day on March 21st serves as a reminder of the magnitude that reading and writing poetry has enriched and inspired the way we live our lives. Ever since humans have been recording history, poetry has challenged the norm with new ways of thinking through allegory and complex emotion. Words have always been the binding source between people and allows us to see life from a new perspective. Poetry is the artistic mastery of this phenomena, by conveying emotions within us and creating the ability to influence others. It's our poetic nature that allows words to be the bridge to our feelings.

### International Nowruz Day

Every year on March 21, the International Nowruz Day is a much-anticipated global New Year's festival that marks the spring equinox, It is celebrated as the beginning of the new year by more than 300 million people all around the world and has been celebrated for over 3,000 years in the Balkans, the Black Sea Basin, the Caucasus, Central Asia, the Middle East and other regions.

Inscribed in 2009 on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity as a cultural tradition observed by numerous peoples, Nowruz is an ancestral festivity marking the first day of spring and the renewal of nature. It promotes values of peace and solidarity between generations and within families as well as reconciliation and neighbourliness, thus contributing to cultural diversity and friendship among peoples and different communities.

### World Down Syndrome Day

World Down Syndrome Day is marked each year on March 21, beginning in 2007. The 21st day of March was selected to signify the uniqueness of the triplication of the 21st chromosome which causes Down syndrome. Every year on March 21, World Down Syndrome Day is observed to create awareness about Down syndrome.

Down syndrome is a naturally occurring chromosomal arrangement that has always been a part of the human condition. It exists in all regions globally and commonly affects learning styles, physical characteristics, and overall health. In order to ensure proper growth and development, social learning programs support and integrate with anyone who has Down syndrome.

### International Day of Happiness

It's a day to be happy, of course! Since 2013, the United Nations has celebrated the International Day of Happiness as a way to recognise the importance of happiness in the lives of people around the world.

Happiness is a fundamental human goal. The United Nations General Assembly recognizes this goal and calls for "a more inclusive, equitable and balanced approach to economic growth that promotes the happiness and well-being of all peoples."

In 2015, the UN launched the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, which seek to end poverty, reduce inequality, and protect our planet – three key aspects that lead to well-being and happiness.

The United Nations invites each person of any age, plus every classroom, business and government to join in celebration of the International Day of Happiness.

### **World Oral Health Day**

World Oral Health Day is observed globally on March 20 every year with the primary aim of creating awareness about the importance of oral health. The day is celebrated to promote good oral hygiene habits, encourage people to take care of their teeth, and educate them on how to prevent dental problems. Each year, World Oral Health Day is given a specific theme. The theme for 2023 is "Be Proud of Your Mouth". It was chosen for three years as part of a campaign launched by the World Dental Federation (FDI) in 2021. The last two World Oral Health Days also had the same theme.

Oral health is an essential part of overall health and well-being and it is important to maintain good oral hygiene to prevent dental problems. Neglecting oral health can lead to various problems such as tooth decay, gum disease, and bad breath. World Health Day is geared towards inspiring people to unite and reduce the burden of oral diseases.

### **International Client's Day**

The global business community celebrates International Client's Day on March 19 every year. As the name entails, it is all about the client on this particular unofficial holiday. Various organizations around the world take the time to thank and congratulate their customers, visitors, partners, and even online shoppers — basically anyone who could be labeled a 'client'.

As , No matter what goods or services you sell, the truth is that your business would be nothing without its clients. No matter whether we're talking about those who visit the shopping mall every few weeks or those who prefer to make their purchases over the internet, the truth is that no business would make it without them.

They're the ones who not only pay you for what you offer, but do a great amount of advertising for you as well. Remember: no celebrity paid thousands if not millions of dollars to say he or she loves a certain product could ever convince your stubborn but lovable grandparents to buy an item as well as you can, and your satisfied clients do you favors like this every single day. And that's why showing them your appreciation is so important!

### **Indian Embassy in Kathmandu celebrates 21st Golden Jubilee Scholarship Day**

The Embassy of India, Kathmandu celebrated the 21st Golden Jubilee Scholarship Day on March 18. On the occasion, Ambassador Naveen Srivastava announced that a special Embassy of India's roll of honour will be awarded to meritorious graduating Golden Jubilee scholars, in different categories from next year.

The prestigious Golden Jubilee Scholarship was established in the year 2002 to mark the completion of 50 years of India-Nepal economic cooperation. At the inception of this scheme, 50 Nepali students were awarded the scholarship. In the year 2007, the

numbers of scholarships were increased to 100. Since the year 2012, the numbers of scholarships have been doubled to 200. Under this scholarship scheme, an MBBS/BDS student receives NRs. 4000/- per month for five years, a BE student receives NRs. 4000/- per month for four years, and a student studying in other undergraduate courses like BA, BEd, B. Pharmacy, BSc Agriculture, BBA, BBM and BBS receives NRs. 3000/- per month for three years.

### **Google Doodle Today: March 19 Celebrates Nobel Laureate Mario Molina's Birth Anniversary**

The Google Doodle of March 19, 2023 is dedicated to Mexican chemist Mario Molina, who is famous for his work on the ozone layer. March 19, 2023 marks the 80th birth anniversary of Molina. Google pays tribute to him through a doodle which depicts the molecular form of ozone, O<sub>3</sub>, as one of the 'Os' of 'GOOGLE', and replaces the other 'O' with the Sun. The ozone layer protects Earth from the Sun's harmful ultraviolet radiation.

The doodle also shows the hole in the ozone layer, and denotes the fact that chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) contributed to the formation of the ozone hole. Chlorofluorocarbons were found in air conditioners and aerosol sprays

### **The 6th Global Recycling Day**

Every year, the Earth yields billions of tons of natural resources and at some point, in the not too distant future, it will run out. That's why we must think again about what we throw away – seeing not waste, but opportunity. The last decade has been the hottest on record, and we are now facing a climate emergency of unparalleled proportions. If we don't make significant and rapid changes, we will see continued rising global temperatures, the melting of icecaps, continents on fire and rapid deforestation.

This directly affects humanity with increased poverty, immigration from displaced communities, job losses, waste mountains and natural habitats disappearing. We have the power to make lasting changes to combat this, and with recycling being recognized in the UN's Sustainable Development Goals 2030, we are already seeing many individuals, governments and organisations taking direct action to support the global green agenda.

Recycling is a key part of the circular economy, helping to protect our natural resources. Each year the 'Seventh Resource' (recyclables) saves over 700 million tonnes in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and this is projected to increase to 1 billion tons by 2030. There is no doubt recycling is on the front line in the war to save the future of our planet and humanity.

### **Ordnance Factories Day: India**

Ordnance Factories are a branch of the government that is engaged in the research and development of weapons for the military, testing, producing, performing logistics and marketing them. Ordnance Factory Day is observed on March 18, annually in India.



It is the day on which the first Ordnance factory was set up by the British at Cossipore, Kolkata in 1801, during colonial rule. The day is celebrated by the Ministry of Defence, who hoist the Indian flag, sing the national anthem and then exhibit various artillery and other items used by the Indian Armed Forces, to the public.

### World Sleep Day

World Sleep Day (the Friday before the northern hemisphere vernal equinox) is an annual event organized by the World Sleep Day Committee of the World Sleep Society, formerly World Association of Sleep Medicine (WASM), since 2008.[1] The goal is to celebrate the benefits of good and healthy sleep and to draw society's attention to the burden of sleep problems and their medical, educational, and social aspects, and to promote the prevention and management of sleep disorders.

### National Vaccination Day or National Immunization Day

Every year, National Vaccination Day or National Immunization Day is observed in India on March 16 with an aim to spread awareness about the importance of vaccines in the healthcare system. The day is observed to create awareness regarding how effective vaccinations are to prevent deadly diseases.

It was first observed on 16 March 1995 when the first dose of Oral Polio Vaccine was given. It is an attempt to increase awareness for the eradication of polio from the planet earth

Every year, the day is celebrated under a specific theme. In 2022, the theme was, 'Vaccines Work For Everyone'. However, the theme for this year is not announced yet

### World Consumer Rights Day

World Consumer Rights Day is celebrated on March 15 every year with an aim to raise global awareness about consumer rights and promote consumer protection. The day is also commemorated to be aware about the market injustices across the world. The World Consumer Rights Day is globally recognised and accredited by the United Nations. For 40 years Consumers International has run the campaign, uniting the consumer movement to celebrate together. Consumers International Members help to select the campaign topic each year to help mobilise global action on pressing issues impacting consumers.

### International Day to Combat Islamophobia

The U.N. General Assembly established the International Day to Combat Islamophobia in a resolution passed by a unanimous majority in 2022, designating March 15 as the day of the holiday's celebration. The Organization of Islamic Cooperation was represented by Pakistan in the resolution's introduction. It is in remembrance of the day in 2019 in Christchurch, New Zealand, when a shooter opened fire inside two mosques, killing 51 people and wounding another 40. The resolution was formally introduced by Pakistan's U.N. representative, Munir Akram. He said that this resolution acknowledges the widespread rise in intolerance, prejudice, and violence against members of numerous religious and other communities, regardless of who is doing it.

### International Day of Action for Rivers

The International Day of Action for Rivers observed on 14 March is a day dedicated to solidarity – when diverse communities around the world come together with one voice to say that rivers matter. That communities having access to clean and flowing water matters. That everyone should have a say in decisions that affect their water and their lives. That it's our time to stand up for these rights, now more than ever.

We're celebrating the 26th Anniversary of this Day for Rivers by also highlighting the importance of being a protector and voice for rivers.

### International Day of Mathematics

Every year on March 14th, people around the world gather together to celebrate the importance of mathematics and everything it's used for, Mathematics is defined as the study of such topics as quantity, structure, space, and change. This definition makes it sound like you have to be a rocket scientist to do math. But whether you realize it or not, you probably use mathematics daily. Do you balance your checkbook? When you have to drive somewhere, do you estimate out how much time it will take to arrive? Do you count calories? Have you ever measured ingredients when you're cooking? Do you do your own taxes? If you do any of these things, you're using math!

### Pi Day

Pi Day is an annual celebration of the mathematical constant  $\pi$ . Pi Day is observed on March 14 since 3, 1, and 4 are the first three significant figures of  $\pi$ . It was founded in 1988 by Larry Shaw, an employee of the San Francisco, California science museum, the Exploratorium. and it also happens to be Albert Einstein's birthday.

### World Rotaract Day

World Rotaract Day - 13 March: is a special day dedicated to celebrating and recognizing the accomplishments of young adults who are involved in the Rotaract movement. Rotaract is a global network of young professionals who work together to promote community service, professional development, and cultural exchange. The day is observed on March 13th each year and is an opportunity to raise awareness about the work that Rotaract clubs are doing around the world.

Rotaract was first established in 1968 in North Carolina, USA, and has since grown to become a global movement with over 250,000 members in more than 10,000 clubs around the world. Rotaract clubs are made up of young adults between the ages of 18 and 30 who come together to address community needs, develop leadership skills, and build international understanding.

On World Rotaract Day, Rotaract clubs around the world hold events and activities to celebrate the achievements of their members and raise awareness about the impact of their work. These events can include service projects, social gatherings, fundraising activities, and more.

### Commonwealth Day

Every year, on the second Monday of March, 56 countries from around the world hold celebrations to commemorate Commonwealth Day. While this day was originally referred to as “Empire Day” and had been celebrated on Queen Victoria’s birthday on May 24th since 1904, Commonwealth Day wasn’t established as such until 1977, when one of its member states proposed this date for all member states of the organization to simultaneously celebrate this occasion, led by the head of the Commonwealth of Nations, the current British ruler.

With 'Forging a Sustainable and Peaceful Common Future' as its theme, the day aims to unite 2.5 billion Commonwealth citizens in celebration of their shared values and principles, and in pursuit of a common future, centred on sustainability and peace.

### World Day Against Cyber Censorship

Every year on March 12th, World Day Against Cyber Censorship rallies support for an unrestricted Internet that is accessible to all. The day also draws attention to ways governments around the world censor free speech online. The Internet lets people around the world gain access to vast amounts of information. Not only can people get information on nearly any topic imaginable, but they can get it quickly, and usually for little cost. Most people who have access to the internet take it for granted. They might also take for granted the idea of sharing things with others over the worldwide web. Unfortunately, however, there are people in the world who want to restrict the internet. These people don’t want people to use their freedom of speech over the worldwide web.

Each year, this issue is becoming more of a problem. Just recently, Reporters Without Borders unveiled several digital predators of freedom. According to Reporters Without Borders, these digital predators represent a clear danger for freedom of opinion and expression, and article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights guarantees this right. Digital predators harass people online, censor information, spread disinformation, and use the internet to spy.

### Ayya Vaikunda Swamikal birth anniversary

Prime Minister Narendra Modi today paid tribute to Ayya Vaikunda Swamikal on his birth anniversary. In a tweet, Mr Modi said, he devoted himself to serving others and nurturing a society that is inclusive and just. The Prime Minister said, Ayya Vaikunda Swamikal undertook numerous efforts to empower the downtrodden as well. Mr Modi said, his thoughts will keep inspiring people across generations.

Ayya Vaikundar also known as Siva Narayanar or Vaikunda Swami is the first and the foremost Purna avatar of Eka-Paran as per Ayyavazhi Mythology. He was born to Lord Narayana and his consort Goddess Lakshmi at the Sea of Tiruchendur on the 20th of Masi, 1008 K.E.

### International Day of Women Judges

International Day of Women Judges holds every March 10 to recognize the contributions of women judges worldwide and is part of global effort to ensuring

gender equality and to address gender-related judicial integrity issues. It aims to incorporate women's representation issues into judicial systems, On - 10 March 2022, for the very first time, we celebrated the International Day of Women Judges pursuant to the recent United Nations General Assembly Resolution 75/274 of 2021.

### **CISF Raising Day :India**

Every year on March 10, the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) Raising Day is observed to mark the CISF's founding in 1969. The Ministry of Home Affairs' top-tier central armed police force, the CISF, is in charge of providing security protection for several public sector organisations, airports, seaports, power plants, and other significant infrastructure projects across the nation.

### **India Day Celebrations at PDAC-2023 in Toronto**

India Day was celebrated at the PDAC-2023 convention in Toronto on Tuesday. The Secretary, Ministry of Mines, Shri Vivek Bhardwaj along with senior officials of the Ministry, Consulate General of India, Toronto, Canada and officials of the Ministry of Coal and C.I.I. attended the event. Large gathering of prospective investors, mining experts and mineral explorers also attended the program. On this occasion Indian officials gave presentation on the mining opportunities in India, followed by a question answer session. Mines Secretary, Shri Vivek Bhardwaj also had one to one interaction with the dignitaries present on the occasion. Event has concluded with a small Holi celebrations and distribution of sweets and millet items brought from India as part of International Year of Millets initiative by the Government of India

### **International Women's Day**

Why do we celebrate women's day on March 8. - In 1917, women in Russia chose to protest and strike under the slogan "Bread and Peace" on the last Sunday in February (which fell on March 8 on the Gregorian calendar). Their movement ultimately led to the enactment of women's suffrage in Russia."

This day on the Gregorian calendar in use elsewhere was March 8. International Women's Day was marked for a first time by the United Nations in 1975.

International Women's Day is a global holiday celebrated annually on March 8 as a focal point in the women's rights movement, bringing attention to issues such as gender equality, reproductive rights, and violence and abuse against women.

### **Holi. - A celebration of colours, tradition, and health**

A festival of vibrant colours and love, Holi truly represents kaleidoscopic life, without caring for all human boundaries. It symbolises the inherent meaning of life and love for each other, marking the very spirit of tolerance and brotherhood in a diverse society, like ours. It is indeed an opportunity to further promote goodwill and harmony among people, who otherwise appear divided into several lines, and gives out a message to work together for the progress and prosperity of our society and nation. This helps revitalise relationships and strengthen emotional bonds.

**3-day Cycling Race held to commemorate 72nd Air Force Day in Sri Lanka ( 2 March )** An Indian Air force cycling team participated in a Cycling Race organised by Air Force of Sri Lanka. The three-day Cycling Race of 395 kilometres was held to commemorate the 72nd Air Force Day in the island nation. The visiting team interacted with High Commissioner and Commander Sri Lankan Air Force. The team also paid their respects to the martyrs of the Indian Peace Keeping Force during their visit.

### **National Pharmacy Education Day**

The Pharmacy Council of India (PCI) has announced 6th March as the National Pharmacy Education Day to commemorate the birth anniversary of Professor Mahadeva Lal Schroff and to recognise his contribution to establishing pharmacy education in India.

Dr. Bharati Pravin Pawar, Minister of State inaugurates Pharma Anveshan-2023 on the occasion of National Pharmacy Education Day, It is the need of the hour to change our gears and adopt a focused approach to impart the best pharmacy education keeping our curriculum in line with the latest developments - Dr. Bharati Pravin Pawar.

### **World Tennis Day**

We celebrate World Tennis Day on the first Monday of March every year and on this day, we are learning all there is to know about this interesting sport. This year, it takes place on March 6. It started out as a handball game, known as “jeu de paume” (“game of the palm”), and has transcended into one of the most popular sports in the world. The holiday was launched by StarGames in 2013 with the aim of encouraging participation in the sport. The sport is played by millions of people from around the world in public courts or in clubs.

### **International Day for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Awareness**

Observed on 5 March, the International Day for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Awareness plays a role in deepening the global public's understanding about how disarmament efforts contribute to enhancing peace and security, preventing and ending armed conflicts, and curbing human suffering caused by weapons.

### **National Safety Day**

The National Safety Day is celebrated every year on March 4 to raise awareness about safety protocols that one should follow in order to avoid accidents and mishaps at the workplace. The day aims to educate the general public about the measures one should follow to work safely.

The theme of National Safety Day is “Reducing Workplace Accidents”. Each year on March 4, the National Safety Council observes National Safety Day to commemorate the founding and founding principles of the organization.



### World Obesity Day

World Obesity Day is observed globally on 4 March as of March 2020 (having previously been observed on the 11th October) with the view of promoting practical solutions to end the global obesity crisis.

It is organized by the World Obesity Federation, a non-profit body which is in official relations with the World Health Organization and is a collaborating body on the Lancet Commission on Obesity. World Obesity states that its aim is to "lead and drive global efforts to reduce, prevent and treat obesity".

### World Wildlife Day

On 20 December 2013, at its 68th session, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), in its resolution UN decided to proclaim 3 March, the international day of the adoption of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) on the planet raise awareness and benefits fauna and flora in 1973, as World Wildlife Day. The commemoration was proposed by Thailand to celebrate and raise awareness of the world's wild fauna and flora.

As this year's theme – 'Partnerships for Wildlife Conservation' – highlights, we need to work across governments, civil society, and the private sector to turn commitment into action. And we need much bolder actions now to cut emissions, accelerate renewables, and build climate resilience.

[www.fundamakers.com](http://www.fundamakers.com)

### World Civil Defense Day

On World Civil Defense Day on March 1 every year, the world's attention is on civil protection and preparedness. People need to learn how to prevent, prepare for, and manage emergency situations such as accidents and disasters. The day celebrates the honor and prestige of those in civil protection. It calls on more people to learn about safety measures and protection skills they would need in the case of any form of emergencies, natural or man-made. A famous Civil Defense Day quote is, "We can only hope for the best as long as we are satisfyingly prepared for the worst." Civil Defense Day is all about raising awareness of the need to plan ahead.

### World Compliment Day

World Compliment Day is celebrated every March 1 to spread joy through simple verbal affirmations of appreciation. With less focus on providing material representations of appreciation, this day is meant to cost absolutely nothing at all, so everyone can participate! Giving a compliment is easy, whether it's telling someone you like their shoes, or letting them know they're doing a great job — whatever it is, it can change someone's whole day around.

### World Music Therapy Day

World Music Therapy Day on March 1 every year is a day for people all around the world to celebrate the healing power of music. People have always known and spoken about the power and benefits of music. Music therapy exists as a clinical field. Music therapists use music to help people, especially children, people with disabilities,

people with mental issues, and the elderly. Music therapy is an established health profession where music is used therapeutically to address physical, emotional, cognitive, and social needs.

## **SUMMITS AND MOU'S**

### **Godrej group and SBI sign a strategic MoU to deepen partnership**

Godrej Capital, the financial services arm of the Godrej Group has signed a strategic memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the State Bank of India (SBI) to deepen their partnership, wherein the latter would provide various financial products and offerings.

Speaking on the development, Pirojsha Godrej, chairperson of Godrej Capital, said, "This partnership is a big step forward in making financial solutions more accessible and affordable. Together, we aim to unlock opportunities for financial inclusion and build a long-term, sustainable franchise, helping drive India's growth story forward." This association leverages the strengths of both groups by facilitating a gamut of financial services provided by the bank, including, and not limited to, banking products, credit cards, wealth management, Life Insurance, and General Insurance as preferred partners.

Dinesh Khara, chairman of SBI, speaking on the announcement, said, "We are happy to embark on this exciting partnership with Godrej Capital. We aim to capitalize on synergies that will empower our customers and accelerate the growth of our economy. In addition, we will focus on delivering financial solutions to the Godrej group."

### **Arunachal Pradesh To Sign MoA With CPSU For Hydropower Development**

The Arunachal Pradesh cabinet, in a meeting, chaired by chief minister Pema Khandugave "go ahead" for the proposed signing of the memorandum of agreement (MoA) with Central Public Sector Undertaking (CPSU) for development of hydropower in the state.

The signing of the MoA is expected to unlock the potential 5 hydroelectric projects (HEPs) with an installed capacity of 2820 MW in Arunachal Pradesh.

The cabinet approved the MoA to be signed with CPSU for development of hydropower in the state. This will pave the way to unlocking potential 5 HEPs with an installed capacity of 2820 MW. This will spur huge investment in the State and generate employment," a statement from the Arunachal Pradesh CMO said. Further, the Arunachal Pradesh cabinet gave its nod to 'recall' the order of new chairman and members of APPSC (Arunachal Pradesh Public Service Commission) and recommended the same to governor for recalling the appointment orders of February 7, 2023.

### **1st G20 Disaster Risk Reduction Working Group meeting to begin at Gandhinagar: 30 March**

The First G20 Disaster Risk Reduction Working Group meeting under India's G20 Presidency will begin today at Gandhinagar in Gujarat. Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister Dr P K Mishra and Minister of State for Communication Devusinh Chauhan, will inaugurate the meeting.

Addressing the media at Gandhinagar, Member Secretary of National Disaster Management Authority Kamal Kishore said that five priority areas have been identified for the meeting which include an early warning for all, resilient infrastructure and improving the National system for financing Disaster Risk Reduction. Around 100 delegates from the G20 member countries, invitee countries and from nine International organisations are participating in the three day event. During the meeting, two side events are planned on 'Early Warning system and Disaster Resilient Infrastructure'. On the third day of the meeting, the participating delegates will be taken on a field visit to Smritivan Earthquake Memorial and Museum at Bhuj. The event also provides an opportunity to the delegates to get a glimpse of cultural heritage of Gujarat.

**2nd G20 Sherpa meeting under India's G20 Presidency will begin in Kerala: 30 March** The second G20 Sherpa meeting under India's G20 Presidency will begin today at the picturesque Kumarakom village in Kerala's Kottayam district. Over 120 delegates, drawn from G20 member nations, representatives of nine invitee countries and various international and regional organizations will attend the four-day event, chaired by India's G20 Sherpa Amitabh Kant.

The multilateral discussions at the meeting will focus on G20's economic and developmental priorities as well as contemporary global challenges. A range of cross-cutting issues of global concern, and the work being done under the 13 working groups under the Sherpa track will form part of the deliberations during the meet. Two high-level side events on Digital Public Infrastructure and Green Development will also be held today. The Kumarakom meet will take forward the outcomes of various Sherpa Track and Finance Track meetings and form the basis of the Leader's Declaration, slated to be adopted at the New Delhi Summit in September later this year.

### **MoD signs 3 defence contracts worth ₹5,400 cr for Army, Navy**

The Ministry of Defence on Wednesday signed three contracts worth ₹5,400 crore with defence PSUs for procurement of automated air defence control and reporting system, Sarang electronic support measure systems and advanced Communication Satellite GSAT 7B.

The first contract with Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) pertains to procurement of Automated Air Defence Control and Reporting System 'Project Akashteer' at a cost of ₹1,982 crore for the Indian Army,

The second contract, also with the BEL, is for acquisition of Sarang Electronic Support Measure (ESM) systems along with associated engineering support package at an overall cost of ₹412 crore for the Indian Navy,

Other than that, both the projects will encourage participation of Indian electronics and associated industries, including MSMEs, who are sub-vendors of the BEL, believes the MoD.

The third contract with New Space India Limited (NSIL), a Central Public Sector Enterprise under Department of Space, Bengaluru, is for procurement of an advanced

communication satellite, GSAT 7B, which will provide high throughput services to the Indian Army, at an overall cost of ₹2,963 crore.

### **Ministry of External Affairs organises seminar on - Seven Decades of the Constitution of India**

The Union Minister of State for External Affairs, Meenakshi Lekhi, inaugurated the seminar on 'Seven Decades of the Constitution of India' on March 28.

The Ministry of External Affairs organised the Seminar on the occasion of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav in collaboration with the Parliamentary Research and Training Institute for Democracies (PRIDE) at the Parliament Library Building. The Seminar was also organised in the context of India's Presidency of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organisation (AALCO).

The Seminar covered the following themes :

1 - Seven decades of the Indian Constitution

2 - Indian Constitution and Human Rights

3 - Indian Constitution and Internationalism

Justice Ranjan Gogoi, Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) and former Chief Justice of India; Justice Arun Mishra, Chairperson of National Human Rights Commission and former Supreme Court Judge; and Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel, Chairperson of National Green Tribunal and former Supreme Court judge, were the speakers at the Seminar.

### **India To Host SCO National Security Advisors Meet Today; 29 March**

As the current chair of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), India will today host the meeting of National Security Advisors (NSA) and top officials in New Delhi.

Pakistan and China are likely to attend the SCO-NSA meeting virtually.

National Security Adviser Ajit Doval will make opening remarks at the meeting. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is an intergovernmental organization established in 2001 and it comprises eight member states, namely, India, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

In 2022, India assumed the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Chairship for 2023.

Secretary of the Security Council of the Russian Federation, Nikolai Patrushev, will attend the annual meeting of the secretaries of security councils of SCO member states in New Delhi on Wednesday,

India became a full member of SCO on June 9 in 2017. There are four Observer States viz Afghanistan, Belarus, Iran and Mongolia and six dialogue partners - Armenia, Azerbaijan, Cambodia, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Turkey.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is a major regional powerhouse that was established over two decades ago with the aim of promoting economic, political, and military cooperation among its member nations. The eight-member countries of SCO represent around 42 per cent of the world's total population and 25 per cent of the global GDP.

### **Mumbai to host 1st Trade & Investment Working Group meeting Under G20**

Investment and trade are key drivers of growth and employment creation and in order to find common solutions, it is important to create a shared knowledge of the difficulties that come while accelerating global trade and investment. With this aim, the 1st Trade and Investment Working Group (TIWG) meeting under India's G20 Presidency is scheduled to be held in the financial capital of India, Mumbai, from March 28–30, 2023. Over 100 representatives from G20 member nations, invitee nations, regional groups, and international organisations will participate in this three-day meeting to discuss ways to speed up international trade and investment. On the first day, a seminar on 'Trade Finance' will be conducted by the Export Credit Guarantee Corporation of India (ECGC) and India EXIM Bank. The two-panel talks will take place to discuss the role of banks, financial institutions, development finance institutions, and export credit agencies in closing the trade finance gap. The seminar will also focus on how digitalisation and fintech solutions can improve access to trade finance.

Key agendas that will be discussed during the first sessions:-

Current trends in international trade and trade finance amidst the pandemic and growing import bills in developing countries.

Cause of trade finance gaps, including reduced credit line support in the private sector and inflation cuts into bank lending limits.

The role of export credit agencies in bolstering trade finance

### **India-Africa Army Chiefs Conclave On March 28 And 29**

Pune will also host the strategically significant India-Africa Army Chiefs Conclave, on March 28 and 29. The conclave will include talks by renowned speakers on the India-Africa Defense partnership, the Indian defence industry's potential and contribution towards regional security.

There is a natural feeling of partnership between India and Africa," remarked Defence Minister Rajnath Singh today (March 28) while addressing the first India-Africa Army Chiefs' Conclave. The event is being organised on the sidelines of the second Africa-India Joint Exercise 'AFINDEX'

India has been one of the biggest contributors of troops to UN Peacekeeping Operations all over the world and the country's Army is considered to be among the expert agencies in the world in mine removal operations.

### **Gentari signs pact (MoU) with Tata Motors for 5,000 e-commercial vehicles**

Clean energy solutions provider Gentari on Monday said it has signed an agreement with Tata Motors for the delivery of 5,000 units of e-commercial vehicles.

The memorandum of understanding (MoU) through its affiliate entity is for three years, Gentari said in a statement. "Gentari, through its affiliated entity Amplus Power Supply Private Limited, signed an MoU with Tata Motors, India's largest commercial vehicle manufacturer, in 2022, whereby the latter will deliver 5,000 units of Tata Ace EV, over three years. The MoU includes delivery of 1,000 units in the first year for deployment in cities, such as Delhi, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Pune and Kolkata," it said.



High-quality electric four-wheelers coming into the market opens a whole new segment to electrify in the urban delivery ecosystem, MoEViNG CEO Vikash Mishra said.

"We are excited to work with Gentari to deploy three- and four-wheeler commercialelectric vehicles across India to reduce the carbon footprint of deliveries. With our operations, charging and maintenance footprint spanning across India, we hope to bring change on-ground and electrify deliveries for e-commerce, e-grocery, the logistics segment and now also large FMCG and traditional companies,"

### **Telangana signs three MoUs with Western Australia government**

A total of three MoUs were signed between the governments of Telangana and Western Australia when a delegation led by Western Australia's Minister for Emergency Services, Innovation and Digital Economy, Stephen Dawson visited State-led startup incubators T-Hub and WE-Hub.

The MoUs signed include one between Hyderabad's Cyber Security Centre of Excellence DSCI and Western Australia's CyberWest, a government-funded innovation hub, which will harness the expertise of both organisations using innovation, design, workshops and industry engagement. The second MoU was between Cyber Security Centre of Excellence DSCI and Edith Cowan University, through this there will be a collaboration for mutual benefit including research, education, innovation, incubation, marketing, hackathons, corporate innovation and training programs.

The third MoU was a Letter of Intent between WE-Hub and CyberWest which will accelerate growth in the local and international ecosystem and support goals of diversity and inclusion within the cyber security sector. This collaboration will also help in seeding female-led cyber security startups and also integrating cyber safety into all cohorts. Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Dawson said: "Western Australia is at the forefront of cyber security research and innovation with leading organisations. The purpose of this visit is to engage with the Telangana ecosystem and understand the priorities as well as convey."

### **Second meeting of Environment and Climate Sustainability Working Group to begin at Mahatma Mandir in Gandhinagar**

The second meeting of the Environment and Climate Sustainability Working Group will begin at Mahatma Mandir in Gandhinagar today. Representatives from more than 30 countries and several international organizations will take part in the event. The meeting will be formally inaugurated tomorrow in the presence of Union Minister Darshana Jardosh. Representatives from more than 30 countries and several international organizations will take part in the event. The three-day meeting will focus on three priority areas such as biodiversity and land degradation, Encouraging resource efficiency in the circular economy, and promoting the sustainable and climate -resilient blue economy.

AIR correspondent reports that the G 20 representatives were accorded a traditional welcome at the Ahmedabad Airport. The three-day meet will commence today with a side event on Water Resource management during which India's capabilities to make water accessible to all will be showcased. All the G 20 countries will also demonstrate

their best practices of Water Resource Management. Later, the delegates will be taken on an excursion to the ancient stepwell Adalaj ni Vav which will demonstrate the long - standing Indian tradition of water conservation. They will also be taken to Engineering Marvels Sabarmati Siphon structure and Sabarmati Escape. During the meeting, various water management interventions of the Indian Government such as Namami Gange, Jal Jeevan Mission, Jal Shakti Abhiyan will be showcased.

### **PM Modi to address One World TB Summit at Varanasi**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit his parliamentary constituency Varanasi today. PM will address the One World TB Summit at Rudrakash Convention Centre at around 10:30 AM.

On the occasion of World Tuberculosis Day, Prime Minister will address the One World TB Summit. This summit is being organised by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) and Stop TB Partnership. Founded in 2001, the Stop TB Partnership is a United Nations-hosted organisation that amplifies the voices of the people, communities, and countries affected by TB.

During the event, Prime Minister will launch various initiatives and will also award select States and Districts for their progress toward ending TB.

In March 2018, during the End TB summit held in New Delhi, Prime Minister called on India to achieve TB-related SDG targets by 2025, five years ahead of stipulated time.

One World TB Summit will provide an opportunity to further deliberate upon the targets as the country moves forward to meet its TB elimination objectives.

International delegates from over 30 countries are scheduled to be present at the summit.

### **Paralympic Committee of India signs MOU with Makers Hive and Vilay Sports**

The Paralympic Committee of India (PCI) has inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Makers Hive and Vilay Sports.

The MoU was signed in the presence of Dr Deepa Malik, a former Paralympic medalist and current president of the PCI, Mr Gursharan Singh, the renowned para-athlete Shri Devendra Jhajharia, Mr Pranav Vempati, CEO of Makers Hive, and Mr Siddharth Ram, CEO of Vilay Sports at the Shree Shiv Chhatrapati Sports Complex in Pune, during the 21st National Para-Athletics Championship.

Vilay Sports is a sports management company that focuses on creating and preserving alliances throughout the spectrum of sports. The company offers clients a 360-degree holistic service and offers cutting-edge solutions to support their success. Vilay Sports' team is eager to work with Makers Hive, an innovative assistive technology firm in India, and PCI, the country's official para-sports regulatory organisation, to create a sustainable way of life for people with disabilities.

On the other hand, the mission of Makers Hive is to establish a revolutionary ecosystem where technology and social problems are met, analytics and human aspirations are encountered, innovation and customer satisfaction are achieved, and creativity empowers the next generation to truly benefit society.

### **MoU signed for setting up nation's first PM MITRA Park in Tamil Nadu**

The nation's first PM Mega Integrated Textile Regions and Apparel (PM MITRA) Park is set to be established in Virudhunagar District of Tamil Nadu, and employ an estimated 2 lakh people, the Memorandum of Understanding for which was signed between the Central and State governments here on Wednesday.

Marking the occasion, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on his Twitter handle: "Today is a very special day for my sisters and brothers of Tamil Nadu!"

"The aspirational district of Virudhunagar will be home to a PM MITRA mega textiles park. This will boost the local economy and will prove to be beneficial for the youngsters of the state #PragatiKaPMMitra," he said. Giving a big boost to the textile sector, the PM MITRA Parks, in all, would create huge employment opportunities and an estimated 20 lakh people would get 'new work' attracting about Rs 70,000 crore investment, Union Textiles Minister Piyush Goyal said here.

The mega project would ensure south Tamil Nadu's economic growth, Chief Minister M K Stalin said.

### **G20 Research and Innovation Initiative Gathering**

The two-day G20 Research and Innovation Initiative Gathering (RIIG) Conference will begin in Dibrugarh, Assam today. It will deliberate on ways towards building a sustainable and circular bio-economy.

About 100 delegates from G20 members, guest countries and International organizations, along with invited participants from the scientific community will be present on the occasion.

The event will bring together key actors, including national authorities and experts from the G20 members responsible for planning, setting up new, and managing existing programmes on the subject.

The area of focus will include challenges and opportunities in agriculture, de-carbonization of the industry as well as bio-energy and bioresource management.

The conference will also deliberate on national and regional programmes and country experiences, regulatory environment and public/private sector collaboration, role of research, development and innovation in creating new, resource-efficient, sustainable and more circular bio-based technologies, products, services and cooperation between G20 members on specific thematic areas.

This event will further promote active engagement between all key stakeholders, including the 3Ps (people, policies and places), and lead towards an inclusive policy-making approach providing a conceptual framework to mainstream circular bio-economy models across different sectors.

### **Himachal signs MoU with French Agency to improve drinking water, sanitation**

To improve drinking water and sanitation services in five towns of Himachal Pradesh, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) of Rs 817.12 crore project has been signed by the State Government with the French Development Agency Agence Francaise de Developpement (AFD).

The MoU was signed in the presence of Chief Minister Thakur Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu and Deputy Chief Minister Mukesh Agnihotri by the Secretary Jal Shakti Vibhag Amitabh Awasthi on behalf of the State Government and country Director AFD Bruno Bosle on behalf of French Development Agency.

The objective of the project is to develop better sewerage facilities in five towns of the state viz. Manali, Bilaspur, Palampur, Nahan and Karsog and to improve drinking water supply in Manali and Palampur towns. Under the project, Rs 612 crore would be provided by AFD, whereas the State Government would provide Rs. 204.85 crore, said the Chief Minister.

### **Second G20 Sustainable Finance Working Group meeting to begin in Udaipur**

The second Sustainable Finance Working Group (SFWG) meeting under India's G20 Presidency will begin today: 21 March at Udaipur in Rajasthan. The three-day meeting will focus on the identification of relevant policies and best practices for mobilizing sustainable finance to help ensure global growth and stability.

This is the first time for the SFWG to go beyond climate-related issues and engage in dialogue for enabling enhanced financing for select sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) primarily through nature-related data and reporting and social impact investing. On the sidelines of the meeting, two workshops will also be organized today and tomorrow. The first workshop will be on Non-Pricing Policy Levers to support Sustainable Investment. The second Workshop will be on enabling finance for Sustainable Development Goals. More than 90 delegates from the member countries of G20, guest countries, and different international organizations are taking part in this mega-event.

### **3rd Annual Edition Of International SME CONVENTION, 2023 to be held in New Delhi**

The 3rd annual edition of the International SME Convention 2023 (ISC) is going to be organized jointly by the Ministry of MSME & Ministry of External Affairs, India SME

Forum, along with Govt. of Madhya Pradesh as a Key State Partner and Govt. of Uttar Pradesh as Associate State Partner. International Network for SMEs (INSME) and World Union of Small and Medium Enterprises (WUSME) are the international partners and TATA AIA is the insurance partner for the ISC 2023 from 19th – 21st March 2023 in New Delhi.

Shri Narayan Rane, Union Minister for MSME will be the chief guest for the inaugural event with Guests of Honour- Shri Bhanu Pratap Singh Verma, Minister of State for MSME & Dr. Rajkumar Ranjan Singh, Minister of State, Ministry of External Affairs, Shri Om Prakash Saklecha, Minister of MSME & Science & Technology, Govt. of MP and Shri Rakesh Sachan, Minister of MSME, Khadi, Village Industries, Sericulture & Textile, Govt. of UP along with presence of senior officers from Central and State Governments.

### **Nagpur to host C-20 India Inception meeting**

Nagpur City will host the Civil20 India (C-20) Inception meeting from 20th to 21st of this month. C-20 is one of the empowered group, working under the ambit of G-20 Secretariat, which provides a platform for Civil Society Organisations around the world

to voice the people's aspirations to the world leaders in G20. Deputy Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Mr. Devendra Fadnavis, Nobel Laureate Kailash Satyarthi, Spiritual leader Mata Amritanandmayi will be present tomorrow in the inaugural ceremony of the meeting organized at 3.30 pm in Hotel Raddison Blu in Nagpur.

Dr. Swadesh Singh, Sous Sherpa of C-20, while addressing in the pre-event press conference regarding Inception meeting of C-20 in Nagpur today informed that the two-day Conference will focus on the perspective of the Civil Society Organizations and non-government organisations. The deliberations of Civil Society Organisation on various issues will be put in the Inception issues like Health, Lifestyle for Environment, Art and Crafts will be discussed which will take the shape of Policy pact.

#### **4th Defence Cooperation Dialogue between India & the Maldives held in Male**

India and the Maldives conducted the 4th Defence Cooperation Dialogue (DCD) in Male on March 19, 2023. The dialogue was co-chaired by Defence Secretary Shri Giridhar Aramane and his Maldivian counterpart, Chief of Defence Force, Maldives National Defence Forces Major General Abdulla Shamaal.

This DCD is the highest institutionalised interactive mechanism between the two countries. Its significance in chartering the future course of relations between both the Armed Forces was highlighted by the importance given to the talks by the two nations. During the interaction, ongoing bilateral defence cooperation activities were reviewed and both sides expressed satisfaction at the increasing engagements. The talks covered the existing bilateral exercises, with both countries agreeing to increase the complexity of these drills.

#### **Tata Steel Signs MoU With The Ministry Of Steel Under The PLI Scheme**

Tata Steel Limited, Tata Steel Long Products Limited, and The Tinplate Company of India Limited today have signed MoUs for eight product categories with the Ministry of Steel under the Production-linked incentive (PLI) Scheme for specialty steel. Chanakya Chaudhary, Vice President, Corporate Services, Tata Steel said: "We are thankful to the Ministry of Steel for driving the PLI scheme, which would go a long way in realising the National Steel Policy 2017 both in terms of scale and quality of products needed for consumers."

The Indian Steel Industry has been on a growth trajectory for the last few years and is currently the second-largest producer globally. Steel is also one of the sectors driving the much-needed private investment in the country. The MoU signing marks a significant milestone for Tata Steel, enabling the Company to further enhance its capabilities and contribute to the Government's vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat.

#### **Government signs MoU with 27 steel companies, kickstarting Rs 6,322 -crore PLI scheme**

The government on Friday signed memorandums of understanding (MoU) with 27 companies, kickstarting the Rs 6,322 -crore production-linked incentives (PLI) scheme for specialty steel, that is expected to generate investments of up to Rs 30,000 crore over the coming five years.



The scheme will create 25 million tonnes of additional specialty steel manufacturing in the country and create 55,000 new jobs as per a statement by the Indian Steel Association (ISA).

### **PM Modi to inaugurate Global Millets Conference in New Delhi**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the Global Millets (Shree Anna) Conference in New Delhi. The Prime Minister will also address the gathering on the occasion. He will unveil a customised postal stamp and currency coin on the International Year of Millets (IYM) – 2023. A video on Millets will also be released during the event with the announcement of ICAR-IIMR as the Global Centre of Excellence. The Conference will be attended by Agriculture Ministers of six countries, international scientists, nutritionists, health experts, start-up leaders and other stakeholders. It will witness participation from over 100 countries and several stakeholders will attend the event virtually from across the globe.

The two-day Conference will have sessions on a wide range of issues related to millets including promotion and awareness of millets among producers, consumers and other stakeholders; millets' value chain development; health and nutritional aspects of millets, market linkages research and development etc. An Exhibition-cum- Buyer-Seller Meet with a focus on Millets will also be held with the participation of more than 50 domestic and international buyers, importers, exporters and processors for the promotion of millets. The exhibition of more than 100 stalls will showcase millets and millet-based ready-to-cook and ready-to-eat products, by millet-based Startups, and exporters, and live cooking sessions by various international and national chefs.

### **Second meeting of Startup-20 engagement group under India's G-20 Presidency begins in Sikkim**

The two-day meeting of the Startup20 engagement group under India's G20 Presidency began today at Chintan Bhawan in Gangtok. The Startup20 engagement group aims to bring together global startup systems while ensuring that every nation has the freedom to grow its unique ecosystem.

Mr Tamang appreciated the central government's Startup India Initiative to transform India into a country of job creators instead of job seekers. He highlighted various aspects of the scheme including tax exemptions, ease of doing business, and funding assistance. The chief minister also acknowledged the role of the National Credit Guarantee Trust Company, Startup India Seed Fund Scheme, Small Industries Development Bank of India, and Startup India Hub in taking India to the third position in the Global Startup ecosystem and a jump from the 81st to the 40th position in Global Innovation Index in 2022.

### **Ministry of Ayush and Ministry of Rural Development signed MoU for skilling of rural youth & empowering women**

In order to empower women and rural poor youth, the Ministry of Ayush (MoA) and Rural Development signed MoU to collaborate in developing skilled personnel by imparting training for the Ayush healthcare system. The course will also include

training of rural youth as panchakarma technicians, which will be started on a pilot basis. The proposed training will be imparted under Deen Dayal Upadhyaya-GrameenKaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY), which is the Ministry of Rural Development's flagship program, charged with the dual goals of diversifying the incomes of rural poor families and catering to the career ambitions of rural youth.

MoA will aid its institutes to conduct courses, training, and provide certification to the candidates. The Ministry will also depute nodal agencies across the country, who will ensure mobilization, counselling, training, placement, and tracking of candidates as per DDU-GKY norms in their respective designated states.

### **Two-day SCO Tourism Ministers' meeting to begin at Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh : 17 March**

The two-day Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Tourism Ministers' Meeting will start today in Varanasi. Union Minister for Tourism G. Kishan Reddy reached Varanasi yesterday to take part in the meeting. During the meeting, the Tourism Joint Action Plan on the Development of Cooperation in Tourism among SCO member countries would be adopted.

The Joint Action Plan will include actions relating to the promotion of the SCO tourism brand, the promotion of the cultural heritage of the SCO Member States in tourism, sharing and exchange of information and digital technology in tourism, and promoting mutual cooperation in medical and health tourism.

### **RBI and Central Bank of the UAE sign MoU to promote innovation in financial products and services**

The Reserve Bank of India and the Central Bank of the United Arab Emirates signed a Memorandum of Understanding in Abu Dhabi on Wednesday to promote innovation in financial products and services.

As per the MoU, both central banks will work together to explore Central Bank Digital Currencies and investigate interoperability between the CBDCs of CBUAE and RBI. They will conduct proof-of-concept and pilot tests of bilateral CBDC bridge to facilitate cross-border transactions of remittances and trade. This collaboration is expected to increase efficiency and reduce costs in cross-border transactions, furthering the economic ties between India and UAE. The MoU also includes technical collaboration and knowledge sharing on matters related to Fintech and financial products and services.

This collaboration will help both central banks enhance their capabilities and contribute to the development of a robust financial ecosystem. The collaboration between RBI and CBUAE is a significant step towards promoting innovation and collaboration in the field of FinTech.

### **First international conference on Shared Buddhist Heritage to begin in New Delhi**

The first international conference on Shared Buddhist Heritage will commence in New Delhi today 14<sup>th</sup> March. It is being organised with a focus on India's civilisational connect with the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) nations 2023. The two-day

conference aims at re-establishing trans-cultural links and seeking out commonalities, between Buddhist art of Central Asia, art styles, archaeological sites and antiquity in various museum collections of the SCO countries.

The event, under India's leadership of SCO, will bring together Central Asian, EastAsian, South Asian and Arab countries on a common platform to discuss Shared Buddhist Heritage. The SCO countries comprise of Member States, Observer States and Dialogue Partners, including China, Russia and Mongolia. The two-day programme is being organised by the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of External Affairs and the International Buddhist Confederation. A number of Indian scholars of Buddhism will also participate in the event. Participants will also have the opportunity to tour some of the historical sites of Delhi.

### **Lockheed Martin, & Tata ink MoU for fighter plane wings production in India**

Global defence aerospace player Lockheed Martin and India's Tata Group have inked an agreement for the production of fighter plane wings at their joint venture Tata Lockheed Martin Aerostructures Ltd (TLMAL) in Hyderabad.

According to Lockheed Martin, the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) envisions production of 29 fighter wing shipsets, with an option of additional shipsets, with deliveries commencing in 2025.

### **Piyush Goyal to chair sixth meeting of National Startup Advisory Council**

Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal will chair the sixth meeting of the National Startup Advisory Council (NSAC) in New Delhi today, March 11. According to the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, NSAC will deliberate upon matters important for the evolution of the Indian startup ecosystem and will cover important topics such as Tech Landscape and the Way Ahead, Innovation in Logistics, Making India the Global Skill Market, Innovation Hub.

### **Joint Statement of India-US Commercial Dialogue held on 10.03.2023 in New Delhi**

India and the United States of America held the 5th Ministerial level meeting of the bilateral Commercial Dialogue in New Delhi on 10 March 2023. India's Minister of Commerce and Industry, Shri Piyush Goyal, and U.S. Secretary of Commerce, Gina Raimondo, co-chaired and re-launched the Commercial Dialogue in accordance with the U.S.-India Joint Leaders' Statement of September 2021, with a renewed focus on future and emerging areas of bilateral commercial partnership. The Commercial Dialogue is part of ongoing efforts to strengthen the U.S.-India Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership, develop inclusive and fair trade and investment policies, and leverage the interests of the private sector in pursuing new market opportunities that advance prosperity in both countries.

The Minister and the Secretary noted with satisfaction that the bilateral goods and services trade has almost doubled since 2014, exceeding US \$191 billion in 2022, signaling accelerated growth benefitting both countries. With the United States becoming India's largest trading partner in 2022, both sides will take further steps to enhance their commercial collaboration and tap into market potential across multiple

sectors. Both sides envision further coordination on how best to foster an enabling environment for increased investment, including by small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and start-up companies.

### **India, US Sign MoU On Semiconductor Supply Chain And Innovation Partnership**

India and the United States have signed an MoU on semiconductor Supply Chain and Innovation Partnership following the Commercial Dialogue 2023. It was signed between Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal and US Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo in New Delhi.

The MoU seeks to establish a collaborative mechanism between the two governments on Semiconductor Supply chain resiliency and diversification in view of the US's CHIPS and Science Act and India's Semiconductor Mission. The India-US Commercial Dialogue was also re-launched today to discuss cooperation for unlocking new trade and investment opportunities between the two countries.

### **PNB Signs MoU With Central Warehousing Corporation**

Punjab National Bank (PNB) and Central Warehousing Corporation signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to facilitate financing under e-NWR (Electronic Negotiable Warehousing Receipt) on Thursday. The partnership is aimed at providing easy access to finance to farmers, food processors, and traders against the pledge of agriculture commodities stored in CWC warehouses. Punjab National Bank said, "Agriculture is an important sector of the country's economy, and government has been focusing on increasing the income of the farmers who drive this segment. One of the main constraints in increasing farm income has been distress sales by the farmers. With a view to curbing the same, the bank has entered this new MoU."

### **Third session of National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction to begin in New Delhi today: 10 March**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the third session of the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in New Delhi today evening. This year's theme of the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction is building local resilience in the face of climate change.

During the event, the Prime Minister will facilitate awardees of the Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar. The winners of the 2023 Puraskar are the Odisha State Disaster Management Authority and the Lunglei Fire Station of Mizoram.

### **Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA) signed between India and Australia**

The honourable PM of Australia, Mr. Anthony Albanese said that Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA) signed between India and Australia is a transformative agreement which will unlock the next level of potential in trade and investment. He was addressing the India-Australia CEO forum held in Mumbai today : March 9.

The Honourable Prime Minister expressed sincere appreciation for the large turnout of Australian investors that came to India as well for the key Indian business houses that participated. He remarked that this is one of the most serious and high-profile delegations to visit India from Australian shores. He was very optimistic about the complementarities between both the nations and concluded by saying that this juncture is a turning point in accelerating economic co-operation and mutual benefits in the relationship between Australia and India.

#### **Pune to host the fourth Y20 Consultation Meeting on the 11th of March 2023**

The fourth Y20 consultation meeting will be held in Pune on the 11th of March 2023 at the Symbiosis International University (SIU), Lavale in collaboration with Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India. Union Minister for Youth Affairs & Sports and Information & Broadcasting, Anurag Singh Thakur will be the Chief Guest for the inauguration ceremony. Dr. Sundeep Waslekar, President, Strategic Foresight Group will be the Keynote Speaker. The inaugural ceremony will take place on Saturday, 11th March 2023

#### **Second Meeting of Global Partnership for Financial Inclusion concludes in Hyderabad**

The second Meeting of Global Partnership for Financial Inclusion, GPFI under G20 India Presidency concluded on Tuesday in Hyderabad. The two-day meeting was led by GPFI Co-Chair and G20 India Presidency and saw participation from Ministry of Finance and Central Bank representatives from G20 and non-G20 countries and International Organisations. During the Plenary, the GPFI members discussed and agreed on the way forward for important deliverables for the year including those on Digital Financial Inclusion, SME Finance. A Symposium on Digital Innovations in Payments and Remittances was also organised on the sidelines of the GPFI meeting for both G20 and non-G20 countries.

#### **ONGC signs MoU with France's TotalEnergies for deep-water exploration**

India's top explorer Oil and Natural Gas Corp has signed a memorandum of understanding with French major TotalEnergies for exploration of deep -water blocks, The MoU seeks to provide technical help for ONGC's push to explore and reduce greenhouse emissions in development of deep-water blocks especially in Mahanadi and Andamans, off India's east coast.

#### **1st High-Level Committee Meeting for Paris Olympics 2024 Was Organized in SAI Headquarters**

The Union Minister of Information & Broadcasting and Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MYAS), Shri Anurag Singh Thakur along with Minister of State (MOS), MYAS Shri Nisith Pramanik chaired the first High- Level Committee Meeting for Paris Olympics 2024,

The meeting which was attended by representatives from MYAS, the Sports Authority of India (SAI), and the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) discussed in detail the roadmap



to the Paris Olympics that is to take place next year and also took an update on the preparations for the upcoming Asian Games in Hangzhou this year.

### **Tata Steel Mining Signs MoU With GAIL For Clean Fuel**

In order to reduce carbon footprint in its operations, Tata Steel Mining Limited has signed a memorandum of understanding with GAIL (India) Limited for supply of natural gas to its ferro alloys plant at Athgarh in Odisha's Cuttack district. According to the MoU, GAIL will supply the agreed quantity of natural gas through its pipeline from Gujarat to Athgarh.

Signing the MoU, Tata Steel Mining MD Pankaj Satija said, "As a responsible mining company, we are committed to protect the environment by using cleaner fuels and signing of the MoU with GAIL (India) Limited will further help us in this direction." Furnace oil emits more carbon dioxide, nitrogen oxides and sulphur oxides than natural gas does. Natural gas emits 27 per cent less CO<sub>2</sub> and has lower levels of other pollutants,

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### **Tamil Nadu signs MoU with UNEP for implementing urban cooling programme in the State**

The Tamil Nadu government has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) for implementing Urban Cooling Programme in the State to meet the objectives under the Tamil Nadu State Action Plan on Climate Change.

The collaboration between the State government and UNEP will aim address the rapidly increasing demand for cooling in cities while supporting implementation of initiatives to adapt and counteract rising heat.

## **AWARDS AND RECOGNITION**

### **Aaliya Mir Becomes The First Woman From J&K To Receive Wildlife Conservation Award**

Jammu and Kashmir's only female wildlife rescuer, Aaliya Mir who works as a project manager with Wildlife SOS, a non-governmental organisation established in 1995 to

protect and conserve India's natural heritage, forests and wildlife, has been awarded by the administration for her work and conservation efforts.

Aaliya, a wildlife conservationist has become the first woman from J&K to be felicitated with an award for her conservation efforts in the region.

Despite having rescued Asiatic black bears, Himalayan brown bears, birds, leopards and other mammals, Aaliya is best known for her work with snakes.

Over the years, she has rescued snakes from the most unlikely places like kitchens, lawns, gardens and toilets of residences, government buildings and offices, school and university premises, and from tyres and engines of vehicles.

### **NGO from Assam honoured with Children's Champion Award**

Students' Welfare Mission, an NGO from Assam's Pathsala which has been working for special and autistic children, has been conferred with the Children's Champion Award 2023 here. Instituted by the Delhi Commission for Protection of Child Rights last year to recognise individuals and institutions that have championed the cause of children across education, justice, health, nutrition, sports and artistic expression categories, the Mission, which is popularly known as Tapoban, has been awarded in the health and nutrition category,

The awards were handed out by Justice P S Narasimha of the Supreme Court, Chief Justice of the Odisha High Court S Muralidhar and Delhi Education Minister Atishi Marlena at a function held here on Saturday. Founder president of the Mission, Kumud Kalita, received the award that carries Rs 75,000, a certificate and a plaque. A jury comprising eminent and accomplished individuals decided to confer the Children's Champion Award on the NGO in health and nutrition category for their "consistent efforts to provide quality care to the children with special needs", the release said. The NGO is the only organisation from the Northeast to be selected for the award. The DCPCR received altogether 1,100 nominations from organisations and individuals across the country. Set up in 2005, Tapoban has been working for the specially-abled children providing speech therapy, physiotherapy and occupational therapy, music and other skills besides awareness.

### **AuditOnline Application Wins WSIS Prizes 2023 for Online Audits in India**

The AuditOnline Application has received global recognition for its contribution in facilitating online audits across Panchayati Raj Institutions in India. The software program was awarded the prestigious World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Prizes 2023 in the Action Line category ICT Applications: e-Government at the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) headquarters in Geneva.

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR), along with the National Informatics Centre (NIC), has been recognized for its efforts in developing the AuditOnline application. The application enables the online audit of all Panchayati Raj Institutions, and its success has earned the team the WSIS Prizes Award 2023.

The application was submitted under the category "C7 – ICT Applications: e-Government" in the 12th edition of the contest. The WSIS Prizes recognize the

excellence of stakeholders in supporting the implementation of WSIS outcomes, WSIS Action Lines, and the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

### **M T Vasudevan Nair awarded state's highest civilian honour**

The "Kerala Jyothi," the highest civilian honor in Kerala was awarded to the writer M T Vasudevan Nair. The second-highest award, "Kerala Prabha," was shared by actor Mammooty, former civil service officer T Madhava Menon, and writer Omchery NNPillai. Arif Muhammad Khan, the Governor of Kerala, has presented the inaugural edition of the "Kerala Puraskarngal" awards, which recognize individuals who have made notable contributions to various aspects of social life. The awards were presented in three categories – "Kerala Jyothi," "Kerala Prabha," and "Kerala Shri."

### **Isha Ambani gets GenNext Entrepreneur award at Forbes India Leadership Awards 2023**

Isha Ambani, the chairperson of Reliance Industries' retail unit, Reliance Retail, has won the 'Gennext Entrepreneur' award at Forbes India Leadership Awards 2023 at the ceremony held on March 24.

Along with her, several other major industry leaders were also felicitated at the award ceremony. The other big names include CK Venkataraman, managing director of Titan Company, who was felicitated with the 'CEO of the Year' award and Abhay Soi, chairman and managing director of Max Healthcare, who was awarded the 'Entrepreneur of the Year' award.

### **Bombay Jayashri chosen for Sangita Kalanidhi Award 2023 by Music Academy**

Renowned Carnatic vocalist and Padma Shri awardee Bombay Jayashri has been selected for the Sangita Kalanidhi award for 2023 by the Music Academy.

In a press release, the Music Academy said, Jayashri is one of the foremost among today's Carnatic musicians, who initially trained under her parents and later under TR Balamani and violin maestro Lalgudi G Jayaraman. Besides Carnatic music, Jayashri is also trained on the veena, classical dance and Hindustani music.

'She is known for her melodic and meditative style of singing. She has also been training underprivileged children in music and contributing through her art to social causes,' the release noted.

### **Hello Ujjivan app wins the prestigious 13th Aegis Graham Bell Awards**

Ujjivan Small Finance Bank is proud to announce that its Hello Ujjivan app has won the 13th Aegis Graham Bell Awards (AGBA) in the "Innovation in Consumer Tech" category. The thirteenth edition of the prize is an initiative of Aegis School of Data Science, backed by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology; NITI Aayog and Skill India to foster an innovative culture in India. Hello Ujjivan, is the first mobile banking app in India that enables speech, visual, and vernacular features to give bank's MicroBanking and Rural customers access to banking financial services who have limited reading and writing abilities. The app has intuitive AI and machine learning

capabilities, to enable customers transact conveniently and safely in the language of their choice

### **RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das Named 'Governor Of The Year' At Central Banking Awards 2023**

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) governor Shaktikanta Das has been selected as the 'Governor of the Year' for 2023 by Central Banking, an international economic research journal. Mr Das has been praised by the publication for his leadership role at the Central bank during his tenure, which began in December 2018, and has been marked by a series of grave challenges, starting with the collapse of a major non-bank firm, moving through the first and second waves of the coronavirus, and then, in 2022, Russia's invasion of Ukraine and its inflationary impact.

### **Gyan Chaturvedi awarded with the 32nd Vyas Samman, 2022**

Noted Hindi writer Dr Gyan Chaturvedi's 2018 satirical novel, Pagalkhana, has been selected for the 32nd Vyas Samman, 2022. Instituted by the KK Birla Foundation in 1991, the annual Vyas Samman is given to an outstanding Hindi literary work by an Indian citizen published during the last 10 years.

### **'Naatu Naatu' from 'RRR' won Oscars for Best Original Song**

'Naatu Naatu' from SS Rajamouli's hit 'RRR' won Oscars for Best Original Song. The audience was captivated as they watched Ram Charan and Jr NTR's spectacular dance moves in the song. The crowd cheered wildly when MM Keeravani (composer of the song) walked up to the stage to accept the prestigious award. There has never been an Oscar nomination in this category from an Indian production before RRR's 'Naatu Naatu'. AR Rahman's 'Jai Ho', written for the 2008 film Slumdog Millionaire, was awarded the Academy Award for Best Original Song in 2009. However, Slumdog Millionaire was made by British production whereas RRR is an Indian production. While 'Naatu Naatu' was nominated for Best Original Song, 'All That Breathes' and 'The Elephant Whisperers' were nominated for Best Documentary Feature and Best Documentary Short Film, respectively. 'The Elephant Whisperers' took home the trophy while 'All That Breathes' lost to 'Navalny'.

### **Indian film The Elephant Whisperers wins Academy Award for Best Documentary Short**

Kartiki Gonsalves and Guneet Monga's Netflix documentary short, The Elephant Whisperers, has won the Oscar for Best Documentary Short category at the 95th Academy Awards. The film was competing against Haulout, How Do You Measure a Year?, The Martha Mitchell Effect and Stranger At The Gate. Director Gonzalves dedicated the award to 'my motherland, India'. Guneet, in an Instagram post, wrote, "Tonight is historic as this is the first ever Oscar for an Indian production..."

Produced by Achin Jain and Guneet Monga, and directed by Kartiki Gonsalves, the 41 - minute short follows the family from Tamil Nadu's Mudumalai Tiger Reserve who end up adopting two orphan baby elephants. What was special about this India short was that it happened to be filmmaker Gonsalves' directorial debut.

### **India Bags Golden & Silver Star at The International 'Golden City Gate Tourism Awards 2023 at ITB, Berlin 2023**

The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, has bagged Golden & Silver Star at The International 'Golden City Gate Tourism Awards 2023' in 'TV/Cinema Commercials International and Country International' Category at ITB, Berlin 2023. The awards were received by Shri Arvind Singh, Secretary (Tourism) Government of India on 08th March 2023 at ITB, Berlin being held from the 7th to 9th March 2023. The Golden City Gate Tourism Multi-media Awards are given annually in various categories related to the Tourism and Hospitality sectors. The 'Golden City Gate' is a creative multi-media international competition for countries, cities, regions and hotels. The entries received for the awards are judged by an international jury comprising film and tourism experts. The annual award ceremony takes place at ITB Berlin, the world's leading tourism trade show.

### **Sir David Alan Chipperfield Receives the 2023 Pritzker Architecture Prize**

Civic architect, urban planner and activist, Sir David Alan Chipperfield CH has been selected as the 2023 Laureate of The Pritzker Architecture Prize, the award that is regarded internationally as architecture's highest honor.

### **Weightlifter Mirabai Chanu wins BBC Indian Sportswoman Of The Year award 2022**

Tokyo Olympic Games silver-medallist weightlifter Mirabai Chanu has bagged the 2022 'BBC Indian Sportswoman Of The Year' award after a public vote. The 28-year-old weightlifter from Manipur became the first athlete to win the award twice in a row after bagging it in 2021 as well.

At the Tokyo Games, she had become the first Indian to win a silver in the sport. Last year, she went on to secure gold at the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham. She also won a silver medal at the World Weightlifting Championships in 2022.

### **Sipra Das gets Lifetime Achievement honour in National Photography Awards ceremony**

Thirteen photographers including senior photojournalist Sipra Das have been conferred with National Photography Awards in various categories at a function in New Delhi.

Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting Dr L Murugan today gave away the awards in presence of Secretary, Information and Broadcasting Apurva Chandra.

Photojournalist Sipra Das has been honoured with the Lifetime Achievement Award. Six photographers each were conferred in the category of Award for Professional Photographers and Award for Amateur Photographers.



## **BHEL bags CBIP Award 2022**

BHEL has been awarded the CBIP Award 2022 for 'Best Contribution in Solar Energy'. The award was received by Dr. Nalin Shinghal, CMD, BHEL, along with Ms. Renuka Gera, Director (IS&P), BHEL from Sh. R.K. Singh, Hon'ble Union Minister of Power and New & Renewable Energy, on CBIP Day. CBIP awards are conferred for outstanding contribution to the development of water, power and renewable energy sectors.

## **ACF confers Grandmaster D Gukesh with Player-of-the-Year award**

Indian Grandmaster D Gukesh has been honoured with Player-of-the-Year award by the Asian Chess Federation (ACF) for clinching the gold medal with a record-breaking score of 9/11 in the 44th Chess Olympiad at Mahabalipuram last year. In March last year, Gukesh became only the sixth Indian to break the 2700 Elo-rating mark, and the youngest Grandmaster from the country to be rated above 2700.

## **India Wins GSMA Government Leadership Award 2023 for Telecom Policy Implementation**

India has been awarded the Government Leadership Award 2023 by Groupe Speciale Mobile Association (GSMA) for implementing best practices in telecom policy and regulation. The GSMA represents more than 750 mobile operators and 400 companies in the telecom ecosystem and recognizes one country every year. India was declared the winner in the ceremony held at Mobile World Congress Barcelona.

## **RANKING**

### **Aparna becomes first IPS officer to scale seven top peaks**

Aparna Kumar is the first woman IPS officer to conquer seven summits, racing ahead and ascending one mountain after another. The Seven Summits are the highest mountain summits on each of the world's seven traditional continents. Getting to the top of any of them is considered a mountaineering challenge. Aparna, an IPS officer from Uttar Pradesh, accepted and completed the challenge. She is the country's first IPS officer to accomplish this distinction.

She also holds the distinction of being the first officer to scale Mount Everest and the first woman to command the ITBP Academy in six decades. Aparna is now an inspector general in the PAC Central Zone and the Sports Secretary of the UP Police Board.

## **BOOKS AND AUTHORS**

### **Mundaka Upanishad: The Gateway to Eternity', written by former MP Dr. Karan Singh**

Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar announced the release of the book "Mundaka Upanishad: The Gateway to Eternity". Dr. Karan Singh, a former member of parliament, wrote the book at Upa-Rashtrapati Nivas in New Delhi. He is a philosopher and politician from India.

Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan initially released this book in 1987. But, the current edition is unique since it includes Dr. Kamal Kishor Mishra's Hindi translation of Dr. Karan Singh's texts, who also transliterated the Sanskrit text in accordance with international standards. There have also been added six antiquated manuscripts that were picked

from the sizable collection at the Sri Ranbir Sanskrit Research Center, Sri Raghunath Temple in Jammu. These documents, which comprise the primary text as well as the Bhasya, Bhasya-tippnam, and Dipika-comments by Adi Shankaracharya and Pandita Naraina, demonstrate that this significant Upanisad has been written down throughout many centuries in both the old and new Kashmiri type of Devanagari script

### **A book titled “As Good as My Word” wrote by KM Chandrasekhar**

As Good as My Word by KM Chandrasekhar, who was the Cabinet Secretary from 2007 - 2011, starts as an autobiography with graphic details of his childhood, schooling and college education, set within the confines of a modest but disciplined Malayali home. The next part delves into his joining the IAS and the early years in his home state Kerala. Both segments, however, pale into insignificance compared to the latter part of the book which deals with a largely unknown but hugely important world of international trade. This is followed by a throwback into a series of tumultuous political events, including recent ones — and their cascading effect on public polity.

### **“The Book of Bihari Literature” A short Stories collection : by Abhay Kumar**

Bihar Minister of Industry, Samir Kumar Mahaseth has recently released a book titled “The Book of Bihari Literature”, edited by Abhay Kumar, an Indian poet- diplomat, during Grand Trunk Road Initiatives 3.0(GTRi 3.0) The book is a collection of short stories and poems written over a period of 2600 years, translated into English from various languages such as Angika, Bajjika, Bhojpuri, Magahi, Maithili, Hindi, Urdu, Pali,Sanskrit, and Farsi.

## **BANKING AND ECONOMY**

### **Aditya Birla Health Insurance inks bancassurance partnership with UCO Bank**

Aditya Birla Health Insurance Co Ltd (ABHICL), the health insurance joint venture of Aditya Birla Capital Ltd. (ABCL) has announced its bancassurance partnership with leading public sector lender, UCO Bank, for the distribution of health insurance products through the bank's branches across India.

This partnership will enable ABHICL to expand its national footprint by leveraging UCO Bank's widely distributed network of 3,164 branches and reach out to more than 40 million customers of the bank across India. Commenting on the association, UCO Bank MD & CEO - Soma Sankara Prasad said, "We are delighted to announce the Bank's new standalone health insurance partnership with Aditya Birla Health Insurance Company, which brings knowledge and expertise of innovative healthcare and Wellness Offerings. We are confident that this partnership will further support the bank in enhancing the customer experience by focussing on selling the right health insurance product to the customers and making the overall experience of insurance policy and claim settlement a smooth experience for the customers. With our customer-first approach we are happy to share Aditya Birla Health Insurance's innovative and health-first solutions with all our customers."

With this association, UCO Bank's customers and employees will have access to ABHICL's comprehensive suite of health-first insurance solutions like incentivized

wellness benefits of up to 100% Health Returns and chronic management program, Day-1 cover for asthma, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes; wellness coaching on nutrition and fitness and counselling on mental health. With the UCO Bank partnership, ABHICL now has 17 bancassurance partners with over 80,000 direct selling agents, across the country.

**Govt introduces surcharge for Gpay, other payment apps; no charge to customers** The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has issued a circular in which it suggested "Prepaid Payment Instruments (PPI)" fees on merchant transactions on Unified Payments Interface (UPI).

The governing body of the UPI payment system added that the PPI fees would be levied on transactions above ₹2,000 on UPI. It will result in an interchange at 1.1% of the transaction value.

However, the NPCI has clarified that there will be zero charges for the bank account to bank account-based UPI payments or normal UPI payments.

With this addition to UPI, the customers will have the choice of using any bank account, RuPay Credit card and prepaid wallets on UPI-enabled apps.

**NPCI recommends additional charges for merchant transactions via UPI**

A recent circular issued by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has suggested that Prepaid Payment Instrument (PPI) charges be applied from April 1 for merchant transactions made using the Unified Payments Interface (UPI).

NPCI, UPI's governing body, will review the stated pricing on or before September 30, 2023.

According to the NPCI circular, using PPIs on UPI will attract interchange at 1.1 percent of the transaction value for transactions worth over Rs 2,000.

Once the additional charges come into effect, the PPI issuer will be paying around 15 basis points as a wallet-loading service charge to the remitter bank. No interchange in terms of peer-to-peer (P2P) or peer-to-peer-merchant (P2PM) transactions between the bank account and the PPI wallet will apply.

**World Bank approves USD 363 million loan to Karnataka for rural water supply programme**

The World Bank has approved a USD 363 million loan to Karnataka, to provide a clean drinking water supply to two million rural households in the state through a piped water connection in their homes.

According to a World Bank statement, the Karnataka Sustainable Rural Water Supply Program will support the Government of Karnataka's ambition to provide functioning tap water connections to every rural household in the state.

**ICICI Lombard becomes first to offer 'Anywhere Cashless' feature**

In an industry-first, ICICI Lombard General Insurance launched 'Anywhere Cashless' feature for health insurance policyholders to avail cashless facilities at any hospital, even if not part of ICICI Lombard's current network of hospitals.

The feature will be subject to the hospital's acceptance of the cashless facility. Policyholders must inform the company 24 hours prior to the date of admission by giving basic information about the patient, policy details, hospital name, diagnosis and treating doctor, among others.

Initially launched as a pilot, the facility can now be availed through the 'IL TakeCare' application across India, wherein customers will not have to bear any out-of-pocket expenses. It provides a hassle-free experience through all aspects of the journey: from admission to discharge, and lets customers choose a nearby or recommended hospital,

### **Government hikes wage under MGNREGA scheme: Effective from April 1**

The Central government has published a notification for the rural employment guarantee programme for the financial year 2023-24, announcing a hike in the wage rate with Haryana having the highest daily wage at ₹357 per day. While the states like Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh have the lowest wage rate of ₹221.

On March 24, the Union Ministry of Rural Development announced changes to the notification issued under Section 6 (1) Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) Scheme's wage rates. The new wage rates ranging from Rs.7 to Rs.26, will come into effect from April 1, 2023.

Up from Rs.231 in 2022-2023, Rajasthan received a Rs.255 wage rate, the highest percentage of salary growth compared to the prior year's rates. Compared to the previous year, Bihar and Jharkhand have seen a percentage rise of about eight. In these two regions, MGNREGA worker received Rs.210 per day in wages last year, now the price has been changed to Rs.228. With daily earnings at Rs.221, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh have the lowest percentage growth from the previous year, at 17. The daily wage in these two regions was Rs.204 for the year 2022-2023.

### **Union Cabinet Approves 4% Increase in Dearness Allowance**

The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved the release of an additional installment of Dearness Allowance (DA) to central government employees and Dearness Relief to pensioners, effective from January 1, 2023. The new installment represents a 4% increase over the existing rate of 38% of the Basic Pay/Pension, which will help compensate against the rising cost of living. This increase in DA will benefit around 47.58 lakh Central Government employees and 69.76 lakh pensioners. The decision to increase the DA is based on the recommendations of the 7th Central Pay Commission, which follows a set formula to calculate the Dearness Allowance for central government employees and pensioners.

The Central Government usually revises the DA twice a year, in January and July, to combat inflation. The announcement of the hike in DA and the payout is generally done in March.

### **IDFC Mutual Fund set to become Bandhan Mutual Fund**

IDFC Mutual Fund, which was founded in 2000, announced that it is set to renovate itself as Bandhan Mutual Fund. Customers will soon discover all IDFC Mutual Fund schemes have been rebranded as Bandhan Mutual Fund after the effective date. Since

the underlying investment strategy, processes, and team continue to remain the same, investors can benefit from the same high-quality investment approach that the fund house is reputed for, - IDFC Mutual Fund said in an official statement.

### **Suryoday Small Finance Bank launches Blossom Women's savings account,**

Suryoday Small Finance Bank on Monday launched a new savings account for women.

Suryoday's Blossom Women's Savings Account is built on a strong proposition of giving women a complete, simplified, and rewarding banking experience.

Under this new account, women can earn up to 7% interest rate per annum with monthly interest credit coupled with a specially designed RuPay Platinum Debit Card which offers discounts on shopping and online purchases and many more, The new women's savings account can be operated through the Bank's 571 banking outlets and digital banking platform.

### **MSME Competitive (LEAN) Scheme launched**

"LEAN has the potential to become a national movement and that it aims to provide a roadmap to global competitiveness for the MSMEs of India," said Union MSME Minister Narayan Rane at the launch of MSME Competitive (LEAN) Scheme on Friday, March 10. During the launch, the Union Minister said that LEAN will not only attempt to improve quality, productivity and performance, but also the capability to change the mind-sets of manufacturers and transform them into a world class manufacturers.

The Scheme aims at reducing manufacturing waste and is an extensive drive to create awareness amongst MSMEs about LEAN Manufacturing practices. Further, the purpose is to motivate and incentivize them to attain LEAN levels while also encouraging them to become MSME Champions.

### **RBI imposes Rs 3.06 Crore penalty on Amazon Pay (India)**

Reserve Bank of India has imposed a penalty of three crore six lakh sixty six thousand rupees on Amazon Pay (India) Private Limited for non-compliance of certain directions related to Prepaid Payment Instruments and Know Your Customer.

Accordingly, a notice was issued and decision to impose the penalty was taken after considering the entity's response. In a press release, RBI said that the action is based on deficiencies in regulatory compliance and is not intended to pronounce upon the validity of any transaction or agreement entered into by the entity with its customers.

### **Foxconn to invest up to \$1 billion in new Bengaluru plant**

Foxconn Technology Group, the Taiwan-based iPhone manufacturer, will set up a 300-acre electronics manufacturing facility in Bengaluru. The company will invest nearly \$700 million, which is likely to generate 1 lakh jobs in the coming years. "Apple phones to be built in a new 300-acre factory in Karnataka. The double-engine governments of PM Narendra Modi and Bommai (Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai) are working to get investments and add jobs," tweeted Rajeev Chandrasekhar, Minister of State, electronics and IT (Meity).



### **RBI puts restrictions on Musiri Urban Co-operative Bank**

The Reserve Bank of India on Friday imposed a Rs 5,000 cap on withdrawals by individual customers from Tamil Nadu-based Musiri Urban Co-operative Bank as part of several restrictions slapped on the lender due to its deteriorating financial condition. The restrictions on the lender will remain in force for six months from the close of business on March 3 and are subject to review, the RBI said in a statement.

### **SBI completes USD 1 billion syndicated social loan**

Country's largest commercial bank, State Bank of India (SBI) on Tuesday announced completion of a \$1 billion Syndicated Social Loan Facility. This syndicated transaction is significant for SBI and the Indian ESG financing market since it is the biggest ESG (environment, social and governance) loan by a commercial bank in the Asia Pacific and the second-largest social loan globally. Additionally, this is the bank's inaugural social loan and the first syndicated loan in the past five years.

### **HDFC Bank, IRCTC launch India's most rewarding co-branded travel credit card**

Indian Railway-backed catering services provider, IRCTC tied up with the largest private sector lender HDFC Bank on Wednesday to launch one of India's most rewarding co-branded travel credit cards. The co-branded card will be called "IRCTC HDFC Bank Credit Card" and will be in a single variant exclusively available on NPCI's RuPay network.

IRCTC HDFC Bank credit card will leverage HDFC Bank's expertise as the market leader in card issuance in the country, offering its best-in-class rewards programme, and IRCTC's unmatched services on train travel.

### **Axis Bank completes acquisition of Citibank's India consumer business**

Axis Bank has completed the acquisition of the India consumer business of the Citigroup-owned foreign bank Citibank for Rs 12,325 crore prior to evaluation of the closing position of Citibank India's assets, assets under management, and liabilities as of January 31, 2023. Post evaluation, the deal is valued at around Rs 11,603 crore. As per this deal, Axis Bank has acquired Citibank's India consumer business from Citibank N.A. or CBNA and the non-banking financial company (NBFC) consumer business from Citicorp Finance (India) Limited or CFIL, according to a recent exchange filing by Axis Bank. The filing - "We now wish to inform you that completion of the acquisition of Citibank's India consumer business from CBNA and the NBFC consumer business from CFIL as going concerns, without values being assigned to individual assets and liabilities for either business shall happen on March 1, 2023."

Axis Bank further said the amount to acquire Citibank India's consumer business is based on the closing position of the latter's assets, assets under management (AUM), and liabilities as of January 31, 2023. The filing added the acquisition of the consumer business of Citibank India is in accordance with the requirements and terms of the agreed contractual documentation and settlement of consideration.

