

CURRENT AFFAIRS E-BOOK

FEBRUARY 2023

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Art and Culture Current Affairs

14th edition of Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav begins in Bikaner

- The 14th Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav commenced in Bikaner, Rajasthan on 25 Feb 2023.
- It is organized by the Union Ministry of Culture, was inaugurated with a Shobha Yatra, in which artists from different states of the country participated in traditional dresses.
- During the event, Rajasthan Governor Kalraj Mishra and Union MoS for Culture Arjun Ram Meghwal inaugurated the craft fair.

World Book Fair 2023 to begin on 25 February in New Delhi

- The 9-day mega book fair will be held from 25th February to 5th March, 2023 at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi.
- It is being organised by National Book Trust, an autonomous organization of the Government of India under the Ministry of Education, in collaboration with India Trade Promotion Organization.
- The book display will also include titles on topics such as history, art and culture.

PM Modi to inaugurate 'Barisu Kannada Dim Dimava' festival on 25 Feb

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate 'Barisu Kannada Dim Dimava' cultural festival at Talkatora Stadium, New Delhi on 25th February, 2023.
- The festival is being organized to celebrate Karnataka's culture, traditions and history.
- The festival will provide an opportunity to hundreds of artists to showcase Karnataka cultural heritage through dance, music, drama, poetry etc.

Agriculture Min inaugurates National Horticulture Fair in Bengaluru

- Union Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister Narendra Singh Tomar on 22 Feb 2023, inaugurated the four-day National Horticulture Fair in Bengaluru, Karnataka.
- The fair is organised to showcase the latest technologies developed by the Indian Institute of Horticultural Research, Bengaluru, under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), for the benefit of productive farmers.

President Murmu inaugurates International Engineering and Tech Fair

- President Droupadi Murmu on 16 February 2023, inaugurated the International Engineering and Technology Fair (IETF) 2023 in New Delhi.
- It is organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).
- IETF-2023 covers 11 areas of emerging technologies that would have a profound impact on India's economy.
- IETF-2023 is a business platform for Engineering and related products and services.

NSD to organise the 22nd edition of the Bharat Rang Mahotsav

- National School of Drama (NSD) will organize the 22nd edition of the Bharat Rang Mahotsav (BRM), from 16th to 26th February, 2023.

- The International Theater Festival will be held in Delhi, Rajahmundry, Jaipur, Ranchi, Jammu, Guwahati, Srinagar, Bhopal, Nashik and Kevadia.
- The plays will be performed in 16 different Indian languages.
- BRM is the largest theater festival in Asia.

Kala Ghoda Arts Festival begins on 5 February in Mumbai

- The 23rd edition of the Kala Ghoda Arts Festival began on 5 February 2023 in Mumbai, Maharashtra.
- It is an annual festival, commencing always on the first Saturday of February and closing is always on the second Sunday in February, in the Kala Ghoda area of South Mumbai, India.
- It was first started in 1999.
- The festival sections are visual arts, dance, music, theatre, cinema, literature.

Vice-President inaugurates 36th Surajkund handicrafts mela

- Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankhar on 3 February 2023, inaugurated the 36th International Surajkund Mela at Faridabad, Haryana.
- It is an annual event that is organized on a large scale by the Haryana government from the 04th to the 25th of February 2023.
- It is a platform for artists across the globe to showcase their culture and talent.
- It is the world's biggest crafts fair.



Awards and Honours Current Affairs

Lionel Messi bags best FIFA football player award

- Argentina captain Lionel Messi has been named the best player in men's football by FIFA, at The Best FIFA Football Awards in Paris.
- Messi won this award for his outstanding performances in men's football from August 2021 to December 2022.
- He scored two goals in the final against France.
- Spain's Alexia Putellas won the best women's player award for the 2nd year in a row.

Screen Actors Guild Awards 2023 announced-I

- The 29th Screen Actors Guild Awards were announced on 26 Feb 2023 at the Fairmont Century Plaza in Los Angeles.
- Sam Elliott won Outstanding Performance by a Male Actor in a Television Movie or Miniseries for '1883'.
- Jessica Chastain won Outstanding Performance by a Female Actor in a Television Movie or Miniseries for 'George & Tammy'.

Screen Actors Guild Awards 2023 announced-II

- Outstanding Performance by a Male Actor in a Leading Role was won by Brendan Fraser for "The Whale".
- Outstanding Performance by a Female Actor in a Leading Role was won by Michelle Yeoh, "Everything Everywhere All at Once".
- Outstanding Performance by a Male Actor in a Drama Series was won by Jason Bateman for "Ozark".

SS Rajamouli's RRR wins Best International Film at HCA Awards

- SS Rajamouli's directorial, 'RRR' has bagged the 'Best International Film' award at the 6th Hollywood Critics Association (HCA) Film Awards.
- The awards were held in Beverly Hills, Los Angeles, USA.
- The 'RRR' also won three other awards at HCA for 'Best Action Film', 'Best Stunts', and 'Best Original Song' (Naatu Naatu).
- The song 'Naatu Naatu' is composed by MM Keeravani.

President Droupadi Murmu confers Sangeet Natak Akademi awards

- President Droupadi Murmu on 23 February 2023, conferred the Sangeet Natak Akademi Fellowships and Awards for the years 2019, 2020 and 2021 in New Delhi.
- Eight persons in the field of performing arts were given the Sangeet Natak Akademi Fellowship, while 128 artistes from the fields of music, dance, theatre, traditional, and folk were honoured with the Sangeet Natak Akademi Awards.

Dr. Mahendra Mishra awarded International Mother Language Award

- Dr Mahendra Kumar Mishra, an Indian educator and social worker, was awarded International Mother Language Award on 21 Feb'23.
- He received the award from Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- He is the first Indian to receive this award.
- Dr Mishra has worked over three decades on the language, culture and education of the marginalised languages of Odisha.

Sansad Ratna award, 2023: List of winners announced Part- 1

- The list of winners of the 13th edition of the Sansad Ratna Award was announced
- The award will be given on 25 March 2023 in New Delhi.
- Prominent CPI-M leader T K Rangarajan was nominated for the "Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Lifetime Achievement Award".
- Winners:
 - Bidyut Baran Mahato (BJP, Jharkhand)
 - Dr. Sukanta Majumdar (BJP, West Bengal)
 - Kuldeep Rai Sharma (INC, Andaman Nicobar)

Sansad Ratna award, 2023: List of winners announced Part- 2

- Heena Vijayakumar Gavit (BJP, Maharashtra)
- Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury (INC, West Bengal)
- Gopal Chinayya Shetty (BJP, Maharashtra)
- Sudhir Gupta (BJP, MP)
- Amol Kolhe (NCP, Maharashtra)
- John Brittas (CPI-M, Kerala),
- Manoj Kumar Jha (RJD, Bihar),
- Fauzia Tahseen Ahmed Khan (NCP, Maharashtra)
- Vishambhar Prasad (SP, UP)
- Smt Chhaya Verma (INC, Chhattisgarh)

Dadasaheb Phalke International Film Festival Awards Winners: Part 1

- The Dadasaheb Phalke International Film Festival awards were announced on 20 Feb 2023 in Mumbai.
- It is the country's highest award in the field of cinema.
- The 2023 winners were revealed by the Directorate of Film Festivals.
- Best Film award: The Kashmir Files
- International Film of the Year award: SS Rajamouli's 'RRR'
- Best Web Series: Rudra: The Edge of Darkness

Dadasaheb Phalke International Film Festival Awards Winners: Part 2

- Best Director: R Balki (Chup: Revenge of The Artist)
- Most Versatile Actor Of The Year: Anupam Kher (The Kashmir Files)
- Best Actress award: Alia Bhatt (Gangubai Kathiawadi)

- Best Actor award: Ranbir Kapoor (Brahmastra)
- Most Promising Actor award: Rishab Shetty (Kannada film 'Kantara')
- Outstanding Contribution In The Film Industry: Rekha
- Critics Best Actor: Varun Dhawan (Bhediya)

Dadasaheb Phalke International Film Festival Awards Winners: Part 3

- Television Series of The Year: Anupamaa
- Best Actor In A Television Series: Zain Imam (Fanaa- Ishq Mein Marjawaan)
- Best Actress In A Television Series: Tejaswi Prakash (Naagin)
- Best Male Singer: Sachet Tandon (Maiyya Mainu)
- Best Female Singer: Neeti Mohan (Meri Jaan)
- Best Cinematographer: PS Vinod (Vikram Vedha)
- Outstanding Contribution In The Music Industry: Hariharan

Ranji Trophy 2022-2023 Winners announced

- Winner of Ranji Trophy 2022-23: Saurashtra (defeated Bengal)
- Player of the Match in the Final: Jaydev Unadkat (Captain of Saurashtra)
- Player of the Series: Arpit Vasavada (Batsman for Saurashtra)
- Highest run scorer: Mayank Agarwal (Karnataka) - 990 runs
- Highest wicket-takers: Jalaj Saxena (Kerala) - 50 Wickets
- Most catches: Meitan Keishangbam (Manipur)- 17 Catches

BAFTA Awards 2023 announced: I

- The 76th British Academy Film Awards, BAFTA (the British Academy of Film and Television Arts) Awards were announced on 19 February 2023.
- The event was hosted by actor Richard E Grant and Alison Hammond.
- Some winner list includes:
- Best Film – 'All Quiet on the Western Front'
- Leading Actress – Cate Blanchett, 'Tar'
- Leading Actor – Austin Butler, 'Elvis'
- Best Casting – Elvi

BAFTA Awards 2023 announced: II

- The German anti-war film 'All Quiet on the Western Front' won seven awards, including the Best Film and Best Director awards.
- Some other winners include:
- Best Director – Edward Berger for the movie 'All Quiet on the Western Front'
- Best Cinematography – 'All Quiet on the Western Front'
- Best Documentary – 'Navalny' directed by 'Daniel Roher'
- British Short Film – 'An Irish Goodbye'

Karthik Subramaniam wins National Geographic's 'pictures of the year'

- Indian-origin photographer Karthik Subramaniam has topped National Geographic's 'Photo of the Year' contest 2023.
- The award was presented to him for a striking picture of an eagle struggling to settle on a tree branch.
- His photograph, titled "Dance of the Eagles", was taken at the Chilkat Bald Eagle Preserve in Alaska and will be the cover page of the May edition of National Geographic.

UNDP's "Don't Choose Extinction" climate campaign wins 2 Anthem Awards

- The UN Development Programme (UNDP) in Feb 2023 won Gold and Silver medal at the 2nd Annual Anthem Awards for its 'Don't Choose Extinction' campaign.
- The award was announced by the International Academy of Digital Arts & Science (IADAS), which was launched by the Webby Awards in 2021.
- UNDP's 'Don't Choose Extinction' campaign is on fossil fuel subsidies and its negative impact on the planet.

NMDC wins five awards at the 9th 'Governance Now PSU Awards' 2023

- India's largest producer of iron ore, National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC) Limited won five awards at the 9th 'Governance Now PSU Awards' held in New Delhi on 16 February 2023.
- Chief Guest of the event, Former Chief Justice of India, Dipak Mishra felicitated the winners.
- The award recognizes the commitment of PSUs in raising the standards in the public sector.

Union Min G. Kishan Reddy presents Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar

- The Union Minister for Culture and Tourism G. Kishan Reddy presented the Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar 2019, 2020, and 2021 to 102 artists (including three joint awards) of India on 15th February 2023.
- Starting in 2006, the award is given to artists up to the age of 40 years with the objective of encouraging outstanding young talents in diverse fields of the performing arts.

Union Minister Amit Shah presents President's Colour to Haryana Police

- Union home minister Amit Shah on 14 February 2023, presented President's Colour to Haryana Police in Karnal on behalf of President Droupadi Murmu in recognition of the Haryana Police's exceptional service.
- Haryana Police has become one of the 10 state police forces in the country to receive this highest honour from the President.
- Indian Navy was the first one to receive this honor in 1951.

Egyptian President bestows Global Best M-GOV Awards on IIT students

- Students from IIT Indore won AED 1 mn by winning gold medal at the World Government Summit in Dubai on 13 Feb'23.
- Niyati Totala and Neel Kalpeshkumar Parikh were awarded by Egyptian President Abel Fattah Al-Sisi.
- These students were the creators of the 'Blockbill' app.



- Blockbill is a blockchain-based receipt generation app that generates digital receipts for all of its users' transactions.

Angela Merkel awarded UNESCO Peace Prize in Ivory Coast

- Former German chancellor Angela Merkel awarded the Felix Houphouet-Boigny UNESCO Peace Prize in Yamoussoukro, Ivory Coast in February 2023.
- Angela Merkel is a German former politician and scientist who served as Chancellor of Germany from 2005 to 2021.
- She implemented a "open-door" refugee policy in Germany by allowing more than 1.2 million migrants to enter in Germany between 2015-2016.

Journalist A.B.K. Prasad chosen for Raja Ram Mohan Roy National Award

- Veteran Journalist Dr. A.B.K. Prasad has been chosen for the prestigious "Raja Ram Mohan Roy National Award" for excellence in Journalism.
- Prasad has the honour of being the editor of all mainstream journals of Andhra Pradesh.
- He served as Chairman of Official Language Commission during 2004 to 2009 in united Andhra Pradesh.
- Award will be given by Press Council of India on 28 Feb'23.

MRF's Mammen gets Atma Lifetime Achievement award

- MRF Ltd. Chairman and Managing Director K.M. Mammen was presented the ATMA Lifetime Achievement Award by Maruti Suzuki India MD Hisashi Takeuchi.
- Award was presented at Automotive Tyre Manufacturers' Association (ATMA) Annual Conclave 2023 in New Delhi on 8 Feb'23.
- Mammen received award in recognition for his distinctive leadership qualities and invaluable contribution to the tyre industry.

NTPC wins 'ATD Best Awards 2023' for 6th consecutive year

- NTPC Limited has been conferred with 'ATD Best Awards 2023' by Association for Talent Development (ATD), USA in February 2023.
- NTPC Limited has won this award for the sixth consecutive year for showcasing enterprise success in the area of talent development.
- The ATD Best Awards recognize organizations that demonstrate talent development across the enterprise.

Golden Book Awards 2023: Winners announced Part 1

- Golden Book Awards recognises the exceptional literary works.
- It is sponsored by Wings Publication International.
- They were announced on 4 Feb'23
- Winners and their work:
 - J.K Rowling – Fantastic Beasts
 - Gaur Gopal Das – Energize Your Mind
 - Deepak Chopra – The Seven Spiritual Law Of Success

- Ashneer Grover – Doglapan
- Namita Thapar – The Dolphin And The Shark: Stories On Entrepreneurship

Golden Book Awards 2023: Winners announced Part 2

- Kamlesh Patel –The Wisdom Bridge
- Jeff Kinney – Diary Of A Wimpy Kid: Diper Overlode
- Sneh Desai, Sunil Tulsiani & Brian Tracy – Ultimate Secrets To Wealth
- Raj Shamani –Build, Don't Talk –Things You Wish You Were Taught In School
- Bhupendra Singh Rathore –Magic Of Thinking Rich
- Deepak Bajaj –Network Marketing In 60 Minutes
- Ruskin Bond – How To Live Your Life
- Dr K. Sreekumar –Buddhavelicham

Rakhi Kapoor awarded Golden Book Awards 2023 for 'Now You Breathe'

- Author Rakhi Kapoor has been awarded the Golden Book Awards 2023 for her book 'Now You Breathe' on 6 February 2023.
- The Golden Book Awards is one of Asia's prestigious award programs which celebrates best works on literature .
- She was also awarded the author of the year at the National Achievers Award in December 2022 at the Constitution Club of India.

VP Nandakumar, Manappuram Finance gets Hurun India award 2023

- VP Nandakumar, Managing Director & CEO of Manappuram Finance Ltd has been awarded the Hurun India's award 2022 for his remarkable achievements in the world of business.
- While V.K. Mathews, founder, and executive chairman, of IBS Software, has been conferred the Hurun Industry Achievement Award 2022.
- V.K. Mathews was nominated on the basis of the research made by the Hurun global team.

Vinesh Phogat and Sakshi Malik nominated for BBC ISWOTY Award

- Wrestlers Vinesh Phogat and Sakshi Malik have been nominated for BBC ISWOTY Award.
- Total of Five athletes were nominated for the BBC Indian Sportswoman Of the Year award.
- The other three are Weightlifter Mirabai Chanu, who won silver at Tokyo Olympics, renowned shuttler PV Sindhu and boxer Nikhat Zareen.
- The winner will be decided by public poll.
- The winner will be declared on March 5.

Dr Peggy Mohan wins 'Mathrubhumi Book of The Year' award 2023

- Author Dr Peggy Mohan has bagged the 'Mathrubhumi Book of The Year' award at the fourth edition of Mathrubhumi International Festival of Letters (MBIFL 2023).
- Her book 'Wanderers, Kings and Merchants,' portraying evolution of language as the outcome of migrations.
- Nobel Laureate Abdulrazak Gurnah presented the award to Mohan at the valedictory ceremony of the four-day MBIFL 2023.

Ricky Kej become only living Indian to win Grammy thrice

- Bengaluru-based musician Ricky Kej has recently won the Grammy Award for the third time.
- He received the award for his album Divine Tides with Steward Copeland, at the 65th Annual Grammy Awards being held at Los Angeles in the United States.
- Ricky is the youngest person from India to have won a Grammy Award, and only the 4th Indian.
- He won his first Grammy back in 2015.

Grammy Awards 2023: Winners List Part - 1

- The 65th Annual Grammy Awards ceremony was held on 5 Feb'23 in Los Angeles, United States.
- Record of the Year: Lizzo
- Album of the Year: Harry Styles-Harry's House
- Song of the Year: Lizzo – About Damn Time
- Best New Artist: Samara Joy
- Best Pop Solo Performance: Bonnie Raitt wins for 'Just like That'
- Best Pop Duo/Group Performance Sam Smith & Kim Petras – Unholy

Grammy Awards 2023: Winners List Part - 2

- Best Dance/Electronic Recording: Beyoncé – Break My Soul
- Best Rock Song: Brandi Carlile – Broken Horses
- Best Rock Album: Ozzy Osbourne – Patient Number 9
- Best Country Solo Performance: Willie Nelson – Live Forever
- Best Country Duo/Group Performance: Carly Pearce & Ashley McBryde – Never Wanted to Be That Girl
- Best Country Song: Cody Johnson – 'Til You Can't

Former PM Manmohan Singh conferred Lifetime Achievement Honour in UK

- He was conferred the Lifetime Achievement Honour by India-UK Achievers Honours in London for his contribution to economic and political life.
- The India-UK Achievers Honours by NISAU UK celebrate the achievements of Indian students who studied at British universities.
- The Lifetime Achievement Honour is a nod to Dr Singh's academic achievements at the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge.

Banking Current Affairs

Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) launched Electronic Bank Guarantee Scheme

- The IOB has launched the facility of issuance of e-BG (Electronic Bank Guarantee) scheme.
- The IOB has launched the e-BG in association with the National e-Governance Services Ltd.
- The e-BG is an instrument issued by the city-headquartered bank in which the bank undertakes to guarantee a specific amount against the non-fulfillment of some action/performance of the applicant.

Karnataka Bank awarded 'Prathista Puraskar' under Digidhan Awards 2022

- Karnataka Bank has been awarded 'Prathista Puraskar' under 'Digidhan Awards 2021-22' by the Union Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology for achieving the target with the highest percentage in BHIM-UPI transactions in the private sector bank category.
- The bank is currently undertaking an accelerated digital drive 'KBL-NxT' under its transformation journey 'KBL VIKAS 2.0'.

Paytm Payments Bank becomes 1st to launch UPI LITE feature

- Paytm Payments Banks Limited (PPBL) in February 2023, has launched UPI LITE feature for multiple small-value UPI transactions and become the first payments bank to launch such feature.
- The UPI LITE feature will help with faster real-time transactions with a single click through Paytm.
- The NPCI designed the feature which was launched by Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in September 2022.

India's retail inflation rises to three-month high level of 6.52 %

- Retail inflation, based on the consumer price index (CPI), rose to 6.52 percent in January 2023 from December 2022's one-year low of 5.72 percent.
- As per the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation data, the retail inflation for January stood at a three-month high level.
- Inflation in January grew mainly due to a rise in food inflation which climbed to 5.94 percent.

RBI announces guidelines on climate risk and sustainable finance

- The Reserve Bank of India, on 8 Feb 2023, announced that it will issue guidelines on broad framework for acceptance of Green Deposits, disclosure framework on Climate-related Financial Risks, and guidance on Climate Scenario Analysis and Stress Testing.
- It will issue the guidelines, which will be based on feedback received on its Discussion Paper (DP) on Climate Risk and Sustainable Finance.

MobiKwik becomes India's first app to support credit cards on UPI

- MobiKwik has become the first fintech apps to support RuPay Credit Cards on UPI.
- The integration is in line with the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) and Reserve Bank of India's vision to boost credit card acceptance across merchants that are not part of the credit ecosystem.

- RuPay Credit Card are issued by all major banks (private and public sector) in the country.

RBI announces pilot for QR code-based Coin Vending Machine

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has announced a pilot program to introduce coin vending machines that use a QR code to improve accessibility to coins.
- The pilot project is planned to be rolled out at 19 locations in 12 cities across the country.
- The QR Code-Based Vending Machine will do away with the necessity for actual tendering of banknotes and their authentication.

RBI increases repo rate by 25 Basis points to 6.5%

- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has increased the repo rate by 25 Basis points to 6.5%.
- Since May 2022, the RBI has increased the repo rate by 2.5%.
- The decision was taken in Monetary Policy Committee meeting.
- Standing Deposit Facility Rate has been revised to 6.25%.
- Marginal Standing Facility Rate and Bank Rate revised to 6.75%.
- RBI said, Inflation for 2022-23 is projected at 6.5%.

PhonePe launches cross-border UPI payments service

- PhonePe announced the debut of a service that will enable its Indian users to pay foreign businesses using the UPI.
- 'UPI international' supports merchant outlets in UAE, Singapore, Mauritius, Nepal and Bhutan that have a local QR code.
- Users will be able to make direct payments in a foreign currency from their Indian bank.
- PhonePe is the first Indian fintech app to launch the service.



Business and Economy Current Affairs

Shailesh Pathak appointed FICCI Secretary General

- Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) has announced the appointment of former bureaucrat Shailesh Pathak as its Secretary General from 1 March 2023.
- He has worked with the government as an IAS officer.
- FICCI also announced that Arun Chawla, Director General, will superannuate on June 30, 2023 and transition to an advisory role.

Reserve Bank of India imposes restrictions on 5 cooperative banks

- The RBI on 22 Feb'23 imposed several restrictions on 5 cooperative banks, including on withdrawals, in the wake of the deteriorating financial condition of the lenders.
- 5 Banks are:
 - HCBL Co-operative Bank, Lucknow
 - Adarsh Mahila Nagari Sahakari Bank, Maryadit
 - Shimsha Sahakara Bank Niyamitha, Maddur
 - Uravakonda Co-operative Town Bank, Uravakonda
 - Shankarrao Mohite Patil Sahakari Bank, Akhuj

NSE gets the final SEBI approval to launch Social Stock Exchange

- The National Stock Exchange (NSE) has got the greenlight from SEBI to launch its Social Stock Exchange.
- The in-principle approval for this was received in Dec 2022.
- The idea of a social stock exchange was first mooted in the Union Budget 2019-20 to enable entities involved in social activities such as charitable trusts and non-profit organisations to access the capital market for funds.

Saraswat Bank partners with Tagit to deploy omnichannel banking

- Saraswat Bank has partnered with Singapore based digital banking solutions provider Tagit to implement omnichannel digital banking solutions for its retail and corporate customers.
- Under the association, the bank will use Tagit's Mobeix Digital Banking platform to enhance customer experience.
- This will increase the market reach, faster time-to-market and enhance customer engagement.

UK surpasses India as the world's sixth-biggest equity market

- The United Kingdom on 22 February 2023, surpassed India as the sixth-largest equity market in the world for the first time since May 2022.
- According to Bloomberg, the combined market capitalization of primary listings in the UK, excluding 'exchanged-traded funds' ETFs and 'American depositary receipts' ADR reached about \$3.11 trillion in February 2023.

Philips Domestic Appliances globally renamed as 'Versuni'

- Philips Domestic Appliances has been renamed as 'Versuni' in February 2023.
- As a licensee of Royal Philips, the company will continue to use the Philips consumer brand, as well as Saeco, Gaggia, and Philips Walita, on its products and services.
- Philips Domestic Appliances is headquartered in the Netherlands and has business offices in more than 100 countries.

PFRDA launches T+2 settlement for NPS withdrawal

- The Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority recently reduced the turnaround time for 'Partial Withdrawal' request of the National Pension Scheme to T+2 Settlement i.e. within 2 days of request.
- Earlier it was under T+4 settlement.
- Partial Withdrawal refers to a situation when a subscriber is withdrawing less than 25% of the funds.
- However, this shall be done only after 10 years.

Direct Tax collections for 2022-23 grow 24% so far

- Direct Tax collections for 2022-23 are at 15.67 lakh crore rupees till 11Feb'23.
- The collections are 24.09% higher than gross collections for corresponding period of 2021-22.
- Direct Tax collection, net of refunds, stands at 12.98 lakh crore rupees which is 18.40% higher than collections of 2021-22.
- This is 91.39% of the total Budget Estimates of Direct Taxes for 2022-23.

India's industrial production index grows 4.3% in December 2022

- As per Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation data, India's Industrial Production, IIP index grew by 4.3 per cent in December 2022.
- It grew by 5.4% during April to December of the current fiscal 2022-23.
- The manufacturing sector's output grew by 2.6% in Dec 2022, while the mining output rose by 9.8% and electricity production increased by 10.4% during December.

Tata group to induct 250 aircraft from Airbus for Air India

- The Tata Group has signed a letter of intent with the American company, Airbus to acquire 250 aircraft, including 40 wide-body planes for Air India in February 2023.
- The airline has placed an order for 210 narrow-body A320neo jets.
- The Tata group acquired 100% stake in Air India and a 100% stake in its arm Air India Express in January 2022.
- Air India currently has a fleet of 113 aircraft.

India's WPI inflation eases to 24-month low of 4.73% in January 2023

- India's annual Wholesale Price-based Inflation (WPI) eased to 4.73 percent in January 2023.
- In December 2022, the WPI-based inflation was 4.95% and in November, it was 6.12 percent.
- January WPI Inflation for food articles increased to 2.38%, up from 0.65 percent in December.
- It stood at 5.72 percent in December 2022 while the previous high of 6.77 percent was recorded in October 2022.

India's retail inflation rises to three-month high level of 6.52 %

- Retail inflation, based on the consumer price index (CPI), rose to 6.52 percent in January 2023 from December 2022's one-year low of 5.72 percent.
- As per the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation data, the retail inflation for January stood at a three-month high level.
- Inflation in January grew mainly due to a rise in food inflation which climbed to 5.94 percent.

India received \$89127 million, highest ever remittances in 2021-22

- India received foreign inward remittances of USD 89,127 million in 2021-22, which was the highest ever received in a single year.
- The highest share of 5 major countries in inward remittances to India through Authorised Dealer (ADs) banks are from the United States (23.4%), followed by United Arab Emirates (18%), United Kingdom (6.8%), Singapore (5.7%) and Saudi Arabia (5.1%).

India's unemployment rate declined to four-month low at 7.14% in Jan

- As per data from the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy, India's unemployment rate declined to a four-month low of 7.14% in January 2023.
- Unemployment rate during Dec'22 was 8.30%, while it was 8% in Nov'22 and 6.43% in Sept'22.
- The urban unemployment rate declined to 8.55% in Jan'23 from 10.09% in Dec'22, while the rural unemployment rate slipped to 6.48% from 7.44%, the data showed.

NIA Launched 'Pay As You Drive' Vehicle Insurance Policy

- New India Assurance (NIA) has launched a 'Pay as You Drive' (PAYD) policy.
- It offers a comprehensive motor insurance policy that charges a premium based on the usage of the vehicle.
- The policy has two components- Third Party cover and own-damage cover.
- The coverage will continue for the policy's remaining duration even if the vehicle has been driven beyond the threshold limit.

S&P Dow Jones will remove Adani Enterprise from sustainability indices

- Adani Enterprises will be removed from sustainability indices by S&P Dow Jones with effect from 7 Feb'23.
- The Indices comprise global sustainability leaders as identified by S&P Global through its Corporate Sustainability Assessment.
- It represents top 10% of the largest 2,500 companies in the S&P Global Broad Market Index based on long-term economic, environmental and social criteria.

Government e-Marketplace achieves a GMV of Rs. 1.5 lakh crore

- As on February 1st 2023, the Government e-Marketplace (GeM) has achieved ₹ 1.5 lakh crore of Gross Merchandise Value (GMV) in FY23.
- The total number of transactions on GeM has crossed 1.3 crore.

- GeM has over 66,000 government buyer organisations and over 58 lakh sellers and service providers.
- GeM portal features over 11,000 product categories with more than 29 lakh listed products.

Union Budget 2023: Lab Grown Diamonds (LGD)

- In budget 2023, it was announced that Customs duty on the seeds used in lab-grown diamond manufacturing will be reduced and a grant will be given to IITs to facilitate its growth.
- Lab-grown diamonds are diamonds that are produced using technology which mimics the geological processes that grow natural diamonds.
- They are environment-friendly compared to earth-mined diamonds.

Budget 2023: National Digital Library for Children and Adolescent

- A National Digital Library for children and adolescents will be set-up for facilitating availability of quality books across geographies, languages, genres and levels.
- States will be encouraged to set up physical libraries for them at panchayat and ward levels.
- State will also provide infrastructure for accessing National Digital Library resources.

Union Budget 2023: National Financial Information Registry to be setup

- A national financial information registry will be set up to serve as the central repository of financial and ancillary information.
- This will facilitate efficient flow of credit, promote financial inclusion, and foster financial stability.
- A new legislative framework will govern this credit public infrastructure, and it will be designed in consultation with the RBI.

Union Budget 2023: MISHTI Scheme for Mangrove plantations

- 'Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats & Tangible Incomes'- MISHTI Scheme was announced in budget on 1 Feb'23.
- The main aim of the scheme is to take up mangrove plantations along the coastline and on salt pan lands.
- It also aims to preserve Mangrove forests.
- MISHTI is to be implemented by converging CAMPA Fund, MGNREGS, and other sources.

Union Budget 2023: PM-PRANAM Scheme

- "PM Programme for Restoration, Awareness, Nourishment and Amelioration of Mother Earth" (PM-PRANAM) was announced in Budget 2023.
- Under the scheme, the govt. aims to incentivize States and Union Territories to promote alternative fertilizers and balanced use of chemical fertilizers.
- The main objective of the scheme is to reduce the use of chemical fertilizers in agriculture.

GST collection at Rs 1.55 lakh crore in January, second highest-ever

- The second-highest Gross GST collection has been made in the month of January 2023, breaching earlier second-highest record in October 2022.
- Over 1,55,000 crore rupees gross GST revenue has been collected in the month of January.

- January's collection includes CGST of 28,963 crores, SGST of 36,730 crores, and IGST of 79,599 crores.

Union Budget 2023: Tax regime

- The rebate limit for individual taxpayers increased from ₹5 lakh to ₹7 lakh a year.
- That is person in new tax regime, with income up to ₹7 lakh will not have to pay any tax.
- It increased tax exemption limit from ₹2.5 lakh to ₹3 lakh.
- The new slabs are:
 - ₹0-3 lakh - no tax
 - ₹3-6 lakh - 5%
 - ₹6-9 lakh - 10%
 - ₹9-12 lakh - 15%
 - ₹12-15 lakh - 20%
 - Above ₹15 lakh - 30%

Union Budget 2023: Mahila Samman Saving Certificate announced

- A new saving scheme 'Mahila Samman Saving Certificate' for women and girls was announced in the Union Budget 2023-24.
- The one-time small saving scheme 'Mahila Samman Saving Certificate' will be available for 2 years up till March 2025.
- Certificate will allow maximum deposit of up to Rs 2 lakh at 7.5 percent interest to the beneficiaries.

Union Budget 2023: PM Vishwakarma Kaushal Samman (PM VIKAS) announced

- PM VIKAS is a package of assistance for traditional artisans and craftspeople.
- The scheme will enable them to improve the quality, scale and reach of their products, integrating them with the MSME value chain.
- Components of scheme include financial support, skill training, knowledge of modern digital techniques, promotion, market linkage, digital payments, and social security.

Union Budget 2023: 'Saptarishi', 7 priorities of the budget announced

- Budget adopted following 7 priorities.
- They complement each other and act as 'Saptarishi' guiding us through the Amrit Kaal.
- They are supposed to guide the country toward a better future and handle challenges it is currently experiencing.
- Inclusive Development
- Reaching the Last Mile
- Infrastructure and Investment
- Unleashing the Potential
- Green Growth
- Youth Power
- Financial Sector



Union Budget 2023: Govt. to set up Agriculture Accelerator Fund

- In Union Budget, govt. announced that it will set up an Agriculture Accelerator Fund to encourage agri- startups by young entrepreneurs in rural areas.
- Fund will aim at bringing innovative and affordable solutions for challenges faced by farmers.
- It will also bring in modern technologies to transform agricultural practices, increase productivity and profitability.

Union Budget 2023: India to become global hub for millets (Shree Anna)

- Budget highlighted importance of millets as means of sustainable cultivation that can raise income of small farmers in arid regions.
- To make India a global hub, Indian Institute of Millet Research, Hyderabad will be made into a center of excellence for sharing best practices, research and technology at international level.
- India is largest producer of millets in the world.

Union Budget 2023: Sickle Cell Anaemia Elimination Mission announced

- It was announced in Union Budget that a Mission to eliminate Sickle Cell Anaemia by 2047 will be launched.
- It will entail awareness creation, universal screening of 7 crore people in the age group of 0-40 years in affected tribal areas.
- It will also perform counselling of people through collaborative efforts of central ministries and state governments.

Union Budget 2023: Pradhan Mantri PVTG Development Mission announced

- This mission aims to provide basic necessities such as housing, water, roads, telecom, education, and health in areas inhabited by PVTGs.
- Particularly vulnerable tribal groups (PVTGs) are the most vulnerable and backward tribes among Scheduled Tribes.
- An amount of 15,000 cr will be made available to implement the Mission in next 3 years under Development Action Plan for Scheduled Tribes.

Union Budget 2023: Urban Infrastructure Development Fund (UIDF)

- Govt. announced that it will set up an Rs.10000 crore per year UIDF, to be used for creating infrastructure in Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities.
- It would be established through the use of priority sector lending shortfall.
- It will be managed by National Housing Bank.
- States will be encouraged to leverage resources from grants of 15th Finance Commission, as well as existing scheme.

Defence Current Affairs

INS Sukanya arrived at Port Colombo of Sri Lanka on official visit

- The Indian Naval Ship, INS Sukanya arrived at the Port Colombo of Sri Lanka on 27 Feb 2023 on an official visit.
- The 101 metre long Offshore patrol vessel along with 106 crew members, was welcomed by the Sri Lanka Navy.
- The crew of the ship will participate in several programmes to promote cooperation between the navies of both countries.

In a historic first, 8 aircraft of IAF land at Saudi Air Force base

- In a historic first, eight aircraft of the Indian Air Force landed at a Royal Saudi Air Force base on 26 February 2023.
- The Indian contingent comprising 145 Air Warriors with its complement of 05 MIRAGE, 02 C17 and 01 IL 78 tankers had an overnight halt in the Kingdom.
- On 27 February the Contingent left for participating in the forthcoming Cobra Warrior 23 Exercise in the UK.

IAF contingent to participate in Exercise Cobra Warrior in UK

- An Indian Air Force contingent comprising 145 air warriors will participate in Exercise Cobra Warrior at the Waddington Air Force Base of the Royal Air Force in UK.
- It is a multilateral Air exercise in which Finland, Sweden, South Africa, US and Singapore are also participating.
- The IAF will be participating with five Mirage 2000 fighters.
- The exercise is scheduled from March 6-24, 2022.

Indian Air Force to participate in Exercise Desert Flag VIII in UAE

- Indian Air Force is participating in Exercise Desert Flag VIII in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) from 27 Feb to 17 March 2023.
- This is the first occasion when the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas shall participate in an international flying exercise outside India.
- The exercise aims to participate in diverse fighter engagements and learn from the best practices of various Air Forces.

Indian Submarine docks in Indonesia for the first time

- India's conventional diesel-electric submarine INS Sindhukesari has on 22 Feb'23 became the 1st Indian submarine to dock in Indonesia.
- This is an attempt to strengthen bilateral relations with Indonesia as part of diplomatic-military outreach to ASEAN countries.
- The docking shows India's increasing military outreach in the region.
- INS Sindhukesari was designed as a part of Project 877.

India-Uzbekistan training Exercise DUSTLIK to begin in Uttarakhand

- As part of a military-to-military exchange program between the Indian and Uzbekistan Army, the 4th edition of biennial training Exercise DUSTLIK (2023) will begin on 21 Feb'23 in Pithoragarh, Uttarakhand.
- The exercise will be conducted till 5 March'23.
- The Indian contingent will be represented by the 14th Battalion, The GARHWAL RIFLES, part of Western Command in this bilateral exercise.

South Africa starts joint military exercise Mosi II with Russia-China

- South Africa started a joint naval military exercise 'Mosi II' with Russia and China in the Indian Ocean in February 2023.
- The South African National Defence Force says 350 members of its armed forces will take part.
- China is South Africa's top bilateral trading partner.
- Russia has announced it will send its Admiral Gorshkov warship, which carries Zircon hypersonic missiles

IAF develops 'Vayulink' platform for steady jammer-proof communication

- The Indian Air Force has developed an innovative solution 'Vayulink' that would aid pilots in dealing with bad weather and also provide jammer-proof uninterrupted communication with the base station.
- The data link communication uses the Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS) that is also known as NAVIC, to send radio communication to the base station when the signals are low.

Indo-Japan military exercise 'Dharma Guardian' to begin on 17 February

- The 4th edition of the joint military exercise between India and Japan, "EX Dharma Guardians" will be conducted from 17 February to 2 March 2023 at Camp Imazu, Shiga Prefecture, Japan.
- Soldiers from the Garhwal Rifles Regiment of the Indian Army and an infantry regiment from the Japan Ground Self Defense Force (JGSDF) are participating in the exercise.

India earmarks 75% of capital procurement budget for domestic industry

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh announced that a record 75% of the India's defence capital procurement budget has been earmarked for domestic industry in 2023-24.
- In 2023-24, Defence Ministry has been allocated a total Budget of ₹ 5.94 lakh cr, which is 13.18% of the total budget.
- Capital outlay pertaining to modernisation and infrastructure development has been increased to ₹1.63 lakh cr.

Cabinet approves proposal to raise seven new battalions of ITBP

- The Cabinet Committee on Security, on 15 Feb'23, approved a proposal to raise 7 new battalions of Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP).

- The approval has also been given for an operational border base with a fresh strength of 9,400 personnel for the ITBP.
- This manpower will be utilised for manning 47 new border posts and a dozen 'staging camps' or troops bases along the Line of Actual Control.

Indian Army gets world's 1st fully operational 'SWARM' Drone System

- NewSpace Research company has delivered 'SWARM' drones to Indian Army in February 2023.
- It makes the Army the first armed force in the world to operationalise SWARM drones.
- The swarm of 100 drones is capable of hitting targets at least 50 kms away into enemy territory.
- These drones are capable of carrying bombs of a particular weight and can hit targets like moving armoured columns.

The 6th edition of Indo-US exercise 'TARKASH' concludes in Chennai

- The 6th edition of the joint exercise 'TARKASH', held from 16 January to 14 February 2023, was concluded in Chennai by the National Security Guard (NSG) and the US Special Operations Force (SOF).
- "Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear (CBRN) Terror Response" has been included in this exercise for the first time.
- CBRN are classified as weapons of mass destruction (WMD).

US Air Force's B-1B Lancer lands at Aero India 2023

- Two US B-1B Lancer heavy bombers have arrived in India for the Aero India 2023 air show, which started on Monday Feb 13-17, 2023.
- The B-1B Lancer (also known as 'Bone', (for B-one) is considered the backbone of America's long-range bomber force.
- It carries the largest conventional payload of both guided and unguided weapons in the US Air Force.

PM inaugurates 14th edition of Aero India 2023 in Bengaluru

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 14th edition of Aero India on 13 Feb'23.
- It is being held at Air Force Station, Yelahanka in Bengaluru.
- Theme of Aero India 2023: The Runway to a Billion Opportunities
- In line with the PM's vision of 'Make in India, Make for the World', the event will focus on displaying indigenous technologies and forging partnerships with foreign companies.

INS Vikrant hosts first landing and take-off trials of LCA, MiG-29K

- The Indian Navy's light combat aircraft (LCA) and MiG-29K aircraft have successfully conducted maiden landing and take-off operations aboard indigenous aircraft carrier (IAC) INS Vikrant on 6 February 2023.
- INS Vikrant was commissioned into the Navy by PM Narendra Modi on 2 September 2022 at the Kochi Shipyard.
- It has been designed by the Warship Design Bureau.

Asia's largest Helicopter factory opened in Tumakuru, Karnataka

- Prime Minister Modi inaugurated Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) helicopter factory at Tumakuru on 6 Feb'23
- This helicopter factory is Asia's largest helicopter manufacturing facility.
- It will initially produce Light Utility Helicopters.
- Factory will be expanded to manufacture Light Combat Helicopter and Indian Multirole Helicopter as well as for repair and overhaul of them in future.

Major General Girish Kalia takes over elite Vajr Division

- In Jammu and Kashmir, Major General Girish Kalia on 1 Feb'23 took over the charge as General Officer Commanding of the elite Vajr Division from Major General Abhijit S Pendharkar.
- He was commissioned on 14 Dec 1991 from Indian Military Academy, Dehradun into MADRAS Regiment.
- Prior to this at he was working at Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff.
- He received Vishisht Seva Medal in 2020.

Indian Army carries out military exercise Trishakti Prahar in Bengal

- A joint training exercise "Exercise Trishakti Prahar" was conducted in North Bengal from 21 to 31 Jan'23.
- The aim of exercise was to practice battle preparedness of Security Forces using latest weapons and equipment in a networked, integrated environment, involving Army, the Indian Air Force and CAPFs.
- It culminated with an Integrated Fire Power Exercise in Teesta Field Firing Ranges.

Government Schemes and Policies Current Affairs

IRCTC to operate Baba Saheb Ambedkar Yatra tour package in April 2023

- Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) will be operating the Baba Saheb Ambedkar Yatra tour package under the "Dekho Apna Desh" initiative in April 2023 from New Delhi.
- It will cover some of the prominent sites associated with the life of Dr. BR Ambedkar.
- Under the "Dekho Apna Desh" initiative, the Ministry of Railways is operating Bharat Gaurav Tourist Trains across India.

Govt revises norms for MPLADS Scheme

- The govt. on 22 Feb'23 announced revised guidelines for Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme-2023 (MPLADS).
- The revised rules will enable MPs to recommend developmental works as per the requirement of their constituency.
- A new website has been unveiled to track funds flow under the scheme.
- The scheme was discontinued during Covid-19.
- It was restored on 10 November 2021.

Union Cabinet approves 'Vibrant Villages Programme' for FY 2022-26

- The Union Cabinet on 15 February 2023 approved "Vibrant Villages Programme" (VVP) for the Financial Years 2022-23 to 2025-26 with financial allocation of Rs 4800 crore.
- The scheme will provide funds for development of essential infrastructure in 4 states and 1 union territory along the northern land border of the country.
- In the first phase 663 Villages will be taken up in the programme.

SEBI launches institutional mechanism to curb market abuse

- Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) in February 2023, proposed an institutional mechanism that will require stock brokers to put in place systems for the detection and prevention of market abuse.
- The mechanism will monitor and control unauthorized trading and will stop firms from facilitating mule accounts.
- It will also focus on ending spoofing and disproportionate trading.

Central govt issues framework to implement 'Vivad se Vishwas-I' scheme

- Finance Ministry has issued an order to implement the "Vivad se Vishwas-I" scheme for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in Feb'23.
- It envisages relief by returning the forfeited amount for not fulfilling contractual obligation during Covid.
- Central Ministries have been asked to refund performance security/bid security and liquidated damages forfeited/ deducted during the pandemic.

Government extends PM-KUSUM scheme till March 2026

- The government has extended the PM-KUSUM scheme till March 2026.
- The decision was taken as the scheme's implementation was significantly affected due to COVID.
- Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthaan Mahabhiyan (PM-KUSUM) was launched in 2019.
- It aimed at adding solar capacity of 30,800 MW by 2022 with the total central financial support of Rs 34,422 crore.

Union govt extends Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban scheme up to 2024

- Union Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs Hardeep Singh Puri announced that the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban (PMAY-U) scheme has been extended up to 2024.
- The central government has sanctioned Rs 2 lakh crore under the scheme, out of which Rs 1.36 lakh crore has been released so far.
- Around 123 lakh houses were sanctioned under the PMAY-U during the financial year 2021-22.



Days and Events Current Affairs

National Science Day: 28 February

- National Science Day is celebrated every year on 28 February.
- The theme 2023 is "Global Science for Global Wellbeing".
- The day is celebrated to mark the discovery of the "Raman Effect" by physicist, Sir CV Raman on this day in 1928.
- For this discovery, he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1930.
- In 1954, he was honoured with India's highest civilian award, the Bharat Ratna.

Rajendra Prasad's Death Anniversary: 28 February

- 2023 marked 60th death anniversary of India's first President Dr Rajendra Prasad.
- He was born on December 3, 1884, at Siwan, Bihar and last breathed on Feb 28, 1963.
- He accompanied Mahatma Gandhi to the Champaran district of Bihar to address the grievances of local peasants.
- He became the President of India on Jan 26, 1950, and went on to winning the presidency for 3 consecutive terms.

Chandra Shekhar Azad's death anniversary: 27 February

- 27 February is observed as the death anniversary of freedom fighter Chandra Shekhar Azad.
- He passed away in 1931 after he shot himself in the head.
- He was born on 23rd July 1906 in Bhabra, Madhya Pradesh.
- He was well known for the key role he played in reorganizing the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HRA).
- He was arrested for joining the non-cooperation movement.

World NGO Day: 27 February

- World NGO Day is celebrated on February 27 every year.
- It aims to inspire people to become more actively involved within non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and encourage a greater symbiosis between NGOs.
- It was first celebrated in 2011 under the theme "Together we make a difference".
- The theme for the year 2023 is "the role and influence of NGOs in advancing human rights."

For the first time, Govt to celebrate Santh Sevalal Maharaj Jayanti

- For the first time, the 284th birth anniversary of Santh Sevalal Maharaj, the spiritual leader of the Banjara Community was celebrated by the Ministry of Culture, Govt of India on 26-27 Feb 2023.
- Union Home Minister Amit Shah was the chief guest at the event.
- It is being celebrated under the Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav.
- Santh Sevalal Maharaj was born on 15 Feb 1739 at Surgondankoppa, Karnataka.

25 February: Vinayak Damodar Savarkar death anniversary

- Savarkar was an Indian independence activist, politician, lawyer and writer.

- He founded a secret society called Abhinav Bharat Society.
- He went to the UK and was involved with organizations such as India House and the Free India Society.
- Savarkar wrote a book titled 'The History of the War of Indian Independence' on 1857 Revolt.
- He also wrote the book 'Hindutva: who is hindu?'.

Central Excise Day: 24 February

- It is celebrated every year on February 24 to honor the service of the Central Board of Excise and Customs (CBEC) to the country.
- The day is celebrated to commemorate the legislation of the Central Excise and Salt act on 24 February 1944.
- Customs, GST, Central Excise & Service Tax (CST), and Narcotics are administered by the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) in India.

World Scout Day: 22 February

- World Scout Day is observed annually on February 22 by millions of Boy Scouts worldwide.
- It honours Lord Robert Baden-Powell, who founded the Boy Scout Movement, on the day of his birthday
- The theme of World Scout Day 2023 is "Our World: Our Equal Future: The Environment and Gender Equality".
- The day is also celebrated as World Thinking Day across the world by Girl Guides/Girl Scouts.

International Mother Language Day: 21 February

- It is celebrated annually on 21 February to promote awareness of linguistic and cultural diversity and to promote multilingualism.
- The theme for 2023 is 'multilingual education - a necessity to transform education.'
- It was formally recognized by the UN General Assembly with the adoption of a UN resolution in 2002.
- The idea to celebrate the Day was the initiative of Bangladesh.

World Day of Social Justice: 20 February

- World Day of Social Justice is observed annually on February 20 to encourage people to see how social justice affects poverty eradication.
- At its 62nd session, the UN General Assembly, in November 2007 proclaimed 20 February as World Day of Social Justice.
- The theme for World Day of Social Justice 2023 is "Overcoming Barriers and Unleashing Opportunities for Social Justice".

Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh Foundation Day: 20 February

- Northern States Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh celebrate their Foundation Day on February 20, since 1987.
- Arunachal Pradesh became the 24th state of India and is also known as the 'land of the rising sun'.

- Mizoram was declared a UT in 1972 under the Northeast Areas (Reorganisation) Act, 1971.
- It became the 23rd state of India after the 53rd Amendment to the Indian Constitution, 1986.

Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Jayanti: 19 February

- February 19 is celebrated as the birth anniversary of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, the founder of the Maratha Empire.
- He was born on February 19, 1630, in Shivneri Fort.
- In 1870, Mahatma Phule started the celebration of Shivaji Jayanti.
- In 1674, he was formally crowned at Raigad Fort and obtained the Chhatrapati title.
- His father Shahaji Bhonsle was a Maratha general.

Dadasaheb Phalke's death anniversary: 16 February

- Dhundiraj Govind Phalke also known as Dadasaheb Phalke is regarded as the 'father of Indian cinema'.
- He was a producer, director and screenwriter.
- He made Raja Harishchandra in 1913, which is considered 1st Indian feature film.
- The Indian government has named the award for lifetime contribution to Indian cinema the Dadasaheb Phalke Award in his honour.
- He passed away on February 16, 1944.

International Childhood Cancer Day (ICCD): 15 February

- The day is observed on February 15 every year.
- The day was created by Childhood Cancer International, an umbrella organisation of various child cancer support groups created by parents.
- The day is dedicated to raising awareness and showing support for children and adolescents suffering from cancer.
- The theme for the three-year (2021-2023) campaign for ICCD is 'Better Survival'.

International Epilepsy Day: 13 February 2023

- International Epilepsy Day was observed on 13 Feb 2023 across the globe to raise awareness of Epilepsy and its impact on individuals & communities around the world.
- An event is organized on this day by the International Bureau for Epilepsy (IBE) and the International League Against Epilepsy (ILAE) to raise awareness about epilepsy.
- Epilepsy is a nervous disorder that affects brain activity.

2019 Pulwama attack: 14 February

- February 14, 2023 marks four years of the 2019 Pulwama attack when 40 Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel were martyred in a suicide bombing attack.
- On February 14, 2019, a terror attack was carried out in Pulwama in Jammu and Kashmir by a suicide bomber.
- The suicide bomber, identified as Jaish-e-Mohammad's Adil Ahmed Dar, rammed his vehicle into a bus with the CRPF convoy.

National Women's Day: 13 February

- The day is celebrated on 13 Feb every year.
- In recognition of Sarojini Naidu's contributions to women's rights and Independence movement, her birthday is celebrated as Women's Day in India.
- It is celebrated to honour the achievements of women in the country, especially in the field of politics, culture, and economy.
- Events are organised to encourage more women to take up leadership roles.

World Radio Day: 13 February

- World Radio Day is celebrated on 13 February to raise awareness about the importance of radio.
- The day was decided by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) on 3 November 2011 during its 36th conference.
- The theme for the 12th edition of World Radio Day (2023), is "Radio and Peace" highlighting independent radio as a pillar for conflict prevention.

PM Modi inaugurates Dayanand Saraswati's 200th birth anniversary event

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the year-long celebrations commemorating the 200th birth anniversary of Maharishi Dayanand Saraswati on 12 February 2023.
- Maharishi Dayanand Saraswati, born on February 12, 1824, was a social reformer who founded Arya Samaj in 1875 to counter the prevalent social inequities.
- The book 'Satyarth Prakash' was written by Dayanand Saraswati in 1875.

World Unani Day 2023: 11 February

- World Unani Day is celebrated on February 11 marking the birth anniversary of Hakim Ajmal Khan.
- Hakim Ajmal Khan was a famous Indian Unani scholar and founder of scientific study in the Unani system of medicine.
- The theme for 2023: Unani Medicine for Public Health
- Unani, also called Yunani is Greek medicine.
- It was mainly developed by the Arabs and Persians.

International Darwin Day: 12 February

- It is observed every year on 12 February to commemorate the birthday of Charles Darwin.
- He was born on 12 February 1809 in England.
- The day focuses on the contribution of Charles Darwin to science and also promotes science in general.
- Darwin was an English naturalist whose scientific theory of evolution by natural selection formed the foundation of modern evolutionary studies.

Thomas Alva Edison Birth Anniversary: 11 February

- The birth anniversary of Thomas Alva Edison is celebrated throughout the world on February 11th.
- He was born on 11th February 1847, in Milan, Ohio, USA.
- He holds the world record of 1093 patents.

- His inventions include the phonograph, the motion picture camera, and early versions of the electric light bulb.
- He was awarded the "Officer of the Legion of Honour" by France in 1881.

International Day of Women and Girls in Science: 11 February

- The International Day of Women and Girls in Science is celebrated annually on 11 February to promote the full and equal access and participation of females in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics fields.
- The United Nations General Assembly passed the resolution in Dec 2015 to celebrate the day.
- The theme for 2023 is 'IDEAS (Innovate, Demonstrate, Elevate, Advance, Sustain).'

World Pulses Day: 10 February

- The United Nations General Assembly has designated 10 February as World Pulses Day to recognize the importance of pulse crops.
- Pulses are the edible seeds of leguminous plants cultivated for food.
- In 2013, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution proclaiming 2016 as the International Year of Pulses.
- "Pulses for a Sustainable Future" is the theme for World Pulses Day 2023.

Baba Amte death anniversary: 9 February

- February 9 marks the death anniversary of Indian social activist, Baba Amte.
- He founded Anandwan, an ashram dedicated to the treatment, rehabilitation, and empowerment of leprosy patients.
- He is also known as the modern Gandhi of India.
- He passed away on 9 Feb 2008.
- He has received numerous awards including Ramon Magsaysay Award (1985), Padma Vibhushan (1986), Templeton Prize (1990),

Sant Ravidas Birth Anniversary: 5 February

- It is celebrated on Magh Purnima.
- He was a 14th-century saint and reformer of the Bhakti movement in North India.
- It is believed that he was born in Varanasi in a cobbler's family.
- He gained prominence due to his belief in one God and his unbiased religious poems.
- He dedicated his whole life to the abolition of the caste system and openly despised the notion of a Brahminical society.

Lata Mangeshkar's first death anniversary: 6 February 2023

- She passed away on 6 Feb 2022.
- She was also known as Swarnakila and the Nightingale of India.
- She was the first musician from India to perform with the Wren Orchestra at London's renowned Royal Albert Hall in 1974.
- She won National Film Award for Best Female Playback Singer in 1974, Padma Vibhushan in 1989, and Bharat Ratna in 2001 for her remarkable contributions to the music industry.



International Day of Zero Tolerance for FGM: 6 February

- International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is observed on 6 February to spread awareness and educate people about the consequences and problems that females faced due to genital mutilation.
- It was first introduced by UNICEF in 2003.
- The theme of 2023 is "Partnership with Men and Boys to Transform Social and Gender Norms to End Female Genital Mutilation".

International Day of Human Fraternity: 4 February

- International Day of Human Fraternity was instituted to celebrate the historic document titled "Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together", being signed by the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar, Ahmad Al-Tayyeb, and Pope Francis on Feb 4, 2019.
- It was established by the United Nations General Assembly on December 21, 2020.
- Motto: Harmony in difference

World Cancer Day: 4 February

- World Cancer Day is an international day marked on 4 February to raise awareness of cancer and to encourage its prevention, detection, and treatment.
- World Cancer Day is led by the Union for International Cancer Control to support the goals of the World Cancer Declaration, written in 2008.
- The theme for the year 2023 is "Close the care Gap: Uniting our voices and taking action."

World Wetlands Day: 2 February

- Every year on 2nd February, World Wetlands Day is celebrated globally.
- This day marks the date of the adoption of the Convention on Wetlands on 2 February 1971, in Ramsar, Iran.
- It was first celebrated in 1997.
- The theme of World Wetlands Day 2023 is "It's Time for Wetlands Restoration," which highlights the urgent need to prioritize wetland restoration.

World Interfaith Harmony Week begins on 1 Feb 2023

- World Interfaith Harmony Week is an annual event observed during the first week of February (1-7), after United Nations General Assembly designation in 2010.
- The week was started by HM King Abdullah II and HRH Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad of Jordan.
- These celebrations focus on creating mutual understanding and interreligious dialogue to promote harmony between people regardless of their faith.

Indian Coast Guard Day: 1 February

- Every year on February 1, Indian Coast Guard Day is observed.
- The Indian Coast Guard was founded on February 1, 1977, and the day is recognized as Indian Coast Guard Day.
- In 2023, the Indian Coast Guard is celebrating its 46th Raising Day.

- The current Director-General of the Indian Coast Guard is Virender Singh Pathania.
- Headquarters: New Delhi



International Current Affairs

Nokia changes its logo for the first time in 60 years

- Nokia, a smartphone and telecom equipment manufacturer, has changed its logo for the first time in nearly 60 years.
- The new logo was launched by CEO Pekka Lundmark on 26 Feb 2023.
- The new logo comprises five different shapes forming the word NOKIA.
- Also, the company has dropped the iconic blue colour and now there's a range of colours depending on the use.

UAE to send its second astronaut to space on a long haul mission

- UAE's second astronaut, Sultan Al Neyadi - Mission Specialist, Primary Crew, Crew-6 embarked on the historic space mission on 27 Feb 2023 from Kennedy Space Center, USA.
- UAE is only the 11th country to send an astronaut on a long-term mission to space with this mission.
- SpaceX Crew-6 is the sixth crewed operational NASA 'Commercial Crew flight' of a Crew Dragon spacecraft.

FATF suspends Russia's membership over Ukraine war

- Global anti-money laundering watchdog the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) has suspended Russia's membership over the Ukraine war.
- FATF said that the Russian's actions unacceptably run counter to the FATF core principles aiming to promote security, safety, and the integrity of the global financial system.
- It added South Africa to its "grey list" of countries under special scrutiny.

China launches communication satellite Zhongxing-26

- China on 23 Feb'23 launched the communication satellite Zhongxing-26 at a cost of 333 million USD.
- It was launched on Long March 3B rocket.
- The main objective of the satellite is to provide broadband connectivity for aviation and ship-related operations.
- It is China's first satellite to provide more than 100 Gbps speed.
- It was launched by the China Academy of Space Technology.

UN approves resolution calling for Russia to leave Ukraine

- The U.N. General Assembly approved a nonbinding resolution on 23 Feb'23, that calls for Russia to end hostilities in Ukraine and withdraw its forces.
- The U.N. has sent a strong message on the eve of the first anniversary of the invasion.
- The countries that voted against resolution: Belarus, Nicaragua, Russia, Syria, North Korea, Eritrea and Mali.
- India abstained from voting.

6.8-magnitude earthquake hits Eastern Tajikistan

- An earthquake of about 6.8 magnitude shook eastern Tajikistan at 5:37 a.m. local time on 23 Feb'23.
- Its impact was also felt in China and other neighbouring countries.
- The earthquake struck the mountainous Gorno-Badakhshan autonomous region which was earlier this month hit by a series of deadly avalanches.
- The epicentre was about 82 kms from the nearest border with China.

Russia launches Soyuz Space craft to bring back stranded astronauts

- Russia's space agency Roscosmos successfully launched an empty SOYUZ spacecraft to bring back the stranded astronauts in space.
- Three astronauts were stranded in space as the Soyuz MS-22 capsule started leaking coolant.
- Now, with the leak, the astronauts will return only by September.
- The leak was due to a micrometeoroid, possibly the size of a small rock hitting the satellite.

7-year-old Prince becomes first digital citizen of Bhutan

- Bhutan's Royal Highness The Gyalsey (Prince) Jigme Namgyel Wangchuck, has become the country's first digital citizen by onboarding with the Bhutan National Digital Identity (NDI) mobile wallet in February 2023.
- Bhutan NDI uses cutting-edge technology to provide citizens with secure and verifiable identity credentials, ensuring the privacy and protection of their personal information.

Russia suspends START, the last Nuclear Treaty

- Russian President Vladimir Putin has announced that Russia is suspending its participation in the New START, the last remaining major military agreement with the United States.
- The name START comes from the original "Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty", known as START-I, which was signed between the US and the erstwhile USSR in 1991, and came into force in 1994.

Seattle becomes first US city to ban caste discrimination

- Seattle has become the first city in the United States to explicitly ban discrimination based on caste.
- The city council in the capital of Washington state voted to add caste to the city's anti-discrimination laws.
- A 2016 survey by the group found that one in four Dalits in the US had faced verbal or physical assault and two out of every three said they had faced discrimination at work.

South Korea court recognises same-sex couple rights for first time

- A South Korean court has for the first time recognised the rights of a same-sex couple in the country.
- The court has ruled that homosexual couples in the country are entitled to the same type of spousal coverage allowed under the national health insurance service as heterosexual couples.
- The ruling took place on February 21, 2023 by Seoul High Court.

World's highest weather station rebuilt on Mount Everest

- The team of mountaineers and scientists re-installed a weather station at an altitude of 8,810 meters at Mount Everest in Feb 2023.
- The world's highest altitude was destroyed due to hurricane-force winds on Mount Everest.
- The group has been led by an electrician and mountain guide, Tenzing Gyalzen Sherpa.
- It is the first-ever terrestrial weather station that is placed above 8,000 meters.

North Korea test fires Hwasong-15 intercontinental ballistic missile

- North Korea successfully test-fired a 'Hwasong-15' Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) on 18 February 2023.
- It was launched into the sea off Japan's west coast.
- Hwasong-15 was first tested in 2017.
- The UN Security Council bans North Korea's missile and nuclear weapons programs.
- It is the first ballistic missile developed by North Korea to reach all of the United States mainlands.

UN Security Council holds first-ever debate on 'Sea-level Rise'

- The United Nations Security Council held its first-ever debate on sea level rise in February 2023.
- The debate was titled "Sea-Level Rise: Implications for International Peace and Security."
- According to the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the rate of sea level rise has doubled since 1993, with a 10-millimeter (0.4 inches) increase since January 2020 to a new record high in 2022.

Spain passes 'menstrual leave' law in first for Europe

- The Spanish govt. approved a law granting paid medical leave to women suffering from severe menstrual pain - a first for any European country.
- Such facilities are presently available in countries like Japan, Indonesia and Zambia.
- The law allows employees experiencing period pain to as much time off as they need.
- The state social security system will compensate for the sick leave.

EU formally bans gas, diesel car sales from 2035

- The European Parliament has approved the law to ban the sale of new gas and diesel cars in the EU.
- The ban will come into effect in 2035.
- The decision was made to increase the use of Electric Vehicles.
- The main objective of it is to achieve zero emissions.
- To execute the plan successfully, the European Commission will prepare a report on the progress every two years starting from 2025.

Equatorial Guinea confirms first Marburg virus disease outbreak

- The World Health Organization (WHO) confirmed the first-ever outbreak of Marburg disease in Equatorial Guinea in February 2023.

- Marburg virus disease is a highly virulent disease that causes haemorrhagic fever, with a fatality ratio of up to 88%.
- It is in the same family as the virus that causes Ebola virus disease.
- Equatorial Guinea has reported 16 suspected cases of Marburg virus.

New Zealand declares national emergency as Cyclone Gabrielle eases

- The New Zealand government on 14 Feb 2023, declared a national state of emergency after Cyclone Gabrielle lashed the North Island.
- Cyclone Gabrielle caused widespread flooding, landslides, and huge ocean swells across the North Island.
- This latest disaster is the third national state of emergency after the 2011 Christchurch earthquake and the Covid pandemic in 2020.

Nikos Christodoulides elected as the new president of Cyprus

- Nikos Christodoulides has been elected as the next President of Cyprus on 12 Feb'23.
- Christodoulides, defeated fellow diplomat Andreas Mavroyanis in the presidential race.
- Christodoulides is supported by the Democratic Party, the Movement for Social Democracy and the Democratic Alignment.
- Previously, he was appointed Government Spokesperson in 2014 and Foreign Minister in 2018.

Moldovan Prime Minister Natalia Gavrilita resigns

- Moldovan Prime Minister Natalia Gavrilita stepped down from her position on 10 February 2023.
- She cited lack of support in the former Soviet Republic, as her reason for resignation.
- Moldova's President Maia Sandu has accepted Gavrilita's resignation.
- Dorin Recean has been appointed as designate Prime Minister.
- Ms. Gavrilita's Party won a majority in elections in August 2021.

South Africa declares 'State of Disaster' over electricity crisis

- South African President Cyril Ramaphosa, on 9 February 2023, declared a national "state of disaster" over power shortages in the country.
- South Africa is currently facing several crises, including issues such as a power crisis, unemployment, etc.
- The President announced that a Minister of Power would be appointed to deal with the matter more effectively and promptly.

Nearly 600 sea lions reported dead after bird flu outbreak in Peru

- Peru announced that nearly 600 sea lions and 55,000 wild birds have died of the H5N1 bird flu virus in February 2023.
- Dead birds include pelicans, different types of gulls and penguins.
- Peru has announced the Biological Vigilance Protocol.
- Bird flu is a highly contagious viral disease that affects species of food-producing bird as well as domesticated birds and wild animals.

Devastating earthquakes hit Turkey & Syria, worst disaster in 84 years

- A powerful magnitude 7.8 earthquake hit Turkey and Syria on 6 February 2023.
- It was one of the strongest to hit the region in more than 100 years and struck 23 kilometers east of Nurdagi in Turkey's Gaziantep province at a depth of 24.1 kilometers.
- Turkey's worst earthquake disaster was in 1939 when 33,000 people died in Turkey's eastern Erzincan province.

Sri Lanka celebrates 75th Independence Day

- Sri Lanka celebrated 75 years of Independence on 4 February 2023, under the theme Namō Namō Matha – A step towards a century.
- The ceremony of the Independence Day Celebrations was held in Colombo.
- A special cultural arts festival Lankaralanka was also held at Independence Square in Colombo.
- India's Union Minister of State for External Affairs V. Muraleedharan participated in the event.

Australia announces removal of British monarchy from its banknotes

- Australia announced that it will erase the British monarch from its banknotes, replacing the late Queen Elizabeth II's image on its \$5 note with a design honoring Indigenous culture.
- The central bank's decision to leave her successor Charles III off the \$5 note means no Britain-based monarch will remain on Australia's paper currency.
- The existing \$5 note will remain legal tender.

US reopens embassy in Solomon Islands after 30 year

- The United States reopened its embassy in the Solomon Islands on Thursday after a 30-year, part of a bid to counter China's growing influence in the South Pacific.
- The United States closed its embassy in the capital Honiara in 1993 after the end of the Cold War.
- The Solomon Islands, a nation of hundreds of islands is located in the Pacific Ocean.
- Solomon Islands PM: Manasseh Sogavare

IMF approves \$4.7 billion Bangladesh support package

- The International Monetary Fund (IMF) on 31 January 2023 approved a total of USD 4.7 billion loan for Bangladesh.
- It includes USD 3.3 billion under the Extended Credit Facility (ECF) and Extended Fund Facility (EFF) and USD 1.4 billion under the Resilience and Sustainability Facility (RSF) for Bangladesh.
- Bangladesh is the first country in Asia to receive financing under the RSF.



MoU and Agreements Current Affairs

APEDA signs MoU with Lulu group for export promotion of millets

- The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) signed an MoU with Lulu Hypermarket LLC for the export promotion of millets in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries on February 21, 2023.
- As per the MoU, the Lulu Group will facilitate promotional activities for millet products and enable the country to display millets and its value-added products.

CSC Academy and NIELIT sign MoU to enhance digital literacy in India

- CSC Academy and NIELIT (National Institute of Electronics and Information Technology) have signed an MoU to enhance digital literacy and skill development in India.
- Under the MoU, CSC Academy and NIELIT will work together to develop training programs in various fields of technology, such as skill development, virtual academy, and content and certifications to mutual partners.

India-Seychelles sign pact on information sharing in maritime security

- The Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region of India and the Regional Coordination Operations Centre, Seychelles signed a MoU on maritime cooperation on 21 Feb'23.
- The MoU aims to promote collaboration between the two Centres towards enhancing maritime domain awareness, information sharing and expertise development.
- They also signed agreement on sharing of white shipping information.

Auckland University, Tata Memorial Hospital sign MoU for cancer care

- Tata Memorial Hospital (TMH), Mumbai, and the University of Auckland signed an MoU on 22 Feb 2023, to engage in long-term cooperation in cancer care.
- The MoU aims to include a digital platform for clinical trials to track study-related activities for patients, investigators, and regulators in cancer treatment care.
- TMH is the largest cancer care hospital and research center in India.

Cabinet approves signing of India-Guyana air services agreement

- The Union Cabinet has approved the signing of an air services agreement between India and Guyana.
- The agreement will provide the legal framework for air operations between two countries.
- Currently, India has air services agreements with around 110 countries.
- Indians have a sizeable presence in Guyana and are the largest ethnic group comprising about 40 per cent of the population.

CWC, IIT-Roorkee to setup International Center of Excellence for Dams

- The Central Water Commission (CWC) signed an MoU with IIT, Roorkee in February 2023, to develop International Centre of Excellence for Dams (ICED) under Dam Rehabilitation and Improvement Project Phase II and III.

- IIT-Roorkee will provide specialized technical support in investigations, modelling, research and innovations, and technical support services to the Indian and overseas dam owners.

SPMCIL signs MoU with TERI under CSR initiatives

- The Security Printing and Minting Corporation of India Limited (SPMCIL) and the Energy Resources Institute (TERI) have signed an MoU for the integrated development of village Model in February 2023.
- The MoU is for the integrated development of village for Social Development, Model Village Siroliya, Dewas, Madhya Pradesh.
- TERI was set up as a Tata Energy Research Institute in 1974.

India and Fiji sign MoU on visa exemption

- India and Fiji have signed a MoU on visa exemption for holders of diplomatic and official passports.
- Under this agreement, diplomatic and official passport holders will be able to enter, transit, and stay in each other territories without a visa for a period not exceeding 90 days.
- The MoU will be helpful in encouraging greater travel between both countries.

BEL signs MoU with IAI for LORA weapon system

- At Aero India 2023, Bharat Electronics Ltd (BEL) has signed an MoU with Israel Aerospace Industries for domestic manufacture and supply of its LORA Weapon System for the Indian Tri-services.
- Under this, BEL will manufacture the system.
- LORA (Long Range Attack) is a sea-to-ground and ground-to-ground system which comprises a long-range ballistic missile, launcher, command and control system.

HAL - Safran signs agreement for development of IMRH engine

- Safran Helicopter Engines and Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) have signed a agreement for development of the engine of the Indian Multi-Role Helicopter (IMRH) and its naval version.
- They will jointly develop engine for the 13-tonne IMRH and the Navy variant Deck-Based Multi-Role Helicopter (DBMRH).
- It was signed at Aero Show 2023.
- This agreement follows the MoU signed on July 8, 2022.

Gopalan Aerospace signs Joint Venture (JVs) with Slovakian firms

- Gopalan Aerospace signed JVs with MTC Slovakia S.R.O and DEFSYSTech S.R.O for the development of precision drones in India.
- The JV will develop a high-precision weapon system, AX-2 Predator.
- It is an attack system of Beyond-Line-Of-Sight guidance type, based on the UAV platform.
- It searches, identifies and destroys High-Value targets using direct hit while destroying its own platform.

Gopalan Aerospace India and Omnipol of Czech Republic signs MoU

- Gopalan Aerospace India Pvt. Ltd. and Omnipol, Czech Republic has signed a MoU for development of a passenger aircraft.
- It was signed for manufacturing and assembling of 1st passenger aircraft (L 410 UVP-E20 version) by a private company in India.
- The MoU was signed at the Bandhan Ceremony of Aero India Show 2023 held on 15 February 2023.

Union Cabinet approves signing of MoU between India and South Africa

- The Union Cabinet, chaired by PM Narendra Modi has approved the signing of the MoU between the Govt of India and the Govt of the Republic of South Africa for cooperation in the Disability Sector.
- The MoU will encourage cooperation between the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities of India and the Government of South Africa through joint initiatives in the disability sector.

ICICI Bank signs pact with BNP Paribas for providing financial service

- ICICI Bank and BNP Paribas in February 2023, have signed an MoU to cater to the banking requirements of European corporates operating in India.
- It establishes a framework of partnership between the two banks for providing financial services to corporate customers operating in India.
- BNP Paribas Group has been in India since 1860 and is among the leading international financial institutions.

Union Cabinet approves signing of MoU between India and Chile

- The Union Cabinet approved the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Chile on 15 February 2023 for cooperation in agriculture and allied sectors.
- The meetings of the Agricultural Working Group will be held once a year alternatively in Chile and India.
- A Chile-India Agricultural Working Group will be constituted for the implementation of the MoU.

DGGI and NFSU sign an MoU for setting up of digital forensic library

- The Directorate General of GST Intelligence (DGGI) and the National Forensic Sciences University (NFSU) on 7 February 2023 signed an MoU for setting up of digital forensic laboratories.
- This MoU will help the DGGI in the field of investigation and digital forensics and will assist the agency for launching effective prosecutions and securing convictions of the guilty.

IISc-Samsung partner for R&D in Electrostatic Discharge Protection

- Indian Institute of Science (IISc) has partnered with Samsung Semiconductor India Research to promote research and development in the field of on-chip Electrostatic Discharge (ESD) Protection.
- ESD is a sudden and momentary flow of electric current between two electrically charged objects.
- Electrostatic Discharge Protection protects the equipment from electromagnetic waves.

EESL signed MoU with Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle JBC

- Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL), a Public Sector Undertaking under Ministry of Power, signed a MoU with Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle Joint Business Council (JBC).
- MoU was signed during G20 Energy Transitions Working Group meeting held in Bengaluru from 5-7 Feb 2023.
- MoU aims to further promote the adoption of energy efficiency and sustainable practices in the region.

ISRO ties up with Indian Navy to conduct recovery trials for Gaganyaan

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) partnered with the Indian Navy to push forward the Gaganyaan mission.
- ISRO along with the Indian Navy carried out the initial recovery trials of the crew module that will splash down in the ocean after re-entering Earth's atmosphere from space.
- The trials were conducted in the Water Survival Test Facility (WSTF) of the Indian Navy at Kochi.

MoD ties up with L&T for procurement of 41 indigenous Modular Bridges

- The Ministry of Defence on 8 February 2023, signed a contract with Larsen and Toubro for the procurement of 41 indigenous Modular Bridges for the Corps of Engineers of the Indian Army.
- These bridges have been designed and developed by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and will be produced by Larsen and Toubro L&T company as a DRDO-nominated production agency.

Myanmar, Russia sign pact on developing nuclear power

- The governments of Russia and Myanmar on 7 February 2023 signed an agreement for developing cooperation in the field of using nuclear technologies for peaceful purposes.
- The pact was signed at the Nuclear Technology Information Centre in Yangon, Myanmar, a joint project between Myanmar's Ministry of Science and Technology, and the Russian Nuclear Power Company.

Agriculture Ministry signs MoU to develop digital extension platform

- The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare signed an MoU on 6 February 2023, with Digital Green under a public-private partnership framework to build a national-level digital extension platform.
- The platform will operate a digital library having material available in different languages and in different formats which will be helpful to the extension functionaries.

CAG signs MoUs with Tajikistan and Kazakhstan on sidelines of SCO SAI

- Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) on 6 Feb'23 signed two MoUs with Tajikistan and Kazakhstan.
- It was done on the sidelines of Shanghai Cooperation Organization Supreme Audit Institutions (SCO SAI) Leaders' meeting in Lucknow.

- The MoUs are aimed at strengthening cooperation and facilitating the exchange of expertise including professionals in the field of auditing.

IIT Madras collaborates with ISRO to develop astronaut training module

- Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has signed an MoU with IIT Madras to build training modules for Indian Spaceflight Program, using augmented reality (AR), virtual reality (VR) and mixed reality (MR) technologies.
- The modules will be used to train engineers at ISRO's Human Space Flight Centre to establish a laboratory based on extended reality (XR) technologies.

Union govt signs MoU to enable primary agricultural credit societies

- The Ministry of Cooperation on 2 February 2023, signed an MoU with the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, NABARD and CSC e-Governance Services India Limited to enable Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS) and provide services by Common Service Centers (CSC).
- It will enhance the business activities of PACS and help them to become a self-sustaining economic entity.

MoHUA ties up to develop Waste to Wealth plants in million plus cities

- The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) and Engineers India Limited (EIL) have signed an MoU in February 2023, for construction of waste-to-energy and bio-methanation projects in million plus cities for "Green Growth" of India.
- India has 59 million plus cities and the ministry has decided to set up solid waste processing facilities in these million plus cities.

HDFC Bank partners with NIIT for building pipeline of High-Quality

- HDFC Bank has partnered with NIIT Limited for the training of skilled Virtual Relationship Management professionals for the banking industry.
- The program is designed to build in-demand and advanced sales skills among the learners which will enable them to acquire new customers for multiple services.
- Any Graduate/Postgraduate with 0-2 years of experience will be eligible for the program.

Reliance announces partnership with Sri Lanka's Maliban Biscuits

- Reliance Consumer Products Limited, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Reliance Retail Ventures Limited announced a strategic partnership with Sri Lanka based Maliban Biscuit Limited.
- It was signed to bring Indian consumers a bouquet of domestic and globally recognized consumer brands and product choices that offer superior value propositions with exceptional quality.

Nagaland govt and Patanjali Foods sign MoU on palm oil cultivation

- Nagaland government and Patanjali Foods Limited have signed MoU for development and area expansion under palm oil cultivation and processing.
- The MoU was signed for Zone-II (Mokokchung, Longleng and Mon districts) of Nagaland, under the National Mission on Edible Oils-Oil Palm (NMEO-OP).



- It will bring a big boost for the oil palm growers in the state of Nagaland and the region.



National Current Affairs

Govt approves \$3.9 billion Hydropower project near China border

- The Indian Govt has approved its largest ever hydropower project in the mountainous northeastern region- Dibang Multipurpose Project (MPP).
- The project bordering China has received an approval of estimated investment of ₹1600 crore.
- The project will be developed by NHPC Limited.
- It is a 2,880-megawatt Dibang project in Arunachal Pradesh.
- The project is estimated to take 9 years to build.

UIDAI implements new security mechanism

- The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) has rolled out a new security mechanism.
- It is for Aadhaar based fingerprint authentication, and faster detection of spoofing attempts.
- The artificial intelligence and machine learning (AI/ML) based security mechanism is now using a combination of both finger minutia and finger image to check the liveness of the finger print captured.

Nitin Gadkari inaugurates 7 National Highway projects

- Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari inaugurated 7 National Highway projects with an investment of 6500 cr in Chitbada village, Ballia, Uttar Pradesh.
- With the construction of Ballia Link Expressway it will be possible to reach Patna from Lucknow through Purvanchal Expressway in just four and a half hours.
- New connectivity route between Ballia-Ara was also announced.

Divorced daughters eligible for family pension

- Now divorced daughters are eligible for family pension and the seven-year service eligibility for entitlement of pension or family pension has been done away with.
- This was informed by Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions Minister Dr. Jitendra while addressing the 49th Pre-Retirement Counselling Workshop in New Delhi on 27 Feb 2023.

PM Narendra Modi inaugurates Shivamogga airport

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 27 February 2023 inaugurated the Shivamogga airport with a lotus-shaped terminal.
- The new airport has been developed at a cost of around Rs 450 crore.
- The passenger terminal building of the airport can handle 300 passengers per hour.
- He also laid the foundation stone of multiple projects at Shivamogga, including two railway projects.

Karnataka plans country's first marina at Byndoor

- The Karnataka Government will build the country's first Marina or a boat basin offering dockage, at Byndoor in Udupi district to promote coastal tourism in Karnataka.

- The government also will collect the history of the greatest dynasties such as Ganga, Kadamba, Rashtrakoota, Chalukya, and Hoysala from the Department of Archaeology and develop the history of tourism in the state

Chatrapati Sambhajnagar to host Women20 Inception Meeting on 27 Feb

- The first meeting of the W20 (Women 20) under India's G20 presidency will be held at Sambhaji Nagar, Maharashtra on 27-28 February 2023.
- 'Pursuit of Gender Equality, Equity and Dignity for Women-led Development' is the theme of the meeting.
- W20 (Women 20) is an official engagement group under the G20 which was established during the Turkish presidency in 2015.

Union Min Jitendra Singh inaugurates 'International Biotech Conclave'

- Union MoS Science & Technology Dr. Jitendra Singh on 25 Feb 2023, inaugurated the 'International Biotech Conclave' in Imphal, Manipur.
- It was held along with the 22nd Congress of the International Society for Ethno-pharmacology and the 10th Congress of the Society for Ethno-pharmacology.
- The theme for the conclave was "Reimagine Ethnopharmacology: Globalisation of Traditional Medicine".

Union government approves renaming of Aurangabad & Osmanabad

- Maharashtra's Aurangabad and Osmanabad have been renamed as Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar and Dharashiv respectively.
- The decision to rename the cities was taken by the Maharashtra government On July 16, 2022.
- The Ministry of Home Affairs on 24 February 2023 approved the proposal.
- Osmanabad derives its name from the last ruler of Hyderabad, Mir Osman Ali Khan.

IREDA to set up office in GIFT city to fund Renewable Energy projects

- Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA) announced to establish an office in Gujarat's GIFT City to finance Renewable Energy projects in foreign currency.
- The office at Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City), Gandhinagar, will be classified as an overseas office, allowing the IREDA to avoid foreign exchange hedging cost.

MoS R Chandrasekhar launches 2nd Semicon India Future Design Road Show

- Union Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology, Rajeev Chandrasekhar launched the 2nd Semicon India Future Design Roadshow in Bengaluru on 24 Feb 2023.
- The aim is to encourage startups, next-generation innovators, and business leaders to invest in semiconductor sector in India.
- He also announced the launch of the ChipIN Centre at C-DAC India, Bangalore

EAM's annual flagship event Asia Economic Dialogue begins in Pune

- External Affairs Ministry's (EAM) annual flagship event on Geoeconomics, Asia Economic Dialogue began in Pune, Maharashtra on 23 Feb 2023.

- The 3-day event is being hosted by EAM and Pune International Centre.
- The principal theme for the Dialogue is 'Asia and the Emerging World Order'.
- More than 44 speakers from various countries will be participating in this Dialogue.

Namami Gange Executive Committee approves projects worth over 1,200 cr

- The Namami Gange Executive Committee has approved 9 Projects, worth over ₹1200 crore for Pollution abatement in Ganga Basin and Ghat Development.
- It was chaired by NMCG Director General G. Asok Kumar.
- It approved projects for sewage treatment in West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh.
- One project for the development of Atal Ghat Manjhi, Saran, Bihar was approved at the cost of 10 cr.

Kerala HC - 1st in country to publish judgments in regional language

- The Kerala High Court has published two of its recent judgments in Malayalam on 21 February 2023.
- The day (21 February) is also observed as International Mother Language Day.
- With this, Kerala High court became the first high court in the country to publish judgments in regional language.
- The judgments in Malayalam were uploaded on the court's website just below the English version.

NHAI to explore use of Phosphor-Gypsum in highway construction

- National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) on 22 Feb'23 announced the use of phosphor-gypsum waste material in the construction of national highways.
- An Indian fertilizer company has constructed a road using phosphor-gypsum, which was evaluated by the Central Road Research Institute (CRRI).
- Based on the CRRI report, the NHAI has approved the use of phosphor-gypsum for road construction.

PM Narendra Modi chairs the 41st edition PRAGATI Interaction meeting

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired the meeting of the 41st edition of the Pro-Active Governance and Timely Implementation (PRAGATI) Interaction on 22 February 2023.
- In the meeting, nine key infrastructure projects were reviewed and PM Modi also reviewed 'Mission Amrit Sarovar'.
- PRAGATI Interaction was launched on 25th March 2015 by PM Modi as a part of the Digital India program.

Extension of term of 22nd Law Commission of India approved

- The Union Cabinet has approved the extension of the term of the Twenty-second Law Commission of India upto 31st August, 2024.
- The Law Commission of India is a non-statutory body constituted by the Government from time to time.
- The tenure of the present Twenty-second Law Commission of India ended on 20 February 2023.

CBI raids 50 locations in Punjab under 'Operation Kanak-2'

- The Central Bureau of Investigation has conducted searches under operation Kanak-2 at around 50 locations in Punjab at the premises of the Food Corporation of India, FCI officials and private rice millers in an ongoing investigation of a case.
- Incriminating documents and digital devices have been recovered during searches.
- The operation was launched to break the nexus of corruption in FCI.

India to setup a Digital University

- The Ministry of Education and various stakeholders are working to set up the 'digital university', announced in the 2022 Union Budget, by August 2023.
- The university will offer the whole gamut of qualifications certificate programmes, diplomas, degrees.
- As proposed by the University Grants Commission (UGC), there won't be any limit on the number of seats.

Millet Festival begins in Mumbai from 22 February 2023

- Three-day long Millet Festival began on 22 February 2023 in Mumbai.
- United Nations has declared year 2023 as 'International Year of Nutritious Cereals'.
- As part of it, this festival is being organized by the Marketing Department.
- A book containing comprehensive information about Millet will also be released.

Railways to launch Guru Kirpa Yatra with Bharat Gaurav Tourist Train

- Indian Railways will launch Guru Kirpa Yatra on 5th April 2023, from Lucknow with its Bharat Gaurav Tourist Train.
- During this holy tour, the pilgrims will visit the most prominent revered sites of Sikhism which includes the five Holy Takhts.
- Bharat Gaurav Tourist Trains is being operated by Railways on various famous theme-based circuits to showcase the cultural heritage of India

Govt approves QC order for mandatory certification of cotton bales

- Union minister for commerce and industry, Piyush Goyal on 21 February 2023, approved the Quality Control Order (QCO) for mandatory certification of cotton bales.
- He presided over the fifth interactive meeting with the Textile Advisory Group (TAG) in New Delhi.
- Under the initiative, modern testing facilities would be created through the Bureau Of Indian Standards.

First nuclear plant of North India to be built in Haryana

- The first nuclear power plant in North India would be built in Gorakhpur, Haryana, according to Union Minister Jitendra Singh.
- The plant will have capacity of 1,400 MW.

- The Gorakhpur Haryana Anu Vidyut Pariyojana (GHAVP), having two units of 700 MW capacity each of Pressurised Heavy Water Reactor (PHWR) of indigenous design, is under implementation near Gorakhpur village of Haryana.

Country's first ever Frozen Lake Marathon in Ladakh sets world record

- In Ladakh, country's first ever Frozen Lake Marathon on Pangong Tso has been officially registered in the Guinness Book of World Records as the world's highest Frozen Lake marathon.
- Organised on: 20 Feb'23
- Organised by: Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council and Adventure Sports Foundation of Ladakh.
- Theme of marathon: The Last Run
- It was organised as part of vibrant village Program.

Fist PM Gati Shakti Workshop for Western & Central Zone held in Goa

- The first PM Gati Shakti regional workshop for the Western and Central Zone was held in Goa on 20 Feb 2023.
- The workshop featured discussions on use cases of National Master Plan (NMP) adoption by Central Ministries & State Departments for planning.
- The scheme incorporates the infrastructure schemes of various Ministries and State Governments and was launched on 13 October 2021 by PM Modi.

Union Education minister launches learning-teaching material for kids

- Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan launched a Learning-Teaching Material 'Jaadui Pitara' for foundational years of children in New Delhi on 20 February 2023.
- It was launched under the National Curriculum Framework for foundational stage – 2022.
- It comprises of playbooks, activity books, flash cards, posters depicting various stories, games, puzzles, puppets and many more items.

Delhi Metro launches first-ever Train Control & Supervision System

- The first indigenously developed Train Control and Supervision System was launched on 18 February 2023, for operations on the Red Line of Delhi Metro.
- The Automatic Train Supervision System (i-ATS) has been developed by a joint team of Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) and Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL).
- The i-ATS is a computer-based system that will manage train operations.

Union Minister Rupala unveils 3rd phase of Sagar Parikrama from Hazira

- The Union Minister Parshottam Rupala unveiled the of Sagar Parikrama began at Hazira port in Surat on 19 Feb'23.
- It is a platform to establish direct communication with all the stakeholders of the fisheries including the fishermen and bring solutions to the problems faced by them.
- The 3-day parikrama will culminate at Mumbai on 21 Feb'23.

India achieves more than 15 thousand transplants for first time

- India achieved more than 15,000 transplants for the first time in a year in 2022.
- Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan announced this during National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation Scientific Dialogue held on 19 Feb'23.
- An annual increase of 27% in transplant numbers has been observed.
- There is a fast resurgence in transplant activities post-COVID.

SII to establish centre of excellence for Infectious Diseases

- The Serum Institute of India(SII) has announced the establishment of a Dr. Cyrus Poonawalla Centre of Excellence in Infectious Diseases and Pandemic Preparedness.
- It will be located at the Indian Institute of Public Health, Hyderabad.
- It is being set up for providing the community with a centralized location for information, resources, and support during times of public health emergencies.

First G20 meeting of Finance Ministers to be held on 24 February

- The first G20 meeting of Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors (FMCBG) under the G20 Indian Presidency will be held on the 24th and 25th of February in Bengaluru, Karnataka.
- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das will jointly chair this meeting.
- Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur will inaugurate the G20 FMCBG meeting.

MEA launches 'mPassport Police App' to expedite police verification

- The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has launched in February 2023, the 'mPassport Police App' to expedite the process of police verification of passport issuance.
- It was launched by Union Home Minister Amit Shah during the 76th Raising Day Parade of Delhi Police.
- The app will allow police personnel to submit digital and paperless verification reports in 5 days.

Dept of Pension & Pensioners Welfare to hold nationwide Pension Adalat

- The Department of Pension and Pensioners Welfare will hold a nationwide Pension Adalat on 17 March'23 through video conferences.
- Its objective is the resolution of pensioners' grievances within the framework of extant policy guidelines.
- Through this, the department will focus on speeding the settlement of cases, especially the cases of super Senior Citizens and family pension cases.

49th meeting of GST Council is being held in New Delhi

- The 49th meeting of the GST Council is being held in New Delhi on 18 Feb'23.
- It will be chaired by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.
- Along with the Union Finance Minister, Union Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary, Finance Ministers of States & UTs (with legislature) are also attending the meeting.
- The last GST council meeting was held on 22 Dec'22, which was the 48th meeting.

Govt declares KTF and J&K Ghaznavi Force as terrorist organizations

- The Home Ministry has declared Khalistan Tiger Force (KTF), and Jammu and Kashmir Ghaznavi Force as terrorist organizations under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967.
- The KTF is a militant outfit that aims at reviving terrorism in Punjab.
- J&K Ghaznavi Force has been found involved in infiltration bids, narcotics and smuggling and carrying out terror attacks in Jammu and Kashmir.

Home Ministry declared Harwinder Singh Sandhu as a terrorist

- Ministry of Home Affairs has declared Harwinder Singh Sandhu 'Rinda' as a terrorist on 17 Feb'23.
- He has been associated with the terrorist organization Babbar Khalsa International and is presently based in Lahore, Pakistan.
- He has been found involved in various terrorist activities, particularly in Punjab.
- He has been declared terrorist under Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967.

UIDAI launched AI Chatbot 'Aadhaar Mitra' for Aadhar related queries

- The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) in February 2023, launched a new chatbot 'Aadhaar Mitra' to help people get an answer to their queries related to the Aadhaar card.
- It is Artificial Intelligence/Machine Learning (AI/ML)-based chatbot and can answer queries related to Aadhaar enrolment number, PVC Card order status, and complaint status, among other things.

Min of Textiles to organise 'Technotex 2023' from 22-24 Feb in Mumbai

- Ministry of Textiles is going to organize 10th 'Technotex 2023: Envisioning Indian Technical Textiles@ 2047' event, to be held from 22nd to 24th February 2023 in Mumbai, Maharashtra.
- The first edition of Technotex was organized in 2011.
- Technotex 2023 would comprise of International Exhibition, Conference and Seminars, CEO's Forum, Investor Discussions, Country and State Sessions.

AIIMS Rishikesh conducts trial of delivering TB medicines using drones

- ALL India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Rishikesh in Feb 2023, conducted a successful trial for transporting Tuberculosis (TB) medicines with the help of a drone to the district hospital in Tehri Garhwal in Uttarakhand.
- Drone start-up company TechEagle's 'Vertiplane X3' drone model was used in the trial and delivered 3 kg of tuberculosis medicines to the hospital.

Divya Kala Mela 2023 is being organised in Mumbai

- It is being organised from 16 to 25 Feb'23 in Mumbai's MMRDA Grounds.
- Divyangjan Empowerment Dept. and National Handicapped Finance and Development Corporation are organising it.
- It is an unique exhibition cum sale of products made by divyang entrepreneurs and artisans.
- It is showcasing products made by around 200 divyang artisans from 24 States and Union Territories.

PM virtually inaugurates Jal Jan Abhiyan in Rajasthan

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually inaugurated the Jal Jan Abhiyan in Abu Road in Sirohi district of Rajasthan on 16 Feb'23.
- The main objective of this campaign is to plant trees along with water harvesting and motivate people for water conservation.
- This campaign has been started by the Brahma Kumaris organisation and the Ministry of Jal Shakti.

India's first waste-to-hydrogen plant to be set up in Pune

- The Government of India is to set up the first waste-to-hydrogen plant at a cost of Rs 430 crores in Pune.
- The plant will be built by a private company Green Billion Limited.
- The company has signed an agreement with the Pune Municipal Corporation for 30 years.
- The objective of the plant is to treat 350 tonnes of solid waste daily. From this, it will produce ten tonnes of Hydrogen every day

RBI announced 2nd global hackathon 'HARBINGER 2023'

- The Reserve Bank of India, on 14 Feb'23, announced its 2nd global hackathon called 'Harbinger 2023 - Innovation for Transformation'.
- The theme of the hackathon is 'Inclusive Digital Services'.
- It will be conducted in 4 segments namely Digital Banking, regulations, transactions, and the use of blockchain in transactions.
- The winner will get Rs 40 lakhs and the runner-up will get Rs 20 lakhs.

AICTE & BPRD jointly launched a national level hackathon, KAVACH-2023

- All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) and the Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPRD) jointly launched a national-level hackathon, KAVACH-2023, to tackle cyber threats and provide effective solutions.
- It is being held to identify innovative ideas and technological solutions for addressing the cyber security and cybercrime challenges of the 21st century.

Govt approves strengthening cooperative movement through 2 lakh PACS

- Govt. has approved strengthening the cooperative movement in the country and deepening its reach up to the grassroots.
- For this, initially 2 lakh multipurpose Primary Agricultural Credit Society (PACS), dairy and fisheries cooperative will be established in each uncovered Panchayat.
- They will be established in the next 5 years.
- This will enable cooperatives to modernise infrastructure.

G20 culture working group meeting to be held in Khajuraho from 22 Feb

- The first Culture Working Group meet will be held in Madhya Pradesh's temple town Khajuraho from 22 to 25 February 2023.
- The theme of the event is "Protection and Restitution of Cultural Property".

- The event will also have an exhibition which will be organized at the Maharaja Chhatrasal Convention Centre, which will be inaugurated by Union Minister for Culture G Kishan Reddy.

Science Center and Planetarium to be constructed in Kota, Rajasthan

- In Rajasthan, Science Center and Planetarium will be constructed in Kota. It will be one of the best science centers and planetariums in the world.
- An MoU was signed on 15 February 2023, between the National Council of Science Museums (NCSM) and the Govt of Rajasthan for construction of the center.
- There are 24 science centers or museums of NCSM, located in different states in India.

HAL unveils next gen supersonic trainer HLFT-42 at Aero India 2023

- Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) has unveiled the design of a new supersonic jet trainer HLFT-42 for combat aircraft training of the Indian Air Force (IAF) at Aero India 2023.
- The aircraft carries the tagline 'the storm is coming' and will be used to comprehensively prepare fighter pilots to operate fifth-generation fighter jets.
- It is equipped with a Fly by Wire (FBW) control system.

Union Health Ministry organises 'Cycle for Health' cyclathon at LHMC

- The Union Health Ministry on 14 February 2023, organised a cyclathon 'Cycle for Health', at Lady Hardinge Medical College in New Delhi.
- It was organized as part of the ongoing 'Swastha Mann, Swastha Ghar' year-long campaign launched in November 2022 which aims to promote and enhance awareness surrounding healthy living.
- Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya also participated in the event.

Govt launches 'Khanan Prahari' and CMSMS to curb unauthorized mining

- The government has launched a mobile app 'Khanan Prahari' and a web app Coal Mine Surveillance and Management System. (CMSMS) for reporting unauthorized coal mining activities.
- It was launched to curb illegal mining and take transparent action as an e-Governance initiative of the government on the use of Space Technology.
- As of Jan 2023, 462 cases have been reported on the Apps.

India's first AC double decker electric bus inducted in Mumbai

- India's first air-conditioned double-decker electric bus was inducted into the fleet of Mumbai's BEST transport body on 13 Feb 2023.
- The will be registered at the Regional Transport Office before it hits the road for the public.
- The fare of these buses will be the same which is applicable for single-decker AC buses.

PM Modi to inaugurate 'Aadi Mahotsav' in Delhi on Feb 16

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate a 15-day 'Aadi Mahotsav' at the Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium, Delhi, on February 16, 2023.

- Around 1,000 tribal artisans and artists from 28 states and Union territories will participate in the festival.
- They include tribal cooks from 19 states and UTs for which 20 food stalls are being set up.

Bengal to host India International Seafood Show from Feb 15 to 17

- The 23rd edition of the India International Seafood Show (IISS) will be held in Kolkata from February 15 to February 17, 2023.
- It will showcase the country's tremendous strides in the seafood sector.
- The Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA), in association with the Seafood Exporters Association of India, will be jointly hosting the event at the Biswa Bangla Mela Prangan.

Paytm launches G20-theme QR Code to celebrate India's G20 presidency

- Paytm has launched a special G20-theme QR Code to celebrate India's G20 presidency and the country's leadership in mobile payments.
- It was launched by Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw during the 'Digital Payments Utsav' 2023.
- The special commemorative QR Code features logos of MeitY's 'DigiDhan Mission', along with those of the G20 2023 and 75th year of India's independence.

India's 1st National Metro Rail Knowledge Centre to be built in Delhi

- GA Infra Pvt Ltd has been awarded the contract for designing and constructing the country's first National Metro Rail Knowledge Centre in February 2023.
- The centre will be located at the Vishwavidyalaya Metro Station in Delhi and built on a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model.
- The centre will provide training and capacity-building opportunities for metro rail professionals.

Govt to set up Bima Sugam portal for general insurance business

- The union govt has announced to set up of a 'Bima Sugam portal' to address the existing protection gap across life, health, and general insurance businesses in the country.
- It is expected to improve the accessibility and ease of purchasing insurance for policyholders.
- The portal will provide a platform where insurers, distribution networks, and policyholders can meet virtually.

PM Narendra Modi inaugurates first phase of Delhi-Mumbai Expressway

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the first phase of the 1,400 kilometres long Delhi-Mumbai expressway in Rajasthan's Dausa on 12 February 2023.
- The 246-kilometre Delhi-Dausa-Lalsot stretch of the expressway will cut down the travel time from Delhi to Jaipur from 5 to 3.5 hours.
- Delhi Mumbai Expressway will be India's longest expressway with a length of 1,386 km.

2-day G-20 empower inception meeting held in Agra on 11 and 12 Feb

- The inception meeting of G-20 empower group of Ministry of Women and Child development was held in Agra, Uttar Pradesh on 11 and 12 February 2023.



- The theme of the meeting was "Empowering Women to Lead across Sectors: Role of Digital Skilling and Future Skills."
- An exhibition "Products and Services by Women at the Grassroots" was also held during the event.

Communications Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw inaugurates AMRITPEX 2023

- The Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw inaugurated AMRITPEX 2023 - National Philatelic Exhibition on 11 February 2023.
- The themes of the exhibition include Amrit Mahotsav of Independence and New India, women power, youth power, nature and wildlife, and culture and history of India.
- The Department of Posts also released a commemorative postage stamp during the event.

PM Narendra Modi flags off 2 Vande Bharat Express trains from Mumbai

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 10 February 2023, flagged off two Vande Bharat trains from Mumbai to Shirdi and Solapur.
- The first Vande Bharat train in Maharashtra connects Mumbai to Gandhinagar in Gujarat.
- With the commissioning of the two trains, the number of Vande Bharat Express trains running from Mumbai has increased to three, taking the number to 10 in the country.

Ministry of Culture to organise Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav-2023

- Union Ministry of Culture is going to organise Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav-2023 at Azad Maidan in Mumbai, from 11th to 19th February 2023.
- The Mahotsav aims to promote National Unity and integrity through cultural exchange.
- More than 350 folk and tribal artists from all over India along with local folk artists, transgender and differently-abled artists will be participating in the event.

Skye Air launched India's first traffic management system for drones

- Skye Air launched India's First Traffic Management System for Drones.
- It will allow drone operators to plan routes, make flight plans and assess risks before running drone-based operations
- The solution, called Skye UTM, is a first-of-its-kind for India.
- Skye UTM is a Cloud-based aerial traffic management system that integrates unmanned air traffic with manned aviation airspace.

MMTC-PAMP launches digital silver

- MMTC-PAMP, a joint venture between state-owned MMTC Ltd and Switzerland-based bullion brand Products Artistiques Metaux Precieux (PAMP), on 9 February 2023, announced the launch of digital silver.
- The digital silver can be purchased for as low as Rs 1.
- MMTC-PAMP is the first Indian gold and silver refiner to get international accreditation from the London Bullion Market Association.

Union Minister Virendra Kumar dedicates to nation 25 ATF

- Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Virendra Kumar dedicated to the nation 25 Addiction Treatment Facilities (ATF) under Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyaan in New Delhi on 9 Feb 2023.
- The scheme aims to bridge the gap between drug abuse victims and the treatment facility dedicated to them.
- The department of social justice and empowerment launched the Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyaan in August 2020.

Urban-20 City Sherpas' meet begins at Ahmedabad in Gujarat

- A two-day Urban-20 City Sherpas' meet began on 9 February 2023, in Ahmedabad, Gujarat.
- The meeting aims to focus on promoting solidarity among cities to find common solutions that are in sync with the overall objectives of the G20.
- Over 30 international cities are participating in the two-day event to discuss the sustainable development of cities.

Union Minister Giriraj Singh inaugurates Mission Antyodaya Survey 2022

- Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Minister Giriraj Singh inaugurated the Mission Antyodaya Survey (MAS) 2022-23 in New Delhi on 9 February 2023.
- The ministry has been conducting the survey across all Gram Panchayats in the country since 2017-18.
- The purpose of this survey is to transform lives and livelihoods of people to measurable outcomes through convergence of various schemes.

Ashwini Vaishnav launches 'Digital Payments Utsav'

- Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnav launched the 'Digital Payments Utsav' in New Delhi on 9 February, 2023.
- It will focus on G-20 Digital Economy Working Group event cities, namely Lucknow, Hyderabad, Pune and Bengaluru.
- G-20 co-branded QR codes and a coffee table book showcasing India's journey to global leadership in digital payments and digital inclusion were released at the event.

Govt. to open Integrative Medicine Centres in all government hospitals

- The government will open Integrative Medicine Centres in all government hospitals across the country.
- The Centers will treat patients using both ayurveda and modern medicine.
- This was announced during the inauguration of Integrative Medicine Centre at Safdarjang Hospital in New Delhi on 7 Feb'23.
- Both Health and Ayush Ministries have joined hands for this initiative.

Reliance Jio and GSMA unveil Digital Skills Initiative in India

- Reliance Jio in collaboration with GSMA has unveiled a nationwide Digital Skill initiative.
- This collaborative effort intends to provide rural women and people from low-income groups with training based on their specific needs.

- Based on research on digital skill gaps, India-specific digital skills training toolkits have been created.
- Initiative is currently being implemented in 10 states.

Visva-Bharati University to be world's 1st Living Heritage University

- Visva-Bharati University, founded by Rabindranath Tagore in 1921, is set to become the world's first "living heritage university".
- The university is expected to receive the heritage tag from UNESCO in April or May 2023.
- The institute was granted the status of a Central University in the year 1951 through a Central Act.
- It is the only university whose Chancellor is the PM of India.

Union Minister Bhupender Yadav launches 'Save Wetlands Campaign'

- Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Bhupender Yadav in February 2023, launched the 'Save Wetlands Campaign.'
- The campaign is based on a "whole of society" approach to wetland conservation.
- It provides an opportunity to sensitise people about the value of wetlands, increase the coverage of wetlands and citizen participation for wetland conservation.

Yuva Sangam registration portal launched

- Yuva Sangam registration portal was launched in New Delhi on 6 Feb 2023.
- Yuva Sangam is an initiative to build close ties between the youth of the North East Region and rest of India under the spirit of Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat.
- Under the initiative over 20 thousand youth will travel across the country and gain a unique opportunity of cross-cultural learning.

Reliance unveils India's 1st hydrogen combustion engine for heavy duty

- Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) on 6 February 2023, unveiled India's first Hydrogen Internal Combustion Engine technology solution for heavy duty trucks.
- It was flagged off by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the India Energy Week in Bangalore.
- The Hydrogen Internal Combustion Engine (H2ICE) powered trucks will emit near zero emissions and reduce noise.

Central govt blocks loan apps Kissht and PayU's LazyPay

- Digital loan apps LazyPay and Kissht have been banned by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY's) on February 5, 2023.
- The central govt also blocked 232 such apps involved in unauthorized loan services, betting, and gambling.
- Kissht app is backed by Vertex Growth and Brunei Investment and is valued at over \$450 million.

Indian Railways launches WhatsApp food delivery facility 'Zoop'

- The Indian Railways has started WhatsApp Communication "Zoop" for railway passengers to order food through e-catering services to make e-catering services more customer-centric.

- Passengers will be able to order food online through WhatsApp while undertaking a journey by using their PNR number.
- Zoop App assists passengers to order food delivery in trains from restaurants at railway stations.

NTPC hosts G20 international seminar on CCUS

- NTPC Ltd. hosted a seminar on 'Carbon Capture Utilization and Storage' at the First Energy Transitions Working Group meeting in Bengaluru.
- The study Report on "Carbon Capture, Utilization, and Storage (CCUS): Technology Gaps and International Collaboration" was unveiled during the event.
- A 3D model of NTPC's flagship project on Methanol Synthesis from Flue Gas CO₂ was displayed at the event.

CAG to host 6th Shanghai Cooperation Organisation SAI Leaders' Meet

- The Comptroller and Auditor General of India, CAG, is going to host the 6th Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Supreme Audit Institutions (SAI) Leaders' Meeting in Lucknow on February 6, 2023.
- CAG Girish Chandra Murmu will lead the discussions on the theme "Integrating Emerging Technologies in Audit".
- Governor of Uttar Pradesh Anandiben Patel will inaugurate the meeting.

Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya chairs CEO Conclave at PLASTINDIA 2023

- Union Minister for Chemicals & Fertilizers and Health & Family Welfare, Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya chaired the CEO Conclave at PLASTINDIA 2023.
- The conference was attended by more than 90 CEOs from the plastics industry both from India and abroad.
- The 11th International Plastics Exhibition and Conclave was organized from February 1 to 5, 2023 at ITPO Pragati Maidan, New Delhi.

15th Standing Committee of Central Zonal Council meet held in Dehradun

- The 15th meeting of the standing committee of the Central Zonal Council was organised in Dehradun on 4 Feb 2023.
- The meeting was held under the chairmanship of Uttarakhand Chief Secretary S.S. Sandhu.
- The discussion was held on providing banking facilities within a radius of five kilometres in remote villages and emphasis was also laid on increasing mobile connectivity through Bharat Net.

Digital India Mobile Van launched

- It was launched by Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology in New Delhi.
- It's objective is to spread awareness of Digital India initiatives and also to spread the word about the G20 Digital Economy Working Group (DEWG).
- Lucknow is the first destination of the van where G20 DEWG's first meet is being held.
- It will tour various other cities in the country as well.

India to host global energy meet in Bengaluru in February 2023

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate a three-day India Energy Week in Bengaluru in February 2023.
- PM Modi will also attend a plenary meeting and hold a round table meeting with CEOs.
- The event is estimated to have more than 650 exhibitors and will see participation from 34 ministers from across countries.
- India target to achieve 20 per cent from earlier 2030 to now 2025-26.

Azad Engineering is India's 1st supplier of parts for nuclear turbine

- Azad Engineering Private Limited has been approved as the first Indian company to supply critical rotating parts for nuclear turbines in February 2023.
- It has signed a long-term supply agreement with General Electric (GE) Steam Power for the supply of nuclear turbine parts.
- These will be assembled on nuclear turbines manufactured in Belfort, France.

IIT Madras to get Rs 242 cr grant for research on Lab Grown Diamonds

- The Indian Institute of Technology Madras will be provided a grant of Rs 242 crore over a period of five years to carry out research on Lab Grown Diamonds (LGD).
- It will encourage indigenous production of LGD seeds, and machines and reduce import dependence.
- The government has proposed to cut duty on the import of 'seeds', used as raw material for lab-grown diamonds.

First tourism working group meeting to be held in Gujarat from 7 Feb

- The first Tourism Working Group (TWG) meeting will be held at Dhordo in Rann of Kutch in Gujarat from 7th to 9th of February 2023.
- It will focus on Green Tourism, Digitalization, Skills, Tourism MSMEs, and Destination Management.
- The meeting will be attended by officials from G-20 Countries, invited countries, and representatives of various international organizations

India's 1st Hydrogen train will come by Dec 2023 on Heritage Routes

- The Union Minister for Railways Ashwini Vaishnaw has announced that the Indian Railways will be introducing hydrogen and electric trains to the eight heritage routes in the country by December 2023.
- These hydrogen trains will include the modified version of steam engines, that will be back on tracks, equipped with vintage sirens and green steam vapours.

India lists Abdul Rehman Makki as UN-listed terrorist

- India has listed Pakistan-based terrorist Abdul Rehman Makki as an UN-listed terrorist.
- The development came after the United Nations Security Council listed the Lashkar-e-Taiba's deputy chief Abdul Rehman Makki as a global terrorist under its ISIL (Daesh) and Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee.

- Abdul Rehman Makki, was already listed by India and US as a terrorist under their domestic laws.

MeitY Secretary inaugurates G20 Cyber Security Exercise and Drill

- The Secretary of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), Alkesh Kumar Sharma inaugurated the G20 Cyber Security Exercise and Drill for more than 400 domestic and international participants under India's G20 presidency.
- The Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) conducted the Cyber Security Exercise and drill in hybrid mode (Physical and Virtual).

PM to participate in Krishnaguru Eknaam Akhanda Kirtan for World Peace

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will participate in the Krishnaguru Eknaam Akhanda Kirtan for World Peace at Barpeta in Assam on 3rd February 2023.
- Paramguru Krishnaguru Ishwar established the Krishnaguru Sevashram in 1974, at Nasatra village in Barpeta, Assam.
- He is the ninth descendant of Mahavaishnab Manohardeva, who was a follower of the great Vaishnavite saint Srimanta Sankardeva.

Tourism minister launches Visit India Year 2023 initiative

- Union Tourism Minister G Kishan Reddy launched the Visit India Year-2023 initiative in New Delhi on 31 January 2023 and also unveiled its logo.
- The Tourism Minister also unveiled the logo of the campaign which is inspired by the image of 'Namaste'.
- The campaign aims to encourage travel in the country that currently holds the G-20 presidency.
- It is an initiative of the Ministry of Tourism.

J. Scindia inaugurates IndiaOne Air's regional connectivity scheme

- Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia on 31 January 2023, inaugurated IndiaOne Air's Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS) Flight Operations for Jamshedpur-Kolkata under the UDAN scheme.
- As per Aviation Ministry, 1.15 crore people who have never undertaken flight service have been benefited through the UDAN Yojana.
- UDAN 4.2 round devoted completely to regional and last-mile connectivity.



Appointments Current Affairs

NASA to name first woman as agency's science chief

- NASA has picked Nicola Fox, a longtime solar scientist who heads its heliophysics division to become the U.S. space agency's science chief.
- She will be the first woman named to serve in the role.
- She is a former top scientist on the Parker Solar Probe mission studying the sun.
- Fox will lead NASA's science directorate, a unit with an annual budget of roughly \$7 billion.

Shailesh Pathak appointed FICCI Secretary General

- Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) has announced the appointment of former bureaucrat Shailesh Pathak as its Secretary General from 1 March 2023.
- He has worked with the government as an IAS officer.
- FICCI also announced that Arun Chawla, Director General, will superannuate on June 30, 2023 and transition to an advisory role.

Lt Gen RS Reen takes over as Director General Quality Assurance (DGQA)

- Lt Gen RS Reen took over as Director General Quality Assurance on 24 Feb'23.
- A 1986-batch officer, Lt Gen Reen is an alumnus of Indian Military Academy, Dehradun.
- He completed his BE (Electrical) from National Institute of Technology, Srinagar.
- He was a senior faculty at Defence Institute of Quality Assurance, Bengaluru.
- He headed the DQA(L) as Addt. Director General (Electronics).

CAG Girish Chandra Murmu selected as External Auditor of ILO in Geneva

- Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG), Girish Chandra Murmu has been selected as External Auditor of the International Labour Organization (ILO) in Geneva for a four-year term from 2024 to 2027.
- CAG will succeed Supreme Audit Institution of Philippines as External Auditor.
- CAG was appointed for its high standing on professionalism, global audit experience and strong national credentials.

Aramane Giridhar gets extension as Defence Secretary

- Defence Secretary Aramane Giridhar has been given extension in service till October 2024.
- The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved his extension in service as Secretary, Department of Defence, beyond the age of superannuation for a period upto 31st of October, 2024.
- Mr. Giridhar is a 1988-batch Indian Administrative Service officer of the Andhra Pradesh cadre.

Rajeev Raghuvanshi appointed as new Drug Controller General of India

- Mr Rajeev Raghuvanshi has been appointed as the new Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) on 22 February 2023.

- He succeeded Dr VG Somani as DCGI who was on this post since 2019.
- he had worked with Ranbaxy and Dr Reddy laboratories.
- His expertise lies in dosage form design and development.
- For his contribution, Dr Reddy's Labs has twice awarded him with "Dr Reddy's Excellence Award".

Dmitry Dmitruk appointed Indian boxing team's foreign coach

- The Boxing Federation of India (BFI) appointed Dmitry Dmitruk as its new foreign coach on 21 February 2023.
- He has been associated with the Irish Athletic Boxing Association (IABA) as well as the Irish National junior teams for 12 years.
- He will work with both men and women boxers alongside the Indian coaches, including men's chief coach C.A. Kuttappa and women's head coach Bhaskar Bhatt.

Rajesh Rai appointed new CMD of Indian Telephone Industries (ITI)

- The Union government appointed Rajesh Rai as the new Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Indian Telephone Industries (ITI) for a period of five years on February 21, 2023.
- ITI Limited is a govt owned company in the telecommunications technology segment established as a departmental factory in 1948.
- It has manufacturing facilities in Bengaluru, Naini, Rae Bareilly, Mankapur, and Palakkad.

UN Social Development Commission elects Ruchira Kamboj its Chair

- Ruchira Kamboj was elected chair at the opening session of the 62nd session of the UN Commission for Social Development held in New York.
- She is an Indian Foreign Service officer of the 1987 batch.
- She is currently serving as India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations since August 2022.

Tata Motors VP Rajan Amba appointed as MD of Jaguar Land Rover India

- Rajan Amba, Vice President of Sales, Marketing & Customer Care, Tata Motors, has been appointed as the Managing Director of Jaguar Land Rover India in February 2023.
- He will be replacing Rohit Suri, who announced his retirement from the position of MD and President back in January 2023.
- He started his career in 1990 and worked at Nike, Titan Watches, and Levi Strauss companies.

Ayushmann Khurrana named UNICEF's National Ambassador for Child Rights

- Bollywood Actor Ayushmann Khurrana has been appointed as the National Ambassador of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) India on Feb 19, 2023.
- Ayushmann was also appointed as UNICEF India's Celebrity Advocate in September 2020 to advocate for ending violence against children and promoting child rights.
- As a national ambassador, He will help UNICEF ensure the rights of all children.

Ramesh Bais takes oath as Governor of Maharashtra

- Ramesh Bais took oath as the 22nd Governor of Maharashtra on 18 Feb'23.

- He has replaced Bhagat Singh Koshyari.
- Previously, he was the Governor of Jharkhand.
- He had earlier served as the Union Minister of State for Steel and Mines, Chemicals and Fertilizers, Information and Broadcasting, and Environment and Forests - independent charge.
- He was a 7 time BJP MP from Raipur in Chhattisgarh.

Chetan Sharma step down as Chief Selector of Indian cricket team

- Chetan Sharma, chairman of the senior men's selection committee, has submitted his resignation to BCCI Secretary Jay Shah.
- He did this following a sting operation by a private news channel.
- The resignation has been accepted by the Indian cricket board.
- S Sharath, Subroto Banerjee, Salil Ankola and Shiv Sunder are the other 4 selectors in the 5-member selection committee.

Lt Gen MV Suchindra Kumar to be new Vice Chief of Indian Army

- Lt Gen MV Suchindra Kumar has been named as the new Vice Chief of Army Staff, while incumbent Lt Gen B S Raju appointed as South Western Army Commander.
- He is serving as the Deputy Chief of Army Staff (Strategy) in the Army Headquarters at present.
- Lt Gen Kumar is an alumnus of the National Defence Academy, Khadakwasla.
- He was commissioned into the 1 Assam Regiment in June 1985.

World Bank President David Malpass announces his resignation

- World Bank chief David Malpass announced on 16 February 2023 that he would step down from his post.
- He was selected as 13th President of the World Bank Group by its Board of Executive Directors on April 5, 2019.
- He served as an economic advisor to Donald Trump in 2017 and also served as Under Secretary of the Treasury for International Affairs at the Treasury Department.

Indian-American Neal Mohan appointed new CEO of YouTube

- YouTube Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Susan Wojcicki stepped from her post on 16 Feb 2023 and will be replaced by Neal Mohan.
- She was previously senior vice president for ad products at Google and became the CEO of YouTube in 2014.
- Mohan, a Stanford graduate, joined Google in 2008 and is the chief product officer at YouTube, where he has been focusing on building YouTube Shorts and Music.

Justice Sonia Gokani took oath as Chief Justice of Gujarat HC

- Justice Sonia Gokani took oath as Chief Justice of Gujarat High Court on 16 February 2023.
- The oath was administered to her by Gujarat Governor Acharya Devvrat.
- She became the first woman to head the Gujarat High court.
- Chief Justice Gokani, is the senior most judge at the Gujarat High Court.
- She is due to retire on 25 February 2023.

Justice Sandeep Mehta takes oath as Chief Justice of Gauhati HC

- Justice Sandeep Mehta on 15 February 2023 took the oath as the Chief Justice of Gauhati High Court.
- He took the place of Justice RM Chhaya who retired recently from the post.
- Previously, he was the Judge of the Rajasthan High Court.
- He was appointed as Judge of the Rajasthan High Court on the 30th of May, 2011, and is due to retire on the 10th of January, 2025.

Aniket Sunil Talati takes over as new President of ICAI

- The Council of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) elected its new president and vice president in February 2023.
- For the 2023-24 term, Aniket Sunil Talati will serve as the President of ICAI, while Ranjeet Kumar Agarwal will be the accounting body's vice president.
- Aniket Sunil Talati also serve as the Director of the ICAI Accounting Research Foundation (ICAI ARF).

Mohammad Shahabuddin elected new President of Bangladesh

- The Election Commission of Bangladesh on 13 February 2023, announced that the Awami League party nominee, Mohammad Shahabuddin was elected unopposed as the 22nd president of Bangladesh.
- He was the only candidate to file his nomination after the time for nomination and withdrawal was over.
- He will replace incumbent President Mohammad Abdul Hamid, the longest-serving president of the country.

President Draupadi Murmu appoints new governors in 13 states

- President Murmu appointed 13 new Governors on 12 Feb'23.
- Newly appointed Governors and state of appointment:
- Lt. General Kaiwalya Trivikram: Arunachal Pradesh
- Lakshman Prasad Acharya: Sikkim
- C P Radhakrishnan: Jharkhand
- Shiv Pratap Shukla: Himachal Pradesh
- S. Abdul Nazeer: Andhra Pradesh
- G.C. Kataria: Assam
- Anusuiya Uikye: Manipur
- La. Ganesan: Nagaland
- Phagu Chauhan: Meghalaya.

President Draupadi Murmu appoints new governors in 13 states

- President Droupadi Murmu appointed 13 new Governors while accepting the resignations of Bhagat Singh Koshyari as Governor of Maharashtra and of Radha Krishnan Mathur as Lt. Governor of Ladakh on 12 February 2023.



- C.P. Radhakrishnan has been appointed as Governor of Jharkhand in place of Ramesh Bais who was appointed as Governor of Maharashtra.
- GC Kataria was appointed Governor of Assam.

Govt appoints two new Supreme Court judges

- The Central government has appointed two new Supreme Court judges, taking the top court's strength to its maximum of 34 judges.
- The appointment was approved on 11 Feb'23 by the govt.
- Appointed Judges:
 - Rajesh Bindal, Chief Justice, Allahabad High Court
 - Aravind Kumar, Chief Justice, Gujarat High Court
- Their names were recommended by the collegium headed by Chief Justice of India.

Satyanarayana Raju appointed as the new MD & CEO of Canara Bank

- The Union government on 7 February 2023 appointed K Satyanarayana Raju as the managing director and CEO of Canara bank.
- He will replace LV Prabhakar, who resigned from his post on December 31, 2022.
- He has also served Canara bank as executive director since 10th March 2021.
- He joined erstwhile Vijaya Bank in 1988 and served as chief general manager in Bank of Baroda.

Centre appoints 5 judges to Supreme Court of India

- Centre has appointed five new judges to the Supreme Court (SC).
- Now total strength of judges in SC has increased to 32.
- Appointed Judges:
 - Justice Pankaj Mithal, Chief Justice Rajasthan High Court (HC)
 - Justice Sanjay Karol, Chief Justice Patna HC
 - Justice P. V. Sanjay Kumar, Chief Justice Manipur HC
 - Justice Ahsanuddin Amanullah, Judge, Patna HC
 - Justice Manoj Misra, Judge, Allahabad HC

Indian-American Apsara Iyer elected as President of Harvard Law Review

- Indian-American student at Harvard Law School, Apsara Iyer has been elected president of the prestigious Harvard Law Review.
- She became the first Indian-American woman to be named to the position in the publication's 136-year history.
- She was elected the 137th president of the Harvard Law Review, which was founded in 1887 and is among the oldest student-run legal scholarship publications.

Shamika Ravi appointed as member of EAC-PM

- Shamika Ravi has been appointed as a member of the Economic Advisory Council to Prime Minister (EAC-PM).
- She is an economics professor and researcher.

- She is currently non-resident senior fellow of the governance studies program at the Brookings Institution Washington D.C.
- EAC-PM, chaired by economist Bibek Debroy, currently has one member and six part-time members.

Mahindra Finance names Raul Rebello as MD and CEO-designate

- Mahindra Finance has appointed Raul Rebello as Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer Designate.
- Raul Rebello is currently the Chief Operating Officer of the company and will take charge as MD and CEO when Ramesh Iyer retires on 29th April 2024.
- He previously served in Axis Bank for 19 years where he was the Executive Vice President and Head of Rural Lending and Financial Inclusion.

Indian-Americans become members of key House committees in US

- House Committee on intelligence: Congressman Dr. Ami Bera.
- Committee on strategic competition between the US and China: Raja Krishnamoorthi- elected representative from Illinois.
- Subcommittee on immigration: Pramila Jayapal- representative from Washington state.
- Committees on homeland security and small business: Shri Thanedar- Congressman from Michigan.

RBI appoints V Ramachandra as member of Advisory Committee of SIFL

- The Reserve Bank in February 2023, appointed V Ramachandra, former chief general manager of Canara Bank, as a member of the Advisory Committee of Srei Infrastructure Finance Limited (SIFL) and Srei Equipment Finance Limited (SEFL).
- The RBI had created a three-member advisory council to support the administrator of SIFL & SEFL after replacing the boards of SIFL and SEFL in October 2021.

Morgan Stanley names Arun Kohli new country head for India

- Morgan Stanley has appointed Arun Kohli as the new India head in February 2023.
- With the bank since 2007, Kohli will relocate to Mumbai from London where he headed the Morgan Stanley's post-Brexit strategy and implemented growth strategies across markets in the region.
- The bank had picked Kamal Yadav and Sachin Wagle as co-heads of investment banking in the country in 2021.

Equatorial Guinea appoints Manuela Roka Botey as first female PM

- Equatorial Guinea has appointed Manuela Roka Botey as prime minister. She became the first woman in the country to hold the position.
- President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, who has ruled the country since 1979, announced the appointment.
- She was the education minister and joined the government in 2020.
- She replaces Francisco Pascual Obama Asue, who has been in the position since 2016.

Prashant Agrawal appointed next ambassador of India to Laos

- Prashant Agrawal has been appointed as the next Ambassador of India to the Lao People's Democratic Republic.
- Presently, he is serving as the High Commissioner of India to Namibia.
- He joined the Indian Foreign Service in 1998 and served in India's Missions in Paris, Port Louis, and Bangkok.
- IFS officer M Subbarayudu has been appointed as the next High Commissioner of India to Namibia.

Major General Girish Kalia takes over elite Vajr Division

- In Jammu and Kashmir, Major General Girish Kalia on 1 Feb'23 took over the charge as General Officer Commanding of the elite Vajr Division from Major General Abhijit S Pendharkar.
- He was commissioned on 14 Dec 1991 from Indian Military Academy, Dehradun into MADRAS Regiment.
- Prior to this at he was working at Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff.
- He received Vishisht Seva Medal in 2020.

Dr. Rajeev Singh appointed as new Drugs Controller General of India

- The Union Public Service Commission has recommended the name of Dr. Rajeev Singh Raghuvanshi as the new Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI).
- He will replace Dr. VG Somani who was appointed as the Drugs Controller General of India in August 2019.
- DCGI heads the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO), which is responsible for ensuring the quality of drug supply in India.



Obituaries Current Affairs

Stock market commentator Ashwani Gujral passes away

- Noted equity analyst Ashwani Gujral passed away in February 2023.
- Gujral featured prominently on major business channels like ETNow, CNBC-TV18.
- He used to feature on the exclusive panel of ETNow to provide technical analysis and market outlook on a daily basis.
- Previously, he used to provide stock market analysis on CNBC-TV18.

Former Academy President Walter Mirisch passes away

- The Former president of the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences or The Oscars, Walter Mirisch, passed away on 25 Feb 2023.
- He served four terms as president of the Academy, from 1973-77, and 15 years as governor of the Academy.
- He won the Academy Award for his movie 'In the Heat of the Night (1967).'
- He was also known for movies such as 'The Apartment, and 'West Side Story.'

Dr. Kanak Rele the Iron Lady who revived Mohiniyattam passes away

- Dr. Kanak Rele, a world-renowned dancer and Mohiniyattam exponent, Passed away on 22 February 2023.
- She established the Nalanda Dance Research Centre and the Nalanda Nritya Kala Mahavidyalaya, which pioneered dance research.
- She taught hundreds of students and brought classical dance to the masses.
- She has received Padma Bhushan, Padma Shri, Kalidas Samman and Sangeet Natak Akademi Award.

Malayalam comedian and TV anchor Subi Suresh passes away

- Popular Malayalam actress, comedian, and TV anchor Subi Suresh passed away in Kochi, Kerala on February 22, 2023.
- The actor made her silver screen debut with Kanaka Simhasanam.
- She went on to act in over 20 films, including Panchavarnathatha, Drama, 101 Weddings, Grihanathan, Happy Husbands, Elamma Enna Aankutty, Thaksara Lahala and Lucky Jokers.

Emmy-nominated actress Barbara Bosson passes away

- Emmy-nominated actress Barbara Bosson passed away on 21 February 2023.
- Her first feature film was 'the Bullitt' in 1968.
- She is well known for her roles as the divorcee Fay Furillo in the 1980s NBC television series 'Hill Street Blues' for which she received Emmy Awards nominations in five consecutive years.
- She also starred in the 1970s series 'Richie Brockelman, Private Eye' as Sharon.

Former Gujarat governor Om Prakash Kohli passes away

- Former Gujarat governor and veteran Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Om Prakash Kohli passed away on 20 February 2023.
- He was the 19th governor of Gujarat from 2014 to 2019.
- While presiding as Gujarat governor, he also served as the governor of Madhya Pradesh and Goa.
- He served in the Rajya Sabha from 1994 to 2000 and chaired the housing committee, among other committee memberships.

Actor-politician Nandamuri Taraka Ratna passes away

- Tollywood actor and politician Nandamuri Taraka Ratna passed away in Bengaluru on 19 February 2023.
- He was a grandson of Veteran Telugu actor and former Chief minister of Andhra Pradesh Shri. NT Rama Rao.
- Ratna made his debut with Okato Number Kurraadu (2002).
- He worked in films like Yuva Rathna, Taarak, and Bhadradri Ramudu.
- He received a Nandi Award for the film Amaravathi (2009).

Tulsidas Balaram, legendary Indian footballer, passes away

- legendary Indian footballer, Tulsidas Balaram passed away on 17 Feb 2023.
- He played in two Olympics in 1956 and 1960 and was part of the team which won the Asian Games gold in Jakarta in 1962.
- In 1962, he received Arjuna Award from the Government of India.
- The Government of West Bengal awarded him 'Banga Vibhushan' in 2013.
- He scored 131 goals, including 14 for India, across 7 seasons.

Yakshagana Bhagavat Balipa Narayana Bhagavatha passes away

- Noted yakshagana Bhagavat, Balipa Narayana passed away on 16 Feb'23.
- He was known as a versatile singer in Thenku Thittu Yakshagana.
- He was well-versed in more than 100 yakshagana prasangas.
- He was the chief bhagavat of Kateel Durgaparameshwari Prasadita Yakshagana Mandali.
- He had created a 5-day 'Devi Mahatme' prasanga, a significant milestone in the history of Yakshagana literature.

Veteran actor Javed Khan Amrohi passes away

- Veteran actor Javed Khan Amrohi passed away on 14 Feb 2023.
- He was known for his work in films such as Once Upon A Time in Mumbai, Chak De India, Lagaan and Andaz Apna Apna.
- He was best known for his roles in the popular DD serial Nukkad.
- Amrohi's other notable titles are the '90s hit films such as Hum Hain Rahi Pyaar Ke, Laadla, Ishq, and the 1988 TV series Mirza Ghalib.

Noted painter Lalitha Lajmi passes away

- Noted painter Lalitha Lajmi passed away in February 2023.
- She held several exhibitions at international art galleries in Paris, London and Netherlands.

- She was sister of late actor-filmmaker Guru Dutt.
- Her works were also influenced by Indian films such as those made by Guru Dutt, Satyajit Ray and Raj Kapoor.

Legendary American pop composer Burt Bacharach passes away

- Legendary American pop songwriter Burt Bacharach passed away in Los Angeles on 9 February 2023.
- His compositions included rock classics such as 'Do You Know the Way to San Jose' and 'Raindrops Keep Fallin on My Head'.
- He has won three Oscars (including "Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid"), an Emmy, eight Grammy Awards, and two Golden Globes.

Legendary playback singer Vani Jayaram passes away

- Padma Bhushan awardee legendary playback singer Vani Jairam passed away on February 4, 2023.
- She was awarded the Padma Bhushan, India's third-highest civilian award, in Jan 2023.
- She won the National Film Award for Best Female Playback Singer thrice.
- She also won state government awards from the states of Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, and Gujarat.

Former President of Pakistan Pervez Musharraf passes away

- Former President of Pakistan Pervez Musharraf passed away on 5 February 2023.
- He was a four-star general who ruled Pakistan for nearly a decade after seizing power in a 1999 coup.
- He had been in self-exile in Dubai since March 2016 facing trial for treason for suspending the constitution in 2007.
- Musharraf as president came to Agra in 2001 for a peace summit with PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee

Noted writer and Sahitya Akademi Awardee, K.V. Tirumalesh passes away

- Noted Kannada writer K.V. Tirumalesh passed away in Hyderabad in February 2023.
- He was regarded as one of the most versatile writers across genres.
- He was awarded the Sahitya Akademi Award for his collections of poems Akshaya Kavya in Kannada (2010).
- His career as a writer began in the 1960s when he wrote the collection of poems MukhavaaDagalu (1968) in the Navya style in Kannada.

Legendary Telugu filmmaker K. Viswanath passes away

- Legendary film director K. Vishwanath passed away in Hyderabad on February 2, 2023.
- Viswanath began his career as an audiographer for Vauhini Studios in Madras.
- His first film was Aatma Gowaravan in 1965 and his last was Subhapradam in 2010.
- He was conferred with the Dadasaheb Phalke Award in 2017.
- In 1992, he received the Andhra Pradesh state Raghubathi Venkaiah Award, and Padma Shri.

Noted Telugu film director Sagar passes away in Chennai

- Noted Telugu director Sagar aka Vidyasagar Reddy has passed away on February 2, 2023.
- He started off his career as an assistant director.
- He made his directorial debut with the 1983 film Rakshasi Loya starring Naresh, Vijayashanti, and others.
- He also served as the President of the Telugu Film Directors Association thrice.

Senior advocate and former Law Minister Shanti Bhushan passes away

- Former law minister and veteran lawyer Shanti Bhushan passed away on 31 January 2023.
- He served as the law minister in the Morarji Desai-led Janata Party government from 1977 to 1979, which came to power after the Emergency.
- He was also a founding member of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) which was formed in 2012.
- He was known for his activism and strong stance against corruption.



Person in News Current Affairs

US nominates former Mastercard CEO Ajay Banga for World Bank President

- U.S. President Joe Biden on 24 February 2023, nominated business executive Ajay Banga to become president of the World Bank.
- Ajay Banga is currently appointed as the vice chairman at private equity firm General Atlantic.
- He has more than 30 years of business experience in handling different roles at Mastercard and on the boards of the American Red Cross, Kraft Foods, and Dow Inc.

Indian-American politician Nikki Haley announces US Presidential bid

- Indian-American Nikki Haley has announced that she will make a bid for the White House.
- She is the first Republican to challenge former President Donald Trump for the party's nomination.
- She is the former governor of South Carolina and U.S. ambassador to the United Nations.
- If she wins she would become the state's first female governor and the first Indian-American to lead the state.

Smriti Mandhana secures highest bid of Rs 3.4 crore in WPL auction

- Smriti Mandhana secured the highest bid of Rs 3.4 crore at the first-ever Women's Premier League (WPL) 2023 auction in Mumbai on 13 February 2023.
- Ten India women's team cricketers were sold for more than Rs 1 crore.
- Mumbai Indians signed India captain Harmanpreet Kaur for Rs 1.8 crore.
- The WPL 2023 T20 tournament will be held in Mumbai from March 3 to 26, 2023.

Saudi Arabia to send its first female astronaut into space

- Saudi Arabia will send its first ever woman astronaut on a space mission later in 2023.
- Rayyana Barnawi will join fellow Saudi male astronaut Ali Al-Qarni on a mission to the International Space Station (ISS).
- The astronauts will join the crew of the AX-2 space mission and the space flight will launch from the USA.

Joe Acaba selected as NASA's Chief Astronaut

- NASA has appointed veteran astronaut Joe Acaba as chief of the Astronaut Office at the agency's Johnson Space Center in Houston in Feb 2023.
- He is the first person of Hispanic heritage selected to lead the office.
- He served as a mission specialist and flight engineer and supported the first resupply spacecraft launched in 2012, the Dragon of SpaceX.
- He has also participated in spacewalks.

Indian-American student named as 'World's Brightest' student

- Indian-American student Natasha Periyannayagam in February 2023, was named in the Johns Hopkins Center for Talented Youth's list of "world's most talented" students for the second year in a row.

- She is studying at Florence M Gaudiner Middle School in New Jersey, United States.
- The list is compiled based on the results of upper-grade-level tests of more than 15,000 students from 76 countries.

Indian-American Pramila Jayapal named Ranking Member of US Immigration

- Indian-American US Representative Pramila Jayapal has been named Ranking Member of the House Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on Immigration Integrity in January 2023.
- She was also the founding co-chair of the We Belong Together campaign.
- Jayapal is the first immigrant in recorded committee history to serve as either Ranking Member or Chair of this Subcommittee.

Indian-American Ami Bera appointed to House Intelligence Committee

- Indian-American Dr. Ami Bera has been appointed as a member of the US House committee handling intelligence-related matters.
- He also serves on the House Foreign Affairs Committee and the House Science, Space, and Technology Committee.
- During the 117th Congress, he served as Chair of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific, Central Asia, and Non-proliferation.



Science and Technology Current Affairs

Antarctic sea ice shrunk to record low

- The Antarctic sea ice shrunk to a record low in Feb 2023.
- It is its lowest extent in the 45 years of satellite record-keeping.
- The National Snow and Ice Data Center, NSIDC at the University of Colorado Boulder said, on February 21st Antarctica's sea ice fell to 1.79 million square kilometers.
- This has surpassed the previous low record by 136,000 square kilometers, registered in 2022.

NASA's James Webb telescope spots six galaxies

- NASA's James Webb telescope has found six big galaxies.
- The telescope sent data that reveals what appear to be six big galaxies as mature as our Milky Way existing about 540 million to 770 million years after the Big Bang explosion that gave birth to the universe 13.8 billion years ago.
- The universe was roughly 3% of its current age at the time.

Meta to launch AI language model LLaMA

- LLaMA is a large language model developed by META that is similar to ChatGPT.
- The main objective of the model is to assist researchers in the field of AI.
- LLaMA is the third large language model developed by META.
- The first was Glactica, and the second was Blender.
- It is yet to be released in the market, and only the research paper has been published.

ICAR develops wheat that can beat the heat

- Scientists at the ICAR's Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) have developed a wheat variety which can beat the heat.
- They have bred wheat varieties with what is termed "mild vernalisation requirement" or the need for a certain minimum period of low winter temperatures for initiation of flowering.
- The crop, when sown in October 20-25, will come to heading only in 100-110 days.

World's First Cloud-Built Demo Satellite Launched Successfully

- World's first satellite fully conceived, designed, and manufactured using the Antaris company's end-to-end cloud platform, JANUS-1 has successfully reached orbit.
- JANUS-1 was recently launched on the Indian Space Research Organization's (ISRO) new mini-rocket SSLV-D2.
- The complete assembly, integration and test for JANUS-1 was done by Indian firm Ananth Technologies, Bengaluru.

New Indian beetle species 'Omorgus Khandesh' spotted in Western Ghats

- A new beetle species 'Omorgus Khandesh' was found in western ghats in India, according to a paper published in the New Zealand-based journal Zootaxa in February 2023.

- It belongs to the Trogidae family and is important for forensic science as it helps detect the time of death of an animal or human.
- Omorgus Khandesh is necrophagous and is also called a keratin beetle.

US Scientists Discovers New Quasicrystal

- US Scientists have recently discovered a new type of quasicrystal, one with 12-fold symmetry, in the Sand Hills of north central Nebraska, USA.
- Quasicrystal is essentially a crystal-like substance.
- However, unlike a crystal, in which atoms are arranged in a repeating pattern, a quasicrystal consists of atoms that are arranged in a pattern that doesn't repeat itself regularly.

Italian researchers discovers invisible Galaxy

- Italian researchers have discovered a Black Galaxy or Invisible Galaxy using ALMA.
- The galaxy is termed invisible because the light emitted couldn't be seen from the earth.
- The galaxy discovered is compact.
- It is young and has interstellar dust.
- The galaxy is forming new stars at the rate of 1000 times the Milky Way.
- ALMA is Atacama Large Millimetre Array.

Israel launches Sniffing Robot to detect disease and aid in security

- Scientists from Israel have developed a sniffing robot which is equipped with a biological sensor.
- The robot uses the antennae of a locust to diagnose disease and improve security checks.
- It is bio-hybrid and therefore its sniffing powers are higher than the electronic sniffers.
- It can detect even the tiniest particle or an organism in its surrounding.

NASA's Curiosity rover finds new evidence of ancient lake on Mars

- US space agency NASA's Curiosity rover has found new evidence of an ancient lake in the form of rocks etched with the ripples of waves in the foothills of a Martian mountain.
- The rover has found some of the clearest evidence of ancient waters.
- The evidence were found at an area called the sulfate-bearing unit.
- The Curiosity rover has been exploring the Martian surface since 2012.

SpaceX performs Booster-7 Static Fire Test of 31 Engines

- SpaceX performed a "static fire" test in which a Starship first-stage prototype known as Booster 7 ignited 31 of its 33 Raptor engines in Feb 2023.
- Starship prototype called Ship 24 has giant booster called Super Heavy & a upper-stage spacecraft known as Starship.
- Both Starship and Super Heavy are designed to be fully reusable, and both are powered by SpaceX's next-generation Raptor engine.

ISRO launches Small Satellite Launch Vehicle SSLV-D2 from Sriharikota

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) on 10 February 2023, successfully launched the second edition of the Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV-D2) at Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh.

- SSLV-D2 is 34 metres in length while 2 metres in width. It can fly with a load of about 120 tonnes.
- ISRO's smallest new rocket SSLV-D2 works on the technology of launch on demand.

New species of voiceless frog discovered in Tanzania

- An international team of researchers discovered a new species of spiny-throated reed frog while conducting an amphibian survey in Tanzania.
- The Ukaguru spiny-throated reed frog does not croak, sing, or ribbit.
- Found in Tanzania's Ukaguru Mountains for which it is named, *Hyperolius ukaguruensis* is among the few frogs around the world that do not vocalize to other frogs.

Qualcomm launches world's 1st satellite-based 2-way messaging solution

- Qualcomm Technologies has introduced the world's first satellite-based two-way capable messaging solution for premium smartphones, called Snapdragon Satellite, on 9 February 2023.
- The Snapdragon Satellite will offer global connectivity using mobile messaging from around the world, beginning with devices based on the flagship Snapdragon 8 Gen 2 Mobile Platform.

ISRO-NASA made NISAR satellite to be launched from India in Sept 2023

- An Earth-observation satellite NISAR jointly developed by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) will be sent to India in February 2023 for a possible launch in September 2023.
- The NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar (NISAR) satellite will provide important information on the Earth's crust, ice sheets, and ecosystems.

Jupiter overtakes Saturn as the planet with the most known moons

- Jupiter has overtaken Saturn as planet with most known moons in the Solar System.
- Saturn got the tag, when it overtook Jupiter in 2019.
- Astronomers have counted 12 previously unknown moons in orbit around Jupiter, bringing the known total to 92.
- Saturn with just 83 moons, is left behind.
- The observations were led by astronomer Scott Sheppard of Carnegie Institution for Science.

World's first 'super' magnets for testing in nuclear plant developed

- World's first 'super' magnets for testing in nuclear fusion plant developed by UK's Tokamak Energy in February 2023.
- Tokamak Energy announced that the Demo4 magnet has a magnetic field strength that is nearly a million times stronger than the Earth's magnetic field, making it capable of confining and controlling the extremely hot plasma created during the nuclear fusion process.

Google introduces AI chatbot 'Bard' to compete with ChatGPT

- Google has unveiled an AI service called "Bard", as it races to catch up with the popular chatbot ChatGPT.
- ChatGPT is AI service of the Microsoft-backed firm OpenAI.

- Bard is powered by LaMDA (Language Model for Dialogue Applications), a large language model that was developed and released by Google in 2021.
- The Bard will be initially opened up to "trusted testers" before making it public.



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Sports Current Affairs

Australia lifts ICC Women's T20 World Cup Trophy

- In Women's Cricket, Australia have lifted the ICC T20 World Cup Trophy for the sixth time.
- In the final match on 26 Feb 2023, they defeated South Africa by 19 runs at Newlands, Cricket Ground in Cape Town.
- Earlier, winning the toss and deciding to bat first, Australia posted 156 for 6 in their allotted 20 overs.
- Beth Mooney top-scored with unbeaten 74 runs for Australia.

Ankit Gulia wins bronze in Ibrahim Moustafa ranking-series 2023

- Indian Greco-Roman wrestler Ankit Gulia won a bronze medal in the men's 72kg category in the Ibrahim Moustafa ranking series in Alexandria, Egypt on 26 Feb 2023.
- He won the medal after Iran's Mohammadreza Abdolhamid Gerai withdrew from the bronze medal match due to an injury.
- Wrestler Reetika also won a bronze medal in the women's 72kg category at the Ibrahim Moustafa ranking series.

Spain's Sergio Ramos announced international football retirement

- Spain's most capped player Sergio Ramos has announced his retirement from international football.
- Ramos, who was part of Spain's World Cup and Euro winning teams had represented Real Madrid in La Liga and now plays for PSG in Ligue 1.
- He went on to play 180 times for his country.
- He was part of the squad which won the World Cup in 2010 and the European Championships in 2008 and 2012.

Anurag Thakur to inaugurate All-India Taekwondo Championship on 24 Feb

- Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports Anurag Singh Thakur will inaugurate the All-India Taekwondo Championship in New Delhi on 24 February 2023.
- The Championship is being organized to mark 50 years of Korea-India diplomatic relations.
- The Korean Cultural Centre, India is co-hosting the championship with the Sports Authority of India under the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports of India.

Aishwary wins gold in men's individual 50m rifle 3 positions event

- Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar on 23 February 2023, won the gold medal in the men's individual 50m rifle 3 positions competition at the ISSF World Cup in Cairo, Egypt.
- He defeated Austria's Alexander Schmirer with a 16-6 score.
- He also won a gold medal in the Chagwon World Cup in 2022.
- India is on top of the medal tally with four gold and Hungary is in second position with two gold medals.

Tilottama Sen wins bronze in Women's 10m Air Rifle at ISSF World Cup

- Tilottama Sen has won bronze medal in the women's 10m Air Rifle at ISSF World Cup at Cairo in Egypt on 22 February 2023.
- She won second bronze for India.
- Great Britain's Seonaid McIntosh won gold and Switzerland's Olympic Champion Nina Christen came second to win silver.
- India is on top of the medal tally with three golds, with Hungary, Britain and Slovakia.

Tilottama Sen wins bronze medal in Women's 10m Air Rifle

- India's Tilottama Sen has won bronze medal in the women's 10m Air Rifle at ISSF World Cup at Cairo in Egypt.
- She won second bronze for India, fifth overall after ending the top eight ranking round with a score of 262.
- Great Britain's Seonaid McIntosh won gold and Switzerland's Olympic Champion Nina Christen came second to win silver.

Rudranksh Patil wins gold in 10m Air Rifle at ISSF World Cup 2023

- Rudranksh Patil won the gold medal in the men's 10m air rifle competition of the ISSF Shooting World Cup in Cairo, Egypt on 21 February 2023.
- He had defeated Germany's Maximilian Ulbrich in the gold medal match by 16-8.
- Varun Tomar also won the bronze medal in the men's 10m air pistol event.
- Rhythm Sangwan won the 10m Air Pistol mixed team competition at the event.

Carlos Alcaraz beats Cameron Norrie to win Argentina Open title 2023

- The World No. 2 tennis player, Carlos Alcaraz defeated Cameron Norrie in the final to win the Argentina Open title in Feb 2023.
- He became the first Spaniard to win the Argentina Open tennis title since Rafael Nadal in 2015.
- He also became the highest-ranked winner in tournament history.
- Casper Ruud, who won the competition in 2020 at the age of 21, was the youngest winner prior to Alcaraz.

Ben Stokes breaks world record for smashing most sixes in Test cricket

- England Test captain Ben Stokes became the player to hit the most number of sixes in the history of Test cricket in the match against New Zealand on 18 Feb 2023.
- He surpassed the previous record of England's coach and former New Zealand cricketer Brendon McCullum.
- Stokes made the record by hitting 109 sixes in 90 Tests.
- McCullum had a record of 107 sixes in 101 Tests.

Saurashtra wins Ranji Trophy title 2023, beat West Bengal by 9 wickets

- Saurashtra defeated West Bengal by 9 wickets at Eden Gardens, Kolkata, to lift the Ranji Trophy title for the second time on 19 February 2023.

- Saurashtra captain Unadkat was named man of the match for his nine-wicket haul in the match, while Arpit Vasavada was adjudged player of the Ranji season 2023.
- The Ranji Trophy tournament has been played since 1934.

Akshdeep and Priyanka win men's and women's 20km race walk gold

- National Open Race Walking Championships was held on 14 Feb'23 in Ranchi.
- In this event, Akshdeep Singh clinched the men's 20km event gold with a stunning national record time.
- In the Women's 20km event, national record holder Priyanka Goswami won gold.
- With this, both had qualified for 2023 World Championships as well as 2024 Paris Olympics.

Hyundai Motors India signs two more women cricketers as ambassadors

- Hyundai Motor India Ltd has signed on two more women cricketers named Yastika Bhatia and Renuka Singh Thakur, to its roster of brand ambassadors.
- Bhatia and Thakur will join Smriti Mandhana, Shafali Verma and Jemimah Rodrigues in the list of brand ambassadors for Hyundai.
- Hyundai Motor India has announced the next edition of its 'The Drive Within' campaign with these five women cricketers.

Khelo India Youth Games concludes in Madhya Pradesh

- Khelo India Youth Games-2022 culminated on 11 Feb 2023 in Bhopal.
- Maharashtra stood first in the medals table by winning 161 medals including 56 gold.
- Haryana came second with 128 medals including 41 gold and hosts Madhya Pradesh came third position with 96 medals including 39 gold.
- 25 national records were broken in the games and maximum 19 records were broken in weight lifting.

Cricketer Eoin Morgan announces retirement from all forms of cricket

- Eoin Morgan, who led England to their first-ever ICC Men's Cricket World Cup title in 2019, announced his retirement from professional cricket on 13 February 2023.
- He is England's leading run-scorer with 6957 runs in 225 ODIs with 13 hundred and the most successful captain in ODIs, with 76 wins from 126 matches.
- Previously, he retired from international cricket in July 2022.

Real Madrid beat Al Hilal to win record fifth Club World Cup title

- Real Madrid has won the Football Club World Cup for a record fifth time after beating Saudi Arabia's Al-Hilal 5-3 in the final in Rabat, Morocco in February 2023.
- It won the tournament in 2014, 2016, 2017 and 2018.
- Madrid also won three Intercontinental Cups in 1960, 1998 and 2002; a match between European and South American champions, which merged with the Club World Cup in 2005.

Shubman Gill named ICC Players of the Month for January 2023

- India batter Shubman Gill was named ICC Men's Player of the Month for January 2023.

- Gill scored 567 runs during January 2023 which included three centuries.
- England's U-19 skipper Grace Scrivens was named the ICC Women's Player of the Month and became the youngest player to be named for the women's honor.
- She was named for her performance in the ICC U-19 Women's T20 World Cup 2023.

Jean-Eric Vergne wins Hyderabad E-Prix

- Jean-Eric Vergne of team DS Penske won the first-ever Formula E race held in Hyderabad on 11 Feb'23.
- Nick Cassidy (Envision Racing) and Antonio Félix da Costa (TAG Heuer Porsche Team) finished 2nd and 3rd respectively.
- This was the first Formula E race held in India.
- It was held on the banks of Hussain Sagar Lake and in India's first street circuit built in Hyderabad.

Union Minister Anurag Thakur flagged off Formula E-Championship

- Union Minister Anurag Thakur flagged off the Formula E Championship in Hyderabad on 11 Feb'23.
- Hyderabad is hosting India's first ever Formula E-race.
- Hyderabad E-Prix is being held at the 'Hyderabad Street Circuit' on the banks of the picturesque Hussain Sagar Lake and NTR Marg.
- Hyderabad is the 27th city in the world to host the race which is the first non-carbon emission event.

R. Ashwin becomes the fastest Indian to pick up 450 Test wickets

- Ravichandran Ashwin become the fastest Indian bowler and second overall to reach the mark of 450 Test wickets in February 2023.
- He picked up his 450th Test wicket during the first Border-Gavaskar Trophy game between India and Australia in Nagpur.
- Ravichandran Ashwin took 89 Test Matches to reach the milestone as compared to Anil Kumble's 93 Test Matches.

R. Sharma becomes 1st Indian captain to score a ton across all formats

- Indian captain Rohit Sharma on 10 February 2023, became the first Indian captain to score a century in all three formats of cricket.
- Rohit is the fourth overall to have scored centuries in all three formats as captain after Tillakaratne Dilshan, Faf du Plessis, and Babar Azam.
- He achieved this feat against Australia in the 1st Test series for the Border-Gavaskar Trophy in Nagpur.

ICC T-20 Women's World Cup to begin on 10 February in South Africa

- The ICC T-20 Women's World Cup is to begin in South Africa on 10th February 2023.
- This is the first time that the tournament is taking place in an African nation.
- The matches will be played in Cape Town, Gqeberha, and Paarl.
- The final will be played on 26th Feb 2023 at the Newlands Stadium.

- A total of 10 teams are participating and a total of 33 matches will be played during the event.

LeBron James becomes NBA's all-time leading scorer

- With his 36th point against the Oklahoma City Thunder on February 7, 2023, LeBron James became the National Basketball Association's all-time leading scorer.
- He passed Kareem Abdul Jabbar to become the top scorer in the NBA with 38388 points over 20 seasons.
- He has won four NBA titles, competing in 10 NBA finals.
- Michael Jordan has the most points per game in NBA history with 30.1.

Cricketer Kamran Akmal announces retirement from all forms of cricket

- Pakistan wicket-keeper batter Kamran Akmal has announced his retirement from all forms of professional cricket.
- He is currently serving as a batting consultant for Peshawar Zalmi.
- He made his Test match debut against Zimbabwe in November 2002 and he also made his ODI debut against Zimbabwe in November 2002.
- He featured in 53 Tests, 157 ODIs, and 58 T20 Internationals for Pakistan.

Raphael Varane announces his retirement from international football

- French defender Raphael Varane announced his retirement from international football in February 2023.
- He made his international debut in 2013 and won the FIFA World Cup in 2018.
- He was nominated for the FIFA 'Best Young Player award' in 2014.
- He won 18 trophies, including three La Liga titles, one Copa del Rey, four UEFA Champions League titles, and four FIFA Club World Cups.

Australia's Aaron Finch announce retirement from International Cricket

- Australian Men T20 Captain Aaron Finch has announced retirement from international cricket.
- Finch had led Australia to the first ICC Men's T20 World Cup title in 2021.
- Finch announced his retirement from all international cricket 12 years after making his debut in 2011.
- Earlier, he had announced his retirement from 50-over format in September 2022.

Ex-Indian cricketer Monty Desai appointed coach of Nepal cricket team

- Nepal Cricket Association has appointed former Indian cricketer Monty Desai as head coach of the Nepal national cricket team.
- He will replace another former Indian cricketer Manoj Prabhakar, who resigned from his post in December 2022.
- He has been the head coach of teams like West Indies, Canada, UAE.
- He has also served as the head coach of the Rajasthan Royals team in IPL.

Aditi Ashok wins 4th LET title; wins by nine shots

- Aditi Ashok clinched the Ladies European Tour Title with a nine-shot win at the Magical Kenya Ladies Open on 5 Feb'23.
- It was her fourth win on the Ladies European Tour for Aditi.
- Aditi is an Indian professional golfer from Bangalore.
- She plays on the Ladies European Tour and LPGA Tour.
- She made her Olympic Games debut at the 2016 Summer Olympics.

Vinesh Phogat and Sakshi Malik nominated for BBC ISWOTY Award

- Wrestlers Vinesh Phogat and Sakshi Malik have been nominated for BBC ISWOTY Award.
- Total of Five athletes were nominated for the BBC Indian Sportswoman Of the Year award.
- The other three are Weightlifter Mirabai Chanu, who won silver at Tokyo Olympics, renowned shuttler PV Sindhu and boxer Nikhat Zareen.
- The winner will be decided by public poll.
- The winner will be declared on March 5.

ITBP won the title of National Ice Hockey Championship 2023

- ITBP's central ice hockey team won the 12th edition of the 2023 IHA National Ice Hockey Championship for men in February 2023.
- The championship was organized by the Ice Hockey Association of India (IHA) in Ladakh, Leh.
- The ITBP team won the title for the third consecutive time by defeating Ladakh Scouts in the final with a score of 1-0.

Sports Minister Anurag Thakur launches Khelo India Winter Games Mascot

- Union Youth Affairs and Sports Minister Anurag Singh Thakur along with the Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, Manoj Sinha on 4 February 2023, launched the Mascot, Theme Song, and Jersey for the 3rd edition of Khelo India Winter Games.
- It is scheduled to be held from February 10 to 14 in Jammu and Kashmir.
- There will be nine sporting events in the Winter Games.

Saudi Arabia to Host Football's 2027 Asian Cup

- Asian Football Confederation announced that Saudi Arabia won the hosting of the 2027 Asian Nations Cup, for the first time in its history, since its inception in 1956.
- This was announced during the 33rd Congress of the Asian Football Confederation (AFC), 1 Feb'23, in the Bahraini capital, Manama.
- Saudi Arabia was the only bid presented at the Congress after India's withdrawal in Dec 2022.

Joginder Sharma announces retirement from all forms of cricket

- Former Indian fast bowler, Joginder Sharma announced his retirement from all forms of cricket on 3 February 2023.
- He represented India in 4 ODIs and 4 T20Is.
- He currently serves as a Deputy superintendent of police in the Haryana Police.
- He also played for Chennai Super Kings from 2008 to 2012.
- He was the member of the 2007 inaugural ICC T20 World Cup Champions Indian team.

Indian wrestler Aman Sehrawat wins bronze medal at Zagreb Open 2023

- Under-23 world champion Aman Sehrawat of India won a bronze medal in the men's 57kg at the Zagreb Open 2023 Ranking Series in Croatia, on 1 February 2023.
- He defeated USA's Zane Raye Rhodes Richards 10-4 to win India's first medal at wrestling competition in 2023.
- Aliabbas Rzazade of Azerbaijan bagged the gold, beating Yuto Nishiuchi of Japan 2-0 in the final.

Sai Sanjay wins Indian National Car Racing Championship 2023

- Sai Sanjay won the National champion in the MRF Formula 2000 class, in the MMSC FMSCI Indian National Car Racing Championship in Feb 2023.
- He made his motorsports debut in 2015 and became the Rotax Senior Max UAE vice-champion in 2018.
- In the other championship classes, Viswas Vijayraj won the LGB F1300 National title while veteran Arjun Balu bagged the ITC crown, his 11th National title.

Kerala wins the inaugural National Beach Soccer Championship 2023

- Kerala won the inaugural National Beach Soccer Championships held at Dumas Beach, Surat, on 1 February 2023.
- Kerala's goalkeeper Santhosh Kasmeer was awarded the best goalkeeper of the tournament.
- Rajasthan's Amit Godara was the highest goalscorer, with 27 goals.
- The best player of the tournament was awarded to Kerala's Siju S.

Dutch player Anish Giri wins Tata Steel Masters 2023

- Dutch player Anish Giri, five times the runner-up in Wijk aan Zee, has won Tata Steel Masters 2023.
- Tata Steel Chess Tournament 2023 is the 85th edition of annual chess tournament held in Wijk aan Zee.
- It was held from 13 to 29 Jan'23.
- The field of 14 players in the Masters section included the numbers 1 and 2 of FIDE World ranking, Magnus Carlsen and Ding Liren.

Prajnesh wins ITF men's tournament in Kuwait

- Prajnesh Gunneswaran has won the final of the \$25,000 ITF men's tennis tournament in Al Zahra, Kuwait, on 29 Jan'23.
- He won by beating Khumoyun Sultanov of Uzbekistan in finals.
- It was first title in 5 years for Prajnesh, who had won two \$150,000 Challengers in 2018 in Bengaluru and Anning.
- It was 11th title in professional circuit for Prajnesh, who was ranked a career-high 75th in 2019.

Indian men's hockey team chief coach Graham Reid resigns

- Graham Reid has resigned as the chief coach of the India men's hockey team on 30 January 2023.

- He took over in 2019, and played a key role in the team winning a bronze medal in the Tokyo Olympics 2021.
- He submitted his resignation to Hockey India President Dilip Tirkey.
- He is a former Australian field hockey player who played as a defender and midfielder for the Australian national team.



Summits and Conferences Current Affairs

20th Edition of BioAsia Summit 2023 concludes in Hyderabad

- The 20th Edition of BioAsia, Asia's largest Life Sciences and Healthcare Convention, concluded in Hyderabad on 26 February 2023.
- The summit 2023 was inaugurated on 24 Feb 2023, by KT Rama Rao, Minister for Industries and Commerce & IT, Government of Telangana.
- The theme of the event for 2023 is "Advancing for ONE: Shaping the next generation of humanized healthcare".

The Maharaja Sayajirao University to host Youth 20 India Summit

- The Maharaja Sayajirao University, Vadodara will host a two-day Youth20 India Summit on 25 February 2023, with a focus on the theme of climate change and environmental conservation.
- More than 600 delegates from 62 countries participate to discuss 'Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction: Making sustainability a Way of Life'.
- It will be inaugurated by Bhupendra Patel, CM of Gujarat.

Om Birla inaugurates 19th Annual Zone III CPA Conference in Sikkim

- Lok Sabha Speaker, Om Birla inaugurated the 19th Annual Zone III Conference of Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) India Region in Gangtok, Sikkim on 23 February 2023 which concluded on 24th Feb.
- The Zone III of the CPA India region is an important platform where legislators of the North Eastern region discuss many subjects and issues, and arrive at common solutions.

Union Min Ashwini Vaishnaw inaugurates SemiconIndia Conference 2023

- The Minister for Communications, Electronics & Information Technology and Railways, Ashwini Vaishnaw inaugurated the 'SemiconIndia Conference of Electronics Manufacturing Supply Chain Ecosystem', on 18 February 2023 in New Delhi.
- The conference held a panel discussion on the existing semiconductor ecosystem in India.
- It is being organized by the Institute of Supply Management (ISM).

Tourism Ministry to organise 1st Global Tourism Investors' Summit

- The Tourism Ministry announced that it will organise the 1st Global Tourism Investors' Summit for promotion of tourism sector.
- It will be organised from 17 to 19 May 2023 in New Delhi.
- The Summit will deliberate on potential opportunities for investment across tourism segments including hotels and restaurants, adventure and eco-tourism, cruise and other related tourism sectors.

PM Modi to address Economic Times Global Business Summit on 17th Feb

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will address the Economic Times Global Business Summit hosted annually by The Times Group on 17 February 2023.

- The theme of the Global Business Summit 2023 is "Resilience, Influence, Dominance".
- It will bring together thought leaders, policymakers, academicians, and corporate heads on a common platform, seeking to provide solutions to key economic challenges.

India to jointly organize 12th World Hindi Conference in Fiji

- It will be organised by Ministry of External Affairs of India in cooperation with the Fiji government.
- It will be held at Nadi in Fiji from 15-17 Feb 2023.
- Theme: Hindi – Traditional Knowledge to Artificial Intelligence
- It will be inaugurated by External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and Fiji Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka.
- The 11th World Hindi Conference was held in Mauritius in 2022.

President Droupadi Murmu inaugurates 2nd Indian Rice Congress

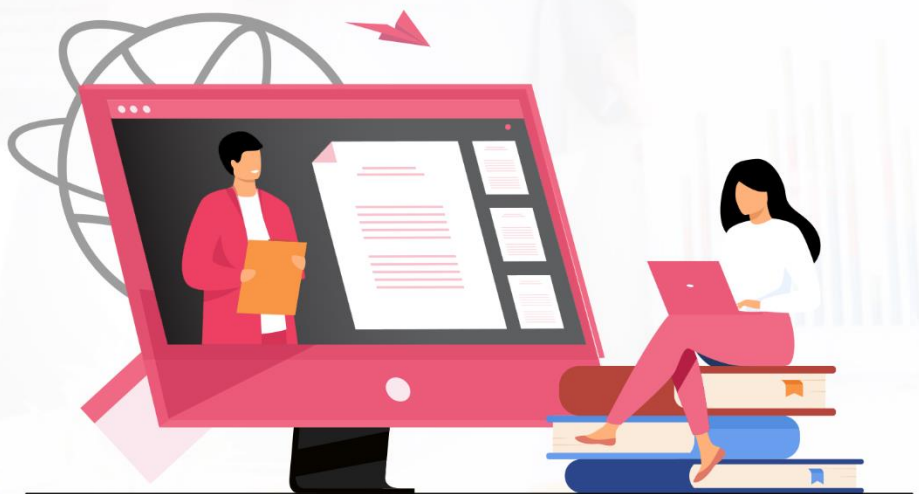
- President Droupadi Murmu inaugurated the second Indian Rice Congress at National Rice Research Center Institute (NRI) in Cuttack, Odisha on 11 February 2023.
- The 2023 congress was held on the theme "Transforming Rice Research".
- It was focused on the global food crisis and the recent scientific developments that will help in increasing the production and yield of paddy crops.

World Government Summit 2023 set to begin in Dubai

- The World Government Summit 2023 is set to begin on 13 February 2023 in Dubai.
- The World Government Summit 2023 will be held under the theme of "Shaping Future Governments".
- It is a global forum held annually in Dubai.
- It brings together leaders in government, business, technology, and civil society to discuss the issues faced by humanity and to shape the future of governments.



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