

❖ Iran becomes a new permanent member of SCO

- Iran has become the new permanent member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) at an India-hosted virtual summit of the grouping.
- With the addition of Iran as a new member, the total membership of the SCO reaches nine.
- The SCO was founded at a summit in Shanghai in 2001 by the presidents of Russia, China, the Kyrgyz Republic, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan.
- India and Pakistan became permanent members of SCO in 2017.
- SCO headquarters: Beijing, China

❖ Indian Overseas Bank unveils RuPay Select Debit card, luxury benefits

- Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) has launched a new RuPay Select Debit card, to provide luxury, convenience, and security, all in one card.

Eligibility Criteria:

- One is required to have a savings account or a certificate of deposit with IOB
- Maintaining an average daily balance of ₹ 1 lakh
- The cash withdrawal limit is set to ₹50,000.
- The daily limit for usage in merchant establishments (PoS) is set at ₹ five lakh.
- Daily usage limit in e-commerce platforms: up to ₹3,50,000.

❖ **China's Qu-Dongyu re-elected as head of FAO**

- China's QU Dongyu has been re-elected as Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) for a second term.
- In the ballot of FAO member countries, Qu received a total of 168 out of 182 votes deposited.
- His new term will run from 1 August 2023 to 31 July 2027.
- He was elected as FAO Director-General for the first time in 2019.
- Under the leadership of QU, the World Food Forum (WFF) was created in 2021.

❖ **Meesho collaborates with IISc's lab for research in generative AI**

- Softbank-backed e-commerce platform Meesho has signed a memorandum of understanding with the Vision & AI Lab of the Indian Institute of Science for one year.
- Aim: To collaborate in the area of generative artificial intelligence
- The goal of this partnership is to foster innovation in generative artificial intelligence and multimodal large language models in the e-commerce industry, thus enhancing user experience.

❖ **ICFA, RAKEZ signs MoU to enhance food and agriculture collaboration**

- Ras Al Khaimah Economic Zone (RAKEZ) and the Indian Chamber of Food and Agriculture (ICFA) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding.
- Aim: To promote mutual growth and development in the food and agriculture sectors of the UAE and India
- The agreement strengthens the strategic collaboration between the two countries.
- The partnership aims to facilitate knowledge exchange, trade promotion, investment, and research and development collaboration.

❖ India doubles its share of global commercial services exports: Report

- According to a World Bank and WTO report, India has doubled its share of global commercial services exports to 4.4% in 2022 from 2% in 2005.
- Report title: Trade in services for development
- The report highlighted that China has also doubled its share of global commercial services exports from 2005 to 2022, from 3% to 5.4%.
- India, South Africa, and Türkiye, jobs directly linked to cross-border services exports account for more than 10% of total services sector jobs.

❖ Lt Gen MU Nair appointed as the Head of National Cyber Coordination Centre

- Lt Gen MU Nair has been appointed as the Head of the National Cyber Coordination Centre, after replacing Lt Gen (ret.) Dr. Rajesh Pant.
- Additionally, he has served as the additional director general, head of signal intelligence, chief of staff of a corps, and command.
- Previously, Lt Gen Nair served as Army Headquarters' chief signal officer.
- He is a distinguished National Defence Academy alumni.
- Nair has extensive knowledge of both domestic and international communication.

❖ India's First 'Police Drone Unit' Launched in Chennai for Enhanced Aerial Surveillance and Quick Detection of Criminal Activities

- The Greater Chennai City Police (GCP) has introduced the groundbreaking 'Police Drone Unit' to bolster aerial surveillance capabilities and expedite the identification of criminal activities.
- The initiative, which involves an investment of approximately Rs 3.6 crore, was inaugurated by the outgoing Tamil Nadu Director General of Police (DGP) C Sylendra Babu, in the presence of Chennai Police Commissioner Shankar Jiwala at Besant Avenue, Adyar.

❖ Purpose and Benefits of the Police Drone Unit:

- Aims to enhance aerial surveillance over vast areas for improved law enforcement.
- Enables quick detection and response to criminal activities.
- Provides an additional tool to monitor and secure large areas efficiently.
- Assists in identifying potential threats and monitoring crowd gatherings.
- Aids in traffic management and control.

❖ British writer Michael Rosen honored with Pen Pinter Prize, 2023

- Renowned British poet and author Michael Rosen has been awarded the prestigious PEN Pinter Prize, 2023 for his literary contribution.
- Michael Rosen is known for making poetry accessible to children through his work and performances.
- The subjects of Rosen's writings are often social, political, and moral.

Pen Pinter Award:

- It was established in the year 2009 by PEN Institute of UK.
- It is the founding center of a global literary network.
- This institution promotes literature and human rights.
- It is awarded annually to a writer living in the United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland, the Commonwealth or a former Commonwealth.
- The winner must be an author of plays, poems, essays or fiction of literary excellence written in English.
- Lemon Sisse, Hanif Qureshi, Mallory Blackman etc. are the main ones among the former recipients of this award.

❖ Minister of State for Defence Inaugurates CSD Depot in Ambala

- Minister of State for Defence Ajay Bhatt inaugurated the new premises of the Canteen Store Department (CSD) Depot in Ambala.
- The construction of the premises was carried out by Dedicated Freight Corridor India Limited, a subsidiary of the Railway Ministry.
- The land of the old CSD depot was exchanged for the new premises.

Recognition of CSD's Work

- CSD provides excellent service to the armed forces, veterans, and their families.
- The department was acknowledged for completing 75 years of service to the armed forces and their families.

❖ Aadhav Arjuna Elected as President of the Basketball Federation of India (BFI)

- Aadhav Arjuna, the president of the Tamil Nadu Basketball Association (TNBA), emerged victorious in the election held at Nehru Stadium and secured the position of president of the Basketball Federation of India (BFI).
- Aadhav received an impressive 38 out of the 39 votes, defeating the incumbent president, K Govindaraj.
- Kulvinder Singh Gill, a former player and the president of the Madhya Pradesh Basketball Association, was elected as the secretary general.

The Basketball Federation of India (BFI)

- It was established in 1950 and is the governing body for basketball in India. It holds affiliation with FIBA Asia and the Indian Olympic Association.
- Basketball in India has its roots dating back to the early 1900s, introduced by Christian missionaries and YMCAs.
- The first national basketball championships took place in 1934, and India joined FIBA in 1936.

❖ NMDC Receives Two Prestigious Awards at ASSOCHAM Business Excellence Awards 2023

- National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC) was honored with two prestigious awards at the ASSOCHAM Business Excellence Awards 2023 in Kolkata.
- The awards received by NMDC were the 'Mineral Development Award' and the 'Employer Brand of the Year Award.'
- These awards recognize NMDC's significant contributions to the mining sector and its exemplary human resources practices.
- The awards were presented by Anurag Srivastava, IAS, Secretary of the Industry, Commerce, and Enterprise Department, Government of West Bengal.
- NMDC is the largest producer of iron ore in India and the sixth largest in the world, playing a pivotal role in the country's mineral development.
- The company's state-of-the-art Research and Development (R&D) Centre focuses on enhancing productivity, promoting sustainable mining practices, and developing advanced beneficiation technologies.
- NMDC is committed to zero-waste mining and continuous innovation, contributing to the growth and advancement of the mining industry.

❖ INBL 3x3 Season 2: Kochi Stars Crowned Women's Champions, Space Jams Dominate Men's Finals

- Kochi Stars, which included prominent players like Stephy Nixon, G. Rojamol, Shireen Limaye and Soniya Joy, won the women's title in the 3*3 Indian National Basketball League's season - 2 in Bengaluru beating Bengaluru's Beagles 21-19 in the final.
- Bengaluru's space Jams defeated pune's DropStep 21-15 and won the men's title.

❖ India win gold in junior mixed team at World Archery Youth C'ship 2023

- Indian pair Priyansh and Avneet Kaur won gold in the junior mixed-team compound event in the final of the World Archery Youth Championships in Limerick, Ireland.
- In the final, the Indian pair defeated Israel 146-144.
- While India's Manav Jadhav and Aishwarya Sharma also won a bronze medal after defeating Mexico in the cadet mixed compound event.
- The World Archery Youth Championships event is taking place at the University of Limerick, Ireland from July 3 to 9.

❖ Japan-India Maritime Exercise (JIMEX 23) 2023.

- The seventh edition of the bilateral Japan-India Maritime Exercise (JIMEX 23) 2023 being conducted by the Indian Navy is being conducted at Visakhapatnam from 5 to 10 July 2023.
- The seventh edition marks the 11th anniversary of JIMEX since its inception in 2012.
- Units of the Japan Maritime Self Defense Force (JMSDF) under the command of RADM Nishiyama Takahiro while Indian Navy ships under the command of Admiral Gurcharan Singh are participating in the exercise.
- The exercise will see the participation of INS Delhi, India's first indigenously built Guided Missile Destroyer, INS Kamorta, an indigenously designed and built Anti-Submarine Warfare Corvette, Fleet Tanker INS Shakti, Maritime Patrol Aircraft P-8I and Dornier.
- The JMSDF will be represented by the guided missile destroyer JS Samidare and its integral helicopters.

❖ **RBI panel recommends measures for internationalization of rupee**

- RBI's working group has recommended the inclusion of the rupee in the Special Drawing Rights (SDR) basket and recalibration of the foreign portfolio investor (FPI) regime to accelerate the pace of internationalization of the rupee.
- The recommendations by an Inter-Departmental Group (IDG), headed by RBI Executive Director Radha Shyam Ratho.
- The group was constituted by RBI Deputy Governor T Rabi Sankar to review the position of the rupee as an international currency.

❖ **DGCA, EU Aviation Safety Agency sign MoU for unmanned aircraft systems**

- The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has signed an MoU with the EU Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) for cooperation in Unmanned Aircraft Systems and Innovative Air Mobility.
- It will focus on collaboration on unmanned aircraft and innovative air mobility between the two civil aviation authorities.
- It would include cooperation in the areas of development of certification standards and environmental standards and related requirements for the certification.

❖ **Scheme for Expansion and Modernization of Fire Services in the States**

- The Ministry of Home Affairs has launched a Scheme for the Expansion and Modernization of Fire Services in the States with a total outlay of Rs.5,000 Crore.
- Objective: To expand and modernize Fire Services within National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF)
- Out of the total outlay, Rs. 500 crore has been kept for incentivizing the States on the basis of their legal and infrastructure-based reforms.
- This scheme was announced by the Union Home Minister, Amit Shah.

❖ Gujarat govt doubles insurance cover under Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya scheme

- The Gujarat government has doubled the insurance coverage under Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana from Rs. 5 lakhs to Rs. 10 lakhs, effective from July 11, 2023.
- The State Health Minister Rushikesh Patel informed that the decision will benefit nearly 1.78 crore Ayushman Bharat cardholders in the state.
- The beneficiaries will get free of cost medical treatment from over two thousand government hospitals and 795 private hospitals in the state under PMAY.

❖ The 2023 Global Peace Index released

- According to the 2023 Global Peace Index (GPI), released by the Institute for Economics and Peace, India has ranked 126 out of 163 countries.
- With an overall score of 2.31, India falls below the global average of 2.314.
- Iceland has remained the most peaceful country in the world since the study was first released in 2008.
- It measures the state of peace across three domains: Societal safety and security, Ongoing domestic and international conflict, and Militarisation.

❖ Global e-commerce transactions expected to hit \$8.5 trillion by 2026

- As per the Global Payments Report 2023, by FIS, the global e-commerce market is expected to grow at a compound annual growth rate of 9% during 2022-26 with transaction value rising to over \$8.5 trillion in 2026
- During 2021-22, all regions except Europe saw double-digit growth with the highest growth of 21% in the Middle East and Africa
- Of the 40 markets, 37 saw double-digit YoY growth from 2021 to 2022.
- The report predicts a mid-teens CAGR in the regions through 2026.

❖ English translation of bestselling Marathi novel 'Dudiya' out

- The fast-paced novel “Dudiya: In your Burning Land”, written by Sahitya Akademi award-winning Marathi novelist Vishwas Patil, has been translated into English by Nadeem Khan.
- The book originally written in Marathi, is a story of a spirited young Adivasi girl who challenges conventional norms both within her impoverished tribe and inside a Naxal camp by simply trying to live a life of dignity and independence.
- The book was published by Niyogi Books.