❖ PM flags off Vande Bharat Express from Dehradun to Delhi

➢ Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagged off the Vande Bharat Express from Dehradun to Delhi through video conferencing.

➢ The Prime Minister also dedicated to the nation the newly electrified railway sections in the state and declared Uttarakhand as a 100% electric traction state.

➢ This will be the sixth Vande Bharat connecting Delhi through various routes. As of now, the national capital is connected to Ajmer, Varanasi, Katra, Bhopal Una and Ambala.

➢ This semi-high-speed train is India's 18th and Uttarakhand's first Vande Bharat train, which will start its inaugural run from Dehradun to Delhi's Anand Vihar Terminal.

➢ The regular operations for the Delhi-Dehradun Vande Bharat Express will start on 29 May. The train will cover a distance of 302 km.

➢ It was manufactured under the 'Make in India' programme, at a cost of about Rs 100 crore. These trains can achieve a maximum speed of 160 kmph.

➢ In the Union Budget for 2022-2023 the government has proposed the development and manufacture of 400 new Vande Bharat trains in the next three years.

❖ INSV Tarini crew back home after 188 days

➢ The crew of INSV Tarini, who returned after an inter-continental voyage, were accorded a grand welcome at the flag-in ceremony in Goa.

➢ Two women officers, Lt Cdr Dilna K and Lt Cdr Roopa A, were involved in the entire operation. Lt Cdr Dilna is a Logistics Officer in the Navy.

➢ Roopa, who hails from Puducherry, has graduated in Aeronautical Engineering from Chennai. He is a Naval Armament Inspection Officer.

➢ Both Dilna and Roopa are currently posted at INS Mandovi in Goa.

➢ The historic voyage from Goa to Rio de Janeiro to Cape Town was completed by INSV Tarini in 188 days.

➢ It reflects an exemplary display of gallantry, courage and tenacity by the crew and highlights the role of the Indian Navy as a pioneer in the country in ocean sailing.

❖ More than 90% of funds allocated under Smart Cities Mission utilised

➢ Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Singh Puri has announced that more than 90% of the funds allocated under the Smart Cities Mission are being utilized and 73% of the projects have already been completed.

➢ The smart city project was to be completed within five years of the selection of the city.

➢ However, in 2021, the ministry changed the deadline to June 2023 for all cities.

➢ Smart Cities Mission is an initiative of the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs which was launched in 2015.

➢ It aims to transform urban areas into sustainable, citizen-friendly and technologically advanced cities.

➢ The mission's primary objective is to enhance the quality of life for citizens by providing them with improved infrastructure, better governance, and increased economic opportunities.

➢ Till 1st May 2023, a total of Rs 38,400 crore was released for the Smart Cities Mission. Out of this amount, ₹35,261 crore has already been utilized for various projects.

❖ Third advance estimate of production of major crops for 2022-23

➢ Union Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister Narendra Singh Tomar released the third advance estimates of production of major crops for the agricultural year 2022-23.

➢ In which food grains production has been estimated at 3305.34 lakh tonnes in the current agricultural year.

➢ In this, record production of rice, wheat, maize, soybean, rapeseed and mustard and sugarcane has been estimated.

➢ As per the 3rd Advance Estimates for 2022-23, the estimated production of major crops is as follows:

➢ Total food grain production: 3305.34 lakh tonnes (record). This is 149.18 lakh tonnes more than the previous year 2021-22.

❖ Govindraj elected as President of Basketball Federation of India

➢ Dr. Govindraj has been elected as the President of the Basketball Federation of India.

➢ He is a Congress MLC and holds the position of President of International Basketball Federation (FIBA) Asia and President of Karnataka Olympic Association.

➢ Dr. Govindaraj is the first Indian to be unanimously nominated as the President of FIBA Asia.

➢ The nomination was confirmed at the FIBA Asia Congress, making Dr. Govindaraj the first Indian to lead the International Basketball Federation in Asia, which comprises 44 countries.

➢ He succeeds Sheikh Saud Ali Al Thani of Qatar, who served as the head of FIBA Asia for four consecutive terms since 2002.

➢ It is a federation of national organisations governing basketball around the world.

➢ It defines the rules of basketball, ensuring consistency and fairness across different countries and competitions.

➢ It consists of 212 national federations organised into five regions: Africa, America, Asia, Europe and Oceania.

❖ Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel launched 'Hamar Sughar Laika Abhiyan'

➢ Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel launched the 'Hamar Sughar Laik Abhiyan' in the 'Bharose Ka Sammelan' program at Sankra in Durg district.

➢ The campaign aims to bring 1,800 malnourished children, identified through a survey, into the category of well-nourished children.

➢ This is the first district level campaign of its kind in the state and focuses on managing the growth of children through hunger testing.

❖ MiG-29K makes night landing on INS Vikrant

➢ The Indian Navy achieved a significant milestone on May 24, 2023 by performing the first-ever night landing of a MiG-29K onboard INS Vikrant.

➢ It is noteworthy in this context that the MiG-29K night landing within three months of the first landing on INS Vikrant is a challenging feat.

➢ INS Vikrant is currently undergoing air certification and flight integration trials with rotary wing and fixed wing aircraft to achieve 'combat ready' status very quickly.

➢ As part of these trials, the first landing of MiG-29K and indigenous LCA (Navy) took place on 06 February 2023 and since then there has been considerable progress in day and night landing trials of all helicopters of the Indian Navy.

➢ The country's first indigenously designed and built aircraft carrier INS Vikrant has completed extensive sea trials ahead of her maiden voyage on August 4, 2021.

❖ ADB will give $ 141.12 million loan for the development of industrial corridor in Andhra Pradesh

➢ The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Government of India signed a $141.12 million loan agreement for the development of an industrial corridor in Andhra Pradesh.

➢ The agreement has been signed to support the development of high quality indoor infrastructure facilities in three industrial areas in Andhra Pradesh. These are: roads, water supply plants and power distribution systems.

➢ The loan is the second tranche of a $500 million Multi-tranche Financing Facility (MFF) under the program approved by ADB in 2016.

➢ With this loan facility, infrastructure facilities will be developed in three industrial clusters under the Visakhapatnam and Srikalahasti-Chittoor areas sanctioned in Andhra Pradesh.

➢ This project will help in skill development of people from socially and economically weaker sections besides increasing investment in the state.

➢ Asian Development Bank (ADB):-

➢ Establishment : 19 December 1966

➢ Headquarters: Manila (Philippines)

➢ Member countries: 68 (India is a founding member)

❖ First Urban Climate Film Festival

➢ The first ever Urban Climate Film Festival is going to be held in New Town, Kolkata from June 3 to 5 to sensitize the audience about the environmental, social and economic impacts of climate change on urban settlements.

➢ The festival will highlight the environmental, social and economic impacts of climate change on urban settlements.

➢ The audience will be able to see these scenarios through the film. During this, 16 films from 12 countries will be screened.

➢ There will also be a Q&A session with film makers to discuss the impact of climate-change on urban buildings.

➢ It aims to encourage citizens to 'behave environmentally responsible' in line with the call of the Hon'ble Prime Minister through the U-20 Priority Sectors and Lifestyle for Environment (LIFE) Mission.

➢ The festival will conclude with a special closing ceremony on June 5, the occasion of World Environment Day.

➢ Launched in New Delhi in March 2023, the film festival is being organized by the National Institute of Urban Affairs.

❖ Kerala becomes India's first fully e-governed state

➢ The state has achieved this feat through policy initiatives aimed at transforming it into a digitally empowered society.

➢ The government focused on setting up a knowledge-based economy and achieving 100% digital literacy.

➢ Important services across various sectors were digitized to ensure transparency, inclusiveness and accessibility for all citizens.

➢ E-governance in Kerala has streamlined service delivery, reducing bureaucratic bottlenecks and delays.

➢ Online portals and mobile applications have been launched for citizens to interact with government departments and access services easily.

➢ Integration of technology in the education and healthcare sectors has been a priority, with digital learning platforms and telemedicine services being implemented.

❖ Indian Long jumper Murali Sreeshankar wins gold at International Jumping Meeting in Greece

➢ Indian Long jumper Murali Sreeshankar won gold while compatriot Jeswin Aldrin finished bagged silver at the International Jumping Meeting 2023 at Kallithea in Greece.

➢ Kerala's Murali Sreesankar won the gold medal in the International Jumping Meet with a jump of 8.31 metres.

➢ Sreeshankar, who has played in the Tokyo Olympics, holds the national record of 8.36 metres.

➢ Sweden's Tobias Montaller won the silver with a jump of 8.27m, while France's Jules Pommery won the bronze.

➢ This was Murali Sreesankar's third competition of the year and also won the third gold medal.

➢ Jeswin Aldrin claimed silver with an effort of 7.85m.

❖ India's AI supercomputer 'AIRAWAT' ranked 75th in Global Supercomputing list

➢ The AI Supercomputer ‘AIRAWAT’, installed at C-DAC, Pune has been ranked 75th in the top 500 Global Supercomputing List.

➢ The announcement was made during the 61st edition of the International Supercomputing Conference (ISC 2023) held in Germany.

➢ The establishment of 'AIRAWAT' at C-DAC Pune is part of the National Program on AI initiated by the Government of India.

➢ AIRAWAT is the name for an in-house cloud platform for big data.

➢ The proposed AIRAWAT system is a 100+ petaflop AI-focused supercomputer.

➢ There are parallels drawn to Japan's AI Bridging Cloud Interface supercomputer in the NITI Aayog report.

➢ This system is a 130 petaflop computer focused on providing compute for AI, ML and big data tasks.

❖ The founder of start-up Dream11, Harsh Jain elected IAMAI chairperson

➢ Harsh Jain, co-founder, and CEO of Dream Sports, has been elected the chairman of the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) for 2023-25.

➢ He has replaced Sanjay Gupta, vice president, and country manager of Google India.

➢ Rajesh Magow (co-founder and group CEO of MakeMyTrip) was elected as vice chairman, while Satyan Ganjwani (vice chairman of Times Internet) as the treasurer of the association.

➢ The IAMAI governing council election is held every two years.

❖ Exemption for leave encashment raised to ₹25 lakh

➢ The Central Board of Direct Taxes has raised the tax exemption on leave encashment on the retirement of non-government salaried employees from ₹3 lakh to ₹25 lakh, effective from 1 April 2023.

➢ It was announced in the union budget 2023.

➢ It applies to the period of earned leave in the credit of the employee at the time of retirement whether on superannuation or otherwise.

➢ In the case of government employees, the entire leave encashment amount received is tax-exempt.

➢ The total tax-exempt amount under a section in the Income Tax Act dealing with leave encashment of salaried private sector employees shall not exceed the limit of Rs. 25 lakh, said the tax authority.

❖ Goa, Uttarakhand signed MoU to Strengthen Tourism Cooperation

➢ The officials of the Government of Goa and the Government of Uttarakhand have signed an MoU for enhancing the tourism landscape of both states.

➢ The MoU was signed in the presence of Rohan Khaunte (Minister for Tourism, Goa) and Pushkar Singh Dhami (CM of Uttarakhand).

➢ Aim: To promote bilateral cooperation in the travel and tourism sector

➢ Under the MoU, both states will benefit from direct flight connectivity between Uttarakhand and Goa, the travel time is reduced from 7 hours to 2.5 hours, making it easier for tourists to travel between the two states.

➢ The tourism departments of both states will also work on joint packages to promote various tourism products, including adventure tourism activities, ecotourism, spiritual tourism, and wellness tourism.

➢ The signing of this MoU is also aligned with the 'Dekho Apna Desh' initiative launched by PM Narendra Modi.