

❖ Himachal Pradesh to prepare green hydrogen policy

- Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu announced that it will formulate a 'Green Hydrogen' policy to promote the use of green hydrogen and establish the state as a leading center for its production.
- The state's abundant renewable energy resources, including ample sunlight, water and wind, make the state an ideal location for generating green hydrogen.
- This initiative of the state will not only contribute to the global fight against climate change but will also make the state a leader in sustainable development.
- The state government has signed an MoU with Oil India Limited (OIL) for the production of green hydrogen.
- OIL has shown interest in setting up a plant in the state that will produce green hydrogen for ethanol production.
- As per the initiative of the state government, this alternative fuel can be used as a replacement for petrol.

❖ India will open its new consulate in Brisbane

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his address at the community event in Sydney during his Australian visit informed that a new consulate will be constructed in Brisbane.
- The main objective of setting up the Consulate in Brisbane is to fulfill the long standing demand of Indian expatriates in Australia.

- This was announced during Prime Minister Modi's address at the Kudos Bank Arena in Sydney, which was attended by over 21,000 people across Australia, along with Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese.
- Meanwhile, Prime Minister Albanese also declared Harris Park as "Little India" during the reception for Prime Minister Modi.
- Harris Park is a center in western Sydney where the Indian community celebrates Indian festivals and events including Diwali and Australia Day.
- Australia was the 17th largest trading partner of India in the year 2022 and India is the 9th largest trading partner of Australia.

Australia:

Capital: Canberra

Currency: Australian Dollar

❖ 76th World Health Assembly held in Geneva

- The 76th World Health Assembly was inaugurated by the World Health Organization (WHO) in Geneva, Switzerland.
- This ten-day 76th World Health Assembly is being organized from 21 to 30 May 2023.
- In this, India is being represented by Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya.
- It serves as a platform for representatives of all WHO member states to come together and address health issues affecting people around the world.
- Appreciating India's health priorities, Dr. Tedros Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the World Health Organisation, praised India's progress in chairing the G20 as well as its efforts to advance digital health and traditional medicine.
- Theme of the 76th World Health Assembly: WHO at 75: Saving Lives, Driving Health for All.

➤ WHO is an inter-governmental organization and works in collaboration with the Ministries of Health of its member states.

❖ **Nepal celebrates Bhoto Jatra**

- Nepal celebrates Bhoto Jatra which is a public holiday in Kathmandu Valley.
- This celebration is a part of Rato Machhindranath Jatra which is a month-long chariot procession.
- It originates at Pulchok where a chariot made of wood without the use of iron nails is created and the procession ends at Jwalakhel.
- In Bhoto Jatra, a "lost & found" bejeweled Nepali vest "bhoto" of Rato Machhindranath is displayed to the public to find its "rightful owner".

❖ **Union Minister Giriraj Singh launches SAMARTH campaign**

- The Union Minister for Rural Development, Giriraj Singh has launched the 'SAMARTH' Campaign on promote Digital Transactions in 50000 Gram Panchayats' in Lucknow.
- Implemented by: Ministry of Rural Development
- Aim: To promote Digital Transactions in rural areas, focusing on women
- Minister has lauded the SHG's NPA, which was reduced from 9.58 % in 2013 to below 2%, and urged banks to recognize and outstanding credit performance of SHG Didis and facilitate loans.
- Acknowledging the contribution of BC Sakhis in digital transactions, where India is emerging as the Global leader under PM Modi's visionary initiatives, Minister added that India is setting global examples in women empowerment too.
- The event witnessed unveiling of a compendium of 75 Inspirational Tales of BC Sakhis along with live testimonies of transformations in the lives of BC Sakhis who narrated before the august gathering their success stories.

➤ On this occasion, Biometric PoS machines and Certificate of On-boarding were distributed to newly selected BC Sakhis.

❖ **Iran successfully launched ballistic missile 'Kheibar**

- Iran has successfully test-launched a ballistic missile with a range of around 2,000-km
- The liquid-fuel missile had been named the Kheibar, the latest version of the Khorramshahr.
- The missiles are capable of carrying 1,500 kg of warheads.
- The speed of the high-mobility tactical missile can reach Mach 16 outside the atmosphere and Mach 8 inside the atmosphere.
- Iran, which has one of the biggest missile programmes in the Middle East, its weapons are capable of reaching Israel and U.S. bases in the region.
- Iran capital: Tehran; Currency: Iranian Rial

❖ **Bank of Maharashtra tops PSU lenders chart in profit and loan growth**

- Bank of Maharashtra (BoM) has emerged as the top performer among public sector lenders in terms of loan and deposit growth in percentage terms during 2022-23.
- BoM has also recorded the highest growth in profitability with the bottom line growing almost 126% to Rs 2,602 crore during the year.
- In terms of percentage increase in gross advances, BoM recorded a 29.4% rise in loans at Rs 1,75,120 crore as of March 2023.
- It was followed by Indian Overseas Bank and UCO Bank with 21.2 per cent and 20.6 per cent growth, respectively.
- However, all the 12 public sector banks together recorded 57 per cent jump in net profit at Rs 1,04,649 crore in FY23, according to published yearly numbers of public sector banks (PSBs).

➤ However, in absolute terms, aggregate loans of the country's biggest lender SBI were nearly 16 times higher at Rs 27,76,802 crore. With regard to deposit growth, BoM witnessed 15.7 per cent rise and mobilised Rs 2,34,083 crore at the end of March 2023.

❖ **World Meteorological Congress approves Global Greenhouse Gas Watch**

➤ The World Meteorological Congress has approved a new greenhouse gas monitoring initiative to support urgent action to reduce heat-trapping gases which are fuelling temperature increase.

➤ Aim: To fill critical information gaps and provide an integrated, operational framework

➤ The framework will bring all space-based and surface-based observing systems, as well as modeling and data assimilation capabilities, under one roof.

➤ It was supported by the WMO's 193 Members.

➤ It recognizes "the growing societal importance of greenhouse gas monitoring in support of improving our scientific understanding of the Earth System.

➤ The urgent need to strengthen the scientific underpinning of mitigation actions taken by the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement.

❖ **India to have new supercomputer for weather forecasting**

➤ During the visit to the National Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasting, Union Earth Sciences Minister Kiren Rijiju informed that India will unveil its new 18 petaflop supercomputer for weather forecasting institutes by the end of 2023.

➤ The new supercomputer will be bought at a cost of Rs 900 crore.

➤ NCMRWF will be allocated eight petaflop supercomputing power with the remaining 10 petaflops going to IITM

➤ The NCMRWF houses 'Mihir', a 2.8 petaflop supercomputer

➤ The Pune-based institute requires higher supercomputing power as it deals with seasonal weather forecasts while the NCMRWF deals with medium-range forecasts for a period extending three to seven days in advance.

❖ **HDFC Bank partners Manipal Global to build up a talent pipeline**

➤ HDFC Bank has partnered with Manipal Global Academy of BFSI to launch its Future Banker 2.0 programme.

➤ Aim: To groom young graduates into banking professionals within a year

➤ The nationwide recruitment initiative seeks to establish a talent pipeline for the bank's retail banking division.

➤ The one-year professional diploma incorporates classroom sessions, guest lectures, role plays, and practical fieldwork. It also includes eight months of paid internship.

❖ **Centre approves digital communication system between banks and CEIB**

➤ The Central Govt. has cleared a prompt digital reporting and communication mechanism between banks and Central Economic Intelligence Bureau (CEIB) to plug defaults on loans of over Rs 50 crore.

➤ CEIB will send a report digitally regarding borrowers to the PSU banks for a loan amount of Rs 50 crore or higher at the pre-approval stage within 15 days of request.

➤ The new system will require banks to submit their requests to CEIB through dedicated emails in a specific format.

➤ The new system was cleared by the Union finance minister in due consultation with all the stakeholders. Under the new system the government has introduced a digital system to streamline the process of communication between banks and the Central Economic Intelligent Bureau (CEIB).