Current Events

March 2022

The download for Current Affairs for Recruitment Test (RTs) exams of UPSC, including ALC, LEO, APFC, EPFO EO/AO, Admin Officer, Store Officer, Deputy Director, and Investigator Grade-I is available.

The Current Events are tailored to the latest RTs trends and requirements of UPSC. To optimize exam performance, focus on the following key points:

- Cover current events from the past 18 months only, up to the date of the exam. For periodic events, such as the Budget, Economic Survey, Nobel Prize, or Tournaments, refer to only the latest ones. For instance, for an April 2023 exam, study the 2023 budget, not the 2022 budget.
- The UPSC RT exam is factual, so don't delve into details or implications.
- The Return on Investment (ROI) for studying current affairs is generally low. Therefore, devote an appropriate amount of time to them while prioritizing other topics that have a higher ROI. For instance, studying 100 pages of current affairs may result in solving only 5 questions, while studying 100 pages of polity could yield 14-15 questions.
- A few questions will always be unsolvable, no matter how much you've studied. Don't get discouraged by them, as they won't affect your selection.
- Based on experience, you can expect to answer approximately 60-70% of question in exam, from these concise current affairs booklets.
- Current affairs for UPSC RT exams are purely factual, so self-study is better than coaching classes. In fact, coaching classes are counterproductive, as a teacher may only cover 10 events in 60 minutes, while you can cover 35-40 events in the same time frame.

Finally, note that these files are specifically prepared for RT exams of UPSC and should not be used for Civil Services Preliminary exam (GS Paper 1).

If you want to report any correction/error/feedback, you are welcome at **contact@humanperitus.com.** We will check and respond within 1 working day.

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1. Sports and Games

Mankading in Cricket
The Marylebone Cricket Club has announced its new code of laws, under which Mankading has been made a normal mode of running out the non-striker.

Mankading is a method of run out where a bowler dismisses a non-striker by hitting the bails before bowling when the latter is outside the crease. Though this is a legally permissible dismissal, it is considered against the spirit of the game. The method is named after legendary Indian bowler Vinoo Mankad.

Promotion of Rural and Indigenous/Tribal Games
'Promotion of rural and indigenous/tribal games' component of Khelo India Scheme is specifically dedicated to the development and promotion of rural and indigenous/tribal games in the country.

Khelo India Scheme aims at infusing sports culture and achieving sporting excellence in the country thus allowing the populace to harness the power of sports through its cross-cutting influence. It is the flagship central sector scheme of Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports.

Following major Indigenous/traditional games have been identified
1. Mallakhamb, MP: It is a combination of Yoga, Gymnastics, and Martial Arts. Many types of Mallakhamb as Pole, Rope, Hanging, Niradhar (without support), on cane, on floating platform, Mallakhamb with weapons etc.

2. Kalaripayattu, Kerala: It is a form of Marital Art. Has different techniques like meipayattu (*physical body exercise*), vadipayattu (*fight using sticks*), valpayattu (*fight using swords*) etc.

3. Gatka, Punjab: Traditional martial art form, that is historically associated with the Sikh gurus. Stick fighting between two or more practitioners, with wooden sticks (called *Soti*) intended to simulate swords.

4. Thang ta, Manipur: Traditional martial art also called HUYEN LALLONG ("method of safe-guarding").

5. Yogasana: Describes a seated posture in yoga typically used for meditation, such as a basic cross-legged position. Examples: Padmasana (lotus pose), Siddhasana (perfect or accomplished pose), Vajrasana (thunderbolt pose) etc.

6. Silambam, TN: Weapon-based Indian martial art, but also traditionally practiced by the Tamil community of Sri Lanka and Malaysia.

India First at Medal tally in ISSF World Cup held in Cairo Egypt
India have taken first place in the medal standing in International Shooting Sport Federation, ISSF World Cup 2022 in Cairo, Egypt. The Indian team finished on the top of the medals tally with a total of 7 medals comprising of 4 gold, 2 silver and 1 bronze.
Norway – 2nd
France – 3rd

Key Points

- Saurabh Chaudhary clinched India's first gold medal in the Men's 10m Air Pistol event by defeating Michael Schwald of Germany.
- Rhythm Sangwan and Anish Bhanwala won the 25m Rapid Fire Pistol Mixed team gold medal match against Thailand.
- Indian trio of Gurpreet Singh, Anish Bhanwala and Bhavesh Shekhawat lost the gold medal match of the Men's 25m Rapid Fire Pistol team competition to Germany.
- In the women's 25m pistol team event final, Indian trio Rahi Sarnobat, Esha Singh and Rhythm Sangwan defeated the Singaporean trio to clinch gold.
- Esha Singh also won the Women's 10m Air Pistol team event in addition to the silver she had earned in the women's 10m Air Pistol individual event, making this her second gold and third medal of the World Cup.

2022 Sportstar Ace Awards

Tokyo Olympic Gold medallist, Neeraj Chopra has claimed the coveted 'Sportstar of the Year (Male)' award at the 2022 Sportstar Aces Awards. Weightlifter Mirabai Chanu, who claimed the silver medal at the Tokyo Olympics, received the 'Sportstar of the Year (Female)' award.

Other Awardees

- Lovlina Borgohain (Sportswoman of the Year, Individual Sports),
- Avani Lekhara (Parathlete of the Year, Female),
- Pramod Bhagat (Special Recognition award),
- Savita (Sportswoman of the Year, Team Sports), and
- Rupinder Pal Singh (Sportsman of the Year, Team Sports

The Aces Awards celebrate the spirit of excellence in sport and hope to inspire our athletes and sportspersons to continue to strive to break new records and reach new pinnacles of glory.

Mithali Raj becomes first cricketer to appear in 6 ICC Women World Cup

Indian women cricketer Mithali Raj has achieved the feat of becoming the first women to appear in 6 ICC Women World Cups. She is the only third cricketer overall to play 6 World Cup after India's Sachin Tendulkar and Pakistan's Javed Miandad. She had made her maiden World Cup appearance in 2000.

Hyderabad FC won first Indian Super League Title 2022

Hyderabad FC has won their first Indian Super League title in 2022 by defeating Kerala Blasters in the final at the Fatorda Stadium in Goa.

2. Science and Technology

First ARTPARK launched at IISc Bengaluru
First Artificial Intelligence & Robotics Technology Park (ARTPARK) of India has been launched at Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bengaluru. It is promoted by a not-for-profit foundation set up by Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bengaluru. It intends to use futuristic technologies with a focus on creating a globally leading artificial Intelligence and Robotics Innovation ecosystem in India.

ISRO's NETRA Project for detecting space debris
Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is building up its orbital debris tracking capability by deploying new radars and optical telescopes under the Network for Space Objects Tracking and Analysis (NETRA) project. Orbital debris are any human-made object in orbit about the Earth that no longer serves a useful function.

MoEF&CC exempted certain genomes edited crops from its Regulations
BT Cotton is India's only transgenic crop approved for commercial cultivation. Gene-editing technologies such as CRISPR are being intensively used to experiment in areas of biomedicine.

CRISPR technology is basically a gene-editing technology that can be used for the purpose of altering genetic expression or changing the genome of an organism. The technology can be used for targeting specific stretches of an entire genetic code or editing the DNA at particular locations. CRISPR stands for Clustered Regularly Interspaced Short Palindromic Repeats.

Ministry of Railways KAVACH System to avoid Train collision
Minister of Railways has inspected the trial of 'KAVACH' working system between Gullaguda-Chitgidda Railway stations.

KAVACH is the indigenously developed Train Collision Avoidance System (TCAS). It is a set of electronic devices and Radio Frequency Identification devices installed in locomotives, in the signaling system and tracks. These communicate with each other using ultra-high radio frequencies to control the brakes of trains and alert drivers. The system initiated the automatic braking system and halted the locomotives 380 metres apart. It is in development since 2012 and is developed by Research Design and Standards Organisation (RDSO) in collaboration with Indian industry and trials facilitated by South Central Railway.

Scientists discovered Microplastics in human blood for the first time
Scientists have discovered microplastics in human blood for the first time, warning that the ubiquitous particles could also be making their way into organs. These tiny pieces of mostly invisible plastic have already been found almost everywhere else on Earth, from the deepest oceans to the highest mountains as well as in the air, soil, and food chain.

Indian Navy successfully tested Naval variant BrahMos cruise missile
The Indian Navy has successfully test-fired a naval variant long-range version of the BrahMos cruise missile.
BrahMos:
- Jointly developed by India and Russia.
- Extended range: 350 to 400 km.
- Speed: Flies almost three times the speed of sound at Mach 2.8.
- Types: Can be launched from submarine, ships, aircraft or land.
- Nomenclature: The name BrahMos is a blend formed from the names of two rivers, the Brahmaputra of India and the Moskva of Russia.

- Engine: First stage: Solid rocket booster; Second stage: Liquid ramjet (airbreathing jet engine).
- Significance: It is the world's fastest Anti-Ship Cruise Missile currently in operation.

HANSA-NG – first of its kind – indigenously developed aircraft trainer
HANSA-NG, a first of its kind, indigenously developed aircraft trainer has completed sea level trials. It is developed by the CSIR-National Aerospace Laboratories (CSIR-NAL).

The HANSA-NG, or HANSA-New Generation, is one of the most advanced flying trainers. HANSA-NG is an upgraded version of HANSA, which saw the first flight in 1993, and was certified in 2000. It is powered by a Rotax Digital Control Engine and is designed to meet the need for trainer aircraft by flying clubs in India. It is an ideal aircraft for Commercial Pilot Licensing (CPL) due to its low cost and low fuel consumption.

National Supercomputing Mission deployed PARAM Ganga at IIT Roorkee
The National Supercomputing Mission (NSM) has deployed "PARAM Ganga", a supercomputer at IIT Roorkee, with a supercomputing capacity of 1.66 Petaflops. The system is designed and commissioned by C-DAC under Phase 2 of the build approach of the NSM.

3. Environment

India's first e-waste eco-park in New Delhi
The Delhi Cabinet has approved the construction of India's first 'e-waste eco-park' for effective management of e-waste. It has also announced Delhi Film Policy 2022 to boost tourism and promote the city as a brand.

India to launch 3rd phase of Monsoon Mission
India will soon lunch the third phase of Monsoon Mission.

National Monsoon Mission (NMM) was launched by the Ministry of Earth Sciences in 2012. The overall objective of NMM is to improve the monsoon prediction over India on all time scales. Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, Pune is main body responsible for execution and coordination of mission.

IPCC releases second part of the Sixth Assessment Report
The IPCC has released the second part of the Sixth Assessment Report, titled 'Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability', the Working Group II contribution to the Sixth Assessment Report. This second part of the report is about climate change impacts, risks and vulnerabilities, and adaptation options. The first part of the report was released in August 2021. That one was centred around the scientific basis of climate change.

The latest report has, for the first time, made an assessment of regional and sectoral impacts of climate change. It has included risks to, and vulnerabilities of, mega-cities around the world. For example, it has said Mumbai is at high risk of sea-level rise and flooding, while Ahmedabad faces serious danger of heat waves.

The IPCC prepares comprehensive Assessment Reports about the state of scientific, technical and socio-economic knowledge on climate change, its impacts and future risks and options for reducing the rate at which climate change is taking place.

The Assessment Reports, the first of which had come out in 1990, are the most comprehensive evaluations of the state of the earth's climate. So far 5 reports have been released.

IPCC: Created in 1988 by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the objective of the IPCC is to provide governments at all levels with scientific information that they can use to develop climate policies. The IPCC currently has 195 members including India. In 2007, the IPCC and US Vice-President Al Gore were jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for their efforts to build up and disseminate greater knowledge about man-made climate change, and to lay the foundations for the measures that are needed to counteract such change.

MoEF&CC announced 5th October as National Dolphin Day
The MoEF&CC has announced that October 5 will be celebrated as National Dolphin Day from this year as part of the conservation campaign for the species and to generate awareness. The decision was taken by the Standing Committee of the National Board for Wildlife (NBWL). Note that, October 5 is currently celebrated as 'Ganga River Dolphin Day', but its redesignation now as a national day will encompass all rivers and oceans' Dolphins beyond the Gangetic ones.

Gangetic Dolphin: It is an indicator species, whose status provides information on the overall condition of the ecosystem and of other species in that ecosystem. It is extremely vulnerable to change in water quality and flow. It is among the 4 freshwater dolphins found in the world – the other 3 are found in the Yangtze River (China), the '*bhulan*' of the Indus (Pakistan) and the '*boto*' of the Amazon River (Latin America). It is a mammal and

cannot breathe in the water and must surface every 30-120 seconds. The Gangetic River species is found in India, Bangladesh and Nepal.

Scientist found Rough-Toothed Dolphin in Lakshadweep
A Research team of the Department of Environment and Forest in Lakshadweep has reported the first-ever live sighting of rough-toothed dolphins in Indian waters.

Rough-Toothed Dolphin: Found in tropical and warmer temperate waters all over the world but little is known about them. Grow up to 8.5ft in length and have grey body with white lips and throat and a speckled belly.

UNEA adopted End Plastic Resolution in Nairobi
United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) has adopted historical resolution – "End Plastic Pollution: Towards an internationally legally binding instrument". The resolution is endorsed by 175 nations at UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-5) in Nairobi and forge an international legally binding agreement by 2024. Under the legally binding agreement, countries will be expected to develop, implement and update national action plans reflecting country-driven approaches to contribute to the objectives of the instrument. The Resolution will pertain to marine ecosystems as well, and will include both binding and voluntary approaches from member states.

Resolution: It is based on 3 initial draft resolutions of Peru, Rwanda and Japan. It addresses the full lifecycle of plastic, including its production, design and disposal. It establishes an Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee, which will begin its work in 2022, with the ambition of completing a draft global legally binding agreement by the end of 2024.

UNEA is the world highest-level decision-making body on the environment.

UNEP Frontiers Report 2022
Also, UNEP in February 2022, released Frontiers Report: Noise, Blazes and Mismatches' which identifies and offers solutions to 3 environmental issues – Urban soundscapes, wildfires and phonological shifts.

Noise Pollution in India: Earlier, it was covered under the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 but later, Noise Pollution (Regulation and Control) Rules, 2000 replaced it. However, under Air Act, 1981, noise emanating from industry is regulated by State Pollution Control Boards / Pollution Control Committees (SPCBs / PCCs) for states/UTs.

Dhaka has been ranked as the noisiest city in the world which is followed by Moradabad, Uttar Pradesh. Irbid, Jordan has been ranked as the world's quietest city.

Fourth COP4 to Minamata Convention held in Bali, Indonesia
Fourth Conference of Parties (COP4) to the Minamata Convention (MC) on Mercury has been held in Bali, Indonesia.

Minamata Convention on Mercury, adopted in 2013 at Geneva, is the world's first legally binding treaty to protect human health and environment from adverse effects of mercury. It is named after the city in Japan that became the epicenter of Minamata disease, a neurological disease caused by severe mercury poisoning, in the 1950s. India signed the Minamata Convention in 2014 and ratified in 2018. It came into force in 2017.

Mercury is considered by WHO as one of the top 10 chemicals or groups of chemicals of major public health concern. It may have toxic effects on nervous, digestive and immune systems, lungs, kidneys, skin and eyes. India is second-largest user of mercury in world after US.

What is Earth Hour?
Every year, Earth Hour is observed on the last Saturday of March at 8:30 pm. And while previously it brought the public out onto the roads to mark the hour, this year the famous environmental initiative went digital as many countries are in lockdown. The topic for Earth Hour 2022 was "Shape Our Future".

Dating back to 2007, Earth Hour is an annual event organized by the World Wildlife Fund that promotes conservation and sustainable energy. During this time, civilians are encouraged to switch off their lights for one hour to help reduce the effect of global warming and raise awareness for climate change and wildlife conservation.

Note that, whereas Earth Hour stands as a climate change initiative where people reduce their electricity usage, Earth Day (April 22) celebrates our natural environment by inspiring people to plant trees, recycle regularly and keep the planet tidy.

Gujrat to use AI-based software SIMBA to identify Asiatic Lions
Gujarat forest department will use SIMBA, an Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based photo-identification software specifically designed to distinguish patterns or marks to identify Asiatic lions. It has been developed by Hyderabad-based '*teliolabs*'.
SIMBA stands for: Software with Intelligence Marking based Identification of Asiatic Lions

Asiatic Lion is one of 5 big cats inhabiting India, along with the Bengal Tiger, Indian Leopard, Snow Leopard, and Clouded Leopard. Found only in India, in 5 protected areas in Gujarat – Gir National Park, Gir Sanctuary, Pania Sanctuary, Mitiyala Sanctuary, and Girnar Sanctuary. Lions are the only cats that live in groups, called *Pride*. Female lions are the pride's primary hunters.

Olive Ridley Turtles arrived Odisha for mass-netting
Olive Ridley Turtles has arrived at Odisha coast for mass nesting.

2022 'arribada' (mass-nesting phenomenon) is the most delayed mass nesting recorded in Gahirmatha. Gahirmatha (Odisha) is the world's largest rookery of olive ridley's followed by Rushikulya.

The Olive Ridley Turtles are the smallest and most abundant of all sea turtles found in the world, inhabiting warm waters of the Pacific, Atlantic and Indian Oceans. It gets its name from the olive-green color of its heart-shaped shell.
Every year, the Indian Coast Guard's "Operation Olivia", initiated in the early 1980s, helps protect Olive Ridley turtles as they congregate along the Odisha coast for breeding and nesting from November to December
Olive Ridley turtles dig holes on the beach at night-time creating a cavity. They lay 40-50 eggs in each hole and cover it again with sand. Before sunrise, the turtles return to the sea, leaving behind the eggs, which hatch after 40-60 days.

Kashmir Valley highly fertile alluvial soil – Karewas
Development and construction in the Kashmir Valley is excavating and destroying its highly fertile alluvial soil deposits called '*Karewas*'. Karewas are thick lacustrine deposits (deposits in lake) of glacial clay and other

materials embedded with moraines. These are getting destroyed due to haphazard constructions, illegal clay mining etc. Lacustrine means "associated with lakes".

In the Kashmiri dialect, the term *Karewa* means "elevated table land". Firstly, this term was used by Godwin Austin in 1859 and later on by Lydekker in 1878 for unconsolidated to semi-consolidated sand clay conglomerate sequence. "Vudr" is the local name for Karewas in Kashmiri language.

What is Extinction Rebellion?
World over activists of Extinction Rebellion is staging protests in various formats.

Extinction Rebellion was initially launched in the United Kingdom in October 2018, as a response to a report by the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Now, it is a global movement which seeks to "rebel", and asks groups to "self-organise", without the need for anyone's permission, to come up with collective action plans as long as they adhere to the group's core principles and values. It is a decentralised, international and politically non-partisan movement using non-violent direct action and civil disobedience to persuade governments to act justly on the Climate and Ecological Emergency.

National Mission on use of Biomass in coal-based Thermal Power Plants
Commission for Air Quality Management has reviewed the progress of Biomass Co-firing.

In May 2021, to address the issue of air pollution due to farm stubble burning and to reduce carbon footprints of thermal power generation, Ministry of Power decided to set up a National Mission on use of Biomass in coal-based thermal power plants.

Biomass Co-firing: It refers to the concurrent blending and combustion of biomass materials with other fuels such as natural gas and coal within a boiler, which reduce the use of fossil fuels for energy generation and emissions without significantly increasing costs and infrastructure investments.

Chilika Lake
The Odisha Government has proposed to ban movement of mechanized fishing boats in the Mangalajodi area of the Chilika lake, an important haunt of migratory birds, to provide the birds an undisturbed ecosystem for 6 months every year. Mangalajodi is recognised as globally important for the conservation of birds. Migratory birds arrive there for roosting.

About the Lake
- *Chilika* is Asia's largest and world's second largest lagoon (after New Caledonia).
- It is Asia's largest brackish water lake.
- It is the largest wintering ground for migratory birds on the Indian Sub-continent.
- In 1981, Chilika Lake was designated the first Indian wetland of international importance under the Ramsar Convention.
- Major attraction at Chilika is Irrawaddy dolphins.
- The sea connected with the lake near Satapada through a shallow and narrow channel.
- The large Nalabana Island (Forest of Reeds) covering about 16 sq km in the lagoon area was declared a bird sanctuary in 1987.
- Kalijai Temple - Located on an island in the Chilika Lake.

First Cyclone of 2022 named – Asani

A low-pressure area that formed over the South-West Indian Ocean has intensified into a cyclone. The Cyclone has been named Asani (meaning *wrath*). The name was suggested by Sri Lanka.

As per the World Meteorological Organisation's National Meteorological and Hydrological Services, 13 countries suggest list of names for cyclones forming in the Bay of Bengal and Arabian Sea, which are to be used alphabetically country wise. The list of countries in the panel include - Bangladesh, India, Iran, Maldives, Myanmar, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen. Asani is the first cyclone of this year and as per order, it was Sri Lanka's turn to name it. The next will be named by Thailand as Sitrang. The next name suggested by India is Tej and it will come fifth in line.

WMO/ESCAP Panel Member countries	Column 1		Column 2		Column 3		Column 4	
	Name	Pron'	Name	Pron'	Name	Pron'	Name	Pron'
Bangladesh	Nisarga	Nisarga	Biparjoy	Biporjoy	Arnab	Ornab	Upakul	Upokul
India	Gati	Gati	Tej	Tej	Murasu	Murasu	Aag	Aag
Iran	Nivar	Nivar	Hamoon	Hamoon	Akvan	Akvan	Sepand	Sepand
Maldives	Burevi	Burevi	Midhili	Midhili	Kaani	Kaani	Odi	Odi
Myanmar	Tauktae	Tau'Te	Michaung	Migjaum	Ngamann	Ngaman	Kyarthit	Kjathi
Oman	Yaas	Yass	Remal	Re-Mal	Sail	Sail	Naseem	Naseem
Pakistan	Gulab	Gul-Aab	Asna	As-Na	Sahab	Sa-Hab	Afshan	Af-Shan
Qatar	Shaheen	Shaheen	Dana	Dana	Lulu	Lulu	Mouj	Mouj
Saudi Arabia	Jawad	Jowad	Fengal	Feinjal	Ghazeer	Razeer	Asif	Aasif
Sri Lanka	Asani	Asani	Shakhti	Shakhti	Gigum	Gigum	Gagana	Gagana
Thailand	Sitrang	Si-Trang	Montha	Mon-Tha	Thianyot	Thian-Yot	Bulan	Bu-Lan
United Arab Emirates	Mandous	Man-Dous	Senyar	Sen-Yaar	Afoor	Aa-Foor	Nahhaam	Nah-Haam
Yemen	Mocha	Mokha	Ditwah	Ditwah	Diksam	Diksam	Sira	Sira

Cyclone Naming: Cyclones around the world are named by Regional Specialized Meteorological Centres (RSMC) and Tropical Cyclone Warning Centres (TCWC). There are total of 6 RSMCs and 5 TCWCs, including the India Meteorological Department. The IMD has been mandated with the duty to name Cyclones that develop over the North-Indian Ocean, including Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal, by following a Standard Procedure.

Africa's Boma Technique undertaken at Keoladeo National Park (Rajasthan)

Africa's Boma technique was undertaken at Keoladeo National Park in Rajasthan's Bharatpur district for capturing and translocating spotted deer. The aim is to improve the prey base in Mujumdar Hills Tiger Reserve, situated 450 km away. The move will lead to herbivores populating the forests ahead of the proposed shifting of 2 tigers to Mukundara.

The Boma capturing technique, which is popular in Africa, involves luring of animals into an enclosure by chasing them through a funnel-like fencing.

Mahatma Gandhi Green Triangle inaugurated in Madagascar's capital – Antananarivo
As part of the 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav' to commemorate India's 75th year of independence, a "Green Triangle" named after Mahatma Gandhi was jointly inaugurated in Madagascar's capital Antananarivo. The Green Triangle highlights Gandhi's vision regarding reducing consumerism and aiming for sustainable development.

UNESCO launches H2Ooooh for school students
H2Ooooh! was launched by UNESCO in July 2021, jointly with the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) and others.

H2Ooooh! is a unique program crafted for Indian school students from Standard 1-8. It aims to increase awareness about the limited availability of water, its sustainable use, its conservation, its exploitation and much more.

March 2022

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4. Schemes and Programmes

4ᵗʰ Janaushadhi Diwas was observed
Janaushadhi Diwas week was observed in the month of March.
Theme of 4ᵗʰ Janaushadhi Diwas: "*Jan Aushadhi-Jan Upyogi*"

Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP) is a campaign launched in 2015 by the Department of Pharmaceuticals, Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers, to provide quality medicines at affordable prices to the masses through special Kendras known as 'Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Jan Aushadhi Kendra'. It also extends coverage and generate awareness of quality generic medicines so as to reduce the out-of-pocket expenditure on medicines and, thereby, redefine the unit cost of treatment per person. Bureau of Pharma PSUs of India (BPPI), established under the Department of Pharmaceuticals, is the implementing agency of PMBJP. Pharmaceuticals & Medical Devices Bureau of India is the implementing agency of PMJBP.

Government of India's PM-YUVA Yojana
The Government has decided that the books selected under the PM-YUVA Scheme are translated into different Indian languages to ensure the exchange of Indian culture and literature in order to promote 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat'.
Pradhan Mantri – Mentorships' Scheme for Young writers (PM-YUVA) has been launched by the Ministry of Education in May 2021 for young writers up to the age of 30 years. Aim of this scheme is to create young aspiring writers into skilled writers representing the rich heritage of India. Through the scheme, new writers will be allowed to participate and become future writers through a mentorship program.

MoLE launches Donate a Pension Initiative
Ministry of Labour and Employment has launched the 'Donate-a-Pension' programme under Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maan-Dhan (PM-SYM) for people to contribute to the pension fund of their support staff. The aim is to extend the benefits of PM-SYM pension scheme to the unorganized workers.

Under it, people/employers can donate the premium contribution for their immediate support staff such as domestic workers, drivers, helpers, care givers, nurses, in their household or establishment or any other eligible unorganized workers in the age group of 18-40 years so as to provide them old age protection through PM-SYM pension scheme. The donor can pay minimum of one year's contribution. The donation amount for a year amount to minimum Rs 660/ and maximum upto Rs. 2400/- depending on the age of the beneficiary.

Meri Policy Mere Haath Campaign
'Meri Policy Mere Haath' campaign was launched in Hassan, Karnataka. The campaign is part of the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana. It is aimed at motivating all farmers in the country to insure their crops. Under this program, every farmer who has taken insurance under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) will get the policy documents at their doorstep.

Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana: It is in line with the One Nation – One Scheme theme. It replaced National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (NAIS) and Modified National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (MNAIS). It was launched in 2016.

Coverage: All food & oilseed crops and annual commercial/horticultural crops for which past yield data is available.

Premium: The prescribed premium is 2% to be paid by farmers for all Kharif crops and 1.5% for all rabi crops. In the case of annual commercial and horticultural crops, the premium is 5%.

Startup Village Entrepreneurship Programme (SVEP)
Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) and the National Institute of Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development (NIESBUD) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to develop a sustainable model for promoting entrepreneurship at the grass roots by initiating the 'Startup Village Entrepreneurship Programme' (SVEP).

SVEP is implemented as a sub-scheme of Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM) since 2016. With an objective to support the rural poor come out of poverty, supporting them setup enterprises and provide support till the enterprises stabilize, SVEP focusses on providing self-employment opportunities with financial assistance and training in business management and soft skills while creating local community cadres for promotion of enterprises. Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDII), Ahmedabad is the technical support partner of SVEP.

The programme seeks to develop pool of Community Resource Persons – Enterprise Promotion (CRP-EP) who are local and support entrepreneurs setting-up rural enterprises. The CRP-EPs are certified and provides business support services to the entrepreneurs.

MoHUA launches Challenge under AMRUT 2.0
Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has launched the Challenge under Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) 2.0.

Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) was launched in 2015 by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.
In October 2021, Government of India launched AMRUT 2.0. Following are the key features of the second phase:
- 100% coverage of water supply to all households in around 4,700 urban local bodies by providing about 68 crore tap connections.
- 100% coverage of sewerage and septage in 500 AMRUT cities by providing around 64 crore sewers/ septage connections.
- Adopt the principles of Circular Economy (Generating wealth from waste using 3Rs).
- Promote conservation and rejuvenation of surface and groundwater bodies.
- Data led governance in water management.
- Technology Sub-Mission to leverage latest global technologies and skills.
- 'Pey Jal Survekshan' to promote competition among cities.

MoW&CD launches Stree Manoraksha Project
Stree Manoraksha Project was launched by Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD) in collaboration with National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences (NIMHANS). The project would focus on building on capacity building of OSC (One-Stop Center) functionaries on the tools and techniques as to how to handle the cases of women approaching the One-Stop Centres, particularly the women who have suffered violence and distress with due sensitivity and care.

NIMHANS is an Institute of National Importance, for patient care and academic pursuit in the field of mental health and neurosciences. It is aimed at extending mental health training to 6000 One-Stop Center (OSC) functionaries across India.

OSC Scheme (by MoWCD) is being implemented since 2015 to provide integrated support and assistance to women affected by violence and in distress, both in private and public spaces. They aid women in medical, legal, and crime-related matters.

Special Entrepreneurship Promotion Drive for Women – SAMARTH
MSME has launched a Special Entrepreneurship Promotion Drive for Women -"SAMARTH". It aims to provide women an opportunity to be self-reliant and independent by undertaking self-employment opportunities.

Under SAMARTH, following benefits will be available to Women Entrepreneurs:
- 20% Seats in free Skill Development Programs will be allocated for Women.
- Special Drive for registration of women owned MSMEs under Udyam Registration.
- 20% of MSME Business Delegations sent to exhibitions under schemes for Marketing Assistance will be dedicated to women owned MSMEs.
- 20% Discount on annual processing fee on NSIC's Commercial Schemes.

5. *Polity*

Constitutional provisions related to Eight Schedule

Bihar Government is trying to revive its long-pending demand for inclusion of Bhojpuri in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution, so that it can be accorded the status of an official language.

Part XVII of the Indian constitution deals with the official languages in Articles 343 to 351. The Constitutional provisions related to the Eighth Schedule are:

1. *Article 344:* Article 344(1) provides for the constitution of a Commission by the President on expiration of five years from the commencement of the Constitution.
2. *Article 351:* It provides for the spread of the Hindi language to develop it so that it may serve as a medium of expression for all the elements of the composite culture of India.

Foreigners' Tribunals in India

A Foreigners' Tribunal in Assam's Cachar district has served a notice to a deceased person, asking him to appear before it as he had failed to produce valid documents to prove his Indian citizenship.

The *Foreigner tribunals* are set up under the Foreigners (Tribunals) Order, 1964. The tribunals are quasi-judicial bodies, to determine if a person staying illegally is a "foreigner" or not. Note that, only Foreigner Tribunal have the right to declare a person as a foreigner. Every individual, whose name does not figure in the final National Register of Citizens (NRC), can represent his/her case in front of the appellate authority i.e., Foreigners Tribunals (FT).

Composition:

- Advocates not below the age of 35 years of age with at least 7 years of practice, or
- Retired Judicial Officers from the Assam Judicial Service, or
- Retired IAS of ACS Officers (not below the rank of Secretary/Addl. Secretary) having experience in quasi-judicial works.

The Ministry of Home Affairs has amended the Foreigners (Tribunals) Order, 1964, and has empowered District Magistrates in all States and Union Territories to set up tribunals (quasi-judicial bodies) to decide whether a person staying illegally in India is a foreigner or not. Earlier, the powers to constitute tribunals were vested only with the Central Government.

6. *Governance*

Village Defence Group to be formed in UT Jammu & Kashmir
Ministry of Home Affairs has given a nod to formation of Village Defence Groups (VDGs) in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K). Members of VDGs will be designated as Village Defence Guards. They will function under the direction of SP/SSP of the concerned district. VDGs were earlier known as Village Defence Committees (VDCs).

4 Film bodies to be merged with National Film Development Corporation
Union Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has announced the merger of 4 film bodies to the National Film Development Corporation (NFDC). The 4 film bodies include:
1. Films Division (FD),
2. Directorate of Films Festivals (DFF),
3. National Film Archives of India (NFAI), and
4. Children's Film Society (CFS).

NFDC is a Central Public Sector Undertaking under Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, incorporated in 1975 with the primary object of planning and promoting an organized, efficient and integrated development of the Indian Film Industry. The mandate of production of feature films is carried out by NFDC.

NCW DSLSA in collaboration launches Legal Aid Clinic
In a move to make legal aid more accessible for women, the National Commission for Women, in collaboration with Delhi State Legal Services Authority, has launched a legal aid clinic which will act as a single-window facility for resolving grievances of women by offering them free legal assistance.

Under the new legal aid clinic, counseling will be provided for walk-in complainants, women in distress will be given legal assistance, advice and information on various schemes of the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA)/ DSLSA, assistance in mahila jansunwai, free legal aid, hearings in matrimonial cases and other complaints registered with the Commission will be provided among other services.

GoI launches Operation Ganga for Indian citizens stranded in Ukraine
The Government of India has launched a 'multi-pronged' initiative named 'Operation Ganga'. It is an evacuation mission to bring back all the Indian nationals who are currently stranded in Ukraine.

India's first International Arbitration Centre opens in Hyderabad
Chief Justice of India has laid down foundation for International Arbitration Centre in Hyderabad. IAMC-Hyderabad is India's first arbitration centre for alternate dispute resolution. The Centre is proposed by the International Arbitration and Mediation Centre Trust.

Bihar becomes first state to introduce Dynamic map for villages
Bihar has become the first state in the country to introduce the concept of a dynamic map for villages which will get updated every time land ownership changes hands. The move is aimed at reducing legal disputes.

7. *International Relations*

14ᵗʰ India Japan Annual Summit held in New Delhi
Prime Ministers of India and Japan have held 14ᵗʰ India Japan Annual Summit in New Delhi. Also, year 2022 marks the 70ᵗʰ anniversary of the establishment of their diplomatic relations.

2ⁿᵈ India-Australia Virtual Summit
The 2ⁿᵈ India-Australia Virtual Summit was held between India's and Australia's Prime Minister. This summit followed the first Virtual Summit in 2020 when the bilateral relationship was elevated to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP). A significant outcome of the summit was the decision to hold annual summits at the level of the Heads of Government under the CSP.

Other developments:
- *Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA):* It was signed recently and is first Free Trade Agreement (FTA) of India with a developed country after more than a decade.
- *SAIEP (Study Australia Industry Immersion Program):* Launched by Australian Trade and Investment Commission for current Indian students at Australian universities to enhance their employability.
- *Maitri Scholars Program:* Announced by Australian Foreign Minister to provide over USD 11 million for 4 years to support Indian students to study in Australia's world-leading Universities.

MoES releases India's Arctic Policy
The Ministry of Earth Science (MoES) has released the India's Arctic policy titled "India and the Arctic: building a partnership for Sustainable Development".

Polar Science and Cryosphere Research (PACER) scheme
Government of India has also approved Polar Science and Cryosphere (PACER) scheme for continuation during 2021-2026. *PACER scheme* comprises the Antarctic program, Indian Arctic program, Southern Ocean program and Cryosphere and Climate program. It is being implemented successfully through National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR), an autonomous institute under the Ministry of Earth Science.

Objectives: To improve our understanding of Polar Science and cryosphere system.

5ᵗʰ Summit of BIMSTEC held in Columbo
India has participated in the 5ᵗʰ BIMSTEC Summit hosted in virtual mode by Sri Lanka, the current chair of BIMSTEC.
Summit's Theme: *"Towards a Resilient Region, Prosperous Economies, Healthy People"*

As per Summit, to re-constitute and reduce the number of sectors of cooperation from 14 to a more manageable 7, each member-state will serve as a lead for a sector as given below.

Lead	Sector
Bangladesh	Trade, investment and development
Bhutan	Environment and climate change
India	Security, including energy
Myanmar	Agriculture and food security
Nepal	People-to-People contacts
Sri Lanka	Science, technology and innovation
Thailand	Connectivity

BIMSTEC is an inter-regional grouping that seeks to foster regional and economic cooperation among its 7 member nations in the littoral and adjacent areas of the Bay of Bengal — India, Thailand, Myanmar, Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Bhutan.

BBIN MVA finalized between India, Bangladesh, and Nepal
A meeting of India, Bangladesh, and Nepal on the BBIN MVA was held at New Delhi. The meeting was held to discuss the Passenger and Cargo Protocols that are essential to operationalize the BBIN Motor Vehicles Agreement (MVA) for the Regulation of Passenger, Personal and Cargo Vehicular Traffic between Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal, signed in June 2015. Bhutan attended the meeting as an observer. During the meeting an enabling MOU to be signed by India, Bangladesh and Nepal for implementation of the BBIN MVA by the three countries, pending ratification of the MVA by Bhutan was finalized.

International Logistics Performance Index (LPI): The International LPI (World Bank) is an indicator of logistics sector performance to benchmark and compare the performance of different countries' logistics sector. It measures the performance of 6 core components of logistics in any nation; rated from 1 to 5 with 1 lowest and 5 as best in that component. In 2018, the International LPI score of India was 3.18.

5th NSA level Colombo Security Conclave held
5th NSA level meeting of the Colombo Security Conclave held.

CSC, renamed version of National Security Advisor (NSA) Level Trilateral on Maritime Security (formed in 2011), helps member nations to build capacity on common security threats. Founding members are Maldives, India and Sri Lanka. Mauritius is added as the newest member in the latest concluded meeting. Bangladesh and Seychelles have observer status.

IONS holds maiden Maritime Exercise – IMEX 22
Maiden edition of IONS Maritime Exercise 2022 (IMEX-22) was conducted at Goa and in Arabian Sea with the aim to enhance interoperability in Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) operations among member navies. It witnessed participation of 15 out of the 25 member nations of IONS.

Defence Exercise in News
SLINEX (Sri Lanka–India Naval Exercise): The 9th edition of the India-Sri Lanka bilateral maritime exercise SLINEX was held at Visakhapatnam.
EX-DUSTLIK: The 3rd edition of the India - Uzbekistan exercise was conducted in Uzbekistan.
LAMITIYE-2022: It is a Joint Military Exercise between the Indian Army and Seychelles Defence Forces.
Prasthan (Offshore Security Exercise): Western Naval Command conducted 'Prasthan' in the Offshore Development Area (ODA) off Mumbai.
Exercise Dharma Guardian: It is an annual exercise between Indian Army and Japanese Ground Self Defence Force. The latest edition was concluded at Belgaum, Karnataka. To promote military cooperation between India and Japan, the first edition of the Dharma Guardian was held in November 2018.
Exercise Varuna: 20th edition of the joint naval exercise of Varuna 2022 between Indian and French navies was held in the Arabian Sea.

UAE Golden Visa allotted to Bollywood Actor Ranveer Singh
Bollywood Actor Ranveer Singh was bestowed the UAE golden visa in Abu Dhabi. In 2019, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) implemented a new system for long-term residence visas, thereby enabling foreigners to live, work and study in the UAE without the need of a national sponsor and with 100 % ownership of their business.

Other sportspersons who have been granted the Golden Visa by Dubai include:
- Footballers Cristiano Ronaldo, Paul Pogba, Roberto Carlos, Luis Figo and Romel Lukaku,
- Tennis player Novak Djokovic,
- Indian tennis player Sania Mirza and her husband and Pakistani cricketer Shoaib Malik,
- Bollywood actors Shah Rukh Khan and Sanjay Dutt have also received their visas.

India-UAE CEPA finalized
The Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) between India and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) got finalized.

India-UAE CEPA was signed on 18th February 2022, during the India-UAE Virtual Summit. The Agreement is expected to enter into force on 1st May 2022. CEPA provides for an institutional mechanism to encourage and improve trade between the two countries.

Relaunch of CEPA between India-Canada
India-Canada have agreed to re-launch the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) negotiations to unlock full potential of bilateral trade. They are also considering an Interim Agreement or Early Progress Trade Agreement (EPTA) that could bring early commercial gains to both the countries.

What is Finlandization?
The French President has suggested Finlandization might be a realistic outcome for Ukraine if and when the Russia-Ukraine war ends.

Finlandization refers to the policy of strict neutrality between Moscow (Russia) and the West that Finland followed during the decades of the Cold War. The principle of neutrality was rooted in the Agreement of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance (or YYA Treaty) that Finland signed with the USSR in April 1948.

Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank
Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) has put all activities relating to Russia and Belarus on hold and under review in the wake of the current conflict in Ukraine.

Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) is a multilateral development bank with a mission to improve social and economic outcomes in Asia and beyond. The Parties (57 founding members) to agreement comprise the Membership of the Bank. It is headquartered in Beijing. The bank started operation after the agreement entered into force on 25th December 2015, after ratifications were received from 10 member states holding a total number of 50% of the initial subscriptions of the Authorized Capital Stock. China is the largest shareholder with 26.61 % voting shares in the bank followed by India (7.6%), Russia (6.01%) and Germany (4.2 %).

India Japan renewed their Bilateral Swap Arrangement
Japan and India have renewed the Bilateral Swap Arrangement (BSA). BSA is a two-way arrangement where both authorities can swap their local currencies in exchange for dollars. This means, India can acquire dollars from Japan in exchange for Rupees. And, conversely, Japan can also seek dollars from India in exchange for Yen. The BSA was negotiated between India and Japan during the Indian prime minister's visit to Japan in 2018.

India rank 1st in the defence import – SIPRI Report
India was ranked 1st in terms of importers of arms between 2017-21 as per the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) on Trends in International Arms Transfer, 2021 report. Egypt, Australia and China

were the next 3 largest importers. Paradoxically, India was the only country among the top 5 whose imports had declined during the said period. The Sweden-based SIPRI is an independent international institute dedicated to research into conflict, armaments, arms control and disarmament.

36ᵗʰ International Geological Congress held in New Delhi
The 36ᵗʰ International Geological Congress was held in New Delhi. It gives first-hand information on latest technologies in mining, mineral exploration and management of water, mineral resource and the environment. The theme of the event was *"Geosciences: The Basic Science for a Sustainable Future."* Described as the Olympics of Geosciences, the IGCs are held quadrennial, under the aegis of the International Union of Geological Congress (IUGS), the Scientific Sponsor of the IGCs.

Latest Edition of Democracy Report 2022 released
The latest edition of Democracy Report was released recently by the V-Dem Institute at Sweden's University of Gothenburg. The study was titled 'Democracy Report 2022: Autocratization Changing Nature?'. As per it, the level of democracy enjoyed by the average global citizen in 2021 is down to 1989 levels, with the democratic gains of the post-cold war period eroding rapidly in the last few years.

Sweden tops the index. The report classifies India as an electoral autocracy ranking it 93ʳᵈ on the LDI, out of 179 countries. India is one of the top ten '*autocratisers*' in the world says the report.

What is BBNJ Treaty?
The fourth meeting of the Intergovernmental Conference (IGC-4) was held in New York to conclude a draft of the instrument on the conservation and sustainable use of 'marine Biological diversity in areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ)'. The IGC-4 is convened under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

The "BBNJ Treaty", also known as the "Treaty of the High Seas", is an international agreement on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction, currently under negotiation at the United Nations. This new instrument is being developed within the framework of the UNCLOS, the main international agreement governing human activities at sea.

BRICS Media Forum training programme for Journalists
Leading media groups from the 5 BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) have put together a 3-month long training programme for Journalists. The programme was an initiative of the BRICS Media Forum.

BRICS Media Forum was established in 2015 by media organisations from the 5 countries, including India's The Hindu, Brazil's CMA Group, Russia's Sputnik, China's Xinhua and South Africa's Independent Media. The Forum was conceived and developed so that it can function as an independent initiative and set of practical activities undertaken within the broad framework of BRICS cooperation.

ECI hosted virtual International Election Visitors Programme
The virtual International Election Visitors Programme (IEVP) 2022 was hosted by the Election Commission of India (ECI) for Election Management Bodies (EMBs) from nearly 32 countries and 4 international organisations. Since the 2012 elections, India has hosted the International Election Visitors Programme (IEVP), which invites international delegates to visit polling stations and observe electoral processes.

8. Awards and Recognition

Physicist Indian Deepak Dhar receives Boltzmann Medal

Deepak Dhar, Physicist, from the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research, Pune, has been selected for the Boltzmann medal. He has become the first Indian to win this award.

President felicitates Nari Shakti Puruskar

On International Women's Day (8th March), President of India has conferred the Nari Shakti Puraskars on 29 outstanding individuals for 2020 and 2021.

Man Booker International Prize

Delhi-based writer Geetanjali Shree's 2019 novel Ret Samadhi has become the first Hindi work of fiction, among 13 books, to be longlisted for the Man Booker International Prize. The novel has been translated into English by painter, writer and translator, Daisy Rockwell under the title Tomb of Sand.

The *International Booker Prize* is awarded every year for a single book that is translated into English and published in the UK or Ireland. The prize money of £50,000 is split between the author and the translator.

Professor Dennis Parnell Sullivan receives Abel Prize

Professor Dennis Parnell Sullivan has been awarded Abel Prize for his ground-breaking contributions to topology in its broadest sense, and in particular its algebraic, geometric and dynamical aspects.

The *Abel Prize* is awarded annually to outstanding Mathematicians. It was established by the Norwegian Government in 2002 and is managed by 'The Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters'.

President's Colour is presented to INS Valqua

President of India has presented the President's Colour to INS Valsura, the Navy's premier technological training establishment in Jamnagar, Gujrat. The President's Colour is bestowed on a military unit in recognition of the exceptional service rendered to the nation, both in peace and in war.

Ecuador – legal rights to wild animals

Ecuador, a South American country, has become the first country in the world to give legal rights to wild animals. Ecuador's Capital: Quito

94th Academy Awards announced

The 94th Academy Awards (also called Oscars) were announced by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. The Awards are presented across 23 categories. This time, there are 2 new categories – Oscars Fan Favourite Award and Oscars Cheer Moment.

Winners
- Best Actor in a Leading Role: Will Smith (Film: King Richard)
- Best Actress in a Leading Role: Jessica Chastain (Film: The Eyes of Tammy Faye)
- Best Film: CODA (Child of Deaf Adults)
- Best International Feature Film: Drive My Car
- Best Directing: Jane Campion (Film: The Power of the Dog)
- Best Actress in a Supporting Role: Ariana DeBose (Film: West Side Story)
- Best Actor in a Supporting Role: Troy Kotsur (Film: CODA)

75th BAFTA Award 2022 announced
75th BAFTA Award 2022 were announced.

Winners
- Best Film: The Power of the Dog
- Best Director: Jane Campion, The Power of the Dog
- Best Actress in Leading Role: Joanna Scanlan, After Love
- Best Actor in Leading Role: Will Smith, King Richard
- Best Supporting Actress: Ariana DeBose, West Side Story
- Best Supporting Actor: Troy Kotsur, CODA

British Academy Film Awards or BAFTA Film Awards are presented in an annual award show hosted by the British Academy of Film and Television Arts to honour the best British and international contributions to film.

70th edition of Miss World 2021 held in Puerto Rico
The 70th edition of the Miss World international beauty pageant was held in San Juan, Puerto Rico.
Karolina Bielawska from Poland has won the title of Miss World 2021. Indian American Shree Saini from the United States bagged the first runner-up title, followed by Olivia Yace from Cote d'Ivoire. Femina Miss India World 2020 Manasa Varanasi represented India at the Miss World 2021. Manasa Varanasi reached the Top 13 contestants but could not make it to the Top 6 finalists.

2022 M3M Hurun Global Rich List
SpaceX and Tesla founder Elon Musk has bagged the top position on the 2022 M3M Hurun Global Rich List, with a total net worth of $205 billion. The 2022 M3M Hurun Global Rich List is published by research and luxury publishing group Hurun India in association with realty firm M3M.

From India, Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL) Chairman Mukesh Ambani was the only Indian to feature in the top 10 list of 2022 Hurun Global Rich List' to emerge as India's as well as Asia's richest man. He occupied the 9th rank globally with a net worth of $103 billion. Also, India emerged as the 3rd largest billionaire producing nation in the world.

Also, India ranked at third in terms of having most billionaires' population globally in 2021, as per Knight Frank's latest edition of The Wealth Report 2022.

3rd National Water Awards presented
The President of India has presented the 3rd National Water Awards in New Delhi. Among the States, Uttar Pradesh has been awarded first prize, followed by Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu.

National Water Awards is given for exemplary work in the field of water resource management. The first National Water Award was launched in 2018, by the Ministry of Jal Shakti.

Freedom of the World 2022 report: India ranked 'Partly Free'
The report titled "Freedom in the World 2022 – The Global Expansion of Authoritarian Rule" by Freedom House, a US-based NGO, was released. The report assesses political rights and civil liberties. The report used 25 indicators, grouped into the categories of political rights and civil liberties to determine whether the country or territory has an overall status of Free, Partly Free, or Not Free. The report is published every year since 1973 to assess the political rights and civil liberties of a country through a series of surveys and analyses.

As per it, India scored 66 out of 100 in 2022. The country had scored 67 in 2021. India was a free country till 2020 when its score was 71.

Celebrity Brand Valuation Report 2021
Cricketer Virat Kohli was ranked as the most valued celebrity for the 5th consecutive time in 2021 as per the Celebrity Brand Valuation Report 2021 (7th Edition) titled "Digital Acceleration 2.0." released by Duff & Phelps (Now Kroll).

Also, Actress Alia Bhatt has ranked 4th with a brand value of USD 68.1 million and has become the most valued female celebrity.

Nagaland becomes first State to implement NeVA
Nagaland State has created history by becoming the 1st State Assembly in the country to implement the National e-Vidhan Application programme to become completely paperless.

NeVA is a Unicode compliant software having provision for easy access to various documents like List of Questions, List of Business, Reports etc. bilingually viz. English and any regional language. This application is spearheading the principle of 'One Nation- One Application' with the objective of Cloud First and Mobile First to serve Members' FIRST.

National e-Vidhan Application (NeVA), a Mission Mode Project for Digital Legislatures to make the functioning of all Legislative Houses in the country paperless, has been developed on the theme of 'One Nation – One Application'.

Deepika Padukone honoured with TIME100 Impact Awards
Deepika Padukone was honoured at the Time100 Impact Awards for her contribution to cinema and spreading awareness about mental health. She also got on the list of one of the 100 most influential people in the world in 2018 by TIME.

9. Social Development

Sample Registration System (SRS) Statistical Report 2019 Released
The office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, which works under the Ministry of Home Affairs, has released the report of the Sample Registration System (SRS) for 2019. SRS is the only official source of various demographic indicators in India except the census.

Key Highlights of SRS Statistical Report are given below.

Crude Birth Rate (CBR) – annual number of live births per 1,000 population
- At National level during 2019 stands at 19.7.
- Maximum in Bihar (25.8) and the minimum in Kerala (13.5).
- There has been a decline of 1.3 points in the CBR for the country from 2014 to 2019.

Crude Death Rate (CDR) – number of deaths per 1,000 mid-year population
- At national level: 6.0 in 2019.
- Maximum in Chhattisgarh (7.3) and minimum Delhi (3.2).
- During the last 5 years, decline in National CDR has been to the tune of 0.7 points.

Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) – number of deaths per 1,000 live births of children under 1 year of age
- It registered a 2-point decline to 30 in 2019 from 32 in 2018 at the National level.
- Maximum in Madhya Pradesh (46) and minimum in Kerala (6).

Under 5 Mortality Rate U5MR – the probability that a child born in a specific year or period will die before reaching the age of 5 years
- Showed a decline of 1 point over 2019 from 2018 (36 in 2018).
- There has been a decline of 1 point in male U5MR and 2 points in female U5MR during the corresponding period.

Sex Ratio at Birth – number of girls born for every 1,000 boys born
- At the national level it has gone up by 5 points to 904 in 2017-19 from 899 in 2016-2018.
- Kerala has highest (968) while Uttarakhand has the lowest (848).

Total Fertility Rate (TFR) – total number of children that would be born to each woman if she were to live to the end of her child-bearing years.
- It came down to 2.1 in 2019 after being stable at 2.2 for the last two years 2017 and 2018.
- Bihar has reported the highest TFR (3.1) while Andhra Pradesh, Delhi, Jammu & Kashmir, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, and West Bengal have reported the lowest TFR (1.5).

Replacement fertility level – is the TFR at which a population can replace itself.
- The replacement level TFR, viz. 2.1, has been attained in 15 States.

Key Highlights of SRS – Bulletin of Register General of India
As per the Sample Registration System (SRS) Bulletin of Registrar General of India (RGI), the Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) has reduced from 39 per 1000 live births in 2014 to 30 per 1,000 live births in 2019 at National Level.

As per the SRS Report of RGI, the Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) has reduced from 8.8 in 2014-16 to 6.5 in 2017-19 at National Level.

Kerala tops in maternal and child health, recording the lowest Maternal Mortality Ratio in the country. It has 30 per one lakh live births in the country. Kerala is way ahead of the national MMR of 103.

Maternal mortality is the maternal death of a woman during pregnancy or after pregnancy, including post abortion or post-birth periods.

As per the SRS based Abridged Life Tables report of RGI, the Life Expectancy at the time of Birth is 69.4 years during 2014-18 in comparison to 69.0 years during 2013-17 at National Level.

UNSD Solution Network releases World Happiness Report
This year marks the 10th anniversary of the World Happiness Report of UNSD Solution Network which evaluates levels of happiness by taking into account factors such as GDP, social support, personal freedom, and levels of corruption in each nation. The goal of the Report is to identify key determinants of well-being.

The report 2022 ranked India at 136th position among 146 countries, while Finland topped the charts for 5th year in a row.

SDSN, set up in 2012, mobilizes global scientific and technological expertise to promote practical solutions for sustainable development, including implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Paris Climate Agreement.

UGC makes Common Entrance Test mandatory for all Central Universities
During a virtual interaction with media, UGC Chairman stated that: Central universities will have to conduct admissions to all undergraduate courses solely on the basis of Common University Entrance Test (CUET) from the upcoming academic year (2022- 23). No weightage will be given to Class 12 scores for undergraduate admissions to any Central University. CUET, which is envisaged in National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, will be conducted for both Under-Graduate and Post-Graduate courses by National Test Agency (NTA).

What is Xenotransplantation?
A person on whom Xenotransplantation was done, succumbed to death in 2 months. *Xenotransplantation* involves the transplantation, implantation, or infusion into a human recipient of live cells, tissues, or organs from a non-human animal source. Pigs are increasingly being used for this, as their organs are anatomically like those of humans and are more tuned for genetic engineering.

Rashtriya Raksha University in Gandhinagar Gujrat
Prime Minister has dedicated to the nation the building of Rashtriya Raksha University near Gandhinagar in Gujarat. Rashtriya Raksha University, an institution of National Importance, is established by the Indian Parliament Act. The University aims to become an academic-research-training ecosystem for national security and police.

India's first rapid rail for Delhi to Meerut Corridor
India's first rapid rail for the Delhi to Meerut corridor was unveiled by the National Capital Regional Transport Corporation (NCRTC). The Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) train will run on the Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut corridor and cover a distance of 82 km in just 55 minutes. It will also be the first in the country to have a business or 'premium' coach on a regional corridor.

Museum of the Future
The Museum of the Future in Dubai was open to the public. The Museum of the Future is an exhibition space for innovative and futuristic ideologies, services, and products. The goal of this museum is to promote technological development and innovation, especially in the fields of robotics and artificial intelligence (AI). The museum reportedly takes the visitors on an experiential journey, transporting them to the year 2071, to coincide with the centenary of the founding of the UAE.

India's first 100% women-owned industrial park established in Hyderabad
India's first 100% women-owned industrial park was established in Hyderabad. Promoted by the FICCI Ladies Organisation (FLO) in partnership with the State government, the park has 25 units, representing 16 diverse green category industries, all owned and operated by women.

Odisha top state for full immunization in India
Odisha has become the top state in the list of full immunization in India. In a step towards preventive health care for mothers and children, the intensified Mission Indradhanush (IMI) 4.0 has been rolled out in the State from March for boosting full immunization coverage of the targeted women and children.

India's first medical city 'Indrayani Medicity' come up in Pune
India's first medical city 'Indrayani Medicity' to come up in Pune. Indrayani Medicity will have hospitals, medical research centre, pharmaceutical manufacturing, wellness and physiotherapy.

MV Ram Prasad Bismil becomes longest vessel to sail over Brahmaputra
Motor Vessel (MV) Ram Prasad Bismil has become the longest vessel ever to sail on the Brahmaputra River. The vessel along with two barges DB Kalpana Chawla and DB APJ Abdul Kalam were flagged off from the Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port in Haldia. The significance of this pilot run lays down the path for commencement of barging operation from Kolkata to Guwahati via Indo Bangladesh Protocol Route (IBRP).

World Peace Centre to be established in Gurugram
India's first World Peace Center is being established in Gurugram. It will be a major world-class centre for personality building, where various dimensions such as Personality Development of Youth, Empowerment of Women and Sanskar Development in Children through Meditation, Yoga, Indian Culture and Jain lifestyle based scientific programs will be conducted.

10. Economy

Government to start NaBFID as DFI next year
Government of India has set a target of about Rs 1 trillion for government-backed National Bank for Financial Infrastructure and Development (NaBFID) for sanctioning loans to the infrastructure sector in the next financial year. It will start its operation in the first quarter of next financial year. NaBFID is a type of Development Financial Institution.

NaBFID is established as a Development Financial Institution (DFI) under the National Bank for Financial Infrastructure and Development Act, 2021. It has authorized share capital of Rs 1 lakh crore. RBI will regulate and supervise it as an All-India Financial Institution (AIFI) under Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934. It will be the 5th AIFI after EXIM Bank, NABARD, NHB and SIDBI. (HQ: Mumbai)

DFI: Development Financial Institutions provide long-term credit for capital-intensive investments spread over a long period and low yielding rates of return, such as urban infrastructure, mining and heavy industry, and irrigation systems.

Government plans revised PPP Model for BharatNet Project
Union Government is planning to come out with a revised Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model for BharatNet project.

BharatNet project is the new brand name of NOFN (National Optic Fibre Network) being implemented in a phased manner to provide broadband connectivity to all the Gram Panchayats (approx. 2.6 lakh) in the country. It is being implemented by a Special Purpose Vehicle named Bharat Broadband Network Ltd. (BBNL), under the Department of Telecommunication (DoT). It is being funded by the Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF).

NITI Aayog releases 2nd edition of Export Preparedness Index (EPI) 2021
NITI Aayog has released 2nd edition of Export Preparedness Index (EPI) 2021.

Key findings
- Most of the 'Coastal States' are best performers, with Gujarat as top-performer, followed by Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu.
- States with higher exports also experience high Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP).
- Among landlocked states, Haryana emerged as a best performer followed by Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and Punjab

EPI, prepared by NITI Aayog in partnership with Institute of Competitiveness, is a comprehensive analysis of India's export achievements of States and Union Territories and identifies challenges and opportunities. EPI is a data-driven endeavour to identify fundamental areas critical for subnational export promotion. EPI ranks states and UTs on 4 main pillars—Policy; Business Ecosystem; Export Ecosystem; Export Performance and 11 sub-pillars. The first Index was launched in August 2020.

Government launches Electronic Bill Processing System
On the 46th Civil Accounts Day, Government has launched e-Bill Processing System.
Civil Accounts Day: *2nd March 2022*

E-Way bill system is for GST registered person / enrolled transporter for generating the way bill electronically on commencement of movement of goods exceeding the value of Rs. 50,000. Under this vendors/supplier can upload their bills online along with supporting documents from the convenience of their place at any time through digital signature. It eliminates physical interface between suppliers and government officers. It is developed by the Public Financial Management System (PFMS) Division.

Reserve Bank Innovation Hub inaugurated in Bengaluru
Reserve Bank Innovation Hub was inaugurated in Bengaluru. It is set up as a Section 8 company under Companies Act, 2013, with an initial capital contribution of Rs 100 crore. RBIH aims to encourage and nurture financial innovation in a sustainable manner through an institutional set-up. It creates an ecosystem that focuses on promoting access to financial services and products for the low-income population in the country. Hub would bring convergence among various stakeholders (BFSI Sector, Start-up ecosystem, Regulators and Academia) in the financial innovation space. It is a wholly owned subsidiary of the RBI.

GI Tag Kashmiri Carpet flagged off to Germany
First ever Geographical Indication (GI) tagged Kashmir carpets was flagged off to Germany. Department of Industry Promotion and Internal Trade granted GI tag to Kashmiri hand knotted carpets in 2016 but the registered carpets were certified from this year.

History of Kashmiri carpet dates back to the period of the famous Sufi Saint and scholar, Hazrat Mir Syed Ali Hamdani (1341- 1385 AD) of Persia.

A GI is primarily an agricultural, natural or a manufactured product (handicrafts and industrial goods) originating from a definite geographical territory.

Government to set up National Land Monetization Corporation (NLMC)
The Union Cabinet has approved the setting up National Land Monetization Corporation (NLMC). The NLMC will be a wholly owned Government of India company with an initial authorized share capital of Rs 5000 crore and paid-up share capital of Rs 150 crore.

NLMC will undertake monetization of surplus land and building assets of 'Central Public Sector Enterprises' (CPSEs) and other Government agencies. The proposal is in pursuance of the Budget Announcement for 2021-22.

Composition: NLMC will have necessary technical expertise to professionally manage and monetize land assets on behalf of CPSEs and other Government agencies.
- The Board of Directors of NLMC will comprise senior Central Government officers and eminent experts to enable professional operations and management of the company.
- The Chairman, and non-Government Directors of the NLMC will be appointed through a merit-based selection process.

What is Equalization Levy?
Justifying the 2 % equalisation levy (EL) imposed by India on the supply of services by multinational enterprises, Government has said it is a sovereign right to tax revenues earned from operations in the country.

India was the one of the first countries to introduce a 6 % equalisation levy in 2016, but the levy was restricted to online advertisement services. However, India introduced the digital tax in April 2020 for foreign companies selling goods and services online to customers in India and showing annual revenues more than INR 2 crores.

The scope was further widened in the Finance Act 2021-22 to cover e-commerce supply or service when any activity takes place online. Since May 2021, this also includes any entity that systematically and continuously does business with more than 3 lakh users in India.

Offshore e-commerce firms that sell through an Indian arm will not have to pay. This means if the goods and services sold on a foreign e-commerce platform are owned or provided by an Indian resident or Indian permanent establishment, they will not be subject to the two percent equalization levy.

Note that, France imposes a 3 % digital services tax.

RBI's Accommodative Policy Stance/ Monetary Policy Committee
Member of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the RBI has been opposing the RBI's Accommodative Policy stance.

An *accommodative stance* means the Central bank is prepared to expand the money supply to boost economic growth. The Central bank, during an accommodative policy period, is willing to cut the interest rates.

Monetary Policy Committee
Under Section 45ZB of the amended (in 2016) RBI Act, 1934, the Central Government is empowered to constitute a 6-member Monetary Policy Committee (MPC).

Objective: Section 45ZB lays down that the Monetary Policy Committee shall determine the Policy Rate required to achieve the inflation target". The decision of the Monetary Policy Committee shall be binding on the Bank.

Composition:
- RBI Governor as its ex officio chairperson,
- Deputy Governor in charge of monetary policy,
- An officer of the Bank to be nominated by the Central Board,
- Three persons to be appointed by the central government. This category of appointments must be from "persons of ability, integrity and standing, having knowledge and experience in the field of economics or banking or finance or monetary policy".
- No government official will be nominated to the MPC.

Selection: The government nominees to the MPC will be selected by a Search-cum-Selection Committee under Cabinet Secretary with RBI Governor and Economic Affairs Secretary and three experts in the field of economics or banking or finance or monetary policy as its members.

Term: Members of the MPC will be appointed for a period of four years and shall not be eligible for reappointment.

RBI conducted Dollar–Rupee Swap auction to infuse dollars
The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has conducted a $ 5 billion dollar-rupee swap auction as part of its liquidity management initiative, leading to infusion of dollars and sucking out of the rupee from the financial system.

Dollar–Rupee Swap auction: It is a Forex tool whereby the Central bank uses its currency to buy another currency or vice versa. In a Dollar–Rupee buy/sell swap, the Central bank buys dollars (US dollars or USD) from banks in exchange for Indian Rupees (INR) and immediately gets into an opposite deal with banks promising to sell dollars at a later date.

12ᵗʰ Quarterly Periodic Labour Force Survey released by NSO

12ᵗʰ Quarterly bulletin for the period of July – September 2021 was released by the National Statistical Office (NSO).

Considering the importance of availability of labour force data at more frequent time intervals, National Statistical Office (NSO) launched Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) in April 2017. It has since released 3 annual reports and 11 Quarterly bulletin.

Key Highlights
LFPR in CWS in urban areas for persons of age 15 years and above -
- Male: 73.5 %
- Female: 19.9 %
- Person: 46.9 %

WPR in CWS in urban areas for persons of age 15 years and above
- Male: 66.6 %
- Female: 17.6 %
- Person: 42.3 %

UR in CWS in urban areas for persons of age 15 years and above
- Male: 9.3 %
- Female: 11.6 %
- Person: 9.8 %

RBI launched new UPI Payment Solution – UPI 123PAY

The Reserve Bank of India has launched a new Unified Payments Interface (UPI) payments solution for feature phone users dubbed 'UPI123Pay'.

UPI '123PAY' is a 3-step method to initiate and execute services for users which will work on simple phones. It will allow customers to use feature phones for almost all transactions except scan and pay. It doesn't need an internet connection for transactions. Customers have to link their bank account with feature phones to use this facility.

RBI released new Microfinance lending norms

RBI has released new microfinance lending norms.

As per these Norms
- All entities, banks, Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs), and Micro-Finance Institutions (MFIs) are subject to the same regulations.
- A microfinance loan is defined by the RBI as a 'collateral-free' loan granted to a household with an annual household income of up to Rs 3 lakh.
- All collateral-free loans offered to low-income households, regardless of the end-use and mode of application/processing/disbursal, are considered microfinance loans.
- The financial entities should have a board-approved policy to provide the flexibility of repayment periodicity on microfinance loans as per borrowers' requirements. They should also have a board approved policy for the assessment of household income.

Microfinance is a form of financial service which provides small loans and other financial services to poor and low-income households. MFIs are financial companies that provide small loans to people who do not have any access to banking facilities. The definition of "small loans" varies between countries. In India, all loans that are below Rs. 1 lakh can be considered as microloans.

What is Agristack?
Government of India is working on a digital 'stack' of agricultural datasets, with its core as land records. But such a centralised stack will use old and inaccurate land records; farmers' personal and financial details will be used without a strong data protection law; and rural areas have a low level of digital literacy. Hence, experts say such an 'AgriStack' is problematic.

The *AgriStack* is a collection of technologies and digital databases proposed by the Central Government focusing on India's farmers and the agricultural sector. The Central Government has claimed that these new databases are being built to primarily tackle issues such as poor access to credit and wastage in the agricultural supply chain.

What is Green Horticulture?
The India Greenhouse Horticulture market held a market value of USD 190.84 Million in 2021 and is estimated to reach USD 271.25 Million by the year 2030.

Greenhouse Horticulture is also known as protected cropping. It is the production of horticultural crops within, under or sheltered by structures for providing modified growing conditions and/or protection from adverse weather, pests, and diseases.

The term *horticulture* is derived from 2 Latin words hortus, meaning '*garden*', and cultura meaning '*cultivation*' hence meaning, crops cultivated in a garden cultivation. It is a science and art of production, utilisation and improvement of fruits, vegetables, flowers and other plants for human food, non-food uses and social needs.

L.H. Bailey is considered the Father of American Horticulture and M.H. Marigowda is considered the Father of Indian Horticulture.

What is Predatory Pricing?
The Competition Commission of India has dismissed allegations of predatory pricing against e-commerce platform Shopee.

Predatory Pricing is the illegal act of setting prices low to attempt to eliminate the competition. Predatory pricing violates antitrust laws, as it makes markets more vulnerable to a monopoly.

Competition Commission of India: Established under the Competition Act, 2002 for the administration, implementation and enforcement of the Act, and was duly constituted in March 2009. Chairman and members are appointed by the Central Government.
Functions of the Commission:
1. To eliminate practices having adverse effects on competition.
2. Promote and sustain competition.
3. Protect the interests of consumers and ensure freedom of trade in the markets of India.

FAME-India Scheme
Under FAME-India Scheme, incentives are provided to buyers of electric vehicles in the form of an upfront reduction in the purchase price of electric vehicles. As per the information received from Department of

Revenue, at present the GST rate on electric vehicles is 5%. The GST rates are prescribed based on the recommendations of the GST Council.

National Electric Mobility Mission Plan (NEMMP) 2020
It is a National Mission document by Ministry of Heavy Industries & Public Enterprises providing the vision and the roadmap for the faster adoption of electric vehicles and their manufacturing in the country. As part of the NEMMP 2020, Scheme named 'Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of (Hybrid &) Electric Vehicles in India' (FAME) was launched in the year 2015 to promote manufacturing of electric and hybrid vehicle technology and to ensure sustainable growth of the same.

The Phase-I of this Scheme (FAME I) was initially launched for a period of 2 years and was implemented through 4 focus areas:
(i) Demand Creation,
(ii) Technology Platform,
(iii) Pilot Project and
(iv) Charging Infrastructure.

FAME II was launched in March 2019 for a period of 3 years (now till 2024). The main objective of the scheme is to encourage faster adoption of electric and hybrid vehicle by way of offering upfront incentive on purchase of electric vehicles and also by establishing the necessary charging infrastructure for electric vehicles.

What is co-location?
The issue of co-location has come into the limelight once again in the wake of the latest order by the market's regulator sanctioning former National Stock Exchange (NSE) MD and CEO over decisions taken by her under the alleged influence of a mysterious 'yogi'.

Co-location allows brokers to operate closer to their servers upon payment of additional fees. Co-location facility provides infrastructure such as power supply, bandwidth, and cooling for setting up servers and storage of data. It helps brokers secure an advantage over others due to proximity to exchange servers as data transmission takes less time. Orders reach exchange servers faster than those who have not availed of the facility.

India's exports crosses $400 billion for the first time ever
India's annual goods exports has crossed the $400 billion mark for the first time ever. Engineering goods, petroleum products, gems and jewellery, chemicals and ready-made garments of all textiles were the top 5 commodities exported from India.

What is Stablecoin?
A Stablecoin is a type of cryptocurrency that is typically pegged to an existing government-backed currency. The majority of the dozens of stablecoins that currently exist use the dollar as their benchmark asset, but many are also pegged to other fiat currencies issued by governments like the 'euro' and 'yen'. As a result, the price of stablecoins fluctuates very little, unlike high-profile cryptocurrencies like bitcoin and ethereum that are prone to sudden ups and downs. Stablecoins are useful because they allow people to transact more seamlessly in cryptocurrencies that function as investments, such as Bitcoin. They form a bridge between old-world money and new-world crypto. The first stablecoin, created in 2014, was Tether, which many other stablecoins are modeled after.

What is Shrinkflation?
Shrinkflation is the practice of reducing the size of a product while maintaining its sticker price. It is a form of hidden inflation. Raising the price per given amount is a strategy employed by companies, mainly in the food and beverage industries, to stealthily boost profit margins or maintain them in the face of rising input costs. Shrinkflation is also referred to as package downsizing in business and academic research.

Microsoft to establish largest data centre in Hyderabad
Microsoft is establishing its largest data center in India in Hyderabad in collaboration with the Telangana govt. It will be one of the largest data centres in India (operational by 2025). Microsoft already has a data centre in 3 Indian regions across Pune, Mumbai, and Chennai. The new data centre will add to the growing demand for Microsoft's cloud services from both the private enterprises as well as the govt sector.

A data center or data centre is a building, a dedicated space within a building, or a group of buildings used to house computer systems and associated components, such as telecommunications and storage systems.

RBI launches DigiSaathi
'DigiSaathi', a 24×7 Helpline for Digital Payments, was launched by Reserve Bank of India along with National Payment Corporation India. It will help customers of payments systems including cards. This initiative will help customers address queries in the digital payments umbrella including cards. It will be available in Hindi and English.

RBI releases booklet on financial frauds – BE (A)WARE
BE (A)WARE, a booklet featuring modus operandi of financial frauds, was released by RBI. The booklet aims to enhance public awareness about various types of financial frauds perpetrated on gullible customers while carrying out digital payments and other financial transactions.

GoI's One Station One Product concept
Visakhapatnam has become the first station in the East Coast railway to implement the Government's 'One Station, One Product' concept.

Government of India announced the 'One Station, One Product' concept in the latest Union Budget to help local businesses and supply chains. The concept is based on the 'One District, One Product' scheme. It aims to promote the supply chain of local products using the Indian Railways network, turning each station into a showcase destination and promotional hub for local products.

11. Important Days

World Sparrow Day
Every year March 20 is observed as World Sparrow Day to raise awareness about the bird. The first World Sparrow Day was celebrated in 2010 in different parts of the world. World Sparrow Day is an initiative of the Nature Forever Society, which is a Non-Government Organisation (NGO) run by Mohammed Dilawar, an internationally acclaimed conservationist.
Theme: *"Monitor the Sparrows & other common birds"*

World Water Day
World Water Day is observed on 22 March every year. It is observed since 1993. The day is coordinated by UN-Water – the UN's inter-agency collaboration mechanism for all freshwater related issues – in collaboration with governments and partners.

The World Water Development Report is also released by the UN every year around World Water Day. Theme: *"Groundwater, making the invisible visible"*

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

The organizers are the United Nations Forum on Forests and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), in collaboration with Governments, the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and other relevant organizations in the field.
Theme 2022: *"Forests and Sustainable Production and Consumption"*

The Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) also released the India State of Forest Report (ISFR), 2021. (*Refer January 2022 Environment Topic*)

World Tuberculosis Day
World Tuberculosis Day is observed every year on 24th March. India TB report on the theme 'Coming Together to End TB Altogether' and National TB Prevalence Survey Report released in the backdrop of celebrations.

Government also launched "*Dare to Erode TB*" program for formation of a Genome Sequencing Consortium for Whole Genome Sequencing, (WGS) TB surveillance based on the Indian Data.

Tuberculosis: Caused by bacterium – Mycobacterium tuberculosis. It is a communicable disease which is spread from person to person through the air.

India's vision to end TB – Eliminating TB by 2025, 5 years ahead of global target by World Health Organisation (WHO) i.e., 2030.

Steps taken by Government to check Tuberculosis
- National Strategic Plan for Tuberculosis Elimination 2017- 2025,
- National Tuberculosis Elimination Program (NTEP)- Centrally Sponsored Scheme and
- TB Harega Desh Jeetega Campaign.

International Women's Day

Women's Day is celebrated every year around the world on March 8. It attempts to recognize the contribution of women and girls around the world, who are leading the charge on climate change adaptation, mitigation, and response, to build a more sustainable future for all.

Theme 2022: *"Gender equality today for a sustainable tomorrow"*

IWD 2022 campaign theme is *'#BreakTheBias'*. It intends to promote a "gender equal world", which is "free of bias, stereotypes, and discrimination". "A world that is diverse, equitable, and inclusive", and where "difference is valued and celebrated".

Kanya Shiksha Pravesh Utsav

On the eve of International Women's Day, the Ministry of Women and Child Development has launched 'Kanya Shiksha Pravesh Utsav' scheme to bring back the out-of-school girls back to the education system.

International Maths Day 2022

14th March, every year is observed as the International Day of Mathematics. The International Day of Mathematics is a project led by the International Mathematical Union with the support of numerous international and regional organizations. The first International Day of Mathematics was marked in March 2020.

Note that, March 14 is already celebrated in many countries as Pi Day because that date is written as 3/14 in some countries and the mathematical constant 'π' is approximately 3.14. The theme for the 2022 International Day of Mathematics is "Mathematics Unites".

National Mathematics Day: Celebrated every year on December 22. It is observed to honour the birth anniversary of the famous mathematician Srinivasa Ramanujan who greatly contributed towards mathematical analysis, number theory, infinite series and continued fractions.

Shaheed Diwas

India celebrates "Shaheed Diwas" annually on 23 March to pay tribute to martyrs Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev Thapar, and Shivaram Rajguru. This day has a very important significance in the Indian freedom struggle.

Bhagat Singh (1907-1923) was a young Indian freedom fighter, who played a major role in revolutionizing India's Independence movement. He was executed at the young age of 23 by the British for 2 of his dramatic violence acts. He was convicted for taking revenge for the death of Lala Lajpat Rai, who went ahead to assassinate John Saunders, a British Police Officer. While in prison, Bhagat Singh gained mass national support, when he initiated a 116-day hunger strike, which is till date, the longest strike in the history of the world. He went on a strike with other inmates to demand equal rights that were given to the European political prisoners. On March 23, 1931, Bhagat Singh, along with Shivaram Rajguru and Sukhdev Thapar, was hanged in Lahore jail and he was just 23 years old at the time of his death. India observes March 23 as Shaheed Diwas or Martyr's Day on these three young martyrs.

World Wildlife Day

World Wildlife Day is observed every year on 3rd March to raise awareness about the world's wild fauna and flora. Note: The day was proposed by Thailand and recognized by United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in 2013. March 3 has been chosen as it is the day of signature of Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in 1973.

Theme 2022: *"Recovering key species for ecosystem restoration"*

National Security Day

In India, National Security Day (Rashtriya Suraksha Diwas) is celebrated every year on 4th March. The day aims to show gratitude to all the security forces, including policemen, para-military forces, commandos, guards, army officers, and other persons involved in security, who sacrifice their life in maintaining the peace and security of the people of the country.

International Day to Combat Islamophobia

United Nations General Assembly has proclaimed 15th March as the International Day to Combat Islamophobia. The 193-member UN General Assembly adopted a resolution, introduced by Pakistan under agenda item Culture of peace.

World Sleep Day

The World Sleep Day is observed on the Friday before the March equinox every year to highlight the importance of quality sleep. In 2022, World Sleep Day falls on 18th March 2022.
Theme 2022: *"Quality Sleep, Sound Mind, Happy World"*

International Day of Happiness

The International Day of Happiness is celebrated every year on 20th March. The United Nations started celebrating this day in 2013, but the resolution for the same was passed on July 12, 2012. The resolution was initiated by Bhutan which shed the light on the importance of National Happiness.
Theme 2022: *"Build Back Happier"*

World Meteorological Day

World Meteorological Day is celebrated globally every year on 23rd March. The day is celebrated as the establishment of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), and it concentrates on the behaviour of Earth's atmosphere. This year World Meteorological Day is celebrated keeping the theme of Early Warning and Early Action.

12. Culture

GI tag granted to Tamil Nadu Musical Instrument – Narasinghapettai Nagaswaram
Narasinghapettai nagaswaram, a wind musical instrument of Tamil Nadu, has been granted the Geographical Indication tag. The Nagaswaram is a wind instrument that is an integral part of Carnatic concerts, weddings, festivals and temple ceremonies. The unique feature of the Nagaswaram is its production process – it is handmade in Narasinghapettai village in Thanjavur, unlike the other machine-made ones.

Artisans of the Nagaswaram choose the wood wisely, a type of ebony, ensuring it is 200 years old, and which does not absorb moisture. The top portion has a metal staple into which a small metallic cylinder is inserted to hold the mouthpiece made of reed. The reeds are made from the leaves of a locally grown plant called '*naanal*' (a variety of bamboo). The GI tag will now honour the Nagaswaram artisans.

UNESCO City of Literature
Kozhikode was proposed by the Kerala Institute of Local Administration (KILA) to be branded as a UNESCO's City of Literature, which is part of a wider UNESCO's Creative Cities Network (UCCN).

UCCN was created in 2004 to promote cooperation with and among cities that have identified creativity as a strategic factor for sustainable urban development. It covers 7 creative fields: Crafts & Folk Art, Design, Film, Gastronomy, Literature, Music, and Media Arts.

6 Indian cities are included on the list – Hyderabad (Gastronomy), Mumbai (Film), Varanasi (Music), Chennai (Music), Jaipur (Crafts and Folk Art) and the latest addition, Srinagar (crafts and folk art).

Indian Constitution to be translated into Santali Script – OlChiki
For the first time, Indian Constitution is translated into Santali script 'OlChiki'. 92nd Constitutional Amendment Act 2003 added Santali to Schedule VIII along with the Bodo, Dogri and Maithili languages.

OlChiki Script: the word '*ol*' means "*write*," and '*chiki*' means "*script*"– was invented by Pandit Raghunath Murmu in 1925 to write Santali. Ol Chiki is alphabetic and does not share any of the syllabic properties of the other Indic Scripts. It contains 30 letters and 5 basic diacritics.

Santals community is concentrated in several states including Assam, Tripura, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal, Odisha and Jharkhand. They speak Santali language which belongs to the Munda group of Austro-Asiatic sub-family of languages. Santals are well known for their housing architecture with colourfully painted walls, floors and artistically carved doors.

Hornbill Nest Adoption Programme
The Nyishi tribe of Arunachal Pradesh has celebrated a decade success of Hornbill Nest Adoption Programme (HNAP).

HNAP, launched in 2011 as community-based Hornbill Conservation Programme, operates in the forests outside Arunachal Pradesh's Pakke Tiger Reserve. Hornbills are indicators of the health of a forest, they are seed dispersers and called as '*farmers of the forest*'.

To encourage inter-tribal interaction and to promote cultural heritage of Nagaland, the Government of Nagaland organizes the Hornbill Festival every year in the first week of December.

India is home to 9 species, of which 4 are found in Western Ghats—Indian Grey Hornbill, Malabar Grey Hornbill, Malabar Pied Hornbill and the Great Hornbill.

Bamiyan Buddha in Afghanistan
Taliban are preserving Bamiyan buddhas in Mes Aynak, with eye to China investment.
Bamiyan Buddhas is situated in the Hindu Kush in the Central Highlands of Afghanistan. Bamiyan Buddhas date back to the 5th century AD and were once the tallest standing Buddhas in the world. They were locally known as Salsal and Shamama. They were great examples of a confluence of Gupta, Sassanian, and Hellenistic artistic styles. UNESCO included the remains in its list of World Heritage Sites in 2003.

Veer Savarkar key activities
Veer Savarkar was born on May 28, 1883, at Bhagur village of Nashik district in Maharashtra and died on February 26, 1966, in Mumbai.

Key Activities:
- Formed a youth organization- Mitra Mela. This organization was put into place to bring in national and revolutionary ideas.
- He was against foreign goods and propagated the idea of Swadeshi.
- He championed atheism and rationality and also disapproved orthodox Hindu belief. In fact, he even
- He dismissed cow worship as superstitious. He also worked on abolishment of untouchability in Ratnagiri. Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar also compared his work to Lord Buddha.

Organizations/institutions he was associated with:
- He was a President of Hindu Mahasabha from 1937 to 1943.
- When Congress ministries offered resignation on 22nd October 1939, Hindu Mahasabha under his leadership cooperated with Muslim league to form government in provinces like Sindh, Bengal and NWFP.
- In Pune, Savarkar founded the "Abhinav Bharat Society".
- He joined Tilak's Swaraj Party.
- He founded the Free India Society. The Society celebrated important dates on the Indian calendar including festivals, freedom movement landmarks, and was dedicated to furthering discussion about Indian freedom.

Important works:
1. Book- The History of the War of Indian Independence.
2. An armed revolt against the Morley-Minto reform.
3. Two-nation theory in his book 'Hindutva'.

100 years of Pal-Dadhvav Massacre in Gujrat
On March 7, the Gujarat Government marked 100 years of the Pal-Dadhvaav killings, calling it a massacre "bigger than the Jallianwala Bagh".

The Pal-Dadhvav massacre took place on 7th March 1922, in the Pal-Chitariya and Dadhvaav villages of Sabarkantha district, then part of Idar state (now Gujrat). Villagers from Pal, Dadhvav, and Chitariya had gathered on the banks of river Heir as part of the 'Eki Movement', led by one Motilal Tejawat. The Movement was to protest against the land revenue tax (*lagaan*) imposed on the peasants by the British and feudal lords. British Paramilitary force was on hunt for Motilal Tehawat. It heard of this gathering and reached the spot. Nearly 200 bhils under the leadership of Tehawat lifted their bows and arrows. But the Britishers opened fire on

them. Nearly 1,000 tribals (*Bhils*) fell to bullets. Tejwat, however, escaped and later "returned to the spot to christen it '*Veerbhumi*'.

Phool Dei celebrated in Uttrakhand
It is celebrated in the Garhwal and Kumaun regions of Uttarakhand every year in the flowering season (March-April) for about a month. The local belief is that placing flowers at the doorsteps of houses for the gods will bring prosperity and blessings. The groups of children, known as Phoolyari, bring flowers daily to the households and receive money and sweets in return from each family on the last day of spring.

India's largest reclining statue of Lord Buddha at Bodh Gaya
India's largest reclining statue of Lord Buddha is being built at Bodh Gaya. Built by Buddha International Welfare Mission, the statue will be 100 feet long and 30 feet high. Lord Buddha is in the sleeping posture in the statue. The construction of the giant statue started in the year 2019.

Bodh Gaya is the place of enlightenment of Lord Buddha, and famous pilgrimage site for Buddhism, visited by devotees from all over the world.