Current Events

October 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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66ᵗʰ edition of Ballon d'Or Awards 2022 announced
The 66ᵗʰ edition of the Ballon d'Or Ceremony (2022) was held at the Théâtre du Châtelet. Paris, France.

This year, Real Madrid's Karim Benzema, a professional French footballer, has won the Men's Ballon d'Or 2022 and becomes the 5ᵗʰ Frenchman to win the prize. Also, Barcelona's Alexia Putellas, a Spanish professional footballer, has won the Women's Ballon d'Or award or Ballon d'Or Féminin Award for the 2ⁿᵈ time.

The list of the winners is given below.

Award	Winner
Ballon d'Or (Men)	Karim Benzema (Real Madrid)
Ballon d'Or (Women)	Alexia Putellas (Barcelona)
Kopa Award	Gavi (Barcelona)
Gerd Muller Award	Robert Lewandowski (Barcelona)
Yashin Trophy	Thibaut Courtois (Real Madrid)
Club of the Year Award	Manchester City
Socrates Award	Sadio Mane (Liverpool)

Notably, the greatest number of Ballon d'Or was received by Lionel Messi. He tops the list with 7 awards followed by Cristiano Ronaldo with 5 awards.

The *Ballon d'Or* is annually presented by the French magazine '*France Football*', since 1956. The inaugural Ballon d'Or was presented to Stanley Matthews of Blackpool in 1956. This is one of the oldest and most prestigious individual awards for a football play. The Women's Ballon d'Or was introduced in 2018.

36ᵗʰ National Games (2022) held in Gujarat
The 36ᵗʰ National Games was held in Gujarat (hosted for first time). The National Games 2022 was held across 6 cities - Ahmedabad, Gandhinagar, Surat, Vadodara, Rajkot and Bhavnagar, in Gujarat. The Indian Olympic Association has also confirmed that Goa will host the 37ᵗʰ edition of the National Games in October next year.

Official Mascot: *Savaj, the Asiatic lion (Savaj, meaning cub in Gujarati)*
The theme of the anthem: *Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat*

36ᵗʰ National Games Key Points
- Raja Bhalindra Singh Trophy to the hybrid contingent of Services for the fourth time in succession.
- Maharashtra bagged the Indian Olympic Association's Best State trophy for finishing second in the medals tally with the most medals amongst States and UTs.
- Best Male Athlete was awarded to Sajan Prakash (5 Gold, 2 Silver, 1 Bronze).
- Best Female Athlete was awarded to Karnataka's Hashika Ramchandra, barely 14 years old. (6 Gold, 1 Bronze).
- Gujarat's 10-year-old Shauryajit Khaire (Mallakhamb) emerged as the 'viral star' of the Games, becoming its youngest medal winner.

Pankaj Advani wins Gold medal in IBSF World Billiards Championship

India's cueist, Pankaj Advani has secured his 25th gold medal after winning the 2022 IBSF World Billiards Championship held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. IBSF stands for International Billiards and Snooker Federation.

India's women team wins the Women's Asia Cup 2022
India's Women team has defeated Sri Lanka in the final of Women's Asia Cup to clinch the title a record-extending 7th time. The 2022 Women's Twenty20 Asia Cup was the 8th edition held in Sylhet, Bangladesh.

Penguin 'Tazuni' unveiled as mascot for 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup
FIFA Women's World Cup 2023 hosts, Australia and New Zealand, has unveiled Penguin '*Tazuni*' as Official Mascot of the FIFA Women's World Cup 2023. Note that, this is the first time that 2 nations co-host the tournament.

Tazuni is based on the 'Eudyptula minor' species endemic to Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia. The name Tazuni is a fusion of the Tasman sea, the home of penguins and Unity, which is the key value of the event.

Aman Sehrawat wins Gold medal at U-23 World Wrestling Championships
Indian teenage wrestler, Aman Sehrawat (16-years old) has become the first Indian wrestler to win a gold medal at the U-23 World Wrestling Championships held in Pontevedra, Spain. Note that, Olympic medalists Bajrang Punia and Ravi Kumar Dahiya had made the final in their categories in previous editions but could only win the silver medal.

Spain wins the FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup 2022
Spain has defeated Columbia to win the 2022 FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup held in India (Finals at D.Y. Patil Stadium, Navi Mumbai). Spain successfully defends their world champions title in the age-group tournament. The win also means that Spain is now tied with North Korea with two titles each and share the honours of being the most successful football team in the history of the U-17 women's World Cup.

2. Science and Technology

ISRO confirms India's Mars Mission spacecraft – Mangalyaan – lost its communication
India's Mars Orbiter Mission (MOM) spacecraft has lost communication with the ground stations, bringing an end to its life after 8 long years. The Mars Orbiter Mission, also called '*Mangalyaan*', was launched onboard PSLV-C25 in November 2013. The spacecraft was successfully inserted into Martian orbit in September 2014, in its first attempt. The spacecraft is tracked by the Indian Deep Space Network (IDSN), located near Bengaluru.

Other Mars Mission

Space Missions	Launch Date	Key Features
Perseverance (USA)	2021	The rover will search for past life on Mars and collect soil and rock samples for future return to Earth.
Hope Mission (UAE)	2021	It is intended to examine Martian weather and atmospheric layers.
Tianwen 1 (China)	2021	Tianwen-1 is China's first Mars mission, consisting of an orbiter and a rover named '*Zhurong*'.

Govt. launches commercial 5G Services
Government has launched commercial 5G service at the 6th edition of the Indian Mobile Congress (IMC).
Theme of the IMC Event: *"New digital Universe"*

5G is the 5th Generation of cellular technology. It is designed to increase speed, reduce latency, and improve flexibility of wireless services. It operates in the millimetre wave spectrum (*30-300 GHz*) which have the advantage of sending large amounts of data at very high speeds.

The previous generations of mobile networks are 1G, 2G, 3G and 4G.
- First Generation – 1G 1980s: 1G delivered analog voice.
- Second Generation – 2G Early 1990s: 2G introduced digital voice (*e.g., CDMA – Code Division Multiple Access*).
- Third Generation – 3G Early 2000s: 3G brought mobile data (*e.g., CDMA2000*).
- Fourth Generation – 4G LTE 2010s: 4G LTE ushered in the era of mobile broadband.

WEF announced addition of 3 Indian company to its Global Lighthouse Network
World Economic Forum (WEF) has announced the addition of 11 factories and industrial sites, including 3 pharmaceutical companies from India, to the list of Global Lighthouse Network. These are:
- Cipla's Indore facility,
- Dr Reddy's Laboratories' Hyderabad facility, and
- The Mondelez facility in Sri City, Chennai.

The *Global Lighthouse Network* is a World Economic Forum initiative in collaboration with McKinsey & Company. It is a community of over 100 manufacturers that are showing leadership in applying Fourth Industrial Revolution technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, 3D-printing and big Data Analytics.

Sampurnanand Optical Telescope completes its 50 years of operations
Sampurnanand Optical Telescope (SOT), located at Aryabhatta Research Institute of Observational Sciences, Nainital, has completed 50 years of its operations.

Sampurnanand Optical Telescope (SOT) has been used for optical observations of comets, occultation by planets and asteroids, star forming regions and star clusters, active galactic nuclei, etc. It has made some of the important discoveries such as – discovery of rings of Uranus, Saturn, Neptune; first detection of optical afterglows of Gamma-Ray-Bursts (GRBs); micro-lensing event, discovery of quakes in various stars (under Nainital-Cape Survey program) etc.

Different types of Solar Eclipses
A solar eclipse occurs when Moon gets between Earth and Sun, and moon casts a shadow over Earth. A Solar Eclipse can only take place during the phase of the New Moon, when the Moon passes directly between the Sun and Earth and its shadows fall upon Earth's surface. The alignment of the Moon results in various type of solar eclipses, given below.
- *Total Solar Eclipse:* It happens when Moon passes between Sun and Earth, completely blocking face of Sun. It is only visible from a small area on Earth.
- *Partial Solar Eclipse:* This happens when Sun, Moon and Earth are not exactly lined up. Only a part of the Sun will appear to be covered, giving it a crescent shape.
- *Annular Solar Eclipse*: It happens when Moon is farthest from Earth. It does not block the entire view of the sun. This looks like a ring around the Moon.

Hybrid solar eclipse: Because Earth's surface is curved, sometimes an eclipse can shift between annular and total as Moon's shadow moves across the globe.

Lunar eclipses
It occurs when Earth positions itself between Sun and Moon, casting a shadow across lunar surface. They can only occur during a Full Moon.

GEAC approves environmental release of DMH-11 (a genetically modified mustard)
The Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC), India's apex regulator of genetically modified plants and food products, has approved the environmental release of "Dhara Mustard Hybrid-11 (DMH-11)", a genetically engineered variant of mustard. If approved for commercial cultivation it would be the first genetically modified food crop available to Indian farmers.

DMH-11 is a hybrid variant of mustard developed by Deepak Pental at The Centre for Genetic Manipulation of Crop Plants, at the University of Delhi in 2002.

Genetically Modified (GM) foods are foods derived from organisms whose genetic material (DNA) has been modified in a way that does not occur naturally, e.g., through the introduction of a gene from a different organism.

ISRO to replace PSLV with Next Gen Launch Vehicle (NGLV)
Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is developing a Next-Gen Launch Vehicle (NGLV) to replace operational systems like the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV).

In NGLV, ISRO is looking at a cost-efficient, three-stage to orbit, reusable heavy-lift vehicle with a payload capability of ten tonnes to Geostationary Transfer Orbit (GTO). It will feature semi-cryogenic propulsion (refined kerosene as fuel with liquid oxygen (LOX) as oxidiser) for the booster stages.

Launch Vehicles are used to carry spacecraft to space. India has two operational launchers, PSLV and Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV).

Type of Satellite Launch Vehicles developed by ISRO:

1. *Satellite Launch Vehicle (SLV):* The first rocket developed by ISRO was simply called SLV, or Satellite Launch Vehicle. It was followed by the Augmented Satellite Launch Vehicle or ASLV.

2. *Augmented Satellite Launch Vehicle (ASLV):* SLV and ASLV both could carry small satellites, weighing up to 150 kg, to lower earth orbits. ASLV operated till the early 1990s before PSLV came on the scene.

3. *Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV):* PSLV's first launch was in 1994, and it has been ISRO's main rocket ever since. Today's PSLV, however, is vastly improved and several times more powerful than the ones used in the 1990s. It is the first Indian launch vehicle to be equipped with liquid stages. It successfully launched two spacecraft – Chandrayaan-1 in 2008 and Mars Orbiter Spacecraft in 2013 – that later travelled to Moon and Mars respectively.

4. *Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV):* GSLV is a much more powerful rocket, meant to carry heavier satellites much deeper into space. It can take 10,000 kg of satellites to lower the earth's orbits. The indigenously developed Cryogenic Upper Stage (CUS), forms the third stage of GSLV Mk II. Mk-III versions have made ISRO entirely self-sufficient in launching its satellites. Before this, ISRO used to depend on the European Arianne launch vehicle to take its heavier satellites into space.

ISRO has proposed to create dedicated satellites for supporting agriculture under *'Bharat Krishi Satellite Programme and Earth Observation Council'*. A minimum of two satellites will be needed for adequate coverage of the country's agricultural area.

Currently used satellites for agriculture:
- Resourcesat (*for crop production forecast*)
- Cartosat (*topographic mapping*)
- RISAT (*weather imaging*)

Ministry of Railways inaugurates India's First Aluminium Freight Train
Ministry of Railways has inaugurated India's First Aluminum Freight Rake named - 61 BOBRNALHSM1 at Bhubaneswar Railway Station. This is a dedicated effort for the Make in India program as it has been fully designed and developed indigenously in collaboration with RDSO, HINDALCO and Besco Wagon. The rake is 180 tonnes lighter than existing steel rakes, resulting in increased speed and lower power consumption for the same distance.

Tesla presents latest proto-type of Humanoid Robot – Optimus
The Chief Executive Officer of Tesla, Mr. Elon Musk, has presented the latest proto-type of a humanoid robot – *Optimus* – being developed by Tesla electric car company. People were shown a video of Optimus performing simple tasks, such as watering plants, carrying boxes and lifting metal bars. The robot is made up of the same auto-pilot system that has been used in Tesla cars.

India's First Indigenous Overhauser Magnetometer (OVH) developed
Indian Scientists have developed an indigenous Overhauser Magnetometer, one of the most accurate magnetometers extensively used by all magnetic observatories around the world. It is developed by the Indian Institute of Geomagnetism (IIG), an autonomous research institution under Department of Science & Technology, Government of India. They are known for their higher accuracy, higher sensitivity, and efficient power consumption and hence find applications in all magnetic observatories worldwide as well as in international space programs. It has so far been imported for such purposes in India.

Overhauser Magnetometer: A magnetometer is a device that measures the magnetic field or magnetic dipole moment. Our earth is a gigantic magnet. Experiments show that variations in the Earth's magnetic field are linked to a variety of weather phenomena. As a result, scientists all over the world can consistently measure changes in the Earth's magnetic field.

Satellite Phones

An Executive of Saudi Arabian oil company 'Saudi Aramco' with an unauthorized satellite phone was arrested in Uttarakhand under Sections of the Indian Telegraph Act and the Indian Wireless Telegraphy Act. Note that, it is not legal to carry a satellite phone in India unless you have permission. Section 6 of The Indian Wireless Telegraphy Act, 1933 makes it illegal to possess any wireless telegraphy apparatus, other than a wireless transmitter.

A *satellite phone* is a type of mobile phone that uses satellites instead of terrestrial cell towers to communicate with the telephone network. It allows for telecommunication in areas where there is no terrestrial coverage or where the coverage is limited, such as remote locations, at sea, or in the air.

Pillars of Creation

NASA has issued a second image of the famous "Pillars of Creation" taken by the James Webb Telescope. The new image has been taken by Webb's Mid-Infrared Instrument (MIRI) – showing the outer skin of the Eagle Nebula. Note that, NASA's Hubble Space Telescope made the Pillars of Creation famous with its first image in 1995.

The *Pillars of Creation* are set off in a kaleidoscope of color in NASA's James Webb Space Telescope's near-infrared-light view. The pillars look like arches and spires rising out of a desert landscape, but are filled with semi-transparent gas and dust, and ever changing. This is a region where young stars are forming – or have barely burst from their dusty cocoons as they continue to form.

The *James Webb Space Telescope (JWST)* is NASA's infrared flagship observatory. It is an international collaboration between NASA, the European Space Agency (ESA), and the Canadian Space Agency (CSA). JWST is headed for Sun-Earth Lagrange Point 2 (L2). NASA's Hubble Space Telescope is the predecessor of James Webb.

DNA Testing

It was observed in the recent times that more and more complainants are seeking DNA tests.

DNA testing is a type of medical test that analyzes an individual's DNA, the genetic material that provides the instruction manual for the development and function of the human body. DNA testing can be used for a variety of purposes, including:
- *Paternity testing:* to determine the biological father of a child,
- *Ancestry testing:* to determine an individual's ancestry or genealogy,
- *Forensic testing:* to help identify individuals in criminal investigations or to match DNA evidence found at a crime scene,
- *Medical testing:* to diagnose genetic disorders and to guide personalized medical treatment,
- *Pre-implantation genetic testing:* to screen embryos for genetic disorders before they are implanted during in vitro fertilization.

National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories (NABL) is an accreditation body. NABL accredits laboratories based on international standards such as ISO/IEC 17025 for testing laboratories and

ISO/IEC 17020 for inspection bodies. Accreditation from NABL demonstrates that a laboratory has the necessary technical competence, impartiality, and infrastructure to perform tests and calibrations to international standards.

WHO publishes first-ever Fungal Priority Pathogens List (FPPL)
The World Health Organization (WHO) has published a report highlighting the first-ever list of fungal "priority pathogens" – a catalogue of the 19 fungi that represent the greatest threat to public health.

The WHO fungal priority pathogens list (FPPL) is the first global effort to systematically prioritize fungal pathogens. The WHO FPPL aims to focus and drive further research and policy interventions to strengthen the global response to fungal infections and antifungal resistance. This report is based on research led by the University of Sydney in Australia.

Fungal pathogens are fungi that cause disease in humans, animals, and plants. Fungal infections can affect various parts of the body, including the skin, nails, lungs, and bloodstream, and can range from mild to severe and even life-threatening.

IAF inducted the indigenously built Light Combat Helicopter
Induction of the indigenously designed and developed Light Combat Helicopter (LCH) was formally inducted into the Helicopter Unit '*Dhanush*' at the Jodhpur Air Force Station.

The twin-engine LCH, designed and developed by HAL, is a 5-8 tonne class dedicated combat helicopter. It was conceptualized after the 1999 Kargil conflict when the need for such a dedicated platform capable of operating in high altitudes was felt.

Carbon Dating
A court in Varanasi has rejected a plea requesting carbon dating into the structure (*claimed to be 'Shivling'*) found inside Gyanvapi Mosque.

Carbon Dating is a widely used method to establish the age of organic materials. The dating method is based on the fact that Carbon-14 (C-14), an isotope of Carbon with an atomic mass of 14, is radioactive, and decays at a well-known rate. The method is developed by American physicist Willard F. Libby.

WWF releases its biennial Living Planet Report, 2022
World-Wide Fund (WWF) has released its biennial Living Planet report 2022 showing trends in global biodiversity and the health of the planet. The Report is published by the international non-profit World-Wide Fund for Nature every 2 years. It is prepared in collaboration between WWF International and the Zoological Society of London.

Zoological Society of London (ZSL) was founded in 1826 and is an international conservation charity, driven by science, working to restore wildlife in the UK and around the world by protecting critical species, restoring ecosystems, helping people and wildlife live together and inspiring support for nature.

Govt. accords Infrastructure Status to 'Data Centres'
The Government has accorded infrastructure status to data centres with more than 5-Megawatt capacity of IT load. Data Centre is included in the Harmonized Master List of Infrastructure sub-sectors by insertion of a new item in the category of 'Communication'. The move helps Data Centre companies to get easier access to institutional credit at lower rates, attract foreign investments.

Data Centres are housed in a dedicated/ centralized building for storage and processing of digital data application. It is a dedicated secure space within a centralized location where computing and networking equipment is concentrated for purpose of collecting, storing, processing, distributing or allowing access to large amounts of data.

Government launches Mission DefSpace at annual Defence Expo in Gandhinagar
The Prime Minister of India has launched 'Mission DefSpace' at the annual Defence Expo held in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.

Mission DefSpace is an ambitious effort to develop innovative solutions for the 3 Services (*Indian Airforce, Navy and Army*) in the space domain through the Indian industry and Startups. 75 challenges are being opened to get innovative solutions, based on the defence requirements in the space domain.

HTT-40 (Hindustan Turbo Trainer-40*)* indigenous trainer aircraft, designed and developed by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), was also unveiled at the India Pavilion during the Expo.

Other Related Key Points
- Partial Test Ban Treaty (PTBT) prohibits nuclear weapons tests "or any other nuclear explosion" in the atmosphere, in outer space, and under water.
- U.N. Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA) supports governments in building legal, technical, and political infrastructure to support global space activities.
- Inter-Agency Space Debris Coordination Committee's (IADC) Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines which cover the overall environmental impact of the missions with a focus on limitation of debris and Post-mission disposal.
- In 2016, China also launched QUESS, world's first quantum communication satellite.
- In 2019, India had become the fourth country after United States, Russia and China to conduct Anti Satellite missile test (dubbed as Mission Shakti). The test entailed launching a ballistic missile into outer space to destroy an Indian satellite located about 300 kilometers above the earth's surface, in Low Earth Orbit (LEO).

Dirty Bomb
Russia has claimed that Ukraine is planning to use a 'Dirty Bomb'.

Dirty Bomb is a bomb that contains radioactive material, such as uranium, which is scattered through the air when its conventional explosive detonates. It doesn't need to contain highly refined radioactive material, as is used in a nuclear bomb. Instead, it uses radioactive materials from hospitals, nuclear power stations or research laboratories. This makes them much cheaper and quicker to make than nuclear weapons. Because radioactive fallout can cause serious illnesses, such as cancer, such a bomb would cause panic among the targeted population.

Indigenous Light Combat Helicopter (LCH) – 'Prachanda' – inducted into Indian Air Force
The Indian Air Force has formally inducted the indigenously developed multi-role Light Combat Helicopter (LCH), *Prachanda* which is suitable for operating in high-altitude battlefields. It is designed and developed by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited.

Light Combat Helicopter: The LCH is the only attack helicopter in the world which can land and take off at an altitude of 5,000 meters with a considerable load of weapons and fuel. The helicopter uses radar-absorbing material to lower radar signature and has a significantly crash-proof structure and landing gear. The helicopter

is equipped with a countermeasure dispensing system that protects it from enemy radars or infrared seekers of enemy missiles. LCH is powered by two French-origin Shakti engines manufactured by the HAL.

Airbus-Tata Consortium to Manufacture C-295 Transport Aircraft in Vadodara, Gujarat
Prime Minister of India has laid the foundation stone of C-295 Transport Aircraft manufacturing facility in Vadodara, Gujarat. The facility will manufacture C-295 aircraft for the Indian Air Force (IAF) through collaboration between Tata Advanced Systems Limited and Airbus Defence and Space S.A., Spain. This is the first project of its kind in which a military aircraft will be manufactured in India by a private company. It is also first time that C295 Transport Aircraft will be manufactured outside of Europe.

3. Environment

Greenwashing

UNFCCC Conference of Parties (CoP27) has named Coca-Cola Company as the official provider and supporter of the Conference scheduled to be held under the Egyptian Presidency in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt. Coca-Cola is considered as one of the biggest plastic polluters of the world and hence, Coca-Cola's sponsorship of the world's biggest climate summit has been criticized as a '*greenwashing exercise*'.

Greenwashing is the process of conveying a false impression or providing misleading information about how a company's products are more environmentally sound. It is considered an unsubstantiated claim to deceive consumers into believing that a company's products are environmentally friendly.

PM launches Mission LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment)

Prime Minister of India has launched Mission LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment) at the Statue of Unity at Kevadia, Gujarat to protect the environment.

Mission LiFE is an India-led global mass movement which aims to nudge individual and collective action to protect and preserve the environment. Its concept was introduced by India at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) COP-26 (Conference of the Parties) held in Glasgow, Scotland. It will run as a 5-year programme.

3 Phases of Mission LiFE are: Change in Demand, Change in Supply, Change in Policy

Steps taken by India in line with the objectives of LiFE:
- Individual-led programs are started to address climate change, such as Swachh Bharat Mission, GOBARdhan Scheme and 'Give It Up' Campaign.
- India's Renewable Energy (RE) capacity is 4th largest in the world, helping it to achieve the Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) of 40% electric capacity from non-fossil-fuel sources 9 years ahead of the 2030 deadline.
- India is ranked 4th in wind energy and 5th in solar energy.

Mawmluh Cave listed as UNESCO's one of the 'First 100 IUGS Geological Sites' in the world

Mawmluh Cave in Meghalaya, locally known as '*Krem Mawmluh*', has been listed as UNESCO's one of the 'First 100 IUGS (International Union of Geological Sciences) Geological Sites' in the world. *Mawmluh Cave* is located about 60 km away from Shillong and was first explored by a British official named Lieutenant Yule back in 1844. The cave is named after a small hamlet in Meghalaya. It is believed to be the 4th longest cave in the Indian subcontinent with a total length of 7 km of cave passages.

According to IUGS, a '*Geological Heritage Site*' is a key place with geological elements and/or processes of scientific international relevance, used as a reference with a substantial contribution to the development of geological sciences through history.

UNFCCC releases NDC Synthesis Report 2022

UNFCCC has released the second edition of its annual report titled – Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) Synthesis Report, 2022. The Report is an annual summary of climate commitments made by countries and their impact on global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. These commitments, known as NDCs, were made by countries who signed on to the Paris Agreement to address climate change. They contain information on targets, and policies and measures for reducing national emissions and on adapting to climate change impacts.

UNEP releases a latest edition of Emission Gap Report 2022
The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has released a report titled 'Emissions Gap Report 2022: The Closing Window — Climate Crisis Calls for Rapid Transformation of Societies'. This is the 13th edition of the UNEP Emissions Gap Report. It assesses the gap between anticipated emissions in 2030 and levels consistent with the 1.5°C and 2°C targets of the Paris Agreement. Every year, the report features ways to bridge the gap. The top 7 emitters under it are - China, the EU27, India, Indonesia, Brazil, the Russian Federation and the United States of America.

The Coldest Year of their Lives Report
UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund) has released a report titled "Coldest Year of the Rest of Their Lives – Protecting children from the escalating impacts of heatwaves", showing that nearly all the children across the world will be exposed to more frequent and severe heat waves by 2050.

State of Climate Action Report, 2022 released
State of Climate Action Report, 2022 is released by Climate Action Tracker (an independent analytic group comprising Climate Analytics and New Climate Institute), the United Nations High-Level Climate Change Champions, World Resources Institute and others. It provides a comprehensive assessment of the global gap in climate action across the world's highest emitting systems.

Climate Transparency Report was released
The Climate Transparency Report was released. It has been developed by experts from 16 partner organisations from the majority of the G20 countries, the report informs policy makers and stimulates national debates.

The Climate Transparency Report provides a concise overview of the key facts and figures on the state of climate performance of the G20 in a comparative stocktake. The analysis covers adaptation, mitigation and finance, with 20 detailed country profiles of all G20 members and a summary of key findings. In 2022, the report especially highlights the link between the climate emergency and energy crisis.

IEA releases World Energy Outlook
International Energy Agency (IEA) has released its annual report titled World Energy Outlook.

Key findings of this Report are:
- World is in the midst of the first global energy crisis, triggered by Russia's invasion of Ukraine.
- India is likely to see world's biggest rise in energy demand this decade, with demand climbing 3 percent annually.

International Energy Agency (IEA) is an autonomous intergovernmental organization established in the framework of Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in 1974. It helps countries to collectively respond to oil supply disruptions. The framework was anchored in the IEA treaty called the "Agreement on an International Energy Program". A candidate country to the IEA must be a member country of the OECD. It is headquartered in Paris, France.

WMO releases Greenhouse Gas Bulletin
World Meterological Organization (WMO) has released the Greenhouse Gas Bulletin. It represents the latest analysis of observations from the WMO's Global Atmosphere Watch (GAW) Programme. It shows globally averaged surface mole fractions for carbon dioxide (CO_2), methane (CH_4) and nitrous oxide (N_2O) and compares them with the mole fractions during the previous year and with the preindustrial levels. It also provides insights

on the change in radiative forcing by long-lived GHGs (LL-GHGs) and the contribution of individual gases to this increase.

Global Mangrove Alliance releases State of World's Mangroves Report, 2022
The Global Mangrove Alliance (GMA) has released its annual report, 'The State of the World's Mangroves 2022'.

Global Mangrove Alliance (GMA) has released their annual report, The State of the World's Mangroves 2022. It is a compilation of the most current information available on what we know about mangrove forests and what's being done to reverse the downward trends impacting the coastal trees and the local communities who depend on them.

Note that, the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) has released the India State of Forest Report (ISFR), 2021.

Key Highlights are given below:
- Total forest cover: 21.71% of the geographical area of India
- Top 3 states in Total Forest cover: Madhya Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh
- Top 3 states by percent of State's Geographic Area under Forest Cover: Mizoram (84.53%), Arunachal Pradesh (79.33%), Meghalaya
- State with Maximum Tree cover: Maharashtra.
- Total Area of Mangrove Cover: 0.15% of country's geographical area
- Top States & UTs with Mangrove Cover: West Bengal, Gujarat, Andaman & Nicobar Islands

Govt. Report finds that India bears world highest health burden from Lead Poisoning
A Central Government report has found that India bears the world's highest health and economic burden due to lead poisoning. The report was prepared jointly by NITI Aayog and the Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR).

Lead (Pb) is a heavy metal that is soft, dense, and malleable. Lead is found in the Earth's crust and has been used by humans for thousands of years in various applications, such as pipes, batteries, and paint. Lead is toxic and can cause serious health problems if ingested or inhaled. It can cause damage to the brain, nervous system, blood cells, and reproductive system. Lead exposure can occur through several sources, such as contaminated water, soil, dust, and air.

Green Crackers
It was reported that due to pollution, many States have banned bursting firecrackers on Diwali. However, some cities have allowed the sale and use of green crackers. The green firecrackers do not contain harmful chemicals and cause less air pollution.

The CSIR-National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (CSIR NEERI) has defined '*green crackers*' as – firecrackers made with a reduced shell size, without ash, and/or with additives such as dust suppressants to reduce emissions with specific reference to Particulate Matter. These crackers come without barium compounds through which crackers get the green colour. It is a metal oxide that contributes to air and noise pollution.

In India, green crackers were launched in 2019 and currently, there are 3 types of green crackers:
(i) SWAS (Safe Water Releaser), (ii) STAR (Safe Thermite Cracker), (iii) SAFAL (Safe Minimal Aluminium).

Govt. inaugurates Asia's largest Compressed Bio-Gas Plant in Sangrur
Government has inaugurated Asia's largest Compressed Bio-Gas Plant in Sangrur, Punjab.

Compressed Bio-Gas (CBG) refers to the natural gas produced by the anaerobic digestion of organic matter (such as agricultural waste, sewage sludge, or food waste), which is then compressed to a high pressure so that it can be stored, transported, and used as a fuel. Compressed biogas is often used as a clean and renewable alternative to fossil fuels for applications such as heating, power generation, and transportation.

Assisted Natural Regeneration (ANR)
Conservation International Report has released a report highlighting the progress on natural regeneration. The report talks about the need for Assisted Natural Regeneration (ANR).

Assisted Natural Regeneration (ANR) is a forest restoration method that relies on the natural ability of trees and other plants to regenerate and regrow, with the support and encouragement of human intervention. It involves protecting and nurturing existing sprouts and seedlings, which often arise from the roots and stumps of previously felled trees, rather than planting new seedlings. ANR aims to restore degraded forest areas by using locally adapted and naturally occurring species, thereby reducing the cost and effort of traditional reforestation techniques.

IUCN Global Ecosystem Typology
The IUCN Global Ecosystem Typology is the first-ever comprehensive classification framework for classifying and mapping all Earth's ecosystems, which integrates their functional and compositional features. This new typology allows for more coordinated and effective approaches to identify which types of forests, reefs and wetlands, for example, are most critical to biodiversity conservation and the supply of ecosystem services, and which are at greatest risk of collapse.

It comprises 6 hierarchical levels. 3 upper levels classify ecosystems based on their functional characteristics. 3 lower levels of classification distinguish functionally similar ecosystems from one another based on compositional resemblance.

India's first-in-the-country Kadavur Slender Loris Sanctuary notified in Tamil Nadu
Tamil Nadu Government has notified first-in-the-country, Kaduvur slender loris sanctuary in Karur and Dindigul districts.

Slender lorises, which are small nocturnal mammals are arboreal in nature as they spend most of their life on trees. The species acts as a biological predator of pests in agricultural crops and benefits farmers. Listed as an endangered species by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Slender Loris has a wide range of ecological roles to play in the terrestrial ecosystem.

MP Wildlife Board approves a new Tiger Reserve named – Durgavati Tiger Reserve
Madhya Pradesh (MP) Wildlife Board has approved a new Reserve for tigers of Panna Tiger Reserve (PTR), to be called Durgavati Tiger Reserve. It will spread across Narisinghpur, Damoh and Sagar districts. Also, a green corridor linking PTR with Durgavati will be developed for the natural movement of the tiger to the new reserve. Other tiger reserves in MP are Kanha, Bandhavgarh, Panna, Pench, Satpura, Sanjay-Dubri.

Govt. prohibits the use of Glyphosate
Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare has issued a notice restricting the use of Glyphosate, a widely used herbicide, citing health hazards for humans and animals. Only authorised Pest Control Operators are now allowed to use it.

Glyphosate is a widely used herbicide, a chemical substance used to kill weeds. It is the active ingredient in several popular weed killer products such as Roundup. It works by inhibiting an enzyme involved in the synthesis of certain amino acids, leading to the death of the plant. The major consumption is done in orchards and plantation crops.

New Island emerges in Pacific Ocean – NASA
As per NASA Earth Observatory, the new island has emerged in the South-West Pacific Ocean after underwater volcanoes. In the South-West Pacific, a seafloor ridge that stretches from New Zealand to Tonga has the highest density of underwater volcanoes in the world. In September 2022, one of them—the Home Reef seamount—awoke, giving rise to a new island.

Ridge: A mid-ocean ridge is a long, underwater mountain system that runs along the floor of the world's oceans. It is a type of divergent boundary where 2 tectonic plates move apart, causing magma to well up from the mantle and solidify as new oceanic crust. The resulting geological formation, the mid-ocean ridge, is characterized by a central rift valley and a raised crest that runs for tens of thousands of kilometers along the ocean floor. These ridges are the longest mountain range on Earth and play an important role in plate tectonics and the Earth's Geology.

Govt. Inaugurates Tehkhand Waste to Energy Plant
Government has inaugurated the Tehkhand Waste to Energy Plant, which will generate electricity from the waste of Municipal Corporation of Delhi, in New Delhi.

There are several methods to generate electricity from waste, including:
- *Landfill Gas Recovery:* Methane gas produced by the decomposition of organic waste in landfills can be captured and burned to generate electricity.
- *Incineration:* Waste can be burned at high temperatures to produce steam, which can drive a turbine to generate electricity.
- *Anaerobic Digestion:* Organic waste can be broken down by microorganisms in the absence of oxygen to produce biogas, which can be burned to generate electricity.
- *Pyrolysis:* Waste can be subjected to high temperatures in the absence of oxygen, breaking it down into syngas, which can be burned to generate electricity.
- *Gasification:* Waste is heated to high temperatures in the presence of a controlled amount of oxygen, producing syngas that can be used to generate electricity.

Anti-Smog Guns
Vehicle-mounted 'Anti-Smog' Guns (ASG) have begun doing rounds in the national capital in an effort to disperse the settled dust particles in the air. *Anti-Smog Guns* are water cannons used to disperse the suspended dust particles that are settled in the air to form thick smog. The gun is connected to a water tank that is mounted on a vehicle.

Report on Sustainable Finance Submitted to IFSCA
A 'Committee of Experts on Sustainable Finance', constituted by International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA), has submitted its final report to IFSCA. The committee was chaired by Shri C.K. Mishra, Former Secretary to Government of India, Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change.

Sustainable Finance refers to the integration of environmental, social, and governance (ESG) considerations into financial decision-making. It involves investing in companies, projects, and assets that promote sustainability and have a positive impact on society and the environment, while also generating financial returns.

International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) was established in October 2020 under the International Financial Services Centres Authority Act, 2019. IFSCA is a unified authority for development and regulation of financial products, financial services and financial institutions in the International Financial Services Centre (IFSC) in India. Prior to IFSCA – RBI, SEBI, PFRDA and IRDAI regulated the business in IFSC. Headquarters: *GIFT City, Gandhinagar*

Govt. declares Modhera, Gujarat as India's First 24×7 solar-powered Village
Government has declared *Modhera* in Gujarat's Mehsana district as India's first 24×7 solar-powered village. The process involved developing a ground-mounted solar power plant and more than 1,300 rooftop solar systems on residential and government buildings.

NMNH organizes Cheetah Awareness Programme
National Museum of Natural History has organized a month-long Cheetah Awareness Programme. Before this, an awareness campaign "*Reintroduction of Cheetah*" was also conducted by NMNH. *National Museum of Natural History* is a subordinate office of Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC).

4. Schemes and Programmes

Govt. approves new Scheme – PM-DevINE
Union Cabinet has approved new Scheme "Prime Minister's Development Initiative for North-East Region (PM-DevINE)". It is a Central Sector Scheme with 100% Central funding and will be implemented by Ministry of Development of North-Eastern Region (DoNER) through North Eastern Council or Central Ministries/ agencies. PM-DevINE will lead to creation of infrastructure, support industries, social development projects and create livelihood activities for youth and women, thus leading to employment generation.

The objectives of PM-DevINE are to:
- Fund infrastructure convergently, in the spirit of PM Gati Shakti,
- Support social development projects based on felt needs of the NER,
- Enable livelihood activities for youth and women,
- Fill the development gaps in various sectors.

Govt. launches YUVA 2.0 to mentor young Authors/Writers
Ministry of Education has launched YUVA 2.0 - Prime Minister's Scheme for Mentoring Young Authors, an Author Mentorship programme to train young and budding authors (below 30 years of age) in order to promote reading, writing and book culture in the country, and project India and Indian writings globally. YUVA 2.0 is a part of India@75 Project (Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav) to bring to the fore the perspectives of the young generation of writers on the THEME: *'Democracy (institutions, events, people, constitutional values – past, present, future)'* in an innovative and creative manner. This scheme will thus help to develop a stream of writers who can write on a spectrum of subjects to promote Indian heritage, culture and knowledge system.

Implementing Agency: *National Book Trust, India*
YUVA stands for *Young, Upcoming and Versatile Authors.*

Govt. to bring convergence between MGNREGS and PMKSY
Government is planning to bring convergence between the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) and the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY). This aims to restoring degraded land and reversing desertification in the country. Note that, according to the Desertification and Land Degradation Atlas published by the Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change in 2021, at least 30% of India's total geographical area is under the category of "degraded land".

In 2019, the Government raised its target of restoration of degraded land from 21 million hectares to 26 million hectares by 2030 following a commitment made during the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (COP14).

The *UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)* is a treaty signed by over 197 countries aimed at combating desertification and land degradation worldwide. The COP (Conference of Parties) is the governing body of the UNCCD, and COP14 was its 14th session, held in New Delhi (2021). The conference provides a platform for countries to review progress, share experiences, and set new targets for achieving the goals of the UNCCD.

PM inaugurates Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Jan Urvarak Pariyojana – One Nation One Fertiliser Scheme
Prime Minister has inaugurated Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Jan Urvarak Pariyojana - One Nation One Fertiliser at the event held in Indian Agricultural Research Institute.

One Nation, One Fertilizer Scheme
Under it, fertilizer companies must market all subsidised fertilisers under a single brand 'Bharat'. With the launch of this Scheme, India will have a common bag design across the country like Bharat Urea, Bharat DAP, Bharat MOP, Bharat NPK, and so on. The rationale is that since fertilizers of a particular category must meet the nutrient-content specifications of the Fertilizer Control Order (FCO), there is no product differentiation among different brands for each type of fertilizer. Also, brand preferences by farmers have resulted in fertilizer-supply delays to farmers and an extra burden on the exchequer due to increased freight subsidies needing to be paid for the long-distance crisscross movement of fertilizers.

Government is also planning to develop more than fertilizer shops across the country as Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samruddhi Kendras (PM-KSK) under Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers.

5. Polity

SC Split verdict
The Supreme Court has delivered a split verdict by two-judge bench on whether Muslim students should shed their hijabs at their school gates. The case would now be re-heard by a larger Bench. The '*split verdict*' means that the matter will now be placed before the Chief Justice of India for further directions. This is why judges usually sit in Benches of odd numbers (three, five, seven, etc.) for important cases.

Govt. approves amendment to Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act 2002
The Union Cabinet has approved amendments to the Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act 2002 to improve governance, reform the electoral process, strengthen monitoring mechanisms and enhance transparency and accountability. The Bill also seeks to improve the composition of board and ensure financial discipline, besides enabling the raising of funds in the multi-state cooperative societies.

97th Constitutional Amendment Act 2011:
- The word "cooperatives" was added after "unions and associations" in Article 19(1)(c) under Part III of the Constitution.
- Article 43B: It was added in the Directive Principles of State Policy (Part IV) regarding the "promotion of cooperative societies".
- It added Part IXB to the Constitution – provisions related to Cooperative Societies.

Also, Amul is be merged with five other cooperative societies to form a Multi-State Cooperative Society (MSCS). MSCS will ensure the export of the products after its certification so that profit can go directly into the bank accounts of the farmers.

Laws on 'hate speech' in India
The U.N. Secretary-General has urged Indians to condemn hate speech and strong pitch for the protection of human rights and pluralism in India. Also, the Supreme Court has directed the Police Chiefs to take "immediate" suo motu action against any hate speech by lodging criminal cases without waiting for formal complaints.

Hate speech is an incitement to hatred against a particular group of persons marginalized by their religious belief, sexual orientation, gender, and so on.

Laws on hate speech in India:
- *Section 295 of Indian Penal Code:* It defines and prescribes punishment for deliberate and malicious acts, intended to outrage the religious feelings of any class by insulting its religion or religious beliefs.
- *Section 298 Indian Penal Code:* It penalizes 'uttering, words, etc., with deliberate intent to wound the religious feelings of any person.
- *Section 153A Indian Penal Code:* It penalizes 'promotion of enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race, place of birth, residence, language, etc., and doing acts prejudicial to maintenance of harmony'.
- *Section 66A of the Information Technology Act 2000:* It punishes sending offensive messages through communication services is added when such speech is made online.
- *Part VII of the Representation of People Act, 1951:* It classifies hate speech as an offence committed during elections into 2 categories: corrupt practices and electoral offences.

Delhi High Court ruling on National Commission for Scheduled Castes
The Delhi High Court has ruled that the National Commission for Scheduled Castes cannot initiate an inquiry based on any "specious complaint and unsubstantiated allegations" made by a person belonging to a Scheduled Castes.

The Commission is empowered to initiate an inquiry, provided a member of a Scheduled Caste is able to establish that he had been ill-treated or discriminated against solely on account that he belonged to that class. The Court pointed out that under Article 338, the Commission has no authority to assume jurisdiction or initiate an inquiry under Article 338 based on such a specious complaint and unsubstantiated allegations.

Article 338 of the Indian Constitution deals with the National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. It provides for the constitution of a National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes to promote and protect the interests of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and to monitor their welfare. The Commission is given powers to investigate and report on any matter relating to the safeguards provided for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes under the Constitution or any other law for the time being in force.

It shall be the duty of the Commission:
- to investigate and monitor all matters relating to the safeguards provided for the Scheduled Castes.
- to inquire into specific complaints with respect to the deprivation of rights and safeguards of the Scheduled Castes.
- to participate and advise on the planning process of socio-economic development of the Scheduled Castes and to evaluate the progress of their development under the Union and any State.
- to present to the President, annually and at such other times as the Commission may deem fit, reports upon the working of those safeguards.
- to make in such reports recommendations as to the measures that should be taken by the Union or any State for the effective implementation of those safeguards and other measures for the protection, welfare and socio-economic development of the Scheduled Castes, and
- to discharge such other functions in relation to the protection, welfare and development and advancement of the Scheduled Castes as the President may, subject to the provisions of any law made by Parliament, by rule specify.

Preventive Detention in India
Supreme Court has ruled that "preventive detention" is a serious invasion of personal liberty, and therefore whatever little safeguards the Constitution and the law authorizing such action to provide must be strictly adhered to.

Preventive detention in India refers to the power of the government to detain a person without trial for a limited period in order to prevent them from acting in a manner prejudicial to the security of the state, maintenance of public order, or maintenance of essential supplies and services. Preventive detention is controversial because it allows the government to detain a person without trial, which goes against the principle of personal liberty guaranteed by the Constitution of India. However, it is considered necessary in certain circumstances to maintain public order and prevent acts that may pose a threat to the security of the state.

Section 149-153 of Code on Criminal Procedure as well as the National Security Act 1980, and Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 deals with the Preventive actions of the Police. Constitution under Articles 22 gives protection from preventive detention, but these protections are not available to a person arrested or detained under preventive detention laws.

Collegium System for the appointment of Judges

The Supreme Court (SC) Collegium has opposed a proposal to recommend 4 new judges, including a Supreme Court lawyer, to the top court through a written note instead of a formal meeting by the Chief Justice of India (CJI). As per the Convention, the Collegium holds physical meetings to discuss names for elevation, at which consensus of the 5 judges is sought.

Collegium system: It is the system of appointment and transfer of judges that has evolved through judgments of the SC. The SC collegium is headed by the CJI and comprises of 4 other senior-most judges of the Court. Similarly, High Court Collegium is led by its Chief Justice and 2 other senior-most judges of that Court.

Ordinarily case: One of the four senior-most puisne Judges of the Supreme Court would succeed the Chief Justice of India

Situational: If the situation is such that the successor Chief Justice is not one of the four senior-most puisne Judges, he must invariably be made part of the collegium.

The procedure to appoint the next CJI is laid out in the Memorandum of Procedure (MoP) between the government and the judiciary. The MoP is the list of rules and procedures for the appointment of judges to the Supreme Court and the high courts. It is a document framed by the government and the judiciary together. The procedure was evolved through 3 Supreme Court judgments that are popularly known as the 3-Judges cases.

These are:
1. SP Gupta v Union of India (1981),
2. Supreme Court Advocates-on-Record Association v Union of India (1993), and
3. In re Special Reference No. 1 of 1998.

After these judgments, the Union Government framed a MoP in June 1999, for the appointment of judges and chief justices of the high courts and the Supreme Court.

Delimitation Commission in India

The Delimitation orders, redrawing Legislative Assembly and Lok Sabha constituencies of UT Jammu and Kashmir, have acquired the "force of law".

Constitutional Basis for Delimitation
- Under Article 82: Parliament enacts a Delimitation Act after every Census.
- Under Article 170: States also get divided into territorial constituencies as per the Delimitation Act after every Census.
- Once the Act is in force, the Union Government sets up a Delimitation Commission.
- The Delimitation Commission is an independent body constituted under Article 82 after the Parliament enacted a Delimitation Act after every census.

The *Delimitation Commission* is appointed by the President of India and works in collaboration with the Election Commission of India. The Constitution mandates that the Commission's orders are final and cannot be questioned before any court as it would hold up an election indefinitely. When the orders of the Delimitation Commission are laid before the Lok Sabha or State Legislative Assembly, they cannot effect any modification in the orders. The first delimitation exercise was carried out by the President (with the help of the Election Commission) in 1950-51. It comprises of Retired Supreme Court Judge, Chief Election Commissioner, Respective State Election Commissioners

SC reiterated the importance of conducting a psychological evaluation for death sentence convicts
In a significant order, Supreme Court has reiterated the importance of conducting a psychological evaluation of convicts who have been awarded death sentences. It called for psychological evaluation of condemned prisoners by expert doctor.

Capital Punishment stands for most severe form of punishment. It is the punishment which is awarded for the most heinous and grievous crimes against humanity.

Certain offences under Indian Penal Code, for which the offenders can be sentenced to punishment of death are: Murder (*Section 302*), Dacoity with murder (*Section 396*), Criminal Conspiracy (*Section 120B*), Waging war against the Government of India or attempting to do so (*Section 121*), Abatement of mutiny (*Section 132*) and others.

The term death penalty is sometimes used interchangeably with capital punishment, though imposition of the penalty is not always followed by execution, it can be commutated into life imprisonment or pardoned by the President under Article 72 of Indian Constitution.

Major Cases Related to Capital Punishment in India:
- *Jagmohan Singh V/s State of UP 1973:* The Supreme Court held that according to Article 21 deprivation of life is constitutionally permissible if that is done according to the procedure established by law.
- *Bachan Singh V/s State of Punjab 1979:* In this case the Supreme Court held that capital punishment should only be given in rarest of rare cases.
- *Machhi Singh V/s State of Punjab 1983:* The Supreme Court outlined certain factors that determine whether a case should be considered rarest of rares.

6. Governance

INTERPOL launches first-ever Police Metaverse
International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) has launched the first ever 'Police Metaverse' specifically designed for law enforcement agencies worldwide during its 90th General Assembly in New Delhi.

Metaverse refers to real-time 3D virtual spaces, where users can meet, create, socialise, work, buy goods and services and attend events with other people who are not in same physical space. INTERPOL metaverse allows registered users to take virtual tour of its General Secretariat headquarters in France's Lyon, interact with other officers via their avatars, and take training courses in forensic investigation and other policing skills.

National Central Bureau (NCB) in India is the sole authorized agency in India for contacts with the police agencies of the other countries. The NCB acts as a branch of the Central Bureau of Investigation. It is under the control of a Deputy Director and 2 Assistant Directors.

Special Remission for Prisoners Eligibility
The Ministry of Home Affairs has framed guidelines that 12 categories of convicts, including "prisoners convicted for the offence of rape" are NOT eligible to be released prematurely under a special remission scheme to commemorate 75 years of Independence.

Prisoners Eligible for Special Remission:
- Women and Transgender convicts of ages 50 and above and male convicts of 60 and above.
- Physically challenged or disabled convicts with 70% disability and more who have completed 50% of their total sentence period.
- Terminally ill convicted prisoners who have completed two-thirds of their total sentence.
- Poor or indigent prisoners who have completed their sentence.
- Persons who committed an offence at a young age (18-21).

Prisoners Excluded from the Scheme
Persons convicted with a death sentence or an offence for which the punishment of death has been specified or life imprisonment or terror-related crime, dowry deaths or counterfeiting currency (Money laundering Act, 2002), the serious offence of rape, and human trafficking. Cases related to POCSO Act 2012.

Maharashtra Government restores 'general consent' for CBI
Maharashtra Government has restored general consent for Central Bureau of India (CBI).

General Consent is normally given by States to help the CBI in the seamless investigation of cases of corruption against Central Government employees in their states. This is essentially consent by default, which means CBI may begin investigations taking consent as having been already given.

The Mediation Bill, 2021 introduced in Rajya Sabha
The Mediation Bill, 2021 was introduced in the Rajya Sabha with the Parliamentary Standing Committee being tasked with a review of the Bill.

While there is no standalone legislation for mediation in India, there are several statutes containing mediation provisions, such as the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908, the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996, the Companies Act, 2013, the Commercial Courts Act, 2015, and the Consumer Protection Act, 2019.

India is a signatory to the Singapore Convention on Mediation (formally the United Nations Convention on International Settlement Agreements Resulting from Mediation).

Government sets up a Commission to study SC status of Dalits post conversion
The Union Government has set up a 3-member Commission headed by former Chief Justice of India K.G. Balakrishnan to study the possibility of according to Scheduled Caste (SC) status to Dalits who have converted to religions other than Buddhism and Sikhism.

The *Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order 1950* provides that only those belonging to Hindu, Sikh and Buddhist communities can be categorized as SCs. Originally it was limited to only Hindus. However subsequent amendments in 1956 and 1990 included Sikhs and Buddhists respectively.

Lok Adalats in India
It was reported that over 450 prisoners have walked free in Chhattisgarh after Lok Adalats — a first of its kind initiative anywhere in the country — were set up in jails across the State. These courts will be held every working Saturday and provide relief to undertrials, and in some cases convicted prisoners, by explaining their rights and legal options such as plea bargaining and settlement.

Lok Adalat, means '*People's Court*', is based on Gandhian principles. NALSA along with other Legal Services Institutions conducts Lok Adalats. Lok Adalat is one of the alternative dispute redressal mechanisms, it is a forum where disputes/cases pending in the court of law or at pre-litigation stage are settled/ compromised amicably. Lok Adalats have been given statutory status under the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987. Under the said Act, the award (decision) made by the Lok Adalats is deemed to be a decree of a civil court and is final and binding on all parties and no appeal against such an award lies before any court of law. If the parties are not satisfied with the award of the Lok Adalat though there is no provision for an appeal against such an award, but they are free to initiate litigation by approaching the court of appropriate jurisdiction by filing a case by following the required procedure, in exercise of their right to litigate.

There is no court fee payable when a matter is filed in a Lok Adalat. If a matter pending in the court of law is referred to the Lok Adalat and is settled subsequently, the court fee originally paid in the court on the complaints/petition is also refunded back to the parties. The persons deciding the cases in the Lok Adalats are called the Members of the Lok Adalats, they have the role of statutory conciliators only and do not have any judicial role; therefore they can only persuade the parties to come to a conclusion for settling the dispute outside the court in the Lok Adalat and shall not pressurize or coerce any of the parties to compromise or settle cases or matters either directly or indirectly. Mobile Lok Adalats are also organized in various parts of the country which travel from one location to another to resolve disputes in order to facilitate the resolution of disputes through this mechanism. The first Lok Adalat camp was organized in Gujarat in 1982 as a voluntary and conciliatory agency. It was given statutory status under the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987.

Nature of Cases to be Referred to Lok Adalat:
- Any case pending before any court.
- Any dispute which has not been brought before any court and is likely to be filed before the court.

Provided that any matter relating to an offence not compoundable under the law shall not be settled in Lok Adalat.

Article 39A of the Constitution of India deals with the provisions of equal justice and free legal aid.

Task Force setup to regulate online gaming submitted its Report to MeitY
An inter-ministerial task force, set up by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, has prepared a final report of its recommendations to regulate the online gaming industry in India. The task force has proposed the creation of a central regulatory body for the sector, clearly defining what games of skill and chance are, and bringing online gaming under the purview of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002.

Types of online gaming
- e-sports (well-organized electronic sports which include professional players),
- Fantasy sports
- Casual games: these can be either skill-based (mental skill) or chance based (based on a random activity like a roll of a dice) online games.

Regulation in other countries
- *China*: They limit children to just 3 hours weekly of online games time – an hour between 8 PM and 9 PM on Friday, Saturday and Sunday most weeks.
- *South Korea:* The Shutdown Law prohibits online game companies from providing services to youth under the age of 16 between midnight and 6 AM.

Government asks States to install local servers to improve online land registration
To boost the digitalization of land records in India, the Central Government has asked the State Governments to set up a local server for the National Generic Document Registration System (NGDRS). This system provides ample options for online property registration. Along with ensuring digitalization of old land records, the government is also planning to come up with an online registration system under the Digital India Land Records Modernization Programme (DILRMP). The program is being implemented by the Ministry of Rural Development.

Digital India Land Records Modernization Programme is a government initiative in India aimed at digitizing land records and making them readily accessible to citizens. The program aims to increase transparency and efficiency in the land records system by computerizing records, mapping lands and implementing land registration and administration systems. This initiative is a part of the larger "Digital India" program, which aims to transform India into a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy.

Other measures taken to promote Digitization
- National Generic Document Registration System (NGDRS) is an in-house advanced software application for the registration system developed by NIC.
- Unique Land Parcel Identification Number (ULPIN) System provides a unique ID of 14 digits for every plot of land in the country based on the Georeference coordinate of vertices of the parcel.
- BhuNaksha: A Solution for digital Cadastral Mapping.
- Survey of Villages Abadi and Mapping with Improvised Technology in Village Areas (SVAMITVA) scheme aims to demarcate inhabited (Abadi) land and provide Record of Rights/Property Cards in rural areas through the latest surveying drone technology.

Government notifies amendment to IT Rules 2021
Government has notified Amendments to the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules 2021 for an Open, Safe & Trusted and Accountable Internet.

Key Amendments

- *Legal obligation on intermediaries:* Take reasonable efforts to prevent users from uploading content that intentionally communicates any misinformation or information that is patently false or untrue. ○ 72-hour time frame for content removal instead of 24 hours.
- *Regional languages:* For effective communication of the rules and regulations of the intermediary, communication should be done in regional Indian languages as well.
- *Removing the words 'defamatory' and 'libellous':* Whether any content is defamatory or libellous will be determined through judicial review.
- *Respect rights:* The rules have made it explicit for the intermediary to respect the rights accorded to the citizens under Articles 14, 19 and 21 of the Constitution.
- *Grievance Appellate Committee(s):* It will be established to allow users to appeal against the inaction or decisions taken by intermediaries on user complaints. Users have the right to approach courts for any remedy.

Prasar Bharti

The Ministry of Information & Broadcasting has issued an advisory stating that no Ministry or Department of the Governments at the Center, States and Union Territories and their associated entities should enter into broadcasting or distribution of broadcasting activities in future. The advisory had been issued in view of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India's (TRAI) recommendation, the Supreme Court judgment in the Cricket Association of Bengal case and the Law Ministry's legal opinion.

Prasar Bharati is a statutory autonomous body. It is the Public Service Broadcaster of the country. It was established under the Prasar Bharati Act in 1997. The Prasar Bharati Corporation's main objective is to provide autonomy to Doordarshan and Akashvani in order to "educate and entertain the public.

Govt. designates Debt Recovery Tribunals for speedy adjudication
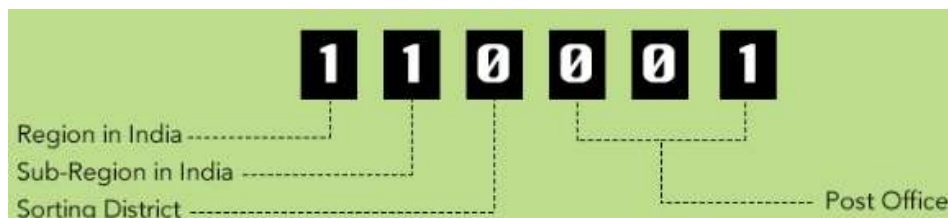
Ministry of Finance has designated one Debts Recovery Tribunal (DRT) each in Chennai, Delhi and Mumbai for speedy adjudication and recovery in high-value cases of Rs. 100 crore and above.

The *Recovery of Debts and Bankruptcy Act (RDB Act), 1993* provides for establishment of DRTs with original jurisdiction and Debts Recovery Appellate Tribunals (DRATs) with appellate jurisdiction. Objective of these Tribunals is to provide expeditious adjudication and recovery of debts due to Banks and Financial Institutions. It also hears cases filed under the *Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (SARFAESI)* Act,2002.

Govt. releases Commemorative Postage Stamp on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee of PIN Code

Government has released a Commemorative Postage Stamp on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee of PIN Code.

A *Postal Index Number (PIN)* code is a 6-digit code used by India Post in the Indian postal code system. Also referred to as Zip codes or area codes, every digit in these codes indicates a specific meaning. Shriram Bhikaji Velankar, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Communications, introduced the PIN code system on 15th August 1972.

Overall, India is divided into 9 postal regions (zones) with the first 8 as geographical regions and 9th being Indian Army.

RBI launches monitoring system – DAKSH

Reserve Bank of India has launched its Advanced Supervisory Monitoring System – DAKSH, which is expected to make the supervisory processes more robust. DAKSH means 'efficient' and 'competent', reflecting the underlying capabilities of the application.

DAKSH is a web-based end-to-end workflow application that monitors compliance requirements in a more focused manner with the objective of further improving the compliance culture in Supervised Entities (SEs) like Banks, NBFCs, etc. The application will also enable seamless communication, inspection planning, execution, cyber incident reporting, and analysis, which enables anytime-anywhere secure access.

7. International Relations

DPIIT hosts Conference on Business 20 (B20) Indonesia Global Dialogue
Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) has hosted Conference on B20 Indonesia Global Dialogue in partnership with Confederation of Indian Industry (CII). The Indian Government side was represented by Shri Amitabh Kant, India's Sherpa to G20.

Business 20 (B20) was formed in 2010, it is the official G20 dialogue forum with global business community. It aims to deliver concrete actionable policy recommendations on the priorities by each rotating presidency to spur economic growth and development.

World Bank makes appointments under the Indus Waters Treaty
The World Bank has appointed a "neutral expert" (*Michael Lino*) and a Chairman (*Sean Murphy*) of the Court of Arbitration regarding the Kishenganga and Ratle Hydro-Electric Power Plants, in view of disagreements and differences between India and Pakistan over the 1960 Indus Water Treaty.

India and Pakistan signed the treaty in 1960 after nine years of negotiations, with the Washington-based World Bank being a signatory. The treaty sets out a mechanism for cooperation and information exchange between the two countries regarding their use of the rivers. Under the Indus Water Treaty (IWT), all the waters of the eastern rivers – Sutlej, Beas, and Ravi – amounting to around 33 Million Acre Feet (MAF) annually is allocated to India for unrestricted use. The waters of western rivers—Indus, Jhelum, and Chenab—amounting to around 135 MAF annually have been assigned largely to Pakistan.

Important international principles for water-sharing
- The Harmon doctrine: It postulates that every state is sovereign in its water resources and has right to do whatever it likes within its territorial jurisdiction.
- Campione Rules: It outline the need to include the water of an aquifer (that is, underground water or fossil water) while determining reasonable equitable share.
- Helsinki rules, 1996: It established the principle of "reasonable and equitable utilization" of the waters of an international drainage basin among the riparian states as the basic principle of international water law.
- Berlin Rules 2004: It provides that basin states should manage the water of an international drainage basin having due regard for the obligation not to cause significant harm to other basin states.

India-Africa Defence Dialogue held in Gandhinagar, Gujarat
India-Africa Defence Dialogue (IADD) was held on the sidelines of DefExpo 2022 in Gandhinagar, Gujarat. Gandhinagar Declaration was adopted as an outcome document of IADD 2022.
Theme: *'Adopting Strategy for Synergizing and Strengthening Defence and Security Cooperation'*

IADD was institutionalised (in 2020) to be held biennially during successive DefExpo.
Initiatives taken in this regard:
- Africa-India Field Training Exercise 2019 (*AFINDEX-19*) to strengthen defence preparedness and security.
- India-Africa Defence Ministers Conclave (*IADMC*) in 2020 that led to the adoption of the Lucknow Declaration, which pertains specifically to defence, military, and security cooperation.

IADMC provides a concrete platform for Indian and African leaders to conduct sustained discussions at the topmost level.

FATF announces removal of Pakistan from its Grey List
Financial Action Task Force (FATF) has announced the removal of Pakistan from its "*Grey List*." Pakistan was included in the grey list for the first time in 2012 and remained in it till 2015. In 2018 FATF Grey listed Pakistan for the second time.

Black List: Only those countries are included in this list that FATF considers as uncooperative tax havens for terror funding. These countries are known as Non-Cooperative Countries or Territories (NCCTs). In other words, countries that are supporting terror funding and money laundering activities are placed in the Blacklist.

Grey List: Those countries which are not considered as the safe haven for supporting terror funding and money laundering; included in this list. The inclusion in this list is not as severe as blacklisted.

When a country comes in the Grey list, it faces many problems like:
- Economic sanctions from international institutions (IMF, World Bank, ADB etc.) and countries,
- The problem in getting loans from international institutions (IMF, World Bank, ADB etc.) and countries,
- Overall Reduction in its international trade
- International boycott

The *Financial Action Task Force (FATF)* is an independent inter-governmental body. FATF is the global money laundering and terrorist financing watchdog. The inter-governmental body sets international standards that aim to prevent these illegal activities. It was established in 1989, by a Group of Seven (G7) Summit held in Paris.

China's Wolf Warrior diplomacy
Chinese aggressive posturing and tough approach to international relations is called Wolf Warrior diplomacy.

"Wolf Warrior diplomacy" is a term that has been used to describe the more assertive and nationalistic foreign policy stance adopted by the Chinese Government in recent years. The term is a reference to a popular series of Chinese action movies called "Wolf Warrior," which depict a patriotic Chinese soldier who fights against foreign enemies to protect his country. The concept of "Wolf Warrior diplomacy" suggests that China is becoming more willing to use its military and economic power to assert its interests on the world stage, and to defend itself against perceived threats from other countries.

Scorched Earth tactics
Russia has been alleged to be using "energy and hunger" as weapons as part of its "scorched earth tactics" on Ukraine and Europe. *Scorched Earth tactics* is a strategy that seeks to deplete the enemy's resources to sustain warfare and break their morale by inflicting heavy hardships on combatants and non-combatants alike. Harming civilians as part of this strategy has been banned under the 1977 Geneva Convention.

Geneva Convention 1977: The Geneva Convention of 1977 is a set of protocols to the Geneva Conventions of 1949, which are the cornerstone of international humanitarian law. The Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their additional protocols aim to protect the victims of armed conflicts, whether they are taking place in times of peace or war, and to provide for the humane treatment of wounded and sick soldiers, prisoners of war, and civilians.

5th assembly of ISA held in New Delhi
The Fifth Assembly of the International Solar Alliance was held in New Delhi. The Republic of India holds the office of the President of the ISA Assembly, with the Government of France as Co-President. Following the 5th General Assembly, three analytical reports were also launched, namely:
- World Solar Technology Report

- World Solar Market Report
- World Solar Investment Report

The *International Solar Alliance* is an international organisation with 109 member and signatory countries. It works with governments to improve energy access and security worldwide and promote solar power as a sustainable way to transition to a carbon-neutral future. Important projects under ISA: *One Sun One World One Grid (OSOWOG); ISA Solar Technology and Application Resource Centre (ISTAR C); Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Scheme.*

Special Meeting of UNSC – Counter Terror Committee (CTC) held in India
Special Meeting of the United Nations Security Council's Counter Terrorism Committee (CTC) was held in Mumbai and Delhi.

The Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is a subsidiary body of the UNSC established in the wake of the 11th September 2001 (*popularly known as 9/11*) terrorist attacks on the United States. Its mandate is to enhance the ability of the international community to counter terrorism and to prevent the financing of terrorism. The CTC also works closely with other UN bodies and international organizations, such as the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) and the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering (FATF), to promote coordinated international action on counter-terrorism.

Nord Stream
According to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the methane released due to ruptures in the underwater Nord Stream natural gas pipeline from Russia to Germany is the single-biggest such release of the greenhouse gas.

Nord Stream is a natural gas pipeline through the Baltic Sea. The pipeline is a key factor in securing energy security in Europe. It consists of 2 pipelines. The twin pipelines together can transport a combined total of 110 billion cubic metres of gas a year to Europe for at least 50 years. The Nord Stream crosses the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) of several countries including Russia, Finland, Sweden, Denmark and Germany, and the territorial waters of Russia, Denmark, and Germany.

Kyrgyzstan cancels joint Military Exercises – CSTO
Kyrgyzstan has unilaterally cancelled joint military drills between the 6 nations comprising the Russia-led Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO).

The Collective Security Treaty Organization (est. In 1992) is an intergovernmental military alliance in Eurasia consisting of 6 post-Soviet states – Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Tajikistan.

8. Awards and Recognition

Nobel Prize Winners for the year 2022 announced

The Nobel Prize is widely considered the world's most prestigious award. It is awarded for achievements in Physics, Chemistry, Physiology or Medicine, Literature, Peace and Economic Science. Prizes in physics, chemistry, physiology or medicine, literature and peace have been awarded since 1901 – and economic sciences since 1968. It is presented by Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences. The prestigious award comes with a gold medal and 10 million Swedish kronor (over $1.14 million). The prize money comes from a bequest left by the prize's creator, Swedish inventor Alfred Nobel, who died in 1895.

Details of this year winners are given below.

- *Nobel Medicine Prize:* The Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 2022 was awarded to Svante Pääbo "for his discoveries concerning the genomes of extinct hominins and human evolution."
- *Nobel Prize in Physics:* The Nobel Prize in Physics 2022 was awarded jointly to Alain Aspect, John F. Clauser and Anton Zeilinger "for experiments with entangled photons, establishing the violation of Bell inequalities and pioneering quantum information science."
- *Nobel Prize in Chemistry:* The Nobel Prize in Chemistry 2022 was awarded jointly to Carolyn Bertozzi, Morten Meldal and K. Barry Sharpless "for the development of click chemistry and bio-orthogonal chemistry."
- *Nobel Prize in Literature:* The Nobel Prize in Literature 2022 was awarded to Annie Ernaux (France) "for the courage and clinical acuity with which she uncovers the roots, estrangements and collective restraints of personal memory."
- *Nobel Peace Prize:* The 2022 Nobel Peace Prize is awarded to human rights advocate Ales Bialiatski (Belarus), the Russian human rights organisation Memorial and the Ukrainian human rights organisation Centre for Civil Liberties.
- *Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences:* The Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences was awarded jointly to Ben Bernanke, Douglas Diamond and Philip Dybvig "for research on banks and financial crises."

A *bank run* occurs when many clients withdraw their money from a bank because they believe the bank may cease to function in the near future. For example, 1930 Economic crisis was majorly due to the Bank Run. Previously it was believed that bank failures were "consequences" and not the "cause" of the financial crisis. The Economist recommended that countries should have deposit insurance provisions (e.*g., India provides Rs 5 Lakh deposit insurance under DICGS*) to build trust and prevent a bank run.

Indian Nobel Prize Winners over the time are given below.

Name	Year	Field
Rabindranath Tagore	1913	Literature
C V Raman	1930	Physics
Har Gobind Khorana	1968	Medicine
Mother Teresa	1979	Nobel Peace Prize
Subramanyan Chandrasekhar	1983	Physics
Amartya Sen	1998	Economics
Venkataraman Ramankrishnan	2009	Chemistry
Kailash Satyarathi	2014	Nobel Peace Prize
Abhijit Banerjee	2019	Economics

7th Edition of Swachh Survekshan (SS) 2021 awarded by the President
The President of India has awarded the respective cities in the 7th edition of Swachh Survekshan (SS) 2022 for their performance in maintaining cleanliness, hygiene and sanitation. The assessment was conducted in 3 phases in July-August, September-October and November 2021 to January 2022.

Swachh Survekshan is an annual survey of cleanliness, hygiene and sanitation in cities and towns across India. It was launched as part of the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, which aimed to make India clean and free of open defecation. The first survey was undertaken in 2016.

Swachh Survekshan 2021 Categories:
*   *Cleanest Cities (less than 1 lakh Population):* Panchgani (Maharashtra), Patan (Chhattisgarh) and Karad (Maharashtra)
*   *Cleanest Cities (more than 1 lakh Population):* Indore (for 6th consecutive time), Surat and Navi Mumbai
*   *Fastest Mover City:* Shivamogga (Karnataka)
*   *Best Ganga Town:* Haridwar (Uttarakhand)
*   *Cleanest State (More than 100 Urban Local Bodies):* Madhya Pradesh
*   *Cleanest State (Less than 100 Urban Local Bodies):* Tripura
*   *Safai Mitra Suraksha category:* Tirupati (Andhra Pradesh)

Swatch Survekshan Gramin-2022 awards announced
The Swachh Survekshan Gramin-2022 award were announced. It ranks States and districts on the basis of their performance attained on key quantitative and qualitative Swachh Bharat Mission Gramin (SBM-G) parameters and engagement of the rural community in the improvement of their sanitation status.

Large States category: Telangana (first position); Haryana; Tamil Nadu.
Small States and UT Category: Andaman and Nicobar Islands (first position) Dadar and Nagar Haveli & Daman and Diu; Sikkim.

Hyderabad wins World Green City Award, 2022
Telangana's Hyderabad city has won the overall 'World Green City Award 2022' and 'Living Green for Economic Recovery and Inclusive Growth' award at the International Association of Horticulture Producers (AIPH), World Green City Awards 2022 held in Jeju, South Korea. Hyderabad also became the only Indian city to win laurels on the International platform.

Angela Merkel receives 2022 UNHCR Nansen Refugee Award
Dr. Angela Merkel, the former Federal Chancellor of Germany, has awarded the 2022 UNHCR Nansen Refugee Award at a special ceremony held in Geneva, Switzerland. The prize was in honour of "the countless people who lent a hand" when large numbers of refugees arrived in Europe in 2015 and 2016.
UNHCR: *"United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees"*

UNHCR Nansen Refugee Award: Since 1954, the UNHCR Nansen Refugee Award has honoured individuals, groups or organizations committed to working for refugees or people who have been internally displaced. The award is named for 'Fridtjof Nansen', a Norwegian explorer and diplomat who served as the League of Nation's first High Commissioner for Refugees from 1921 until his death in 1930. Nansen won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1922 for his work on behalf of those who were displaced during the First World War and other conflicts.

Valley of Words Book Awards

Anees Salim's The Odd Book of Baby Names (English fiction) and Rudrangshu Mukherjee's Tagore & Gandhi: Walking Alone, Walking Together (English non-fiction) were among the 8 that were adjudged the best books of the year at the 6th edition of 'Valley of Words Book Awards'.

The Valley of Words Book Awards is considered one of the most comprehensive independent literary award programmes in India.

- Hindi fiction: Khela by Neelakshi Singh (*Setu Publications*)
- Hindi non-fiction: Jeete Ji Allahabad by Mamta Kalia (*Rajkamal Prakashan*)

SASTRA Ramanujan Prize for 2022

The SASTRA Ramanujan Prize for 2022 will be awarded to Yunqing Tang, Assistant Professor with the University of California, Berkeley, U.S.A. The award, instituted by the Shanmugha Arts, Science, Technology & Research Academy (SASTRA) in 2005 with a cash prize of $10,000, is presented annually to individuals aged 32 and below, who made outstanding contributions in the field of mathematics, influenced by Srinivasa Ramanjuan in a broad sense.

Dr. Vivek Lall awarded Lifetime Achievement Award

Indian-origin, Dr. Vivek Lall has been given with the Lifetime Achievement Award by US President Joe Biden with the citation of '*With Grateful Recognition'*. The citation was given to Dr. Lall by the AmeriCorps, which is a part of the US Government and aims to foster activities that bring Americans closer together to "serve communities."

Sri Lankan author wins Booker Prize 2022

Sri Lankan author, Shehan Karunatilaka has won the prestigious Booker Prize for fiction, for his book '*The Seven Moons of Maali Almeida'. Booker Prize* is awarded every year to the best novel that was "written in English and published in the UK or Ireland". It was launched in 1969 and was sponsored by Man Group. It carries an award of £ 50,000.

The Seven Moons of Maali Almeida tells the story of a war photographer who has woken up dead in what seems to be a celestial visa office. He has 'seven moons' to try and solve the mystery of his death and to help unveil a cache of photos that will rock war-torn Sri Lanka.

9. Social Development

4 multilateral Agencies launches a global 'One Health' Plan

Four multilateral agencies have launched a global 'One Health' plan to better address threats to all living beings as well as the environment. These are -

- United Nations (UN) Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO),
- the UN Environment Programme (UNEP),
- the World Health Organization (WHO),
- the World Organisation for Animal Health

They have unveiled the 5-year One Health Joint Action Plan. The Joint Plan of Action will create a framework and integrate systems and capacity to collectively better prevent, predict, detect and respond to health threats. This will help improve the health of humans, animals, plants, and the environment, while contributing to sustainable development.

One Health is an integrated, unifying approach that aims to sustainably balance and optimise the health of humans, animals, plants and ecosystems. The concept recognises the health of humans, domestic and wild animals, plants and the wider environment (including ecosystems) are closely linked and interdependent. It is the primary approach for addressing the complex health challenges facing our society, such as ecosystem degradation, food system failures, infectious diseases and antimicrobial resistance (AMR).

Other Global initiatives:

- *The Pilanesberg Resolution 2001:* It was targeted at multilateral and bilateral donors and governmental authorities to consider potential wildlife health impacts in development projects.
- *One World-One Health:* It was introduced by the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) in 2007 along with 12 recommendations (*Manhattan Principles*) that focused on establishing a more holistic approach to preventing epidemic disease and maintaining ecosystem integrity.
- National Framework for One Health 2021: It was introduced by FAO which guides towards overcoming the systemic barriers to implement the One Health approach.

Dr Dilip Mahalanabis who pioneered ORS passed away

Dr. Dilip Mahalanabis who pioneered the proper practical, emergency use of Oral Rehydration Solution (*commonly known as ORS*) for diarrhoeal diseases has passed away. He was working in refugee camps during the 1971 Bangladesh Liberation war when he came up with ORS. In 2002, Dr Dilip Mahalanabis (along with Dr. Nathaniel F Pierce) was awarded the Pollin Prize by Columbia University (considered the equivalent of Nobel in Pediatrics).

Oral Rehydration Salts (ORS) are a mixture of electrolytes (salts) and carbohydrates (in the form of sugar) dissolved in water. They are used to replace salts and water that the body loses when you have dehydration caused by gastroenteritis, diarrhoea or vomiting. The electrolytes are potassium and sodium.

National Curriculum Framework for Foundational Stage

Government has launched the National Curriculum Framework for Foundational Stage and the pilot project of Balvatika 49 Kendriya Vidyalayas across the country.

As per the National Education Policy (NEP), 2020, following four NCFs will be developed:

- National Curriculum Framework for Early Childhood Care and Education (NCFECCE)
- National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCFSE)

- National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCFTE)
- National Curriculum Framework for Adult Education (NCFAE)

NCF, under NCFECCE, for foundational stage is the first ever integrated Curriculum Framework for children between ages 3-8 in India.

This is the first Stage in the 5+3+3+4 Curricular and Pedagogical restructuring of School Education and will be an integral part of the of the overall NCFECCE, covering education for children up to the age of 18.

Panchakosha system for Education
The framework has listed the '*panchakosha*' concept for children's education. It comprises of physical development (*sharirik vikas*), development of life energy (*pranik vikas*), emotional and mental development (*manasik vikas*), intellectual development (*bauddhik vikas*) and spiritual development (*chaitsik vikas*). The Panchakosha description is provided in the Taittiriya Upanishad.

BCCI announces Pay Equity Policy
Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has announced a "pay equity policy" for its contracted women cricketers in the country. This means that the match fee for both Men and Women Cricketers will now be the same from the BCCI. With this, India has become the second country in international cricket to implement equal pay for men and women players, first being New Zealand.

Note that, India ranked 135 among a total of 146 countries in the Global Gender Gap Index 2022 released in July 2022.

Related Constitutional provisions:
- *Article 16*: All citizens have a right to equality of opportunity in relation to matters of public employment or appointment to any office under the state.
- *Article 38(2)*: strives to minimize inequalities in income among individuals.
- *Article 39(d):* Promise equal pay for equal work for both men and women.

Equal Pay International Coalition (EPIC): Led by ILO, UN Women and OECD, it is an initiative driven by stakeholders committed to reduce gender pay gap and make equal pay for work of equal value a reality across all countries and sectors. It contributes to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) target 8.5 focusing on equal pay between women and men for work of equal value.

World Bank releases a report titled- Poverty and Shared Prosperity 2022
World Bank has released a report titled – Poverty and Shared Prosperity 2022. The edition provides the first comprehensive look at the landscape of poverty in the aftermath of an extraordinary series of shocks to the global economy. The report identifies how governments can optimize fiscal policy to help correct course.

Poverty Alleviation Schemes in India.
Health and Nutrition
- Ayushman Bharat (*Universal Health Coverage*)
- Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (*for Pregnant and Lactating mothers*)
- POSHAN Abhiyaan
- National Food Security Act, 2013 and Public Distribution System (*PDS*)

Employment and Livelihood
- Deen Dayal Antodaya Yojana – National Livelihood Mission
- Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (*MNREGA*)
- Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana

Social Security
- Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana
- Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana
- Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maandhan Yojana (*Social security for unorganized sector*)

Schemes to overcome impact of COVID-19
- Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana package for food, insurance of health workers etc.
- PM CARES for Children Scheme
- PM Street Vendor's Atma Nirbhar Nidhi (*micro-credit facility for street vendors*)

Others
- Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Affordable Housing)
- Pradhan Mantri Ujjawala Yojana (Affordable cooking fuel)

Sandalwood Spike Disease (SSD)
It was reported in a study that Sandalwood Spike Disease (SSD) is posing a severe threat on the commercial cultivation of Sandalwood.

Sandalwood Spike Disease is an infectious disease which is caused by phytoplasma. It is a bacterial parasite of plant tissues which are transmitted by insect vectors and involved in plant-to-plant transmission. The disease was first reported in Kodagu, Karnataka in 1899. There is no cure as of now for the infection. Presently, there is no option but to cut down and remove the infected tree to prevent the spread of the disease.

NCST expresses concern over deaths caused by Pyrophyllite chronic exposure
The National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) has expressed deep concern over the misery and despair experienced by the families of people died following exposure to a pyrophyllite grinding unit in Madarangajodi village in Odisha's Keonjhar district.

Pyrophyllite is a hydrated aluminum silicate mineral used in a variety of industrial applications, including as a filler material in paper and rubber production, as a lubricant in ceramics production, and as a pigment in paint and cosmetics. Chronic exposure to pyrophyllite dust can also lead to the development of lung diseases, such as silicosis.

EU new law on standard charger
As per a new law passed by the European Union Parliament, all new Smartphones, Tablets and Cameras will have a single standard charger from late 2024. It mandates smartphone, laptop and camera manufacturing companies to adopt a standard charger, atleast in Europe. Makers of laptops will have extra time, from early 2026, to also follow suit.

Government initiatives for Mental Health Concerns at working places
WHO and the International Labour Organization (ILO) have called for concrete actions to address mental health concerns in the working population.

Government Initiatives
- *Constitutional Provision*: The Right to Health (including mental healthcare) is a fundamental right under Article 21 of the Constitution.
- *National Mental Health Program (NMHP):* To address the huge burden of mental disorders and shortage of qualified professionals.
- *Mental Health Care Act 2017*: It guarantees every affected person access to mental healthcare and treatment from services run or funded by the Government.
- *Kiran Helpline*: Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (2020) launched a 24/7 toll-free helpline.
- World Mental Health Day is observed on 10th October every year, with the overall objective of raising awareness of mental health issues around the world and mobilizing efforts in support of mental health.
- Manodarpan Initiative: It is an initiative of the Ministry of Education aimed to provide psychosocial support to students, family members and teachers for their mental health and well-being during the times of Covid-19 pandemic.
- MANAS Mobile App: In 2021, the Government of India launched the MANAS (Mental Health and Normalcy Augmentation System) Mobile App to promote mental wellbeing across age groups.

Promotion of Indian Languages

The Ministry of Education in November 2021 constituted a high-powered committee, the Bharatiya Bhasha Samiti, for the promotion of Indian languages, led by the Sanskrit proponent and Padma Shri awardee Chamu Krishna Shastry. The committee is tasked with preparing an action plan for the growth of Indian languages as prescribed under National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which requires mother tongue to be the medium of instruction in schools and higher education institutions.

Key focus areas for promoting Indian languages:
- *Bilingual*: Prepare teachers to be bilingual.
- *Qualification*: Incorporating languages as a qualification.

Three-Language Formula (by Kothari Committee)
The formula as enunciated in the 1968 National Policy Resolution provided for the study of "Hindi, English and modern Indian language (preferably one of the southern languages) in the Hindi speaking states and Hindi, English and the Regional language in the non-Hindi speaking States".

India ranked 107th in the Global Hunger Index (GHI)

In the latest edition of Global Hunger Index (GHI), India was ranked at 107 among 121 countries. The Global Hunger Index (GHI) is published annually as part of a partnership between Concern Worldwide, Ireland's largest aid and humanitarian agency and Welthungerhilfe. The first GHI report was published in 2006. The GHI is intended to be "a tool designed to comprehensively measure and track hunger at global, regional, and national levels".

Following four indicators were considered for calculating the global score out of 100, in order to decide the ranking:
- Undernourishment
- Child wasting (percentage of children below 5 years of age who have low weight for their height, reflecting acute undernutrition)
- Child stunting (percentage of children below 5 years of age who have low height for their age, reflecting chronic undernutrition)
- Child mortality (the mortality rate of children under the age of 5)

Vice President emphasis the importance of Human Rights at 30th Foundation Day of NHRC
The Vice President of India Shri Jagdeep Dhankar has stressed that human rights are quintessential for the flourishing of democracy and urged every citizen to work for the protection and promotion of the human rights of others at the 30th Foundation Day celebration of the National Human Rights Commission (12th October).

Human rights are moral principles or norms for certain standards of human behaviour and are regularly protected in municipal and international law.

Promotion and protection of human rights:
- *Article 51 A (g):* Every citizen to protect and improve the natural environment and have compassion for living creatures.
- *Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993* (as amended in 2019) provided for the constitution of a National Human Rights Commission at the Union level, which steers the State Human Rights Commission in States and Human Rights Courts.
- *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*: It is an international document adopted by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). It establishes the rights and freedoms of all members of the human race.
- *Human Rights Day* is celebrated on 10th December all around the world.
- *Freedom in the World 2021 Report* published by USA-based human rights watchdog Freedom House.
- *Human Rights Council:* The Human Rights Council is an inter-governmental body within the United Nations system responsible for strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights.
- *Amnesty International:* An international organisation of volunteers who campaign for human rights.

Madhya Pradesh to provide medical education in Hindi language
It was reported that Madhya Pradesh will soon become the first State in the country to provide medical education in Hindi.

Commitment to Reducing Inequality Index (CRII) released
Oxfam International and Development Finance International (DFI) has released the latest edition of Commitment to Reducing Inequality Index (CRII). The Index which is prepared by Oxfam International and Development Finance International (DFI) measures governments policies and actions in 3 areas proven to have a major impact on reducing inequality. The 3 areas are public services (health, education, and social protection), taxation and workers' rights.

The 2022 CRII looks at government policies and actions in 161 countries to fight inequality during the first two years of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ranking
- India's overall rank has improved by six points from 129 in 2020 to 123 in 2022.
- Norway leads the CRII followed by Germany and Australia.

10. Economy

Correlation Between Oil and US Dollar

Russia-Ukraine crisis and USA monetary tightening have impacted import-dependent countries like India. Note that, India is the world's third-largest oil consumer behind the U.S.A. and China.

Correlation Between Oil and US Dollar: The U.S. dollar is the standard currency used to pay for oil globally, prompted by an agreement between the U.S.A. and Saudi Arabia in 1945. Countries that buy crude oil and those that produce it exchange DOLLAR in a system called the petrodollar system. As the U.S.A. shifted from being a net importer to a net exporter of energy in 2020 and was the largest global producer in 2021, a rise in Oil prices helps the US earn more revenue and thus makes the US dollar stronger.

Some related terms are given below.
- *Currency Depreciation:* Currency depreciation is a fall in the value of a currency in terms of its exchange rate versus other currencies. Orderly currency depreciation can increase a country's export activity as its products and services become cheaper to buy. However, Currency depreciation in one country can spread to other countries.
- *Balance of Trade (BOT)*: Balance of Trade (BOT) is the difference between the value of a country's exports and the value of a country's imports for a given period. Balance of trade is the largest component of a country's Balance of Payments (BOP).
- *Balance of Payments (BOP)*: The Balance of Payments (BOP), is a statement of all transactions made between entities in 1 country and the rest of the world over a defined period, such as a quarter or a year.
- *Current Account Balance*: The Current Account Balance (CAB) is part of a country's financial inflow and outflow record. It is part of the balance of payments, the statement of all transactions made between one country and another.

Faceless Tax Assessment System

Under the faceless tax regime, information about high-value transactions of taxpayers is received by the tax department which is then used to issue notices under Section 148 of the Income Tax Act 1961. It was reported that thousands of such notices were issued and taxpayers had to pay tax, interest and penalties.

The *faceless tax assessment system*, launched in 2020, has put everything online — from the filing of returns to the assessment orders. It has even done away with the need for huge storage facilities for the records of taxpayers. The only 2 Departments that are required to physically interact with taxpayers are the investigation wing and international taxation.

Organic Fertilizer

India has the potential to become the hub of organic fertiliser production in the world. An *organic fertilizer* is a fertilizer that is derived from organic sources, including organic compost, cattle manures, poultry droppings and domestic sewage. It can be categorized into 2 segments, according to government rules: Biofertilizer and Organic Manure.

1. Bio-fertiliser: Bio-fertilisers are composed of living microorganisms attached to solid or liquid carriers and are useful for cultivable land, as these micro-organisms help in increasing the productivity of soil and / or crops. Examples: *Rhizobium, Azospirilium, Azotobacter, Phosphobacteria, Blue Green Algae (BGA), Mycorhiza, Azolla.*

2. *Organic manure:* Organic manure, on the other hand, refers to partially decomposed organic matter like digestate from a biogas plant, compost and vermicompost, which provides nutrients to the soil / crops and improves yield.

Sikkim is the first 'Organic State' in India.

Ministry of Commerce & Industry releases Logistics Ease Across Different States (LEADS), 2022
The Ministry of Commerce and Industry has released the Logistics Ease Across Different States (LEADS) Report 2022.

The LEADS is an indigenous data-driven index to assess logistics infrastructure, services, and human resources across all 36 States and UTs. LEADS continues to act as a guiding & bridging mechanism for the identification of interventions enhancing logistics efficiency at State/UTs. It reflects positively on international indices, like Logistics Performance Index. The first logistics report was released in 2018.

LEADS 2022 adopted classification-based grading system while previous versions were based on ranking systems for all states. 3 performance categories include:
- Achievers (States/UTs achieving 90% or more percentage) - Maharashtra tops amongst the "Achievers" states.
- Fast Movers (achieving scores between 80% to 90%)
- Aspirers (achieving scores below 80%)

The *Logistics Performance Index (LPI),* developed by the World Bank Group, is an interactive benchmarking tool created to help countries identify the challenges and opportunities they face in their performance on trade logistics and what they can do to improve their performance.

India ranked 44th on the LPI in 2018. As of 2022 no new data has been published.

Initiatives Related to Logistics: Multimodal Transportation of Goods Act, 1993; PM Gati Shakti Scheme; Multi Modal Logistics Parks; LEADS Report; Dedicated Freight Corridor; Sagarmala Projects; Bharatmala Project

Green GDP
It was reported in the RBI paper, that the Green GDP is growing faster than the traditional GDP, as India took measures to cut carbon emissions, improve resource use efficiency and boost clean energy capacity.

Green GDP considers estimates for environmental degradation, depletion of natural resources, and savings of resources and environment into the national income accounts. It involves subtraction of carbon emission cost, opportunity cost of waste generated, and adjusted savings of natural resource depletion from GDP. United Nations first proposed idea of green GDP in 1993.

India's attempts to measure Green GDP
- Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation initiated compilation of environmental accounting under Natural Capital Accounting and Valuation of Ecosystem Services (NCAVES).
- NCAVES project was launched in 2017 by UN and European Union to enhance knowledge and accounting process for ecosystem accounting.
- Green Accounting for Indian States & Union Territories Project (GAISP) to build a framework for environmentally adjusted national income accounts.

- Uttarakhand became the first State in India to measure Gross Environment Product for quantifying ecological growth measurement.

Doom Loop

According to Economists, Europe is headed for doom loop. *Doom Loop* is the circle of vulnerability where a country's banking system can be severely hurt by volatility in the price of the sovereign bonds, they hold for reserves. Thus, resulting in a contraction in lending provided by the banks. This contraction in credit, in turn, slows the domestic economy, resulting in a further deterioration in the price of the sovereign's bond issues. A country is at risk of a doom loop when a shock to one part of its economic system is amplified by its effect on another.

In Ethics/Psychology, a 'doom loop' is a negative belief cycle, where a series of beliefs, actions, and reactions work to reinforce negative beliefs and unwanted behaviours.

RBI announces SOP for Inter-operable Regulatory Sandbox (IoRS)

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has announced a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Inter-operable Regulatory Sandbox (IoRS) to regulate newer fintech products and services falling in the ambit of more than one regulator. The move is aimed at developing a clear jurisdiction where there are overlapping areas involving multiple regulators, including the RBI, Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDAI), Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA).

Inter-operable Regulatory Sandbox (IoRS) is a mechanism to facilitate testing of innovative hybrid financial products / services falling within the regulatory ambit of more than one financial sector regulator. To obviate the need of innovators, to engage with different regulators regarding their hybrid product, a common window has been made available.

RBI amends regulatory framework for ARCs

Reserve Bank of India has amended regulatory framework for Asset Reconstruction Companies (ARCs). It was based on recommendations of the Committee headed by Sudarshan Sen to undertake comprehensive review of the working of ARCs.

Asset Reconstruction Company (ARC) is a specialized financial institution that buys the Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) from banks and financial institutions so that they can clean up their balance sheets. This helps banks to concentrate in normal banking activities. Banks rather than going after the defaulters by wasting their time and effort, can sell the bad assets to the ARCs at a mutually agreed value. The ARCs are registered under the RBI.

The Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (SARFAESI) Act, 2002 provides the legal basis for the setting up of ARCs in India. The SARFAESI Act helps reconstruction of bad assets without the intervention of courts.

DPIIT launches Credit Guarantee Scheme for Startups (CGSS)

Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) has notified establishment of Credit Guarantee Scheme for Startups (CGSS). Scheme will be operated by National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company Limited.

It aims to provide credit guarantees to loans extended by Scheduled Commercial Banks, Non-Banking Financial Companies and Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) registered Alternative Investment Funds (AIFs) to finance eligible Startups. *Venture debt* is a type of loan offered by banks and non-bank lenders that is designed specifically for early stage, high-growth companies with venture capital backing.

Alternative Investment Funds (AIFs) are privately pooled investment vehicles for investing in non-traditional asset classes such as infrastructure funds, private equity funds, venture capital funds, among others. They allow investors to diversify from conventional asset classes.

Codex standards for nutmeg, saffron, chilli-peppers, and paprika finalised
Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs (CCSCH) has finalized and recommended quality standards for nutmeg, saffron, chilli-peppers, and paprika and forwarded these proposed standards to the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

The '*Codex Alimentarius*' is international food standards, guidelines and codes of practice contribute to the safety, quality and fairness of this international food trade. These food standards, guidelines and codes helps on Protecting Consumer Health and Removing Barriers to Trade. *Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC)* is the body responsible for all matters regarding the implementation of the Joint Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and WHO Food Standards Programme.

Defence Exercise in News
- *SIMBEX*: Indian has conducted 29th edition of bilateral Maritime Exercise – Singapore-India Maritime Bilateral Exercise (SIMBEX 2022) with Singapore at Visakhapatnam. It is an annual bilateral maritime exercise between the 2 nations.
- *IMT TRILAT*: It is Indian Navy's maiden Trilateral Exercise with Mozambique and Tanzania.
- *Prasthan exercise*: An offshore security exercise conducted under aegis of Headquarters, Eastern Naval Command. It is conducted every 6 months to integrate efforts of all maritime stakeholders involved in offshore defence.
- *PowerEX*: It is designed and conducted by CERT-In in collaboration with Power-CSIRTs (Computer Security Incident Response Teams in Power sector) for Power Sector Utilities. The Objective of the exercise was to "Recognize, Analyse & Respond to Cyber Incident in IT & OT Systems". The theme of the exercise was "Defending Cyber induced disruption in IT & OT infrastructure".
- *IBSAMAR*: It is a joint multinational maritime exercise, among the Indian, Brazilian and South Africa navies. The previous edition of IBSAMAR (IBSAMAR VI) was conducted in Simons Town, South Africa in 2018.

Govt. allows International Trade Settlement in Indian Rupees
The Government of India has made suitable amendments in the Foreign Trade Policy (FTP) and Handbook of Procedures to allow for International Trade Settlement in Indian Rupees (INR) i.e., invoicing, payment, and settlement of exports / imports in Indian Rupees. This was done to fulfil the obligation in accordance with the RBI guidelines issued in July 2022. Government also highlighted that this was done in the light of rising interest in internationalization of Indian Rupee.

The Tarapore Committee on Fuller Capital Account Convertibility (CFAC) defined 'international currency' as – a currency that is widely used for international transactions. For example, today, the U.S. Dollar is the most widely accepted currency for international transactions, followed by Euro.

Internationalization of Rupee is a process to increase rupee acceptance (*credibility*) across the world through activities given below: increased use for invoicing of settlement of cross-border transactions; freedom for non-residents to hold financial assets/liabilities in Rupee; freedom for non-residents to tradable balances in rupee at offshore locations.

Govt. launches Digital Banking Units (DBUs) across 75 districts
Government of India has launched 75 Digital Banking Units (DBU) across 75 districts to the Nation.

A *Digital Banking Unit* (DBU) refers to a specialized fixed-point business unit/hub housing certain minimum infrastructure for delivering digital banking products & services as well as servicing existing financial products & services digitally. These are brick-and-mortar banking outlets with digital infrastructure to deliver a variety of banking products and services to people.

Foreign Direct Product Rule
U.S.A. officials have applied the 'Foreign Direct Product Rule' to China's advanced computing and supercomputer industry to stop it from obtaining advanced computing chips.

Foreign Direct Product Rule: It enables U.S. regulators to extend their technology export control powers far beyond America's borders to transactions between foreign countries and China. It was first introduced in 1959. It essentially says that if a product was made using American technology, the U.S.A. Government has the power to stop it from being sold – including products made in a foreign country.

IFC launches Global Food Security Platform
International Finance Corporation has launched the Global Food Security Platform to support the private sector for sustainable production and delivery of food stocks to countries affected by food instability.

International Finance Corporation (IFC): It is an international financial institution (established in 1956 as a private sector arm of World Bank Group) that offers investment, advisory, and asset management services to encourage private sector development in developing countries. It is a member of the World Bank Group and is headquartered in Washington, D.C., United States.
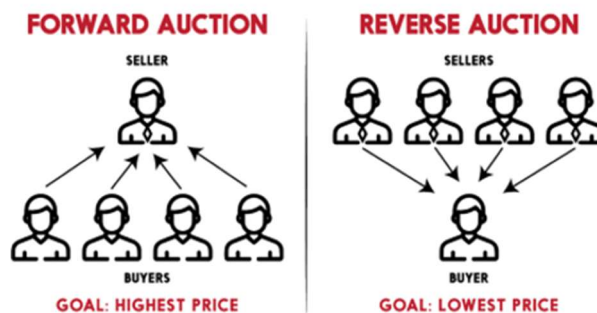
IMF publishes latest edition of World Economic Outlook
The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has published the latest edition of World Economic Outlook.

World Economic Outlook is a survey by the IMF staff usually published twice a year. It presents IMF staff Economists' analyses of global economic developments during the near and medium term. Chapters give an overview as well as more detailed analysis of the world economy; consider issues affecting industrial countries, developing countries, and economies in transition to market; and address topics of pressing current interest. Other report published by IMF: *"Global Financial Stability Report"*.

Reverse Auction
The Central Government is contemplating ending the reverse auction method of project bidding for wind and solar energy projects.

A '*reverse auction*' is a type of auction in which sellers bid for the prices at which they are willing to sell their goods and services. In the reverse auction procedure, once the bids are opened and the lowest price is determined, there is a further auction for even lower bids. It is the opposite of a regular auction, where a seller puts up an item and buyers place bids until the close of the auction, at which time the item goes to the highest bidder. The mechanism of reverse auctions has been heavily utilized in the renewable energy sector to determine the lowest tariff.

Govt.'s HELP Policy

Several Oil and Gas and coal-bed methane blocks were offered under the HELP auction. The *Hydrocarbon Exploration and Licensing Policy (HELP)* was approved in March 2016. It replaced the erstwhile New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP). The main features of HELP are Revenue Sharing Contract, single licence for exploration and production of conventional as well as unconventional hydrocarbon resources, marketing & pricing freedom etc.

Non-Deliverable Forward

Non-Deliverable Forward (NDFs) are types of derivatives for trading in non-convertible or restricted currencies without delivery of the underlying currency.

Trading in the *Non-Deliverable Forward (NDF)* market generally takes place in offshore centres. In this market, no exchange takes place of the two currencies' principal sums; the only cash flow is the movement of the difference between the NDF rate, and the prevailing spot market rate and this amount is settled on the settlement date in a convertible currency, generally in US dollars, in an offshore financial centre. The NDF markets have generally evolved for currencies with foreign exchange convertibility restrictions, particularly in the emerging Asian economies, viz., Taiwan, Korea, Indonesia, India, China, Philippines, etc.

Govt. organizes 13th FICCI Global Skills Summit 2022

Government of India has organized the 13th Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) Global Skills Summit 2022. Theme: *"Education to Employability – Making It Happen"*

FICCI is a non-government, not-for-profit organisation. Established in 1927, it is the largest and oldest apex business organisation in India. It provides a platform for networking and consensus building within and across sectors and is the first port of call for Indian industry, policymakers and the international business community.

Various Initiatives taken for Skill Development:
- *Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana:* The flagship Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) scheme was launched in 2015 to provide short-term training, skilling through ITIs and under the apprenticeship scheme.
- *SANKALP and STRIVE:* The SANKALP programme which focuses on the district-level skilling ecosystem and the STRIVE project which aims to improve the performance of ITIs are other significant skilling interventions.
- *TEJAS Initiative for Skilling:* TEJAS (Training for Emirates Jobs and Skills), a Skill India International Project to train overseas Indians was launched at the Dubai Expo, 2020.

RBI issues Scale Based Regulation for NBFCs

Earlier in October 2021, the Reserve Bank of India issued the Scale Based Regulation (SBR): A Revised Regulatory Framework for NBFCs. The framework categorized 16 large NBFCs into 4 layers based on their size, activity and perceived riskiness. These categories are – Base Layer (NBFC-BL), Middle Layer (NBFC-ML), Upper Layer (NBFC-UL) and Top Layer (NBFC-TL). It specifies that Upper Layer shall comprise of those

NBFCs which are specifically identified by the Reserve Bank based on a set of parameters and scoring methodology as provided in the framework. The list of these 16 NBFCs was released by the RBI.

A *Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC)* is a company registered under the Companies Act, 1956 engaged in the business of loans and advances, acquisition of shares/ stocks/ bonds/ debentures/ securities issued by Government or local authority or other marketable securities of a like nature, leasing, hire-purchase, insurance business, chit business but does not include any institution whose principal business is that of agriculture activity, industrial activity, purchase or sale of any goods (other than securities) or providing any services and sale/purchase/construction of immovable property.

Govt. modifies ECLGS for civil aviation

The Department of Financial Services (*under Ministry of Finance*) has modified the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) to give Civil Aviation sector necessary collateral-free liquidity at reasonable interest rates to tide over their present cash flow problems. Under it, the Government enhances the maximum loan amount eligibility for airlines under ECLGS 3.0 to 100% of their fund based or non-fund-based loan outstanding as on the reference dates or Rs. 1,500 crore, whichever is lower; and of the above, Rs. 500 crore shall be considered, based on equity contribution by the owners.

The *Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS)* is a financial support program launched by the Government of India in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The scheme provides a 100% guarantee cover to banks and NBFCs for emergency credit lines provided to eligible micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and individuals, who have been affected by the pandemic.

Impossible Trinity

The term 'impossible trinity' or 'trilemma' has come under focus as the U.S.A. Federal Reserve has been raising interest rates to fight rising prices. In a normal scenario where capital is largely free to move across borders, this has led many investors to pull money out of the rest of the world and rush to the U.S.A. in search of higher yields, thus putting pressure on many currencies such as the Indian Rupee.

The *impossible trinity*, or the trilemma, refers to the idea that an economy cannot pursue independent monetary policy, maintain a fixed exchange rate, and allow the free flow of capital across its borders at the same time. According to economists, any economy can choose to pursue only two out of the three policy options noted above simultaneously in the long run.

SEBI bars Entities from Securities Market for up to 2 years

SEBI has barred 10 entities, including Bombay Dyeing & Manufacturing Company Ltd and its promoters, from the securities markets for up to 2 years and levied a fine totaling Rs 15.75 crore on them for being involved in a fraudulent scheme of misrepresenting the company's financial statements.

Securities and Exchange Board of India was established in April 1992, in accordance with the provisions of the Securities and Exchange Board of India Act, 1992. Its basic function is to protect the interests of investors in securities and to promote and regulate the securities market.

Appellate Mechanism: There exists Securities Appellate Tribunal (SAT) constituted to protect the interest of entities that feel aggrieved by SEBI's decision. It has the same powers as vested in a civil court. Further, if any person feels aggrieved by SAT's decision or order can appeal to the Supreme Court.

UNCTAD publishes Global Investment Trend Monitor Report 2022
United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) has published a report titled - Global Investment Trend Monitor Report 2022. According to the Report, the economic downturn brings down funding for climate mitigation and adaptation.

India emerges as the world's largest producer, consumer of Sugar
It was reported by the Government that India has emerged as the world's largest producer and consumer of sugar as well as the world's 2nd largest exporter of sugar.

The sugar industry is broadly divided into 2 major areas of production – Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Haryana and Punjab in the North and Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh in the South.

Due to the tropical climate in South India, it has higher sucrose content giving a higher yield per unit area as compared to North India.

IARI develop 5 new varieties of Basmati Rice
Indian Agriculture Research Institute (IARI) has developed 5 new varieties of seeds of Basmati Rice.

India is known for its Basmati rice, with 7 States — Jammu and Kashmir (now a Union Territory), Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand — earmarked for geographical indication (GI).

The *Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI),* commonly known as the Pusa Institute, is India's national institute for agricultural research, education, and extension. The name '*Pusa*' Institute is derived from the fact that the institute was originally located in Pusa, Bihar as the Imperial Institute of Agricultural Research in 1911, now relocated to Delhi.

SIPRI ranked India at 4th for the self-reliance in Defence Production in Indo-Pacific region
Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) has released a study according to which India was ranked 4th among 12 Indo-Pacific nations in self-reliant arms production capabilities.

The 12 countries in the study were selected because they have the highest military spending in the region — Australia, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam. The study, which measures self-reliance until 2020, is based on 3 indicators of self-reliance in each country: 1. Arms procurement, 2. Arms industry, 3. Uncrewed maritime vehicles

SIPRI is an independent international institute dedicated to research into conflict, armaments, arms control and disarmament. Established in 1966, SIPRI provides data, analysis, and recommendations, based on open sources, to policymakers, researchers, media, and the interested public.

Digital Detox
A village in India's Maharashtra State has declared "independence" from 2 modern-day addictions – television and mobile internet. A siren goes off at 7 pm every evening in *Vadgaon* village in Sangli district, an indication to all residents to switch off their TV sets and mobile phones. The two instruments of "addiction" can be switched on when the village council sounds the siren again at 8.30 pm. This can be written as a way forward – an example of how to detach from modern-day urban life.

Digital Detox refers to a period of time during which an individual voluntarily limits or abstains from using electronic devices, particularly those that are connected to the internet, in order to reduce stress and improve

overall well-being. The goal of a digital detox is to give people a break from the constant barrage of information, notifications, and stimulation that can come from being connected to the internet and technology, and to help them focus on real-world experiences and relationships.

11. Important Days

World Teachers Day – 5ᵗʰ October
World Teachers Day is being celebrated across the world on 5ᵗʰ October.
Theme for the year 2022: *"the transformation of education begins with teachers"*

Held annually on 5ᵗʰ October since 1994, the day commemorates the anniversary of the adoption of the 1966 ILO/UNESCO Recommendation concerning the 'Status of Teachers'. World Teachers' Day is co-convened in partnership with UNICEF, UNDP, the International Labour Organization, and Education International.

Breast Cancer Awareness Month
In a global effort to raise awareness on breast cancer, October has been designated as the Pink Month. The Pink Month is a month where efforts to educate those concerned about the disease, including early identification and signs and symptoms associated with breast cancer.

International Day of the Girl Child – 11ᵗʰ October
The International Day of the Girl Child is observed every year across the world on 11ᵗʰ October. The day recognizes the rights and challenges girls face around the world.

The purpose of the day, which marks its 10ᵗʰ anniversary this year, was to stand up for and with girls who are more vulnerable to discrimination and violence than boys the moment they first draw breath. Though her potential is equal to a boy, that possibility is not always valued or nurtured.
The theme of the year 2022: "*Our time is now—our rights, our future*"

International Day for the Eradication of Poverty
The International Day for the Eradication of Poverty is an international observance celebrated on 17ᵗʰ October. The main objective of this day is to raise awareness about the efforts being made to eradicate poverty in the world community.
The theme for the year 2022: "*DIGNITY FOR ALL IN PRACTICE: The commitments we make together for social justice, peace, and the planet*"

United Nations Day – 24ᵗʰ October
United Nations is celebrated every year on 24ᵗʰ October. It is an opportunity to reflect on the organization's work on behalf of humanity, including on urgent challenges such as alleviating poverty and hunger, defending human rights and addressing the need for bold climate action.
The theme for 2022 UN day is "*Dignity, Freedom, and Justice for All*".

It marks the anniversary of the entry into force in 1945 of the UN Charter. With the ratification of this founding document by the majority of its signatories, including the five permanent members of the Security Council, the United Nations officially came into being. The day has been celebrated as United Nations Day since 1948.

World Migratory Bird Day – 8ᵗʰ October
World Migratory Bird Day 2022 is celebrated every year around the world on 8 October.
Theme for the year 2022: *"Dim the Lights for Birds at Night"*

World Migratory Bird Day is an annual campaign aimed at raising awareness of migratory birds and the need for international cooperation to conserve them. This year, the campaign focuses on Light Pollution and its impact on migratory birds. Light Pollution can alter the natural patterns of light and dark in ecosystems. It can change birds' migration patterns, foraging behaviours, vocal communication, and increase predation.

Light Pollution refers to the excessive or misdirected artificial light that interferes with natural light patterns and negatively impacts the environment, wildlife, and human health. It occurs when outdoor lighting is not properly shielded, causing it to scatter in all directions and raise levels of artificial light at night. Some of the effects of light pollution include disrupting ecosystems and wildlife behavior, hindering astronomical observations, and affecting human circadian rhythms.

International E-Waste Day – 14ᵗʰ October
International E-Waste Day is observed every year on October 14ᵗʰ since 2018.). The focus of this year International E-waste Day is hoarding of small, unused, dead or broken plug-in and battery-operated products. Theme: *"Recycle it all, no matter how small!"*

The initiative was started by Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Forum. The WEEE is a not-for-profit association of 46 WEEE producer responsibility organisations across the world and was founded in April 2002.

Basel Convention on the control of the trans-boundary movement of hazardous waste, 1992: The Basel Convention started to address e-waste issues since 2002 which include, among others, environmentally sound management; prevention of illegal traffic to developing countries and building capacity around the globe to better manage e-waste.

Rotterdam Convention, 2004: The Convention seeks to promote exchange of information (through Prior Informed Consent) among Parties over a range of potentially hazardous chemicals (includes pesticides and industrial chemicals) that may be exported or imported.

WEEE Forum: It is an international association of 46 e-waste producer responsibility organisations.

National Dolphin Day – 5ᵗʰ October
In March 2022, the MoEF&CC announced 5ᵗʰ October to be celebrated as National Dolphin Day as part of the conservation campaign for the species and to generate awareness. Earlier, this day was celebrated as 'Ganga River Dolphin Day', but its redesignation as a national day aims to 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).

World Sloth Bear Day – 12ᵗʰ October
The first World Sloth Bear Day was observed on 12ᵗʰ October in India to generate awareness and strengthen conservation efforts around the bear species endemic to the Indian subcontinent. A proposal for observing the World Sloth Bear Day was mooted by Wildlife SOS India, an organisation involved in sloth bear conservation and protection, and it was accepted by IUCN.

Key Points
- Listed under Schedule I of the (Wildlife Protection) Act of India, 1972 the species has the same level of protection as tigers, rhinos and elephants.
- Sloth Bear is one of the 8 bear species found across the globe.
- Presently Sloth bears are only found in the Indian subcontinent, Nepal and a sub-species in Sri Lanka.

Conservation Status
- IUCN Red List: *Vulnerable*
- Wildlife protection Act (1972): *Schedule I*
- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES): *Appendix I*

Ayurveda Day – 23rd October
The 7th Ayurveda Day was celebrated worldwide on 23rd October. Dhanawantari Jayanti has been celebrated since 2016 as Ayurveda Day to promote our most ancient and well documented system of medicine.
Theme for the year 2022: "*Har Din Har Ghar Ayurveda*"

Keeping in view the theme, activities were conducted under 3-Js i.e., *'Jan Sandesh', 'Jan Bhagidari' and 'Jan Aandolan'.*

Rashtriya Ekta Diwas – 31st October
In India, the Rashtriya Ekta Diwas or National Unity Day is observed every year on 31st October. The Day is celebrated to commemorate the birth anniversary of the Iron Man of India, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. This year marks the 147th anniversary of the great leader who played an instrumental role in India's struggle for independence, and later during the integration of the country.

World Mental Health Day 2022 – 10th October
World Mental Health Day is observed every year on 10th October. It aims to mobilize efforts in support of mental health and provides an opportunity for everyone to talk and discuss mental health issues, and what more needs to be done.
Theme for the year 2022: *"Make Mental Health & Well-Being for All a Global Priority"*

World Food Day – 16th October
World Food Day is celebrated every year on 16th October to raise awareness on the issues of poverty and hunger. It is established by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations in November 1979.
The theme for the year 2022: "*Leave NO ONE behind*"

International Day of Rural Women – 15th October
The International Day of Rural Women is celebrated every year on 15th October.

The United Nations' International Day of Rural Women celebrates and honours women and girls living in rural areas. It recognizes the huge role that rural mothers, daughters and grandmothers play in producing food, and building agricultural and rural development worldwide.

World Statistics Day – 20th October
World Statistics Day is celebrated all over the world on 20th October.
The theme of the year 2022: *"Data for Sustainable Development"*

World Statistics Day is celebrated under the guidance of the United Nations Statistical Commission as a day to celebrate the contribution of statistics in the socio-economic development of the world. It is celebrated every five years and was first celebrated on 20 October 2010.

Note that, the National Statistics Day of India is celebrated on 29th June.

12. Culture

Prime Minister inaugurates first phase of Mahakal Lok Corridor in Ujjain
The Prime Minister of India has inaugurated the Mahakal Lok Corridor in Ujjain's Mahakaleshwar temple. It is the first phase of the Mahakaleshwar Temple Corridor Development Project. The corridor has around 108 aesthetically ornate pillars made of intricately carved sandstones that depict the Anand Tandav Swaroop (Lord Shiva's dance form), 200 statues and murals of Lord Shiva and goddess Shakti.

The overall Project will provide better amenities for those visiting the temple which is dedicated to Lord Shiva and houses one of the 12 Jyotirlingas (representation of Lord Shiva) in India.

Numismatics in India
The recent discussion on putting images of Gods and Goddesses on coins and banknotes has renewed interest in Numismatic history of India.

Numismatics is the study and collection of coins, tokens, and other coin-like objects that people used as currencies throughout history. The term may also refer to the study of money and other payment methods that people use to pay for goods and services and to settle debts.

Numismatic Society of India, founded in 1910 at Allahabad, was intended as a coordinating body to promote the knowledge and regulate the study of Indian numismatics.