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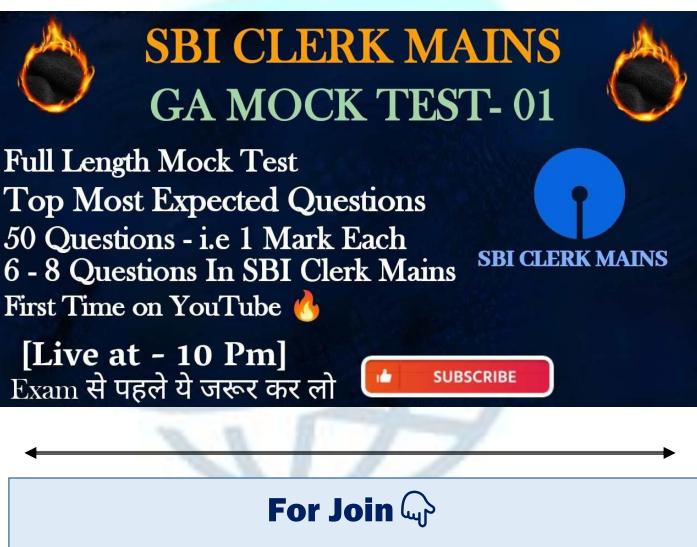
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# Top 12 Students Selected in RRB PO With Highest Marks in GA Section







## Aparchit January 1st Week English Best 350+ MCQs with Amazing Facts By :- Aparchit Exam Warriors/Kumar Kaushal Sir

# Q. Who has been appointed by the Central Government as the first woman Director General of the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF)?

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- A) Archana Ramasundaram B) Nina Singh
- C) Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay

### D) Anjali Bansal

#### Answer: B

- ✓ The central government has appointed Nina Singh as the first woman Director General of the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF).
- ✓ The 1989-batch IPS officer of the Rajasthan cadre is currently working as the Special DG of the CISF.
- Meanwhile, Rahul Rasgotra, the Special Director of the Intelligence Bureau (IB), was appointed as the new Director General of the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP). He is also a 1989-batch IPS officer but from the Manipur cadre.
- ✓ The current ITBP chief, Anish Dayal Singh, was appointed as the Director General of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF). He worked for the country's internal security and counter-intelligence agency, IB, for a long time.
- ✓ Dayal is currently investigating the Parliament security breach incident that happened on December 11.
- ✓ Furthermore, the Centre has appointed Vivek Srivastava, a 1989-batch IPS officer of the Gujarat cadre, as the Director General of the Fire Service, Civil Defence and Home Guards. Currently, he is a special director at the Intelligence Bureau.
- ✓ Central Industrial Security Force (CISF)
- ✓ Founded : 1969
- ✓ HQ : New Delhi
- ✓ Motto : Protection and Security
- ✓ Director General : Nina Singh

#### **FIRST'S FEMALE IN NEWS 2023**

- ➢ Nina Singh becomes first woman to be appointed as DG of CISF.
- Captain Fatima Wasim has become the first woman medical officer to be posted at the operational post of Siachen Glacier.

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Captain Geetika Kaul of Snow Leopard Brigade had become the first woman medical officer to be deployed in Siachen.

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- Sue Redfern became the first woman to stand as an umpire in a men's first-class cricket match in England and Wales.
- Jaya Varma Sinha has been appointed as the new Chairperson and Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Railway Board (Ministry of Railways) w.e.f Sept 01, 2023. She has replaced AK Lahoti.
- > She is the first woman to be appointed to this Apex post of Indian Railways.
- > Geetika Srivastava is first woman to head Indian mission in Pakistan.
- > Phangnon Konyak became the first woman to chair the Rajya Sabha from Nagaland.
- > Tenzing Yangki has become the first female IPS officer of Arunachal Pradesh.
- Lisa Franchetti becomes 1st woman to be top Navy officer in US history.
- > Nusrat Chowdhary will become the first Muslim woman federal judge in US history.
- Celeste Saulo of Argentina has been appointed as the first female Secretary-General of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).
- Shalini Singh from Lucknow has become the first woman NCC cadet in India to complete a mountaineering course in the Himalayan region of Uttarakhand.
- Parminder Chopra becomes first woman Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Power Finance Corporation.
- Amy Pope of the United States has been selected as the first female Director-General of the United Nations Migration Agency.
- > Lieutenant Shivangi Singh is the first woman Rafale pilot to take part in Orion Exercise 2023.
- Wing Commander Deepika Mishra has become the first woman Air Force officer to receive the Gallantry Medal.
- New Zealand-born Kim Cotton has become the first female umpire to officiate in a Men's T20 International (T20I) cricket match involving two ICC full-member nations.
- > Sheenu Jhawar becomes first woman president of TiE Rajasthan.
- American Space Agency, NASA has selected the first woman astronaut, Christina Koch for its Artemis II mission.
- Surekha Yadav, Asia's 1st woman loco pilot who now operates Vande Bharat, From Solapur to Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminal (CSMT) in Maharashtra.



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- > Shalija Dhami becomes first woman officer to command a fighter unit in Indian Air Force (IAF).
- Colonel Geeta Rana became the first woman officer to command a field workshop.
- Captain Shiva Chauhan becomes the first women officer to be operationally deployed in the highest battleground in Kumar Post on the Siachen glacier.
- The first woman officer to be posted on foreign assignment in the Border Roads Organization (BRO)
   Captain Surabhi Jakhmola.
- Rae Bareli's hockey stadium is named after hockey star Rani Rampal, first woman player from India to achieve this feat.
- > Hekani Jakhalu became the first female MLA of Nagaland Assembly.
- > Equatorial Guinea appoints Manuela Roka Botey as first female PM.
- > Indian-origin Manpreet Monica Singh sworn in as 1st female Sikh judge of USA.
- > Santhi Kumari Appointed as First Woman Chief Secretary of Telangana.
- > Saudi Arabia's Rayna Barnawi first female astronaut is set to go into space this year .
- > Dina Boluarte became Peru's first female president.
- FIFA has announced that Stephanie Frappart of France will be the first woman to referee a men's' World Cup match.
- > PT Usha Become First Women President of Indian Olympic Association.

Q. Who among the following athletes has topped the Forbes list of highest-paid women athletes 2023?

A) Iga Swiatek

**B)** Naomi Osaka

- C) Elena Rybakina
- D) Venus Williams

#### Answer : A

- ✓ Badminton star PV Sindhu has made it into the list of 2023's highest-paid women athletes by Forbes where she finished at the 16th spot alongside gymnast Simone Biles with her \$7.1 million earnings.
- ✓ Last year Sindhu was placed 12th with her \$7.1 million earnings in a list which was led by Japanese tennis star Naomi Osaka. Sindhu had broken into the top 10 in the 2018 list with \$8.5 million which placed her at 7th.
- ✓ Polish tennis star Iga Swiatek who is valued at \$23.9 million at first spot. She won the French Open and ended the year as the No.1 ranked player in the world.
- ✓ She is followed by freestyle skiing star Eileen Gu from China whose value is \$22.1 million.



Tennis player Coco Gauff comes in at 3rd with \$21.7 million while the same sports' UK's Emma Raducanu (\$15.2 million) Japan's Naomi Osaka (\$15 million), Belarus's Aryna Sabalenka (\$14.7 million), US's Jessica Pegula (\$12.5 million), US's Venus Williams (\$12.2 million), Kazakhstan's Elena Rybakina (\$9.5 million) and Canada's Leylah Fernandez (\$8.8 million) close out the top 10.

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HDFC Bank board has recommended to RBI the reappointment of Atanu Chakraborty as part-time Q. non-executive chairman and independent director for how many years?

| A) 2 years | B) 3 years |
|------------|------------|
|            |            |

C) 4 years D) 5 years

### Answer: B

- ✓ HDFC Bank approves re-appointment of Atanu Chakraborty as chairman for 3 years
- ✓ Private lender HDFC Bank board has recommended the reappointment of Atanu Chakraborty as the parttime non-executive chairman and independent director, subject to further approval.
- ✓ The matter is with the Reserve Bank of India for a second term of three years from May 5, 2024, to May 4, 2027 approval.
- ✓ Chakraborty, a 1985 batch IAS officer of Gujarat cadre, retired as Secretary of Department of Economic Affairs in April 2020.
- ✓ Chakraborty mainly worked in areas of Finance & Economic Policy, Infrastructure, Petroleum & Natural Gas. In the Union Government, he held various posts such as Secretary to Government of India in the Ministry of Finance- Department of Economic Affairs (DEA) during FY 2019-20.

### **HDFC BANK IN NEWS 2023**

- HDFC Bank approves re-appointment of Atanu Chakraborty as chairman for 3 years.
- > HDFC Bank has recently raised Rs 7,425 crore through infrastructure bond issue.
- Reserve Bank of India has approved the reappointment of Sashidhar Jagdishan as HDFC Bank MD & CEO for a period of three years.
- > HDFC Bank Launches India's First Co-Branded Hotel Credit Card named 'Marriott Bonvoy HDFC Bank Credit Card' in partnership with Marriott International.
- ▶ HDFC Bank's Sashidhar Jagdishan is highest paid bank CEO in FY23 with Rs 10.55 crore pay.
- ▶ HDFC Bank overtakes SBI in CRISIL's corporate banking ranking for 2023.
- Food delivery platform Swiggy has joined hands with HDFC Bank to launch a co-branded credit card.



> HDFC Bank, India's largest private lender, has achieved a significant milestone by entering the \$100 billion market-capitalization club as world's 7th largest lender.

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- > HDFC emerges as fourth largest bank in the world after merger.
- According to Bloomberg, with a valuation of \$172 billion, the merger will place HDFC in the fourth position in equity market capitalisation behind JP Morgan Chase & Co., Industrial and Commercial Bank of China Ltd. and Bank of America Corp.
- > Deepak Parekh has announced his decision to step down as HDFC chairperson after serving as the chairman for 46 years.
- > HDFC Bank introduced a new credit card named 'Millennia Credit card' which offers cashback over e-commerce platforms and multiple benefits.
- SEBI has granted approval for a change in control of HDFC Asset Management Company (HDFC) AMC) due to the amalgamation of HDFC Ltd and HDFC Bank Ltd.
- > As part of the amalgamation, existing shareholders of HDFC Ltd will hold a 41% stake in HDFC Bank.
- > HDFC Bank has launched a retail banking initiative called 'Vishesh' aimed at customers in semi-urban and rural areas.
- > HDFC Bank partners Manipal Global to build up a talent pipeline.
- > SEBI has granted approval for a change in control of HDFC Asset Management Company (HDFC AMC) due to the amalgamation of HDFC Ltd and HDFC Bank Ltd.
- > HDFC Bank has signed a "Master Inter Bank Credit Agreement" with Export-Import Bank of Korea for a USD 300 million line of credit.
- > HDFC Bank recommends re-appointment of Sashidhar Jagdishan MD, CEO for 3 yrs.
- HDFC Bank's Sashidhar Jagdishan is 'BS Banker of the Year 2022'.
- > HDFC Bank, IRCTC launch India's most rewarding co-branded travel credit card.
- > HDFC Bank, Lulu Exchange ink deal to enhance cross-border payments between India-Gulf region.
- > HDFC Bank collaborates with Microsoft as part of its digital transformation.
- Reserve Bank of India said SBI, ICICI Bank, HDFC Bank remain domestic systemically important banks (D-SIBs). .
- ▶ India's first Electronic Bank Guarantee issued by HDFC Bank.
- $\succ$  HDFC BANK



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- ➢ Founded : 1994
- Founder : Hasmukhbhai Parekh
- HQ : Mumbai, Maharashtra
- MD & CEO : Sashidhar Jagdishan
- > Tagline : We understand your world

Q. The Union Cabinet has approved the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for copra for the 2024 season. The MSP for fair average quality of milling copra has been fixed at \_\_\_\_ for the 2024 season.

- A) Rs 11,160 per quintal
- B) Rs 12,000 per quintal
- C) Rs 11,260 per quintal
- D) Rs 15,260 per quintal

#### Answer : A

- ✓ The Union Cabinet has approved the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for copra for the 2024 season.
- ✓ The MSP for fair average quality of milling copra and ball copra has been fixed at Rs 11,160 per quintal and Rs 12,000 per quintal for the 2024 season, respectively.
- ✓ The MSP for the 2024 season had been hiked by Rs 300 per quintal for milling copra and Rs 250 per quintal for ball copra over the previous season.
- ✓ The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has given its approval for the MSPs for copra for the 2024 season.
- ✓ The central government had announced in the Union Budget of 2018-19, that MSPs of all the mandated crops will be fixed at a level of at least 1.5 times of all India weighted cost of production.
- ✓ Kerala and Tamil Nadu are the major producers of milling copra, whereas ball copra is produced predominantly in Karnataka.
- ✓ In the last ten years, the government has increased the MSP for milling copra and ball copra from Rs 5,250 per quintal and Rs 5,500 per quintal in 2014-15 to Rs 11,160 per quintal and Rs 12,000 per quintal in 2024-25, recording a rise of 113 percent and 118 percent, respectively.
- ✓ Ball/edible copra is used as a dry fruit and employed for religious purposes, whereas milling copra is used to extract oil.



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Q. Reliance Jio Infocomm has joined hands with which IIT to launch 'Bharat GPT'?

A) IIT Madras

C) IIT Guwahati

B) IIT KanpurD) IIT Bombay

#### Answer : D

- ✓ Reliance Jio Infocomm, India's largest telecom service provider, is working with the Indian Institute of Technology Bombay to launch 'Bharat GPT', a large language model specifically tailor for India's needs.
- ✓ The company is also "comprehensively thinking" to launch an operating system for smart televisions.
- ✓ Ambani said that the next 10 years will be defined by large-language models and generative AI.

## **IIT IN NEWS 2023**

- Reliance Jio Infocomm, India's largest telecom service provider, is working with the Indian Institute of Technology Bombay to launch 'Bharat GPT', a large language model specifically tailor for India's needs.
- > IIT Guwahati recently developed an indigenous river model, BRAHMA-2D.
- > IIT Kanpur, Indian Navy join forces to drive innovation through research partnership.
- > SAMRIDHI conclave, a deeptech startup acceleration drive launched at IIT Ropar.
- The First Australia India Education and Skill Council (AIESC) meeting was held at IIT Gandhinagar, Gujarat.
- > IIT Kanpur and Airbus to collaborate to boost aerospace talent base in India.
- IIT Kanpur has signed an MoU with private lender ICICI Bank to support the startup ecosystem in the institute.
- > IIT Guwahati have developed pharmaceutical and food products from tea factory waste.
- > IIT Jodhpur scientists develop 'CODE' device for good air quality.
- IIT Madras-incubated space tech startup GalaxEye Space on 29 August 2023 launched their dronebased synthetic aperture radar (SAR) system, Ahead of their planned satellite launch in 2024.
- IIT Bombay has received a donation of \$18.6 million from an alumnus towards the establishment of a Green Energy and Sustainability Research Hub.
- IIT Guwahati has signed MoU with the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) to build capacity/skills in international affairs and foreign policy.
- > IIT Guwahati researchers develop Al-based model for knee X-ray.



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- > Infosys co-founder Nandan Nilekani donated ₹315 crores to IIT Bombay.
- > IIT-Madras generates hydrogen from seawater using solar energy.
- > India, Israel to jointly develop Center of Water Technology at IIT Madras.
- > IIT Madras researchers partner for development of materials and micro-device processing techniques.
- IIT Kanpur's C3iHub, a cybersecurity Technology Innovation Hub, has launched a Cybersecurity Skilling Programme.
- > IIT Madras to set up its first international campus in Tanzania.
- Indian Institute of Technology Madras will be provided a grant of Rs 242 crore over a period of five years to carry out research on Lab Grown Diamonds (LGD).
- Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay has been ranked 1st in India and 47th globally in engineering and technology by the QS World University Rankings for 2023.
- IIT Indore, in partnership with NASA-Caltech and the University of Gothenburg in Sweden, has designed an inexpensive camera setup.
- Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT Madras) Researchers have developed a three-dimensional (3D) paper-based portable device that can detect adulteration in milk within 30 seconds.
- > IIT Kanpur to Host Youth20 Consultation under G20 Presidency of India.
- > IIT Bombay's SHUNYA secures second place in 'Solar Decathlon' Build Challenge in US.
- Students of the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Indore won an award of AED (Emirates Dirham)
   1 million along with a gold medal at the World Government Summit in Dubai.
- > IIT Indore Students Awarded with Global Best M-GOV Awards by Egyptian President.
- Startup Incubation and Innovation Centre (SIIC) at IIT Kanpur has entered into a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) agreement with Advanced Weapons and Equipment India Limited.
- > DRDO Industry Academia Centre of Excellence inaugurated at IIT Hyderabad.
- > IIT Madras-incubated firm has developed an indigenous mobile operating system called BharOS.
- IIT Madras Centre of Excellence working with DRDO on Advanced Defence Technologies including Combat Vehicle Technologies.
- > IIT Madras researchers develop machine learning tool to detect tumour in brain, spinal cord.
- > ISRO plans to develop astronaut training module with IIT Madras.
- IIT-Bombay and Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) join hands to develop touchless biometric system.



> IIT delhi has been ranked among the top 50 engineering institutions in the QS World University Rankings by Subject.

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- > An IIT Madras incubated firm has developed an indigenous mobile operating system 'Bharos' that can benefit India's 100 crore mobile phone users.
- Q. Consider the following statements regarding the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA):

1. It was established following the 1967 Arab-Israeli Six-Day War to carry out direct relief and work programmes for Palestine refugees.

2. It is funded almost entirely by voluntary contributions from UN Member States.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

| A) 1 only | B) 2 only |
|-----------|-----------|
|           |           |

C) Both 1 and 2

D) Neither 1 nor 2

#### Answer: B

- ✓ India recently announced that it has provided US \$ 2.5 million to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East or the UNRWA for the welfare of Palestinian refugees.
- ✓ About United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA):
- ✓ It is a UN agency that supports the relief and human development of Palestinian refugees.
- ✓ Establishment:
- ✓ Following the 1948 Arab-Israeli war, UNRWA was established by United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Resolution 302 (IV) of 8 December, 1949, to carry out direct relief and work programmes for Palestine refugees.
- ✓ Fields of operations: It provides services in its five fields of operations: Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including the East of Jerusalem.
- ✓ It reports only to the UNGA.
- ✓ Headquarters: It was originally headquartered in Beirut, Lebanon, but was moved to Vienna, Austria, in 1978. In 1996, the General Assembly moved the agency to the Gaza Strip to demonstrate the Assembly's commitment to the Arab-Israeli peace process.



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Q. Consider the following statements regarding the Salton Sea, recently seen in the news:

- 1. It is a shallow, saline lake located in Africa.
- 2. It is located below sea level and its salinity exceeds that of seawater.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

A) 1 only B) 2 only

C) Both 1 and 2 D) Neither 1 nor 2

#### Answer: B

- The U.S. Department of Energy recently discovered the world's largest Lithium reserve beneath California's Salton Sea.
- ✓ About Salton Sea:
- ✓ It is a shallow, saline lake located in the lower Colorado Desert, southern California, USA.
- ✓ It is a geological depression tucked between mountain ranges and lying below sea level.
- ✓ Formation:
- ✓ The area that is now the lake was formerly a salt-covered sink or depression (a remnant of prehistoric Lake Cahuilla) about 280 feet (85 metres) below sea level until 1905–06, when diversion controls on the Colorado River broke a few miles below the California-Mexico border and floodwaters rushed northward, filling the depression.
- The Salton Sea is an important stopping point for migratory waterfowl and serves as critical habitat for birds moving south to Mexico and Central America
- Q. Consider the following statements regarding the Maulana Azad National Fellowship:
  - 1. It is a five year fellowship given in the form of financial assistance.
  - 2. The University Grants Commission is the implementing agency of this fellowship.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

A) 1 only

B) 2 only

C) Both 1 and 2

D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C



Researchers and doctoral students from about 30 universities across the country have written separate letters  $\checkmark$ to the Union Minority Affairs Minister to increase the scholarships under Maulana Azad National Fellowship (MANF).

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- ✓ Objective: The objective of the Maulana Azad Fellowship Scheme (MANF) is to provide five year fellowships in the form of financial assistance.
- ✓ It is given to students from six notified minority communities viz. Buddhist, Christian, Jain, Muslim, Parsi and Sikh, notified by the Central Government, to pursue M. Phil and Ph.D.
- ✓ This will enable them to be eligible for employment to the posts with M.Phil and Ph.D as pre-requisites, including the posts of Assistant Professors in various academic institutions.
- ✓ Implementing Agency: UGC will be the nodal agency for implementing this fellowship
- With reference to the Srimukhalingam temple, consider the following statements: **Q**.
  - 1. It is a Kalinga architectural style temple.
  - 2. It is built by the Pala King Dharmapala.
  - 3. It is located on the banks of the River Vamsadhara.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- A) Only one **B)** Only two
- C) All three

#### Answer : B

✓ Archaeological Survey of India assured to send a note to UNESCO over inclusion of Srimukhalingam temple in Andhra Pradesh in world heritage structures' list.

D) None

- $\checkmark$  It is located in the State of Andhra Pradesh.
- ✓ This temple is built in the Kalinga architectural style.
- ✓ It is located on the banks of Vamsadhara River and is dedicated to lord Srimukha Lingeswara (a form of Shiva).
- ✓ The Shivalinga here has a mukha or facial representation of Lord Shiva.
- ✓ It was constructed in the 9th century CE by kings of the Eastern Ganga Dynasty
- ✓ It was built by Kamarnava II, ruler from the family line of Eastern Ganga.
- Hence only statements 1 and 2 are correct.



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- Q. Consider the following statements regarding the Green deposit:
  - 1. It is a fixed-term deposit for those who want to invest in environmentally friendly projects.
  - 2. It is not covered by Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

A) 1 only B) 2 only

C) Both 1 and 2 D) Neither 1 nor 2

#### Answer : A

- Recently, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said it is not mandatory for banks and Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs) to raise green deposits.
- ✓ In general terms, a green deposit is a fixed-term deposit for those who want to invest in environmentally friendly projects.
- ✓ Just like a regular Fixed Deposit scheme, the green deposit pays interest to its investors and has a fixed term.
- ✓ The proceeds that a bank gets from deposit holders get earmarked for allocation to green finance.
- ✓ A green fixed deposit, also known as an environmentally friendly fixed deposit, is a financial instrument that encourages sustainable development by channelling funds towards projects focused on renewable energy, clean technology, or other environmentally beneficial initiatives.
- ✓ The green activities/projects financed under the framework can be classified under priority sector if they meet the requirements laid down in Priority Sector Lending (PSL) guidelines of RBI.
- ✓ The current framework permits green deposits to be denominated in Indian Rupees only.
- ✓ The deposits raised under the framework are covered by Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC) in accordance with the Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation Act, 1961 and the regulations framed there under, as amended from time to time.
- ✓ On maturity, the green deposits would be renewed or withdrawn at the option of the depositor.
- Q. Consider the following statements regarding the Warli Painting:
  - 1. It is a tribal art from the North Sahyadri Range in Maharashtra.
  - 2. One of the central aspects depicted in this painting is the tarpa dance.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

| A) 1 only | B) 2 only |
|-----------|-----------|
|-----------|-----------|

C) Both 1 and 2 D) Neither 1 nor 2



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#### Answer : C

- Recently, an exhibition by the Inherited Arts Forum, traces the artistic journey of the celebrated Mashe family and their effort in reviving the Warli painting.
- ✓ It is a style of tribal art created by the tribal people from the North Sahyadri Range in Maharashtra.
- ✓ This art form can be traced back to 10th century AD but was first discovered and appreciated for its distinctive style only in the early 1970s.
- ✓ It was traditionally practised by women of the Warli tribe called Suvasinis, who decorated the Lagn Chowk or the wedding square.
- Q. Consider the following statements regarding the National Transit Pass System:
  - 1. It facilitates the seamless transit of timber, bamboo and other forest produce across the country.
  - 2. It allows users to self-generate No Objection Certificates for exempted tree species.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

| A) 1 only       | B) 2 only          |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| C) Both 1 and 2 | D) Neither 1 nor 2 |

#### Answer : C

- Recently, the Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change launched the National Transit Pass System (NTPS) pan-India.
- ✓ It is to facilitate the seamless transit of timber, bamboo, and other forest produce across the country.
- Currently, the transit permits are issued for transport of timber and forest produce based on state specific transit rules.
- ✓ The NTPS is envisioned as a "One Nation-One Pass" regime, which will enable seamless transit across the country.
- ✓ Currently, the transit permits are issued for transport of timber and forest produce based on state specific transit rules.
- ✓ The NTPS is envisioned as a "One Nation-One Pass" regime, which will enable seamless transit across the country.
- ✓ This initiative will streamline the issuance of timber transit permits by providing a unified, online mode for tree growers and farmers involved in agroforestry across the country, contributing to the ease of doing business.



The QR coded transit permits generated under NTPS will allow check gates across various states to verify the validity of the permits and allow seamless transit.

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- ✓ Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
- Consider the following statements regarding the Mumbai Trans Harbour Link (MTHL) Project: Q.
  - 1. It connects Mumbai with Navi Mumbai.
  - 2. It is being financed by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

A) 1 only

B) 2 only

C) Both 1 and 2

D) Neither 1 nor 2

#### Answer : C

- ✓ The Mumbai Trans Harbour Link (MTHL) project, which is expected to be inaugurated early next year, has seen a cost escalation of Rs 2,192 crore or 14.9 per cent, according to information obtained through a Right to Information (RTI) query recently.
- ✓ About Mumbai Trans Harbour Link (MTHL) Project:
- ✓ MTHL is a 21.8-kilometer, Road Bridge connecting the Indian city of Mumbai with Navi Mumbai, its satellite city.
- ✓ It is the longest sea bridge in India. The total length of MTHL Bridge is 21.8 km, of the length on the sea is 16.50 km and the land portion is 5.5 km.
- The bridge begins in Sewri, South Mumbai, and crosses Thane Creek north of Elephant Island, and will  $\checkmark$ terminate at Chirle village, near Nhava Sheva.
- The foundation stone for the MTHL project was laid in December 2016.  $\checkmark$
- ✓ 85% of the MTHL project's construction is being financed by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).
- ✓ The Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA) manages the MTHL construction.
- ✓ Project Benefits:
- $\checkmark$ The MTHL Bridge gives faster connectivity with the proposed Navi Mumbai International Airport, JNPT Port, Mumbai-Pune Expressway, and Mumbai-Goa Highway.
- This concrete bridge will feature a 4 km steel span section in the middle to allow for ships to pass underneath.  $\checkmark$



✓ It also incorporates seven orthotropic steel deck (OSD) spans, ranging from 90m to 180m, a first-of-its-kind application in India.

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- ✓ MTHL will feature an intelligence transport system (ITS) and the other amenities required for a marine bridge.
- Q. With reference to the Know India Programme (KIP), consider the following statements:
  - 1. It is a flagship programme of the Ministry of Culture, Government of India.
  - 2. Its participants are promoted to visit places of historical and cultural significance.
  - 3. It is open to all Indian citizens in the age group of 18-30 years.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- A) Only one **B)** Only two D) None
- C) All three

#### Answer : A

- ✓ Secretary (CPV & OIA) recently addressed the Valedictory Session of the 70th edition of the Know India Programme (KIP) at a function held at Ministry of External Affairs.
- ✓ About Know India Programme (KIP):
- ✓ KIP is a flagship programme of the Ministry of External Affairs for engagement with Indian origin youth (between 18 and 30 years old).
- ✓ It is a three-week orientation programme for diaspora youth conducted with a view to promoting awareness of different facets of life in contemporary India.
- $\checkmark$  The programme has been in existence since 2003.
- ✓ Features of KIP:
- ✓ As a part of the programme, the applicants finalized through the selection process visit India for a 21-day schedule.
- ✓ 90% of the cost of international airfare for KIP participants visiting India is borne by the Ministry, while the remaining 10% is borne by the applicants themselves.
- ✓ During the period of their stay in India, the Ministry provides for their accommodation, meals, and domestic transportation by road/air.
- ✓ Eligibility Criteria:



The programme is open to youth of Indian origin (excluding non-resident Indians) in the age group of 18- $\checkmark$ 30 years, with preference given to those from Girmitiya countries (Mauritius, Fiji, Suriname, Guyana, T&T, Jamaica, etc.).

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The Union Cabinet has approved the proposal to open a Consulate General of India in which city of Q. New Zealand?

| A) Auckland | B) Greymouth  |
|-------------|---------------|
| C) Hamilton | D) Wellington |

#### Answer : A

- ✓ The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister, Narendra Modi has approved the proposal to open a Consulate General of India in Auckland, New Zealand.
- ✓ Opening of Consulate General of India in Auckland would help in increasing India's diplomatic footprint and strengthen India's diplomatic representation in view of India's increasing global engagement.
- ✓ This will also help promote India's strategic and commercial interests and better serve the welfare of the Indian community in Auckland.
- ✓ The Consulate is likely to be opened and fully operationalized within a time frame of 12 months.
- ✓ New Zealand
- ✓ Capital : Wellington
- ✓ Currency : Dollar
- ✓ Prime Minister : Christopher Luxon
- India has signed an MoU with which country for cooperation in the field of broadcasting, exchange Q. of news, and audio-visual programmes?
  - A) Indian

**B)** Malaysia

D) Russia

C) Japan

#### Answer : B

- ✓ The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister, Narendra Modi has approved the MoU/Agreement to strengthen the cooperation in the field of broadcasting, exchange of news, and audio-visual programmes as well as significantly augment India's friendly relations with Malaysia.
- With this, the total number of MoUs signed by Prasar Bharati with different countries has increased to 46.



✓ Prasar Bharati plays a very important role in nation-building and lays continuous focus on providing meaningful and accurate content to one and all, both within the country and abroad.

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- ✓ The major benefit arising out of signing of MoUs are exchange of programmes in the areas of Culture, Education, Science, Technology, Sports, News and other fields on gratis/non-gratis basis
- Which state government has established an autonomous board to recruit efficient and skilled Q. candidates for Public Sector Units (PSUs) through a transparent selection process?

| A) Madhya Pradesh | B) Kerala |
|-------------------|-----------|
|                   |           |

C) Uttar Pradesh D) Odisha

#### Answer: B

- ✓ Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan has inaugurated an autonomous board established by the state government to recruit efficient and skilled candidates for Public Sector Units (PSUs) through a transparent selection process.
- ✓ The board aims to enhance the efficiency of public sector institutions in the state, he said during the inauguration of the Kerala Public Enterprises (Selection and Recruitment) Board, and it's office at Vellayambalam.
- ✓ The recruitment of public sector undertakings under the Department of Industries and Commerce will be under the board's purview in the first phase.
- ✓ Initial tasks include selection for various posts in 20 public institutions and appointing managing directors in 22 public sector institutions.
- What is the name of the first Hindu woman for elections in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Buner district in Q. the General Elections in Pakistan?
  - A) Suman Kumari

**B)** Seema Ghulam

C) Saveera Parkash

D) Ayesha Naseem

#### Answer : C

- ✓ Pakistan People's Party nominates Dr Saveera Parkash, to contest from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Buner district in the General Elections.
- ✓ The decision comes following the Pakistan Electoral Commission's mandate of having at least 5% women candidates on general seats.
- Prakash, a member of the PPP women's wing, will run for the PK-25 seat in the February 8 elections.



Her father, Oam Parkash is a retired doctor and has been an active member of the PPP for over three decades.  $\checkmark$ 

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- Saveera was also serving as the PPP women's wing General Secretary in Buner
- Who has been roped in as event ambassador for the 19th edition of the Tata Mumbai Marathon? Q.
  - A) Aum Shinrikyo
  - C) Yoko Kamikawa D) Ayuko Kato

#### Answer : B

✓ Two-time pole vault world champion and Tokyo Olympics gold medallist Katie Moon has been roped in as event ambassador for the 19th edition of the Tata Mumbai Marathon.

**B) Katie Moon** 

- ✓ Promoted by Procam International, the Mumbai Marathon is a World Athletics Gold Label Race.
- ✓ Moon had clinched gold medal at the 2022 Eugene and 2023 Budapest World Athletics Championships.
- Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) will spend as much as \$320 million on marathon sponsorships for the next eight years.
- UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has appointed Sigrid Kaag as the senior humanitarian and 0. reconstruction coordinator for Gaza. She is from which country?
  - A) South Africa
    - C) Netherland

**B)** Ethiopia **D)** Argentina

#### Answer : C

- ✓ UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has appointed Sigrid Kaag of the Netherlands as the senior humanitarian and reconstruction coordinator for Gaza.
- ✓ In this role, she will facilitate, coordinate, monitor, and verify humanitarian relief consignments to Gaza.
- ✓ She will also establish a United Nations mechanism to accelerate humanitarian relief consignments to Gaza through States which are not party to the conflict.
- ✓ In executing these functions, she will be supported by the UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS). Ms. Kaag is expected to begin her assignment on 8 January 2024
- Who has joined the Indian Street Premier League (ISPL) as the owner of team Chennai? Q.
  - A) Suriya
- B) Vijay Sethupathi

C) Dhanush

- D) Rajinikanth

Answer : A



✓ National Award winner Suriya has joined the Indian Street Premier League (ISPL) as the owner of team Chennai.

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- ✓ The ISPL is India's first tennis ball T10 cricket tournament that will be played inside a stadium.
- The tournament will feature 19 high-intensity matches, boasting a line-up of six teams Hyderabad,  $\checkmark$ Mumbai, Bengaluru, Chennai, Kolkata, and Srinagar.
- ✓ Recently, Amitabh Bachchan, Akshay Kumar, Hrithik Roshan, and Ram Charan were announced as the team owners of Mumbai, Srinagar, Bengaluru, and Hyderabad, respectively.
- The ISPL is scheduled to be held from March 2 to March 9 in Mumbai.  $\checkmark$
- Q. India and which country have signed a Protocol on Consultations for the period of next four years (2024-28) to make progress in economic cooperation, energy trade, connectivity, military-technical cooperation, and people-to-people exchanges?

| A) Israel | B) Japan    |
|-----------|-------------|
| C) Russia | D) Malaysia |

#### Answer : C

- ✓ India and Russia have signed a Protocol on Consultations for the period of next four years (2024-28) to make progress in economic cooperation, energy trade, connectivity, military-technical cooperation, and peopleto-people exchanges.
- ✓ Jaishankar said the relations between India and Russia have been strong and steady, living up to the responsibility of a special and privileged strategic partnership.
- ✓ India and Russia also signed two important agreements to take forward the further implementation of Kudankulam nuclear power projects in India.

#### Q. Which state of India has emerged as India's 'Petro Capital'?

- A) Madhya Pradesh
- C) Gujarat

**B)** Rajasthan

D) Odisha

#### Answer : C

- ✓ With the world's largest grassroot oil refinery in Jamnagar and OPaL petrochemical complex at Dahej in Bharuch district, Gujarat is now recognized as the 'petro capital' of India.
- ✓ Reliance Industries Ltd's (RIL) Jamnagar refinery is the largest and most complex single-site refinery in the world with 1.4 million barrels per day (MMBPD) crude processing capacity.

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The Jamnagar refinery complex houses some of the world's largest units, such as the fluidized catalytic cracker, coker, alkylation, paraxylene, polypropylene, refinery off-gas cracker, and petcoke gasification plants.

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#### Which IIT has collaborated with the Government of Assam's flagship Arohan scheme to motivate Q. meritorious students to pursue STEM subjects in their higher education?

| A) IIT Madras | B) IIT Guwahati |
|---------------|-----------------|
| C) IIT Kanpur | D) IIT Delhi    |

#### Answer : B

- ✓ The Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati has collaborated with the Government of Assam's flagship Arohan scheme to motivate meritorious students to pursue STEM subjects in their higher education.
- ✓ To date, the Institute has successfully hosted 3311 students (2009 girls and 1302 boys) and few hundred mentee teachers, inspiring them to explore the vast opportunities and interests in STEM education.
- ✓ Interestingly, the number of girl students was around 65 percent of the total participants, highlighting the importance of encouraging and promoting girl/women in STEM education.
- ✓ Under the Arohan scheme, IIT Guwahati has hosted meritorious students (Mentees) along with their Guide teachers/Officers in a total of 12 batches.

#### Union Minister RK Singh has inaugurated POWERGRID Vishram Sadan in which city? Q.

| A) Chennai   | B) Bengaluru |
|--------------|--------------|
| C) Hyderabad | D) Mumbai    |

#### Answer : B

- ✓ Union Minister for Power, New and Renewable Energy RK Singh has inaugurated POWERGRID Vishram Sadan in Bengaluru.
- ✓ Built at a cost of about Rs 23 crore, this 2-storey Vishram Sadan has 270 beds.
- ✓ The 55 rooms of this Sadan are equipped with all necessary facilities and are capable of providing the maximum possible comfort to the attendants of the patients.
- ✓ POWERGRID as a responsible corporate citizen has built similar Vishram Sadans at AIIMS, New Delhi, IGIMS, Patna, DMCH Darbhanga, KGMU, Lucknow, Guwahati and Vsadodara for the benefit of the masses. Such Vishram Sadans are also being constructed by POWERGRID at Ranchi and Jhansi.



#### President Droupadi Murmu will be the Chief Guest at the celebration of the Karbi Youth Festival in **Q**. which state on 17 January 2024?

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A) Manipur **B)** Assam

C) Rajasthan D) Odisha

#### Answer : B

- ✓ President Droupadi Murmu will be the Chief Guest at the celebration of the Karbi Youth Festival on 17 January 2024.
- ✓ The festival will be held at Taralangso, Diphu.
- ✓ The celebration, from January 12-19, will feature traditional art, folk dance, music, and indigenous tribal foods.
- ✓ Other dignitaries attending include Assam Governor Gulab Chand, Meghalaya Governor Phagu Chauhan, and Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma.
- Reserve Bank of India has accorded approval to ICICI Prudential Asset Management Company Ltd Q. (ICICI AMC) for acquiring up to how much percent stake in Federal, RBL Bank?

| A) 8.95% | B) 9.95% |
|----------|----------|
| C) 7.95% | D) 5.95% |

#### Answer : B

- ✓ The Reserve Bank of India has accorded approval to ICICI Prudential Asset Management Company Ltd (ICICI AMC) for acquiring up to 9.95 percent stake in the bank.
- ✓ The approval granted by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is subject to compliance with the relevant provisions of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949, RBI's Master Direction and Guidelines on Acquisition and Holding of Shares or Voting Rights in Banking Companies dated January 16, 2023.
- ✓ Meanwhile, RBI also accorded approval to ICICI AMC to acquire a 9.95 percent stake in RBL Bank and Equitas Small Finance Bank.
- Which company has signed an MoU with Adani Total Gas Ltd (ATGL) for supply chain Q. decarbonization?

| B) Amazon   |
|-------------|
| D) Flipkart |
|             |

Answer: D



✓ Adani Total Gas Ltd (ATGL) and Flipkart have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding to collaborate on decarbonizing Flipkart's supply chain.

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- ✓ The initiative aims to reduce Flipkart's carbon footprint in the primary, secondary, and tertiary movements of goods across sourcing locations, warehouses, and customer deliveries.
- ✓ Under the MoU, ATGL will provide decarbonizing solutions, supporting Flipkart's transition to cleaner fuel options, including natural gas, and the integration of electric vehicles (EVs).
- ✓ Adani Total Energies E-Mobility Ltd (ATEL), a subsidiary of ATGL, will deploy EV charging infrastructure at Flipkart's pan-India supply chain, encompassing warehouses and logistics locations.
- This partnership is expected to contribute to the decarbonization of the e-commerce logistics segment in  $\checkmark$ India, which handles over 8 million shipments per day

#### ISRO has launched FEAST software and book to guide faculty and students. What is the meaning of Q. 'E' in 'FLEAT'?

| A) Entire | B) Element   |
|-----------|--------------|
| C) Exam   | D) Effective |
|           |              |

#### Answer : B

- The Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC) of the Indian space agency ISRO, has developed an analysis software that is used to perform Finite Element Analysis (FEA) of various types of structures including rockets, aircraft, satellites, buildings, etc.
- ✓ FEA is a computerised method for predicting how a component or a structure reacts to real-world forceslike various types of structural loads, thermal conditions and other physical effects that a structure experiences while in operation.
- ✓ During the design and development phase of a product, FEA is carried out to evaluate how well and safely the structure/component can withstand the various loads, and perform its intended function without any failure.
- With their latest offering—an FEA software known as FEAST (Finite Element Analysis of Structures)-Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) hopes to take this indigenous and customisable FEA software to the Indian user base.
- FEAST is available in three versions, based on the sophisticating levels and requirements of a broad category of users - academic (for students and educational institutions), premium (for small and medium scale industries) and professional (for general large-scale applications).

Q. Which country has conducted a successful flight test of the indigenously developed guided multilaunch rocket system 'Fatah-II', which is capable of engaging targets with high precision up to a range of 400 kilometers?

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- A) Pakistan B) Saudi Arabia
- C) UAE

D) Iran

#### Answer : A

- Pakistan has conducted a successful flight test of indigenously developed guided multi-launch rocket system
   'Fatah-II', which is capable of engaging targets with high precision up to a range of 400 kilometres.
- ✓ The 'Fatah-II' is "equipped with state-of-the-art avionics, sophisticated navigation system and unique flight trajectory," the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the media wing of the military.
- ✓ The weapon system is capable of engaging targets with high precision up to a range of 400 kilometres.
- Q. With reference to Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana (SSY), consider the following statements:
  - 1. It is a small-deposit scheme tailored specifically for the girl child.
  - 2. NRIs are not eligible to open these accounts.
  - 3. There is no maximum limit for a family to open SSY scheme accounts.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- A) Only one
- B) Only two
- C) All three
- D) None

### Answer : B

- ✓ The Government recently raised the interest rates on the Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana (SSY) scheme by 20 basis points to 8.2 percent from the existing 8 percent.
- ✓ About Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana:
- ✓ SSY is a savings scheme launched in 2015 under the Government of India's " Beti Bachao Beti Padhao" campaign, which aimed to promote the education of girl children.
- ✓ SSY is a small-deposit scheme tailored specifically for the girl child.



This scheme enables guardians to open a savings account for their girl child with an authorised commercial  $\checkmark$ bank or India Post branch.

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- $\checkmark$  Eligibility:
- ✓ The girl must be an Indian resident.
- ✓ The account can be initiated by the parent or legal guardian of the girl child.
- $\checkmark$  The girl child must be below the age of 10 at the time of opening the account.
- ✓ Only one SSY account is allowed per girl child.
- ✓ A family is limited to opening a maximum of two SSY scheme accounts.
- ✓ NRIs are not eligible to open these accounts.
- $\checkmark$  The girl must operate the account once she attains the age of 18 years.
- ✓ Features:
- ✓ The minimum and maximum deposits that can be made in an account in a financial year are Rs.250 and Rs.1.5 lakh, respectively. The deposits can be made in multiples of 100.
- ✓ Deposits towards the scheme should be made for a period of 15 years. However, the scheme matures after 21 years.
- ✓ No interest will be payable once the account completes twenty-one years from the date of opening.
- ✓ Partial Withdrawal:
- ✓ Withdrawal up to a maximum of 50% of the amount in the account at the end of the financial year preceding the year of application for withdrawal shall be allowed for the purpose of education of the account holder.
- ✓ Such withdrawal shall be allowed only after the account holder has attained the age of 18 years or has passed the 10th standard, whichever is earlier.
- ✓ Tax benefits: To encourage investments in SSY, the scheme offers the following tax benefits:
- ✓ Section 80C Deductions: Investments made in the SSY scheme can be deducted under Section 80C of the Income Tax Act up to a maximum cap of Rs. 1.5 lakh.
- ✓ Tax-Exempt Interest: The interest that accrues on the Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana account, compounded annually, is exempt from tax under Section 10 of the Income Tax Act.
- Tax-Free Proceeds: The proceeds received upon maturity or withdrawal from the SSY account is also  $\checkmark$ exempt from income tax.



## Q. Consider the following statements regarding the X-ray Polarimeter Satellite (XPoSat) mission:

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- 1. It is launched by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).
- 2. It aims to study black hole binaries and low-magnetic field neutron stars.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
- B) 2 only
- C) Both 1 and 2
- D) Neither 1 nor 2

#### Answer : C

- ✓ Recently, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) launched the PSLV-C58 X-ray Polarimeter Satellite (XPoSat) mission.
- ✓ It is the first dedicated scientific satellite from ISRO to carry out research in space-polarisation measurements of X-ray emission from celestial sources.
- ✓ It carries two payloads namely
- ✓ POLIX: It is an X-ray Polarimeter for astronomical observations in the energy band of 8-30 keV.
- The payload is being developed by Raman Research Institute (RRI), Bangalore in collaboration with U R Rao Satellite Centre (URSC).
- ✓ It is expected to observer about 40 bright astronomical sources of different categories during the planned lifetime of XPoSat mission of about 5 years.
- ✓ This is the first payload in the medium X-ray energy band dedicated for polarimetry measurements.
- XSPECT: It is an X-ray SPECtroscopy and Timing payload onboard XPoSat, which can provide fast timing and good spectroscopic resolution in soft X-rays.
- ✓ It would observe several types of sources viz X-ray pulsars, blackhole binaries, low-magnetic field neutron star (NS) in LMXBs, AGNs and Magnetars.
- ✓ The launch put India in an elite category as it has become the second (after NASA's Imaging X-ray Polarimetry Explorer (IXPE) launched in 2021) nation to send an observatory to study astronomical sources such as black holes, neutron stars among others



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### **ISRO IN NEWS 2023-24**

- Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) launched the PSLV-C58 X-ray Polarimeter Satellite (XPoSat) mission.
- Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) is planning to send Indian astronauts to the moon for the first time by 2040.
- ISRO's Next Moon Mission in Collaboration with Japan Gathers Steam. This mission, called LUPEX, or Lunar Polar Exploration, is slated for 2024-25.
- Centre has approved the establishment of a new spaceport in Kulasekarapattinam, Tamil Nadu for carrying out the launches of the Small Satellite Launch Vehicles (SSLV) developed by the ISRO.
- ISRO has announced a new online training programme for post-graduate and final-year undergraduate students of physical sciences and technology. The programme is called Space Science and Technology Awareness Training (START).
- ISRO will launch Singapore's TeLEOS-2 satellite using the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) from the Satish Dhawan Space Center in Sriharikota.
- ISRO has successfully conducted the Reusable Launch Vehicle Autonomous Landing Mission (RLV LEX) at the Aeronautical Test Range (ATR), Chitradurga, Karnataka.
- ISRO has successfully launched India's largest Launch Vehicle Mark-III (LVM3) rocket/OneWeb India-2 Mission with 36 satellites onboard from Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh.
- ISRO successfully launched a Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle -C52(PSLV-C52) on 14 February 2022 from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre at Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh.
- > The PSLV-C52 rocket carried three satellites EOS-04 ,INSPIR Esat-1and INS-2TD).
- Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) will launch OneWeb India-2 mission from Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota.
- Under a commercial agreement with NewSpace India Ltd, will launch 72 satellites of UK-based Network Access Associates Ltd and place them in low Earth orbit.
- Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) recently successfully carried out a controlled descent of its 12-year-old low earth orbit satellite Megha Tropiques-1 (MT-1) into the Pacific Ocean.
- Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has recently released images of Earth captured by the EOS-06 satellite.



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- > Earth Observation satellite (EOS-6) is the third-generation satellite in the Oceansat series.
- Indian Space Research Organization has launched its smallest rocket SSLV-D2 into space from Satish Dhawan Space Center (Sriharikota).
- > ISRO's SSLV-D2 flew into space carrying three satellites with it.
- These include ISRO's satellite EOS-07, Chennai-based space startup Spacekidz's satellite Azad SAT-2 and American company Antaris's satellite JANUS -1.
- > All these three satellites will be placed in circular orbit 450 km apart.
- An Earth-observation satellite jointly developed by National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and ISRO will be sent to India in late February 2023 for a possible launch in September.
- India's first ever private Vikram-S (Suborbital) rocket was launched on 18 November from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota.
- > Vikram-S, designed by Skyroot Aerospace.
- ISRO has successfully launched its heaviest rocket LVM3-M2, from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota spaceport, Andhra Pradesh on 23 October 2022. The mission, which was named LVM3-M2/OneWeb India-1, carried 36 broadband communication satellites of OneWeb Company.
- ISRO will launch 36 satellites of OneWeb, the UK's global communications network, on October 23, 2022.
- > The name of the rocket is LVM3, it was earlier called GSLV Mk III.
- > ISRO 'Shukrayaan I' mission to planet Venus reportedly shifted to 2031.
- ISRO is doing to boost the use of 'NAVigation with the Indian Constellation' (NavIC), India's version of GPS.
- ISRO has unveiled spectacular images of the Earth taken by its Earth Observation Satellite (EOS-06), also known as Oceansat-3.
- Q. Consider the following statements regarding the e-SCR portal:
  - 1. It provides the digital version of the Supreme Court's judgments.
  - 2. It is developed with the help of the National Informatics Centre.
  - Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
  - A) 1 only

B) 2 only



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### C) Both 1 and 2

### D) Neither 1 nor 2

### Answer : C

- ✓ The Electronic Supreme Court Reports (e-SCR) portal starting with just 2,238 translated judgments as of January 2023 and ending the year with over 31,000 rulings translated.
- ✓ It is an initiative to provide the digital version of the apex court's judgments in the manner as they are reported in the official law report.
- ✓ The Supreme Court has developed a search engine with the help of the National Informatics Centre.
- ✓ It is comprising elastic search technique in the database of e-SCR and the search facility in e-SCR provides for free text search, search within search, case type and case year search, judge search, year and volume search and bench strength search options.
- ✓ It will provide free access to it's about 34,000 judgements to lawyers, law students and the common public.
- ✓ These verdicts will be available on the apex court website, its mobile app and on the judgment portal of the National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG).
- Q. Reliance Power has inked an agreement to sell its 1,200 MW Kalai II hydroelectric project for Rs 128.39 crore to THDC India. Kalai II hydroelectric project is located in which state?
  - A) Assam

B) Nagaland

C) Uttarakhand

D) Arunachal Pradesh

#### Answer : D

- Reliance Power has inked an agreement to sell its 1,200 MW Kalai II hydroelectric project in Arunachal Pradesh for Rs 128.39 crore to THDC India.
- ✓ The purpose of entering into the agreement was to monetise the hydroelectric power project.
- ✓ Under the pact, there will transfer of the development rights and associated physical assets, studies, clearances, designs and intellectual properties of the proposed 1,200 MW Kalai-II hydroelectric project located at the Lohit River basin of Arunachal Pradesh to THDC for an aggregate consideration of Rs 128.39 crore, subject to certain indemnities, representations and covenants.

# Q. Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has flagged off how many electric buses for pollution-free Guwahati?

| A) 200 | <b>B) 100</b> |
|--------|---------------|
| C) 500 | D) 300        |



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### Answer : A

- ✓ Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has flagged off 200 electric buses from Guwahati.
- ✓ The initiative as the government's one of the biggest push towards a pollution-free environment.
- ✓ By 2025, we want to establish Guwahati as the country's first city to be powered by a 100 per cent green public transportation system. This new fleet builds upon the 100 CNG buses dedicated to the New Year.

Q. Agreement on the Prohibition of Attack against Nuclear Installations and Facilities is signed between which of the following countries?

A) Russia and USA

- **B)** India and China
- C) India and Pakistan

D) USA and China

### Answer : C

- ✓ Agreement on the Prohibition of Attack against Nuclear Installations and Facilities
- ✓ About Agreement on the Prohibition of Attack against Nuclear Installations and Facilities:
- ✓ It was signed on December 31, 1988, by the then Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and Indian PM Rajiv Gandhi.
- ✓ The treaty came into force on January 27, 1991, and has two copies each in Urdu and Hindi.
- ✓ Need for the Agreement:
- ✓ In 1986, the Indian army carried out a massive exercise 'Brasstacks', raising fears of an attack on nuclear facilities.

### **SIGNS MoU IN NEWS 2023**

- > Cabinet approves the Migration and Mobility Agreement between India and Italy
- > India and Italy sign Mobility and Migration Partnership Agreement to facilitate movement of workers.
- > India-Japan pact on semiconductor supply chain gets Cabinet green light.
- > India, Italy sign defence agreement.
- India and Tanzania elevate ties to Strategic Partnership; Agree on 5 year roadmap for defence cooperation.
- > India, Tanzania to sign 15 agreements with eye on USD 10 billion trade.
- > India And Saudi Arabia Tie Up For Green Hydrogen.
- ▶ India And Saudi Arabia Sign Agreement On Cooperation In Energy Sector.



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- > India, New Zealand Sign MoU To Enhance Cooperation In Civil Aviation.
- India and Trinidad and Tobago have entered a partnership by signing an MoU to share INDIA STACK.
- > India, Moldova agree to sign MoU for cooperation in agriculture
- India, UAE sign MoU on linking of India's Unified Payments Interface with Instant Payment Platform of UAE.
- India, Panama sign MoU on electoral cooperation.
- > India and Singapore extend MoU on cooperation for 5 years.
- Israel signed an agreement with India to enhance technological advancements and sustainable practices cooperation in the fields of water and agriculture.
- > India and US To Establish Monitoring Group to Boost High-Tech Trade and Tech Partnership.
- > India and Australia Sign Agreements on Migration and Green Hydrogen Task Force.
- > India, Israel sign MoU for industrial research and development cooperation.
- > NET Zero' Innovation Virtual Centre to be jointly created by India-UK.
- > India, UK sign agreement to collaborate on science and innovation.
- > Nepal and India to Sign Agreement for Cross-Border Digital Payments.
- > India and Romania sign first Defence Cooperation Agreement to strengthen bilateral relations.
- > India, US to sign memorandum of understanding on semiconductors.
- > Australia, India agree on strengthening economic, defence ties.

Q. India's first submarine tourism will be started in which state?

| A) Odisha  | B) Maharashtra |
|------------|----------------|
| C) Gujarat | D) Kerala      |

### Answer : C

✓ Gujarat government is going to start the country's first submarine tourism. This project has been started around Bet Dwarka, a small island off the coast of Dwarka city. For this, Gujarat Government has joined hands with Mazgaon Dock Limited (MDL). This project is likely to start before Diwali 2024. The weight of this tourist submarine will be approximately 35 tons and its capacity will be to carry 30 passengers.



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## **GUJARAT IN NEWS 2023-24**

- ➢ Gujarat government is going to start the country's first submarine tourism.
- Union Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying Parshottam Rupala inaugurated the Global Fisheries Conference India 2023 at Gujarat Science City, Ahmedabad.
- Dhordo, a village located in the Kutch district of Gujarat, known for its annual Rann Utsav has been bestowed with the title 'Best Tourism Village' by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has laid the foundation Stone for the Akashvani Dahod FM Relay Station Project in Gujarat.
- Gujarat Assembly has passed the Gujarat Local Authorities Law (Amendment) Bill 2023 by a majority vote to raise reservation for Other Backward Class (OBC) communities in local self-government bodies to 27 percent from the current 10 percen.
- 'Gujarat Declaration' outlining the outcome of the first WHO Traditional Medicine Global Summit 2023 released.
- In a significant development for India's energy sector, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that the 700 MW nuclear power plant located in Kakrapar, Gujarat, has commenced its operations at maximum capacity.
- > Gujarat to host 69th edition of Filmfare Awards in 2024.
- London-based company OneWeb and the Gujarat Government's Science and Technology Department have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) today for the establishment of a 'Satellite Network Portal Site' in Gujarat.
- Union Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah organized a virtual ceremony to lay the foundation stone of the country's first cooperative-run Sainik School.
- Sarbananda Sonowal inaugurated the best tourism facilities in the historical lighthouses of Gujarat.
- Under the Sagarmala programme, the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways is developing a National Maritime Heritage Complex, a world-class facility at Lothal, Gujarat.
- Gujarat government signs MoU with US chip maker firm Micron Technology for semiconductor assembly and testing facility in Ahmedabad.
- Indian cabinet has given its approval to Micron Technology's plan to invest \$2.7 billion in setting up a semiconductor testing and packaging unit in Gujarat.



## Urban-20 City Sherpas' meet begins at Ahmedabad in Gujarat.

> India's largest power company NTPC Ltd has commissioned India's first green hydrogen blending project at Kawas, Gujarat.

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- > BJP leader Bhupendra Patel took oath as the Chief Minister of Gujarat for a second straight term.
- Madhvendra Singh has been appointed as the first Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Gujarat Maritime Cluster by Gujarat Ports Infrastructure Company Limited.
- First G20 Tourism Working Group meeting at Dhordo in Kutch region of Gujarat.  $\geq$
- > Former Gujarat governor and veteran Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Om Prakash Kohli passed away.
- ▶ Gujarat Day is celebrated on May 1 every year. The state was established on May 1, 1960.
- > Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel has declared the last week of April as "Swagat Saptah" in commemoration of the completion of 20 years of the "State Wide Attention on Grievances by Application of Technology" (SWAGAT) initiative.
- > Deakin University of Australia to set up campus in GIFT city.
- > Two Australian Universities Wollongong and Deakin to set up Campuses in Gujarat's GIFT City.
- > The Youth 20 India Summit will be held at the Maharaja Sayajirao University Vadodara in Gujarat.
- International Kite Festival 2023 begins in Ahmedabad, Gujarat.

#### Which player won the Scottish Junior Open Squash Under-19 title? **Q**.

A) Anahat Singh **B)** Joshna Chinappa **C)** Saurav Ghoshal D) Aditya Jagtap

#### Answer : A

Talented Indian squash player Anahat Singh has performed brilliantly and won the Girls Under-19 title in  $\checkmark$ the 2023 Scottish Junior Open Squash held in Edinburgh. In the final match, he defeated Robin McAlpine by a margin of 11-6, 11-1, 11-5. In the girls' under-11 category, Divyanshi Jain was the runner-up.

- Q. Who has been appointed as the Director General of Fire Services, Civil Defense and Home Guards?
  - A) Vinay Sagar

- **B)** Vivek Srivastava
- C) Abhishek Singh D) Ashok Khemka

Answer: B



The Appointments Committee of the Union Cabinet has recently approved the appointment of Gujarat cadre IPS officer Vivek Srivastava as Director General of Fire Services, Civil Defense and Home Guards.

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- ✓ Fire Services, Civil Defense and Home Guards function under the Ministry of Home Affairs
- Who has been made the special envoy for peace in Afghanistan by the United Nations Security Q. **Council?** 
  - A) Narendra Modi **B)** Hamid Karzai
    - C) Joe Biden D) S Jaishankar

#### Answer : B

- ✓ Former Afghan President Hamid Karzai has been nominated by the United Nations Security Council as the special envoy for peace in Afghanistan.
- ✓ China and Russia abstained from voting on this resolution brought in the Security Council, while 13 countries supported this resolution.
- ✓ It is noteworthy that in the year 2021, Taliban had captured power in Afghanistan.

In which city of UP did Defense Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurate the first Sainik School for girls? Q.

A) Varanasi **B)** Mathura **C)** Lucknow **D)** Moradabad

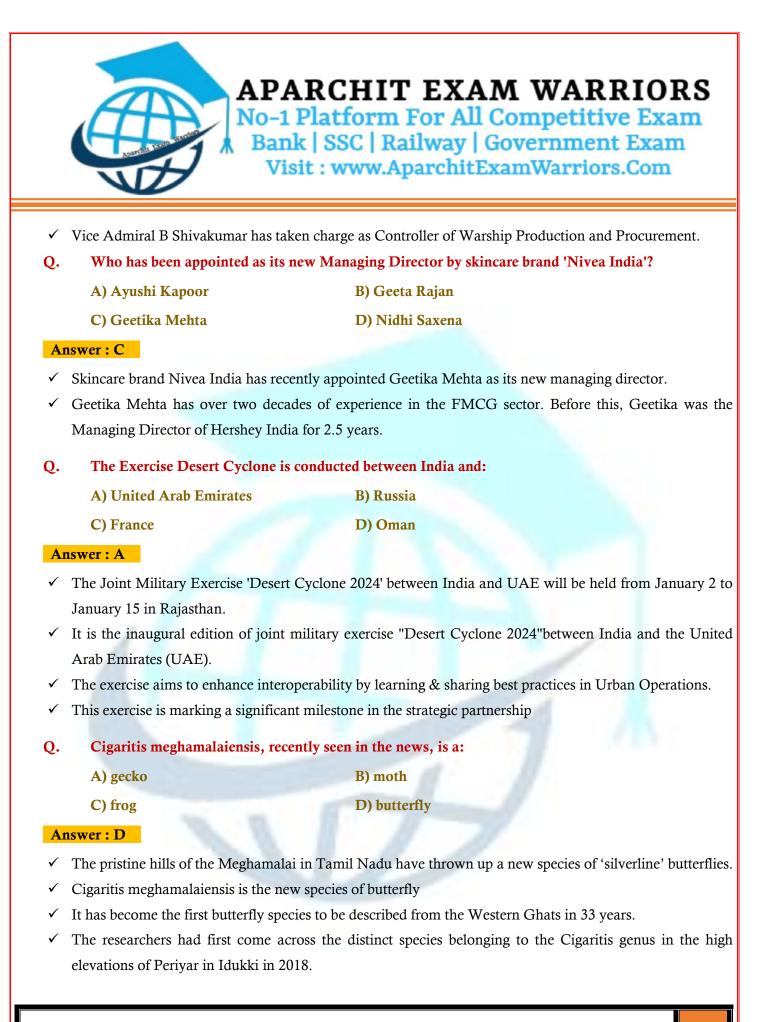
#### Answer : B

- ✓ Defense Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated the first Sainik School for girls 'Samvid Gurukulam' Sainik School in Vrindavan, Mathura in Uttar Pradesh.
- ✓ The government had taken the initiative to establish 100 new such Sainik Schools in the year 2019, out of which 42 schools have been established. Under this, partnerships have been made with NGOs/private/state government schools
- Who has recently assumed the charge of 'Chief of Material' in the Navy? Q.
  - **B)** Kiran Deshmukh A) B Shivakumar
  - C) Abhinav Sen Gupta

### Answer : B

- ✓ Vice Admiral Kiran Deshmukh has assumed the charge of 'Chief of Material' in the Indian Navy.
- ✓ Vice Admiral Deshmukh is an alumnus of VJTI, Mumbai University and joined the Indian Navy in 1986.

D) Alok Sinha



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✓ Further explorations have revealed the species to be confined to the Meghamalais and the adjoining Periyar Tiger Reserve.

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Q. The KH-22 supersonic cruise missile is developed by:

| A) Iran    | B) Israel |
|------------|-----------|
| C) Ukraine | D) Russia |

## Answer : D

- ✓ Ukraine Air Force spokesperson recently disclosed that the country's air defense units were unable to shot down any of the KH-22 supersonic cruise missiles launched by Russia.
- ✓ About KH-22 Missile:
- ✓ It is a Soviet-era long-range airborne supersonic cruise missile.
- $\checkmark$  Armed with a nuclear or highly explosive fragmenting cumulative warhead, it was initially designed to destroy aircraft carriers and other large warships, or even groups of such carriers.
- The Kh-22 family was developed in the USSR in the 1960s and specifically designed to be launched from  $\checkmark$ Tupolev-22 bombers.
- ✓ Later, both the missiles and the aircraft were modernized as part of the so-called "Kh-22 special air-to-surface missile complex."
- ✓ Upgraded in the 1970s, the missile had an impressive speed of 4,000 kilometers per hour, a 1,000-kilogram warhead, and a range of 500 kilometers.
- ✓ It weighs 5,820 kilograms.
- ✓ A total of approximately 3,000 such missiles were produced in the USSR.
- ✓ In 2000, Ukraine transferred 386 Kh-22 missiles to Russia as an installment against the gas debt.
- The successor to the Kh-22 became the Kh-32, which can be carried by the new Russian Tu-22M3M  $\checkmark$ bombers.
- Which country has officially declined the invitation to join the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, Q. South Africa) grouping of major emerging economies?

| A) Saudi Arabia | B) Egypt |
|-----------------|----------|
| C) Argentina    | D) Iran  |

Answer : C



✓ Argentine President Javier Milei has officially declined the invitation to join the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) grouping of major emerging economies.

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- ✓ The bloc made up of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa in August announced it was admitting six new members in a bid to counter the Western-led global order.
- ✓ The membership of Argentina, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and the United Arab Emirates was due to take effect from January 1, 2024.
- The rejection was conveyed through letters sent to BRICS leaders, solidifying Argentina's decision to abstain from the bloc. President Milei's rejection was grounded in the assertion that Argentina's membership was "not considered appropriate at this time.
- Q. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated a new terminal building at Tiruchirappalli International Airport in which state?

| A) Karnataka  | B) Kerala    |
|---------------|--------------|
| C) Tamil Nadu | D) Telangana |

### Answer : C

- ✓ Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated a new terminal building at Tiruchirappalli International Airport in Tamil Nadu.
- ✓ The new terminal building has been developed at a cost of more than Rs 1100 crore.
- ✓ The airport's design has been inspired by the cultural vibrancy of Tiruchirappalli. It would depict art forms from Kolam art to colours of Srirangam Temple and other theme artworks.
- ✓ The two-level new international terminal building has the capacity to serve more than 44 lakh passengers annually and about 3500 passengers during peak hours.
- ✓ Tiruchirappalli International Airport is the second largest airport in terms of international passenger traffic after Chennai in Tamil Nadu
- The Prime Minister also laid the foundation stone of multiple development projects worth more than ₹19,850 crore in Tamil Nadu.

## **AIRPORT IN NEWS 2023**

- > Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated a new terminal building at Tiruchirappalli International Airport in Tamil Nadu.
- Union Cabinet has approved the proposal to declare Surat Airport an international airport.



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- > 58 Airports in the country have been covered under Krishi Udan Scheme.
- Deoghar Airport in Jharkhand is the first airport in the country to land a commercial aircraft in low visibility.
- Larsen and Toubro (L&T) Construction have secured a large order to construct the greenfield Bhogapuram International Airport project in Andhra Pradesh.
- The largest airport in the world is the king Fahd International Airport, located in Dammam, Saudi Arabia which covers an area of about 300 sq.
- Minister of Civil Aviation, Shri Jyotiraditya M Scindia inaugurated Utkela Airport owned by the Government of Odisha.
- Guwahati's Lokpriya Gopinath Bordoloi International Airport became the first airport in the northeast to get 'Digi Yatra' facility.
- > Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate Gujarat's first greenfield airport at Hirasar near Rajkot.
- > Government of India has given 'in-principle' approval for setting up 21 new greenfield airports.

Q. What is the maximum punishment under the Bharatiya Nyay Sanhita (BNS) for a driver who causes a serious road accident due to careless driving and leaves without informing the police or any official?

- A) 1 years in jail and a fine of Rs 5 lakh
- B) 5 years in jail and a fine of Rs 10 lakh
- C) 10 years in jail and a fine of Rs 7 lakh
- D) 20 years in jail and a fine of Rs 2 lakh

### Answer : C

- ✓ The countrywide truckers' stir has been called off recently as the government assured that it would consult stakeholders before implementing a contentious law against hit-and-run.
- ✓ About the new hit-and-run law:
- ✓ As per the Bharatiya Nyay Sanhita (BNS), which is a replacement for the British-era Indian Penal Code (IPC), if a driver causes a serious road accident due to careless driving and then leaves without informing the police or any official, they could be punished with up to 10 years in jail and a fine of Rs 7 lakh.
- ✓ BNS has established two distinct categories under the umbrella of "causing death by negligence."
- ✓ The first category addresses causing death through any rash or negligent act that does not amount to culpable homicide.



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- $\checkmark$  Offenders in this category may face imprisonment for up to five years and a fine.
- The second category deals with causing death through rash and negligent driving, not amounting to culpable homicide.
- ✓ If the individual escapes without promptly reporting the incident to a police officer or magistrate, they could be subjected to up to 10 years of imprisonment and a fine.
- ✓ What was the hit-and-run law before?
- ✓ The old, British-era IPC did not have a specific provision for hit-and-run cases.
- ✓ Actions in such cases were taken under Section 304 A of the IPC.
- ✓ As per this section, an individual causing the death of another due to a reckless or negligent act could face a maximum jail term of two years or a fine.
- ✓ All cases of hit-and-run, along with other forms of activities that came under the ambit of causing death by a "rash and negligent act" were lodged under Section 304A of the IPC.
- Who has been appointed as the Chairman of the 16th Finance Commission by the Central Q. **Government?** 
  - A) Shaktikanta Das
    - **C)** Arvind Panagariya

- **B)** Raghuram Rajan
- D) Alok Gandhi

#### Answer : C

- ✓ The Central Government appointed former Vice Chairman of NITI Aayog Arvind Panagariya as the Chairman of the 16th Finance Commission.
- ✓ Ritwik Ranjanam Pandey has been appointed Secretary of the Commission.
- ✓ Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi had approved the 16th Finance Commission.
- ✓ The Finance Commission is constituted under Article 280 of the Constitution of India.
- The commission's main task is to suggest the ratio in which taxes should be divided between the Centre and states for the five-year period starting from April 1, 2026.
- ✓ The members of the commission and its Terms of Reference (ToR) are currently being determined.
- Government of India, in adherence to Article 280(1) of the Constitution, has established the Sixteenth  $\checkmark$ Finance Commission, appointing Dr. Arvind Panagariya, former Vice-Chairman of NITI Aayog and Professor at Columbia University, as its Chairman.
- The Commission has also been tasked with reviewing disaster management financing arrangements under the Disaster Management Act, 2005, and making recommendations for improvements.



- The Commission has been requested to make its report available by 31st October, 2025.
- What is the Finance Commission?
- ✓ About:
- The Finance Commission in India is a constitutional body established under Article 280 of the Indian  $\checkmark$ Constitution.

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- ✓ Its primary function is to recommend the distribution of financial resources between the central government and the state governments.
- ✓ The Fifteenth Finance Commission was constituted on 27th November, 2017. It made recommendations covering the period of six years commencing on 1st April, 2020 through its Interim and Final Reports.
- $\checkmark$  The recommendations of the Fifteenth Finance Commission are valid up to the financial year 2025-26.
- 'Population (1971)' was considered only for the 14th Finance Commission, while 'Population (2011)' and  $\checkmark$ 'Tax and fiscal efforts' were introduced by the 15th Finance Commission. The figures represent the weightage in percentage for each criterion during the specified periods.
- The First Finance Commission was constituted vice Presidential Order dated 22.11.1951 under the chairmanship of Shri K.C. Neogy on 6th April 1952.
- Joint military exercise 'Desert Cyclone' is conducted between India and which country? Q.

| A) Mongolia             | B) Qatar   |
|-------------------------|------------|
| C) United Arab Emirates | D) Bahrain |

#### Answer : C

- ✓ The joint military exercise 'Desert Cyclone' of India and United Arab Emirates is being organized in Mahajan, Rajasthan which will end on January 15.
- ✓ In this, 45 soldiers of Zayed First Brigade are participating from UAE side.
- ✓ Exercise 'Desert Cyclone' will further strengthen mutual cooperation between India and UAE.

## **UAE IN NEWS 2023-24**

- The joint military exercise 'Desert Cyclone' of India and United Arab Emirates is being organized in  $\geq$ Mahajan, Rajasthan
- India, UAE ink MoU to strengthen educational cooperation for students, faculty.



India, UAE sign MoU on linking of India's Unified Payments Interface with Instant Payment Platform of UAE.

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- > UAE becomes first Arab country to get observer status on Asia-Pacific money laundering.
- > United Arab Emirates (UAE) has emerged as the fourth largest investor in India during 2022-23.
- > Dubai Emerges as India's Top Choice for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)
- > UAE to Host World's Largest IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025.
- Etihad Airways, the national airline of the UAE, has been named the Environmental Airline of the Year 2023 for the second year in a row at the Airline Rating Awards.
- > UAE India's second largest export destination and third largest source of imports.
- The first conference of I2U2 Business Forum, a joint initiative of India, Israel, the US and the United Arab Emirates, was held on 22 February 2023 in Abu Dhabi (UAE).
- United Arab Emirates (UAE) will host the 13th World Trade Organisation (WTO) Ministerial meeting in February 2024.
- UAE will host the 28th Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP28) in November 2023.
- Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) signed an agreement to set up its first overseas office in Abu Dhabi Global Market.
- UAE and India launched the UAE India Business Council UAE Chapter (UIBCUC) to strengthen economic ties and enhance bilateral trade and investment.
- EDGE, UAE's leading defence group signed a Memorandum of Understanding with India's aerospace firm Hindustan Aeronautics (HAL) at the International Defence Exhibition and Conference (IDEX).
- India, France, UAE Establish Trilateral Cooperation Initiative, in fields including Energy, Defence & Economy.
- India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI) is shortly to be connected to comparable networks in Indonesia, Mauritius, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).
- > RBI, Central Bank of UAE sign MoU to promote innovation in financial products and services.
- > Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan appointed President of UAE.
- Emaar, a Dubai-based real estate developer, has become the first foreign company to invest in a megamall spread over one million square feet in Srinagar.



## > Indian Air Force contingent of 110 Air Warriors reached Al Dahfra airbase of United Arab Emirates (UAE) on 25 February for participating in Exercise 'Desert Flag VIII.

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- > President of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, has appointed Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan, his brother, as the Vice President of the country.
- > The 'Study in India Pavilion' at the Global Education & Training Exhibition (GETEX) in Dubai, UAE.
- > HDFC Bank and UAE-based financial services company Lulu Exchange, have partnered to strengthen cross-border payments between India and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) region.
- ➢ About UAE
- ➢ Official Language ∶ Arabic
- Capital : Abu Dhabi
- Currency : Emirati Dirham
- President of UAE : Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan
- Prime Minister: Sheikh Mohammed ibn Rashid Al Maktoum

#### Who recently got M.S. Who was awarded the Swaminathan Award? **Q**.

- A) Lal Krishna Advani
- **B)** S Jaishankar
- C) B.R. Kamboj D) Arun Sinha

### Answer : C

- ✓ Chaudhary Charan Singh, Vice Chancellor of Haryana Agricultural University, Professor B.R. Kamboj received the prestigious M.S.
- ✓ Has been awarded the Swaminathan Award.
- ✓ Kamboj was given this award for his contribution as a scientist and extension specialist in the field of agricultural science.
- ✓ Karnataka Governor Thawar Chand Gehlot presented him this award.
- Who has been appointed as the new Chairman and Managing Director of Power Grid Corporation? Q.
  - A) Ajay Mohan

B) Ravindra Kumar Tyagi

**C)** Rahul Upadhyay

D) Srikanth Kandikuppa

Answer : B

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✓ Ravindra Kumar Tyagi has been appointed as the new Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Power Grid Corporation, owned by the Ministry of Power.

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- ✓ Tyagi will replace Srikanth Kandikuppa who retired recently.
- ✓ Power Grid Corporation of India Limited is a central public sector undertaking owned by the Ministry of Power, Government of India.
- Q. India has started its tenure as a member of the United Nations Statistical Commission for how many years?

| A) 2 years | B) 4 years |
|------------|------------|
| C) 5 years | D) 6 years |

### Answer : B

- ✓ Recently, India began its four-year term as a member of the United Nations Statistical Commission.
- It is the supreme body of the global statistical system. It was established in the year 1947.  $\checkmark$
- This commission includes 24 member countries of the United Nations.  $\checkmark$
- India last became a member of the Statistical Commission in 2004.  $\checkmark$
- With reference to the River Devika Project, consider the following statements: Q.
  - 1. It is a river rejuvenation project implemented in Jammu and Kashmir.
  - 2. It plans to develop bathing "ghats" and catchment areas.
  - 3. Its entire cost is borne by the State Government.
  - How many of the above statements are correct?
  - A) Only one **B)** Only two
  - C) All three
- D) None

#### Answer : B

- ✓ North India's first river rejuvenation project, 'Devika', is in the final stages. and it will be soon dedicated to the nation by the Prime Minister.
- ✓ About River Devika Project:
- ✓ Built on the lines of 'Namami Ganga', the project was launched in February 2019.
- ✓ It is north India's first river rejuvenation project.
- The project is implemented along the Devika River in Jammu and Kashmir.



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- ✓ It has been included in the Government of India's National River Conservation Project (NRCP).
- ✓ Under the project, bathing "ghats" (places) on the banks of the Devika River will be developed, encroachments will be removed, natural water bodies will be restored, and catchment areas will be developed along with cremation ground.
- ✓ The project includes the construction of three sewage treatment plants with 8 MLD, 4 MLD and 1.6 MLD capacities, a sewerage network of 129.27 km, the development of two cremation ghats, protection fencing and landscaping, small hydropower plants, and three solar power plants.
- ✓ Built at a cost of over Rs 190 crore, the sharing of fund allocation is in the ratio of 90:10 by the centre and UT, respectively.

## Q. Consider the following statements regarding the United Nations Statistical Commission:

- 1. Its members are elected by the United Nations Economic and Social Council.
- 2. India is currently a member of the Commission.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- A) 1 only B) 2 only
- C) Both 1 and 2 D) Neither 1 nor 2

### Answer : C

- ✓ India started its four-year term as a member of the United Nations Statistical Commission.
- ✓ It was established in 1947 and is the highest body of the global statistical system.
- ✓ It brings together the Chief Statisticians from member states from around the world.
- ✓ Functions:
- ✓ It is the highest decision-making body for international statistical activities, responsible for setting statistical standards and the development of concepts and methods, including their implementation at the national and international levels.
- The Statistical Commission oversees the work of the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), and it is a Functional Commission of the UN Economic and Social Council.
- Membership: The Commission consists of 24 member countries of the United Nations elected by the United Nations Economic and Social Council based on an equitable geographical distribution according to the following pattern:
- ✓ Five members from African States



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- ✓ Four members from Asia-Pacific States
- ✓ Four members from Eastern European States
- ✓ Four members from Latin American and Caribbean States
- ✓ Seven members from Western European and other States
- $\checkmark$  Term: The term of office of members is four years.
- ✓ India was a member of the Statistical Commission last in 2004 and the country is returning to the UN agency after a gap of two decades.
- ✓ Headquarter: New York
- Q. Consider the following statements regarding the Direct-to-Mobile (D2M) technology:

1. It is a combination of broadband and broadcast that uses mobile phones to capture territorial digital TV signals.

2. It can be used in emergency alert warning purposes without depending on internet/cellular networks.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

| A) 1 only       | B) 2 only          |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| C) Both 1 and 2 | D) Neither 1 nor 2 |

### Answer : C

- Indian telecom operators have asked the government to auction the spectrum that will be used for direct-tomobile (D2M) technology services.
- The science behind D2M is similar to that of an FM radio, where a receiver within the device can tap into different radio frequencies.
- This new-age technology is a combination of broadband and broadcast that uses mobile phones to capture territorial digital TV signals.
- ✓ Using D2M, multimedia content, including live TV matches, can be streamed to phones directly without using the internet.
- ✓ D2M can ensure-
- ✓ Emergency alerts are delivered directly, reliably and without dependence on internet/cellular networks.
- ✓ Disaster Management audio content is delivered directly and authentically in a targeted manner.
- ✓ With D2M, governments can broadcast citizen-centric information.



#### This approach benefits consumers by reducing their reliance on internet data consumption for staying $\checkmark$ informed and entertained

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Which city has achieved 100% saturation in 'Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra"? 0.

| A) Udhampur | B) Reasi |
|-------------|----------|
|-------------|----------|

**C)** Baramulla D) Kathua

### Answer : A

- ✓ Udhampur achieved 100% saturation in 'Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra"
- ✓ Dr. Jitendra Singh commends Udhampur's success, nearing full implementation in key schemes and flagship projects.
- ✓ PMGSY and RDD departments were lauded for excellence in road connectivity and efficient completion of Area Development Plan.
- ✓ All the "Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra" schemes as well as all the flagship schemes of Govt. of India are nearing 100% saturation in district Udhampur.
- The Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities has organized which edition of Divya Q. Kala Mela in Surat, Gujarat?
  - A) 12th
  - **B) 14th**
  - **C)** 16th
  - **D) 20th**

## Answer : A

- The Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan), under the Ministry of Social  $\checkmark$ Justice and Empowerment, Government of India, organized 'the 12th edition of Divya Kala Mela' in Surat, Gujarat.
- ✓ The Mela is co-hosted by the National Divyangian Finance and Development Corporation (NDFDC).
- ✓ The primary objective of the 'Divya Kala Mela' is to contribute to the economic empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (PwD)/Divyangjan.
- ✓ This event aimed at showcasing the products and craftsmanship of Divyang entrepreneurs and artisans from across the nation.



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## **MELA IN NEWS 2023-24**

- > 12th edition of Divya Kala Mela : Surat, Gujarat.
- Pitra Paksha Mela : Gaya, Bihar
- > Shravani Mela : Deoghar, Jharkhand
- > Kheer Bhavani Mela : Jammu and Kashmir
- SARAS Aajeevika Mela : Jammu and Kashmir
- Matua Mela : West Bengal
- Shrimp Mela : Punjab
- Maghi Mela : Punjab
- > 36th Surajkund International Crafts Mela : Faridabad, Haryana.
- Gangasagar Mela : West Bengal
- Pusa Krishi Vigyan Mela : New Delhi

# Q. Which Union Territory has become the first Union Territory to implement the PM Vishwakarma Yojana (PMVY) in the country?

A) Jammu and KashmirB) PuducherryC) LadakhD) Chandigarh

#### Answer : A

- ✓ Jammu and Kashmir has become the first Union Territory (UT) to implement the PM Vishwakarma Yojana (PMVY).
- ✓ It is an initiative that aims to empower and enhance the skills of the craftsman community.
- ✓ The inauguration of the training programme for the first batch of 30 trainees (Viswakarmas) in 'darzi craft' was virtually conducted by Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar, and Secretary of the Union Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE), Atul Kumar Tiwari, at ITI Shopian.
- PMVY, an initiated launched by the Central government in September 2023, aims to recognize artisans and craftspeople through PM Vishwakarma certificates and ID cards.
- ✓ The scheme includes basic training of five to seven days, advanced training of 15 days or more, a stipend of ₹500 per day, and a free modern toolkit worth ₹15,000 for trained Vishwakarmas.



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Q. Who has been appointed as the new Defence Minister of China?

A) Choi Soo-jong B) Dong Jun

C) Hwang Kwanghee D) Shin Ye-eun

#### Answer: B

- ✓ China named former Navy chief Dong Jun as its new defence minister to replace the last minister, Li Shangfu, who disappeared from public view four months ago.
- ✓ The appointment by Chinese lawmakers comes as President Xi Jinping upgrades the military as part of his push to make China a dominant world power, a goal that has alarmed many neighbours, especially its assertiveness towards self-ruled Taiwan and in the disputed South China Sea.

Q. How much total transaction value was done through UPI in the year 2023?

- A) ₹25-lakh crore
- B) ₹18-lakh crore
- C) ₹16-lakh crore
- D) ₹20-lakh crore

#### Answer : B

- ✓ Unified Payments Interface (UPI) ended 2023 at a high, recording over 1,200 crore transactions worth more than ₹18-lakh crore in December, a peak for both the transaction count and value.
- ✓ Over 11,765 UPI transactions worth ₹182.2-lakh crore were processed in 2023, up 59 percent in terms of volume and 45 percent in terms of value compared with 2022, as per data by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI).
- ✓ Transactions worth ₹18.23-lakh crore were processed during December, significantly higher than the previous high of ₹17.40-lakh crore in November. In percentage terms, the value of transactions was 4.8 percent higher on the month and 42 percent on year.
- ✓ The number of transactions on the UPI network breached the 1,200 crore mark to 1,202 crore transactions, higher by 6.9 percent on month and 54 percent on year
- ✓ On-year growth in UPI transactions has consistently remained over 40 percent for the value of transactions and above 50 percent for the volume of UPI trades in 2023 and FY24 so far.



#### Q. Popular Queen Margrethe II to step down after 52 years on throne. She is the Queen of which country?

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A) Denmark **B)** Norway

D) Switzerland C) Sweden

#### Answer : A

- ✓ Denmark's popular Queen Margrethe II, Europe's longest-serving monarch, would abdicate on January 14 and pass the baton to her son Crown Prince Frederik.
- ✓ Margrethe, 83, has reigned for 52 years and has been Europe's only reigning queen after the death of Britain's Elizabeth II.
- ✓ She has been hailed for subtly modernising Danish royalty in her half-century on the throne. The queen, known for her artistic talents, has been hugely popular in Denmark.
- She has managed to be a queen who has united the Danish nation in a time of large changes: globalization, the appearance of the multicultural state, economic crises in the 1970s, 1980s and again in 2008 to 2015, and the pandemic.
- Kia India has appointed Gwanggu Lee as the new Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer Q. with immediate effect. Kia is the company of which country?

| A) Japan | B) South Korea |
|----------|----------------|
|          | D) C           |

C) United States **D)** Germany

#### Answer : B

- ✓ Kia India has appointed Gwanggu Lee as the new Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer with immediate effect.
- ✓ He will be the third MD and CEO of Kia India, succeeding Kook Hyun Shim and Tae Jin Park.
- ✓ Kia currently sells five models, including Seltos, Sonet, and Carens, in the Indian market.
- ✓ Kia and Kia Motors Corporation is a South Korean multinational automobile manufacturer.
- Flipkart co-founder Binny Bansal has launched a new e-commerce start-up to help emerging e-Q. commerce brands expand globally. What is the name of this startup?

| A) OutDoor | B) OppDoor |
|------------|------------|
| C) AppDoor | D) eDoor   |

Answer: B



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- ✓ Flipkart co-founder launched e-commerce start-up 'OppDoor'
- ✓ Flipkart co-founder Binny Bansal has launched a new e-commerce start-up OppDoor, business-to-business (B2B) platform.
- ✓ The software services platform will help emerging e-commerce brands expand globally.
- ✓ OppDoor is a 'managed services platform for global expansion'.
- ✓ It will help e-commerce brands by offering them end-to-end services on global markets, customer behaviour, taxation and compliance, partnerships, and third-party vendors.
- OppDoor delivers fully managed Amazon services aimed at expanding private label brands across multiple regions globally
- ✓ About OppDoor
- ✓ The startup is registered in Singapore and was established in May 2021.
- ✓ The company is operating as a venture capital firm and was earlier known as 'Three State Ventures Pte Ltd.'
- ✓ The company is receiving investment from different startups across India (like Curefood, and Scapia).
- ✓ The company's main aim is to help firms achieve e-commerce excellence across the globe. Its main purpose is to support e-commerce companies to expand operations globally by providing them with end-to-end solutions
- ✓ OppDoor has presence in 8 countries.
- ✓ OppDoor provides services primarily in eight countries Australia, Canada, Germany, Japan, Mexico, Singapore, the UK, and the US.
- The company is currently not providing services in India as there was no mention of India on its website.
   The company website doesn't provide details of Benny Bansal as its owner

## Q. World Braille Day is observed on which day?

- A) 2 January
- C) 4 January

B) 5 January

D) 3 January

#### Answer : C

- ✓ World Braille Day is observed every year on January 04 to commemorate the birth anniversary of Louis Braille, the inventor of Braille.
- ✓ The first World Braille Day was celebrated on January 4, 2019



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- Q. Who has become the first company to achieve ISCC-Plus certification?
  - A) Shriram Chemical
  - **B)** Reliance Industry
  - C) Adani Group
  - D) Wipro technologies

#### Answer: B

- ✓ Reliance Industries Limited's (RIL) Jamnagar Refinery has become the first refinery in India to produce ISCC-Plus certified chemically recycled polymers.
- ✓ RIL's Jamnagar Refinery located in the state of Gujarat has now become ISCC-Plus certified.
- ✓ ISCC Plus is an internationally recognized certification

### **INDIA'S FIRST IN NEWS 2023**

- Reliance Industries Achieves India's First ISCC-Plus Certification .
- > Lucknow city, known as the 'City of Nawabs', will be developed as India's first 'AI City'.
- > Uttar Pradesh government has announced the launch of India's first 'Telecom Center of Excellence.
- > India's first solar roof cycling track was inaugurated in Hyderabad city.
- > Uttarakhand launches India's first polythene waste bank for sustainable waste management.
- Telangana has launched India's first Agricultural Data Exchange (ADeX) and Agriculture Data Management Framework (ADMF) in Hyderabad.
- > India's first-ever sports university to be set up in Manipur.
- > India Launches Its 1st Indigenous e-Tractor Developed By the CMERI.
- Dr Jitendra Singh, had launched the CSIR Prima ET11, the first indigenous e-Tractor developed by the Central Mechanical Engineering Research Institute (CMERI), Durgapur, a public engineering R&D institution in Durgapur, West Bengal, and a constituent laboratory of the Indian Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR).
- ▶ Kerala Launches India's First AI School, Pioneering Future-Focused Education.
- Sanchi, a world heritage site located in the Raisen district of Madhya Pradesh, is all set to become India's first solar city.
- > Hitachi Payment Services launched India's first UPI-ATM.
- > India's first Vedic-themed park unveiled in Noida.



▶ Google celebrates India's street food 'pani puri' with an interactive game Doodle, allowing users to help a street vendor fulfill pani puri orders.

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- > OPPO India sets up first PPP-model Atal Tinkering Lab in Kerala.
- Kerala gets India's first Construction Innovation Hub.
- > Uttar Pradesh government announced that the Buddh international circuit in Greater Noida will host India's first MotoGP racing event.
- > India's First 'Sahiwal' Breed Calf Given Birth Through 'Cow Surrogacy' At TTD's Goshala In Tirupati.
- > Recently, the PM has inaugurated India's first facility to produce rare earth permanent magnets in Visakhapatnam.
- India's first online gaming academy launched in Madhya Pradesh.
- Kerala to set up India's first fisheries Atal Incubation Centre.
- > India's first International Multi Modal Logistics park in Jogighopa, Assam.
- India's First Undersea Tunnel in Mumbai Set to Open by November 2023.
- > India's first private hill station Lavasa was sold to Darwin Platform Infrastructure for Rs 1.8 thousand crore after the approval of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT).
- > According to the Kolkata Metro Rail Corporation, India's first underwater metro service, the East-West Metro Corridor project is expected to be completed by December 2023.
- > Tech startup firm IG Drones has developed India's first 5G-enabled drone capable of vertical take-off and landing. This drone has been named Skyhawk.
- > Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari unveiled the country's first droneair traffic management system "Sky UTM".
- > India's First Centre of Excellence in Online Gaming to be set up in Shillong, Meghalaya.
- Luminous Power Technologies announced its plan to build the country's first green energy-based solar panel manufacturing factory in Uttarakhand.
- > India's First AC Double Decker Electric Bus Introduced in Mumbai.
- NCERT Launched India's First National Assessment Regulator "PARAKH".
- > PARAKH stands for The Performance Assessment, Review, and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development.



#### **Q**. Consider the following statements regarding the SMART (Scope for Mainstreaming Ayurveda **Research in Teaching Professionals) Program:**

1. It intends to promote robust clinical studies in Ayurveda academic institutions/hospitals across India.

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2. It is an initiative of NITI Aayog.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

A) 1 only

C) Both 1 and 2

D) Neither 1 nor 2

#### Answer : A

✓ The Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS) along with National Commission for Indian System of Medicine (NCISM) has launched 'SMART 2.0' program.

B) 2 only

- ✓ Scope for Mainstreaming Ayurveda Research among Teaching professionals (SMART) program promotes robust clinical studies in priority areas of Ayurveda with Ayurveda academic institutions/hospitals across the country through mutual collaboration.
- ✓ The objective of 'SMART 2.0' is to generate a tangible evidence to demonstrate efficacy and safety of Ayurveda interventions using interdisciplinary research methods and translating it into public health care.
- $\checkmark$  The study aims at safety, tolerability and adherence to Ayurveda formulations in the priority research areas of Bal Kasa, malnutrition, insufficient lactation, Abnormal Uterine Bleeding, Osteoporosis in postmenopausal women and Diabetes Mellitus (DM) II.
- ✓ What is CCRAS?
- ✓ It is an autonomous body of the Ministry of AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy), Government of India.
- ✓ It is an apex body in India for the formulation, coordination, development and promotion of research on scientific lines in Ayurveda and Sowa-Rigpa system of medicine
- 0. Which wildlife sanctuary was recently included in the Swadesh Darshan 2.0 scheme?
  - **B)** Sunabeda Wildlife Sanctuary A) Kotagarh Wildlife Sanctuary
  - C) Hadagarh Wildlife Sanctuary D) Debrigarh Wildlife Sanctuary

#### Answer : D

✓ The Ministry of Tourism has included Debrigarh Wildlife Sanctuary in the Swadesh Darshan 2.0 scheme.



✓ Swadesh Darshan Program was started in the year 2015 by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, which is a 100% centrally funded scheme.

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- ✓ Debrigadh Wildlife Sanctuary is located near Hirakud Dam (Mahanadi River) in Bargarh district of Odisha.
- Consider the following statements regarding the Swadesh Darshan Scheme: Q.
  - 1. It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme launched by the Union Ministry of Culture.
  - 2. Operation & Maintenance (O&M) of the projects is the responsibility of the respective State Governments.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only B) 2 only D) Neither 1 nor 2
- C) Both 1 and 2

### Answer : B

- ✓ The Kármán line lacks a specific national demarcation, resembling the concept of international waters.
- ✓ About Swadesh Darshan Scheme:
- ✓ It was launched in 2015 by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, to develop sustainable and responsible tourism destinations in the country.
- $\checkmark$  It is 100% centrally funded scheme.
- ✓ Under the scheme, the Ministry of Tourism provides financial assistance to State governments, Union Territory Administrations or Central Agencies for development of tourism infrastructure in the country.
- ✓ Operation & Maintenance (O&M) of the projects sanctioned under Swadesh Darshan Scheme is the responsibility of the respective State Government/UT Administration.
- ✓ Swadesh Darshan 2.0:
- The Ministry of Tourism has revamped its Swadesh Darshan scheme as Swadesh Darshan 2.0 (SD2.0) for development of sustainable and responsible tourist destinations covering tourism and allied infrastructure, tourism services, human capital development, destination management and promotion backed by policy and institutional reforms.
- ✓ The objective for the Swadesh Darshan 2.0 scheme envisage increase in private sector investment in tourism & hospitality.
- ✓ It may help in increasing Public Private Partnerships (PPP) in the field of tourism and operation and maintenance of the created assets under the scheme.



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Q. In which state was 'Rahat Vani Kendra' inaugurated for early disaster warning?

A) Bihar

C) Uttar Pradesh

**B)** Uttarakhand

D) Madhya Pradesh

### Answer : C

- ✓ Uttar Pradesh State Chief Secretary Durga Shankar Mishra inaugurated 'Rahat Vani Kendra' (RVC), an observatory for early disaster warning.
- ✓ Its objective is to provide early disaster warning, forecasting, ensure timely relief delivery and direct benefit transfer of compensation to the victims.
- $\checkmark$  It has been set up in Lalbagh area of Lucknow where a team of six personnel is working

## **UTTAR PRADESH IN NEWS 2023**

- Uttar Pradesh State Chief Secretary Durga Shankar Mishra inaugurated 'Rahat Vani Kendra' (RVC), an observatory for early disaster warning.
- > Lucknow city, known as the 'City of Nawabs', will be developed as India's first 'AI City'.
- > Uttar Pradesh government has announced the launch of India's first 'Telecom Center of Excellence.
- Uttar Pradesh has achieved the highest entry rate on the Inter-Operable Criminal Justice System (ICJS) platform.
- A high-level delegation from the Uttar Pradesh government is set to participate in the World Economic Forum (WEF) meeting in Davos, Switzerland.
- Uttar Pradesh government has linked big institutions like the CSIR and DRDO with the Bulk Drug Park and made them its knowledge partners.
- Ayodhya, the temple city on the banks of the Saryu River in Uttar Pradesh, marked a spectacular Deepotsav on Saturday, setting a new Guinness World Record with the lighting of 22.23 lakh earthen lamps across 51 ghats.
- President Draupadi Murmu inaugurated the first Uttar Pradesh International Trade Show at India Expo Center and Mart in Greater Noida.
- Uttar Pradesh New and Renewable Energy Development Agency (UPNEDA) has signed an MoU with the Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) for the solarisation of residential units at Ayodhya and for bio-energy and renewable project financing.



Ashok Leyland has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the government of Uttar Pradesh to set up an integrated commercial vehicle bus plant focused on green mobility in Uttar Pradesh.

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- Uttar Pradesh government has decided to organize a campaign under Road Safety Fortnight from July 17 to 31.
- > Uttar Pradesh Police Department has launched 'Operation Conviction' to combat criminals and mafias in the state.
- > Uttar Pradesh government has decided to cancel all Traffic Chalan for private and commercial vehicle owners pending from 2017 to 2021.
- > UP holds 2nd position in GI tagged products.
- > After getting GI tag for three more One District One Product (ODOP) crafts, Uttar Pradesh has now come second in the country in terms of maximum number of items with Geographical Indication tag.
- > The ODOP crafts which have got GI tag include Mainpuri Tarkashi, Mahoba Gaura Stone Craft and Sambhal Horn Craft.
- > Tamil Nadu leads with 55 GI-tags, followed by UP and Karnataka with 48 and 46 GI products, respectively.
- > The state government has given green signal to the project of setting Uttar Pradesh a state's first Pharma Park in Lalitpur district of Bundelkhand.
- > Uttar Pradesh introduces "School Health Program" digital health cards for children.
- > The online rural education initiative 'Pahal' was officially launched by Chief Secretary Durga Shankar Mishra at Government UP Sainik Inter College in Sarojini Nagar.
- ▶ Uttar Pradesh on track to be first Indian state with 100% EVs in govt depts.
- > Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of the India's first urban transport ropeway on March 24, 2023, in Varanasi.
- > Uttar Pradesh government has launched the portal for the creation of 'Family ID One Family One Identity'.
- > Uttarakhand won the first prize for its tableau, followed by Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh in the second and third positions respectively.
- > Uttar Pradesh came in third with its tableau commemorating Ayodhya's Deepotsav.
- > Uttar Pradesh Government Launched 'Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan' Campaign.



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- > Uttar Pradesh tops charts for mobile gaming destination in India.
- > Taj Mahotsav Starts In Agra of Uttar Pradesh.
- > UP first all-woman PAC battalions formed by Uttar Pradesh Govt.
- > Uttar Pradesh tops in India, 8462 lakes developed under Mission Amrit Sarovar.
- > Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath inaugurates north India's first data centre at Greater Noida.
- > Uttar Pradesh bags top honours at PMAY-U Awards 2021.
- Agriculture Minister of India, Narendra Singh Tomar, has introduced a new platform called 'DigiClaim' on the national crop insurance portal.
- Kannuj will be developed into a tourist destination as per the decision taken by the Government of Uttar Pradesh.
- Centre has approved the setting up of the Terai Elephant Reserve (TER) at Dudhwa-Pilibhit in Uttar Pradesh. The Terai Elephant Reserve is the 3rd Elephant Reserve in India.
- Uttar Pradesh cabinet has gave a green signal for the development of the first tiger reserve in the Bundelkhand region
- Q. Consider the following statements regarding the Kochi-Lakshadweep islands submarine optical fiber connection project:
  - 1. It aims to increase in internet connectivity to eleven Lakshadweep Islands.
  - 2. It is funded by Universal Services Obligation Fund (USOF).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

A) 1 only B) 2 only

D) Neither 1 nor 2

#### Answer : C

C) Both 1 and 2

- Recently, the Prime Minister of India in Kavaratti, Lakshadweep, inaugurated Kochi-Lakshadweep islands submarine optical fiber connection (KLI-SOFC) project.
- ✓ It is the submarine cable connectivity project from Mainland (Kochi) to eleven Lakshadweep Islands namely, Kavaratti, Agatti, Amini, Kadmat, Chetlet, Kalpeni, Minicoy, Androth, Kiltan, Bangaram and Bitra has been extended.
- ✓ The project is funded by Universal Services Obligation Fund (USOF), Department of Telecommunication.



✓ Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) was the Project Executing Agency and the work was awarded to M/s NEC Corporation India Pvt Ltd through Global Open Tendering process.

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- ✓ The major activities related to the project include Marine Route Survey, Submarine Cable laying, Civil Construction of CLS stations, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of End Terminals (SLTE).
- ✓ Significance of the project
- ✓ The KLI-SOFC project will lead to an increase in internet speed unlocking new possibilities & opportunities.
- ✓ For the first time since independence, Lakshadweep will be connected through Submarine Optic Fibre Cable.
- ✓ The dedicated submarine OFC will ensure a paradigm shift in communication infrastructure in the Lakshadweep islands, enabling faster and more reliable internet services, telemedicine, e-governance, educational initiatives, digital banking, digital currency usage, digital literacy etc.
- Q. Hardeep Singh Puri has inaugurated the National Street Food Festival 2023 in which city?

| A) New Delhi | B) Chennai   |
|--------------|--------------|
| C) Bengaluru | D) Hyderabad |

#### Answer : A

- ✓ Hardeep Singh Puri, Minister of Housing & Urban Affairs and Petroleum & Natural Gas, has inaugurated the National Street Food Festival 2023 in New Delhi.
- ✓ This street food festival was organized by the National Association of Street Vendors of India (NASVI) at Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium.
- ✓ This festival is the first 'Zero Waste Street Food Festival' in India.
- The Minister appreciated NASVI for providing training to 1,50,000 street vendors in food safety and hygiene. He also noted the establishment of two Regional Street Food Vendors Training Institutes (SVTI) which will be launched by NASVI in 2024 in Delhi and Patna.

## **FESTIVAL IN NEWS 2023**

- National Street Food Festival : New Delhi
- ▶ Kuno Forest Festival : Madhya Pradesh
- > 'Shar Amartala Torgya' Festival : Arunachal Pradesh
- 24th Hornbill Festival : Nagaland

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- Dhillo festival : Goa
- > India International Science Festival (IISF) 2023 : Faridabad, Haryana
- Arattu festival : Kerala
- Banni festival : Andhra Pradesh
- Zanskar Festival : Ladakh
- Indo-Latin America Cultural Festival : New Delhi
- Nuakhai festival : Odisha
- Nadi Utsav : Delhi
- Karnataka Cultural Festival : Sri Lanka .
- Unmesha' International Literature Festival and 'Utkarsh' Festival of Folk and Tribal Performing Arts : Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh
- > Festival of Libraries 2023 : New Delhi .
- Chachin Grazing Festival : Arunachal Pradesh
- Harela Festival : Uttarakhand
- Bonalu Festival : Telangana
- Kharchi Puja : Tripura
- Palkhi festival : Maharashtra
- Raja festival : Odisha
- Kheer Bhawani Mela : Jammu and Kashmir
- Great Prayer Festival : Ladakh
- > Sinthan Snow Festival : Jammu and Kashmir
- Heritage Festival : Goa
- Thawe Festival : Bihar
- Bohag Bihu festival : Assam
- > 49th Khajuraho Dance Festival : Madhya Pradesh
- > Yaoshang festival : Manipur
- Purple Fest : Goa
- > Orange Festival : Nagaland
- Kala Ghoda Arts Festival : Mumbai, Maharashtra
- Losar Festival : Ladakh



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- > 23rd Hornbill Festival : Nagaland
- Gaan Ngai festival : Manipur
- Cherchera Festival : Chhattisgarh
- > 26th National Youth Festival 2023 : Hubbali, Karnataka
- > International Yoga Festival 2023 : Rishikesh, Uttarakhand
- Tribal Dance Festival & Military Tattoo : New Delhi
- Mongeet Festival : Assam
- International Kite Festival 2023 : Ahmedabad, Gujarat
- > Vigyanika Science Literature Festival : Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh
- > Baisakhi is a harvest festival : Punjab and Haryana
- Q. Consider the following statements regarding Kavaratti Island:
  - 1. It is located in the centre of the Lakshadweep archipelago.
  - 2. It is being developed as a smart city under the flagship Smart Cities Mission.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

A) 1 only

B) 2 only

C) Both 1 and 2 D) Neither 1 nor 2

#### Answer : C

- ✓ The Prime Minister received a warm welcome in Kavaratti, Lakshadweep, recently as he arrived to inaugurate and lay the foundation for numerous development projects.
- ✓ About Kavaratti Island:
- ✓ Kavaratti is the capital of Lakshadweep (smallest Union Territory of India) and its most developed island.
- ✓ It lies 360 km of the coast of the State of Kerala.
- ✓ It is located in the centre of the Lakshadweep archipelago. It is located between Agatti Island on the west and Andrott Island on the east.
- ✓ It has an area of 4.22 sq km. The maximum length of the island is 5.8 km, and width is 1.6 km.
- $\checkmark$  The island is 2 to 5 m above the mean sea level on the western side and 2 to 3 m on the eastern side.
- ✓ Languages Spoken: Malayalam and Mahl



✓ Karavatti has been selected as one of the hundred Indian cities to be developed as a smart city under the flagship Smart Cities Mission.

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- Q. Kuna National Park is located near which one of the following mountain ranges?
  - A) Vindhya **B)** Aravalli
  - **C)** Eastern Ghats

### Answer : A

✓ Three cubs were born to the Namibian cheetah Aasha at Kuno National Park in Madhya Pradesh's Sheopur district recently.

**D)** Western Himalayas

- ✓ About Kuna National Park:
- ✓ Location:
- ✓ It is located in the Sheopur district of Madhya Pradesh.
- ✓ It is nestled near the Vindhyan Hills.
- ✓ It is named after the Kuno River (one of the main tributaries of the Chambal River) that cuts across it.
- Q. Consider the following statements regarding Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC):
  - 1. It is a statutory body.
  - 2. It works under the Union Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

A) 1 only B) 2 only

C) Both 1 and 2 D) Neither 1 nor 2

#### Answer : A

- ✓ The Quality Council of India (QCI) and Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) recently signed an initial pact to enhance the quality of the latter's products, train artisans, and introduce 'Made in India' label for Khadi.
- ✓ About Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC):
- ✓ It is a statutory body established under the Khadi and Village Industries Commission Act of 1956.
- It is an apex organization under the Ministry of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises, with regard to khadi and village industries within India.



✓ It is an apex organization under the Ministry of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises, with regard to khadi and village industries within India.

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- ✓ The KVIC is charged with the planning, promotion, organisation and implementation of programmes for the development of Khadi and other village industries in rural areas in coordination with other agencies engaged in rural development wherever necessary.
- ✓ The following are the schemes covered under the KVIC:
- ✓ Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP)
- ✓ Market Promotion Development Assistance (MPDA)
- ✓ Interest Subsidy Eligibility Certificate (ISEC)
- ✓ Workshed Scheme for Khadi Artisans
- ✓ Strengthening the infrastructure of existing weak Khadi institutions and assistance for marketing infrastructure
- ✓ Khadi Reform and Development Programme (KRDP)
- Scheme of Fund for Regeneration of Traditional Industries (SFURTI)  $\checkmark$
- ✓ Honey Mission
- Consider the following statements regarding the Square Kilometer Array Observatory: **Q**.
  - 1. It is the world's biggest radio telescope to address a wide variety of scientific goals.
  - 2. India is part of this international mega science project.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

A) 1 only

- B) 2 only
- C) Both 1 and 2 D) Neither 1 nor 2

#### Answer : C

- ✓ The Government of India has accorded its approval for India's participation in the international mega science project, Square Kilometer Array (SKA), at an estimated cost of 1250 Cr rupees.
- ✓ It is a state of the art, mega science international facility to build the world's biggest and most sensitive radio telescope for addressing a wide variety of cutting-edge science goals.
- The SKAO, collocated in Australia (SKA-Low) and South Africa (SKA-Mid) with operational headquarters in the UK, is expected to revolutionize radio astronomy, while driving the growth of many important new state-of-the-art technologies



✓ Other ten countries involved are - Australia, Canada, China, India, Italy, New Zealand, South Africa, Sweden, and the Netherlands.

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- ✓ India and SKAO
- ✓ Subsequent to this approval, India will be signing the SKAO treaty to become a full-fledged member of the SKA Observatory and thus join the growing list of countries participating in the project.
- ✓ This approval covers funding support for the construction phase of the international SKA Observatory (SKAO) spread over the next 7 years.
- ✓ The project will be jointly funded by the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) and Department of Science and Technology (DST), with DAE as the lead agency.
- ✓ The Indian participation in SKA is a truly nationwide, inclusive project led by a consortium of more than 20 academic and research institutes (with NCRA-TIFR as the nodal institute).
- Consider the following statements regarding the Fog Pass Devices: Q.
  - 1. It is a GPS based navigation device which provides on-board real-time information.
  - 2. It is suitable only to diesel locomotives.
  - Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
  - A) 1 only
  - C) Both 1 and 2

- B) 2 only
- D) Neither 1 nor 2

#### Answer : A

- ✓ Recently, to ensure smooth rail operations, Indian Railways have provisioned 19,742 Fog Pass Devices during the foggy weather.
- ✓ It is a GPS based navigation device that helps the loco pilot to navigate during dense fog conditions.
- It provides on-board real-time information (Display as well as voice guidance) to Loco Pilots regarding location of fixed landmarks such as Signal, Level Crossing gate (Manned & Unmanned), Permanent Speed Restrictions, Neutral Sections etc.
- ✓ It displays approach indications of next three approaching fixed landmarks in geographical order accompanied with voice message approximately 500m on approach.
- ✓ General features of Fog Pass Device
- Suitable for all types of sections like single line, double line, electrified as well as non electrified sections.  $\checkmark$
- ✓ Suitable for all types of electric and diesel locomotives, EMUs/MEMUs/ DEMUs.



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- ✓ Suitable for train speeds up to 160 KMPH.
- ✓ It has built-in re-chargeable battery back-up for 18 hrs.
- ✓ It is portable, compact in size, light in weight (not more than 1.5 Kg including battery) and of robust design.
- ✓ Loco Pilot can carry the device easily with him to the locomotive on resuming his duty.
- $\checkmark$  It can be easily placed on the cab desk of locomotive.
- ✓ It is a standalone system.
- ✓ It is unaffected by weather conditions like Fog, Rain or Sunshine.
- Q. With reference to Sikki grass, consider the following statements:
  - 1. It is known as golden grass due to its golden luster on drying.
  - 2. It is mainly grown in the Deccan Plateau region.
  - 3. It is used in making handicrafts.
  - How many of the statements given above are correct?
  - A) Only one B) Only two
  - C) All three D) None

### Answer : B

- ✓ Sikki artisans suffer livelihood losses amid climate change and failed promise of government in providing financial help in setting up of Sikki stalls in countrywide trade fairs held round the year.
- ✓ Sikki grass belongs to the zizanoides grass family.
- ✓ It is a rich yellowish variety of reed grass, locally known as 'Kaincha' is called Golden Grass due to its golden luster on drying.
- ✓ Scientifically called Chrysopogon zizanioides, it finds mention in ancient Sanskrit texts such as the Ramayana, where it is referred to as viran, sugandhimool, ushir and nalad.
- This grass grows indigenously in the Tarai regions of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar and has an average height of 3-4 feet.
- ✓ Hence only statements 1 and 3 are correct.
- Q. Who has been appointed as the Deputy Chief of the Indian Naval Staff?
  - A) Krishna SwaminathanB) Dinesh K TripathiC) Sanjay Jasjit SinghD) Kiran Deshmukh
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### Answer : B

- ✓ Vice Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi officially assumed the role of Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff.
- ✓ Earlier he was serving as the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the Western Naval Command.
- ✓ Vice Admiral Tripathi joined the Indian Navy on 1 July 1985.
- ✓ Presently the Chief of the Indian Naval Staff is Admiral R. This is Hari Kumar.

Q. Who has recently been appointed Chairman of the Supreme Court Legal Services Committee?

- A) Justice BR Gavai B) Justice Sanjeev Khanna
- C) Justice Ajay Sinha D) Justice Satish Chandra Sharma

### Answer : A

- ✓ Supreme Court judge, Justice BR Gavai has been nominated as the Chairman of the Supreme Court Legal Services Committee by the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA).
- ✓ Justice Gavai has replaced senior judge Justice Sanjeev Khanna

Q. In which city did the Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh inaugurate the five-day winter carnival?

| A) Manali | B) Kasol |
|-----------|----------|
| C) Shimla | D) Baddi |

### Answer : A

- ✓ Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu inaugurated the five-day winter carnival in Manali.
- ✓ He also inaugurated the cultural program at Manu Rangashala, the stage of the five-day festival.
- ✓ There will be presentations of 25 cultural groups from different states in the carnival.

Q. Beatrice Chebet smashed the women's world 5km record in Barcelona. She is from which country?

B) Kenya

D) Iran

A) Ethiopia

C) Zimbabwe

- Answer: B
- ✓ Kenya's Beatrice Chebet smashed the women's world 5km record in Barcelona.
- ✓ The 23-year-old's time of 14min 13sec improved on the previous women-only world record of 14:29 set by Ethiopia's Senbere Teferi in September 2021.



✓ Her performance also bettered the women's world record set in a mixed race of 14:19, achieved by Ethiopia's Ejegayehu Taye at the same Barcelona meet in 2021.

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- ✓ Taye finished second behind Chebet on Sunday, clocking 14:21, while Kenya's Lilian Kasait Rengeruk was third in 14:26 as the top three dipped under the previous women-only world record mark.
- Legal scholar Professor Ved Prakash Nanda passed away recently. In which year was he given the Q. Padma Bhushan award?

| A) 2020 | B) 2017 |
|---------|---------|
| C) 2018 | D) 2019 |

### Answer : C

- ✓ Legal scholar Professor Ved Prakash Nanda passed away.
- ✓ Professor Nanda was a distinguished academic whose contributions to the legal field are invaluable and his work highlights his strong com mitment to legal education.
- ✓ Professor Ved Prakash Nanda was also a prominent member of the Indian diaspora in USA and was passionate about strong India-USA relations.
- ✓ In 2018, Professor Ved Prakash Nanda had received the prestigious Padma Bhushan award.
- As a professor of International Law at the University of Denver, Colorado, Prof. Nanda carved a significant niche in the academic realm. He served as President of the World Jurist Association, honorary Vice President of the American Society of International Law and in advisory council of the United States Institute of Human Rights.

Who has been appointed as the Deputy Executive Director (Management) of the United Nations Q. Population Fund (UNFPA) by United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres?

A) Ban Ki-moon

B) Amina J. Mohammed

**C)** Andrew Saberton

D) Monica Ferro

### Answer : C

- ✓ United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres has appointed Andrew Paul Saberton of the United Kingdom as Assistant Secretary-General to serve as Deputy Executive Director (Management) of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).
- ✓ Saberton succeeds Ib Petersen of Denmark, to whom the Secretary-General and the Executive Director of UNFPA are grateful for his dedicated service.



Saberton has served as the Assistant Secretary-General and Deputy Executive Director (Management) ad interim since November 2023 and as UNFPA Comptroller and Director for the Division of Management Services since September 2016.

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- Previously, he was the Chief of the Finance Branch (2011-2016) and Chief of the Accounts Section (2009-2011) at UNFPA, and a Senior Finance Officer at the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (2001-2009).
- Which of the following interest rate on small savings scheme is not correct under the January-March Q. 2024?
  - A) Senior Citizen Savings Scheme 8.2%
  - B) National Savings Certificate 7.7%
  - C) Public Provident Fund Scheme 7.4%%
  - D) Sukanya Samriddhi Account 8.2%

### Answer : C

- ✓ The Centre hiked the interest rates of some of the small savings schemes, such as Sukanya Samriddhi Scheme, and 3-year Time Deposit, for the January-March 2024 quarter.
- ✓ As per the latest revised list, the interest rate of Sukanya Samriddhi Scheme will be 8.2%, while for 3-year TD it would be 7.1% for the last guarter of the current fiscal.
- ✓ Earlier, the interest rates for the Sukanya Samriddhi Scheme and 3-year TD were 8.0%, and 7.1%, respectively.
- ✓ The PPF rates were kept unchanged for more than 3 years. It was last tweaked in April-June 2020, when it was slashed to 7.1 percent from 7.9 percent.
- ✓ Before the revision, the interest rates on small savings schemes ranged between 4 percent (post office savings deposits) and 8.2 percent (Senior Citizens Savings Scheme).
- ✓ Interest rates for Jan-March 2024
- ✓ Savings Deposit- 4 per cent
- ✓ National Saving Certificates (NSC)- 7.7 percent
- ✓ Kisan Vikas Patra- 7.5 percent (will mature in 115 months)
- ✓ Public Provident Fund- 7.1 per cent
- ✓ Sukanya Samriddhi Account- 8.2 per cent



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- ✓ Senior Citizens Savings Scheme- 8.2 per cent
- Q. Which country has initiated the process of investing \$2 billion in food parks in India?

| A) UAE   | B) Saudi Arabia |
|----------|-----------------|
| C) Qatar | D) Iran         |

### Answer : A

- ✓ UAE has initiated the process of channelising its long-promised \$2-billion investments into food parks in India, starting with Gujarat, after the two countries sorted out concerns on curbs imposed by the Essential Commodities Act.
- ✓ The investments are being made as part of the four-nation I2U2 (India-Israel-UAE-USA) initiative to develop a series of integrated food parks across India to enhance food security in the Middle East and South Asia.
- ✓ The first food park is likely to be set up on land near Kandla where the investors would get into contract farming arrangements with locals.
- ✓ The UAE had first promised in 2018 to invest in food parks in India which later got dovetailed into the I2U2 initiative announced at the Leaders' Summit in July 2022.
- ✓ It was virtually attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, US President Joe Biden, Israeli Prime Minister (former) Yair Lapid, and UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan.
- ✓ These food parks would incorporate state-of-the-art climate-smart technologies to reduce food waste and spoilage, conserve fresh water, and employ renewable energy sources, per the joint statement signed by the leaders at the Summit.

Q. Defence Secretary, Giridhar Aramane has inaugurated a new design and test facility at Aero Engine Research and Development Centre (AERDC) of Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) in which city?

- A) Chennai
- C) Mumbai

B) Bengaluru

D) New Delhi

### Answer: B

✓ Defence Secretary Giridhar Aramane has inaugurated a new design and test facility at Aero Engine Research and Development Centre (AERDC) of Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) in Bengaluru, Karnataka.



 $\checkmark$  The newly inaugurated facility, spanning over 10,000 sq. meters, is poised to be a hub of innovation in the field of aerospace engineering.

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- ✓ Additionally, the newly developed facility has set-ups for testing air producers of Jaguar, Gas Turbine Starter Unit (GTSU) - 110 M2 and 127E of Light Combat Aircraft, Auxiliary Power Units of IMRH and Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft, Gas Turbine Electrical Generator (GTEG)-60 for An-32 aircraft.
- Which of the following has declared 2024 as the 'Year of Human Resource Development and **Q**. **Discipline'?**

| A) SEBI  | B) RBI    |
|----------|-----------|
| C) IREDA | D) NABARD |

### Answer : C

- ✓ CMD of IREDA, Pradip Kumar Das has declared 2024 as the 'Year of Human Resource Development and Discipline'.
- ✓ The CMD praised the efforts of the employees that have propelled IREDA to new heights.
- ✓ The year 2024 will be christened as 'Year of Human Resource Development and Discipline' to mark IREDA's future roadmap into new strategic sectors and geographies.
- The move suggests IREDA's commitment to evolving and adapting to new challenges while prioritizing the development and discipline of its human resources to drive the organization's progress

### **IREDA IN NEWS 2023**

- IREDA Declared 2024 as 'Year of HR Development and Discipline'
- > IREDA CMD Pradip Kumar Das bagged 'CMD of the Year' award
- Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA) launched a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) portal to improve transparency in CSR initiatives.
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has granted an 'Infrastructure Finance Company (IFC)' status to Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA).
- > IREDA signs MoUs with Union Bank of India and Bank of Baroda to co-finance Renewable Energy projects.
- > IREDA and Bank of Maharashtra partner to promote renewable energy adoption in India.
- ▶ Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA), a Mini Ratna (Category I) has signed an a MoU with Government, Revenue Target for 2023-24 set at ₹ 4,350.



Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA) has set up a state-of-the-art Business Centre at NBCC Office Complex, East Kidwai Nagar, New Delhi.

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- Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA)
- > It was incorporated as a Public Limited Company in the year 1987 as a 'Non-Banking Financial Institution'.
- > It is a Miniratna (Category 1) type company functioning under the administrative control of 'Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, Government of India.
- > Its function is to encourage projects related to new and renewable energy sources and to provide them financial assistance for their development.
- ▶ It has been notified as a 'Public Financial Institution' under section 4'A' of the 'Companies Act, 1956'.
- Chairman and Managing Director Pradip Kumar Das  $\geq$

Who has become the first woman to hold a \$100 billion fortune, according to the Bloomberg Q. **Billionaires Index?** 

| A) Miriam Adelson | B) Liliane Bettencourt          |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|
| C) Roshni Nadar   | D) Francoise Bettencourt Meyers |

#### Answer : D

- ✓ Françoise Bettencourt Meyers, heiress to the L'Oréal beauty empire, has made history as the world's first woman to surpass a net worth of \$100 billion, according to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index.
- ✓ This milestone was achieved through the surge in L'Oréal S.A. stock. As of that day, her net worth stood at \$100.1 billion, shows Bloomberg's data.
- ✓ Established in 1909 by Bettencourt Meyers' chemist grandfather, Eugene Schueller to sale a hair dye, the company has been led by non-family executives for many decades.
- ✓ L'Oreal Group, the world's largest cosmetics company, owns brands like Lancome and Maybelline.
- ✓ L'Oreal acquires Australian brand Aesop in a \$2.5 billion deal in 2022. Marks the largest brand acquisition in L'Oreal's history

**B)** Maharashtra

- 'Kadiyal Sarees' belongs to which state which recently got GI tag? Q.
  - A) Bihar
  - C) West Bengal D) Kerala

Answer : C



✓ As a part of the National GI Drive Mission, 'Kadiyal Sarees' of West Bengal have been granted the Geographical Indication (GI) tag.

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- ✓ Along with this, some other products of West Bengal have been given GI tag which include Sundarban honey, Black Nunia rice from Jalpaiguri district and Tangail, and Gorod.
- ✓ West Bengal Forest Development Corporation Limited has applied for a special GI tag for Sundarban honey.

### GI TAG IN NEWS 2023

- As a part of the National GI Drive Mission, 'Kadiyal Sarees' of West Bengal have been granted the Geographical Indication (GI) tag.
- Ladakh secures 4th GI tag for Sea Buckthorn.
- > The famous Kadaknath chicken meat from Jhabua district of Madhya Pradesh has now got a Geographical Indication (GI) tag.
- Goan cashew (Fruit and Nut) was recently granted the geographical indication (GI) tag.
- Basohli Pashmina, a more than 100-year-old traditional craft from Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua district, has got the Geographical Indication (GI) tag.
- Tamil Nadu's Salem Sago gets GI tag.
- > Bhaderwah Rajmash and Sulai honey of Doda and Ramban districts of Jammu and Kashmir, have been granted Geographical Indication (GI) tags.
- > Chokuwa rice of Assam recently earned a GI (Geographical Indication) tag for its exquisiteness.
- > The Matti banana variety, native to Kanniyakumari district was recently granted the Geographical Indication (GI) tag.
- Mushkbudji rice, which was granted the GI tag along with eight other products from Jammu and Kashmir.
- > Tamil Nadu's Authoor betel leaves get Geographical Indication (GI) certificate.
- > Geographical Indications Registry, in June 2023, accorded the Geographical Indication (GI) tag to the Kari Ishad mango predominantly grown in Ankola taluk of Uttara Kannada in Karnataka .
- Mircha rice variety from West Champaran district of Bihar has recently been granted the GI tag.
- > The products included are Tandur red gram of Telangana, gamocha of Assam, Alibag white onion of Maharashtra, and Raktsey Karpo apricot of Ladakh among others.



After getting GI tag for three more One District One Product (ODOP) crafts, Uttar Pradesh has now come second in the country in terms of maximum number of items with Geographical Indication tag.

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- > The ODOP crafts which have got GI tag include Mainpuri Tarkashi, Mahoba Gaura Stone Craft and Sambhal Horn Craft.
- Ladakh wood carvings, also known as 'Ladakh Shingskos', have been granted the Geographical Indication (GI) tag.
- > The GI tag was granted to Tamil Nadu's famous Cumbum Paneer Thirachai, also known as Cumbum Grapes.
- Gond paintings from Madhya Pradesh have bagged the Geographical Indication (GI) tag.
- Banarasi paan has been awarded the GI tag, which signifies its unique identity and origin. Three other foods from the Varanasi region, including Banarasi Langda Mango, Ramnagar Bhanta (Brinjal), and Adamchini rice, have also received the GI tag.
- Chhattisgarh's Nagri Dubraj rice variety gets geographical indication tag.
- Gamocha', a symbol of the culture and identity of Assam, has received the Geographical Indication (GI) tag.
- European Commission (EC) has recently granted Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) status to Kangra tea, aunique variety of tea grown in the Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh in India.
- > The Central Government has granted Geographical Indication (GI) tag to Mithila Makhana, Bihar.
- GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS (GI) :-
- > GI tags are issued as per the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999. This tag is issued by the Geographical Indication Registry under the Department of Industry Promotion and Internal Trade, Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- > Darjeeling Tea was the first Indian product to get the geographical indication tag in 2004.
- > The second GI tag in India was given to Aranmula Kannadi (Handicraft) which is a mirror and made in Kerala.
- > A GI is registered for an initial period of ten years, which must be renewed after 10 years.
- > Kerala has topped among Indian states for having most number of products securing the Geographical Indication (GI) tag in financial year 2022-23.
- $\blacktriangleright$  What is GI tag?



A GI is a sign used on products that have a specific geographical origin and possess qualities or a reputation that are due to that origin.

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NHPC has inked an initial pact to invest Rs 4,000 crore in 750 MW Kuppa Pumped Hydro Storage **Q**. Project at Chhota Udaipur in which state?

A) Gujarat

**B)** Haryana

C) Madhya Pradesh

**D)** Rajasthan

### Answer : A

- ✓ NHPC has inked an initial pact to invest Rs 4,000 crore in 750 MW Kuppa Pumped Hydro Storage Project at Chhota Udaipur in Gujarat.
- ✓ About NHPC Limited:
- ✓ NHPC Limited (formerly known as National Hydroelectric Power Corp.) is a Government of India Mini Ratna Category-I Public Sector Enterprise under the Ministry of Power.
- ✓ It was incorporated in the year 1975 under the Companies Act, 1956, with the objective of developing hydroelectric power in the country.
- ✓ With an authorized share capital of Rs.15,000 crore. NHPC is a premier organization in the country for the development of hydropower.
- ✓ NHPC is headquartered in Faridabad, Haryana.

Which bank has introduced Super Special Fixed Deposit with an incredibly enticing interest rate of 0. 7.50% per annum?

- A) Karnataka Bank **B)** Indian Overseas Bank
- C) Bank of Baroda

D) Bank of India

### Answer : D

- ✓ Bank of India has introduced Super Special Fixed Deposit with an incredibly enticing interest rate of 7.50% per annum.
- ✓ This offer is available for both existing customers and the general public, but only for deposits ranging from ₹2 Crores to less than Rs. 50 Crores.
- ✓ The fixed deposit has a specific maturity period of 175 days, starting from January 1st, 2024.



The Super Special Fixed Deposit offers an excellent opportunity for High Net Worth Individuals (HNIs) and Corporates to invest their surplus funds for the short term

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### **BOI IN NEWS 2023**

- Bank of India (BoI) has launched an exclusive savings bank product for women (Nari Shakti Savings  $\geq$ Account) with an independent source of income.
- Bank of India has inaugurated its IFSC Banking Unit (IBU) at GIFT SEZ area in Gandhinagar
- Rajneesh Karnatak has been appointed as the MD & CEO of the Bank of India (BOI) with effect from April 29, 2023.
- He replaces Atanu Kumar Das.
- Bank of India has launched a 'Centralized Pool Buy-Out and Co-Lending Cell' to boost priority sector lending in Mumbai, Maharashtra.
- $\geq$ Bank of India, one of the largest public sector banks (PSBs) in the country, has become the first bank to officially roll out Mahila Samman Savings Certificate (MSSC) scheme..
- Bank of India (BOI)
- ➢ Founded : 7 September 1906
- Founder : Ramnarain Ruia
- Headquarters : Mumbai
- MD & CEO : Rajneesh Karnatak
- Tagline : Relationship beyond Banking

Nadia Calviño has been appointed as the president of the European Investment Bank (EIB). She is **Q**. from which country?

- A) South Africa
- C) South Korea

- B) Japan
- **D)** Spain

### Answer : D

- ✓ Nadia Calviño took over as president of the European Investment Bank, replacing Werner Hoyer.
- The eighth president of the EU bank, Calviño is the first woman to lead the institution. She is also the first Spaniard to head the Bank.
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- ✓ President Calviño was previously first vice-president of the government of Spain and minister of economy, trade, and enterprise.
- ✓ Calviño takes over from Werner Hoyer, who had been president of the Bank since 2012. Hoyer gave the Bank a higher public profile, in part through its evolution into the EU climate bank.
- ✓ The European Investment Bank (EIB) is the European Union's investment bank and is owned by the 27 member states.
- $\checkmark$  The EIB was founded by the Treaty of Rome, which came into force on 1 January 1958.
- ✓ It headquarters in Luxembourg
- Hyderabad & Bengaluru Airports have bagged global second and third positions in the Circum's on-0. time performance review 2023. Which airport has topped the list?
  - A) Changi Airport **B) St Paul International Airport**

**C)** Hong Kong airport

D) Charles de Gaulle airport

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#### Answer : B

- ✓ Bengaluru's Kempegowda International Airport bagged third position in the world for its annual On-Time Performance (OTP) in the year 2023.
- ✓ According to a report released by aviation analytics firm Circum, Hyderabad airport is ranked as the second most punctual airport in the world and Bengaluru airport stands next.
- ✓ The Circum report stated that a flight is considered punctual if it departs or arrives with a difference of 15 minutes from the scheduled time.
- ✓ The Kempegowda International Airport has achieved 84.08 % punctuality rate in the year 2023, making it one of the most punctual airports in the world. However, Hyderabad's Rajiv Gandhi International Airport beat Bengaluru airport with a slightly higher punctuality rate stands at 84.42%.
- ✓ Meanwhile, America's Minneapolis' St Paul International Airport topped the list of most airports across the globe with a punctuality rate of 84.44%.
- Which country has taken over the chairmanship of BRICS for 2024? Q.

| A) Russia | B) China |
|-----------|----------|
| C) Brazil | D) India |

Answer : A



✓ Russia has taken over the BRICS chairmanship as of January 1, following the decision made during the 15th BRICS Summit in August 2022.

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- ✓ Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates have joined BRICS as new full members which is a strong indication of the growing authority of the association and its role in international affairs.
- ✓ About BRICS
- ✓ The full form of BRICS is Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa.
- ✓ Goldman Sachs economist Jim O'Neill coined the term BRIC (without South Africa) in 2001.
- ✓ He claimed that by 2050, the four BRIC economies would dominate the global economy by 2050.
- ✓ South Africa was included in the list in 2010.
- ✓ The presidency of the Forum is rotated annually among the members.
- ✓ BRICS accounts for about 40% of the world's population.
- ✓ It accounts for 30% of the world's GDP (Gross Domestic Product).
- ✓ In the year 2014, during the 6th BRICS Summit in Fortaleza, Brazil, the BRICS leaders signed an agreement to establish a New Development Bank (NDB).

How many crore rupees has the Central Government allocated for the 'Prithvi Vigyan scheme? Q.

| A) 3,797 crores | <b>B) 4,797 crores</b> |
|-----------------|------------------------|
| C) 5,797 crores | D) 6,797 crores        |

### Answer: B

- ✓ The Central Government has allocated approximately Rs 4,797 crore for the PRITHVI VIGYAN scheme.
- The scheme consists of five ongoing sub-schemes, including Atmosphere and Climate Research-Modeling Observational Systems and Services (ACROSS), Ocean Services, Modeling Applications, Resources and Technology (O-SMART), etc.
- The objective of the Prithvi scheme is to enhance long-term observations of the atmosphere and ocean  $\checkmark$
- Who inaugurated the 'NCC Republic Day Camp' 2024? Q.
  - A) Jagdeep Dhankhar **B)** Narendra Modi
  - C) Rajnath Singh **D)** S Jaishankar

### Answer : A

✓ Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar inaugurated the NCC Republic Day Camp 2024 in Delhi Cantt.



✓ On this occasion, he said that NCC cadets are a symbol of dynamism of youth and reflect the established discipline of the organization.

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✓ He further said that during the upcoming Republic Day, the women cadets will march on the 'Path of Duty' in two distinct contingents with two women bands.

**B)** Marine Drive

- Where did Union Sports Minister Anurag Thakur inaugurate the 'Beach Games'? Q.
  - A) Marina Beach
  - C) Cox's Bazar Beach **D)** Ghoghla Beach

### Answer : D

- ✓ Union Sports Minister Anurag Thakur inaugurated the 'Beach Games' organized at Ghoghala Beach in the Union Territory of Diu.
- ✓ On this occasion, he said that due to these games, 'Beach Games' will be promoted in other states and union territories of the country also.
- ✓ Before this, he participated in the 'Mera Bharat' program at Malala Auditorium in Diu.
- He further said that so far 45 lakh youth have registered their names on the 'Mera Bharat' platform.  $\checkmark$
- Who will be awarded the 'Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puraskar' 2023 for Corporate Social Q. **Responsibility?**

**D) NTPC** 

- A) Tata Group **B)** Odisha Mining Corporate Limited
- **C)** Reliance Foundation

#### Answer: B

- ✓ The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports has announced the Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puruskar 2023.
- ✓ Odisha Mining Corporate Limited has been honored in the category of Promotion of Sports through Corporate Social Responsibility.
- Jain Deemed University, Bengaluru has been honored for identifying and nurturing emerging and young talent.
- President Draupadi Murmu will honor the winners at Rashtrapati Bhavan on 9th of this month.  $\checkmark$
- Who has been appointed as the Managing Director of 'National Asset Reconstruction Company'? Q.
  - A) Ajay Kapoor

**B)** Kishan Kumar

C) P Santosh

- D) Natarajan Sundar

Answer : C



✓ Canara Bank Chief General Manager P Santosh has been appointed as the new Managing Director of National Asset Reconstruction Company (NARCL).

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- ✓ He has replaced Natarajan Sundar who recently resigned from the post.
- ✓ Canara Bank is the sponsor bank of NARCL with more than 10 percent stake.
- ✓ Public sector banks are the major shareholders of NARCL.
- ✓ NARCL is a government unit, it was established in the year 2021
- Which cricketer from Odisha has been banned for two years by the Board of Control for Cricket in Q. India?
  - A) Sumit Sharma
    - C) Ajit Mohanty

**B)** Rahul Kumar D) Ajay Munda

### Answer : A

- ✓ The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has banned Odisha cricketer Sumit Sharma for two years.
- This ban has been imposed on Sumit Sharma for giving multiple birth certificates.  $\checkmark$
- ✓ Sharma had gone to Baroda with the team to play his first Ranji Trophy match of the season where the governing body's disciplinary committee handed him a suspension letter.
- The "workation" or "digital nomad" visa, recently seen in the news, was introduced by which one Q. of the following countries?
  - A) United States of America **B)** United Kingdom C) South Korea D) Austria

#### Answer : C

- ✓ South Korea recently introduced a new visa for foreigners allowing them to visit the country on a working holiday or workation.
- About Workation Visa:
- The "workation" or "digital nomad" visa allows foreign nationals to visit South Korea on a working holiday.  $\checkmark$
- $\checkmark$  Eligibility:
- ✓ Foreign nationals with an annual income twice as much as South Korea's per capita gross national income will be eligible to apply for the visa.
- ✓ It will be given to those having a work experience of over a year in one industry and are eligible for remote work.



✓ Moreover, the applicants must also have medical insurance of over 100 million won (₹63,62,655.45) and must cover medical treatment and repatriation fees.

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- $\checkmark$  The visa will also be allowed to the families of these employees.
- The visa, which is valid for a year and renewable for up to two years,  $\checkmark$
- Q. Consider the following statements regarding the PRERANA program:
  - 1. It is a week-long residential program for school students.

2. It aims to engage students in diverse indigenous knowledge systems and latest State-of-Art technologies.

- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- A) 1 only
- B) 2 only
- C) Both 1 and 2
- D) Neither 1 nor 2

#### Answer : C

- ✓ Recently, the Department of School Education & Literacy, Ministry of Education, Government of India has launched 'Prerana: An Experiential Learning program'.
- ✓ It aims to offer a meaningful, unique, and inspiring experience to all participants, thereby empowering them with leadership qualities.
- ✓ It is driven by a strong commitment to integrate principles of Indian education system and the philosophy of value-based education which is a corner stone of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.
- ✓ It is a week-long residential program for selected students of class IX to XII.
- ✓ The curriculum of Prerana School prepared by IIT Gandhi Nagar is rooted in nine value based themes: Swabhiman and Vinay, Shaurya and Sahas, Parishram and Samarpan, Karuna and Sewa, Vividhta and Ekta, Satyanishtha and Shuchita, Navachar and Jigyasa, Shraddha aur Vishwas, and Swatantrata and Kartavya.
- Q. Consider the following statements regarding the Wetland City Accreditation:
  - 1. It is given to cities which have taken exceptional steps to safeguard their urban wetlands.
  - 2. No Indian city has received this recognition.



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Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

| A) 1 only       | B) 2 only          |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| C) Both 1 and 2 | D) Neither 1 nor 2 |

### Answer : C

- Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has submitted three nominations from India for Wetland City Accreditation (WCA) of Indore (Madhya Pradesh), Bhopal (Madhya Pradesh) & Udaipur (Rajasthan) under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.
- ✓ The Ramsar Convention during COP12 held in the year 2015 approved a voluntary Wetland City Accreditation system under Resolution XII.10
- ✓ It recognizes cities which have taken exceptional steps to safeguard their urban wetlands.
- ✓ It also recognizes the importance of wetlands in urban and peri-urban environments and to take appropriate measures to conserve and protect these wetlands.
- ✓ Since Ramsar COP13, 43 cities from 17 countries have been officially recognized as "Wetland Cities".
- ✓ There is no India city which has received this recognition.
- Q. Which company will invest ₹211 crore (\$ 25.712 million) over a five-year period for exploration stage activities of five lithium blocks in Fiambala area of Argentina?
  - A) Adani Group B) NTPC Limited
  - C) Khanij Bidesh India Ltd D) Reliance Industries Limited

#### Answer : C

- ✓ India's KABIL (Khanij Bidesh India Ltd) will invest ₹211 crore (\$ 25.712 million) over a five-year period for exploration stage activities of five lithium blocks in Fiambala area of Argentina.
- ✓ An exploration and development agreement in this regard is expected to be signed with CAMYEN, a stateowned miner in Argentina's Catamarca province, later this month.
- Q. The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has approved the Punjab government's purchase of a private thermal plant, Goindwal Sahib Thermal Power Plant, for \_\_\_\_\_

| A) ₹ 1,280 crore | B) ₹ 1,380 cror |
|------------------|-----------------|
|------------------|-----------------|

 C) ₹ 1,080 crore
 D) ₹ 1,980 crore

Answer : C



✓ The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has approved the Punjab government's purchase of a private thermal plant, Goindwal Sahib Thermal Power Plant.

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- ✓ CCI approves the proposed acquisition of 100 percent shareholding of GVK Power (Goindwal Sahib) Ltd by Punjab State Power Corporation Ltd (PSPCL).
- ✓ The government had created history by buying a private thermal plant, Goindwal Sahib Thermal Power Plant for ₹ 1,080 crore, at the cheapest price in the country.
- ✓ This is the first time that a State has purchased a thermal plant. The 540-MW thermal plant would be named after Guru Amardass, the third Guru of Sikhs.

B) earth observation

#### Q. The PRITHvi VIgyan (PRITHVI) scheme, recently seen in the news, primarily focuses on:

- A) deep sea mining
- C) wildlife conservation D) industrial development

### Answer : B

- ✓ To enhance the understanding of the Earth and its vital signs, the Union Cabinet recently approved the "PRITHvi VIgyan (PRITHVI)" scheme.
- ✓ About the PRITHVI Scheme:
- ✓ It is an initiative of the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) to enhance the understanding of the Earth and its vital signs.
- ✓ This overarching initiative, with an allocation of Rs 4,797 crore for the period 2021-26, aims to significantly enhance research, modelling, and service delivery across crucial areas like weather, climate, oceans, and the polar regions.
- ✓ The Prithvi scheme integrates five existing sub-schemes:
- ✓ Atmosphere and Climate Research-Modelling Observing Systems and Services (ACROSS)
- ✓ Ocean Services, Modelling Application, Resources and Technology (O-SMART)
- ✓ Polar Science and Cryosphere Research (PACER)
- ✓ Seismology and Geosciences (SAGE)
- $\checkmark$ Research, Education, Training, and Outreach (REACHOUT).
- ArcelorMittal partners with which IIT to build Asia's 1st Hyperloop facility? Q.

| A) IIT Madras    | B) IIT Bombay |
|------------------|---------------|
| C) IIT Hyderabad | D) IIT Delhi  |



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### Answer : A

- ✓ ArcelorMittal partners with IIT Madras to build Asia's 1st Hyperloop facility.
- ✓ ArcelorMittal and ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India materials and engineering resources being deployed to construct Asia's first Hyperloop testing facility at IIT Madras, Chennai, India.
- The government is encouraging the development of domestic Hyperloop technology through collaboration between academia and industry, with the Ministry of Railways having made an initial funding of Rs. 8.34 crore to IIT Madras.

### IIT IN NEWS 2023

- ArcelorMittal and ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India materials and engineering resources being deployed to construct Asia's first Hyperloop testing facility at IIT Madras, Chennai, India
- Reliance Jio Infocomm, India's largest telecom service provider, is working with the Indian Institute of Technology Bombay to launch 'Bharat GPT', a large language model specifically tailor for India's needs.
- > IIT Guwahati recently developed an indigenous river model, BRAHMA-2D.
- > IIT Kanpur, Indian Navy join forces to drive innovation through research partnership.
- > SAMRIDHI conclave, a deeptech startup acceleration drive launched at IIT Ropar.
- The First Australia India Education and Skill Council (AIESC) meeting was held at IIT Gandhinagar, Gujarat.
- > IIT Kanpur and Airbus to collaborate to boost aerospace talent base in India.
- IIT Kanpur has signed an MoU with private lender ICICI Bank to support the startup ecosystem in the institute.
- > IIT Guwahati have developed pharmaceutical and food products from tea factory waste.
- > IIT Jodhpur scientists develop 'CODE' device for good air quality.
- IIT Madras-incubated space tech startup GalaxEye Space on 29 August 2023 launched their dronebased synthetic aperture radar (SAR) system, Ahead of their planned satellite launch in 2024.
- IIT Bombay has received a donation of \$18.6 million from an alumnus towards the establishment of a Green Energy and Sustainability Research Hub.
- IIT Guwahati has signed MoU with the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) to build capacity/skills in international affairs and foreign policy.
- ▶ IIT Guwahati researchers develop Al-based model for knee X-ray.



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- > Infosys co-founder Nandan Nilekani donated ₹315 crores to IIT Bombay.
- > IIT-Madras generates hydrogen from seawater using solar energy.
- > India, Israel to jointly develop Center of Water Technology at IIT Madras.
- > IIT Madras researchers partner for development of materials and micro-device processing techniques.
- IIT Kanpur's C3iHub, a cybersecurity Technology Innovation Hub, has launched a Cybersecurity Skilling Programme.
- > IIT Madras to set up its first international campus in Tanzania.
- Indian Institute of Technology Madras will be provided a grant of Rs 242 crore over a period of five years to carry out research on Lab Grown Diamonds (LGD).
- Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay has been ranked 1st in India and 47th globally in engineering and technology by the QS World University Rankings for 2023.
- IIT Indore, in partnership with NASA-Caltech and the University of Gothenburg in Sweden, has designed an inexpensive camera setup.
- Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT Madras) Researchers have developed a three-dimensional (3D) paper-based portable device that can detect adulteration in milk within 30 seconds.
- > IIT Kanpur to Host Youth20 Consultation under G20 Presidency of India.
- > IIT Bombay's SHUNYA secures second place in 'Solar Decathlon' Build Challenge in US.
- Students of the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Indore won an award of AED (Emirates Dirham)
   1 million along with a gold medal at the World Government Summit in Dubai.
- > IIT Indore Students Awarded with Global Best M-GOV Awards by Egyptian President.
- Startup Incubation and Innovation Centre (SIIC) at IIT Kanpur has entered into a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) agreement with Advanced Weapons and Equipment India Limited.
- > DRDO Industry Academia Centre of Excellence inaugurated at IIT Hyderabad.
- > IIT Madras-incubated firm has developed an indigenous mobile operating system called BharOS.
- IIT Madras Centre of Excellence working with DRDO on Advanced Defence Technologies including Combat Vehicle Technologies.
- > IIT Madras researchers develop machine learning tool to detect tumour in brain, spinal cord.
- > ISRO plans to develop astronaut training module with IIT Madras.



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Q. India will be self-sufficient in pulses by which year?

| A) 2030 | B) 2027 |
|---------|---------|
| C) 2028 | D) 2026 |

### Answer: B

- ✓ The government is committed to making India self-reliant in pulses by December 2027.
- ✓ Union home and cooperation minister Amit Shah said after launching a portal through which the two cooperatives-Nafed and NCCF-can buy tur dal (pigeon pea) from registered farmers.
- ✓ The move comes at a time when the domestic production of tur is pegged at 3.4 million tonnes in 2023-24 due to fall in acreage, lower than its record output of 4.8 million tonnes in 2016-17.

### TARGET YEAR IN NEWS 2023

- India self-reliant in pulses by December 2027
- ➢ Indian Consumer Tech To Touch \$300 Bn By 2027.
- India is expected to overtake Japan and Germany to emerge as the third largest economy in the world by 2027.
- Members of the Association of Asia Pacific Airlines (AAPA) collectively have set an "aspirational target" of 5% sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) usage by 2030.
- > India to push developed nations to become carbon-negative before 2050.
- This 'Bharat Drone Shakti 2023' event will help the country to achieve its commitment of becoming a global drone hub by 2030.
- Vaccine manufacturer Indian Immunologicals Limited (IIL) expects to commercially launch its dengue fever vaccine by early 2026.
- Group Chief Economic Advisor at the State Bank of India (SBI), Soumya Kanti Ghoshon has reiterated that India is likely to become the third-largest economy by 2027.
- > The Ministry of Coal has set a target to gasify 100 million tonnes of coal by FY 2030.
- According to the report of Goldman Sachs Research, by the year 2075, India will become the second largest economy in the world after China leaving behind not only Japan and Germany but also America.
- > UNEP suggests measures to reduce 80% of world's plastic pollution by 2040.
- ▶ India aims to become one trillion dollar tourism economy by 2047.



### The government announced a plan to add 250 GW of renewable energy capacity in the next five years to achieve its target of 500 GW of clean energy by 2030.

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- > India has set targets for half of its installed electricity capacity to be from non-fossil fuel sources by 2030 and for the country to attain net-zero carbon emissions by 2070.
- > 2023 foreign trade policy has the vision to take India's goods and services exports to \$2 trillion by 2030.
- ▶ India to get 9% of Electricity from Nuclear Sources by 2047.
- India sets target to become 'Global Hub for Green Ship' building by 2030
- Indian Railways to become Net Zero Carbon Emitter by 2030.
- India to produce 5 million tonnes of green hydrogen by 2030.
- > India has set a target to replace the use of diesel by renewable energy in the agriculture sector by 2024.
- Indian Government has set a target to eliminate TB in India by 2025.
- India targets ₹25,000-cr worth defence exports by 2024.
- > Reserve Bank of India's 2023 monetary policy objective is to hold inflation within the mandated tolerance band and guide it towards the medium-term target of 4% by 2024.

#### Vietnam-based electric vehicle (EV) manufacturer VinFast to build integrated electric vehicle facility Q. in which state?

A) Kerala

**B)** Tamil Nadu

**C)** Karnataka

D) Telangana

### Answer: B

- ✓ VinFast to build integrated electric vehicle facility in Tamil Nadu, India; up to \$2B investment.
- Vietnam-based electric vehicle (EV) manufacturer VinFast and the Tamil Nadu State Government announced a partnership in a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the development of a VinFast electric vehicle manufacturing plant. VinFast and the State Government will work toward a total investment of up to US\$2 billion, with an intended commitment of US\$ 500 million for the first phase of the project, spanning five years



**Q**. ISRO used which launch vehicle to successfully launch its Solar mission Aditya L1 in September 2023? A) DOL V C 55 D) DCI V C EA

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| A) PSLV C-55 | D) PSL V C-54       |
|--------------|---------------------|
| C) PSLV C-56 | <b>D) PSLV C-57</b> |

### Answer : D

Α

- ✓ India's first space-based observatory to study the Sun, Aditya-L1, reached its orbit around the Lagrange Point-1 (L1).
- ✓ ISRO successfully performed the final manoeuvres to place the spacecraft in the halo orbit around the L1 point
- ✓ ISRO successfully launched its Solar mission Aditya L1 (PSLV C-57) from Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh on September 02, 2023.
- ✓ Aditya-L1 is a satellite dedicated to the comprehensive study of the Sun.
- ✓ The spacecraft carries seven payloads to observe the photosphere, chromosphere and the outermost layers of the Sun (the corona) using electromagnetic and particle and magnetic field detectors, all seven are developed indigenously. Five by ISRO and two by Indian academic institutes in collaboration with ISRO.
- Aditya in Sanskrit means the Sun. L1 here refers to Lagrange Point 1 of the Sun-Earth system. L1 is a location in space where the gravitational forces of two celestial bodies, such as the Sun and Earth, are in equilibrium.
- Aditya-L1 will stay approximately 1.5 million km away from Earth.  $\checkmark$
- What will be the distance of Aditya-L1 satellite from the earth, for the comprehensive study of the Q. Sun?

| <ul><li>A) 1.5 million</li><li>C) 0.5 million</li></ul> |                             | B) 2 million                      |  |
|---------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
|                                                         |                             | D) 1 million                      |  |
| n                                                       | swer: A                     |                                   |  |
|                                                         | Aditya-L1 will stay approxi | mately 1.5 million km away from 1 |  |

Aditya-L1 will stay approximately 1.5 million km away from Earth, directed towards the Sun, which is about 1% of the Earth-Sun distance.

95

Adidas to set up its first Asia GCC outside China in Which State? Q.

| A) Telangana | B) Tamil Nadu  |
|--------------|----------------|
| C) Karnataka | D) Maharashtra |



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### Answer: B

- ✓ Adidas is gearing up to set up its first and only global capacity centre (GCC) in Asia outside China in Chennai Tamil Nadu.
- ✓ Adidas AG is a German athletic apparel and footwear corporation headquartered in Herzogenaurach, Bavaria, Germany.
- ✓ CEO : Bjørn Gulden
- Q. Consider the following statements regarding the Project Veer Gatha:
  - 1. It is a joint initiative of the Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Education.
  - 2. It aims to disseminate the details of bravery of the Gallantry Awardees among students.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

| A) 1 only       | B) 2 only          |  |
|-----------------|--------------------|--|
| C) Both 1 and 2 | D) Neither 1 nor 2 |  |

### Answer : C

- ✓ The third edition of Project 'Veer Gatha', as part of Republic Day celebrations, has witnessed an overwhelming pan India response.
- ✓ It is a joint initiative of Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Education.
- ✓ It was instituted under Gallantry Awards Portal (GAP) in 2021.
- ✓ Aim: With the aim to disseminate the details of acts of bravery of the Gallantry Awardees and the life stories of these brave hearts among the students so as to raise the spirit of patriotism and instill amongst them values of civic consciousness.
- Project Veer Gatha deepened this noble aim by providing a platform to the school students to do creative projects/activities based on gallantry award winners.
- Q. Consider the following statements regarding the Rejupave technology:
  - 1. It is developed by the CSIR-Central Road Research Institute.
  - 2. It is used in constructing high-altitude bituminous roads at low temperature conditions.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

A) 1 onlyB) 2 only

C) Both 1 and 2 D) Neither 1 nor 2



### Answer : C

✓ Border Roads Organisation (BRO) has utilised road construction technology i.e. Rejupave technology to build high-altitude bituminous road sections at the Sela tunnel and LGG-Damteng-Yangste (LDY) road near the India-China border in Arunachal Pradesh.

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- ✓ About the Rejupave Technology:
- ✓ It is developed by India's oldest and premier road research organisation, CSIR-Central Road Research Institute (CSIR-CRRI).
- ✓ It is beneficial in constructing high-altitude bituminous roads at low and sub-zero temperature conditions.
- ✓ This technology brings down the production and rolling temperature of bituminous mixes by 30 degrees Celsius to 400 degrees Celsius with negligible heat loss in the bituminous mix during transit, despite long haulage time amid snowfall.

# Q. Which of the following has inked a MoU with ISRO's National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC) to develop and report a 'Green Cover Index' for the extensive network of the Indian National Highways?

- A) Border Roads Organisation
- B) Larsen & Toubro
- C) Ministry of Road Transport and Highways
- D) National Highways Authority of India

#### Answer : D

- The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has inked a MoU with ISRO's National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC) to develop and report a 'Green Cover Index' for the extensive network of the Indian National Highways.
- ✓ NHAI's collaboration with the Indian Space Research Organization's (ISRO) satellite centre data will take three years to map the entire highway network, promoting environmental awareness and sustainable development.
- ✓ The tech-enabled Green Cover Index
- ✓ The NRSC will undertake a comprehensive pan-India estimation of green cover, referred to as the 'Green Cover Index' for National Highways using high-resolution satellite imagery.



Q. Which company has signed an MoU with Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL) to extend financial support of up to Rs 35,000 crore for infrastructure projects over the next five years?

A) NTPC Limited

**B)** Adani Enterprises

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**C)** ReNew Power **D) REC Limited** 

### Answer : D

- ✓ REC Limited, a Maharatna Central Public Sector Enterprise (CPSE) under the Ministry of Power, has signed a MoU with Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL) to extend financial support of up to Rs. 35,000 crore for infrastructure projects over the next five years.
- The agreement encompasses a wide spectrum of projects, including multi-modal logistics hubs, rail  $\checkmark$ infrastructure, road development, port facilities, and metro projects that RVNL is venturing into.
- ✓ REC Limited, established in 1969, is a "Maharatna" Central Public Sector Enterprise (CPSE) that operates under the Ministry of Power.
- ✓ Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL), classified as a "Schedule 'A' Navratna" CPSE under the Ministry of Railways, plays a crucial role in fulfilling around 30 percent of Indian Railways' infrastructure needs
- Which state government has distributed loans totaling Rs 6,55,684 crore in the last six and a half **Q**. years to boost the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector in state?
  - A) Uttar Pradesh
  - **B)** Madhya Pradesh
  - C) Rajasthan
  - **D)** Haryana

### Answer : A

- ✓ The Yogi government has distributed loans totaling Rs 6,55,684 crore in the last six and a half years to boost the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector in Uttar Pradesh.
- ✓ The sector has provided employment to 2.5 crore youths during the period. The government has been providing loans to aspiring entrepreneurs every year, with the amount exceeding the target each time.
- The MSME sector, which was dying of neglect during the previous governments, got a fresh lease of life  $\checkmark$ when Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath took over in 2017 and launched various initiatives such as the One District, One Product (ODOP) scheme, Mukhyamantri Gramodyog Rojgar Yojana, Mukhyamantri Yuva Swarojgar Yojana and Vishwakarma Shram Samman Yojana among others.



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Q. Which of the following cities will host the International Kite Festival 2024?

A) Ahmedabad B) Ayodhya

C) Bhubaneswar D) Varanasi

### Answer: B

- ✓ Ahead of the Ram Temple consecration ceremony scheduled for January 22, the Uttar Pradesh government will host an International Kite Festival here.
- ✓ The Ayodhya Development Authority (ADA) has initiated preparations for the festival, which is likely to take place between January 19 and 21, providing renowned kite flyers from both within the country and around the world with an opportunity to showcase their art.
- Q. India's External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar will represent India at the 19th Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Summit in which country?

| A) Zimbabwe | B) Uganda                  |
|-------------|----------------------------|
| C) Ghana    | D) <mark>Sri Lan</mark> ka |

### Answer : B

- ✓ India's External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar will represent India at the upcoming Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Summit in Uganda's capital Kampala January 2024.
- ✓ Scheduled from January 17 to 20, 2024, the 19th edition of the NAM summit will be preceded by a crucial foreign ministerial meeting from January 15.
- Additionally, the African country will host the Third South Summits and G77 meeting from January 21 to 23.
- ✓ At the 2019 NAM summit in Azerbaijan, and the 2016 NAM Venezuela summits, India was represented at the Vice President level.
- ✓ Uganda will be the chair of the NAM grouping from 2024-2027. The African country was chosen to host the 19th Non-Aligned Movement Summit on October 19, 2019, during the meeting held in Baku, Azerbaijan.
- ✓ The membership of NAM today comprises 53 countries from Africa, 40 from Asia, 26 from Latin America and the Caribbean, and one from Europe (Belarus).
- ✓ The first summit of the Non-Aligned Movement was held in Belgrade, Serbia in 1961



Q. REC Ltd has signed an MoU with which bank to jointly offer loans for power, infrastructure, and logistics projects in India over the next three years?

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A) Karnataka Bank **B)** Bank of Baroda

C) Karur Vyasya Bank D) Indian Overseas Bank

### Answer: B

- ✓ State-owned REC Ltd has inked an initial pact with Bank of Baroda to jointly offer loans for power, infrastructure and logistics projects in India over the next three years.
- ✓ Both entities endeavour to champion initiatives that will invigorate economic development and enhance accessibility to essential services nationwide.
- State Bank of India (SBI) has raised \_ through issuance of the Green Notes to fund sustainable Q. projects.

| A) USD 150 million | B) USD 250 million |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| C) USD 200 million | D) USD 350 million |

#### Answer: B

- ✓ State Bank of India (SBI) has raised USD 250 million through issuance of the Green Notes to fund sustainable projects.
- ✓ The bank has concluded the successful placement of USD 250 million senior unsecured Green floating rate notes, referred to as 'The Green Notes'.
- ✓ This issuance, maturing on December 29, 2028, is part of SBI's USD 10 billion medium-term note programme and was conducted through a private placement facilitated by its London branch.
- ✓ Green Notes were issued on a floating rate basis of 1.20 per cent above the Secured Overnight Financing Rate (SOFR) and have been listed on the India International Exchange.
- Q. Who has been appointed as the MD & CEO of the National Asset Reconstruction Company (NARCL)?
  - A) P Santhosh
  - **C)** Gaurav Ahluwalia
- **B)** Rudrendra Tandon

**D)** Pratibha Parkar

### Answer : A

✓ Chief General Manager of Canara Bank, P Santhosh has been appointed as the Managing Director of National Asset Reconstruction Company (NARCL).

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- $\checkmark$  He succeeds Natarajan Sundar, who resigned from the post.
- ✓ Canara Bank is the sponsor bank of NARCL with over a 10 percent stake. Public sector banks are major shareholders of NARCL.
- ✓ A total of 10 Public Sector Banks (PSBs) have transferred Non-Performing Assets of over Rs 11,617 crore to NARCL between January and November last year.

Q. Who has been elected as the president of the All-India Rubber Industries Association (AIRIA)?

A) Sripriya Ranganathan B) Virander Kumar Paul

C) Shashi Singh D) Prabhat Kumar

### Answer : C

- ✓ Shashi Singh has been elected as the president of the All-India Rubber Industries Association (AIRIA), the apex body for rubber industries in India.
- ✓ Singh will be succeeding Ramesh Kejriwal as the President of AIRIA, playing a pivotal role in steering the association forward.
- $\checkmark$  Indra Parekh has been elected as the vice president of the Association
- Q. Who has been appointed as the MD & CEO of National Investment and Infrastructure Fund Limited (IIFL)?

| A) Ipsita Dasgupta | B) Sanjiv Aggarwal |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| C) Anshika Singh   | D) Vasudha Gupta   |

### Answer : B

- ✓ Government-backed National Investment and Infrastructure Fund Limited has appointed Sanjiv Aggarwal as its chief executive officer and managing director.
- ✓ Aggarwal succeeds Rajiv Dhar, who served as interim CEO and MD from May 2023.
- ✓ Aggarwal had previous stints with Citigroup and ANZ Investment Bank in the Indian energy and infrastructure sectors.
- ✓ The National Infrastructure and Investment Fund (NIIF) is India's first-ever sovereign wealth fund (SWF). The state-owned fund was set up by the Indian Government in the year 2015.
- ✓ NIIF, which is 49% owned by the government, manages over \$4.9 billion of equity capital commitments across its four funds—master fund, fund of funds, strategic opportunities fund, and India-Japan Fund



Q. Who has been appointed as the Chief Executive Officer of the Indian Olympic Association (IOA)?

A) Sourav Ganguly B) K

C) Raghuram Iyer

B) Kapil Dev

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D) Rahul Dravid

### Answer : C

- ✓ The Indian Olympic Association has appointed Raghuram Iyer as the Chief Executive Officer.
- The appointment, long-awaited and in response to reminders from the International Olympic Committee (IOC), brings a wealth of experience to the forefront.
- Raghuram Iyer comes with a rich experience in the sports management field, having served as the CEO of Indian Premier League (IPL) sides Rajasthan Royals, Lucknow Super Giants and Rising Pune Supergiant.







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