

IBT[®]
IBT INSTITUTE PVT. LTD

MONTHLY — Current Affairs

January, 2024



NATIONAL NEWS

President Approves Chief Election Commissioner Bill and GST Amendment

- President Droupadi Murmu gave her assent to the Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Bill, 2023. It was passed by the Parliament in the recently concluded Winter Session.
- The new legislation provides for the appointment, salary, and removal of the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and Election Commissioners (ECs). According to the provisions, the CEC and ECs will be appointed by the President upon the recommendation of a Selection Committee.

Reuse of Inert Waste under Swachh Bharat Mission 2.0

- The government has intended to link road construction with the Swachh Bharat Mission 2.0. The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has developed a policy regarding the use of inert waste. The Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari, stated that his government has developed a draft policy to encourage the use of alternative fuels in construction equipment.
- The flagship Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) 2.0, with its heavy focus on solid waste management, is being seen as a potential game-changer for India. The key mission agenda talks about making India “garbage-free”, with components like remediation of legacy waste, and increasing capacity for treatment, processing, recovery, and recycling of municipal solid.

Gujarat emerges as India's Petro capital

- With the world's largest grassroot oil refinery in Jamnagar and OPaL petrochemical complex at Dahej in Bharuch district, Gujarat is now recognised as the 'petro capital' of India, officials said. 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.
- The Gujarat government, major players of this sector have scaled new heights in the global market. These companies started as small scale units but eventually grew into major players. As a result of proactive government policies, the state contributes to around 75 per cent of the country's total dye and intermediates manufacturing.

Power Minister RK Singh Launched POWERGRID Vishram Sadan in Bengaluru

- POWERGRID Vishram Sadan was inaugurated by Sh. R.K. Singh, Hon'ble Union Minister for Power, New and Renewable Energy, Govt. of India in virtual presence of Dr. Mansukh L Mandaviya, Hon'ble Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Chemical and Fertilizer presence of Sh. K J George, Hon'ble Minister of Energy, Sh. Tejasvi Soorya, Hon'ble MP, Bengaluru South, Dr. Yatindra Dwivedi, Director (Personnel) POWERGRID, Dr. Partima Murthy, Director, NIMHANS, Bengaluru and senior officials from POWERGRID.
- Indian power sector is ready to meet the growing demand of Power. The demand of power is increased by 70% in the last 9 years. The Minister was addressing the audience after inaugurating the Vishram Sadan by Power Grid Corporation of India Ltd at National Institute of Medical Health and Neurosciences NIMHANS campus in Bengaluru today. He asserted that no other country had experienced such a huge demand.

Rajasthan's First Snake Park will Open in Kota

- The first snake park of the state will be opened in Kota. Its building is ready. The Central Zoo Authority (CZA) has recently approved it. Its exercise was going on for the last 19 years. A building of 9290 sq. ft. on the ground floor and 6703 sq. ft. on the first floor of Snake Park has been constructed at a cost of 7.42 crores near Herbal Park on Bundi Road.
- A special zone of glass has been made to keep other species of snakes including the rare Anaconda species. Snakes will get an atmosphere from its special tiles. It is expected that in the new year 2024, Kota will get the gift of the state's first snake park. This snake park is being constructed in the Herbal Park on Bandi Road, Kota.

Gujarat To Unveil India's First Submarine Tourism in Dwarka

- With the world's largest grassroot oil refinery in Jamnagar and OPaL petrochemical complex at Dahej in Bharuch district, Gujarat is now recognised as the 'petro capital' of India, officials said. 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.
- In the Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit (VGGS) held in 2019, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) worth Rs 3,000 crore was signed for a bio-refinery in the Dahej Petroleum, Chemicals and Petrochemicals Investment Region (PCPIR), followed by a Rs 7,000 crore MoU in 2022 for chemical manufacturing in Dahej.

National Chief Secretaries Conference Focuses on 'Ease of Living' and Collaboration

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to preside over the third National Conference of Chief Secretaries in Delhi on December 28 and 29. The primary focus of the conference will be 'Ease of Living,' with an emphasis on formulating and implementing a unified development agenda and action plan in collaboration with the states.
- Addressing the need for easy access to welfare schemes and enhancing service quality, the conference will delve into five sub-themes: land and property, electricity, drinking water, health, and schooling. Special sessions will also explore topics such as cyber security challenges, perspectives on AI, stories from the ground through the aspirational block and district program, the role of states in streamlining schemes, and opportunities and challenges associated with AI in governance.

PM inaugurates Maharishi Valmiki International Airport at Ayodhya Dham

- The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated the newly built Ayodhya Airport. The airport has been named Maharishi Valmiki International Airport. Prime Minister expressed happiness on naming Ayodhya Airport after Maharishi Valmiki. Maharishi Valmiki International Airport in modern India will connect us to Ayodhya Dham and the divine-grand-new Ram temple.
- Maharishi Valmiki's Ramayana is the path of knowledge which connects us to Shri Ram. Maharishi Valmiki International Airport in modern India will connect us to Ayodhya Dham and the divine-grand-new Ram temple. In the first phase the airport can handle 10 lakh passengers annually and after the second phase, Maharishi Valmiki International Airport will cater to 60 lakh commuters annually.

PM inaugurates, dedicates to nation and lays the foundation stone of multiple development projects worth more than Rs 15,700 crore

- The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated, dedicated to the nation and laid the foundation stone of multiple development projects worth more than Rs 15,700 crore at Ayodhya Dham. After that, he also inaugurated the newly built Ayodhya Airport. The airport has been named Maharishi Valmiki International Airport.
- These include projects worth about Rs 11,100 crore for the development of Ayodhya and its surrounding areas and projects worth about Rs 4600 crore related to other projects across Uttar Pradesh. Earlier PM Modi inaugurated the redeveloped Ayodhya Railway Station and flagged off new Amrit Bharat trains and Vande Bharat trains.

Gujarat Sets Guinness Record In Mass Surya Namaskar

- Gujarat, known for its rich cultural heritage and commitment to health and wellness, achieved a remarkable feat on New Year's morning by making an indelible mark in the Guinness Book of World Records. The state hosted the largest simultaneous Surya Namaskar performance, involving over 4,000 participants from 108 locations across 51 categories.
- The chosen number of 108 holds special significance in Indian culture, and the venues for the mega event included the iconic Modhera Sun Temple. In Vedic culture, esteemed mathematicians regarded 108 as a symbol of complete existence, linking it to the Sun, Moon, and Earth.

Modi govt raises Sukanya Samridhi Yojana interest rate ahead of Lok Sabha election 2024

- The Narendra Modi government has hiked the interest rates for 'Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana' by 20 basis points. As per a finance ministry circular, the deposit under this scheme will now have an interest rate of 8.2 per cent instead of earlier 8 per cent, PTI reported.
- The Government recently raised the interest rates on the Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana (SSY) scheme by 20 basis points to 8.2 per cent from the existing 8 percent. 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.

PM Modi to inaugurate 'India's longest sea bridge' in Mumbai

- The ambitious infrastructure project, the Mumbai Trans Harbour Link (MTHL) will be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 12 January, Maharashtra CM Eknath Shinde. The MTHL project is 22 km long, touted to be India's longest and the world's 12 longest sea bridge.
- The project consists of an approximately 22 km long 6-tier (3+3-lane, 2 emergency lane) bridge connecting Shivdi in Mumbai city and Nhava on the mainland. It has been in the making since 2018. Originally expected to be completed in 4.5 years, the infrastructure project was delayed by eight months due to Covid-19 pandemic.

Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy Launches "Abhaya Hastam" for Congress' Six Guarantees Implementation in 100 Days

- Telangana chief minister A Revanth Reddy kickstarted "Abhaya Hastam", a programme to implement the six guarantees as promised by the Congress before the elections, and the government was committed to implementing all the promises within 100 days.

- Under this, a special campaign ‘Praja Palana’ (People’s governance) was launched across the state on 28 December, 2023. The program, aimed at receiving applications from eligible beneficiaries of various schemes promised under Abhay Hastam, will end on January 6, 2024.

GST collections rise 10% to Rs 1.64 lakh crore in December

- The gross Goods and Services Tax, GST revenue collection in the month of December, 2023 stood at one lakh 64 thousand and 882 crore rupees. The revenue for December is 10.3 percent higher than the GST revenues in the same month last year.
- The Finance Ministry in a statement said that out of the total GST revenue collected for the month, Central Goods and Services Tax, CGST collection is 30 thousand 443 crore rupees, State Goods and Services Tax, SGST is 37 thousand 935 crore rupees, Integrated Goods and Services Tax, IGST is around 84 thousand 255 crore rupees and cess is 12 thousand 249 crore rupees.

Govt extends tenure of PLI scheme for Auto industry by a year with partial amendments

- The Ministry of Heavy Industries issued a Gazette notification to extend the tenure of Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme for Automobile and Auto Components by one year with partial amendments to provide clarity and flexibility to the scheme.
- However, it will still be eligible for benefits in the following year if it meets the threshold calculated based on a 10% year-on-year increase over the earlier year’s threshold. The amendment also includes changes in the table showing the incentive outlay, taking the total indicative incentive amount to Rs 25,938 crore.

Ministry of Education launches PRERANA program

- The Department of School Education & Literacy, Ministry of Education, proudly presents Prerana: An Experiential Learning program. This unique initiative aims to empower students of classes IX to XII with leadership qualities and provide them with a meaningful, unique, and inspiring experience.
- Prerana is driven by a strong commitment to the principles of the Indian education system and the philosophy of value-based education, a cornerstone of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. It fosters respect for India’s rich cultural heritage and diverse traditions, embodying the spirit of “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam” (the world is one family).

Jharkhand govt reduces qualifying age for old-age pension to 50

- In a significant move to enhance social security and address the challenges faced by marginalized communities, Chief Minister Hemant Soren of Jharkhand announced a reduction in the qualifying age for old-age pensions. The decision primarily targets tribals and Dalits, lowering the age threshold from 60 to 50 years.
- Chief Minister Hemant Soren highlighted the historical context, emphasizing that, in the two decades following Jharkhand's formation in 2000, only 16 lakh people received pension benefits. However, under his government's tenure, pensions have been extended to an impressive 36 lakh individuals, predominantly those aged above 60 years.

Assam government initiates 'Gunotsav 2024 to assess performance of 40 lakh students in government school

- Assam Government launches 'Gunotsav 2024' a comprehensive state-wide assessment aimed at evaluating the performance of approximately 40 lakh students of 43,498 government schools spread across 35 districts. The exercise, which began yesterday, will conclude on February 8 in three phases. The first phase covering 12 districts from January 3 to 6, the second phase involving 13 districts from January 10 to 12, and the final phase comprising the remaining 10 districts scheduled from February 6 to 8.
- Gunotsav, an initiative of the Government of Assam, is covering all government Elementary and Secondary schools in the state. To facilitate the assessment process, a total of 18,098 external evaluators deployed throughout the State. This diverse group of evaluators will include the chief minister, MLAs, the chief secretary, and college teachers, Government Officers among others to visit schools as external evaluators.

UP CM Launches Mobile App Of State Information Commission

- Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath launched a software and a mobile application to facilitate e-filing and online hearing of complaints and second appeals in the State Information Commission. After launching the complaint and appeal tracking system at the RTI Bhawan .
- Technology can become a powerful medium to bring changes in a person's life. With the launch of this software and mobile application, no person will have to physically come to the State Information Commission office for their complaints.

Tamil Nadu Kicks Off First Jallikattu Event of the year

- Jallikattu, the traditional bull-taming sport, kicked off the year in Tamil Nadu with an event in Thachankurichi village featuring 500 bulls and heavy security. A five-judge Constitution

bench of Justices KM Joseph, Ajay Rastogi, Aniruddha Bose, Hrishikesh Roy and CT Ravikumar was hearing a batch of petitions challenging Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra governments' laws allowing the bull-taming sport 'Jallikattu' and bullock cart races.

- The event was declared open by Minister for Law S. Raghupathy and Minister for Environment and Climate Change Siva V. Meyyanathan .Mr. Raghupathy administered the oath to the tamers. District Collector I.S. Mercy Ramya and other officials were present.

Indian economy to grow at 7.3% in current financial year

- The National Statistical Office (NSO) under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation has said that the Indian economy will grow by a robust 7.3 per cent in the Financial Year 2023-24 over and above the provisional growth rate of 7.2 per cent during the last financial year.
- NSO in its report based on First Advance Estimates (FAE) of National Income for the financial year 2023-24, said that the construction sector has been estimated to have double-digit growth of 10.7 per cent. It highlighted that all the economic sectors have fared well by witnessing more than six per cent, except for the Agriculture and Allied sectors, for which the estimated growth is 1.8 per cent.

Shri Nitin Gadkari inaugurates and lays the foundation stone of 12 National Highway projects with a total length of 105 km worth over Rs 1464 Crore in Kerala

- In Kerala, Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari will inaugurate and lay the foundation stone of 12 National Highway projects at a function to be held at Kasaragod. The projects, worth over 1464 crore rupees have a total length of 105 km.
- Union Ministers Dr V K Singh, V Muraleedharan, and State Public Works Minister Muhammed Riyas are among those scheduled to attend. Furthermore, a focus on eliminating black spots on National Highways is anticipated to contribute to a significant decrease in road accidents.

Paytm Enters Partnership with Ayodhya Nagar Nigam to Facilitate Mobile Payments Across the City

- A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed by Paytm with Ayodhya Nagar Nigam. In order to enable mobile payments within the Nagar Nigam vicinity this measure was adopted. This is aimed at providing seamless mobile payment services during the inauguration of the Ram Mandir in the city.

- One97 Communications which owns the brand Paytm signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Ayodhya Nagar Nigam, to enable Nagar Nigam facilities with mobile payments using Paytm pioneered QR code, Soundbox and card machines.

Finance Ministry Greenlights an Additional Rs 1,500 Crore for FAME-II Scheme

- In a strategic move to further propel the adoption of electric vehicles (EVs) in India, the Union Finance Ministry has greenlit an additional allocation of Rs. 1,500 crore for the second phase of the Faster Adoption and Manufacture of Electric Vehicles (FAME-II) program.
- The target for supporting the number of vehicles has been raised from 1.56 million to 1.74 million. The target for electric two-wheelers (e2Ws) increased by 50% to 1.55 million. The target for electric three-wheelers (e3Ws) was reduced by 68% to 155,536.

All Banking Exam

Study Material

- ▲ 6 Course Books for All Bank Exam
- ▲ 4500 + Questions with Solutions

[→ BUY NOW](#)

50% OFF

~~₹2600~~ **₹1300**



Gujarat to host tenth edition of Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit commencing in Gandhinagar

- Gujarat is all set to host the tenth edition of the Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit commencing on the coming 10th of January at Mahatma Mandir in Gandhinagar. The Tenth edition will celebrate “20 Years of Vibrant Gujarat as the Summit of Success”. The theme of the summit this time is 'Gateway to the Future'.
- Akashvani's correspondent reports that the tenth edition of the summit is unique in many ways. The tenth edition Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit is being held after a gap of four years as the summit was canceled in 2021 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The anamorphic projection facility will be used for the first time at the Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit this year.

Kyrgyzstan Declared 'Snow Leopard' As National Symbol

- Kyrgyzstan, a country nestled in the heart of Central Asia, has officially declared the snow leopard as its national symbol, signifying a profound commitment to conservation and ecological balance. President Sadyr Zhaparov, through a signed decree, emphasized the snow leopard's role not only as a symbol of natural wealth and cultural prosperity but also as a vital indicator of the stability and health of the mountain ecosystems that cover a substantial portion of the global territory.
- President Zhaparov's decree highlights the crucial role of snow leopards in maintaining ecological equilibrium. The loss of these majestic creatures in the wild poses a significant risk to the fragile balance of the mountain ecosystem, with potential detrimental impacts on various animal species and even on human populations.

PM Modi to inaugurate India's longest sea Bridge Atal Setu in Mumbai on January 12 during Maharashtra visit

- Mumbai and Navi Mumbai have only two road connectivity options. The MTHL is also expected to strengthen connectivity between Mumbai Port Trust (MbPT) and Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT), playing a pivotal role in stimulating urban and industrial development.
- The inauguration of this sea bridge also stands as a testament to India's growing infrastructure prowess. In December 2016, PM Modi laid the foundation stone of the bridge. Marking the historic milestone in India's infrastructure development, the name Atal Setu also honours the former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

Maharashtra establishes Atpadi conservation reserve to safeguard endangered canids

- The Maharashtra government has established a crucial new wildlife habitat in Sangli district, aptly named the Atpadi Conservation Reserve. Spanning a compact 9.48 sq. km, this reserve prioritizes the protection of the endangered 'canid' family, including wild dogs, wolves, jackals, and foxes.
- Strategically located, Atpadi bridges the gap between the Maini Conservation Area and the Madhok Bird Sanctuary, fostering a safe wildlife corridor. This diverse sanctuary boasts three distinct forest types – semi-evergreen, moist deciduous, and dry deciduous.

'Prasadam' India's first hygienic food street in Ujjain

- Spanning an impressive 939 square meters, "Prasadam" stands as a symbol of holistic development. Positioned near the Mahakaleshwar Temple, it is designed not just as a food

street but as a multifaceted destination contributing to various aspects of community life. The food street comprises 17 shops, each offering a unique culinary experience.

- “Prasadam” goes beyond offering a culinary delight. It provides an array of facilities, including a dedicated kids’ play area, drinking water facility, CCTV surveillance, ample parking, public conveniences, and spacious seating areas. These facilities are aimed at enhancing the overall experience for visitors and locals alike.

Supreme court orders constitution of committee in all high courts for implementation of Judicial pay commission

- Observing that judicial service cannot be equated with the service of other officers of the Government, the Supreme Court rejected the argument that the pay and allowances of judicial officers and other government officers should be equivalent.
- The Court made this observation in the judgment passed in the All India Judges Association case directing the States to implement the recommendations of the Second National Judicial Pay Commission regarding the pay and allowances for judicial officers.

Chandubi festival was celebrated along the chandubi Lake in Assam

- Preserving the waterbody, the water level of which has rapidly been lowering over the years, has been the motive for organising the festival every year. It is organised every year for five days starting from the first day of the New Year along the Chandubi lake, which is situated in the state of Assam.
- The main attractions of the Chandubi festival are the local folk culture, ethnic cuisine, local handloom and dresses, boating, etc. The major aim of the Chandubi Festival is to promote eco-tourism in this biodiversity hotspot of Assam.

Yuva Nidhi Scheme launched by Karnataka government for unemployed youth

- Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy CM D.K. Shivakumar launched the Yuva Nidhi scheme, the fifth poll guarantee of the Congress for educated unemployed youth of Karnataka, in Shivamogga. Apart from their Cabinet colleagues, thousands of people and youths from Shivamogga and neighbouring districts turned up for the launch.
- The scheme offers financial aid to graduates and diploma holders who are yet to get a job, but only for a maximum of two years. Training will be provided to the graduates and diploma holders who register themselves on the skill connect portal of the State Government.

Govt’s ZED scheme for MSMEs hits 1 lakh certification milestone

- The Zero Effect, Zero Defect scheme (ZED) by the MSME Ministry has achieved a significant milestone of certifying 1 lakh (100,000) Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) for environmentally conscious manufacturing practices.
- The Zero Effect, Zero Defect scheme (ZED) was launched in October 2016 and revamped in April 2022, aims to encourage sustainable manufacturing and reduce environmental impact. The scheme was made free for women-led MSMEs in December 2023, and the government guarantees 100% financial support for certification costs.

PM Modi Releases First Instalment of PM-JANMAN Scheme for Pucca Homes

- In a significant move towards uplifting Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs), Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to release ₹540 crore, the inaugural tranche of funding, for pucca homes under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G) on January 15. This disbursement, part of the recently launched PM-JANMAN package, aims to foster the comprehensive development of PVTG habitations.
- The Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan (PM-JANMAN) was launched on November 15, 2023. It is a significant government initiative targeting the socio-economic welfare of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) in India.

Maharashtra's Pench Tiger Reserve Achieves Milestone as India's First Dark Sky Park

- The Pench Tiger Reserve (PTR) in Maharashtra has been marked as India's first Dark Sky Park and the fifth such park in Asia for protecting the night sky and preventing light pollution, making the facility ideal for astronomy enthusiasts.
- The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) emphasises on the recognition of the intrinsic value of the night sky as a natural, cultural, and historical resource. The reserve has inaugurated a night observatory with the district planning committee (DPC) fund.

Ganga Sagar Mela, India's second-largest fair after Kumbh Mela, is celebrated in West Bengal of India

- The Ganga Sagar Mela stands as a testament to the vibrant cultural and spiritual tapestry of India. Held annually in Sagardwip, West Bengal, this magnificent fair has earned the distinction of being the second most popular mela in the country, surpassed only by the revered Kumbh Mela.

- The festival draws a massive influx of devotees who converge to partake in rituals, seek spiritual purification, and celebrate with immense fervor. Held during the winter season, the Ganga Sagar Mela is a sacred gathering where pilgrims immerse themselves in the holy waters of the Ganga River to cleanse their souls. The Ganga, considered the holiest river in Hindu mythology, culminates its journey in Sagardwip, merging with the Bay of Bengal.

Delhi LG Kicks Off 2-Day Global 'Patang Utsav' At Baansera

- Delhi Development Authority (DDA) will organise two days International Kite Festival 'Patang Utsav' at Baansera--Delhi's first bamboo park at Sarai Kale Khan on bank of river Yamuna, on January 13-14. Speaking at the inauguration, Lieutenant Governor VK Saxena commended the Delhi Development Authority for spearheading the festival and transforming previously degraded landscapes into open green spaces.
- While entry to the place will remain ticketed, the authority has planned various arrangements to facilitate visitors. DDA will bring professional artists from Gujarat for flying and displaying huge kites and the general public can also participate in large number.

Yuva Nidhi scheme was launched by Karnataka Government for providing financial aid to unemployed graduates and diploma holders

- Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah recently unveiled the fifth and final poll guarantee of the Congress party, named the 'Yuva Nidhi' scheme. Launched at Freedom Park in Shivamogga, this initiative aims to provide unemployment assistance to graduates and diploma holders who completed their degrees during the academic year 2022-23.
- Under the scheme, the government has committed to providing Rs 3,000 per month to degree holders and Rs 1,500 per month to diploma holders who have been unable to secure employment in the last six months and are not pursuing higher studies.

India's First National Highway steel Road section on NH-66 Mumbai-Goa National Highway inaugurated

- Dr. V.K. Saraswat, Member (S&T), NITI AAYOG inaugurated India's First National Highway Steel Slag Road section on NH- 66 Mumbai-Goa National Highway. The Steel Slag Road Technology, developed by CSIR-Central Road Research Institute (CSIR-CRRI) is transforming the waste of steel industries into wealth and is helping the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) to build stronger and ecofriendly national highways in the country.

- JSW Steel, under the CSIR-CRRI technological guidance, has constructed the 1 km long four lane steel slag road section on Indapur-Panvel Section of NH-66 Mumbai-Goa. For construction of this road around 80,000 tons of CONARC Steel slag were converted as processed steel slag aggregates at JSW Steel Dolvi, Raigad plant.

Wholesale Price Index (WPI) Inflation Hits Nine-Month High At 0.73% In December 2023

- The wholesale price index (WPI)-based inflation came in at 0.73 per cent for December 2023, up from 0.26 in November, according to the data released by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. WPI has continued its upward trajectory after returning to positive territory in November after seven months.
- Earlier in March, the WPI-based inflation was 1.34 per cent before falling to -0.92 per cent in April. Positive rate of inflation in December, 2023 is primarily due to increase in prices of food articles, machinery & equipment, other manufacturing, other transport equipment and computer, electronics & optical products etc.

Government Reduces Windfall Tax On Crude Oil Amid Global Economic Concerns

- In response to the evolving dynamics of the global oil market, the Indian government has decided to slash the windfall tax on domestically-produced crude oil, effective January 16. The tax, levied as the Special Additional Excise Duty (SAED), has been reduced from Rs 2,300 per tonne to Rs 1,700 per tonne.
- The move aims to address the challenges posed by soaring crude oil prices and is part of the government's fortnightly review mechanism based on average oil prices in the preceding two weeks. The reduction in windfall tax comes against the backdrop of concerns about weakened global economic conditions and an increase in crude inventories in the United States, contributing to a decline in crude prices.

New campus of National Academy of Customs, Indirect Taxes and Narcotics in Andhra Pradesh

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be on a two-day visit to Andhra Pradesh and Kerala. He will inaugurate the new campus of the National Academy of Customs, Indirect Taxes and Narcotics in Andhra Pradesh and interact with Officer Trainees of the 74th and 75th batches of the Indian Revenue Service and officer trainees of the Royal Civil Service of Bhutan.
- The Prime Minister will reach Kochi this evening and hold a roadshow from Maharaja's College Ground to the Government Guest House on his way to Ernakulam. The Prime

Minister will perform pooja and darshan at the Guruvayoor Temple and Thriprayar Shree Ramasami Temple in Thrissur district.

Wings India 2024 event to be held at Begumpet Airport, Hyderabad

- Wings India 2024, touted to be Asia's largest event on civil aviation, will be held here for four days from January 18, an official release. Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia will inaugurate the event, which is organised around commercial, general and business aviation, at the airport in Begumpet.
- In pursuance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision to fulfil the common man's aspirations of flying, and the grand success of the previous edition of the event, the Union Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA), Airports Authority of India (AAI) and Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) are organising 'Wings India 2024', according to the release.

India To Host Year-long “Ramayan” Festival from Delhi

- Coinciding with the inauguration of the Ram Temple at Ayodhya, India is organising a year-long festival on “connecting the world through Ramayan”. The festival will begin from Delhi’s historic Purana Qila (Old Fort) and then will be taken to various cities like Lucknow, Ayodhya and Varanasi.
- The festival 'Year of Connecting the World Through Ramayana' will kick off from Delhi's historic Purana Qila from January 18-24. Coinciding with the inauguration of the Ram Temple at Ayodhya, India is organising a year-long festival on “connecting the world through Ramayan”.

Jagannath Temple Heritage Corridor at Puri in Odisha open for Public

- The much-awaited Puri 'Srimandir Parikrama Prakalpa' or Jagannath Temple Heritage Corridor project in Odisha opened to the public. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik inaugurated the project worth eight hundred crore rupees just before concluding Purna Ahuti of the Maha Yagna.
- Akashvani correspondent reports that the Maha Yagna, which began on Makar Sankranti Day, is on its third day and will conclude with the offering of Purna Ahuti by Puri Gajapati King Dibyasingha Deb this afternoon. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik will inaugurate the project worth eight hundred crore rupees project. Devotees are happy to see the renovation of the surroundings of the Srimandir.

9th Pakke Paga Hornbil Festival (PPHF) celebrated in Arunachal Pradesh

- The 9th edition of the Pakke Paga Hornbill Festival (PPHF) commenced here in Pakke-Kessang district, showcasing the dedicated efforts towards conservation of nature and wildlife. The festival, to be held from 18 to 20 January, was inaugurated by Tourism Minister Nakap Nalo.
- Addressing the gathering, Nalo hailed the PPHF as a “one-of-a-kind festival” in the state, emphasising the crucial role played by the forest department and the local communities in providing a sanctuary for the endangered hornbill birds.

MeitY launches Centre of Excellence in Intelligent Internet of Things Sensors and India Innovation Centre for Graphene in Kochi, Kerala

- MeitY Secretary S Krishnan launched a Centre of Excellence (CoE) in Intelligent Internet of Things (IIoT) Sensors and India’s first graphene centre - India Innovation Centre for Graphene (IICG) in Kerala. This program aims to unite key figures from industries, startups, investors, academia, and R&D organisations involved in electronics hardware design and manufacturing, said the release.
- The CoE in IIoT Sensors is a unique facility established at Makers Village Kochi by MeitY, Government of India and Government of Kerala to catalyse the development of sensors within the realm of Intelligent IoT systems covering a broad spectrum of applications of intelligent sensors in networks, devices and sensor systems.

Government invites suggestions on draft ‘Indian Stamp Bill 2023’ from public within 30 days

- The Department of Revenue has prepared a draft Indian Stamp Bill to align it with the modern stamp duty regime. Once enacted, the Bill will replace the Indian Stamp Act of 1899. The Indian Stamp Act, 1899 is a fiscal statute laying down the law relating to tax levied in the form of stamps on instruments recording transactions.
- The Indian Stamp Act, 1899 (2 of 1899) is a fiscal statute laying down the law relating to tax levied in the form of stamps on instruments recording transactions. Stamp duties are levied by the Central Government, but within the States are collected and appropriated by the concerned States in terms of provisions of Article 268 of the Constitution.

800 BCE Ancient Human Settlement Discovered at Vadnagar , Gujarat

- Digital University Kerala (DUK) (formerly IIITMK) and Centre for Materials for Electronics Technology (CMET), Thrissur are the technical partners for setting up these centres. The complete full-fledged facility for R&D, incubation, innovation, skilling,

capacity building, testing and certification shall be established at these centres by the experts of these agencies.

- Secretary Krishnan also unveiled Hardtech 2024 - Makers Village's premier annual program on the occasion.
- This program aims to unite key figures from industries, startups, investors, academia, and R&D organisations involved in electronics hardware design and manufacturing, said the release. The secretary also addressed the gathering on the occasion, highlighting the importance of IIoT sensors and Graphene technologies in driving digital transformation and economic growth.

J&K Lt. Governor Manoj Sinha Releases 'Intikhab-e-Kalam-e-Rahi'

- Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha released 'Intikhab-e-Kalam-e-Rahi', Urdu translation of the poetic compositions of Jnanpith Award recipient poet Prof. Rehman Rahi by noted writer Dr Satish Vimal. The Lt Governor congratulated Dr Satish Vimal and the team associated with the publication. Writer Mushtaq Barq and Literary Activist Sheikh Waseem Ahmad were also present.
- However, Kashmir has been going through a prolonged dry spell and a 79 per cent deficit in rainfall was recorded for December while there has been no precipitation in most parts of the valley in the first fortnight of January. 'Chilla-i-Kalan' will end on January 31.

PM Initiates 8 AMRUT Projects Worth Rs. 2,000 Crores In Solapur, Maharashtra

- The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of 8 AMRUT (Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation) projects worth around Rs. 2,000 crores in Solapur, Maharashtra. The Prime Minister noted the fact that his 11-day special ritual was initiated at Panchwati in Nashik, Maharashtra.
- The nation is in a mood for bhakti with the Pran Pratishtha at the Ram Temple at Ayodhya Dham on 22nd January. "The decade-old pain of Lord Ram's darshan in a tent will be far out now", PM Modi remarked. He said he is following the rules and regulations of the 11-day anushthan with utmost dedication and commitment under the guidance of saints and seers and expressed confidence in conducting the Pran Pratishtha with the blessings of all citizens.

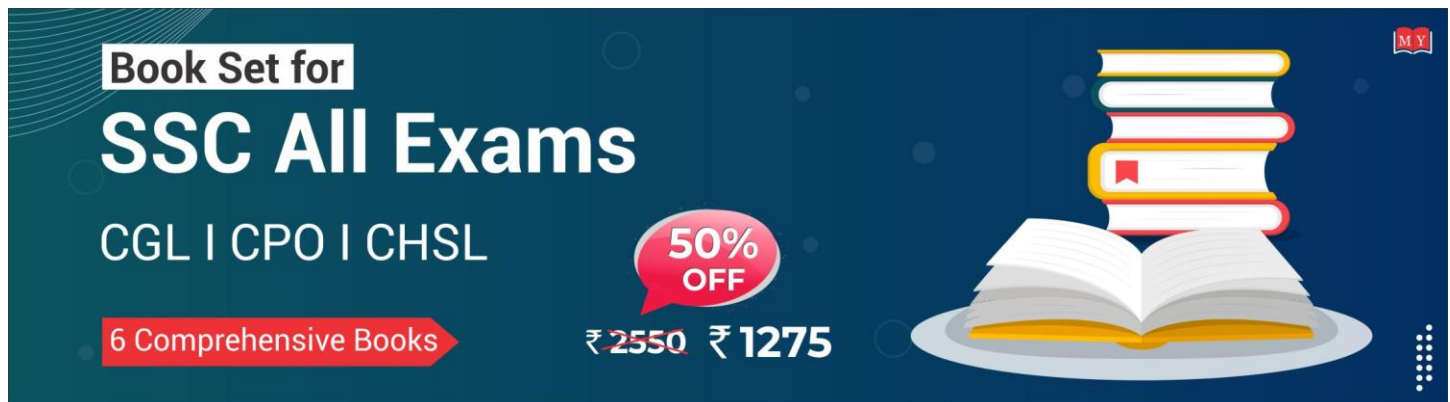
Himachal Pradesh Launches 'My School-My Pride' For Education Transformation

- In a move aligning with the National Education Policy (NEP)-2020, Himachal Pradesh has unveiled the 'My School-My Pride' campaign under the 'Apna Vidyalay' programme, aimed at revolutionising the quality of education in government schools.

- This initiative will encourage active participation from individuals and organisations to adopt schools and contribute to various aspects of students' growth. Officers from the education department will act as mentors for specific schools.

Annual celebration at Jagannath Temple featuring stalls showcasing local artistry and cuisine

- Budhua, the cab driver, is oblivious to the fact that I cannot speak Odia. He points at the plastic bottles and paper plates strewn by picnickers along the picturesque Marine Drive Road and says something in an angry tone. I too express my disgust in Hindi, with a smattering of Bengali. I wind down the window to catch some cool breeze and sleep.
- While the Nila Chakra is said to face you from wherever you view it in Puri, the flag is changed every evening, a ritual that has been followed for the past 800 years. People gather to watch Dhawaja Parivartan, a fascinating feat, when the member of a family that has been performing it hereditarily scales the shikara of the 214-ft high temple.



Book Set for
SSC All Exams
CGL | CPO | CHSL
6 Comprehensive Books
50% OFF
₹ 2550 ₹ 1275

Union Minister G. Kishan Reddy has formally inaugurated the National Skill Training Institute in Hyderabad

- Union Tourism Minister G Kishan Reddy, inaugurated the National Skill Training Institute in Hyderabad, Telangana. Constructed for 19.90 crore rupees in 4 acres of area, the institute offers both short-term and long-term skilling courses to women in various sectors.
- Empowerment of women has been a major priority for the Central Government. The Government has launched numerous schemes dedicated to empowering women across India. He recalled the initiatives like Beti Bachao Beti Padhav and PM Ujjwala. He added that several other initiatives have also been taken to help women increase their opportunities to build decision-making power.

Ministry of Education issues guidelines for coaching centres; prohibits intake of students below 16 years

- The guidelines issued by the education ministry on the back of undue stress and rising suicides, not only question the methodology of teaching in the coaching centres in the absence of policy but also put the spotlight on the mental health of students, say educationists.
- The necessary next step, they suggest, was an institutional focus on counselling for students beyond 16, who face stiff competition in JEE, NEET and other tests. The guidelines came after complaints received by the government regarding increasing cases of student suicides, fire incidents, lack of facilities in coaching incidents, as well as the teaching methods adopted by them.

Production Linked Incentive Schemes lead to production/ sales of Rs. 8.61 lakh crore and employment generation of over 6.78 lakh

- Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Schemes witness over Rs. 1.03 lakh crore of investment till November 2023, which has led to production/ sales of Rs. 8.61 lakh crore and employment generation (direct & indirect) of over 6.78 lakhs.
- PLI Schemes have witnessed exports surpassing Rs. 3.20 lakh crore, with significant contributions from sectors such as Large-Scale Electronics Manufacturing, Pharmaceuticals, Food Processing, and Telecom & Networking products.

PM Narendra Modi offers prayers at Sri Ranganathaswamy temple, Tiruchirapalli, Tamil Nadu

- The temple is believed to have been built during the Vijayanagara period (1336-1565). Inside the temple, Lord Ranganatha, an incarnation of Lord Vishnu in a reclining pose, is worshipped with deep devotion.
- PM Modi also immersed himself in the rich cultural heritage of Tamil Nadu by listening to a scholar recite verses from the Kamba Ramayanam at the Sri Ranganathaswamy Temple. The Prime Minister chose to sit in the very place where Kamban first sang the Tamil Ramayana, symbolising a profound connection between the Tamil language, the state of Tamil Nadu, and the revered figure of Sri Ram.

Bhopal hosted the 63rd meeting of the Central Geological Programming Board (CGPB)

- The 63rd Central Geological Programming Board (CGPB) meeting was held in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh.

- In the presence of other senior officials, Shri V.L. Kantha Rao, inaugurated an Exhibition on the theme, “Mining and Beyond”, in which GSI, PSUs, DMFs, major mining companies, private exploration agencies, startups, Madhya Pradesh Government showcased their achievements. The proposed Annual Programme for ensuing Field Season year 2024-25 was placed before the Board for discussion.

Vice President to inaugurate ‘Hamara Samvidhan, Hamara Samman’ campaign in New Delhi.

- Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar launched the Hamara Samvidhan Hamara Samman campaign of the Ministry of Law and Justice, in New Delhi to commemorate the 75th Year of India as Republic. The event also brought together representatives from Bhashini and IGNOU to formalize their collaboration with Department of Justice.
- The partnership with Bhashini would break the barriers of language in accessibility to justice. The partnership with IGNOU will open the opportunity for Paralegals to acquire certifications in diverse field of laws, enhance their educational opportunities and increase their skills and employability across different sectors of legal assistance and support.

Centre approves Rs 235 cr outlay for administrative reforms public grievance redressal

- The Centre has approved an outlay of Rs 235 crore for a revamped scheme for administrative reforms to be implemented in the next two financial years in the the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances.
- The Scheme for Comprehensive System for Redressal of Public Grievances has an allocation of Rs. 128 crores seeks to take forward the 10-Step CPGRAMS reforms aimed at improving quality of grievance redressal and reducing timelines by developing an AI enabled comprehensive system for redressal of Public Grievances.

Government defers ₹5,000 crore spending on strategic petroleum reserves in FY24

- The Finance Ministry has postponed plan of spending ₹5,000 crore in FY24 to refill the strategic petroleum reserves, citing emerging trends in oil markets. Finance Ministry, ₹15,000 crore will be given to Indian Oil Corporation, Bharat Petroleum Corporation and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation in FY24.
- This is part of the plan to provide ₹30,000 crore as capital support the PSU oil marketing companies for green energy and net zero initiatives. The decision was taken in November 2023 during the Expenditure Finance Commission (EFC) meeting.

Odisha to establish a melanistic tiger safari-a first of its kind in the world

- An exclusive safari of melanistic tigers, the first-of-its-kind in the world, will be started near Baripada in Odisha's Mayurbhanj district, which also houses the famed Similipal Tiger Reserve (STR).
- Similipal is the only place where melanistic (black stripe) tigers are found in the wild. The safari is expected to boost tourism as tourists will now get to see the rare big cat .

Cabinet approved RS.8500 crores to promote coal / Lignite Gasification Projects under 3 categories

- The Union Cabinet approved a viability gap funding (VGF) scheme of ₹8,500 crore for coal gasification projects for public and private sector companies. The grant will be paid to the selected entity in two equal installments.
- The VGF will be given in three categories. One, for three projects of government-owned companies, for which a grant of ₹ 4,050 crore will be given. The selection of entities under category II and III shall be carried out through a competitive and transparent bidding process.

President of India inaugurates Kaushal Bhavan

- In a historic moment, President Droupadi Murmu inaugurated Kaushal Bhawan, symbolizing India's unwavering commitment to empowering its youth through skill development. Under the aegis of the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE), the Bhawan is set to catalyze the realization of aspirations and nurture the nation's young talent, steering India toward a more skilled future.
- The event was also graced by the esteemed presence of Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, Union Minister, Education and, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship; Shri. Rajeev Chandrasekhar, Minister of State, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship and Electronics and Information Technology and Jal Shakti and Shri Atul Kumar Tiwari, Secretary, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.

India-set 'To Kill a Tiger' nominated for best documentary feature at Oscars 2024

- The documentary revolves around Ranjit's relentless pursuit of justice for his 13-year-old daughter, who was abducted and sexually assaulted by three men. Despite the men's arrest after Ranjit reports the incident to the police, his relief is short-lived. The villagers and their

leaders launch a campaign to pressure the family into dropping the charges, making Ranjit's quest for justice an uphill battle.

- To Kill a Tiger is produced by Cornelia Principe and David Oppenheimer. The other four nominees for the Best Documentary Feature Oscar include Bobi Wine: The People's President, The Eternal Memory, Four Daughters, and 20 Days in Mariupol.

Telangana government will Introduce Gruha Jyothi Scheme under which every BPL card household will get 200 units of free electricity

- The Chief Minister of Telangana, Revanth Reddy, has taken significant strides to expedite the implementation of various welfare schemes, including the much-anticipated Gruha Jyothi Scheme. The state government aims to roll out this scheme from the first week of February, bringing relief to numerous households.
- However, in recent years, Saudi Arabia has embarked on a series of socio-economic reforms under Vision 2030, spearheaded by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. These reforms aim to modernize the Saudi economy and society, reducing its dependence on oil and opening up to more international norms.

Centre issued a notification appointing Karnataka High court's Chief Justice Prasanna B Varale as a judge of the Supreme Court

- Centre issued a notification appointing Karnataka High court's Chief Justice Prasanna B Varale as a judge of the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court has got a new judge, within a week after recommendation from the apex court's collegium. Centre has notified the appointment of Karnataka High Court's Chief Justice Prasanna B Varale, as a judge of the apex court.
- A vacancy arose after the retirement of Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul. It decided to fill up the sole existing vacancy by recommending Justice Varale. Since the workload of judges has increased considerably, it has become necessary to ensure that the court has full working judge-strength at all times.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

BRICS Group To Double In 2024 After Saudi, Iran, UAE, Egypt, Ethiopia Join Ranks

- Current members Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa in August invited six other nations to become part of their group, pairing some of the planet's largest energy producers

with some of the biggest consumers among developing countries. Only Argentina declined the invitation after President Javier Milei, who took office this month, reversed his predecessor's membership bid.

- Established in 2009 as an informal alliance, the BRICS group (which was initiated by Russia) is aimed at providing a platform for its members to counter the dominance of the United States and its Western allies in the global order.

Strong Growth In GST Collections ,December 2023 Records ₹1.65-Lakh Crore

- In a significant economic development, Goods and Services Tax (GST) collections for December 2023 reached ₹1,64,882 crore, marking a notable 10.28% surge compared to the ₹1,49,507 crore collected in the same month the previous year.
- This accomplishment underscores the seventh consecutive month in the fiscal year where average GST collections have exceeded ₹1.6-lakh crore. Notably, November 2023 witnessed GST collections at ₹1,67,929 crore, contributing to the overall positive trend.

10th World Tamils Economic Conference & and Global Economic Summit to be held in Chennai

- The 10th World Tamils Economic Conference and Global Economic Summit will be held in Chennai on January 9 and January 10. Nearly 50 speakers are expected to present papers in various sessions, including the global economic situation - opportunities and challenges; start-ups and innovative projects; funding and financial assistance; opportunities in healthcare projects and IT; communication and artificial intelligence, and women empowerment through education and entrepreneurship.
- The First World Tamils Economic Conference was held in Chennai 2009, the second was in Dubai 2011, third was in Chennai 2016, fourth was in Durban, South Africa 2017 and the Fifth was in Pondicherry 2018, again Sixth was in Chennai 2019, Seventh was virtual 2020, eighth was in Chennai both virtual and physical.

South Korea launches 'workation' visa for foreigners

- South Korea has introduced a new visa for foreigners allowing them to visit the country on a working holiday or workation. The "workation" or "digital nomad" visa allows foreign nationals to visit South Korea on a working holiday.
- According to Yonhap News Agency, the "digital nomad" or "workation" visa will be given by South Korea's justice ministry to those having a work experience of over a year in one

industry and are eligible for remote work. The visa will also be allowed to the families of these employees.

Toy exports from India increased 239% over last 8 years

- Exports of toys from India increased 239 per cent over the last eight years to \$326 million in 2022-23 from \$96 million in 2014-15 while imports declined 52 per cent to \$159 million from \$332 million in the same period because of a combination of measures including import tariff increase and quality control, per a case study on the ‘success story of made in India toys’ carried out by IIM Lucknow on behalf of the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT).
- In the next eight years, around 12 per cent compounded annual growth rate is expected in the toy sector and exports are likely to increase to \$3 billion by 2028. Toys imports declined 52% from \$332 million to \$159 million in the same period. The study was conducted by IIM Lucknow on behalf of the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT).

MoU for several investments to be signed on second day of global investors meet in Tamil Nadu

- During the Global Investors Meet, discussions were held on climate change missions, circular economy, AI, and providing a robust environment for start-ups and SMEs. Climate protection teams will be created in every district. Industries were encouraged to develop initiatives to achieve zero carbon emissions.
- The Tamil Nadu Global Investors Meet 2024 has attracted record investments of ₹6.64 lakh crore, much higher than the estimated sum of about ₹5 lakh crore and doubled the investment that was attracted in the previous GIM held in 2019.

PM Modi Inaugurates India's Largest Global Trade Show at Vibrant Gujarat Summit 2024

- PM Modi Inaugurates India's Largest Global Trade Show at Vibrant Gujarat Summit 2024 Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 10th edition of the Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit in Gandhinagar, alongside several global leaders.
- The three-day event is witnessing the participation of 34 partner countries and delegates from over 130 countries. It will also celebrate ‘20 years of Vibrant Gujarat as the Summit of Success’. Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the country's largest Global Trade show at Gandhinagar one day ahead of the Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit 2024.

South Korea passes law banning dog meat trade

- The slaughter and sale of dogs for their meat is to become illegal in South Korea after MPs backed a new law. The legislation, set to come into force by 2027, aims to end the centuries-old practice of humans eating dog meat.
- Dog meat stew, called “boshintang“, is considered a delicacy among some older South Koreans, but the meat has fallen out of favour with diners and is no longer popular with young people. Under the new law the consumption of dog meat itself will not be illegal.

India to chair UNESCO's world heritage committee for first time in July

- India is set to chair UNESCO's World Heritage Committee and host its 46th session in New Delhi from July 21 to 31, 2024, marking a historic milestone for our nation. Vishal V Sharma, India's Permanent Representative to UNESCO, announced this decision on January 9.
- The World Heritage Committee, comprising representatives from 21 member states, gathers annually to recognize global cultural and natural heritage. Their work contributes to the prestigious UNESCO World Heritage Sites list.

DPIIT organizes startup India Innovation week 2024 from 10th – 18th January 2024

- With an aim to bring together the country's startups, entrepreneurs, investors, policymakers, and other stakeholders, the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry, is organising the Startup India Innovation Week 2024 from 10th January 2024 to 18th January 2024 to celebrate the Indian Startup Ecosystem and the National Startup Day (16th January 2024).
- Startups Unlocking Infinite Potential on 11th January 2024, at the Tenth Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit in Gandhinagar, Gujarat which aims to provide a global forum for business networking, knowledge sharing, and inclusive socio-economic development.

Switzerland to Host Ukraine Peace Summit on Zelenskiy's Request

- Switzerland agreed to host a global peace summit on Ukraine at the request of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy. Neutral Switzerland has previously acted as a broker to resolve conflicts and could now help find a resolution for the war that began when Russia sent troops into Ukraine on Feb. 24, 2022.
- Zelenskiy, during a press conference in Bern alongside Swiss counterpart Viola Amherd, revealed that the peace summit's participants are yet to be finalized. However, he

emphasized the invitation to countries respecting Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, hinting at inclusivity.

Second International AYUSH Conference Inaugurated in Dubai

- The second International AYUSH Conference and Exhibition opened its doors at the Dubai World Trade Centre, orchestrated by the Science India Forum and the Ministry of AYUSH. Running from January 13 to 15, the three-day event is dedicated to showcasing AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha, Homeopathy) as a reliable healthcare system for preventing and managing Non-Communicable Chronic Diseases (NCDs).
- The focal theme of the conference, "Non-Communicable Chronic Diseases – Prevention & Management through AYUSH," aims to highlight AYUSH as a prevention-oriented and cost-effective approach to creating a disease-free society.

World's largest open-air theatrical festival is celebrated in Odisha

- The story begins with the legendary king of Mathura, Kansa, also uncle of Lord Krishna, ascending the throne, and ends with Krishna killing Kansa. During the festival, Bargarh becomes the city of Mathura, the river Jeera becomes the Yamuna and Ambapali situated on the other side of Jeera becomes Gopapura.
- For 11 days, the whole of Bargarh town is transformed into a very big stage even though the story of Kansa, his death and the noble deeds of Sri Krishna are enacted in 14 main places at Mathura and four places in Gopapura.

India record its first –ever confirmed sighting of a rare Tibetan Brown Bear in Sikkim

- In a remarkable development for India's wildlife conservation, the first-ever confirmed sighting of the rare Tibetan Brown Bear (scientific name *Ursus arctos pruinosus*) was recorded in the high altitudes of North Sikkim. This discovery, made by the joint efforts of the Sikkim Forest Department and WWF-India, marks a significant addition to the country's mammal diversity and highlights the ecological richness of the region.
- The Tibetan Brown Bear, also known as the Tibetan Blue Bear, is an omnivore with a diet generally consisting of marmots and alpine vegetation. It is distinct from the more commonly found Himalayan Black Bear in terms of appearance, habitat, and behavior.

India launches the “Alliance for Global Good-Gender Equality “at the World Economic Forum

- In a significant move on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting, India has unveiled the “Alliance for Global Good-Gender Equity and Equality.” The initiative has

gained support from influential entities, with the World Economic Forum (WEF) and Invest India joining as crucial partners.

- The announcement took place during an India Reception, hosted by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII). Union ministers Smriti Irani and Hardeep Singh Puri, along with WEF Founder Klaus Schwab, were present at the event.

Akasa Air announces flight operation from upcoming Noida International Airport


- It will be the second airline to commence commercial flight operations from the soon-to-be-opened Noida International Airport in Uttar Pradesh. The first airline to announce its collaboration with the greenfield airport, situated close to the national capital, was IndiGo, as per an official statement.
- The inception of the Elite Ensemble series was marked by a captivating performance by none other than Sorabh Pant, who graced the stage during the inaugural edition of the Elite Ensemble series. With his incisive wit and keen observational humour, he effortlessly held the audience's attention throughout the performance.

SSC All Exams Test Series

- ◆ 150+ Full Length Tests
- ◆ English & Hindi Medium
- ◆ Designed by IBT Experts

[→ BUY NOW](#)

~~₹ 669~~
₹ 334
UP TO 50% OFF



The 19th NAM Summit Begins in Uganda's Kampala

- External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar shared glimpses of the 19th Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Summit, which commenced here. The foreign minister can be seen meeting various foreign dignitaries participating in the two-day summit.
- The 19th NAM Summit under Uganda's leadership is being held under the theme 'Deepening Cooperation for Shared Global Affluence' and brings together more than 120 developing countries on a platform of crucial historic significance.

Japan becomes 5th country to land a spacecraft on the moon

- Japan became the 5th country in history to reach the moon when one of its spacecraft successfully made a soft landing on the lunar surface. Japan follows the United States, the Soviet Union, China and India in reaching the moon.
- SLIM landed on the moon at about 12:20 a.m. Tokyo time. SLIM, which was aiming to hit a very small target, is a lightweight spacecraft about the size of a passenger vehicle. It was using “pinpoint landing” technology that promises far greater control than any previous moon landing.

Switzerland and India reach deal on FTA after 16 years of negotiations

- After 16 years of negotiations, Switzerland and India have finally reached a consensus on a free-trade agreement, as confirmed by Swiss Economy Minister Guy Parmelin, reported. Parmelin is heading the delegation of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA). Last May, the economics minister met Goyal.
- According to the agency, Parmelin travelled to India directly from the World Economic Forum in Davos to meet with Minister Piyush Goyal. The State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) announced that EFTA had updated its free trade agreement with Chile.

India Launches ‘Alliance for Global Good- Gender Equity and Equality’ at Davos World Economic Forum 2024

- The newly launched Alliance aims to bring together global best practices, foster knowledge sharing, and attract investments in key areas such as women’s health, education, and enterprise. The initiative builds on the commitments of the G20 Leaders’ Declaration and India’s dedication to women-led development.
- Industry leaders, including Mastercard, Uber, Tata, TVS, Bayer, Godrej, Serum Institute of India, IMD Lausanne, and over 10,000 partners, have already expressed their support for the Alliance. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation is backing the initiative, with the CII Centre for Women Leadership serving as its anchor. The World Economic Forum is a ‘Network Partner,’ and Invest India is an ‘Institutional Partner.’

The world’s tallest 721 feet Ram temple will be built in Perth, Australia

- Perth in Australia will soon be home to the world's tallest Ram temple - the colossal structure will be approximately 721 feet tall. Spearheaded by the ShriRam Vedic and Cultural Trust, the monumental project, estimated to cost around ₹ 600 crore, will be spread across 150 acres.

- Dr Harendra Rana, the deputy head of the Trust, revealed that the project extends beyond the conventional concept of a temple. The International ShriRam Vedic And Cultural Union (ISVACU) which is overseeing the project has envisioned the temple as a multifaceted hub encompassing cultural, spiritual, and community activities.

NEW OPPPOINTMENT AND PERSON IN NEWS

Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankhar Appointed as Ex-Officio Chancellor of Pondicherry University

- In a recent development, Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar has been appointed as the Ex-Officio Chancellor of Pondicherry University. This decision was made in line with the provisions under the Pondicherry University Act, 1985. The role of the Chancellor in a university holds significant importance in terms of governance and ceremonial duties, acting as a bridge between the university and the external bodies.
- This appointment marks a crucial step in enhancing the administrative and academic functions of Pondicherry University. The Vice President, known for his eminent stature in the political arena, brings a wealth of experience and expertise to this honorary position.

Rashmi Govil To Be Next Director (HR) Of IOC

- Rashmi Govil, a seasoned HR executive with nearly three decades of experience at Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), is poised to step into the role of Director (Human Resources) at the state-owned firm. Govil, currently serving as Executive Director (HRD & ER) at IOC, will succeed Ranjan Kumar Mohapatra.
- Govil has played a pivotal role in various HR segments, including industrial relations, compensation management, performance management, staffing recruitment, policy formulation, succession planning, systems management, and audit.

Dong Jun Named As China's New Defense Minister

- China has named former naval commander Dong Jun as its new defense minister, two months after removing his predecessor Li Shangfu from the role without explanation following Li's extended absence from public view. The announcement did not provide reasons for the sweeping move, which comes on the heels of a series of military personnel shake-ups in recent months.

- The top body of China's rubber stamp legislature, the National People's Congress (NPC), announced Dong's appointment following their final session for the year, Chinese state media Xinhua reported. The body also announced that nine military figures had been removed from their positions in the NPC, according to Xinhua.

Vice Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi took over as vice chief of the Nabval staff

- Vice Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi, AVSM, NM took over as Vice Chief of the Naval Staff on 04 Jan 24. On taking over, the Flag Officer paid homage to the Bravehearts who made the supreme sacrifice in service of the nation by placing a floral wreath at the National War Memorial. Prior to taking over as Vice Chief of the Naval Staff, VAdm Dinesh K Tripathi served as the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Western Naval Command.
- An alumnus of Sainik School Rewa and National Defence Academy, Khadakwasla, he was commissioned into the Indian Navy on 01 Jul 1985. A Communication and Electronic Warfare specialist, he served on frontline warships of the Navy as Signal Communication Officer and Electronic Warfare Officer, and later as the Executive Officer and Principal Warfare Officer of Guided Missile Destroyer INS Mumbai.

Vice Admiral Sanjay Jasjit singh assumes command as flag office of western naval command

- In a formal ceremony held at INS Shikra, the naval air station in Colaba, Mumbai, Vice Admiral Sanjay Jasjit Singh took charge as the Flag Officer Commanding in Chief (FOC-in-C) of the Indian Navy's Western Naval Command.
- The ceremony marked the transition of leadership from Vice Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi, who had been serving as the FOC-in-C. Vice Admiral Singh, upon assuming command of the Navy's Western Fleet, often referred to as the "Sword Army" of the service, paid homage to the fallen heroes who sacrificed their lives for the nation.

Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal to chair first Inland Waterways Development Council Meeting in Kolkata

- The Inland Waterways Authority of India, operating under the Ministry of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways (MoPSW), is hosting the first-ever meeting of the 'Inland Waterways Development Council' in Kolkata. Union Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways, Sarbananda Sonowal, is set to lead discussions with representatives from waterway states, central government officials, and experts aboard the MV Ganga Queen.

- Ministers and officials from various state governments, central government, and domain experts are scheduled to participate in the event. As part of the agenda, Sonowal will unveil several initiatives, including the "Harit Nauka – Guidelines for Green Transition of Inland Vessels" and the River Cruise Tourism Roadmap 2047.

Shashi Singh Elected as President of All India Rubber Industries Association (AIRIA)

- The All India Rubber Industries Association (AIRIA), the foremost authority representing India's rubber industry, has recently announced a significant leadership change. Shashi Singh has been elected as the new President, succeeding Ramesh Kejriwal.
- This transition marks a new era for AIRIA, with Singh set to advance the association's mission and goals. With a rich history of over two decades in the rubber industry, Singh has been an integral part of AIRIA. Before his election as President, he served as the senior vice president. His tenure in the association is distinguished by his roles in various committees and as the chief convener for the western region.

Kuwait emir appoints Sheikh Mohammed Sabah al-Salem al-Sabah as prime minister of Kuwait

- The OPEC member with the world's seventh-largest oil reserves is expected to preserve key Kuwaiti foreign policies, including support for Gulf Arab unity, Western alliances and good ties to Riyadh a priority relationship.
- Kuwait may also look to expand ties to China as it seeks a bigger role in the region, especially after Beijing sponsored a deal that normalised ties between Iran and Saudi Arabia in March. Kuwait will have to grapple with long-running strains between the ruling family and its critics in the perpetually deadlocked and fractious parliament that critics say have hindered fiscal and economic reform.

Justice BR Gavai Nominated as Chairperson of Supreme Court Legal Services Committee

- Supreme Court judge Justice BR Gavai has been nominated as the Chairman of the Supreme Court Legal Services Committee (SCLSC), replacing Justice Sanjiv Khanna – the senior most judge of the top court after the Chief Justice of India (CJI).
- The Supreme Court Legal Services Committee is constituted under Section 3A of the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987, with the aim of providing “free and competent legal services to the weaker sections of society” in cases under the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court.

Senthil Pandian C to be India's next ambassador to WTO

- The Indian government has named IAS officer Senthil Pandian as the ambassador to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in Geneva. This appointment follows the conclusion of Brajendra Navnit's term as India's ambassador to the WTO on March 31, 2024. The decision was approved by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC), entrusting Pandian, a 2002 IAS officer from the Uttar Pradesh cadre, with the responsibility for a three-year term from the date of assuming office.
- Senthil Pandian C is currently serving as the commissioner of excise in Uttar Pradesh. His extensive experience in administrative roles within the Indian bureaucracy positions him well to represent the country's interests on the global trade stage. As he takes charge, Pandian steps into a crucial role during a time of unprecedented economic challenges and shifting global trade dynamics.

Bhutan's Tshering Tobgay to become PM for second time

- Bhutanese voters have elected Tshering Tobgay to become Prime Minister for a second time after his party won nearly two-thirds of seats, the election commission said in results released on January 10. The party clinched almost a two-thirds majority, winning 30 seats of the 47 national assembly seats to return to power.
- The election was dominated by serious economic challenges that have called into question the Himalayan kingdom's long-standing policy of prioritising "Gross National Happiness" over growth. Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India, Bhutan's key trading partner, offered his "heartiest congratulations to my friend" Tobgay for winning the polls, according to a post on X, formerly Twitter.

Gabriel Attal appointed as France's new Prime Minister

- Gabriel Attal has been named next Prime Minister of France, as Emmanuel Macron aims to revive his presidency with a new government. Gabriel Attal is currently working as an education minister. Before Attal, the Socialist leader Laurent Fabius was the youngest French PM, appointed at the age of 37 by President François Mitterrand in 1984.
- At 34, he is the youngest Prime Minister in modern French history, outranking even Socialist Laurent Fabius who was 37 when he was appointed by François Mitterrand in 1984. Mr Attal replaces Élisabeth Borne, who resigned after 20 months in office.

Sheel Vardhan singh appointed as UPSC member

- In a significant development, Sheel Vardhan Singh, the former Director General of the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), has been appointed as a member of the Union

Public Service Commission (UPSC). The decision was conveyed through a personnel ministry order, marking a notable milestone in Singh's distinguished career.

- During his tenure as the Director General of CISF from November 2021 to December 2023, Singh played a pivotal role in providing visionary leadership that significantly enhanced security measures across the vital industrial sector. His strategic acumen and commitment to strengthening the nation's security infrastructure earned him recognition and respect within the organization.

Taiwan Elects Pro-Sovereignty William Lai in Historic Election, Further Straining China Ties

- Lai, the candidate of the ruling Democratic Progressive Party, won a tight race with 40.1% of the vote, beating out two rivals who favor closer ties with Beijing. A third consecutive presidential term for any party is unprecedented in Taiwan and indicates that, for at least a plurality of voters, antipathy toward mainland China outweighs growing discontent over the economy and other domestic problems.
- But as packed crowds of supporters reveled in the Democratic Progressive Party's win outside its headquarters here in Taipei, Lai struck a sober tone in his victory speech, seemingly mindful of the challenges facing him over the next four years, including the island's standoff with China, a divided legislature and an increasingly disaffected populace.

Vice admiral an **pramod** appointed director general naval operations

- Vice Admiral AN Pramod assumed charge as the Director General Naval Operations (DGNO) on 15 Jan 2024. An alumnus of the 38th Integrated Cadet Course, Naval Academy, Goa, he was commissioned into the Indian Navy on 01 July 1990. The Flag Officer is a CAT 'A' Sea King Air Operations Officer and a Communication & Electronics Warfare Specialist.
- His important afloat appointments include Fleet Operations Officer, Western Fleet, Command of IN ships Abhay, Shardul and Satpura, Executive Officer Rajput, SCO Sujata and GO II Kirpan. He commanded the Naval Air Station, Utkrosh at Port Blair and was also the Directing Staff at DSSC, Wellington.

Bernardo Arevalo sworn in as Guatemala's President

- Guatemala's new president was finally sworn into office. It was a moment that nearly didn't happen. Despite winning the election by a landslide back in August, anticorruption

campaigner Bernardo Arevalo faced months of opposition from political opponents, and those efforts to prevent the transfer of power continued right up until the last minute.

- In Guatemala City, the morning started off hopeful. Big groups of indigenous people came into the city on buses. Across the boulevards musicians played on stages, and kids carried balloons. An inauguration felt inevitable.

Crown Prince Frederik X becomes king of Denmark

- Denmark's King Frederik X has taken the throne after the abdication of his mother Queen Margrethe II, looking emotional as he waved to the thousands who gathered in the capital Copenhagen to witness the start of a new era.
- For many in Denmark, his mother Margrethe was the only monarch they had ever known. But her shock abdication, after more than five decades on the throne, paved the way for her son, the former crown prince, to succeed her.

Rameshbabu Praggnanandhaa Surpasses Viswanathan Anand to become India's number one Chess player

- As a result of this victory, Praggnanandhaa became only the second Indian after Vishwanathan Anand to defeat a reigning champion. He also overtook Anand to become India's new number one Chess player in terms of live ratings.
- Rameshbabu Praggnanandhaa, an 18-year-old chess prodigy from Chennai, achieved a historic milestone in his career by defeating World Champion Ding Liren from China. This significant victory occurred during the fourth round of the 2024 Tata Steel Chess Tournament held in Wijk aan Zee.

Jagrut Kotecha appointed as the new CEO of PepsiCo in India

- India remains a pivotal market for PepsiCo, playing a crucial role in our global strategy. Over the last six years, Ahmed has been instrumental in transforming our business, driving innovation, and steering the team through challenging landscapes.
- His leadership saw the introduction of pioneering products and various community focused initiatives, and I look forward to continuing to work with him in his new capacity. This leadership change has been meticulously planned and was communicated to the India office employees as part of a series of leadership changes across the AMESA region.

Senior IPS officer Daljit Singh Chaudhary appointed chief of Sashastra Seema Bal

- Senior IPS officer Daljit Singh Chaudhary was appointed as the director general of the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB), a Personnel Ministry order stated. Chaudhary, a 1990 batch

Indian Police Service (IPS) officer of Uttar Pradesh cadre, is presently working as Special Director General of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF).

- The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved his appointment as the DG, SSB for a period up to November 30, 2025e. the date of his superannuation, the order stated.

India elected as First Vice chair of FAO COFI Sub-Committee on Fisheries Management

- India has been elected as the First Vice Chair of the Food and Agriculture Organization FAO COFI Sub-Committee on Fisheries Management. Embassy of India in Rome said in a social media post that India's role in this crucial Sub-Committee as the representative of Global South would give much-needed balance and perspective to the global narratives concerning fisheries governance and management.
- India will serve as member of a FAO Fisheries Bureau on 'Capture Fisheries' for the first time in 57 years. India is one of the top fishing nations with over 28 million inland and marine fishers.

BANKING NEWS

RBI permits lending and borrowing of G-Secs

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced new guidelines on December 27, 2023, focused on lending and borrowing practices of government securities. The central bank aims to deepen the market for securities lending and borrowing and enhance the depth and liquidity of the Government Securities (G-Sec) market.
- Under newly issued guidelines, Government Securities (excluding Treasury Bills) issued by the central government are eligible for lending or borrowing through a Government Security Lending (GSL) transaction. Further, G-Secs, including Treasury Bills and state government bonds, can also be used as collateral in GSL transactions.

Women Secure 34% Share of Life Insurance Policies in Fiscal Year 2022-23

- India's Insurance industry is one of the premium sectors experiencing upward growth. This upward growth of the insurance industry can be attributed to growing incomes and increasing awareness in the industry. India is the fifth largest life insurance market in the world's emerging insurance markets, growing at a rate of 32-34% each year.
- In the fiscal year 2022-23, the number of life insurance policies issued to women reached 97.38 lakh, out of a total of 2.84 crore policies sold. Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the

industry under the automatic method is allowed up to 26% and licensing of the industry is monitored by the insurance regulator the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI).

NPCI set to Introduce UPI for secondary market from Jan 1, 2024

- The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) is set to launch a Unified Payments Interface (UPI) feature for stock trading in the secondary market starting January 1, 2024. This initiative will start in its beta testing phase for the equity cash segment and aims to streamline trading and enhance security and profitability for investors.
- This UPI-based system involves blocking a specific amount for multiple debit transactions, enabling seamless trading in the stock market. Initially, in the beta phase, the service is available for a limited set of pilot customers before its full-scale launch.

RBI Issues Notification on Reporting Requirements for Resident Individuals under the Liberalised Remittance Scheme (LRS)

- RBI Issues Notification on Reporting Requirements for Resident Individuals under the Liberalised Remittance Scheme (LRS) .The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) notified regarding the Liberalised Remittance Scheme (LRS) for Resident Individuals- Reporting of monthly return and daily transactions.
- It has now been decided that the submission of both returns through the XBRL site will be discontinued and shifted to the Centralised Information Management System (CIMS), which is the Bank's new data warehouse.

InCred's lending business turns unicorn after raising \$60 m in Series D round

- InCred Financial Services Ltd (InCred Finance), the lending arm of financial services firm InCred Group, has raised ₹500 crore in its Series D round of funding from new and existing investors.
- Following the fresh capital infusion, InCred has been valued at \$1.04 billion and has become the second company to gain unicorn status this year. InCred Financial Services was formed by the merger of KKR India Financial Services Ltd and the erstwhile InCred Financial.

UPI Ends 2023 With Record Transactions Worth ₹18-Lakh Crore, Up 42% Y-O-Y

- 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 per cent in terms of volume and 45 per cent 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 per cent higher on the month and 42 per cent on year.

FinMin Allows 30th Tranche Of Electoral Bonds

- The government has approved the issuance of the 30th tranche of electoral bonds that will open for sale. Electoral bonds have been pitched as an alternative to cash donations made to political parties as part of efforts to bring transparency to political funding. General elections are due later this year as the term of the 17th Lok Sabha is coming to an end.
- State Bank of India (SBI), in the XXX Phase of sale, has been authorised to issue and encash Electoral Bonds through its 29 Authorised Branches w.e.f. January 2 to January 11, 2024," the finance ministry said in a statement. Electoral bonds are encashed by an eligible political party only through a bank account with the authorised bank. SBI is the only authorised bank to issue electoral bonds.

RBI Reports Indian Banks Achieve Decadal High in Asset Quality Improvement

- The Gross Non-Performing Assets (GNPA) ratio of Indian scheduled commercial banks (SCBs) went on improving in the second quarter of this financial year, dropping to a fresh decadal low, according to the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI's) report titled 'Trend and Progress of Banking in India'.
- "The improvement in asset quality, measured by GNPA ratios, that began in 2018-19 continued during 2022-23. The GNPA ratio of SCBs fell to a decadal low of 3.9% at end-March 2023 and further to 3.2% at end-September 2023," the RBI said in the report which was released. As per the report, the Indian scheduled commercial banks (SCBs) Gross Non-Performing Assets (GNPA) ratio improved in the second quarter of this financial year.

RBI Prolongs Payments Infrastructure Development Fund Scheme By 2 Years Till December 2025

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced its decision to extend the Payments Infrastructure Development Fund (PIDF) for two years up to December 31, 2025. The Scheme was operationalized by the RBI in 2021 for three years (extendable up to 2 years) to encourage deployment of payment acceptance infrastructure in India.

- It includes physical Point of Sale (PoS) terminals, Quick Response (QR) codes, in tier-3 to tier-6 centers, North Eastern states and Union Territories (UTs) of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh. To strengthen the payment acceptance infra by including 30 lakh touch points, which includes 10 lakh physical and 20 lakh digital payment devices every year.

Muthoot FinCorp Secures ₹200 Crore through Private Placement of NCDs from SBI

- Muthoot FinCorp, the flagship company of Muthoot Pappachan Group (Muthoot Blue), has announced ₹200 crore investment by State Bank of India (SBI) in the non-convertible debentures (NCDs) under private placement with a face value of ₹1 lakh for each NCD.
- The maturity/tenure options of this issue is five years with half yearly being the frequency of the interest payment. The secured issued NCDs is rated as AA-/stable by CRISIL and listed on the debt market segment of BSE, Muthoot FinCorp said in a statement.



Video Course for
SSC All Exams

- 680+ Video Lectures
- Weekly Live Doubt Session
- Video Lectures by IBT Experts

70% OFF ₹7499 ₹2249

Record 8.18 crore Income Tax Returns filed so far in current financial year

- India has witnessed a substantial surge in the number of Income Tax Return (ITR) filings, setting a new record at 8.18 crore filings by December 31, 2023. This marks an increase of 9 per cent from the 7.51 crore returns filed by the same time in the previous year.
- During the same period, a total of 1.60 crore audit reports and other forms were filed, surpassing the 1.43 crore filings in the corresponding period of the preceding year. To encourage taxpayers to file their ITRs and forms early, over 103 crore outreaches were made through targeted e-mail, SMS and other creative campaigns.

REC Limited signs MoU with Rail Vikas Nigam Limited, to Finance Multi-Modal Infrastructure Projects up to Rs. 35,000 crores over next 5 Years

- REC Limited has entered into an MoU with Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL) to finance up to Rs. 35,000 Crores for Infrastructure Projects to be executed by RVNL over the next 5

years. These projects constitute multi-modal logistics hub projects, rail infrastructure projects, road, port, and metro projects where RVNL has forayed into.

- RVNL is primarily undertaking Railway projects and has also made forays into road, port, irrigation and metro projects, many of which have forward and/or backward linkages with Railway infrastructure one way or the other.

White-Label ATM Expansion Propels 3.5% Growth in Total ATMs for 2022-23

- India must install at least 5-10 lakh additional automated teller machines (ATMs) to improve digital financial inclusion, said experts at a webinar organised by The Dialogue, a prominent tech policy think-tank, on September 22, 2023. They emphasised the critical role of ATMs in bridging the urban-rural divide and promoting economic growth.
- ATMs complement digitisation efforts and serve as vital tools to boost financial inclusion in remote communities. Public Sector Banks (PSBs) continue to dominate the ATM landscape, with a notable increase from 75,653 in 2022 to 78,777 in 2023 for on-site ATMs.

RBI permits ICICI Pru Mutual Fund to acquire 9.95% stake in Karur Vysya Bank

- Reserve Bank of India has accorded approval to ICICI Prudential Asset Management Company Ltd (ICICI AMC) for acquiring up to 9.95 per cent stake in the bank. RBI accorded the approval subject to conditions on Thursday, Federal Bank said in a regulatory filing.
- The approval granted by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is subject to the 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 9.95 per cent stake in RBL Bank and Equitas Small Finance Bank.

Reserve Bank of India plans to tighten dividend declaration criteria for banks

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has proposed new rules of dividend payout for domestic and overseas banks operating in India. The proposed rules for dividend payout by banks will be effective from the fiscal year 2024-25 onwards.
- The RBI has invited public feedback on the proposed rules, and the deadline for submission is 31 January 2024. Banks with an NNPA (Net Non-Performing Asset) ratio exceeding 6% and a Capital Adequacy Ratio (CAR) below 11.5% are prohibited from declaring dividends.

RBI gives clarity to 'politically exposed persons' term to meet FATF norms

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has updated Know Your Customer (KYC) norms for politically exposed persons (PEPs) who transact with regulated entities (REs), seeking to

comply with the recommendations of intergovernmental organisation Financial Action Task Force (FATF),

- PEPs are individuals entrusted with prominent public functions by a foreign country, including the heads of states/governments, senior politicians, senior government or judicial or military officers, senior executives of state-owned corporations and important political party officials.

Narayana Health gets IRDAI nod to launch health insurance business

- Narayana Health has received approval from the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) to venture into the health insurance business in India.
- The company operates one of the largest hospital chains, known by the brand name Narayana Hospital. With this approval, the count of Standalone Health Insurance Companies (SAHI) will increase from 5 to 6.

Tata Pay Secures Payment Aggregator License from RBI

- In a significant development, Tata Pay, the digital payments app under Tata Digital, has been granted a payment aggregator (PA) license by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). This license positions Tata Pay among industry leaders such as Razorpay, Cashfree, and Google Pay, enabling it to efficiently handle ecommerce transactions within its subsidiary entities.
- Similar licenses were also obtained by other players like DigiO, a Bengaluru-based identity verification startup supported by Groww, allowing them to integrate payment services with their digital identification solutions.

RBI Introduces Stricter Regulations for Short-Term Commercial Papers and Non-Convertible Debentures

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has tightened rules for the issuance of short term Commercial Papers (CPs) and Non-Convertible Debentures (NCDs), with an initial maturity of up to one year. As per the revised norms, CPs and NCDs issued from April 1 onwards will have a minimum denomination of Rs 5 lakh and in multiples of Rs 5 lakh thereafter.
- The new norms are effective from April 1, 2024, and include six key changes. Non-residents are eligible to invest in CPs and NCDs to the extent permitted under FEMA or the rules framed under.

Raksha Mantri approves proposal to launch group Insurance Scheme for Casual Paid Labourers engaged by BRO

- Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh has approved a proposal to launch a Group (Term) Insurance Scheme for Casual Paid Labourers (CPLs) engaged by Border Roads Organisation/General Reserve Engineer Force for the ongoing project works. This scheme will provide the insured value of Rs 10 lakh as an insurance in any kind of death to CPLs family/Next of Kin.
- This scheme will serve as a social security and welfare measure to the CPLs working in remote and far-flung areas of the nation. It will go a long way in securing the livelihoods of their families

RBI cancels licence of Hiriyr Urban Co-op bank with immediate effect

- It has canceled the license of The Hiriyr Urban Co-operative Bank citing weak financial condition. The survival of the bank is detrimental to the interests of its depositors as the bank, with its current financial position, would be unable to make full payments to its existing depositors.
- According to the data presented by the bank, 99.93 percent of the depositors are entitled to receive the full amount of their deposits from DICGC. According to the release, it has been said that till September 30, 2023, DICGC has already paid Rs 224.53 lakh of the total insured deposits based on the wishes received from the respective depositors of the bank.

Defense Minister Sanctions Insurance Scheme for BRO Workers

- For the benefit of casual labourers employed by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) for constructing roads and tunnels in harsh terrain and border areas, the Defence Ministry has sanctioned a group insurance scheme.
- This is the second set of welfare measures for such workers announced by the ministry in the last five months. The insurance cover, the ministry says, is likely to serve as a social security and welfare measure for the labour force employed in infrastructure project works. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh approved the scheme that will provide an insured sum of Rs 10 lakh to the deceased labourer's family or next of kin in case of a fatal mishap on the job.

State bank of India has introduced the Green Rupee Term Deposit

- State Bank of India (SBI), the country's largest Bank has launched a special fixed deposit (FD) scheme. SBI Green Rupee Term Deposit (SGRTD) has been launched to mobilise funds to support environment-friendly initiatives and projects, thereby fostering the growth of a green finance ecosystem in India, as per the release shared by the bank.

- Recently, the State Bank of India (SBI) launched the SBI Green Rupee Term Deposit (SGRTD). The SGRTD is a deposit scheme that aims to raise funds for environmentally-friendly initiatives and projects. The scheme is open to NRIs, non-individuals, and resident individuals. The SGRTD has tenors of 1,111 days, 1,777 days, and 2,222 days. The SGRTD offers flexible tenors.

Yes Bank Introduces VeeFin's SmartFin for Digital Supply Chain Finance

- Yes Bank has announced the launch of SmartFin, an end-to-end digital supply chain finance (SCF) platform, powered by VeeFin Solutions. The platform's comprehensive capabilities in digital onboarding, credit underwriting, loan management and transaction processing redefine the accessibility of SCF products.
- SmartFin facilitates digital SCF loans for dealers and suppliers of corporate clients, enabling them to achieve their strategic business objectives, that includes working capital efficiency, market expansion, sales acceleration, and strengthening supply chain partnership.

World Bank keeps India's FY25 GDP growth estimate unchanged at 6.4%

- The World Bank has maintained its economic growth projection for India in the fiscal year 2024-25 at 6.4 percent. This is attributed to factors like high food inflation and diminishing pent-up demand. The unchanged projection is attributed to factors such as strong domestic demand, increased public infrastructure spending, and robust growth in private-sector credit.
- In its biannual 'Global Economic Prospects' report, the World Bank said India was likely to maintain the fastest growth rate among the world's largest economies, but its post-pandemic recovery was expected to slow, with estimated growth of 6.3 per cent in FY24, before recovering gradually to 6.5 per cent in FY26.

Reserve Bank of India imposes monetary penalty on Punjab and Sind Bank

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed a monetary penalty of ₹1 crore on Punjab and Sind Bank for non-compliance with certain directions issued by RBI on 'Loans and Advances – Statutory and Other Restrictions'.
- This penalty has been imposed in the exercise of powers vested in RBI conferred under the provisions of Section 47 A (1) (c) read with Sections 46 (4) (i) and 51(1) of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949. This action is based on deficiencies in regulatory compliance and is not intended to pronounce upon the validity of any transaction or agreement entered into by the bank with its customers.

EPFO Removes Aadhaar as Valid Date of Birth Proof

- The UIDAI has clarified that while Aadhaar serves as unique identification proof, it does not qualify as evidence of date of birth under the provisions of the Aadhaar Act, 2016. The circular stressed that this decision aligns with the directives of Table-B of Annexure-1 of the Joint Declaration SOP issued earlier. The decision received approval from the Central Provident Fund Commissioner (CPFC).
- UIDAI's circular referenced the Aadhaar Act of 2016 and the corresponding regulations governing the enrolment and update procedures, explicitly stating that Aadhaar cannot be considered valid proof of date of birth. This aligns with the stance presented in the office memorandum issued on December 20, 2018, reiterating that Aadhaar is not proof of date of birth.

TECH & DEFENCE NEWS

Power Minister RK Singh Launched POWERGRID Vishram Sadan in Bengaluru

- POWERGRID Vishram Sadan was inaugurated by Sh. R.K. Singh, Hon'ble Union Minister for Power, New and Renewable Energy, Govt. of India in virtual presence of Dr. Mansukh L Mandaviya, Hon'ble Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Chemical and Fertilizer presence of Sh. K J George, Hon'ble Minister of Energy, Sh. Tejasvi Soorya, Hon'ble MP, Bengaluru South, Dr. Yatindra Dwivedi, Director (Personnel) POWERGRID, Dr. Partima Murthy, Director, NIMHANS, Bengaluru and senior officials from POWERGRID.
- Indian power sector is ready to meet the growing demand of Power. The demand of power is increased by 70% in the last 9 years. The Minister was addressing the audience after inaugurating the Vishram Sadan by Power Grid Corporation of India Ltd at National Institute of Medical Health and Neurosciences NIMHANS campus in Bengaluru today. He asserted that no other country had experienced such a huge demand.

India, Russia ink pacts on construction of future power units of Kudankulam nuclear plant

- India and Russia signed the agreement on the construction of future power units of the Kudankulam nuclear plant. Agreements have also been signed in the areas of medicines, pharmaceutical substances and medical devices.

- The Kudankulam nuclear power plant is being constructed in Tamil Nadu with the technical assistance of Russia. The construction started in March 2002. The Kudankulam nuclear power plant's first generating unit has been continuously running at its 1,000 MW design capacity since February 2016.

Exercise desert cyclone started on 2 january 2024 in Rajasthan

- Ministry of External Affairs, potential areas of bilateral cooperation in the defence field are the production and development of defence equipment; joint exercises of armed forces, particularly naval exercises; sharing of information on strategy and doctrines; technical cooperation in respect of Intermediate Jet Trainer etc.
- In recent times, the collaboration in defence between the two nations has seen significant enhancement, particularly in defence training, the supply of defence inventory, and the implementation of regular exchange programs. The joint drills under 'Desert Cyclone 2024' will aim to enhance interoperability by learning and sharing best practices in urban operations.

Reliance Jio and IIT-Bombay Collaborate to Develop 'BharatGPT' AI for India

- Reliance Jio Infocomm, an Indian telecom operator in India, is set to launch a groundbreaking initiative in collaboration with the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay — the 'Bharat GPT' program.
- Announced by Akash Ambani, the chairman of Reliance Jio, this program aims to leverage the power of large language models and generative artificial intelligence (GPT) to transform various sectors in the country. The Bharat GPT program is part of Jio's broader vision, known as "Jio 2.0". Its main aim is to create a comprehensive ecosystem of development.

Russia and NASA Extend Joint ISS Flights Until 2025

- Russian and US space agencies have agreed to keep working together to deliver crews to the International Space Station (ISS) until at least 2025, Russian corporation Roscosmos. Russia's space state agency Roscosmos said that a cross-flight programme with NASA to the International Space Station (ISS) had been extended until 2025, Interfax news agency reported.
- The International Space Station Program brings together international flight crews, multiple launch vehicles, globally distributed launch and flight operations, training, engineering, and development facilities, communications networks, and the international scientific research community.

IIT Madras targets incubating 100 startups across various sectors in 2024

- Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT Madras) is targeting incubating at least 100 start-ups across various sectors next year, in 2024. Sharing the institute's targets for 2024, V. Kamakoti, Director, IIT Madras, said, "We are looking at closing this financial year ending March 31, 2024 with 366 patents. We will try our best to see one patent a day."
- Kamakoti said the institute is working hard towards maintaining the number 1 ranking in the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF). Hopefully, we are also looking to move to higher rankings in World Rankings as well. We want to start a couple of new courses in IITM Zanzibar.

Kerala Introduces K-Smart Tech Solution for Streamlining Local Self-Government Services

- Aimed at making available all services of local self-government institutions over a uniform digital platform, Kerala has introduced K-Smart (Kerala Solutions for Managing Administrative Reformation and Transformation), the first of its kind project in the country.
- It is for the first time that a system that makes available the entire gamut of services of a department in a single click is being introduced in the country. Initially, K-Smart will be operational in corporations and municipalities and later will be rolled out in grama panchayats as well.

NASA Reinitiates Spacecraft Mission to Study 'God of Chaos' Asteroid Apophis

- The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has relaunched a spacecraft to study asteroid Apophis. The former OSIRIS-REx spacecraft has now been renamed OSIRIS-APEX. OSIRIS-REx had carried out a seven-year journey to bring Earth a sample of asteroid Benu.
- The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has relaunched the OSIRIS-REx spacecraft to intercept the 'God of Chaos' asteroid Apophis as it approaches Earth's orbit. The spacecraft has been renamed OSIRIS-APEX (Origin, Spectral Interpretation, Resource Identification, and Security–Apophis Explorer).

Ratle hydroelectric project to power rajasthan for 40 years

- Ratle Hydro Electric Power Corporation Limited (RHPCL), a joint venture company of NHPC Limited and Jammu and Kashmir State Power Development Corporation (JKSPDC), has entered into a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) with Rajasthan Urja Vikas and IT

Services Limited, for offtake of power generated from 850 MW Ratle Hydroelectric Project, Kishtwar in the union territory of Jammu & Kashmir.

- The agreement has been signed for offtake of power for a period of 40 years from the Commercial Operation Date (COD) of the project and as per power allocation to be notified by Ministry of Power, Govt. of India. The signing ceremony took place in Jaipur, with the presence of senior officials from RHPCL and Rajasthan Urja Vikas and IT Services Limited. This collaboration signifies a strategic initiative to enhance the energy landscape, fostering sustainable power solutions for Rajasthan.

Israel Approves \$3.2 Billion Grant to Intel for Construction of \$25 Billion Chip Plant

- Israel's government agreed to give Intel Corp a \$3.2 billion grant for a new \$25 billion chip plant it plans to build in southern Israel. The chip plant will be an expansion of Intel's existing Kiryat Gat site.
- The news comes as Israel remains locked in a war with Palestinian militant group Hamas in the wake of the Oct. 7 Hamas attack on Israel. It also is a big show of support by a major U.S. company and a generous offer by Israel's government at a time when Washington has increased pressure on Israel to take further steps to minimize civilian harm in Gaza.

ISRO's first Sun mission successfully injected into final orbit

- Positioned around 1.5 million kilometres from Earth, Lagrange Point 1 is a unique location in space where the gravitational forces between the Sun and Earth are in a delicate equilibrium. The L1 point is about 1% of the total distance between the Earth and the Sun. The Sun's extreme temperatures make a "touchdown" impossible.
- A satellite placed in the halo orbit around the L1 point has the major advantage of continuously viewing the Sun without any occultation/eclipses. This will provide a greater advantage of observing the solar activities and their effect on space weather in real-time.

Indian navy reduced 21 crew members of merchant ship MV Lila Norfolk, including 15 Indians, from pirates off the Somalia coast

- The Indian Navy's elite marine commandos successfully rescued 21 crew members, including 15 Indians, from the Liberian-flagged vessel MV Lila Norfolk on January 5, 2024. The action was a rapid response to an attempted hijacking in the North Arabian Sea.
- The Indian Navy's marine commandos present onboard the mission deployed warship boarded the merchant vessel and have carried out the sanitisation operation. "MV Lila

Norfolk sent a message on the United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO) portal indicating that five to six unknown armed personnel boarded the vessel.

ArcelorMittal partners with IIT Madras to create Hyperloop facility in TN

- Steel giant ArcelorMittal has partnered with the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras to build “Asia’s first” Hyperloop test track facility. ArcelorMittal is collaborating with the IIT Madras’s Hyperloop Technology teams — Avishkar Hyperloop, a student team, and TuTr Hyperloop, a startup incubated in IIT Madras, for the project.
- The companies, ArcelorMittal and ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India (AM/NS), are providing foundational steel materials as well as engineering, design, and project management expertise to support the construction of Asia’s first Hyperloop test track at the 163-acre Discovery campus of IIT Madras, located at Thaiyur on the outskirts of Chennai.

Tata Motors introduces 1st pure Electric Vehicle architecture called ‘acti.ev’

- Tata Passenger Electric Mobility (TPEM) has launched its first advanced Pure EV architecture, acti.ev, and the Punch.ev, the first product based on this architecture. The Punch.ev can now be booked at Tata Motors showrooms and Tata.ev stores for a payment of ₹21,000.
- Tata Motors introduced the first pure electric vehicle (EV) architecture called ‘acti.ev’, which will underpin its future portfolio of EVs such as Punch, Sierra, Harrier and Curvv. Tata Motors holds more than 80% share in the electric car market.

HFCL bags Rs 1,127 cr order to transform BSNL’s Optical Transport Network

- It has secured a Rs 1,127 crore order from Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd (BSNL) aimed at transforming the Optical Transport Network (OTN) infrastructure across the state-owned telco's pan India network.
- HFCL's comprehensive network upgrade will not only cater to the requirements of enterprise and FTTH/broadband services but also position BSNL for the future with the seamless launch of 4G services and the anticipation of 5G services in the coming years.

6.Indian Navy’s Elite Marine Commandos Effectively Rescue 21 Crew Members, Including 15 Indians, from MV Lila Norfolk

- Indian Navy rescued all 21 crew members, including 15 Indians, onboard the distressed cargo ship 'MV Lila Norfolk' off Somalia coast. The Navy rushed its warship INS Chennai

and deployed maritime operations after a distress signal from the cargo ship signalled the hijacking. The Navy's elite Marine Commandos (Marcos), conducted sanitisation operations on the vessel and confirmed the absence of hijackers.

- Naval warship INS Chennai, a navy destroyer, that was diverted from its anti-piracy patrol, launched its helicopter and issued warning to pirates to abandon the hijacked vessel. The hijacking was reported by the UK Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO), a British military organisation that tracks movements of various vessels in strategic waterways.

India on top of medals table in Asian Shooting Championship in Jakarta with 07 Gold, 06 Silver, and 06 Bronze medals

- Media SAI In Women's shooting, Rhythm Sangwan bagged the Bronze medal in the 25-meter Pistol event at the Asian Shooting Championship in Jakarta, Indonesia. With this medal, Rhythm confirmed the 16th Paris Olympic quota for the Indian shooting contingent.
- Also, this is the sixth Paris quota in the pistol events for India and the second in women's 25m Pistol. Rhythm ended the tournament with an impressive performance collecting a total of five medals, 1 gold, 2 silver, and 2 bronze medals.

India Navy to host MILAN 24 exercise in Visakhapatnam

- The MILAN exercise, initiated in 1995 as part of India's 'Look East policy,' has evolved into a biennial showcase of naval prowess and international collaboration. Following the success of the 11th edition held in Visakhapatnam in February-March 2022, organized under the Eastern Naval Command with the theme 'Camaraderie-Cohesion-Collaboration,' the upcoming edition marks a continuation of this tradition.
- This phase is designed to showcase the naval capabilities of the participating nations, highlighting their dedication to ensuring maritime security in the region. MILAN 24 underscores India's commitment to nurturing partnerships, exchanging ideas, and collectively enhancing maritime security.

Tamil Nadu may get four new Biodiversity Heritage sites

- There are several attractions in Arittapatti village but the most notable geographical feature is the chain of seven barren granite hillocks. This rocky landscape surprisingly supports a total of 72 lakes, 200 natural springs and three check dams. One of these lakes, Anaikondan Lake, dates back to the 16th century Pandya kingdom.
- Biodiversity heritage sites are biological areas with unique and ecologically fragile ecosystems comprising rare and threatened species. These kinds of areas are usually home to

important species that are not only endemic or endangered but can also be either keystone species, flagship species or umbrella species.

IISC Bengaluru develops heat tolerant vaccine against current strains of SARS-COV-2

- A heat-tolerant vaccine developed by the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) researchers to be effective against all current strains of SARS-CoV-2 besides having the potential to be quickly adapted for future variants as well.
- The vaccine candidate has been designed by genetically engineering a domain of the surface spike glycoprotein of SARS-CoV-2, called the Receptor Binding Domain (RBD), which plays a key role in facilitating viral entry and infection. Most of the neutralising antibodies produced by our body target the RBD.

Navy chief formally receives Drishti -10 long endurance UAV

- Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) is extremely challenging for the Indian Navy since the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) accounts for one of the busiest maritime traffic regions of the world. The IOR sea lines are critical in bringing prosperity to many nations in the region. With the growth of the Chinese Navy, the presence of Chinese submarines and Underwater Unmanned Vehicles (UUV) have increased in the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean.
- Indian Navy is abreast with similar technology induction in many domains. The Navy had inducted the ship command and control system in the mid-eighties and developed an indigenous data link akin to Link 11 for networking warships and aircraft for Command, Control, Communications and Information (C3I) operations. The Navy has also acquired Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV)s in the mid-nineties from Israel for long-range surveillance.

Indian Army Day observed on 15th January

- Army Day is celebrated on January 15. On this day, people honour and pay tribute to the brave soldiers of the Indian Army. We salute and express our gratitude to the valiant soldiers, who dedicate their lives to protect our great nation.
- The theme for the 2024 Indian Army Parade is "In Service of the Nation" which resonates deeply with the core values and commitment of the Indian Army. This year's celebration of the 76th Army Day is set to take place in Lucknow, UP, as reported by news agency ANI.

The Department of Science and Technology, Govt. of India is organizing the 9th edition of IISF 2023

- The India International Science Festival (IISF) is a collaborative endeavour between Ministry of Science and Technology, Ministry of Earth Sciences, Department of Space and Department of Atomic Energy in partnership with Vijnana Bharati - a science movement spearheaded by scientists of the nation with swadeshi spirit.
- IISF's primary objective is to commemorate the world of science, making it accessible to all. The essential notion is to engage general populace with science in an enjoyable and entertaining manner, thereby contributing to health, prosperity and meaningful life.

All Banking Exam

Study Material

- ▲ 6 Course Books for All Bank Exam
- ▲ 4500 + Questions with Solutions

50% OFF

~~₹2600~~ **₹1300**

[BUY NOW](#)



India-Thailand first Naval Exercise Ayutthaya

- In a historic move, the Indian Navy and Royal Thai Navy (RTN) joined forces for the maiden bilateral exercise named 'Ex-Ayutthaya' in December 2023. This maritime collaboration, symbolizing the invincible spirit, holds profound significance as it connects the ancient cities of Ayodhya in India and Ayutthaya in Thailand, reflecting shared historical narratives and rich cultural ties dating back centuries.
- In a landmark move, the Indian Navy and Royal Thai Navy conducted the inaugural 'Ex-Ayutthaya' naval exercise, signifying an unbreakable connection between the ancient cities of Ayodhya and Ayutthaya.

First human vaccine trials for deadly Nipah virus

- In a groundbreaking initiative, researchers at the University of Oxford in the United Kingdom have commenced the first-in-human vaccine trials for the deadly Nipah virus. This initiative is a significant step forward in addressing the severe impact of the virus on various Asian countries, including India. The trials will be conducted on 51 individuals aged 18 to 55 and are led by the Oxford Vaccine Group.
- The experimental vaccine, named ChAdOx1 NipahB, aims to combat the Nipah virus, a highly lethal disease with a fatality rate of approximately 75%. The Nipah virus has been

responsible for outbreaks in several Asian countries, such as Singapore, Malaysia, Bangladesh, and India. Notably, a recent outbreak occurred in Kerala in September of the previous year.

TCS ranked second most valuable IT brand in Global list

- Accenture, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), and Infosys have continued to up their brand value and dominance in the IT industry, according to the latest Brand Finance 2024 report. This is despite disruptions caused by newer technologies and a tepid growth environment. The three IT services giants topped the list of world's most valuable IT services brands.
- Accenture remains the world's most valuable IT services brand, with a brand value of \$40.5 billion, representing a 1.6% increase from the previous year, according to an ET report quoting Brand Finance 2024 report.

North Korea conducts 'underwater nuclear weapons system' test

- North Korea informed it has carried out a test of its “underwater nuclear weapons system” in response to drills by the US, South Korea and Japan this week. The underwater drone, which supposedly can carry a nuclear weapon, was tested off the east coast, state media stated.
- South Korea called the reported tests a “provocation”. The North has claimed tests of its “Haeil-5-23” system before, but the latest incident comes as the North has ramped up military action in recent weeks.

Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri launches first pilot project to make jet fuel from alcohol in pune

- The first pilot technology project to make jet fuel from alcohol was inaugurated by Union Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Singh Puri in Pune. This project will produce sustainable biological aviation fuel or SAF. This pilot project has been set up in the research and development department of Praj Udyog Group in Pirangut Industrial Estate near Pune.
- Pramod Chaudhary, President of Praj, along with officials of Indian Oil and other oil companies were present for the inauguration program. There is a huge demand for this bioaviation fuel in the global market, and it is a big challenge to provide the necessary raw materials for it.

Tourism Ministry to organize annual event “Bharat Parv” from 23rd to 31st January

- The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India is set to organize the nine-day annual mega event “Bharat Parv” at the Lawns and Gyan Path in front of Red Fort, Delhi as part of the

Republic Day Celebrations. Being held since 2016, this year it is being celebrated from 23rd – 31st January 2024.

- The highlights of the mega event are the Republic Day Parade tableaux, dynamic cultural performances by the Zonal Cultural Centres and engaging presentations by cultural troupes from various States and Union Territories, food stall representing all the States and UTs, handicraft and handloom display and enthusiastic performances by the Armed Forces Band. The event is open to the public and entry is free.

SpaceX Launches Ax-3 Mission to ISS with First Turkish Astronaut Onboard

- In a historic event, SpaceX successfully launched the Ax-3 mission to the International Space Station (ISS) from NASA's Kennedy Space Center on January 18. The Crew Dragon capsule, named "Freedom," was propelled into space atop a Falcon 9 rocket, marking the third mission organized by Houston-based Axiom Space.
- The Ax-3 mission, led by former NASA astronaut Michael López-Alegría, boasts a diverse crew. Alongside mission pilot Walter Villadei and European Space Agency astronaut Marcus Wandt, it includes Alper Gezeravcı, Turkey's inaugural astronaut. Axiom highlights this mission as "the first all-European commercial astronaut mission" to the ISS.

Cameroon starts world's first malaria program for children

- Cameroon will be the first country to routinely give children a new malaria vaccine as the shots are rolled out in Africa. The country will be the first to routinely give children a new malaria vaccine, aiming to vaccinate about 250,000 kids this year and next year.
- The Central Africa nation hopes to vaccinate about 250,000 children this year and next year. Gavi said it is working with 20 other African countries to help them get the vaccine and that those countries will hopefully immunize more than 6 million children through 2025.

Securities and Exchange Board of India Permits Short-Selling for Investors Across Categories & Restricts Naked Short-Selling

- Investors across all categories will be allowed for short selling, but naked short selling will not be permitted. The market regulator also said all stocks that trade in the futures and options (F&O) segment are eligible for short selling.
- All investors would be required to mandatorily honour their obligation of delivering the securities at time of settlement. The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has announced that investors across all categories will be allowed to engage in short-selling, with the restriction that naked short-selling will not be permitted.

India-Kyrgyzstan Joint Special Forces Exercise ‘Khanjar’ commences in Himachal Pradesh

- The 11th edition of the India-Kyrgyzstan Joint Special Forces Exercise ‘Khanjar’ commenced at the Special Forces Training School in Bakloh, Himachal Pradesh. The exercise, scheduled from January 22 to February 3, involves joint training between the special forces of India and Kyrgyzstan.
- According to an official release from the Ministry of Defence, the ongoing India-Kyrgyzstan Joint Special Forces Exercise ‘Khanjar’ is providing a valuable opportunity for both nations to strengthen defense ties while jointly addressing international concerns related to terrorism and extremism.

Iran successfully launches Sorayya satellite in orbit

- Iran has achieved a significant milestone in its space program with the successful launch and operation of its domestically-developed satellite, Soraya. The Soraya, which was launched into orbit approximately 750 kilometres above Earth’s surface, has transmitted its first signal back to Earth.
- The U.S. intelligence community’s 2023 worldwide threat assessment stated that the development of satellite launch vehicles “shortens the timeline” for Iran to develop an intercontinental ballistic missile because it uses similar technology.

Serum Institute of India joins global network to boost production of affordable outbreak vaccines

- The world’s largest vaccine manufacturer, the Serum Institute of India Pvt. Ltd (SII), is joining a growing CEPI network of vaccine producers in the Global South to support more rapid, agile, and equitable responses to future public health disease outbreaks.
- The addition of SII to the CEPI manufacturing network will be a significant boost to vaccine production efforts in Global South regions and will mean the world is better prepared to achieve the 100 Days Mission to develop new vaccines against known or novel infectious diseases within three months of a pandemic threat being recognised.

Vijay Raghavan panel expressed concern in a report on the functioning of DRDO

- The Ministry of Defence in India has taken a significant decision to undertake a comprehensive revamp of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO). Long recognized for its delayed projects and cost overruns, the DRDO is now set to undergo a transformation to enhance its technological advancements beyond the missile program.

- In 2014, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Vadodara bus station, marking a significant milestone in modernizing public transportation which stands as the biggest bus stand in India as of 2024. With an expenditure of nearly 114 crores, this five-story structure accommodates 30,000 passengers daily, facilitating travel on 800 buses. The terminal also boasts a spacious commercial complex housing around 400 retail shops.

NATO's largest military exercise 'Steadfast Defender 2024' begins after the cold war

- NATO did not mention Russia by name in its announcement. But its top strategic document identifies Russia as the most significant and direct threat to NATO members' security. The exercise comes at an important moment after Russia's invasion of Ukraine started the deadliest war on European soil in more than 70 years.
- More than 50 ships from aircraft carriers to destroyers will take part, as well as more than 80 fighter jets, helicopters and drones and at least 1,100 combat vehicles including 133 tanks and 533 infantry fighting vehicles.

Indian Navy to set up second VLF communication station in Telangana

- The Telangana government has transferred 1,174 hectares of forest land at Dammaigudem forest area in Vikarabad district for the Indian Navy's Very Low Frequency (VLF) communication transmission station. According to the chief minister's office (CMO), the station will be completed by 2027. The navy uses VLF communication transmission stations to communicate with ships and submarines.
- The Eastern Naval Command in Visakhapatnam has already identified Telangana as a suitable area for setting up a second radar station. Since 2010, the navy has been in touch with the state government.

Aviation watchdog DGCA has slapped a fine of 1.10 crore on Air India for safety violations with respect to flights operated on certain long routes

- Aviation watchdog DGCA has imposed a penalty of Rs 1.10 crore on Air India for safety violations with respect to operations of its leased Boeing 777 planes to the US while the airline said it plans to appeal against the regulator's decision. This is the second time in a week that the regulator has penalised Air India.
- The regulator carried out a detailed probe after receiving a voluntary safety report from an airline employee alleging safety violations of flights operated by Air India on certain long range terrain critical routes

11th edition of India-Kyrgyzstan Joint Special Forces Exercise ‘Khanjar’ commenced in Himachal Pradesh

- The 11th edition of India-Kyrgyzstan Joint Special Forces Exercise Khanjar started at the Special Forces Training School in Himachal Pradesh’s Bakloh. The exercise is being conducted from January 22 to February 3, 2024 (13-day exercise).
- To exchange experiences and best practices in Counter Terrorism and Special Forces Operations in Built-up Area and Mountainous Terrain under Chapter VII of United Nations Charter.

BOOKS & AWARDS NEWS

India Ranked Second Largest Steel Producer in the World

- India is the world’s second largest steel producer and it achieved another distinction in 2022 as total production rose compared with the previous year, even as most other top producers registered a dip. India has become the world's second-largest steel producer, signifying remarkable progress in the steel industry.
- According to the Ministry of Steel, domestic steel production was around 90 million tonnes, with domestic steel consumption at 87 million tonnes. According to the report, the Production Linked Incentive Scheme increased investment in the steel sector. This year, a Memorandum of Understanding was inked with 27 companies covering 57 projects totalling over 29 crore rupees.

Naila Kiani becomes first Pakistani woman to summit world’s 10th highest mountain

- Pakistan’s Naila Kiani has become the first woman from the country to summit 8,091m high Annapurna I in Nepal. Kiani, mother of two and a banker in Dubai, reached the top of the world’s 10th highest mountain. She scaled Annapurna I along with Pakistani mountaineer Shahroz Kashif.
- The six-member team included two Pakistanis and India’s Arjun Vajpayee. Kiani’s summit was announced by her expedition organisers Seven Summit Treks. She has also become the first Pakistani woman to scale four peaks of over 8,000m.

Raghuram Rajan has recently released a new book titled ‘Breaking the Mould, Reimagining India’s Economic Future’.

- Penguin Random House India has announced that the former governor of the Reserve Bank of India, Raghuram Rajan, and fellow economist Rohit Lamba's new book titled 'Breaking the Mould Reimagining India's Economic Future,' will be released.
- This is not the first book by the Ranjan on Indian Economy. His earlier books included Fault Lines: How Hidden Fractures Still Threaten the World Economy which had also won Financial Times Business Book of the Year Award.

UP ranks First in the Inter-Operable Criminal Justice System for 3rd Consecutive Year

- Uttar Pradesh has ranked first for the third consecutive year in recording the highest entry rate on the Inter-Operable Criminal Justice System (ICJS) platform, conceptualized by the Supreme Court's e-committee and implemented by the ministry of home affairs.
- The ICJS platform facilitates seamless transfer of data and information among various pillars of the criminal justice system nationwide. By enabling data interchange between all stakeholders through a common digital interface, the ICJS platform reduces paperwork and delays. It assists speedy administration of justice while aiding officers with decision-making via comprehensive analytics.

Jammu and Kashmir becomes first UT to implement PM Vishwakarma Yojana

- Jammu and Kashmir has become the first Union Territory in the country to implement the PM Vishwakarma Yojana with the start of training for the first batch of 30 trainees. The initiative aims to empower and enhance the skill of the craftsmen community in the country, the official added.
- The training programme was virtually inaugurated for the first batch of 30 trainees (Vishwakarma) in 'darzi craft' 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, the report added.

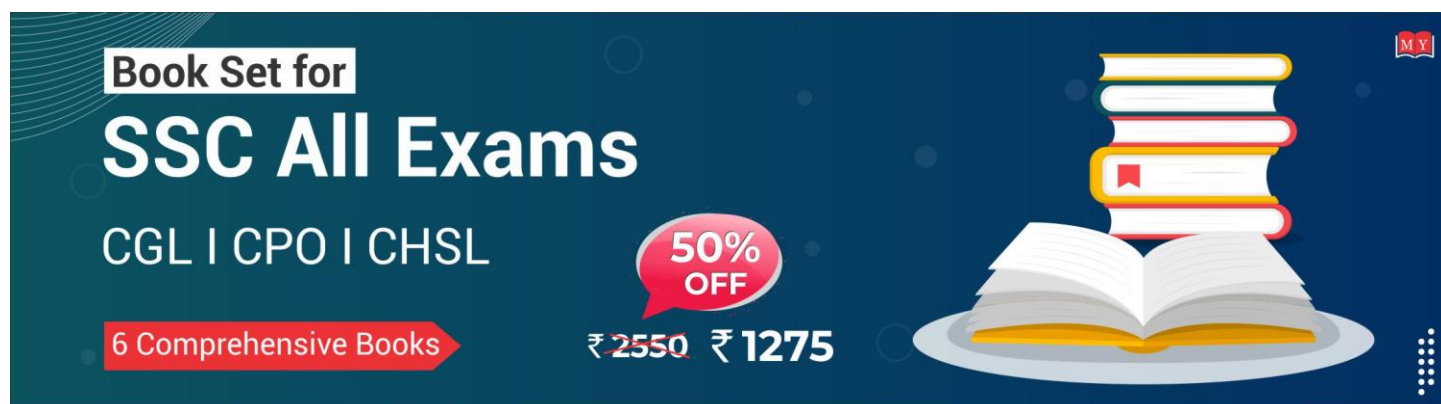
Uttar Pradesh investor base surpasses Gujarat to rank second with 89.47 lakh stock market investors

- The number of stock market investors in India has surged past the 8 crore milestone, registering a remarkable growth of 22.4% from the figure recorded on December 31, 2022, as per data from the National Stock Exchange (NSE). The total investor count as of December 25, 2023, stood at 8.49 crore from 6.94 crore on December 31, 2022. Investor base increased from 7 crore to 8 crore in eight months, as per the data.

- The state of Maharashtra tops the list of highest number of registered investors at 1.48 crore. Uttar Pradesh has ascended to the second position, surpassing Gujarat, with 89.47 lakh investors. The state recorded a growth of 33.8% in new investors.

India to become world's largest metallurgical coal importer by 2026

- Growing industrialisation leading to higher steel consumption and limited availability of coking coal will aid in India becoming the world's largest importer of metallurgical coal in 2026, surpassing China.
- Rise in India's metallurgical coal imports will be aided by growing industrialization, higher steel consumption and limited availability of coking coal. As per the IEA, China and India have been the main drivers of this surge, with China overtaking India to regain its position as the largest importer of metallurgical coal.



Book Set for
SSC All Exams
CGL | CPO | CHSL

6 Comprehensive Books

50% OFF
₹2550 ₹1275

Vasanthalakshmi honored with the Nritya Kalanidhi

- Classical dancer and choreographer Vasanthalakshmi Narasimhachari was presented with 'Nritya Kalanidhi' award at the 17th Dance Festival of The Music Academy which began in the city. Renowned Carnatic vocalist and Padma Shri awardee Bombay Jayashri has been selected for the Sangita Kalanidhi award for 2023 by the Music Academy.
- Presenting the award, Edgar Pang Tze Chiang, Consul General, Consulate General of the Republic of Singapore in Chennai, recalled that Ms. Narasimhachari and her late husband and dance exponent M.V. Narasimhachari were dance tutors at the Singapore Fine Arts Society in the 1970s. They had trained many Singaporean dancers and created multicultural performances.

SVAMITVA Scheme Receives 'Best Innovation Award' at Public Policy Dialogues Conclave 2024

- The Ministry of Panchayati Raj participated in the Innovation Sandbox presentation and showcased the “Digital Transformation Initiatives in Land Governance through SVAMITVA Scheme” detailing the processes followed by States to digitalize land governance systems transparently and efficiently.
- The Ministry of Panchayati Raj has been conferred with the prestigious 1st Prize in the Innovation Sandbox presentation for “Digital Transformation Initiatives in Land Governance through SVAMITVA Scheme” at the second annual three-day “Public Policy Dialogues” Conclave of the Bharti Institute of Public Policy (BIPP), Indian School of Business (ISB), Hyderabad during 3rd January to 5th January 2024.

West Bengal Secures Geographical Indication (GI) Tags for Sundarban Honey, Black Nunia Rice, Tangail, Gorod & Kadiyal Sarees

- In a significant stride towards safeguarding its cultural and agricultural heritage, West Bengal has successfully obtained Geographical Indication (GI) tags for several products under the National GI Drive Mission. The move aims to protect the unique identity and quality of regional products.
- As part of the GI protection initiative, these products now enjoy legal recognition and protection against unauthorized use, ensuring the economic prosperity of local communities and the preservation of West Bengal’s diverse cultural and agricultural legacy.

India tops the list of source markets for tourism into Sri Lanka in 2023

- India has topped the list of source markets for tourism into Sri Lanka in 2023. The island has welcomed 1.487 Million tourists during the last year with India contributing over 20% arrivals. Tourism holds a pivotal position in Sri Lanka’s economy as a top foreign revenue source.
- In all over 3 lakh Indian tourists reached Sri Lanka in 2023 followed by Russia which contributed 1.97 lakh. Tourism holds a pivotal position in Sri Lanka’s economy as a top foreign revenue source. Tourism contributed 2.1 billion USD from 1.1 billion USD achieved in the previous year.

Arunachal Pradesh’s Adi Kekir, Handmade Carpets, and Wancho Wooden Craft Granted Geographical Indication (GI) Tag

- Itanagar, Three items of Arunachal Pradesh have received the prestigious Geographical Indication (GI) tag, officials said on Wednesday. These are adi kekir (ginger), carpet handmade by Tibetan settlers and wooden items made by the Wancho community.

- A geographical indication or 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. Wancho wooden craft items are unique as they feature tobacco pipes with head-shaped bowls and drinking mugs showing warriors carrying heads.

India wins its Gold medal at Zagreb open 2024

- India's young wrestling sensation, Aman Sehrawat, set the stage on fire at the Zagreb Open 2024 by winning a gold medal in the 57 kg category of the men's singles event. The 20-year-old wrestler demonstrated his prowess by defeating China's Zou Wanhao 10-0 in the final, securing victory by technical superiority. This impressive win marked a stellar beginning for Sehrawat in the year 2024.
- Sehrawat, currently ranked 13th in the world, showcased his dominance over his Chinese counterpart right from the initial moments of the final match. With precision and skill, he left no room for error and concluded the fight with a resounding victory, leaving a minute and eight seconds on the clock.

Willem Dafoe honoured with first Hollywood walk of Fame star in 2024

- Actor Willem Dafoe has become the first celebrity to be honoured with a Hollywood Walk of Fame star this year. Dafoe, who has featured in almost 150 films, was felicitated on Monday afternoon in California, as reported by CNN. His wife, Giada Colagrande, attended the event, as did his friends and former co-stars Pedro Pascal, Patricia Arquette, Mark Ruffalo, and Camila Morrone.
- The actor concluded his speech by giving a shout-out to his wife and director Giada Colagrande. Finally, thank you to my wife Giada Colagrande, who teaches me gratitude and reminds me not to spit on my luck.

Union Minister Bhupendra Yadav launched a book titled 'MODI : Energising a Green Future'

- Union Minister Bhupender Yadav, heading the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), has recently unveiled an insightful book titled "Modi: Energising A Green Future". This book, a significant addition to environmental literature, is published by Pentagon Press in collaboration with the Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee Research Foundation.

- The central theme of the book revolves around Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision and actions for a sustainable and eco-friendly future. It delves deep into the strategies and policies under PM Modi's leadership that have placed India at the forefront of the global environmental movement.

India ranks 80 in Henley Passport Index 2024

- The Henley Passport Index 2024 was released, highlighting the "power" of passports of 199 countries. The index, which ranks countries based on the number of destinations that allow visa-free entry to their passport, was topped by France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Singapore and Spain. Passports of all these countries have visa-free access to 194 destinations, three more than last year.
- According to the latest ranking, India stands at the 80th rank in the list of most powerful passports. Its passport has visa-free access to 62 nations, including Angola, Barbados, Bhutan, Bolivia, Djibouti, El Salvador, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Malaysia, Mauritius, Nepal, Qatar and Zimbabwe.

Jaya Jaitly's new book 'Inspirations for graphic design from India released

- With a new book out, Jaya Jaitly on why graphic design study in India needs an overhaul and how public spaces can do better than 'kindergarten wall art' Jaya Jaitly's latest book is a departure from what came before — from textile, craft and all things handmade. Instead, it's a deep dive into design thinking.
- The tome, recently published by art and publishing platform Arthshila, is co-authored by Jaitly and graphic designer-illustrator Dimple Bahl, also long time faculty at National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT). In focus are various Indian crafts traditions, as pivotal components of graphic design.

A book named "Gandhi A Life in Three Campaigns" Launched

- Renowned author M.J. Akbar, along with co-author K. Natwar Singh, launched a new book titled "Gandhi: A Life in Three Campaigns." This book was unveiled at a significant event hosted by Nripendra Misra, Chairman of the Executive Council of the Prime Minister's Museum and Library Society, at the Prime Minister's Museum and Library at the Pradhan Mantri Sangrahalaya.
- National Security Advisor Ajit Doval, at the book launch, praised Gandhi's use of 'soft power' as a strategic tool against colonial rule. He described Gandhi's political approach as

inclusive, transcending conventional notions of soft and hard power, and coined it as “smart power.”

PM Modi pays tributes to Tamil poet Thiruvalluvar

- Thiruvalluvar, also known as Valluvar, holds a significant place in Tamil culture, standing as one of its most distinguished literary figures. Living during the Sangam era of Tamil classical culture, Thiruvalluvar is revered as a poet, philosopher, and a wise man.
- The Sangam era, known for its eminent poets, witnessed the emergence of the earliest Tamil literature, which has endured for over 2,000 years. Thiruvalluvar's life and works remain a source of inspiration.

The government has invited nominations for Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar-2024

- The government has invited nominations for Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar-2024 in the field of Science, Technology, and Innovation. The awards will be announced on 11th May on National Technology Day. A total of Fifty-six awards have been announced in four categories for individuals or teams. These are Vigyan Ratna, Vigyan Shri, Vigyan Yuva and Vigyan Team awards.
- The nominations for this bouquet of awards are invited on the Award Portal of the Ministry of Home Affairs from to the 28th of next month. The awards this year are being coordinated by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research under the Ministry of Science and Technology.

The 75th Primetime Emmy Awards were held at the Peacock Theater in Los Angeles

- Television's annual celebration, typically held in September, was pushed to January as a result of the historic Hollywood strikes. The ceremony is now happening in the heart of Hollywood's traditional awards season.
- The strike-delayed Emmy Awards are airing night from Peacock Theater in downtown Los Angeles, with Anthony Anderson hosting the ceremony. The “black-ish” star is tasked with hosting at a time when emceeing awards shows is hardly a coveted job, especially after comic Jo Koy was widely roasted for his Golden Globes performance last weekend.

Major A.Ranjith kumar received his second Sena Medal

- Major A. Ranjith Kumar, a native of Tiruppur district, received his second Sena Medal (Gallantry) – referred to as “Bar to Sena Medal” – during the Central Command Investiture Ceremony 2024 held in Lucknow last week.

- The officer led an avalanche rescue team from the High Altitude Warfare School, Gulmarg, in search of 29 students from the Nehru Institute of Mountaineering at Uttarkashi in Uttarakhand, who went missing on October 4, 2022, after an avalanche hit the area.

Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar releases book titled ‘Fertilising the Future: Bharat’s March Towards Fertilizer Self-Sufficiency

- Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar released the book 'Fertilising the Future Bharat's March Towards Fertilizer Self-Sufficiency' written by Chemicals and Fertilizers Minister Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya. Sharing about the book release in a social media post, Dr. Mandaviya expressed his gratitude to the Vice President.
- Dr. Mandaviya that the Hindi version of the book is titled 'Urvarak-Atmanirbharta ki Raah.' Dr. Mandaviya further added, the book delineates the journey of making India self reliant in the fertilizer sector under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the revolutionary changes that have taken place till date.

The book “An Uncommon Love: The Early Life of Sudha and Narayana Murthy” released

- The book “An Uncommon Love: The Early Life of Sudha and Narayana Murthy,” authored by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni. The book offers an intimate view into the lives of one of India’s most respected couples, Sudha and Narayana Murthy, the co-founders of Infosys. The biography details their early life, love story, and the foundational years of Infosys.
- The Murthys are known for their philanthropic work and pivotal roles in the Indian IT industry. Their story is unique, with a deep connection to literature and reading, particularly Kannadiga writers. The connection was sparked by a collection of books by George Mikes, which brought Sudha and Narayana Murthy together.

REC wins ICAI Award for Excellence in Financial Reporting for FY 2022-23

- REC Limited, a Maharatna Public Sector Unit and a leading NBFC under the Ministry of Power, has been awarded ‘Plaque’ under the ‘Financial Services Sector (Other than Banking and Insurance)’ category at the ICAI Awards for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the financial year 2022-23.
- This is the only award bestowed by the ICAI under this category and the selection has been made based on the company’s accounting practices, disclosure policies, presentation of financial statements, other information contained in the Annual Report and degree of compliance with Indian Accounting Standards, Statutory guidelines and Regulations.

SPORTS NEWS

David Warner Retires From One-Day Cricket Ahead Of Test Farewell

- Australia's David Warner has announced his retirement from One-day International (ODI) cricket alongside the end of his Test career completing another chapter in his illustrious career. While Warner bids farewell to ODIs, he remains available for T20 cricket and aims to feature in Australia's World Cup campaign in the T20 format in June, scheduled to take place in the Caribbean and the USA.
- Australian cricket stalwart Warner officially announced his retirement from ODI cricket. The veteran opener confirmed that the recent World Cup final against India marked his last 50-over appearance for Australia, where they clinched an upset victory in November.

In Men's Chess, Dommaraju Gukesh secures spot at a prestigious Candidates tournament

- In Men's Chess, Dommaraju Gukesh has secured his spot at the prestigious Candidates tournament, which will take place in Toronto from April 2 to 25, 2024. Gukesh became the third Indian to make the Candidates tournament, joining R Praggnanandhaa and Vidit Gujrathi.
- This is the first time in history that three Indians are playing the Candidates. The winner gets the chance to take on China's Ding Liren in the next World Chess Championship. In Women's Candidates, Koneru Humpy and Rameshbabu Vaishali will represent the country. The winner of the tournament will face Ju Wenjun of China for the titles. The Eight-player event will be conducted in Round Robin format.

PM Launhes Khelo India Youth Games 2023 In Chennai, Tamil Nadu

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi declared the Khelo India Youth Games 2023 open at the Nehru Indoor Stadium in Chennai. The opening ceremony of the national sports event took place in a grand fashion with several cultural programmes exhibiting the traditional and cultural practices of Tamil Nadu.
- The event, which is being held for the first time in a south Indian state, will feature over 5,600 athletes. The games will be played across four cities of Tamil Nadu, including Chennai, Madurai, Trichy, and Coimbatore, from January 19 to January 31. The games will feature 26 sporting disciplines with a mix of conventional sports and traditional ones.

Tata Sons secures the IPL title sponsorship for the next five seasons

- The Tata Group has extended its title sponsorship of the IPL for another five years, from 2024 to 2028, for INR 2500 crore (US\$301 million approx.), making it the "highest-ever sponsorship amount in the history of the league," a BCCI statement said. The group were the IPL title sponsors in 2022 and 2023, and are also the title sponsors of the Women's Premier League (WPL).
- "The collaboration with TATA Group for the title sponsorship of IPL 2024-28 is a significant milestone in IPL's journey," IPL chairman Arun Singh Dhumal said. "The record-breaking sum of INR 2500 crore by TATA Group is a testament to the immense value and appeal that the IPL holds in the world of sports."

Chirag Shetty and Satwiksairaj finished second in the India Open title 2024

- The world champions have staged quite a comeback here, they looked completely at sea in the first game. That is the third consecutive defeat in the final of a tournament for Satwik and Chirag, they had lost the China Masters and the Malaysia Open.
- Home favourites Satwik and Chirag signed off with a second successive runner-up finish after losing a tense final against world champions Kang Min Hyuk and Seo Sang Jae at the Super 750 badminton tournament. here have been few tournaments where we lost and then we got lucky to win but I feel when it matters, it will come, we just need to hang in there.

Tata remains IPL title sponsor in record-breaking US\$300m deal

- Tata Group has won IPL sponsorship rights for 5 years for \$300 million. Tata Group has won the title sponsorship of the Indian Premier League (IPL) for 2024-28. IPL has become the world's richest T20 tournament with the brand value of \$8.4 billion.
- Tata Group has been the title sponsor of both the men's IPL and the Women's Premier League. The Indian Premier League (IPL) is a men's Twenty20 cricket league. It is annually held in India. The league is contested by ten city-based franchise teams. The BCCI founded the league in 2007.

Kochi to get country's first carbon-neutral sports city featuring international cricket stadium

- Kerala Cricket Association (Member, The Board of Control for Cricket in India) has embarked on its glory of its vision -Mission 2020 and has developed 12 first class Sports Infrastructure in the state for a total investment of Rs.150 Crores till date. KCA also

announces 3 more domestic venues at different districts and upgradation of existing facilities is underway.

- With a mission statement “BEYOND 2020” KCA is now proudly announcing “Cochin Sports City” to the State of Kerala at Chengamanad village, Aluva- Near Nedumbassery International Airport in 40 acres of land. The project will be India’s first Carbon Neutral Sports City featuring International Cricket Stadium.

Rohan Bopanna becomes oldest player to hold No.1 men’s tennis doubles ranking

- Indian tennis sensation Rohan Bopanna became the oldest player to hold the No. 1 men's doubles ranking. The 43-year-old Ace player, alongside Australia's Matthew Ebden defeated the Argentine pair Máximo González and Andrés Molteni in straight sets 6-4, 7-6 in the 2024 Australian Open quarter-finals.
- After becoming the World No. 1, Bopanna said that his achievement will inspire the people all over the world, being 40 and above in a different way. Bopanna had made his debut more than 20 years ago. He will be 43 years and 330 days old at the end of the tournament.

India’s Sahil Thakur finishes 47th in giant slalom in winter youth Olympics 2024.It was held in South Korea country

- The men’s giant slalom race comprised a field of 79 athletes. Sahil was placed 62nd among the 65 competitors, who finished the first run and earned a starting spot in the second run.Sahil, who is only Indian athlete competing at Gangwon, finished the second run to be placed 47th — among the 50 competitors who finished run — in the final standings.
- Gangwon 2024 is the first time the Winter Youth Olympic Games is being held in Asia. Around 1,900 athletes, with an equal representation of males and females, from 80 countries, are competing in Gangwon.

ICC announces groups for T20 Men’s Cricket World cup 2024

- The 20 teams have been divided into four groups, with five sides in each group. The top two teams from each group will qualify for Super Eights, and the top two teams from each group will proceed to the semi-finals.The tournament will kick off with the first match to be played between co-host USA and Canada in Dallas. The blockbuster clash between India and Pakistan is scheduled for June 9 in New York.
- This is the very first time 20 teams will be participating, and it will also feature the African nation of Uganda, which has qualified for the first time in any ICC World Cup.A total of 55 matches will be played across nine venues, with six stadiums located in the West Indies and

the rest in the USA. Super Eight matches, along with the knockout stage, will be played in the West Indies.

Slogan,Emblem and Mascots of the 9th Asian Winter Games unveiled

- The 9th Asian Winter Games, set to illuminate the winter sports landscape in 2025, have officially entered an exciting phase with the unveiling of its core symbols – the slogan, emblem, and mascots. This grand reveal, hosted in the capital city of Heilongjiang Province, China, marks a significant milestone as the Games draw closer.
- Embracing the spirit of unity and sportsmanship, the official slogan “Dream of Winter, Love among Asia” resonates deeply with the ethos of the Games. This slogan encapsulates the aspirations and passion for winter sports among Asian countries, highlighting the essence of dreams, love, and camaraderie that the Games aim to foster.

Indian President Launches 5th Meghalaya Games in Tura,Meghalaya

- On January 15, 2024, the President of India, Smt Droupadi Murmu, inaugurated the 5th Edition of the Meghalaya Games in Tura, Meghalaya. In her address, the President highlighted the tremendous potential for the development of sports and sportspersons in the North East region, citing its rich tradition of a strong sports culture.
- The 5th installment of the Meghalaya Games holds historical significance on multiple fronts. Notably, it marks the inaugural occasion of being hosted in Tura, a departure from its previous exclusive location in Shillong.

Sumit Nagal becomes First Indian Man in 35 years to Beat Seeded Player at Australia Open

- India’s top ranking tennis sensation Sumit Nagal creates history to become first Indian man in 35 years to beat a seeded player at Grand Slam. He secured his spot in the second round of the Australian Open after defeating world number 27 Alexander Bublik of Kazakhstan in a commanding straight-set victory.
- The 26-year-old Nagal, who fought his way into the main draw through the qualifiers, displayed exceptional skill and determination to beat Alexander Bublik with a scoreline of 6-4, 6-2, 7-6(7-5) in a grueling match that lasted two hours and 38 minutes . This victory marks Nagal's debut progression to the second round and a significant milestone in his tennis career.

Rohit Sharma tops list of batters with most hundreds in T20I

- The match between India and Afghanistan became the first in international cricket to feature two Super Overs. It is only the second T20 match to have two super overs - Mumbai Indians vs Kings XI Punjab in the IPL in 2020 was the first.
- 424 Runs aggregated by India and Afghanistan in Bengaluru are the second most in a T20I to have ended in a tie. Four-hundred-and-twenty-eight runs in the 2010 Christchurch T20I between New Zealand and Australia are the highest, with both teams scoring 214.

IMPORTANT DAYS NEWS

Global Family Day observed on 1st January

- Celebrated every year on January 1, Global Family Day starts the new year with a positive message of unity to the world. Yes, believe it or not, we are all one! Cultures and religions across the world may be different but, the truth is, all of mankind is a large family that can survive and succeed only if united. And yes, this is a goal that can be achieved — all that is required is spreading the message of peace and unity.
- Global Family Day, also known as World Peace Day. On the first day of the new millennium, in 1997, the United Nations General Assembly declared the International Decade for the Culture of Peace and Nonviolence for the Children of the World.

World Braille Day observed on 4th January

- As the world prepares to celebrate World Braille Day on 4 January, a global commemoration is underway to acknowledge the significance of Braille as a vital medium of communication for blind and partially sighted individuals. This day holds special importance as it marks the birthday of Louis Braille, the visionary inventor of the Braille script, born in France in 1809.
- Recognizing the paramount role of Braille in education, communication, and social inclusion, the United Nations has designated 4 January each year as World Braille Day. Braille, a universal code rather than a language, serves as a tool to write and read in various languages, including Sanskrit, Arabic, Chinese, Hebrew, Spanish, and many others.

Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Or NRI Day observed on 9th January

- Pravasi Bharatiya Divas or NRI Day is formally observed on 9 January to celebrate the day when Mahatma Gandhi returned from South Africa to Mumbai, India. The day is celebrated

to acknowledge the contribution of the non-resident Indian community in helping in the development of the country.

- This day plays a significant role as the overseas Indian community gets a shared platform to get themselves engaged with the government and the native people of the land. The conventions are very useful in networking among the overseas Indian community residing in various parts of the world and enable them to share their experiences in various fields.

World Hindi Day observed on 10th January

- World Hindi Day, also called the Vishwa Hindi Diwas, is observed on January 10. With around 600 million speakers globally, Hindi is one of the most widely spoken languages across the world, along with Mandarin, Chinese, and English.
- On this day in 1949, Hindi was spoken for the first time in the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). The day is observed around the world to promote the language. Vishwa Hindi Diwas was marked for the first time on January 10, 2006, on the instructions of the then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. It is an occasion to recognise Hindi as a universal language.

National Youth Day observed on 12th January

- National Youth Day is also known as Rashtriya Yuva Diwas and is celebrated on the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda. The day creates awareness and provides knowledge about the rights of people in India. It is a day to educate people to behave properly in the country.
- In 1984, the Indian Government first declared to celebrate the birthday of Swami Vivekananda i.e. 12 January as National Youth Day. Since then the day has been celebrated as National Youth Day all over the country. The government's main aim is to make a better future for the country by motivating the youths through the way of their life and ideas of the Swami Vivekananda.

National Startup Day is observed every year on 16th of January

- Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi officially declared 16 January as National Startup Day. Under the Startup India programme, startups in the country expanded from around 400 to 1.18 lakh. On the NationalStartupDay, I extend my best wishes to our talented entrepreneurs who with their hard work & innovative zeal are paving the way for India's emergence as a 'Global Hub for Startups.

- Union Minister Piyush Goyal shared a post on X saying , "Celebrating 8▯ Incredible Years of Startup India! A result of PM Narendra Modi ji's visionary leadership, this initiative is advancing our country's startup ecosystem to greater heights.

Parakram Diwas (Valor day) observed on 23rd January

- Parakram Diwas 2024 promises to be a monumental celebration, weaving together historical reflections and vibrant cultural expressions at the iconic Red Fort in Delhi. Inaugurated by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi on the evening of January 23rd, the event will continue until January 31st, creating a comprehensive experience that honors the profound legacy of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose and the Azad Hind Fauj.
- Parakram Diwas 2024 at Red Fort commemorates the resilient legacy of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose and the Azad Hind Fauj. Inaugurated by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, this event, organized by the Ministry of Culture, promises a poignant blend of history and culture. The Red Fort, pivotal in Bose's saga, hosts a projection mapping show, exhibitions, and immersive experiences. Recognizing the heroes of the Indian National Army, the celebration unfolds a rich tapestry of bravery and sacrifice. With free entry for all, Parakram Diwas stands as an annual tribute, inviting global engagement in honouring India's freedom fighters.

International Day of Education Observed on 24th January

- International Day of Education 2024 is observed on the 24th January 2024The International Day of Education was declared by the UN General Assembly in December 2018 as a way to honor education and to think about how crucial learning is to progress and peace.
- Each of us has a responsibility to advance high-quality education.Institutions are not the only ones that can impart knowledge.Access to education, which most of us probably take for granted, can help many people escape poverty and open the door to a bright future.

National voters day observed on 25th January

- Election Commission of India is celebrating 14th National Voters' Day (NVD) on 25th January 2024. Hon'ble President of India Smt. Droupadi Murmu will be the Chief Guest at the national function being organized in New Delhi by the Election Commission of India. Union Minister of State for Law and Justice (Independent Charge), Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal will grace the function as Guest of Honour.
- Awards will be presented to State and District level officers for their outstanding performance in the conduct of elections during 2023 in different spheres such as IT

initiatives, Security Management, Election Management, Accessible Election, Electoral Roll and contribution in the field of voter awareness and outreach.

Himachal Pradesh Statehood day observed on 25th January

- The 54th statehood day of Himachal Pradesh would be celebrated at Dharampur in Mandi district and chief minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu will preside over the function there. Dharampur has a political importance for Congress in Himachal Pradesh as of the total 10 assembly seats of Mandi district, it is the lone seat which Congress has won.
- Dharampur was considered as the stronghold of BJP, but in 2022 assembly elections, Congress snatched it after former BJP minister Mahendra Singh Thakur stepped aside to pave way for his son Rajat Thakur.

OBITUARY NEWS

Amruta Someshwara, Scholar and Folklore Expert, Passes Away in Mangaluru, Karnataka

- Scholar, senior writer and folklore expert Amrut Someshwara passed away at his residence near Someshwara-Kotekar in Mangaluru. He was 88. He is survived by his wife and two sons. The last rites will be performed on January 7, sources in his family informed.
- Mr. Someshwara had more than 100 works to his credit, including about 40 Yakshagana scripts written both in Kannada and Tulu. He had retired as Head of the Department of Kannada at Vivekananda College in Puttur, Dakshina Kannada district. He was a visiting professor in the Department of Kannada of Mangalore University.

Brazil's 4-time FIFA World Cup champion Mario Zagallo passed away

- Zagallo, who played alongside Pele in Brazil's 1958 and 1962 World Cup-winning teams and later won the trophy as a coach, died Friday of multiple organ failure, said the Barra D'Or hospital in Rio de Janeiro, where he had been treated for a series of health problems in recent months.
- Mario Zagallo, who won two World Cups as a player, one as a coach and another as an assistant coach for Brazil, has passed away at the age of 92. He holds the record for World Cup titles in general with four titles in total. He also holds the record for World Cup finals with six participations.

'India's oldest' sloth bear in captivity passed away in Bhopal zoo

- India's oldest female sloth bear, whose name was Gulabo, has passed away at the Van Vihar National Park and Zoo, located in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh. Gulabo was the oldest sloth bear of the country. She died at the age of 40. She was rescued from a street performer (Madaari) in May 2006, when she was 25 years.
- Gulabo was one of the star attractions in the park. The Van Vihar National Park, located on the banks of Bhopal's Upper Lake, also runs a rescue and breeding centre for sloth bears. A 36-year-old male sloth bear died due to multi-organ failure at a zoo-cum-animal rescue centre in Madhya Pradesh capital Bhopal.

Hindustani classical vocalist utsad Rashid khan passed away in Kolkata

- Hindustani classical singer and music maestro Utsad Rashid Khan passed away in Kolkata .He was 55 and is survived by his wife, two sons and a daughter. The famous vocalist was suffering from cancer and was admitted to a private health facility in Kolkata in November 2023.
- Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, rushed to the hospital to meet the bereaved family and described Mr. Khan as "truly a world famous classical Indian vocal artist". Ms. Banerjee said that the body of the music maestro will be kept at Rabindra Sadan, the State's cultural complex on Wednesday and the final rites will be held with full State honours including a gun salute.

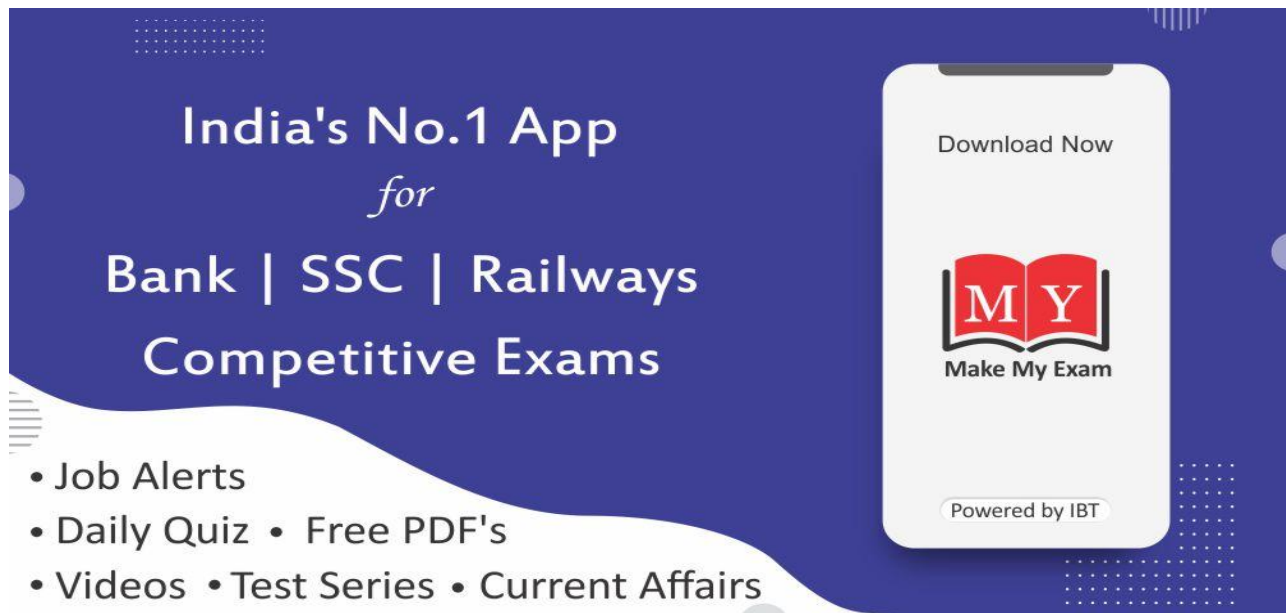
Renowned classical singer Prabha Atre dies at 92

- Born on September 13, 1932, Mrs Atre was a science and law graduate and later earned a doctorate in music. She was one of the oldest and most renowned practitioners of the Kirana gharana and was adept at different musical genres, including khyaal, tarana, thumri, dadra, ghazal and bhajan.
- Besides being a classical vocalist, she also excelled as an academician, researcher, composer and author. She composed music for a full-length dance recital 'Natya Prabha', a music composition adapted for jazz by a top Netherlands artist.

Renowned Urdu Poet Munawwar Rana Passes Away At 71

- Rana breathed his last at Lucknow's PGI Hospital, where he was undergoing treatment for Kidney and heart ailments. Born on November 26, 1952, in Uttar Pradesh's Raebareli, Rana was one of India's most celebrated Urdu poet.
- Reacting to the news of his death, former Uttar Pradesh chief minister and Samajwadi Party boss Akhilesh Yadav said that he was "extremely heartbroken." Munawwar Rana's daughter

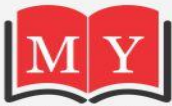
Sumaiya Rana is the national spokesperson of Samajwadi Party. In 2014, Rana was given the Sahitya Akademi Award for 'Shahdaba', an Urdu poem written by him.



India's No.1 App
for
Bank | SSC | Railways
Competitive Exams

- Job Alerts
- Daily Quiz • Free PDF's
- Videos • Test Series • Current Affairs

Download Now



Make My Exam

Powered by IBT

Now Govt. Job is in Your Hand !!

India's #1
Educational App

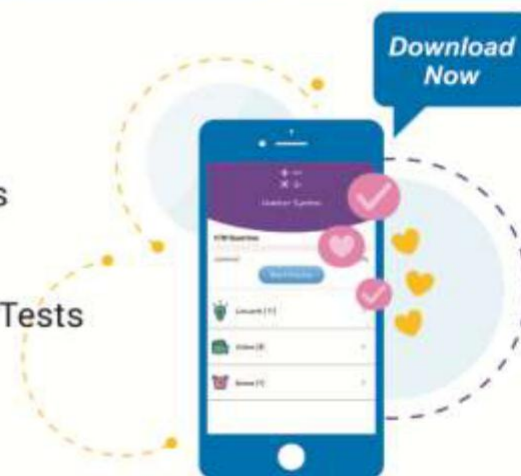
makemyexam



make **MY** exam



- 1000+ Videos
- 2000+ Concepts
- 3000+ Quizzes
- 1000+ Practice Tests
- 500+ PDF



India's Best Video Course for Competitive Exams by IBT Faculties

BANK ALL EXAMS

VIDEO COURSE

395 Videos

₹3749/-



Videos by IBT Experts

RAILWAY ALL EXAMS

VIDEO COURSE

602 Videos

₹3499/-



Videos by IBT Experts

SSC ALL EXAMS

VIDEO COURSE

688 Videos

₹3599/-



Videos by IBT Experts

SBI CLERK (PRE)

VIDEO COURSE

327 Videos

₹2499/-



Videos by IBT Experts

RAILWAY NTPC

VIDEO COURSE

602 Videos

₹2699/-



Videos by IBT Experts

SSC CGL EXAM

VIDEO COURSE

688 Videos

₹2999/-



Videos by IBT Experts

SBI PO (PRE)

VIDEO COURSE

327 Videos

₹2499/-



Videos by IBT Experts

RBI ASSISTANT (PRE)

VIDEO COURSE

327 Videos

₹2499/-



Videos by IBT Experts

SSC CHSL EXAM

VIDEO COURSE

688 Videos

₹2999/-



Videos by IBT Experts

To buy visit www.makemyexam.in or Whatsapp- 99152-28862