

MARCH 2024

THE HINDU REVIEW

- **Monthly** capsule
- **Current** Affairs

Economy | Appointment | Awards | Ranking
Government Scheme | Summit | Partnership | GDP
Banking & Financial | Defence | Sports |
Book and Author | Science and technology



OSCARS

The Hindu Review (MARCH 2024)

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Chapter 1: Appointment (National, International)

(National)

<u>Organization</u>	<u>Person</u>
Appointed as chairperson and independent director of Payments Private Ltd (PayU)	Renu Sud Karnad (Updated 1 March)
Re-appointed as the managing director and chief executive officer (MD and CEO) of Jana Small Finance Bank About Jana Small Finance Bank Limited <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established - 2018 • Headquarters - Bengaluru • CEO - Ajay Kanwal 	Ajay Kanwal (Updated 1 March)
Appointed as the Director general (DG) of the National Security Guard (NSG)	Daljit Singh Chaudhary (Updated 1 March)
Appointed as the head of Parliament security	Anurag Agarwal (Updated 4 March)
The Reserve Bank has appointed Tamilnad Mercantile Bank Ltd (TMB) S. Ravindran as part-time chairman of the bank	S. Ravindran (Updated 4 March)
Bharat Petroleum Corporation (BPCL) has introduced as the brand ambassador	Neeraj Chopra (Updated 5 March)
Etched her name in history as the first woman sniper of the Border Security Force (BSF) About Border Security Force (BSF) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Founded- 1 December 1965 • Founder- Khusro Faramurz Rustamji 	Sub-Inspector Suman Kumari (Updated 6 March)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constituting instrument - Border Security Force Act 1968 • Headquarters - New Delhi • Director General- IPS Nitin Agarwal 	
Slice has announced the appointment of as its latest brand ambassador	Nayanthara (Updated 7 March)
German technology major SAP has appointed as president and managing director for SAP Indian Subcontinent.	Manish Prasad (Updated 8 March)
NHPC has taken over the additional charge of the post of Chairman and Managing Director of NHPC Limited	Rajendra Prasad Goyal (Updated 10 March)
Elected as the new President of the Paralympic Committee of India (PCI)	Devendra Jhajharia (Updated 12 March)
Sworn in as the Vigilance Commissioner at the Central Vigilance Commission	AS Rajeev (Updated 12 March)
Assumed the charge of Chairman of National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC) About National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NCSC is a constitutional body. It was established to provide safeguards against exploitation of the Scheduled Castes (SC). • Established – 19 February 2004 • Headquarters – New Delhi • Under – Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment 	Kishor Makwana (Updated 12 March)
Resigned from his position as the Chief Minister of Haryana, following emerging rifts within the coalition government formed by the Bharatiya	Manohar Lal Khattar (Updated 12 March)

<p>Janata Party (BJP) and the Jannayak Janata Party (JJP)</p> <p>About Haryana</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital – Chandigarh • Governor – Bandaru Dattatreya • Legislative Assembly Seats- 90 	
<p>Become the new Chief Minister of Haryana</p> <p>About Haryana</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital – Chandigarh • Chief Minister – Nayab Singh Saini (replace Manohar Lal Khattar) • Governor – Bandaru Dattatreya • Legislative Assembly Seats- 90 	<p>Nayab Singh Saini (Updated 13 March)</p>
<p>Industry body Indian Sugar & Bio-energy Manufacturers Association (ISMA) has announced the appointment as its new Director General</p>	<p>Deepak Ballani (Updated 13 March)</p>
<p>The government gave Foreign Secretary a six-month extension</p>	<p>Vinay Mohan Kwatra (Updated 14 March)</p>
<p>Named as the new Election Commissioners</p> <p>About Election Commissioner of India (ECI)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Founded - 25 January 1950 • 25 January - Voter's Day • HQ - New Delhi • 1st Chief - Sukumar Sen • 1st Women Chief - V.S. Ramadevi • 25th Chief - Rajiv Kumar • Commissioner - Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Gyanesh Kumar • Tenure - 6/65yrs 	<p>Gyanesh Kumar, Sukhbir Sandhu (Updated 14 March)</p>
<p>Appointed as the new Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Northern Coalfields Limited (NCL)</p>	<p>B Sairam (Updated 14 March)</p>

Kotak Mahindra Bank has appointed Kotak Securities MD and CEO Jaideep Hansraj as Group President - One Kotak	Jaideep Hansraj (Updated 18 March)
The Central Government has appointed as the Chairman of the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE).	Rahul Singh (Updated 18 March)
The Central Government has appointed the new Chairman of Prasar Bharati About Prasar Bharati <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prasar Bharati is a statutory autonomous body. • Prasar Bharati, India's public service broadcaster, was established under the Prasar Bharati Act, 1990. It was established on November 23, 1997. • Akashvani (All India Radio - Radio Network) and Doordarshan (Television Network) are its major components. 	Navneet Kumar Sehgal (Updated 18 March)
Election Commission has announced as its National PwD Icon	Sheetal Devi (Updated 18 March)
Resigned from the posts of Governor of Telangana and Lieutenant Governor of Puducherry.	Tamilisai Soundararajan (Updated 19 March)
Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC) Poonawalla Fincorp has appointed as Managing Director (MD) & Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the company	Arvind Kapil (Updated 19 March)

Appointed as the new government spokesperson.	Sheyphali B Sharan (Updated 20 March)
Assumed office as the Governor of Telangana at the Raj Bhavan, Hyderabad.	C. P. Radhakrishnan (Updated 20 March)
Leading FMCG maker P&G India has appointed Kumar as CEO of the company,	Venkatasubramanian (Updated 21 March)
Given additional charge of Ministry of Food and Processing Industries following the resignation of Pashupati Kumar Paras from the Union Council of ministers.	Kiren Rijju (Updated 21 March)
Appointed as the new Mumbai municipal commissioner.	Bhushan Gagrani (Updated 22 March)
Elected as Chairman of Indian Banks' Association.	M V Rao (Updated 22 March)
Elected as the President of the Indian Steel Association (ISA) About Indian Steel Association (ISA) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Indian Steel Association was set up in 2014 as an apex body of steel producing companies of India. Headquarters - New Delhi It represents 65% of India's crude steel production. 	Naveen Jindal (Updated 22 March)
Appointed as its new captain with Mahendra Singh Dhoni stepping down as the skipper	Ruturaj Gaikwad (Updated 22 March)
Appointed as chairperson of Digital News Publishers Association (DNPA) About DNPA	Mariam Mammen Mathew (Updated 23 March)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DNPA serves as a vital umbrella organization for digital media businesses, including print and broadcasting, and comprises 18 prominent media organizations. • These include Dainik Jagran, Dainik Bhaskar, The Indian Express, Malayala Manorama, ETV, India Today Group, Times Group, Amar Ujala, Hindustan Times, Zee Media, ABP Network, Lokmat, NDTV, The New Indian Express, Mathrubhumi, The Hindu, Network 18 and India TV. 	
Appointed as the new chairman of Surat Diamond Bourse (SDB).	Govind Dholakia (Updated 24 March)
Selected for the appointment as Director in the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC)	Hansha Mishra (Updated 28 March)
Sworn in as Judicial Member, Lokpal	Ritu Raj Awasthi (Updated 28 March)
Becomes Eveready's new brand ambassador	Neeraj Chopra (Updated 29 March)
Appointed as the Director General of the National Investigation Agency (NIA).	Sadanand Vasant Date (Updated 29 March)
Appointed as MD & CEO of Bank of Maharashtra	Nidhu Saxena (Updated 29 March)
Appoints as CMD of New India Assurance Company About New India Assurance Company	Girija Subramanian (Updated 30 March)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New India Assurance Company is India's premier general insurance company. • Established in 1919. It is one of the Domestic Systemically Important Insurers (DSIIs) identified by the IRDAI. • The New India Assurance Company is headquartered in Mumbai. 	
<p>Elected as the new Chairman of Automotive Tyre Manufacturers' Association (ATMA)</p> <p>About ATMA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ATMA is the national industry body for the automotive tyre sector in India. • Established -1975 • ATMA is amongst the most active national industry bodies in the country representing ₹90,000 crore (\$11 bn) automotive tyre industry. 	<p style="text-align: right;">Arnab Banerjee (Updated 31 March)</p>

(International)	
<u>Organization / Country</u>	<u>Person</u>
<p>Elected as PM of Pakistan</p> <p>About Pakistan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital- Islamabad • Currency - Pakistani Rupee • Official languages- Urdu, English • President- Asif Ali Zardari • Prime Minister - Shehbaz Sharif 	<p style="text-align: right;">Shehbaz Sharif (Updated 4 March)</p>
<p>Took oath as the 14th President of Pakistan</p> <p>About Pakistan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital- Islamabad 	<p style="text-align: right;">Asif Ali Zardari (Updated 11 March)</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currency - Pakistani Rupee • Official languages- Urdu, English • President- Asif Ali Zardari • Prime Minister - Shehbaz Sharif 	
Elected as new PM of Palestinian	Mohammad Mustafa (Updated 16 March)
Wins Russian presidential election with 87.97% of the vote About Russia <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital – Moscow • Currency – Rubel • President – Vladimir Putin 	Vladimir Putin (Updated 19 March)
Named as the next Ambassador of India to Russia. About Russia <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital – Moscow • Currency – Rubel • President – Vladimir Putin 	Vinay Kumar (Updated 21 March)
Elected as new President of Indonesia About Indonesia <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital - Jakarta • Currency - Rupiah • Official language - Indonesian • President - Prabowo Subianto 	Prabowo Subianto (Updated 21 March)
Appointed as the India's next envoy to Iraq	Soumendu Bagchi (Updated 27 March)
Named Portugal's Prime Minister About Portugal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital- Lisbon • Currency - euro • Prime minister- Luis Montenegro • Official language- Portuguese • Continent- Europe, Africa 	Luis Montenegro (Updated 28 March)
Appointed as Next Envoy to Myanmar	Abhay Thakur

	(Updated 28 March)
Won the Senegalese presidential election	Bassirou Diomaye Faye (Updated 29 March)
Appointed as India's next ambassador to Niger About Niger <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital- Niamey • Currency- West African CFA franc • President- Mohamed Bazoum • Official language- French • Continent - Africa 	Sita Ram Meena (Updated 29 March)

Chapter 2: Awards (National, International)

(National)

Award	Person/Organization	Purpose/ Field
Maharashtra Bhushan Award 2024	Dr. Pradeep Mahajan	For his contribution in the field of regenerative medicine.
The first prize in the National Youth Parliament Festival 2024	Yatin Bhaskar Duggal	National Youth Parliament 2024 is based on the ' Young Voices: Engage and Empower for Nation's Transformation ' theme.
Chameli Devi Jain Award 2024	Greeshma Kuthar, and Ritika Chopra of the Indian Express	For Outstanding Woman Media Person of the Year
Sahitya Akademi Award for 2023	Sanjeev	For his novel " Mujhe Pehchaano "
PV Narasimha Rao Memorial Award	Ratan Tata	For his outstanding philanthropic contributions
The 2024 Sangita Kalanidhi award	Thodur Madabusi Krishna	The Sangita Kalanidhi award is considered one

		of the highest honours in Carnatic music.
The Saraswati Samman for the year 2023	Prabha Varma	For his work in Malayalam language.
'The GEEF Global Environment Award 2024' in the gold category	THDC India Limited	The company has been consistently establishing new benchmarks in the energy sector and conferring this award is testimony of a display of professionalism and sensitivity to address environmental concerns in its journey of providing affordable power to all.
The 29th Devi Shankar Awasthi Award for the year 2023.	Young poet critic Nishant	For his criticism book 'Kavita Pathak Aalochna'.
The prestigious Times Power Icon 2024 Award.	Vijay Jain	He is a Managing Director of Star Estate.

(International)

<u>Award</u>	<u>Person/Organization</u>	<u>Purpose/ Field</u>
An Honorary Knighthood from United Kingdom's King Charles III	Sunil Bharti Mittal	For his contributions to fostering stronger business ties between India and the UK.
'India-UK Achievers' awards	Zoya Akhtar and Asma Khan	Akhtar's acclaimed work in cinema and Khan's culinary contributions were celebrated during the event. Chef Asma Khan of the women-run Darjeeling

		Express restaurant in London was also honoured.
The Bob Jones Award, the US Golf Association's (USGA) highest honour.	Tiger Woods	This prestigious award recognizes Woods' dedication to sportsmanship, his respect for the traditions of the game, and his significant charitable endeavors.
'Measles and Rubella Champion' award	India	For its exemplary efforts in combating these diseases.
The Miss World 2024	Krystyna Pyszkova	Krystyna Pyszkova from the Czech Republic was crowned as the new Miss World 2024
'Erasmus Prize' 2024	Amitav Ghosh	For highlighting the climate change crisis
IAA Goden Compass Award at the 45th IAA World Congress	Srinivasan K. Swamy	The award honours those who have significantly contributed to the world stage in the field of marketing, advertising and media.
'Diana Memorial Award'	Uday Bhatia & Manasi Gupta	Uday Bhatia made a unique invention to deal with the electricity crisis. During the Corona pandemic, 24-year-old Manasi Gupta's mental health services were appreciated and she got a different recognition.
Abel Prize for 2024	Michel Talagrand of the French National Center for	For his groundbreaking contributions to

	Scientific Research (CNRS) Paris, France	probability theory and functional analysis , with outstanding applications in mathematical physics and statistics. "
The 2024 inaugural Women's Prize for Non-Fiction.	Madhumita Murgia's "Code Dependent: Living in the Shadow of AI",	It explores the impact of AI on human society

Awards 2024: Complete winners list

96th Osacar 2024 winners announced

Best Picture	Oppenheimer
Best Actress	Emma Stone, "Poor Things"
Best Director	Christopher Nolan, "Oppenheimer"
Best Actor	Cillian Murphy, "Oppenheimer"
Best Song	"What Was I Made For?" from "Barbie"
Best Score	Oppenheimer
Best Sound	The Zone of Interest
Best Short Film (Live Action)	The Wonderful Story of Henry Sugar
Best Cinematography	Oppenheimer
Best Documentary Feature	20 Days in Mariupol
Best: Documentary (Short Subject)	The Last Repair Shop
Best Film Editing	Oppenheimer
Best Visual Effects	Godzilla Minus One
Best Supporting Actor	Robert Downey Jr., "Oppenheimer"
Best International Feature	The Zone of Interest
Best Costume Design	Poor Things
Best Production Design	Poor Things
Best Makeup and Hairstyling	Poor Things
Best Adapted Screenplay	American Fiction
Best Original Screenplay	Anatomy of a Fall
Best Animated Feature	The Boy and the Heron
Best Animated Short	War Is Over!
Best Supporting Actress	Da'Vine Joy Randolph, "The Holdovers"

24 writers honoured with Sahitya Akademi Award for 2023

- **Twenty-four writers** has received the **Sahitya Akademi Award for 2023**.
- The award ceremony coincided with the 70th anniversary celebrations of the National Academy of Letters at the Sahityotsav.
- The awards were given for literary works including nine books of poetry, six novels, five of short stories, three essays, and one literary study.
- Sanjeev for his novel "Mujhe Pehchaano" and Gaur for her book "Requiem in Raga Janki" received the prestigious award.

- Sadiqua Nawab Saher received the award for her book "Rajdev Ki Amrai" in Urdu, while Swarnjit Savi was awarded for his book of poetry "Mann Di Chip" in Punjabi.
- Other recipients of the awards in poetry include Vijay Verma (Dogri), Vinod Joshi (Gujarati), Manshoor Banihali (Kashmiri), Sorokkhaibam Gambhini (Manipuri), Ashutosh Parida (Odia), Gaje Singh Rajpurohit (Rajasthani), Arun Ranjan Mishra (Sanskrit) and Vinod Asudani (Sindhi).
- Apart from Gaur, Sanjeev and Saher, writers such as Swapnamay Chakrabarti (Bengali), Krushnat Khot (Marathi), and Rajasekaran Devibharathi (Tamil) have been awarded for their novels.
- For short stories, Pranavjyoti Deka (Assamese), Nandeswar Daiman (Bodo), Prakash S Parienkar (Konkani), Taraceen Baskey (Turia Chand Baskey) (Santali) and T Patanjali Sastry (Telugu) got the award.
- Lakshmisha Tolpadi (Kannada), Basukinath Jha (Maithili) and Judhabir Rana (Nepali) received the prize for their essays, while EV Ramakrishnan was awarded for his literary study in Malayalam.

Madhumita's book shortlisted for Women's Prize for Non-fiction

- Indian-British journalist and commentator **Madhumita Murgia's** book which explores the impact of AI on human society has been **shortlisted for the 2024 inaugural Women's Prize for Non-Fiction.**
- The six books in the shortlist are Murgia's "Code Dependent: Living in the Shadow of AI", "Thunderclap: A Memoir of Art and Life and Sudden Death" by Laura Cumming, "Doppelganger: A Trip Into the Mirror World" by Naomi Klein, "A Flat Place" by Noreen Masud, "All That She Carried: The Journey of Ashley's Sack, a Black Family Keepsake" by Tiya Miles, and "How to Say Babylon: A Jamaican Memoir" by Safiya Sinclair.
- The six books cover a broad range of subjects – from life writing, religion, art and history, to AI, social media and online politics.
- "Code-Dependent", published by Picador, explores the impact of AI – powerful, flawed, and often exploitative – on human society and exposes how it can strip away our individual and collective sense of agency.

Chapter 3: Government Scheme/ campaign

SCHEME	PURPOSE
'One time scheme' (OTS) in all the urban local bodies (ULBs) of Telangana state	Under the OTS the government ordered a waiver of 90 per cent on accumulated arrears interest on property tax, provided taxpayer clear the principal amount of dues till the financial year 2022-2023 together with 10 per cent of interest at one go.
Indiramma housing scheme (Telangana)	Under the scheme, the Congress government will provide Rs 5 lakh financial assistance to construct houses for those who already own a housing plot .
Acing Development of Innovative Technologies with iDEX (ADITI) scheme	To promote innovations in critical and strategic defence technologies .
"Mukhyamantri Yuva Udyami Vikas Abhiyan (MYUVA)" (Uttar Pradesh)	The government aims to prepare one lakh young entrepreneurs every year through this initiative.
The Jharkhand Widow Remarriage Promotion Scheme 2024 (Jharkhand)	Under the Jharkhand Widow Remarriage Promotion Yojana 2024 , the Jharkhand state government will provide INR to all the widowed who will get remarriage .
Uttar Poorva Transformative Industrialization Scheme 2024 (UNNATI 2024)	<p>The Union Cabinet has approved the proposal of the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) for UNNATI 2024.</p> <p>The scheme is proposed to be divided into two parts. Part A caters to the incentives to the eligible units (₹9,737 crore), and Part B is for implementation and institutional arrangements for the scheme (₹300 crore).</p>

Mahtari Vandan Yojana (Chhattisgarh)	The scheme has been launched in Chhattisgarh to provide financial assistance of Rs 1000 per month to eligible married women of the state as monthly DBT .
Neengal Nalama Scheme (Tamil Nadu)	For improving the health index and social well-being of all citizens and making them aware of the Tamil Nadu government schemes .
Electric Mobility Promotion Scheme 2024	The Heavy Industries Ministry has announced the Electric Mobility Promotion Scheme 2024 to accelerate the adoption of Electronic Vehicles (EVs) in India .

Chapter 4: Summit/ Conference

Summit/Conference	Location	About
The second Two-Day Regional Conference on Strengthening of PESA	Ranchi, Jharkhand	The upcoming National Conference on PESA aims to consolidate insights from the two editions of Regional Conferences held at Pune and Ranchi , to streamline and accelerate the implementation of the PESA Act based on unanimous consent.
The 3rd Summit for Democracy in Seoul in a hybrid format	South Korea	The Summit for Democracy was started by American President Joe Biden in 2021 to address the emerging challenges to democracy from authoritarianism and defend and promote human rights .
4th Shanghai Cooperation Organization Startup Forum	New Delhi	The initiative focused on broadening startup interactions among the SCO Member States , fostering an environment conducive to innovation, promoting job creation , and inspiring young talent to develop innovative solutions .
High-level delegation to Geneva for a series of crucial meetings at the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Headquarters.	New Delhi, India to coordinate	Dr Neeraj Mittal, Secretary, Department of Telecommunications, Government of India , led a high-level delegation to Geneva for a series of crucial meetings at the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Headquarters .

The 148th meeting of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, IPU	Geneva, Switzerland	The delegation attended the meetings of the IPU Asia Pacific Geo Political Group, APG BRICS Parliamentary Coordination Forum and IPU Forum of Women Parliamentarians.
The two-day 2nd Employment Working Group (EWG) meeting	Brasilia, Brazil	The G20 EWG's mandate is to address labour, employment and social issues for strong, sustainable, balanced and job-rich growth for all.

Chapter 5: Partnership/ Agreement

Partnership/ Agreement	Aim
NTPC Green Energy (NGEL) has signed a joint venture agreement with Maharashtra State Power Generation Company (MAHAGENCO)	For development of renewable energy parks in Maharashtra.
Reliance partners with Sri Lanka's Elephant House	To intensify fight against Coke & Pepsi
Maruti Suzuki partners with Union Bank of India	For dealer financing solutions.
State-run Coal India Limited (CIL) and Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) have signed a joint venture agreement (JVA)	For setting up India's first commercial-scale ammonium nitrate plant through surface coal gasification (SCG) technology route.
Jal Shakti Ministry has signed agreement with 12 technical education institutions	For academic and research collaboration towards basin management of six rivers.
REC Limited has partnered with the Unit of Science and Educational Development (UNISED)	To support the education of around 75,500 children of Siddharthnagar district, Uttar Pradesh.
Public sector bank Punjab National Bank (PNB) has partnered with online travel tech platform EaseMyTrip	To launch a co-branded travel credit card "PNB EMT Credit Card".

<p>European aerospace firm Airbus has signed a contract with the Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Mumbai</p>	<p>To provide aviation education to professionals and empower them with industry-ready skills through Airbus Beyond programmes.</p>
<p>India signed a free trade agreement (FTA) with four European countries, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland.</p>	<p>With a goal of reaching \$100 billion in investments in India and one million jobs.</p>
<p>The Ministry of Defence has signed a ₹200 crore contract with Big Bang Boom Solutions Private Limited (BBBS).</p>	<p>For anti-drone systems for the Indian Army and Indian Air Force (IAF)</p>
<p>Mumbai-based tech company Aurionpro Solutions has secured a Rs 100-crore contract from State Bank of India</p>	<p>For the licence, implementation and support of its transaction banking platform, iCashpro+.</p>
<p>India and Dominican Republic signs protocol</p>	<p>For establishment of Joint Economic and Trade Committee</p>
<p>L&T Finance Holdings Ltd (LTFH) has signed a financing pact with Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)</p>	<p>To support financing in rural and peri-urban areas in India, particularly women borrowers.</p>
<p>Max India's subsidiary partners with IIT Delhi</p>	<p>This partnership aims to develop offerings tailored specifically for the senior demographic.</p>
<p>India's largest private company Reliance Industries has entered in a binding agreement in Viacom 18 Media</p>	<p>To buy Paramount Global's entire 13.01% stake in Viacom 18 Media for Rs 4,286 crore (\$517 million).</p>
<p>The Ministry of Defence (MoD) has signed a contract worth ₹2,890 crore with the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)</p>	<p>For the midlife upgrade of 25 Dornier patrol aircraft of the Indian Navy.</p>

Meta partners with Election Commission of India via the Voluntary Code of Ethics”	To limit misinformation, remove voter interference , and enhance transparency and accountability on its platforms to support free and fair elections.
YES Bank has partnered with the Indian Olympic Association (IOA)	As part of the collaboration, the bank launched the campaign ' Milkar Jitayengey ' and introduced the ' YES Glory Debit Card, ' specially designed for India’s Olympic athletes.
Airtel Payments Bank has partnered with Noise, India’s premier wristwatch brand, and Mastercard,	To launch A New Way to Pay
Tech Mahindra has collaborated with American technology firm IBM	To set up a ' Synergy Lounge ' in its Sinin its Singapore campus , to assist enterprises in operationalizing and deriving value from next-gen technologies.
Federal Bank & NPCI partner	For contactless NCMC (National Common Mobility Card) payments at enabled metro stations and PoS terminals.
Star Housing Finance partners with Tata Capital Housing Finance	The partnership aims to leverage domain of Star HFL in low ticket affordable housing finance space and the mutual synergies arising out of operations.
Starburst Accelerator SARL has partnered with the Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT Madras)	To set up an innovative hub for start-ups with €100 million in funding support.
Ujjivan Small Finance Bank has partnered with Veefin Solutions Ltd	To enhance supply chain finance offerings for MSMEs , addressing the sector’s working capital needs.

The Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Mumbai has partnered with Europe's Starburst	To boost the aerospace, new space, and defence (ASD) industry in India
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Ministry of Jal Shakti signs agreement with 12 technical education institutions for basin management of 6 rivers

- Jal Shakti Ministry has signed agreement with 12 technical education institutions for academic and research collaboration towards basin management of six rivers.
- These are Narmada, Godavari, Mahanadi, Krishna, Cauvery and Periyar. This agreement was signed under the National River Conservation Plan.
- Narmada Basin Management — IIT Indore and IIT Gandhinagar
- Godavari Basin Management — IIT Hyderabad and NEERI Nagpur
- Mahanadi Basin Management — IIT Raipur and IIT Rourkela
- Krishna Basin Management — NIT Warangal and NIT Surathkal
- Cauvery Basin Management — IISc Bangalore and NIT Trichy
- Periyar Basin Management — IIT Palakkad and NIT Calicut.

Chapter 6: Ranking Index

Index	Index released by	India's Rank	1st Rank
The International IP Index for 2024	12th edition of the US Chamber of Commerce's Global Innovation Policy Center's International IP Index.	42nd	United States
The United Nations Human Development Index		134	Switzerland
World's most polluted capital city	Swiss organization IQAir		New Delhi
The 2024 World Happiness Report	UN Sustainable Development	126	Finland

	Solutions Network, Gallup, and the Oxford Wellbeing Research Centre.		
Hurun Global Rich List 2024.	The Hurun Research Institute	Mumbai	New York

Mumbai Overtakes Beijing to Become Asia's Billionaire Capital: Hurun Report

- **Mumbai has dethroned Beijing as Asia's billionaire capital**, marking a historic milestone in the latest Hurun Global Rich List 2024.
- With 271 billionaires, India now stands third globally in terms of billionaire count.
- The report unveils a total of 3,279 billionaires globally, with 167 additions in the past year.
- While China maintained its lead with 814 billionaires, India added nearly 100 new billionaires, while China saw a decline of 155.
- The top 10 cities with billionaires include, **New York, London, Mumbai**, Beijing, Shanghai, Shenzhen, Hong Kong, Moscow, New Delhi, and San Francisco.
- The top 10 nations with billionaires include, **China, the US, India**, the UK, Germany, Switzerland, Russia, Italy, France and Brazil.
- The top 10 global billionaires include, **Elon Musk (Tesla), Jeff Bezos (Amazon), Bernard Arnault (LVMH), Mark Zuckerberg (Meta), Larry Ellison (Oracle), Warren Buffet (Berkshire Hathaway), Steve Ballmer (Microsoft), Bill Gates (Microsoft), Larry Page (Alphabet), Mukesh Ambani (Reliance industries)**.

ambitious baba .com

Chapter 7: Mergers and Acquisitions

Merger Company	About
The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has approved the Scheme of Amalgamation of Fincare Small Finance Bank with AU Small Finance Bank Ltd.	Under the merger agreement, shareholders of Fincare Small Finance Bank will get 579 equity shares of AU Small Finance Bank Ltd for every 2,000 fully paid-up equity shares they own.
Accenture launches learning platform; to acquire edtech Udacity	Accenture LearnVantage will help clients re-skill and upskill in the areas of technology, data and AI to fill gaps created by advances in technologies .

Fintech GIPL merges with North East Small Finance Bank, gets CCI nod	GIPL operates under the brand name "slice" and focuses on facilitating payments and credit products through digital means in India .
The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has approved the acquisition of Kesoram's Cement Business by UltraTech Cement Limited	The deal is estimated to be valued at ₹7,600 crore , including the debt the company will take on from Kesoram .
Adani Ports acquires 95% of Odisha's Gopalpur Port from SP Group	For an equity value of Rs 1,349 crore and enterprise value of Rs 3,080 crore to boost its east coast presence .
Kotak Mahindra Bank has acquired 100 per cent stake in Sonata Finance Private Limited – a microfinance institution — for Rs 537 crore.	With this acquisition, Sonata has become a wholly-owned subsidiary of the private sector bank .

Chapter 8: Loan

Organization/Bank	Loan Amount	To which country	Purpose
Asian Development Bank (ADB)	A 181 million dollars loan	India	To improve urban livability and mobility in Ahmedabad .
Asian Development Bank (ADB)	\$23 million loan	The Government of India	To enhance access to quality fintech education, research, and innovation at the Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT-City) .
DBS Bank	A USD 250 million loan	India	For new-age entrepreneurs .
Japan Bank for International Co-operation (JBIC).	USD 200 million Loan	State-run NTPC group	For Renewable Projects

Japan Bank for International Co-operation (JBIC).	20 billion (around Rs 1,100 crore)	NHPC	For developing a 300 MW solar project in Bikaner, Rajasthan.
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Chapter 9: App/Website/Portal

App/ Website/Portal	Company / Department	Purpose
Haj Suvidha mobile App	Minority Affairs Minister Smriti Irani	Haj Suvidha Mobile App will aid the pilgrims in providing their location to officials in case of any need . App will also help pilgrims to locate the nearest health facilities in times of need.
PM-SURAJ portal 'Pradhan Mantri Samajik Utthan and Rozgar Adharit Jankalyan' national portal	The Prime Minister	The Prime Minister has launched the PM-SURAJ portal 'Pradhan Mantri Samajik Utthan and Rozgar Adharit Jankalyan' national portal and also sanctioned credit support to one lakh entrepreneurs of disadvantaged sections .
'Know Your Candidate' app	The Election Commission of India	The KYC app provides voters with the ability to access information about candidates with criminal antecedents .
Saksham App	The Election Commission of India	This initiative aims to address the needs of voters above 85 years of age and Persons-with-Disabilities (PWDs) with a 40 percent benchmark disability, allowing them to cast their votes from the comfort of their homes.

Chapter 10: Important MoU

MoU	Between Which Countries
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Signed an MoU whereby it will deliver pre-ordered food on trains.	Online food ordering and delivery platform, Swiggy with the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC)
Signed an MoU to establish the state's first Centre for AI.	Karnataka government with the World Economic Forum
Signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for establishing a framework to promote the use of local currencies — the Indian Rupee (INR) and the Indonesian Rupiah (IDR) — for cross-border transactions.	The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the Bank Indonesia (BI)
Signed a multi-year MoU for conducting joint research on blockchain and artificial intelligence (AI) technology.	National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) with the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore
Signed an MoU to train members of Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM) 's Women's Self Help Groups (SHGs) under the Lakhpati Didi Yojana.	Easy Trip Planner Ltd.'s EaseMyTrip.com , with the Ministry of Rural Development
Signed a MoU to formalize their partnership in applications of geospatial technology and artificial intelligence.	The Ministry of Rural Development has with the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi
Signing of MoU on extending co-operation in the field of Energy Efficiency and Energy Conservation Measures.	India and Bhutan
Signed a MoU on cooperation in the sphere of law and dispute resolution.	India and Singapore
Signs MoU to give finance solution	SANY India signs MoU with J&K Bank
Signed an MoU to promote technology development, innovative solutions and joint R&D.	Indian Navy with Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur
Signed a MoU for the dissemination & promotion of ICAR's initiatives for the growth of Indian Agriculture and farmers' welfare.	The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) and Krishi Jagran Pvt Ltd

Signed an MoU to set up 5,000 electric vehicle charging stations across India

Tata Passenger Electric Mobility (TEPM) with Hindustan Petroleum Corporation (HPCL)

Chapter 11: GDP Forecasting

India's GDP growth at 8.4% in Q3 2023-24

- India's gross domestic product (GDP) for the third quarter of the ongoing financial year accelerated to 8.4 per cent year-on-year, showed data shared by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.
- In the same period last year, the GDP growth was 4.3 per cent.
- GDP at constant (2011-12) prices in Q3 of 2023-24 is estimated at Rs 43.72 lakh crore, against Rs 40.35 lakh crore in Q3 of 2022-23, showing a growth rate of 8.4 percent.
- While analysts had estimated the GDP growth in the third quarter at below 7 per cent.
- The double-digit growth rate of the construction sector (10.7 per cent), followed by a good growth rate of the manufacturing sector (8.5 per cent) has boosted the GDP growth in FY24, according to the government.

Moody's raises India's 2024 GDP forecast to 6.8%

- Global rating agency Moody's has raised India's GDP growth projection for 2024 to 6.8 per cent from the 6.1 per cent.
- The increase in estimate was attributed to India's robust economic performance in 2023 and diminishing global economic challenges.
- Surpassing the analysts' expectations of 6.6 per cent, India's economy grew 8.4 per cent during the October-December quarter.
- Moody's attributed this strong growth to the government's capital spending and vigorous manufacturing activity.
- For 2025, the GDP growth is estimated at 6.4 per cent.

CRISIL raises India's GDP growth forecast to 6.8% for FY25

- Rating agency CRISIL raised its economic growth forecast for India in the next financial year (FY25) to 6.8 per cent from 6.4 per cent estimated earlier, citing higher growth momentum.
- In its India Outlook report, growth will moderate in FY25 from 7.6 per cent in the current financial year as higher interest rates and lower fiscal impulse will temper demand.
- The report also expects the Indian economy to grow at an average rate of 6.7 per cent till the end of this decade.

- On the inflation front, the rating agency expects the softening to continue in the next financial year on the back of healthier agriculture output that tames food inflation, and benign oil and commodity prices.

Moody's ups growth forecast to 8% for FY24

- **Moody's Ratings** has raised **India's GDP growth forecast for FY24 to around 8 per cent from 6.6 per cent** on the back of strong domestic consumption and capital expenditure.
- The latest estimate of Moody's is about 140 basis points higher than the earlier projection of 6.6 per cent made in November 2023.
- The National Statistical Office (NSO) has projected 8.4 per cent growth in December quarter of the current financial year.
- It has also revised GDP estimates for the first and second quarters to 8.2 per cent and 8.1 per cent from 7.8 per cent and 7.6 per cent, respectively.

S&P Global raises India's FY25 GDP growth forecast to 6.8%

- **S&P Global** has raised **India's gross domestic product (GDP) growth forecast for Financial Year 2024-25 (FY25)** by 40 basis points to **6.8 per cent** or lower than the central bank and government's projection of 7 per cent.
- The Indian economy is estimated to have clocked a growth of 7.6% in the current fiscal.
- In November, last year, the U.S.-based agency had projected India's growth to be 6.4% in 2024-25 fiscal on robust domestic momentum.

Chapter 12: Current Affairs (National)

Leopard numbers show 8% rise from 2018 to 2022

- **India's leopard numbers rose by 8% from 12,852 in 2018 to 13,874 in 2022**, according to a report made public by the Environment Ministry.
- While the highest number of leopards were reported in Madhya Pradesh (3,907), only three other States reported over 1,000 animals each — Maharashtra (1,985), Karnataka (1,879) and Tamil Nadu (1,070).
- While Uttarakhand reported a 22% decline in the big cat numbers — reportedly due to poaching and man-animal conflict, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam and West Bengal saw a collective 150% rise to 349 animals.

FSSAI gives 'Eat Right Station' certificate to 150 Railway Stations

- **Food regulator FSSAI** has awarded **'Eat Right Station' certification to 150 railway stations** so far for ensuring safe, hygienic and nutritious food options for passengers.
- The 'Eat Right Station' certification process involves rigorous audits of food vendors, training of food handlers, adherence to strict hygiene and sanitation

protocols and efforts to raise awareness among individuals to make informed food choices.

- Some of the prominent stations that have been certified as Eat Right stations are in New Delhi, Varanasi, Kolkata, Ujjain, Ayodhya Cantt, Hyderabad, Chandigarh, Kozhikode, Guwahati, Visakhapatnam, Bhubaneswar, Vadodara, Mysuru City, Bhopal, Igatpuri, and Chennai, among others from various states.

4 days long 'Tawi Festival' begins in Jammu

- The four day long '**Tawi Festival**' begins in **Jammu region**.
- This time four-day 'Tawi festival' will strictly remain focussed on the promotion of Jammu's rich, diverse art forms and cultural heritage where the youth will also get a platform to give a vent to their creativities besides sharing thoughts with experts.
- The festival comprises Seminars, workshops, and talks, performances of folk music and street theatre, classical and folk dance and music, and a Mela, with an emphasis on showcasing entrepreneurship, innovation, local cuisines, and organic products sourced from women's NGO groups across the Himalayan region.

Ministry of Women and Child Development organizes 'Poshan Utsav'

- The **Ministry of Women and Child Development** has organized the **Poshan Utsav at The Oberoi**.
- The event aimed to promote good nutrition behavior and highlighted India's ongoing efforts to **combat malnutrition** by promoting good nutrition practices.
- The event was graced by the Union Minister for Women and Child Development and Minority Affairs, Smriti Zubin Irani and Bill Gates, Co-Chair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF).
- The event featured the release of the '**Poshan Utsav Book**', conceptualized by the Ministry of Women and Child Development and curated by the Deendayal Research Institute (DRI).

PM Modi launches development projects worth 35,700 crore rupees in Jharkhand

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** has inaugurated and laid the foundation stone for multiple development projects worth 35,700 crore rupees in Jharkhand from Sindri in Dhanbad district.
- These projects are related to fertilizer, rail, power, and coal sectors.
- Modi dedicated to the nation the Hindustan Urvarak & Rasayan Ltd's (HURL) Sindri fertiliser plant, in order to attain self-sufficiency in the urea sector. The plant has been developed at a cost of over 8,900 crore rupees.

Cabinet approves establishment of International Big Cat Alliance

- **The Union Cabinet** has approved the **establishment of International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA)** with headquarters in India with a one-time budgetary support of **Rs.150 crore for a period of five years from 2023-24 to 2027-28**.

- PM Modi on the occasion of Global Tiger Day 2019 called for an Alliance of Global Leaders to curb poaching in Asia.
- While commemorating 50 years of India's Project Tiger on April 9, 2023, he formally announced the launch of International Big Cat Alliance.
- International Big Cat Alliance aiming at securing the future of big cats and landscapes they thrive. India is home to five big cats namely Tiger, Lion, Leopard, Snow Leopard and Cheetah.

Cabinet approves PM-Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana

- The Union Cabinet has approved a ₹75,021-crore package for the “PM-Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana” (PM Free Electricity scheme) to promote rooftop solar (RTS) installations in India.
- The scheme claims to be able to provide 300 units of “free electricity” every month to one crore households.
- Prime Minister had launched the scheme on February 13, 2024.
- Scheme provides a central financial assistance of 30,000 subsidy for 1 kW system, 60,000 for 2 kW systems and 78,000 for 3 kW systems or higher.
- Households can access collateral-free low-interest loan products of around 7 per cent at present for installation. In addition to this, Model Solar Village will be developed in each district to act as role model for adoption of rooftop solar in rural areas.

Amit Shah inaugurates National Urban Cooperative Finance and Development Corporation

- Cooperation Minister **Amit Shah** has launched the National Urban Co-operative Finance and Development Corporation Limited (NUCFDC), the Umbrella organization for the Urban Cooperative Banks in New Delhi.
- NUCFDC has received a Certificate of Registration from the RBI to operate as a Non-Banking Finance Company and serve as the umbrella organisation for the urban cooperative banking sector.
- The main objective of NUCFDC should be to help urban cooperative banks adhere to the Banking Regulations Act and bring professionalism in their work.
- There are more than 1,500 UCBs with 11,000 branches, having a deposit of ₹5 lakh crore and credit base of ₹3.50 lakh crore across the country.

L&T commissions India's first indigenously built green hydrogen electrolyser in Gujarat

- **Larsen & Toubro (L&T)** has commissioned its **first indigenously-manufactured electrolyser at the Green Hydrogen Plant** at A M Naik Heavy Engineering Complex in Hazira, Gujarat.
- This step marks L&T Electrolysers Limited's entrance into the domestic manufacturing of electrolysers, aligning with the company's focus on enhancing sustainable energy solutions.

Sarbananda Sonowal dedicates first-ever Made-in-India ASTDS tug

- **Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal** has inaugurated the **60T bollard pull tug named 'Ocean Grace' and the Medical Mobile Unit (MMU)**.
- The Ocean Grace is the first make in India ASTDS Tug developed by the Cochin Shipyard Limited under MoPSW.
- The 'Ocean Grace' built at a cost of Rs. 45 crores, stands as a pinnacle of maritime engineering, equipped with cutting-edge technology and boasting a remarkable bollard pull of 60 tonnes.
- The goal of the Green Tug Transition Programme (GTTP) is to convert at least 50% of all tugs into Green Tugs by 2030 and to have Green Tugs operating at all major ports.

Chapchar Kut Festival Celebrated Across Mizoram

- **Chapchar Kut** - the biggest festival of **Mizoram** was celebrated across the state with full traditional fervor and festivities.
- The festival has attracted thousands of people who thronged the Assam Rifles Ground - Lammual in the heart of Aizawl city with full capacity.
- Chapchar Kut, the biggest festival of the Mizos, celebrates unity and resilience after the completion of the Jhum operation.

Jyotiraditya Scindia inaugurates country's 1st Green Hydrogen Plant in Stainless Steel Sector at Haryana

- **Union Steel Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia** has virtually inaugurated **India's 1st Green Hydrogen Plant in the Stainless-Steel Sector at Jindal Stainless Limited, Hisar**.
- This plant will be the world's first off-grid Green Hydrogen plant for the stainless-steel industry and the world's first Green Hydrogen plant with rooftop and floating solar.
- This project will reduce carbon emissions by around two thousand 700 Metric Tonnes per annum and 54 thousand tons of carbon dioxide emissions over the next two decades.

India's first indigenous Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor at Kalpakkam

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** has inaugurated **India's first indigenous Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor (PFBR) (500 MWe) at Kalpakkam, Tamil Nadu**.
- In line with the true spirit of Aatmanirbhar Bharat, PFBR has been fully designed and constructed indigenously by BHAVINI with significant contribution from more than 200 Indian industries including MSMEs.
- Once commissioned, India will only be the second country after Russia to have commercial operating Fast Breeder Reactor.
- The PFBR reactor core consists of control sub-assemblies, blanket subassemblies and fuel sub-assemblies. With minimised nuclear waste generated from the reactor and advanced safety features, FBRs will provide a safe, efficient and clean source of energy and contribute to the goal of net zero.

- In India's three stages of the nuclear power programme, BHAVINI paves the way as a forerunner in the second stage by building a 500 MWe PFBR.

Cuttack Rupa Tarakasi, Banglar muslin get GI tag

- The **Cuttack Rupa Tarakasi**, more widely known as Silver Filigree, has **recently been awarded the Geographical Indication (GI)** tag by the Geographical Indications Registry in Chennai.
- This recognition, sought by the Odisha State Co-operative Handicrafts Corporation Limited and supported by the Department of Textile and Handicrafts, Government of Odisha, places Cuttack's Silver Filigree on the map as a unique and protected form of art.
- Silver Filigree, or Tarakasi, is a testament to the unparalleled skill and precision of artisans in Cuttack.
- The craft's history traces back to over 500 years ago, with influences spanning from Persia to Indonesia, and finally making its home in Cuttack, Odisha. This intricate form of metalwork involves twisting thin silver wires to create delicate and complex designs, often used in jewelry and decorative items.

Mandaviya inaugurates Three CIPET Centers Across India

- Union Minister of Chemicals and Fertilisers and Health and Family Welfare **Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya** virtually inaugurated **3 centers of Central Institute of Petrochemicals Engineering & Technology (CIPET) established across India.**
- These three new CIPET centres dedicated to the nation by the Minister are CSTS Baddi (Himachal Pradesh), CSTS, Ranchi (Jharkhand), and CSTS Gwalior (MP).
- CIPET Institutes helped the industry not only by providing skilled manpower but also by research and production. By getting training from CIPET, youth almost get 100% jobs in petrochemical sector.
- CIPET was started in 1968 in Chennai as Central Plastic Engineering and Tool Institution.

India's unemployment rate in 2023 dropped to 3.1%: NSO

- **India's unemployment rate dropped to 3.1 per cent in 2023 from 3.6 per cent** in the preceding year, reflecting continued improvement in the labour markets, revealed the latest employment-unemployment indicators report released by the National Statistical Office.
- During the calendar year 2023, the unemployment rate in both rural and urban areas declined to 2.4 per cent and 5.2 per cent, respectively, from 2.8 per cent and 5.9 per cent in 2022.
- The unemployment rate for rural women (1.9 per cent) was lower than for rural men (2.7 per cent) in 2023, whereas in urban areas, the rate was higher for women (7.5%) compared to men (4.4%).

BHEL bags order worth Rs 9,500 cr to set up 1,600 MW thermal project

- Power equipment major **Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd (BHEL)** has secured a power plant engineering, procurement, and construction (EPC) **order of over Rs 9,500 crore from NTPC Ltd.**
- The order is for the Singrauli Super Thermal Power Project Stage-III (2x800 MW), in Uttar Pradesh.
- According to BHEL, the order won in international competitive bidding is for the supply of equipment like boilers, turbines, generators, and associated auxiliaries, along with electrical and control and instrumentation, balance of plant packages, and others.

PM Modi inaugurates India's first underwater metro in Kolkata

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** has inaugurated **India's first under-river metro tunnel in Kolkata.**
- The metro tunnel has been built under Kolkata's Hooghly River that will connect Howrah Maidan to Esplanade.
- The 4.8 km stretch between Howrah Maidan and Esplanade is the second section of the East-West Metro corridor between Howrah Maidan and the IT hub Salt Lake Sector V.

Government launched innovative NITI for states platform for policy and good governance

- Minister of Communications, Railways, and Electronics & Information Technology **Ashwini Vaishnaw** has launched **NITI Aayog's NITI For States platform at Rang Bhawan Auditorium, Akashvani, New Delhi.**
- The 'NITI For States', is a cross-sectoral knowledge platform designed to become a Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) for Policy and Good Governance.
- The significant features of the platform include a multi-sectoral live repository of 7,500 Best Practices, 5,000 Policy documents, 900+ datasets, 1,400 data profiles, and 350 NITI publications.

Rajnath Singh inaugurates 'Chola' building at Naval War College

- **Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh** has inaugurated the **new Administrative & Training building at the Naval War College (NWC) in Goa.**
- The modern edifice, named the 'Chola', pays homage to the mighty maritime empire of the Chola dynasty of ancient India.

Fly91 gets DGCA approval to start flights

- **The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA)** has granted **air operator's certificate to Goa-based Just Udo Aviation Pvt Ltd to operate its airline Fly91.**
- The grant of the air operator certificate marks the completion of all regulatory and compliance requirements for the airline to begin its commercial operations.
- The airline has been allocated its first set of routes under the government's regional connectivity scheme UDAN, or Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik.
- This includes routes to Sindhudurg, Jalgaon, Nanded and Agatti from Bangalore, Goa, Hyderabad and Pune under the UDAN 5.0 of the civil aviation ministry.

Kerala Launches India's First Govt-Backed OTT Platform, 'CSpace'

- Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan has inaugurated the state's own Over-The-Top (OTT) platform at Kairali Theatre.
- The platform, called CSpace, is India's first government-backed OTT platform.
- The OTT platform is managed by Kerala State Film Development Corporation (KSFDC), a state-owned entity entrusted with the promotion of Malayalam cinema. A special curator panel is set by KSFDC to select content for the platform.

IOC to make fuel for Formula 1 - first by an Indian firm

- India's largest oil company, Indian Oil Corporation Ltd (IOC) will start manufacturing fuel used in adrenaline-pumping Formula One or F1, motor racing as it looks to expand its basket of niche fuels.
- F1 fuel is essentially high-octane petrol and the standards are heavily regulated by global motor sport governing body Federation Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA) on various counts, including permissible additives and blending agents.
- IOC will supply fuel for all the motorcyclists from 15 countries that will participate in the FIM Asia Road Racing Championship.

First Bharat Steam Boiler Expo 2024 held in Guwahati

- The first Bharat Steam Boiler Expo 2024 was held at Veterinary College Field in Guwahati, Assam.
- The expo is organized by the Assam's Inspectorate of Boilers (CIB) and supported by the Assam government's Labour Welfare Department.
- The expo aims to improve the efficiency and growth of various sectors that use steam boilers.

Govt extends subsidy for Ujjwala beneficiaries by another one year

- The Union Cabinet has decided to extend the subsidy of ₹300 per LPG cylinder for up to 12 refills per year till the end of next financial year (March 2025).
- About 10.27 crore beneficiaries under the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) will get the benefit of the scheme with its continuation set to incur ₹12,000 crore.
- The Centre had started a targeted subsidy of ₹200 per cylinder for up to 12 refills per annum to the PMUY consumers in May 2022. In October 2023, the Centre increased the subsidy to ₹300 per cylinder for up to 12 refills per year.
- As on February 1, 2024, the effective price of domestic LPG for PMUY consumers is ₹603 per LPG cylinder of 14.2 kg.

World's largest literary festival-'Sahityotsav' to be held from March 11-16

- World's largest literary festival-'Sahityotsav' by Sahitya Akademi will be held from the 11th to 16th of March.
- The festival commemorating 70 years of Sahitya Akademi will witness the participation of more than a hundred renowned writers and scholars.
- Over 190 sessions and more than 175 languages of the country will also be represented during the festival.

- The Chief Guest of the Awards Presentation Ceremony will be Pratibha Rai, the distinguished Odia writer.

Cabinet approves 4% hike in DA for government employees

- The Union Cabinet has approved hike in dearness allowance (DA) for central government employees and dearness relief (DR) for pensioners by 4 per cent with effect from January 1.
- With this revision, the DA will reach 50 per cent. This means various other allowances such as Housing Rent Allowances (HRA), Children's Education and Transport Allowances, and gratuities, will also go up based on the formula suggested by the 7th Pay Commission.
- All of them will get arrears for January and February and the revised rate for the current month, along with salary and pension for March.

PM launches 52 tourism sector projects worth more than Rs 1400 crores

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has launched 52 tourism sector projects worth over Rs 1400 crore under the Swadesh Darshan and Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Heritage Augmentation Drive (PRASHAD) schemes.
- Nine tourism infrastructure projects, spread across the country, developed under Swadesh Darshan and PRASHAD schemes worth Rs 469 crore were launched, besides 43 other projects worth Rs 963 crore were also launched under the two schemes of tourism ministry.
- The project launch events were also carried out at all the 52 destinations, simultaneously by the ministry, state government, UT administrations and local authorities.
- The projects launched included three projects under PRASHAD Scheme (Hazratbal- Srinagar, Jogulamba- Telangana, Amarkantak-Madhya Pradesh) worth Rs 129.35 crore.

Cabinet approves MSP for Raw Jute for 2024-25 Season

- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has increased the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for raw jute for the 2024-25 season by ₹285 to ₹5,335 per quintal.
- The decision would ensure a return of 64.8% over the all-India weighted average cost of production.
- In the last 10 years, the government has increased MSP for raw jute from ₹2,400 per quintal in 2014-15 to ₹5,335 a quintal in 2024-25, registering a growth of 122%".
- The decision is expected to help jute farmers in West Bengal, Bihar and Assam.

PM Modi dedicated Sela tunnel to nation

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has dedicated the Sela tunnel in Arunachal Pradesh to the country, with the new route allowing faster deployment of weapons, soldiers and equipment to forward areas near the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the Tawang sector.

- the tunnel is built by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) at a cost of Rs 825 crore. It is the world's longest twin-lane tunnel above 13,000 feet.
- The tunnel will cut down the travel time to Tawang by at least one hour as well as provide all-weather connectivity.

Bichom becomes 27th district of Arunachal Pradesh

- **Bichom**, carved out of West and East Kameng, became the **27th district of Arunachal Pradesh**.
- In February this year, the state assembly passed the Arunachal Pradesh (Re-Organization of Districts) (Amendment) Bill, 2024 for the creation of Bichom and Keyi Panyor districts.
- A total of 27 villages from West Kameng and 28 from East Kameng were made part of Bichom district.

DST, T-Hub launch AI-ML hub in Hyderabad

- The **Department of Science and Technology (DST)**, which works under the Union Ministry of Science and Technology, and start-up ecosystem enabler T-Hub have joined hands to set up a Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence Technology Hub (MATH) in Hyderabad.
- The hub will work to foster AI innovation, create job opportunities, and provide a conducive ecosystem for AI and ML start-ups.

India to construct a 10,000-GPU Supercomputer for self-sufficient AI advancement

- The **Indian government**, led by PM Narendra Modi, has **approved a new \$1.24 billion investment for the IndiaAI mission, a "national-level" plan** designed to create an all-Indian AI ecosystem from scratch.
- This initiative aims to create an all-Indian AI ecosystem from scratch, bolstering India's technological prowess and fostering innovation in AI.
- The HPC system, expected to include 10,000 "or more" GPUs as AI accelerators, will be developed through a public-private partnership to support startups and research organizations.

PM Modi lays foundation stone of "Experience of Spirituality at Chitrakoot Ghat" project in Chitrakoot

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** performed Bhoomi Pujan and **inaugurated projects worth 118 crore 72 lakh rupees in Madhya Pradesh** through video conferencing.
- These include various projects in Gwalior and Chitrakoot under Swadesh Darshan 2.0 scheme and development work of Amarkantak and Pitambara Peeth Temple Datia under Prasad scheme.
- PM also laid the foundation stone of the "Experience of Spirituality at Chitrakoot Ghat" project in Chitrakoot.
- The Prime Minister also inaugurated various development works worth 50 crore rupees under the Prasad Scheme in Amarkantak. Which includes development

around Narmada Temple, and expansion of tourist and public facilities in Amarkantak.

Poshan Pakhwada 2024 begins

- The **Ministry of Women and Child Development** will organize **Poshan Pakhwada nationwide from 9 March to 23 March 2024**.
- This 15-day celebration aims to spread awareness about nutrition, dietary practices, and women's health.
- During the Pakhwada, mass sensitisation and community activities will be held around the themes including Poshan Bhi Padhai Bhi, dietary practices focused on sensitisation around nutrition and health of pregnant women.

Arjun Munda inaugurates agriculture integrated command and control center

- Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare **Arjun Munda** has inaugurated the **Agriculture Integrated Command and Control Centre established at Krishi Bhawan in New Delhi**.
- Aim - To empower the farmers of the country by equipping them with information, services and facilities.
- The objective of the new initiative is to provide farmers the information about the reality of the farm and also to find out what are the real challenges in the agriculture sector.

Hardeep S Puri Inaugurates 5th ONGC Para Games

- Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister **Hardeep Singh Puri** has inaugurated the **5th Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) Para Games at New Delhi's Thyagaraj Stadium**.
- The ONGC Para Games is a testament to the spirit of the participating athletes.
- The 5th ONGC Para Games, featuring a total of 371 athletes will witness active participation across a range of sporting disciplines.
- Athletes from various oil and gas public enterprises will compete across disciplines such as athletics, badminton, table tennis, and wheelchair racing.

PM Modi unveils 125-foot tall statue of Lachit Borphukan

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** has unveiled a **125-foot bronze statue of 'Ahom general' Lachit Borphukan in Assam's Jorhat**.
- The 'Statue of Valour' was unveiled by the PM at the Lachit Barphukan Maidam Development Project at Hollongapar near Teok.
- The height of the statute, built by Ram Vanji Sutar, is 84 feet and it is set on a pedestal of 41 feet, making the structure 125 feet tall.

About Ahom General Lachit Barphukan

- Ahom General Lachit Barphukan was one of the five Barphukans who held administrative, judicial, and military duties in the Ahom kingdom of Assam and was born in 1622.

India now stands as the world's second-largest producer of mobile phones

- India now stands as the world's second-largest producer of mobile phones at the end of the decade 2014-2024.
- India Cellular and Electronics Association said in a statement that the sector has transitioned from being 78 percent import-dependent in 2014 to 97 percent self-sufficiency.
- Only three percent of the total mobile phones sold in India are now imported.
- India's mobile phone production is nearing 20 lakh crore rupees in a decade of unprecedented growth.
- India produced 2.45 billion units of mobile phones during these ten years, against a goal of 2.5 billion units.
- China is the largest producer of mobile phones; Indonesia stands at 3rd.

Majuli Mask Making and Manuscript Painting Receive GI Tags

- Mask making and manuscript painting of Majuli, an island-district of Assam, have received Geographical Indication (GI) tags.
- Majuli's Mukha Shilpa traces its origins to Srimanta Sankardev, who used arts as medium for Bhakti.
- Mask making or 'Mukha Shilpa' of Majuli is an age-old art form in the island, dating back to the 16th century. It is one of the most famous traditional crafts still practiced in Majuli, the world's largest inhabited river island.

North India's First Government Homeopathic College to be Established in Kathua

- Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology, **Dr Jitendra Singh**, announced the establishment of **North India's first Government Homeopathic College in the Jasrota area of Kathua district, Jammu and Kashmir.**
- The project, funded centrally at Rs 80 crore, reflects a significant stride in healthcare and education infrastructure development in the region.
- The open space will be utilised later on for construction of an auditorium, playground, etc.

Jal Shakti Ministry launched Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain 2024

- The Union Minister for Jal Shakti, **Gajendra Singh Shekhawat** has launched the "Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain" campaign 2024.
- It is the fifth edition of the campaign. The launch of Catch the Rain Campaign was scheduled to be held at the NDMC Convention Centre in New Delhi.
- The theme of the Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain Campaign 2024 is Nari Shakti se Jal Shakti.

PM Modi inaugurates 15 Airport Projects

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** has inaugurated 15 airport projects, including the revamped Terminal 1 of the **Indira Gandhi International Airport in Delhi, worth over Rs.9,800 crore.**
- The project virtually launched by the PM during an event at Uttar Pradesh's Azamgarh included 12 new terminal buildings of Pune, Kolhapur, Gwalior,

Jabalpur, Delhi, Lucknow, Aligarh, Azamgarh, Chitrakoot, Moradabad, Shravasti and Adampur Airports.

- In the fiscal year 2023-24, the Airports Authority of India (AAI) has already operationalized state-of-the-art new integrated terminal buildings at Chennai, Port Blair, Surat, and Tiruchirappalli Airports.

Tata Power Solar completes India's largest solar-BESS project in Chhattisgarh

- **Tata Power Solar Systems Limited (TPSSL)**, a subsidiary of Tata Power Renewable Energy Limited (TPREL), has **completed India's largest Solar and Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) project at Rajnandgaon in Chhattisgarh.**
- It comprises a 100 MW Solar PV Project and a 120 MWh Utility Scale Battery Energy Storage System (BESS).
- TPSSL secured the Rs 945 crore project from SECI in December 2021, handling engineering, construction, and commissioning of the project.

SIDBI gets \$24.5 million from GCF for 'Avaana' fund

- **Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI)** has received **\$24.5 million from Green Climate Fund (GCF) for its maiden anchored project 'Avaana Sustainability Fund (ASF)' valued at \$120 million.**
- GCF, a pivotal component of the historic Paris Agreement, is the world's largest climate fund.
- The primary aim of the ASF project is to invest in early-stage companies harnessing technology-led innovation to spur climate solutions and sustainability in India.

India's Index of Industrial Production grows by 3.8% in January 2024

- **India's industrial production grew 3.8 per cent in January 2024**, according to official data released by the government.
- Factory output measured in terms of the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) witnessed a growth of 5.8 per cent in January 2023.
- The IIP grew 5.9 per cent during April 2023 to January 2024 compared to a 5.5 per cent expansion in the year-ago period.

Anurag Thakur launches PB-SHABD to offer news feed to media outlets

- Information and Broadcasting Minister **Anurag Singh Thakur** launched **PB-SHABD, a news-sharing service from Prasar Bharati** in New Delhi.
- PB-SHABD stands for Prasar Bharati – Shared audio-visuals for Broadcast Dissemination
- He also launched revamped websites of Akashvani News and DD News and updated News on the Air mobile app.
- CEO of Prasar Bharti - Gaurav Dwivedi

Ministry of Defence approves three lakh vacancies to expand NCC

- **Defence Minister Rajnath Singh** has approved a proposal for **the expansion of the National Cadet Corps (NCC) with the addition of three lakh cadet vacancies.**

- This decision comes in response to the growing demand for NCC enrolment from educational institutions across India.
- Since its inception in 1948 with just 20,000 cadets, the NCC will now have a sanctioned strength of 20 lakh cadets, solidifying its position as the world's largest uniformed youth organization.
- The expansion plan aims to evenly distribute vacancies across all States and Union Territories, reducing the waiting list of institutions seeking NCC affiliation.

Maharashtra's Ahmednagar to be renamed 'Ahilyanagar'

- **The Maharashtra Cabinet has approved to rename Ahmednagar district as Ahilya Nagar after the 18th-century Maratha queen Ahilyabai Holkar.**
- The proposal to rename the city was first announced by Maharashtra chief minister Eknath Shinde in May last year on the 298th birth anniversary of the 18th-century queen Ahilyabai Holkar.
- Following the approval, Curry Road will be renamed Lalbaug, Sandhurst Road will now be known as Dongri, and Marine Lines will be renamed Mumbadevi.

SC ordered Election Commission to Published Data on Electoral Bond

- **The Election Commission of India on its official website on March 14 published the electoral bonds data as ordered by the Supreme Court of India (SC).**
- The publication of the electoral bond data came almost a month after the Supreme Court struck down the 2018 scheme calling it "unconstitutional."
- In the data on electoral bonds, the only information available about donors is the name of their company or individual.
- **The SBI confirmed in an affidavit that 22,217 electoral bonds were purchased and 22,030 redeemed by political parties between April 1, 2019, and February 15, 2024.**
- The SBI shared two sets of data with the Election Commission. The first set includes the name of the purchaser of the electoral bond, date, and denomination. The second list lays out details of the political party and dates and denomination of bonds encashed.
- The data reveals key details like the name of the electoral bond purchaser and the amount they donated through the bond. It pertains to the purchase of electoral bonds in the denomination of ₹1 lakh, ₹10 lakh and ₹1 crore.
- The donors include a range of companies like Megha Engineering and Infrastructure, Future Gaming and Hotel Services (Lottery Martin), Sun Pharma, Lakshmi Mittal, Sula Wine, DLF Commercial Developers, etc.

Who are the biggest donors?

- In the data released, there are 1,260 companies and individuals that purchased electoral bonds worth ₹12,769 crore. The top 20, all companies, accounted for ₹5,945 crore—or nearly half of the total amount donated through electoral bonds.

Shipping Ministry approves projects worth ₹645-crore in Assam to boost tourism

- India's Shipping Ministry has approved waterways projects worth ₹645 crore on Brahmaputra in Assam.
- Projects, aimed at boosting river tourism, will be implemented with financial assistance from the Centre.
- Projects will involve the creation of slipways at strategic locations in Dhubri and Majuli, new passenger terminals at Ghagor in North Lakhimpur and Bahari in Barpeta district of Assam. There will be additional passenger terminals in Goalpara, Guijan, Kurua, Dhubri, Disangmukh & Matmora.

NHPC bags 200 MW capacity solar power project in Gujarat

- State-run hydro power major NHPC has bagged a 200-megawatt (MW) capacity solar power project to be set up at the Gujarat State Electricity Corporation's (GSECL) 1,125 MW RE Park in Khavda.
- NHPC will develop the project on a build-own-and-operate basis at a tentative development cost of about ₹847 crore.
- The project was secured at a tariff of ₹2.66 per unit and will be completed in a period of 18 months.
- The project will generate about 473 million units (MU) in the first year of commissioning and the cumulative generation from the project over a period of 25 years would be about 10,850 million units.

Government launches alternate Auto Fuel Ethanol100

- Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Hardeep Singh Puri has launched Ethanol100, an alternate auto fuel in New Delhi.
- Ethanol100, a cleaner and greener alternative to gasoline, is a blend of 92 to 94 percent ethanol, 4 to 5 percent motor spirit to provide colour to flame and 1.5 percent Co-solvent higher saturated alcohol.
- The fuel produces lower emissions of greenhouse gases, a reduction by around 63% on well to wheel basis.
- Ethanol100 will help to mitigate the impacts of climate change and improve air quality. Prominent two-wheeler manufacturers are already undertaking trials for Ethanol100 compliant vehicles.

Kashmir hosts first Formula-4 Car Racing Event along Dal Lake

- Srinagar hosted the first-ever Formula 4 car racing demonstration event on the banks of the world-famous Dal Lake.
- The event enthralled locals and motorsport fans as they witnessed stunts performed by professional Formula 4 drivers.
- Sleek racing cars roared along a 1.7 km track from Lalit Ghat on the banks of Dal Lake to Nehru Park in the city.

India's first integrated Oil Palm Processing Unit by 3F Oil Palm starts commercial operations

- India's first integrated oil palm processing unit in Arunachal Pradesh started operation by one of India's largest oil palm development companies, 3F Oil Palm.

- A new factory has been established in the Lower Dibang Valley district of India's northeast state. This factory is part of Mission Palm Oil and is India's first oil palm factory under NMEO-OP.
- This integrated Oil Palm project will include a cutting-edge oil palm factory (Palm Oil Processing and Refinery), a zero-discharge effluent plant, a palm waste-based power plant, and additional structures and go-downs for support purposes.
- This factory marks the first Oil Palm factory in Arunachal Pradesh and India's first Oil Palm Factory under NMEO-OP.
- 3F Oil Palm's state-of-the-art Integrated Oil Palm Processing Unit has been designed to process fresh fruit bunches (FFBs) into high-quality palm oil with an impressive capacity of 10 metric tons per hour.

Election Commission launches 'Mission 414' campaign in Himachal

- **The Election Commission** has launched a special campaign in **Himachal Pradesh to boost voter turnout in 414 polling stations with less than 60% voting during the last Lok Sabha polls.**
- The main focus of the campaign — **"Mission 414"** — is increasing the vote percentage in 414 identified polling stations which registered less than 60% voting in the last Lok Sabha polls.
- Awareness campaigns and cultural events would be held besides making these 414 stations model polling stations.
- Booth youth icons from first time voters would be roped in and special invitation cards made by children would be given to prospective voters.

Tata Sons announces sale of 0.6% Stake in TCS for over ₹9,300 crore

- **Tata Sons**, the holding company of the Tata Group, will be selling **2.34 crore shares or 0.65 per cent equity of Tata Consultancy Services** through a block deal for ₹9,362.3 crore (\$1.13 billion).
- According to the December-end filing, Tata Sons holds a 72.38 per cent stake in TCS.
- Holding companies and promoter entities usually sell stakes in group firms to generate cash to pay down debt and stabilise balance sheets.

ICRA forecasts Indian IT service industry growth at 3-5% in FY25

- **Indian IT sector's revenue growth** is expected to come at a **tepid 3-5% in FY25, a domestic rating agency ICRA.**
- This is the second consecutive year when the credit rating agency has forecasted a growth rate in the range of 3-5 per cent for sector.
- The sector's hiring will "remain muted" in the near-term until the growth momentum picks up, ICRA Ratings said.

India's 1st Battery Energy storage GigaFactory to be launched in J&K

- **GoodEnough Energy** will start operations at **India's first battery energy storage gigafactory in the northern region of Jammu and Kashmir** by October.

- The facility will help industry in cutting more than 5 million tons of carbon emissions in a year.
- GoodEnough has already spent 1.5 billion rupees (\$18.07 million) on the 7 gigawatts per hour (GWH) facility and will spend 3 billion rupees by 2027 to raise capacity to 20 GWH.
- Battery energy storage projects are critical to India's ambitious plan to expand its renewable energy capacity to 500 gigawatts (GW) by 2030, from 178 GW at present.
- India has set a 2070 goal for becoming net zero.

IIT Madras develops customisable 'Electric Standing Wheelchair'

- IIT Madras has developed an indigenous **electric standing wheelchair** called 'NeoStand,' claimed to be India's most customizable wheelchair for the benefit of wheelchair users.
- The wheelchair was launched at the campus in the presence of Professor V Kamakoti, Director of IIT Madras, faculty, researchers, dignitaries, supporters of this project, and users of these rehabilitative devices.
- The NeoStand is a compact standing wheelchair equipped with navigation for its motorized standing mechanism. Users can easily switch from sitting to standing at the touch of a button.

GRID-INDIA is now a Miniratna Company

- **Grid Controller of India Limited (GRID-INDIA)** achieved a significant milestone by being conferred with the status of **Miniratna Category-I Central Public Sector Enterprise (CPSE)**.
- This recognition, bestowed upon by the Ministry of Power, Government of India, underscores GRID-INDIA's pivotal role in the nation's power landscape.
- Established in 2009, GRID-INDIA holds the crucial mandate of overseeing the seamless and uninterrupted operation of the Indian Power System, ensuring the efficient transfer of electric power within and across regions, facilitating trans-national power exchanges with a focus on reliability, economy, and sustainability.

'Operation Indravati' to evacuate stranded Indians in Haiti launched

- India has launched '**Operation Indravati**' to evacuate its citizens stranded in war-torn Haiti amid the intense fighting between the armed groups and the government.
- 12 citizens have been successfully rescued to the **Caribbean nation Dominican Republic** and further thanked its government for their support.

What's happening in Haiti?

- **The Caribbean nation of Haiti** has been plagued by widespread gang violence for over two years since the July 2021 assassination of President Jovenel Moise.

- In the power vacuum that followed the assassination, the country's de facto leader, Prime Minister Ariel Henry, assumed power, with the support of several nations.

Bharat Biotech starts clinical trials of Tuberculosis vaccine MTBVAC in India

- **Bharat Biotech International Ltd started clinical trials of the Tuberculosis vaccine MTBVAC on adults in India.**
- This is the first vaccine against Tuberculosis derived from a human source by the Spanish bio-pharmaceutical company, Biofabri.
- The trials are carried out by Bharat Biotech in close collaboration with Biofabri.

Government allocated Rs 6200 cr to boost RRB

- **The union government has allocated Rs 6212.03 crore to regional rural banks under the recapitalization scheme.**
- Under the scheme, recapitalization support is provided to RRBs to maintain the minimum prescribed capital-to-risk (Weighted) Assets ratio of nine per cent.
- The performance of RRBs has improved significantly, with a consolidated CRAR (Capital to Risk-weighted Assets Ratio) at an all-time high of 13.83 per cent as of December 31, 2023.

World's largest copper manufacturing plant owned by Adani Group

- **Billionaire Gautam Adani-led group has started of the first phase of the world's largest single-location copper manufacturing plant at Mundra in Gujarat, which will help cut India's dependence on imports and aid energy transition.**
- The 1st phase of the facility will produce 0.5 million tonnes a year of refined copper.
- India joins China and other nations that are rapidly expanding production of copper.
- India's per capita copper consumption is around 0.6 kg and the global average is 3.2 kg.

India's first Artificial Intelligence based Film 'IRAH' trailer launched

- **The trailer and song launch of the first Hindi film on this subject, "IRAH," took place in Mumbai.**
- The movie features Rohit Bose Roy, Rajesh Sharma, Karishma Kotak, and Rakshith Bhandarry in prominent roles.
- The movie is Produced by Big Films Media and directed by Sam Bhattacharjee. The film is set to release nationwide in theaters on April 4th through Iamplex Digital Theatrical Distribution.
- The trailer of the film "IRAH" showcases the misuse of AI technology, shedding light on its negative aspects.

World's First Om-Shaped Temple inaugurated in Rajasthan

- **The World's first-ever Om-shaped temple has inaugurated in the village of Jadan in Pali district of Rajasthan.**

- This temple became the world's first temple designed in this iconic form. This architectural masterpiece will not only attract tourists, but will also boast of an impressive visual presence that will be visible from space too.
- The 'Om Aakar' temple spans across a vast expanse of 250 acres in Jadan Village.

Features of Om Aakar Temple

- This temple is shaped like the Om symbol and follows the Nagara style commonly seen in North India. This intricate design pays tribute to the region's rich cultural and architectural heritage.
- Nagara style got its fame from the Gupta dynasty and continued to flourish through various regional kingdoms and empires that ruled over the northern parts of India.
- One notable aspect of this temple is that it can hold 1,008 idols of Lord Mahadev and 12 Jyotirlingas within its sacred boundaries.

Chapter 13: Current Affairs (International)

Nicaragua becomes first Spanish-Speaking nation to recognize IPS

- Nicaragua has become the first Spanish-speaking nation to officially recognize the Indian Pharmacopoeia (IP) or Indian Pharma standards.
- This development follows the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Pharmacopoeia Cooperation between the Governments of India and Nicaragua.
- The move is expected to foster stronger ties between the two nations in the areas of healthcare, encouraging the exchange of expertise and resources for improved medical standards.
- The Indian Pharmacopoeia (IP), compiled by the Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission (IPC) under the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare in India, serves as the official compendium of standards for drugs.
- The legal significance of the IP within India, enshrined in the Second Schedule of the Drugs & Cosmetics Act, 1940, necessitates adherence to its standards for all imported, manufactured, and distributed drugs within the country.

France become first country to enshrine abortion rights in its constitution

- France has become the first country in the world to enshrine abortion rights in its constitution.
- French lawmakers from both houses of the Parliament, in a special session, voted 780 to 72 in favor of the move to amend the Constitution.
- The amendment states that there is a guaranteed freedom to abortion in France.
- France has a long history of supporting abortion rights. The voluntary ending of pregnancy became legal in France in 1975 with a law named after Simone Veil, the health minister who supported it.

Panama becomes 97th member of International Solar Alliance

- **Panama** has officially become the **97th member of the International Solar Alliance (ISA)**.
- This milestone was announced by Randhir Jaiswal, the spokesperson for the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).
- Moreover, on March 5, Malta became the 119th country to join the International Solar Alliance.
- The International Solar Alliance (ISA) is an action-oriented, member-driven, collaborative platform for increased deployment of solar energy technologies as a means for bringing energy access, ensuring energy security, and driving energy transition in its member countries.

Sweden officially becomes 32nd member of NATO

- **Sweden** has officially become the **32nd member of NATO** after it completed the accession process in Washington.
- The handover of documents took place at a ceremony two years after Sweden applied to join the military alliance following the full-scale war between Russia and Ukraine in February 2022.
- The foundations of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) were officially laid down on 4 April 1949 with the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty, more popularly known as the Washington Treaty.

New Zealand bans disposable E-Cigarettes and Vapes

- **The New Zealand government** will ban the sale of **disposable e-cigarettes**, increase fines on retailers that sell to those younger than **18 years old** and better regulate retailers.
- The New Zealand government has received significant criticism for rolling back a world-first law banning tobacco sales for future generations.
- It is committed to reducing smoking but is just taking a different approach, including further regulations around vaping.

Saudi Arabia to participate in Miss Universe event in historic first

- Saudi Arabia officially joined the Miss Universe pageant with Romy Alqahtani as the Islamic country's first-ever representative.
- This is another step for Saudi Arabia, which has been shedding its conservative cloak under Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman Al Saud.
- Romy Alqahtani, a 27-year-old model, would be the first participant from the country in the international beauty pageant.
- Last year, Miss Nicaragua Sheynnis Palacios was crowned Miss Universe 2023.

Chapter 14: Banking & Financial

RBI cancels licence of Rajasthan-based Sumerpur Mercantile Urban Coop Bank

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has cancelled the licence of Sumerpur Mercantile Urban Cooperative Bank, Pali (Rajasthan), as the lender does not have adequate capital and earning prospects.
- The Registrar of Cooperative Societies, Rajasthan, has also been requested to issue an order for winding up the bank and appoint a liquidator.
- On liquidation, every depositor will be entitled to receive deposit insurance claim amount of his/her deposits up to Rs 5 lakh from Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC).
- As per the data submitted by the bank, 99.13 per cent of the depositors are entitled to receive full amount of their deposits from DICGC.

GST Collections Jump 12.5% YoY to Rs 1.68 Lakh Crore in Feb 2024

- Gross Goods and Services Tax (GST) revenue collected for February 2024 is ₹1,68,337 crore, marking a robust 12.5% increase compared to that in the same month in 2023.
- This growth was driven by a 13.9% rise in GST from domestic transactions and 8.5% increase in GST from import of goods.
- GST revenue net of refunds for February 2024 is ₹1.51 lakh crore which is a growth of 13.6% over that for the same period last year.
- Breakdown of February 2024 Collections-
Central Goods and Services Tax (CGST)- ₹31,785 crore
State Goods and Services Tax (SGST)- ₹39,615 crore
Integrated Goods and Services Tax (IGST)- ₹84,098 crore, including ₹38,593 crore collected on imported goods
Cess- ₹12,839 crore, including ₹984 crore collected on imported goods

FIU imposes 5.49 crore fine on Paytm Payments Bank

- Financial Intelligence Unit - India (FIU-IND) has hit Paytm Payments Bank Ltd with a hefty penalty of Rs 5,49,00,000 for alleged violations of anti-money laundering rules under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).
- The penalty pertains to issues within a business segment that was discontinued two years ago.
- The bank was accused of violating rules outlined in the PMLA and its associated regulations, as well as guidelines issued by the Director FIU-IND.
- The investigation was prompted by specific information provided by law enforcement agencies regarding certain entities believed to be involved in illicit activities, including online gambling.

Flipkart unveils its UPI handle to boost India's digital evolution

- **Flipkart** has launched its **UPI (Unified Payments Interface) handle to enhance digital payment** offerings to all users, including the e-commerce major's over 500 million customers, and boost India's digital evolution.
- Powered by Axis Bank, Flipkart UPI will initially be available for Android users.
- Customers can register for UPI with @fkaxis handle and can do fund transfers and checkout payments using the Flipkart app.

Kotak Mahindra Bank introduces Smart Choice Gold Loan

- **Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. (KMBL)** has launched '**Smart Choice Gold Loan**' for customers.
- This product comes with features including a fixed monthly interest rate starting from 0.88%, same-day disbursement, flexible repayment options, and minimal documentation requirements.
- This new product is designed to leverage the significant gold reserves held by Indian households, providing an easy and efficient way to meet their financial needs.
- The launch of the Smart Choice Gold Loan comes at a time when the demand for gold-backed financing solutions is on the rise in India.

Infibeam Avenues get RBI's authorization to payment aggregator licence

- India's first listed AI-powered fintech company, **Infibeam Avenues** has received the final authorization from **RBI to operate as a payment aggregator for its payment gateway brand, CCAvenue.**
- The RBI had in March 2020 introduced the PA framework, which necessitates payment gateways to secure an aggregator licence for acquiring merchants and delivering digital payment solutions.
- More than 10 million merchants are on Infibeam's platform, and this year, the company has already crossed half a million merchants onboarding in 1H FY24.

30 banks join RBI's UDGAM portal for unclaimed deposits

- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has announced that **30 banks are now participating in the UDGAM portal**, designed for individuals to search for their unclaimed deposits/accounts.
- UDGAM -- Unclaimed Deposits-Gateway to Access inforMation -- is an online portal developed by RBI.
- It facilitates the registered users to search unclaimed deposits/accounts across multiple banks in one place in a centralised manner.
- All unclaimed deposits/accounts that are part of the Depositor Education and Awareness (DEA) Fund of RBI can be searched in the UDGAM portal.

Kotak Life introduces Non-Linked Par Product Kotak G.A.I.N

- Private sector life insurer **Kotak Life Insurance** has launched a **non-linked participating product Kotak G.A.I.N** which offers long-term saving or income.
- The minimum annual premium payable to avail the product is Rs 50,000.

- While taking the policy, the minimum age of the policyholder should be 90 days while the policy maturing age should be minimum 40 years and maximum 85 years.
- The product provides three options to the policyholder to choose from.
- Under the first option, policyholders can receive regular income from the 1st month of policy issuance for monthly payout mode and 1st year onwards for annual payout mode.
- Under the second option, income benefits will be used to purchase additional sum assured throughout the policy term and receive it as lump sum or withdraw as per convenience.

Future Generali India launches new women's health insurance plan

- **Future Generali India Insurance Company (FGII)**, a private general insurer, has launched the most **comprehensive women's health insurance plan**.
- The plan is designed to meet women's unique needs.
- FGII "**HEALTH POWHER**" aims to address the various needs of women across the different stages of their lives.

Karnataka Vikas Grameena Bank launches 'Vikas Spoorty'

- **Karnataka Vikas Grameena Bank (KVGB)** has launched a **new loan scheme called 'Vikas Spoorty'** to strengthen the rural credit delivery system and also to motivate the common man to take up income-generating activities on a smaller scale.
- Under this scheme, people may avail a minimum loan of ₹50,000 and a maximum of ₹2,00,000.
- But the customer shall open a 'Daily Deposit' (pigmy) account and contribute regularly to it to service the repayment of instalment and interest for the loan.
- Chairman of KVGB - Shreekanth M Bhandiwad

Govt keeps interest rates on small savings schemes unchanged for Q1 FY25

- **The government** has kept the **interest rates unchanged on various small savings schemes** for the first quarter of the next fiscal, beginning April 1, 2024.
- With this, the **interest rates will remain unchanged till June 30, 2024**.
- These schemes offer guaranteed returns at regular intervals compounded monthly, quarterly or annually as the case may be. These instruments cater to conservative investors and offer guaranteed but low returns and range between 6-8 per cent.

BoB launches green term deposit scheme with 7.15% interest

- **Bank of Baroda (BoB)** has launched the **BoB Earth Green Term Deposit Scheme**, aimed at raising deposits for financing eligible environment-friendly projects and sectors.
- The scheme offers customers the dual benefits of stable financial returns and contribution to a greener planet.

- It offers annual interest rates, ranging from 6.75 per cent for a tenure of 12 to 18 months to 7.15 per cent for 777 days.
- Additionally, for longer tenures of 1,111 days, 1,717 days, and 2,201 days, the interest rates are set at 6.40 per cent per annum.

IndusInd Bank launched all-in-one payment wearables

- **IndusInd Bank** has introduced 'Indus PayWear,' a new wearable payment solution, available on Mastercard.
- These wearables enable users to tokenise their IndusInd Bank cards for tap-and-pay transactions at contactless Point-of-Sale (PoS) terminals worldwide.
- Indus Paywear aims to deliver unparalleled flexibility, convenience, and security to users. It is a fine example of how Mastercard leverages its expertise to allow consumers the power to choose between and make payments using their favorite wearable device.

Retail inflation dropped a tad to 4-month low of 5.09% in February 2024

- **India's retail inflation eased marginally to 5.09 per cent** on an annual basis in **February as against 5.10 per cent in the previous month**, data released by the Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation.
- The number has remained within the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) tolerance band of 2-6 per cent.
- On a sequential basis, the inflation rate increased to 0.16 per cent against a contraction of (-)0.11 per cent in the previous month.
- The rural inflation rate remained unchanged at 5.34 per cent, meanwhile, the urban inflation rate declined to 4.78 per cent from 4.92 per cent in January.
- The food inflation for February stood at 8.66 per cent versus 8.30 per cent recorded in January.

Kotak Mahindra Bank sells 2% stake in KFin Tech

- **Kotak Mahindra Bank** has sold a **2% stake in KFin Technologies** through the open market for Rs 208 crore.
- The private sector lender sold 3,470,000 shares of KFin Technologies at Rs 600.28 a share, bulk deals data on the BSE showed.
- As of December end, Kotak Mahindra Bank held a 9.80% stake in KFin Technologies.
- Kotak Mahindra Bank invested Rs 310 crore in KFin Technologies in September 2021.

RBI bars Federal Bank, South Indian Bank from issuing co-branded credit cards

- Following the directions by the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)**, private sector lenders **Federal Bank and South Indian Bank** stopped issuing co-branded credit cards to new customers on account of regulatory deficiencies.
- South Indian Bank said that it will not onboard new customers on their co-branded credit cards until it is fully compliant with directions under RBI Master Direction on Credit Card and Debit Card issuance.

- However, the lender added that it will continue to service the existing customers who hold co-branded credit cards.
- South Indian Bank has one co-branded credit card in partnership with State Bank of India (SBI), which is available in two variants SimplySAVE and Platinum.

Total of 22,217 electoral bonds purchased: SBI to SC

- **The State Bank of India (SBI) has told the Supreme Court that a total of 22,217 electoral bonds were purchased by political parties between April 1, 2019 and February 15 this year, out of which 22,030 were redeemed.**
- In a compliance affidavit filed in the apex court, the SBI said as per the court's direction, it has made available the details of electoral bonds to the Election Commission of India before the close of business hours on March 12.
- A total number of 22,217 bonds were purchased during the period April 1, 2019 till February 15, 2024.
- The affidavit said between April 1, 2019 to April 11, 2019, a total of 3,346 electoral bonds were purchased and 1,609 redeemed.

Private banks' share in deposits rises to 34%

- **The share of private sector banks in total deposits has risen significantly, reaching 34% as of December 2023, up from 25% at the end of the financial year 2017-18.**
- This growth has been driven by aggressive interest rate offerings and improved customer relationship management strategies adopted by private banks.
- The share of public sector banks in the space has declined to 59% from 66% at the end of the financial year 2017-18, according to the Reserve Bank of India data.
- The ability of private banks to swiftly raise interest rates on fixed deposits has helped them increase their share in total deposits.

RBI imposes ₹1.40 cr monetary penalty on Bank of India

- **The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed a penalty of Rs 1.4 crore on Bank of India for non-compliance with certain regulatory norms.**
- It has also imposed a penalty of Rs 29.55 lakh on private sector lender Bandhan Bank for non-compliance with certain directions.
- The penalty on Bank of India has been imposed for non-compliance with the RBI's directions related to 'interest rate on deposits', 'customer service in banks', 'interest rate on advances', and contravention of provisions of Credit Information Companies Rules 2006.

India's WPI inflation eases to four-month low of 0.20 per cent in Feb

- **Data released by the Ministry of Commerce & Industry showed that India's wholesale price inflation eased further to a four-month low of 0.20 per cent in February on an annual basis, as against 0.27 per cent in January.**
- The sequential WPI rate for February grew 0.07 per cent against a contraction of (-)0.33 per cent in the month before.

- Inflation for food articles stood at 6.95 per cent in February. For the primary articles segment, the inflation rate in February surged to 4.49 per cent from 3.84 per cent in the preceding month.

Axis Bank to support Tata Memorial-supported National Cancer Grid

- A national tumour biobank and cancer teleconsultation network are among the projects that will be **supported by a ₹100 crore contribution towards the National Cancer Grid (NCG), from Axis Bank.**
- As part of the five-year partnership, Axis Bank will support NCG, a network of 300-plus cancer centres across the country, coordinated by the Tata Memorial Hospital (TMH), under the Tata Memorial Centre.
- The aim is to improve cancer care and research, in terms of access and digital adoption on formalising a Memorandum of Understanding with Tata Memorial.

FinMin notifies Rs 90 coin to commemorate 90 years of RBI

- **The Finance Ministry has notified the issuance of a special commemorative coin of Rs 90 denomination to mark the completion of 90 years of the RBI.**
- One side of the coin shall bear the RBI's logo in the centre, with RBI@90 inscribed below.
- This will be a silver coin with 99.99% silver purity, weighing about 40 grams
- The face of the coin shall bear the Lion Capital of Ashoka Pillar in the centre with "Satyamev Jayate" inscribed in the Devnagari script below it.

RBI imposes ₹1.31 cr. penalty on Tamilnad Mercantile Bank

- **The Reserve Bank of India has imposed penalties on DCB Bank and Tamilnad Mercantile Bank for non-compliance with certain directions related to 'interest rate on advances'.**
- A monetary penalty of **Rs 63.6 lakh has been imposed on DCB Bank.**
- A penalty of **Rs 1.31 crore has been imposed on Tamilnad Mercantile Bank** for non-compliance with certain directions issued by it on 'Interest Rate on Advances' and 'Central Repository of Information on Large Credits (CRILC) - Revision in Reporting.

Gross Direct Tax collections for FY 2023-24 register a growth of 18.74%

- The **provisional figures of Direct Tax collections for the Financial Year 2023-24** (as on 17.03.2024) show that **Net collections are at Rs. 18,90,259 crore**, compared to Rs. 15,76,776 crore in the corresponding period of the preceding Financial Year (i.e. FY 2022-23), **representing an increase of 19.88%.**
- The Net Direct Tax collection of Rs. 18,90,259 crore (as on 17.03.2024) includes Corporation Tax (CIT) at Rs. 9,14,469 crore (net of refund) and Personal Income Tax (PIT) including Securities Transaction Tax (STT) at Rs. 9,72,224 crore (net of refund).

LIC world's strongest insurance brand: Brand Finance Insurance

- **Insurance behemoth Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC)** has emerged as the **strongest insurance brand globally**, according to a report Brand Finance Insurance 100 2024.
- The report said that LIC's brand value remains steady at USD 9.8 billion, accompanied by a brand strength index score of 88.3 and an associated AAA brand strength rating.
- Following LIC, the rankings highlight Cathay Life Insurance as the second strongest brand, experiencing a 9 per cent increase in brand value to USD 4.9 billion, closely followed by NRMA Insurance, which saw an 82 per cent rise in brand value to USD 1.3 billion.

Innoviti Payments, Concerto Software get RBI payment aggregator licences

- Offline point-of-sales deploying company **Innoviti Payments** and payment gateway Vegaah, which is run by **Concerto Software** and Systems, have **secured the online payment aggregator (PA) licence from the Reserve Bank of India**, joining the likes of MSwipe, Razorpay, Cashfree, and Zomato.
- CCAvenue, which is run by listed fintech company Infibeam Avenues, also received its PA licence from the RBI earlier this month.
- As PAs, these companies are authorized to settle ecommerce transactions. The licence also brings these payment companies directly within the purview of RBI regulations.
- Bengaluru-based Innoviti has around 2,500 online merchants who are using its online payment system named 'Innoviti Link'.

RBI imposes Rs 59.90 lakh fine on Nashik's Janalaxmi Cooperative Bank

- The **Reserve Bank** has **imposed a penalty of Rs 59.90 lakh on Nashik-based Janalaxmi Cooperative Bank** for non-compliance with regulations.
- The bank had failed to constitute a board of management within the extended timeline granted by RBI, sanctioned credit facilities to its nominal members in excess of the prescribed limit, and, opened/renewed term deposits at interest rates higher than those offered by the State Bank of India for the same tenor.
- The **central bank also imposed a penalty of Rs 28.30 lakh on Solapur Janata Sahakari Bank** for appointing a member on its board of management who did not satisfy the 'fit and proper' criteria and failure to reconstitute the panel within the specified time and contravention of Supervisory Action Framework by the lender by sanctioning fresh loans carrying risk weights of more than 100 per cent in FY22.

Government to borrow ₹7.5-lakh crore in April-Sept

- The **government will borrow ₹7.5-lakh crore between April 1 and September 30.**
- The interim Budget has set a target of ₹14.13-lakh crore of gross borrowing during FY25 to bridge the deficit between expenditure and Income.

- This means 53 per cent of the yearly target is to be borrowed during the first half of the current fiscal, which is lower than the previous years' number of 60 per cent or more.

SEBI cancels investment banking licence of Karvy Investor Services

- **Capital markets regulator SEBI has cancelled the registration of Karvy Investor Services Ltd. (KISL) as a merchant banker for breach of eligibility criteria.**
- The order came after the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) conducted an inspection of Karvy Investor Services during March 15-17, 2023 and in the onsite inspection, the regulator found that the merchant banker was not functioning or operational both at the registered as well as in the correspondence address.
- In April 2023, SEBI barred Karvy Investor Services from taking new clients for allegedly violating regulatory norms. It had found that KISL neither had any physical infrastructure nor any employee working for it.

Bank of India to raise Rs 10,000 cr via infrastructure bonds

- **Bank of India (BoI)'s board has given approval to raise Rs 10,000 crore through long-term infra bonds to fund infrastructure projects.**
- The fund would be raised in 2024-25, BoI said in a regulatory filing.
- Recently, many banks including SBI have issued infrastructure bonds to secure funds that are solely dedicated to advancing various infrastructure development projects.
- These bonds help in building roads, bridges, airports, power plants, and telecommunications networks etc and addressing the infrastructure deficit of the country.

Axis Bank launches Digital US Dollar Fixed Deposits for NRIs at GIFT City

- **Axis Bank has launched the digital US dollar Fixed Deposits (FD) tailored for Non-Resident Indian (NRI) customers at the IFSC Banking Unit (IBU) situated in GIFT City, Gujarat.**
- The US Dollar fixed deposit scheme offers a diverse array of investment tenures ranging from seven days to an extensive ten years.
- Additionally, customers retain the flexibility to request partial or full premature closure of their FD through the Axis Bank mobile application, enhancing their control and convenience over their investments.
- With this introduction, Axis Bank becomes the first bank to offer a digital journey for GIFT City Deposits.
- **Income Tax department has levied a penalty of Rs 564.44 crore on Bank of India, the public sector lender.**
- The bank has received the order under Section 270A of the Income Tax Act, 1961 from the Income Tax Department, Assessment Unit pertaining to AY2018-19, wherein the penalty of Rs 564.44 crore has been imposed on various disallowances made.

Chapter 15: Committee

Committee	Headed by	Purpose
The two-days' 47th Meeting of the National Committee of Archivists (NCA)	Shri Arun Singhal	The two-day meeting held with an aim to revitalise the archives administration and records management system across states and Union Territories.

Chapter 16: Defence News

DRDO conducts successful flight test of VSHORADS missile

- **Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO)** conducted a successful flight test of a **Very Short-Range Air Defence System (VSHORADS)** missile from a ground-based portable launcher off the coast of Odisha from the Integrated Test Range in Chandipur.
- The test was carried out against high-speed unmanned aerial targets under different interception scenarios.
- The VSHORADS is propelled by a dual thrust solid motor and would be used for neutralising low altitude aerial threats at short ranges.
- The VSHORADS is a Man Portable Air Defence System (MANPAD) indigenously developed by Research Centre Imarat (RCI) in collaboration with other DRDO laboratories and other industry partners.

Iran launches 'Pars 1' satellite into orbit from Russia

- **Russia** has launched an **Iranian-made research satellite into orbit amid rising tensions with the West.**
- The Pars 1 remote sensing and imaging satellite was launched by a Russian Soyuz rocket from the Vostochny Cosmodrome and will scan Iran's topography from an orbit of 310 miles (500km).
- The launch of Pars 1 follows the August 2022 deployment of Iran's Khayyam satellite, also facilitated by Russia.
- This pattern of collaboration indicates a strengthening of scientific and technological ties between Iran and Russia, amidst broader geopolitical tensions.

Navy commissions strategically important base INS Jatayu in Lakshadweep Islands

- **The Indian Navy** has **commissioned its new base "INS Jatayu"** at Minicoy Island, Lakshadweep

- It will bolster its operational capabilities within the strategically important Lakshadweep islands.
- Jatayu has been commissioned under the command of Commandant Vrat Baghel.
- The crest of the INS Jatayu -depicting a bird signifying Jatayu, a character in the Hindu epic Ramayana -- was hoisted after the unveiling of the commissioning plaque.

CCS gives nod to 5th generation aircraft project worth ₹15,000 crore

- The **Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS)** has approved the project for the design and development of **India's fifth-generation fighter jet, Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA), to be undertaken by the Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO).**
- The AMCA is envisaged as a 25-tonne twin-engine stealth aircraft with an internal weapons bay and Diverterless Supersonic Intake which has been developed in India for the first time.
- It is intended to have an internal carriage of 1,500 kg of payload and 5,500 kg of external payload with 6,500 kg of internal fuel.
- The development of AMCA is planned to be carried out in two phases, an MK1 with the General Electric F414 engine and an Mk2 with a more powerful engine planned to be co-developed in partnership with Saran of France for which discussions are underway.

DRDO successfully conducts Mission Divyastra

- **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** has conducted first successful flight test of indigenously developed **Agni-5 missile with Multiple Independently Targetable Re-Entry Vehicle (MIRV) technology.**
- The flight test named Mission Divyastra was carried out from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island in Odisha.
- Various Telemetry and radar stations tracked and monitored multiple re-entry vehicles. The Mission accomplished the designed parameters.
- Missiles equipped with MIRV technology can aim multiple targets that can be located hundreds of kilometres apart. Agni-5, which can carry nuclear warheads and hit targets more than 5,000 km away, is aimed mainly at thwarting the challenge from China.
- The Agni 1 to 4 missiles have ranges from 700 km to 3,500 km and have already been deployed.

UK tests a laser weapon that can hit a coin from a kilometer

- The **UK's Ministry of Defence (MoD)** has conducted successful tests of its **first-ever laser weapon, named "DragonFire".**
- The high-powered laser is designed to target and neutralize drones, offering a potentially low-cost alternative to traditional missiles.
- The DragonFire laser weapon is expected to significantly reduce the reliance on expensive ammunition, offering a cost-effective solution for air defense.

Army raises helicopter unit at Jodhpur to induct Apache attack choppers

- The Indian Army has raised its **first squadron of Apache attack helicopters in Rajasthan's Jodhpur** with the aim of supporting ground operations near the Pakistan border.
- Developed by the US aviation giant Boeing, Apache choppers are known as the 'tanks in the air'.
- They are advanced multi-mission helicopters with the latest technology and have come to be known the best attack helicopters in the world.

Guyana to acquire 2 HAL-Made Dornier 228 Aircraft from India

- The Indian defence industry is making forays in the Caribbean with the **Guyana Defence Force (GDF) planning to soon acquire two new aircraft from New Delhi with a \$23.27 million loan from Export-Import Bank of India.**
- An agreement in this regard was signed between Guyanese Finance Minister and Deputy GM of EXIM Bank.
- Guyana, which has a substantial Indian diaspora, plans to purchase two HAL (Dornier) 228 planes from Hindustan Aeronautics Limited.

LCA Tejas MK-1A completes maiden flight in Bengaluru

- The **Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) has successfully completed the first flight of indigenous light combat aircraft (LCA) Tejas Mark 1A fighter jet in Bengaluru.**
- The aircraft was airborne for 15 minutes during its first flight.
- The fighter aircraft is likely to be deployed at Nal airbase in Rajasthan's Bikaner near the Pakistan border where it can take care of the western adversary.
- LCA Mk-1A is an advanced variant of the LCA Mk-1, and it has advanced electronic radar, superior warfare capabilities, and improved maintenance features.

Defence Exercise	Between	About
Exercise Cutlass Express 24 (CE-24)	India, the US and African countries	INS Tir , the lead ship of First Training Squadron (1TS) , participated in Exercise Cutlass Express 24 (CE-24) held at Port Victoria, Seychelles.
Tenth edition of the Joint Military Exercise "LAMITIYE-2024"	Indian Army and Seychelles	A contingent from the Indian Army embarked on a journey to Seychelles to participate

		in the Tenth edition of the Joint Military Exercise "LAMITIYE-2024" alongside the Seychelles Defence Forces (SDF) .
A joint military exercise called Tiger Triumph-24	India and the United States	The exercise, Tiger Triumph-24 , is aimed at " developing interoperability " for conducting Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) operations and " refine Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to enable rapid and smooth coordination between forces of both countries.
The second edition of India-Mozambique-Tanzania Trilateral Exercise (IMT TRILAT 24)	India-Mozambique-Tanzania	The week-long exercise underscores the importance of enhanced maritime cooperation and interoperability between the Navies of India, Mozambique, and Tanzania .

Chapter 17: Sports News

Paul Pogba banned for four years for doping

- France and Juventus midfielder Paul Pogba has been **banned for four years for a doping**.
- Pogba was provisionally suspended by Italy's national anti-doping (NADO Italia) tribunal in September after testing positive for testosterone — a banned substance.
- The test, performed after Juve's 3-0 Serie A season-opening victory at Udinese on Aug. 20, detected testosterone, a hormone that increases athletes' endurance. The 30-year-old was an unused substitute in that game.

Pro Kabaddi League Season 10, Puneri Paltan Clinches Maiden Title

- **Puneri Paltan** won the **Pro Kabaddi League** trophy for the first time as they **defeated the Haryana Steelers** in the final at the GMC Balayogi Stadium in Hyderabad.
- The Paltan took an early lead with Ankit opening the scoring for the Steelers and Rahul Sethpal keeping the game interesting with his dynamic offensive moves.

B Sai Praneeth announces retirement from international badminton

- **Indian shuttler B Sai Praneeth** has announced his **retirement from international badminton**.
- The 31-year-old battled nagging injuries since the Olympic Games in Tokyo and decided to hang his boots due to that.
- In his 24-year-long career, he won a World Championships bronze medal and represented India at the Tokyo 2020 Olympics.

Shahbaz Nadeem retires from international and India's domestic cricket

- **Spinner Shahbaz Nadeem** has **retired from all forms of international cricket**.
- Now, he wants to play in T20 leagues worldwide.
- Nadeem took 542 wickets in his first-class career and played two Tests for India.
- His Test debut was in 2019 when he was 30 years old. The Jharkhand spinner was called in place of Kuldeep Yadav. During the Ranchi Test against South Africa, Shahbaz took 2 wickets for 22 in the first innings and 2 wickets for 18 in the second innings.

Sunrisers Hyderabad appoint Pat Cummins as captain for IPL 2024

- **Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH)** has announced star **Australian cricketer Pat Cummins** as their **new captain for the Indian Premier League (IPL) season 2024**.
- Cummins, who won the ICC World Test Championship and ICC Cricket World Cup with Aussies last year as a captain, replaces South African batter Aiden Markram as the franchise's captain.
- Cummins was brought by SRH for Rs 20.5 crores in the IPL auctions held last year, making him the second-most expensive player in history.

Umpire Marais Erasmus set to retire

- **Veteran South Africa umpire Marais Erasmus** has announced **his retirement from the ICC Elite Panel of Umpires**.
- His illustrious career spanning over two decades will culminate with his final officiating duty during the second Test between New Zealand and Australia.
- The Christchurch Test will be Erasmus' 82nd men's Test match as umpire, putting him 10th on the list of umpires to officiate in most Test matches.
- Erasmus also officiated 124 men's ODIs, 43 men's T20 matches, and 18 women's T20 matches. In 131 international games, he has also served as the TV umpire.
- Erasmus was the on-field umpire in 25 ICC Men's Cricket World Cup matches, 33 ICC Men's T20 World Cup matches, 18 ICC Women's T20 World Cup matches and six ICC Champions Trophy games. He stood in seven finals of ICC tournaments.

James Anderson becomes first pacer to pick 700 Test wickets

- **England great James Anderson** has become **first-ever fast bowler to pick up 700 Test wickets in 187 matches.**
- The 41-year-old got to the major landmark when he dismissed Kuldeep Yadav on Day 3 of the fifth and final Test against hosts India at the HPCA Stadium in Dharamsala.
- The legendary fast bowler became only the third man after Sri Lanka's Muttiah Muralitharan (800) in 133 matches and leg-spinner Shane Warne (708) in 145 matches to achieve the feat.
- Anderson's longevity is a thing of marvel in international cricket as the fast bowler made his debut in 2003 and continues to be one of the leading bowlers in the Test format of the game.

Satwik-Chirag win French Open doubles title

- The pair of **Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty** clinched its **second French Open men's doubles badminton title.**
- The Indian top seed registered a straight games victory over Chinese Taipei's Lee Jhe-Huei and Yang Po-Hsuan in the final.
- Satwik-Chirag, who earlier won the title in 2022, clinched a 21-11, 21-17 win to bag the second final at the tournament.

Indian sailor Vishnu Saravanan clinches gold medal at Europa Cup

- **Indian sailor Vishnu Saravanan** won the **gold medal at the Europa Cup 2024** in the ILCA 7 category in Mallorca, Spain.
- The event was organized by Reial Club Nautic Port de Pollenca. Saravanan topped the 91-boat race with 17 net points.
- Australia's Lawson McAullay won the bronze with 22 net points at the event.
- The ILCA7 is a category within the ILCA -International Laser Class Association sailing class.

Rachin Ravindra becomes youngest cricketer to win Sir Richard Hadlee Medal

- **New Zealand's top order batter Rachin Ravindra** has become the **youngest recipient of the Sir Richard Hadlee Medal** after being named the country's outstanding male cricketer of the year.
- Meanwhile, Amelia Kerr became the year's top female cricketer after winning the Debbie Hockley medal for the second time in a row.
- Kane Williamson received the ANZ Test Player of the Year Award and won the Redpath Cup for men's first-class batting.
- Ravindra, 24, is the youngest winner of the award in its history, following a season in which he has established himself as a key member of New Zealand's red and white teams.

Max Verstappen triumphs at Saudi Arabian Grand Prix

- **Red Bull's Max Verstappen** clinched victory at the **Saudi Arabian Grand Prix**, starting from pole position.

- It marked Red Bull's second consecutive one-two finish in the 2024 Formula One season.
- It was the first time Verstappen, winner of a record 19 of 22 races last year, has won the first two races of a season.
- Sergio Perez (Red Bull) finished at second and Charles Leclerc finished third for Ferrari.
- The victory was a ninth in a row for Verstappen, dating back to Japan last September, and the 56th of the 26-year-old Dutch driver's career.
- It was also his 100th career podium while Red Bull's 115th win lifted them ahead of Williams in fourth place on the all-time list.

Mumbai Wins Ranji Trophy 2024 after beating Vidarbha

- **Mumbai has won the Ranji Trophy 2024 after beating Vidarbha by 169 runs at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai.**
- It also happened to be their 42nd title for Mumbai, which showed why they are deemed as a brute force in Indian domestic cricket.
- Mumbai also ended their 8-year-long wait to win the championship after they last got their hands on the title back in the 2015-16 edition.

Jaiswal and Sutherland crowned ICC Players of the Month for February

- The International Cricket Council (ICC) has revealed the ICC Men's and Women's Player of the Month award winners for February 2024.
- **Yashasvi Jaiswal (India) wins the ICC Men's Player of the Month** award following a dominant series of batting performances as India battled back in February to secure series victory over England in the ICC World Test Championship.
- **Annabel Sutherland (Australia) is named the ICC Women's Player of the Month** after her stunning efforts with bat and ball set new records in Australia's Test victory over South Africa in Perth.

Matthew Wade retires from first-class cricket

- **Australia keeper Matthew Wade** has announced his **decision to retire from first-class cricket.**
- The left-hand batter stated that he will continue to feature in shorter formats of the game.
- The 36-year-old announced his decision just before the upcoming Sheffield Shield final, marking his 166th and final first-class match as Tasmania takes on Western Australia.

RCB triumphs over Delhi Capitals in WPL 2024 final

- **Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) beat Delhi Capitals in the final of the 2024 Women's Premier League** to break their 16-year-long trophy drought.
- RCB defeated DC by eight wickets to lift the WPL trophy at the Arun Jaitley Stadium in New Delhi.

- RCB made easy work of their 114-run chase against DC to lift their maiden WPL title. A wonderful first innings performance from RCB's spin-attack helped them clinch their first-ever trophy as a franchise.
- Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) Captain - Smriti Mandhana
- Delhi Capitals (DC) Captain - Meg Lanning (Australia)

Other Awards

Award	Winner	Prize Money
Winners	RCB	₹6 Crore
Runners-Up	DC	₹3 Crore
Orange Cap (Highest Run-Scorer)	Ellyse Perry (RCB)	₹5 Lakh
Purple Cap (Highest Wicket-Taker)	Shreyanka Patil (RCB)	₹5 Lakh
Most Valuable Player of the Season	Deepti Sharma (UP Warriorz)	₹5 Lakh
Emerging Player of the Season	Shreyanka Patil (RCB)	₹5 Lakh
Powerful Striker of the Season	Georgia Wareham (RCB)	₹5 Lakh
Most Sixes of the Season	Shafali Verma (DC)	₹5 Lakh
Player of the Final	Sophie Molineux (RCB)	₹2.5 Lakh
Powerful Striker of the Final	Shafali Verma (DC)	₹1 Lakh

Alcaraz beats Medvedev to win second straight Indian Wells title

- **Carlos Alcaraz (Spain) defeated Daniil Medvedev (Russia) in straight sets, with a score of 7-6 (7/5), 6-1 in the final of the Indian Wells ATP tournament.**
 - With this win, the 20-year-old Alcaraz became the first player to win back-to-back Indian Wells titles since Novak Djokovic did it from 2014 to 2016.
 - It was Alcaraz's first title since Wimbledon last July.
- Men's singles - Carlos Alcaraz
 Women's singles - Iga Swiatek
 Men's Doubles - Wesley Koolhof & Nikola Mektic

Women's Doubles – Hsieh Su-wei & Elise Mertens

India, Mozambique, Tanzania Joint Maritime Exercise begins

- **INS Tir and INS Sujata** has participated in the **second edition of India Mozambique Tanzania (IMT) Tri Lateral (TRILAT) Exercise.**
- It is a joint maritime exercise scheduled from 21-29 Mar 24.
- The first edition of IMT TRILAT exercise conducted in Oct 22, saw participation of INS Tarkash with the Tanzanian and Mozambique Navies.
- The current edition of the exercise is planned in two phases. As part of the harbour phase scheduled from 21-24 Mar 24, Naval ships Tir and Sujata will engage with the respective Navies at the ports of Zanzibar (Tanzania) and Maputo (Mozambique).

3rd edition of North East Games 2024 begins In Nagaland

- **In Nagaland, the 3rd edition of North East Games 2024** kick-started with a glittering opening ceremony at **Regional Centre for Sporting Excellence, Sovima.**
- Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio officially declared open the 3rd North East Games 2024.
- More than 3000 athletes from eight North Eastern states are competing in 15 disciplines being held in 12 venues across three districts Chumoukedima, Dimapur and Kohima.
- Highlights of event include Archery, Athletics, Badminton Basketball, Boxing, football, lawn tennis, Pencak Silat, S, Table Tennis, Taekwondo, Volleyball, And Wushu.

Sathiyam Gnanasekaran won WTT Feeder Beirut 2024 men's title

- **Star paddler G. Sathiyam** has become the **first-ever Indian to win a men's singles trophy at a WTT Feeder Series event in Beirut, Lebanon.**
- He defeated compatriot Manav Thakkar 3-1 (6-11 11-7 11-7 11-4) on the final day of WTT Feeder Beirut 2024.
- In the women's singles event, Xia Lian Ni claimed her second WTT Feeder title, exhibiting an excellent performance to defeat Suh Hyo Won with a score of 11-9 11-5 11-5.

Sharath Kamal to be Indian Flagbearer at Paris Olympics 2024

- Ace table tennis player **Sharath Kamal** will be the **Indian team's flagbearer for the upcoming Paris 2024 Olympics.**
- While Olympic bronze medalist MC Mary Kom has been named as the chef de mission for the Summer Games.
- Ranked World No. 88, Kamal has won the national table tennis championship a record 10 times. He has also claimed 13 medals at the CWG, including seven golds, and has earned two medals at the Asian Games. The legendary table tennis player is also a three-time bronze medalist at the World Championships.

Sreeja Akula wins women's singles title at WTT Feeder Beirut II 2024

- In Table Tennis, India's **Sreeja Akula won the women's singles title at the WTT Feeder Beirut II 2024 table tennis tournament** at the Al Kawthar Secondary School in Lebanon.
- Akula, the world No. 47, beat Luxembourg's Sarah De Nutte to win what was her second WTT singles career title.
- The 25-year-old's maiden crown came at the Feeder Corpus Christi 2024 in Texas.

Carlos Sainz wins F1 Australian GP

- **Ferrari's Carlos Sainz ended Red Bull's Formula 1 winning streak by winning the Australian Grand Prix.**
- Sainz, who started on the front row alongside Verstappen, kept his place into turn one, but passed the Dutchman on lap two at turn nine for the lead and took control once his rival retired two laps later with a fiery mechanical failure.

Kenya allrounder Collins Obuya retires from cricket

- **Kenya allrounder Collins Obuya has retired from cricket following their defeat to Uganda in the third-place play-off match in the African Games.**
- A leg spinning allrounder, Obuya played 104 ODIs for Kenya, scoring 2044 runs and taking 35 wickets.
- He is their third-highest run-scorer in the format, with Kenya stripped of their ODI status in 2014.
- He is also Kenya's highest run-scorer in T20Is, with 1794 runs from 76 appearances.

Sunrisers Hyderabad record for highest IPL total of all time

- **Sunrisers Hyderabad scored 277/3 in 20 overs in Hyderabad against Mumbai Indians to break the record of RCB's total of 263/5 in 2013** against the now-defunct Pune Warriors India.
- Highest totals in IPL history:
Sunrisers Hyderabad - 277/3 vs Mumbai Indians, 2024
Royal Challengers Bengaluru - 263/5 vs Pune Warriors India, 2013
Lucknow Super Giants - 257/5 vs Punjab Kings, 2023
Royal Challengers Bengaluru - 248/3 vs Gujarat Lions, 2016
Chennai Super Kings - 246/5 vs Rajasthan Royals, 2010

Sri Lanka to host Women's Asia Cup 2024

- The **Asian Cricket Council (ACC) has announced the upcoming Women's Asia Cup 2024, scheduled to take place in Dambulla, Sri Lanka, from July 19th to July 28th 2024.**
- The Asian Cricket Council (ACC) announced the upcoming Women's Asia Cup 2024, scheduled to take place in Dambulla, Sri Lanka, from July 19th to July 28th, 2024.
- The tournament will feature eight teams, one more than the previous edition in 2022. India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh will be joined by the

semifinalists of the Women's Premier Cup 2024 - UAE, Malaysia, Nepal, and Thailand.

IIT Madras to host the 6th Shaastra Rapid FIDE Rated Chess Tournament

- An International Chess Federation (FIDE)-rated **Rapid Chess Tournament** will be hosted by **IIT Madras**.
- More than 35 players from the institute will take part in the event.
- The '6th Shaastra Rapid FIDE Rated Chess Tournament' will witness the participation of six Grandmasters, sixteen International Masters, three Women Grandmasters and a Women International Master.

Chapter 18: Book and Author

Book	Author
"The Gems of Indian Art"	Unveiled by Ministers Nitin Gadkari, Arjun Ram Meghwal, and S.P.S. Baghel , marking a pivotal moment in India's art scene.
"The Conspiracy"	Authored by Gotabaya Rajapaksa
"Sagar Parikrama"	Parshottam Rupala
"From A Car Shed To The Corner Room & Beyond "	Written by S Raman

Chapter 19: Important Day

Date	Day	Theme/Importance
1 March	Zero Discrimination Day	To protect everyone's health, protect everyone's rights
1 March	World Seagrass Day	Healthy Seagrass, Healthy Planet
1 March	World Civil Defence Day	World Civil Defence Day was first established in 1990 by the International Civil Defence Organisation (ICDO) to commemorate the anniversary of the adoption of the ICDO's Constitution.

3 March	World Wildlife Day	Theme 2024 - Connecting People and Planet: Exploring Digital Innovation in Wildlife Conservation.
3 March	World Hearing Day	Theme 2024 - Changing mindsets: Let's make ear and hearing care a reality for all.
4 March	National Safety Day	Theme 2024 - Safety Leadership for ESG Excellence.
4 March	World Obesity Day	Theme 2024 - Let's Talk About Obesity And..."
5 March	Dissociative Identity Disorder Awareness Day	Objective - To raise awareness about the difficulties faced by people with dissociative identity disorder and what we can do to improve their standards of life.
5 March	International Day for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Awareness	The day is celebrated to promote awareness and understanding of disarmament issues, especially among the youth.
6 March	Ghana Independence Day	Ghana set record as the first country to gain independence from colonial rule after de long fight for freedom.
7 March	Jan Aushadhi Diwas	This day serves as the culmination of a week-long event commencing on March 1, aimed at raising awareness about generic medicines and their potential to benefit millions of individuals.
8 March	International Women's Day	The theme of Women's Day 2024 is 'Invest in women: Accelerate Progress', which emphasizes the importance of creating a world where women feels respected, valued, and empowered.

9 March	No Smoking Day	Theme 2024 - Protecting children from tobacco industry interference.
9 March	CISF Raising Day	This day marks the establishment of the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) in 1969.
10 March	International Day of Women Judges	The day is dedicated to recognizing the contributions of women judges worldwide.
12 March	National Mauritius Day	This national holiday is a time to commemorate the country's independence from Britain in 1968 and its transition to a republic in 1992.
11 March	World Plumbing Day	The idea behind World Plumbing Day is for people worldwide to pause and reflect on the vital role of plumbing in preserving health and way of life , or in building sustainable, disease-free futures for millions in developing countries.
13 March	No Smoking Day	It is a day dedicated to spreading awareness about the destructive impacts of smoking and to inspire individuals to give up smoking.
14 March	International Day of Action for Rivers	Theme 2024 - Water for All
14 March	World Kidney Day	Theme 2024 - Kidney Health for All – Advancing Equitable Access to Care and Optimal Medication Practice
15 March	Pi Day	Every year, Pi Day is observed to commemorate the constant value of Pi and how it simplifies calculations for us.
15 March	World Consumer Rights Day	Theme 2024 - Fair and responsible AI for consumers.

16 March	National Vaccination Day	National Vaccination Day or National Immunization Day is celebrated in India on 16 March every year to raise awareness about the significance of vaccines in the human body.
18 March	Ordnance Factories Day	Indian Ordnance Factories play an important role in safeguarding us and providing strength to the Indian Armed Forces .
20 March	French Language Day	Objective - To raise awareness about the history and use of the French language worldwide.
20 March	International Day of Happiness	This day is dedicated to spreading awareness about the importance of happiness and well-being.
20 March	World Sparrow Day	Theme 2024 - I Love Sparrow
21 March	World Oral Health Day	Theme 2024 - A Happy Mouth is A Happy Body
21 March	World Forestry Day	Theme 2024 - Forests and innovation: new solutions for a better world.
21 March	World Poetry Day	Theme 2024 - Standing on the Shoulders of Giants
21 March	International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination	Theme 2024 - A Decade of Recognition, Justice, and Development: Implementation of the International Decade for People of African Descent
21 March	World Down Syndrome Day	Objective - To raise awareness about the discrimination faced by people with Down Syndrome.
22 March	Bihar Diwas	The day marks the anniversary of the founding of Bihar state in 1912.

22 March	World Water Day	Theme 2024 - Water for Peace
23 March	World Tuberculosis Day	Theme 2024 - Yes! We can end TB
23 March	World Meteorological Day	Theme 2024 - At the Frontline of Climate Action
23 March	Shaheed Diwas	It was on March 23, 1931 , when freedom fighter Bhagat Singh, along with his associates Shivaram Rajguru and Sukhdev Thapar , were hanged to death by the British.
24 March	International Day for the Right to the Truth concerning Gross Human Rights Violations and for the Dignity of Victims	The day honour the memory of victims of gross and systematic human rights violations and promote the importance of the right to truth and justice .
25 March	International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade	The day honours and remembers those who suffered and died as a consequence of the transatlantic slave trade .
25 March	International Day of Solidarity with Detained and Missing Staff Members	The day marked anniversary of abduction of Alec Collett , a former journalist who was working for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East when he was abducted by armed gunman in 1985 .
26 March	Purple Day of Epilepsy	This day holds special significance as it aims to raise awareness about epilepsy, a neurological disorder characterised by recurrent seizures.
27 March	World Theatre Day	Objective - To raise awareness about the role of theatre in our lives, and to promote its growth.

29 March	World Piano Day	This day serves as a global platform to recognize the beauty, cultural significance, and enduring appeal of the piano , fostering appreciation for its rich legacy across generations and cultures.
30 March	International Day of Zero Waste	This day aims to raise awareness about reducing waste and promoting zero-waste initiatives to achieve sustainable development.
30 March	Rajasthan Diwas	On this day in 1949, 19 princely states and 3 states were merged to form the state of Rajasthan after a process that took eight and a half years .

Chapter 20: Science & Technology

India's IN-SPACE Inaugurates Satellite & Payload Technical Centre in Ahmedabad

- Union minister Dr Jitendra Singh has inaugurated the IN-SPACE Technical Centre at the headquarters of the Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACE) in Bopal area of Ahmedabad.
- Our target is to take the space economy from 2 per cent to 10 per cent by 2030, which will be a five-fold increase. We have mentioned 15 per cent by 2047 as per our vision document.
- The IN-SPACE Technical Centre will help develop rockets and not just satellites.
- The IN-SPACE offers a range of facilities including the Climate Simulation Test Facility (CSTF), Thermal and Vacuum Environment Simulation Facility (TVAC), Vibration Test Facility (VTF), the Space Systems Assembly Integration Testing and Checkout Laboratory, the RF and Opto-Electronics Laboratory and Clean Rooms for AIT activities.

Chapter 21: Obituary

Person	About
Brian Mulroney	Born on March 20, 1939, in the town of Baie-Comeau in Quebec, Mulroney was PM for nearly nine years, after assuming

	the office in on September 17, 1984 and demitting it in June 25, 1993.
Padma Shri Awardee Arun Sharma	Sharma was senior-most team member which excavated the Ram Janmabhoomi Ayodhya site on order of Allahabad High Court and had submitted a report that a temple was demolished to make a mosque .
Admiral Laxminarayan Ramdas	Known for his heroic role during the 1971 Indo-Pakistan War , he later emerged as a leading peace activist, advocating for nuclear disarmament after his retirement.
Renowned Rabindra Sangeet Singer Sadi Mohammad	Sadi Mohammad completed his bachelor's and master's in Rabindra Sangeet from the Visva-Bharati University in India and is the son of Liberation War martyr Salimullah and Jebunnesa Salim Ullah .
Former Pakistan captain Saeed Ahmed	Ahmed played 41 Test matches , scoring 2,991 runs with five centuries and 16 half-centuries . He also took 22 wickets with his off-spin bowling.
Tamil Actor Lakshmi Narayanan Seshu	Seshu made his film debut with the 2002 Dhanush film, Thulluvadho Ilamai . He became a household name after his character grew popular in hit comedy show, Lollu Sabha .
Nobel Prize winner Daniel Kahneman	Daniel Kahneman , a psychologist who pioneered theories in behavioural economics that heavily influenced the discipline, and won him a Nobel prize, has died at age 90 .

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