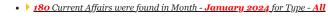


# Current Affairs - January 2024

Month January 2024

▶ 18

▼ Type All ▼



# **Appointments**

- 1. Bernardo Arévalo has been named as new President of Guatemala (Central America).
  - Nalso, Karin Herrera has been named as vice-president.
- 2. Sanjiv Khanna has been named as Executive Chairperson of National Legal Services Authority (NALSA).
- 3. Succès Masra has been named new Prime Minister of Chad (Central Africa).
- 4. Champai Soren has been named as new (7th) Chief Minister of Jharkhand, after earlier CM Hemant Soren had resigned.
- 5. Frederik X has been named new King of Denmark, acceding to throne following his mother Margrethe II's abdication (after her 52 years long reign).
- 6. Gabriel Attal has been named new prime minister of France.
  - Naged 34, he is youngest PM of France.
- 7. Lai Ching-te has been elected as president of Taiwan (Officially called Republic of China).
  - 🥄 He is set to be first president to assume the office through election instead of a predecessor's death.
- 8. Nadia Calvino (Spain) has been named new president of Kirchberg (Luxembourg) based European Investment Bank, becoming first woman to hold the post.
- 9. Nitish Kumar has been named chief minister of Bihar, for his record 9th term.
  - 🔪 It came after he resigned as chief minister of govt formed in 2022 by an alliance comprising RJD, INC, CPI.
  - Nor his 9th term now, Nitish Kumar has rejoined BJP led NDA alliance. Vijay Kumar Sinha and Samrat Choudhary have been named deput CMs.
- 10. P Santhosh has been named MD & CEO of National Asset Reconstruction Company (NARCL).
- 11. Raghuram Iyer has been named new Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Indian Olympic Association (IOA).
- 12. Sheikh Hasina has been elected as Prime Minister of Bangladesh, for her 4th consecutive term.
- 13. Tshering Tobgay has been elected as Prime Minister of Bhutan, for his 2nd term.
- 14. Azerbaijan govt named **Mukhtar Babayev** as president-elect for 2024 United Nations Climate Change Conference or Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC (commonly known as **COP29**), to be hosted by Azerbaijan in Baku in 2024.
  - 🔪 Notably -
    - $^{\ \ \ }$  2023 Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC (**COP28)** was hosted by Dubai (UAE).
    - Note the Parties of the UNFCCC (COP30) will be hosted by Belém (Brazil).
    - National India has proposed to host COP33 in India in 2028.
- 15. Govt named Daljit Singh Chaudhary as Director General of paramilitary force Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB).
- 16. ▶ Govt named **Senthil Pandian C** as India's Permanent Representative to Geneva based World Trade Organization (WTO), succeeding *Brajendra Navnit*.
- 17. Govt named Vikas Sheel as Executive Director of Manila (Philippines) based Asian Development Bank (ADB).
  - 🥄 His earlier role of Mission Director of *Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)* shall be taken up by *Chandra Bhushan Kumar*.
- 18. ▶ Govt named members of newly formed 16th finance Commission, headed by **Arvind Panagariya** (former NITI Aayog Vice-Chairman).
  - 🥄 Members are Ajay Narayan Jha, Annie George Mathew, Niranjan Rajadhyaksha & Soumya Kanti Ghosh.
  - Nackground -

- **♦** Govt had recently constituted **16th Finance Commission**, in pursuance to Article **280(1)** of the Constitution.
  - It will be chaired by **Arvind Panagariya** (former NITI Aayog Vice-Chairman), while *Ritvik Ranjanam Pandey* has been named as Secretary to the Commission.
  - 16th FC has been asked to make its report available by 31st October 2025, to give recommendations for devolution of taxes and other fiscal matters for 5 fiscal years (covering FY27 (2026-27) to FY31 (2030-31)).
  - Earlier, 15th FC was constituted in November 2017 and submitted its final report On 01 Feb 2021, chaired by *Nand Kishore Singh* (covering FY22 (2021-22) to FY26 (2025-26)).
  - Nout -
    - Finance Commissions are constituted by President of India under Article 280 of the Indian Constitution, to define financial relations between central and state governments.
    - 🔪 First Finance Commission was established in 1951, chaired by K C Neogy.
    - Finance Commission consists of a chairman and four other members.
- 19. Govt re-appointed **Michael Debabrata** as a **Deputy Governor** of **RBI**, for further period of 1 year.
  - 🥄 RBI Board has 4 Deputy Governors. Other 3 M Rajeshwar Rao, T Rabi Sankar & Swaminathan J.
  - 🦠 Shaktikanta Das is Governor of RBI.
- 20. Misc. Appointments (Jan 2024) -
  - Randhir Jaiswal has been named official spokesperson in Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), succeeding Arindam Bagchi, who was named India's next Permanent Representative to United Nations and other international organizations based in Geneva.
  - Neel Vardhan Singh has been named new Member in UPSC.
    - Numbers. 1 Chairman (Manoj Soni Currently) & upto 10 members.
  - 🥄 New Indian Ambassadors Appointed -
    - Naveesh Kumar Czech Republic
    - Nanish Prabhat Denmark
    - 🦠 Madhumita Hazarika Bhagat Turkmenistan
    - 🔪 Vidhu P Nair Angola
  - Naharashtra govt named Rashmi Shukla as Chief of State Police (DGP). She is 1st female to hold the post.
  - 🥄 National Investment and Infrastructure Fund Limited (NIIFL) named Sanjiv Aggarwal as its MD & CEO.
    - NIIFL maintains infrastructure investments funds for international and Indian investors anchored by Government of India.
  - 🔪 RBI approved appointment of *Praveen Achuthan Kutty* as MD & CEO of *DCB Bank*.
  - New Prasanna Bhalachandra Varale (Former Chief Justice of Karnataka HC) has been named as as a Judge of Supreme Court of India, taking sitting strength of SC to max possible number of 34.
  - 🔪 Azali Assoumani has been re-elected as President of Comoros (East Africa), for his 4th term.
- 21. New Members named in Railway Board -
  - Natish Kumar Member (Traction & Rolling Stock)
  - Neema Kumar Member (Operations & Business Development)
  - 🔪 About -
    - Nailway Board has 4 Members and 1 Chairman (Jaya Varma Sinha currently).
- 22. President Droupadi Murmu nominated Satnam Singh Sandhu (Chandigarh University founder) to the Rajya Sabha.
  - Rajya Sabha membership is limited to 250, out of which upto 12 members are nominated by President of India, and rest are elected by State legislative assemblies members.

## **Awards**

- 1. Notable Winners at 29th Critics' Choice Awards (Hosted in Los Angeles (USA)) -
  - Nest Picture Oppenheimer
  - Nest Director Christopher Nolan (for Oppenheimer )
  - Nest Actor Paul Giamatti (for The Holdovers)
  - Nest Actress Emma Stone (for Poor Things)
  - Nest Supporting Actor Robert Downey Jr. (for Oppenheimer)

- Nest Supporting Actress Da'Vine Joy Randolph (for *The Holdovers*)
- Nest Foreign Language Film Anatomy of a Fall (France)
- 2. 2023 ICC Awards Winners -
  - Nen's Awards -
    - Number of the Year (Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy) Pat Cummins (Australia)
    - 🥄 Test Cricketer of the Year Usman Khawaja (Australia)
    - 🔪 ODI Cricketer of the Year Virat Kohli (India). Its his 4th ODI Cricketer of the year title.
    - 🥄 T20I Cricketer of the Year Suryakumar Yadav (India). Its his 2nd T20 Cricketer of the year title.
    - New Zealand)
    - Nassociate Cricketer of the Year Bas de Leede (Netherlands)
  - 🔪 Women's Awards -
    - Nat Sciver-Brunt (England) Cricketer of the Year (Rachael Heyhoe Flint Award) Nat Sciver-Brunt (England)
    - NODI Cricketer of the Year Chamari Athapaththu (Sri Lanka)
    - Natthews (WINDIES)
    - Nemerging Cricketer of the Year Phoebe Litchfield (Australia)
    - 🥄 Associate Cricketer of the Year Queentor Abel (Kenya)
  - 🥄 Umpire of the Year (David Shepherd Trophy) Richard Illingworth (England). Its his 3rd time winning this award.
  - Also, India's *Rohit Sharma* has been named captain of *ICC Men's ODI Team of the Year 2023*, and *Suryakumar Yadav* was named captain of *ICC Men's T20I Team of the Year 2023*.
- 3. 81st Golden Globe Awards 2024 (hosted in California, USA) -
  - Best Motion Picture -
    - Nrama Oppenheimer
    - Nusical / Comedy Poor Things
    - Name and the Heron
    - Non-English Anatomy of a Fall (France)
  - Nest Performance in a Motion Picture (Drama) -
    - 🥄 Actor Cillian Murphy for Oppenheimer
    - Nactress Lily Gladstone for Killers of the Flower Moon
  - Nest Performance in a Motion Picture (Musical or Comedy) -
    - 🔪 Actor Paul Giamatti for The Holdovers
    - Natress Emma Stone for Poor Things
  - 🔪 Best Supporting Performance in a Motion Picture
    - ightharpoonup Supporting Actor Robert Downey Jr. for Oppenheimer
    - Nupporting Actress Da'Vine Joy Randolph for The Holdovers
  - 🔪 Best Director Christopher Nolan for Oppenheimer
  - Narbie received most nominations (9), and Oppenheimer won most awards (5).
  - Nest Television Series -
    - 🔪 Drama Succession (HBO)
    - Nusical or Comedy The Bear (FX / Hulu)
- 4. BCCI Awards 2023 -
  - 🥄 Polly Umrigar Award (Best Men's International Cricketer) -
    - Nohammed Shami for 2019-20
    - 🥄 Ravichandran Ashwin for 2020-21
    - Nasprit Bumrah for 2021-22
    - Nhubman Gill for 2022-23
  - 🔪 Best International Cricketer (Women) -
    - 🔪 Deepti Sharma for 2019-20 & 2022-23
    - 🔪 Smriti Mandhana for 2020-21 and 2021-22
  - 🥄 Col CK Nayudu Lifetime Achievement Award Farokh Engineer and Ravi Shastri
- 5. Best marching contingents & tableaux of Republic Day Parade 2024 -
  - 🔪 Panel Results -

- Nest three Tableaux (States/UTs) -
  - New First Odisha (Woman Empowerment in Viksit Bharat)
  - 🥄 Second Gujrat (Dhordo : A Global Icon Of Gujarat's Border Tourism)
  - Nadu Tamil Nadu (Kudavolai System in ancient Tamil Nadu Mother of Democracy)
- Ninistries/Departments Ministry of Culture (Bharat : Mother of Democracy)
- Nest Marching Contingent among three services Sikh Regiment Contingent
- Nest Marching Contingent among CAPF/other auxiliary forces Delhi Police Women Marching Contingent
- 🔪 Online Poll (on MyGov) -
  - Nest Marching Contingent among three services Rajputana Rifles Regimental Marching Contingent
  - Nest Marching Contingent among CAPF/other auxiliary forces CRPF Woman Marching Contingent
  - Nest three Tableaux (States/UTs):
    - 🥄 First Gujrat (Dhordo : A Global Icon Of Gujarat's Border Tourism)
    - Necond Uttar Pradesh (Viksit Bharat Samradh Virasat)
    - Third Andhra Pradesh (Transforming School Education in Andhra Pradesh Making Students Globally Competitive)
  - Best Tableau (Central Ministries/Departments) Vibrant Villages (Ministry of Home Affairs)
- Notably -
  - NCC Directorate Maharashtra contingent won Prime Minister's Banner at Republic Day Camp 2024 event, for third time in a row.
- 6. Padma Awards 2024 (Highest Civilian Awards in India) -

# 🔪 Padma Vibhushan (5)

SN	Name	Field	State/Region/Country
1	Ms. Vyjayantimala Bali	Art	Tamil Nadu
2	Shri Konidela Chiranjeevi	Art	Andhra Pradesh
3	Shri M Venkaiah Naidu	Public Affairs	Andhra Pradesh
la 1	Shri Bindeshwar Pathak (Posthumous)	Social Work	Bihar
5	Ms. Padma Subrahmanyam	Art	Tamil Nadu

# 🔪 Padma Bhushan (17)

SN	Name	Field	State/Region/Country
16	Ms. M Fathima Beevi (Posthumous)	Public Affairs	Kerala
7	Shri Hormusji N Cama	Literature & Education - Journalism	Maharashtra
8	Shri Mithun Chakraborty	Art	West Bengal
9	Shri Sitaram Jindal	Trade & Industry	Karnataka
10	Shri Young Liu	Trade & Industry	Taiwan
11	Shri Ashwin Balachand Mehta	Medicine	Maharashtra
	Shri Satyabrata Mookherjee ( <b>Posthumous</b> )	Public Affairs	West Bengal
13	Shri Ram Naik	Public Affairs	Maharashtra
14	Shri Tejas Madhusudan Patel	Medicine	Gujarat
15	Shri Olanchery Rajagopal	Public Affairs	Kerala
16	Shri Dattatray Ambadas Mayaloo alias Rajdutt	Art	Maharashtra
	Shri Togdan Rinpoche (Posthumous)	Others - Spiritualism	Ladakh

18	Shri Pyarelal Sharma	Art	Maharashtra
19	Shri Chandreshwar Prasad Thakur	Medicine	Bihar
20	Ms. Usha Uthup	Art	West Bengal
	Shri Vijaykanth ( <b>Posthumous)</b>	Art	Tamil Nadu
22	Shri Kundan Vyas	Literature & Education - Journalism	Maharashtra

# Nadma Shri (110)

	auna Suri (110)						
SN	Name	Field	State/Region/Country				
23	Shri Khalil Ahamad	Art	Uttar Pradesh				
24	Shri Badrappan M	Art	Tamil Nadu				
25	Shri Kaluram Bamaniya	Art	Madhya Pradesh				
26	Ms. Rezwana Choudhury Bannya	Art	Bangladesh				
27	Ms. Naseem Bano	Art	Uttar Pradesh				
28	Shri Ramlal Bareth	Art	Chhattisgarh				
29	Ms. Gita Roy Barman	Art	West Bengal				
30	Ms. Parbati Baruah	Social Work	Assam				
31	Shri Sarbeswar Basumatary	Others - Agriculture	Assam				
32	Shri Som Datt Battu	Art	Himachal Pradesh				
33	Ms. Takdira Begum	Art	West Bengal				
34	Shri Sathyanarayana Beleri	Others - Agriculture	Kerala				
35	Shri Drona Bhuyan	Art	Assam				
36	Shri Ashok Kumar Biswas	Art	Bihar				
37	Shri Rohan Machanda Bopanna	Sports	Karnataka				
38	Ms. Smriti Rekha Chakma	Art	Tripura				
39	Shri Narayan Chakraborty	Science & Engineering	West Bengal				
40	Shri A Velu Ananda Chari	Art	Telangana				
41	Shri Ram Chet Chaudhary	Science & Engineering	Uttar Pradesh				
42	Ms. K Chellammal	Others - Agriculture	Andaman & Nicobar Islands				
43	Ms. Joshna Chinappa	Sports	Tamil Nadu				
44	Ms. Charlotte Chopin	Others - Yoga	France				
45	Shri Raghuveer Choudhary	Literature & Education	Gujarat				
46	Shri Joe D Cruz	Literature & Education	Tamil Nadu				
47	Shri Ghulam Nabi Dar	Art	Jammu & Kashmir				
48	Shri Chitta Ranjan Debbarma	Others - Spiritualism	Tripura				
49	Shri Uday Vishwanath Deshpande	Sports	Maharashtra				
50	Ms. Prema Dhanraj	Medicine	Karnataka				
51	Shri Radha Krishan Dhiman	Medicine	Uttar Pradesh				
52	Shri Manohar Krishana Dole	Medicine	Maharashtra				

SN	Name	Field	State/Region/Country
53	Shri Pierre Sylvain Filliozat	Literature & Education	France
54	Shri Mahabir Singh Guddu	Art	Haryana
55	Ms. Anupama Hoskere	Art	Karnataka
56	Shri Yazdi Maneksha Italia	Medicine	Gujarat
57	Shri Rajaram Jain	Literature & Education	Uttar Pradesh
58	Shri Jankilal	Art	Rajasthan
59	Shri Ratan Kahar	Art	West Bengal
60	Shri Yashwant Singh Kathoch	Literature & Education	Uttarakhand
61	Shri Zahir I Kazi	Literature & Education	Maharashtra
62	Shri Gaurav Khanna	Sports	Uttar Pradesh
63	Shri Surendra Kishore	Literature & Education - Journalism	Bihar
64	Shri Dasari Kondappa	Art	Telangana
65	Shri Sridhar Makam Krishnamurthy	Literature & Education	Karnataka
66	Ms. Yanung Jamoh Lego	Others - Agriculture	Arunachal Pradesh
67	Shri Jordan Lepcha	Art	Sikkim
68	Shri Satendra Singh Lohia	Sports	Madhya Pradesh
69	Shri Binod Maharana	Art	Odisha
70	Ms. Purnima Mahato	Sports	Jharkhand
71	Ms. Uma Maheshwari D	Art	Andhra Pradesh
72	Shri Dukhu Majhi	Social Work	West Bengal
73	Shri Ram Kumar Mallick	Art	Bihar
74	Shri Hemchand Manjhi	Medicine	Chhattisgarh
75	Shri Chandrashekhar Mahadeorao Meshram	Medicine	Maharashtra
	Shri Surendra Mohan Mishra ( <b>Posthumous)</b>	Art	Uttar Pradesh
	Shri Ali Mohammed & Shri Ghani Mohammed* ( <b>Duo</b> )	Art	Rajasthan
78	Ms. Kalpana Morparia	Trade & Industry	Maharashtra
79	Ms. Chami Murmu	Social Work	Jharkhand
80	Shri Sasindran Muthuvel	Public Affairs	Papua New Guinea
81	Ms. G Nachiyar	Medicine	Tamil Nadu
82	Ms. Kiran Nadar	Art	Delhi
	Shri Pakaravur Chithran Namboodiripad ( <b>Posthumous)</b>	Literature & Education	Kerala
84	Shri Narayanan E P	Art	Kerala
85	Shri Shailesh Nayak	Science & Engineering	Delhi
	Shri Harish Nayak (Posthumous)	Literature & Education	Gujarat
87	Shri Fred Negrit	Literature & Education	France

SN	Name	Field	State/Region/Country
88	Shri Hari Om	Science & Engineering	Haryana
89	Shri Bhagabat Padhan	Art	Odisha
90	Shri Sanatan Rudra Pal	Art	West Bengal
91	Shri Shankar Baba Pundlikrao Papalkar	Social Work	Maharashtra
92	Shri Radhe Shyam Pareek	Medicine	Uttar Pradesh
93	Shri Dayal Mavjibhai Parmar	Medicine	Gujarat
94	Shri Binod Kumar Pasayat	Art	Odisha
95	Ms. Silbi Passah	Art	Meghalaya
	Ms. Shanti Devi Paswan & Shri Shivan Paswan* ( <b>Duo</b> )	Art	Bihar
97	Shri Sanjay Anant Patil	Others - Agriculture	Goa
98	Shri Muni Narayana Prasad	Literature & Education	Kerala
99	Shri K S Rajanna	Social Work	Karnataka
100	Shri Chandrashekar Channapatna Rajannachar	Medicine	Karnataka
101	Shri Bhagwatilal Rajpurohit	Literature & Education	Madhya Pradesh
102	Shri Romalo Ram	Art	Jammu & Kashmir
103	Shri Navjivan Rastogi	Literature & Education	Uttar Pradesh
104	Ms. Nirmal Rishi	Art	Punjab
105	Shri Pran Sabharwal	Art	Punjab
106	Shri Gaddam Sammaiah	Art	Telangana
107	Shri Sangthankima	Social Work	Mizoram
108	Shri Machihan Sasa	Art	Manipur
109	Shri Omprakash Sharma	Art	Madhya Pradesh
110	Shri Eklabya Sharma	Science & Engineering	West Bengal
111	Shri Ram Chander Sihag	Science & Engineering	Haryana
112	Shri Harbinder Singh	Sports	Delhi
113	Shri Gurvinder Singh	Social Work	Haryana
114	Shri Godawari Singh	Art	Uttar Pradesh
115	Shri Ravi Prakash Singh	Science & Engineering	Mexico
116	Shri Seshampatti T Sivalingam	Art	Tamil Nadu
117	Shri Somanna	Social Work	Karnataka
118	Shri Kethavath Somlal	Literature & Education	Telangana
119	Ms. Shashi Soni	Trade & Industry	Karnataka
120	Ms. Urmila Srivastava	Art	Uttar Pradesh
121	Shri Nepal Chandra Sutradhar <b>(Posthumous)</b>	Art	West Bengal
122	Shri Gopinath Swain	Art	Odisha
123	Shri Laxman Bhatt Tailang	Art	Rajasthan

SN	Name	Field	State/Region/Country
124	Ms. Maya Tandon	Social Work	Rajasthan
125	Ms. Aswathi Thirunal Gouri Lakshmi Bayi Thampuratty	Literature & Education	Kerala
126	Shri Jagdish Labhshanker Trivedi	Art	Gujarat
127	Ms. Sano Vamuzo	Social Work	Nagaland
128	Shri Balakrishnan Sadanam Puthiya Veetil	Art	Kerala
129	Shri Kurella Vittalacharya	Literature & Education	Telangana
130	Shri Kiran Vyas	Others - Yoga	France
131	Shri Jageshwar Yadav	Social Work	Chhattisgarh
132	Shri Babu Ram Yadav	Art	Uttar Pradesh

- Notably, Padma awardees are selected by a committee headed by cabinet secretary of India (Rajiv Gauba currently).
- 7. Assam govt announced winners of State's Civilian Awards for 2023.
  - New Highest civilian award in State of Assam, called **Assam Baibhav**, shall be conferred on former *Chief Justice of India* **Ranjan Gogoi**.
    - 🥄 He is 3rd recepient of this award, after Ratan Tata (2021) & Tapan Saikia (2022).
    - Note The Award carries cash prize of 5 lakh, along with lifetime free medical treatment.
  - State government honored total 22 personalities under civilian awards 2023, including 1 Assam Baibhav, 4 Assam Saurav and 17 Assam Gaurav awards.
    - Assam Saurav awardees include Kishan Chand Nauriyal (Arts and Culture), Elvis Ali Hazarika (Swimming), Hima Das (Athletics) and Nadiram Deuri (Tiwa Dance). It carries cash prize of 4 lakh.
- 8. Bengali writer **Shirshendu Mukhopadhyay** has been awarded **2023 Kuvempu Rashtriya Puraskar**, conferred by *Rashtrakavi Kuvempu Prathishtana* in honour of late Kannada poet *Kuvempu*. The award carries cash prize of 5 lakh.
- 9. Malayalam Poet P N Gopikrishnan has been selected for Odakuzhal Award 2023 for his poetry collection Kavitha Mamsabhojiyanu.
  - Nalayalam.
- 10. ▶ Noted lyricist-screenwriter **Javed Akhtar** has been honored with *Padmapani Lifetime Achievement Award* at *Ajanta-Ellora Film Festival 2023*.
- 11. President Droupadi Murmu conferred Swachh Survekshan awards 2023 at Bharat Mandapam (New Delhi) -
  - 🔪 Surat (Gujarat) and Indore (Madhya Pradesh) have been Jointly named India's cleanest cities.
    - Nearlier, Indore had conquered the top spot alone for 6 consecutive years.
  - Nother Awardees -
    - 🥄 Top 3 Cities with population under 1 lakh Sasvad (Maharashtra), Patan (Gujarat) and Lonavala (Maharashtra)
    - Negative Cleanest Cantonment Board Mhow Cantonment Board (Madhya Pradesh)
    - 🥄 Cleanest Ganga Towns Varanasi (1), Prayagraj (2).
    - 🥄 Best Performing States (Top 3) Maharashtra (1), Madhya Pradesh (2) and Chhattisgarh (3).
    - Nest Safaimitra Surakshit Sheher Chandigarh.
- 12. President Droupadi Murmu conferred National Sports Awards 2023 and National Adventure Awards 2022 -
  - 🥄 Tenzing Norgay National Adventure Awards 2022 -
    - **♦** Savita Kanswal (Posthumous) (Mountaineering)
    - 🥄 Tulsi Chaitanya Mothukuri (Swimming)
    - Nashu Kumar Tiwari (Skydiving)
    - Narveen Singh (Mountaineering)
  - Notably, National Sports Awards 2023 were announced earlier in Dec 2023.

- 1. Novel **Conversations with Aurangzeb**, written by Tamil Writer **Charu Nivedita** has been released. It has been translated by *Nandini Krishnan*.
- 2. Book An Uncommon Love: The Early Life of Sudha and Narayana Murthy, authored by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni has been released.
- 3. Book Gandhi: A Life in Three Campaigns, authored by M J Akbar & K Natwar Singh has been released.
- 4. Book Major Shaitan Singh, PVC: The Man In Half Light, by Jai Samota has been released.
  - Major Shaitan Singh was honored by Param Vir Chakra (India's highest military decoration), for his bravery at Rezang La during Sino-Indian War 1962.
- 5. Book Pranab My Father: A Daughter Remembers, authored by Sharmistha Mukherjee has been released.
- 6. Book Ram Mandir: Raashtr Mandir, Ek Saajhee Viraasat, written by *Geeta Singh & Mohd. Aarif Khan* has been released.
- 7. Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav launched book **Modi: Energising A Green Future**, authored by R K Pachnanda, Bibek Debroy, Anirban Ganguly & Uttam Kumar Sinha.
- 8. Former Indian Army Chief Manoj Mukund Naravane's autobiography titled Four Stars of Destiny, has been released.
- 9. Home Minister Amit Shah launched book Assam's Braveheart Lachit Barphukan, written by Arup Kumar Dutta.
- 10. Home Minister Amit Shah launched book *A Promised Nation Hon'ble Shri Narendra Modi- the Maker of New India*, written on life and works of PM Narendra Modi, in Braille script.

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# **Days**

- 1. ▶ Jan 04 is observed by UN as **World Braille Day**, marking birthday of Louis Braille, the creator of Braille writing system used by visually impaired people.
- 2. Jan o6 is observed as *Journalist Day* by *Maharashtra* government, in memory of Balshastri Jambhekar, known as Father of Marathi journalism. He started First newspaper in Marathi, named *Darpan*.
- 3. Jan 10 is observed as **World Hindi day**, being celebrated world wide since 2006. The language is spoken by over 45 crore people globally.
  - Notably -
    - 🥄 Similar sounding National Hindi Day (Hindi Diwas) is seperate from World Hindi Day.
    - National Hindi Day is observed on *September 14*, marking adoption of Hindi in Devanagari script as an official language in Hindi speaking states.
    - 🥄 On 50th birthday of Beohar Rajendra Simha on 14th September 1949, Hindi was adopted as an official language.
- 4.  $\blacktriangleright$  Jan 11 is observed as National Human Trafficking Awareness Day.
- 5. Jan 15 is observed as **Indian Army Day**.
  - It marks taking over of Lt Gen K M Cariappa (later Field Marshal) as commander-in-chief of the Indian Army in 1949 from General Francis Butcher, the last British commander-in-chief of India.
  - 🥄 General Cariappa retired on January 14, 1953. His retirement day is observed as Armed Forces Veterans Day, since 2017.
  - Notably, Indian Army has marked 2024 as Year of Technology Absorption.
  - Jan 15 is also observed as Thiruvalluvar Day, marking birth anniversary of Noted Tamil poet and philosopher Thiruvalluvar (commonly known as Valluvar).
  - Jan 15, 2024 also marks 150th anniversary of establishment of *India Meteorological Department (IMD)*, which was formed on Jan 15, 1875.
- 6. Jan 16 is observed as National Startup Day, since 2022. On this occasion -
  - Startup Shala was launched for extensive handholding of startups at the scaleup stage, as Startup India's flagship Accelerator Program. The initiative is a 3-month long accelerator program for early-stage startups to provide them access to knowledge, network, funds, or guidance required to scale up.
  - National Startup Awards 2023 were conferred.
- 7. Jan 19 is observed as Kokborok Day (Tripuri language Day), observed in Tripura.
- 8. Jan 21 is statehood day of Northeastern States of Tripura, Manipur and Meghalaya (Formed in 1972).
- 9. Jan 23 is Birth Anniversary of notable Freedom Fighter Netaji Shri Subhash Chandra Bose.
  - In 2021, Govt had announced to celebrate January 23rd every year as 'Parakram Diwas', to commemorate birth anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose.

- 🔪 Notably -
  - Netaji revived *Azad Hind Fauj* (INA) in 1943, which was founded by Mohan Singh and Indian prisoners of war captured by Japan during Malayan campaign and at Singapore in 1942. INA aimed to secure India's independence from British rule, and was supported by Japanese Empire initially.
  - Soldiers of INA were persecuted later under infamous *Lal Qila Trials* by british Govt during 1945-1946. This led to country-wide uproar against british rule and shaken up the already weakened british govt (due to world war 2). The widespread revolt proved to be a major driver of India's independence from british rule in 1947.
- Non this occasion -
  - 🔪 Govt announced winner of Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar 2024 -
    - 60 Parachute Field Hospital (Uttar Pradesh) has been selected (in institutional category) for Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar 2024.
    - 🔪 About -
      - Govt instituted annual Subhas Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar to honour invaluable contribution and selfless service rendered by individuals and organisations in field of disaster management.
      - It is announced every year on 23rd January, carrying cash prize of 51 lakh for an institution and 5 lakh for an individual.
- 10. Jan 24 is foundation day of Uttar Pradesh, which was formed on Jan 24, 1950.
  - Non this occasion, state govt conferred *Uttar Pradesh Gaurav Samman 2023* (1st edition) on noted ISRO scientist **Ritu Karidhal Srivastava** and **Naveen Tiwari** (CEO of Inmobi). Award carries cash prize of 11 lakh.
- 11. Jan 24 is observed as National Girl Child Day in India, initiated in 2008 by Ministry of Women and Child Development.
- 12. Jan 24 is observed by UNESCO as International Day of Education, with 2024 theme Learning for lasting peace.
- 13. Jan 25 is observed in India as National Voters' Day, with 2024 theme Nothing Like Voting, I Vote For sure.
  - It marks Foundation day of Election Commission of India (ECI), which was established on 25th January 1950. It is observed Since 2011.
  - 🔪 On this occasion -
    - Nort voter awareness film *My Vote My Duty* produced by ECI in association with filmmaker *Raj Kumar Hirani* was screened.
    - 🥄 A special commemorative postage stamp was released, to mark 75th year of Election Commission of India.
  - 🔪 Jan 25 is also observed as -
    - National Statehood day of Himachal Pradesh, formed in 1971.
    - 🥄 National Tourism Day in India, with 2024 theme Sustainable Journeys, Timeless Memories.
      - Note that World Tourism day is observed on Sep 27.
- 14. Jan 26, 2024 has been observed by UN as 1st ever International Day of Clean Energy. It will be observed annually.
  - 🥄 Jan 26 is also observed as International Customs Day.
- 15. Jan 26, 2024 observed as 75th Republic day of India. It marks enactment of Indian constitution on Jan 26, 1950.
  - 🔪 Chief Guest -
    - Neresident of France, Emmanuel Macron was Chief Guest at Republic Day 2024 celebrations.
  - Navards -
    - President Ram Nath kovind approved conferment of Jeevan Raksha Padak Series Awards 2023 on 31 persons, which includes Sarvottam Jeevan Raksha Padak to 3, Uttam Jeevan Raksha Padak to 7 and Jeevan Raksha Padak to 21 persons.
    - President Draupadi Murmu Conferred Rashtriya Bal Puraskar 2024 to 19 children under various categories (age group 5-18 years).
    - President approved 391 Gallantry and other Defence decorations to Armed Forces personnel (Army 269, Navy 43, Air Force 70, CRPF 1, BRDB 3, Coast Guard 1, J&K Police 4). Awards Include **6 Kirti** Chakras, **16**Shaurya Chakras.
      - Nartime Decorations -
        - No Paramvir Chakra Awardees This year.
        - No Mahavir Chakra Awardees This year.
        - No Vir Chakra Awardees This year.
      - Peacetime Decorations -

- No Ashoka Chakra Awardees This year.
- 🔪 Kirti Chakra (All from Army) -
  - 🔪 Major Digvijay Singh Rawat
  - Najor Deependra Vikram Basnet
  - 🥄 Captain Anshuman Singh
  - 🔪 Havildar Pawan Kumar Yadav
  - 🔪 Havildar Abdul Majid
  - Nepoy Pawan Kumar
- Naurya Chakra -
  - 🔪 Major Maneo Francis (Army)
  - 🥄 Major Amandeep Jakhar (Army)
  - 🥄 Captain Mv Pranjal (Army)
  - 🔪 Captain Akshat Upadhyay (Army)
  - Naib Subedar Baria Sanjay Kumar Bhamar Sinh (Army)
  - Navildar Sanjay Kumar (Army)
  - 🦠 Rifleman Alok Rao (Army)
  - Narshotam Kumar (Army (Civilian))
  - 🔪 Lieutenant Bimal Ranjan Behera (Navy)
  - Ning Commander Shailesh Singh (Air Force)
  - Naruthedath (Air Force)
  - 🔪 Assistant Commandant Bibhor Kumar Singh (CRPF)
  - 🔪 Mohan Lal (J&k Police)
  - ASI Amit Raina (J&k Police)
  - 🦠 SI Faroz Ahmad Dar (J&k Police)
  - Constable Varun Singh (J&k Police)
- 🔪 About -
  - 🥄 India's Top Peacetime Gallantary Awards are Ashoka Chakra > Kirti Chakra > Shaurya Chakra.
  - 🥄 India's Top Wartime Gallantary Awards are Param Vir Chakra > Maha Vir Chakra > Vir Chakra.
- President Also approved gallantary Decorations to Coast Guard Personnel, which includes 1 President's Tatrakshak Medal (Distinguished Service) - Bhisham Sharma, 2 Tatrakshak Medal (Gallantry) and 3 Tatrakshak Medal (Meritorious Service).
- Notable Points -
  - Vice-President *Jagdeep Dhankhar* inaugurated year long pan India campaign **Hamara Samvidhan**, **Hamara Samman**, at Dr Ambedkar International Centre (New Delhi), to commemorate 75th Year of India as Republic.
    - Campaign will be undertaken by Department of Justice (Ministry of Law and Justice).
- 16. Jan 27 is observed by UN as International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust.
  - The Holocaust was World War II genocide of European Jews. Between 1941 and 1945. Germany murdered over 60 lakh Jews, around two-thirds of Europe's Jewish population.
- 17. ▶ Jan 28 is observed globally as *Data Privacy Day*.
- 18. Jan 30 is observed as Martyr's Day, marking death anniversary of M K Gandhi. He was killed on this day in 1948, by Nathuram Godse.
  - 🔪 Jan 30 is also observed by WHO as World neglected tropical diseases Day.
- 19. ▶ Jan 31 is observed as *International Zebra Day*.
- 20. Jan 9 is observed as **Pravasi Bharatiya Divas**, established in 2003. It marks contribution of overseas Indian community in development of India. It commemorates return of M K Gandhi from South Africa to India on 9 January 1915.
  - This day came into effect in 2003, but in 2015 it was revised and since then, PBD Convention has been organised once every 2 years.
  - Last (17th), PBD Convention was held during Jan 8-10, 2023 at Indore (Madhya Pradesh). Next PBD convention will be held during Jan 8-10, 2025.
- 21. January 12 is observed as **National youth Day** in india, to commemorate birth anniversary of Legendary Philiosopher Shri **Swami Vivekananda**. It has been observed since 1984.

- Non this occasion -
  - 🥄 PM Narendra Modi inaugurated 27th National Youth Festival in Nashik (Maharashtra).
    - ightharpoonup Theme was ViksitBharat@2047 By the Youth, For the Youth.
    - 15 young individuals were conferred with National Youth Award at 27th National Youth Festival 2024.
  - Karnataka Govt began disbursement under Yuva Nidhi scheme, which offers monthly unemployment allowance of Rs 3000 to graduates and 1500 to diploma holders who passed in 2022-23 academic year.
    - Allowance would be given for 2 years from date of announcement of the result, or till he/she becomes employed/self-employed (whichever is earlier).
  - Urban Youth Unit at NIUA and YuWaah UNICEF partnered to solidify commitment to empowering young people for urban governance.
- 🔪 Also, Jan 12-16 is observed annually as National Youth Week.
- 🥄 Notably, International Youth Day is celebrated on August 12 by United Nations..
- 22. Ministry of Road Transport and Highways annually observes Road Safety Week between Jan 11-17.

#### **Defence**

- 1. Ist edition of Bilateral Maritime Exercise between **Indian** & **Thailand** Navies, named **Ex-**Ayutthaya (which translates to the invincible one) has been hosted by Thailand, along with 36th edition of India-Thailand Coordinated Patrol (Indo-Thai CORPAT).
- 2. Ist edition of Joint India-UAE Army exercise DESERT CYCLONE held at Mahajan (Rajasthan).
- 3. Indian and Japanese Coast Guards conducted joint exercise Sahyog Kaijin, off the coast of Chennai.
- 4. As per Military Strength Rankings 2024 by Global Firepower -
  - 🔪 Top 5 Strongest Armies US (1), Russia (2), China (3), India (4), South Korea (5)
- 5. Indian Air Force (IAF) conducted Exercise Desert Knight over Arabian sea, along Air Forces from France & UAE.
- 6. Indian Navy Ships Cheetah, Guldar and Kumbhir have been decommissioned, after 4 decades of services.
  - Cheetah, Guldar and Kumbhir were built at Gdynia Shipyard (Poland) as Polnocny class Landing Ships, and were commissioned into Indian Navy in 1984, 1985 and 1986 respectively.
- 7. Indian Navy participated in **Ex Sea Dragon 24** (4th edition), an Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) exercise organized by **US**Navy. It was also attended by navies from Australia, South Korea & Japan.
- 8. Indian Navy received its first indigenous medium-altitude long-endurance (MALE) drone, the Drishti 10 Starliner unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV).
  - \times It will boost Navy's intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities.
  - Notes that I of Starliner drone has been built by Adani Defence and Aerospace at its Hyderabad facility, with technology transfer from Israeli defence firm Elbit Systems.
- 9. Misc. Defence News (Jan 2024) -
  - Defence Ministry approved raising 4 new National Cadet Corps (NCC) Units in UTs of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh. It includes one Mixed (Boys & Girls) Army Battalion each at Udhampur (J&K), Kupwara (J&K) and Kargil (Ladakh), and one Air Squadron at Udhampur (J&K).
  - NRDO successfully test fired New Generation AKASH (AKASH-NG) surface-to-air missile, with Operational range 70-80 KM.
  - NRDO launched indigenously developed assault rifle named *Ugram*, to replace ageing *INSAS* rifle currently used by Armed Forces.
    - It has been developed by DRDO Unit Armament Research and Development Establishment (ARDE) and Hyderabadbased private firm Dvipa Armour India Private Limited.
  - 9th chapter of *Capsule on Science, Technology and Applied Research (CAPSTAR)* held at Military Institute of Technology (MILIT) Pune, with participation from services, academia, DRDO Labs and private defence industries.
  - Ajay Bhatt (Minister of State for Defence) flagged off indigenously developed **Astra Mk-1** air-to-air missiles produced by Bharat Dynamics Limited (with range upto 110 KM), for induction into Indian Air Force (IAF).
  - Indian Army launched Operation Sarvashakti, to eliminate terrorists operating on both sides of Pir Panjal mountain ranges in J&K UT.
  - Ninistry of Defence signed Contract with Mumbai-based *Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders (MDL)*, for acquisition of 14 Fast Patrol Vessels (FPVs) for *Indian Coast Guard*, at cost 1070 crores.

#### **Economy**

- 1. First Advance Estimates of National Income for FY24 (2023-24), released by National Statistical Office (Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation) -
  - Real GDP (GDP at Constant (2011-12) Prices) in 2023-24 is estimated to be 171.79 lakh crores, as against Provisional Estimate of GDP for 2022-23 of 160.06 lakh crore (7.3% growth).
  - Nominal GDP (GDP at Current Prices) in 2023-24 is estimated at 296.58 lakh crores, as against Provisional Estimate of GDP for 2022-23 of 272.41 lakh crores(8.9 % growth).
  - 🔪 About -
    - First Advance Estimates of GDP were introduced in 2016-17, to serve as essential inputs to the Budget exercise. It is based on limited data and compiled using Benchmark-Indicator Method.
- 2. Yes Bank Launched SmartFin, as an advanced digital Supply Chain Finance (SCF) platform developed in collaboration with Veefin Solutions, to support Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).
- 3. IndusInd Bank launched UPI-enabled Samman RuPay Credit Card in association with National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), tailored for government sector employees.
- 4. Inflation and Trade Data for December 2023 -
  - Night Inflation -
    - Nholesale price Index (WPI) based (wholesale inflation) -
      - WPI based inflation increased to **0.73** % in **December** 2023.
      - NPI Inflation in last 12 months -
        - November 2023 0.26 % 🔪
        - Negative) (Negative)
        - Negative) September 2023 (-) 0.26 % (Negative)
        - Nugust 2023 (-) 0.52 % (**Negative**)
        - 🔪 July 2023 (-) 1.36 % (**Negative**)
        - Nune 2023 (-) 4.12 % (Negative) (lowest in 8 years)
        - Nay 2023 (-) 3.48 % (**Negative**)
        - Negative) (Negative)
        - 🔪 March 2023 1.34 %
        - 🔪 February 2023 3.85 %
        - 🔪 January 2023 4.73 %
        - Necember 2022 4.95 %
    - Consumer Price Index (CPI) Based (retail inflation) -
      - CPI-based inflation rate for December 2023 increased to 5.69%.
      - 🔪 CPI Inflation in Last 12 Months -
        - 🔪 November 2023 5.55 %
        - 🔪 October 2023 4.87 %
        - 🔪 September 2023 5.02 %
        - 🥄 August 2023 6.83 %
        - Nuly 2023 7.44 % (15 Month High)
        - 🔪 June 2023 4.81 %
        - Nay 2023 4.25 % (25 Month Low)
        - 🔪 April 2023 4.7 %
        - 🔪 March 2023 5.66 %
        - 🦠 February 2023 6.44 %
        - 🔪 January 2023 6.52 %
        - 🔪 December 2022 5.72 %
  - 🔪 Trade -
    - Noverall Trade **December** 2023 (Merchandise + Services) -
      - 🔪 Overall Imports 71.50

- Noverall Exports 66.33
- Noverall Trade Deficit 5.17 Billion USD
- November 2023)
  - 🔪 Overall Imports 67.88
  - Noverall Exports 62.58
  - Noverall Trade Deficit 5.30 Billion USD
  - Notably, India's Overall Trade Deficit stood at 21 month low of 1.38 Billion USD, in April 2023.
- 🔪 Notable facts about India's Trade during Previous Financial Year (FY 23 (2022-23)) -
  - 🔪 Exports stood at highest ever USD 770.18 billion during FY 2022-23, growing 13.84 % over FY 2021-22.
    - Out of this, Merchandise exports stood at USD 447.46 billion & Services exports at USD 322.72 billion, both a new annual record.
    - US and UAE retained first and second places respectively as India's largest export destinations, during
      FY 2022-23. Netherlands rose to third place, replacing China.
  - In terms of overall trade too (exports + imports), US remained India's top partner in 2022-23, with \$128.55 Billion Trade (Exports \$78.31 billion & imports \$50.24 billion).
- 5. State Bank of India (SBI) launched *Green Rupee Term Deposit* scheme, to mobilise funds to support environment-friendly initiatives and projects, to help foster growth of a green finance ecosystem in India. Tenors and Interest rates (50 basis points less for bulk deposits) -
  - 🔪 1111 Days- 6.65 %
  - 1777 Days- 6.65 %
  - 2222 Days- 6.40 %
- 6. As per IMF World Economy Outlook January 2024 Update -
  - 🔪 Globally -
    - **♦** Growth is projected to stay 3.1 % in 2024 (same as 2023), and 3.2 % in 2025.
      - 2024 global growth forecast has been increased to 3.1 % (from 2.9 % in Oct 2023 update), amid higher resilience in USA and several large emerging / developing economies.
    - Note that the second of the s
  - Growth in Other notable regions -
    - Name = 1.5 April 1.5 India Set to fall from 6.7 % in 2023 to 6.5 % in 2024 & 2025.
      - Notably, IMF has revised 2023 growth forecast for India from 6.3 % earlier to 6.7 % now.
    - **US** 2.5 % (2023), 2.1 % (2024), 1.7 % (2025)
    - \ China 5.2 \% (2023), 4.6 \% (2024), 4.1 \% (2025)
- 7. As per United Nations' World Economic Situation and Prospects 2024 -
  - Notable regions -
    - VSA 1.4 % in 2024 (after 2.5 % in 2023)
    - 🥄 European Union 1.2 % in 2024 (after 0.5 % in 2023)
    - Number 2023 (2014) China 4.7 % in 2024 (2014)
    - South Asia 5.2 % in 2024 (after 5.2 % in 2023)
    - **№** India 6.2 % in 2024 (after 6.3 % in 2023). India remains fastest growing large economy in the world.
    - Least developed countries 5.0 % in 2024 (after 4.4 % in 2023). Notably, UN SDGs have set 7.0 % growth target for LDCs.
- 8. As per Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) data on trends in Direct Tax collections during period FY14 (2013-14) FY23 (2022-23) -
  - Net Direct Tax Collections increased from 638596 crores to 1663686 crores.
  - No. Gross Direct Tax Collections increased from 721604 crores to 1972248 crores. ■
  - Notes To the GDP ratio increased from 5.62% to 6.11%.
  - Note that the North Nor
  - Number of ITRs filed increased from 3.80 crores to 7.78 crores.
- 9. As per World Bank's latest Global Economic Prospects report -

- Global growth is projected to slow for third year in a row from 2.6% in 2023 to 2.4% in 2024, before picking up to 2.7 % in 2025.
- GDP Growth projections in notable regions -
  - 🔪 USA 1.6 % in 2024 & 1.7 % in 2025
  - 🔪 South Asia 5.6 % in 2024 & 5.9 % in 2025
  - China 4.5 % in 2024 & 4.3 % in 2025
  - **№** India 6.4 % in 2024 & 6.5 % in 2025. India remains fastest growing large economy in the world.
- 10. ▶ As per data by *Bloomberg* -
  - Indian stock market went past Hong Kong to become 4th highest equity market globally, with value of shares listed on Indian exchanges reaching USD 4.33 trillion.
  - Nop 3 US (\$50.86 trillion), China (\$8.44 trillion) and Japan (\$6.36 trillion).
- 11. Asian Development Bank (ADB) and India's *SAEL Industries Limited* (through its subsidiary SAEL Solar P4 Private Limited) signed loan agreement of \$147 million, for development of a 400-megawatt (MW) greenfield solar power plant in Gujarat (India), to support India's ongoing transition toward clean energy and low-carbon growth.
- 12. ▶ Beijing based Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) announced investment of Approx USD 58 million in Sustainable Energy Infra Trust (SEIT), India's largest renewable energy Infrastructure Investment Trust (InvIT).
  - SEIT has 8 operating solar power generation assets of 1.54 gigawatt-peak capacity in India, co-sponsored by *Mahindra Susten Private Limited* and *Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan*.
- 13. Competition Commission of India (CCI) Approvals -
  - Tata Electronics's acquisition of 100 % equity of Wistron Infocomm Manufacturing (India) Private Limited, from SMS Infocomm (Singapore) Private Limited.
    - ↑ This will enable Tata Electronics to become 1st Indian iPhone maker.
  - Nerger of Fincare Small Finance Bank into AU Small Finance Bank.
    - \ Under this all-share deal, shareholders of Fincare SFB will receive 579 shares in AU SFB for every 2000 shares they hold in Fincare SFB.
- 14. ▶ Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman presented report *Indian Economy A Review*, prepared by office of Chief Economic Advisor (CEA) V Anantha Nageswaran.
  - This report has been tabled in place of usual Economic Survey traditionally presented annually before Union Budget. As 2024 is a general elections year, Economic Survey has not been presented.
  - The report presents a comprehensive analysis of India's economic journey over past 10 years, and aims to assess state of Indian economy and provide insights into its future outlook.
- 15. ► GST revenue collected in December 2023 stood at 164882 crores (CGST 30443 crores, SGST 37935 crores, IGST 84255 crores & cess 12249 crores).
- 16. Home Minister Amit Shah launched Computerization project of 1851 units of *Agriculture and Rural Development Banks* (ARDBs) and Registrar of Cooperative Societies (RCSs) of all States/UTs, to modernize the cooperative sector and enhance efficiency by bringing entire cooperative ecosystem on a digital platform.
- 17. ICICI Bank subsidiary *ICICI Bank Canada* launched its *Money2India* mobile banking app, enabling customers of all Canadian banks to instantly transfer funds to any Indian bank without opening an account with *ICICI Bank Canada*.
  - Nusers can send amounts up to CAD 30000 in a single transaction.
- 18. In a supervisory action against Paytm Payments Bank (PPBL), under section 35A of Banking Regulation Act 1949 -
  - No further deposits shall be allowed in any PPBL customer accounts, prepaid instruments, wallets, FASTags, NCMC cards, etc. after February 29, 2024.
  - Nowever, Withdrawal or utilisation of balances by its customers (from mentioned products) will be permitted without any restrictions.
  - Notably, Earlier in March 2022, RBI had directed PPBL to stop onboarding new customers.
- 19. Misc. Financial / Economy News (Jan 2024) -
  - Name of the Indian GDP Growth Forecasts -
    - Nindia Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra) 6.7% for FY24 (2023-24).
    - As per APAC Cross-Sector Outlook 2024 by Fitch Ratings 6.9% for FY24 (2023-24) & 6.5 for FY25 (2024-25).
    - 🔪 As per World Bank's latest Global Economic Prospects report -

- Global growth is projected to slow for third year in a row from 2.6% in 2023 to 2.4% in 2024, before picking up to 2.7% in 2025.
- Notable regions -
  - NSA 1.6 % in 2024 & 1.7 % in 2025
  - Nouth Asia 5.6 % in 2024 & 5.9 % in 2025

  - **Note:** India 6.4 % in 2024 & 6.5 % in 2025. India remains fastest growing large economy in the world.
- Nas per United Nations' World Economic Situation and Prospects 2024 -
  - Notable regions -
    - **USA 1.4** % in 2024 (after 2.5 % in 2023)
    - European Union 1.2 % in 2024 (after 0.5 % in 2023)
    - New China 4.7 % in 2024 (after 5.3 % in 2023)
    - Nouth Asia 5.2 % in 2024 (after 5.2 % in 2023)
    - **Note:** India 6.2 % in 2024 (after 6.3 % in 2023). India remains fastest growing large economy in the world.
    - Least developed countries 5.0 % in 2024 (after 4.4 % in 2023). Notably, UN SDGs have set 7.0 % growth target for LDCs.
- 🔪 Notable Penalties put by RBI -
  - 🥄 ESAF Small Finance Bank 29.55 Lakh
  - Nunjab and Sind Bank 1 crore
  - Nanlaxmi Bank 1.2 crore
  - NKGSB Co-operative Bank 50 lakh
- NBI Cancelled banking licence of -
  - 🥄 Dabhoi (Gujarat) based Shree Mahalaxmi Mercantile Co-operative Bank
  - Niriyur (Karnataka) based Hiriyur Urban Co-operative Bank
- RBI Approved Power Finance Corporation (PFC)'s proposal to establish a finance company within Gujarat's GIFT City, an International Financial Services Centre (IFSC).
- Tata Consumer Products Ltd acquired 100% stake in FMCG Brand Capital Foods (owner of brands Ching's Secret and Smith & Jones) for 5100 crores.
- Maharatna PSU *REC Limited* issued its 1st Japanese Yen (JPY) 61.1 billion (5-year, 5.25-year and 10-year) Green bonds, under its US\$ 10 billion Global Medium Term Notes Programme. Proceeds will be applied to finance Eligible Green Projects.
- Govt announced to set up Trade Connect ePlatform, as an intermediary platform to connect Indian exporters / entrepreneurs with stakeholders in international trade.
- 🔪 Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) became most valuable PSU in India, after overtaking SBI.
  - LIC market cap reached 5.8 lakh crores, following a recent persistent rally in its shares.
- Taiwanese electronics contract manufacturer Foxconn partnered with Indian IT Firm HCL Group, to establish a semiconductor packaging and testing venture in India.
- National DLabs (business incubator at Indian School of Business (ISB)) launched startup accelerator programme called Build for Billions, in partnership with Reserve Bank Innovation Hub (RBIH) and Union Bank of India.
  - Note that the North Nor
- 🔪 LIC launched its *Jeevan Dhara II* deferred annuity plan, with life cover during deferment period.
  - Note: It provides higher annuity rates as policyholders age.
  - \ It has minimum entry age of 20 years.
- Yes Bank became first Indian bank to execute an export finance transaction on International Trade Financing Services Platform (ITFS) of RXIL Global IFSC Limited (RXIL), a cross-border fintech firm registered under International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA).
  - This facilitates arranging credit for exporters and importers from both Indian and Global Institutions, at competitive pricing.

- Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas approved establishment of a subsidiary company by Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC), focusing on green energy and gas ventures, to be named *ONGC Green Limited*.
- NBI approved LIC's acquisition of up to 9.99% aggregate holding in HDFC Bank.
- Krutrim AI (Founded by Ola Founder Bhavish Aggarwal) became India's first AI startup to reach unicorn status (valuation of \$1 billion).
- 20. PM Narendra Modi released first instalment to 1 lakh beneficiaries of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana Gramin (PMAY G) under Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan (PM-JANMAN).
  - Launched on *Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas* (Nov 15, 2023), PM-JANMAN focuses on 11 critical interventions through 9 Ministries, with budget of approx 24000 crores.
    - It aims at socio-economic welfare of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs), by saturating PVTG households and habitations with basic facilities.
- 21. ▶ RBI Digital Payments Index (RBI-DPI) for September 2023 stands at **418.77**, against 395.57 for March 2023, showing growth in Digital payments speae.
  - RBI has been publishing DPI data since January 1, 2021 with March 2018 as base (100), to capture extent of digitisation of payments across country.
- 22. RBI enhanced bulk deposit limit for large urban co-operative banks (UCBs) to **1 crore** and above (from current 15 lakh and above).
  - New bulk deposit limit applies to UCBs in Tier 3 (deposits between 1000-10000 crores) and Tier 4 (deposits over 10000 crores) categories.
- 23. RBI issued a draft framework for *Self-Regulatory Organisations* (SRO) focused on **FinTech** sector, to empower the growing sector to function and innovate responsibly, even without formal regulations.
- 24. SBI announced raising \$1 billion from overseas, to bolster domestic ESG (Environmental, social, and governance) financing market, including a green shoe of \$250 million.

# **International**

- 1. Kyrgyzstan declared snow leopard as its national symbol, underscoring its commitment to conservation and ecological balance.
- 2. As per Henley Passport Index 2024 Global Ranking -
  - √ 6 Nations have been ranked jointly at top (enabling visa-free access to 194 nations) France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Singapore, Spain.
  - 🥄 Indian passport has been ranked at 80th place (jointly with Uzbekistan), enabling visa-free access to 62 nations.
- 3. As per 2024 Social Progress Index released by Social Progress Initiative -
  - Norway (2), Finland (3)
  - Nottom 3 Chad (168), Central African Republic (169), South Sudan (170)
  - 🔪 **India** ranked 111 in list.
  - 🔪 Neighbors China (77), Pakistan (134), Sri Lanka (83), Bangladesh (121), Nepal (110)
- 4. As per Global 500 Brands Ranking 2024 by Brand Finance -
  - 🥄 Top 5 firms globally Apple, Microsoft, Google, Amazon, Samsung
  - Top 3 Indian Firms in list Tata Group (64), Infosys (145), LIC (222)
  - Notably, As per IT Services Firms 2024 Ranking by Brand Finance -
    - Nop 3 IT Firms globally Accenture, TCS, Infosys
- 5. As per UK-based consultancy Skytrax -
  - 🔪 Top 3 Airports globally in 2023 -
    - Nangi Airport (Singapore)
    - Namad Airport (Doha)
    - 🔪 Haneda Airport (Tokyo)
  - 🥄 Top 3 Indian Airports -
    - Nelhi's IGI Airport (36th)
    - 🔪 Hyderabad's Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (65th)
    - 🥄 Bangalore's Kempegowda International Airport (69th)

- 6. Asian Development Bank (ADB) launched *Climate Action Catalyst Fund (CACF)*, as a first-of-its-kind carbon fund under *2015 Paris Agreement*.
  - It will aim to mobilize innovative carbon finance through purchase of carbon credits, to catalyze investments in transformative mitigation actions in ADB's developing member countries.
- 7. Govt announced to set up **Bharat Park**, an India-specific trade zone with a showroom and warehouse in **UAE**.
  - 🥄 It will facilitate other countries to buy Indian goods, while payments will be secured in UAE.

# **Meetings**

- 1. 9th edition of India International Science Festival (IISF) 2023 held at THSTI campus in Faridabad (Haryana), with theme Science and Technology Public Outreach in Amrit Kaal.
- 2. 10th edition of biennial *Vibrant Gujarat Global Investors Summit* held at Gandhinagar (Gujarat). Theme for this edition is *Gateway to the Future*.
  - Nis edition had 34 Partner countries and 16 Partner organisations.
  - Notable visiting heads of state included *Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan* (President of UAE & Ruler of Abu Dhabi, **Chief Guest**), *Petr Fiala* (PM of Czech Republic), Filipe Nyusi (President of Mozambique) & José Ramos-Horta (President of Timor Leste).
  - 🔪 Notable MOUs -
    - University of San Diego (USA) will set up its campus in GIFT City (Gandhinagar), in collaboration with IIT Gandhinagar.
    - Nouth Korean Semiconductor Substrates maker firm *Simmtech* will set up a unit to support semiconductor ecosystem at Sanand near Ahmedabad.
      - Notably, India's first semiconductor chip factory is being set up by *Micron* at Sanand, which is expected to begin production in December 2024. *Simmtech* will Ensure Uninterrupted Supplies to Micron's unit in Sanand.
    - Nuring the summit, Shanghai-based **New Development Bank** (setup by BRICS Nations) signed 3 loan agreements with India -
      - Noan of USD 500 million to develop 13500 kilometers of rural roads in Gujarat.
      - 🔪 Loan of USD 115 million for an Integrated Sewerage System for city of Imphal (Manipur).
      - Loan of **USD 70 million** for rejuvenation of Lamphelpat waterbody and its surrounding areas in Imphal (Manipur).
  - Notable Activities -
    - ▶ Joint Statement for *India-Czechia Strategic Partnership on Innovation* was adopted, to boost India-Czechia bilateral relations.
    - 🔪 MOUs signed between India and UAE -
      - 🦠 Investment Cooperation in Innovative Healthcare Projects, Renewable Energy Sector & Food Park Development.
      - NOU between UAE Based Logistics firm *DP World* and *Gujarat Govt*, for Special Economic Zone (SEZ) development, ports and related infrastructure.
    - 🔪 Notably -
      - 🔪 India-UAE Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) had come into effect on May 1, 2022.
      - Note That India-UAE bilateral trade reached USD 85 billion in 2022-23, targeted to be 100 billion USD (well before target year of 2030). ■
- 3. 19th Summit of **Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)** held in *Kampala (Uganda)*, with theme *Deepening Cooperation for Shared Global Affluence*.
  - India was represented by External Affairs Minister *S Jaishankar*. He also attended *3rd South Summit* of the *Group of 77 and China (G-77)*, in Kampala.
  - 🔪 About -
    - Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) is a forum of 120 countries that are not formally aligned with or against any major power bloc. It was founded in 1961, to advance interests of developing countries in the context of Cold War confrontation.
- 4. Aatmanirbhar Bharat Utsav 2024 held at Bharat Mandapam (New Delhi).
  - During the summit, National One District One Product Awards 2023 were conferreed. Gold Winners -

- 🔪 District Awards -
  - 🔪 Agriculture Alluri Sitharama Raju (Andhra Pradesh), for *Araku Coffee*
  - Non-Agriculture Kakinada (Andhra Pradesh), for Uppada Jamdani Saree
- 🔪 States -
  - 🥄 Category A Uttar Pradesh
  - **№** Category B J&K
- 🔪 Mission Aboard -
  - Consulate General of India, Vancouver (Canada)
- 5. International Purple Fest 2024 held in Goa (2nd edition), showcasing diversity, inclusivity, and empowerment of Divyangjans (PWDs) on a global scale.
  - Non this occasion, *Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD)* and *Enable India* jointly introduced a transformative 70-hour interactive Employability Skills course for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs).
- 6. Wings India 24 organized in Hyderabad (Telangana), as largest event in Civil Aviation sector in Asia, with theme Connecting India to the World in Amrit Kaal: Setting the Stage for India Civil Aviation @2047. Notable Highlights -
  - 🔪 UDAN 5.3 (Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik) was launched.
  - Airbus formed a 50:50 joint venture with Tata-owned Air India, to launch a world-class pilot training centre in Gurugram (Haryana).
  - Airbus partnered with Tata Group to establish a Final Assembly Line (FAL) for helicopters in India, to produce Airbus' best-selling H125 helicopters in India.
  - Newly formed airline *Akasa Air* placed order for 150 narrow-body 737 MAX planes with US aircraft manufacturer Boeing, costing \$20 billion.
  - Kempegowda International Airport (Bengaluru) and Indira Gandhi International Airport (Delhi) were named Best Airport of the Year, during Wings India Awards 2024.
- 7. Notable highlights from Annual World Economic Forum (WEF) Meet 2024 in Davos (Switzerland) -
  - India announced launch of Global Good Alliance for Gender Equity and Equality, to promote women-led development globally.
    - Supported by *Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation*, the alliance will be housed by *CII Centre for Women Leadership*, with WEF as *Network Partner* and *Invest India* as *Institutional Partner*.
  - NEF and *Telangana* govt jointly established *19th* Centre of *WEF's Fourth Industrial Revolution Network (4IR)* in *Hyderabad*, to help advance healthcare technology.
    - Noticial launch of the centre will be conducted during BioAsia 2024 (Feb 2024).
  - MoU signed between *Adani Enterprises* & *Maharashtra* govt, to set up 1 GW of hyperscale data infrastructure in state over 10 years, with investment of 50000 crores.
  - As per *Edelman Trust Barometer 2024* released during WEF meet, India topped the charts in metrices of *confidence in businesses* and *non-governmental organizations (NGOs)*.

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## **National**

- 1. Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS) & National Commission for Indian System of Medicine (NCISM) launched SMART 2.0 (Scope for Mainstreaming Ayurveda Research among Teaching professionals) program, to promote robust clinical studies in priority areas of Ayurveda with Ayurveda academic institutions/hospitals across country.
- 2. Assam govt launched Mukhyamantri Mahila Udyamita Abhiyaan, aimed at empowering rural women entrepreneurs who are part of self-help groups.
  - This initiative introduces unique conditions, focusing specifically on number of children that applicant woman have (upto 3 children for General/OBC and upto 4 children for SC/ST women).
- 3. Kerala govt launched Operation Amrith (Antimicrobial Resistance Intervention For Total Health), to curb overuse of antibiotics in state by checking over-the-counter sales of antibiotics without a doctor's prescription.
  - AMR (antimicrobial resistance), refers to the ability of bacteria and microbes to resist the drugs used to inhibit or kill them. Recognized as a *silent pandemic*, AMR is associated with 5 million annual deaths globally.
- 4. ► Maratha Military Landscapes of India has been named as India's nomination for recognition as UNESCO World Heritage
  List for 2024-25.

- 12 components of this nomination are Salher fort, Shivneri fort, Lohgad, Khanderi fort, Raigad, Rajgad, Pratapgad, Suvarnadurg, Panhala Fort, Vijay durg, Sindhudurg in Maharashtra and Gingee Fort in Tamil Nadu.
- 5. Pench Tiger Reserve (located on Madhya Pradesh-Maharashtra border) has been recognized as India's 1st Dark Sky Park (and 5th in Asia).
  - It has been recognized for its efforts to protect night sky and prevent light pollution, making it ideal for astronomy enthusiasts.
- 6. West Bengal govt introduced a free training module for SC/ST students in state for various entrance and competitive examinations, named *Yogyasree*.
- 7. As per 3rd advance estimates of area and production of various horticultural crops for year 2022-23, released by Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare -
  - Estimation of total horticulture production for 2022-23 is **355.25 million tonnes**, which is 8 million tonnes more than 2021-22.
  - Stimated Area under cultivation is 28.34 million hectares, against 28.04 in 2021-22.
- 8. As per States' Startup Ranking Framework 2022 -
  - Category A States (Population over 1 crore) -
    - 🥄 Best performer Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu
    - 🥄 Top Performer Maharashtra, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Telangana
  - 🔪 Category B States (Population under 1 crore) -
    - 🦠 Best performer Himachal Pradesh
    - 🥄 Top Performer Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya
- 9. As per NITI Aayog report Multidimensional Poverty in India since 2005-06 -
  - 🥄 Between 2013-14 to 2022-23 -
    - 🥄 24.82 crore people escaped multidimensional poverty, with decline in Poverty Headcount Ratio from 29.17% to 11.28%.
    - Nutrar Pradesh registered largest decline in number of poor (5.94 crore people escaping multidimensional poverty), followed by Bihar (3.77 crore), Madhya Pradesh (2.30 crore) and Rajasthan (1.87 crore).
    - All 12 indicators of MPI have recorded significant improvement during the period. India is likely to achieve its SDG target of halving multidimensional poverty well before 2030.
    - National About -
      - Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) is a globally recognized comprehensive measure that captures poverty in multiple dimensions beyond monetary aspects.
      - NPI's global methodology is based on robust Alkire and Foster (AF) method that identifies poverty based on universally acknowledged metric designed to assess acute poverty.
- 10. ▶ Bihar Police announced *Mission Investigation@75 Days*, aiming to streamline and expedite criminal justice process in state, Starting from January 01, 2024.
  - Under it, investigators will be mandated to complete investigation of cases within 75 days of registration of First Information Reports (FIRs).
- 11. Cabinet Approvals (Jan 05, 2024) -
  - NOUs -
    - With *United States for International Development/India (USAID/India)*, for supporting Indian Railways to achieve Mission Net Zero Carbon Emission by 2030.
    - Nith Guyana cooperation in hydrocarbon sector.
    - Nith Mauritius cooperation in development of a Joint Small Satellite.
  - 🔪 General -
    - Approved to declare Ayodhya Airport as an International Airport and naming it as *Maharishi Valmiki International Airport*, *Ayodhyadham*.
    - Approved overarching scheme *PRITHvi VIgyan (PRITHVI)* of Ministry of Earth Sciences, for implementation during 2021-26 at cost 4797 crores.
      - It encompasses five ongoing sub-schemes -
        - Natmosphere & Climate Research-Modelling Observing Systems & Services (ACROSS)
        - Nocean Services, Modelling Application, Resources and Technology (O-SMART)
        - Nolar Science and Cryosphere Research (PACER)

- Seismology and Geosciences (SAGE)
- Nesearch, Education, Training and Outreach (REACHOUT)
- Najor Objectives of overarching Prithvi Scheme -
  - Augmentation and sustainance of long-term observations of atmosphere, ocean, geosphere, cryosphere and solid earth to record vital signs of the Earth System and change.
  - Development of modelling systems for understanding and predicting weather, ocean and climate hazards and understanding the science of climate change.
  - 🔪 Exploration polar and high seas regions of the Earth towards discovery of new phenomena and resources.
  - Development of technology for exploration and sustainable harnessing of oceanic resources for societal applications.
  - Translation of knowledge and insights from Earth systems science into services for societal, environmental and economic benefit.

# 12. Cabinet Approvals (Jan 18, 2024) -

- NOUs -
  - 🔪 With Ecuador, Dominican Republic, The Netherlands Cooperation in field of Medical Products Regulation
  - With European Commission Working Arrangements on Semiconductors Ecosystems under framework of EU-India Trade and Technology Council.
  - With Kenya, Cuba Cooperation in field of sharing successful Digital Solutions implemented at Population Scale for Digital Transformation.
- Name of the General -
  - Approved creation of 3 posts at level of Joint Secretary (2 posts of Joint Secretary and 1 post of Economic Adviser) for recently constituted **16th Finance Commission** (to be headed by **Arvind Panagariya**).
- CCEA (Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs) Approvals -
  - No Proposal for equity investment by -
    - Nouth Eastern Coalfields Limited (SECL) for setting-up 1×660 MW Thermal Power Plant through JV of SECL and MPPGCL
    - Mahanadi Coalfields Limited (MCL) for setting-up 2x800 MW Thermal Power Plant through Mahanadi Basin Powe Ltd (MBPL a subsidiary of MCL).
- 13. Cabinet Approvals (Jan 25, 2024) -
  - NOUs
    - Nith Oman cooperation in field of Information Technology.
    - Approved signing of a protocol for establishment of Joint Economic and Trade Committee (JETCO) between India and Caribbean nation Dominican Republic.
  - CCEA (Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs) Approvals -
    - Approved scheme for *promotion of Coal/Lignite Gasification Projects of Government PSUs and Private Sector*, with outlay 8500 crores towards incentive for coal gasification projects under three categories.
      - In category I 4050 crores for Government PSUs in which upto 3 projects will be supported by providing lumpsum grant of 1350 crore or 15% of capex, whichever is lower.
      - In category II 3850 crores for private sector / Government PSUs in which lump-sum grant of 1000 crore or 15% of capex, whichever is lower provided for each project.
        - At least one project will be bid out on tariff-based bidding process and its criteria will be designed in consultation with NITI Aayog.
      - In category III 600 crores for demonstration Projects (indigenous technology) and/or small-scale product-based Gasification Plants under which lump-sum grant of 100 crore or 15% of capex, whichever is lower, will be given to selected entity who will have a minimum Capex of 100 Crore and minimum production of 1500 Nm3/hr Syn gas.
    - Name Approved equity investment by Coal India Limited (CIL) for -
      - 🔪 Setting up of Coal-to-SNG (Synthetic Natural Gas) Project at ECL command area through a JV of CIL & GAIL
        - Project will be set up at Sonepur Bazari Area of Eastern Coalfields Limited (ECL) in Burdwan district of West Bengal.
      - Setting up of Coal-to-Ammonium Nitrate Project at MCL command area through a JV of CIL & BHEL.

- Project will be set up at Lakhanpur Area of Mahanadi Coalfields Limited (MCL) in Jharsuguda district of Odisha.
- 14. ▶ Department of School Education & Literacy (Ministry of Education) launched Experiential Learning program named *Prerana*, aiming to empower participants with leadership qualities by offering them meaningful, unique, and inspiring experiences.
  - \ It is a week-long residential program for selected students of class IX to XII, to run from a Vernacular School, established in 1888, in Vadnagar (Gujarat).
  - 🔪 A batch of 20 selected students (10 boys and 10 girls) will attend the program, every week from across country.
- 15. Environment Ministry submitted proposals for *Wetland City Accreditation* under *Ramsar Convention* on Wetlands for cities of **Indore (Madhya Pradesh), Bhopal (Madhya Pradesh) & Udaipur (Rajasthan),** as first Indian cities for which nominations have been submitted for WCA.
  - Nout -
    - Ramsar Convention during COP12 (held in 2015) approved a voluntary *Wetland City Accreditation* system, which recognizes cities which have taken exceptional steps to safeguard their urban wetlands. It aims to further promote conservation of urban / peri-urban wetlands, as well as sustainable socio-economic benefits for local populations.
- 16. General News / Events (Jan 1-10, 2014) -
  - US designated 12 countries (China, North Korea, Pakistan, Cuba, Eritrea, Iran, Nicaragua, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Myanmar) as Countries of Particular Concern for having engaged in or tolerated particularly severe violations of religious freedom.
- 17. General News / Events (Jan 11-20, 2024) -
  - \ University Grants Commission (UGC) introduced Mulya Pravah 2.0, to promote ethical practices in higher education.
    - 🔪 It is an updated version of original Mulya Pravah guideline, introduced in 2019.
  - 🔪 A new campus of IIT Madras will soon be started in Kandy (Sri Lanka).
  - 🔪 International Camel Festival 2024 held in Bikaner (Rajasthan).
  - Ninistry of Home Affairs revoked *Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment Act 2020* registration of New Delhi based think-tank *Centre for Policy Research (CPR)*.
  - No British & Ukraine signed a new security agreement, to increase military funding for ukraine amid its war with Russia, to 2.5 billion pounds (\$3.2bn).
  - Note That is a second in July 2024 in New Delhi, making it India's 1st time holding this event. 
     India will chair & host UNESCO's World Heritage Committee's 46th session in July 2024 in New Delhi, making it India's 1st time holding this event.
  - New Pakke Paga Hornbill Festival 2024 held at Seijosa in Pakke Kessang district of Arunchal Pradesh, to acknowledge Nyishi tribal group and its role in safeguarding hornbills of Pakke Tiger Reserve.
  - 🔪 Traditional buffalo fight *Moh-juj* organized during *Magh Bihu* harvest festival in Assam.
    - \ It has been organized after a gap of 9 years, due to a ban imposed by supreme court.
  - 🥄 2nd edition *IInvenTiv* held at IIT Hyderabad, as R &D Innovation Fair of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).
  - NHAI launched *One Vehicle, One FASTag* initiative, to encourage users to use one FASTag per vehicle, to enhance efficiency of Electronic Toll Collection system.
  - Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region organized Uttar Purvi Mahotsav 2024 at Bharat Mandapam (New Delhi), showcasing rich diversity of North East India.
  - Ayush Minister Sarbananda Sonowal laid foundation of India's 1st *Integrated Ayush Wellness Centre*, to be set up at Azara (Guwahati).
  - Health & Family Welfare Minister Mansukh Mandaviya inaugurated India's 1st Healthy & Hygienic Food Street, PRASADAM, at Mahakal Lok in Ujjain (Madhya Pradesh).
  - Indus Food 2024 organized at India Expo Mart in Greater Noida (Uttar Pradesh), showcasing India's vibrant and diverse food ecosystem.
  - Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation launched MPLADS e-SAKSHI Mobile App, for revised fund flow procedure under MPLAD Scheme.
- 18. General News / Events (Jan 21-31, 2024)
  - NITI Aayog, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare and UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) jointly launched Investment Forum for Advancing Climate Resilient Agrifood Systems in India.
    - 🥄 It aims to develop an investment and partnership strategy to advance climate resilient agrifood systems in India.

- Odisha govt announced to establish a melanistic tiger safari, as first of its kind in world, near Baripada (Mayurbhanj District).
- President Droupadi Murmu inaugurated Kaushal Bhawan in New Delhi, to mark empowering India's youth through skills, under Skill India Mission.
- Norld Health Organization (WHO) certified Cabo Verde (island country of West Africa) as a malaria-free country, making it 43rd to achieve malaria-free status (3rd in Africa).
- Ayush Minister *Sarbananda Sonowal* laid foundation stone for *Ayush Diksha*, as first of its kind centre for development of human resources for Ayush professionals.
  - 🔪 It will be developed within campus of Central Ayurveda Research Institute, Bhubaneswar.
- Inline with recommendations of new National Education Policy 2020, govt directed all school / higher education regulators to make study material in Indian languages (included in the 8th Schedule of Constitution) available for all courses in next 3 years.
  - \ It aims to provide students with opportunity to study in their own language, to give them a natural space to think innovatively without any language barrier.
  - Now that also launched *Anuvadini* App, to undertake translation of Engineering, Medical, Law, UG, PG and Skill books. These books are available on *ekumbh* portal.
- 🥄 47th International Kolkata Book Fair has been organized in Kolkata, with United Kingdom (UK) as theme country.
- Narendra Modi launched 173 Km long double line electrified section between *New Khurja New Rewari* on Dedicated Freight Corridor (DFC), as crucial connectivity between Western and Eastern DFCs.
  - This section is also known for a *one kilometre long double line rail tunnel with high rise electrification*, as first of its kind in the world.
- Nannual Ethnic Mamani Festival organized at Historical Styangkung Village and Chiktan Shagaran in Ladakh.
- Norld's largest cruise ship, *Royal Caribbean's Icon of the Seas* embarked on its first official voyage, out of Port of Miami in USA.
  - It is approx 365 metres long and weighs around 250000 tons. It can carry approx 10000 passengers and crew at maximum capacity.
- Govt extended ban on Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI) for 5 years, under Section 3(1) of Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) 1967.
- Leducation Minister Dharmendra Pradhan launched *Ministry of Education AICTE Investor Network*, to bring students, faculty, investors and the market on one platform to strengthen culture of innovation and address issue of start-up funding.
- 19. Fovt announced to designate Farsi (Persian) as a classical language of India, under New Education Policy.
  - Tamil was the first language in India to receive classical language status in 2004, followed by Sanskrit, Kannada, Telugu, Malayalam and Odia.
  - Notably -
    - Note that the schedule of Indian Constitution lists 22 languages as official languages in India, and 6 languages as classical languages of India. It will now also include Persian.
- 20. Govt launched National Single Window System, to streamline import, clinical investigations, and testing of medical devices.
  - N It will act as a one-stop shop for all approvals required by investors, facilitating ease of doing business.
  - Note: It has been developed by Tata Consultancy Services (TCS).
- 21. Himachal Pradesh govt unveiled *My School-My Pride* campaign under *Apna Vidyalay* programme, aimed at revolutionizing quality of education in government schools, through a holistic approach to student growth and development.
  - It will encourage active participation from individuals and organisations to adopt schools and contribute to various aspects of students' growth.
- 22. Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep S. Puri launcheed refreshed *PAiSA* (*Portal for Affordable Credit and Interest Subvention Access*) Portal and *PM SVANidhi Mission Monitoring* Portal, to provide real-time progress updates on the mission and scheme.
  - New YM SVANidhi (*Prime Minister Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi*) was launched in 2020, to provide affordable loans to street vendors (ranging 10000 50000).

- 23. Jharkhand Govt announced reduction in qualifying age for receiving old-age pension to 50 years (from 60 years earlier), for women/SC/ST category beneficiaries.
- 24. Maharashtra govt declared a new Conservation Reserve in forest land of Sangli district, namely Atpadi Conservation Reserve.
  - 🥄 It connects Maini Conservation Area in the west with Maldhok Bird Sanctuary in the northeast.
  - It will help in protection of wildlife corridors and preserve the habitat of wolves, deer, foxes, civets and other mammals in the area.
- 25. Ministry of Education releasesd All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) 2021-2022 (conducted since 2011).
  - NEnrolment in higher education increased to 4.33 crore in 2021-22 from 4.14 crore in 2020-21 and 3.42 crore in 2014-15.
  - Female enrolment increased to 2.07 crore in 2021-22 from 2.01 crore in 2020-21, and 1.57 crore in 2014-15.
  - Category wise -
    - NC 66.23 lakh in 2021-22 (46.07 lakh in 2014-15).
    - No. 15. 12. 1 ST 27.1 lakh in 2021-22 (16.41 lakh in 2014-15).
    - ◆ OBC 1.63 crore in 2021-22 (1.13 crore in 2014-15).
  - Among Disciplines at undergraduate level, enrolment is highest in Arts (34.2%), followed by science (14.8%), Commerce (13.3%) and Engineering & Technology (11.8%).
  - 🥄 Among streams at postgraduate level, maximum students are enrolled in Social Science (21.1%) followed by science (14.7%).
  - Number of Universities / University level institutions registered is 1168 (341 established since 2014-15).
  - 🥄 Number of faculty/teachers in 2021-22 are 15.98 lakh, of which about 56.6% are male and 43.4% are female.
- 26. Ministry of Rural Development launched *DAY-NRLM's* **SARATHI** app, as national tech solution for strategy for working with most vulnerable households. It has been developed in partnership with *The/Nudge Institute*.
- 27. Misc. MOUs (January 2024) -
  - Netween Indian Railways & Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), to reduce energy and water consumption, aimed at lowering GHG (green house gas) emissions.
    - Notably, Indian Railways aims to be *Net Zero Carbon Emitter* by 2030.
  - Netween *IIT Roorkee* & *IIT Bhilai*, to strengthen academic and research collaboration, to Forge Alliance for Tribal Research and Preservation of Indian Knowledge Systems.
  - Note that the New York Service Servic
  - Netween Coal India Limited & National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) for Setting up of Multi Skill Development Institutes (MSDIs) in each subsidiary of Coal India Limited.
  - ▶ Between NHPC & Gujarat Power Corporation Limited, for Rs 4000 crores investment in proposed 750 MW Kuppa Pumped Hydro Storage Project.
  - Note that the second section (PFC) & Gujarat Govt, to provide comprehensive financial backing of upto 25000 crores, for state's generation, transmission, and distribution projects.
  - Netween National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) & ISRO's National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC), to develop and report a Green Cover Index for extensive network of National Highways in India.
  - NRLM) & SBI, on Svyam Siddha SBI's Financial Product to finance SHG Women led Enterprises in Rural India. NRLM
  - Netween Google India Digital Services and NPCI International Payments Ltd, to help expand UPI payments infrastructure beyond India.
    - 🥄 It will enable Indian travellers to conveniently make transactions abroad via Google Pay.
    - Also, NPCI commenced linkage of India's UPI with Singapore's *PayNow*, enabling Indians to receive remittances instantly from Singapore-based Indian diaspora and vice-versa. The arrangement was announced in Feb 2023.
  - Netween *IIT Madras* & *Altair* (tech firm providing solutions in simulation, high-performance computing and AI), to launch an *eMobility Simulation Lab*.
  - Between Indian renewable energy firm ACME Group & Japanese integrated heavy industry group IHI Corporation, for supply of green ammonia from Odisha to Japan.
    - Green Ammonia will be produced at ACME's 1.2 MMTPA Green Ammonia project being developed at Gopalpur (Odisha), with investment of 5 billion USD.
    - Term sheet covers supply of 0.4 MMTPA of green ammonia from Phase-1 of Odisha project in Gopalpur on a long-term basis.

- ▶ Between state govts of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Ministry of Jal Shakti, for implementation of *Modified PKC-ERCP* (integration of original PKC with Eastern Rajasthan Canal Project of Rajasthan).
  - 🔪 It is 2nd project under national perspective plan of interlinking of rivers (ILR) program of Government of India.
- Netween NTPC Green Energy Limited (NGEL) & Maharashtra Govt, for development of Green Hydrogen and derivatives (Green Ammonia, Green Methanol) of up to 1 million Ton capacity per annum, Pumped Storage Projects of 2 GW & Renewable energy projects up to 5 GW.
  - Note that It envisages potential investment of approx 80000 crores in 5 years.
- ▶ Between *NHAI* & *Geological Survey of India*, to help develop robust National Highways network by assisting NHAI with site specific geotechnical consultancy.
- 28. Notable Points from PM Narendra Modi's visit to Tamil Nadu & Lakshadweep -
  - 🔪 Tamil Nadu -
    - Launched *Demonstration Fast Reactor Fuel Reprocessing Plant (DFRP)* at Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research (IGCAR) Kalpakkam.
      - \ It is only of its kind in world and is capable of reprocessing both carbide and oxide fuels discharged from fast reactors.
    - New Terminal Building at Tiruchirappalli International Airport, with capacity of serving 44 lakh passengers annually.
  - 🔪 Lakshadweep -
    - Launched *Kochi-Lakshadweep Islands Submarine Optical Fiber Connection (KLI SOFC)* project, to boost internet speeds in Lakshasweep islands (upto 200 Gbps).
      - 🥄 For the first time since independence, Lakshadweep has been connected through Submarine Optic Fibre Cable.
    - Launched *Low Temperature Thermal Desalination (LTTD)* plant at Kadmat, to produce 1.5 lakh litres of clean drinking water every day.
    - Launched Lakshadweep's first battery backed solar power project at Kavaratti.
- 29. Notable Points from PM Narendra Modi's visit to Maharashtra -
  - 🔪 Mumbai -
    - Inaugurated Atal Bihari Vajpayee Sewri Nhava Sheva Atal Setu (earlier knwon as Mumbai Transharbour link), built at cost over 17840 crores.
      - This approx 21.8 km long 6-lane bridge has 16.5 km length over sea and about 5.5 km on the land. It connects *Mumbai* with *Navi Mumbai*.
      - Nit is longest bridge in India (also longest sea bridge in India), and world's 12th longest sea bridge.
      - It will provide faster connectivity to Mumbai International Airport and Navi Mumbai International Airport and will also reduce travel time from Mumbai to Pune, Goa and South India.
    - Naturated Bharat Ratnam (Mega Common Facilitation Centre) for Gems and Jewellery sector at Santacruz Electronic Export Processing Zone Special Economic Zone (SEEPZ SEZ), as first of its kind in India with best available machines in world including 3D Metal printing.
    - Launched *Namo Mahila Shashaktikaran Abhiyaan*, which aims to empower women in Maharashtra by providing skill development training and entrepreneurship development.
  - Nashik
    - ightharpoonup Inaugurated 27th National Youth Festival in Nashik, on the occasion of National Youth Day (Jan 12).
- 30. Notable points from Tamil Nadu Global Investors Meet (GIM) 2024 (3rd edition, hosted in Chennai) -
  - Natate govt released roadmap to making the State a \$1 trillion economy by 2030.
  - Released Semiconductor and Advanced Electronics policy 2024, to attract companies to invest in semiconductor & advanced electronics manufacturers in State.
  - Note that the property of the
  - Notable MOUs -
    - ▼ Vietnamese electric vehicle firm VinFast announced to establish an integrated electric vehicle facility (Both EV and battery manufacturing) in Tuticorin (Tamil Nadu), with investment of \$2 billion.
- 31. Notable points from PM Narendra Modi's visit to Karnataka and Tamil Nadu -
  - 🔪 Karnataka -

- Naugurated Boeing India Engineering & Technology Center (BIETC) campus in Bengaluru.
  - Null with investment of 1600 crores, this 43 acre campus is Boeing's largest such investment outside USA.
- ▲ Launched Boeing Sukanya Program, that aims to support entry of more girl children from across India into aviation sector.
  - It will facilitate females from across India to learn critical skills in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) fields and train for jobs in aviation sector.
- Nadu -
  - \ Launched revamped **DD Podhigai** channel as **DD Tamil**.
  - Naugurated Khelo India Youth Games 2023 (6th edition) in Chennai.
    - Nascot for the games is *Veera Mangai*, an Indian queen who waged a war against British colonial rule. Logo for the games incorporates figure of poet Thiruvalluvar.
    - Athletes from across India will participate in 26 sporting disciplines. Silambam, a traditional sport of Tamil Nadu, is being introduced as a demo sport for the first time in KIYG.
- 32. Notable points from PM Narendra Modi's visit to Andhra Pradesh and Kerala -
  - Nandhra Pradesh -
    - Inaugurated new state-of-the-art campus of *National Academy of Customs, Indirect Taxes and Narcotics (NACIN)* at Palasamudram, Sri Sathya Sai District (Andhra Pradesh).
  - 🔪 Kerala -
    - 🥄 Inaugurated New Dry Dock (NDD) & International Ship Repair Facility (ISRF) at Cochin Shipyard Limited (Kochi)-
      - NDD can handle strategic assets like future aircraft carriers up to 70000T displacement, and also large commercial vessels, eliminating India's dependency on foreign nations for emergency national requirements.
      - ▼ ISRF will modernise and expand existing ship repair capabilities of CSL, to help make Kochi a global ship repair hub.
- 33. Odisha CM *Naveen Patnaik* inaugurated **Malkangiri airport**, to enhance connectivity and foster development in tribal-dominated areas.
  - Note that the commodating nine-seateraircraft.
  - Note: This takes number of operational airports in Odisha to 7.
- 34. PM Narendra Modi attended **Pran Pratishtha (consecration)** ceremony of **Shri Ramlalla** (Childhood form of Lord Shri Ram) in newly built Shri Ram Janmbhoomi Mandir in **Ayodhya (Uttar Pradesh)**.
  - Non this occasion -
    - 🥄 The auspicious occasion was celebrated by Hindus across Nation and world, in grand fervour.
    - No. PM released 6 special commemorative postage stamps to mark the grand occasion.
    - No. Chhattisgarh govt announced *Ramlala Darshan Scheme*, to enable its citizens to avail free-of-cost pilgrimage to newly built Ram Temple at Ayodhya.
      - Approx 20000 Individuals in age group 18-75 shall be selected for Ayodhya visit each year.
  - Name of Ayodhya Land Dispute -
    - ↑ 1528 The ancient Temple at site of Birth of Lord Shri Ram was demolished by Muslim Invader Babur, and Babri masjid was built over it in 1528 by Mughal commander Mir Baqi.
      - This action was in line with Islamic invaders' long standing approach to destroy all ancient Hindu religious sites in India, to weaken India by depriving it of its rich cultural heritage.
      - Nefore 1940s, the masjid was officially known as Masjid-i-Janmasthan.
    - 1858 Nihang Sikhs installed Nishan Sahib and performed a havana inside Babri Masjid, also writing Ram inside it.
       This was followed by riots in Ayodhya, after which British administration prohibited Hindus from conducting puja
       (rituals) at the contested site. A platform was created for conducting rituals outside the mosque.
    - 🔪 1885 First Suit filed by Mahanth Raghubar Das to construct Ram Temple in Ayodhya.
    - 1949 Idols of Lord Ram found inside Babri Masjid. 5 other suits were filed both by Hindu and Muslim religious organizations, Between 1950 and 1990.
    - 🔪 1992 Babri Masjid was demolished by Hindus.
    - 2010 Allahabad High Court pronounced a judgement that divided disputed land among Nirmohi Akhara, Sunni Waqf Board and Ram Lalla.

- 2019 Supreme court overruled HC judgement and gave the site to Hindus, with muslims to be given 5 acre land outside Ayodhya, to build a mosque.
  - SC referenced a report from Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) as evidence suggesting presence of a non-Islamic structure beneath demolished Babri Masjid.
  - Concerned Mosque will be made by Indo-Islamic Cultural Foundation near Ayodhya, named Masjid Muhammed bin Abdullah.
- 35. PM Narendra Modi launched **Pradhanmantri Suryodaya Yojana**, which aims to install rooftop solar on **1 crore** houses across nation.
  - 🦠 Maharatna PSU REC Ltd has been designated as nodal agency for implementation of PM Suryoday Yojana.

# **Persons**

- 1.▶ 125-foot-tall statue of *Dr B R Ambedkar* has been unveiled at Swarajya Maidan of *Vijayawada (Andhra Pradesh)*.
  - 🔪 It has been named Statue of Social Justice.
  - ९ The statue stands on an 81 feet tall base building, making its total height 206 feet, as fourth tallest statue in India. ▶
- 2. Notable Visits from India (Jan 2024)
  - 🥄 Smriti Irani (*Minority Affairs & Women and Child Development* Minister) visited Saudi Arabia.
    - 🥄 She led first ever non-Muslim Indian delegation to Medina, one of Islam's holiest cities in Saudi Arabia.
    - She also visited perimeter of Masjid-e-Nabwi (Prophet's mosque) in Medina, which houses Prophet Muhammad's tomb.
  - Nefence Minister Rajnath Singh visited UK.
  - 🦠 External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar visited Nepal.
    - \ During the visit, Nepal and India signed a power trade agreement, for Nepal to export 10000 megawatts (MW) of hydroelectricity to India over next 10 years.
- 3. Notable Visits to India (Jan 2024) -
  - 🥄 Fahad Abdullah S Al-Ghofaily, Chief of Saudi Arabia Navy visited India.
  - Neresident of 78th Session of United Nations General Assembly (PGA), Dennis Francis visited India.
    - Ne participated as a State guest in Republic Day Parade of Maharashtra.
  - News Swiss Economy Minister Guy Parmelin (head of Swiss Federal Department of Economic Affairs, Education and Research) visited India.
  - 🥄 French President Emmanuel Macron visited India, to attend India's 75th republic day celebrations as chief guest.
    - 🔪 Notable MOUs/Agreements signed during visit -
      - NoU Between ISRO's commercial arm *NewSpace India Limited (NSIL)* & French satellite launch company *Arianespace*, to support satellite launch missions.
      - \ India and France adopted a Roadmap on Defence Industrial Cooperation, to identify co-operation opportunities in defence industrial sector.
      - 🔪 India and France declared 2026 as India-France Year of Innovation.
      - Note India agreed to join *Mercator* initiative, which aims to create a digital twin of the ocean, in preparation for *2025 UN Ocean Conference (3d edition)*, to be co-hosted by France and Costa Rica in *Nice (France)*.
- 4. Obituaries (January 2024) -
  - 🥄 Ved Prakash Nanda Noted Indian-American Padma Bhushan awardee Academic.
  - Ustad Rashid Khan Noted Padma Bhushan Awardee Hindustani classical musician, belonging to Rampur-Sahaswan gharana.
  - 🥄 Hariram Dwivedi Noted Hindi Litterateur.
  - 🥄 Munawwar Rana Noted Sahitya Akademi Awardee Urdu language litterateur.
  - 🥄 Prabha Atre Noted Padma Vibhushan awardee classical singer, from *Kirana gharana*.
  - 🥄 KJ Joy Noted Music Composer in Malayalam film industry.
  - 🔪 Norman Jewison Noted Canadian filmmaker.

# **Science**

- 1. China launched lotus-shaped satellite Einstein Probe, aimed at observing mysterious transient phenomena in the universe that flicker like fireworks.
- 2. Microsoft launched AI Odyssey initiative in India, aiming to train 100000 Indian developers in latest AI technologies, and equip them with skills essential for executing AI projects aligning with business goals.
- 3. American Lunar Mission **Peregrine Mission one** has been declared as failed, after a fault prevented it from completing its mission.
  - No Built by Astrobotic Technology, the mission carried payloads for NASA's Commercial Lunar Payload Services (CLPS) program. It was launched as maiden flight of Vulcan Centaur rocket, by United Launch Alliance (ULA). It aimed to land first US built lunar lander on the Moon, since crewed Apollo Lunar Module on Apollo 17 in1972.
- 4. CoRover.ai launched indigenous generative AI platform **BharatGPT** as India's first Large Language Model (LLM), to revolutionise AI conversations across 22 Indian languages.
- 5. European Union's Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S) declared **2023** as **hottest year on record**, potentially marking warmest period in last 100000 years.
  - 🥄 2023 saw global average temperature of 14.98°C, 0.17°C higher than previous highest annual value in 2016.
  - 🥄 2023 was 0.60°C warmer than 1991-2020 average and 1.48°C warmer than 1850-1900 pre-industrial level.
  - \ It sheds light on alarming trajectory of global warming, with each passing month breaking climate records and raising concerns about upcoming consequences for the planet and humans.
- 6. I-STEM (Indian Science, Technology, and Engineering facilities Map), an initiative from Office of Principal Scientific Advisor, organized **Samavesha** National event at Indian Institute of Science Bangalore (IISc), to revolutionise Research collaboration in India.
  - ▼ I-STEM aims to connect Researchers/Industry/Start-ups with Lab facilities, to save their capital expenditure of purchasing advanced equipment, by connecting them with institutions possessing required equipment.
- 7. ISRO launched XPOSAT (X-ray Polarimeter Satellite) into an Eastward low inclination orbit, onboard PSLV-C58 rocket.
  - This space observatory will study polarisation of cosmic X-rays, with operational lifespan of minimum 5 years. It will study 50 brightest known sources in universe, after being placed in a circular low Earth orbit of 500–700 km.
  - 🔪 It will complement efforts of NASA's *Imaging X-ray Polarimetry Explorer (IXPE),* which was launched in 2021.
  - Nayloads -
    - Note: Polarimeter Instrument in X-rays (POLIX) Will measure degree and angle of polarization of astronomical sources in medium X-ray range.
    - X-ray Spectroscopy and Timing (XSPECT) Will measure spectroscopic information, timing of soft X-rays and electromagnetic spectrum generated by different types of matter.
- 8. ISRO's **Aditya-L1** spacecraft successfully reached **Lagrangian point (L1)**, to study the sun in a halo orbit abround 1.5 million away from Earth.
  - 🔪 It was launched on September 2, 2023 onboard PSLV C57 rocket.
  - A satellite placed in halo orbit around L1 point can continuously view the Sun without any occultation/eclipses. It will study solar atmosphere, solar magnetic storms, and their impact on environment around Earth. Planned mission duration is 5.2 years.
  - 🔪 Payloads -

Туре	Sl. No.	Payload	Capability
	1	Visible Emission Line Coronagraph(VELC)	Corona/Imaging & Spectroscopy
Remote Sensing	2	Solar Ultraviolet Imaging Telescope (SUIT)	Photosphere and Chromosphere Imaging- Narrow & Broadband
Payloads	3	Solar Low Energy X-ray Spectrometer (SoLEXS)	Soft X-ray spectrometer: Sun-as-a-star observation
	4	High Energy L1 Orbiting X-ray Spectrometer(HEL1OS)	Hard X-ray spectrometer: Sun-as-a-star observation
	5	Aditya Solar wind Particle Experiment(ASPEX)	Solar wind/Particle Analyzer Protons & Heavier Ions with directions
In-situ Payloads	6	Plasma Analyser Package For Aditya (PAPA)	Solar wind/Particle Analyzer Electrons & Heavier Ions with directions
	7	Advanced Tri-axial High Resolution Digital Magnetometers	In-situ magnetic field (Bx, By and Bz).

- 9. Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA)'s **Smart Lander for Investigating Moon (SLIM)** mission successfully landed on moon surface, making **Japan** the **5th** country to soft-land a spacecraft on Moon (after Soviet Union, US, China & India).
  - 🔪 Mission includes rovers named Lunar Excursion Vehicle 1 (LEV-1) & Lunar Excursion Vehicle 2 (LEV-2).
  - SLIM was launched alongwith X-Ray Imaging and Spectroscopy Mission (XRISM), a joint X-ray space telescope mission of JAXA & NASA, to provide breakthroughs in the study of structure formation of the universe, outflows from galaxy nuclei, and dark matter.
- 10. Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) launched Centre of Excellence (CoE) in Intelligent Internet of Things (IIoT) Sensors and India Innovation Centre for Graphene (as India's first Graphene Centre), at Maker Village in Kochi (Kerala).
  - 🥄 CoE in IIoT Sensors will catalyze development of sensors within realm of Intelligent IoT systems.
  - NICG (set up by Kerala Govt along with Tata Steel Limited) will foster R&D and capacity building in area of Graphene and 2D material systems.
  - These centres have been set up with *Digital University Kerala* and Thrissur-based *Centre for Materials for Electronics Technology (CMET)* as technical partners.
- 11. Misc. Science News / Events (Jan 2024) -
  - New York Ne
  - Researchers at Linköping University (Sweden) developed an electrically conductive soil for soilless cultivation (known as hydroponics), which can enable seedlings to grow 50% faster when their root system is stimulated electrically through a new cultivation substrate.
  - 🔪 Japan launched intelligence-gathering satellite Optical-8, to improve military monitoring and response to natural disasters.
  - Chinese firm Betavolt developed nuclear battery capable of operating for 50 years, without requiring recharging (including in smartphones).
    - It utilizes 63 nuclear isotopes compactly arranged within a module, operating by converting the energy released from decaying isotopes into electricity.
    - Netavolt used *nickel-63*, a radioactive element, as the energy source for the battery.
  - Nanish logistics firm *Maersk* unveiled its container ship *Ane Maersk*, as world's first large container ship powered by *green methanol*, to reduce emissions from shipping industry.
  - As per 1st survey on number of Snow Leopards in India (conduted by Wildlife Institute of India), population of Snow leopards in India stands at 718.

#### **Sports**

- 1. 2023 World Blitz Chess Championships (Samarkand, Uzbekistan) -
  - Nen Magnus Carlsen (Norway). Its his 7th world blitz title.
  - Nomen Valentina Gunina (Russia).
- 2. 2023 World Rapid Chess Championships (Samarkand, Uzbekistan) -
  - Men Magnus Carlsen (Norway). Its his 5th world Rapid title.
  - Women Anastasia Bodnaruk (Russia). She defeated India's Koneru Humpy in final, who won women's individual silver medal.
- 3. 2024 Adelaide International Tennis -
  - Nen's singles Jiří Lehečka (Czech Republic)
  - Nomen's singles Jelena Ostapenko (Latvia)
  - Men's doubles Rajeev Ram (US) & Joe Salisbury (UK)
  - 🥄 Women's doubles Beatriz Haddad Maia (Brazil) & Taylor Townsend (US)
- 4. 2024 Asian Rifle/Pistol Championships (Jakarta, Indonesia) -
  - Nedal Table -

Rank	Nation	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
1	India	12	7	5	24
2	South Korea	5	3	6	14

Rank	Nation	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
3	China	3	3	1	7
4	Kazakhstan	2	1	2	5
5	Vietnam	1	2	0	3

- Nindia ranked at Top, with 24 medals (including 12 gold).
  - 🥄 Individual Indian gold medalists -
    - 🥄 Varun Tomar Men's 10 m air pistol
    - Nogesh Singh Men's 25 m standard pistol
    - 🔪 Akhil Sheoran Men's 50 m rifle 3 positions
    - 🦠 Esha Singh Women's 10 m air pistol
    - Nancy Mandhotra Women's 10 m air rifle
- 5. 2024 Men's FIH Hockey5s World Cup (1st edition, hosted in Muscat (Oman)) -
  - Netherlands won the title, defeating Malaysia in final. Oman stayed at 3rd place.
  - Nalaysia 's Akhimullah Anuar was named Best player.
- 6. 2024 United Cup Tennis (Hosted in Australia) -
  - 🔪 Germany won the title, after Alexander Zverev (Germany) won against Hubert Hurkacz (Poland).
  - Name About -
    - Nuited Cup is an international hard court tennis competition featuring mixed-gender teams from 18 countries.
    - 🥄 2024 is 2nd edition of United cup. 1st edition was won by USA.
- 7. 2024 Women's FIH Hockey5s World Cup (1st edition, hosted in Muscat (Oman)) -
  - Netherlands won the title, defeating India in final. Poland stayed at 3rd place.
  - 🦠 Netherlands's *Noor de Baat* was named *Best player*.
- 8. 2024 Asian Shotgun Championships (Kuwait City, Kuwait) -
  - Nedal Table -

Rank	Nation	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
1	China	5	3	1	9
2	Chinese Taipei	2	0	0	2
3	India	1	3	4	8
4	Kazakhstan	1	1	3	5
5	Iran	1	1	0	2

- Notable Indian Medalists -
  - 🥄 Gold Women's Skeet team event, comprising Maheshwari Chauhan, Raiza Dhillon, Ganemat Sekhon.
  - Silver -
    - Anantjeet Singh Naruka (Men's Skeet)
    - 🦠 Raiza Dhillon (Women's Skeet)
- 9. 2024 Grand Prix Zagreb Open wrestling (Zagreb, Croatia) -
  - Nampions -
    - Freestyle United States
    - 🔪 Greco-Roman Azerbaijan
    - **№** Women Ukraine
  - Notably -
    - Name of the street of the stre
    - As a result of sanctions by UWW imposed on **Wrestling Federation of India** for not conducting its elections on time, wrestlers from India participated under name and flag of *United World Wrestling (UWW)*.
- 10. 2024 Australian Open Grand Slam Tennis (112th edition, hosted in Melbourne) -
  - Nen's singles Jannik Sinner (Italy). He defeated Daniil Medvedev (Russia).
    - 🔪 It was his 1st grand slam singles title.
  - 🔪 Women's singles Aryna Sabalenka (Belarus). She defeated Zheng Qinwen (China).

- 🔪 It was her 2nd grand slam singles title (1st was Australian open 2023).
- Nen's doubles **Rohan Bopanna (India)** & Matthew Ebden (Australia)
  - 🔪 This is Rohan Bopanna's second grand slam doubles title (after 2017 French Open win).
  - \ It also made Rohan Bopanna the oldest player to claim No. 1 spot in men's tennis doubles rankings, at age of 43.
- 🥄 Women's doubles Hsieh Su-wei (Chinese Taipei) & Elise Mertens (Belgium)
- 🔪 Mixed doubles Hsieh Su-wei (Chinese Taipei) & Jan Zieliński (Poland)
- 🔪 Boys' singles Rei Sakamoto (Japan)
- 🦠 Girls' singles Renáta Jamrichová (Slovakia)
- 🔪 Notably -
  - **Sumit Nagal** became first Indian tennis player to defeat a seeded opponent at a Grand Slam since 1989, when he defeated *Alexander Bublik* (Kazakhstani) during Australian Open 2024.
    - Earlier, *Ramesh Krishnan* was first Indian player to beat a seeded opponent at a Grand Slam in 1989, when he defeated *Mats Wilander* during 1989 Australian Open.
- National About-
  - Australian Open is one of 4 Grand slams in Tennis. Other 3 French Open (May-Jun), Wimbledon (July) & US Open (Aug-Sep).
- 11. 2024 India Open Badminton (New Delhi) -
  - Nen's singles Shi Yuqi (China)
  - Nomen's singles Tai Tzu-ying (Chinese Taipei)
  - Nen's doubles South Korea's Kang Min-hyuk & Seo Seung-jae
  - 🥄 Women's doubles Japan's Mayu Matsumoto & Wakana Nagahara
  - Nixed doubles Thailand's Dechapol Puavaranukroh & Sapsiree Taerattanachai
- 12. 2024 Malaysia Open badminton -
  - 🔪 Men's singles Anders Antonsen (Denmark)
  - 🔪 Women's singles An Se-young (South Korea)
  - 🥄 Men's doubles China's Liang Weikeng & Wang Chang
  - 🥄 Women's doubles China's Liu Shengshu & Tan Ning
  - Nixed doubles Japan's Yuta Watanabe & Arisa Higashino
- 13. Beach Games 2024 (first multi-sports beach games in India) organized at blue flag certified Ghoghla Beach in Diu.
  - Nagar Haveli, Diu & Daman.
  - Notably, Lakshadweep won gold medal in Beach Soccer, defeating Maharashtra.
- 14. Maharashtra topped the medal tally in Khelo India Youth Games 2024 (6th edition), hosted in 4 cities of Tamil Nadu.
  - Top 3 Maharashtra (158, with 57 gold), Tamil Nadu (98, with 38 gold), Haryana (103, with 35 gold)
  - 🔪 About -
    - Nascot for the games was *Veera Mangai*, an Indian queen who waged a war against British colonial rule. Logo for the games incorporates figure of poet Thiruvalluvar.
    - Nathletes from across India participated in 26 sporting disciplines.
      - Silambam, a traditional sport of Tamil Nadu, was introduced as a demo sport for the first time in KIYG.
      - No Squash was introduced in Khelo India Youth Games for the first time, in 2024 edition.
- 15. Tata Steel Chess Tournament 2024 (Annual chess tournament held in Wijk aan Zee (the Netherlands)) -
  - Champions -
    - Masters Wei Yi (China). He defeated India's *Gukesh D* in the finals.
    - Neglight Challengers Leon Luke Mendonca (India). He defeated India's Divya Deshmukh in finals.
  - Notably, during the tournament, *Rameshbabu Praggnanandhaa* became Top ranked Indian chess player, after defeating reigning world champion *Ding Liren*.
- 16. ▶ Indian Wrestler **Ravi Kumar Dahiya** (Tokyo Olympic silver medallist) won *bronze* medal at *Grand Prix De France Henri Deglane 2024* wrestling tournament in Nice (France).
  - As a result of sanctions by UWW imposed on **Wrestling Federation of India** for not conducting its elections on time, wrestlers from India participated under name and flag of *United World Wrestling (UWW)*.
- 17. Misc. Sports News (Jan 2024) -

- 🥄 Noted Australian cricketer *David Warner* announced his retirement from international Test & ODI cricket.
- Kenya's Beatrice Chebet broke women's world 5km record in Barcelona (Spain), beating previous record of 14:29 with timing of 14:13.
- 🥄 Indian winners at Scottish Junior Squash Open 2023 in Edinburgh -
  - 🔪 Prabhav Bajoria (Boys Under 11)
  - Name of the Shresht Iyer (Boys Under 13)
  - Nubhash Choudhary (Boys Under 15)
  - 🔪 Aadya Budhia (Girls Under 13)
  - Nahat Singh (Girls Under 19)
- \ India's Rohit Sharma became first men's cricketer to feature in 150 T20 Internationals.
- New Zealand cricketer *Tim Southee* became first bowler to take 150 wickets in T20 Internationals.
- Australian cricketer *Shaun Marsh* announced his retirement from all forms of Cricket.
- Nini (a pair of Siberian tigers) have been named as Mascots for 2025 Asian Winter Games (9th edition, to be hosted in Harbin (China)).
- Sue Redfern (England) become first ICC appointed female neutral umpire (belonging to none of playing nations) to officiate in a bilateral series (between Australia and South Africa).
- Global soccer governing body FIFA's president Gianni Infantino has been honored with International Sports Personality of the Year award, at 12th annual Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Creative Sports Awards in Dubai (UAE).
- Tata Group retained title sponsorship of Indian Premier League (IPL) for upcoming 5 seasons (2024 to 2028), by paying 500 crore per season.
  - In 2022, Tata Group had replaced Chinese mobile manufacturer Vivo as IPL title sponsor for 2022 and 2023 seasons, at cost 365 crore per season.
- 🥄 India's Man Singh won gold medal at Asian Marathon Championships 2024 in Hong Kong.
- 🥄 Indian table tennis player Sreeja Akula won her 1st international title, at WTT Feeder Corpus Christi 2024 in Texas (USA).