# CHRONICLE

# Current Affairs Roundup 2024

## for UPSC, State PSCs
and other upcoming Competitive Examinations like SSC, Banking, Railway, Police, NDA, CDS, etc.



## India's Achievements

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# CURRENT AFFAIRS ROUNDUP 2024

### for UPSC, State PSCs
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*Editor*

**N.N. Ojha**

Guiding Civil Services Aspirants Since 33 Years

*Compiled by*

Chronicle Editorial Team

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**Updated upto February 2024**

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## Supreme Court Upholds States' Power to Sub-Classify Scheduled Castes

❖ The Supreme Court affirmed on 8th February, 2024, that individual States have the authority to provide **preferential allotment of reservation** benefits to particularly backward groups within the Scheduled Castes without encroaching upon Parliament's power to include or exclude communities from the Presidential list.

❖ **Articles 341 and 342** empower the President to **compile lists of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes**, respectively.

❖ Parliament regulates the inclusion or exclusion of any caste, race, or tribe from these lists through legislation.

❖ The Bench dismissed concerns that sub-classification would lead to the **"Balkanisation of the list,"** emphasizing that States have the prerogative to address the unique needs of specific sub-castes.

❖ The High Courts have the authority under **Article 226** to scrutinize State decisions on sub-classification, ensuring alignment with empirical data and the objective of promoting equality.

❖ The court acknowledged the **risk of political appeasement** and emphasized the importance of States demonstrating objective criteria, such as lack of representation, in identifying backward classes.

## Centre Enacts ANRF Provisions

❖ On 5th February, the Centre activated the provisions of the **Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF)** and designated Abhay Karandikar, the Secretary of the Department of Science and Technology (DST), as the interim CEO.

❖ The ANRF, with an initial corpus of Rs 50,000 crore, predominantly sourced from the private sector, aims to **offer strategic direction for research, innovation**, and entrepreneurship across various domains.

❖ The ANRF Act, passed in 2023, has now been brought into force, marking a significant step towards establishing a national research foundation. Finance Minister allocated Rs 2,000 crore for ANRF in the 2024-25 fiscal year.

❖ While the ANRF Act has been enacted, the accompanying rules are yet to be made public.

❖ The **Department of Science and Technology (DST)** will administer the NRF, overseen by a Governing Board comprising eminent professionals.

❖ The **Prime Minister** serves as the **ex-officio President**, and the Union Ministers of Science & Technology and Education are ex-officio Vice-Presidents.

❖ The ANRF absorbs the functions of the existing **Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB)** established in 2008, with an expanded mandate to cover a broader range of activities, reinforcing India's research and innovation ecosystem.

## Bharat Mobility Global Expo 2024

❖ On 2nd February, 2024, Prime Minister addressed the audience and toured the Bharat Mobility Global Expo 2024, India's largest mobility exhibition held at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi.

❖ The expo showcases India's capabilities in the **mobility and automotive value chains**, featuring exhibitions, conferences, buyer-seller meets, and more.

❖ Reiterating the goal of **'Viksit Bharat' by 2047**, PM emphasized the pivotal role of the mobility sector, considering it the beginning of a golden period for the industry.

❖ Stakeholders were encouraged to **transform the automotive landscape** with the vision of an efficient, sustainable, and inclusive future.

## Law Commission Proposes Reforms on Prevention of Damage to Public Property

❖ On 2nd February, 2024, the 22nd Law Commission of India presented its findings, encapsulated in Report No. 284, titled "Revisiting the Law on Prevention of Damage to Public Property," to the Government of India.

❖ The report addresses the persistent issue of destruction of public property, causing significant financial losses to the public exchequer and inconveniences to the general public.

❖ After thorough deliberations, the Law Commission recommends amendments to the **Prevention of Damage to Public Property Act, 1984.**

❖ These proposed changes aim to address the gravity of the issue and provide more effective legal mechanisms for preventing and penalizing damage to public assets.

# Plans and Policies

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## Pradhan Mantri Matsya Kisan Samridhi Sah-Yojana (PM-MKSSY)

- ❖ On 8ᵗʰ February, 2024, the Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister, sanctioned the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Kisan Samridhi Sah-Yojana (PM-MKSSY), a sub-scheme under the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana.
- ❖ The extension of the **Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund (FIDF)** aims to bolster the development of fisheries infrastructure, including fishing harbours, fish landing centres, ice plants, cold storage, and fish transport facilities.
- ❖ About 121 fisheries infrastructure projects, totaling Rs 5,588.63 crore, have already been greenlit under the FIDF.
- ❖ The **PM-MKSSY sub-scheme** will operate with 50% public financing, including contributions from the World Bank and the Agence Française de Développement (AFD), with the remaining 50% anticipated from private sector investments.
- ❖ It will **span four years from 2023-24 to 2026-27** across all states and union territories.
- ❖ The scheme **aims to benefit fishers,** aquaculture farmers, fish workers, and fish vendors by facilitating formalization of the fisheries sector and enhancing access to institutional credit.
- ❖ It is projected to **support 6.4 lakh micro-enterprises** and 5,500 fisheries cooperatives, providing access to institutional credit.

## Composite Licensing for Insurers

- ❖ On 6ᵗʰ February, 2024, the **Standing Committee on Finance** of the Lok Sabha proposed significant reforms in the insurance sector, suggesting composite licensing for insurers and a reduction in GST rates on health and term policies.
- ❖ The committee advocates for **composite licensing**, enabling insurers to offer life, non-life, and health insurance products under one entity.
- ❖ This move aims to streamline operations, enhance customer choice, and simplify compliance for insurance companies.
- ❖ Highlighting the **deterrent effect of high GST rates** on insurance uptake, especially for health and term policies, the committee recommends a reduction in GST rates. Lower premiums and easier claims

processing are expected to incentivize policy adoption.
- ❖ Concerned about **uninsured vehicles posing risks on roads**, the committee suggests stricter enforcement measures and data integration to ensure vehicle owners have adequate insurance coverage.
- ❖ To facilitate **long-term investment** opportunities for insurers, the committee proposes extending the maximum tenure of bonds to 50 years.
- ❖ This initiative aims to provide insurers with stable investment avenues and support financial security.

## Voluntary Carbon Market Framework in the Agriculture Sector

- ❖ On 29ᵗʰ January, 2024, the Union government launched a framework to promote voluntary carbon markets in agriculture, aiming to **benefit farmers** and encourage environmentally friendly practices.
- ❖ India's farm sector accounts for **14% of the country's total greenhouse gas emissions**, ranking behind electricity (44%) and manufacturing industries and construction sectors combined (18%).
- ❖ The framework has been designed to encourage **small and medium farmers to participate in carbon credit programs,** fostering environmentally sustainable agricultural practices.
- ❖ It aims to not only benefit farmers but also expedite the adoption of eco-friendly agricultural practices.
- ❖ The framework establishes an accreditation system for independent bodies that will verify and certify carbon sequestration projects.
- ❖ In addition to the **carbon market framework**, the **Accreditation Protocol of Agroforestry Nurseries** was also launched to strengthen institutional arrangements for large-scale production and certification of planting material.

| **Carbon Market** |
| :--- |
| ➢ The concept of a carbon market originated from the **1997 Kyoto Protocol**, operationalizing the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (**UNFCCC**). It obligated countries to restrict and decrease greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. |
| ➢ Carbon market is a platform where **carbon credits are traded to decrease greenhouse gas** emissions. |
| ➢ Each carbon credit signifies the prevention or removal of one tonne of carbon or its greenhouse gas equivalent. |

# 3 Bills and Acts

## Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Amendment Act, 2024

❖ The Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Amendment Act, 2024 received the assent of the President on 15th February, 2024.

❖ The Act amends the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974.

❖ The amendments decriminalises several minor water pollution related violations, and instead imposes penalties.

❖ It also exempts specific industrial plants from regulatory restrictions.

❖ It will initially apply to Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, and the union territories. Other states may pass resolutions to extend its applicability to their states.

❖ Union Environment Minister emphasized the necessity for balancing development and environmental protection, **advocating for ease of living** and business operations alongside transparency in addressing water pollution issues.

❖ It aims to **rationalize criminal provisions,** ensuring that citizens and businesses operate without the fear of imprisonment for **minor procedural or technical defaults**, aligning penalties with the severity of offenses.

❖ The central government gains authority to exempt certain industrial plants from Section 25 restrictions, reducing regulatory burden and duplication of surveillance efforts.

❖ Provision is made for the central government to prescribe guidelines regarding the nomination of **State Pollution Control Boards'** chairpersons, ensuring fair appointments and aligning with similar provisions in the Air Act.

## The Constitution (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Castes Order (Amendment) Act, 2024

❖ The Constitution (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Castes Order (Amendment) Act, 2024 received the assent of the President on 12th February, 2024.

❖ The Act amends the Constitution (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Castes Order, 1956.

❖ The amendment addresses long-standing demand of several communities in the region.

❖ The historic legislation aims to **extend Scheduled Tribe status** to the Pahari Ethnic Group, Padari Tribes, Koli, and Gadda Brahmin communities in Jammu and Kashmir, fulfilling their enduring aspirations for recognition and empowerment.

❖ The inclusion of these communities in the Scheduled Tribes list will not diminish the existing reservation benefits accorded to other Scheduled Tribe groups such as **Gujjars and Bakarwals.** Their reservation entitlements will remain unaffected.

❖ Reservation provisions for the **newly recognized Scheduled Tribes** will be implemented in a manner that safeguards the reservation rights of the already listed communities.

❖ Necessary notifications on reservation will be issued by the Government of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir to maintain parity in reservation levels.

## The Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024

❖ The Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024 received the assent of the President on 12th February, 2024.

❖ This legislation **proposes stricter penalties**, including imprisonment and hefty fines, for individuals and organized groups involved in exam malpractices.

❖ The proposed legislation aims to **curb unfair means in public examinations** and common entrance tests nationwide.

❖ It focuses on deterring individuals, groups, or **institutions engaging in unfair means** for wrongful gains, thus safeguarding the integrity of public examinations.

❖ The bill clarifies that candidates, as defined, will **not face action under the bill** but will be subject to existing administrative provisions of the relevant examination authority.

❖ 'Public Examinations' include exams by various authorities like UPSC, SSC, Railway Recruitment Boards, IBPS, Central Government Ministries, NTA, and others notified by the Centre.

❖ Imprisonment for a minimum of **three years, extendable to five years**, and a fine of up to **Rs 10 lakh for unfair means.**

❖ For organized crimes, including by examination authorities or institutions, imprisonment for a minimum of five years, extendable to ten years, and a fine of not less than Rs 1 crore. Institution's property may be attached and forfeited, with recovery of the examination cost.

❖

## India Ageing Report 2023

❖ **Published by:** United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS).

❖ **About the Report:** This report sheds light on the challenges, opportunities and institutional responses surrounding elderly care in India.

**Highlights**

❖ **Demographic Projection:** The decadal growth rate of the elderly population of India currently estimated to be at 41%. With this rate, the percentage of elderly population in the country projected to double to over 20% of total population by 2050. By 2046, it is likely that elderly population will have surpassed the population of children (aged 0 to 15 years) in the country.

❖ **Population of People Aged 80+:** The population of people aged 80+ years will grow at a rate of around 279% between 2022 and 2050 with a predominance of widowed and highly dependent very old women.

❖ **Vulnerabilities of Elders:** More than 40% of the elderly in India are in the poorest wealth quintile, with about 18.7% of them living without an income.

## Global Innovation Index 2023

❖ **Published by:** World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) in collaboration with Cornell University, INSEAD, and various organizations and institutions

❖ **About the Index:** The Global Innovation Index (GII) evaluates and quantifies the innovation performance of global economies. As per the report, India has maintained its 40th rank, retaining its position as a prominent performer among lower-middle-income countries.

**Leading the Innovation Landscape**

❖ Switzerland continues its impressive streak as the most innovative economy for the 13th consecutive year while Sweden surged to second place.

**India in the Index**

❖ **India Leads the Lower-Middle-Income Economies**: India secured the top position among the 37 lower-middle-income countries and also led the group of 10 economies in Central and South America.

❖ **Strong Performance Across Key Innovation Indicators**: India has consistently excelled in innovation for the 13th consecutive year, achieving top rankings in crucial indicators such as ICT services exports (5th place), venture capital received (6th place), graduates in science and engineering (11th place), and global corporate R&D investors (13th place).

❖ **Continuous Improvement**: Over the past eight years, India has steadily climbed in the GII rankings, showing remarkable progress. In 2015, India was positioned at 81st place.

## Henley Passport Index 2024

❖ **Published by:** Henley & Partners, a global citizenship and residence advisory firm.

❖ **About the Index:** This index mainly assesses the world's passports according to the number of destinations their holders can access without a prior visa. It encompasses 199 different passports and covers 227 travel destinations.

**Key Highlights**

❖ **Most Powerful Passports**: Six countries have claimed the top spot on the 2024 Henley Passport Index, offering their citizens the most powerful passports with visa-free access to 194 destinations out of 227 around the world. They are - four EU member states — **France, Germany, Italy, and Spain** — and two Asian powerhouses **Japan and Singapore**.

❖ **India's Rank:** India is currently ranked **80th** on the 2024 Henley Passport Index, with visa-free access to 62 destinations, including popular tourist destinations like Thailand, Indonesia, Mauritius, Sri Lanka, and Maldives.

## GlobaI Peace Index 2023

❖ **Published by:** Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP)

❖ **About the Index:** This report presents the most comprehensive data-driven analysis to-date on trends in peace, its economic value, and how to develop peaceful societies.

❖ This widely recognized index ranks 163 independent states and territories based on their level of peacefulness.

## CLEA-Commonwealth Attorneys and Solicitors General Conference

❖ On 3rd February, 2024, the Commonwealth Legal Education Association (CLEA)-Commonwealth Attorneys and Solicitors General Conference (CASGC) 2024 was held at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.

❖ The theme of the event was **"Cross-Border Challenges in Justice Delivery"**.

❖ The Conference deliberated on important issues pertaining to law and justice like: Judicial transition and the ethical dimensions of legal practice; Executive accountability; and Revisiting modern-day legal education, among others.

> **Commonwealth Legal Education Association (CLEA)**
>
> ➢ Founded in 1971, it is a Commonwealth-wide body with regional Chapters and Committees in South Asia, Southern Africa, West Africa, the Caribbean and the UK.
> ➢ It fosters and promotes high standards of legal education in the Commonwealth.

## South Summit of G77

❖ The third South Summit of G77 was held at Kampala in Uganda from 21 to 22 January, 2024, under the theme **"Leaving No One Behind"**.

❖ The summit aims to boost South-South cooperation among its 134 member States of the Group of 77 (G-77).

❖ The **'South Summit'** is the **supreme decision-making body of the Group of 77**.

❖ G-77 is the largest intergovernmental organization of developing countries in the United Nations. India is a member of this group.

## 19th Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)

❖ The 19th Summit of the NAM was held on 19-20 January, 2024, in **Kampala, Uganda**, with the theme of **"Deepening Cooperation for Shared Global Affluence"**.

❖ **Uganda** has taken over as chair from Azerbaijan, to run **until 2027**.

❖ The summit adopted the **Kampala Declaration,** slamming Israeli military aggression and calling for the implementation of the UN Security Council resolution to allow humanitarian aid into the besieged Gaza Strip.

❖ The **NAM was established in 1961 in Belgrade, Yugoslavia**, through the initiative of five leaders of newly independent countries: Josip Broz Tito of Yugoslavia, Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt, Jawaharlal Nehru of India, Sukarno of Indonesia, and Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana.

❖ At present **NAM has 120 Member States**.

❖ **NAM does not have a permanent secretariat** or a formal founding charter, act, or treaty.

## 9th India International Science Festival

❖ The 9th edition of the India International Science Festival (IISF) 2023 was **held at Faridabad**, Haryana from January 17th-20th, 2024.

❖ The theme of the present edition was **'Science and Technology Public Outreach in Amrit Kaal'**.

## 12th General Assembly of Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace

❖ On 17th January, 2024, the Vice President of India inaugurated the 12th General Assembly of the Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace (ABCP) in New Delhi.

❖ The theme of the event was **"The Buddhist Voice of Global South"**.

❖ **ABCP was founded in 1970 at Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia** as a voluntary movement of followers of Buddhism with both monastic (monks) and lay members.

❖ It is currently **headquartered** at the **Gandanthegchenling Monastery in Ulaanbaatar**, Mongolia.

❖ The Indian National Centre of ABCP was formed in New Delhi in 1974.

## GPAI Summit

❖ **India, the Chair of the Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (GPAI),** hosted the GPAI Summit from December 12 - 14, 2023, at the Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi.

❖ The major outcomes achieved during the GPAI summit was - **GPAI New Delhi Declaration** - built the consensus among GPAI members on advancing safe, secure, and trustworthy AI and commitment to supporting the sustainability of GPAI projects.

# Art & Culture

**6**

## Nagara Style of Temple Architecture

- ❖ The Ram Mandir in Ayodhya, consecrated on 22nd January, 2024, is built in the Nagara architecture.
- ❖ Nagara Style originated in the **late Gupta period**, around the **5th century** CE, in **northern India**. Concurrently, the **Dravida style**, also emerging during this period, can be observed in **southern India.**
- ❖ Nagara temples feature a **raised plinth** as their foundation.
- ❖ The **Garbha Griha, housing the deity's idol**, is considered the most sacred area within the temple.
- ❖ The **shikhara, resembling** a **mountain peak**, stands tall above the Garbha Griha and symbolizes the natural and cosmological order in Hindu tradition.
- ❖ **Amalaka or Kalash** which is installed on Shikhara is another characteristic feature of this form of temple style.
- ❖ These temples typically include a circumambulatory passage around the garbha griha.
- ❖ One or more mandapas (halls) are aligned on the same axis as the garbha griha.
- ❖ Nagara Style can be classified based on the **Style of Shikhara** into **Valabhi, Phamsana, Rekha- Prasad or Latina, Shekhari and Bhumija.**
- ❖ **Odisha School, Chandel School and Solanki School** are Sub-Schools of Nagara Style of Temple Architecture.

## Pakke Paga Hornbill Festival

- ❖ The 9th edition of the Pakke Paga Hornbill Festival (PPHF) took place between 18th to 20th January, 2024 in Seijosa in **Arunachal Pradesh's Pakke Kesang district**.
- ❖ The first-ever PPHF was held in **2015**. The aim was to recognise the role played by the **Nyishi tribal group** in conserving hornbills in Pakke Tiger Reserve (PTR).
- ❖ Other objectives were to **raise alternative sources of income** for the region and to create awareness in the rest of India about the wonders of PTR and its surrounding areas.
- ❖ This year, the festival's theme was **'Domutoh Domutoh, Paga hum Domutoh'**. It translates to 'Let Our Hornbills Remain' in the Nyishi language.
- ❖ This year's festival aims to underscore the **critical need for preserving** these iconic birds.

- ❖ **Nyishi Tribe** is the largest ethnic group in Arunachal Pradesh, primarily residing in the districts of Papum Pare, Kurung Kumey, East Kameng, and parts of Lower Subansiri.

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### Hornbills

- ➢ The hornbills (Bucerotidae) are a family of birds found in tropical and subtropical Africa and Asia.
- ➢ India is home to nine species of hornbills. The northeastern region has the highest diversity of hornbill species within India.
- ➢ **Conservation Status:** *IUCN:* Vulnerable; *WPA, 1972:* Schedule I; *CITES:* Appendix I.

### Pakke Tiger Reserve

- ➢ It is located in the **East Kameng district** of Arunachal Pradesh.
- ➢ It is surrounded by the Tenga Reserve Forest to the North, Doimara Reserve Forest on the West, Nameri National Park and Tiger Reserve (Assam) on the South.

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## Chandubi Festival of Assam

- ❖ Recently, the Chandubi Festival was celebrated along the Chandubi Lake in the state of Assam.
- ❖ It is organised **every year for five days** starting from the first day of the New Year along the **Chandubi Lake**, which is situated in the state of Assam.
- ❖ The main attractions of the Chandubi festival are the local folk culture, ethnic cuisine, local handloom and dresses, boating, etc.
- ❖ The major aim of the Chandubi Festival is to promote eco-tourism in this biodiversity hotspot of Assam.

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### Chandubi Lake

- ➢ It was created during a massive earthquake in **the year 1897.**
- ➢ The name Chandubi is derived from two words where '**Chand' means five and 'Dubi' means sinking in Khasi language.**
- ➢ This freshwater lake was turned into an economically viable water body that would sustain different communities living around the lake.

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## Garba Dance included in UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage List

- ❖ The decision was made at the 18th session of UNESCO's Intergovernmental Committee for Safeguarding of ICH in Botswana.

# Science & Technology

## GSLV-F14/INSAT-3DS Mission

❖ On 17th February 2024, Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) successfully launched the GSLV-F14/INSAT-3DS mission from SDSC-SHAR, Sriharikota.

## About GSLV-F14

❖ Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV) is a three-stage 51.7 m long launch vehicle having a liftoff mass of 420 tonnes.

## About INSAT-3DS

❖ INSAT-3DS is designed for enhanced meteorological observations and monitoring of land and ocean surfaces for weather forecasting and disaster warning.

❖ The satellite will provide improved weather forecasts and meteorological services.

❖ It will also provide satellite aided search and rescue services.

## PACE Satellite Mission

❖ In a milestone for climate science, NASA's PACE satellite mission, aimed at examining ocean health, air quality, and climate change effects, soared into orbit **on 8th February**, following a successful launch from Florida's Cape Canaveral Space Force Station aboard a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket.

❖ **Named Plankton, Aerosol, Climate, ocean Ecosystem (PACE),** the mission aims to unravel the intricate dynamics of Earth's oceans and atmosphere by scrutinizing microscopic life in water and particles in the air, shedding light on crucial factors influencing global warming.

❖ Equipped with a **hyperspectral ocean color instrument**, PACE will survey oceans across various light spectrums, facilitating the **tracking of phytoplankton distribution** and identifying harmful algal blooms, aiding fisheries management and environmental monitoring efforts.

❖ The satellite carries **two polarimeter instruments to analyze sunlight interaction** with atmospheric particles, providing insights into aerosols, cloud properties, and air quality at different scales, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of ocean-atmosphere interactions and climate change impacts.

❖ PACE's observations promise to **revolutionize ocean science**, enhancing our grasp of the ocean's role in the climate system.

❖ Coupled with data from other missions like **Surface Water and Ocean Topography**, PACE will catalyze advancements in Earth system understanding, benefiting coastal communities and industries.

## Drive to Eliminate Lymphatic Filariasis by 2027

❖ The Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare commenced a **mass drug administration campaign** in India on 8th February, 2024, aiming to eliminate lymphatic filariasis, commonly known as **elephantiasis, by 2027**, three years ahead of the global target.

❖ Lymphatic filariasis, categorized as a **neglected tropical disease** by the World Health Organisation (WHO), poses a significant public health challenge in India and globally, being a leading cause of **long-term disability** worldwide.

❖ India has set an ambitious goal to eliminate lymphatic filariasis by 2027, aligning with a mission-mode, multi-partner approach to achieve the target ahead of the **global deadline of 2030**.

❖ The campaign targets **81 districts across nine endemic states**, including Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Odisha, Telangana, and Uttar Pradesh, covering a wide geographic area affected by lymphatic filariasis.

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### Lymphatic Filariasis

➢ A tropical, parasitic disease that affects the **lymph nodes and lymph vessels**.

➢ Lymphatic filariasis is spread by **infected mosquitoes**. Their bites deposit a parasite that travels to the lymph system.

➢ Treatment for filariasis includes **anti parasite drugs and antibiotics**.

➢ Lymphatic filariasis causes significant disability and disfigurement, with painful manifestations like lymphoedema, elephantiasis, and scrotal swelling.

➢ India bears nearly 40% of the global burden of this parasitic vector-borne disease.

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## Microsoft Partners with Sarvam AI to Develop Voice-Based Generative AI

❖ On 8th February, 2024, Microsoft announced its collaboration with Indian startup **Sarvam AI** to advance voice-based generative AI and deploy **large language models** on Azure.

# Ecology & Environment

**9**

## Environmentalists Launch 'Coexistence: The Great Elephant Migration' Exhibition in Bengaluru

❖ On 3rd February, 2024, Coexistence Consortium introduced a month-long exhibition focusing on man-animal conflict, featuring life-size Lantana elephants to raise awareness about the invasive weed affecting Karnataka's forest ecosystem.

❖ The exhibition addresses the serious threat posed by **Lantana camara**, an **invasive weed native to South America**, affecting wildlife movement and biodiversity in **Karnataka's tiger reserves**.

❖ Around 100 life-size Lantana elephants displayed across Bengaluru, including 60 in Lalbagh Botanical Garden.

❖ Installations **near government buildings**, metro stations, colleges, tech parks, lakes, and green spaces. Over 50 discussions, nature trails, storytelling, street plays, and citizen science contests are part of the initiative.

❖ A **round table conference** with tribal community members, scientists, environmentalists, and forest department officials to address man-animal conflict and strategize Lantana removal.

❖ Karnataka's Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife), stressed continuous awareness efforts and calls for funds for habitat restoration and wildlife corridor reclamation.

## Rare Dusted Apollo Butterfly Sighted for the First Time in Himachal Pradesh

❖ Dusted Apollo, a rare high-altitude butterfly, was recently spotted and photographed in **Himachal Pradesh**, marking the first documentation of the species in the region.

❖ The sighting brings joy to butterfly enthusiasts, indicating a thriving diversity of Apollo butterflies in Himachal Pradesh.

❖ Sighted and **photographed in September 2023** during a trek to Manimahesh Lake in Chamba by forest guards Gajinder Verma and Abinash Thakur.

❖ Dusted Apollo, discovered in 1890, is known for its **distribution range from Ladakh to West Nepal,** flying between 3,500 to 4,800 meters in the inner Himalayas.

❖ Characteristics like the complete discal band on the upper forewing and narrower dark marginal band on the hind wings help identify the Dusted Apollo.

❖ **Regal Apollo**, another rare species, also photographed at **Manimahesh,** highlights a positive sign of diverse Apollo butterflies in the region.

❖ Apollos are **commercially valuable**, fetching high prices in the poaching industry. Of the 11 Apollo species in Himachal Pradesh, five are declared Scheduled species.

## California Hit by Second Atmospheric River

❖ On 4th February, 2024, the second consecutive atmospheric river struck California, causing widespread flooding, power outages for nearly 850,000 people, and a rare warning for hurricane-force winds.

❖ The storm inundated streets and brought down trees and power lines across the San Francisco Bay Area. Winds reached over 60 mph (96 kph), with some areas experiencing gusts exceeding 80 mph (128 kph).

❖ An atmospheric river (AR) is a **long, narrow band of highly concentrated water vapour** in the atmosphere. It is often thousands of kilometers in length and can extend from the tropics to higher latitudes.

❖ ARs are responsible **for transporting large amounts of water vapour**, equivalent to the flow of the Amazon River.

❖ They are associated with **low-level jet streams** and are capable of connecting tropical moisture sources with mid-latitude regions.

❖ ARs are significant contributors to heavy rainfall and can result in intense precipitation events. The concentration of moisture can lead to flooding, especially in regions with complex topography or urban areas.

❖ **In colder regions**, atmospheric rivers can contribute to **heavy snowfall,** impacting mountainous areas.

## Antarctic Marine Protected Areas Face Severe Acidification Threat

❖ A new study published on 4th January, 2024, highlights alarming concerns regarding escalating **acidity levels in the continental shelves of Antarctic Marine Protected Areas** (MPAs) due to heightened greenhouse gas emissions.

❖ Continental shelves in **Antarctic MPAs** are prone to more severe acidification than the open ocean, posing a threat to marine ecosystems.

## India launched UPI Services in Sri Lanka and Mauritius

❖ On 12th February, 2024, Prime Minister launched the Unified Payment Interface (UPI) services in Sri Lanka and Mauritius.

❖ He also launched RuPay card services in Mauritius via video conferencing.

❖ India's emergence as a leader in **Fintech innovation** and **Digital Public Infrastructure** underscores the significance of sharing developmental experiences with partner countries.

❖ The launch aims to enhance **digital connectivity** and facilitate seamless digital transactions between India, Sri Lanka, and Mauritius.

❖ India has witnessed an exceptional surge in Unified Payments Interface (UPI) transactions, reaching a staggering **8,572 crore by December 11, 2023**, marking a significant shift towards digital transactions.

❖ This growth is part of a larger trend, with UPI transactions surging from 92 crore in FY 2017-18 to 8,375 crore in FY 2022-23, showcasing a compound annual growth rate **(CAGR) of 147% in terms of volume**.

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**National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)**

➢ It is an umbrella organisation for operating **retail payments and settlement** systems in India.

➢ It is an initiative of **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** and **Indian Banks' Association (IBA)** under the provisions of the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007.

➢ Considering the utility nature of the objects of NPCI, it has been incorporated as a "**Not for Profit**" Company under the provisions of Section 25 of Companies Act 1956 (now **Section 8 of Companies Act 2013**), with an intention to provide infrastructure to the entire Banking system in India for physical as well as electronic payment and settlement systems.

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## Iran Introduces 15-Day Visa-Free Policy for Indian Tourists

❖ On **6th February, 2024**, Iran announced the implementation of a 15-day visa-free policy for Indian tourists visiting Iran, according to a statement from the Iran Embassy.

❖ Indian citizens can now enter Iran for tourism purposes **without a visa**, under the new policy.

❖ The initiative allows for a **maximum stay of 15 days per visit**, with a restriction of one entry every six months.

❖ While the visa abolition benefits tourists entering Iran via air borders, those intending longer stays or multiple entries within six months must obtain appropriate visas from Iranian representations in India.

❖ Iran joins several countries in offering **visa-free access** to Indian tourists. Recent examples include **Malaysia, Thailand, and Sri Lanka**, which have relaxed visa regulations to attract more visitors from India.

❖ Last year, Malaysia introduced a 30-day visa-free entry for **Indian and Chinese visitors**, subject to security screenings. Thailand also waived entry visa requirements for Indian tourists for six months, effective until May 10, 2024.

❖ **Sri Lanka extended** visa-free entry to visitors from **seven countries**, including India, China, and Russia, as part of efforts to enhance tourism and facilitate travel.

## Unified Payments Interface (UPI) Launched at Eiffel Tower in Paris

❖ The formal launch of India's mobile-based payment system, the Unified Payments Interface (UPI), took place at the iconic Eiffel Tower in Paris during the Republic Day reception, the Indian Emabssy announced **on 2nd February, 2024.**

❖ UPI facilitates round-the-clock payments through a **virtual payment address** created by users.

❖ It integrates multiple bank accounts into a single mobile application, offering seamless fund routing and merchant payments.

❖ In 2023, an agreement between **NPCI International Payments Limited (NIPL)** and **France's Lyra** Collect paved the way for implementing UPI in France and Europe.

❖ Indian tourists in France are now able to make payments in rupees through the UPI mechanism.

## Denmark Unveils Green Fuels Alliance India at GIM 2024

❖ On 9th January, 2024, Denmark announced the Green Fuels Alliance India (GFAI) initiative at the Global Investors Meet 2024 (GIM), aiming to enhance

## Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

❖ The military regimes in Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger have announced their withdrawal from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), citing the bloc as a threat to member states.

❖ The Sahel nations, facing challenges of jihadist violence and poverty, have had strained relations with ECOWAS since recent coups. Despite being founding members in 1975, they were suspended and faced heavy sanctions for the overthrow of civilian governments.

❖ The leaders of the three nations recently formed an "Alliance of Sahel States" to strengthen their stance.

❖ Founded in 1975, ECOWAS is a political and economic union of 15 West African nations (now 12)

## International Organisation for Migration (IOM)

❖ Amy Pope, a former White House advisor became the first woman to head the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the United Nations' migration agency.

❖ The IOM was established in 1951 as the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration and became a UN agency in 2016.

❖ It is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.

❖ It has 175 member states including India.

## International Sugar Organisation

❖ India has been named Chair of the International Sugar Organisation (ISO) for 2024 during the 63rd council meeting in London.

❖ The OSO is headquartered in London, United Kingdom with 87 members including India.

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**National Sugar Institute**

➢ The National Sugar Institute is located in Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh.

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## Asian Pacific Postal Union

❖ Recently, India, for the first time, took over the leadership of the Asian Pacific Postal Union (APPU).

❖ Headquartered in Bangkok, Thailand, APPU is an intergovernmental organisation comprising 32 member countries in the Asia-Pacific region.

❖ It is the only restricted union of the Universal Postal Union (UPU) in the region, which is a specialised agency of the United Nations.

❖ The Union also acts as the regional platform for consultation on key global matters impacting the postal sector.

## Central Bureau of Investigation

❖ On 1st April 2023, Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) celebrated its diamond jubilee. It was established by a resolution of the Union Ministry of Home Affairs dated April 1, 1963.

❖ The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) is the premier investigating agency of India.

❖ It operates under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions.

❖ CBI is exempted from the provisions of the Right to Information Act.

❖ CBI is India's officially designated single point of contact for liaison with the Interpol.

## World Cooperative Economic Forum (WCEF)

❖ In an effort to bolster the global cooperative movement, leaders and experts from the cooperative sector have come together to establish the World Cooperative Economic Forum (WCEF).

❖ The forum is headquartered in New Delhi and aims to represent the interests of over three million cooperatives across the world.

## Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL)

❖ The Ministry of Finance elevated Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL) to the status of a Navratna Central Public Sector Enterprise (CPSE).

❖ The Navratna companies are CPSE units that have been granted financial autonomy to invest up to Rs. 1,000 crore without seeking approval from the central government.

❖ A Navratna company is upgraded to a Maharatna company when it fulfills the required eligibility criteria.

❖ There are currently 13 Maharatna, 16 Navratna companies as on Oct, 2023.

## World Meteorological Organization

❖ Dr. Abdulla Al Mandous, a meteorologist from the United Arab Emirates (UAE), was elected as the new President of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) for a four-year term spanning from 2023 to 2027.

## Andhra Pradesh

### Caste Census

❖ The Government in Andhra Pradesh has initiated a comprehensive caste census, marking the state's commitment to understanding and addressing the complex caste dynamics within its population.

❖ Launched with the aid of a specially designed phone app, this ambitious census aims to enumerate all castes in the state.

❖ Andhra Pradesh now stands as the second state in the country, following Bihar, to undertake such a comprehensive caste enumeration.

❖ The app offers more than 700 caste options for the public to choose from, with a notable inclusion being the 'No caste' option.

### Jagananna Amma Vodi Scheme

❖ The scheme aims to provide financial assistance to approximately 42 lakh mothers, offering them an annual gift of Rs. 15,000 for sending their children to school.

❖ Through the Amma Vodi scheme, approximately 83 lakh students from Class I to intermediate levels will benefit from the financial assistance provided by the state government.

❖ By directly supporting mothers, the scheme recognizes their critical role in shaping the educational journey of their children.

❖ By extending financial assistance to mothers, the government aims to alleviate any financial burdens associated with their children's education, encouraging them to send their wards to schools.

### Mulapeta Port

❖ The Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh has initiated the construction of the Mulapeta Greenfield port in Srikakulam district.

❖ The port is estimated to cost Rs. 4,362 crore and is expected to be completed within two years.

❖ The district has the advantage of a 193-kilometre long coastline, which constitutes a significant portion of the state's total coastline of 974 kilometers.

❖ The development of the Mulapeta greenfield port and the fishing harbor is expected to significantly boost the local economy and create employment opportunities for the people in the district.

### Statue of Social Justice

❖ The Andhra Pradesh government has unveiled the world's tallest statue of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, the architect of the Indian Constitution, in Vijayawada.

❖ The Statue of Social Justice is the tallest Ambedkar's statue in the world.

❖ The Statue of Social Justice is 125 feet tall and is built on an 81-foot plinth, giving a total height of 206 feet.

❖ It is the fourth tallest, and the second tallest standing statue in India.

❖ The Statue of Social Justice is among the top 40 tallest statues in the world. The second-tallest Ambedkar statue, which is 175 feet, is situated in neighbouring Telangana.

## Assam

### Gunotsav 2024

❖ The Gunotsav 2024 (fifth round) was held between January 3, 2024, and February 9, 2024.

❖ Gunotsav is a state Government initiative for improvement of quality of school education.

❖ The four core areas viz. scholastic (learning outcomes of children), co-scholastic, infrastructure and community participation are evaluated in Gunotsav exercise.

❖ Schools are graded as A+, A, B, C and D on the basis of performance (90% on Scholastic, 5% each on Co-scholastic & other areas and Community Participation & Contributions).

❖ This exercise helps in identifying the learning gaps and ensuring taking appropriate remedial measures for attaining grade specific learning outcomes by all children.

❖ 'Gunotsav' made its debut in 2017 and the 2024 edition marks the fifth round of this comprehensive exercise, covering all districts of Assam.

### Project Gajah Kotha

❖ The "Gajah Kotha" campaign has been initiated by Assam to tackle the escalating problem of human-elephant conflict (HEC).

❖ This campaign focuses on HEC-affected villages in eastern Assam, where it aims to educate residents about the behaviour, ecology, and cultural significance of elephants in the region, emphasizing the importance of conservation.

# 13 World of Sports

## World Athletics Championships

The World Athletics Championships are a biennial athletics competition organized by World Athletics. Alongside the Olympic Games, they represent the highest level championships of senior international outdoor athletics competition for track and field athletics globally.

**World Athletics**
➤ **Headquarters:** Monaco
➤ **President:** Sebastian Coe

### World Athletics Championships 2023

❖ The World Athletics Championships 2023 was held in Budapest, Hungary.
❖ **Fastest Man:** Noah Lyles (USA) – 100 metre sprint (9.83 seconds)
❖ **Fastest Woman:** Sha'Carri Richardson (USA) – 100 metre sprint (10.65 seconds)
❖ **2025 Event:** The 2025 World Athletics Championships are scheduled to be held from 13 to 21 September 2025 in Tokyo, Japan.

### India at World Athletics 2023

Neeraj Chopra of Haryana's Panipat district with a best throw of 88.17m became the first Indian athlete to win a gold medal at the Senior World Championships in the men's javelin throw event.
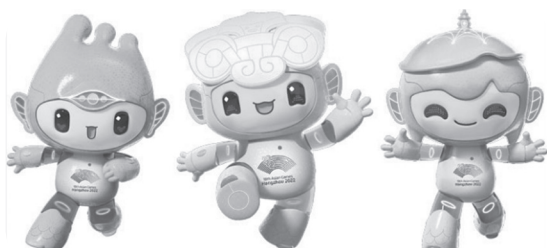
## Asian Games

The Asian Games is the biggest sports competition in Asia, held once every four years.
❖ They are organized by the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA).
❖ The symbol for the Asian Games is the rising sun with interlocking rings.

### 19th Asian Games

The 2022 Asian Games was held from 23 September to 8 October 2023 in Hangzhou, China.



❖ **Mascot:** The mascots of the 19th Asian Games are a group of robots named: Chenchen, Congcong, Lianlaian.

### India at Asian Games 2023

❖ With an unprecedented haul of 107 medals that included 28 gold, 38 silvers and 41 bronze medals, India set a new benchmark for themselves at the Asian Games 2023 in Hangzhou, the People's Republic of China.
❖ It was the first time in Asian Games history that India's medals tally crossed the three-figure mark. By doing so, they became the only fourth country after China, Japan and the Republic of Korea to win 100 or more medals in a single edition of the Asian Games.

| Medal Tally (Top 4) | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Country | Gold | Silver | Bronze | Total |
| People's Republic of China | 201 | 111 | 71 | 383 |
| Japan | 52 | 67 | 69 | 188 |
| Republic of Korea | 42 | 59 | 89 | 190 |
| India | 28 | 38 | 41 | 107 |

### Asian Athletics Championships 2023

❖ The 2023 Asian Athletics Championships was held from 12 to 16 July 2023 in Bangkok, Thailand.
❖ India finished third, winning 27 medals, with 6 Gold, 12 Silver and 9 Bronze.
❖ Japan topped the medal table followed by China.

# 14 Portals & Apps

| Portal/App | Concerned Authority | Aim/Other Details |
|---|---|---|
| SuSwagatam Portal | Supreme Court of India | To facilitate the visitors to have a smooth and simple process of getting online ePass required to visit the SCI for official/ case related purpose. |
| UDGAM Portal | Reserve Bank of India | UDGAM (Unclaimed Deposits – Gateway to Access Information) has been launched to help bank account holders with information regarding unclaimed amount at one place. |
| Jharniyojan Portal | Govt. of Jharkhand | Through this portal the government will try to provide a platform to employers and candidates looking for employment. |
| Arunpol App & 'e-Vigilance Portal' | Arunachal Pradesh Police | For safety & security of the citizens of the state. Arunpol App will facilitate common people to lodge complaints without coming to a police station. |
| Sarpanch Samvad Mobile App | Quality Council of India (QCI) | This application is exclusively designed for Sarpanchs actively serving in Gram Panchayat Offices. |
| Yuva Uttarakhand Mobile App | Govt. of Uttarakhand | The primary objective of this innovative app is to provide valuable information about self-employment opportunities to the state's unemployed youth. |
| Rozgar Prayag Portal | Govt. of Uttarakhand | To provide employment opportunities available on a single portal in Uttarakhand. |
| iStart Talent Connect Portal | Govt. of Rajasthan | This portal is designed to address the challenges faced by both corporates and startups in finding the right candidates for their organizations. |
| 'Sinh Suchna' App | Govt. of Gujarat | It will provide exact information regarding the location and movement of the lions in real-time. The app empowers individuals to directly report lion sightings to the forest department. |
| 'Rajmargyatra' App. | National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) | To improve user experience on highways and create a 'citizen-centric unified mobile application'. |
| PM-Kisan Mobile App | Union Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare | By using Face Authentication Feature from this app farmer can complete e-KYC remotely, sitting at home easily by scanning face without OTP or fingerprint and help 100 other farmers to do e-KYC at their home. |
| Floodwatch App | Central Water Commission (CWC) | This app gives information related to the flood situation and forecasts up to 7 days on a real-time basis to the public. |
| Athidhi Portal | Govt. of Kerala | To expedite the registration of migrant workers in Kerala. |
| 'Brand Bengaluru' Portal | Govt. of Karnataka | To gather suggestions from the public regarding the development of the city. |
| ULLAS Mobile App | Ministry of Education | ULLAS (Understanding Lifelong Learning for All in Society) provides basic education, digital and financial literacy, and critical life skills to citizens aged 15 and above who were unable to attend school. |
| Mobile-Dost-App | Govt. of J&K | It has been launched in sync with the vision of Apka-Mobile-Hamara-Daftar, a pioneering initiative for mobile-based delivery of citizen-centric services in the Union Territory. |
| 'Prahari' App | Union Home Ministry | Through the 'Prahari' app, jawans can get personal and service-related information, housing, Ayushman- Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) and leave related information on their mobile. |

- **KHANJAR:** The 11th edition of the India-Kyrgyzstan Joint Special Forces Exercise KHANJAR was held at the Special Forces Training School in Bakloh, Himachal Pradesh, from 22nd January to 3rd February 2024.
- **CYCLONE II:** The second edition of India-Egypt Joint Special Forces Exercise CYCLONE took place at Anshas, Egypt, from 22nd January to 1st February, 2024.
- **Ex-Ayutthaya**: During December 20-23, 2023, Indian Navy and Royal Thai Navy conducted a maiden bilateral exercise named 'Ex-Ayutthaya,' symbolizing the significance of Ayodhya in India and Ayutthaya in Thailand with historic legacies and rich cultural ties.
- **Sahyog Kaijin:** In January 2024, Indian and Japanese Coast Guards conducted joint exercise 'Sahyog Kaijin' off the coast of Chennai.
- **'SADA TANSEEQ':** The inaugural edition of India-Saudi Arabia Joint Military Exercise 'SADA TANSEEQ' was held at Mahajan, Rajasthan from 29th January to 10th February 2024.
- **Ex- Desert Knight:** On 23 Jan 2024, the Indian Air Force (IAF) conducted Exercise Desert Knight over the Arabian Sea along with French Air and Space Force (FASF) and United Arab Emirates (UAE) Air Force. While the French and the UAE Air Force operated from the Al Dhafra air base in the UAE, the IAF operated from bases within India.
- **Harimau Shakti:** The bilateral training exercise "Exercise Harimau Shakti 2023", between Indian & Malaysian Army was held from October 23 to November 5, 2023 in Umroi Cantonment, Meghalaya.
- **SIMBEX:** The 30th edition of Singapore-India Maritime Bilateral Exercise (SIMBEX) was conducted from 21-28 September, 2023 in Singapore.
- **SLINEX 23:** The 10th edition of India-Sri Lanka bilateral maritime exercise SLINEX-23 was held at Colombo from 03 - 08 April 2023.
- **Konkan 2023:** The annual bilateral maritime exercise between the Indian Navy and the Royal Navy (UK) was held from 20 to 22 March 2023 off the Konkan coast in the Arabian Sea.
- **India-EU Joint Naval Exercise:** On 24 Oct 2023, the European Union (EU) and India conducted their first joint naval exercise in the Gulf of Guinea.
- **Indo-Thai CORPAT:** The 35th edition of India-Thailand Coordinated Patrol (Indo-Thai CORPAT) between the Indian Navy and the Royal Thai Navy was conducted from 03rd -10th May, 2023 in the Andaman Sea.
- **BONGOSAGAR & CORPAT**: The 4th edition of BONGOSAGAR-23 and the 5th edition of CORPAT were conducted between the Indian Navy and Bangladesh Navy at Visakhapatnam.
- **FRINJEX-23:** The maiden joint military exercise between the Indian Army and French Army was conducted at the Pangode military station, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala on March 7 and 8, 2023.
- **KAZIND-2023:** Indian Army and Air Force participated in the 7th edition of the Joint Military 'Exercise KAZIND-2023' in Otar, Kazakhstan, from October 30 to November 11, 2023. The exercise between India and Kazakhstan began as "Exercise PRABAL DOSTYK" in 2016. After the second edition, it was renamed "Exercise KAZIND".
- **Cope India:** The sixth edition of Cope India, an Air Exercise between the Indian Air Force (IAF) and United States Air Force (USAF), conducted at Air Force Stations Kalaikunda, Panagarh and Agra.
- **Ajeya Warrior:** The 7th edition of biennial joint military exercise "Ajeya Warrior" between India and the United Kingdom was conducted at Salisbury Plains, United Kingdom from 27 April to 11 May 2023. It is conducted alternatively in the United Kingdom and India.
- **MITRA SHAKTI-2023:** From 16th to 29th November 2023, the ninth edition of Joint Military exercise "MITRA SHAKTI-2023" between India and Sri Lanka was held in Aundh (Pune).
- **SURYA KIRAN-XVII:** The Army of India and Nepal carried out 17th edition of Joint Military Exercise SURYA KIRAN in Pithoragarh, Uttarakhand from 24th November to 07th December 2023.
- **AUSTRAHIND:** The 2nd edition of the exercise between India and Australia was conducted in Perth, Australia, from November 22nd to December 6th, 2023. Indian Armed Forces, with members from all

# Awards

## Highest Civilian Awards of India

### Bharat Ratna 2024

The Government of India announced to confer Bharat Ratna – India's highest civilian award to five stalwarts - Karpoori Thakur, Lal Krishna Advani, P. V. Narasimha Rao, Chaudhary Charan Singh, and M. S. Swaminathan.

### Karpoori Thakur

❖ Karpoori Thakur was born on 24 January 1924 at Pitaunjhia (now Karpuri Gram) in Samastipur District of Bihar.

❖ Thakur was the Bihar Chief Minister between December 1970 and June 1971 as well as between December 1977 and April 1979.

❖ Thakur is notably recognized in Bihar for implementing a complete ban on alcohol in 1970.

❖ Thakur was a votary of Hindi language, and as the education minister of Bihar, he removed English as the compulsory subject for the matriculation curriculum.

❖ Thakur sowed the seeds for government job reservations for backward classes in the late 1970s by deciding to implement the Mungeri Lal Commission recommendations.

### Lal Krishna Advani

❖ Lal Krishna Advani was born on 8 November 1927 in Karachi, British India and migrated to India during the Partition.

❖ His decades-long service in public life has been marked by an unwavering commitment to transparency and integrity, setting an exemplary standard in political ethics.

❖ He was the minister of home affairs from 1998 to 2004 and deputy prime minister from 2002 to 2004.

❖ He has served as leader of opposition in both the houses.
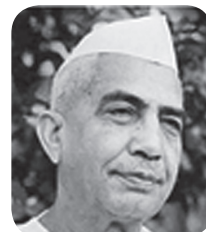
### Pamulaparthi Venkata Narasimha Rao

❖ P.V. Narasimha Rao was born on 28 June 1921 in the village of Laknepalli, Warangal district of present-day Telangana (then part of Hyderabad State).

❖ P.V. Narasimha Rao was the 9th Prime Minister of India (1991 – 1996).

❖ He is widely lauded for his pivotal role in introducing economic reforms that rescued the almost bankrupt nation from economic collapse.

❖ He also served as the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, Union Defence Minister, Union Minister of External Affairs, and Union Minister of Home Affairs.

❖ "Gyan Bhoomi" is the samadhi of Narasimha Rao at Necklace Road in Hyderabad on the banks of Hussainsagar lake.

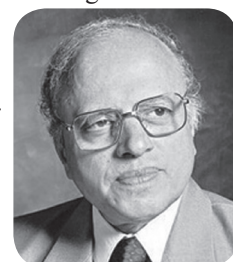### Chaudhary Charan Singh

❖ Shri Charan Singh was born in 1902 at Noorpur in Meerut district of Uttar Pradesh.

❖ He served as the 5th prime minister of India and 5th Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh.

❖ He was the chief architect of land reforms in U.P.; he took a leading part in formulation and finalisation of the Dept. Redemption Bill 1939, which brought great relief to rural debtors.

❖ As Chief Minister he was instrumental in bringing about the Land Holding Act 1960 which was aimed at lowering the ceiling on land holdings to make it uniform throughout the State.

❖ Kisan Ghat is the memorial of Chaudhary Charan Singh located in Delhi.

### Mankombu Sambasivan Swaminathan

❖ Dr. M. S. Swaminathan was an Indian geneticist.

❖ Called the 'Father of the Green Revolution', he played a major role in the set of changes introduced in farming in the 1960s and '70s that helped India achieve food security.

❖ He was the first recipient of World Food Prize (1987) for developing and spearheading the introduction of high-yielding wheat and rice varieties.

# Appointments

**17**

- **Lieutenant General Upendra Dwivedi:** He has been appointed as the new Army Vice Chief succeeding Lt Gen MV Suchindra Kumar.
- **Ahmed Awad bin Mubarak:** Yemen's foreign minister Ahmed Awad bin Mubarak has been appointed as the country's new prime minister.
- **Rashmi Shukla:** She became Maharashtra's first woman Director General of Police.
- **Randhir Jaiswal:** He replaced Arindam Bagchi as the official spokesperson of Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).
- **Mio Oka:** Asian Development Bank appointed Mio Oka as country director for India.
- **Olzhas Bektenov**: Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev signed a decree on Feb. 6, 2024 to appoint Olzhas Bektenov as the new Prime Minister of Kazakhstan.
- **Justice Prasanna Bhalachandra Varale:**The Chief Justice of the Karnataka High Court has been appointed as Judge of the Supreme Court of India. With this, now, the Dalit representation on the Bench is three.
- **Justice Sanjiv Khanna:** The senior-most judge of the Supreme Court was appointed as the NALSA Executive Chairperson.
- **Pankaj Tripathi:** The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has appointed Bollywood actor Pankaj Tripathi as the "UPI Safety Ambassador."
- **Heeralal Samariya:** He has been appointed as the new Chief Information Commissioner (CIC).
- **Vineet McCarty:** Vice Admiral Vineet McCarty assumed the position of Commandant at the Indian Naval Academy on January 15, 2024.
- **Daljit Singh Chaudhary:** He has been appointed as the Director General of Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB).
- **Anil Kumar Lahoti:** He assumed the role of TRAI Chairman, filling the vacancy left by PD Vaghela.
- **Jay Shah:** The Secretary of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has been appointed for a third consecutive term as the President of the Asian Cricket Council (ACC).
- **Senthil Pandian C:** He became the new ambassador to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in Geneva, succeeding Brajendra Navnit.
- **Girish Chandra Murmu:** The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India, has been elected as the vice-chair of the UN Panel of External Auditors.
- **Rahul Navin:** He has been appointed as the Acting Director of Enforcement Directorate.
- **Tshering Tobgay:** He became the Prime Minister of Bhutan for a second term.
- **Indra Mani Pandey:** From India, he became the Secretary General of BIMSTEC, succeeding Tenzin Lekphell (Bhutan).
- **Raghuram Iyer:** He became the CEO of Indian Olympic Association (IOA).
- **Vikas Sheel:** He has been appointed as the Executive Director of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in Manila.
- **Neelkanth Mishra:** He has been appointed as the part-time Chairperson of the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI).
- **N.V. Ramana:** Former Chief Justice of India (CJI) N.V. Ramana has been appointed as member of the International Mediator Panel of Singapore International Mediation Centre (SIMC).
- **Alok Sharma:** He has been appointed as the Director of the Special Protection Group (SPG), the elite security unit responsible for safeguarding the Prime Minister.
- **Rajkumar Rao:** Election Commission of India (ECI) on 26 Oct, 2023 appointed Rajkumar Rao as its 'National Icon' for voter awareness and education.
- **Edgars Rinkevics:** He has been sworn in as Latvia's first openly gay head of state, and the first openly gay president of an EU member state.
- **QU Dongyu:** From China, he has been re-elected to a second term as Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations.
- **Admiral Lisa Franchetti:** She became first woman to lead US Navy.
- **Rakesh Pal:** He has been appointed as the 25th Director General (DG) of the Indian Coast Guard (ICG).
- **Lieutenant General Raghu Srinivasan:** He has been appointed as the 28th Director General (DG) of the Border Roads Organisation (BRO).
- **Vice Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi:** He took over as the Vice Chief of the Naval Staff.
- **Rahul Rasgotra:** He assumed the charge of the Director General, ITBP on 1st January 2024.

- **Dr Nitya Anand:** He was the driving force behind Centchroman's discovery, also referred to as "Saheli." It was the first and only once-weekly, non-steroidal, non-hormonal oral contraceptive pill in history. Saheli was incorporated into the National Family Programme of India in 2016. It is still the only non-hormonal, non-steroidal contraceptive available worldwide.

- **Prabha Atre:** She was an Indian classical vocalist from the Kirana gharana. She was awarded all three of the Padma Awards by the Government of India.

- **Malini Rajurkar:** She was an Indian Hindustani classical singer of Gwalior Gharana. She was awarded Sangeet Natak Academy Award in 2001.

- **Saroja Vaidyanathan:** She was an Indian choreographer, guru, and notable proponent of Bharatanatyam. She was conferred the Padma Shri in 2002 and the Padma Bhushan in 2013.

- **Rashid Khan:** He was an Indian classical musician in the Hindustani tradition. He belonged to the Rampur-Sahaswan gharana, and was the great-grandson of gharana founder Inayat Hussain Khan. He was awarded the Padma Shri, as well as the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award in 2006. He was awarded the Padma Bhushan in 2022.

- **N. K. Desam:** He was a Malayalam-language poet and literary critic from Kerala. In 2009, his poetry collection Mudra won the Kerala Sahitya Akademi Award. In 2017, his Malayalam transliteration of Gitanjali by Rabindranath Tagore was selected for the Kendra Sahitya Akademi Translation Prize.

- **Jitendra Pal Singh Uberoi:** He was an Indian sociologist and philosophical anthropologist. He was a Professor of Sociology from the Delhi School of Economics. Uberoi was instrumental in establishing sociology as a discipline of study in post-colonial India.

- **Gogi Saroj Pal:** She was a renowned feminist painter.

- **Ved Prakash Nanda:** He was an Indian-American academic who received the Padma Bhushan award on 20 March 2018 in the field of literature and education.

- **Munawwar Rana:** He was an Indian Urdu poet. He was honoured with the Sahitya Akademi Award in 2014 for his poem Shahdaba but returned in 2015.

- **Mohammad Shamim Jairajpuri:** He had been a Dean at AMU and received the first Janaki Ammal National Award in 1999, bestowed by the Government of India, Ministry of Environment and Forests and Lifetime Achievement Award from the Zoological Society of India for his notable works on taxonomy of nematodes.

- **Sukhbir Singh Gill:** He was Chandigarh's first hockey Olympian. He had represented India at the Sydney Olympics (2000), the Hockey World Cup in Kuala Lumpur (2002), and the FIH Champions Trophy in Cologne (Germany) in 2002.

- **Thanga Darlong:** He was an Indian folk music artist, known for his contribution to the folk music of Tripura and his work in preserving and promoting the traditional instrument Rosem. He was awarded the Padma Shri (2019); Sangeet Natak Akademi Award (2014).

- **V. Mohini Giri:** She was former chairperson of the National Commission for Women and a dedicated advocate for the women's movement. She was Chairperson of the Guild of Service, a New Delhi-based social service organisation. She founded War Widows Association, New Delhi in 1972. In 2007, she was awarded the Padma Bhushan.

- **MS Swaminathan:** M.S. Swaminathan was an agricultural scientist and a key architect of the country's 'Green Revolution'. He founded the MS Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF) in 1988, using the proceeds from the First World Food Prize he was awarded in 1987. He was also awarded Padma Shri (1967), Ramon Magsaysay Award (1971), Padma Bhushan (1972), and Padma Vibhushan (1989)

- **Giorgio Napolitano:** Giorgio Napolitano was Italy's longest-serving president and the first in the nation's history to be reelected to the office.

- **N Valarmathi:** She was an Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) scientist, who lent her voice to countdowns for rocket launches in Sriharikota. She was last heard during the countdown announcement for the launch of Chandrayaan-3 that made a historic landing on the Moon.

- **Henry Alfred Kissinger:** He served as United States secretary of state and national security advisor in

# 19 Books & Authors

- **Pranab, My Father: A Daughter Remembers:** Sharmishtha Mukherjee
- **Droupadi Murmu: From Tribal Hinterlands to Raisina Hills:** Kasturi Ray
- **The Golden Years: The Many Joys of Living a Good Long Life:** Ruskin Bond
- **MADE IN INDIA :75 Years of Business and Enterprise:** Amitabh Kant
- **The Poverty of Political Economics:** Meghnad Desai
- **Partitioned Freedom:** Ram Madhav
- **Collective Spirit, Concrete Action:** Shashi Shekhar Vempati
- **Mundaka Upanishad: The Gateway to Eternity:** Dr. Karan Singh
- **Courting India: England, Mughal India and the Origins of Empire:** Nandini Das
- **Bipin: The Man Behind the Uniform:** Rachna Biswat Rawat
- **India's Struggle for Independence – Gandhian Era**: P. Jyothimani and G. Balan
- **Revolutionaries – The Other Story of How India Won Its Freedom:** Sanjeev Sanyal
- **Assam's Braveheart Lachit Barphukan:** Arup Kumar Dutta
- **Building Partnerships: India and International Cooperation for Maritime Security:** Captain Himadri Das
- **Victory City:** Salman Rushdie
- **India's Vaccine Growth Story – From Cowpox to Vaccine Maitri:** Sajjan Singh Yadav
- **Gandhi: A Life in Three Campaigns:** M.J. Akbar
- **The Great Bank Robbery: NPAs, Scams and the Future of Regulation:** Pattabhi Ram & Sabyasachee Dash
- **Modi: Shaping a Global Order in Flux:** Edited by Sujan Chinoy, Vijay Chauthaiwala, and Uttam Kumar Sinha
- **Gandhi: Siyasat aur Sampradaiykta:** Piyush Babele
- **An Uncommon Love: The Early Life of Sudha and Narayana Murthy:** Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni
- **Modi: Energising A Green Future:** Edited by R.K. Pachnanda, Bibek Debroy, Anirban Ganguly, Uttam Kumar Sinha
- **Sanskriti ke Ayaam:** Manorama Mishra
- **As Good as My Word:** KM Chandrasekhar
- **Smoke and Ashes: A Writer's Journey Through Opium's Hidden Histories:** Amitav Ghosh
- **Four Stars of Destiny: An Autobiography:** General Manoj Mukund Naravane
- **The Babri Masjid Ram Mandir Dilemma:** Madhav Godbole
- **Breaking the Mould: Reimagining India's Economic Future:** Raghuram Rajan (in collaboration with Rohit Lamba)
- **Prism: The Ancestral Abode of Rainbow:** Vinod Mankara
- **Crosscourt:** Jaidip Mukerjea and Papri Sri Raman
- **Sachin@50'- Celebrating A Maestro:** Boria Majumdar
- **COACHING BEYOND: My Days with the Indian Cricket Team:** R. Kaushik & R. Sridhar
- **India's Knowledge Supremacy: The New Dawn:** Dr Ashwin Fernandes
- **'Naye Bharat ka Samaveda:** A seminal collection spotlighting Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's impactful speeches, delving deep into the core essence and values embedded in our nation's Constitution.
- **Zeba: An Accidental Superhero:** Huma Qureshi
- **Roller Coaster: An Affair with Banking:** Tamal Bandyopadhyay
- **RESILIENT INDIA: How Modi Transformed India's Disaster Management Paradigm:** Edited and Compiled by Bluekraft Digital Foundation
- **Welcome to Paradise:** Twinkle Khanna
- **Reflections:** Narayanan Vaghul
- **India's Moment: Changing Power Equations around the World:** Mohan Kumar
- **Thread By Thread:** Sathya Saran
- **Do Palkon Ki Chhavn Main:** Dr. Hema Joshi
- **Nilavu Kudicha Simhangal:** S Somanath (It was withdrawn/not published)
- **The Reverse Swing: Colonialism to Cooperation:** Ashok Tandon
- **The Book of Life: My Dance with Buddha for Success:** Vivek Ranjan Agnihotri
- **India in the G20: Rule-taker to Rule-maker:** Edited by Manjeet Kripalani

# 20 Important Days

## Important Days/Weeks & Themes

| Date | Day | Theme |
|---|---|---|
| **January** | | |
| 4 January | World Braille Day | – |
| 9 January | Pravasi Bharatiya Divas | "Diaspora: Reliable Partners for India's progress in Amrit Kaal" |
| 10 January | World Hindi Day | "Hindi – Traditional Knowledge to Artificial Intelligence" |
| 12 January | National Youth Day | "Viksit Yuva-Viksit Bharat" |
| 15 January | Indian Army Day | – |
| 16 January | National Startup Day | – |
| 23 January | Parakram Diwas | – |
| 24 January | International Day of Education | "To invest in people, prioritize education" |
| 24 January | National Girl Child Day | "Self Defence Training for Girls" |
| 25 January | National Voters Days | "Nothing Like Voting, I Vote for Sure" |
| 25 January | National Tourism Day | – |
| 26 January | International Day of Clean Energy | – |
| 29 January (Last Sunday of January) | World Leprosy Eradication Day | "Act Now, End Leprosy" |
| **February** | | |
| 2 February | World Wetlands Day | "Wetland restoration" |
| 4 February | World Cancer Day | "Close the care gap" |
| 10 February | World Pulses Day | "Pulses for a Sustainable Future" |
| 10 February | National Deworming Day | – |
| 11 February | International Day of Women and Girls in Science | "Innovate. Demonstrate. Elevate. Advance. Sustain. ( I.D.E.A.S.)" |
| 13 February | World Radio Day | "Radio and Peace" |
| 20 February | World Day of Social Justice | "Overcoming Barriers and Unleashing Opportunities for Social Justice" |
| 21 February | International Mother Language Day | "Multilingual education – a necessity to transform education" |
| 28 February | National Science Day | "Global Science for Global Wellness" |
| **March** | | |
| 1 March | World Seagrass Day (First-ever World Seagrass Day) | – |
| 1 March | Zero Discrimination Day | "Save lives: Decriminalise" |
| 3 March | World Wildlife Day | "Partnerships for wildlife conservation" |

# 21 India - Who's Who

| Heads of Important Offices/Institutions in India | |
|---|---|
| Chief Justice of India (CJI) | Dhananjaya Y. Chandrachud |
| Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) | Rajiv Kumar |
| Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) | Girish Chandra Murmu |
| Chairperson, Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) | Dr. Manoj Soni |
| Attorney General (AG) | R. Venkataramani |
| Solicitor General | Tushar Mehta |
| National Security Advisor (NSA) | Ajit Doval |
| Foreign Secretary | Vinay Mohan Kwatra |
| Chairperson, Railway Board | Jaya Varma Sinha |
| Principal Scientific Adviser | Ajay K. Sood |
| Chief Economic Adviser | V Anantha Nageswaran |
| Chairperson, National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) | Arun Kumar Mishra |
| Chairperson, National Commission for Minorities | Sardar Iqbal Singh Lalpura |
| Chairperson, National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC) | Vijay Sampla |
| Chairperson, National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) | Harsh Chouhan |
| Chairperson, National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC) | Hansraj Gangaram Ahir |
| Chairperson, National Commission for Women (NCW) | Rekha Sharma |
| Chairperson, National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) | Priyank Kanungo |
| Chairperson, Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT) | Justice Ranjit More |
| Chairperson, Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) | Praveen Kumar Srivastava |
| Chairperson, Central Information Commission (CIC) | Heeralal Samariya |
| Chairperson, Atomic Energy Commission | Dr. Ajit Kumar Mohanty |
| Secretary, Department of Space | S. Somanath |
| Chairperson, University Grants Commission (UGC) | M. Jagadesh Kumar |
| Chairperson, Competition Commission of India (CCI) | Ravneet Kaur |
| Chairperson, Central Water Commission (CWC) | Khushvinder Vohra |
| Chairperson, National Forest Commission | B. N. Kirpal |
| Chairperson, National Council for Transgender Persons | Laxmi Narayan Tripathi |
| Chairperson, 15th Finance Commission of India | N. K. Singh |
| Chairperson, 16th Finance Commission of India | Arvind Panagariya |
| Governor, Reserve Bank of India (RBI) | Shaktikanta Das |
| Chairperson, Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) | Madhabi Puri Buch |
| Chairperson, Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDA) | Debasish Panda |
| Chairperson, 7th Pay Commission | Ashok Kumar Mathur |
| Chairperson, Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) | Sivasubramanian Ramann |

# 22 World - Who's Who

| International Organizations | Headquarter | Founded | President/ General Secretary/Head |
|---|---|---|---|
| United Nations Organization (UN) | New York, US | 1945 | António Guterres |
| United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) | New York, US | 1946 | Catherine M. Russell |
| United Nations Populations Fund (UNFPA) | New York, US | 1969 | Dr. Natalia Kanem |
| United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) | Geneva, Switzerland | 2006 | Omar Zniber |
| United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) | Nairobi, Kenya | 1977 | Maimunah Mohd Sharif |
| Joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS (UNAIDS) | Geneva, Switzerland | 1994 | Winnie Byanyima |
| United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) | Geneva, Switzerland | 1963 | Nikhil Seth |
| United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) | Copenhagen, Denmark | 1973 | Jorge Moreira Da Silva |
| United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East | Amman, Jordan and Gaza, Palestinian Authority | 1949 | Philippe Lazzarini |
| United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) | Geneva, Switzerland | 1980 | Robin Geiss |
| United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) | Nairobi, Kenya | 1972 | Inger Andersen |
| United Nations Conference on Trade & Development (UNCTAD) | Geneva, Switzerland | 1964 | Rebeca Grynspan |
| Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) | Abuja, Nigeria | 1975 | Omar Touray |
| United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) | New York, US | 1965 | Achim Steiner |
| World Health Organization (WHO) | Geneva, Switzerland | 1948 | Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus |
| World Economic Forum (WEF) | Geneva, Switzerland | 1971 | Executive Chairman – Klaus Schwab President – Børge Brende |
| World Food Programme (WFP) | Rome, Italy | 1961 | Cindy McCain |
| International LabourOrganisation (ILO) | Geneva, Switzerland | 1919 | Gilbert F. Houngbo |
| World Trade Organisation (WTO) | Geneva, Switzerland | 1995 | Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala |
| World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) | Geneva, Switzerland | 1950 | President: Abdulla Al Mandous Secretary General: Celeste Saulo |
| World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) | Geneva, Switzerland | 1967 | Daren Tang |
| International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) | Geneva, Switzerland | 1863 | Mirjana Spoljaric Egger |
| United Nations Education Scientific & Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) | Paris, France | 1945 | Audrey Azoulay |

# Oneliner Current Affairs

## National

- Which Indian state has formed 'Sadak Surakhya Force' (SSF) to enhance road safety? **- Punjab**
- Which state of India has passed a Bill, first to do so after Independence, to adopt the Uniform Civil Code (UCC)? **- Uttarakhand**
- Where did the "Conference of All India Secretaries on Jal Vision @ 2047- Way Forward" take place? **- Bhopal**
- In which State/UT was 'Yashobhoomi' India International Convention and Expo Center inaugurated? **- Delhi**
- 'Hamara Samvidhan, Hamara Samman campaign', recently seen in the news, is associated with which ministry? **- Ministry of Law and Justice**
- Who chaired the first National Conference on Seaweed Cultivation in Kutch, Gujarat? **- Shri Parshottam Rupala**
- Where was the Mamani Food Festival organized? **- Ladakh**
- Which city ranks first in the country in cases of food adulteration according to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) data? **- Hyderabad**
- Who was the Chief Guest of the Republic Day in the year 2024? **- Emmanuel Macron**
- Which city is considered the country's first solar city? **- Sanchi**
- Which country's military contingent participated in the Republic Day Parade 2024? **- France**
- What has the University Grants Commission recently announced to de-recognize? **- M. Phil Degree**
- Where was the Global Fisheries Summit held recently? **- Ahmedabad**
- Japan has raised the age of consent from 13 years to 16 years; what is the age of consent in India? **- 18 years**
- Which organization recently removed Aadhaar from the list of acceptable documents for proof of date of birth? **- Employee's Provident Fund Organization**
- In which Indian state does the Soliga tribe, known for their traditional honey collection practices, reside? **- Karnataka**
- Under the Sadbhavana scheme, which village in the Poonch district has been adopted by the Army as a model village? **- Topa Pir**

- In the 'Solar Policy 2024', what is Delhi's target solar power capacity by 2027? **- 4500 MW**
- What is the name of the free power scheme to be launched by the Telangana government? **- Gruha Jyothi**
- Which state became the second state in the country, after Bihar, to conduct a caste census? **- Andhra Pradesh**
- What initiative did Odisha's Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik launch for Samaleswari Temple Area? **- Samaleswari Temple Area Management and Local Economic Initiative (SAMALEI)**

## International

- Which country received 40,000 litres of Malathion from India to combat locusts? **- Afghanistan**
- Which country launched the "Alliance for Global Good-Gender Equity and Equality" at the World Economic Forum? **- India**
- Which two countries recently signed an agreement called 'Atlantic Declaration' to bolster economic security in the face of threats coming from Russia and China? **- USA and UK**
- With which country has India approved the Migration and Mobility Agreement? **- Italy**
- What was the theme of the G20 summit in 2023? **- 'One Earth One Family One Future'**
- Which initiative was recently launched by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) in partnership with the Ministry of External Affairs to facilitate safe, orderly and regular migration for Indian workers and students? **- PRAYAS (Promoting Regular & Assisted Migration for Youth and Skilled Professionals)**
- Which is the first WTO member country to formally submit its acceptance of the WTO's new Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies, paving the way for the historic agreement for ocean sustainability to enter into force?**– Switzerland**
- What was the name of the operation carried out by India to evacuate Indian nationals from Israel due to Israel-Hamas war? **- Operation Ajay**
- From which regional organization did the military regimes of Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger withdraw from, citing it as a threat and leading to strained relations? **- ECOWAS**

## National Affairs

1. **On 15th February, 2024, the Constitutional Bench of the Supreme Court, led by Chief Justice unanimously declared the electoral bonds scheme unconstitutional, citing a violation of which article of the Constitution?**
   (a) Article 19   (b) Article 20
   (c) Article 22   (d) Article 25

2. **Recently Kachchhi Kharek Dates have been awarded GI Tag. It is related to which state?**
   (a) Tamil Nadu
   (b) Gujarat
   (c) Andhra Pradsh
   (d) Madhya Pradesh

3. **Recently Government Distributed 1.25 Crore Property Cards under which Scheme?**
   (a) SVAMITVA
   (b) Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana
   (c) Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan
   (d) Garib Kalyan Rojgar Yojana

4. **Where was Maharishi Valmiki International Airport Inaugurated recently?**
   (a) Varanasi   (b) Haridwar
   (c) Patna   (d) Ayodhya

5. **Where was 26th Eastern Zonal Council Meeting held recently?**
   (a) Patna
   (b) Bhubaneswar
   (c) Kolkata
   (d) Ranchi

6. **Which state government has declared 'Kaji Nemu' as the state fruit?**
   (a) Uttarakhand (b) Assam
   (c) Arunachal  (d) Sikkim

7. **Agricultural scientist MS Swaminathan has been awarded with which award on 9 February 2024?**
   (a) Padma Shri
   (b) Bharat Ratna
   (c) Padma Bhushan
   (d) Jnanpith Award

8. **Where was the 7th session of the Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs (CCSCH) held?**
   (a) Pune      (b) New Delhi
   (c) Chennai   (d) Kochi

9. **Recently which State Government announced Digital Detox Initiative?**
   (a) Uttar Pradesh
   (b) Karnataka
   (c) Gujarat
   (d) Kerala

10. **Recently Veer Bal Diwas has been observed on which day?**
    (a) 26 December
    (b) 15 December
    (c) 16 January
    (d) 2 February

11. **Which union ministry has launched Amplifi 2.0 portal?**
    (a) Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs
    (b) Finance Ministry
    (c) Ministry of Rural Development
    (d) Ministry of Commerce and Industry

12. **President Smt. Draupadi Murmu presented the President's Color to which medical college in Pune on December 1, 2023?**
    (a) National Medical College
    (b) Armed Forces Medical College (AFMC)
    (c) Sri Krishna Medical College
    (d) Armed Medical College

13. **When was the 61ST Foundation Day of Nagaland state celebrated?**
    (a) December 1, 2023
    (b) 2 November 2023
    (c) 10 December 2023
    (d) 23 December 2023

14. **Who took over as the Senior Air Staff Officer (SASO) of the Western Air Command of the Indian Air Force on December 1, 2023?**
    (a) Air Marshal Praveen Keshav Vohra
    (b) Air Marshal S P Dharkar
    (c) Air Marshal AP Singh
    (d) Air Marshal Vivek Ram Chaudhary

15. **Who took over as Director General (Inspection and Security) at Air Force Headquarters, New Delhi?**
    (a) Air Marshal Sanjeev Kapoor
    (b) Air Marshal Makrand Ranade
    (c) Air Marshal K. Anantharaman
    (d) Air Marshal Vibhas Pandey

16. **Which British Indian composer has been included in the 2024 Booker Prize judging panel?**
    (a) Nitin Sahni
    (b) Subhash Sahay
    (c) Nitin Gautam
    (d) Sanjeev Kapoor