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Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare and Tribal Affairs Shri Arjun Munda launched the centralized "Kisan Rakshak Helpline 14447 and Portal", Agri-Insurance Sandbox Framework Platform SARTHI and Learning Management System (LMS) Platform.

Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare and Tribal Affairs Shri Arjun Munda launched the centralized "Kisan Rakshak Helpline 14447 and Portal", Agri-Insurance Sandbox Framework Platform SARTHI and Learning Management System (LMS) Platform for the farming community under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) in Delhi. Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare and Food Processing Sushri Shobha Karandlaje and Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Shri Kailash Choudhary, Secretary Shri Manoj Ahuja were also present on the occasion. Since its inception in 2016, the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) has been a safety net for farmers in India, protecting them from the unpredictability of nature through crop insurance. It became crucial for the scheme to ensure farmers could navigate the claim process, submit grievances, seek information on their queries and obtain timely assistance without difficulty. To address these challenges and ensure prompt support for farmers, the Government has introduced the Krishi Rakshak Portal and Helpline (KRPH) 14447. These initiatives, introduced alongside cutting-edge technologies such as YES-Tech, Digi-Claim, WINDS, CROPIC, and AIDE app, underscore the Government's unwavering commitment to innovation, and sustainability in farming.

In a significant stride towards fostering digital inclusion in the MSME sector, the Quality Council of India (QCI) and Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) launch of the DigiReady Certification (DRC) portal.

In a significant stride towards fostering digital inclusion in the MSME sector, the Quality Council of India (QCI) and Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) launch of the DigiReady Certification (DRC) portal. For the initiative, QCI, in conjunction with ONDC, aim to assess and certify digital readiness of MSME entities. By leveraging this online self-assessment tool, MSMEs can evaluate their preparedness to seamlessly onboard as sellers on the ONDC platform, thereby expanding their digital capabilities and business potential. The DRC portal is meticulously designed to facilitate a streamlined seller journey, ensuring that MSMEs and small retailers can integrate seamlessly into existing digitized workflows.

Principal Scientific Advisor to the Government of India Prof Ajay Kumar Sood launched "Science for Women-A Technology & Innovation (SWATI)" Portal.

Principal Scientific Advisor to the Government of India Prof Ajay Kumar Sood launched "Science for Women-A Technology & Innovation (SWATI)" Portal. It is aim to creating a single online portal representing Indian Women and Girls in STEMM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics & Medicine). Launching the Portal

on the occasion of International Day of Women and Girls in Science at Indian National Science Academy (INSA), New Delhi, the database of SWATI Portal will serve in policy making to address the challenges of Gender-gap. The Portal is a complete interactive database and the first-of-its-kind in India which is developed, hosted and maintained by the National Institute of Plant Genome Research (NIPGR), New Delhi under the leadership of Dr Subhra Chakraborty.

Finland's former Prime Minister Alexander Stubb became the Nordic country's 13th president after defeating former Foreign Minister Pekka Haavisto in election.

Finland's former Prime Minister Alexander Stubb became the Nordic country's 13th president after defeating former Foreign Minister Pekka Haavisto in election. Stubb, of the conservative National Coalition party, secured 51.6% of the vote, while Haavisto of the Green Party received 48.4%. The 55-year-old Stubb, who was prime minister in 2014-2015 and started his political career as a lawmaker at the European Parliament in 2004, will become the 13th president of Finland since the Nordic country's independence from the Russian empire in 1917. Haavisto was Finland's top diplomat in 2019-2023 and the main negotiator of its entry into NATO.

Lebanese Judge Nawaf Salam was elected president of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) by his peers, for a term of three years with effect from 6th February 2024.

Lebanese Judge Nawaf Salam was elected president of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) by his peers, for a term of three years with effect from 6th February 2024. President Salam has been a member of the court since 6 February 2018. Before joining the court, he was ambassador and permanent representative of Lebanon to the United Nations in New York from July 2007 to December 2017. He follows American Judge Joan E. Donoghue, who was president from 2021 until 5 February 2024.

Apurva Chandra, 1988-batch IAS officer from Maharashtra cadre, has been appointed as the new Secretary of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

Apurva Chandra, 1988-batch IAS officer from Maharashtra cadre, has been appointed as the new Secretary of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. He was handling the position of Secretary in the Department of Health and Family Welfare for a month as an additional charge, along with serving as the Secretary in the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting. Senior bureaucrat Sanjay Jaju has been appointed as the new Secretary of Ministry of Information & Broadcasting (MIB) Secretary in place of Chandra. Jaju, a 1992-batch IAS officer, is currently serving in his cadre state of Telangana.

Kazakh President Qasym-Zhomart Toqayev has appointed Olzhas Bektenov, the

former head of his administration and an anti-corruption watchdog, as the Kazakhstan's new prime minister just a day after dismissing the government.

Kazakh President Qasym-Zhomart Toqaev has appointed Olzhas Bektenov, the former head of his administration and an anti-corruption watchdog, as the Kazakhstan's new prime minister just a day after dismissing the government. Bektenov, who previously served as Toqaev's chief of staff and led the Anti-Corruption Agency, succeeds Alikhan Smaiylov. His appointment comes in the wake of Smaiylov's tenure, which spanned over two years amidst the country's most tumultuous independence-era unrest, resulting in at least 238 fatalities. Smaiylov was named prime minister in the wake of violent protests in January 2022 that left 225 people dead.

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has appointed Mio Oka as its new Country Director for India, succeeding Takeo Konishi who has been promoted as ADB Director General for South Asia at the Manila headquarters.

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has appointed Mio Oka as its new Country Director for India, succeeding Takeo Konishi who has been promoted as ADB Director General for South Asia at the Manila headquarters. She will take charge of steering ADB operations in India and fostering relations with the government and the country's other development partners. She will lead the implementation of ADB's country partnership strategy, 2023–2027 that is designed to catalyze robust and inclusive private sector-led growth in India. A Japanese national, Ms. Oka has almost 3 decades of professional experience, including over 18 years with ADB, where she has served in various capacities since joining as a project specialist in the Mekong Department in 2005.

IRS officer Narendra Kumar Yadav, Additional Director GST, has been appointed as the new brand ambassador of The Fit India movement, a flagship initiative by the Government of India.

IRS officer Narendra Kumar Yadav, Additional Director GST, has been appointed as the new brand ambassador of The Fit India movement, a flagship initiative by the Government of India. Narendra Kumar Yadav is one of the youngest IRS officers who was appointed at the age of 22 in 2009. Narendra Yadav, who is well-known for his passion, commitment, and steadfast dedication to public service, has often motivated and mentored aspiring civil servants through his inspirational speeches.

Tata AIA Life Insurance Company Limited Board has appointed Venkatachalam H. as the new Chief Executive Officer & Managing Director, subject to regulatory approval from IRDAI.

Tata AIA Life Insurance Company Limited Board has appointed Venkatachalam H. as the new Chief Executive Officer & Managing Director, subject to regulatory approval from IRDAI. Venkatachalam H. will take over from current Chief Executive Officer and

Managing Director, Naveen Tahilyani who moves to another role in the Tata Group and has been elevated as a Non-Executive Director of Tata AIA Life Insurance Company Ltd. He has expertise in Sales & Distribution, Strategy, Business and Process Development and Key Account Management. He joined Tata AIA in 2016 and was President and Chief Distribution Officer in his previous role.

Nayib Bukele, the incumbent President of El Salvador, wins re-election for a second consecutive term in elections in the Central American country.

Nayib Bukele, the incumbent President of El Salvador, wins re-election for a second consecutive term in elections in the Central American country. The victory of President Bukele is being seen as an endorsement of his fierce gang crackdown that significantly transformed safety for citizens in the country. Born on July 24, 1981, Bukele is often called the 'world's coolest dictator', a tag which he has received from his followers on social media. A former publicist, Bukele earlier served as the Mayor of San Salvador from May 2015 to April 2018.

LIC Mutual Fund Asset Management (LIC AMC) has appointed Ravi Kumar Jha as its Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer.

LIC Mutual Fund Asset Management (LIC AMC) has appointed Ravi Kumar Jha as its Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer. Jha has worked for over 30 years with LIC and has handled diverse positions. He was serving as executive of corporate strategy till December 2023 at the company. Jha holds a bachelor's degree in commerce from Ranchi University.

UK photographer Nima Sarikhani has won the Wildlife Photographer of the Year People's Choice Award for the photo of a cute polar bear sleeping peacefully on a small iceberg.

UK photographer Nima Sarikhani has won the Wildlife Photographer of the Year People's Choice Award for the photo of a cute polar bear sleeping peacefully on a small iceberg. The photo was described as "breathtaking and poignant" by Dr Douglas Gurr, director of the Natural History Museum. The People's Choice Award saw a record-breaking 75,000 votes cast, propelling Sarikhani to victory over 24 other finalists. These 25 finalists were chosen by the Natural History Museum in London and an international judging panel from nearly 50,000 submitted photos.

Legendary sprinter and Indian Olympic Association (IOA) President PT Usha was conferred with the 'Lifetime Achievement' award by Sports Journalists Federation of India (SJFI) and Delhi Sports Journalists Association (DSJA) at the National Sports Club of India in New Delhi.

Legendary sprinter and Indian Olympic Association (IOA) President PT Usha was conferred with the 'Lifetime Achievement' award by Sports Journalists Federation of India (SJFI) and Delhi Sports Journalists Association (DSJA) at the National Sports

Club of India in New Delhi. To honour her stellar sporting career, Ms Usha was presented with a medallion, a citation and a memento on the occasion. The ceremony was graced by Guest of Honours Shri Rajeev Shukla, Member of Parliament – Rajya Sabha and Vice President, BCCI and former Indian shooter Shri Jaspal Rana.

Taylor Swift won album of the year for 4th time at the Grammy Awards for “Midnights”.

Taylor Swift won album of the year for 4th time at the Grammy Awards for “Midnights”. She is the first person in Grammy history to win album of the year four times. She was previously tied with Stevie Wonder, Frank Sinatra, and Paul Simon for the record. The award was presented to Swift by Celine Dion.

HDFC Bank has raised USD 300 million in its maiden sustainable finance bond issue.

HDFC Bank has raised USD 300 million in its maiden sustainable finance bond issue. This is part of an overall raise of \$ 750 million through Regulation S Bonds. The USD 300 million sustainable finance bonds have been raised for a tenure of three years at a spread of 0.95 percent over the US treasury, while the remaining USD 450 million will be repaid in five years at 1.08 percent over the US Treasury. These are the tightest credit spreads achieved by an Indian issuer for a three-year sustainable bond and five-year senior unsecured bond for a similar size of USD Reg S issuance.

The Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) has released the CRISIL's impact assessment of the Fund of Funds for Startups (FFS) study report named “Prabhaav”.

The Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) has released the CRISIL's impact assessment of the Fund of Funds for Startups (FFS) study report named “Prabhaav”. It assesses the impact of the Fund of Funds for Start-ups (FFS). Funds of Fund for Start Ups (FFS) under the Start Up India Action Plan launched by Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi in 2016, is one of the flagship programmes of DPIIT, Government of India. The scheme is being managed by SIDBI on behalf of, and under the overall guidance and direction of DPIIT. The scheme has already catalysed investments to the tune of ~4x of the amount drawn with ₹17,534 crore invested in 938 unique startups. Thus, the scheme resulted in significant multiplier effect, promoting enhanced capital flow into this segment. While FFS largely focusses on early-stage funding in young companies, as many as 18 of its startups have already become unicorns.

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a \$200 million loan to strengthen flood and riverbank erosion risk management along the 650 kilometers (km) long main stem of the Brahmaputra River in Assam, India.

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a \$200 million loan to strengthen flood and riverbank erosion risk management along the 650 kilometers (km) long main stem of the Brahmaputra River in Assam, India. The project builds on the success and lessons from the ADB-financed Assam Integrated Flood and Riverbank Erosion Risk Management Investment Program (2010–2020) and similar investments in Bangladesh and will continue to tackle recurrent flooding and continual riverbank erosion of the Brahmaputra River. The project will apply a holistic, integrated, and risk-informed approach to scale up investment in flood and riverbank erosion risk management and its long-term planning, while intensifying support for climate and disaster resilience and food security. By optimizing co-benefits and empowering women through disaster-resilient economic activities, the project will benefit about 1 million people and increase crop production over 50,000 hectares.

India has successfully introduced its Unified Payment Interface (UPI) services in Sri Lanka and Mauritius.

India has successfully introduced its Unified Payment Interface (UPI) services in Sri Lanka and Mauritius. Additionally, RuPay card services were launched in Mauritius as part of this initiative. The first UPI transaction in Sri Lanka was made by an Indian, with Mauritian Prime Minister Pravind Jugnauth and Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe, along with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, attending the virtual ceremony. The launch of UPI further strengthens India's ties with Sri Lanka and Mauritius, making transactions easier for Indians visiting Sri Lanka and Mauritius, as well as Mauritian nationals travelling to India.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has revised upwards the ceiling in respect of remuneration of Non-Executive Directors (NEDs), other than the Chair of the Board, to ₹30 lakh per annum from ₹20 lakh.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has revised upwards the ceiling in respect of remuneration of Non-Executive Directors (NEDs), other than the Chair of the Board, to ₹30 lakh per annum from ₹20 lakh. The board of the bank may fix a lower amount within the ceiling limit of Rs 30 lakh per annum depending upon the size of the bank, experience of the NED and other relevant factors. The instructions on review of fixed remuneration granted to NEDs would be applicable to all the private sector banks including small finance banks (SFBs) and payment banks (PBs) as also the wholly owned subsidiaries of foreign banks. The instructions come into force with immediate effect.

In a move to support farmers and traders with low-interest rate loans, the Warehousing Development Regulatory Authority (WDRA) and Punjab & Sind Bank (PSB) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

In a move to support farmers and traders with low-interest rate loans, the Warehousing Development Regulatory Authority (WDRA) and Punjab & Sind Bank

(PSB) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The primary objective of the MoU is to raise awareness about funding against electronic Negotiable Warehouse Receipts (e-NWRs). The NWR system enables farmers to store the produce safely and scientifically at warehouses near their farms. It also allows farmers to receive loans from banks using the issued NWRs against their deposited stock. Farmers can avail loans of up to Rs75 lakh, while borrowers from other categories can access loans of up to Rs5 crore under the agriculture sector. The MoU exchange took place between TK Manoj Kumar, Chairperson of WDRA, and Swarup Kumar Saha, MD&CEO of PSB, at the head office of PSB on February 5, 2024. It was signed in the presence of Dr Ram Jass Yadav and Ravi Mehra, Executive Directors of PSB, along with Naveen Barolia, Dy Director (M&C), and Sai Pradeep Gopisetty, Asst Director (SA&O), from WDRA.

Fintech startup LeRemitt and Yes Bank have partnered to introduce a cross-border platform that enables micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to conduct international transactions in key currencies, including US dollars and euro.

Fintech startup LeRemitt and Yes Bank have partnered to introduce a cross-border platform that enables micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to conduct international transactions in key currencies, including US dollars and euro. In addition to multi-currency support, the platform offers transparency, efficiency, and cost benefits for small businesses involved in global trade, making it more accessible for MSMEs. This collaboration highlights dedication to empowering MSMEs by providing a seamless, efficient, and cost-effective international payments solution.

Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation (HSBC) has partnered with Google Cloud to finance fast-growing climate technology firms.

Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation (HSBC) has partnered with Google Cloud to finance fast-growing climate technology firms. Under the new partnership, Google Cloud will introduce GCR-Sustainability companies to HSBC's specialist climate tech finance team to explore venture debt financing options. HSBC will seek financing opportunities for companies within the GCR-Sustainability ecosystem, as part of its ambition to deploy \$1bn of climate tech finance, as well as facilitating connections with HSBC's customer base.

Ahmedabad-based real estate developer Shivalik Group has received regulatory approval from Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) for its first fund-Shivalik Investment Fund as a Category II AIF (Alternative Investment Fund).

Ahmedabad-based real estate developer Shivalik Group has received regulatory approval from Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) for its first fund-Shivalik Investment Fund as a Category II AIF (Alternative Investment Fund). The proposed AIF aims to raise up to Rs300 crore through private placement, including

Rs150 Crore Green Shoe Option exercisable at the discretion of the investment manager. The fund will mobilize funds from a diverse group of domestic investors, including individuals, family offices, HUFs, high net-worth individuals, private institutions, other body corporate or non-corporate in India.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) maintained its benchmark interest rate (repo rate) at 6.5% during its 6th bi-monthly policy announcement for the financial year 2023–24.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) maintained its benchmark interest rate (repo rate) at 6.5% during its 6th bi-monthly policy announcement for the financial year 2023–24. This was the sixth time that RBI left rates unchanged, and notably for the entire FY24, the repo rate stood at 6.5%. In addition, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das-headed MPC also left standing deposit facility and marginal standing facility rates unchanged at 6.25% and 6.75%, respectively. On the growth front, the RBI projects a 7% real GDP growth for the upcoming financial year 2024–25 from the previous projection of 6.6%. This projection includes a growth rate of 7.2% in Q1, 6.8% in Q2, 7% in Q3, and 6.9% in Q4. Meanwhile, in the second quarter of the fiscal year 2023-24 (Q2FY24), the GDP growth expanded to 7.6%, exceeding analysts' expectations.

Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Ltd (IREDA) has received approval from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to set up a wholly owned subsidiary in the International Financial Services Centre (IFSC) situated in GIFT City in Gujarat.

Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Ltd (IREDA) has received approval from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to set up a wholly owned subsidiary in the International Financial Services Centre (IFSC) situated in GIFT City in Gujarat. Further, the subsidiary will not only be paving the way for IREDA to leave its global footprints but also serve as an offshore platform for securing competitive funding to push the growth of the renewable energy sector. IREDA's entry into the IFSC is expected to open up new business opportunities and establish IREDA's global presence for the renewable energy sector.

Fintech firms Juspay and Decentro and software-as-a-service company Zoho have received the final authorisation from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to operate as payment aggregators.

Fintech firms Juspay and Decentro and software-as-a-service company Zoho have received the final authorisation from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to operate as payment aggregators. They will join the likes of Razorpay, Cashfree, Zomato and others who got the licence earlier. While Juspay operated as a payment gateway running a technology stack for ecommerce payments, Decentro is a technology company that enables ecommerce and other consumer facing players offer financial services like lending, KYC and other services. Software as a service startup Zoho

also got the payment aggregator licence on February 2, 2024. Zoho is the first enterprise SaaS player to get the payment aggregator nod from the RBI.

SBI (State Bank of India) tied up with Flywire for easing payments for Indian students studying abroad.

SBI (State Bank of India) tied up with Flywire for easing payments for Indian students studying abroad. A seamless and fully digital payment experience will be given to students, which is better than the existing complex process. Under the partnership, Flywire's technology will be integrated directly into the bank's platform, offering Indian students an advanced digital checkout experience for their international educational payments. Under this partnership, the services will range from application to tuition fees.

In an effort to expand its card business and reach small and medium-sized businesses (SME), HDFC Bank introduced four credit cards- BizFirst, BizGrow, BizPower, and BizBlack.

In an effort to expand its card business and reach small and medium-sized businesses (SME), HDFC Bank introduced four credit cards. The four credit cards are BizFirst, BizGrow, BizPower, and BizBlack. The business credit card range offers an interest-free credit cycle of 55 days, savings on core business spends like utility bills, GST, income tax, vendor payments, business travel, and business productivity tools. Key features of the business credit cards, according to the HDFC Bank press release: Up to 55 days free credit period (industry best); Up to 10X* Reward Points on Business Spends; Bill Payments | Tax Payments | Vendor Payments | Business Travel | Business Productivity Tools; Specially Curated Business Insurance Package; Fire & Burglary | Cash in Safe & Transit | Electronic Equipment; Exclusive Business focussed Redemption Catalogue; Travel & Hotels | Microsoft Office 365 | Clear Tax | Amazon for Business | Google Ads; EMI and Loan on card facility.

Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) has launched a new investment plan- LIC Index Plus Plan.

Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) has launched a new investment plan- LIC Index Plus Plan. This plan is a unit-linked, individual life insurance plan with a regular premium. The plan offers the benefit of savings along with life insurance coverage during the entire tenure of the policy. The plan offers life insurance coverage and savings throughout the term of the policy. The minimum age to get insured under this policy is 90 days. The maximum age has been kept at 85 years. The premium will be decided according to the basic sum assured. The sum insured for insurers between the ages of 90 days and 50 years has been kept at 7 to 10 times the annual premium. This will be for people between 90 days and 50 years old. Whereas for those aged between 51 and 60 years, the annual premium will be 7 times of the sum insured.

Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik released "Shree Jagannatha, Lord Of The Universe", a coffee-table book brought out by The Hindu Group at the valedictory session of the three-day, first-ever "World Odia Language Conference".

Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik released "Shree Jagannatha, Lord Of The Universe", a coffee-table book brought out by The Hindu Group at the valedictory session of the three-day, first-ever "World Odia Language Conference". The book, which pictorially narrates traditions and rituals associated with sibling deities of Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra, and Devi Subhadra in Puri, one of the four sacred dhams for Hindus, was unveiled in the presence of Raghuvir Srinivasan, Editor of The Hindu BusinessLine, who has also edited Shree Jagannatha, Lord Of The Universe, and Sridhar Aranala, vice-president, S&D Circulation of THG Publishing Private Limited. This picture-rich coffee-table book attempts to tell the story of Shree Jagannatha worship, the temple, and its traditions.

Information and Broadcasting Secretary, Sanjay Jaju inaugurated the Publications Division stall at the World Book Fair in New Delhi's Pragati Maidan.

Information and Broadcasting Secretary, Sanjay Jaju inaugurated the Publications Division stall at the World Book Fair in New Delhi's Pragati Maidan. Mr. Jaju also unveiled the Division's latest publications 'India Year Book 2024' and 'Career Calling'. 'India Year Book 2024,' the annual reference guide captures the pulse of India's progress, encapsulating the latest government plans, policies, and initiatives. In addition to that 'Career Calling,' is a curated collection exploring careers from traditional to lesser-known paths.

Andhra Pradesh finance minister Buggana Rajendranath has presented the Vote-On-Account Budget with an outlay of Rs2.86 lakh crore for 2024-25 in the Andhra Pradesh Assembly.

Andhra Pradesh finance minister Buggana Rajendranath has presented the Vote-On-Account Budget with an outlay of Rs2.86 lakh crore for 2024-25 in the Andhra Pradesh Assembly. Industries minister Gudivada Amarnath presented the same in the Legislative Council. Rajendranath has put the revenue expenditure at Rs 2,30,110.41 crore and the capital expenditure at Rs 30,530.18 crore. The fiscal deficit is Rs 55,817 crore while the revenue deficit was placed at Rs 24,758 crore. The fiscal deficit rate is about 3.51 percent while revenue deficit rate is 1.56 percent of the GSDP. The Global Investor Summit held at Visakhapatnam in March 2023 resulted in the signing of 386 MoUs to bring in Rs 13,11,000 crore by way of investments. The revised estimate for revenue expenditure for FY 2023-24 is Rs 2,28,237.77 crore, whereas for capital expenditure, it is Rs 27,308.12 crore. The revenue deficit for 2023-24 is around Rs 31,534.94 crore, whereas the fiscal deficit for the same period is around Rs 60,153.59 crore, which amounts to 2.19 per cent and 4.18 per cent of

the GSDP respectively.

Kerala Finance Minister K.N Balagopal presented the State budget for 2024-25, proposing a deficit of ₹273.94 crore, after accounting for ₹1,067 crore in additional resource mobilisation and ₹1,420 crore in additional expenditure.

Kerala Finance Minister K.N Balagopal presented the State budget for 2024-25, proposing a deficit of ₹273.94 crore, after accounting for ₹1,067 crore in additional resource mobilisation and ₹1,420 crore in additional expenditure. Most tax heads and the pet theme of welfare pension were untouched, while fees/ levy were revised, and a gallonage fee of ₹10 per litre of IMFL was introduced afresh. The Finance Minister raised the support price of rubber by ₹10 to ₹180 “despite financial constraints”. As per the Centre’s guidelines, Kerala’s eligible borrowing limit is ₹39,626 crore, based on which the State Budget was prepared. But it has been allowed to borrow only ₹28,830 crore till now. Balagopal proposed a revision of electricity duty collected at the rate of 1.2 paise per unit to 15 paise per unit to raise ₹24 crore. This would be enhanced to 10 paise per unit, which is expected to bring in an additional ₹101.41 crore. A filing fee of 0.1 percent of the loan amount subject to a maximum of ₹10,000 will be charged from the financial institutions for this. This is expected to bring in an additional revenue of ₹50 crore.

Gujarat finance minister Kanubhai Desai presented a ₹3.32 lakh crore state budget with no new taxes imposed on people.

Gujarat finance minister Kanubhai Desai presented a ₹3.32 lakh crore state budget with no new taxes imposed on people. The total budget outlay of ₹3,32,465 crore for 2024-25 showed an increase of ₹31,444 crore, or 10.44%, over the previous fiscal (2023-24 budget estimate). Of the total outlay, nearly ₹2.14 lakh crore or 64.4% was allocated for “developmental expenditure”, while ₹83,000 crore or 25.1% was for “non-developmental expenditure”. Gujarat government unveiled its fiscal plan for the year 2024-25 with an estimated surplus budget of ₹146.72 crore while outlining a roadmap for the next 25 years. By raising Gujarat’s contribution to the national GDP from 5.1% in 2000-2001, to 8.2% right now, the state has earned the distinction of being the growth engine of India.

Delhi Lieutenant Governor VK Saxena has given his approval to the annual budget of the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) for the financial year 2024-25, setting an ambitious outlay of Rs 8,811 crore.

Delhi Lieutenant Governor VK Saxena has given his approval to the annual budget of the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) for the financial year 2024-25, setting an ambitious outlay of Rs 8,811 crore. In line with the emphasis of the Centre, the capital expenditure constitutes 61 percent (around) of the annual allocations. The overall receipts of DDA saw a massive jump of 75 per cent in the current financial year at Rs 7,696 crore in comparison to Rs 4,392 crore in the previous year. The proposed

expenditure in the next financial year 2024-25 for these projects will be financed from revenues, which have been projected at Rs 9,182 crore.

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has raised India's growth outlook for the fiscal year 2024-25 (FY25) to 6.2%, up from the earlier estimate of 6.1%.

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has raised India's growth outlook for the fiscal year 2024-25 (FY25) to 6.2%, up from the earlier estimate of 6.1%. In terms of inflation management, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is expected to start lowering interest rates from mid-2024 to reach 5.5% by the end of 2025. For 2025-26, OECD has kept its growth forecast for India unchanged at 6.5 percent. The interim Budget has pegged the Centre's capital expenditure target for the next fiscal at `11.1 trillion, up 17% from the revised estimate of `9.5 trillion for FY24. The 17% projected growth is the lowest in five years.

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has approved acquisition of 70% stake by Zurich Insurance Company Ltd (Acquirer) in Kotak Mahindra General Insurance Company Limited (Target).

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has approved acquisition of 70% stake by Zurich Insurance Company Ltd (Acquirer) in Kotak Mahindra General Insurance Company Limited (Target). The Proposed Combination involves an acquisition of a majority stake in Target by the Acquirer from Kotak Mahindra Bank Limited. Pursuant to the Proposed Combination, the Acquirer will acquire a 51% stake in Target (through a combination of fresh growth capital and share purchase). In addition to the above, the Acquirer will also acquire an additional stake of up to 19% in the Target, over a period of time.

HDFC Bank have received the Reserve Bank of India's approval to acquire up to 9.5 percent in six banks- Axis Bank, Suryoday Small Finance Bank, ICICI Bank, Bandhan Bank, YES Bank and IndusInd Bank.

HDFC Bank have received the Reserve Bank of India's approval to acquire up to 9.5 percent in six banks- Axis Bank, Suryoday Small Finance Bank, ICICI Bank, Bandhan Bank, YES Bank and IndusInd Bank. The 'aggregate holding' includes shareholding by the bank and entities under the same management/ control, mutual funds, trustees and promoter group entities. The approvals were granted pursuant to applications made by HDFC Bank (as a promoter/sponsor of the Group) to the RBI on December 18, 2023.

Central Board of Trustees (CBT) of Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) has recommended 8.25 percent interest rate for fiscal year 2023-24.

Central Board of Trustees (CBT) of Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) has recommended 8.25 percent interest rate for fiscal year 2023-24. The 235th

meeting of the Central Board of Trustees, EPFO, has recommended 8.25 percent as rate of interest on Employees' Provident Fund deposits for 2023-24. This decision follows a marginal increase in the interest rate to 8.15% for FY23 from 8.10% in FY22, and a historic low of 8.1% in FY22 from 8.5% in FY21. The recommended distribution of Rs1,07,000 crore to EPF members' accounts for FY24 marks a significant increase from the previous fiscal year.

The Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) has increased its paid-up share in SBI Cards and Payments Services, a non-banking financial company, to over 5.02% from 4.99%.

The Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) has increased its paid-up share in SBI Cards and Payments Services, a non-banking financial company, to over 5.02% from 4.99%. LIC, acting as an investor, has bought over three lakh shares of SBI Cards and Payments Services recently. The average cost per share was ₹716.

Bandhan Financial Holdings Limited (BFHL) has received the final approval on the acquisition from the Insurance Regulatory & Development Authority (IRDAI) to acquire the 100% paid up share capital of Aegon Life Insurance Company.

Bandhan Financial Holdings Limited (BFHL) has received the final approval on the acquisition from the Insurance Regulatory & Development Authority (IRDAI) to acquire the 100% paid up share capital of Aegon Life Insurance Company. With this, all regulatory approvals for the proposed acquisition are in place.

Researchers from the Kerala Forest Research Institute (KFRI), Botanical Survey of India, and the University of Hyderabad have discovered a new fungus species, 'Trichoglossum syamviswanathii', from Kerala.

Researchers from the Kerala Forest Research Institute (KFRI), Botanical Survey of India, and the University of Hyderabad have discovered a new fungus species, 'Trichoglossum syamviswanathii', from Kerala. The species Trichoglossum syamviswanathii is named after renowned scientist and former director of KFRI Syam Viswanath for his contribution to the field of forestry in India. Trichoglossum species play a critical role in the decomposition of organic matter and forest survival.

The International Day of Women and Girls in Science is celebrated on February 11 every year.

The International Day of Women and Girls in Science is celebrated on February 11 every year. The day is observed by the United Nations to promote full and equal access and participation of women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields. This year will be the ninth International Day of Women and Girls in Science Assembly. The United Nations General Assembly passed resolution 70/212 on 22 December 2015, which proclaimed the 11th day of February as the annual commemoration of the observance. The theme for International Day of

Women and Girls in Science 2024 is “Women and Girls in Science Leadership, a New Era for Sustainability”.

World Unani Day is celebrated on 11 February across the world.

World Unani Day is celebrated on 11 February across the world. The day marks the birth anniversary of social reformer and great Unani scholar, Hakim Ajmal Khan. This day marks the contribution of Hakim Ajmal Khan to the development of Unani medicine in India and across the world. It aims to create awareness among people about healthcare delivery through Unani medicines. Indian Govt declared the birthday of Hakim Ajmal Khan as World Unani Day to recognize his tremendous contributions to the development of the Unani system of medicine. In 2017, First World Unani Day was celebrated at Hyderabad’s Central Research Institute of Unani Medicine (CRIUM). The theme of Unani Day 2024 is "Unani Medicine for One Earth, One Health".

World Pulses Day is annually observed on February 10 with the primary aim of educating the masses about its nutritional value and environmental benefits.

World Pulses Day is annually observed on February 10 with the primary aim of educating the masses about its nutritional value and environmental benefits. The UN General Assembly recognised the value of pulses in 2013 and initiated the process of adopting the year 2016 as the International Year of Pulses (IYP). The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the UN aimed the day to focus on public awareness of its nourishing and environmental benefits. Following the International Year of Pulses conclusion, Burkina Faso, a landlocked country in West Africa, proposed the idea of observing a day as World Pulses Day. Eventually, in 2019, the UN General Assembly dedicated February 10 as World Pulses Day. The theme for World Pulses Day 2024 is ‘Pulses: Nourishing soil and people’.

National Deworming Day (NDD) is annually observed February 10 to make every child in the country worm-free.

National Deworming Day (NDD) is annually observed February 10 to make every child in the country worm-free. The initiative aims to deworm all children under the age group of 1 year to 19 years from the prevalence of Soil-Transmitted Helminths (STH). The STHs are also known as parasitic intestinal worms in common language. The National Deworming Day, established in February 2015 by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, works under the Government of India. According to the National Health Mission’s official website, the day is observed in around 277 districts across 11 states and Union Territories of India.

The first-ever United Nations (UN)'s International Day of the Arabian Leopard was observed across the globe on 10th February 2024 to raise awareness about the critically endangered status of the Arabian Leopard.

The United Nations General Assembly has marked February 10th as the International Day of the Arabian Leopard. This decision, formalized in resolution 77/295, highlights the critical status of the Arabian Leopard (*Panthera pardus nimr*), classified as Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List. The International Day of the Arabian Leopard aims to restore this species as a flagship for conservation, underscoring the essential role of biodiversity in maintaining the planet's health and ecosystem resilience.

The International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) observed every year on 6th February.

The International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) observed every year on 6th February. 6th February 2024, marked 13th anniversary of this international day. The theme of this day 'Her Voice. Her Future. Investing in Survivor-Led Movements to End Female Genital Mutilation'. Against the practice of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), WHO in 1997 issued a joint statement together with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). Since then several efforts were made to counteract FGM. The Joint Programme on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting was initiated by UNFPA and UNICEF in 2007 to accelerate the abandonment of the practice. The UN General Assembly in 2012 adopted a resolution A/RES/67/14 on the elimination of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).

India contributed USD 32.89 million to the United Nations Regular Budget for 2024, joining the "honour roll" of 36 Member States who have paid their regular budget dues in full to the UN on time.

India contributed USD 32.89 million to the United Nations Regular Budget for 2024, joining the "honour roll" of 36 Member States who have paid their regular budget dues in full to the UN on time. The UN Committee on Contributions said that as of January 31 2024, 36 Member States have paid their regular budget assessments in full, within the 30 day due period specified in UN financial regulations.

The second edition of the World Defense Show was held from 4th February 2024 to 8th February 2024 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

The second edition of the World Defense Show was held from 4th February 2024 to 8th February 2024 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Bearing testimony to the growing defence ties between India and Saudi Arabia, Raksha Rajya Mantri Shri Ajay Bhatt was on a visit to Riyadh as head of the Indian delegation for the ongoing World Defence Show (WDS) 2024. The exhibition features defense companies from every sector and tier of the industry with an abundance of show features, all designed to deliver best-in-class events that connect you with the defense community. On February 06, 2024, the Raksha Rajya Mantri held a meeting with the Defence Minister of Saudi Arabia Prince Khalid bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud on the sidelines of the show. They

discussed various aspects of bilateral defence cooperation. Shri Ajay Bhatt also witnessed the signing of an MoU between Munitions India Limited and its local partner on the sidelines of WDS 2024.

Tech giant Google signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Government of Maharashtra to provide artificial intelligence (AI)-led solutions across key sectors in the state.

Tech giant Google signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Government of Maharashtra to provide artificial intelligence (AI)-led solutions across key sectors in the state. As a part of the collaboration, Google will leverage its AI capabilities to provide solutions in sectors like agriculture, healthcare, sustainability, education, and startups. The company also announced launching a state-of-the-art AI Centre of Excellence at the Indian Institute of Information Technology (IIIT), Nagpur. This collaboration will empower state citizens with critical future-ready skills, revolutionise essential sectors like healthcare and agriculture, and create a thriving environment for the Maharashtra AI startups through the AI Center of Excellence at IIIT Nagpur. In the healthcare domain, the company, along with its partners and the State of Maharashtra, will provide health-related AI imaging models such as TB-Chest X-Ray and Diabetic Retinopathy to increase access to care through AI-enabled screening.

Union Minister of Education and Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, launched the EdCIL Vidyanjali Scholarship Programme on 6th February 2024 in New Delhi.

Union Minister of Education and Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, launched the EdCIL Vidyanjali Scholarship Programme on 6th February 2024 in New Delhi. Secretary, Higher Education, Ministry of Education, Shri K. Sanjay Murthy; Secretary, Department of School Education and Literacy, Shri Sanjay Kumar; Executive Director, EdCIL, Dr. Chandrashekhar; and other dignitaries were also present at the event. He commended the efforts of students of NVS and mentioned that nearly 14,000 students have succeeded in getting admission to reputed institutes including IITs, NITs, etc without joining any coaching centres. Many students come from marginalised families. He also added that 70 students are being bestowed upon the scholarship amounting to Rs5 crore.

On 7th February 2024, the Uttarakhand Assembly passed the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) Bill, becoming the first state in India to pass a law.

On 7th February 2024, the Uttarakhand Assembly passed the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) Bill, becoming the first state in India to pass a law. This stems from Article 44 of the Constitution (Directive Principles of State Policy) which although not enforceable, obligates the State to strive to implement such a uniform law. The Bill will now be sent to the President for her assent after which it will become a law. The

UCC Bill, which will now become an Act is based on the draft submitted by a high-level committee formed by the Uttarakhand government under the chairmanship of retired Supreme Court judge Justice Ranjana P Desai. The Uniform Civil Code brings a common law for marriage, divorce, inheritance of property, etc, which were earlier governed by personal laws of every religion. The common code bars bigamy (marrying one person while still legally married to another) and polygamy (having multiple spouses simultaneously).

The Telangana State Board for Wildlife has approved a proposal by the Forest Department to declare the corridor area between Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve (Maharashtra) and Kawal Tiger Reserve (Telangana) as a conservation reserve.

The Telangana State Board for Wildlife has approved a proposal by the Forest Department to declare the corridor area between Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve (Maharashtra) and Kawal Tiger Reserve (Telangana) as a conservation reserve. The proposals will soon be sent to the Union Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change. Once the process is completed, the 1,492-square kilometre area in Kagaznagar and Asifabad divisions will be a conservation reserve, with increased protection and conservation measures. Among other significant decisions, the compensation for deaths resulting from wildlife attacks has been raised to 10 lakh, up from the previous amount of ₹5 lakh. The board also backed initiatives to increase cellphone connectivity in remote areas, a move that is expected to enhance communication and safety in these regions. The board gave its nod to T-Fiber connectivity, which will extend to all villages and settlements in forested regions across the state.

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi visited Goa on 6th February, 2024.

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi visited Goa on 6th February, 2024. He inaugurated ONGC Sea Survival Centre. He inaugurated India Energy Week 2024. He participated in the Viksit Bharat, Viksit Goa 2047 programme. Achieving Aatmanirbharta in energy requirements has been a key focus area of the Prime Minister. In yet another step in this direction, India Energy Week 2024 will be held from 6 – 9 February in Goa. It will be India's largest and only all-encompassing energy exhibition and conference, bringing together the entire energy value chain, and will serve as a catalyst for India's energy transition goals. Prime Minister inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of projects worth over Rs1330 crores in the public programme in Goa. Prime Minister inaugurated the permanent campus of National Institute of Technology Goa to the nation. Prime Minister also inaugurated a 100 TPD Integrated Waste Management Facility in South Goa. It has been designed for the scientific treatment of 60 TPD wet waste and 40 TPD dry waste, while also featuring a 500 KW solar power plant that generates surplus electricity. Prime Minister laid the foundation stone for Passenger Ropeway, along with associated tourism activities, connecting Panaji and Reis Magos. Foundation stone for the

construction of a 100 MLD Water Treatment Plant in South Goa will be laid by him. Further, he also distributed appointment orders to 1930 new Government recruits across various departments under Rozgar Mela and also hand over sanction letters to beneficiaries of various welfare schemes.

The headquarters of the Confederation of International Small Tea Holders (CITS) will shift to India from China.

The headquarters of the Confederation of International Small Tea Holders (CITS) will shift to India from China. The decision was taken recently at the 25th session of the FAO Intergovernmental Group on Tea (FAO IGG on Tea) held in Guwahati recently. The Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) IGG on Tea, which is under the United Nations, also decided to take up the issue of climate change and assess carbon footprint of tea plantations globally. The FAO IGG on Tea is the highest global platform for tea wherein all tea-producing and consuming nations deliberate on trends in production, consumption, trade and prices of tea, including regular appraisal of the global market situation and short-term outlook. The meeting was held in Assam for the first time, with 77 delegates attending the session over three days from January 31, 2024. India took over as the chair of the FAO IGG on Tea from the United Kingdom for the next two years and the session was presided over by Saurav Pahari, deputy chairman of Tea Board India. Among the key decisions taken was to move the headquarters of CITS, which was set up as per a proposal of an earlier IGG meet, from China to India. The central and Assam governments informed the IGG on Tea the steps it has taken for development of small holders. The meeting also discussed the strategic framework for the group for the period 2022-31 as per the mandate of the FAO.

The Supreme Court has issued several directions to ensure that environmental bodies function vibrantly, and are assisted by robust infrastructure and human resources.

The Supreme Court has issued several directions to ensure that environmental bodies function vibrantly, and are assisted by robust infrastructure and human resources. The court directed the Central Empowered Committee (CEC) to adopt some measures to promote institutional transparency, efficiency, and accountability in its functioning. It has ordered CEC to formulate guidelines for conduct of its functions and internal meetings. The Court's judgment was in the context of institutionalisation and reconstitution of CEC. Guidelines for its operations and internal meetings will be developed by the CEC. Operating procedures outlining the responsibilities of the CEC Secretary and its members must be developed by the CEC. The CEC must create guidelines for public meetings, publish agendas on its website in advance, maintain meeting minutes, and establish rules for notice to parties.

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi visited Odisha and Assam on 3-4 February,

2024.

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi visited Odisha and Assam on 3-4 February, 2024. On 3rd February, Prime Minister inaugurated, dedicated to nation and laid the foundation stone of multiple infrastructure projects worth more than Rs68,000 crore during a public programme in Sambalpur, Odisha. On 4th February Prime Minister inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of various development initiatives worth more than Rs11,000 crore during a public programme in Guwahati. In line with the Prime Minister's vision to strengthen the energy security of the country, inauguration, dedication to nation and foundation stone laying of multiple projects aimed at boosting the energy sector will be done in the public programme in Sambalpur, Odisha. Prime Minister inaugurated 'Dhamra – Angul Pipeline Section' (412 Km) of 'Jagdishpur-Haldia & Bokaro-Dhamra Pipeline Project (JHBDPL)'. Built at a cost of more than Rs2450 crore under the 'Pradhan Mantri Urja Ganga', the project will connect Odisha with the National Gas Grid. Prime Minister also laid the foundation stone of 'Nagpur Jharsuguda Natural Gas Pipeline Section' (692 Km) of Mumbai-Nagpur-Jharsuguda Pipeline. The project, which will be developed at a cost of more than Rs2660 crore, will improve the natural gas availability to states like Odisha, Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh. During the programme, Prime Minister also dedicated to nation and laid the foundation stone of multiple power projects worth about 28,980 crore. Prime Minister laid the foundation stone of the Neyveli Lignite Corporation (NLC) Talabira Thermal power project worth more than 27000 crore.

Union Minister of State for Electronics and IT, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, and Jal Shakti, Shri Rajeev Chandrasekhar launched the "Digital India FutureLABS" at the 'Digital India FutureLABS Summit 2024'.

Union Minister of State for Electronics and IT, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, and Jal Shakti, Shri Rajeev Chandrasekhar launched the "Digital India FutureLABS" at the 'Digital India FutureLABS Summit 2024'. Companies like NXP Semiconductors, Tenstorrent and Qualcomm India have signed MoUs in areas like High Performance Computing space, Design & Innovation in Compute space and Indian Telecom Stack. Minister Rajeev Chandrasekhar addressed the summit that included senior leadership of major industry players, startups, young Indians and academia from the electronics manufacturing field. The Digital India FutureLABS, coordinated by C-DAC, aims to tap into the trillion-dollar opportunity presented by the Electronics System Design and Manufacturing (ESDM) sector.

The Telangana government decided to change the state's abbreviation to 'TG' from present 'TS'.

The Telangana government decided to change the state's abbreviation to 'TG' from present 'TS'. The decision was taken at the state Cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy. Following the Cabinet decision, 'TG' will replace 'TS' in the gazette of the Union government. After formation of Telangana in 2014, then TRS

government had opted 'TS' as the state abbreviation. The Cabinet also decided to change the Telangana Talli statue to reflect the sentiments of the people of Telangana. It decided to adopt Andesri's 'Jai Jai Ho Telangana' as the state song. It was also decided to design a new state emblem in consultation with all stakeholders. The Cabinet decided to conduct the Assembly session from February 8 and approved the Governor's speech. Two more guarantees will be implemented after discussion in the Assembly. These guarantees are gas cylinders for Rs 500 and free power up to 200 units to households. The Cabinet also decided to take up caste census in the state.

Ministry of Education launched the Automated Permanent Academic Account Registry (APAAR) using Common Service Centres (CSCs) in remote villages across the country.

Ministry of Education launched the Automated Permanent Academic Account Registry (APAAR) using Common Service Centres (CSCs) in remote villages across the country. The goal of APAAR is to set up a unified student identification system called 'One Nation, One Student ID'. APAAR is part of the National Education Policy (NEP 2020) requiring all college/university students to register on the Academic Bank of Credits (ABC). Under the new rule, possessing an ABC ID is mandatory for college or university admission. Launching the programme, Sanjay Kumar, secretary of the Department of School Education and Literacy, highlighted the growing digital services in the country and how they can benefit school education through CSCs.

The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi approved the "Pradhan Mantri Matsya Kisan Samridhi Sah-Yojana (PM-MKSSY)".

The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi approved the "Pradhan Mantri Matsya Kisan Samridhi Sah-Yojana (PM-MKSSY)". The scheme aims formalization of the fisheries sector and supporting fisheries micro and small enterprises with an investment of over Rs6,000 crores over a period of next four (4) years from FY 2023-24 to FY 2026-27 in all States/Union Territories. The Sub-scheme will be implemented as a Central Sector Sub-scheme under the Central Sector Component of the PMMSY at an estimated outlay of Rs 6,000 crore consisting of 50% i.e Rs3,000 crore public finance including the World Bank and the AFD external financing. And rest 50% i.e Rs3,000 crore being the anticipated investment from the beneficiaries/private sector leverage. It will be implemented for 4 (four) years from FY 2023-24 to FY 2026-27 across all the States and UTs.

The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved auctions in eight spectrum bands for mobile phone services at a base price of Rs 96,317.65 crore to improve the quality of telecom services and coverage for consumers.

The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved auctions in eight spectrum bands for mobile phone services at a base price of Rs 96,317.65 crore to improve the quality of telecom services and coverage for consumers. The Ministry of Communication has announced auctions for spectrum in 800 MHz, 900 MHz, 1800 MHz, 2100 MHz, 2300 MHz, 2500 MHz, 3300 MHz and 26 GHz frequency bands. The said spectrum will be offered with a validity period of 20 years. A total of 10,523.15 MHz is being offered with a valuation of Rs 96,317.65 crore.

Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) has released the Annual NeSDA Way Forward Report 2023.

Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) has released the Annual NeSDA Way Forward Report 2023. The Report highlights the significant progress made by the States and UTs during the year under mandatory e-Services and total e-Services under NeSDA Framework. Towards promotion of e-Services the Department organized three Regional Conferences at Bhopal, Mumbai and Guwahati, respectively, which were addressed by Dr Jitendra Singh, MoS (PP) and senior dignitaries of State Governments. The Department also engaged with RTS Commissioners / Appellate Officers for improving e-Services delivery. It also organized Brain-Storming Session with Industry Leaders on the Theme of Emerging and Future e-Governance Initiatives and Emerging Technologies.

Chile's two-time former president Sebastián Piñera has died in a helicopter crash.

Chile's two-time former president Sebastián Piñera has died in a helicopter crash. Miguel Juan Sebastián Piñera Echenique was a Chilean businessman and politician who served as president of Chile from 2010 to 2014 and again from 2018 to 2022. At the time of his death, he had an estimated net worth of US\$2.7 billion, according to Forbes, making him the third richest person in Chile and the 1177th richest person in the world.

Prominent British-Indian peer Shreela Flather passed away in the UK at the age of 89.

Prominent British-Indian peer Shreela Flather passed away in the UK at the age of 89. Known for her elegant sarees in the House of Lords, the teacher and politician was a life peer as Baroness Flather of Windsor and Maidenhead in Berkshire. As the Lifetime President of the Memorial Gates Council, she was instrumental in the creation of the iconic Memorial Gates at Hyde Park Corner in London as a tribute to the war efforts made by some 5 million Commonwealth soldiers during the World Wars. She was a unique personality and a force of nature. Shreela was always proud of being Indian and Asian.

Renowned litterateur and Padma Shri awardee Usha Kiran Khan passed away at

the age of 78 in Patna, Bihar.

Renowned litterateur and Padma Shri awardee Usha Kiran Khan passed away at the age of 78 in Patna, Bihar. Khan's literary contributions earned her widespread recognition, including prestigious honours such as the Padma Shri in 2015, the Sahitya Akademi Award, the Mahadevi Verma Award, the Dinakar National Award, and the Bharat-Bharati, among others. Her notable works include her Maithili novel 'Bhamati: Ek Avismaraniya Premkatha', for which she received the Sahitya Akademi Award, and her Hindi novel 'Sirjanhaar', which earned her the Kusumanjali Sahitya Samman from the Indian Council for Cultural Relations in 2012.

Mir Mohammad Farooq Nazki, veteran broadcaster, poet and Sahitya Akademi winner, passed away in Katra at the age of 83.

Mir Mohammad Farooq Nazki, veteran broadcaster, poet and Sahitya Akademi winner, passed away in Katra at the age of 83. Nazki held several important positions in All India Radio Kashmir and Doordarshan and in 1995, Nazki was awarded the Sahitya Akademi award in Kashmiri for his poetry book Naar Hyutun Kanzal Wanas (Fire in the eyelashes). He was also the media advisor to two chief ministers -- Farooq Abdullah and Omar Abdullah. Farooq Nazki was born in 1940. Throughout his career, he produced gems like Kashmiri Dastkariyan and Lafz. He also served as Director of Doordarshan and All India Radio Kashmir Srinagar (AIR Srinagar) from 1986 to 1997 under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (India).

The American space agency NASA has launched a new PACE satellite designed to closely study the world's oceans and atmosphere.

The American space agency NASA has launched a new PACE satellite designed to closely study the world's oceans and atmosphere. A SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket carried PACE into orbit from Kennedy Space Center in Florida. PACE stands for Plankton, Aerosol, Cloud, Ocean Ecosystem. The satellite will spend at least three years studying the environment from an orbit 676 kilometers above the Earth's surface. A third instrument will collect monthly measurements. Scientists should start getting their first data within one or two months.

The Bihar State Disaster Management Authority (BSDMA) has launched the Novel Initiative Technological Intervention for Safety of Humanlives (NITISH) device.

The Bihar State Disaster Management Authority (BSDMA) has launched the Novel Initiative Technological Intervention for Safety of Humanlives (NITISH) device. It is an innovative pendant-shaped technology designed, to provide timely alerts to farmers and the public, specifically targeting lightning, floods, heatwaves, and coldwaves. The device is connected to the Bihar Meteorological Service Centre, ensuring real-time and accurate weather-related alerts. The NITISH Device is introduced in collaboration with the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Patna, Bihar.

Embraer Defense & Security and Mahindra Defence Systems have announced a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to collaborate on the C-390 Millennium bid for the Indian Air Force's (IAF's) Medium Transport Aircraft (MTA) procurement project.

Embraer Defense & Security and Mahindra Defence Systems have announced a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to collaborate on the C-390 Millennium bid for the Indian Air Force's (IAF's) Medium Transport Aircraft (MTA) procurement project. As part of the MOU, which was signed in New Delhi on 9 February, Embraer and Mahindra will “jointly pursue the MTA programme”, according to Bosco da Costa Junior, president and CEO of Embraer Defense & Security. The objective of the MoU is to jointly fulfil the acquisition of the C-390 Millennium multi-mission aircraft by the Indian Air Force in its upcoming MTA procurement project.

The Ministry of Education has partnered with Fédération internationale de football association (FIFA) to promote football in schools across India.

The Ministry of Education has partnered with Fédération internationale de football association (FIFA) to promote football in schools across India. Their joint initiative aims to distribute 11 lakh footballs to more than 1.5 lakh schools, making the sport accessible to students nationwide. The initiative seeks to integrate football-related activities into the education system, emphasizing inclusivity regardless of gender.

Australia beat India in the Under-19 World Cup of the International Cricket Council (ICC) in South Africa.

Australia beat India in the Under-19 World Cup of the International Cricket Council (ICC) in South Africa. The 2024 ICC Under-19 Men's Cricket World Cup was an international limited-overs cricket tournament organized by the International Cricket Council (ICC), that was held in South Africa from 19 January to 11 February 2024. It was the 15th edition of the Under-19 Cricket World Cup.

India and Bangladesh were declared joint champions of the SAFF U19 Women's Championship at the BSSSMK Stadium in Dhaka, Bangladesh, on February 8, 2024.

India and Bangladesh were declared joint champions of the SAFF U19 Women's Championship at the BSSSMK Stadium in Dhaka, Bangladesh, on February 8, 2024. The 2024 SAFF U-19 Women's Championship was the fifth edition of the SAFF U-18/19/20 Women's Championship, an international football competition for women's under-19 national teams organized by SAFF. The tournament was held from 2 to 8 February 2024 in Bangladesh.

Assam Chief Minister Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma launched the Logo, Anthem, Mascot, Jersey, and Torch of Khelo India University Games - 2023, Ashtalakshmi

in Guwahati.

Assam Chief Minister Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma launched the Logo, Anthem, Mascot, Jersey, and Torch of Khelo India University Games - 2023, Ashtalakshmi in Guwahati. Union Minister Nisith Pramanik was also present on the occasion. The inaugural ceremony will be held on 19th February and of the total 20 sporting events, 16 will be held in Guwahati. Competitions for the rest of the disciplines will be held in other North Eastern states. Government of Assam, in association with the Sports Authority of India, is going to host the Fourth Khelo India University Games 2023 in Guwahati from the 19th to the 29th of this month. The event will be organised at 18 venues in 7 cities during 11 days duration where around 4500 athletes are expected to participate in 20 sporting disciplines. Over 200 universities will participate in the mega-university event.