



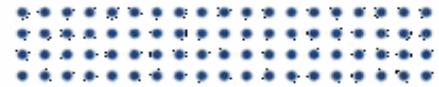
Prime Reader

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**February
2024**

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- Awards & Recognitions
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Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar launched the 'Van Mitra' scheme and its portal to encourage community participation in tree planting activities in non-forest areas.

Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar launched the 'Van Mitra' scheme and its portal to encourage community participation in tree planting activities in non-forest areas. The members of families with an annual income of less than Rs 1.80 lakh can register to become 'Van Mitras'. The objective of this scheme is to directly involve the local public in increasing forest areas across the state, ensuring an increase in the survival rate of afforestation, and promoting tree planting in non-forest areas. Each van mitra will receive an incentive based on the maintenance of the plant and they can plant a maximum of 1,000 saplings. Any individual aged between 18 and 60 can become a van mitra.

Azerbaijan Incumbent president Ilham Aliyev won a fifth consecutive term with over 92% of the vote and re-elected.

Presidential elections were held in Azerbaijan on 7 February 2024. Incumbent president Ilham Aliyev, who has held office since 2003, won a fifth consecutive term with over 92% of the vote, defeating his closest runner-up Zahid Oruj, who obtained just 2% of the vote. Aliyev was first elected president in 2003 after the death of his father Heydar Aliyev, a former KGB officer who had ruled Azerbaijan since 1993.

Justice Nilay V Anjaria was appointed as the next chief justice of the Karnataka High Court.

The Supreme Court Collegium headed by Chief Justice of India (CJI) D Y Chandrachud recommended the appointment of Justice N V Anjaria of the Gujarat High Court as the Chief Justice (CJ) of Karnataka High Court. The Karnataka HC CJ, P S Dinesh Kumar, is set to retire on February 24, 2024. The Collegium recommended that Justice Anjaria be appointed as the CJ of Karnataka High Court with effect from the date on which CJ P S Dinesh Kumar demits office.

The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) elected Ranjeet Kumar Agarwal as their new President.

The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) elected Ranjeet Kumar Agarwal as their new President. Agarwal is the 72nd President of ICAI and served as Vice President in 2023-24. He succeeded Aniket S. Talati. A graduate of Calcutta University, Agarwal is a practicing Chartered Accountant since last 24 years. He is also a Company Secretary and DISA from ICAI. He was elected to the 23rd, 24th and 25th Central Council of ICAI three times in a row.

Private sector lender SBM Bank India has appointed Ashish Vijayakar as managing director and chief executive officer.

Private sector lender SBM Bank India has appointed Ashish Vijayakar as managing director and chief executive officer. The appointment is for three years starting February 17, 2024. Vijayakar is a veteran banker with a track record spanning around three decades in the banking and financial services sector. He comes with a strong background in building and growing global businesses, with involvement in portfolio management and credit risk, having held key leadership positions across various geographies in Standard Chartered Bank and Cr dit Lyonnais over close to 25 years.

The Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs organised Prize Distribution Function of the 16th National Youth Parliament Competition, 2019-20 for Universities/Colleges at GMC Balayogi Auditorium, Parliament House Complex, New Delhi.

The Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs organised Prize Distribution Function of the 16th National Youth Parliament Competition, 2019-20 for Universities/Colleges at GMC Balayogi Auditorium, Parliament House Complex, New Delhi. Five other Universities/Colleges were also conferred Awards for their meritorious performance in the competition. The list of the winning institutions is: 1. DAV College, Jalandhar; 2. Jadavpur University, Kolkata; 3. University of Mumbai, Mumbai; 4. Chanakya National Law University, Patna; 5. Shivaji University, Kolhapur. Students of Central University of Punjab, Bathinda which stood first at National Level in the 16th National Youth Parliament Competition, presented a repeat performance of their 'Youth Parliament' sitting.

Renowned Urdu poet Gulzar and Sanskrit scholar Jagadguru Rambhadracharya have been named the recipients of the 58th Jnanpith Award (2023).

Renowned Urdu poet Gulzar and Sanskrit scholar Jagadguru Rambhadracharya have been named the recipients of the 58th Jnanpith Award (2023). Sampooran Singh Kalra, popularly known as Gulzar, is celebrated for his works in Hindi cinema and is considered one of the finest Urdu poets of this era. Gulzar received the Sahitya Akademi Award for Urdu in 2002, the Dadasaheb Phalke Award in 2013, Padma Bhushan in 2004, and at least five National Film awards for his works. Rambhadracharya, the founder and head of Tulsi Peeth in Chitrakoot, is a renowned Hindu spiritual leader, educator and writer of more than 240 books and texts, including four epics. A polyglot who speaks 22 languages, Rambhadracharya is a poet and writer in several Indian languages, including Sanskrit, Hindi, Awadhi, and Maithili. In 2015, he received the Padma Vibhushan award. Established in 1944, the Jnanpith Award is given annually for outstanding contributions to Indian literature. This is the second time the award is being given for Sanskrit language and the fifth time for Urdu language.

Former Prime Ministers PV Narasimha Rao and Chaudhary Charan Singh, and eminent agricultural scientist MS Swaminathan will be conferred with the

highest civilian award 'Bharat Ratna'.

Former Prime Ministers PV Narasimha Rao and Chaudhary Charan Singh, and eminent agricultural scientist MS Swaminathan will be conferred with the highest civilian award 'Bharat Ratna'. Serving in various capacities, PV Narasimha Rao is widely credited with initiating pivotal economic reforms and appointing Manmohan Singh as Finance Minister during a challenging economic period. He died in 2004. Chaudhary Charan Singh, India's fifth prime minister, founded the Lokdal party in 1980 and is often hailed as India's farm hero. The father of green revolution, Dr Swaminathan played a key role in introducing high-yielding varieties of wheat and rice, saving India from famine-like conditions in the 1960s.

Indian paraarcher Sheetal Devi won the Sportstar Aces Award for the Sportstar of the Year (female) and Indian javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra won the Sportstar Aces Award for Sportstar of the Year (Male) at Sportstar ACES Awards 2024 held at the Taj Mahal Hotel in Mumbai.

Indian paraarcher Sheetal Devi won the Sportstar Aces Award for the Sportstar of the Year (female) and Indian javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra won the Sportstar Aces Award for Sportstar of the Year (Male) at Sportstar ACES Awards 2024 held at the Taj Mahal Hotel in Mumbai. In 2023, Sheetal became the world record holder in the women's doubles event at the Para Worlds, while at the World Archery Para Championships, she clinched a silver medal, making her the first female armless archer to do so. She won three medals at the Asian Para Games, including two golds and one silver. This is Neeraj Chopra second consecutive Sportstar of the Year award. Neeraj, the world No. 1 in men's javelin throw, began 2023 by winning Diamond League events in Doha [88.67m], before becoming the first Indian to win a gold medal at the World Athletics Championships with an 88.17m throw. India cricketer Mohammed Shami claimed the 'Sportsman of the Year (Team Sports)' honour at the Sportstar ACES Awards 2024. Shami was the top wicket-taker of the ODI World Cup 2023 with 24 scalps.

President Droupadi Murmu has awarded the Vishisht Seva Medal to Havildar Varinder Singh of the Sikh Regiment in the Indian Army for his development of a 'multipurpose octocopter'.

President Droupadi Murmu has awarded the Vishisht Seva Medal to Havildar Varinder Singh of the Sikh Regiment in the Indian Army for his development of a 'multipurpose octocopter'. The 'multipurpose octocopter' developed by Singh is a versatile drone capable of not only conducting surveillance operations but also performing tasks such as grenade dropping, aerial target engagement with weapons like the AK-47, and logistics operations. With the help of a four-hand grenade MGM rifle, the enemy can be killed with pinpoint accuracy. The Vishisht Seva Medal (VSM) is a decoration of the Indian Armed Forces. It is given to personnel of all levels in the Indian Armed Forces as an acknowledgement for "distinguished service of a high

order.” The medal is crafted from bronze and is adorned with a golden ribbon featuring three dark blue stripes.

Isha Ambani, Director of Reliance Retail Ventures, received a special award at the Lokmat Maharashtra of the Year 2024 (LMOTY 2024) for her remarkable contributions in the field of business.

Isha Ambani, Director of Reliance Retail Ventures, received a special award at the Lokmat Maharashtra of the Year 2024 (LMOTY 2024) for her remarkable contributions in the field of business. She spearheaded leading brands like Tira & Trends.

Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) commemorated its 88th Foundation Day on 10 February 2024 in Chennai, Tamil Nadu.

Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) commemorated its 88th Foundation Day on 10 February 2024 in Chennai, Tamil Nadu. Indian Overseas Bank has drawn up expansion plans to open 88 new branches during the year commemorating the 88th Foundation Day celebrations. The Chennai-headquartered bank marking the occasion unveiled RuPay Credit Card variants, IOB Freedom Savings and Current Account Variant and Digital Documents Execution for online locker agreements. Meanwhile, Indian Overseas Bank has increased the interest rates on Rupees Retail Term Deposits for 444 days by 20 basis points with immediate effect. Retail term depositors would receive an interest rate of 7.30 percent, senior citizens 7.80 percent, and Super Senior Citizens 8.05 percent on term deposits with 444 days.

The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) issued draft regulations on Bima Sugam, which is a one-stop online insurance marketplace.

The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) issued draft regulations on Bima Sugam, which is a one-stop online insurance marketplace. The one-stop solution is slated to facilitate a range of services related to insurance policies -- from purchase, sale, servicing and settlement of claims to grievance redressal. Bima Sugam, which is part of the Bima trinity, seeks to empower and protect the interest of policyholders. The other branches are Bima Vistaar and Bima Vahak. Bima Sugam shall be a one-stop solution for all Insurance stakeholder's vis-a-vis customers, insurers, intermediaries or insurance intermediaries and insurance agents to promote transparency, efficiency, collaboration across the entire insurance value chain, technological innovation in the insurance sector.

Federal Bank introduced its newest product, the 'Stellar Savings Account', aiming to transform the banking sector by delivering exceptional benefits and innovative features.

Federal Bank introduced its newest product, the 'Stellar Savings Account', aiming to transform the banking sector by delivering exceptional benefits and innovative features. Noteworthy features of the Stellar Savings Account comprise: One-year complimentary wellness plan: Emphasizing the overall well-being of its customers, Federal Bank presents a complimentary one-year wellness plan alongside the Stellar Savings Account. Insurance coverage: Ensuring peace of mind and financial security, the Stellar Savings Account provides robust insurance coverage, offering protection for customers and their loved ones in the face of unforeseen circumstances. Milestone benefits: The Stellar Savings Account introduces milestone benefits, ensuring the celebration of each banking achievement with exclusive perks and privileges. Accelerated reward points: With the Stellar Savings Account, customers can accumulate reward points on every transaction, enjoying accelerated points for debit card expenditures in travel, electronics, and apparel segments, thereby maximizing their rewards. Eco-friendly debit card: Aligning with its commitment to sustainability, Federal Bank introduces an environmentally friendly debit card with the Stellar Savings Account.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB) signed Terms of Reference for the integration of fast payment systems.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB) signed Terms of Reference for the integration of fast payment systems. This interface is designed exclusively for India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI) and Nepal's National Payments Interface (NPI). The main goal of this integration is to streamline and facilitate low-cost fund transfers between India and Nepal, allowing users of both systems to make rapid transactions.

BOBCARD (formerly known as BOB Financial Solutions), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Bank of Baroda, and National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has launched Corporate Credit Card on RuPay Network.

BOBCARD (formerly known as BOB Financial Solutions), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Bank of Baroda, and National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has launched Corporate Credit Card on RuPay Network. This makes BOBCARD the second credit card issuer in the ecosystem (after IndusInd Bank) to have corporate credit card on RuPay with a host of benefits for the corporates for varied use cases and convenience of linkage with UPI through any UPI-enabled app. A corporate credit card on the RuPay network is a financial instrument designed specifically for corporate clients, offering benefits and features tailored to meet the needs of businesses.

LIC of India has introduced a new plan called "LIC's Amritbaal Plan 874".

LIC of India has introduced a new plan called "LIC's Amritbaal Plan 874". This plan, launched by Dr Vivek Joshi, Secretary of Financial Services, Ministry of Finance,

GOI, will be available for purchase starting from 17 February 2024. LIC's Amritbaal is a savings-oriented life insurance plan tailored to meet the educational and other needs of a child. It offers guaranteed additions of Rs 80 per thousand basic sums assured annually, provided the policy remains in force. The plan allows entry from birth (30 days completed) up to 13 years of age, with maturity ranging from 18 to 25 years. Premium payment terms of 5, 6, or 7 years are available. The minimum policy terms vary based on premium payment type, ranging from five to 10 years. The maximum policy term is 25 years, except for policies obtained through specific channels, which have a maximum term of 20 years. The minimum sum assured is Rs 2 lakh with no maximum limit (conditions apply). At maturity, the sum assured along with guaranteed additions is payable. Settlement options are available for receiving the maturity amount over 5, 10, or 15 years.

Bank of Maharashtra (BoM) celebrated its 89th Business Commencement Day in Pune on 8th February, 2024.

Bank of Maharashtra (BoM) celebrated its 89th Business Commencement Day in Pune on 8th February, 2024. As Bank has undertaken Digital transformations in areas of digital journey, digital operations & digital compliance, accordingly new 89 digital products and services were launched marking this occasion as "Maha Parivartan Diwas 2.0". All Branches/offices across the country were also connected virtually to the program. The Bank has implemented several initiatives to cater to both businesses and individuals. For businesses, they have launched the Mahabank Equipment Finance Scheme to finance construction equipment purchases for MSMEs and Corporates. To effectively cater to new-age banking users, the Bank has enhanced features on its WhatsApp banking service (+91 – 7066036640), customers can now warm list, hotlist, and modify debit card limits for various channels.

Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has granted In-principle approval to Policybazaar for upgradation of license from direct insurance broker (Life and General) to composite insurance broker.

Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has granted In-principle approval to Policybazaar Insurance Brokers Private Limited (Policybazaar), a wholly owned subsidiary of the company for upgradation of license from direct insurance broker (Life and General) to composite insurance broker. This approval is expected to pave the way for Policybazaar to sell reinsurance products besides being a pure play platform focused on insurance buying. This will allow to deepen the insurance penetration in the country by bringing more technology, process control and data analytics based innovation into re-insurance capacity.

PayNearby, a branchless banking and digital network has launched the 'Digital Naari' platform to generate long-term self-employment for women across Bharat.

PayNearby, a branchless banking and digital network has launched the 'Digital Naari' platform to generate long-term self-employment for women across Bharat. This program is designed to provide additional income generation opportunities for women in rural and semi-urban areas, recognising their pivotal role as equal contributors to the nation's growth. Aligned with the Government's 'Lakhpati Didi' initiative, the platform seeks to onboard and uplift 1 lakh women by the end of 2025, facilitating their economic empowerment. Through the Digital Naari platform, the uplifted lady banker, called didi, can provide a diverse range of financial and digital services to the masses.

Mirae Asset Mutual Fund launched Mirae Asset Nifty Smallcap 250 Momentum Quality 100 ETF, marking the country's first multi-factor-based ETF (exchange traded fund) on the Nifty Smallcap 250 Index.

Mirae Asset Mutual Fund launched Mirae Asset Nifty Smallcap 250 Momentum Quality 100 ETF, marking the country's first multi-factor-based ETF (exchange traded fund) on the Nifty Smallcap 250 Index. The open-ended new fund offer (NFO) will be available for subscription till February 21, 2024. Additionally, the 'Mirae Asset Nifty Smallcap 250 Momentum Quality 100 ETF Fund of Fund' will open for subscription on February 15, 2024 and close on February 28, 2024. Mirae Asset Nifty Smallcap 250 Momentum Quality 100 ETF aims to generate returns commensurate with the performance of the Nifty Smallcap 250 Momentum Quality 100 Total Return Index, subject to tracking error.

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has approved the Proposed Combination involving acquisition of 100% of the equity shares of Tianish Laboratories Private Limited by the Matrix Pharma Private Limited.

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has approved the Proposed Combination involving acquisition of 100% of the equity shares of Tianish Laboratories Private Limited by the Matrix Pharma Private Limited. Kotak Strategic Situations India Fund II (Investor 1) is an alternative investment fund registered with the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) under the SEBI (Alternative Investment Funds) Regulations, 2012. Kotak Alternate Asset Managers Limited (Investor 2) acts as an investment manager, engaged in the business of managing and advising funds across the following asset classes namely: (a) Special Situations; (b) Real Estate; (c) Infrastructure; (d) Private Equity; and (e) Private Credit.

Mswipe Technologies has received a payment aggregator (PA) license from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

Mswipe Technologies has received a payment aggregator (PA) license from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). The approval propels Mswipe into an elite group of entities, including Juspay, Razorpay, and Google, who are poised to redefine the digital payments landscape in India.

Investor Education and Protection Fund Authority (IEPFA) and Singapore-headquartered DBS Bank signed a Memorandum of Understanding to spread awareness on investment and fraudulent schemes.

Investor Education and Protection Fund Authority (IEPFA) and Singapore-headquartered DBS Bank signed a Memorandum of Understanding to spread awareness on investment and fraudulent schemes. According to the MoU, DBS Bank aims to support IEPFA's investor awareness activities by disseminating safety messages via its various digital platforms. Leveraging DBS Bank's extensive network of branches and ATMs in 19 Indian states, as well as its digital infrastructure, will significantly increase the reach of IEPFA's investor awareness and protection messages to the end users.

Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant presented a Rs 26,850.56 crore revenue surplus budget for 2024-25 in the Assembly, with no additional taxes being imposed on the citizens of the coastal state.

Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant presented a Rs 26,850.56 crore revenue surplus budget for 2024-25 in the Assembly, with no additional taxes being imposed on the citizens of the coastal state. The revenue surplus was Rs 1,720 crore, while the Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) is expected to witness a growth of 13.87 percent, with per capita income of Rs 7.64 lakh. He also announced a one-time amnesty scheme for residential houses that are being operated illegally as home stays, hotels and restaurants. Goa received Rs 750 crore as financial assistance from the Centre for fiscal 2023-24 and this is expected to rise to Rs 1,506 crore for 2024-25. There are several leave and licence agreements (between government and private parties) that are not renewed, due to which there is revenue leakage, and to curb this the state government will introduce a regulation for such agreements.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman proposed an interim Budget of ₹1.18 lakh crore for fiscal 2024-25 for the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman proposed an interim Budget of ₹1.18 lakh crore for fiscal 2024-25 for the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir. The interim Budget envisages a fiscal deficit of Rs 20,760 crore and a 7.5 percent growth in gross state domestic product (GSDP). The capital expenditure for the fiscal has been proposed at Rs 38,566 crore, which is 14.64 percent of the GSDP, as per the interim Budget tabled by Sitharaman in Parliament. The revenue receipts for the next fiscal stood at Rs 97,861 crore. The revenue of the UT has been estimated at ₹20,867 crore. The UT administration also pursued Union government for getting central financial assistance. The Union government has agreed to provide ₹41,751.44 crores to the UT administration in this financial year and ₹37,277.74 crores in the next financial year. While the budgetary estimate for the next financial year 2024-25 is about ₹1,18,728 crore, the UT administration has proposed the vote on account for ₹59,364

crore.

The 193rd Meeting of Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) was held in New Delhi under the chairmanship of Shri Bhupender Yadav, Union Minister for Labour and Employment, Environment, Forest and Climate Change and Chairman, ESIC.

The 193rd Meeting of Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) was held in New Delhi under the chairmanship of Shri Bhupender Yadav, Union Minister for Labour and Employment, Environment, Forest and Climate Change and Chairman, ESIC. Shri Rameswar Teli, Union Minister of State for Labour & Employment, Petroleum and Natural Gas also attended the meeting as Vice-Chairman. During the 193rd meeting of the ESI Corporation, the proposal to provide Medical Benefit to the Insured superannuating workers who went out of the ESI Scheme coverage due to exceeding the wage ceiling, if the worker was under insurable employment for at least 5 years before superannuation/voluntary retirement, has been approved. The persons who were in the insurable employment for at least 5 years after 01.04.2012 and superannuated/voluntarily retired on or after 01.04.2017 with wages up to Rs30,000 per month will be benefitted under the new benefit scheme. To promote holistic wellbeing of the ESI beneficiaries, a new Policy on AYUSH 2023 in ESIC institutions was adopted during the meeting. The policy details the establishing of Panchkarma, Kshara Sutra and AYUSH Units in ESIC Hospitals.

The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) announced the reconstitution of the Expert Committee on the implementation of Ind AS/IFRS.

The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) announced the reconstitution of the Expert Committee on the implementation of Ind AS/IFRS. The 13-member committee, which will be headed by the Member (Finance and Investment) F&I of IRDAI. It will also include the Chairman of the Accounting Standards Board (ASB) of ICAI, the President of the Institute of Actuaries of India (IAI), the CGM & HOD of IRDAI's Actuarial Department, among others. The committee will also address the requirements of guidance notes, APS, and Education Material from respective professional institutes.

The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC), under the chairmanship of Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh, accorded approval for Acceptance of Necessity (AoNs) for various capital acquisition proposals amounting to Rs 84,560 crore.

The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC), under the chairmanship of Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh, accorded approval for Acceptance of Necessity (AoNs) for various capital acquisition proposals amounting to Rs 84,560 crore. The DAC has accorded AoN under Buy {Indian-Indigenously Designed Developed and Manufactured (IDDM)} category for procurement of a new generation of Anti-tank

mines having seismic sensor and provision of remote deactivation with additional safety features.

The Indian Air Force conduct Exercise 'Vayu Shakti-24' on 17 February 2024 at the Pokhran Air to Ground Range, near Jaisalmer, Rajasthan.

The Indian Air Force conduct Exercise 'Vayu Shakti-24' on 17 February 2024 at the Pokhran Air to Ground Range, near Jaisalmer, Rajasthan. The exercise also showcased joint operations with the Indian Army. This year, the exercise saw participation by 121 aircraft, including the indigenous Tejas, Prachand and Dhruv. Other participated aircraft include the Rafale, Mirage-2000, Sukhoi-30 MKI, Jaguar, Hawk, C-130J, Chinook, Apache and Mi-17. Indigenous Surface to Air Weapon systems Akash and Samar demonstrated their capability to track and shoot down an intruding aircraft. Exercise Vayu Shakti demonstration of the IAF's capability to deliver weapons with long range, precision capability as well as conventional weapon accurately, on time and with devastating effect, while operating from multiple air bases.

Japan's Mizuho Bank has acquired 15 percent stake in Digital non-banking finance company Credit Saison (CS) India for Rs 1,200 crore.

Japan's Mizuho Bank has acquired 15 percent stake in Digital non-banking finance company Credit Saison (CS) India for Rs 1,200 crore. This is Credit Saison's first investment from an external investor. CS India received its (Non-banking Finance Company) NBFC licence in September 2019 from the RBI and focussed initial operations in wholesale lending and tech-integrated partnerships with other NBFCs and fintechs.

A team of researchers have discovered a new species of damselfly named 'Phylloneura rupestris' at the Ponmudi hills in Thiruvananthapuram district of Kerala.

A team of researchers have discovered a new species of damselfly named 'Phylloneura rupestris' at the Ponmudi hills in Thiruvananthapuram district of Kerala. The hills are a part of the Agasthyamalai landscape, at the southernmost tip of the Western Ghats. The Ponmudi hills are biodiversity-rich, and this is the third species of damselfly discovered from the region. The new species, named Cliffside Bambootail (Phylloneura rupestris), belongs to a group called bambootails, so named because of their long abdomen that resembles bamboo stalks.

Researchers at Odisha's Berhampur University have discovered a new species of marine amphipod, named 'Parhyale odian', from the state's Chilika Lake, Asia's biggest brackish water lagoon on India's east coast.

Researchers at Odisha's Berhampur University have discovered a new species of marine amphipod, named 'Parhyale odian', from the state's Chilika Lake, Asia's

biggest brackish water lagoon on India's east coast. The new species has been named Parhyale odian after Odisha's native language, Odia, as the species was collected there. The present contribution has added one more species to the genus Parhyale, raising the global species number in the group to 16.

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah launched 'Asha Kirana Eye Care at Your Doorstep' under the aegis of National Programme for Control of Blindness and Visual Impairment in Haveri, Karnataka.

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah launched 'Asha Kirana Eye Care at Your Doorstep' under the aegis of National Programme for Control of Blindness and Visual Impairment in Haveri, Karnataka. An initiative by the Department of Health and Family Welfare, comprehensive eye check-ups will be done for individuals across all age groups under the 'Asha Kirana' scheme. Free spectacles will be provided to the visually impaired and cataract surgeries will be done free of cost. With the objective of reducing prevalence of avoidable blindness, 'Asha Kirana' has already been implemented successfully in eight districts across two phases. The first phase covered Chikkaballapur, Kalaburagi, Haveri, and Chamarajanagar, while the second phase included Chitradurga, Mandya, Raichur, and Uttara Kannada district. These initiatives have yielded promising results, with millions of individuals benefiting from primary and secondary gaps in eye health services availability.

Sikkim Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang launched a World Bank-assisted programme Sikkim INSPIRES (Integrated Service Provision and Innovation for Revising Economics), aimed at providing economic growth opportunities for women and youth.

Sikkim Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang launched a World Bank-assisted programme Sikkim INSPIRES (Integrated Service Provision and Innovation for Revising Economics), aimed at providing economic growth opportunities for women and youth. The programme focuses on providing better economic opportunities for women and youth through training and employment initiatives. This initiative aims to boost economic inclusion for women and youth in non-farm sectors, backed by a \$100 million grant from the World Bank and a significant support from the Indian government. With India funding 90% of the loan, the State government is responsible for just 10% repayment. Over the next five years, Sikkim INSPIRES will operate across nine government departments, fostering economic growth and inclusivity.

World Day of Social Justice is observed on 20 February annually to raise voices against social injustice and remove barriers regarding gender, race, inequality, religious discrimination, etc.

World Day of Social Justice is observed on 20 February annually to raise voices against social injustice and remove barriers regarding gender, race, inequality, religious discrimination, etc. It also highlights the social injustice done throughout the

world and looks into the solutions and improvements. The theme of World Day of Social Justice 2024 is "Global Coalition for Social Justice: Bridging Gaps, Building Alliances". On 26 November 2007, the UN General Assembly declared 20 February as the annual World Day of Social Justice. In 2009, this day was first observed.

World Pangolin Day is observed annually on the third Saturday in February and taken place on February 17 in this year 2024.

World Pangolin Day is observed annually on the third Saturday in February and taken place on February 17 in this year 2024. The day aims to celebrate pangolins, raise awareness and recommit international N.G.O.s to the fight against the global capturing of pangolins in Africa and Asia. 17th February 2024 marked the observance of the 13th World Pangolin day.

The International Day for the Prevention of Violent Extremism as and when Conducive to Terrorism (PVE Day) is annually observed on 12th February.

The International Day for the Prevention of Violent Extremism as and when Conducive to Terrorism (PVE Day) is annually observed on 12th February. The United Nations General Assembly (in its resolution 77/243) declared 12 February the International Day for the Prevention of Violent Extremism as and when Conducive to Terrorism (PVE day). 12th February 2024 marked the observance of the 2nd International PVE Day.

International Epilepsy Day 2024, observed on 12th February.

International Epilepsy Day observed annually on the second Monday of February to awareness programs were conducted across various regions to educate and sensitize the public about epilepsy. International Epilepsy Day 2024, observed on 12th February. The theme for International Epilepsy Day 2024 is 'Milestones on My Epilepsy Journey'. International Epilepsy Day was instituted in 2015. According to the official website of the World Health Organization (WHO), epilepsy is characterized as a non-communicable neurological disorder impacting approximately 50 million individuals globally.

The Global Tourism Resilience Day is annually celebrated on February 17 to raise awareness of the need to promote resilient tourism development capable of withstanding both predictable and unexpected challenges.

The Global Tourism Resilience Day is annually celebrated on February 17 to raise awareness of the need to promote resilient tourism development capable of withstanding both predictable and unexpected challenges. The United Nations' Global Tourism Resilience Day, established by the United Nations General Assembly on 17 February 2023. UNWTO projected scenarios for 2023 indicated that international tourism would recover almost 90% of pre-pandemic levels by the end of 2023. 17 February 2024 marked the observance of the 2nd Global Tourism Resilience Day.

National Productivity Day is celebrated on 12th February every year in India to commemorate the founding of the National Productivity Council (NPC).

National Productivity Day is celebrated on 12th February every year in India to commemorate the founding of the National Productivity Council (NPC). Indian Productivity Week which is observed from February 12 to February 18. The theme of National Productivity Day 2024 is "Artificial Intelligence (AI)- Productivity Engine for Economic Growth". It highlights the crucial role of AI in driving a country's economic growth and productivity. The goal of the NPC is to raise national awareness of the need to boost productivity. The purpose of the festivities is to increase public awareness of innovation, efficiency, and productivity.

Every year on 12 February International Darwin Day is observed to commemorate the birthday of Charles Darwin.

Every year on 12 February International Darwin Day is observed to commemorate the birthday of Charles Darwin. He was born on 12 February 1809 at Shrewsbury, Shropshire, England. Darwin Day is also known as International Darwin Day. The day focuses on the contribution of Charles Darwin to science and also to promote science in general. Darwin Day celebration began with three Darwin enthusiasts: Dr. Robert Stephens, who motivated the community of Humanist in Silicon Valley to initiate an annual Darwin Day celebration in 1995; Prof. Massimo Pigliucci, who organised an annual Darwin Day event at the University of Tennessee in 1997 and Amanda Chesworth, who joined Stephens to officially incorporate the Darwin Day Program in 2000 in New Mexico.

World Radio Day is marked annually on 13th February.

World Radio Day is marked annually on 13th February. It is generally believed that the first radio transmission was made by Guglielmo Marconi in 1895 and radio broadcasting of music and talk that was aimed towards a wider audience came into existence, albeit experimentally, sometimes around 1905-1906. The radio came into existence commercially in the early 1920s. The theme for the World Radio Day 2024 is "Radio: A century informing, entertaining and educating".

February 13th is celebrated as National Women's Day in India, in honour of Sarojini Naidu, known as 'The Nightingale of India'.

February 13th is celebrated as National Women's Day in India, in honour of Sarojini Naidu, known as 'The Nightingale of India'. 13th February 2024 marks the 145th birth anniversary of Sarojini Naidu. She was born on the 13th February 1879 in Hyderabad. Sarojini Naidu was well known as the "Nightingale of India" or "Bharat Kokila". This title was given to her by Mahatma Gandhi, Father of the Nation. National Women's Day will empower, encourage women and recognises their contribution to society.

International Childhood Cancer Day is observed every year on February 15 to raise awareness around the unique challenges of childhood cancers.

International Childhood Cancer Day is observed every year on February 15 to raise awareness around the unique challenges of childhood cancers. International Childhood Cancer Day (ICCD) is a global campaign to raise awareness about childhood cancer and its unique challenges, showing support for children and adolescents with cancer, survivors and their families worldwide. February 15 is marked as International Childhood Cancer Day (ICCD) and is observed to highlight the challenges related to childhood cancer and the need to support children, adolescents and their families to battle this dreaded disease. The campaign theme of International Childhood Cancer Day 2024 is "Unveiling Challenges".

Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) is the India's 'most valuable company' with a market capitalisation (mcap) of ₹15.64 trillion, according to a study by Axis Bank's private banking unit Burgundy Private, and Hurun India.

Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) is the India's 'most valuable company' with a market capitalisation (mcap) of ₹15.64 trillion, according to a study by Axis Bank's private banking unit Burgundy Private, and Hurun India. The latest edition of the annual Burgundy Private and Hurun India 500 report is based on data from October 2022-October 2023, with Reliance Industries topping the list for the third consecutive time. Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) and HDFC Bank are the second and third most valuable companies, respectively, with a market value of ₹12.36 trillion and ₹11.25 trillion. Rounding off the top five were ICICI Bank (₹6.47 trillion) and Infosys (₹5.71 trillion). Bharti Airtel, ITC, Larsen & Toubro, HCL Technologies, and Kotak Mahindra Bank, in that order, rounded off the top 10, with their mcaps being ₹5.55 trillion, ₹5.36 trillion, ₹4.02 trillion, ₹3.43 trillion, and ₹3.41 trillion, respectively.

Forbes India unveiled its prestigious 30 Under 30 list for 2024.

This year's list includes three familiar names from the entertainment space: actors Radhika Madan, Rashmika Mandanna, and Dot. 27-year-old actress Rashmika Mandanna appears in Telugu, Tamil, and Hindi movies. In the action movie 'Varisu', directed by Vamshi Paidipally, she starred with Tamil superstar Vijay. Actress Radhika Madan, 28, works in Hindi cinema. She began the year in a supporting role in the criminal drama 'Kuttey', which was directed by Aasman Bhardwaj. Aditi Saigal is the youngest of the three. The 23-year-old singer-actor is famous for her stage name, Dot. The Forbes India 30 Under 30 alum club boasts a formidable 300 members, including notable success stories like Nikhil Kamath of Zerodha and the Postman co-founders Abhinav Asthana, Abhijit Kane, and Ankit Sobti. The impact of the 30 Under 30 extends beyond business into entertainment and sports.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was on a three-day visit to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Qatar, marking his seventh visit to the UAE and second to Qatar since assuming office in 2014.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was on a three-day visit to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Qatar, marking his seventh visit to the UAE and second to Qatar since assuming office in 2014. In his departure statement, PM Modi underscored the substantial growth in cooperation between India and the UAE over the past nine years, covering diverse sectors such as trade, investment, defence, security, food and energy security, and education. PM Modi inaugurated the first Hindu Mandir in Abu Dhabi, UAE, organized by the BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha, symbolizing the deepening cultural bonds between the two countries. Additionally, he also addressed global leaders at the World Government Summit in Dubai, upon an invitation extended by Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President, Prime Minister, and Defense Minister of the UAE.

Ambassador Ruchira Kamboj, Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations, chaired the 62nd session of the Commission for Social Development (CSocD62), held from 5th to 14th February 2024 at the UN headquarters in New York.

Ambassador Ruchira Kamboj, Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations, chaired the 62nd session of the Commission for Social Development (CSocD62), held from 5th to 14th February 2024 at the UN headquarters in New York. This Commission is a functional body of the Economic and Social Council that serves as a vital intergovernmental platform to discuss and enhance international cooperation on social development matters. The priority theme of the 62nd session was, "Fostering Social Development and Social Justice through Social Policies to Accelerate Progress on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to Achieve the Overarching Goal of Poverty Eradication".

The World's Migratory Species report was released at the opening press conference of the 14th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS COP14) in Samarkand, Uzbekistan.

The first-ever State of the World's Migratory Species report was launched by the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), a UN biodiversity treaty, at the opening of a major UN wildlife conservation conference (CMS COP14). The World's Migratory Species report was released at the opening press conference of the 14th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS COP14) in Samarkand, Uzbekistan. The landmark report reveals: Some migratory species listed under CMS are improving, nearly half (44 percent) are showing population

declines. More than one-in-five (22 percent) of CMS-listed species are threatened with extinction. Nearly all (97 percent) of CMS-listed fish are threatened with extinction. Globally, 399 migratory species that are threatened or near threatened with extinction are not currently listed under CMS.

India and Colombia signed a MoU on Cooperation in the field of Sharing Successful Digital Solutions Implemented at Population Scale for Digital Transformation.

India and Colombia signed a MoU on Cooperation in the field of Sharing Successful Digital Solutions Implemented at Population Scale for Digital Transformation. It was signed between the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) and the Information Technologies and Communications of Colombia. Union Minister of State for Electronics and IT, Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, and Jal Shakti, Shri Rajeev Chandrasekhar exchanged the MoU with Mr. Mauricio Lizcano, Minister of Information Technologies and Communications of Colombia. Both sides discussed the importance of Digital Public Infrastructures. The MoU intends to promote digital transformation (viz INDIA STACK) through capacity-building programs, the exchange of best practices, the exchange of public officials and experts, the development of pilot or demo solutions.

Cochin International Airport Ltd (CIAL) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) for setting up a world's first green hydrogen plant in the premises of Cochin Airport.

Cochin International Airport Ltd (CIAL) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) for setting up a world's first green hydrogen plant in the premises of Cochin Airport. This collaborative effort will result in the world's first green hydrogen plant and fueling station located within an airport setting. The agreement exchange ceremony for the green hydrogen plant was held at Legislative Complex, Thiruvananthapuram in the presence of Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan who is also the chairman of CIAL.

Taiwan and India signed a memorandum of understanding to facilitate employment of Indian workers in Taiwan.

Taiwan and India signed a memorandum of understanding to facilitate employment of Indian workers in Taiwan. The MoU was signed via video link by Baushuan Ger, representative of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Center in India, and Manharsinh Laxmanbhai Yadav, director general of the India-Taipei Association. Taiwan will initially seek Indian workers with good English proficiency on a small scale, and if the results of the MoU are good, the openings will be gradually increased. According to the terms of the MoU, the Taiwanese side will decide the industries and number of Indian migrant workers to be employed.

REC Limited has signed agreements worth Rs588 crores with Damodar Valley Corporation (DVC) to strengthen infrastructure and energy projects in the Damodar Valley region.

REC Limited has signed agreements worth Rs588 crores with Damodar Valley Corporation (DVC) to strengthen infrastructure and energy projects in the Damodar Valley region. The agreements aim to strengthen the cooperation between REC and DVC for the development of tubed coal mines, and include a Term Loan agreement, an Escrow agreement, and Hypothecation deeds. The agreements signed underscore the collaborative efforts of both organizations in promoting sustainable development and leveraging resources for the greater benefit of the community.

India and Russia have signed a protocol on amendments to the 2008 intergovernmental agreement on cooperation in construction of additional nuclear reactors in Kudankulam Nuclear Power Project site and in construction of Russia-designed nuclear power plants at new sites in India.

India and Russia have signed a protocol on amendments to the 2008 intergovernmental agreement on cooperation in construction of additional nuclear reactors in Kudankulam Nuclear Power Project site and in construction of Russia-designed nuclear power plants at new sites in India. Alexey Likhachev, Director General of Rosatom State Corporation, and Ajit Kumar Mohanty, Chairman of Atomic Energy Commission of India, Secretary of Department for Atomic Energy of the Government of India, signed in the agreement during their visit to KKNPP site where the Russian nuclear energy agency has built 2 X 1,000 MWe VVER nuclear reactors and is constructing four more reactors with similar capacity. During the two-day visit, the Russian delegation inspected the power units being constructed as the second and third stages of the KKNPP i.e., the construction of reactors 3 to 6 and discussed the long-term cooperation agenda. The KKNPP in Tamil Nadu is a joint initiative of the two countries and the flagship project of bilateral technological and energy cooperation.

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Department of Fisheries signs a MoU with Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC).

The Department of Fisheries signed an Memorandum of Understanding with Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) to provide a digital platform and empower all stakeholders including traditional fishermen, fish farmers producer organization, entrepreneurs from fisheries sector to buy and sell their products through e-market place. ONDC is a unique platform of e-marketing that will play a significant role in fisheries sector by connecting fishermen, fish farmers, FFPOs, self-help groups and other fishermen cooperatives in a structured manner. The program envisions a comprehensive approach which will ensure that small- scale fishers and marginalized communities have equal access to market opportunities, fostering social inclusion and equitable economic development.

Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Ltd (IREDA) and Punjab National Bank (PNB) have signed a MoU aimed at advancing renewable energy initiatives across the nation.

Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Ltd (IREDA) and Punjab National Bank (PNB) have signed a MoU aimed at advancing renewable energy initiatives across the nation. The agreement, signed at IREDA's registered office in New Delhi, paves the way for joint efforts in co-lending and loan syndication for a diverse spectrum of renewable energy projects. The MoU comprises various provisions aimed at enhancing support for renewable energy projects. These include joint lending, loan syndication and underwriting, management of Trust and Retention Account (TRA) for IREDA borrowers, and working towards competitive terms of sanction, including pricing on IREDA borrowings. Through the collaboration, IREDA and PNB can also invest in bonds issued by either organization.

Union Minister for Health & Family Welfare and Chemicals & Fertilizers, Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya launched the AIIMS-SBI Smart Payment Card.

Union Minister for Health & Family Welfare and Chemicals & Fertilizers, Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya launched the AIIMS-SBI Smart Payment Card. The AIIMS-SBI Smart Payment Card will ensure hassle free payments for treatment in AIIMS New Delhi. AIIMS Smart Payment Card will resolve the long pending issue of patients from far flung areas carrying cash with them to the hospital. That patients or their caretakers

can get the card easily from the facilitation centres across AIIMS, New Delhi and thereafter use it for payment at various counters. Funds can now be transferred easily and swiftly from across the country by anyone in case of any urgent payment related requirement, for the patient being attended at AIIMS, New Delhi. The card once issued will be valid for a period of five years. All transactions done using this card are linked to the E-Hospital functional at AIIMS. Reconciliation of all financial transactions can be done by the Finance Division, AIIMS owing to the two-way integration between AIIMS & the bank. The card will be linked to the patient's Unique Hospital Identification (UHID) number & the Ayushman Bharat Health Account (ABHA) ID issued under the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM).

The Ministry of Rural Development unveiled the National Generic Document Registration System (NDGRS) throughout Assam, alongside the launch of the Unique Land Parcel Identification Number (ULPIN) and Blockchain technology in the Darrang district of Assam.

The Ministry of Rural Development unveiled the National Generic Document Registration System (NDGRS) throughout Assam, alongside the launch of the Unique Land Parcel Identification Number (ULPIN) and Blockchain technology in the Darrang district of Assam. The ULPIN (Unique Land Parcel Identification Number) is taken as the unique blockchain ID and the land parcel is uniquely identified using ULPIN from Bhunaksha. The ULPIN, a 14-digit alpha numeric identification number to every land parcel can be described as the AADHAR or fingerprint for land. The identification is based on the longitude and latitude of the land parcel and is dependent on geo-referenced cadastral maps.

Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) has inks a contract worth Rs 2,282 crore from the Indian Navy.

Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) has inks a contract worth Rs 2,282 crore from the Indian Navy. The deal is for supplying of state-of-the-art indigenously designed and developed electronic warfare suite for use on-board warships. The company has also received additional orders worth Rs 114.59 crore since the last disclosure on 30th January 2024 and these orders pertain to the supply of SDRs, HD VLF receivers, EVMs etc.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated and laid the foundation stone for various developmental projects worth Rs 7,500 crore in Jhabua, Madhya Pradesh.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated and laid the foundation stone for various developmental projects worth Rs 7,500 crore in Jhabua, Madhya Pradesh. The event, attended by Chief Minister Mohan Yadav and his cabinet ministers, focused on initiatives benefiting the significant tribal population of the region. The Prime Minister dedicated and laid the foundation stone for multiple initiatives aimed at benefiting the

tribal population. One such initiative is the monthly disbursement of instalments under the Aahar Anudan Yojna to approximately two lakh women beneficiaries. This scheme provides Rs 1,500 per month for nutritious food to women from various especially backward tribes in Madhya Pradesh. Additionally, Prime Minister Modi distributed 1.75 lakh Adhikar Abhilekh (record of rights) to beneficiaries of the SVAMITVA Scheme, offering documentary evidence for their land rights. Furthermore, he transferred Rs 55.90 crores for 559 villages under the Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana and laid the foundation stone for the 'CM Rise School' in Jhabua. The school aims to integrate technology, providing modern facilities such as smart classes and an e-library to students.

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB) has revised the National Film Awards regulations and made significant changes, including renaming awards, merging categories, and increasing prize money.

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB) has revised the National Film Awards regulations and made significant changes, including renaming awards, merging categories, and increasing prize money. The 'Indira Gandhi Award for Best Debut Film of a Director' and the 'Nargis Dutt Award for Best Feature Film on National Integration', which are part of the National Film Awards, have been renamed on the recommendation of the Committee for Rationalisation of Film Awards. 'Indira Gandhi Award for Best Debut Film of a Director' be renamed as 'Best Debut Film of a Director', and the award money be increased to Rs 3 lakh. 'Nargis Dutt Award for Best Feature Film on National Integration' be renamed as 'Best Feature Film Promoting National, Social and Environmental Values'. This award carries a Rajat Kamal to the director and the producer with Rs 1.5 lakh each. It be clubbed with 'Best Film on Social Issues and Best Film on Environment Conservation/Preservation'. The award amount has been increased to Rs 2 lakh each to the director and producer. The Dadasaheb Phalke Award has increased from Rs 10 lakh to Rs 15 lakh. The rationalisation committee was headed by Neerja Sekhar, additional secretary in the Information and Broadcasting ministry. Other changes include the creation of a new category called 'Best AVGC Film', which combines the Best Animation Film and Best Special Effects categories. Awards for Best Actor, Actress, Supporting Actor, and Supporting Actress have been renamed and the prize money increased. Additionally, changes have been made to categories such as Best Audiography and Best Music Director.

Greening and Restoration of Wasteland with Agroforestry (GROW) report and portal was launched by Prof Ramesh Chand, Member, NITI Aayog at NITI Aayog.

Greening and Restoration of Wasteland with Agroforestry (GROW) report and portal was launched by Prof Ramesh Chand, Member, NITI Aayog at NITI Aayog. This multi-institutional effort led by NITI Aayog utilized remote sensing and GIS to assess agroforestry suitability across all districts in India. Using thematic datasets, an

Agroforestry Suitability Index (ASI) was developed for national-level prioritization. The report provides state-wise and district-wise analysis, supporting government departments and industries for greening and restoration projects.

The urban unemployment rate declined to its lowest level in over four years of 6.5% in October-December 2023 (Q3FY24).

The urban unemployment rate declined to its lowest level in over four years of 6.5% in October-December 2023, while the female labour force participation rate rose to its highest level of 25%, according to quarterly Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) data released. Urban unemployment was 7.2% in October-December 2022 and 6.6% in the previous quarter. During the pre-pandemic period, the urban unemployment rate ranged from 7.8-9.7%, as per the PLFS. The decline in the overall unemployment rate during Q3 FY24 was due to a drop in the male unemployment rate, which fell from 6.0% in Q2FY24 to 5.8% in Q3FY24. The female unemployment rate stayed flat at 8.6% in Q3FY24. The Worker Population Ratio (WPR) also increased to 46.6% in Q3FY24 from 46.0% in Q2FY24. The WPR is defined as the percentage of employed persons in the population.

Bihar introduced 'Patna Declaration' to strengthen bird conservation initiatives in South Asian region.

Bihar introduced 'Patna Declaration' to strengthen bird conservation initiatives in South Asian region. In a bid to check illegal hunting of wild and migratory birds and suggest measures to strengthen their conservation efforts in countries falling in the Central Asian Flyway (CAF), a three-day international workshop was held in the Bihar capital from February 5, 2024. The international workshop was organised by the Department of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (DEFCC) of Bihar government in association with the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS). The workshop, which concluded on February 7, was attended by delegates from countries like Myanmar, Kazakhstan, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bangladesh and Bhutan besides those from across India.

Arunachal Pradesh has become the first state in the North-East India and 10th in the country to achieve 100 percent saturation of Har Ghar Jal under Jal Jeevan Mission.

Arunachal Pradesh has become the first state in the North-East India and 10th in the country to achieve 100 percent saturation of Har Ghar Jal under Jal Jeevan Mission. The Centre's Rs396541.22 lakh and State's Rs 45551.18 lakh ensured that every household in the state has clean and safe piped water. The mission aims at improving the 'quality of life' and enhanced 'ease of living' in rural areas by making a provision of assured tap water supply to every rural household in the country by 2024.

President Droupadi Murmu has given her assent to the Public Examinations

(Prevention of Unfair Means) Bill, 2024.

President Droupadi Murmu has given her assent to the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Bill, 2024. The Bill was passed by the Parliament in the recently concluded budget session. President Droupadi Murmu has given her assent to the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Bill, 2024. The Bill was passed by the Parliament in the recently concluded budget session. The Bill intended to prohibit collusion or conspiracy to facilitate indulgence in any unfair means. As per the provisions of the Bill, committed offence will be punishable with imprisonment between three to ten years, and a fine up from ten lakh to one crore rupees. All offences under the Bill will be cognisable, non-bailable, and non-compoundable.

Union Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying, Shri Parshottam Rupala launched the realigned Animal Husbandry Infrastructure Development Fund (AHIDF) Scheme and released the Radio Jingle on AHIDF at New Delhi.

Union Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying, Shri Parshottam Rupala launched the realigned Animal Husbandry Infrastructure Development Fund (AHIDF) Scheme and released the Radio Jingle on AHIDF at New Delhi. The scheme has been realigned and will be implemented for another 3 years. The industry, FPO, Dairy Cooperatives should take benefit of the scheme. Now the Dairy Cooperatives will avail benefit of interest subvention of 3% under AHIDF instead of 2.5% which was received in DIFD. The Dairy Cooperative will also get Credit Guarantee support under the Credit Guarantee Fund of AHIDF. Amba Feed informed that they have set up 120000 MT per annum of Animal Feed plant in Coimbatore under AHIDF.

The Government of India has unveiled the prestigious 'National Creators Award' to acknowledge the growing influence of digital creators and influencers and champion India's digital economy.

The Government of India has unveiled the prestigious 'National Creators Award' to acknowledge the growing influence of digital creators and influencers and champion India's digital economy. The award aims to shine a spotlight on the multifaceted voices and talents shaping India's trajectory, while also propelling positive societal change and fostering innovation in the digital realm. The award ceremony will recognise outstanding creativity and innovation across a broad spectrum of categories, spanning storytelling, advocacy for social change, environmental sustainability, education, gaming, and beyond.

The famed Kaji nemu (kaji lemon), which has been declared the state fruit of Assam.

The famed Kaji nemu (kaji lemon), which has been declared the state fruit of Assam. Kaji nemu is a lemon whose botanical name is citrus limon, and a GI-certified product. The oval-shaped elongated lemon looks a bit like the gondhoraj lebu but is different. It is not as pungently fragrant as the gondhoraj and its peel is smooth and

thin. While this is easily available in various parts of Assam, getting Kaji nemu can be quite a task in other parts of India.

The pristine Gupteswar Forest, adjacent to Gupteswar Shiva temple in Odisha's Koraput district has been declared as the fourth Biodiversity-Heritage Site (BHS) of the state.

The pristine Gupteswar Forest, adjacent to Gupteswar Shiva temple in Odisha's Koraput district has been declared as the fourth Biodiversity-Heritage Site (BHS) of the state. The site is spread over 350 hectares of demarcated area. Along with its sacred grooves traditionally worshipped by the local community, the site is bestowed with a wide range of flora and fauna.

The second edition of India Energy Week 2024 in Goa concluded successfully, with an announcement that the next edition of the global energy conclave will be held at Yashobhoomi in New Delhi between February 11-14.

The second edition of India Energy Week 2024 in Goa concluded successfully, with an announcement that the next edition of the global energy conclave will be held at Yashobhoomi in New Delhi between February 11-14. Union Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas and Housing & Urban Affairs Shri Hardeep Singh Puri also announced that the fourth edition of the global conclave in 2026 will be back in Goa at the IPSHEM-ONGC-Training Institute. The four day event, inaugurated by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, featured global oil, gas, biofuels and renewable companies exhibiting their products and services. The International Energy Agency (IEA) released a report 'Indian Oil Market Outlook to 2030' stating India will become the largest source of global oil demand growth between 2024 and 2030.

Union minister for education, skill development & entrepreneurship, Dharmendra Pradhan launched the 100-Cube Start-Up initiative of IIT Bhubaneswar's Research and Entrepreneurship Park.

Union minister for education, skill development & entrepreneurship, Dharmendra Pradhan launched the 100-Cube Start-Up initiative of IIT Bhubaneswar's Research and Entrepreneurship Park. The 100-Cube Start-up Initiative will shape the future of the entrepreneurship landscape of Odisha and India by creating a conducive environment. During the event, IIT Bhubaneswar signed MoUs with 15 companies to build strategic collaborations for achieving the 100 Cube objective. Pradhan also officially inaugurated the 1500-seater auditorium hosting the event and laid the e-foundation for infrastructure projects worth Rs450 crores.

The Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, exempted Income Tax for the Dairy Cooperative Society.

The Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, exempted Income Tax for the Dairy Cooperative Society. A primary cooperative society engaged in supplying of

milk to the Federal Cooperative Society is eligible to claim deduction in respect of its entire profit relating to supply of milk to Unions society u/s 80P of the Income Tax Act, 1961. The surcharge on co-operative societies has been reduced from 12% to 7% on income of more than ₹1 crore and up to ₹10 crores. The rate of Alternate Minimum Tax for the cooperative societies have also been reduced from 18.5% to 15% for cooperative societies at par with companies. A higher limit of ₹ 3 crore for TDS on cash withdrawal has been provided for co-operative societies as against Rs 1 crore threshold for applicability of TDS u/s 194N for other recipients.

The “Scheme Guidelines for implementation of Pilot Projects for use of Green Hydrogen in the Transport Sector”, have been issued by the Ministry of New & Renewable Energy (MNRE) on February 14, 2024, under the National Green Hydrogen Mission.

The “Scheme Guidelines for implementation of Pilot Projects for use of Green Hydrogen in the Transport Sector”, have been issued by the Ministry of New & Renewable Energy (MNRE) on February 14, 2024, under the National Green Hydrogen Mission. With the falling costs of renewable energy and electrolyzers, it is expected that vehicles based on green hydrogen can become cost-competitive over the next few years. Future economies of scale and rapid technological advancements in the field of vehicles powered by hydrogen are likely to further improve the viability of transport based on green hydrogen. These pilot projects will be implemented through the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways and the Scheme Implementing Agencies (SIAs) nominated under this Scheme. The scheme will support development of technologies for use of Green Hydrogen as a fuel in Buses, Trucks and 4-wheelers, based on fuel cell-based propulsion technology / internal combustion engine-based propulsion technology. The other thrust area for the scheme is to support development of infrastructure such as hydrogen refuelling stations.

The Odisha Cabinet approved 'Swatantra Yuva Udyami (SWAYAM)' yojana, which is meant to provide interest-free loans to unemployed youths in the State.

The Odisha Cabinet approved 'Swatantra Yuva Udyami (SWAYAM)' yojana, which is meant to provide interest-free loans to unemployed youths in the State. The state government, in its cabinet meeting, has decided to provide interest-free loans up to Rs 1 lakh to youth of the state under the new government scheme 'Swayam'. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has also decided to give more employment or more income to the rural youth and the urban youth by introducing one new scheme, 'SWAYAM' so that people who are maintaining small enterprises can avail liquid capital without any collateral security. Under the new government scheme to create self-employment for youth, 1 lakh eligible rural and an equal number of urban youth in the age group of 18-35 years will receive interest-free loans of up to Rs 1 lakh for starting a new business or expanding an existing one. The scheme will be operational for two years and Rs 672 crore will be spent from the state's coffers.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi visit Rewari in Haryana.

During his visit, he inaugurate, dedicated to the nation, and laid the foundation stone of several development projects worth more than 9,750 crore rupees. These projects pertain to the urban transport, health, rail, and tourism sectors. One of the projects is the Gurugram Metro Rail project, which will be built at a cost of around 5,450 crore rupees. The project's total length is 28.5 Kms and will connect Millennium City Centre to Udyog Vihar Phase-5, merge with the existing metro network of Rapid Metro Rail Gurugram at Mousari Avenue station near Cyber City, and have a spur at Dwarka Expressway. In line with the Prime Minister's vision to strengthen public health infrastructure across the country, the foundation stone of All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Rewari, Haryana, will be laid. The institute will be constructed on 203 acres of land at a cost of about 1,650 crore rupees. It will have facilities such as the Hospital Complex with 720 beds, Medical College with 100 seats, Nursing College with 60 seats, and AYUSH Block with 30 beds. The Prime Minister also inaugurated the newly built Anubhav Kendra Jyotisar in Kurukshetra. The Prime Minister will also laid the foundation stone of several railway projects and dedicate them to the nation. These projects include doubling several railway lines in the State.

Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM), the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to organised a two-day national workshop convened in Ranchi, Jharkhand, from February 15-16, 2024.

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Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs Nirmala Sitharaman presided over the 19th Foundation Day celebrations of the Security Printing and Minting Corporation of India Limited (SPMCIL) through hybrid mode, in New Delhi. The programme was attended in virtual mode across various units of SPMCIL; senior officers, employees, employees/ representatives of recognised unions of Apex Bipartite Forum, EPF and GPF trustees and employees/representatives from SC, ST & OBC organisations participated enthusiastically in the event. The Union Finance Minister also launched three souvenir coins: Coloured souvenir coin on Endangered Animals of India - Greater One Horned Rhino; Bi-metallic clad souvenir coin on Enlightenment of Buddha; and Coloured souvenir coin of Ral Lalla and Ayodhya Ram Mandir.

The Government of India (GoI) has announced an increase in the authorized capital of the Food Corporation of India (FCI) from Rs10,000 Crore to Rs21,000 Crore.

The Government of India (GoI) has announced an increase in the authorized capital of the Food Corporation of India (FCI) from Rs10,000 Crore to Rs21,000 Crore. This strategic move shows the government's steadfast commitment to supporting farmers and fortifying India's agrarian economy. The increase in authorized capital is a significant step towards enhancing the operational capabilities of FCI in fulfilling its mandate effectively. GoI provides equity to FCI for working capital requirement and for creation of capital assets. These initiatives of integrated IT solutions serving as the core operational software for FCI, shall provide a single source of information and streamline functions with a common digital backbone.

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Padma Shri awardee Dr Ishwar Chander Verma (I C Verma), an advisor in the institute of medical genetics and genomics, passed away. Dr Verma has gone on to become the only doctor from Delhi to win the country's fourth-highest civilian award in 2023. Professor Verma received the prestigious Padma Shri in 2023 for his groundbreaking research contributions. He was awarded the BC Roy National Award in 1983. Under Professor Verma's exemplary guidance, the Institute of Medical Genetics and Genomics at Sir Ganga Ram Hospital (SGRH) garnered the esteemed FICCI 9th Annual Healthcare Excellence Award in 2017.

Renowned chef Imtiaz Qureshi, a recipient of the Padma Shri award, passed away at the age of 93.

Renowned chef Imtiaz Qureshi, a recipient of the Padma Shri award, passed away at the age of 93. Chef Qureshi, known for his culinary expertise as the master chef at ITC Hotels, gained acclaim for establishing the culinary brand Bukhara. Born in Kolkata in 1928, Chef Qureshi began his culinary journey at the age of seven by assisting the royal chefs in his family home. He was one of the essential pillars in popularizing the art of Dum Pukht abroad, making it a global gastronomic sensation.

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) successfully launched the INSAT-3DS mission into space aboard the heavy-lift Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle Mk-II (GSLV-MkII).

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) successfully launched the INSAT-3DS mission into space aboard the heavy-lift Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle Mk-II (GSLV-MkII). The mission, designed to operate in space for 10 years, aims to boost India's environment monitoring, oceanic observations, weather forecasting, and disaster relief operations. This orbit is over 35,000 kilometers above the Earth's equator. The INSAT-3DS, a state-of-the-art meteorological satellite, is the latest addition to India's third-generation satellites in geostationary orbit. The satellite is equipped with a multi-spectral Imager (optical radiometer) capable of capturing images of the Earth and its surroundings in six distinct wavelength bands.

SpaceX launched 'Odysseus', also known as NOVA-C, as part of the Intuitive Machines 1 Mission (IM-1) from the Kennedy Space Center in Florida.

SpaceX launched 'Odysseus', also known as NOVA-C, as part of the Intuitive Machines 1 Mission (IM-1) from the Kennedy Space Center in Florida. The aim of the mission is to place Odysseus at crater Malapert A near the lunar south pole. Odysseus carries five NASA payloads, and commercial cargo. Odysseus's payloads will study interactions between the lunar surface and plumes, which are clouds of gas. They will also perform radio astronomy experiments, and study how the lunar

surface interacts with the space weather. Odysseus will also demonstrate precision landing technologies, and exhibit communication and navigation mode capabilities. First, Odysseus will be placed into an Earth orbit of size 185 kilometres x 60,000 kilometres.

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Japan's space agency Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) successful launched its new flagship rocket on 17 February 2024, the third time, H3 launch vehicle (H3TF2) after two previous failed attempts. The H3 rocket, billed as flexible and cost-effective by space agency JAXA, "was put into orbit", after the rocket launched from the Tanegashima Space Center in southwestern Japan.

Centre For Development Of Telematics (C-DOT) and Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee (IIT-R), have signed an agreement to develop a groundbreaking 140GHz Fully Integrated Transmitter & Receiver Module for 6G and Beyond.

Centre For Development Of Telematics (C-DOT) and Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee (IIT-R), have signed an agreement to develop a groundbreaking 140GHz Fully Integrated Transmitter & Receiver Module for 6G and Beyond. The agreement, signed under the Telecom Technology Development Fund (TTDF) scheme of the Department of Telecommunications.

Google has introduced a new video generation AI model called 'Lumiere' that uses a new diffusion model called Space-Time-U-Net, or STUNet.

Google has introduced a new video generation AI model called 'Lumiere' that uses a new diffusion model called Space-Time-U-Net, or STUNet. Lumiere creates 5-second videos in one process instead of putting smaller still frames together. This technology figures out where things are in a video (space) and how they simultaneously move and change (time). The design facilitates a wide range of content creation tasks and video editing applications, including image-to-video, video inpainting, and stylised generation. It supports both text-to-video and image-to-video generation and joins existing AI models such as Runway Gen-2 and Pika 1.0.

The United World Wrestling (UWW) announced that they have lifted the suspension on the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) with immediate effect on 13th February 2024.

The United World Wrestling (UWW) announced that they have lifted the suspension on the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) with immediate effect on 13th February 2024. The candidates for this commission (WFI's Athletes' Commission) shall be active athletes or retired for no longer than four years. However, the UWW directed

the national body to provide written guarantees that there would be no discriminatory action against the protesting wrestlers and that the WFI would have to re-convene the elections of its Athletes' Commission no later than July 1, 2024.

The Indian women's badminton team clinched their maiden gold defeated Thailand (3-2) at the Badminton Asia Team Championships (BATC) 2024.

The Indian women's badminton team clinched their maiden gold defeated Thailand (3-2) at the Badminton Asia Team Championships (BATC) 2024. PV Sindhu, Gayatri Gopichand-Treesa Jolly and teenage sensational Anmol Kharb won their respective matches as India won the final 3-2 in Shah Alam. The 2024 Badminton Asia Team Championships was held at the Setia City Convention Centre in Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia, from 13 to 18 February 2024. This championships was organised by the Badminton Asia along with Badminton Association of Malaysia as the host organiser. Two-time Olympic medallist PV Sindhu, the world No. 11, kicked off the Indian title charge in style, beating the 17th ranked Supanida Katethong 21-12, 21-12.

Union Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports, Anurag Singh Thakur, handed over the Chess Olympiad Torch to Budapest, Hungary, the host of the 45th edition of the Chess Olympiad.

Union Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports, Anurag Singh Thakur, handed over the Chess Olympiad Torch to Budapest, Hungary, the host of the 45th edition of the Chess Olympiad. The transfer of the torch took place at the Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium in New Delhi. The ceremony, held at the Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium in New Delhi, was not just a formal handover but also a celebration of chess as an intellectual sport deeply rooted in India's heritage.

In the Bengaluru Open tennis, India's Saketh Myneni and Ramkumar Ramanathan won the doubles title.

In the Bengaluru Open tennis, India's Saketh Myneni and Ramkumar Ramanathan won the doubles title. Myneni and Ramkumar defeated the French pair of Constantin Kouzmine and Maxime Janvier 6-3, 6-4 to clinch the doubles title. Earlier, Stefano Napolitano of Italy defeated Nagal 6-7, 4-6 in the singles semi-final. In the second semi-final, South Korea's Seongchan Hong defeated Spain's Oriol Roca Batalla 6-2, 3-6, 6-3 to set up a summit clash with Napolitano.