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General Awareness Topic(Covered)

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PFRDA Selected NEC Corp India Private Limited as System Integrator.

NEC Corporation has been selected as SI for a period of six years, PFRDA has said. NEC Corporation India is expected to play a crucial and pivotal role in PFRDA's digital transformation journey. Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) had in February this year sought bids from prospective bidders to be appointed as SI for PFRDA-TRACE as part of Technology Architecture (TARCH) project.

Cyril Ramaphosa Re-elected as President of South Africa for 2nd Term.

Cyril Ramaphosa has been re-elected as South Africa's president for a second term after his party struck a last-minute deal with political rivals. Ramaphosa's African National Congress, which came to power in 1994 after waging a decades-long battle against apartheid, lost its majority for the first time in an election last month and spent two weeks locked in intensive behind-the-scenes talks with other parties.

Ajith Kumar KK Named as MD and CEO of Dhanlaxmi Bank for 3 Years Tenure.

Private sector Dhanlaxmi Bank on Tuesday said it has appointed Ajith Kumar KK as Managing Director (MD) of the bank. He will take charge on June 20, Kerala-based Dhanlaxmi Bank said in a regulatory filing. The board at its meeting held on Tuesday approved the appointment of Ajith Kumar KK as Managing Director & CEO of the bank for a period of three years with effect from June 20, 2024, and on such remuneration as approved by RBI vide letter dated April 18, it said.

Bharti AXA Life Appoints Akhil Gupta As New Chairman.

Akhil Gupta, the vice chairman of Bharti Enterprises, has been appointed as the new chairman of Bharti AXA Life Insurance. Gupta has been instrumental in the expansion of Bharti Airtel since its inception, bringing more than forty years of professional experience to the table. He holds a strong track record of conceptualising and implementing transformative initiatives that have had a significant impact on the Bharti Group.

ACC Approves Re-appointment of Ajit Doval as National Security Advisor & P K Mishra as Principal Secretary to PM Modi.

Ajit Doval has been reappointed the National Security Advisor (NSA) and PK Mishra the Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, the government said on Thursday, in a resounding vote for continuity under Narendra Modi's third term as the Prime Minister. Doval is a former Indian Police Service (IPS) officer of the 1968 batch and retired director of the Intelligence Bureau (IB) in 2005. He will continue to handle national security, military affairs, and intelligence. He was appointed the NSA after Modi was sworn in as the Prime Minister in May 2014 and then reappointed in 2019.

'White Lotus' actor Theo James named UNHCR global goodwill ambassador.

Theo James, who acted in the television series 'The Gentlemen' and 'The White Lotus', has supported UNHCR since 2016, and has travelled to Greece, France and Jordan to meet asylum seekers and refugees, the agency said. James said his own family's experience had "given me an understanding of the sacrifices and struggles that refugees face".

Globally Acclaimed Filmmaker Vinod Ganatra Becomes 1st Indian to Receive 'Nelson Mandela Lifetime Achievement Award' of South Africa.

Globally-acclaimed film-maker Vinod Ganatra has become the first Indian to be conferred the prestigious 'Nelson Mandela Lifetime Achievement Award' of South Africa for his contribution to films, an official said here on Tuesday. Ganatra, a well-known film-maker and editor from Gujarat, now based in Mumbai, was honoured with the coveted award at the ongoing 7th Nelson Mandela Children's Film Festival, for his immense contributions to the world of cinema for kids.

Siddhesh Sakore, Farmer From Maharashtra, Named Land Hero By UN Agency.

Siddhesh Sakore, a farmer and the founder of AGRO RANGERS, from Maharashtra, has been named Land Hero by the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). On the occasion of World Desertification and Drought Day, the UNCCD announced the names of 10 Land Heroes in a programme in Bonn, Germany, on Sunday. Apart from Siddhesh Sakore, other Land Heroes are from Brazil, Costa Rica, Germany, Mali, Moldova, Morocco, the Philippines, the US, and Zimbabwe.

SEBI bags 'Best Conduct of Business Regulatory' award in Asia Pacific by the Asian banker.

SEBI has been given 'Best Conduct of Business Regulator' award in Asia Pacific by The Asian Banker for its role in enhancing the regulatory framework for securities markets in India. The award was received by Sebi's Whole Time Member Kamlesh Chandra Varshney in a ceremony held in Hong Kong. The Asian Banker creates platforms to build a greater sense of community amongst players in the financial services industry, from traditional banks and digital disruptors to fintechs and platform players.

Sahitya Akademi Announced Yuva Puraskar, Bal Sahitya Puraskar for 2024.

Sahitya Akademi announced the winners of the prestigious Yuva Puraskar and Children's Literature Award for 2024. A total of 23 writers including English writer K Vaishali and Hindi writer Gaurav Pandey will receive the Youth Award. Vaishali has been honored for her memoir "Homeless: Growing Up Lesbian and Dyslexic in India"

and Pandey for her poetry collection "Smriti Ke Beech Ghiri Hai Prithvi". The Yuva Puraskar is given for 10 poetry books, seven short story collections and other works in various genres.

Wildlife Filmmaker Shri Subbiah Nallamuthu Won V. Shantaram Lifetime Achievement Award at 18th MIFF.

The 18th Mumbai International Film Festival (MIFF) is honoring the illustrious wildlife filmmaker Shri Subbiah Nallamuthu by conferring upon him the much coveted V. Shantaram Lifetime Achievement Award, announced Dr. L. Murugan, the Minister of State for Information & Broadcasting today. Shri Subbiah Nallamuthu, has made exceptional contributions to wildlife cinematography, earning him global acclaim. An alumnus of the Film and Television Institute of India, he gained prominence with his work on Living on the Edge, India's longest-running Panda Award-winning environment series. His expertise extends to his tenure with the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) as a high-speed cameraman.

Neobanking Startup Jupiter Money Receives Final Approval from RBI for issuance of PPI.

Tiger Global and Peak XV Partners-backed neobanking startup Jupiter has secured a prepaid payments instrument licence from the Reserve Bank of India. This will allow the Bengaluru-based startup to offer digital wallets to its users for making UPI payments, transferring funds, besides paying bills.

Kotak Mahindra Bank Insurance Collaborates with Mahindra Finance to Offer Life Insurance Products.

Kotak Mahindra Life Insurance Company Ltd. (Kotak Life) has partnered with Mahindra & Mahindra Financial Services Ltd (Mahindra Finance) to offer life insurance solutions to customers. The agreement was signed by Mahesh Balasubramanian, MD, Kotak Mahindra Life Insurance Company, and Raul Rebello, Managing Director & CEO, Mahindra Finance. Mahesh Balasubramanian of Kotak Life, said, "Through our collaboration with Mahindra Finance, our aim is to extend our outreach to the untapped segments of the population."

RBI Cancels Purvanchal Cooperative Bank's Licence.

The Reserve Bank of India cancelled the license of Mumbai based City Cooperative Bank on Wednesday, dashing the hopes of depositors about getting its merger with Cosmos Bank. Last week, the RBI had cancelled the banking license for Purvanchal Co-operative Bank Ltd., located in Ghazipur, Uttar Pradesh.

Karnataka Bank Launched KBL WISE Senior Citizen Savings Account.

Karnataka Bank at a launch event held in Bengaluru announced the launch of KBL WISE Senior Citizens Savings Bank Account, a unique banking product designed to cater to the Banking, Healthcare & Wellness needs of our esteemed senior citizens. The Product has been aptly named KBL WISE i.e.: Wellness Investments & Savings for Elderly. The Savings product is available in two exclusive variants - KBL Wise Signature, a regular variant and KBL Wise Advantage, a premium variant. This innovative product offers an array of bundled features like 'Free Top-up Health insurance upto Rs.10 Lakhs, Free MediBuddy Healthcare Benefits, Free HospiCash Facility, Discount on Locker Rentals, Doorstep Banking facility, a Lifetime Free Ru pay Platinum Debit card, and other features.

RBI Wins 'Risk Manager of the Year' award in 2024.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has won the "Risk Manager of the Year Award 2024" by Central Banking, a leading publication based in London, UK. This accolade recognizes RBI's exemplary strides in enhancing its risk culture and awareness, affirming its pivotal role in safeguarding the stability of the Indian financial system. "The Reserve Bank of India has been awarded the Risk Manager of the Year Award 2024 by Central Banking, London, UK. RBI was awarded the best risk manager for improving its risk culture and awareness. Executive Director Shri Manoranjan Mishra received the award on behalf of the RBI.

Policy Loan Facility mandated in all Life Insurance Savings Products CIS to simplify policy details.

Regulator IRDAI on Wednesday said the facility of policy loan is now mandatory in all life insurance savings products, enabling policyholders to meet liquidity requirements. Issuing a master circular which consolidates all regulations with regards to life insurance policies, the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) also said the free look period, which provides time to review the policy terms and conditions, is 30 days as against 15 days earlier.

RBI Imposes Rs 1.45 Cr Penalty on Central Bank of India.

The Reserve Bank on Friday said it has imposed a penalty of Rs 1.45 crore on the Central Bank of India for non-compliance with certain directions related to 'loans and advances' and 'customer protection'. The RBI had conducted a statutory inspection for Supervisory Evaluation (ISE 2022) of the Central Bank of India with reference to its financial position as of March 31, 2022. A notice was issued to the bank, advising it to show cause as to why a penalty should not be imposed on it for its failure to comply with the directions, the RBI said.

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a \$170 million policy-based loan to improve India's health system.

The programme will strengthen disease surveillance systems to effectively respond to public health threats. It will set up laboratory networks for infectious disease surveillance at the state, union, and metropolitan levels. It will also support the establishment of robust data systems to monitor and coordinate national health programmes for the poor, women, and other vulnerable groups. The programme will improve the governance and coordination of India's One Health approach, its multisector response to emerging infectious diseases.

SabPaisa Gets RBI Nod To Operate As A Payment Aggregator.

Payments solutions startup SabPaisa has received 'in-principle' approval from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to operate as a payment aggregator. The licence will enable SabPaisa to fill the 'innovation gap' and scale its offerings to onboard more merchants onto its fold. The authorisation will also enable the startup to bring 'unification, inclusivity, experience and performance' in the platform's product suite.

Board of Axis Bank gives nod to hike stake in Max Life for Rs 336 cr.

The board of private sector lender Axis Bank on Wednesday gave approval to increase its stake in Max Life Insurance to 19.99 per cent. The equity stake will be acquired for Rs 336 crore. "The board of directors of the bank, at its meeting held on June 19, 2024, has approved a proposal for the acquisition of additional equity shares of Max Life by the bank for an amount of up to Rs 336 crore, thereby increasing the aggregate shareholding of the Axis entities from 19.02 per cent to 19.99 per cent," the lender informed the exchanges.

Alia Bhatt Launches Her Debut Children's Book Titled 'Ed Finds a Home'.

Alia Bhatt celebrated Father's Day in the most unique way possible. She shared the first look of her book on Instagram. "Ed Finds a Home is just the beginning of a new series of books from the universe of Ed-a-mamma.. My childhood was full of storytelling and storytellers .. and one day I had a dream to bring out that child in me and put it into books for children. Fingers crossed for this journey ahead," wrote Alia as she shared a picture of herself grinning with joy as she held her first book in her hand.

Alpana Killawala Authored a Memoir titled 'A Fly on the RBI Wall'.

Harshad Mehta scam, liberalisation of the Indian economy — Alpana Killawala's tenure with the communications department of the Reserve Bank of India coincided with a very vibrant phase of the central bank. 'A Fly on the RBI Wall' is a no-holds-barred account of her journey, a peek into the minds of the governors, all eminent scholars, under whom she worked over the course of a career spanning more than two decades.

HAL receives RFP from MoD for 156 light combat helicopters worth Rs 45000 crores.

Hindustan Aeronautics (HAL) shares hit a new high of Rs 5,484.20 as they surged 5 per cent on the BSE in Tuesday's intraday trade after the company, on Monday, said the Defence Ministry has issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) for 156 Light Combat Helicopters (LCH). HAL has notified that a RFP has been issued to the company by the Ministry of Defence (MoD) for procurement of 156 LCH Prachand or Light Combat Helicopters (90 for the Indian Army and 66 for the Indian Air Force).

Indian Army gets its 1st Batch of 1st Indigenous LM Nagastra-1 with Reusable Technology.

An important step towards attaining "Aatmanirbharta" (self-reliance) in defence and ammunition systems, the Indian Army has received the first batch Nagastra-1, the country's first indigenous loiter munition made by Solar Industries in Nagpur. The Indian Army has placed an order to supply 480 Loiter Munitions under Emergency Procurement Powers, with Solar Industries subsidiary Economics Explosives Ltd (EEL). "After successful completion of pre-delivery inspections, EEL delivered 120 Loiter Munitions to an Army Ammunition Depot," defence officials were quoted by ANI as saying.

Sagar Defence Engineering Secures Contract from DRDO to Develop Cutting-Edge ULUAVs.

In a significant boost to India's military capabilities, Sagar Defence Engineering Pvt. Ltd. from Pune has secured a contract from the Defence Research and Development Organisation's (DRDO) Technology Development Fund (TDF) to develop Underwater Launched Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (ULUAVs). The contract was officially signed between Dr Nidhi Bansal, Director of TDF, and Sagar Defence Engineering Pvt. Ltd. in the presence of Dr GA Srinivasa Murthy, Director of the Defence Research & Development Laboratory (DRDL) in Hyderabad along with the PMMG team, DRDL, and the user, a representative from the Directorate of Submarine Acquisition (DSMAQ) of the Indian Navy. This highlights the collaborative effort to propel India's defence technology to new heights.

USA Conducted Operational Test Launch of Minuteman III ICBMs.

"An operational test launch of an Air Force Global Strike Command unarmed Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missile launched from Vandenberg Space Force Base on Tuesday, June 4, at 12:56 a.m. PT. The purpose of the ICBM test launch program is to validate and verify the safety, security, effectiveness, and readiness of the weapon system, according to Air Force Global Strike Command," the space force base said in a statement. (Agencies)

Ukraine Launches World's 1st Unmanned Systems Forces.

In a move aimed at revolutionizing modern warfare, Ukraine has officially established the world's first Unmanned Systems Forces (USF), dedicated to advancing the capabilities of unmanned and robotic warfare across air, sea, and ground domains.

India Possesses 172 Warheads; More Nuclear Weapons than Pakistan.

India's nuclear warheads numbered slightly higher than Pakistan's as of January this year, Swedish think-tank Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) said on Monday. The SIPRI report said that the world's nine nuclear-armed states -- the United States (US), Russia, the United Kingdom (UK), France, China, India, Pakistan, North Korea and Israel -- continued to modernise their nuclear arsenals in 2023, with several of them deploying new nuclear-armed or nuclear-capable weapon systems that same year.

Fitch Ratings raises India's 2024/25 GDP forecast to 7.2%.

India is expected to grow by 7.2% in the current fiscal year, stronger than earlier expected, with its central bank opting for just a one-quarter-point rate cut in that period, Fitch Ratings said in its quarterly Global Economic Outlook (GEO) report published on Tuesday.

CII estimates India's GDP to grow at 8% in 2024 inflation likely to remain within RBI is 4% target.

According to the CII, the measures implemented by the government aimed at simplifying business processes. These measures have been beneficial for both small and medium-sized enterprises, which are the backbone of the nation. CII's positive outlook is based on several key factors. The organization expects India to grow at a rate of 8 percent. During the event, Puri emphasized that policy interventions, particularly the ones aimed at improving the Ease of Doing Business (EODB), have strengthened the Indian economy.

India to maintain 6.5 to 7% Y-o-Y GDP Growth between FY26 and FY30.

India is expected to sustain a potential growth rate of 6.5 per cent -7 per cent year-on-year (Y-o-Y) between 2025-26 and 2029-30, UBS Securities said on Monday. During FY25, India is expected to grow at 7 per cent as post-pandemic recovery in the capital expenditure (capex) cycle, driven by government spending and strong residential real estate demand is likely to continue, said Tanvee Gupta Jain, chief India economist at UBS Securities. In the recent review of the monetary policy, the Reserve Bank of India revised its FY25 gross domestic product (GDP) forecast to 7.2 per cent from 7 per cent projected in April.

Assam secretariat becomes India's first eco - friendly state government headquarters.

The Assam secretariat on Sunday became the country's first green state government headquarters with the inauguration of a 2.5 MW solar power project on its campus, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said. Installed at a cost of Rs 12.5 crores, the grid-connected rooftop solar power plant will save Rs 30 lakhs in electricity bills every month, he said while addressing the official programme here.

NITI Aayog launched initiatives under Atal innovation mission to Foster innovation.

Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog is Government of India's flagship initiative to promote a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship in the country and was setup in 2016. Towards this end AIM has taken a holistic approach to ensure creation of a problem-solving innovative mindset in schools and creating an ecosystem of entrepreneurship in universities, research institutions, private and MSME sector. All the initiatives of AIM are currently monitored and managed systematically using real-time MIS systems and dynamic dashboards. AIM is also currently having its programs reviewed by third party agencies for ensuring continuous improvements.

Assam Launches 'Mukhya Mantri Nijut Moina' Scheme to Promote Girl Education.

Assam chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said that in a push to increase enrolment of girl students in higher education, the Cabinet has accorded approval to provide financial assistance to girl students under the Mukhya Mantri Nijut Moina scheme to be offered as Admission Assistance. Girl students enrolled in Higher Secondary, Degree First Year and PG First Year of Government and Venture Schools, Colleges and Universities irrespective of their economic status is eligible for this scheme. The chief minister added, "From this academic year, both Boys and Girls who score more than 75% marks will receive 10,000 as a one-time financial grant under the Anundoram Borooh Scheme. From next academic year, scooters will be distributed to both boy and girl students who secure more than 75% marks.

World Blood Donor Day is celebrated on 14th June.

World Blood Donor Day, celebrated annually on 14 June, is a worldwide celebration to honour and thank those people who donate their blood, voluntarily and unpaid, to give others the gift of life. It is celebrated on the day of birthday anniversary of Karl Landsteiner, who discovered the ABO blood group system. We encourage our Member States to provide resources and infrastructure to facilitate voluntary blood donation, and to support the development of nationally coordinated blood transfusion services that provide equitable access to safe and quality assured blood transfusions for the whole population.

International Day of Family Remittances is Celebrated on June 16

It is projected that by 2030 more than US\$ 5 trillion will have been sent home by migrants to low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), with much of this money going directly to rural areas where 80 percent of the world's poor live, facing food shortages and the impacts of climate change. This money is sent by migrant and diaspora communities and directly supports millions of families in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by contributing to their poverty alleviation, education, healthcare, small business development, gender equality, and rural economic growth.

World day to Combat Desertification and Drought is Observed on June 17.

Desertification, land degradation, and drought are among the most pressing environmental challenges of our time, with up to 40% of all land area worldwide already considered degraded. Healthy land not only provides us with almost 95% of our food but so much more: it clothes and shelters us, provides jobs and livelihoods, and protects us from the worsening droughts, floods and wildfires. At the same time, growing populations coupled with unsustainable production and consumption patterns fuel demand for natural resources, putting excessive pressure on land to the point of degradation. Desertification and drought are driving forced migration, putting tens of millions of people each year at risk of displacement.

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day is overserved on June 15th.

As the world prepares to observe World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) on 15 June, this year UN DESA programme on ageing, in partnership with the International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (INPEA), will focus on the theme, "Spotlight on Older Persons in Emergencies," to highlight the critical need to protect and support older persons during crises.

ASEAN Dengue Day is observed on June 15th.

Dengue is a mosquito-borne viral disease that has rapidly spread in most ASEAN countries in recent years. The virus is transmitted by female mosquitoes mainly of the species *Aedesaegypti*. Dengue is widespread throughout ASEAN, with local variations in risk influenced by climate parameters as well as social and environmental factors. The disease causes a wide spectrum of disease, ranging from subclinical disease to severe flu-like symptoms and some people develop severe dengue associated with severe bleeding, organ impairment and/or plasma leakage. Severe dengue was recognized in the 1950s during dengue epidemics in the Philippines and Thailand. Today, severe dengue affects most Asian countries and has become a leading cause of hospitalization and death among children and adults in these regions.

World Crocodile Day is Celebrated on June 17.

June 17 marks World Croc Day, an occasion that is dedicated to celebrating and raising awareness about one of the world's most formidable reptiles: the crocodile. This day isn't just for herpetologists or wildlife enthusiasts. It's for everyone. From understanding the unique characteristics of crocodiles to acknowledging the threats they face, World Croc Day offers a chance for us to learn, appreciate, and take action to protect these ancient creatures.

International Day for Countering Hate Speech is observed on 18 June.

The United Nations has a long history of mobilizing the world against hatred of all kinds to defend human rights and advance the rule of law. The impact of hate speech cuts across numerous UN areas of focus, from protecting human rights and preventing atrocities to sustaining peace, achieving gender equality and supporting children and youth.

Global Wind Day is celebrated on June 15th.

Global Wind Day or World Wind Day is a worldwide event that is held on June 15. It is organised by WindEurope and GWEC (Global Wind Energy Council). It is a day when wind energy is celebrated, information is exchanged and adults and children find out about wind energy, its power and the possibilities it holds to change the world. In association with EWEA and GWEC, national wind energy associations and companies involved in wind energy production organise events in many countries around the world. In 2011, there were events organised in 30 countries, on 4 continents. Events included visits to onshore and offshore wind farms, information campaigns, demonstration turbines being set up in cities, wind workshops and a wind parade. Many events happened on Global Wind Day (15 June) itself, but there were also events on the days and weeks before and afterwards.

Autistic Pride Day is celebrated on June 18.

Autistic Pride Day is an annual celebration for autistic individuals. This day acknowledges the significance of pride for autistic people and its impact on fostering positive societal changes. Autistic individuals, their families, and allies unite to honour the strengths, talents, and unique perspectives of those on the autism spectrum. It serves as a platform to celebrate the achievements and contributions of autistic individuals in various fields, advocating for inclusivity, equality, and respect for autistic voices.

International Picnic Day is celebrated on 18 June.

From bustling cities to serene countryside, families and friends worldwide gather to celebrate International Picnic Day on June 18, a tradition that brings communities together under the open sky. The concept of a picnic is believed to have originated in France after the Revolution. The term “pique-nique” first appeared in print in 1692, and it referred to a group of people who brought their own wine to a restaurant.

Sustainable Gastronomy Day is observed on June 18 every year.

Sustainable Gastronomy Day is observed on June 18 every year. The day is celebrated to promote the idea that sustainable gastronomy can play a significant role in achieving sustainable development. Recognizing gastronomy as a form of cultural expression connected to the world's nature and cultural diversity is another important goal for the day.

National Reading Day is celebrated on June 19.

Reading is an essential activity that not only helps you unwind but learn, focus and hone your communication skills. Before the internet dominion and way before television, people relied on reading as the medium of communication. National Reading Day is observed on P.N. Panicker's death anniversary and serves as a tribute to his vision, passion, and unwavering commitment to promoting reading as a means of personal and societal growth. It encourages individuals to celebrate the joys of reading, explore the wealth of knowledge available in books, and recognize the transformative power of reading in shaping individuals and communities.

International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict is Observed on June 19.

Conflict-related sexual violence is a devastating form of attack and repression, which has lasting, harmful effects on survivors' physical, sexual, reproductive, and mental health, and destroys the social fabric of communities. Despite widespread awareness and condemnation, this grotesque crime continues around the world. The past year has seen harrowing reports of sexual violence from Sudan to Haiti and Israel. Far too often, the perpetrators walk free while survivors spend their entire lives in recovery.

World Sickle Cell Day is Observed on June 19.

World Sickle Cell Awareness Day, observed annually on June 19th, serves as a crucial platform for raising awareness about sickle cell disease (SCD), a genetic blood disorder affecting millions worldwide. The day aims to highlight the struggles faced by those with SCD, promote understanding of the disease, and streamline efforts towards improving patient care and finding a cure. The international awareness day also seeks to increase public knowledge and understanding of the challenges experienced by patients, their families, and caregivers.

Each year on 20 June, the world celebrates World Refugee Day.

World Refugee Day is an international day designated by the United Nations to honour refugees around the globe. It falls each year on 20 June and celebrates the strength and courage of people who have been forced to flee their home country to escape conflict or persecution.

India Becomes the Most Represented Nation in THE University Impact Rankings 2024.

India has brilliantly performed in the Times Higher Education (THE) University Impact Rankings 2024. It is being reported that India has made an impressive 105 university mentions in the list, becoming the most represented nation. In total, 2,152 universities from 125 countries and regions were included on the Impact Rankings 2024 list. Closely following India, are the countries of Turkey at second place and Pakistan at third. The first on the list is Western Sydney University, Australia, with a score of 99.7. This is its third consecutive year at the top. The University of Manchester, UK is placed at second, with a score of 98.5. University of Tasmania, Australia, has been placed at third.

SDR Report says World Falling Behind on Environment, Health, and Hunger SDGs.

The world is way off track on most of the sustainable development targets agreed in 2015, such as tackling poverty and hunger, says a United Nations report which cites funding shortfalls, geopolitical tensions and the COVID-19 pandemic. The U.N.'s annual Sustainable Development Report ranks the performance of its 193 member states in implementing 17 wide-ranging "sustainable development goals" (SDGs), which also include improving access to education and health care, providing clean energy and protecting biodiversity.

India stands at 116th Rank out of 163 countries in Global Peace Index 2024, Iceland Tops the list.

The Institute for Economics and Peace's annual Global Peace Index provides a comprehensive framework for evaluating the peacefulness of nations. It assesses the level of peacefulness in 163 countries and territories around the world. India, in particular, has shown a slight improvement in its ranking in the GPI. In 2023, India ranked 126 out of 163 countries, with an overall score of 2.31. In previous rankings, it stood at 139 in GPI 2020 and 141 in GPI 2019.

India Ranks 176 out of 180 Countries in Environment Performance Index 2024.

India, the third-largest emitter of greenhouse gases, has found itself among the lowest-ranked countries for air quality, projected emissions, and biodiversity in the

2024 Environmental Performance Index (EPI) released on June 5. In the overall index, India placed 176th out of 180 countries, surpassing only Pakistan, Vietnam, Laos, and Myanmar. This is a modest improvement from the previous EPI, where India was at the very bottom. This year's EPI introduced a new category for biodiversity and habitat, revealing alarming encroachments of protected areas by buildings and croplands. The index now evaluates 58 indicators, including air and water quality, waste management, emission growth rates, and projected emissions under three main categories: ecosystem vitality, environmental health, and climate change. These indicators provide a gauge at a national scale of how close countries are to established environmental policy targets.

Indian Firms among World's Top 100 most valuable brands in Kantar BrandZ 2024 report.

Four Indian companies have made it to the list of 100 most valuable global brands this year. While Apple has topped the Kantar BrandZ Most Valuable Global Brands Report, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), HDFC Bank, Airtel and Infosys from India also made the cut. In the 2024 list, TCS has been ranked the 46th most valuable global brand, having a valuation of around \$44.8 billion. It is followed by HDFC Bank, in the 47th spot, with a brand value of approximately \$43.3 billion. At 73 is Airtel, valued at around \$25.3 billion. Next, in the 74th spot, is Infosys, with its brand value of around \$24.7 billion.

IMD & ONAMET of Dominican Republic Signed MoU to Enhance Meteorological Capabilities.

India and the Dominican Republic are joining forces to enhance the technical capabilities of the National Meteorological Office (ONAMET). This collaboration is cemented by a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) and ONAMET, aimed at improving weather forecasting and monitoring. The MoU includes training personnel, exchanging expertise on early warning systems, and accessing satellite data to develop better meteorological models. This initiative is crucial as climate change increasingly impacts weather patterns, making accurate forecasting more vital than ever.

Gautam Adani Meets Bhutan PM Tshering Tobgay; Signed MoU to Establish 570 MW Hydroelectric Plant.

AdGroup chairman Gautam Adani has met with Bhutan Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay in a significant development for bilateral cooperation. Adani and Prime Minister Tobgay signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Bhutan's Druk Green Power Corporation for the establishment of a 570 MW hydroelectric plant in Chukha province. Further, he praised Bhutan's efforts to develop infrastructure under the vision of King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck and expressed eagerness to collaborate on hydro and other projects in Bhutan.

MEA & SBI Signed MoU to enhance Digital Payment Services for Users eMigrate Portal.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and the State Bank of India (SBI) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Saturday to enhance digital payment services for users of the eMigrate portal. The agreement was signed by Joint Secretary OE and PGE (Overseas Employment and Protector General of Emigrants) Bramha Kumar, on behalf of the Ministry, and Neelesh Dwivedi, General Manager (NW-I) from SBI, at Sushma Swaraj Bhawan in Delhi. This MoU will become operational following the successful integration of SBI's payment gateway, SBlePay, with the eMigrate portal.

IFC commits \$105 million in Brookfield's 500 MW solar project.

To be located in Bikaner, Rajasthan, the project is currently being developed by Brookfield Asset Management. The funding will involve long-term non-convertible debentures allocated to the special purpose vehicles which will be responsible for executing the project. The project will be integrated to the inter-state transmission system of India's green energy corridor. Brookfield will supply solar power to commercial and industrial consumers at competitive rates through long-term power purchase agreements and also participate in merchant markets through power exchanges. Through collaboration with Brookfield, IFC seeks to promote the widespread adoption of clean energy by proving the feasibility of large-scale renewable energy generation and its distribution to corporate and industrial clients throughout India via the interstate transmission network.

India & Gambia Signed Extension of MoU on Governance Reforms for 5 Years.

The original MoU, signed on July 8, 2021, laid the foundation for a three-year partnership aimed at improving governance practices in both countries. The extension signifies a continued commitment to this collaboration, underscoring the shared goal of promoting transparency, accountability, and efficiency in public administration. The MoU focuses on the exchange and implementation of best practices in administrative reforms through various initiatives, including good governance webinars, research publications, and capacity-building programs. Key areas of cooperation include improving performance management systems in government, implementing contributory pension schemes, and advancing e-recruitment processes.

ISRO Partners with Manav Rachna University, Establishing New Milestone with GNSS Receiver Deployment.

In a pioneering collaboration, Manav Rachna University (MRU) has become the first university in Delhi NCR to install a Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) receiver, thanks to a partnership with the National Atmospheric Research Laboratory

(NARL) of the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO). This significant development was marked by the setup of a GNSS and Space Weather Laboratory at the MRU campus.

The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship partners with Australian Government to energise Agriculture Sector of India with emerging skills.

The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE), in collaboration with the Australian Government, hosted a comprehensive and productive roundtable to discuss the learnings from the Australia-India Critical Agriculture Skills Pilot Project. Led by Shri Atul Kumar Tiwari, Secretary, MSDE, and Mr. Mathew Johnston, Minister Counsellor, Education and Research, Australian High Commission, the roundtable focussed on the opportunities that lay beyond in taking the initiative forward, bringing it up to scale and replicating the model to other sectors. Representatives from the National Council for Vocational Education and Training (NCVET), National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), Indian Council for Agricultural Research (ICAR), Ministry of Education (MoE), and Agriculture Skill Council of India (ASCI) were also part of the roundtable.

Federal Bank launches UPI-enabled RuPay Wave Credit Card.

Federal Bank has joined hands with the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) to launch RuPay Wave Credit Card. The new card will help customers with the convenience of UPI-powered transactions on a robust RuPay network. It will seamlessly integrate the benefits and features of RuPay credit cards with the experience of UPI payments, ushering in a new era of simplicity and efficiency in digital transactions.

India Post Payments Bank and Ria Partner to Launch Doorstep Remittance Services in Rural India.

The partnership aims to combine IPPB's reach through India's postal network with Ria's global network of international inward money transfer services to provide doorstep financial services. According to a press release, the transactions will be made available at more than 25,000 Post Offices immediately, with an expected reach of over 100,000 locations.

Ophichthus Suryai, A New Species of Snake Eel Discovered Off Odisha Coast.

Scientists of the Zoological Survey of India's (ZSI) regional centre at Gopalpur in Odisha's Ganjam district have discovered a new species of snake eel from different estuarine ecosystems in the state, an official said. At least six specimens have been collected from the Subarnarekha river at Talasara in Balasore district, Paradip in Jagatsinghpur district and Bahuda river near Sunapur in Ganjam district at different times last year.

RBI Monetary Policy Raises FY25 real GDP growth forecast to 7.2% from 7%.

The Reserve Bank of India, in its June monetary policy, has raised its real GDP growth forecast for the current financial year 2024–25 (FY25) to 7.2 percent from 7 percent earlier. This comes after, in FY24, the GDP growth expanded to 8.2 percent, exceeding analysts' expectations.

Madhya Pradesh CM Mohan Yadav Inaugurates PM Shri Tourism Air Service From Bhopal.

In Madhya Pradesh, the BJP government led by Chief Minister Dr Mohan Yadav has completed 180 days of its tenure. On this occasion, the Chief Minister inaugurated the PM Shri Tourism Air Service from Bhopal today. Akashvani correspondent reports, Chief Minister Dr Mohan Yadav today inaugurated the PM Shri Tourism Air Service at Raja Bhoj Airport in Bhopal by flagging off the aircraft. On this occasion, the Chief Minister said that the launching of air service will make it easier for any common man to travel.

New Postal Law 'Post Office Act 2023' Comes Into Effect.

The central government has issued a notification giving effect to the provisions of the new postal law, the Post Office Act, 2023, from June 18. According to a Ministry of Communications release, "The Post Office Act, 2023," vide notification dated June 17, 2024, comes into force with effect from June 18, 2024, and repeals the Indian Post Office Act, 1898." "The Post Office Bill, 2023" was introduced in Rajya Sabha on August 10, 2023, and passed in Rajya Sabha on December 4, 2023. The bill was then considered and passed by the Lok Sabha on December 12 and 18, 2023.

Shri Chirag Paswan and Shri Ravneet Singh launch Website and Mobile App for World Food India 2024.

As a precursor to the 3rd edition of World Food India, Union Minister of Food Processing Industries, Shri Chirag Paswan and Union Minister of State for Food Processing Industries and Railways, Shri Ravneet Singh, launched the website and mobile application for World Food India 2024.

Army Hospital (R&R) Delhi Launches First-of-its-Kind Skin Bank Facility for Armed Forces.

The Indian Army has launched a first-of-its-kind skin bank facility that aims to revolutionise the treatment of severe burn injuries and other skin-related conditions for service personnel and their families. The defence ministry in a statement on Tuesday said the skin bank will be staffed by a team of highly-trained medical professionals, including plastic surgeons, tissue engineers and specialised technicians.

Gol Introduced Rules for Offshore Minerals Ahead of the Auctions.

In a bid to kick-start the nation's offshore mineral auctions, the Centre has introduced the Offshore Areas (Existence of Mineral Resources) Rules, 2024. This comprehensive regulatory framework mandates rigorous exploration standards to ensure accurate assessment and sustainable development of offshore mineral resources. According to the new rules dated June 6, a minimum of general exploration (G2) is required to grant mining leases, while general exploration (G4) is necessary for obtaining composite licences. These standards are designed to provide a clear and structured approach to evaluating the presence and potential of mineral resources before advancing for extraction.

Virat Kohli Tops Kroll's 2023 Celebrity Brand Valuation Report with USD 228 Million.

Virat Kohli topped the list of celebrity brands with a value of \$227.9 million, moving up from second place the previous year. Ranveer Singh followed in second place with a brand value of \$203.1 million, down from his top spot in 2022. Shah Rukh Khan secured the third position with a brand value of \$120.7 million, marking a significant rise from his tenth place ranking in 2022. Akshay Kumar claimed fourth place with a brand value of \$111.7 million, slightly lower than his third place in the previous year.

Sankara Eye Foundation India Launches First-of-its-kind Innovation Lab for Eye Care in India.

Sankara Eye Foundation, India has launched the country's first-of-its-kind Innovation Lab supported by G.D. Naidu Charities, focused on advancing eye care through cutting-edge research, development, and training. This center aims to deliver high-quality eye care solutions to underserved populations in India, reaching the most remote rural villages with innovative approaches to diagnosis, treatment, and prevention.

Cabinet approves development of Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport, Varanasi.

The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi today approved the proposal of Airports Authority of India (AAI) for development of Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport, Varanasi including Construction of New Terminal Building, Apron Extension, Runway Extension, Parallel Taxi Track & Allied works.

Karnataka becomes 1st State to give RS 1 Cr Accident Insurance Compensation; KSRTC distributes RS 1 Cr to Employees Dependents.

Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy on Wednesday distributed compensation of Rs 1 crore each to the dependents of four Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) employees who died in road accidents while on duty. The amount was

awarded under KSRTC's accident insurance relief compensation (Saarige Suraksha). At a programme held at the KSRTC head office here, the minister also handed over Rs 10 lakh each to the dependents of 23 employees who died due to various ailments, under KSRTC's employees' family welfare compensation scheme.

Former Odisha Governor Murlidhar Chandrakant Bhandare Passed Away on June 15 at the age of 95.

Born on December 10, 1928 at Mumbai, he had been appointed the Governor of Odisha on August 21, 2007 and succeeded Rameshwar Thakur. He continued in the office until the appointment of SC Jamir on March 9, 2013. Former Governor Murlidhar Chandrakant Bhandare passed away on Saturday. He was 95. As a senior advocate in the Supreme Court, Bhandare was respected as a champion of the causes of the common man. He was the president of the Supreme Court Bar Association for two terms.

Srinivasa Hegde, Former ISRO Scientist & Mission Director of Chandrayaan-1, passed away.

Former Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) scientist and Mission Director for India's first deep space mission—Chandrayaan-1, Srinivas Hedge (71) passed away on Friday noon, at a private hospital in the presence of his family and friends. Hegde was reeling with health complications for several years, and on Thursday evening he suffered a cardiac arrest. He was on a ventilator until Friday afternoon in a hospital in Jayanagar, Bengaluru.

Legendary Bharatanatyam dancer C.V. Chandrasekhar passes away.

Academician, dancer, musician, choreographer and mentor — C.V. Chandrasekhar (fondly referred to as CVC or Chandru anna) handled them all in a way uniquely his own. He was an artiste whom the entire dance fraternity looked up to in reverence. When it came to art practice, he brooked no compromise. His was a life rich in artistic values. The 89-year-old dancer passed away this morning.

Wartsila Launches World First Large Scale 100% Hydrogen Ready Engine Power Plant.

As per the company, the new engine power plant wcan run on natural gas and 25 vol% hydrogen blends. "The Wartsila 31 engine platform, which the hydrogen-ready power plant is based on, is the most efficient in the world. It synchronises with the grid within 30 seconds from start command, ensures energy security through fuel flexibility and offers unparalleled load following capabilities and high part load efficiency.

India Develops 4% of global antibacterial Agents.

The number of antibacterial agents in the clinical pipeline, including antibiotics, increased globally from 80 in 2021 to 97 in 2023, according to the World Health Organization, India has 4% of the total percentage of antibacterial agents in clinical development by location of research facilities, according to the report on antibacterial agents in clinical and preclinical development worldwide. Among the upper middle-income countries, China, Russia and South Africa comprised 7%, 3%, and 2% of the agents, respectively, and 84% put together from the pipeline was in the high-income countries.

Reliance JPL JV Orbit Connect India Received Approval from IN-SPACe to Launch Satellite Internet in India.

A joint venture between Reliance Industries' Jio Platforms and Luxembourg-based SES has received the approval from Indian space regulator, Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACe), to operate satellites in the country. The approvals were issued to Orbit Connect India that will provide satellite-based high-speed internet access.

Lal, Mursan & Hilsa are Craters on Mars named after Towns of Bihar and UP and Indian Physicist.

Lal, Mursan and Hilsa are three craters on the surface of Mars, discovered by Ahmedabad's Physical Research Laboratory (PRL), that could hold proof that there was water on the red planet at some point in the past. The biggest crater of the three - Lal - has been named after the late Professor Devendra Lal, a legendary cosmic ray physicist from Varanasi and the director of PRL between 1972 and 1983.

Sumit Nagal finishes runner-up at ATP Perugia Challenger.

Sumit Nagal produced a weak effort to go down against Italy's Luciano Darder in a lop-sided final of the ATP Perugia Challenger on Sunday. The 26-year-old Nagal was no match for Darder, losing 1-6, 2-6 in little over one hour in the summit clash as he failed to claim his third title this year. Nagal had advanced to the final with a fighting 7-6 (2), 1-6, 6-2 win over former world No. 37 Bernabe Zapata Miralles of Spain.