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## General Awareness Topic(Covered)

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**Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the 'Pradhan Mantri Samajik Utthan and Rozgar Adharit Jankalyan' (PM-SURAJ) national portal and sanctioned credit support to one lakh entrepreneurs of disadvantaged sections.**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the 'Pradhan Mantri Samajik Utthan and Rozgar Adharit Jankalyan' (PM-SURAJ) national portal and sanctioned credit support to one lakh entrepreneurs of disadvantaged sections. Interacting with beneficiaries of various government schemes, including Scheduled Caste, Backward Classes, and sanitation workers, PM Modi emphasized the government's commitment to prioritise the underprivileged. The portal was launched during an event organized by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. The event also saw active participation, with over 3 lakh individuals attending offline, and an additional 3 lakh viewers tuning in online. The portal aims to provide credit support to eligible individuals across the country, including Scheduled Castes and Backward Classes, and sanitation workers.

**Russian President Vladimir Putin has won 5th term as the president of Russia in the 2024 presidential elections.**

Russian President Vladimir Putin has won 5th term as the president of Russia in the 2024 presidential elections. He claimed another six-year term by getting 87 percent of the vote with 80 percent of the precincts counted. Communist candidate Nikolai Kharitonov finished second and newcomer Vladislav Davankov third. Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin is a Russian politician and former intelligence officer who is the president of Russia. Putin has held continuous positions as president or prime minister since 1999, as prime minister from 1999 to 2000 and from 2008 to 2012, and as president from 2000 to 2008 and since 2012.

**Sheetal Devi, a distinguished Para-archer, and Arjuna Awardee, was announced as the National Icon in the PwD category.**

Sheetal Devi, a distinguished Para-archer, and Arjuna Awardee, was announced as the National Icon in the PwD category. In a first of its kind initiative, the Election Commission of India (ECI) in association with the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) organised an Exhibition Cricket Match between the Indian Deaf Cricket Association Team and the Delhi & District Cricket Association team. The match was held on March 16, 2024 at Karnail Singh Stadium in New Delhi. The event was graced by Chief Election Commissioner Shri Rajiv Kumar and Election Commissioner's Shri Gyanesh Kumar and Shri Sukhbir Singh Sandhu who felicitated the winning team.

**The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has announced the formation of an expert 16-member committee, chaired by Dr. V K Paul, to review the implementation of AB-PMJAY.**

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has announced the formation of an expert committee to review the implementation of Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY). The 16-member committee, chaired by Dr. V K Paul (Vinod Kumar Paul), Member (Health) at NITI Aayog, will oversee the progress of AB-PMJAY in terms of beneficiary identification, hospitalisation, and modes of implementation. A key task of the committee is to suggest measures to prevent fraud or misuse of the scheme. Additionally, the committee will discuss ways to provide linkages with Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM) and Ayushman Arogya Mandirs (AAMs). The government has formally notified the setting up of the committee on 8 March 2024 and has set a deadline of 45 days for the panel to submit its report.

**Kotak Mahindra Bank has appointed Jaideep Hansraj, the managing director & CEO of Kotak Securities, as the group president-One Kotak.**

Kotak Mahindra Bank has appointed Jaideep Hansraj, the managing director & CEO of Kotak Securities, as the group president-One Kotak, with effect from April 1, 2024. The appointment is important for leveraging the Group's financial conglomerate model and delivering holistic propositions to customers. Kotak Securities president and COO Shripal Shah will take over as the MD & CEO from Hansraj after receiving necessary approvals.

**The Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) has unanimously elected Ashwani Kumar as its new president.**

The Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) has unanimously elected Ashwani Kumar as its new president. Kumar, who is a Jalandhar-based engineering exporter, replaced Dr A Sakthivel. Besides serving as the Regional Chairman (Northern Region) of the organisation, Kumar has also represented various forums of Jalandhar. He is taking over the post at a time when global trade is undergoing a sea change.

**Kishor Makwana assumed the charge of Chairman of National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC) in New Delhi.**

Kishor Makwana assumed the charge of Chairman of National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC) in New Delhi. Luv Kush Kumar also assumed the charge of Member of NCSC. Makwana served as a joint spokesperson of the Gujarat unit of the Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP). He is also a journalist and a columnist. He has been an Author of more than 33 books. Makwana has written 9 books on Dr. Ambedkar.

**Indian athlete Devendra Jhajharia was elected as the new president of the Paralympic Committee of India (PCI).**

Indian athlete Devendra Jhajharia was elected as the new president of the Paralympic Committee of India (PCI). Jhajharia, javelin thrower, who has secured three medals at the Paralympics, including two golds and a silver, was elected to the top post of the organisation and has taken over the post from Deepa Malik, a Paralympics silver medalist athlete. He had won a gold medal each in the 2004 Athens and 2016 Rio Paralympics in the F46 disability category, was the only candidate in the fray for the top post. Jayawant Hammanawar, an international coach and referee from Goa, was elected unopposed as the secretary general. R. Chandrashekhar and Satya Prakash Sangwan will be the two vice-presidents, while Sunil Pradhan was the lone candidate for the treasurer's post. Lalit Thakur and T. Diwakara are the two joint-secretaries.

### **Retired Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officers Gyanesh Kumar and Dr Sukhbir Singh Sandhu appointed as the new election commissioners in the Election Commission of India.**

Retired Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officers Gyanesh Kumar and Dr Sukhbir Singh Sandhu appointed as the new election commissioners in the Election Commission of India. They were appointed election commissioners by the selection panel chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The two vacancies were created in the Election Commission after the retirement of Anup Chandra Pandey in February and the resignation of Arun Goel recently, days ahead of Lok Sabha polls 2024. Gyanesh Kumar is a 1988-batch IAS officer from the Kerala cadre. Kumar, has worked with Union Home Minister Amit Shah before. He retired as secretary in the Ministry of Cooperation, which comes under Amit Shah, on 31st January 2024. Sukhbir Singh Sandhu is also 1998 batch IAS officer but from Uttarakhand cadre. Sandhu has served as the chief secretary of Uttarakhand when Pushkar Singh Dhami became the Chief Minister in 2021.

### **Krystyna Pyszkova from the Czech Republic won the Miss World 2024 title at 71st Miss World pageant, held at the Jio World Convention Centre in Mumbai.**

Krystyna Pyszkova from the Czech Republic won the Miss World 2024 title at 71st Miss World pageant, held at the Jio World Convention Centre in Mumbai. The reigning Miss World, Karolina Bielawska from Poland, crowned her successor at the star-studded event. Krystyna received the Best Fashion Designer Award - Europe. She beat contestants including India's Sini Shetty, Trinidad and Tobago's Aché Abrahams, and Botswana's Lesego Chombo. The first runner-up was Yasmina Zaytoun from Lebanon. Pyszkova, fluent in English, Polish, Slovak, and German, is the second Miss World from the Czech Republic.

### **Oppenheimer won a leading 7 awards in 96th Academy Awards (Oscars 2024).**

The 96th Academy Awards ceremony, which was presented by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS), took place on 10 March 2024, at the

Dolby Theatre in Hollywood, Los Angeles. The nominations were announced on January 23, 2024. Oppenheimer led with 13 nominations, followed by Poor Things and Killers of the Flower Moon with 11 and 10, respectively. Oppenheimer won a leading seven awards, including Best Picture and Best Director. Other major winners were Poor Things with four awards and The Zone of Interest with two. The cultural phenomenon of "Barbenheimer" received a total of 21 nominations (8 for Barbie and 13 for Oppenheimer). The two films competed against each other in 6 categories, including Best Picture. Godzilla Minus One became the first ever Godzilla film to be nominated for an Academy Award.

**The Indian Express's Chief of National Bureau (govt) Ritika Chopra and independent journalist Greeshma Kuthar have been jointly awarded the Chameli Devi Jain Award 2024 for Outstanding Woman Media Person of the Year.**

The Indian Express's Chief of National Bureau (govt) Ritika Chopra and independent journalist Greeshma Kuthar have been jointly awarded the Chameli Devi Jain Award 2024 for Outstanding Woman Media Person of the Year. An independent jury comprising senior journalist and columnist Radhika Ramaseshan (Chair), award-winning journalist and author Mariyam Alavi, and Down to Earth managing editor Richard Mahapatra selected the winners from more than 65 entries of women journalists. Kuthar has been awarded for her deeply-researched long-form investigative reporting from conflict areas such as Manipur. Chopra has been awarded for her in-depth investigative stories in the fields of education and government policy. The award presentation took place at the India International Centre, CD Deshmukh Hall.

**Renowned carnatic musician, T M Krishna, has been chosen as the Sangita Kalanidhi awardee for 2024.**

Renowned carnatic musician, T M Krishna, has been chosen as the Sangita Kalanidhi awardee for 2024. The award, considered the Oscar equivalent for carnatic music, is given away by the Music Academy in Chennai. T.M. Krishna began his musical journey at a young age. At the age of 12, Krishna presented his debut concert at the Madras Music Academy. The Madras Music Academy also announced other awards along with the Sangita Kalanidhi. The Nritya Kalanidhi was awarded to Mohiniyattam exponent Neena Prasad, who runs music academies in Chennai and Thiruvananthapuram. The two Sangeet Acharya awards were given to mridangam guru Professor Parasalla Ravi and Carnatic vocalist Geetha Raja, a student of the renowned T. Brinda of the Veenai Dhanammal school of Carnatic Music.

**Author Rakhi Kapoor wins her second Golden Book Award for her 26th book titled 'Breaking Free Embracing Me – healing from childhood abuse and Toxic Conditioning'.**

Author Rakhi Kapoor wins her second Golden Book Award for her 26th book titled 'Breaking Free Embracing Me – healing from childhood abuse and Toxic Conditioning'. After winning multiple awards including the Golden Book Award 2023 for her 25th book 'Now You Breathe – Overcoming Toxic Relationships and abuse' Rakhi Kapoor published yet another impactful book and became the two-time recipient of this prestigious award. Rakhi Kapoor is also a physiotherapist who pioneered the concept of prenatal counselling in India to enhance maternal and fetal health outcomes.

**The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) approved launch of same day settlement (T+0) for a limited set of 25 scrips with a limited number of brokers along with a slew of measures to bring flexibility for initial public offerings (IPOs), Alternative Investment Funds (AIFs), and Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs).**

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) approved launch of same day settlement (T+0) for a limited set of 25 scrips with a limited number of brokers along with a slew of measures to bring flexibility for initial public offerings (IPOs), Alternative Investment Funds (AIFs), and Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs). The market regulator also approved a uniform approach for verification of market rumours—based on the submissions made by an Industry Standards Forum (ISF). Earlier, Sebi chairperson Madhabi Puri Buch had indicated March 28 as the timeline to launch T+0 settlement cycle. The composite holdings of all such FPIs in the company with no identified promoter should be less than 3 percent of its total equity share capital. FPI registrations that expire due to non-payment of registration fee will now be permitted to be reactivated within 30 days from such expiry. If the FPI chooses not to re-activate its registration within 30 days, it shall be given 180 days for disposal of its securities.

**The Reserve Bank of India has reconstituted the three-member Committee of Advisors of Abhyudaya Cooperative Bank Ltd.**

The Reserve Bank of India has reconstituted the three-member Committee of Advisors of Abhyudaya Cooperative Bank Ltd, inducting Devendra Kumar (former Chief General Manager, State Bank of India) in place of Mahendra Chhajed (Chartered Accountant), who resigned. On November 24, 2023, RBI superseded the bank's Board of Directors for 12 months and appointed Satya Prakash Pathak (former Chief General Manager of State Bank of India ) as "Administrator" to manage the affairs of the bank during this period. A "Committee of Advisors" was also constituted to assist the Administrator in discharging his duties. Besides Kumar, the Bank's Committee of Advisors now comprises Venkatesh Hegde (former General Manager, SBI) and Suhas Gokhale (former MD, COSMOS Cooperative Bank Limited).

**Ministry of Finance and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) signed a \$181**

**million loan to build quality infrastructure and services toward improving urban livability and mobility in the peri-urban areas of Ahmedabad, Gujarat.**

Ministry of Finance and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) signed a \$181 million loan to build quality infrastructure and services toward improving urban livability and mobility in the peri-urban areas of Ahmedabad, Gujarat. The project aims to make peri-urban areas of Ahmedabad livable, environmentally sustainable, and efficient with robust physical and social infrastructure, a vibrant economy, and a distinct identity as a preferred investment destination. The project will benefit urban poor, women, and migrant workers through improved urban services and urban governance. It will construct 166 km of water distribution network, 126 km of climate-resilient stormwater drainage, 300 km of sewerage systems, and four sewage treatment plants.

**NPCI International Payments Ltd (NIPL) has partnered with Nepal-based payment network Fonepay Payment Service, for cross-border UPI transactions between India and Nepal.**

NPCI International Payments Ltd (NIPL) has partnered with Nepal-based payment network Fonepay Payment Service, for cross-border UPI transactions between India and Nepal. The agreement will facilitate QR-code-based, person-to-merchant (P2M) UPI transactions between the two countries. In the first phase, Indian consumers will be able to make instant, secure and convenient UPI payments across various business stores in Nepal to merchants on the Fonepay Network. This cross-border payment solution will significantly improve economic ties, commerce and tourism between the two nations, eventually promoting economic prosperity and progress.

**L&T Finance Holdings has signed a financing pact with Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) worth \$125 million to support financing in rural and peri-urban areas in India.**

L&T Finance Holdings has signed a financing pact with Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) worth \$125 million to support financing in rural and peri-urban areas in India. In November 2023, L&T Finance Holdings sourced \$125 million loan from Asian Development Bank (ADB), and as part of the co-financing agreement, an additional \$125 million loan is now being raised from JICA. At least 40 percent of the proceeds will be allocated for women borrowers, while the rest will be allocated to support farmers, MSMEs, as well as loans to purchase new two-wheeler vehicles including electric two-wheelers.

**Karnataka Vikas Grameena Bank (KVGB) has launched a new loan scheme called 'Vikas Spoorty'.**

Karnataka Vikas Grameena Bank (KVGB) has launched a new loan scheme called 'Vikas Spoorty' to strengthen the rural credit delivery system and also to motivate the common man to take up income-generating activities on a smaller scale. This



scheme is a hassle-free loan without collateral security and surety aimed at meeting the genuine credit needs of small entrepreneurs. It links repayment of the loan to the small amounts contributed by them on a daily basis to their 'Daily Deposit' scheme of the bank (pigmy account) at their doorsteps. Under this scheme, people may avail a minimum loan of ₹50,000 and a maximum of ₹2,00,000. But the customer shall open a 'Daily Deposit' (pigmy) account and contribute regularly to it to service the repayment of instalment and interest for the loan.

### **Federal Bank and South Indian Bank have stopped issuing co-branded credit cards following regulatory changes in credit card rules.**

Federal Bank and South Indian Bank have stopped issuing co-branded credit cards following regulatory changes in credit card rules. The Reserve Bank of India has made amendments in master direction for credit and debit card issuance and conduct rules. Federal Bank has three co-branded credit cards with partnerships with OneCard Scapia Technology Pvt Ltd and FI Brand Pvt Ltd. Pursuant to a letter from Reserve Bank of India, dated 12 March 2024, RBI have stopped issuance of new co-branded credit cards.

### **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has signed of a multi-year MoU with the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore, for conducting joint research on Blockchain and Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology.**

National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has signed of a multi-year MoU with the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore, for conducting joint research on Blockchain and Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology. The association will also propel further innovation through the establishment of the "NPCI-IISc Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Deep Tech Research & Development". The partnership will focus on scalable blockchain platforms and multi-modal analytics over fintech data. Faculty members from five departments at IISc will work with NPCI researchers on practical challenges related to these areas. IISc is one of the oldest and premier institutes for pioneering advanced technological research in science, engineering, design and management in India.

### **The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) expanded its framework for qualified stock brokers (QSBs)!**

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) expanded its framework for qualified stock brokers (QSBs), setting out three additional parameters for their identification that includes brokers' compliance score, proprietary trading volumes and grievance redressal mechanism. Brokers can now voluntarily opt to become QSBs. SEBI had previously outlined four parameters to designate a stockbroker as a QSB in a circular dated February 6, 2023. These parameters included the total number of active clients, total assets of clients, trading volumes, and end-of-day margin obligations. The initial list of QSBs was issued on March 3, 2023, based on

these criteria. The revised framework for designating a stockbroker as a QSB includes the following parameters: Total number of active clients. Available total assets of clients. Trading volumes (excluding proprietary trading).

**The State Bank of India has partnered with Paytm parent organisation One97 Communications to settle Unified Payments Interface (UPI) transactions upon acquiring the third-party app provider (TPAP) license.**

The State Bank of India has partnered with Paytm parent organisation One97 Communications to settle Unified Payments Interface (UPI) transactions upon acquiring the third-party app provider (TPAP) license. One97 Communications collaborate with major banks like State Bank of India (SBI), HDFC Bank, Axis Bank, and YES Bank. The transition is expected to be seamless and gradual, with the "@paytm" handle being retained. However, instead of linking to Paytm Payments Bank (PPBL), these handles will redirect to one of the four banks for settlement.

**The Union Minister of Finance, Nirmala Sitharaman was presented with two insightful books by, Sivasubramanian Ramann, Chairman and Managing Director, SIDBI.**

The Union Minister of Finance, Nirmala Sitharaman was presented with two insightful books by, Sivasubramanian Ramann, Chairman and Managing Director, SIDBI. The first book, titled Prabhaav is an Impact Study of Fund of Funds, reveals the transformative effects of fund allocation strategies under the Start Up Fund of Funds scheme of the Govt. The second book 'Diagnostic mapping of cluster - Charting the path ahead through intervention' is a comprehensive treatise on Cluster Development, which highlights the how SIDBI has been attending to clusters under a Programmatic/Structured Approach adopted.

**Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Singh Thakur has released a book titled 'Israel War Diary' written by Vishal Pandey at a function in New Delhi.**

Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Singh Thakur has released a book titled 'Israel War Diary' written by Vishal Pandey at a function in New Delhi. This book will give insight to the people about India's stance on the Israel-Hamas war. It will provide a detailed overview of the war between Israel and Hamas. The book is published by Prabhat Prakashan Pvt Ltd. The book is available in Hindi Language.

**Ministry of Defence signed two contracts for a combined value of Rs8073.17 crore with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited for acquisition of 34 Advanced Light Helicopters Dhruv Mk III.**

Ministry of Defence signed two contracts for a combined value of Rs8073.17 crore with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) for acquisition of 34 Advanced Light Helicopters (ALH) Dhruv Mk III along with Operational Role Equipment for Indian Army (25 ALHs) and Indian Coast Guard (09 ALHs). The acquisition is under Buy

(Indian-IDDM - Indigenously Designed, Developed & Manufactured) category marking a significant move towards indigenisation in defence manufacturing. The ALH Dhruv Mk III UT (Utility), the Indian Army version, is designed for Search & Rescue, Troop Transportation, Internal Cargo, Recce/ Casualty Evacuation etc. The project will generate employment of an estimated 190 Lakh Man-Hours during its duration.

**Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated 'Nausena Bhawan', the newly-constructed headquarters of the Indian Navy, located at Delhi Cantonment.**

Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated 'Nausena Bhawan', the newly-constructed headquarters of the Indian Navy, located at Delhi Cantonment. This is the Navy's first independent headquarters in Delhi. A consolidated and purpose-built facility such as Nausena Bhawan was necessary as the Navy had operated from 13 different locations. The architectural design of Nausena Bhawan was selected through a countrywide competition to ensure the building's functionality and aesthetic appeal. Comprising three wings across four stories, the building incorporates innovative construction technologies to optimise efficiency and sustainability.

**INS Tir, the lead ship of First Training Squadron (1TS), participated in Exercise Cutlass Express - 24 (CE – 24) held at Port Victoria, Seychelles.**

INS Tir, the lead ship of First Training Squadron (1TS), participated in Exercise Cutlass Express - 24 (CE – 24) held at Port Victoria, Seychelles from 26 February to 8 March 2024. The exercise was inaugurated by the President of Seychelles in attendance of dignitaries from India, USA and African countries. As part of Cutlass Express, the Indian Navy actively engaged with participants from 16 friendly foreign countries. Earlier INS Tir undertook joint EEZ surveillance with Seychelles Coast Guard from 01 – 03 Mar 2024. The extant deployment of INS Tir at Seychelles and participation in exercise Cutlass Express underscores close ties between Indian Navy and the regional Navies towards joint training fostering interoperability and building bridges of friendship.

**An Indian Army contingent 'GORKHA RIFLES' embarked for Seychelles to participate in the 10th edition of Joint Military Exercise 'LAMITIYE-2024', which will be conducted at Seychelles from 18 to 27 March 2024.**

An Indian Army contingent 'GORKHA RIFLES' embarked for Seychelles to participate in the 10th edition of Joint Military Exercise 'LAMITIYE-2024', which will be conducted at Seychelles from 18 to 27 March 2024. The Joint Exercise between the Indian Army and Seychelles Defence Forces (SDF) will be conducted. 45 personnel each from the GORKHA RIFLES of the Indian Army and Seychelles Defence Forces (SDF) will participate in the exercise. The aim of the exercise is to enhance interoperability in sub-conventional operations in a semi-urban environment under Chapter VII of the

United Nations Charter on Peacekeeping Operations. The 10-day joint exercise will include field training exercises, combat discussions, lectures and demonstrations, which culminate in two days of validation exercises.

**The grand 'Bharat Shakti' exercise on 12th March 2024, showcased the capabilities of indigenously manufactured defence equipment of the three services at the Pokhran firing range in Rajasthan.**

The grand 'Bharat Shakti' exercise on 12th March 2024, showcased the capabilities of indigenously manufactured defence equipment of the three services at the Pokhran firing range in Rajasthan. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, and Army Chief General Manoj Pande were present to witness the demonstration. The integrated tri-service firepower and manoeuvre exercise was held for about 50 minutes at the Pokhran field firing range where India showcased the prowess of its indigenous defence equipment. The roar of aircraft mid-air, and valour displayed on ground during Bharat Shakti exercise is the call of a 'new India' (naye Bharat ka aavhan hai).

**The Ministry of Defence has signed a contract worth Rs2,890 crore with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) for Mid Life Upgrade (MLU) of 25 Dornier Aircraft along with associated equipment for the Indian Navy.**

The Ministry of Defence has signed a contract worth Rs2,890 crore with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) for Mid Life Upgrade (MLU) of 25 Dornier Aircraft along with associated equipment for the Indian Navy. The MLU for Dornier Aircraft includes an upgrade to incorporate state-of-the-art avionics systems and primary role sensors. The project will be implemented within six and half years.

**Reliance Industries has agreed to buy Paramount Global's entire 13.01% stake in Viacom 18 Media for approximately Rs4,286 crore.**

Reliance Industries has agreed to buy Paramount Global's entire 13.01% stake in local entertainment network Viacom 18 Media for approximately Rs4,286 crore. After the completion of this transaction, Reliance's equity stake in Viacom18 will increase to 70.49% on a fully diluted basis. At present, Reliance holds Compulsorily Convertible Preference Shares of Viacom18, representing a 57.48% equity stake.

**B2B SaaS fintech company Perfios has become India's second unicorn of 2024 as it raised \$80 million in a new funding round from Teachers' Venture Growth (TVG).**

B2B SaaS fintech company Perfios has become India's second unicorn of 2024 as it raised \$80 million in a new funding round from Teachers' Venture Growth (TVG). Perfios now valued at more than \$1 billion with the new investment. Company will be using the new capital for international expansion and to explore inorganic growth opportunities.

**Global rating agency Fitch Ratings raised India's growth forecast for the next financial year (FY25) to 7% from 6.5% estimated earlier.**

Global rating agency Fitch Ratings raised India's growth forecast for the next financial year (FY25) to 7% from 6.5% estimated earlier. Fitch projects consumer inflation in the country at 4.0% by the end of the year. Another ratings agency Moody's pegged the economic growth at 6.4% in 2025 while revising its forecast for the current year to 6.8% from 6.1%. The revision by Fitch comes roughly two weeks after official data showed the country's GDP expanded 8.4% in the October-December period, boosted by double-digit expansion in the manufacturing sector. That was much higher than an average estimate of 6.6% by most economists.

**The Boards of Aditya Birla Capital Limited (ABCL) and Aditya Birla Finance (ABFL) approved the Scheme of Amalgamation (Scheme) of the two companies, to further create a large unified operating NBFC.**

The Boards of Aditya Birla Capital Limited (ABCL) and Aditya Birla Finance (ABFL) approved the Scheme of Amalgamation (Scheme) of the two companies, to further create a large unified operating NBFC. ABCL is a listed systemically important non-deposit taking core investment company (NBFC-CIC), ABFL is a non-deposit taking systematically important NBFC (NBFC-ICC). The company's proposed amalgamation, which subject to regulatory and other approvals as required, has quite a few benefits including the one that the merger will result in reduction of legal entities and simplification of the group structure of Aditya Birla Capital. This will enhance value for various stakeholders of the Company.

**A new colourful flowering plant species, 'Begonia Narahari', was discovered in Mishmi Hills of Arunachal Pradesh's Lohit district by scientists.**

A new colourful flowering plant species, 'Begonia Narahari', with a distinctive feature of displaying a vivid blue iridescence in direct light, was discovered in Mishmi Hills of Arunachal Pradesh's Lohit district by scientists. The plant has a distinctive feature of displaying a vivid blue iridescence in direct light. The plant has been named after a scientist from Hyderabad, G. Narahari Sastry, who also happens to be a former CSIR-Director of North East Institute of Science and Technology (NEIST), Jorhat (Assam). The plant, belonging to the genus Begonia, is renowned for its striking appearance and is considered one of the largest and fastest-growing genera of flowering plants.

**A new genus and species named 'Indopria Angulata' of parasitoid wasp has been discovered by a team of researchers at the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI), Kolkata.**

A new genus and species named 'Indopria Angulata' of parasitoid wasp has been discovered by a team of researchers at the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI), Kolkata.

This discovery expands the knowledge of the local insect fauna and highlights the importance of continued research efforts to document and classify species within this diverse group of insects. Additionally, the identification of *Indopria angulata* provides valuable insights into the evolutionary relationships and ecological roles of parasitoid wasps in their respective ecosystems. Named *Indopria*, with 'Indo' representing India and 'pria' from Latin meaning 'little wasp'.

**Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai launched 'Krishak Unnati Yojna' to provide input assistance to farmers and released Rs13,320 crore to 24.72 lakh cultivators.**

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai launched 'Krishak Unnati Yojna' to provide input assistance to farmers and released Rs13,320 crore to 24.72 lakh cultivators. The scheme was launched at a function at Saryu Prasad Agrawal stadium in Balod district. Input assistance worth Rs13,320 crore was transferred to the bank accounts of 24.75 lakh farmers under the Krishak Unnati Yojana. Of these cultivators, 24.72 lakh sold paddy this year in the kharif marketing season 2023-24 at minimum support price, and they were paid the difference amount of Rs13,289 crore. Similarly, more than Rs31 crore was paid to 2,829 farmers producing paddy seeds through the seed corporation.

**Telangana Chief Minister Anumula Revanth Reddy launched the Indiramma Housing Scheme.**

Telangana Chief Minister Anumula Revanth Reddy launched the Indiramma Housing Scheme at Agriculture Market Committee Ground, Bhadrachalam. The primary aim behind this initiative is to realize the dream of home ownership for all those belonging to the economically weaker sections. As part of the scheme, the government will allot house titles in the names of women. Already, the government has approved 4,50,000 Indiramma houses, amounting to a total cost of Rs22,500 crore. Under the Indiramma housing scheme, the government will offer Rs5 lakh financial aid to construct houses on their own plots, benefiting all deserving individuals from the economically weaker sections.

**International Day of Action for Rivers is annually observed on 14 March to spread awareness about the importance of rivers and climate change.**

International Day of Action for Rivers is annually observed on 14 March to spread awareness about the importance of rivers and climate change. The theme of International Day of Action for Rivers 2024 is 'Water for All'. The participants of the First International Meeting of People Affected by Dams held in March 1997 in Curitiba Brazil adopted the International Day of Action Against Dams and For Rivers, Water, and Life. 20 countries' representatives had decided that the International Day of Action would take place on 14 March Brazil's Day of Action Against Large Dams.

**The International Day of Happiness is annually observed on 20th March.**

The International Day of Happiness is annually observed on 20th March. The day's goal is to make the world a kinder and happier place by encouraging people to practise simple, daily happiness habits. The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) first declared this special day in 2013. On July 12, 2012, the United Nations General Assembly declared the International Day of Happiness via resolution 66/281. The theme of International Day of Happiness 2024 is "Happier Together".

**World Oral Health Day is celebrated every year on March 20 to spread awareness around oral health.**

World Oral Health Day is celebrated every year on March 20 to spread awareness around oral health. World Oral Health Day was first celebrated September 12, 2007, on the birthday of FDI founder Dr Charles Godon. It was organised by the FDI World Dental Federation to raise global awareness around importance of oral health and hygiene. However, in 2013, the FDI decided to move the date to March 20 in order to avoid conflict with other events and to align with the international calendar. The theme of World Oral Health Day 2024 is "A happy mouth is....a happy body".

**International Day to Combat Islamophobia is annually observed across the globe on 15 March.**

International Day to Combat Islamophobia is annually observed across the globe on 15 March. This global observance aims to address the pervasive fear, prejudice, and hostility faced by Muslims worldwide. The resolution was introduced by Pakistan on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). The resolution, adopted by consensus by the 193-member world body and co-sponsored by 55 mainly Muslim countries, emphasizes the right to freedom of religion and belief. Muslims in India endure systemic discrimination in education, employment, and political representation, exacerbating social disparities.

**National Vaccination Day is annually celebrated in India on 16 March to acknowledge and appreciate the hard work of frontline health care workers to ensure the vaccination of every child.**

National Vaccination Day is annually celebrated in India on 16 March to acknowledge and appreciate the hard work of frontline health care workers to ensure the vaccination of every child. In 1988, the World Health Organization (WHO) Global Polio Eradication Initiative was begun as the initial step of removing this disease from the planet. In 1995, around the same time, the government of India began the pulse polio Vaccination Program as the first attempt of uprooting this sickness from the country. From that point forward, March 16 has been celebrated as National Vaccination Day. The theme of National Vaccination Day 2024 is 'Vaccines Work For All'.

**Ordnance Factories Day is annually observed on 18 March.**

Ordnance Factories Day is annually observed on 18 March. Indian Ordnance Factories play an important role in safeguarding us and providing strength to the Indian Armed Forces. In 1775, the Board of Ordnance was formed in Fort William, Kolkata. In 1787, a gunpowder factory was formed in Ishopore and a gun carriage factory was formed in Cossipore, Kolkata. After India gained independence in 1947, the Ordnance Factories were placed under the control of the Indian Government. Ordnance Factories Day is celebrated on March 18 to commemorate the day when Ordnance Factory in Cossipore, Kolkata was formed.

**The United Nations French Language Day is annually observed on 20th March to marks the celebration of the French language and its culture.**

The United Nations French Language Day is annually observed on 20th March to marks the celebration of the French language and its culture. It is one of the six official languages celebrated by the UN each year. The French Language Day was introduced by the United Nations back in 2010 as part of the Language Day celebrations to raise awareness of multilingualism and cultural diversity. According to the United Nations, the date of French Language Day was chosen symbolically in reference to March 20, 1970, which marks the creation of the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation (ACCT), which became the International Organization of La Francophonie (OIF).

**Global Recycling Day is celebrated every year on 18th March to raise awareness of the importance of recycling and encourage people to take action to reduce waste and protect the environment.**

Global Recycling Day is celebrated every year on 18th March to raise awareness of the importance of recycling and encourage people to take action to reduce waste and protect the environment. Global Recycling Day was first established in 2018 by the Global Recycling Foundation, a non-profit organization that aims to promote the importance of recycling and support sustainable development. The day is recognized by the United Nations and is celebrated around the world. The theme of Global Recycling Day 2024 is "RecyclingHeroes".

**World Sleep Day 2024 was observed on Friday, 15 March.**

World Sleep Day is observed annually on the Friday before the March Equinox. World Sleep Day is celebrated each year to raise awareness of critical sleep-related issues in medicine, education, social work and driving, as well as to celebrate good sleep. It is organised by the World Sleep Society's World Sleep Day Committee. World Sleep Day 2024 was observed on Friday, 15 March. The theme for World Sleep Day 2024 is 'Sleep Equity for Global Health'. The first co-chairs of World Sleep Day were Antonio Culebras, MD, a professor of neurology at Upstate Medical University, and Liborio



Parrino, MD, an associate professor of neurology at the University of Parma in Italy.

### **World Kidney Day 2024 was observed on 14th March.**

World Kidney Day is annually observed on the second Thursday of March, to create awareness about the importance of healthy kidneys and how one can maintain kidney health and prevent kidney-related diseases. This year 2024 it falls on March 14. World Kidney Day was celebrated in 2006 for the first time. It was a joint initiative of the International Society of Nephrology and the International Federation of Kidney Foundations. The theme for the World Kidney Day 2024 campaign is 'Kidney Health for All – Advancing Equitable Access to Care and Optimal Medication Practice'.

### **International Day of Mathematics (IDM) is annually celebrated on 14th March to spread awareness about its role in solving real-world problems.**

International Day of Mathematics (IDM) is annually celebrated on 14th March to spread awareness about its role in solving real-world problems. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) declared the International Day of Mathematics at the 40th General Conference on November 19, 2019. International Day of Mathematics coincides with International Pi Day. Pi is one of the most widely known mathematical constants and it is rounded to 3.14, which is why it is observed on March 14. The theme for International Day of Mathematics 2024 is 'Playing With Math'.

### **Every year, World Consumer Rights Day is observed on 15 March to create more awareness about consumer rights.**

Every year, World Consumer Rights Day is observed on 15 March to create more awareness about consumer rights. On March 15, 1962, President John F. Kennedy spoke before the US Congress and addressed consumer rights. This incident marked the first time that a world leader spoke of consumer rights. In 1983, the first World Consumer Rights Day was observed. Since then, the United Nations has recognised the special day. The theme of World Consumer Rights Day 2024 is 'Fair and Responsible AI for Consumers'.

### **President of India Droupadi Murmu, was visit on Mauritius from 11th to 13th March 2024.**

President of India Droupadi Murmu, was visit on Mauritius from 11th to 13th March 2024. She attended the National Day celebrations of Mauritius on 12th March as the Chief Guest, on the invitation of the Government of Mauritius. President Murmu hold bilateral meetings with the President of the Republic of Mauritius, Mr Prithvirajsing Roopun and Prime Minister of Mauritius, Mr Pravind Kumar Jugnauth. During the visit, President Murmu and Prime Minister Jugnauth jointly inaugurated 14 India-assisted projects, showcasing the growing expanse and multifaceted nature of India's vibrant development partnership with Mauritius that constitutes a key pillar of

the bilateral relationship. President Murmu also witness exchange of important bilateral agreements that seek to further strengthen the robust bilateral institutional collaboration and capacity-building cooperation between the two countries. She addressed Mauritian youth at the University of Mauritius and socio-cultural organisations, members of the Indian diaspora and the Indian community at the Mahatma Gandhi Institute.

### **India world's largest arms importer, despite ongoing efforts to bolster its defense-industrial base between 2019 and 2023.**

India world's largest arms importer, despite ongoing efforts to bolster its defense-industrial base between 2019 and 2023. The country accounted for a significant 9.8% of the total global arms imports. Recent data from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) reveals a 4.7% increase in India's arms imports between 2014-18 and 2019-23. Although Russia remained India's main arms supplier (accounting for 36% of its arms imports), this was the first five-year period since 1960-64 when deliveries from Russia (or the Soviet Union before 1991) made up less than half of India's arms imports.

### **The protocol for establishment of Joint Economic and Trade Committee (JETCO) between India and Dominican Republic was signed at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MIREX) of Dominican Republic at Santo Domingo.**

The protocol for establishment of Joint Economic and Trade Committee (JETCO) between India and Dominican Republic was signed at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MIREX) of Dominican Republic at Santo Domingo on March 12, 2024. The protocol was signed by Mr Roberto Álvarez, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Dominican Republic and Mr Ramu Abbagani, Ambassador of India to the Dominican Republic on behalf of the Department of Commerce. The agreement, signed in the 25 years of establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries, is an important step to elevate the existing economic and commercial relations further. The protocol envisages to strengthen and develop cooperation on trade, services, industrial technologies and various other sectors by means of technical assistance, training programmes and capacity building.

### **An MoU has been signed between India's National Institute of Electronics and Information Technology (NIELIT) and Information Technology Institute (ITI) of Egypt to promote cooperation and collaboration in the IECT domain.**

An MoU has been signed between India's National Institute of Electronics and Information Technology (NIELIT) and Information Technology Institute (ITI) of Egypt to promote cooperation and collaboration in the IECT domain. Under the MoU, both the insititues intend to collaborate in multiple areas including curriculam and traing materials development and sharing virtual labs facilities. NIELIT, which is an autonomous scientific society under the Ministry of Electronics and Information

Technology, signed the MoU with ITI, affiliated with the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology of the Arab Republic of Egypt, in Cairo.

**Ministry of Heavy Industries and IIT Roorkee signed a MoU to work together to encourage innovation and advance the automotive and electric vehicle (EV) sector.**

Ministry of Heavy Industries (MHI) and the Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee (IIT Roorkee) signed a MoU to work together to encourage innovation and advance the automotive and electric vehicle (EV) sector. This MoU was signed in the presence of Dr Mahendra Nath Pandey, Minister of Heavy Industries, Shri Pushkar Singh Dhami, Chief Minister of the State of Uttarakhand (through VC) and senior officials of the Ministry of Heavy Industries and the State of Uttarakhand. With a total grant of ₹19.8745 Cr provided by MHI and an additional ₹4.78 Cr contributed by industry partners, the total project cost is ₹24.6645 Cr.

**To transform the Fair Price Shops (FPSs) across India, the Department of Food and Public Distribution has signed two MoUs with the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) and the Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI).**

To transform the Fair Price Shops (FPSs) across India, the Department of Food and Public Distribution has signed two MoUs with the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) and the Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI). The Department of Food & Public Distribution (DoF&PD) signed an MoU with the National Institute for Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development, NIESBUD under Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE), to tackle skill development challenges faced by FPS dealers. The two MoUs are a breakthrough in the area of capacity building and opening investment & financing opportunities for FPSs in the country. The two agreements will significantly elevate employability and enhance the livelihood of FPS dealers.

**REC Limited has signed a MoU with the Government of Rajasthan, finance power & infrastructure projects in Rajasthan worth Rs20,000 crores annually for next 6 years.**

REC Limited has signed a MoU with the Government of Rajasthan, to finance projects across power and non-power infrastructure sectors. Under this agreement, REC Limited will provide loans of up to Rs20,000 crores annually for the next six years to various departments, undertakings, institutions and schemes of the Government of Rajasthan. This collaboration underscores REC's commitment to supporting the development of both power and non-power infrastructure in Rajasthan, thereby contributing to the state's economic growth and prosperity.

**REC Power Development and Consultancy Limited (RECPDCL) has signed an**

**MoU with Bharat Heavy Electrical Limited (BHEL) for joint development of utility scale Renewable Energy Projects across the country.**

REC Power Development and Consultancy Limited (RECPDCL) has signed an MoU with Bharat Heavy Electrical Limited (BHEL) for joint development of utility scale Renewable Energy Projects across the country. The MoU thus aims to contribute to the clean energy targets of the nation, through a dedicated Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV). The SPV will be benefitted by the core engineering expertise of BHEL and infrastructure investment expertise of REC Limited. The SPV will focus on catering to the energy requirement of preferably the commercial and industrial (C&I) segment, with an initial capacity of 1 GW which would be scaled up further.

**Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India has signed a Non-Financial MoU with the Bharat Financial Inclusion Limited (BFIL) to support the livelihood intervention of DAY-NRLM by syncing their activities in livestock and fisheries development.**

Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India has signed a Non-Financial MoU with the Bharat Financial Inclusion Limited (BFIL) to support the livelihood intervention of DAY-NRLM by syncing their activities in livestock and fisheries development. As BFIL is already working with women in sphere of financial inclusion in rural areas through JLGs with most of the beneficiaries in livestock sector. As part of the MoU, in initial phase a centralized Project Monitoring Unit will be established to support DAY-NRLM at national level and State PMU in Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Bihar will be developed. The PMU will comprise specialists from livestock (as per the need in respective state), Market Linkage etc.

**The Rural Development Ministry has signed an MoU with IIT-Delhi for leveraging the use of geospatial technology and artificial intelligence to monitor assets under the MGNREGA.**

The Rural Development Ministry has signed an MoU with IIT-Delhi for leveraging the use of geospatial technology and artificial intelligence to monitor assets under the MGNREGA. The MoU was signed by Amit Kataria, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) and Manabendra Saharia of IIT Delhi. This MoU centres around the project 'BhuPRAHARI', an initiative aimed at leveraging ground and space-based geospatial technologies along with artificial intelligence to monitor and manage assets under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA).

**The Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) has signed a tripartite MoU with Prasar Bharati and the Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) to extend affordable and accessible digital services across India.**

The Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) has signed a tripartite MoU with Prasar Bharati and the Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) to extend affordable and accessible digital services across India. The service will be powered by Prasar Bharati's OTT platform and include linear channels, live TV and on-demand content. The USOF aims to provide high-speed broadband and mobile connections across remote and rural areas.

**India and Singapore have signed a MoU, to deepen cooperation on legal and dispute resolution services between the two countries.**

Singapore's Minister for Culture, Community and Youth, and Second Minister for Law Mr Edwin Tong SC and India's Minister for Law and Justice Mr Arjun Ram Meghwal have signed a MoU, to deepen cooperation on legal and dispute resolution services between the two countries. Under the MoU, the Singapore Ministry of Law and the India Ministry of Law and Justice will work together to promote expertise and information, hold and organise events and courses on international commercial dispute resolution, promotion of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms and other areas of mutual interests.

**The Union Cabinet approved the signing of MoU between India and Bhutan on extending co-operation in the field of Energy Efficiency and Energy Conservation Measures.**

The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi approved the signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Bhutan on extending co-operation in the field of Energy Efficiency and Energy Conservation Measures. The MoU was signed between Bureau of Energy Efficiency, Ministry of Power, Government of India and Department of Energy, Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources, Royal Government of Bhutan. As part of this MoU, India aims to assist Bhutan to enhance energy efficiency in the household sector by promoting star labeling programme developed by Bureau of Energy Efficiency.

**The Union Cabinet gave its Ex-post facto approval to the Inter-Governmental Framework Agreement (IGFA) that was signed on 13th February, 2024 during the High Level visit between the Government of Republic of India and the Government of the United Arab Emirates.**

The Union Cabinet gave its Ex-post facto approval to the Inter-Governmental Framework Agreement (IGFA) that was signed on 13th February, 2024 during the High Level visit between the Government of Republic of India and the Government of the United Arab Emirates. The aim of the IGFA is to enhance the bilateral relations and to further strengthen the relations between the two countries in the Ports, Maritime and Logistics sectors. The IGFA includes areas of cooperation between the two countries with the objective of exploring further potential of future joint investment and collaboration in respect of development of the IMEC.

**On 12th March 2024, Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagged off 10 new Vande Bharat trains during Gujarat visit.**

On 12th March 2024, Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Gujarat and flagged off 10 new Vande Bharat trains, including a train between Ahmedabad and Mumbai Central. In a major boost to the Railway infrastructure, connectivity and the petrochemicals sector, the Prime Minister visited DFC's Operation Control Centre in Ahmedabad to lay the foundation stone and dedicate a slew of railway and Petrochemicals projects worth over Rs1,06,000 crores. Prime Minister dedicate to the nation and lay the foundation stone of various developmental projects worth over Rs85,000 crore at Ahmedabad. Prime Minister visited Sabarmati Ashram where he inaugurated Kochrab Ashram and launch the Master plan of Gandhi Ashram Memorial. PM witnessed 'Bharat Shakti' – a synergised demonstration of indigenous defence capabilities in the form of a Tri-Services Live Fire and Manoeuvre Exercise in Pokhran, Rajasthan. He lay the foundation stone of Railway Workshops, Loco Sheds, Pit lines/ Coaching Depots; Phaltan – Baramati New line; Electric Traction System upgradation work and dedicate to the Nation two new sections of Dedicated Freight Corridor between New Khurja to Sahnewal (401 Rkm) section of Eastern DFC and New Makarpura to New Gholvad section (244 Rkm) of Western DFC; Western DFC's Operation Control Center (OCC), Ahmedabad.

**The Union government has approved the transfer of Air India building in Mumbai to the Government of Maharashtra at a consideration of Rs1,601 crore.**

The Union government has approved the transfer of Air India building in Mumbai to the Government of Maharashtra at a consideration of Rs1,601 crore. The state government also agreed to waive dues of Rs298.42 crore, which would have been otherwise payable by AI Assets Holding Ltd (AIAHL) to GoM for this transaction. The 23-storey building has 46,470 square meters of space, which was constructed in 1974 on land owned by the Maharashtra government. The new owner is expected to use the building to house its offices.

**Union Minister of Science & Technology, Dr Jitendra Singh inaugurated the first-of- its-kind "National Speed Breeding Crop Facility" at the premier National Agri-Food Biotechnology Institute (NABI) in Mohali, Punjab.**

Union Minister of Science & Technology, Dr Jitendra Singh inaugurated the first-of-its-kind "National Speed Breeding Crop Facility" at the premier National Agri-Food Biotechnology Institute (NABI) in Mohali, Punjab. This initiative is in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's priority of doubling the farmer's Income, ensuring their economic empowerment and promoting Agri-StartUps". Biotechnology speedy seeds facility will cater to all the States of India but it will especially be useful for the North Indian States like Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana and the UT of J&K. This facility will augment transformational changes in crop improvement programmes by

accelerating the development of advanced crop varieties that could sustain climate change and contribute to the food and nutritional demand of the population with implementation of speed breeding cropping methods.

**The Government of India has announced its decision to celebrate September 17, the day on which the princely State of Hyderabad merged into the Indian Union in 1948, as 'Hyderabad Liberation Day'.**

The Government of India has announced its decision to celebrate September 17, the day on which the princely State of Hyderabad merged into the Indian Union in 1948, as 'Hyderabad Liberation Day'. Hyderabad did not get independence for 13 months after India's independence on August 15, 1947 and was under the rule of the Nizams. The region was liberated from Nizam's rule on September 17, 1948 after police action namely 'Operation Polo'. "Whereas, there has been a demand from the people of the region that 17th September may be celebrated as Hyderabad Liberation Day. When India gained independence, the Razakars called for Hyderabad state to either join Pakistan or to become a Muslim dominion while resisting its merger with the Union of India.

**The central government has approved the 'TG' prefix, replacing 'TS' for vehicle registration number plates in Telangana.**

The central government has approved the 'TG' prefix, replacing 'TS' for vehicle registration number plates in Telangana. The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways issued a gazette notification effective immediately, that is, March 12, 2024. This change aims to enhance regulatory clarity and effectiveness. The change will be applied to new vehicles and the vehicles with TS number plates will continue. The new vehicles coming on the roads will be sporting registered number plates with the 'TG' prefix in the state.

**Union Minister for Civil Aviation and Steel, Jyotiraditya M. Scindia inaugurated Fly91, a regional airline and flagged off its maiden flight between Manohar International Airport (MOPA), Goa and Agatti Islands, Lakshadweep.**

Union Minister for Civil Aviation and Steel, Jyotiraditya M. Scindia inaugurated Fly91, a regional airline and flagged off its maiden flight between Manohar International Airport (MOPA), Goa and Agatti Islands, Lakshadweep. The Schedule flights will commence effective from 18 March 2024, between Manohar International Airport, Goa and Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Jalgaon, Agatti, Pune, Nanded and from Bengaluru, Hyderabad, and Pune to Sindhudurg, Jalgaon, Nanded and Goa, in a phased manner. These new connections will fulfil the demand for enhanced connectivity across the nation and increase accessibility of different regions. The event was attended by Fly91 Chairman Shri Harsha Raghavan, Shri Asangba Chuba Ao, Jt Secretary MoCA and other officials from AAI and the Ministry of Civil Aviation.

**The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) has unveiled several initiatives aimed at enhancing the scale and pace of the skill ecosystem.**

The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) has unveiled several initiatives aimed at enhancing the scale and pace of the skill ecosystem. MSDE has signed 19 MoUs with its various departments – one led by the Directorate General of Training (DGT), 3 MoUs signed by the National Institute for Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development (NIESBUD), 5 under the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), one under PM Vishwakarma and 9 MoUs through the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC). Union Minister of Education and Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, Dharmendra Pradhan, announced these strategic partnerships to bring scale and speed to the country's skill ecosystem in New Delhi. During the event, the Minister also launched Mock Test 2.0 by NIMI in 12 languages and 4 New Age courses under the Craftsmen Training Scheme (CTS) in Artificial Intelligence and Cyber Security.

**India and Brazil hold their first-ever '2+2' defence and foreign ministerial dialogue in New Delhi.**

India and Brazil hold their first-ever '2+2' defence and foreign ministerial dialogue in New Delhi. The Brazilian delegation was led by Director at Brazilian foreign ministry Marcelo Camara and Rear Admiral Fernando de Luca Marques de Oliveira. It was co-chaired by additional secretary in the external affairs ministry G V Srinivas and joint secretary in the defence ministry Vishwesh Negi. India and Brazil explored ways to expand cooperation in areas of energy, critical minerals, technology and counter-terrorism at their first '2+2' defence and foreign ministerial dialogue.

**Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde inaugurated India's first Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) powered bus, which will be operated by Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation (MSRTC).**

Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde inaugurated India's first Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) powered bus, which will be operated by Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation (MSRTC). 5000 of its diesel vehicles will be converted to LNG alternative fuel vehicles in phases, adding that 34 percent of its total expenditure is for diesel for its fleet of 16,000 buses. Due to conversion of buses from diesel to LNG, pollution will reduce by 10 percent and fuel cost will go down significantly.

**The Department of Fisheries successfully inaugurated the integration of the Kisan Credit Card (KCC) Fisheries scheme onto the JanSamarth Portal.**

The Department of Fisheries successfully inaugurated the integration of the Kisan Credit Card (KCC) Fisheries scheme onto the JanSamarth Portal. The integration of the KCC Fisheries scheme onto the JanSamarth Portal signifies a towards providing a digital platform for fish farmers and stakeholders in the fisheries sector. This



initiative aims to streamline processes, digitize workflows, and provide efficient loan management services, ensuring enhanced accessibility and transparency for beneficiaries. The integration of the KCC Fisheries scheme onto the JanSamarth Portal heralds a new era of efficiency, transparency, and inclusivity in the fisheries sector. Fishers and Fish farmers across the country can now easily apply for their KCC loans and manage their loan accounts online.

**Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi participated and addressed the youth in the 'India's Techade: Chips for Viksit Bharat' at via video conferencing.**

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi participated and addressed the youth in the 'India's Techade: Chips for Viksit Bharat' on 13th March 2024 at via video conferencing. He also laid the foundation stone of three semiconductor projects worth about Rs1.25 lakh crore with the goal of 'Development of Semiconductors and Display Manufacturing Ecosystems in India'. India Semiconductor Mission has been set up by the Government of India to create an end-to-end semiconductor ecosystem to enable India to lead the global semiconductor industry. The following units will be dedicated to the nation by the Prime Minister- India's first Fab facility in Dholera, Gujarat; OSAT facility in Sanand, Gujarat; OSAT facility in Morigaon, Assam. The occasion witness the participation of students from 1814 institutes, including, all Central Universities, IITs, NITs, IIMs, IISER, IISc and other top institutes where Research, Innovation and STEM disciplines are prominent.

**Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled the first-ever nationwide initiative 'Dekho Apna Desh People's Choice 2024' in order to identify the pulse of the nation on tourism.**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled the first-ever nationwide initiative 'Dekho Apna Desh People's Choice 2024' in order to identify the pulse of the nation on tourism. The aim of the nationwide poll is to engage with citizens to identify the most preferred tourist attractions and understand perceptions across five tourism categories, including spiritual, cultural and heritage, nature and wildlife, adventure, and other category. Additionally, PM Modi also launched the 'Chalo India Global Diaspora Campaign' with an aim to motivate the Indian diaspora to become Incredible India ambassadors and promote tourism to India. The campaign has been launched based on the clarion call of the Prime Minister, wherein he requested Indian diaspora members to encourage at least five non-Indian friends to travel to India.

**Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicated to the nation the Marathwada Rail Coach Factory and launched various other railway projects in Maharashtra.**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicated to the nation the Marathwada Rail Coach Factory and launched various other railway projects in Maharashtra. He also inaugurated five Jan Aushadi Kendras (for affordable and quality generic medicines) at the Lokmanya Tilak Terminus (Mumbai), Manmad (Nashik), Pimpri, Solapur and

Nagbhir (Chandrapur). He also inaugurated four rail coach restaurants at Nashik Road, Akola, and Mumbai's Andheri and Borivali stations. The PM inaugurated and dedicated to the nation 506 projects, including the Latur-based Marathwada Rail Coach Factory, a wagon repair workshop at Badnera and Vande Bharat chair car maintenance-cum-workshop depot in Pune. The Marathwada Rail Coach Factory will ensure supply of the Vande Bharat Train sets (16 car formation) to the Indian Railways in co-ordination with its technology partners. It will provide direct employment to around 1,300 persons and indirect employment to more than 10,000 persons in terms of various outsourced activities.

**Hardeep Singh Puri, Union Minister for Petroleum & Natural Gas and Housing and Urban Affairs, launched 'ETHANOL 100, a revolutionary automotive fuel at IndianOil Retail Outlet Irwin Road Service Station, New Delhi.**

Hardeep Singh Puri, Union Minister for Petroleum & Natural Gas and Housing and Urban Affairs, launched 'ETHANOL 100, a revolutionary automotive fuel at IndianOil Retail Outlet Irwin Road Service Station, New Delhi. Customers can avail ETHANOL 100 at select 183 retail outlets across five states – Maharashtra, Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh, New Delhi, and Tamil Nadu. Shri Pankaj Jain, Secretary, Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas; Shri Shrikant Madhav Vaidya, Chairman, senior officials from MoP&NG, functional Directors of IndianOil also participated in the launch ceremony. ETHANOL 100 fuel has the potential to transform our transportation sector and reduce our dependence on fossil fuels.

**The ministry of information & broadcasting (MIB) notified the new Cinematograph (Certification) Rules, 2024, to improve the process of film certification and enhance transparency, efficiency and ease of doing business for the film industry.**

The ministry of information & broadcasting (MIB) notified the new Cinematograph (Certification) Rules, 2024, to improve the process of film certification and enhance transparency, efficiency and ease of doing business for the film industry. The new rules aim to streamline and modernise the film certification process for the digital age, keeping pace with the emerging technologies and advancement in the film sector. The new rules will provide greater representation of women in the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) Board & CBFC Advisory Panels, where it is stipulated that one-third of the members in the Board shall be women or preferably half shall be women. The upgraded CBFC rules introduce new age-based categories of certification by further subdividing the existing UA category into three age-based categories- 7 years (UA 7+), 13 years (UA 13+), and 16 years (UA 16+), instead of 12 years.

**The Ministry of Heavy Industries (MHI) has approved new electric vehicle (EV) policy to promote India as a manufacturing destination for e-vehicles.**

The Ministry of Heavy Industries (MHI) has approved a scheme to promote India as a manufacturing destination so that e-vehicles with the latest technology can be manufactured in the country. The policy is designed to attract investments in the e-vehicle space by reputed global EV manufacturers. The new policy entails lower import taxes on certain electric vehicles for companies committing to at least \$500 million (Rs4,150 crore) in investment and a manufacturing plant within 3 years. It proposes to reduce import duties for interested EV makers to 15% from the current 70% or 100% on vehicles having a CIF (cost, insurance and freight) value of \$35,000 and above for a period of five years from the date of issuance of the approval letter by the government. The policy allows all international players, including Chinese manufacturers, to qualify for a duty reduction, provided they establish manufacturing facilities within 3 years and achieve a localisation level of 50% by their fifth year of operations in the country. Under this scheme, EV passenger cars (e-4W) can initially be imported with a minimum CIF value of \$35,000 (Rs29 lakh), at a duty rate of 15% for a period of 5 years from the date of issuance of approval letter.

### **Shri Apurva Chandra, Union Health Secretary launched a National Action Plan for Prevention and Control of Snakebite Envenoming (NAP-SE) in India.**

Shri Apurva Chandra, Union Health Secretary launched a National Action Plan for Prevention and Control of Snakebite Envenoming (NAP-SE) in India. With a vision to reduce snakebite deaths by half by 2030, NAPSE provides a broad framework for states to develop their own action plan for management, prevention and control of snakebites through the 'One Health' approach. An array of IEC materials were also launched on the occasion which includes: A booklet on 'Snakebite - Let's put an end to snakebite deaths': this booklet will be used for creating awareness in the general community; Posters on Do's and Don'ts for general community; and A 7-minute video on Snakebite Awareness for General Community. A Snakebite Helpline no (15400) was launched, a vital resource that provides immediate assistance, guidance, and support to individuals and communities affected by snakebite incidents will be piloted in five States (Puducherry, Madhya Pradesh, Assam, Andhra Pradesh and Delhi).

### **Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) has secured other orders valued at Rs1940.35 crore.**

Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) has secured other orders valued at Rs1940.35 crore. It has entered into a contract valued at Rs847.70 crore plus taxes with Larsen & Toubro Limited (L&T) for the supply of 14 cutting-edge Communication and Electronic Warfare (EW) sensors and systems. These state-of-the-art systems, manufactured domestically by BEL, will be installed on three Cadet Training Ships for the Indian Navy. BEL has now accumulated orders totalling Rs32,716.33 crore in the current financial year.

### **The Department of Pharmaceuticals has notified a new code UCPMP 2024 which**

**prohibits pharma companies.**

The Centre has notified UCPMP 2024 code which prohibits pharma companies from offering gifts and travel facilities to healthcare professionals or their family members. The Uniform Code for Pharmaceuticals Marketing Practices (UCPMP) 2024 issued by the Department of Pharmaceuticals also bans supply of free samples to those who are not qualified to prescribe such a product. The guidelines which prohibit pharma companies from offering gifts to healthcare professionals state: "No gift should be offered or provided for personal benefit of any healthcare professional or family member (both immediate and extended) by any pharmaceutical company or its agent. No pecuniary (relating to or consisting of money) advantage or benefit in kind may be offered, supplied, or promised to any person qualified to prescribe or supply drugs, by any pharmaceutical company or its agents. Sample packs should be limited to prescribed dosage for not more than three patients for the required course of treatment and no company should offer more than 12 such sample packs per drug to any healthcare practitioner per year.

**Minister of State for Culture and External Affairs, Meenakshi Lekhi unveiled the revamped website of Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and handed over the MoUs for Monuments Adoption under the Adopt a Heritage 2.0.**

Minister of State for Culture and External Affairs, Meenakshi Lekhi unveiled the revamped website of Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) at the National Museum. She also handed over the MoUs for Monuments Adoption under the Adopt a Heritage 2.0 to the representatives of the Corporate-Houses. The MoU aims to make preservation 4000 heritages of ASI an inclusion process based on theme of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Paryas'. This comprehensive digital overhaul reflects ASI's commitment to leveraging technology for the benefit of all, ensuring that the nation's cultural treasures are accessible to a broader audience. The signing of MoUs will formalize the commitment of these agencies to take up the responsibility of adopting specific monuments, contributing to their maintenance and better showcasing to public.

**Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled development projects worth ₹17,500 crore in Assam on 9th March 2024 during his Assam visit.**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled development projects worth ₹17,500 crore in Assam on 9th March 2024 during his Assam visit. The PM unveiled the projects strengthening the health, oil and gas, railway and housing sectors at a function in Jorhat. He laid the foundation stone of projects under the Prime Minister's Development Initiative for North Eastern Region (PM-DevINE) scheme. Among these projects are a Medical College and Hospital at Sivasagar and a Hemato-Lymphoid Centre in Guwahati. He also laid the foundation stone for the capacity expansions of the Digboi Refinery from 0.65 to 1 mmtpa and Guwahati Refinery from 1.0 to 1.2 mmtpa, among others. PM Modi inaugurated a new medical college and hospital at

Tinsukia and the 718-km-long Barauni- Guwahati Pipeline, built at a cost of about ₹3,992 crore.

### **India rejected China's diplomatic protest over Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Arunachal Pradesh.**

India rejected China's diplomatic protest over Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Arunachal Pradesh and said objecting to such visits or developmental projects does not stand to reason. India has repeatedly rejected China's territorial claims over Arunachal Pradesh, asserting that the state is an integral part of the country. Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated a number of development projects in Arunachal Pradesh, including the Sela Tunnel, an all-weather strategic link for Tawang and Kameng districts near the Line of Actual Control (LAC). PM visited Itanagar – the capital of Arunachal Pradesh. He remotely dedicated to the nation the Sela Tunnel built at an altitude of 13,000 feet in Arunachal Pradesh. The Rs825 crore tunnel constructed on the road connecting Tezpur in Assam with the West Kameng district of Arunachal Pradesh will provide all-weather connectivity to Tawang, which is at the core of the India-China boundary dispute in the eastern sector.

### **During the West Bengal visit, the Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled infrastructure projects worth more than Rs4,500 crore in Siliguri, the largest city in the region, and then address a BJP rally.**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was visit northern West Bengal, which his third trip to the state this month. During the visit, the PM unveiled infrastructure projects worth more than Rs4,500 crore in Siliguri, the largest city in the region, and then address a BJP rally. The PM inaugurate multiple projects of railway line electrification that will benefit the people of northern West Bengal and nearby areas. These railway lines are the Eklakhi-Balurghat section, Barsoi-Radhikapur section, Raninagar Jalpaiguri-Haldibari section, Siliguri-Aluabari section via Bagdogra, and the Siliguri–Sivok–Alipurduar Junction–Samuktala section. The PM also inaugurate two national highway projects worth Rs3,100 crore in West Bengal. On March 1, the PM unveiled projects worth Rs7,200 crore in Arambagh in Hooghly district, and on March 2, he unveiled projects worth Rs15,000 crore in Krishnanagar in Nadia. On March 6, he inaugurated multiple metro railway projects in Kolkata.

### **The ministry of women and child development launched a National Curriculum for Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) for children from 3 to 6 years as well as a National Framework for early childhood stimulation for children from birth to 3 years.**

The ministry of women and child development launched a National Curriculum for Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) for children from 3 to 6 years as well as a National Framework for early childhood stimulation for children from birth to 3 years. The activities and modules of the Curriculum and the Framework will be

imparted to children across all the anganwadi centres in the country, which number more than 13 lakh. National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development (NIPCCD) will lead the training of both the Anganwadi functionaries on the new Curriculum and Framework. For children from age 3 to 6, the National Curriculum for ECCE 2024 will cover all areas of development as per the National Curriculum Framework for Foundational Stage 2022 (NCF-FS). The curriculum will be structured to provide a weekly calendar spanning 36 weeks of active learning, 8 weeks of reinforcement and 4 weeks of initiation, together with 5+1 days of play-based learning in one week, and three blocks of activities in one day.

### **Maharashtra Cabinet decided to rename 8 Mumbai railway stations.**

Maharashtra Cabinet decided to rename 8 Mumbai railway stations that bear names dating back to the British colonial era. Following the approval, Curry Road will be renamed to Lalbaug, Sandhurst Road will now be known as Dongri, and Marine Lines will be rechristened as Mumbadevi. Cotton Green will be renamed to Kalachowki, Charni Road to Girgaon, Dockyard Road to Mazgaon, and King Circle to Tirthakar Parshivnath. The cabinet has also decided to rename Ahmednagar district as Ahilya Nagar.

### **Former Navy Chief Admiral (retd) L Ramdas passed away at the age of 90.**

Former Navy Chief Admiral (retd) L Ramdas passed away at the age of 90. On November 30, 1990, he had taken over as the 13th Chief of Naval Staff (CNS) and retired in 1993. Admiral Ramdas, whose full name is Laxminarayan Ramdas, settled at Alibag in Maharashtra after retirement. He joined the Joint Services Wing of the Armed Forces Academy in Clement Town, Dehradun in 1949, and was commissioned as an officer of the Indian Navy in September 1953. He was trained as a communications specialist. They were also part of movements for gender equality, fisherpeople's rights, the rights of farmers, the rights of religious and ethnic minorities, and many others.

### **Padma Shri awardee for handloom and Bababuti sarees, Kapil Dev Prasad passed away in Bihar.**

Padma Shri awardee for handloom and Bababuti sarees, Kapil Dev Prasad passed away in Bihar. Kapil Dev Prasad, resident of Basavan Bigha village of district headquarters Bihar Sharif, had given recognition to the art of handloom and Bababuti saree. He distributed the skills learned from his ancestors among the people and developed this art as a form of employment. In 2023, he was awarded the Padma Shri, the country's fourth highest honour.

### **'Agray' and 'Akshay', the 5th and 6th ships of 08 x ASW Shallow Water Craft (SWC) Project being built by M/S GRSE for Indian Navy, were launched at M/S GRSE, Kolkata.**

'Agray' and 'Akshay', the 5th and 6th ships of 08 x ASW Shallow Water Craft (SWC) Project being built by M/S GRSE for Indian Navy, were launched on 13 March 2024 at M/S GRSE, Kolkata. The Launch Ceremony was presided over by Air Chief Marshal V R Chaudhari, Chief of the Air staff. In keeping with maritime tradition, Mrs Neeta Chaudhari, President AFFWA, launched the ships to the invocation from Atharva Veda. The ships have been rechristened as Agray and Akshay, named after erstwhile Abhay Class Corvettes Agray and Akshay of Indian Navy. The contract for building 8 ASW SWC ships was signed between MOD and Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE), Kolkata on 29 April 2019.

**MethaneSAT, a satellite which will track and measure methane emissions at a global scale, was launched aboard a SpaceX Falcon9 rocket from California.**

MethaneSAT, a satellite which will track and measure methane emissions at a global scale, was launched aboard a SpaceX Falcon9 rocket from California. The washing-machine-sized satellite, named MethaneSAT, one of 53 payloads on SpaceX's Transporter-10 rideshare mission. MethaneSAT is designed to ultimately help policymakers independently verify industry reports by pinpointing hotspots of methane, the invisible but potent greenhouse gas, which traps much more heat in Earth's atmosphere per molecule than carbon dioxide. MethaneSAT, the first satellite by a nonprofit environmental group, will collect data about methane leaks from 300 targets worldwide while circling Earth 15 times a day from its orbit 360 miles (580 kilometers) above ground, according to the mission plan.

**The Indian Army has launched “Signals Technology Evaluation and Adaptation Group” (STEAG), a first of its kind specialised technology unit, for undertaking research and evaluation of the next generation communication technologies.**

The Indian Army has launched “Signals Technology Evaluation and Adaptation Group” (STEAG), a first of its kind specialised technology unit, for undertaking research and evaluation of the next generation communication technologies. This elite unit is dedicated to researching and evaluating futuristic communication technologies like 6G, artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning, and quantum computing for military applications. The hi-tech unit will carry out technical scouting, evaluation, development, management of core ICT solutions, and provide user interface support by maintenance and upgradation of contemporary technologies available in the environment.

**Royal Challengers Bangalore won the Women’s Premier League 2024 title with an 8-wicket victory over Delhi Capitals in the final at the Arun Jaitley Stadium in New Delhi.**

Royal Challengers Bangalore won the Women’s Premier League 2024 title with an 8-wicket victory over Delhi Capitals in the final at the Arun Jaitley Stadium in New Delhi. Having won the toss, Delhi Capitals skipper Meg Lanning opted to bat first. DC,

who also finished runners-up last season, never managed to recover and could only get 113 on the scoreboard before being bundled out in the 19th over bowled by Shreyanka Patil. Delhi Capitals 113/10 (Shafali Verma 44, Meg Lanning 23; Shreyanka Patil 4/12) lost to Royal Challengers Bangalore (Ellyse Perry 35\*, Sophie Devine 32; Shikha Pandey 1/11) by eight wickets.

**Mumbai wins their 42nd Ranji Trophy title, beating Vidarbha in the final that concluded at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai.**

Mumbai wins their 42nd Ranji Trophy title, beating Vidarbha in the final that concluded at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai. Chasing 538 runs, Vidarbha were bowled out for 368 as Mumbai recorded a 169-run win. Mumbai have thus clinched a record-extending 42nd Ranji Trophy and ended a 6-year wait. Tanush Kotian was the most successful bowler for Mumbai in Vidarbha's second innings, finishing with impressive figures of 4/95. The Mumbai team collected the trophy and a Rs5 crore winning prize, while the Vidarbha team received Rs3 crore prize money.