



LISAS

SEPTEMBER - 2024

CAREER IN FOCUS

UPSC

OPSC

SSC

RAILWAY

BANKING

ASO



MODI'S VISIT TO UKRAINE **MODEL QUESTIONS**

➤ **CURRENT AFFAIRS MCQ**

LISAS : A 31 year Saga of Success

Editor

Dr. Linu Chayani

Advisers

**Shreenath Sahoo
Lalitendu Pattanaik
Asit Kumar Nayak
Naresh Sahoo**

Published by

LISAS CAREER

2, BUDHA NAGAR
Bhubaneswar – 751006
Mob : 9338222113
9337594620
9692056687

Printed at

Bibhuti Printers
Bhubaneswar.

Message from the Editor



Dr. Linu Chayani

First Class First (Gold Medalist), B.A. (Hons) & M.A.
M.Phil. (Delhi University), Ph.D. (Utkal)

Dear students,

The major requirements for your success in competitive examinations are Knowledge, Skills and Attitude.

Knowledge is acquired by reading relevant books, newspapers, magazines. The present issue of '**LISAS CAREER IN FOCUS**' containing important information on different topics would be of immense help to you for your preparation in competitive examinations.

Apart from knowledge, you are required to develop the skill of reading, remembering and writing in an effective manner. Efforts should be made to enhance speed of reading. Repeated revision makes the task of memorization of facts easier. Developing the writing skills requires regular practice.

The most challenging task for a candidate is to develop a competitive attitude for achieving success. Such type of attitude can be cultivated by consistent and sincere efforts.

I am sure that you will try your best to develop knowledge, skills and attitude and achieve greater success.

Dr. Linu Chayani

Mob : 9437079693

➤ India's PM Visit To Ukraine	
➤ Future Of India-Us Partnership	
➤ Shaping The Future Of India's Space Sector	
➤ India's Uniform Civil Code Conundrum	
➤ Strengthening India's Cyber Defence	
➤ From Crisis To Cooperation: India's Role In South Asia	
➤ India's Battle Against Plastic Waste	
➤ World Affairs	37
➤ National Affairs	39
➤ India & the World	53
➤ Business and Economy	58
➤ Science and Technology	62
➤ Sports	63
➤ Awards	68
➤ Miscellaneous	70
➤ Match Point	72
➤ MCQ on Current Affairs	75

ISSUES OF THE MONTH

INDIA'S PM VISIT TO UKRAINE

India's Prime Minister paid a visit to Ukraine at the invitation of Ukraine's President. It was the first Indian head of state to visit Ukraine since its independence in 1991.



The visit focused on cooperation in defence as India operates a large inventory of military equipment of Ukrainian origin.

Key Takeaways from India's PM Visit to Ukraine

- **Clarification of India's Stance on the Russia-Ukraine War:** India's PM emphasised that India has never been neutral in the Russia-Ukraine conflict and has always stood for peace.
- India seeks sincere engagement among all stakeholders to find practical solutions for an early resolution of the conflict.
- **Formation of an Intergovernmental Commission:** An Intergovernmental Commission between India and Ukraine has been established to restore and deepen bilateral trade and economic relations to pre-conflict levels.
- Bilateral trade has reached USD 3.386 billion in 2021-22.
- **Signing of Four Key Agreements:** Both signed four agreements covering areas such as agriculture, the food industry,

medical product regulation and cultural cooperation.

- The agreements aim to promote cooperation in agriculture and food industry, regulate medical products, provide humanitarian grant assistance, and strengthen cultural ties between the two nations.
- **Bhishma Cubes Gifted to Ukraine:** India gifted four Bharat Health Initiative for Sahyog Hita & Maitri (BHISHMA) cubes to Ukraine, designed to provide emergency medical care through **mobile hospitals**.
- These cubes are part of Project Aarogya Maitri, a program to offer crucial medical supplies and ensure rapid deployment of medical facilities in crisis situations.
- **Solidarity with Lives Lost:** PM visited the multimedia Martyrologist exposition on children at the National Museum of History of Ukraine in Kyiv and expressed his sorrow at the tragic loss of young lives.
- He also placed a toy in their memory mark of respect.
- **Invitation to President Zelenskyy:** India's PM extended an invitation to the Ukrainian President to visit India, marking a significant gesture during his first visit to Ukraine since 1991.

Dynamics of India-Ukraine Relations

- **Historic Visit:** Shri Narendra Modi is the first Indian Prime Minister to visit Ukraine since diplomatic relations were established in 1992. India was one of the first countries to recognise Ukraine after it gained independence following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.
- **Departure from Traditional Foreign Policy:** Historically, India maintained closer ties with the Soviet Union (predecessor to Russia) and had less engagement with Ukraine.
 - The visit is part of India's broader strategy to enhance relations with Europe, moving beyond the narrow focus on relations with Europe's big four i.e., Russia, Germany, France, and Britain
 - The visit marks a significant shift in India's foreign policy, reflecting a broader engagement with central and eastern Europe.
- **New Avenues in Bilateral Relations:** High-level interactions have increased with External Affairs Minister, and National Security Advisor engaging with Ukrainian counterparts.
- **Strategic Interests:** Ukraine's expertise in defence technology, such as gas turbines and aircraft, offers opportunities for collaboration and joint manufacturing in India.
- **Economic Opportunities:** Ukraine's strength as one of the world's agrarian powers will add to its strategic salience in the years ahead.
 - Pre-war Ukraine was among the biggest sources of sunflower oil for India.
- **Independent Foreign Policy:** India's interactions with Ukraine do not undermine its relations with Russia, reflecting India's de-hyphenated policy.

Why is Ukraine Important for India's Defence Sector?

- **Soviet Era Equipment:** India has a significant inventory of Soviet-era defence equipment still operational, including gas turbine engines for Indian Navy Warships and An-32 aircraft operated by the IAF (Indian Air Force).
- **Indian Air Force:** In June 2009, India signed a USD 400 million agreement with Ukraine's SpetsTechnoExport (STE) to upgrade its fleet of 105 AN-32 aircraft, extend their life by 40 years, and improve their avionics.
 - The IAF is heavily dependent on the AN-32 for air maintenance of army troops deployed along our northern frontier, air cargo drop-off and para drop-off.
- **Indian Navy:** Ukraine is supplying critical components for the construction of two Admiral Grigorovich-class frigates at the Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL).
 - For the Indian Navy, the impact is most acute as over 30 Indian frontline warships are powered by engines from Zorya Nashproekt of Ukraine.
 - Ukraine's state-owned Zorya-Mashproekt is in talks with Indian private sector companies to jointly manufacture gas turbines used by warships like Talwar-class frigates.
- **Defence Trade:** After the Balakot air strike in 2019, IAF made emergency procurement of R-27 air to air missiles from Ukraine for its SU-30MKI fighters.
 - At Aero India in February 2021, Ukraine signed four agreements worth USD 70 million which includes sale of new weapons as well as maintenance and

upgrades of existing ones in service with the Indian military.

- **Boosting Indian Defence Industry:** Ukraine has been looking to procure some military hardware from India in addition to efforts to deepen its presence in the Indian defence market.
- Ukraine also held discussions with the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) for possible collaborations in research and development.

What are Irritants in India-Ukraine Relations?

- **Russia-Ukraine War:** The ongoing Russia-Ukraine war has been a persistent irritant in India's relationships with Ukraine and its Western partners.
- India has maintained a neutral stance on Russia's invasion of Ukraine, avoiding direct condemnation of Moscow while advocating for diplomacy and dialogue.
- India has refused to join the West's sanctions on Russia and has stepped up buying Russian fuel at a discounted price.
- India has largely abstained from voting in a UN General Assembly resolution that condemned Russia's invasion of Ukraine.
- **Supply Chain Interruptions:** The war disrupted supply chains for critical defence equipment. For instance, the upgrade of the Indian Air Force's An-32 aircraft has been delayed due to the conflict's impact on Ukrainian factories.
- Russia has delayed the delivery of the remaining two squadrons of the S-400 Triumf air defense system to India until August 2026.
- **Ukraine's Stance on Kashmir:** Ukraine's occasional comments and positions on

the Kashmir issue have been a source of friction between the two nations.

- In 2019, following the revocation of Article 370 by India, Ukraine expressed concerns over the situation in Jammu and Kashmir, which was seen by India as interference in its internal matters.
- **Diplomatic Misalignments:** Differences in foreign policy priorities and global alignments have sometimes created friction in India-Ukraine relations.
- India's strategic partnership with Russia contrasts with Ukraine's opposition to Russian actions, leading to a diplomatic balancing act that complicates bilateral relations.

Way Forward

- **Balanced Approach to Russia-Ukraine Conflict:** India must continue to carefully navigate its stance on the Russia-Ukraine conflict.
- While maintaining its strategic relationship with Russia, India should also express concern for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity.
- **Strategic Autonomy and Non-Alignment:** India should continue to emphasise its policy of strategic autonomy and non-alignment.
- By doing so, it can avoid being drawn into geopolitical conflicts that do not directly serve its national interests.
- **Humanitarian Assistance and Support:** India can enhance its relationship with Ukraine by offering humanitarian assistance and support.
- This could include medical aid, reconstruction assistance, and technical expertise for rebuilding war-torn areas.
- **Mediation and Peace Initiatives:** If the opportunity arises, India could offer

to mediate between Russia and Ukraine, given its cordial relations with both nations.

- This would position India as a responsible global player and could help in finding a peaceful resolution to the conflict.
- **Leveraging Global South Solidarity:** India should engage with

other Global South countries to build a coalition that promotes peace and development in conflict regions like Ukraine.

...



LISAS'IAS

(31 Years of Excellence)



LISAS

OAS (PRELIM) EXAM. - 2024

VERY SIMILAR TESTs (VSTs)

(ONLINE & OFFLINE)

JOIN IMMEDIATELY

2, Budha Nagar, Bhubaneswar - 751006, www.lisasias.org, e-mail : lisascivils@liskasias.org
Phone - 9338222113, 9337594620, 9692056687

FUTURE OF INDIA-US PARTNERSHIP

India stands in a unique position as it faces the potential political changes in the United States.



Unlike many American allies, India has successfully strengthened its relationship with the US under both Republican and Democratic administrations, establishing itself as a key partner across various domains including trade, technology, and security.

While the India-US partnership has seen consistent growth over the past two decades, challenges persist in areas such as immigration, trade policies, and geopolitical alignments, particularly concerning Russia and China. As India navigates these complexities, it must leverage its strategic advantages, including its robust engagement with US policymakers, strong diaspora connections, and growing importance in the Indo-Pacific region, to further strengthen and adapt this crucial relationship in an increasingly multipolar world.

How India and US Relations Evolved Over Time?

- From Estrangement to Engagement-The Cold War Thaw: During the Cold War, India and the US found themselves on opposite sides, with India pursuing non-alignment and India's major rival of the time Pakistan aligning with the US.
- The relationship began to thaw in the 1990s with India's economic liberalization and the end of the Cold War.
- A significant turning point came with President Bill Clinton's visit to India in

2000, marking the first presidential visit in more than 20 years.

- This period saw the beginning of strategic dialogues and increased economic cooperation.
- The signing of the Next Steps in Strategic Partnership (NSSP) in 2004 further solidified the growing ties.
- Nuclear Breakthrough-A New Era of Trust: The 2008 Civil Nuclear Agreement marked a watershed moment in India-US relations.
- This deal effectively ended India's nuclear isolation and recognized it as a responsible nuclear power.
- The agreement paved the way for India's integration into the global nuclear order, despite not being a signatory to the Non-Proliferation Treaty.
- It also led to increased cooperation in defense and high-technology sectors. The deal's implementation, completed in 2008, demonstrated the US commitment to elevating India's global stature.
- Defense Ties- From Buyer to Partner: India-US defense cooperation has grown exponentially since the early 2000s.
- From being a peripheral buyer, in 2016, the US designated India as a Major Defense Partner.
- In 2018, India was elevated to Strategic Trade Authorization tier 1 status, which allowed India to receive licence-free access to a wide range of military and dual-use technologies•regulated by the US's department of commerce.
- The signing of foundational agreements like LEMOA (2016), COMCASA (2018)

and BECA (2020) has enabled deeper military cooperation.

- Joint exercises like Malabar and the establishment of the 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue in 2018 have further strengthened strategic ties.
- Economic Synergy-Beyond Trade to Strategic Cooperation: Economic relations have been a key driver of the India-US partnership.
- The bilateral trade between India and the US stood at USD 118.28 billion in 2023-24.
- The US is now India's largest trading partner and a significant source of FDI.
- Cooperation has expanded beyond trade to areas like clean energy, digital economy, and healthcare.
- The launch of initiatives like the US-India Strategic Clean Energy Partnership (SCEP) in 2021 and collaboration in Covid-19 vaccine production showcase the evolving nature of economic ties.
- Collaborating in the Digital Age: Technology cooperation has emerged as a cornerstone of India-US relations in the 21st century.
- The two countries have established multiple forums for collaboration in emerging technologies like AI, quantum computing, and 5G.
- The US-India Science and Technology Endowment Fund, established in 2009, has fostered innovation and entrepreneurship.
- Recent initiatives like the US-India Artificial Intelligence Initiative and the Critical and Emerging Technology Initiative (iCET) launched in 2022 underscore the strategic importance of tech cooperation in bilateral ties.
- Geopolitical Alignment-Partners in the Indo-Pacific: The rise of China has brought

India and the US closer in their strategic outlook.

- The revival of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) involving India, US, Japan, and Australia, signifies this alignment.
- India's inclusion in the US Indo-Pacific strategy reflects the growing convergence.
- Joint statements emphasizing a "free and open Indo-Pacific" and initiatives like the Supply Chain Resilience Initiative demonstrate the depth of geopolitical cooperation.

What are the Major Areas of Friction in India-US Relations?

- Trade Tensions-Navigating Economic Choppy Waters: Despite growing bilateral trade, economic frictions persist between India and the US.
- Key issues from the US end include India's trade surplus (USD 36.74 billion in 2023-24), market access barriers, and intellectual property rights concerns.
- The US has criticized India's data localization policies and e-commerce regulations, while India has objected to US tariffs on steel and aluminium.
- The removal of India from the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) in 2019 and ongoing disagreements at the WTO over agricultural subsidies further complicate trade relations.
- Strategic Autonomy vs. Alliance Expectations: India's policy of strategic autonomy often clashes with US expectations of closer alignment.
- This is evident in India's stance on Russia-Ukraine War, including its refusal to condemn Russian actions in Ukraine and its continued purchase of Russian military equipment (like the S-400 missile

system) and oil (Russia being India's major supplier).

- The US's CAATSA sanctions threat looms over India's defense choices.
- Similarly, India's participation in groupings like BRICS and SCO, which include US adversaries, sometimes creates friction.
- Balancing these divergent interests while maintaining a strong partnership remains a significant challenge for both nations.
- Technology Transfer and Defense Cooperation: While defense ties have improved dramatically, issues persist in technology transfer and joint production.
- India seeks advanced technologies and greater technology sharing, but US export control regulations often limit such transfers.
- The lag in implementing agreements like COMCASA and BECA due to Indian concerns about information security also impacts deeper defense cooperation.
- Recent initiatives like the Defense Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI) aim to address these issues, but progress has been slower than anticipated.
- Human Rights and Democratic Values: US concerns over human rights issues in India, including religious freedom, press freedom, and treatment of minorities, occasionally strain bilateral relations.
- The US Commission on International Religious Freedom's recommendations to designate India as a "country of particular concern" in 2020 and 2021 highlight these tensions.
- India views such criticisms as interference in internal affairs. Balancing strategic partnership with values-based diplomacy remains a challenge, as evidenced by muted US responses to controversial Indian policies like the revocation of Article 370 in Kashmir.

- Visa and Immigration: Immigration policies, particularly those affecting Indian tech workers and students, have been a persistent irritant.
- Changes to H-1B visa rules have caused concern in India.
- The backlog for employment-based green cards, disproportionately affecting Indians, remains a major issue.
- More than 1 million Indians are waiting for highly skilled immigrant visas.
- Climate Change and Energy: While both countries are committed to addressing climate change, differences persist over the pace and scale of action.
- The US pushes for more ambitious emission reduction targets, while India emphasizes its development needs and calls for greater financial support from developed nations.
- Disagreements over issues like carbon border taxes and the phasing out of coal or phasing down highlight the challenges.
- Intellectual Property Rights: Intellectual property rights (IPR) protection remains a contentious issue in India-US relations.
- The US has consistently placed India on its Priority Watch List in the Special 301 Report, citing concerns over patent laws, copyright piracy, and trademark infringement.
- India's use of compulsory licensing for pharmaceuticals and its stance on agricultural patents have been particular points of friction.
- While India has made efforts to strengthen its IPR regime, including the National IPR Policy in 2016, differences in approach to innovation and access to technology persist.

How can India Further Enhance its Relations with the US?

- "Make in India" Meets "Buy American": India can propose joint manufacturing initiatives that align with both countries' economic goals.
 - This could focus on sectors like electronics, pharmaceuticals, and defense equipment.
 - Implementing a fast-track approval process for such joint ventures and creating special economic zones tailored for US companies could make this initiative attractive.
 - This approach could potentially create a win-win situation, addressing US concerns about job creation while boosting India's manufacturing capabilities.
- Green Energy Corridor: India can propose a bilateral Green Energy Corridor, focusing on joint development and production of renewable energy technologies.
 - This could include collaborative research on solar, wind, and hydrogen technologies, joint ventures for manufacturing green energy equipment, and shared projects for sustainable urban development.
 - By leveraging US technological expertise and India's scale, this initiative could accelerate both countries' clean energy transitions.
 - Offering preferential market access for jointly developed green technologies could make this partnership economically viable while addressing climate change concerns.
- Digital Democracy Initiative: India can initiate a Digital Democracy Initiative with the US, focusing on developing shared norms and technologies for an open, secure internet.
 - This could include joint efforts in cybersecurity, countering disinformation, and promoting digital literacy.
 - Collaborative projects to develop privacy-preserving technologies and open-source digital public goods could be key components.
 - By aligning digital governance approaches, India can address US concerns about its tech policies while asserting its role in shaping global digital norms. This initiative could also include joint programs to bridge the digital divide in both countries.
- Skills Passport Program: India can propose a Skills Passport Program to address US labor shortages while providing opportunities for Indian workers.
 - This program would involve standardized skill certification recognized by both countries, streamlined visa processes for certified workers, and joint training programs.
 - Focusing on sectors with high demand in the US, such as healthcare, IT, and advanced manufacturing, could make this initiative mutually beneficial.
 - Including provisions for knowledge transfer and return migration could address brain drain concerns while facilitating circular migration.
- Strategic Resource Partnership: India can offer to become a key partner in securing and diversifying US supply chains for critical resources.
 - This could involve joint exploration and production of rare earth elements, collaborative research on alternative materials, and coordinated stockpiling of strategic resources.
 - By leveraging its geological resources and manufacturing capabilities, India can position itself as a reliable alternative to China in critical supply chains.

- Implementing fast-track environmental clearances and offering fiscal incentives for such projects could accelerate this partnership.
 - **Pandemic Preparedness and Beyond:** Building on the cooperation during the Covid-19 pandemic, India can propose a comprehensive Health Security Alliance.
 - This could include joint vaccine development and production facilities, collaborative research on emerging infectious diseases, and shared early warning systems for potential pandemics.
 - Extending this to areas like telemedicine, medical device development, and health data analytics could create a robust, multifaceted partnership.
 - Offering reciprocal recognition of medical qualifications and streamlined approval processes for joint medical research could further strengthen this alliance.
 - **Space Commercialization Consortium:** India can initiate a Space Commercialization Consortium with the US, focusing on joint development of commercial space technologies and services.
 - This could include collaborative projects in small satellite development, space-based internet services, and space tourism technologies.
 - By combining ISRO's cost-effective approach with NASA's advanced capabilities, this consortium could accelerate space commercialization.
 - Offering preferential launch services for joint projects and creating a shared regulatory framework for commercial space activities could make this partnership attractive to both countries.
 - **AgriTech Innovation Hub:** India can establish an AgriTech Innovation Hub in partnership with the US, focusing on developing and deploying advanced agricultural technologies.
 - This could include joint research on climate-resilient crops, precision farming techniques, and AI-driven pest management systems.
 - By combining US agricultural research capabilities with India's diverse agro-climatic zones, this hub could accelerate innovations in food security.
 - Offering field testing opportunities in India for jointly developed technologies and creating farmer exchange programs could enhance the practical impact of this initiative.
-

SHAPING THE FUTURE OF INDIA'S SPACE SECTOR

India's Space Sector has experienced significant growth and achievements over the past year, marking a new era of innovation and exploration. From the successful Chandrayaan-3 lunar landing to



the launch of the Aditya L1 Solar Mission, ISRO has demonstrated its capabilities on the global stage. The organization has also

made strides in its Gaganyaan human spaceflight program, conducted critical tests for reusable launch vehicles, and expanded its satellite portfolio with missions like XPoSat and INSAT-3DS. Furthermore, the country has laid out ambitious roadmaps for lunar exploration and human spaceflight, including plans for an Indian space station by 2035.

In recognition of these milestones, India is celebrating National Space Day on 23rd August, a testament to the nation's growing prowess in space technology. However, despite these impressive accomplishments, India needs to work even more diligently to fully realize its potential in the space sector. While ISRO has made progress in research and development, there is a pressing need to accelerate the commercialization of space technologies and foster a robust private space industry. The transfer of operational responsibilities to NewSpace India Limited (NSIL) and the emergence of private players like Agnikul Cosmos and Skyroot Aerospace are steps in the right direction, but more needs to be done to create a thriving ecosystem of space startups and businesses.

What are the Current Major Developments in India's Space Sector?

- **Advancements in Space Science Missions:** Following the success of Chandrayaan-3, ISRO has been actively pursuing other scientific missions.
 - The Aditya-L1 solar observatory, launched in September 2023, completed its first orbit around the L1 point in July 2024 and has already contributed to solar storm studies.
 - The X-ray Polarimeter Satellite (XPoSat), launched in January 2024, is advancing India's capabilities in space-based astronomy.
- **Gaganyaan Mission Progresses:** ISRO is making significant strides in its human spaceflight program, Gaganyaan.
 - In 2023, the agency successfully conducted the first abort test (TV-D1) of the crew escape system.
 - Four astronaut candidates have been selected and are undergoing rigorous training.
 - The first unscrewed Gaganyaan mission is expected in late 2024, with the crewed mission planned for 2025.
- **Commercialization and Privatization Push:** NewSpace India Limited (NSIL) is taking a more active role in commercializing ISRO's technologies.
 - In May 2024, NSIL took over all commercial activities related to Indian Remote Sensing satellite data and products.
 - In March 2024, Agnikul Cosmos successfully launched its SoRTeD-01 vehicle, marking a milestone for private space ventures in India.
- **Next-Generation Launch Vehicle Development:** ISRO is actively working on

its Next Generation Launch Vehicle (NGLV) to enhance payload capacity and reduce launch costs.

- The NGLV is designed to be a three-stage vehicle powered by semi-cryogenic, liquid, and cryogenic engines.
 - Concurrently, ISRO is developing a semi-cryogenic engine for the LVM-3 rocket, with successful pre-burner ignition tests conducted in May 2024.
 - These developments are crucial for India to compete in the heavy-lift launch market and support future ambitious space missions.
 - Also, the government approved the Indian Space Policy 2023 that states that the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), as the national space agency will focus primarily on the research and development of new space technologies and applications and on expanding the human understanding of outer space.
 - Expanding International Collaborations: India is strengthening its space diplomacy and international partnerships.
 - NSIL signed an agreement with SpaceX to launch the GSAT-20/GSAT-N2 satellite, showcasing a pragmatic approach to utilizing international launch capabilities.
 - India's collaboration with NASA for the NISAR mission, expected to launch in early 2025, demonstrates growing technical cooperation with global space leaders.
 - Additionally, Indian astronaut candidates are set to receive training in the U.S., potentially leading to an Indian presence on the International Space Station.
- What are the Major Issues Related to the Indian Space Sector?
- Limited Private Sector Participation: Despite recent policy reforms, India's

space sector remains heavily dominated by government entities.

- Private companies account for a minor share in India's USD 78 billion space economy.
- The lack of a comprehensive regulatory framework and limited access to ISRO's facilities have hindered private sector growth.
- While startups like Skyroot Aerospace and Agnikul Cosmos have made progress, they face challenges in scaling up.
- Insufficient Funding and Resource Allocation: India's space budget, while growing, remains modest compared to global leaders.
- In 2023-24, ISRO's budget was approximately USD 1.7 billion, less than NASA's budget (USD 25.3 billion).
- This limited funding affects ISRO's ability to pursue multiple ambitious projects simultaneously.
- For instance, the development of the Gaganyaan human spaceflight program has faced delays partly due to resource constraints.
- The lack of sustained, substantial funding also impacts long-term projects like the development of advanced propulsion systems and next-generation launch vehicles, potentially limiting India's competitiveness in the global space market.
- Brain Drain and Talent Retention: The Indian space sector faces a significant challenge in retaining top talent.
- Significant number of aerospace engineering graduates from top Indian institutes seek opportunities abroad or in other sectors.
- The lack of competitive salaries, limited research opportunities, and bureaucratic

hurdles in government organizations contribute to this brain drain.

- While ISRO has a dedicated workforce, it struggles to compete with global tech giants and international space agencies in attracting and retaining specialized talent, particularly in emerging fields like artificial intelligence and quantum technologies applied to space.
- **Technological Gaps in Certain Areas:** Despite impressive achievements, India lags in some critical space technologies.
- For example, India is yet to master reusable launch vehicle technology (despite efforts like Pushpak reusable launch vehicle), while companies like SpaceX have made it commonplace.
- In satellite technology, India is still catching up in areas like high-throughput satellites and advanced earth observation capabilities.
- These gaps limit India's competitiveness in the global commercial space market, where cutting-edge technology often determines market share.
- **Limited International Collaboration and Market Access:** While ISRO has collaborative agreements with over 60 countries, the depth and scale of these collaborations often fall short of their potential.
- India's share in the global space economy remains under 2%, despite having the capability to launch satellites cost-effectively.
- Geopolitical factors, such as India's non-membership in the Missile Technology Control Regime until 2016, have historically limited technology transfers and market access.
- Although improving, India's ability to attract major international space projects and secure a larger share of the global

commercial launch market remains constrained by factors like limited global marketing and stringent regulatory environments in potential partner countries.

- **Inadequate Space Infrastructure and Ground Facilities:** India's space infrastructure, while improving, still lags behind global standards.
- The country has only one major launch site at Sriharikota, limiting launch frequencies and flexibility.
- The lack of a dedicated deep space network hampers India's ability to conduct complex interplanetary missions.
- **Underdeveloped Domestic Supply Chain:** The Indian space sector suffers from an underdeveloped domestic supply chain for critical components and materials and heavy imports.
- During FY 2021-22, items worth ₹2,114.00 crore were imported whereas an amount of only ₹174.9 crore was generated from exports
- This dependency on imports not only increases costs but also poses risks to program schedules and national security.
- The lack of a robust ecosystem of suppliers for specialized materials like composites, high-grade alloys, and electronic components hinders the growth of both ISRO and private space companies.
- **Regulatory Hurdles and Policy Gaps:** Despite recent reforms, India's space sector still grapples with regulatory complexities.
- The absence of a comprehensive Space Activities Act creates uncertainty for private players.
- The lack of clear policies on crucial aspects like on-orbit servicing and space resource utilization puts India at a disadvantage in emerging space markets.

- Limited Focus on Space Sustainability and Debris Management: India's approach to space sustainability and debris management has been relatively passive.
 - India aims to achieve debris free space missions by 2030 but the country has not yet implemented a comprehensive space debris mitigation strategy.
 - The 2019 ASAT test, which created hundreds of debris pieces, highlighted this gap.
 - A total of 82 rocket bodies from Indian launches were placed in orbit till 2023.
 - The upper stage of PSLV-C3 underwent an accidental break-up in 2001 and generated 371 debris.
 - 52 PSLV-C3 debris were still in orbit till the end of 2023.
 - Insufficient Academia-Industry-Government Collaboration: The synergy between academic institutions, industry, and government agencies in the space sector remains suboptimal.
 - Only about 0.4% of India's patents come from academia-industry collaborations.
 - The lack of a structured framework for technology transfer from research institutions to industry hampers innovation.
 - ISRO's engagement with universities, while improving, is still limited in scope and scale.
- What Measures can be Adopted to Enhance India's Space Sector?
- Accelerate Private Sector Integration: Implement a 'Space Sector Transformation Program' to fast-track private participation.
 - Establish a one-stop-shop for space-related licenses and approvals, reducing bureaucratic hurdles.
 - Create 'Space Enterprise Zones' with tax incentives and simplified regulations to attract investment.
 - Develop a public-private partnership model for sharing ISRO's facilities and expertise with private entities.
 - Talent Retention and Development Initiative: Introduce a 'Space Talent Retention Scheme' offering competitive salaries and research grants to top aerospace graduates.
 - Implement a 'Space Sabbatical Program' allowing ISRO scientists to work in private companies or foreign space agencies for skill enhancement.
 - Create an 'Aerospace Innovators' program to identify and nurture young talent from schools and colleges. Develop exchange programs with leading global space agencies and companies for knowledge transfer and skill development.
 - Technology Leap-frog Strategy: Launch a 'Next-Gen Space Tech Mission' focusing on critical areas like reusable launch vehicles, quantum communication, and AI in space.
 - Establish 'Advanced Space Technology Centers' in partnership with global tech giants to accelerate innovation in key areas.
 - Implement a 'Space Tech Transfer Program' to adapt defense and other high-tech innovations for space applications.
 - Create a 'Space Patent Pool' to facilitate sharing of intellectual property among Indian space entities.
 - Expand International Collaborations Strategically: Develop bilateral 'Space Bridges' with key countries for joint missions, technology exchange, and market access.
 - Create a 'South Asian Space Alliance' to leverage regional cooperation and expand India's space influence.

- Implement a 'Space Diplomacy Initiative' using space capabilities for international development and disaster management.
- Actively participate in forming international space laws and policies to ensure India's interests are represented.
- Enhance Space Infrastructure and Facilities: Develop more spaceports on the eastern coast to increase launch capabilities and flexibility.
- Establish a network of 'Mini Space Centers' across the country for testing, assembly, and specialized research.
- Create a state-of-the-art Deep Space Network with multiple ground stations for enhanced deep space mission capabilities.
- Develop a 'National Space Cloud' for efficient data storage, processing, and distribution of space-based information.
- Strengthen Domestic Supply Chain: Launch a 'Space Component Indigenization Mission' to achieve maximum localization in critical components by 2030.
- Establish 'Space Technology Parks' in key industrial clusters to foster a robust supplier ecosystem.
- Introduce preferential procurement policies for domestically manufactured space components to boost local production.
- Streamline Regulatory Framework: Enact a comprehensive 'Indian Space Activities Act' to provide legal clarity and support for all space activities.
- Implement a 'Fast-Track Approval System' for space projects, with a maximum 6-month timeline for all clearances.
- Develop clear policies on emerging areas like space tourism, debris removal, and on-orbit servicing.
- Prioritize Space Sustainability: Implement a 'National Space Debris Management Plan' with clear guidelines and enforcement mechanisms.
- Establish more 'Space Situational Awareness Center' equipped with advanced tracking and monitoring capabilities.
- Allocate dedicated funding for developing active debris removal technologies and missions.
- Introduce mandatory 'End-of-Life Management Plans' for all Indian satellites and launch vehicles.
- Foster Academia-Industry-Government Synergy: Create 'Space Technology Incubation Centers' in universities, co-managed by ISRO and industry partners.
- Establish a 'National Space Research Consortium' to coordinate and fund collaborative projects across sectors.
- Launch an annual 'India Space Innovation Challenge' with substantial grants for breakthrough ideas.

Conclusion

India's space sector has experienced substantial growth in recent years, highlighted by the successful Chandrayaan-3 mission and the launch of Aditya L1. However, to fully realize its potential, India must address challenges such as fostering a robust private space industry, enhancing international collaboration, and investing in critical technologies. By overcoming these obstacles, India can position itself as a major player in the global space economy and contribute to the advancement of human knowledge and exploration.

●●●

INDIA'S UNIFORM CIVIL CODE CONUNDRUM

The Uniform Civil Code (UCC) has been a longstanding and complex issue in India's legal and social landscape. The UCC aims to replace the current system where different religious communities follow their own personal laws in matters such as marriage, divorce, inheritance, and adoption. Proponents argue that a UCC would promote national integration, gender justice, and equality before the law, while critics express concerns about preserving religious and cultural diversity.



The concept of a UCC has been part of India's constitutional framework since independence, included as a Directive Principle of State Policy. However, its implementation has been a subject of debate and controversy for decades. The discussion around UCC touches on sensitive issues of religious freedom, minority rights, and the balance between uniform civil law and India's diverse cultural traditions.

What is Uniform Civil Code?

- The Uniform Civil Code refers to a single set of laws governing personal matters such as marriage, divorce, adoption, inheritance, and succession for all citizens of India.
- The concept of UCC is mentioned in Article 44 of the Indian Constitution as a Directive Principle of State Policy, which states that the state shall endeavor to secure a uniform civil code for citizens throughout the territory of India.

- However, it's important to note that this is not a legally enforceable right but a guiding principle for the state.

What is the Constitutional History and Key Judicial Pronouncements Related to Uniform Civil Code in India?

- The Initial Debates:
 - Sub-Committee on Fundamental Rights: Tasked with drafting fundamental rights for the Constitution Ambedkar, Munshi, and Minoo Masani included UCC in their drafts.
 - Division of Rights: The Sub-Committee split fundamental rights into justiciable and non-justiciable categories. UCC was placed in the non-justiciable section.
- M.R. Masani, Hansa Mehta, and Amrit Kaur opposed this, arguing that personal laws based on religion hindered national unity.
- They advocated for UCC as a justiciable right.
- Constituent Assembly Debates:
 - Draft Article 35: Introduced by Ambedkar, which later became Article 44, placed UCC in the Directive Principles, making it non-mandatory.
 - Muslim leaders like Ismail Sahab and Pocker Sahib Bahadur argued that UCC violated religious freedom and would cause disharmony.
- Defense of UCC:
 - K.M. Munshi: Advocated UCC for national unity and secularism, noting even Hindu communities' concerns.
 - Alladi Krishnaswami Aiyar: Argued UCC would promote harmony and questioned

why there was no protest against the existing common criminal code.

- Ambedkar: Emphasized UCC's optional nature and its inclusion in the Directive Principles as a compromise.
- Key Judicial Pronouncements on UCC
 - 1985 - Shah Bano Case: The Court upheld a Muslim woman's right to maintenance, linking UCC to national integration.
 - 2000 - Lily Thomas Case: The Supreme Court emphasized the significance of UCC in terms of succession.
 - 2003 - John Vallamattom Case: Struck down discriminatory provisions in Christian personal law, reiterating the need for UCC.
 - 2017 - Shayara Bano Case: Addressed triple talaq, reigniting the UCC debate but separating it from the issue of human rights.

What are the Arguments in Favour of Uniform Civil Code?

- Equality Under the Law-Breaking Down Religious Barriers: A UCC would ensure equal rights and treatment for all citizens, regardless of their religious background.
- This aligns with Article 14 of the Indian Constitution, which guarantees equality before the law.
- A UCC would standardize marriage laws, promoting gender equality and religious neutrality.
- The recent implementation of UCC in Uttarakhand, which bans polygamy and standardizes the marriage age at 21 for all, serves as a model for potential national implementation.
- Empowering Women-Challenging Patriarchal Norms Many personal laws have been criticized for being discriminatory towards women.
- A UCC could address issues like triple talaq, unequal inheritance rights, and child marriage.
- NFHS-5 estimates show that 23.3% of women in the 20-24 age bracket were married before they were 18, highlighting the need for uniform marriage laws.
- A UCC could potentially reduce this figure.
- Simplifying the Legal System- Streamlining Personal Laws: India's current system of multiple personal laws based on religion creates a complex legal landscape.
- A UCC would simplify this system, making it easier for courts to administer justice and for citizens to understand their rights.
- Personal law disputes account for a significant portion of civil cases, contributing to judicial backlog. A unified code could potentially reduce this burden and streamline legal processes.
- National Integration-Fostering a Unified Indian Identity: Proponents argue that a UCC would promote national integration by emphasizing citizenship over religious identity in civil matters.
- This aligns with the idea of "constitutional patriotism" advocated by scholars like Jürgen Habermas.
- The successful implementation of a common criminal code (Indian Penal Code) across all communities serves as a precedent for how a unified law can function in a diverse society like India.
- Modernization and Social Reform: A UCC could be an opportunity to reform outdated practices across all communities and align personal laws with contemporary social values.
- For instance, the legalization of same-sex relationships by the Supreme Court in 2018 highlights the need for modernized personal laws.

- A UCC could potentially address issues like LGBTQ+ rights in marriage, adoption, and inheritance, which are currently not uniformly recognized under various personal laws.
- International Alignment-Keeping Pace with Global Trends: Many countries with diverse populations have successfully implemented unified civil codes.
- Turkey's adoption of a secular civil code in 1926 serves as an example.
- Adopting a UCC could align India with international human rights standards, potentially improving its standing on global indices like the Global Gender Gap index, which is currently 129th out of the 146 countries.

What are the Arguments Against the Uniform Civil Code?

- Cultural Preservation- Safeguarding India's Diverse Heritage: India's pluralistic society is characterized by a rich blend of cultural and religious practices, many of which are protected under personal laws.
- Critics argue that a UCC could erode this diversity, leading to cultural homogenization.
- For instance, the unique matrilineal inheritance system of the Khasi tribe in Meghalaya, could be at risk.
- Religious Freedom-Balancing Secularism and Faith: Opponents of UCC argue that it could infringe on the right to religious freedom guaranteed by Article 25 of the Constitution.
- They contend that personal laws are an integral part of religious practice for many communities.
- A 2021 Pew Research Center survey found that 84% of Indians consider religion very important in their lives, underscoring the potential resistance to changes in religiously-influenced personal laws.
- Minority Rights-Protecting Vulnerable Communities: There are concerns that a UCC could disproportionately affect minority communities, potentially leading to a sense of marginalization.
- Critics point to the recent implementation of UCC in Uttarakhand, which faced opposition from minority groups who felt their customs were not adequately considered.
- India's minority population, comprising about 19.3% of the total population (2011 Census), fears that a UCC might be influenced more by majority practices, potentially diluting their cultural identity.
- Practical Implementation- Overcoming Logistical Hurdles: Critics argue that creating a UCC that satisfies all communities in a diverse country like India is practically impossible.
- The Law Commission's 2018 report concluded that a UCC is "neither necessary nor desirable at this stage," citing the country's diversity.
- The challenge is evident in the fact that even within Hindu law, which was codified in the 1950s, there are still regional variations.
- For instance, the Hindu Succession (Kerala Amendment) Act, 2015, provides for different inheritance rules in Kerala.
- Federalism Concerns-State vs. Centre Authority: The implementation of a nationwide UCC could potentially infringe upon the federal structure of India.
- Personal laws fall under the Concurrent List of the Constitution, allowing both state and central governments to legislate on them.
- Critics argue that a centrally imposed UCC could undermine state autonomy. The recent UCC implementation in Uttarakhand, while a state initiative, has

raised questions about how a national UCC would interact with state-specific laws and customs.

- **Economic Impact-Hidden Costs of Legal Overhaul:** The implementation of a UCC would require a massive overhaul of the legal system, potentially incurring significant costs.
 - This includes retraining legal professionals, updating legal databases, and potentially increasing the court burden during the transition period.
 - With India's judiciary already facing a backlog of over 47 million cases, critics argue that the resources required for UCC implementation could be better used in addressing existing judicial inefficiencies.

What Should be the Way Forward?

- **Inclusive Dialogue- Building Consensus Through Consultation:** The way forward for UCC must involve extensive, nationwide consultations with diverse stakeholders.
 - This should include religious leaders, legal experts, civil society organizations, and representatives from various communities.
 - The process should be transparent, with clear communication of proposed changes and their implications.
 - Public debates and discussions should be encouraged to build awareness and gather diverse perspectives.
- This inclusive approach could help address concerns and build a broader consensus, potentially reducing resistance to implementation.
- **Phased Implementation-A Gradual Approach to Change:** Rather than an abrupt overhaul, a phased implementation of UCC could be more feasible and less disruptive.

- This could start with areas of broad agreement, such as standardizing the legal age of marriage, equal rights to female or inheritance rights.
- Subsequent phases could address more contentious issues. This gradual approach allows for adjustments based on feedback and real-world outcomes. It also provides time for communities to adapt and for the legal system to prepare for changes.
- **Constitutional Safeguards- Protecting Minority Rights:** Any UCC implementation should include robust constitutional safeguards to protect minority rights and cultural practices.
 - This could involve creating a body to oversee UCC implementation and address grievances.
 - Clear mechanisms should be established for communities to seek exemptions for specific practices that do not conflict with fundamental rights.
 - This approach can help balance the goals of uniformity and cultural preservation, addressing a key concern of UCC critics.
 - A just civil code is more important than the uniform civil code.
- **Evidence-Based Reform-Learning from State-Level Initiatives:** The way forward should involve careful study of existing state-level initiatives related to personal law reforms.
 - For instance, the outcomes of Goa's civil code (in place since Portuguese rule) and Uttarakhand's recent UCC implementation should be analyzed.
 - This evidence-based approach can inform the design of a national UCC, highlighting successful strategies and potential pitfalls.
- It can also provide concrete data to support or modify arguments for and against UCC.

●●●

STRENGTHENING INDIA'S CYBER DEFENCE

The year 2024 has ushered in a new era of digital threats, with Artificial



Intelligence (AI) and its various manifestations, including Generative AI and Artificial General Intelligence (AGI), at the forefront of security

concerns. The potential for digital attacks, disinformation campaigns, and cyber threats remains high. The recent global disruption caused by a Microsoft Windows software update glitch serves as a stark reminder of the vulnerabilities in our interconnected digital infrastructure.

For India, as with the rest of the world, the threat landscape is evolving rapidly. From AI-enabled deep fakes to sophisticated cyber attacks targeting critical infrastructure, the challenges are multifaceted and growing in complexity. The rise in cyber fraud affecting ordinary citizens, including phishing attempts, identity theft, and financial scams, underscores the need for heightened awareness and robust cybersecurity measures. As we navigate this new digital reality, it is imperative for both the public and private sectors in India to prioritize cybersecurity, invest in advanced protective measures, and foster a culture of digital vigilance to safeguard national security and individual privacy.

What are the Current Major Cyber Threats that India is Facing?

- The Ransomware Rampage: India witnessed an increase in ransomware attacks recently with the healthcare sector being particularly vulnerable.
 - The Cloud Conundrum: As India rapidly adopts cloud technologies, with the overall Indian Public Cloud Services (PCS) market expected to reach USD 24.2 billion by 2028, cloud security threats have become a major concern.
 - Phishing Paradox: India recorded over 79 million phishing attacks in 2023. The finance sector bore the brunt, accounting for the majority of all phishing attacks.
 - The IoT Invasion: With India's IoT market projected to reach USD 9.28 billion by
- Security software maker Quick Heal stated it has detected over 48000 instances of the WannaCryransomware attack in India.
 - The attack on the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Delhi in November 2022.
 - There were at least 6,000 attempts to hack the server of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).
 - Examples include the Phishing Campaigns targeting State Bank of India users , where fraudsters sent fake SMS messages to millions of customers, attempting to steal their banking credentials.
 - This trend underscores the importance of user education and advanced email security solutions.
 - In 2023, a significant data breach at Air India exposed the personal data of 4.5 million passengers, attributed to a compromise in its cloud service provider's systems.
 - This incident highlights the need for robust cloud security strategies, including proper configuration, access management, and continuous monitoring.

2025, the security of Internet of Things (IoT) devices has become a critical issue.

- Researchers discovered a vulnerability in millions of smart meters deployed across India, potentially allowing hackers to manipulate power consumption data.
- This discovery emphasizes the need for stringent security standards and regular updates for IoT devices in both consumer and industrial settings.
- **The Supply Chain Siege:** India's digital supply chains faced unprecedented attacks in 2023, with a rampant increase in software supply chain vulnerabilities.
- The SolarWinds-like attack on the IT services giant in 2023 is a prominent example.
- This incident exposed the cascading effect of supply chain attacks and highlighted the need for rigorous vendor risk management and software integrity verification processes across Indian industries.
- **The Crypto Crimes Wave:** According to a report published by 'Broadband India Forum' Cryptocurrency theft grew with roughly \$3.2 billion worth stolen in 2021, a 516% increase compared to 2020.
- The infamous WazirX Crypto Heist which compromised 45% of WazirX's crypto assets, has highlighted significant vulnerabilities highlighted the vulnerabilities in digital asset platforms.
- This trend calls for stronger regulations, enhanced cybersecurity measures for crypto exchanges, and increased user awareness about safe crypto practices.
- **The Deepfake Dilemma:** India witnessed a 230% increase in deepfake videos in 2023, with political misinformation campaigns leading the charge.
- The viral deep fake video of a prominent Indian politician making inflammatory

statements during the 2024 election campaign caused significant social unrest.

- This incident highlights the urgent need for deepfake detection technologies, stricter content moderation policies, and public awareness campaigns about digital media literacy.
- **Lack of Cybersecurity Professionals:** India faces a severe shortage of skilled cybersecurity professionals, leaving organizations vulnerable to cyber threats.
- India has a shortage of 8 lakh cybersecurity professionals. This shortage is particularly acute in emerging technologies like AI and cloud security.
- The lack of expertise hampers the implementation of robust cybersecurity measures and incident response capabilities, making it a critical threat to India's overall cybersecurity posture.
- **The Honey Trap Hazard:** Honey trapping has emerged as a significant cyber threat in India, particularly targeting government officials, military personnel, and high-profile individuals.
- This method involves creating fake social media profiles, usually of attractive individuals, to lure targets into compromising situations or divulging sensitive information.
- In 2023, the Indian Army reported a dramatic increase in honey trapping attempts on its personnel compared to the previous year.
- Another DRDO senior technical officer was detained in 2023 on suspicion of giving information about India's missile testing to a Pakistani intelligence operative.

What are the Key Government Initiatives Related to Cybersecurity in India?

- **National Cyber Security Policy:** The policy outlines objectives and strategies to protect cyberspace information and

infrastructure, develop capabilities to prevent and respond to cyber attacks, and minimize damages through coordinated efforts across institutional structures, people, processes, and technology.

- Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C): To provide a comprehensive and coordinated framework for law enforcement agencies to tackle cyber crimes.
- Components:
 - National Cyber Crime Threat Analytics Unit
 - National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal
 - National Cyber Crime Training Centre
 - Cyber Crime Ecosystem Management Unit
 - National Cyber Crime Research and Innovation Centre
 - National Cyber Crime Forensic Laboratory Ecosystem
 - Platform for Joint Cyber Crime Investigation Team
- Computer Emergency Response Team - India (CERT-In): An organization under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) responsible for collecting, analyzing, and disseminating information on cyber incidents, as well as issuing alerts on cybersecurity threats.
- Cyber Surakshit Bharat Initiative: To raise awareness about cyber crimes and implement safety measures for Chief Information Security Officers (CISOs) and frontline IT staff across all government departments.
- Cyber Swachhta Kendra (Botnet Cleaning and Malware Analysis Centre): Launched in 2017, this center aims to create a secure cyberspace by detecting botnet infections in India and notifying users to enable the cleaning and securing of their systems to prevent further infections.
- National Critical Information Infrastructure Protection Centre (NCIIPC): Established to

protect Critical Information Infrastructure (CII) in sectors such as power, banking, telecom, transport, government, and strategic enterprises.

- CII is defined as a computer resource whose destruction would have a debilitating impact on national security, economy, public health, or safety.
- Defence Cyber Agency (DCyA) A tri-service command of the Indian Armed Forces responsible for handling cybersecurity threats.
- The DCyA has the capability to conduct cyber operations, including hacking, surveillance, data recovery, encryption, and countermeasures against various cyber threat actors.
- Digital Personal Data Protection Act 2023: This landmark legislation aims to protect the digital personal data of individuals in India and regulate the collection, storage, processing, and sharing of such data.
- Key features:
 - Establishes a Data Protection Board of India to enforce compliance
 - Requires explicit consent for data collection and processing
 - Mandates data fiduciaries to implement reasonable security safeguards

What Measures can India Adopt to Bolster its Cybersecurity?

- Cyber Fusion Centers: Establish regional Cyber Fusion Centers to facilitate real-time threat intelligence sharing between public and private sectors.
- Implement advanced AI and machine learning systems for predictive threat analysis.
- Create a centralized incident response team capable of rapid deployment to address major cyber incidents.

- Conduct regular joint cyber exercises involving multiple stakeholders to test and improve coordination.
- Digital Literacy Crusade: Launch a nationwide digital literacy campaign targeting all demographics, with a focus on cybersecurity awareness.
- Integrate cybersecurity education into school curricula from secondary to higher education levels.
- Develop a mobile app providing real-time cybersecurity tips and threat alerts to citizens.
- Conduct regular cyber hygiene workshops in rural areas using local languages and relatable scenarios.
- Partner with popular social media influencers to spread cybersecurity awareness among youth.
- Strengthening Current Data Protection Framework: India should strengthen the existing Digital Personal Data Protection Act 2023 by incorporating provisions for regulating AI powered breaches of personal data, imposing stricter penalties for breaches, and enforcing rigorous implementation and scrutiny.
- Enhancing the current act will address emerging threats without duplicating legislative efforts.
- Secure-by-Design Initiative: Promote a 'Secure-by-Design' approach in software and hardware development across industries.
- Establish a national cybersecurity product certification program to ensure adherence to security standards.
- Offer grants and funding for startups focusing on developing innovative cybersecurity solutions.
- Create a dedicated R&D fund for quantum-resistant cryptography to prepare for future threats.
- AI-Powered Cyber Defense: Invest in developing AI-powered cybersecurity solutions tailored to India's unique threat landscape.
- Implement machine learning algorithms for anomaly detection in network traffic and user behavior.
- Develop AI-driven threat hunting capabilities to proactively identify and neutralize emerging cyber threats.
- Supply Chain Fortification: Implement a comprehensive supply chain risk management framework for both hardware and software procurement.
- Conduct regular security assessments of third-party vendors and service providers.
- Develop a national database of trusted suppliers and mandate its use in government and critical sector procurements.
- Implement blockchain technology for enhanced traceability and integrity in digital supply chains.
- Cloud Citadel-Securing India's Digital Sky: Establish a national cloud security framework with stringent compliance requirements for all cloud service providers.
- Implement mandatory encryption for all data stored in the cloud, addressing vulnerabilities like those in the Air India breach.
- Create a Cloud Security Operations Center to monitor and respond to threats across public cloud services.
- DeepfakeDefense: Implement strict content verification protocols for all major social media platforms operating in India.
- Create a rapid response team to address viral deepfakes during critical periods like elections.
- Launch a public awareness campaign on identifying and reporting deepfakes.

- The Cyber Warrior Initiative: India should launch a comprehensive "Cyber Warrior Initiative" to address the critical shortage of cybersecurity professionals.
- This program would involve partnering with universities to develop specialized cybersecurity curricula, establishing a national cybersecurity scholarship program, and creating a cyber reserve force.
- Implementing a national certification program and offering tax incentives to companies investing in employee cybersecurity training would further strengthen the workforce.

●●●



LISAS'IAS

(31 Years of Excellence)



IAS/OAS 2024-25

(INTEGRATED COURSE)

JOIN IMMEDIATELY

20% OFF

ON
COURSE FEE

- SYLLABUS COVERAGE BY EXPERIENCED FACULTIES
- EXAM. ORIENTED STUDY MATERIALS
- UNIT TESTS & VSTs WITH DISCUSSION CLASSES
- WRITING SKILL SESSIONS
- PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT SESSIONS
- INTERVIEW TECHNIQUES & MOCK INTERVIEW SESSIONS
- DAILY UPDATED CURRENT AFFAIRS
- MONTHLY MAGAZINE
- LIBRARY WITH A.C. READING ROOM FACILITY

2, Budha Nagar, Bhubaneswar - 751006 Phone - 9338222113, 9692056687, 9337594620

www.lisasias.org, e-mail : lisascivils@lisasias.org

FROM CRISIS TO COOPERATION: INDIA'S ROLE IN SOUTH ASIA

The evolving geopolitical landscape in South Asia underscores the need for India to adapt



its approach towards its neighbouring countries with prudence and pragmatism. The recent upheaval in Bangladesh, resulting in the resignation of Prime Minister of Bangladesh and the Bangladesh Army's interim governance, highlights the volatility of regional politics and the imperative for India to support the democratic aspirations of its neighbours while maintaining strategic relationships. The parallels with Nepal's 2006 movement for multi-party democracy remind us that India's diplomatic stance should align with the popular will, fostering stability and positive engagement.

As regional dynamics continue to evolve, India's commitment to fostering peace, stability, and development in its neighbourhood will not only secure its own strategic interests but also contribute to the broader goal of regional harmony and prosperity.

Why India's Neighbourhood is Facing Continuous Political and Economic Turmoil?

- **Military Interference in Civilian Governance:** Many countries in South Asia have a history of military coups and interventions, undermining democratic institutions.
- Pakistan has experienced direct military rule for nearly half its existence since independence.
- The 2021 military coup in Myanmar, where the military (Tatmadaw) seized power,

detaining civilian leaders sparked widespread civil unrest.

- In Bangladesh, the military has intervened multiple times, most notably in 2007-2008.
- These interventions often lead to political instability, human rights violations, and economic disruptions.
- **Economic Vulnerabilities and External Dependencies:** Sri Lanka's economic crisis in 2022 is a stark example, with external debt reaching all time high.
- Bangladesh's dependence on the garment industry which accounts for 80% of its exports, makes it vulnerable to global garment demand fluctuations.
- The Maldives' tourism sector contributes about 28% to its GDP, exposing it to external shocks like the Covid-19 pandemic, which caused its economy to contract.
- Pakistan's external debt stood at USD 130.6 billion by the end of 2022, with China holding about 30% of it, creating potential for economic leverage.
- **Geopolitical Competitions and External Influences:** China's investments in Pakistan's infrastructure through the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) have significantly increased Beijing's influence.
- In Sri Lanka, the handover of Hambantota Port to China on a 99-year lease due to debt issues exemplifies how economic dependencies can translate into strategic concessions.
- Nepal's balancing act between India and China is evident in infrastructure projects like the Pokhara International Airport, built with Chinese assistance.

- Climate Change and Environmental Challenges: The Maldives, with 80% of its land less than 1 meter above sea level, faces an existential threat from rising sea levels.
- Bangladesh, according to the World Bank, could have 13.3 million internal climate migrants by 2050.
- In 2022, Pakistan experienced catastrophic floods affecting millions of people and causing high economic loss.
- Nepal's glaciers are retreating at rates of 10 to 60 meters per year, threatening water security for millions.
- Legacy of Colonial Structures and Fragile Institutions: The Radcliffe Line, hastily drawn in 1947, created numerous border disputes, including the ongoing India-Pakistan conflict over Kashmir.
- Bangladesh's creation in 1971 further exemplifies the instability of colonial borders.
- According to the Economist Intelligence Unit's Democracy Index 2020, most South Asian countries fall into "flawed democracy" or "hybrid regime" categories, highlighting political instability rooted in fragile institutions.
- Demographic Pressures and Socio-Economic Disparities: India's neighbourhood has a significant youth population.
- In Pakistan, approximately 64% of the population is under 30, creating significant pressure to generate jobs and prevent them from being drawn towards extremist ideologies.
- Youth unemployment rates are high: 20.5% in Nepal (2022), 24.74% in Sri Lanka.

What are the Current Major Challenges that India Faces in its Neighbourhood?

- Pakistan: The India-Pakistan relationship remains strained, with continued tensions over Kashmir and cross-border terrorism.
- Recent developments include Pakistan's economic crisis, political instability and ongoing negotiations with the IMF.
- The country's growing closeness to China through the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor poses strategic challenges for India.
- The recent terrorist attacks in the Reasi district of Jammu, allegedly sponsored by Pakistan, have exacerbated the issue.
- Bangladesh: Bangladesh is experiencing significant political upheaval with the current Prime Minister's resignation amid protests.
- This change could potentially affect the positive trajectory of India-Bangladesh relations developed over the past decade.
- Key issues include managing shared water resources, particularly the Teesta River agreement, addressing illegal migration, and maintaining economic cooperation.
- Concerns about illegal migration, particularly from Bangladesh, have long been raised by Indian states such as Assam.
- In August 2024, a regional party expressed concern about an increase in immigration due to unrest in Bangladesh and unfenced stretches of the border.
- There are apprehensions that the influx of illegal migrants could reduce the Assamese people to a minority in their own state, similar to what happened in Tripura and Sikkim.
- The potential military rule in Bangladesh could exacerbate these issues, including increasing migration pressures and minority concerns.

- Nepal: Nepal's political landscape remains complex, with frequent changes in government affecting policy consistency.
 - The country's growing economic ties with China, including through the Belt and Road Initiative, are a concern for India.
 - Border disputes, particularly the Kalapani issue, continue to be a source of tension.
 - However, cultural and people-to-people ties remain strong, and there's potential for enhanced cooperation in hydropower and infrastructure development.
- Sri Lanka: Sri Lanka is slowly recovering from its severe economic crisis, with India playing a crucial role in providing economic assistance and India was the first country to hand-over its letter of support for financing and debt restructuring of Sri Lanka to the International Monetary Fund .
 - The Katchatheevu island issue and ill treatment of Tamil minorities and the implementation of the 13th Amendment to Sri Lanka's Constitution continue to be important issues in bilateral relations.
- Maldives: The recent election of Pro-China President has led to a shift in Maldives' foreign policy, with calls for reducing Indian military presence in the country highlighted by the Indian-out Campaign.
 - This presents a challenge to India's strategic interests in the Indian Ocean region.
- Myanmar: The military coup in Myanmar and subsequent civil unrest have created complex challenges for India.
 - The Rohingya refugee influx into India's northeastern states and the potential for increased Chinese influence in a destabilized Myanmar are significant concerns.
 - While India has strategic and economic interests in Myanmar, including countering insurgency in its Northeast and implementing connectivity projects through its Act-East Policy, it must balance these with concerns over human rights and democracy.
- Bhutan: While India-Bhutan relations remain strong, Bhutan's efforts to diversify its foreign relations and reduce economic dependence on India present new dynamics.
 - The unresolved Doklam issue involving Bhutan, India, and China remains a strategic concern.
 - India continues to be Bhutan's principal development partner, but there's a need to update the relationship to reflect Bhutan's evolving aspirations.
- Afghanistan: The return of the Taliban to power has reshaped the geopolitical landscape, but India has managed to maintain cordial relations through humanitarian assistance and hosting the Afghanistan cricket team.
 - However, India's significant investments in Afghanistan's development remain at risk as its strategic influence has waned.

How has India Remained Resilient Despite History of Neighbouring Political and Economic Turmoil?

- Robust Constitutional Framework and Institutional Strength: India's democracy is anchored in its comprehensive Constitution, which has withstood numerous challenges since 1950.
 - The Constitution's basic structure doctrine, established in the landmark KesavanandaBharati case (1973), safeguards the essence of the constitution.
 - India's independent judiciary, exemplified by crucial interventions like the 2G spectrum case verdict (2012) cancelling 122 telecom

licenses, acts as a strong check on executive power.

- Additionally, the separation of power among the executive, legislature, and judiciary ensures a balanced and accountable governance structure.
- The Election Commission of India has consistently conducted free and fair elections, managing the world's largest democratic exercise.
- These institutions, despite occasional controversies, have shown resilience in upholding democratic norms.
- Vibrant Civil Society and Free Press: India boasts a dynamic civil society and media landscape that actively participates in democratic discourse.
- The Right to Information Act (2005) has empowered citizens to demand accountability, with over 4800 RTI applications being filed every day.
- Civil society movements have significantly influenced policy, as seen in the Jan Lokpal movement leading to anti-corruption legislation.
- India's press faces challenges of political biases but remains largely free and diverse, with over 100,000 registered publications.
- The digital revolution has further democratized information access, with India having over 759 million internet users as of 2022.
- India's Apolitical Armed Forces and Civilian Control: India's armed forces have consistently maintained their apolitical stance, respecting civilian authority since independence.
- Unlike some neighbouring countries, India has never experienced a military coup.
- The principle of civilian control is deeply ingrained, with the President as Supreme

Commander and policy decisions made by elected representatives.

- The armed forces' focus on national security rather than political power is evident in their crucial role during natural disasters, such as the 2013 Uttarakhand floods rescue operations and current rescue operations in Wayanad, reinforcing their commitment to serving the nation under civilian leadership.
- Federal Structure and Decentralization: India's federal system allows for power distribution and regional autonomy, crucial for managing a diverse nation.
- The 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments (1992) strengthened local governance.
- The Goods and Services Tax (GST) implementation in 2017, despite initial challenges, showcased cooperative federalism.
- India's federal structure allows for special provisions to accommodate unique regional needs.
- Article 371 of the Constitution provides special status to several Northeastern states, respecting their distinct cultural identities.
- The reorganization of Jammu and Kashmir in 2019, while controversial, was carried out through constitutional means.
- The creation of new states like Telangana (2014) in response to regional demands showcases the system's flexibility.
- States' autonomy in various sectors allows for policy experimentation and localized governance, as seen in Kerala's successful Covid-19 response or Gujarat's economic policies.
- Political Alternation and Multiparty System: India's democracy has demonstrated the peaceful transfer of

power multiple times, a key indicator of democratic health.

- The 2014 election resulted in a shift in leadership, while the 2024 elections saw a robust democratic exercise with no single party securing a clear majority.
- **Economic Liberalization and Middle Class Growth:** India's economic reforms since 1991 have contributed to democratic stability by fostering a growing middle class and reducing poverty.
- The middle class, estimated to be about 350 million strong, acts as a stabilizing force in democracy.
- **Managing Divergent Interests and Separatist Tendencies:** India's democracy draws strength from its cultural diversity, with the Constitution recognizing 22 official languages and numerous affirmative action policies.
- The reservation system, despite controversies, has increased representation of marginalized communities.
- India has shown remarkable ability to address regional aspirations and separatist movements within its democratic framework.
- Examples include the 2015 Naga Peace Accord and the tripartite agreement with Tripura's NLFT in 2019.
- India's approach of negotiation and political integration, rather than solely military solutions, has been crucial in maintaining unity amid diversity.

What Measures can India take to Enhance Relations with its Neighbours?

- **Connectivity Catalyst-Bridging Borders, Building Bonds:** India should accelerate its connectivity initiatives like the Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal (BBIN) Motor Vehicles Agreement and the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway.

- India could establish more Integrated Check Posts (ICPs) along its borders, similar to the successful ICPs with Nepal and Bangladesh.
- Additionally, expanding digital connectivity through projects like the South Asian Satellite can foster regional integration.
- These initiatives would position India as a facilitator of regional prosperity, countering the narrative of it being a regional hegemon.
- **Economic Empowerment- From Aid to Trade:** India should transition from an aid-centric approach to a trade and investment-focused strategy.
- Implementing a Neighbourhood First Economic Zone with preferential trade terms could stimulate regional economic integration.
- Establishing joint economic zones, like the successful India-Bangladesh border haats, across other borders would boost local economies.
- This approach would create mutual economic dependencies, reducing the appeal of adversarial policies among neighbours.
- **Cultural Confluence-Soft Power Surge:** Leveraging its rich cultural heritage, India should expand initiatives like the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) scholarships and establish more Indian cultural centers in neighbouring countries.
- Promoting cross-border tourism through initiatives like the Buddhist Circuit can enhance people-to-people connections.
- India could also increase its capacity to host students from neighbouring countries in its premier institutions.
- Bollywood and India's other regional cinema could be strategically promoted to foster cultural understanding.

- **Disaster Diplomacy-United in Adversity:** Given the region's vulnerability to natural disasters, India should take the lead in establishing a South Asian Disaster Response Force.
 - This could involve shared early warning systems and coordinated response mechanisms.
 - India's expertise in space technology could be utilized to develop a regional satellite-based disaster management system.
 - This approach would position India as a responsible regional leader, fostering goodwill through practical assistance in times of crisis.
- **Multilateral Mediation-Revitalizing Regional Forums:** India should work towards reinvigorating SAARC focusing on non-controversial areas like climate change, public health, and education to build consensus.
 - Encouraging Track II diplomacy and think tank collaborations can help in resolving contentious issues.
 - By championing multilateralism, India can dispel fears of its dominance and create a more cooperative regional environment.
- **Green Diplomacy- Eco-Allies:** With climate change posing an existential threat to many countries in the region, India should spearhead a South Asian Green Alliance.

- This could involve sharing clean technologies, joint research on climate-resilient agriculture, and coordinated positions in global climate negotiations.
- India could offer its neighbours preferential access to its emerging green hydrogen and solar technology sectors.
- This green diplomacy would position India as a responsible stakeholder in regional ecological security.

Sports Solidarity-Uniting Through Athletic Endeavors: India could take the lead in reviving and expanding the South Asian Games, potentially including more sports and cultural events.

- Establishing a South Asian Sports Development Fund could help improve sports infrastructure across the region.
- India could offer its world-class training facilities and coaches to athletes from neighbouring countries.
- Organizing more bilateral and multilateral cricket series, given the sport's popularity in the region, could foster people-to-people connections.
- This sports diplomacy would create positive engagement opportunities and showcase India's soft power.

●●●

●

INDIA'S BATTLE AGAINST PLASTIC WASTE

India generates approximately 4 million tonnes of plastic waste annually, with only a



quarter being recycled or treated. To address this issue, the government implemented the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)

rules, mandating that plastic users are responsible for collecting and recycling their waste. This system operates through an online EPR trading platform, where recyclers receive certificates for recycled plastic that can be purchased by companies falling short of their recycling targets.

However, the EPR system has faced significant challenges. In 2022-23, nearly 3.7 million tonnes of recycled plastic certificates were generated, but a substantial number were found to be fraudulent. While the market-driven approach shows promise, it has limitations. Addressing India's plastic waste problem requires not only improving the recycling system but also focusing on reducing plastic production and promoting sustainable alternatives.

Major Issues Arising from Mismanaged Plastic Waste in India

- Choking the Environment: Plastic waste in India causes severe environmental degradation.
- It clogs waterways, leading to flooding in urban areas during monsoons.
- For instance, Mumbai's 2005 floods were exacerbated by plastic-clogged drains.
- Marine pollution is another critical issue, with an estimated 0.6 million tonnes of plastic entering India's oceans annually leading to issues like Eutrophication and Bioaccumulation

- Already 88% of marine species studied have been negatively impacted by plastic pollution and it is estimated that up to 90% of seabirds and 52% of sea turtles ingest plastic.
- The burning of plastic waste, a common disposal method, releases harmful dioxins and furans, contributing to air pollution.
- Public Health Concerns: Plastic waste poses significant health risks to the Indian population.
 - Microplastics have been found in drinking water sources and food products, with potential long-term health effects still being studied.
 - The accumulation of plastic waste leads to clogging and potential breeding grounds for disease vectors like mosquitoes, contributing to the spread of dengue and malaria.
 - The burning of plastic waste releases carcinogens and other toxic substances, leading to respiratory issues and other health problems in nearby communities.
- Economic Challenges: The plastic waste problem has significant economic implications for India.
 - According to a FICCI report, India could lose over USD 133 billion worth of material value used in plastic packaging by 2030.
- Uncollected plastic packaging waste accounts for USD 68 billion of this loss.
- E-commerce and Packaging Waste: The rapid growth of e-commerce in India, accelerated by the Covid-19 pandemic, has led to a surge in packaging waste.
 - India's e-commerce market is expected to reach USD 200 billion by 2026, up from USD 38.5 billion in 2017.

- This growth corresponds with increased use of plastic packaging materials, including bubble wrap, air pillows, and polybags.
- Many of these materials are difficult to recycle and often end up in landfills or as litter.
- **Regulatory and Enforcement Challenges:** While India has implemented various regulations to address plastic waste, enforcement remains a major challenge.
- The Plastic Waste Management Rules 2016 (amended in 2022) ban certain single-use plastics, but implementation is inconsistent across states.
- The Extended Producer Responsibility system faces issues with fraudulent certificates and inadequate monitoring.
- The informal nature of much of the recycling sector makes it difficult to regulate and improve practices.
- India is among the 12 countries responsible for 60% of the planet's mismanaged plastic waste.
- **Technological and Infrastructure Gaps:** India faces significant technological and infrastructure deficits in managing plastic waste.
- Many municipalities lack modern waste segregation and processing facilities.
- Only 60% of the total collected plastic waste is recycled in India.
- Advanced recycling technologies for handling multi-layered plastics and other difficult-to-recycle materials are not widely available.
- The lack of a comprehensive waste tracking system makes it difficult to monitor the flow of plastic waste from generation to disposal or recycling.
- **Microplastic Pollution in Agriculture:** The use of plastic mulch and the application of sewage sludge containing microplastics in agriculture is an emerging concern.
- Studies have shown that microplastics can accumulate in agricultural soils, potentially affecting soil health, crop yields, and food safety.
- While comprehensive data for India is lacking, global trends indicate widespread use of plastic in agriculture and inadequate wastewater treatment.
- **Biodegradable Plastics Controversy:** The promotion of biodegradable plastics as a solution to plastic waste has created new challenges.
- Many so-called biodegradable plastics require specific conditions to break down, which are not met in natural environments or standard waste management systems.
- Moreover, the mixing of biodegradable plastics with conventional plastics can complicate recycling processes.
- India lacks clear standards and certification processes for biodegradable plastics adds to this issue.

Current Framework Related to Plastic Waste Management in India

- Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016
- Mandates steps to minimize plastic waste generation, prevent littering, and ensure segregated storage and handover of waste.
- Extends responsibility to producers, importers, and brand owners for both pre-consumer and post-consumer plastic packaging waste under Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR).
- Increases the minimum thickness of plastic carry bags and sheets to 50 microns.

- Expands jurisdiction from municipal areas to rural areas, with Gram Panchayats responsible for implementation.
- Introduces waste segregation at source for individual and bulk generators.
 - Plastic Waste Management (Amendment) Rules, 2018
- Applies phasing out of multi-layered plastic (MLP) to those that are non-recyclable, non-energy recoverable, or have no alternate use.
- Establishes a central registration system by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) for producers, importers, and brand owners.
- It omitted the rule of explicit pricing of carry bags mentioned in the 2016 rule.
 - Plastic Waste Management Amendment Rules, 2021
- Prohibits specific single-use plastic items by 2022 due to low utility and high littering potential.
- Bans manufacture, import, stocking, distribution, sale, and use of certain single-use plastics, including polystyrene, from 1st July 2022.
- Enforces collection and environmental management of plastic packaging waste through EPR.
- Increases plastic carry bag thickness from 50 microns to 75 microns by September 2021 and to 120 microns by December 2022.
 - Plastic Waste Management (Amendment) Rules, 2022
- Introduces EPR guidelines with mandatory targets for recycling, reuse of rigid plastic packaging, and use of recycled plastic content.
- Imposes environmental compensation on those failing to meet EPR targets, based on the polluter pays principle.
- Provides a framework to strengthen the circular economy of plastic packaging waste.
 - Plastic Waste Management (Amendment) Rules, 2024:
- The rules outline specific forms and procedures for registration, reporting, and certification related to plastic waste management and EPR obligations.
- Expanded Definitions:
 - Importer: Now includes imports of various plastic-related materials for commercial use, beyond just plastic packaging and similar items.
 - Producer: Also Encompasses the production of intermediate materials for plastic packaging and contract manufacturing for brand owners.
- Manufacturers of carry bags and commodities from compostable or biodegradable plastics must obtain certification from the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) before marketing or selling.
- These items must adhere to mandatory labelling requirements and comply with Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) regulations for food contact applications.
- Manufacturers must process pre-consumer plastic waste generated during production and report it to the State Pollution Control Board or Pollution Control Committee.
- Compostable plastics must bear a label indicating they are only compostable under industrial conditions.
- Biodegradable plastics must specify the number of days they take to biodegrade and the environment in which they will biodegrade.
- Mandatory Jute Packaging Act, 2010: An Act enacted to ensure the mandatory use of jute packaging and to make provisions

for the prevention of environmental pollution caused by the use of artificial packaging like plastics in the supply and distribution of certain products.

Alternatives to Plastics:

- **Bagasse:** Made from sugarcane or beet pulp. It is compostable and eco-friendly.
- **Bioplastics:** Plant-based plastics used primarily in food packaging.
- **Natural Textiles:** Includes materials such as cotton, wool, and hemp.
- **Edible Seaweed Cups:** Seaweed grows rapidly, up to 60 times faster than land-based plants, making it a sustainable option.
- **Algae-Blended Ethylene-Vinyl Acetate:** Utilizes algae to convert air and water pollutants (ammonia, phosphates, and carbon dioxide) into plant biomass rich in proteins.
- **Compostable Plastics:** Can be plant-based or fossil fuel-based and degrade through biological processes into CO₂, water, inorganic compounds, and biomass, without leaving toxic residues. For example, BASF's Ecoflex.

What Measures can be Adopted for Better Management of Plastic Waste in India?

- **"Trash to Treasure":** Implement a comprehensive circular economy approach to plastic waste management.
- Encourage design for recyclability in product development.
- Establish material recovery facilities in every major city to efficiently sort and process plastic waste by promoting 4R's: reduce, reuse, recycle, and recover.
- Incentivize the use of recycled plastics in manufacturing through tax breaks or subsidies.
- Create a robust market for recycled plastics by mandating minimum recycled content in certain products, driving demand

and closing the loop in plastic consumption.

- **Smart Waste, Smart Cities:** Integrate smart technology into waste management systems across urban India.
- Implement IoT-enabled smart bins that can alert authorities when full, optimizing collection routes.
- Use AI and machine learning for better waste sorting and recycling processes.
- Develop mobile apps for citizens to report illegal dumping and locate nearest recycling centers.
- **Greening the Supply Chain:** Strengthen and expand the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) system.
- Implement a graded fee structure where harder-to-recycle plastics incur higher EPR fees.
- Introduce a plastic credit trading system to incentivize over-achievement of recycling targets.
- Extend EPR to cover the informal sector, providing social security and better working conditions for waste pickers while formalizing their crucial role.
- **Nationwide Awareness and Education Campaign:** Launch a comprehensive, multi-lingual national awareness campaign on plastic waste.
- Integrate plastic waste management into school curricula from primary to higher education.
- Conduct regular community workshops on waste segregation and recycling practices.
- Use social media influencers and celebrities to promote plastic-free lifestyles.
- Establish a national plastic waste innovation challenge to engage youth in finding creative solutions to plastic pollution.

- "Waste-to-Energy 2.0": Invest in advanced waste-to-energy technologies for plastics that cannot be recycled.
 - Implement pyrolysis and gasification plants in outskirts of major cities to convert plastic waste into fuel or energy.
 - Ensure strict emissions control and monitoring for these plants to prevent air pollution.
 - Use the energy generated to power waste management facilities, creating a self-sustaining system. Continuously research and adopt new technologies for handling difficult-to-recycle plastics.
- Plastic Footprint: Introduce mandatory annual plastic footprint audits for large and medium-sized companies.
 - Require public disclosure of plastic usage, waste generation, and recycling rates in annual reports.
 - Develop a standardized methodology for calculating and reporting plastic footprints.
 - Use this data to inform policy decisions and track progress in plastic waste reduction. Implement a rating system for companies based on their plastic footprint management.
- Green Procurement: Implement strict plastic waste reduction criteria in all government procurement policies.
 - Mandate the use of recycled plastic content in government-purchased products where feasible.
 - Prioritize vendors with strong plastic waste reduction and recycling practices.
 - Use government buildings as role models for plastic-free buildings. Extend these procurement policies to state-owned enterprises and encourage adoption by the private sector.
- Wastepreneurs: Launch a national incubator program specifically for waste management startups.
 - Provide seed funding, mentorship, and networking opportunities for innovative recycling businesses.
 - Create mini special economic zones with tax benefits for recycling and upcycling industries.
- Towards Plastic-Free Farming: Develop and subsidize biodegradable alternatives to plastic mulch and greenhouse covers.
 - Implement a take-back program for agricultural plastics like pesticide containers.
 - Promote the use of organic mulch and other sustainable farming practices.
 - Create a certification for "Plastic-Free Farms" to add value to their produce. Establish regional centers for recycling and proper disposal of agricultural plastics.
- Plastic in Road Construction- Paving the Way with Waste: Expand the use of plastic waste in road construction nationwide.
 - Develop standardized guidelines for the optimal mix of plastic waste in road materials.
 - Establish regional plastic processing centers to convert waste into road-ready materials. Train local construction workers in plastic road-building techniques, creating new green jobs.
 - Thiagarajar College of Engineering in Madurai has patented a method to create durable tiles and blocks from waste plastic, suitable for use as construction material and can serve as a model.



WORLD AFFAIRS

Rwanda's Kagame has been sworn as president for the fourth term

Rwandan President Paul Kagame was sworn in for a fourth term after winning 99.18% of the vote. The inauguration was attended by various African dignitaries. Kagame's main competitor, Frank Habineza, received 0.5% of the votes.



Rwanda, a landlocked country in East Africa, is the fifth-most densely populated country in the world.

World's oldest calendar has been discovered in Turkey

Archaeologists have found the world's oldest calendar on a 12,000-year-old stone pillar at the GobekliTepe site in Turkey. This discovery, which predates Ancient Greece's documented calendars, reveals ancient humans tracked time accurately and even recorded a comet strike that triggered a mini ice age. GobekliTepe, the oldest known man-made structure, was built between 9,600 and 8,200 BC and predates Stonehenge by over 6,000 years.

China launched the first satellite constellation network to counter Starlink

A Chinese state-owned enterprise, Shanghai Spacecom Satellite Technology (SSST), has launched 18 low Earth orbit (LEO) satellites using a Long March 6 rocket from Taiyuan Satellite Launch Center. This move is intended to develop a satellite network similar to SpaceX's Starlink, which provides global internet coverage.

A Moon crater has been named after PasangLhamu Sherpa

LhamuPasang Sherpa is the first Nepalese woman to reach on the Mount Everest

summit. Nepal celebrated the naming of a crater at the Moon's South Pole in honor of PasangLhamu Sherpa. The US Geological Survey as well as topographic and hydrological features of Earth has named this crater after Sherpa. The Government of Nepal has honored her by declaring PasangLhamu a National Luminary.

South Africa's historic sites linked to liberation struggle, Mandela received UNESCO World Heritage status

UNESCO added historical sites related to South Africa's liberation struggle and Nelson Mandela to its World Heritage List. The sites were nominated under the name "Human Rights, Liberation Struggle and Reconciliation: Nelson Mandela Legacy Site," with support from various countries. World Heritage Sites are recognized for their cultural, historical, or natural significance.

Azerbaijan, the host of COP29 climate summit, launched a climate finance action fund

The "Climate Finance Action Fund" (CFAF) will be funded by fossil fuel producers to support efforts in meeting the 1.5°C temperature target. Initially, \$1 billion will be raised for the fund. Half of this will support climate projects in developing countries, while the other half will aid nations in meeting their climate targets. Twenty percent will be allocated for emergency disaster response. The fund will be discussed at COP29 in Baku from November 11-22, 2024, which aims to phase out fossil fuels.

Ivory Coast joined the UN Water Convention as the 10th African country

Ivory Coast has joined the 1992 UN Water Convention as the 10th African country to do so, aiming to improve cooperative water

management. The convention, which now has 53 parties, promotes sustainable management of transboundary waters. Ivory Coast is also classified as one of Africa's water-insecure countries. Sierra Leone, Zambia, and Zimbabwe are nearing accession to the convention.

MV Sea Change, world first commercial passenger ferry powered by 100% hydrogen, launched at the San Francisco Ferry Building

The 70-foot hydrogen-powered Sea Change catamaran will carry up to 75 passengers between Pier 41 and downtown San Francisco. Unlike diesel boats, it emits only heat and water vapor. The service will be free for six months under a pilot program. The vessel, built in California and Washington, can travel about 300 nautical miles and run for up to 16 hours on a single refuel. This technology aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the shipping industry.

Global Biofuels Alliance (GBA) is set to get diplomatic status

The Indian government is likely to sign a headquarters agreement with the Global Biofuels Alliance (GBA). GBA's diplomatic status and recognition as an international organisation will be similar to the status given to the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) and the International Solar Alliance (ISA). After this agreement, GBA will be an independent and international legal persona that will carry out its functions in a more efficient manner at the international level. It will give immunities and privileges to the organization as an international organization. Its secretariat will also be set up in a country.

France, Germany, Italy, and Poland will jointly develop long-range cruise missiles

France, Germany, Italy and Poland launched an initiative to develop long-range cruise missiles. These cruise missiles will have a range of more than 500 kilometers. The first draft of the missile might come out by the end of 2024. The main aim of this project was to meet NATO demands for such a capability. The INF treaty signed in 1987 had outlawed nuclear and conventional ground-launched missiles with a range between 500 and 5,500 km. In the 1990s, Germany, Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic also destroyed their missiles.

K P Sharma Oli took the oath of office as Prime Minister of Nepal

Nepal President Ram Chandra Paudel appointed K P S Oli as the new prime minister. Oli, supported by the Nepali Congress and his own Communist Party of Nepal-Unified Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML), was the only candidate with 166 legislative votes. Oli and Congress president Sher



Bahadur Deuba will alternate as prime ministers until the 2027 elections. Oli, starting his third term, succeeds Pushpa Kamal Dahal Prachanda, who lost a confidence vote.

Donald Trump distancing himself from Project 2025

The '2025 Presidential Transition Project' known as 'Project 25' has published a 900-page document titled "The Mandate for Leadership 2025: The Conservative Promise". This document contains a plethora of extremely contentious policy proposals.

●●●

●

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

'Amrit Gyan Kosh' and 'Faculty Development' portals launched by Dr. Jitendra Singh under Mission Karmayogi

Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh launched the 'Amrit Gyan Kosh' portal and 'Faculty



Development Portal' at the Public Service Training Institute Conference in New Delhi. These initiatives aim to modernize civil service training, with plans to train 31 lakh government

employees annually. Dr. Singh also introduced the 13th Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) for continuous enhancement of training institutes. Five Civil Services Training Institutions were recognized for their high number of IGoT courses: ISTM, NTIPRIT, Rafi Ahmad Kidwai National Postal Academy, NICF, and SVP National Police Academy.

'JiyoParsi' scheme portal has been launched by Union Minister Kiren Rijju

'JiyoParsi' scheme portal would enable Parsis to apply, check the status of their application and to receive financial assistance online through direct benefit transfer mode. The Ministry of Minority Affairs is implementing the JiyoParsi scheme to reverse the declining trend of the Parsi population. Under this scheme, the declining trend of the Parsi population is trying to be reversed by adopting a scientific protocol and structured interventions to stabilise their population. This scheme provides financial assistance to Parsi

couples for medical treatment under standard medical protocol and child care. It also provides financial assistance to dependent elderly people.

IITGN and IIT Indore have jointly set up cNARMADA to assess the river ecosystem

The Centre for Narmada River Basin Management (cNARMADA) has been set up at the campus of the Indian Institute of Technology Gandhinagar (IITGN). IITGN has joined hands with the Indian Institute of Technology Indore (IITI) to conduct the Condition Assessment and Management Plan (CAMP) of the Narmada River basin. cNARMADA was inaugurated to assess and identify existing conditions affecting the river ecosystem. It will also prepare a road map for comprehensive rejuvenation and conservation of the riverine ecosystems. Narmada and its tributaries will be studied using a basin-wide approach considering major human activities.

IIT Madras ranked top spot in the NIRF Ranking 2024

The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras has been ranked the top institution in India for the sixth consecutive year in the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) 2024. IGNOU was ranked first among open universities. The Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru was named the best university. Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) in Ahmedabad, Bangalore, and Calcutta continued to lead in management. The NIRF 2024 now evaluates institutions across 16 categories, including engineering, management, and medicine. This year, a

record 10,885 institutions participated in the rankings.

Railways and NCRTC collaborated to promote 'One India-One Ticket' initiative

The Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) and the National Capital Region Transport Corporation (NCRTC) have launched the 'One India-One Ticket' initiative. This allows passengers to book both Indian Railways and RRTS (Regional Rapid Transit System) services together. After booking an IRCTC train e-ticket, users can add RRTS tickets for up to eight passengers. The RRTS booking option will appear on the PNR confirmation page and can be accessed from the train ticket booking history. Each RRTS ticket will have a QR code valid for four days, including one day before and two days after the travel date.

Union Minister Dr.Jitendra Singh proposed a National Geospatial Data Repository

Union Minister Dr.Jitendra Singh has proposed creating a National Geospatial Data Repository and a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model to enhance the use of geospatial data. This initiative, involving the Department of Space, Department of Science and Technology, and Ministry of Earth Sciences, aims to develop innovative products for farmers and rural artisans. A unified web repository for Indian science and technology will be launched, and feedback will be collected. Dr. Singh also reviewed the status of a common research portal and the progress of the "Vigyan Shakti" portal, emphasizing the importance of pooling knowledge and resources through PPPs.

109 climate-resilient seed varieties released by PM Modi to increase agricultural production and nutrition

PM NarendraModi has launched 109 new high-yielding, climate-resilient, and bio-fortified seed varieties developed by the Indian

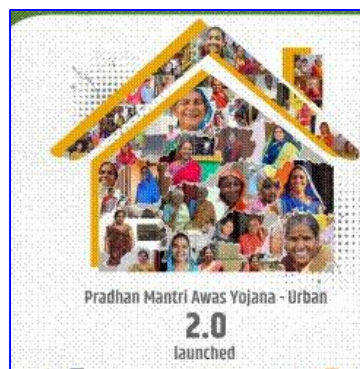
Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR). These seeds cover 61 crops, including cereals, millets, oilseeds, pulses, and various horticultural crops. The release took place at the Pusa campus in Delhi, where Modi also met with farmers and scientists.

Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) has been established to review the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024

A 31-member Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) will review the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024, which aims to replace the Waqf Act of 1995. The committee includes 21 members from the Lok Sabha and 10 from the Rajya Sabha, with notable members such as Asaduddin Owaisi and Imran Masood. The JPC was formed after opposition objections, and it is expected to report by the end of the first week of the next parliamentary session.

Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban (PMAY-U) 2.0 scheme has been approved by the Union Cabinet

The Union Cabinet has approved the implementation of the Pradhan Mantri Awas



Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G) for FY 2024-25 to 2028-29, which aims to build three crore new houses: two crore in rural areas and one crore in urban

areas. The scheme has a budget of ₹3.06 lakh crore. The PradhanMantriAwasYojana-Urban (PMAY-U) 2.0 will assist one crore urban poor and middle-class families with housing costs, including financial aid of ₹2.30 lakh crore and a 4% interest subsidy on home loans. Additionally, the Clean Plant Programme (CPP) and the modified PradhanMantri JI-VAN Yojana for biofuel

projects have also been approved and extended until 2028-29.

Government amended a provision of the Rules of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 (CAA)

Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has amended a provision of the Rules of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 (CAA) that requires applicants seeking citizenship to submit a document by any government authority. As per the new rule, Schedule 1A of the act has been expanded to include any document issued by the State or the Central government or any quasi-judicial authority in India. Under Schedule 1A of the CAA, applicants from Afghanistan, Bangladesh or Pakistan have to submit the document to prove their nationality. The CAA Rules also enabled local priests or a “locally reputed community institution” to issue the mandatory certificates certifying the faith of an applicant. CAA has a provision to provide citizenship of India to six non-Muslim communities from the three countries who entered India before December 31, 2014.

An amendment to the Finance Bill, 2024 has been moved by the central government

Under a new amendment, individuals who acquired property before July 23, 2024, can choose between a 12.5% long-term capital gains tax rate without indexation or a 20% rate with indexation when selling their property. Indexation adjusts asset prices for inflation, which lowers taxable gains. The recent change in the Union Budget 2024 reduced the LTCG tax rate from 20% to 12.5% without indexation, potentially increasing tax liabilities for some sellers.



Government to introduce Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024, in the Lok Sabha

The Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024, proposed amendments to the Waqf Act, 1995. The bill will be introduced in the Lok Sabha by Minority Affairs Minister Kiren Rijju. It has proposed 40 amendments. These amendments aim to diminish the ‘arbitrary’ authority of the Waqf Boards. The existing Waqf Act allows the boards to claim any property as Waqf without mandatory verification. It has also involved ‘district collector’ in the Act and has given the collector powers to resolve disputes related to the Waqf Act between the Waqf Board and the government. The word ‘Waqf’ will be replaced with ‘Unified Waqf Management, Empowerment, Efficiency and Development’ in the 1995 act. The bill also proposed the establishment of a separate Board of Auqaf for the Bohras and Aghakhanis. The bill will also streamline the process of registration of Waqfs through a central portal and database.

The continuation of interest subvention scheme for farmers has been approved by the government

The government has approved the continuation of the interest subvention scheme for short-term agricultural loans up to ₹3 lakh through Kisan Credit Cards (KCC) for the current financial year. Farmers will get loans at a concessional rate of 7% interest, with an additional 3% subvention for timely repayment. In 2024-2025, lending institutions will receive a 1.5% interest subvention. Small and marginal farmers can access this subvention for up to six months after harvest to encourage storage and avoid distress sales. Banks will offer the applicable subvention rate for restructured loans in the first year, with regular rates in the second year. Aadhaar linkage remains mandatory for these loans.

The Digital Shakti Centre has been inaugurated by the National Commission for Women in New Delhi to fight cybercrimes against women

In partnership with the Cyber Peace Foundation, NCW Chairperson Rekha Sharma inaugurated the Digital Shakti Centre to raise awareness of cyber crimes and provide technical assistance for handling complaints. The centre aims to help women use technology safely and resolve cybercrime issues efficiently. The initiative builds on the success of the Digital Shakti program, introduced in 2018. Ms. Sharma noted an increase in cybercrime cases in India, from 52,974 in 2021 to 65,893 in 2022, with more complaints from women.

Version 4.0 of Price Monitoring System (PMS) Mobile App launched by the Minister of Food and Consumer Affairs, PralhadVenkatesh Joshi

Starting August 1, 2024, the Department of Consumer Affairs will expand its price monitoring to 38 commodities, adding 16 new items to the existing 22. This expansion includes items like bajra, jowar, ghee, butter, and bananas. The department monitors prices daily from 550 centers across 34 States/UTs. This data helps inform government and RBI decisions on CPI inflation. Monitoring these items is crucial for stabilizing food prices and controlling overall inflation.

India is the 2nd largest aluminum Producer in the World

India is the 2nd largest producer of aluminum, 3rd of lime, and 4th of iron ore globally. In FY 2024–25 (April-June), primary aluminum production grew by 1.2%. Iron ore production increased from 72 MMT to 79 MMT, and limestone production rose from 114 MMT to 116 MMT. Manganese ore production grew by 11% to 1.0 MMT. Iron ore and limestone make

up about 80% of total mineral production by value.

India is ranked 39th in Travel & Tourism Development Index 2024

India is ranked 39th out of 119 countries in the Travel and Tourism Development Index 2024 by the World Economic Forum. In 2022, India had 14.3 million international tourist arrivals, capturing 1.47% of the global market share and 15.66% in Asia and the Pacific. Minister of Tourism Gajendra Singh Shekhawat noted improvements in travel and tourism prioritization, safety and security, and health and hygiene.

Supreme Court ruled that state governments have the power to sub-classify SCs, and STs for the reservation

A seven-judge bench of the Supreme Court, led by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud, ruled



that state governments can sub-classify SCs and STs for reservations if they provide sufficient data showing inadequate representation

and varying levels of social backwardness. This decision overruled a 2004 verdict that deemed such sub-classification impermissible. The court clarified that sub-classification under Article 14 of the Constitution is allowed as long as it doesn't offer exclusive benefits to certain castes, and does not violate Article 341(2).

Bharatiya Vayuyan Vidheyak Bill introduced in Lok Sabha

Union Civil Aviation Minister Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu introduced the Bharatiya Vayuyan Vidheyak 2024 in the Lok Sabha to replace the outdated Aircraft Act of 1934. The new law aims to streamline and clarify aviation regulations, giving the Central Government authority over various aspects of aircraft management and safety. It will also transfer the certification and licensing process

for Radio Telephone Operator Restricted (RTR) from the Department of Telecommunications to the DGCA, simplifying the process for pilots by consolidating certification under one authority.

The Women Entrepreneurship Program has been introduced by the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC)

The new program aims to support women entrepreneurs by offering financial grants, training, and networking opportunities. It partners with Britannia Industries to showcase their products on the Skill India Digital Hub. The program includes self-learning entrepreneurship courses in various languages, leading to co-branded certificates from NSDC, Britannia Industries, and NIESBUD. The goal is to empower 25 lakh Indian women. The program will end with a grand finale where a panel will select the top 50 contestants, and ten winners will receive ₹10 lakh each from Britannia Industries.

An MoU signed with GBPUAT by BIS to develop first of its kind standardized agricultural demonstration farm

A landmark MoU has been signed by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) and GovindBallabh Pant



University of Agriculture and Technology (GBPUAT) to facilitate the development of a

'Standardised Agricultural

Demonstration Farm' (SADF), the first of its kind in India. The primary objective of this MoU is to develop SADF at GBPUAT in collaboration with BIS. These farms will serve as experimental sites for testing and implementing various agricultural practices and new technologies as per Indian standards. This partnership with GBPUAT is a significant step towards promoting

standardized agricultural practices and ensuring the implementation of cutting-edge technologies to enhance agricultural productivity and sustainability.

9th governing council meeting of NITI Aayog is chaired by PM Modi

The meeting is focused on making India a developed country. The theme of this year's meeting is Viksit Bharat@2047. In the meeting, the Vision Document on Viksit Bharat has been discussed. The main aim of the Governing Council meeting is to foster participative governance and collaboration between the Centre and State Governments. In the meeting, detailed deliberations on the role of states in achieving the goal of Viksit Bharat will be also discussed. The Prime Minister is the Chairperson of the NITI Aayog. SumanBery is currently Vice Chairperson, NITI Aayog. NITI Aayog was formed via a resolution of the Union Cabinet on 1 January 2015.

IRCTC has been upgraded from 'Schedule B' to 'Schedule A' category Central Public Sector Enterprises by the Government of India

The Ministry of Railways announced the upgrade of IRCTC from 'Schedule B' to 'Schedule A' Category CPSE. IRCTC has shown a CAGR of 50.63 per cent between Fiscal 2022 and Fiscal 2024 in total income. It declared dividend of Rs 280 crores, Rs 440 and Rs 520 crores for 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24, respectively. Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) is in its 25th year of incorporation. It is a Mini-Ratna PSU under the Ministry of Railways. Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation was established in 1999. It is headquartered in New Delhi. Sanjay Kumar Jain is its chairman and MD. It provides ticketing, catering, and tourism services for Indian Railways.

The Ministry of Defence has been given Rs 6,21,940.85 crore in Union Budget for the Financial Year (FY) 2024– 2025

The government has allocated an additional ₹400 crore to the Acing Development of Innovative Technologies with iDEX (ADITI) program for defense innovation. For FY 2024-25, the Ministry of Defence's budget is approximately ₹1 lakh crore, 18.43% higher than FY 2022-23 and 4.79% more than FY 2023-24. The Defence Forces will receive ₹1.72 lakh crore for capital expenditures, a 20.33% increase from FY 2022-23. Of the modernization budget, 75% (₹1,05,518.43 crore) is allocated for domestic procurement. The Ex-Servicemen Contributory Health Scheme (ECHS) gets ₹6,968 crore, a 28% increase. Border Roads Organisations (BRO) receive ₹6,500 crore, up 160% from FY 21-22. The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) will get ₹23,855 crore, and the Technology Development Fund (TDF) is allocated ₹60 crore. Defence pensions have been increased to ₹1.41 lakh crore.

By 2026, Airbus plans to introduce the first Made in India H-125

Airbus, in partnership with Tata, will start building a Final Assembly Line (FAL) for H-125 helicopters in India this winter. The first Made-in-India helicopter is expected by 2026, with an initial production of 10 helicopters per year, potentially increasing to up to 50. Airbus, confident due to the success of the A-320, aims for similar success with the H-125. Beyond manufacturing, Airbus is also involved in helicopter maintenance through a partnership with Indamer, offering MRO services in Mumbai, New Delhi, and Nagpur. Additionally, Airbus has made notable contributions to the C-295 defense program.

Union Minister Shri Jyotiraditya M. Scindia launched 'The Future is Now' as the theme for India Mobile Congress (IMC) 2024

The Minister launched the Indian Mobile Congress 2024 app and website for registration and introduced the Testing Scheme for Start-ups & MSMEs in the telecom sector. The scheme offers up to ₹50 lakh reimbursement for testing and certification costs, with a total fund of ₹25 crore, and the application process is online. The Minister also facilitated an MoU between NTIPRIT and IIT Jammu for cybersecurity capacity building and announced the PanditDeendayalUpadhyay Telecom Excellence Awards 2023.

"Utkrishtataki Ore BadhteKadam" event organized by MoHUA and awarded best performers under PM SVANidhi and DAY-NULM

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) organized the event "Utkrishtataki



Ore BadhteKadam" to honor top performers under the PM Street Vendor's

AtmaNirbharNidhi (PM SVANidhi) Yojana and the DeendayalAntyodayaYojana - National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM). The PM SVANidhi scheme, launched on June 1, 2020, provides up to ₹80,000 in working capital loans to urban street vendors without collateral. DAY-NULM, launched on September 24, 2013, aims to reduce poverty and support urban poor households.

"E-mobility R&D Roadmap for India" report has been released by the Principal Scientific Adviser

The R&D roadmap for the automotive sector identifies key areas for future technology, including Energy Storage Cells, EV Aggregates, Materials and Recycling, and Charging and Refueling. The report aims for India to achieve global leadership in these areas and become self-reliant in the next five years. India seeks a 45% reduction in emission intensity by 2030 and energy independence by 2047, with a goal of reaching net-zero emissions by 2070. The automotive sector is a major contributor to India's GDP.

India's first overseas Jan Aushadi Kendra has been inaugurated by External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar in Mauritius

During the inauguration, Mauritius Prime Minister Pravind Kumar Jugnauth joined him. Jaishankar said that the India-Mauritius health partnership project will supply cost-effective, made-in-India medicines. Earlier, the Mediclinic project at Grand Bois in Mauritius with Indian grant assistance was inaugurated by Dr. Jaishankar. Dr. Jaishankar said this will provide secondary health care for 16,000 people in the Grand Bois area. India has close relations with Mauritius, an island nation in the Western Indian Ocean. Indian-origin people make up about 70% of the island's population of 1.2 million.

Government plans to launch the fourth phase of the PradhanMantri Gram SadakYojana

In the fourth phase of the PradhanMantri Gram SadakYojana (PMGSY), 50,000 habitations with populations over 250 in plain areas and 100 in special category states will be connected by roads. This phase, part of the Ministry of Rural Development's 100-day agenda, has a budget of ₹1.9 lakh crore, with

₹1.3 lakh crore from the central government and ₹60,000 crore from states. It focuses on improving village connectivity within 50 km of national highways. Previous phases were launched in 2000, 2013, and 2019. PMGSY-IV, along with the Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G), aims to boost rural investment and job creation.

STATE NEWS

Madhya Pradesh became the first state to provide money to girl's students to buy sanitary napkins

Madhya Pradesh government will provide three hundred rupees to each girl's student



annually to buy sanitary napkins. Under the Sanitation and Hygiene Scheme, the amount will be transferred to each girl student's account. This

initiative will benefit around 19 lakh students from class seventh to twelfth. More than 57 crore 18 lakh rupees have been transferred to the accounts of more than 19 lakh girl students. Some states like Karnataka, Rajasthan and Delhi, provide free sanitary napkins that are given to students. Chief Minister Dr. Mohan also announced the inclusion of Rani Durgavati in the curriculum of state government schools. The Chief Minister also felicitated the girl's students who performed well in international and national level competitions in sports activities.

The registration of temples, mutts, and trusts has been made compulsory by the Bihar government

The Bihar government has ordered district magistrates to ensure that all public temples, mutts, dharamshalas, and trusts in the state are registered with the Bihar State Board of Religious Trusts (BSBRT) and that their

property details are submitted. The BSBRT, under the State's Law Department, oversees this registration as required by the Bihar Hindu Religious Trust Act, 1950. Currently, there are 2,512 unregistered temples and mutts in Bihar owning 4,321.64 acres of land, while 2,499 registered temples own 18,456 acres. The highest number of unregistered temples are in Vaishali, Bhabua, and West Champaran. The government plans to take strict action against illegal property transactions involving both registered and unregistered entities.

Ancient Maharashtra rock art declared a 'Protected Monument'

The Maharashtra government has declared the geoglyphs and petroglyphs in Ratnagiri as



'protected monuments' under the Maharashtra Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains

Act, 1960. These ancient artworks, dating back to the Mesolithic Age (about 20,000–10,000 years ago), include images of animals like rhinoceros, deer, and monkeys, as well as footprints. The petroglyphs in Ratnagiri are significant as they represent the works of Mesolithic man. In the Konkan region, these geoglyphs and petroglyphs cover a 900-kilometer area, with Ratnagiri alone housing over 1,500 artworks at 70 sites, seven of which are on UNESCO's tentative World Heritage List.

Cabinet approved the extension of PradhanMantri JI-VAN Yojana

The Union Cabinet has extended the PradhanMantri JI-VAN Yojana until 2028-29 to support advanced Biofuel projects. The revised scheme, which will be implemented over five years, includes "bolt-on" and "brownfield" projects. It aims to provide financial support across multiple sectors, offering farmers stable income from selling

agricultural residue, reducing environmental pollution, and contributing to India's net-zero emissions goal by 2070. Launched in 2019, the scheme focuses on developing 2nd Generation (2G) ethanol from biomass and agricultural waste, and it supported the creation of India's first 2G ethanol plant by Indian Oil Corporation in Panipat.

Three Indian Ocean structures named Ashoka, Chandragupta and Kalpataru

India has proposed names for three underwater geological structures in the Indian Ocean: the Ashoka Seamount, Chandragupta Ridge, and Kalpataru Ridge. These names, recently approved by the International Hydrographic Organisation and UNESCO's Intergovernmental

Oceanographic Commission, honor figures from the Maurya dynasty. Discovered by the National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR), these structures are located in the Southwest Indian Ridge region. The Ashoka Seamount (180 sq km) and Kalpataru Ridge (430 sq km) were found in 2012, while the Chandragupta Ridge (675 sq km) was identified in 2020.

The IIT Indore creates e-shoes with real-time location tracking

The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Indore has provided the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) with ten pairs of shoe soles using Tribo-Electric Nanogenerator (TENG) technology. These shoes harness motion energy to power electronic devices and include a GPS module for real-time location tracking. Developed under Prof. I.A. Palani, the shoes feature TENG systems that generate power from movement using aluminum and fluorinated ethylene propylene (FEP). They are intended for military use and can also be applied in industrial and civilian settings, such as monitoring seniors or tracking employees.

The two-child policy for individuals contesting local body elections abolished by Andhra Pradesh

The Andhra Pradesh government has removed the rule that barred individuals with more than two children from contesting local body elections. This decision, made by Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, addresses concerns over the state's low fertility rate of 1.5. The two-child policy, implemented in 1994, previously restricted such individuals from holding government jobs or receiving certain benefits.

Maharashtra government approved the Logistic Policy to create five lakh job opportunities

The Maharashtra government has approved Logistics Policy 2024. It has proposed to set up more than 200 logistics parks, complexes, and truck terminals with integrated facilities. It will generate approximately 5,00,000 new job opportunities. The main objective of the policy is to include developing more than 10,000 acres of dedicated logistics infrastructure, and 25 district logistic nodes. It has proposed to create five regional logistic hubs and as many state logistic hubs. Hi-tech logistics will especially incentivise the adoption of Artificial Intelligence (AI), BlockChain technology, robotics, automation, etc.

BhumiPujan ceremony of Tata Group's ₹27,000 crore semiconductor assembly and test facility in Jagiroad, Assam was conducted recently

Tata announced in February 2024 that the Indian government had accepted Tata Electronics' proposal to construct a cutting-edge, greenfield semiconductor assembly and testing facility in Assam. The project is estimated to create around 27,000 direct and indirect jobs in the region, with an investment outlay of ₹27,000 crores. By mid-2025, the new facility should be operating. Because

Assam is close to water supplies, green energy sources, and test hubs in Southeast Asian nations, it was an important location. Use cases for the facility and semiconductor chips include mobile devices, artificial intelligence, and the automobile sector.

Nagaland has become first state which have signed an MoU on disaster risk management

Nagaland has become the first Indian state to adopt the Disaster Risk Transfer Parametric



Insurance Solution (DRTPS) by signing a three-year MoU with SBI General Insurance. This insurance will cover the entire state, with the

government paying the premium, and provide financial support for extreme events and vital infrastructure from 2024 to 2027. The Maharashtra government and Toyota Kirloskar Motor have signed an MoU to establish a Rs 20,000 crore manufacturing plant in Aurangabad. The plant will focus on producing electric and hybrid cars.

The "VIRAASAT" exhibition concluded at Handloom Haat in Janpath

The "VIRAASAT" exhibition, a fortnight-long event celebrating the 10th National Handloom Day, was organized by the National Handloom Development Corporation Ltd (NHDC) under the Ministry of Textiles, Government of India. The exhibition concluded on August 16, 2024. "VIRAASAT" extended the festivities from the previous year's National Handloom Day. This year's National Handloom Day, marking its tenth anniversary on August 7, followed the Swadeshi Movement's commencement on August 7, 1905. The Indian government had designated August 7 as National Handloom Day in 2015, and the inaugural celebration was held in Chennai with Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Haryana government will procure all crops in the state at minimum support price (MSP)

Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini announced that the state is currently procuring 14 crops at MSP. The government has waived 133 crore rupees in unpaid canal water irrigation charges and decided to end the "abiana" system, which will benefit farmers by 54 crore rupees annually. Additionally, compensation of 137 crore rupees for crop damage due to natural calamities will be paid to affected farmers in Rohtak, Nuh, Fatehabad, and Sirsa within a week. Farmers can now purchase a three-star motor for new tubewell connections from anywhere in India, and the government plans to fill 40,000 positions in the public sector.

Ideas4Life portal was launched by Shri Bhupendra Yadav at IIT Delhi

The "Ideas4Life" initiative, launched by Union Minister Bhupendra Yadav, invites ideas for



eco-friendly products and services that encourage behavior change. It aims to engage students, teachers, and researchers in Mission Life's global efforts. The

portal 'Ideas4Life.nic.in' allows participants to submit their ideas online. Winning ideas in each of the seven themes—save water, save energy, reduce waste, reduce e-waste, avoid single-use plastic, adopt sustainable food systems, and adopt healthy lifestyles—will receive prizes. Educational institutions like UGC, AICTE, and IITs will help promote the initiative.

Gujarat is to establish 'GRIT' based on the NitiAayog model

Gujarat CM Bhupendra Patel announced the establishment of Gujarat State Institution for

Transformation (GRIT), a think-tank modelled after NITI Aayog. It will serve as a public policy think-tank for the state. Gujarat CM Bhupendra Patel unveiled the 'Gujarat@2047 Dynamic Document-Roadmap'. It is focused on pillars of 'Earning Well' and 'Living Well' aimed to enhance the quality of life and economic prosperity in the state. It will help the state in achieving development goals. CM affirmed that the government is committed to adopting the Prime Minister's 'GYAN' mantra, focusing on the advancement of the Garib (Poor), Yuva (Youth), Annadata (Farmers), and Naari (Women).

Rajasthan government announced reservation for Agniveers in recruitment for state police, jail guards, and forest guards

This announcement was made on Kargil Vijay Diwas, which was celebrated on July 26. Rajasthan government has not yet revealed the specific percentage of reservation allocated for Agniveers in these sectors. The Rajasthan government's announcement aligns with the Agnipath scheme, which was launched in 2022 by the central government. This also comes after the Arunachal Pradesh government made the announcement regarding a new initiative. With the help of this new initiative, retired Agniveers will be given preference when hiring for important positions in the state's emergency services, fire department, and police department. The Union Ministry of Home Affairs earlier allocated 10% of vacancies in the Central Armed Police Forces for ex-Agniveers.

Charaideo Maidam of Assam has been included in UNESCO World Heritage List

Charaideo Maidam in eastern Assam has been included in the UNESCO World Heritage Site list as a cultural property. Similar to Egyptian pyramids, these maidams are burial mounds of the Ahom royal family, whose rule lasted for

600 years before British occupation. This is the first cultural World Heritage Site in Northeast India and the 43rd in the country. Assam also has two natural World Heritage Sites: Kaziranga and Manas National Parks. The maidams contain the remains and belongings of Ahom rulers, who later adopted Hindu cremation practices.

Shinkun La Tunnel construction launched by PM Modi

On the 25th anniversary of Kargil Vijay Diwas, PM Modi launched the construction of the



Shinkun La Tunnel, which will be the world's highest tunnel at about 15,800 feet. The 4.1-km twin-tube tunnel, costing Rs 1,681 crore,

will be built by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) on the Nimu-Padum-Darcha road and is expected to be completed in two years. The tunnel will boost economic development in Ladakh and Himachal Pradesh and support military operations along the China border. The project was approved by the Cabinet Committee on Security in February 2023.

Mizoram's Aizawl will become the fourth state capital in the Northeast to be connected by rail link by next year

By July 2025, Aizawl, the capital of Mizoram, will become the fourth northeastern capital to be connected by rail, with a new broad gauge track being laid by Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) up to Sairang near Aizawl. The Rs 8,213.72-crore Bhairabi-Sairang railway project, spanning 52 km, is part of the Ministry of Railways' Capital Connectivity Projects, which aim to connect all northeastern state capitals by rail. The 51.38 km line is divided into four sections: Bhairabi-Hortoki, Hortoki-Kawnpui, Kawnpui-Mualkhang, and Mualkhang-Sairang.

Sikkim makes it mandatory for tourist vehicles to carry garbage bags

As per the Sikkim government directive, all tourist vehicles entering Sikkim will now have to carry a large garbage bag mandatorily. This decision has been made to ensure community participation in achieving the goal of environmental sustainability. It will be the responsibility of the tour operators, travel agencies and vehicle drivers to inform the travelers about using garbage bags for waste disposal. Awareness campaign will be carried out to educate tourists about waste management and environmental sustainability.

A scheme to provide rented accommodation to construction workers for Rs 5 per day was launched by the Gujarat government

Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel launched the 'ShramikBasera' scheme to provide temporary housing for around 15,000 construction workers at a nominal rate of Rs 5 per day. As part of this initiative, the CM conducted the bhoomipujan for 17 dwelling structures in Ahmedabad, Gandhinagar, Vadodara, and Rajkot. A dedicated portal for the scheme was also introduced. Over the next three years, similar centers will be built across Gujarat to benefit about 3 lakh construction workers. The project, costing Rs 1,500 crore, aims to improve the living standards of workers in the unorganized and construction sectors by providing them with food, health, housing, and financial support.

The Muslim Marriage and Divorce Registration Act was repealed by the Assam Government

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said the Assam Cabinet on July 18 approved a bill to repeal the Assam Muslim Marriage and Divorce Registration Act and Rules, 1935. The Act allowed underage marriages under

specific conditions. By passing the Assam Repealing Bill 2024, Assam's government decided to repeal the 1935 Assam Muslim Marriages and Divorce Registration Act and Rules. The Repeal Bill 2024 will be introduced during the upcoming Monsoon Session of the Assembly. The act contained provisions allowing marriage registration even if the bride and groom had not attained the legal age of 18 and 21 years.

Madhya Pradesh is the 'best performing state' under the PM SVANidhi Scheme

The Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry announced that Madhya Pradesh secured first



place in the 'Best Performing State' category under the

PradhanMantriSVANidhiYojana. This micro-credit plan, introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic, offers loans up to Rs 50,000 to urban street vendors. Assam ranked second in the 'Best Performing State – Innovation and Best Practices Awards' category. In the 'Best Performing ULBs - Loan Performance with mega and million-plus cities' category, the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) came first, followed by Bruhat Bengaluru MahanagaraPalike (BBMP) and Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation. Kerala topped the 'Systematic Progressive Analytical Real-Time Ranking (SPARK)' category, with Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan in second and third places.

“Lok Samvardhan Parv” inaugurated by Union Minister Shri Kiren Rijiju at Delhi Haat, New Delhi

The Ministry of Minority Affairs organized LokSamvardhanParv, a ten-day festival at Delhi Haat, as part of its 100 Days Program to promote its schemes and achievements. The

event showcased activities with partner organizations and featured success stories. ShriKirenRijiju launched a loan facility scheme by the National Minorities Development and Finance Corporation (NMDFC), providing over Rs 1,000 crore to more than 2.5 lakh beneficiaries for 2024-24. AnMoU was signed between NMDFC and several banks for implementing various schemes. The festival highlighted over 70 handicrafts and handloom products by 162 artisans from minority communities across different states.

Agniveers will be provided a 10% horizontal reservation by the Haryana government in recruitment to specific positions in the departments of police, mining, and jail

Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini announced a 10% reservation for Agniveers in direct recruitment for posts like constable, mining guard, and forest guard, along with a three-year age relaxation, which extends to five years for the first batch. Agniveers will also have a 1% horizontal reservation in group B jobs and 5% in group C jobs. Additionally, they will receive preference in matrix scores for government jobs. The government will provide an annual subsidy of Rs 60,000 to industrial units employing Agniveers with salaries over Rs 30,000, and an interest-free loan of up to Rs 5 lakh for Agniveers starting their own businesses. Agniveers will be prioritized for arms licenses and will receive free treatment and compensation in case of accidents under the Road Transport Highway Scheme.

Karnataka Cabinet cleared the Karnataka State Employment of Local Candidates in the Industries, Factories and Other Establishments Bill, 2024

The Bill mandates that 50% of management jobs and 75% of non-management positions in industries, factories, and other

establishments be reserved for local candidates. Violations can result in a penalty of up to Rs 25,000. Candidates must pass a Kannada proficiency exam or have a secondary school diploma with Kannada as a subject. If qualified local candidates are not available, businesses must train and engage locals within three years, or they can request a relaxation from the government. A nodal body will be established to verify employee information and report to the government regularly. Additionally, a law requires private industries to hire only Kannadigas for group 'C' and 'D' jobs.

UP government will increase the income of farmers through 'carbon finance'

The Uttar Pradesh government will boost farmers' incomes through 'carbon finance'. It will encourage farmers to participate in the plantation drive. The Uttar Pradesh government has set a target of planting 36.50 crore saplings on July 20. The UP government has set a target to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2070. Farmers will gain additional income from carbon credits by planting fast-growing trees such as poplar, melia, dubia, and semal. In the first phase, Gorakhpur, Lucknow, Bareilly, Meerut, Moradabad, and Saharanpur districts have been selected for this initiative. Between 2024 and 2026, farmers will receive incentives of Rs 202 crore. In the first phase, Rs 50 lakh obtained from carbon credits will be distributed to 100 selected farmers in the Gorakhpur division.

Indore created a world record by planting 11 lakh saplings in a day

Indore set a new Guinness World Record by planting over 1.1 million saplings in 24 hours on July 14. The state government organized the event, and Union Home Minister Amit Shah participated in the "EkPedMaaKeNaam" campaign by planting a sapling. The

campaign, launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on World Environment Day, aims to plant 51 lakh saplings in Indore. The tree plantation drive took place in the Revati range of the BSF Academy, involving 2000 BSF jawans, over 100 NRIs, NCC cadets, and citizens. The previous record of 921,730 saplings was set by Assam's Forest Department in September 2023.

ODISHA NEWS

Odisha government launched India's first rice ATM

The Annapurthi Grain ATM can release up to 50 kg of grain in five minutes and operates



around the clock. This rice ATM will revolutionize the Public Distribution System (PDS) for ration cardholders. This machine has been installed at a warehouse in Mancheswar. It has been

launched by the Odisha Food Supplies and Consumer Welfare Minister Krushna Chandra Patra. After entering the ration card number, the biometric verification is done by this machine. ATM dispense the rice after successful verification. The machine has been developed in partnership with the World Food Programme. The rice ATM will be installed in all 30 districts of Odisha.

KIIT DU received the prestigious UN ECOSOC Special Consultative Status



KIIT has received the distinguished Special Consultative Status from the United Nations Economic and Social Council (UN ECOSOC). It recognizes the University's

substantial contributions to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). 476 applications from 19 organizations were selected for this prestigious honour. The status was conferred during the UN ECOSOC management segment meeting. KIIT has also signed an MoU with UN Volunteers (UNV). It has opened a remarkable opportunity for students of KIIT DU to engage with various UN agencies to serve as 'National University UN Volunteers'. It will equip KIIT students with valuable professional experience in international development.

Odisha government presented a budget of Rs 2.65 lakh cr budget for FY25

This year's budget of the Odisha government was more focused on agriculture and women's empowerment. The budget for FY25 is around 15 per cent more than the budgetary estimate of Rs 2.30 lakh crore for 2023–24. Rs 33,919 crore has been allocated for agriculture, which is about 36 per cent

more than the allocation made in the previous year. Rs 5,000 crore has been allocated for the "SamrudhaKrushakYojana" for farmers. A new scheme 'CM Kisan' for farmers with an outlay of Rs 1,935 crore has been announced in the budget. The state government has decided to implement the Ayushman Bharat-PradhanMantri Jan ArogyaYojana (AB PM-JAY). The government renamed 'BijuSetuYojana' as 'SetuBandhanYojana', while 'Make in Odisha' was changed to 'UtkarshUtkal'. The government has renamed many schemes like KALIA, 'BijuSwasthyaKalyanYojana' (BSKY) and 'BijuPuccaGharYojana' (BPGY). The state government has renamed the KALIA scheme as 'CM-KISAN'. A corpus fund of Rs 500 crore has been created for the Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA).

●●●



LISAS' IAS
(31 Years of Excellence)



LISAS

CONGRATULATES



SANTOSH KUMAR PATRA

RANK - 409

IAS - 2023

2, Budha Nagar, Bhubaneswar - 751006, www.lisasias.org, e-mail : lisascivils@lisasias.org
Phone - 9338222113, 9337594620, 9692056687

INDIA AND THE WORLD

The 10th edition of Exercise MITRA SHAKTI started at Army Training School, Maduru Oya, Sri Lanka

It is an India- Sri Lanka Joint Military Exercise. It is scheduled to be conducted from 12th to 25th August 2024.



Indian contingent comprises of 106 personnel. Indian contingent is being represented by a Battalion of

Rajputana Rifles along with other personnel. Personnel from Gajaba Regiment of Sri Lankan Army are representing the Sri Lankan contingent. Exercise MITRA SHAKTI is an annual training event. It is carried out alternatively in India and Sri Lanka. Its last edition was carried out in Pune in Nov 2023. The exercise aims to enhance the joint military capability of India and Sri Lanka to undertake counter-insurgency operations. It will focus on operations in the semi-urban environment.

IAF participated in Exercise Udara Shakti 2024 in Malaysia

Exercise Udara Shakti 2024 was conducted in collaboration with the Royal Malaysian Air Force (RMAF) from 05 to 09 August 2024 at Kuantan, Malaysia. The IAF participated in this exercise with Su-30MKI fighter jets. During the exercise, IAF's Su-30MKI fighter jets engaged in air combat missions with the RMAF's Su-30MKM fighters. The main aim of the exercise is to boost operational efficiency and technical experts of both Air Forces. In this exercise the crews of both the air forces got familiar with each other's operational protocols. It will enhance interoperability,

commonality and overall effectiveness in Su-30 aircraft operations.

The Indian government has formed a five-member committee to oversee situation on Bangladesh border

A committee has been formed to assess and monitor the India-Bangladesh border situation, chaired by Ravi Gandhi, Additional Director General of BSF Eastern Command. Members include IGs from BSF Frontier Headquarters South Bengal and Tripura, a representative from the Planning and Development division of the Land Ports Authority of India (LPAI), and the Secretary of LPAI. The committee will ensure communication with Bangladesh to safeguard Indian citizens and minority communities in Bangladesh.

India to open a consulate in Auckland to strengthen diplomatic ties

India will open a Consulate in Auckland to strengthen ties with New Zealand. The Indian diaspora, which comprises six percent of New Zealand's population, has significantly contributed to the country's development. President Droupadi Murmu is currently visiting New Zealand as part of her three-nation tour. India and New Zealand established bilateral relations in 1952.

India and Zambia held their 4th Foreign Office Consultations (FOC)

At the 4th Foreign Office Consultations between India and Zambia, both countries agreed to enhance bilateral relations and explore new areas of cooperation. They reviewed issues such as institutional mechanisms, scholarships, and collaborations in various sectors including defence, health, agriculture, and trade. The delegations were satisfied with their current ties and discussed holding the next meeting in New Delhi.

Customs Cooperation Arrangement signed by India and New Zealand to facilitate trade between the two countries

India and New Zealand signed a customs arrangement on August 6, 2024, to boost trade and enforcement cooperation. During Indian President Draupadi Murmu's visit, she met with New Zealand leaders and discussed ratifying the International Solar Alliance (ISA) and exchanging best practices in traditional medicine. The agreement and new collaborations aim to strengthen bilateral relations and explore joint research and development opportunities.

India's first GI-tagged fig juice exported to Poland by Purandar Highlands

Purandar Highlands Farmers Producer Company Limited has exported its award-winning fig juice, made from GI-tagged Purandar figs, to Poland. This marks the first time Indian fig juice has reached the European market. The juice, which has a provisional patent and has been recognized at SIAL 2023 and Macfrut Italy, is facilitated for export by APEDA. Purandar figs are prized for their sweetness, size, and nutritional benefits. Scion Agricos Pvt Ltd is assisting in global market entry for the juice.

Japan, South Korea, and UAE tourists can now avail visa-on-arrival in India

Citizens of Japan, South Korea, and the UAE can now get a visa-on-arrival in India for tourism, business, conference, and medical purposes. This visa is valid for 60 days with double entry and is available at six airports: Mumbai, Bangalore, Chennai, Delhi, Hyderabad, and Kolkata. Additionally, e-Visa and Electronic Travel Authorization (ETA) are available for citizens of 167 countries, allowing entry through 30 international airports and six seaports.

The 14th Defence Policy Dialogue between Vietnam and India was held in New Delhi

During a meeting co-chaired by Vietnam's Deputy Minister of National Defence, Senior

Lieutenant General Hoang Xuan Chien, and India's Defence Secretary



Shri Giridhar Aramane, both sides acknowledged progress since the signing of the "Joint Vision Statement on India-Vietnam Defence Partnership towards

2030." Vietnam proposed five key areas for cooperation: staff conversations, delegate exchanges, education and training, service-to-service interaction, and defence industry cooperation. A Letter of Intent to enhance training cooperation was signed, further strengthening the defence aspect of the India-Vietnam Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.

The President of Fiji conferred the Companion of the Order of Fiji on President Droupadi Murmu

President Droupadi Murmu is on a two-day visit to Fiji. She addressed the Fijian Parliament, highlighting the 75-year diplomatic relationship between India and Fiji. During her visit, she met with Fijian President William Kautokvile, thanked Fiji for its support of India's Aditya L1 Mission, and recalled India's aid to Fiji during the COVID-19 crisis through the Vaccine Maitri initiative. Fiji is an island country in the South Pacific Ocean, with Suva as its capital.

India is expected to host the third edition of the Voices of the Global South summit

India will host the Global South Summit virtually, chaired by PM Narendra Modi. The summit will address climate change, conflict impacts, and development issues. It aims to provide a platform for Global South countries to discuss their challenges and priorities. The first Global South Summit was held in January 2023, and the second edition took place in November 2023.

Wing Commander Shubhanshu Shukla of the Indian Air Force has been chosen as the lead astronaut for the Indo-US mission to the ISS

Axiom Space Inc. and ISRO's Human Space Flight Centre have signed a Space Flight



Agreement for the Axiom-4 mission to the ISS. The mission will feature Indian astronauts, with Group Captains

PrasanthBalakrishnan Nair as backup and ShubhanshuShukla as the prime pilot. The

Gaganyaan project aims to send a three-person crew into a 400-kilometer orbit and return them to Earth. It is India's first human spaceflight program, set to launch with an LVM3 rocket. Future goals include sending an Indian astronaut to the moon by 2040 and establishing a space station by 2035.

Nine agreements were signed by India and Vietnam

During Vietnam Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh's state visit to India, agreements were signed to enhance the India-Vietnam strategic partnership. The agreements cover customs, agriculture, law, broadcasting, culture, and tourism. Bilateral trade has reached \$15 billion, and both nations aim to boost it further. A Comprehensive Strategic Partnership action plan for 2024-2028 was agreed upon. MoUs were signed for agricultural research between Central Agricultural University, Manipur, and Vietnam Academy of Agricultural Sciences, and for broadcasting cooperation between PrasarBharati and Voice of Vietnam. Additionally, two \$300 million credit line agreements were finalized.

The world's first postage stamp based on Lord Rama of Ayodhya was issued by Laos

Laos has released a special postage stamp set featuring Lord Ram, the world's first stamp

depicting 'Ram Lalla of Ayodhya.' The set, reflecting Laos' deep ties with India, was inaugurated by Indian External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and Laos' SalimxayKommasith. It includes two stamps: one of Lord Ram and another of the Buddha from LuangPrabang. The stamps celebrate the shared cultural heritage and long-standing Buddhist connections between India and Laos.

India- Saudi Arabia organised first meeting of High-Level Task Force on Investments

A virtual meeting was co-chaired by India's Principal Secretary PK Mishra and Saudi Energy Minister Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman. They reviewed efforts to boost two-way investments, with India supporting Saudi investments of \$100 billion committed during previous high-level visits. Saudi Arabia was invited to open a Sovereign Wealth Fund office in India. Mishra also invited the Saudi Energy Minister to visit India for a future High-Level Task Force meeting, which aims to facilitate bilateral investments. Senior representatives from both sides, including various Indian government secretaries, were present.

A Cultural Property Agreement signed between India and USA to repatriate stolen Indian artifacts

India and the US signed their first-ever Cultural Property Agreement at the 46th World Heritage Committee meeting in New Delhi. This agreement aims to prevent and stop the illegal smuggling and trade of Indian antiquities. It aligns with the 1970 UNESCO Convention on cultural property, to which both countries are signatories. The agreement will help curb the illicit movement of archaeological and ethnographic items. Since 1976, India has recovered 358 antiquities, with 345 returned after 2014.

External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar participates in ASEAN foreign ministers meetings

External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar attended ASEAN foreign ministers meetings in Vietnam and Laos, which are part of the ASEAN framework. He will also participate in ASEAN-India, East Asia Summit (EAS), and ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) meetings. This year marks a decade of India's Act East Policy, introduced at the 2014 East Asia Summit. Jaishankar met with Brunei's counterpart to launch a logo celebrating 40 years of diplomatic relations and discussed bilateral cooperation and Indian trafficking issues with Laos' Prime Minister.

According to the FAO report, China, Australia and India registered most increased forest areas

The FAO report "The State of the World's Forests" reveals that in 2020, global forest cover was about 4.1 billion hectares, or 31% of the land area. India ranks third in forest area gains, adding 266,000 hectares annually from 2010 to 2020. China and Australia are first and second, gaining 1.937 million and 446,000 hectares, respectively. Other top countries include Chile, Vietnam, Turkey, the U.S., France, Italy, and Romania. Indonesia saw an 8.4% drop in deforestation, while Brazil's Amazon achieved a 50% reduction in 2023. The report also noted a 23% decrease in global mangrove loss over the past two decades and highlighted climate change's impact on forests.

India's ranking has dropped to 82 in the World's Most Powerful Passport 2024

The Henley Passport Index has released the 2024 ranking of the world's most powerful passports. India is ranked 82nd globally, allowing Indian passport holders to travel to 58 countries without requiring a visa. This represents a drop of two places compared to last year, when India was ranked 80th. In the 2024 Index, Singapore's passport has

reclaimed its title as the world's most powerful, granting visa-free or visa-on-arrival access to 195 countries. Afghanistan ranked last with visa-free entry to only 26 destinations.

UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy visited New Delhi

During his visit, UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy met with Indian External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and National Security Advisor Ajit Doval. A key outcome was the announcement of the Technology Security Initiative, aimed at enhancing cooperation in semiconductors, AI, critical minerals, and telecommunications. This initiative seeks to elevate the strategic partnership between India and the UK. Both countries also agreed to boost defense and security collaboration in the Indo-Pacific region. The initiative will support an expanded "Future Telecoms Partnership" and review the Roadmap 2030 for bilateral relations.

\$1 million will be contributed by India to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre

Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced a \$1 million contribution to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre to support heritage conservation, particularly in the global South. This funding will aid in capacity building, technical assistance, and site conservation. He also launched a Certificate Program in World Heritage Management for Young Professionals in India. Additionally, he proposed that the historical "Maidam" in North-East India be added to the UNESCO World Heritage List, making it India's 43rd World Heritage Site and the first in Northeast India to receive cultural status.

India and Malaysia have decided to increase cooperation in the field of palm oil

Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan met Malaysia's Minister of Plantations and Commodities, Datuk Seri

Johari Abdul Ghani, in New Delhi to discuss enhancing bilateral agriculture cooperation. They addressed market access issues, digital technology in plantations, and the National Mission on Edible Oils. Launched in August 2021, this mission aims to increase Crude Palm Oil production to 1.12 million tonnes by 2025-26. It is active in 15 states, with Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and Kerala accounting for 98% of production.

India and Switzerland aim for a \$100 billion investment and 1 million jobs in the next 15 Years

Union Minister Piyush Goyal visited Switzerland to promote investment in India and discuss the India-EFTA Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA), signed on March 10.



Switzerland, India's 20th largest trading partner with bilateral trade of \$21 billion in 2023, is also the 12th largest investor in India with \$10 billion in FDI. Around 330 Swiss companies in India have created over 166,000 jobs. Both countries aim to achieve \$100 billion in investment and create one million jobs in India over the next 15 years.

Asia's first health research related "Pre-clinical Network Facility" inaugurated under CEPI

Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh inaugurated Asia's first health research-related "Pre-Clinical Network Facility" at the Regional Centre of Biotechnology, Faridabad. This facility, part of the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), is the 9th such lab globally and the first in Asia. It includes a large Experimental Animal Facility with space for 75,000 rodents and the "Genetically Defined Human Associated Microbial Culture Collection (G-HUMIC) Facility," which will provide microbial cultures for research. The facility is operated by the Translational Health Science & Technology

Institute (THSTI), under the Department of Biotechnology.

India's exports exceeded USD 200 billion in the first quarter (April–June) of 2024–25

India is optimistic about reaching its USD 800 billion annual export target. In June, exports totaled \$65.47 billion, up 5.4% from the previous year, with merchandise exports rising from \$34.32 billion to \$35.20 billion and services exports increasing from \$27.79 billion to \$30.27 billion. Imports grew by 6.3% to \$73.47 billion. For the fiscal year 2023-24, India achieved record exports of \$778 billion, slightly surpassing the previous year's \$776.3 billion. The trade deficit narrowed significantly from \$121.6 billion to \$75.6 billion, with imports decreasing from \$898 billion to \$853.8 billion.

India signed MoU with Marshall Islands to implement four Community Development Projects

India and the Marshall Islands signed an MoU in Tokyo to establish community projects in the Marshall Islands. The projects include community centers in Arno and Wotje Atolls, an airport terminal on Mejit Island, and a sports center in Ailuk Atoll. These initiatives fulfill commitments made at the Forum of India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC) summit. India is also working on proposals for desalination and dialysis machines for the Marshall Islands.

World Heritage Young Professionals Forum 2024 has been inaugurated

India is hosting the UNESCO World Heritage Committee meeting in New Delhi from July 21-31, 2024. Additionally, the Ministry of Culture is organizing the 2024 World Heritage Young Professionals Forum from July 14-23, 2024. The forum, themed "World Heritage in the 21st Century," will feature 50 young professionals (20 from India and 30 from abroad) discussing World Heritage, sustainable development, and climate change.



BUSINESS AND ECONOMY

FDI inflows in the manufacturing sector increased almost 69% and reached \$165.1 billion in last 10 years (2014-24)



From 2004 to 2014, FDI inflows in the manufacturing sector were \$97.7 billion. Between

2019-20 and 2023-24, inflows surged to \$383.5 billion, largely due to production-linked incentive (PLI) schemes. The government has approved 755 PLI applications in 14 key sectors, with investments totaling Rs 1.23 lakh crore and about 8 lakh jobs created. An outlay of Rs 1.97 lakh crore has been announced for these PLI initiatives, aimed at boosting sectors such as electronics, pharmaceuticals, medical services, autos, steel, telecommunications, textiles, and food.

Ayush Standardisation Department will be established by the BIS

The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) will create a new dedicated department for standardising Ayush practices. This is announced by the Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution Ministry. Its main aim is to enhance the safety, efficacy, and quality of Ayush products. This department will cover Ayurveda, Yoga, Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, Sowa-Rigpa, and Homeopathy. The Ayush department will form seven sectional committees, each focusing on a specific system within Ayush. Evidence-based standards will be aligned with national and international guidelines.

RBI raised the maximum amount that can be paid with UPI from Rs 1 lakh to Rs 5 lakh

The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) has raised the UPI payment limit to Rs 5 lakh from

Rs 1 lakh, as announced by RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das. UPI, with 42.4 crore users, has become a popular payment method. UPI transactions grew by 45% annually, with their value increasing by over 35% to Rs 20.64 trillion. For three consecutive months, total transactions have exceeded Rs 20 trillion.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) maintained its inflation projection for FY25 at 4.5 per cent in its Monetary Policy Committee

The RBI's Monetary Policy Committee projected CPI inflation at 4.5% for FY25, with quarterly estimates of 4.9% for Q1, 4.4% for Q2, 4.7% for Q3, and 4.3% for Q4. GDP growth for FY25 is forecasted at 7.2%, though Q1 growth is revised to 7.1% from 7.3%. The repo rate remains unchanged at 6.5% for the ninth consecutive time, despite speculation of a Federal Reserve rate cut in September.

Government to allow bio-bitumen mixing up to 35% to save foreign exchange outflows

Union Road Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari announced that the government will allow up to 35% lignin to be mixed with petroleum-based bitumen. One tonne of paddy straw yields 30% bio-bitumen, 350 kg of bio-gas, and 350 kg of biochar. Bio-bitumen costs ₹40 per kg, compared to ₹50 per kg for petroleum-based bitumen. India consumed 88 lakh tonnes of bitumen in 2023-24, with a forecast of 100 lakh tonnes for 2024-25. Bitumen, used in road and roof construction, is produced from crude oil. There are 450 projects in Haryana, Punjab, and Western Uttar Pradesh converting biomass into bio-CNG.

Karnataka government formed a task force to clear encroachments in forests and Western Ghats

The Karnataka government has established a task force to clear illegal resorts, homestays, and other encroachments in the Western Ghats. Led by the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, this action follows recent landslides in the region. Orders for the removal of encroachments have been issued by the forest department's additional chief secretary. The task force will address forest land encroachments as outlined in Section 64A of the Karnataka Forest Act.

A record 7.28 crore income tax returns (ITRs) were filed for the fiscal year 2024–25

The Finance Ministry reported a 7.5% increase in income tax returns filed by July 31, 2023, compared to the previous year. For 2024-25, 72% of taxpayers chose the New Tax Regime, with 5.27 crore out of 7.28 crore ITRs filed under this regime. On July 31 alone, nearly 69.92 lakh ITRs were filed, and 58.57 lakh were from first-time filers, indicating a broader tax base. To encourage timely filing, outreach activities included educational videos in various languages on digital platforms.

32 International Conference of Agricultural Economists (ICAE) inaugurated by Prime Minister Modi in New Delhi

The International Association of Agricultural Economists (ICAE) conference, held in India after 65 years, has the theme "Transformation Towards Sustainable Agri-Food Systems." It focuses on addressing global challenges like climate change, resource depletion, and rising production costs. The conference will provide a platform for young researchers and professionals to present their work, network, and discuss India's advancements in agriculture, including digital and sustainable

practices. Approximately 1,000 delegates from 75 countries are participating.

With \$120 million in new funding from WestBridge, Rapido became a unicorn

Rapido became a unicorn after raising \$120 million in its Series E round from WestBridge



Capital, boosting its valuation to over \$1 billion. This funding will help Rapido expand its auto and cab services into new cities in India

and develop its technology. Founded in 2015 by ArvindSanka, PawanGuntupalli, and Rishikesh SR, Rapido competes with Ola, Uber, and Namma Traveller. It is the third unicorn this year, following Perfeos and Krutrim AI, and joins Zepto and InCred Wealth as new unicorns from 2023.

As per RBI report, India accounts for nearly half of the global digital payments

According to the Reserve Bank of India, India handles 48.5% of global real-time payment volumes. The digital economy makes up about 10% of India's GDP and is expected to grow to 20% by 2026. Digital payments have seen a 50% annual growth rate in volume and 10% in value over the past seven years. India led global remittances in 2023 with \$115.3 billion received. Cybersecurity remains a major challenge, with security incidents rising from 53,117 in 2017 to over 13 lakh in early 2023. India's digital infrastructure is seen as a key driver of future growth.

Presenting the Union Budget 2024–25, Finance Minister NirmalaSitharaman proposed to abolish angel tax for all investor classes

To reduce uncertainty and disputes, it is suggested that I-T regulations be streamlined for reopening and reevaluation. Reassessments after three years are allowed

only if the evaded income exceeds Rs 50 lakh and can occur up to five years after the assessment year. The proposed change would reduce the time limit for search cases from ten years to six years before the search year. Currently, the Startup India program recognizes 1,17,000 registered startups. Angel tax, introduced in 2012 by Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee, imposes a 31% tax on funds raised from angel investors if it exceeds the company's fair market value, aiming to prevent money laundering and fraudulent valuations.

The joint programs towards innovation, entrepreneurship, and IP will be built by NITI Aayog & WIPO for the global south

NITI Aayog's Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) and the World Intellectual Property



Organization (WIPO) signed a Letter of Intent in New Delhi to collaborate on innovation, entrepreneurship, and intellectual

property (IP) programs for Global South countries. The AIM-WIPO partnership aims to boost global innovation, raise IP awareness in schools, and support sustainable economic growth. WIPO, a UN agency, releases the annual Global Innovation Index (GII). According to the GII 2023, India is ranked 40th out of 132 economies. The WIPO Report 2022 noted India's highest global growth in patent filings at 31.6% for six consecutive years. AIM's goal is to foster a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship in India.

ADB retained India's FY25 GDP growth forecast to 7%

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) forecasts India's economy will grow by 7% in 2025 with an inflation rate of 4.6%. India is expected to be the fastest-growing economy in Asia. For

2025-26, India's GDP growth is projected at 7.2% with an average inflation of 4.5%. The ADB has raised its growth forecast for Asia and the Pacific to 5% for 2024. India's industrial sector is expected to grow strongly, driven by manufacturing and construction. A delay in the La Nina climate pattern might affect agriculture. Investment demand will remain high, led by public investment. Inflation in Asia and the Pacific is projected to slow to 2.9% this year.

India's growth projections for 2024 have been raised to 7% from the earlier 6.8% by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in its latest forecast

India is expected to remain the fastest-growing country among emerging markets, with its growth rate revised to 7% for 2024 by the IMF, up from earlier estimates of 6.5% and 6.8%. For 2025, the IMF estimates India's growth at 6.5%, driven by strong domestic demand and a growing workforce. India and China will contribute nearly half of global growth in 2024. China's growth forecast for 2024 has been revised to 5% due to increased private consumption and strong exports. India's GDP grew by 8.2% in 2023-24, 7.2% in 2022-23, and 8.7% in 2021-22.

The composition of NITI Aayog has been revised by the government


Prime Minister Narendra Modi will remain the chairperson of NITI Aayog. Suman Bery will continue to hold the post of Vice President, NITI Aayog. There is no change in Full-Time Members. The Full Time Members are V K Saraswat, Prof. Ramesh Chand, Dr V K Paul, and Anand Virmani. Along with Home Minister Amit Shah, Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, and Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has been added as an Ex-Officio Member.

In FY25, Net direct tax collections so far grew 19.5% to Rs 5.74 lakh crore

For the financial year 2024-25, India's net direct tax collection reached ₹5.74 lakh crore by July 11, 2024, a 19.54% increase from the previous year. This includes ₹3.46 lakh crore from personal income tax, ₹2.10 lakh crore from corporate tax, ₹16,634 crore from securities transaction tax (STT), and ₹1,413


crore from other taxes. Gross direct tax collection grew by 23.24% to ₹6.45 lakh crore. Income tax refunds totaled ₹70,902 crore, up 64.49% from the previous year, with ₹55,063 crore refunded to corporate taxpayers and ₹15,826 crore to personal income taxpayers.

...



LISAS'IAS

(31 Years of Excellence)



IAS/OAS

FOUNDATION COURSE

- **CLASSES ON SATURDAY & SUNDAY**
- **COVERAGE OF UPSC/OPSC SYLLABUS**
- **EXAM. ORIENTED STUDY MATERIALS**
- **WEEKLY, MONTHLY & SEMESTER END EXAMS.**
- **DOUBT CLARIFICATION AND PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT SESSIONS**
- **DAILY UPDATED CURRENT AFFAIRS**
- **MONTHLY MAGAZINE (LISAS CAREER IN FOCUS)**
- **LIBRARY WITH A.C. READING ROOM FACILITY**

2, Budha Nagar, Bhubaneswar - 751006, Phone - 9338222113, 9692056687, 9337594620
www.lisasias.org, e-mail : lisascivils@lisasias.org

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Neelakurinji officially becomes a 'threatened species'

Neelakurinji (*Strobilanthes kunthiana*) has been added to the IUCN Red List as a Vulnerable species. This shrub, which blooms once every 12 years, is a major tourist attraction. It is found in high-altitude grasslands and is threatened by habitat loss due to tea and softwood plantations and urbanization. About 40% of its habitat has been lost, and the rest is under threat from invasive species like eucalyptus and black wattle. Neelakurinji has an occupancy area of 220 sq km and exists in 34 subpopulations across 14 ecoregions.

Operational Guidelines for Implementation of Model Solar Village under PM-Surya Ghar-Muft Electricity Scheme has been released by Government

The scheme aims to create one Model Solar Village per district in India to promote solar energy and self-reliance in rural areas. Each selected village will receive ₹1 crore from a total fund of ₹800 crore. Villages with populations over 5,000 (2,000 for special states) can compete for this grant. A District Level Committee will evaluate the villages based on their renewable energy potential. The PM-Surya Ghar: Free Electricity Scheme, approved on February 29, 2024, aims to boost solar rooftop capacity for residential households with a budget of ₹75,021 crore, set to be implemented by FY 2026-27.

DRDO successfully conducted maiden test flight of Long Range Glide Bomb (LRGB), GAURAV

The successful maiden test flight was conducted from Sukhoi-30 MK-I of the Indian Air Force. The test was carried out off the coast of Odisha. GAURAV is an air-launched glide bomb. It is one thousand-kilogram class glide bomb. It is capable of reaching and hitting targets at long distances. Research Centre Imarat, Hyderabad has been designed and developed it indigenously. At the time of the flight test, the target was erected at Long Wheeler's island. The glide bomb hit the target with pinpoint accuracy.

Union Minister released version 2.0 of 'FloodWatch India' mobile application

The upgraded 'FloodWatch India' app, developed by the Central Water Commission (CWC), now provides flood forecasts from 592 monitoring stations, up from 200 in the previous version. It also includes data on the storage of 150 major reservoirs. Using satellite data, mathematical modeling, and real-time monitoring, the app delivers accurate flood forecasts in English and Hindi.

The Army conducting exercise 'ParvatPrahara' in Ladakh, which focused on high altitude operations

To focus on high altitude warfare and operations, the Indian Army conducted a strategic military exercise, 'ParvatPrahara', in Ladakh. The 'ParvatPrahara' (Mountain Strike) exercise focuses on mountainous and rugged terrain such as found in areas like Eastern Ladakh. This is vital for maintaining the readiness and effectiveness of the forces in the region, which is close to the India-China border. The exercise, which will last over a fortnight, will train soldiers on the unique challenges posed in such terrain by simulating real-world warfare scenarios. Various arms of the Army are participating in the exercise, including infantry, armoured, artillery and

support units. The exercise involves the Mountain Strike Corps of the Northern Command, which is in charge of operations in this critical region near the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

The production of 200 Astra missiles has been approved by Air Force

The DRDO and the BDL have received clearance from Indian Air Force (IAF) to produce 200 Astra air-to-air missiles for its Su-30 and LCA Tejas fighter aircraft. Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) is the development agency for the project, Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) is the production agency for it. Defence Acquisition Council had cleared the programme for IAF and Indian Navy. Under this, 248 missiles were expected to be produced for IAF and Indian Navy in 2022-23. The Astra Mark 1 missile is a predecessor to the Mark 2. It has already been inducted into the IAF and the Navy. Astra Mark 1 missile has a range of up to 100 kilometres. First test of Astra Mark 2 missiles is expected soon.

Indian scientists have developed an enhanced genome-editing system

Scientists at CSIR-Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology in New Delhi have developed an improved genome-editing system that surpasses existing CRISPR technologies in precision and efficiency. This new system, which builds on the CRISPR-Cas9 tool, allows for more accurate modifications of DNA in higher-order organisms. CRISPR-Cas9 uses a guide-RNA to target specific DNA sequences, while Cas9 acts as a molecular scissor to cut the DNA. The new system, called FnCas9, offers enhanced precision but with low efficiency.

Indian Coast Guard (ICG) launched 'Suvidha Software Version 1.0'

'Suvidha Software Version 1.0' has been launched by the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) during the 'Annual Operational Sea Training Conference' at Visakhapatnam, Andhra

Pradesh. This software has been designed to enhance training protocols and ensure consistency across all ICG platforms. The conference saw active participation from senior officers from various ICG regions. It provided a valuable platform for discussing best practices, sharing insights, and aligning strategies to address the dynamic maritime security landscape. Indian Coast Guard Raising Day is celebrated on February 1, 2022. The Indian Coast Guard is the world's fourth-largest Coast Guard. Its motto is VayamRakshamah (We Protect).

E-SeHAT Tele-consultancy has been launched by the Indian Army

The Ex-Servicemen Contributory Health Scheme (ECHS) has launched the Electronic



Services e-Health Assistance and Tele-Consultation (E-SeHAT) module. It will enable ECHS beneficiaries to obtain online Tele-

consultation for medical treatment from their homes without visiting the ECHS Polyclinic. Its main aim is to provide health care services through safe and structured video-based clinical consultations. This pilot project has been launched at 12 ECHS polyclinics, including the remote locations of Baramulla, Imphal, Churachandpur, Dimapur and Aizawal. The E-SeHAT initiative is aligned with the Digital India vision of the Government of India. It will transform healthcare delivery for veterans, ensuring timely and quality medical attention from the comfort of their homes.

Gaganyaan astronauts will travel to ISS in a joint mission with NASA



As part of a collaborative effort with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), one of the four astronauts undergoing training

for the Gaganyaan mission will travel to the International Space Station. ISRO had signed a Space Flight Agreement with the American firm Axiom Space for the joint mission to the International Space Station (ISS). India's Astronaut Selection Board had selected four astronauts from a group of pilots from the Indian Air Force for the Gaganyaan mission. In 2025, India will send its first human space flight. The design and realization of the crew escape system's solid motors have been completed, along with static testing of these motors. At present, astronauts are undergoing training at ISRO's Astronauts Training Facility (ATF) in Bengaluru for the Gaganyaan Mission.

Second stage Ballistic Missile Defence System successfully tested by DRDO

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully tested the Phase-II Ballistic Missile Defence System. The test involved launching a target missile from LC-IV Dhamra, simulating an opponent's ballistic missile. It was tracked by radars and intercepted by the Stage-II AD endo-atmospheric missile launched from LC-III at ITR, Chandipur. The test confirmed the system's effectiveness in defending against 5000 km range ballistic missiles and demonstrated the nation's advanced capabilities in missile defense.

At the International Space Scientists Meet, two Indian space scientists were honored

The Committee on Space Research (COSPAR) honored two Indian scientists at its 45th Scientific Assembly in Busan, South Korea. Prahlad Chandra Agrawal received the Harrie Massey Award for his significant contributions to space research. Anil Bhardwaj was awarded the Vikram Sarabhai Medal for outstanding space science research in developing countries. The awards also include the naming of a minor planet after Agrawal.

COSPAR, established in 1958, is a leading organization in space science research.

The first malaria vaccine in Ivory Coast, Africa has been launched by India's Serum Institute and Oxford University

The R21 malaria vaccine, developed by the University of Oxford and the Serum Institute of India, is the second malaria vaccine after RTS,S. It includes an immune-boosting adjuvant from Novavax. The WHO has approved R21, and it is being used in Ivory Coast, Ghana, Nigeria, Burkina Faso, and the Central African Republic. The vaccine aims to immunize young children, with an initial 656,600 doses provided to Ivory Coast. The Serum Institute of India plans to produce 25 million doses initially, with a goal of increasing to 100 million doses per year. Each dose costs less than \$4.

'One Scientist, One Product' scheme launched by ICAR

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) launched the 'One Scientist-One Product' program to enhance agricultural and animal husbandry research. On ICAR's 96th foundation day, 323 new varieties of 56 crops were released, including 289 climate-resistant and 27 bio-enhanced varieties. Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan inaugurated the program. ICAR aims to develop 100 new seed varieties and technologies in 100 days as part of a new action plan. From 2014-15 to 2023-24, ICAR released 2,593 high-yielding varieties, with 2,177 being climate-resilient and 150 bio-fortified.

•

●●●

SPORTS

Paris Olympics 2024 has been concluded and India finished at the 71st spot in the overall medal tally

India secured 6 medals, including one silver and five bronze medals. At the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, India had finished 48th spot with a total of 7 medals, including one gold, two silver, and four bronze



medals. On the final day, Sifan Hassan of the Netherlands won her third medal in the women's marathon. In an Olympic record time of two hours 22 minutes 55 seconds, Hassan finished three seconds ahead of Ethiopian competitor TigstAssefa. TigstAssefa of Ethiopia earned a silver medal. The Summer Olympics in 2028 are scheduled to take place in Los Angeles. After 1932 and 1984, Los Angeles will host the games for the third time.

First-ever Global Women's Kabaddi League will take place in Haryana

The Global Pravasi Women's Kabaddi League (GPKL) will begin in Haryana in September. Female athletes from over 15 countries will participate in this tournament. It will be organized by the Holistic International Pravasi Sports Association (HIPSA) in partnership with World Kabaddi. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was recently signed between HIPSA and the Government of Haryana to facilitate this initiative. Teams from different countries, including England, Poland, Argentina, Canada, and Italy will participate in this tournament.

Aman Sehrawat won the bronze medal in the men's 57kg free-style category at the Paris 2024 Olympics

Aman Sehrawat won over Darian Toi Cruz of Puerto Rico with a 13-5 score. He is an Indian wrestler from Haryana. He was the only Indian male wrestler to qualify for the Paris Games. He is now youngest Indian to win an individual Olympic medal. He won a bronze medal in the 57 kg category at the 2022 Asian Games. In April 2023, he won a gold medal at the Asian Wrestling Championships. He won his first National Championship title in 2021.

Neeraj Chopra won the silver medal at the 2024 Paris Olympics

Indian athlete Neeraj Chopra won a silver medal in the men's javelin throw at the 2024 Paris Olympics with a throw of 89.45 meters, becoming the first Indian track and field athlete to win two Olympic medals. Pakistani javelin thrower Arshad Nadeem won gold with a record-breaking throw of 92.97 meters, while Anderson Peters of Grenada secured bronze with 88.54 meters. Additionally, Hockey India won a bronze medal by defeating Spain 2-1, marking India's 13th Olympic medal in hockey and repeating their bronze victory from the Tokyo Olympics.

India won the CAVA Women's Volleyball Nations League title for the second time

The Indians defeated hosts Nepal in the final of the CAVA Women's Volleyball Nations League at the Dasharath Stadium in Kathmandu. This was the second time Nepal faced India in the title match at home and the first time since the 13th South Asian Games. With this win, India won its second title in the CAVA Women's Volleyball Nations League. The final match saw a high level of

competition and skill between the two teams, with India eventually winning the gold medal in a close contest, Nepal securing the silver medal and Iran winning the bronze medal.

Lieutenant Colonel Kabilan Sai Ashok became India's youngest Olympic referee in boxing

At the Paris Olympics 2024, Lieutenant Colonel Kabilan Sai Ashok became India's youngest Olympic referee in boxing. Lt Col Ashok's participation as an Olympic referee shows his strong commitment to fair play and sportsmanship. His role is crucial in ensuring that matches are conducted with fairness and respect. India's boxing contingent for the 2024 Paris Olympics consists of six pugilists, with two male and four female athletes.

Swapnil Kusale won a bronze medal at 50-metre rifle 3-position shooting

At the 2024 Paris Olympics, shooter Swapnil Kusale won a bronze medal in the men's 50m rifle 3 positions final, making him the first Indian to achieve this in the event. He scored 451.4 points, finishing behind China's Y.K. Liu, who won gold with 463.6 points, and Ukraine's S. Kulish, who took silver with 461.3 points.

Jiya Rai is now the youngest and fastest female paraswimmer in world to successfully swim solo across the English Channel

The 16-year-old covered 34 kilometres in 17 hours and 25 minutes, from Abbots Cliff in England to Pointe de la Courte-Dune in France. She holds the world record for open water swimming and competes internationally as a paraswimmer. Jiya Rai is a recipient of Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar 2022, the highest award for citizens below 18 years of Age. Her remarkable conquest of the English Channel has been dedicated to promoting autism awareness. She is the daughter of a navy officer serving in Mumbai.

The English Channel is an arm of the Atlantic Ocean. It separates Southern England from northern France.

Manu Bhaker made history by becoming the first Indian woman ever to win an Olympic medal in the shooting competition

On the second day of the Olympics in Paris, Indian shooter Manu Bhaker started the medal



count for his country by winning a bronze in the women's 10-meter air pistol competition. In the women's and

men's 10-meter air rifle competitions, Indian shooters Ramita Jindal and Arjun Babuta qualified for the finals, respectively. In Badminton women's singles, India's PV Sindhu won against Fathimath Nabaaha Abdul Razzaq of Maldives. Nikhat Zareen, an Indian boxer, defeated Maxi Carina Kloetzer of Germany in the women's Boxing 50-kilogram competition. Balraj Panwar of India moved quickly to the men's single sculls quarterfinal in rowing. In the Repechage 2 race, he came in second, behind Quentin Antognelli of Monaco.

Sri Lanka won their maiden Women's Asia Cup title

Sri Lanka won their first Women's Asia Cup title by defeating India at the Rangiri Dambulla International Stadium in Dambulla. This was only the second time in nine finals that India failed to win the Women's Asia Cup. Samarawickrama was declared the Player of the Match in the final, while Chamari Athapattu received the Player of the Tournament award. It was the ninth edition of Women's Asia Cup.

Abhinav Bindra has been awarded the Olympic Order by the International Olympic Committee (IOC)

He has been awarded for his outstanding contributions to the Olympic movement. He is the first Indian to win an individual gold at the Olympics. He won the gold at the 2008 Beijing Olympics in the men's 10-meter air rifle event. Bindra is a member of the IOC Athletes Commission. He is the first Indian to receive this award. The Olympic Order is the highest award presented by the IOC for exceptional service to the Olympic Movement. It was established in 1975. It can be bestowed upon IOC members, athletes, and other individuals. The award comes in three grades: gold, silver, and bronze. The gold medal is the most prestigious.

Leander Paes, and Vijay Amritraj inducted into Tennis Hall of Fame

Leander Paes and Vijay Amritraj, legendary Indian tennis players, have become the first



Asians inducted into the International Hall of Fame. Paes, 51, was honored in the 'Player

Category' for his achievements, including an Olympic bronze in 1996 and multiple Grand Slam titles. Amritraj, 70, was inducted in the 'Contributor Category' for his success in leading India to Davis Cup finals and reaching high world rankings in singles and doubles. With their induction, the Hall of Fame now includes 267 members from 28 countries.

2 phase of Khelo India Rising Talent Identification (KIRTI) initiative inaugurated by Dr.MansukhMandaviya

The KIRTI initiative aims to create a unified talent identification system using global best practices and modern ICT tools. It seeks to streamline grassroots talent identification on a single platform, with a target of completing 20 lakh assessments in 2024–2025. The first

phase, launched on March 12, 2024, in Chandigarh, registered 3,62,683 athletes across 70 centers, evaluating them in 11 sports, including archery, athletics, football, and boxing. Football and athletics had the most evaluations.

Spain defeated England to win its fourth UEFA Euro title

Spain won the UEFA Euro title by defeating England 2-1 in Berlin. Neco Williams and MikelOyarzabal scored for Spain, while Cole Palmer scored for England. Spain previously won the title in 1964, 2008, and 2012. In the semi-finals, Spain beat France, and England defeated the Netherlands. Spain's LamineYamal was named Young Player of the Tournament, and Rodri was named Player of the Tournament. Yamal also became the youngest player and goal scorer in Euro Championship history. In another event, Argentina won their 16th Copa America title by defeating Colombia, and Lionel Messi set a record with 45 career trophies.

In Wimbledon Tennis, Carlos Alcaraz has won the Men's Singles title

Carlos Alcaraz of Spain defeated Novak Djokovic 6-2, 6-2, 7-6 in the Wimbledon final, marking his second appearance in the event. Alcaraz became the sixth man in the professional era to win both the Roland Garros and Wimbledon titles in the same year. BarboraKrejckikova of the Czech Republic won her first Wimbledon women's singles title by defeating Italy's Jasmine Paolini 6-2, 2-6, 6-4. In Mixed Doubles, the Polish-Taiwanese pair of Jan Zieliński and Hsieh Su-Wei claimed their second Grand Slam title of the season, defeating the Mexican duo Giuliana Olmos and Santiago Gonzalez in straight sets.



AWARDS

Shah Rukh Khan received lifetime achievement award at Locarno Film Festival



He became the first Indian personality to be honoured with a lifetime achievement award, also called PardoallaCarriera, or Career Leopard. He

received the award at the 77th edition of the Locarno Film Festival. As part of the Locarno tribute, the festival also screened Khan's 2002 hit Devdas. 2024 Locarno International Film Festival is a film festival event. It is being held from August 7, 2024 to August 17, 2024 in Locarno, Switzerland.

Timor-Leste's highest civilian award presented to President DroupadiMurmu

President DraupadiMurmu received Timor-Leste's highest civilian award, the Grand Collar of the Order of Timor-Leste, from President Ramos-Horta, recognizing her work in public service, education, social welfare, and women's empowerment. This marks the first visit by an Indian President to Timor-Leste. Both nations aim to strengthen bilateral ties and discussed Timor-Leste's potential membership in the International Solar Alliance.

Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar has been announced by the government

The RashtriyaVigyanPuraskar recognizes contributions in science, technology, and innovation in India. The ISRO-Chandrayaan 3 Team will receive the Vigyan Team Award for their work in space research. Professor G. Padmanabhan, former Director of IISc, will receive the VigyanRatna Award for lifetime contributions to biological sciences. The

Vigyan Shri Award will go to Rahul Mukherjee, Sanjay Behari, AdimurthiAdi, Bhim Singh, Anandharamakrishnan C, and Syed Wajh Ahmad Naqvi. Recipients of the VigyanYuva Award include Dr.Bappi Paul, Dr.Abhilash, and others. The awards ceremony will be held on August 23, alongside National Space Day.

Google CEO SundarPichai and his wife Anjali Pichai receive top honours from IIT Kharagpur

Google CEO SundarPichai and his wife Anjali Pichai were awarded honorary degrees by IIT Kharagpur. SundarPichai received an honorary Doctor of Science for his contributions to digital transformation and technology, while Anjali Pichai was honored with the Distinguished Alumnus Award. The degrees were conferred at a ceremony in San Francisco, with President DraupadiMurmu presenting SundarPichai's award in his absence at IIT Kharagpur's 69th convocation.

Union Minister Dr.Jitendra Singh was conferred the "Lifetime Achievement Award"

He was awarded for his contributions to diabetes care, research, and diabetology at a ceremony in Chennai during an international medical meet. He previously received the "Gold Medal for Oration" from JIPMER and the "Jamna Devi Gian Devi Award" for journalism. He authored the book "Diabetes Made Easy" and was elected to the Lok Sabha for three consecutive terms. He also became the first person from Jammu & Kashmir to serve three consecutive terms in the Union Council of Ministers.

The Gandhi Mandela Award 2020 has been given to Nobel Peace Prize laureate Rigoberta Menchú Tum

On Nelson Mandela's 106th birth anniversary, the Gandhi Mandela Award was presented to Rigoberta Menchú Tum, a Guatemalan human rights activist dedicated to promoting Indigenous rights. She has received numerous honors, including the Nobel Peace Prize in 1992 and the Princess of Asturias Award in 1998. The Gandhi Mandela Award, established by the Gandhi Mandela Foundation, recognizes individuals upholding the values of Gandhi and Mandela. The award includes a gold medal, a pine wood box, and a certificate signed by a jury of former Chief Justices from India, Nepal, and Bangladesh.

The Indian Institute of Spices Research (IISR) has got the best technology award

The Indian Institute of Spices Research (IISR) won an award for its pioneering work in horticultural sciences. The award was presented by Union Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan at ICAR's 96th Foundation Day. IISR developed the "Process for instant soluble turmeric enriched spice-flavoured milk powder," which was among the top five technologies in ICAR's Horticulture Sciences Division. This technology was commercialized with Malabar Regional Co-operative Milk Producers' Union, resulting in products like Golden Milk and Golden Milk Mix. IISR, established in 1975, is headquartered in Kozhikode, Kerala.

Global CSR & ESG Award 2024 presented to Sobha Group's Sri Kurumba Trust for Child & Women Development

Sri Kurumba Educational and Charitable Trust, the CSR wing of Sobha Group, won

the "Best Child and Women Development Initiatives of the Year 2024" award at the Global CSR, Sustainability, and ESG Awards 2024 in Gurgaon. Mr. Nagarajan S, Project Vice President at Sobha Limited, accepted the award. The event recognized the Trust's efforts in empowering children and women through education and community development programs. The Global CSR & ESG Awards aim to honor organizations and individuals making a positive social impact.

Andhra Pradesh Community Managed Natural Farming (APCNF) wins the Gulbenkian Prize for Humanity 2024

The Andhra Pradesh Community Managed Natural Farming (APCNF) program won the Gulbenkian Prize for Humanity 2024, announced by Dr. Angela Merkel. This Andhra Pradesh Government initiative was



recognized for its impact on food security, climate resilience, and ecosystem protection, particularly in

supporting smallholder and female farmers. The prize, awarded by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, includes €1 million and honors exceptional contributions to climate action and solutions. The 2024 Prize highlights the interconnected nature of climate-related challenges.

●●●

●

MISCELLANEOUS

APPOINTMENT

Syed Refaat Ahmed took the oath of office as new chief justice of Bangladesh

Professor Muhammad Yunus, the chief adviser, was present when President



Mohammed Shahabuddin administered him the oath. Professor Muhammad Yunus

heads the interim government in

Bangladesh. Syed Refaat Ahmed succeeded Obaidul Hassan. In the middle of widespread protests calling for a reform of the judiciary and protestors giving judges a deadline to step down, Obaidul Hassan announced his resignation. Hassan was seen by protestors as a supporter of Sheikh Hasina, the ousted prime minister of Bangladesh.

Challa Sreenivasulu Setty has been appointed Chairman of the State Bank of India (SBI)

The proposal to appoint Challa Sreenivasulu Setty as Chairman of SBI has been approved by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC). His appointment will be effective for a three year period from the date of his assumption of charge of the office. He was serving as the SBI Managing Director, heading Global Markets & Technology. His name for being appointed SBI Chairman was recommended by the Financial Services Institutions Bureau (FSIB) in June this year.

Daljit Singh takes additional charge of Director General BSF

Daljit Singh Chawdhary, a 1990 batch IPS officer from the Uttar Pradesh cadre, has

taken on the additional role of Director General of the Border Security Force. He has held various positions in Uttar Pradesh and previously served as ADG in the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) and SDG in the Central Reserve Police Force. He has been awarded four Gallantry medals, the Police Medal for Meritorious Service, and the President's Police Medal for Distinguished Service.

President Droupadi Murmu has appointed Governors in various states

President Droupadi Murmu has appointed Maharashtra Assembly Speaker Haribhau Kisanrao Bagde as Governor of Rajasthan. Former Deputy Chief Minister of Tripura Jishnu Dev Varma has been appointed Governor of Telangana. Om Prakash Mathur has been appointed as Governor of Sikkim. He is former Rajya Sabha MP from Rajasthan.

UPSC chairman Manoj Soni has resigned

A UPSC Chairperson, who took office on May 16, 2023, has resigned before his term's end in May 2029, citing personal reasons. His resignation, submitted over two weeks ago, is still pending acceptance. He previously joined the UPSC as a member in June 2017. The Chairperson wishes to devote more time to the Anoopam Mission, a branch of the Swaminarayan Sect in Gujarat, where he became a monk after his initiation in 2020. As of July 19, 2024, the UPSC had seven members besides the Chairperson.

Vinay Mohan Kwatra has been appointed as the next Ambassador of India to the U.S.

Vinay Mohan Kwatra will be the next Ambassador of India to the United States of America. He will assume the office very soon. He is a 1988 batch officer who was appointed

Foreign Secretary in April 2022. He has expertise in dealing with India's neighbourhood as well as the U.S., China and Europe. He has served as the Ambassador of India to France from August 2017 to February 2020. He was also in the position of Joint Secretary in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) for two years, between October 2015 and August 2017.

OBITUARIES

Former Foreign Minister K. Natwar Singh passed away at the age of 95

Natwar Singh, a former Indian Foreign Service officer who began his career in 1953, served as Minister of External Affairs in Dr. Manmohan Singh's cabinet in 2004–05. He retired from the IFS in 1984 to become a Lok Sabha MP from Bharatpur. Singh was awarded the Padma Vibhushan and wrote several books, including one on the Jat ruler Suraj Mal. His autobiography, *One Life Is Not Enough*, was published in 2014.

Former West Bengal Chief Minister and senior CPIM leader Buddhadeb Bhattacharya passed away at the age of 80

He served as the Chief Minister of West Bengal from 2000 to 2011, taking over from Jyoti Basu. Known for his reformist approach, he promoted industrialization, including investments in IT and IT-enabled services. He facilitated the establishment of a Tata Nano plant in Singur and a special economic zone in Nandigram. In January 2022, he was awarded the Padma Bhushan.

Veteran Bharatanatyam dancer Yamini Krishnamurthy died at the age of 84

Bharatanatyam and Kuchipudi dancer Yamini Krishnamurthy, aged 84, passed away after prolonged illness. Born on December 20,

1940, in Madanapalli, Andhra Pradesh, she began dancing at five at Kalakshetra in Chennai. She was also trained in Carnatic vocals and the veena. She received the Padma Shri in 1968, Padma Bhushan in 2001, Padma Vibhushan in 2016, and the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award in 1977. She founded the Yamini School of Dance in New Delhi.

Anshuman Gaekwad passed away in Vadodara while battling cancer

He is an Indian cricketer and former coach,



and selector. From 1975 to 1987, he played 40 Test matches and 15 ODIs for India. He scored 1985 runs in Tests. His highest score is 201 against

Pakistan. He was appointed India coach in October 1997. He continued till September 1999. In June 2018, he was awarded CK Nayudu Lifetime Achievement Award. CK Nayudu Lifetime Achievement Award is the highest honour given by BCCI to a former player.

BOOKS

The book 'Wings to Our Hopes, Volume I,' has been released

The book compiles 75 significant speeches from the first year of tenure of President Droupadi Murmu. This book has been published by the Publication Division. The book has been released in Hindi and English. Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan released the e-book in the presence of Information and Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw.

●●●

MATCH POINT

- DRDO successfully tested long range glide bomb, named- **'Gaurav'**
- Newly appointed head coach of the Indian junior men's hockey team- **PR Sreejesh**
- Recently which Indian parachutist was suspended by the Badminton World Federation- **Pramod Bhagat**
- Recently Vinay Mohan Kwatra took charge as India's ambassador to – **USA**
- Recently, this state government declared the ancient monument of the Mesolithic era located in Ratnagiri as a 'protected monument' – **Maharashtra**
- This state government has announced investment of 696 crores in 11 projects to promote state tourism- **Himachal Pradesh**
- Indian Railways has partnered with this organization to promote 'One India-One Ticket' initiative- **National Capital Region Transport Corporation**
- The joint military exercise 'Mitra Shakti' was conducted between India and - **Sri Lanka**
- Recently this bank launched special Braille debit card for visually impaired customers- **PNB**
- With this organisation Amazon India has tied up to expand EV delivery fleet- **Gentari**
- The position of India in the medal tally in Paris Olympics 2024- **71st**
- This country won the most medals in Paris Olympics 2024- **USA**
- India has recently signed an agreement with this country to start UPI service- **Maldives**
- This Indian has been elected as the second vice president of the Athletes Commission of the International Olympic Committee- **Abhinav Bindra**
- Paul Kagame was recently sworn in as the President of – **Rwanda**
- Who were the flag bearers of India at the closing ceremony of Paris Olympics 2024- Manu Bhaker and PR Sreejesh
- Which Indian wrestler won the bronze medal in men's 57 kg freestyle in Paris Olympics - **Aman Sehrawat**
- Recently this state government has launched 'Attendance' portal- **Chhattisgarh**
- Reserve Bank of India has increased the UPI payment limit from Rs 1 lakh to - **Rs 5 lakh**
- In these two states has the Central Government recently established new peacock sanctuaries- **Karnataka and Kerala**
- Indian men's hockey team won bronze medal in Paris Olympics, the captain of this team is - **Harmanpreet Singh**
- This person has been chosen by the IOA for the case related to the disqualification of Vinesh Phogat before the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS)- **Harish Salve**
- Budhadev Bhattacharya passed away recently, he was the former Chief Minister of which state- **West Bengal**
- The exercise recently organized by the Indian Army in Ladakh was - **'Parvat Prahar'**
- The number of villages recognized as 'Best Tourist Village' in the year 2023 is – **35**
- In this weight category Vinesh Phogat was disqualified in Paris Olympics- **50 kg**
- The new Lieutenant Governor of Puducherry- **K Kailashnathan**
- 'Nandini Sahakar Yojana', recently was in new, has been launched by- **NCDC**

- The new head of the interim government of Bangladesh- **Muhammad Yunus**
- President Draupadi Murmu was recently awarded the highest civilian honor of – **Fiji**
- Recently Yamini Krishnamurthy passed away, she had achieved fame in - **Classical dance**
- This player won the gold in men's singles tennis at Paris Olympics 2024- **Novak Djokovic**
- The rank of India according to the Tourism Development Index 2024 report- **39th**
- Number of National High-Speed Road Corridor projects have been approved by the Central Government- **8**
- Noah Lyles, who won the gold medal in the men's 100m sprint at the Paris Olympics, is a runner from - **United States**
- This player won the silver medal in men's singles tennis at Paris Olympics 2024- **Carlos Alcaraz**
- India's rank in the Global Agriculture Export Index- **8th**
- Where will the 32nd International Conference of Agricultural Economists be organized- **New Delhi**
- Number of medals has India won so far in Paris Olympics 2024- **3**
- The new Director General of Assam Rifles- **Vikas Lakhera**
- Rohan Bopanna announced his retirement from Indian tennis after representing India in - **Paris Olympics**
- This country is hosting the multinational air exercise, 'Taranga Shakti 2024'- **India**
- In this sport has India won all three medals so far in Paris Olympics 2024- **Shooting**
- Under IPEF, this country has been appointed as the Vice President of Supply Chain Council- **India**
- Recently in this Tiger Reserve a wind turbine has been installed for electricity generation- **Periyar Tiger Reserve**
- The new Governor of Punjab and Chandigarh Administrator- **Gulab Chand Kataria**
- This sports person is the first Indian to win two medals in a single Olympics after independence- **Manu Bhaker**
- This country will host the Asia Cup in the year 2025- **India**
- Sado gold mine was recently declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site. This is located in - **Japan**
- The new Governor of Assam- **Laxman Prasad Acharya**
- Manika Batra has become the first Indian to reach the round of 16 of the singles competition of the Olympic Games, she is associated with - **Table Tennis**
- The new Governor of Jharkhand- **Santosh Kumar Gangwar**
- The main objective of Green India Mission under the National Climate Change Action Plan- **Protect, restore and increase forest area**
- Rajasthan government has announced to provide reservation to Agniveers in - **Jail and Forest Guard and State Police**
- This country has got the chairmanship of Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre for 2024-25- **India**
- The new Governor of Rajasthan - **Haribhau Kisanrao Bagde**
- The new Governor of Telangana- **Jishnu Dev Verma**

- The new Governor of Sikkim - **Om Prakash Mathur**
- The new Governor of Chhattisgarh - **Ramen Deka**
- The historical 'Moidams' has been included in the UNESCO World Heritage List. This is located in - **Assam**
- India's rank in the recently released Global Passport Index- **82nd**
- India's first integrated agri-export facility will be set up at - **Jawaharlal Nehru Port (Mumbai)**
- The number of PradhanMantriBhartiyaJanaushadhiKendrasgovernment has targeted to open across the country by March 31, 2027 is - **25,000**
- Recently RBI has approved the proposal of this bank to convert into a universal bank- **AU Small Finance Bank**
- Two advanced Triput class ships were built for the Indian Navy by- **Goa Shipyard Limited**
- This country will host the Olympic Winter Games 2030- **France**
- The new name of the Darbar Hall in RashtrapatiBhavan- **'GanatantraMandap'**
- This will be the fourth capital city of the Northeast region to come under railway connectivity by July next year- **Aizawl**
- The loan limit under the Mudra scheme has been increased to – **₹ 20 lakh**
- NITI Aayog has recently collaborated with this organisation for the Global South Innovation Program- **WIPO**
- Krishnan VenkatSubramaniam has recently been appointed as the CEO and MD of - **Federal Bank**
- Manolo Marquez has been appointed the head coach of the Indian men's football team. He belongs to which country- **Spain**
- This cricketer has become the highest run-scorer for India in women's T20I- **SmritiMandhana**
- DMRC inaugurated the e-waste recycling box facility in collaboration with - **Japan**
- A new AI version has been launched by OpenAI recently- **GPT-4o mini**
- Recently, this state has announced to give 10% reservation to Agniveers in police recruitment- **Haryana**
- In this state 'LadkaBhau' scheme has been started recently- **Maharashtra**
- Paul Kagame has recently won the presidential election of - **Rwanda**
- This organisation was awarded the Best Ship of the Eastern Fleet at the Fleet Awards held in Visakhapatnam- **INS Delhi**
- Asia's first health research-related "pre-clinical network facility" was inaugurated in – **Faridabad**
- Recently, this state government has created a world record of planting 11 lakh saplings in a single day- **Madhya Pradesh**
- ICAR's 'One Scientist-One Product' program has been launched to improve research in - **Agriculture and Animal Husbandry**

●●●

MCQ ON CURRENT AFFAIRS

1. Consider the following statements regarding the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme:

1. It is an ongoing Indian Railways mission to redevelop railway stations across India.
2. It shall cater for the introduction of new amenities as well as the upgradation and replacement of existing amenities.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

2. Consider the following statements regarding St Martin's Island:

1. It is located in the northeastern region of the Bay of Bengal.
2. It is the only coral island that belongs to Bangladesh.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

3. Consider the following statements regarding the 'FloodWatch India' Application:

1. It provides information related to the flood situation and forecasts up to 7 days on a real-time basis.
2. It is developed by the Central Water Commission.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

4. Consider the following statements regarding the Kasturba Gandhi BalikaVidyalayas (KGBV) Scheme:

1. It provides the facility to have at least one residential school for girls from Classes VI-XII in every educationally backward block (EBB) of the country.
2. It provides for 100% reservation of the seats for girls belonging to SC, ST, OBC, or minority communities.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

5. Consider the following statements regarding Canine Distemper disease:

1. It is a contagious and serious viral disease that mainly infects dogs.
2. There is no cure and no antiviral drugs have been approved to combat the infection.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

6. Consider the following statements regarding the Distributed Denial-of-Service (DDoS) Attack:

1. Its primary goal is to steal sensitive data from the target's server.
2. It achieves effectiveness by utilizing multiple compromised computer systems as sources of attack traffic.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

7. INS Arighat, recently seen in the news is a:

- (a) torpedo launch and recovery vessel
- (b) Shivalik- class stealth multi-role frigate
- (c) nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine
- (d) Kiev-class aircraft carrier

8. With reference to the Model Solar Village initiative, consider the following statements:

1. It aims to create one Model Solar Village per district across India.
2. It is implemented by the Union Ministry of New and Renewable Energy.
3. A revenue village with a population size above 5,000 is eligible to participate in this initiative.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2
- (b) 1 and 3
- (c) 2 and 3
- (d) All three

9. Consider the following statements about 'Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission'

1. It is the only UN body specialized in ocean science and services
2. It is in charge of coordinating the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development

Select the correct statement(s)

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

10. A confession made in police custody under Section 27 of the Indian Evidence Act is admissible if:

- (a) it is made in the presence of a magistrate
- (b) it leads to the discovery of a fact
- (c) it is voluntarily written
- (d) it is corroborated by physical evidence

11. 'Smithophismizoramensis', recently seen in the news is a species of:

- (a) bird
- (b) medicinal plant
- (c) snake
- (d) Spider

12. The Omkareshwar Floating Solar Project is located in which one of the following states?

- (a) Gujarat
- (b) Maharashtra
- (c) Rajasthan
- (d) Madhya Pradesh

13. NEOWISE Telescope, recently seen in news, was launched by:

- (a) ISRO
- (b) NASA
- (c) European Space Agency

- (d) World Meteorological Organisation

14. Consider the following statements regarding the Grain ATM:

1. It is designed and developed by the World Food Programme India.
2. It is an automated multi-commodity dispensing solution that provides fast and precise access to commodities.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

15. Panikkar Seamount, Raman ridge and Chandragupt ridge, which have been seen in news, are present in:

- (a) Atlantic Ocean
- (b) Arctic Ocean
- (c) Pacific ocean
- (d) Indian Ocean

16. Consider the following statements regarding Fruit Rot Disease, recently seen in the news:

1. It is a plant disease caused by a number of different fungi, bacteria and viruses.
2. Continuous heavy rainfall coupled with low temperature, high relative humidity and intermittent rain and sunshine hours favour the occurrence of fruit rot.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

17. With reference to Neelakurinji Plant, consider the following:

1. It is a flowering shrub which blooms once in 12 years.
2. It is categorised as critically endangered species under the IUCN Red list.
3. It is endemic to the high-altitude shola grassland ecosystems of southwest India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2
- (b) 1 and 3
- (c) 2 and 3
- (d) All three

18. Exercise Udara Shakti, was conducted between India and:

- (a) France
- (b) Malaysia
- (c) Australia
- (d) Bhutan

19. Lake Bolsena, the largest volcanic lake in Europe, is located in which one of the following countries?

- (a) Germany
- (b) France
- (c) Italy
- (d) Spain

20. With reference to the Income Tax Appellate Tribunal (ITAT), consider the following statements:

1. It serves as the final fact-finding body in tax disputes, offering both taxpayers and the income tax authorities a convenient platform to resolve disputes.
2. The orders passed by the ITAT are final, and an appeal lies to the High Court only if a substantial question of law arises for determination.

3. It functions under the regional High Court's jurisdiction and must adhere to the rules of the same.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

21. Consider the following statements regarding Pinaka-MK3 weapon system:

- 1. It is a Multi-Barrel Rocket Launcher (MBRL).
- 2. It delivers lethal and responsive fire against a variety of area targets located within a range of 2000 km.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

22. The Juanga tribe, recently seen in the news, primarily lives in which one of the following Indian states?

- (a) Karnataka
- (b) Meghalaya
- (c) Madhya Pradesh
- (d) Odisha

23. Exercise Mitra Shakti, was conducted between India and:

- (a) Russia
- (b) Nepal
- (c) Indonesia
- (d) Sri Lanka

24. Consider the following statements regarding Kasturi Cotton Bharat:

- 1. It is an initiative of the Ministry of Textiles.
- 2. A blockchain-based software platform is being used to ensure

traceability and certification of Kasturi Cotton Bharat-tagged bales.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

25. Consider the following statements regarding the Nandini Sahakar Scheme:

- 1. It is aimed at assisting women cooperatives under the purview of the National Cooperative Development Corporation.
- 2. Under this maximum financial assistance of 25 lakh rupees is provided to women cooperatives.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

26. Consider the following statements regarding the Triboelectric Nanogenerator (TENG) Technology:

- 1. It is a self-powered, feasible solution to convert mechanical energy into electricity.
- 2. It can be used to track the location of senior citizens suffering from Alzheimer.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

27. Consider the following statements regarding Gout:

1. It is a common form of arthritis that can affect anyone.
2. It results from increased uric acid in the blood serum of the human body.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Neither 1 nor 2
- (d) Both 1 and 2

28. Consider the following statements about RashtriyaVigyanPuraskar (RVP)

1. The awards under RashtriyaVigyanPuraskar (RVP) are given in four categories in which VigyanRatna (VR) is the highest honour.
2. The RashtriyaVigyanPuraskar Committee (RVPC) is headed by the Principal Scientific Adviser (PSA) of India.
3. The award ceremony for all categories of awards will be held on 23rd August on which National Space Day is celebrated.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

29. Consider the following statements about Mining Surveillance System (MSS)

1. It is a satellite-based monitoring system which aims to detect illegal mining activity through automatic remote-sensing detection technology.

2. It is a pan-India surveillance network that was developed by the Indian Bureau of Mines.

Choose the incorrect statements:

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

30. Which of the following are the weight categories in the Olympic women wrestling competition?

1. Freestyle 50 kg
2. Freestyle 55 kg
3. Freestyle 62 kg
4. Freestyle 68 kg
5. Freestyle 70 kg

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1, 3, 4
- (b) 1, 2, 3
- (c) 1, 4, 5
- (d) 1, 3, 5

31. The Indian government is implementing the AnaemiaMuktBharat(AMB) strategy to reduce anaemia among which of the following groups?

1. Children aged 0 to 6 months
2. Adolescents aged 10-19 years
3. Women of reproductive age
4. Lactating women

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 2, 3, 4
- (b) 1, 2, 3
- (c) 1, 2, 4
- (d) 1, 2

32. With reference to Waqf, consider the following statements:

1. It refers to a property dedicated in the name of God for religious and charitable purposes.

2. It can be established through a deed or instrument.
 3. Waqfs in India are regulated by the Waqf Act, 1995.
- How many of the statements given above are correct?
- (a) Only one
 - (b) Only two
 - (c) All three
 - (d) None
33. Guru Ghasidas-TamorPingla Tiger Reserve is situated in which one of the following States?
- (a) Chhattisgarh
 - (b) West Bengal
 - (c) Gujarat
 - (d) Jharkhand
34. Consider the following statements regarding the National Coastal Mission Scheme:
1. It aims to address the impact of climate change on coastal and marine ecosystems.
 2. It is implemented by the State Governments of Coastal States and Union Territory (UT) Administrations.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
35. Bhoj Wetland, recently in news is located in:
- (a) Tamil Nadu
 - (b) Uttar Pradesh
 - (c) Maharashtra
 - (d) Madhya Pradesh
36. Consider the following statements about QCI Surajya Recognition & Ranking Framework
1. It is an initiative designed to drive excellence among states to improve quality of life of citizens across India.
 2. The framework focuses on 4 pillars – Shiksha, Swasthya, Samriddhi and Sushasan.
 3. This initiative combines monthly and cumulative evaluations to ensure a thorough and balanced assessment.
- How many of the statements given above are correct?
- (a) Only one
 - (b) Only two
 - (c) All three
 - (d) None
37. Which organization has established India's first Geothermal field development project, and where is it located?
- (a) Tata Power in Gujarat
 - (b) National Thermal Power Corporation in Chhattisgarh
 - (c) Oil and Natural Gas Corporation in Ladakh
 - (d) Singareni Collieries Company Limited in Telangana
38. Consider the following statements with reference to the Auroville Township:
1. It is an international cultural township located in Karnataka.
 2. It is under the administrative control of the Union Ministry of Education.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2

39. With reference to Bluetongue Disease, consider the following statements:
1. It is an infectious, non-contagious disease that affects wild and domestic ruminants.
 2. It is a vector-borne disease caused by a bacterium.
 3. Vaccination is the most effective and practical measure to minimize losses related to the disease.
- How many of the statements given above are correct?
- (a) Only one
 - (b) Only two
 - (c) All three
 - (d) None
40. With reference to the Guidelines for Organ Transport in India through air, consider the following statements:
1. Airlines carrying the organs can request the Air Traffic Control for aircraft's priority takeoff and landing.
 2. Airport officials should establish a "green corridor" and provide a trolley for transporting the organ box.
 3. The airline crew can guide and assist the accompanying medical personnel in carrying the organ box.
- How many of the statements given above are correct?
- (a) Only one
 - (b) Only two
 - (c) All three
 - (d) None
41. Consider the following statements with reference to the e-rupee:
1. It is a digital currency issued by the Reserve Bank of India.
 2. The central bank pays interest on e-rupees which are kept in users' wallets.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
42. Consider the following statements regarding the Central Electricity Regulatory Commission:
1. It is a statutory body established under the provisions of the Electricity Regulatory Commissions Act, 1998.
 2. It issues licences to persons to function as transmission licensee and electricity trader.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
43. Consider the following statements
1. National Handloom Day is celebrated every year on 7th of August since 2015.
 2. It was on this day in 1905 Swadeshi Movement was launched.
 3. Recently "VIRAASAT" – the "Exclusive Handloom Expo" was organised by Ministry of Textiles.
- How many of the statements given above are correct?
- (a) Only one
 - (b) All three
 - (c) Only two
 - (d) None

44. Under the Axiom-4 mission, ISRO has collaborated with which of the following space agencies to enhance India's human space programme?

- (a) Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency
- (b) Roscosmos
- (c) European Space Agency
- (d) National Aeronautics and Space Administration

45. A four-ringed butterfly, the great four-ring was rediscovered in India after 61 years, in which of the following states?

- (a) Kerala
- (b) Andaman and Nicobar Islands
- (c) Arunachal Pradesh
- (d) Himachal Pradesh

46. Consider the following statements regarding Dark Patterns:

- 1. They are deceptive and manipulative user interface (UI) design techniques.
- 2. They exploit cognitive biases and psychological principles to influence user behavior.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

47. Consider the following statements regarding the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN):

- 1. It is a specialized agency of the United Nations to tackle the human suffering caused by malnutrition.
- 2. It mobilizes public-private partnerships and provides financial and technical support to deliver nutritious foods to those

people most at risk of malnutrition.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

48. Consider the following statements regarding Commemorative stamps:

- 1. These are issued for commemorating important events, prominent personalities in various fields.
- 2. These stamps can be issued on a living personality.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

49. Consider the following statements regarding 'Zero-click' attacks.

- 1. Zero-click attack is a cyber-attack that does not require any action by the user to hack his/her device.
- 2. Hacking a device by giving a missed WhatsApp call is a type of Zero-click attack.

Which of the above statements is/are incorrect?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

50. The Report titled 'Strategy for the development of Seaweed Value Chain' was published by

- (a) Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change

- (b) NITI Ayog
(c) International Seaweed Association (ISA)
(d) Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS)
51. Consider the following statements regarding the Astra Missile:
1. It is a surface-to-surface ballistic missile.
 2. It is indigenously developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
(b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2
52. Thadou people are primarily located in which one of the following states?
- (a) Odisha
(b) Himachal Pradesh
(c) Kerala
(d) Manipur
53. Consider the following statements about Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana
1. It is an umbrella scheme for ensuring holistic development of agriculture and allied sectors.
 2. It is Centrally Sponsored Scheme implemented by Union Ministry of Agriculture.
 3. "Innovation and Agri-Entrepreneurship Development" is a component under it.
- How many of the statements given above are correct?
- (a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All three
(d) None
54. Maritime Partnership Exercise, recently seen in news held between India and?
- (a) Russia
(b) Sri Lanka
(c) United Kingdom
(d) United States of America
55. In which of the following cases, the Supreme Court established the 'creamy layer' concept for Other Backward Classes (OBCs)?
- (a) State of Punjab v. Davinder Singh case
(b) EV Chinnaiah case
(c) A.K Gopalan vs. State of Madras case
(d) Indra Sawhney Case
56. Which of the following committees recommended for the Sub-categorisation of Other Backward Classes (OBC)?
- (a) Usha Mehra Committee
(b) Justice P. Ramachandra Raju Commission
(c) Justice G. Rohini Commission
(d) None of the above
57. Which of the following diseases can be detected through Genetic screening?
1. Sickle Cell Disease
 2. Cystic Fibrosis
 3. Down Syndrome
 4. Neural tube defects
 5. Edwards Syndrome
- How many of the above options is/are correct?
- (a) Only two
(b) Only three
(c) Only four
(d) All five
58. Consider the following statements regarding the Standardised Precipitation Index:

1. It is calculated based on the long-term precipitation record for a particular location and long-term period.
2. It measures both the wet and dry conditions of an area.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

59. The Maritime Partnership Exercise, recently seen in the news was held between India and:

- (a) Japan
- (b) France
- (c) Indonesia
- (d) Russia

60. With reference to Article 311 of the Indian Constitution, consider the following statements:

1. It states that no government employee can be dismissed, removed, or reduced in rank except after an inquiry by a competent authority.
2. Conduct involving moral turpitude is a ground for the dismissal, removal, or reduction in rank of government employees.
3. The decisions made under the provisions of Article 311 are not subject to judicial review.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2
- (b) 1 and 3
- (c) 2 and 3
- (d) All three

61. Which one of the following best describes the term "Genetic Screening"?

- (a) A method used to analyze dietary habits and nutrition levels.
- (b) A test to determine an individual's suitability for specific job roles based on their genetic makeup.
- (c) A tool used to identify individuals at higher risk of developing certain disorders.
- (d) A procedure to alter genetic material to enhance physical traits.

62. The WHO Global Traditional Medicine Centre (WHO GCTM) is located in which one of the following states?

- (a) Telangana
- (b) Rajasthan
- (c) Madhya Pradesh
- (d) Gujarat

63. Which one of the following is the primary purpose of the Kamaz-53949 Typhoon-K?

- (a) Performing aerial surveillance and reconnaissance
- (b) Acting as a frontline combat vehicle
- (c) Safe transportation of troops and military cargo in high-risk areas
- (d) Conducting search and rescue operations in disaster zones

64. Which one of the following statements best describes the term 'Thanatourism'?

- (a) Participating in eco-friendly tours to promote environmental conservation.
- (b) Traveling to sites with significant historical monuments and architecture.

- (c) Participating in high-risk adventure activities in remote locations.
- (d) Visiting locations associated with death, suffering, or tragedy.
65. With reference to Metal-air batteries, consider the following:
1. It has a higher energy density than a lithium-ion battery.
 2. It is not recyclable and poses environmental hazards.
 3. It can be used in large-scale stationary energy storage applications.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 and 2
(b) 1 and 3
(c) 2 and 3
(d) All three
66. Consider the following statements about Women Entrepreneurship Program, recently seen in news
1. It aims to empower 25 lakh women across India, providing them resources to start and grow successful businesses.
 2. It is a joint initiative of NITI Aayog and Ministry of Women and Child Development.
- Choose the correct statements:
- (a) 1 only
(b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2
67. Consider the following statements about 'One Scientist One Product'
1. It aids to improve research in the field of agriculture and animal husbandry.
 2. It was launched by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR).
- Choose the incorrect statements:
- (a) 1 only
(b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2
68. Consider the following statements regarding Nano-MIND technology.
1. The technology enables the selective activation of targeted brain circuits, surpassing current brain manipulation methods.
 2. The technology uses magnetic fields and magnetized nanoparticles.
 3. The technology can help in creating new treatments for neurological disorders.
- How many of the above statements is/are correct?
- (a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All three
(d) None
69. With reference to Disaster Management (Amendment Bill), 2024, consider the following statements:
1. It makes provision for the constitution of the "Urban Disaster Management Authority" for State capitals and large cities having municipal corporations.
 2. It empowers the National Disaster Management Authority (NDM) to prepare the disaster plan at both the national and state level.
 3. It seeks to make provision for a "State Disaster Response Force" by the State Governments.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2
- (b) 1 and 3
- (c) 2 and 3
- (d) All three

70. Which one of the following is an example of surrogate advertising?

- (a) Promoting a new car using the brand name of another popular car.
- (b) Advertising a new soda using the brand name of a well-known liquor brand.
- (c) Using celebrity endorsements to promote a product.
- (d) Advertising a product directly on social media.

71. Consider the following statements regarding One DAE One Subscription (ODOS).

- 1. One DAE One Subscription (ODOS) was launched by the Department of Atomic Energy.
- 2. It provides access to national and international research papers and scientific journals.
- 3. It will allow scientists, engineers, students, and researchers to publish in open-access journals.

How many of the above statements is/are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

72. Consider the following statements with reference to the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority:

- 1. It is set up to fix and revise the prices of controlled bulk drugs.

2. It works under the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Neither 1 nor 2
- (d) Both 1 and 2

73. Exercise Tarang Shakti, recently seen in the news, is an:

- (a) Air exercise
- (b) Navy exercise
- (c) Army exercise
- (d) None of the above

74. Consider the following statements about PARAKH

- 1. It is a unit established within NCERT in 2023.
- 2. The mandate of PARAKH is to work on bringing the school boards across the States and the Union Territories to a common platform.

Choose the correct statements:

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

75. Consider the following statements about National Culture Fund

- 1. It was set up as a Trust to mobilize extra resources through Public Private Partnerships (PPP) to protect India's tangible & intangible cultural heritage.
- 2. It is managed and administered through a Governing Council chaired by Ministry of Tourism.
- 3. Donations to the National Culture Fund are eligible for 100% tax

benefit under Income Tax Act, 1961.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2
- (b) 1 and 3
- (c) 2 and 3
- (d) All three

76. Consider the following statements about Standardized Agriculture Demonstration Farm (SADF)

1. It aims to enhance agricultural practices, increase crop yields and integrate Indian Standards in farming to benefit the agricultural sector.
2. The Bureau of Indian Standards & Govind Ballabh Pant University of Agriculture and Technology have signed an agreement to develop India's first SADF.

Choose the incorrect statements:

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

77. Global Water Tech Summit 2024, recently in news was hosted by

- (a) Ministry of Jal Shakti
- (b) Central Water Commission (CWC)
- (c) Global Energy and Environment Foundation
- (d) NitiAyog

78. Consider the following statements regarding the Advanced Land Navigation System:

1. It is a Ring Laser Gyro (RLG) based navigation system.

2. It provides GPS and Hybrid Navigation data for the navigation requirements.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

79. Consider the following statements about Mekedatu Project

1. The project is proposed at the confluence of the Cauvery River with its tributary Kabini.
2. It is a multi-purpose project proposed by Kerala.

Choose the incorrect statements:

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

80. The term 'Alderman', sometimes seen in the news, is associated with which one of the following?

- (a) Military leadership
- (b) Religious authority
- (c) Educational administration
- (d) Municipal government

81. With reference to the Defence Acquisition Council (DAC), consider the following statements:

1. It is the highest decision-making body of the defence ministry on procurement.
2. The defence minister is the chairman of DAC.
3. It gives in principle approval of a 15 years Long Term Integrated Perspective Plan (LTIPP) for defence forces.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

82. Consider the following statements regarding Saffron crop:

- 1. It regenerates from the vegetative multiplication of its underground corms.
- 2. It can be grown in dry, moderate and continental climate types.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

83. Consider the following statements regarding the National Metallurgist Awards:

- 1. It is given annually only to Indian nationals.
- 2. It is conferred to recognize outstanding contributions in the metallurgical field.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

84. Consider the following statements about NIPUN Bharat Mission

- 1. It aims to ensure universal acquisition of foundational literacy and numeracy for every child, by 2026-27.
- 2. The mission focuses on children of age group of 3 to 9 years including pre-school to Grade 3.

3. It is being implemented by Ministry of Women and Child Development.

4. A five-tier implementation mechanism under the centrally sponsored scheme of SamagraShiksha has been set up for the implementation of NIPUN.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1, 2 and 4
- (b) 1, 3 and 4
- (c) 2, 3 and 4
- (d) All the above

85. Consider the following statements about Unified Logistics Interface Platform (ULIP)

- 1. It is a digital platform for digitalized tracking and monitoring of logistics movement in the country.
- 2. It is developed by the National Industrial Corridor Development Corporation Limited (NICDC), under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Choose the incorrect statements:

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

86. Consider the following statements regarding National Policy for Rare Disease (NPRD) 2021:

- 1. It has provision for financial support of up to Rs. 50 lakhs to the patients suffering from rare diseases.
- 2. It has provisions for the promotion of research and development for

diagnosis and treatment of rare diseases.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

87. Consider the following statements with reference to the Pollution Under Control (PUC) Certificate:

1. It is a validation document that states that the vehicle's emission levels are within the permissible levels set by the government.
2. Only petrol and diesel vehicles are required to possess a valid PUC certificate in India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

88. Bohai Gulf, recently seen in the news, is located on the:

- (a) Coast of Eastern Japan
- (b) Coast of Northeastern China
- (c) Coast of Southern Korea
- (d) Coast of southern China

89. Consider the following statements about Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP)

1. It is a decentralized, state-based surveillance programme in the country.
2. The programme is implemented by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare with the assistance from World Bank.

Choose the correct statements:

- (a) 1 only

- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

90. Which of the following statements accurately describe the differences between a royalty and a tax?

- (a) A royalty is a payment made to the government for the use of public resources, while a tax is a payment made to the government for general revenue purposes.
- (b) A royalty is typically a percentage of revenue or profit derived from the use of a resource, while a tax is usually a fixed amount imposed on income, property, or sales.
- (c) Royalties are only paid by businesses, whereas taxes are only paid by individuals.
- (d) Royalties and taxes are both voluntary payments made to the government for various purposes.

91. Consider the following statements about the National Mission for Manuscripts (NMM):

1. The National Mission for Manuscripts was established by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India.
2. The mission aims to document and conserve manuscripts in different languages and scripts across India.
3. The mission also provides training in manuscript conservation and paleography.

How many of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

92. The 'White category' sectors, as classified by environmental regulations in many countries, are characterized by which of the following attributes?
- High pollution potential and extensive regulatory requirements.
 - Low pollution potential and minimal regulatory requirements.
 - Moderate pollution potential with moderate regulatory oversight.
 - No pollution potential and no regulatory requirements.
93. Consider the following statements about the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C):
- The I4C is established under the Ministry of Home Affairs.
 - One of the sectors of I4C is dedicated to providing cybercrime investigation training.
 - The I4C also focuses on creating awareness about cybercrimes among citizens.
- How many of the statements given above is/are correct?
- Only one
 - Only two
 - All three
 - None
94. 'Mission Indradhanush' launched by the Government of India pertains to
- Immunization of children and pregnant women
 - Construction of smart cities across the country
 - India's own search for the Earth-like planets in outer space
 - New Educational Policy
95. Tell Umm Amer, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, recently in the news, is located in:
- Palestine
 - Australia
 - Indonesia
 - Israel
96. Consider the following statements regarding the E-Upahaar Portal:
- It was developed by the National Informatics Centre (NIC), Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.
 - It helps in the auctioning of gift items presented to the Hon'ble President and former Presidents of India.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- 1 only
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2
 - Neither 1 nor 2
97. Consider the following statements regarding the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre:
- It helps in implementing disaster risk reduction in Asia and the Pacific region.
 - India is a founding member of this organization.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- 1 only
 - Both 1 and 2
 - 2 only
 - Neither 1 nor 2
98. Consider the following statements with reference to the YamunotriDham:
- It is located in the Garhwal Himalayas.
 - It is a part of Char Dham, the four most revered Hindu pilgrimages.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
(b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2
99. Consider the following statements regarding the GROWTH-India Telescope:
1. It is India's first fully robotic optical research telescope.
 2. It is located at the Indian Astronomical Observatory site at Hanle, Ladakh.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
(b) 2 only
(c) Neither 1 nor 2
(d) Both 1 and 2
100. Consider the following statements with reference to the Cultural Property Agreement:
1. It aims to prevent and curb the illicit trafficking of antiquities.
 2. It was signed recently between India and Australia.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
(b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2
101. Consider the following statements about State of the World's Forests 2024 Report
1. It is published by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations.
 2. According to the report there is a decline in deforestation rates compared to previous decades.
 3. India ranked third globally in terms of forest area gains
- How many of the statements given above are correct?
- (a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) None
(d) All three
102. The "Right to be forgotten" is considered part of the broader right to:
- (a) Freedom of Expression
(b) Privacy
(c) Property
(d) Assembly and Association
103. Consider the following statements about Green Climate Fund
1. It is the world's largest dedicated climate fund which was set up at COP 16 held in Cancun in 2010.
 2. It is an operating entity of the financial mechanism of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).
 3. Recently SIDBI received the fund from GCF to implement Financing Mitigation and Adaptation Project.
- How many of the statements given above are correct?
- (a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) None
(d) All three
104. Consider the following statements about 'Mission LiFE' :
1. 'Mission LiFE' is an initiative by the Government of India aimed at promoting sustainable living.
 2. It focuses on individual actions that can collectively contribute to environmental protection.
 3. 'Mission LiFE' includes guidelines for industries to reduce their environmental impact.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2
- (b) 1 and 3
- (c) 2 and 3
- (d) All three

105. Which one of the following statements best describes the term 'Greenium'?

- (a) A tax incentive for investing in renewable energy projects.
- (b) The premium interest rate offered by green bonds compared to conventional bonds.
- (c) A subsidy provided by the government for green infrastructure projects.
- (d) The savings an issuer of a green bond realises on the coupon payment because the bond is green.

106. Consider the following statements:

- 1. The British Government termed him the "Father of Indian Unrest".
- 2. He established the Deccan Education Society in Pune in 1884.

The above statements describe which one of the following personalities?

- (a) BalGangadharTilak
- (b) Bipin Chandra Pal
- (c) Gopal Krishna Gokhale
- (d) LalaLajpatRai

107. Consider the following statements regarding the Llama 3.1:

- 1. It is a new open source Artificial Intelligence model developed by Meta.
- 2. It can converse in eight languages and write higher-quality computer code.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

108. Consider the following statements regarding the Olympic Order:

- 1. It is the highest award bestowed by the International Olympic Committee.
- 2. It is awarded in three grades namely gold, silver and bronze.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

109. Sarco Capsule, recently seen in news is associated with?

- (a) A pod that aids in ending the life of a patient to limit the patient's suffering
- (b) A space capsule to transport cargo and astronauts to and from space
- (c) A drug administered to treat Multidrug-resistant TB (MDR TB).
- (d) None of the above

110. The Purvodaya Initiative mentioned in the Union Budget of 2024 is related to:

- (a) Enhancing agricultural productivity in the Western States
- (b) A plan for the holistic development of the eastern region
- (c) Promoting tourism in the Northeastern region
- (d) Improving educational infrastructure in rural areas

111. The "World's Forests 2024 Report" was released by which organization?

- (a) United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
 (b) World Wildlife Fund (WWF)
 (c) Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
 (d) International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
112. Which one of the following is the primary objective of NPS Vatsalya Scheme?
- (a) To provide health insurance for children from poor families.
 (b) To offer educational scholarships for students.
 (c) To provide a monthly stipend to poor families with minor children.
 (d) To help parents and guardians plan for their children's future financial needs.
113. Consider the following statements regarding the Vishnupad Temple:
1. It is located on the banks of the Godavari.
 2. It was built on the orders of Queen Ahilyabai Holkar of Ahmadnagar.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
 (b) 2 only
 (c) Both 1 and 2
 (d) Neither 1 nor 2
114. With reference to 'Angel Tax', consider the following statements:
1. It was first time introduced in 2012 to prevent black money laundering through share sales.
 2. It was levied on the capital raised via the issue of shares by unlisted companies.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
 (b) 2 only
 (c) Both 1 and 2
 (d) Neither 1 nor 2
115. Consider the following statements regarding the Electric Mobility Promotion Scheme:
1. It aims to accelerate the adoption of Electric Vehicles in India.
 2. It will be applicable to both commercial and privately owned vehicles.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
 (b) 2 only
 (c) Both 1 and 2
 (d) Neither 1 nor 2
116. Consider the following statements about MSME TEAM Initiative
1. It aims at assisting five lakh MSMEs to onboard the Open Network Digital Commerce (ONDC) platform.
 2. MSME TEAM Initiative is a sub-scheme under the Central Sector Scheme "Raising and Accelerating MSME Performance (RAMP)".
 3. MSME-TEAM Initiative provides financial assistance to MSMEs for catalogue preparation, account management, logistics and designs.
- How many of the statements given above are correct?
- (a) Only one
 (b) Only two
 (c) All three
 (d) None
117. Consider the following statements about Air Breathing Propulsion System

1. This system utilizes atmospheric oxygen as an oxidiser to burn the fuel.
2. Air-breathing technologies can be used only within the denser layers of the Earth's atmosphere.
3. Ramjet and Scramjet are examples of Air Breathing Propulsion System.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) All three
- (b) Only one
- (c) Only two
- (d) None

118. With reference to the National Mission on Cultural Mapping (NMCM), consider the following statements:

1. It is a scheme administered by the Ministry of Education to create a comprehensive database of artists and art forms in the country.
2. It aims to cover all the inhabited villages of India, which are marked as 'village', in the Census 2011.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

119. Consider the following statements with reference to the Kalarippayattu:

1. It is the traditional martial art form popularly practiced in Kerala.
2. It is practiced by men as well as women.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only

- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

120. The Bonn Challenge is related to:

- (a) Reducing greenhouse gas emissions by promoting the use of renewable energy sources.
- (b) Restoring degraded and deforested landscapes to enhance biodiversity and ecosystem services.
- (c) Promoting sustainable agriculture practices to increase food security.
- (d) Reducing marine pollution and protecting oceanic ecosystems.

121. Consider the following statements with reference to the India Maritime Centre (IMC):

1. It is an initiative of the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways to provide a unified platform for the Indian maritime industry.
2. It will be located in Chennai, Tamil Nadu.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

122. Consider the following statements regarding the Upper Karnali Hydro-Electric Power Project:

1. It is a run-of-the-river hydropower project being developed on the Karnali River in Nepal.
2. The project will supply power to Nepal, India and Bangladesh.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only

- (b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2
123. In the context of KanwarYatra, the term 'Kanwar' refers to:
(a) A type of prayer chant
(b) A holy book
(c) A traditional dance
(d) A bamboo pole
124. Consider the following statements about Kisan Credit Card Scheme
1. The scheme was prepared by the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD).
 2. It is implemented by all Co-operative banks, Regional Rural Banks and Public Sector Banks throughout the country.
 3. It covers the risk of KCC holders against death or permanent disability resulting from accidents.
- How many of the above statements is/are correct?
(a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All three
(d) None
125. With reference to the National Clean Air Programme, consider the following statements:
1. It was launched by the Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change.
 2. It has a target to achieve a reduction in PM10 level up to 40% by 2025-26.
 3. Under this programme Central Pollution Control Board monitors city air quality and publishes its findings regularly.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 and 2
(b) 1 and 3
(c) 2 and 3
(d) All three
126. "MashcoPiro tribe", recently seen in the news, primarily resides in:
(a) Andes Mountains
(b) Amazon jungles
(c) Atacama Desert
(d) Pampas Grasslands
127. Consider the following statements regarding the International Centre for Audit of Local Governance:
1. It is a collaborative platform for policymakers, administrators and auditors linked with local governments.
 2. It serves as a centre of excellence for capacity building of local government auditors.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(a) 1 only
(b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2
128. Bhusanket Web Portal, which was recently lauched, provides information about:
(a) Magnetic changes in earth's core area
(b) Invasive plant species
(c) Swell waves in the coastal areas
(d) Landslide hazards
129. With reference to the Bhil tribe, consider the following statements:
1. They belong to the Australoid group of tribes.
 2. They are mainly inhabited in the northeastern states of India.
 3. They celebrate the Baneshwar fair during the period of Shivratri.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2
- (b) 1 and 3
- (c) 2 and 3
- (d) All three

130. Consider the following statements about UN Water Convention

1. It is a legally binding instrument adopted in 1992.
2. The Convention replaces bilateral and multilateral agreements for specific basins or aquifers.
3. The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) provides services to the UN Water Convention.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 3
- (b) 1 and 2
- (c) 2 and 3
- (d) All three

131. Consider the following statements about Khelo India Rising Talent Identification (KIRTI) Program

1. It is aimed at school children between nine and 18 years of age group.
2. It aims to use sports as a tool to curb addiction towards drugs and other gadgetry distractions.

Choose the incorrect statements:

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

132. The Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report is released by which organization?

- (a) United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

(b) World Bank

(c) United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

(d) International Monetary Fund (IMF)

133. Nalanda University, one of the most renowned ancient centers of learning, was founded by which historical figure?

- (a) Chandragupta Maurya
- (b) Harshavardhan
- (c) Ashoka
- (d) Kumara Gupta I

134. Consider the following statements about e-mobility R&D Roadmap for India

1. It is launched by the Office of the Principal Scientific Advisor (PSA) to the Government of India.
2. It is prepared by the Automotive Research Association of India.
3. Energy Storage Cells and Materials and recycling are categorised as two of the four important areas under the road map.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

135. Consider the following statements about Committee on Space Research (COSPAR)

1. It is the world's first scientific body dedicated to space science research.
2. Massey Award is one of the initiatives of this committee.

Choose the incorrect statements:

- (a) 1 only

- (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
136. Where is the Davis Strait located?
- (a) Between Iceland and Norway
 - (b) Between Antarctica and South America
 - (c) Between Alaska and Siberia
 - (d) Between Greenland and Canada
137. Consider the following statements with reference to the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme:
1. It was launched by the Government of India in view of the Covid-19 crisis.
 2. The National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company Ltd (NCGTC) provides guarantee to the loans provided under this scheme.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
138. Consider the following statements with reference to the Coalition of Epidemic Preparedness Innovations:
1. It is an innovative partnership between public, private, philanthropic and civil organisations.
 2. India is not a part of this initiative.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
139. Consider the following statements regarding the National Bank for

Financing Infrastructure and Development:

1. It was formed by the Reserve Bank of India under the Banking Regulation Act, 1949.
2. It is a specialized Development Finance Institution in India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
140. Consider the following statements about Chandipura Virus
1. The infection caused by the virus of the Rhabdoviridae family.
 2. The infection reaches the central nervous system which lead to encephalitis.
 3. Several species of sandflies and mosquito species of Aedesaegypti are the vectors of Chandipura Virus.
- How many of the statements given above are correct?
- (a) Only one
 - (b) Only two
 - (c) All three
 - (d) None
141. Consider the following statements about hydrogen fuel cells:
1. Hydrogen fuel cells produce electricity through an electrochemical reaction between hydrogen and oxygen.
 2. The only by-product of a hydrogen fuel cell is water.
 3. Hydrogen fuel cells are less efficient than traditional combustion engines.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2
- (b) 1 and 3
- (c) 2 and 3
- (d) All three

142. What is the primary goal of the ASMITA project, recently seen in the news?

- (a) To digitize educational content for online learning
- (b) To enhance infrastructure in rural schools
- (c) To promote and integrate Indian languages into the education system
- (d) To promote sustainable agriculture practices

143. Consider the following statements with reference to the Late Blight Disease:

- 1. It is a serious viral infection that can affect tomatoes and potatoes.
- 2. The disease can be managed with a timely application of fungicide.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

144. Tizu River, recently seen in the news, flows through which one of the following states?

- (a) Meghalaya
- (b) Uttarakhand
- (c) Sikkim
- (d) Nagaland

145. With reference to the PM SHRI (PM Schools for Rising India) Scheme, consider the following statements:

- 1. It is a centrally sponsored scheme by the Government of India.
- 2. PM SHRI Schools will be overseen by the Central Government, State/UT Governments, local bodies, as well as Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS) and Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti (NVS).
- 3. The selection of PM SHRI schools will be done through Challenge Mode, wherein schools compete for support to become exemplar schools.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

146. Consider the following statements with reference to the Chandipura virus (CHPV) infection:

- 1. It can be transmitted through sand flies and mosquito species.
- 2. This infection has largely remained limited to children below 15 years.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

147. Consider the following statements regarding the Srijan Portal:

- 1. It is developed by the Department of Defence Production, Union Ministry of Defence.

2. It gives information on items that can be taken up for indigenization by the private sector.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Neither 1 nor 2
- (d) Both 1 and 2

148. With reference to the Bhojshala complex, consider the following statements:

1. It was built by the Raja Bhoja of the Pala Dynasty.
2. It was for the first time attacked by Alauddin Khilji.
3. It is currently protected under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2
- (b) 2 and 3
- (c) 1 and 3
- (d) All three

149. Consider the following statements with reference to the Halwa ceremony:

1. It is a tradition performed every year to celebrate a successful budget presentation.
2. It involves members of the finance ministry who are involved in the preparation of the budget.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

150. Consider the following statements about BeejUtsavs

1. It is a popular movement to preserve indigenous seed varieties that are on the verge of extinction.

2. It is an annual festival organised by Ministry of Tribal Affairs in the state of Chhattisgarh.

Choose the correct statements:

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

151. Consider the following statements regarding the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO):

1. It was established by the Chicago Convention and is headquartered in Montreal, Canada.
2. It sets standards and regulations necessary for aviation safety, security, efficiency, and regularity, as well as for aviation environmental protection.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

152. Consider the following statements regarding the APSTAR-6E Satellite, recently seen in the news:

1. It is NASA's first all-electric propulsion communication satellite.
2. It operates in geostationary orbit to deliver efficient and high-capacity broadband communication services.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only

- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

153. With reference to the UK-India Young Professionals Scheme, consider the following statements:

1. It allows degree-holding Indian citizens between 18 and 30 years old to live and work in the UK for up to five years.
2. It will enable candidates to enter the UK at any time while their visa is valid and leave and return anytime during their stay.
3. A person must be selected in the India Young Professionals Scheme ballot before they can apply for a Young Professionals Scheme visa.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

154. Consider the following statements with reference to the World Heritage Young Professionals Forum:

1. It serves as a platform for young people and heritage experts to foster intercultural learning and exchange.
2. It aims to integrate innovative technologies for the promotion of World Heritage.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

155. Tirzepatide drug, recently in news, is advised for:

- (a) Shingles
- (b) HIV treatment
- (c) TB treatment
- (d) weight loss

156. Consider the following statements about Mahabodhi Temple Complex

1. It is one of the four holy sites related to the life of the Lord Buddha, marking the spot of the Buddha's Enlightenment.
2. The first temple was built by Emperor Asoka in the 3rd century B.C.
3. It was recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2002.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

157. Consider the following statements about Asur Community

1. They are Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) of Jharkhand.
2. Eight of their ten clans are matrilineal clans.
3. They have their own community council (jatipanch) where disputes are settled.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2
- (b) 1 and 3
- (c) 2 and 3
- (d) All three

158. Consider the following statements about Quantum Navigation

1. Quantum navigation focuses on the movement of a single atom tracked under cryogenic conditions.
2. In quantum navigation, the signal “doesn’t drift”, making interception much harder to achieve

Choose the correct statements:

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

159. In the Indian context, what is the implication of ratifying the ‘Additional Protocol’ with the ‘International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)’?

- (a) The civilian nuclear reactors come under IAEA safeguards.
- (b) The military nuclear installations come under the inspection of IAEA.
- (c) The country will have the privilege to buy uranium from the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG).

- (d) The country automatically becomes a member of the NSG.

160. Consider the following statements about International Atomic Energy Agency(IAEA):

1. The IAEA is an independent agency that reports to both the United Nations General Assembly and the United Nations Security Council.
2. The IAEA is primarily responsible for promoting the peaceful use of nuclear energy and preventing its use for military purposes.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

ANSWER KEYS

1	C	51	B	101	D	151	C
2	C	52	D	102	B	152	B
3	C	53	C	103	D	153	B
4	A	54	A	104	A	154	C
5	C	55	D	105	D	155	D
6	B	56	C	106	A	156	C
7	C	57	D	107	C	157	B
8	B	58	C	108	C	158	C
9	C	59	D	109	A	159	A
10	B	60	A	110	B	160	C
11	C	61	C	111	C		
12	D	62	D	112	D		
13	B	63	C	113	B		
14	C	64	D	114	C		
15	D	65	B	115	C		
16	C	66	A	116	C		
17	B	67	D	117	A		
18	B	68	C	118	B		
19	C	69	B	119	C		
20	C	70	B	120	B		
21	A	71	C	121	A		
22	D	72	D	122	C		
23	D	73	A	123	D		
24	C	74	C	124	C		
25	A	75	B	125	A		
26	C	76	D	126	B		
27	D	77	C	127	C		
28	C	78	C	128	D		
29	D	79	C	129	B		
30	A	80	D	130	A		
31	A	81	C	131	D		
32	C	82	C	132	C		
33	A	83	C	133	D		
34	C	84	A	134	C		
35	D	85	D	135	D		
36	C	86	C	136	D		
37	C	87	A	137	C		
38	B	88	B	138	A		
39	B	89	C	139	B		
40	C	90	A	140	C		
41	A	91	C	141	A		
42	C	92	B	142	C		
43	B	93	C	143	B		
44	D	94	A	144	D		
45	C	95	A	145	C		
46	C	96	C	146	C		
47	B	97	B	147	D		
48	A	98	C	148	B		
49	D	99	D	149	B		
50	B	100	A	150	A		

● ● ●

LISAS' PUBLICATIONS

LISAS'IAS

GENERAL STUDIES

For Civil Services Preliminary Exam.

2, BUDHANAGAR, BHUBANESWAR-751 006
MOB: 9338222113, 9337594620
Website: www.lisasias.org, E-mail: lisascivils@lisasias.org

LISAS'IAS

GENERAL STUDIES

PAPER – I, II, III & IV
(REVISED SYLLABUS)
OAS MAIN EXAMINATION

DR. LINU CHAYANI

LISAS'IAS

GENERAL STUDIES

For Civil Services Main Examination

2, BUDHANAGAR, BHUBANESWAR-751 006
MOB: 9338222113, 9337594620, 9102066687
Website: www.lisasias.org, E-mail: lisascivils@lisasias.org

LISAS JULY - 2024
CAREER IN FOCUS

UPSC | OPSC | SSC | Railway | Banking | AIC

INDIA'S TRANSITION TO A DEVELOPED NATION

MODEL QUESTIONS
➤ CURRENT AFFAIRS MCQ

LISAS : A 31-year Saga of Success

LISAS'IAS

PREVIOUS YEARS' SOLVED PAPERS

17 PRACTICE SETS
(PAPER - I & II)
FOR OAS (PRELIMINARY) EXAM.
(AS PER NEW PATTERN)

DR. LINU CHAYANI

LISAS

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

DR. LINU CHAYANI

LISAS'IAS
(Best Institute for Civil Services)

- Experienced Faculties
- Unparallel Results
- Examination Oriented Study Materials
- Regular Unit Tests & VSTs
- Discussion Sessions based on Tests
- Doubt Clarification Sessions
- Daily Current Affairs
- Monthly Magazine on Current Affairs
- Library with AC Reading Room Facilities
- Facilities for Correspondence Course

2, BUDHANAGAR, BHUBANESWAR-751006
MOBILE : 9338222113, 9337594620
Website : www.lisasias.org, E-mail : lisascivils@lisasias.org