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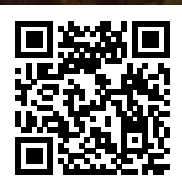
LawEx

15-31 MAY, 2023

ISSUE - 07

[Cover story]

NEW
PARLIAMENT
BUILDING OF
INDIA



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About Magazine

“LawEx” is a carefully curated set of Current Events designed specifically for CLAT aspirants. To take you one step closer to realizing your dream, “LawEx” provides a fortnightly overview of the most significant current events related to politics, economics, science and technology, & sports with a wide range of infographics to ensure a smoother learning experience and enhanced retention of information.

Editor's Note

The Prime Minister of India inaugurated the new parliament building of India, triangular in shape, on May 28, 2023, Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change has launched a mobile application called “Meri LiFE” (My Life) to mobilise youth for climate change ahead of World Environment Day on 5th June, India celebrated the 25th anniversary of Pokhran-II, a series of nuclear tests, recently, a five-judge Bench of the Supreme Court (SC) upheld the amendments made by the legislatures of Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, and Karnataka to The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (PCA) Act, 1960, allowing bull-taming sports like jallikattu, kambala, and bullock-cart races. Keep reading to know more.

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The Question Bank



**CONTEMPORARY EVENTS OF SIGNIFICANCE FROM
INDIA AND THE WORLD**

QUICK BOOSTERS



INAUGURATION OF THE NEW PARLIAMENT BUILDING OF INDIA

WHY IN NEWS?

- The Prime Minister of India inaugurated the new parliament building of India on May 28, 2023.

Key Highlights

- The construction of the new building, designed by architect Bimal Patel, began in 2019.
- The Prime Minister installed the sacred 'Sengol' in the Lok Sabha chamber, right next to the Speaker's chair, after performing puja.
- Prime Minister also released a special commemorative postage stamp and a ₹75 coin to mark the inauguration of the new Parliament building.
 - The Prime Minister was handed over the historic 'Sengol' by Adheenams before it was installed in the new Parliament building.
- The new building is triangular in shape, mostly because the plot of land that it is built on is a triangle.
 - According to architect Bimal Patel, the shape is also a nod to the sacred geometry in different religions. Its design and materials are meant to complement the old Parliament, with the two buildings expected to function as one complex.
 - The new Parliament building has three storeys and a built-up area of 64,500 sqm.
- Lok Sabha
 - The Lok Sabha chamber will have 888 seats, up from the existing 543, with the option of expanded seating up to 1,272.
 - The Lok Sabha will be used for joint sittings of both Houses in the absence of a Central Hall, which was the fulcrum of the old building.
 - The new Lok Sabha chamber has a peacock theme, with designs drawn from the national bird's feathers carved on the walls and ceiling, complemented by teal carpets.
- Rajya Sabha
 - The Rajya Sabha chamber can accommodate 384 Members of Parliament (MPs), as opposed to the existing capacity of 250.
 - The increased capacity of both chambers is meant to cater to any future increase in the number of MPs following delimitation.
 - The Rajya Sabha chamber has been decorated with the national flower lotus as its theme, with red carpets.
- Built using green construction techniques, the new building is supposed to reduce electricity consumption by 30 per cent, compared to the old one.
 - Rainwater-harvesting and water-recycling systems have been included.
 - It has been designed to be more space efficient, and meant to function for the next 150 years, according to the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.
- As per building codes, since Delhi is in seismic zone-V, the building is primed to be earthquake-safe.
- The new building has a Constitution Hall, where the journey of Indian democracy has been documented.
- There are six new committee rooms in the new building, as opposed to three in the old building. In addition, there are 92 rooms as offices for the Council of Ministers.
- For the interior and exterior of the building, construction materials have been brought in from across the country, including sandstone from Sarmathura in Dholpur and granite from Lakha village in Jaisalmer, Rajasthan.
 - Similarly, the wood used in the decor is from Nagpur and craftsmen from Mumbai have led the wooden architecture design.
 - Bhadohi weavers from Uttar Pradesh have made the traditional hand-knotted carpets for the building.

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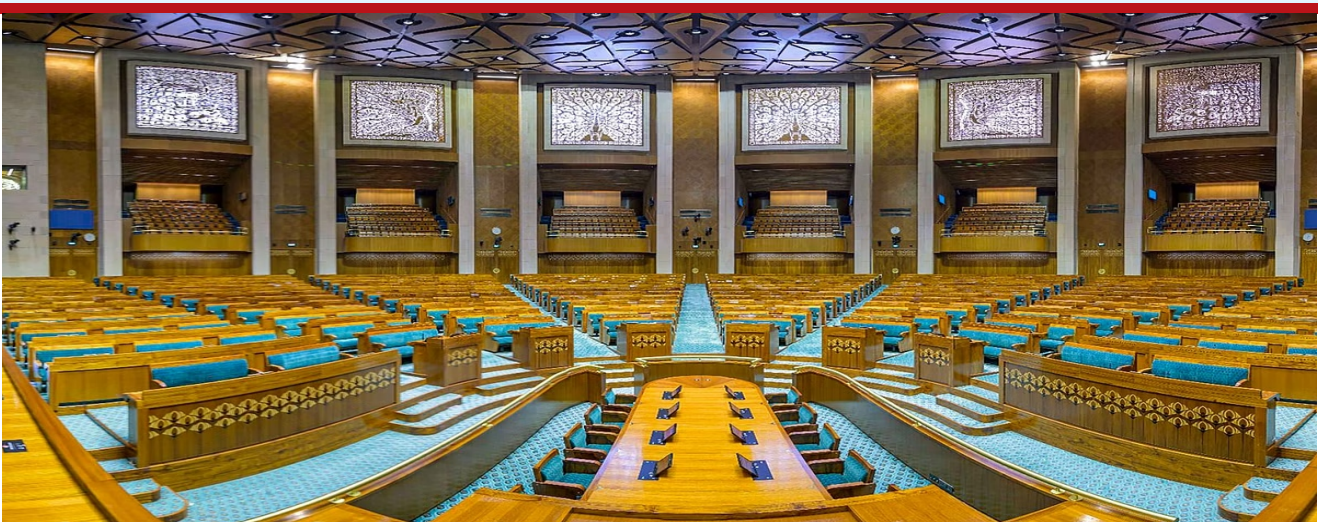




- The 16-foot-tall bronze statue of Mahatma Gandhi, which has been the site of numerous protests and gatherings by MPs and photo-ops for students, will remain on the lawn between the old and new buildings.
 - The statue, which was installed at the main entrance of the Parliament in 1993, was shifted during construction.
 - Made by Padma Bhushan-awardee sculptor Ram V Sutar, the statue now faces the old building, near the entrance used by the Lok Sabha Speaker.
- The building is replete with national symbols, including the national emblem — the Lion Capital of Ashoka — that weighs 9,500 kg and is 6.5 metres in height, and is visible from a distance.
 - At the entrance, the Ashoka chakra and the words 'Satyameva Jayate' have been carved in stone.
- The public entrances lead to three galleries —
 - the Sangeet Gallery, which exhibits dance, song, and musical traditions of India;
 - the Sthapthya Gallery depicts the architectural heritage of the country, and
 - the Shilp Gallery showcases the distinct handicraft traditions of different states.
- The building has three main gates -- Gyan Dwar, Shakti Dwar, and Karma Dwar. It will have separate entrances for VIPs, MPs, and visitors.
- At all the entrances of the building, auspicious animals as guardian statues will be exhibited, based on their importance in Indian culture and vastu shastra.
 - These include the elephant, the horse, the eagle, the swan, and mythical creatures shardula and makara.
- One of the features of the new Parliament building is a Foucault pendulum suspended from its 'Constitutional Gallery' area.
 - It has been designed and installed by the National Council of Science Museums (NCSM), Kolkata.
 - Above the pendulum, on the ceiling, six individual panels depict the artistic interpretation of the section of the night sky and celestial bodies present over New Delhi on the midnight of January 26, 1950.

DID YOU KNOW?

- The new parliament building is constructed by Tata Projects Ltd.
- The Central Vista was inaugurated in 1931 and comprised Rashtrapati Bhawan, Parliament House, North and South Blocks and the Record Office, which was later named as The National Archives, along with the India Gate monument and the civic gardens on either side of the Rajpath (now Kartavya Path).
- The foundation of Delhi was laid at the Coronation Durbar of 1911 by King George V and Queen Mary as the capital of British India. Prior to this, Calcutta had served as the capital of British India for a long time.
- The task of constructing a new city was given to Edwin Lutyens and Herbert Baker.
- Herbert Baker is also the architect of the Union buildings at Pretoria, South Africa.
- The Parliament House building was designed by both Lutyens and Baker.
- Rashtrapati Bhavan was designed by Edwin Lutyens.
- The Secretariat, which includes both north and south blocks was designed by Herbert Baker.



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INDIA'S DEFENCE MINISTRY APPROVES FOURTH POSITIVE INDIGENISATION LIST

WHY IN NEWS?

To promote 'Aatmanirbharta' in defence & minimise imports by Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs), the Ministry of Defence has approved 4th Positive Indigenisation List (PIL) of 928 strategically-important Line Replacement Units (LRUs)/Sub-systems/Spares & Components, including high-end materials & spares, with import substitution value worth Rs 715 crore.

Key Points

- The 928 components and sub-systems will only be procured from domestic firms once import bans on them kick in, over a period of five-and-a-half years.
- The latest list is the fourth such list to be released. Termed a Positive Indigenisation List (PIL), the document comprises everything from line replacement units, sub-systems and components used for various military platforms, equipment and weapons.
- The years-long timeline for import bans kicks in starting December 2023 and will run through December 2028.
- Earlier, three such lists were put out in December 2021, March 2022 and August 2022. These lists contain 2,500 items which are already indigenised and 1,238 (351+107+780) items which will be indigenised within the given timelines.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Current estimates place India's defensive capital expenditure at USD 130 billion over the next five years.
- The defence ministry has set a \$25 billion (Rs 1.75 lakh crore) turnover goal in defence manufacturing in the next five years, including an export target of \$5 billion worth of military hardware.
- India remained the world's largest arms importer for the five-year period between 2018-22 even though its arms imports dropped by 11% between 2013-17 and 2018-22, according to the Swedish Think Tank Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI).
- Russia was the largest supplier of arms to India in both 2013-17 and 2018-22, but its share of total Indian arms imports fell from 64% to 45%, while France emerged as the second largest supplier between 2018-22.
- In August 2020, the defence ministry launched the SRIJAN portal, which is a 'one-stop-shop online portal that provides access to the vendors to take up items that can be taken up for indigenisation.
- Indigenously built defence products in India include Tejas Aircraft, Arjun Tank, NETRA, ASTRA, LCH 'Prachand', and ICG ALH Squadrons.
- Two Defense Industrial Corridors have been established in Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, focusing on developing defense manufacturing ecosystems and attracting investments.

Aatmanirbharta in Defence

4th POSITIVE INDIGENISATION LIST APPROVED

- Another 928 strategically-important LRU Units/ Sub-systems/Spares & Components to be 'Made in India'
- High-end materials & spares with import substitution value worth Rs 715 crore included.
- From among the previous PILs, 2810 (2500+ 310) items indigenised so far

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 MinistryofDefenceGovernmentofIndia



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SERIOUS LAPSES IN POSH ACT ENFORCEMENT: SUPREME COURT

WHY IN NEWS?

- The Supreme Court has expressed disquiet at what it called the “serious lapses” in the implementation of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Work Place (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (POSH Act), even a decade after its enactment.

Key Points

- The apex court referred to a newspaper survey which revealed that out of 30 national sports federations in the country, only 16 had constituted Internal Complaints Committees mandated under the 2013 Act.
- The court said that this is indeed a sorry state of affairs and reflects poorly on all the State functionaries, public authorities, private undertakings, organisations and institutions that are duty-bound to implement the PoSH Act in letter and spirit.
- The court directed the Union, States and Union Territories to undertake a time-bound exercise to verify whether Ministries, Departments, government organisations, authorities, public sector undertakings, institutions, bodies, etc., had constituted Internal Complaints Committees (ICCs), Local Committees(LCs) and Internal Committees(ICs) under the Act.
- These bodies have been ordered to publish the details of their respective committees in their websites. They were given eight weeks to comply and file affidavits in the apex court.
- SC has given eight weeks for government Ministries and bodies to comply with the mandates of the 2013 Act.

What is the Prevention of Sexual Harassment (PoSH) Act, 2013?

- The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, commonly known as the PoSH Act, was passed in 2013. It defined sexual harassment, lay down the procedures for complaint and inquiry, and the action to be taken in cases of sexual harassment.
- The 2013 law broadened and gave legislative backing to what are known as the Vishaka Guidelines, which were laid down by the Supreme Court in a judgment passed in 1997.
- The case in question was filed by women's rights groups, including one called Vishaka, over the alleged gangrape of a social worker from Rajasthan named Bhanwari Devi. Bhanwari had fought against the marriage of a one-year-old baby girl in 1992, and had been allegedly gangraped as retribution.
- The Vishaka Guidelines defined sexual harassment and imposed three key obligations on institutions — prohibition, prevention, redress. The Supreme Court directed that they should establish a Complaints Committee, which would look into matters of sexual harassment of women at the workplace. The court made the guidelines legally binding.
- The PoSH Act subsequently mandated that every employer must constitute an Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) at each office or branch that had 10 or more employees. It defined various aspects of sexual harassment, and lay down procedures for action in case of a complaint.



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MERI LIFE APP

WHY IN NEWS?

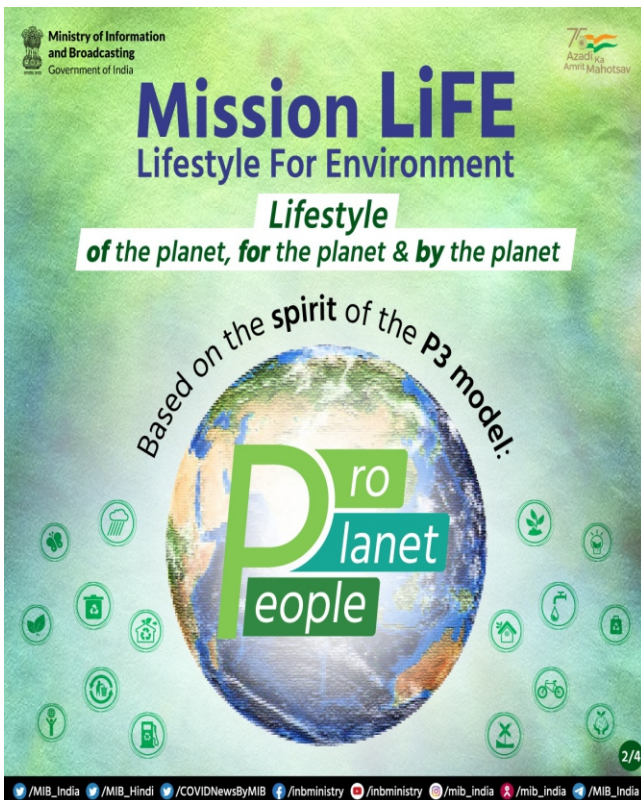
- The Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change has launched a mobile application called “Meri LiFE” (My Life) to mobilise youth for climate change ahead of World Environment Day on 5th June.

Key Points

- The Ministry has developed two dedicated portals for LiFE, in order to create a structured reporting format that can track the progress being made on LiFE.
 - The Mission LiFE Portal (missionlife-moefcc.nic.in) is open access and can be used to download the 100+ creatives, videos, and knowledge materials that have been developed by the ministry for LiFE.
 - The Meri LiFE Portal (merilife.org) has been developed for ministries and institutions to upload event reports and capture the progress of the mass mobilisation drive.
- The Meri LiFE app will help in creating a structured way to track the progress being made on Mission LiFE.
- Upon successful sign-up, users will be guided to participate in a series of LiFE related tasks under the following 5 themes, namely, Save Energy, Save Water, Reduce Single Use Plastic, Adopt Sustainable Food Systems and Adopt Healthy Lifestyle.
- Through a gamified experience, the app nudges people to take the 5 for 5 challenge- take Five LiFE Actions towards June 5th.

About LiFE Mission

- LiFE was introduced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi—at COP26 in Glasgow on 1 November 2021—as a mass movement for “mindful and deliberate utilisation, instead of mindless and destructive consumption” to protect and preserve the environment.
- It aims to nudge individuals and communities to practice a lifestyle that is synchronous with nature and does not harm it.
- Mission LiFE emboldens the spirit of the P3 model, i.e. Pro Planet People. It functions on the basic principles of 'Lifestyle of the planet, for the planet and by the planet'.
- Through the P3 community, the Mission seeks to create an ecosystem that will reinforce and enable environmentally friendly behaviours to be self-sustainable.



DID YOU KNOW?

- India is the first country to include LiFE in its Nationally Determined Contributions.
- Within India, at least 80 percent of all villages and urban local bodies are aimed to become environment-friendly by 2028.
- The theme for World Environment Day on 5 June 2023 will focus on solutions to plastic pollution under the campaign #BeatPlasticPollution.
- India was the global host of 2018 World Environment Day With “Beat Plastic Pollution” as the theme for the 2018 year's edition.

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MODEL PRISONS ACT, 2023

WHY IN NEWS?

- The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has prepared the 'Model Prisons Act 2023' that will replace a British-era law to overhaul the prison administration that will focus on the reformation and rehabilitation of inmates, it said on May 12.

Key Features

- It will replace the existing 130-year-old colonial law, the Prisons Act of 1894, in an attempt to shift the focus of incarceration from “retributive deterrence” to “reform and rehabilitation”.
- Intending to provide guidance and address gaps in the existing prison laws, the 2023 Act seeks to bring in the use of technology in prison management, make provisions for the grant of parole, furlough, and remission, and introduce special provisions for women and transgender inmates.
- The 2023 Act also seeks to bring about “transparency in prison management” and includes provisions for security assessment and segregation of prisoners; individual sentence planning; grievance-redressal; prison development board; use of technology in prison administration; and protecting society from criminal activities of hardened criminals and habitual offenders.
- Provisions for establishing high-security jails and open, semi-open jails have also been inserted.
- New measures for prisoners to video conference with courts have also been introduced. However, if a prisoner is using prohibited items like mobile phones in jail, they will be punished for it.
- Along with the Prisons Act, 1894, the Prisoners Act, 1900, and the Transfer of Prisoners Act, 1950 have also been reviewed by the MHA, and their relevant provisions have been assimilated into the Model Prisons Act, 2023.

DID YOU KNOW?

- As per the provisions of the Constitution, 'prisons' and 'persons detained therein' fall under the State List. This means that the responsibility of prison management and administration solely vests with the state government, which alone is competent to make appropriate legislative provisions in this regard.
- However, the MHA stated that owing to the critical role played by “efficient prison management” in the criminal justice system, the Centre finds it crucial to support the States and UTs in this regard.

Modi Government has prepared the new '**Model Prisons Act, 2023**' by changing **130-year-old prison laws**

Benefits of Model Prisons Act, 2023

- New act to have focus on **vocational training** and **skill development** of prisoners and their reintegration into the society.
- Provision for **legal aid** to prisoners, provision of **parole, furlough** and **premature release etc.** to incentivise good conduct.
- Provision of protecting society from criminal activities of **hardened criminals and habitual offenders** etc.




Benefits of Model Prisons Act, 2023:

- Provision for **video conferencing** with courts, scientific and technological interventions in prisons, etc.
- Provision of **punishment for prisoners and jail staff** for use of prohibited items like mobile phones etc. in jails.
- Provision regarding **establishment and management of high security jail, open jail (open and semi open), etc.**

Modi Government has prepared the new '**Model Prisons Act, 2023**' by changing **130-year-old prison laws**



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Prisons Ranking

Color guide

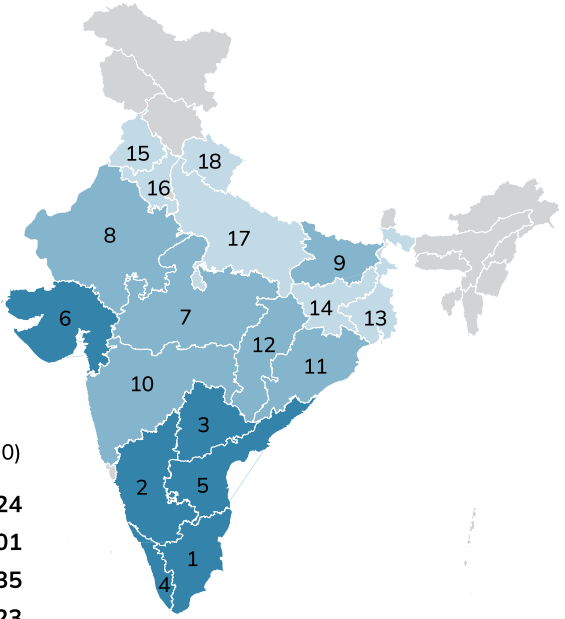
- Best
- Middle
- Worst

Clusters

- I. 18 large and mid-sized states (population above 10 million)
- II. 7 small-sized states (population up to 10 million)

Indicators
(in IJR 3)

29

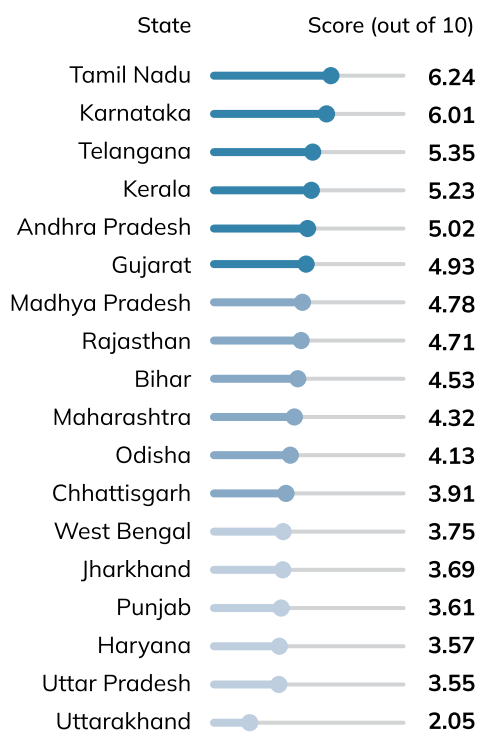


Map 11: Large and mid-sized states

Rank (out of 18)

NEW

IJR 1 2019	IJR 2 2020	IJR 3 2022
10	6	1
3	14	2
13	2	3
1	5	4
15	7	5
9	10	6
7	8	7
12	1	8
6	3	9
2	4	10
5	9	11
8	11	12
4	12	13
18	15	14
16	13	15
11	16	16
14	17	17
17	18	18

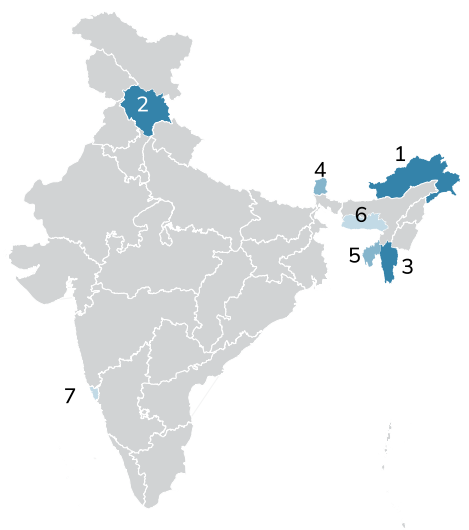
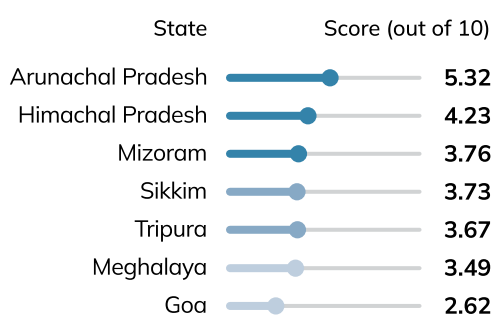


Map 12: Small states

Rank (out of 7)

NEW

IJR 1 2019	IJR 2 2020	IJR 3 2022
3	3	1
6	1	2
4	7	3
7	6	4
5	2	5
1	4	6
2	5	7



08

PUSHING EXPECTATIONS

Overcrowding

Number of states/UTs where prison occupancy was below 100%.

Total states*

Year	Number of states/UTs	Total states
IJR 1 (2019)	17	36
IJR 2 (2020)	15	36
IJR 3 (2022)	17	36

Women staff

Number of states/UTs where the share of women in prison staff was above 10%.

Year	Number of states/UTs	Total states
IJR 1 (2019)	17	34
IJR 2 (2020)	17	34
IJR 3 (2022)	19	35

Correctional staff

Number of states/UTs where the correctional staff vacancy was below 20%.

Year	Number of states/UTs	Total states
IJR 1 (2019)	5	23
IJR 2 (2020)	5	27
IJR 3 (2022)	8	25

Medical officer

Number of states/UTs where the medical officer vacancy was below 20%.

Year	Number of states/UTs	Total states
IJR 1 (2019)	13	32
IJR 2 (2020)	11	32
IJR 3 (2022)	12	33

Spending on inmates

Number of states/UTs that spent, on average, more than ₹30,000 a year—₹2,500 a month—per inmate on food, clothing, medical, vocational and welfare activities.

Year	Number of states/UTs	Total states
IJR 1 (2019)	19	35
IJR 2 (2020)	22	36
IJR 3 (2022)	24	36

* Number of states/UTs (out of 36) for which data was available.

Infrastructure

National prisons occupancy

130%

December 2021

118%

December 2020

Uttarakhand prisons have capacity for 3,741 inmates. As of December 2021, there were 6,921 inmates, or, 185% occupancy.

54%

Jails in India are overcrowded.

Video-conferencing in jails

Nationally, the share of jails with a video-conferencing facility has increased from 60% in December 2019 to 84% in December 2021.

Medical Officers

Uttarakhand, with 6,921 inmates across 11 jails, records only 1 doctor against 10 sanctioned posts.

11 states/UTs have not sanctioned any post for correctional staff

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GREENWASHING TECHSPRINT

WHY IN NEWS?

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will be among 13 international regulators taking part in the Global Financial Innovation Network's (GFIN) first-ever Greenwashing TechSprint.

Key Points

- The Reserve Bank of India invited applications from all India-based firms and innovators to participate in Global Financial Innovation Network (GFIN)'s first-ever Greenwashing TechSprint.
- The TechSprint will bring together 13 international regulators alongside firms and innovators to address GFIN's priority on environmental, social and governance (ESG) and sustainable finance.
- The TechSprint will launch on June 5 and will run for 3 months, ending with a showcase day in September 2023.
- The first-ever virtual greenwashing TechSprint will be hosted on the UK Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) Digital Sandbox, and its purpose is to bring together international regulators, firms, and innovators as a collective priority.
- The aim is to address a GFIN priority on Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) by developing a tool or solution that could help regulators or the market more effectively tackle or mitigate the risks of greenwashing in financial services.
- The number of investment products marketed as 'green' or making wider sustainability claims is growing. Exaggerated, misleading or unsubstantiated claims about Environmental Social and Governance (ESG) credentials damage confidence in these products.

DID YOU KNOW?

- The GFIN has an agreed definition of greenwashing: 'greenwashing is 'marketing that portrays an organisation's products, activities or policies as producing positive environmental or social outcomes, or avoiding environmental or social harm, when this is not the case.'
- The central bank believes that the growing number of investment products that make wider sustainability claims or market themselves as "green" requires a tool or solution to effectively tackle the risks of greenwashing in financial services.

About GFIN

- The Global Financial Innovation Network (GFIN) was formally launched in January 2019 by an international group of financial regulators and related organisations.
- The GFIN is a network of over 70 organisations committed to supporting financial innovation in the interests of consumers.
- It seeks to provide a more efficient way for innovative firms to interact with regulators, helping them navigate between countries as they look to scale new ideas.
- The GFIN is overseen by the Coordination Group.
- The Coordination Group is made up of GFIN Members and sets the overall direction, strategy and annual work programme of the GFIN.
- The Coordination Group is currently being chaired by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA).
- Membership in the Coordination Group lasts for two years, and members meet twice a year to provide ongoing input and engagement into the work-streams.

Members from India

- International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA)
- Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI)
- Pension Fund Regulatory & Development Authority
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI)

GFIN Greenwashing TechSprint

The DFSA, as part of the Global Financial Innovation Network, invites firms to participate in a Greenwashing TechSprint, hosted on the UK Financial Conduct Authority Digital Sandbox



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PRODUCTION LINKED INCENTIVE SCHEME – 2.0 FOR IT HARDWARE

WHY IN NEWS?

- The Union Cabinet approved the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme 2.0 for IT Hardware with a budgetary outlay Rs. 17,000 crore.

Key Features

- PLI Scheme 2.0 for IT hardware covers laptops, tablets, all-in-one PCs, servers and ultra-small form factor devices.
- The tenure of this scheme is 6 years.
- The scheme is expected to lead to incremental production of ₹3.35 lakh crore, incremental investment of ₹2,430 crore and create incremental direct employment for 75,000 people during the scheme period.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Electronics manufacturing in India has witnessed consistent growth with 17% compound annual growth rate (CAGR) in last 8 years. This year it crossed a major benchmark in production – 105 billion USD (about Rs 9 lakh crore).
- India has become the world's second-largest manufacturer of mobile phones, after China.
- Exports of mobile phones crossed a major milestone of 11 billion USD this year (about Rs 90 thousand crore).
- The global electronics manufacturing ecosystem is coming to India, and India is emerging as a major electronics manufacturing country.
- PLI Scheme, launched in April 2020 with a focus on mobile phone production, has given a massive boost to electronics manufacturing in the country.
- The Union Budget 2021-22 announced the PLI schemes for 14 key sectors. These are mobile manufacturing, manufacturing of medical devices, automobiles and auto components, pharmaceuticals, drugs, specialty steel, telecom & networking products, electronic products, white goods (ACs and LEDs), food products, textile products, solar PV modules, advanced chemistry cell (ACC) battery, and drones and drone components.

Cabinet Decisions
17 May 2023

PLI SCHEME 2.0 FOR IT HARDWARE

Union Cabinet Approves Production Linked Incentive Scheme 2.0 for IT Hardware

- Products covered: **Laptops, Tablets, All-in-One PCs, Servers and Ultra small form factor devices**
- Budgetary outlay: **Rs 17,000 Cr**
- Tenure: **6 Years**
- Expected incremental **production: Rs 3.35 Lakh Cr**
- Expected incremental **investment: Rs 2,430 crore**
- Expected incremental **direct employment: 75,000**

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25TH ANNIVERSARY OF POKHRAN-II

WHY IN NEWS?

- India celebrated the 25th anniversary of Pokhran-II, a series of nuclear tests.

Pokhran - II

- On May 11, 1998, Under the prime ministership of Atal Bihari Vajpayee, India conducted three nuclear bomb test explosions at the Indian Army's Pokhran Test Range. Two days later, on May 13, two more bombs were tested.
- The 1998 tests were the second instance of nuclear testing by India. It was code-named 'Operation Shakti'.
- A pivotal moment in India's nuclear journey came after it suffered a crushing defeat in the 1962 Sino-Indian War and China's subsequent nuclear bomb test at Lop Nor in 1964.

Pokhran - I

- India conducted its first nuclear tests on May 18, 1974, in Pokhran, Rajasthan, as part of the 'Smiling Buddha' operation.
- Under the prime ministership of Indira Gandhi, India became the sixth country in the world to conduct a nuclear test, and the first nation outside of the United Nations Security Council's permanent members to do so.
- There was near-universal condemnation of India's nuclear advancement, with Canada imposing significant sanctions on India. The Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), a multi-nation export control body, was formed in reaction to India's first nuke test.

DID YOU KNOW?

- India currently possesses approximately 160 nuclear warheads, according to the Federation of American Scientists (FAS).
- In 2003, India officially came out with its nuclear doctrine that clearly elaborated on the 'no first use' policy.
- In 2018, India achieved an operational nuclear triad capability, allowing for the launch of nuclear weapons from land, air, and sea.
- In 1999, the Prime Minister proposed to celebrate National Technology Day to honour those scientists, engineers, and technologists who contributed to the success of the Pokhran nuclear tests. Since then, the day has been celebrated annually on May 11.
- Physicist Homi J Bhabha lobbied to establish India's first research institution dedicated to studying nuclear physics, and in 1945, the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research came into existence in Bombay.
- Post-independence, Bhabha convinced Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru about the importance of nuclear energy and the need for India to allocate resources for its development. Thus, in 1954, the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) was founded, with Bhabha as director.

WHEN INDIA BECAME NUCLEAR

Three detonations happened on May 11 & two on May 13



Power of the three bombs

15kt
Atom bomb

45kt
Hydrogen bomb

0.2kt
The sub-kiloton device



Former President Abdul Kalam and R. Chidambaram were the chief coordinators of Pokhran-II



India became the **6th country** to join the nuclear club

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WITHDRAWN OF RS 2,000 NOTES BY RBI

WHY IN NEWS?

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has recently decided to withdraw Rs 2,000 denomination banknotes from circulation and asked everyone to exchange them by September 30, 2023.
- The Rs 2,000 notes, however, will continue to be legal tender.

Key Points

- According to the RBI, the Rs 2000 denomination banknote was introduced in November 2016 “primarily with the objective to meet the currency requirement of the economy in an expeditious manner after withdrawal of the legal tender status of all Rs 500 and Rs 1000 banknotes in circulation at that time.”
- With the fulfilment of that objective and the availability of banknotes in other denominations in adequate quantities, the printing of Rs 2000 banknotes was stopped in 2018-19.
- A majority of the Rs 2000 denomination notes were issued prior to March 2017 and are currently at the end of their estimated life-span of 4-5 years.
- The RBI has observed that this denomination is not commonly used for transactions. Further, the stock of banknotes in other denominations continues to be adequate to meet the currency requirement of the public.
- In view of the above, and in pursuance of the “Clean Note Policy” – a policy adopted by RBI to ensure the availability of good quality banknotes to the members of the public – the central bank decided to withdraw the Rs 2000 denomination banknotes from circulation.
- About 89% of the Rs 2000 denomination banknotes were issued prior to March 2017, and are at the end of their estimated 4-5-year lifespan.
- The total value of these banknotes in circulation has declined from Rs 6.73 lakh crore at its peak as on March 31, 2018 (37.3% of notes in circulation) to Rs 3.62 lakh crore, constituting only 10.8% of notes in circulation on March 31, 2023.
- The exchange limit for Rs 2000 banknotes is set at Rs 20,000 at a time.

DID YOU KNOW?

- The last time India demonetised currency was in November 2016 when the government withdrew 500 and 1000 rupees notes.
- The Government of India issues all coins upto ₹ 1,000, and 1 Rupee Note, while RBI issues currency notes other than 1 Rupee Note.

What is the Clean Note Policy?

- The Clean Note Policy seeks to give the public good-quality currency notes and coins with better security features, while soiled notes are withdrawn out of circulation.
- The RBI had earlier decided to withdraw from circulation all banknotes issued prior to 2005 as they have fewer security features as compared to banknotes printed after 2005.
- However, the notes issued before 2005 continue to be legal tender. They have only been withdrawn from circulation in conformity with the standard international practice of not having notes of multiple series in circulation at the same time.

The Indian EXPRESS

181 crore

Approx no. of
Rs 2000 notes
in circulation,
valued at
Rs 3.62 lakh
crore, that
will now be
withdrawn



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FORUM SHOPPING

WHY IN NEWS?

- Recently, the Chief Justice of India (CJI) DY Chandrachud condemned the 'Forum Shopping' practice.
- The remark came as the litigant mentioned his case before the CJI, seeking a hearing, although he had mentioned the same case a day before Justice KM Joseph.

What is Forum Shopping?

- When litigants or lawyers attempt to deliberately move their case to a particular judge or court where they think the judgment could be more favourable, they are said to be “forum shopping.”
- Lawyers think about which is the right forum to approach as part of their litigation strategy.
 - For example, one could directly approach the Supreme Court via a public interest litigation case instead of the concerned High Court because the issue could get more eyeballs.
- Even the US and UK courts have criticised the practice of forum shopping as something to be avoided or prohibited.
- However, most common law countries use the “forum non-conveniens” principle to prevent forum shopping, which gives the court discretionary powers to refuse to exercise its jurisdiction over a matter where another court, or forum, may more conveniently hear a case.
- Using this power, the court can dismiss a case in the interests of justice and the parties while allocating it to the appropriate bench.



Previous Cases Related to te Forum Shopping

- The Supreme Court, in its 1988 ruling in 'Chetak Construction Ltd. vs. Om Prakash' said, “A litigant cannot be permitted a choice of the forum,” and that every attempt at forum shopping “must be crushed with a heavy hand.”
- In the case of 'Vijay Kumar Ghai vs. State of W.B.', the SC termed forum shopping as a “disreputable practise by the courts” that “has no sanction and paramountcy in law”.
- In its 2017 ruling in 'Union of India & Ors. vs. Cipla Ltd.', the SC laid down a “functional test” to be adopted for forum shopping.
- On March 28, the Jammu, Kashmir, and Ladakh High Court in 'Dr. Khair-Un-Nisa and Ors vs. UT of Jammu and Kashmir and Ors' imposed costs worth one lakh rupees on the petitioners for indulging in forum shopping by filing multiple petitions before different wings of the court, albeit having the same cause of action.
- On April 26, 2022, the Jodhpur Bench of the Rajasthan High Court in the case of 'Dhanwantri Institute of Medical Science vs. The State of Rajasthan' upheld an order imposing costs worth 10 lakh rupees on a party for engaging in forum shopping.
- On July 27, 2017, the Delhi High Court in 'Rosmerta HSRP Ventures Pvt. Ltd. vs. Govt. of NCT of Delhi & Anr.' imposed costs on a private company that it found was indulging in forum hunting in an arbitration matter.

Bench Hunting

- “Bench hunting” refers to petitioners managing to get their cases heard by a particular judge or court to ensure a favourable order.
- Relying on the 2017 SC ruling in 'Kamini Jaiswal vs. Union of India', the court said that “unscrupulous elements” are always on the hunt to find a court or forum of their choice but are not permitted to do so by law.



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44TH ISO COPOLCO PLENARY

WHY IN NEWS?

- India hosted the 44th edition of the coveted annual ISO COPOLCO Plenary from 23-26 May 2023 in New Delhi.

Key Points

- Apart from other distinct activities targeting enhanced consumer engagement in the standardisation process, the mega event was organised by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS).
- The plenary aims to address challenges and good practices for consumer engagement, sustainable futures, and legal frameworks for consumer protection.
- With a people-centric approach and themes such as 'Challenges and Good Practices for Consumer Engagement', 'Empowering Consumers for a Sustainable Future' and 'Consumer Protection and Legal Frameworks' this year's plenary was particularly important for India and the international community.

About ISO

- The International Standards Organisation (ISO), an international body with 168 countries as members, develops standards for the world, impacting a diverse range of business and social sectors.
- Through their consumer committee on standards development (COPOLCO), ISO involves the wider public in the process of standardisation.
- Therefore, ISO COPOLCO is reckoned as the major international event that brings together representatives from ISO member countries to discuss and develop strategies for accelerating the development of standards for the world.

About ISO COPOLCO

- ISO COPOLCO, or the Committee on Consumer Policy, is a committee of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) responsible for promoting consumer interests in the standardisation process.
- It also ensures that standards are developed with the needs of consumers in mind.

DID YOU KNOW?

- BIS, a national standards body of India, is actively involved in matters of international and regional standardisation.
- BIS is a member of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and, through the Indian National Committee (INC), is a member of the International Electro-Technical Commission (IEC).
- BIS is also a member of regional standards bodies like the Pacific Area Standards Congress (PASC), and the South Asian Regional Standards Organization (SARSO) and is under the framework of IBSA (India, Brazil and South Africa).
- India is also one of the founding members of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO).



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THIRSTY AIS

WHY IN NEWS?

- Artificial Intelligence (AI) has shown great progress, but a recent study highlights the significant water consumption of AI models in data centres, making it an environmental concern.
- The study uncovers the environmental cost of training and deploying large AI models, emphasising the need for sustainable practices.

Key Highlights

- The water footprint of AI is the amount of water that is used to generate electricity and provide cooling for the data centers that run AI models.
- Large AI models like GPT-3 and GPT-4 have a hidden water footprint.
 - Training GPT-3 in Microsoft's US data centres can consume up to 700,000 liters of fresh water, equivalent to producing hundreds of cars. ChatGPT, for a simple conversation, “drinks” a 500ml bottle of water, considering its billions of users.
- Data centres, where AI models reside, are energy-intensive and water-thirsty.
 - Google's US data centres alone consumed 12.7 billion liters of freshwater for cooling in 2021. These centres rely on water-intensive cooling systems and require significant amounts of water for power generation.
- Data centres generate heat, necessitating cooling systems. Water-intensive evaporative cooling towers are often used, requiring pure freshwater to prevent corrosion and microbial growth. Water is also consumed for power generation in data centres.
- The study suggests training AI models during cooler hours to reduce water loss through evaporation. It calls for the industry to develop environmentally friendly AI models. Uncovering and addressing the water footprint of AI models is crucial, considering freshwater scarcity and ageing water infrastructure.
- As we explore the potential of AI and models like ChatGPT, it is vital to be mindful of their environmental impact. With freshwater scarcity and droughts increasing, sustainable practices are essential. Addressing the hidden water footprint of AI models is crucial for a sustainable future.

NUMBER CRUNCHING

500ml ChatGPT needs to “drink” up to 500ml of clean fresh water for a simple conversation of roughly 20-50 questions and answers



7L litres Microsoft's San Francisco data centre is estimated to have used 700,000 litres of clean water to train OpenAI's GPT-3 model. The training had an additional off-site water footprint of 2.8 million litres due to electricity usage



3.5mn litres

GPT-3 had a combined water footprint of 3.5 million litres in the US, which would have risen to 4.9 million litres, if trained in the Asia-Pacific



➤ The newly-launched GPT-4 is likely to have a significantly larger water footprint than GPT-3

2% Warehouse-scale data centres, where most AI models are trained and deployed, collectively account for 2% of the



global electricity usage

16bn litres

Google's self-owned data centres in the US consumed 16 billion litres of fresh water – 90% of it potable – for on-site cooling in 2021



84mn litres

Microsoft's giant data centre complex in North Holland consumed 84 million litres of water in 2021, at a time of severe water shortages



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SCO MEMBERS ADOPT INDIA'S PROPOSAL ON DPI

WHY IN NEWS?

- The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) members voted unanimously to adopt India's proposal for developing digital public infrastructure (DPI) as the right way for deploying digital technology.

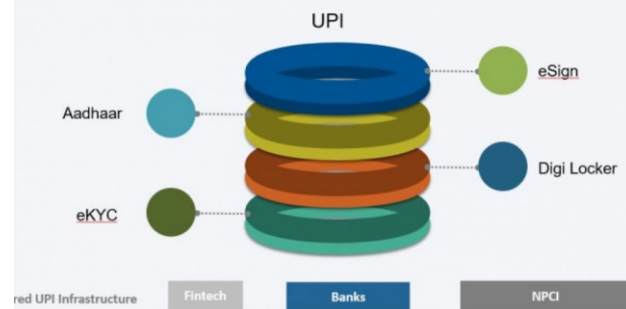
Key Points

- The SCO also agreed to look at the possibility of setting up an organisation which will decide common standards for the interoperability of digital systems being developed by each country.
- The proposal includes platforms such as Aadhaar, United Payments Interface (UPI), and DigiLocker which are based on open and interoperable application programming interfaces (APIs) and enable digital inclusion, innovation, and social empowerment. These platforms aim to provide a robust and secure digital infrastructure for various services.
- India's DPI proposal also entails collaborating with the SCO members on various aspects of digital public infrastructure such as design, development, implementation, evaluation, and governance.
- India's DPI has received raving reviews from several international organisations, including the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which said that the country was able to quickly provide support to an impressive share of poor households during the COVID-19 pandemic due to its resilient DPI.

Digital Public Infrastructure

- DPI or digital public infrastructure are blocks or platforms built either by private or government agencies with government support. These platforms are meant to deliver essential services in the digital space.
- India, through India Stack, became the first country to develop all three foundational DPIs, Digital identity (Aadhaar), Real-time fast payment (UPI) and Account Aggregator built on the Data Empowerment Protection Architecture (DEPA).

India's Strong Digital Infrastructure



DID YOU KNOW?

- The SCO is an eight-nation organisation which counts China, India, Russia, Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan as its members.
- India and Pakistan became members in 2017.
- Saudi Arabia has approved a memorandum on granting the kingdom the status of a dialogue partner in the SCO.
- Iran will be the newest member of the largest regional organisation- the SCO when it joins the forum in 2023 under the chairmanship of India.
- Approximately 74 billion UPI transactions worth ₹125.94 lakh crore were conducted in 2022, National Payments Cooperation of India data show.
- Using CoWin, India's Covid-19 vaccination app, 2.2 billion doses have been administered so far.



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GLOBAL REPORT ON INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT 2023 (GRID-2023)

WHY IN NEWS?

- The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre has recently released its flagship annual report titled The Global Report on Internal Displacement 2023 (GRID-2023).

Key Findings

- The report said 32.6 million people were displaced due to disasters, and the number of people displaced by disasters rose by 40 per cent from 2022 to 2021.
- Of the total disaster displacement, 98 per cent were triggered by weather-related events like floods and storms.
- India recorded the fourth largest disaster displacement, with 2.5 million displacements. Pakistan had the highest number of disaster displacements in the world in 2022, at 8.16 million.
- The Philippines was at second rank and reported 5.44 million displacements; China at third rank with 3.63 million; and Nigeria at fifth rank with 2.4 million.
- The report attributes the increase in disasters, particularly weather-related, to the three-year-long La Niña. La Niña is the cooler than the normal phase of the El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) phenomenon in the central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean.
- The “triple-dip” La Niña caused widespread disasters across the world. Disasters displaced 8.7 million people internally in 88 countries and territories as of December 31, 2022. This led to record levels of flood displacement in countries including Pakistan, Nigeria and Brazil.
- In recent years, disasters have displaced more people than historically dominant reasons for conflicts and violence. This makes climate change — that leads to frequent weather-related disasters — the key driver of massive internal migration of people, who we popularly call “climate refugees”.
- In 2022, the number of people displaced by the Russia-Ukraine war increased. According to GRID-2023, the conflict caused a displacement of 16.9 million — “the highest figure ever recorded for any country.” The number of displacements associated with conflict and violence nearly doubled to 28.3 million.

DID YOU KNOW?

- According to the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, internally displaced persons (also known as "IDPs") are "persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized border."
- Unlike refugees, these internally displaced persons do not have a special status in international law with rights specific to their situation. The term "internally displaced person" is merely descriptive.
- The term 'refugee' is defined as per the 1951 Refugee Convention, a “refugee” is a person who has been persecuted and forced to leave his native country. A precondition of being considered a refugee is that a person crosses an international border.



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Internal displacements in 2022 Disasters

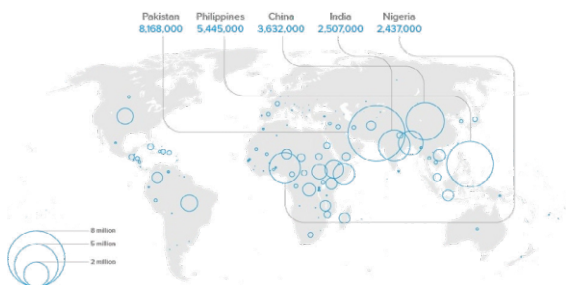
32.6m

53%
Share of internal displacements triggered by disasters

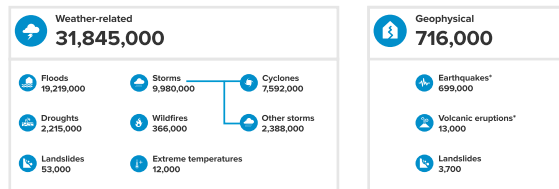
What are internal displacements?

The internal displacements figure refers to the number of forced movements of people within the borders of their country recorded during the year (see p. 135 for further information)

Five countries reporting the highest figures



Breakdown by hazard



6 out of 10 disaster displacements were triggered by floods, surpassing storms for the first time since 2016

98% of disaster displacements were triggered by weather-related hazards such as floods, storms and droughts

*May also include tsunamis. Due to rounding, some totals may not correspond with the sum of the separate figures.

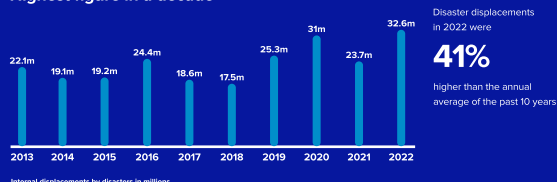
Key displacement situations

25% of global disaster displacements were triggered by monsoon flooding in Pakistan

1.1 million movements were recorded in Somalia as the country experienced its worst drought in 40 years

2% of Tonga's population was forced to relocate after an extremely rare volcanic eruption

Highest figure in a decade



Internal displacements in 2022 Conflict and violence

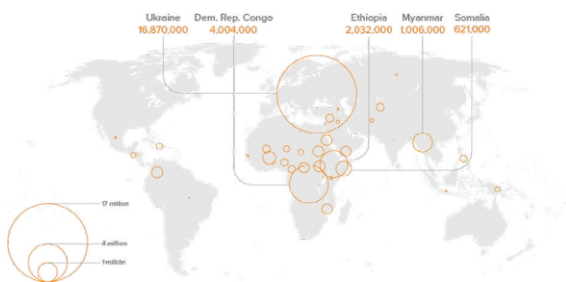
28.3m

47%
Share of internal displacements triggered by conflict and violence

What are internal displacements?

The internal displacements figure refers to the number of forced movements of people within the borders of their country recorded during the year (see p. 135 for further information)

Five countries reporting the highest figures



Breakdown by type of violence¹



6 out of 10 displacements were triggered by international armed conflicts

75% Increase in the number of displacements triggered by non-international armed conflicts in the last three years, largely the result of escalating violence in DRC, Ethiopia and Somalia

Due to rounding, some totals may not correspond with the sum of the separate figures.

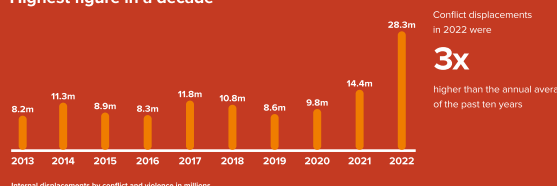
Key displacement situations

60% of global conflict displacements were recorded in Ukraine as people repeatedly fled from rapidly shifting frontlines

4 million conflict displacements took place in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 15 times more than in 2021

106,000 internal displacements in Haiti, a five-fold increase compared to 2021 and the highest figure ever recorded for the country

Highest figure in a decade



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RASHT-ASTARA RAILWAY

WHY IN NEWS?

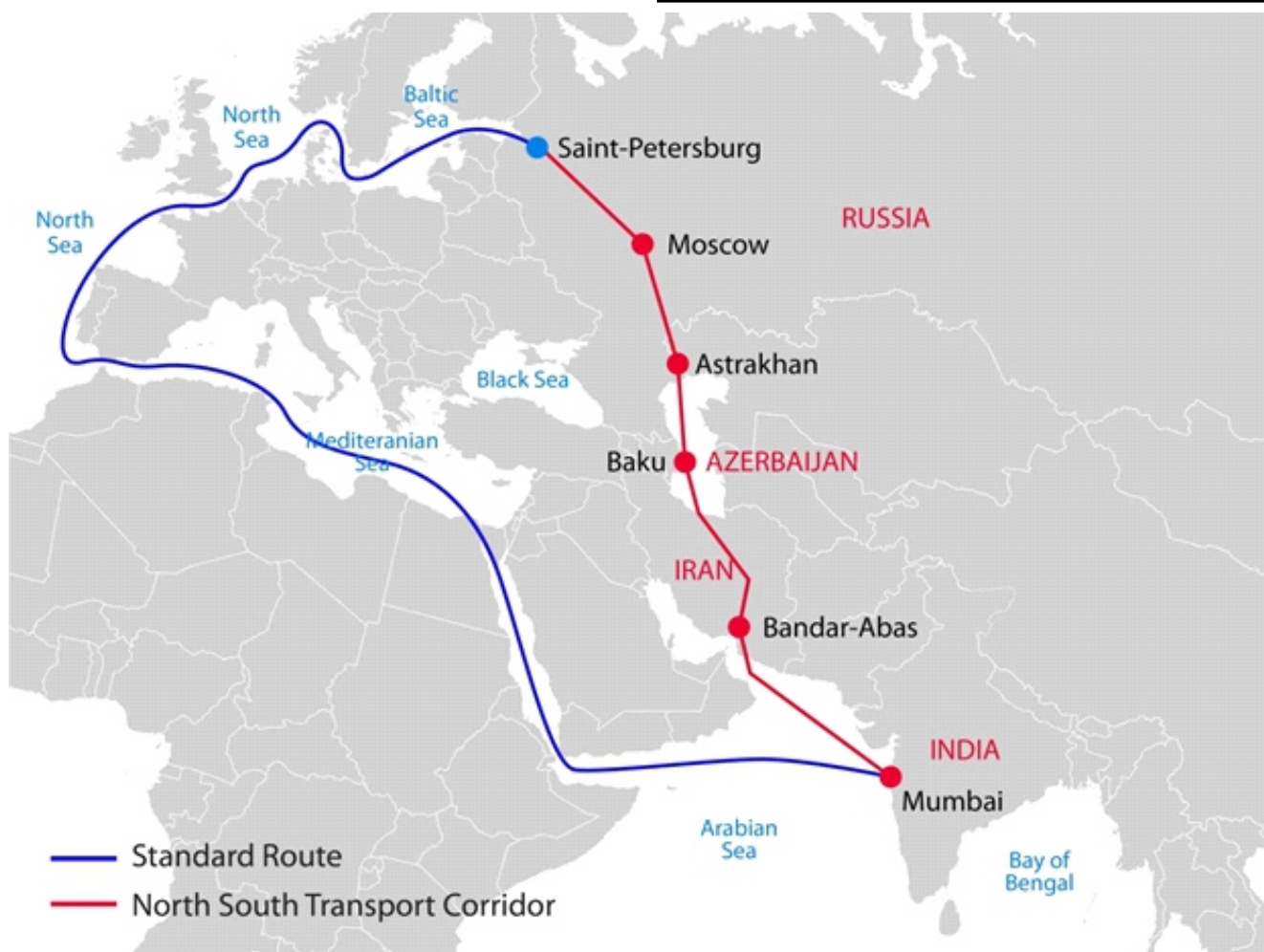
- Russian President Vladimir Putin and his Iranian counterpart Ebrahim Raisi signed a deal to finance and build an Iranian railway line, the Rasht-Astara railway, as part of an embryonic International North–South Transport Corridor (INSTC).

Key Points

- The Rasht-Astara railway is seen as an important link in the corridor, intended to connect India, Iran, Russia, Azerbaijan and other countries via railways and sea — a route Russia says can rival the Suez Canal as a major global trade route.
- It is a 162-kilometer railway that will connect the city of Rasht (Iran) near the Caspian Sea, to Astara (Azerbaijan) on the border with Azerbaijan. The new connection will shave four days off that traveling time frame.
- The 162 km railway along the Caspian Sea coast would help to connect Russian ports on the Baltic Sea with Iranian ports in the Indian Ocean and the Gulf.

About INSTC

- INSTC is a multi-modal transportation established in 2000 in St. Petersburg by Iran, Russia and India for the purpose of promoting transportation cooperation among the Member States.
- This corridor connects the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf to the Caspian Sea via Iran, then is connected to St. Petersburg and North European via Russian Federation.
- The INSTC was expanded to include eleven new members. These are Azerbaijan, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkey, Ukraine, Belarus, Oman, Syria, and Bulgaria (Observer).



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G7 SUMMIT

WHY IN NEWS?

- In 2023, as the G7 Presidency, Japan hosted the G7 Hiroshima Summit.
- It has significant implications that the leaders of the G7 gather for discussions in Hiroshima, a city which has recovered from the catastrophic damage by an atomic bomb and which continues to seek lasting world peace.

Key Points

- The G7 concluded its annual summit with the release of the G7 Hiroshima Leaders' Communiqué on May 21, 2023.
- The leaders' communiqué featured commitments and statements on a range of topics including climate, health, food security, and technology. However, the war in Ukraine, nuclear nonproliferation, and economic security were the most prominent.
 - At the summit, G7 leaders committed to implementing new sanctions on key sectors in Russia, providing Ukraine with budget support through early 2024, and reducing reliance on Russian energy.
- Nuclear disarmament and nuclear nonproliferation also featured prominently at the summit.
- On the topic of economic security, G7 leaders focused on building supply chain resilience, countering economic coercion, and protecting critical technologies.
 - In response to China's coercive economic practices (the subject of a recent CSIS report) the G7 Leaders' Statement on Economic Resilience and Economic Security called for the creation of a new Coordination Platform on Economic Coercion to promote cooperation within and beyond the G7 in responding to economic coercion.
- On food security, the leaders highlighted the importance of the Black Sea Grain Initiative and called on all participants to fulfill their commitments.
- On health, the leaders agreed to coordinate on pandemic preparedness, as well as vaccine manufacturing and distribution.

G7's Climate Wishlist

- The G7 stressed on the need for a global peak in emissions by 2025. The G7 claimed that their emissions had already "peaked", and asked all "major economies" to ensure that their individual emissions do not continue to rise beyond 2025.
- The 2025 peak year is not mandated under the Paris Agreement or any other international decision.
- The G7 reiterated its commitment to turn net-zero by 2050.
- China has said it would turn net-zero only in 2060, while India has set 2070 as the target. Some other countries, including big emitters like Russia and Saudi Arabia, have 2060 as their net-zero targets.
- The G7 countries put no deadline to ending the use of fossil fuels, only saying that they were committed to accelerating the phase-out of "unabated fossil fuels" in line with 1.5 degree Celsius trajectories.

DID YOU KNOW?

- India was invited to attend the G7 conference, and Prime Minister Narendra Modi participated at the Summit in Hiroshima.
- The visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi was the first visit to the Japanese city by an Indian Prime Minister since India conducted nuclear tests in Pokhran in 1974.
- Prime Minister also unveiled a bust of Mahatma Gandhi in Hiroshima. The location of the bust of Gandhi has been chosen as a mark of solidarity for peace and non-violence.
- The US conducted the world's first nuclear attack on Hiroshima on August 6, 1945, destroying the city and killing some 140,000 people.
- G7 members - the US, the UK, Germany, Italy, Japan, France and Canada.



Canada



France



Germany



Italy



Japan



United Kingdom



United States

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THIRD FIPIC SUMMIT 2023

WHY IN NEWS?

- The third Forum for India–Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC) Summit was held in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea on May 22, 2023.

Key Points

- The Prime Minister co-chaired the third Summit of the Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC III Summit) with his Papua New Guinea counterpart James Marape.
- At the Summit, the Prime Minister of India unveiled for the region a 12-point development programme in areas of healthcare, cyberspace, clean energy, water and small and medium enterprises.
 - The 12-point development plan included establishing a super-specialty cardiology hospital in Fiji, assistance in setting up of dialysis units in all 14 Pacific island countries, rolling out sea ambulances, capacity building programmes for SME (small and medium enterprises) sector and opening Yoga centres.
- Prime Minister Modi also announced bringing Jan Aushadhi Centers to the island nations for ensuring medicines at affordable prices.
- To address the water scarcity issue, he pledged to provide desalination units for the people of every Pacific Island country.
- Along with India, other Quad nations (Australia, the US and Japan) have announced plans to implement Open Radio Access Networks (RAN) beginning with Palau in the Pacific Region.
- The Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea urged India to be an advocate for the PICs in the G-7 and the G-20 summits.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi along with his Papua New Guinea counterpart James Marape on May 22 released the Tamil classic 'Thirukkural' in the Tok Pisin language to bring the Indian thought and culture closer to the people of this southwestern Pacific nation.
 - Tok Pisin is the official language of Papua New Guinea.
 - Thirukkural, a collection of couplets on ethics, political and economic matters, and love, is written by Poet Thiruvalluvar.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit was his first visit to the country, the first by any Indian prime minister, for the Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC) Summit 2023.
- The Indian Prime Minister was honoured with the Grand Companion of the Order of Logohu (GCL) - the highest civilian award of Papua New Guinea.
- The Forum for India–Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC) was launched during PM Modi's visit to Fiji in November 2014.
- The previous two meetings of the India-Pacific Islands Cooperation were held in November 2014 in Fiji and August 2015 in Jaipur.
- FIPIC includes 14 island countries – Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu – that are located in the Pacific Ocean, to the northeast of Australia.



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25 YEARS OF KUDUMBASHREE

WHY IN NEWS?

- President Droupadi Murmu inaugurated the silver jubilee celebrations of Kudumbashree, the largest self-help group network in the country.
- The president had also released a handbook titled chuvadu (footsteps) that codified ideas for the movement's future and the achievements it has gained so far.

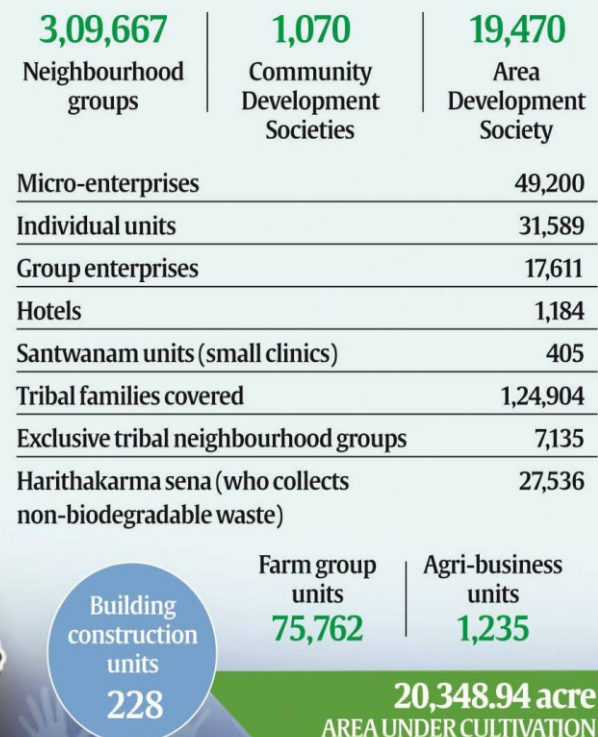
What is Kudumbashree?

- The word "Kudumbashree" means 'prosperity of the family' in the Malayalam language.
- Kudumbashree, the largest Self-Help Group (SHG) network in the country, was established in 1997 in Kerala to eradicate poverty and empower women.
- From the beginning, it has been functioning under the local self-government department by accepting financial support from the union government and NABARD (National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development).
- At the primary level, Kudumbashree is the collective of Neighbourhood Groups (NHG). Area Development Societies (ADS) at the ward level and Community Development Societies (CDS) at the local government level.
- The organisation currently has 306,551 NHGs, 19,470 ADSs and 1070 CDSs.
- Kudumbashree is currently undertaking consultancy work on women empowerment in 13 other states.
- Now, Kudumbashree is Kerala's biggest social capital. Its members have risen to become elected members of the three-tier local bodies after enforcing the 33 per cent women reservation (in Kerala local bodies, the percentage of reservations is 50).

Initiatives for Women Empowerment

- Ujjawala Scheme
- Swadhar Greh Scheme
- Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY)
- Pradhan Mantri Mahila Shakti Kendra Scheme
- Mahila e-haat
- Mahila Bank
- Mahila Coir Yojana
- Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP)
- Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women (STEP) Scheme
- POSHAN Abhiyaan
- Anganwadi Services Scheme
- Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) Scheme
- One Stop Centre (OSC)
- Universalisation of Women Helpline
- Child Protection Services Scheme
- Scheme for Adolescent Girls (SAG)
- Working Women Hostel

25 YEARS OF KUDUMBASHREE



Source: www.kudumbashree.org

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TALLER NOSE IN HUMANS INHERITED FROM NEANDERTHALS: STUDY

WHY IN NEWS?

- New research has found that a particular gene in humans leading to a taller nose from top to bottom was inherited from Neanderthals.

Key Findings

- The shape of the nose could have evolutionary implications in the better survival of humans, possibly helping them adapt to climates prevalent in the time of our ancestors.
- There is also speculation that changes in the shape and the size of the nose could have affected the landmark's ability to maintain certain temperatures and humidity within.
- Prehistoric humans and Neanderthals are believed to have interbred, exchanging genetic material and contributing to the genomes of present-day humans, thus shaping human destiny to this day. This is also known as the introgression of genomic sequences.
- Researchers have estimated that this interbreeding occurred approximately 70,000-100,000 years ago, leaving a lasting genetic legacy in the human population.
- Having been passed down for thousands of generations, the researchers said in the study, they found that some DNA inherited from Neanderthals influenced the shape of our faces and that it could have been helpful to our ancestors.
- In the last 15 years, since the Neanderthal genome has been sequenced, scientists have learnt that our ancestors apparently interbred with Neanderthals, leaving us with little bits of their DNA.
- The study used data from more than 6,000 volunteers across Latin America, of mixed European, Native American and African ancestry, who are part of the UCL-led CANDELA study, which recruited from Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Mexico and Peru.
- The researchers newly identified 33 genome regions associated with face shape, 26 of which they were able to replicate in comparisons with data from other ethnicities using participants in east Asia, Europe, or Africa.
- The present study also adds to a growing and significant body of evidence on diseases and traits in modern humans that have been influenced by genomic loci from the Neanderthals and the Denisovans.
- A mass of emerging evidence suggests that the Neanderthal genomes could also have contributed to the way we respond to pathogens as well as defined our risk of developing a number of skin and blood conditions and some cancers (like liver cancer), and even depression.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Neanderthals lived in Eurasia from approximately 400,000 to 40,000 years ago. They were a species of archaic humans closely related to modern humans, sharing a common ancestor.
- Species such as Homo Longi have only been identified as recently as 2018. There are now 21 known species of human.
- Stages of Human Evolution
 - Dryopithecus
 - Ramapithecus
 - Australopithecus
 - Homo Erectus
 - Homo Sapiens Neanderthalensis
 - Homo Sapiens Sapiens



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INTERNATIONAL MUSEUM EXPO 2023

WHY IN NEWS?

- Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the International Museum Expo 2023 in New Delhi.

Key Points

- The Prime Minister also unveiled the Mascot of the International Museum Expo, the Graphic Novel – A Day at the Museum, the Directory of Indian Museums, the Pocket Map of Kartavya Path, and Museum Cards.
- The Prime Minister unveiled the Expo's mascot – a “contemporised” version of the famous Dancing Girl of Mohenjodaro made of wood in the Chennapatnam art style.
- The mascot is regarded as contemporary dwarfals extending an invitation to the expo.
- The Graphic Novel portrays a group of children visiting the National Museum where they learn about the different career opportunities that are available at the museum.
- The Directory of India Museums is a comprehensive survey of Indian museums.
- The Pocket Map of the Kartavya Path highlights the various Cultural Spaces and institutions and it also traces the history of the iconic pathways.
- Museums Cards are a set of 75 cards with illustrated facades of iconic museums across the country, and is an innovative way to introduce museums to people of all ages and each card holds brief information about Museums.
- The theme of 'Sustainability and Well-being' aligns with the present-day global priorities, recognising the significant role museums play in raising awareness and promoting sustainable practices.
- The Prime Minister also inaugurated a virtual walkthrough of the upcoming National Museum at the North and South Blocks, the 'Yuge Yugeen Bharat National Museum'.
- The government had announced plans to convert the North and South Blocks into museums in 2021.

DID YOU KNOW?

- The International Museum Expo was organized as part of Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav to celebrate the 47th International Museum Day (May 18). The IMD theme for this year is 'Museums, Sustainability and Well Being'.
- The North and South blocks are buildings in the Central Secretariat complex built during the 1930s. While the South Block houses the Prime Minister's Office, the External Affairs Ministry and the Defence Ministry, the North Block is home to the ministries of Finance and Home.
- The foundation of the current National Museum had been laid by late first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru in 1955.
- The Dancing Girl was discovered in one such excavation in 1926, by British archaeologist Ernest McKay in a ruined house in the 'ninth lane' of the 'HR area' of Mohenjodaro's citadel.
- The original Mohenjodaro Dancing Girl, all of 10.5 cm tall, has style. She has bangles all down one arm, an elaborate hairdo, and a statement necklace.



INTERNATIONAL MUSEUM EXPO 2023

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HISTORIC 'SENGOL' INSTALLED IN NEW PARLIAMENT BUILDING BY PM MODI

WHY IN NEWS?

- On May 28, 2023, Prime Minister Narendra Modi installed a historic sceptre 'Sengol' next to the Lok Sabha Speaker's seat in the newly constructed Parliament building.

Key Points

- Ahead of its installation in the new Parliament building, the 'Sengol' was handed over to PM Modi by nearly 30 pontiffs from different Adheenams in Tamil Nadu.
- Until now, the sceptre was housed at a museum in Uttar Pradesh's Prayagraj.
- The one accorded the 'sengol' is expected to impart a just and impartial rule.

What is Sengol?

- Known as Sengol — derived from the Tamil word 'semmai', meaning righteousness.
- The sceptre is a historical symbol of Independence as it signifies the transfer of power from the British to the Indians.
- It was built by Vummidi Ethirajulu and Vummidi Sudhakar, both of whom are still alive and remember making it.
- The sceptre is five feet in length and has a Nandi, Lord Shiva's sacred bull, on the top, symbolising justice.

Background

- Before Independence, Lord Mountbatten, the last Viceroy, asked Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru if there was a ceremony that should be followed to symbolise the transfer of power.
- PM Nehru then consulted C. Rajagopalachari, commonly known as Rajaji, the last Governor-General of India.
- Rajaji suggested that the Chola model of handing over the Sengol sceptre could be adopted as a suitable ceremony for India's independence.
- The Sengol sceptre was presented to PM Nehru by Thiruvavaduthurai Adheenam (a 500-year-old Saivaite monastery) on August 14, 1947.



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SUPREME COURT UPHOLDS TAMIL NADU LAW ALLOWING JALLIKATTU

WHY IN NEWS?

- Recently, a five-judge Bench of the Supreme Court (SC) upheld the amendments made by the legislatures of Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, and Karnataka to The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (PCA) Act, 1960, allowing bull-taming sports like jallikattu, kambala, and bullock-cart races.
- The five-judge Bench overruled the view taken by a two-judge Bench of the Court in its 2014 ruling in Animal Welfare Board of India v. A. Nagaraja, banning such sports— including Jallikattu.

Key Points of the Judgement

- In its judgement, the Supreme Court held that the amendments (Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Tamil Nadu Amendment) Act of 2017 are valid legislations and did not violate the Constitution. It also said that the amendments are in time with Entry 17 of List III of the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution, which relates to preventing animal cruelty.
- Adding that the 2017 amendment “minimises cruelty to animals in the concerned sports”, the court held that once it's implemented and read with the rules, the sports will not come under the definition of cruelty defined in the 1960 Act.
- The Supreme Court banned Jallikattu through a judgment in May 2014 in the Animal Welfare Board of India vs A. Nagaraja case on the grounds of cruelty to animals.
- The court ruled that whether the amended laws seek to preserve the cultural heritage of the States is “debatable” and must be left to the wisdom of the legislature. However, it emphasised that it does not accept the view laid down in A. Nagaraja, that Jallikattu is not a part of the cultural heritage of State of Tamil Nadu since there was insufficient material to draw that conclusion.
- The court also said that the 2017 amendment does not violate Articles 51-A (g) and 51-A (h), which impose duties on Indian citizens to protect the environment and develop a scientific temper, humanism, spirit of inquiry, and reform, respectively.
- Further, it also held that the amendment didn't violate Articles 14 (Right to Equality) and 21 (Right to Life) of the Constitution.

About Jallikattu

- Jallikattu, also known as 'Eruthazhuvuthal', is a bull-taming sport traditionally played in Tamil Nadu.
- Jallikattu refers to silver or gold coins tied on bulls' horns. In this, a bull is released into a field; whoever is able to take control of the bull by grabbing the large hump on its back wins the sport.
- It is typically a part of celebrations in Tamil Nadu on Mattu Pongal day, the third day of the four-day Pongal festival.
- The festival is a celebration of nature, and thanksgiving for a bountiful harvest, of which cattle-worship is part.
- However, the practice of jallikattu has long been contested, with animal rights groups and the courts expressing concern over cruelty to animals and the bloody and dangerous nature of the sport that sometimes causes death and injuries to both the bulls and human participants.
- According to an investigation by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), between January and June 2017, 15 people and five bulls died and nearly 2,000 spectators were injured due to the sport.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Kambala is an annual festival in the farming belts of Karnataka during the winter when contestants sprint along waterlogged, muddy fields holding a rope attached to two buffaloes. The events are organized between November and March every year.
- Bullock cart racing starts from November and lasts till May. It is a cultural activity and popular amongst farming community in Maharashtra.
- Camel race is a part of many fairs and festivals in Rajasthan such as Pushkar Fair, Bikaner Camel Festival, etc.
- Every Makar Sankranti, which coincides with Assam's harvest festival Bhogali Bihu, bulbul fights are organised in the Hayagriva-Madhava temple in Hajo, about 30 km from Guwahati.

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**CONTEMPORARY EVENTS OF SIGNIFICANCE
FROM INDIA AND THE WORLD**

QUICK FACTS



1. In the controversial Kashi Vishwanath temple and Gyanvapi mosque case, the Allahabad High Court allowed the Archeological Survey of India (ASI) to conduct carbon dating of what Hindu religious groups have claimed is a 'Shivling' inside the Gyanvapi mosque. Carbon dating is a method of calculating the age of very old objects by measuring the amounts of different forms of carbon in them. The Hindu petitioners have claimed the object inside the Gyanvapi mosque to be a "Shivling". The claim was disputed by the Muslim side, which said the object was part of a "fountain".
2. A gharial (*Gavialis gangeticus*), native to the Indian subcontinent, has been seen in Pakistan's Punjab province for the first time after three decades and could have been from a population reintroduced on this side of the Radcliffe Line in 2017. It was thought to be extinct. A possibility is it came from India during floods last year, according to locals and stayed there in the Satluj river. They said there are almost 10 individuals, but the location has not still (been) confirmed. India has reintroduced the gharial in the Harike wetland which is 50 km from the border. The Harike wetland is where the Beas and the Satluj, two of the three eastern rivers of the Indus river system and whose waters are allotted to India according to the 1960 Indus Waters Treaty, meet.
3. The 1986-batch Karnataka cadre Indian Police Service (IPS) officer Praveen Sood has been appointed the head of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), as per a government order released recently. The panel that selects the CBI chief consists of the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition and the Chief Justice of India. The process of appointment was established by the Supreme Court's Vineet Narain judgement (1997), and the changes made to The Delhi Special Police Establishment (DSPE) Act, 1946 by The Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013.
4. Moving closer to being able to develop the country's first vaccine against dengue, drug-makers Serum Institute of India and Panacea Biotec have applied to the Indian Council of Medical Research's (ICMR) call for 'Expression of Interest' for collaborative Phase-III clinical trials for indigenous manufacturers. The phase-III clinical trial is being done for evaluation of efficacy, along with safety and immunogenicity of tetravalent dengue vaccine candidate developed by Indian manufacturers. According to ICMR, dengue virus disease causes significant morbidity and mortality across the globe; in India, 2 to 2.5 lakh cases are reported annually.
5. Sikkim celebrated its 48th Statehood Day on May 16, 2023. On May 16, 1975, Sikkim became the 22nd state of India. The formation of the state of Sikkim came about through the 36th Amendment of the Indian Constitution. Sikkim is bordered by the Tibet Autonomous Region of China to the north and northeast, by Bhutan to the southeast, by the Indian state of West Bengal to the south, and by Nepal to the west. Mount Kanchenjunga, India's highest peak and the world's third-highest mountain lies in Sikkim.
6. The National Workshop on "Capacity building of training institutes and HRD in the disability field in the context of National Education Policy: 2020" was inaugurated on 16th May 2023 in Jabalpur. The workshop, organised by the Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI), aimed to empower individuals with disabilities and implement the goals of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.
7. Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX), the flagship initiative of the Ministry of Defence (MoD), has reached a milestone with the signing of the 250th contract, the first one under the Mission DefSpace, and the 100th SPRINT (Navy) contract. Mission DefSpace, with 75 'Defence Space Challenges' to be addressed by the private sector, was launched during DefExpo at Gandhinagar in October 2022. The first iDEX contract of Mission DefSpace was awarded to Inspecity. Inspecity is developing a gas-based (compact micro propulsion system) system. This technology, once developed, can be integrated with other satellites, including the cubesat swarm being developed under Mission DefSpace. The 100th SPRINT (Navy) contract was exchanged with Siliconia Technologies Private Limited. It envisaged the development of a prototype that is "a lightweight ASIC (Application-Specific Integrated Circuit) based communication system using software-defined antenna for Low Earth Orbit, Medium Earth Orbit and Geostationary satellite communication. Under the SPRINT initiative, a total of 75 challenge statements for the Indian industry were unveiled in July 2022, and the initiative aims at inducting at least 75 technologies and products into the Navy by August 2023.
8. The 2023 edition of the South Asian Football Federation (SAFF) Championship, South Asia's marquee international tournament, will be held in Bengaluru from June 21 to July 3. India will be hosting the tournament for the fourth time and first since the 2015 edition when it was held in Thiruvananthapuram.
9. The Maharashtra government has constituted a special investigation team (SIT) to probe a recent incident in which a group of people from the minority community allegedly





attempted to 'forcibly' enter the Trimbakeshwar temple in Nashik. Trimbakeshwar Shiva Temple is an ancient and historic Hindu temple in Trimbak village (Located in the Nasik district of Maharashtra) dedicated to Lord Trimbakeshwar (Supreme deity Lord Shiva). It is 28 Km far from the City of Nashik. Trimbakeshwar Temple is an ancient temple of Lord Shiva and is identified as one of the divine 12 Jyotirlinga. The holy river Godavari originates near Trimbak.

10. The Union Health Ministry of India has unveiled a groundbreaking initiative, the "75/25" program, on the occasion of World Hypertension Day (WHD) on 17th May 2023. This ambitious undertaking aims to screen and provide standard care to a staggering 75 million individuals with hypertension and diabetes by the year 2025. The theme for World Hypertension Day 2023 is "Measure Your Blood Pressure, Control It, Live Longer."
11. The Central Bureau of Investigation on May 17 searched 12 locations in Delhi and Rajasthan in connection with a case alleging corruption in the award of ₹2,200 crore civil works related to the Kiru hydro-electric power project in Jammu and Kashmir. The Kiru Hydro Electric Project is proposed on River Chenab, located in Kishtwar district of J&K. The project is envisaged as a Run of River Scheme.
12. Recently, a Project Collaboration Agreement was signed between the Department of Health Research (DHR) and the World Health Organization (WHO) to promote access to high-quality, affordable assistive technology mainly through fostering research, innovation, and capacity building. This collaboration aims to work towards drawing global attention toward access to assistive technology, fostering research and innovation and developing and disseminating appropriate training programmes.
13. Cracks in buildings and 'sinking' land in Joshimath, a hill town in Uttarakhand, made the headlines earlier this year. A similar phenomenon has been playing out for years in the plains of Punjab, Haryana, Delhi and Faridabad. The unlikely culprit is excessive groundwater extraction. Agricultural practices in northwest India are heavily dependent on groundwater withdrawal. With limited monsoon rain, the groundwater table is precariously low, show data gathered for years by the Central Ground Water Board (CGWB).
14. Inflation rate based on Wholesale Price Index (WPI) fell to a near three-year low of (-) 0.92 per cent in April, slipping into negative territory for the first time in 33 months, according to data released by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. A high base effect, along with moderation in global commodity prices, reflected in the easing of food, fuel and other input costs.
15. The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has arrested three persons in connection with the raids conducted as part of a nationwide drive codenamed 'Operation Dhvast', in the terrorist-gangster-drug smugglers network cases. The operation was aimed at breaking the terror nexus of terrorists, and other notorious gangsters involved in targeted killings, terror funding of pro-Khalistan outfits, and extortion and smuggling of drugs and weapons.
16. The Supreme Court declined to lift the stay imposed by Patna High Court on the caste survey initiated by the Bihar government. The HC had on May 4 put the survey on hold. The High Court saw the Bihar government's measure as an infringement upon Parliament rights and suggested that the exercise was essentially "a Census", and raised questions regarding privacy and data security. The first round of caste survey in Bihar was conducted between January 7 and 21. The second round started on April 15 and was supposed to continue till May 15.
17. All the 23 police stations under the Visakhapatnam Police Commissionerate likely to get e-Malkhana, a scientific way of storing property and evidence recovered from crime scene, by June. The facility was first commissioned in July 2021 at Narsipatnam Police Station (presently in Anakapalli district). Visakhapatnam will be the first city in Andhra Pradesh to have such facility. However, in rural areas, we already had it in Narsipatnam.
18. A greater flamingo (*Phoenicopterus roseus*) was rescued from Najafgarh wetland, bordering Haryana. The bird was caught in a high-tension wire and injured its wing, and broke a bone. Greater flamingo is the state bird of Gujarat. Of the six species of flamingos in the world, two are found in India: the tallest of them, the greater flamingo and the smallest one, the lesser flamingo (*Phoeniconaias minor*). In the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, they are categorised as "least concern (LC)".
19. Madhya Pradesh high court has ordered the state government to halt the felling of Baobab trees in the Dhar district following protests by tribals. The court has ordered the state to ensure that "not a single Baobab tree is cut for any purpose whatsoever by any authority until further orders of this court". The district has around 1,000 Baobabs, some of which are centuries old, and are of heritage and historical



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value. The trees have been placed under the Biodiversity Act, meaning permission for commercial use must be taken from the state biodiversity board.

20. Justice Prashant Kumar Mishra and senior advocate K V Viswanathan were sworn in as judges of the Supreme Court, taking its working strength to 34. Chief Justice of India (CJI) D Y Chandrachud administered the oath of office to them. The Supreme Court, which has a sanctioned judge strength of 34, was working with 32 judges following the retirement of Justices Dinesh Maheshwari and M R Shah. The President appoints the Judges of the Supreme Court under clause (2) of Article 124 of the Constitution. The President consults with Supreme Court and High Courts judges to make informed appointments.
21. According to a report titled 'A Shadow of Refuge: Rohingya Refugees in India', India is not allowing exit permissions for Rohingya refugees who have completed refugee status determinations with the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and "gained approval from third countries for resettlement." The report, jointly prepared by The Azadi Project, a women's rights non-profit and Refugees International, an international NGO that advocates for the rights of stateless people, was released in New Delhi on May 18.
22. The Orissa High Court has directed the State government to draw up an action plan to ensure the complete absence of Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) children and the reduction of Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM) children by half in the state by the end of 2023. The SAM children are those in the red zone with a higher risk of contracting secondary infection. This category may suffer from severe illnesses. MAM children, on the other hand, show signs of malnourishment but are in the yellow zone, which means their lives are not under threat.
23. In view of celebrating 2023 as the International Year of Millets and bringing the global food processing industry together, the Ministry of Food Processing Industries will organise the second edition, 'World Food India 2023', from 3rd-5th November 2023 in New Delhi. With the objective of introducing the world to rich Indian food culture as well as promoting investments in the diverse food processing sector of the country, the Ministry of Food Processing Industries of India launched the first edition of World Food India in 2017.
24. The Government of India formally inaugurated the Centre of Excellence on Sustainable Land Management (CoE-SLM) on May 20, 2023 at the Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE), Dehradun. During the 14th Conference of the Parties (COP-14) of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) on September 9, 2019, the Prime Minister of India announced the establishment of CoE-SLM at ICFRE. CoE-SLM aims to promote South-South Cooperation and address land degradation issues through sustainable land management practices. The CoE-SLM is poised to make a lasting impact in addressing land degradation issues, by leveraging sustainable land management practices, fostering cooperation among developing countries, and achieving Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN), this initiative aligns with the vision of the Indian government to promote environmental conservation and combat climate change.
25. The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) busted the Ambergris smuggling gang racket, a threat to the nation's flora and fauna. Ambergris is a product of sperm whales, a protected species listed under Schedule II of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, and thus prohibited for possession/export/transport. The DRI is an Indian intelligence agency that functions under the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC), Ministry of Finance.
26. The Supreme Court reserved its order on the Delhi government's plea challenging the nomination of 10 aldermen by the Lieutenant Governor (LG) to the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD). As per the Delhi Municipal Corporation Act, 1957, ten people, over the age of 25 can be nominated to the corporation by the administrator (the LG). These people are expected to have special knowledge or experience in municipal administration. They are meant to assist the house in taking decisions of public importance.
27. The Reserve Bank of India's Central Board recently approved the transfer of Rs 87,416 crore as surplus, or dividend, to the Union Government for the accounting year 2022-23, providing a major boost to its fiscal position. This is a 188 per cent jump from the last year's (2021-22) surplus transfer of Rs 30,307 crore, which was also the lowest in 10 years. The RBI normally pays dividends from the surplus income it earns on investments, valuation changes on its dollar holdings and the fees it gets from printing currency, among others. The rupee depreciation against the dollar also weighs on the surplus transfer.
28. The Navy's Kilo-class submarine INS Sindhuratna which underwent a major upgrade in Russia, reached Mumbai after sailing for 97 days and almost 10,000 miles with two port calls in between. The submarine underwent a Medium Refit Life

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- Certification (MRLC) process in Russia, which extended its life. However, it faced transportation issues in the backdrop of the war in Ukraine. On the way, the submarine made port calls in Le Havre, France and Cadiz, Spain. The Navy has 16 conventional submarines in service. These are seven Russian Kilo-class submarines, four German-origin HDW submarines and five French Scorpene-class submarines.
29. Indian naval sailing vessel Tarini (INSV Tarini) is on her return journey to India after a seven-month-long transoceanic intercontinental expedition, covering 17,000 nautical miles. During the expedition, Tarini sailed to Rio de Janeiro in Brazil via Cape Town in South Africa, participating in the Cape to Rio Race 2023. Captain Dilip Donde was the first Indian to circumnavigate the globe in 2009-2010. Subsequently, Abhilash Tomy, a retired naval officer, was the first Asian skipper to participate in two circumnavigations. Recently, during the Golden Globe Race (GGR) 2022, an east-bound non-stop circumnavigation race starting and finishing in Les Sables d' Olonne in France, Tomy accomplished the feat of getting a podium finish. He finished second in the race, which bars participants from using modern cutting-edge navigational equipment. INSV Tarini is also known for circumnavigating the globe with an all-women officer crew in the historic expedition titled 'Navika Sagar Parikrama' that began in 2017.
 30. More than 30 large lakes in India have recorded a drying trend from 1992 to 2020, a new analysis published in journal Science revealed. Of them, 16 are the major lakes of southern India. Some of these include Mettur, Krishnarajasagar, Nagarjuna Sagar and Idamalayar. Recent droughts may have contributed to reservoir storage declines in southern India, noted the research published on May 18, 2023.
 31. India appears to have slowed down on sequencing genomes of COVID-19 variants. The India SARS-CoV-2 Genomics Consortium (INSACOG), a multi-laboratory, multi-agency, pan-India network tasked with sequencing, and keeping an eye out for new, threatening SARS-CoV-2 variants, has not published a single bulletin since March 27. INSACOG is a joint programme initiated by the Union Health Ministry of Health and the Department of Biotechnology with the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR). It is a consortium of 54 laboratories to monitor the genomic variations in SARS-CoV-2.
 32. The Supreme Court has held that the independence of district judiciary is part of the basic structure of the Constitution and judicial independence from the executive and the legislature requires the judiciary to have a say in matters of finances. The judgment, based on a petition filed by the All India Judges Association, gave a series of directions to amend the service rules of the district judiciary and for payment of arrears of pension, additional pension, gratuity and other retiral benefits. The directions were based on the recommendations made in the report of the court-appointed Second National Judicial Pay Commission headed by Justice P.V. Reddi (retired) as its chairman with senior advocate R. Basant as its member. The district judiciary refers to the judicial system at the district level in India. It is the first level of the judiciary and is responsible for hearing and deciding on cases at the local level.
 33. For the second time in a decade, the U.N.-recognised Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) deferred the accreditation of the National Human Rights Commission, India (NHRC-India), citing objections like political interference in appointments, involving the police in probes into human rights violations, and poor cooperation with civil society. The United Nations' Paris Principles, adopted in 1993 by the U.N. General Assembly, provide the international benchmarks against which National Human Rights Institutions (NHRI) can be accredited. The Paris Principles set out six main criteria that NHRIs are required to meet. These are: mandate and competence; autonomy from government; independence guaranteed by a statute or Constitution; pluralism; adequate resources; and adequate powers of investigation.
 34. The 3rd edition of Khelo India University Games (KIUG) will be held in the four cities (Lucknow, Varanasi, Gautam Buddha Nagar, and Gorakhpur) of Uttar Pradesh. The mascot of the 3rd edition of Khelo India University Games is named Jitu, which represents Swamp Deer (Barasingha) - the state animal of Uttar Pradesh. The first edition was Khelo India University Games held in Odisha in 2020, the second edition was held in Bangalore, Karnataka in 2022 (shifted from 2021 to 2022 due to Covid-19 pandemic).
 35. According to the Union Ministry of Earth Science, India will unveil its new 18 petaflop supercomputer for weather forecasting institutes later this year. According to the arrangement arrived at by the ministry, National Centre for

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Medium Range Weather Forecasting (NCMRWF) will be allocated eight petaflop supercomputing power with the remaining 10 petaflops going to Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM). The NCMRWF houses 'Mihir', a 2.8 petaflop supercomputer, while the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Pune, is home to 'Pratyush', a 4.0 petaflop supercomputer.

36. Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) chairman Somanath has urged Indian scientific institutions to identify talented students and take steps to motivate them in effectively using the data emerging from science-based space missions. ISRO is collaborating with the Raman Research Institute (RRI) to build X-Ray Polarimeter Satellite (XPoSat), scheduled to be launched sometime this year. XPoSat will be India's first, and only the world's second polarimetry mission using X-Ray. XPoSat aims to study the dynamics of the bright astronomical X-Ray sources under extreme conditions. It has two payloads – an X-Ray Polarimeter named POLIX and X-ray SPECTroscopy and Timing identified as XSPECT.
37. Recently, India's insurance sector regulator unveiled a fresh blueprint to cover a larger portion of the population against risks of adverse shocks, with an eye on insuring everyone by 2047. The regulator is working on a three-pronged approach -- availability, accessibility and affordability -- to ensure 'Insurance for All by 2047'. IRDAI is also planning to launch Bima Trinity - Bima Sugam, Bima Vistar, Bima Vaahaks – in collaboration with general and life insurance firms to make insurance activities hassle free.
38. The three southern states of Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Telangana emerged as the top performers among the 'larger states' in the NITI Aayog's annual 'health index' for the Covid year of 2020-21. While Tripura was the best among the 'smaller states', Delhi ranked at the bottom of the Union territories' list. The annual health index, which measures the performance of states and UTs on a “weighted composite score incorporating 24 health performance indicators”, was launched by the NITI Aayog in 2017. The Aayog brings out the index in collaboration with the Union Health Ministry and World Bank.
39. The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) on May 29 successfully placed the NVS-01 navigation satellite, weighing about 2232 kg, into Geosynchronous Transfer Orbit. The NVS-01 carried navigation payloads L1, L5 and S bands. Interestingly, for the first time, an indigenous atomic clock was flown in NVS-01. NVS-01 is the first of the second-generation satellites envisaged for the Navigation with Indian Constellation (NavIC) services. IRNSS-1G was the seventh navigation satellite of the seven satellites constituting the IRNSS space segment. Its predecessors—IRNSS-1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 1E and 1F—were launched by PSLV-C22, PSLV-C24, PSLV-C26, PSLV-C27, PSLV-C31 and PSLV-C32 in July 2013, April 2014, October 2014, March 2015, January 2016 and March 2016 respectively.
40. The 17th Lok Sabha, which is entering its final year, has functioned for 230 sitting days so far. Of all the Lok Sabhas that completed the full five-year term, the 16th Lok Sabha had the lowest number of sitting days (331). With one more year remaining, and 58 average sitting days a year, the 17th Lok Sabha is unlikely to sit for more than 331 days. This could make it the shortest full-term Lok Sabha since 1952.
41. The Delhi High Court has set up a five-member panel to implement the Centre's rare diseases policy in an efficient manner and ensure that its benefits reaches patients. Under the National Policy for Rare Diseases, 2021, hundreds of patients — mostly children — are registered with the 'Digital Portal for Crowdfunding and Voluntary donations for Patients of Rare Diseases' by the Union Health Ministry. However, the government has been unable to fully finance their treatment due to high costs, resource constraints, and competing health priorities.



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INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

QUICK FACTS



1. The 18th session of the UN Forum on Forests was held from 8 to 12 May 2023 at UN Headquarters in New York. The delegates discussed the integrated policies on sustainable forest management (SFM) and energy to meet the United Nations-mandated Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). The delegates also called for proper implementation of SFM in tropical regions. Sharing concerns on wildfires and the problems associated with current forest certification schemes, India presented a case of a UNFF country-led initiative on long-term SFM.
2. Cyclone Mocha made landfall in Myanmar. It has been termed as an extremely severe cyclonic storm by India Meteorological Department (IMD) and as a 'Super Cyclone' by a frontline international weather website Zoom Earth. Yemen suggested the name 'Mocha'.
3. Just five months after the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) granted "accelerated" approval for a drug to treat Alzheimer's disease, developed by Biogen and Eisai and called lecanemab, another pharmaceutical company, Eli Lilly, has released what it calls "positive results" from phase 3 trials for its own candidate Alzheimer's treatment, donanemab.
4. The World Health Organisation recommends against using artificial sweeteners to achieve weight loss and prevent lifestyle diseases such as diabetes. The report emphasised that while there was a need to cut the intake of sugar, it should not be replaced by artificial sweeteners. Artificial sweeteners provide a sweet taste with very little to no calories. Many diabetics use sweeteners in their tea and coffee, but there is a growing market for packaged foods and beverages using these sweeteners to offer low-calorie options.
5. The first ministerial-level meeting of the India-European Union Trade and Technology Council (TTC) was held on May 16 in Brussels to discuss ways to increase cooperation in strategic technologies, digital connectivity, clean energy, trade and investments. The EU-India Trade and Technology Council is the second bilateral forum for the EU and the first one established with any partner for India. The EU and the US launched a TTC in June 2021.
6. World Telecommunication and Information Society Day is observed every year on May 17. May 17 marks the anniversary of the signing of the first International Telegraph Convention and the creation of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). World Telecommunication and Information Society Day (WTISD) focuses this year on "Empowering the least developed countries through information and communication technologies."
7. Cooler and drier climates could have been more conducive to the transmission of Covid-19 virus, but available evidence does not suggest that weather conditions played a prominent role in the propagation of the virus, an expert group set up by the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) has concluded. The expert group was constituted by the WMO in September 2020 to assess whether meteorological factors like heat and humidity had any role to play in the transmission of the Covid19 virus.
8. A new study published in the May 10 issue of the Nature journal describes a pangenome reference map, built using genomes from 47 anonymous individuals (19 men and 28 women), mainly from Africa but also from the Caribbean, Americas, East Asia, and Europe. The genome is the blueprint of life, a collection of all the genes and the regions between the genes contained in our 23 pairs of chromosomes. Each chromosome is a contiguous stretch of DNA string. Unlike the earlier reference genome, which is a linear sequence, the pangenome is a graph. The graph of each chromosome is like a bamboo stem with nodes where a stretch of sequences of all 47 individuals converge (similar), and with internodes of varying lengths representing genetic variations among those individuals from different ancestries.
9. Every year, May 22 is observed as International Day for Biological Diversity (IDB) to promote comprehension and consciousness of biodiversity concerns. The theme for this year is "From Agreement to Action: Build Back Biodiversity." The origins of the International Day for Biological Diversity can be traced back to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, commonly referred to as the Earth Summit, which took place in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992. On May 22, 1992, a substantial number of nations adopted the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).
10. To commemorate the birth anniversary of Anton Jansa, a pioneer in beekeeping, World Bee Day is observed on May 20. Jansa hailed from a Slovenian family of





beekeepers, and beekeeping has long been considered as a significant agricultural practice with a rich tradition in Slovenia. The United Nations General Assembly declared World Bee Day in 2017, following a proposal by Slovenia and the support of 115 countries. The theme for this year is “Bee engaged in pollinator-friendly agricultural production.”

11. Meta has been fined a record-breaking €1.2 billion (\$1.3 billion) by European Union regulators for violating EU privacy laws by transferring the personal data of Facebook users to servers in the United States. The crackdown on Meta coincides with the fifth anniversary of the EU's General Data Protection Regulation, widely seen as the world's benchmark for privacy. Since May 2018, regulators in the 27-nation EU have had the power to wield fines of as much as 4% of a company's annual revenue for the most serious violations.
12. The First Disaster Risk Reduction Working Group meeting under India's G20 Presidency was concluded at Gandhinagar in Gujarat. During the meeting, India highlighted the importance of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR). India has raised the concern of building a resilient infrastructure for disaster risk reduction at various international forums and has also called for worldwide collaboration on the issue.
13. Recently, the 19th World Meteorological Congress (WMC) has approved the Global Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Watch (G3W), a GHG monitoring initiative, to reduce the heat-trapping gases and combat Climate Change. The initiative supports urgent action to reduce heat-trapping gases, which are fuelling temperature increases. The new global GHG watch will fill critical information gaps and provide an integrated and operational framework. The framework will bring all space-based and surface-based observing systems, as well as modelling and data assimilation capabilities, under one roof.
14. Bulgarian writer Georgi Gospodinov and translator Angela Rodel won the International Booker Prize for 'Time Shelter', a darkly comic novel about the dangerous appeal of nostalgia. The International Booker Prize is awarded every year to a translated work of fiction published in the U.K. or Ireland. It is run alongside the Booker Prize for English-language fiction, which will be handed out in the autumn. Last year's winners were Indian writer Geetanjali Shree and American translator Daisy Rockwell for “Tomb of Sand.”
15. Menstrual Hygiene Day is observed every year on the 28th day of the fifth month because menstrual cycle averages 28 days in length and people on an average menstruate for five days each month. Menstrual Hygiene Day was started by Germany-based NGO WASH United in 2013 when a 28-day social media campaign was launched to spread awareness around different aspects of menstruation. The theme for Menstrual Hygiene Day 2023 is - 'Making menstruation a normal fact of life by 2030.
16. Girish Chandra Murmu, the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG), has been re-elected as the External Auditor of the World Health Organization (WHO) for a four-year term from 2024 to 2027. The CAG is already holding this position in the WHO since 2019 for a four-year term from 2019 to 2023. Besides the WHO, the CAG of India is currently the External Auditor of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (2020-2025), International Atomic Energy Agency (2022-2027), Organization for Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (2021-2023) and Inter-Parliamentary Union (2020-2022). The CAG is a Member of the United Nations Panel of External Auditors. He is also a member of the Governing Boards of the International Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions and ASOSAI.
17. China launched a spacecraft carrying three astronauts, including its first civilian, to its Tiangong space station. This is the country's fifth manned mission to a fully functional space station since 2021. The three astronauts will replace the crew of Shenzhou-15 aboard the Tiangong space station, who have been there since November last year. The new crew will stay there for the next five months and will carry out “large-scale in-orbit tests and experiments in various fields as planned. The Tiangong space station, expected to become the sole in-orbit outpost for scientific research after the end of operations for the International Space Station in 2030, is China's ambitious project to achieve its space dreams.



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**ARTS & CULTURE AND HISTORICAL EVENTS
OF CONTINUING SIGNIFICANCE**

QUICK FACTS



1. A tribal leaders' forum in Manipur has sought the "total separation" of the hill areas inhabited by the indigenous people, primarily those belonging to the Kuki-Chin-Zomi-Mizo group, from the state. In a petition to former CRPF (Central Reserve Police Force) chief Kuldiep Singh, appointed by the security advisor to the Manipur Government soon after ethnic clashes broke out in the State on May 3, the Indigenous Tribal Leaders' Forum (ITLF) said the tribal people of Manipur "could no longer live with the dominant Meiteis anymore". ITLF describes itself as a conglomerate of the recognised tribes in Manipur's Churachandpur, one of the worst-affected districts during the ethnic clashes.
2. The Chief Ministers of Assam and Meghalaya on May 24 initiated the second phase of talks to resolve disputes in the six remaining sectors along the 884.9 km border boundary between the two States. The six sectors where disputes remain are Langpih, Borduar, Nongwah-Mawtamur, Desh Doomreah, Block 1 & Block II, and Psiar-Khanduli. Since July 2021, they have been engaged in discussions to settle the disputes, and last March, 2022 they signed an MoU to address six out of the twelve disputed areas.
3. On the occasion of International Museum Day (May 18), Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the International Museum Expo in Delhi's Pragati Maidan. During the ceremony, PM Modi also unveiled the Expo's mascot – a "contemporised" version of the famous Dancing Girl of Mohenjodaro. The mascot is regarded as contemporary dwarf-pals extending an invitation to the expo," it was announced during the unveiling. It was discovered in 1926 by archaeologist Ernest Mackay at Mohenjodaro, one of the largest and most advanced urban settlements of the ancient world.
4. Kashmiri Pandits embark on the annual pilgrimage to Mata Kheer Bhawani temple in Ganderbal, Jammu Kashmir. Every year, Kheer Bhawani Melas are organised at five shrines across Kashmir. The five shrines where Kheer Bhawani melas are held annually are Ragnya Bagwati shrine at Tulmulla in Ganderbal, Ragnya Bagwati shrine at Manzagam in Kulgam, Tripursundri shrine at Devsar in Kulgam, Ragnya Bagwati shrine at Logripora in Anantnag and Ragnya Bagwati temple complex at Tikkar in Kupwara.
5. To mark the inauguration of the new Parliament building, Prime Minister Narendra Modi released a commemorative coin of Rs 75 denomination on Sunday (May 28). As per the Ministry of Finance notification, the latest Rs 75 coin is circular in shape with a diameter of 44mm. The composition of the coin is of a quaternary alloy — 50 per cent silver, 40 per cent copper, 5 per cent nickel and 5 per cent zinc. One side of the coin bears the image of the Lion Capital of the Ashoka Pillar in the centre, flanked by the word "Bharat" in Devanagari script and "INDIA" in English. The inscription "Sansad Sankul" is written in Devanagari script on the upper periphery, while the words "Parliament Complex" in English on the lower periphery on the other side of the coin.
6. The district administration in Udaipur, Rajasthan, and NGOs have started a child marriage-free campaign. Child marriages usually take place in the state during this period, after Akshaya Tritiya and till Peepal Poonima, due to several auspicious dates, and many cases go unreported. Under the campaign, anyone can report cases of child marriage on helpline number 9784399288. The identity of those calling will be kept confidential, and they will be given a cash prize of Rs 2,100, said officials.
7. A fresh round of excavations at the site of Delhi's Purana Qila or Old Fort has uncovered evidence of the continuous history of the city since the pre-Mauryan era. The findings include shards of Painted Gray Ware pottery which are usually dated to around 1200 BC to 600 BC. The Purana Qila, built by Sher Shah Suri and Mughal emperor Humayun, is believed by many to be the site of Indraprastha, as mentioned in the Mahabharat. The new excavations have also found remains of a 900-year-old Vaikuntha Vishnu from the Rajput period, a terracotta plaque of Goddess Gaja Lakshmi from the Gupta period, the structural remains of a 2,500-year-old terracotta ring well from the Mauryan period, and a well-defined four-room complex from the Sunga-Kushan period dating back to 2,300 years ago, besides beads, seals, copper coins and a bone needle.



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TEST ZONE



PASSAGE - 1

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) decided to withdraw Rs 2000 from circulation. As per the notification issued by the RBI, the Rs 2,000 note is being taken out of circulation in pursuance of the clean note policy. The central bank has asked people to exchange or deposit the Rs 2,000 note in banks by [1]. The RBI has stressed the fact that Rs 2000 note continues to be a legal tender. This means that one can use the Rs 2000 note for buying goods and services, in everyday life transactions etc. However, nothing is mentioned in the latest circular regarding what will happen if Rs 2000 note is not exchanged or deposited in banks by the [1] deadline.

In a media interaction on May 22, 2023, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said that procedural elements post-[1] deadline or possible deadline extension will be taken based on the number of Rs 2000 notes that come back from circulation. The RBI in its directive to all banks has said that the instructions for the modalities of exchange and deposit of Rs 2000 note are effective till [1]. Thus, one needs to await further instructions from RBI regarding what will happen to these notes from October 1, 2023.

[Extracted, with edits and revisions, from: "Rs 2000 note withdrawn: What happens if you fail to deposit, exchange it by [1]?", by Preeti Motiani, The Economic Times]

1. Which date has been replaced with '[1]' in the passage above?

A July 30, 2023

B August 30, 2023

C September 30, 2023

D October 30, 2023

2. In which year was the Rs 2000 note introduced?

A September 2016

B November 2016

C September 2015

D November 2015

3. A new commemorative coin with a denomination of Rs 75 was unveiled by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the inauguration of the new Parliament building. All coins are minted in the four mints owned by the Government of India in Mumbai, Hyderabad, Kolkata and _____.

A Noida

B Nasik

C Hoshangabad

D Mysore

4. Who among the following won the 'Governor of the Year' award in the Central Banking Awards 2023?

A Jerome H. Powell

B Yi Gang

C Villeroy de Galhau

D Shaktikanta Das

5. In India, Banknotes function as –

A Unlimited legal tender

B Limited legal tender

C Both A and B

D Neither A nor B

Q.1 (C) Q.2 (B) Q.3 (A) Q.4 (D) Q.5 (A)

Answers

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PASSAGE - 2

Russian President Vladimir Putin and his Iranian counterpart [1] on Wednesday oversaw, via video-link, the signing of a deal to finance and build an Iranian railway line as part of an embryonic international North–South Transport Corridor. The Rasht-Astara railway is seen as an important link in the corridor, intended to connect India, Iran, Russia, Azerbaijan and other countries via railways and sea – a route that Russia says can rival the Suez Canal as a major global trade route.

“The unique North-South transport artery, of which the Rasht-Astara railway will become a part, will help to significantly diversify global traffic flows,” Putin said. He also said the 162 km railway along the Caspian Sea coast would help to connect Russian ports on the Baltic Sea with Iranian ports in the Indian Ocean and the Gulf.

Russia and Iran have been pushed to strengthen their political and economic ties by Western economic sanctions on each, which both say are unjustified. Since the 1979 Islamic Revolution that swept U.S.-backed Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi from power, Iran has been ostracised by the West and its economy is crippled by a myriad of sanctions. It holds around a quarter of the Middle East's oil reserves. The West also imposed other set of restrictions over Iran's nuclear program, while Russia was sanctioned due to its actions in Ukraine.

[Extracted, with edits and revisions, from: “Russia and Iran sign rail deal for corridor intended to rival Suez Canal”, The Indian Express]

1. Whose name has been replaced with '[1]' in the passage above?

A Hassan Rouhani

B Sayyid Mohammad Khatami

C Sayyid Mohammad Khatami

D Ebrahim Raisi

2. Which country is set to become a permanent member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) next month when India will hold the summit?

A Iran

B Saudi Arabia

C Belarus

D Mongolia

3. International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC), is a multi-modal transportation established in _____ in St. Petersburg by Iran, Russia and India.

A 1995

B 2000

C 2004

D 2007

4. Which country does not border with the Caspian Sea?

A Iran

B Russia

C Turkmenistan

D Syria

5. The Suez Canal is an artificial sea-level waterway running across the Isthmus of Suez in Egypt, to connect the Mediterranean Sea and the

A Red Sea

B Caspian Sea

C Black Sea

D Persian Gulf

Q.1 (D) Q.2 (A) Q.3 (B) Q.4 (D) Q.5 (A)

Answers

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PASSAGE - 3

On May 17, 2023, President Droupadi Murmu inaugurated the silver jubilee celebrations of Kudumbashree, the largest self-help group network in the country. The president had also released a handbook titled chavadu (footsteps) that codified ideas for the movement's future and the achievements it has gained so far. For the organisation, the silver jubilee marked a self-assessment of its achievements, examining the quality of life of its members, planning the future of neighbourhood groups and micro-level planning on sustainable development goals.

While looking back, Kudumbashree has evolved and transformed significantly in the last 25 years. Five years ago, when the worst flood of the last hundred years inundated most parts of the state, Kudumbashree donated Rs 7 crore to the Chief Minister's distress relief fund. That amount equalled contributions from tech giants Google and Apple and Rs 3 crore more than the contributions of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. What further made the contribution distinct was Kudumbashree's conceptualisation years ago as an all-women poverty alleviation programme with members hailing primarily from lower-income families of the state.

Most of the Kudumbashree workers themselves were victims of the flood that perished houses, destroyed livelihoods and washed away all means of their livelihood. But all those disturbing factors failed to dispirit these women, who were eager to contribute their maximum to the distress relief fund to help those who suffered more than them.

[Extracted, with edits and revisions, from: "25 years of Kudumbashree: How this women's collective intervened to empower women, fight poverty", by K A Shaji, Down to Earth]

1. On May 17, 2023, President Droupadi Murmu inaugurated the silver jubilee celebrations of Kudumbashree, the largest self-help group network in the country. It was established in 1997 in –

A Kerala

B Andhra Pradesh

C Karnataka

D Tamil Nadu

2. In which state is India's first carbon-neutral farm situated?

A Sikkim

B Kerala

C Goa

D Maharashtra

3. Who among the following is the current CEO of Apple Inc.?

A Steven Jobs

B Ajay Banga

C Satya Nadella

D Tim Cook

4. Social Progress Index (SPI) is a comprehensive tool that holistically measures a country's social progress across three critical dimensions of social progress - Basic Human Needs, Foundations of Wellbeing, and Opportunity. Which institution/ministry released this index?

A Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

B NITI Aayog

C Ministry of Law and Justice

D Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM)

5. Which state is set to welcome India's first underwater metro train?

A Kerala

B West Bengal

C Mumbai

D Goa

Q.1 (A) Q.2 (B) Q.3 (D) Q.4 (D) Q.5 (B)

Answers

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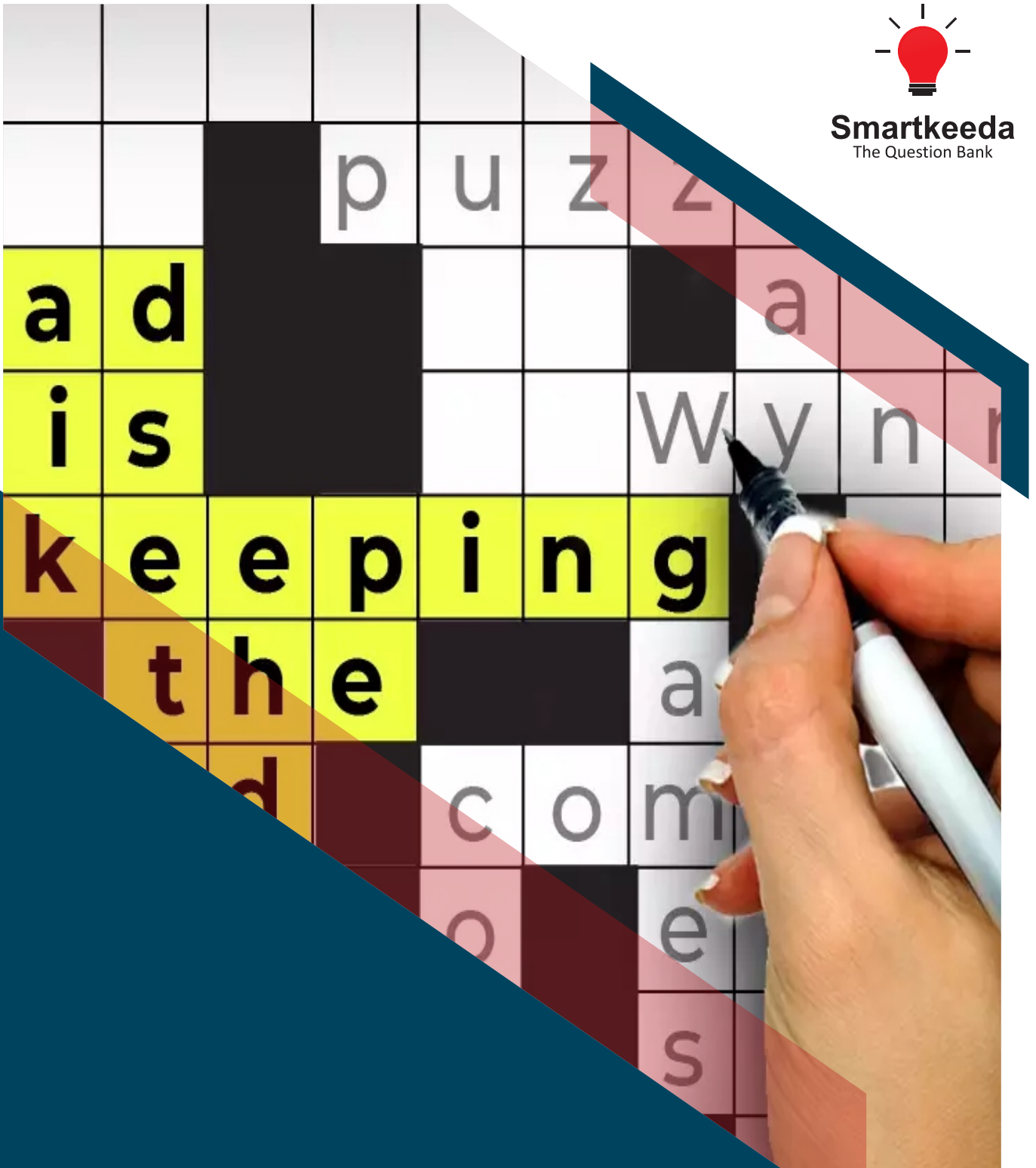
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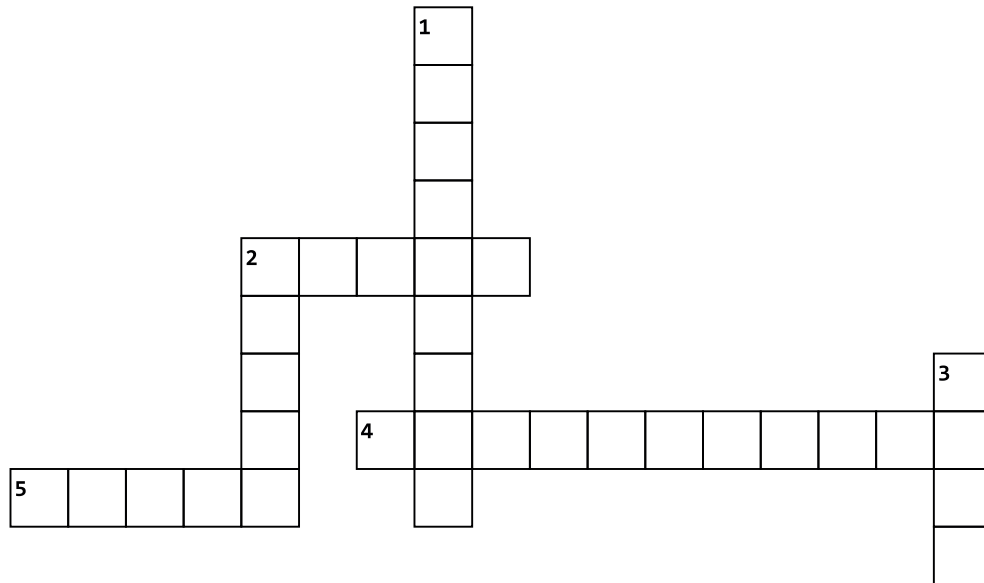
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CROSSWORD CORNER



CROSSWORD - 1



Across

2. World Hypertension Day
4. Newly appointed head of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)
5. World Bee Day

Down

1. 2023 edition of the South Asian Football Federation (SAFF) Championship will be held
2. Sikkim celebrated its 48th Statehood Day
3. The flagship initiative of the Ministry of Defence

Answers

- | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|--------|---------------|
| 1 Bengaluru | 2 17May (Across) | 3 IDEX | 4 Praveensood |
| 2 16May (Down) | 5 20May | | |



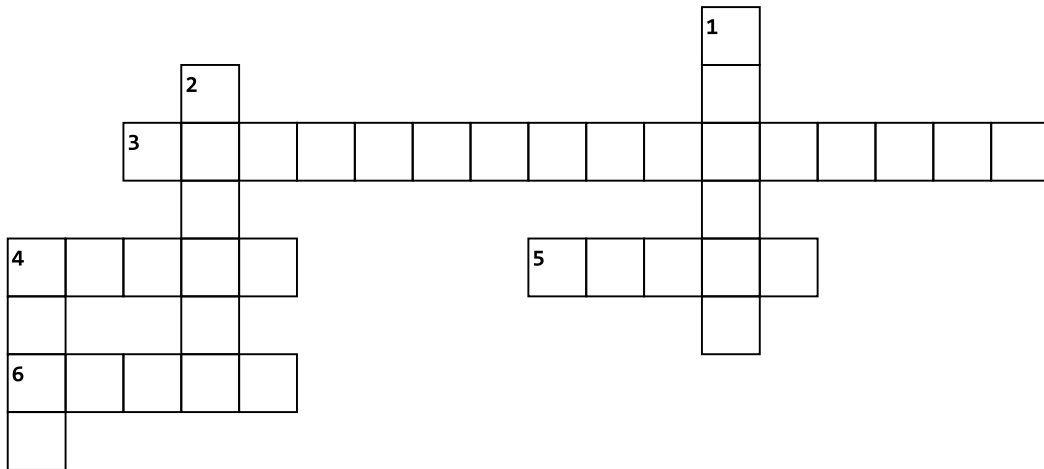
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CROSSWORD - 2



Across

3. Winner of International Booker Prize 2023
4. International Day for Biological Diversity (IDB)
5. International Museum Day
6. Inauguration of the new Parliament building of India

Down

1. India's first, and only the world's second polarimetry mission using X-Ray
2. Top performer among the 'larger states' in the NITI Aayog's annual 'health index'
4. International Year of Millets

Answers

4	22May (Across)
3	GeorgiGospodinov
2	Kerala
1	XPosat
6	28May
5	18May
4	2023 (Down)

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