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National

1. Beta Version of T+0 settlement launched

The Bombay Stock exchange (BSE) and National Stock Exchange have launched the Beta Version of T+0 settlement. It allows trading in the T+0 rolling settlement cycle in the equity segment on an Optional basis. The operational guidelines for the launch of this shorter tenure settlement cycle was launched by SEBI.



2. Extension of AFSPA for 6 months in Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland

The Ministry of Home Affairs has extended the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA) for 6 months in the districts of Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland. The following step was taken by the Ministry after review of the law and order situation in the two Northeastern States. The Act was passed by Parliament of India in 1958.

3. Kerala Kalamandalam lifted gender restrictions to learn Mohiniyattam

A deemed university for arts and culture, the Kerala Kalamandalam had lifted gender restrictions to learn Mohiniyattam. Mohiniyattam is an Indian Classical dance form that dates back to the age-old Sanskrit Hindu text on performing arts called "Natya Shastra". The dance form has evolved in the state of Kerala and was performed by Devdasis in temples during Chera Kings rule.

4. Mushk Budiji Rice

Researchers have recently reported that altitude and temperature play an important role in the development of indigenous rice variety called Mushk Budiji Rice. The Kashmir Himalaya is known for the cultivation of Mushk Budiji Rice and the rice variety has received a Geographical Indication tag. The study was conducted using Gas Chromatography-Mass Spectroscopy and an Electronic nose.

5. India applied to ISBA to explore Afanasy Nikitin Seamount

India recently applied to the International Seabed Authority (ISBA) to explore the cobalt-rich crust long known as Afanasy Nikitin Seamount (AN Seamount). AN Seamount is a structural feature in the Central Indian Basin and comprises a main plateau rising above 1200m above the surrounding ocean floor. The rights of the region are already claimed by Sri Lanka under a separate set of laws.

6. NAAC introduce Binary categorization for higher educational institutions

The National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC), an Autonomous body under University Grants Commission (UGC) introduced Binary categorization of "Accredited" or "Not accredited" for higher educational institutions. The NAAC functions through the General Council and Executive Committee and the Chairperson of UGC is President of the GC of the NAAC.

7. 18 protected monuments delisted from Monuments of National Importance list

The Archaeological Survey has recently delisted 18 protected monuments from the list of Monuments of National Importance (MNI). The monuments have ceased to be of "National Importance". Out of the 18 monuments delisted,

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9 are located in Uttar Pradesh. Uttar Pradesh has the highest number of monuments i.e. 745.

8. 100% acquisition of Lanco Amarkantak Power Limited

Adani Power Limited acquired 100% stakes of Lanco Amarkantak Power Limited. The acquisition was approved by Competition Commission of India (CCI). Lanco Amarkantak Power Limited is engaged in the business of Thermal Power generation in India and it is a part of Lanco Group. Adani Power Limited operates multiple states in India including Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Chattisgarh, Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh.

9. Karnataka approaches SC for release of NDRF funds

The Government of Karnataka approaches the Supreme Court for directing the Centre to release funds from National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) to the state for drought management. The petition raises concerns of violation of fundamental rights of the people of Karnataka under Article 14 and 21. NDRF is managed by the Central Government and the fund is placed under Public Account of Government of India.

10. Smart Meter National Programme

Kerala opted out of the Central Government's scheme to replace 250 million conventional meters with smart meters across all households by March 2025. The scheme promotes use of Smart meters across the country and improves the billing and collection efficiencies of distribution companies (DISCOMs) operating in the country.

11. 900 year old Chalukyan inscription discovered

A 900 year old inscription from the Kalyani

Chalukya dynasty has been discovered from Gangapuram, a temple town in Mahabubnagar district, Telangana. The Chalukyas ruled over Deccan India between 6th and 12th centuries. The inscription was discovered by archaeologist E. Sivangi Reddy when he visited the surroundings of Chowdamma Temple as a part of "Preserve Heritage for Posterity" campaign.



12. Recommendations on "Usage of Embedded SIM for Machine to Machine Communication"

The regulatory body set up by the Government of India under Telecom Authority of India Act, 1997 released recommendations on "Usage of Embedded SIM for Machine-to-Machine (M2M) Communications". It will promote orderly growth in the M2M e-SIM segment of the Telecommunications sector in India.

13. Insurance E-Marketplace Bima Sugam

The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) approves setting up of Insurance E-Marketplace "Bima Sugam" that aims to establish a digital public Infrastructure towards universalisation and democratisation of Insurance. The marketplace can be used for buying, selling and servicing insurance policies as well as setting claims.

14. "Vote from Home" extended to PwD

The Election Commission of India introduces 'vote-from-home' for the first time in Lok Sabha

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elections, benefiting Persons with Disabilities (PwD) and citizens aged 85 and above. Eligible individuals, including service voters and media persons, can avail the facility by submitting Form 12D and undergoing a supervised postal ballot voting process at their homes.



15. Project ANAGRANINF against Gram Negative Bacterial Infections

The Technology Development Board (TDB) has partnered with Peptris Technologies Pvt. Ltd. and Foundation for Neglected Disease Research (FNDR) for the 'ANAGRANINF' project, receiving a ₹75 lakh grant. This collaboration aims to develop novel antibiotics against gram-negative bacterial infections, leveraging AI tools and adhering to WHO guidelines on Antimicrobial Resistance.

16. Operation Indravati

India launched Operation Indravati to evacuate Indian Citizens from war torn Haiti. Haiti has been facing intense fighting between Armed Groups and Government. India does not have an embassy in Haiti and is represented by an Indian mission at Santo Domingo, capital of Dominican Republic. Haiti consists of 75-90 Indians.

17. Gulaal Gota

Holi in Rajasthan's Jaipur will be played by old traditional medium called "Gulaal Gota" that dates back to 400 years. Gulaal Gota is a small ball made of lac filled with dry gulaal and is

made by Muslim lac makers called Manihaars in Jaipur.

18. MeitY Startup Hub

The theme of Bharat Mahakumbh starting from March 18, 2024, is 'Bharat Innovates.'

This theme focuses on showcasing India's innovative prowess across various sectors, including technology, science, agriculture, and industry.

Through exhibitions, seminars, and workshops, Bharat Mahakumbh aims to highlight groundbreaking innovations, promote entrepreneurship, and inspire the next generation of inventors and creators.

By celebrating India's innovative spirit, the event seeks to drive economic growth, solve societal challenges, and establish the country as a global leader in innovation and technology.

19. PM Modi received Bhutan's Order of the Druk Gyalpo

The Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi received Bhutan's highest civilian award "Order of the Druk Gyalpo". He becomes the first foreign head of the Government to receive the honour. Both the countries have signed MoUs covering areas such as Petroleum, trade, digital connectivity, space and Agriculture.



20. TCPL inaugurated new factory to produce Hydrogen based ICEs

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The Joint Venture of Tata Motors Limited and Cummins Inc USA, "Tata Cummins Private Limited" inaugurated a new factory in Jamshedpur for production of Hydrogen based Internal Combustion Engines(ICEs) for medium and heavy commercial vehicles. The factory will also manufacture low to zero emission technology products.

21. BhashaNet Portal unveiled on Universal Acceptance Day

The National Internet Exchange of India(NIXI) under MeitY launched the BhashaNet Portal on the Universal Acceptance Day. The launch is aimed at advancing towards digital inclusion and promoting linguistic diversity in India. The Universal Acceptance Day is to be observed on March 21, 2023 at the Dr Ambedkar International Centre in Delhi.

International

1. Food Waste Index Report 2024

The Food Waste Index Report 2024 was recently released by UNEP. The report stated that households over the globe wasted over one billion Meals a day in 2022. The report is jointly authored by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and a UK based non profit organisation WRAP(Waste and Resources Action Programme). According to the report, Food Waste is defined as food and associated inedible parts removed from the human food supply chain.

2. UNHCR reports crossing off 4500 Rohingya refugees across Bay of Bengal in 2023

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported that over 4500 Rohingya refugees crossed the Andaman Sea

and Bay of Bengal in 2023. UNHCR was established in 1950 by UNGA after the Second World War and was awarded Nobel Peace Prizes in 1954 and 1981. Rohingyas are a group of Muslim Minority ethnic groups that belong to the Arakan Kingdom of Myanmar.

3. Thailand passes Same Sex marriages bill

The Parliament of Thailand recently passed the landmark bill for Marriage Equality, thereby legalising same sex unions. Thailand became the third territory in Asia to legalise same sex unions and the bill was approved by 400 lawmakers out of 415 lawmakers present.

4. Amul to debut US market with Fresh Milk Export

India's largest dairy products brand, AMUL announced the launch of four fresh variants of milk in the US market with the help of 108 year old Cooperative organisation Michigan Milk Producers Association (MMPA). It will be the first time that Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation (GCMMF), parent company of Amul, will be exporting Milk outside India.



5. EU launched new Digital Marketing Act (DMA)

The European Union launched the New Digital marketing Act (DMA) aimed at investigations into tech giants namely Apple, Alphabet and Meta. It is the first Probe under the New DMA tech legislation. The objective of the Act is to regulate behaviour of large technology companies and

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promote fair competition in the Digital market. The probe is expected to be completed in 12 months.

6. Meme Coins

Meme Coins also known as Memetic Tokens or Community Coins is a unique category of cryptocurrencies that are gaining popularity in the digital currency space. The Coins have traced their origin from Meme culture. These coins are highly volatile in nature and have massive/Uncapped supply leading to very low values per token.

7. AUKUS Submarine program

The AUKUS countries consisting of Australia, UK and USA signed a trilateral security partnership known as SSN-AUKUS submarine program to build nuclear powered submarines for the Royal Australian Navy. The AUKUS partnership was announced in 2021 and is aimed to strengthen collective industrial base capacity and generate economic growth in defence and national security sectors.

8. **World Happiness Report released by UN SDSN** The Annual World Happiness Report was released by UN SDSN in partnership with Gallup and Oxford Wellbeing Research Centre. Finland has topped the list for the seventh consecutive year. The Report considers six key factors like Social Support, income, health, freedom, generosity and the absence of corruption. India is ranked 126th in the list.

Sports

1. Sreejesh and Caram appointed as co-chair of new FIH Athletes Committee

The International Hockey Federation recently

announced the appointment of Indian Goalkeeper PR Sreejesh and Chile Skipper Camila Caram as the co-chairs of the new FIH Athletes Committee. It is a consultative body that makes recommendations to the FIH Executive body.



2. SRH record highest ever score in IPL history

The Sunrisers Hyderabad recorded the highest ever score of 277 in IPL during an encounter against Mumbai Indian at Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium, Hyderabad. It is the third highest total in T20 Cricket history and highest total by any T20 franchise team.

3. NFL prohibits Hip-drop tackle

The National Football League (NFL) during an annual meeting in Orlando, Florida has prohibited the use of Hip-drop tackle starting from the 2024 season. The Competition committee of the league unanimously voted in favour of the change. The Hip-drop tackle technique has resulted in multiple player injuries over the years.

4. Haryana won Boxing Sub Junior National Championship

The state of Haryana with a total of 19 medals

was crowned champion at the Sub Junior National Championship. Haryana won 10 Medals in Girls section and 9 medals in Boys section. Delhi and Maharashtra finished second and third at the event.

5. USA won CONCACAF Nations League Title

The United States clinched their third CONCACAF Nations League title with a 2-0 victory over Mexico. Goals from Gio Reyna and Tyler Adams secured the win. Despite a penalty scare for Mexico, overturned by VAR, the US emerged victorious. The win boosts momentum ahead of Copa America.

6. Sathiyam won WTT Feeder Title

G. Sathiyam won Men's singles Title at the WTT Feeder Title beating higher ranked Manav Thakkar at Beirut, Lebanon. The scoreline of the final was 6-11, 11-7, 11-7, 11-4. Sathiyam had beaten India Number 2 Harmeet Desai and Chinese Taipei's 39th ranked Chuang Chih-Yuan, former World Number 3.



7. Kohli completes 12000 T20 runs

Indian batter Virat Kohli becomes sixth batter in the world and first Indian to reach the landmark of 12000 T20 runs. The feat was achieved during the Inaugural match of IPL 2024 between RCB

and CSK at MA Chidambaram Stadium, Chennai. Chris Gayle scored the most number of runs, 14562 during his career.

Person in News

1. Simon Harris elected as New Prime Minister of Ireland

Irish Politician Simon Harris, currently Minister of Further and Higher Education becomes Ireland's new Prime Minister. The appointment came after the surprise resignation of sitting Prime Minister Leo Varadkar. Simon Harris has been a member of the Fine Gael Party since his youth.



Science and tech/Space/Defence

1. Successful test firing of Kalam-250

The leading private Space tech company, Skyroot Aerospace successfully test fired "Kalam-250". It is a stage-2 of Vikram-1 space launch vehicle and it was tested at the propulsion Testbed of the Indian Space Research Organisation, at its Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC) in Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh. The Kalam-250 is a high strength composite rocket motor that uses solid fuel and high performance Ethylene-Propylene-Diene terpolymers (EPDM) Thermal protection system.

2. Tiger Triumph 2024

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Indian Army Contingent along with Indian Navy and Indian Air Force is participating in the second edition of Tri-Services India-US amphibious exercise “EX Tiger Triumph 2024”. The 14 day exercise is to take place in two phases namely Harbour Phase at Visakhapatnam and Sea Phase at Kakinada.

3. Nimmu-Padam Darcha Road connected

The Border Road Organisation (BRO) connected the strategic Nimu-Padam-Darcha road also known as the third Axis connecting Ladakh to the hinterland. The road passes through one pass only, namely Shinkun LA and is shorter than the other two axes namely Manali-Leh and Srinagar-Leh. The 298 km road will connect Manali to Leh through Darcha and Nimmu on Kargil-Leh highway.

4. ICG Ship Samudra Paheredar arrives at Manila Bay

ICG Ship Samudra Paheredar arrived at Manila Bay, Philippines as part of the overseas deployment to ASEAN countries. ICG Ship Samudra Paheredar is a specialised Pollution Control Vessel aimed at a broader initiative of ICG Marine Pollution Response capabilities. As a part of the initiative ICG pollution control vessel visited Cambodia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Indonesia.

5. Operation SANKALP

The Indian Navy has significantly enhanced its maritime security operations since mid-December 2023, responding to 18 incidents and playing a pivotal role as the 'First Responder' and 'Preferred Security Partner' in the Indian Ocean Region. The navy has deployed over 5000 personnel, 450 ship days, and 900 hours of maritime surveillance aircraft to address threats and safeguard India's maritime interests.

Health/Agriculture/Environment

1. India TB Report 2024 released by MoHFW

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare recently released the India TB Report 2024 that stated that the gap between estimated number and actual cases of Tuberculosis is closing. There was a marginal decline in TB Cases from 28 lakh in 2015 to 27.8 lakh in 2023. India has set the goal of eliminating Tuberculosis by 2025.

2. Global network for Coronaviruses “COVINET”

The special organisation of the United Nations, WHO, has recently launched “COVINET”. COVINET is a network of global laboratories that will identify and monitor potentially novel coronaviruses that could emerge shortly. The Global network will have Animal health and environmental surveillance.

3. Butterfly Cicada Species discovered in Meghalaya

A new species of Butterfly Cicada belonging to the genus Becquartina was discovered by scientists from Meghalaya. The Becquartina genus species was discovered for the first time in India. The Butterfly Cicada has colourful wings and the species appears as endemic and is found localised in Garo Hills and Ri Bhoi district.



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4. Discovery of Amino Acids in Stomata

A Novel Regulatory mechanism that controls the opening of stomata in plants was discovered by scientists from Nagoya University. The role of Phosphorylation at the 881st Threonine Residue (Thr881) was uncovered by the team. The previously unknown Phosphorylation event activates the proton pump, facilitating stomatal opening and enhancing photosynthetic activity.



5. Ozone spike due to reverse spinning of Polar Vortex over Arctic

Sudden Atmospheric warming event recently led to the reversal of the trajectory of the Arctic's Polar Vortex. The phenomenon has led to spinning in the wrong direction of the Vortex thereby record breaking "Ozone spike" thereby impacting global weather patterns. Polar Vortex can be defined as a large area of low pressure and cold air over both North and South poles.

6. Newly recognised ecoregion SEAMA in South Africa

A recent study led by Environmentalists in South Africa has unearthed a wealth of undocumented biodiversity in South Africa Montane Archipelago (SEAMA) region. The region stretches from Northern Mozambique to Mount Mulanje In Malawi. Mount Mulanje is South Africa's second Highest mountain. The study was published in the journal Nature Scientific. The region faces threat due to severe deforestation and requires urgent conservation efforts.

7. Forest fires in Eturnagaram Wildlife Sanctuary

The Eturnagaram Wildlife Sanctuary located near the border of Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh and Telangana is presently grappling with forest fires in Tadvai region. The River Godavari passes through the Wildlife Sanctuary and the Sanctuary is famous for Sammakka Sarakka Jathra, Asia's largest Tribal Jathra.

8. Captive Elephant (Transfer or Transport) Rules, 2024

The Union Environment Ministry has notified a set of rules called Captive Elephant (Transfer or Transport) Rules, 2024. The objective of the rules is to liberalise the conditions under which Elephants may be transferred within or between states. The Elephants are kept under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.

9. Overestimation of Anaemia Prevalence in India

A study led by Dr Anura Kurpad from St John's Medical College, Bengaluru states that previous studies led by various institutions have overestimated anaemia prevalence in eight states. The overall Iron Deficiency was just 18.4%, highest among adolescent girls followed by Adult women. One third of anaemic women faced iron deficiency.

10. Unhealthy levels of arsenic in water

A study by the University of Sheffield highlights the danger of cooking rice with arsenic-contaminated water, affecting 32% of the global population in low- and middle-income countries. Different cooking methods were examined, with findings suggesting brown rice as a safer option due to its lower arsenic absorption. Recommendations include selecting safer rice varieties and cooking techniques.

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11. Decline in Coral cover in Gulf of Mannar

The Gulf of Mannar Marine National Park, known for its extensive coral reefs, faces significant degradation due to climate change and anthropogenic stress. A recent study by SDMRI revealed a decline in live coral cover from 37% in 2005 to 27.3% in 2021, with predictions of severe coral bleaching this year. Anthropogenic activities exacerbate the threats to this fragile ecosystem.



12. Entanglement leading to infertility in female right Whales

Recent study reveals female right whales may never breed post-entanglement in fishing gear. Right whales, stout-bodied with enormous heads, were hunted for oil and baleen. Considered 'right' to hunt, they were nearly exterminated, with North Atlantic right whales critically endangered. Urgent conservation measures are vital for their survival.

13. Vechur Cow

Dr Sosamma Iype won Padma Shri in 2022 for saving and resurrecting a breed of indigenous cattle called Vechur Cow. Vechur Cow is a rare dwarf cattle breed of India named after Vechur, a small place by the side of Vembanad lake near Vaikam, South Kerala. Vechur Cow is considered as the smallest cattle breed in the World.

14. Sea Cucumber maintained health of World's Reef

Researchers at Georgia Institute of Technology have discovered the pivotal role that sea cucumbers play in maintaining the health of World's reefs. Sea cucumbers are part of a larger animal group called Echinoderms and are found in all marine environments throughout the world. They are protected under Schedule 1 of Wildlife Protection Act of 1972. Sea cucumbers act like Vacuum cleaners, sucking sediments that have found their way onto the Coral.

15. Netravati River Front Project

The Principal Bench of National Green Tribunal (NGT) in New Delhi initiated the Action framework on Netravati Waterfront Promenade Development Project in Mangalore. The project is managed by Mangaluru Smart City Ltd. (MSCL) and was in controversy due to alleged violations of Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) norms and environmental regulations. Netravati river rises between Kudremukh and Ballalarayana Durga in Karnataka.

16. New Species of Deep-sea isopod discovered

A new species of Deep-Sea isopod named "Brucethoa Isro" was discovered off the Kollam Coast, Kerala. It is the second species within this genus to be documented in India and is named after the Indian Space Research Organisation. Isopods are an order of invertebrates that belong to the crustacean group of animals.

17. Subduction zone discovered beneath Gibraltar Strait

Scientists at University of Lisbon have discovered a Ring of Fire subduction zone beneath Gibraltar Strait. The Subduction zone may lead to Atlantic Oceans closure in 20 million years. A Subduction zone is a spot where 2 tectonic plates of a planet collide and one of them subducts beneath the other. The Gibraltar Strait is located between

Spain and Morocco.

18. Earth Hour observed on March 23

The Earth Hour was observed on March 23 by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF). The Earth Hour was first celebrated in Sydney in 2007 and it encouraged people to switch off all lights for an hour from 8:30pm to 9:30 pm. It is observed annually towards the end of March.

