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# A Crucial Piece of Advice!

We find several students discussing the issue of lack of time and digging out content regarding how to use every second of your time efficiently. Some of you must be thinking, we have 86400 seconds each day, so why should we worry about just a single one? **Does a single second hold that much importance? YES!** When it comes to competition, each & every second is very crucial.

The first question that might come to your mind is “Is that even possible to use each second of your time effectively?” or “Do I even have that much spare time?” Let's help you by looking over the top time drainers of your daily routine:

- On an average, a person spends 67 minutes per day eating and drinking beverages while watching their favorite TV series.
- Travelling is one of the most overlooked time drainers. CNBC claims that the average commute is a little over 50 minutes per day.
- 44% of people waste tons of time just sitting in the traffic, while others keep scrolling through their feeds.
- Digital Information World suggests that people spend 2 hours and 22 minutes on social media.
- More often unproductive chats on WhatsApp are the major time drainers where you waste your time on without even knowing how much time is spent.

Adding up all these, you spend nearly **4 hours** daily or 1/6th of your day doing a whole lot of **NOTHING!** Over the course of a week that amounts to over **28 hours** of wasted time, and more than **1460 hours** or **52,560,000 seconds** annually!! Scary! Isn't it?

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# National & States Affairs

**501.** On December 19, the Congress government in Rajasthan announced to provide 12 LPG cylinders a year at ₹500 each to BPL families enrolled under the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) from April 1. PM Ujjwala Yojana was launched by PM Narendra Modi on 1 May, 2016 at Ballia, Uttar Pradesh for giving LPG connections to the poor. [{Read more}](#)

## Key Points:

- Rajasthan – announced to provide 12 LPG cylinders a year at ₹500 each to BPL families under PMUY from April 1
- PMUY – was launched by PM Narendra Modi on 1 May, 2016
- [Rajasthan: Capital – Jaipur](#) | [CM – Ashok Gehlot](#) | [Governor – Kalraj Mishra](#)

**502.** On December 20, to complement government's push for electric vehicles (EVs), the National Test House (NTH) announced to set up testing facilities for EV batteries and charging systems at its Mumbai and Kolkata centres. The NTH will also set up a state-of-the-art Transformer Testing Facility at Jaipur, Rajasthan. The transformer testing facility at Jaipur will be spread over about 10,000 square metre area and the project will cost around Rs 125 crore. NTH functions under the Department of Consumer Affairs, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution (MoCAFPD). [{Read more}](#)

## Key Points:

- National Test House (under MoCAFPD) announced to set up:
  - Testing facilities for EV batteries and charging systems at its centres in Mumbai & Kolkata
  - State-of-the-art Transformer Testing Facility at Jaipur
- [Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution: Piyush Goyal](#) | [Constituency – Maharashtra](#)
- [MoS in Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution: Ashwini Kumar Choubey & Sadhvi Niranjana Jyoti](#)

**503.** On December 19, Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel unveiled the logo, website and social media handles of Urban-20 or U20 in Gandhinagar as part of G20 programmes to be held in the state in 2023. Under the G20 presidency of India, Ahmedabad has been selected to host the U20 cycle. U20 cycle will begin in February 2023 with the Sherpas' meeting and end with the U20 Mayors' summit. Along with C40 (Climate 40) and United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), Ahmedabad will organise various events including City Sherpas' inception meeting on February 9 and 10, 2023. The U20 Mayors' Summit will be held in July 2023. U20 provides a platform for cities from G20 countries to facilitate discussions on various important issues of urban development including climate change, social inclusion, sustainable mobility, and affordable housing, and propose collective solutions. [{Read more}](#)

## Key Points:

- Bhupendra Patel – unveiled the logo, website & social media handles of U20 as part of G20 programmes
- Gujarat – will host the G20 Summit in 2023 | Ahmedabad – will chair the U20 cycle in Feb 2023
- Ahmedabad – will also host the C40 (Climate 40) and United Cities & Local Governments (UCLG)
- U20 cycle will begin in Feb 2023 with the Sherpas' meeting & end with the U20 Mayors' summit in July 2023
- [Gujarat: Capital – Gandhinagar](#) | [CM – Bhupendra Patel](#) | [Governor – Acharya Dev Vrat](#)

**504.** On December 19, Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog, opened applications for 'ATL Marathon 2022-23', a flagship innovation challenge under AIM's Atal Tinkering Labs program. ATL Marathon is a national level innovation challenge for young innovators across India. The theme for this edition of ATL Marathon is "India's G20 Presidency". [{Read more}](#)



**Key Points:**

- AIM (NITI Aayog) – conducted the ‘ATL Marathon 2022-23’, a national level innovation challenge for young innovators
- Theme of ATL Marathon 2022-23 – “India’s G20 Presidency”
- HQs of AIM – New Delhi | Director – Chintan Vaishnav | Launched in – 2016 (a flagship initiative of NITI Aayog)

**505.** On December 18, Adani group announced to invest Rs 10,700 Cr into expansion of Chaudhary Charan Singh International Airport, Lucknow so that its annual passenger handling capacity zooms from 4 million passengers per annum (MPPA) to 39 MPPA. The Adani group had in November 2020 taken control of Chaudhary Charan Singh International Airport (CCSIA) from the Airports Authority of India (AAI). During the last few years, the Adani group has gradually increased its presence in the aviation sector. Airports in Lucknow, Jaipur, Mangaluru, Thiruvananthapuram, Ahmedabad, and Guwahati were leased by the AAI in February 2019 through a competitive bidding process. The Adani group did aggressive bidding and won the rights to run all six of them for 50 years. Moreover, the Adani group would invest about Rs 10,000 crore in the Ahmedabad airport between 2023 and 2027 to triple its passenger handling capacity, making it a regional hub. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Adani group – to invest Rs 10,700 Cr to expand Chaudhary Charan Singh International Airport (Lucknow)
- HQs of Adani Group – Ahmedabad, Gujarat | Chairman – Gautam Adani | MD – Rajesh Adani

**506.** Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Earth Sciences Dr Jitendra Singh said that ‘Samudrayaan’ mission is aimed at sending 3 personnel to 6000-metre depth in a vehicle called ‘MATSYA 6000’ for the exploration of deep-sea resources like minerals. The mission is expected to be launched by 2026. ‘MATSYA 6000’ vehicle is being designed and developed by National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT), Chennai under Ministry of Earth Sciences. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- ‘Samudrayaan’ mission is aimed at sending 3 personnel to 6000-metre depth in a vehicle called ‘MATSYA 6000’
- The mission is expected to be launched by 2026
- ‘MATSYA 6000’ vehicle is being designed & developed by – NIOT, Chennai

**507.** On December 18, Tamil Nadu Government made Aadhaar mandatory for government employees, government pensioners and beneficiaries of various schemes implemented by the State government through various Departments by their implementing agencies. The Treasuries and Accounts Department, through its implementing agency, would offer Aadhaar enrolment facilities for the beneficiaries who are not yet enrolled. In all other cases, where biometric or Aadhaar OTP or Time-based OTP authentication is not possible, benefits under the scheme may be given on the basis of physical Aadhaar letter whose authenticity can be verified through Quick Response (QR) code printed on the Aadhaar letter. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Tamil Nadu – made Aadhaar mandatory for Govt Employees, Govt Pensioners & Beneficiaries of various schemes
- Tamil Nadu: Capital – Chennai | CM – Muthuvel Karunanidhi Stalin | Governor – Ravindra Narayan Ravi

**508.** On December 20, Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) announced that three new cultural sites in India, including the iconic Sun Temple at Modhera, historic Vadnagar town in Gujarat, and rock-cut relief sculptures of Unakoti Range in Tripura, have been added to the Tentative List of UNESCO World Heritage Sites. The UNESCO website describes a tentative list as an ‘inventory of those properties which each State Party intends to consider for nomination’. Vadnagar is also the birthplace of PM Narendra Modi. With this, India now has 52 sites on the UNESCO’s Tentative List of World Heritage Site. [{Read more}](#)



**Key Points:**

- 3 new cultural sites in India have been added to the 'Tentative List of UNESCO World Heritage Sites':
  - Modhera Sun Temple (Gujarat)
  - Vadnagar town (Gujarat)
  - Unakoti Range (Tripura)
- Vadnagar is also the birthplace of PM Narendra Modi
- With this, India now has 52 sites on the UNESCO's Tentative List of World Heritage Sites

**509.** On December 18, Sri Lanka and India announced to start a passenger ferry service between Kankesanthurai port in Jaffna district and Pondicherry. With such engagement, the new service is expected to generate a large portion of foreign revenue. It will also be of immense convenience for Buddhist pilgrims to India. Moreover, the passenger transport services will also be started from south India to Trincomalee and Colombo in Sri Lanka. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Sri Lanka & India – to start a passenger ferry service between Kankesanthurai Port in Jaffna district & Pondicherry
- Sri Lanka – Colombo/Sri Jayawardenepura Kotte – Sri Lankan Rupee
- PM – Dinesh Gunawardena | President – Ranil Wickremesinghe

**510.** On December 20, Steel Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia launched India's first Green Steel Brand - "KALYANI FERRESTA" in New Delhi. This first-of-its-kind steel has been manufactured by a Pune-based Steel company, Kalyani group, by using renewable energy resources, leaving zero carbon footprints in the environment. Government of India has been promoting green steel manufacturing and has put in place a National Steel Policy to achieve zero carbon emissions by the industry. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Jyotiraditya Scindia – launched India's first Green Steel Brand - "KALYANI FERRESTA" in New Delhi
- It is manufactured by Kalyani group (Pune) by using Renewable Energy resources
- Ministry of Steel: Jyotiraditya M. Scindia | Constituency – Guna, Madhya Pradesh
- MoS in Ministry of Steel: Faggansingh Kulaste

**511.** On December 20, Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs (IICA), an autonomous institution under the aegis of the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, launched a programme to create 'Impact Leaders' in the areas of Environmental-Social-Governance (ESG). The impact leaders of the IICA certified ESG professional programme will have the responsibility to balance the 'Purpose, People, Planet and Profit'. The 'IICA Certified ESG Professional: Impact Leader Programme' is first of its kind in India designed specifically for creating most needed ESG professionals. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- IICA – launched a first of its kind programme to create 'Impact Leaders' in the areas of ESG
- 'Impact Leaders' of IICA certified ESG professional program will have to balance the 'Purpose, People, Planet & Profit'
- HQs of IICA – Gurgaon, Haryana | DG & CEO – Praveen Kumar





## International Affairs

**512.** On December 20, Nepal's drug regulatory authority has blacklisted 16 Indian pharmaceutical companies, including Divya Pharmacy which manufactures Yoga Guru Ramdev's Patanjali products, stating that they failed to comply with the World Health Organisation's (WHO) drug manufacturing standards. The list of the companies that do not comply with WHO standards were published after inspection of the manufacturing facilities of the pharmaceutical companies that had applied to export their products to Nepal. [{Read more}](#)

### Key Points:

- Nepal – blacklisted 16 Indian pharmaceutical companies that failed to comply with WHO's drug manufacturing standards
- Nepal – Kathmandu – Nepalese Rupee | President – Bidhya Devi Bhandari | PM – Sher Bahadur Deuba

## Banking, Finance, Insurance & Economic Affairs

**513.** On December 18, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman chaired the 48<sup>th</sup> GST Council meeting. The GST Council agreed to decriminalise certain offences and doubled the threshold for launching prosecution under the tax law to Rs 2 crore, but retained the limit at Rs 1 Crore for fake invoicing. The Council also clarified on the definition of SUVs (Sports Utility Vehicles) for the levy of 22% compensation cess over the 28% GST. Tax on Ethyl alcohol supplied to refineries for blending with motor spirit (petrol) was reduced to 5%, from 18%. The GST Council also decided to lower tax rates on husk of pulses to Nil from 5%. Currently, 1.40 crore tax payers are registered under GST. [{Read more}](#)

### Key Points:

- Nirmala Sitharaman – chaired the 48<sup>th</sup> GST Council Meeting
- Some important Decisions:
  - Threshold for launching prosecution under the tax law is doubled to Rs 2 Crore (Rs 1 Cr for fake invoicing)
  - 22% compensation cess over the 28% GST for the SUVs (Sports Utility Vehicles)
  - Tax on Ethyl alcohol supplied to refineries for blending with motor spirit (petrol) is reduced to 5% (from 18%)
  - Tax rates on husk of pulses is lowered to Nil (from 5%)

**514.** On December 20, TransUnion CIBIL, in collaboration with Ahmedabad-based Online PSB Loans (OPL), launched "FIT Rank", a ranking system for MSME borrowers. The 'FIT Rank' will rate the over 6 Crore micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) by drawing inputs from their current accounts, income tax returns and GST returns to arrive at a score between 1-10 to rate a borrower after taking consent to draw the relevant data. [{Read more}](#)

### Key Points:

- TransUnion CIBIL + Online PSB Loans (Ahmedabad) = launched "FIT Rank", a ranking system for MSME borrowers
- HQs of TransUnion CIBIL – Mumbai, Maharashtra | MD & CEO – Rajesh Kumar

**515.** On December 20, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) announced to gradually eliminate share buybacks through stock exchanges by April 2025 as it works to create a more equitable process for shareholders. The SEBI will create a separate window on the stock exchanges to conduct buybacks until then. The regulator also increased the minimum utilization of funds allocated for buybacks through the stock exchange to 75% from 50%. The SEBI reduced the timeline for the completion of buybacks through the tender offer route by 18 days. [{Read more}](#)



**Key Points:**

- SEBI – announced to gradually eliminate share buybacks through stock exchanges by April 2025
- SEBI – increased the minimum utilization of funds allocated for buybacks through the stock exchange to 75% (from 50%)
- SEBI – reduced the timeline for the completion of buybacks through the tender offer route by 18 days

**516.** On December 20, Jammu and Kashmir Bank signed an MoU with the Administration of Ladakh union territory, conferring preferential status to each other. According to the MoU, the Ladakh UT Administration would nominate J&K Bank as 'preferred banker' for all its banking-related services, while as, J&K Bank would give the 'most favoured client' status to UT Administration and its active permanent employees who maintain their salary accounts with the Bank. Moreover, J&K Bank would provide support to 50 tuberculosis (TB) patients from Kargil as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- J&K bank + Ladakh = an MoU to provide preferential status to each other
- HQs of J&K Bank – Sri Nagar, J & K | MD & Chairman – R. K. Chhibber

## **Defence Affairs**

**517.** On December 22, Indian Navy launched the Indian Naval Ship (INS) 'Arnala', the first of the eight indigenously-built Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASW-SWC), at the shipbuilding facility of L&T in Chennai's Kattupalli. Built by Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE), Kolkata, 'Arnala' made its first contact with the water of the Bay of Bengal. The ship has been named 'Arnala' to signify the strategic maritime importance accorded to the island of Arnala, situated in Maharashtra. The 'Arnala' class of ships will replace the 'Abhay' class ASW ships of the Indian Navy. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Indian Navy – launched 'INS Arnala', the first of 8 indigenously-built Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft
- It is built by GRSE | 'Arnala' ships will replace 'Abhay' class ASW ships | Arnala Island – situated in Maharashtra
- HQs of GRSE – Kolkata, India | Chairman & MD – P. R. Hari | Founded in – 1884

**518.** On December 20, Indian Navy received the fifth scorpene-class submarine named Vagir built under Project-75. Project-75 includes indigenous construction of six submarines of Scorpene design. These submarines are being constructed at Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) Mumbai, under collaboration with Naval Group, France. Other submarines of the Kalvari class are INS Kalvari, INS Khanderi, INS Karanj, and INS Vela which have already been commissioned into the Navy and INS Vagsheer, which was launched in April earlier 2022. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Indian Navy – received the 5<sup>th</sup> scorpene-class submarine named Vagir built under Project-75
- All Scorpene-class submarines under 'Project-75' are being built by = Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders + France
- The 6 submarines being commissioned under the Indian Navy's Project-75 are:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> – Kalvari | 2<sup>nd</sup> – Khanderi | 3<sup>rd</sup> – Karanj | 4<sup>th</sup> – Vela | 5<sup>th</sup> – Vagir | 6<sup>th</sup> – Vagsheer



# Sports & Games

**519.** On December 17, Rehan Ahmed became the youngest men's Test cricketer for England. He made his Test debut against Pakistan in Karachi. He was 18 years and 126 days & he also broke Brian Close's previous record set in July 1949. He was not the youngest player to play a Test for England. Holly Colvin made her debut for the women's team against Australia at Hove in 2005 at 15 years and 336 days. [{Read more}](#)

## **Key Points:**

- Rehan Ahmed – became the youngest men's (not overall) Test cricketer for England (18 years & 126 days)
- Holly Colvin – overall youngest Test cricketer of England (15 years & 336 days)
- UK – London – Pound Sterling | PM – Rishi Sunak (57<sup>th</sup>) | New King – King Charles III

**520.** Indian Navy's sailboat INSV Tarini set sail for an expedition to Cape Town, South Africa for participating in the 50<sup>th</sup> edition of Cape to Rio Race 2023. This ocean sailing race was scheduled to be flagged off from Cape Town on 2 January, 2023 and to culminate at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The race is one of the most prestigious Trans-Atlantic ocean races. [{Read more}](#)

## **Key Points:**

- INSV Tarini – to participate in the 50<sup>th</sup> edition of 'Cape to Rio Race 2023', an ocean sailing race (in Jan)
- The race was scheduled to be flagged off from Cape Town (South Africa) & to culminate at Rio de Janeiro (Brazil)

**521.** The 2023 women's World Boxing Championships will be hosted by Delhi from March 15 to 31. India will host the biennial event for the third time in the tournament's history. Since the inception of the tournament in 2001, the prestigious event has taken place twice in India previously in 2006 and 2018, both times in the capital. Besides this, India has also hosted the Women's Youth World Championships in 2017 in Guwahati. India has never conducted the men's world championship. [{Read more}](#)

## **Key Points:**

- Delhi – to host the '2023 Women's World Boxing Championships' (3<sup>rd</sup> time after 2006 & 2018)
- Delhi: CM – Arvind Kejriwal | Lt. Governor – Vinai Kumar Saxena | Chief Secretary – Naresh Kumar

**522.** On December 22, Tata Motors has extended its association with 'Maharashtra Open', also known as 'Tata Open Maharashtra', as the title sponsor for the fifth consecutive year. This is South Asia's only ATP 250 tournament, scheduled to begin on 31 December in Pune. Maharashtra Open is owned by IMG and managed by Reliance-backed RISE Worldwide and will be held at the Balewadi Stadium by the Maharashtra State Lawn Tennis Association (MSLTA) in association with the state government. [{Read more}](#)

## **Key Points:**

- Tata Motors – extended its association with 'Maharashtra Open' as the Title Sponsor (for the 5<sup>th</sup> consecutive year)
- This is South Asia's only ATP 250 tournament
- 'Maharashtra Open' is owned by – IMG | Managed by – RISE Worldwide (Reliance)
- HQs of Tata Motors – Mumbai, Maharashtra | Non-Executive Director & Chairman – Natarajan Chandrasekaran





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## Persons in News

**523.** On December 21, Ashutosh Manke, a 13-year-old boy from Madhya Pradesh, has been named 'Swachhta Ambassador' for Katni district, Madhya Pradesh. Ashutosh Manke, a student of 9<sup>th</sup> standard at CM Rice Model School, sent a postcard on cleanliness, giving his suggestions for the maintenance of garbage carts and general cleanliness. [{Read more}](#)

### Key Points:

- Ashutosh Manke – is named 'Swachhta Ambassador' for Katni district, Madhya Pradesh
- Madhya Pradesh: Capital – Bhopal | CM – Shivraj Singh Chouhan | Governor – Mangubhai Chhaganbhai Patel

## Science & Technology

**524.** On December 21, European Space Agency's (ESA) "Vega C" rocket was lost in space after it launched from the spaceport in Kourou, French Guiana. The rocket was carrying two satellites part of the Airbus' Pleiades Neo Earth-imaging constellation but failed to deliver them in Low Earth orbit (LEO). Pleiades Neo 5 and 6 were the 138<sup>th</sup> and 139<sup>th</sup> Airbus Defence and Space satellites to be launched by Arianespace. [{Read more}](#)

### Key Points:

- "Vega C" rocket of ESA – lost in space after it launched from Kourou, French Guiana (Operated by - Arianespace)

**525.** On December 20, Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACe) signed an MoU with Bengaluru-based deep tech startup, QNu Labs, to develop indigenous Satellite QKD (Quantum Key Distribution) products. With this MoU, QNu Labs, with the support of ISRO and IN-SPACe, aims to demonstrate unlimited distance Satellite QKD based quantum secure communication. IN-SPACe was constituted in June 2020. [{Read more}](#)

### Key Points:

- IN-SPACe + QNu Labs (Bengaluru) = an MoU to develop indigenous Satellite QKD products
- HQs of ISRO – Bengaluru, Karnataka | Director – S. Somanath | Formed on – August 15, 1969

## Appointments & Resignations

**526.** On December 20, Katrina Kaif was signed as a brand ambassador for Pepsico India's packaged-water brand Aquafina. She was earlier the brand ambassador for the company's fruit flavoured sugar drink Slice for the last 16 years. According to Dentsu, the Indian advertising market will hit \$11.1 billion in 2022, led primarily by digital advertising which will grow 31.6% and television ads which are expected to increase at 14.5%. [{Read more}](#)

### Key Points:

- Katrina Kaif – signed as a brand ambassador for Pepsico India's packaged-water brand, 'Aquafina'

**527.** On December 22, Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar has nominated P. T. Usha to the panel of Vice Chairpersons in the Rajya Sabha (Upper House). Ms. Usha is the first nominated member in the history of the Rajya Sabha to be included in the panel. The Vice President of India is the ex-officio Chairman of Rajya Sabha. [{Read more}](#)



**Key Points:**

- Jagdeep Dhankhar (Rajya Sabha Chairman) – nominated P. T. Usha to the panel of Vice Chairpersons in the Rajya Sabha
- P. T. Usha – is the first nominated member in the history of the Rajya Sabha to be included in the panel

**528.** On December 20, Sports brand Puma India has on-boarded Bollywood actor and entrepreneur Anushka Sharma as its new brand ambassador, part of its commitment towards the women's business in India. With this, She has joined Puma's roster of ambassadors such as Virat Kohli, KL Rahul, Kareena Kapoor Khan, Yuvraj Singh, Sunil Chhetri, and recently Harrry Sandhu. The actor will endorse the brand's footwear, apparel and accessories including select collections through myriad activities and brand campaigns throughout the year. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Anushka Sharma – appointed as brand ambassador of Puma for women's business in India
- Other ambassadors of Puma – Virat Kohli, KL Rahul, Kareena Kapoor Khan, Yuvraj Singh, Sunil Chhetri, & Harrry Sandhu
- HQs of Puma – Herzogenaurach, Germany | CEO – Bjorn Gulden (Arne Freundt from Jan 2023)

## **Awards, Rewards, Recognition & Prizes**

**529.** S. S. Rajamouli's movie "Rise Roar Revolt (RRR)" has now secured a place in the global list of 'Top 50 Films of 2022' curated by Sight and Sound magazine. RRR was placed at 9<sup>th</sup> spot. The list also includes Shaunak Sen's acclaimed documentary "All that Breathes" which secured the 32<sup>nd</sup> spot. The film has been lauded internationally, winning awards at the Sundance Film Festival and Cannes Film Festival among others. Aftersun, directed by Dir Charlotte Wells, secured first place in the list. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- S. S. Rajamouli's 'RRR' (9<sup>th</sup>) – featured in the global list of 'Top 50 Films of 2022' by Sight and Sound magazine
- Shaunak Sen's 'All that Breathes' – secured the 32<sup>nd</sup> spot | First spot – 'Aftersun' (by Dir Charlotte Wells)

**530.** On December 20, Union Tribal Affairs Minister, Arjun Munda awarded the DS Group in the category of 'Environment Sustainability' at the 20<sup>th</sup> FICCI CSR Awards. Dharampal Satyapal Group was awarded for its water conservation project, Water Economic Zone, in Udaipur, Rajasthan. Started in 2018, the 'Water Economic Zone (WEZ)', focuses on enhancing natural resources, particularly water and soil whereby ensuring groundwater recharge. The FICCI CSR Awards recognises the efforts of companies in integrating and internalising Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- DS Group (Noida, UP) – awarded in the category of 'Environment Sustainability' at the 20<sup>th</sup> FICCI CSR Awards
- Dharampal Satyapal Group was awarded for 'Water Economic Zone' in Udaipur, Rajasthan

**531.** On December 21, Infosys has been recognised for Leadership in Corporate Transparency and Performance on Climate Change by global environmental non-profit CDP, securing a place on its annual 'A List'. Infosys is one of a small number of companies that achieved an 'A' out of nearly 15,000 companies scored. Infosys has been featured in the leadership category under the CDP Climate Change disclosure for the seventh year in a row. CDP's annual environmental disclosure and scoring process is widely recognized as the gold standard of corporate environmental transparency. [{Read more}](#)



### Key Points:

- Infosys – recognised for ‘Leadership in Corporate Transparency and Performance on Climate Change’ by CDP
- Infosys secured place in ‘A List’ | Infosys has been featured in this list for the 7<sup>th</sup> year in row
- HQs of Infosys – Bengaluru, Karnataka | MD & CEO – Salil Parekh | Chairman – Nandan Nilekani | Founded in – 1981

**532.** On December 20, RBL Bank, one of India’s leading private sector banks, won the “IBSi Global FinTech Innovation Awards 2022” in the ‘Best CRM System Implementation and Most Impactful Project’ category along with BUSINESSNEXT. BUSINESSNEXT is a composable suite of deep tech platforms - CRMNEXT, CUSTOMERNEXT & DATANEXT and pre-assembled products for the BFSI industry. The award identifies and honours technology companies and banks for their outstanding work in implementing and innovating financial technology using emerging technologies. [{Read more}](#)

### Key Points:

- RBL Bank + BUSINESSNEXT = won the “IBSi Global FinTech Innovation Awards 2022”
- Category – ‘Best CRM System Implementation and Most Impactful Project’
- HQs of RBL Bank – Mumbai, Maharashtra | MD & CEO – R. Subramaniakumar | Chairman – Prakash Chandra

**533.** On December 21, RailTel Corporation of India Limited, a Miniratna PSU under the Railways Ministry, received the “Best Presented Annual Report (BPA) Award for 2021” instituted by the South Asian Federation of Accountants (SAFA). This award is considered the most prestigious accolade for financial reporting in the South Asian region. The annual report of the RailTel won the ‘Certificate of Merit’ in the ‘Infrastructure and Construction Sector’ category. The award ceremony was hosted by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nepal in Kathmandu on December 18. [{Read more}](#)

### Key Points:

- RailTel – received the SAFA’s “Best Presented Annual Report Award for 2021” at Kathmandu, Nepal
- RailTel won the ‘Certificate of Merit’ in the ‘Infrastructure and Construction Sector’ category
- HQs of RailTel – New Delhi | CMD – Sanjai Kumar

**534.** On December 21, Shah Rukh Khan became the only Indian to be named in an international list of 50 greatest actors of all time by Empire magazine. The publication highlighted his notable characters from four movies Sanjay Leela Bhansali-directed ‘Devdas’, Karan Johar’s ‘My Name Is Khan’ and ‘Kuch Kuch Hota Hai’, and ‘Swades’, directed by Ashutosh Gowariker. The list also recognises Hollywood giants like Denzel Washington, Tom Hanks, Anthony Marlon Brando, Meryl Streep, Jack Nicholson and many others. [{Read more}](#)

### Key Points:

- Shah Rukh Khan – only Indian to be named in international list of ‘50 Greatest Actors of All Time’ by Empire magazine

**535.** On December 19, the Smart Cities Mission (SCM), under the Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs, won the Platinum Icon at the Digital India Awards 2022 for their initiative “DataSmart Cities: Empowering Cities through Data” under the ‘Data Sharing and Use for Socio Economic Development’ category. The Awards instituted in 2009, under the aegis of National Portal of India, are one of a kind in India for honouring the efforts of different Government entities in the digital realm. These are conducted by the National Informatics Centre (NIC) under the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY). The year 2022 marked the 7<sup>th</sup> edition of the Digital India Awards. DataSmart Cities initiative is based on a ‘People, Platform, Process’ strategy. Moreover, other awards given under various categories are as mentioned below. [{Read more}](#)



### Key Points:

- 7<sup>th</sup> edition of 'Digital India Awards 2022' – by NIC (MeitY)
- 'Data Sharing and Use for Socio Economic Development' category:
  - Platinum Icon: Smart Cities Mission, MoHUA
  - Gold Icon: Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE)
  - Silver Icon: Center for e-governance (Karnataka)
- 'Digital Initiatives for Ease of Doing Business' category:
  - Platinum Icon: Mine Mitra (Uttar Pradesh)
  - Gold Icon: eAbkari (Odisha)
  - Silver Icon: Invest Punjab
- 'Digital Initiatives at Grassroot Level' category:
  - Platinum Icon: e-Vivechna App (Madhya Pradesh)
  - Gold Icon: DeGS Computer Basic Training Grassroot level (Jharkhand)
  - Silver Icon: Ksheerasree Portal (Kerala)
- 'Digital Initiatives in Collaboration with Startups' category:
  - Platinum Icon: Digital Workforce Management System (Kerala)
  - Gold Icon: Smart Nutrient Management of the Soil (Telangana)
  - Silver Icon: Digital Deposit Refund System (Uttarakhand)
- 'Digital Empowerment of Citizens' category:
  - Platinum Icon: National Agriculture Market (eNAM)
  - Gold Icon: Transport Mission Mode Project (eTransport)
  - Silver Icon: Judgment Search Portal
- 'Public Digital Platforms' category:
  - States:
    - Platinum Icon: Duare Sarkar (West Bengal)
    - Gold Icon: e-Services Manipur
  - Central Ministries & Departments:
    - Platinum Icon: Indian Customs Electronic Data Interchange Gateway (ICEGATE) Portal (CBIC)
    - Gold Icon: eShram

## Schemes & Initiatives

**536.** According to the information was given by Minister of Ayush Sarbananda Sonowal in a written reply to Rajya Sabha on December 20, Ministry of AYUSH is running a Central Sector Scheme namely, "AYURSWASTHYA Yojana", with two components - AYUSH & Public Health (PHI), and Centre of Excellence (CoE), from the Financial Year 2021-22. It was launched by merging two erstwhile schemes of this Ministry namely - (i) Central Sector Scheme of Grant-in-Aid for Promotion of AYUSH Intervention in Public Health Initiatives (PHI), and (ii) Central Sector Scheme for assistance to AYUSH organizations engaged in AYUSH Education/Drug Development & Research/Clinical Research etc. The maximum admissible financial assistance under the Centre of Excellence component of AYURSWASTHYA Yojana, to an organization/institute is Rs 10 Crore for a maximum period of 3 years. [{Read more}](#)

### Key Points:

- Ministry of AYUSH – is running a Central Sector Scheme namely, "AYURSWASTHYA Yojana" from FY 2021-22
- Two components of the scheme – AYUSH & Public Health (PHI), and Centre of Excellence (CoE)
- Maximum admissible financial assistance under the 'Centre of Excellence' component – Rs 10 Crore
- [Ministry of AYUSH: Sarbananda Sonowal](#) | [Constituency – Majuli, Assam](#)
- [MoS in Ministry of AYUSH: Munjapara Mahendrabhai](#)





**537.** On December 18, Odisha's Keonjhar district is India's highest recipient of funds under the District Mineral Foundation (DMF) scheme, and has spent ₹3,000 Crore under the scheme over the past 7 years. With a geographical area of 8,303 sq km, Keonjhar is hugely rich in mineral reserves, especially iron ore. The DMF fund is augmented by mining companies' contribution of 30% of their royalty amount for mining leases. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Keonjhar district (Odisha) – India's highest recipient of funds under the 'District Mineral Foundation (DMF) Scheme'
- DMF fund is augmented by mining companies' contribution of 30% of their royalty amount for mining leases
- Odisha: Capital – Bhubaneswar | CM – Naveen Patnaik | Governor – Ganeshi Lal

## **Important Days & Dates**

**538.** On December 20, Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) commemorated its '59th Raising Day'. SSB guards the India's border with Nepal and Bhutan and it works under the administration of the Ministry of Home Affairs. SSB was conceived in November 1962 under the name of 'Special Service Bureau', which was eventually created in March 1963 with the sole purpose of achieving 'Total security preparedness in the remote border regions. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- December 20 – 59<sup>th</sup> raising day of SSB
- SSB – guards the India's border with Nepal & Bhutan
- HQs of SSB – New Delhi | Director General – S. L. Thaisen (under Ministry of Home Affairs)

**539.** National Farmers Day, also known as Kisan Diwas, is observed across India on December 23 to mark the birth anniversary of the fifth Prime Minister of India, Choudhary Charan Singh. The day was first observed in 2001. Choudhary Charan Singh served as the 5<sup>th</sup> Prime Minister of India between 28 July, 1979 to 14 January, 1980. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- December 23 – Kisan Diwas or National Farmers Day (since 2001)
- The day marks the birth anniversary of – Choudhary Charan Singh (5<sup>th</sup> PM of India)

**540.** December 15 is celebrated as International Tea Day in several countries such as - India, Nepal, Vietnam, Indonesia, Kenya, Malawi, Malaysia, Uganda, Tanzania, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka. This day not only celebrates tea as a special beverage but also promotes sustainable tea manufacture, business, and consumption. The theme for International Tea Day 2022 is not known yet. People started to observe International Tea Day in New Delhi in 2005. In most tea-producing countries, the season of tea production begins in May, which is why the UN celebrates May 21 as International Tea Day. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- December 15 – International Tea Day in several countries
- May 21 – International Tea Day by the UN

**541.** National Mathematics Day is observed annually on December 22 to mark the birth anniversary of the eminent mathematician Srinivasa Ramanujan. He was born in Erode, Tamil Nadu, in 1887 to a humble Iyengar Brahmin family. In 2012, former Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh paid tribute to the mathematician and declared December 22 as National Mathematics Day. Moreover, 2012 was observed as the "National Year of Mathematics" in India. Besides, 1729 is globally known as the 'Hardy-Ramanujan Number'. [{Read more}](#)



### Key Points:

- December 22 – National Mathematics Day (birth anniversary of eminent mathematician Srinivasa Ramanujan)
- 2012 – “National Year of Mathematics” in India | Hardy-Ramanujan Number – 1729

## Obituaries

**542.** On December 19, 1971 India-Pakistan war veteran and retired Border Security Force (BSF) personnel, Lance Naik Bhairon Singh Rathore, passed away in Jodhpur. His bravery at Rajasthan’s Longewala post was portrayed by actor Suniel Shetty in the Bollywood movie ‘Border’. He was 81. He was deployed at the Longewala post in the Thar desert of Jaisalmer. It was the bravery of these men that decimated an assaulting Pakistani brigade and tank regiment at this location on December 5, 1971. He received the Sena Medal in 1972 for his gallant action. [{Read more}](#)

### Key Points:

- Lance Naik Bhairon Singh Rathore – retired BSF Personnel & 1971 India-Pakistan war hero – passed away
- His role was portrayed by Suniel Shetty in the 1997 movie ‘Border’

## Meetings, Conferences & Summits

**543.** On December 17, Union Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas, Hardeep S. Puri, addressed the Plenary Session at the 7<sup>th</sup> “Petrochemical Conclave” organised by Indian Oil Corporation Ltd (IOCL) at New Delhi. “India’s Petchem Future - Sustainable and Atmanirbhar” was the theme of the conclave. The Conclave aimed to provide a comprehensive platform for varied Petrochemical stakeholders to deliberate on the opportunities and challenges with the sector and brainstorm on the impacts of forces like energy transition, Crude Oil to Chemicals, Industry 4.0, emerging Green pathways, and Circular economy. Petrochemical market size is currently in India about \$190 Billion. [{Read more}](#)

### Key Points:

- Hardeep S. Puri – addressed the Plenary Session at the 7<sup>th</sup> “Petrochemical Conclave” organised by IOCL
- Theme – “India’s Petchem Future - Sustainable and Atmanirbhar”
- HQs of IOCL – New Delhi | Chairperson – Shrikant Madhav Vaidya | Founded in – 1959

## Ranks, Reports & Surveys

**544.** India climbed 8 spots in the global ranking on median mobile download speeds, from 113<sup>th</sup> in October 2022 to 105<sup>th</sup> in November 2022, according to latest data released by internet testing firm Ookla. India showed an improvement in median mobile download speeds, recording 18.26 Mbps in November, up from 16.5 Mbps in October. India’s global ranking on overall median fixed broadband speeds decreased by a spot to the 80<sup>th</sup> position in November from 79<sup>th</sup> in October. Qatar reported the fastest median mobile download speed of 176.18 Mbps in November 2022. [{Read more}](#)

### Key Points:

- India (18.26 Mbps) – ranked 105<sup>th</sup> in the Global ranking on median mobile download speeds by Ookla (in Nov 2022)
- Top – Qatar (176.18 Mbps)
- India’s global ranking on overall median fixed broadband speeds (in Nov 2022) – 80<sup>th</sup>



**545.** Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE) has been ranked No. 1 in India and 121<sup>st</sup> worldwide for being the most sustainable university, in the “UI Green Metric World University Rankings 2022” released by the Universitas Indonesia (UI). In 2022, 1050 universities from 85 countries participated. MAHE’s total score for this year was 8,050 with six criteria: Setting and Infrastructure, Education and Research, Energy and Climate Change, Waste, Water, and Transportation. MAHE is followed by Karnataka’s Mangalore University & Tamil Nadu’s S. R. M. University. Globally, the list was topped by Wageningen University & Research of the Netherlands. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- “UI Green Metric World University Rankings 2022” – released by the Universitas Indonesia
- MAHE – ranked No. 1 in India and 121<sup>st</sup> worldwide | In India: 2<sup>nd</sup> – Mangalore University, 3<sup>rd</sup> – S. R. M. University
- Wageningen University & Research of the Netherlands – ranked No. 1 in the world

**546.** Meghalaya topped across India with average monthly income per agricultural household (Rs 29,348), as per the 77<sup>th</sup> round of the Situation Assessment Survey (SAS) of Agricultural Households in the Rural Areas of India. Meghalaya is followed by Punjab (Rs 26,701) and Haryana (Rs 22,841). [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- 77<sup>th</sup> round of Situation Assessment Survey (SAS) of Agricultural Households in the Rural Areas of India:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> – Meghalaya (Rs 29,348), 2<sup>nd</sup> – Punjab (Rs 26,701), 3<sup>rd</sup> – Haryana (Rs 22,841)

## **Ordinance, Bills & Acts**

**547.** In December 2022, the Parliament passed the “Energy Conservation (Amendment) Bill, 2022” that enables the Union government to set up a Carbon Credit Trading Scheme and specify the minimum amount of non-fossil sources to be used by designated energy consumers. It will also enable the government to establish Carbon Markets in India. The Bill, which amends the “Energy Conservation Act, 2001”, was passed in the Rajya Sabha by voice vote. India’s goal is to cut emission intensity by 45% and achieve 50% of the installed capacity of electricity generation from non-fossil fuel sources. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Parliament passed the “Energy Conservation (Amendment) Bill, 2022”
- The Bill amends the “Energy Conservation Act, 2001”
- The Bill enables government to establish Carbon Markets in India & set up a Carbon Credit Trading Scheme

## **Acquisitions & Mergers**

**548.** On December 19, Wipro Consumer Care announced its entry into the packaged food and spice segment by acquiring Nirapara, one of the largest-selling traditional food brands in Kerala. Launched in 1976, Nirapara is known for its blended spices. The deal size was not disclosed by the company. Wipro Consumer Care and Lighting, a part of Wipro Enterprises, is among the fastest growing FMCG businesses in India. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Wipro Consumer Care – acquired Nirapara, one of the largest-selling traditional food brands in Kerala
- HQs of Wipro – Bangalore, Karnataka | MD & CEO – Thierry Delaporte | Founder Chairman – Azim Premji



# MoUs, Collaborations & Partnerships

**549.** On December 20, Online home services platform, Urban Company, signed an agreement with the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) to provide training and digital certification to thousands of freshers. The professionals will be trained by Urban Company for various facilities including Salon, Spa & Massage, Electricians, Plumbers, Carpenters, Appliance Repair, and Cleaning & Pest Control. This is in addition to its 2019 deal with NSDC to train 30,000 professionals under the Skill India mission which was launched in 2015. Through the 'Skills for All' vision, NSDC aims to train thousands of unskilled workers into blue-collar skilled microentrepreneurs. [{Read more}](#)

## **Key Points:**

- Urban Company + NSDC = an agreement to provide training and digital certification to thousands of freshers
- Through 'Skills for All' vision, NSDC aims to train unskilled workers into blue-collar skilled microentrepreneurs
- HQs of NSDC – New Delhi | CEO – Ved Mani Tiwar | Chairman – A. M. Naik (works under MoSDE)

**550.** On December 20, Switzerland-based E2S Power, a developer of thermal energy storage solutions, and India Power Corporation Ltd (IPCL), a power utility firm, signed an agreement for a 250 kWh pilot Thermal Energy Storage Unit to be operated in India. This collaboration will help in transforming thermal power assets into clean energy storage facilities. Through this JV the company expects to cater an estimated demand of 10 GW of Long Duration Energy Storage System (LDESS) within next 8-10 years. [{Read more}](#)

## **Key Points:**

- E2S Power (Switzerland) + IPCL = an agreement for a 250 kWh pilot Thermal Energy Storage Unit to be operated in India
- Aim: To cater an estimated demand of 10 GW of Long Duration Energy Storage System (LDESS) within next 8-10 years
- HQs of IPCL – Kolkata, West Bengal | Chairman – Amit Kiran Deb





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