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March
MockDrill
PDF No. 10

(PDF in English)



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An important message from Team Smartkeeda

Hi Folks! We hope you all are doing well. We would like to state here that this PDF is meant for preparing for the upcoming MockDrill Test of March 2022 Month at Testzone. In this Current Affairs PDF we have added all the important Current Affairs information in form of 'Key-points' which are crucial if you want to score a high rank in Current Affairs Mocks at Testzone. Therefore, we urge you to go through each piece of information carefully and try to remember the facts and figures because the questions to be asked in the Current Affairs MockDrill will be based on the information given in the PDF only.

We hope you will make the best of use of this PDF and perform well in MockDrill Tests at Testzone.

All the best!

Regards

Team Smartkeeda

स्मार्टकीड़ा टीम की ओर से एक महत्वपूर्ण सन्देश!

मित्रों! हम आशा करते हैं की आप सभी स्वस्थ और कुशल होंगे। इस सन्देश के माध्यम से हम आपसे यह कहना चाहते हैं की ये PDF मार्च 2022 माह में Testzone पर होने वाले MockDrill Test में आपकी तैयारी को बेहतर करने के लिए उपलब्ध करायी जा रही है। इस PDF में हमने कुछ अति आवश्यक 'Key-Points' के माध्यम से आपको सम-सामयिकी (Current Affairs) सूचनाओं से अवगत कराया है और अगर आप MockDrill में अपनी योग्यता सिद्ध करना चाहते हैं तो आपके लिए हर सूचना को पढ़ना, समझना और उसे याद रखना भी अति आवश्यक है क्योंकि MockDrill में शामिल किए गए प्रश्न PDF में दी गयी सूचना या जानकारी पर ही आधारित होंगे।

हम आशा करते हैं की आप इस PDF का भरपूर लाभ उठाते हुए आने वाले MockDrill Test में बेहतर अंक प्राप्त करेंगे।

आभार,

टीम स्मार्टकीड़ा

INDEX

National & States Affairs	6
International Affairs	7
Banking, Finance, Insurance & Economic Affairs	8
Defence Affairs	9
Sports & Games	10
Science & Technology	11
Appointments & Resignations	11
Awards, Rewards, Recognition & Prizes	13
Schemes & Initiatives	13
Important Days & Dates	14
Books & Authors	15
Meetings, Conferences & Summits	15
Ranks, Reports & Surveys	16
Amount & Agreements	16
Acquisitions & Mergers	17
MoUs, Collaborations & Partnerships	17



National & States Affairs

451. The Narasinghapettai Nagaswaram, a classical wind music instrument traditionally made by artisans based at a village near Kumbakonam in Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu, received the Geographical Indication (GI) tag. The nagaswaram now being used by artists throughout is called 'pari nagaswaram', which is longer than the 'thimiri'. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- "Narasinghapettai Nagaswaram" a classical wind music instrument – received GI tag
- This instrument is traditionally made by artisans based at a village in Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu
- Tamil Nadu: Capital – Chennai | CM – Muthuvel Karunanidhi Stalin | Governor – Ravindra Narayan Ravi

452. On March 20, Africa's Boma technique is undertaken at Keoladeo National Park in Rajasthan's Bharatpur district for capturing and translocating deer to Mukundara Hills Tiger Reserve, situated 450 km away. Boma capturing technique is popular in Africa. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Africa's Boma technique is undertaken at Keoladeo National Park for translocating deer to Mukundara Hills
- Keoladeo National Park + Mukundara Hills Tiger Reserve = located in Rajasthan
- Rajasthan: Capital – Jaipur | CM – Ashok Gehlot | Governor – Kalraj Mishra

453. On March 22, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya launched the "BRICS Vaccine R&D Center" and "Workshop on Vaccine Cooperation" through video-conference. India has one of the world's largest vaccine manufacturing industries which supplies vaccines to more than 150 countries and meets 65-70% of WHO's vaccine requirements. This Centre will help to pool together complementary advantages of BRICS countries in vaccine research and development and boost the capacity of BRICS countries to prevent and control infectious diseases and provide timely help to other developing countries in need. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya – launched the "BRICS Vaccine R&D Center" & "Workshop on Vaccine Cooperation"
- India's vaccines supply meets 65-70% of WHO's vaccine requirements

454. On March 20, Nagaland became the first paperless Legislative Assembly in India by implementing the National e-Vidhan Application (NeVA) programme. Now members can use electronic devices to participate in House proceedings. This initiative encourages paperless operations and reflects government's commitment towards Ashta Lakshmi. NeVA is a device neutral and member-centric application deployed on GI Cloud (MeghRaj) and it is a centrally sponsored scheme launched by Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs. The expenses for implementing NeVA are funded by the Centre and the state government on a 90:10 sharing basis. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Nagaland – became the first paperless Legislative Assembly in India by implementing "NeVA" programme
- Expenses for implementing 'NeVA' are funded by the Centre & the state government in the ratio of 90:10
- 'NeVA' is launched by Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs
- Nagaland: Capital – Kohima | CM – Neiphiu Rio | Governor – Jagdish Mukhi (addi. charge)



455. In March 2022, Environment Ministry's Expert Appraisal Committee has given grant of environment clearance for Sun Pharmaceuticals Industries Ltd's expansion project in the Madurantakam taluk near Vedanthangal Bird Sanctuary in Tamil Nadu. The estimated project cost would be ₹202.36 Cr. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Sun Pharma's expansion project near Vedanthangal Bird Sanctuary (TN) received grant of environment clearance
- Tamil Nadu: Capital – Chennai | CM – Muthuvel Karunanidhi Stalin | Governor – Ravindra Narayan Ravi

456. On March 24, Kerala's Tourism Minister P. A. Mohamed Riyas launched its 24x7 WhatsApp chatbot "Maya" to enable tourists to access all information and updates about the tourism ecosystem in the state by just sending a 'Hi' to the WhatsApp no 7510512345, or by scanning the QR code to access the service. After the launch of Caravan Tourism, Kerala is also exploring the possibilities of more new products like heli-tourism and cruise tourism for holidayers. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Kerala Tourism – launched its 24x7 WhatsApp chatbot "Maya" for tourists
- Kerala: Capital – Thiruvananthapuram | CM – Pinarayi Vijayan | Governor – Arif Mohammad Khan

International Affairs

457. In March 2022, Germany signed a long-term energy agreement with Qatar to reduce its dependence on Russia. Minister for Economic Affairs Robert Habeck secured the deal on a visit to Doha as part of efforts to diversify Germany's energy supply. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Germany – signed a long-term energy agreement with Qatar to reduce its dependence on Russia
- Germany – Berlin – Euro | President – Frank-Walter Steinmeier
- Qatar – Doha – Riyal | PM – Khalid bin Khalifa bin Abdulaziz Al Thani
- Russia – Moscow – Russian Ruble | PM – Mikhail Mishustin | President – Vladimir Putin

458. On March 23, France's President Emmanuel Macron suggested "Finlandization" of Ukraine amid rising tensions of Russia's invasion. 'Finlandization' refers to the policy of strict neutrality between Moscow and the West that Finland followed during the decades of the Cold War. The principle of neutrality was rooted in the Agreement of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance that Finland signed with the USSR in April 1948. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- France's President suggested "Finlandization" of Ukraine
- 'Finlandization' refers to the policy of strict 'neutrality' between Moscow & the West
- Ukraine – Kyiv – Ukrainian hryvnia | President – Volodymyr Zelensky

459. On March 20, Russia attacked Ukraine with cruise missiles from ships in the Black Sea and Caspian Sea, and launched hypersonic missiles from Crimean airspace. Russia fired "Kalibr" cruise missiles from the Black Sea & Caspian Sea and hypersonic "Kinzhal (Dagger)" missiles from airspace of Crimea. [{Read more}](#)



Key Points:

- Russia – used “Kinzhal” hypersonic missile & “Kalibr” cruise missiles against Ukraine
- Russia – Moscow – Russian Ruble | PM – Mikhail Mishustin | President – Vladimir Putin

Banking, Finance, Insurance & Economic Affairs

460. For the first time, India achieved its target of reaching \$400 billion in merchandise exports. India achieved the exports target nine days ahead of the intended deadline. India’s goods exports registered 37% increase over its exports in FY21 which were \$298.1 billion. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- India achieved its target of reaching \$400 billion in merchandise exports for the first time (9 days ahead of the deadline)
- India’s goods exports registered 37% increase over FY21’s exports of \$298.1 billion

461. On March 23, SBI Card, India’s largest pure-play credit card issuer, partnered with Nature’s Basket, India’s leading premium grocery store brand, to launch “Nature’s Basket SBI Card”. The card will be introduced in two variants - ‘Nature’s Basket SBI Card’ and ‘Nature’s Basket SBI Card Elite’. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- SBI Card + Nature’s Basket = partnership to launch “Nature’s Basket SBI Card”
- HQs of SBI Cards & Payment Services Ltd – Gurgaon, Haryana | MD & CEO – Rama Mohan Rao Amara
- HQs of Nature’s Basket – Mumbai, Maharashtra | CEO – Devendra Chawla

462. On March 20, HDFC Bank decided to launch an application “AutoFirst” that will offer fully automated auto loans. The bank also plans to launch “SmartHub Vyapar programme” to give a digital push to small business loans. The bank plans to onboard 20 million retailers in 3 years. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- HDFC Bank – to launch “AutoFirst” app to offer fully automated auto loans
- HDFC Bank – also plans to launch “SmartHub Vyapar programme”
- HQs of HDFC Bank – Mumbai, MH | MD & CEO – Sashidhar Jagdishan | Tagline – “We understand your world”

463. On March 23, EbixCash, a technology-based provider of digital products and services in the B2C, B2B and financial technology space has announced a partnership with Axis Securities for providing trading services to its customers. Under the agreement, customers of EbixCash will be offered a 3-in-1 account that integrates their savings, demat and trading accounts. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- EbixCash + Axis Securities = partnership for providing trading services to EbixCash’s customers
- HQs of EbixCash – Mumbai, Maharashtra | President & CEO – Robin Raina
- HQs of Axis Securities – Mumbai | MD & CEO – B Gopkumar



464. On March 23, ICICI Bank launched a co-branded credit card called “Chennai Super Kings ICICI Bank Credit Card” in partnership with Chennai Super Kings (CSK), one of the most successful cricket teams in India. The card has been specially designed with a range of exclusive privileges for millions of cricket fans of the iconic team. Four years ago, ICICI Bank had launched a similar co-branded credit card with Manchester United, a professional football club of England. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- ICICI Bank + CSK = launched a co-branded credit card called “Chennai Super Kings ICICI Bank Credit Card”
- HQs of ICICI Bank – Mumbai, MH | MD & CEO – [Sandeep Bakhshi](#) | Taglines – “Hum Hain Na!” & “Khayal Apka”
- CSK Captain – Ravindra Jadeja | Owner – India Cements | Head Coach – Stephen Fleming

Defence Affairs

465. The 3rd edition of India-Uzbekistan Joint Military Exercise “Dustlik” was conducted at Yangiariq, Uzbekistan from March 22 to 31, 2022. The joint exercise focused on Counter-Terrorism operations in semi-urban terrain under a United Nations Mandate. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- 3rd edition of Joint Military Exercise “Dustlik” conducted at Yangiariq, Uzbekistan – between India & Uzbekistan
- Uzbekistan – Tashkent – So’m | President – Shavkat Mirziyoyev

466. On March 22, Indian Army’s Agnibaaz Division and Maharashtra Police organized a joint exercise “Suraksha Kavach 2” at Lullanagar, Pune. The aim of the exercise was to harmonize the drills and procedures undertaken by Army and Police to counter any likely terrorist actions in Pune. The exercise involved participation of Counter Terrorism Task Force (CTTF) of Indian Army, Anti-Terrorism Squad of Maharashtra Police alongwith Quick Reaction Teams (QRTs), Dog Squads and Bomb Disposal Teams of both agencies. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Indian Army’s Agnibaaz Division & Maharashtra Police – organized “Suraksha Kavach 2” exercise at Lullanagar, Pune
- Maharashtra: CM – Uddhav Thackeray | Governor – Bhagat Singh Koshyari
- HQs of Indian Army – New Delhi | Chief – Gen. Manoj Mukund Naravane | Vice Chief – Lt. Gen. Manoj Pande

467. On March 22, the Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) under the Chairmanship of Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, accorded Acceptance of Necessity (AoN) for Capital Acquisition proposals of Armed Forces amounting to Rs 8,357 Cr. AoNs accorded by DAC include procurement of Night Sight (Image Intensifier), Light Vehicles GS 4X4, Air Defence Fire Control Radar (Light) and GSAT 7B Satellite. The satellite will be for communication requirements of the Army. As an impetus to ‘Aatmanirbhar Bharat’, all of these proposals have been approved under ‘Buy (Indian IDDM)’ category with focus on indigenous design & development and manufacturing in India. The DAC also cleared the procurement of 14 items worth Rs 380.43 Cr from the Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) startups/MSMEs. AoN to Procurement timelines is reduced from 2+ years to 5 Months, keeping in line with the Innovation Ecosystem. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- DAC accorded Acceptance of Necessity (AoN) for Capital Acquisition proposals of Armed Forces worth Rs 8,357 Cr
- DAC also cleared the procurement of 14 items worth Rs 380.43 Cr from the ‘iDEX’ startups/MSMEs
- AoN to Procurement timelines are reduced from 2+ years to 5 Months



468. Indian Army contingent arrived in Seychelles for the 9th edition of the 10-day-long Joint Military Exercise “Lamitiye 2022”, conducted between the Indian Army and Seychelles Defence Forces (SDF) from March 22 to 31. The Indian Army comprises troops from the 2/3 Gorkha Rifles group (Prkanthi Battalion). Lamitiye, which in Creole means friendship, is a biennial training event being conducted in Seychelles since 2001. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- 9th edition of Joint Military Exercise “Lamitiye 2022” – conducted between Indian Army & Seychelles Defence Forces
- HQs of Indian Army – New Delhi | Chief – Gen. Manoj Mukund Naravane | Vice Chief – Lt. Gen. Manoj Pande
- Seychelles – Victoria – Seychellois Rupee | President – Wavel Ramkalawan

Sports & Games

469. Manasi Joshi and Nithya Sre claimed a Gold medal each, while Pramod Bhagat secured two silver and a bronze as India bagged as many as 21 medals (6 Gold, 7 Silver & 8 Bronze) at the Level 1 Spanish Para Badminton International in Cartagena, Spain. Later, India claimed 34 medals (11 Gold, 7 Silver & 16 Bronze) from the Level 2 Spanish Para Badminton International event. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- India bagged 21 medals (6 Gold, 7 Silver & 8 Bronze) at the “Level 1 Spanish Para Badminton International”
- India bagged 34 medals (11 Gold, 7 Silver & 16 Bronze) at the “Level 2 Spanish Para Badminton International”
- Manasi Joshi (Gold) + Nithya Sre (Gold) + Pramod Bhagat (2 Silver & 1 Bronze) = Para-Badminton Players

470. On March 23, World No. 1 Tennis Player from Australia, Ashleigh Barty announced her retirement from tennis at the age of 25. Barty retired weeks after becoming the first home Australian Open champion in 44 years as she won women’s single title at the “Australian Open 2022”. Iga Swiatek is new world number one after replacing the retired Ashleigh Barty, who asked for her name to be withdrawn from the rankings. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- World No. 1 Ashleigh Barty (Australia - Tennis) – announced her retirement from Tennis
- Iga Swiatek is new World No. 1 after replacing the retired Ashleigh Barty

471. In March 2022, Sprinter Pranav Prashant Desai and high jumper Ramsingbhai Govind Padhiyar clinched Gold medals on the final day of the “World Para Athletics Grand Prix 2022” and 13th “Fazza International Para Athletics Championships”. The Championships was held in Dubai, UAE. Overall India won a total of 14 medals (5 Gold, 6 Silver & 3 Bronze) to claim 8th place in the medal tally. Colombia finished on top with 25 medals including 12 Gold. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- “World Para Athletics Grand Prix 2022” & 13th “Fazza International Para Athletics Championships” held in Dubai
- India claimed 8th place in the medal tally with 14 medals (5 Gold, 6 Silver & 3 Bronze) | Top – Colombia

472. On March 20, Hyderabad FC clinched their maiden Indian Super League title as it bagged the ‘Hero ISL 2021-22’ trophy by defeating Kerala Blasters FC. Hero ISL 2021-22 was the 8th season of the Indian Super League since its formation in 2013 and the 26th season of the top division of Indian football league system. The season started on 19 November 2021 and concluded with the final on 20 March 2022. [{Read more}](#)



Key Points:

- Hyderabad FC – clinched its maiden Indian Super League title winning the ‘Hero ISL 2021-22’ trophy
- Hyderabad FC beat Kerala Blasters FC

473. On March 20, Charles Leclerc of Ferrari won the Formula One (F1) season-opening Bahrain Grand Prix after reigning champion Max Verstappen was forced out with engine trouble with just two laps remaining. Carlos Sainz made it a Ferrari one-two while Lewis Hamilton snatched third place for Mercedes. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Charles Leclerc ([Ferrari](#)) – won “F1 Bahrain Grand Prix 2022”
- [Bahrain – Manama – Dinar](#) | [PM – Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa](#) | [King – Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa](#)

Science & Technology

474. On March 22, Bharti Enterprises-led OneWeb, the low Earth orbit (LEO) satellite communications company, signed an agreement with SpaceX to resume satellite launches. The first launch with SpaceX is anticipated in 2022 and will add to OneWeb’s total in-orbit constellation that is currently at 428 satellites, or 66% of the fleet. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- OneWeb + SpaceX = an agreement to resume its low Earth orbit (LEO) satellite launches
- [HQs of SpaceX – California, U.S.](#) | [Founder & CEO – Elon Musk](#) | [Founded in – 2002](#)
- [HQs of OneWeb – London, UK](#) | [CEO – Adrian Steckel](#) | [Executive Chairman – Sunil Bharti Mittal](#)
- [OneWeb – co-owned by Bharti Global & the UK](#)

Appointments & Resignations

475. On March 17, IT major Tata Consultancy Services re-appointed Rajesh Gopinathan as the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer for 5 years, from February 21, 2022 to February 20, 2027. The company has also re-appointed N. Ganapathy Subramaniam as the Chief Operating Officer and Executive Director from February 21, 2022, to May 19, 2024. Rajesh Gopinathan has been the CEO and MD of TCS since 2017. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Rajesh Gopinathan – re-appointed as MD & CEO of Tata Consultancy Services for 5 years till 2027
- [HQs of TCS – Mumbai, Maharashtra](#) | [MD & CEO – Rajesh Gopinathan](#) | [Founded in – 1968](#)

476. On March 19, Serdar Berdimuhamedow was sworn in as the President of Turkmenistan. Berdimuhamedow won the presidential election with nearly 73% of the votes on March 12. He is the son of the former president Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov. Presidential elections in Turkmenistan are held every 7 years. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Serdar Berdimuhamedow – sworn in as the President of Turkmenistan
- [Turkmenistan – Ashgabat – Manat](#) | [President – Serdar Berdimuhamedow](#)



477. On March 21, S. Phangnon Konyak was elected unopposed as the Rajya Sabha member from Nagaland, making her the first woman from Nagaland to get a berth in Parliament's Upper House (Rajya Sabha). Konyak, who is the state BJP women's wing chief, has become the second woman Member of Parliament from Nagaland in 45 years. Rano M Shaiza was the first. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- S. Phangnon Konyak – first woman from Nagaland to be elected as the Rajya Sabha member
- With this, she became the second woman Member of Parliament from Nagaland
- [Nagaland: Capital – Kohima | CM – Neiphiu Rio | Governor – Jagdish Mukhi \(addi. charge\)](#)

478. On March 17, Amidst the ongoing crisis in Ukraine, the government decided to extend the tenure of India's envoy to the United Nations T.S. Tirumurti for three months. Mr. Tirumurti was due to retire on March 31. He will now remain in the position at the rank of Secretary to the government from April 1 to June 30, 2022. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- T. S. Tirumurti – received 3 months extension for his tenure as India's envoy to the United Nations
- [US – Washington, D.C. – US Dollar | 46th President – Joe Biden | 49th VP – Kamala Harris](#)

479. On March 19, the Asian Cricket Council (ACC) decided to extend the tenure of Jay Shah as its President until 2024. Tenure of the executive board, along with its committees, will also continue till 2024. ACC is responsible for organising the Asia Cup tournaments. Pankaj Khimji was appointed as the Vice President of the Asian Cricket Council (ACC) and Mahinda Vallipuram was appointed as Chairman of Development Committee. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Jay Shah – got extension of his tenure as ACC President until 2024
- Pankaj Khimji – appointed as the Vice President of the Asian Cricket Council (ACC)
- Mahinda Vallipuram – appointed as Chairman of Development Committee of ACC
- [HQs of ACC – Colombo, Sri Lanka | President – Jay Shah](#)

480. On March 16, Japanese automaker Nissan appointed Frank Torres as Regional Divisional Vice-President for Business Transformation in the AMIEO region (Africa, Middle East, India, Europe and Oceania) and the new President of Nissan India. He replaced Sinan Ozkok. Atsushi Najima, Managing Director, Nissan Philippines, will be Nissan India's Chief Financial Officer. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Frank Torres – appointed as President of Nissan India (succeeding - Sinan Ozkok)
- [Hqs Nissan India – Chennai, Tamil Nadu | President – Frank Torres](#)

481. On March 21, Nongthombam Biren Singh was sworn in for the 2nd consecutive term at Raj Bhavan in Imphal. He was elected from Heingang constituency for the record 5th time. Governor La Ganesan administered the oath of office and secrecy. Before entering into Politics, Singh began his career as a footballer and got recruited in the Border Security Force (BSF) playing for its team. He quit the Congress in 2016 and joined the BJP. He was elected in 2017 elections and became the first BJP chief minister of Manipur. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- N. Biren Singh – sworn in as the CM of Manipur for the 2nd consecutive term (constituency – Heingang)
- [Manipur: Capital – Imphal | CM – N. Biren Singh | Governor – La. Ganesan](#)



Awards, Rewards, Recognition & Prizes

482. The legendary Devendra Jhajharia became the first para athlete to receive the Padma Bhushan in 2022, the country's third highest civilian award. Jhajharia is a multiple-time Paralympics medal winner. While shooter Avani Lekhara, javelin thrower Sumit Antil & gold medallist in badminton Pramod Bhagat are the other Paralympic medallists who received Padma Shri in 2022. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Devendra Jhajharia ([Javelin Thrower](#)) – received 'Padma Bhushan' in 2022 (first Para-athlete to receive Padma Bhushan)
- Other Paralympic medallists to receive Padma Shri 2022: Avani Lekhara, Sumit Antil & Pramod Bhagat

483. On March 19, Sportstar and The Hindu group released a coffee-table book, "Road to 1000" at the "2022 Sportstar Aces Awards" at The Taj Mahal Palace hotel. The book is a 520-page, special collection with 1000 pictures to commemorate Indian cricket's journey. The book is powered by IDFC First Bank. Moreover, Neeraj Chopra received Sportstar of the Year (Male) Award and Mirabai Chanu received Sportstar of the Year (Female) Award. While former Indian hockey team captain Ajit Pal Singh was conferred the 'Lifetime Achievement Award'. Lovlina Borgohain received Sportswoman of the Year award in Individual Sports category. And Savita received Sportswoman of the Year in Team Sports category. Besides, Avani Lekhara received Parathlete of the Year (Female) Award and Sumit Antil received Parathlete of the Year (Male) Award. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Sportstar & The Hindu group – released a coffee-table book, "Road to 1000" at the "2022 Sportstar Aces Awards"
- The book is powered by IDFC First Bank
- 2022 Sportstar Aces Awards:
 - Neeraj Chopra – Sportstar of the Year (Male) Award
 - Mirabai Chanu – Sportstar of the Year (Female) Award
 - Avani Lekhara – Parathlete of the Year (Female) Award
 - Sumit Antil – Parathlete of the Year (Male) Award
 - Ajit Pal Singh – Lifetime Achievement Award
 - Lovlina Borgohain – Sportswoman of the Year Award (Individual Sports)
 - Savita – Sportswoman of the Year Award (Team Sports)

484. On March 20, Former India cricketer Suresh Raina was felicitated with prestigious "Sports Icon" award at "Maldives Sports Awards 2022" by Maldives government. He was nominated alongside 16 international sportspersons. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Suresh Raina – felicitated with prestigious "Sports Icon" award at "Maldives Sports Awards 2022" by Maldives Govt
- [Maldives – Male – Maldivian rufiyaa](#) | [President – Ibrahim Mohamed Solih](#)

Schemes & Initiatives

485. On March 21, the Union Cabinet approved the continuation of the National AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) Control Programme (NACP), a Central Sector Scheme fully funded by the Government of India for a period of 5 years from April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2026, with an outlay of Rs 15471.94 Cr by approving phase-V of the programme. [{Read more}](#)



Key Points:

- Cabinet approved the continuation of the National AIDS & STDs Control Programme (NACP) for 5 years up to 2026
- Outlay of 'NACP phase-V' – Rs 15471.94 Cr

486. In March 2022, Chhattisgarh's CM Bhupesh Baghel presented the budget worth Rs 1,12,603 Cr for the financial year 2022-23. He also announced to hike annual assistance for beneficiaries under the "Rajiv Gandhi Landless Agricultural Workers Nyay Yojana" to Rs 7000 per year. The first installment of Rs 71.08 Cr has already been disbursed to more than 3.54 lakh landless beneficiaries. The CM also announced implementation of Old Pension Scheme (OPS) replacing the National Pension System (NPS) from next year for all employees appointed on or after January 1, 2004. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Chhattisgarh's CM Bhupesh Baghel presented the state budget worth Rs 1,12,603 Cr for FY2022-23
- Annual assistance for beneficiaries under "Rajiv Gandhi Landless Agricultural Workers Nyay Yojana" hiked to Rs 7000
- Chhattisgarh – also replaced the National Pension System (NPS) with Old Pension Scheme (OPS)
- Chhattisgarh: Capital – Raipur | CM – Bhupesh Baghel | Governor – Anusuiya Uikey

Important Days & Dates

487. On March 19, Home Minister Amit Shah attended the 83rd Raising Day parade of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) at Maulana Azad Stadium in Jammu. For the first time, the CRPF celebrated its Raising Day outside the national capital. CRPF Raising Day is celebrated to mark the day when Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, then home minister, presented colours to the CRPF in 1950 after the CRPF Act was enacted and the force rechristened to its present name. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Amit Shah attended the 83rd Raising Day parade of CRPF – observed on March 19
- HQs of CRPF – New Delhi | DG – Kuldiep Singh | Formed – 1939 | Motto – "Service & Loyalty"

488. World Meteorological Organization (WMO) has been commemorating World Meteorological Day since 1961 on March 23. In 2022, the theme is "Early Warning and Early Action". On this day in 1951, the WMO was founded. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- March 23 – World Meteorological Day – by WMO
- Theme – "Early Warning and Early Action"
- HQs of WMO – Geneva, Switzerland | SG – Petteri Taalas | President – Gerhard Adrian | Established in – 1950

489. Each year, on 24 March, the "International Day for the Right to the Truth Concerning Gross Human Rights Violations and for the Dignity of Victims" is observed by the United Nations. The day was first observed in 2011. The date was chosen because on 24 March 1980, Archbishop Oscar Arnulfo Romero of El Salvador was assassinated, after denouncing violations of human rights. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- March 24 – "Int. Day for the Right to the Truth Concerning Gross Human Rights Violations & for the Dignity of Victims"



490. March 21 is observed as the International Day of Forests every year to celebrate and raise awareness of the importance of all types of forests. This day has been observed since 2013. On November 28, 2012, United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) approved a resolution to observe this day. The theme for 2022 is “Forests and Sustainable production and consumption”. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- March 21 – International Day of Forests by – UNGA (since 2013)
- 2022’s theme – “Forests and Sustainable production and consumption”

491. World Sparrow Day is observed on March 20 every year. The first such event was held in 2010. In 2022, the theme is “Monitor the Sparrows & other common birds”. Sparrows or common House Sparrows are found in every continent of the world. However, house sparrows are becoming extinct everywhere. World Sparrow Day is an initiative of the Nature Forever Society, which is a non-government organisation (NGO) run by Mohammed Dilawar, an internationally acclaimed conservationist. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- March 20 – World Sparrow Day by – NGO Nature Forever Society (since 2010)
- 2022’s Theme – “Monitor the Sparrows & other Common Birds”
- Nature Forever Society NGO run by – Mohammed Dilawar

492. The International Adolescent Health Week was celebrated from 20th to 26th March to inspire health care providers, policy makers, administrators, media and adolescents and their communities to advocate for a successful transition into adulthood. In 2022, the theme is “Transitions”. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- March 20 to 26 – International Adolescent Health Week
- 2022’s theme – “Transitions”

Books & Authors

493. A picture-book edition titled “The Little Book of Joy” co-authored by the Nobel Peace Prize winners the Dalai Lama (14th) and Archbishop Desmond Tutu will be published in September 2022. It will be published by Random House Children's Books. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- “The Little Book of Joy” book – authored by Dalai Lama + Desmond Tutu
- The book will be published in Sep 2022 by – Random House Children's Books

Meetings, Conferences & Summits

494. Delegates representing 33 companies from the UAE, Hong Kong and Saudi Arabia arrived in Srinagar, J & K to turn ₹3,000 Cr MoUs, signed earlier in January, into a reality. Delegates attended the “Gulf Business Summit” on March 22 and discussed exploring investment opportunities in J&K in different sectors. The J&K government had already signed the MoUs in January with the UAE-based companies. [{Read more}](#)



Key Points:

- Delegates representing 33 companies from UAE, Hong Kong & Saudi Arabia arrived in Srinagar, J & K to attend the “Gulf Business Summit”

Ranks, Report & Surveys

495. In terms of annual average PM2.5 levels in 2021, Delhi ranked as the most polluted out of 107 capital cities in the world, according to the “2021 World Air Quality Report” released by the Swiss organization IQAir. Delhi topped the list for the 4th consecutive year, followed by Dhaka. While N’Djamena, the capital of Chad, was third on the list. India was home to 11 of the 15 most polluted cities in Central and South Asia in 2021. Bhiwadi in Rajasthan topped the list of the ‘world’s most polluted cities’ in 2021 among 50 cities ranked in terms of PM2.5 levels. Bhiwadi was followed by Ghaziabad, and Hotan in China. Among countries, India ranked 5th among the Most Polluted countries in the world. Bangladesh topped the list, followed by Chad and Pakistan. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- “2021 World Air Quality Report” – released by IQAir (Goldach, Switzerland)
- Most Polluted Capital Cities in the World: 1st - Delhi, 2nd - Dhaka, 3rd - N’Djamena
- Most Polluted Cities in the World: 1st - Bhiwadi, 2nd - Ghaziabad, 3rd - Hotan
- Most Polluted Countries in the World: 1st - Bangladesh, 2nd - Chad, 3rd - Pakistan | India - 5th

496. On March 22, Unemployment rate for persons of age 15 years and above in urban areas dipped to 9.8% in July-September 2021 from 13.2% in the same quarter of the previous year, according to the 12th “Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS)” released by the National Statistical Office (NSO). Joblessness or unemployment rate (UR) is defined as the percentage of unemployed persons in the labour force. The unemployment rate in April-June 2021 was 12.6% in urban areas. In urban areas, unemployment rate declined to 11.6% among females & 9.3% among males in July-September. NSO launched PLFS in April 2017. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- 12th “Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS)” – released by NSO
- India’s urban unemployment rate declined to 9.8% in July-Sep 2021 (compared to 12.6% in April-June)
- Unemployment rate declined to 11.6% among females & 9.3% among in July-Sep 2021
- NSO comes under – Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation (MoS I/C – Rao Inderjit Singh)
- HQs of NSO – New Delhi | Chairperson – Bimal Kumar Roy

Amount & Agreements

497. On March 21, National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) sanctioned a financial assistance of Rs 4,013 Cr to Odisha under the Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) during the FY22, the highest allocation in India. The allotment was made on the basis of the priority accorded by the state government for developing of infrastructure regarding drinking water supply, irrigation and rural connectivity. The total sanction has crossed Rs 32,100 Cr for Odisha since the inception of the RIDF. [{Read more}](#)



Key Points:

- NABARD – sanctioned Rs 4,013 Cr to Odisha under RIDF for FY22 (highest allocation in India)
- Odisha: Capital – Bhubaneswar | CM – Naveen Patnaik | Governor – Ganeshi Lal
- HQs of NABARD – Mumbai, Maharashtra | Chairman – Govinda Rajulu Chintala | Founded in – 1982

Acquisitions & Mergers

498. On March 23, State Bank of India (SBI), Axis Bank and Kotak Mahindra Bank acquired 7.84% stake each in Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC). All the three banks invested Rs 10 Cr each in the entity. The ONDC is an open-source e-commerce platform engaged in creating an open public digital infrastructure. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- SBI + Axis Bank + Kotak Mahindra Bank = acquired 7.84% stake each in Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC)
- HQs of Kotak Mahindra Bank – Mumbai, MH | MD & CEO – Uday Kotak | Tagline – “Let’s make money simple”
- HQs of Axis Bank – Mumbai | MD & CEO – Amitabh Chaudhry | Tagline – “Badhti ka Naam Zindagi”
- HQs of SBI Bank – Mumbai, Maharashtra | Chairman – Dinesh Kumar Khara
- MDs – Challa Sreenivasulu Setty | Ashwani Bhatia | Ashwini Kumar Tewari | Swaminathan Janakiraman

MoUs, Collaborations & Partnerships

499. On March 21, India’s main potash manufacturer and importer Indian Potash Ltd (IPL) signed an MoU with Israel Chemicals Ltd (ICL Group) to import 6-6.5 lakh tonnes muriate of potash (MoP) per annum for next 5 years until 2027, to boost domestic availability of this key fertilizer mainly used in horticulture and plantation crops. Israel Chemicals is also working with the IPL in operating a project titled “Potash for Life focused on achieving higher fertilizer use efficiency” with an aim to increase the income of farmers. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Indian Potash Ltd + Israel Chemicals = an MoU to import 6-6.5 lakh tonnes muriate of potash per annum till 2027
- HQs of Indian Potash Ltd – Chennai, Tamil Nadu | Chairman & MD – Sundeep Kumar Nayak
- HQs of Israel Chemicals Ltd – Tel Aviv-Yafo, Israel | CEO – Raviv Zoller

500. In March 2022, An MoU was signed between Khanij Bidesh India (KABIL) and Australian government's Critical Minerals Facilitation Office (CMFO) to carry out joint due diligence for greenfield and brownfield projects to identify lithium and cobalt mineral assets in Australia. KABIL is mandated to identify and acquire overseas mineral assets of critical and strategic nature such as lithium and cobalt, among others. Both countries have committed to invest \$6 million jointly to explore Lithium and Cobalt mines in Australia in the next 6 months. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- KABIL (India) + CMFO (Australia) = an MoU to identify critical mineral assets in Australia
- India + Australia = committed to invest \$6 million to explore Lithium & Cobalt mines in Australia
- Australia – Canberra – Australian Dollar | PM – Scott Morrison





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