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- Digital India RISC-V Microprocessor (DIR-V) Program launched
- Cabinet approves 540 MW Kwar hydro project on river Chenab in J&K
- Indus Water Treaty (IWT), 1960
- Cabinet approves Amalgamation of Consultancy Development Centre (CDC)
- Govt approves Rs 60,939 crore subsidy for P&K fertilisers for April-September
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April 1

Rajya Sabha passes Bill to remove Bhogta caste from SC list

- The Constitution (Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes) Orders (Amendment) Bill, 2022 was passed by a voice vote.
- The Bill amends the Schedule to the ST Order to include communities such as Deshwari, Ganjhu, Dautalbandi (Dwalbandi), Patbandi, Raut, Maajhia, Khairi (Kheri), Tamaria (Tamadia), and Puran in the list of STs in Jharkhand.

Constitutional Provisions

- Article 46 of the Constitution, provides that the State shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the society and in particular, of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation.
- Under Article 341(1), the President of India, after consultation with the Governor, may specify, "the castes, races, tribes or parts of groups within castes or races, which shall be deemed to be Scheduled Castes".
- The President has notified the Scheduled Castes in the order called 'Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order-1950' and the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes List (Modification) Order-1956.
- Article 164(1), provides that in the States of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh and Odisha there shall be a Minister in charge of tribal welfare who may in addition be in charge of the welfare of the Scheduled Castes and backward classes or any other work.

Dr Raghu Ram bestowed coveted British honour

- The award was bestowed by Prince Charles and prince wales near
- The honours system of order of British Empire (OBE) recognises people who have made achievements in public life and committed themselves to serving and helping Britain.
- The Doctors receiving honours in Knight/Dame, CBE, OBE, MBE etc categories by the queen.
- Ram is also one of the youngest recipients of the prestigious Padma Shri and Dr BC Roy National awards, which were conferred on him in 2015 and 2016, respectively.

HUL's digitally advanced Dapada factory joins WEF's prestigious Lighthouse Network

- The first FMCG production facility in India to receive this designation.
- The Global Lighthouse Network is a community of manufacturing sites recognised by the World Economic Forum (WEF) for applying advanced

technologies, innovations, and sustainable practices to modernise business operations.

- The Network includes sites that have implemented end-to-end digitisation across the value chain, pushing the boundaries of technological advancement.
- These revolutionary technologies result in reduced manufacturing cost, greater agility, and speed.

Kannagi temple festival to be held on April 16

- Mangala Devi Kannagitemple is a historic temple located in the Idukki District of Kerala bordering Tamil Nadu, about 7 km from Pazhiyankudi in Theni district and 15 km from Thekkady in Idukki
- Cheran Chenguttuvan, the king of ancientTamilakam had erected the temple for Kannagi around 2000 years back at Vannathipaarai and called it 'Kannagi Kottam' or 'Mangaladevi Kannagi temple'.
- It sits at an altitude of about 1,337 m above the mean sea level.
- It is celebrated around the 'Chitra poornima festival'.
- Thousands of devotees come from the states of Kerala and Tamil Nadu to take the blessings of the goddess.
- It is celebrated on the Poornima, hence believed by the locals that the shrine was made by king on this day.
- At the temple, pujas were performed with flowers, milk and honey.
- Yaha puja and milk pot processions were conducted. Prasadams were distributed to the devotees.
- The Department of Siddha led by Dr. Sirajudeen offered 'nilavembu' to the devotees as a precaution.

Members of ruling and opposition party has blown over the contribution of Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel on the 'Sardar Sarovar Dam'

- The Sardar Sarovar Dam is a concrete gravity dam built on the Narmada river in Navagam near Kevadiya, Narmada district, Gujarat in India. Indian states Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Rajasthan receive water and electricity supply from the dam.
- The foundation stone of the project was laid out by Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru on 5 April 1961.

Contributions of Nehru and Patel

- They played an important role in politics building, especially when it came to party affairs or, for instance, the choice of the first president of India.
- Patel, who had a better grip over the party, invariably won these contests between Nehru and him.
- Patel was also party to the idea of plebiscite wherever there was dispute — Junagadh, J&K and Hyderabad. This was the clear position of the government of India then.

- Patel did not resign from the cabinet when it was decided to refer the J&K issue to the UN or when ceasefire was accepted by India. He might have had his reservations, but went along with the decisions.
- Nehru's stand -The Constitution of India was still being drafted and the country had decided to adopt the Westminster type of democracy with a prime minister and his cabinet, which was supposed to be collectively responsible to Parliament. The Constitution was still a work in progress and so is the system of collective responsibility

April 2

Surat gets India's first steel slag road

- The processed steel slag (industrial waste) road is built as part of a joint-venture project by the
 - Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)
 - Central Road Research Institute (CRRI)
 - Union Ministry of Steel
 - government think-tank NITI Aayog
 - ArcelorMittal-Nippon Steel (AM/NS)
- The six-lane public road is a kilometre-long stretch in Hazira industries.
- The construction cost of the processed steel slag road is 30 per cent cheaper than roads built from natural aggregates.
- The thickness of the road is also 30 per cent lesser than normal ones, while the durability is much longer due to the utilisation of steel slag.
- This project falls under the initiative of the Waste to Wealth and Clean India Campaign.
- The slag is generated from a steel furnace burning at around 1,500-1,600 degree centigrade in the form of molten flux material as an impurity.
- The molten material is poured into the slag pits for cooling as per the customized procedure and further processed to develop stable steel slag aggregates, with "better material properties in place of the natural aggregate commonly used in road constructions"

Scientists publish the first complete human genome

- A complete human genome makes it easier to study genetic variation between individuals or between populations.
- A genome refers to all of the genetic material in an organism.
- The human genome is mostly the same in all people, but a very small part of the DNA does vary between one individual and another.
- By constructing a complete human genome, scientists can use it for reference while studying the genome of various individuals, which would

help them understand which variations, if any, might be responsible for disease.

The Indian Antarctic Bill introduced in Lok Sabha

- To provide for national measures to protect the Antarctic environment and associated ecosystems and to give effect to the Antarctic Treaty
- To provide a harmonious policy framework for India's Antarctic activities through a well-established legal mechanism
- Facilitate activities of the Indian Antarctic programme, including management of Antarctic tourism and sustainable development of fisheries
- To prohibit Indian expedition to Antarctica or carrying of certain activities in Antarctica without a permit or the written authorisation of another party to the protocol
- To provide for inspection in India by an officer designated by the Central government as an Inspector and to constitute an inspection team to carry out inspections in Antarctica.
- The growing presence of Indian scientists in Antarctica and the commitment to Antarctic research and protection prompted the government to adopt domestic legislation consistent with its obligations as a member of the Antarctic Treaty system.
- These laws will enable India's courts to deal with disputes or crimes committed in parts of Antarctica, and help build credibility vis-à-vis India's participation.

India and Antarctica:

- India is a signatory of the Antarctic Treaty, the Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources and the Protocol on Environmental Protection.
- India took its first expedition to Antarctica in 1982.
- The country maintains two research stations on Antarctica – Maitri (since 1989) at Schirmacher Hills and Bharati (2012) at Larsemann Hills – and has launched 41 expeditions to the continent thus far.

How Global Indigenous Practices Of 'Good Fire' Can Prevent Forests From Rampant Burning

- Indigenous and traditional knowledge of land management in many regions — particularly the use of fire to manage fuel, including for wildfire mitigation— can be an effective way of reducing hazard.
- It can also ensure that biodiversity and cultural (including understanding traditional gender roles that can govern burning activities) and ecological values are respected, as well as create livelihood opportunities.

Increasing case of forest fire

- Forest fire is a major cause of injury and loss to forests, with the population increase, the frequency and subsequent damage due to forest fire is increasing day by day.
- Major forest fires recently witnessed were- Australia Bush Fire, Uttarakhand forest fire, Russian wildfires etc.

Examples of how indigenous communities globally used burning to control wildfires:

- Australian Aborigines' use of fire to create mosaic landscapes for hunting and gathering purposes also broke up the continuity of fuels and so inhibited the extensive spread of wildfires.
- Canadian First Nations used fire as a way of managing their territory.
- Indigenous peoples from the Venezuelan, Brazilian and Guyanese Amazon as well as the Brazilian Cerrado have used fire for subsistence activities and the control of savanna plant fuel levels to prevent the spread of wildfires into adjacent forests.
- Brazil's Xavante Amerindians, for instance, are trained in total fire suppression.
- The Pemón in south-east Venezuela use patch mosaic burning to protect and sustain forests in Canaima National Park, which helps reduce the impacts of wildfires in the region.
- In South America, indigenous knowledge is combined with science to protect indigenous territories from wildfire incidents.
 - This is done through the indigenous cultural burning for wildfire prevention, mitigation, and response Network or PARUPA.

Utkal Divas: Odisha Celebrates 87th Foundation Day

- Utkal Divas, also known as Odisha Day and Utkala Dibasa, is celebrated on April 1 every year in memory of all the struggle that went into gaining a separate identity for the state that was once part of Kalinga ruled by emperor Ashok, and later by Kharavela.
- Odisha became the first independent state on language basis in India on this day 86 years ago.
- The state became a separate province, after a long struggle of over three centuries. The state was carved out of the combined Bengal-Bihar-Orissa province.
- The new province of Odisha was formed after people's continued struggle, which finally paid off on April 1, 1936.
- Sir John Hubbak was the first governor of the state.
- The state was originally called Orissa but the Lok Sabha passed the Orissa Bill, and Constitution Bill (113rd amendment), in March 2011 to rename it Odisha.

The UN General Assembly had declared April 2 as World Autism Awareness Day

- The UN General Assembly had declared April 2 as World Autism Awareness Day.
- The objective of the day is to create awareness about Autism and also to encourage people to support those who are suffering from this disorder.
- The theme of 2022 is - "Inclusive Quality Education for All" which marks the global inequalities in education and society, faced by people with autism.
- Autism or Autism Spectrum Disorder is a lifelong developmental disability that manifests itself during the first three years of life.
- It results from a neurological disorder that affects the functioning of the brain, mostly affecting children and adults in many countries irrespective of gender, race or socio-economic status.
- It is characterized by impairments in social interaction, problems with verbal and non-verbal communication and restricted, repetitive behaviour, interests and activities.
- Though there is no cure for it, therapeutic and behavioural guidance can considerably improve quality of life.

April 3

World Economic Forum has released the Global Gender Gap Report 2021.

- Overall Ranking: India has fallen 28 places- it is now ranked 140 among 156 countries.
- Among Neighbours: It is now one of the worst performers in South Asia, trailing behind neighbours Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka and Myanmar.
- Political empowerment: India has declined on the political empowerment index as well by 13.5 percentage points.
- In the index of education attainment, India has been ranked at 114.
- India has fared the worst on "Health and Survival", which includes the sex ratio, and economic participation of women.
- The estimated earned income of women in India is only one-fifth of men's, which puts the country among the bottom 10 globally on this indicator.
- For the 12th time, Iceland is the most gender-equal country in the world.
- The top 10 most gender-equal countries include Finland, Norway, New Zealand, Rwanda, Sweden, Ireland and Switzerland.
- The gender gap in political empowerment remains the largest: women represent only 26.1 per cent of some 35,500 parliament seats and just 22.6 per cent of over 3,400 ministers worldwide.

- Bangladesh is “the only country where more women have held head-of-state positions than men in the past 50 years.
- The countries with the largest gender gaps in economic participation include Iran, India, Pakistan, Syria, Yemen, Iraq, and Afghanistan.

Disquiet over govt.'s new policy for rare diseases

- The policy specifies increasing the government support for treating patients with a ‘rare disease’— from ₹15 lakh to ₹20 lakh. But, caregivers say this doesn’t reflect actual costs of treatment.
- Advocacy groups, however, have expressed concerns about the lack of funding support in the policy for patients diagnosed with life-threatening rare, genetic disorders.
- Patients of rare diseases will soon be eligible for a one-time treatment under the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY).
- Beneficiaries for financial assistance would not be limited to below poverty line (BPL) families, but extended to about 40% of the population, who are eligible as per 23 norms of Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY), for their treatment in Government tertiary hospitals only.
- The policy has categorised rare diseases in three groups – disorders amenable to one-time curative treatment; those requiring long term or lifelong treatment; and diseases for which definitive treatment is available but challenges are to make optimal patient selection for benefit.

US, Iran say they'll begin indirect talks on nuclear program

- Trump pulled the U.S. out of the accord in 2018. Besides, he opted for a “maximum pressure” campaign by imposing sanctions and other tough actions.
- Iran responded by intensifying its enrichment of uranium and building of centrifuges, while maintaining its insistence that its nuclear development was for civilian and not military purposes.
- Iran’s moves increased pressure on major world powers over the Trump administration’s sanctions and raised tensions among U.S. allies and strategic partners in West Asia.
- In January 2020, following the drone strike on Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps commander Gen. Qasem Soleiman, Iran announced that it would no longer observe the JCPOA’s restraints.
- The collapse of the JCPOA drags Iran towards nuclear brinkmanship, like North Korea, which has created major geopolitical instability in the region and beyond.

Iran Nuclear Deal:

- Also known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

- The JCPOA was the result of prolonged negotiations from 2013 and 2015 between Iran and P5+1+EU (China, France, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom, the United States, and the European Union, or the EU).
- Under the deal, Tehran agreed to significantly cut its stores of centrifuges, enriched uranium and heavy-water, all key components for nuclear weapons.

Haryana's 75% Quota For Locals In Private Jobs

- It requires private companies to set aside for domiciles 75% of jobs up to a monthly salary of Rs 50,000 or as may be notified by the government from time to time.
- The law is applicable to all the companies, societies, trusts, limited liability partnership firms, partnership firms and any person employing 10 or more persons and an entity, as may be notified by the government from time to time shall come under the ambit of this Act.

legal issues:

- The question of domicile reservation in jobs: While domicile quotas in education are fairly common, courts have been reluctant in expanding this to public employment. It raises questions relating to the fundamental right to equality of citizens.
- The issue of forcing the private sector to comply with reservations in employment. For mandating reservation in public employment, the state draws its power from Article 16(4) of the Constitution. But, the Constitution has no manifest provision for private employment from which the state draws the power to make laws mandating reservation.
- It may not be able to withstand judicial scrutiny on the touchstone of Article 19(1)(g).
- Public sector jobs constitute only a minuscule proportion of all jobs. Therefore, talks about extending the legal protections to the private sector to really achieve the constitutional mandate of equality for all citizens has been on.
- Since private industries use public infrastructure in many ways — from accessing land through subsidised allotment to receiving credit from public banks, tax exemptions and in many cases subsidies for fuel etc, the state has a legitimate right to require them to comply with the reservation policy.

6-digit HSN code mandatory in invoices for business with over Rs 5 crore turnover

- Over 200 countries use the system as a basis for their customs tariffs, gathering international trade statistics, making trade policies, and for monitoring goods.
- The system helps in harmonising of customs and trade procedures, thus reducing costs in international trade.

HS code mean- Harmonised System, or simply 'HS':

- It is a six-digit identification code. Of the six digits, the first two denote the HS Chapter, the next two give the HS heading, and the last two give the HS subheading.
- Developed by the World Customs Organization (WCO).
- Called the “universal economic language” for goods.
- It is a multipurpose international product nomenclature.
- The system currently comprises of around 5,000 commodity groups.

NASA's InSight Detects Two Sizable Quakes on Mars

- The two recent quakes of magnitude 3.3 and 3.1 originated in a region called Cerberus Fossae.
- These findings support the idea that the planet is seismically active.

InSight Mission:

- InSight is part of NASA's Discovery Program.
- It will be the first mission to peer deep beneath the Martian surface, studying the planet's interior by measuring its heat output and listening for marsquakes, which are seismic events similar to earthquakes on Earth.
- It will use the seismic waves generated by marsquakes to develop a map of the planet's deep interior.

April 4

Evolution can happen at shorter timescales, a fruit fly study shows

- The study has vastly changed our understanding of evolution and questioned the old notion of evolution being a slow process occurring over a longer period of time.
- We now have evidence that the change is actually happening faster than we ever thought and that not all evolution happens due to habitat destruction, invasion or pollution.
- It establishes that evolutionary changes happen quickly and researchers can track these in real time — within a single seasonal turn in a year.
- Ecosystems can experience rapid environmental change but whether populations can continuously adapt to those changes is unknown.
- Combining a field experiment with laboratory common garden experiments, the study observed changes in six phenotypes related to reproductive output or stress tolerance underlain by rapid, genome-wide evolution.
- The direction of trait and genomic shifts changed over months, in accordance with environmental changes.
- This study demonstrates the potential for rapid, continuous evolution to changing environmental conditions and highlights the importance of

collecting data with a high temporal resolution for observing the effects of fluctuating selection.

- The experiment focused on three key elements to study adaptive tracking in response to ongoing environmental change:
 - generating highly accurate measurements of phenotypic and genomic evolution,
 - taking these measurements on a time scale similar to that of natural environmental change, and
 - collecting measurements from independent replicate populations experiencing similar environmental conditions

Outcomes of the study:

- In understanding the field life of fruit flies a little more which will have a large impact on our basic understanding of evolution.
- Biologists could better predict the future of species experiencing rapid changes in climatic variables.

They grow fast and easy but do Miyawaki forests meet the fundamental principles of ecological restoration?

- Miyawaki is a technique pioneered by Japanese botanist Akira Miyawaki, which helps build dense, native forests.
- It is effective because it is based on natural reforestation principles, i.e. using trees native to the area and replicating natural forest regeneration processes.
- It has some significant benefits over more traditional forestry methods when used in smaller afforestation projects and is particularly effective in the urban environment.
- The trees planted by this method grow much faster, jump starting the forest creation process and capturing more carbon.
- The approach is supposed to ensure that plant growth is 10 times faster and the resulting plantation is 30 times denser than usual.
- It involves planting dozens of native species in the same area, and becomes maintenance-free after the first three years.
- Higher biodiversity has been recorded in Miyawaki forests than in neighbouring woodland, so it's an ideal method for creating diverse forest ecosystems quickly.

Criticism of the Miyawaki Method:

- Critics have accused him of shilling for corporations like Toyota, which have contributed to deforestation in places such as India, and of creating monotonous-looking forests that are expensive to boot.
- Environmentalists have questioned the efficacy of the method that accelerates the growth of trees and claims to match a forest's complex ecosystem. They believe that it is not a good idea to force plants to

photosynthesise fast. Also, a forest is not just the trees, but a complex ecosystem.

- The technique was started by the Japanese considering the climate in Japan and the regular occurrence of natural calamities like earthquakes. Environmentalists have questioned the suitability of the method for a tropical country like India.
- Miyawaki forests can only be grown at smaller spaces in or near cities. Such forests also lack some qualities of natural forests, such as medicinal properties and the ability to bring rain.
- Miyawaki Forests are very dense, which restricts the movement of any possible wildlife the forest might attract. Experts are of the opinion that nothing can replace something that is very natural in its form, like natural forests. However, it cannot be denied that these plantations can supplement and complement them.

Nutrition Institute plans to revise dietary guidelines after 11 years

- To identify various dietary and nutrition problems prevalent among different segments of the population in the country.
- To continuously monitor diet and nutrition situation of the country.
- To evolve effective methods of management and prevention of nutritional problems.
- To conduct operational research connected with planning and implementation of national nutrition programmes.
- To dovetail nutrition research with other health programmes of the government.
- Human resource development in the field of nutrition.
- To disseminate nutrition information.
- To advise governments and other organisations on issues relating to nutrition

National Institute of Nutrition:

- The National Institute of Nutrition (NIN) is an Indian Public health, Nutrition and Translational research center located in Hyderabad.
- The institute is one of the oldest research centers in India, and the largest center, under the Indian Council of Medical Research, located in the vicinity of Osmania University.
- It was founded by Sir Robert McCarrison in the year 1918 as 'Beri-Beri' Enquiry Unit in a single room laboratory at the Pasteur Institute, Coonoor, Tamil Nadu.
- Within a short span of seven years, this unit blossomed into a "Deficiency Disease Enquiry" and later in 1928, emerged as full-fledged "Nutrition Research Laboratories" (NRL) with Dr. McCarrison as its first Director.
- It was later shifted to Hyderabad in 1958.

- At the time of its golden jubilee in 1969, it was renamed as National Institute of Nutrition (NIN).

Army inducts Russian MANPADS

About Igla-S missile System:

- Developed by Russia
- It is a man-portable air defence system (MANPADS)
- It has won bid for Indian Army's Very Short Range Air Defence deal.
- It offers superior performance over earlier supplied SA-18 missiles to India.
- It is designed for use against visible aerial targets at short range such as tactical aircraft, helicopters, unmanned aerial vehicle (UAVs), cruise missile, head-on or receding, in presence of natural (background) clutter and countermeasures.
- As per requirements of Indian Army, it will have maximum range of 6 km, altitude of 3 km along with all-weather capability.
- Igla-S missile system will replace the existing Igla in service which is in urgent need of replacement.

History:

- The first MANPADS developed by the US were called 'Redeye' and declared operational in 1968, according to a report by the Australian Government.
- An updated version, the Stinger, was released in 1970s.
- They were provided to Mujahideen in Afghanistan to fight Soviet aircraft in the 1980s.
- The Soviets too have developed their own MANPADS – Strela and Igla.
- Around 20 countries, including the US, UK, Russia, Sweden, North Korea, Poland, and others, produce MANPADS.

\$40 trillion economy by 2047 possible if working age population is employed: CII report

- In 2020, there were about 900 million people (67% of total population) in the working age group of 15-64 in India, which is expected to expand by another 100 million by 2030, despite a declining trend in fertility rate.
 - This implies that a whopping 24.3% of the incremental global workforce over the next decade will come from India.
- The golden period of 30 years between 2020-50 where our working age population will bulge can be an important horizontal enabler to bolster growth, even as the developed world including China ages.
- Closing the skill gaps of its qualified workforce will be critical, as India depends more on human capital than its peer countries that have a similar level of economic development.
- The report cautioned that if India does not create enough jobs and its workers are not adequately prepared for those jobs, its demographic dividend may turn into a liability.

Confederation of Indian Industries (CII)

- It is a non-government, not-for-profit, industry-led and industry-managed organization.
- It was founded in 1895.
- It headquarters in New Delhi.
- It works to create and sustain an environment conducive to the development of India, partnering industry, Government and civil society, through advisory and consultative processes.

April 5

ICICI Bank official summoned as COVID orphans face eviction over loan dues

- The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) is an Indian statutory body established by an Act of Parliament, the Commission for Protection of Child Rights (CPCR) Act, 2005.
- The Commission works under the aegis of Ministry of Women and Child Development, GoI.
- The Commission began operational on 5 March 2007.
- The Commission is mandated under section 13 of CPCR Act, 2005 "to ensure that all Laws, Policies, Programmes, and Administrative Mechanisms are in consonance with the Child Rights perspective as enshrined in the Constitution of India and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child."
- As defined by the commission, child includes person up to the age of 18 years.

Community museum inaugurated in Gya - SASOMA VILLAGES

- Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council, LAHDC, Leh Chairman/CEC Tashi Gyaltson inaugurated the Community Museum in Gya - Sasoma.
- Arguably, Gya is the first village and oldest inhabitation in Upper Ladakh.
- Gya is situated on the Leh-Manali National Highway.
- The Community Museum will be an anchorage point for the young generations of Ladakh to their identity and to the visitors to understand this region. Museum has a work-in-progress corner, with a hope to get more collections from people's contributions and further grow.

Digital Banking units to come up in 75 districts

- This was stated by the Union Minister of State for Finance Dr. Bhagwat Karad, in a written reply in Lok Sabha.
- He said that no funds have been allocated by RBI for setting up of DBUs and the DBUs are expected to be operationalized by the end of the current calendar year.

- He said that as apprised by Reserve Bank of India(RBI), a Committee has been set up to prepare a roadmap for successful implementation of the said programme.
- Criteria, such as relatively higher percentage of women population, youth, MSMEs, exports, geographically and strategically important locations, North-East area, SHG penetration, moderate level of digital adoption etc., will be taken in to consideration while finalizing the list of 75 districts for setting up of DBUs.

SBI signs MoU with the Border Security Force

- The MoU will ensure extensive benefits to the security forces including complimentary Personal and Air Accidental Insurance (Death) cover, additional cover in case of on-duty death, and Permanent Total Disability/ Partial Disability cover.
- The MoU will support child education and the marriage of girl children of deceased BSF personnel.
- The retired personnel will be eligible for complimentary Personal Accidental (Death) Insurance, irrespective of age, whereas family pensioners will be eligible for a bouquet of benefits.
- Bank will offer zero-balance savings bank accounts with a host of complimentary benefits and waiver of service charges to BSF personnel.
- Bank will also provide attractive interest rates and concession on processing charges for serving personnel on Home, Car, Education, and Xpress Credit Personal loans.

Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur launched the Broadcast Seva Portal

- The portal will provide a single point facility to the stakeholders to request for required permission, registrations and licences.
- The Broadcast Seva Portal will reduce the turnaround time of applications and at the same time help applicants track the progress. This portal will reduce the human interface and will be a major step towards Ease of Doing Business.
- The 360-degree digital solution will facilitate the stakeholders in seeking permissions, applying for registration, tracking applications, calculating fees and executing payments.
- This portal will provide its services under the wider umbrella efforts of Digital India to all stakeholders to private satellite TV channels, teleport operators, community and private radio channels.
- The Broadcast Seva portal will be soon linked to National Single Window System.

PM congratulates Indian music composer, Ricky Kej on winning Grammy Award for album Divine Tides

- Ricky Kej (born 5 August 1981) is a multi-Grammy Award-winning Indian music composer and environmentalist.
- Ricky won his first Grammy in 2015 for his album 'Winds of Samsara' in the Best New Age Album category.
- With his second win, Ricky Kej joins a rarefied group which includes Ravi Shankar, Zubin Mehta, Zakir Hussain, AR Rahman and other Indian winners.

What Is 'J' Form and How Will It Benefit Farmers?

- The move, aimed at bringing transparency as well as empowering farmers, will make Punjab the first state in the country to provide digitised form J in real time.
- 'J form' is the sale receipt of a farmer's agricultural produce in mandis (grain market).
- These forms were earlier issued manually by arthiyas (commission agents) because in Punjab, a majority of farmers sell their crops through such agents only. Also, this form is an income proof for a farmer who sells his crop.
- By getting digitised J form, farmers will now have a clear record of the crop sold and income received in lieu of that and it will save their time as well, ensuring that they do not need to run to arthiyas to get copies of their sale.

The Indian Antarctic Bill introduced in Lok Sabha

- The draft bill is the first domestic legislation with regard to Antarctica in India.
- The Bill puts into place a comprehensive list of regulations related to Antarctica, for such scientific expeditions, as well as for individuals, companies and tourists.
- A domestic legislation will further provide more validity to the Antarctic Treaty, and subsequent protocols, of which India is a signatory.
- It extends the jurisdiction of Indian courts to Antarctica, for crimes on the continent by Indian citizens, or foreign citizens who are a part of Indian expeditions.
- The Bill introduces an elaborate permit system for any expedition or individual who wishes to visit the continent.
- The Bill further enlists elaborate standards for environmental protection as well as waste management.
- The Bill prohibits drilling, dredging, excavation or collection of mineral resources or even doing anything to identify where such mineral deposits occur — the only exception is for scientific research with a granted permit.

Indian Oil, L&T, Renew Join Hands For Green Hydrogen

- The IndianOil-L&T-ReNew JV will focus on developing green hydrogen projects in a time-bound manner to supply it at an industrial scale.

- Green hydrogen is produced through electrolysis of water using renewable energy.
- Nearly all of the hydrogen currently produced in India is grey hydrogen using natural gas and ammonia.
- The government is aiming to use green hydrogen as a substitute for grey hydrogen which is used by oil refiners and fertiliser manufacturers.
- The Centre has released draft guidelines on the National Hydrogen Mission which aims to increase production to 5 million metric tonnes (MMT) by 2030 to meet about 40 per cent of domestic requirements.
- Recently, Union Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari travelled to the Parliament in a Hydrogen-based Fuel Cell Electric Vehicle (FCEV).

UN climate report: It's 'now or never' to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees.

- The IPCC is the United Nations body for assessing the science related to climate change. The IPCC was set up in 1988 by the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) and the UN Environment Programme (UNEP). Its main activity is to prepare Assessment Reports, special reports, and methodology reports assessing the state of knowledge of climate change.
- The IPCC's Assessment Reports (ARs), which are produced every few years, are the most comprehensive and widely accepted scientific evaluations of the state of the Earth's climate.
- Six Assessment Reports have been published so far, the sixth report (AR6) coming in three parts — the first in August 2021, the second in February 2022, and the third on April 4, 2022.

April 6

Supervisory Committee on Mullaperiyar Dam may continue till dam safety authority gets fully functional, Centre tells SC

- The Dam Safety Act of 2021 has come as a panacea to end the prolonged and bitter legal battle over Mullaperiyar dam between Tamil Nadu and Kerala.
- The 2021 Act comprehensively provides for surveillance, inspection, operation and maintenance to prevent disasters caused by dams.
- It mandates the setting up of two specialised bodies, National Committee on Dam Safety and the National Dam Safety Authority, to evolve policies, recommend regulations for dam safety standards and resolve disputes between States.
- Kerala and Tamil Nadu have been trading allegations against each other over the safety of the Mullaperiyar dam.

- While Kerala claims the 126-year-old dam is unsafe a threat to thousands of people living downstream, Tamil Nadu, argues that the dam is so strong that the height of water level could even be increased to 152 feet.

State of denotified tribes, and why House panel is critical about a programme for their development

- De-notified, nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes are communities who are the most vulnerable and deprived.
- Denotified tribes (DNTs) are communities that were 'notified' as being 'born criminal' during the British regime under a series of laws starting with the Criminal Tribes Act of 1871.
- Nomadic and semi-nomadic communities are defined as those who move from one place to another rather than living at one place all the time.
- A National Commission for De-notified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes (NCDNT) was constituted in 2006 by the then government.
- It was headed by Balkrishna Sidram Renke and submitted its report in June 2008. The Renke commission estimated their population at around 10.74 crore based on Census 2001.
- A new Commission constituted in February 2014 to prepare a state-wise list, which submitted its report on January 8, 2018, identified 1,262 communities as de-notified, nomadic and semi-nomadic.
- While a number of these tribes are categorised under SC, ST and OBC, many are not. According to Department of Social Justice and Empowerment, 269 DNT communities are not covered under any reserved categories. These communities are frequently left out because they are less visible and difficult to reach.

Germany closes Russian darknet marketplace Hydra

- Founded in 2015, Hydra sold illegal drugs, stolen credit card data, counterfeit currency and fake identity documents, masking the identities of those involved using the Tor encryption network.
- The marketplace had around 17 million customer accounts and over 19,000 vendor accounts, according to the BKA federal police.
- The Hydra market was probably the illegal marketplace with the highest turnover worldwide, with sales amounting to at least €1.23 billion in 2020 alone.
- A dark net or darknet is an overlay network within the Internet that can only be accessed with specific software, configurations, or authorization, and often uses a unique customized communication protocol.

India, Philippines conclude contract for BrahMos missiles

- The first agreement was signed only in March last year, a second agreement in November and the deal was signed this January.

- Referring to interest from the Philippines in acquiring other defence equipment, he said discussions were on for systems related to aerospace and Navy.
- He said Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. had offered to do a technical briefing on the indigenous Light Combat Aircraft Tejas and there was a "degree of interest" from Manila.

SC sets deadline for Centre's response on Hindu Succession Act

- The petition filed by Kamal Anant Khopkar said Sections 15 and 16 of the Act, which deals with inheritance of self-acquired and inherited properties of Hindu women, "unveils deeply rooted patriarchal ideology".
- The petition draws attention to Section 15 of the 1956 Act which actually mandates how the husband's heirs have the first right over the self-acquired property of a woman who dies intestate. That is, the husband's family comes first in the line of inheritance.
- The Hindu Succession Act, 1956 is an Act of the Parliament of India enacted to amend and codify the law relating to intestate or unwilled succession, among Hindus, Buddhists, Jains, and Sikhs.
- The Act lays down a uniform and comprehensive system of inheritance and succession into one Act.
- Parts of this Act was amended in December 2004 by the Hindu Succession (Amendment) Act, 2005.

Bill introduced to ban financing of weapons of mass destruction

- It seeks to ban funding of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and empowers the Centre to freeze and seize financial assets of people involved in such activities.
- It also fulfils India's international obligations pertaining to weapons of mass destruction.
- The earlier law of 2005 regarding WMDs and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) only banned their manufacture.
- The United Nations Security Council's targeted financial sanctions and the recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force have mandated against financing of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems.
- The Bill seeks to insert a new Section 12A in the existing law which states that "no person shall finance any activity which is prohibited under this Act, or under the United Nations (Security Council) Act, 1947 or any other relevant Act for the time being in force, or by an order issued under any such Act, in relation to weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems".
- The Bill would give the government powers to "freeze, seize or attach funds or other financial assets owned by such person; or held by or on behalf of, or

at the direction of, such person; or derived or generated from the funds or other assets owned or controlled, directly or indirectly, by such person”.

Zelenskiy accuses Russia of worst war crimes since WW2

- The grimmest discoveries have been made in a Kyiv suburb called Bucha, a town located about 25 km to the northwest of the capital, which had an estimated population of around 36,000 before the invasion began.
- More than 300 bodies have been found in the town that Zelensky visited, some with their hands bound, flesh burned, and shot in the back of the head.
- War crimes are defined as “grave breaches” of the Geneva Conventions, agreements signed after World War II that laid down international humanitarian laws during war time. Deliberately targeting civilians amounts to a war crime.
- The International Criminal Court (ICC) at The Hague has already opened an investigation into possible war crimes by Russia. Russia does not recognise the ICC and will likely not cooperate with the investigation.

Parliament passes Chartered Accountants, Cost and Works Accountants and Company Secretaries (Amendment) Bill

- The Bill amends the Chartered Accountants Act, 1949, the Cost and Works Accountants Act, 1959, and the Company Secretaries Act, 1980.
- It changes the disciplinary mechanism under the three Acts and specifies timelines for disciplinary proceedings. It also provides more external representation on the Board of Discipline and Disciplinary Committee.
- The Bill creates a Coordination Committee headed by the Secretary of the Ministry of Corporate Affairs. The Committee will have representation from the three Institutes formed under the Acts.
- The Secretary to each Council will be designated as chief executive with the President as the head of the Council. The President will be responsible for ensuring implementation of decisions of the Council.

April 7

IMF lauds India's PM Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana program

- In a report the IMF has said, the expansion of food transfers and subsidies make it an important instrument for poverty alleviation.
- Appreciating the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana, the report demonstrated that the program provided insurance to the poor and prevented an increase in the prevalence of extreme poverty in the country.
- It stated that doubling of entitlements in 2020 during pandemic helped maintain extreme poverty at the low 0.8 percent level. It also said, without

any food subsidies, extreme poverty in the pandemic years would have increased by 1.05 per cent.

- The report said that poverty in the country declined the fastest during the period 2014 to 2019.
- The report also stated that social safety net provided by the expansion of country's food subsidy program absorbed a major part of the pandemic shock. This illustrates the robustness of India's social safety architecture as it withstood one of the world's biggest income shocks.
- Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) is a food security welfare scheme announced by the Government of India on March 26 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic in India.
- The program is operated by the Department of Food and Public Distribution under the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution.
- PMGKAY provides 5 kg of rice or wheat per person and 1 kg of dal to each family holding a ration card.

Exports of agricultural products, including marine, for the year 2021-22 have crossed the 50 billion dollar mark, which is the highest level ever achieved in it.

- As per the provisional figures released by Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics, DGCIS, the agricultural exports have grown by 19.92 percent during 2021-22.
- This achievement over the past two years will go a long way in realising the Prime Minister's vision of improving farmers' income.
- The highest ever exports have been achieved for staples like rice, wheat, sugar, other cereals and meat which resulted in benefiting farmers in many states.

Government gives nod to 5 new sites for N-power plants

- He informed Lok Sabha that the Government has accorded administrative approval and financial sanction for construction of 10 indigenous 700 Mega Watt Pressurized Heavy Water Reactors PHWRs to be set up in fleet mode.
- On progressive completion of the projects under construction and accorded sanction, the nuclear capacity is expected to reach 22,480 Mega Watt by 2031.
- There are presently 22 reactors with a total capacity of 6,780 Mega Watt in operation and one reactor, KAPP-3 (700 Mega Watt) has been connected to the grid in January last year.
- In addition, there are 10 reactors which are various stages of construction, which will add a total capacity of 8,000 Mega Watt.
- In order to produce fuel for all indigenous PHWRs, Fuel fabrication capacity is augmented in the facilities available at Nuclear Fuel Complex, Hyderabad and the upcoming facilities at Nuclear Fuel Complex, Kota, Rajasthan in

order to match with the requirement of existing PHWRs and upcoming PHWRs.

India will achieve the target of Sustainable Development Goals before the deadline of 2030, says Govt

- The World Health Day is a global health awareness day celebrated every year on 7 April, under the sponsorship of the World Health Organization (WHO).
- Since 1950, the World Health Day is held annually on April 7.
- The date of April 7 marks the anniversary of the founding of WHO in 1948.
- The Theme for 2022 is 'Our planet, our health'.

The Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Amendment Bill, 2022

- While there is no single, authoritative definition of a “weapon of mass destruction” (WMD) in international law, the expression is usually understood to cover nuclear, biological, and chemical (NBC) weapons.
- According to the United States Department of Homeland Security, “A weapon of mass destruction is a nuclear, radiological, chemical, biological, or other device that is intended to harm a large number of people.”
- The use of chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons is regulated by a number of international treaties and agreements.
- Among them are the Geneva Protocol, 1925, that banned the use of chemical and biological weapons; and the Biological Weapons Convention, 1972, and Chemical Weapons Convention, 1992, which put comprehensive bans on the biological and chemical weapons respectively.
- India has signed and ratified both the 1972 and 1992 treaties.
- The use and proliferation of nuclear weapons is regulated by treaties such as Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT).
- The Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Act, 2005 prohibited the manufacturing, transport, and transfer of weapons of mass destruction, and their means of delivery.
- The Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Act, 2005 of India prohibited the manufacturing, transport, and transfer of weapons of mass destruction, and their means of delivery.

Will hear petition against electoral bond scheme: CJI Ramana

- Electoral bonds are an instrument through which anyone can donate money to political parties.
- Such bonds, which are sold in multiples of Rs 1,000, Rs 10,000, Rs 1 lakh, Rs 10 lakh, and Rs 1 crore, can be bought from authorised branches of the State Bank of India.

- As such, a donor is required to pay the amount — say Rs 10 lakh — via a cheque or a digital mechanism (cash is not allowed) to the authorised SBI branch.
- The donor can then give this bond (just one, if the denomination chosen is Rs 10 lakh, or 10, if the denomination is Rs 1 lakh) to the party or parties of their choice.
- The political parties can choose to encash such bonds within 15 days of receiving them and fund their electoral expenses. On the face of it, the process ensures that the name of the donor remains anonymous.
- critics argue that the anonymity of electoral bonds is only for the broader public and opposition parties.
- The fact that such bonds are sold via a government-owned bank (SBI) leaves the door open for the government to know exactly who is funding its opponents.
- This, in turn, allows the possibility for the government of the day to either extort money, especially from the big companies, or victimise them for not funding the ruling party — either way providing an unfair advantage to the party in power.

XE variant slightly tuned up version of Omicron - The Statesman

- XE, a sub-variant of Omicron, which caused the third wave of Covid-19 this winter, had not been found in India until now.
- The XE variant is what is called a 'recombinant'. This means it contains the mutations found in BA.1 as well as BA.2 varieties of Omicron. This was first discovered in the United Kingdom in January, and so far more than 600 samples of XE have been found in different countries.
- Recombinant variants are not uncommon.

April 8

UN General Assembly votes to suspend Russia from the Human Rights Council

- This was part of the global response to the alleged war crimes in Bucha, a town outside Kyiv, where more than 300 bodies of civilians have been found after the withdrawal of the Russian forces.
- The Human Rights Council is an inter-governmental body within the United Nations system, which is responsible for strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights around the world.
- The Human Rights Council replaced the former UN Commission on Human Rights. It was created by the UNGA on March 15, 2006, and the body met in its first session from June 19-30, 2006.

- The Council, which meets at the UN Office in Geneva, Switzerland, is made up of 47 UN Member States who are elected by majority vote through a direct and secret ballot at the UNGA.
- The membership of the Council is based on equitable geographical distribution. African and Asia-Pacific states have 13 seats each, Latin American and Caribbean states have 8 seats, Western European and other states 7 seats, and Eastern European states 6 seats.
- The members serve for three years and are not eligible for immediate re-election after serving two consecutive terms.
- The Council has a five-person Bureau, consisting of a president and four vice-presidents, each representing one of the five regional groups. They serve for a year each, in accordance with the Council's annual cycle.

Russia and UNHRC

- With membership on the Council comes a responsibility to uphold high human rights standards. This is a criteria insisted on by States themselves when they adopted resolution 60/251 in March 2006 to create the Human Rights Council.
- It is this responsibility that Russia is alleged to have wilfully violated in Ukraine. Russia's three-year term as member of the Council began on January 1, 2021.

Public participation sought for child protection

- The Ministry of Women and Child Development sent its draft guidelines for Mission Vatsalya Scheme to States and Union Territories and sought suggestions by April 18, 2022.
- Mission Vatsalya is essentially renaming of a pre-existing scheme called Child Protection Services, and also includes child welfare services.
- To encourage public participation and utilise the resources available for success of the mission, the civil society, people's groups and various volunteering organisations can be encouraged to participate under Mission Vatsalyain a systematic and planned manner.
- These could include organisations under government initiatives such as Bharat Scout and Guide, NSS Volunteers, and Nehru Yuva Kendras. More NGOs and Self-Help Groups could be identified.
- The Ministry has also proposed a Vatsalya portal that will allow volunteers to register so that State and District Authorities can engage them for executing various schemes.
- Child protection programme components include institutional services through child care institutions (CCI) and family-based non-institutional care through sponsorship, foster care and adoption.

- It also supports after-care programme for children at CCIs once they turn 18, and emergency outreach service through Childline or the national helpline 1098 for children.

The fingerprint on the new tax on Employees' Provident Fund income

- An Employees' Provident Fund (EPF) account is mandatory for formal sector workers earning up to ₹15,000 a month in firms with over 20 employees, as a means of ensuring retirement income.
- The Finance Ministry had rationalised the tax move by arguing that the ₹2.5 lakh cap on contributions will cover about 93% of EPF members, and the tax-free, assured income was being milked by the super-rich and high net-worth individuals.
- On August 31, 2021, the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) notified rules to calculate the taxable income on PF contributions exceeding the specified limits, starting from the financial year 2021-22.
- The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) issued a circular in April 2022 to explain the operational details of the tax.
- the EPFO will maintain a non-taxable account for contributions up to ₹2.5 lakh a year, and a taxable account for members who contribute over that threshold.
- Tax will be levied at 20% on such income for EPF members whose retirement savings accounts have not been linked to their Permanent Account Number (PAN), while the rate will be 10% for those who have linked their tax and EPF accounts.

The common complaints about Aadhaar, which CAG has now flagged in UIDAI audit

- UIDAI is the statutory authority established in 2016 to issue Aadhaar to all residents of the country. As of October 31, 2021, UIDAI had issued 131.68 crore Aadhaar numbers.
- There are issues of data-matching, errors in authentication, and shortfall in archiving, the CAG has said in its audit report on the functioning of the UIDAI.
- The CAG has said the data of Aadhaar card holders have not been matched with their Aadhaar number even after 10 years in some cases.
- It has also criticised the absence of a system to analyse the factors leading to authentication errors.
- even though UIDAI was maintaining one of the largest biometric databases in the world, it did not have a data archiving policy, which is considered "a vital storage management best practice.

Indonesia's palm oil crisis, and its implications for India

- The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) has estimated the archipelago's palm oil production for 2021-22 (October-September) at 45.5 million tonnes

(mt). That's almost 60% of the total global output and way ahead of the next bigger producer: Malaysia (18.7 mt).

- It is also the world's No. 1 exporter of the commodity, at 29 mt, followed by Malaysia (16.22 mt).
- Yet, the country has seen domestic prices of branded cooking oil spiral, from around 14,000 Indonesian rupiah (IDR) to 22,000 IDR per litre between March 2021 and March 2022.
- The first has to do supply disruptions — manmade and natural — in other cooking oils, especially sunflower and soyabean.
- The second factor is linked to petroleum, more specifically the use of palm oil as a bio-fuel. The Indonesian government has, since 2020, made 30% blending of diesel with palm oil mandatory as part of a plan to slash fossil fuel imports.
- India is the world's biggest vegetable oils importer. Out of its annual imports of 14-15 mt, the lion's share is of palm oil (8-9 mt), followed by soyabean (3-3.5 mt) and sunflower (2.5).
- Indonesia has been India's top supplier of palm oil, though it was overtaken by Malaysia in 2021-22.

CAG pulls up UIDAI over privacy gaps, duplication of cards

- The list, notified by Department of Military Affairs, Ministry of Defence (MoD), lays special focus on equipment/systems, which are being developed and likely to translate into firm orders in next five years.
- These weapons and platforms are planned to be indigenised progressively with effect from December 2022 to December 2027. These 101 items will, henceforth, be procured from local sources as per provisions of Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP) 2020.
- This follows issue of first list (101) and second list (108) that were promulgated on August 21, 2020 and May 31, 2021 respectively.
- The third list comprises Light Weight Tanks, Mounted Arty Gun Systems (155mmX 52Cal), Guided Extended Range (GER) Rocket for PINAKA MLRS, Naval Utility Helicopters (NUH), Next Generation Offshore Patrol Vessels (NGOPV) etc.

IEA releases extra oil to calm prices

- The move is aimed at calming crude oil prices that hit a 14 year-high of \$139 per barrel in March.
- India had in November 2021 announced that it would release 5 million barrels from the strategic reserve as part of a coordinated effort with other crude oil importing countries to stabilise the price of crude oil.

International Energy Agency (IEA)

- The International Energy Agency (IEA) is a Paris-based autonomous intergovernmental organisation.

- It was established in the framework of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in 1974 in the wake of the 1973 oil crisis.
- The IEA was initially dedicated to responding to physical disruptions in the supply of oil, as well as serving as an information source on statistics about the international oil market and other energy sectors.
- It is best known for the publication of its annual World Energy Outlook.
- Membership: Only OECD member states can become members of the IEA. In 2022, Lithuania joined the IEA and became its 31st member.

Ministry of Environment informed Rajya Sabha about the Indian Tent Turtles.

- The Indian tent turtle (*Pangshura tentoria*) is a species of turtle in the family Geoemydidae. The species is endemic to India and Bangladesh.
- The preferred habitats of *P. tentoria* are freshwater rivers and swamps.
- Indian tent turtle is listed in Schedule –I of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 and is thereby provided the highest degree of protection.
- There are no reports to indicate that the Indian tent turtle is on the verge of extinction due to illegal mining in Narmada River.
- IUCN Status: Least Concern.
- CITES Status: Appendix II.

Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh says, EOS-02 satellite will be launched in second quarter of 2022

- EOS-02 is Technology demonstration satellite for various new technologies with applications that include agriculture, forestry, geology, hydrology, miniaturised power electronics, reaction wheels etc. and forming the payload for SSLV-1.
- EOS-01: Earth Observation satellite meant for Agriculture, Forestry & disaster management support
- EOS-02: Technology demonstration satellite for various new technologies with applications that include agriculture, forestry, geology, hydrology etc. and forming the payload for SSLV-1.
- EOS-03 : First Agile Earth Observation satellite in Geostationary orbit and applications which include near real time imaging, quick monitoring of natural disasters, spectral signatures for agriculture, forestry etc.
- EOS-04 : Radar Imaging satellite meant to provide high quality images under all weather conditions for applications such as Agriculture, Forestry & Plantations, Soil Moisture & Hydrology and Flood Mapping.
- EOS-05 : Earth Observation Satellite in the Geostationary Orbit.
- EOS-06 : Earth Observation satellite meant for applications, which include ocean related services and advisories towards potential fishing zone forecast , ocean state forecast

April 9

Cabinet approves distribution of fortified rice across Government Schemes

- These schemes of Government of India are the National Food Security Act (NFSA), Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman-PM POSHAN [erstwhile Mid-Day Meal Scheme (MDM)] and Other Welfare Schemes (OWS) of Government of India.
- The entire cost of rice fortification (around Rs. 2,700 crore per annum) would be borne by the Govt. of India as part of food subsidy till its full implementation upto June, 2024.

The following three phases are envisaged for full implementation of the initiative:

- Phase-I: Covering ICDS and PM POSHAN in India all over by March, 2022 which is under implementation.
- Phase-II: Phase I above plus TPDS and OWS in all Aspirational and High Burden Districts on stunting (total 291 districts) by March 2023.
- Phase-III: Phase II above plus covering the remaining districts of the country by March 2024.
- Prime Minister of India in his address on the 75th Independence Day (15th August, 2021) made an announcement on Fortification of Rice so as to provide nutrition to every poor person.

First batch of aircrew of Indian Navy completes training for induction of MH-60 helicopters

- India had signed a \$2.2 billion deal for MH-60R helicopters built by Lockheed Martin during the visit of then U.S. President Donald Trump in February 2020.
- Three helicopters were handed over to the Indian Navy last July in the U.S. and are being used for training Indian pilots at Pensacola, Florida and San Diego. Deliveries are expected to be completed by 2025.
- The MH-60Rs are a replacement of the Sea King 42/42A helicopters already decommissioned in the 1990s, and are envisaged to operate from the frontline ships and aircraft carriers.
- The MH-60R helicopters will provide the Navy enhanced offensive role including anti-submarine warfare, anti-ship strike, specialised maritime operations as well as search and rescue operations.
- This will be the first major induction of helicopters by the Navy in decades for deployment on ships.

India studying U.S. sanctions on Russian diamond major Alrosa

- Alrosa is a Russian group of diamond mining companies that specialize in exploration, mining, manufacture, and sale of diamonds. The company leads the world in diamond mining by volume.

- The company's headquarters are located in Mirny (Sakha Republic) and Moscow.
- Diamond has been a major component of India-Russia trade in recent years and the sector also received attention at the top political level.

Cabinet approves extension of Atal Innovation Mission till March 2023

- The AIM shall work on its intended target of creating an innovation culture and entrepreneurial ecosystem in the country. This will be done by AIM via its various programs.
- The intended targets that will be achieved by AIM are:
 - Establishing 10000 Atal Tinkering Labs (ATLs),
 - Establishing 101 Atal Incubation Centers (AICs),
 - Establishing 50 Atal Community Innovation Centers (ACICs) and
 - Supporting 200 startups via the Atal New India Challenges.
- The total budgeted expenditure of 2000+ crore shall be incurred in the process of the establishment and supporting the beneficiaries.
- The Mission has been set up under the NITI Aayog, in accordance with the Finance Minister's declaration in the 2015 Budget Speech.
- The objectives of the AIM are to create and promote an ecosystem of innovation and entrepreneurship across the country via interventions at school, university, research institutions, MSME and industry levels.

DRDO successfully flight-tests Solid Fuel Ducted Ramjet (SFDR) technology

- The test successfully demonstrated the reliable functioning of all critical components involved in the complex missile system and met all the mission objectives.
- The SFDR-based propulsion enables the missile to intercept aerial threats at very long range at supersonic speeds.
- The SFDR has been developed by Defence Research and Development Laboratory, Hyderabad in collaboration with other DRDO laboratories such as Research Centre Imarat, Hyderabad and High Energy Materials Research Laboratory, Pune.

'AAI launches 'AVSAR' Scheme to provide platform to SHGs

- Under "AVSAR" (Airport as Venue for Skilled Artisans Of The Region), which is an initiative of AAI, an opportunity to help the indigent to mobilize their households into functionally effective self-earned groups for self-reliance and self-dependence, has been provided.
- Under this scheme, an area of 100-200 square feet has been earmarked at each AAI operated airport.
- The space is being allotted to the self- help groups, turn on turn basis, for a duration of 15 days.
- Few outlets have already been commissioned at Chennai, Agartala, Dehradun, Kushinagar, Udaipur & Amritsar Airport wherein SHGs operated

by local women, are showcasing and marketing their homemade local products like Puffed Rice, Packaged Papad, Pickles, traditional craft with contemporary design to the air travellers.

UIDAI collaborates with ISRO for developing Bhuvan-Aadhar portal

- NRSC will be developing Bhuvan-Aadhar portal providing information and locations of the aadhaar centres across India.
- The portal also provides a facility to search the relevant Aadhaar centres by location based on residents requirements.
- Bhuvan will facilitate complete geographic information storage, retrieval, analysis and reporting for Aadhaar centres, with a high resolution backdrop of natural color satellite images.
- The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) is a statutory authority established under the provisions of the Aadhaar (Targeted Delivery of Financial and Other Subsidies, Benefits and Services) Act, 2016 on 12 July 2016 by the Government of India, under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).

Centre sets up AVGC promotion task force for animation, visual effects, gaming and comic sector

- The AVGC Promotion Task Force shall be headed by Secretary, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting.
- It will have Secretaries of –
 - Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship;
 - Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education;
 - Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology and
 - Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade.
- The AVGC Promotion Task Force also includes State Governments of Karnataka, Maharashtra, Telangana;
- The Terms of Reference of the Task Force include the following:
 - Framing of a national AVGC policy,
 - Recommend national curriculum framework for Graduation, Post-Graduation and Doctoral courses in AVGC related sectors,

From the Himalayan highlands of Leh-Ladakh to the banks of River Ganges in Varanasi – the heritage handicraft of Pashmina has got a brand new identity.

- The premium Pashmina products prepared by the highly skilled Khadi weavers of Varanasi was launched by Chairman KVIC, Shri Vinai Kumar Saxena in Varanasi.
- This is for the first time that Pashmina products are being produced outside the region of Leh-Ladakh and Jammu & Kashmir.
- Pashmina is famed as an essential Kashmiri art form but rediscovery of Pashmina in Varanasi, the spiritual and cultural Capital of India, is unique in many ways.

- The production of Pashmina prepared in Varanasi liberates this heritage art from the regional confines and creates a fusion of diverse artistry from Leh-Ladakh, Delhi and Varanasi.

April 10

W boson mass less than expected

- The physicists at the U.S. government's Fermi National Accelerator Lab crashed particles together over ten years and measured the mass of 4 million W bosons.
- These subatomic particles are responsible for a fundamental force, and they exist for only a fraction of a second before they decay into other particles.
- The difference in mass from what the prevailing theory of the universe predicts is too big to be a rounding error or anything that could be easily explained away, according to the study.
- If confirmed by other experiments, it would present one of the biggest problems yet with the standard model of particle physics.

W Bosons

- In particle physics, the W and Z bosons are vector bosons that are together known as the weak bosons or more generally as the intermediate vector bosons.
- These elementary particles mediate the weak interaction.
- The standard model says a W boson should measure 8,03,57,000 electron volts, plus or minus six. The recent study found it slightly more than that.

cardless cash withdrawal system in india

- RBI Governor said the absence of need for a card to initiate cash withdrawal transactions would help in containing frauds like card skimming, card cloning, etc.
- However, Governor Shaktikanta Das clarified credit & debit cards will be continued.
- Under the cardless cash withdrawal facility, individuals can withdraw cash without using any debit card at Automated teller machines (ATMs).
- The cardless withdrawal request can be initiated for a minimum of ₹100 per transaction and up to a maximum of ₹10,000 per day or ₹25,000 per month for a beneficiary while the limits are subject to change as per regulatory guidelines.

GSLV With Improved Cryogenic Upper Stage Getting Ready

- A high-level panel which examined last year's failed GSLV-F10/EOS-03 mission had recommended measures for making the CUS more robust.

- Indian Space Research Organisation's Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre (LPSC) is tasked with making the required modifications to the cryogenic engine-powered upper stage of the GSLV Mk II rocket.
- The GSLV-F10 mission on August 12, 2021 was designed to place the earth observation satellite EOS-03 in a geosynchronous transfer orbit, but the upper stage of the rocket malfunctioned, forcing the space agency to abort the mission.
- A national-level Failure Analysis Committee (FAC) later concluded that a leak in a Vent and Relief Valve (VRV) had led to a lower build-up of pressure in the Liquid Hydrogen (LH2) propellant tank, leading to a failed mission.
- Pressure build-up in the liquid hydrogen (LH2) propellant tank was low when the upper stage engine was to ignite.
- This caused the fuel booster turbo pump inside the LH2 tank, which feeds the main turbo pump of the engine to malfunction, affecting the flow of propellant into the engine thrust chamber.

Sangeet Natak, Lalit Kala Akademi Awards

- The Sangeet Natak Akademi Awards are national honours bestowed by the government on performing artists and teachers and scholars in the field of performing arts.
- The awards were given in the categories of music, dance, and theatre. In addition, one category was reserved for traditional, folk, and tribal dance, music, theatre and puppetry.
- An award each was also given for overall contribution and scholarship in performing arts.
- In addition, tabla maestro Zakir Hussain, Sattriya dancer Jatin Goswami, Odissi exponent Sonal Mansingh and Thiruvaidaimarudur Kuppiah Kalyanasundaram were given fellowships for their contribution to the field of dance.
- Among the 13 honoured for music are Hindustani vocalists Mani Prasad and Madhup Mudgal, santoor player Tarun Bhattacharya, Tejendra Narayan Majumdar for sarod, and Carnatic vocalists Alamelu Mani and Malladi Suribabu.
- Bharatanatyam dancer Radha Sridhar, Mohiniyattam dancer Gopika Varma, Kuchipudi dancer Ramalinga Sastry are among the 10 dancers who got the award.
- Among the eight theatre artistes who have been given the award are Suhas Joshi and Teekam Joshi for acting, Rajiv Naik and Lalitluangliana Khiangte for playwriting, and Sanjay Upadhyay for direction.
- Musicians Malini Awasthi and Gazi Khan Barna (folk music), Arjun Singh Dhurve (folk dance) Mohammad Sadiq Bhagat (folk theatre), Anupama

Hoskere (string puppetry), and Hem Chandra Goswami (mask making) are awardees in the other categories.

- Sculptor Himmat Shah, and painters Jyoti Bhatt and Shyam Sharma were awarded the prestigious Lalit Kala Akademi fellowship. Diwan Singh Bajeli was awarded the field of overall contribution in performing arts.

Contours of Yemen's first ceasefire in over 6 years

- The parties agreed to halt all offensive military, air, ground and maritime operations inside Yemen and across its borders.
- Under the deal, commercial flights will now be able to operate from the Houthi-held capital of Sanaa, fuel ships will be allowed to pass into the port of al-Hudaydah.
- The ceasefire agreement, brokered by the United Nations came into effect on April 2. The deal also coincided with the first day of Ramzan, the Muslim holi month of fasting.
- The truce is the first nationwide cessation of hostilities agreed by all sides in over six years.
- The war began in 2014 when Iran-backed Houthi rebels seized Sanaa and the country's northwest, sending the ruling government into exile.
- Few months in, a military coalition led by Saudi Arabia intervened with a massive air campaign, hoping to drive back the Houthis and restore the government.
- Since the war escalated in 2015, Yemen has suffered from one of the world's worst humanitarian crises, witnessing mass hunger, poverty and civilian deaths. The UN estimates over 377,000 deaths due to the conflict as of late 2021.

sowing maize in spring is not a good choice for Punjab farmers

- The ideal time for sowing maize is from January-end to February 15. But farmers continue to sow it till the end of February or even in early March.
- Utilizing more area for maize cultivation is always a welcome move in a state like Punjab where maize is seen as an alternative to the water-guzzling paddy crop.
- But growing maize during spring is not always a good choice in Punjab. From March to June, the temperature in the state is very high and the sunshine hours are also long.
- The temperature starts rising from March from 35 degree centigrade to 45 degree in June. Also, the average sunshine hours remain between 9 to 9.5 hours.
- Due to high temperature, the water gets evaporated soon and frequent watering of the maize crop is needed in peak summer season. This affects the water table drastically.

- According to experts, this crop is 'big no' without 'drip irrigation' for Punjab where the groundwater table is depleting drastically and there is a need for sustainable farming.
- Experts said that summer moong and sunflower crops are the best alternatives.
- Both the crops are extremely vital in the country as India imports 2.5 million tonnes sunflower oil every year and also 2-3 million tonnes of pulses.

'Micro-swimmers' may soon help with drug delivery

- It is possible to use light as a fuel to move microbots in real-body conditions with intelligent drug-delivery that is selectively sensitive to cancer cells.
- The research is led by MPI-IS and Max Planck Institute for Solid State Research (MPI-FKF), Stuttgart, Germany.
- Made from the two-dimensional compound poly (heptazine imide) carbon nitride (aka PHI carbon nitride), these microbots are nothing like the miniaturised humans.
- They range from 1-10 micrometre (a micrometre is one-millionth of a metre) in size, and can self-propel when energised by shining light.
- The PHI carbon nitride microparticles are photocatalytic. Like in a solar cell, the incident light is converted into electrons and holes. These charges drive reactions in the surrounding liquid.
- The charges react with the fluid surrounding them. This reaction, combined with the particle's electric field, makes the microbots (micro-swimmers) swim.

Can't regulate parties announcing freebies in polls

- The poll body was replying to a petition filed by advocate Ashwini Upadhyay that the promise and distribution of "irrational freebies" by political parties amounted to bribery and unduly influencing voters. It vitiated free and fair elections in the country, the petition said.
- But the ECI adopted a hands-off approach, saying "whether such policies are financially viable or have adverse effect on the economic health of the State is a question that has to be considered and decided by the voters of the State".
- The election body said it cannot regulate policies and decisions that may be taken by the winning party when they form the government. Such an action, without enabling provisions of law, would be an overreach of powers.
- The ECI referred to the top court's own decision in the S. Subramaniam Balaji case that the poll body cannot intervene in promises made in election manifestos released by parties before the announcement of the election dates, after which the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) kicked in.

April 11

Ukraine braces for key battles on eastern front

- Kramatorsk is a city and the administrative centre of Kramatorsk Raion in the northern portion of Donetsk Oblast, in eastern Ukraine.
- Since October 11, 2014 Kramatorsk has been the provisional seat of Donetsk Oblast, following the events surrounding the war in Donbas. Sievierodonetsk has a similar status for Luhansk Oblast.
- The city is located on the banks of the Kazennyi Torets River which is a right tributary of the Siversky Donets. It is an important industrial and mechanical engineering centre in Ukraine.

India's Coastline is Eroding : Ministry of Earth Sciences

- The National Centre for Coastal Research (NCCR), Chennai, an attached office of the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES), is monitoring shoreline erosion since 1990 using remote sensing data and GIS mapping techniques.
- About 6,907.18 km long Indian coastline of mainland has been analysed from 1990 to 2018.
- In terms of percentage, West Bengal, located on the eastern coast of the country, with a 534.35-km-long coastline, suffered erosion along about 60.5% of the coast (323.07 km) over the period from 1990 to 2018.
- This is followed by Kerala on the west coast, which has 592.96 km of coastline and 46.4% of it (275.33 km) faced erosion.
- Tamil Nadu, with a long coastline of 991.47 km, recorded erosion along 42.7% of it (422.94 km).
- Gujarat, with the longest coastline of 1,945.6 km, recorded erosion along 27.06% (537.5 km) of it.
- In the Union Territory of Puducherry, with a 41.66-km-long coastline, about 56.2% of its coast (23.42 km) recorded erosion.
- Another organisation under the Ministry, the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) has prepared and published an atlas of Coastal Vulnerability Index (CVI) maps for the entire coastline of India at a 1:100000 scale, the Ministry informed Parliament.

Union Minister Amit Shah inaugurates Seema Darshan Project at Indo-Pak border

- This multipurpose tourism project was completed under the direct guidance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- 'Seema darshan Project' was initiated with the aim to provide an opportunity to the people so that they can visualize the life and work of the BSF personnel on our border.
- BSF is constantly protecting our borders in very adverse weather conditions.

- Under the 'Seema Darshan Project', all kinds of tourist facilities and other special attractions have been developed at a cost of 1 crore 25 lakhs.

SpaceX capsule carrying 3 paying customers, former NASA astronaut arrives at International Space Station

- The Ax-1 mission, which was organized by Houston company Axiom Space, is flying on the SpaceX Crew Dragon Endeavour.
- Axiom Mission 1 (or Ax-1) is a private crew mission to the International Space Station (ISS), operated by Axiom Space out of Axiom Space's Mission Control Center (or MCC-A) in Houston, TX. The flight launched on 8 April 2022, from Kennedy Space Center.
- Axiom Space was founded in 2016 with the goal of creating the world's first commercial space station.

AIR News launches new weekly interactive programme Abhyaas for Competitive Examinations

- It is aimed at reaching out to students and job-seekers preparing for competitive examinations.
- The programme is in Hindi and is broadcasted every Saturday between 9.30-10pm.
- Every week a subject is chosen. Students can ask questions through WhatsApp or email and a guest speaker or expert responds to their queries. Questions on each subject are selected on the basis of crowd sourcing from students across the country.
- The program also includes segments like Explainer, Factfile, Examination Calendar and Question of the Week.

Believers celebrate Palm Sunday in Kerala

- Palm Sunday is a Christian moveable feast that falls on the Sunday before Easter.
- The feast commemorates Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, an event mentioned in each of the four canonical Gospels.
- Palm Sunday marks the first day of Holy Week.
- For adherents of mainstream Christianity, it is the last week of the Christian solemn season of Lent that precedes the arrival of Eastertide.

Adani Joins \$100 Billion Club, Adds Highest Wealth Amongst Ambani, Bezos, Musk & Others This Year

- The club refers to people whose net wealth is \$100 billion or above.
- Although Bill Gates did have a net worth of over \$100 billion in 1999 for a brief period, the term centibillionaire did not gain currency until the founder of Amazon, Jeff Bezos, increased his wealth to \$112 billion in 2017.
- It is since then that he was referred to as the world's first centibillionaire. After that, the numbers kept increasing.

- Today, the club has 10 members, with Musk on top and Bezos next, followed by Arnault, Gates, and Warren Buffett of Berkshire Hathaway. Adani is tenth on the list and \$3 billion below the person above him, Oracle's Larry Ellison — whose net wealth is \$103 billion.

President of India Inaugurates Madhavpur Ghed Fair

- Since 2018, the Government of Gujarat in association with the Ministry of Culture is organizing this fair every year to celebrate the sacred union of Lord Krishna and Rukmini.
- Born in today's Uttar Pradesh, Shri Krishna makes Gujarat his workplace and marries Rukmini, a princess from today's north-eastern region of our country. According to folk belief, the land of Madhavpur Ghed village has been a witness to their union.
- The Madhavpur Fair connects Gujarat with north-east region in an integral bond.
- Through such events, people, especially the young generation gets a chance to gain knowledge about our heritage, culture, art, handicrafts and traditional cuisine.
- These events also encourage tourism. All the festivals associated with Madhavpur Ghed fair also underline the unity and diversity of India.

NCPCR To Celebrate Pariksha Parv 4.0 From 11th April

- NCPCR has been celebrating exams with its campaign 'Pariksha Parv' since 2019, intending to change the outlook of children towards exams stress and overcome their anxiety before exam result at a platform.
- Pariksha Parv 4.0 is an endeavor for providing a platform for students, parents and teachers to share their thoughts and get guidance and important tips from the experts.
- In stressful times, talking about and sharing the uneasy and confusing thoughts would help mitigate stress and anxiety of students to a great extent.
- This year, Pariksha Parv4.0 will focus on SAMVEDNA- (1800-121-2830), a toll-free Tele counseling service of NCPCR by trained Counsellors for COVID related stress which will now be extended for students to cope up with exam and result related queries, stress and anxiety.

April 12

Goa, Gujarat top NITI Aayog's state energy and climate index

- The States have been categorised based on size and geographical differences as larger and smaller States and UTs. The index is based on 2019-20 data.

- Gujarat, Kerala and Punjab have been ranked as the top three performers in the category of larger States, while Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh were the bottom three States.
- Goa emerged as the top performer in the smaller States category followed by Tripura and Manipur.
- Among UTs, Chandigarh, Delhi and Daman & Diu/Dadra & Nagar Haveli are the top performers.
- Punjab was the best performer in discom performance, while Kerala topped in access, affordability and reliability category.
- Haryana was the best performer in clean energy initiative among larger States and Tamil Nadu in the energy efficiency category.
- The State Energy and Climate Index (SECI) is the first index that aims to track the efforts made by States and UTs in the climate and energy sector.

Fourth Annual US-India 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar led the Indian delegation. The US delegation was led by Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin.
- The dialogue enabled both sides to undertake a comprehensive review of cross-cutting issues in the India-US bilateral agenda related to Foreign Policy, Defense and Security.
- The Defence Minister said India's Department of Space and the US's Dept of Defence have finished a 'Space Situational Awareness' agreement.
- An agreement on Defence Space and Defence Artificial Intelligence dialogues has also been reached.

Discovery of Megalithic Stone Jars in Assam

- The paper, 'An archaeological survey of the Assam stone jar sites' documents three distinct jar shapes (bulbous top with conical end; biconical; cylindrical) on spurs, hill slopes and ridge lines.
- At one site, Nuchbunglo, as many as 546 jars were found. This is arguably the largest such site in the world.
- The study published in Asian Archaeology, calls for more research to understand the "likely cultural relationship" between Assam and Laos and Indonesia, the only two other sites where similar jars have been found.

CBIC Chairman releases National Time Release Study, 2022

- TRS are essentially a performance measurement tool for assessing the cargo clearance process of the international trade, as recommended by the World Trade Organization (WTO) under the Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) and the World Customs Organization (WCO).
- It adopts average cargo release time, i.e. the time taken from the arrival of the cargo at the customs station to its eventual release for import or export, as the case may be.

- The National Time Release Study (NTRS) 2022 covered 15 major Customs formations, including four port categories - seaports, air cargo complexes (ACCs), inland container depot (ICDs) and integrated check posts (ICPs) and is based on the sample period between 1st – 7th January 2022.

The Parliamentary Consultative Committee attached to the Civil Aviation Ministry discussed 'e-BCAS project'.

- Bureau of Civil Aviation Security, BCAS establishes, develops, implements maintains, and reviews the National Aviation Security Programme.
- It also safeguards civil aviation operations against acts of unlawful interference and threat, taking into account the safety, regularity, and efficiency of flights.
- It has now undertaken e-BCAS, an initiative under e-Governance for automation of internal processes. This will be an online platform for facilitation of stakeholders.
- It will leverage strength of existing processes and organizational structure, with the objective to make entire activities transparent, user-friendly, and efficient.
- It will digitize the office processes, facilitate fast approvals, and ensure ease of doing business, by technological integration across various divisions and processes.
- Under e-Sahaj module, issuance of security clearance will be provided.
- Under the e-training module, 16 training courses are being run for aviation security training and certifications. The Module involves online testing and effective supervision of the quality of training being imparted.

PM Narendra Modi honoured with first Lata Deenanath Mangeshkar Award

- Master Deenanath Mangeshkar Smruti Pratishthan informed that the award will be given annually to a person who has made a path-breaking, spectacular and exemplary contribution to the nation and its people.
- The organization said, Mr. Modi is an international statesman who has put India on the path of global leadership. Calling Mr. Modi an inspiration, the organization said, he is one of the greatest leaders that India has seen in its glorious history.
- Among the other awardees will be singer Rahul Despande, who will receive the Master Deenanath Award besides three other special awardees including veteran actress Asha Parekh, actor Jackie Shroff and the Mumbai Dabbawalas, represented by Nutan Tiffin Suppliers.

First flight of Made in India HAL Dornier Do-228 to take off from Dibrugarh in Assam to Pasighat in Arunachal Pradesh

- Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) has approved a Scheme – “Providing air connectivity and Aviation infrastructure in North Eastern Region (NER)” to

promote air connectivity in the States of NEER and, if required, to develop infrastructure for air connectivity.

- As a part of this scheme, two important development will take place on 12th April 2022 –First flight of Made in India HAL Dornier Do-228 from Dibrugarh in Assam to Pasighat in Arunachal Pradesh.
- Alliance Air will be India's first commercial airline to fly Indian made aircraft for civil operations.
- There will also be inauguration of First FTO (Flying Training Organization) for North Eastern Region at Lilabari, Assam.
- Connectivity in NEER is very essential and Under "Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik (UDAN)", the Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS), Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) has identified NEER as a priority area.

Anti-Tank Guided Missile 'HELINA' successfully flight tested

- The flight-test was jointly conducted by the teams of scientists from Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), Indian Army and Indian Air Force (IAF).
- The flight trials were conducted from an Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH) and the missile was fired successfully engaging simulated tank target.
- The missile is guided by an Imaging Infra-Red (IIR) Seeker operating in the Lock on Before Launch mode. It is one of the most advanced anti-tank weapons in the world.
- Helina has a maximum range of seven kilometers and has been designed and developed for integration on weaponized version of the ALH.
- Helina can engage targets both in direct hit mode as well as top attack mode.
 - In the top attack mode, the missile is required to climb sharply after launch and travel at a certain altitude and then plunge on the top of the target.
 - In the direct hit mode, the missile travels at a lower altitude, directly striking the target.

April 13

Retail Inflation Soars to 17-Month High of 6.95% in March On High Food Prices

- A surge in food price inflation, which quickened to 7.68% from 5.85% in February, combined with rising fuel prices and producers passing on higher commodity prices and input costs to consumers across goods and services to drive the overall Consumer Price Index (CPI)-based inflation print to a 17-month high.
- Consumers in rural India faced a higher level of inflation than urban residents, with overall rural inflation 154 basis points higher at 7.66%, as

the rural food price index sped past 8% to 8.04% in March, from February's 5.81%.

- The uptick in fuel prices and their ripple effects on transport and logistics costs are expected to intensify in April.

India likely to miss year's solar capacity target

- As of December 2021, India's cumulative installed solar capacity was 55 GW, with grid-connected utility-scale projects making up 77% of the total and the rest from grid-connected rooftop solar (20%) and mini or micro off-grid projects (3%).
- With just eight months of 2022 remaining, only about 50% of the 100GW target, consisting of 60 GW of utility-scale and 40 GW of rooftop solar capacity, has been met.
- Approximately 19 GW of solar capacity is expected to be added in 2022 — 15.8 GW from utility-scale and 3.5 GW from rooftop solar.

Army seeks loiter munitions for its mechanised forces along western, northern borders

- The CALM System is a pre-loaded canister with loiter ammunition or a drone which once fired can remain aloft for a period of time over the area of operation, and when a target is sighted it can be guided down to destroy the target with the explosive payload that it carries.
- Usually, loiter ammunitions carry a camera which is nose-mounted and which can be used by the operator to see the area of operation and choose targets.
- These munitions also have variants which can be recovered and reused in case they are not used for any strike.

Karnataka govt set to bring eggs on mid-day meal menu

- The current version of the programme, renamed PM Poshan Shakti Nirman or PM Poshan in 2021, traces its roots to 1995; it was launched as a centrally sponsored scheme on August 15 that year across 2,408 blocks for students up to Class 5.
- In 2007, the UPA government expanded it to Class 8.
- The scheme covers 11.80 crore children across Classes 1 to 8 (age group 6 to 14) in 11.20 lakh government and government-aided schools and those run by local bodies such as the municipal corporations in Delhi under the provisions of the National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA).

Deochar Ropeway Accident

- The process to build the ropeway started in 2010 after the Jharkhand government gave the consultancy to RITES, a Government of India enterprise under the aegis of Indian Railways.
- Thereafter, Damodar Ropeways and Infra Limited (DRIL) was given the contract through a tendering process.

- Union Finance Minister while presenting Union Budget for 2022-23 announced National Ropeways Development Programme – “Parvatmala” -- will be taken up on PPP mode, which will be a preferred ecologically sustainable alternative in place of conventional roads in difficult hilly areas.

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi will inaugurate the Pradhanmantri Sangrahalaya on 14th April, 2022.

- The Sangrahalaya, being inaugurated during the celebration of Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav, tells the story of India after Independence through the lives and contributions of its Prime Ministers.
- The Pradhanmantri Sangrahalaya is a tribute to every Prime Minister of India since Independence, irrespective of their ideology or tenure in office.
- The Sangrahalaya integrates the erstwhile Teen Murti Bhawan designated as Block I, with the newly constructed building designated as Block II.
- The logo of the Sangrahalaya represents the hands of the people of India holding the Dharma Chakra symbolizing the nation and democracy.

For the first time in 11 years, the number of domestic patent filing surpasses the number of international patent filing in India during Jan-Mar 2022

- This means the total 19796 patent applications filed, 10706 were filed by Indian applicants against 9090 by non-Indian applicants. This is represented as under:
- Filing of patents have increased from 42763 in 2014-15 to 66440 in 2021-22, more that 50% increase in a span of 7 years
- Nearly five times increase in grant of patents in 2021-22 (30,074) as compared to 2014-15 (5978)
- Reduction in Time of patent examination from 72 months in Dec 2016 to 5-23 months at present, for different technological areas
- India's ranking in Global Innovation Index has increased to 46th in 2021 (+35 ranks) as compared to from 81st in 2015-16

Kishan Reddy launches the Utsav Portal of Amrit Samagam Conference

- The Utsav Portal website, a digital initiative launched by the Ministry of Tourism, aims to showcase all the events, festivals and live darshans across India to promote different regions of the country as popular tourist destinations worldwide.
- The objective is to showcase various elements, dates and details of the events and festivals of India on a global platform and increase tourism awareness, attractions, and opportunities by providing tourists with contextual digital experiences in the form of visually appealing photographs and stills from the events.
- Additionally, the objective is also to let the devotees and travelers experience and view the sights of some of the well-known religious divine shrines in India in the form of Live Darshan.

April 14

India projected to grow at 8% this fiscal: World Bank

- The country is estimated to have grown at 8.3% in the fiscal year that just passed, following a contraction of 6.6% in the previous year owing to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- For the South Asia region, growth is expected to be slower than projected, by 1 percentage point, at 6.6% in 2022 and 6.3% next calendar year.
- This is due to Russia's war on Ukraine, which has impacted the region, when it was already experiencing "fragile" growth, rising commodity prices, bottlenecks to supply and financial sector vulnerabilities.

Lankan economic crisis kindles Kochi container terminal's hopes

- At ICTT, Vallarpadam, Kochi, cargo traffic has increased by over 62% in March with mother vessels calling at the Cochin port.
- According to statistics available with the Cochin port, the transshipment volume at the ICTT has increased to 13,609 TEUs (twenty-foot equivalent unit) in March 2022 compared to 8,394 TEUs in March 2021.
- There were also reports that ports such as Thoothukudi, Chennai, and Mundra have become beneficiaries with traffic being diverted from Colombo due to various reasons.

Government lays down norms for quota in promotions

- It said that following a January 28 Supreme Court judgment, the Attorney-General opined that three conditions were to be met while implementing the policy of reservation in promotions.
- These are
 - Collection of quantifiable data regarding inadequacy of representation of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes;
 - application of this data to each cadre separately; and
 - if a roster exists, the unit for operation of the roster would be the cadre or which the quantifiable data would have to be collected and applied in regard to the filling up of the vacancies in the roster.
- The order said that all the Ministries and departments are required to ensure that the conditions are complied with before implementing reservation in promotions and carrying out any promotions based thereon.

Govt exempts all customs duties on cotton imports till 30 Sept

- Ministry of Finance has issued a notification in this regard saying that the exemption on cotton import will come into effect from 14th April and remain in force till 30th of September, 2022.

- The exemption will benefit the textile chain-yarn, fabric, garments and made-ups and will also provide relief to consumers. Textile exports are also to be benefitted from this move.
- Previously, the import of cotton attracted a 5 percent basic customs duty and another 5 percent Agriculture Infrastructure Development Cess (AIDC).

Allow colour blind candidates to study film editing courses, Supreme Court tells FTII

- Colour blindness, also known as colour deficiency, is the inability to see colours in the normal way. Colour blind individuals often cannot distinguish between certain colours — usually greens and reds, and sometimes blues as well.
- Two types of cells in the retina detect light — the “rods”, which distinguish between light and dark, and the “cones” that detect colour. There are three types of cones that see colour — red, green, and blue — and our brains use the information from these cells to perceive colour.
- Colour blindness can be the result of the absence of one or more of these cone cells, or their failure to work properly.

Prabhat Patnaik named for Malcolm Adiseshiah Award 2022

- The award is annually given by the Malcolm and Elizabeth Adiseshiah Trust to an outstanding social scientist for Distinguished Contributions to Development Studies.
- Patnaik has taught at the Centre for Economic Studies and Planning in the School of Social Sciences at Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi, and has served as Vice-Chairman of the Kerala State Planning Board.
- Malcolm Sathiyathan Adiseshiah (1910 – 1994), was an Indian development economist and educator. In 1976 he was awarded the Padma Bhushan.

Nod to extend Gram Swaraj scheme

- The CCEA approved the extension of the scheme that ended on March 31 at a total financial outlay of ₹5,911 crore, of which ₹3,700 crore would be the Centre's share and ₹2,211 crore the share of States.
- The scheme would work towards “poverty-free and enhanced livelihood in villages; healthy villages, child-friendly villages; water-sufficient villages; clean and green villages; self-sufficient infrastructure in villages; socially-secure villages; villages with good governance and engendered development in villages.”
- Panchayats would be strengthened and a spirit of healthy competition inculcated.
- The scheme started in 2018-2019.

April 15

Imd Expects Normal Monsoon Rainfall For Fourth Straight Year

- The IMD predicts a “normal”, “below normal”, or “above normal” monsoon in relation to a benchmark “long period average” (LPA).
- According to the IMD, the “LPA of rainfall is the rainfall recorded over a particular region for a given interval (like month or season) average over a long period like 30 years, 50 years, etc”.
- The IMD’s latest prediction of a normal monsoon was based on the LPA of the 1971-2020 period, during which India received 87 cm of rain for the entire country on average.
- The IMD has in the past calculated the LPA at 88 cm for the 1961-2010 period, and at 89 cm for the period 1951-2000.
- While this quantitative benchmark refers to the average rainfall recorded from June to September for the entire country, the amount of rain that falls every year varies from region to region and from month to month.
- Therefore, along with the countrywide figure, the IMD also maintains LPAs for every meteorological region of the country — this number ranges from around 61 cm for the drier Northwest India to more than 143 cm for the wetter East and Northeast India.

WhatsApp Payments will display your legal name

- This will take the total permissible number of users on the platform to 100 million.
- As a result of this clearance from NPCI, WhatsApp will be able to add 60 million users to its UPI service and take on heavyweight rivals such as Walmart-backed PhonePe and Google Pay, which command a majority of the transactions that happen on UPI.
- The NPCI has mandated that no platform should handle more than 30 per cent of total transaction volumes of UPI on a three-month rolling period basis.
- However, for bigger players like PhonePe, which commanded a 49 per cent market share in terms of value of transactions in March and Google Pay, which had a 35 per cent market share, it has allowed them time until the end of 2022 to comply with the directive.
- So, even as these players could continue commanding a significant market share till the end of this year, the increasing clearance to WhatsApp and the mandate for the others to restrict their share could result in a less skewed market.

What is the Neptune cruise missile that severely damaged Russian warship Moskva?

- The Ukrainians claim that the Moskva was hit by two anti-ship cruise missiles called the Neptune. Ironically, the design of this missile is based on a Russian Kh-35 cruise missile which goes by the NATO name of AS-20 Kayak.
- the Neptune is a coastal anti-ship cruise missile which is capable of destruction of naval vessels in a range of 300 km.
- Moskva is a guided missile cruiser of the Russian Navy named after the city of Moscow. It has a displacement of 12,490 tons. It is the flagship of the Black Sea Fleet of the Russian Navy and carries a crew of around 500 personnel.

India to host Street Child Cricket World Cup in 2023

- In 2019, this championship was held in London where eight teams competed, and Team India South lifted the cup after beating hosts England.
- This event will take place in September ahead of the ICC World Cup, and see street children and young people take part in a mixed-gender cricket tournament.

Poila Boishakh.

- Poila Boishakh is the first day of the Bengali calendar which is also the official calendar of Bangladesh.
- This festival is celebrated on 14 April in Bangladesh and 15 April in the Indian states of West Bengal, Tripura, and Assam (Barak Valley) by Bengalis regardless of religious faith.
- The traditional greeting for Bengalis in the new year is "Shubho Noboborsho" which is literally "Happy New Year".
- The festive Mangal Shobhajatra is organized in Bangladesh. In 2016, the UNESCO declared this festivity organized by the Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Dhaka as a cultural heritage of humanity.

Haryana to setup training institute for drone pilots

- The institute, to be set up under the aegis of the Drone Imaging and Information Service of Haryana Limited (DRIISHYA) is expected to cater to training needs of personnel of DRIISHYA and other organisations.
- The Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar was informed that Haryana is the first state to create a separate corporation to hasten unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV)-driven governance application.
- With the help of drones, illegal encroachments can also be controlled along with detecting of expansion of areas as earlier manual surveys were conducted at regular intervals which were time-consuming, costly and required more manpower.
- Besides the revenue department, the use of drones should also be ensured in urban local bodies, power, disaster management, mining, forest, traffic, town and country planning, agriculture, etc, as it would help in mapping,

land records, disaster management and emergency services, development planning departments in the urban areas.

National Health Authority (NHA) gives open call for Expression of Interest for developing innovative solutions for building digital health ecosystem for India

- The interested developers/ parties can also make a significant contribution to the national digital health ecosystem development by sharing their Expression of Interest (EoI).

Some illustrative examples of the contribution for this cause are as follows:

- Unified Health Interface (UHI) - NHA intends to develop a digital platform (similar to Unified Payment Interface or UPI) for interoperability between various digital solutions to facilitate various stakeholders using disparate solutions to communicate.
- Health Claims Platform (HCP) - NHA is developing a Health Claims Platform as a public good. Health providers (e g: Hospitals, labs) can submit their e-claims on this platform which can be received by payers (e.g.: Insurers, TPAs) for processing.
- Software as a Service (SaaS) - Various digital health solutions can be used by healthcare providers. These may include solutions such as Hospital Information System (HIS), Hospital (or Health) Management Information System (HMIS) etc.

Government under Shri Narendra Modi launches country's biggest ever Quiz Contest Sabka Vikas Mahaquiz

- The quiz aims to sensitise the participants about the various schemes and initiatives and how to avail the benefits.
- This quiz has been fittingly launched on the birth anniversary of Bharat Ratna Dr Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar on 14th April 2022.
- Under this, the first quiz is the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) under the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution.
- Under the scheme, all National Food Security Act (NFSA) beneficiaries are entitled to 5 kgs of free food grain every month. This is over and above the highly subsidised food grains available to NFSA beneficiaries.
- The scheme has been successful in keeping extreme poverty low during the pandemic and has been praised in a working paper prepared by the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

April 16

Navy accelerates indigenisation efforts, focus on weapons and aviation items

- This falls in line with the Government's push to cut down on defence imports and boost domestic manufacturing which has gained further urgency due to

the ongoing Russian war in Ukraine and the large scale dependency of Indian military on Russian arms and equipment.

- Till date, Navy has indigenised around 3,400 items under INIP, including over 2,000 machinery and electrical spares, over 1,000 aviation spares and over 250 weapon spares.
- The existing Naval Aviation Indigenisation Roadmap (NAIR) 2019-22 is also under revision.
- All the fast moving aircraft mandatory spares and high-cost indigenous repairs are being included in the revised NAIR 2022-27.
- Four in-house indigenisation committees have been formed to handle indigenisation of spares with respect to naval aircraft. In addition, the Naval Liaison Cells (NLCs) located at various places have been nominated as 'indigenisation cells'.
- There are currently 41 ships and submarines under construction, 39 are being built in India shipyards while in principle approval from MoD exists for 47 ships to be built in India.
- The Naval Innovation and Indigenisation Organisation (NIIO) which was launched by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh in August 2020 provides an accessible interface for academia and industry with Indian Navy capability development apparatus.

Egypt approves India as wheat supplier; to import about one million tonnes

- The Egyptian delegation's visit to India follows several trade talks and meetings with the various wheat importing countries, which are exploring possibilities of sourcing grain from alternate sources as supplies have been disrupted because of the Russia and Ukraine conflict.
- Egypt imported 6.1 million tonnes (mt) of wheat in 2021 and India was then not part of the list of accredited countries that could export wheat to Egypt.
- More than 80% of Egypt's wheat imports estimated to be close to \$2 billion in 2021 were from Russia and Ukraine.
- Growth in wheat exports is driven mostly by the demand from countries such as Bangladesh, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Sri Lanka, Oman and Malaysia. However, India is also making efforts to boost wheat exports to other countries including Yemen, Afghanistan and Indonesia.

e-DAR portal to speed up accident compensation claims

- The Ministry of Roads, Transport and Highways (MoRTH) has developed the portal named 'e-DAR' (e-Detailed Accident Report).
- Digitalised Detailed Accident Reports (DAR) will be uploaded on the portal for easy access.
- The web portal will be linked to the Integrated Road Accident Database (iRAD). F

- From iRAD, applications to more than 90% of the datasets would be pushed directly to the e-DAR.
- Stakeholders like the police, road authorities, hospitals, etc., are required to enter very minimal information for the e-DAR forms. Thus, e-DAR would be an extension and e-version of iRAD.

India to get record number of doctors in next 10 years: PM Modi

- Modi was speaking after virtually inaugurating a new super speciality hospital in Kutch, Gujarat.
- The goal of having at least one medical college in every district of the country and ensuring that medical education was in the reach of everyone will result in the country getting a record numbers of doctors and medical practitioners after 10 years.
- The Ministry of Health administers a Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) for 'Establishment of new Medical Colleges attached with existing district/referral hospitals' with preference to underserved areas and aspirational districts, where there is no existing Government or private medical college.
- Under the Scheme, 157 new medical colleges have been approved in three phases and 70 are already functional. Out of 157 sites, 40 are in aspirational districts.

PM will inaugurate the three-day Global Ayush Investment & Innovation Summit (GAIIS) in Gandhinagar, Gujrat

- The most pertinent event of Ministry of Ayush for 2022, this Summit will witness the participation of industry leaders, academicians, and scholars to deliberate upon ways to promote traditional medicines, and systems.
- One of the aims of the Summit is to attract lucrative investments to build India as the Global Ayush Destination in the world.
- The ground-breaking ceremony for the WHO Global Centre for Traditional Medicine will also take place on 19th April, in Jamnagar, Gujarat. This centre will emerge as an international hub of global wellness taking traditional medicine systems of the world to new heights.

PM Narendra Modi unveils 108 ft Lord Hanuman statue in Gujarat's Morbi

- This statue is the second of the 4 statues being set up in the four directions across the country, as part of #Hanumanji4dham project.
- It has been set up in the west, at the Ashram of Param Pujya Babu Keshvanand ji in Morbi.
- The first statue of the series was set up in the north in Shimla in 2010.
- Work on the statue in the south at Rameswaram has been started.

Are UPA's oil bonds to blame for high fuel prices?

- An oil bond is an IOU, or a promissory note issued by the government to the oil marketing companies (OMCs), in lieu of cash that the government would

have given them so that these companies don't charge the public the full price of fuel.

- An oil bond says the government will pay the oil marketing company the sum of, say, Rs 1,000 crore in 10 years. And to compensate the OMC for not having this money straightaway, the government will pay it, say, 8% (or Rs 80 crore) each year until the bond matures.
- Thus, by issuing such oil bonds, the government of the day is able to protect/subsidise the consumers without either ruining the profitability of the OMC or running a huge budget deficit itself.
- Oil bonds were issued by several governments in the past. But the ones in question now are the ones which the UPA government issued.

Nagaland: 33% women reservation in Urban Local Bodies

- The civic body elections were first held in the state in 2004, in accordance with the Nagaland Municipal Act of 2001.
- In 2006, the Nagaland Municipal Act of 2001 was amended to include a 33 per cent reservation for women in line with the 1992 Constitutional amendment.
- Since then, there has been widespread opposition to the amendment, as many Naga groups contend that the reservations are in contravention with Naga customary laws as enshrined in Article 371(A) of the Constitution — which accords the state special status and protects its traditional way of life.
- In February 2017, as the Nagaland government tried holding the elections as per a Supreme Court directive (to hold elections with 33 per cent reservation for women), the state was convulsed by violent protests that led to ouster of the then chief minister T R Zeliang.

The UK-Rwanda Agreement Represents Another Blow to Territorial Asylum

- Under this new plan, people who arrive in Britain as stowaways in trucks or boats will be flown 6,400 kilometers to Rwanda, potentially for good.
- Once there, they will be assessed for eventual resettlement in the African nation.
- The UK has paid the Rwandan government £120 million for housing and integrating the migrants as part of the pilot scheme, which will initially last for five years.
- But the UK-Rwanda deal has not been popular among human rights and refugee organisations, who see it as an inhumane and expensive exercise. The United Nations has said that it raises “a number of human rights concerns.”

April 17

Rural Inflation Higher Than Urban Inflation Now?

- Urban inflation has usually tended to be higher than rural inflation by an average of about 0.8 percentage points through most of 2021 — the only exceptions being August when both stood at 5.3% and May when rural inflation was 6.6% and urban inflation was 5.9%.
- In March, the gap between the two has surpassed 1.5% with urban inflation at 6.12% and rural areas clocking 7.66%.
- While food inflation was the key driver for the headline inflation rate jump in March, with the overall consumer food price index racing to 7.68% from 5.85% in February, the spike was far more pronounced in rural India where food inflation hit 8.04%.
- While high inflation affects the poor the most in general, the fact that price rise in food, the largest component of their consumption basket, is driving the current surge is particularly burdensome.

FDA Authorizes First COVID-19 Diagnostic Test Using Breath Samples

- The InspectIR COVID-19 Breathalyzer is about the size of a piece of carry-on luggage and can be used in doctor's offices, hospitals and mobile testing sites.
- The test, which can provide results in less than three minutes, must be carried out under the supervision of a licensed health care provider.

Fuel ship sinks off Tunisia, threatens marine life

- The Tunisian Navy had rescued all seven crew members from the ship, which was heading from Equatorial Guinea to Malta, and sent a distress call 11 km away from southern city of Gabes.
- The cause of the incident was bad weather, the Environment Ministry said, adding that water had seeped into the ship, reaching a height of two metres.
- Gabès is the capital city of the Gabès Governorate in Tunisia. It is located on the coast of the Gulf of Gabès.
- The Gulf of Gabes, also known as Lesser Syrtis, is a gulf on Tunisia's east coast in the Mediterranean Sea, off North Africa.

Centre extends tenure of environmental clearances

- The EC for river valley projects will now have a 13-year validity, and nuclear power projects or those involving the processing of nuclear fuel 15 years. Projects and activities other than the mining and river valley projects will have their EC valid for 10 years.
- Explaining its rationale, the Ministry said that nuclear power projects and hydropower projects had "high gestation" period due to "geological surprises, delays in forest clearance, land acquisition, local issues, rehabilitation and

resettlement and such other factors which are often beyond the control of project proponents.

- In this context, the Central government "deems it necessary" to extend the validity of Environmental Clearance (EC) for such projects.
- An EC is a long-drawn process that is mandatory for projects beyond a certain size and often involves an environment impact assessment of a potential project and sometimes public hearings involving the local populace who might be affected by the project.
- One of the conditions of an EC is that a project must begin construction in the period that it has been granted an EC and if unable, a fresh process must begin. This leads to projects being financially unviable.
- Mining leases are now granted for a period of 50 years but the Environment Clearance is valid for 30 years.

Centre would establish seaweed park with special economic zone status in Tamil Nadu

- The project will be the first of its kind in India and will come up under the PM Kisan Sampada Yojana.
- The state government has been asked to locate the project site and acquire the land, after which the works on the project will start. He further said the Centre has plans to implement projects worth 20-thousand crore rupees, under the PM Kisan Sampada Yojana.
- Seaweed, or macroalgae, refers to thousands of species of macroscopic, multicellular, marine algae.

Govt to launch e-Sanjeevani Tele-consultation facility at one lakh health and wellness centers

- More than one lakh 17 thousand Health and Wellness Centres have been operationalized in the country so far.
- Now the common citizens will also be able to take advice from the big doctors of the country through e-Sanjeevani Tele-consultation facility.
- E-Sanjeevani is providing affordable and accessible health care as envisioned by the Prime Minister. Teleconsultation services are very crucial for people in remote areas and are helpful in making healthcare services accessible for all.

Aviation Ministry's 'UDAN' scheme awarded Prime Minister's Award for Excellence

- The government has initiated this award to acknowledge, recognize and reward extraordinary and innovative work done by Districts and Organizations of State and Government.
- The Ministry said, UDAN scheme emphasises on Good Governance, Qualitative achievements, and last mile connectivity rather than only on achievement of quantitative targets.

- The award consists of a trophy, scroll and an incentive of ten lakh rupees. The Ministry of Civil Aviation will receive the award at Civil Service Day function on 21st of April.
- In a short span of five years, 415 UDAN routes have connected 66 underserved and unserved airports, including heliports and over 92 lakh people have benefited from it.
- UDAN scheme has immensely benefitted several sectors pan-India including Hilly States, North-Eastern region and Islands.

SECI issues tender for 500 MW/1000 MWh Standalone Battery Energy Storage Systems

- A first-of-its-kind tender in the country, it will provide Discoms with storage facilities to be used on an "on-demand" basis. The tender has been issued under the Standard Bidding Guidelines issued by the Ministry of Power in March 2022.
- The total capacity to be set up under the RfS is 1000 MWh (500 MW x 2hrs), which will constitute two projects of 500 MWh (250 MW x 2 hrs) capacity each.
- The Projects will be installed in the vicinity of the Fatehgarh-III Grid-Substation of the ISTS network, in the State of Rajasthan.
- The Buying Entities will be offered the storage capacity to charge and discharge the same daily through RE power, as per their energy shifting requirements.
- The Projects will be set up on a "Build-Own-Operate" basis, with the connectivity and necessary permissions being under the scope of the Project Developer.

April 18

Industry welcomes proposed UCMDMP for medical device

- It also aims at giving the industry an identity, apart from influencing the marketing dynamics of the pharmaceutical industry.
- Medical devices are characteristically different from pharmaceuticals and therefore a separate code for medical devices was much needed to accurately capture the ethical marketing practice requirements for the medical device sector.
- The implementation of the UCMDMP will be a big step towards furthering patient interest and "will restrain the unethical element and restore competitiveness and esteem for the compliant players."

Militant groups in Kashmir now have Iridium satellite phones, Wi-Fi-enabled thermal imagery tools

- Bodies such as the National Technical Research Organisation (NTRO) and the Defence Intelligence Agencies (DIA) have been tasked with finding and giving out real-time information about the presence of these satellite phones in the Kashmir Valley.
- In the aftermath of the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks, the Directorate General of Shipping (DGS) first restricted the use of Iridium and Thuraya satellite phones and infrastructure, and in 2012 completely banned them under the provisions of the Indian Telegraph Act.
- Iridium Communications Inc. is a publicly traded American company headquartered in McLean, Virginia.
- Iridium operates the Iridium satellite constellation, a system of 66 active satellites used for worldwide voice and data communication from hand-held satellite phones and other transceiver units.

Twitter board adopts 'poison pill' after Musk's \$43 billion bid to buy company

- This defense mechanism was developed in the 1980s as company leaders, facing corporate raiders and hostile acquisitions, tried to defend their businesses from being acquired by another enterprise, person or group.
- A poison pill is a maneuver that typically makes a company less palatable to a potential acquirer by making it more expensive for the acquirer to buy shares of the target company above a certain threshold.
- The strategy also gives a company more time to evaluate an offer and can give the board leverage in trying to force a direct negotiation with the potential acquirer.
- A poison pill is officially known as a shareholder rights plan, and it can appear in a company's charter or bylaws or exist as a contract among shareholders.
- There are different types of poison pills, but usually, they allow certain shareholders to buy additional stock at a discounted price.

Telangana's paddy protest and the controversy over parboiled rice

- parboiled rice refers to rice that has been partially boiled at the paddy stage, before milling.
- Parboiling of rice is not a new practice, and has been followed in India since ancient times.
- there are several processes for parboiling rice. The Paddy Processing Research Centre (PPRC), Thanjavur follows a method known as the chromate soaking process.
- All processes generally involve three stages—soaking, steaming and drying. After passing through these stages, the paddy goes for milling.
- Parboiling makes rice tougher. This reduces the chances of the rice kernel breaking during milling.
- Parboiling also increases the nutrient value of the rice.

- Third, parboiled rice has a higher resistance to insects and fungi.
- The rice becomes darker and may smell unpleasant due to prolonged soaking.
- Besides, setting up a parboiling rice milling unit requires a higher investment than a raw rice milling unit.

Vagsheer, the last of six submarines under Project 75, launched

- The Scorpene class submarine is a diesel-electric attack submarine built by Mumbai's Mazgaon Dock ship builders with French collaboration.
- The state-of-the-art technology used in Scorpene-class has superior stealth features such as advanced acoustic silencing techniques, low radiated noise levels and ability to launch crippling attacks with precision-guided weapons on board.
- This submarine can attack through launching the torpedoes and anti-ship missiles while underwater or on the surface. This will enhance Indian Navy's capacity to address the threats both above and under water.
- Four submarines of scorpene class- INS Kalvari, INS Khanderi, INS Karanj and INS Vela have already been commissioned while the fifth submarine Vagir is still undergoing sea trials.
- The first two submarines - INS Kalvari and INS Khanderi - were commissioned on September 21, 2017 and September 19, 2019.
- INS Karanj and INS Vela were commissioned in one calendar year in 2021 in the month of February and November respectively.

National Data and Analytics Platform launched by NITI Aayog

- Conceived in 2020, the platform aims to standardise data across government sources and provide flexible analytics that make it easy for users to analyse information using multiple datasets.
- The portal will help policymakers, academics and researchers to easily analyse data without having to process it. The portal will have 200 datasets from more than 46 ministries at the time of the launch.
- New datasets will be added up to the village level in the future.
- Presently, many government departments have public dashboards with options to download data, some are available as image files while others are in PDF format, making it difficult to compile information. Experts say this will be addressed in NDAP.

Extreme poverty in India declined by 12 percentage points between 2011-2019: World Bank

- The poverty headcount rate has declined from 22.5 percent in 2011 to 10.2 percent in 2019.
- Poverty reduction was higher in rural areas as compared to urban India.
- Rural poverty dropped by 14.7 percent while urban poverty declined by 7.9 percentage points during 2011 to 2019.

- Farmers with small landholding sizes have experienced higher income growth.
- Real incomes for farmers with the smallest landholdings have grown by 10 percent in annualized terms between the two survey rounds in 2013 and 2019 compared to a 2 percent growth for farmers with the largest landholding.

Railways to run Vande Bharat Express trains between Khajuraho and Delhi

- He said that two rake points have been approved at Chhatarpur and Khajuraho. He also informed about the redevelopment of Khajuraho station to make it a world class station.
- The Khajuraho Group of Monuments are a group of Hindu and Jain temples in Chhatarpur district, Madhya Pradesh. They are a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- The temples are famous for their nagara-style architectural symbolism and their erotic sculptures.
- Most Khajuraho temples were built between 885 AD and 1050 AD by the Chandela dynasty
- Of the surviving temples, the Kandariya Mahadeva Temple is decorated with a profusion of sculptures with intricate details.

April 19

Draft law to enable aircraft lessors to repossess aircraft during dispute

- The Ministry has sought stakeholders' comments on the draft Protection and Enforcement of Interests in Aircraft Objects Bill, 2022.
- The Bill will implement the provisions of the Convention on International Interests in Mobile Equipment and Protocol on Matters Specific to Aircraft Equipment which was adopted at a conference in Cape Town in 2001. India acceded to the two instruments in 2008.
- These provide default remedies for the creditor and create a legal regime for disputes.
- The draft legislation is necessary because several Indian laws such as the Companies Act, 2013 are in conflict with the Cape Town Convention and Protocol.

Lt.Gen. Manoj Pande is next Chief of Army

- The 29th Army Chief will be the first officer from the Corps of Engineers to become the Chief of Army Staff succeeding General Manoj Mukund Naravane who is scheduled to complete his 28-month tenure on 30th of April.
- An alumnus of the National Defence Academy, Lieutenant General Pande was commissioned into the Corps of Engineers in December 1982.

- General Manoj Pande commanded an engineer regiment during Operation Parakram in the Pallanwala sector along the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir.
- He was the Commander-in-Chief of the Andaman and Nicobar Command before he took charge of the Eastern Command.

Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar launched two online portals.

- These are Comprehensive Registration of Pesticides (CROP) and Plant Quarantine Management System (PQMS) of the Plant Protection Division at a function in New Delhi.
- The portals will provide hassle-free service to the traders besides helping them in export and imports.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the first ever Semicon India-2022 Conference on 29th of April in Bengaluru.

- Semicon India-2022 Conference will be organised by Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology from 29th of April to 1st of May around theme of - Design and Manufacture in India, for the World: Making India a Semiconductor Nation.
- Semicon India - 2022 aims to make India a significant player in Global Semiconductor value chain.
- Semicon India-2022 conference will attract best minds from across the world from semiconductor industry, research and academia and will act as a big step in fulfilling PM's vision on making India a global hub for electronics manufacturing and Semiconductor industry.

India and Finland announced the decision to establish an Indo-Finnish Virtual Network Centre on Quantum Computing.

- Science and Technology Minister Dr Jitendra Singh and visiting Finland Minister of Economic Affairs Mika Lintila, who is currently in India, announced this. An MoU for this was also signed.
- The Indian side has identified three premier institutes IIT, Madras, IISER, Pune and C-DAC, Pune for Virtual Network Centre on Quantum Computing.
- The move comes in the wake of the decision taken in the last Joint Committee meeting held in November 2020 to initiate cooperation in new emerging areas like 5G; Quantum Computing and Sustainability by involving, Academia, Industries and Start-ups of the two countries.
- Referring to the Virtual Summit last March between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Prime Minister of Finland Ms. Sanna Marin, Dr Jitendra Singh pointed out that Finland's leading role in clean and green technologies can help India's drive towards sustainable development.
- He also shared that both India and Finland are consultative members of the Antarctic Treaty and have active stations in Antarctica.

- Finland would be hosting Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting in 2023 and India in 2024.
- The visiting Finnish Minister Lintila assured that Finnish companies will partner with India for Carbon-neutral technologies and enhance cooperation for Sustainability in Climate Change.

Invictus Games opens with Prince Harry tribute to Ukrainians

- The first edition of the Games was held in London in 2014, and subsequent competitions were organised in Orlando, US (2016), Toronto, Canada (2017), and Sydney, Australia (2018). The 2023 edition will be held in Dusseldorf, Germany.
- The Games are an international sporting competition similar to the Paralympics, but meant for wounded, injured, and sick military service personnel and war veterans.
- The word 'invictus' means 'unconquered'. The Games draw inspiration from the British poet William Ernest Henley's 1875 poem 'Invictus'.
- The Invictus Games are the brainchild of Prince Harry, Duke of Sussex, who attended the Warrior Games in the United States in 2013, and wanted to start something similar in London.

PM Modi begins 3-day Gujarat tour with visit to Command and Control Centre for Schools

- In June 2021, former Chief Minister Vijay Rupani inaugurated the technological and infrastructural upgraded Command and Control Centre 2.0 or 'Vidya Samiksha Kendra'.
- It is a surveillance system which tracks enrolment, attendance, learning outcomes, drop-outs, school accreditation and monitors schools, teachers and block and cluster resource centre co-ordinators.
- This state of the art data driven centre is based on the National Digital Education Architecture (NDEAR) Framework.
- The centre is located in sector 19 of Gandhinagar and is aimed at leveraging data and technology to improve learning outcomes.

WHO establishes the Global Centre for Traditional Medicine in India

- The WHO describes traditional medicine as the total sum of the "knowledge, skills and practices indigenous and different cultures have used over time to maintain health and prevent, diagnose and treat physical and mental illness".
- Its reach encompasses ancient practices such as acupuncture, ayurvedic medicine and herbal mixtures as well as modern medicines.
- Traditional medicine in India is often defined as including practices and therapies — such as yoga, Ayurveda, Siddha — that have been part of Indian tradition historically, as well as others — such as homeopathy — that became part of Indian tradition over the years.

- Ayurveda and yoga are practised widely across the country; the Siddha system is followed predominantly in Tamil Nadu and Kerala; the Sowa-Rigpa system is practised mainly in Leh-Ladakh and Himalayan regions such as Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Darjeeling, Lahaul & Spiti.

April 20

China, Solomon Islands sign landmark security pact

- The two sides signed an inter-governmental framework agreement on security cooperation.
- Under the agreement, the two sides “will conduct cooperation in such areas as maintenance of social order, protection of the safety of people’s lives and property, humanitarian assistance and natural disaster response, in an effort to help Solomon Islands strengthen capacity building in safeguarding its own security.”
- Amid concern from Australia, New Zealand and the U.S., the Solomon Islands said there was no agreement for a Chinese military base.
- Solomon Islands is a sovereign country consisting of six major islands and over 900 smaller islands in Oceania, to the east of Papua New Guinea and northwest of Vanuatu.
- Its capital, Honiara, is located on the largest island, Guadalcanal.

Supreme Court replaces chief of expert panel for Delhi-Dehradun expressway

- The court made it clear that the replacement of the Uttarakhand Chief Secretary with C.P. Goyal should not be seen as an expression of lack of confidence in the senior bureaucrat.
- The Bench also brought in Anil Prakash Joshi, founder of Himalayan Environmental Studies and Conservation Organisation, and environmentalist Vijay Dhasmana as members of the panel.
- The order was based on a plea by an NGO, Citizens for Green Doon, against a National Green Tribunal (NGT) order.
- The NGT had appointed the 12-member expert committee to be headed by Chief Secretary, Uttarakhand, with nominees of Wildlife Institute of India, Central Pollution Control Board, Uttarakhand State Pollution Control Board and others.
- The tribunal had allowed the expressway project and formed the committee to prevent environmental damage by unscientific muck dumping or obstruction of animal corridor on the Ganeshpur-Dehradun Road (NH-72A) stretch.

UGC rules for tie-ups between Indian and foreign universities

- The UGC decided that an Indian higher education institution that has a National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) grading of 3.01 or above, or is among the top 1,000 QS World University or Times Higher Education rankings, or is among the top 100 universities under National Institution Ranking Framework, will be able to tie-up with a foreign education institution which too features among the top 1,000 QS or Times Higher Education rankings.
- The previous regulations, known as the University Grants Commission (Promotion and Maintenance of Standards of Academic Collaboration between Indian and Foreign Educational Institutions) Regulations, 2016, which will now stand repealed, required two institutions to tie up with each other after obtaining the UGC's approval.
- Under the new regulations to be made public soon, universities and colleges will no longer be required to seek its permission to do so, if they met the ranking criteria.

PM Modi inaugurates new dairy complex, potato processing plant in Gujarat's Banaskantha

- The Prime Minister also dedicated the Banas Community Radio Station to the nation.
- This Community Radio Station has been established to provide farmers key scientific information related to agriculture and animal husbandry. It is expected that the radio station will connect with over 5 lakh farmers of about 1700 villages.
- The Prime Minister dedicated to the nation the expanded facilities for the production of cheese products and whey powder at the Banas dairy plant in Palanpur.
- Also, the Prime Minister dedicated to the nation, Organic Manure and Biogas plant established at Dama, Gujarat.
- The Prime Minister also laid the foundation stone of four gobar gas plants of 100 tonnes capacity to be established at Khimana, Ratanpura – Bhildi, Radhanpur and Thawar.
- Banas Dairy is a division of Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation which is under the ownership of Ministry of Cooperation, Government of Gujarat based in the Banaskantha district of Gujarat and is Asia's largest milk producer.
- It was founded in 1969, in accordance with the 1961 rule of the National Dairy Development Board under Operation Flood.

Prime Minister lays foundation stone of WHO Global Center for Traditional Medicine at Jamnagar, Gujarat

- Groundbreaking ceremony was attended by Prime Minister of Mauritius Shri Pravind Kumar Jugnauth and Dr. Tedros Ghebreyesus, Director-General, World Health Organization (WHO).
- The Ministry of Ayush and the World Health Organization (WHO) is establishing world's first and only Global Centre for Traditional Medicine (WHO GCTM) in Jamnagar, Gujarat.
- WHO Global Centre for Traditional Medicine in India at Jamnagar, Gujarat, will have its interim office at the Institute of Training and Research in Ayurveda (ITRA) in Gujarat. This Centre will be supported by an investment of about USD 250 million from the Government of India.
- The primary objective of WHO GCTM is to harness the potential of traditional medicine from across the world through modern science and technology and improve overall health of the communities' world over.
- The Centre will highlight the potential of traditional medicine and utilize technological advancements to promote its safe and effective use.
- India's traditional medicine system is not limited only to treatment. It is a holistic science of life.

SBI raises MCLR

- SBI raised the MCLR by 10 basis points (bps) across tenures to 7.1% (from 7% earlier); it is now slightly lower than the 7.25% at HDFC Bank, Punjab National Bank, and ICICI Bank.
- MCLR, which RBI instituted with effect from April 1, 2016, is the lowest interest rate that a bank or lender can offer. It is applicable to fresh corporate loans and floating rate loans taken before October 2019.
- RBI then switched to the external benchmark linked lending rate (EBLR) system where lending rate is linked to benchmark rates like repo or Treasury Bill rates.
- As a result of the increase in MCLR, borrowers who have taken home, vehicle, and personal loans will find their equated monthly instalments (EMIs) rising in the coming months.

Vice President visits birthplace of freedom fighter Alluri Sitarama Raju

- Alluri Sitarama Raju (1897 – 1924) was an Indian revolutionary who waged an armed campaign against British colonial rule in India.
- Born in present-day Andhra Pradesh, he became involved in anti-British activities in response to the 1882 Madras Forest Act, which effectively restricted the free movement of Adivasis (tribal communities) in their forest habitats and prevented them from practicing a traditional form of agriculture known as podu.
- Rising discontent towards the British led to the Rampa Rebellion of 1922, in which he played a major part as a leader.

- He was nicknamed "Manyam Veerudu" (Hero of the Jungle) by local villagers for his heroic exploits.

Defence Secretary inaugurates two-day National Level Pollution Response Exercise of Indian Coast Guard off Mormugao harbour

- The objective of NATPOLREX-VIII is to enhance the preparedness and response capability of all the stakeholders in combating marine spills.
- It aims at validating the procedures and guidelines as contained in the National Oil Spill Disaster Contingency Plan (NOSDCP) at the national and regional levels under the aegis of SACEP MoU to which India is a member state.
- The event is being attended by more than 85 participants from 50 agencies, including 29 observers from 22 friendly foreign countries & International Organisations and two Coast Guard ships from Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.

Minimum 25% pre-cast concrete elements usage made mandatory in road construction

- The minimum mandatory usage should be 25% of total concrete volume other than the foundations & sub-structures of Bridges/Viaduct/RoB.
- Industrialised Pre-cast Concrete has the benefits of all-weather and fast construction, reliable quality & enhanced performance durability, aesthetics due to uniformity in appearance and reduced carbon emission/reduced noise & air pollution due to reduced construction activities at site, etc.
- To add to that, it will also play an integral role in accelerating the growth of the MSME sector.

India's NIA organises Colombo Security Conclave on investigation of terrorism cases

- Panellists and participants from India, Maldives, Mauritius, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh participated in the virtual conference.
- The Colombo Security Conclave is a grouping of India, Sri Lanka, the Maldives and Mauritius.
- The fifth meeting of national security advisers of the Colombo Security Conclave was held in the Maldives on March 9 and 10, 2022.

April 21

Russia says it has successfully tested a new Sarmat intercontinental missile that can evade defenses.

- The missile was fired from the Plesetsk state test cosmodrome in northwest Russia's Arkhangelsk region.

- After the test, Russian President Vladimir Putin said the new missile complex has the highest tactical and technical characteristics and is able to overcome all modern means of anti-missile defense.
- An intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) is a missile with a minimum range of 5,500 kilometres primarily designed for nuclear weapons delivery (delivering one or more thermonuclear warheads).

Digital Banking units to come up in 75 districts

- Earlier this month, the Reserve Bank of India announced the guidelines for DBUs, following the report of a working group of the Indian Banks Association.
- A digital banking unit is a specialised fixed point business unit or hub housing certain minimum digital infrastructure for delivering digital banking products and services as well as servicing existing financial products and services digitally in self-service mode at any time.
- Commercial banks (other than regional rural banks, payment banks and local area banks) with past digital banking experience are permitted to open DBUs in tier 1 to tier 6 centres, unless otherwise specifically restricted, without having the need to take permission from the RBI in each case.
- As per the RBI, each DBU must offer certain minimum digital banking products and services.
- Such products should be on both liabilities and assets side of the balance sheet of the digital banking segment. Digitally value-added services to conventional products would also qualify as such.

Police to formulate guidelines on loudspeaker use

- The Maharashtra government is relying on provisions of The Noise Pollution (Regulation and Control) Rules, 2000 to negotiate the controversy over the use of loudspeakers by mosques.
- As per the Central Pollution Control Board's mandate for noise pollution, 'noise' is defined as unwanted sound. Sound, which pleases the listener, is music and that which causes pain and annoyance is noise.
- Section 2 (a) of the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 includes noise in the definition of 'air pollutant'.
- Noise pollution and its sources are regulated under The Noise Pollution (Regulation and Control) Rules, 2000 under The Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.

What is the threshold for acceptable level of noise?

- Noise pollution Rules have defined the acceptable level of noise in different zones for both daytime and nighttime. In industrial areas, the permissible limit is 75 decibels (unit of sound; tenth of a 'bell', symbol dB) for daytime, and 70 dB for night.

- Daytime is defined as the period from 6 am to 10 pm, and night is 10 pm to 6 am of the following day.

Global Ayush Investment and Innovation Summit-2022

- The three day Ayush global summit will witness a dialogue with entrepreneurs, industry, startups and other stakeholders to encourage them to increase investment for innovation in Ayush as the sector continues to showcase colossal room for growth.
- The Global Ayush Investment & Innovation Summit will be in progress till April 22, 2022 in Gandhinagar, Gujarat and commenced a day after the Prime Minister inaugurated the WHO-Global Centre for Traditional Medicine in Jamnagar.
- In 2014, where the Ayush sector was less than \$3 billion, today it has increased to more than \$18 billion.
- Many new initiatives in Ayush sector were announced by the Prime Minister, first being a special Ayush mark for Ayush products. This will give people all over the world the confidence of quality Ayush products.
- Government will develop a network of Ayush parks to encourage the promotion, research and manufacturing of Ayush products across the country.
- A new category named 'Ayush Aahar' was announced which will greatly facilitate the producers of herbal nutritional supplements.
- India will soon introduce a special Ayush visa category for foreign nationals who want to come to India to take advantage of Ayush therapy was announced.
- PM Modi announced launch of Ayush Export Promotion Council and four Ayush ICT initiatives which includes Ayush Information Hub, AyuSoft, Ayush Next and Ayush GIS.
- Prime Minister also released a comic book named 'Professor Ayushman', which describes how Ayush systems and products helped in fighting not only COVID-19 but other diseases also.
- On this occasion, the Prime Minister distributed awards to the winners of 'Ayush Start-up Challenge' organised by All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA) in association with Start-up India.

Government Approves PLI Scheme for Drones and drone components.

- The ministry invited applications from eligible manufacturers on 10th March 2022 and the last date for submission was 31st March 2022.
- The eligibility criteria for the PLI scheme for drones and drone components includes an annual sales turnover of INR 2 crore for drone companies and INR 50 lacs for drone components manufacturers; and value addition of over 40% of sales turnover.

- The PLI scheme for drones and drone components was notified on 30th September 2021.
- Under the scheme, a total incentive of INR 120 crore is spread over three financial year which is nearly double the combined turnover of all domestic drone manufacturers in FY 2020-21.
- The PLI rate is 20% of the value addition which is one of the highest among other PLI scheme.
- A unique feature of drone PLI scheme is that the manufacturers who fail to meet the value addition threshold in 2021-22 will be allowed to claim the lost incentive in the subsequent year if they make up the shortfall in 2022-23.

Govt amends rules governing Nidhi companies

- Now, public companies desiring to function as Nidhis must obtain prior declaration from the central government before accepting deposits, the Ministry said.
- A Nidhi company, especially popular in southern states like Tamil Nadu, is a non-banking financial company. The core business of Nidhi companies is borrowing and lending money between their members.
- For timely disposal, it has also been provided in amended rules that in case no decision is conveyed by the central government within 45 days of the receipt of applications by companies in NDH-4 form, approval will be deemed as granted. This will apply for such companies which shall be incorporated after Nidhi (Amendment) Rules, 2022.

Project 75 India

- Dr Ajay Kumar, Defence Secretary was the Chief Guest at the ceremony and the submarine has been named 'Vagsheer'. The Kalvari class is a class of diesel-electric attack submarines based on the Scorpène-class submarine being built for the Indian Navy.
- The submarines are designed by French naval defence and energy company DCNS and are being manufactured by Mazagon Dock Limited in Mumbai.
- The first of the Project - 75 submarines was commissioned into the Navy in December 2017 and presently four submarines of this Project are in commission in the Indian Navy.
- The fifth submarine is progressing with the Sea Trials and is likely to be delivered this year.
- The sixth submarine will now commence setting to work of various equipment and their harbour trials. The crew will thereafter sail the submarine for the rigorous Sea Acceptance Trials after which the submarine would be delivered to the Indian Navy by late next year.

India's first pure green hydrogen plant commissioned in Jorhat.

- Oil India Limited (OIL) has taken the first significant step towards Green Hydrogen Economy in India with the commissioning of India's First 99.999%

pure Green Hydrogen pilot plant, with an installed capacity of 10 kg per day at its Jorhat Pump Station in Assam today.

- The plant produces Green Hydrogen from the electricity generated by the existing 500kW Solar plant using a 100 kW Anion Exchange Membrane (AEM) Electrolyser array.
- The use of AEM technology is being used for the first time in India.
- This plant is expected to increase its production of green hydrogen from 10 kg per day to 30 kg per day in future.
- The company has initiated a detailed study in collaboration with IIT Guwahati on blending of Green Hydrogen with Natural Gas and its effect on the existing infrastructure of OIL.

April 22

Defence Minister inaugurates DefConnect 2.0

- The event was inaugurated by Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh. The event will attract a large number of innovators and investors from India's leading industries in the defence sector.
- The DefConnect will provide a unique opportunity for innovators associated with iDEX-DIO to showcase their capabilities, products and state-of-the-art-technologies to the target audience of the industry leaders.
- The iDEX, launched by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi in 2018, essentially provides a unified platform for various stakeholders in the defence and aerospace sectors.
- It acts like an umbrella organisation to oversee technology development and potential collaborations in this specific field.
- Platforms like the iDEX enable the military to find disruptive solutions to complex challenges through its flagship programmes like Defence India Startup Challenges (DISC) and Open Challenges (OC) which shall be the key components for the future of military technology.
- Till date, iDEX has launched five rounds of DISC and three rounds of OC, receiving more than 2,000 applications from individual innovators and start-ups.
- Furthermore, iDEX has been able to fund projects in numerous technological areas through its Grant-in-Aid framework, Support for Prototype and Research Kickstart (SPARK), which entail provisioning of grant up to Rs 1.50 crore to budding entrepreneurs.

Govt. approves advisory for management of Human-Wildlife Conflict across the country.

- The report analyses the Wildlife (Protection) Amendment Bill, 2021 tabled in the Lok Sabha in December 2021.
- The Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 provides a legal framework for the protection of various species of wild animals and plants.
- While it has been amended several times, the latest set of proposed amendments by the Environment Ministry were to make it more compliant with the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), to which India is a signatory.
- One of the clauses proposed by the Ministry was to have a Standing Committee of the State Board for Wildlife (SBWL) to make the functioning of the body “more purposive”
- The report recommends an advisory committee to be headed by the Chief Wildlife Warden, who can consult the committee to act appropriately.

India Post Payments Bank's 'Fincluvation'

- Fincluvation is an Industry first initiative to create a powerful platform to mobilize the start-up community towards building meaningful financial products aimed at financial inclusion.
- Fincluvation will be a permanent platform of IPPB to co-create inclusive financial solutions with participating start-ups.

India Post Payments Bank

- India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) has been established under the Department of Posts, Ministry of Communication with 100% equity owned by Government of India.
- IPPB was launched by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi on September 1, 2018.

PM Award for Excellence in Public Administration

- Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration have been instituted with a view to recognize the extraordinary and innovative work done by Districts/implementing units and Central/State organisations for the welfare of common citizens.
- They are also conferred for effective implementation of identified priority programs and innovation.
- Exemplary work done in the following five identified priority programmes are given awards
 - Promoting “Jan Bhagidari” or People's Participation in Poshan Abhiyan,
 - Promoting excellence in sports and wellness through Khelo India scheme,
 - Digital payments and Good Governance in PM SVANidhi Yojana,
 - Holistic Development through One District One Product scheme,

- o Seamless, End-to-End Delivery of Services without Human Intervention.
- A total of 16 awards for 5 identified Priority Programmes and for innovations in the sphere of public administration/delivery of services etc. are given this year.

Civils services Day?

- 21st April every year.
- On this day, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel addressed the first batch of probationers at the All India Administrative Service Training School at Metcalfe House, New Delhi in 1947. In his speech he called civil servants as the steel frame of India.

NITI Aayog, UNICEF to Develop Country's First Report on 'State of India's Children'

- The SoI seeks to formalize a framework of cooperation to launch the first report on the 'State of India's Children: Status and Trends in Multidimensional Child Development', with a focus on the multidimensional aspects of child development like health, education, nutrition, protection, and other relevant areas.
- The collaboration between NITI Aayog and UNICEF India will draw up the methods, technical analysis, reporting, and action planning for the first report on the 'Status of India's Children'

Dr. Ambedkar Centres of Excellence (DACE) Scheme launched

- Ambedkar Foundation (DAF), Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Govt. of India, is starting Dr. Ambedkar Centres of Excellence (DACE) in 31 Central Universities across the country.
- The DACEs are being set up to provide high quality free coaching facilities to the Scheduled Caste students for the Civil Services examinations, conducted by Union Public Service Commission (UPSC).
- Under the DACE Scheme, a total of 100 seats will be sanctioned for coaching per centre.
- Of the total sanctioned seats for coaching, 33% seats will preferably be given to the eligible female candidates of Scheduled Castes.
- If eligible female candidates are not available in sufficient numbers for the coaching, the concerned University will allocate the vacant seats to the male/transgender candidates (SC Candidates only).
- The coaching benefits, under the scheme, will only be utilized by a student ONCE regardless of the number of chances he/she is entitled for a particular competitive examination.
- Ambedkar Foundation (DAF) shall fund the entire expenditure incurred on the establishment of Dr. Ambedkar Centre for Excellence.

- 75,000/- per annum / per student will be provided to the University for 100 students. Total amount of Rs. 75.00 lakh per year would be provided to the University for running the Scheme.

IFSCA (Fund Management) Regulations, 2022

- Registering the Fund Management Entity: A Fund Management Entity will be registered with IFSCA and will be able to manage different types of funds and schemes subject to meeting the eligibility criteria.
- Green Channel: Venture Capital Schemes or non-retail schemes soliciting money from accredited investors only shall qualify for a green channel i.e. the schemes filed can open for subscription by investors immediately upon filing with IFSCA.
- Exchange Traded Funds (ETFs): Considering that ETFs offer a means to gain exposure to specific markets or asset classes at a low cost, registered fund managers in IFSC shall be able to launch not just Index based ETFs but also Active ETFs and Commodity based ETFs.
- Environment Social Governance (ESG): Growing number of investors expect fund managers to make ESG issues integral to their investment strategies. With the intent of making IFSC a hub for a host of activities related to sustainable finance, disclosures have been proposed to be mandated at the entity level and scheme level.

Government think-tank Niti Aayog has prepared a draft battery swapping policy.

- Under this, it has proposed offering incentives to electric vehicles (EVs) with swappable batteries, subsidies to companies manufacturing swappable batteries, a new battery-as-a-service business model, and standards for interoperable batteries, among other measures.
- The draft policy has suggested that the GST Council consider reducing the differential across the tax rates on Lithium-ion batteries and electric vehicle supply equipment. Currently, the tax rate on the former is 18 per cent, and 5 per cent on the latter.
- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had announced during this year's Union Budget that the government was set to roll out a battery swapping policy, in a bid to reduce upfront costs of purchasing EVs and drive adoption among buyers.
- The policy is targeted at supporting the adoption of battery-swapping, primarily for battery swapping systems used in electric scooters and three-wheeler electric rickshaws.
- Niti Aayog said battery swapping will fall under the battery-as-a-service (BaaS) business model, and such models would have to ensure interoperability between EVs and batteries for a successful mainstreaming of battery swapping as an alternative.

Regulatory framework for special purpose acquisition companies

- The Company Law Committee, which was set up in 2019 to make recommendations to boost ease of doing business in India, has made this suggestion in its report submitted to the government recently.
- An SPAC, or a blank-cheque company, is an entity specifically set up with the objective of acquiring a firm in a particular sector.
- An SPAC aims to raise money in an initial public offering (IPO) without any operations or revenues. The money that is raised from the public is kept in an escrow account, which can be accessed while making the acquisition.
- If the acquisition is not made within two years of the IPO, the SPAC is delisted and the money is returned to the investors.
- While SPACs are essentially shell companies, a key factor that makes them attractive to investors are the people who sponsor them. Globally, prominent names such as tennis star Serena Williams, Dell Technologies founder and CEO Michael Dell, billionaire and venture capitalist Vinod Khosla etc. have participated in SPACs.

Atal Pension Yojana; Enrollments cross 4 crore

- Atal Pension Yojana is the guaranteed pension scheme of Government of India administered by PFRDA. The scheme allows any Citizen of India between the age group of 18-40 years to join through the bank or post office branches where one has the savings bank account.
- Under the scheme, a subscriber would receive a minimum guaranteed pension of Rs.1000 to Rs. 5000 per month from the age of 60 years, depending upon his contribution.
- The same pension would be paid to the spouse of the subscriber after the demise of subscriber and on demise of both the subscriber and spouse, the pension wealth as accumulated till age 60 of the subscriber would be returned back to the nominee.
- Out of the total enrolments under APY as on 31st March 2022, nearly 80% subscribers have opted for Rs 1000 pension plan and 13% for Rs 5000 pension plan. Out of the total APY subscribers 44 % are female subscribers while 56% are male subscribers. Further, out of the total APY subscribers, 45% are aged between 18 and 25 years.

April 23

Study flags poor control of blood sugar in Indians

- The latest results of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)-India Diabetes (INDIAB) study, conducted in 27 States (unified Andhra Pradesh), two Union Territories and the National Capital Territory have stressed the

need to have better control over various health parameters that impact mortality and quality of life.

- The report "Achievement of guideline recommended diabetes treatment targets and health habits in people with self-reported diabetes in India (ICMR-INDIAB-13): a national cross-sectional study" reasons that achievement of treatment targets remains sub optimal in India, in a pan-Indian study, and goes on to provide hints for shaping the health care response to the crises.
- Higher education, male sex, rural residence, and shorter duration of diabetes (under 10 years) were associated with better achievement of combined achievement of targets
- For the outcome assessment, good glycaemic control was defined as HbA1c of less than 7.0% (A), blood pressure control was defined as less than 140/90 mm Hg (B), and the LDL cholesterol target was defined as less than 100 mg/dL (C).
- ABC control was defined as the proportion of individuals meeting glycaemic, blood pressure, and LDL cholesterol targets together.
- Only just over 36% of 4,834 people with diabetes achieved good glycaemic (blood sugar) control, over 48% achieved blood pressure control, and 41.5% achieved good LDL cholesterol control.

Government contemplating postal ballot facility for NRIs

- He shared with the members of the Indian community that extension of Electronically Transmitted Postal Ballot System (ETPBS) facility to overseas voters is being contemplated.
- In meetings with NRI groups, Mr. Chandra spoke of the experience of conducting elections in India, which has 950 million voters in over 1 million polling stations.
- The ECI had written to the Law Ministry in 2020 proposing that NRIs be allowed to vote through postal ballots, following which the matter has been under consideration by the government.
- While the ECI at present allows NRIs to register as overseas electors as long as they have not acquired the citizenship of another country, they have to reach their respective polling booths to cast their votes in person on voting day.
- According to an ECI official, as of now there are only 1.12 lakh registered overseas electors.

Earth Day 2022 was observed with main theme for 2022 as "Invest In Our Planet".

- Earth Day marks the anniversary of the birth of the modern environmental movement in 1970.

- It is widely recognized as the largest secular observance in the world, marked by more than a billion people every year as a day of action to change human behavior and create global, national, and local policy changes.
- In 1969, at a UNESCO Conference in San Francisco, peace activist John McConnell proposed a day to honor the Earth and the concept of peace, to first be observed on March 21, 1970, the first day of spring in the northern hemisphere.
- This day of nature's equipoise was later sanctioned in a proclamation written by McConnell and signed by Secretary-General U Thant at the United Nations.
- A month later, United States Senator Gaylord Nelson proposed the idea to hold a nationwide environmental teach-in on April 22, 1970. The first Earth Day was focused on the United States.
- In 1990, Denis Hayes, the original national coordinator in 1970, took it international and organized events in 141 nations.
- On Earth Day 2016, the landmark Paris Agreement was signed by 123 countries.
- This signing satisfied a key requirement for the entry into force of the historic draft climate protection treaty adopted by the consensus of the 195 nations present at the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris.

Zelenskyy gets John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Award for protecting democracy

- The John F. Kennedy Library Foundation said that he was chosen because of the way he has “marshaled the spirit, patriotism and untiring sacrifice of the Ukrainian people in a life-or-death fight for their country.
- The foundation said four U.S. officials were chosen for standing up for free and fair elections, as the system is challenged in ways it has never been before.
- They are Republican U.S. Rep. Liz Cheney of Wyoming, Michigan Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson, Arizona House Speaker Rusty Bowers, and Fulton County, Georgia, elections worker Wandrea “Shaye” Moss.

PM Modi holds talks with British counterpart Boris Johnson

- Issues of defence and security cooperation, cyber security and space also figured in the discussion between the two leaders.
- India and United Kingdom have decided to do their best to conclude the Free Trade Agreement by the end of 2022.
- Both countries have decided to deepen climate and energy partnerships and invited UK to join India's National Hydrogen Mission.
- They welcomed the establishment of a mechanism on maritime electric propulsion.

- India and United Kingdom have signed six Memorandums of Understanding. Of the six MoUs exchanged, two are Government to Government, while four are Non-Governmental.
- The 2 sides agreed on a new and expanded India-U.K. defence partnership and vowed to seal an ambitious free trade agreement by the end of the year.
- The U.K. is creating an Open General Export Licence (OGEL) for India to “reduce bureaucracy and slashing delivery times” for defence procurement.

Global Ayush Investment and Innovation Summit-2022

- The assurances of investment include more than Rs. 7000 crore from FMCG, around 1000 crore from Medical Value Travel (MVT), around 345 Crores from Pharma sector, 300 crore for Farmers & Agri category and around Rs.60 crore in the Technology & Diagnostic category.
- Five significant MoUs were signed in the presence of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi during the inaugural session of the event on 20 April 2022.
- During the event, a total of 12 MoUs were also signed between the Central Council for Research in Ayurveda Sciences (CCRAS), Ministry of Ayush and various prestigious research institutes including IIT Delhi, IIT Guwahati, ICMR NITM, AIIMS, CSIR, NIPER, NIMHANS, JNU, ICGB, AVP, TDU.
- The Summit was organized in line with Sustainable Development Goal Number 3 of promoting “Good Health and Well-being.”

APEDA signs MoU with NRDC to strengthen the export value chain.

- The MoU has been signed for the implementation of the Agri Export Policy announced by Government of India in 2018 and to strengthen the export value chain.
- NRDC is an enterprise of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR), Ministry of Science & Technology, Government of India.
- and it was established in 1953 with the primary objective to promote, develop and commercialize the technologies, know-how, inventions, and patents.

Two-day Conference and Exhibition on the Indian National Calendar as part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav inaugurated today in Ujjain

- The 'Indian National Calendar,' which was officially established by India's Parliament in 1957, is a scientific statement of India's identity. This was an act of reclaiming our identity after independence.
- The Indian national calendar, sometimes called the Saka calendar, is used, alongside the Gregorian calendar, by The Gazette of India, in news broadcasts by All India Radio and in calendars and communications issued by the Government of India.

India's participated as the Guest of honour at the Paris Book festival 2022

- The Paris Book Festival was inaugurated on 21st April 2022. India Pavilion at the Paris Book Festival was inaugurated on same day.

- The India Pavilion which has been designed by National Institute of Design (NID), houses more than 15 digital and physical exhibitions displaying over 400 books published in various Indian languages representing the works of 65 Indian publishers.

April 24

Twitter bans ads which deny climate change

- Twitter's announcement on Earth Day is part of an attempt to curb climate change disinformation campaigns on its network.
- Twitter has said that climate denialism shouldn't be monetised on the platform and that "misrepresentative ads shouldn't detract from important conversations about the climate crisis".
- In 2019, Twitter shared plans to achieve 100 percent carbon-neutral power sourcing in their data centres by the end of 2022.

Google's announcement of similar policy

- In October 2021, tech giant Google had done something similar when it announced a new monetisation policy for Google advertisers, publishers and YouTube creators.
- Google's policy prohibits ads for, and monetization of, content that contradicts "well-established scientific consensus around the existence and causes of climate change".

IPS officer Rashmi Shukla is facing an FIR in Mumbai and is being probed for allegedly tapping the phones of Rajya Sabha MP Raut

- Section 5(2) says that "on the occurrence of any public emergency, or in the interest of the public safety", phone tapping can be done by the Centre or states if they are satisfied it is necessary in the interest of "public safety", "sovereignty and integrity of India, the security of the State".
- There is an exception for the press: "press messages intended to be published in India of correspondents accredited to the Central Government or a State Government shall not be intercepted or detained, unless their transmission has been prohibited under this sub-section".

Who can tap phones?

- In the states, police have the powers to tap phones.
- At the Centre, 10 agencies are authorised to do so: Intelligence Bureau, CBI, Enforcement Directorate, Narcotics Control Bureau, Central Board of Direct Taxes, Directorate of Revenue Intelligence, National Investigation Agency, R&AW, Directorate of Signal Intelligence, and the Delhi Police Commissioner.
- Tapping by any other agency would be considered illegal.

Who authorises phone tapping?

- Rule 419A of the Indian Telegraph (Amendment) Rules, 2007, says phone tapping orders “shall not be issued except by an order made by the Secretary to the Government of India in the Ministry of Home Affairs in the case of Government of India and by the Secretary to the State Government in-charge of the Home Department in the case of a State Government”.
- The order has to be conveyed to the service provider in writing; only then can the tapping begin.

Indomethacin drugs show efficacy in the treatment of mild and moderate COVID-19 patients

- The drug, indomethacin, is widely used to treat various types of inflammation-related conditions.
- Indomethacin is a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug available as capsules and a liquid suspension, to be taken orally.
- Indomethacin works by stopping the body's production of a substance that causes pain, fever, and inflammation. It is used to relieve moderate to severe pain, tenderness, swelling, and stiffness caused by various kinds of arthritis, and pain in the shoulder caused by inflammation.

What makes blue straggler stars tick

- For this, the researchers also made use of the observations by the UVIT instrument (Ultra Violet Imaging Telescope) of ASTROSAT, India's first science observatory in space.
- A blue straggler is a main-sequence star in an open or globular cluster that is more luminous and bluer than stars at the main sequence turnoff point for the cluster.
- Blue stragglers were first discovered by Allan Sandage in 1953 while performing photometry of the stars in the globular cluster M3.

why a blue straggler is more massive, and energetic, than expected may be resolved in several ways:

- One, that these do not belong to the family of stars in the cluster, and hence are not expected to have the group properties. But if they actually belong, the evasive behaviour is due to these stars gaining mass from a binary companion.
- Second, the straggler draws matter from the giant companion and grows more massive, hot and blue, and the red giant ends up as a normal or smaller white dwarf.
- The third possibility is that the straggler draws matter from a companion star, but that there is a third star that facilitates this process.
- The IAP researchers have shown evidence that supports the second of the hypotheses listed above.

Govt to raise number of Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Kendras to ten thousand by March 2024

- The government has invited applications to open Janaushadhi Kendras in three thousand five hundred 79 Blocks of four hundred six districts of 26 States and Union Territories.
- It highlighted that under the scheme, seven hundred 39 districts of the country have been covered and eight thousand six hundred ten stores have been opened till the last month.
- The Ministry said that about fifteen thousand crore rupees have been saved of the general public under this scheme.
- The Ministry said that new applications have been invited to cover five hundred 79 blocks of 406 districts. It said that any Individuals, Unemployed Pharmacist, Government nominated agencies, NGO's, Trust and Societies can apply for PMBJK.

GO 111, the order to protect Hyderabad's Osman Sagar and Himayat Sagar

- On March 8, 1996, the government of erstwhile (undivided) Andhra Pradesh had issued 'Government Order (GO) 111' prohibiting development or construction works in the catchment area of the Osman Sagar and Himayat Sagar lakes up to a radius of 10 km.
- The GO prohibited the setting up of industries, residential colonies, hotels, etc. which cause pollution. The aim of the restrictions was to protect the catchment area, and to keep the reservoirs pollution-free.
- The reservoirs were created by building dams on the Musi (also known as Moosa or Muchkunda) river, a major tributary of the Krishna, to protect Hyderabad from floods.
- Osman Sagar was completed in 1921, and Himayat Sagar in 1927.

April 25

PM Modi reaches Jammu to participate in Panchayati Raj Day event

- He said that Palli is on its way to becoming India's first carbon-neutral panchayat.
- On the occasion, the Prime Minister also inaugurated and laid the foundation stones of several development projects worth over 20,000 crore rupees in Jammu and Kashmir.
- he Prime Minister laid the foundation stone of the Delhi-Amritsar-Katra Expressway and inaugurated the 500KW Solar Power Plant at Palli village along with 108 Jan Aushadhi Kendras, in Samba district.
- He also inaugurated the Banihal-Qazigund Road Tunnel, built at a cost of over 3100 crore rupees. The 8.45 Km long tunnel will reduce the road distance between Banihal and Qazigund by 16 km, and reduce journey time by around one and a half hours.

- He laid the foundation stones for the 850 MW Ratle Hydroelectric Project and 540 MW Kwar Hydroelectric Project to be constructed on the Chenab river in Kishtwar District.
- He also launched the Amrit Sarovar initiative aimed at developing and rejuvenating 75 water bodies in each district of the country.

Panchayati Raj

- Ministry of Panchayati Raj commemorates 24th April of every year as the National Panchayati Raj Day (NPRD), as the 73rd Constitutional Amendment came into force on this date.
- 24th April, 1993 marks a defining moment in the history of decentralization of power to the grassroots, with the institutionalization of Panchayati Raj, through the Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act, 1992 which came into force with effect from that day.

All-India Household Consumer Expenditure Survey

- Typically, the Survey is conducted between July and June and this year's exercise is expected to be completed by June 2023.
- Estimates of household monthly per capita consumer expenditure (MPCE) and the distribution of households and persons over different MPCE classes, based on the Survey, may only become available about a year after the field work is completed.
- The results will include separate data sets for rural and urban parts, and also splice spending patterns for each State and Union Territory, as well as different socio-economic groups.
- Fresh one-off surveys on consumer expenditure and employment and unemployment were commissioned over 2011-12 after the usually scheduled Surveys conducted in 2009-10 had coincided with a worldwide slowdown following the 2008 global financial crisis and a drought year in India.
- India has not had any official estimates on per capita household spending, used to arrive at estimates of poverty levels in different parts of the country and to review economic indicators such as the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), since 2011-12.
- The government had junked the findings of the last Survey, conducted in 2017-18, citing "data quality" issues.
- The Survey could not be launched in the past two years due to the pandemic.

Understanding the Olga Tellis judgment

- The Olga Tellis vs Bombay Municipal Corporation judgment in 1985 ruled that eviction of pavement dwellers using unreasonable force, without giving them a chance to explain is unconstitutional. It is a violation of their right to livelihood.

- The judgment agrees that pavement dwellers do occupy public spaces unauthorised. However, they should be given a chance to be heard and a reasonable opportunity to depart “before force is used to expel them.
- The case started in 1981 when the State of Maharashtra and the Bombay Municipal Corporation decided that pavement and slum dwellers in Bombay city should be evicted and “deported to their respective places of origin or places outside the city of Bombay.”
- Pavement dwellers, too, have a right to life and dignity. The right to life included the right to livelihood. They earn a meagre livelihood by living and working on the footpaths.

Towards a resolution of the Arunachal-Assam border dispute

- The issue started with a 1951 report which transferred 3,648 sq. km of the “plain” area of Balipara and Sadiya foothills to the Darrang and Lakhimpur districts of Assam.
- Arunachal Pradesh claims the transfer was done without consulting its tribes who had customary rights over these lands.
- The two States have decided to form 12 committees involving the districts sharing the boundary in order to come up with a solution.
- Assam has had boundary disputes with all the north-eastern States that were carved out of it.
- While Nagaland became a State in 1963, Meghalaya first became an Autonomous State in 1970 and a full-fledged State in 1972.
- Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram were separated from Assam as Union Territories in 1972 and as States in 1987.

Strontium: A Cyber-Espionage Group

- Strontium is also known as Fancy Bear, Tsar Team, Pawn Storm, Sofacy, Sednit or Advanced Persistent Threat 28 (APT28) group.
- It is a highly active and prolific cyber-espionage group. It is one of the most active APT groups and has been operating since at least the mid-2000s
- The group is said to be connected to the GRU, the Russian Armed Forces' main military intelligence wing.
- The group deploys diverse malware and malicious tools to breach networks. In the past, it has used X-Tunnel, SPLM (or CHOPSTICK and X-Agent), GAMEFISH and Zebrocy to attack targets.
- APT28 uses spear-phishing (targeted campaigns to gain access to an individual's account) and zero-day exploits (taking advantage of unknown computer-software vulnerabilities) to target specific individuals and organisations.

Carbon Tax

- Pennsylvania becomes the first major fossil fuel-producing state in the US to adopt a carbon pricing policy to address climate change.

- It joins 11 states where coal, oil and natural gas power plants must buy credits for every ton of carbon dioxide they emit.
- President Joe Biden is attempting a less direct approach — known as the social cost of carbon — that calculates future climate damages to justify tougher restrictions on polluting industries.
- Governments elsewhere have moved more aggressively. Canada, for example, imposes fuel charges on individuals and also makes big polluters pay for emissions. It's one of 27 nations with some kind of carbon tax, according to The World Bank.

Social cost of carbon vs carbon pricing

- The social cost of carbon attempts to capture the value of all climate damage, centuries into the future.
- Carbon pricing reflects how much companies are willing to pay today for a limited amount of emission credits offered at auction.
- In other words, the social cost of carbon guides policy, while carbon pricing represents policy in practice.

European Union ground rules for Web Digital Services Act

- The Act, which is yet to become law, was proposed by the EU Commission (anti-trust) in December 2020. The DSA will tightly regulate the way intermediaries, especially large platforms such as Google, Facebook, and YouTube, function when it comes to moderating user content.
- The DSA is “a set of common rules on intermediaries’ obligations and accountability across the single market”, and ensures higher protection to all EU users, irrespective of their country.
- It will be a landmark legislation to force big Internet companies to act against disinformation and illegal and harmful content, and to “provide better protection for Internet users and their fundamental rights”.
- The proposed Act will work in conjunction with the EU’s Digital Markets Act (DMA), which was approved last month.
- The DSA is likely to be adopted by the EU Parliament in the next few months. Once adopted, “it will apply from fifteen months or from January 1, 2024, whichever is later”.

Cochin Shipyard Ltd set to build two 62T bollard pull tugs

- The vessels will be built at Tebma Shipyards facility at Malpe in Karnataka.
- The vessels will have a length of 33 metres and a breadth of 11.9 metres. The tugs can reach a speed of 12.5 knots and a Bollard pull capacity of 62 tonnes.
- Ocean Sparkle Ltd, is a leading service provider in the Comprehensive Port Operations and Management Sector in the country.

- Cochin Shipyard Limited recently took over Tebma Shipyards Ltd for the dedicated construction of tugs, specialised vessels such as dredgers, ferries and coastal vessels to cater to the market needs.
- Bollard Pull is a measure of the pulling power of a vessel, comparable to the horsepower rating of conventional vehicle engines.
- It can be defined as the thrust that is developed by the propulsion systems of any vessel when it has a zero speed in the forward direction.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the seventh edition of Raisina Dialogue

- President of the European Union Ursula Von Der Leyen is the chief guest at the Dialogue.
- The three-day Dialogue is based on the theme - Terranova, impassioned, impatient, imperiled.
- There are six broad thematic pillars of the Dialogue including Rethinking Democracy, End of Multilateralism, Water Caucuses, and Achieving Green Transitions.
- Raisina Dialogue will have around 100 sessions with over 210 speakers from 90 countries.
- The Raisina Dialogue is a multilateral conference committed to addressing the most challenging issues facing the global community.
- Every year, global leaders in policy, business, media, and civil society are hosted in New Delhi to discuss cooperation on a wide range of pertinent international policy matters.
- The conference is hosted by the Observer Research Foundation in collaboration with the Ministry of External Affairs.

April 26

The quarrel over Kuril Islands

- This is the first time in about two decades that Japan has used this phrase to describe the dispute over the Kuril Islands.
- Japan had been using softer language since 2003, saying that the dispute over the islands was the greatest concern in Russia-Japan bilateral ties.

What are the Kuril Islands/ Northern Territories?

- These are a set of four islands situated between the Sea of Okhotsk and the Pacific Ocean near the north of Japan's northernmost prefecture, Hokkaido.
- Both Moscow and Tokyo claim sovereignty over them though the islands have been under Russian control since the end of World War II.

- The Soviet Union had seized the islands at the end of World War II and by 1949 had expelled its Japanese residents. Tokyo claims that the disputed islands have been part of Japan since the early 19th century.

dispute

- According to Tokyo, Japan's sovereignty over the islands is confirmed by several treaties like the Shimoda Treaty of 1855, the 1875 Treaty for the exchange of Sakhalin for the Kuril Islands (Treaty of St. Petersburg), and the Portsmouth Treaty of 1905 signed after the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-05 which Japan had won.
- Russia, on the other hand, claims the Yalta Agreement (1945) and the Potsdam Declaration (1945) as proof of its sovereignty and argues that the San Francisco Treaty of 1951 is legal evidence that Japan had acknowledged Russian sovereignty over the islands.

Tamil Nadu Assembly passed two Bills that seek to transfer the Governor's power in appointing Vice-Chancellors of state universities

- Chief Minister MK Stalin said the Bills were required as the Governor was disregarding the state government's opinion on the appointments of VCs, an argument also made by states such as Maharashtra and West Bengal in the past.
- In December 2021, the Maharashtra Assembly passed a Bill amending the Maharashtra Public Universities Act, 2016.
- In 2019, the West Bengal government, led by the Trinamool Congress, took away the Governor's authority in appointing VCs to state universities. It has also hinted at removing the Governor as the Chancellor of the universities.
- In West Bengal, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu, the elected governments have repeatedly accused the Governors of acting at the behest of the Centre on various subjects, including education.
- Education comes under the Concurrent List, but entry 66 of the Union List — "coordination and determination of standards in institutions for higher education or research and scientific and technical institutions" — gives the Centre substantial authority over higher education.

Self-amplifying RNA SARS-CoV-2 lipid nanoparticle vaccine

- The vaccine, ARCT-154, has been developed by Arcturus Therapeutics Holdings, based in San Diego, California, and its trials are in progress in Vietnam.
- An mRNA vaccine, such as those from Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna, use messenger RNA that encodes the spike protein of the coronavirus.
- In other words, the mRNA directs the cell to produce copies of the spike protein, so that the immune system will recognise the spike if and when actual infection takes place, and mount a response.

- A self-amplifying mRNA vaccine is an improvement on the traditional RNA platform.
- It encodes four extra proteins in addition to the vaccine antigen, and these enable amplification of the original strand of RNA once inside the cell.
- The basic advantage is that it requires a smaller dose.

Himachal Pradesh to get a new Airport in Mandi!

- The new greenfield airport at Nagchala, Mandi is being developed under the Greenfield Airport Policy of MoCA and a Joint Venture Company between State Government of Himachal Pradesh and Airport Authority of India has been formed.
- There are 3 airports i.e. Shimla, Kullu, & Kangra and 5 heliports i.e. Kangnidhar, Shimla, Rampur, Baddi, and SASE(Manali) in Himachal Pradesh that are developed or being developed which would give a massive boost to tourism industry of the state once completed.

Govt amends Defence Acquisition Procedure 2020

- Going forward all modernisation requirements of the Defence Services and Indian Coast Guard are to be indigenously sourced irrespective of the nature of procurement.
- Import of defence equipment/sourcing from Foreign Industry of capital acquisitions should only be an exception and undertaken with specific approval of DAC/Raksha Mantri.
- Requirement of Integrity Pact Bank Guarantee (IPBG) has been dispensed with. Instead, Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) will be taken as a bid security for all acquisition cases with Acceptance of Necessity (AoN) cost more than Rs 100 crore.
- the procurement process under iDEX procedure of DAP 2020 has been simplified. With this simplification, time taken from grant of AoN to signing of contract will be reduced to 22 weeks.
- Make-II procedure of DAP-2020 has been simplified by incorporating Single Stage Composite Trials of prototypes and dispensing off with quantity vetting and scaling for initial procurements in the delegated cases.

A newly discovered episodically accreting young star

- So far 25 such rare groups of stars have been discovered.
- On occasions their feeding rate increases. This is known as the periods of enhanced mass accretion from their circumstellar disc.
- This process is known as mass accretion from the circumstellar disc of the star.
- These pre-main-sequence stars are surrounded by a disc from which it steadily feeds on the matter from the disc-shaped region of gas and dust surrounding the star to gain mass.

- Episodically accreting young stars are young, low-mass stars that have not initiated hydrogen fusion in their core and are fuelled by gravitational contraction and deuterium fusion (pre-main-sequence phase of the star).
- Such rare stars have gained significant interest in the star-formation community lately and this study could help probe into this group of stars and their formation mechanism in greater detail.
- Scientists have spotted a new member belonging to the extremely rare group of young stars that exhibit episodic accretion.

April 27

COVID-19 vaccines for kids

- Biological E's Corbevax has been approved for administration in children between the ages of five and 12 and Bharat Biotech's Covaxin has been approved for restricted use in emergency situations in the 6-12 age group.
- Currently, Bharat Biotech's inactivated whole virion vaccine is being administered in children aged 15-18, and Biological E's protein sub-unit vaccine in children between 12 and 15 under a national COVID-19 immunisation programme.
- The DCGI has also cleared ZyCoV-D's two-dose regimen for children aged over 12. The second dose of the vaccine can be administered on the 28th day.

'Country of Particular Concern' on religious freedom grounds, says U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF)

- It has also called for "targeted sanctions" on individuals and entities responsible for severe violations of religious freedom by freezing those individuals' or entities' assets and/or barring their entry" into the U.S.
- The USCIRF is an independent, bipartisan body created by the International Religious Freedom Act, 1998 (IRFA) with a mandate to monitor religious freedom violations globally and make policy recommendations to the President, the Secretary of State, and the Congress.
- It is a congressionally created entity and not an NGO or advocacy organisation.
- It is led by nine part-time commissioners appointed by the President and the leadership of both political parties in the House and the Senate.

U.S. hosts weapons summit for Ukraine

- The meeting of 40 countries at the U.S. Ramstein Air Base in Germany comes after Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov accused Ukraine of only "pretending" to negotiate a cease-fire and warned of a "real" risk of a new world war.

- Ramstein Air Base is a United States Air Force base in Rhineland-Palatinate, a state in southwestern Germany.
- It serves as headquarters for the United States Air Forces in Europe – Air Forces Africa (USAFE-AFAFRICA) and also for NATO Allied Air Command (AIRCOM).

Net direct tax collection reaches highest-ever figure in FY 22

- As against ₹14.09 lakh crore this year, our collection in 2020-21 was only ₹9.45 lakh crore. In a single year, we moved upward by nearly ₹4.5 lakh crore, registering a growth of 49%.
- The collection is the best-ever as far as income tax and corporation tax are concerned.
- The direct tax-to-GDP ratio is around 12%,” he added, noting that the CBDT was working to raise the ratio to 15-20% in 5-10 years.
- “The direct tax collection this year has surpassed the indirect tax collection which was other way round till last year. It is now 52%... our aim is to look at 60% of tax contribution coming from direct taxes in some years,” said the CBDT chairman.

Himachal Pradesh government has signed MoU for the development of seven ropeway projects

- The MoU was signed between Ropeways and Rapid Transport System Development Corporation (RTDC) HP Limited and National Highways Logistic Management Limited (NHLML) for the development of ropeways as innovative transport solution in Himachal Pradesh.
- The Chief Minister Jai Ram was also apprised of the immediate need for maintenance of important stretches on Shimla-Mataur, Pathankot-Chakki-Mandi Mandi-Manali highways.

‘Fasal Bima Pathshala’ to be organized across the country under ‘Kisan Bhagidari Prathmikta Hamari’ campaign

- Union Minister of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare Shri Narendra Singh Tomar will chair the National level special programme on ‘Fasal Bima Pathshala’ on 27th April 2022.
- He will connect with farmers in all the Implementing States across the country through specially organized ‘Fasal Bima Pathshala’ coordinated by CSC from 1 lakh locations across the country.
- The Campaign aims to make the farmers aware about key scheme aspects of Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) like basic scheme provisions, importance of insuring the crops and how to avail scheme benefits etc. in the ongoing Kharif Season 2022 along with facilitating farmers in getting benefit of the PMFBY scheme.

- Under this campaign, the broader focus will be on importance of PMFBY/RWBCIS (Restructured Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme) and how farmers can enrol under the scheme and avail the benefit of the scheme.

IAF readies Bagdogra Airfield; Civil aircraft operations restarted

- The work was executed with Border Roads Organisation (BRO) as the implementing agency.
- Bagdogra is the second busiest airport of West Bengal and is a joint user international airport with a civil terminal attached to the IAF airfield.
- The Bagdogra airfield is not only important from a strategic point of view but is also a major international hub for promoting tourism and economy. The airfield is an important node for connecting Darjeeling and Siliguri to the rest of the country and the world.

Asthma drug blocks protein crucial to replication of coronavirus

- The drug, montelukast, is an oral treatment given to prevent wheezing, difficulty breathing, chest tightness, and coughing caused by asthma, and also used to prevent breathing difficulties during exercise.
- Montelukast is prescribed in India by physicians. It is readily available as tablets and syrup (for kids) in pharmacy shops under different brand names.
- In fact, some clinicians were using montelukast to treat Covid-19 patients because of its known role in making breathing easier in asthma patients.
- However, it was not known that this drug also has antiviral activity, which was figured out in this study.

WHO recommends highly successful COVID-19 therapy and calls for wide geographical distribution and transparency from originator

- Paxlovid consists of nirmatrelvir tablets and ritonavir tablets, co-packaged for oral use.
- It was given emergency use authorisation (EUA) by the USFDA in December last year.
- Nirmatrelvir inhibits a viral enzyme called protease that is necessary for the virus to replicate itself inside the host cell. Ritonavir slows down the breakdown of nirmatrelvir in order to help it remain in the body for longer at higher concentrations.
- A drug like nirmatrelvir is considered to have an advantage over vaccines because it attacks a vulnerability in the virus that does not mutate like spike proteins — which vaccines target — do.
- As a result, the medication is seen to be effective against all variants.

April 28

The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi has accorded approval to the opening of a new Indian Mission in Lithuania in 2022.

- Lithuania is a country in the Baltic region of Northern Europe.
- It is one of three Baltic states and lies on the eastern shore of the Baltic Sea.
- Lithuania shares land borders with Latvia to the north, Belarus to the east and south, Poland to the south, and Kaliningrad Oblast of Russia to the southwest. It has a maritime border with Sweden to the west on the Baltic Sea.
- Its capital and largest city is Vilnius.

India-Lithuania relations

- Opening of Indian Mission in Lithuania will help expand India's diplomatic footprint and deepen political relations and strategic cooperation. It will also provide market access for Indian companies and bolster Indian exports of goods and services.
- India recognized Lithuania (along with the other Baltic States of Latvia and Estonia) on 7th September 1991 after acceptance of their independence by the erstwhile USSR.
- Diplomatic relations were established with Lithuania on 25th February 1992.
- Lithuanian language, which is the oldest living Indo-European language, has a lot of similarities with Sanskrit hence signifying possible close ancient links.

Digital India RISC-V Microprocessor (DIR-V) Program launched

- Its overall aim is to enable creation of Microprocessors for the future in India, for the world and achieve industry-grade silicon & Design wins by December"2023.
- DIR-V will see partnerships between Startups, Academia & Multinationals, to make India not only a RISC-V Talent Hub for the World but also supplier of RISC-V SoC (System on Chips) for Servers, Mobile devices, Automotive, IoT & Microcontrollers across the globe.
- He also unveiled not only the Blueprint of the roadmap of design & implementation of the DIR-V Program with – SHAKTI Processor by IIT Madras and VEGA Processor by C-DAC but also the strategic Roadmap for India's Semiconductor Design & Innovation to catalyze the semiconductor ecosystem in the country.
- Ministry of Electronics and IT is planning to join the RISC-V International as Premiere Board Member to collaborate, contribute and advocate India's expertise with other global RISC-V leaders.

Cabinet approves 540 MW Kwar hydro project on river Chenab in J&K

- The project would be implemented by Chenab Valley Power Projects Private Ltd., a joint venture between the NHPC and the Jammu and Kashmir State Power Development Corporation, with equity contribution of 51% and 49%.
- The project, to be commissioned within 54 months, is expected to generate 1975.54 million units in a 90% dependable year.
- This is part of the Indus basin and would be one of the at least four projects coming up in the district, including the 1,000 MWs Pakal Dul hydroelectric project and 624 MWs run-of-the-river Kiru hydroelectric project.

Indus Water Treaty (IWT), 1960

- Under the 1960 vintage Indus Water Treaty (IWT) between India and Pakistan, the two countries share the waters of six rivers in the Indus basin that flow through India towards Pakistan.
- Of these, India has complete rights over three eastern rivers - Sutlej, Beas and Ravi, while Pakistan has rights over the western rivers - Chenab, Jhelum, and Indus.
- India can, however, build run-of-the-river projects on the western rivers.

Cabinet approves Amalgamation of Consultancy Development Centre (CDC)

- CSIR and CDC are two separate Autonomous bodies (Abs) under Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR), Ministry of Science and Technology.
- CSIR was set up in 1942 under Societies Registration Act XXI of 1860 as a National R&D organization for scientific industrial research for India's economic growth and human welfare.
- CDC was set up in 1986 as a society with the support of DSIR for developing, strengthening and promoting consultancy skills and capabilities in the country.
- CDC was approved as an Autonomous Institution of DSIR by Union Cabinet in 2004.
- CDC is located in India Habitat Centre, New Delhi
- Based on the recommendations of the 14th Finance Commission, NITI Aayog conducted a reviews of autonomous bodies (Abs) under various Government Departments.
- The amalgamation of two societies shall not only streamline in Department but also as per Prime Minister's Mantra of Minimum Government Maximum Governance.

Govt approves Rs 60,939 crore subsidy for P&K fertilisers for April-September

- Government is making available fertilizers, namely Urea and 25 grades of P&K fertilizers to farmers at subsidized prices through fertilizer manufacturers/ importers.
- The subsidy on P&K fertilizers is being governed by NBS Scheme w.e.f 01.04.2010.

- In view of steep increase in the international prices of fertilizers & inputs i.e. Urea, DAP, MOP and Sulphur, Government has decided to absorb the increased prices by increasing subsidy on P&K fertilizers including DAP.
- The subsidy would be released to fertilizer companies as per approved rates so that they can make available fertilizers to farmers at an affordable price than it would have been otherwise.
- The Union Government has decided to provide subsidy of Rs. 2501 per bag on DAP instead of existing subsidy of Rs.1650 per bag which is a 50% increase over the last year's subsidy rates.
- The increase in the prices of DAP & its raw material is in the range of approx. 80%.

Cabinet approves additional funds of ₹820 crore for India Post Payments Bank

- The Cabinet also granted in principle approval for future fund infusion to the tune of Rs.500 crore for meeting regulatory requirements and technological upgradation.
- India Post Payments Bank did a nationwide a launch by on September 1, 2018 with 650 branches/controlling offices.
- IPPB has enabled 1.36 lakh Post Offices to provide banking services and has equipped nearly 1.89 lakh Postmen and Gramin Dak Sevaks with smartphone and biometric device to provide doorstep banking services.
- Since the launch of IPPB, it has opened more than 5.25 crore accounts, out of which, 77% of accounts are opened in Rural areas, 48% are women customers with around Rs.1000 crore of deposit.

Cabinet approves ₹2,400-crore project to upgrade to 4G services in Left Wing Extremism-hit areas

- The Project envisages upgrading 2,343 left Wing Extremism Phase-I sites from 2G to 4G mobile services at an estimated cost of Rs.1,884.59 crore (Excluding taxes and levies).
- This includes O&M for five years. However, BSNL will maintain the sites for another five years at its own cost. The work will be awarded to BSNL because these sites belong to BSNL.
- The Cabinet also approved funding of operations and maintenance cost of LWE Phase-I 2G sites by BSNL for an extended period beyond the contractual period of five years at an estimated cost of Rs.541.80 crore.
- The extension will be up to 12 months from the date of approval by the Cabinet or commissioning of 4G sites, whichever is earlier.
- The upgradation will enable better internet and data services in these LSW areas. The proposal is in line with the goal of providing mobile connectivity in rural areas.
- It shall also fulfil the communication needs of the security personnel deployed in these areas.

- In addition, delivery of various e-governance services, banking services, tele-medicine; tele-education etc. through mobile broadband shall be possible in these areas.

Cabinet nod to MoU with Chile for cooperation in disability sector

- Chile is a country in the western part of South America.
- It occupies a long, narrow strip of land between the Andes to the east and the Pacific Ocean to the west. It shares land borders with Peru to the north, Bolivia to the north-east, Argentina to the east, and the Drake Passage in the far south.
- It is the world's southernmost country, the closest to Antarctica, that is geographically on the mainland. The country's capital and largest city is Santiago

India Chile relations

- The year 2019-20 marked 70th year of diplomatic relations between the two countries.
- Bilateral relations have strengthened over the years with exchange of high-level visits, which include two visits of the Hon'ble President of Chile in 2005 and 2009.
- Chile was the first country in South America to sign a trade agreement with India, in 1956
- The Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) between the two sides came into force in 2007. In 2016, both countries signed an agreement to expand the India- Chile PTA.

NHA launches nurse module of Health Professional Registry

- The module for doctors from all systems of medicines and their onboarding is already in place in the Health Professional Registry.
- Now with this nation-wide roll out of the Nurse Module, nurses providing health services across modern and traditional systems of medicine can also enroll on Healthcare Professional Registry.
- Going forward, NHA plans to enroll more categories of health professionals like Para-medicals, grass-root level community health workers (ASHAs), medical support staff, allied healthcare professionals etc. in the registry.

Health Professional Registry (HPR)

- Health Professional Registry (HPR) is a comprehensive repository of all healthcare professionals involved in delivery of healthcare services across both modern and traditional systems of medicine.
- HPR is a core building block of the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM).
- Through HPR, healthcare professionals can onboard onto India's digital health ecosystem and connect to patients to healthcare providers or vice versa with last mile coverage.

- Benefits of HPR include unique and trustable identity, online presence and discoverability along with telemedicine and unified digital services.

National Health Authority (NHA)

- The National Health Authority (NHA) is the apex body of the Government of India leading the implementation for Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM) in coordination with different ministries/departments of the Government of India, State Governments, and private sector/civil society organizations.
- NHA also implements the flagship scheme, Ayushman Bharat – Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY).

April 29

Union Minister for Rural Development & Panchayati Raj Shri Giriraj Singh today launched 'Azadi Se Antyodaya Tak', a 90-day campaign

- Celebrating the spirit of the year-long Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (AKAM), the identified districts are aligned with the birth place of 99 Freedom Fighters, who made the ultimate sacrifice for the nation during India's struggle for independence.
- The goal of the campaign is to take up 17 select schemes with direct assistance to beneficiaries in saturation mode, reaching out to the person at the bottom of the pyramid in rural areas by each of the participating ministries/departments.
- The 75 districts, marginally lagging behind in the development parameters, have been shortlisted through MPCE (Monthly per Capita Indicators) and D5/D7 SECC-2011 (Socio-Economic Caste Census) data.

ZED certification scheme launched for MSMEs

- This Scheme is an extensive drive to enable and facilitate MSMEs adopt Zero Defect Zero Effect (ZED) practices and motivate and incentivize them for ZED Certification while also encouraging them to become MSME Champions.
- Through the journey of ZED Certification, MSMEs can reduce wastages substantially, increase productivity, enhance environmental consciousness, save energy, optimally use natural resources, expand their markets, etc.
- Under the Scheme, MSMEs will get subsidy as per the following structure, on the cost of ZED certification:
 - Micro Enterprises: 80%
 - Small Enterprises: 60%
 - Medium Enterprises: 50%

- There will be an additional subsidy of 10% for the MSMEs owned by Women/SC/ST Entrepreneurs OR MSMEs in NER/Himalayan/LWE/Island territories/aspirational districts.
- In addition to above, there will be an additional subsidy of 5% for MSMEs which are also a part of the SFURTI OR Micro & Small Enterprises - Cluster Development Programme (MSE-CDP) of the Ministry.
- Further, a limited purpose joining reward of Rs. 10,000/- will be offered to each MSME once they take the ZED Pledge
- A provision of up to Rs. 5 lakh(per MSME) will be made available for handholding and consultancy support for MSMEs under ZED Certification for assisting them to move towards Zero Defect Zero Effect solutions.

How India affords a falling LPR

- This suggests not only that more than half of India's population in the working-age group (15 years and older) is deciding to sit out of the job market, but also that this proportion of people is increasing.
- According to the CMIE, the labour force consists of persons who are of age 15 years or older, and belong to either of the following two categories:
 - are employed
 - are unemployed and are willing to work and are actively looking for a job
- There is a crucial commonality between the two categories — they both have people “demanding” jobs. This demand is what LFPR refers to. While those in category 1 succeed in getting a job, those in category 2 fail to do so.
- Thus, the LFPR essentially is the percentage of the working-age (15 years or older) population that is asking for a job; it represents the “demand” for jobs in an economy. It includes those who are employed and those who are unemployed.
- The Unemployment Rate (UER), which is routinely quoted in the news, is nothing but the number of unemployed (category 2) as a proportion of the labour force.

Union Minister of Culture Arjun Ram Meghwal visited the mini lake Anang Tal (Mehrauli, New Delhi) created

- He instructed to finish the work of cleaning of Anang Tal and declare it a National Monument immediately.
- The millennium old Anang Tal signifies the beginning of Delhi.
- Anang Tal has a strong Rajasthan connection as Maharaja Anang Pal is known as nana (maternal grandfather) of Prithviraj Chauhan whose fort Rai Pithora is on the list of ASI.
- Anangpal II, popularly known as Anangpal Tomar, was a ruler from the Tomar Rajput Dyansty.
- He is known to have established and populated Delhi in the 11th century.

Ministry of Agriculture to organise various awareness activities tomorrow as part of the ongoing 'Kisan Bhagidari Prathmikta Hamari' campaign

- As part of the campaign, Ministry of Agriculture, Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE) and Ministry of Rural Development will hold wide range of awareness activities tomorrow.
- As part of the campaign, the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare will organize demonstration on farm machinery through their FMTTIs (Farm Machinery Training and Testing Institute) at different locations across the country tomorrow.
- FMTTIs will also impart training to the women farmers simultaneously. Along with the physical field visits, online webinar will also be organised to provide interface between innovators and industries.
- The Ministry will organise field visits to Sunflower cultivation sites in Ambala Kurukshetra (Haryana) Fatehgarh Sahib (Punjab) and mustard farms in Jammu, Kathua and Udhampur (JK).
- Kisan Goshti programmes will also be organised to make farmers aware about the benefits of cultivation of cash crops.
- Training on microrhizome based disease free planting material production in Ginger and Turmeric will be provided by Directorate of Arecanut and Spices Development at Kerala Agricultural University, Thrissur.

Hindustan Aeronautics Limited commences Main Airframe Fatigue Test of LCA Mk1

- These tests will be carried out over a period of eight to nine years. The successful completion of the MAFT will qualify the LCA [Air Force] Mk1 airframe for its full service life.
- As per the military airworthiness requirements, the MAFT had to demonstrate the capability of the airframe to withstand four times the service life.
- The airframe is the same for the LCA Mk1 in service and the more capable LCA-Mk1A, 83 of which the IAF has contracted for. The MK1A is expected to roll out in the next couple of months.
- The test plan and schedule for the MAFT has been jointly arrived at by the designers from the HAL and scientists from the Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA) in coordination with the Regional Centre for Military Airworthiness (RCMA), CEMILAC

Xi's "Global Security Initiative" looks to counter Quad

- Xi last week first proposed what he called a Global Security Initiative, speaking at the Boao Forum in China, warning against "hegemonism, power politics and bloc confrontation".
- China would like to propose a Global Security Initiative, which would "oppose unilateralism, and say no to group politics and bloc confrontation."

- This would “oppose the wanton use of unilateral sanctions and long-arm jurisdiction”, appearing to refer to Western sanctions.
- China’s proposed security initiative would “oppose” what he called “the destruction of the international order under the banner of so-called ‘rules’ and the dragging of the world under the cloud of the ‘new cold war’”, and would “build an Asian security model of mutual respect, openness and integration”.
- China’s Foreign Minister Wang Yi had also taken aim at the Quad last month, suggesting that the grouping was equivalent to the “Five Eyes” intelligence alliance involving the Australia, New Zealand, Canada, the U.S. and U.K. and the AUKUS pact, as a key element in what he called U.S. plans to build an “Asian NATO”
- The members of the Quad have rejected the notion that it is an Asian NATO or a military alliance, and pointed to its broad-based cooperation, including on vaccines and technology.

Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) organises 2 days’ workshop in Jharkhand on ADIGRAMS

- Adivasi Grants Management System (ADIGRAMS) Portal will provide a central database for Ministry of Tribal Affairs and the State Tribal Development/ Welfare Department to access, interact and analyse up-to-date scheme wise Physical and financial information and progress.
- The portal will enable the officials/stakeholders at Central, State, District, Block and village level to access, monitor and measure performance in a real-time basis and take decisions accordingly.

This portal covers the following schemes of MoTA:

- Grants under Article 275 (1) of the Constitution of India
- Special Central Assistance (SCA) to Tribal Sub-Scheme (TSS)
- Scheme for development of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)
- Institutional Support for Development and Marketing of Tribal Produce
- Mechanism for Marketing of Minor Forest Produce (MFP) through Minimum Support Price (MSP) and Development of Value Chain for MFP (MSP for MFPs)

Union Education Minister will be launching the Mandate Document of National Curriculum Framework (NCF)

- The National Education Policy (NEP), 2020 recommends the development of National Curriculum Frameworks (NCF) in four areas- School Education, Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), Teacher Education and Adult Education.
- For providing inputs for the development of these, four curriculum frameworks, 25 themes based on the perspectives of the NEP, 2020 are identified under the three categories, viz.,

- o Curriculum and Pedagogy
- o Cross-cutting Issues
- o Other important areas of NEP, 2020 focussing on systemic changes and reforms.
- The Mandate Document describes the development process of the NCF, its expected structure and objectives, and some of the basic principles from the NEP 2020 that will inform the development of the four NCFs.
- The NCF is being drafted through a collaborative and consultative process, starting from district to state level and then National level. The 'Guidelines for Position Papers for the Development of the National Curriculum Framework' is an integral part of this Mandate Document.

April 30

US wants to ban menthol cigarettes

- Menthol cigarettes see a disproportionately high usage in the African American community than by White Americans.
- The FDA's move, thus, has been welcomed by many as likely to help reduce the burden of tobacco-related ailments specifically in the Black population.

Why does the FDA consider menthol cigarettes especially dangerous?

- The agency says menthol, with its minty taste and aroma, reduces the irritation and harshness of smoking. This increases appeal and makes menthol cigarettes easier to use, particularly for youth and young adults.
- Menthol also interacts with nicotine in the brain to enhance nicotine's addictive effects, while making it more difficult for people to quit smoking.
- The agency said "modeling studies have estimated a 15 per cent reduction in smoking within 40 years" if menthol cigarettes were banned.
- Apart from menthol, all other flavours in cigarettes were banned in the US in 2009.

India's first indigenous aircraft carrier INS Vikrant

- The yard is in the process of setting up a new drydock, with a 600-tonne gantry crane, capable of handling vessels up to Suezmax, aircraft carriers of 70,000 tonnes displacement, Jack-up rigs and LNG vessels.
- The International Ship Repair Facility being established by the Shipyard will have a 6,000-tonne shiplift, six work stations, besides a total outfitting berth of 1,500 metres.
- The Shipyard enjoys 40 per cent market share of the country's ship building industry and has so far built and exported 47 vessels to countries like Norway, the Netherlands, Germany, United States, Saudi Arabia and UAE.

Govt to launch indigenously developed e-commerce network

- Commerce and industry minister Piyush Goyal announced the test-launch of the open-source system. In a tweet, Mr Goyal said, after UPI, another game-changing idea to democratise commerce - ONDC.
- Additional Secretary in the department for promotion of industry and internal trade (DPIIT) Anil Agrawal said, the project is massive as it will provide a wide choice to all consumers and retailers and the formal launch will take place after successful testing of the system.
- He said, end-to-end testing is being done to create a playbook with an aim to launch it in 100 cities in six months. The initial test launch, which was started in Bengaluru, will also cover cities such as Delhi, Coimbatore, Bhopal and Shillong.
- The system will have multiple choices for both retailers and customers in terms of cataloguing, inventories, warehousing, suppliers, logistics and payments.

Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated SemiconIndia Conference 2022

- The flagship conclave with the theme Catalyzing India's Semiconductor Ecosystem, is being held in Bengaluru from 29th April to 1st May 2022.
- Inaugurating the conference, Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India said, We have earmarked USD 10 billion for India Semiconductor Mission and are creating an environment that encourages growth to create a vibrant semiconductor ecosystem and steer India into the future."
- The conference aligns with the larger national narratives such as Make in India and Atmanirbhar Bharat and is pegged as the launchpad to India Semiconductor Mission (ISM).
- IESA launched an industry report on 'Semiconductor manufacturing supply chain – India's opportunity in the global market".

During the conference, the below Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) were inked:

- MOU signed between SEMI and ELCINA to promote semiconductor ecosystem in India
- MOU between CDAC and Qualcomm for partnership in semiconductors which will target semiconductor design startups, in line with the objectives of the PLI scheme
- MOU between AICTE and SEMI and ISM for training and skilling tech workforce for the semiconductor sector

Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban 2.0 launches National Behaviour Change Communication Framework for Garbage Free Cities

- Now, under SBM-U 2.0, the newly launched 'National Behaviour Change Communication Framework for Garbage Free Cities' shall serve as a guiding document and blueprint for States and Cities to undertake large scale

multimedia campaigns along with intensive and focused inter-personal communication campaigns.

- The framework focuses on intensifying messaging around the key focus areas of source segregation, collection, transportation, and processing of waste, plastic waste management, and remediation of legacy dumpsites to truly transform the urban landscape of India.

Atal New India Challenge 2.0

- Atal New India Challenge is a flagship program of Atal Innovation Mission, NITI Aayog.
- The program aims to seek, select, support and nurture technology-based innovations that solve sectoral challenges of national importance and societal relevance.
- One of the primary goals of the ANIC program is to support innovations in areas critical to India's development and growth – Education, Health, Water and Sanitation, Agriculture, Food Processing, Housing, Energy, Mobility, Space Application etc.
- Launching the Challenge, Dr S. Chandrasekar, Secretary, DST in his address said that Government will hand-hold the path breaking innovations and asked the start-ups to take up hard challenges.
- The Atal New India Challenge aims to address the Commercialization Valley of Death - supporting innovators scale over the risks associated with access to resources for testing, piloting and market creation.

Mission SAGAR IX: India sends Medical Aid to Sri Lanka

- Mission SAGAR IX: INS Gharial reaches Colombo, delivers critical medical aid to Sri Lanka
- It delivered over 760 kgs of 107 types of critical lifesaving medicines. The shipment was received by Sri Lankan Health Minister Channa Jayasumana.
- In line with the Government's vision of SAGAR - Security And Growth for All in the Region - the Indian Navy undertakes several deployments titled Mission SAGAR to assist friendly countries.
- Since May 2020, the Indian Navy has successfully concluded eight such missions, deploying ten ships to 18 Friendly Foreign Countries

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