



# MONTHLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

## APRIL-MAY 2024

for BANK/SSC/RAILWAY Examination

### SPECIAL ATTRACTION

- *Tri-Service Planning Conference: Parivartan Chintan*
- *The Deep State Struggle: Forces Behind the Israel-Iran Conflict*
- *The Book Titled "The Law and Spirituality: Reconnecting the Bond" Released*
- *Olympic Champion Valerie Adams Named Ambassador for TCS World 10K Bengaluru 2024*

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**Are You  
Next?**

## FOREWORD

Dear Aspirants,

As we all know, the Civil Services Exam (CSE) is becoming more and more challenging due to the day by day increase in unpredictability. We at PLUTUS Academy developed this magazine keeping in mind the unpredictable nature of the Civil Services Exam. The development of the magazine is in such a chronological order that it gives conceptual clarity to aspirants at first glance. Each and every topic contains relevant sources and articles, an aspirant should first go through the original article and try to get conceptual grasp and make notes from them. After that they should read the topics from magazines. An aspirant should also try to make note of the keywords relevant for mains preparation. In this way an aspirant will move towards the unending ocean of civil services preparation with clarity and confidence.

Our PLUTUS Academy team wishes you All the Best for your career. Do hard work and be consistent in your journey, it will definitely give results. May you all crack the Civil Services Examination with flying colours.

Team  
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## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### UN APPOINTS SAUDI ARABIA TO LEAD WOMEN'S RIGHTS FORUM DESPITE CRITICISM



Saudi Arabia has been chosen to chair the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), despite widespread criticism due to its poor record on women's rights. The appointment of Saudi Ambassador Abdulaziz Alwasil has sparked outrage from human rights groups, given the stark disparity between the kingdom's actions and the commission's mandate to promote gender equality.

### ROMANIA AND BULGARIA PARTIALLY JOIN SCHENGEN TRAVEL ZONE



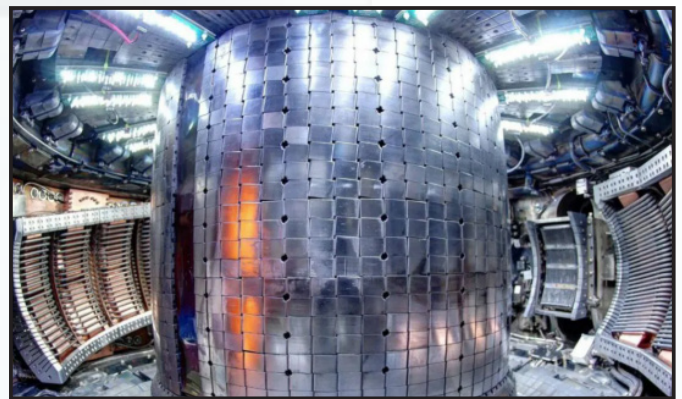
Romania and Bulgaria have taken a significant step in their integration with the European Union by partially joining the Schengen travel zone. While travelers arriving by air or sea now enjoy ID-check-free access, land border checks persist due to opposition from Austria.

### INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF MILLETS 2023: A RECAP



The International Year of Millets (IYM) 2023, concluded with a closing ceremony held at the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) headquarters in Rome, Italy, on March 29th, 2024. The event served as a platform to assess the accomplishments and insights gained from the year-long celebration.

### KOREAN FUSION REACTOR 'ARTIFICIAL SUN' SETS NEW RECORD



Scientists in South Korea have set a new world record using the Korea Superconducting Tokamak Advanced Research (KSTAR) device, an "artificial sun" nuclear fusion reactor. During tests conducted between December 2023 and February 2024, they generated plasma temperatures of 100 million degrees Celsius for a duration of 48 seconds.

## GERMANY LEGALIZES RECREATIONAL CANNABIS



On April 1, 2024, Germany became the largest European Union (EU) nation to legalize recreational cannabis use, despite facing opposition from politicians and medical associations. Under the new law, adults over 18 are now permitted to carry up to 25 grams of dried cannabis and cultivate up to three marijuana plants at home.

## PETER PELLEGRINI WINS SLOVAKIA PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS: PRO-RUSSIA STANCE SOLIDIFIED



In Slovakia's recent presidential election, Peter Pellegrini emerged victorious, reinforcing the pro-Russian stance of Prime Minister Robert Fico's government. Pellegrini's win signals a continuity in Fico's policies, characterized by a tilt towards Russia, controversial reforms, and strained relations with the West.

## U.S. AND BRITAIN FORGE ALLIANCE TO ENHANCE AI SAFETY



The United States and Britain have joined forces to bolster the safety measures surrounding artificial intelligence (AI) amidst concerns over upcoming advanced AI iterations. This collaboration, formalized through a memorandum of understanding, aims to collectively develop advanced AI model testing procedures, aligning with commitments made during the AI Safety Summit held at Bletchley Park.

## 111-YEAR-OLD JOHN ALFRED TINNISWOOD BECOMES WORLD'S NEW OLDEST MAN



Guinness World Records (GWR) has shared a video of the world's oldest living man, 111-year-old John Alfred Tinniswood, from England. In the video, Tinniswood reveals what he believes is the secret to his exceptional longevity and also offers a piece of advice for others.



## CHINA SURPASSES INDIA AS LARGEST IMPORTER OF RUSSIAN CRUDE



China has surpassed India as the primary importer of Russian crude oil via sea routes, with China importing 1.82 million barrels per day (bpd) in March compared to India's 1.36 million bpd. This shift is attributed to India's slowdown in imports due to sanctions and rising prices.

## THE DEEP STATE STRUGGLE: FORCES BEHIND THE ISRAEL-IRAN CONFLICT



The current war between Israel and Iran is not merely a conflict between two nation-states, but rather a complex interplay of power dynamics and ideological differences that stem from a deeper, more intricate struggle, the clash between the "Deep State" and the Islamist forces in the Middle East. This conflict, which has its roots in the early 20th century, has been shaped by a series of pivotal events, power dynamics, and ideological differences that have profoundly impacted the course of history in the Middle East.

## SINGAPORE PRIME MINISTER LEE HSIEN LOONG TO STEP DOWN, HANDS OVER POWER TO DEPUTY LAWRENCE WONG



Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, after two decades in office, will step down on May 15, passing the baton to his deputy, Lawrence Wong. The transition marks a significant moment for Singapore as it prepares for new leadership amidst the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

## NIGERIA BECOMES FIRST COUNTRY TO ROLL OUT NEW MENINGITIS VACCINE



In a groundbreaking move, Nigeria has become the inaugural nation to introduce the innovative Men5CV vaccine, recommended by the WHO, targeting five strains of meningococcal bacteria. This historic milestone holds immense promise in combating meningitis, a severe threat in Africa, particularly in Nigeria. The vaccine rollout, funded by Gavi, is a crucial step towards achieving the WHO's goal of eliminating meningitis by 2030.

## NATIONAL NEWS

### GOVERNMENT FORMS 14TH TASK FORCE TO EXPLORE USE OF BIOCHAR IN STEEL PRODUCTION



The Indian government has taken proactive steps to address carbon emissions in the steel industry by establishing a task force to investigate the potential use of biochar. With the steel sector contributing significantly to greenhouse gas emissions, this initiative aims to reduce carbon intensity and promote sustainability in steel manufacturing processes.

### INDIAN GOVERNMENT'S STAKE SALE IN STATE-RUN COMPANIES FALLS SHORT IN 2023/24



The Indian government aimed to raise funds through the sale of stakes in state-run companies in the fiscal year 2023/24. However, the achieved amount of 165 billion rupees fell short of the internal target by about 9%, reaching \$1.98 billion. This setback is attributed to the forthcoming general elections, causing a shift in focus away from Prime Minister Narendra Modi's privatization agenda.

### GOVERNOR R.N. RAVI INAUGURATES PARAM VIR CHAKRA GARDEN



Tamil Nadu Governor R.N. Ravi inaugurated the Param Vir Chakra garden and Aikyam exhibition at the Kanchi Mahaswami Vidya Mandir in Tambaram. Ravi was accompanied by Lt. Gen. Karanbir Singh Brar, Ati Vishisht Seva Medal (AVSM), General Officer Commanding (Dakshin Bharat area), and V.Shankar, chairman of the Sri Kanchi Mahaswami trust.

### INDIA LIFTS EXPORT RESTRICTIONS ON ESSENTIAL GOODS FOR MALDIVES AMID DIPLOMATIC STRAIN



India has removed export restrictions on essential commodities for the Maldives, including items like eggs, potatoes, onions, rice, wheat flour, sugar, and dal, for the fiscal year 2024-25. This move comes despite strained diplomatic relations between the two countries since November last year.

## PUNE CELEBRATES YOGA MAHOTSAV AHEAD OF INTERNATIONAL YOGA DAY



The 'Yoga Mahotsav' was held in Pune, Maharashtra, to mark the 75-day countdown to the International Day of Yoga. Organized by the Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga and the National Institute of Naturopathy, Ministry of Ayush, the event witnessed the overwhelming participation of thousands of people. The participants engaged in the practice of the Common Yoga Protocol (CYP) starting at 6.00 AM on April 7th, showcasing the growing popularity of Yoga.

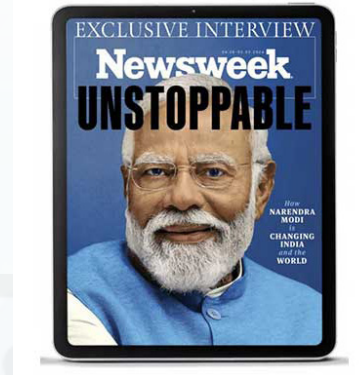
## INDIA SECURES SECOND OVERSEAS PORT: SITTWE AGREEMENT APPROVED BY MEA



In a strategic move to bolster its maritime presence and enhance regional connectivity, India has gained operational control over the Sittwe Port in Myanmar, following approval from the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). The agreement allows India Ports Global (IPGL), a company fully owned

by the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, to manage the entire port on the Kaladan River, marking India's second overseas port acquisition after Chabahar in Iran.

## PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI'S HISTORIC FEATURE ON NEWSWEEK COVER



Prime Minister Narendra Modi is poised to make history as the first Indian Prime Minister since Indira Gandhi to grace the cover of Newsweek. In a comprehensive interview, PM Modi discussed a spectrum of topics, including China, economic reforms, the upcoming Lok Sabha polls, the Quad alliance, and the role of democracy in India.

## INDIA DONATES AMBULANCES AND SCHOOL BUSES TO NEPAL



In a gesture of solidarity and support, India has donated 35 ambulances and 66 school buses to various organizations in Nepal, bolstering infrastructure in the crucial sectors of health and education. Indian Ambassador to Nepal, Naveen Srivastava, officiated the handover ceremony

alongside Finance Minister Barshaman Pun.

## **J&K HIGH COURT UPHOLDS RULE OF LAW, QUASHES DETENTION UNDER PUBLIC SAFETY ACT**



In a significant ruling, the Jammu and Kashmir High Court has quashed the detention of Jaffar Ahmad Parray under the Public Safety Act. Justice Rahul Bharti emphasized that India operates under the rule of law, asserting that citizens cannot be detained without proper legal grounds. Parray had been held since May based on allegations of being associated with terrorist groups, but the court found the detention illegal and ordered his immediate release.

## STATE NEWS

### UTKAL DIWAS 2024, A CELEBRATION OF ODISHA'S RICH CULTURE AND HERITAGE



Utkal Diwas, also known as Odisha Day or Utkala Dibasa, is a significant annual celebration held in the Indian state of Odisha. It is observed on 1st April every year to commemorate the formation of the state of Odisha on April 1, 1936. This day holds immense cultural and historical importance for the people of Odisha, as it represents the culmination of a long-standing struggle for a separate state, distinct from the combined Bihar and Orissa provinces during the British colonial era.

### UP LEADS WITH MOST GI-TAGGED PRODUCTS



The northern Indian state of Uttar Pradesh has taken the lead in having the highest number of Geographical Indication (GI) certified products in the country. With the recent addition of 15 new products, Uttar Pradesh now boasts a total of 69 GI-tagged products, surpassing Tamil Nadu's 58.

The holy city of Varanasi has emerged as a leader

in GI-tagged goods production, with a remarkable 30 certified products – the highest from a single geographical area. GI certification ensures that these products are unique representations of a specific culture, society, or craft.

### UTTARAKHAND'S RESPONSE TO GLOF RISKS IN HIMALAYAS



The state government of Uttarakhand has initiated proactive measures to assess and mitigate the risks associated with Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs). Two expert panels have been established to conduct risk assessments and monitor five high-risk glacial lakes in the region. These lakes have been identified as prone to immediate danger, necessitating urgent attention and intervention.

### INNOVATIVE ELECTION INITIATIVE: PUNJAB LAUNCHES 'BOOTH RAABTA' WEBSITE



In an innovative move aimed at enhancing voter engagement and accessibility to election-related information, Punjab's Malerkotla district has in-

troduced the 'Booth Raabta' website. Spearheaded by District Election Officer and Deputy Commissioner, Dr. Pallavi, this platform, accessible via boothraabta.com, serves as a comprehensive resource hub for voters and polling personnel alike. The initiative has garnered praise from key officials, including Deputy Election Commissioner of India, Hirdesh Kumar, and Punjab Chief Electoral Officer, Sibin C.

### CHITRAKOOT'S STUNNING GLASS SKYWALK BRIDGE IN UTTAR PRADESH



In a remarkable feat of engineering and tourism development, the state of Uttar Pradesh has unveiled its first-ever glass skywalk bridge, located at the enchanting Tulsi (Shabari) Waterfall in Chitrakoot. This innovative and visually stunning structure, shaped like Lord Ram's bow and arrow, is poised to become a premier eco-tourism destination for visitors to the region.

### LONGTE FESTIVAL CELEBRATED BY ARUNACHAL PRADESH'S NYISHI TRIBE



The Nyishi tribe in Arunachal Pradesh enthusiastically celebrates the Longte festival, one of their biggest cultural events. Unlike many other tribal festivals, Longte prohibits the sacrifice of animals, instead adorning altars with decorative white feathers and bamboo decorations.

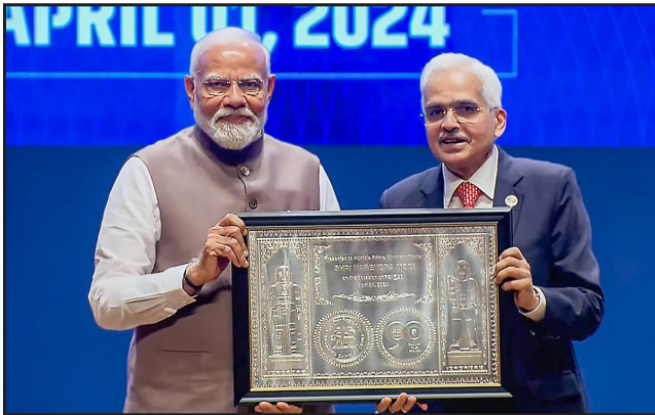
### MADHYA PRADESH LEADS IMPLEMENTATION OF CENTRE'S GREEN CREDIT PROGRAMME (GCP)



In the realm of environmental conservation, Madhya Pradesh emerges as a frontrunner in the effective execution of the Green Credit Programme (GCP) initiated by the central government. Over the past two months, the GCP has greenlit tree plantation initiatives spanning across 500 land parcels, encompassing 4,980 hectares spread over 10 states.

## BANKING NEWS

### RBI CELEBRATES 90 YEARS OF SERVICE ON FOUNDATION DAY 2024



The Reserve Bank of India (RBI), the nation's central banking institution, is entering its 90th year on April 1st, 2024. To mark this significant occasion, Prime Minister Narendra Modi is attending the event at Mumbai's National Centre for the Performing Arts.

### SBI MUTUAL FUND ACQUIRES 3% STAKE IN SAVITA OIL TECHNOLOGIES



On March 26, 2024, Savita Oil Technologies announced a significant equity transaction via a block deal, wherein the company's promoter, Mr. Gautam N. Mehra, sold a 3% stake to SBI Mutual Fund. This resulted in a reduction of the promoter group's stake to 59.78%.

### HDFC BANK TO DIVEST 100% STAKE IN EDUCATION ARM: SHARES IN FOCUS



HDFC Bank, a leading private sector lender in India, is pursuing the sale of its entire stake in HDFC Education and Development Services. This move comes as the bank seeks to maintain transparency and regulatory compliance while selecting a buyer through the Swiss challenge method. HDFC Bank disclosed its intention to divest its stake in HDFC Education and Development Services in a regulatory filing on March 30.

### RBI'S DIGITA INITIATIVE: CURBING ILLEGAL LENDING APPS



The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is contemplating the establishment of the Digital India Trust Agency (DIGITA) to combat the proliferation of illegal lending apps. This initiative aims to bolster cybersecurity measures and clamp down on fraudulent activities in the digital lending sector.

## MERGER ANNOUNCEMENT: AU SMALL FINANCE BANK AND FINCARE SMALL FINANCE BANK



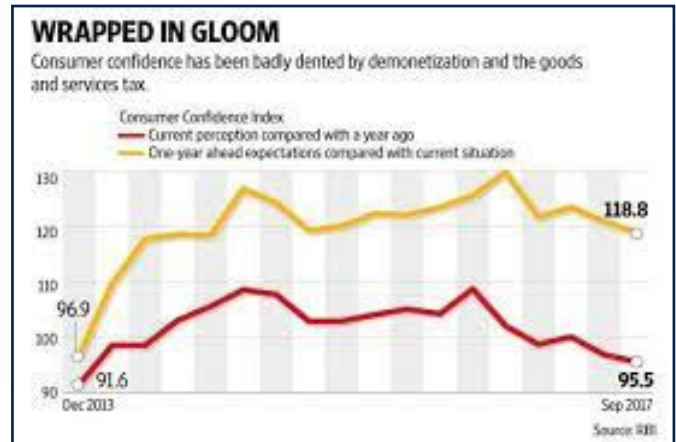
AU Small Finance Bank has merged with Fincare Small Finance Bank, marking a significant consolidation in the banking sector. The merger, finalized on April 1, 2024, through an all-stock deal, strengthens AU SFB's presence in South India and enhances its customer base and distribution network.

## MUDRA LOANS SURGE PAST ₹5 LAKH CRORE MARK IN FY24



In FY24, small business loans under the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) witnessed a record surge, crossing the ₹5 lakh crore milestone, as per recent government data. Disbursements totaled ₹5.20 lakh crore, a significant increase from ₹4.40 lakh crore in the previous fiscal year. Notably, nearly 70% of the beneficiaries of these loans are women.

## RBI SURVEY: CONSUMER CONFIDENCE ON THE RISE



The Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) recent survey conducted in March 2024 indicates a significant improvement in consumer confidence for the year ahead. The Future Expectations Index (FEI) rose by 2.1 points to reach 125.2, the highest level since mid-2019. This surge in optimism is attributed to households' positive sentiments regarding the general economic situation, employment prospects, and discretionary spending.

## RBI TAKES REGULATORY ACTIONS REGARDING NBFCs' REGISTRATION



In a recent announcement, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has made significant regulatory decisions regarding the registration of non-banking finance companies (NBFCs). The RBI has cancelled the registration certificates of four NBFCs and has received.



voluntary surrender of licenses from 11 other entities for various reasons, including business exit, amalgamation, and non-requirement for registration as per specific criteria.

### INDIA POST PAYMENTS BANK (IPPB) INTRODUCES AEPS SERVICE CHARGES



India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) has implemented service charges for Aadhaar Enabled Payment System (AePS) transactions, effective from June 15, 2022. AePS is a bank-led model allowing on-line financial transactions at Point of Sale (PoS) terminals through Aadhaar authentication, enabling various banking services.

### SBI LIFE LAUNCHES IDEATIONX: PIONEERING LIFE INSURANCE INNOVATION



SBI Life Insurance has inaugurated IdeationX, a groundbreaking initiative aimed at fostering life insurance innovation. This initiative encourages future leaders from top B-Schools to devise unconventional solutions that cater to evolving consumer needs in the insurance sector.

### RBI EXPANDS GOLD HEDGING OPTIONS FOR RESIDENTS AMIDST PRICE SURGE



In response to the soaring gold prices, expected to surpass \$2700 per ounce this year amidst escalating geopolitical tensions in the Middle East, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced a significant policy amendment. This move allows resident entities to diversify their hedging strategies against gold price volatility in overseas markets.

### IMGC AND BANK OF INDIA PARTNER TO OFFER MORTGAGE GUARANTEE-BACKED HOME LOANS



India Mortgage Guarantee Corporation (IMGC) has entered into a strategic partnership with Bank of India (BOI) to introduce mortgage guarantee-backed home loan products. This collaboration targets salaried and self-employed individuals in the affordable housing sector, aiming to enhance accessibility to homeownership.

## BUSINESS NEWS

### PARADIP PORT EMERGES AS INDIA'S TOP CARGO-HANDLING PORT IN 2023-24



Paradip Port Authority, Odisha, surpasses Deendayal Port Authority, Kandla, to become India's leading cargo-handling major port in the fiscal year 2023-24, handling 145.38 Million Metric Tons (MMT) of cargo, marking a 7.4% growth from the previous year.

### INDIA'S TRADE DEFICIT NARROWS TO 11-MONTH LOW



India's merchandise trade deficit reached a low of \$15.60 billion annually in March, marking a significant reduction in the yearly deficit to \$240.2 billion in FY24. This decline comes as India strategically curtails its overseas purchases. Economists had initially estimated March's deficit to be \$18.55 billion, making this reduction even more noteworthy.

### GOVERNMENT SETS COAL PRODUCTION TARGET AT 170 MILLION TONNES FOR FY25



The government aims to produce 170 million tonnes of coal from captive and commercial coal blocks in the upcoming financial year, as per the review conducted by M Nagaraju, the additional secretary of coal. Representatives from 74 coal mines participated in the review meeting, expressing confidence in achieving the set target.

### LIC INCREASES EQUITY STAKE IN HINDUSTAN UNILEVER BY OVER 5%



In a recent move, Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) announced that its stake in FMCG major Hindustan Unilever Limited (HUL) has surpassed 5%. The Corporation augmented its shareholding in HUL from 4.99% to 5.01% of the company's paid-up capital by acquiring additional shares from the open market. This increase amounted

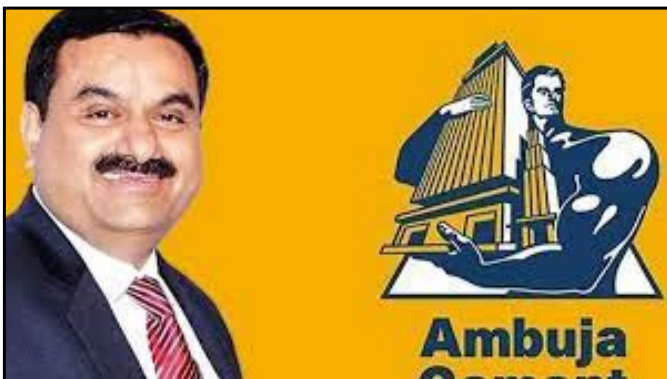
to a purchase of 3,05,000 equity shares, bringing LIC's total shares in HUL to 11,77,18,555.

### **SANY INDIA LAUNCH OF ITS FULLY ELECTRIC DUMP TRUCK**



In a groundbreaking move, Sany India, a leading manufacturer of mining and construction equipment, has launched the SKT105E Electric Dump Truck. This remarkable feat marks a significant milestone in the Indian mining industry, as the SKT105E becomes the first locally manufactured electric off-highway dump truck, paving the way for a more environmentally conscious and cost-effective future.

### **ADANI FAMILY'S INVESTMENT IN AMBUJA CEMENTS: STRENGTHENING STAKE AND CEMENTING GROWTH**



The Adani family, led by Gautam Adani, has infused ₹8,339 crore into Ambuja Cements Ltd., increasing their stake to 70.3%. This investment, part of a larger strategy, aims to bolster Ambuja's growth trajectory and cement its position in the market

## ECONOMY NEWS

### SEBI UNVEILS SCORES 2.0: ENHANCING INVESTOR COMPLAINT REDRESS SYSTEM



The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has launched SCORES 2.0, an upgraded version of its Complaint Redress System (SCORES), to strengthen mechanisms for addressing investor complaints. This enhanced system features automated routing, oversight by designated authorities, and streamlined processes. Understanding SEBI SCORES: SEBI Complaint Redress System (SCORES) is an online platform launched in June 2011, allowing investors to lodge complaints in the securities market via web URL and an app.

### WORLD BANK RAISES INDIA'S GROWTH PROJECTION: FY24 GDP AT 7.5%



The World Bank has revised India's GDP growth projection for FY25 to 6.6%, indicating a moderate yet steady growth trajectory. Despite the anticipated slowdown, robust economic activity in India is expected to drive growth in South Asia, outpacing other emerging market and developing economies.

### INDIA WHOLESALE PRICE INDEX (WPI) REPORT: MARCH 2024



March 2024 witnessed a positive inflation rate of 0.53% in India's Wholesale Price Index (WPI) compared to March 2023. This inflation was primarily attributed to increased prices in food articles, electricity, crude petroleum & natural gas, machinery & equipment, and other manufacturing sectors.

### INDIA'S TRADE PERFORMANCE IN MARCH 2024: A COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS



In March 2024, India's goods exports surged to a 12-month high at \$41.68 billion, marking a significant achievement despite a slight decrease of 0.67% compared to the previous year. Notably, the goods trade deficit narrowed to \$15.6 billion, the lowest in 11 months. This boost was largely propelled by a substantial decline in gold imports by 53.6%, offset by a remarkable 1059% increase in silver imports.

## APPOINTMENTS NEWS

### MOUSHUMI BASU TAKES OVER AS NEW PRESIDENT OF JNU TEACHERS ASSOCIATION



The Jawaharlal Nehru University Teachers Association (JNUTA) has appointed a new team of office-bearers for the term of 2024-2025, according to a statement released. Moushumi Basu, a professor at the School of International Studies, has been appointed as the next JNUTA president.

### JOYSHREE DAS VERMA BECOMES NEW PRESIDENT OF FICCI LADIES ORGANISATION



Joyshree Das Verma has taken over as the 41st National President of the FICCI Ladies Organisation (FLO) for the year 2024-25. FLO is the oldest women-led and women-centric business chamber of South East Asia.

### IIT-KANPUR ALUMNUS SANDEEP JAIN STEPS INTO FISME PRESIDENCY



Sandeep Jain, an auto-component manufacturer and alumnus of IIT-Kanpur, has been unanimously elected as the President of the Federation of Indian Micro and Small & Medium Enterprises (FISME) for the year 2024-25. In line with FISME's tradition of holding annual elections, Jain's name was approved in a meeting of the Central Executive Committee held in New Delhi. FISME elects one-third of its CEC members annually, and the newly constituted body elects the President for the year.

### LT GEN JS SIDANA IS NEW DIRECTOR GENERAL OF EME



Lieutenant General JS Sidana has taken over as the 33rd Director General of the Department of Electronics and Mechanical Engineers (DGEME) and Senior Colonel Commandant of the EME Corps on April 1, 2024.

## **SANJAY NAYAR APPOINTED AS NEW ASSOCHAM PRESIDENT**



The Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM), a prominent industry chamber, has appointed Sanjay Nayar as its new President. Nayar has replaced Ajay Singh, the Co-Founder of SpiceJet airline, whose tenure has ended.

## **SANTOSH KUMAR JHA APPOINTED AS NEW CMD OF KONKAN RAILWAY CORPORATION**



Santosh Kumar Jha, an Indian Railway Traffic Services (IRTS) officer of the 1992 batch, will assume the role of Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of the Konkan Railway Corporation Ltd. (KRCL) on April 1, 2024.

## **WIPRO APPOINTS NEW CEO: SRINIVAS PALLIA**



Wipro, the IT giant, has announced the resignation of its CEO, Thierry Delaporte. In his place, the company's Board of Directors has appointed Srinivas Pallia as the new Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director, effective April 7, 2024.

## **IPS OFFICER LOVE KUMAR APPOINTED AS IG IN SPECIAL PROTECTION GROUP**



Indian Police Service (IPS) officer Love Kumar has been appointed as the Inspector General (IG) in the Special Protection Group (SPG) for a period of two years, according to an official notification issued by

the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT). The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved this proposal from the Office of the Secretary (Security), Cabinet Secretariat.

**OLYMPIC CHAMPION VALERIE ADAMS NAMED AMBASSADOR FOR TCS WORLD 10K BENGALURU 2024**



Iconic shot putter and two-time Olympic medalist, Valerie Adams, has been named the International

Event Ambassador for the 16th edition of the Tata Consultancy Services World 10K Bengaluru, to be held on April 28, 2024.

**CENTRE APPOINTS MANOJ PANDA AS NEW FINANCE COMMISSION MEMBER**



The appointment of Manoj Panda fills a vacancy in the Sixteenth Finance Commission, allowing it to commence its duties. Panda, an esteemed economist and former director of the Institute of Economic Growth, joins as a full-time member.

**SENIOR IPS OFFICER ANURAG KUMAR APPOINTED AS JOINT DIRECTOR OF CBI**



In a significant development in India's law enforcement landscape, the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the appointment of senior IPS officer Anurag Kumar as the Joint Director of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). This move, which comes into effect immediately, underscores the government's confidence in Kumar's leadership and expertise to serve in this crucial role.

**SENIOR BUREAUCRAT VANDITA KAUL APPOINTED AS SECRETARY, DEPARTMENT OF POSTS**



In a significant development, Senior Bureaucrat Vandita Kaul, a seasoned professional with a wealth of experience in financial services and banking, has been appointed as the Secretary of the Department of Posts. Kaul, a 1989-batch In-

dian Postal Service officer, currently serves as Member (Banking & Direct Benefit Transfer) of the Postal Services Board. She will succeed Vineet Pandey upon his superannuation.

### JUSTICE ANIRUDDHA BOSE APPOINTED DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL JUDICIAL ACADEMY



Supreme Court Justice Aniruddha Bose has been named the new director of the National Judicial Academy (NJA) in Bhopal, as announced by Supreme Court Chief Justice DY Chandrachud during a ceremonial bench held on April 10. The NJA, established in 1993, operates under the guidance of the Supreme Court and aims to enhance the skills of judges and facilitate court administration.

### KRISTALINA GEORGIEVA RE-APPOINTED AS IMF MANAGING DIRECTOR



Kristalina Georgieva has been re-appointed as the Managing Director (MD) of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for a new 5-year term starting on 1 October 2024. She was the sole candidate

nominated for the position this year, and her appointment was made by the IMF executive board.

### SAURABH GARG APPOINTED AS SECRETARY OF THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION



In a significant move, the Central Government has entrusted IAS officer Saurabh Garg with the additional charge of Secretary of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI). This decision, communicated through an order issued by the Department of Personnel & Training (DoPT), underscores Garg's extensive experience and expertise in the realm of public administration.



## AGREEMENTS NEWS

### AMENDMENT TO INDIA-MAURITIUS DOUBLE TAXATION AVOIDANCE AGREEMENT



India and Mauritius recently signed an amendment to their Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) on March 7, 2024. The amendment includes a principal purpose test (PPT) aimed at combating tax avoidance by ensuring that treaty benefits are granted only for transactions with a genuine purpose. This move raises concerns about increased scrutiny on foreign portfolio investments via Mauritius and potential implications for past investments.

## DEFENCE NEWS

### TRI-SERVICE PLANNING CONFERENCE: PARIVARTAN CHINTAN



The inaugural Tri-Service Planning Conference, dubbed 'Parivartan Chintan,' convened in New Delhi on April 8, 2024, orchestrated by the Ministry of Defence. This landmark event aimed to foster jointness and integration among the Indian Armed Forces, especially in light of ongoing efforts to establish unified theatre commands.

### CONFERENCE: INDIAN ARMY ENHANCES AIR DEFENCE WITH IGLA-S MANPADS



The Indian Army has bolstered its Very Short Range Air Defence (VSHORAD) capabilities with the acquisition of Iгла-S Man Portable Air Defence Systems (MANPADS) from Russia. This procurement, part of a larger deal for 120 launchers and 400 missiles, signifies a significant upgrade over outdated systems.

## INDIGENOUS MAN PORTABLE ANTI-TANK GUIDED MISSILE SYSTEM: A MILESTONE IN INDIA'S SELF-RELIANCE



In a significant milestone for India's defense capability, the Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO) and the Indian Army have successfully conducted trials of the indigenously designed and developed Man Portable Anti-tank Guided Missile (MPATGM) Weapon System. This indigenous development marks a crucial step towards achieving self-reliance in advanced technology-based defense systems, as underscored by Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh

## AWARDS NEWS

### GAIL WINS 15TH CIDC VISHWAKARMA AWARD FOR BARAUNI – GUWAHATI PIPELINE



GAIL (India) Limited has been honored with the prestigious 15th CIDC Vishwakarma Award in the 'Achievement Award for Best Construction Projects' category for its remarkable accomplishment in the Barauni – Guwahati Natural Gas Pipeline project (BGPL). The project, an integral component of the Jagdishpur – Haldia & Bokaro – Dhamra Pipeline project, marks a significant milestone by connecting North-East India to the National Gas Grid for the first time.

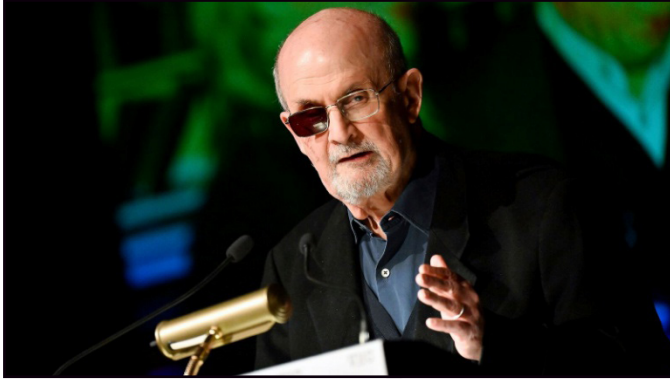
### ALEKSEI NAVALNY AND YULIA NAVALNAYA HONoured WITH FREEDOM PRIZE



The late Russian dissident Aleksei Navalny and his wife, Yulia Navalnaya, will receive the Freedom Prize of the Media from a leading German forum, the Ludwig Erhard Summit. The award is presented annually to public figures who have made significant contributions to freedom of expression, dialogue, and democracy

## BOOKS AND AUTHORS NEWS

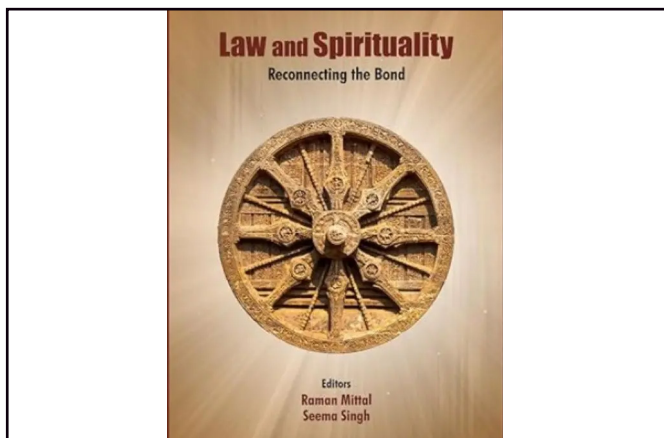
### **SALMAN RUSHDIE'S MEMOIR "KNIFE": A HARROWING TALE OF RESILIENCE AND THE FIGHT FOR FREE SPEECH**



law and the realm of spirituality. This groundbreaking work delves deep into the complex interplay between these two fundamental pillars of human society, offering a refreshing and enlightening perspective

Celebrated British-American author Salman Rushdie is set to release his memoir "Knife", recounting the chilling experience of being stabbed at a public event in 2022 and his journey to overcome the near-fatal ordeal. The book serves as a powerful testament to Rushdie's unwavering commitment to free speech, a core value that has defined his life and literary career.

### **THE BOOK TITLED "THE LAW AND SPIRITUALITY: RECONNECTING THE BOND" RELEASED**



In the ever-evolving landscape of legal discourse, the book "Law and Spirituality: Reconnecting the Bond," edited by Professor Raman Mittal and Professor Seema Singh, stands as a remarkable exploration of the intricate relationship between two seemingly disparate realms – the domain of



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