

GUPTA

CLASSES

Current Affairs

Decemeber-2023

English

Part-3



GUPTA

CLASSES

- i. The executive board, made up of 58 member states with a 4-year term, has the role of administering the UN body and appointing the director-general.
- ii. The bureau of the executive board consists of 12 members: the chairperson, 6 vice-chairpersons and the 5 chairpersons of the permanent commissions and committees.
- iii. The Chairperson of the UNESCO Executive Board, for the term 2023-2025 is Vera Lacoecilhe, a French-Lebanese diplomat and the representative of St. Lucia.

7. In December 2023, Rajiv Anand was named as the Chairman of _____ (Insurance Company).

- 1) IndiaFirst Life Insurance
- 2) Max Life Insurance
- 3) Ageas Federal Life Insurance
- 4) Tata AIA Life Insurance
- 5) PNB MetLife India Insurance

Answer- 2) Max Life Insurance

Explanation:

Rajiv Anand, a Non-Executive Director of Max Life Insurance Co. Ltd. nominated by Axis Bank Ltd, has been named the **Chairman of Max Life Insurance Co. Ltd.**, with effect from 5th December 2023.

i. Rajiv Anand, Deputy Managing Director (MD) of Axis Bank(since 2021) succeeded Analjit Singh, the Founder and Chairman Emeritus of Max Life Insurance Co Ltd.

ii. Analjit Singh has formally stepped down from the Chairman position and as a member of the Max Life Insurances board as of 4 December 2023.

Note: Max Life Insurance Co Ltd is a 70:30 Joint Venture (JV) between Max Financial Services Limited (MFSL), a part of the Max Group, and Axis Bank Limited.

- Analjit Singh was honoured with Padma Bhushan in 2011 for Trade and Industry.

8. Name the country that has recently (in Dec '23) elected to represent the Asian region in the Executive Committee of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC).

- 1) Indonesia
- 2) China
- 3) Japan
- 4) Thailand
- 5) India

Answer- 5) India

Explanation:

India has been unanimously elected to represent the Asian region in the Executive Committee of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (**CAC**).

i. The election took place during the 46th meeting of the CAC held at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Headquarters in Rome, Italy from 27th November to 2nd December 2023.

ii. The Indian delegation was led by G Kamala Vardhana Rao, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI).

iii. The Executive Committee comprises the Chair, 3 vice Chairs, 6 regional coordinators and 7 elected representatives from the 7 geographical regions of Codex: (Africa; Asia; Europe; Latin America and the Caribbean; Near East; North America; & The Southwest Pacific).

- The Executive Committee is chaired by the Chairperson of the CAC.

iv. At present, Chairperson of CAC is Steve Wearne, Director of Global Affairs at the United Kingdom Food Standards Agency.

9. Who was recently (in Dec '23) appointed as the Part-time Government Director on the Board of Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL)?

- 1) V Natesan
- 2) Pradeep Gaur
- 3) Vivek Kumar Gupta
- 4) Rajesh Prasad
- 5) Sanjeeb Kumar

Answer- **3) Vivek Kumar Gupta**

Explanation:

Droupadi Murmu, The President of India, has approved the appointment of **Vivek Kumar Gupta** as **Part-time Government Director** on the Board of Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (**RVNL**) with immediate effect.

i. He is currently serving as the Principal Executive Director (PED)/Gati Shakti, Railway Board. He will hold the part time post till he holds the position of PED/Gati Shakti, Railway Board, or until further orders, whichever comes earlier.

ii. Vivek Kumar Gupta is an Indian Railway Service of Engineers (IRSE) officer and was transferred to the Railway Board and posted as PED (Gati Shakti), Railway Board in 2023.

10. In December 2023, _____ became the first woman Indian Armed Forces officer to be appointed as Aide-de-Camp (ADC) to a Governor.

- 1) Punita Arora
- 2) Manisha Padhi
- 3) Ruchi Sharma
- 4) Priya Jhingan
- 5) Mohana Singh Jitarwal

Answer- **2) Manisha Padhi**

Explanation:

Squadron leader **Manisha Padhi**, a 2015 batch Indian Air Force (IAF) officer was appointed as the Aide-de-Camp (**ADC**) to **Mizoram Governor** Hari Babu Kambhampati.

- She became the **first woman Indian Armed Forces officer** to be appointed as Aide-de-Camp (**ADC**) to a Governor.
- She formally joined her post and reported to the Mizoram Governor at a ceremony at the Raj Bhavan in Aizawl, Mizoram.
- She was previously posted at Air Force Stations in Bidar (Karnataka), Pune (Maharashtra), and Bhatinda (Punjab).

11. In December 2023, _____ Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Members of Parliament (MPs) including Narendra Singh Tomar, Union Minister of _____ (Ministry) resigned from the Parliament after winning the respective state assembly elections.

- 1) 15; Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution
- 2) 10; Ministry of Rural Development

- 3) 15; Ministry of Road Transport and Highways
- 4) 10; Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare
- 5) 12; Ministry of Rural Development

Answer- **4) 10; Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare**

Explanation:

10 Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Members of Parliament (MPs) including Union Minister **Narendra Singh Tomar**, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare (MoA&FW) and Minister of State (MoS) Prahlad Singh Patel, Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI), have resigned from the Parliament after winning the respective state assembly elections.

i. Details of 10 MPs who have resigned from the Parliament:

Name	Parliamentary Constituency	State
Lok Sabha		
Narendra Singh Tomar	Morena	Madhya Pradesh(MP)
Prahlad Singh Patel	Damoh	
Rakesh Singh	Jabalpur	
Uday Pratap Singh	Hoshangabad	
Riti Pathak	Sidhi	
Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore	Jaipur Rural	Rajasthan
Diya Kumari	Rajsamand	
Arun Sao	Bilaspur	Chhattisgarh
Gomati Sai	Raigarh	
Rajya Sabha		
Kirori Lal Meena	Rajasthan	

12. Who has recently (in Dec '23) sworn in as the Chief Minister (CM) of Telangana?

- 1) Anumula Revanth Reddy
- 2) Ponnampaluri Prabhakar
- 3) Damodar Rajanarasimha
- 4) N Uttam Kumar Reddy
- 5) Duddilla Sridhar Babu

Answer- **1) Anumula Revanth Reddy**

Explanation:

On 7th December 2023, **Anumula Revanth Reddy**, President of Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC), was sworn in as the Chief Minister (**CM**) of **Telangana**. He became the 1st Congress CM of Telangana and the 2nd CM of the State since its formation in 2014.

i. Mallu Bhatti Vikaramarka, Former Leader of Opposition in Telangana Legislative Assembly, took oath as the Deputy CM of Telangana.

ii. Telangana Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan administered the oath of office at the Lal Bahadur Shastri Stadium in Hyderabad, Telangana.

iii. Telangana Legislative Assembly elections were held on 30th November 2023 to elect 119 members.

iv. The Indian National Congress (INC – 64) with its ally Communist Party of India (CPI – 1) won a clear majority with 65 seats against the incumbent Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS)'s 39 seats.

13. Who has been recently (in Dec '23) appointed as 24th Chief Secretary of Jharkhand?

- 1) Banna Gupta
- 2) Mithilesh Kumar Thakur
- 3) Sukhdev Singh
- 4) Lalbiaktluanga Khiangte
- 5) Satyanand Bhokta

Answer- **4) Lalbiaktluanga Khiangte**

Explanation:

Lalbiaktluanga Khiangte, a 1988 batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer, was appointed as **24th Chief Secretary of Jharkhand** with 'immediate effect'. He will be holding the post till 31st October 2024.

i. He will replace the incumbent Chief Secretary Sukhdev Singh (1987 batch IAS officer) who has been made the DG of Shri Krishna Institute of Public Administration.

ii. Prior to his appointment, Khiangte was serving as an additional chief secretary to the Department of Forest, Environment and Climate Change, Jharkhand.

14. Who has recently (in Dec' 23) sworn in as 6th Chief Minister of Mizoram?

- 1) Vishnu Deo Sai
- 2) Lalbiakzama
- 3) Baryl Vanneihisangi
- 4) Conrad Kongkal Sangma
- 5) Lalduhoma

Answer- **5) Lalduhoma**

Explanation:

Lalduhoma (74), **Lalduhoma** (74), Leader of the Zoram People's Movement (ZPM), was sworn in as the 6th Chief Minister (**CM**) of **Mizoram**. He is also the oldest person to become the CM of Mizoram.

i. **Baryl Vanneihisangi** (32) of ZPM elected from Aizawl South-III constituency, has become the youngest female Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) of Mizoram.

15. Which of the following is incorrectly matched with respect to the additional charge given to ministers by President Droupadi Murmu on 7th December 2023?

- 1) Arjun Munda - Union Minister for the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare
- 2) Sushri Shobha Karandlaje - Minister of State in Ministry of Food Processing Industries
- 3) Rajeev Chandrasekhar - Minister of State of Ministry of Jal Shakti
- 4) Bharti Pravin Pawar - Minister of State in Ministry of Tribal Affairs
- 5) Smriti Zubin Irani - Union Minister for the Ministry of Textile

Answer- 5) Smriti Zubin Irani - Union Minister for the Ministry of Textile

Explanation:

On 7th December 2023, Droupadi Murmu, President of India, as advised by the Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi has given additional charge to 4 Union Ministers.

i. Union Minister Arjun Munda, Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA), has been given additional charge as the Union Minister for the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare (MoA&FW).

ii. Sushri Shobha Karandlaje, Minister of State (MoS) for MoA&FW was given additional charge of MoS in Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI).

iii. Rajeev Chandrasekhar, MoS for Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) and Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeiTY) was given additional charge as the MoS of Ministry of Jal Shakti (MoJS).

iv. Bharti Pravin Pawar, MoS of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoH&FW) was given additional charge as the MoS in MoTA.

16. Who has been recently (in Dec '23) elected as the Prime Minister (PM) of Poland?

- 1) Marek Belka
- 2) Ewa Kopacz
- 3) Donald Tusk
- 4) Beata Szydło
- 5) Mateusz Morawiecki

Answer- 3) Donald Tusk

Explanation:

Donald Tusk, leader of Civic Coalition (KO), was elected as the **Prime Minister (PM) of Poland** by winning a vote of confidence in parliament on 11th December 2023.

- He takes oath as PM at the presidential palace by Poland's President Andrzej Duda.

i. Donald Tusk served as the prime minister of Poland between 2007 and 2014. In that period, he was in office for seven years, which made him the longest-serving Prime Minister in democratic Poland

ii. He also served as the European Council president from 2014-2019.

17. Which country has recently (in Dec '23) reappointed Geraldo João Martins as the Prime Minister (PM)?

- 1) Guyana
- 2) Cabo Verde
- 3) Burkina Faso
- 4) Senegal
- 5) Guinea-Bissau

Answer- 5) Guinea-Bissau

Explanation:

On 12th December 2023, the President of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau, Umaro Sissoco Embalo issued the decree reappointing **Geraldo João Martins** as Prime Minister(PM) to the Government of **Guinea-Bissau**.

- He was initially appointed as PM in August 2023 after winning the legislative elections conducted in June 2023.
- He has belonged to the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC) party since 2018.
- Prior to the appointment, he served as a Finance Minister to the Government of Guinea-Bissau.

18. In December 2023, Mohan Yadav was sworn in as the _____ Chief Minister (CM) of Madhya Pradesh (MP).

- 1) 17th
- 2) 19th
- 3) 16th
- 4) 18th
- 5) 15th

Answer- **2) 19th**

Explanation:

Mohan Yadav, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) legislature party leader was sworn in as the **19th Chief Minister (CM) of Madhya Pradesh (MP)**. BJP legislators Rajendra Shukla and Jagdish Devda were sworn in as the Deputy Chief Ministers.

i. They were administered the oath of office and secrecy by Governor Mangubhai Patel at the Lal Parade Ground in Bhopal, MP.

ii. Mohan Yadav replaced Shivraj Singh Chouhan who served as the CM of MP for a record 4 terms of more than 16 years and 5 months in office.

Note: Shivraj Singh Chouhan, BJP's longest-serving CM in India from 2005 to 2023, except for 15 months from December 2018 to March 2020 when the Congress governed the state.

19. Who has recently (in Dec '23) sworn in as the 4th Chief Minister (CM) of Chhattisgarh?

- 1) Arun Sao
- 2) Mohan Yadav
- 3) Vishnu Deo Sai
- 4) Bhajan Lal Sharma
- 5) Revanth Reddy

Answer- **3) Vishnu Deo Sai**

Explanation:

Vishnu Deo Sai of Bharatiya Janata Party(BJP) was sworn in as the **4th Chief Minister (CM) of Chhattisgarh**. BJP legislators Vijay Sharma and Arun Sao were sworn in as the Deputy Chief Ministers.

- They were administered the oath of office and secrecy by Governor Biswabhusan Harichandan in Raipur, Chhattisgarh on 13th December 2023.

i. Vishnu Deo Sai replaced Bhupesh Baghel(Congress) who served as the CM of Chhattisgarh from 2018 to 2023. Vishnu Deo Sai became the first tribal chief minister of Chhattisgarh.

ii. In the Chhattisgarh assembly general election, BJP won 54 of the 90 seats while Congress won 35 seats. Gondvana Gantantra Party (GGP) has won 1 seat.

iii. Vishnu Deo Sai was elected as the Member of Legislative (MLA) from the Kunkuri Assembly constituency.

20. Name the personality from India who has recently (in Dec '23) elected to the Governing Council of the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT).

- 1) Uma Sekhar
- 2) Karuna Nundy
- 3) Indira Jaising
- 4) Menaka Guruswamy
- 5) Vrinda Grover

Answer- **1) Uma Sekhar**

Explanation:

India's first woman candidate, **Uma Sekhar** was **elected** to the Governing Council of the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (**UNIDROIT**) in its 82nd session, by winning 45 out of 59 votes in the initial round of elections held in Rome, Italy on 14 December 2023.

- The election consisted of 32 contestants from different countries.

i. With this, India will be a member of the Governing Council for the period from 1 January 2024 – 31 December 2028.

ii. Uma Sekhar is an Additional Secretary and Legal Adviser in the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), India.

21. Who has been recently (in Dec '23) sworn in as the 14th Chief minister (CM) of Rajasthan?

- 1) Ashok Gehlot
- 2) Mohan Yadav
- 3) Vishnu Deo Sai
- 4) Bhajan Lal Sharma
- 5) Revanth Reddy

Answer- **4) Bhajan Lal Sharma**

Explanation:

Bhajan Lal Sharma of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), a 1st-time Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) elected from the Sanganer Constituency, sworn in as the **14th Chief Minister (CM) of Rajasthan.**

- Rajasthan Governor Kalraj Mishra administered oath of office and secrecy to Bhajan Lal Sharma in the event held in Jaipur, Rajasthan.
- Bhajan Lal Sharma replaced Indian National Congress (INC) leader Ashok Gehlot, who served as the CM of Rajasthan for 3 terms from 1998-2003, 2008-2013, and 2018-2023.
- Diya Kumari and Prem Chand Bairwa were sworn in as the Deputy CMs of Rajasthan during the event.
- Vasudev Devnani has been appointed as the speaker of Rajasthan State Assembly.

22. In December 2023, Abdel Fattah Saeed Hussein Khalil El-Sisi was re-elected as the president of _____ (country) for the 3rd term.

- 1) Serbia
- 2) Egypt
- 3) Liberia

4) Argentina

5) Bulgaria

Answer- **2) Egypt**

Explanation:

Incumbent Egyptian President **Abdel Fattah Saeed Hussein Khalil El-Sisi** secures **3rd term** as **Egypt's** president, after winning the 2024 Presidential Elections with 89.6% of the vote.

i. He is Egypt's 8th president, who has been in office since 2014. He was 1st elected as president in mid-2014, then re-elected in 2018 for the 2nd term.

ii. In 2019, constitutional amendments in Egypt extended the presidential term from 4 years to 6 and also amended the constitution to raise the limit on consecutive terms in office from 2 to 3.

iii. It added 2 years to El-Sisi's 2nd term and allowed him to run for the 3rd term with six-years; this is also said to be the final term in office according to the constitution, starting from April 2024.

23. Who has recently (in Dec '23) sworn in as 17th Emir of Kuwait?

1) Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammed Al-Sabah

2) Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah

3) Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah

4) Sheikh Meshal al-Ahmad al-Jaber al-Sabah

5) Sheikh Sabah Al-Khalid Al-Sabah

Answer- **4) Sheikh Meshal al-Ahmad al-Jaber al-Sabah**

Explanation:

Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah officially assumed the role of **Emir of Kuwait**, taking the constitutional oath in a ceremony held before the Kuwaiti National Assembly. He became the **17th ruler of Kuwait**, the oil-rich Gulf state.

i. He **succeeded** the late **Emir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah**, who passed away at the age of 86 on 16 December 2023. He served as the Emir of Kuwait for 3 years (2020-2023).

Note: The Emir of Kuwait is the commander-in-chief of all defence forces and the Crown Prince is the deputy commander.

24. Name the personality who has recently (in Dec '23) become the first Indian to be inducted as a governing board member to the International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) Foundation.

1) Vita Dani

2) Sujay Ghorpade

3) Chetan Baboor

4) Naina Jaiswal

5) Indu Puri

Answer- **1) Vita Dani**

Explanation:

Sports philanthropist and entrepreneur **Vita Dani** has become the **first Indian** to be inducted as a governing board member to the International Table Tennis Federation (**ITTF**) Foundation.

- Vita Dani along with Jalaj Dani co-founded Dani Foundation.

i. She is also the co-owner of the Chennaiyin Football Club (CFC), along with Abhishek Bachchan and Mahendra Singh (MS) Dhoni.

ii. As the Chairperson of Ultimate Table Tennis (UTT), she has been reshaping the landscape of Table Tennis, ensuring accessibility across all segments of society, and orchestrating multiple tournaments spanning 25 states in India.

25. Who has been recently (in Dec '23) elected as the President of Wrestling Federation of India (WFI)?

- 1) Darshan Lal
- 2) Anita Sheoran
- 3) Sanjay Kumar Singh
- 4) Asit Saha
- 5) Karan Bhushan Singh

Answer- **3) Sanjay Kumar Singh**

Explanation:

Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) names **Sanjay Kumar Singh** as its new **President**, he is also the Vice-President of Uttar Pradesh(UP) Wrestling Association.

- Sanjay Kumar won the election with 40 votes (special majority) by defeating former India wrestler and Commonwealth Games gold medalist Anita Sheoran who secured only 7 votes.

i. Previously the position of 'President' was held by Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh Member of Parliament(MP) representing Kaiserganj Constituency of UP in the Lok Sabha.

- Brij Bhushan has been serving the post since 2011 (three terms 2011-15, 2015-19, 2019-23).

26. In December 2023, Government of India reconstituted the National Startup Advisory Council (NSAC) upon the completion of its 2 year term.

Following the reconstitution, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI) has nominated _____ non-official members to represent various stakeholders of the startup ecosystem.

- 1) 15
- 2) 31
- 3) 20
- 4) 25
- 5) 18

Answer- **2) 31**

Explanation:

On 18th December 2023, Government of India reconstituted the National Startup Advisory Council (NSAC) upon the completion of its **2 year term**. Following the reconstitution, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI) has nominated **31 non-official members** to represent various stakeholders of the startup ecosystem.

About the Reconstituted NSAC:

i. The nominated members include founders of startups, individuals representing investor interests and representatives from incubators and accelerators.

ii. The 31 nominated non-official members includes Kunal Bahl, Co-Founder of Snapdeal, Sanjeev Bikhchandani, Founder and Executive Vice Chairman of Info Edge; Nithin Kamath, Founder and CEO of Zerodha; and Nivruti Rai MD & CEO of Invest India. [Click here for the complete list of nominated members](#)

Note- The term of the non-official members of NSAC shall be 2 years or until further orders.

27. Name the personality who has recently (in Dec '23) appointed as the first ever global brand ambassador of Bisleri International Private Limited.

- 1) Deepika Padukone
- 2) Dino Morea
- 3) Mahendra Singh Dhoni
- 4) Virat Kohli
- 5) Anushka Sharma

Answer- **1) Deepika Padukone**

Explanation:

Bisleri International Private Limited, leading Indian bottled water company, has roped in **Deepika Padukone**, a bollywood actress and producer as its first ever **global brand ambassador**.

- As the brand ambassador, she will feature on the Bisleri's #DrinkItUp campaign, which embraces the fun and excitement of visualising hydration.
- Padukone will also be a part of all Bisleri product packaging.

Note- Bisleri was launched in India in 1965. In 1969, Parle Group acquired the Bisleri brand, from an Italian entrepreneur, Signor Felice Bisleri

28. Name the actor who has been recently (in Dec '23) appointed as brand ambassador for football by the Sony Sports Network (SSN).

- 1) Ranbir Kapoor
- 2) Sidharth Malhotra
- 3) Kartik Aaryan
- 4) Vicky Kaushal
- 5) Aditya Roy Kapoor

Answer- **3) Kartik Aaryan**

Explanation:

Sony Sports Network (SSN), owned and operated by Sony Pictures Networks (SPN), has appointed Bollywood Actor **Kartik Aaryan** as its official **brand ambassador for football**.

i. As the brand ambassador, he will feature on SSN's 'Your Home of Football' campaign.

ii. He will promote a diverse portfolio of football offerings that includes the live telecast of over 900 football matches.

- This includes the UEFA(Union of European Football Associations) European Championship (UEFA EURO 2024), UEFA Champions League, UEFA Europa League, UEFA Conference League, UEFA Nations League, Bundesliga, Emirates FA Cup, Durand Cup, and Roshn Saudi League, amongst others.

29. Who has been recently (in Dec '23) appointed as the interim Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Slice-backed North East Small Finance Bank (NESFB)?

- 1) Smriti Chandra
- 2) Ram Krishna Garg
- 3) Satish Kumar Kalra
- 4) Rajan Bajaj
- 5) Gautam Barua

Answer- **3) Satish Kumar Kalra**

Explanation:

The Reserve Bank of India (**RBI**) has approved the appointment of **Satish Kumar Kalra**, as interim Managing Director (**MD**) and Chief Executive Officer (**CEO**) of the Fintech startup Slice-backed North East Small Finance Bank (**NESFB**).

i. Kalra served as the MD & CEO, and Executive Director of Andhra Bank from 2012 to 2017. Later he served as the independent director at Lakshmi Vilas Bank from 2019 to 2021. At present, he is serving as an independent director at Can Fin Homes Limited.

ii. He has also served as a member of the Experience Advisory Board for Banking and Financial Frauds from 2020 to 2021.

Note- In October 2023, RBI approved the merger of Guwahati(Assam) based NESFB with Slice. Slice shareholders will own a 95-97% stake in the merged entity; the remaining is owned by NESFB shareholders.

30. Who has recently (in Dec '23) appointed as the Chairman of the BSE Limited (formerly Bombay Stock Exchange) with effect from 17th January 2024?

- 1) Umakant Jayaram
- 2) Sundararaman Ramamurthy
- 3) Pramod Agrawal
- 4) Sushri Jayshree Vyas
- 5) Subhasis Chaudhuri

Answer- **3) Pramod Agrawal**

Explanation:

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (**SEBI**) has approved the appointment of **Pramod Agrawal** as the **Chairman** of the **BSE Limited** (formerly Bombay Stock Exchange) with effect from 17th January 2024.

- He will be replacing Subhash Sheoratan Mundra (SS Mundra), the current Chairman of BSE, whose tenure is set to expire on 16th January 2024.
- He has been serving as the Public Interest Director of BSE since November 2023.

31. Which bank has recently (in Dec '23) re-appointment Atanu Chakraborty as the Part-Time Non-Executive Chairman and Independent Director for a second term of 3 years?

- 1) YES Bank
- 2) ICICI Bank
- 3) Axis Bank
- 4) HDFC Bank
- 5) IndusInd Bank

Answer- **4) HDFC Bank**

Explanation:

The Board of Directors of **HDFC Bank** Limited has recommended the re-appointment of **Atanu Chakraborty** as the **Part-Time Non-Executive Chairman and Independent Director** of the Bank to the Reserve Bank of India (**RBI**) for a second term of **3 years** with effect from 5th May 2024 to 4th May 2027.

i. He was appointed to the post in May 2021 and his first tenure of 3 years is set to end on 4th May, 2024.

ii. In 2019, he served on the board of the World Bank(WB) as Alternate Governor as well as on the Central Board of Directors of the RBI.

32. In December 2023, the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) constituted a 3-member ad hoc committee to run the day-to-day operations of the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI).

Who has been appointed as the chairman of the ad hoc committee?

- 1) Arun Sinha
- 2) Bhupinder Singh Bajwa
- 3) Rajvir Singh
- 4) Prabhat Kumar
- 5) V Jayanth

Answer- 2) Bhupinder Singh Bajwa

Explanation:

The Indian Olympic Association (IOA) constituted a **3-member ad hoc committee** to run the day-to-day operations of the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI). This comes after the suspension of the WFI's governing council by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MYAS).

- The IOA appointed **Bhupinder Singh Bajwa**, the President of Wushu Association of India as chairman of the ad hoc committee.
- The other 2 members of the committee are Maneyapanda Muthanna Somaya, an Olympian in hockey; and Manjusha Kanwar, a former international badminton player.

Note: Bhupinder Singh Bajwa was also one of the members of the previous ad-hoc committee formed by IOA in April 2023.

33. In December 2023, Reserve Bank of India (RBI) approved the appointment of Chandra Shekhar Rajan as the Part-time Chairman of _____(Bank).

- 1) Kotak Mahindra Bank
- 2) Axis Bank
- 3) ICICI Bank
- 4) HDFC Bank
- 5) YES Bank

Answer- 1) Kotak Mahindra Bank

Explanation:

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has approved the appointment of **Chandra Shekhar Rajan** (C S Rajan) as the **Part-time Chairman** of **Kotak Mahindra Bank Limited (KMBL)** for two years with effect from 1st January 2024.

i. C S Rajan is serving as an Additional and Independent Director on KMBL's Board (since 2022).

ii. He will be replacing incumbent Non-Executive Independent Part-time Chairman, Prakash Apte who is set to retire on 31st December 2023.

34. Who has been recently (in Dec '23) appointed as the Chief Justice of the Jharkhand High Court?

- 1) Prasanna B. Varale
- 2) Sunita Agarwal
- 3) Shree Chandrashekhar
- 4) Dhiraj Singh Thakur

5) Ravi Malimath

Answer- **3) Shree Chandrashekhar**

Explanation:

Droupadi Murmu, the President of India, by exercising her powers conferred by Article 223 of the Constitution of India, has appointed **Shree Chandrashekhar** as **Chief Justice of the Jharkhand High Court** with effect from 29th December 2023.

- Chandrashekhar was serving as the Judge of the Jharkhand High Court.
- Chandrashekhar replaced Sanjaya Kumar Mishra who retired on 28th December 2023.
- He was initially appointed as Additional Judge of the Jharkhand High Court in 2013 and he was made the Judge of the High Court of Jharkhand in 2014.

35. In December 2023, _____ was appointed as the 1st woman Director General (DG) of the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF).

- 1) Sheila Samanta
- 2) Nina Singh
- 3) Madhuri Kanitkar
- 4) Arti Sarin
- 5) Geetika Koul

Answer- **2) Nina Singh**

Explanation:

Nina Singh was appointed as the **1st woman** Director General (**DG**) of the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF). She will hold the post till her superannuation on July 31, 2024.

- She was holding the additional charge of DG of CISF from August 2023 following the superannuation of Sheel Vardhan Singh, who held the position from November 2021 to August 2023.

i. Anish Dayal Singh, DG of Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) was appointed as the full-time DG of the Central Reserve Police Force (**CRPF**) till his superannuation on 31 December 2024.

- He was holding the additional DG, CRPF charge following S L Thaosen's retirement on 30 November 2023.

ii. Rahul Rasgotra succeeded Anish Dayal Singh and will be the new DG of ITBP till the date of his superannuation on 30 September 2025.

iii. Vivek Srivastava was appointed as DG of the Fire Service, Civil Defence, and Home Guards till the date of his superannuation on 30 June 2025.

- Before that, he was a special director of IB.

36. Who has been recently (in Dec '23) appointed as the Global Brand Ambassador for Hyundai Motor India Limited (HMIL)?

- 1) Anushka Sharma
- 2) Deepika Padukone
- 3) Alia Bhatt
- 4) Katrina Kaif
- 5) Priyanka Chopra

Answer- **2) Deepika Padukone**

Explanation:

Hyundai Motor India Limited (**HMIL**), a wholly-owned subsidiary of South Korea-based Hyundai Motor Company (HMC), has roped in **Deepika Padukone**, a Bollywood actress and producer as its **brand ambassador**.

- Deepika Padukone's profound connection with the Indian audience represents Hyundai's commitment to its customers.
- As a brand ambassador, Deepika will act as a catalyst to bridge the gap between cutting-edge automobiles and Indian customers.

37. In December 2023, Joe Biden, The President of the United States of America (USA) was nominated _____ as a member of the Board of Directors of the US International Development Finance Corporation (DFC) for 3 years.

- 1) Bharat Desai
- 2) Jay Chaudhry
- 3) Vinod Khosla
- 4) Deven Parekh
- 5) Romesh Wadhvani

Answer- **4) Deven Parekh**

Explanation:

Joe Biden, The President of the United States of America (USA) has nominated Indian-American global venture capitalist **Deven Parekh**, Managing Director at Insight Partners, as a **member** of the Board of Directors of the US International Development Finance Corporation (**DFC**) for **3 years**.

- He is the nominee recommended by Charles Ellis Schumer, Senate Majority Leader.
- Previously in 2020, he was nominated to the Board of DFC by then-President Donald Trump.

Note: DFC is America's development finance institution, based in Washington, DC, USA. Chief Executive Officer- Scott Nathan.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

1. Who has recently (in Nov '23) won the Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur, the highest civilian award of France, for the contributions in promoting space cooperation between India and France?

- 1) Kalpana Kalahasti
- 2) V R Lalithambika
- 3) Ritu Karidhal
- 4) Nandini Harinath
- 5) Tessy Thomas

Answer- **2) V R Lalithambika**

Explanation:

Dr **V R Lalithambika**, a distinguished scientist at the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) was honoured with "**Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur**", the highest civilian award of France, for her contributions in promoting space cooperation between India and France.

i. On behalf of the French Government, Thierry Mathou Ambassador of France to India, conferred the award to her during the event held in Bengaluru, Karnataka.

ii. She becomes the 2nd ISRO scientist to receive the award. Previously, A S Kiran Kumar, former chairman of ISRO received the award in 2019.

2. Name the personality who has recently (in Nov '23) honoured with "Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres" (Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters).

- 1) Rahman Abbas
- 2) Aruni Kashyap
- 3) Rakhshanda Jalil
- 4) Vivek Shanbhag
- 5) Arshia Sattar

Answer- **5) Arshia Sattar**

Explanation:

Eminent Indian author and translator, Dr **Arshia Sattar**, was honoured with "**Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres**" (Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters), a prestigious honor from French Government, for her commitment to cultural relationship and cooperation between diverse literary worlds.

i. Thierry Mathou presented the insignia of the award to Arshia Sattar at a special ceremony at the Consulate General of France in Bengaluru, Karnataka.

3. Which of the following points is "Incorrect" with respect to the 54th edition of the International Film Festival of India (IFFI) held at Goa in November 2023?

- 1) Indian actress, Padma Shri Awardee Madhuri Dixit was honoured with the Special Recognition to Bhartiya Cinema award.
- 2) American Actor Michael Douglas was honoured with the Satyajit Ray Lifetime Achievement Award of the Year(2023)
- 3) Endless Borders directed by Abbas Amini (Persian) won the Best Film Award under Golden Peacock Category.
- 4) The film "White Flower" directed by Arvin Sinha won the best film award at "75 Creative Minds of Tomorrow" (CMOT).
- 5) "Panchayat 2" a comedy-drama series in Hindi streamed on Amazon Prime Video in 2022 won the prestigious OTT Award for web series.

Answer- **4) The film "White Flower" directed by Arvin Sinha won the best film award at "75 Creative Minds of Tomorrow" (CMOT).**

Explanation:

The 54th edition of the [International Film Festival of India \(IFFI\)](#) was held in Goa from 20 to 28th November 2023.

- The 54th IFFI was jointly organised by the National Film Development Corporation (NFDC) under the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting(MIB) along with the Entertainment Society of Goa (ESG), Government of Goa.
- The International film "Catching Dust" directed by the British filmmaker Stuart Gatt was screened as the opening film.
- Himachal Pradesh Police Orchestra 'Harmony of the Pines' performed at the closing ceremony of the 54th IFFI on 28th November 2023.

- Renowned Indian actress, Padma Shri Awardee Madhuri Dixit was honoured with the Special Recognition to Bhartiya Cinema award for her outstanding contributions to the Indian film industry.
- American Actor Michael Douglas was honoured with the Satyajit Ray Lifetime Achievement Award of the Year(2023) by Shekhar Kapoor and Chief Minister Shri Pramod Sawant.
- Endless Borders directed by Abbas Amini (Persian) won the Best Film Award under Golden Peacock Category.
- The film “Odh” directed by **Akhil Lotlikar** won the best film award at “**75 Creative Minds of Tomorrow**” (CMOT) held at the 54th IFFI, Goa on November 25, 2023.
- “Panchayat 2” a comedy-drama series in Hindi streamed on Amazon Prime Video in 2022 won the prestigious OTT Award for web series at the 54th IFFI.

4. Which of the following personalities has/have ‘Not’ featured on 2023 Power 100 published by Art Review in December 2023?

- 1) Geeta Kapur
- 2) Prateek Raja
- 3) Bose Krishnamachari
- 4) Dayanita Singh
- 5) Natasha Ginwala

Answer- **1) Geeta Kapur**

Explanation:

5 Indians including **Bose Krishnamachari**, an Indian painter and artist-curator hailing from Kerala, are featured on 2023 Power 100, the annual ranking of the most influential people in art, published by Art Review, a London-based magazine.

i. Bose Krishnamachari is ranked 38th on the list. He has curated the murals on Manaveeyam street in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala Traditional Historical and Colonial Architecture photography exhibition and ‘Contextual Cosmologies.

ii. The other Indians on the list were,

- **Prateek Raja & Priyanka Raja**, Gallerists and Cofounders of Experimenter, Kolkata(West Bengal) ranked 62nd.
- **Dayanita Singh**, Photographer (Delhi) ranked 78th.
- **Natasha Ginwala**, an independent curator, researcher, and writer, ranked 94th.

5. Which of the following Indians has/have recently (in Dec ‘23) featured in the Forbes Asia’s 2023 Heroes of Philanthropy list?

- 1) Nikhil Kamath
- 2) Kushal Pal Singh
- 3) Nandan Nilekani
- 4) Both 1 & 2
- 5) All 1, 2 & 3

Answer- **5) All 1, 2 & 3**

Explanation:

The **Forbes Asia’s 2023 Heroes of Philanthropy list**, the 17th edition of the annual unranked list, features 3 Indians: **Kushal Pal Singh** (K.P. Singh), Chairman Emeritus of DLF Limited; Nandan

Nilekani, co-founder and Chairman of Infosys; and Nikhil Kamath, Co-founder and Chief Financial Officer, Zerodha.

- The list features a total of 15 philanthropists from the Asia-Pacific region.

Note: The list includes names from lifelong philanthropists to newcomers from the Asia-Pacific region.

6. Who was recently (in Dec '23) awarded with the WISE Prize for Education 2023 by the Qatar Foundation at the 11th edition of the World Innovation Summit for Education (WISE) Summit?

- 1) Harshad Mehta
- 2) Safeena Husain
- 3) Ketan Parekh
- 4) Pratik Gandhi
- 5) Sucheta Dalal

Answer- **2) Safeena Husain**

Explanation:

Safeena Husain, the founder and board member of Educate Girls, was awarded the **WISE Prize for Education 2023** by the Qatar Foundation at the 11th edition of the World Innovation Summit for Education (WISE) Summit held on 28th -29th November 2023.

i. Safeena Husain became the first Indian woman to receive the WISE Prize for Education, and she received the WISE Prize medal along with USD 500,000 prize money.

ii. Safeena Husain is recognized for her contribution to equality and access to education through her Educate Girls organisation, which empowers communities for girls' education by partnering with the government to identify, enrol, and retain out-of-school girls across India.

iii. Educate Girls, an Indian Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO), established in 2007, enrolled 1.4 million girls in schools and supported education for more than 18.6 million children through the government education system.

7. Which Statutory body/Regulatory body has recently (in Dec '23) awarded the International Social Security Association (ISSA)'s Vision Zero 2023 Award at the 23rd World Congress on Safety and Health at Work held in Sydney, Australia?

- 1) Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority
- 2) Employees' State Insurance Corporation
- 3) National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development
- 4) Food Safety and Standards Authority of India
- 5) Federation of Indian Export Organisations

Answer- **2) Employees' State Insurance Corporation**

Explanation:

The **Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC)** under Ministry of Labour & Employment (MoL&E) was awarded **Vision Zero 2023 Award** by International Social Security Association (ISSA) at the **23rd World Congress on Safety and Health at Work**, held in Sydney, Australia from 27th to 30th November, 2023.

- The award was received by Rajendra Kumar, Director General of ESIC.

i. The 23rd World Congress on Safety and Health at Work is one of the largest international conferences for work health and safety.

ii. The World Congress was co-organised by the International Labour Organization (ILO), SafeWork New South Wales (NSW) and ISSA.

iii. The theme of the event was “Shaping Change: Collaborating for a healthier and safer world of work”.

8. Which word has been selected as Word of the Year 2023 by the Oxford University Press (OUP) in December 2023?

- 1) Rizz
- 2) Authentic
- 3) Deepfake
- 4) Goblin Mode
- 5) Heat Dome

Answer- **1) Rizz**

Explanation:

On December 4, 2023, the Oxford University Press (**OUP**) named ‘**Rizz**’, a colloquial noun defined as style, charm, or attractiveness; the ability to attract a romantic or sexual partner, as its **word of the year for 2023**. It is mainly used by the younger generation.

i. Rizz:

- Etymologically, the term is believed to be a shortened form of the word ‘charisma’, taken from the middle part of the word.
- The word ‘rizz’ can also be used as a verb, in phrases such as ‘to rizz up’,

9. Name the personality who has recently (in Dec ‘23) honoured with the Public Relations Society of India (PRSI) National Award 2023.

- 1) Vaishnavi Ramakrishnan
- 2) Shailaja Vardhan
- 3) Prathap C Reddy
- 4) Saurabh Bose
- 5) Suganthy Sundararaj

Answer- **5) Suganthy Sundararaj**

Explanation:

Public Relations Society of India (**PRSI**) honoured **Suganthy Sundararaj**, Regional Head of Public Relations at Apollo Hospitals, with the **PRSI National Award 2023** for her outstanding contributions to PRSI and the industry.

i. The award was presented during the International Public Relations (IPR) Festival 2023 held in New Delhi, Delhi from 25th to 27th November 2023.

ii. The award recognised her dedication to the PR industry and her role in shaping the strategic management of the PR function in the healthcare domain.

10. In December 2023, Rex Karmaveer Global Fellowship (RKGf) 2023-24 and Karmaveer Chakra Medal presented at the _____ Edition of the annual REX CONCLiVE.

- 1) 15th
- 2) 7th
- 3) 10th
- 4) 9th

5) 12th

Answer- **5) 12th**

Explanation:

Rex Karmaveer Global Fellowship (**RKGF**) **2023-24** and the most prestigious and inclusive **Karmaveer Chakra Medal** were presented to people who have innovative ideas which may make a difference to the world.

i. awards are instituted by the International Confederation of Non-Governmental Organisation (iCONGO) in association with the United Nations (UN).

ii. The awards were presented during the **12th Edition of the annual REX CONCLIVE** and Karmaveer Chakra Award event at Shri Nadar School, Faridabad, Haryana. [List of 2023 Awardees of Rex Karmaveer Global Fellowship & Chakra Awards.](#)

11. Who has recently (in Dec '23) recognised as Time Magazine's 2023 Person of the Year and became the 1st woman to appear twice on a Person of the Year cover?

- 1) Kamala Harris
- 2) Taylor Alison Swift
- 3) Greta Thunberg
- 4) Angela Merkel
- 5) Alex Newell

Answer- **2) Taylor Alison Swift**

Explanation:

TIME, the news magazine based in the United States of America (USA), has named the American singer-songwriter **Taylor Alison Swift** as its **2023 Person of the Year** and became the **1st person** to be recognised for her achievements in the arts.

- With this, She became the 1st woman to appear twice on a Person of the Year cover since the nominations began in 1927. Previously, She was named TIME's Person of the Year in 2017.
- She is also the 4th individual selection who was born in the last 50 years.

i. Lionel Andrés Messi, Captain of Argentina's national football team, has been named Time magazine's Athlete of the Year for 2023.

ii. An American entrepreneur Sam Altman, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and co-founder of OpenAI, has been named Time Magazine's CEO of The Year 2023.

iii. American actor and singer, Alex Eugene Newell, was named TIME's 2023 Breakthrough of the Year. Newell was recognized for their success as a non-binary actor on stage and screen.

12. Who has recently (in Dec '23) honoured with the National Awards for the Empowerment of Divyangjan under the category 'Best Personality- Empowerment of Differently-abled' by Draupadi Murmu, President of India?

- 1) Sadhu Kailash
- 2) Kiran Kumar
- 3) Prashant Agrawal
- 4) Kailash Agarwal
- 5) Nisha Agarwal

Answer- **3) Prashant Agrawal**

Explanation:

On the occasion of International Day of Persons with Disabilities 2023 (3 December 2023), **Draupadi Murmu**, President of India, honoured **Prashant Agrawal**, President of Narayan Seva Sansthan (NSS) in Udaipur, Rajasthan, with **National Awards for the Empowerment of Divyangjan** under the category '**Best Personality- Empowerment of Differently-abled**' .

- The award recognises his outstanding work in the field of empowerment of persons with disabilities (PwDs/Divyangjan).
- The award ceremony was organised by the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DoEPwD), Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (MSJE) at Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi, Delhi.
- The award has been annually presented by the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DoEPwD), MSJE since 1969.
- A total of 30 awards (21 individuals and 9 institutions) were presented as a part of National Awards for the Empowerment of Divyangjan 2023.

13. In December 2023, Union Minister of Education Dharmendra Pradhan honoured the _____ outstanding district and block education officers across India with the National Awards for Innovations and Good Practices in Educational Administration for the years 2020-21 & 2021-22.

- 1) 80
- 2) 65
- 3) 75
- 4) 70
- 5) 69

Answer- **2) 65**

Explanation:

Union Minister of Education **Dharmendra Pradhan** honoured the **65** outstanding district and block education officers across India with the **National Awards for Innovations and Good Practices in Educational Administration** for the years **2020-21 & 2021-22**.

- The awards were presented during the event held at Dr. B.R. Ambedkar International Centre in New Delhi, Delhi.

Note: A 2-day National Conference on Innovations and Good Practices in Educational Administration was organised by the National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (**NIEPA**) as a prelude to the award ceremony.

14. Which word has been selected as Word of the Year 2023 by the Cambridge dictionary in December 2023?

- 1) Rizz
- 2) Authentic
- 3) Deepfake
- 4) Goblin Mode
- 5) Hallucinate

Answer- **5) Hallucinate**

Explanation:

The **Cambridge dictionary** has chosen “**hallucinate**” – a verb as its **Word of the Year for 2023**. This decision is in recognition of the new meaning the word has acquired in the context of artificial intelligence (AI) algorithms.

i. The traditional definition of “hallucinate” refers to the experience of seeing, hearing, or feeling things that are not there

15. Name the Actor that has recently (in Dec '23) honoured with “Officer Order of Merit of the Italian Republic”.

- 1) Arjun Rampal
- 2) Kabir Bedi
- 3) Naseeruddin Shah
- 4) Abhay Deol
- 5) Randeep Hooda

Answer- **2) Kabir Bedi**

Explanation:

Kabir Bedi, a renowned Indian actor, was honoured with “**Officer Order of Merit of the Italian Republic**” (Ufficiale Ordine al Merito della Repubblica Italiana), the one of the most prestigious Italian civilian award, for his contributions in promoting better relations between India and Italy.

- The Scroll of Honour was read aloud by Consul General Alessandro de Masi at a private ceremony held in Mumbai, Maharashtra.
- The Scroll of Honour was signed by Italian President Sergio Mattarella and counter-signed by Italian Prime Minister (PM) Giorgia Meloni.

i. In 2010, the Italian Government honoured him with the Cavaliere Ordine al Merito della Repubblica Italiana (Knight of the Order of Merit of the Italian Republic), for his lifetime achievements as an actor.

16. In December 2023, Tiriyani Block of _____ (state) secured the first position in the National Institution for Transforming India (NITI) Aayog’s inaugural delta rankings of Aspirational Blocks Programme (ABP) for the first Quarter of 2023-2024.

- 1) West Bengal
- 2) Karnataka
- 3) Andhra Pradesh
- 4) Odisha
- 5) Telangana

Answer- **5) Telangana**

Explanation:

Tiriyani Block of Kumuram Bheem Asifabad district, **Telangana** secured the **first position** in the National Institution for Transforming India (NITI) Aayog’s inaugural delta rankings of Aspirational Blocks Programme (ABP) for the **first Quarter** of **2023-2024**.

- The Kaushambi block of Kaushambi District in Uttar Pradesh secured second position.
- This is the first time that the ranking of blocks was calculated as part of the Aspirational Blocks Programme.

i. The Aspirational Blocks Programme (ABP) was launched in January 2023 with a focus on improving governance to enhance citizens’ quality of life in underdeveloped blocks in India.

17. Name the personality who has recently (in Dec '23) honoured with the Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC)'s Nyholm Prize for Education.

- 1) Savita Ladage
- 2) Basudeb Dasgupta
- 3) Anish Ghosh
- 4) Jayanth Kumar
- 5) Ajay Sharma

Answer- **1) Savita Ladage**

Explanation:

Savita Ladage Professor at Homi Bhabha Centre for Science Education, Tata Institute of Fundamental Research in Mumbai, Maharashtra, has been honoured with the **Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC)'s Nyholm Prize for Education**, in recognition for her contributions to chemistry education.

- As a part of the prize, Prof. Ladage will receive a cash prize of 5,000 British pound sterling (GBP), along with a medal and a certificate.
- Savita Ladage has been honoured for advocating chemical education, including efforts like mentoring chemistry educators and initiating programs for teachers and students that promote chemistry education in India.

i. The Nyholm Prize for Education recognises inspirational, innovative, and dedicated individuals or teams making a substantial and sustained impact within education.

18. Which of the following personalities has/have recently (in Dec '23) honoured with Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament, and Development for 2023?

- 1) Daniel Barenboim
- 2) Ali Abu Awwad
- 3) Jamila Afghani
- 4) Both 1 & 2
- 5) Both 2 & 3

Answer- **4) Both 1 & 2**

Explanation:

The **Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament, and Development for 2023** has been jointly awarded to **Daniel Barenboim**, an Argentine-Israeli classical pianist and conductor, and **Ali Abu Awwad**, Palestinian peace activist, for their efforts towards a non-violent resolution of the Israel-Palestine conflict.

i. Daniel Barenboim became a symbol of hope and a space for dialogue and gained a permanent base in Berlin's (Germany) Pierre Boulez Saal, in March 2017.

- His awards and honours, including the titles of Grand Officier in France's Légion d'Honneur and Knight Commander of the British Empire (KBE) among others.

ii. Ali Abu Awwad was awarded the 2023 Luxembourg Peace Prize as an Outstanding Peace Activist.

Note: The international jury of the Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament, and Development was chaired by former Chief Justice T S Thakur.

19. Which of the following personalities have recently (in Dec '23) become 1st Indians to be inducted into the International Tennis Hall of Fame?

- 1) Mahesh Bhupathi
- 2) Leander Paes

3) Vijay Amritraj

4) Both 1 & 2

5) Both 2 & 3

Answer- **5) Both 2 & 3**

Explanation:

Indian tennis legends **Leander Paes**; Indian sports commentator and promoter **Vijay Amritraj**; and British sports journalist and writer Richard Evans were inducted into the International Tennis Hall of Fame as a part of the class of 2024.

- Leander Paes was selected under Player Category and Vijay Amritraj and Richard Evans were selected under Contributor Category.
- **Paes and Amritraj** have become the **1st two Indians** to receive the honours and the 1st Asian men to be selected in their respective categories.

Note: With this, India has become the 28th nation represented in the Hall of Fame.

i. The Class of 2024 will be officially inducted into the International Tennis Hall of Fame on 20th July 2024 in Newport, Rhode Island, the United States of America (USA).

ii. Leander Paes, Vijay Amritraj, and Richard Evans will join an elite group of 264 inductees from 28 nations, including India.

20. In December 2023, Novak Djokovic from Serbia, has named men's International Tennis Federation (ITF) World Champion 2023 for the _____ time, while Belarusian tennis player, _____ has named as the women's ITF World Champion for the first time.

1) 10th; Aryna Sabalenka

2) 8th; Victoria Azarenka

3) 9th; Olga Govortsova

4) 8th; Aryna Sabalenka

5) 9th; Victoria Azarenka

Answer- **4) 8th; Aryna Sabalenka**

Explanation:

Novak Djokovic, a Serbian tennis player, has been named men's International Tennis Federation (ITF) World Champion 2023 for the **eighth time** in his career.

- **Aryna Sabalenka**, a Belarusian tennis player, has been named as the **women's ITF World Champion** for the **first time** for her consistent performance in the 2023 season.
- Men's Doubles: Rajeev Ram (United States of America) and Joe Salisbury (United Kingdom) have been named men's doubles ITF World Champions for a second time.
- Women's Doubles: Storm Hunter (Australia) and Elise Mertens (Belgium) have been named women's doubles ITF World Champions for the first time.

21. Which of the following Indian Officers were recently (in Dec '23) honoured with the "Golden Owl" for outstanding performance at the Defense Services Command & Staff College (DSCSC) in Sapugaskanda, Sri Lanka?

1) Major Rohit (Indian Army)

2) Lieutenant Commander Sunnay Sharma (Indian Navy)

3) Wing Commander S Mahajan (Indian Air Force)

4) Both 1 & 2

5) All 1, 2 & 3

Answer- 5) All 1, 2 & 3

Explanation:

On 14th December 2023, **All 3 Indian Armed Forces officers**, who underwent the Command & Staff course No 17 at the Defense Services Command & Staff College (**DSCSC**) in Sapugaskanda, **Sri Lanka**, were honoured with the “**Golden Owl**” for outstanding performance.

- Ranil Wickremesinghe, President and the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of Sri Lanka presented the awards during the Graduation ceremony of DSCSC Course No.17 at Nelum Pokuna Mahinda Rajapaksa Theatre in Sri Lanka.
- He also presented the Commandant’s Honours and Golden Pen award during the event.

i. The 3 Indian Officers were:

- **Major Rohit** from the **Indian Army**
- **Lieutenant Commander Sunnay Sharma** from the **Indian Navy**
- **Wing Commander S Mahajan** from the **Indian Air Force**

ii. Indian Navy’s Sunnay Sharma also received the ‘Commandant’s Honours’ during the ceremony.

iii. The Golden Pen Award was presented to the student officer who produces the best commandant’s research paper from the three wings.

22. Which of the following points is/are ‘correct’ with respect to the 1st edition of Hurun India Top 100 Under 30 List (2023) released in December 2023?

A) Kaivalya Vohra (21) and Aadit Palicha (22) the co-founders of Zepto, a grocery delivery platform, were the youngest entrepreneurs on the 2023 list.

B) Devanshi Kejriwal(27), Co-Founder and Chief Product Officer (CPO) of Skillmatics is the youngest woman entrepreneur on the list.

C) SaaS (software as a service) emerged as the primary contributor to the List, with 19 entrepreneurs.

- 1) Only A
- 2) Only A & B
- 3) Only B & C
- 4) Only A & C
- 5) All A, B & C

Answer- 5) All A, B & C

Explanation:

On 13th December 2023, Mumbai (Maharashtra) based Hurun India launched the inaugural edition of **Hurun India Top 100 Under 30 List (2023)**, which features 100 Indian entrepreneurs of age 30 or younger (sorted by age).

i. Kaivalya Vohra(21) and Aadit Palicha(22) the co-founders of Zepto, a grocery delivery platform, were the youngest entrepreneurs on the 2023 list.

ii. Devanshi Kejriwal(27), Co-Founder and Chief Product Officer (CPO) of Skillmatics is the youngest woman entrepreneur on the list.

iii. SaaS (software as a service) emerged as the primary contributor to the List, with 19 entrepreneurs, followed by Fintech and Edtech, with 11 entities each.

- 8 entries on the list were associated with Space Technology companies.

iv. The list features only 5 women entrepreneurs(including Devanshi Kejriwal). The other 4 are,

- Neetu Yadav(28) founder of Animall
- Vrushali Prasade(29) co-Founder & Chief Technology Officer(CTO) of Pixis

- Sonakshi Nathani (30) Co-founder of Bikayi
- Sai Gole (30) Co-founder of Bharat Agri (formerly known as LeanAgri)

v. The average age of the founders in the list is 28 and 5 entrepreneurs also feature in the Hurun India Rich list.

23. Who has recently (in Dec '23) won Bhutan's National Order of Merit (NOM) Gold Medal for significant contribution to public healthcare services to Bhutan?

- 1) Poonam Khetrapal Singh
- 2) Chandrakant Lahariya
- 3) Soumya Swaminathan
- 4) Rachel Chatterjee
- 5) Susheel Kumar Trivedi

Answer- **1) Poonam Khetrapal Singh**

Explanation:

Bhutan Government honoured Dr **Poonam Khetrapal Singh** (India), Regional Director of the World Health Organisation (WHO) South-East Asia, with the **Bhutan's National Order of Merit (NOM) Gold Medal** for her significant contribution to public healthcare services to Bhutan.

- i. Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, the Druk Gyalpo (dragon king) of Bhutan presented the award during the celebration of 116th National Day of Bhutan (17th December 2023) in Thimphu, Bhutan.
- ii. Retired Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Poonam Khetrapal Singh became the first Indian and the first woman to be elected as the Regional Director of WHO South-East Asia In 2014. She was re-elected to the post for another 5 year term in 2019.
- iii. In February 2013, she joined the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW), Government of India, as Advisor for International Health.

Note:

- As the WHO regional director, she has played a key role in supporting transformative healthcare leadership in Bhutan.
- During her tenure, Bhutan has become one of the first countries to eliminate measles (2017) and rubella (2023) ahead of schedule.

24. Which of the following books has/have recently (in Dec '23) been awarded with the 5th edition of Gaja Capital Business Book Prize 2023?

- 1) Winning Middle India: The Story of India's New-Age Entrepreneurs
- 2) Against All Odds: The IT Story of India
- 3) The Indian Entrepreneur (A Sociological Profile of Businessmen and Their Practices)
- 4) Both 1 & 2
- 5) Both 2 & 3

Answer- **4) Both 1 & 2**

Explanation:

The **5th edition of Gaja Capital Business Book Prize 2023** was jointly awarded to "**Against All Odds: The IT Story of India**" written by S. 'Kris' Gopalakrishnan, N. Dayasindhu, and Krishnan Narayanan; and "**Winning Middle India: The Story of India's New-Age Entrepreneurs**" written by T.N. Hari and Bala Srinivasa.

- i. The books were selected from a shortlist of 5 books, including Capture the Dream: The Many Lives of Captain C.P. Krishnan Nair (by Bachi Karkaria); Essentially Mira: The Extraordinary Journey Behind

Forest Essentials(by Mira Kulkarni); and The Tech Phoenix: Satyam's 100-Day Turnaround(by T.N. Manoharan & V. Pattabhi Ram).

ii. Gaja Capital Business Book Prize 2023 is an annual award established in 2019, which celebrates non-fiction works on contemporary Indian business.

- The award offers prize money of Rs 15 lakhs, the largest book prize in India.

25. Which Indian Navy's training institute has recently (in Dec '23) received the original 'Vir Chakra' Medal of late Vice Admiral(VAdm) Benoy Roy Chowdhury ?

- 1) INS Shivaji
- 2) INS Gomantak
- 3) INS Hansa
- 4) INS Agnibahu
- 5) INS Shikra

Answer- **1) INS Shivaji**

Explanation:

Indian Naval Ship **(INS) Shivaji**, Indian Navy's premier marine engineering training institute, has received the **original 'Vir Chakra' medal**, which was awarded to **Late Vice Admiral(VAdm) Benoy Roy Chowdhury** for his gallant actions during the 1971 India-Pakistan war.

- The Chair of INS Shivaji, VAdm Dinesh Prabhakar, Ati Vishisht Seva Medal (AVSM), Vishisht Seva Medal (VSM) (Retd) received the medal from Pradipta Bose & Gargi Bose, the family members of B R Chowdhury on behalf of the Indian Navy at an event held in Lonavala, Maharashtra.

i. The 'Vir Chakra' is an Indian wartime military bravery award presented for acts of gallantry on the battlefield, on land or in air or at sea.

ii. It is one of the six gallantry awards and the order of precedence of these awards is the Param Vir Chakra, the Ashoka Chakra, the Maha Vir Chakra, the Kirti Chakra, the Vir Chakra and the Shaurya Chakra.

26. Name the Israeli film that has recently (in Dec '23) won the Golden Royal Bengal Tiger Award for Best Film in the International Competition Category at the 29th Kolkata International Film Festival - 2023 (KIFF - 2023).

- 1) Sand Storm
- 2) The Lost Kingdom
- 3) Image Of Victory
- 4) Children of Nobody
- 5) Lebanon

Answer- **4) Children of Nobody**

Explanation:

Israeli film '**Children of Nobody**', written and directed by Erez-Tadmor, won the **Golden Royal Bengal Tiger Award for Best Film** in the international competition category at the **29th Kolkata International Film Festival - 2023 (KIFF - 2023)** held from 5th - 12th December 2023 in Kolkata(West Bengal).

i. Along with the award, 'Children of Nobody'(Yeladim Shel Af Ehad in Hebrew language) was given the prize money of Rs 51 lakh.

ii. Venezuelan director Carlos Daniel Malave was chosen as the Best Director and Rs 21 lakh for “One Way”.

iii. ‘Mon Potongo’, directed by Sarmistha Maiti and Rajdeep Paul, was awarded best film under the Bengali Panorama category

27. Name the personality from India who has been recently (in Dec ‘23) honoured with the 6th Rabindranath Tagore Literary Prize (2023) for the book “Salt & Pepper: Selected Poems.

- 1) Sukrita Paul Kumar
- 2) Arundhathi Subramaniam
- 3) Vikram Seth
- 4) Rukmini Bhaya Nair
- 5) Tishani Doshi

Answer- **1) Sukrita Paul Kumar**

Explanation:

Sukrita Paul Kumar, Indian Poet, critic and Translator, was honoured with the **6th Rabindranath Tagore Literary Prize (2023)** for her book titled “**Salt & Pepper: Selected Poems**” published by Paperwall Publishing.

- The award carries a cash prize of USD 10,000 and a handmade brass statuette of Tagore.

i. Indian-American economist Abhijit Banerjee, the 2018 Nobel Prize laureate (Economics), received the Tagore Prize for Social Achievement 2023. The award includes a custom-crafted brass statuette of Tagore.

- The Award Ceremony was held at the India International Center, IIC, in New Delhi, Delhi.

28. In December 2023, Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) won the 9th edition of the Leif Erikson Awards for its _____ mission.

- 1) Aditya-L1
- 2) Gaganyaan 1
- 3) NISAR
- 4) Chandrayaan-3
- 5) Mars Orbiter

Answer- **4) Chandrayaan-3**

Explanation:

On 19th December 2023, The Exploration Museum in Husavik, Iceland announced the winners of the 9th edition of the Leif Erikson Awards.

- **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)**, the national space agency of India based in Bengaluru, Karnataka won the **2023 Leif Erikson Lunar Prize** for its **Chandrayaan-3 mission**, the 1st spacecraft to softland near Moon’s south pole. [Click Here to read about Chandrayaan-3 Mission](#)
- The award recognises ISRO’s efforts in advancing lunar exploration and contributions to understanding celestial mysteries.

i. Other winners of 9th Leif Erikson Awards(2023):

- Leif Erikson Award 2023 is awarded to former American astronaut Bill Anders (William Alison Anders) for his iconic “Earthrise” photograph taken during the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)’s Apollo 8 mission.

- Leif Erikson Young Explorer Award 2023 is awarded to Kellie Gerardi, an American aerospace professional and science communicator, for her contributions to bioastronautics research and spacesuit evaluation.
- Leif Erikson Exploration History Award 2023 is awarded to Libby Jackson, British space exploration expert and author, for her work in preserving the history of female astronauts and space professionals.

29. Name the personality who has recently (in Dec '23) won the 5th edition of the Miss Continental International Award (2023) pageant held in India.

- 1) Natalee Fernando (Sri Lanka)
- 2) Farzana Yasmin Ananna (Bangladesh)
- 3) Aastha Rawal (India)
- 4) Angelica Lopez (Philippines)
- 5) Tashi Choden Wangdue (Bhutan)

Answer- **3) Aastha Rawal (India)**

Explanation:

Indian Actress **Aastha Rawal** has won the 5th edition of the **Miss Continental International Award (2023) pageant** held in India for the very first time.

- Aastha Rawal was also honoured with the titles of “Best in Interview” and “Best in Swimwear”.
- The competition included participants from Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Bhutan, and other Asian countries.

30. Which of the following points is/are “correct” with respect to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)’s Heritage Awards 2023 announced in December 2023?

- A) The UNESCO’s 2023 Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation, also known as Heritage Awards, were awarded to a total of 12 projects from India(6), China(5), Nepal(1).**
- B) Rambagh Gate and Ramparts in Punjab (India), has won the “Award of Excellence”, the highest honour of UNESCO heritage awards.**
- C) Church of Epiphany in Haryana (India) have won the 2 awards: Special Recognition for Sustainable Development and Award of Distinction.**

- 1) Only A
- 2) Only A & B
- 3) Only B & C
- 4) Only A & C
- 5) All A, B & C

Answer- **2) Only A & B**

Explanation:

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (**UNESCO**)’s **2023** Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation, also known as **Heritage Awards**, were awarded to a total of **12 projects** from **India(6)**, China(5), Nepal(1). [Winners of 2023 UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation.](#)

i. Rambagh Gate and Ramparts in Punjab(India), has won the “**Award of Excellence**”, the highest honour of UNESCO heritage awards.

ii. Karnikara Mandapam, Kunnamangalam Bhagawati Temple, Kerala, India have won the **2 awards**. It was recognised with **Special Recognition for Sustainable Development** category and **Award of Distinction**.

iii. The awards were announced by UNESCO Regional office in Bangkok, Thailand(UNESCO Bangkok), the Asia-Pacific Regional Bureau for Education as well as a Cluster Office in the Asia-Pacific region of the UNESCO

31. Which Indian airport's Terminal 2 (T2) has recently (in Dec '23) received the "World Special Prize for an Interior 2023" from UNESCO's (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) Prix Versailles under the category of Airports?

- 1) Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport
- 2) Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport
- 3) Kempegowda International Airport
- 4) Indira Gandhi International Airport
- 5) Chennai International Airport

Answer- 3) Kempegowda International Airport

Explanation:

India's **Kempegowda International Airport's** (KIA) Terminal 2 (T2) in Bengaluru, Karnataka received the "World Special Prize for an Interior 2023" from UNESCO's (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) Prix Versailles under the category of Airports.

- The award recognizes creativity, innovativeness, ecological efficiency, and the reflection of local heritage.
- As per Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL), it is the only Indian airport to receive such global recognition.
- The KIA Terminal 2 is designed by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM), with civil construction by Larsen & Toubro (L&T).

i. Other two Prix Versailles (Airports) Awards and Winners:

- Prix Versailles Award- It was won by Shenzhen Bao'an International Airport, Satellite Concourse, Shenzhen, China.
- Special prize for an Exterior- It was won by Newark Liberty International Airport, Terminal A, Newark, New Jersey, United States (US).

32. Which of the following points is/are 'Incorrect' with respect to the National Sports Awards 2023 announced by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MYAS) ?

- 1) Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award 2023 will be given to the Badminton duo Chirag Chandrashekar Shetty and Rankireddy Satwik Sai Raj.
- 2) Arjuna Awards for outstanding performance in Sports and Games 2023 was awarded to 26 personalities including Mohammed Shami (Cricket), R Vaishali (Chess).
- 3) Jaskirat Singh Grewal (Golf), Bhaskaran E (Kabaddi) and Jayanta Kumar Pushilal (Table Tennis) has been chosen for Lifetime Category and won the Dronacharya Award for outstanding coaches in Sports and Games 2023
- 4) 3 personalities have been chosen for Dhyan Chand Award for Lifetime achievement in Sports and Games 2023 including Manjusha Kanwar (Badminton).
- 5) Lovely Professional University, Punjab won the Overall winner university in the Maulana Abul Kalam Azad (MAKA) Trophy for the record 26th time.

Answer- 5) Lovely Professional University, Punjab won the Overall winner university in the Maulana Abul Kalam Azad (MAKA) Trophy for the record 26th time.

Explanation:

Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (**MYAS**) announced the **National Sports Awards 2023** which will be conferred on **42 sportspersons**, coaches and entities under 5 categories on 9th January 2024 by the President of India, Droupadi Murmu at Rashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi, Delhi.

- The awards were recommended by the selection committee headed by Justice A. M. Khanwilkar, (Retd. Judge, Supreme Court of India) and consisting of members including eminent sportspersons, persons having experience in sports journalism and sports administrators.
- **Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award 2023** will be given to the Badminton duo Chirag Chandrashekhkar Shetty and Rankireddy Satwik Sai Raj.
- Arjuna Awards for outstanding performance in Sports and Games 2023 was awarded to 26 personalities including Mohammed Shami (Cricket), R Vaishali (Chess).
- Jaskirat Singh Grewal (Golf), Bhaskaran E (Kabaddi) and Jayanta Kumar Pushilal (Table Tennis) has been chosen for Lifetime Category and won the Dronacharya Award for outstanding coaches in Sports and Games 2023 and a total (including Jaskirat Singh Grewal, Bhaskaran E and Jayanta Kumar Pushilal) of 8 (5 Regular Category & 3 in Lifetime Category)
- 3 personalities have been chosen for Dhyan Chand Award for Lifetime achievement in Sports and Games 2023 including Manjusha Kanwar (Badminton).
- **Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar (Punjab) won the Overall winner university in the Maulana Abul Kalam Azad (MAKA) Trophy 2023.**
- Guru Nanak Dev University (GNDU) MAKA Trophy 2023 for the record 25th time.

33. Which of the following points is/are “correct” with respect to the 18th edition of the NASSCOM- Data Security Council of India (DSCI) Annual Information Security Summit (AISS) held at Gurugram, Haryana in December 2023?

- A) During the summit, India Cyber Threat Report 2023 was launched which provides insights into cyber threats in India and aims to provide businesses with actionable recommendations.**
- B) During the summit, the 13th edition of the DSCI Excellence Awards (2023) was presented to recognise organisations and individuals for their work in the fields of cybersecurity and privacy.**
- C) Indian Oil Corporation Limited has been conferred with the prestigious DSCI Excellence Awards 2023 under the category of “Best Security Practices in Energy Sector”.**

- 1) Only A
- 2) Only A & B
- 3) Only B & C
- 4) Only A & C
- 5) All A, B & C

Answer- 2) Only A & B

Explanation:

The 18th edition of the NASSCOM- Data Security Council of India (DSCI) Annual Information Security Summit (AISS), a 3-day event, was held from 19th to 21st December 2023 at the Leela Ambience Hotel, Gurugram, Haryana.

- During the summit, the 13th edition of the **DSCI Excellence Awards (2023)** was presented to recognise organisations and individuals for their work in the fields of cybersecurity and privacy.
- The summit was organised by DSCI is a not-for-profit industry body that focuses on data protection in India established by the National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM).
- The event witnessed the launch of Secure in India 2023; India Cyber Threat Report 2023; and India Cybersecurity Domestic Market Report 2023.
- The third edition of the GCC (Global Capability Centers) report, 'Secure in India 2023' was launched during the event.
 - The report was prepared by DSCI, in partnership with KPMG International Limited and NASSCOM to showcase GCC Cyber Security footprint in India.
- During the summit, **India Cyber Threat Report 2023** also launched, provides insights into cyber threats in India and aims to provide businesses with actionable recommendations.
 - The report is a collaboration of Seqrite, the enterprise arm of global cybersecurity solution provider Quick Heal Technologies Limited, and DSCI.
- Axis Bank won the DSCI Excellence Award for Best Security Practices in Organization under the Banking Sector Category.
- **GAIL** has been conferred with the prestigious DSCI Excellence Awards 2023 under the category of "**Best Security Practices in Energy Sector**". [List of Winners of DSCI Excellence Awards 2023.](#)

34. Which of the following points is 'Incorrect' with respect to the winners of the Sahitya Akademi Awards 2023 announced by Sahitya Akademi in December 2023?

- 1) The Sahitya Akademi announced the winners of the Sahitya Akademi Awards 2023, the annual award that recognizes literary works in 24 Indian languages (including English).
- 2) Tamil writer Perumal Murugan has been chosen for the 2023 Sahitya Akademi Awards for his novel Poonachi.
- 3) Telugu writer Patanjali Sastry has been chosen for the 2023 Sahitya Akademi Awards for his Short Stories 'Rameshwaram kaakulu Marikonni Kathalu'.
- 4) Malayalam litterateur E.V. Ramakrishnan has been chosen for the 2023 Sahitya Akademi Awards for his Literary Study 'Malayala Novelinte Deshakalanga'.
- 5) Vijay Verma has been chosen for the 2023 Sahitya Akademi Awards for his Poetry Daun Sadiyan Ek Seer (Ghazal) in Dogri language.

Answer- 2) Tamil writer Perumal Murugan has been chosen for the 2023 Sahitya Akademi Awards for his novel Poonachi

Explanation:

The Sahitya Akademi announced the winners of the **Sahitya Akademi Awards 2023**, the annual award that recognizes literary works in **24 Indian languages** (including English).

- The books were selected based on recommendations made by a Jury of three members in the concerned languages.
- The winners of the Sahitya Akademi Awards 2023 include 9 books of poetry, 6 Novels, 5 short stories, 3 Essays, and 1 Literary Study.

- The winners of the awards are recommended by the jury members in 24 languages and were approved by the executive board of the Sahitya Akademi under the chairmanship of Shri Madhav Kaushik, President, Sahitya Akademi.
- **Tamil writer Rajasekaran (Devibharathi)** has been chosen for the **2023 Sahitya Akademi Awards** for his **novel Neervazhi Padoom**.
- Telugu writer Patanjali Sastry has been chosen for the 2023 Sahitya Akademi Awards for his Short Stories 'Rameshwaram kaakulu Marikonni Kathalu'.
- Malayalam litterateur E.V. Ramakrishnan has been chosen for the 2023 Sahitya Akademi Awards for his Literary Study 'Malayala Novelinte Deshakalangaal'.
- Vijay Verma has been chosen for the 2023 Sahitya Akademi Awards for his Poetry Daun Sadiyan Ek Seer (Ghazal) in Dogri language. [List of Winner of Sahitya Akademi Awards 2023](#)

SUMMITS, CONFERENCES

1. Which of the following points is "Incorrect" with respect to the 28th edition of Conference of Parties (COP) of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) hosted by the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in December 2023?

- 1) Narendra Modi, Prime Minister (PM) of India, attended the COP 28 Presidency's session on "Transforming Climate Finance" in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates (UAE).
- 2) PM Modi along with Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al-Nahayan (President of UAE), co-hosted the event on the "Green Credits Programme" at COP28 in Dubai (UAE).
- 3) PM Narendra Modi launched the LeadIT2.0 initiative to provide the co-development and transfer of low-carbon technology.
- 4) Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA), a Mini Ratna Category I Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) under the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) has launched its retail division.
- 5) ReNew Energy Global Plc (ReNew) signed an MoU with the World Bank worth USD 5.3 billion for investing in projects that help mitigate climate change.

Answer- 5) ReNew Energy Global Plc (ReNew) signed an MoU with the World Bank worth USD 5.3 billion for investing in projects that help mitigate climate change.

Explanation:

The 28th [Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change \(UNFCCC\) \(COP 28\)](#) was held in Expo City, Dubai, The United Arab Emirates (UAE) from 30th November to 12th December 2023.

- On 1st December 2023, **Narendra Modi**, Prime Minister (PM) of India, attended the COP 28 Presidency's session on "**Transforming Climate Finance**" in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates **(UAE)**.
- On 1st December 2023, PM Modi along with Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al-Nahayan (**President of UAE**), **co-hosted** the event on the "Green Credits Programme" at COP28 in Dubai (UAE).
- PM Narendra Modi launched the LeadIT2.0 initiative at COP28 which was held in Dubai (UAE). The main focus of the initiative is on inclusive and just industry transition.
- It aims to provide the co-development and transfer of low-carbon technology while providing financial assistance to emerging economies.

- During his address at the COP28 meeting, PM Modi proposed to host the 33rd edition of COP(COP33) in India. He was accompanied by COP28 President Sultan Al-Jaber and UN Climate Change Executive Secretary Simon Steill.
- Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency(IREDA), a Mini Ratna Category I Public Sector Undertaking(PSU) under the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy(MNRE) has launched its retail division.
- **ReNew Energy Global Plc (ReNew)**, a leading decarbonisation solution company, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **Asian Development Bank(ADB)** worth USD 5.3 billion for investing in projects that help mitigate climate change.
- Multilateral Development Banks(MDBs) came together at the COP28 climate summit in Dubai(UAE) to unlock over USD180 billion in climate finance.
- On the sidelines of COP28, ADB launched a Nature Solutions Finance hub for Asia and the Pacific, with an investment of USD 2 billion. It will provide investment to projects that have nature-based solutions.

ACQUISITION AND MERGERS

1. In November 2023, the Competition Commission of India (CCI) approved the proposed acquisition by Atlas 2022 Holdings Limited to increase its voting rights/shareholding in Vodafone Group Plc (Vodafone) from _____ to less than 25%.

- 1) 20.4%
- 2) 11.2%
- 3) 14.6%
- 4) 15.9%
- 5) 12.5%

Answer- **3) 14.6%**

Explanation:

The Competition Commission of India (**CCI**) approves the proposed acquisition by **Atlas 2022 Holdings Limited** to increase its voting rights/shareholding in Vodafone Group Plc (Vodafone) from **14.6%** to less than 25% through a series of on-market and/or off-market transactions.

- Atlas 2022 Holdings Limited (Atlas), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Emirates Telecommunications Group Company PJSC (e&), plays a pivotal role in acquiring and holding e&'s significant 14.6% interest in Vodafone.

i. CCI approved the acquisition of shareholding of Delanord Investments Limited (Delanord) by Abu Dhabi Ports Company PJSC (Abu Dhabi Ports Company).

2. In November 2023, the SBI Mutual Fund (SBI MF) received approval from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for acquiring aggregate holding of up to 9.99% of the paid-up share capital of _____ (Bank).

- 1) South Indian Bank
- 2) Karur Vysya Bank
- 3) Axis Bank
- 4) IDFC FIRST Bank
- 5) RBL Bank

Answer- 2) Karur Vysya Bank

Explanation:

The SBI Mutual Fund (**SBI MF**) received approval from the Reserve Bank of India (**RBI**) for acquiring aggregate holding of up to **9.99%** of the paid-up share capital or voting rights of **Karur Vysya Bank Ltd (KVB)**.

- i.** SBI MF has received regulatory approval, pursuant to Regulation 30 of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)(Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015.
- ii.** The approval has been granted in accordance with the application submitted by SBI MF to the RBI.
 - As per the approval, SBI MF must acquire major shareholding within 1 year from the RBI's letter. Failure to do so will result in the automatic cancellation of the approval.

3. In December 2023, State Bank of India's (SBI) shareholding in Jio Payments Bank Limited reduced to _____ in Financial Year 2022-23 (FY23).

- 1) 18%
- 2) 20%
- 3) 23%
- 4) 33%
- 5) 29%

Answer- 3) 23%

Explanation:

State Bank of India's (SBI) shareholding in Jio Payments Bank Limited reduced to **23%** in Financial Year 2022-23 (**FY23**) from 30% that SBI maintained since the inception of Jio Payments Bank.

- i.** With shareholding less than 25%, SBI will not be able to restrict special resolutions in the payment bank.
- ii.** SBI has stayed away from two Jio Payments Bank rights issues while Reliance Industries Limited(RIL), has picked up 10 million shares on 29 November 2023, and 70 million on 23 January 2023.

4. In December 2023, State Bank of India (SBI) is set to acquire an additional _____ stake in SBI Pension Funds Private Limited (SBIPFPL) for a cash consideration of Rs. 229.52 crore.

- 1) 10%
- 2) 40%
- 3) 20%
- 4) 50%
- 5) 30%

Answer- 3) 20%

Explanation:

The Executive Committee of the Central Board (**ECCB**) of State Bank of India (**SBI**) has approved **SBI** to acquire an **additional 20% stake** in SBI Pension Funds Private Limited (**SBIPFPL**) for a cash consideration of **Rs. 229.52 crore**.

- These stakes are currently held by SBI Capital Markets Limited (SBICAPS), a wholly-owned subsidiary of SBI.
- i.** After the acquisition, SBI will own 80% of the stake in SBIPFPL whereas the remaining 20% of the stake will be owned by SBI Funds Management Limited. The acquisition will be completed by 15th December 2023.

ii. The acquisition is based on the valuation report of Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu India Limited Liability Partnership (LLP).

Note- SBI Funds Management Limited is a joint venture of SBI (62.53%) and Amundi (36.73%), a French asset management company.

5. In November 2023, the government of India proposed to sell _____ stake in Ircon International Limited (IRCON) through an offer for sale (OFS).

- 1) 20%
- 2) 8%
- 3) 10%
- 4) 15%
- 5) 5%

Answer- **2) 8%**

Explanation:

The **government of India** has proposed to sell **8% stake** in Ircon International Limited (**IRCON**), a Navratna Central Public Sector Unit (CPSU) under the Ministry of Railways (MoR), through an offer for sale (**OFS**).

i. As of September 2023, the government holds 73.18% stake in IRCON.

ii. Initially, the government will sell 3.76 crore shares at Rs.2 per share (representing a 4% stake) through the OFS and the additional 4% will be sold if the offer is oversubscribed.

iii. Details of IRCON OFS:

- The offer will take place on a separate window of the stock exchanges under the T+1 period.
- The offer will take place on December 7, 2023 (T Day) and continue till the next day (8th December 2023).
- OFS is open for Non-retail investors on 07th December 2023 (T day).
- The retail investors can participate in the OFS on 08th December 2023 (T+1).

6. Name the company that has recently (in Dec '23) acquired the Sanghi Industries Limited (SIL) at an enterprise value of Rs 5,185 crore.

- 1) JK Cement Limited
- 2) UltraTech Cement Limited
- 3) JSW Cement Limited
- 4) Ambuja Cements Limited
- 5) Ramco Cements Limited

Answer- **4) Ambuja Cements Limited**

Explanation:

Adani Group-owned Ambuja Cements Limited (**ACL**) completed the acquisition of Gujarat-based Sanghi Industries Limited (**SIL**) at an enterprise value of **Rs 5,185 crore** by holding a controlling **stake of 54.51%**.

- The acquisition will be fully funded through internal accruals.
- The deal will boost Ambuja Cements' capacity to 74.6 million tonnes per annum (MTPA) from 68.5 MTPA.
- ACL bought about 141 million shares of SIL. Each share is priced at Rs. 121.9 by the Promoters.
- Whereas, 7.3 million shares of SIL were bought through off-market trade.

7. In December 2023, the enemy property shares worth Rs _____ were sold by the Government of India as part of its initiative to dispose of the enemy properties in India.

- 1) 4290 crore
- 2) 2458 crore
- 3) 3298 crore
- 4) 1094 crore
- 5) 2709 crore

Answer- **5) 2709 crore**

Explanation:

The **enemy property** shares worth **Rs 2709 crore** were sold by the **Government of India** as part of its initiative to dispose of the enemy properties in India.

i. The enemy properties are the assets left behind by people who have taken citizenship of Pakistan and China, mostly between 1947 and 1962.

ii. In September 2023, 19 enemy properties in Uttar Pradesh were disposed of by way of sale through e-auction.

iii. As of December 2023, a total of 12,611 enemy properties (12,485 were related to Pakistanis and 126 to Chinese) were vested with the Custodian of Enemy Property for India (CEPI), a statutory authority under the provisions of the Enemy Property Act (1968).

8. In December 2023, Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) reduced its shareholding in HDFC Asset Management Company (AMC) Limited from 9.046% to _____ (%) of the paid-up capital.

- 1) 7.817%
- 2) 5.116%
- 3) 8.025%
- 4) 6.953%
- 5) 4.141%

Answer- **4) 6.953%**

Explanation:

Mumbai (Maharashtra) based Life Insurance Corporation of India (**LIC**) has reduced its shareholding in HDFC Asset Management Company (**AMC**) Limited from 9.046% to **6.953%** of the paid-up capital.

i. LIC's shareholding in HDFC AMC has reduced from 1,93,11,744 to 1,48,44,466 Equity Shares.

ii. LIC sold the additional shares of HDFC AMC through Open Market Transaction.

9. In December 2023, the Competition Commission of India (CCI) gave its approval to acquire the stakes in _____ (Insurance Company) by Temasek-controlled entity and Motilal Oswal 4(MO) Alternate Investment Advisors Private Limited.

- 1) Niva Bupa Health Insurance
- 2) Aditya Birla Health Insurance
- 3) HDFC ERGO General Insurance
- 4) Star Health and Allied Insurance
- 5) Max Life Insurance

Answer- **1) Niva Bupa Health Insurance**

Explanation:

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has given its approval to acquire the stakes in **Niva Bupa Health Insurance Company Limited** by a Temasek-controlled entity and Motilal Oswal(MO) Alternate Investment Advisors Private Limited.

- i. In October 2023, Niva Bupa Health Insurance company opened the windows for new investors to invest Rs.800 crore in the firm for a minority stake.
- ii. Following this, investors like Motilal Oswal Private Equity, Temasek and Paragon Partners Growth Fund II invested in Niva Bupa.
- iii. This investment is subjected to regulatory approval.

10. Name the Mutual Fund company that has recently (in Dec '23) acquired 1.5% of paid-up equity share capital in Karur Vysya Bank (KVB) Limited through open market transactions.

- 1) HDFC Mutual Fund
- 2) Edelweiss Mutual Fund
- 3) Axis Mutual Funds
- 4) SBI Mutual Funds
- 5) ICICI Prudential Mutual Fund

Answer- **4) SBI Mutual Funds**

Explanation:

SBI Mutual Fund (MF) has acquired **1.5%** of paid-up equity share capital in **Karur Vysya Bank (KVB)** Limited through open market transactions.

- i. SBI Mutual Fund (MF) purchased a total of 1.2 crore shares of KVB for Rs 194.4 crore with the average price per share being Rs 162.
- ii. In November 2023, the Reserve Bank of India(RBI) granted its approval to SBI MF to acquire an aggregate holding of up to 9.99% in KVB.

11. In December 2023, Bain Capital sold 1.08% stake in _____ (Bank) for Rs 3737 crore in a block trade.

- 1) IndusInd Bank
- 2) Axis Bank
- 3) HDFC Bank
- 4) ICICI Bank
- 5) YES Bank

Answer- **2) Axis Bank**

Explanation:

Bain Capital, an American Private Equity (PE) firm, has sold **1.08% stake** or 33.38 million shares worth **Rs 3737 crore** in **Axis Bank** in a block trade.

- The shares were sold by 3 affiliate firms of Bain Capital: BC Asia Investments VII, BC Asia Investments III and Integral Investments South Asia IV at Rs 1119.7 apiece.
- i. This was the 2nd sell down of Axis bank by Bain in 2023. Previously, in June 2023, Bain had sold 0.73% stake for Rs 2178 crore at Rs 968 per share.
 - ii. In November 2017, Bain had bought a stake worth Rs 6,854 crore in Axis Bank and has sold shares in several tranches since then.

12. Which company has recently (in Dec '23) received the Competition Commission of India (CCI) approval for the acquisition of sole control over Constantia Flexibles Holding GmbH (Constantia)?

- 1) Manjushree Technopack
- 2) Bemis Limited
- 3) Aluflexpack Limited
- 4) Uflex GmbH
- 5) Capripack BidCo GmbH

Answer- 5) Capripack BidCo GmbH

Explanation:

On December 12, 2023, the Competition Commission of India (CCI) approved the acquisition of sole control over Constantia Flexibles Holding GmbH (Constantia) by Capripack BidCo GmbH (Capripak).

- The sole control will be acquired by the acquisition of 100% of Constantia's shareholding and voting rights from Constantia Lux S.à r.l.
- Capripack is an acquisition vehicle owned by investment funds managed and advised by One Rock Capital Partners, LLC (ORC), a private equity firm based in New York, United States of America(USA).
- Constantia, headquartered in Austria, is a wholly owned subsidiary of Constantia Lux S.à r.l. It is indirectly controlled by funds managed or advised by Wendel SE, a French investment company.

13. Which company has recently (in Dec '23) acquired 49% of paid-up equity share capital in Pirimid Fintech by investing Rs 25 crore?

- 1) Cashfree Payments India Private Limited
- 2) Razorpay Software Private Limited
- 3) BharatPe Limited
- 4) Infibeam Avenues Limited
- 5) Paytm Private Limited

Answer- 4) Infibeam Avenues Limited

Explanation:

Infibeam Avenues Limited (IAL), a Gandhinagar (Gujarat) based Financial Technology Company, has acquired 49% of paid-up equity share capital in Pirimid Fintech, a Ahmedabad (Gujarat) based Financial Services company, by investing Rs 25 crore.

i. This is in response to the increasing demand in the global capital markets for artificial intelligence (AI)-backed software to streamline trading, research and investment processes.

ii. The collaboration aims to combine Infibeam's digital payments and AI-based frameworks with Pirimid Fintech's capital market trading software.

14. In December 2023, Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) reduced its percentage of the paid-up capital in Dixon Technologies (India) Limited to _____ from 5.012% through open market operations.

- 1) 2.23%
- 2) 3.65%
- 3) 4.3%

4) 4.92%

5) 3%

Answer- 5) 3%

Explanation:

Headquartered in Mumbai (Maharashtra), Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) has reduced its percentage of the paid-up capital in Dixon Technologies (India) Limited to 3% from 5.012% through open market operations.

i. This decrease of 2.012% during the period from 20th April 2022 to 15th December 2023, is a result of decreasing equity shares from 29,97,913 to 17,94,395 at an average cost of Rs 5,877.65.

15. Which bank has recently (in Dec '23) sold its entire 2.86% of paid-up share capital in Nippon Life India Asset Management Limited (NAM-INDIA) for Rs 795.27 crore?

1) HDFC Bank

2) IndusInd Bank

3) Axis Bank

4) ICICI Bank

5) YES Bank

Answer- 2) IndusInd Bank

Explanation:

IndusInd Bank Limited has sold its entire 2.86% of paid-up share capital in **Nippon Life India Asset Management Limited** (NAM-INDIA) (Formerly Reliance Life Asset Management Limited) for **Rs 795.27 crore** through open market transactions.

- IndusInd Bank exits NAM-India by offloading 1,78,57,355 shares at an average price of Rs 445.35 per share.

i. SBI Funds Management Limited, ICICI Prudential Asset Management Company Limited, Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance Company Limited, Société Générale S.A. and Morgan Stanley Asia (Singapore) Pte were among the buyers.

16. Which of the following points is/are "correct" with respect to the Competition Commission of India (CCI) approval on 19th December 2023?

A) CCI approved the proposal to acquire certain business undertakings of Ind Swift Laboratories Limited (ISLL) and Essix Biosciences Limited (Essix) by Synthimed Labs Private Limited (Synthimed).

B) CCI approved the proposal related to the acquisition of majority shareholding of Glenmark Life Sciences Limited (GLS) by Nirma Limited.

C) CCI approved the amalgamation of Dhani Services Limited (Dhani/DSL) and Indiabulls Enterprises Limited (IEL) into and with Yaari Digital Integrated Services Limited.

1) Only A

2) Only A & B

3) Only B & C

4) Only A & C

5) All A, B & C

Answer- 5) All A, B & C

Explanation:

On 19th December 2023, the Competition Commission of India (CCI) approved the following:

- i. CCI approved the proposal to acquire certain business undertakings of Ind Swift Laboratories Limited (**ISLL**) and Essix Biosciences Limited (**Essix**) by Synthimed Labs Private Limited(**Synthimed**).
- ii. CCI approved the proposal related to the acquisition of majority shareholding of Glenmark Life Sciences Limited (**GLS**) by **Nirma Limited** through the purchase of shares from the GLS's promoter and purchase of shares from the public shareholders under an open offer as per the Securities and Exchange Board of India(SEBI) (Substantial Acquisition of Shares and Takeovers) Regulations, 2011.
- iii. CCI approved the scheme of arrangement involving a list of organisations, the details of the proposed combination are as follows:
- **Amalgamation** of Dhani Services Limited (**Dhani/DSL**) and Indiabulls Enterprises Limited (**IEL**) into and with Yaari Digital Integrated Services Limited
 - [Amalgamation of the following companies](#) into Yaari Digital and Amalgamation of Juventus Estate Limited with and into Yaari Digital,
 - .Demerger of the Real Estate Business Undertaking of India Land Hotels Mumbai Private Limited into Indiabulls Pharmicare Limited and discharge of consideration thereof by way of issuance of shares by Yaari Digital, in the capacity of the holding company of Indiabulls Pharmicare.

17. Which of the following cruise missiles has/have recently (in Dec' 23) added to Iran navy's arsenal?

- 1) Talaeieh
- 2) Nasir
- 3) Meshkat
- 4) Only 1 & 2
- 5) Only 2 & 3

Answer- **4) Only 1 & 2**

Explanation:

Iran's navy has added the "**Talaeieh**" and the "**Nasir**", the domestically produced cruise missiles to its arsenal. The missiles are stationed at a naval base near the Indian Ocean in the southern Iranian port of Konarak.

i.The Talaeieh has a range of over **1,000 kilometres** and can change targets while traveling.

ii.The Nasir has a range of **100 kilometres** and can be installed on warships.

iii.The missiles were designed by Iran's military sector.

18.Which state's tourism board has recently (in Dec '23) completed the first gyrocopter trial flight and is set to launch India's first Himalayan Air Safari scheme using gyrocopter?

- 1) Bihar
- 2) Uttarakhand
- 3) Himachal Pradesh
- 4) Uttar Pradesh
- 5) Sikkim

Answer-**2) Uttarakhand**

Explanation:

Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board (**UTDB**) in partnership with Rajas Aerosports and Adventures Private Limited has completed the first gyrocopter trial flight at Bairagi Camp in Haridwar, Uttarakhand.

- i. These state-of-the-art gyrocopters are procured from German company '**AutoGyro**' and it will be operated by trained German pilots.
- ii. The scheme is part of the '**Breakfast Tourism**' initiative of UTDB.
- iii. The lesser-known picturesque locations in Uttarakhand can be explored through this scheme.

19. Which of the following points is/are "correct" with respect to the recent approval made by the Competition Commission of India (CCI) in December 2023?

- A) The CCI has approved the acquisition of controlling stakes in Tata Capital Limited by IndusInd International Holdings Limited (IIHL), IIHL BFSI (India) Limited (IIHL BFSI), and Aasia Enterprises LLP (Aasia).**
- B) CCI approved the acquisition of a 9.99 % equity stake in Dilip Buildcon Limited (DBL) by Alpha Alternatives Holdings Pvt Ltd (AAHPL) and its other entities.**
- C) CCI has approved the proposal made by PCBL Limited to acquire 100% paid-up share capital in Pune-based Aquapharm Chemicals Private Limited (ACPL).**

- 1) All A, B & C
- 2) Only A & B
- 3) Only B & C
- 4) Only A & C
- 5) Only A

Answer- **3) Only B & C**

Explanation:

The Competition Commission of India (**CCI**) has approved the acquisition of controlling stakes in Reliance Capital Limited (**RCL**) by IndusInd International Holdings Limited (**IIHL**), IIHL BFSI (India) Limited (**IIHL BFSI**), and Aasia Enterprises LLP (**Aasia**).

- At present, RCL is going through insolvency resolution proceedings initiated under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC).
 - Post transaction, IIFL along with other entities, will have a controlling stake in RCL.
- i. CCI approved the acquisition of a 9.99 % equity stake in Dilip Buildcon Limited (DBL) by Alpha Alternatives Holdings Pvt Ltd (AAHPL) and its other entities.**
 - ii. The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has approved the proposal made by Kolkata (West Bengal) based PCBL Limited (formerly known as Phillips Carbon Black Limited) to acquire 100% paid-up share capital in Pune-based Aquapharm Chemicals Private Limited (ACPL).**
 - The deal is worth Rs 3,800 crore and was approved under the Green Channel route.

20. Which of the following Subsidiaries of ICICI Bank has recently (in Dec '23) received Reserve Bank of India (RBI) approval to acquire aggregate holding of up to 9.95% stake in RBL Bank Limited, IDFC FIRST Bank Limited, Equitas Small Finance Bank (SFB), Federal Bank, and IndusInd Bank Limited?

- 1) ICICI Prudential Life Insurance Company Limited
- 2) ICICI Prudential Asset Management Company Limited
- 3) ICICI Prudential Trust Limited

4) Both 1 & 2

5) Both 1 & 3

Answer- **4) Both 1 & 2**

Explanation:

The Reserve Bank of India (**RBI**) has given its approval to ICICI Prudential Asset Management Company Limited (**I-Pru AMC**) and ICICI Prudential Life Insurance Company Limited (**I-Pru Life**) to acquire aggregate holding of up to **9.95%** of the paid-up share capital or voting rights in RBL Bank Limited, IDFC FIRST Bank Limited, Equitas Small Finance Bank (SFB), Federal Bank, and IndusInd Bank Limited.

- The companies must complete the acquisition within 1 year, by December 26, 2024. The approval will be cancelled if the companies fail to acquire the stake within the mentioned year.
- The approval has been granted concerning an application submitted by I-Pru AMC and I-Pru Life to RBI.
- I-Pru AMC and I-Pru Life hold 2.08% of the equity share capital of RBL Bank Limited as of December 22, 2023.
- The approval granted by the RBI is subject to compliance with the relevant provisions of the Banking Regulation Act of 1949.

Note- The aggregate holding should not exceed 9.95% of the paid-up share capital or voting rights of the banks at all times.

- If the aggregate holding falls below 5%, prior approval from the RBI is required to increase it to 5% or more of the share capital or voting rights of the banks.

21. In December 2023, Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) reduced its shareholding in Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) from 11.701% to _____ through open market operation(OMO).

1) 10.785%

2) 9.617%

3) 7.367%

4) 8.438%

5) 6.980%

Answer- **2) 9.617%**

Explanation:

Life Insurance Corporation of India (**LIC**) **reduced** its shareholding in Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (**BHEL**) from 11.701% to **9.617%** through open market operation (**OMO**).

- LIC sold its BHEL shares at an average price of Rs 79.58 through secondary market between June 2019 and December 2023.
- LIC's shareholding decreased from 40,74,40,614 to 33,48,62,025 Equity Shares.

DEFENCE

1. Which company has recently (in Dec '23) signed a Rs 588.68 crore contract with the Ministry of Defence (MoD) to acquire the Digital Coast Guard (DCG) project under the Buy (Indian) category?

- 1) THDC India Limited
- 2) Telecommunications Consultants India Limited
- 3) Indian Telephone Industries Limited
- 4) RailTel Corporation of India Ltd
- 5) Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited

Answer- 2) Telecommunications Consultants India Limited

Explanation:

The Ministry of Defence (**MoD**) has signed a contract worth **Rs. 588.68 crore** with Telecommunications Consultants India Limited (**TCIL**), Ministry of Communications (MoC), to acquire the Digital Coast Guard (**DCG**) project under the Buy (Indian) category.

- This contract in line with Government of India's strategic vision for Digital Armed Forces will contribute to the efforts to achieve 'Atmanirbharta' in defence.
- i. The Digital Coast Guard (DCG) project is a pivotal initiative of the Indian Coast Guard (ICG).
 - ii. The project includes the establishment of a Disaster Recovery Data Center; amplification of connectivity across ICG sites and the development of the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system.

2. The _____ Edition of Joint Military Exercise 'VINBAX-2023' between India and Vietnam began at Hanoi, Vietnam in December 2023.

- 1) 7th
- 2) 4th
- 3) 5th
- 4) 6th
- 5) 2nd

Answer- 2) 4th

Explanation:

VINBAX-2023, the **4th** edition of Joint Military Exercise is being held between **India and Vietnam** in Hanoi, Vietnam from 11th to 21st December 2023.

- Aim: To foster collaborative partnership, inter-operability and share best practices between India and Vietnam under Chapter VII of United Nations (UN) Charter on Peacekeeping Operations.
- i. The Indian contingent is represented by 45 personnel including 39 personnel from the Engineer Regiment of the Bengal Engineer Group, and 6 personnel from the Army Medical Corps.
 - ii. The Vietnam People's Army contingent is also represented by 45 personnel.

3. In December 2023, the Ministry of Defence approved the purchase of 70,000 more semi-automatic assault rifles from _____(country) based Sig Sauer Inc. for the Indian Army at a cost of Rs 800 crore.

- 1) Israel
- 2) Indonesia

- 3) France
- 4) Russia
- 5) United States of America

Answer- **5) United States of America**

Explanation:

The Indian Ministry of Defence (**MoD**) has approved the purchase of **70,000 semi-automatic assault rifles** for the Indian Army (**IA**) at a cost of **Rs 800 crore**, during a high-level MoD meeting. They will be bought from the **United States of America (USA)** based **Sig Sauer Inc.**

- The rifles will be used in counter terrorism operations and other duties at borders.
- i.** India has been using Sig Sauer rifles since 2019 when it bought 72,400 SiG 716 rifles of 7.62 x 51mm caliber viz. 66,400 for IA, 4,000 for the Indian Air Force (IAF) and 2,000 for the Indian Navy (IN),.
 - ii.** The rifles are being purchased to boost the capabilities of soldiers stationed along the borders with China and Pakistan.
 - iii.** Weighs 3.82 kg without the magazine, it has an effective kill range of 600 meters. It is more accurate than the INSAS (Indian Small Arms System) because it has a higher caliber.

4. Which of the following points is/are “correct” with respect to the Exercise Astrashakti-2023, as of December 2023?

- A) Exercise Astrashakti-2023, took place at the Air Force Station Suryalanka in Odisha.**
- B) During the Exercise, the Indian Air Force (IAF) showcased the abilities of the Akash weapon system (AWS), which is a Short Range Surface to Air Missile (SRSAM) Air Defence System, neutralising four targets simultaneously in a single firing unit.**
- C) IAF successfully test-fired the SAMAR air defence missile system for the first time which engaged aerial threats with a speed range of 2 to 2.5 Mach, during the Exercise.**

- 1) Only A
- 2) Only A & B
- 3) Only B & C
- 4) Only A & C
- 5) All A, B & C

Answer- **3) Only B & C**

Explanation:

Exercise Astrashakti-2023, took place at the Air Force Station Suryalanka in **Andhra Pradesh (AP)**. During this the Indian Air Force (IAF) showcased the abilities of Akash weapon system (**AWS**), and also successfully test fired Surface to Air Missile for Assured Retaliation (**SAMAR**) air defence missile system.

- During the exercise, AWS, which is a Short Range Surface to Air Missile (**SRSAM**) Air Defence System, neutralized four targets simultaneously in a single firing unit.
 - With this demonstration, **India** became the **first** to engage four targets simultaneously at extended ranges using a single firing unit with command guidance.
 - Development: It is indigenously **designed and developed** by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (**DRDO**), and has been improved from time to time
- i.** During the exercise, IAF successfully test-fired the SAMAR air defence missile system for the first time which engaged aerial threats with a speed range of 2 to 2.5 Mach.
 - ii.** Development: SAMAR is developed using refurbished Russian-origin Vympel R-73E and R-27ET1 air to air missiles infrared guided Air-to-Air Missiles (AAMs). It is jointly developed by IAF's 7 Base

Repair Depot (BRD), Delhi and 11 BRD, Nashik, Maharashtra in association with Indian private-sector companies Simran Flowtech Industries and Yamazuki Denki.

5. In December 2023, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) signed a contract worth Rs. _____ with Mazagon Dockyard Shipbuilders Limited for the procurement of six Next Generation Offshore Patrol Vessels (NGOPVS) for the Indian Coast Guard (ICG).

- 1) 2794.34 crore
- 2) 1614.89 crore
- 3) 3898.12 crore
- 4) 2989.34 crore
- 5) 4892.90 crore

Answer- **2) 1614.89 crore**

Explanation:

On 20th December 2023, the **Ministry of Defence (MoD)** signed a contract worth **Rs.1614.89 crore** with **Mazagon Dockyard Shipbuilders Limited** (MDL – functioning under MoD) for the procurement of six Next Generation Offshore Patrol Vessels (**NGOPVS**) for the Indian Coast Guard (**ICG**).

i. About the Contract:

- The contract was made under the Buy (Indian-Indigenously Designed, Developed and Manufactured (IDDM)) category.
 - The NGOPVS are designed, developed and manufactured by MDL Mumbai, Maharashtra.
- The six multi-role state-of-the-art vessels will be delivered in sixty-six months (5.5 years) to ICG.
- Four of these vessels would replace the existing ageing OPVs and the remaining two would augment the ICG fleet.

6. Which company has recently (in Dec '23) entered a contract worth Rs 488.25 crore with the Ministry of Defence (MoD) for the repair and maintenance of equipment and systems onboard naval vessels?

- 1) Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers
- 2) Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited
- 3) Hindustan Shipyard Limited
- 4) Goa Shipyard Limited
- 5) Cochin Shipyard Limited

Answer- **5) Cochin Shipyard Limited**

Explanation:

The Ministry of Defence (**MoD**) entered into a contract with **Cochin Shipyard Limited** (CSL) worth **Rs 488.25 crore** for the **repair and maintenance** of equipment and systems onboard naval vessels.

- CSL is a Miniratna Company under the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW).

i. About the Contract:

- The work on the contract was commenced during the second quarter (Q2) of the financial year 2023-24(FY24)
- The contract is expected to be completed by Q1 of FY25.
- The contract is based on the Approval of Necessity (AoN) from MoD.

7. In December 2023, the Indian Navy (IN) inducted the Missile Cum Ammunition (MCA) Barge, LSAM 10 (Yard 78), the _____ Barge of the MCA Barge project in Mumbai, Maharashtra for the Naval Armament Depot (NAD), Karanja, Mumbai.

- 1) 6th
- 2) 4th
- 3) 2nd
- 4) 5th
- 5) 3rd

Answer- 2) 4th

Explanation:

On 28 December 2023, The Indian Navy (IN) inducted the Missile Cum Ammunition (MCA) Barge, LSAM 10 (Yard 78), the 4th Barge of the 08 x MCA Barge project at Naval Dockyards in Mumbai, Maharashtra for the Naval Armament Depot (NAD), Karanja, Mumbai.

- The induction Ceremony was presided over by Cmde MV Raj Krishna, CoY(Mbi).
- The barge was built by the SECON Engineering Projects Pvt Ltd (SEPPL), Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh for the IN.

i. The Barges are indigenously designed and built by the classification Naval Rules and Regulations of the Indian Register of Shipping (IRS).

ii. The model testing of the Barge during the design stage was conducted at the Naval Science and Technological Laboratory (NSTL), Visakhapatnam.

Note: The 1st Barge of series LSAM 7 (Yard 75) was delivered to IN on 18th July 2023.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

1. Which company has recently (in Nov '23) received the second type certificate for medium category drones from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA)?

- 1) Garuda Aerospace Private Limited
- 2) Paras Defence and Space Technologies Limited
- 3) Dhaksha Unmanned Systems Private Limited
- 4) Thanos Technologies Private Limited
- 5) TechEagle Private Limited

Answer- 1) Garuda Aerospace Private Limited

Explanation:

Chennai (Tamil Nadu) based **Garuda Aerospace Private Limited** has secured the **second type certificate** for **medium category** drones from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA).

i. The certification showcases Garuda Aerospace's dedication to pioneering advancements in Unmanned Aerial Vehicle(UAV) technology.

ii. The DGCA Type Certification is issued under the provision of Rule 8 and Rule 9 (3) of the Drone Rules 2021.

2. Name the company that has recently (in Nov '23) launched the three Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Crafts (ASW SWC) project: Indian Naval Ship (INS) Mahe, INS Malvan, and INS Mangrol at its Kochi Yard in Kerala for the Indian Navy (IN).

- 1) Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers
- 2) Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited
- 3) Hindustan Shipyard Limited
- 4) Goa Shipyard Limited
- 5) Cochin Shipyard Limited

Answer- 5) Cochin Shipyard Limited

Explanation:

Cochin Shipyard Limited (**CSL**) launched the first three ships of the **8** Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Crafts (**ASW SWC**) project namely Indian Naval Ship (**INS**) **Mahe**, **INS Malvan**, and **INS Mangrol** at its Kochi Yard in **Kerala** for the Indian Navy (**IN**).

i. They are 78 meters (m) long, 11.36m wide, and have a draught of about 2.7m, displacement about 896 tons, and can reach a maximum speed of 25 knots and endurance of 1800 nautical miles.

ii. They are equipped with indigenously developed SONARS (Sound Navigation and Ranging) for underwater surveillance.

iii. The **3rd** Ammunition Cum Torpedo Cum Missile (**ACTCM**) **Barge**, LSAM 17 (Yard 127) has been delivered to IN in the presence of Shankar Mukharjee, INAS (Indian Naval Armament Service), AGM Naval Armament Depot (NAD), Karanja in Mumbai, Maharashtra. This Barge's all major and auxiliary equipment/systems sourced from indigenous manufacturers.

3. Which company has recently (in Nov '23) partnered with Satellogic Inc to develop local space technology capabilities in India?

- 1) Mahindra Aerospace Limited
- 2) Tata Advanced Systems Limited
- 3) Hindustan Aeronautics Limited
- 4) Lockheed Martin Corporation
- 5) Larsen & Toubro Limited

Answer- 2) Tata Advanced Systems Limited

Explanation:

Tata Advanced Systems Limited (**TASL**), a leading aerospace and defence solutions provider, has announced a partnership with **Satellogic Inc.**, a sub-meter resolution Earth Observation(EO) Data collection company, to develop local space technology capabilities in India.

i. This collaboration is a first step in TASL's satellite strategy. Both TASL and Satellogic will collaborate to develop a new satellite design along with developing imagery in India for national defense and commercial applications.

ii. For this, TASL is commissioning a Satellites' Assembly, Integration and Test (AIT) in Karnataka.

4. In December 2023, Union Minister of Railways, Ashwini Vaishnaw announced that the Indian Railways is set to install an Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based surveillance system, named _____ to reduce elephant deaths on railway tracks.

- 1) Gaj Yatra
- 2) Haathi AI
- 3) Gajraj System

- 4) Gajraj MIKE
- 5) Janvar System

Answer- **3) Gajraj System**

Explanation:

Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, **Ministry of Railways**, announced that the Indian Railways will install '**Gajraj System**', an Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based surveillance system, covering 700-kilometer (km) track across India to **reduce elephant deaths on railway tracks**.

- i. 700 km of rail network across Assam, West Bengal, Odisha, Kerala, Jharkhand, Chattisgarh, and Tamil Nadu will be covered under this system.
- ii. The implementation of this system will cost around Rs 181 Crore.
- iii. The Gajraj System' was developed by the Railways in collaboration with several startups. This technology was tested on a 150-kilometer stretch of Assam in 2022. Based on the field experience, improvements were made in the system exhibiting a 99.5% accuracy in detecting elephants on tracks.

5. Name the Autonomous Bodies of Department of Health and Family Welfare that has recently (in Dec '23) launched the revamped version of the DIGI-PHARMed application, a cloud-based application to provide end-to-end services to Pharmacy institutions/Pharmacists.

- 1) National Institute of Biologicals
- 2) Pharmacy Council of India
- 3) Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission
- 4) Medical Council Of india, New Delhi
- 5) National Institute of Health & Family Welfare

Answer- **2) Pharmacy Council of India**

Explanation:

Pharmacy Council of India (PCI) launched the revamped version of the **DIGI-PHARMed application**, a cloud-based application to provide end-to-end services to Pharmacy institutions/Pharmacist/Pharmacy student/Pharmacist jobseeker.

- i. Dr. Montu Kumar M Patel, President of PCI inaugurated the revamped DIGI-PHARMed application.
- ii. The Objective of DIGI-PHARMed application to ensure that educational standards are implemented uniformly across India.

6. Name the first Survey Vessel (Large) (SVL) ships that has recently (in Dec '23) delivered to the Indian Navy(IN) by Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE).

- 1) INS Nireekshak
- 2) INS Makar
- 3) INS Darshak
- 4) INS Nirupak
- 5) INS Sandhayak

Answer- **5) INS Sandhayak**

Explanation:

Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (**GRSE**), Kolkata (West Bengal) has delivered Indian Naval Ship (**INS Sandhayak (Yard 3025)**), the **first** of four Survey Vessel (Large) (**SVL**) ships to the Indian Navy(**IN**) on 4th December 2023. Sandhayak has an indigenous content of over 80% by cost.

- The contract for building four SVL ships was signed between the Ministry of Defense (MoD) and GRSE on 30 October 2018.

- The Keel for the ship was laid in 2019 and the ship was launched in 2021. After the launch, the ship has undergone a comprehensive schedule of trials in harbour and at sea.
- SVL ships are 110 meter long, 16 meter wide with a displacement of 3,400 tons and it was developed DMR 249-A steel manufactured by Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL).
- The ship is powered by two Diesel Engines and it can achieve speeds upto 18 knots.

Note- Other three Survey Vessel (Large) (SVL) are Nirdeshak (Yard 3026), Ikshak (Yard 3027) and Sanshodhak (Yard 3028)

7. In December 2023, China National Space Agency (CNSA) launched the MisrSat-2 or Aiji Yaogan Weixing Erhao (Aiji 2) satellite with a Long March-2C carrier rocket.

Which space agency, along with CNSA has developed the MisrSat-2?

- 1) Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency
- 2) National Aeronautics and Space Administration
- 3) Egyptian Space Agency
- 4) Italian Space Agency
- 5) Canadian Space Agency

Answer- 3) Egyptian Space Agency

Explanation:

On 4th December 2023, China National Space Agency (**CNSA**) launched the **MisrSat-2** or Aiji Yaogan Weixing Erhao (**Aiji 2**) satellite with a Long March-2C carrier rocket from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in northwest China.

i. MisrSat-2, the optical remote sensing satellite, was jointly developed by the **Egyptian Space Agency** (EgSA) and CNSA.

- The satellite, weighing 350 kg, features an high-resolution imager with a ground resolution of 2 metres in panchromatic mode and 8 metres in colour. The lifetime of the satellite is 5 years.
- The development of MisrSat-2 is a landmark project between China and Egypt under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

ii. Along with the MisrSat-2, two remote sensing satellites namely Starpool (Xingchi-1) 02-A and Starpool(Xingchi -1) 02-B, developed by Chinese startup EllipSpace, were also launched by the same rocket.

iii. These satellites will provide wide-area comprehensive perception services, laying a solid foundation for the construction of the “StarPool Plan” integrated communication, navigation and remote sensing system.

8. Which country inaugurated the world’s largest and most advanced nuclear fusion reactor in December 2023?

- 1) France
- 2) Japan
- 3) China
- 4) United States of America
- 5) Russia

Answer- 2) Japan

Explanation:

The **world's largest and most advanced** nuclear fusion reactor, Japan Torus-60 Super Advanced (**JT-60SA**) started its operations in Naka, **Japan**. The reactor is a joint initiative between the European Union (EU) and Japan.

i. JT-60SA reactor is a six-storey-high machine which is constructed as per Broader Approach (BA) Agreement.

- The agreement was signed between the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom) and Japan in 2007. The Satellite Tokamak Programme (STP) involved the construction of the JT-60SA reactor.
- It comprises a doughnut-shaped "tokamak" (toroidal chamber with magnetic coils) vessel set to contain swirling plasma heated up to 200 million degrees Celsius.
- It uses powerful superconducting coils cooled to approximately -269°C (absolute temperature approximately 4K) to confine plasma that can reach 100 million $^{\circ}\text{C}$.

9. In December 2023, _____, became the first Indian citizen (woman) to operate the rover (Perseverance) on Mars with National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

- 1) Nandini Harinath
- 2) Vanitha Muthayya
- 3) Ritu Karidhal Srivastava
- 4) Akshata Krishnamurthy
- 5) Minal Rohit

Answer- **4) Akshata Krishnamurthy**

Explanation:

Indian Researcher Dr **Akshata Krishnamurthy** has become the first Indian citizen (woman) to operate the rover (Perseverance) on **Mars** and also the **first Indian citizen** to collect samples from Mars to bring back to Earth.

i. She is currently working as a Principal investigator and mission science Phase lead at National Aeronautics and Space Administration(NASA).

10. In December 2023, Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre (IN-SPACE) unveiled a seed fund scheme to offer financial assistance of up to Rs _____ each for Startups using space technology.

- 1) 1 crore
- 2) 10 Lakh
- 3) 20 Lakh
- 4) 2 crore
- 5) 30 Lakh

Answer- **1) 1 crore**

Explanation:

India's space regulator Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre (**IN-SPACE**) has unveiled a **seed fund scheme** to offer financial assistance of up to **Rs 1 crore** each to **start-ups** operating in the areas of Urban Development and Disaster Management by using space technology.

i. The scheme was launched in collaboration with the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)'s National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC) to provide opportunities to companies that leverage space technology for societal benefit.

ii. Aim: To promote space technology and provide mentorship support, training, and networking opportunities.

11. Which of the following points is/are “correct” with respect to the Propulsion Module (PM) of Chandrayaan-3, as of December 2023?

A) The Propulsion Module (PM) of Chandrayaan-3 by the Indian Space Research Organisation’s (ISRO) retreats from an orbit around the moon to an orbit around Earth.

B) ISRO performed three maneuvers, including the first orbit-raising maneuver (from 150 km to 5112 km), the second maneuver moved PM to Earth orbit of 1.8 lakhs x 3.8 lakhs km, and the final Trans-Earth Injection (TEI) maneuver.

C) The orbit period (time taken to revolve around Earth) of PM is nearly 13 days with a 27-degree inclination.

1) Only A

2) Only A & B

3) Only B & C

4) Only A & C

5) All A, B & C

Answer- **5) All A, B & C**

Explanation:

The Propulsion Module (**PM**) of **Chandrayaan-3** by the Indian Space Research Organisation’s (**ISRO**) retreats from an orbit around the **moon** to an orbit **around Earth**.

- On 14th July 2023, ISRO successfully launched Chandrayaan-3 into orbit onboard the Launch Vehicle Mark-3 Mission 4 (LVM3 M4) rocket from SDSC SHAR (Satish Dhawan Space Centre-Sriharikota Range), Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh (AP) to Soft-land on the moon’s south pole.
- The propulsion module separated the lander on 17th August 2023 and the lander successfully Soft-landed on the moon’s south pole on 23rd August 2023.

i. ISRO performed **three maneuvers**, including the first orbit-raising maneuver (from 150 km to 5112 km), the second maneuver moved PM to Earth orbit of 1.8 lakhs x 3.8 lakhs km, and the final Trans-Earth Injection (TEI) maneuver.

ii. In the **post-TEI maneuver**, the propulsion module made four moon fly-by (gravity assist maneuvers) before departing the Moon’s sphere of influence (SOI).

iii. The **orbit period** (time taken to revolve around Earth) of PM is nearly 13 days with a 27-degree inclination.

iv. ISRO is set to launch **India’s first X-ray polarimeter satellite (XPoSat)** to investigate the polarisation of intense astronomical X-ray sources.

- It has two payloads, including the POLIX (Polarimeter Instrument in X-rays) and the XSPECT (X-ray Spectroscopy and Timing).
- XPoSat is set to be launched by the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) from the Satish Dhawan Space Center in Sriharikota in December 2023. The mission life is expected to be approximately 5 years.

12. Name the company that has recently (in Dec ‘23) launched the largest and most capable multimodal Artificial intelligence (AI) model called ‘Gemini’.

1) Lenovo Group

2) Microsoft

- 3) Google
- 4) IBM
- 5) Samsung

Answer- **3) Google**

Explanation:

Google launched its largest and most **capable multimodal** Artificial intelligence **(AI) model**, 'Gemini', which comes in three sizes: Gemini Ultra, Gemini Pro, and Gemini Nano.

Variants of Gemini:

- **Gemini Ultra:** The largest and most capable model for highly complex tasks and it is the first model to outperform human experts on MMLU (massive multitask language understanding) with a score of 90.0%.
- **Gemini Pro:** The best model for scaling across a wide range of tasks
- **Google Bard** integrated with Gemini Pro for more advanced reasoning, planning, and understanding.
- **Gemini Nano:** The most efficient model for on-device tasks It is expected to launch Bard Advanced with Gemini Ultra in early 2024.

13. China and _____ have recently (in Dec' 23) signed two cooperation documents in space exploration to boost deep space exploration, spacecraft development and construction of space infrastructure.

- 1) Egypt
- 2) Pakistan
- 3) Nepal
- 4) Qatar
- 5) Saudi Arabia

Answer- **1) Egypt**

Explanation:

China and **Egypt** have signed two cooperation documents in space exploration to boost deep space exploration, spacecraft development and construction of space infrastructure. The 2 documents were,

- A memorandum of understanding (**MoU**) between the government of China and Egypt on space cooperation and peaceful use of outer space.
- A cooperation agreement between the China National Space Administration (CNSA) and the Egyptian Space Agency (EGSA) on the International Lunar Research Station (ILRS).

14. In December 2023, Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) under which Ministry launched the web portal for the National Awards for e-Governance (NAeG) 2024?

- 1) Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions
- 2) Ministry of Corporate Affairs
- 3) Ministry of Finance
- 4) Ministry of Home Affairs
- 5) Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises

Answer- **1) Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions**

Explanation:

On 8th December 2023, the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) under the **Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions** launched the web portal for the National Awards for e-Governance (**NAeG**) 2024.

- i. NAeG Awards is one of the most competitive and prestigious digital governance awards schemes in India. This aims to encourage innovations in successful e-Governance solutions.
- ii. The award aims to recognize and promote excellence in implementation of e-Governance initiatives.

15. Which aerospace company/ space agency has recently (in Dec '23) launched the Zhuque-2 Yao-3, the world's first liquid oxygen-methane powered launch vehicle, carrying 3 satellites into space?

- 1) Roscosmos (Russia)
- 2) JAXA (Japan)
- 3) Boeing Company (United States of America)
- 4) LandSpace (China)
- 5) SpaceX (United States)

Answer- **4) LandSpace (China)**

Explanation:

On 9th December 2023, China-based private space technology firm, LandSpace Technology Corporation, successfully launched the Zhuque-2 Yao-3, the world's first liquid oxygen-methane powered launch vehicle, carrying 3 satellites, from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center, Inner Mongolia region, China.

- With this, LandSpace became the World's first company to launch satellites using a rocket fueled by Methane and liquid oxygen.
 - The **3 satellites**: Honghu satellite, Tianyi 33 satellite and Honghu-2 satellite, were launched into the predetermined orbit.
- i. China-based Beijing Interstellar Glory Space Technology Ltd., also known as iSpace, has launched "Hyperbola-2Y", fuelled by methane-liquid oxygen, from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center, China.
 - With this, **iSpace** completed China's first reusable launch vehicle test.
 - ii. iSpace announced the launch of the first flight of the 13.4-metric-ton to low Earth orbit (LEO) Hyperbola-3 rocket in 2025. A demonstration of reuse will follow in 2026.

16. Which of the following nuclear-powered submarines were recently (in Dec '23) unveiled by Russia in Archangelsk region?

- 1) Leningrad
- 2) Krasnoyarsk
- 3) Emperor Alexander III
- 4) Both 1 & 2
- 5) Both 2 & 3

Answer- **5) Both 2 & 3**

Explanation:

Russian President Vladimir Putin unveiled 2 newly built nuclear-powered submarines namely the "**Krasnoyarsk**" and "**Emperor Alexander III**," at the Sevmash shipyard in Severodvinsk in Russia's northwestern Archangelsk region. The 2 vessels will join the Russian Navy's Pacific fleet and will start patrolling the Pacific.

- He also visited the Admiral Kasatonov frigate, one of the most advanced ships in Russia's Northern Fleet. This vessel is equipped with new Zircon hypersonic cruise missiles.
- The President also took part in a flag-hoisting ceremony in Severodvinsk on the White Sea where the 2 new nuclear-powered submarines were built over the past 6 years.

i. Krasnoyarsk is a nuclear-powered submarine of the new Yasen (Ash Tree) class of multi-purpose submarines equipped with long-range, high-precision missiles.

ii. The Emperor Alexander III is the 7th Borei (Arctic Wind)-class atomic-powered submarine to enter service. The Borei is the first new generation of undersea vessels Russia has launched since the Cold War.

17. Name the company that has recently (in Dec '23) unveiled a compact delivery drone, L07 for healthcare and e-commerce industries.

- 1) Thanos Technologies Pvt. Ltd
- 2) Throttle Aerospace Systems Pvt. Ltd
- 3) Paras Aerospace Pvt. Ltd
- 4) Daksha Unmanned Systems Pvt. Ltd
- 5) UrbanMatrix Technologies Pvt. Ltd

Answer- 2) Throttle Aerospace Systems Pvt. Ltd

Explanation:

Throttle Aerospace Systems Private Limited (TAS), a subsidiary of RattanIndia Enterprises Limited has unveiled a compact delivery drone, **L07** under TAS L-series.

- L07 drone finds its application in the healthcare and e-commerce industries with a reliable and efficient delivery solution.

About L07:

i. L07 is a vertical take-off and landing (VTOL) drone designed to meet the specific requirements of scenarios.

ii. This indigenous drone has a carrying capacity of up to 7 kg, and can be deployed single-handedly in less than 5 minutes.

iii. The drone can fly up to 2,000 metres above Mean Sea Level (MSL).

18. Which company has recently (in Dec '23) launched India's first Sodium (Na)-Ion battery technology?

- 1) Zensar Technologies
- 2) Exide Industries
- 3) Cyient Technologies
- 4) KPIT Technologies
- 5) Amara Raja Batteries

Answer- 4) KPIT Technologies

Explanation:

KPIT Technologies unveiled **India's first Sodium (Na)-Ion battery technology** which was developed in collaboration with the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (**IISER**), **Pune, Maharashtra.**

- KPIT is the first company in India and the fourth in the world to possess a proven technology solution for sodium-ion battery storage.

- i. The technology can reduce the cost of an Electric Vehicle(EV) battery by 25-30% as compared to current lithium-ion batteries.
- ii. Sodium-ion batteries are considered alternatives to lithium-ion batteries, leveraging the abundance and lower cost of sodium. Lithium availability is limited to only a few countries like China, Bolivia, etc.

19. In December 2023, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) approved the Rs. _____ proposal to purchase about 6,400 rockets for Pinaka Multi-Barrel Rocket Launcher (MBRL) systems.

- 1) 2,800 crore
- 2) 1,200 crore
- 3) 3,200 crore
- 4) 2,100 crore
- 5) 1,900 crore

Answer- **1) 2,800 crore**

Explanation:

The Ministry of Defence (**MoD**) has approved the **Rs 2,800 crore** proposal to purchase about **6,400 rockets** for **Pinaka** Multi-Barrel Rocket Launcher (**MBRL**) systems, for boosting the Indian Army's capabilities.

- MoD's Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) approved the proposal for the acquisition of 2 variants of these rockets, known as Area Denial Munition Type 2 and Type-3.
- The Indian Army will only purchase the rockets from domestic suppliers and the 2 main contenders are Munitions India Limited and Economic Explosives Limited of Solar Industries.

i. Named after the bow of the Hindu deity '**Shiva**', the Indian-made Pinaka weapon system was developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) of India.

ii. It stands as a battle-proven, all-weather artillery weapon system, strategically designed for indirect area fire.

- The Pinaka system is one of the first few military technologies to be exported from India to foreign countries like Armenia.

20. Name the Indian Naval Ship (INS) that has recently (in Dec '23) commissioned by the Indian Navy (IN) at the Naval Dockyard in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh(AP).

- 1) INS Shishumar
- 2) INS Magar
- 3) INS Tarmugli
- 4) INS Vishal
- 5) INS Ranvijay

Answer- **3) INS Tarmugli**

Explanation:

On December 14, 2023, The Indian Navy (**IN**) commissioned the Fast Attack Craft, **Indian Naval Ship (INS) Tarmugli** at the Naval Dockyard in **Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh(AP)**. VAdm Sandeep Naithani, Chief of Materiel was the Chief Guest for the commissioning ceremony.

- The ship has served under the flags of 2 nations (India and Maldives) and bearing 3 names (INS Tillanchang; MCGS Huravee and INS Tarmugli) during its commendable service. 3
- The vessel was built by Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers, Kolkata, West Bengal in 2001.

i. It was commissioned in the Indian Navy as INS Tillanchang, a Trinkat Class ship, and served till 2006. It was gifted to Maldives National Defence Force (MNDF) as a part of diplomatic outreach in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).

21. In December 2023, India's fastest solar-electric boat, Barracuda was launched in _____(state).

- 1) Tamil Nadu
- 2) Gujarat
- 3) Odisha
- 4) Kerala
- 5) West Bengal

Answer- **4) Kerala**

Explanation:

India's fastest **solar-electric boat, Barracuda** was launched at the Navgathi Panavally Yard in Alappuzha, **Kerala**. The vessel was jointly developed by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited and Navalt Solar & Electric Boats Private Limited.

About the vessel:

i. Barracuda has twin 50 kilowatt (kW) electric motors, a marine-grade LFP battery, and 6 kW solar power system.

ii. The vessel can be deployed in the rough seas as a workboat to ferry up to 12 passengers and cargo.

iii. The vessel is 14-metre-long and 4.4-metre-wide.

22. Name the country that has recently (in Dec '23) launched a reusable uncrewed spacecraft atop a Long March 2F rocket.

- 1) United States of America
- 2) Japan
- 3) China
- 4) Russia
- 5) France

Answer- **3) China**

Explanation:

China launched a **reusable uncrewed spacecraft** atop a **Long March 2F rocket** from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center, China. The launch marked the third instance of a reusable robotic spacecraft after 2020 and 2022.

i. The spacecraft was developed by the China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation (CASC).

ii. China's reusable spacecraft mission coincides with the United States of America(USA)'s X-37B.

23. Which country has recently (in Dec '23) commenced the operations of the world's first fourth-generation nuclear reactor?

- 1) China
- 2) Japan
- 3) Russia
- 4) United States of America
- 5) Israel

Answer- **1) China**

Explanation:

China has commenced the operations of a **200 megawatt (MW)** High-Temperature, Gas-Cooled Reactor (**HTGCR**) plant which is the **world's first fourth-generation nuclear reactor** in Shandong, China.

- i. The plant was developed jointly by state-run utility Huaneng, Tsinghua University and China National Nuclear Corporation.
- ii. The plant uses a modular design (less than 300MW) which can be constructed off-site.
- iii. China has a goal to produce 10% of electricity from nuclear power by 2035 and 18% by 2060.

24. In December 2023, Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully carried out a flight trial of an indigenous high-speed tailless flying-wing stealth Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) from Chitradurga, Karnataka.

The Flying Wing Technology Demonstrator (FWTD) has been developed for India's secret unmanned combat aerial vehicle (UCAV) programme called _____.

- 1) Lakshya
- 2) Ghatak
- 3) Kapothaka
- 4) Kusha
- 5) Ulka

Answer- **2) Ghatak**

Explanation:

Defence Research and Development Organisation (**DRDO**) has successfully carried out a flight trial of an indigenous high-speed tailless flying-wing stealth Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (**UAV**) from the Aeronautical Test Range, **Chitradurga, Karnataka**.

- The Flying Wing Technology Demonstrator (**FWTD**) has been developed for India's secret unmanned combat aerial vehicle (**UCAV**) programme called '**Ghatak**'.
- i. The UAV is called Autonomous FWTD, was designed and developed by the Aeronautical Development Establishment (ADE), a premier DRDO laboratory located in Bengaluru, Karnataka.
 - ii. DRDO carried out the maiden flight of this aircraft in 2022, followed by six more trials in various developmental configurations using two in-house manufactured prototypes.

25. Which country has recently (in Dec '23) commenced the world's deepest, Deep Underground and Ultra-low Radiation Background Facility for Frontier Physics Experiments (DURF)?

- 1) India
- 2) Japan
- 3) United States of America
- 4) China
- 5) Russia

Answer- **4) China**

Explanation:

China has commenced the operation of a **2,400-metre (7,874 feet)** deep physics laboratory, Deep Underground and Ultra-low Radiation Background Facility for Frontier Physics Experiments (DURF) in Sichuan Province of the People's Republic of China (**PRC**).

- DURF has become the **deepest and largest underground** lab in the **world**.

- i. DURF is the expansion of the second phase of China Jinping Underground Laboratory (CJPL – II) which was jointly developed by Tsinghua University and Yalong River Hydropower Development Company Limited.
- ii. The construction of a 330,000 cubic metres laboratory was started in 2020.
- iii. DURF is located beneath Jinping Mountain in Sichuan’s Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture.

26. Which company has recently (in Dec ‘23) collaborated with France-based Merio to make Advanced Gimbals for the Indian armed forces?

- 1) Srishti Robotics Technologies Private Limited
- 2) Rapyuta Robotics Private Limited
- 3) NAVA Design & Innovation Private Limited
- 4) Precision Automation & Robotics India Private Limited
- 5) HC Robotics Private Limited

Answer- **5) HC Robotics Private Limited**

Explanation:

Hyderabad(Telangana)-based **HC Robotics Private Limited** is set to collaborate with the **France-based Merio**, specialised in UAV(Unmanned Aerial Vehicle) payload systems, to make **Advanced Gimbals** for the **Indian armed forces**.

- i. A high-level delegation led by Remi Plenet, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Merio, met with Sridhar Babu, Minister for Industries and Information Technology, Telangana to explain Merio’s plan to build new technologies in Hyderabad.
- ii. The delegation has met officials of the Defence Ministry, and Air Force Chief, and visited Western Naval Command and Indian Coast Guard, etc focusing on developing advanced gimbals in collaboration with HC Robotics.

27. Which company has recently (in Dec ‘23) launched the Tsukoyomi-1 satellite of Japan based company, Institute for Q-shu Pioneers of Space, Inc. (iQPS Inc.) from the Mahia Peninsula, New Zealand?

- 1) Capella Space
- 2) Rocket Lab Inc
- 3) Firefly Aerospace
- 4) Virgin Galactic
- 5) Relativity Space

Answer- **2) Rocket Lab Inc**

Explanation:

Rocket Lab, Inc. based in California, the United States of America, successfully launched the **“The Moon God Awakens” mission** of the Institute for Q-shu Pioneers of Space, Inc. (**iQPS Inc.**), the Japanese Earth-imaging company, from the Rocket Lab Launch Complex 1, Pad B, on Mahia Peninsula, New Zealand.

- The electron rocket carried the QPS-Synthetic-Aperture Radar (SAR)-5 **satellite, named “Tsukoyomi-1”**, to a circular orbit 575 kilometres(km) above Earth.
- i. QPS-SAR-5 joined the QPS-SAR-6 craft in that orbit to capture high-resolution views of Earth as closely as a 1-meter-square view.
 - ii. The satellite is part of a 36-satellite constellation, aiming to monitor fixed points on Earth every 10 minutes by 2025 or later.

28. Name the company that has recently (in Dec '23) delivered the 250th fuselage for AH-64E Apache Combat helicopters.

- 1) BAE Systems Limited
- 2) Lockheed Martin India Private Limited
- 3) BrahMos Aerospace Limited
- 4) Tata Boeing Aerospace Limited
- 5) Horizon Aerospace Limited

Answer- 4) Tata Boeing Aerospace Limited

Explanation:

Tata Boeing Aerospace Limited (**TBAL**) has delivered the **250th fuselage** for **AH-64E Apache Combat helicopters** which was manufactured at TBAL's state-of-the-art facility in Hyderabad, Telangana.

- The fuselages are the primary body of an aircraft or helicopter and manufactured fuselages are dispatched to Arizona in the United States of America (USA) for final assembly.
- i.** The Apache attack helicopter is regarded as the world's most advanced and deadliest attack helicopter, with over 1,280 AH-64E Apaches in operation worldwide.
- ii.** The helicopter can deliver a variety of weapons, including air-to-ground Hellfire missiles, 70 mm Hydra rockets and air-to-air Stinger missiles.
- iii.** Government of India (**GoI**) inked a contract with **TBAL** in 2020 for procurement of six new Apache helicopters for the Indian Army at a cost of around **USD 800 million**.
- iv.** The first Apache will be delivered in February 2024, whereas the remaining five helicopters are set to be delivered by April 2024.

29. Name the app that has been recently (in Dec '23) launched by the Ministry of Textiles to provide important information about Minimum Support Price (MSP) and agronomy to jute farmers.

- 1) e-Aushadhi
- 2) Samarth
- 3) E-Dhaga
- 4) Paat-Mitro
- 5) PRIASoft

Answer- 4) Paat-Mitro

Explanation:

The Ministry of Textiles(**MoT**) has unveiled the '**Paat-Mitro**' mobile application(**app**) to provide important information about Minimum Support Price (**MSP**) and agronomy to jute farmers.

- The app was developed by Jute Corporation of India Limited (JCI), a central public sector undertaking (CPSU) under MoT.
- The app was launched during the Jute Symposium held in New Delhi, Delhi on 21st December 2023.

Paat-Mitro app:

- i.** The free app, available in 6 languages, provides access to Jute Gradation Parameters, Farmer-centric schemes like 'Improved Cultivation and Advanced Retting Exercise for Jute (Jute - ICARE)', weather forecasts, JCI's Purchase Centers' locations, Procurement Policies.
- ii.** The app comes with features like 'Chatbot' and offers a facility to track the status of their payments made for the raw jute.