

**21 Mar, 2024**

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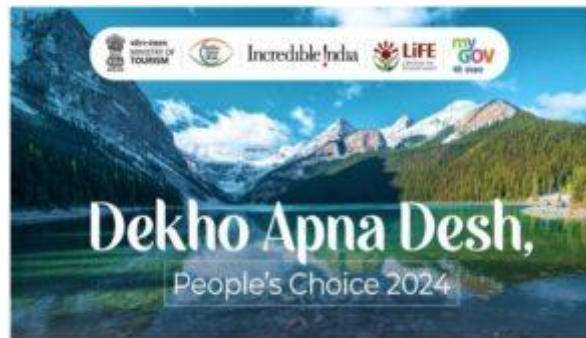


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## NATIONAL NEWS

### PM Modi launches 'Dekho Apna Desh People's Choice Poll 2024

The **Ministry of Tourism** launched the **Dekho Apna Desh People's Choice Poll 2024** to identify the most preferred tourist attractions and destinations of the country. The Poll was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi through Video Conferencing from Srinagar.



- Through this Nationwide poll, the Ministry aims to engage with citizens to identify the most preferred tourist attractions and tourist perceptions across 5 tourism categories – Spiritual, Cultural & Heritage, Nature & Wildlife, Adventure, and any other category.
- The “Dekho Apna Desh People’s Choice 2024” campaign is one of the various initiatives and projects, launched by the Prime Minister for the promotion of domestic tourism. To participate in the campaign, citizens can share their votes at <https://innovateindia.mygov.in/dekho-apna-desh/>. Participants must select at least one attraction they have already visited from any of the five categories and choose at least one attraction that they wish to visit in the future. The voting will be open till **30th April 2024**.

### Centre notifies new CBFC certification rules

The Centre notified the **new Cinematograph (Certification) Rules, 2024**, to improve the process of film certification and enhance transparency, efficiency and ease of doing business for the film industry.



- The ministry of information & broadcasting (MIB) in a statement said that the new rules aim to **streamline and modernise the film certification process** for the digital age, keeping pace with the emerging technologies and advancement in the film sector.

- The new rules will provide greater representation of women in the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) Board & CBFC Advisory Panels, where it is stipulated that one-third of the members in the Board shall be women or preferably half shall be women.

## Union Health Ministry launches National Action Plan for Prevention and Control of Snakebite Envenoming in India – An Initiative to halve the Snakebite deaths by 2030 through ‘One Health’ Approach

**Apurva Chandra**, Union Health Secretary launched a **National Action Plan for Prevention and Control of Snakebite Envenoming (NAP-SE)** in India to reduce snakebite deaths by half by 2030.



- NAPSE provides a broad framework for states to develop their own action plan for management, prevention and control of snakebites through the ‘One Health’ approach. The activities envisaged under human, wildlife, tribal and Animal health component will be undertaken by concerned stakeholders at all levels.
- An array of IEC materials were also launched on the occasion which includes

1. A booklet on ‘Snakebite - Let’s put an end to snakebite deaths’: this booklet will be used for creating awareness in the general community;
2. Posters on Do’s and Don’ts for general community; and
3. A 7-minute video on Snakebite Awareness for General Community.

## Centre forms committee to look into Ayushman Bharat implementation

The **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare** has announced the **formation of an expert committee** to review the implementation of Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (**AB-PMJAY**).



- The 16-member committee, chaired by **Dr. V K Paul**, Member (Health) at NITI Aayog, will oversee the progress of AB-PMJAY in terms of beneficiary identification, hospitalisation, and modes of implementation.

- A key task of the committee is to suggest measures to prevent fraud or misuse of the scheme. Additionally, the committee will discuss ways to provide linkages with Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM) and Ayushman Arogya Mandirs (AAMs).

### ICAR and Krishi Jagran signs a MoU for the dissemination & promotion of ICAR's initiatives for the growth of Indian Agriculture and farmers' welfare

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research and Krishi Jagran Pvt Ltd signed a MoU for the dissemination & promotion of ICAR's initiatives for the growth of Indian Agriculture and farmers' welfare.



- **Dr. U.S. Gautam**, Deputy Director General (Agril. Extension) ICAR and **Shri M.C Dominic**, Founder & Editor-In-Chief, Krishi Jagran Pvt Ltd, signed the MoU for their respective organisations.
- The MoU will help in the Video production of ICAR Success Stories on social media platforms and promote the success stories of ICAR-developed technologies across India. It will also help in generating Video Bytes of senior officials and Writeups in relevant Krishi Jagran magazine editions on ICAR initiatives.

### Indian Navy & IIT Kharagpur joins forces to drive innovation through research partnership

The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kharagpur and the Indian Navy have joined hands to drive innovation through research partnership, according to a statement issued by the institution.



- This collaboration, it said, signified a move towards a symbolic relationship between the academia and the military, "fostering an environment conducive to innovation and knowledge exchange".

- The collaboration focuses on joint research and development initiatives involving teams from Indian Navy and IIT Kharagpur.

## Railway Protection Force and National Commission for Women Unite Against Human Trafficking

In a significant step towards combating human trafficking, the **National Commission for Women (NCW)** signed a Memorandum of Understanding (**MoU**) with the Railway Protection Force (**RPF**) to combat human trafficking across India.



- Through this collaborative effort, both organizations pledged to provide training and sensitize RPF officials to effectively address the problems of women trafficking within the Indian Railway network.
- The initiative comes as a response to the alarming statistics revealing that 70% of trafficked victims are women, highlighting the urgent need for concerted action to protect the most vulnerable in society.

## NHAI Completes Largest InvIT Monetization of Over Rs. 16,000 Crore Through 'Round 3'

**National Highways Infra Trust (NHIT)**, the infrastructure Investment Trust by the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), has **successfully concluded fund-raising through 'InvIT Round-3' for National Highway stretches** of aggregate length of **889 kilometers** at an Enterprise Value of over **Rs. 16,000 crore**, which is the largest monetization by NHAI and one of the largest transactions in the history of Indian road sector.



- In the third round of monetization, NHIT has raised unit capital of around Rs. 7,272 crore from marquee domestic and international investors and debt of around Rs. 9,000 crore from

Indian lenders, to fund the acquisition of National Highway stretches, at a base concession fee of around Rs. 15,625 crore, and additional concessional fees of Rs.75 crore.

- The units were subscribed by investors through a book build process at a cut off price of Rs. 124.14 per unit, at a premium over the current NAV of Rs.122.86 per unit.

### New vehicles in Telangana will now use 'TG' prefix in registration numbers

The central government has **approved** the 'TG' prefix, replacing 'TS' for vehicle registration number plates in Telangana. The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways issued a gazette notification.



- The new prefix on registration plates will be effective immediately, said Telangana Special Representative in New Delhi Mallu Ravi's office.
- The change will be applied to new vehicles and the vehicles with TS number plates will continue. The new vehicles coming on the roads will be sporting registered number plates with the 'TG' prefix in the state.

### Chhattisgarh govt launches input assistance scheme for farmers, transfers Rs 13,320 cr

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai launched 'Krishak Unnati Yojna' to provide input assistance to farmers and released Rs 13,320 crore to 24.72 lakh cultivators. The scheme was launched at a function at Saryu Prasad Agrawal stadium in Balod district.



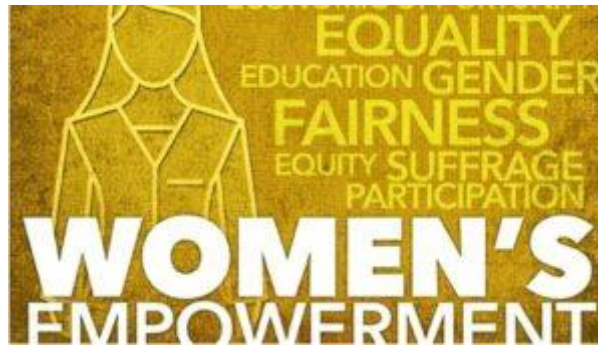
- Of these cultivators, 24.72 lakh sold paddy this year in the kharif marketing season 2023-24 at minimum support price, and they were paid the difference amount of Rs 13,289 crore, the chief minister said.
- Similarly, more than Rs 31 crore was paid to 2,829 farmers producing paddy seeds through the seed corporation, he said.



## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### India ranks 113 out of 190 countries in the World Bank's legal gender gap index

India's ranked improved to 113 out of 190 countries in the **World Bank's Women, Business and Law index**, according to the 10th edition of the report released recently.



- The index measures how laws and regulations affect women's economic opportunity on a scale from 0 to 100, where 100 means equal legal rights for men and women. The report covers eight related areas: Mobility, workplace, pay, marriage, parenthood, entrepreneurship, assets, and pension.
- Globally, none of the countries has a full score in the new index, indicating that women did not enjoy equal rights in any of the countries. **Indian women enjoyed 60% of the legal rights** given to men as per the new report, lower than the global average of 64.2%.

## BANKING & FINANCE

### RBI Imposes Penalties On DCB Bank, Tamilnad Mercantile Bank

The **Reserve Bank of India** it has imposed **penalties on DCB Bank and Tamilnad Mercantile Bank** for non-compliance with certain directions related to 'interest rate on advances'.



- RBI said **Rs 1.31 crore penalty was imposed on TMB** for non-compliance on 'Interest Rate on Advances' and 'Central Repository of Information on Large Credits (CRILC) - Revision in Reporting'.

- Similarly, **DCB Bank was imposed a penalty of Rs 63 lakh** for non-compliance with directions on 'Interest Rate on Advances'. These penalties have been imposed under the provisions of section 47 A of the Banking Regulation Act.

### SBI to shift global back office from Kolkata to Mumbai

In a move towards further centralization, the State Bank of India (SBI) is **planning to shift its global back office operations from Kolkata to Mumbai**, India's financial capital. This decision comes after a previous attempt in March 2007 to relocate these departments faced resistance from SBI staff in Kolkata.



- The back office was set up in 2015 in the City of Joy when Anundhati Bhattacharya was the chairperson of the bank. The back office works 22x7 to cater to customers in Sydney, Bahrain, Hong Kong, London and New York.

### Govt keeps interest rates on small savings schemes unchanged for Q1 FY25

The **Centre** said it would keep the **interest rates on small savings schemes unchanged** for the April-June quarter of the new fiscal. The Finance Ministry on a regular basis reviews the interest rates of small savings schemes on a quarterly basis. This is for the **first time in seven quarters** that rates on these instruments have not been tweaked.



- The rates of interest on various Small Savings Schemes for the first quarter of FY 2024-25 starting from 1st April, 2024 and ending on 30th June, 2024 shall remain unchanged from those notified for the fourth quarter (1st January, 2024 to 31st March, 2024) of FY 2023-24.
- The **PPF rates** were kept unchanged for more than 3 years. It was last tweaked in April-June 2020, when it was slashed to **7.1 per cent** from 7.9 per cent.
- The current rates are:

Savings deposit - 4.0%

One-year time deposit - 6.9%

Two-year time deposit - 7.0%  
Three-year time deposit - 7.1%  
Five-year time deposit - 7.5%  
Five-year recurring deposit - 6.7%  
Senior Citizen Savings Scheme - 8.2%  
Monthly Income Account - 7.4%  
National Savings Certificate - 7.7%  
Public Provident Fund Scheme - 7.1%  
Kisan Vikas Patra - 7.5% (115 months)  
Sukanya Samriddhi Account Scheme - 8.2%

### World Bank nod to \$452m for Assam's rural connectivity

The **World Bank's** board of executive directors has **approved a new programme to help Assam improve connectivity** for over 1.8 million people living in rural areas, especially during extreme weather.



- The **US \$452 million Assam Resilient Rural Bridges Program** aims to strengthen the resilience and management of roads and bridges to help people living in 1,739 villages.
- The programme will support the government of Assam to attract private investment for quality jobs, increase farmers' incomes and enhance value chains thus promoting inclusive and diversified growth in the rural sector.

### YES Bank partners with Indian Olympic Association for Paris Olympics 2024

**YES Bank** announced its partnership with the Indian Olympic Association (**IOA**) as the **Official Banking Partner for Team India** at the **Paris Olympics 2024**.



- As part of the collaboration, the bank launched the campaign '**Milkar Jitayengey**' and introduced the '**YES Glory Debit Card**,' specially designed for India's Olympic athletes.
- The bank also unveiled the 'YES Glory' savings account proposition, extending benefits to athletes and their immediate family members.
- The YES Glory account offers a range of benefits tailored to the needs of champion athletes. These perks include a complimentary Welcome on-board Taj voucher, free orthopedic consultations, and zero cross-currency mark-up on international spends.

### Insurance sector attracted Rs 54,000 crore FDI in last 9 years: DFS Secretary

India's insurance sector has seen a robust foreign direct investment (FDI) in last decade. The total inflow by FDI in insurance sector totaled around **Rs 54,000 crore over past nine years**, according to Financial Services Secretary **Vivek Joshi**.



- The permissible FDI limit for insurance sector was increased from 26% in 2014 to 49% in 2015 and further to **74% in 2021**.
- However, he said, the permissible FDI limit for insurance intermediaries was increased to 100 per cent in 2019.

## BUSINESS & ECONOMY

### Fintech co Perfios becomes India's 2nd unicorn of year 2024

Fintech-focussed software-as-a-service firm **Perfios** said it has **secured \$80 million in funding from Teachers' Venture Growth (TVG)**, a late-stage venture and growth investment arm of Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan.



- With the fresh investment, the company's new valuation **will cross the \$1 billion mark**, said sources, which makes Perfios the second unicorn of 2024. Before it, Bhavish Aggarwal's AI startup Krutrim had attained the coveted status.
- Perfios said it plans to continue its expansion internationally in markets such as South-East Asia, Middle East and Africa. It will also use the recently raised funds towards inorganic growth partnerships or acquisitions.

## SPORTS

### **WPL 2024 final: Royal Challengers Bangalore claim championship with win over Delhi Capitals**

**Royal Challengers Bangalore** broke years of jinx and won its first title across franchise leagues when it **beat Delhi Capitals by eight wickets to claim the second season of the Women's Premier League** at the Arun Jaitley Stadium in New Delhi.



- Chasing the modest 114-run target, RCB were off to a sedate start, scoring just 25 runs in the first six overs. Shikha Pandey provided Delhi the first breakthrough as she trapped Sophie Devine in front of wicket.
- Perry emerged as highest run-getter in WPL 2024, thus winning the orange cap. Perry's teammate, Shreyanka Patil won the purple cap, claiming 13 wickets in 8 matches.

## APPOINTMENTS

### **Exporters body FIEO unanimously elects Ashwani Kumar as new President**

Exporters body **FIEO** said **Ashwani Kumar** has been elected as its new **President**.



- The Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) said that Kumar was elected as president unanimously. He has replaced **A Sakthivel**.

- Besides serving as the Regional Chairman (Northern Region) of the organisation, Kumar has also represented various forums of Jalandhar including its Focal Point Industries Association, Effluent Treatment Society, Management Association, Badminton Association, and Integrated Association of SMEs.

## UK gets its first Black government leader as Vaughan Gething is elected first minister of Wales

Vaughan Gething was elected **first minister of Wales**, becoming the **first Black leader** of a government in the U.K.



- Zambian-born Gething will **replace incumbent Mark Drakeford** who in December announced his departure after five years leading the Welsh government, which has responsibility for a limited number of devolved areas including health and education.
- Gething was elected government leader by members of the Welsh parliament in Cardiff, four days after winning the contest to be leader of Wales' governing Labour Party. He secured 27 of 51 votes in the legislature, the Senedd, where Labour is the biggest party.

## Union Minister Kiren Rijju given additional charge of Ministry of Food Processing Industries

Earth Sciences Minister **Kiren Rijju** took **additional charge** as the **Union Minister of Food Processing Industries**.



- Earlier in the day, President Droupadi Murmu accepted the **resignation** of Union Food Processing Industries Minister **Pashupati Kumar Paras**.
- Paras resigned as he accused the BJP of doing "injustice" with his Rashtriya Lok Janshakti Party (RLJP) by excluding it from the seat-sharing deal with allies for the Lok Sabha polls in Bihar.

# Must Watch

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## AWARDS

### Author Rakhi Kapoor receives The Prestigious Golden Book Award 2024 for her book “Breaking Free Embracing me”

Author **Rakhi Kapoor** wins her **second Golden Book Award** for her twenty-sixth book titled **Breaking Free Embracing Me – healing from childhood abuse and Toxic Conditioning**.



- After winning multiple awards including the Golden Book Award 2023 for her twenty-fifth book *Now You Breathe – Overcoming Toxic Relationships and abuse* Rakhi Kapoor published yet another impactful book and became the two-time recipient of this prestigious award.
- Rakhi Kapoor is also a physiotherapist who pioneered the concept of prenatal counselling in India to enhance maternal and fetal health outcomes. Rakhi has been impacting the lives of thousands of young couples, and new moms, through her antenatal programs for over two decades through her center Dwi Maternity Studio in Chennai.

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

### Tamil Nadu creates history with India’s second privately developed rocket

**Agnikul Cosmos Private Limited**, a space start-up with its headquarters in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, will launch its **first rocket**, the Agnibaan Sub Orbital Technology Demonstrator (**SOrTeD**), from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh.





- This launch is slated to be historic for several reasons. **It will be the first rocket launch from a private launchpad in India**, the first rocket launch powered by a **semi-cryogenic engine**, and the first-ever single-piece 3D-printed engine created and manufactured in the country.
- The first stage of the three-stage Agnibaan rocket is propelled by seven Agniete engines, each of which can produce 25 kN of thrust at sea level. All of these engines are electric pump-fed engines, allowing for simplified engine design and highly configurable engine clustering architectures.
- With a lift-off mass of 14,000 kilograms, the launch vehicle, measuring 18 meters in length and 1.3 meters in width, can transport a maximum payload of 100 kilos to an altitude of 700 kilometers.

### Multi-purpose app SAKHI to assist Gaganyaan Crew

The Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC), the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) facility at Thumba in Thiruvananthapuram, has developed a **multi-purpose app SAKHI** that will help astronauts on the Gaganyaan space flight mission carry out a range of tasks such as looking up vital technical information or communicating with one another.



- The Space-borne Assistant and Knowledge Hub for Crew Interaction (SAKHI) will, among other things, monitor the health of the astronauts, help them stay connected with Earth and even alert them about their dietary schedules.
- SAKHI will keep the crew connected with the onboard computer and ground-based stations, guaranteeing a seamless communication link. The app will also remind them about their hydration and dietary schedules and sleep patterns. ISRO is hoping to launch the Gaganyaan human spaceflight mission in 2025.

### G42 Partnered With Cerebras Systems To Build Supercomputer Condor Galaxy 3

Abu Dhabi's leading technology holding group, **G42**, has partnered with **Cerebras Systems**, a pioneer in accelerating generative AI, to build the **supercomputer Condor Galaxy 3**.



- Condor Galaxy 3 is the third and most powerful cluster in their series of AI supercomputers, solidifying its position as the world leader.
- Condor Galaxy 3 boasts double the processing power of its predecessors, reaching a phenomenal 16 exaFLOPs of AI computing power. This immense power is achieved through 64 of Cerebras' latest CS-3 systems, each featuring the industry's fastest AI chip, the Wafer-Scale Engine 3 WSE-3.

## ENVIRONMENT

### **New genus of parasitoid wasp discovered**

A **new genus and species of parasitoid wasp** has been discovered by a team of researchers at the Zoological Survey of India (**ZSI**), **Kolkata**, a significant find after nearly two decades.



- Named **Indopria**, with 'Indo' representing India and 'pria' from Latin meaning 'little wasp', says P.V. Theertha, a native of Kannur and senior research, fellow at ZSI, Kolkata.
- The species was discovered during India's 75th Independence Day celebrations, hence the inclusion of 'Indo' to signify the country and the species name 'angulata' (Latin) refers to the specialised characteristic of its wings.

### **A new flowering plant found in Arunachal Pradesh is named after a Hyderabad scientist**

A **new colourful flowering plant species**, '**Begonia Narahari**', with a distinctive feature of displaying a vivid blue iridescence in direct light, was discovered in **Mishmi Hills of Arunachal Pradesh's Lohit district** by scientists.



- The plant has a distinctive feature of displaying a vivid blue iridescence in direct light. The plant discovery was also published in reputed international journal 'Phytotaxa' in its latest issue.
- According to reports, Begonia belongs to the family Begoniaceae and comprises about 2,100 species. It is considered as one of the largest and fastest growing genera of flowering plants. It is mainly found in tropical and subtropical regions of the world.
- The plant has been named after a scientist from Hyderabad, **G. Narahari Sastry** in recognition of "his immense contribution to establishing the Germplasm Conservation Centre for the Bioresources at NEIST campus.

## BOOKS & AUTHORS

### **I&B Minister Anurag Thakur releases book titled Israel War Diary written by Vishal Pandey**

Information and Broadcasting Minister **Anurag Singh Thakur** has released a book titled **Israel War Diary** written by **Vishal Pandey** at a function in New Delhi.

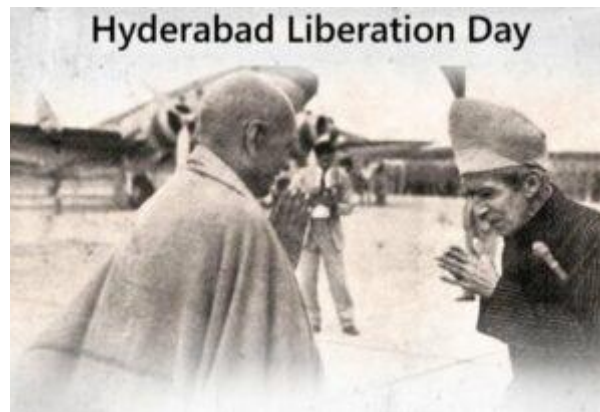


- The book offers deep insights into the Israel-Hamas conflict, shedding light on its geopolitical complexities and ramifications.
- Through meticulous analysis and firsthand reporting, readers gain a comprehensive understanding of the events and factors that shaped this significant conflict.

## IMPORTANT DAYS

### Central government to celebrate September 17 as 'Hyderabad Liberation Day' every year

The Ministry of Home Affairs announced the celebration of 'Hyderabad Liberation Day' every year on **September 17**. The day will be celebrated to remember the martyrs who liberated Hyderabad on this day.



- Even after India's independence on August 15, 1947, Hyderabad did not get independence and continued to remain under the rule of the Nizams for 13 months.
- The city was liberated from Nizam's rule on September 17, 1948, after a police action namely 'Operation Polo'.



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# Must Watch

## BANK EXAMS 2024

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