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# Friends!

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# A Crucial Piece of Advice!

We find several students discussing the issue of lack of time and digging out content regarding how to use every second of your time efficiently. Some of you must be thinking, we have 86400 seconds each day, so why should we worry about just a single one? **Does a single second hold that much importance? YES!** When it comes to competition, each & every second is very crucial.

The first question that might come to your mind is “Is that even possible to use each second of your time effectively?” or “Do I even have that much spare time?” Let's help you by looking over the top time drainers of your daily routine:

- On an average, a person spends 67 minutes per day eating and drinking beverages while watching their favorite TV series.
- Travelling is one of the most overlooked time drainers. CNBC claims that the average commute is a little over 50 minutes per day.
- 44% of people waste tons of time just sitting in the traffic, while others keep scrolling through their feeds.
- Digital Information World suggests that people spend 2 hours and 22 minutes on social media.
- More often unproductive chats on WhatsApp are the major time drainers where you waste your time on without even knowing how much time is spent.

Adding up all these, you spend nearly **4 hours** daily or 1/6th of your day doing a whole lot of **NOTHING!** Over the course of a week that amounts to over **28 hours** of wasted time, and more than **1460 hours** or **52,560,000 seconds** annually!! Scary! Isn't it?

But what if you could effectively utilize this time to validate the knowledge you just gained during your study sessions? How about competing with your friend in a live Current Affairs battle instead of just sitting and listening to the traffic horns? How about dominating the English language leaderboard instead of searching for a filter on Snapchat?

Time and tide wait for none! Team Smartkeeda perceived the importance of time and practice in your test preparation journey. We understood how each second can make a huge difference to your career. Therefore, we were determined to build an application that has the competence to save each second of your preparation time making you 100% productive. We worked diligently for 3-4 years to build an application with the single aim of making each second of your test preparation time, efficient.

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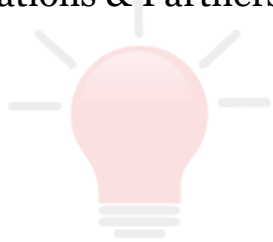
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# National & States Affairs

1. On February 2, PVR Cinemas launched a five-screen property at Chennai International Airport in Chennai, Tamil Nadu. It is the first multiplex in India to be housed within an airport complex. The cinema will serve the entertainment needs for arriving and departing passengers besides benefiting residents in the neighborhood. With this opening, PVR has managed 908 screens at 182 properties in 78 cities in India and Sri Lanka. [{Read more}](#)



## Smart Points:

- PVR Cinemas – launched first multiplex in India to be housed within an airport complex (5 screens)
- Total Screens managed by PVR in India and Sri Lanka – 908

2. On February 2, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, while presenting the Union Budget 2023-24 in the Parliament, announced that the Indian government has proposed to work in a mission mode to eliminate Sickle Cell Anaemia (Anemia) by 2047. The mission will entail awareness creation, universal screening of 7 Crore people in the 0-40 years age group in affected tribal areas and counselling through collaborative efforts of central ministries and state governments. [{Read more}](#)

## Smart Points:

- Indian Govt has proposed to work in a mission mode to eliminate Sickle Cell Anaemia (Anemia) by 2047
- It will entail awareness creation, universal screening of 7 Cr people in the 0-40 years age group in affected tribal areas

3. On February 2, Union Railway minister Ashwini Vaishnaw announced that India's first Hydrogen Train will be designed & manufactured by December 2023. First, it will run on heritage circuits like Kalka-Shimla and later it will be expanded to other places. In the Union Budget 2023-24, the Finance Ministry has allocated Rs 2.41 lakh crore for Railways. Under the 'Amrit Bharat Station' scheme, 1275 stations are being re-developed, whereas the production of Vande Bharat trains will be revamped. [{Read more}](#)



## Smart Points:

- India's first Hydrogen Train will be designed & manufactured by December 2023
- It will first run on heritage circuits like Kalka-Shimla and will be expanded to other places later
- Finance Ministry – allocated Rs 2.41 lakh Cr for Railways in the Union Budget 2023-24
- 1275 stations are being re-developed under the 'Amrit Bharat Station' scheme
- Ministry of Railways: Ashwini Vaishnaw | Constituency – Odisha
- MoS in Ministry of Railways: Danve Raosaheb Dadarao & Darshana Vikram Jardos

4. On February 2, Madhya Pradesh government issued a notification announcing that the name of Bhopal's Islam Nagar village will be changed to Jagdishpur with immediate effect. According to several accounts, the name of Islam Nagar used to be Jagdishpur 308 years ago. [{Read more}](#)

## Smart Points:

- Islam Nagar village – will be renamed as Jagdishpur (located in Bhopal, MP)
- Madhya Pradesh: Capital – Bhopal | CM – Shivraj Singh Chouhan | Governor – Mangubhai Chhaganbhai Patel



**5.** On February 3, Sikkim Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang launched an initiative named “Mero Rukh Mero Santati” (Plant a Tree, Leave a Legacy) under which 100 trees will be planted for every child born in the Himalayan state. It is aimed at strengthening the connect between parents, children and nature by planting trees to commemorate childbirth. This is the first of its kind innovative green initiative in India. [{Read more}](#)

**Smart Points:**

- Sikkim – launched an initiative named “Mero Rukh Mero Santati” (Plant a Tree, Leave a Legacy)
- Under this initiative, 100 trees will be planted for every child born in the state
- [Sikkim: Capital – Gangtok](#) | [CM – Prem Singh Tamang](#) | [Governor – Lakshman Prasad Acharya](#)

**6.** On February 1, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, during her Union Budget speech, announced that the Indian Institute of Millets Research in Hyderabad will be supported as the ‘Centre of Excellence for Sharing Best Practices’, research and technologies at the international level. This comes as India is at the forefront of popularising millets. The Finance Minister also announced that the agriculture credit target will be raised to Rs 20 lakh crore with a focus on animal husbandry, dairy and fisheries. [{Read more}](#)

**Smart Points:**

- Indian Institute of Millets Research (Hyderabad) – will be supported as ‘Centre of Excellence for Sharing Best Practices’
- Finance Minister: Agriculture Credit Target will be raised to Rs 20 lakh crore

**7.** On February 3, Punjab-based Patiala Foundation shared initiatives on road safety, environment conservation at the annual UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Partnership Forum. The ECOSOC meeting highlighted the need for “revitalised partnerships” to recover stronger from the pandemic and achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Patiala Foundation was accorded ECOSOC Special Consultative Status in 2018 and works in the field of protection and regeneration of livelihood, heritage conservation, road safety and environment conservation. Under the iHERITAGE project, Patiala Foundation conducts events and heritage walks among school children and local population as well as visitors to create awareness about the local heritage and culture. Under the environment conservation project ‘Prithvi’, Patiala Foundation distributes dry leaf composters to citizens for managing and recycling garden waste. [{Read more}](#)

**Smart Points:**

- UN ECOSOC meeting – highlighted the need for “revitalised partnerships” to achieve 2030 Agenda for SDGs
- Patiala Foundation – accorded ECOSOC Special Consultative Status in 2018
- It works in the field of protection & regeneration of livelihood, heritage conservation, road safety & environment conservation
- iHERITAGE project – started by Patiala Foundation
- Prithvi – environment conservation project of Patiala Foundation
- [HQs of ECOSOC – New York, US](#) | [President – Lachezara Stoeva](#) | [Established in – 1945](#) | [Members – 53](#)

**8.** An UAE-based firm, DP World, has bagged the tender to develop a Rs 4,243-crore mega container terminal for Deendayal Port Authority at Tuna-Tekra in Gulf of Kutch, Gujarat. Hindustan Ports Pvt Ltd, an Indian arm of DP World bagged the project from the government-owned port authority that operates India’s number one major port. [{Read more}](#)

**Smart Points:**

- DP World – bagged the tender to develop a Rs 4,243-Cr mega container terminal for Deendayal Port Authority, Gujarat
- Hindustan Ports Pvt Ltd – an Indian arm of DP World (UAE)
- [Gujarat: Capital – Gandhinagar](#) | [CM – Bhupendra Patel](#) | [Governor – Acharya Dev Vrat](#)



**9.** On February 3, AZAD Engineering Private Limited, a Hyderabad-based market leader in Precision Engineering, is approved as the first Indian company to supply critical rotating parts for Nuclear Turbines. The first set of critical parts has now been delivered and will be assembled on Nuclear Turbines manufactured in Belfort, France. AZAD have signed a long-term supply agreement with GE Steam Power for supply of Nuclear Turbines parts which opens up a very big opportunity for the company and is a proud moment for the country as well. [{Read more}](#)

**Smart Points:**

- AZAD Engineering (Hyderabad) – approved as 1<sup>st</sup> Indian company to supply critical rotating parts for Nuclear Turbines
- AZAD + GE Steam Power = an agreement for supply of Nuclear Turbines parts

**10.** On February 1, Delhi Commission for Protection of Child Rights (DCPCR) launched 'Bal Mitra', a WhatsApp Chatbot to provide communication support to children and parents in Delhi. Along with a platform to report any matter related to the protection of child rights, this chatbot will also guide people, especially parents, on issues of admissions and education of their children. Some of the chatbot's features include complaint registration, searching information and tracking complaint status, seeking information on admissions along with providing authentic information on various matters related to children and their rights. It will also ensure the confidentiality of the matters reported through it. DCPCR, a statutory body under the Delhi government was constituted under the Commission for Protection of Child Rights (CPCR) Act, 2005. Before this, the DCPCR launched the 'Early Warning System' for schools which helped the education department to bring back over 50,000 students to schools and reduce the dropout rate. [{Read more}](#)

**Smart Points:**

- DCPCR – launched 'Bal Mitra', a WhatsApp Chatbot to provide communication support to children & parents in Delhi
- DCPCR – a statutory body under the Delhi government constituted under CPCR Act, 2005
- Delhi: CM – Arvind Kejriwal | Lt. Governor – Vinai Kumar Saxena | Chief Secretary – Naresh Kumar

**11.** On February 1, two Shaligram (non-anthropomorphic representations of Lord Vishnu in Hindu religion) stones, dispatched from Nepal for the Ram Temple in Ayodhya, reached their destination. The holy stones were welcomed at the Hindu god Lord Ram's birthplace by Priests and locals. Both these stones have been brought from a waterfall named Kali Gandaki in Nepal. The boulders are expected to be used for the construction of idols of Ram and Janaki, which will be placed in the main temple complex of the under-construction Ram Mandir. [{Read more}](#)



**Smart Points:**

- Two Shaligram stones have been brought from Nepal to Ayodhya for the Ram Temple
- UP: Capital – Lucknow | CM – Yogi Adityanath | Governor – Anandiben Patel

## **International Affairs**

**12.** In February 2023, India and the United States launched the initiative on "Critical and Emerging Technology (iCET)" with its inaugural meeting in Washington, D.C. The iCET initiative was launched by Indian PM Narendra Modi and U.S. President Joe Biden in May 2022 with the goal to elevate and expand Indo-US strategic technology partnership and defense industrial cooperation between the governments, businesses, and academic institutions of the two countries. The aim is to put in place a robust innovation ecosystem between India and the United States. [{Read more}](#)





### Smart Points:

- India + US = launched the initiative on “Critical and Emerging Technology (iCET)”
- US – Washington, D.C. – US Dollar | 46<sup>th</sup> President – Joe Biden | 49<sup>th</sup> VP – Kamala Harris

**13.** On February 3, Australia announced to replace the portrait of the late Queen Elizabeth II from its five-dollar banknote in favor of a design that honors the culture of the country’s Indigenous people. The decision followed a consultation with the Federal government. [{Read more}](#)



### Smart Points:

- Australia – announced to replace the portrait of the late Queen Elizabeth II from its five-dollar banknote
- Australia – Canberra – Australian Dollar | PM – Anthony Albanese

## Banking, Finance, Insurance & Economic Affairs

**14.** On February 2, Reliance Retail partnered with Innoviti Technologies, ICICI Bank and Kotak Mahindra Bank to enable acceptance of RBI-issued Digital Rupee (e₹-R) at its stores. It is the first organised retail chain in India to accept Digital Rupee. Reliance was also the first to introduce dynamic QR-based in-store UPI payments. Innoviti Technologies, the technology partner to Reliance Retail, built this solution using advanced technology that integrates into the cashier billing system. Customers can simply scan the QR code on the terminal of the Digital Rupee app, powered by ICICI Bank or Kotak Mahindra Bank, and enter the passcode to authorise the payment through the e₹-R. [{Read more}](#)

### Smart Points:

- Reliance Retail – became the first organised retail chain in India to accept Digital Rupee
- To enable acceptance of RBI-issued Digital Rupee (e₹-R) at its stores, Reliance Retail has partnered with:
  - Innoviti Technologies (Technology Partner)
  - ICICI Bank & Kotak Mahindra Bank
- Innoviti Technologies – built the solution to integrate into the cashier billing system for Reliance Retail

**15.** The Financial Services Institution Bureau (FSIB) has recommended the name of M. Jagannath for the first vacancy of Managing Director in LIC of India and Tablesh Pandey for the second vacancy of Managing Director in LIC of India. However, the final appointment needs to be approved by the Appointments Committee of Cabinet. As of now, the LIC has four MDs and two of them (Raj Kumar & BC Patnaik) are set to retire in the coming two months. LIC's total assets under management stood at over ₹41.66 lakh crore as of September 2022. [{Read more}](#)

### Smart Points:

- FSIB recommended the names of M. Jagannath & Tablesh Pandey for the vacancies of MD in LIC
- Currently, LIC has 4 MDs of which 2 MDs (Raj Kumar & BC Patnaik) are set to retire
- HQs of LIC – Mumbai | Chairman – M. R. Kumar | Founded in – 1956 | Tagline – “Yogakshemam Vahamyaham”

**16.** Digital payments across the country registered a growth of 24.13% in a year through September 2022, as per RBI’s Digital Payments Index (RBI-DPI) that measures the adoption of online transactions. The RBI-DPI stood at 377.46 in September 2022 against 349.30 in March 2022 and 304.06 in September 2021. The index is published on a semi-annual basis from March 2021 onwards with a lag of four months. [{Read more}](#)



### Smart Points:

- RBI – released its semi-annual report “Digital Payments Index (RBI-DPI)”
- Digital payments growth across India – 24.13% in a year through September 2022
- RBI-DPI – stood at 377.46 in September 2022 (against 349.30 in March 2022 & 304.06 in September 2021)
- HQs of RBI – Mumbai, Maharashtra | Governor – Shaktikanta Das (25<sup>th</sup>) | Established on – 1<sup>st</sup> April, 1935
- Total Deputy Governors (4) – Mahesh Kumar Jain | T. Rabi Sankar | Michael D. Patra | M. Rajeshwar Rao

**17.** On February 2, as the promoter of IndusInd Bank, IndusInd International Holdings Limited received approval from the RBI to increase its stake in the bank to 26% from the current 15.16%. The approval given by the RBI is in-line with newly introduced RBI (Acquisition and Holding of Shares or Voting Rights in Banking Companies) Directions, 2023, making IndusInd Bank, the first bank to have its promoter increase its shareholding to 26%. Accordingly, the Hinduja Group is likely to deploy ₹ 8,000–10,000 crore to increase their shareholding in the bank. [{Read more}](#)

### Smart Points:

- IndusInd International Holdings Ltd – received approval from RBI to increase its stake in IndusInd bank to 26%
- IndusInd International Holdings Limited – promoter of IndusInd Bank
- IndusInd Bank – first bank to have its promoter increase its shareholding to 26%
- HQs of IndusInd Bank – Pune, Maharashtra | MD & CEO – Sumant Kathpalia | Tagline – “We Make You Feel Richer”

**18.** Mobicule, a niche player and expert in debt collection, launched mCollect Repossession module, an industry first for banks and NBFCs. The revolutionary Asset Repossession Solution is a comprehensive solution that maps all the complex processes in repossession of an asset, as a part of its debt collection and recovery product. Mobicule is a pioneer in offering solutions that digitize processes and improve efficiency using mobile technology. With mCollect’s Repossession offering implementation, the existing and widely-utilised paper-based processes will be digitized and integrated in the form of a recovery suite that will offer real-time visibility and process compliance. [{Read more}](#)

### Smart Points:

- Mobicule – launched mCollect Repossession module, an industry first for banks and NBFCs
- Mobicule – a pioneer in offering solutions that digitize processes and improve efficiency using mobile technology
- HQs of Mobicule – Mumbai, MH | MD – Siddharth Aggarwal

**19.** On February 3, Central PSU RailTel Corporation of India Ltd (RailTel) received a work order from the State Bank of India (SBI) for providing 4G LTE connectivity to 15,000 offsite ATMs spread across India. The project also entails the operations and maintenance of the entire network for a period of 5 years. The estimated total value of the project awarded to RailTel is Rs 253.35 Cr. Besides last mile connectivity, the project also includes the establishment of a Network Operations Centre (NOC), backhaul connectivity to the Data centre & Disaster Recovery centre (DC-DR) of SBI, a live dashboard for SLA monitoring, 24x7 helpdesk, etc. [{Read more}](#)

### Smart Points:

- RailTel – received a work order from SBI for providing 4G LTE connectivity to 15,000 offsite ATMs spread across India
- HQs of RailTel – New Delhi | CMD – Sanjai Kumar

**20.** On February 3, Yes Bank appointed Rajan Pental as an Executive Director for a period of three years with effect from February 2, 2023. Rajan Pental is currently the Global Head of Retail Banking of Yes bank. He has been part of Yes Bank since November 2015. He will continue to spearhead the bank's retail banking portfolio, apart from his appointment as an Executive Director. [{Read more}](#)



**Smart Points:**

- Rajan Pental – appointed as Executive Director of Yes Bank for a period of 3 years
- HQs of Yes Bank – Mumbai, Maharashtra | MD & CEO – Prashant Kumar | Tagline – “Experience our Expertise”

## Sports & Games

**21.** For the first time, India has been announced as the host of “Volleyball Club World Championship 2023” which is set to be held from December 6 and 10, 2023. The 2024 edition will also be held in India. The host cities and format for both editions will be decided later. [{Read more}](#)



**Smart Points:**

- India – to host the “Volleyball Club World Championship” for 2023 & 2024
- It will be the first time of India hosting the “Volleyball Club World Championship”
- HQs of FIVB – Lausanne, Switzerland | President – Ary Graca | Founded – 1947

**22.** On February 3, Indian pacer Joginder Sharma from Haryana announced retirement from all formats of cricket. The cricketer is known for his exceptional bowling in the T20 World Cup 2007 Final, where India defeated Pakistan. He currently serves as a Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) in Haryana. Joginder Sharma played his first international match in an ODI against Bangladesh in Chattogram in 2004. [{Read more}](#)



**Smart Points:**

- Joginder Sharma (Haryana) – announced retirement from all formats of cricket
- He is known for his bowling in T20 World Cup 2007 Final where India defeated Pakistan
- He played his first international match in an ODI against Bangladesh in Chattogram in 2004
- Haryana: Capital – Chandigarh | CM – Manohar Lal Khattar | Governor – Bandaru Dattatray

**23.** On February 1, for the very first time, Saudi Arabia has been awarded the hosting rights to stage Asia's most prestigious men's national football tournament, the AFC Asian Cup 2027, by the 33<sup>rd</sup> AFC Congress held in Manama, Bahrain. The tournament will feature the most exciting talent from across Asia, with the qualifying phase to commence in October 2023. [{Read more}](#)

**Smart Points:**

- 33<sup>rd</sup> AFC Congress – held in Manama, Bahrain
- Saudi Arabia – declared the host of the AFC Asian Cup 2027 (Asia's most prestigious men's national football tournament)
- Saudi Arabia – Riyadh – Saudi Riyal | PM – Mohammed bin Salman Al Saud | King – Salman bin Abdulaziz





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# Science & Technology

**24.** On February 2, NASA and IBM collaborated to develop AI-based models that will make it easier to mine vast datasets to advance scientific knowledge about Earth, and help the world to adapt to a changing environment. The joint work will apply AI foundation model technology to NASA's Earth-observing satellite data for the first time. One project will train an IBM geospatial intelligence foundation model on NASA's Harmonized Landsat Sentinel-2 (HLS) dataset, a record of land cover and land use changes captured by Earth-orbiting satellites. Another output from this collaboration is expected to be an easily searchable corpus of Earth science literature. [{Read more}](#)

## Smart Points:

- NASA + IBM = collaborated to develop AI-based models to mine vast datasets to advance scientific knowledge about Earth
- A project will train an IBM geospatial intelligence foundation model on NASA's HLS-2 dataset
- HQs of NASA – Washington D.C., US | Administrator – Bill Nelson | Founded in – 1958
- HQs of IBM – Armonk, New York, US | CEO – Arvind Krishna | Founded in – 1911

**25.** Researchers at the Microsoft Research (MSR) lab in India have been working toward creating digital ecosystems for Indian languages that do not have enough presence online. To bring 'rare' Indian languages online, Microsoft launched 'Project ELLORA' (Enabling Low Resource Languages) in 2015. The researchers are mapping out resources, including printed literature, to create a dataset to train their AI model. [{Read more}](#)

## Smart Points:

- Microsoft launched 'Project ELLORA' (Enabling Low Resource Languages) in 2015 to bring 'rare' Indian languages online
- HQs of Microsoft – Washington, US | Chairman & CEO – Satya Nadella | Founded in – 1975

**26.** On February 3, the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Platforms (C-CAMP) launched a programme, "National Diagnostics Catapult (C-CAMP InDx 2.0)", to boost India's preparedness for current and future pandemics and scale up diagnostics space for infectious diseases. The programme was anchored by C-CAMP with support from the Bangalore Life Sciences Cluster (BLiSc) and funding from the Rockefeller Foundation, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and FIND. [{Read more}](#)

## Smart Points:

- C-CAMP (Bengaluru) – launched a programme, "National Diagnostics Catapult (C-CAMP InDx 2.0)"
- It will boost India's preparedness for current & future pandemics and scale up diagnostics space for infectious diseases

**27.** More than 340 birds of different species, including the rare species of bird "Peregrine Falcon", were spotted in the water bodies inside the core area of the Kawal Tiger Reserve during the 'Asian Water Bird Census (AWC) 2023' conducted by the Wildlife Conservation Society of India conducted the census in collaboration with the Hyderabad Tiger Conservation Society. The bird species identified during the census include both local and migratory birds. [{Read more}](#)



## Smart Points:

- 'Asian Water Bird Census 2023' = by Wildlife Conservation Society of India + Hyderabad Tiger Conservation Society
- More than 340 birds of different species, including "Peregrine Falcon" – spotted in Kawal Tiger Reserve (Telangana)
- HQs of Wildlife Conservation Society of India – Bengaluru, Karnataka

**28.** Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) is set to showcase its capabilities at 'Aero India 2023' (14<sup>th</sup> edition) scheduled to be held in Feb 2023 at Air Force Station, Yelahanka, Bengaluru. BEL's display in the area of 'Air Defence & Surveillance' will include Hexacopter, Tethered UAV, Swarm of UAVs, Robotic Surveillance, Shallow Water Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) and D4 Anti-drone Systems. The display in the area of 'C4I Systems' will include C4I technologies, Combat Management Systems and Navigational Consoles and that in the area of 'Artificial Intelligence-based Products' will include AI-based activity interference of air targets for situation awareness. The D4 (Drone Detect, Deter & Destroy) anti-drone system has been developed by the Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO). [{Read more}](#)

**Smart Points:**

- 'Aero India 2023' (14<sup>th</sup> edition) – held at Air Force Station, Yelahanka, Bengaluru
- BEL showcased its capabilities at 'Aero India 2023' which also included D4 Anti-drone Systems of DRDO
- D4 – Drone Detect, Deter & Destroy
- HQs of BEL – Bengaluru, Karnataka | CMD – Bhanu Prakash Srivastava (addi. charge)
- HQs of DRDO – New Delhi | Chairman – Samir V. Kamat | Established in – 1958

## Appointments & Resignations

**29.** On February 1, President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, who has ruled the country since 1979, made the announcement that Manuela Roka Botey was appointed as the first female Prime Minister of Equatorial Guinea. Ms Rotey was previously the education minister and joined the government in 2020. She replaces former premier Francisco Pascual Obama Asue. [{Read more}](#)



**Smart Points:**

- Manuela Roka Botey – appointed as 1st female PM of Equatorial Guinea (Replacing – Francisco Pascual Obama Asue)
- President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo – has been ruling the country since 1979

**30.** On February 2, M. Subbarayudu, currently serving as Ambassador of India to Peru, has been appointed as the next High Commissioner of India to Namibia. Subbarayudu is expected to take up the assignment shortly. According to the MEA, he joined the Indian Foreign Service (IFS) in 1994. [{Read more}](#)



**Smart Points:**

- M. Subbarayudu – appointed as the next High Commissioner of India to Namibia
- Namibia – Windhoek – Namibian Dollar/South African Rand | President – Hage Geingob

**31.** Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission secretary-cum-scientific director Rajeev Singh Raghuvanshi was recommended by the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) to be the next Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI). Mr. Rajeev succeeded Dr. V G Somani, whose extended tenure ended mid-February. The UPSC recommendation has been approved by the Health Ministry, followed by approval of the Appointments Committee of Cabinet led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. [{Read more}](#)

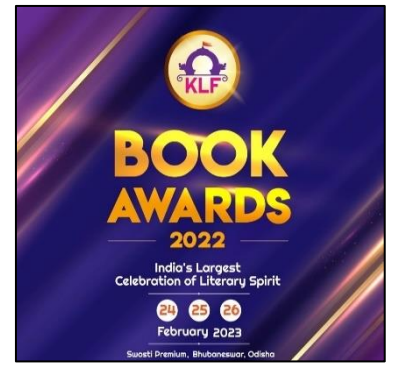


**Smart Points:**

- Rajeev Singh Raghuvanshi – appointed as the next DCGI (replacing – Dr. V G Somani)
- The Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) – Rajeev Singh Raghuvanshi

## Awards, Rewards, Recognition & Prizes

**32.** The Kalinga Literary Festival (KLF) announced the winners for KLF Book Awards 2022. The winners will be facilitated on February 24-26 in Bhubaneswar. Held annually in Bhubaneswar, KLF gives out awards in many categories such as fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and in English, Hindi, Nepali, Maithili, Odia and other Indian languages. Among the winners in various categories are Sanjeev Sanyal (Non-fiction in English), Akshaya Mukul (Non-fiction in English), Kailash Satyarthi (Non-fiction in Hindi), Akhilesh (Non-fiction in Hindi), Navtej Sarna (Fiction in English), Pravin Kumar (Fiction in Hindi), Ranjit Hoskote (Poetry award in English) and Pankaj Chaturvedi (Poetry award in Hindi). Some of the additional winners include - Poonam Vasam in the KLF Women/Dalit/Tribal/Minorities Literature Award 2021-22, and Gopal's Gully by Zarin Virji in the Children Book Award category. [{Read more}](#)



### Smart Points:

- KLF Book Awards 2022:
  - Sanjeev Sanyal & Akshaya Mukul (Non-fiction in English category)
  - Kailash Satyarthi & Akhilesh (Non-fiction in Hindi category)
  - Navtej Sarna (Fiction in English category)
  - Pravin Kumar (Fiction in Hindi category)
  - Ranjit Hoskote (Poetry award in English)
  - Pankaj Chaturvedi (Poetry award in Hindi)
  - Poonam Vasam (KLF Women/Dalit/Tribal/Minorities Literature Award 2021-22)
  - Gopal's Gully by Zarin Virji – Children Book Award category

**33.** In a ceremony held on the eve of the FIH Odisha Hockey Men's World Cup 2023 Bhubaneswar-Rourkela final, FIH President Tayyab Ikram presented the "FIH President's Award" to V. K. Pandian, Secretary to the Chief Minister of Odisha, for his outstanding contribution to hockey. The FIH President's Award recognises individuals National Associations or other organisations for valuable services to hockey, whether direct or indirect or initiatives which have had a significant effect on hockey at the international level. [{Read more}](#)

### Smart Points:

- V. K. Pandian (Secretary to Odisha's CM) – received the "FIH President's Award" during Men's Hockey World Cup 2023
- HQs of FIH – Lausanne, Switzerland | President – Mohammad Tayyab Ikram | CEO – Thierry Weil | Founded in – 1924

## Schemes & Initiatives

**34.** The government of Goa launched the "Vision for All School Eye Health Program" in partnership with OneSight EssilorLuxottica Foundation and Prasad Netralaya. The programme is an extension of the current Vision for All Goa eye health program. The Vision for All Goa eye health program commenced in February 2021 and its monthly camps have screened 50,000 citizens as well as provided free spectacles to 16,000 people in need. The Vision for All School Eye Health will focus on training 2000 teachers on basic visual acuity tests for the children in their respective schools. [{Read more}](#)

### Smart Points:

- Goa + OneSight EssilorLuxottica Foundation + Prasad Netralaya = launched “Vision for All School Eye Health Program”
- Goa: Capital – Panaji | CM – Pramod Sawant | Governor – P. S. Sreedharan Pillai

**35.** On February 2, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said that the government, during her Budget 2023 speech, launched a small savings scheme, “Mahila Samman Savings Certificate”, especially for women to commemorate the Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav. This will offer a deposit facility up to Rs 2 lakh in the name of women or girls for a tenor of 2 years at a fixed interest rate of 7.5% with a partial withdrawal option. The scheme is a one-time scheme and will be available for a two-year period between 2023 and 2025. [{Read more}](#)

### Smart Points:

- Central Govt launched a small savings scheme, “Mahila Samman Savings Certificate”, especially for women
- This will offer a deposit facility up to Rs 2 lakh for a tenor of 2 years at a fixed interest rate of 7.5%

**36.** Jammu & Kashmir government’s ambitious initiative ‘Har Gaon Hariyali’ has recorded a plantation of 90 lakh saplings during the current fiscal against the set target of plantation of 1.35 Crore seedlings. Pertinently, the government of Jammu and Kashmir launched this remarkable initiative in consonance with the vision of ‘Green Jammu and Kashmir’ to ensure sustainable development and promote climate justice across J&K. Green Jammu and Kashmir campaign aim at creating a people’s movement at a massive scale with the involvement of all stakeholders particularly village panchayats, women, students, Urban Local bodies, NGOs, and civil society. [{Read more}](#)

### Smart Points:

- J&K’s ambitious initiative ‘Har Gaon Hariyali’ has recorded a plantation of 90 lakh saplings during the current fiscal
- The target set for plantation – 1.35 Crore seedlings
- J & K: Capital – Srinagar | Lt. Governor – Manoj Sinha

## Obituaries

**37.** On February 3, renowned filmmaker and Dadasaheb Phalke awardee Kasinadhuni Viswanath died at the age of 92 in Hyderabad. Popularly known as ‘Kalatapasvi’, Viswanath was born in February 1930 in Andhra Pradesh. He became the 48th recipient of the Dadasaheb Phalke award, the highest recognition in Indian cinema, in 2016. His other honors include Padma Shri in 1992, five National Awards, 20 Nandi Awards (given by the Andhra Pradesh government), and 10 Filmfare trophies including the Lifetime Achievement award. [{Read more}](#)

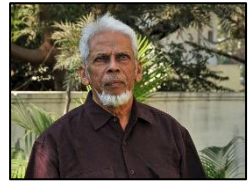


### Smart Points:

- Kasinadhuni Viswanath (Andhra Pradesh) – filmmaker – passed away
- Awards: 48<sup>th</sup> Dadasaheb Phalke Award, Padma Shri (1992), 20 Nandi Awards (by Andhra Pradesh) & Lifetime Achievement award at Filmfare etc
- Andhra Pradesh: Capital – Vishakhapatnam | CM – YS Jaganmohan Reddy | Governor – S. Abdul Nazeer



**38.** Noted Kannada writer K. V. Tirumalesh passed away in Hyderabad at the age of 82. He was suffering from age-related illnesses. He is regarded as one of the most versatile writers across genres and a man with eclectic interests. He was recognised as a poet and honoured with the Sahitya Akademi award in 2010 for his collections of poems “Akshaya Kavya” in Kannada. [{Read more}](#)



**Smart Points:**

- K. V. Tirumalesh – a Noted Kannada Writer/Poet – passed away
- Awards: Sahitya Akademi Award (2010) for his collections of poems “Akshaya Kavya”

**39.** Former India footballer Parimal Dey, a member of the country’s bronze medal winning team in the 1966 Merdeka Cup, has passed away. He was 81. He made five appearances for India and scored a goal in the country's bronze medal finish in the 1966 edition of the Merdeka Cup in Kuala Lumpur. That was also his only goal for India. Fondly known as Jangla-da, Dey was born on May 4, 1941. He was conferred with the Banga Bhushan title by the Government of West Bengal in 2019. He also won ‘Banglar Gourav’ award in 2018-19. For Bengal, Dey won the Santosh Trophy twice in 1962 and 1969. In 1971, he joined Mohun Bagan and won the Rovers Cup. Dey also won the Durand Cup (1967, 1970), Rovers Cup (1967, 1969, 1973), among other tournaments. [{Read more}](#)



**Smart Points:**

- Parimal Dey (also known as Jangla-da) – India footballer – passed away
- He was part of 1966 edition of the Merdeka Cup in Kuala Lumpur
- Awards: Banga Bhushan title by the Government of West Bengal (2019) & ‘Banglar Gourav’ award in 2018-19

## **Meetings, Conferences & Summits**

**40.** The United Kingdom has been named as Country Partner for the 20<sup>th</sup> edition of the BioAsia 2023, the next in the annual series of healthcare and life sciences event of Telangana government that will be held in Hyderabad from February 24-26, 2023. Shakthi Nagappan is the CEO of BioAsia. ‘Advancing for ONE: Shaping the next generation of humanized healthcare’ is the theme of BioAsia 2023. [{Read more}](#)

**Smart Points:**

- UK – is named as Country Partner for the 20<sup>th</sup> edition of the ‘BioAsia 2023’
- Theme – “Advancing for ONE: Shaping the Next Generation of Humanized Healthcare”
- UK – London – Pound Sterling | PM – Rishi Sunak (57<sup>th</sup>) | New King – King Charles III

## **Ranks, Reports & Surveys**

**41.** On February 2, the unemployment rate in India has declined to a four-month low at 7.14% in January, according to the data from the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE). The unemployment rate during December 2022 was 8.30%. The data further showed that urban unemployment in January stood at 8.55%, while rural joblessness stood at 6.48%. Among the states, unemployment was the highest in Jammu and Kashmir at 21.8% closely followed by Haryana at 21.7% and Rajasthan at 21.1%. On the other hand, as per the data unemployment was the lowest in states such as Chhattisgarh at 0.5%. [{Read more}](#)



### Smart Points:

- CMIE – released data for unemployment in India in January
- Unemployment rate – 7.14% (4 months low) | Urban – 8.55% | Rural – 6.48
- Highest unemployment in India – J & K (21.8%), Haryana (21.7%) & Rajasthan (21.1%)
- Lowest unemployment in India – Chandigarh (0.5%)
- Unemployment in December 2022 – 8.30%

**42.** India has increased its forest area in the past decade and ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> globally in average annual net gain in forest area from 2010-2020, according to the “Annual Economic Survey 2022-23” by the Department of Economic Affairs. India added an average of 2,66,000 hectares of additional forest area every year during the period. Forests covered 24% of India’s total geographical area accounting for 2% of the world’s total forest area in 2020. The top 10 countries account for 66% of the world’s forest area in which top three includes - Brazil (59%), Peru (57%), and Democratic Republic of Congo (56%). Among Indian States, Madhya Pradesh with 11% of India’s total forest cover, had the largest area under forests in 2021, followed by Arunachal Pradesh (9%), and Chhattisgarh (8%). Mizoram (85%), Arunachal Pradesh (79%), Meghalaya (76%) - are the top three states in terms of highest proportion of forest cover to the geographical area of the State in 2021. Arunachal Pradesh has the maximum carbon stock in forests, and Jammu & Kashmir contributes the maximum per-hectare carbon stock of 173.41 tonnes. Moreover, India now has 75 Ramsar sites for wetlands covering the area of 13.3 lakh hectares. [{Read more}](#)

### Smart Points:

- India – ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> globally in average annual net gain in forest area from 2010-2020
- Forests covered 24% of India’s total geographical area accounting for 2% of the world’s total forest area in 2020
- Top 3 countries with world’s highest forest area: Brazil (59%), Peru (57%), Democratic Republic of Congo (56%)
- In India, Madhya Pradesh (with 11% of India’s total forest cover) – had the largest area under forests in 2021
- In India, Mizoram (85%) – has the highest proportion of forest cover to the geographical area of the State in 2021
- Arunachal Pradesh – has the maximum carbon stock in forests
- India now has 75 Ramsar sites for wetlands

**43.** The length of rural roads constructed under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) has again fallen short of its target. According to data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO) of its latest “Twenty Point Programme (TPP)” progress report, only 9,753 km of roads could be constructed in the first 6 months of FY23. It represents only 41% of the target for April-September of FY23. The TPP report monitors over 50 different schemes and plans on a quarterly basis. Ministry of statistics and programme implementation (MoSPI) is tasked with monitoring 65 items under the TPP. Of these, 17 are reported on a quarterly basis, and the others on an annual basis. Performance of a programme is considered “poor” by the NSO if the level of targets achieved is below 80%. Currently in its third phase, PMGSY was launched as a centrally-sponsored scheme in 2000. [{Read more}](#)

### Smart Points:

- “Twenty Point Programme (TPP)” progress report – released by the NSO (under MoSPI)
- Only 9,753 km of roads (41% of the target) – could be constructed under the PMGSY in the first 6 months of FY23
- MoSPI is tasked with monitoring 65 items under the TTP | PMGSY was launched in 2000



# Acquisitions & Mergers

**44.** On February 1, Adani Group acquired Israel's port of Haifa for USD 1.2 billion. Besides the takeover of the Port of Haifa, the Adani Group also vowed to transform the skyline of the Mediterranean city as part of its decision to invest more in the country, including opening an artificial intelligence lab in Tel Aviv. [{Read more}](#)

## Smart Points:

- Adani Group – acquired Israel's Haifa Port for USD 1.2 billion
- HQs of Adani Group – Ahmedabad, Gujarat | Chairman – Gautam Adani | MD – Rajesh Adani

# MoUs, Collaborations & Partnership

**45.** One of India's leading unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) training and manufacturing groups, Drone Destination (DD), signed an MoU with IIT Patna to open Bihar's first government-approved drone training hub. DD is the state-run Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Udan Academy (IGRUA)'s partner for drone training and has several centres across India. Drone Destination had become the first Drone Training Organisation to certify over 1,200 DGCA-certified Drone Pilots in India along with IGRUA and Sanskardham. [{Read more}](#)

## Smart Points:

- DD + IIT Patna = an MoU to open Bihar's first government-approved drone training hub
- DD – state-run Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Udan Academy (IGRUA)'s partner for drone training
- Director of IIT Patna – T. N. Singh
- Bihar: Capital – Patna | CM – Nitish Kumar | Governor – Rajendra Vishwanath Arleka

**46.** Reliance Consumer Products Limited (RCPL), the FMCG arm and a wholly owned subsidiary of Reliance Retail Ventures Limited (RRVL), announced a strategic partnership with Sri Lanka-based Maliban Biscuit Manufactories. Maliban, a heritage brand and household name in Sri Lanka, is a pioneering biscuit manufacturer well known for last 70 years for its range of quality products including biscuits, crackers, cookies and wafers. [{Read more}](#)

## Smart Points:

- Reliance Consumer Products Ltd + Maliban Biscuit Manufactories (Sri Lanka) = a strategic partnership

**47.** On February 2, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) signed an MoU with Engineers India Limited to develop Waste to Energy and bio-methanation projects in cities with a population of million plus as a part of furthering the 'Green Growth' agenda. The MoU was signed in the presence of Manoj Joshi, Secretary of MoHUA and Vartika Shukla, CMD of EIL. There are 59 million plus cities in India and for management of organic/wet fraction of municipal solid waste, bio-methanation plants have been proposed in these million plus cities. [{Read more}](#)

## Smart Points:

- MoHUA + Engineers India Ltd = an MoU to develop Waste to Energy and bio-methanation projects in cities with a population of million plus
- Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs: Hardeep Singh Puri | Constituency – Uttar Pradesh
- MoS in Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs: Kaushal Kishore
- HQs of Engineers India Ltd – Gurugram, Haryana | Chairman & MD – Vartika Shukla



**48.** On February 2, in the direction of fulfilling PM Narendra Modi's dream of 'Sahkar Se Samridhi', an MoU was signed between Ministry of Cooperation (MoC), Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), NABARD and CSC e-Governance Services India Limited, to enable Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS) to provide services offered by Common Service Centers. PACS will now be able to function as Common Service Centres, along with this, more than 300 services will be made available to the rural population including 13 Crore farmer members of PACS. [{Read more}](#)

**Smart Points:**

- MoC + MeitY + NABARD + CSC = MoU to enable 'Primary Agricultural Credit Societies' to provide services offered by CSCs
- HQs of NABARD – Mumbai, Maharashtra | Chairman – Shaji K V | Founded in – 1982
- Ministry of Cooperation: Amit Shah | Constituency – Gandhinagar, Gujarat
- MoS in Ministry of Cooperation: B. L. Verma
- Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology: Ashwini Vaishnaw | Constituency – Odisha
- MoS in Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology: Rajeev Chandrasekhar

**49.** On February 2, General Atomics, a major American energy and defence corporation, has started three significant projects in India in the field of Artificial Intelligence (AI), Drones and Semiconductors. With Bharat Forge, General Atomics Aeronautical Systems (GA-ASI) has entered into a partnership in the critical field of aerospace manufacturing and with 114ai, an Indian artificial intelligence (AI) company, to develop the next generation of technologies in artificial intelligence. It has entered into a partnership with 3rdiTech, an Indian start-up, in the field of semiconductors. A task force is set up by the US Semiconductor Industry Association (SIA) in partnership with the India Electronics Semiconductor Association (IESA) with participation from the Government of India Semiconductor Mission to develop a readiness assessment to identify near-term industry opportunities and facilitate the longer-term strategic development of complementary semiconductor ecosystems. [{Read more}](#)

**Smart Points:**

- General Atomics (US) – started 3 projects in India in the field of AI, Drones & Semiconductors
- GA-ASI (US) + Bharat Forge (India) = partnership in the field of Aerospace Manufacturing
- GA-ASI (US) + 114ai (India) = partnership to develop the next generation of technologies in AI
- General Atomics + 3rdiTech = partnership in the field of Semiconductors
- US SIA + IESA (India) = a task force to facilitate strategic development of complementary semiconductor ecosystems

**50.** On February 1, Nagaland government and Patanjali Foods Limited signed an MoU for development and area expansion under palm oil cultivation and processing under the National Mission on Edible Oils-Oil Palm. Patanjali Foods Ltd is already working in the states of Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam and Tripura in the North East. [{Read more}](#)

**Smart Points:**

- Nagaland + Patanjali = an MoU for development and area expansion under palm oil cultivation & processing
- Patanjali Foods Ltd is already working in the states of Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam & Tripura in the North East
- HQs of Patanjali Ayurved – Haridwar, Uttarakhand | MD – Acharya Balkrishna
- Nagaland: Capital – Kohima | CM – Neiphiu Rio | Governor – La. Ganesan





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