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India Ranks Fourth in Global Military Expenditure: SIPRI Report

Released by: - Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)

The theme of the report: - Military Spending across the Globe

Major Findings

(a) Global - According to the **Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)**, global military expenditure has reached a new record high of **\$2240 billion**, increasing by **3.7%** in real terms in **2022**. Europe witnessed its most substantial year-on-year increase in military spending in at least 30 years. The United States, China, and Russia, which are the three largest military spenders, contributed 56% of the total global military expenditure in 2022. These findings were released by SIPRI in its latest report on global military spending.

(b) India specific - India's military expenditure in 2022 amounted to **\$81.4 billion**, which is the **fourth-highest** in the world. This represents a **6%** increase compared to the previous year's spending.

Highlights of Report: -

1) Top 5 ranks:-

1. United States
2. China
3. Russia
4. India
5. Saudi Arabia

Parameters of ranking: - Budgetary spending on Defence

India's rank: - 4th

India's rank in the previous year:- 3rd due to substantial increases in Russian spending.



Dalai Lama Gets 1959 Ramon Magsaysay Award in Person After 64 Years

After a 64-year wait, members of the **Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation** personally presented the 1959 Ramon Magsaysay Award to the **Dalai Lama** at his residence. The award was the first international recognition given to the spiritual leader for his exceptional leadership of the Tibetan community's courageous fight in safeguarding their sacred religion, which serves as the foundation of their culture and way of life. The award was given by the Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation in the Philippines in August 1959.

Susanna B Afan, the President of the Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation, along with Foundation Trustee Emily A Abrera, had the honor of meeting with the Dalai Lama, a Nobel Peace Prize recipient, in person to present the 1959 Ramon Magsaysay Award, 64 years after it was awarded to him.

The office of the Tibetan spiritual leader has reported that his elder brother, Gyalo Thonden, had accepted the Magsaysay Award on behalf of the Dalai Lama in Manila, Philippines, in August 1959. Following his exile from Tibet in 1959, the Dalai Lama has resided in India.

Who is Dalai Lama?

The Dalai Lama is the spiritual leader of the Tibetan people and is regarded as one of the most important figures in Tibetan Buddhism. The title "Dalai Lama" is a combination of the Mongolian word "dalai," meaning ocean, and the Tibetan word "lama," meaning guru, teacher, or mentor. The Dalai Lama is believed to be the reincarnation of Avalokiteshvara, the bodhisattva of compassion, and is responsible for leading the Tibetan people in spiritual and secular matters.

The current and 14th Dalai Lama is Tenzin Gyatso, who was born in Tibet in 1935. He was recognized as the Dalai Lama at the age of two and was enthroned in 1950. In 1959, he fled Tibet following a failed uprising against Chinese rule and has since been living in exile in India. The Dalai Lama is a Nobel Peace Prize laureate and has been a vocal advocate for nonviolence, human rights, and religious harmony throughout his life. He is widely respected and admired for his teachings, wisdom, and compassion, and has followers all over the world.

About the Ramon Magsaysay Award

The Ramon Magsaysay Award is an annual award that recognizes individuals and organizations in Asia who demonstrate exceptional courage, integrity, and service to their communities. Established in 1957, the award was named after the late Philippine President **Ramon Magsaysay**, who was known for his honest leadership and dedication to public service. The award is often referred to as the "**Nobel Prize of Asia**" and is administered by the Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation, based in Manila, Philippines.

The award is given in six categories, namely **government service, public service, community leadership, journalism, creative arts, and peace and international understanding**. Recipients of the award receive a certificate, a medal, and a cash prize.

The Ramon Magsaysay Award has recognized individuals and organizations from various fields, including social work, education, the arts, and science, among others. The award has become one of the most prestigious honors in Asia and has helped raise awareness of the significant contributions of individuals and organizations in promoting social justice, human rights, and democratic values in the region.

List of Indian recipients of the Ramon Magsaysay Award:

Name	Year of Award	Category
Vinoba Bhave	1958	Community Leadership
Jayaprakash Narayan	1965	Public Service
Mother Teresa	1962	Peace and International Understanding
Satyajit Ray	1992	Journalism, Literature, and Creative Communication Arts
M.S. Swaminathan	1986	Public Service
Arvind Kejriwal	2006	Emergent Leadership
Shanta Sinha	2003	Community Leadership
Rajendra Singh	2001	Community Leadership
Kulandei Francis	2012	Community Leadership
Bezwada Wilson	2016	Emergent Leadership
Ravish Kumar	2019	Journalism, Literature, and Creative Communication Arts

Note: This list includes only individuals who were born in India or have Indian nationality.

India Climbs 6 Spots to 38th in World Bank's Logistics Performance Index 2023

According to the **Ministry of Commerce & Industry**, India's rank in the 7th edition of the **World Bank's Logistics Performance Index 2023** has improved by 6 positions, and it now stands at 38th among 139 countries. The ministry further stated that India has shown significant progress in 4 out of 6 **LPI indicators**.

India's Performance in World Bank's Logistics Performance Index 2023: Key Points

- The government claimed in an official statement that India's improved logistics infrastructure is evidence of the country's global standing.
- They attribute this development to their concentrated effort on reforming logistics infrastructure.
- The government also mentioned that the **PM GatiShakti National Master Plan**, launched in October 2021, is responsible for this update.
- The plan aims to address the evolving requirements of logistics due to factors such as e-commerce, urbanization, energy preferences, and the need to establish sturdy supply chains.
- Additionally, the Ministry stated that India's ranking was improved due to the implementation of the **National Logistics Policy (NLP)**, which provides guidance for States or UTs in developing logistics policies.
- The NLP focuses on promoting energy-efficient transportation modes and the use of greener fuels to minimize carbon emissions.
- Moreover, the **Commerce Ministry** mentioned that the government invested in trade-related infrastructure, including both soft and hard infrastructure, to connect port gateways on both coasts to economic zones in the hinterland.

Logistics Data Bank project by NICDC

The Ministry stated that the **Logistics Data Bank** project by **NICDC**, which involves the use of **RFID** tags on containers and has been implemented in the Western region of India since 2016, and expanded to a Pan India level in 2020, has resulted in significant improvements in cross-border trade facilitation.

Additionally, the project fosters competition among ports by offering data on performance benchmarking, congestion, dwell time, speed, and transit time analysis, according to the Ministry. The Ministry also recognized that initiatives such as Sagarmala and Bharatmala have been instrumental in enhancing India's logistics efficiency.

68th Filmfare Awards 2023 Announced: Check The Complete List Of Winners

On April 27, 2023, the **68th edition of the Hyundai Filmfare Awards** took place at the **Jio World Conventional Centre** in Mumbai. This year's ceremony was co-hosted by Salman Khan, Ayushmann Khurrana, and Maniesh Paul, marking Salman Khan's first time as a host for the event. The awards were presented in collaboration with Maharashtra Tourism. The award ceremony was a platform for many up-and-coming artists to achieve their dreams of receiving the prestigious Black Lady trophy.

Here's a list of winners of the Filmfare Awards 2023:

Category	Winner
Best Film	Gangubai Kathiawadi
Best Film (Critics')	Badhaai Do
Best Actor (Male)	Rajkummar Rao for Badhaai Do
Best Actor (Female)	Alia Bhatt for Gangubai Kathiawadi
Best Actor (Critics')	Sanjay Mishra for Vadh
Best Actress (Critics')	Bhumi Pednekar for Badhaai Do and Tabu for Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2
Best Director	Sanjay Leela Bhansali for Gangubai Kathiawadi
Best Actor in a Supporting Role (Male)	Anil Kapoor for Jug Jugg Jeeyo
Best Actor in a Supporting Role (Female)	Sheeba Chaddha for Badhaai Do
Best Music Album	Pritam for Brahmastra: Part One - Shiva
Best Dialogue	Prakash Kapadia and Utkarshini Vashishtha for Gangubai Kathiawadi
Best Screenplay	Akshat Ghildial, Suman Adhikary and Harshavardhan Kulkarni for Badhaai Do
Best Story	Akshat Ghildial and Suman Adhikary for Badhaai Do
Best Debut (Male)	Ankush Gedam for Jhund
Best Debut (Female)	Andrea Kevichusa for Anek
Best Debut Director	Jaspal Singh Sandhu and Rajeev Barnwal for Vadh

Category	Winner
Lifetime Achievement Award	Prem Chopra
Best Lyrics	Amitabh Bhattacharya for Kesariya from Brahmastra: Part One - Shiva
Best Playback Singer (Male)	Arijit Singh for Kesariya from Brahmastra: Part One - Shiva
Best Playback Singer (Female)	Kavita Seth for Rangisari from Jug Jugg Jeeyo
RD Burman Award for Upcoming Music Talent	Jahnvi Shrimankar for Dholida from Gangubai Kathiawadi
Best VFX	DNEG and Redefine for Brahmastra: Part One - Shiva
Best Editing	Ninad Khanolkar for An Action Hero
Best Costume Design	Sheetal Sharma for Gangubai Kathiawadi
Best Production Design	Subrata Chakraborty and Amit Ray for Gangubai Kathiawadi
Best Sound Design	Bishwadeep Dipak Chatterjee for Brahmastra: Part One - Shiva
Best Background Score	Sanchit Balhara and Ankit Balhara for Gangubai Kathiawadi
Best Choreography	Kruti Mahesh for Dholida from Gangubai Kathiawadi
Best Cinematography	Sudeep Chatterjee for Gangubai Kathiawadi
Best Action	Parvez Shaikh for Vikram Vedha

National Affairs

- The **Union Health Ministry** and the **Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs** have made a noteworthy and inventive decision to urge states and Union Territories to establish 100 food streets in 100 districts throughout the country. This pilot project is intended to serve as a model for other streets to follow and promote hygienic and safe food practices. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- During his two-day visit to Kerala, Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to inaugurate India's first-ever **water metro** that connects 10 islands surrounding Kochi using battery-operated **electric hybrid boats**. ([Click here to read the article](#))

- India has put forward a proposal to construct a **G20 park in Delhi** that will serve as a representation of global unity on the path of development. According to sources, PM Modi has been closely monitoring the park's concept development. The park, which will be located at the **Shanti Path and Ring Road junction**, will be based on the theme of "**One Earth, One Family, One Future.**" ([Click here to read the article](#))
- The '**Study in India Pavilion**' at the Global Education & Training Exhibition (GETEX) in **Dubai** was inaugurated by the Consul General of India in Dubai, Dr. Aman Puri on April, 26, 2023. Organized by the Services Export Promotion Council with the support of the Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce & Industry, the India Pavilion at **GETEX 2023** is being held from 26-28 April 2023 at Dubai World Trade Centre, Dubai, UAE. The pavilion, spanning over 200 sqm, features more than 30 universities and edtech stakeholders of Indian higher education. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- The Indian Government has taken steps for **National Medical Devices Policy** to implement the **PLI Scheme** for medical devices and establish 4 Medical Devices Parks in **Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu** and **Uttar Pradesh**. At present, 26 projects worth Rs 1206 crore have been approved under the scheme, with an investment of Rs 714 crore realized. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** inaugurated the '**NAMO Medical Education and Research Institute**' in Silvassa town, located in the Union Territory of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu. The institute has been developed under the Ministry of Health and is spread over a lush green campus of 14.48 acres built at a cost of ₹203 crore. Here are five things to know about this new medical college. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **Khongjom Day** was commemorated at Khongjom in Thoubal district of **Manipur** to honour the soldiers who fought in the 1891 Anglo-Manipuri War. Manipur's Chief Minister **N. Biren Singh** and Governor Ms. Anusuiya Uikey were among those who paid their respects to the heroes at the event, held at Kheba Ching in Khongjom. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **Himachal Pradesh** has made history by becoming the first Indian state to establish a **DNA database** specifically for unidentified bodies. This groundbreaking initiative commenced in April 2022, and the database currently contains 150 DNA samples of unknown individuals, according to recent news reports. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **Mana village** in Uttarakhand, which was previously recognized as the last Indian village, will now be acknowledged as the "first Indian village." The **Border Roads Organisation (BRO)** has installed a signboard at the entrance of the border village to declare Mana's updated status. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- Chief Minister **Bhupendra Patel** has declared the last week of April as "**Swagat Saptah**" in commemoration of the completion of 20 years of the "State Wide Attention on Grievances by Application of Technology" (**SWAGAT**) initiative, which was launched by Narendra Modi during his tenure as the Chief Minister of Gujarat in 2003. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **Bengaluru**, India's technological hub, is poised to witness a unique celestial event known as "**Zero Shadow Day**," according to the **Astronomical Society of India (ASI)**. During this event, any vertical objects in the city will not cast any shadows, due to the sun's position directly overhead. The phenomenon is expected to occur at around 12:17 PM and will last for a brief period. ([Click here to read the article](#))

States in the News

- The **Kerala government** initiated a project aimed at reinvigorating the sports culture in the state by establishing high-quality playgrounds in every panchayat. The '**One Panchayat, One Playground**' project was launched by Kerala's Chief Minister, Pinarayi Vijayan, at Kallikkad. During the inauguration, he emphasized the significance of a strong sports culture in fostering a robust and contented community. ([Click here to read the article](#))



- The tourism department of the **Goa government** is set to hold the '**Heritage Festival 2023**' from April 28 to 30 at Saligao village in North Goa. The festival aims to promote cultural tourism in the state by showcasing its traditions, culture, and arts. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- The **Rajasthan** government's recent declaration of three areas as **conservation reserves** has brought a ray of hope for wildlife conservation efforts and ecotourism in the state. **As the state government declared three areas — Sorsan in Baran, Khichan in Jodhpur and Hamirgarh in Bhilwara —** as conservation reserves. The new reserves are expected to protect rare and endangered species and provide a safe haven for migratory birds. ([Click here to read the article](#))

International Affairs

- **Kelvin Kiptum**, a 23-year-old Kenyan athlete, collapsed to the ground after achieving victory in the London Marathon and posting the second-best time in history for the distance. Kiptum broke the course record with an impressive time of 2 hours, 1 minute, and 25 seconds, falling short of Eliud Kipchoge's world record by only 16 seconds. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **Mongolia** will have its first oil refinery up and running by 2025. The first phase of the **\$1.2 billion Indian soft loan-funded Mongol Oil Refinery** will be finished by the end of the year. Given that **Russia** is the only source of energy imports for Mongolia, the development has strategic ramifications. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- An **India-Ukraine Chamber of Commerce** will be established in the upcoming months in an effort to strengthen commercial ties. The Chamber will work to increase opportunities for investment and cooperation in industries including infrastructure and power with the help of the **Ukrainian government**. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **Udai Tambar**, an Indian-origin CEO working on youth development services in the **United States**, have been selected to serve as members of **New York City's** newly formed racial justice advisory board. ([Click here to read the article](#))

- The city of **Ayodhya** has been chosen for a two-year pilot project aimed at producing **biodiesel from waste**. Belgium-based company **Vito** is expected to launch the project in Ayodhya soon. The company, which focuses on clean technology and sustainable development, has already started working on the project, according to officials. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- To combat the falling value of the Zimbabwean currency, the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe (RBZ) has announced plans to introduce a **gold-backed digital currency**. The digital gold tokens will be a form of electronic money, backed by gold held at the RBZ. This will enable holders of small amounts of **Zimbabwean dollars** to exchange their money for tokens and protect themselves against exchange rate fluctuations. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **IIT Madras** is set to establish the first Indian Institute of Technology in Africa in **Tanzania**, with classes scheduled to begin in October. The new campus will be located in **Zanzibar**, and marks IIT Madras' first international campus. **V Kamakoti**, the institute's director, announced the plans during his address at IIT Madras' 64th Institute Day. A team of five IIT Madras professors visited Tanzania in February to hold discussions with officials about setting up the new campus. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **Mohammed Shahabuddin Chuppu** has become the **22nd president of Bangladesh**, taking over from Abdul Hamid, in a ceremony attended by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, politicians, judges, and senior officials. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- A panel in **Japan's health ministry** has approved the country's **first abortion pill**, in a major step for reproductive rights decades after other countries made abortion medication widely available. The ministry's pharmaceutical board granted approval to the **MeFeego Pack**, an abortion pill manufactured by British pharmaceutical Linepharma, according to a spokesperson from the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- The **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** Annual Report 2022 revealed that **Pakistan** received loans of \$5.58 billion, making it the largest recipient of ADB-funded programs/projects in the year 2022. Out of the total lending, Pakistan received concessional funding of \$2.67 billion from the bank, highlighting the dire economic situation in the country. ([Click here to read the article](#))

Agreements/MoUs Signed

- **India** and the **United Kingdom** have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for collaboration on **science and innovation**. The agreement was signed at the **UK-India Science Innovation Council** meeting, chaired by UK Science Minister George Freeman and Indian Minister of State for Science and Technology Dr Jitendra Singh. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- Global power technology company, **Cummins Inc**, has entered into a definitive agreement with **Tata Motors Ltd** to manufacture a range of low-to-zero-emissions technology products in **India**. The two companies have established a new business entity, TCPL Green Energy Solutions Private Ltd (GES), a wholly-owned subsidiary under the existing joint venture, **Tata Cummins Private Limited (TCPL)** in India. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **Shivalik Small Finance Bank** has announced a strategic partnership with **Arya.ag**, a grain commerce platform, to provide financing to small farmers against warehouse receipts. The collaboration will enable Arya.ag to further its mission of driving financial inclusion for farmers and Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) in India. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- During the India-UK Science & Innovation Council meeting, chaired by Union Minister **Dr Jitendra Singh** and attended by UK Minister **George Freeman**, it was announced that the two countries will collaborate to establish the **India-UK "NET Zero" Innovation Virtual Centre**. ([Click here to read the article](#))

Books and Authors

- HarperCollins' Fourth Estate will publish a book titled "**Smoke and Ashes: A Writer's Journey Through Opium's Hidden Histories**" by **Amitav Ghosh**. The book is a combination of a memoir, a travelogue, and a deep dive into the economic and cultural history of opium. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- At the end of the 'Saurashtra Tamil Sangam' event, the Prime Minister of India, **Narendra Modi**, revealed a book called '**Saurashtra Tamil Sangam Prashasti**,' authored by Somnath Sanskrit University. The Sangam celebrates the cultural and historical bond between Gujarat and Tamil Nadu, as many people migrated from the Saurashtra region to Tamil Nadu several centuries ago. ([Click here to read the article](#))

- The Union Minister of Finance and Corporate Affairs, **Nirmala Sitharaman**, launched a book called "**Reflections**" in Mumbai. The author of the book is **Narayanan Vaghul**, a well-known banker, and it provides a detailed account of his experiences in the financial landscape of India over several decades. Sitharaman praised Vaghul for his leadership qualities and extensive experience in banking, as well as his contributions to mentoring leaders. She particularly highlighted his ideas and vision for women empowerment, which she believes will continue to be relevant and valuable as more women take on leadership roles in financial services in India. ([Click here to read the article](#))

Banking/Economy/Business News

- **Canara Bank**, in partnership with the **Reserve Bank Innovation Hub (RBIH)**, has introduced a new customer-friendly service called "**Digitalised Submission of Form 15G/15H**," which is aimed at enhancing customer satisfaction. These are self-declaration forms that individuals submit to the bank to avoid the deduction of TDS on interest income, provided their income is below the basic exemption limit. These forms, namely Form 15G (for individuals and HUFs) and Form 15H (for senior citizens), require PAN information to be furnished. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced that it has unified the provisioning norms for standard assets across all categories of **urban cooperative banks (UCBs)**. In December 2020, the RBI had classified UCBs into four tiers, namely tier 1, 2, 3, and 4, for regulatory purposes. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has levied penalties of Rs 44 lakhs on four **cooperative banks** for violating various norms. The penalties are based on deficiencies in regulatory compliance and is not intended to pronounce upon the validity of any transaction or agreement entered into by the banks with their customers, the RBI said. These banks are Tamil Nadu State Apex Co-operative Bank, Bombay Mercantile Co-operative Bank, Janata Sahakari Bank, Baran Nagrik Sahkari Bank. ([Click here to read the article](#))

- **Jupiter, a neobanking startup**, has obtained a non-banking finance company (NBFC) license from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), enabling the company to provide credit from its own resources. According to Jitendra Gupta, the founder of Amica Financial Technologies Ltd., which operates Jupiter, the company will appoint a professional chief executive officer to manage the NBFC operations. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- The state-owned railway company **Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL)** was in focus as the Indian Government upgraded its status to a 'Navratna' Central Public Sector Enterprise (CPSE) from a 'Miniratna' category. The decision to upgrade RVNL was approved by the Finance Minister and is set to take effect from April 26, 2023. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- The **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** has predicted that India will be the world's fastest-growing economy, despite facing significant challenges such as financial turbulence, inflationary pressures, the impact of the **Russia-Ukraine conflict**, and the ongoing effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. According to the IMF's flagship World Economic Outlook report released on April 11th, the Indian economy is forecast to grow by **5.9%** in the current fiscal year. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- The National Payments Corporation of India's (NPCI) subsidiary, NPCI Bharat BillPay Ltd (NBBL), has launched the NOCS platform to provide reconciliation and settlement services for transactions made on the **Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) network**. This platform will serve as the foundation for the ONDC network and enable secure and timely transfer of funds to network participants. ([Click here to read the article](#))



- Reliance General Insurance has made history by becoming the first general insurance company to accept the Reserve Bank of India's **(RBI) Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) e-Rupee (e₹)** for premium payments. The insurer has partnered with YES Bank to facilitate the collection of premiums in digital mode using the bank's e-rupee platform. ([Click here to read the article](#))

Appointments/Resignations

- The legendary wrestler and coach, **Mahavir Singh Phogat** has been appointed as the **Chairman of the MMA-1 Federation**. Mahavir is responsible for promoting mixed martial arts (MMA) in India. As the Chairman of the MMA-1 Federation, Phogat will work towards developing and promoting MMA in India, with a focus on identifying and nurturing young talent in the sport. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **Shreekant M Bhandiwad** has become the new Chairman of **Karnataka Vikas Grameena Bank (KVGB)**, taking over the position from his predecessor. Prior to his appointment, Bhandiwad served as the head of the Patna circle of Canara Bank, and also gained experience working in the CMD's Secretariat at the bank's head office. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **Anant Maheshwari**, the President of Microsoft India, has been appointed as the **Chairperson of Nasscom** for the period 2023-24, succeeding Krishnan Ramanujam, the President of Business and Technology Services at Tata Consultancy Services, who held the position for the year 2022-23. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **Pankaj Singh**, the BJP MLA from Noida and son of Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, has been elected unopposed as **Cycling Federation of India (CFI)** president in the Annual General Body meeting in Nainital. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **Hari Hara Mishra** has been appointed as the new Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the **Association of Asset Reconstruction Companies (ARCs)**. The ARCs are the voice of all Asset Reconstruction Companies in India and have been active for over eight years. Currently, there are 28 ARCs registered with the Reserve Bank of India. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- The government announced the appointment of **Siddhartha Mohanty** as the Chairperson of the **Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC)** until June 29, 2024. Following this, he will serve as the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer until June 7, 2025, as stated by LIC in a release. ([Click here to read the article](#))

Defence News

- Over 3000 participants from 38 countries - including, **the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)** Allies and partners – participated in the 2023 edition of the annual exercise “**Locked Shields**,” hosted by the NATO Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence in Tallinn (Estonia). “Locked Shields” is the world’s largest cyber defence exercise. It started on 18 April 2023 and involved protecting computer systems from real-time attacks and simulating tactical and strategic decisions in critical situations. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **India** initiated **Operation Kaveri** to evacuate its citizens from the unrest-stricken **Sudan**. As per External Affairs Minister **S Jaishankar's** tweet, the operation is currently in progress, and roughly 500 Indians have already arrived at Port Sudan. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- The 7th edition of the joint military exercise “**AJEYA WARRIOR-23**” is currently underway at Salisbury Plains in the United Kingdom from 27 April to 11 May 2023. This biennial training event with the **United Kingdom** alternates between the United Kingdom and India, and the last edition was held in **Chaubatia, Uttarakhand** in October 2021. ([Click here to read the article](#))

Awards and Recognitions

- **Dr Raghu Ram Pillarisetti**, a renowned surgeon, has been awarded the lifetime achievement award by the **Telugu Association of London**. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **Ratan Tata**, the Chairman Emeritus of Tata Sons, has been awarded the **Order of Australia (AO)**, which is Australia's highest civilian honour. The announcement was made by Australia's High Commissioner to India, Barry O'Farrell. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **Alessandra Korap**, an indigenous Munduruku woman from the Brazilian Amazon, has been recognized with a 2023 Goldman Environmental Prize, an esteemed award that acknowledges the efforts of six activists from six continents who work at the grassroots level to safeguard the environment. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **Shakira**, the renowned Colombian singer, will be recognized with the prestigious '**Latin Women of the Year**' award at the inaugural Latin Women in Music gala hosted by Billboard. With her exceptional music contributions spanning over three decades, Shakira has been titled as the '**Queen of Latin Music**'. ([Click here to read the article](#))

- The **Green Organization** has awarded **Power Grid Corporation of India Ltd. (PGCIL)**, a Maharatna CPSU of Ministry of Power, Government of India, with the Global Gold Award for their **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)** work. The recognition was given at the Green World Awards 2023 function held in Miami, USA. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **Neeli Bendapudi**, the current president of Penn State University, is set to receive the **Immigrant Achievement Award** for her significant contributions to higher education in the **United States**. The award recognizes immigrants who have made significant contributions to their communities and professions, and Bendapudi's innovative leadership and extensive career in academia have earned her this prestigious recognition. ([Click here to read the article](#))

Summit and Conference

- The first trilateral consultations between the Foreign Affairs Ministry of **India, Armenia, and Iran** took place in Yerevan. **Mnatsakan Safaryan**, the deputy foreign minister of Armenia, **Seyed Rasoul Mousavi**, the assistant of the foreign minister of Iran, and **JP Singh**, the joint secretary of the Ministry of External Affairs of India, led their respective delegations at the meeting. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- The upcoming **Quad Summit** in Sydney is set to mark a significant milestone in the growing cooperation between the four democracies of the **Indo-Pacific region**. The Quad, comprising the United States, Japan, India, and Australia, has been seeking to promote a free and open Indo-Pacific, with a focus on maritime security, infrastructure development, and economic integration. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** inaugurated and addressed the **One Earth One Health – Advantage Healthcare India – 2023** conference at Pragati Maidan in New Delhi via video conferencing. The conference was attended by health ministers from across the world, as well as delegates from West Asia, SAARC, ASEAN, and African regions. In his address, PM Modi emphasized the importance of holistic healthcare and a healthy ecosystem for human well-being. ([Click here to read the article](#))

- India will host the **Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Summit** in New Delhi On July 3-4, which will be **Russian President Vladimir Putin's** first visit to the country since the conflict in Ukraine. The agenda for the Summit, which is anticipated to centre on counter-terror, Afghan stability, inclusive connectivity efforts including **Chabahar Port & INSTC**, aside from India's extensive outreach to Eurasia, will be finalised at the SCO Foreign Ministers meeting next week in Goa on May 4-5. ([Click here to read the article](#))

Ranks and Reports

- India has made a significant leap on the **World Bank's Logistics Performance Index**, moving up six places to 38th out of 139 countries in the 2023 ranking. This improvement is the result of the country's substantial investments in both hard and soft infrastructure, as well as technology. In 2018, India was ranked 44th on the index, and its current position marks a considerable improvement from its 54th rank in 2014. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- The **Ministry of Jal Shakti** has released the first-ever Census of Water Bodies, which has revealed that **West Bengal** has the highest number of water bodies in India, while **Sikkim** has the lowest. This census has been conducted in convergence with the 6th Minor Irrigation Census under the Irrigation Census scheme launched by the Ministry of Jal Shakti. ([Click here to read the article](#))

Sports News

- Master blaster **Sachin Tendulkar** has turned 50 this year on 24 April and to honour him the iconic **Sydney Cricket Ground** in Australia has unveiled a set of gates named after him. Along with him, the SCG also added the name of another cricketing legend **Brian Lara**, who will be sharing the honour with Sachin Tendulkar. The gates were unveiled to mark Tendulkar's 50th birthday and the 30th anniversary of Lara's 277 at the SCG, in which he scored a century in the test played in January 1993. With this new honour, both the legends will join the league of great **Donald Bradman, Alan Davidson and Arthur Morris**. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- In honor of **Sachin Tendulkar's 50th birthday**, the West Stand at the renowned Sharjah cricket stadium has been renamed as the 'Sachin Tendulkar Stand.' A special ceremony was held on Monday to commemorate the occasion, which coincided not only with the batting icon's birthday but also with the 25th

anniversary of his remarkable performance of scoring back-to-back centuries against Australia in 1998, known as the 'Desert Storm,' in front of a packed stadium. ([Click here to read the article](#))

- Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant announced that Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** will inaugurate the **National Games in Goa** in October 2023. The announcement was made after a meeting between Sawant, State Sports Minister Govind Gaude, and Indian Olympic Association chairperson PT Usha to review preparations for the event. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- Odisha FC** won the **Hero Super Cup 2023** Final by defeating **Bengaluru FC** 2-1. Diego Mauricio scored both goals for Odisha FC, the first one from a free kick in the 23rd minute and the second one in the 37th minute. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- Jaden Pariat**, a young Indian racing talent representing Argenti Motorsport, has demonstrated his exceptional skills by securing a podium position in the opening round of the ROKiT British F4 Championship held at Donington Park. He has become the second Indian racer to achieve an international podium in a Tatuus F4 car, following Kush Maini's feat in 2017. ([Click here to read the article](#))

Schemes and Committess News

- UDAN 5.0**, The Regional Connectivity Scheme, also known as **UDAN**, has entered its fifth stage, with the goal of improving connectivity to the nation's rural and regional communities. The **Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA)** on April 21 began the process of accepting airline proposals for a number of routes under this fifth round of bidding for its regional connectivity scheme **UDAN**. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- Sachin Kumar Jain**, a research scholar at the Indian Institute of Technology-Madras, died by suicide, which has prompted the institute to form an inquiry committee to investigate the matter. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- The **Indian Olympic Association** has announced that a two-member ad-hoc committee consisting of **Bhupender Singh Bajwa**, an IOA executive council member, and Suma Shirur, an accomplished IOA sportsperson, will oversee the **Wrestling Federation of India's** office. Ahead of the WFI's election, a retired **High Court Judge** will also be appointed to the Ad-Hoc Committee to ensure impartial and transparent voting. ([Click here to read the article](#))

Science and Technology News

- **TeLEOS-2 and Lumelite-4**, two Singaporean satellites, were successfully launched into orbit by the dependable Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) while seven other payloads attached to the **PS4 upper stage** were used for experiments, according to the **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)**. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **IIT Kanpur's C3iHub**, a cybersecurity Technology Innovation Hub, has launched a Cybersecurity Skilling Programme with support from the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India, under the National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems (NM-ICPS). ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **Darwin's theory of evolution**: More than 1800 scientists, educators, and scientific enthusiasts in India have criticized the **National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT)** for their decision to eliminate Darwin's theory of evolution from science textbooks for classes 9 and 10. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **NASA scientists** have successfully extracted **oxygen** from simulated lunar soil in a vacuum environment, which could pave the way for future human colonies on the **Moon**. The ability to extract oxygen from lunar soil is crucial for providing breathable air for astronauts and can also be used as propellant for transportation and space exploration. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **Sara**, the world's first robotic check-in assistant, has been unveiled by **Dubai-based airline Emirates**. Sara is part of a new City Check-in and Travel Store which recently opened in Dubai's financial district. The robot uses facial recognition technology to match customer's faces with scanned passports, check them in, and guide them to the luggage drop area. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- The **SHUNYA** team from the **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay** earned the second position in the Solar Decathlon Build Challenge held in the US. They designed a zero-energy house to tackle air pollution issues in Mumbai's hot and humid climate. SHUNYA is a group of students from **IIT Bombay** who are committed to creating a sustainable future. ([Click here to read the article](#))

Important Days News

- **World Book and Copyright Day** is observed on **April 23** every year to promote reading books, particularly among the younger generation. **The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)** initiated this event with the aim of combating the reduced importance given to reading due to the excessive availability of information from various sources. The theme for World Book Day 2023 is **'Indigenous Languages.'** It focuses on promoting the diversity in native languages of a country. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **The International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace** is celebrated annually on **24 April**. The Day acknowledges the use of multilateral decision making and diplomacy in achieving peaceful resolutions to conflicts among nations. This day aims to promote the principles of multilateralism and diplomacy in resolving global challenges and conflicts. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **World Immunization Week**, celebrated in the last week of April, aims to highlight the collective action needed to protect people from vaccine-preventable diseases. The aim of this week is to increase awareness around the benefits of immunization and also to encourage people to get vaccinated. This year the day is observed from April 24th to April 30th and is an important effort to help prevent the spread of deadly diseases around the world. The theme for this year's World Immunization Week is **"The Big Catch-Up"** and aims to emphasize the need for countries to accelerate their progress towards ensuring that everyone, particularly children are protected from preventable diseases. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- The **Government of India**, in collaboration with the **Government of Madhya Pradesh**, will commemorate **National Panchayati Raj Day** on **April 24, 2023**, at **Rewa** in **Madhya Pradesh**. The event is part of the **Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (AKAM) - Samaaveshi Vikaas (Inclusive Development)** campaign, which aims to celebrate people's participation in the saturation of people-centric schemes. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **World Malaria Day (WMD)** is an international observance commemorated every year on **25 April** and recognizes global efforts to control malaria. The aim of World Malaria Day is to raise awareness of the devastating impact of malaria and to mobilize resources and support for malaria control and

prevention programs in endemic countries. World Malaria Day 2023 will be marked under the theme "Time to deliver zero malaria: invest, innovate, implement". ([Click here to read the article](#))

- **Every year on April 25th, International Delegate's Day** is observed to pay tribute to the delegates who are an integral part of the United Nations (UN) and play a significant role in its functioning. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **World Day for Laboratory Animals on April 24th** advocates for the end of the suffering of animals in laboratories, and their replacement with advanced scientific non-animal techniques. Laboratory animals are used for biomedical research to discover the causes, diagnoses, and treatments of diseases, in the cosmetics industry, and more. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **International Chernobyl Disaster Remembrance Day** is observed on **April 26**, annually, in memory and honour of those who lost their lives. Below are some of the key facts about the disaster. It is a day that will eternally be associated with the tragic day that the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant, formally known as the Vladimir Lenin Nuclear Power Plant, experienced a systems test malfunction. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **World Intellectual Property Day** is marked on **April 26th** with the objective of raising awareness about the impact that patents, copyrights, trademarks, and designs have on our daily lives. The 2023 World Intellectual Property Day theme is focused on **Women and IP: Accelerating Innovation and Creativity**. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **International Girls in ICT Day** is an annual event celebrated on the **fourth Thursday of April** to encourage and empower girls and young women to explore and pursue careers in the field of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). This year, it is being observed on **April 27** with the theme "**Digital Skills for Life**". ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **April 28** marks the global observance of **World Day for Safety and Health at Work 2023**, aiming to raise awareness regarding the significance of safeguarding workers against occupational hazards, illnesses, and accidents. The International Labour Organization (ILO) selects the theme for World Day for Safety and Health at Work, and for this year, it is "**A safe and healthy working environment as a fundamental principle and right at work**." ([Click here to read the article](#))

- **World Dance Day**, which occurs every year on **April 29th**, is a yearly celebration of dance that aims to increase awareness about its importance in diverse cultures and societies worldwide. The event, also known as **International Dance Day**, honors the birth anniversary of **Jean-Georges Noverre**, a French dancer and ballet instructor recognized as the father of contemporary ballet, and encourages the promotion of this artistic expression. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **World Veterinary Day** is an annual event celebrated on the **last Saturday of April** to increase awareness about the important work of veterinarians in promoting animal health, welfare, and public health. This year, the event falls on **April 29th**. This year's theme for World Veterinary Day 2023 is "**Promoting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusiveness in the Veterinary Profession**". ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)** has designated **April 30th** as **International Jazz Day** to bring attention to jazz and its ability to unite people worldwide in a diplomatic manner. ([Click here to read the article](#))

Obituaries

- **Tarek Fatah**, a Pakistani-Canadian journalist who referred to himself as a "**Midnight's Child**" due to being born shortly after Pakistan's independence in 1949, has passed away from cancer at the age of 73. Fatah was recognized for his critiques of Islamic extremism and the Pakistani establishment, as well as his support for queer rights. After his parents migrated from Bombay to Karachi, he was born and later attended the University of Karachi where he studied biochemistry and became a leftist activist before eventually transitioning into journalism. Fatah's daughter confirmed his death on social media. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **Parkash Singh Badal**, a former Chief Minister of Punjab and leader of the Akali Dal, has passed away at the age of 95 in Mohali. He started his political career as a village sarpanch and went on to contest assembly elections for the first time in 1957 as a member of the Congress party. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **Trilochan Kanungo**, a prominent economist and a long-standing member of the **Biju Janata Dal (BJD) party**, has died at the age of 82. Mr. Kanungo was previously the chairman of Cuttack Municipality and served as the chairperson of the state finance commission. ([Click here to read the article](#))

- Popular Malayalam actor **Mamukkoya** passed away. He was 76 years old. He made his acting debut in the theatre in 1979. Before that, he worked in a timber mill in Kozhikode. In his four-decade-long career, Mamukkoya acted in over 450 Malayalam films. He also appeared in a French film titled Flammens of Paradise. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- Uttarakhand minister **Chandan Ram Dass** passed away at the state's Bageshwar district hospital. Dass, MLA (member of legislative assembly) from Bageshwar constituency, held the portfolio of social welfare and transport. The Uttarakhand government has decided to close all offices of the state government for a day. ([Click here to read the article](#))

Miscellaneous News

- Fit India Champion, **Arjun Vajpai** has achieved a significant feat by becoming the first Indian man to reach the summit of Mt. Annapurna 1. This mountain, located in Nepal, is the tenth highest peak in the world, standing at an elevation of 8,091 metres (26,545 ft) above sea level. ([Click here to read the article](#))

Static Takeaways

- UNESCO Director-General, Audrey Azoulay;
- UNESCO Headquarters: Paris, France;
- UNESCO Founded: 16 November 1945.
- World Veterinary Association President: Rafael Laguens;
- World Veterinary Association Founded: 1863;
- World Veterinary Association HQ: Brussels, Belgium.
- Mongolia capital: Ulaanbaatar
- Mongolia Prime Minister: Luvsannamsrain Oyun-Erdene
- Mongolia currency: Tugrik

- RBI Founded: 1 April 1935, Kolkata;
- RBI Governor: Shaktikanta Das;
- RBI HQ: Mumbai.
- Nasscom Founders: Dewang Mehta, Nandan Nilekani;
- Nasscom Founded: 1 March 1988;
- Nasscom President: Debjani Ghosh;
- Nasscom Type of business: Non-governmental trade association;
- Nasscom Headquarters: Noida, Uttar Pradesh.
- NATO Founded: 4 April 1949, Washington, D.C., United States;
- NATO Founders: United States, United Kingdom, France, Canada, Italy;
- NATO Headquarters: Brussels, Belgium;
- NATO Secretary General: Jens Stoltenberg.
- International Labour Organization Founded: 1919;
- International Labour Organization Director-general: Gilbert Houngbo;
- International Labour Organization Headquarters: Geneva, Switzerland.
- International Theatre Institute Headquarters: Paris, France
- International Theatre Institute Founded: 1948.

