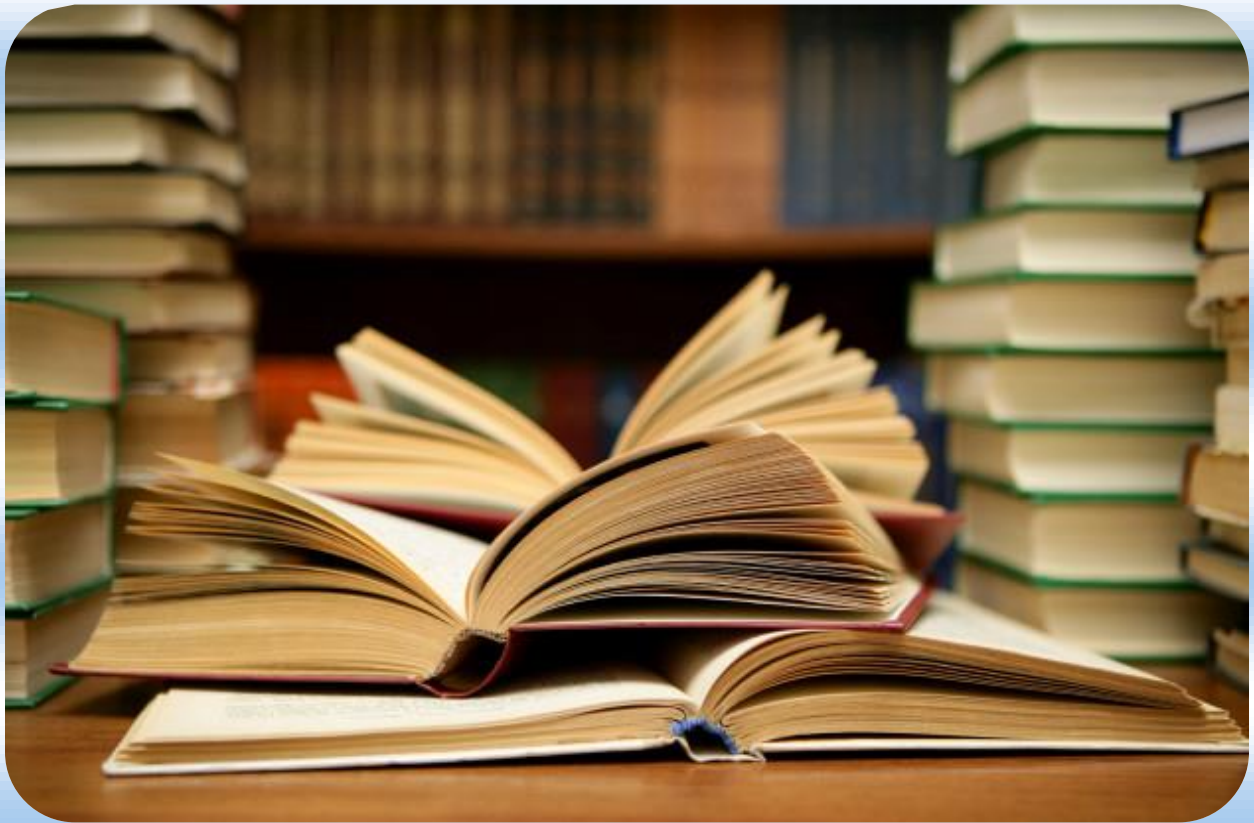


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GENERAL KNOWLEDGE MONTHLY



APRIL-2023

NATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

Himachal Pradesh's Kangra tea gets European GI tag

SHIMLA: Famous for its distinct flavour, Kangra tea will soon get a Geographical Indication (GI) tag from the European Commission. This will open the European markets for the product. A government spokesman said in 2005, Kangra tea was accorded the status of Geographical Indication Tag in India. The development and cultivation of Kangra tea is being promoted and looked after by four departments Tea Board of India Regional office Palampur, cooperative and agriculture departments of the state and CSIR, IHBT Palampur and Chaudhary Sarwan Kumar Agriculture University, Palampur.

India, Malaysia can now trade in Indian rupee

India and Malaysia can now use the Indian rupee to settle trade in addition to other currencies, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Saturday. The move follows the decision by the Reserve Bank of India in July last year to allow the settlement of international trade in Indian currency. "Trade between India and Malaysia can now be settled in Indian Rupee (INR) in addition to the current modes of settlement in other currencies," the MEA said.

India Post Payments Bank launches 'WhatsApp Banking Services'

The Airtel-IPPB WhatsApp Banking solution aims to provide multi-language support, making bank services more accessible to customers. India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) on Friday launched 'WhatsApp Banking Services' in collaboration with Airtel, which will allow the IPPB customers to access banking services on their mobile phones. According to the Union ministry of communications, the move is aligned with the government's objective of promoting digital and financial inclusion among citizens in their language.

Sheenu Jhavar becomes the first woman President of TiE Rajasthan

Jaipur (Rajasthan) [India], April 1 (ANI/PNN): TiE Rajasthan announced Dr Sheenu Jhavar as its new President for the two-year term 2023-2025. She is the first woman in the 21 years history of TiE Rajasthan to assume this responsibility. Dr Jhavar took charge from Dr Ravi Modani who was successfully leading the chapter since 2021. During the biennial leadership transition ceremony, Dr Jhavar informed that India has the third largest number of unicorns in the world, and within India - Jaipur stands as the first tier 2 city.

Bank of Maharashtra inaugurates its first dedicated Branch for Start-ups at Pune

Mumbai (Maharashtra) [India], April 1 (ANI/PNN): Bank of Maharashtra (BoM), a premier public sector bank in the country, has inaugurated its first dedicated Branch for start-ups at Pune. A S Rajeev, MD & CEO, Bank of Maharashtra and Prashant Girbane, Director General, Mahratta Chamber of Commerce, Industries and Agriculture (MCCIA) inaugurated the Start-up Branch at FC Road, Yashomangal, Pune City Zonal Office.



PhonePe launches new shopping app Pincode on ONDC

PhonePe launched a new shopping app called "Pincode," which is built on top of the ONDC platform. The app will focus on hyperlocal e-commerce and is now available for download on the Google Play Store and App Store. Currently, the app is live only for customers in Bengaluru and will be launched in other cities soon, said the company in a press release. It aims to promote local shopkeepers and sellers and hopes to digitally connect consumers with all the neighbourhood stores that they usually buy from offline.



Dhoni, Yuvraj inducted with the MCC honorary life membership

Former India World Cup winning captain MS Dhoni and the 2011 ODI World Cup Player of the tournament, Yuvraj Singh were named among the five Indians to have been inducted with the Marylebone Cricket Club's (MCC) honorary life membership on Wednesday. "We are thrilled to be able to announce our newest cohort of Honorary Life Members of MCC, as we prepare for the new international summer.

India become world's second-largest solar manufacturer by 2026

With 110 gigawatts (GW) of solar photovoltaic (PV) module capacity set to come online in the next three years, India will become self-sufficient and will be the second-largest PV manufacturing country after China, says a new joint report from the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis (IEEFA) and JMK Research and Analytics.



India to chair Commonwealth group on reform of financial architecture

Finance ministers from various Commonwealth countries have called for a systemic reform of the global financial architecture to enhance access to development financing for vulnerable countries.



Axis Bank, Shriram Housing Finance announce partnership for co-lending

New Delhi: Private sector lender Axis Bank and Shriram Housing Finance Limited (SHFL) on Thursday announced partnership under the co-lending model through the Yubi Co.Lend platform. Through this partnership, both the lenders will offer secured MSME (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises) loans and home loans to the middle and low-income segment borrowers based in rural and semi-urban regions, a joint statement said.

India's 2nd largest cricket stadium to come up in city

Jaipur: World's third and India's second largest cricket stadium is going to be built in Jaipur, for which a MoU will be signed between Rajasthan Cricket Association (RCA) and Vedanta's Hindustan Zinc (HZL) in a function to be held at the RCA Academy here on Thursday. On the occasion of Invest Rajasthan Summit 2022, organized by Rajasthan Government, Anil Agarwal, chairman, Vedanta Group, had announced cooperation in the International Cricket Stadium being constructed by RCA.

Nita Mukesh Ambani Cultural Centre opens in Mumbai. All you need to know about NMACC

Nita Mukesh Ambani Cultural Centre was inaugurated on Friday in Mumbai. Nita Ambani performed traditional puja on Ramnavmi on Thursday to seek the Almighty's blessings on the eve of the launch of Nita Mukesh Ambani Cultural Centre (NMACC). Several Bollywood and Hollywood celebrities marked the 2-day long event.



Sportiqo launches new digital campaign 'Khel On, Trade On' with brand ambassador Robin Uthappa

With the IPL fever gripping the country, Sportiqo, a blockchain-based fantasy sports platform has announced the launch of its first digital campaign featuring cricketer Robin Uthappa. As per the company, the campaign is aimed at promoting Sportiqo's sports solutions and engaging with sports enthusiasts worldwide. The digital campaign, titled, "Khel On. Trade On," will showcase Uthappa highlighting the company's products and services and how one can learn about financial trading by applying their skills and knowledge of their favourite sport.

Delhi Airport Ranked as World's 9th Busiest In 2022

New Delhi: Delhi airport has emerged as the ninth busiest airport in the world in 2022 with passenger traffic of more than 5.94 crore, according to Airports Council International (ACI) list. DIAL is the operator of the Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) in the national capital.



RBI issues detailed norms for outsourcing of IT services by banks, NBFCs

Mumbai: Reserve Bank of India came out with detailed norms for outsourcing of IT services by banks, NBFCs and regulated financial sector entities to ensure that such arrangements do not undermine their responsibilities and obligations to customers. In its 'Master Direction on Outsourcing of Information Technology Services', RBI said that Regulated Entities (REs) have been extensively leveraging IT and IT-enabled Services (ITeS) to support their business models, products and services offered to their customers.

Bill banning online gambling gets Tamil Nadu Guv's nod despite Centre's new gaming rules

Hours after Tamil Nadu's legislative assembly passed a resolution against its Governor RN Ravi for indefinitely withholding assent to several bills, he gave his assent to the state government's Bill banning online gambling. Stakeholders from the online gaming sector – who were earlier miffed with the Bill – have said that they will mount a legal challenge against it after it is notified.

ICICI Bank introduces EMI facility for UPI payments by scanning QR

ICICI Bank today announced that it has introduced easy EMI facility for UPI payments made by scanning QR code. Customers eligible for PayLater, the Bank's 'buy now, pay later' service can avail of the EMI facility in an instant, easy and seamless manner. This first-of-its-kind facility enhances affordability of lakhs of the Bank's customers as they can now instantly buy products or services just by scanning the required merchant QR code at a store and making payments in EMIs.

Country's first 3D-printed post office coming up in Bengaluru

Bengaluru will soon have India's first post office constructed using 3D printing technology. The project at Cambridge Layout in Ulsoor is being implemented by Larsen & Toubro, which has experience in constructing 3D-printed buildings. According to S Rajendra Kumar, chief postmaster general of the Karnataka circle.



HDFC Bank signs agreement with Export Import Bank of Korea for \$300 million credit line

HDFC Bank on Wednesday announced that it has signed a "Master Inter Bank Credit Agreement" with Export Import Bank of Korea for a USD 300 million line of credit. The pact was signed by the two entities at GIFT City in Gujarat's capital Gandhinagar on Wednesday, said a release by the HDFC Bank. This agreement will help HDFC Bank raise foreign currency funds which it would extend to Korea-related businesses, said the release.

India's economic growth projected to decelerate to 6% in 2023 from 6.6% in 2022: UN

By Yoshita Singh United Nations, India's economic growth is projected to decelerate to 6 per cent in 2023 from 6.6 per cent in 2022, according to the United Nations. The UN Trade and Development Conference (UNCTAD) in its latest Trade and Development Report Update released Wednesday expects global growth in 2023 to drop to 2.1%, compared to the 2.2% projected in September 2022, assuming the financial fallout from higher interest rates.

Kolkata Metro runs through tunnel below Hooghly, first in India to complete under-river journey

Kolkata Metro Wednesday (April 12) became the first metro rail in the country to make an under-river journey as its rakes passed through an underwater tunnel below the Hooghly river. Kolkata Metro general manager P Uday Kumar Reddy travelled from Mahakaran to Howrah Maidan station in rake No. MR-612, which crossed the Hooghly river at 11:55 am.



Rajasthan's Nandini Gupta on winning Miss India 2023

Nandini Gupta, a 19-year-old girl from Rajasthan, was recently crowned Miss India 2023 at the Grand Finale event held in Imphal, Manipur. After emerging victorious at the 59th edition of the beauty pageant, Nandini will now prepare to represent the country at the Miss World contest. Expressing her happiness and gratitude over the win, she penned a heartfelt note on social media.



Rabada becomes fastest to pick 100 IPL wickets

Kagiso Rabada of Punjab Kings picked his 100th IPL (Indian Premier League) wicket against Gujarat Titans at the IS Bindra Stadium on Thursday and became the fastest bowler to reach the mark in terms of matches played. The right-arm pacer completed the milestone in his 64th IPL match with the wicket of Wriddhiman Saha, going well clear of Lasith Malinga, who picked his 100th wicket in his 70th match.



Assam's Bihu dance creates history, enters Guinness Book of World Records

Assam created history and marked its entry in the Guinness Book of World Records on Thursday, with more than 11000 dancers and drummers performing 'Bihu' dance and playing 'dhol' in a single venue. As per the reports, all the performers, including drummers and dancers, participated at the Sarusajai Stadium in Guwahati in the State Government's bid to register its world record in the Guinness Book.

MRF second strongest tyre brand in the world: Brand Finance report

MRF Ltd has emerged as the second-strongest tyre brand in the world according to the latest report by Brand Finance on the 'Most Valuable and Strongest Tyre Brands' in the world. MRF has scored high in almost all parameters and is also featured as the second fastest-growing tyre brand in the world. It has scored 83.2 out of 100 in brand strength and was awarded a AAA- brand rating.

Indian Railways earns record revenue of Rs 2.40 trillion in 2022-23

The Indian Railways has registered record revenue of Rs 2.40 lakh crore for the financial year 2022-23, which is nearly Rs 49,000 crore more than the previous year, reflecting a 25 per cent growth, according to an official statement. Indian Railways' passenger revenue has also registered an all-time high growth of 61 per cent to reach at Rs 63,300 Crore, it said. During this financial year 2022-23, freight revenue too has leapfrogged to Rs 1.62 lakh crore, a growth of nearly 15 per cent on the previous year.

CBI summons Arvind Kejriwal for questioning on April 16 in Delhi excise case

Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal has been summoned by the CBI on Sunday (April 16) for questioning in the Delhi excise policy case. The summons comes as AAP leader and former Delhi deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia is in jail in connection with the same case and the investigative agencies have made several arrests. Kejriwal has also received a summon from the Goa Police regarding a case of an alleged defacement of public property for which he will have to be present for questioning on April 27.

SBI reintroduces 400 days 'Amrit Kalash' retail term deposit scheme

State Bank of India has reintroduced retail term deposit scheme 'Amrit Kalash' of 400 days tenure at 7.10 per cent interest rate. The scheme is available from April 12, 2023 till June 30, 2023. Senior citizens will get additional interest of 50 basis points on the scheme. India's largest bank had first floated this scheme on February 15, 2023. It was valid up to March-end 2023.

Highways Authority Enables FASTag-Based Payments at Forest Entry Points

New Delhi: The authorities of Nagarjunasagar-Srisaillam Tiger Reserve spread across the states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana and NHAI's subsidiary Indian Highways Management Company have signed an agreement on Friday. This MoU between the two parties will pave a way to facilitate seamless and efficient entry process for vehicles entering into the forest area.



WTO panel rules against India's import duties on ICT products

The dispute panel of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) on Monday said the import duties imposed by India on certain information and communication technology (ICT) products violates global trading norms, a decision which New Delhi will challenge at the appellate body of the Geneva-based multilateral organisation. The ruling followed a dispute filed by the European Union, Japan and Taiwan against these duties in the WTO.

INTERNATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

Finland Becomes 31st NATO Member After Turkey's Approval

Finland will become the 31st member of Nato after Turkey's parliament voted to approve its application. Turkey had delayed Finland's bid to join the West's defensive alliance for months - complaining the Nordic nation was supporting "terrorists". Sweden, which applied to join Nato at the same time last May, is still being blocked by Ankara over similar complaints. Any Nato expansion needs the support of all its members.

Indian-origin robotics engineer to head NASA's newly-established Moon to Mars Programme

Amit Kshatriya, a decorated Indian-American software and robotics engineer was appointed as the first head of NASA's newly-established Moon to Mars Programme that will help the agency ensure a long-term lunar presence needed to prepare for humanity's next giant leap to the Red Planet. Kshatriya will serve as NASA's first head of the office, with immediate effect, the agency announced on Thursday.



Britain forges biggest trading deal since Brexit, set to join trans-Pacific pact

The UK will join an 11-nation Indo-Pacific free-trade bloc, becoming the first new member since its creation, in a bid to strengthen economic ties with new partners following divorce from the European Union. Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's government sees membership of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, which includes Australia, Japan and Canada, as a boost for economic growth and geopolitical relations.



China announces 'renaming' of 11 places in Arunachal Pradesh

In its latest attempt to lay claim to areas inside the Indian territory, the Chinese government on Sunday announced it would “standardise” the names of 11 places in Arunachal Pradesh. Releasing a list of the 11 places along with a map that shows parts of Arunachal Pradesh instead as inside the southern Tibetan region, that China refers to as Zangnan, the Chinese Ministry of Civil Affairs even included a town close to the Arunachal Pradesh capital of Itanagar. This is Beijing’s third such list on Arunachal Pradesh, attempting to “rename” places by giving them what it calls “standardised geographical names”. In 2017, the Chinese Ministry of Civilian Affairs put out a similar list of six places, and in December 2021.

After ChatGPT, Italy plans to ban English language

Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni's party have proposed a draft bill in the parliament that would impose fines of up to €100,000 on public and private entities that use foreign terms, particularly English, instead of Italian in official communications. This comes a day after Italy said it was temporarily blocking ChatGPT over data privacy concerns, the first western country to take such action against the popular artificial intelligence (AI) chatbot.

OPEC members announce cut in oil production exceeding one million barrels per day from next month

Saudi Arabia and other OPEC+ oil producers on Sunday announced further oil output cuts of around 1.16 million barrels per day, in a surprise move that analysts said would cause an immediate rise in prices and the United States called inadvisable. The pledges bring the total volume of cuts by OPEC+, which groups the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries with Russia and other allies, to 3.66 million bpd according to Reuters calculations.



New Zealand's Kim Cotton becomes first female umpire to officiate men's T20I match

New Zealand's Kim Cotton on Wednesday became the first woman on-field umpire in a full-member men's T20I during New Zealand's second match against Sri Lanka in Dunedin. Cotton, 48, has previously officiated in 54 women's T20Is, both as an on-field and TV umpire, besides 24 women's ODIs since 2018. Cotton first marked her presence in the men's game as a TV umpire in 2020 during a tied contest between India and New Zealand in Hamilton.

Nepal becomes founding member of International Big Cats Alliance

Nepal has become a founding member of the International Big Cats Alliance. During the launch of the alliance under India's initiative, Minister for Energy Shakti Bahadur Basnet handed over the letter mentioning Nepal will be associated with the alliance as a founding member to Indian Minister for Forest and Climate Change Bhupendra Yadav. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday launched the alliance aimed at the conservation of seven big cats namely tiger, lion, leopard, snow leopard, cheetah, jaguar and puma.



Historic! US, not China, is now India's largest trading partner as New Delhi's exports grow; bilateral trade crosses USD 128 billion

The United States has emerged as India's biggest trading partner in the fiscal year 2022-23 as New Delhi and Washington continue to strengthen their economic ties. During the same fiscal, India's mutual trade with China slipped by 1.5%. The provisional data released by India's Commerce Ministry shows that bilateral trade between the two countries increased by 7.65% to USD 128.55 billion in 2022-23 from USD 119.5 billion in 2021-22.

Melbourne overtakes Sydney as Australia's most populous city

Sydney has long been Australia's most populous city, but last week, Melbourne officially overtook it – thanks to a quirk in how the figures are counted. Melbourne's population was 4,875,400 at the country's most recent census in 2021, while there were 18,700 fewer people in Sydney, according to data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) which returns Melbourne to the mantle of Australia's most populous city, a title it last held in 1905.



India-born academic named in task force to expand US-India univ partnerships

Indian-origin academic Neeli Bendapudi has been appointed as one of five co-chairs of an Association of American Universities (AAU) task force focused on the expansion of research and academic partnerships among higher education institutions in the US and India. Seen as a "natural fit" for the task force, Bendapudi, who is the president of the Pennsylvania State University, comes with a 30-year career as a leader in higher education and business, a Pennsylvania State University release said.

With over 133 mn fans, Elon Musk now the most-followed person on Twitter

Billionaire Elon Musk, who is the second richest man in the world with a fortune worth \$193+ billion, is now the most-followed person on Twitter, a company he acquired a few months ago. The 51-year-old has dethroned former US President Barack Obama to become the most-followed celebrity on the micro-blogging site. While he has exactly 133,092,775 followers (at the time of writing this article), Obama is a close second with 133,040,842 followers.



Ghana becomes first country to approve Oxford malaria vaccine for children

Ghana has become the first country in the world to approve an effective malaria vaccine developed at Oxford University. The R21/Matrix-M vaccine, the first to exceed the World Health Organization (WHO)'s target of 75 per cent efficacy, has been approved for use in children aged 5-36 months, the group most at risk of malaria death. "It is hoped that this first crucial step will enable the vaccine to help Ghanaian and African children to effectively combat malaria," the University said in a statement.

Bangladesh all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan named ICC Player of the Month for March

NEW DELHI: Bangladesh's star all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan has been named ICC Player of the Month awards for March 2023 by the International Cricket Council (ICC) on Wednesday while Rwanda's Henriette Ishimwe bagged the ICC Women's Player of the Month awards "Shakib won the ICC Men's Player of the Month award for the second time after series-winning exploits against England and Ireland," the ICC stated in a media release. Shakib Al Hasan.

India elected to UN Statistical Commission, other key UN subsidiary bodies

India was elected by the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) as a member of the UN Statistical Commission, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, and the Programme Coordinating Board of the Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). In a significant victory, India was overwhelmingly elected to the UN Statistical Commission, returning to the world organisation's highest statistical body after a gap of two decades in a "competitive" election.

Aleksander Ceferin re-elected UEFA president unopposed until 2027

Aleksander Ceferin was re-elected unopposed for a third term of four years as president of UEFA at a meeting of European football's governing body in Lisbon on Wednesday. The 55-year-old Slovenian lawyer, first elected in 2016 following the downfall of Frenchman Michel Platini, will now remain in the role until 2027. UEFA president urges tougher action on abuse of players "I would like to thank you from the bottom of my heart for your unanimous support.

