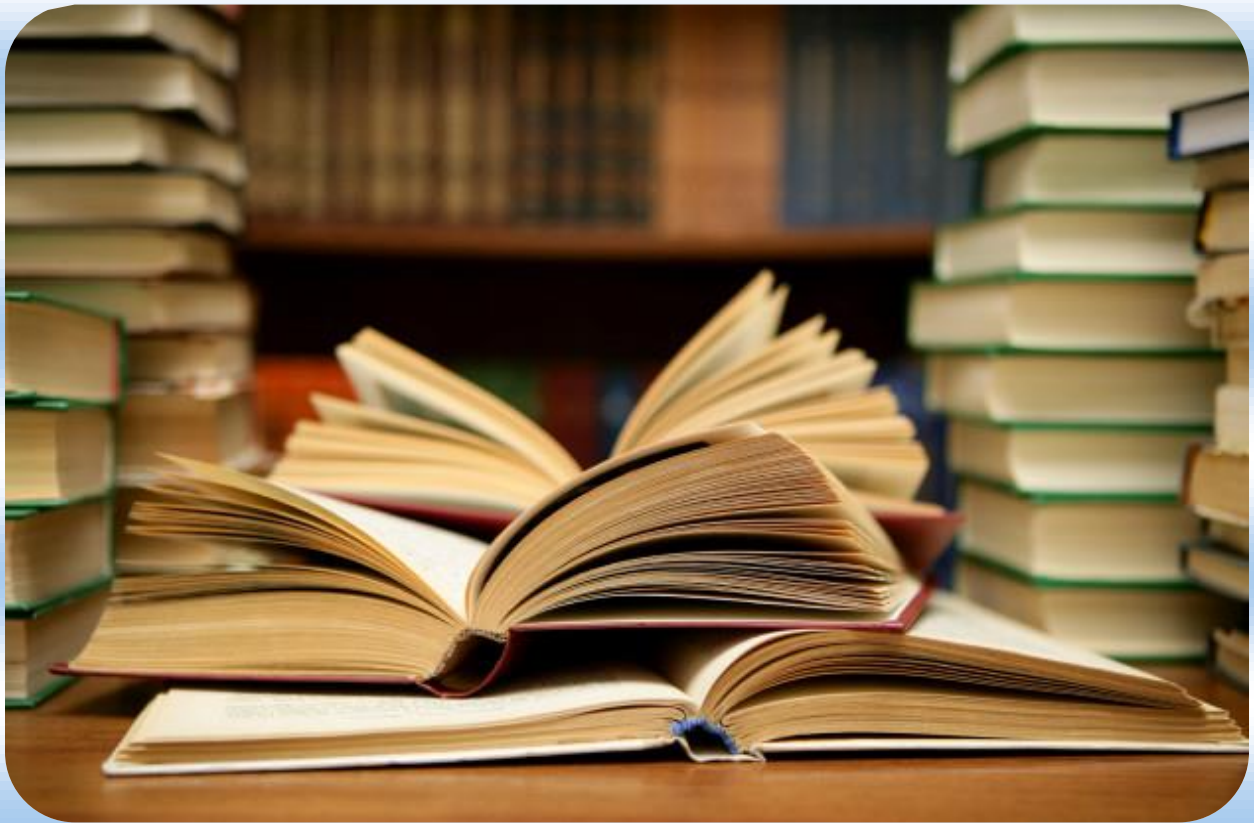


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GENERAL KNOWLEDGE MONTHLY



JUNE-2023

NATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

Meghalaya Forms Expert Panel to Review Reservation Formula; Opposition Leader Ends Hunger Strike

THE Meghalaya government has notified an expert committee to review the state's 1972 reservation policy, seen as "unfair" to the state's Khasi community. The Conrad Sangma government was under pressure from a hunger strike called by Ardent Basaiawmoit, the president of the Voice of the People's Party (VPP) in Meghalaya, which had begun to attract support of various political parties and Khasi civil society groups.

J.P. Morgan Raises India's FY24 GDP Forecast to 5.5% Amidst Global Economic Concerns

(Reuters) -J.P.Morgan raised its forecast for India's annual growth by 50 basis points to 5.5% for fiscal 2024, but warned that a global economic slowdown and tighter financial conditions will still drag the economy.



GST Revenue Collection for May Up 12% YoY at Rs 1.57 Lakh Crore

The revenue from Goods and Services Tax (GST) crossed Rs 1.57 lakh crore- mark in May for the fifth time since inception of GST, Ministry of Finance said on June 1. At Rs 1.57 lakh crore, the GST collected in May is lower than April's record Rs 1.87 lakh crore. However, the government has collected monthly GST revenues more than Rs 1.4 lakh crore for 14 months in a row now. Compared to May 2022, the latest GST collections figure is up 12 percent.

UPI Transactions Reach Record High of Rs 14.3 Trillion in May 2023

Unified Payment Interface (UPI) transactions in May scaled a new high of Rs 14.3 trillion in terms of value and 9.41 billion in volume. It is a 2 per cent rise in value (Rs 14.07 trillion) and 6 per cent in volume (8.89 billion) compared to April. Transactions worth around Rs 3.96 trillion happened in the last ten days of May, according to data from the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI). Compared to May in Financial Year 2022-23, transaction volume increased by 58 per cent and value by 37 per cent.

City Investments to Innovate, Integrate and Sustain 2.0 (CITIIS 2.0) from 2023 to 2027

The government on Wednesday approved the second phase of the City Investments to Innovate, Integrate and Sustain (CITIIS) project, a programme under the ambit of the Smart Cities Mission, which aims to promote integrated waste management and climate-oriented reform actions. The CITIIS 2.0 will be implemented in 18 cities which would be selected based on a competition.

Microsoft joins Indian govt to train 6K students, 200 educators in cybersecurity skills

New Delhi, Microsoft on Thursday signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Directorate General of Training (DGT) under the Ministry of Skills Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) to train 6,000 students and 200 educators in digital and cybersecurity skills in the country. As part of this collaboration with, Microsoft will offer a wide range of courses, including training in AI, cloud computing, web development and cybersecurity skills for students.

India Defeat Pakistan To Become Hockey Junior Asia Cup Champions

The Indian Junior Men's Hockey Team reigned supreme as it beat nemesis Pakistan 2-1 in a thrilling Final match of the Men's Junior Asia Cup 2023 here in Salalah, Oman. Early goals by Angad Bir Singh (13') and Arajjeet Singh Hundal (20') ensured India remained in command of the game while some outstanding saves by goalkeeper Shashikumar Mohith Honnenahalli kept India in the lead throughout the match.



Coromandel Express Derails and Collides with Two Other Trains in Odisha

A little after 6. 50pm on Friday, Shalimar-Chennai Coromandel Express (12841) should have passed the stationary goods train in the loop line to its left. But it didn't. A route relay interlocking system error that controls the changing of tracks meant that Coromandel did not switch to the second track at the interchange but hurtled on and rammed into the freight train at express speed.

RBI Launches '100 Days 100 Pays' Campaign to Settle Unclaimed Deposits

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on June 1 launched a '100 Days 100 Pays' campaign to trace and settle the top 100 unclaimed deposits of every bank in every district within 100 days. As of February end, the total amount of so-called unclaimed deposits, which are accounts that have not been operated for 10 years or more, transferred to the RBI by state-run banks was Rs 35,012 crore, the central bank said earlier.

Dubai Emerges as India's Top Choice for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)

Dubai, a favourite destination among tourists and shopping aficionados, is becoming the top choice among Indian investors. Dubai ranks No. 1 as the Destination City for foreign direct investment (FDI) from India in calendar year 2022. According to the Dubai FDI Monitor, India ranked among the Top 5 source countries for announced FDI projects and estimated FDI capital in calendar year 2022. India accounted for 12 percent of announced FDI projects in Dubai in 2022. Only the US (20 percent) and UK (13 percent) are ahead of India.

Shalini Singh becomes the first female NCC cadet to complete mountaineering course

Shalini Singh created history by becoming the first female NCC cadet in India to complete the mountaineering course in the Himalayan region in Uttarakhand. After completing the mandatory basic mountaineering course, Shalini was enrolled in the 67 UP battalion.



Sunil Kumar wins decathlon gold at Asian U20 Athletics Championship

India's Sunil Kumar scored 7003 points and clinched gold in men's decathlon at the Asian U20 Athletics Championships in Yecheon, South Korea on Tuesday. Apart from Sunil's heroics, Pooja clinched women's high jump silver after finishing with a 1.82m jump while Bushra Khan, secured silver in women's 3000m race.



World Bank cuts 2023 global growth forecast to 2.1% in 2023 after growing 3.1% in 2022

The World Bank (WB) said in a report on June 6 that the global economy is in a precarious situation and heading for a substantial growth slowdown as sharp interest-rate increases has hit activity and stirred the vulnerabilities in lower-income countries. That's the latest outlook of the World Bank, a 189-country anti-poverty agency, which estimates that the international economy will expand just 2.1 per cent in 2023 after growing 3.1 per cent in 2022.

RBI permits banking units at IFSC to settle Non-deliverable foreign exchange derivative contracts (NDDCs) in rupee

The Reserve Bank of India said it has permitted banks operating International Financial Services Centre (IFSC) to offer non-deliverable derivatives contracts utilising rupees to resident non-retail users for hedging. The step has been taken in order to develop the onshore rupee non-deliverable derivatives contract market and to provide residents with the flexibility to efficiently plan their hedging activities, the RBI announced on its website on Tuesday.

Foundation stone of ONGC National Disaster Mitigation Centre was launched in Jammu

State-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) on Tuesday said it is funding the construction of a National Disaster Mitigation Centre and Yatri Niwas in Sidhra in Jammu to ease logistic challenges for tourists and pilgrims. "This ONGC-funded Yatri Niwas will solve this logistical challenge to a large extent, by providing accommodation for 30,000 tourists in a year, thus staggering the movement of tourists and pilgrims," the firm said in a statement.



RBI issues updated list of entities not authorized to deal in forex transactions

The Reserve Bank (RBI) Wednesday said it has added eight more entities or platforms or websites to the alert list of unauthorised forex trading platforms. The new additions to the alert list of unauthorised forex trading platforms include QFX Markets, 2Win Trade, Guru Trade7 Ltd, Bric Trade, Rubik Trade, Dream Trade, Mini Trade and Trust Trade, the RBI said in a statement.

Google Pay introduces UPI verification through Aadhaar

Google Pay has introduced UPI verification via Aadhaar card. The new feature will allow customers to register for Unified Payments Interface (UPI) without the need of debit card, according to The Hindu. The move is supported by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI). Customers who want to activate UPI through Aadhaar should have a valid phone number linked to their bank and registered with the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI).

Cyclone 'Biparjoy' in Arabian Sea rapidly intensifies into very severe cyclonic storm

In its latest weather bulletin, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Friday said that Cyclone Biparjoy is likely to intensify more in the next 36 hours. It will move northwestwards during the next two days, IMD added. Cyclone 'Biparjoy' on June 7 rapidly intensified into a severe cyclonic storm, with meteorologists predicting a "mild" monsoon onset over Kerala and "weak" progress beyond the southern peninsula under its influence.

Government approves over Rs 89 thousand crore revival package for BSNL

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved the Rs 89,000 crore revival package for Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL), according to a release by the government. The package will be utilised for enhancing BSNL's 4G and 5G services. It includes allotment of 4G and 5G spectrum for the BSNL through equity infusion. The release said that the authorised capital of BSNL will be increased from Rs 1 lakh 50 thousand crore to Rs 2 lakh 10 thousand crore.

J&K maintains first rank in UT category in Food Safety Index 2022-23; for third time in row

In a significant achievement, Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) has maintained its first rank under the union territory (UT) category in Food Safety Index 2022-23. The Department of Food and Drugs Administration, J&K, received the award third time in a row for 2021, 2022 and 2023, an official statement said on Thursday. The index is released annually by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) to measure the performance of states and UTs on various parameters of food safety.

ISRO chairman S Somnath informs Chandrayaan 3 mission is planned to be launched by mid-July

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) will begin a fresh bid to land a rover on the moon in the middle of July this year through the launch of the Chandrayaan-3 mission, ISRO chairman S Somanath said on Thursday on the sidelines of an international conference on Spacecraft Mission Operations (SMOPS-2023). The Chandrayaan-3 mission is identical to the Chandrayaan-2 mission.

RBI Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) decided unanimously to keep the policy repo rate unchanged at 6.5% for the second time

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Thursday left the main policy instrument, repo rate, unchanged at 6.50 per cent for the second consecutive monetary policy, giving relief to home, vehicle and other retail borrowers from an increase in equated monthly instalments (EMIs). The decision to keep the repo rate — it is the interest rate at which the RBI lends to banks in the country — unchanged was taken unanimously by the six Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) members as inflation continues to remain above the 4 per cent target.

RBI lets banks issue RuPay prepaid forex cards to help widen usage

In order to expand payment options for Indians travelling abroad, the Reserve Bank of India on Thursday decided to allow issuance of RuPay Prepaid Forex cards by banks in India for use at ATMs, PoS machines and online merchants overseas. Further, RuPay Debit, Credit, and Prepaid Cards will be enabled for issuance in foreign jurisdictions, which can be used internationally, including in India, Reserve Bank Governor Shaktikanta Das said, while unveiling the second bi-monthly monetary policy of this fiscal.

Madhya Pradesh to launch 'Ladli Bahna' scheme to make women financially independent

Madhya Pradesh chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Saturday launched the electronic process to transfer ₹1,000 each in the bank accounts of 12 million women under the state's Ladli Behna scheme and said the amount will be gradually increased to ₹3,000. In an event held in Jabalpur, Chouhan started the scheme with a single click and called it a milestone towards women's empowerment.

Indian Council of Agricultural Research signs a MOU with Amazon Kisan to Empower Farmers

New Delhi: Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) and Amazon Kisan have joined hands to guide farmers on scientific cultivation of different crops for optimum yield and income. According to the agriculture ministry statement, under the memorandum of understanding (MoU), ICAR will offer technological support to farmers through Amazon's network. This partnership is expected to enhance farmers' livelihoods and increase crop productivity.

Forex reserves jump \$5.9 bn to \$595 bn: Reserve Bank data

India's forex kitty jumped \$5.929 billion to \$595.067 billion for the week ended June 2, the Reserve Bank said on Friday. The reserves had dropped for two consecutive weeks and declined by \$4.34 billion to \$589.14 billion in the previous reporting week. It can be noted that in October 2021, the country's forex kitty had reached an all-time high of \$645 billion. The reserves have been declining as the central bank deploys the kitty to defend the rupee amid pressures caused majorly by global developments.

RBI notifies 4 key measures to strengthen 1,514 urban co-operative banks

Aiming to strengthen 1,514 urban co-operative banks, the Centre on Friday said the Reserve Bank has notified four key measures, including giving them two years more to meet the priority sector lending targets. The Ministry of Cooperation in a statement said that four important initiatives have been taken to strengthen 1,514 Urban Co-operative Banks (UCBs) in the country.

G-20 development ministers' meet begins in Varanasi

India will host a three-day meeting of development ministers of the G20 member nations in Varanasi beginning Sunday that is expected to focus on disruptions in global supply chains, food and energy security challenges and impacts of climate change among other issues. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will deliver a special video address at the beginning of the meeting which will be chaired by External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar.

Rohit Sharma has become the third Indian opener to cross 13,000 runs across formats

India captain Rohit Sharma completed 13,000 runs as an international opener during the World Test Championship Final against Australia at the Oval in London on Thursday. The 36-year-old is the third-quickest to the mark among all openers, only behind Matthew Hayden (293 innings) and Sachin Tendulkar (295), crossing the mark in his 307th innings. Rohit achieved the feat during the second innings of the final after being dismissed on 15 in the first innings.

Ravindra Jadeja surpassed Bishan Singh Bedi to become the country's most successful left-arm spinner in Tests

Indian all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja on Friday created history, as he surpassed compatriot Bishan Singh Bedi to become the country's most successful left-arm spinner in the history of Test cricket. Jadeja accomplished this during India's ICC World Test Championship final against Australia at The Oval. In Australia's second innings, Jadeja put to an end innings of two centuries from the first innings, Steve Smith (34) and Travis Head (18). Jadeja ended the day with figures of 2/25 in nine overs.

Centre bans over 150 'anti-India' sites, YouTube news channels in 2 years

Officials familiar with the matter have revealed that the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (I&B) has taken down more than 150 websites and YouTube-based news channels since May 2021. These actions were taken due to the production of content deemed "anti-India" and in violation of Section 69A of the Information Technology (IT) Act. A senior official from the I&B ministry stated that these websites and channels were removed for producing content that was deemed to be against India's interests, as reported by HT.

Moody's Projects 6-6.3% GDP Growth for India in June Quarter, Flags Fiscal Risks

Moody's on Sunday said the Indian economy is expected to clock a 6-6.3 per cent growth in June quarter, and flagged risks of fiscal slippage arising from weaker-than-expected government revenues in FY24. Moody's growth estimate is lower than the 8 per cent projection for the first quarter made by the Reserve Bank of India last week. In an interview with PTI.

₹1.2 Trillion Released as Third Tax Devolution to States by Govt

The government on Monday released the third installment of tax devolution to state governments, amounting to Rs 1.18 trillion. This is significantly higher than the normal monthly devolution of Rs 59,140 crore. The government is releasing an additional advance installment to the states in June, 2023. This is being done to help the states speed up capital spending, finance their development and welfare-related expenditures, and make resources available for priority projects and schemes, the Ministry of Finance said.

India tops digital payments rankings globally, shows MyGovIndia data

India with 89.5 million digital transactions in the year 2022 has topped the list of five countries in digital payments, according to data from MyGovIndia. As per the data, India in the year 2022 accounting for 46 per cent of the global real-time payments, adding that the digital payment transactions in India is more than the other four leading countries combined. "India keeps dominating the digital payment landscape! With innovative solutions and widespread adoption, we're leading the way towards a cashless economy.

RBI not to regulate social media influencers

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI), in a recent announcement, has stated that it does not have any immediate plans to introduce distinct regulations governing the activities of social media influencers in the financial markets. The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), according to Governor Shaktikanta Das, already has measures in place to address this issue. "The RBI is not planning to issue any separate guidelines to regulate financial market.

PLI Schemes: Boosting Production, Employment, and Economic Growth

The production-linked incentive (PLI) schemes have led to an increase in production, employment generation, and exports of the country, a top government official said on Tuesday. Secretary in the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) Rajesh Kumar Singh said that due to the schemes, there was an increase of 76 per cent in foreign direct investment in the manufacturing sector in 2021-22 (USD 21.34 billion) compared to 2020-21 (USD 12.09 billion).

Education loans register 17% growth in FY23

For the first time in five years, growth in education loans not only turned positive but also registered a 17 per cent surge in the last financial year ended March, 2023. According to Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) data, the outstanding portfolio under education loans grew 17 per cent at ₹96,847 crore in the year 2022-23 as against ₹82,723 crore in the previous year. This is significant because the growth in education loans was flat during 2021-22 and it was negative for the three years prior to it.

RBI Chief Shaktikanta Das Named 'Governor Of The Year' At London's Central Banking Awards

The chief of the Reserve Bank of India, Shaktikanta Das was honoured with the title of 'Governor of the Year' for 2023 by Central Banking in London. Central Banking is an international economic research journal. The award recognised his role as the RBI chief in managing inflation and skilfully handling India's banking system during crises like COVID pandemic and global turmoils.

RING digital credit platform now features NPCI UPI plug-in

New Delhi [India], June 12: RING, India's leading digital credit platform has partnered with National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) to add its newly launched UPI Plug-in functionality to RING's pre-existing suite of digital services. This partnership will help RING offer 'Scan & Pay' options to its existing customers and acquire new customers who use UPI as a preferred mode of payment.

IIT Madras Researchers Develop Data Science, IoT-Based Method for Mobile Pollution Monitoring

Researchers from the Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT-M) have come up with a low-cost IoT-based mobile air pollution monitoring framework that uses sensors positioned on transportation systems to collect spatio-temporal data on air quality and constantly track the air quality of broad geographic regions with high degree of temporal and spatial accuracy. In other words, with these inexpensive mobile monitoring devices.

Centre Introduces 'Y-Break – Yoga at Office Chair' for Employee Stress Relief

The central government has instructed its employees to incorporate a brief 'Y-Break - Yoga at Office Chair' to relax, rejuvenate, and enhance concentration. As reported by PTI, the personnel ministry has directed all central government ministries and departments to embrace and encourage this innovative Yoga practice for employees in the workplace. "Y-Break at workplace was introduced by the Ministry of AYUSH with an aim to get de-stressed, refreshed and re-focused at the workplace.

Prime Ministers' Museum and Library Society replaces Nehru Memorial Museum and Library Society

The Nehru Memorial Museum and Library Society housed in Teen Murti Bhavan premises here has been renamed as Prime Ministers' Museum and Library Society, prompting sharp reactions from the Congress. Teen Murti Bhavan served as the official residence of India's first prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru. In a special meeting of the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library Society (NMML), it was resolved to change its name, the Culture Ministry said on Friday.

Sovereign Gold Bond Scheme: Issue price fixed at Rs 5,926/gm

The government has fixed the issue price at Rs 5,926 per gram of gold for the first tranche of the Sovereign Gold Bond Scheme 2023-24, which will open for subscription for five days from Monday. The issue will be opened for subscription during the period June 19-23, 2023, with the settlement date of June 27, 2023, the finance ministry said in a statement on Friday. The issue price of the bond during the subscription period would be Rs 5,926, it said.

NITI Aayog and United Nations Join Hands to Accelerate Sustainable Development in India

The government policy think tank Niti Aayog, and the United Nations in India have joined forces to sign the Government of India - United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2023-2027, the government said in a press release on Friday. The agreement, aimed at advancing India's sustainable development goals, was formalized in the presence of esteemed dignitaries, including B V R Subrahmanyam, CEO of Niti Aayog, and Shombi Sharp, UN Resident Coordinator in India.

Guwahati railway station gets FSSAI 'Eat Right Station' tag

GUWAHATI: Guwahati railway station has been awarded 'Eat Right Station' certification by FSSAI (Food Safety and Standards Authority of India) for providing high-quality and nutritious food to passengers. The station is the first under the Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) to get the status for a period of two years from June 2, 2023, a NFR release said here on Tuesday. NFR said efforts are on to bring more stations such as Rangiya, Lumding, Tinsukia, Alipurduar Jn. and Katihar in the 'Eat Right Station' category.

SBI Presents Record-breaking Dividend Cheque of Rs 5,740 Crore to Finance Minister

State Bank of India (SBI) on Friday paid a dividend of Rs 5,740 crore for the financial year 2022-23 to Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman. The dividend cheque was presented by SBI chairman Dinesh Kumar Khara in the presence of Financial Services Secretary Vivek Joshi. "Smt @nsitharaman receives a dividend cheque of Rs 5,740 crore for FY 2022-23, which is the highest-ever dividend given by State Bank of India to Govt of India for a financial year, from Shri Dinesh Kumar Khara, Chairman -@TheOfficialSBI.

ISRO's Pioneering Mission in Norway: Strengthening Space Sector Ties

On November 20, 1997, a Rohini RH-300 Mk-II sounding rocket rose to the skies from Svalbard, Norway, operationalising a new rocket launching range there. The solid propellant-powered rocket was shipped from India for the launch, while four senior hands of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) were specially flown to Norway to make sure everything went off all right.

The Gandhi Peace Prize for 2021 will be conferred on Gita Press, Gorakhpur, one of the largest publishers of religious texts

Gita Press, Gorakhpur, has been selected for the Gandhi Peace Prize for the year 2021. A jury headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi unanimously selected Gita Press for the award after due deliberations on Sunday (June 18) "in recognition of its outstanding contribution towards social, economic and political transformation through non-violent and other Gandhian methods," the government said in a statement.

IIT Delhi's AI model predicts normal monsoon in 2023

The new climate model developed by a research team led by Prof. Saroj K. Mishra of IIT Delhi has predicted that 2023 will be a normal monsoon year. It said the All India Summer Monsoon Rainfall (AISMR) of ~790mm in the oncoming monsoon season means normal monsoon. "The prediction is made using a model trained with historical AISMR data, Niño3.4 index data, and categorical Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) data for the period 1901–2001,".

Salman Rushdie wins prestigious German peace prize 2023

Salman Rushdie, celebrated British-American author of *Midnight's Children* and *The Satanic Verses* has been recognized with Peace Prize of the German Book Trade. The Peace Prize of the German Book Trade for 2023 has been awarded to British-American author Salman Rushdie, "for his indomitable spirit, for his affirmation of life and for enriching our world with his love of storytelling.

PM Modi and President Biden Exchange Unique Gifts During White House Visit

US President Joe Biden and First Lady Jill Biden Wednesday hosted Prime Minister Narendra Modi for a private dinner at the White House where they discussed a wide range of issues.



Tata Power becomes most attractive employer brand; Amazon follows

Tata Power Company has emerged as the country's most 'attractive employer brand', followed by e-commerce giant Amazon and Tata Steel, a research report by Randstad India revealed . HR services provider Randstad India's annual report 'Randstad Employer Brand Research (REBR) 2023' revealed that Tata Power Company scored very high on financial health, good reputation and career progression opportunities -- the top 3 Employee Value Proposition (EVP) drivers for the organisation that helped.

NHAI launches 'Knowledge Sharing Platform' for development of Highways

New Delhi: To promote inclusive development of national highways, the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) on Tuesday launched a knowledge sharing platform, the ministry of road transport & highways said in a statement.



GOI approved Micron's \$2.7 bn semiconductor packaging plant

The Indian cabinet has given its approval to US chipmaker Micron Technology's plan to invest \$2.7 billion to set up a semiconductor testing and packaging unit in Gujarat, Reuters reported on Tuesday. The government will provide production-linked incentives worth ₹11,000 crore (\$1.34 billion) for the semiconductor plant, the report said. Micron's Assembly Testing Marking and Packaging will be built in Sanand, the report added citing source.

Apple to launch its credit card in India

In a bid to tap the growing opportunities in India's financial sector, Apple Inc is planning to launch its credit card in India, also known as Apple Card. The iPhone maker is planning to tie up with HDFC bank to bring its credit card to its Indian customers, reported Moneycontrol citing sources.



World Bank Grants USD 255.5 Million Loan to Enhance Technical Education in India

The World Bank has approved a USD 255.5 million loan for improving the quality of technical education in government-run institutions in India. Over the next five years, the project will support around 275 government-run technical institutions in selected states across the country, benefitting more than 350,000 students each year.



PM Narendra Modi receives Egypt's highest honour 'Order of the Nile'

Prime Minister Narendra Modi received Egypt's highest civilian honour 'Order of The Nile' as he met the Arab Republic's president, Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, in Cairo on Sunday even as the two nations signed three Memorandum of Understanding for cooperation in agriculture, archaeology and antiquities as well as competition law.



Deloitte appoints former SoftBank India head Manoj Kohli as senior advisor

Deloitte announced on June 29 that it has appointed industry veteran Manoj Kohli as senior advisor. In his role as senior advisor to Deloitte, Kohli will leverage his extensive business and industry knowledge, to help strengthen the company's presence in South Asia, according to Deloitte's statement.



INTERNATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

Latvian Parliament elects foreign minister Edgars Rinkevics as new president

HELSINKI (AP) — Latvian lawmakers on Wednesday picked the country's long-serving and popular foreign minister, a strong backer of Ukraine, as its new head of state in a tight vote. The 100-seat Saeima legislature elected Edgars Rinkevics, the country's top diplomat since 2011, as president to serve for a four-year term.



Texas becomes largest state to ban transgender care for minors

Texas Governor Greg Abbott on Friday signed a bill that bans transgender healthcare including puberty blockers and hormone therapy for minors, making Texas the largest of the 20 states to have outlawed gender-affirming care.



North Korea's First Spy Satellite Launch Ends in Failure

North Korea's first attempt at launching a military spy satellite resulted in failure on Wednesday, with South Korea's military picking up wreckage after the carrier rocket crashed into its western waters.



NATO launches Arctic exercises, pledges protection of Finland

NATO countries have kicked off military exercises with a pledge to defend their newest member, Finland, which is hosting its first joint training in the Arctic region since becoming part of the Western alliance in April.



WMO gets Celeste Saulo as its 1st female Secretary-General

Saulo, a WMO vice-president who has headed Argentina's weather service since 2014, won a landslide vote at the UN climate agency's congress in Geneva. The World Meteorological Organization voted Thursday for Argentina's Celeste Saulo to become its first woman leader and steer the WMO's critical global role in tracking climate change.



Former PM Jacinda Ardern receives New Zealand's second-highest honour

New Zealand has awarded Jacinda Ardern one of the country's highest honours, making the former prime minister a dame for her service to the country during the Covid-19 pandemic and Christchurch terror attacks. Ardern accepted the honour but said she had felt conflicted about doing so.



Canada wildfire smoke triggers air quality concerns in New York

Hundreds of uncontrolled forest fires blazed across Canada causing the air quality of New York city to deteriorate. Wildfires are common in Canada's western provinces, but this year flames have mushroomed rapidly in the country's east, making it the worst-ever start to the season.



Former U.S. President Donald Trump charged in classified documents probe

Former United States President Donald Trump has said that he has been indicted on charges of mishandling classified documents at his Florida estate, igniting a federal prosecution that is arguably the most perilous of multiple legal threats against the former president as he seeks to reclaim the White House. The Justice Department did not immediately publicly confirm the indictment.

Boris Johnson quits as UK lawmaker after it was told that he will be sanctioned for misleading Parliament

Former U.K. Prime Minister Boris Johnson shocked Britain on Friday by quitting as a lawmaker after being told he will be sanctioned for misleading Parliament. Johnson quit after receiving the results of an investigation by lawmakers over misleading statements he made to Parliament about "partygate," a series of rule-breaking government parties during the pandemic.

US Vice President Kamala Harris announces more than 100 million US Dollars assistance for Caribbean

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP) — U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris announced Thursday that the U.S. is investing more than \$100 million in the Caribbean region to crack down on weapons trafficking, help alleviate Haiti's humanitarian crisis and support climate change initiatives.



China plans to restrict use of mobile file-sharing services AirDrops and Bluetooth

China is planning to restrict and scrutinise the use of wireless filesharing services between mobile devices, such as airdrop and Bluetooth, after they were used by protesters to evade censorship and spread protest messages. The Cyberspace Administration of China, the country's top internet regulator, has released draft regulations on "close-range mesh network services" and launched a month-long public consultation on Tuesday. Under the proposed rules, service providers would have to prevent the dissemination of harmful and illegal information, save relevant records and report their discovery to regulators.



Forbes' Global 2000 List: Reliance Rises by Eight Positions to Attain 45th Rank

Billionaire Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Industries Ltd climbed eight spots to the 45th rank, the highest for an Indian company on Forbes' latest Global 2000 list of public companies worldwide. The Global 2000 ranks the largest companies in the world using four metrics: sales, profits, assets, and market value, Forbes said while releasing the 2023 ranking of the world's top 2,000 companies.

UK Appoints Jane Marriott as First Woman Envoy to Pakistan

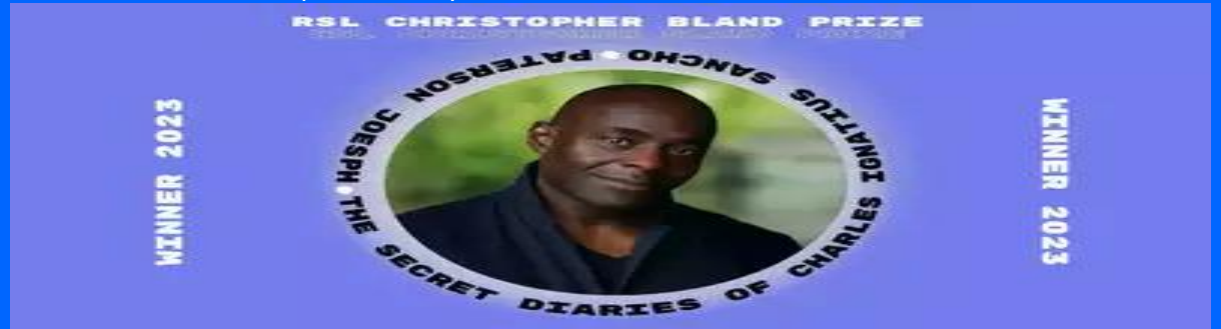
Islamabad: The UK on Thursday announced the appointment of senior diplomat Jane Marriott as the next British High Commissioner to Pakistan, making her the first female British envoy to Islamabad. Prior to this appointment, Jane Marriott, 47, was the high commissioner to Kenya since September 2019. She would be replacing Dr Christian Turner, who left Pakistan in January after serving as the envoy since December 2019.

Ramachandra Guha's book wins Elizabeth Longford Prize

Modern-day Brits have honoured historian Ramachandra Guha for a rather unusual book that is mainly about white Brits who were severely punished for going against the British establishment of their day to give their all for Indian independence. On Monday, Guha was in London to collect a £5,000 cheque for winning the highly regarded Elizabeth Longford Prize for Historical Biography 2023 in its 20th anniversary year for *Rebels against the Raj: Western Fighters for India's Freedom* (published by William Collins).

Paterson Joseph won the RSL Christopher Bland Prize 2023

Author Paterson Joseph was announced as the winner of the 2023 Royal Society of Literature (RSL) Christopher Bland Prize for his debut novel 'The Secret Diaries of Charles Ignatius Sancho' on June 8. The RSL Christopher Bland Prize is an annual award that is given to a debut writer for their work of fiction or non-fiction, who is first published at the age of 50 or over. The winner receives a prize money of £10,000.



Elon Musk confirms Twitter video app for smart TVs

A Twitter video app for smart TVs is in the social media company's plans, owner Elon Musk said in a tweet, a move that would be in line with the company's new plans to focus on growing video content on the platform. In response to a tweet suggesting that a Twitter video app is needed, Musk replied, "It's coming". New CEO Linda Yaccarino and Musk had in an investor presentation on Thursday laid out Twitter's plans to focus on video, creator and commerce partnerships to revitalise the social media company's business beyond digital advertising.

President of US Joe Biden to announce over six hundred million dollar in climate investments

President Joe Biden will visit Palo Alto, California, on Monday and announce over \$600 million in climate investments to help coastal communities around the country fight climate change, a White House official said on Sunday. The investments will be funded by Biden's climate and infrastructure bills and will include a \$575 million project to fight rising sea levels, storm surge and tidal hurricanes, said the official, who did not wish to be named.

