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1. New BIS specifications for TVs manufactured in India (Jan. 9, 2023)

New BIS specifications for TVs manufactured in India

The **Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS)**, through its technical committee, has published an **Indian Standard Specification for televisions** with built-in satellite tuners. BIS has published **three significant Indian Standards** in the area of Electronics.

The first standard

- TVs manufactured as per this Indian standard will be able to receive **free-to-air TV and radio channels** by connecting a **dish antenna with the LNB mounted** at a suitable location on the roof top/side wall of the building.
- This will facilitate dissemination of **government initiatives**, schemes, Doordarshan's educational content and Indian cultural programs in the country and facilitate them to reach and benefit the population at large in the country.
- Currently, television (TV) viewers in the country are required to buy set-top boxes to watch various paid and free channels.
- Viewers are also required to use a set top box for free to air channels (non-encrypted) broadcast by Doordarshan.
- Now Doordarshan is starting the process of discontinuing analog broadcasting in a **phased manner**.
- Doordarshan will continue to broadcast free to air channels using **digital satellite transmission**.

The second standard

- The second standard is the Indian standard for **USB Type C receptacles, plugs and cables**.
- In this, the existing international standard **IEC 62680-1- 3:2022** is being adopted.
- This standard provides requirements for **USB Type-C ports, plugs and cables** for use in various electronic devices such as mobile phones, laptops, notebooks, etc.
- This standard will provide a common charging solution for smartphones and other electronic devices sold in the country.

The third Standard

- The third standard is the Indian Standard for **Video Surveillance Systems**.
- The Bureau of **Indian Standards through its Technical Committee** on Alarm and Electronic Security Systems has developed a series of **Indian Standards (IS 16910)** on video surveillance systems for use in security applications.

- The **IS 16910 series** of standards is an adoption of the International Standard IEC 62676 series.
- **Video Surveillance System (VSS)** is an essential security component which is used almost everywhere to capture any unwanted activity.

About Bureau of Indian Standards

- Bureau of Indian Standards is the national standards body of India under the **Department of Consumer Affairs**, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Government of India.
- Headquarters- **Manak Bhawan, Old Delhi**
- Director General- **Pramod Kumar Tiwari**
- Established- **23 December 1986**

2. New British Indian Army Memorial to be built in Scotland (Jan. 9, 2023)

New British Indian Army Memorial to be built in Scotland

A new **British Indian Army memorial** has been approved to be built in the **Scottish city of Glasgow** to commemorate the **sacrifices of millions of Indian soldiers** who fought alongside the British during the **two world wars**.

An overview of the news

- In this, the contribution of more than **40 lakh Indian soldiers** who fought on behalf of Britain in both the world wars will be shown.
- **Scotland**, the local council of Glasgow has approved plans to build a memorial. **Glaswegian City Council** is now making the final preparations to build the memorial.
- This war memorial will be built near an art gallery and museum named **Kelvingrove**.
- According to **Colourful Heritage**, the organisation that made the memorial, the diversity of India can also be shown through this memorial.
- Therefore, it will give information about the contribution of all the soldiers of **Hindu, Muslim, Sikh and Christian** religions.
- The contribution of those Sikh and Muslim soldiers who participated in the **Second World War** will be specially shown in the memorial.

3. India identifies two lithium and one copper mine in Argentina (Jan. 9, 2023)

India identifies two lithium and one copper mine in Argentina

Recently **India** has discovered **two lithium mines and one copper mine in Argentina** in the South America continent.

Overview of the news

- The Center sent a team of **three geologists** in November last year to "assess potential lithium deposits" in the Latin American nation.
- The team included **one geologist each** from Mineral Exploration Corporation Limited (MECL), KABIL (Khanij Bidesh India Limited) and Geological Survey of India (GSI).
- **KABIL**, a joint venture set up through the participation of National Aluminum Company (NALCO), Hindustan Copper (HCL) and MECL, aims to ensure continuous supply of critical and strategic minerals to the domestic market.
- India formed '**Khanij Videsh India Limited**' in August 2019 for exploration of minerals in other countries; Which recently entered into an agreement with an Argentinian firm for the exploration of minerals like lithium.
- Lithium is used in rechargeable batteries. These batteries are used to power electric vehicles, laptops and mobile phones etc.

Mineral Videsh India Limited

- It has been formed by three government companies NALCO, Hindustan Copper and Mineral Exploration Limited, through which minerals like lithium and cobalt can be purchased from abroad.

Production and storage of lithium in the world

- **Australia** is currently the **top lithium producer globally**. While **Argentina is the fourth largest producing country** in the world.
- Together with Argentina, Chile and Bolivia, it forms the '**Lithium Triangle**'.
- Apart from the lithium triangle in the world, America and China are also its major producers.
- Presently India is dependent on imports for these minerals.

4. Luxury Cruise Ganga Vilas carrying Swiss tourists reaches Ghazipur in UP (Jan. 8, 2023)

Luxury Cruise Ganga Vilas carrying Swiss tourists reaches Ghazipur in UP

The luxury Cruise **Ganga Vilas** carrying **Swiss tourists** on 7 January reached **Ghazipur in Uttar Pradesh**.

An overview of the news

- The tourists visited the famous places of Ghazipur including the **tomb of Lord Cornwallis**. The cruise reached Varanasi on 8 January.
- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** will flag off Ganga Vilas, the world's longest river cruise, on **January 13**.
- The cruise will start from **Varanasi** in Uttar Pradesh and end at **Dibrugarh in Assam**.
- The journey will cover a distance of 3,200 km in 50 days and pass through 27 river systems in **India and Bangladesh**.
- The cruise will also pass through national parks and sanctuaries including **Sundarbans Delta and Kaziranga National Park**.

World's longest river cruise Ganga Vilas

- The length of the Ganga Vilas vessel is **62 metres and the width is 12 metres**.
- It has three decks, **18 suites** on board with a capacity of **36 passengers**, with all facilities for tourists.
- It is equipped with **pollution free** mechanisms and **noise control technologies**.
- The itinerary of Ganga Vilas has been conceptualised to showcase the rich heritage of India with stops at places of historical, cultural and religious importance.
- Ganga Vilas Cruises is the first cruise service of its kind.
- With the support of the **Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI)** under the Ministry of Shipping, Ports and Waterways, efforts are on to make this service a success in other parts.

The global River cruise market

- The global river cruise market has grown at a rate of **~5%** over the past few years and is expected to account for **~37% by 2027**.
- **Europe** is the fastest growing with about **60% of river cruise ships** in the world.
- In India, **8 river cruise ships** operate between **Kolkata and Varanasi**, while cruise movement also operates on **National Waterway 2 (Brahmaputra)**.
- **10 passenger terminals** are under construction on NW2 which will further enhance the potential for river cruises.

5. India overtakes Japan to become third largest auto market globally (Jan. 8, 2023)

According to the latest **Nikkei Asia industry data**, **India has overtaken Japan to become the third largest auto market** for the first time.

An overview of the news

- India's new vehicle sales were at least **4.25 million units**, ahead of the **4.2 million sold in Japan**, based on preliminary results.
- New vehicles delivered in India between January and November 2022 totaled **4.13 million**.
- In December 2022 sales volume the total comes to around **4.25 million units**.
- India sales volumes are expected to increase further with the inclusion of pending sales figures for the fourth quarter for commercial vehicles.
- Most of the new autos sold in India last year consisted of vehicles powered by **gasoline, including hybrid vehicles**.
- Along with **Maruti Suzuki, Tata Motors** and other Indian automakers have seen sales growth during the last year.
- According to **British research firm Euromonitor**, only **8.5 per cent** of Indian households own a passenger vehicle in 2021, which means there is considerable scope for growth in sales.
- According to data from the **Japan Automobile Dealers Association** and the **Japan Light Motor Vehicle and Motorcycle Association**, **4,201,321 vehicles** were sold in Japan last year, **down 5.6 percent from 2021**.

World's largest auto market

- In 2021, **China topped the global auto market** with sales of 26.27 million vehicles.
- The **US stood second** with 15.4 million vehicles sold, followed by Japan with 4.44 million units.
- According to Nikkei Asia, China overtook Japan to become the second largest auto market **in 2006**.
- **In 2009**, China overtook the US to become the world's largest auto market.

6. Kevin McCarthy elected as new speaker of the US House of Representatives (Jan. 7, 2023)

Kevin McCarthy elected as new speaker of the US House of Representatives

Republican leader **Kevin McCarthy** has been elected as the **speaker of the US House of Representatives**.

An overview of the news

- He was serving as the **House Minority Leader** in the House.
- The US Parliament has elected Kevin McCarthy of the Republican Party as the speaker of the House of Representatives after 15 rounds of voting. McCarthy is the **55th speaker of the US House of Representatives.**
- Kevin McCarthy, 57, has replaced **Nancy Pelosi**, 82, the leader of the **Democratic Party** in the House of Representatives.
- After the midterm elections held on November 8, the number of members of former President Donald Trump's Republican Party has increased to **222 in the 435-member House of Representatives.**
- With this, President Joe Biden's Democratic Party has come in the minority in the House of Representatives.
- Kevin McCarthy has become the **third most senior US position** after US President **Joe Biden** and Vice President **Kamala Harris.**

About Kevin McCarthy

- Kevin McCarthy is a member of the Republican Party.
- He was elected as the House Minority Leader from **2019 to 2023.**
- He previously served as the House **Majority Leader from 2014 to 2019** under Speakers **John Boehner and Paul Ryan.**
- McCarthy has been elected as a member of the US Parliament **9 times.** He was born in **Bakersfield, California.**

7. RBI to issue green bonds in two tranches of Rs 8,000 crore each (Jan. 7, 2023)

RBI to issue green bonds in two tranches of Rs 8,000 crore each

The **Reserve Bank of India** on 6 January said that **maiden Sovereign Green Bonds (SGrBs)** would be issued in **two tranches of Rs 8,000 crore each** on January 25 and February 9.

An overview of the news

- The central government is issuing these sovereign green bonds as part of its **total market borrowing.** These bonds are being issued to promote green infrastructure.
- The Central Government had released the [**framework of Sovereign Green Bond**](#) on 9 November 2022.

- Sovereign green bonds worth **Rs 8000 crore** will be issued on **January 25, 2023**. In this, green bonds worth Rs 4000 crore will be issued for **5 years** and sovereign green bonds worth Rs 4000 crore will be issued for **10 years**.
- Apart from this, Sovereign Green Bonds worth **Rs 8000 crores** will be issued as the next instalment on **9 February 2023**. In which green bonds worth Rs 4000 crore will be issued for **5 years** and sovereign green bonds worth Rs 4000 crore will be issued for **10 years**.

What are Sovereign Green Bonds?

- These are bonds that are used by the government **to finance projects** that have a positive impact on the **environment**.
- The Green Bond was launched in **2007 by the European Investment Bank and the World Bank**.
- A Green Bond is an instrument that helps in **raising funds for green projects**.
- Funds from these bonds will be invested in public sector projects that help **reduce carbon intensity**.
- These bonds fall into **9 broad categories**. Some of these are projects like renewable energy, energy efficiency, clean transportation, green building.
- The government aims to attract foreign investors through these bonds.
- Being asset linked, it becomes easier for the **government to raise money** through these bonds.

8. India to host Voice of Global South Summit (Jan. 7, 2023)

India to host Voice of Global South Summit

India will host a **special virtual Summit** on 12th and 13th of January 2023 called '**Voice of Global South Summit**'.

An overview of the news

- The theme of the Summit is '**Unity of Voice, Unity of Purpose**'.
- The summit is envisaged to bring together the countries of the South and share their perspectives and priorities on various issues.
- More than **120 countries** have been invited for this summit.
- The initiative is inspired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of **Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas and Sabka Prayas** and India's philosophy of **Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam**.

- The summit is India's attempt to provide a common platform to discuss concerns affecting developing countries.
- India will work to ensure that the valuable inputs generated by participating countries in the Voice of the Global South deliberations receive due cognizance globally.

9. Arjun Ram Meghwal inaugurates Astro Tourism - A Sky Gazing event at Delhi's India Gate (Jan. 7, 2023)

Arjun Ram Meghwal inaugurates Astro Tourism - A Sky Gazing event at Delhi's India Gate

National Council of Science Museums (NCSM) in association with **Nehru Memorial Museum and Library** organised **Astro Tourism - A Sky Gazing event** at **Delhi's India Gate** on 6 January.

An overview of the news

- The event was inaugurated by Minister of State for Culture, **Arjun Ram Meghwal**.
- The program will help in developing scientific temper among the people which is a fundamental duty as per our constitution.
- **Astro tourism event** includes the following activities - Astro talks by expert astronomers, Exhibition on Astronomy, Story related to celestial objects, Experience of using telescope to see craters of Moon, Astronomy related activities, Photographic panel exhibition, Astro-Photography.
- This 3 day event is a great learning experience for children of all age groups, as it is interactive and practical and the best way to present science in a popular way.

National Council of Science Museums (NCSM)

- It is an **autonomous society** under the **Ministry of Culture, Government of India** and was formed on **April 4, 1978**.
- It administers **25 Science Centres/Museums** spread all over India.
- Science City, Kolkata, Birla Industrial and Technological Museum, Kolkata, Nehru Science Centre, Mumbai, Visvesvaraya Industrial and Technological Museum, Bangalore and National Science Centre, Delhi are the national level centres of NCSM.
- Headquarters - **Kolkata, West Bengal**

10. 17th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention to be organised from 8th to 10th January in Madhya Pradesh (Jan. 7, 2023)

17th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention to be organised from 8th to 10th January in Madhya Pradesh

The **17th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) convention** is being organised in **Indore** from 8-10 January 2023 in collaboration with the Government of Madhya Pradesh.

An overview of the news

- The theme of this PBD Convention is "**Diaspora: Reliable partners for India's progress in Amrit Kaal**".
- Over 3,500 expatriate members from around **70 different countries** have registered for the PBD Convention.
- The **Yuva Pravasi Bharatiya Divas** will be inaugurated on 8 January 2023 in partnership with the **Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports**.
- **Ms. Zaneta Mascarenhas**, Member of Parliament of Australia will be the **guest of honour** at the Yuva Pravasi Bharatiya Divas.
- On 9 January 2023, the PBD Convention will be inaugurated by **Narendra Modi**.
- The convention will feature addresses by the **Chief Guest, Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali**, the President of Republic of Guyana, and the **Special Guest of Honour, Chandrikapersad Santokhi**, President of the Republic of Suriname.
- A commemorative postage stamp '**Go Safe, Go Trained**' will be released to underline the importance of safe, legal, orderly and efficient migration.
- The Prime Minister will also inaugurate the first-ever **digital Pravasi Bhartiya Divas exhibition** on the theme "**Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav - Contribution of Diaspora to the Indian Freedom Struggle**" to highlight the contribution of our overseas freedom fighters to India's independence.
- On 10 January 2023, Hon'ble Rashtrapati **Droupadi Murmu** will confer Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards 2023 and preside over the Valedictory Session.

Five thematic Plenary sessions of PBD Convention

1. '**Role of Diaspora Youth in Innovations and new Technologies**', chaired by Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports, Anurag Singh Thakur.
2. Chaired by Minister of Health and Family Welfare Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya and co-chaired by Minister of State for External Affairs Dr. Rajkumar Ranjan Singh '**Role of Indian Diaspora in Promoting Indian Healthcare Ecosystem in AMRUT Kaal: Vision @ 2047**'.
3. '**Leveraging the soft power of India - Goodwill through craft, cuisine & creativity**', chaired by Minister of State for External Affairs, Meenakashi Lekhi.
4. '**Enabling global mobility of Indian workforce - Role of Indian Diaspora**', chaired by Minister of Education, Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, Dharmendra Pradhan.
5. '**Harnessing the potential of diaspora entrepreneurs towards an inclusive approach to nation building**', chaired by Minister of Finance, Nirmala Sitharaman.

