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1. 1st All India Annual State Ministers Conference on Water (Jan. 4, 2023)

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1st All India Annual State Ministers Conference on Water to be held in **Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh** on 5th & 6th January, 2023.

Important facts

- The Government is deliberating on the preparation of the **Action Plan and Vision Document of India@2047**.
- Water Vision@2047 is part of **PM's India@2047 plan**.
- Thematic sessions will be organised at the conference to focus on water security, water use efficiency, water governance, water infrastructure and water quality.
- Ministers of State for Water Resources, Public Health Engineering Department (PHED) and Irrigation of all States/Union Territories of the country will participate.
- The participants will have to prepare a blueprint of **Water Vision @ 2047** and prepare a road map to overcome the water problems of the country.

Objectives of the conference

- To collect inputs for India@2047 and 5P vision from various water stakeholders of the states as water is a state subject.
- Improving engagement and partnership with states and sharing of initiatives and schemes of the Ministry of Jal Shakti.

5 thematic sessions of the conference

- Water Security in Water Deficit, Water Surplus and Hilly Regions
- Water Use Efficiency including Reuse of Waste Water/ Grey Water
- Water Governance
- Climate Change Resilient Water Infrastructure, and
- Water Quality

Union Minister of Jal Shakti - **Gajendra Singh Shekhawat**

2. PM Modi presides over annual general meeting of Nehru Memorial Museum and Library society (Jan. 4, 2023)

PM Modi presides over annual general meeting of Nehru Memorial Museum and Library society

Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** on 2nd January chaired the **Annual General Meeting of Nehru Memorial Museum and Library Society** in New Delhi.

Important facts

- He underlined the need to widen the scope of research on **modern Indian history** by involving individuals and institutions to create awareness about the country's past.
- He stressed the need for institutions in the country to record research work for the benefit of present and future generations.
- He also expressed satisfaction over the design and contents of the Prime Minister's Museum and described the museum as truly **nation-centric and not individual-centric**.
- The Prime Minister's Museum is a tribute to every Prime Minister of India since independence.
- It is a descriptive record of the contribution made by each PM to the development of the country in the last 75 years.
- The PM mentioned that the **200th birth anniversary** of Swami Dayanand Saraswati, the founder of **Arya Samaj**, is in 2024.

About Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

- It was established in **1964** in the memory of **Jawaharlal Nehru (1889-1964)**.
- It is an autonomous institute under the **Ministry of Culture**, Government of India.
- It is located in **Teen Murti House**, the official residence of the first Prime Minister of India.
- It has four major components, a Memorial Museum, a Library on Modern India, a Center for Contemporary Studies and the Nehru Planetarium.
- It is a specialised library designed and developed as an exclusive research and reference centre on colonial and post-colonial India. It has a rich manuscript section.
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3. Dr. Vinay Prakash Singh takes over as the Secretary General of the Asian Pacific Postal Union (Jan. 3, 2023)

Dr **Vinay Prakash Singh** assumed the charge as the **Secretary General** of the Asian Pacific Postal Union (APPU) on 1 January 2023. . This is the first time that an Indian is leading an international organization in the postal sector. Dr Singh will remain in office for **4 years**.

Former Member (Personnel), Postal Services Board, Department of Post Dr Vinay Prakash Singh was elected as the Secretary General during the 13th APPU Congress held in Bangkok during August- September 2022.

Asian Pacific Postal Union (APPU) is an intergovernmental organization of **32-member countries** of the Asian-Pacific region. APPU is the only Union of the Universal Postal Union (UPU) in the region, which is a specialized agency of the United Nations.

The headquarters of the Asian Pacific Postal Union is in **Bangkok, Thailand**.

The Secretary General leads the activities of the Union and is also the Director of the Asian Pacific Postal College (APPC) which is the largest intergovernmental postal training institute in the region.

The Asia Pacific region generates around half of the global mail volume and has around one-third of the global postal human resource.

4. MOIL registers record production in December (Jan. 3, 2023)

MOIL has registered its best December production of **1,41,321 tonnes of manganese ore** in December, 2022.

Important facts

- MOIL has registered an increase of **18 percent** in production as compared to November 2022.
- Along with this, **sales of 1,64,235 tonnes** have also been done for the month of December with an increase of about **91 percent** as compared to November 2022.
- Besides this, the company has increased prices in an effective range of **2.7-15%**.

About MOIL

- It is a **Schedule-A, Miniratna category-1 Company** under the administrative control of the **Ministry of Steel**, Government of India.
- It is the largest producer of manganese ore in the country with about **45% market share**, operating eleven mines in the states of **Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh**.
- The company aims to almost double its production to **3 million tonnes by 2030**.
- It is also looking for business opportunities in the state of **Gujarat, Rajasthan and Odisha** apart from other regions of the state of Madhya Pradesh.

5. China becomes the first country in Asia and second in the world to launch Hydrogen powered Train (Jan. 3, 2023)

China becomes the first country in Asia and second in the world to launch Hydrogen powered Train

China became the **first country** in Asia and **second** in the world to launch Hydrogen powered urban trains. Germany was the first country to introduce hydrogen powered trains in September 2022.

Chinese company CRRC Corporations Ltd built a train that has a top speed of 160 KM per hour and can run without refuelling for 600 Km . The German Coradia iLint serial train developed by French **company Alstom** has set a record 1175 Km range without refuelling.

According to the Chinese officials, the operation of the train will reduce CO2 emissions compared to diesel traction by 10 tons per year.

Hydrogen powered Trains

Hydrogen is considered to be the green fuel of the future. The Hydrogen fuel cell is environment friendly and it does not emit any greenhouse gasses. The hydrogen fuel cell uses hydrogen and air to generate electricity. The combination of air and hydrogen will produce water as a by-product which will be released by the Train.

India is committed to achieve **zero net carbon emission by 2070.**

Hydrogen Train in India

As per Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, India will most likely get its first-ever indigenous Hydrogen trains by December 2023. As per the minister, like Vande Bharat Express, the Indian Railways is working on the new environment-friendly trains and the engineers are designing it. "The design process is already going on and we should be able to roll out the first hydrogen train in the country by December 2023," he added.

6. Croatia adopts Euro currency, also included in Europe's free passport club (Jan. 3, 2023)

Croatia adopts Euro currency, also included in Europe's free passport club

On January 1, 2023, **Croatia** adopted the **euro currency** and also joined **Europe's free passport club (Schengen area)**, nearly a decade after joining the European Union.

Important facts

- On January 1, 2023, Croatia with a population of about 4 million said goodbye to its **Kuna currency** and became the **20th member of the Eurozone.**
- It will be the **27th country in the world's largest passport-free Schengen zone**, which enables more than 400 million people to move freely within its member states.
- Adoption of the euro will help Croatia's economy at a time when **global inflation** has been rising since Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, which has pushed up **fuel and food prices.**
- It will also boost Croatia's major **tourism industry**, which accounts for **20 percent of its gross domestic product (GDP).**
- The Eurozone consists of **19 members of the European Union (EU)**, which uses the Euro as their official currency.

What is the Schengen Zone?

- The border-free Schengen Area guarantees **visa-free movement** for over 400 million EU citizens, as well as tourists, students living in the EU and visiting the EU.
- Free movement of persons enables every EU citizen to travel, work and live in an EU country without special formalities.
- The Schengen provision eliminates checking at the EU's internal borders, while providing a set of rules for controls at external borders.

About Croatia

- Croatia is a country located in the northwestern part of the **Balkan Peninsula**.
- Prime Minister: **Andrej Plenković**
- President: **Zoran Milanović**
- Capital: **Zagreb**
- Currency :**euro**

7. India's manufacturing output reaches 13-month high in December (Jan. 3, 2023)

India's manufacturing output reaches 13-month high in December

India's manufacturing sector activity rose to a **13-month high in December**, supported by healthy inflows of new business and strong demand conditions, according to a monthly survey.

Important facts

- The seasonally adjusted **S&P Global India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI)** rose to **57.8 in December from 55.7** in November.
- The reason for this is that the fastest improvement is now being seen in business activities in the last 2 years.
- The December data showed that overall operating conditions improved for the **18th consecutive month**.

Meaning of PMI Index

- In the language of Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI), a score **above 50 means expansion**, while a figure **below 50 indicates contraction**.
- The beginning of 2022 was very good, since then the performance of the manufacturing sector has remained consistently good.

- The S&P Global India Manufacturing PMI is prepared by S&P Global on the basis of responses received from purchasing managers of **400 manufacturers**.

8. 50 Electric Buses launched in Delhi with support under FAME India Phase II scheme (Jan. 3, 2023)

50 Electric Buses launched in Delhi with support under FAME India Phase II scheme

On 3 January 2022, **50 electric buses** were launched in **Delhi** with support from the government under the [FAME India Phase II scheme](#) of the Ministry of Heavy Industry.

Important facts

- In 2019, the government approved **Rs 10,000 crore** for a period of three years.
- Out of the total budgetary support, about 86 per cent of the funds have been allocated for incentives to generate demand for electric vehicles.
- Union Heavy Industries Minister **Mahendra Nath Pandey** said that the government has placed an order for **3,538 electric buses**. Of these, a total of **1,716 buses** have been deployed so far.
- The Union Territory of Delhi had sanctioned **400 electric buses - 300 to the Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC)** for intra-city operations and **100 to the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC)** for last-mile connectivity - in August 2019.
- A total of **250 buses** have already been deployed by DTC and now the remaining **50 buses** have been launched fulfilling MHI's commitment of providing 300 electric buses to DTC.

FAME India Scheme

- To improve the infrastructure required for the large-scale use of electric vehicles, the Government formulated a Scheme namely **FAME India (Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Hybrid and Electric Vehicles) in 2015**.
- Under this scheme, by the year 2022, **60-70 lakh hybrid and electric vehicles** are targeted to be put on the roads across the country.
- This will reduce the consumption of about 950 crore litres of petrol and diesel, which will also save Rs 62 thousand crores spent on this.
- The main objective of this scheme is to **reduce pollution and reduce greenhouse gas emissions**.
- **Phase-II of FAME India Scheme** is being implemented for a period of 3 years from **April 1, 2019**.
- The **Phase-I** of this Scheme was launched for a period of 2 years from **1st April 2015**, which was extended from time to time and the last extension was allowed up to **31st March 2019**.

What are Electric Vehicles?

- Electric Vehicles are vehicles that are partially or fully powered on electric power.
- They have low running costs and are also very **environmentally friendly** as they use little or no fossil fuels (petrol or diesel).
- These vehicles can solve the problems of increasing **pollution, global warming, depleting natural resources etc.**

9. Elon Musk becomes first person ever to lose \$200 billion (Jan. 2, 2023)

According to **Bloomberg Billionaires Index** Tesla Chief **Elon Musk** became the only person in history to lose **\$200 billion** from their net worth.

Important facts

- Musk, who recently acquired the micro-blogging platform **Twitter for \$44 billion**, was the second person to amass over **\$200 billion after Jeff Bezos**.
- After the acquisition, Musk had a takeover of Twitter, resulting in a **loss of Tesla shares**.
- According to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index, **Musk's wealth declined to \$137 billion**. Musk also sold several Tesla shares throughout the year.
- Currently, Musk's stake in his **Space Exploration Technologies Corp.** is valued at **\$44.8 billion**, which is higher than his roughly \$44 billion position in Tesla stock (he still has options worth an estimated \$27.8 billion).
- Elon Musk became the richest person in the world when his wealth reached **\$340 billion** on November 4, 2021.
- He lost the title to French fashion and cosmetics magnate **Bernard Arnault in early December 2022**.

Who is Elon Musk?

- He is the charismatic **chief executive officer (CEO) of electric car maker Tesla** and rocket manufacturer **SpaceX**.
- Musk completed the deal to buy **Twitter** in October 2022, becoming the owner of the social media company.
- Born and raised in **South Africa**, Musk spent time in Canada before moving to the United States.

10. Centre to launch the Digital India Innovation Fund for catalyzing deep tech start-ups (Jan. 2, 2023)

Minister of State for Electronics and IT, Rajeev Chandrasekhar on 30th December 2022 said that the central government is going to launch a Digital India Innovation Fund that will support deep-tech startups.

What is Deeptech?

- Technology that is based on tangible engineering innovation or scientific advances and discoveries are known as Deep tech.
- It is a term used to describe technologically based companies or enterprises that develop innovative solutions and approaches to address major societal challenges such as climate change, food production, chronic diseases, waste recycling and others.
- As for the technologies, deep tech involves the vast utilization of advanced solutions, including Artificial intelligence & Machine learning, Big data, Nanotechnologies, Blockchain, Quantum computing, Robotics etc.

India's Deeptech ecosystem

- India's deep-tech ecosystem has grown by 53% in the last decade and is now at par with developed economies such as the US, China, Israel and Europe.
- From drone delivery and cold chain management to climate action and clean energy, deep-tech start-ups are making their presence felt in all sectors.
- Bengaluru accounts for 25-30% of India's deep-tech start-ups, followed by Delhi-NCR (15-20%) and Mumbai (10-12%).