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1. India emerges as the world's largest producer and consumer of sugar (Oct. 6, 2022)

As per Ministry of Consumer Affairs, **India** emerges as the **world's largest producer and consumer of sugar** and world's **2nd largest exporter of sugar**.

Important facts

- India has produced more than **5000 Lakh Metric Tonnes (LMT)** of sugarcane during the sugar season (October-September) 2021-22.
- Out of this, about **3574 LMT** of sugarcane has been processed by sugar mills to produce about **394 lakh metric tonnes** of sugar (sucrose).
- Of this, **35 lakh metric tonnes** of sugar was used to prepare **ethanol** and **359 lakh metric tonnes of sugar** was produced by sugar mills.
- All the records of sugarcane production, sugar production, sugar export, sugarcane procurement, cane arrears payment and ethanol production were set during the same season.
- Another centre of attraction in the current season is the record **highest sugar export of around 109.8 lakh metric tonnes**.
- The policies of the Government of India and supportive international prices have played a major role in the achievement of the Indian sugar industry.
- About **Rs 40,000 crore foreign exchange** has been earned for the country from exports.

The largest producer of sugarcane in the world

- **Brazil** is the largest producer of sugarcane in the world.
- **India is the second largest** producer of sugarcane.
- Brazil produced about 32 million ton of sugar in 2021-22.

Major sugarcane-producing states in India

- **Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra and Karnataka** account for nearly 80 percent of the total sugar production in the country.
- The other major sugarcane-producing states are Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Bihar, Haryana, and Punjab.
- Since 2010-11, India has consistently produced surplus sugar, comfortably exceeding the domestic requirements.

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3. Former German Chancellor Angela Merkel wins UN refugee award (Oct. 5, 2022)

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) on 4 October honoured former **German Chancellor Angela Merkel** with the **UNHCR 'Nansen' Refugee Award for the year 2022** for her '**moral and political courage**' during the refugee crisis in Syria.

Important facts

- The award selection committee said she was chosen for her leadership, courage and compassion, which helped ensure the protection of millions of desperate asylum seekers.
- Merkel will be honoured with the award on **October 10 in Geneva.**

Merkel's efforts for refugee protection

- Under the leadership of former German Chancellor Angela Merkel, Germany gave asylum to more than **1.2 million refugees** and asylum seekers in **2015 and 2016.**
- These refugees had reached **Germany** to save lives from violent conflict in **Syria and other places.**
- UN Refugee Agency High Commissioner **Filippo Grandi** praised the former chancellor's resolve to stand up for the protection of refugees, human rights and international law.

About UNHCR Nansen Refugee Award

- This award was established in **1954.**
- This award is given every year in memory of **Fridjof Nansen**, devoted to Norway's scientific, diplomatic and human welfare work.
- This award is awarded to an individual, group or organisation that has made efforts to protect refugees, displaced and homeless people.

4. Centre designates 10 members of Hizb- Ul- Mujahideen, LeT outfits as terrorists under UAPA (Oct. 5, 2022)

The Union Home Ministry on October **5 designated a total of 10 members** of **Hizbul Mujahideen (HM), Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT)** and other banned organizations as terrorists under the **Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA).**

Important facts

- Five of these terrorists are associated with **Hizb-ul-Mujahideen**, two from **Tehreek-ul-Mujahideen** and one each from **Lashkar-e-Taiba, Jammu and Kashmir Islamic Front** and **Harkat-ul-Jihad-e-Islami.**
- The names of the five declared terrorists of Pakistan are **Shaukat Ahmed Sheikh**, who is currently a resident of Pakistan and serving as the Chief Launching Commander of Hizb-ul-I Mujahideen. Apart from this, the names of Habibullah Malik alias Sajid Jatt, Basit Ahmed Reshi and Imtiaz Ahmed Kandu alias Sajjad are included.

- The Home Ministry has claimed that Malik has created a network of hardline terrorists and is the mastermind of several terrorist attacks in the Valley.

Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA)

- This Act was passed in **1967**.
- The Act provides for special procedures for dealing with terrorist activities.
- Illegal activities are those actions which promote activities by any individual/organization which violates the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the country.
- This Act imposes reasonable restrictions on the freedom of speech and expression, the right to assemble without arms and to form associations provided by **Article 19** of the Constitution.

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6. MoU signed between Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare and NAFED (Oct. 5, 2022)

The **Department of Agriculture Farmers Welfare** and the **National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED)** signed a Memorandum of Understanding (**MoU**) on October 4 to celebrate and promote millet as the **International Year of Millet 2023**.

Important facts

- Keeping in view the initiative of **International Year of Millet (IYOM)-2023**, both the organizations will work together for promotion and marketing of millet based products.
- India is preparing to put nutritious cereals back on the world map.
- Under the MoU, maximum value creation and support for coarse grain based products, organized promotion, market and effective market linkages will be established across the country.

International Year of Millet (IYOM)-2023

- The United Nations General Assembly (**UNGA**) adopted India's resolution and declared **2023** as the **International Year of millets** in March 2021.
- India's proposal received the support of **72 countries**.
- **In 2021, NITI Aayog** signed a letter of intent with the United Nations World Food Program (WFP).
- The partnership focuses on mainstreaming millets and helping India take a global lead in promoting its health benefits.
- The objective of this partnership is to build resilient livelihoods for smallholder farmers and to build adaptability to climate change and changing food systems.

Why is millet called a superfood?

- India is the **5th largest exporter** of Millets globally.
- Millets are one of the oldest food items in the country.
- Known as a superfood, Millets can address issues related to **nutritional security, food system security and farmers' welfare**.
- These are a **rich source of protein, fibre, minerals, iron, calcium** and have a **low glycemic index**.
- They are known for their nutrient rich content and certain characteristics like drought tolerance, photo-insensitivity, resilience to climate change etc.
- They can be cultivated with **less water and less cost**.
- It can also grow well in dry areas or on land with low fertility.

What are Millets?

- They include jowar (sorghum), ragi (finger millet), korra (foxtail millet), arke (kodo millet), sama (little millet), bajra (pearl millet), chena/barr (proso millet) and sanwa (barnyard millet).

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8. Dr. Rajendra Kumar assume charge as the Director General of ESIC (Oct. 4, 2022)

Senior IAS officer of Tamil Nadu cadre, Dr. **Rajendra Kumar**, took over the charge of Director General of Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) on 4 October 2022.

The ESIC comes under the Union Ministry of Labour and Employment.

Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC)

It was set up under the Employees' State Insurance Act, 1948. It comes under the Union Ministry of Labour and Employment.

The ESIC was set up to administer a health insurance scheme for the workers and their dependents.

It also has hospitals in India where medical facilities are provided to eligible workers and their families.

The Scheme was started in New Delhi and Kanpur on 24th February 1952.

24 February is observed as ESIC day.

Headquarters: **New Delhi**

9. NPCI to launch Rupay Debit Card in Oman (Oct. 4, 2022)

Oman has become the latest country in the world where National Payment Corporation of India (NPCI) will launch its RuPay Debit card.

A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed on 4 October 2022 between the Central Bank of Oman and National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) for cooperation in digital payment systems.

The agreement was signed during the visit of the Minister of State for External Affairs **V Muraleedharan** to Oman. He was on a two day (3-4 October) visit to Oman.

This was his second visit to Oman and he met Oman's foreign minister Sayyid Badr bin Hamad bin Hamood Albusaidi .

Rupay Card

RuPay is an Indian payment gateway like Visa or MasterCard and is increasingly being expanded to India's neighbouring countries or nations with a huge Indian diaspora.

Rupay card was officially launched for public in **India on 8 May 2014**

Singapore was the **first foreign country** where it was launched in May 2018, followed by Bhutan and the Maldives.

In West Asia, **UAE was the first country** where RuPay was launched during PM Modi's August 2019 visit.

Agreement has also been signed with Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, France and Nepal for its launch in the respective countries.

National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)

- NPCI, an umbrella organization for operating retail payment and settlement systems in India, has been initiated by the 'RBI' and the 'Indian Banks' Association' (IBA) under the 'Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007'.
- It is a 'not-for-profit' company established under the provisions of Section 25 of the Companies Act 1956 (as amended in 2013), with the objective of providing physical and electronic payment infrastructure to the entire banking system in India.

10. Indian American Vivek Lal gets Lifetime Achievement award in US (Oct. 4, 2022)

Indian-origin General Atomics CEO **Vivek Lal** has been honoured with the Lifetime Achievement Award by **US President Joe Biden** with a citation for '**With Grateful Recognition**'.

Important facts

- The award is given to him by **AmeriCorps** and by the Office of the President.
- AmeriCorps operates as part of the US government, which aims to promote activities that inspire Americans to "serve communities".
- Indian-American Vivek Lal is currently the Chief Executive Officer of General Atomics Global Corporation.
- Lal was born on 05 March 1969 in Jakarta, Indonesia.
- Lal completed his PhD in Aerospace Engineering from Wichita State University in Kansas.
- He has also been the CEO and Chairman of Reliance New Ventures Reliance Industries Limited.

