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## **1. John Slaven Appointed Vice-Chairman of International Aluminium Institute ( May 22, 2024 )**

Vedanta Aluminium has announced the appointment of its CEO, John Slaven, as Vice-Chairman of the International Aluminium Institute (IAI).

### **An Overview of the News**

- **Leadership Role:** In his new role, Slaven will lead global initiatives to promote sustainable transformation within the aluminium industry.

### **John Slaven's Role and Vision:**

- **Sustainability Focus:** Emphasizes aluminium's crucial role in advancing the energy transition towards a Zero Carbon future.
- **Industry Advocacy:** Aims to increase awareness of aluminium's vast potential and promote its use in creating a greener planet.

### **John Slaven's Background:**

- **Experience:** Over 30 years in the metals, mining, and modern manufacturing industries.
- **Leadership:** Held diverse positions in top companies, contributing to transformative advancements.
- **Current Role:** As CEO of Vedanta Aluminium, he oversees the company's growth strategy, prioritising environmental, social, and governance (ESG) efforts.
- **Recognition:** Under his leadership, Vedanta Aluminium has been recognised as the most sustainable aluminium company in the world.

### **International Aluminium Institute (IAI):**

- **Establishment:** Founded in 1972, it is the sole organisation representing the global primary aluminium industry.
- **Mission:** Focuses on raising awareness about the industry's operations, advocating for responsible production, and highlighting aluminium's environmental benefits.
- **Membership and Data:** Includes the world's leading bauxite, alumina, and aluminium companies, maintaining over 40 years of extensive global data on production, consumption, energy use, and environmental impact.

## **2. ITC's Sanjeev Puri takes over as CII chairman for 2024-25 ( May 21, 2024 )**

ITC Ltd Chairman and Managing Director Sanjeev Puri has assumed the post of CII Chairman for 2024-25, succeeding R Dinesh, Chairman, TVS Supply Chain Solutions.

### **An Overview of the News**

- The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) held a meeting on May 19, 2024, to elect new office bearers for the year 2024-25.

**About Sanjeev Puri:**

- Sanjeev Puri holds several key positions within ITC Limited, including Chairman of ITC Infotech India Limited and its subsidiaries in the UK and USA, as well as Surya Nepal Pvt. Ltd.
- Under his leadership, ITC has launched the 'ITC Next' vision, which aims to transform the group into a future-tech, climate-positive, innovative and inclusive enterprise.
- Sanjeev Puri has been honored with several awards, including the 'Best CEO Award' by Business Today in 2024 and the 'Transformational Leader Award 2022-23' by the Asian Center for Corporate Governance and Sustainability.

**Rajeev Memani appointed as Chairman Designate of CII**

- He serves as Chairman of the India Region of Ernst & Young (EY) and is a member of EY's global management body, leading the Global Emerging Markets Committee.
- Rajeev Memani is recognized as a trusted advisor to large Indian companies, private equity funds and multinational organizations, providing guidance on various aspects such as trust building, mergers and acquisitions, technology and smart capital allocation strategies.

**R Mukundan appointed as CII Vice Chairman**

- He is the Managing Director and CEO of Tata Chemicals Limited and holds the status of a distinguished alumnus from IIT Roorkee and Harvard Business School.
- With 33 years of experience within the Tata Group, R Mukundan has held various leadership positions in the chemicals, automotive and hospitality sectors, and has made significant contributions to the industry. He actively participates in industry forums and impact organizations.

**About CII**

- The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) is a prominent business lobby group in India, established in 1895 as the Engineering and Iron Trades Association in Bengal.
- It was known as the Confederation of Engineering Industry (CEI) until 1992 when it adopted its current name.
- CII is headquartered in New Delhi and advocates for business-friendly policies by engaging with the government.
- Other key business lobby groups in India include ASSOCHAM, FICCI, and NASSCOM.
- ASSOCHAM's President is Sanjay Nayar, FICCI's President for 2023-2024 is Dr. Anish Shah, and NASSCOM's President since 2018 is Debjani Gosh.

### **3. Keki Mistry Approved as Chairman of HDFC Life by IRDAI ( May 9, 2024 )**

The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDAI) has approved Keki Mistry's appointment as chairman of HDFC Life on May 7, 2024.

#### **An Overview of the News**

- Mistry succeeds Deepak S. Parekh, who stepped down from the chairman and non-executive director roles.
- HDFC Life's board unanimously endorsed Mistry's appointment on April 18, awaiting IRDAI's approval.
- Formerly vice chairman and CEO of HDFC Limited, Mistry now serves as a non-executive director on HDFC Bank Limited's board post-merger.

#### **About Keki Mistry**

- With directorships in multiple companies, Mistry is a chartered accountant and fellow member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India.
- He contributes as a member of the Primary Market Advisory committee (PMAC) and has previous experience on SEBI's Corporate Governance Committee.
- Mistry chaired the CII Corporate Governance Committee for two consecutive terms (2016-17 and 2017-18).
- Currently, he leads Working Group 1 within an SEBI expert committee dedicated to enhancing business practices and aligning regulations.

#### **HDFC Life Insurance Company Limited:**

- It is a provider of long-term life insurance services.
- The company provides both individual and group insurance services.
- Establishment - 14 August 2000.
- Headquarters - Mumbai

### **4. Ashish Chauhan and Sridhar Vembu Appointed to UGC by Ministry of Education ( April 14, 2024 )**

Ashish Kumar Chauhan, MD and CEO of the National Stock Exchange (NSE), and Sridhar Vembu, CEO of Zoho Corporation, have been appointed as members of the University Grants Commission (UGC).

#### **An Overview of the News**

- Their tenure spans three years, as per the notification from the Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education.

**Other Appointments**

- Retired Professor Sachidananda Mohanty, former Vice Chancellor of Central University of Odisha, has been appointed to the UGC. Professor Mohanty brings his extensive experience in academia to the commission.
- Professor Shashikala Gulabrao Wanjari, Vice Chancellor of the National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA) in New Delhi, Delhi, has been appointed as a member of the UGC. Her tenure, like others', is set for three years or until further orders.

**About UGC**

- The UGC was proposed by the Sargent Report of 1944 to establish a national system of education in India.
- Established by an Act of Parliament in 1956, the UGC plays a pivotal role in higher education governance.
- The current Chairman of UGC is Mamidala Jagadesh Kumar, and its headquarters are located in New Delhi, Delhi.
- With these appointments, the total number of members in the UGC has increased from 4 to 8, enriching its expertise and diversity.

**5. Adani begins Operation of the Copper Unit at Mundra ( April 1, 2024 )**

The first phase of the world's largest copper manufacturing plant in Mundra, Gujarat was launched by the Adani-led group. The company plans to invest \$1.2 billion in this phase.

**An Overview of the News****Kutch Copper Operations:**

- Kutch Copper, a subsidiary of Adani Enterprises Limited, commenced operations of its greenfield copper refinery, marking the shipment of the inaugural batch of cathode.
- Production Capacity and Expansion Plans:
  - The plant is estimated to produce 0.5 million tonnes of refined copper annually in its initial phase, with plans to expand to a capacity of 1 million tonnes by March 2029.
  - Upon completion of its second phase, Kutch Copper aims to become the world's largest single-location custom smelter with an annual production target of 1 million tonnes.

**ESG Commitment:**

- The company pledges to maintain high ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) performance standards by leveraging advanced technology and digitalization.

**Role in India's clean energy transition:**

- Increased copper production supports India's transition to clean energy, facilitating the development of technologies for electric vehicles, solar power, wind power and batteries.

**Job Creation and Domestic Demand:**

- The expansion of copper production is expected to create 2,000 direct and 5,000 indirect employment opportunities and meet India's target of doubling copper demand by 2030.

**Diversification and Industry Demand:**

- Catering to the growing demand for copper in various industries, Kutch Copper has expanded its offering to include copper tubes for air conditioning and refrigeration.

**Reduction in Import Dependence:**

- Domestic copper production aims to reduce India's dependence on imported copper, which has increased steadily in recent years.

**Stability Practice:**

- Kutch Copper prioritizes sustainability by using technology with minimal carbon footprint, allocating green space within the plant area and implementing eco-friendly water management practices.

**Industry Scenario:**

- Vedanta Ltd is looking to reopen a plant in Tuticorin, Tamil Nadu, while Hindalco Industries Ltd currently operates the largest copper smelter in India with a capacity of 0.5 million tonnes.

**Global Production Dynamics:**

- Globally, copper production is concentrated, with Chile and Peru being the top producers, collectively accounting for 38% of global production.

**6. MV Rao takes over as chairman of the Indian Banks Association ( March 22, 2024 )**

Central Bank of India MD and CEO MV Rao was elected as the new chairman of the Indian Banks Association (IBA) during the managing committee meeting held on 21 March.

**An Overview of the News****Vice President Selection:**

- The committee also appointed three vice presidents:
- Dinesh Kumar Khara, Chairman of State Bank of India (SBI)

- S L Jain, MD and CEO of Indian Bank
- N Kamakody, MD and CEO of City Union Bank

**Appointment of Honorary Secretary:**

- Madhav Nair, Country Head and CEO of the Bank of Bahrain and Kuwait was appointed as Honorary Secretary of the IBA.

**Contribution of Madhav Nair:**

- Serving as the first Vice President, Madhav Nair has been actively involved in policy advocacy related to areas such as technology, risk management, and environmental, social, and governance (ESG) factors since 2016.

**Indian Banks Association (IBA)**

- IBA represents a diverse range of Indian banks including public sector, private sector, foreign, co-operative and regional rural banks.
- Role and Functions: It plays an important role in shaping banking policies and promoting the adoption of best practices within the Indian banking industry.
- Expectations of new leadership: The election of a new leadership team is expected to infuse new energy and focus IBA's efforts to address the various challenges and leverage opportunities in the Indian banking sector.

**7. Jaipur hosts a two-day regional conference on good governance ( Oct. 4, 2023 )**

A two-day regional conference on "Good Governance" began in Jaipur on October 4, 2023.

**An Overview of the News**

- The conference also saw the presentation of 2022 award winners under the Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration.
- The program was presided over by Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot and Union Minister of State for Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions Dr. Jitendra Singh.
- The conference featured 13 award winners from various categories, including the PM Award and National e-Governance Award winners from Rajasthan.

**Highlights of the Conference:**

- The conference included plenary sessions on "Administrative Reforms and Effective Redressal of Public Grievances" and "Technology in Governance".
- These sessions will feature presentations, short films and discussions on the journey of the Prime Minister's Awards Scheme and the role of technology in governance.

### **Objectives of the Conference:**

- The primary objective of the conference is to facilitate the exchange of experiences and innovative ideas in public administration both at the national and state levels.
- It aims to promote good governance, e-governance, and digital governance by bringing together representatives from all the states and union territories of India to share their initiatives and practices.

### **About Rajasthan**

- It is a state in northern India and is the largest Indian state by area and the seventh largest state by population.
- It is bordered by five other Indian states: Punjab to the north; Haryana and Uttar Pradesh in the northeast; Madhya Pradesh in the southeast; and Gujarat in the southwest.
- Rajasthan is also home to three national tiger reserves, Ranthambore National Park in Sawai Madhopur, Sariska Tiger Reserve in Alwar and Mukundara Hills Tiger Reserve in Kota.

Formation - 30 March 1949

Capital - Jaipur

Districts - 33 (7 divisions)

Governor - Kalraj Mishra

Chief Minister - Ashok Gehlot (INC)

Assembly - Rajasthan Legislative Assembly (200 seats)

Rajya Sabha - 10 seats

Lok Sabha - 25 seats

### **8. PM Narendra Modi launches Sankalp Saptah ( Sept. 30, 2023 )**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched a week-long program called "Sankalp Saptah" for aspirational blocks in New Delhi on 30 September 2023.

#### **An Overview of the News**

- The objective of the Sankalp Saptah is **to effectively implement the Aspirational Block Programme, which aims to improve governance at the block level and enhance the quality of life of the citizens.**
- About three thousand panchayat and block level representatives and officials from across the country will participate in this program to be held at Bharat Mandapam in the national capital.
- Additionally, around two lakh people including block and panchayat level officials and farmers will join the program virtually.

- Sankalp Saptaah will be celebrated in all 500 aspirational blocks of 329 districts of the country from 3rd to 9th October.
- During this week each day will focus on a specific development theme on which all the Aspirational Blocks will work.

**The topics for the first six days are as follows:**

1. Sampurna Swasthya (Comprehensive Health)
2. Suposhit Pariwaar (Well-nourished Family)
3. Swachhta (Cleanliness)
4. Krishi (Agriculture)
5. Shiksha (Education)
6. Samridhi Diwas (Prosperity Day)

The final day of the week will be dedicated to celebrating the work done throughout the week, known as Sankalp Saptaah - Samavesh Samaroh".

**9. 'India Smart Cities Conclave 2023' organized in Madhya Pradesh ( Sept. 26, 2023 )**

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India organized the 'India Smart Cities Conclave 2023' in Indore, Madhya Pradesh on September 26, 2023.

**An Overview of the News**

- The event brought together all 100 smart cities that are leading urban innovation and changing the city development process.
- The conclave aims to showcase the excellent work done under the Smart Cities Mission and shape the future of urban transformation in India.
- President Draupadi Murmu on September 27, 2023, honored the winners of the India Smart Cities Awards Competition (ISAC) 2022, which has been organized by the ministry since 2018.

**Main activities during the Event:**

- The event was scheduled for two days on September 26 and 27, 2023.
- On the first day of the conclave, an exhibition of the award-winning projects of ISAC 2022 was inaugurated.
- Attendees had the opportunity to interact with Smart City Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) and participate in site visits of notable projects implemented under the Smart City Mission in Indore and Ujjain.

- ISAC 2022 awards were distributed on the second day of the conclave. The awards will
- recognize 5 States/Union Territories (UTs), 31 distinguished cities and 7 partner organizations for their outstanding contributions.
  - In total, there have been 66 recipients of ISAC awards.
  - Additionally, several reports will be released during the conclave, including:
    - ISAC 2022 Awards Collection
    - UN Habitat report: "Smart Cities Mission – Localization of the Sustainable Development Goals"
    - A collection of Smart City Mission newsletters
    - ISAC 2023 Awards Booklet.

**Smart City Mission:**

- The Smart Cities Mission was launched on 25 June 2015 as a centrally sponsored scheme with the goal of transforming 100 cities using "smart solutions".
- The mission aims to provide essential infrastructure, a clean and sustainable environment and a high quality of life to the citizens through smart solutions.

**Mission Achievements:**

- More than 6000 projects costing more than Rs 1.1 lakh crore have been completed as part of the Mission, with the remaining projects targeted to be completed by June 30, 2024.
- One of the notable achievements was the establishment of Integrated Command and Control Centers (ICCC) in all 100 smart cities, functioning as the city's operational center for urban management.
- ICCC has significantly improved various urban services including crime tracking, civil defense, transport management, solid waste management, water supply and disaster management.
- Smart cities have launched projects in areas such as mobility, energy, water, sanitation, solid waste management, public space, social infrastructure and smart governance.

**10. International Democracy Day - 15 September ( Sept. 15, 2023 )**

International Democracy Day is celebrated every year on 15 September.

**An Overview of the News**

- International Democracy Day emphasizes the importance of democracy, considering it not only a fundamental human right but also a vital element in promoting good governance and peace.
- The day reminds us of the important role of democracy in shaping societies globally.

- In **2023, the theme** of International Democracy Day focuses on "**Empowering the Next Generation**", highlighting the important contribution of young individuals in promoting democracy.
- Acknowledging and promoting youth participation in democratic processes is a fundamental element for safeguarding the future of democracy.

### **History of International Democracy Day:-**

- It has its origins in the Universal Declaration on Democracy, which was adopted by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) on September 15, 1997.
- The IPU is an international organization consisting of national parliaments around the world.
- Qatar took a leading role in advocating the establishment of International Democracy Day following the adoption of the Universal Declaration on Democracy.
- On November 8, 2007, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) took an important step by unanimously adopting a resolution entitled "Support by the United Nations System of Governments' Efforts to Promote and Consolidate New or Restored Democracies". This resolution formalized the International Day of Democracy.

### **About Democracy**

- It is a term that originates from the Greek words 'demos', which refers to a citizen of a city-state, and 'kratos', which refers to the concept of power or government.
- Democracy is considered a fundamental value within the United Nations. It is built on key principles, including:
  - **Respect for human rights:** Democracy involves a commitment to upholding the rights of individuals.
  - **Fundamental Freedom:** It involves the protection of basic freedoms.
  - **Periodic and genuine elections:** Democracy involves the practice of holding honest and legitimate elections on a regular basis.
  - **Universal suffrage:** Ensures that all eligible citizens have the right to vote.
- Democracy is a system that gives citizens the right to choose their leaders.
- It encourages active participation of citizens in the processes that determine decisions affecting their lives.