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1. Piyush Goyal's two-day visit to Italy (April 14, 2023)

Piyush Goyal's two-day visit to Italy

Union Minister of Commerce and Industry **Piyush Goyal** was visiting **Rome** on 12 April 2023 on a two-day visit to **Italy**.

An Overview of the News:

- Shri Goyal met **Antonio Tajani, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs**, Government of Italy to review all aspects of bilateral trade and economic relations.
- Both the Ministers exchanged views on leveraging the India-Italy trade and economic partnership for development in various sectors.
- After the state visit of Italian **Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni** to India on 2 March 2023, efforts were made to elevate the bilateral relationship to the level of a strategic partnership.

Suggestion for formation of Joint Working Group:

- Tajani suggested setting up of a joint working group in strategic areas such as space, technology, defence, agriculture etc. to keep abreast of important developments in these areas.

Bilateral trade with Italy:

- Bilateral trade between India and Italy to be around **US\$ 16 billion** in 2022.
- Shri Goyal briefed about the progress made in India-EU FTA negotiations. Both the Ministers underlined the importance of a free, balanced and fair **Free Trade Agreement** and hoped that it would be concluded soon.

Joint Commission on Economic Cooperation (JCEC) in Rome:

- The two leaders also agreed to hold the next session of the Joint Commission on Economic Cooperation (JCEC) in Rome in the last week of September 2023.

Italy:

- Capital: **Rome**
- Currency: **Euro**
- President: **Sergio Mattarella**
- Prime Minister: **Giorgia Meloni**

2. Foreign Minister S. Jaishankar launches "Tulsi Ghat Restoration Project" in Kampala (April 13, 2023)

Foreign Minister S. Jaishankar launches "Tulsi Ghat Restoration Project" in Kampala

External Affairs Minister **S Jaishankar** launched **Varanasi's 'Tulsi Ghat Restoration Project'** on 10 April 2023 during his visit to **Kampala, Uganda**.

An Overview of the News:

- The **Tulsi Ghat Renovation Project** is an initiative aimed at enhancing the aesthetic appeal of **Varanasi**, the oldest inhabited city in the world.
- Uganda was supported to chair the Non-Aligned Movement from Africa for the period from 2022 to 2025. The position of chair of NAM rotates every three years during the summits.

Mozambique Visit:

- The External Affairs Minister will visit **Mozambique** from 13 to 15 April. This will be the first visit by an External Affairs Minister of India to Mozambique.
- The fifth meeting of the India-Mozambique Joint Commission will be chaired by the Foreign Ministers of both the countries.
- During the visit, various types of assistance will be announced from the Indian side to both these countries. There will also be talk on defense cooperation with these two countries.
- In March 2023, India conducted military exercises with nine countries in Africa, as well as a separate meeting with the military chiefs of African countries.
- In March 2023, **Cyclone Freddy** caused havoc in **Malawi, Mozambique and Madagascar**.

Uganda:

- Capital: **Kampala**
- President: **Yoweri Museveni**
- Prime Minister: **Robinhood Nabanza**
- Currency: **Uganda Shilling**

Mozambique:

- Capital: **Maputo**
- President: **Philippe Nyusi**
- Prime Minister: **Carlos Agostinho do Rosário**
- Currency: **Mozambican metical (MZN)**

3. Kolkata Metro becomes India's first metro train to run under river (April 13, 2023)

Kolkata Metro becomes India's first metro train to run under river

On 12 April 2023, the Kolkata Metro reached Howrah from Kolkata through a river tunnel for the first time in India, carrying only officers and engineers. This tunnel is built across the Hooghly River.

An Overview of the News:

- Services on this route of Kolkata Metro will start from this year itself. Once the services start, Howrah will become the country's deepest metro station (33 meters below the surface).

520 meter long tunnel:

- The route from Howrah to Esplanade is about 4.8 km long, of which 520 m will be completed by tunneling under the Hooghly river. It will take about 45 seconds to cross this tunnel built across the Hubli river.
- The tunnel is 32 meters below the surface of the water. The entire length of this tunnel is 10.8 km underground.

Tunnel built on the lines of Eurostar

- This tunnel of Kolkata Metro has been built like the Eurostar trains passing through the Channel Tunnel in Europe between London and Paris.
- The work of digging this tunnel was completed by Afcons in four months (April-July 2017).

Kolkata Metro Rail Corporation (KMRC):

- The Kolkata Metro Rail was inaugurated on 24 October 1984 as India's first metro.
- Now again, for the first time in the country, the tunnel under the river has also been built here, the Kolkata Metro.
- The tunnel will remain like this for 120 years

Based on the standard of tunnel seismic zone 3:

- The Kolkata Metro tunnel has been designed according to seismic zone 3, the zone in which Kolkata falls.

Kolkata metro tunnel age 120 years:

- The Kolkata Metro tunnel is designed for a service life of 120 years. Not even a drop of water can enter the tunnels of the river.
- General Manager of Kolkata Metro Railway: **P Udaya Kumar Reddy**
- MD of Kolkata Metro Rail Corporation (KMRC): **H N Jaiswal**

4. Solar Energy Corporation of India gets 'Miniratna Category-I' status (April 12, 2023)

Solar Energy Corporation of India Limited (SECI)

Solar Energy Corporation of India Limited (SECI) has been accorded the **status of Miniratna Category-I Central Public Sector Enterprise (CPSE)** on 10th April, 2023.

An overview of the news

- Its formal announcement has been issued by the **Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, Government of India.**

- SECI has achieved this feat in a short span of time due to its **consistent performance, mobility and flexibility in operations.**
- SECI has played a central role in the rapid addition of RE generation capacity in the country and has contributed to the country's climate commitments, carbon reduction strategies and sustainable energy transition.
- It is making steady progress towards achieving the Prime Minister's '**Panchamrit**' **goals** and achieving 500 GW non-fossil fuel based non-fossil fuel based capacity by 2030.

Solar Energy Corporation of India Limited (SECI)

- It is a **Central Public Sector Undertaking (CPSU)** under the administrative control of the **Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE)**, set up on **20th Sept, 2011.**
- It is the only CPSU dedicated to the **Solar Energy Sector.**
- The company holds **Category 1 Power Trading Licence** and is active in this domain through trading of Solar Energy from the projects set up under the schemes being implemented by it.
- So far, SECI has awarded renewable energy (RE) project capacity of over 56 GW.
- SECI enjoys the **highest credit rating of AAA by ICRA.**
- Managing Director - **Suman Sharma**

5. International Conference on Defence Finance and Economics (April 12, 2023)

International Conference on Defense Finance and Economics in New Delhi

Defense Minister **Rajnath Singh** inaugurated the three-day **International Conference on Defense Finance and Economics in New Delhi** on April 12, 2023.

An overview of the news

- The conference is organized by the **Ministry of Defence.**
- It will provide a platform to eminent policy makers, academicians and government officials from home and abroad to share their insights and experiences on defense finance and economics in the context of emerging security challenges and policies globally.
- Delegates from **USA, UK, Japan, Australia, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Kenya** are participating in the conference.

Objective of the Conference

- To promote **dialogue and cooperation among the participants and contribute to the defense preparedness** of the country with optimum financial resources and effective implementation of the defense budget.
- Participating in **global discussions on defense finance and economics and proposing a sustainable roadmap on the subject.**
- To disseminate the best practices, experiences and expertise of various countries and align processes in the Indian context with international standards.

The topics of discussion

- **Current challenges and opportunities in the areas of Defence Finance and Economics**, such as how to allocate and use resources efficiently & effectively.
- Different models and practices of finance and economics related to **Defence Acquisition around the world.**
- **Latest developments and innovations in Defence Research and Development.**
- Best practices on managing human resources in Defence, including issues related to pay, pensions and welfare of Defence Personnel and the role & functions of oversight mechanisms within defence ecosystems.

6. Cipla signs agreement with Novartis Pharma AG (April 12, 2023)

Cipla signs agreement with Novartis Pharma AG

Indian multinational pharmaceutical company **Cipla entered into a perpetual licence agreement with Switzerland-based pharmaceutical company Novartis Pharma AG.**

An Overview of the News

- The agreement allows Cipla to manufacture and market **diabetes drug Galvus** and its **combination brands** from January 1, 2026.
- **Galvus** is an **oral anti-diabetic medicine** that contains **Vildagliptin** as an active ingredient in it. It is used for the treatment of **type 2 diabetes.**
- The perpetual licence agreement between Cipla and Novartis Pharma AG will enable Cipla to expand its product offerings in the diabetes segment.

About Novartis AG

- It is a multinational pharmaceutical corporation.
- The company is consistently ranked among the top five pharmaceutical companies globally.

- Novartis is one of the world's largest pharmaceutical companies in terms of revenue.
- In 2022, it was ranked as the fourth largest pharmaceutical company by revenue.

CEO - **Vasanth Narasimhan**

Subsidiaries - **Sandoz, Novartis India Ltd.**

Headquarters - **Basel, Switzerland**

Established - **29 February 1996**

Founder - **Johann Rudolf; Alexander Clavell**

About Cipla Limited

- It is an Indian multinational pharmaceutical company.
- It primarily develops drugs to treat medical conditions such as heart disease, arthritis, diabetes, depression and respiratory diseases.

CEO - **Umang Vohra**

Founder - **Khwaja Abdul Hameed**

Headquarters - **Mumbai**

Subsidiaries - **Cipla USA Inc., Cipla Health Ltd. etc.**

7. IndusInd Bank signs co-financing loan agreement with Citibank and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) (April 12, 2023)

IndusInd Bank signed a co-financing loan agreement with **Citibank and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)** for a funding line of **\$125 million**.

An Overview of the News

- The funding line will be used by **IndusInd Bank** to provide credit to the agriculture sector.
- The co-financing includes **JPY 13 billion (about \$97.45 million) from JICA** and a **\$30 million loan from Citibank** to IndusInd Bank.
- The collaboration between the three entities aims to support the development of the agriculture sector in India by providing financial support to farmers and other related businesses.
- IndusInd Bank is a leading private sector bank in India with a strong presence in retail banking, corporate banking and treasury operations.

About IndusInd Bank

- It is a **leading financial services company** in India, headquartered in **Mumbai**.

- The Bank offers a variety of commercial, transactional and electronic banking services to meet the needs of a wide variety of customers. These include savings and current accounts, loans, credit cards, insurance and investment options.
- IndusInd Bank was inaugurated in **April 1994 by the then Union Finance Minister Manmohan Singh.**
- The present Chairman of the Board of IndusInd Bank is **Arun Tiwari.**
- The tagline of the bank is "**We Care Dil Se, We Make You Feel Richer**".

About Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)

Formation - **1 October 2003**

Type - **Corporate Administrative Agency**

Purpose - **Official Development Assistance**

Headquarters - **Chiyoda, Tokyo, Japan**

Service Area - **Worldwide**

Official language - **Japanese, English (secondary)**

President - **Akihiko Tanaka**

Affiliation - **Development Assistance Committee**

Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

About Citibank

Establishment - **16 June 1812**

Founder - **Samuel Osgood**

Headquarters - **New York, New York, United States**

8. Central Bureau of Narcotics launches Unified Portal (April 11, 2023)

Central Bureau of Narcotics launches Unified Portal

The **Central Bureau of Narcotics** launched the **Unified Portal** on 11th April and the portal was inaugurated by Shri Sanjay Malhotra, Revenue Secretary.

An Overviews of the News

- The portal has been launched towards strengthening the vision of Digital India during the period of '**Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav**'.
- This portal is a one-stop solution for licensing and ExIM authorizations issued by the Bureau.
- The portal is designed to create efficiency, transparency and accountability among the users of the department to promote the growth of drugs and pharma sector, boost

economy for "Atma Nirbhar Bharat", and meet the needs of pharma and chemical industries.

- The launch of the Unified Portal will ease the process of doing business with NDPS and Controlled Substances in the country with transparency and better compliance.
- The portal is integrated with other government services such as Bharat Kosh, GST, PAN-NSDL verification, e-Sanchit and UIDAI, facilitating a single point service for obtaining licence from CBN.

About Central Bureau of Narcotics (CBN)

- The Central Bureau of Narcotics is a Central Government organisation dealing with international trade in Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Precursor Chemicals under various United Nations Conventions and the provisions of the NDPS Act, 1985.
- It is the nodal agency of the Government of India responsible for controlling the production, trade and consumption of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances in India.
- It was established under the Indian Opium Act, 1857.
- It issues licences for the cultivation, production and distribution of narcotics and intoxicants.
- The CBN monitors and regulates the production and distribution of these substances, and combats illegal drug trafficking.
- The CBN collaborates with other law enforcement agencies such as the Narcotics Control Bureau, Customs and Excise Department to coordinate efforts to combat drug trafficking and abuse.
- CBN collaborates with international agencies such as the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) to combat the global problem of drug trafficking and abuse.

Establishment - 1935

Headquarters - Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh

9. Food Conclave-2023 in Hyderabad (April 11, 2023)

Food Conclave-2023 in Hyderabad

The two-day '**Food Conclave-2023**' will be organized on April 28 and 29 in Hyderabad, Telangana.

An Overview of the News:

- The **objective** of the Food Conclave is to identify the main challenges and opportunities for the development of the Indian agri-food sector in the current decade.
- The event will consist of **five thematic tracks** covering various aspects of the agri-food sector.
- - The main focus areas will be **agriculture (green), edible oils (yellow), dairy (white), meat and poultry (pink), and aquaculture (blue)**.

Partner organizations of the event:

- The Government of Telangana is collaborating with several organizations to organize this session.
- The **World Economic Forum-India, Indian Vegetable Oil Producers Association, Indian Dairy Association, Heifer International and Society of Aquaculture Professionals** along with the Government of Telangana are involved in the event.

Telangana:

- Capital: **Hyderabad**
- Governor: **Tamilisai Soundararajan**
- Chief Minister: **K Chandrasekhar Rao**

10. Ministry of Electronics & IT organized 35th CISO Deep Dive Training Program (April 11, 2023)

Ministry of Electronics & IT organized 35th CISO Deep Dive Training Program

The event is being organized by the National e-Governance Division under its **Capacity Building Scheme** of the Ministry of Electronics & IT, with 22 participants from Central Ministries and States/UTs.

An Overview of the News:

- It is being organized at the **35th Chief Information Security Officers (CSIO) Intensive Training Program** at the School of Planning and Architecture in **Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh** from April 10-14, 2023.

Objective:

- To spread awareness about cyber-crime and ensure adequate security measures to tackle the growing menace.
- For this, the Cyber Secure India programme, an initiative of the Ministry of Electronics and IT with the mission of building the capacity of CISOs and frontline IT officers in all government departments, was envisaged.

5-Day Intensive Training for CISOs:

- A 5-day intensive training program has been designed for CISOs of Public Sector Banks and Insurance Companies, technical wings of police and security forces, CTOs and members of technical/PMU teams, subordinate agencies/PSUs.
- The objective of this training is to educate and enable CISOs in particular to understand cyber attacks comprehensively and thoroughly, gain necessary hands-on experience about the latest technologies in security and create an empowered e-commerce ecosystem for individual organizations and citizens at large. To deliver the benefits of infrastructure.
- Launched in the year 2018, CISO Training is a first of its kind partnership between the government and an industry association under the **Public Private Partnership (PPP)** model.

