

### NATIONAL

#### 1. Bauxite Certified Reference Material (CRM)

**Why in news** - National Aluminium Company Limited (NALCO) has successfully developed a Bauxite Certified Reference Material (CRM).

**Key Points –**

- This is the first of its kind CRM in India and 5 th in the World.
- Name - BARC B1201.
- Collaborator - Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC).
- NALCO - Navratna CPSE, under Ministry of Mines.

**About CRM –**

- Blocks of metal that indicate concentration of their various constituent elements.
- The CRM was certified for 9 property values.

#### 2. Pension reforms

**Why in news** – Formation of a committee to look into improving the system of pension for government employees was announced.

**Key Points –**

- 5 states reverted to the Old Pension Scheme (OPS) - Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand.

**About the committee**

- Head - T V Somanathan (Finance Secretary).
- Task assigned – To work on an approach that will strike a balance between employees’ needs and fiscal prudence.
- Any changes proposed to be adopted by both Central and state governments.

National Pension Scheme (NPS)	Old pension scheme (OPS)
Contributory scheme – Employees (10%) + Government (14%).	Receive 50% of their last drawn salary as monthly pensions.
Eligibility - 18 - 70 years	Eligibility - Only government employees

In effect - From April 1, 2004 (except for armed forces)	In effect - Before April 1, 2004
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#### 3. Flood disaster preparedness

**Why in news** - The World Bank has approved a \$108 million loan to help Assam improve disaster preparedness and enhance flood forecasting.

**Key Points –**

- It is part of a larger \$500 million investment program for Assam.
- Flood affected protected areas in Assam - Kaziranga National Park, Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary etc.

#### 4. Lord Basaveshwara

**Why in news** - Amit Shah unveiled the statues of Lord Basaveshwara and Nadaprabhu Kempegowda in Bengaluru, Karnataka.

**Key Points –**

**About N Kempegowda –**

- Chieftain under the Vijayanagara Empire of the 16th century.
- Founder of Bengaluru.
- Developed around 1,000 lakes in the city to cater to its drinking and agricultural needs.
- Iconic figure among Vokkaligas

**About Jagadguru Basaveshwara (Basavanna) –**

- 12th century poet and philosopher.
- Founder of Lingayatism, Lingayat community. (Follower of Saivite).
- Teachings - Arivu (true knowledge), Achara (right conduct), and Anubhava (divine experience).
- He believed in a society free of the caste system, with equal opportunity for all.
- Established Anubhava Mantapa - Common forum for all to discuss the prevailing problems of socio, economic and political strata.

### INTERNATIONAL

#### 1. Humza Yousaf

**Why in news** - Humza Yousaf has been elected as Scottish National Party’s new leader.

### Key Points –

- He replaced First Minister Nicola Sturgeon.
- Pakistan origin Humza is set to become the first person of color to serve as Scotland's first minister.
- He became the youngest and the first Muslim leader of a government in western Europe.

### 2. IMF bailout

**Why in news** - The International Monetary Fund (IMF) executive board approved a nearly \$3 billion bailout plan for Sri Lanka.

### Key Points –

- Bailout - extending support to an entity facing a threat of bankruptcy.

### About IMF –

- Established - July 1944, Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, United States.
- Function - last resort lender for countries facing severe economic crises.
- The IMF lends money in the form of Special Drawing Rights (SDRs).
- SDR is a basket of 5 currencies — US dollar, Euro, Chinese Yuan, Japanese Yen and British Pound.
- Lending is done through - Standby credit facility, extended fund facility, rapid credit facility, short term liquidity line, sustainability facility etc.

## SUMMITS & CONFERENCES

### 1. India-Africa Army Chiefs' Conclave

**Why in news** - The first joint conference of army chiefs of India and African countries was held in Pune.

### Key Points –

- Chief guest - Defense Minister Rajnath Singh.
- Army chiefs of 10 countries along with 31 representatives of African countries are present.
- It was organised on the sidelines of the AFINDEX joint exercises.

## ENVIRONMENT

### 1. Gandhamardan hill

**Why in news** - The Gandhamardan hill range of Odisha has been accorded the tag of 'biodiversity heritage site (BHS).

### Key Points –

- 3rd BHS in Odisha. (1st - Mahendragiri hills in Gajapati, 2nd - Mandasaru gorge in Kandhamal district).
- Spread – Bargarh and Balangir districts.
- It is famous for medicinal plants. It is considered the 'Ayurvedic paradise' of Odisha.
- 2 historical monuments on the hill - Nrusinghanath temple and Harishankar temple.
- BHS is declared Under Section 37 of Biological Diversity Act, 2002. It is notified by the State Government in consultation with local bodies.

## ECONOMY

### 1. Interchange fee on UPI transactions

**Why in news** - NPCI has recommended an interchange fee on Unified Payments Interface (UPI) transactions of over Rs 2,000.

### Key Points –

- Using the Prepaid Payment Instruments (PPIs) on UPI would attract interchange at 1.1% of the transaction value for transactions worth over Rs 2,000.

Merchant category	Interchange (% of transaction value)	Capped at (in ₹)
Convenience store	1.1	NA
Government*	1.0	10
Mutual fund	1.0	15
Insurance	1.0	10
Railways*	1.0	5
Cash withdrawal at PoS	1.0	10
Supermarket	0.9	NA
Telecom	0.7	NA
Utilities/ Post office	0.7	NA
Education	0.7	15
Agriculture	0.7	10
Real estate agents and managers - rentals	0.7	NA
Fuel*	0.5	NA

\* For government, fuel and railways: Acquirer will surcharge 2.5% (up to ₹10), 1% and ₹10 respectively



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- No interchange in terms of peer-to-peer (P2P) or peer-to-peer-merchant (P2PM) transactions between the bank account and the PPI wallet would apply.
- PPIs are digital wallets that allow users to store money and make payments.

## Key Points –

- She is the first woman from J&K to receive it.
- Alia Mir's Wildlife Rescue Helpline (2021) works to rescue snakes and other wild animals.

## AWARDS & HONOURS

### 1. Wildlife Conservation Award

**Why in news** - Wildlife conservationist Aliya Mir was honoured by J&K Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha.

## BOOKS & AUTHORS

### 1. "War & Women"

**Why in news** – The Book "War & Women" written by Dr. MA Hasan was launched on March 24, 2023.

## Key Points –

- It speaks against Pak Army on genocide in 1971.



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### POINTERS

- According to S&P Global Ratings, India's economic growth is estimated to be at what percent in the fiscal year beginning April 2023 – **6%**.
- Which state released the updated State Disaster Management Policy and Disaster Management Plan 2023 in March 2023 – **Tamil Nadu**.
- Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav recently launched the Aravalli Green Wall Project in which city – **Gurugram**.
- Where have researchers discovered a new species of moray eel named *Gymnothorax tamilnaduensis* in March 2023 – **Cuddalore coast, Tamil Nadu**.
- Which bank will buy all of SVB's deposits and loans - **First Citizens Bank**.
- What is the name of recently launched world's first 3D-printed rocket - **Terran 1**.
- What is the maximum GST compensation cess rate for pan masala on the retail sale price per unit - **51%**.
- Who is heading the government constituted committee to monitor the stock of Arhar dal - **Nidhi Khare**.
- Who has won the Children's Champion Award 2023 in the health and nutrition category - **'Tapoban' (Assam's NGO)**.
- Recently, which Indian all-rounder cricketer has been included in the elite grade 'A+' of the BCCI central contract list - **Ravindra Jadeja**.

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