

## International

### Mohamed al-Bashir appointed as caretaker Prime Minister of Syria.

Mohamed al-Bashir has been appointed the caretaker Prime Minister of the transitional government in Syria. In a televised statement, Mr Bashir said that he will lead the interim authority till 1st of March, next year with the backing of the former rebels who toppled President Bashar al-Assad a few days ago.

Al-Bashir ran the rebel-led Salvation Government before the 12-day lightning offensive swept into Damascus.

### Donald Trump names Harmeet Dhillon to be Assistant Attorney General for civil rights.

US President-elect Donald Trump has named Republican Party activist Harmeet Dhillon to be the Assistant Attorney General for civil rights. Making the announcement, Mr. Trump said, that in her new role at the Department of Justice, Harmeet will be a tireless defender of American Constitutional Rights and will enforce Civil Rights and Election Laws fairly and firmly.

### Israel carries out dozens of air strikes across Syria.

Israeli warplanes have carried out dozens of attacks across Syria, including in the capital, Damascus. The UK-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR) said there were more than 100 strikes on military targets. Israel said that it is acting to prevent weapons from falling into the hands of extremists following the overthrow of the Assad regime.

### New Zealand plans to ban greyhound racing.

New Zealand has announced plans to ban greyhound racing, citing an unacceptably high rate of injuries. The government plans to wind down the industry over the next 20 months to allow time for the rehoming of racing dogs and for those in the industry to transition to other jobs. The sport has long faced criticism in the country, with some breeders accused of mistreating or doping the animals. Apart from New Zealand, commercial greyhound racing is permitted in Australia, Ireland, the UK, and the US.

## National

### Former Karnataka CM S.M. Krishna passes away.

S.M. Krishna, former Karnataka Chief Minister from 1999 to 2004, passed away at his residence. He was 92. S M Krishna had also served as the Minister of External Affairs between June 2009 and October 2012. Krishna, was credited with creating world-class infrastructure in Bengaluru during his stint as Karnataka Chief Minister. He was a recipient of the Padma Vibhushan.

### ICRISAT grants its first industrial design in India for Solar-Powered Water Hyacinth Harvester.

The International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) has been granted its first industrial design in India for a Solar-Powered Water Hyacinth Harvester developed by a team of scientists. The harvester is a solar-powered equipment, designed and fabricated in-house, is an affordable solution priced at under 2 lakh rupees making it ideal for rural farming communities that cannot afford sophisticated machinery costing 10 times as much. ICRISAT has demonstrated that 72,000 kg of water hyacinth biomass can be mechanically harvested from a 3-acre pond in 2 to 3 days by a team of two or three people.

### Suspect registry of identifiers of Cyber Criminals launched in collaboration with banks and financial institutions.

The Centre informed that a suspect registry of identifiers of Cyber Criminals has been launched in collaboration with banks and financial institutions under Citizen Financial Cyber Fraud Reporting and Management System (I4C). Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai said the initiative has saved money of more than 1400 crore rupees by declining more than 5.6 lakh fraudulent transactions.

Several measures have been taken to mitigate rampant cyber frauds and complaints taking into consideration major hotspots of cyber crime. Seven Joint Cyber Coordination Teams (JCCTs) have been constituted for Mewat, Jamtara, Ahmedabad, Hyderabad, Chandigarh,

Visakhapatnam and Guwahati under I4C covering the whole country based upon cyber crime hotspots and areas having multi-jurisdictional issues.

### **PM POSHAN scheme: Centre to bear additional cost of ₹425.62 cr in FY2024-25 due to inflation.**

The Central government has announced that it will bear the additional cost of ₹425.62 crore in FY 2024-25 on account of inflation in food material cost under the centrally sponsored PM POSHAN Scheme. Under the scheme, one hot cooked meal is served to 11.70 crore students studying in Balvatika and classes I to VIII 10.24 lakh government and government-aided schools.

### **Ajay Seth gets additional charge of Revenue Secretary**

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has given additional charge of the post of the Secretary of Department of Revenue to Economic Affairs Secretary, Ajay Seth with immediate effect. He will be in charge of the post until the appointment of a regular incumbent or further orders.

### **Dharmendra Pradhan releases Vishnukant Shastri's Rachana Sanchayan.**

Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan has released Vishnukant Shastri's Rachana Sanchayan published by Sahitya Akademi in New Delhi. During the release, the Minister lauded Vishnukant Shastri's contribution in advancing Indian culture, religion, spirituality and literature.

### **Centre releases Rs 1,869 Crore for Swachh Bharat Mission-Grameen in 2024.**

The Ministry of Rural Development has informed that a sum of over 1,869 crore rupees was released up to November this year as center's share under Swachh Bharat Mission-Grameen to sustain the open defecation free status of villages across the country. The ministry has informed that soak pits, waste stabilisation ponds and decentralised wastewater treatment system are built for the

purpose. Over 56 lakh individual toilets, around 1.4 lakh schools and Anganwadi toilets and 64,000 community sanitary complexes are built till now under MGNREGS.

### **Opposition submits no confidence motion against Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar.**

The opposition party has submitted a no-confidence motion against Rajya Sabha Chairman, Jagdeep Dhankhar accusing him of being partisan in functioning in the House. The notice has been submitted to Secretary General of the Rajya Sabha. All parties belonging to the I.N.D.I.A. group have formally submitted a no-confidence motion against the Rajya Sabha Chairman for conducting the proceedings of the House allegedly in a partisan manner.

### **Business and Economy**

### **UAE Hosts Founders' Retreat to Boost India-UAE Startup Collaboration**

The United Arab Emirates hosted a three-day Founders' Retreat in Abu Dhabi and Dubai, bringing together over 60 leading Indian startup founders with UAE business leaders and policymakers.

Co-organized by the UAE Embassy in Delhi, Offline, and the UAE-India CEPA Council, the retreat was a landmark initiative fostering transformative collaborations. Participating ventures, averaging a valuation of \$3.5 billion, included founders from 13 Indian unicorns and five publicly listed companies, emphasizing the potential for closer investment ties.

### **RBI releases "Handbook of Statistics on Indian States, 2023-24".**

The Reserve Bank of India released the ninth edition of its statistical publication titled "Handbook of Statistics on Indian States, 2023-24". Through this publication, the Reserve Bank has been disseminating wide-ranging data on the regional economies of India.

This publication provides sub-national statistics on socio-demographics, health, state domestic product, agriculture, environment, price and wages, industry, infrastructure, banking and fiscal indicators across Indian states over various time periods ranging from 1951 to 2024.

## **ADB approves \$350mn loan to enhance India's logistics sector.**

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a \$350 million policy-based loan to support the Government of India's wide-ranging reforms to strengthen and modernise the country's logistics sector and achieve increased economic competitiveness. The loan will finance the second subprogramme of the Strengthening Multimodal and Integrated Logistics Ecosystem Programme, which supports the government's efforts to create a comprehensive policy, planning and institutional framework at the federal, state, and city levels.

## **73,151 startups in India now have at least one woman Director: Commerce & Industry Ministry.**

Commerce and Industry Ministry has said that 73,151 startups with at least one-woman director have been recognized under the Startup India Initiative. This represents nearly half of the startups supported by the government, showcasing the crucial role women play in driving innovation and economic growth.

Over 3,107 crore rupees has been invested in 149 women-led startups through Alternative Investment Funds. Startup India Seed Fund Scheme has approved 227.12 crore rupees in funding for 1,278 women-led startups since its inception in April 2021. Credit Guarantee Scheme for Startups has guaranteed 24.6 crores in loans for women-led ventures since April last year.

## **Flipkart, DPIIT sign MoU to accelerate growth of startup ecosystem.**

Flipkart, India's e-commerce platform, has signed an MoU with the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) to support and empower tech start-ups in India.

Aimed at encouraging the growth of innovators and entrepreneurs, the partnership would build on existing efforts under the Flipkart Leap and Ventures initiative with its \$100 million fund.

## **SIP inflows cross Rs 25,000 crore mark for 2nd consecutive month in November.**

The inflow into systematic investment plans (SIPs) in the country topped the 25,000 crore rupees mark for the second consecutive month and stood at 25,320 crore rupees in November this year, almost similar to the October figures of 25,323 crore rupees. According to data from the Association for Mutual Funds in India (AMFI), last month, the mutual fund industry's total assets under management (AUM) increased to over 68 lakh crore rupees from over 67 lakh crore rupees in October.

## **RBI approves Burman family entities' open offer to acquire 26% additional stake in REL.**

The Reserve Bank has approved the open offer of Burman family -- the promoters of FMCG major Dabur -- to acquire an additional 26% stake in NBFC firm Religare Enterprises Ltd (REL). The central bank also directed maintaining of the current board/management structure of REL.

## **Sports**

### **BCCI appoints Devajit Saikia as Board's Acting Secretary.**

The Board of Control for Cricket in India , BCCI has appointed Devajit Saikia as the board's acting secretary by President Roger Binny, replacing Jay Shah who recently took over as the new ICC chair from December 1. Mr. Saikia, who hails from Assam, is a former first-class cricketer. He is currently the BCCI joint-secretary.

### **F1: Lando Norris wins Abu Dhabi Grand Prix**

Lando Norris has won the season-ending Abu Dhabi Grand Prix to deliver McLaren's first Formula One constructors' title since 1998 after teammate Oscar Piastri collided with Max Verstappen on the opening lap and finished 10th. Carlos Sainz and Charles Leclerc were second and third for Ferrari, McLaren's historic rivals and the only team that could have beaten them to the championship.