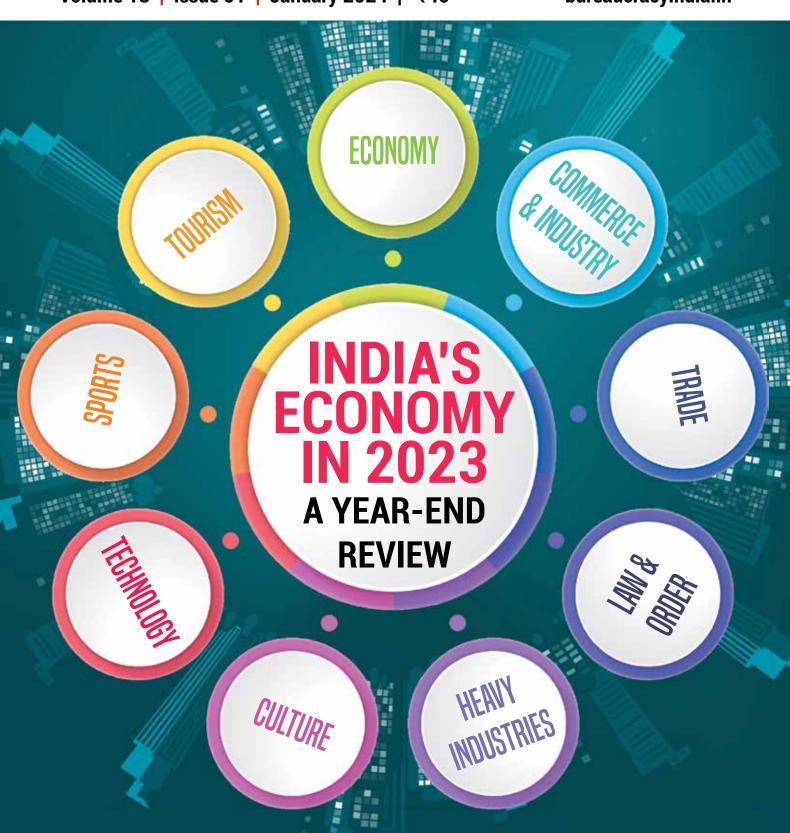
POLITICAL PICTURE A FEATURE A TOURISM A APPOINTMENTS

# BUREAUCRACY INDIA

Volume 13 | Issue 01 | January 2024 | ₹40

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# **NATUROPATH & AYURVEDIC BENEFITS**

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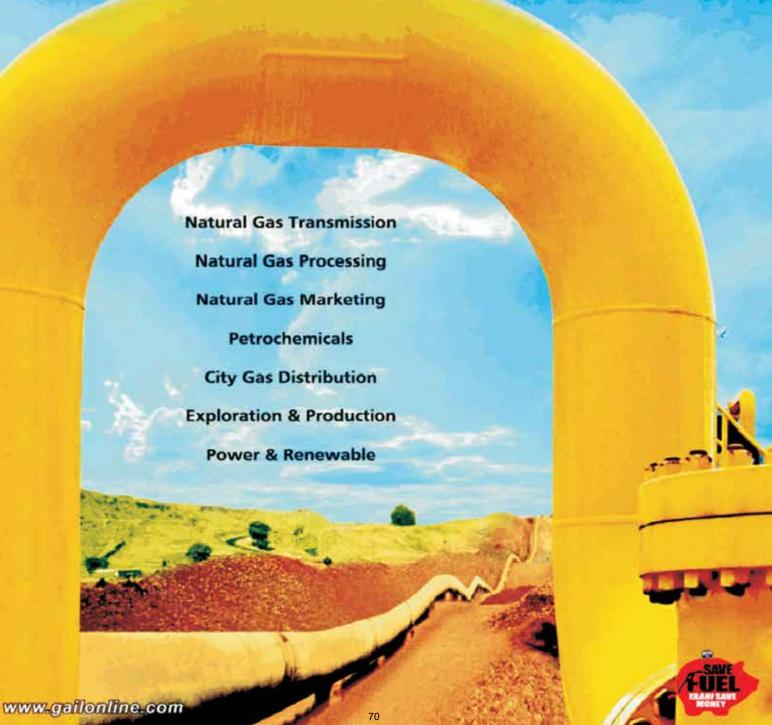






# **Naturally GAIL**

80% of India's Natural Gas Users Rely on Us - Naturally



# BUREAUCRACY IN

Volume 13 | Issue 01 | January 2024



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s we step into new year, 2024, we bring you the year-end review of India of the year 2023 that was incredible and magnificient having successfully carried out the Grand G20 or the Moon Mission. The success story could be digged out from all sectors, whether its Trade or Tourism, Commerce or Culture; India has risen above in every field in 2023. We bring you a detailed summary of what our readers would like to know in this month's cover story.

The chessboard has been laid out for the upcoming elections and the first milestone has been the 2023 elections in 5 states, out of which 3 have been won by the BJP government. The selection of all new Chief Ministers have been a result of calculative political move, which was beyond everyone's imagination. We bring you the insight study of all our new elected Chief Ministers in Political Picture.

Some more interesting stories from Religion, Tourism etc. also awaits your attention. We hope you enjoy and we welcome your suggestions as always.

This month belongs to Ayodhya Ram Mandir Nirman, a grandeur that we will cover to the core and also our 75th Republic Day, a salutation to look for.

You can follow us on social media platforms for day to day updates and live coverages of all these events and much more.

We wish all our readers a very Happy New Year 2024. May this year brings an end to war and propagate a message of peace across the world. May we all prosper beyond imagination and lead a healthy life.



Deepak Vyas Editor





Feel free to write back to us at bureaucracyindiamag@gmail.com and follow our social media handles



6 Appointments



8
Cover Story





22
Political
Picture









4

30 Tourism

# **APPOINTMENTS**

# S SURESH KUMAR (IAS) ASSUMES CHARGE AS CHAIRMAN OF DVC

**S Suresh Kumar** (IAS) has assumed the charge of Chairman of Damodar Valley Corporation (DVC) with effect from 1st January, 2024. Prior to joining the post, Kumar was working in the capacity of Director General at Netaji Subhash Administrative Training Institute, Kolkata.

Kumar joined the Indian Administration Services in the West Bengal Cadre in 1988. He holds a B Tech degree in Chemical Engineering from IIT Madras. He served as the Additional Chief Secretary to the Government of West Bengal, Power Department since November 2019 till April 2023 and was also assigned the additional charge of non-conventional Energy Resources Deptt., Government of West Bengal. Kumar has a vast repertoire of experience in both technical as well as administrative domains for over 30 years. He has served a multitude of administrative posts during his career span: as the Director (Finance) of National Aids Control Organization from 2006-08, as the OSD in the Election Commission of India during 2009, as the Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs, GoI from 2008-2014.





# PRADEEP SINGH RAJPUROHIT IFS CONCURRENTLY ACCREDITED AS HIGH COMMISSIONER TO GRENADA AND DOMINICA

**Dr. Pradeep Singh Rajpurohit IFS** (2004), presently High Commissioner of India to the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, has been concurrently accredited to the following, with residence in Port of Spain, as the next:

- (a) High Commissioner of India to Grenada.
- (b) High Commissioner of India to the Commonwealth of Dominica

### RK TYAGI ASSUMES CHARGE AS NEW CMD OF POWER GRID

Ravindra Kumar Tyagi has assumed charge as Chairman & Managing Director (CMD) of Power Grid Corporation of India (PGCIL). Prior to this, he was serving as Director (Operations) of the company. Tyagi has over 33 years of rich experience in the power sector at various key positions in leading CPSUs. He has handled multi-disciplinary work in various business areas of Power Grid such as asset management, engineering, business development (domestic and overseas), telecom, load despatch & communication, NTAMC, DMS etc. and head of Power Grid's North Eastern Region. Tyagi is an Electrical Engineer from Punjab Engineering College (PEC), Chandigarh and M Tech in Energy Studies from IIT Delhi. He is a "Fulbright Scholar" from Carnegie Mellon University, USA. He is an author of more than 50 technical papers presented in National and International conferences. He has represented India in many International technical committees for preparing various Technical Standards. He is a recipient of various national and international recognitions.





# PRASHANT KUMAR IPS APPOINTED UTTAR PRADESH DGP

**Shri Prashant Kumar** IPS (Uttar Pradesh 1990), has been appointed Special DG(Law) and Special DG-EOW, has been appointed Director General of Police(DGP), Uttar Pradesh.

# RUDRA





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**RESIDENTIAL INTERIORS** 

**ARCHITECTURAL ASSISTANCE** 

**SET DESIGNING** 

TRADE SHOWS

**3D RENDERING** 











Summit, India is determined to emerge from 2023 with increased stability and optimism for its growth and future prospects. The country's attractiveness as an investment destination remains robust, given the size and scale of operations it has to offer to global companies, abundant skilled talent pool, and prowess in technology and innovation.

# by Suhani Nagpal

he industrial manufacturing sector has experienced a significant boost, attracting global technology giants like **Apple** eager to expand their supplier networks within India. This momentum is further supported by the implementation of state industrial policies that complement sector-specific incentive schemes. Concurrently, substantial investments in logistics and infrastructure

development, including the construction of new roads, highways, and rail tracks, underscore the government's commitment to strengthen this critical sector.

With an eye on the future, the country aims to achieve developed economy status by 2047, demonstrating a clear trajectory towards sustained growth and development.

We discuss India's performance on key macroeconomic indicators in this year-end review of 2023.



# **ECONOMY**

As the world's fastest-growing economy for the past two years, India experienced several developments in 2023 that heighten foreign investor confidence.

Boasting a GDP of US\$3.75 trillion, India is the **fifth largest economy** in the world. The per capita income, per government data, was INR 98,374 in 2022-23 (approx. US\$1,183). The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Deputy Governor Michael D Patra told media last month that the Indian economy was on track to hit US\$5 trillion by 2027 on the back of developments in the financial sector and the country's demographic advantage.

# GDP growth

The country's real gross domestic product (GDP) or GDP at constant prices (2011-12) registered a faster-than-expected



growth rate of **7.6 percent** in the July-September quarter of 2023. As per the IMF forecast, India's real GDP would increase beyond 6 percent in 2023 and 2024. This would put its compound annual growth above China's at 4-5 percent and above the world economy (3 percent).

#### Stock market

India's Nifty 50 index, hit a new high, up 16 percent this year. Per reporting in *CNBC*, it has surpassed Hong Kong's Hang Seng index, which fell 18 percent. India's stock market is **now** the seventh largest with a market capitalization of US\$3.989 trillion. High performing sectors predicted for 2024 include banking, healthcare, and energy while consumer goods, utilities, and chemicals could lag.

#### **Bureaucracy reforms**

India's ease of doing business reforms have centered around streamlining and digitizing regulatory compliance processes throughout the entire business lifecycle, spanning from incorporation to the cessation of operations. For example, in the Union Budget for 2023-24, the government declared a reduction in over 39,000 compliances and the decriminalization of more than 3,400 legal provisions.

During the period from April 1 to November 30, 2023, a total of 122,317 companies were incorporated in India, compared to 115,233 incorporations for the same period last year. Additionally, 37,482 limited liability partnerships (LLPs) were incorporated during the same period this year, a notable increase from the 23,531 incorporations recorded last year for the corresponding timeframe.

Companies and LLPs can now be incorporated using the central government's National Single Window System

(NSWS), which offers various central and state government approvals in one place, as well as the MCA21 portal of the Ministry of Corporate Affairs.

Moreover, the 2023 survey conducted by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia Pacific (UNESCAP) on digital and sustainable trade facilitation positioned India as a leader in global trade facilitation efforts, achieving an impressive score of 93.55 percent in 2023 compared to 90.32 percent in 2021.

#### **FDI** inflow

An uncertain global macroeconomic environment and the rising cost of finance has also impacted India, which experienced a significant decline in foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows during 2023. The country dropped by a spot to be the fifth on the list of the highest-funded geographies in 2023. For the April-June quarter, the states attracting the highest FDI, despite sharp decline in absolute numbers, were Maharashtra, Delhi, Karnataka, Telangana, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Haryana, Rajasthan, West Bengal, and Jharkhand.

Startup funding in India declined to US\$7 billion in 2023, compared to US\$25 billion last year. Late-stage funding has been hit the worst followed by seed-stage funding.

Investors are now paying attention to Artificial Intelligence (AI) and AI-driven products and services. The market is just going through a period of recalibration after a peak in 2021 and investors are now cautiously placing their bets and taking longer to close deals.

Noteworthy major deals in 2023 included Abu Dhabi Investment Authority's US\$500 million investment in Lenskart and the US\$600.25 million buyout of Sanghi Industries by Ambuja Cements, owned by Gautam Adani.



# **COMMERCE & INDUSTRY**

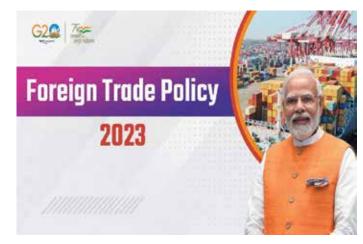
# Foreign Trade Policy 2023

Foreign Trade Policy 2023 (FTP 2023) was launched on 31st March 2023 in New Delhi by the Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, Shri Piyush Goyal.

The Key Approach to the policy is based on these 4 pillars:

- (i) Incentive to Remission,
- (ii) Export promotion through collaboration Exporters, States, Districts, Indian Missions,
- (iii) Ease of doing business, reduction in transaction cost and e-initiatives
- (iv) Emerging Areas E-Commerce Developing Districts as Export Hubs and streamlining SCOMET policy.

The new FTP is introducing a one-time Amnesty Scheme for exporters to close the old pending authorizations and start



afresh. The FTP 2023 encourages recognition of new towns through "Towns of Export Excellence Scheme" and exporters through "Status Holder Scheme".

G20



Under India's Presidency, the G20 Trade and Investment Ministerial reached a groundbreaking consensus on few concrete and action-oriented deliverables which have been adopted in the Outcome Document.

The first one being adoption of High-Level Principles on digitalization of trade documents wherein the G20 Ministers have enunciated 10 broad principles that comprehensively cover various dimensions of an effective transition to paperless trade. This will provide guidance to the countries in implementing measures related to the cross-border exchange of electronic trade-related data and documents.

The Ministers also endorsed a **G20 Generic Mapping** Framework for Global Value Chains (GVCs), which contained key building blocks of data, analysis, and representation of GVC data.

G20 Ministers acknowledged the importance of mutual dialogues to reduce regulatory divergences and associated trade costs and also to prevent unnecessary trade frictions, monitor trade and investment-related measures and solve existing irritants.

# **Bharat Mandapam**

The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi dedicated to nation the International Exhibition-cum-Convention Centre (IECC) complex at Pragati Maidan in New Delhi on 26th July 2023 and



urged the nation to move ahead with the principle of 'Think Big, Dream Big, Act Big'. The complex has been named, 'Bharat Mandapam'. Prime Minister also unveiled the G-20 coin and G-20 stamp at the grand opening ceremony and participated in the naming ceremony of the Convention Centre. Developed as a national project at a cost of about Rs 2700 crores, the new Convention Complex will help showcase and promote India as a global business destination.

### **BILATERAL COOPERATION**

#### India-USA

India and the United States held the 13th Ministerial-level meeting of India – United States Trade Policy Forum (TPF) in Washington, DC, on 11th January 2023. Union Minister of Commerce and Industry and the U.S. Trade Representative Ambassador co-chaired the meeting. The Ministers launched a new working group on "Resilient Trade" to deepen bilateral dialogue on a range of issues that can enhance the resiliency and sustainability of the trade relationship by strengthening resilience in global supply chains, especially in the critical sectors.

Several rounds of meetings were held this year to resolve all the seven ongoing disputes at the World Trade Organization (WTO) between India and USA.

The India-US Commercial Dialogue meeting held on 10th March 2023 in New Delhi was co-chaired by the Union Minister of Commerce and Industry and US Secretary of Commerce. One of the major outcomes was signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on establishing semiconductor supply chain and innovation partnership facilitating a collaborative mechanism between the two governments on Semiconductor Supply chain resiliency and diversification in view of US's CHIPS and Science Act and India's Semiconductor Mission. An MoU on "Enhancing Innovation Ecosystems through an Innovation Handshake" was signed between the two countries on the 14th of November 2023 in San Francisco to further strengthen start-up ecosystems of both countries.

#### India-UAE

India and UAE successfully held the 1st Meeting of the Joint Committee (JC) of the India-UAE CEPA from 11th -12th June 2023 in New Delhi. During the JC, both sides, inter-alia, reviewed the bilateral trade under the CEPA, agreed to operationalize the established committees/sub-committees/technical council under the CEPA, agreed on creation of a new sub-committee on Trade in Services, and also agreed to set-up a UAE-India CEPA Council (UICC) as a B2B collaboration mechanism, with a focus on MSMEs and start-ups, for building greater economic linkages and optimizing CEPA benefits.

The Joint Task Force was established in 2013 to promote trade, investment and economic ties between India and the UAE and has provided an effective mechanism for discussion on opportunities for investments in both countries as well as resolution of issues faced by investors of the two countries.

#### India-Africa

Union Minister of Commerce and Industry interacted with 15 ambassadors from key African nations namely Algeria, Botswana, Egypt, Ghana, Republic of Guinea, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Morocco, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda and Zimbabwe on 8th June 2023 in New Delhi. It provided a unique platform for diplomatic representatives to engage in fruitful discussions, strengthen bilateral ties, and forge new partnerships for mutual growth and development.

### OTHER SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

#### Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF)

Union Minister of Commerce and Industry participated in the third in-person IPEF Ministerial meeting on 14th November, 2023 in San Francisco, California. During this Ministerial meeting, the first-of-its-kind IPEF Supply Chain Resilience Agreement was signed by the Minister along with the Ministers from other IPEF partner countries. The Agreement is expected to make IPEF supply chains more resilient, robust, and well-integrated, and contribute towards economic development and progress of the region as a whole.

#### **Spice Board**

Spice Board organized the World Spice Congress at Navi

Mumbai from the 15th to the 17th of September 2023. World Spice Congress provides an opportunity to get to know this sector in a better way. Trade, sustainability, quality and food safety initiatives, recent developments, concerns and future prospects are discussed and deliberated in detail by the key players of the industry- the producers, traders, processors, exporters and regulators from across the world.

The Government of India notified the constitution of the National Turmeric Board on 4th October 2023. The **National Turmeric Board** will focus on the development and growth of turmeric and turmeric products in the country.

#### Tea Board

Tea Board participated in the reverse Buyer-Seller Meet (RBSM) in the "World Food India 2023" with value-added exporters and a number of buyers from countries like UAE, Russia, Egypt, France, Japan, Qatar visited the stalls. Generic Promotion of Assam tea in connection with its completion of 200 years of its journey was done through Audio Video advertisements and advertising (Digital and Static media) was continued at Guwahati International Airport in November 2023.



Per data from the Services Export Promotion Council (SEPC), India's services exports will touch US\$192 billion and are expected to reach US\$400 billion by the end of 2023-24 as compared to US\$181.37 billion in 2022.

Top service sector performers are telecom, computer, information, transport, and travel. Segments like tourism, hospitality, and medical value tourism are also rebounding after the pandemic. India aims to achieve US\$1 trillion in services exports by 2030.

FDI Equity Inflow (Month-Wise) During the Financial Year 2023-24		
Two quarters of FY 2023-24 [April – September 2023]	Amount of FDI equity inflow	
	(in INR)	(in US\$)
April 2023	418.77 billion	5.10 billion
May 2023	220.55 billion	2.67 billion
June 2023	259.99 billion	3.16 billion
July 2023	209.17 billion	2.54 billion
August 2023	240.71 billion	2.90 billion
September 2023	339.57 billion	4.08 billion

Source: DPIIT, Government of India



# **LAW & ORDER**

#### **MEDIATION ACT, 2023**

The Mediation Act, 2023, lays down the legislative framework for mediation to be adopted by disputing parties, especially institutional mediation where various stakeholders have been identified to establish a robust and efficacious mediation ecosystem in India.

A successful settlement not only helps in preserving the relationship amongst the parties, offering ease of living but also contributing in the growth of the economy.

The key/main provisions of the Mediation Act, 2023, include:

- a) provisions relating to voluntary pre-litigation mediation in matters of civil or commercial dispute before parties approach a court or Tribunal;
- matters or disputes not fit for mediation, process of mediation to be completed within a maximum period of 180 days;
- procedure for appointment of mediator and conduct of mediation:
- d) functions of Mediation Service Providers and Mediation Institutes:
- e) Mediated Settlement Agreement resulting from mediation being final, binding and enforceable in accordance with the provisions of Code of Civil Procedure, 1908, in the same manner as if it were a judgment or decree of a Court;
- f) challenge to Mediated Settlement Agreement to lie on limited grounds of fraud, corruption, impersonation etc.;
- g) community mediation for reference of disputes with consent of parties which are likely to affect peace, harmony and tranquillity amongst the residents or families of any area or locality;
- h) online mediation;
- establishment of the Mediation Council of India and power to make rules and regulations inter-alia for conduct of mediation.



# ARBITRATION AND CONCILIATION ACT, 1996 AND ARBITRATION COUNCIL OF INDIA

The Arbitration and Conciliation (Amendment) Act, 2019 provides for establishment of the Arbitration Council of India (Council) for the purpose of framing policies governing the



grading of arbitral institutions and recognizing professional institutes' providing accreditation of arbitrators.

The establishment of the Council is aimed to minimize the roles of courts in arbitration matters, by providing that parties may approach arbitral institutions which are graded by the Council and designated by the Supreme Court and High Courts, as the case may be, for the purpose of appointment of arbitrators under section 11 of the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996.

Presently, other steps for the establishment of Arbitration Council of India are underway.

#### The Advocates (Amendment) Act, 2023 (33 of 2023)

Repeal of 'The Legal Practitioners Act, 1879 (18 of 1879), amendment of the Advocates Act, 1961 (25 of 1961) by incorporating provisions of Section 36 of the Legal Practitioners Act of 1879 in the Advocates Act.

The proposal for repeal is in tune with the policy of the Central Government to repeal all obsolete laws which have lost their utility. It helps in reducing the number of laws in the statute book. The Legal Practitioner Act, 1879 is an Act to deal with legal practitioners in the country. It was a British Era Act. After independence, Parliament has enacted a new law, namely, the Advocates Act, 1961 (25 of 1961) to deal with legal practitioners.

Currently, the Legal Practitioners Act, 1879 has been repealed and the Advocates (Amendment) Act, 2023 has been passed by the Parliament and the assent of the Hon'ble President of India has also been received on 8th December, 2023.

### **INCOME TAX APPELLATE TRIBUNAL (ITAT)**

The Income Tax Appellate Tribunal (ITAT) is the oldest Tribunal in the country and during the year 2023, as on 01.12.2023, the Tribunal disposed off a total of 30943 appeals and 33314 appeals are pending for adjudication. The website of ITAT has been updated and made fully functional. JudiSIS App, ITAT e-Filing Portal, e-Library Portal have been launched. The concept of paperless courts has been introduced with the online publication of daily orders and online communication of hearing notices. The ITAT API has also been linked with the LIMBS portal. Digital Display Boards have been installed in the Tribunal premises akin to the High Courts.



# **HEAVY INDUSTRIES**

The key initiatives/achievements/events of Ministry of Heavy Industries (MHI) during the year are as under:

# Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric Vehicles in India Phase II Scheme

The Government is committed to provide clean and green public transport and is implementing the Phase-II of the Faster Adoption and Manufacturing Electric Vehicles (FAME-II) scheme with the aim to reduce dependence on fossil fuel and to address the issue of vehicular emissions. The Scheme had an outlay of Rs. 10,000 crores over a Five years' period from 01/04/2019. The proposal for enhancement of outlay of "Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric Vehicles in India Phase II" from Rs. 10,000 crores to Rs. 11,500 crores has been examined by Department of Expenditure (DoE) and approved considering the objectives of the Scheme. This phase mainly focuses on supporting electrification of public & shared transportation, and aims to support through demand incentive e-vehicles including e-buses. In addition, creation of charging infrastructure is also supported under the Scheme.

# PLI Scheme for Advance Chemistry Cell (ACC), Battery Storage in India

To enhance India's manufacturing capabilities and exports for the manufacture of Advance Chemistry Cell (ACC) in India, Government approved a 'Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme' for setting up manufacturing facilities for Advance Chemistry Cell (ACC), Battery Storage in India, with an outlay of Rs. 18,100 crores for 7 years.

# **GST Concession Certificate**

Issue of GST Concession Certificate to orthopedically disabled persons is one of the important services provided by MHI under its Citizen's Charter. As a step towards Digital India, an online portal for issuing Aadhar Authenticated GST concession certificate was launched by MHI in November 2020. The development of online portal has improved the quality of service rendered by this Ministry. This IT enabled initiative has helped streamlining the process and facilitated issue of 2985 GST



Concession Certificates in 11 months' period from January 2023 to November 2023 (highest ever in the last five-year period). A total of 5513 GST Concession Certificates were issued in current and last year through this portal.

- BHEL signed MOUs with:
  - Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) for long-term maintenance, repair, and operations support for Line Replaceable Units (LRUs) for Light Combat Aircraft 'Tejas'.
  - Munitions India Limited (MIL) for co-production and supply of ammunitions including smart ammunitions on 15th February 2023 during AERO show event at Bengaluru.
  - Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, on 24th March, 2023, laid foundation stone of Centre of Excellence (CoE) on Machine Tools Design at IIT-BHU in collaboration with HMT funded by MHI under its scheme on 'Enhancement of Competitiveness in the Indian Capital Goods Sector, Phase II'. In this CoE, IIT -BHU will develop the design of hightech machine tools and create three new technologies, which are currently not available in the country. These techniques will be used in the fields of national defence, aerospace, power and energy sector, space technology, precision components machining etc. This CoE will help reduce imports of Rs.400 crore by the year 2030 and encourage domestic sourcing while making India self-reliant with a high degree of reliability and efficiency in design and development. This center will encourage startups and skill development and will also prove helpful in technical education and employment generation.
- BHEL has signed MOU with Indraprastha Gas Ltd. for joint collaboration for development, manufacturing & deployment of Type-IV Cylinders (CNG and/or Hydrogen), for city gas distribution and Fuel cell-based power backup systems. This MoU will assist in contributing towards the 'National Green Hydrogen Mission' of the Govt. of India.
- Minister of State (MoS) of Power & Heavy Industries, Shri Krishan Pal Gurjar inaugurated the Extension Centre of Common Engineering Facility Centre (CEFC), WRI Trichy at BHEL Haridwar on 23rd May, 2023. Shri Gurjar Commended Team BHEL's technology, engineering & manufacturing capabilities, and appreciated BHEL's role in contributing to the Prime Minister's vision of an Aatmanirbhar Bharat.
- MHI organized 'National Conference on Robotics' on 3rd

   4th July, 2023 in Bengaluru in association with Central Manufacturing Technology Institute (CMTI), Bengaluru and Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru. The Conference was inaugurated by Union Minister of Heavy Industries Dr. Pandey and Minister of State of Heavy

Industries. The conference was attended by approx. 350 participants including heads of industry, leading companies, start-ups and academia, to discuss the progress, challenges and transformative potential of Robotics in the manufacturing sector.

- Dr. Pandey held a meeting with US Govt. delegation led by Mr. John Kerry, State Secretary, on 26th July, 2023 to discuss Payment Security Mechanism (PSM) and way forward regarding e-buses under FAME-India Scheme Phase-II.
- Union Minister, MHI inaugurated 'Green BHEL', an initiative for transforming BHEL into a Green Company with an objective to attain Net Zero by 2047.
- 14 townships of BHEL spread across the nation have been certified as Single-use Plastic Free Zones for the last 3 years as a result of the various initiatives undertaken by BHEL under Gol's 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyan'
- BHEL has successfully manufactured India's first set
  of Selective Catalyst Reactors (SCR) for limiting NOx
  emissions for the 5x800 MW Yadadri Thermal Power
  Station in Telangana. Notably, it is a significant milestone
  under the 'Make in India' initiative of the Government of
  India as these catalysts were hitherto being imported.
- Dr. Mahendra Nath Pandey inaugurated and flagged off 'The Green Plate EV rally' organized by SIAM on 18th October 2023 in partnership with MHI at Bharat Mandapam, Pragati Maidan, New Delhi to showcase the advancements made by



the Indian Automotive industry in the area of Electrification and also spread awareness and increase confidence among the customers on the excellent quality EV products available in the Indian market.

- MHI successfully completed its Special Campaign 3.0 on Swachhata from 2nd October to 31st October, 2023 and celebrated it as a cleanliness festival within the Ministry and across its CPSEs and ABs, at 781 campaign sites. Total revenue generated from the disposal of scrap is more than Rs. 5.78 Crores.
- BHEL has signed a contract of Rs. 2956.89 Crore with the Ministry of Defence (MoD) for the supply of 16 Upgraded Super Rapid Gun Mounts (SRGM). These will be installed on both in-service and newly built ships of the Indian Navy and will be manufactured at the Haridwar unit.



# **CULTURE**

The major initiatives/events/achievements of Ministry of Culture during the year 2023 are as follows:

# AZADI KA AMRIT MAHOTSAV (AKAM)

To honor and commemorate 75 years of India's independence, Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (AKAM) was launched by the Prime Minister in March 2021. AKAM became a people's movement and has united the nation through a whole of society approach. A continuous effort to spotlight unsung heroes and document local history connected to freedom struggle is ongoing and being showcased on the AKAM website.

"Meri Maati Mera Desh": As the culminating campaign of two-year long Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, "Meri Maati Mera Desh- Maati Ko Naman Veeron ka Vandan" is the unified celebration of India's soil and valour. It has witnessed tremendous *jan bhagidari* with more than 7000 blocks from 766 districts of the country. More than 2 lakh Shilaphalakams were established during this campaign. More than 3 crore people took the Panch Pran Pledge and showcased their dedication towards the nation. More than 2 lakhs Amrit Vatikas were created, and



over 2 crore tree saplings were planted across the country. Ceremonies and commemorations were organized for 2,18,856 freedom fighters. More than 4 crore people uploaded their selfies under Meri Maati Mera Desh Campaign. More than 8500 Kalash were brought to Delhi from 7000+ blocks of the country.

#### **G20 ACTIVITIES**

 Over a thousand students, youth and children belonging to G-20 countries, colleges and schools of Delhi and NCR participated in the 'G-20 March for World Peace' on January, 21, 2023.



- Almost 1000 enthusiastic runners barring different agegroup from different parts of Delhi, Gujarat, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh took part in the "G-20 Run for Women Power" in Gandhi Darshan, Rajghat, New Delhi on 5th March. 2023.
- During India's G20 Presidency, M/o Culture hosted 4th G20 Culture Working Group Meeting on 24-25 August, 2023 in Varanasi with the stated outcomes:
  - The Outcome Document and Chair's Summary titled the 'Kashi Culture Pathway' was agreed upon by all G20 countries.
  - A Report 'G20 Culture: Shaping the Global Narrative for Inclusive Growth' based on Global Thematic Webinars was launched in the G20 Culture Ministers Meeting on 26.8.2023.
  - iii. The Culture Ministers of the G20 members and invitee countries released the special edition stamp on 26th August, 2023 in Varanasi, to mark the successful conclusion of the deliberations of the CWG of India's G20 Presidency.

# INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL RELATIONS

### Cultural Exchange Programe (CEP)

The following CEPs were signed by MoC with the following Governments:

- i. The Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt for a period of five years on 25th January, 2023.
- ii. The Slovak Republic for the years 2023-2026 on 4th March, 2023.
- iii. The Republic of Colombia for the period 2023-2026 on 26th April, 2023.
- iv. The Republic of Mauritius for the years 2023-2026 on 06.07.2023 and is valid till 31-12-2026.
- v. The Government of the United Republic of Colombia on 9th October, 2023 for the years 2023-2027.
- vi. The Government of the Italian Republic for the years 2023-2027 on 2nd November, 2023.
- vii. The Government of the Republic of Belarus for the years 2023-2025 on 2nd November, 2023.

# **Retrieval Of Antiquities**

Total 357 antiquities have been retrieved from 1976 till November, 2023. However, a major retrieval has taken place since 2014 with 344 antiquities retrieved from different countries, viz. USA, Australia, UK, Canada etc.

# Inclusion in UNESCO's World Heritage List

The 45th World Heritage Committee meeting was held in 2023 at Riyadh (Saudi Arabia) wherein Santiniketan and Hoysala temples (Sacred Ensembles of Hoysalas) from India were inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. Santiniketan in West Bengal is a university set up by the Nobel Laureate, Rabindranath Tagore, based on ancient Indian traditions and reflecting his vision and philosophy of recognizing unity of humanity or 'Visva Bharati'. The Sacred Ensembles of Hoysalas comprise three magnificent 13th century temples of the Hoysala Dynasty in Karnataka, namely Hoysalesvara Temple Helebidu, Channakeshava Temple Belur, and Keshava Temple Somnathapur. This takes India's World Heritage Sites to 42 (Cultural-34, Natural-7, Mix-1), putting India in the 6th position for the maximum number of sites on the World Heritage list of UNESCO.

In 2023, **Gwalior and Kozhikode** were included in the **UNESCO Creative Cities Network** as creative cities of Music and Literature respectively.

'Garba of Gujarat' has been inscribed on the UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

### INDIAN ART, ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN BIENNALE 2023

Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated the first Indian Art, Architecture & Design Biennale (IAADB) 2023, held at Red Fort. During the programme, PM inaugurated the 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat Centre for Design' and the student Biennale-Sammunnati. A Commemorative Stamp has also been released by Prime Minister. Indian Art, Architecture & Design Biennale (IAADB) will serve as an introduction to the Cultural Space in Delhi.

## OTHER IMPORTANT EVENTS/INITIATIVES:

- Har Ghar Tiranga Campaign: In the year 2023, more than 10 crore people uploaded their selfies with Tiranga.
- Cultural Extravaganza Vande Bharatam programme of Ministry of Culture, performed by 479 artists remained one of the star attractions at the Republic Day celebrations on 26th January, 2023. A colorful tableau of Ministry of Culture with the title 'Shakti Rupen Sansthita' was also showcased at the Republic Day celebrations.
- Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav was organised from 11th to 19th February, 2023 in Mumbai. More than 300 folk and tribal artists including renowned classical artists, film artists, transgenders and differently abled artists entertained and inspired the audience with the enthralling performances.
- Ministry of Culture in collaboration with Arya Samaj foundation inaugurated the yearlong celebrations commemorating **200th Birth anniversary of Maharishi Dayanand Saraswati**, at New Delhi on 12th February, 2023. The Prime Minister addressed the event and encouraged everyone to follow the teachings of Maharishi Dayanand.
- Mera Gaon Meri Dharohar platform was launched on 27th July 2023 at Qutub Minar, New Delhi. A Craft exhibition and market was organized at the venue along with folk dance and music performances with the representatives of 1000 villages. A projection mapping show was also organized at the location.

- India's largest Folk and Tribal Cultural event "Utkarsh" was organised from 3rd to 5th August, 2023 at Ravindra Bhavan, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh which was inaugurated by Hon'ble President of India, Smt. Droupadi Murmu.
- Prime Minister inaugurated a three-day Mega Event 'International Museum Expo 2023' from 18th to 20th May, 2023 at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi to celebrate
- the International Museum Day and to institutionalize this in its annual calendar.
- Ministry of Culture organised the **Festival of Libraries** during 5-6 August, 2023. The event was inaugurated by the President of India and valedictory function was graced by Vice-President of India. The Festival was organised with the aim to promote development and digitization of Libraries and cultivate the culture of reading.



# **TECHNOLOGY**

India stands at the forefront of global innovation, with key achievements across electronics, semiconductors, and artificial intelligence.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the **SemiconIndia 2023** event in Gandhinagar, marking a significant leap in India's



semiconductor manufacturing prowess. The three-day event witnessed the convergence of global industry leaders, with Micron Technology, Applied Materials, and Foxconn showcasing their commitment to India's semiconductor ecosystem.

India, as the Incoming Support Chair of the Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (GPAI), hosted the annual GPAI Summit from December 12-14, 2023, in New Delhi. The summit brought together representatives from 28 member countries and the European Union, creating a platform for in-depth discussions on the evolving landscape of Artificial Intelligence (AI).

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) organized the G20-DIA Programme in Bangalore from



August 17-19, 2023. The event featured the participation of 109 startups from 23 nations, highlighting India's position as a global hub for digital innovation. The program encompassed workshops, exhibitions, and awards, attracting over 15,000 participants.

The Cabinet's approval of Micron's Rs 22,516 crore semiconductor unit in Sanand, Gujarat, witnessed a rapid transition from approval to groundbreaking within three months.



This strategic move aligns with India's vision of becoming a semiconductor manufacturing hub, anticipating the creation of thousands of direct and indirect job opportunities.

The Union Cabinet's approval of the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme 2.0 for IT Hardware reinforces India's position as a global IT manufacturing hub.

The first India Stack Developer Conference, inaugurated by Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology, Rajeev Chandrasekhar, emphasized the objective of creating a robust ecosystem for digital innovation.

The Union Cabinet's approval of the Memorandum of Cooperation with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia signifies a significant step in enhancing collaboration in the fields of digitization and electronic manufacturing.

The extension of the Digital India program, incentives for RuPay Debit Cards, and the introduction of the AI-enabled translation tool Bhashini reflect India's commitment to fostering a technologically advanced society.

Anticipation builds for the upcoming Vibrant Gujarat Summit, set to unveil Gujarat's roadmap for Viksit Bharat@2047.



# **SPORTS**

The Year 2023 saw commendable performances of Indian Sportspersons in several International Events

India achieved a historic milestone at the Asian Games held in Hangzhou, China, clinching a total of 107 Medals (28 Gold, 38 Silver, 41 Bronze Medals). The Indian contingent shattered country's previous record of 70 medals in the 2018 edition. Notably, athletics contributed 29 Medals, while archery and shooting accounted for 9 and 22 medals respectively.



- The success in Asian Games was followed by the triumph of the Indian contingent in the Asian Para Games which finished with historic 111 Medals including 29 Gold Medals, surpassing all previous records. The biggest haul for India came from athletics, with the Indian contingent securing 55 Medals including 18 Gold Medals.
- Indian Athletes showed exceptional performance in August, 2023, with Neeraj Chopra winning India's first-ever Gold Medal in the prestigious World Athletics Championship.
   The Indian 4X400 m Relay Team had a spectacular run in the World Athletics Championship, finishing 5th in the



Finals and breaking the Asian Record on road to the finals. In chess, Grandmaster R. Praggnanandhaa finished second in the FIDE World Cup after a well-fought final against the World Number-1, Magnus Carlsen.

- At the Special Olympics World Summer Games 2023, Berlin, held between 17th and 25th June, 2023, the 280-member strong Indian contingent finished their campaign with 202 medals, including 76 Gold, 75 Silver and 51 Bronze.
- Satwiksairaj Reddy and Chirag Shetty became the first-ever Indian pair to win the prestigious Swiss Open Badminton Championship. Moreover, in the ISSF Rifle/ Pistol World Cup 2023 held in Bhopal, India, the hosts won 7 Medals (1 Gold, 1 Silver, 5 Bronze), finishing 2nd in the overall medal tally.

# International Events hosted by India in 2023:

 In the run-up to the prestigious FIH Odisha Hockey Men's World Cup 2023, Bhubaneswar – Rourkela, a nationwide Trophy Tour was kicked off in Bhubaneswar on 5th December by the Chief Minister of Odisha. The coveted trophy traversed 13 states and 01 Union Territory before concluding its journey in Odisha on 25th December. The world cup commenced on 13th January 2023 and the finals was played on 29th January, 2023. Germany won the tournament and Belgium won the silver.

 In a breakthrough moment for the development of motorsports in India, the first-ever MotoGP Bharat, one



of the races of the prestigious MotoGP series was organized at the Buddha International Circuit, Noida. MotoGP is the top-tier motorcycle road racing event in the world where 22 riders representing 11 teams contested for the coveted title with Marzo Bezzecchi of Italy winning the inaugural MotoGP Bharat title.

- India hosted the IBA Women's World Boxing Championship 2023 held in New Delhi during March 23, where Indian women pugilists (Lovlina Borgohain, Nikhat Zareen, Nitu Ghanghas and Saweety Boora) bagged 4 gold medals in different weight categories, and India was crowned the best team of the tournament.
- India hosted 141st International Olympic Committee (IOC) Session in Mumbai, after a gap of 40 years. The IOC Session is the annual general meeting of the IOC, the apex global governing body of the Olympic Movement. The Session was inaugurated by the Hon'ble Prime Minister on 14th October 2023. An important decision taken by the IOC General Body was the approval for the inclusion of Cricket in the Los Angeles Olympic Games 2028. In addition to this, the Hon'ble Prime Minister announced India's interest in hosting the Youth Olympics 2030, and the Summer Olympics in 2036.

### National Games successfully organized in Goa:

**The 37th National Games** were inaugurated by Hon'ble Prime at the Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in Goa on 26th



October 2023. This edition marked a significant milestone, with participation from over 10,000 sportspersons, coaches, and officials representing all States and Union Territories. Maharashtra topped the Medal tally with 228 Medals, followed by Services and Haryana.

The National Sports Day 2023 was celebrated throughout the country with the active participation of various stakeholders, including the Ministries and Departments of the Government of India, State Governments, Indian Missions abroad, educational Institutions etc. Various important initiatives were launched by this Department on the National Sports Day including the launch of the 3rd edition of Fit India Quiz, two portals, one for the National Sports Federations and another for the Khelo India infrastructure projects.

#### **Events organized under Khelo India Scheme:**

- With a vision to identify talent and create an opportunity for young and aspiring para athletes to shine, the **first-ever Khelo India Para Games** were held in Delhi from 10th December to 17th December, 2023. Haryana came first with a total of 105 medals while Uttar Pradesh finished second and Tamil Nadu came third.
- The third edition of Khelo India University Games (KIUG) 2022 was successfully organized from 25th May to 3rd June, 2023 in Uttar Pradesh. The event saw participation



of around 4700 athletes from over 200 Universities across the country. The debut of water sports made this edition of KIUG more significant.

- The "Khelo India Dus Ka Dum" event organized to commemorate the International Women's Day 2023, saw a massive participation of over 1 lakh women in 1500 plus sporting events organized across the country.
- The 5th edition of Khelo India Youth Games was successfully concluded on 11th February, 2023 at Upper Lake, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh. Maharashtra topped the Medal Tally with 161 Medals (including 56 Gold), followed by Haryana and Madhya Pradesh, in the Games.
- The **3rd Khelo India Winter Games** were inaugurated on 10th February, 2023 at Gulmarg. Over 2000 players participated in the event. The Games were concluded on 14th February, 2023, with Jammu and Kashmir topping the medal tally with 76 medals (including 26 Gold) followed by Maharashtra and Himachal Pradesh. On this occasion, 40 Khelo India Centres were also e-launched by the Hon'ble Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports.



# Revision in the norms of international exposure:

• The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports has been supporting athletes in every possible way to prepare for the major competitions. The ceiling amount for **boarding** and lodging of athletes in international competitions to provide high-quality accommodation for the athletes had recently been raised in keeping with the current norm. The athletes traveling abroad for approved competitions will now be entitled to USD 250 per day from the previous entitlement of USD 150 per day. In addition to that, the athletes are being supported holistically to ensure that they have access to state-of-the-art infrastructure, equipment, best-in-class training and support staff.



# **TOURISM**

The major initiatives/events/achievements of Ministry of Tourism during the year 2023 are as follows:

 Ministry of Tourism successfully organized 4 G20 Tourism Working Group and the Tourism Ministerial Meeting at different venues in the country, viz. Rann of Kutch, Siliguri/ Darjeeling, Srinagar and Panaji, Goa. The G20 Roadmap for Tourism as a vehicle for achieving sustainable development goals, the key deliverable of the tourism working group under India's G20 Presidency was fully endorsed by all the



G20 member countries as well as the invitee countries. It highlights five priorities: Green Tourism, Digitalization, Skills, Tourism MSMEs and Destination Management for achieving the SDGs.

 Ministry of Tourism organized the 11th edition of International Tourism Mart in the NER to showcase the tourism potential of the North Eastern States of India at the



domestic and international levels at Shillong, Meghalaya. It was organized from 21st to 23rd November 2023 in association with the State Government of Meghalaya. The Mart brought together the tourism business fraternity and entrepreneurs from the eight North Eastern States on a common platform thereby provided an avenue for tourism stakeholders of Meghalaya and other north-eastern States to showcase the uncharted travel destinations in the region. The International Tourism Mart was a Green Event in which low carbon options were adopted on the lines of the action points formulated by Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, GOI for implementation of Mission LiFE and sensitizing the tourism stakeholders and generating greater awareness about its objectives.

 On the occasion of World Tourism Day on 27th September 2023, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India organised the Global Launch of 'Travel for LiFE' a program for tourism sector under Mission LiFE, envisaged to create



awareness about sustainable tourism and to nudge the tourists and tourism businesses to adopt sustainable practices synchronous with nature. The program aims to encourage large scale behavioural changes and mainstream sustainability into tourism sector towards developing a sustainable, responsible and resilient tourism sector.

• The year 2023 was declared to be the **Visit India Year 2023** in a bid to position India as a 360-degree holistic destination



in the major international source markets. Ministry of Tourism in collaboration with the overseas Indian Missions participated in major international travel exhibitions like FITUR, Madrid, Arabian Travel Mart, Dubai, World Travel Market, London, IMEX Frankfurt, Top Resa, Paris, ITB Berlin, OTDYKH, Moscow and ITB Asia Singapore leading a delegation of DMCs, inbound tour operators, hoteliers amongst others to showcase the diversity of Indian tourism products and themes to the global travel trade sector. India was also the partner country for the JATA Tourism Expo, which was held at Tokyo, in October 2023.

 Building upon the vision of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's "Developing Tourism in Mission Mode," Ministry of Tourism unveiled an ambitious campaign aimed at showcasing India as a premier wedding destination on the global stage. The aim of the campaign is to redefine India's perception beyond the realm of royal, extravagant weddings. showcasing the beauty and diversity of India as a premier wedding destination on the global stage. By



opening the doors to India's captivating locales, vibrant rituals, rich gastronomy, and world-class infrastructure, the objective of the campaign is to enthrall couples from across the world and entice them to craft their dream celebration in the embrace of India's charm.

 Ministry of Tourism has revamped its Swadesh Darshan scheme in the form of Swadesh Darshan 2.0 with the mission to create a robust framework for integrated development of tourism destinations in partnership with the States/ UTs and Local Governments for promoting sustainable and responsible tourism in the country and has identified



55 destinations across 32 States/UTs for development. The Scheme will implement sustainable and responsible tourism practices in various projects and initiatives and will encourage adoption of principles of sustainable tourism including environmental sustainability, socio-cultural sustainability and economic sustainability. In addition, the Ministry of Tourism has also issued guidelines for 'Challenge Based Destination Development', a sub-scheme under Swadesh Darshan 2.0. Under SD 1.0, Ministry has sanctioned ₹ 5294.11 Crore for undertaking 76 projects, out of these 64 projects are reported physically complete.

As we bid farewell to 2023 and welcome 2024, this yearend review encapsulates India's strides in trade, technology, sports, tourism and many other segments underlining the nation's commitment to excellence and innovation on the global stage.

# THE POLITICAL CHESSBOARD WITH NEW CMs by Dhwani Vyas

he 5 states elections held in last months of 2023 has been a gamechanger; proclaiming a resurrection of the BJP in the Hindi heartland, increased Congress influence in the South, and a vote for change in the north-eastern State of Mizoram. Furthermore, the choices for Chief Ministers in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, and Telangana are a clear break from the past.

Except for Mizoram, where Lalduhoma was the obvious choice, in all other States, parties had to carefully navigate various calculations of contending leaders.

The BJP has not only initiated a significant generational change in the North belt by sidelining State stalwarts Shivraj

Singh Chouhan, Vasundhara Raje, and Raman Singh, but has also attempted social engineering by appointing Mohan Yadav (OBC), Bhajan Lal Sharma (Brahmin), and Vishnu Deo Sai (tribal) as the Chief Ministers in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Chhattisgarh respectively.

The Congress, has described the new Chief Ministers of BJP as the "end of regional satraps in BJP", alleging that "whoever becomes a challenge to PM Modi is finished".

However, the Congress defeat in three States has been described to its inability to control its regional satraps, and on the other hand, strong Chief Ministers and regional parties are considered the bedrock of federalism.



During the recent Assembly election campaign, Union Home Minister Amit Shah addressed a public rally in north Chhattisgarh's Kunkuri Assembly constituency, seeking votes for BJP tribal leader Vishnu Deo Sai. Shah assured the audience: "You make him an MLA, we will make him a big man."

Following the BJP's impressive victory over the incumbent Congress, 59-year-old Vishnu Deo Sai was appointed as the first tribal Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh, where diverse Adivasi communities make up one-

# **VISHNU DEO SAI**

# Chhattisgarh

### Few keypoints abouts him:

- Vishnu Deo becomes Chhattisgarh's first tribal chief minister.
- He was born in Jashpur. Before joining politics, he was an agriculturist by profession.
- He has a strong political background and he started his political career as a village sarpanch in 1989.
- He won four consecutive Lok Sabha elections from the Raigarh constituency from 1999 to 2014.
- In the just-concluded assembly election in Chhattisgarh, Vishnu Deo won from north Chhattisgarh's Kunkuri constituency defeating UD Minj, the sitting Congress MLA.

third of the total population.

Sai secured victory by defeating the sitting Congress MLA, Udit Minj, with a margin of over 25,000 votes. The Kunkuri constituency is situated in the tribal-dominated Surguja region, where the BJP won all 14 seats. His appointment signifies a generational shift replacing Raman Singh, (a leader from the Vajpayee and Advani era) who has served three consecutive terms as the State's Chief Minister.

After Sai was declared the leader of BJP's legislative party in a meeting of 54 newly-elected MLAs in Raipur, he stated, "Humility should not be considered a weakness. I consider it my strength, and I will try to remain humble throughout my life."

Sai, with a class X education, hails from a political family: his grandfather was a nominated MLA, and his uncle served as a two-term MLA from the Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJP's predecessor) and later became a Lok Sabha MP (1977-79) and a Minister of State in the Janata Party government.

According to the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) and Chhattisgarh Election Watch, Sai has total assets worth over Rs.3.8 crore and over Rs.65 lakh in liabilities.

A seasoned politician, Sai has ministerial experience and organisational skills. A four-time Lok Sabha MP from 1999 to 2014 and three-time MLA, he served as the Union Minister of State for Steel, Labour, and Employment in the first Narendra Modi government.

In 1989, Sai entered the Assembly of undivided Madhya Pradesh in 1990 and remained an MLA until 1998. He served as Chhattisgarh's BJP chief thrice since 2006 but was replaced by OBC face Arun Sao as State chief in August 2022 and named a member of the BJP national working committee.

Chhattisgarh citizens describe Sai as a "no-nonsense" and "forthright person", a grassroots leader who ascended through

"Humility should not be considered a weakness. I consider it my strength, and I will try to remain humble throughout my life."

- Vishnu Deo Sai

panchayat bodies.

During the run-up to the State Assembly election, Prime Minister Narendra Modi cited President Droupadi Murmu's candidacy as evidence of the BJP's concern for the tribal people. The party could now highlight Sai's appointment in view of the upcoming Assembly elections in the neighbouring States of Jharkhand and Odisha, which have sizeable tribal populations.

The toughest challenge for the Sai government is the tribal areas. Balancing the coexistence of communally polarised tribal groups and addressing longstanding issues facing forest-dwelling communities due to Maoist insurgency and expanding mining projects will pose significant challenges.



Madhya Pradesh's newly elected Chief Minister, Mohan Yadav, has surpassed many senior contenders. He is clearly not on par with the political stature of figures like outgoing Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, a five-time Lok Sabha member from 1991 to 2005, or Uma Bharti, another former BJP Chief Minister in Madhya

# MOHAN YADAV Madhya Pradesh

# Few keypoints abouts him:

- Dr. Mohan Yadav is an Indian politician belonging to the Bharatiya Janata Party.
- On March 25, 1965, Mohan Yadav was born in Ujjain.
- He graduated from Ujjain University with a Bachelor of Science degree.
- He further pursued his academic interests and completed LLB, Master of Arts, Master of Business Administration, and Doctorate of Philosophy degrees from the same university.
- He was interested in politics from the get-go. He was a member of the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad.

Pradesh who gained prominence during Lal Krishna Advani's rath yatra.

Notable figures like V.D. Sharma, Narottam Mishra, and Narendra Singh Tomar were among those considered as potential replacements for Shivraj Singh Chouhan, who was not projected as the party's Chief Minister face in the recent Assembly election.

Yadav's appointment surprised not only the top contenders but also the

party's rank and file, as well as the media, which had no prior information about his elevation.

Two factors seem to have worked in Yadav's favour. First, he is said to enjoy proximity to the RSS, the BJP's ideological fountainhead. Second, he hails from the Other Backward Classes (OBC) community. In the current political climate, with Rahul Gandhi advocating for a caste census and the focus on OBCs by various political parties, it was imperative for the BJP to replace Chouhan, an OBC leader, with another OBC leader.

He has been the president of the Madhya Pradesh Wrestling Association and the vice-president of the Madhya Pradesh Olympic Association. He is popularly known as a former local wrestler known as "Mohan Pehalwan", as a viral video shows him skillfully handling two swords.

Yadav began his political journey as an ABVP member, and his role as a student activist and later as a young leader was mainly in Ujjain district. His organisational responsibilities within the BJP and its student and youth wings were initially confined to Ujjain.

Having joined the RSS in 1993-95 at the bottom rung, Yadav

steadily climbed the party ladder, eventually becoming the Ujjain district general secretary of the BJP in 2000. In the following years, he held important positions, including chairman of the Ujjain Development Authority (2004-2010) and chairman of the Madhya Pradesh State Tourism Development Corporation in Bhopal (2011-2013).

Yadav became an MLA for the first time in 2013, representing the Ujjain South seat. He retained this seat in 2018 and 2023, serving as the Cabinet Minister for Higher Education in 2020 in the Chouhan government.

He has also faced controversies in the past, including an accusation of disrespecting Hindu religious beliefs. He once compared Goddess Sita with divorced women during a public meeting, clarifying later that he intended to highlight Sita's devotion to Lord Ram despite facing difficulties. Known as a hardcore Hindutva ideologue, Yadav's elevation is seen as part of the BJP's strategy to emphasize religious agendas in the 2024 Lok Sabha election campaign, countering the OBC pitch by other political parties.



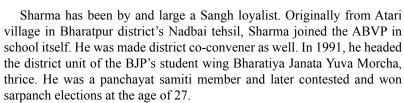
# Leaving behind almost a dozen Chief Minister aspirants, the BJP zeroed in on Bhajan Lal Sharma, a 56-year-old first-time legislator from Sanganer with a 34-year association with the Sangh, to be the Chief Minister of Rajasthan. Sharma defeated his rival, Pushpendra Bharadwaj of the Congress with a margin of 48,081 votes.

After Hardeo Joshi, a Brahmin, who held the post for three terms, this was the second time in the history of the State that a Brahmin had been chosen to lead Rajasthan. Sharma's selection was a deliberate decision in the framework of the BJP's caste calculations. He was also someone who enjoyed the confidence of the Sangh, unlike Vasundhara Raje. Like the Chief Minister candidates of the other two Hindi heartland States, the party clearly preferred a person with organisational loyalty if not administrative experience.

# BHAJAN LAL SHARMA Rajasthan

### Few keypoints abouts him:

- Bhajan Lal Sharma (born 15 December 1967) is an Indian politician currently serving as the 14th Chief Minister of Rajasthan since December 2023.
- ❖ He was born in Atari village of Bharatpur's Nadbai.
- He has an MA in political science from the University of Rajasthan.
- He started his political career with the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh since his school days through its student wing the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad.



Equipped with a Masters in Political Science from Rajasthan University, Sharma worked his way up quietly behind the scenes as many opportunities came his way to test his ideological loyalty. In 1990, while participating in the ABVP's Kashmir Bachao Andolan, he was jailed in Udhampur along with other activists, and in 1992, he was arrested again in the Ram Janmabhoomi movement.

In 2003, he briefly became disenchanted with his party and joined BJP rebel Devi Singh Bhati's Samajik Nyaya Manch. Bhati, a seven-time MLA from Kolayat in Bikaner, nurtured his own ambitions. Angered over the reservations for the Jat community, he floated his own outfit. Sharma fought the elections on an SNM ticket from Nadbai and lost badly. In fact, barring Bhati, everyone else who had contested from the SNM lost.

The Manch became defunct in a few years, and Sharma returned to the BJP soon after. Sharma was made BJP's district president and later State vice-president. He was brought to the headquarters in Jaipur as a general secretary, a post he held until his candidature was announced from Sanganer.

Just as it did in Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh, the central command cleared the names of two Deputy Chief Ministers, Diya Kumari and Prem Chand Bairwa, along with Sharma's name, extending the "collective leadership" mantra and picking a team representative of caste interests.



# ANUMULA REVANTH REDDY Telangana

Anumula Revanth Reddy, at 54, has become the youngest Chief Minister of Telangana and the first from the Congress party. His aggressive campaign led the party

While Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka and N. Uttam Kumar Reddy harboured were the other top contenders, Reddy emerged as the clear choice of the Congress leadership.

to a decisive victory over the ruling BRS.

Reddy's belonging to the politically powerful Reddy community (43 out of 119 MLAs) played a crucial role in his favour. However, his past political affiliations were a point of contention during the election campaign. Reddy, who began his journey with the right-wing ABVP, was also briefly associated with the TRS (BRS' earlier avatar) before a stint with the TDP. His defection to the TDP helped him win Assembly seats in 2009 and 2014 (undivided Andhra Pradesh).

He joined the Congress in 2017, eventually becoming the Pradesh Congress Committee president in 2021. His rise was not without effort. He undertook a 140-km padayatra against farm laws, solidifying his position as a prominent voice of opposition against the BRS government.

# Few keypoints abouts him:

- Anumula Revanth Reddy (born 8 November 1969) is an Indian politician who is serving as the second and current Chief Minister of Telangana since 7 December 2023.
- He represents Kodangal constituency in the Telangana Legislative assembly.
- He belongs to the Indian National Congress (INC)
- He graduated with a Bachelor of Arts from Andhra Vidyalaya College, Osmania University, Hyderabad.
- Reddy married Geetha, former union minister Jaipal Reddy's niece.

Now, even BJP leaders like former State party president Bandi Sanjay express relief at the BRS' defeat. Reddy, meanwhile, has hit the ground running. A day after taking oath, he met with aggrieved citizens at Mahatma Jyotiba Phule Praja Bhavan, underscoring his campaign promise to address inaccessibility to government officials. He has also ensured the continuation of "Praja Vani", a biweekly public grievance redressal programme.

Reddy's initial actions suggest a more decentralised approach compared to his predecessor, K. Chandrasekhar Rao. He has put several BRS proposals, such as the Pharma City and Airport Metro line, under review, hinting at a desire to leave his own mark on Telangana's development. His vision for the State will become clearer in the coming months.

While the Telangana victory sparked hopes of a Congress resurgence in neighbouring Andhra Pradesh, the situation there remains different. The Karnataka result had limited impact, and attracting fresh faces poses a significant challenge. Whether Congress can replicate its Telangana success in Andhra Pradesh remains to be seen.



Born on February 22, 1949, in the small village of Tualpui in eastern Mizoram's Champhai district, Lalduhoma graduated from GM High School in Champhai, the same school attended by the outgoing Chief Minister Zoramthanga. With former Chief Minister and veteran Congress leader Lalthanhawla also hailing from this place, the district has now produced three Chief Ministers in Mizoram.

After graduation, Lalduhoma worked as personal assistant to the first Mizoram Chief Minister, C. Chhunga. Later, he joined the IPS. During Indira Gandhi's tenure as Prime Minister, Lalduhoma served as a guard in the PMO before giving up his IPS job. He entered politics when Mizoram was yearning for peace after continuous insurgency since 1966. Lalduhoma claimed that he entered politics at the behest of Indira Gandhi, who played a key role in brokering peace between India and the then-outlawed Mizo National Front (MNF). It was Lalduhoma who travelled to London, where MNF founder Laldenga was in exile, to record the latter on tape, urging the people of Mizoram to vote for the Congress for peace in Mizoram.

Lalduhoma's political journey has been long, winding, and sometimes rough. After joining the Congress, he was elected uncontested to the Lok Sabha in 1984, only to be later disqualified under the Anti-Defection Law. He was the first MP in India to be disqualified under this law; he had voted against the Congress party's whip.

Lalduhoma resigned as the State

# LALDUHOMA Mizoram

#### Few keypoints abouts him:

- Lalduhoma (born 22 February 1949) is an Indian politician who is serving as the 6th Chief Minister of Mizoram since 8 December 2023.
- \* He is a former Indian Police Service officer.
- He was elected as Member of Parliament to the Lok Sabha from Mizoram in 1984.
- He is the founder and president of Zoram Nationalist Party, a regional political party in Mizoram.
- ❖ In the 2018 election, he and his party joined a coalition party, the Zoram People's Movement (ZPM). The party officially declared him the CM candidate.

Congress president and later left the party in 1986. He founded the Mizo National Union in the mid-1980s, which later merged with Brigadier T Sailoled Mizoram People's Conference to form the Democratic Party (DP). As the DP lost elections, Lalduhoma in the mid-1990s tried his luck in the MNF, which needed a capable leader following the death of Laldenga in 1990.

Lalduhoma soon took charge, but a split in the party made him leave and join MNF (Nationalist) in late 1999, later rechristened Zoram Nationalist Party in 2003. He managed to keep it alive until it merged with other smaller parties to form the Zoram People's Movement in 2017, now emerging as the formidable third force that ended bipolar politics in Mizoram in 2023. His ZPM government is the first non-MNF and non-Congress government in Mizoram in the last three decades or so.

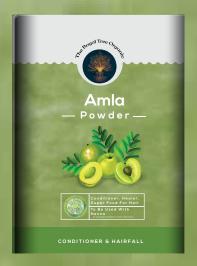
Lalduhoma first contested Assembly elections on a Congress ticket in 1984 but lost by a margin of 846 votes. The same year, he contested the Lok Sabha election as a Congress candidate and was elected unopposed. Lalduhoma was elected as an MLA for the first time only in 2003, from the erstwhile Ratu constituency.

As ZPM's chief ministerial candidate, Lalduhoma contested two seats in 2018, from Serchhip and Aizawl East-I, his home turf. However, he vacated his home constituency for Serchhip. In 2021, he was again disqualified under the Anti-Defection Law, now becoming the first Mizoram MLA to attract action under the law. The reason for his disqualification was that he won on an independent ticket, since ZPM was not a registered party at that time, but he functioned as a ZPM MLA. He was later elected in a byelection with a much bigger margin.

After 39 years in politics, Lalduhoma's lifelong dream came true on December 9, 2023, when he took the oath as Chief Minister of Mizoram. Though Lalduhoma consistently topped the polls as the people's choice for "favourite chief minister" over the past several elections, he could not make the final leap. This time, the people appear to have elected the Chief Minister they wanted.



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# Religion



# **Spirituality**

Interestingly, when we think about spirituality, we think about more serious topics in life or probably deeper.

# by Vibha Gurtu

Spirituality: The term spirit means "animating or vital principle in man and animals". In modern times the emphasis is on subjective experience and the "deepest values and meanings by which people live", incorporating personal growth or transformation, usually in a context separate from organized religious institutions. Spirituality can be defined generally as an individual's search for ultimate or sacred meaning, and purpose in life. Additionally it can mean to seek out or search for personal growth, religious experience, belief in a supernatural realm or afterlife, or to make sense of one's own "inner dimension" according to Wikipedia.

The search for peaceful living is made easier through the medium and that is what is true role of a Religion i.e. a spiritual journey through the guidelines of religion and this is what 'We' (humans) seek for the purpose of life. Some follow saints, gurus or religious texts and gods to move to the final stage of life, peacefully.

I am a Hindu. I practise Hindism as I am born and raised amidst the prayers, mantras, aartis and lighting of the Diya every morning and evening.

I was born in the family of teachers, preachers and journalists. We were told, directed and also gifted books from other beliefs too. We were allowed to question, argue and debate on various topics and history.

It is here, I was introduced to practice silence, the importance of fasting and introspecting self at the deeper layers of emotions, beliefs, patterns, thoughts and actions. I learnt to take ownership of my actions and that each thought is deemed action.

I realised that each one of us has a spiritual journey, which is guided by religion in its own form and beliefs.

Being a Hindu made me understand the grandeur of the connection between Self and the divine in a simple and beautiful way. It is here I understood that Atheism was always part of the larger umbrella of Sanatana dharam. Few philosophical ideologies related to this are;

Charvaka/Lokayata Philosophy: The Charvaka school, also known as Lokayata, is often considered one of the earliest forms of atheism in Hindu philosophy. Charvaka rejects the authority of the Vedas, denies the existence of an afterlife, and advocates for a materialistic philosophy grounded in empirical evidence and sensory perception.

**Ajivika Tradition**: The Ajivikas were an ancient Indian philosophical and ascetic movement that rejected the concept of a personal God and focused on determinism. While not explicitly atheist, their philosophy did not revolve around a creator deity. **Sankhya Philosophy**: Sankhya is one of the classical



philosophical schools of Hinduism. While not strictly atheistic, it doesn't necessarily emphasize a personal God. Instead, it focuses on the enumeration and analysis of the components of the material world and the self.

The flexibility and diversity of Hindu thought allow for a range of perspectives, including atheistic or non-theistic viewpoints, to coexist within the broader framework of the tradition.

Isn't this amazing? Where one can question a thought or belief and still be connected to the source directly.

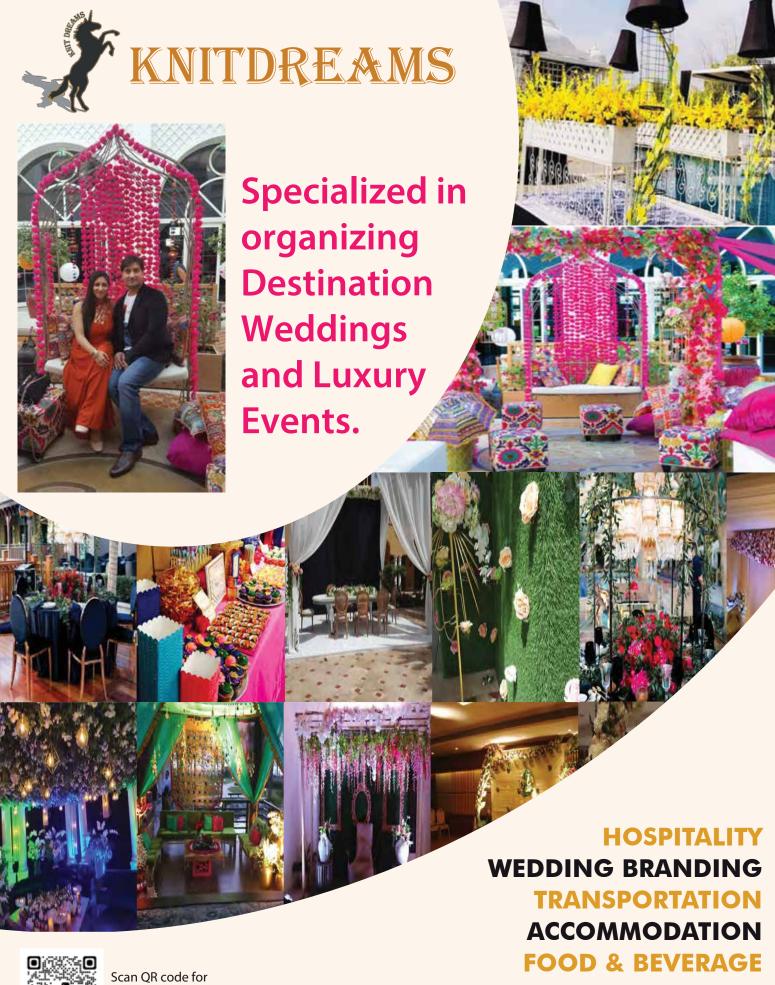
#### **About Author**



Vibha is an author, a practitioner and facilitator of Shamanism and an intuitive healer. Trained in reiki, pranic healing, hypnotherapy, tarot card reading and others, she founded Aumtara, a spiritual hub, in New Delhi. Vibha is a spiritual guide, talk therapist and an

image consultant. She uses her learning and experience to create inner and outer balance. Vibha assists people to break repetitive patterns to achieve life goals through clarity. She provides holistic healing to bring a shift internally in thoughts and externally with behaviour and appearance. She has conducted numerous workshops on image makeover, relationships and empowerment at individual and corporate levels.

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# Inclicates Control Carries 100 MILLION passangers

ndiGo has created history by becoming the first Indian airline to carry 100 million passengers in a single calendar year, 2023. This development further cements IndiGo's standing among the 10 largest airlines in the world by passenger traffic.

IndiGo, which its 17th anniversary this year, has also become one of the fastest airlines to reach the 100 million passenger figure. The new milestone represents a 22% increase in passenger traffic for 2023. IndiGo recently achieved another first for India, by becoming the first airline to operate more than 2,000 flights a day. Today, IndiGo operates to 118 destinations, including 32 international destinations.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Pieter Elbers, Chief Executive Officer, IndiGo said,

"We are incredibly delighted to achieve this historic milestone, welcoming aboard 100 million passengers in a year. This landmark figure is the result of the love and trust shown by our customers and the hard work and passion of all IndiGo colleagues. This milestone is also a validation of our strategy which has been executed so diligently. At IndiGo, we are proud to give wings to the nation, by connecting people and aspirations for the past 17 years, making air travel accessible for hundreds of millions of Indians."



Over the last 6 months, IndiGo has added more than 20 new international routes to its network while strengthening domestic connectivity. Over the next few months, the airline aims to further add destinations like Bali, Indonesia, and Medina, Saudi Arabia to its network and deliver growth in the most financially and environmentally sound way possible. By doing so IndiGo continues to serve the mobility needs for our customers and support the progress of India.

Reaching this wonderful landmark in a single year symbolizes the great year it has been for IndiGo and Indian aviation in general. The vision of the government on India's growth and progress, and aviation as one of the catalysts for this, is benefitting the nation as well as the tourism and hospitality sector. For a geographically vast and culturally diverse country like India, aviation also assumes a great role in bridging distances and bringing people closer.

# 15 Best Luxury Hotels in the World for 2023

Bureaucracy India in association with LTI-Luxury Travel Intelligence brings an exclusive study of 15 most luxurious hotels of 2023

# 1. BULGARI, ROME

Bulgari clearly understands the needs and likes of global highnet-worth clients. With Rome, the investment in both time and money is extraordinary and subsequently so is the property. With upcoming resorts in the Maldives, Miami Beach and Los Angeles, the continuing rise of Bulgari as a luxury hospitality operator is a potential game changer and such an enthralling watch.



# → 2. MANDARIN ORIENTAL COSTA NAVARINO

Mandarin Oriental is one of many luxury hotel brands. Recently, it named Mandarin Oriental as the World's Best Luxury Hotel Brand 2023 and this spectacular new resort demonstrates exactly why. This is a breathtaking haven in Greece, with 99 elegantly appointed suites and villas, each providing exceptional views and abundant space while seamlessly blending traditional Messenian elements with contemporary luxury.

# 3. BULGARI, TOKYO

Even though it only opened in April, this can already be considered Japan's most luxurious hotel. The property is located on the penthouse floors of the Yaesu skyscraper, from the 40th floor upwards, with 98 very spacious rooms and suites (spacious is now a Bulgari hotel trademark), a seriously lavish spa and multiple dining and drinking options.



# 4. 1 PLACE VENDÔME, PARIS

Chopard, the renowned jeweler, has quietly created this gem of a boutique Paris grand dame, with just 15 suites and rooms. But, it is a truly special place, particularly if you appreciate quiet luxury.

# 5. THE FIFTH AVENUE HOTEL, NEW YORK CITY -

This is a rich, romantic and colorful new property with an old-school vibe. There are 153 well-appointed rooms and suites, each with its own personality and engaging details that make this historic mansion feel like home.



# 6. THE PENINSULA, ISTANBUL

This is a lavish resort-style property with a wow factor at every turn. Spread across four buildings, there are 177 rooms and suites offering multiple layouts and categories, a classic Peninsula-style lobby, an impressive spa, plus indoor and outdoor pools.



# 7. ESTELLE MANOR, U.K.

This 60-acre country club and hotel nestled in Oxfordshire and perched on the Cotswolds doorstep, is billed as a "new school club with old school values.' It has the vast choice of accommodations (108 rooms and suites with more to come). Also soon to arrive will be a 3,000-square0meter Roman-inspired bathhouse and spa.

# 8. SIX SENSES, ROME

This is a bold project for Six Senses, creating an urban wellness-focused resort and a true oasis within Rome's chaotic and magical historic epicenter. Some guest rooms and all of the suites have terraces and the dramatic yet soothing Roman Spa sits across two floors.





# 9. RAFFLES AT THE OWO, LONDON

This is another superb property fashioned from a historic landmark—Britain's Old War Office (OWO). The moment you enter and take in the grand staircase, you can sense the immense importance of this building in its former life. Now it features 120 opulent rooms and suites, nine restaurants, three bars and a Guerlain spa.

# 10. FOUR SEASONS THE PEARL, QATAR

This is a little different to the usual Four Seasons resort, with only residential-style apartments on offer. Each comes with a large bedroom, bathroom, lounge, fully equipped kitchen and spacious terrace. There are also two and three-bedroom apartments available, creating a real home-away-from-home feel, Four Seasons style.



# 11. THE PENINSULA, LONDON

With such an exceptional year for London in luxury hotel openings, the Peninsula stands out from the crowd.



# 12. COMO METROPOLITAN SINGAPORE

The hotel is part of an integrated, immersive experience spread over 19 floors, bringing the best of COMO hospitality, fashion, wellness and cuisine into one location in the heart of Singapore.

# 13. SIX SENSES SOUTHERN DUNES ← → → THE RED SEA, SAUDI ARABIA

This Red Sea resort pays homage to Nabataean architectural heritage and majestic desert surroundings. With 36 guest rooms and suites, and another 40 pool villas dotted among the dunes, this very special property in Saudi Arabia achieves exceptional standards in sustainability and desert hospitality.





# 14. CAPELLA, SYDNEY

Thi is luxurious, mid-sized property, ticking all of the boxes. The landmark heritage building has been brought alive by Capella while maintaining the heritage elements. The expansive spa is also very impressive.

# **15. THE DOLLI, ATHENS**

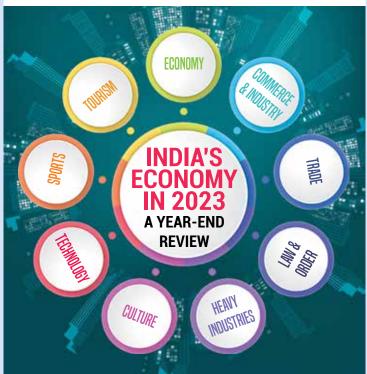
Since its opening, The Dolli has been a big hit with discerning in-the-know Athenians and it's easy to understand why. It is chic yet informal and offers guests a comprehensive choice of individually appointed rooms, suites and apartments.



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