



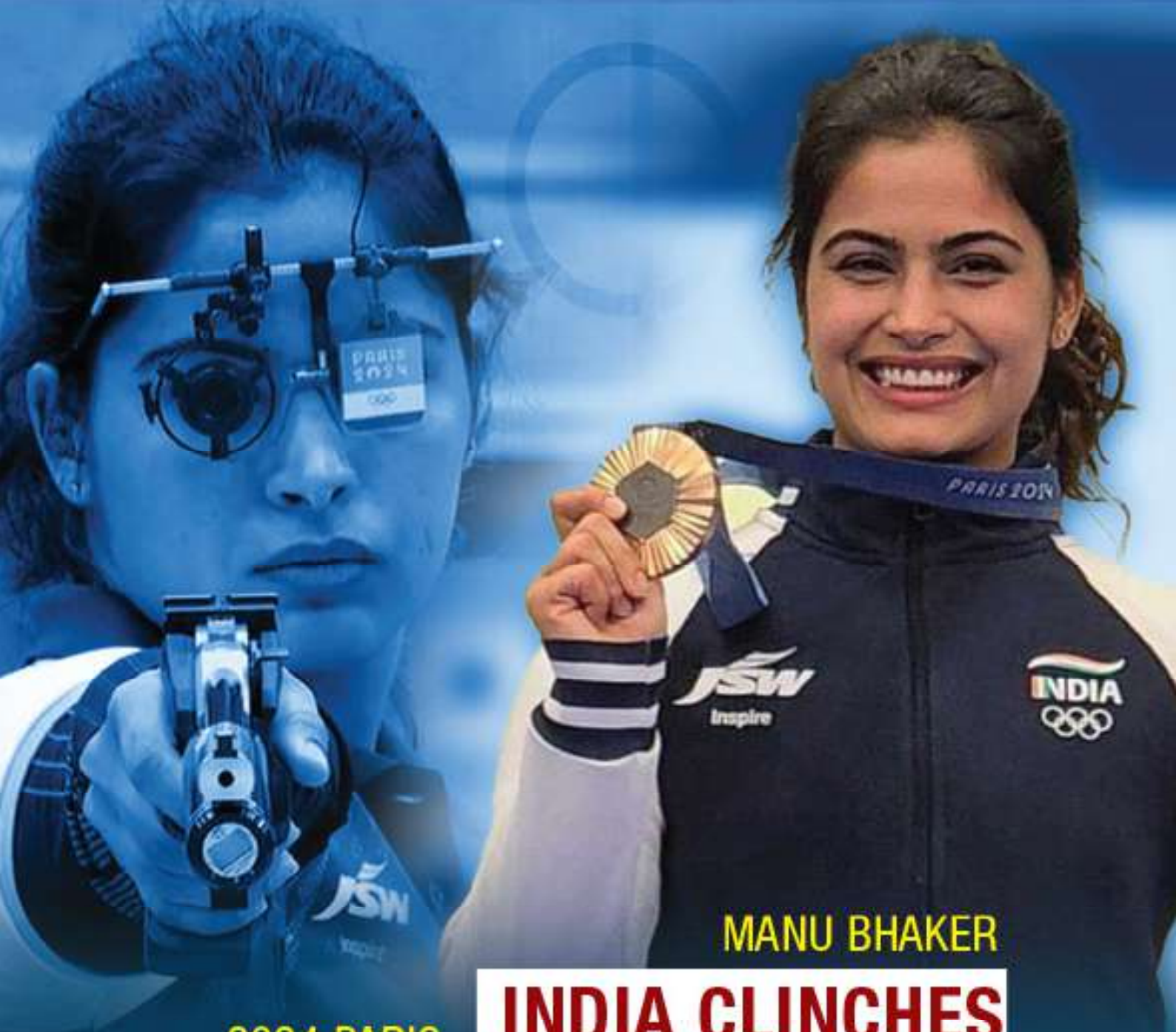
SIVARAJAVEL IAS ACADEMY

AN IDEAL INSTITUTE FOR CIVIL SERVICE EXAMS

SANGAMAM

Monthly Current Affairs for Competitive Exams

JULY - 2024 (English / Tamil)



2024 PARIS
OLYMPICS

MANU BHAKER

**INDIA CLINCHES
FIRST MEDAL**



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JULY 2024

SANGAMAM

Monthly Current Affairs for TNPSC

JULY

DIRECTOR: SIVARAJAVEL S

EDITOR:

Elakkiya M

SUB EDITORS:

Archana S

Manivannan S

Venkatesan T

DESIGNERS:

Thomas Kalaivanan S

Kalaiselvi R



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🌐: www.sivarajavelias.com

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HEAD OFFICE

No.97, AF Block, Shanthi Colony, 12th Main Road,
Anna nagar West, Chennai – 600 040

Ph: 9626364444

BRANCH OFFICES

TIRUNELVELI

No.106B, 3rd floor, Gilgal Complex,
VOC ground opposite, Palayamkottai - 627 002.

Ph: 9626252500

TRICHY

No.143, 4th Floor, Lakshmi Complex, Salai Road,
Thillai Nagar, Trichy - 620 018.

Ph: 9751500300 / 9786500300

MANU BHAKER



Who is she ? Manu Bhaker was born (born 18 February 2002) in Gorla village of Jhajjar district in Haryana. Her father, Ram Kishan Bhaker,

works as a chief engineer in the Merchant Navy, while her mother Sumedha Bhaker, a masters degree holder in Sanskrit, and was the principal of the school at Gorla. During her schooling, she participated in multiple sports such as tennis, skating, Manipuri martial-art thang-ta and boxing, earning several medals at the national games in these sports. As a -14year-old, Bhaker decided to focus on shooting sport.

She won two bronze medals at the 2024 Summer Olympics in Paris. She secured a bronze in the women's 10 metre air pistol event, becoming the first female shooter from India to win a medal at any Olympics. Subsequently, she earned another bronze medal in the mixed 10 metre air pistol team event, becoming the first Indian woman to win two medals in a single Olympics.

Bhaker won gold at the 2022 Asian Games in the women's 25m pistol team event. She earned her individual gold medal at the 2018 Commonwealth Games in the women's-10metreairpistolevent,whereshe set a new Commonwealth Games record. Earlier, she had become the **youngest Indian to win a gold at the ISSF World Cup in 2018 at the age of 16..**

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Mr. Elanchezhian DSP, GR-I 41st Rank

I am preparing for civil services exam(TNPSC and UPSC) since 2019. With Guidance of Sivarajavel IAS academy , I cleared the TNPSC exam in my third attempt. Sivarajavel sir's guidance was very helpful to me.

By choosing Sociology as optional subject I was able to crack many exams. By learning Sociology I was able to understand and handle many other exams too. especially the Descriptive sections. Group 1 exam has three stages. Prelims, Mains and Interview.

PRELIMS EXAM

It is objective type and It is to test our knowledge.

Unit 8 and unit 9(Tamil Society and Development of TN) are important parts .

MAINS EXAM

It is descriptive type. Mains exam demands not only knowledge But also skills like Time Management and Writing Skills.

To develop this skill one must write at least 30 Test in the coaching institutes .

INTERVIEW

For Interview part , We must be aware about Current affairs and we should be able to connect it with Static General knowledge.

One should be aware about their own Districts and Personal details.



13th century inscription

- A 13th century inscription has been found near Tirukovilur in Kallakurichi district. Researchers have informed that it belongs to the reign of Rajendra Chola. They said that it contains the details of the donation of land for lighting the lamp in the temple.

A district with no maternal mortality

- Due to the efficient functioning of the health department, Virudhu Nagar Health District has achieved a record of zero maternity and delivery deaths in the last one year.
- "In Tamil Nadu, 99.9 per cent deliveries take place in hospitals, of which 59 per cent take place in government hospitals.

Taghaisal Tamizhar -2024

- The Tamil Nadu government has been giving the award named 'Tagaisal Tamilar' since 2021 to honor those who have contributed immensely to the development of Tamil Nadu and the Tamil community.
- Accordingly, the Tamil Nadu government has announced that this year's Thakaisal Tamilar Award will be given to Kumari Ananthan, a senior leader of the Congress Party, a literary figure and a veteran political leader.
- Chief Minister M.K.Stalin is going to present the Thakaisal Tamil Award to Kumari Ananthan during the August 15 Independence Day celebrations.
- Kumari Ananthan, who has been selected for the 'Tagaisal Tamilar' award, will be awarded Rs 10 lakh and a certificate of appreciation.

TAMILNADU NEWS

Best Transgender Award-2024

- Sandhya Devi from Kanyakumari has been awarded the Best Transgender Award for the year 2023-24 by the Department of Social Welfare and Women's Rights, Government of Tamil Nadu. Sandhya Devi has been given this award for her continuous service in an outstanding manner for the welfare of transgender people.

National Handloom Weaver Award

- Balakrishnan, a handloom weaver from Dindigul district, has been selected for the National Handloom Award. She will be conferred with the Sant Kabir National Award 2023 during the National Handloom Day celebrations on August 7.
- This award has been announced to Balakrishnan for his cotton saree woven in cotton. 17 individuals from various states across India have been shortlisted for this award. Out of which, 2 people have been selected from Tamil Nadu. In this, Balasubramaniam from Kanchipuram and Balakrishnan, a handloom weaver from Dindigul have been selected.

Country's largest battery plant at Krishnagiri

- Headquartered in Greater Noida, LOHUM manufactures sustainable battery raw materials through recycling, reuse and low carbon refining. The company plans to invest Rs 2000 crore over 6 years to manufacture cathode active material in Krishnagiri district in Tamil Nadu.
- They have also said that the products manufactured here will be supplied to Ola, Xcite, TVS and Amararaja companies that can manufacture batteries.

Porpanaikotai Excavation Sotupavaval Bells

- Sutupavala beads have been found at Polpanaikottai. The second phase of excavation at Porpanaikottai is going on from 18.06.2024. 519 artefacts including glass beads, soap stone beads and crystal beads have been found. Today, two coral beads, an agate and an amethyst are available.
- Archeological sites of the early Sangam period such as Arikamedu, Poombukar, Kodumanal, Thandikudi, Khaval, Keezadi, Korkai etc. have been found in significant numbers. The source stones from which amethyst and agate stones can be made are available in the western parts of India. Recently copper nails and eye ink sticks have been found, but now agate beads and agate beads are better. He mentioned that they ensure the cultural richness of Porpanaikottai.
- In Pudukottai District, Porpanaikottai, excavation work was being carried out, now a copper nail used by the ancestors has been found.
- A total of 5 nails have been found. Its length is 2.3 cm. So, the width is 1.2 cm and the weight is 2 grams.

Cuddalore District Marungur Excavation

Anjanakola made of copper has been found in excavations at Marungur in Cuddalore district. Antiquities including copper coins of the Rajarasan period and flint stones were collected. Green colored glass beads, anchanakol and rowleted potsherds were also found in Marungur excavations.

Green glass bell

Now I got a green colored glass bell. Cylindrical glass bead 12.5 mm, length 8 mm, diameter 0.45 gm.

Anjanakol

Anjanakol made of copper, used for blinding eyes, was found at a depth of 127 cm. This Anjanakola is 4.7 cm long and weighs 3.6 grams.

Rouletted tiles

At a depth of 122cm two sherds of Related type were found. Such related types of pottery are found in Tamil Nadu at Arikamedu, Vasavasamuthram, Bhoombukar, Alaghankulam, Korkai, Geezadi and coastal archaeological sites of Andhra and Orissa states.

Rouletted pottery was generally considered to be Furnished pottery. Recent studies suggest that the pottery was made by people living along the eastern coast of South India. Such related pottery belongs to the early historical period known as the Sangam period. Therefore, it is confirmed that Marungur is an archeological site belonging to the early historical period.

Best Police Station 2022 - Annavasal

- In order to encourage the provision of improved service to the people in the police stations across the state, the best performing police stations are selected and honored with a shield every year. It is to be noted that a committee has been formed to select the best police station and the best police stations are identified and ranked and given the shield based on various parameters including capacity building and service in the police stations.
- India's best female footballer 2024
- Tamil Nadu's Indumati Kathiresan has been awarded the Best Female Footballer of India award for the year 2023-24. Odisha FC in Indian Women's Football League Indumati was instrumental in the win scoring 5 goals.
- He hails from Cuddalore and works in the police force in Chennai. This is the first time that a player from Tamil Nadu has received this prestigious award.



First female Chief Secretary of Maharashtra

- Sujata Saunik, a 1987 batch IAS officer, became the first female Chief Secretary of Maharashtra when she took over from retiring Chief Secretary Nitin Kareer. Incidentally, Kareer had taken the charge of this post from Saunik's husband Manoj Saunik.
- Earlier, Sujata Saunik worked as additional chief secretary in the Home Department and General Administration Department, Government of Maharashtra. She will be the 45th CS of Maharashtra since 1960, when the state came into being.
- The outgoing Chief Secretary was given a three-month extension by the central government in March 2024 in the wake of the Lok Sabha polls that concluded on June 4 with the result announcement. Apart from Saunik, senior bureaucrats Rajesh Kumar and IS Chahal were also in the race to become the Chief Secretary.

Archaeologists have discovered a 41,000-year-old ostrich nest in Prakasam, Andhra Pradesh.

- Prehistoric Ostrich Nest: Details of the Discovery
- The nest, identified as the world's oldest known ostrich nest, measures 9-10 feet in width.
- The nest was once home to 9-11 eggs but was capable of holding 30-40 eggs at a time.
- Ostriches are mega omnivores, weighing between 90 and 140 kg and standing seven to nine feet tall.

Megafauna

- Megafauna generally refers to animals weighing

more than 50 kg, though scientific definitions vary.

- The term was first used by Alfred Russel Wallace in his 1876 book, "The Geographical Distribution of Animals."

Megafauna can be classified into:

- Megaherbivores (plant-eaters),
- Megacarnivores (meat-eaters), and
- Megaomnivores (who eat both plants and meat).

Historical Evidence of Megafauna

- Early Documentation: Richard Lydekker in 1884 presented the earliest documented evidence of ostriches in the subcontinent, identifying the extinct *Struthio asiaticus* in the Dhok Pathan deposits in Upper Siwalik Hills, present-day Pakistan.
- Discoveries in Maharashtra: Archaeologist S A Sali in 1989 reported ostrich eggshell beads and engraved pieces dating back to 50,000-40,000 years ago at Patne, Maharashtra.
- CCMB Research in 2017: Researchers at the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB) in Hyderabad established the presence of ostriches in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, and Gujarat 25,000 years ago.

TATA Group - India's most valuable brand

- Tata Group has retained its position as India's most valuable brand with a value of \$28.6 billion, reflecting a 9 per cent increase from last year. Following Tata, Infosys holds the second position, while HDFC Group has made a significant leap to third place, in Brand Value's 'India 100 2024 ranking.

- The India 100 report is curated by Brand Value, assessing more than 250 Indian brands across industries.
- Brand Finance's report highlighted that Tata Group marks the first time an Indian brand is nearing the \$30 billion mark. Meanwhile, HDFC was propelled to the third position driven by its monumental merger with HDFC Ltd. This merger has bolstered HDFC Group's brand value, reflecting a strong presence in the financial sector.

NIRMAN Bill-2024

- Uttar Pradesh (UP), the state government has passed the draft for the Uttar Pradesh Nodal Investment Region for Manufacturing (Construction) Area Bill (NIRMAN)-2024. This initiative, chaired by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, is part of a broader strategy to uplift the state's economy to the one trillion dollar mark.

objective and framework of UP Government

- Special Investment Regions (SIRs) are supposed to be set up all over UP by the NIRMAN-2024 bill. The plan is for these areas to be spread out evenly across the state's four geographical zones. To make these SIRs, cluster regions for big investments are being built. The goal is to give power from the state government to regional officials, which will make doing business easier.

Strategic Development and Economic Impact

- For these SIRs, UP wants to use about 20,000 acres of land from its land bank under the NIRMAN-2024 plan. Each place, like the big 5,000-hectare area set aside by the Bundelkhand Industrial Development Authority, will make it easier for big business and industrial activities to happen. This is supposed to make the economy grow very quickly, protect investment zones legally, make it easier for businesses to run, and give a lot of jobs to people in the area.

Global India AI Summit - 2024

- The IndiaAI Mission aims to build a comprehensive ecosystem that fosters AI

innovation by democratizing computing access, enhancing data quality, developing indigenous AI capabilities, attracting top AI talent, enabling industry collaboration, providing startup risk capital, ensuring socially impactful AI projects, and promoting ethical AI. This mission drives responsible and inclusive growth of India's AI ecosystem through following seven pillars:

IndiaAI Compute Capacity:

- This pillar focuses on creating a scalable AI computing ecosystem with over 10,000 GPUs through public-private partnerships to meet the demands of India's growing AI startups and research community. An AI marketplace will offer AI as a service and pre-trained models, serving as a central hub for essential AI resources.

IndiaAI Innovation Centre:

- This centre is dedicated to developing and deploying indigenous Large Multimodal Models (LMMs) and domain-specific foundational models in critical sectors.

IndiaAI Datasets Platform:

- This platform aims to streamline access to high-quality non-personal datasets for AI innovation. A unified data platform will provide seamless access to these datasets for Indian startups and researchers.

IndiaAI Application Development Initiative:

- This initiative promotes AI applications in critical sectors by addressing problem statements from Central Ministries, State Departments, and other institutions. It focuses on developing, scaling, and promoting the adoption of impactful AI solutions with the potential for large-scale socio-economic transformation.

IndiaAI FutureSkills:

- This pillar aims to reduce barriers to entry into AI programs by increasing AI courses at the undergraduate, master's, and Ph.D. levels. Data and AI Labs will be established in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities to offer foundational courses.

IndiaAI Startup Financing:

- This pillar supports and accelerates deep-tech

AI startups by providing streamlined access to funding for innovative AI projects.

Safe & Trusted AI:

- This pillar focuses on ensuring the responsible development, deployment, and adoption of AI by implementing Responsible AI projects, developing indigenous tools and frameworks, self-assessment checklists for innovators, and other guidelines and governance frameworks.

Sampoornata Abhiyan

- NITI Aayog launched the 'Sampoornata Abhiyan' today witnessing significant participation from citizens across the country. The launch events were organised across all the 112 Aspirational Districts and 500 Aspirational Blocks. This comprehensive three-month campaign, running from 4th July to 30th September 2024, aims to achieve 100% saturation of 12 key social sector indicators across all Aspirational Districts and Blocks.
- This comprehensive three-month campaign to be focused on themes including health, nutrition, agriculture, social development and education, will continue till September this year. As part of the campaign, district and block officials along with elected people's representatives will organise awareness activities including Gram Sabhas, Nukkad Natak, Paushtik Aahar Mela, Health camps, Exhibitions, Poster making and Poem competitions around 12 themes identified in all aspirational blocks and districts.

400 MW solar power plant in Gujarat

- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the ENGIE group have signed a long-term local currency loan agreement to construct and operate a 400-megawatt solar photovoltaic power plant in Surendranagar District, Gujarat, India.
- ADB was the mandated lead arranger for the entire loan totaling 14.6 billion Indian rupees (approximately \$175.9 million) with ADB and Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank both providing 7.3 billion Indian rupees. The project will support the Government of India's target of achieving at least 500 gigawatts of nonfossil fuel energy capacity by 2030.

- The plant will generate an average of 805 gigawatt-hours annually over the next 25 years, avoiding nearly 662,441 tons of carbon dioxide emissions per year.

- Enren Energy Private Limited, a special-purpose vehicle owned by the ENGIE group, will implement the project, while state-owned electricity distribution company Gujarat Urja Vikas Nigam Limited will be the sole offtaker. ADB has been supporting the development of renewable energy in India since 2007 and has financed several independent solar power producers.

Ganges Water Treaty - India and Bangladesh

- The Ganges Water Treaty, signed by India and Bangladesh in 1996, is a 30-year treaty due to expire in 2026, and renewed by mutual consent.
- Under the treaty, the upper riparian India and lower riparian Bangladesh agreed to share the water of this transboundary river at Farakka, a dam on Bhagirathi river around 10 kms from Bangladesh border.

Lokpath Mobile App

- On July 2, 2024, the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh, Dr. Mohan Yadav, launched the 'Lokpath Mobile App'. This innovative initiative aims to address and resolve road-related issues faced by the public within a seven-day timeframe. The app was developed by the Public Works Department (PWD) and represents a significant step towards improving transparency and accountability in public infrastructure management.

Features of the Lokpath Mobile App

- The Lokpath Mobile App allows citizens to report issues related to roads, such as potholes, directly to the PWD. Users can take photographs of the problematic areas and upload them through the app, ensuring that the complaint reaches the relevant authorities quickly. The app's interface is user-friendly, making it accessible to people across different age groups and technical proficiencies.

Objectives and Benefits

- The primary objective of the Lokpath Mobile App is to enhance the efficiency of road maintenance and repair. By enabling real-time reporting and tracking of complaints, the app ensures that road issues are addressed promptly. The CM emphasized that this initiative will help in maintaining the 40,000 kilometers of roads in Madhya Pradesh more effectively, fostering a safer and more reliable transportation network for residents.

Telecommunication Act 2023

- The Telecommunication Act 2023 aims to amend and consolidate the law relating to development, expansion and operation of telecommunication services and telecommunication networks; assignment of spectrum; and for matters connected therewith. The Telecommunication Act 2023 also seeks to repeal existing legislative framework like Indian Telegraph Act 1885 and Indian Wireless Telegraph Act 1933 owing to huge technical advancements in the telecom sector and technologies.
- Guided by the principles of Samavesh (Inclusion), Suraksha (Security), Vriddhi (Growth), and Tvarit (Responsiveness), the Act aims to achieve the vision of Viksit Bharat (Developed India).

The salient features of the sections that have been brought into force with effect from July 05, 2024 (Today) are:

- Optimal utilization of spectrum: The Act provides legal framework for efficient utilization of scarce spectrum through processes such as secondary assignment, sharing, trading, leasing and surrender of spectrum. It also enables the utilisation of spectrum in a flexible, liberalised and technologically neutral manner. It also empowers the Central Government to establish an enforcement and monitoring mechanism for the purpose.
- Prohibition of use of equipment which block telecommunications: The Act prescribes, with immediate effect, the use of any equipment which blocks telecommunication, unless permitted by the Central Government.

- Criteria for appointment as Chairperson and Members of TRAI: Section 59(b) of the Act will amend section 4 of the TRAI Act 1997 and prescribes criteria for appointment of Chairperson and Members of TRAI.

Mica mines of Jharkhand 'child labour-free'

- National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) declared the mica mines of Jharkhand 'child labour-free' at an event in Koderma, Jharkhand. NCPCR chairperson Priyank Kanoongo announced this as the first-ever successful endeavor to cleanse a supply chain of child labour in mica mining.

Child Labour in India

- In India, working children up to 14 years of age are classified as child labour.
- Child Labour in Mica Mines of Jharkhand

Background on Mica Mining

- Mica, a shimmery, translucent mineral, is used in various industries including cosmetics, electronics, automobiles, and construction. It is abundant in the Koderma and Giridih districts of Jharkhand. Koderma was once known as the Mica capital of India, the Abkrah Nagari.

Historical Context

- Mica mining was once a booming industry in the area, making India the largest exporter of Mica globally. However, the Forest Conservation Act of 1980 banned mining in forest areas without central government permission, leading to illegal mining operations.

National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR)

- Established in 2007 under the Commission for Protection of Child Rights (CPCR) Act, 2005
- Under administrative control of the Union Ministry of Women and Child Development
- Safeguards children's rights as per the Constitution and other laws
- Ensures rights provided by the Right to Education Act, 2009, and POCSO Act 2012

Digital Competition Bill

- In February 2023, the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) constituted a Committee on Digital Competition Law (CDCL) to examine the need for a separate law on competition in digital markets. The CDCL deliberated on the issue for a year and came to the conclusion that there was a need to supplement the current ex-post framework under the Competition Act, 2002 with an ex-ante framework. It laid out this ex-ante framework in the draft Digital Competition Bill.

What is an ex-ante framework?

- The Competition Act, 2002 is the primary legislation concerned for preventing practices that have an adverse effect on competition. It establishes the Competition Commission of India (CCI) as the national competition regulator. As with competition law in all other jurisdictions, the Competition Act, 2002 is based on an ex-post framework. This means that the CCI can use its powers of enforcement only after the anti-competitive conduct has occurred.

New Challenger 3500 jet plane

- The Madhya Pradesh government has approved the purchase of a new Challenger 3500 jet plane. Chief Minister Mohan Yadav assisted in making this decision, which will make it easier for VVIPs to go around. This move was made after the state's last jet, a B-200GT VT MPQ, was damaged in a crash landing at Gwalior Airport in May 2021. The new jet is designed to make VVIP transportation within the state safer and more efficient.

Adoption Of The National E-Vidhan Application (NEVA)

- The Madhya Pradesh government has also committed to invest approximately Rs 23.87 crore to establish the National E-Vidhan Application (NEVA). This is in addition to purchasing the new jet. The purpose of this project, which is part of the Centre's Digital India initiative, is to bring the state assembly

online. It intends to integrate all state houses on a single digital platform, which will benefit the environment and make government operations more effective. According to the NEVA funding plan, the central government would pay 60% of the project cost, while state governments will pay the remaining 40%. This represents a significant step forward in Madhya Pradesh's efforts to digitize its government processes.

About The Challenger 3500 Jet Plane

- Bombardier debuted the Challenger 3500 in 2023. It is a step up in the super-midsize private jet category, with a range of 3,400 nautical miles. It boasts an autonomous control system, an environmentally friendly design built of long-lasting materials, and a Nuage seat for optimal comfort. The 3500 boasts the lowest operating costs in its class and features a voice-controlled cabin that allows you to adjust the temperature, lighting, and entertainment. It also features a 24-inch 4K display, a wireless charging system throughout the bedroom, and superior soundproofing technology, making it one of the quietest cabins in its category.

World's largest Ramayan temple

- The second phase of construction for the "world's largest Ramayan temple," known as the Viraat Ramayan Mandir, has begun in East Champaran district, Bihar. This phase involves raising the temple's structure to the plinth level, which will be approximately 26 feet high. The second phase is a crucial part of the overall construction, as it includes the installation of the world's largest Shivling, which will be 33 feet tall and weigh 200 tonnes.
- The Viraat Ramayan Mandir is being built at a cost of ₹500 crore and is expected to be completed by the end of 2025. Once finished, it will be three times larger than the Ram Mandir in Ayodhya, covering an area of 3.76 lakh sq.ft. The temple will feature 22 sanctum sanctorum for different deities and will have a total of 12 shikhars (spires), with the main shikhar being 270 feet tall.

Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) for organic products - India and Taiwan

- The Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) for organic products between India and Taiwan has been implemented w.e.f. 8th July 2024 during the 9th Working Group on Trade Meeting with Taiwan at New Delhi. The implementation of the MRA between India and Taiwan is a landmark achievement as it is the first bilateral agreement for organic products
- The implementing Agencies for the MRA are Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA), Ministry of Commerce and Industry, India and Agriculture and Food Agency, Ministry of Agriculture (AFA), Taiwan.
- By virtue of this agreement, agricultural products produced and handled organically in conformity with the National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP) and accompanied by an organic demonstration document (transaction certificate, etc.) issued by an accredited certification body under NPOP are allowed for sale in Taiwan as organically produced including display of the “India Organic” logo.
- Similarly, agricultural products produced and handled organically in conformity with the Organic Agriculture Promotion Act and accompanied by an organic demonstration document (transaction certificate etc) issued by an accredited certification body under the Taiwanese regulation are allowed for sale in India as organically produced including display of the “Taiwan Organic” logo.
- The mutual recognition will ease the export of organic products by avoiding dual certifications; thus, reducing compliance cost, simplifying compliance requirement by adhering to only one regulation and enhancing trade opportunities in the organic sector.

Principal advisor for National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme

- The Union government has named Dr. Soumya Swaminathan, former chief scientist of the World Health Organization, as principal advisor

for its National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme.

- Swaminathan, who played a key role during the pandemic outbreak, will provide technical advice on the overall strategy to achieve programme goals, suggest policy directions and necessary course corrections for optimal outcomes, and advise on research strategy.
- “She will also assist in the formation of expert groups with top talent globally. Additionally, she will support the union health ministry, state officials, and development partners in assessing the impact of the programme,” Union health ministry said in a statement. Her appointment is on a pro bono basis.
- Swaminathan has also served as director general of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) during 2015-2017.

Rs 750-crore agri fund - NABARD

- National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) announced the launch of a Rs 750-crore agri fund aimed at supporting startups and rural enterprises. This fund, named ‘Agri-SURE’, was unveiled by NABVENTURES, a subsidiary of NABARD, and is designed to foster investment in innovative, technology-driven, high-risk, and high-impact activities in agriculture and allied areas.
- According to the statement released by NABARD, the Agri-SURE fund has an initial corpus of Rs 750 crore, contributed equally by NABARD, the Ministry of Agriculture, and other institutions, with each entity investing Rs 250 crore. This strategic collaboration underscores the commitment of the government and financial institutions to propel the agricultural sector towards sustainable growth and modernization.
- The Agri-SURE fund will be managed by NABVENTURES, a wholly-owned subsidiary of NABARD, and is set to support around 85 agri startups with investment sizes of up to Rs 25 crore each by the end of its term. The fund’s multifaceted support structure includes investments in sector-specific, sector-agnostic, and debt Alternative Investment Funds (AIFs),

alongside direct equity support to promising startups.

- “The fund is structured to support approximately 85 agri startups with investment sizes of up to Rs 25 crore each by the end of its term,” NABARD stated. The initiative aims to invigorate the agricultural landscape through various innovative and technology-driven initiatives.

Zero-emission trucks (ZETs) - NITI Aayog

- In a bid to zero-emission trucks (ZETs) adoption in the country, NITI Aayog in collaboration with IIM Bangalore, Smart Freight Centre India, CALSTART/Drive to Zero and WRI India announced the launch of the NITI GearShift Challenge as part of the e-FAST India initiative. The hackathon aims to foster innovative business models for the adoption of ZETs in India, addressing the nation’s pressing economic and environmental challenges.
- The hackathon will unfold in two rounds. In Round 1, teams will submit their initial business models addressing a specific barrier—technical, operational, or financial—supported by high-level strategies and research.
- Shortlisted teams in Round 2 will present detailed business models with an implementation roadmap, backed by both primary and secondary research. These proposals will be mentored by industry leaders to ensure practical and impactful solutions.
- India’s freight sector is vital to the economy, ensuring the smooth delivery of goods to over 1.4 billion people.
- With road freight accounting for a staggering 55 per cent of India’s annual diesel consumption and nearly 40 per cent of CO2 emissions from road transport, there is an urgent need to transition to more sustainable solutions.
- The electrification of freight transportation is a key priority, as electric trucks offer a transformative opportunity to reduce emissions, improve air quality, and enhance energy security.

- The GearShift Challenge marks a pivotal move towards sustainable freight transportation in India. By tapping into the creativity and expertise of participants, the hackathon aims to generate practical solutions that will accelerate the adoption of zero-emission trucks, thereby benefiting both the economy and the environment.

The Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 2011 Updated

- The Consumer Affairs Ministry wants to change the Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 2011. The goal of the change is to require that important information about pre-packaged goods sold in stores that are bigger than 25 kilograms or 25 liters be made public. The goal of this move is to get rid of the current exemption for bulk packages and give customers more information.
- The Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 2011 requires for declaration of mandatory information like name and address of the manufacturer/ packer/ importer, country of origin, common or generic name of the commodity, net quantity, month and year of manufacture, MRP, Unit Sale Price, best before/ use by date in case of commodity become unfit for human consumption, consumer care details etc. on all pre-packaged commodities in the interest of consumers.
- The Rules are applicable on all pre-packaged commodities except the following:
 - packages of commodities containing quantity of more than 25 kilogram or 25 litre;
 - cement, fertilizer and agricultural farm produce sold in bags above 50 kilogram; and
 - packaged commodities meant for industrial consumers or institutional consumers.
- The Rules are not applicable for the packaged commodities containing quantity of more than 25 kilogram or 25 litre except cement, fertilizer and agricultural farm produce sold in bags above 50 kilogram, because it is presumed that the packaged commodities meant for retail sale are not more than 25 kg. However, it is observed that the packaged commodities above

25 kg are also available in the market for retail sale, which is not as per the intention to make all declarations on pre-packaged commodities meant for retail sale.

India's longest and largest urban tunnel project

- On July 13, 2024, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated India's longest and largest urban tunnel project, the Thane Borivali Twin Tunnel, developed by the Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA). This Rs. 16,600 crore project will reduce travel time between Thane and Borivali from over an hour to just 12 minutes, cutting the travel distance by 12 km. This initiative is part of broader infrastructure projects worth Rs. 29,000 crore aimed at enhancing connectivity in Mumbai.

Key Highlights of the Thane Borivali Twin Tunnel

- Tunnel Length: 11.8 km
- Route: From Thane to National Highway 8 at Borivali
- Estimated Cost: Rs. 16,600 crore
- Operational Lanes: 2 operational lanes, 1 emergency lane
- Travel Time Reduction: More than 1 hour saved (journey completed in 12 minutes)
- Carbon Emissions Reduction: 1,50,000 MT per year
- Completion Target: May 2028

Environmental and Technical Aspects

- The tunnel, which includes a 10.25 km bored section with cross passages every 300 meters, will use India's largest tunnel-boring machine. MMRDA assures that its construction will not harm the Sanjay Gandhi National Park and will help reduce noise and air pollution.

Second Asia Pacific ministerial conference

- The second Asia Pacific ministerial conference on civil aviation will be held in the national capital on September 11 and 12, which is expected to see the participation of representatives from around 40 countries, including China and Pakistan.
- The Asia Pacific region is a significant contributor to global air traffic, and India is the world's fastest-growing aviation market.

About the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)

Establishment and Background

- Founded on December 7, 1944, by the Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation
- Became a specialized agency of the United Nations in 1947

HQ:

- Montreal, Canada

Objectives and Mission

- Develop international standards and regulations for aviation safety, security, efficiency, and environmental protection
- Promote safe and orderly growth of international air transport

Structure and Governance

- Assembly: Meets every three years, includes all member states
- Council: Governing body with 36 elected member states
- Secretariat: Led by the Secretary General, manages daily operations

Membership

- 193 member states as of 2024
- Open to all states subscribing to Chicago Convention principles
- India: Founding member, joined in 1944

Functions and Responsibilities

- Establish international standards and recommended practices (SARPs)
- Conduct audits and monitor SARPs compliance
- Provide technical assistance and capacity-building
- Facilitate aviation data and statistics collection

MANAS (Madak Padarth Nisedh Asuchna Kendra) Portal

- Union Home Minister Amit Shah launched the MANAS (Madak Padarth Nisedh Asuchna Kendra) Portal with a toll-free number 1933 to seek advice on de-addiction and rehabilitation and share information on drug trafficking.
- MANAS will have a toll-free number 1933, a web portal, a mobile app, and a UMANG app so that citizens of the country can anonymously connect with NCB 24x7 to seek advice on de-addiction and rehabilitation and share information on drug trafficking.
- MANAS will have a toll-free number 1933, a web portal, a mobile app, and a UMANG app so that
- Addressing the 7th NCORD top-level meeting, Union Home Minister Amit Shah launched the National Narcotics Helpline 'MANAS' and informed that, for capacity-building, the "Centre of Excellence for Narcotics Control" has been founded and 'Mission Spandhan' has been initiated to create awareness among the public regarding issues relating to drugs.

Budget 2024: National Quantum Mission tees off with ₹427-cr budgetary support

- In the Budget speech for 2020-21, it was mentioned that the mission would be set up

at a cost of ₹8,000 crore. On April 18, 2023, the Union Cabinet approved the setting up of the NQM at a cost of ₹6,003 crore, to be spent between 2023-24 and 2030-31.

- "The Mission aims to seed, nurture and scale up scientific and industrial R&D and create a vibrant and innovative ecosystem in Quantum Technology (QT). This will accelerate QT-led economic growth, nurture the ecosystem in the country and make India one of the leading nations in the development of Quantum Technologies and Applications (QTA)," says a footnote to the expenditure budget of the Department of Science and Technology (DST).

Key objectives

- The Mission's objectives include developing intermediate-scale quantum computers with 50-1,000 physical qubits in 8 years in various platforms, including superconducting and photonic technology, the DST says on its website.
- "Satellite-based secure quantum communications between ground stations over a range of 2,000 km within India, long-distance secure quantum communications with other countries, inter-city quantum key distribution over 2,000 km, as well as multi-node Quantum networks with quantum memories are some of the deliverables of the Mission," it says.
- Further, the Mission will focus on developing magnetometers with high sensitivity in atomic systems and atomic clocks for precision timing, communications, and navigation. It will also support the design and synthesis of quantum materials such as superconductors, novel semiconductor structures, and topological materials for the fabrication of quantum devices. Single photon sources/ detectors, and entangled photon sources will also be developed for quantum communications, sensing, and metrological applications.

Maharashtra Special Public Security (MSPS) Act, 2024

- Maharashtra government had tabled the Maharashtra Special Public Security (MSPS) Act, 2024, aimed at curbing the 'menace of Naxalism' in urban areas.

- The provisions of the proposed Bill, which allows the State to declare any organization as ‘unlawful’ with offenses categorized as cognisable and non-bailable, has raised concerns and is being dubbed the ‘urban naxal’ law.
- The Maoist-hit States of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Chhattisgarh and Odisha have already implemented Public Security Acts to prevent unlawful activities.

Why was the Bill proposed?

- The bill aims to curb Urban Maoism/Naxalism.
- The presence of, and activities carried out, by Naxalites or the CPI (Maoist), in urban areas are together termed as Urban Maoism/Naxalism.
- Provisions of Maharashtra Special Public Security Bill, 2024

Declaration of Unlawful Organizations:

- The Bill grants the state the authority to declare an organization as “unlawful” — a decision which can be reviewed by an advisory board set up by the state government.

Definition of Unlawful Activities:

- Activities which constitute a danger or menace to public order, peace and tranquility.
- Interference with law administration and public servants.
- Violence, vandalism, use of firearms, explosives, and disruption of transportation.
- Encouraging disobedience to law and institutions.
- Collecting funds or goods for unlawful activities.
- All offenses under the new bill are cognizable and non-bailable:
- All offenses under the new bill will be cognizable and non-bailable, and will be investigated by a police officer not below the rank of a Sub-Inspector.

Provision for punishment:

- The offenses covered in the bill carry sentences

ranging from two to seven years, along with fines between ₹2 lakh and ₹5 lakh.

- Prime Minister SVANidhi scheme - Madhya Pradesh Best Performing State
- Madhya Pradesh has been recognized as the ‘Best Performing State’ under the Prime Minister SVANidhi scheme, which supports urban street vendors with collateral-free loans up to ₹50,000. The Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry announced this accolade, with Assam securing the second position in the ‘Best Performing States – Innovation and Best Practices Award’ category.
- Overview of the Prime Minister SVANidhi Scheme
- Launched in June 2020 amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, the PM SVANidhi scheme provides micro-credit to street vendors in urban areas to help them recover from the economic impact of the crisis. The scheme offers collateral-free loans up to ₹50,000, repayable within a year, aiming to enhance financial stability and support small businesses.

Achievements

- Madhya Pradesh: Awarded as the top state in the PM SVANidhi scheme for its effective management and implementation.
- Assam: Ranked second in the ‘Best Performing States – Innovation and Best Practices Award’ category.

Asia’s First Pre-Clinical Network Facility Inaugurated in Faridabad

- Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh recently inaugurated Asia’s inaugural health research-related “Pre-clinical Network Facility” at Faridabad’s Translational Health Science & Technology Institute (THSTI). This facility, selected by the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), is notable as Asia’s first and the 9th globally to handle BSL3 pathogens.

The facility includes one of India’s largest small animal housing capacities, supporting research on immune-compromised mice and various species. Additionally, the inauguration of the “Genetically

Defined Human Associated Microbial Culture Collection (Ge-HuMic) Facility” aims to foster national and international collaborations in microbial research.

U-WIN portal

- The U-WIN portal, a replication of the Covid-19 vaccine management system Co-WIN, is set for a pan-India launch likely by the end of August, aiming to maintain an electronic registry of routine immunisations, official sources said.
- Currently, U-WIN is in pilot mode across all states and Union Territories, except for West Bengal, which is yet to start uploading data, the sources told PTI, adding that it is still under consideration in the state.
- The U-WIN platform captures every vaccination event for pregnant women and children under the Universal Immunization Programme (UIP).
- Minister of Finance Nirmala Sitharaman had announced in the interim Budget for 2024-2025 that U-WIN, along with intensified efforts under Mission Indradhanush, will be rolled out nationwide for managing immunisation.

Rajiv Gandhi Civil Abhaya Hastham Scheme

- Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy has launched the Rajiv Gandhi Civil Abhaya Hastham Scheme Telangana 2024 for the financially unstable students of his state, through which the students of economically weaker General (EWS quota) / BC / SC / ST community of the state who have passed the preliminary UPSC Civil Services Examination 2024 and now they want to prepare for the main examination but are unable to prepare due to financial problems, such students will be provided financial assistance of Rs 01 lakh which will be transferred to their bank account.
- With the launch of this scheme, the students of the state will be encouraged to prepare for UPSC, which will increase the number of civil employees in the state.

Cultural Property Agreement

- On July 26, 2024, the U.S. Ambassador to India Eric Garcetti and Govind Mohan, Secretary, Indian Ministry of Culture, signed a Cultural Property Agreement Cultural Property Agreement between the two countries in the presence of Minister of Culture Gajendra Singh Shekhawat.
- Cultural property agreements prevent the illegal trade of cultural property and simplify the process by which looted and stolen antiquities may be returned to their country of origin.
- The United States has been unwavering in its commitment to protect and preserve cultural heritage worldwide and to restrict trafficking in cultural property.

About

- First and foremost, it’s about justice – returning to India and to Indians, what is rightfully theirs.
- Secondly, it’s about connecting India with the world. Every American and every global citizen deserves to know, see, and experience the culture that we celebrate here today. To know Indian culture is to know human culture.”
- With this agreement, India joins the ranks of 29 existing U.S. bilateral cultural property agreement partners. The U.S.-India Cultural Property Agreement was negotiated by the State Department under the U.S. law implementing the 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property.

One DAE One Subscription

- The ‘One DAE One Subscription’ (ODOS) initiative was launched at Tata Memorial Hospital in Mumbai, bringing together around 60 units of the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) for shared access to research papers and scientific journals.
- DAE signed consortium agreements with Wiley India and Springer Nature Group, enhancing read and publish access for scientists, engineers, students, and researchers.

- This initiative aims to expand access to knowledge and facilitate open access publishing.

India's first sunken museum

- India's first sunken museum was inaugurated on July 29 at the iconic Humayun's Tomb complex in New Delhi. As per reports, Union Culture Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat officially opened the museum, which showcases over 500 artefacts, many of which are on public display for the first time. The museum is inspired by traditional 'baolis' or water tanks, and offers insights into the life of Mughal emperor Humayun and the rich heritage of the Nizamuddin area.
- Developed by the Aga Khan Trust for Culture in collaboration with the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), the museum is a product of 25 years of conservation efforts across the 300-acre site that includes Humayun's Tomb, Sunder Nursery, and Nizamuddin Basti.

India's first integrated agri-export facility - Jawaharlal Nehru Port, Mumbai

- Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal has approved a Rs. 284.19 crore project for the 'Development of an Export-Import and Domestic Agricultural Commodity-Based Processing and Storage Facility' at JNPA, Mumbai, to be executed in a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) mode.
- This facility will address logistics inefficiencies and enhance India's agricultural export and import capabilities.
- The new facility will feature advanced storage

options, including a frozen store, a cold store, and dry warehouses, and will support the export of agricultural products like non-basmati rice and spices, improving logistics and reducing wastage.

Charaideo Moidams - UNESCO World Heritage List

- The Charaideo Moidams, a unique 700-year-old mound-burial system of the Ahom dynasty from Assam, has been added to the UNESCO World Heritage List.

About Charaideo Moidams

- The Charaideo moidams represents the late medieval (13th-19th century CE) mound burial tradition of the Tai Ahom community in Assam.
- Charaideo, more than 400 km east of Guwahati, was the first capital of the Ahom dynasty founded by Chao Lung Sukaphaa in 1253.
- The Ahoms preferred to place the deceased family members at Charaideo where the first king Sukapha was laid to rest.
- The historical chronicles inform that wives, attendants, pet animals and huge quantity of valuables were buried with the departed kings.
- After 18th century, the Ahom rulers adopted the Hindu method of cremation and began entombing the cremated bones and ashes in a Maidam at Charaideo.
- Out of 386 Maidams explored so far, 90 royal burials at Charaideo are the best preserved, representative of and the most complete examples of mound burial tradition of the Ahoms.



Tactical ballistic missile - North Korea

- North Korea has said it successfully tested a new tactical ballistic missile capable of carrying a 4.5-tonne "superlarge warhead", state media reported.
- The test of the Hwasongpho-11 Da-4.5 missile was conducted to verify its flight stability and hit accuracy at the maximum range of 500km (310 miles) and minimum range of 90km (55 miles), Pyongyang's official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) reported.

World Heritage Committee -2024

- The 46th session of the World Heritage Committee will take place in New Delhi, India. The event brings together delegates from across the globe to discuss and collaborate on preserving our shared cultural, natural and mixed heritage. The meeting is a significant step towards fostering global cooperation and ensuring the protection of our World Heritage properties.
- The World Heritage Committee comprises of representatives from 21 States Parties to the World Heritage Convention (1972) elected by the General Assembly of UNESCO. Current members of the World Heritage Committee as on elections in the 24th General Assembly of UNESCO (November 2023), are as follows: Argentina, Belgium, Bulgaria, Greece, India, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Lebanon, Mexico, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Rwanda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Senegal, Türkiye, Ukraine, Viet Nam, and Zambia

Bureau Members

- Chairperson: H.E. Ambassador Mr. Vishal Sharma (India)
- Rapporteur: Mr Martin Ouaklani (Belgium)
- Vice-Chairpersons: Bulgaria, Greece, Qatar, Kenya and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

World's oldest cave art found showing humans and pig

- The oldest example of figurative cave art has been discovered in the Indonesian Island of Sulawesi by Australian and Indonesian scientists.
- The painting of a wild pig and three human-like figures is at least 51,200 years old, more than 5,000 years older than the previous oldest cave art.

Top Expensive Cities 2024

- Hong Kong, Singapore and Zurich are currently the costliest cities for international workers in 2024, according to Mercer's cost-of-living data report. These three cities have maintained their positions in Mercer's rankings from the previous year. On the other hand, the cities with the lowest living costs are Islamabad, Lagos, and Abuja.
- Other Indian cities that feature on the list include Chennai (189), Bengaluru (195), Hyderabad (202), Pune (205) and Kolkata (207).
- Expensive housing markets and increased costs for transportation, goods and services are

among the reasons why the cost of living in the top ranking cities is particularly high, as per the report.

- European cities feature heavily in the top 10 most expensive places to live. In addition to the four Swiss cities, London has joined the top 10 ranking in.

Colombo Security Conclave - Bangladesh as its fifth member state

- The Colombo Security Conclave (CSC), a regional security grouping, officially welcomed Bangladesh as its fifth member state. The announcement came during the 8th Deputy National Security Adviser (DNSA) level meeting, hosted virtually by Mauritius. The existing members – India, Sri Lanka, Mauritius, and the Maldives – warmly received Bangladesh into the fold, while Seychelles participated as an observer state.
- The Colombo Security Conclave was established in 2020, when India, Sri Lanka and the Maldives agreed to expand the scope of their trilateral meeting on maritime cooperation. Mauritius joined the conclave at the fifth meeting of the grouping in Male in March 2022.
- During virtual meeting, member states reviewed the progress of activities outlined in the CSC's Roadmap for 2023-2024. They also discussed decisions taken at previous high-level meetings, including the 7th DNSA level meeting hosted by the Maldives in July 2023 and the 6th NSA level meeting in Mauritius last December.

POPULATION PROJECTIONS 2024

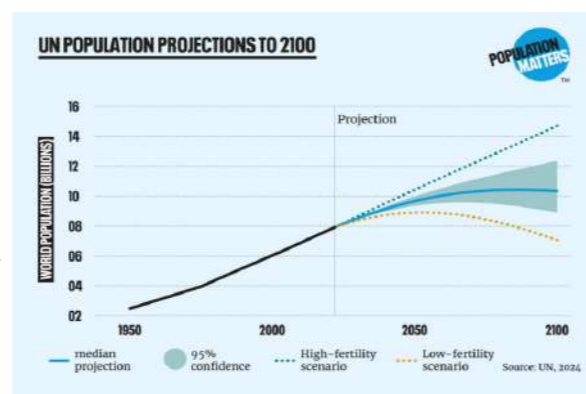
- World Population Prospects 2024 is the most recent set of projections from the United Nations Population Division (UNPD), released every two years. While other organisations also make detailed population projections, the UN's have traditionally been seen as the most authoritative and have a good track record of accuracy on the global scale.
- Its most likely projection (called the medium variant) is for a population of 8.5 billion in 2030, crossing 10 billion by 2061, with the global population peaking at 10.3 billion in the mid-2080s. After peaking, the global population will plateau and then gradually decline.
- The 2024 prospects offer a more optimistic outlook than the previous 2022 prospects, with the peak of global population revised slightly lower.

China makes world's first high-speed carbon fiber train

- China has introduced the world's first passenger train made from carbon fiber, a material known for its lightweight and energy-efficient properties.
- The metro train, dubbed Cetrovo 1.0 or the Carbon Star Rapid Transit, was unveiled in Qingdao, Shandong province.
- Developed by Qingdao Sifang Rolling Stock Company, a subsidiary of China Railway Construction Corporation, the train has completed in-factory testing and is set to begin operation later this year.

Henley Passport Index - 2024

- The Henley Passport Index has released its 2024 ranking of the most powerful passports in the world, placing India at 82nd globally. This ranking allows Indian passport holders to travel to 58 countries without the need for a visa. Compared to last year, when India was ranked 80th, this represents a decline of two positions.
- The Henley Passport Index, which compiles its data from the International Air Transport Association (IATA), serves as a comprehensive resource for assessing global travel privileges. Over the years, India's passport performance has fluctuated significantly. In 2014, India held the 76th position, granting access to 52 countries. The following year saw a sharp drop to 88th place with visa-free access to just 51 nations.



ENVIRONMENT
NEWS

India Becomes First Country To Prepare Entire Fauna Checklist

- India has become the first country in the world to prepare a comprehensive checklist of its entire fauna, covering 104,561 species, Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav announced. He was speaking at the Animal Taxonomy Summit-2024 organized by the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI).
- Yadav also launched the Fauna of India Checklist Portal on the occasion of the 109th Foundation Day of the ZSI in Kolkata. He emphasized that India is a global leader in biodiversity conservation, highlighting that the country's tradition, ethos, and values respect nature and promote biodiversity conservation.
- "India has become the first country in the world to prepare a checklist of its entire fauna, covering 104,561 species, positioning itself as a global leader in biodiversity documentation," Yadav stated. The Fauna of India Checklist Portal is the first comprehensive document detailing the faunal species reported from India.
- "The faunal checklist will be an invaluable reference for taxonomists, researchers, academicians, conservation managers, and policymakers. It comprises 121 checklists of all known taxa covering 36 phyla. Endemic, threatened, and scheduled species have also been included in the list," he added.

Brain-eating amoeba

- A five-year-old girl undergoing treatment for primary amoebic meningoencephalitis (PAM), a rare infection caused by Naegleria fowleri or "brain-eating amoeba", died at the Government Medical College Hospital in Kozhikode.

Primary amoebic meningoencephalitis

- Primary amoebic meningoencephalitis (PAM) is a rare brain infection that is caused by Naegleria fowleri. It is a free-living amoeba or a single-celled living organism.
- Naegleria fowleri lives in warm fresh water and soil around the world, and infects people when it enters the body through the nose. Higher temperatures of up to 115°F (46°C) are conducive to its growth and it can survive for short periods in warm environments.
- The amoeba can be found in warm freshwater, such as lakes and rivers, swimming pools, splash pads, surf parks, or other recreational venues that are poorly maintained or minimally chlorinated.

Symptoms of infection with brain-eating amoeba (Naegleria fowleri)

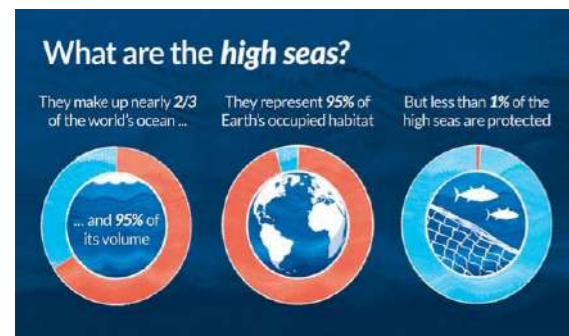
- The signs and symptoms of primary amoebic meningoencephalitis (PAM) come on suddenly and are severe at the start, including:
 - High fever.
 - Very painful headache.
 - Nausea and vomiting.
 - Trembling.
- Symptoms like those of meningitis, including a stiff neck and extreme sensitivity to light (photophobia).
- Mental confusion.
- Coma.
- The fatality rate is higher than 97% even with treatment.

- The incubation period for infection with brain-eating amoeba (*Naegleria fowleri*)
- It takes about two to 15 days after you've been exposed to the amoeba for symptoms to develop.

Global Conclave on Plastics Recycling and Sustainability

- The Global Conclave on Plastics Recycling and Sustainability (GCPRS) – a recycling and sustainability focused trade exhibition under the purview of the All India Plastics Manufacturers' Association (AIPMA) aims to address the critical issues surrounding plastic use, its impact on the environment, and the innovative solutions that can lead to a more sustainable future.
- The exhibition is also a platform for showcasing business opportunities, focusing on the latest trends and innovations in plastic recycling and sustainable practices, offers numerous prospects for trade in various sectors.
- For the last three decades, AIPMA has been the apex body that unites the sprawling number of Indian plastics manufacturers. Now, it has taken on the mantle of organizing the GCPRS – an international exhibition in India for promoting proven recycling and sustainability practices in the Indian plastics industry.
- Currently only 30% of India's 3.4 million tonnes (MT) of plastic waste is recycled.
- In summary, the AIPMA exhibition on plastics recycling and sustainability is a fertile ground

High Seas Treaty



- The Indian government said it would soon sign and ratify the High Seas Treaty, a new international legal architecture for maintaining the ecological health of the oceans. The treaty, negotiated last year, is meant for reducing pollution, and for conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and other marine resources in ocean waters.

- High seas are areas outside the national jurisdiction of any country because of which the treaty is also known as the agreement on Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdictions

(BBNJ). It is formally called the Agreement on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction.

for businesses to grow, innovate, and contribute to a sustainable future while expanding their market presence and forging new partnerships.

IUCN Red List Category changes

- Red List assessments are constantly being compiled and submitted for publication on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™, and the underlying database is constantly expanding and changing as new species are brought in and existing species undergo taxonomic revisions. To ensure a regular flow of assessments on to the website, we endeavour to update The IUCN Red List at least twice each year.
- IUCN often tries to time IUCN Red List updates to coincide with major events in the conservation calendar (e.g., CBD CoP meetings, CITES meetings, the IUCN World Conservation Congress, etc.) to maximise its power to inform international conservation efforts. In years when there are many such events scheduled, The IUCN Red List may be updated more than twice.
- All of the statistics presented in the summary tables are for species only (i.e., they do not include subspecies, varieties or geographically isolated subpopulations or stocks). More detailed analyses of specific taxonomic groups and the results of regional assessment projects can be found in the Resources & Publications section or in the regional pages for Europe, the Mediterranean, the Gulf of Mexico, and the Persian Gulf.

Deep-water dogfish shark - *Squalus hima*

- Scientists from the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) have discovered a new species of deep-water dogfish shark, *Squalus hima*, from the Sakthikulangara fishing harbour in Kerala along the Arabian Sea.

About *Squalus hima*

- *Squalus* is a genus of dogfish sharks in the family Squalidae, commonly known as spurdogs, characterized by smooth dorsal fin spines.
- The new species, *Squalus hima* sp. nov., has been misidentified with *S. mitsukurii* and *S. lalannei* in the past.
- *Squalus hima* differs from other species by the number of precaudal vertebrae, total vertebrae, teeth count, trunk and head heights, fin structure, and fin colour.

Comparison with Other Species

- On the Indian coast, two species of *Squalus* are found from the southwest coast of India.
- The new species, *Squalus hima* n.sp., is very similar to *Squalus lalannei* but differs in many characteristics.
- Species in the *Squalus megalops* group are characterized by an angular short snout, a small mouth almost as wide as the snout, the first dorsal fin origin behind the pectoral fins, and a body without any spots.

Phlogacanthus Sudhansusekharii

- Researchers from the Botanical Survey of India (BSI) have discovered a new plant species from a wildlife sanctuary in Arunachal Pradesh, officials said.
- *Phlogacanthus Sudhansusekharii*, the plant species recently discovered from the Itanagar Wildlife Sanctuary in Papum Pare district, belongs to the family Acanthaceae and the *Phlogacanthus* genus, they said.

- The species is named to honour Dr Sudhansu Sekhar Dash, a scientist at the BSI, for his "significant contribution" to plant and ecological research in the Indian Himalayan region, BSI officials said.
- The genus *Phlogacanthus* comprises 13 species in India and is mainly spread over the northeastern and eastern Himalayan states

India Ranks Third in Global Forest Area Gains

- India gained 2,66,000 hectares of forest area annually from 2010 to 2020, securing the third spot among the top 10 countries with the most significant forest area gains during this period, according to a new report by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO).
- The report, released, said that China led the world with the maximum forest area gain of 1,937,000 hectares, followed by Australia with 4,46,000 hectares, and then India. Other countries in the top 10 include Chile, Vietnam, Turkey, the United States, France, Italy and Romania.
- The UN agency praised India for its efforts in restoring degraded lands and expanding agroforestry through innovative approaches. This includes the development of a new national policy aimed at better supporting agroforestry in the country.

New horned frog species (*Xenophrys apatani*)

- This species of frog is known for living amongst litter of tea leaves and sports a small horns.
- It is dark brown in colour.
- Found in Tale Wildlife Sanctuary in Arunachal Pradesh.
- This newly discovered horned frog has a strong resemblance to the Maason's horned frog, which has a wide distribution in Vietnam and China.




- This species was first identified in 2019 in Arunachal Pradesh but researchers confused with Maason's horned frog despite the large geographical distance between Vietnam and North-East India.
- The horned frog species has been named after Apatani tribe which is found in the region around Tale Wildlife Sanctuary.

About Apatani Tribe

- Apatani tribe predominantly reside in the Lower Subansiri Valley of Arunachal Pradesh, close to the Tale Wildlife Sanctuary.
- The naming of the frog after the Apatani people is a recognition of this tribal group in conserving wild flora and fauna in the region.

Significant aspects about Apatani Tribes:

- Terraced Paddy fields in Ziro Valley with innovative paddy-cum-fish cultivation system.
- Apatani women wear nose pl ugs and face tattoo as a mark of identity within the tribe



TNPSC

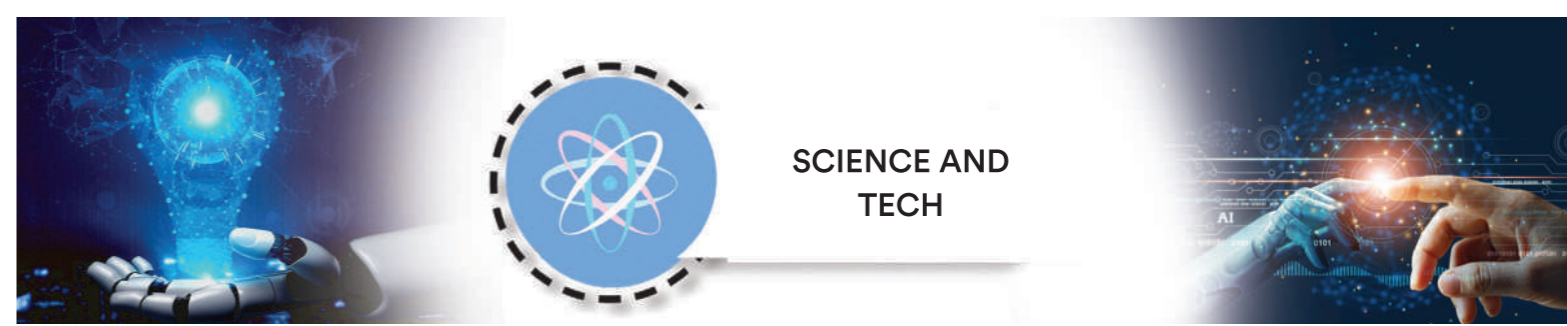
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World's First Brain Implant for Epilepsy Control



- A UK-based teenager has become the first person in the world to be fitted with a brain implant device to help bring his epileptic seizures under control.
- The Deep Brain Stimulation (DBS) device was inserted in his skull which reduced his daytime seizures by 80%.

Epilepsy:

- It is a central nervous system (neurological) disorder in which brain activity becomes abnormal, causing seizures or periods of unusual behaviour, sensations, and sometimes loss of awareness.

Causes:

- It is caused by abnormal electrical activity in the brain.
- The disease has no identifiable cause in nearly 50% of the cases. However, head trauma, tumours in the brain, some infections like meningitis, or even genetics can lead to epilepsy.
- It's more common in young children and older adults. It occurs slightly more in males than in females.

Available Treatment of Epilepsy:

- Anti-seizure Medications: These are the first line of treatment, aiming to control seizure frequency and severity..
- Ketogenic diet: A high-fat, low-carbohydrate

SCIENCE AND TECH

diet can be remarkably effective, particularly in children with medication-resistant epilepsy.

Epilepsy Surgery:

Doctors can carry out brain surgery to remove a portion of the brain where the seizures originate.

Corpus Callosotomy:

In this surgical procedure doctors remove the corpus callosum (a part that connects both halves of the brain) that will not allow abnormal electrical signals to travel from one half of the brain to another, preventing abnormal electrical discharges from spreading and causing seizures.

Aditya-L1, Mission has successfully completed

- India's first solar mission, Aditya-L1, has successfully completed its initial halo orbit around the Sun-Earth L1 point, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) announced. This significant milestone was achieved through a carefully executed station-keeping maneuver.
- Launched on September 2, 2023, Aditya-L1 was inserted into its targeted halo orbit on January 6, 2024. The spacecraft, designed to observe the Sun from the Lagrangian point L1, takes approximately 178 days to complete one revolution around this point.
- ISRO explained that the Aditya-L1 spacecraft, while traveling in its halo orbit, experiences various perturbing forces that can cause deviations from its planned path. To counteract these forces and maintain the intended orbit, the spacecraft has undergone multiple station-keeping maneuvers. The first two maneuvers were conducted on February 22 and June 7, respectively. The latest maneuver, executed on Tuesday, has ensured the spacecraft's seamless transition into the second halo orbit around the L1 point.

- The journey of Aditya-L1 around the Sun-Earth L1 Lagrangian point involves navigating complex dynamics, including modeling the perturbing forces acting on the spacecraft. ISRO's understanding of these forces has been crucial in accurately determining the trajectory and planning precise orbit maneuvers.

SpaceX - First-ever private spacewalk

- "Polaris Dawn," a ground-breaking mission that SpaceX is getting ready for, intends to send astronauts farther from Earth than any previous mission has in more than 50 years. The crew of the mission, which will take off on a Falcon 9 rocket from Florida, could spend up to five days in space, as per the reports of 'The U.S. Sun'.

Historical ascent

- This mission's Dragon spacecraft is scheduled to launch four people to an initial orbital height of 870 miles. This distance is greater than any crewed space trip since the 1966 Gemini 11 mission and the 1972 Apollo 17 mission. The launch date of Polaris Dawn is scheduled for July 31, 2024, at the latest, though it may occur before.
- The crew plans to conduct the first-ever private spacewalk with bespoke SpaceX spacesuits made for the effort, along with a raft of experiments. Polaris Dawn's orbit will take the mission about 435 miles (700 kilometers) above Earth, in the highest-altitude crewed flight since the Apollo moon missions of the 1960s and 1970s. For comparison, the International Space Station orbits at roughly 250 miles (400 km).

Robot suicide

- In a surprising and unsettling turn of events in South Korea, a robot serving as a civil servant at the Gumi City Council was found unresponsive after apparently falling down a two-meter staircase. This incident, described by some as the country's first "robot suicide," has triggered widespread curiosity and concern about the

future of artificial intelligence and robotics.

- In reality, the phrase "robot suicide" exaggerates the situation, as current AI technology lacks self-awareness and the capability for intentional actions akin to human behavior. However, the incident does highlight crucial areas that require attention. It underscores the importance of ongoing research in artificial intelligence to better understand machine behaviour and prevent unforeseen occurrences.

Oceans travel safer - New technology

- The Indian Institute of Technology Bombay (IIT Bombay) and the Indian Register of Shipping (IRS) have just stated that they will collaborate to make the oceans safer by developing a new technology that can forecast where ships will travel. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the two entities to formalize this collaboration.

Goal Of The Collaboration

- The primary purpose of this partnership is to create a tool for predicting the paths of disabled ships and floating goods. The tool's purpose is to make it easier to locate drifting ships and adjust the paths of nearby ships, so avoiding accidents and making the seas safer in general.

Features Of The Proposed Tool

- The anticipated prediction tool will be compatible with the IRS's current Emergency Response System (ERS) software. One essential feature of the program is its ability to generate reports automatically, allowing users to make quick judgments in marine circumstances.

Super-Earth

- A team of international researchers has made a groundbreaking discovery in the search for potentially habitable exoplanets.
- Their study, accepted for publication in The Astrophysical Journal Letters, reveals that LHS 1140 b, an exoplanet located approximately 48 light-years away in the constellation Cetus,

could be a super-Earth ice or water world.

- The findings, led by Université de Montréal, challenge previous assumptions about LHS 1140 b. Initially thought to be a mini-Neptune with a thick hydrogen-rich atmosphere, new data from the James Webb Space Telescope (JWST) suggests it is more likely a rocky or water-rich planet larger than Earth.

Generative AI - India ranks fifth

- India ranks fifth in Generative AI (GenAI) innovations, trailing behind China, the US, Republic of Korea, and Japan. Despite India's position, the country has shown the highest annual growth rate in GenAI patent publications, with significant potential for economic impact.
- Global Rankings and Patent Data
- China: Tops with 38,210 patents.
- United States: Second with 6,276 patents.
- Republic of Korea: Third with 4,155 patents.
- Japan: Fourth with 3,409 patents.
- India: Fifth with 1,350 patents from 2014 to 2023.
- Innovation and Growth in India
- India has overtaken the UK (sixth with 714 patents) and Germany (708). Notable Indian patents include a retail AI assistant solution by RN Chidakashi Technologies (Miko Robotics) and Tata Consultancy Services' GenAI tool for contract lifecycle management. India has the highest annual growth rate in GenAI patent publications at 56%, although it holds only a 3% share of total GenAI patents.

MeDevIS (Medical Devices Information System) - Online platform

- World Health Organization (WHO) has introduced an online platform called MeDevIS (Medical Devices Information System), the first global open access clearing house for

information on medical devices. It is designed to support governments, regulators and users in their decision-making on selection, procurement and use of medical devices for diagnostics, testing and treatment of diseases and health conditions.

- The MeDevIS platform includes 2301 types of medical devices used for a broad-ranging health issues, including reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health, noncommunicable diseases such as cancer, cardiovascular diseases, diabetes as well as infectious diseases such as COVID-19.
- There are over 10 000 different medical devices that are being used for protection, prevention, diagnostics, treatment or rehabilitation of health issues globally. These include multiple simple and complex medical technologies ranging from pulse oximeters, digital thermometers, single-use syringes and medical masks to various diagnostic laboratory tests and other medical equipment including electrocardiograms, endoscopes, all imaging radiology technologies, and technologies used for treatments such as hemodialysis units and defibrillators, implantable prosthesis, cardiac stents and complex radiotherapy equipment.

Extreme solar Particle Event

- Solar particle events (SPEs) are short-lived bursts of high-energy particles from the solar atmosphere and are widely recognized as posing significant economic risks to modern society.
- Most SPEs are relatively weak and have minor impacts on the Earth's environment, but historic records contain much stronger SPEs which have the potential to alter atmospheric chemistry, impacting climate and biological life. The impacts of such strong SPEs would be far more severe when the Earth's protective geomagnetic field is weak, such as during past geomagnetic excursions or reversals.
- Here, we model the impacts of an extreme SPE under different geomagnetic field strengths, focusing on changes in atmospheric chemistry and surface radiation using the atmosphere-

ocean-chemistry-climate model SOCOL3-MPIOM and the radiation transfer model LibRadtran.

India a global chess powerhouse using technology-driven tools - IIT Madras (CESSA)

- IIT Madras Centre of Excellence in Sports Science and Analytics (CESSA) unveiled plans to make India a global chess powerhouse using technology-driven tools.
- The initiative is aimed at enhancing fan engagement, providing solutions for federations to flag cheating and chess training programmes to further grow the sports at the grassroots level, the institute said.
- This was revealed at the Sports Tech Start Up Conclave' being organised in New Delhi by IIT Madras CESSA, a release here said.
- The conclave is sponsored by Dream Sports, Vedanta and SFA Play.
- Addressing the conclave, Sandip Pradhan, Director-General, Sports Authority of India (SAI) said, "we will be very happy to collaborate through IIT Madras CESSA to support products that can be integrated into sports bodies."
- "We would like to be shown the path to support various stakeholders in the sports ecosystem through this forum," he said and added that the entire country was proud of IIT Madras, especially the way it has developed various technologies.

New high efficacy malaria vaccine

- A new high efficacy malaria vaccine co-developed by the Serum Institute of India (SII) and the University of Oxford was officially rolled out on Monday when Cote d'Ivoire in West Africa became the first country to begin administering R21/Matrix-M.
- The vaccine, which was granted World Health Organisation (WHO) approval last year, is said

to have undergone a rigorous regulatory process and clinical assessment and was found to be highly effective and affordable. As a low-dose vaccine, it can be manufactured at speed and scale which is seen as critical to stemming the spread of the mosquito-borne disease.

- That's why we have committed to producing 100 million doses of R21, which will protect millions of lives and alleviate the burden of this deadly disease for future generations.
- In anticipation of the roll-out, SII said it has manufactured 25 million doses of the vaccine and is committed to scaling up to 100 million doses annually. In keeping with its aim of delivering vaccines at scale and low cost, the Pune-headquartered company said it is offering the vaccine at less than \$ 4 per dose.

New Caves on the Moon

- An international team of scientists using data from NASA's LRO (Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter) has discovered evidence of caves beneath the Moon's surface.
- In re-analyzing radar data collected by LRO's Mini-RF (Miniature Radio-Frequency) instrument in 2010, the team found evidence of a cave extending more than 200 feet from the base of a pit. The pit is located 230 miles northeast of the first human landing site on the Moon in Mare Tranquillitatis. The full extent of the cave is unknown, but it could stretch for miles beneath the mare.
- Scientists have suspected for decades that there are subsurface caves on the Moon, just like there are on Earth. Pits that may lead to caves were suggested in images from NASA's lunar orbiters that mapped the Moon's surface before NASA's Apollo human landings. A pit was then confirmed in 2009 from images taken by JAXA's (Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency) Kaguya orbiter, and many have since been found across the Moon through images and thermal measurements of the surface taken by LRO.



SPORTS NEWS

Team India's victorious T20 World Cup 2024 campaign

- Team India's victorious T20 World Cup 2024 campaign earned Rohit Sharma's side a handsome prize of Rs. 125 crore. A total of 42 people travelled to the United States of America and the West Indies for the global cricketing event, including 15 first-team players, support staff, reserves, etc. The prize money of Rs. 125 crores that the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) wouldn't just be distributed among players but also the support staff, reserves, and others who constituted the 42-member contingent. However, the prize money's share varies from role to role.
- The BCCI selection committee also named four reserve players alongside the 15-member squad for the T20 World Cup. They were Rinku Singh and Shubman Gill, Avesh Khan and Khaleel Ahmed. They will also be rewarded with a sum of INR 1 crore each.

Leon Master chess championship - Viswanathan Anand

- Former world chess champion Viswanathan Anand of India has won the Leon Master chess championship for the 10th time. He defeated Jaime Santos Latasa of Spain in the final 3-1 played on 30 June 2024 at Leon in Spain to win the 2024 Leon Masters.
- Five time world champion Viswanathan Anand has previously won the Leon Masters in 1996, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2011, 2016, and 2024.

About Viswanathan Anand

- Viswanathan Anand was born in Chennai, Tamil Nadu on 11 December 1969. He is considered to be the best chess player India has ever produced.

- Soon Anand developed expertise in the sport and became the National Sub-Junior Chess Champion at the age of 14.
- At the age of 15 years he became the youngest Indian to earn the International Masters (IM) norms.
- Anand became India's first chess Grand Master in 1988.
- He has been world chess champion five times. From 2000 to 2002, Anand was the FIDE World Chess Champion.
- In 2007 he became the undisputed World Champion in 2007 and defended his title against Vladimir Kramnik of Russia in 2008.
- He again successfully defended his world title by beating Veselin Topalov of Bulgaria in 2010 and again by beating Boris Gelfand of Israel in 2012.
- He lost to Norway's Magnus Carlsen in the world chess championship in 2013 and 2014.
- Anand, in April 2006 became the fourth player after Garry Kasparov, Vladimir Kramnik and Veselin Topalov, to pass the 2800 Elo rating marks..
- He has been a world number ranked player for 21 months.

Award and Honours for Viswanathan Anand

- Vishwanathan Anand was the first recipient of India's highest sports award instituted by the government of India - Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna. He was conferred the award in 1991-92. The Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna has been renamed as Major Dhyani Chand Khel Ratna Award by the government of India.
- He was awarded India's second highest civilian award, Padma Vibhushan in 2007. He is the first sports person to achieve the Padma Vibhushan award.

New head coach of the Indian men's cricket team

- In a significant development for Indian cricket, former opening batter Gautam Gambhir has been appointed as the new head coach of the Indian men's cricket team. Gambhir, a World Cup winner, will take charge of the upcoming away series against Sri Lanka, which includes 3 ODIs and 3 T20Is starting on July 27, 2024. His appointment comes after Rahul Dravid's successful tenure, during which India clinched the ICC Men's T20 World Cup in 2024 and finished as runners-up in the ICC 50-over World Cup in 2023 and the ICC World Test Championship in 2023.
- Known for his exceptional batting prowess and strategic acumen, Gambhir has left an indelible mark on Indian cricket. His crucial performances in the 2007 ICC World T20 and the 2011 ICC Cricket World Cup cemented his legacy as one of the sport's greats. As the former captain of the Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR), he led the team to two IPL title victories (2012 and 2014) and played a mentoring role in securing their third title in 2024.
- Gambhir, a veteran of 58 Tests and 147 ODIs, in his new role as head coach, will aim to foster a culture of excellence, discipline, and teamwork within the Indian cricket team. His wealth of experience and deep understanding of the game position him ideally to guide the team forward. His focus will be on nurturing young talent and preparing the team for future global challenges.

Chef-de-Mission of India's Paris 2024 Olympics

- Olympic medallist Gagan Narang replaced boxing legend Mary Kom as the Chef-de-Mission of India's Paris 2024 Olympics contingent, the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) announced.
- Gagan Narang is a bronze medal winner in the men's 10m air rifle event at the London 2012 Olympics.
- When it comes to any national contingent taking part in an international multi-discipline event, the Chef-de-Mission is the most important administrative position.
- Chef-de-Missions are tasked with looking after the athletes and their well-being. They are also the point of contact with the various organising committees and the sporting members of the contingent.
- Two-time Olympic medallist badminton ace PV Sindhu and 13-time Commonwealth Games medallist table tennis veteran Sharath Kamal will be the flag-bearers for India at the Paris 2024 Olympics opening ceremony.



Gagan Narang Appointed as India's Chef-De-Mission for Paris Olympics 2024

Sabeera Haris won a bronze - International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) Junior World Cup

- Sabeera Haris won a bronze in the women's trap to help India open their account on competition day two of the ongoing International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) Junior World Cup in Porpetto, Italy
- Sabeera shot 29 out of her first 40 final targets, to finish behind Sofia Gori of Italy who won silver with 39 hits out of the full quota of 50 targets in the final. Carey Garrison of the United States won gold with 40 hits to her name.

BCCI announces ₹8.5 crore to support Indian Athletes in Paris Olympics 2024

- Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) secretary Jay Shah announced that the Cricket administrative body will provide ₹8.5 crore to the India Olympic Association to support Indian athletes at the 2024 Paris Olympic.
- Shah's announcement came the Paris Games are set to begin from July 26. As many as 117 athletes will represent India at the Paris Olympics. There will also be 140-strong support staff, making it a 257-member contingent.

Manu Bhaker - Paris 2024 Olympics

- Indian shooters Manu Bhaker and Sarabjot Singh scripted history with a bronze medal in the 10m air pistol mixed team shooting event at the Paris 2024 Olympics.
- This was India's sixth Olympic medal in shooting and first-ever in a shooting team event.
- The result also made Manu Bhaker the first athlete of independent India to win two medals in one edition of the Olympics.

Olympic Order Award

- Indian shooting legend Abhinav Bindra has been awarded with Olympic Order by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) for his outstanding services to the Olympic Movement.
- The award ceremony will be held during the 142nd IOC Session in Paris on August 10, a day before the closing of the Olympics.
- "It is with great pleasure that I inform you that the IOC Executive Board has decided to award you with the Olympic Order for your outstanding services to the Olympic Movement," IOC President wrote in a letter addressed to Bindra.



- Manu Bhaker became the first Indian woman to win an Olympic medal in shooting.

Swapnil Kusale won the bronze medal

- Indian shooter Swapnil Kusale won the bronze medal in the men's 50m rifle 3 positions final at the Paris 2024 Olympics shooting competition.
- This was India's first-ever Olympic shooting medal in the 50m 3P.



IMPORTANT DAYS

DATE	DAYS	THEME AND OBJECTIVES
July - 1	National Doctor's Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This day encourages society to appreciate and support the medical profession and to advocate for better working conditions and resources for healthcare workers. The theme chosen for National Doctor's Day in 2024 is "Healing Hands, Caring Hearts."
July - 2	World UFO Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unidentified Flying Object is an abbreviation for UFO. Every year on July 2, people all over the planet observe World UFO Day. This extraordinary day is all about studying the Unidentified Flying Objects (UFOs) and bringing people together to discuss possibilities of life beyond Earth
July - 2	World Sports Journalists Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unidentified Flying Object is an abbreviation for UFO. Every year on July 2, people all over the planet observe World UFO Day. This extraordinary day is all about studying the Unidentified Flying Objects (UFOs) and bringing people together to discuss possibilities of life beyond Earth
July -4	International Cooperative Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> International Cooperative Day is an annual celebration of the cooperative movement observed on the first Saturday in July since 1923 by the International Cooperative Alliance. The theme for the 102nd International Cooperative Day is- "Cooperatives Build a Better Future for All."

July - 11	World Population Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> World Population Day is an annual event, observed on July 11 every year, which seeks to raise awareness of global population issues. The event was established by the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme in 1989. The theme for World Population Day 2024 is "Empowering Future Generations: Sustainable Development and Population Trends"
July - 15	World Youth Skills Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This day is observed to focus on vocational training, education and apprenticeships to mitigate the gap between education and employment. It also drives attention to foster innovation, productivity and social inclusion to achieve global development goals. The theme for World Youth Skills Day 2024, "Youth Skills for Peace and Development," underscores the crucial role young people play in peacebuilding and conflict resolution.
July - 17	World Day for International Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> World Day for International Justice, also referred to as Day of International Criminal Justice or International Justice Day, is an international day celebrated throughout the world on July 17 as part of an effort to recognize the emerging system of international criminal justice. The theme for World Day for International Justice 2024 is "Overcoming Barriers and Unleashing Opportunities for Social Justice", which emphasizes the United Nations' recommendations to enhance global solidarity and restore trust in governments.
July - 18	Nelson Mandela International Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nelson Mandela International Day is an annual international day in honour of Nelson Mandela, celebrated each year on 18 July, Mandela's birthday. The day was officially declared by the United Nations in November 2009, with the first UN Mandela Day held on 18 July 2010. This year, the theme to celebrate Nelson Mandela International Day 2024 is 'Combating poverty and inequality is in our hands.'
July - 22	National Flag Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Flag Day is observed on July 22 annually to celebrate the adoption of the tricolour designed by Pingali Vekayya as the flag of India.
July - 26	Kargil Diwas / Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kargil Diwas, also known as Kargil Vijay Diwas, is celebrated annually on July 26 to commemorate India's victory over Pakistan in the Kargil War. "Kargil Vijay Diwas: A tribute to the courage and valor of our armed forces." "Honoring the brave souls who fought for our freedom and dignity." "Their bravery and sacrifice inspire us to serve our nation with pride."

July - 28	World Hepatitis Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> World Hepatitis Day, observed on July 28 every year, aims to raise global awareness of hepatitis — a group of infectious diseases known as hepatitis A, B, C, D, and E — and encourage prevention, diagnosis and treatment. This year's theme is: It's time for action.
July - 28	World Nature Conservation Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> World Nature Conservation Day, observed on July 28th, aimed to promote awareness on the importance of a healthy environment and sustainable resource use. Each zodiac sign has unique traits that can be harnessed for conservation efforts, from clean-ups to advocacy. Promoting Sustainable Practices Balancing human needs with environmental preservation The theme for 2024 is "Connecting People and Plants, Exploring Digital Innovation in Wildlife Conservation." This forward-looking theme highlights the intersection of technology and nature conservation, recognizing the potential of digital tools in advancing environmental protection efforts.
July - 29	International Tiger Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Global Tiger Day, often called International Tiger Day, is an annual celebration to raise awareness for tiger conservation, held annually on 29 July. It was created in 2010 at the Saint Petersburg Tiger Summit in Russia. The theme of the 2024 International Tiger Day is Call for Action. This year's theme highlights the importance of concerted efforts from the global community to save the endangered Tiger species on earth.
July - 30	International Friendship Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Friendship Day is a day in several countries for celebrating friendship. It was initially promoted by the greeting card industry; evidence from social networking sites shows a revival of interest in Friendship Day that may have grown with the spread of the internet, particularly in India, Bangladesh, and Malaysia. The theme for International Friendship Day 2024 is "Embracing Diversity, Fostering Unity", emphasising the connection and understanding between people from different backgrounds and fostering a spirit of unity and cooperation.



World's largest international maritime exercise.

- The Indian Navy's P-8I aircraft has embarked on its participation in RIMPAC 2024, hosted by the US Pacific Fleet in Hawaii. RIMPAC, held biennially, stands as the preeminent international maritime exercise, fostering collaboration and operational cohesion among global naval forces.
- India has joined the Rim of the Pacific Exercise (RIMPAC), hosted by the US Pacific Fleet in Hawaii. RIMPAC, held biennially, is considered "the world's largest international maritime exercise."
- This year's edition brings together armed forces from 29 countries for a five-week training period, aiming to strengthen multilateral relations and improve preparedness to promote "a free and open Indo-Pacific."

Indian army has inducted chip-based 4G mobile base station

- Indian army has inducted the first-ever indigenous chip-based 4G mobile base station, which it procured from Bangalore-based firm Signaltron through the government e-marketplace portal, a top company official said.
- Signaltron founder Himamshu Khasnis told PTI that the chip used in the Sahyadri LTE base stations has been developed by Signalchip.
- Earlier in 2010, Mr Khasnis and his team founded a fabless semiconductor company Signalchip to make chips for 4G and 5G networks.
- "Signaltron has built the entire system indigenously using India's first chips for 4G and 5G networks developed by Signalchip.

DEFENCE NEWS

This is the first time an Indian system running on an Indian chip for complex communication technology has been inducted into the army. Using indigenous chips gives a high degree of control on the security of the system in its operation.

Nomadic Elephant joint military exercise

- As part of the defense cooperation between Mongolia and the Republic of India, the "Nomadic Elephant" joint military exercise is taking place at the Indian Army Training Base in Shillong City, Meghalaya State, India, on July 3-16, 2024.
- At the opening of the military exercise, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Mongolia to the Republic of India Ganbold Dambajav noted that the "Nomadic Elephant" joint military exercise between Mongolia and India is proof of the successful development of the defense cooperation between the two countries and will be significant in exchanging experience, military tactics, and ensuring cohesion during peacekeeping efforts.
- The joint military exercise was first held in Mongolia in 2004, with personnel from the 150th Regiment of the Mongolian Armed Forces. Military personnel from the 150th Regiment of the Mongolian Armed Forces including a number of female officers are participating in this year's exercise.

Exercise MAITREE 2024

- The joint military exercise MAITREE 2024, between the Indian Army and the Royal Thailand Army, is currently underway in Tak Province, Thailand. This exercise marks a significant milestone in fostering military cooperation and

enhancing the operational capabilities of the two nations under the United Nations charter.

- Exercise MAITREE 2024 will continue till 15 July with additional training activities aimed at further enhancing the operational synergy between the Indian Army and the Royal Thailand Army. The exercise underscores the commitment of both nations to collaborate closely in addressing regional security challenges and promoting peace.

Indo-Russian joint venture

- The Indian Army is scheduled to receive another batch of 35,000 AK-203 rifles by May 2025. (Kalashnikov Group/Janes)
- Indo-Russian Rifles Private Limited (IRRPL) – a joint venture between Russia and India – has completed the delivery of 35,000 7.62 mm Kalashnikov AK-203 assault rifles to the Indian Army, Russian defence industrial group Rosstec said on 5 July.
- Delivery of the rifles represents the initial tranche of a larger Indian military requirement for 600,000 AK-203s. IRRPL – headquartered in Korwa, Uttar Pradesh, in northern India – was set up in 2019 to produce the rifles in India.
- “The IRRPL joint venture ... has completed the first phase of the project to manufacture Kalashnikov AK-203 assault rifles in India,” Rosstec quoted Alexander Mikheev, the director general of its subsidiary Rosoboronexport, Russia’s defence export agency, as saying.
- This made it possible to manufacture and supply a batch of 35,000 Kalashnikov assault rifles to the Indian Army within the timeframe agreed upon with the Indian MoD [Ministry of Defence].”

INS Delhi Wins Best Ship of Eastern Fleet 2024

- On July 14, 2024, Visakhapatnam hosted the prestigious Fleet Awards Function to honor the Eastern Fleet’s exceptional operational achievements over the past year. INS Delhi was

recognized as the Best Ship of the Eastern Fleet for its outstanding performance and operational prowess.

- Operational Excellence and Awards
- INS Delhi, a guided-missile frigate of the Delhi class, stood out for its strategic capabilities and mission success. The event also acknowledged INS Kavaratti as the Best Ship among Corvettes, OPVs, and LSTs, while INS Shivalik, INS Sumedha, and INS Sumitra were commended for their spirited contributions to the Sunrise Fleet.

Financial Year highest allocation - Ministry of Defence

- The Ministry of Defence (MoD) has been allocated a record Rs 6.22 lakh crore in the Regular Union Budget for the Financial Year 2024-25, marking the highest allocation among all ministries.
- “While maintaining the allocation made to MoD during interim budget, the Government has made an additional allocation to the tune of Rs 400 crore on innovation in defence through the Acing Development of Innovative Technologies with iDEX (ADITI) scheme,” as per a Ministry of Defence press release.
- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced an additional Rs 400 crore for innovation in defence through the Acing Development of Innovative Technologies with iDEX (ADITI) scheme. This initiative aims to engage start-ups, MSMEs, and innovators in developing indigenous technological solutions for the Indian military.
- The total allocation represents a significant increase of 18.43% over the previous fiscal year, with 27.66% earmarked for capital expenditure. The budget aims to promote self-reliance in defence technology and manufacturing while equipping the Armed Forces with modern weapons and platforms.
- Under the capital head, Rs 1.72 lakh crore has been allocated to the Defence Forces, a 20.33% increase from the actual expenditure in FY 2022-23. The MoD has set aside 75% of the modernization budget, amounting to Rs

1,05,518.43 crore, for procurement through domestic industries.

Exercise Khaan Quest

- Mongolia is hosting the 21st edition of the multinational joint military exercise Khaan Quest.

About the exercise:

- The exercise first started as a bilateral event between the USA and Mongolian Armed Forces in the year 2003.
- Subsequently, from 2006 onwards the exercise graduated to a Multinational Peacekeeping Exercise.
- Exercise KHAAN QUEST provides a platform for the participating countries to share their best practices in Tactics, Techniques and Procedures for the conduct of joint operations.

Commandant the Army Hospital (Research & Referral) - Lt Gen Shankar Narayan

- The Armed Forces Medical Services witnessed a significant change in leadership as Lt Gen Shankar Narayan, NM, VSM, assumed the role of Commandant at the Army Hospital (Research & Referral), widely recognized as the apex hospital of the Indian Armed Forces. This appointment marks a new chapter in the hospital’s illustrious history and promises to bring fresh perspectives to military healthcare.
- The General Officer’s commitment to medical excellence is evident in his impressive array of specializations:

Pediatrics:

- His primary area of expertise, focusing on the health and well-being of children.

Neonatology:

- A post-doctoral sub-specialization from the renowned All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi, equipping him with advanced skills in newborn care.
- Pediatric Liver Transplantation: Specialized training at the world-famous King’s College Hospital, London, adding a critical dimension to his pediatric expertise.
- This combination of specializations positions Lt Gen Narayan as a uniquely qualified leader in military healthcare, particularly in the realm of pediatric and neonatal medicine.

Features of the exercise:

- The exercise is scheduled to be conducted from 27th July to 9th August 2024 at Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia.
- The Indian Army contingent will participate in the 21st edition of the multinational joint military exercise Khaan Quest 2024.
- The last edition of Exercise KHAAN QUEST was also conducted in Mongolia.
- Tactical drills to be practiced during the exercise will include the establishment of static and mobile checkpoints, cordon and search operations, patrolling, evacuation of civilians from hostile areas, counter-improvised explosive device drills, combat first-aid and casualty evacuation.
- The Indian Army contingent comprising 40 personnel is being represented mainly by the Battalion of the Madras Regiment.





AWARDS

Spice Award 2024

- Sopna Kallingal of Kallingal Plantation, Thrissur, received Spice Award 2024, instituted by ICAR-Indian Institute of Spices Research. The award has been given to her for her initiatives in enterprise diversification and integrated crop management strategies, promoting a sustainable spice-based cropping system.

About Spice Award

- Spice Awards is an annual event which has been created to reward Asian and Indian cuisine across Scotland and we are delighted to present the 6th Annual SPICE Awards for 2024. Our independent voting campaign runs annually. We invite communities from across the country to support their favourite local and national businesses by voting for them via our online voting system.

About Sopna Kallingal's achievement

- She received the award on June 2, at a function held in Kozhikode Under the leadership of Ms. Kallingal, Kallingal plantation has a diverse range of crops, embodying a dedication to enterprise diversification and agriculture innovation, according to the award citation. The priority crop in the Kallingal Plantation is nutmeg. However, through an intercropping method, the plantation has optimised space and productivity, integrating nutmeg trees, coconut palms, areca nut and black pepper vines. It has a variety of livestock, including Marwadi horses, native cow, ornamental fish, pigeons, rabbits, ornamental hens and goats, highlighting the effectiveness of mixed farming methods.

National Literary Award

- Tamil literature, renowned author Sivashankari has been selected as the recipient of the highly

esteemed Dr. C. Narayana Reddy National Literary Award. This prestigious accolade celebrates her immense contributions to the rich tapestry of Tamil literary culture and her role in shaping contemporary Indian literature.

Award Details and Presentation

- The Dr. C. Narayana Reddy National Literary Award, presented by the Sushila Narayana Reddy Trust, is one of the most respected honors in the Indian literary community. Sivashankari will receive:
 - A substantial cash prize of ₹5 lakh
 - A commemorative memento
 - A traditional shawl
- The award ceremony is scheduled to take place on July 29, 2024, at the iconic Ravindra Bharati in Hyderabad. This date holds special significance as it coincides with the 93rd birth anniversary celebrations of Dr. C. Narayana Reddy, the renowned Telugu poet and academic after whom the award is named.

Order of Saint Andrew the Apostle Award

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi, was honoured with the Order of Saint Andrew the Apostle, Russia's highest civilian accolade.
- The highest civilian Russian award for the Indian Prime Minister was announced in 2019, for "exceptional services in promoting special and privileged strategic partnership between Russia and India and friendly relations between the Russian and Indian people".

About award

- It is awarded to distinguished government officials, military leaders, and notable figures in science, culture, art, and various sectors of

the economy for their exceptional contributions to Russia. It is also granted to foreign head of states for their outstanding service to the Russian Federation.

Prestigious Agriculture Leadership Awards 2024 - Nagaland

- Nagaland has been adjudged as the best state in Horticulture in the prestigious Agriculture Leadership Awards 2024. The award was given to the state for its outstanding work in introducing innovative programmes and policies for horticulture development, which has positively touched the lives of large number of farmers and the rural people in the State.
- Nagaland's Minister for Women Resource Development & Horticulture, Salhoutuonuo Kruse received the award at the 15th Agriculture Leadership Conclave held in New Delhi.

About Award

- The annual awards were instituted in 2008 for recognizing excellence and leadership roles played by individuals and organizations towards the development of Indian agriculture and bringing about rural prosperity. The awards are given to recognize the efforts making significant contributions in agriculture, livestock, social and rural development.
- Nagaland has achieved G.I registration of three horticultural crops viz., Naga Mircha, Naga Tree Tomato and Naga Sweet Cucumber. The Department of Horticulture has also mobilized the formation of 13 FPCs and so far an area of 6800 Ha were brought under Organic Certification.

Gulbenkian Prize

- In a significant recognition of innovative agricultural practices, the Andhra Pradesh Community Managed Natural Farming (APCNF) initiative has been awarded the prestigious 2024 Gulbenkian Prize for Humanity. This accolade not only highlights India's progress in sustainable farming but also places Andhra Pradesh on the global map for its pioneering efforts in eco-friendly agriculture.

About the Award

- The Gulbenkian Prize for Humanity is an esteemed award instituted by the Portugal-based Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (CGF). It is presented annually to individuals and organizations making substantial contributions to:

- Global food security
- Climate resilience
- Ecosystem protection

IISR Wins Best Technology Award

- Union Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan presented the award during the 96th Foundation Day celebrations of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) in New Delhi.
- The technology titled 'Process for instant soluble turmeric enriched spice flavoured milk powder' was one of the top five technologies under Horticulture Sciences Division of the ICAR.
- The technology had already been commercialised with Malabar Regional Co-operative Milk Producers' Union Limited. Two products –Golden Milk and Golden Milk Mix had been produced and marketed.
- The technology is being developed by K. Anees, Rajeev P., E. Radha, and C. K. Thankamani, all of whom are IISR scientists.
- The awarded technology is unique in its ability to produce an instant, fully soluble spice mix powder for preparing turmeric-flavored milk.

COSPAR Harrie Massey Award

- Indian astrophysicist Prahlad Chandra Agrawal received the prestigious COSPAR Harrie Massey Award 2024 at the 45th COSPAR Scientific Assembly opening ceremony in Busan, South Korea, on July 15. He is the first Indian recipient of the award for space research.
- The award recognises outstanding contributions

to the development of space research, in which a leadership role is of particular importance. Along with a medal and citation, the awardee is honoured by the naming of a Minor Planet (20064 Prahladagrawal).

- Agrawal, 83, was the guiding force and Principal Investigator for the ambitious AstroSat project, India's first dedicated multi-wavelength space telescope, launched on September 28, 2015. Planned as a five-year mission, AstroSat is still producing useful data, most recently resulting in a significant discovery regarding the black hole binary source Swift J1727.8-1623. AstroSat observations have been cited in over 500 research papers, resulting in more than 30 PhD theses.

Lifetime Achievement Award

- In an event marking the International Meet of leading medical professionals from around the globe, Union Minister Jitendra Singh was honoured with the "Lifetime Achievement

Best Agriculture State Award 2024

- Maharashtra wins the Best Agriculture State Award 2024 by the 15th Agriculture Leadership Awards Committee, chaired by Justice P. Sathasivam, for its innovative agricultural and rural initiatives.
- The state launched India's largest bamboo mission, covering 21 lakh hectares, and announced plans for a 1.20 lakh-acre green belt in Nandurbar district, focusing on sustainable development and environmental protection.
- Maharashtra aims to improve irrigation capabilities across approximately 17 lakh hectares through 123 projects, highlighting its commitment to food security and agricultural growth.



Award" for his remarkable contributions to diabetology, diabetes care, and research.

- Singh's achievements also include his role as the Lifetime Patron of the Research Society for the Study of Diabetes in India (RSSDI), the country's largest academic association for diabetologists.
- His extensive contributions include receiving the "Gold Medal for Oration" from JIPMER Puducherry, the "Jamna Devi Gian Devi Award" for journalism, and authoring eight books and three monographs on diabetes.
- His book "Diabetes Made Easy" was featured in the Best-Seller section of the World Book Fair in New Delhi.
- Singh's pioneering work on "Stress Diabetes in Kashmiri Migrants" received acclaim from the World Health Organization (WHO).
- He was instrumental in finalising the "Guidelines for Management of Diabetes in Pregnancy," which have been approved by the WHO.



ECONOMY NEWS

India creates 46.7 million jobs in 2023-24 fiscal: RBI

- India has generated 46.7 million jobs in the fiscal 2023-24 taking the total jobs to 643.3 million, according to the first ever provisional numbers on productivity released by Reserve Bank of India.
- The employment growth rate for the fastest growing major economy stood at 6% in FY24 against 3.2% in the preceding fiscal, the central bank said in a report on measuring productivity on industry level.
- According to data released by the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy last week, the unemployment rate rose to an eight-month high of 9.2% in June 2024, up from 7% in the previous month. It had earlier estimated that India's unemployment rate was 8% in FY24 against 7.7% in the preceding fiscal.
- India recorded a 8.2% GDP growth in FY24, exceeding estimates while RBI projected GDP to grow by 7.2% in FY25.

Bilateral trade to \$100 billion by 2030 - India & Russia

- India and Russia are looking to raise bilateral trade to \$100 billion by 2030, balance the lopsided trade, eliminate non-tariff trade barriers, and explore the possibility of a Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU)-India Free Trade Area.
- A joint statement issued after multiple rounds of talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Russian President Vladimir Putin also announced that both nations plan to establish a bilateral settlement system using national currencies and introduce digital financial instruments into mutual settlements.
- Economic collaboration, especially in energy,

trade, manufacturing, and fertilisers, dominated the agenda during Modi's two-day trip to Moscow. Both sides have called for "increased supplies of goods from India to achieve balanced bilateral trade" and "reinvigoration of investment within the framework of the special investment regimes".

Angel tax scrapped

- On July 23, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced that the "angel tax" will be scrapped, bringing cheer among startups and their investors. Here, we explain how the draconian law came into being and what its removal means for the startup ecosystem.

The origins of angel tax

- The idea of angel tax was first introduced in the 2012 Union Budget by then Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee. The primary objective was to check money laundering practices through investments in startups and catch bogus firms after advent of such cases.

What is angel tax?

- Angel Tax, formally known as Section 56 (2) (vii b) of the Income Tax Act, is the tax imposed on funds raised by startups from angel investors.
- However, this implies only to funds that exceed the fair market value of the company.

Frist NDA 3.0 Budget 2024

- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's Budget 2024 speech had good news for taxpayers opting for the new regime. The standard deduction in the new tax regime has been increased from ₹ 50,000 to ₹ 75,000.
- This Budget has also revised tax slabs under the new regime. Annual income up to ₹ 3 lakh will now attract zero tax, income in the ₹ 3 lakh-7

lakh bracket will be taxed at 5 per cent. The rate will be 10 per cent for income between ₹ 7 lakh -10 lakh, 15 per cent for ₹ 10 lakh - 12 lakh and 20 per cent for ₹ 12 lakh - ₹ 15 lakh. Annual income over ₹ 15 lakh will attract 30 per cent tax.

- Ms Sitharaman said salaried employees can save up to ₹ 17,500 in income tax under the new tax slabs. The Budget has made no changes to the old tax regime, which a large section of professionals opts for.
- Budget 2024 had a big announcement for professionals entering the workforce. Ms Sitharaman announced that the Centre will give one-month's salary to those joining their first job. This amount will be provided as a Provident Fund contribution. The move, she said, will benefit 210 lakh youngsters.
- The Finance Minister said this amount would be provided through the Direct Benefit Transfer route. First-time employees registered with EPFO will get a month's salary -- up to ₹ 15,000 -- in their PF accounts in three instalments. Ms Sitharaman also announced reimbursement to employers up to ₹ 3,000 per month for two years towards their EPFO contribution for each additional employee.
- Budget 2024 also proposed to raise the limit of exemption of capital gains on some financial assets to ₹ 1.25 lakh per year. The Finance

Minister announced that angel tax will be abolished for all classes of investors.

- The first Budget of Modi 3.0 earmarked key projects for two states -- Bihar and Andhra Pradesh. This comes after Nitish Kumar's JDU and N Chandrababu Naidu's TDP backed the BJP, which fell short of majority in this election, to cobble up the required numbers.
- Ms Sitharaman announced plans to develop expressways connecting Patna and Purnea, and Buxar and Bhagalpur and another connecting Bodhgaya, Rajgir, Vaishali and Darbanga. Additionally, Bihar will get a two-lane bridge over Ganga in Buxar district. The Finance Minister also announced a 2,400 MW power plant at Pirpainti in Bhagalpur.
- Bihar is also part of the Purvodaya initiative announced by Modi 3.0 to step up development in the eastern part of the country. "We will formulate Purvodaya for all-round development of Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Odisha, and Andhra Pradesh," the Finance Minister said.
- In Andhra Pradesh, where the NDA swept the recently held Assembly polls, infrastructure projects in Railways and roadways will be prioritised, the minister announced. "Recognising Andhra Pradesh's need for capital, to facilitate support through multilateral development agencies, ₹ 15,000 crore to be arranged for Andhra Pradesh for development of capital," she said.



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