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NATIONAL

HIGH COURT STRUCK DOWN BIHAR 65% QUOTA RULE -

- Recently, the Patna High Court struck down the Bihar government's decision to increase the reservation quota from 50% to 65% for Backward Classes (BC), Extremely Backward Classes (EBC), Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST) in educational institutions and government jobs.
- This move by the Bihar government has raised important questions about the legal limits on reservation policies in India.
- In November 2023, the Bihar government issued gazette notifications to raise the quota for deprived castes from 50% to 65%. This decision was taken following a caste-based survey report, which showed the need for increased representation of BC, EBC, SC and ST communities.
- The Bihar Assembly unanimously passed the Bihar Reservation Amendment Bill in November 2023 to implement this 65% quota.
- A Public Interest Litigation (PIL) was filed challenging the Bihar government's decision to increase reservations beyond 50%.
- The Patna High Court ruled that the 65% quota violated the 50% limit set by the Supreme Court in the Indira Sawhney case (1992). The court argued that the state government's decision was not based on "adequate representation" in government jobs, but on the proportional population of these communities.
- The court also noted that together with the 10% Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) quota, the bill has pushed total reservation to 75%, which is unconstitutional.
- Bihar has the lowest per capita income in the country (below USD 800 per year), which is 30% of the



national average. It has the highest fertility rate and only 12% of the population lives in urban areas, compared to the national average of 35%.

THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA RECENTLY ADDRESSED THE JOINT SITTING OF BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT. IT WAS THE FIRST TIME SHE ADDRESSED THE NEWLY ELECTED 18TH LOKSABHA -

- A joint sitting involves both houses of Parliament (Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha) meeting together.

There are two main types of joint sittings in the Indian parliamentary system.

- First is the presidential address under Article 87 and
- Second is the resolution of legislative deadlocks under Article 108.
- The President addresses the Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha at the beginning of the first session after each general election. The President also addresses both Houses at the beginning of the first session of each year.
- The Constitution (First Amendment) Act of 1951 modified Article 87 as follows: In clause (1), the phrase "every session" was replaced with "the first session after each general election to the House of the People and at the commencement of the first session of each year."



KERALA ASSEMBLY SEEKS RENAMING STATE TO 'KERALAM' -

- On June 24, the Kerala Assembly passed a resolution asking the Indian Central Government to change the name of the state in the Constitution from "Kerala" to "Keralam." This was the second time in a year that the resolution was passed unanimously. This plan, which is being led by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, focuses on making the constitutional name match the word "Keralam" in Malayalam.

- There are differences between the Malayalam name “Keralam” and the English name “Kerala” used in the Constitution’s first Schedule, which was brought up by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan in the Kerala Assembly.



- Article 3 of the Constitution is used to ask for a change in the move. The similar resolution from last year had to be looked at again and changed because it didn’t include enough requests for changes to the Eighth Schedule, which deals with official languages.
- The name “Kerala” has historical and language meanings. It was first used in writing in 257 BCE by Emperor Ashoka, who called it “Keralaputra.” German scholar Dr. Herman Gundert connects the word to “Keram,” which refers to the area between Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. The word “cher” in this name comes from the old language Old Tamil and means “to join.”
- In the 1920s, the Madras Presidency brought together parts of Travancore, Cochin, and the Malabar area to make a single Malayalam-speaking state. After India got its freedom, on November 1, 1956, the State Reorganisation Commission, which was led by Syed Fazl Ali, suggested that Kerala be formed based on linguistic unity, which meant that more Malayalam-speaking areas were added while some Tamil-speaking areas were left out.
- The goal of changing the name of the state to “Keralam” is to better reflect its language, culture, and history within the limits of the country’s law.

FSSAI CRACKS DOWN ON MISLEADING -

- Recently, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has directed manufacturers (Food Business Operators (FBOs) to remove "100% fruit juice" claims from products made with reconstituted juice.
- Reconstituted juices are made by adding water back to concentrated fruit juice. FSSAI aims to prevent

misleading consumers who might believe they're getting pure, undiluted juice.

Key Regulations-

- **No "100% Juice" Claims-** As per Advertising and Claims Regulations (2018), such claims are not allowed for any fruit juice product.
- **"Reconstituted" Labeling-** Food Products Standards & Additives Regulations (2011) mandates that reconstituted juices must clearly state "reconstituted" in the ingredient list.
- **Sweetener Transparency-** Juices with added nutritive sweeteners exceeding 15 gm/kg must be labeled "Sweetened Juice."



FIRST ALL-INDIA SURVEY ON AYUSH -

- Recently, the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) released the findings of a national survey on Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy (AYUSH) systems of medicine.
- This is the first-ever all-India AYUSH survey conducted by the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) from July 2022 to June 2023, that provides valuable insights into the utilisation patterns of these traditional healthcare practices within the Indian population.
- This survey covered the entire Indian Union, excluding a few inaccessible villages in the Andaman & Nicobar Islands.
- In rural India, around 95% of males and females (aged 15 and above) are knowledgeable about AYUSH, while in urban areas the awareness rate is around 96%.
- About 79% of households in rural India and about 80% in urban India have at least one member aware about medicinal plants and home medicines.



- Around 24% of the households (in both rural and urban India) have at least one member aware about folk medicine or local health tradition.

Use of AYUSH-

- Around 53% of people in urban areas and 46% in rural areas have used AYUSH for prevention or treatment of ailments, during the last 365 days.
- The average expenditure per person for prevention or treatment of ailments using AYUSH stood at Rs. 574/person in urban areas and Rs. 472/person in rural areas.

THE 1984 LOK SABHA ELECTION, ONLY TIME A PARTY WON 400+ SEATS -

- The 1984 Lok Sabha election stands out as a momentous event, etched in history as the only time a single party secured an overwhelming majority of over 400 seats. This remarkable feat was achieved by the Indian National Congress party, led by the charismatic Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, in the wake of a profound national tragedy – the assassination of his mother and former Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi.
- The year 1984 was a tumultuous one for India. The country was grappling with the aftermath of Operation Blue Star, a military operation ordered by Indira Gandhi to flush out Khalistani militants from the Golden Temple in Amritsar. Tensions were high, and the nation was still reeling from the shock of Indira Gandhi's assassination by her own Sikh bodyguards on October 31, 1984.
- On December 24, 1984, the results of the 8th Lok Sabha election were announced, and the Indian National Congress emerged as the undisputed victor. The party secured an astounding 415 out of 542 seats, a feat unprecedented in Indian electoral history. This landslide victory was a testament to the public's trust in Rajiv Gandhi's leadership and the Congress party's ability to navigate the country through challenging times.

**INDIA TO IMPORT WHEAT AFTER 6 YEARS -**

- India, the world's second-largest wheat producer, plans to begin wheat imports after a six-year gap to replenish depleted reserves and control rising prices, driven by three consecutive years of disappointing crops.
- India is likely to remove a 40% import tax on wheat, allowing private traders to purchase from countries like Russia, though in small quantities.
- India's wheat production has declined in the last 3 years due to unfavourable weather conditions, leading to a sharp drop in wheat output.
- The government estimates this year's wheat crop to be 6.25% lower than the previous year's (2023) record production of 112 million metric tons.

**ARTICLE 361: IMMUNITY SHIELD UNTIL GOVERNOR IN OFFICE -**

- A complaint alleging sexual harassment has been lodged against West Bengal Governor.
- However, Constitutional immunity prevents the police from identifying the Governor as a suspect or conducting an investigation into the matter.
- Under Article 361, the Constitution establishes a total prohibition on prosecuting the Governor. The police can take action only after the Governor ceases to be in office, which is when either the Governor resigns or he no longer enjoys the confidence of the President.
- It states that the President and the Governors shall not be answerable to any court for the exercise and performance of the powers and duties of his office or for any act done by him in the exercise and performance of those powers and duties.
- No process for the arrest or imprisonment of the President, or the Governor of a State, shall be issued from any court during his term of office.



- **Rameshwar Prasad vs Union of India, 2006-** In this case, the Supreme Court outlined the immunity enjoyed by the Governor even on allegations of personal malafides.
- **Demolition of the Babri Masjid Case-** In 2017, the Supreme Court allowed fresh charges of criminal conspiracy against UP Chief Minister Kalyan Singh in the 1992 demolition of the Babri Masjid. However, the trial did not take place since he was then the Governor of Rajasthan.
- The court held that, being the Governor of Rajasthan, **he is entitled to immunity under Article 361 of the Constitution as long as he remains Governor of Rajasthan.** The Court of Sessions will frame charges and move against him as soon as he ceases to be Governor.

INDIA'S COMMITMENT TO DEBRIS-FREE SPACE MISSIONS BY 2030 -

- **At the 42nd Inter-Agency Space Debris Coordination Committee (IADC) annual meet, ISRO Chairman S. Somanath announced India's pledge to achieve debris-free space missions by 2030.** This commitment aligns with global efforts to ensure the sustainability of space exploration.



- Chairman Somanath highlighted ISRO's comprehensive plan for space exploration and utilization, emphasizing the importance of sustainability in future missions.
- **India aims to achieve debris-free space missions by involving all space actors, both governmental and non-governmental, by 2030.** This initiative underscores the nation's commitment to long-term space sustainability.

- **With 54 spacecraft in orbit and numerous non-functional objects,** ISRO has been actively taking measures to dispose of or remove space debris. Efforts include deorbiting spacecraft once their mission is complete and designing systems to minimize debris creation.
- ISRO emphasizes the importance of developing skills for future explorations beyond Earth's orbit, including lunar and planetary missions. Additionally, plans for India's own space station, 'Bharatiya Antriksh Station,' by 2035 are underway, with a focus on ensuring the sustainability of space in collaboration with other space actors.

KATCHATHEEVU ISLAND ISSUE -

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi lashed out at the Congress over the controversial Katchatheevu island that was handed over to Sri Lanka by former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in 1974.**
- The debate around the Katchatheevu Island is currently hotting up in the Tamil Nadu politics and beyond ahead of the Lok Sabha Election.



- Katchatheevu is a 285-acre uninhabited speck in the Palk Strait, between India and Sri Lanka, an island located about 14 nautical miles off Rameswaram, India.
- **In 1974, Prime Ministers Indira Gandhi of India and Sirima R.D. Bandaranaike of Sri Lanka signed an agreement that recognized Katchatheevu as part of Sri Lanka's territory,** resulting in a change of ownership.

INDIA SECURES SITTWE PORT AGREEMENT -

- **India has recently secured rights to operate the Sittwe port in Myanmar after Chabahar Port in Iran.**
- The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has given the green light to the proposal for India Ports Global (IPGL) to manage all operations at the port situated on the Kaladan River.

- **Kaladan River is a river in eastern Mizoram State of India it also flows through Chin and Rakhine State of western Myanmar.**
- In India, the Kaladan River is called the Chhimtuipui River. It acts as the border between India and Burma (Myanmar) .

THE GOVERNMENT HAS DECIDED TO CONSTRUCT A FENCE ALONG THE ENTIRE 1643-KILOMETER-LONG INDO-MYANMAR BORDER TO FACILITATE BETTER SURVEILLANCE -

- Two pilot projects of fencing through a Hybrid Surveillance System (HSS) are under execution.
- The fencing will be completed in the next four-and-half years. Anyone coming through will have to get a visa.
- The FMR is a mutually agreed arrangement between the two countries that allows tribes living along the border to travel up to 16 km inside the other country without a visa.
- Under the FMR, every member of the hill tribes, who is either a citizen of India or a citizen of Myanmar and who is resident of any area within 16 km on either side of the border can cross over on production of a border pass with one-year validity and can stay up to two weeks.
- India currently has more than 15000 km of land borders and more than 7500 km of maritime



borders. It shares borders with seven countries including Afghanistan, Pakistan, China, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Myanmar.

SUDARSHAN SETU : INDIA'S LONGEST CABLE-STAYED BRIDGE -

- Recently, PM inaugurated Sudarshan Setu connecting Okha mainland and Beyt Dwarka island in Gujarat. It is a Signature Bridge is technically a sea-link, a first for Gujarat.
- Its a 4 lane bridge spans 2.32 km, with a central double span cable-stayed portion measuring 900 meters and a 2.45 km long approach road. Therefore its total length is 4,772 meters.
- Project cost : Rs 978 crore, was funded by the Union government. Bridge is a part of National Highway 51 that runs along the sea coast of Saurashtra.
- Geographical Location : Located off Gujarat, situated in the Gulf of Kutch, the Okha town of Devbhumi Dwarka district of mainland Gujarat to Bet Dwarka. (After the Union Territory of Diu (40sqKm), located at Una coast in Gir Somnath, Bet Dwarka (36sqKm) is the second largest island off Gujarat coast.)
- Its pillars are decorated with verses of Bhagavad Gita and images of Lord Krishna. It also has solar panels installed on the upper portions of the footpath, generating one megawatt of electricity.



INTERNATIONAL

RECENTLY, THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE TREATY OF VERSAILLES WAS OBSERVED WHICH WAS SIGNED ON 28TH JUNE 1919, AT THE PALACE OF VERSAILLES, IN PARIS, FRANCE -

- It was one of the treaties that officially ended five years of conflict known as the World War I (1914-18). The Treaty mentioned the conditions of peace



- between Germany and the victorious Allies, led by the United States, France, and the United Kingdom.
- The war guilt clause of the treaty forced Germany and other Central Powers (like Austria-Hungary) to take all the blame for World War I.
- **This led to the loss of territories, reduction in military forces, and reparation payments to Allied powers by Germany.** Disintegration of the German population was later used by Hitler to justify German aggression and expansion.
- **It further posed severe risks to the entire European economy which led to the Great Depression of 1929.** The treaty caused resentment among Germans who saw it as a dictated peace and is considered one of the reasons for World War II.
- Also, the treaty led to the formation of the League of Nations.

RELOS AND INDIA-RUSSIA RELATION -

- Recently, the **India-Russia mutual logistics agreement named the Reciprocal Exchange of Logistics Agreement (RELOS)** is now ready for finalisation. It will facilitate military cooperation between India and Russia, including joint exercises, training, and disaster relief efforts.
- **The Reciprocal Exchange of Logistics Agreement (RELOS) between India and Russia is a significant**

administrative arrangement that will enhance military cooperation between the two nations.

- This agreement is designed to streamline military logistics support, making joint operations and long-distance missions more efficient and cost-effective for both India and Russia.



- **It will facilitate the replenishment of essential supplies (fuel, rations, spare parts)** thus enabling continuous, uninterrupted military presence in crucial regions.
- It will provide berthing facilities for troops, warships, and aircraft. It will be applicable during both wartime and peacetime missions.
- **It will enable smoother utilisation of the host nation's existing logistics networks.** Enhances ability to respond swiftly to crises.
- It will provide a strategic edge to the military operations of both countries thereby reducing overall mission costs.
- Enhances India's maritime outreach and influence in strategically important regions. Boosts Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) and shared logistics facilities could enable better information exchange about maritime activities, enhancing both countries' situational awareness.

Balancing Quad Agreements-

- RELOS balances India's logistics agreements with Quad countries and Russia's non-Quad stance.
- Strengthens Russian presence in Indo-Pacific without Quad involvement.
- It Counterbalances US influence and China's regional role for both India and Russia.

UKRAINE "PATH TO PEACE" SUMMIT -

- Recently, the two-day Summit on Peace in Ukraine titled "Path To Peace Summit", held in Switzerland, ended on 16th June 2024. Through this summit, participants hoped for an end to the war between Russia and Ukraine.

What were the Key Highlights of the Summit-

- **Call for Territorial Integrity of Ukraine-** 80 countries have called for the "territorial integrity" of Ukraine to be the basis for any peace agreement to end the Russia-Ukraine war.
- **They supported the final joint communiqué that outlined a "Path to Peace" and focused on 3 agendas-** nuclear safety, global food security, and humanitarian issues.
- **Release of Prisoners of War-** The declaration emphasised the release of all prisoners of war and the return of all deported and unlawfully displaced Ukrainian children and civilians.
- **Absence of Russia from Peace Summit-** Russia, the primary party to the conflict, was not invited by the host, Switzerland, due to the International Criminal Court's indictment of President Vladimir Putin.
- **India's Refusal to Endorse Ukraine Meet Statement-** India along with Saudi Arabia, South Africa, and the United Arab Emirates refused to sign onto the final document released at the conclusion of a Peace Summit. India emphasised that only proposals acceptable to both Russia and Ukraine can lead to peace.

What is India's Stand in the Russia-Ukraine Conflict-

- Commitment to Non-Alignment
- Preserving Strategic Partnership with Russia
- Humanitarian Assistance and Diplomatic Efforts
- Balancing Ties with the West

FAR-RIGHT SWING IN EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ELECTIONS -

- In the recent European Parliament elections, right-wing and far-right parties gained ground while left-leaning and liberal parties faced losses.

- **Major Political Groups:** Members of European Parliament align with Europe-wide political groups based on shared ideological beliefs.
- Major groups include the European People's Party (EPP), Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (S&D), Renew Europe, Greens/European Free Alliance (Greens/EFA), European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR), Identity and Democracy (ID), and the Left Group (GUE/NGL).
- In the latest elections, although the EPP remained the largest group, **there was a notable rise in support for right-wing and far-right parties.**
- The European Parliament (EP) is the only directly elected body of the EU, representing the citizens of its member states.

**WHAT WILL BE DISCUSSED AT G7 SUMMIT ? -**

- **The G7 Leaders' Summit will take place in Italy's Apulia region from June 13th to 15th.** This is because Italy will be leading the group in 2023.
- **The G7 countries are Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States.** During times of global change, the group faces important problems such as geopolitical strife and major issues such as climate change and the effects of technology.



- Over the years, the G7 has moved its attention from economic policies to bigger problems facing the world. However, as the world economy changes, some are

wondering if the G7 is still necessary. In contrast to the growth of economies like China and India, its share of world GDP has gone down. People have asked for a more fair grouping than the G7, maybe something like the G20, which was created during the 2008 financial crisis because it includes more people.

- **Regulation of New Technologies:** The summit will also talk about how to regulate new technologies so that they help the world grow in a good way. This includes making plans for how to handle how new technologies affect people's lives and businesses.
- **Role of the G7:** The G7 continues to be important in shaping international policies and tackling global problems, even though its members and the way the global economy is changing are criticized. This shows that it is still relevant in the international arena.
- **The G7 started with a very important meeting in Paris in 1973. The purpose of that meeting was to deal with the oil crisis, inflation, and the end of the Bretton Woods system, which set the value of the US dollar against gold.** This meeting led to the creation of a forum for the world's major industrial democracies to work together on economic strategy. In 1975, six countries met in Rambouillet, France, for the first official G7 meeting. In 1976, Canada joined, and starting in 1977, the European Union did too.

INDIA'S REFUSAL TO SIGN UKRAINE DECLARATION AT SWISS CONFERENCE -

- **At the recent Summit on Peace in Ukraine hosted by Switzerland, India opted not to sign the final communique alongside several other nations.** This decision stemmed from India's strategic relationship with Russia, its primary defense supplier, and Moscow's absence from the summit, which India deemed crucial for any lasting peace agreement involving Ukraine.
- **India's abstention was rooted in its belief that sustainable peace in Ukraine requires a solution acceptable to all parties involved, including Russia.** With Russia absent from the summit, India expressed reservations about endorsing a communique that didn't

reflect Moscow's perspective, crucial for achieving lasting stability in the region.

- **Represented by Secretary (West) Pavan Kapoor from the Ministry of External Affairs, India emphasized the need for dialogue and diplomacy involving all stakeholders to resolve the Ukraine conflict effectively.** This stance underscored India's cautious diplomatic approach amidst the ongoing war and its broader geopolitical considerations.



SPAIN BECOMES 99TH MEMBER OF INTERNATIONAL SOLAR ALLIANCE -

- **Spain has officially become the 99th member of the International Solar Alliance (ISA).** The Instrument of Ratification was handed over by Spain's Ambassador to India, José María Ridao Domínguez, to Abhishek Singh, Joint Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), during a meeting in New Delhi. MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal confirmed the development in a post on X.
- **The ISA, launched by India and France during COP21 in Paris, aims to implement the Paris Climate Agreement through extensive deployment of solar energy.** It serves as a collaborative platform for member countries to increase the use of solar energy technologies, enhance energy access, ensure energy security, and drive the global energy transition.
- **As of now, 116 countries are signatories to the ISA Framework Agreement, with 94 having completed the ratification process.** Spain's inclusion follows Panama, which ratified the agreement in March, becoming the 97th member.
- **The Sixth Assembly of the ISA was held in New Delhi from October 30 to November 2, 2023, marking another**



significant event in the organization's ongoing efforts to promote solar energy globally.

IRELAND, NORWAY AND SPAIN HAS RECENTLY ANNOUNCED THAT THEY WILL FORMALLY RECOGNISE THE STATE OF PALESTINE -

- The announcement came even as reports emerged of Israel pushing its way further into Rafah in southern Gaza. Israel reacted furiously to the announcements by recalling its Ambassadors to the three countries.
- The conflict traces its roots back to the 1917 Balfour Declaration, where the British Foreign Secretary Arthur James Balfour expressed official support for the establishment of a Jewish "national home" in Palestine.
- In 1948, Britain, unable to quell Arab-Jewish violence, withdrew its forces from Palestine, leaving the responsibility of resolving competing claims to the newly formed United Nations.
- The UN proposed a partition plan to establish independent Jewish and Arab states in Palestine, but it was not accepted by most Arab nations.
- Israel's declaration of independence in 1948 led to attacks by surrounding Arab states. Israel ended up controlling about 50% more territory than originally envisioned by the UN partition plan.
- The UN partition plan saw Jordan control the West Bank and Jerusalem's holy sites, while Egypt controlled the Gaza Strip. However, it didn't resolve the Palestinian crisis, resulting in the formation of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) in 1964.



- **Founded with the goal of freeing Palestine from Israeli rule and Jewish dominance, establishing Muslim Brotherhood dominance in the Arab world.** The United Nations granted PLO observer status in 1975, recognizing Palestinians' right to self-determination.
- **Six-Day War (1967)-** Israeli forces seized the Golan Heights from Syria, the West Bank and East Jerusalem from Jordan, and the Sinai Peninsula and Gaza Strip from Egypt.
- **Camp David Accords (1978)-** The "Framework for Peace in the Middle East," brokered by the U.S.
- **In 1987, Hamas, a violent offshoot of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood, was founded.** It sought to fulfill its agenda through violent jihad and is regarded as a terrorist organization by the U.S. government.
- **In 2006, Hamas won the Palestinian Authority's legislative elections, leading to its control of Gaza and the expulsion of Fatah in 2007,** resulting in a geographical split in the Palestinian movement.
- **First Intifada (1987)-** The First Intifada (Palestinian Uprising) began in 1987 as tensions in the occupied territories of the West Bank and Gaza reached a boiling point. This uprising evolved into a small war between Palestinian militants and the Israeli army.
- **Oslo Accords (1993)-** In 1993, Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) signed the Oslo Accords. The agreements led to both parties officially recognizing each other and renouncing the use of violence.
- **In 2005, Israel initiated a unilateral withdrawal of Jewish settlements from Gaza,** while maintaining tight control over all border crossings, effectively imposing a blockade on the region.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

SPACEX WINS \$843-MILLION NASA CONTRACT TO DESTROY THE INTERNATIONAL SPACE STATION -

- NASA has awarded SpaceX an \$843 million contract to construct a spacecraft aimed at safely deorbiting the International Space Station (ISS) by around 2030. While SpaceX will build the vehicle, NASA will oversee its operation and take ownership of the craft once completed.
- According to the space agency's plans, SpaceX's specially designed deorbit vehicle will drag the football field-size ISS back to Earth sometime after the end of its operational life in 2030. **The ISS will smash into our planet's atmosphere at a speed of more than 17,000 mph (27,500 km/h) before landing in a crashdown spot in the ocean.**



- The floating laboratory's first parts were launched in 1998, and it has been occupied by astronauts from the U.S., Japan, Russia, Canada and Europe since 2000, who have completed more than 3,300 scientific experiments in a close orbit above Earth.
- **But the space station is showing its age: technical faults and leaks continue to cause issues for crews, and the contracts between the five participating national space agencies, which marked an era of global cooperation in space following the end of the Cold War, will end by 2030.**

THE INDIAN SPACE RESEARCH ORGANISATION (ISRO) SUCCESSFULLY DEMONSTRATED THE LANDING OF THE PUSHPAK REUSABLE LAUNCH VEHICLE (RLV LEX-03) FOR THE THIRD TIME -

- The **third demonstration was to test the vehicle in more challenging conditions**—when there is a higher degree of deviation from the intended orbit while the launch vehicle

comes down and when there are more severe wind conditions.



- **Pushpak reused the winged body and flight systems from the second experiment without any modifications.**
- **The vehicle uses multiple sensors such as inertial sensor, radar altimeter, pseudolite system (a ground-based positioning system), as well as the NavIC satellite-based positioning system.**
- To bring down launch costs and to remain competitive, the reusable launch vehicle is designed to take satellites up to space and return and land on a runway like an aeroplane.

US, INDIA TO LAUNCH NASA-ISRO SYNTHETIC APERTURE RADAR TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE -

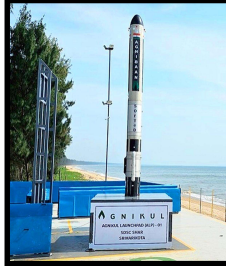
- **India and the United States (US) are preparing to jointly launch NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar to combat climate change and other global challenges.** Announced the White House as National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan is on a two-day visit to New Delhi.
- **A new partnership between the US Space Force and the Indian startups, 114ai and 3rdiTech. Launching a new partnership between the U.S. Space Force and the Indian startups, 114ai and 3rdiTech, including on advancing space situational awareness, data fusion technologies, and infra-red sensor semiconductor manufacturing.**
- As the world's two oldest and largest democracies, the United States and India share a unique bond of friendship, and Mr. Sullivan's trip will further deepen the already



strong US-India partnership to create a safer and more prosperous Indo-Pacific.

INDIA'S FIRST 3D-PRINTED ROCKET LAUNCHED -

- Recently Chennai-based start-up Agnikul Cosmos has launched the world's first rocket, Agnibaan Sub Orbital Technology Demonstrator (SOrTeD), powered by a fully 3D-printed engine.
- It aims to conduct a test flight to showcase the company's internally developed technologies and gather important flight data.
- This has achieved several firsts for the Indian space ecosystem i.e. launch from a private pad (Dhanush), homegrown semi-cryo engine-powered rocket launch and the world's 1st single-piece 3D printed engine.
- It uses liquid oxygen and kerosene as propellant.
- Launch was supported by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and the Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACE).



SIDE-EFFECTS OF COVID-19 VACCINE -

- Recently, there has been a lot of controversy over the side-effects of Oxford-AstraZeneca's vaccine. It is sold in India under the brand name of "Covishield" by Serum Institute of India (SII)
- It is being linked to a rare adverse side effect called Thrombosis with Thrombocytopenia Syndrome (TTS).
- TTS is also referred to as vaccine-induced prothrombotic immune thrombocytopenia (VIPIT) or vaccine-induced immune thrombotic thrombocytopenia (VITT). This rare syndrome has been observed in individuals who have received Covid-19 vaccines utilising adenoviral vectors.
- It is generally believed to be caused by an immune reaction triggered by the adenovirus vector used in these vaccines.
- TTS is linked to a variety of symptoms such as difficulty breathing, chest or limb pain, small red

spots or bruising beyond the injection site, headaches, numbness in body parts, and more.

- Thrombosis refers to the formation of blood clots, while thrombocytopenia is characterised by a low platelet count.
- Covishield has shown over 80% protection against severe COVID-19 and over 90% protection against death in various studies, even during the Delta wave.
- For a 50% chance of getting Covid-19 and a 0.1% risk of death, the vaccine provides a significant mortality benefit, outweighing the risks by far.



FIRST INDIAN SPACE TOURIST COMPLETES SUB-ORBITAL FLIGHT -

- Gopi Thotakura, a commercial pilot from India, made history by becoming the first person from India to go on a recreational space trip.
- This happened on May 19 on a Blue Origin-owned spaceship. Participants in the flight, which lasted only ten minutes from start to finish, reached an altitude of about 105 km above Earth, crossing the Karman line, which is the line between Earth's atmosphere and space.
- Suborbital space trips, like the one Thotakura took, don't go around the Earth in an orbit. Instead, they cross the Karman line for a short time and then go back. People who go on these trips usually get to feel weightless for a few minutes and see Earth from space in a very different way.
- Over 50 people have already been on suborbital trips, which were made possible by private aerospace companies like Blue Origin and took less than a day.

INDIA'S FIRST MULTI-PURPOSE GREEN HYDROGEN PILOT PROJECT INAUGURATED IN HIMACHAL PRADESH -

- India takes a significant step in renewable energy with the inauguration of its first multi-purpose green hydrogen pilot project at the 1,500 MW Nathpa Jhakri Hydro Power Station (NJHPS) in Himachal Pradesh's

Jhakri. Spearheaded by Satluj Jal Vidyut Nigam (SJVN), the project aims to produce green hydrogen through renewable energy sources.

- **The project features a 20Nm³/hr electrolyzer and 25kW fuel cell capacity-based green hydrogen pilot system.** It is the nation's first multi-purpose green hydrogen generation plant, serving both electricity generation and the high-velocity oxygen fuel (HVOF) coating facility of NJHPS.



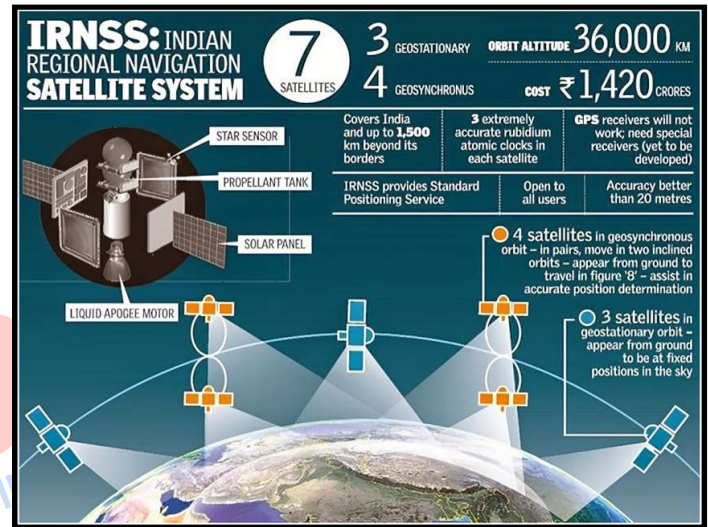
- Utilizing renewable energy from SJVN's 1.31 MW solar power plant located in Wadhwal, Himachal Pradesh, the project employs an alkaline electrolyzer to split water into hydrogen and oxygen. This integration allows for sustainable hydrogen production.
- **During eight hours of operation, the pilot project is set to produce 14 kg of green hydrogen daily, stored in six storage tanks.** This green hydrogen will serve dual purposes: facilitating HVOF coating of turbine underwater parts and generating electricity through its 25 kW fuel cell.

ATOMIC CLOCKS FOR ONE-NATION, ONE-TIME -

- **India aims to deploy its own atomic clocks across the nation, to enhance its timekeeping infrastructure and national defence capabilities for the future.**
- **The deployment of atomic clocks across India aims to synchronise all digital devices with Indian Standard Time (IST), ensuring uniformity.**
- **These atomic clocks are being installed by the National Physical Laboratory (NPL) under the Ministry of Science and Technology and the Ministry of Consumer Affairs.**
- **An atomic clock, is a clock, known for its exceptional accuracy, and functions by utilising specific resonance**

frequencies of atoms, typically cesium or rubidium. It was invented in 1955 by Louise Essen.

- **The extreme precision levels of the atomic clocks can be interpreted by the fact that they will lose one second approximately every 100 million years. Currently, atomic clocks in India are operational in Ahmedabad and Faridabad.**
- **The electronic components of atomic clocks are governed by microwave electromagnetic radiation (EM).** Maintaining this radiation's precise



frequency is essential to induce quantum transitions in cesium or rubidium atoms.

- **The quantum transition (energy change) of cesium or rubidium atoms is induced solely when the radiation is maintained at an exceptionally specific frequency.**
- **In an atomic clock, these quantum transitions are then observed and maintained in a feedback loop.** The waves generated in these quantum transitions are then counted to arrive at the value of a second.

ECONOMY & FINANCE

TATA GROUP IS INDIA'S MOST VALUABLE BRAND: REPORT -

- **Tata Group** has maintained its position as India's most valuable brand with a value of US\$ 28.6 billion, marking a 9% increase from last year. Infosys ranks second, and HDFC Group has surged to third place following its merger with HDFC Ltd. Tata Group is on the verge of becoming the first Indian brand to reach the US\$ 30 billion mark.
- **Taj remains India's strongest brand, with a Brand Strength Index (BSI) score of 92.9 out of 100 and an AAA+ rating.** The telecom sector experienced a 61% growth in brand value, driven by Jio, Airtel, and Vi, while the banking sector reported a 26% increase, with SBI as India's second most valuable bank.
- Westside is the fastest-growing Indian brand, with a 122% increase in brand value, followed by Motherson at 86% and Sonata Software at 83%. Hexaware is the fastest-growing brand in the IT services sector, with a 20% increase in brand value. The mining, iron, and steel sectors saw a 16% growth due to infrastructure and manufacturing investments.



FDI TO INDIA DROPS BY 43% IN 2023, RANKED 15TH GLOBALLY: UNCTAD -

- According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), foreign direct investment (FDI) to India in 2023 decreased by 43% compared to 2022, dropping India's rank to 15th among global FDI recipients. This decline mirrors a global trend where overall FDI fell by 2%.
- The annual World Investment Report by UNCTAD highlights a general decline in FDI worldwide due to multinational companies' cautious approach. Factors contributing to this decline include

uncertain global growth prospects, economic fracturing, trade and geopolitical tensions, industrial policies, and supply chain diversification.



- International project finance, crucial for infrastructure development, dropped by 23%, while cross-border mergers and acquisitions fell by 46%.
- **FDI to developing countries fell by 7% to \$867 billion, with developing Asia seeing an 8% drop to \$621 billion. Notably, FDI to China, India, West Asia, and Central Asia also declined.** India's FDI inflow in 2023 was \$28 billion, down from \$49 billion in 2022, resulting in its global FDI recipient ranking falling from 8th to 15th.

RECENTLY, RUSSIA HAS SENT TWO TRAINS CARRYING COAL TO INDIA THROUGH THE INTERNATIONAL NORTH-SOUTH TRANSPORT CORRIDOR (INSTC) FOR THE FIRST TIME -

- The consignment travels over 7,200km from St. Petersburg, Russia to Mumbai port via Bandar Abbas port of Iran.



- International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) is a 7,200-kilometer Multimode Transit Route linking the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf to the Caspian Sea via Iran and onward to northern Europe via St. Petersburg in Russia.

- It connects ship, rail, and road routes for moving cargo between India, Iran, Azerbaijan, Russia, Central Asia, and Europe.
- It was launched on 12th September 2000 in St. Petersburg, by a trilateral agreement signed by Iran, Russia and India at the Euro-Asian Conference on Transport in 2000 for promoting transportation cooperation among the Member States.
- Since then, INSTC membership has expanded to include 10 more countries (total 13)-Azerbaijan, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Ukraine, Syria, Belarus, and Oman.

53RD GST COUNCIL MEETING OVERVIEW

- The 53rd GST Council met under the Chairpersonship of Union Minister for Finance & Corporate Affairs Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman in New Delhi. The meeting was attended by key officials, including Union Minister of State for Finance Shri Pankaj Chaudhary, Chief Ministers of Goa and Meghalaya, Deputy Chief Ministers of Bihar, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, and Odisha, Finance Ministers of States & UTs (with legislature), and senior officers of the Ministry of Finance & States/ UTs.

**Changes in GST Tax Rates****GST Rates on Goods**

- Uniform IGST Rate on Aircraft Parts: A uniform rate of 5% IGST will apply to imports of parts, components, testing equipment, tools, and tool-kits of aircrafts to boost MRO activities.
- Milk Cans GST Rate: All milk cans (steel, iron, aluminum) will attract a 12% GST rate.
- Paper Products GST Rate Reduction: The GST rate on carton, boxes, and cases of both corrugated and non-corrugated paper or paper-board has been reduced from 18% to 12%.

- Solar Cookers GST Rate: All solar cookers, whether single or dual energy source, will attract 12% GST.
- Poultry Keeping Machinery: The GST entry covering poultry keeping machinery attracting 12% GST has been amended to specifically incorporate “parts of poultry keeping machinery” and regularize past practice.
- Sprinklers GST Rate: All types of sprinklers, including fire water sprinklers, will attract 12% GST.
- Defence Forces IGST Exemption: The IGST exemption on imports of specified items for defence forces has been extended for five years till 30th June 2029.
- RAMA Programme IGST Exemption: IGST exemption on imports of research equipment/buoys under the RAMA programme has been extended subject to conditions.
- Compensation Cess on SEZ Imports: Compensation Cess on imports in SEZ by SEZ Unit/developers for authorized operations is exempted w.e.f. 01.07.2017.
- Miscellaneous Exemptions: Compensation Cess on supply of aerated beverages and energy drinks to authorized customers by Unit Run Canteens under Ministry of Defence and Adhoc IGST exemption on imports of technical documentation for AK-203 rifle kits for Indian Defence forces are also recommended.

GST Rates on Services

- Indian Railways Services Exemption: Services provided by Indian Railways to the general public, such as platform tickets, retiring rooms/waiting rooms, cloakroom services, and battery-operated car services, are exempt from GST.
- SPV Services Exemption: Services provided by Special Purpose Vehicles (SPV) to Indian Railways for infrastructure use during the concession period and maintenance services by Indian Railways to SPV are exempt.
- Accommodation Services Exemption: Accommodation services valued up to Rs. 20,000 per month per person supplied for a minimum continuous period of 90 days are exempt from GST.
- Co-insurance and Re-insurance Services: Co-insurance premium apportioned by lead insurer to the co-insurer and transactions of ceding commission/re-insurance

commission between insurer and re-insurer are declared as no supply under Schedule III of the CGST Act.

- **GST Liability on Reinsurance Services:** GST liability on reinsurance services of specified insurance schemes will be regularized retrospectively.
- **Retrocession Clarification:** Retrocession, re-insurance of re-insurance, is eligible for exemption under Sl. No. 36A of notification No. 12/2017-CTR.
- **RERA Statutory Collections:** Statutory collections by Real Estate Regulatory Authority (RERA) are exempt from GST.
- **Incentive Sharing under RuPay and BHIM-UPI:** Further sharing of incentive under NPCI's promotion scheme for RuPay Debit Cards and BHIM-UPI transactions is not taxable.

NVIDIA BECOMES THE WORLD'S MOST VALUABLE COMPANY -

- **Nvidia is a well-known technology company that makes graphics processing units (GPUs).** They recently did something very impressive by becoming the most valuable company in the world. This new development is a big deal in the tech business; Nvidia has now surpassed tech giants like Microsoft and Apple.
- **Nvidia's market value reached an all-time high of \$3.326 trillion on June 18, when its stock price went up by 3.2% and reached \$135.21 per share.** This big rise in value happened after Nvidia passed Apple and became the second most valuable company a few days before.
- Nvidia's shares have gone up a huge 173% over the year, doing much better than other tech companies like Microsoft. This sudden rise is mostly because of the high demand for Nvidia's high-end chips, which are currently hard to find.



INDIA'S MARKET CAPITALIZATION REACHES \$5 TRILLION MILESTONE -

- In a significant stride, India's market capitalization has surged to \$5 trillion, marking a historic achievement. **This remarkable feat was accomplished in under six**

months since surpassing the \$4 trillion mark, showcasing the nation's robust economic resilience and investor confidence.

- Joining the elite league of countries with a \$5 trillion market cap, **India stands alongside stalwarts like the US, China, Japan, and Hong Kong. However, on a closing basis, India's market cap currently stands at \$4.97 trillion on the BSE and \$4.93 trillion on the NSE.**
- **India's market cap witnessed a staggering surge of over 60% from its lows in March 2023, propelled by a rally in shares of small- and mid-sized firms.** This uptick is attributed to a re-rating of valuations, fueled by improved economic and earnings growth prospects, surpassing global and emerging market peers.
- **The growth trajectory of India's market cap is further fueled by the emergence of mega newly listed companies, such as the Life Insurance Corporation (LIC), contributing significantly to the nation's market value.** Additionally, the increase in market value of the public sector undertaking (PSU) pack has bolstered India's standing, with the nation now boasting 100 stocks with an m-cap above \$10 billion.

THE INDIAN RUPEE DEPRECIATED BY AROUND 27.6% AGAINST THE US DOLLAR IN THE LAST 10 YEARS -

- The currency has gained real value when considering its exchange rate against major global currencies.

How is the Decadal Journey of the Indian Rupee-

- **The rupee fell from Rs 44.37 to Rs 60.34 (26.5%) from 2004 to 2014 against the US dollar.**
- **The rupee has further depreciated from Rs 60.34 to Rs 83.38 (27.6%) against the US dollar in the last between 2014 to 2024.**
- **Appreciation and depreciation** of currency refer to changes in the value of a currency relative to other currencies in the foreign exchange market.
- Between 2004 and 2024, **rupee declined by 32.2% (from 133.77 to 90.76) as per 40-currency basket NEER and 40.2%, (from 139.77 to 83.65) as per 6-currency basket NEER and during the same period.**

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- **The rupee's average exchange rate against the US dollar dropped by 45.7%, from Rs 44.9 to Rs 82.8.** Therefore, between 2004 and 2024, the rupee has undergone a smaller depreciation against the currencies of India's major trading partners compared to its depreciation solely against the US dollar.
- Also rupee's trade-weighted REER for both 40-currency and 6-currency basket has increased in the last 20 years indicating that Rupee strengthened between 2004-05 and 2023-24. Rupee has strengthened in real terms over time, while ruling at 100 or above most of the time in the last 10 years.

CHINA SURPASSES US AS INDIA'S LARGEST TRADING PARTNER -

- According to data released by the Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI), **China has emerged as India's largest trading partner in the fiscal year 2023-24, with two-way commerce totaling USD 118.4 billion.**
- **This marks a narrow overtaking of the United States, whose two-way trade with India amounted to \$118.3 billion during the same period.** The shift reflects a dynamic in bilateral trade relationships, with China reclaiming its position as India's top trading partner after the US held the position in the preceding two fiscal years.
- **Imports from China increased by 3.24% to \$101.7 billion, while exports rose by 8.7% to \$16.67 billion compared to FY23.** From FY19 to FY24, India's exports to China experienced a slight decline of 0.6%, reaching \$16.66 billion.
- Conversely, imports from China surged by 44.7% during the same period, reaching \$101.75 billion.
- India primarily imports electrical and electronic equipment, engineering goods, chemicals, plastics, and textiles from China. **India's major exports to China include engineering goods, agricultural products, ores and minerals, chemicals, and petroleum products.**



- **The trade balance heavily favors China, with the trade deficit expanding from \$53.57 billion in FY19 to \$85.09 billion in FY24.**
- India relies on Chinese imports to meet domestic demand and preferences, contributing to the widening trade deficit. **India's exports mainly consist of primary commodities, while Chinese exports are dominated by machinery, chemicals, and technology.**
- **India's pharmaceutical industry heavily depends on China for active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs),** further exacerbating the trade deficit. India's reliance on critical products from China, such as telecom components and lithium-ion batteries for EVs, contributes to the trade deficit.

RBI GOLD HOLDINGS AND FOREIGN EXCHANGE RESERVES UPDATE -

- **In the fiscal year 2023-24, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) saw a significant increase in its gold reserves, adding 27.46 metric tonnes and reaching a total of 822.10 metric tonnes by the end of March 2024.** This brought the share of gold in the total foreign exchange reserves to about 8.15%, up from 7.81% in the previous year.
- The World Gold Council highlighted a continuing trend of net central bank buying, though some banks may opt to remain on the sidelines amidst recent price surges. Opportunistic selling might also emerge due to the substantial price rise observed during the year.
- **Out of RBI's total gold holdings, 408.31 metric tonnes were held domestically, while 387.26 metric tonnes were kept in safe custody with the Bank of England and the Bank for International Settlements.** Additionally, 26.53 metric tonnes were held in the form of gold deposits.
- By December 2023, RBI's foreign exchange reserves covering imports increased to 11 months from 9.3 months, indicating improved reserve adequacy. The ratio of short-term debt to reserves decreased from 23.0% to 20.3%, and the ratio of volatile capital flows to reserves declined from 72.7% to 70.4% during the same period.

IMPORTANT DATES AND EVENTS

GST DAY 2024: CELEBRATING INDIA'S UNIFIED TAX SYSTEM -

- Goods and Services Tax (GST) Day is an important annual event in India's economic calendar. This day commemorates the implementation of a transformative tax system that revolutionized the country's fiscal landscape. As we approach GST Day 2024, let's explore its history, significance, and impact on India's economy.
- GST Day is observed on July 1 each year. The upcoming celebration in 2024 will mark the seventh anniversary of the GST system in India. This comprehensive indirect tax was introduced to simplify the complex web of taxes previously levied by central and state governments.
- The concept of GST was first introduced in India in the early 2000s. The Kelkar Task Force, a dedicated team of experts, proposed a comprehensive indirect tax system to replace the existing framework that was hindering the country's economic growth.



INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN CONFLICT 2024 -

- Every year, on June 19, we observe the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict. This important day aims to raise awareness about the serious issue of sexual violence during wars and conflicts worldwide. It also focuses on finding ways to stop these terrible crimes.
- The United Nations declared June 19 as this special day in 2015, commemorating the adoption of a resolution that condemned sexual violence as a tactic of war and an impediment to building peace.
- The International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict is crucial for informing people about

the atrocities happening globally.

It also encourages everyone to speak up against these crimes.

- This day is about giving hope. It aims for people to work together for a future where everyone feels safe and secure. Each person can contribute today to make a better future.



JUNE 1 IS THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BEGINNING OF OPERATION BLUE STAR -

- Operation Blue Star was an Indian Armed Forces operation carried out between 1 and 10 June 1984.
- Punjab witnessed insurgency which began in the late 1970s and reached its peak in the first half of the 1980s.
- This insurgency, also known as the Khalistan movement, was led by Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale for the establishment of an independent Sikh state called 'Khalistan'.
- In 1983, Bhindranwale along with his followers occupied and fortified the Sikh shrine Akal Takht inside the Golden Temple Complex from which he led the insurgency campaign.
- To counter escalating violence, on June 6, 1984, Indira Gandhi government ordered a military action, known as 'Operation Blue Star' into the Golden temple in order to remove militants from the Golden Temple complex.

THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE, ORGANIZED AN EVENT ON 31 MAY TO OBSERVE WORLD NO TOBACCO DAY 2024 -

- According to an estimate in 2016-2017 after China, India has the world's highest number of tobacco consumers, nearly 26 crore.
- A study of WHO finds that India loses 1% of its GDP to diseases and early deaths from tobacco use.
- Additionally, the health of more than 60 lakh people employed in the tobacco industry is also placed

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at risk because of the absorption of tobacco through the skin, which can cause various diseases.



- A 2021 study estimated that the country incurred a loss exceeding ₹1.7 lakh crore as a result of tobacco's effects on the health of its consumers in the fiscal year 2017-2018.

Challenges in tobacco control measures in India-

- Inadequate Penalties:** The fines for violating COTPA regulations have not been updated since 2003, with a maximum fine of only ₹5,000 for first-time packaging violations.
- Affordability of Tobacco:** Low tobacco taxes, which have not kept pace with income rises, have made tobacco products more affordable over the years.
- Government and Industry Ties:** Engagement of government officials with the tobacco industry and the Central government's 7.8% stake in ITC Ltd., India's largest tobacco company, exemplify conflicts of interest.

UNITED NATIONS DECLARES MAY 25 AS WORLD FOOTBALL DAY -

- In a historic move, the United Nations General Assembly has unanimously proclaimed May 25 as the World Football Day, marking a significant milestone in the global celebration of the world's most popular sport. The resolution, adopted during the 80th plenary meeting of the General Assembly in New York, coincides with the 100th anniversary of the first international football tournament

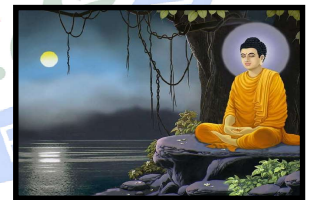


with representation from all regions – the 1924 Summer Olympic Games held in Paris.

- The resolution, introduced by Taher M. El-Sonni, Permanent Representative of the State of Libya to the United Nations, was passed unanimously by the 193-member General Assembly. It underscores the power of football to promote peace, development, and unity among nations, aligning with the UN's mission of fostering a better world through sport and the Olympic ideal.
- The proclamation of World Football Day by the United Nations is a testament to the sport's universal appeal and its ability to transcend boundaries and bring people together. Football has proven to be a unifying force, bridging cultural divides and fostering friendship and camaraderie among nations.

BUDDHA PURNIMA -

- The President of India extends greetings on the occasion of Buddha Purnima, highlighting the significance of Lord Buddha's teachings.
- Buddha Purnima also known as Vesak, commemorates the birth of Prince Siddhartha Gautama, who later became known as Gautama Buddha and founded Buddhism.
- Celebrated primarily in South, Southeast, and East Asia, it falls on the full moon day of the Hindu month of Vaisakha, typically in April or May.
- It is considered a 'triple-blessed day' as it marks Buddha's birth, enlightenment, and Maha Parnirvana. It has been recognised by the United Nations as the 'UN Day of Vesak' since 1999.



AWARDS, RECOGNITIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

KOZHIKODE, INDIA'S FIRST UNESCO CITY OF LITERATURE -

• On June 23, 2024, Kozhikode made history by becoming the first UNESCO City of Literature in India. This prestigious recognition highlights the city's rich literary heritage and cultural significance.



• Minister for Local Self-Government M.B. Rajesh announced the achievement, comparing Kozhikode to London in its ability to attract and nurture talent. He described the city as:

- Unpretentious
- Hospitable

Kozhikode's literary legacy includes:

- Two Jnanpith Award winners
- Notable contributions in cinema, music, and media
- The city's success in becoming India's first City of Literature surprised many, as it surpassed Kolkata, a city with a longer literary tradition. This achievement was credited to:
- Effective planning and preparation
- Initiative by the Mayor and Kerala Institute of Local Administration

INDIA'S FIRST FEMALE UN AMBASSADOR, RUCHIRA KAMBOJ, RETIRES AFTER 35 YEARS -

- Senior diplomat Ruchira Kamboj, who made history after becoming the first woman to become the Indian Ambassador to the United Nations, retired on 1 June, after an illustrious career spanning nearly four decades, she announced on Saturday.
- Ruchira Kamboj was born on May 3, 1964, and is a retired Indian Foreign Service officer from the 1987 batch. She most recently held the position of Permanent



Representative of India to the United Nations, where she worked from August 2022 to May 2024 before retiring. She has held the positions of Permanent Representative of India to UNESCO, Paris; High Commissioner of India to South Africa. She was the First Female Indian Ambassador to Bhutan. She was the top-ranked woman in both the 1987 Foreign Service and Civil Services batches in India.

- In 1987, she excelled in the Civil Services Examination and began her diplomatic journey in Paris, France. She worked as Third Secretary in the Indian Embassy to France and Second Secretary before returning to Delhi. She worked as Under Secretary in India's Ministry of External Affairs, handling India's relationship with the Commonwealth of Nations. From 1996-1999, she served as First Secretary and Head of Chancery at the Indian High Commission in Mauritius. She later served as Deputy Secretary and Director in charge of Foreign Service Personnel and Cadre in Delhi.

HISTORIC ELECTION IN MEXICO: CLAUDIA SHEINBAUM BECOMES FIRST WOMAN PRESIDENT -

- In a historic moment for Mexico, Claudia Sheinbaum has been elected as the country's first woman president, according to the provisional results announced by the Mexican election commission.
- Sheinbaum, from the ruling Morena party, has taken an unassailable lead over her nearest rivals in the presidential contest held on June 2, 2024. Outgoing Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador, who mentored Sheinbaum, has congratulated her on her victory. The elections also saw the renewal of more than 20,000 political positions, including all seats in the lower house, the senate, and regional and municipal offices.



- The presidential race was a groundbreaking one, with two female candidates emerging as the front-runners. Sheinbaum faced tough competition from Xochitl Galvez, the opposition party candidate backed by the PRI, which has ruled Mexico for 71 years. The third candidate, Jorge Álvarez Máynez, secured a smaller percentage of votes.
- **According to the National Electoral Institute of Mexico, Sheinbaum secured between 58.3% and 60.7% of the vote, while Xóchitl Gálvez received between 26.6% and 28.6%, and Jorge Álvarez Máynez had between 9.9% to 10.8%.** Sheinbaum's Morena party is also expected to win a majority of seats in both chambers of the Mexican Congress.

PRADEEP SINGH KHAROLA HAS BEEN ASSIGNED THE ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF NTA DG -

- The Director General of the National Testing Agency, Subodh Kumar Singh, was removed from the post on June 22, amid controversy over irregularities in exams. Subodh Kumar Singh's services were put on a "compulsory wait" in Department of Personnel and Training, the government said in a letter. India Trade Promotion Organisation Chairman and MD Pradeep Singh Kharola was assigned additional charge of NTA DG till appointment of a regular incumbent or until further orders.
- **Pradeep Singh Kharola is currently the Chairman and Managing Director of India Trade Promotion** and has been appointed as the Director General of National Testing Agency as an additional charge. Kharola is a 1985 batch IAS officer.
- **The Union Ministry of Education has constituted a high-level committee of experts to ensure transparent, smooth and fair conduct of examinations. Dr K Radhakrishnan, Former Chairman, ISRO and Chairman BoG, IIT Kanpur, will head the panel of 7 experts.**



US NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR JAKE SULLIVAN VISITS INDIA -

- In the first official visit from the US since Prime Minister Narendra Modi was re-elected for a third term, **US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan met National Security Advisor Ajit Doval in Delhi.**
- India's National Security Advisor, Ajit Doval, held a bilateral meeting with the US' National Security Advisor, Jake Sullivan, in New Delhi.
- **They agreed to enhance cooperation in various domains including Defence technology, Space, Artificial Intelligence, High-Performance Computing, and critical minerals.**
- Both sides committed to taking concrete steps in the upcoming months to overcome long-standing obstacles in bilateral strategic trade, technology, and industrial cooperation, including commercial and civil space sectors.
- **They co-chaired the second meeting of the India-U.S. initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology (iCET).**



LT. GEN. UPENDRA DWIVEDI APPOINTED NEXT ARMY CHIEF -

- **Lt. Gen. Upendra Dwivedi was recently named by the Ministry of Defense as the next Chief of the Army Staff.** His replacement will be Gen. Manoj Pande, and the change will happen on June 30, 2024. General Pande was given an extra month to leave before his original planned date.
- **Lieutenant General Upendra Dwivedi was born on July 1, 1964. He joined the army as an infantryman in the Jammu & Kashmir Rifles on December 15, 1982, and rose through the ranks.** During his long military service, he has held important leadership and strategic



positions. He used to be the Vice Chief of the Army Staff before becoming the Army Chief.

- During his long and accomplished service, Lt. Gen. Dwivedi has held important leadership roles, such as being in charge of the 18th Jammu and Kashmir Rifles Regiment and the 26th Sector Assam Rifles Brigade. He has also been the Inspector General of the Assam Rifles (East) and the 9th Corps. He has also been Director General of Infantry and General Officer Commanding-in-Chief at the Northern Command, which shows that he has a deep knowledge of military operations and the needs of infantry. Along with his real military knowledge, Lt. Gen. Dwivedi is also a graduate of the prestigious Sainik School, Rewa.

SOLOMON ISLANDS ELECTS PRO-CHINA LEADER JEREMIAH MANELE AS NEW PRIME MINISTER -

- In a significant political development, the Solomon Islands has elected former Foreign Minister Jeremiah Manele as its new prime minister, indicating that the South Pacific island nation is likely to maintain close ties with China.
- Jeremiah Manele secured 31 votes in a secret ballot involving 49 lawmakers, defeating opposition leader Matthew Wale, who received 18 votes. Manele used his first speech as the leader to promise to govern with integrity and prioritize the nation's interests.
- The withdrawal of pro-Beijing former Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare from the contest and his support for Manele as their party's candidate suggest that the Solomon Islands could follow a similar trajectory in its relationship with China.
- During Sogavare's previous term, China's influence in the Solomon Islands grew significantly, with the country switching diplomatic recognition from Taiwan to Beijing and striking a secret security pact



that raised concerns about potential Chinese naval presence in the region.

- Meg Keen, the director of the Pacific Islands program at the Lowy Institute, a Sydney-based international policy think tank, stated that while Manele may be a "less fiery and combative leader" for the West to manage, he is expected to continue pursuing close relations with China.
- The Solomon Islands' political landscape has been marked by instability and unrest in recent years, with riots erupting in the capital, Honiara, following elections and leadership changes. The country's ties with China have been a contentious issue, raising concerns among regional powers and allies.

PUTIN REAPPOINTS MIKHAIL MISHUSTIN AS RUSSIAN PRIME MINISTER -

- In a widely anticipated move, Russian President Vladimir Putin has reappointed Mikhail Mishustin as the Prime Minister of Russia, subject to approval by the lower house of parliament, the State Duma.



This decision comes as part of the legal procedure following Putin's inauguration for his fifth presidential term.

- The Speaker of the State Duma, Vyacheslav Volodin, announced that the house will hold a session later on Friday to consider Mishustin's candidacy. However, given the Kremlin-controlled nature of the parliament, Mishustin's approval is considered a mere formality.
- Mikhail Mishustin, aged 58, has held the position of Prime Minister for the past four years. In line with Russian law, he submitted his Cabinet's resignation, following Putin's inauguration ceremony.
- Political observers note that Mishustin's reappointment was widely expected, as Putin values his skills and his lack of political ambition. Mishustin, the former head of Russia's tax service, has maintained a low profile, steering clear of political statements and avoiding media interviews.

PROGRAMMES, SCHEMES AND INITIATIVES

WORLD BANK APPROVES \$1.5 BILLION LOAN TO SUPPORT INDIA'S GREEN HYDROGEN PUSH -

• The World Bank has approved a second round of \$1.5 billion in financing to help India accelerate its development of low-carbon energy. This funding aims to promote the market for green hydrogen, electrolyzers, and increased renewable energy penetration. The initiative aligns with India's National Green Hydrogen Mission and energy transition targets, including achieving 500 GW of installed renewable energy capacity by 2030 and reaching net zero by 2070.



• First Round of Funding (June 2023): The World Bank initially approved a \$1.5 billion loan for the First Low-Carbon Energy Programmatic Development Policy Operation. This supported transmission charge waivers for renewable energy in green hydrogen projects, annual renewable energy tenders of 50 GW, and the creation of a national carbon credit market framework.

Objectives of the Second Round

• Green Hydrogen Market : Boost production and consumption of green hydrogen.

RECENTLY, INDIA HAS ACHIEVED HIGHER ETHANOL PRODUCTION FROM GRAINS, PARTICULARLY MAIZE, SURPASSING THAT FROM SUGAR-BASED FEEDSTOCK -

• Ethanol, also known as ethyl alcohol, is a biofuel produced from various sources such as sugarcane, corn, rice, wheat, and biomass.

• Molasses, a byproduct of sugar manufacture, are generally the main source of production of ethanol (anhydrous alcohol) and rectified spirit.

• The production process involves the fermentation of sugars by yeasts or via petrochemical processes such as ethylene hydration.

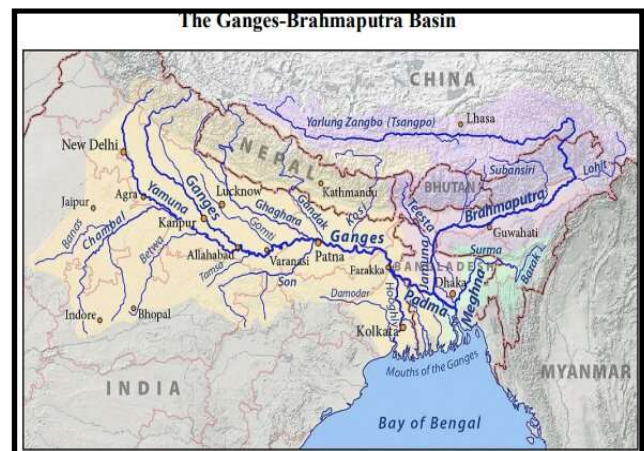


• Ethanol is 99.9% pure alcohol that can be blended with petrol to create a cleaner fuel alternative. Ethanol is a clear, colorless liquid with a characteristic wine-like odor and pungent taste. It is fully soluble in water and most organic solvents.

• In its pure form, it has a boiling point of 78.37 degrees Celsius and a melting point of -114.14 degrees Celsius. Ethanol is a combustible material and has a lower combustion temperature than gasoline, making it a cleaner-burning alternative.

WHAT IS TEESTA TREATY -

• In June 2023, when Sheikh Hasina, the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, paid a state visit to India, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that a technical team would go to Bangladesh to talk about how to protect and control the Teesta River. The Teesta water-sharing pact has been a point of contention between India and Bangladesh for over a decade. This brought it back to the public's attention.



- After Modi's speech, India's Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra made it clear that the talks were more about **controlling the flow of water in the Teesta than making deals to share water**. While the central government agreed with this position, West Bengal's Chief Minister, Mamata Banerjee, disagreed. She said that talks about the Teesta waters should not continue without the state's participation. She was worried that sharing Teesta's water would have bad effects on the people in north Bengal.

INDIA-IRAN CONTRACT ON CHABAHAR PORT -

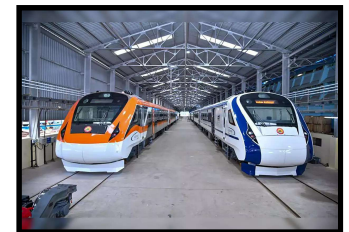
- India and Iran signed a 10-year contract for the operation of Chabahar Port.
- The long-term agreement was signed between Indian Ports Global Ltd. (IPGL) and Port and Maritime Organisation (PMO) of Iran, enabling operation of the Shahid-Beheshti terminal.
- The pact replaces one-year contracts that were being signed to keep the port operational until now. India has also offered a credit window equivalent to \$250 million for mutually identified projects aimed at improving Chabahar-related infrastructure.
- Iran's Chabahar port is located on the Gulf of Oman and is the only oceanic port of the country. It is situated in the city of Chabahar in Sistan and Baluchestan Province. Chabahar has two ports; Shahid Kalantari and Shahid Beheshti.



- The CISF personnel have replaced the 150 personnel of the Delhi Police, which included 54 women personnel, who were previously deployed for Parliament security.
- The new Parliament building was inaugurated on May 28, 2023, marking its first official use.
- On December 13, 2023, two individuals carrying colour spraying canisters breached security protocols by entering the Lok Sabha chamber during Zero Hour from the visitors' gallery. The intrusion was reportedly a protest against rising unemployment, ethnic violence in Manipur, and farmers' issues. Six individuals were subsequently arrested and booked under various sections, including terror charges. The police are yet to file a chargesheet in the case.
- Following the breach, eight Delhi Police security personnel responsible for frisking and baggage scanning were suspended.

INDIA'S INDIGENOUS BULLET TRAIN: VANDE BHARAT SETS TO REDEFINE HIGH-SPEED RAIL TRAVEL -

- In a significant stride towards advancing India's rail infrastructure, the country is gearing up to launch an indigenous bullet train capable of reaching speeds exceeding 250 kilometres per hour (km/h). This groundbreaking initiative is set to revolutionize high-speed rail travel in India, showcasing the nation's engineering prowess and commitment to cutting-edge technology.



CISF PERSONNEL REPLACE DELHI POLICE FOR PARLIAMENT SECURITY -

- Following a security breach in December 2023, the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) has taken over the security of the Parliament complex.



- The Vande Bharat trains, manufactured by the Indian Railways' Integral Coach Factory (ICF) in Chennai, are at the forefront of this ambitious project. These state-of-the-art trains are designed to operate on the recently announced north, south, and east corridors, reaching a top speed of 220 kmph – faster than any existing train on the Indian Railways network.

- **The National High-Speed Rail Corporation Ltd (NHSRCL), responsible for executing India's first bullet train project, has made remarkable progress. It has already completed 300 kilometres of pier work, laying the foundation for the country's journey into high-speed rail excellence.** Additionally, the extensive land acquisition process for the entire 508-kilometre route was successfully completed in January, paving the way for seamless implementation.

PARAGUAY BECOMES 100TH MEMBER OF INTERNATIONAL SOLAR ALLIANCE -

- **Paraguay is the 100th country to become a full member of the International Solar Alliance. A formal ceremony was held in New Delhi to mark this important step in the growth of ISA.** Fleming Raul Duarte, Paraguay's ambassador to India, gave the Instrument of Ratification. The event shows that Paraguay is serious about promoting clean energy.
- **India and France helped to start the International Solar Alliance at the COP21 UN Climate Change Conference in Paris in 2015.**
- The ISA's main goal is to make it easier for many people to use solar energy and to support healthy growth around the world. Its main goal is to work together with countries that get a lot of sun to make energy more accessible, improve energy security, and help the world move to a low-carbon economy.



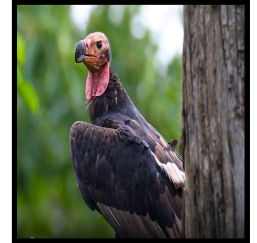
WORLD'S FIRST ASIAN KING VULTURE CONSERVATION AND BREEDING CENTRE IN MAHARAJGANJ, UP -

- **Uttar Pradesh is set to establish the world's first conservation and breeding centre for Asian king vultures or red-headed vultures in Maharajganj.** The facility will improve the population of critically

endangered species listed in the International Union for Conservation of Nature's red list since 2007. The centre is named Jatayu Conservation and Breeding Centre.

About Asian King vulture

- This is one of the 9 species of Vulture which are found in India.
- It is also called the Asian King vulture or Pondicherry Vulture was extensively found in India but its numbers drastically reduced after diclofenac poisoning.
- Conservation status: IUCN Red List: Critically Endangered
- Wildlife Protection Act, 1972: Schedule 1
- The centre is named Jatayu Conservation and Breeding Centre, where 24x7 monitoring of the vultures is being done. Among its staff include a scientific officer and a biologist. They (vultures) make one partner in their entire life and lay one egg in a year. Hence, their monitoring is our highest priority.



AS OF MARCH 2024, INDIA'S TOTAL INSTALLED ROOFTOP SOLAR (RTS) CAPACITY STOOD AT 11.87 GIGAWATTS (GW), WITH A NOTABLE INCREASE OF 2.99 GW IN INSTALLED CAPACITY DURING 2023-2024 -

- **The government introduced the Rooftop Solar Programme in 2014 to promote rooftop solar installation.** The original target was 40 GW installed capacity (out of 100 GW by 2030) by 2022 but the goal was not met by 2022, the deadline was extended to 2026.
- **Rooftop solar panels are photovoltaic panels** installed on the roof of a building and connected to the main power supply unit.
- This program was launched as part of the Jawaharlal Nehru National Solar Mission in 2010, the Initial target was 20 GW of solar energy by 2022 then the revised target was 100 GW by 2022, including 40 GW from RTS.

Key Initiatives under Rooftop Solar-

- SUPRABHA (Sustainable Partnership for RTS Acceleration in Bharat).

- SRISTI (Sustainable Rooftop Implementation for Solar Transfiguration of India).
- Centrally driven by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) and executed through state nodal agencies and power distribution companies.



Top performers States: Gujarat, Maharashtra, Rajasthan.

Moderate performers: Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka.

Underperformers: Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand.

What is the Significance of the Rooftop Solar Programme-

- A. Decentralised Energy Production
 - B. Economic Advantages
 - C. Energy Independence
 - D. Rural Electrification and Energy Diversification
 - E. Sustainable Development
- India's total installed rooftop solar capacity is reported to be approximately 11.87 GW, with Gujarat leading the table followed by Maharashtra, as of March 2024.

WATER STORAGE AT JUST 23% IN INDIA'S KEY RESERVOIRS -

- **Water storage in India's key reservoirs was down to just 23 per cent of their total capacity** amid a relentless heatwave in many parts of the country.
-
- **As per data released by Central Water Commission (CWC) for 150 major reservoirs.** At least eight reservoirs had zero storage, These were in Maharashtra, Karnataka, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh (AP), and Uttarakhand.
 - There were four others which had less than 10 per cent storage — in the states of AP, Gujarat, Maharashtra, and Karnataka.
 - **The southern region — consisting of AP, Telangana, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu — was the most affected.**

- In the northern, eastern, and central region, available storage was just 30 per cent, 28 per cent, and 29.1 percent respectively of the total capacities of reservoirs. Storage in the Ganga river basin was just 31.99 per cent of its capacity.

LAND SUBSIDENCE IN CHENAB VALLEY -

- Recently, there were reports of **Land subsidence in different parts of the Chenab Valley, especially in the Ramban, Kishtwar, and Doda districts**, which led to destruction of several houses.
- Earlier, landslides were common during rain and snowfall in the region. However, there has been frequent occurrence of land subsidence in the last 10 to 15 years.
- According to the **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Land subsidence is sinking off the ground because of underground material movement.**
- It can happen for **many reasons, man-made or natural, such as the removal of water, oil, or natural resources, along with mining activities.** Earthquakes, soil erosion, and soil compaction are also some of the well-known causes of subsidence. It can happen over very large areas like whole states or provinces, or very small areas.

Causes-

- Overexploitation of Underground Resources:
- Extraction of Solid Minerals:
- Load Exerted on Ground:

Examples-

- **Jakarta, Indonesia:** It is experiencing severe land subsidence (25 cm/year) due to excessive groundwater extraction.
- **Netherlands:** Land subsidence has been a major problem due to the extraction of natural gas from underground reservoirs.

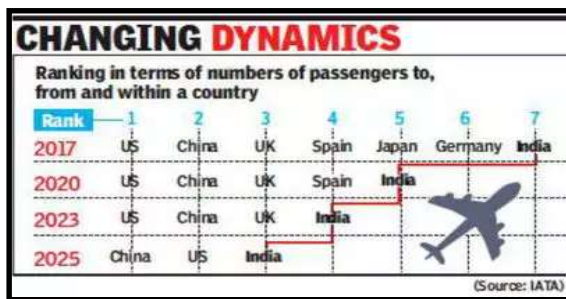
What are the Reasons for Land Subsidence in the Chenab Region-

- Geological Factors
- Unplanned Constructions and Urbanization
- Hydroelectric Projects
- Poor Drainage Systems

REPORTS & INDICES

INDIA RANKS 3RD-LARGEST DOMESTIC AVIATION MARKET -

- The Indian aviation market has grown to become the third biggest in the world. It has moved up from fifth place a decade ago to this important accomplishment. The success made under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi shows an excellent average yearly growth rate in airline seat capacity of 6.9%, which is the highest rate in the world.



- Low-cost airlines (LCCs), which now have 78.4% of the market, have become very important. IndiGo is a big name in this field, and in the last ten years, it has grown its market share by half, to 62%, with an impressive yearly capacity growth rate of 13.9%. The rapid rise of low-cost carriers (LCCs) has made flying easier for more Indians, which has helped the economy grow.
- To be clear, the US had the most seats (about 84 million) in November 2023, followed by China with 65 million. India had about 15 million seats, while Japan and Brazil came in next with 12 million and 10 million seats, respectively.
- These numbers show not only how big domestic flight is, but also how strong each market is and how it plans to grow. In general, India's situation shows how important it is becoming and how well it is doing strategically in the world of aviation.

ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE INDEX 2024 -

- The Yale Center for Environmental Law and Policy and the Columbia Center for International Earth Science Information Network released the Environmental Performance Index (EPI) for 2024.
- **Global Scenario:** Estonia leads the index by reducing its greenhouse gas emissions by 59% from 1990 levels.
- The report shows that **only five countries — Estonia, Finland, Greece, Timor-Leste, and the United Kingdom —** cut their GHG emissions at the rate needed to reach net zero by 2050. In contrast, Sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia rank lowest among the eight regions assessed.
- Apart from the United Kingdom, all countries identified in the 2022 Environmental Performance Index (EPI) report as being on track to achieve net zero emissions by 2050, and have either seen slow progress, as in the United States, or their emissions are still increasing, as seen in China, India, and Russia.
- **India's Performance:** India ranks 176th out of 180 countries with 27.6 points, placing above only Pakistan, Vietnam, Laos, and Myanmar.
- It performs poorly in Air quality, Emissions, and Biodiversity Conservation, largely due to its heavy reliance on coal, which contributes significantly to greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution levels.
- Specifically, India ranks 177th in air quality and 172nd in projected emissions by 2025.
- **The Largest Emitter Of Transboundary Pollution:** In South Asia, India is identified as the largest emitter of transboundary pollution, impacting neighbouring Bangladesh and affecting residents' well-being.
- Despite its low overall ranking, **India fares relatively better (133rd) in the climate change category, due to investments in renewable energy and a commitment to achieving net-zero emissions by 2070.**

ACCORDING TO A GLOBAL ASSESSMENT OF NITROUS OXIDE (N₂O) EMISSIONS, INDIA IS THE WORLD'S SECOND LARGEST SOURCE OF IT THAT HEATS UP THE ATMOSPHERE FAR MORE THAN CARBON DIOXIDE -

- According to a global assessment of Nitrous Oxide (N₂O) emissions, **India is the world's second largest source of it that heats up the atmosphere far more than carbon dioxide.**
- **Nitrous Oxide, a potent greenhouse gas, its emissions have grown by 40% between 1980 and 2020.**
- **India was responsible for nearly 11% of the global man-made Nitrous Oxide emissions in 2020, just after China (16.7%).**
- The major source of these emissions comes from fertiliser usage, particularly nitrogen-based fertilisers, and animal manure in agriculture. On the other hand, the US (5.7%), Brazil (5.3%) and Russia (4.6%) were the top five emitters, along with China and India.
- **However, the per capita emissions (Kg Nitrous Oxide/Person) in India have the lowest (0.8) in comparison to countries like China (1.3), US (1.7), Brazil (2.5) and Russia (3.3).**
- **The increase in greenhouse gases has already raised the Earth's average surface temperature by 1.15°C compared to the 1850-1900 average.**
- Anthropogenic Nitrous Oxide emissions contribute to about 0.1 degrees of this warming.
- High levels of N₂O in the atmosphere can deplete the ozone layer and compound the effects of climate change.
- On the earth, excess nitrogen contributes to soil, water, and air pollution.



RECENTLY, INDIA HAS SLIPPED TWO PLACES ON THE WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM'S (WEF) GLOBAL GENDER GAP INDEX TO 129TH PLACE -

- This year, the 18th edition of the Global Gender Gap Index benchmarks gender parity across 146 economies, providing a basis for the analysis of gender

parity developments across two-thirds of the world's economies.

- As per WEF, at the current pace it would take another **134 years (equivalent to five generations) to achieve full gender parity.**



- It annually benchmarks the current state and evolution of gender parity. It is the longest-standing index tracking the progress of numerous countries' efforts towards closing these gaps over time since its inception in 2006.

- **Published by: The World Economic Forum**

Four Key Dimensions-

- Economic Participation and Opportunity, Educational Attainment, Health and Survival, Political Empowerment.
- Overall, **India ranked 129 in this year's index, scoring marginally lower than the previous edition.** With a population of more than 140 crore, India has closed 64.1% of its gender gap in 2024 and the decline of two places from 127th last year.
- A. India had the best rank (65) in the 'Political Empowerment' parameter
- B. Economic Participation and Opportunity (142)
- C. Health and Survival (142)
- D. Educational Attainment (112)
- This slight regression is mainly the result of small declines in 'Educational Attainment' and 'Political Empowerment', while 'Economic Participation and Opportunity' slightly improved.
- **Top Rankers:** Iceland was followed by Finland, Norway, New Zealand and Sweden in the top five. The majority of the top 10 most gender-equal countries are in Europe, with Ireland and Spain re-entering the top 10 this year.

WORLD PRESS FREEDOM INDEX 2024 ANNOUNCED, INDIA RANKED 159TH OUT OF 180 COUNTRIES -

- **In the latest edition of the World Press Freedom Index published annually by Reporters Without Borders (RSF), India finds itself at a concerning**

position, ranking 159th out of 180 countries. This marks a slight improvement from its previous rank of 161, yet it still underscores significant challenges faced by journalists in the country. Surprisingly, India trails behind its neighboring nation Pakistan, which holds the 152nd position, while Sri Lanka stands at 150th place.



- Norway topped the ranking, while Denmark was on the second rank in World Press Freedom Index. Sweden ranked third on the list.
- The World Press Freedom Index evaluates 180 countries based on the freedom and independence journalists have to work and report. The rankings shed light on the varying degrees of press freedom across the globe. **In the Asia-Pacific region, which ranks as the world's second most challenging area for journalism, several countries, including Myanmar, China, North Korea, Vietnam, and Afghanistan, are among the most dangerous for media personnel. Notably, no Asian country made it to the Index's top 15 this year, indicating a pervasive challenge to press freedom in the region.**
- The recently released 2024 World Press Freedom Index by Reporters Without Borders (RSF) has once again shed light on the state of press freedom across the globe. In South Asia, India finds itself ranked at 159th, while its neighbor Pakistan stands marginally higher at 152. Sri Lanka, another regional player, is positioned at 150. These rankings underscore the challenges journalists face in the region, where the ability to work and report independently is often compromised.

INDIAN SPACE SITUATIONAL ASSESSMENT REPORT 2023 -

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has released the Indian Space Situational Assessment Report (ISSAR) for 2023, which provides a comprehensive overview of the current state of India's space assets and their vulnerability to potential collisions in space.
- **Globally, 3,143 objects were added in 2023 from 212 launches and on-orbit breakup events.** India contributed to this with the launch of 127 satellites by the end of December 2023.
- In the year 2023, **all seven launches of ISRO, namely SSLV-D2/EOS7, LVM3-M3/ONEWEB 2, PSLV-C55/ TeLEOS-2, LVM3-M4/ Chandrayaan-3, and PSLV-C57/Aditya L-1, were successful.**
- A total of 5 Indian satellites, 46 foreign satellites, and 8 rocket bodies (including POEM-2) were placed in their intended orbits.
- As of 31st December 2023, **India has 22 operational satellites in Low Earth Orbit (LEO) and 29 in Geostationary Orbit (GEO).**
- There are three active Indian deep space missions, Chandrayaan-2 Orbiter, Aditya-L1, and Chandrayaan-3 Propulsion Module.



Space Situational Awareness Activities-

- ISRO regularly carries out analyses to predict close approaches by other space objects to Indian space assets.
- In case of critical close approaches, ISRO carries out Collision Avoidance Maneuvers (CAMs) to safeguard its operational spacecraft.
- About 1 lakh close approach alerts were received from USSPACECOM (US Space Command), and over 3,000 alerts for close approaches within a distance of 1 km were detected for ISRO satellites.

DEFENCE

THALES INKS PACT WITH ADANI DEFENCE TO MANUFACTURE 70MM ROCKETS IN INDIA -

- Adani Defence & Aerospace has signed an agreement with Thales Group to manufacture 70mm rockets locally. This strategic collaboration aligns with the Indian government's "Make in India" initiative, aiming to enhance self-reliance in defence production.

- Earlier this month, Adani Defence and Aerospace signed a landmark agreement with EDGE Group – one of the world's leading advanced technology and defence groups in the UAE. The Drishti-10



- Starliner is an Indian medium-altitude long-endurance UAV based on the Israeli Elbit Hermes 900, manufactured by Adani Defence and Aerospace for the Indian Armed Forces. The UAV reportedly has an indigenous content of over 70%.

- The agreement aims to establish a global platform leveraging the defence and aerospace capabilities of both companies to bring together their respective product portfolios and cater to the requirements of global and local customers.

SEBEX 2, INDIA'S NEW EXPLOSIVE REVOLUTIONIZING MILITARY FIRE POWER -

- India has taken a significant leap in military technology with the development of SEBEX 2, a powerful new explosive.
- Certified by the Indian Navy, SEBEX 2 is reported to be twice as lethal as the standard Trinitrotoluene (TNT), marking it as one of the most powerful non-nuclear explosives globally. This breakthrough is set to revolutionize artillery shells and warheads, enhancing their destructive capabilities without increasing their weight.

- SEBEX 2 was rigorously tested under the Defence Export Promotion Scheme of the Indian Navy. The formulation was developed by Economic Explosives Ltd (EEL), a subsidiary of Nagpur-based Solar Industries. The certification process, completed last week, highlights the explosive's enhanced firepower and blast effect, which surpasses any currently available solid explosive.



- The development of SEBEX 2 falls under the Make in India initiative, showcasing India's commitment to advancing its defense capabilities with indigenous technologies.

INDIAN NAVY JOINS WORLD'S LARGEST NAVAL EXERCISE RIMPAC -

- As a participant in the Rim of the Pacific Exercise (RIMPAC) 2024, the Indian Navy has made a strong statement in the world of military exercises. This exercise is the world's biggest international maritime



- warfare exercise, and it takes place in Hawaii with a huge group of troops from around the world.
- In 2024, the exercise had over 150 planes, 40 surface ships, 3 submarines, people from over 29 countries, and a total of over 25,000 people. The Hawaiian Islands are the focus of this huge show of military power and cooperation, which runs until August 01. The Indian Navy sent the INS Shivalik, a cutting-edge multi-role stealth frigate, to this important military gathering.
- The INS Shivalik, a guided missile stealth frigate that was planned and built in India, shows how technically advanced and flexible the Indian Navy. The frigate was sent to Pearl Harbor to take part in different parts of

RIMPAC 2024. It had been sent to key areas like the South China Sea and the North Pacific Ocean before. That the ship traveled 9000 Nautical Miles to take part in the drill shows how far the Indian Navy can go.

INDIA IS DISCUSSING THE PURCHASE OF 12 USED MIRAGE-2000 FIGHTERS AIRCRAFT FROM QATAR, ENHANCING COMBAT STRENGTH AMIDST RETIRING MIG FIGHTERS -

- **Mirage 2000 is a fourth-generation, multirole fighter aircraft, and has played a significant role in the Indian Air Force (IAF) for several decades.** It was originally designed by the French company Dassault Aviation.
- **India acquired around 51 Mirage 2000s in different batches,** forming three squadrons based at the Gwalior Air Force station.
- The Mirage 2000 is a versatile platform capable of air-to-air combat, ground attack, reconnaissance, and nuclear strike missions.
- During the **Kargil conflict**, Mirage 2000s successfully hit enemy camps at high altitudes using laser-guided bombs. It played a crucial role in the **2019 Balakot airstrikes**, demonstrating its combat effectiveness.
- The ongoing upgrade program aims to enhance their capabilities, ensuring their relevance till 2035.



TARANG SHAKTI-2024 -

- **India will host its first multinational air exercise called Tarang Shakti-2024 in August 2024,** with the participation of 10 countries and some others as observers. It is inspired by the Red Flag exercise hosted by the US.
- The exercise will be held in 2 phases, with the first phase in southern India and the second in the western sector.
- **Australia, France, Germany, Japan, Spain, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, and the United**



States are expected to participate.

- **Germany will showcase the A-400M aircraft,** which will be displayed for the Indian Air Force (IAF) as it is being considered as a potential option for the current open tender seeking medium transport aircraft.
- Recently, IAF participated in the 2nd edition of air exercise Red Flag 2024 from 4th to 14th June 2024 in Alaska.

IAF RAFALE JETS JOIN MULTI-NATION DRILL IN ALASKA -

- **The Indian Air Force (IAF) took part in the Red Flag drill in Alaska, USA, in June 2023. The Indian Air Force's Rafale jets took part in the multinational air drill for the first time.** The goal of the drill was to make the air forces more ready for battle and better able to work together.
- **The Republic of Singapore Air Force, the UK's Royal Air Force, the Royal Netherlands Air Force, the German Luftwaffe, and the US Air Force were among the air forces from around the world that took part in the Red Flag drill.** During the drills, Indian Rafale jets worked closely with F-16 and F-15 planes from other countries.
- The Rafale jets of the Indian Air Force (IAF) were sent on difficult missions that focused on Beyond Visual Range (BVR) fighting as part of large-scale offensive and defensive operations. The point of these battles was to make them feel like real battles. The Rafale jets' international flight was helped by IL-78 air-to-air refuellers. It was also easier to move people and things with the help of the C-17 Globemaster.



HINDUSTAN AERONAUTICS LIMITED GETS RS 50,000 CRORE TENDER FOR COMBAT HELICOPTERS -

- **Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), a well-known Indian state-owned aerospace and defense company, was recently given a unique contract worth about Rs 50,000 crore by the UK Ministry of Defence.** This is the

biggest single order for helicopters that has ever been given to an Indian company. The money will be used to buy Light Combat Helicopters (LCH), also known as “Prachand.”



- **This tender, which was handled through the Single Vendor Contract (SVC) method, is only going to HAL.** The company is now going to make a techno-commercial bid, which will be talked over with the defense minister until it is agreed upon.
- **During test flights in Ladakh, the Prachand helicopters, which were designed to work well in the Indian terrain, showed how well they could handle high levels. The fact that these choppers can fly at high altitudes and have advanced weapons for battle means they will be useful in many situations.** Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR), Destruction of Enemy Air Defense (DEAD), and Counter Insurgency (CI) are some of these. It will also take action against slow-moving planes and Remotely Piloted Aircraft (RPAs), helping out in all kinds of weather and terrain.

CHINA'S THIRD AIRCRAFT CARRIER COMPLETES MAIDEN SEA TRIALS -

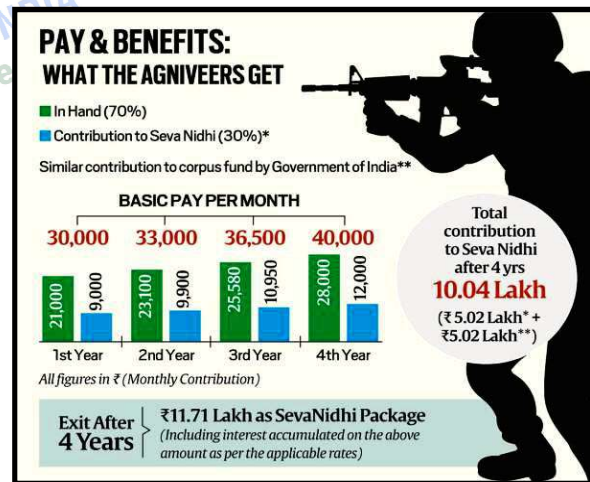
- **China's third aircraft carrier, Fujian has successfully completed its eight-day maiden sea trials. Fujian is an 80,000 tonne supercarrier with electromagnetic catapults for launching aircraft.**
- **Trials focused on propulsion, electrical systems, and other equipment, achieving expected results.**
- **China is the second country after the US to field a supercarrier with this technology.**
- **China's first aircraft carrier Liaoning was commissioned in 2012 and the second carrier Shadong was launched in 2017.**
- **China announced that it is building its fourth aircraft carrier, likely a nuclear-powered supercarrier.**



- **The Indian Navy operates two aircraft carriers namely the INS Vikramaditya, a refurbished Russian carrier commissioned in 2013, and the INS Vikrant, an indigenously designed and built carrier commissioned in September 2022.**

SURVEY ON AGNIPATH SCHEME -

- **The Army is conducting an internal survey on the Agnipath scheme to assess its impact on its recruitment process so far, based on which it is likely to draw up recommendations for possible changes to the scheme.**
- **Introduced in 2022, the Agnipath scheme — also called the Tour of Duty scheme is a short-term recruitment scheme for the Indian Army.**
- **Under the policy, soldiers — called ‘Agniveers’ — are recruited for four years, at the end of which only 25 percent of recruits from a batch are retained for regular service.**
- **Age Limit-** Candidates between the age of 17.5 years to 21 years will be eligible for enrolling in the Agnipath scheme.



- **The scheme provides an avenue to Indian youth, desirous of serving the country to get recruited in the Armed Forces for a short duration. The scheme enhances the youth profile of the Armed Forces.**

SPORTS

T20 WORLD CUP 2024, INDIA LIFTS THE TROPHY -

- **India beats South Africa by 7 runs and lifts the India lifts ICC T20 World Cup 2024 for 2nd time after 2007.** India has ended an 11-year trophy drought by defeating South Africa in the T20 World Cup final by a margin of 7 runs. This victory marks India's second T20 World Cup title. At the end of their 20 overs, South Africa managed to reach 169/8, chasing India's 176/7.
- Earlier, Virat Kohli (76) and Axar Patel (47) weathered the early storm to push India to a competitive score in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup final against South Africa in Bridgetown on June 29.



Here is the list of all winners of the T20 World Cup 2024:

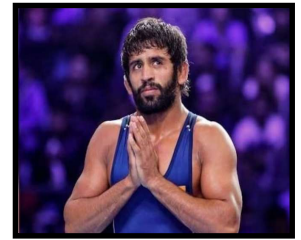
- Player of the match – Virat Kohli (India)
- Player of the tournament – Jasprit Bumrah (India)

OLYMPICS MEDALIST BAJRANG PUNIA SUSPENDED BY NADA FOR ANTI-DOPING RULE VIOLATION -

- **Olympic bronze medalist wrestler Bajrang Punia has been suspended by the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) for a second time for refusing to provide a urine sample during selection trials.** This suspension comes after NADA revoked his previous suspension due to procedural issues. Punia's legal team plans to challenge the suspension, arguing he did not refuse to provide a sample but sought clarification on expired kits used previously.
- **NADA initially suspended Bajrang Punia on April 23 for refusing to give a urine sample during selection trials in Sonapat on March 10.** The global governing body for wrestling, United World Wrestling (UWW), also suspended him. Punia appealed, and the Anti-Disciplinary

Doping (ADDP) panel revoked the suspension on May 31, citing that NADA had not issued a formal "notice of charge."

- On Sunday, NADA served Punia with a formal notice of charge, reinstating his provisional suspension. The notice stated Punia violated Article 2.3 of the National Anti-Doping Rules, 2021, for refusing to submit a urine sample. Punia has until July 11 to request a hearing or accept the charge.



TAMIL NADU'S SHYAAMNIKHIL BECOMES INDIA'S 85TH CHESS GRANDMASTER -

- **In a remarkable achievement, P Shyaamnikhil from Tamil Nadu has etched his name in the annals of Indian chess history by becoming the country's 85th Grandmaster (GM).** The 31-year-old chess prodigy, who embarked on his journey at the tender age of eight, finally secured the coveted third and final GM norm at the prestigious 2024 Dubai Police Masters Chess Tournament.
- Before the start of the Dubai event, Shyaamnikhil needed just one win and eight draws to attain the coveted GM title. Although he had accumulated the required 2500 ELO rating points and secured two GM norms way back in 2012, the elusive third norm eluded him for over a decade. Nevertheless, his unwavering determination and skills ultimately paved the way for his triumphant ascent to the Grandmaster's ranks.
- **Born in Nagercoil, Tamil Nadu, in 1992, Shyaamnikhil's chess journey began when he relocated to Chennai to pursue his passion.** His talent was evident from an early age, as he earned the International Master (IM) title in 2011 and secured his first GM norm at the Mumbai Mayor's Cup the same year.



TAKSHVI VAGHANI SETS NEW WORLD RECORD FOR THE LOWEST LIMBO SKATING OVER 25 METRES -

- In a remarkable display of skill, flexibility, and unwavering determination, India's young skating sensation, Takshvi

Vaghani, has etched her name in the record books by setting a new world record for the lowest limbo skating over 25 metres. On April 18, 2024, the 6-year-old prodigy from Ahmedabad, Gujarat,



defied the boundaries of human agility, gliding across the 25-meter distance at a mere 16 cm (6.29 in) above the ground.

- Takshvi Vaghani's achievement is a testament to her exceptional talent and rigorous training. With her lithe movements and impeccable balance, she surpassed the previous world record held by Manasvi Vishal from Pune, who had skated the same distance at a height of 16.5 centimeters.
- The young skater's remarkable performance not only showcased her extraordinary flexibility but also her unwavering determination to push the boundaries of what is possible in the world of roller skating.

WORLD ANTI-DOPING REPORT 2022 -

- The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) anti-doping report, 2022, released by the WADA reveals alarming

statistics on global doping violations, emphasising the need for stringent measures to safeguard the integrity of sports.

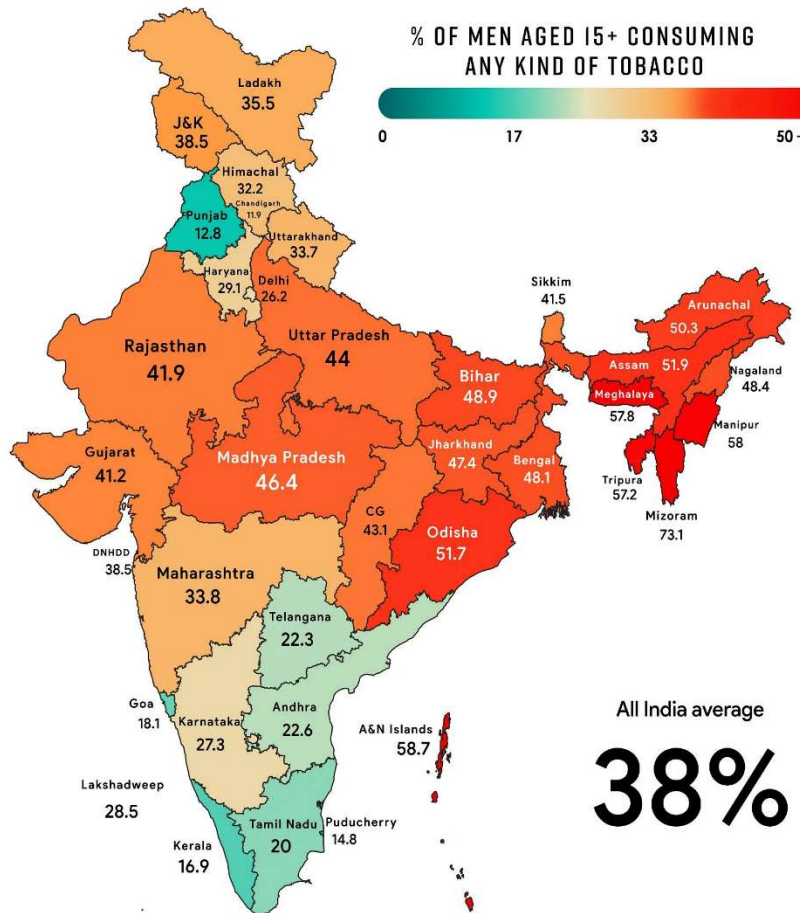
India Leads Globally in Doping Offences:

- India emerged with the highest percentage of doping offenders, accounting for 3.26% of tested athletes.
- Out of 3,865 samples tested by India's National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA), 125 returned Adverse Analytical Findings (AAFs), making India the only country with over 100 positive results and the highest among nations testing more than 2,000 samples.
- An AAF is a report from a WADA-accredited laboratory that identifies the presence of a prohibited substance and/or its metabolites or markers in a sample.
- Despite being 11th in the number of samples tested, India's doping violations surpassed major sporting nations like Russia, the USA, Italy, and France.
- South Africa followed India with 2.09% of samples testing positive among nations collecting over 2,000 samples.
- China tested the most samples (17,357), producing only 0.25% AAFs, while the USA (84) and Russia (85) closely followed India in the number of positive results.
- WADA reported a 6.4% increase in the total number of samples analysed and reported into its Anti-Doping Administration and Management System (ADAMS) in 2022 compared to 2021, signalling a positive trend towards maintaining the integrity of sports.

MAPS



PUNJAB HAS THE LOWEST RATE OF TOBACCO CONSUMPTION IN INDIA



Created via iipmaps.com

Source: National Family Health Survey - 5

IMPORTANT MCQ FOR COMPETITIVE EXAMS

- Q1. Recently, where was the second annual meeting of the initiative on Critical and Emerging Technologies (iCET) between India and the US held ?
a) New Delhi b) Chennai
c) Hyderabad d) Jaipur
- Q2. What is the main objective of 'SDG 7', recently in news ?
a) Promote nuclear energy development
b) Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 50%
c) Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all
d) Increase fossil fuel production worldwide
- Q3. A Central Sector Scheme named Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) seeks to give financial support to all farmer families in the nation who own cultivable land. When did the PM-KISAN Scheme get its start ?
a) 2014 b) 2015
c) 2017 d) 2019
- Q4. In August 2024, the Indian Air Force (IAF) will conduct Tarang Shakti-2024, its first multinational air exercise. How many countries are likely to participate in the exercise ?
a) 5 b) 7 c) 8 d) 10
- Q5. Which company is in advanced negotiations to buy the movie and event ticketing division of fintech player Paytm. The estimated value of the deal is between Rs. 1,600 crore and Rs. 2,000 crore ?
a) Swiggy b) Uber
c) Zomato d) Foodpanda
- Q6. Which river in Jammu and Kashmir is crossed by the recently built world's highest railway bridge, which has undergone a thorough examination by Indian Railways officials ?
a) Neeru b) Chenab
c) Tawi d) Jhelum
- Q7. According to the poll, how much percentage of urban Indians reported becoming victims of financial fraud personally or within their families over the past three years ?
a) 45% b) 43% c) 47% d) 49%
- Q8. H5N2 virus, sometimes seen in the news, is related to which disease ?
a) Malaria b) Dengue
c) Bird flu d) AIDS
- Q9. Which country will be the first in South America to incorporate UPI technology into its digital payment ecosystem ?
a) Brazil b) Peru
c) Argentina d) Colombia
- Q10. In June 2024, the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) has granted its approval for the merger of _____.
a) Vistara with Air India b) Akasha with Air India
c) SpiceJet with Vistara d) Air India with Spice Jet
- Q11. Which of the following aptly describes Delta ?
a) A triangular coastal land formed by silt deposited by a river while following into a sea or an ocean.
b) A place where the waters of a river and sea mingle
c) A place where accumulated water is distributed for irrigation through channels
d) A place where streams, big and small, join a major river.
- Q12. The correct chronological order in which the British established their trading centres in the place mentioned below is
a) Calcutta, Surat, Madras, Bombay
b) Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, Surat
c) Surat, Madras, Bombay, Calcutta
d) Surat, Madras, Calcutta, Bombay
- Q13. Inflation exists when
a) there is general increase in the prices over time.
b) there are periodic decreases in the price level.
c) there are continuous increases in the output level over time.
d) there is rise in the purchasing value of money.

- Q14. The law of demand states that
a) if the price of a good increases, the demand for that good decreases.
b) if the price of a good increases, the the demand for that good increases.
c) if the price of a good increases, the quantity demanded of that good decreases.
d) if the price of a good increases, the quantity demanded of that good increases.
- Q15. Jaitak Fort is located in which state of India ?
a) West Bengal b) Himachal Pradesh
c) Rajasthan d) Kerala
- Q16. The festival of 'Dhanu Jatra 'is celebrated in which Indian state ?
a) Odisha b) Kerala
c) Tamilnadu d) West Bengal
- Q17. Who has been appointed as the next Chief of the Indian Navy ?
a) Vice Admiral Karambir Singh
b) Vice Admiral Dinesh Kumar Tripathi
c) Vice Admiral Satish Ghormade
d) Vice Admiral Ajendra Bahadur Singh
- Q18. Recently, which country emerged as India's third largest export destination in 2023-24 ?
a) Netherlands b) Mexico
c) Malaysia d) Singapore
- Q19. The 'Saarthi 2.0 'mobile app for investor education on personal finance is introduced by the Securities and Exchange Board of India. In which year was the first Saarthi version released ?
a) 2021 b) 2023 c) 2022 d) 2019
- Q20. What is the name of the Russian cosmonaut, who recently became the first person to spend 1000 days in space?
a) Yelena Kondakova
b) Nikolai Chub
c) Yuri Gagarin
d) Oleg Kononenko
- Q21. Mount Kanlaon, recently seen in the news, is located in which country ?
a) Mexico b) Philippines
c) Indonesia d) Chile
- Q22. Which company has signed an agreement with the Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya (GSV) for carrying out joint research related to 5G/6G communications in the transportation and logistics sector ?
a) BSNL b) Nokia
c) Samsung d) Reliance
- Q23. International Sex Workers Day is commemorated every year on which day ?
a) 1 June b) 2 June
c) 3 June d) 4 June
- Q24. Tanvi Sharma, who was seen in news in June 2024 for achieving a remarkable achievement, is associated with which of the following sport ?
a) Hockey b) Tennis
c) Badminton d) Football
- Q25. The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has collaborated with which company to manufactured a 3D-printed rocket engine ?
a) Wipro b) HCL
c) TCS d) Infosys
- Q26. The Reserve Bank of India transfers how many tonnes of gold from the United Kingdom to Indian vaults for the first time since 1991 ?
a) 50 tonnes b) 150 tonnes
c) 100 tonnes d) 75 tonnes
- Q27. An IIT Madras startup Agnikul Cosmos launches the world's first rocket with a fully 3D-printed engine. Agnibaan is a two-stage rocket capable of carrying up to how many kg to a height of 700 kilometers ?
a) 200 kg b) 300 kg
c) 400 kg d) 500 kg
- Q28. Who has been recently appointed as the Joint Director of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) ?
a) Rajesh Sharma b) Anurag Kumar
c) Suresh Mehta d) Vikram Singh
- Q29. Which Union Ministry has implemented an innovative e-flow ecological monitoring system to monitor the Ganga river's quality in real time ?
a) Ministry of Agriculture
b) Ministry of Jal Sakthi
c) Ministry of Home affairs
d) Ministry of Commerce

- Q30. Uttar Pradesh government will transform Ranipur Tiger Reserve into a premier eco-tourism destination. It is located in which city of Uttar Pradesh ?
a) Lucknow b) Chitrakoot
c) Sambal d) Kanpur
- Q31. In June 2024, the World Health Organization (WHO) has designated National _____ as a WHO Collaborating Centre (CC) for traditional medicine research.
a) Indian Medical Association Building, Delhi
b) AIIMS, Delhi
c) Fortis Hospital, Noida
d) National Institute of Indian Medical Heritage, Hyderabad
- Q32. Global Wind Day is observed every year on which day?
a) 12 June b) 13 June c) 14 June d) 15 June
- Q33. World Blood Donor Day is observed every year on which day ?
a) 12 June b) 13 June
c) 14 June d) 15 June
- Q34. Shruti Vora, who was seen in news in June 2024 for achieving a remarkable achievement, is associated with which of the following sport ?
a) Tennis b) Equestrian
c) Badminton d) Wushu
- Q35. From which of the following, is the GDP of a country not derived from ?
a) Agricultural sector b) Industrial sector
c) International sector d) Service sector
- Q36. Ghodbunder Fort, recently seen in news, is located in which state ?
a) Maharashtra b) Gujarat
c) Kerala d) Rajasthan
- Q37. Recently, which country became the first Southeast Asian country to recognize same-sex marriage ?
a) Thailand b) Vietnam
c) Malaysia d) Singapore
- Q38. Which airport recently became the first in the country to introduce a self-service baggage drop system ?
a) Rajiv Gandhi International Airport
b) Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport
c) Indira Gandhi International Airport
d) Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose International Airport
- Q39. Matsya 6000, recently seen in the news, is developed by which institute ?
a) IIT, Roorkee
b) National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT), Chennai
c) IIT, Kanpur
d) National Institute of Oceanography
- Q40. Who has been appointed as the Pro-Tem speaker of the 18th Lok Sabha ?
a) Mallikarjun Kharge b) Mahua Moitra
c) Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury d) Bshartruhari Mahtab
- Q41. Recently, who became the first Indian to win a three star Grand Prix event in equestrian ?
a) Roshni Sharma
b) Shruti Vora
c) Alisha Abdullah
d) Kalyani Potekar
- Q42. The Sustainable Development Report (SDR) is an annual analysis of UN member states 'progress towards the SDGs since their adoption in 2015. India obtains the _____ rank with an overall score of _____, demonstrating progress toward the SDGs.
a) 110th, 63 b) 109th, 64
c) 108th, 62 d) 107th, 65
- Q43. Leaders of the Group of Seven (G7) wealthy democracies have agreed to provide a _____ loan to support Ukraine in its fight against Russia.
a) \$50 million b) \$50 billion
c) \$50 trillion d) \$100 billion
- Q44. What is the name of the Principal Secretary to Prime Minister Modi who has been reappointed ?
a) Ajay Kumar Bhalla b) Tarun Kapoor
c) Amit Khare d) Dr PK Mishra
- Q45. UNESCO has shortlisted seven most beautiful museums for the prestigious Prix Versailles Award, including the Smritivan Earthquake Memorial Museum. It is located in which state ?
a) Maharashtra b) Odisha
c) Gujarat d) Andhra Pradesh

- Q46. The State management of the railway and construction of new lines by a state agency was recommended for the first time by
a) Otto Niemeyer Committee
b) Sir William Acworth Committee
c) Eustace Percy Committee
d) Frederick Nicholson Committee
- Q47. The foundation of the princely State of Hyderabad was laid by
a) Sarfaraz Khan
b) Amir Khan
c) Khawaja Abid Shaik-ul-Mulk
d) Asaf Jah Nizam-ul-Mulk
- Q48. Which is the form of market where there is lack of competition ?
a) Monopoly
b) Oligopoly
c) Perfect competition
d) Marketisation
- Q49. From which of the following, is the GDP of a country not derived from ?
a) Agricultural sector
b) Industrial sector
c) International sector
d) Service sector
- Q50. Kariyala is the famous folk dance of which of the following Indian state ?
a) Kerala
b) Himachal Pradesh
c) Haryana
d) Uttar Pradesh
- Q51. Kohima is the capital city of which Indian state ?
a) Nagaland
b) Arunachal Pradesh
c) Mizoram
d) Manipur
- Q52. Which country accounted for over 31% of India's total pharmaceutical exports?
a) United Kingdom
b) Netherlands
c) United States
d) South Africa
- Q53. Which district of Uttar Pradesh is known as the "Land of Tigers" ?
a) Baghpat
b) Gorakhpur
c) Varanasi
d) Agra
- Q54. Which state government recently launched the 'Mission Nischay' ?
a) Haryana
b) Punjab
c) Uttarakhand
d) Gujarat
- Q55. Recently, Cyril Ramaphosa has been re-elected as the President of which country ?
a) Kenya
b) Rwanda
c) South Africa
d) Nigeria
- Q56. Which country will host the first multinational air exercise Tarang Shakti in August 2024 ?
a) India
b) Russia
c) Japan
d) USA
- Q57. Which ministry is preparing to launch the third version of the flagship government scheme FAME 3.0, which is scheduled to be announced in the Union Budget 2024 ?
a) Ministry of Defence
b) Ministry of Agriculture
c) Ministry of Home affairs
d) Ministry of Heavy Industry
- Q58. Who has inaugurated the new campus of Nalanda University at Rajgir in Nalanda district ?
a) Narendra Modi
b) Amit Shah
c) Nitish Kumar
d) Droupadi Murmu
- Q59. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will lead the main International Yoga Day event in Srinagar on June 21. What is the theme of International Yoga Day 2024 ?
a) Yoga for Heart
b) Yoga For Wellness
c) Yoga for health
d) Yoga for Self and Society
- Q60. The 'Akaal Takhat' was constructed by
a) Guru Hargovind
b) Guru Ram Das
c) Guru Arjun Dev
d) Guru Gobind Singh
- Q61. After Guru Gobind Singh's death, the institution of Guruship came to an end the spiritual authority passed to-
a) The sayings of the earlier Gurus
b) Granth Sahib
c) The initiation ceremony
d) The Almighty
- Q62. Economic sanctions are mainly used to
a) to help international trade run smoothly
b) punish nations that disobey international law
c) to impose tariffs on vehicles at the border
d) all the above

- Q63. The demand for a inferior good increases with _____ in the consumer's income.
a) increase b) decrease
c) constant d) double
- Q64. Where is the hq of International Hockey Federation situated ?
a) Lausanne, Switzerland b) Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
c) Munich, Germany d) Budapest, Hungary
- Q65. Where is the headquarters of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) ?
a) Chennai b) New Delhi
c) Mumbai d) Noida
- Q66. In which country is the 26th edition of the World Energy Congress being organized in 2024 ?
a) Germany b) France
c) Netherlands d) Spain
- Q67. What ambitious goal has India set for its non-fossil-fuel energy capacity by 2030 ?
a) 200 GW b) 300 GW
c) 400 GW d) 500 GW
- Q68. Recently, where was the second annual meeting of the initiative on Critical and Emerging Technologies (iCET) between India and the US held ?
a) New Delhi b) Chennai
c) Hyderabad d) Jaipur
- Q69. What is the main objective of 'SDG 7', recently in news?
a) Promote nuclear energy development
b) Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 50%
c) Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all
d) Increase fossil fuel production worldwide
- Q70. As of May 2024, which nation has been surpassed by the United Kingdom to become India's fourth-largest export market ?
a) USA b) China
c) Japan d) Singapore
- Q71. Which state/UT recently organized the 'Hemis festival 2024' ?
a) Ladakh b) Assam
c) Manipur d) Lakshadweep
- Q72. Recently, a team of wildlife experts has documented the presence of a 'striped caecilian (Ichthyophis spp)' in which national park for the first time ?
a) Kaziranga National Park
b) Manas National Park
c) Raimona National Park
d) Orang National Park
- Q73. Four Armed Forces Medical Service (AFMS) Officers have brought laurels to India by clinching a record 32 Medals in the 43rd World Medical and Health Games. The championship was held in which country ?
a) France b) Italy
c) UK d) Spain
- Q74. Olympic medallist Bajrang Punia, who was suspended by the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) earlier, has now again been banned provisionally. In which year NADA was established ?
a) 2003 b) 1999 c) 2000 d) 2005
- Q75. Who has been appointed as the Pro-Tem speaker of the 18th Lok Sabha ?
a) Mallikarjun Kharge
b) Mahua Moitra
c) Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury
d) Bshartruhari Mahtab
- Q76. According to the Henley Private Wealth Migration Report 2024, 4,300 millionaires may leave India this year. Which country continues to be a favored destination for Indian millionaires ?
a) Netherland b) USA
c) Singapore d) UAE
- Q77. How many member countries are there in NATO ?
a) 30 b) 32 c) 33 d) 34
- Q78. Which one of the following is known as greatest guerrilla among the Marathas ?
a) Sahu
b) Balaji Vishwanath
c) Baji Rao
d) Tara Bai
- Q79. What is the capital of Oman ?
a) Sana'a b) Doha
c) Jerusalem d) Muscat

- Q80. Where is the Principal Bench of the GST Appellate Tribunal (GSTAT) located ?
a) Mumbai b) Kolkata
c) New Delhi d) Chennai
- Q81. Recently, which ministry has launched the “Safai Apnao, Bimaari Bhagao” initiative under Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban 2.0 ?
a) Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs
b) Ministry of Rural Development
c) Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
d) Ministry of Agriculture
- Q82. Saipan Island, recently seen in news, is located in which ocean ?
a) Indian Ocean
b) Atlantic Ocean
c) Southern Ocean
d) Pacific Ocean
- Q83. Which ministry has named Pradeep Singh Kharola, a retired Indian administrative officer, the National Testing Agency’s (NTA) new director general, effective until a regular incumbent is appointed ?
a) Ministry of Home Affairs
b) Ministry of Corporate affairs
c) Ministry of MSME
d) Ministry of Education
- Q84. The Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs, Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman, chaired the _____ GST Council meeting, which was held in New Delhi.
a) 52nd b) 53rd c) 51st d) 54th
- Q85. In June 2024, which woman police station has achieved ISO 9001:2015 Certification ?
a) Surat Woman Police Station
b) Bhopal Woman Police Station
c) Kota Woman Police Station
d) Itanagar Woman Police Station
- Q86. National Doctor’s Day is observed every year on July 1. What is the theme of National Doctor’s Day 2024 ?
a) Celebrating Resilience and Healing Hands.
b) Lessen the mortality of COVID 19
c) Family Doctors on the Front Line
d) Healing Hands, Caring Hearts
- Q87. How much prize money has been announced by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) for Team India for winning the ICC Men’s T20 World Cup 2024 ?
a) 125 crore rupees b) 225 crore rupees
c) 101 crore rupees d) 100 crore rupees
- Q88. International Day of Parliamentarism is observed annually on which day ?
a) 29 June b) 28 June
c) 30 June d) 1 July
- Q89. Which company has received the “Sustainable Governance Champion Award” at the Outlook Planet Sustainability Summit & Awards 2024 ?
a) Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders
b) Hindustan Shipyard
c) ABG Shipyard
d) Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers
- Q90. Who has been appointed as the president of the European Council ?
a) Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa b) José Sócrates
c) Paulo Rangel d) António Costa
- Q91. The World Bank has approved a second round of _____ amount in financing to help India accelerate the development of low-carbon energy in June 2024 ?
a) 1.5 million dollars b) 1.5 billion dollars
c) 1.5 trillion dollars d) 2.5 billion dollars
- Q92. As a tribute to the heroes of the Kargil War, the Indian Army has opened the Khalubar War Memorial for tourists in which city ?
a) Udhampur b) Gulmarg
c) Udaipur d) Ladakh
- Q93. Where will the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2024 be held ?
a) India b) Australia
c) England d) Bangladesh
- Q94. Recently, where was the ‘Bharat Centre of Olympic Research and Education’ inaugurated ?
a) Jaipur
b) Gandhinagar
c) Patna
d) Lucknow

Q95. Shivaji died in the year :

- a) 1679 A.D.
- b) 1680 A.D.
- c) 1681 A.D.
- d) 1678 A.D.

Q96. Which among of the following rulers ruled as first and last rulers ?

- a) Chandragupta-II and Samudragupta.
- b) Chandragupta-I and Kumaragupta.
- c) Chandragupta-I and Ramagupta.
- d) Chandra-II and Kumaragupta.

Q97. Name the first Indian to get Nobel prize in economics

- a) Amartya Sen
- b) C V Raman
- c) Mihir Sen
- d) Arun Shourie

Q98. If cash reserve ratio decreases, credit creation will _____.

- a) increase

b) decrease

c) does not change

d) first decreases than increases

Q99. Who is the Chairman of the Sixteenth Finance Commission ?

- a) Dr. Raghuram Rajan
- b) Dr. Arvind Panagariya
- c) Dr. Subramanian Swamy
- d) Dr. Manmohan Singh

Q100. What is the tagline of the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) ?

- a) "Serving the Nation with Pride"
- b) "In the Silence of Our Great Mountains – Work Speaks"
- c) "Building Bridges, Connecting People"
- d) "Roads to Prosperity and Security"

ANSWERS

1-a	2-c	3-d	4-d	5-c	6-b	7-c	8-c	9-b	10-a
11-a	12-d	13-a	14-c	15-b	16-a	17-b	18-a	19-c	20-d
21-b	22-b	23-b	24-c	25-a	26-c	27-b	28-b	29-b	30-b
31-d	32-d	33-c	34-b	35-c	36-a	37-a	38-c	39-b	40-d
41-b	42-b	43-b	44-d	45-c	46-b	47-d	48-a	49-c	50-b
51-a	52-c	53-a	54-b	55-c	56-a	57-d	58-a	59-d	60-a
61-b	62-b	63-b	64-a	65-b	66-c	67-d	68-a	69-c	70-b
71-a	72-a	73-a	74-d	75-d	76-d	77-b	78-c	79-d	80-c
81-a	82-d	83-d	84-b	85-d	86-d	87-a	88-c	89-d	90-d
91-b	92-d	93-d	94-b	95-b	96-b	97-a	98-a	99-c	100-b