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**INDIA TO OBSERVE 'SAMVIDHAAN HATYA  
DIWAS' ON JUNE 25**



**WHAT ARE BHARAT SMALL REACTORS?**

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2. Banking and Finance

3. Appointments and Resignations

4. Important Dates

5. Defence

6. Sports/Rankings/Awards

7. Government Initiatives/MOUs

8. Science and Technology

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# NATIONAL

## ABHAY MUDRA IN BUDDHISM -

- Recently, the leader of opposition while delivering his speech in Parliament used the symbolic image of Lord Shiva and the 'Abhay Mudra' to criticise the government's assault on the idea of India, the Constitution, and those who resisted these attacks.
- **Mudras are hand gestures that are used in Indian dance, yoga, and meditation practices to convey certain meanings and emotions.** They are believed to facilitate the flow of prana or vital energy in the body and can have therapeutic benefits.
- **In Indian classical dance forms, mudras are used to convey emotions, themes, and stories. In yoga and meditation practices, it helps in concentration, relaxation, and the cultivation of certain qualities.**
- While there are a large number of esoteric mudras, over time Buddhist art has retained only 5 of them for the representations of the Buddha- **DharmaChakra Mudra, Bhumisparsha Mudra, Varada Mudra, Dhyana Mudra and Abhay Mudra.**
- **Abhay Mudra:** It is a hand gesture commonly depicted in Buddhist and Hindu iconography, representing the "gesture of fearlessness".
- It is typically formed with the palm of the right hand facing outward at shoulder height, with the fingers pointing upwards.
- It is associated with the Lord Buddha immediately after he attained enlightenment, portraying a sense of the security, serenity, and compassion that derive from enlightenment".
- **The mudra represents the moment when the Buddha tamed a mad elephant, illustrating his ability to grant fearlessness to his followers.**



- **Association with Other Religions:** The Abhaya Mudra is also found in the iconography of other religious traditions, including Christianity and Jainism.

## CENTRE RECONSTITUTES NITI AAYOG, INCLUDES UNION MINISTERS FROM NDA ALLIES -

- The Centre has reconstituted the NITI Aayog, the apex public policy think tank of the Union government, following changes in the council of ministers. Prime Minister Narendra Modi remains the chairperson, with economist Suman K Bery continuing as the vice-chairperson.



- **The reconstituted NITI Aayog includes four full-time members and 15 Union Ministers, including those from BJP allies, serving as either ex-officio members or special invitees.**

### Leadership and Full-Time Members

- **Chairperson:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi
- **Vice-Chairperson:** Economist Suman K Bery

### Full-Time Members

- VK Saraswat (Former ISRO DG and Scientist)
- Ramesh Chand (Agricultural Economist)
- Dr. VK Paul (Paediatrician)
- Arvind Virmani (Noted Economist)

### Ex-Officio Members from the Cabinet

- Rajnath Singh (Defence)
- Amit Shah (Home)



- Shivraj Singh Chouhan (Agriculture)
- Nirmala Sitharaman (Finance)

### SAWAN BEGINS WITH HARELA FESTIVAL IN UTTARAKHAND 2024 -

- July 16, marks the official beginning of Sawan accompanied by the vibrant Harela festival celebrated across Uttarakhand. This traditional festival holds deep significance for the region's agriculture and culture, symbolising prosperity and overall well-being.
- Harela is a significant Hindu festival observed in Uttarakhand and parts of Himachal Pradesh, particularly popular in the Kumaun region of Uttarakhand.
- Celebrated with immense enthusiasm, Harela signifies peace, prosperity, and the celebration of nature.
- This traditional festival holds deep cultural and environmental importance, symbolising prayers and hopes for abundant harvests and prosperity through divine blessings.
- It also commemorates the ceremonial union of Shiva and Parvati.



### MIZORAM'S AIZAWL BECAME THE FOURTH CAPITAL IN NORTHEAST INDIA TO GAIN RAILWAY CONNECTIVITY -

- The city of Aizawl in Mizoram will be the fourth capital in Northeast India to have train service by July 2025. Currently, Guwahati, Agartala, and Naharlagun are all connected to the railway network. This makes it easier to get around the area.
- Bairabi-Sairang railway project goes from Bairabi in Assam to Sairang in Mizoram's Aizawl District and is 52 km long. This project, which started in 2008-2009 and cost about Rs 8,213.72 crore, is meant to improve transportation in the area.
- So far, 93% of the project's actual work is done. The railway line has four stops: Hortoki, Kawnpui,

**Mualkhang, and Sairang.** The stations are split up into segments to make construction easier. The project also requires a lot of engineering work. For example, 12,853 meters of tunneling and the building of 55 major and 89 smaller bridges are part of it.



### THANE TO BORIVALI: INDIA'S LONGEST AND LARGEST URBAN TUNNEL -

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

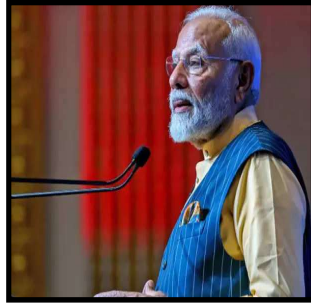
#### Key Highlights of the Thane Borivali Twin Tunnel

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

### PM MODI INAUGURATES WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE'S 46TH SESSION IN NEW DELHI -

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 46th session of the World Heritage Committee at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi, emphasizing India's commitment to global heritage preservation.

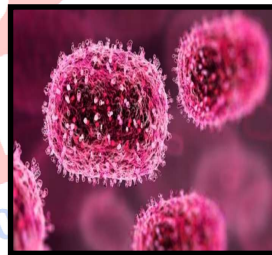
- PM Modi announced a \$1 million contribution to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre for heritage conservation, particularly in the Global South. He highlighted India's efforts in conserving heritage sites in countries like Cambodia, Vietnam, and Myanmar.



- PM Modi reiterated India's vision of balancing development with heritage conservation, citing projects like the Vishwanath Corridor, Ram Temple, and the modern campus of Nalanda University. He noted that India's heritage reflects both history and advanced science, exemplified by structures like the 8th-century Kedarnath Temple and the 2000-year-old rust-resistant Iron Pillar in Delhi.

### CHANDIPURA VIRUS INFECTION CONFIRMED IN GUJARAT -

- The first confirmed death due to Chandipura virus infection in Gujarat was reported as a four-year-old child from Mota Kanthariya in Aravalli. The confirmation came from Pune's National Institute of Virology. The virus, initially reported in north Gujarat, has spread to new areas, raising concerns about a potential outbreak with 14 deaths in two weeks and 26 suspected cases under investigation.
- Chandipura virus (CHPV) is part of the Rhabdoviridae family, transmitted primarily by sandflies (Phlebotomine sandflies, *Phlebotomus papatasi*) and mosquitoes (*Aedes aegypti*). The virus resides in the salivary glands of these insects and can be transmitted to humans or other vertebrates through bites, leading to central nervous system infections and encephalitis.



- CHPV infection begins with flu-like symptoms such as acute fever, body ache, and headache. It can rapidly progress to altered sensorium, seizures, and encephalitis. Other reported symptoms include respiratory distress, bleeding tendencies, or anaemia. The infection often progresses rapidly, potentially leading to mortality within 24-48 hours of hospitalization.

### INDIA – US SIGNED CULTURAL PROPERTY AGREEMENT -

- India and the US signed a deal on cultural property on July 26, 2024. The goal was to make it easier for them to work together to protect cultural heritage. Both countries have made a larger promise to return stolen artifacts and stop the illegal trade of cultural property, which includes this deal.
- **Purpose of the Agreement**
- The main goals of the Cultural Property Agreement between the United States and India are twofold:
  - **Justice:** It makes sure that culture items that belong to India are returned to the country.
  - **Cultural Exchange:** It helps people around the world understand Indian culture and shows how important it is to human history.
- Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, who is Minister of Culture, was there when U.S. Ambassador Eric Garcetti and Indian Union Culture Secretary Govind Mohan signed the deal. It was signed after experts from both countries worked together to negotiate for almost two years.



### 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.



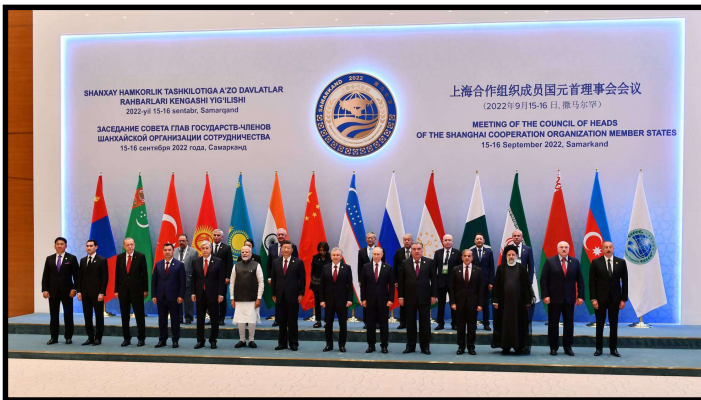
#### **Use of AYUSH-**

- **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.**

# INTERNATIONAL

## SCO SUMMIT -

- The **2024 Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Summit, being held in Astana, Kazakhstan from July 3-4.** The SCO aims to enhance collaboration and solidarity across sectors including trade, investment, energy, transportation, and security.



- **Established in 2001, it is an intergovernmental alliance founded by Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan.** The alliance focuses on political, economic, and security cooperation, with its first summit held in Shanghai, China.
- **Members:** China, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Iran, and Uzbekistan.
- **Observers:** Observers consist of Afghanistan, Belarus, and Mongolia.
- **Dialogue Partners:** Armenia, Azerbaijan, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Turkey, Egypt, Nepal, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia.

## PM MODI BECOMES MOST FOLLOWED GLOBAL LEADER ON X WITH OVER 100 MILLION FOLLOWERS -

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has achieved a significant milestone on social media platform X, surpassing 100 million followers. This milestone solidifies his position as the most followed global leader on X, far ahead of other world figures such as US

President Joe Biden, Dubai ruler Sheikh Mohammed, and Pope Francis.

- **PM Modi's journey to 100 million followers on X marks a staggering growth, with approximately 30 million new followers in the past three years alone.** His engaging presence on the platform has attracted a diverse audience, including political leaders, celebrities, and common citizens.
- PM Modi's follower count on X exceeds not only other political leaders like Rahul Gandhi and Arvind Kejriwal in India but also surpasses global celebrities such as Taylor Swift and Lady Gaga, as well as prominent athletes like Virat Kohli and Neymar Jr.



## INDIA INAUGURATES FIRST OVERSEAS JAN AUSHADI KENDRA IN MAURITIUS -

- S Jaishankar has inaugurated India's 1st overseas Jan Aushadi Kendra in Mauritius.



- Jaishankar, along with Mauritian PM Pravind Kumar Jugnauth, inaugurated the Jan Aushadi Kendra as part of India's commitment to provide affordable, Made-in-India medicines.

- The Mediclinic at Grand Bois, also inaugurated during the visit, symbolizes strengthened India-Mauritius relations in healthcare.

**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.



**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.

**FREE MOVEMENT REGIME (FMR) AGREEMENT WITH MYANMAR -**

**• India's recent plans to review the Free Movement Regime (FMR) agreement with Myanmar and fence the India-Myanmar border** have initiated discussions, especially in the northeastern states.



**• The decision aims to address a complex intersection of historical, cultural, and security considerations.**

**• Much of India's northeast region was under Burmese occupation until the Treaty of Yandaboo in 1826 established the current India-Myanmar boundary.**

**• The Treaty of Yandabo was signed by General Sir Archibald Campbell on behalf of the British and Governor of Legaing Maha Min Hla Kyaw Htin on behalf of the Burmese.**

**• It ended the First Anglo-Burmese War (1824-1826).**

**• However, the border separated communities with shared ethnicity and culture, including the Nagas in Nagaland and Manipur, as well as the Kuki-Chin-Mizo communities in Manipur and Mizoram, without their agreement.**

**• Currently, India and Myanmar share a 1,643 km border across Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh, of which only 10 km is fenced, in Manipur.**

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

### INDIA SEIZES PAK-BOUND CONSIGNMENT OF BANNED CHEMICALS -

- India has seized Pakistan-bound consignment, consisting of internationally banned chemicals used for tear gas and riot control agents, from China at a port in Tamil Nadu.



- Chinese firm had shipped a consignment of “Ortho-Chloro Benzylidene Malononitrile” to Pakistan.
- The chemical consignment was seized under the provisions of the Customs Act, 1962, and the Weapons of Mass Destruction and Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Act, 2005.
- Ortho-Chloro Benzylidene Malononitrile (CS) is a listed substance under the Wassenaar Arrangement. India is a signatory to the Wassenaar Arrangement, China and Pakistan are not.

### CHINA UNVEILS WORLD’S FIRST CARBON FIBER HIGH-SPEED TRAIN -

- China has built the world’s first passenger train made from carbon fibre, a material that makes it much lighter and more energy-efficient than conventional trains. The metro train – known as Cetrovo 1.0 or the Carbon Star Rapid Transit – was unveiled in Qingdao, in the eastern province of Shandong, on July 17.
- It has completed in-factory testing and is ready to go into operation in the coastal city later this year, according to its

developer Qingdao Sifang Rolling Stock Co, a subsidiary of China Railway Construction Corporation.



- The train’s main load-bearing structures – including car body and bogie frame – are built with carbon fibre composite materials, the company said. That makes its body and frame 25 per cent and 50 per cent lighter, respectively, than those of a conventional train.
- Overall, it is 11 per cent lighter than a traditional train, and the company said energy consumption would be reduced by 7 per cent. That would mean a reduction in carbon dioxide emissions of about 130 tonnes a year – equivalent to planting more than 40 hectares (100 acres) of trees.

### INDIA TARGETS \$500 BILLION IN ELECTRONICS MANUFACTURING BY 2030: NITI AAYOG -

- India should set an ambitious target of achieving \$500 billion in electronics manufacturing by 2030, as stated in a recent NITI Aayog report. This goal includes \$350 billion from finished goods manufacturing and \$150 billion from component manufacturing. Currently, India’s electronics production totals \$101 billion, with \$86 billion from finished goods and \$15 billion from components.
- The report, titled “Electronics: Powering India’s Participation in Global Value Chains,” also forecasts that India’s electronics exports could reach \$240 billion, with domestic value addition expected to surpass 35%.
- As of FY23, India’s electronics sector has reached \$101 billion, up from \$48 billion in FY17. The sector is driven primarily by mobile phone production,





which constitutes 43% of total electronics production. India's electronics manufacturing primarily involves the final assembly of electronic goods, with significant room for growth in components and design capabilities.

### WHAT ARE BHARAT SMALL REACTORS? -

- As part of India's plan to improve its nuclear energy powers, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced a plan to build Bharat Small Reactors (BSRs) in her Budget 2024 speech. In a big change to India's nuclear strategy, this effort is to work together with the private sector.
- Bharat Small Reactors are small nuclear reactors that are meant to make energy on a smaller scale than regular big nuclear power plants. India's well-known 220-megawatt pressurized Heavy Water Reactor (PHWR) technology will be used.
- India's nuclear energy landscape has changed forever with the government's promise to work with the business sector. The Atomic Energy Act of 1962 used to make it hard for private people to get involved, but this new plan wanted to increase funding and help nuclear power grow.



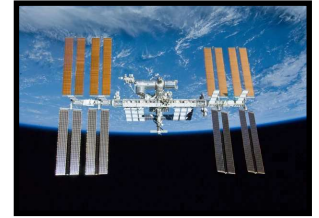
### Why Bharat Small Reactors are Needed-

- BSRs provide several advantages:
- Flexibility in siting and deployment
- Faster construction timelines
- Potential cost-effectiveness

### 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.

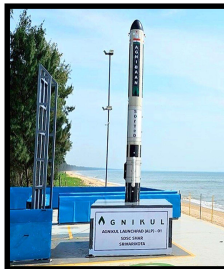
- To bring down launch costs and to remain competitive, the reusable launch vehicle is designed to take satellites up to space and return and land on a runway like an aeroplane.

#### 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.



## ECONOMY & FINANCE

### ECONOMIC SURVEY 2023-24 -

- On July 22, the Economic Survey 2023–24 will be released by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman. This is the first day of the summer session of Parliament. This is not how things usually work; Economic Surveys usually come out on January 31. But in election years, like 2024, there will be a shorter report before the interim budget.
- There is a lot of information in the Economic Survey about the state of the national economy for the fiscal year that is coming to an end. The Chief Economic Adviser guides the Economic Division of the Department of Economic Affairs in making it, and the Finance Minister gives his or her approval. The poll has changed in both format and frequency since it began in 1950–1951.



### BUDGET 2024: ANGEL TAX ABOLISHED, CORPORATE TAX REDUCED -

- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced the abolition of 'angel tax' for all investors and reduced the corporate tax rate for foreign companies from 40% to 35%, aiming to boost the Indian start-up ecosystem & attract foreign capital.
- Angel tax is an income tax levied at the rate of 30.6% when an unlisted company issues shares to an investor at a price higher than its fair market value.



### GOI'S MONETARY SOURCES & SPENDING AS UNVEILED BY UNION BUDGET FY 24-25

- Rupee Comes From:** Borrowing (27%), Income Tax (19%), GST & Other Taxes (18%), Corporation Tax (17%), Excise Duties (5%), Non-Tax Receipts (9%), Customs (4%), Non-Debt Capital Receipts (1%)
- Rupee Goes To:** States' Share of Taxes (21%), Interest Payments (19%), Central Sector Scheme (16%), Finance Commission (9%), Centrally Sponsored Schemes (9%), Subsidies (8%), Defence (8%), Pensions (4%)



### 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.

### 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.



### 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.

# IMPORTANT DATES AND EVENTS

RECENTLY, THE 52ND ANNIVERSARY OF THE SIMLA AGREEMENT, SIGNED ON 2ND JULY 1972 BY THEN PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA AND PAKISTAN WAS OBSERVED -

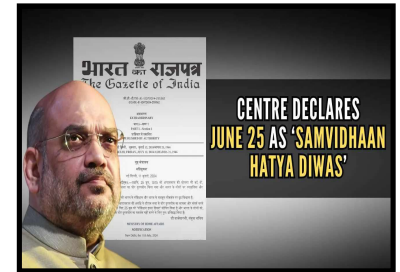
- The agreement was a direct consequence of the 1971 Indo-Pakistani War, which resulted in the independence of Bangladesh (formerly East Pakistan). India's military intervention played a crucial role in this conflict, significantly altering the geopolitical landscape of South Asia.
- Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and Pakistan's President Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. The agreement aimed to establish peace and normalise relations between the two countries after the intense hostilities.
- India aimed for a bilateral resolution to the Kashmir dispute, restraining Pakistan from internationalising the issue. Hoping for improved relations with Pakistan based on the new regional power balance.
- India chose not to press for turning the ceasefire line into a permanent boundary to prevent further resentment and potential revanchism in Pakistan.



INDIA TO OBSERVE 'SAMVIDHAAN HATYA DIWAS' ON JUNE 25 -

- The Government of India, under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has made a significant decision to observe June 25 annually as 'Samvidhaan Hatya Diwas' (Constitution Murder Day). This observance is intended to commemorate the immense sacrifices and contributions of those who endured the harsh realities of the 1975 Emergency.
- The Union Home Minister emphasized that this decision serves a dual purpose: To honor the spirit of millions who struggled to revive democracy

- To acknowledge the inexplicable persecution faced by citizens at the hands of an oppressive government during the Emergency period
- The observance of Samvidhaan Hatya

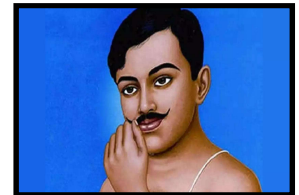


Diwas is expected to play a crucial role in keeping the eternal flame of individual freedom and the defense of democracy alive in every Indian citizen. By doing so, it aims to prevent any dictatorial force from repeating the horrors of the past.

- The Emergency refers to a 21-month period from June 25, 1975, to March 21, 1977. During this time, the government led by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi invoked special provisions in the Constitution to impose sweeping executive and legislative measures on the country.

CHANDRA SHEKHAR AZAD BIRTH ANNIVERSARY 2024 -

- Born Chandra Shekhar Tiwari on July 23, 1906, in the small village of Bhavra in Madhya Pradesh, Azad was a beacon of revolutionary fervour from a very young age.

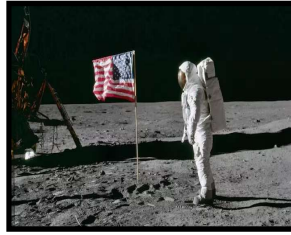


- In 1920, he became an active member of the Hindustan Republican Association (HRA).
- In January 1931, during a fierce encounter with the British police in Alfred Park, Allahabad, Azad fought valiantly but was eventually cornered.

APOLLO 11 ANNIVERSARY -

- NASA's Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin made history on July 20, 1969, when they landed on the moon. One of the most important parts of this task was

planting the American flag, which has come to represent national pride and success ever since.



- Matthew Ward, a history professor, says that the American flag has been an important symbol in times of both joy and sadness in the country's past. Its part in showing American ambition and exploration is shown by the fact that it was there during the Apollo moon landings.
- Anne Platoff, a professor at the University of California, looked into what the flags on the moon meant. The United States signed the United Nations Treaty on Outer Space, which says that acts like this are illegal. So, the flag-raising wasn't designed to claim territory.

talked about his pride and memories, relating the flag to the deaths of freedom fighters.

### JULY 21 MARKS HOTTEST DAY RECORDED GLOBALLY EVER -

- The average temperature of the Earth's surface air rose to a record-high 17.09°C (62.7°F) on July 21, 2023. The Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S) of the European Union reported this all-time high. It shows a worrying trend of rising temperatures around the world, which is happening at the same time as severe heatwaves and wildfires in the USA and Europe.
- The previous high temperature mark was 17.08°C, which was set on July 6, 2023. Based on data from C3S that goes back to 1940, July 21 is a major date in climate records, which shows how bad the current weather is. Quite amazingly, world temperatures have been rising steadily for the past 13 months. Since June 2023, every month has had the hottest temps compared to its historical average. This is a worrying sign that the heat is getting worse.
- Extreme weather events like long heatwaves and floods around the world are happening more often as global temperatures rise. This year, the weather has been very bad in many places. In North America, there have been deadly heatwaves, and parts of East Africa and Brazil have had serious flooding.



### NATIONAL FLAG DAY ON JULY 22 -

- The Constituent Assembly of India officially accepted the National Flag on July 22, 1947. This was a big step in India's journey to become free from colonial rule. This adoption was a sign of the hopes and togetherness of the country during hard times.
- The Constituent Assembly met in New Delhi at 10:00 AM, with Dr. Rajendra Prasad in charge. Since its start on December 9, 1946, the Assembly has met many times to talk about a wide range of important issues. A move about the flag, led by Jawaharlal Nehru, was the main item on the agenda.
- Nehru wanted the National Flag to have a white band with an Ashoka Chakra in navy blue in the middle of the white band. The flag should be a horizontal triangle with deep golden, white, and dark green colors. The goal of this design was to capture India's spirit and past while also being aesthetically pleasing. At a ratio of 2:3, the measurements were made uniformly. In his speech, Nehru



### KARGIL VIJAY DIWAS, CELEBRATES ON 26TH JULY -

- Kargil Vijay Diwas is a significant day observed on 26th July each year in India. This day marks the victory of the Indian Armed Forces over Pakistan in the Kargil War of 1999.
- The conflict, fought in the high-altitude region of Kargil, was a turning point in Indo-Pak relations and a testament to the valor and resilience of the Indian soldiers.



- In 2024, Kargil Vijay Diwas marks the 25th anniversary of the Kargil War of 1999. The Indian Army's 'Operation Vijay' successfully repelled Pakistani forces in the Kargil sector, now part of Ladakh.



- This significant milestone commemorates the valor and sacrifices of soldiers who defended India's sovereignty, reinforcing national pride and honoring their enduring legacy.
- Kargil War Diwas is observed on 26th July as on this day in 1999, the Indian troops announced their victory over the Pakistani rangers after nearly three-month long armed battles on the icy heights of Kargil.

#### 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.

#### 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.

# AWARDS, RECOGNITIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

## AFTER 350 YEARS, CHHATRAPATI SHIVAJI'S "BAGH NAKH" BACK IN INDIA

- The historic wagh nakh, the tiger claw-shaped weapon reportedly used by Maratha warrior king Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj to kill Bijapur Sultanate general Afzal Khan in the 1659 Battle of Pratapgarh. It has been put on display at the Satara Museum on July 19, for the next seven months.
- The weapon, brought to India from London's Victoria and Albert Museum on July 17 to commemorate the 350th anniversary of the Maratha ruler's ascension to the throne, received a grand welcome in Western Maharashtra's Satara. The Chief Minister praised Mr. Mungantiwar's efforts to bring the weapon from London.
- Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, along with his deputies Devendra Fadnavis and Ajit Pawar, Culture Affairs Minister Sudhir Mungantiwar, and members of the royal family of Satara, attended the event. The wagh nakh was encased in a bulletproof cover, and security was heightened.



## 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.

**DEPUTY NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISER (NSA) RAJINDER KHANNA HAS BEEN APPOINTED AS THE ADDITIONAL NSA. THIS IS THE FIRST TIME THE ADDITIONAL NSA POST HAS BEEN FILLED**

- **Deputy National Security Adviser (NSA) Rajinder Khanna has been appointed as the additional NSA.** This is the first time the additional NSA post has been filled, a position that has always existed but remained vacant until now.
- Additionally, **Intelligence Bureau special director T.V. Ravichandran has been appointed as deputy NSA.**
- **The National Security Council was established in 1998 by the government of then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee following nuclear tests by India and Pakistan.** It is the apex body for national security management in India.
- Prior to the formation of the NSC, **the functions related to national security were carried out by the Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister.**
- It operates under a three-tier structure i.e. **Strategic Policy Group (SPG), National Security Advisory Board (NSAB) and National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS).**
- **The Strategic Policy Group is chaired by the Cabinet Secretary, consisting of serving senior officials responsible for policy-making and for follow up action in matters concerning national security.** It includes the Chiefs of the Armed Forces, the Intelligence Bureau and the Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW). Its main task is to make policy recommendations to the NSC.
- **National Security Advisory Board includes senior retired officials, academics, and experts from civil society. It provides long-term analysis and policy recommendations on national security issues to the**



**NSC, covering areas like Internal and External Security, Foreign Affairs, Defence, Science & Technology, and Economic Affairs.**

- **National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS) is overseen by the Prime Minister, operates with NSA as its secretary, and serves as the apex body for all matters concerning internal and external security.**
- **The NSC is headed by the Prime Minister of India.**

**WHO IS KEIR STARMER, THE NEXT BRITISH PRIME MINISTER -**

- **The Labour Party won a huge majority in the recent government elections, which means that Keir Starmer will be the next Prime Minister of the United Kingdom.** The Conservative Party was thrown out, and Labour won 410 of the 650 seats. This was a big improvement from the previous election when they did very poorly.
- **Rishi Sunak, who was Prime Minister at the time, formally conceded defeat, making way for Keir Starmer to take over.** This is a major change in the UK's political scene; Labour now controls the government after a long time of Conservative rule.
- **Keir Starmer was well-known in the areas of human rights and public service before he became a politician.** He tried to make sure that Northern Ireland's police respected human rights. From 2008 to 2013, he was the **Director of Public Prosecutions.** Notably, he worked on cases that got a lot of attention, like the prosecution of MPs and the media.



**GAUTAM GAMBHIR APPOINTED INDIA'S NEW CRICKET HEAD COACH -**

- **Gautam Gambhir has been named as the new head coach of the Indian men's cricket team by Jay Shah, who is the secretary of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI).**
- **The news was shared on social media, with a note about how well Gambhir knows current cricket and how many different kinds of experiences he has had with the game.**



- **Gautam Gambhir is a former professional cricket player who was a big part of India's wins in cricket, including the T20 and ODI World Cups.**



- Famous for being smart about strategy, Gambhir became a coach and led the Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) to an IPL title in 2024. During his playing career, he led the team to two wins as captain.

#### ISRO SELECTS 2 GAGANYAAN ASTRONAUTS FOR INTERNATIONAL SPACE STATION MISSION UNDER AXIOM-4 -

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has shortlisted two of its four trained Gaganyaan astronauts for a mission to the International Space Station (ISS) in collaboration with United States' NASA later this year, according to officials in the know of the matter.
- **Only one of the shortlisted astronauts will go on the mission which is supposed to take place "no earlier than October 2024," according to the information available on NASA website.**
- The mission will take place "no earlier than October 2024," according to the information available on NASA website. The astronauts will have to go to the United States ahead of the mission to train on the specifics of the ISS.
- **"While they have general training for space-fairing, much of their training in India focussed on Gaganyaan modules. They will have to be familiarised with ISS modules and protocols,"** the official said.



#### KP SHARMA OLI APPOINTED AS NEPAL'S NEW PRIME MINISTER -

- **K.P. Sharma Oli on July 15 was sworn in as Nepal's Prime Minister for the fourth time. The leader of Nepal's largest communist party was appointed Nepal's Prime Minister on July 14, by President Ram Chandra Paudel to lead a new coalition government that**

faces the daunting challenge of providing political stability in the Himalayan nation.

- **Khadga Prasad Sharma Oli (born 22 February 1952) is a Nepali politician who is the current Prime Minister of Nepal, in office since 15 July 2024. He previously served as prime minister from 11 October 2015 to 3 August 2016, and from 15 February 2018 to 13 July 2021, the first prime minister to be appointed following the first general election under the new constitution.**
- **Mr. Oli, 72, succeeds Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' who lost the vote of confidence in the House of Representatives on June 12, leading to the formation of the new government headed by Mr. Oli. He became the Prime Minister with the support of the Nepali Congress, the largest party in Parliament. Mr. Oli was sworn in by President Paudel at Shital Niwas, the main building of Rashtrapati Bhawan.**
- Mr. Oli now needs to secure a vote of confidence from Parliament within 30 days of appointment according to the constitutional mandate. Mr. Oli will need a minimum of 138 votes in the 275-seat House of Representatives (HoR).



#### JOE BIDEN WITHDRAWS FROM US PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS -

- **On July 21, 2023, US President Joe Biden revealed that he was dropping out of the race for president. This came after a lot of talk and pressure from well-known Democrats.** Concerns about Biden's age and ability were raised by his recent debate performance against Republican Donald Trump. This made party members less confident in his campaign.
- Biden tried to calm people's worries about his age during the debate, but he made them worse instead. Concerns about his ability to stay in the race were raised by instances of him messing up his speech.
- **Now that Biden has quit, the Democratic Party has the very important job of finding a good candidate.** Several possible options have come forward, and each has their own set of skills and problems to solve.

# PROGRAMMES, SCHEMES AND INITIATIVES

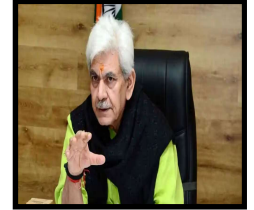
## INDIA'S AMBITIOUS AIRPORT EXPANSION PLAN -

- India plans to double its number of operational airports to 300 by 2047, driven by an eightfold increase in passenger traffic. This ambitious expansion involves developing existing airstrips and constructing new airports across the country.
- **Development of Existing Airstrips:** The Airports Authority of India (AAI) plans to develop 70 airstrips into airports capable of handling narrow-body aircraft like A320 or B737.
- Existing airstrips at Mandavi (Gujarat), Sultanpur (Uttar Pradesh), Tura (Meghalaya), and Chhindwara (Madhya Pradesh) can be upgraded for small aircraft. Nearly 40 airstrips are slated for development to accommodate smaller aircraft.
- New greenfield airports may be constructed in **Kota (Rajasthan), Parandur (Tamil Nadu), Kottayam (Kerala), Puri (Odisha), Purandar (Maharashtra), Car Nicobar, and Minicoy (Andaman and Nicobar Islands)**. Passenger traffic is expected to increase eightfold, from 376 million to 3-3.5 billion annually by 2047. International traffic may constitute 10-12% of this growth.
- The plan is part of Vision 2047, aiming to accommodate this massive increase in air travel demand.
- **UDAN Scheme Implementation: Improving connectivity to tier-II and -III cities through schemes like UDAN (Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik).**
- In 2014, there were 74 operational airports, which has now increased to 148. Under the UDAN scheme, 68 underserved/unserved destinations, including 58 airports, 8 heliports, and 2 water aerodromes, have been connected. It has provided air connectivity to over 29 states/union territories.



## CENTRE EMPOWERS LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR -

- The Centre has strengthened the authority of the Lieutenant Governor (LG) of Jammu and Kashmir through amendments to the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganization Act, 2019. The amended rules, effective immediately upon publication in the Official Gazette, significantly enhance the LG's powers, particularly in matters related to transfers, postings of all-India service officers, police, and judicial appointments.
- **Previously, proposals concerning police, public order, all-India services, and the Anti-Corruption Bureau required the Finance Department's approval before reaching the LG.** Under the new rules, such proposals must be submitted directly to the LG through the Chief Secretary of the Union territory, limiting the role of the elected government in critical governance matters.
- These amendments come amidst speculation of upcoming assembly polls in Jammu and Kashmir.



## INDIA'S FIRST INTEGRATED AGRI-EXPORT FACILITY AT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU PORT -

- **Project Overview:** Rs. 284.19 crore PPP project at Jawaharlal Nehru Port, Mumbai, spanning 67,422 square meters to enhance agri-logistics, reduce inefficiencies, and extend product shelf life.





- **Benefits:** Empowering farmers, job creation, better pricing, and boosting export capacity.
- The project aims to support rural development and set a precedent for future infrastructure 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.

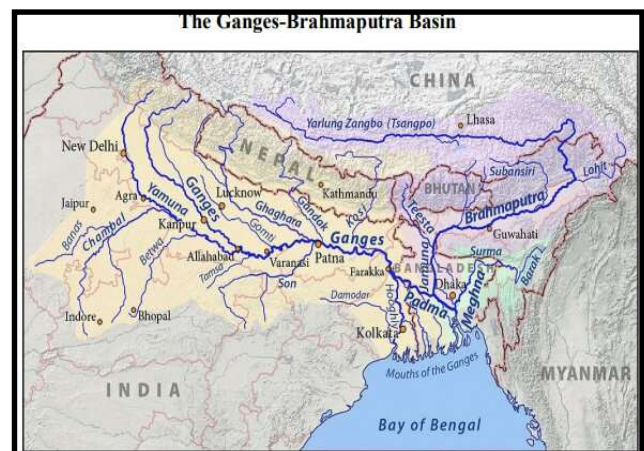
- The production process involves the fermentation of sugars by yeasts or via petrochemical processes such as ethylene hydration.



- 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.



### 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.

- 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.

### RECENTLY, INDIA HAS DECIDED TO ENDORSE AND APPROVE THE BIODIVERSITY BEYOND NATIONAL JURISDICTION (BBNJ) AGREEMENT ALSO CALLED HIGH SEAS TREATY -

- This global agreement is designed to safeguard high seas marine biodiversity through collaboration at international level and it will operate within the framework of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).



- According to the 1958 Geneva Convention on the High Seas, parts of the sea that are not included in the territorial waters or the internal waters of a country are known as the high seas. It is the area beyond a country's Exclusive Economic Zone (that extends up

to 200 nautical miles from the coastline) and till where a nation has jurisdiction over living and non-living resources.

- **No country is responsible for the management and protection of resources on the high seas. The high seas cover over 64% of the world's oceans and 50% of the Earth's surface,** making them vital for marine life.
- **They are home to around 270,000 known species, with many yet to be discovered.** The high seas regulate climate, absorb carbon, store solar radiation, and distribute heat, crucial for planetary stability and mitigating climate change. High Seas Treaty is formally called the Agreement on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction. In short, known as BBN or High Seas Treaty.
- It is a new international legal framework under UNCLOS for maintaining the ecological health of the oceans.
- The treaty was negotiated in 2023 and is meant to reduce pollution, and promote the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and other marine resources in ocean waters outside the national jurisdiction of any country.

### NAGALAND CROWNED BEST STATE IN HORTICULTURE: AGRICULTURE LEADERSHIP AWARDS 2024 -

- **In a significant recognition of its efforts in agricultural development, Nagaland has been awarded the title of best state in horticulture at the prestigious Agriculture Leadership Awards 2024.** This accolade highlights the state's commitment to innovative agricultural practices and rural development.
- **The Agriculture Leadership Awards, instituted in 2008, are annual recognitions that celebrate excellence and leadership in agricultural development and rural prosperity.** The 2024 awards ceremony took place as part



of the 15th Agriculture Leadership Conclave held in New Delhi.

- **Nagaland's victory in the horticulture category stems from its outstanding work in introducing innovative programmes and policies for horticulture development.** These initiatives have had a tangible positive impact on the lives of many farmers and rural residents in the state

### MAHARASHTRA WINS BEST AGRICULTURE STATE AWARD FOR 2024 -

- **The 15th Agriculture Leadership Awards Committee has announced that Maharashtra has won the Best Agriculture State Award for 2024.** The announcement was made by the committee headed by Justice P Sathasivam, former Chief Justice of India and Governor of Kerala.
- **Eknath Shinde, the Chief Minister of Maharashtra, will receive the award on July 10, 2024, at a function in New Delhi.**
- Maharashtra secured this prestigious award due to its innovative agricultural and rural initiatives. The state government's policies and high-impact developmental projects have significantly contributed to agricultural and rural prosperity.



### Key highlights of Maharashtra's agricultural innovations:

- A. Sustainable development policies focusing on environmental protection and food security
- B. Launch of the country's largest bamboo mission covering 21 lakh hectares
- C. Plans to establish a green belt spanning 1.20 lakh acres in Nandurbar district
- D. Target to enhance irrigation capabilities across 17 lakh hectares through 123 projects

**MP GOVT PLANTS 11 LAKH TREES IN SINGLE DAY, SETS WORLD RECORD -**

- Indore on July 14, set a new Guinness World Record in the category of “the most trees planted by a team in 24 hours” by planting more than 11 lakh saplings.



Chief Minister Mohan

Yadav stated that Indore, already the cleanest city in India and the economic capital of Madhya Pradesh, has now achieved the world record of planting more than 11 lakh saplings in a single day. The programme was organised by the state government.

- Indore is now number 1 in the world. My brothers and sisters of Indore, I congratulate you all for creating history in the plantation after cleanliness,” Yadav said in a post on his official X account while sharing the Guinness World Records certificate and pictures of receiving it.
- Earlier in the day, Union Home Minister Amit Shah participated in the ‘Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam’ campaign and planted a sapling. The “Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam” campaign was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on June 5 to mark World Environment Day. Under this drive, approximately 140 crore trees will be planted across the country, including 5.5 crore in Madhya Pradesh, which Shah described as the ‘lungs of Bharat.’

**INDIA PREPARES TO SIGN HEAD-QUARTERS AGREEMENT WITH GLOBAL BIOFUELS ALLIANCE -**

- The Global Biofuels Alliance (GBA), launched in September 2023 by key G20 members including India, the United States, and Brazil, is poised to take a significant step forward in its institutional development. The Indian government is preparing to sign a headquarters agreement with the alliance, marking a crucial milestone in the organization’s evolution and India’s role in global sustainable energy initiatives.

**The impending headquarters agreement will grant the GBA:**

- Diplomatic status within India
- Recognition as an international organization
- An independent legal persona
- This elevated status will enable the GBA to function more efficiently at the international level, mirroring the recognition given to other global initiatives like the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) and the International Solar Alliance (ISA).



## REPORTS & INDICES

**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-

- Decentralised Energy Production
- Economic Advantages
- Energy Independence
- 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.

### **INDIA'S POPULATION TO PEAK AT 1.7 BILLION BY 2060S BEFORE DECLINING: UN REPORT -**

- **India's population is projected to peak at 1.7 billion in the early 2060s before declining by 12%, as predicted by the United Nations' World Population Prospects 2024 report.** Despite the decline, India will remain the world's most populous country throughout the 21st century.



- **India's population, currently estimated at 1.45 billion, is expected to increase to 1.69 billion by 2054, peaking at about 1.7 billion in the early 2060s.** A decline of 12% is projected, bringing the population to around 1.5 billion by 2100.

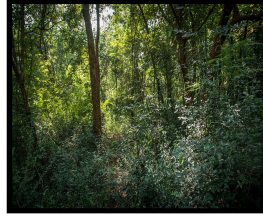
- **India surpassed China as the world's most populous nation last year and will retain this status throughout the century.** By the end of the century, India's population will still significantly exceed that of any other country.

- China's population, currently at 1.41 billion, is projected to decline to 1.21 billion by 2054 and further to 633 million by 2100 due to a low fertility rate of around one birth per woman

### **21.71% OF COUNTRY'S AREA UNDER FOREST COVER: MOS KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH -**

- **Forest Survey of India (FSI), Dehradun, an organization under the Ministry carries out the assessment of forest cover biennially. As per the latest India State of Forest Report (ISFR) published in 2021, the total forest cover of the country is 7,13,789**

square kilometer which is 21.71% of the geographical area of the country. The State/UTs wise details of forest cover as per ISFR, since 2019 are given in Annexure.



- The tree cover increased by 721 square kilometer during 2019 to 2021. There is no loss of tree cover during 2019 and 2021. Therefore, the question of increase in emission of carbon dioxide due to loss of tree cover does not arise.
- The contradictions between India State of Forest Report 2021 and Global Forest Watch data may be because of the differences in the definition of forest cover and tree cover adopted in these two reports. At present there is no plan to amend the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhniyam, 1980.

#### WORLD'S MOST POWERFUL PASSPORTS 2024: SINGAPORE LEADS; INDIA AT 82ND

- **Singapore has reclaimed its title as the world's most powerful passport**, offering visa-free access to a record 195 global destinations according to the Henley Passport Index. **India ranks 82nd, allowing visa-free entry to 58 countries.**
- **Singapore:** Visa-free access to 195 destinations, ranking first.
- **Joint Second:** France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Spain, each with visa-free access to 192 destinations.
- **Joint Third:** Austria, Finland, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, South Korea, Sweden, each with 191 destinations.
- **Fourth Place:** UK, Belgium, Denmark, New Zealand, Norway, Switzerland with 190 destinations.
- **Eighth Place:** US with 186 destinations, continuing its decade-long slide.
- **82nd Spot:** India, tied with Senegal and Tajikistan, allows visa-free entry to 58 countries.



#### MADHYA PRADESH TOPS BEST PERFORMING STATE IN SVANIDHI SCHEME -

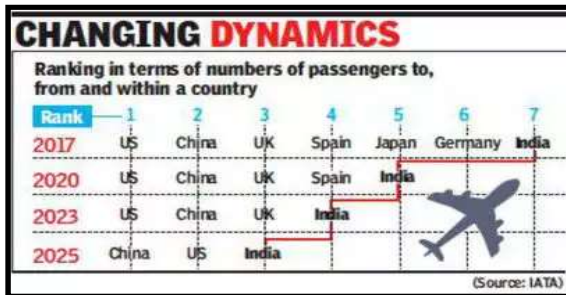
- The Union housing and Urban Affairs Ministry said that Madhya Pradesh is the best state in the Prime Minister SVANidhi scheme's "Best Performing State" category. The state's successful adoption of a micro-credit program to help urban street vendors is highlighted by this award.
- The PM SVANidhi plan, which started in 2020, gives loans of up to ₹50,000 to street vendors in cities with no collateral. During the COVID-19 pandemic, a plan was put in place to help vendors recover from the effects of the crisis on their businesses.
- Madhya Pradesh's involvement in the plan shows that it is well-managed and reached at the state level. Assam won second place in the "Best Performing States – Innovation and Best Practices Award" category, just behind Madhya Pradesh.



#### 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.

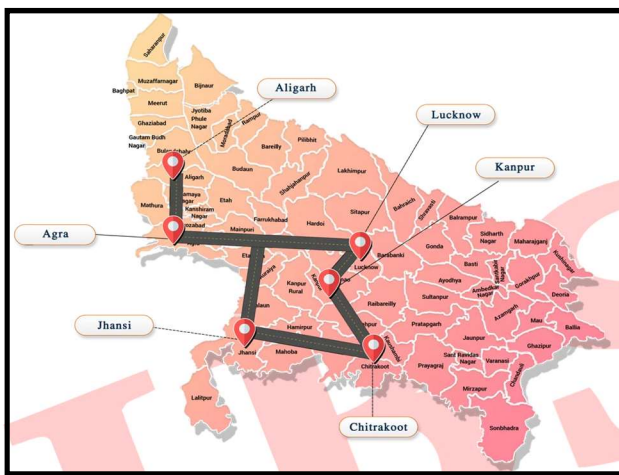
- Apart from the United Kingdom, all countries identified in the 2022 Environmental Performance Index (EPI) report as being on track to achieve net zero emissions by 2050, and have either seen slow progress, as in the **United States, or their emissions are still increasing, as seen in China, India, 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.**



# DEFENCE

## UTTAR PRADESH DEFENCE CORRIDOR BOOSTS INDUSTRIAL GROWTH -

- The Uttar Pradesh government has secured over 154 defence manufacturing deals worth Rs 25,000 crore, marking a significant stride in bolstering India's defence production capabilities. These initiatives are part of the Uttar Pradesh Defence Industrial Corridor (UPDIC), spanning Lucknow, Kanpur, Jhansi, Aligarh, Chitrakoot, and Agra districts.



- The corridor is set to create 40,000 new jobs and has already acquired 1,700 hectares of land for industrial development. Companies like Adani Defence, BrahMos Aerospace, and Tata Technologies are among the major stakeholders investing in projects totaling nearly Rs 8,000 crore.
- These efforts aim to enhance self-reliance in defence production and contribute to India's defence exports, which saw a significant rise of over 32% in the past year. Projects like the Kalashnikov AK-203 rifle assembly in Amethi and the upcoming BrahMos missile manufacturing facility in Lucknow further solidify Uttar Pradesh's role in India's defence manufacturing ecosystem.

## BSF, CISF REAFFIRMS 10% CAPFS RESERVATION FOR AGNIVEERS -

- The first batch of Agniveers will be eligible for recruitment in CAPFs such as CISF, BSF, CRPF, ITBP, SSB and Assam Rifles in 2026.
- Candidates between the age of 17.5 years to 21 years will be eligible for enrolling in the Agnipath scheme.
- Only 25% of Agniveers who are absorbed into the forces after 4 years will receive pension.



## INDIA UNVEILS INDIGENOUS LIGHT TANK 'ZORAWAR' -

- India has unveiled the 'Zorawar' light tank, developed jointly by DRDO and Larsen & Toubro, aimed at bolstering military capabilities in high-altitude environments. Designed within a record two-year timeframe, the tank features advanced weaponry and protection systems, including a 105mm rifled cannon and composite modular armor. Named after General Zorawar Singh, the tank is slated for extensive trials before potential deployment in Ladakh, Sikkim, or Kashmir.
- The 'Zorawar' tank, powered initially by a 750 HP Cummins engine with plans for a domestic replacement, boasts a sophisticated turret from John Cockerill with electro-optical cameras and anti-tank guided missiles. It integrates advanced systems like a Remote-Controlled Weapon system (RCWS) and is designed for amphibious operations, enhancing maneuverability across varied terrains.



**UNION BUDGET 2024-25: RS 6.22 LAKH CRORE ALLOCATED TO MINISTRY OF DEFENCE -**

- In the Regular Union Budget for FY 2024-25, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) has received an allocation of Rs 6,21,940.85 crore (approximately US \$75 billion), marking the highest allocation among all ministries.



This represents a 4.79% increase over the previous fiscal year (FY 2023-24) and an 18.43% increase compared to FY 2022-23. The budget focuses on promoting self-reliance in defence technology and manufacturing, equipping the Armed Forces with modern weapons and platforms, and enhancing operational readiness and veterans' healthcare.

- **Capital Expenditure:** Rs 1.72 lakh crore allocated to Defence Forces under capital head, a 20.33% increase from FY 2022-23 and 9.40% more than FY 2023-24.
- **Operational Readiness:** Rs 92,088 crore allocated for operational readiness, a 48% increase from FY 2022-23.
- **Veterans' Healthcare:** Rs 6,968 crore allocated to the Ex-Servicemen Contributory Health Scheme (ECHS), a 28% increase from the previous year.
- **Border Infrastructure:** Rs 6,500 crore allocated to Border Roads Organisations (BRO) under capital for BE 2024-25, a 30% increase from FY 2023-24 and 160% higher than FY 2021-22.
- **Indian Coast Guard:** Rs 7,651.80 crore allocated, a 6.31% increase over FY 2023-24.
- **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO):** Rs 23,855 crore allocated, with a major share for capital expenditure.
- **Defence Pensions:** Rs 1,41,205 crore allocated, a 2.17% increase from FY 2023-24.

**DRDO SUCCESSFULLY FLIGHT-TESTS PHASE-II BALLISTIC MISSILE DEFENCE SYSTEM -**

- On July 24, 2024, the Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO) of India achieved

a significant milestone in its ongoing efforts to enhance national security.

- The organization successfully conducted a flight test of the Phase-II Ballistic Missile Defence System, demonstrating India's growing capabilities in defending against long-range ballistic missile threats.



- At 16:20 hours, a Target Missile was launched from LC-IV Dhamra. This missile was designed to mimic an adversary's ballistic missile, presenting a realistic threat scenario for the defence system to counter.
- The simulated threat was promptly detected by weapon system radars deployed both on land and at sea. This detection triggered the activation of the AD Interceptor system, showcasing the integrated nature of India's missile defence network.

**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.

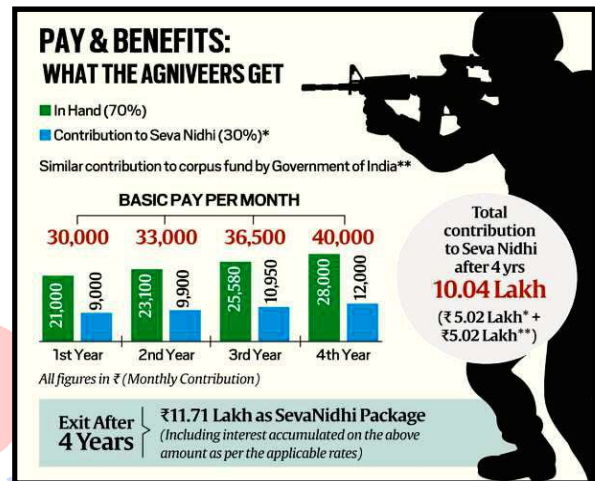


- The exercise will be held in 2 phases, with the first phase in southern India and the second in the western sector.
- Australia, France, Germany, Japan, Spain, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, and the United States are expected to participate.
- Germany will showcase the A-400M aircraft, 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.

### 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

### **GAGAN NARANG APPOINTED AS INDIA'S CHEF-DE-MISSION FOR PARIS OLYMPICS 2024 -**

- Four-time Olympian and 2012 Olympic bronze medalist Gagan Narang has been appointed as India's Chef-De-Mission for the 2024 Paris Olympics. This decision comes after Mary Kom's resignation from the position due to health issues.
- Narang's elevation from deputy chef-de-mission to the chief role was described by the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) as a natural progression following Mary Kom's departure.



### **The role of Chef-De-Mission is crucial for the Olympic contingent. Key responsibilities include:**

- Overseeing athletes' well-being
- Serving as the primary point of contact with organizing committees
- Liaising with sporting members of the contingent

### **NEERAJ CHOPRA TO LEAD 28-MEMBER SQUAD IN PARIS OLYMPICS -**

- A 28-member Indian athletics team, led by men's javelin throw defending champion Neeraj Chopra, will compete at the Paris 2024 Olympics, the Athletics Federation of India (AFI) announced on June 04. Chopra made history three years ago by becoming the first Indian track and field athlete to win a medal at the Olympics, that too a gold.
- This time, the Indian javelin throw ace will have Olympic debutant Kishore Jena for company in his pet event.
- The 2024 Summer Olympics, officially the Games of the XXXIII Olympiad and officially branded as Paris 2024, is an upcoming international multi-sport event scheduled to take place from 26 July (the date of the opening ceremony) to 11 August 2024 in France,



with some competitions starting on 24 July. Paris is the main host city, with events held at 16 other cities spread across Metropolitan France, plus one subsite in Tahiti—an island within the French overseas country and overseas collectivity of French Polynesia.

### **SPAIN CLINCHES EURO 2024 TITLE WITH DRAMATIC VICTORY OVER ENGLAND -**

- In a thrilling finale to Euro 2024, Spain secured their fourth European Championship trophy with a nail-biting 2-1 victory over England at the Olympiastadion in Berlin.
- This win cements Spain's status as the most successful nation in the tournament's history and marks their third title in the last five editions.
- The opening 45 minutes saw both teams cautiously feeling each other out, with Spain dominating possession but struggling to create clear-cut chances. England managed the first shot on target just before halftime, as Phil Foden's close-range effort was comfortably saved by Spanish goalkeeper Unai Simón.



### **BCCI GRANTS RS 8.5 CRORE FOR INDIAN OLYMPIC CONTINGENT -**

- Jay Shah, Secretary of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), told the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) on July 20 that the BCCI would be giving Rs. 8.5 crore to help pay for the 2024 Olympics in Paris. India's success at the Games will be improved by this financial help.
- India will send 117 runners to the 2024 Olympics, which is a little less than the number that went to



**Tokyo 2020.** The total number of people in the contingent has grown to 257, though, because a lot of teachers and support staff are now with the athletes.

- There are a total of 140 support staff. Of those, 67 will be staying in the Games Village and 72 will be staying somewhere else, with government money paying for their stay. With this new plan, there will be a better mix of athletes to support staff.

### MANOLO MARQUEZ APPOINTED HEAD COACH OF INDIAN MEN'S FOOTBALL TEAM -

- **Manolo Marquez was appointed as the new head coach of the Indian men's football team by the All India Football Federation (AIFF) on July 20.** Marquez will take over as the full-time national team head coach after ISL 2024-25.



- **From Barcelona, Spain, Marquez has a stellar record of coaching in India. In his first stint, he transformed underdogs Hyderabad FC into ISL champions before he took over at Goa.** Last season, Goa finished third in the league and reached the semifinals of the playoffs. Before coming to India, Marquez had extensive experience coaching in Spain at clubs like Las Palmas (in La Liga), and Las Palmas B, Espanyol B, Badalona, Prat, Europa (third division).
- The 55-year-old Spaniard will take over the role immediately. However, Marquez, who is currently serving as the head coach of Indian Super League (ISL) side FC Goa, will simultaneously continue to fulfil his club commitments till the 2024-25 season ends.

### OLYMPIC GAMES PARIS 2024 OPENING CEREMONY -

- **Location of the opening ceremony:** On the banks of river Seine, Paris, France.
- The ceremony started with a short film featuring the soccer icon Zinedine Zidane, with the first musical interlude featuring the popstar Lady Gaga singing entirely in French.

- A total of 78 athletes and officials from 12 disciplines represented India.



- **Motto of Paris Olympics:** "Games wide open."

### 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.

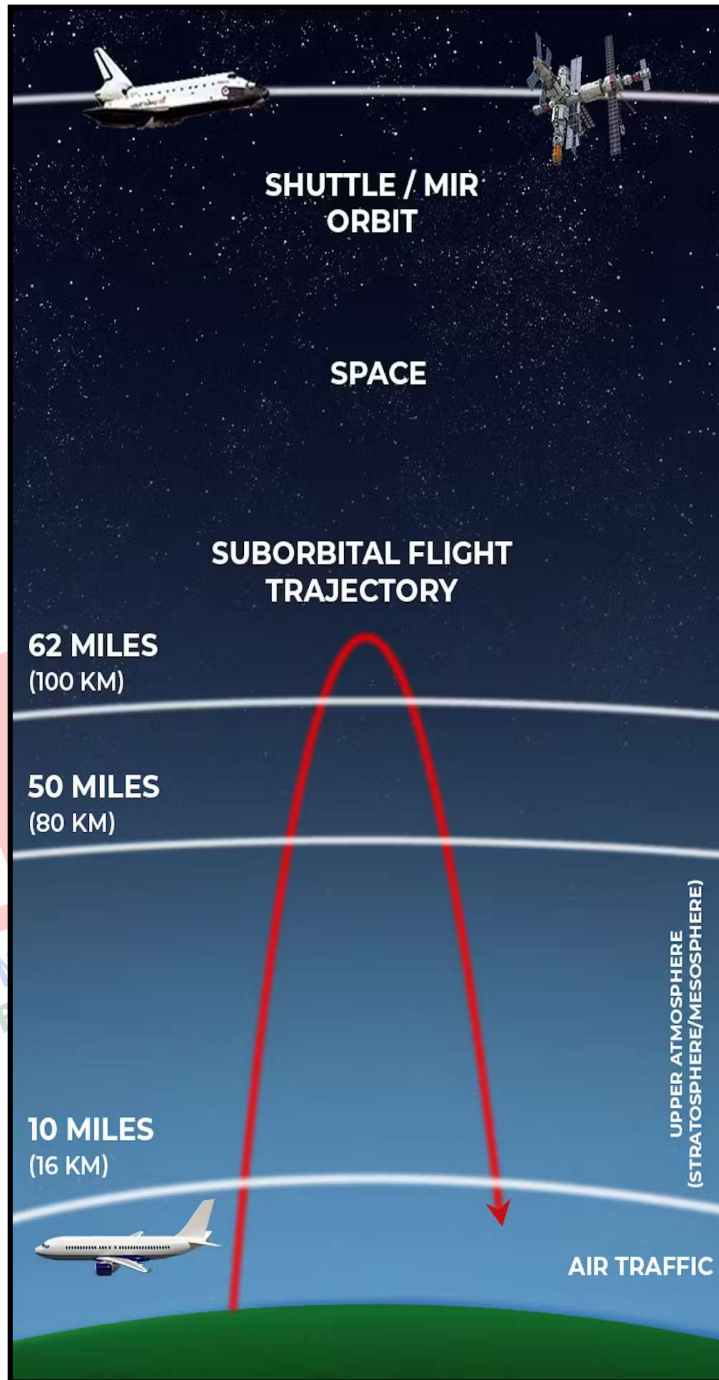


- Earlier, Virat Kohli (76) and Axar Patel (47) weathered the early storm to push India to a competitive score in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup final against South Africa in Bridgetown on June 29.

### 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)

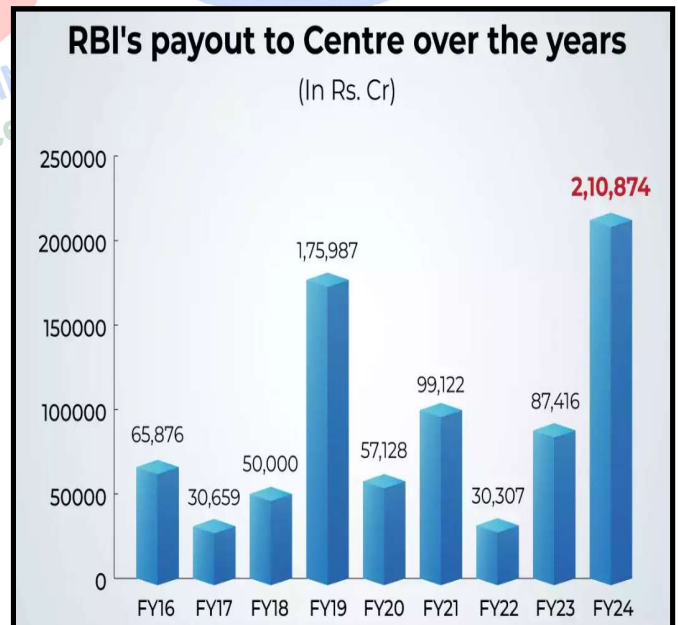
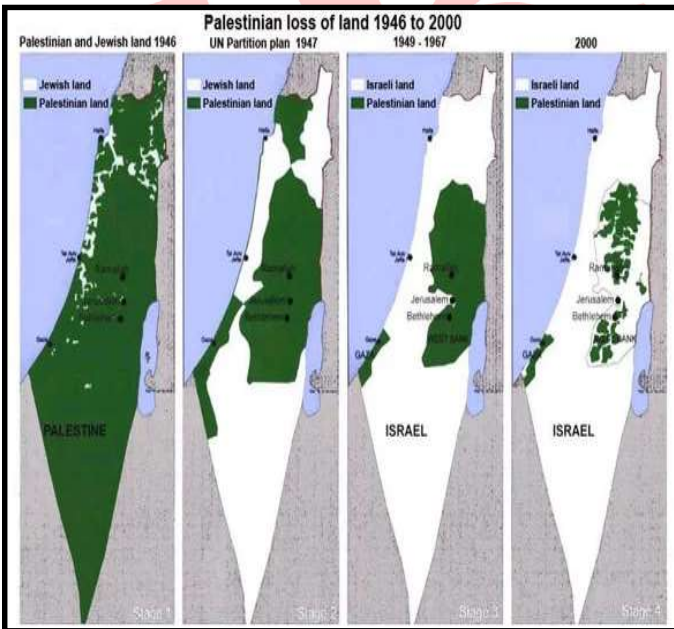
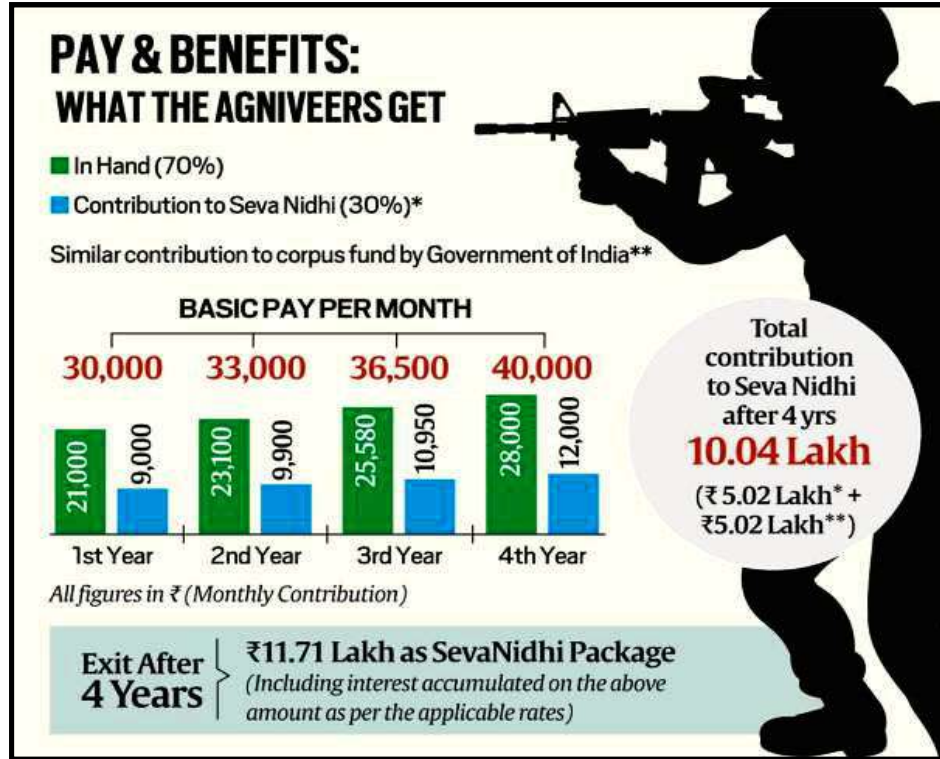
# MAPS



**IBS**  
EMPOWERING  
Leaders in F









- Q11. Indian army recently conducted joint military exercise 'Maitree' with which country's army ?  
a) Indonesia                      b) Egypt  
c) Thailand                        d) Vietnam
- Q12. Which organization named Pawan Kapoor and TV Ravichandran as the new deputy members of its Council Secretariat team in July 2024 ?  
a) DRDO    b) NABARD    c) NSA            d) IRDAI
- Q13. Nyoma-Chushul region, recently seen in news due to flash floods, is located in which state/UT ?  
a) Assam                              b) Sikkim  
c) Ladakh                            d) Uttarakhand
- Q14. Svalbard, recently seen in the news, is an archipelago located in which ocean ?  
a) Arctic Ocean                      b) Indian Ocean  
c) Atlantic Ocean                    d) Pacific Ocean
- Q15. FIDE has declared that Singapore would host the 2024 World Championship match between India's D Gukesh and the defending champion, Ding Liren from which country ?  
a) China    b) Japan    c) Spain    d) Germany
- Q16. The HSBC India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) increased to \_\_\_\_\_, up from 57.5 in May 2024, suggesting a more significant improvement in business conditions.  
a) 58.2    b) 57.2    c) 58.3    d) 57.3
- Q17. Our knowledge about the Harappan civilization is as yet incomplete because  
a) Only a few sites have so far been excavated  
b) We have absolutely no idea regarding the economic conditions then prevailing  
c) The script on the Harappan seals is still indecipherable  
d) The evidence available does not throw any light on religious beliefs
- Q18. The Indus Valley Civilisation belongs to the-  
a) "Palaeolithic Age"    b) "Mesolithic Age"  
c) "Chalcolithic Age"    d) "Neolithic Age"
- Q19. In economics secondary effects refer to the  
a) best alternative that must be forgone as the result of a choice.  
b) immediate and visible intended consequences of a change.  
c) impact of the scarcity of resources on the scarcity of the goods that are produced with those resources.  
d) unintended consequences of a change that are not immediately identifiable but are felt only with time.
- Q20. Which curve shows the inverse relationship between unemployment and inflation rates  
a) Supply curve                      b) Indifference curve  
c) IS curve                            d) Phillips curve
- Q21. Consider the following statements:  
1. Madras was officially renamed Chennai on July 17, 1996.  
2. The state of Madras was renamed Tamil Nadu on January 14, 1969.  
3. Chennai is located on the Malabar Coast in southeast India.  
4. Chennai is known as the "Silicon Valley of India".  
How many of the statements given above are incorrect?  
a) Only one                            b) Only two  
c) Only three                         d) All four
- Q22. With reference to the Pradhan Mantri Schools for Rising India (PM-SHRI) Scheme, consider the following statements:  
1. It is a centrally sponsored scheme which was announced in 2020.  
2. Its goal is to development of more than 14500 schools across the country.  
3. The PM SHRI Schools will be developed as Green Schools.  
How many of the statements given above are correct ?  
a) Only one                            b) Only two  
c) All three                            d) None
- Q23. Who has the authority to amend the list of Scheduled Castes under Article 341 of the Indian Constitution ?  
a) The President alone.  
b) The Parliament alone.  
c) The President with the consent of the Parliament.  
d) The Supreme Court of India.
- Q24. Consider the following statements about the Sutlej River :  
• It enters India through the Shipki La Pass in Himachal Pradesh.



- Sutlej River meets the Beas River in Harike.
- Salal Dam is a run-of-the-river hydropower project on the Sutlej River.

Which of the statements given above are correct ?

- a) 1 and 2 only                      b) 2 and 3 only  
c) 1 and 3 only                      d) 1, 2 and 3

Q25. Consider the following statements:

- The Status of Leopards in India report is released by International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).
- Madhya Pradesh has the highest number of leopards in India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?

- a) 1 only                                      b) 2 only  
c) Both 1 and 2                      d) Neither 1 nor 2

Q26. Consider the following statements:

1. National Waterway 1 (NW-1) is the longest National Waterway in India.
2. The Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) is responsible for the development and maintenance of national waterways only, and not state waterways.
3. The IWAI operates under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

How many of the above statements are correct ?

- a) Only one                                      b) Only two  
c) All three                                      d) None

Q27. Consider the following statements regarding the Nalanda University :

1. The university was founded by Chandragupta II.
2. Hiuen Tsang visited Nalanda during the reign of Harshavardhan.
3. The library of Nalanda University was called Dharmaganja.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct ?

- a) 1 only                                      b) 2 only  
c) 1 and 2 only                      d) 2 and 3 only

Q28. Consider the following statements:

1. The Supreme Court of India has a sanctioned strength of 34 judges, including the Chief Justice of India.
2. The collegium system plays a crucial role in the selection and recommendation of candidates for the Supreme Court.
3. The Constitution of India has set the minimum age of 45 years for the appointment of judges to Supreme Court.

Which of the statements given above are correct ?

- a) 1 and 2 only                      b) 2 and 3 only  
c) 1 and 3 only                      d) 1, 2 and 3

Q29. Positive Indigenisation List (PIL) was seen in the news recently, is :

- a) A list of imported defence items that are approved for use by the Indian armed forces.
- b) A catalogue of defence technologies India is willing to export to friendly nations.
- c) A register of foreign defence companies allowed to operate in India.
- d) A list of defence items that will only be procured from domestic manufacturers after specified timelines.

Q30. Which of the following statements(s) is/are correct ?

1. Indonesia is the world leader in nickel production and reserves.
  2. Nickel is used in the electric vehicle (EV) industry.
- Select the correct answer using the codes given below:
- a) 1 only                                      b) 2 only  
c) Both 1 and 2                      d) Neither 1 nor 2

Q31. What is the capital city of Somalia ?

- a) Apia                                      b) Mogadishu  
c) Kigali                                      d) Tunis

Q32. Ujjain is situated on the banks of which river ?

- a) Shipra                                      b) Cauvery  
c) Narmada                                      d) Mahanadi

Q33. Where is the hq of The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) situated ?

- a) London                                      b) Paris  
c) Beijing                                      d) New York

Q34. What is the state bird of Himachal Pradesh ?

- a) Western tragopan                      b) Yellow Bulbul  
c) Hill myna                                      d) White-winged duc

Q35. Thane-Borivali Tunnel project, recently seen in the news, is associated with which state ?

- a) Uttar Pradesh                      b) Kerala  
c) Maharashtra                      d) Gujarat

Q36. Which state won the 'Best State in Horticulture Award 2024' in the Agriculture Leadership Awards 2024 ?

- a) Assam                                      b) Arunachal Pradesh  
c) Nagaland                                      d) Sikkim

- Q37. Which nation's container ship "San Fernando" made its debut at India's biggest transshipment port, Vizhinjam International Seaport Limited (VISL), berthing in Kerala ?  
a) Japan      b) China      c) USA      d) Russia
- Q38. In July 2024, a report predicted India is predicted to reach a tipping point in \_\_\_\_\_, when its 1.61 billion people reach twice the number of China's 806 million.  
a) 2080      b) 2085      c) 2075      d) 2070
- Q39. On which date the Central Government declare "Samvidhan Hatya Diwas" to protest and honour those who fought against the injustice during the Emergency imposed by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in 1975 ?  
a) June 24      b) June 25      c) June 27      d) June 28
- Q40. In July 2024, K P Sharma Oli was sworn in as Nepal's Prime Minister for the \_\_\_\_\_ time.  
a) second      b) third      c) fourth      d) fifth
- Q41. Project 2025, recently seen in the news, is related to which country ?  
a) Australia      b) Japan      c) USA      d) India
- Q42. President Draupadi Murmu has appointed Justice N. Kotiswar Singh and Justice R. Mahadevan as judges of the Supreme Court. With these two appointments, the sanctioned number of judges in the Supreme Court will increase to \_\_\_\_\_.  
a) 32      b) 33      c) 34      d) 31
- Q43. Nallathambi Kalaiselvi has been appointed as Director General for the second time in which of the following organizations ?  
a) Department of Scientific and Industrial Research  
b) Indian council of medical research  
c) Defence Research & Development Organization  
d) Council of Scientific and Industrial Research
- Q44. Nelson Mandela International Day is observed on every year on which day ?  
a) 15 July      b) 16 July      c) 17 July      d) 18 July
- Q45. The Indian team, which participated at the 35th International Biology Olympiad (IBO) 2024 achieved remarkable success, with one student winning a GOLD medal and three students securing SILVER medals.  
The 35th IBO was held in which country ?  
a) Kazakhstan      b) Oman  
c) UAE      d) India
- Q46. Shaurya Bawa, who was seen in news in July 2024 for achieving a remarkable achievement, is associated with which of the following sport ?  
a) Tennis      b) Shotput  
c) Squash      d) Wushu
- Q47. 'Hind Swaraj' was written by  
a) Abdul Kalam Azad      b) Gandhiji  
c) Sardar Patel      d) None of the above
- Q48. Which of the following refers to print revolution ?  
a) Invention of printing press  
b) Shift from hand printing to mechanical printing  
c) Revolt of people against printed matters  
d) Handwritten manuscripts for printed books
- Q49. Which one of the following is considered the best form of government ?  
a) Democracy      b) Dictatorship  
c) Monarchy      d) Military Rule
- Q50. Which is known as "Golden Fibre" ?  
a) Cotton      b) Jute      c) Rice      d) Silk
- Q51. In India all of the following are sources for government revenue, except ?  
a) Agricultural income tax      b) Anti dumping duty  
c) Perquisite tax      d) Toll tax
- Q52. Which among the following does not count in the development expenditure of government ?  
a) Expenditure on economic services  
b) Expenditure on social services  
c) Grant to states  
d) Defence expenditure
- Q53. What does the term 'Call Money' refer to ?  
a) A loan made for a very short period of a few days or a week  
b) Student loans to help cover the cost of higher education  
c) Loans to allow consumers to buy homes they can't pay for upfront  
d) Personal loans for any personal expenses which don't have a designated purpose

- Q54. The demand for a normal good increases with \_\_\_\_\_ in the consumer's income.  
a) increase                      b) decrease  
c) constant                      d) double
- Q55. With reference to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), consider the following statements:  
1. It is an agency of the United Nations, provides humanitarian and developmental aid to children worldwide.  
2. It was established by the United Nations General Assembly and Ludwik Rajchman.  
3. It began its work in India in 1949.  
How many of the statements given above are correct ?  
a) Only one                      b) Only two  
c) All three                      d) None
- Q56. Recently, the Prime Minister of India remembered and paid tribute to Pingali Venkayya on his birth anniversary. He was the known as the designer of which of the followings ?  
a) Ram Mandir in Ayodhya  
b) Indian National Flag (Tricolour)  
c) National Emblem  
d) Rashtrapati Bhavan
- Q57. Consider the following statements about Uniform Civil Code:  
1. It refers to the formulation of one law for India.  
2. Article 44 directs the state to implement a UCC in India.  
3. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar believed that this Code was desirable but should be voluntary for the time being.  
4. Goa is the only Indian state with a Uniform Civil Code for all residents, regardless of religion.  
How many of the statements given above are correct ?  
a) Only one      b) Only two      c) Only three      d) All four
- Q58. Consider the following statements about Cloudbursts:  
1. It is a sudden, intense precipitation event that can lead to flooding.  
2. It occurs through orographic lift or warm-cool air mixing, causing rapid condensation.  
Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?  
a) 1 Only                      b) 2 Only  
c) Both 1 and 2                      d) Neither 1 nor 2
- Q59. With reference to the 'Tarang Shakti 2024,' consider the following statements:  
1. It is a two-phase military exercise to be hosted by the Indian Air Force.  
2. Its first phase will held Sular, Tamil Nadu from 6th of August.  
3. The second phase will take place in Pathankot from September 1–14.  
How many of the statements given above are correct ?  
a) Only one      b) Only two      c) All three      d) None
- Q60. Which of the following statements are correct about the Rabies ?  
1. Rabies is a viral, zoonotic, neglected tropical disease.  
2. Transmission to humans primarily occurs through contact with the blood of infected animals.  
3. It is a vaccine-preventable disease.  
Select the answer using the code given below:  
a) 1 and 2 only                      b) 2 and 3 only  
c) 1 and 3 only                      d) 1, 2 and 3
- Q61. Consider the following statements regarding Thorium-based nuclear power station.  
1. Russia has built the world's first nuclear power plant using molten thorium salt.  
2. Unlike uranium, thorium must first be converted to U-233 in a reactor to produce nuclear energy.  
3. The station's reactor uses carbon dioxide for heat transfer and heavy water for cooling.  
How many of the above statements is/are correct ?  
a) Only one                      b) Only two  
c) All three                      d) None
- Q62. Consider the following statements regarding Gobi Desert.  
1. Gobi Desert is a vast, arid region located entirely in China.  
2. It is known for its dunes, mountains and rare animals such as snow leopards and Bactrian camels.  
3. The Gobi Desert is the source of many important fossil finds.  
How many of the above statements is/are correct ?  
a) Only one                      b) Only two  
c) All three                      d) None
- Q63. Consider the following statements regarding Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR).  
1. Indian Council of Agricultural Research reports to the Department of Agriculture & Farmers 'Welfare.  
2. ICAR established Krishi Vigyan Kendras for the vocational training of farmers.



3. It assists farmers with access to improved technologies and technical support services.  
How many of the above statements is/are correct ?  
a) Only one                      b) Only two  
c) All three                      d) None
- Q64. The Report on Currency and Finance 2023-24, recently seen in news is released by  
a) Ministry of Finance      b) State Bank of India  
c) Niti Ayog                      d) Reserve Bank of India
- Q65. Saang is the famous dance of which of the following Indian state ?  
a) Himanchal Pradesh      b) Rajasthan  
c) Punjab                      d) Haryana
- Q66. What is the currency of Hungary ?  
a) Forint      b) Peso      c) Manat      d) Colon
- Q67. Bharatanatyam is the famous folk dance of which of the following Indian state ?  
a) Tamil Nadu      b) Odisha      c) Kerala      d) Goa
- Q68. Dhubri port located in which Indian state ?  
a) Maharashtra      b) Kerala  
c) Assam                      d) West Bengal
- Q69. Adam's Bridge, recently seen in the news, is separated by which two water bodies ?  
a) Bay of Bengal and Arabian Sea  
b) Gulf of Mannar and Palk Strait  
c) Red Sea and Gulf of Aden  
d) Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean Sea
- Q70. Recently, India signed a 'Cultural Property Agreement' with which country to prevent and curb the illicit trafficking of antiquities ?  
a) USA      b) Russia      c) China      d) Japan
- Q71. What is the name of the typhoon that recently wreaked havoc across Taiwan, the Philippines, and parts of southeastern China ?  
a) Typhoon Thelma                      b) Typhoon Gaemi  
c) Typhoon Eve                      d) Typhoon Barijat
- Q72. Recently, where was the 14th East Asia Summit Foreign Ministers' Meeting (EAS FMM) held ?  
a) Beijing, China                      b) Vientiane, Lao PDR  
c) New Delhi, India                      d) Jakarta, Indonesia
- Q73. Recently, researchers have spotted 'Magnetofossils' in which region of India ?  
a) Ladakh                      b) Assam  
c) Manipur                      d) Gujarat
- Q74. Which Hall was originally called the Throne Room, located under the Vice Regal Lodge's central dome ?  
a) Ashok hall                      b) Durbar hall  
c) Ball hall                      d) Grandeur hall
- Q75. With a length of 4.1 km and an elevation of \_\_\_\_\_ feet, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will fire the first explosion for the Shinku La tunnel, which will exceed China's Mila tunnel in terms of height.  
a) 16800 feet                      b) 14800 feet  
c) 15800 feet                      d) 18800 feet
- Q76. Once 4G services are launched, BSNL hopes to have a 25% market share of subscribers by the end of 2025. With 86.3 million mobile customers, what percentage of the market is it now ?  
a) 7.2%      b) 7.3%      c) 7.4%      d) 7.5%
- Q77. A detachment of the Indian Army left for the Multinational Military Exercise KHAAN QUEST. In which nation will the drill take place between July 27 and August 9, 2024 ?  
a) Maldives                      b) Mongolia  
c) France                      d) Australia
- Q78. National Security Advisor NSA Ajit Doval led the Indian delegation at the 4th Annual Meeting of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation BIMSTEC Security Chiefs in which country ?  
a) Myanmar                      b) Bangladesh  
c) Sri Lanka                      d) Nepal
- Q79. Recently, who has become the first woman to be appointed the Director General of Medical Services ?  
a) Lt Gen Punita Arora  
b) Lt Gen Sadhna Saxena Nair  
c) Lt Gen Madhuri Kanitkar  
d) Lt Gen Kavita Sahai
- Q80. Krishnaraja Sagar (KRS) Dam, recently seen in the news, is located in which state ?  
a) Karnataka                      b) Tamil Nadu  
c) Gujarat                      d) Kerala

- Q81. 'Political parties are allotted symbols by
- The government of India
  - The constitution of India
  - The party leaders
  - The Election Commission
- Q82. Monazite sand in Kerala is rich in \_\_\_\_\_.
- Uranium
  - Thorium
  - Titanium
  - Iron ore
- Q83. Which one of the following industry uses bauxite as a raw material ?
- Aluminium
  - Cement
  - Paper
  - Steel
- Q84. Which among the following profession belongs to the tertiary sector of the economy ?
- Fisherman
  - Farmer
  - Factory worker
  - Teacher
- Q85. The difference between exports and imports is called ?
- assets and liabilities
  - balance of payment
  - GDP
  - balance of trade
- Q86. For the buying and selling of precious metals such as Gold and Silver, the market established is termed as \_\_\_\_\_.
- Capital Market
  - Money Market
  - Bullion Market
  - Wholesale cash market
- Q87. Open Market Operations refer to \_\_\_\_\_.
- Borrowings by Scheduled banks from RBI
  - Lending by Commercial banks to industry
  - Purchase and sale of Government securities by RBI
  - Deposit mobilisation
- Q88. When the productive capacity of the economic system of state is inadequate to create sufficient number of jobs, it is called \_\_\_\_\_.
- seasonal unemployment
  - structural unemployment
  - disguised unemployment
  - cyclical unemployment
- Q89. Recently, where was the second annual meeting of the initiative on Critical and Emerging Technologies (iCET) between India and the US held ?
- New Delhi
  - Chennai
  - Hyderabad
  - Jaipur
- Q90. What is the main objective of 'SDG 7', recently in news ?
- Promote nuclear energy development
  - Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 50%
  - Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all
  - Increase fossil fuel production worldwide

## ANSWERS

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