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NATIONAL

UNION HOME MINISTER AMIT SHAH SAID THAT THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT WILL CREATE FIVE NEW DISTRICTS IN THE UNION TERRITORY OF LADAKH -

- MHA has decided to create five new districts in the union territory: **The new districts would be Zaskar, Drass, Sham, Nubra and Changthang**
- MHA has asked the Ladakh administration to form a committee to assess various aspects related to the formation of new districts. **Such as headquarters, boundaries, structure, creation of posts, and any other aspect related to the formation of districts.**
- The Union Home ministry has asked the Ladakh administration to submit its report within three months. Ladakh will send the final proposal regarding the creation of new districts on the basis of this report to the Union Home Ministry for further action
- Creation of five new districts in Ladakh as a step towards better governance and prosperity.
- Ladakh is a very large Union territory in terms of area. At present, Ladakh has two districts –Leh and Kargil. It is one of the least populated areas of India.



BHARATMALA PARIYOJANA -

- **Nearly 50% of the Bharatmala Pariyojana Phase-I, a flagship road network expansion program, has been completed as of 31st March 2024** and is expected to be completed by 2027-28.
- The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways' Vision 2047 aims to provide high-speed corridors within 100-150 km of all citizens and enhance passenger convenience by developing world-class amenities.
- This vision serves as the basis for the Master Plan for highways and related infrastructure in India.

- **The first-phase of Bharatmala was announced in 2017 and was to be completed by 2022, but it could not be completed due to slow implementation and financial constraints.**
- **Bharatmala, Sagarmala, dry/land ports, and other infrastructure projects have been incorporated under PM Gati-Shakti Plan to enhance connectivity and logistics efficiency.**



CYCLONE ASNA FORMS OVER KUTCH -

- **Cyclone Asna has formed over the Kutch coast in Gujarat and adjoining areas of Pakistan, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said on August 30.**
- **The cyclonic storm – a rare land-originating one in August and headed to the Arabian Sea – is expected to move further away from the western coast in the next 48 hours.**
- Asna name has been given by Pakistan.
- The name Asna, which means “the one to be acknowledged or praised”. Between 1891 and 2023, only three cyclonic storms formed in the Arabian Sea in August (in 1976, 1964, and 1944), according to the IMD.

WAQF BOARD AMENDMENT BILL 2024 -

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government is all set to table the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024, in the Lok Sabha on August 8.** The new bill that proposes to amend the Waqf Act, 1995 will be introduced in the Lok Sabha by Minority Affairs Minister Kiren Rijju.
- **With over 40 amendments, the bill has proposed to revoke several clauses in the existing Waqf Act – the law governing Waqf boards.** It has proposed far-reaching changes in the present Act, including ensuring

the representation of Muslim women and non-Muslims in such bodies.

- **The Bill proposes the inclusion of two Muslim women and two non-Muslim members in the Waqf Board, and inserts a new section to prevent the wrongful declaration of a property as ‘Waqf’.** The Waqf comprises property or land donated by followers of Islam, and is presently managed by the members of the community. Waqf Boards currently control 8.7 lakh properties spanning 9.4 lakh acres across India, with an estimated value of ₹1.2 lakh crore.
- **Collectively, this makes the Waqf Boards the third largest landowner in India, after the armed forces and the Indian Railways.** The Waqf Act was last amended in 2013.

INDIA CELEBRATES NATIONAL SPACE DAY WITH LAUNCH OF ‘SAPNO KI UDAAN’ E-MAGAZINE -

- **On India’s inaugural National Space Day, the nation witnessed a significant educational milestone with the release of ‘Sapno ki Udaan’,** an innovative e-magazine. This launch, spearheaded by Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, marks a fusion of science, creativity, and education, aimed at inspiring the next generation of Indian students.
- The e-magazine was officially unveiled through a virtual launch event, reflecting the digital-first approach of modern educational initiatives. This format allowed for widespread participation and accessibility across the country.



Key Attendees

- Dharmendra Pradhan: Union Minister of Education
- Jayant Chaudhary: Minister of State for Education
- Sanjay Kumar: Secretary, Department of School Education and Literacy
- Other notable attendees included Vipin Kumar (Additional Secretary), Prof. D.P.

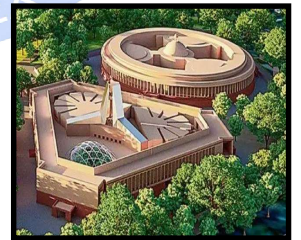
Saklani (Director, NCERT), Rahul Singh (Chairperson, CBSE), and Prof. Saroj Sharma (Chairperson, NIOS)

The e-magazine presents a diverse array of content, including:

- Poetry
- Essays
- Stories
- Anecdotes
- Riddles
- What makes ‘Sapno ki Udaan’ unique is its sourcing of content from a wide range of contributors, including students, teachers, and parents from across India.

SIX NEW PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES FOR 2024-25: LOK SABHA SPEAKER CONSTITUTES -

- The Lok Sabha speaker on August 17, named the constituents of the six new Parliamentary Committees including the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) which examines government expenditure.
- Ganesh Singh, BJP MP from Satna, Madhya Pradesh has been appointed as the chairperson of the Committee on Welfare of Other Backward Classes.



Six New Parliamentary Committees for 2024-25

- Public Account committee
 - Committee on Public Undertakings
 - Committee on Estimates
 - Committee on Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes
 - Committee on Welfare of Other Backward Classes
 - Committee on Public Accounts
- The Committee was first established in 2012 and its functions include, considering reports from the National Commission for Backward Classes and reviewing welfare measures for OBCs.
 - BJP Lok Sabha MP from Mandla constituency Dr Faggan Singh Kulaste has been appointed as the chairperson of

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the committee on the Welfare of scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

- Similarly, a BJP Lok Sabha MP from Odisha's Kendrapara, Baijyant Panda has been appointed as the chairperson of the committee on Public undertakings.

RASHTRAPATI BHAVAN HALLS RENAMED TO REFLECT INDIAN CULTURAL VALUES

- In a bid to align with Indian cultural values and reduce traces of colonial influence, Rashtrapati Bhavan has officially renamed two of its prominent halls.



- **Durbar Hall is now Ganatantra Mandap, reflecting the Republic concept, replacing the colonial term 'Durbar' (courts and assemblies of Indian rulers and the British).**

- **Ashok Hall has been renamed Ashok Mandap, honouring Emperor Ashoka and Indian cultural significance.** This change aims to remove anglicized influences and align with the ethos associated with the word 'Ashok.'

- **The Rashtrapati Bhavan statement mentioned that Ashok Hall was originally a ballroom.** The word 'Ashok' signifies being free from sufferings or sorrow, and also refers to Emperor Ashok, a symbol of unity and peaceful co-existence.

- The word also refers to the Ashok tree, which holds deep significance in Indian religious traditions, arts, and culture.

- **The Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi is the largest residence of any Head of State in the world.** It was originally built as the 'Viceroy House' for the British Viceroy of India and later renamed Rashtrapati Bhavan when India became a Republic in 1950.

- **It was designed by British architect Sir Edwin Landseer Lutyens, who combined Indian, Mughal, and European architectural styles.**

- **In 2023, the world-renowned Mughal Gardens at the Rashtrapati Bhavan were also renamed as Amrit Udyan.**

- Earlier in 2022, the PM inaugurated the 'Kartavya Path' symbolising a shift from erstwhile Rajpath being an icon of power to Kartavya Path being an example of public ownership and empowerment.

INDIA'S FIRST CONSTITUTION MUSEUM MARKS 75 YEARS OF THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION -

- **India's first Constitution Museum, named "The Constitution Academy and The Rights & Freedoms Museum," is set to be inaugurated by OP Jindal**



Global University on November 26, 2024. This initiative celebrates the 75th anniversary of the adoption of the Indian Constitution.

- **The museum will provide an in-depth exploration of the Indian Constitution, highlighting its various sections and their significance.** Visitors can engage with profiles of Constituent Assembly members, examine the debates and discussions that shaped the Constitution, and explore the document's evolution through textual, audio-visual, and experiential formats.

SUPREME COURT'S LANDMARK VERDICT ON SUB-CLASSIFICATION OF SCS AND STS

- **On August 1, 2024, a seven-judge Bench of the Supreme Court of India delivered a landmark judgement that reframed the operation of the Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST)**



quota for the first time since reservations were introduced in the Constitution in 1950.

- This historic verdict saw six separate opinions, with five in favor of sub-classification and a lone dissent by Justice Bela Trivedi.

- **Article 341 allows the President, through a public notification, to list "castes, races or tribes" that suffered historical injustices, particularly**

untouchability, as SCs. These groups are collectively accorded 15% reservation in education and public employment.

LADAKH GETS FIVE NEW DISTRICT -

- The Ministry of Home Affairs has decided to create five new districts in the union territory of Ladakh, said home minister Amit Shah on August 26.
- Amit Shah said the creation of new districts will take the benefits meant for the people to their doorsteps by bolstering governance in every nook and cranny. He attributed the decision to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision to build a developed and prosperous Ladakh.
- **These districts are** – Zaskar, Drass, Sham, Nubra and Changthang.
- Until 2019, Ladakh was a part of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir. However, the BJP-led Central government that year revoked the special status accorded to the state. The government also divided the state into two union territories – Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

INDIA'S FIRST SUNKEN MUSEUM TO OPEN AT HUMAYUN TOMB -

- **India's first sunken museum, located at the Humayun Tomb complex in Delhi, will have its grand opening on July 29, 2024.**
- **It will be open to visitors starting July 30.** The museum's launch aligns with the 46th UNESCO World Heritage Committee session, which will be attended by Union Culture and Tourism Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat and Prince Rahim Aga Khan.
- Humayun's Tomb, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is renowned for its architectural and historical significance.
- **Constructed in the 16th century, this monument is a prime example of Mughal heritage and stands as a key cultural landmark in Delhi.**
- It exemplifies the grandeur and intricate design of Mughal architecture, highlighting the era's artistic and cultural achievements.



MINIMUM AGE OF MARRIAGE FOR GIRLS RAISED TO 21 YEARS IN HP, BILL PASSED IN VIDHAN SABHA -

- Minimum age of marriage for girls raised to 21 years in HP, bill passed in Vidhan Sabha
- Himachal Pradesh Vidhan Sabha has passed Prohibition of Child Marriage (Himachal Pradesh Amendment) Bill 2024 for raising minimum age of marriage for girls from 18 to 21 years in the state.
- Bill was presented in Assembly by Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Dhani Ram Shandil. Bill was passed by voice vote. Himachal Pradesh has become first state in the country to pass such a bill to raise minimum age of marriage for girls from 18 to 21.
- Now this bill will be sent to Governor for approval who may send it to President of India.

PARLE REMAINS INDIA'S MOST-CHOSEN FMCG BRAND FOR 12TH YEAR -

- **Parle, the biscuit brand owned by Parle Products, continues to be India's top FMCG brand.** According to the latest edition of Brand Footprint, Kantar World panel's annual ranking of the most chosen consumer brands in India. In fact, seven of the top 10 brands are owned by homegrown companies.
- **Out of nearly 445 brands, Parle with 7.98 billion CRP has been on the top since the launch of its brand footprint twelve years ago followed by Britannia that had CRP of 7.93 billion.**
- Both these brands gained 6% and 16% each. Hindustan Unilever's shampoo brand Clinic Plus was the only non-food exception in the top five brands although it declined 5% to 4.14 billion.
- **“Consumer choice is a very reliable strength test for a brand across market conditions and Brand Footprint has been a widely acclaimed ranking system to measure this for over a decade now.**
- As we see over the years, consumers are making increasing trips for purchase and that adds their options and in-turn, their choice. This is reflected in the constant increase in CRP's,” said K Ramakrishnan, managing director- South Asia, World panel Division at Kantar.

INTERNATIONAL

RECENTLY, AFTER FORMER BANGLADESH PRIME MINISTER SHEIKH HASINA RESIGNATION, ST MARTIN'S ISLAND CAME INTO CONTROVERSY OVER ITS LEASE TO ANOTHER NATION -

- St Martin's Island is located in the northeastern region of the Bay of Bengal, close to the border between Bangladesh and Myanmar. It is nine kilometres away from the southern tip of Bangladesh's Cox's Bazar-Teknaf peninsula.
- The 7.3 km long island is at an elevation of 3.6 metres above the mean sea level. It is Bangladesh's only coral island and is also a breeding ground for sea turtles.
- The island was once part of the Teknaf peninsula around 5,000 years ago, but gradually got submerged into the sea.
- Around 450 years ago, the southern suburbs of present-day St Martin's Island resurfaced, and the northern and rest of the parts of the island rose above sea level in the following 100 years.
- In 1900, British India annexed the island during a land survey. During which the island came to be known as St Martin's Island, named after then Deputy Commissioner of Chittagong Martin. After the partition of British India in 1947, it became part of Pakistan.

BANGLADESH PM SHEIKH HASINA RESIGNS AMID PROTESTS -

- Sheikh Hasina has resigned as Bangladesh's Prime Minister amid violent protests demanding her departure. The Bangladesh Army, led by General Waker-Uz-Zaman, has taken control.
- General Waker-Uz-Zaman announced that the Army will establish an interim government and urged protesters to return to peace.
- Bangladesh has been facing significant protests for the past month over the job quota system.



- The protestors opposed to the return of a 30% quota in government employment at all levels for those who fought for the freedom of Bangladesh from Pakistan, as well as their children and grandchildren.
- These protests are the largest since Sheikh Hasina was re-elected for her fourth consecutive term since 2008.

INDIA SURPASSES CHINA AS TOP IMPORTER OF RUSSIAN OIL -

- In July 2024, India became the top buyer of Russian oil, overtaking China. This change happened because China was making less money from refining oil, which led them to buy less Russian crude.
- Russian oil made up a record 44% of India's total oil imports in July.
- India imported 2.07 million barrels of Russian oil per day. This was a 4.2% increase from June and a 12% increase from July 2022.
- On the other hand, China's imports from Russia dropped to 1.76 million barrels per day.



India's rise in oil imports is mainly due to:

- Russian oil being available at lower prices because Western countries imposed sanctions on Russia after its invasion of Ukraine.
- A steady need for Russian oil as long as these sanctions are in place.

TAKEAWAYS FROM PM MODI UKRAINE VISIT -

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has wrapped up his trip to Ukraine. Modi became the first Indian prime minister to make a state visit to Ukraine since the two countries established relations over three decades ago.

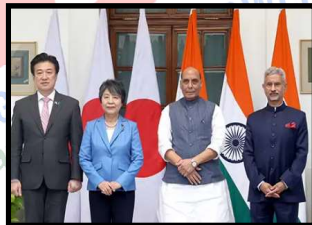


In his Ukraine visit some key outcomes to be noted, such as:

- Modi and Volodymyr Zelenskyy held wide-ranging talks at Mariinskyi Palace, the official residence of the Ukrainian President, **paid homage to Mahatma Gandhi's statue at 'Oasis of Peace' park in Kyiv.**
- **P.M Modi honoured the memory of the children that have been killed by the Russia-Ukraine war at the Martyrologist Exposition on children at the National Museum of History of Ukraine.**
- "Following the visit, we also agreed on a joint statement focusing on the development of a strategic partnership, bilateral trade, and continued military-technical cooperation," said the Ukrainian President, whose country is at war with Russia.
- **PM Modi's office in the joint India-Ukraine statement said both leaders reiterated their readiness for further cooperation in upholding principles of international law, including the UN Charter, such as respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty of states.** "They agreed on the desirability of closer bilateral dialogue in this regard," the joint statement said.

INDIA-JAPAN 2+2 SUMMIT -

- The partnership between India and Japan is becoming increasingly important, especially when it comes to ensuring a free, open, and fair Indo-Pacific region. **This was clearly seen during the recent "2+2" dialogue, where India's External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh met with their Japanese counterparts.**
- The meeting took place at a time when there were rising tensions in the region due to China's growing military activities.
- **Over the past ten years, India and Japan have greatly strengthened their relationship, turning it into what is now called a "special strategic and global**



partnership." This stronger bond has been driven by shared interests and the need to work together to maintain peace and security in the region.

WORLD'S OLDEST CALENDAR DISCOVERED

- **Archaeologists at Göbekli Tepe in southern Turkey have discovered what is thought to be the Earth's oldest known Sun-and-Moon calendar, carved into a large stone pillar.** This discovery, reported in a study on July 24, offers new insights into the development of early timekeeping methods.
- The pillar, estimated to be nearly 13,000 years old, is adorned with 365 V-shaped symbols, each likely representing a single day.
- This design reflects an advanced understanding of both solar and lunar cycles. **The calendar includes 12 lunar months plus an additional 11 days, indicating that ancient societies had a sophisticated grasp of time.**

**UN HUMAN RIGHTS TEAM TO VISIT BANGLADESH TO INVESTIGATE HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS -**

- **A human rights team from the United Nations will visit Dhaka to discuss with the Bangladesh interim government,** investigations into the human rights violations during the recent unrest in Bangladesh.
- **UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres' Deputy Spokesperson Farhan Haq said UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Turk discussed with Bangladesh interim leader Muhammad Yunus a comprehensive range of support that the UN Human Rights Office could provide to the interim government and the transition, including on accountability issues.**



- The team visiting Bangladesh will discuss with the interim government areas of support and the modalities for an investigation of human rights violations in the context of the recent violence and unrest, Haq said.
- Turk said in a statement issued in Geneva that a comprehensive, impartial, and transparent investigation into all human rights violations and abuses that have occurred will be a critical first step.

PM MODI TO ADDRESS THIRD VOICE OF GLOBAL SOUTH SUMMIT -

- **India hosted the third Voice of Global South Summit (VOGSS), following the principle of ‘Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam,’ which means “the world is one family.”** This summit supports Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s vision of development that includes everyone.
- The VOGSS is designed to empower countries in the Global South by providing a platform to discuss and address ongoing challenges like conflicts, food and energy crises, and climate change—issues that heavily impact developing nations.
- **All countries from the Global South are invited to join the summit, which is held online.** The event includes a Leaders’ Session and several sessions for different ministers.

US TO RELEASE \$3.5 BILLION MILITARY AID TO ISRAEL -

- **The U.S. State Department announced the release of \$3.5 billion in military assistance to Israel after Congress approved the funds amidst rising tensions due to the ongoing conflict in Gaza.** This money is part of a larger \$14 billion supplemental bill that was passed in April 2023.
- **Amount:** The \$3.5 billion is specifically set aside for military financing.
- **Purpose:** The funds are to be used to buy U.S.-made weapons and military equipment.



- **Congressional Approval:** The U.S. Congress approved this funding while Israel was actively engaged in military action in Gaza.

Great Barrier Reef Faces Record Temperatures, Urgent Threats –

- **The Great Barrier Reef (GBR) is experiencing serious problems because of climate change. Recently, scientists have found that the ocean’s surface temperature is the highest it has been in over 400 years.** This rapid increase in temperature has caused a lot of coral bleaching, putting the world’s largest coral reef ecosystem at great risk.
- **Coral bleaching happens when corals get stressed due to warmer water, pollution, or other harmful factors.** This stress causes them to expel tiny organisms called dinoflagellates that they need to survive. Corals can recover if the stress is short-lived, but if it lasts too long, the corals may die.

HAMAS CHIEF ISMAIL HANIYEH KILLED IN IRAN -

- **Hamas’s political chief Ismail Haniyeh has been assassinated in Iran’s capital, Tehran.** Haniyeh and one of his bodyguards were killed after the building where they were staying was struck, the statement said, adding that Haniyeh was in Tehran to attend the inauguration ceremony of Iran’s President Masoud Pezeshkian on July 30.
- **In the wake of the Hamas leader’s killing, an emergency meeting of Iran’s Supreme National Security Council is currently underway at Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei’s residence.**
- Such a meeting only occurs during extraordinary circumstances, US media reported, citing two Iranian officials. On July 30, Haniyeh, who led Hamas’s political operations from exile in Qatar, attended the inauguration ceremony of Iran’s President Masoud Pezeshkian. He also met Iran’s Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.



SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

SMALL SATELLITE LAUNCH VEHICLE (SSLV) -

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) successfully launched the third developmental flight of the Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV) from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre.
- The SSLV-D3 placed the Earth observation satellite EOS-08 precisely into orbit.
- It also marks the completion of ISRO/Department of Space's SSLV Development Project.
- **NewSpace India Limited (NSIL)**, ISRO's commercial arm, and India's private space industry can now produce SSLVs for commercial missions.
- It is a three-stage Launch Vehicle configured with three Solid Propulsion Stages. It also has a liquid propulsion-based Velocity Trimming Module (VTM) as a terminal stage, which can help adjust the velocity as it prepares to place the satellite.
- **Significance-** Essentially, the aim behind SSLVs is to produce low-cost launch vehicles with short turnaround times and minimal infrastructural requirements.
- The SSLV can launch satellites weighing up to 500kg and accommodate multiple satellites.
- **Before SSLVs, smaller payloads had to be sent into Space using other launch vehicles carrying multiple, bigger satellites.** They depended upon the launch schedules of those satellites.



collaboration with Martin Group, RHUMI-1 represents a leap forward in rocket technology, promising to enhance efficiency and reduce operational costs in space exploration.



- The RHUMI-1 reusable hybrid rocket was launched from a mobile launcher in Thiruvudandai, a coastal village near Chennai, Tamil Nadu. This mobile launch capability sets RHUMI-1 apart from traditional rocket systems, offering flexibility in launch locations.

The inaugural flight of RHUMI-1 carried a significant payload:

- Three CubeSats
- 50 PICO satellites
- These satellites were launched into a suborbital trajectory with the primary mission of collecting data for research on global warming and climate change.

ISRO LAUNCHED SSLV-D3-EOS-08 -

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) launched the SSLV-D3-EOS-08 mission. This mission launched a small satellite designed to observe Earth.
- It follows the success of the earlier SSLV-D2-EOS-07 mission, which was launched in February 2023.
- **The SSLV-D3-EOS-08 is the third flight in ISRO's Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV) series.** This mission completes the development phase of this new rocket. Earlier in 2024, ISRO successfully launched two other missions: PSLV-C58/XpoSat in January and GSLV-F14/INSAT-3DS in February.



INDIA LAUNCHES WORLD'S FIRST MOBILE HYBRID ROCKET: RHUMI-1 -

- **India's space efforts received a significant boost with the successful launch of RHUMI-1, the world's first mobile hybrid rocket. This achievement also marks a milestone as the first reusable hybrid rocket in India.** Developed by Chennai-based startup Space Zone India in

THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO ADVANCING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) TECHNOLOGY IS EVIDENT WITH ITS NEW BUDGETARY ALLOCATION FOR THE INDIAAI MISSION

- The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology has been allocated Rs 551.75 crore in the Union Budget 2024-25 to enhance AI infrastructure, including the procurement of high-performance Graphic Processing Units (GPUs).
- This move aims to support domestic AI development and reduce reliance on expensive foreign hardware. IndiaAI Mission aims to establish a robust AI computing infrastructure in India to support the development and testing of AI systems.
- The Mission aims to enhance data quality, and develop indigenous AI technologies. It focuses on attracting top talent, fostering industry collaboration, supporting impactful AI startups, and promoting ethical AI practices.
- The Union Cabinet approved the Rs 10,372 crore IndiaAI Mission in March to establish a computing capacity of over 10,000 GPUs and develop foundational models with a capacity of more than 100 billion parameters trained on datasets covering major Indian languages for priority sectors like healthcare, agriculture, and governance.

**SPACEX'S POLARIS DAWN MISSION: THE FIRST PRIVATE SPACEWALK -**

- SpaceX's upcoming Polaris Dawn mission is set to make history as the first private spacewalk. Scheduled for launch on August 26, 2024, at 3:38 a.m. EDT (0738 GMT), this five-day expedition will be led by American billionaire Jared Isaacman, who previously chartered the Inspiration4 mission in 2021.

- The mission will utilize a Falcon 9 rocket and the Crew Dragon capsule, Resilience, for its third flight.

Crew Details-

- **Jared Isaacman:** Mission Commander and the financier behind the Polaris Program.
- **Scott "Kidd" Potteet:** Pilot, a retired US Air Force Lt. Col.
- **Sarah Gillis:** Mission Specialist and SpaceX's lead space operations engineer for astronaut training.
- **Anna Menon:** Mission Specialist, SpaceX's lead operations engineer for crew operations development, and medical officer.

**INDIA LAUNCHED ITS FIRST REUSABLE HYBRID ROCKET 'RHUMI- 1', DEVELOPED BY THE TAMIL NADU-BASED START-UP SPACE ZONE INDIA WITH MARTIN GROUP, FROM THIRUVIDANDHAI IN CHENNAI. -**

- **Hybrid Rocket Engine:** The RHUMI Rocket is equipped with a generic-fuel-based hybrid motor.
- Hybrid systems improve efficiency and reduce operational costs.
- **Adjustable Launch Angle:** The rocket's launch angle can be precisely adjusted between 0 to 120 degrees.
- **Parachute System:** It is equipped with an electrically triggered parachute deployer.
- **Environmentally Friendly:** RHUMI is 100% pyrotechnic-free and 0% TNT.
- **Application:** The rocket's applications extend beyond space exploration, impacting fields such as agriculture, environmental monitoring, and disaster management.



ECONOMY & FINANCE

INDIA IS EXPERIENCING A SIGNIFICANT SHORTAGE OF NATURAL RUBBER (NR), WITH DOMESTIC PRODUCTION LAGGING BEHIND DEMAND BY APPROXIMATELY 5.5 LAKH TONNES -

• Demand-Supply Gap-

Despite an increase in NR production from 8.39 lakh tonne in 2022-23 to 8.57 lakh tonne in 2023-24, consumption has surged from 13.5 lakh tonne to 14.16 lakh tonne.



• Currently, **about 70% of NR is consumed by the tyre industry.** The remaining 30% is utilised by non-tyre companies, predominantly small and micro enterprises, which are suffering the most.

• India has historically depended on NR imports due to insufficient domestic production. **India imports natural rubber to meet local demand from neighbouring countries such as Vietnam and Indonesia.**

• NR imports face a 25% customs duty or Rs 30 per kg whichever is higher. Latex rubber used for making gloves and balloons has a total 75% duty.

• **The turmoil in Bangladesh has disrupted the smooth supply of NR to India.** The availability of NR is uncertain due to heavy monsoons reducing tapping activities. This situation particularly impacts industries that depend on NR.

UNION CABINET APPROVES ₹24,657 CRORE RAILWAY PROJECTS FOR CONNECTIVITY -

• On August 9, 2024, the Union Cabinet in India approved eight new railway projects, with a total investment of ₹24,657 crore. These projects aim to improve connectivity, make travel more efficient, and be

environmentally friendly by reducing logistics costs and cutting down on carbon emissions.

- The new projects will add 900 kilometers to the railway network, covering 14 districts in Odisha, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Jharkhand, Bihar, Telangana, and West Bengal. The projects are expected to be finished by 2030-31.



The Railway routes include:

- Gunupur – Therbubali: 73.62 km
- Junagarh – Nabrangpur: 116.21 km
- Badampahar – Kandujhargarh: 82.06 km
- Bangriposi – Gorumahisani: 85.60 km
- Malkangiri – Pandurangapuram: 173.61 km
- Buramara – Chakulia: 59.96 km
- Jalna – Jalgaon: 174 km
- Bikramshila – Katareah: 26.23 km

THE UNION BUDGET 2024 HAS INTRODUCED SIGNIFICANT MODIFICATIONS TO THE TAXATION OF CAPITAL GAINS IN INDIA -

- **Any profit or gain that arises from the sale of a ‘capital asset’ is known as ‘income from capital gains’.** Such capital gains are taxable in the year in which the transfer of the capital asset takes place. This is called capital gains tax
- **Rate for short-term STT paid listed equity, Equity oriented mutual fund and units of business trust (Section 111A) has increased from 15 to 20%. Similarly the rate for these assets for long-term (S. 112A) has increased from 10 to 12.5%.**
- The exemption limit of 1 lakh for LTCG on these assets has also increased to Rs 1.25 lakh. This increased

exemption limit will apply for FY 2024-25 and subsequent years.

RBI AUGUST 2024 MPC MEETING: REPO RATE UNCHANGED AT 6.5% -

• The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) concluded its Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meeting, maintaining the benchmark interest rates at 6.5% by a 4:2 majority. This decision marks the ninth consecutive instance of unchanged rates, reflecting the central bank's cautious approach to monetary policy in the face of economic challenges.



• The MPC's decision to keep the repo rate steady at 6.5% demonstrates a continuation of its previous stance. This rate has remained unaltered since February 2023, when the last increase was implemented. The committee's split decision, with four members voting for the status quo and two opposing, highlights the complexity of the current economic landscape.

• RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das confirmed that the Marginal Standing Facility (MSF) and Standard Deposit Facility (SDF) rates will remain at 6.75% and 6.25% respectively. These rates play crucial roles in the broader monetary framework, influencing liquidity and lending practices in the financial system.

The MPC also provided key economic projections:

- Real GDP growth for the fiscal year 2025-26 is projected at 7.2%
- Inflation forecast is maintained at 4.5%.

GOVT PERMITTED 100% FDI FOR AIRCRAFT MRO VIA AUTOMATIC ROUTE

• The government allows 100% Foreign Direct Investment via the automatic route for aircraft Maintenance, Repair, and Overhaul (MRO) to boost the sector.



- A uniform 5% IGST rate on imports of aircraft parts and tools is introduced, enhancing competitiveness and efficiency.
- Policies include extended export periods, reduced GST, exempted customs duty, and simplified clearance processing.

RAPIDO BECOMES UNICORN WITH FRESH \$120 MILLION FUNDING -

• In a display of growth, India's space technology sector has reached new frontiers, securing a record-breaking \$126 million in funding for 2023. This represents a 7% increase from 2022 and an impressive 235% jump from 2021, according to the latest Tracxn Space Tech Geo Report 2024.



• The surge in funding comes as India's space tech startup ecosystem expands rapidly, now boasting more than 100 companies — as per govt with the majority founded in the past five years.

• Rapido, a ride-hailing startup, raised \$120 million in fresh funding led by WestBridge Capital, reaching a \$1 billion valuation and joining the unicorn club. It's the third startup to achieve this status in 2023, following Krutrim and Perfios. After a funding slowdown, the startup ecosystem sees renewed investment activity, with Zepto and Purplle also securing substantial funding earlier this year.

UNIFIED PENSION SCHEME -

- **Guaranteed Pension:** 50% of last drawn pay as lifelong monthly pension.
- **Family Pension:** 60% of employee's pension provided to the family after death.
- **Minimum Pension:** ₹10,000 per month for employees with 10+ years of service.
- **Dearness Relief:** Periodic hikes in line with inflation trends.



- **Contributions:** Employees contribute 10% of their salary; government contributes 18.5%.

INDIA AIMS FOR \$30 TRILLION ECONOMY BY 2047 -

- India aims to become a USD 30 trillion economy by 2047, the 100th anniversary of its independence. According to a plan by NITI Aayog, called 'Vision for Viksit Bharat @ 2047', the goal is to raise the average income per person to USD 18,000 per year.
- This plan is designed to help India avoid getting stuck at a middle-income level.
- To reach this goal, India needs to grow its economy from the current USD 3.36 trillion to USD 30 trillion, which means it has to grow nine times bigger in the next couple of decades. The average income per person also needs to increase from USD 2,392 to USD 18,000.
- The report says moving from a middle-income to a high-income country requires a steady annual growth rate of 7-10% for 20-30 years. Only a few countries have managed to maintain such high growth rates consistently.



- Of these 53 crore accounts, 55.6 per cent or 29.56 crore Jan-Dhan account holders are women and 66.6 per cent or 35.37 crore Jan Dhan accounts are in rural and semi-urban areas, as per a statement from the Ministry of Finance.
- Deposit balances under PMJDY account stand at ₹2,31,236 crore — this is a 15x increase as of August 14, 2024.
- The average deposit per account, according to the finance ministry stood at ₹4,352, as of 14 August 2024 -an 4x increase.
- Over 36.06 crore RuPay debit cards have been issued under PMJDY.
- As many as 89.67 lakh point-of-sale (PoS/mPoS) machines have been installed under PMJDY.
- Total number of digital transactions has risen from 2,338 crore in FY19 to 16,443 crore in FY24.
- Total number of UPI transactions has increased from 535 crore in FY19 to 13,113 crore in FY24.
- Total number of RuPay card transactions at PoS and e-commerce has increased from 67 crore in FY18 to 96.78 crore in FY24.

THE PRADHAN MANTRI JAN DHAN YOJANA (PMJDY) HAS COMPLETED A MILESTONE 10 YEARS -

- "Jan Dhan Yojana has been paramount in boosting financial inclusion and giving dignity to crores of people, especially women, youth, and the marginalized communities.
- PMJDY was announced by PM Modi in his Independence Day address on August 15, 2014.
- In its 10 years since commencement, PMJDY has led to a total of 53.13 crore accounts.

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%)

IMPORTANT DATES AND EVENTS

INDIA IS SET TO CELEBRATE ITS FIRST NATIONAL SPACE DAY ON AUGUST 23, 2024 -

- India is celebrating its maiden National Space Day on August 23, 2024.
- **Theme-** “Touching Lives while Touching the Moon: India’s Space Saga.”
- **India became the fourth country to land on the moon and the first to reach its southern polar region on August 23, 2023.**
- To honour this landmark achievement, the Prime Minister of India announced August 23 as “National Space Day”.



PARTITION HORRORS REMEMBRANCE DAY -

- **Partition Horrors Remembrance Day, known in Hindi as “Vibhajan Vibhishika Smriti Diwas,” is a solemn national memorial day observed annually on August 14th in India.**
- This day serves as a poignant reminder of the immense suffering and loss experienced during the 1947 partition of India. Established in 2021 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, this commemoration aims to honor the victims and acknowledge the profound impact of partition on millions of lives.
- **The partition of India in 1947 marked the end of British colonial rule and the birth of two independent nations: India and Pakistan.**
- This momentous event, while celebrated for granting independence, also brought about one of the largest mass migrations in human history and unleashed unprecedented violence.



The partition resulted in-

- Displacement of 10 to 20 million people along religious lines
- Estimated deaths ranging from 200,000 to 2 million
- Countless incidents of violence, including rape and abduction

WHO DECLARES MPOX A GLOBAL PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY -

- **The World Health Organization (WHO) declared mpox a “public health emergency of international concern” (PHEIC), on August 14, 2024.** This decision was made after experts noticed a rise in mpox cases, especially in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and other African countries.
- **A PHEIC is a serious health event that can affect multiple countries and needs a coordinated global response.** It refers to an unusual event that could spread internationally, requiring countries to work together.



DEATH ANNIVERSARY OF ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE, OBSERVED ON AUGUST 16TH -

- **On August 16, India observes the death anniversary of Atal Bihari Vajpayee, a distinguished statesman, poet, and visionary leader who profoundly influenced the country’s political landscape.** Vajpayee, the 10th Prime Minister of India, is celebrated for his leadership and his ability to unite diverse ideologies while championing democratic principles.
- **Born on December 25, 1924, in Gwalior, Atal Bihari Vajpayee’s rise from a modest background to becoming one of India’s most esteemed leaders is a testament to his dedication and service.** His early years were marked by his passion for politics and his ability to

connect with people from all walks of life, which laid the foundation for his future success.



- Vajpayee served as Prime Minister of India in three separate terms, demonstrating his political resilience and strategic vision. His tenure saw significant milestones, including:
 - **Pokhran-II Nuclear Tests (1998):** Under Vajpayee's leadership, India conducted nuclear tests, establishing itself as a nuclear power. This pivotal moment was a testament to his commitment to national security and technological advancement.
 - **Golden Quadrilateral Project:** This ambitious infrastructure project aimed to connect major cities across India with a network of highways, revolutionizing the country's road infrastructure and boosting economic development.
 - **Economic Liberalization:** Vajpayee played a crucial role in India's economic reforms, promoting policies that led to increased foreign investment and economic growth.

“HARYANA, MAHARASHTRA, JAMMU & KASHMIR ELECTION DATES ANNOUNCED FOR 2024” -

- Assembly elections for Haryana and Jammu and Kashmir will be held from September 18 to October 1, the Election Commission announced on August 16. While polling in Jammu and Kashmir will be held across three phases, Haryana will have one phase. The counting of votes will take place on October 4, 2024. Maharashtra and Jharkhand are the other States that will go to polls this year.
- The poll panel recently visited Jammu and Kashmir and Haryana to review the preparations for the Assembly elections 2024. However, the ECI is yet to visit



the Eknath Shinde-headed state of Maharashtra and Jharkhand ruled by Hemant Soren-led government.

- The assembly elections for 90 seats of Jammu and Kashmir will be held in three phases – September 18, 25 and October 1, Election Commission said on August 16.

PM MARKS 5 YEARS OF ABROGATION OF ARTICLES 370 AND 35(A) -

- **On the fifth anniversary of the abrogation of Articles 370 and 35(A), Prime Minister Narendra Modi highlighted the decision as a pivotal moment in Indian history, marking the beginning of a new era of progress and prosperity for Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) and Ladakh.**
- He emphasized that the abrogation ensured the full implementation of the Indian Constitution in these regions, aiming to enhance security, dignity, and development opportunities for marginalized communities while reducing corruption.
- **Historical Significance:** Modi described the abrogation as a “watershed moment,” symbolizing the start of a new era for J&K and Ladakh.
- **Constitutional Implementation:** The move aligned these regions with the broader Indian Constitution, adhering to its vision.

QUIT INDIA MOVEMENT DAY -

- **Quit India Movement Day, also known as August Kranti Day, is a significant date in India's history that commemorates the launch of the Quit India Movement in 1942.** This pivotal moment in India's struggle for independence from British colonial rule called for the immediate withdrawal of British forces from India. Led by Mahatma Gandhi, the movement mobilized millions of Indians in a non-violent civil disobedience campaign against British colonialism.



- Quit India Movement Day is observed annually on August 8th. In 2024, it falls on a Thursday. This date marks the 82nd anniversary of the movement's launch.
- **The roots of the Quit India Movement can be traced back to the growing discontent with British rule in India. A crucial catalyst was the failure of the Cripps Mission in March 1942, which aimed to secure Indian cooperation during World War II.** The frustration stemming from this failure set the stage for a more aggressive push for independence.
- **On August 8, 1942, during the All India Congress Committee session in Bombay (now Mumbai), the Quit India Resolution was adopted.** This resolution demanded an immediate end to British rule in India. It was during this session that Mahatma Gandhi gave his famous "Do or Die" speech, which became the rallying cry for the movement.

NATIONAL SPACE DAY 2024 -

- **India is set to commemorate its first National Space Day in 2024, marking a historic milestone in the nation's journey of space exploration. Spearheaded by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO),** this day represents a momentous occasion to celebrate India's growing prominence in the global space community.
- National Space Day is not merely a reflection on past triumphs but a forward-looking event aimed at inspiring future generations and underscoring the pivotal role of space science and technology in shaping our world.
- **National Space Day 2024 is scheduled to be celebrated on August 23, 2024. This date holds profound significance as it marks the one-year anniversary of India's successful Chandrayaan-3 mission.**
- On August 23, 2023, India etched its name in the annals of space exploration history by becoming the fourth nation to successfully land on the moon. This remarkable achievement not only showcased ISRO's burgeoning



capabilities but also ignited a sense of national pride and garnered international acclaim for India's space program.

NAGASAKI DAY 2024 -

- **Nagasaki Day is an annual observance that commemorates one of the most devastating events in human history – the atomic bombing of Nagasaki, Japan, during World War II.**



This solemn occasion serves as a powerful reminder of the catastrophic consequences of nuclear warfare and underscores the critical importance of global peace and disarmament efforts.

- Nagasaki Day is commemorated each year on August 9th, marking the exact date of the atomic bombing in 1945. In 2024, this significant day will fall on a Friday, providing an opportunity for extended reflection and commemoration over the weekend.
- **Nagasaki Day-Theme for 2024**

The theme for Nagasaki Day 2024 is:

- "Together with the Hibakusha, let us achieve a nuclear weapon-free, peaceful, and just world—for the future of humankind and our planet."

AUGUST 12: INTERNATIONAL YOUTH DAY

- **International Youth Day is celebrated every year on August 12. This day is dedicated to recognizing the important role that young people play in making society better and to drawing attention to the challenges they face.**



- It's a time for various events like awareness campaigns, community gatherings, and concerts that address issues affecting young people around the world.

- Each year, International Youth Day has a specific theme that focuses on different aspects of helping and empowering young people. For 2024, the theme is ‘From Clicks to Progress: Youth Digital Pathways for Sustainable Development.’
- This theme looks at how digital technology and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) connect, and it highlights how young people are involved in these areas.
- The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 aims to address India's evolving development needs by overhauling the education system to meet 21st century goals and Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4), while preserving India's cultural heritage.
- It replaced the National Policy on Education, 1986, which was modified in 1992.
- Transitions from the 10+2 to a 5+3+3+4 system, including children aged 3-6 in the school curriculum with an emphasis on Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE).

KALAM'S 9TH DEATH ANNIVERSARY -

- 27th July is observed as the death anniversary of former President Dr APJ Abdul Kalam. He is an inspiration for Indians due to his unparalleled dedication as a scientist, teacher, and the 11th President of India (2002-07).
- Born on 15th October 1931 at Rameswaram in Tamil Nadu. He graduated in Science from St Joseph's College, Trichy in 1954 and specialised in Aeronautical Engineering from Madras Institute of Technology (MIT) in 1957.
- He is one of the most distinguished scientists in India with the unique honour of receiving honorary doctorates from 48 Universities and institutions in India and abroad.
- He planned programmes to produce a number of successful missiles, which helped earn him the nickname “Missile Man of India”.

4TH ANNIVERSARY OF NEP 2020 -

- Recently, the Union Ministry of Education celebrated the 4th anniversary of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 with a week-long campaign called "Shiksha Saptah."
- This campaign is designed to promote and celebrate the achievements and objectives of NEP 2020.

- **Funding:** Targets increasing public investment in education to 6% of GDP.

WORLD WATER WEEK 2024: 25-29 AUGUST

- The Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI) is organising the next World Water Week on 25-29 August 2024. World Water Week is the leading conference on global water issues, held every year since 1991.
- The Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI) has announced that World Water Week 2024 will center around the theme “Bridging Borders: Water for a Peaceful and Sustainable Future”.
- This powerful theme encapsulates the urgent need for global cooperation in addressing water-related challenges that transcend national boundaries.



AWARDS, RECOGNITIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

INDEPENDENCE DAY GALLANTRY AWARDS 2024 -

- As India celebrates its 78th Independence Day, President of India has conferred prestigious gallantry awards on Armed Forces and Central Armed Police Forces personnel.
- Additionally, 1,037 police medals were awarded to personnel from Police, Fire, Home Guard & Civil Defence, and Correctional Services for exceptional bravery and service.
- The Prime Minister has also unveiled ambitious goals to shape India's future, highlighting the nation's commitment to its security forces and development.
- India's Independence Day theme for the year 2024 is 'Viksit Bharat', symbolising the vision of becoming a developed nation by 2047.



What are the Gallantry Awards Awarded on the 78th Independence Day-

- **Kirti Chakra-** Four Kirti Chakras including three posthumous were awarded. The Kirti Chakra award for gallantry was first instituted in 1952 as Ashoka Chakra class -II, and was redesignated as Kirti Chakra in 1967.
- **Shaurya Chakra-** 18 Shaurya Chakras including four posthumous were awarded. The Shaurya Chakra Instituted in 1952 as Ashoka Chakra Class-III and renamed in 1967 as Shaurya Chakra and awarded for gallantry, otherwise than in the face of the enemy.
- **Sena Medal (Gallantry)-** One Bar to Sena Medal (Gallantry) and 63 Sena Medals (Gallantry) including two posthumous were awarded. The Bar to Sena Medal (Gallantry) is an award given to personnel of the Indian Army who have already received the Sena Medal (Gallantry) and have performed subsequent acts of bravery or exceptional service.
- **Nao Sena Medals-** 11 Nao Sena Medal (Gallantry) were awarded. Nau Sena Medal is a gallantry award for Indian

Navy personnel, awarded for exceptional devotion to duty or courage.

- **Vayu Sena Medals-** 6 Vayu Sena Medals (Gallantry) were awarded. Vayu Sena Medal instituted in 1960 to recognise exceptional devotion to duty or acts of courage by Air Force personnel.

OLYMPIC ORDER AWARDED TO ABHINAV BINDRA -

- Recently, the Prime Minister congratulated athlete Abhinav Bindra on being awarded the Olympic Order for his outstanding services to the Olympic Movement.
- The Olympic Order is the highest award from the International Olympic Committee, given to individuals for outstanding contributions to the Olympic movement, recognizing exceptional dedication to promoting the values and ideals of the Olympics.
- Established in 1975, it replaced the Olympic Diploma of Merit. The Olympic Order has three grades: gold, silver, and bronze. The gold order is reserved for heads of state and exceptional circumstances.
- Other notable recipients of the Olympic Order include Indira Gandhi and Nelson Mandela.
- The award was presented during the 142nd International Olympic Committee (IOC) Session in Paris. The IOC is the guardian of the Olympic Games, established in June 1894. It is a not-for-profit independent international organisation.



RBI GOVERNOR SHAKTIKANTA DAS RANKED TOP CENTRAL BANKER FOR 2ND YEAR -

- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das has been recognized as the top central banker globally for the second straight year by the US-based Global Finance magazine. He was awarded an 'A+' grade in

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the prestigious Global Finance Central Banker Report Cards 2024.

- The rankings are determined based on a grading scale from A to F, assessing performance in key areas such as inflation control, economic growth goals, currency stability, and interest rate management. An 'A' represents outstanding performance, while an 'F' denotes complete failure.
- Alongside Shaktikanta Das, Denmark's Christian Kettel Thomsen and Switzerland's Thomas Jordan were also awarded the 'A+' grade. The report highlighted the successful efforts of central bankers in combating inflation through strategies like higher interest rates, which have led to significant reductions in inflation globally.

PRESIDENT MURMU GIVES AWAY FIRST-EVER RASHTRIYA VIGYAN PURASKAR -

- President Droupadi Murmu presided over the first-ever investiture ceremony for the Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar (National Science Awards). These awards, instituted last year to replace all existing science accolades, mark a new chapter in recognizing scientific excellence in the country.
- The ceremony's highlight was the conferral of the inaugural Vigyan Ratna Puraskar, India's highest science award, to Govindrajan Padmanabhan, a renowned biochemist and former director of the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore.
- This award acknowledges Dr. Padmanabhan's significant contributions to biochemistry and his leadership in Indian scientific research.



President Murmu Gives Away First-Ever Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar

INDIA WELCOMES FIRST CIVILIAN SPACE TOURIST GOPICHAND THOTAKURA -

- Gopichand Thotakura, India's first civilian space tourist, received a warm welcome in Delhi upon his return on August 26, 2024. Thotakura made history by joining Blue Origin's New Shepard-25 (NS-25) mission, founded by Amazon's Jeff Bezos, becoming the second Indian citizen to travel to space after Rakesh Sharma's 1984 mission. His trip lasted about ten minutes, reaching a maximum altitude of 105 km.
- Thotakura's journey marks a significant milestone as the first Indian space tourist. During the NS-25 mission, he and five other crew members enjoyed a brief yet memorable spaceflight. The experience offered Thotakura a unique perspective on Earth, enhancing his appreciation for space and the need to protect our planet.

**JAPAN'S PRIME MINISTER FUMIO KISHIDA RESIGNING -**

- Japan's Prime Minister Fumio Kishida announced on August 14, that he will be stepping down from the post next month, and will not contest in the upcoming vote to elect a new chief for the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP).
- Kishida has been having a torrid time in office, his government has been battered by scandals, and his 20% approval rating indicates a disastrous erosion of public trust.
- The prime minister told a press conference that "Politics cannot function without public trust," a reference to a slush funds scandal that has unfolded over the past year, and severely tarnished the government's image. A Nikkei poll has projected the



government's approval rating at just 20% for eight consecutive months until July, down sharply from the 60% rating that Kishida enjoyed when he took office in late 2021.

- "It is necessary to show the public the new, changed LDP," Kishida said. "The most obvious first step toward showing that the party will change is for me to step aside."

LT GEN VIKAS LAKHERA ASSUMES CHARGE AS ASSAM RIFLES DIRECTOR GENERAL -

- In a significant change in leadership took place as Lt General Vikas Lakhera assumed charge as the new Director General of the Assam Rifles, an organization fondly known as the "Sentinels of the Northeast".
- This transition marks a new era for the paramilitary force that has long been crucial to maintaining peace and security in India's northeastern region.



- Lt Gen Lakhera succeeds Lt General P C Nair, who retired after an illustrious career spanning four decades. The change of guard ceremony not only highlighted the continuity of leadership but also underscored the importance of experience and expertise in guiding this vital force.
- Lt Gen Lakhera's journey in the Indian Armed Forces began on June 9, 1990, when he was commissioned into the 4 Sikh Light Infantry. This initial posting laid the foundation for a career marked by dedication, valor, and strategic acumen.

JAY SHAH TO REPLACE GREG BARCLAY AS ICC CHAIRMAN -

- BCCI secretary Jay Shah is set to become the ICC chairman, replacing Greg Barclay in November 2024.
- Shah has secured backing from key cricket boards, including England and Australia, ensuring his victory.
- Jay Shah will be the third Indian to hold the position, following N Srinivasan and Shashank Manohar.

- The chairman's election comprises 16 votes and a majority of 9 votes is required (51%).

INDIAN COAST GUARD D-G RAKESH PAL DIES DUE TO CARDIAC ARREST IN CHENNAI -

- Director General of Indian Coast Guard Rakesh Pal, who played a key role in boosting his force's operational prowess, died at a hospital in Chennai on Sunday following a cardiac arrest, officials said.



- Pal had taken charge as the 25th Indian Coast Guard (ICG) chief on July 19 last year.
- The officer, who was to attend an ICG event along with Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, was admitted to Rajiv Gandhi General Hospital (RGGH) after he complained of chest pain.

PAETONGTARN SHINAWATRA, THE YOUNGEST PRIME MINISTER OF THAILAND -

- Paetongtarn Shinawatra was elected as Thailand's youngest prime minister at the age of 37. Her election came after the dismissal of Srettha Thavisin, marking a major change in Thailand's political scene amid ongoing instability.



- Paetongtarn is the daughter of Thaksin Shinawatra, a highly influential and controversial figure in Thai politics. She is the third member of the Shinawatra family to become prime minister, following her father and her aunt, Yingluck Shinawatra. Her rise highlights the family's strong and lasting political presence.

T.V. SOMANATHAN APPOINTED AS NEW CABINET SECRETARY -

- Senior IAS Officer T.V. Somanathan has been appointed as the new Cabinet Secretary of India, succeeding Rajiv Gauba, whose term ends this month. Somanathan will begin his two-year tenure on August 30, 2024.



He will also serve as Officer on Special Duty (OSD) in the Cabinet Secretariat until he formally assumes the role of Cabinet Secretary.

- **Previous Positions:** Somanathan, a 1987-batch IAS officer of the Tamil Nadu cadre, has held several prominent positions, including Finance Secretary since April 2021, and Expenditure Secretary since December 2019. He has also served in the Prime Minister's Office and various roles in his cadre state and abroad.

WHO IS MUHAMMAD YUNUS, CHIEF ADVISER TO BANGLADESH INTERIM GOVERNMENT -

- Muhammad Yunus, who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2006, has been appointed as the chief adviser to Bangladesh's interim government. This happened after Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina resigned due to growing protests. The announcement was made by Army Chief Waker-uz-Zaman and is related to widespread unrest over government job quotas.
- Yunus was born in 1940 in Chittagong. He is a respected economist with a PhD from Vanderbilt University. After Bangladesh gained independence, he returned and became the head of the economics department at Chittagong University. Yunus is famous for creating the concept of microcredit, which involves giving small, collateral-free loans to poor entrepreneurs who don't have access to traditional banking.

**GOVIND MOHAN TO TAKE CHARGE AS UNION HOME SECRETARY -**

- Senior IAS officer Govind Mohan on August 22, will take charge as the new Union Home Secretary from Ajay Kumar Bhalla, who completes his five year tenure at the sensitive post, official sources said.



- **The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) on August 21, appointed 1989-Sikkim cadre IAS officer Govind Mohan as the next Home Secretary.** Mohan will replace Ajay Kumar Bhalla upon completion of his tenure on August 22.
- Mohan is currently posted as Secretary in the Ministry of Culture. Bhalla, a 1984-batch IAS officer of the Assam-Meghalaya cadre, was appointed as Home Secretary in August 2019.

MOTHER TERESA'S 114TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY, OBSERVED ON AUGUST 26

- August 26, 2024 marks the 114th birth anniversary of Mother Teresa, a divine figure whose legacy of love and compassion continues to inspire the world. Born on 26 August 1910 in Albania, she became one of the most revered figures of the 20th century, recognized globally for her selfless service to humanity.



- Mother Teresa was honored with the Nobel Peace Prize, the Ramon Magsaysay Peace Prize, and India's highest civilian award, the Bharat Ratna, among many others.
- **Mother Teresa was born as Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu in Skopje, Macedonia. From a young age, she was deeply influenced by her Catholic upbringing. At just 12 years old, she felt a divine call to become a missionary. In 1928, she left her home and joined the**

Sisters of Loreto, an Irish order of nuns with missions in India.

- After training in Dublin, she was sent to Kolkata, India, where she worked as a school teacher from 1931 to 1948. During this time, the sight of extreme poverty moved her to dedicate her life to helping the destitute.

WHO IS PAVEL DUROV, CEO OF TELEGRAM, ARRESTED IN FRANCE -

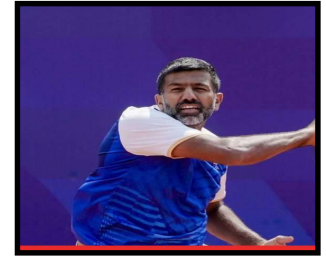
- Pavel Durov, the co-founder and CEO of Telegram, was arrested at Le Bourget airport in Paris. His arrest is connected to an ongoing investigation in France. Authorities are looking into accusations that Telegram, due to its privacy features and lack of moderation, has allowed various illegal activities to occur on its platform.
- These activities include crimes like drug trafficking and cyberstalking, and the French government is concerned that Telegram isn't doing enough to stop them or help law enforcement.
- Pavel Durov was born in the Soviet Union and later studied at St. Petersburg University. He is well-known for creating the social media platform VKontakte (VK), which became very popular in Russia.
- However, when the Russian government asked him to hand over user data, he refused. This led him to leave Russia and, in 2013, he founded Telegram. His main focus with Telegram has always been on protecting user privacy and providing strong security features.



INDIAN TENNIS LEGEND ROHAN BOPANNA RETIRES AFTER PARIS 2024 OLYMPICS EXIT -

- Rohan Bopanna, one of India's most accomplished tennis players, has announced his retirement from representing India in international competitions following his exit from the Paris 2024 Olympics.

- This marks the end of an era for Indian tennis, as Bopanna has been a stalwart for the country for over two decades.



- Bopanna's Olympic journey came to an end in the men's doubles first

round, where he partnered with N. Sriram Balaji. The Indian duo faced a formidable French pair, Gael Monfils and Edouard Roger-Vasselin, ultimately succumbing to a 7-5, 6-2 defeat.

- While the result may not have been what Bopanna hoped for, it serves as a poignant bookend to his illustrious career representing India.

FORMER UNION HEALTH SECRETARY PREETI SUDAN TO HEAD UPSC FROM AUGUST 1 -

- Former Union Health Secretary Preeti Sudan is set to assume the role of Chairperson of the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) on August 1, 2024.



- This appointment is made under Article 316 A of the Constitution, as confirmed by a government official.
- Ms. Sudan, who is currently serving as a member of the Commission, will be stepping into the shoes of Manoj Soni, the outgoing Chairperson. Mr. Soni recently tendered his resignation, citing "personal reasons" for his departure.
- The newly appointed Chairperson's tenure is scheduled to last until April 2025, coinciding with Ms. Sudan reaching the age of 65. This timeline aligns with the constitutional provisions governing the UPSC leadership.

CENTRE APPOINTS B SRINIVASAN AS NEW NSG DIRECTOR GENERAL -

- The Centre on Tuesday appointed 1992 batch Indian Police Service (IPS) officer B Srinivasan as the new director general of National Security Guard (NSG).



- Srinivasan, a 1992 batch Bihar cadre IPS officer, takes over as NSG director general after Nalin Prabhat's departure to being deputed as Jammu and Kashmir's Special Director General of Police.
- "The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved appointment of Srinivasan as Director General, NSG, from the date of joining the post and up to August 31, 2027 i.e., the date of his superannuation," said a Ministry of Personnel order.

JAY SHAH ELECTED AS NEW INTERNATIONAL CRICKET COUNCIL CHAIRMAN -

- Jay Shah has been elected unopposed as the new Chair of the International Cricket Council (ICC), succeeding Greg Barclay. This appointment marks a significant moment in cricket administration, as Shah becomes the youngest person ever to hold this prestigious position.
- Shah is presently serving as the Secretary of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI). He will officially begin his new role as ICC Chair on December 1, 2024.

**The election process unfolded as follows-**

- Greg Barclay, who had served two terms since 2020, confirmed he would not seek a third term.
- The ICC board of directors had until August 27 to file nominations for the next chair.
- An election would have been held only if multiple candidates were nominated.
- Shah emerged as the sole nominee, resulting in his unopposed election.

VENEZUELA'S NICOLAS MADURO BECOMES PRESIDENT FOR THIRD TIME -

- Venezuela's National Electoral Council (CNE) announced on July 29, that Nicolas Maduro has won the presidential election once again and will govern the country from 2025 to 2031. Notably, it will be Nicolas Maduro's third time as Venezuela's President.



- He was born 23 November 1962 is a Venezuelan politician and the president of Venezuela since 2013. Beginning his working life as a bus driver, Maduro rose to become a trade union leader before being elected to the National Assembly in 2000.
- He was appointed to a number of positions under President Hugo Chávez, serving as President of the National Assembly from 2005 to 2006, as Minister of Foreign Affairs from 2006 to 2013 and as the vice president from 2012 to 2013 under Chávez. After Chávez's death was announced on 5 March 2013, Maduro assumed the presidency.

PROGRAMMES, SCHEMES AND INITIATIVES

NHPC, SECI, RAILTEL, AND SJVN GAIN NAVRATNA STATUS -

- **Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman granted 'Navratna' status to four Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs): NHPC, Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI), Railtel Corporation of India (RCIL), and Satluj Jal Vidyut Nigam (SJVN).** This brings the total number of Navratna CPSEs in India to 25. The Navratna status provides these entities with increased financial and operational autonomy.
- **Railtel Corporation-** The 22nd Navratna, with a turnover of ₹2,622 crore and a net profit of ₹246 crore for FY24.
- **Solar Energy Corporation-** The 23rd Navratna, reporting an annual turnover of ₹13,035 crore and a net profit of ₹436 crore for FY24.
- **NHPC-** The 24th Navratna, with an annual turnover of ₹8,405 crore and a net profit of ₹3,744 crore for FY24.
- **SJVN-** The 25th Navratna, posting an annual turnover of ₹2,833 crore and a net profit of ₹908 crore for FY24.

THE BHARTIYA VAYUYAN VIDHEYAK BILL 2024 -

- **The Ministry of Civil Aviation tabled the "The Bhartiya Vayuyan Vidheyak Bill 2024" that replaces the Aircraft Act 1943,** to put aside the colonial legacy of aviation - one of the most modern and hi-tech sectors.
- The Aircraft Act 1934 is an act to make better provision for the control of the manufacture, possession, use, operation, sale, import and export of aircraft.



Need to Replace the Aircraft Act 1943:

- The Act has been amended several times to enhance safety, oversight, and to meet requirements for sustainable growth of the aviation sector and to give effect to the provisions of international conventions.

As a result of numerous amendments, a need is felt to address the ambiguities and confusion experienced by the stakeholders,

- To remove redundancies,
- To simplify processes and improve ease of doing business,
- To provide for design, manufacture, and maintenance of aircraft and related equipment.

BUDGET 2024-25: INFRASTRUCTURE ALLOCATION AND DEVELOPMENT PLANS

- **In the 2024-25 Budget, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has allocated ₹11 lakh crore for capital expenditure, representing 3.4% of the GDP.** To encourage states to invest in infrastructure, ₹1.5 lakh crore will be provided to them as long-term interest-free loans.

Target Sectors of Budget 2024-25

- The government's expenditure on infrastructure as a share of the total budget remains steady at 13.9%, slightly down from 14.3% in FY2024.
- The transport sector constitutes the largest portion of infrastructure spending, at 11.29% of the budget, though its share has decreased by 0.4 percentage points from last year.
- The Ministry of Roads, Transport and Highways has been allocated ₹2.78 lakh crore for 2024-25.
- The Railway outlay remains above 5%, with a record allocation of over ₹2.55 lakh crore.
- Funding for signalling and telecom work, including the KAVACH automatic train protection system, has increased compared to FY2024.
- The Ministry of Civil Aviation's allocation decreased by 20% to ₹2,357 crore.
- The outlay for shipping remains unchanged at ₹2,377 crore.



- The regional connectivity scheme is set to receive ₹502 crore.

PM MODI DISTRIBUTES CERTIFICATES TO 11 LAKH NEW 'LAKHPATI DIDIS' -

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi distributed certificates to 11 lakh new Lakhpati Didis in a function organised at Jalgaon in Maharashtra. The Prime Minister also felicitated Lakhpati Didis and discussed with them about their businesses.
- These Lakhpati didis whose number is more than one crore in the country, are earning more than one lakh rupees per year. 11 lakh new Lakhpati Didis, recently became Lakhpati during the third term of the NDA Government.
- Release of revolving fund Community Investment Fund of 2,500 crore
- **During the program, Prime Minister released a revolving fund – Community Investment Fund of 2,500 crore rupees, expected to benefit about 48 lakh members of 4.3 lakh Self Help Groups (SHGs).**
- The Prime Minister also released a bank loan of 5,000 crore rupees, which will benefit 25.8 lakh members of two lakh 35 thousand 400 SHGs.

UNIFIED PENSION SCHEME (UPS) VS OLD PENSION SCHEME (OPS): -

- The Indian government's recent approval of the Unified Pension Scheme (UPS) has generated significant interest, particularly among government employees.
- **Both the UPS and OPS offer a pension based on 50% of the salary. However, the UPS calculates this based on the average of the last 12 months' basic pay, while the OPS used the last drawn salary.** The UPS's introduction of a minimum ₹10,000 monthly pension provides a safety net not explicitly defined in the OPS.
- **The most significant departure from the OPS is the UPS's requirement for employee contributions.** While this may be seen as a disadvantage by some employees, it helps ensure the long-term sustainability of the pension system and aligns with modern pension schemes globally.

WILL INDIA BAN TELEGRAM -

- **The Indian government has launched a comprehensive investigation into Telegram, the widely-used encrypted messaging platform.** This probe comes in the wake of allegations that the app is being misused for various criminal activities, most notably extortion and gambling.
- **The investigation has gained additional significance following the recent arrest of Telegram's founder, Pavel Durov, in Paris.** This article explores the nuances of the ongoing investigation, its potential impact on Telegram users in India, and the global reactions to these developments.
- The investigation into Telegram's operations in India is being spearheaded by two key government entities: **the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) and the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).** These bodies are working in tandem to scrutinize the platform's alleged involvement in facilitating criminal activities.

**MADHYA PRADESH HAS COMMISSIONED THE LARGEST FLOATING SOLAR PROJECT IN CENTRAL AND NORTH INDIA, GENERATING 90 MW AT OMKARESHWAR**

- **Situated at Omkareshwar in Khandwa District, Madhya Pradesh, India, utilizing the backwaters of the Omkareshwar dam on the Narmada River.** As the largest floating solar project in central and northern India, it boasts a substantial output of 90 MW energy.
- Spearheaded under the Union Ministry of Renewable Energy, the project is managed by SJVN Green Energy Limited (SGEL). **This entity is a wholly owned subsidiary of SJVN, established as a joint venture between the Government of India and the Government of Himachal Pradesh.**
- **The project was set up at a cost of Rs. 646 crores. Projected to produce 196.5 million units of electricity annually with a total of 4,629.3 million units over 25**

years. It aims to cut down 2.3 lakh tons of carbon emissions, aligning with India's goal for net zero emissions by 2070.

- One of the critical benefits includes reducing water evaporation, which aids in water conservation.
- **The project operates on a Build Own and Operate model with a competitive tariff of Rs 3.26 per unit, secured through a bidding process for a duration of 25 years.**

NANJARAYAN AND KAZHUVELI BIRD SANCTUARY & TAWA RESERVOIR AS NEW RAMSAR SITES -

- Recently, the centre declared the Nanjarayan Bird Sanctuary and Kazhuveli Bird Sanctuary in Tamil Nadu and Tawa Reservoir in Madhya Pradesh as three new wetlands as Ramsar Sites.
- With these inclusions, India has increased its tally of Ramsar sites to 85.
- Now, Tamil Nadu harbours a maximum number of Ramsar Sites (18 sites) followed by Uttar Pradesh (10 sites).

What are the Key Facts About Three New Ramsar Sites-

- **Nanjarayan Bird Sanctuary-** It is a large shallow wetland in northeastern Uthukuli Taluk, Tiruppur District, Tamil Nadu. Centuries ago, it was restored by a local King Nanjarayan. Spanning 125.865 hectares, the lake relies on rainfall from Nallar drainage and also supports agriculture and groundwater recharge.
- **Kazhuveli Bird Sanctuary-** It spans over 5151.6 hectares on the Coromandel Coast in Villupuram district, north of Pondicherry. This large brackish lake, connected to the Bay of Bengal via the Uppukalli creek and Edayanthittu Estuary, is a vital wetland with diverse water features like estuarine, creek-fed brackish, and freshwater basins.
- **The Tawa Reservoir-** It is situated at the confluence of the Tawa and Denwa rivers near Itarsi town, was originally built for irrigation and now also supports power generation and aquaculture. The reservoir lies within the Satpura Tiger Reserve, bordering the Satpura National Park and Bori Wildlife Sanctuary.

CENTRAL INDIA FORESTS FACE HIGH FIRE RISK, STUDY WARNS -

- Forests in Khandwa and North Betul, located in Central India, are increasingly at risk of forest fires due to a combination of human activities and natural factors. This concern was highlighted in a study published on August 14, 2024.
- **The research was led by Vibha Sahu from the Indian Institute of Forest Management. By analyzing 22 years of satellite data from the MODIS (Moderate Resolution Imaging Spectroradiometer), the study uncovered a troubling trend:** the number of forest fires in Khandwa has been rising by an average of three fires per year, while North Betul has seen an increase of one fire per year.
- **The study found that about 45% of Khandwa's forests and 50% of North Betul's forests are now in areas classified as having a high or very high risk of fire.** In Khandwa, the most vulnerable areas are in the northern and southeastern regions. In North Betul, the high-risk zones are mainly in the northwestern and northeastern parts.

MAHARASHTRA LAUNCHES FIRST SOLAR VILLAGE -

- Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde has launched the Solar Village Scheme. This program aims to power 100 villages with 100% solar energy. Manyachiwadi in Satara district is the first village to benefit from this scheme, making it the first fully solar-powered village in the state.
- This is a government initiative to promote renewable energy, specifically solar power, in Maharashtra. The plan is to provide complete solar power to two villages in each district.
- **No Electricity Bills:** Households will not need to pay for their electricity under the PM Suryagarh Muft Bijali Yojana.



- **Free Power for Farmers:** Farmers will receive free electricity.
- **First Success:** Manyachiwadi has become the first village in Maharashtra to be entirely powered by solar energy.

INDIA'S ETHANOL PRODUCTION SHIFT FROM SUGAR TO MAIZE -

- **Cereal Grains have overtaken sugarcane as the primary feedstock for the production of ethanol used in blending with petrol.**
- In the current supply year 2023- 2024, sugar mills and distilleries supplied 401 crore liters of ethanol to oil marketing companies.
- **Of that, 211 crore liters or 52.7% was ethanol produced using maize and damaged foodgrains (mainly broken/ old rice not fit for human consumption),** while sugarcane-based feedstocks (molasses and whole juice/ syrup) accounted for the remaining 190 crore liters.
- **This is the first time that the contribution of grains to India's ethanol production has surpassed 50%.**
- **Ethanol is 99.9% pure alcohol that can be blended with petrol.** Alcohol production involves fermentation of sugar using yeast. In cane juice or molasses, sugar is present in the form of sucrose that is broken down into glucose and fructose. The **'National Policy on Biofuels'** notified by the government in 2018 envisaged an indicative target of 20% ethanol blending in petrol by 2030. In 2014 only 1.5 per cent ethanol was blended in petrol in India.
- Given the encouraging performance and various interventions made by the government since 2014, the 20% target was advanced to 2025-26.
- **Till 2017-18, ethanol was being produced only from molasses, the dense dark brown liquid byproduct containing sucrose that mills cannot economically recover and crystallize into sugar.** However Sugarcane is a water-guzzling crop. A NITI Aayog report says that just one liter of ethanol produced from sugarcane consumes at least 2,860 liters of water.

- India will require 1320 million tons of sugarcane, 19 million hectares of additional land and 348 billion cubic meters of extra water to produce enough ethanol to meet the 20% ethanol blending target of 2025.

DELHI AIRPORT ACHIEVE 'NET ZERO CARBON EMISSION AIRPORT' STATUS -

- **Delhi Airport made history by becoming the first airport in India to achieve 'Net Zero Carbon Emission Airport' status under the Airport Carbon Accreditation (ACA) programme by Airport Council International (ACI).**



- This significant milestone was proudly announced by Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL).
- **Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) earned Level 5 certification, which reflects its strong commitment to environmental sustainability and its success in significantly reducing carbon emissions. Remarkably, this goal was achieved six years ahead of the 2030 target.**

STUDY PREDICTS 49% INCREASE IN GLOBAL FLOODING BY 2100 -

- **By the year 2100, mainly due to the continued release of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere.** If these emissions stay high, flooding events could increase by 49% compared to 2020 levels, particularly affecting vulnerable areas like tropical coastlines and dry regions.
- **Flood Risk by 2050:** By 2050, the risk of flooding could be 7% higher if emissions are low and 15% higher if emissions are high.
- **Regional Differences:** The risk of flooding won't be the same everywhere. Some regions might see a big increase in floods, while others could see fewer.



WAYANAD RANKED AMONG TOP LANDSLIDE-PRONE DISTRICTS IN ISRO'S 2023 LANDSLIDE ATLAS -

- Wayanad, currently reeling from the deadly July 30 landslide disaster, was among several places in Kerala identified by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) in 2023 as being highly susceptible to landslides based on key socio-economic parameters.
- In the Landslide Atlas of India, prepared by the National Remote Sensing Centre (a unit of ISRO) in February 2023, Wayanad ranked 13th among 147 districts across 17 States and two Union Territories.
- Meanwhile, Thrissur, Palakkad, Malappuram, and Kozhikode ranked third, fifth, seventh, and tenth, respectively.

**628 TIGERS DIE IN INDIA DURING THE PAST FIVE YEARS -**

- A total of 628 tigers died in India during the past five years due to natural causes and other reasons,

including poaching, according to government data. Meanwhile, 349 people were killed in tiger attacks during this period, with Maharashtra alone recording 200 deaths.



- According to the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), 96 tigers died in 2019, 106 in 2020, 127 in 2021, 121 in 2022, and 178 in 2023. The number of tiger deaths in 2023 is also the highest since 2012, the data revealed. Responding to a question in the Rajya Sabha, Union Minister of State for Environment Kirti Vardhan Singh said on July 25 that 49 people each were killed in tiger attacks in 2019 and 2020, 59 in 2021, 110 in 2022, and 82 in 2023.
- Uttar Pradesh recorded 59 human deaths in tiger attacks while Madhya Pradesh reported 27. The number of tigers in India stood at 3,682, around 75% of the global wild tiger population, in 2022, according to the latest government data. Maharashtra alone recording 200 deaths.

REPORTS & INDICES

NATIONAL GLACIAL LAKE OUTBURST FLOODS RISK MITIGATION PROGRAMME

- The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has taken up expeditions to glaciers at an altitude of 4500m and above to map their vulnerability to Glacial Lake Outburst Flood (GLOF).
- Of the nearly 7,500 glacial lakes in the Indian Himalayas, NDMA has finalised 189 high-risk lakes that require mitigation measures.

National Glacial Lake Outburst Floods Risk Mitigation Programme (NGRMP)-

- It is an initiative launched by the Government of India to address the risks posed by GLOFs. 16 teams went out for expedition out of which 15 teams completed their expedition. Another seven expeditions are underway.
- **Of the 15 expeditions completed, 6 were in Sikkim, 6 in Ladakh, 1 in Himachal Pradesh, and 2 in Jammu and Kashmir.**
- Teams on expeditions assess the structural stability and potential breach points of glacial lakes, gathering relevant hydrological and geological samples and data, measuring water quality and flow rates, identifying risk zones and making downstream communities aware.

NATIONAL INSTITUTIONAL RANKING FRAMEWORK (NIRF): 2024 -

- Union Minister for Education Shri Dharmendra Pradhan on August 12, released the India Rankings 2024, which implements the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF).
- **The National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) was officially introduced by the Ministry of Resource Development (HRD) on September 29, 2015, with the Minister of HRD formally launching initiative.** The NIRF ranking event will be held at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi. The Minister of State Education Sukanto Majumdar shall also be present at this event.

SUPREME COURT CONSTITUTES NATIONAL TASK FORCE FOR HEALTHCARE WORKERS SAFETY -

- The Supreme Court on Tuesday formed a 10-member National Task Force to make a blueprint for the safety and facility of healthcare workers at their workplace.



Members

- The newly established NTF comprises a distinguished panel of medical experts from various specialisations, including:
- Surgeon Vice-Admiral Aarti Sarin
- Dr D Nageshwar Reddy
- Dr M Shreenivas
- Dr Pratima Murty
- Dr Goverdhan Dutt Puri
- Dr Saumitra Rawat
- Anita Saxena
- Pallavi Sapre, Dean
- Dr Padma Srivastava

In addition to the core members, the NTF will also include ex officio members such as:

- the Cabinet Secretary to the Government of India,
- the Home Secretary,
- the Secretary of the Union Health Ministry,
- the Chairperson of the National Medical Commission, and
- the President of the National Board of Examiners.

INDIA RANKED 2ND LARGEST ALUMINIUM PRODUCER IN THE WORLD -

- **India has solidified its position as a global leader in mineral production, with impressive rankings across several key minerals.** The country stands as the 2nd largest Aluminium



producer, the 3rd largest lime producer, and the 4th largest iron ore producer in the world.

- These rankings underscore India's significant contribution to the global mineral industry and highlight its growing importance in the sector.
- **The fiscal year 2023-24 witnessed unprecedented levels of mineral production in India, setting a strong foundation for continued growth.**
- Two key minerals, iron ore and limestone, emerged as the backbone of India's mineral sector, collectively accounting for an impressive 80% of the total MCDR mineral production by value. The production figures for these crucial minerals in FY 2023-24 were as follows:
- **Iron Ore:** 275 million metric tons (MMT)
- **Limestone:** 450 million metric tons (MMT)
- These figures not only represent a significant achievement for India's mineral sector but also indicate the robust demand from various industries that rely on these raw materials.

INDIA RANKED 39TH IN THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT INDEX 2024 -

- **The World Economic Forum (WEF) recently released its Travel and Tourism Development Index (TTDI) for 2024**, offering a comprehensive evaluation of India's standing in the global tourism landscape.
- This index is a crucial benchmark for assessing the competitiveness and sustainability of tourism sectors worldwide.
- This table presents the top 10 countries ranked according to their scores, along with their change in rank, percentage change, and percentage difference from the leader (United States).

INDIA SELECTS CREW FOR AXIOM-4 MISSION TO ISS -

- **India has announced the selection of two astronauts, Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla and Group Captain Prasanth Balakrishnan Nair, for the upcoming Axiom-4 mission to the International Space Station (ISS).** This mission represents a significant step

in strengthening human spaceflight cooperation between ISRO and NASA, as well as advancing India's own human space program.



- **Primary and Backup Pilots:** Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla will serve as the primary mission pilot, while Group Captain Prasanth Balakrishnan Nair will act as the backup mission pilot.
- **Training:** Both astronauts will undergo training in the United States starting the first week of August.
- **Role:** During the Axiom-4 mission, they will perform scientific research, technology demonstration experiments, and participate in space outreach activities.

THE FOOD SAFETY AND STANDARDS AUTHORITY OF INDIA (FSSAI) HAS RECENTLY ISSUED A DIRECTIVE TO FOOD BUSINESSES TO REMOVE CLAIMS RELATED TO 'A1' AND 'A2' TYPES OF MILK FROM THEIR PRODUCT DESCRIPTIONS -

- **Overview of Classification Of Dairy Products As 'A1' and 'A2'**- Several FBOs (Food Business Operators) are selling milk and milk products in the name of A1 and A2.
- **Recognition of Classification:** FSSAI regulations do not officially recognise this distinction, leading to the current mandate to eliminate these claims.
- **Differentiation:** Based on the structural differences in beta-casein protein.
- **Beta-Casein:** It is one of the major proteins found in milk, and it comes in two main variants: A1 and A2.
- Historically, cows produced only A2 beta-casein. However, due to genetic mutations, some cows began to produce A1 beta-casein as well.
- **Key Difference:** It lies in the amino acid structure.
- A1 beta-casein has a histidine amino acid at position 67. While A2 beta-casein has proline at the same position.

DEFENCE

INDIA COMMISSIONS SECOND NUCLEAR SUBMARINE, INS ARIGHAAT -

- India recently commissioned its second nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine (SSBN) called **INS Arighaat**. This event took place in Visakhapatnam and was a significant step in strengthening India's defense capabilities.
- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh mentioned that this move is crucial for boosting India's nuclear triad, which is a three-part system that includes land-based missiles, aircraft, and submarines capable of launching nuclear weapons. This makes India more secure against potential threats.
- The SSBN programme is an important part of India's defense strategy. SSBNs are submarines that can carry and launch ballistic missiles. **INS Arighaat is the second submarine in this program, following INS Arihant, which was commissioned in 2016.**
- The goal of this program is to give India a reliable second-strike capability. This means that even if an enemy attacks first, India can still respond with a powerful counterattack using these submarines.

MITRA SHAKTI 2024: STRENGTHENING INDO-SRI LANKAN MILITARY TIES -

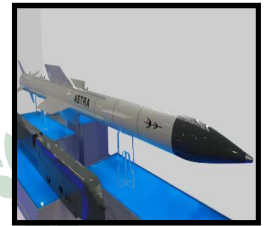
- The Mitra Shakti military exercise, an annual bilateral engagement between the Indian Army and the Sri Lankan Army, commenced on August 12, 2024.
- This year's exercise, held at the Sri Lankan Army Training School in Maduru Oya, marks a significant milestone in the military cooperation between these two South Asian nations.
- Set to run until August 25, this combined training exercise exemplifies the commitment of both countries to enhance



their military capabilities and foster stronger bilateral relations.

INDIAN AIR FORCE APPROVES PRODUCTION OF ASTRA MARK 1 MISSILES -

- The Indian Air Force (IAF) has given clearance to the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and the Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) to produce 200 Astra air-to-air missiles for its Su-30 and LCA Tejas fighter aircraft.
- The clearance was given to the DRDO and public sector firm BDL, during a recent visit by Indian Air Force Deputy Chief Air Marshal Ashutosh Dixit to Hyderabad.
- The Astra Mark 1 missiles are advanced air-to-air missiles developed by India's Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).



INDIAN ARMY CONDUCTS 'PARVAT PRAHAAR' EXERCISE IN LADAKH -

- The Indian Army has conducted a strategic military exercise, 'Parvat Prahaar', in Ladakh, focusing on high-altitude warfare and operations. This exercise is crucial for maintaining the readiness and effectiveness of the Army in the region, which is close to the India-China border.
- The 'Parvat Prahaar' (Mountain Strike) exercise emphasizes mountainous and rugged terrains, such as those found in regions like Eastern Ladakh. The exercise, which continues for over a fortnight, involves simulating real-world combat scenarios to train soldiers in the unique challenges posed by such terrains.



- Various arms of the Army, including infantry, armoured, artillery, and support units, are participating in this drill. Different kinds of tanks, artillery guns including K-9 Vajra, air-defense systems, UAVs, and other aviation assets of the Army are showcasing their operability and war preparedness.

US APPROVES \$52.8 MILLION SONOBUOY SALE TO INDIA -

- The United States Secretary of State, Antony Blinken, has given the green light for a possible sale of anti-submarine warfare equipment to India, worth around USD 52.8 million. This move highlights the strong commitment between the US and India to strengthen their relationship, especially in the areas of defence and security.



- The US Department of Defence, through its Defence Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA), has announced that India has asked to buy various sonobuoys, which are special devices used to detect submarines underwater.

The specific types include:

- AN/SSQ-53G High Altitude Anti-Submarine Warfare (HAASW) sonobuoys
- AN/SSQ-62F HAASW sonobuoys
- AN/SSQ-36 sonobuoys
- Along with the sonobuoys, the sale will also include technical documents, engineering support, and logistical services to help India use and maintain this equipment.

INS ARIGHAT -

- India is now all set to commission its second nuclear-powered submarine, INS Arighat, armed with nuclear missiles for strategic deterrence.
- It is India's second indigenously built nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine (SSBN), following India's first nuclear submarine, INS Arihant, commissioned in 2018.



- It was constructed at the Indian Navy's Ship Building Centre (SBC) in Visakhapatnam.
- It represents a critical component of India's nuclear triad, enabling the nation to launch nuclear missiles from land, air, and sea.

DRDO SUCCESSFULLY TESTS LONG RANGE GLIDE BOMB 'GAURAV'-

- DRDO successfully conducted the first test of the GAURAV Long Range Glide Bomb from an Su-30 MK-I off Odisha's coast.
- GAURAV, a 1,000 kg air-launched bomb, hit its target with pinpoint accuracy, showcasing India's indigenous defence capabilities.
- It has been designed and developed indigenously by the Research Centre Imarat, Hyderabad.



CENTRE FORMS COMMITTEE TO MONITOR BANGLADESH BORDER SITUATION -

- In response to the volatile situation in Bangladesh, the Indian government has established a committee to monitor the Indo-Bangladesh border and ensure the safety of Indian nationals and minority communities in the neighboring country.
- The committee will maintain communication with Bangladeshi authorities and oversee security measures at the border.



Committee Details

- Chair: ADG, Border Security Force (BSF), Eastern Command
- Members
- IG, Frontier HQ, South Bengal, BSF
- IG, BSF Frontier HQ, Tripura
- Member (Planning & Development), Land Ports Authority of India (LPAI)
- Secretary, LPAI

EXERCISE UDARA SHAKTI 2024: STRENGTHENING INDO-MALAYSIAN AIR FORCE COOPERATION -

- The bilateral air exercise “Udara Shakti 2024” between the Indian Air Force (IAF) and the Royal Malaysian Air Force (RMAF) concluded successfully on August 9, 2024. This exercise, hosted by the RMAF at its base in Kuantan, Malaysia,



marked a significant milestone in military cooperation between the two nations.

- The IAF’s participation in Exercise Udara Shakti 2024 was notable, with a contingent of seven Sukhoi-30 MKI fighter aircraft. These advanced jets, along with their crews, returned to India on August 10, 2024, after four days of intensive joint exercises and knowledge exchange.

SUCCESSFUL PHASE-II BALLISTIC MISSILE DEFENCE SYSTEM TEST -

- The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has successfully tested its Phase-II Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) system, showcasing India's advanced capabilities in defending against long-range ballistic missile threats.
- The Phase-II system can intercept ballistic missiles with a range of up to 5,000 km, enhancing India’s strategic defence.
- Phase-I BMD, capable of intercepting missiles with ranges up to 2,000 km, has already been deployed.
- The Phase-II missile is a two-stage, solid-propelled, ground-launched system designed for endo to low exo-atmospheric interception.
- The test demonstrated a network-centric warfare weapon system, including long-range sensors, low-latency communication, and advanced interceptor missiles.

- It employs a multi-layered approach with interceptor missiles like Prithvi Air Defence and Advanced Air Defence. Recent efforts focus on enhancing capabilities through global cooperation and acquiring systems like the Russian S-400 Triumf.
- The DRDO is developing an indigenous multi-tier network to counter missiles with ranges of up to 2000 km and 5000 km in Phases 1 and 2, respectively.
- The network includes surveillance radars for the detection and tracking of incoming missiles. Ballistic missiles of India are Agni, K 4 (SLBM), Prahaar, Dhanush, Prithvi and Trishul.

‘TARANG SHAKTI 2024’, FIRST MULTINATIONAL AIR EXERCISE -

- India will host its first multinational air exercise, ‘Tarang Shakti 2024’, in two phases starting on the 6th of next month in Sular, Tamil Nadu. In this exercise, nearly 30 countries will participate, and out of 30, ten countries will join the exercise with their fighter aircraft. The exercise will showcase India’s defence prowess and provide a platform for participating militaries to foster interoperability.

- **Invitations have been extended to 51 countries. Ten countries will be participating with assets and 18 as observers with one more country likely to join,” Air Marshal Singh said while briefing the media.**

- Indian Air Force’s LCA Tejas, Mirage 2000, and Rafale to take part in the mega exercise, they added. Air Marshal A P Singh, Vice Chief of the Air Staff (VCAS), told that this exercise will also showcase India’s defence prowess and move towards ‘Atmanirbharta’ in defence.

Foreign aircraft in the ‘Tarang Shakti’ exercise

- Rafale from France
- Typhoon from Germany
- F-18 from Australia
- F-16 from Greece
- C-130J from Bangladesh

SPORTS

AVANI LEKHARA BREAKS PARALYMPIC RECORD -

- Para shooter Avani Lekhara created history on August 30, by becoming the first Indian woman to win two gold medals at Paralympics.



- Avani, who became the first Indian woman to win a Paralympic Games gold medal during the women's 10m air rifle standing SH1 event at the Tokyo 2020 edition, retained her title in Paris.
- This is Avani's third medal at the Paralympic Games. She had also won a bronze medal in the women's 50m rifle 3 positions SH1 event in Tokyo.
- Avani Lekhara set a new Paralympic record with a score of 249.7, becoming the first Indian woman to win two individual gold medals at the Paralympics. With this achievement, Avani joined Devendra Jhajharia as the only Indian Paralympian to win multiple individual gold medals.
- Avani also known as Avani Lekhara is a rising Indian Paralympian rifle shooter, born on 8th November 2001 in Jaipur, Rajasthan.
- Due to her training and her success in shooting, she also gave a historic performance at the Tokyo 2020 Paralympics by winning gold in the women's 10m air rifle standing event SH1 and a bronze in the 50m rifle 3 positions.

PARALYMPIC GAMES BEGIN ON AUGUST 28, 2024 -

- French President Emmanuel Macron declared the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games open on Wednesday evening at Place de la Concorde. This is the first time that France has hosted the Paralympic Summer Games, and is also the first time that a Paralympics

opening ceremony has taken place outside a stadium, in the heart of the host city.

- "The aim of this ceremony is to change the way we look at people with disabilities, and to oppose all preconceived opinions on these issues, but not in a vain and sterile opposition," said

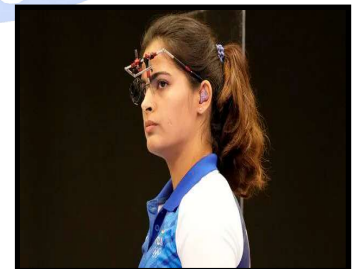


Thomas Jolly, artistic director of the Paris 2024 ceremonies.

- Around 4,400 athletes from a record 168 delegations will participate in the 11-day competition across 22 sports starting from August 30, with Eritrea, Kiribati and Kosovo making their Paralympic debuts.

STAR SHOOTER MANU BHAKER SET TO BE INDIA'S FLAGBEARER IN CLOSING CEREMONY -

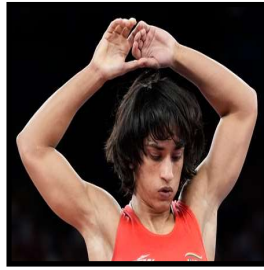
- Manu Bhaker, India's two-time Olympic bronze medallist, has been chosen to be India's flagbearer for the closing ceremony of the Paris Olympics. According to sources from the Indian



- Manu Bhaker, India's two-time Olympic bronze medallist, has been chosen to be India's flagbearer for the closing ceremony of the Paris Olympics. According to sources from the Indian Olympic Association (IOA), Bhaker will represent India as the women's flagbearer during the event.
- India's men's flagbearer for the ceremony is yet to be confirmed. The closing ceremony of the Paris Olympics will take place on August 11. Bhaker excelled in Paris, earning two bronze medals and setting several new records.
- The Paris Olympics has been a redemption for the 22-year-old shooter. During the 10m air pistol qualification round in the Tokyo Olympics in 2021, her gun malfunctioned, which led to a loss of time.

WHY VINESH PHOGAT DISQUALIFIED IN PARIS OLYMPIC 2024 -

- **Indian wrestler Vinesh Phogat has been disqualified from the Paris Olympics after failing to meet weight requirement for her 50 kg gold medal. As per the report, Phogat was reportedly over the permissible weight limit by just 100 grams, which may lead to her disqualification.** According to competition rules, she will not be eligible for a silver medal, leaving only gold and bronze winners in the 50 kg category.
- According to competition rules, Phogat will not be eligible even for a silver medal and the 50 kg will have just gold and bronze medal winners.
- As per rule, wrestlers have to stay within their weight category on both days of the competition.

**NOAH LYLES WINS U.S. MEN'S 100-METER OLYMPIC GOLD IN 20 YEARS -**

- **American sprinter Noah Lyles clinched gold in the men's 100-meter sprint at the 2024 Paris Olympics. The race was one of the closest in Olympic history, with Lyles finishing just 0.005 seconds ahead of Jamaica's Kishane Thompson.** Lyles' time of 9.784 seconds narrowly beat Thompson's 9.789 seconds. Team USA's Fred Kerley secured bronze with a time of 9.81 seconds.
- **Lyles' victory marks the first time an American has won the 100-meter gold since Justin Gatlin in Athens 2004.** This race also saw a historic number of seven men finishing under 9.90 seconds, shattering the 10-second barrier.
- Despite a slow start, Lyles surged in the final stretch, overtaking competitors and crossing the finish line in a dramatic photo finish.

**VINESH PHOGAT'S DISQUALIFICATION AT PARIS OLYMPICS: UNDERSTANDING THE WEIGH-IN PROCESS AND WEIGHT CUTTING CHALLENGES -**

- **Vinesh Phogat's pursuit of a gold medal at the Paris Olympics ended unexpectedly when she failed to meet the weight requirement for her women's 50kg wrestling final.**
- Weighing in at just over 100 grams above the limit, she also lost her chance at a confirmed silver medal.
- Despite weighing 49.9kg on the morning of August 6 and securing three consecutive victories, including a win over defending champion Yui Susaki, Vinesh gained weight during the day, resulting in her disqualification before the final bout.

**NEERAJ CHOPRA CLINCHES SILVER IN JAVELIN AT PARIS 2024 OLYMPICS -**

- **Neeraj Chopra, the reigning Olympic champion, put on an impressive display at the Paris Olympics, winning the silver medal in the men's javelin throw event.** Chopra's season-best throw of 89.45m earned him the runner-up position, but he was unable to defend his title, as Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem broke the Olympic record with a stunning throw of 92.97m.
- Chopra, who was the defending champion coming into the competition, was unable to replicate his gold-medal-winning performance from the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. However, his silver-medal finish is still a remarkable achievement, as he continues to establish himself as one of the world's premier javelin throwers.
- **The true star of the event was Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem, who produced a remarkable performance to claim the gold medal.** Nadeem's record-breaking throw of 92.97m not only secured him the top spot on



the podium but also etched his name in the Olympic history books.

INDIAN WRESTLER AMAN SEHRAWAT SECURES BRONZE AT PARIS 2024 OLYMPICS -

- In a thrilling match at the Champ de Mars arena, India's Aman Sehrawat clinched a bronze medal in the men's 57kg wrestling category at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games.
- The young grappler demonstrated exceptional skill and determination as he defeated Puerto Rico's Darian Toi Cruz with a decisive score of 13-5 on Friday.
- Sehrawat's path to the bronze medal was marked by both triumph and adversity. As the youngest male wrestler in the Paris Summer Games, he showcased his prowess early in the competition:
- **Round of 16:** Aman dominated his bout against North Macedonia's Vladimir Egorov, securing a convincing 10-0 victory.
- **Quarterfinal:** He continued his impressive run by registering a 12-0 technical superiority win over Albania's Zelimkhan Abakanov.
- **Semifinal:** Despite his strong performances, Aman faced a setback in the semifinal bout against the top-seeded wrestler, Japan's Rei Higuchi.



INDIA MEN'S HOCKEY TEAM SECURES BRONZE AT PARIS 2024 OLYMPICS -

- In a thrilling encounter, the Indian men's hockey team secured the bronze medal at the Paris 2024 Olympics after defeating Spain 2-1 in the third-place match at the Yves du Manoir Stadium in Paris on Thursday. This victory marks a significant milestone for Indian hockey, as the team secured its first back-to-back Olympic medals since the 1972 Munich Games.
- The match started with Spain drawing first blood, as Marc Miralles beat P.R. Sreejesh from a penalty stroke in the second quarter. However, India responded with a

determined effort, leveling the scores just before the half-time whistle, courtesy of a Harmanpreet Singh drag flick.

- **Harmanpreet Singh's Heroics** The Indian captain proved to be the hero of the match, as he scored the decisive goal three minutes into the second half, once again from a penalty corner, to give India the lead. Despite being reduced to 10 players in the final period after Sukhjeet Singh was reprimanded with a green card, the Indian team held firm and staved off any potential danger from the Spanish side.



ICC MOVES WOMEN'S T20 WORLD CUP 2024 TO UAE DUE TO BANGLADESH UNREST -

- **The ICC has announced the relocation of the Women's T20 World Cup 2024 from Bangladesh to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) due to significant safety concerns.** The event, originally set to be hosted in Bangladesh, will now take place from October 3 to 20 in Dubai and Sharjah.
- This decision follows a series of political upheavals in Bangladesh, including unrest and the flight of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, which led to travel advisories from several participating countries.
- **The move was confirmed after a virtual board meeting where the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) consented to the change.**
- Despite efforts by the new interim government to retain the event through the United Nations, the escalating unrest and the issuance of travel advisories made it impractical to proceed with the event in Bangladesh.



HISTORIC BRONZE WIN FOR MANU BHAKER AND SARABJOT SINGH AT PARIS OLYMPICS

- In a remarkable display of skill and precision, Manu Bhaker and Sarabjot Singh has secured a bronze medal in the 10m Air Pistol Mixed Team event at the Paris Olympics.



- The Indian pair triumphed over South Korea's Oh Ye Jin and Lee Wonho, bringing home the second medal for India at these Games. This victory is particularly notable as it marks the second bronze for Manu Bhaker at the Paris Olympics, making her the first Indian to win two medals in a single edition of the Olympic Games since Independence.
- Manu Bhaker and Sarabjot Singh, both hailing from Haryana, have demonstrated their prowess in shooting by previously winning the 10m air pistol mixed team gold at the 2022 National Shooting Championship held at the Madhya Pradesh Academy in Bhopal. Their latest achievement at the Paris Olympics adds to their illustrious careers and brings immense pride to India.

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.

IMPORTANT MCQ FOR COMPETITIVE EXAMS

- Q1. Saang is the famous dance of which of the following Indian state ?
a) Himanchal Pradesh b) Rajasthan
c) Punjab d) Haryana
- Q2. What is the currency of Hungary ?
a) Forint b) Peso
c) Manat d) Colon
- Q3. Bharatanatyam is the famous folk dance of which of the following Indian state ?
a) Tamil Nadu b) Odisha
c) Kerala d) Goa
- Q4. Dhubri port located in which Indian state ?
a) Maharashtra b) Kerala
c) Assam d) West Bengal
- Q5. 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
- Q6. 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
- Q7. 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
- Q8. 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
- Q9. Recently, researchers have spotted 'Magnetofossils' in which region of India ?
a) Ladakh b) Assam
c) Manipur d) Gujarat
- Q10. 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
- Q11. 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
- Q12. 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%
- Q13. 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
- Q14. 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
- Q15. 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
- Q16. Krishnaraja Sagar (KRS) Dam, recently seen in the news, is located in which state ?
a) Karnataka b) Tamil Nadu
c) Gujarat d) Kerala

- Q17. ' Political parties are allotted symbols by
a) The government of India
b) The constitution of India
c) The party leaders
d) The Election Commission
- Q18. Monazite sand in Kerala is rich in _____.
a) Uranium b) Thorium
c) Titanium d) Iron ore
- Q19. Which one of the following industry uses bauxite as a raw material ?
a) Aluminium b) Cement
c) Paper d) Steel
- Q20. Which among the following profession belongs to the tertiary sector of the economy ?
a) Fisherman b) Farmer
c) Factory worker d) Teacher
- Q21. The difference between exports and imports is called ?
a) assets and liabilities
b) balance of payment
c) GDP
d) balance of trade
- Q22. For the buying and selling of precious metals such as Gold and Silver, the market established is termed as _____.
a) Capital Market b) Money Market
c) Bullion Market d) Wholesale cash market
- Q23. Open Market Operations refer to _____.
a) Borrowings by Scheduled banks from RBI
b) Lending by Commercial banks to industry
c) Purchase and sale of Government securities by RBI
d) Deposit mobilisation
- Q24. When the productive capacity of the economic system of state is inadequate to create sufficient number of jobs, it is called _____.
a) seasonal unemployment
b) structural unemployment
c) disguised unemployment
d) cyclical unemployment
- Q25. Port Moresby is the capital of which country ?
a) Solomon Islands b) Papua New Guinea
c) East Timor d) Brunei
- Q26. Where is Kempegowda International Airport situated ?
a) Kochi, Kerala b) Bangalore, Karnataka
c) Imphal, Manipur d) Hyderabad, Telangana
- Q27. The headquarter of Organization of the Petroleum Exporting (OPEC) is in which country ?
a) London, United Kingdom b) Rome, Italy
c) Paris, France d) Vienna, Austria
- Q28. Grammy Awards are the annual awards presented for outstanding achievements in the music industry by which country ?
a) United Kingdom b) France
c) United States d) Russia
- Q29. Recently, the world's oldest calendar has been discovered in which country ?
a) Egypt b) Turkey
c) Iran d) Iraq
- Q30. Which institution remained on the top spot in the National Institute Ranking Framework, 2024 ?
a) IIT Madras b) IIT Kanpur
c) IIT Delhi d) IIT Roorkee
- Q31. What is the theme of 'International Youth Day 2024' ?
a) From Clicks to Progress: Youth Digital Pathways for Sustainable Development
b) Green Skills for Youth: Towards a Sustainable World
c) Intergenerational solidarity: Creating a world for all ages
d) Transforming Food Systems: Youth Innovation for Human and Planetary Health
- Q32. DRDO successfully conducts the inaugural flight test of the Long Range Glide Bomb 'GAURAV' from the Su-30 MK-I platform off the Odisha coast. It was designed and developed by the Research Center Imarat (RCI) in which city ?
a) Chennai b) Kolkata
c) Hyderabad d) Bengaluru
- Q33. As on 31 July 2024, how many of total beneficiaries (account-holders) are there under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) ?
a) 42.99 crore b) 52.99 crore
c) 62.99 crore d) 72.99 crore

- Q34. The Government of India has declared August 23rd as “National Space Day” to celebrate the remarkable success of which mission ?
a) Aditya-L1 b) Gaganyaan
c) Parker Solar Probe d) Chandrayaan-3
- Q35. Consider the following points about the recently released NIRF Ranking 2024:
(i) NITI Aayog has released the NIRF Rankings 2024.
(ii) This is the 8th consecutive edition of India Rankings of HEIs in India.
(iii) IIT Madras retains its 1st position in Overall Category for the sixth consecutive year.
(iv) IISc Bengaluru stood first in Research Institutions Category for the fourth consecutive year.
(v) Jamia Hamdard, New Delhi tops the ranking in Pharmacy this year.
How many of the point(s) is/are INCORRECT ?
a) only one b) only two
c) only three d) only four
- Q36. World Organ Donation Day is observed every year on which day ?
a) August 11 b) August 12
c) August 13 d) August 14
- Q37. Union Finance Secretary T V Somanathan has been appointed Cabinet Secretary for two years. He will be taking over from _____.
a) Manoj Govil
b) Sanjay Malhotra
c) Rajiv Gauba
d) Pramod Kumar Mishra
- Q38. What is the primary objective of the Jiyo Parsi Scheme, recently seen in news ?
a) To promote the education of Parsi children
b) To reverse the declining trend of the Parsi population
c) To provide financial aid for Parsi businesses
d) To encourage Parsi cultural activities
- Q39. On August 17, 2024, India will play home to the _____ Voice of Global South Summit. The theme for the entire event is “An Empowered Global South for a Sustainable Future.”
a) 2nd b) 3rd
c) 4th d) 1st
- Q40. Which state government has ordered all state agencies to stop doing business with Punjab National Bank (PNB) and State Bank of India (SBI) ?
a) Telangana b) Karnataka
c) Bihar d) Odisha
- Q41. Transportation is an activity of
a) Primary sector
b) Service sector
c) Tertiary sector
d) Both (b) and (c)
- Q42. Which Country has a bi-party system
a) India b) Pakistan
c) China d) Britain
- Q43. In which field is the achievement of dictatorship is regarded as better than that of democracy ?
a) Economic Field
b) Educational Field
c) Scientific Field
d) Defence Field
- Q44. What type of economic activity is making shoes from leather ?
a) Primary b) Secondary
c) Tertiary d) Service
- Q45. What situation would result if Government expenditure exceeds the Government revenue on Current Account?
a) Deficit budgeting
b) Zero-based budgeting
c) Performance-based budgeting
d) Surplus budgeting
- Q46. An increase in the growth rate of the nominal money supply results in
a) Lower rate of inflation
b) Higher rate of inflation
c) Lower interest rates
d) Currency appreciation
- Q47. Saving is that portion of money income that is
a) spent for development of Industries
b) not spent on consumption
c) spent on health and education
d) spent for consumer durables

- Q48. Stagflation is a period of _____.
- Persistent high inflation combined with high unemployment
 - Persistent high inflation combined with low unemployment
 - Persistent low inflation combined with high unemployment
 - Persistent low inflation combined with low unemployment
- Q49. The Feroze Gandhi Unchahar Thermal Power Plant is located in which state ?
- Odisha
 - Uttar Pradesh
 - Maharashtra
 - Chattisgarh
- Q50. The National Sports Day is observed in India on _____?
- August 29
 - September 1
 - July 30
 - March 8
- Q51. The “National Geophysical Research Institute” (NGRI) is situated in _____?
- Telangana
 - Maharashtra
 - Gujarat
 - Bihar
- Q52. Which country is known as the Island of pearls ?
- Madagascar
 - Australia
 - Bahrain
 - Maldives
- Q53. Recently, which country launched its first reusable hybrid rocket “RHUMI 1” ?
- India
 - Nepal
 - Myanmar
 - Pakistan
- Q54. Recently, which space organization has launched ‘Tanager-1 Satellite’ to track methane emissions ?
- ISRO
 - ESA
 - CNSA
 - NASA
- Q55. What is the theme of the first ‘National Space Day’ ?
- A New Era of Space Exploration
 - India’s Journey to the Stars
 - Touching Lives while Touching the Moon: India’s Space Saga
 - None of the Above
- Q56. ‘Dumbur Dam’, recently seen in the news, is located in which state ?
- Assam
 - Uttarakhand
 - Tripura
 - Sikkim
- Q57. In 2022, India and Africa’s bilateral trade surpassed \$100 billion. By which year is the \$200 billion target, as stated in Future Target, supposed to be achieved ?
- 2028
 - 2030
 - 2032
 - 2035
- Q58. Which elements are generally used in the ‘Atomic clocks’, recently seen in news ?
- Caesium
 - Sodium
 - Barium
 - Americium
- Q59. Where was the ‘Under-17 World Wrestling Championship 2024’ held ?
- Tokyo, Japan
 - Amman, Jordan
 - Beijing, China
 - New Delhi, India
- Q60. Recently, which state has reported an outbreak of bird flu or avian influenza ?
- Odisha
 - Bihar
 - Uttar Pradesh
 - Jharkhand
- Q61. Recently, which state government has launched the “Mukhya Mantri Sukh Shiksha Yojana” ?
- Andhra Pradesh
 - Gujarat
 - Himachal Pradesh
 - Uttarakhand
- Q62. Recently, who has been appointed as the new Director General of the National Security Guard (NSG) ?
- B Srinivasan
 - RK Vishwakarma
 - Ashok Kumar
 - Arun Singh
- Q63. Which two states recently announced the development of religious circuit ‘Krishna Gaman Path’ ?
- Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh
 - Odisha and Jharkhand
 - Uttar Pradesh and Bihar
 - Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan
- Q64. In the Union Territory of Ladakh, how many new districts has the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) established ?
- 4
 - 3
 - 5
 - 2

- Q65. Which two of the following extreme locations are connected by East – West Corridor ?
- Mumbai and Nagpur
 - Mumbai and Kolkata
 - Silchar and Porbandar
 - Nagpur and Siligudi
- Q66. Which roads are called all seasons roads ?
- Unmetalled roads
 - Metalled roads
 - Rural roads
 - Border roads
- Q67. Kakrapara Nuclear Power Plant is located at
- Rajasthan
 - Tamil Nadu
 - Assam
 - Gujarat
- Q68. Removing barriers or restrictions set by the government is called;
- Liberalisation
 - Investment
 - Favorable trade
 - Free trade
- Q69. When we produce a good by exploiting natural resources, it is an activity of the;
- Secondary sector
 - Tertiary sector
 - Primary sector
 - Organized sector
- Q70. The GST (Goods and Services Tax), is levied on which of the following products ?
- Petroleum Crude
 - Tobacco
 - Natural Gas
 - Aviation Turbine Fuel
- Q71. Which of the following is called GDP Deflator ?
- Ratio of nominal to real GDP
 - Ratio of nominal to real GNP
 - Ratio of nominal to real CPI
 - Ratio of real to nominal GNP
- Q72. "Forests" is listed in the _____ list given in the Seventh Schedule in the Constitution of India.
- Union
 - State
 - Global
 - Concurrent
- Q73. 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 ?
- Ram Mandir in Ayodhya
 - Indian National Flag (Tricolour)
 - National Emblem
 - Rashtrapati Bhavan
- Q74. The Report on Currency and Finance 2023-24, recently seen in news is released by
- Ministry of Finance
 - State Bank of India
 - Niti Ayog
 - Reserve Bank of India
- Q75. Which of the following statements is true regarding the India-Bangladesh Extradition Treaty ?
- The treaty does not allow extradition for political offences under any circumstances.
 - The treaty allows extradition for offences punishable with at least one year in prison.
 - The treaty was first signed in 2013 and has not been amended since then.
 - The principle of double criminality does not apply to the treaty.
- Q76. Which of the following statements about the symptoms of Mpx is correct ?
- Mpx causes primarily gastrointestinal discomfort.
 - Symptoms of Mpx include painful rash, fever, and swollen lymph nodes.
 - Symptoms of Mpx are limited to respiratory problems and chronic cough.
 - Mpx causes sudden and severe headache without any rash.
- Q77. Which new categories were included for the first time in the India Rankings 2024 ?
- Central Universities and Private Universities
 - State Public Universities, Open Universities, and Skill Universities
 - International Universities and Deemed Universities
 - Agricultural Universities and Law Schools

- Q78. What is the funding structure of ABPM-JAY (Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana) with respect to central government contribution and state government contribution ?
- 50:50 ratio for all states
 - 60:40 for NE states and three Himalayan states, 90:10 for others
 - 90:10 for NE states and three Himalayan states, 60:40 for others
 - 100% centrally funded for all states
- Q79. The Report on Currency and Finance 2023-24, recently seen in news is released by
- Ministry of Finance
 - State Bank of India
 - Niti Ayog
 - Reserve Bank of India
- Q80. On 29th of August, nation remembered the Indian greatest field hockey player Major Dhyan Chand on the National Sports Day. He was known as the Wizard of Hockey and led India to win gold medals in field hockey at how many Olympic Games ?
- One
 - Two
 - Three
 - Four

ANSWERS

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