

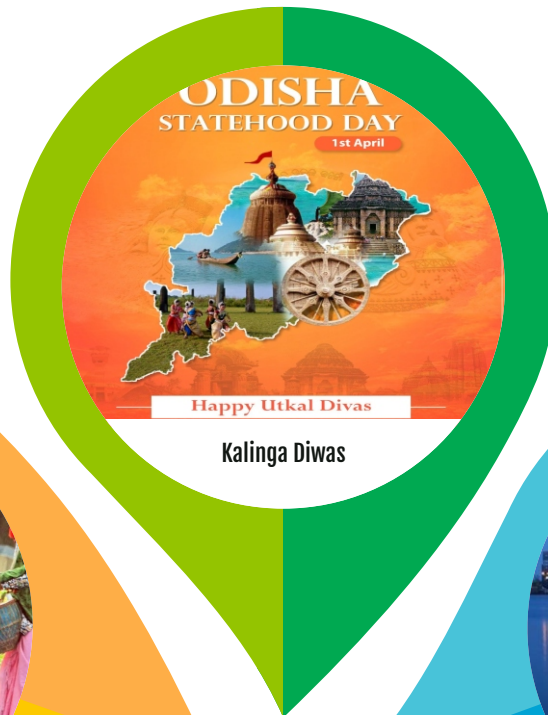
APTI PLUS OAS GAZETTE

MAY 2024



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Sarhul festival celebrated in Sundargarh district



Paradip Port in Odisha becoming India's highest cargo handling port



Odia Vocalist Shantilata Barik Passes Away



Surge in Royal Bengal Tiger population

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COMPREHENSIVE COVERAGE OF CURRENT AFFAIRS FOR ODISHA STATE CIVIL SERVICES EXAMS

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SUCHISMITA PANIGRAHI
RANK 2



And many more...

Odisha Current Affairs

Utkal Divas is celebrated annually on April 1st.

- It commemorates the formation of Odisha as a state, following a struggle for recognition as an independent entity.
- The day is also referred to as Odisha Foundation Day and Vishuva Milan.
- Under British rule, Odisha was part of the Bengal presidency, along with present-day Bihar and West Bengal.

Importance of Odisha Day:

- Odisha's historical importance dates back to ancient times when it was known as Kalinga, ruled by kings like Ashoka and Kharavela.
- Kharavela's reign is credited with establishing Odisha's reputation as a center of art, architecture, and sculpture.
- The state witnessed various ruling powers, including the Mughals and British, before its formation as a separate province.

Struggle for Independence:

- Odisha's quest for autonomy culminated on April 1, 1936, with the formation of the new province.
- Notable leaders such as UtkalaGouraba, Madhusudan Das, and Gopabandhu Das played pivotal roles in this movement.
- The state was initially called Orissa until it was officially renamed Odisha through the Orissa Bill in March 2011.

Even before summer is yet to fully set in, the Rushikulyariver which is known as the lifeline of Ganjam district, is drying up rapidly.

- This has sparked concern in the district with people involved in farming wondering what the future holds in store for them. Scanty rainfall in the last few months and the rapidly increasing temperatures are the reasons behind the river drying up.
- The issue assumes significance with the 'BaruniSnan' ceremony scheduled for April 6. Residents of Aska, Purusottampur and Pratappur and even people from outside the district come in large numbers to take a dip in the river on the auspicious occasion.
- However, people are wondering how will they take a dip when even the knees are not getting fully submerged in the river.
- However, with the river going dry, it will not just be the festival which will be affected. Already the riparian villages are facing a drinking water crisis. The problem will increase if some measures are not taken for supply of water to the river.
- The river is considered holy and is intrinsically linked to the religion and spirituality of the people. People use its water for drinking and also for irrigating their farmlands. The river water is

used in various religious ceremonies like temple consecration, 'BaruniSnan', 'Sankranti Snan' and 'fire rituals'.

- The river originates from the Rushimal hill in Kandhamal district and flows through Ganjam district before merging with Bay of Bengal. An anicut built by the British in 1891 at Janbil near this town is the main source of water for hundreds of hectares of farmlands in the district. Lakhs of residents residing in Berhampur town and adjoining areas depend on the river for drinking water. Moreover, scores of industrial firms use the river water to run their plants.

The state of Odisha has experienced a significant surge in forest fires, with incidents quadrupling in just a month, largely due to rising temperatures.

- The number of forest fire incidents in Odisha rose from 957 at the end of February to 4,525 by the end of March.
- A staggering 3,572 fire points were detected in March alone, with half of them occurring in the final week of the month.
- According to the Forest Survey of India (FSI), 1,792 forest fire points were identified in Odisha between March 25 and 31.
- The sudden rise in temperatures is believed to have triggered this surge in forest fires.

Paradip Port in Odisha has achieved a significant milestone by becoming India's highest cargo handling port.

- The Paradip Port Authority (PPA) recorded a record 145.38 million metric tonnes (MMT) of cargo throughput in FY 2023-24, surpassing Deendayal Port, Kandla, to emerge as the top major port in the country.
- This achievement marks the first time in its 56-year history of operation that PPA has exceeded previous records set by Deendayal Port.
- Paradip Port, located on the east coast of India in Odisha, is a major seaport on the Bay of Bengal. It is an artificial deep-water port and one of the largest ports in India.
- It is situated at the confluence of the Mahanadi River and the Bay of Bengal. It serves as a vital gateway for the export and import of goods for the eastern and central parts of India.
- It was commissioned as a major port on 12th March 1966.

Odisha has achieved a milestone by recording its second-highest Goods and Services Tax (GST) collection ever, amounting to Rs 5,109.33 crore in March 2024.

- This marks a significant increase from the GST collection of Rs 4,749.02 crore in March 2023, showing a growth rate of 7.59% in the Gross GST (CGST+IGST+OGST+Cess) collection compared to the same period last year.
- The state had previously set its highest GST collection record in February 2024, with Rs 5,135.81 crore.

SOA(Siksha 'O' Anusandhan) University and the Central Ayurveda Research Institute (CARI), under the Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS), Bhubaneswar, have joined hands to conduct collaborative research on two plants' anti-inflammatory and wound-healing properties.

- CCRAS, an autonomous institution under the Ministry of Ayush, is the country's apex body for formulating and coordinating research in ayurvedic sciences.
- The research project, titled 'Aqueous and ethanolic extraction of two promising extra-pharmacopoeial (AnuktaDravya) plants and evaluation of their anti-inflammatory and wound-healing activities,' will be funded entirely by CCRAS.
- The project will be conducted over the next two years, with SOA's Centre for Biotechnology contributing to its execution.

The recent surge in Royal Bengal Tiger population within Similipal National Park, located in Mayurbhanj district, has delighted wildlife enthusiasts.

- Forest authorities emphasize that for the tiger population to sustain growth, it's crucial to provide conducive conditions for tigresses to reproduce.
- The park presently boasts a tally of 27 tigers as per the latest census.
- Tigresses, unlike their male counterparts, are selective about mating partners and require a safe birthing ground with ample food resources.
- Their maternal instincts drive them to fiercely protect and nurture their cubs until they reach maturity, after which they encourage independence.
- The life expectancy of tigers ranges from 14 to 16 years, with aging typically commencing at 11 years.

Esteemed Odia Vocalist Shantilata Barik Passes Away

- Born on October 1, 1960, in Khurda district, Odisha, Barik earned her Acharya degree in music from Utkal Sangeet Mahavidyalaya in the capital city.

- Barik enjoyed widespread recognition in Odisha and was a beloved figure in many households.
- She was particularly known for her renditions of popular Odia devotional songs (Bhajans).
- Some of her notable Odia devotional songs include "Thaka Mana ChalaJiba," "Bhaji Bhaji to Nama," "He Chakanayan," and "BalirenuMahabandha."
- Barik had a longstanding association with All India Radio and had received recognition from the Odisha Sangeet Natak Academy for her significant contributions to Odia music, language, and culture.

Ashwini Vaishnaw, serving as the Minister for Railways, Communications, and Electronics & Information Technology, has been sworn in as a Rajya Sabha Member from Odisha for the second consecutive term.

- Ashwini Vaishnaw, a member of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and a former bureaucrat with an academic background from IIT-Kanpur, took the oath in Odia language.
- Members of Rajya Sabha are elected by the elected members of the Assemblies of States and Union territories in accordance with the system of proportional representation by means of the single transferable vote.
- The Council of States (Rajya Sabha) first constituted on 3 April 1952.

The Higher Education department in Odisha has announced a new financial incentive program to encourage quality education in higher education institutions, including both government and non-government aided colleges in the state.

- Starting from the 2024-25 academic session, colleges and universities can earn cash rewards based on their National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) score.

Incentives based on NAAC grades:

- Institutions securing an 'A++' grade will receive Rs 15 lakh.
- Institutions scoring 'A+' will earn Rs 10 lakh.
- Institutions with an 'A' grade can get Rs 7.5 lakh.
- Institutions with a 'B++' grade will receive Rs 6 lakh.
- Institutions with 'B+' and 'B' grades will be sanctioned Rs 5 lakh and Rs 4 lakh respectively.
- These incentives can be utilized by institutions to improve facilities, enhance faculty development, and support student services.

The Odisha government has established an informatics centre focused on water management, aiming to enhance the

dissemination of water-related information to stakeholders

- This center will aggregate, curate, and standardize micro-level hydro-meteorological data from various water sector entities to improve water management and disaster preparedness.
- Operating as a centralized repository, the centre will facilitate seamless data access, analysis, and sharing with the national water informatics centre.
- It will actively disseminate water-related intelligence through reports, publications, and online platforms.
- State centre would be a primary source of comprehensive hydro-meteorological data, including groundwater levels, surface water availability, water quality metrics, and demand-supply dynamics.
- The centre will collaborate closely with the State Hydrological Data Centre (SHDC) at Rajiv Bhawan to streamline data integration efforts and engage in research and development activities in hydro-meteorology.

Female Olive Ridley sea turtles tagged over a decade ago have returned to the Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary, the species' largest rookery, to lay eggs

- The turtles have been observed to revisit their preferred nesting sites, such as the golden beach of Gahirmatha.
- The Odisha forest department, in collaboration with the Wildlife Institute of India (WII), Dehradun, tagged the turtles between 1998 and 2010 for research purposes, including studying their reproductive biology, movements, and growth rates.
- Tagging also helps track the turtles' migratory routes and foraging areas.

Four rivers in southern Odisha are currently without water, according to data from the Central Water Commission

- This lack of water is particularly concerning given the high temperatures at the start of summer.
- The affected rivers flow between the Mahanadi and Pennar basins, passing through Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and Odisha.
- The rivers in Odisha that are affected are Rushikulya, Bahuda, Vamsadhara, and Nagavali.
- Experts attribute this to reduced monsoon rainfall, changes in rainfall patterns, catchment degradation, and groundwater depletion.
- Nitin Bassi from the Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW) has suggested that adopting micro-irrigation systems and changing cropping patterns in the Mahanadi river

basin could reduce the water deficit from 24% to about 18% of the water supply requirement.

- Data from April 4 shows that the east-flowing rivers between Mahanadi and Pennar have zero storage this year, a 100% departure from the ten-year average. Similarly, the east-flowing rivers between Pennar and Kanyakumari have only 12% storage, with a departure of over 50% from the ten-year average.

The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has reported that the air quality in Odisha's Barbil town, located in the Keonjhar district, is very poor, with an Air Quality Index (AQI) value of 304

- This value is higher than the AQI values recorded in metro cities like Delhi and Mumbai, which were 178 and 95, respectively, on the same day.
- Additionally, the air quality in Keonjhar and Nayagarh, also in Odisha, has been categorized as poor by the CPCB, with AQI values of 228 and 275, respectively, on the same day.
- AQI:
- AQI is a yardstick that runs from 0 to 500.
- The higher the AQI value, the greater the level of air pollution and the greater the health concern.

Debrigarh Wildlife Sanctuary has emerged as a thriving eco-tourism destination, welcoming an impressive 70,000 visitors during the fiscal year 2023-24

- A notable achievement for Debrigarh is the designation of the entire sanctuary, including the eco-tourism zone and all 48 protection establishments, as 'Free From Single-Use Plastic' starting April 1.
- National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) approved Odisha's Proposal to declare Debrigarh a Tiger Reserve in Feb 2023.
- Debrigarh Wildlife Sanctuary, situated near the Hirakud dam in Sambalpur, covers an expanse of 347 square kilometers and stands as a prominent attraction in western Odisha.
- Notably, it is poised to become the third tiger reserve in the state, joining the ranks of Similipal and Satkosia.
- Originally designated as a wildlife sanctuary in 1985, it is nestled in the Bargarh district, adjacent to the Mahanadi River.
- This sanctuary holds historical significance due to its association with the renowned freedom fighter, Veer Surendra Sai.
- It served as a base for him during his resistance against British rule, notably at 'Barapathara,' situated within the sanctuary.

Odisha is unlikely to achieve its target of becoming a one trillion dollar economy by 2030, as per a report by India Ratings and Research (IRR)

- The report indicates that by the 2046-47 financial year, eight states will have economies exceeding one trillion dollars each.
- Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Gujarat are expected to achieve this milestone by 2039, followed by Tamil Nadu in 2041, Uttar Pradesh in 2042, Madhya Pradesh and Telangana in 2044, and Andhra Pradesh in 2046.
- Odisha's economy was USD 93.7 billion in 2023-24, ranking 13th among sub-national economies and 18th in terms of per capita income at USD 1,807.
- Despite positive growth trends, achieving the one trillion dollar mark by 2047 seems unlikely due to the state's starting point and required growth rates.
- Odisha has also projected its 2023 target. It is the 13th-largest state economy, ahead of Punjab and Bihar. But if the average rate of growth and depreciation of India rupee against dollar in last six years is taken into account, it looks unlikely that Odisha will be able to reach the one trillion dollar economy even by 2047.

Sustainability grants have been awarded to 11 research centers of excellence (CoEs) across five public universities in Odisha

- These CoEs were established as part of the World Bank-supported Odisha Higher Education Programme for Excellence and Equity (OHEPEE) and phase two of the Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA).
- The Odisha State Higher Education Council, along with a panel of experts, recently assessed the research work of these CoEs and awarded them a sustainability grant totaling approximately Rs 61.5 lakh for the academic sessions of 2023-24 and 2024-25 under the Mukhyamantri Research and Innovation Fellowship programme.
- Among these CoEs, Sambalpur University's research on 'natural products and therapeutics' received the highest grant of Rs 35 lakh.
- Despite these challenges, the state government continues to support the CoEs by providing research grants to fellows and sustainability grants for maintenance of equipment, research internships, publication of critical texts, and engagement of research associates.

The Sarhul festival, a significant religious event for tribal communities, was celebrated in Sundargarh district

- The spring festival known as Sarhul holds great cultural significance for indigenous tribes like the Mundas, Oraons, and Santhals.
- Among these, the Oraon community especially celebrates Sarhul as the largest spring festival, typically observed in March and April.
- In their native language, it is called "Khaddi," symbolizing the symbolic union or marriage of the earth.
- The forest flower sakhua or Sal is central to this festival, representing deep cultural ties within the forest ecosystem.

Odisha teacher Subhadarshani Pradhan has been actively involved in conserving the Mangrove pitta birds since 2020, inspiring local villagers in Bhitarkanika to join her cause

- Recognizing the threats faced by the nearly threatened Mangrove pitta, Subhadarshani initiated a conservation effort.
- She engaged with villagers living near Bhitarkanika to raise awareness about the importance of the bird in the local ecology and how to protect it.
- Mangrove pitta birds are resident, non-migratory birds that primarily feed on crustaceans, mollusks, and insects.
- They indicate the health of mangrove forests; their presence suggests a healthy ecosystem, while their absence can indicate disturbances or imbalances in the ecosystem.
- The breeding season of Mangrove pitta birds in Bhitarkanika ranges from April to August.
- The bird, locally known as 'Nabarangi' because of its colorful body, has a black head with a brown crown, a white throat, greenish upper parts, buff under-parts, and a reddish vent area.
- During the first-ever census conducted last year by the Forest department to count the birds in the national park, 179 Mangrove pitta birds were sighted, indicating a good population in the core areas of Bhitarkanika.
- The Mangrove pitta birds are almost endangered, with habitats restricted to mangrove forest areas in Odisha's Bhitarkanika and the Sunderbans in West Bengal.
- Their population is threatened by habitat loss and degradation caused by human activities.
- Highest number of the birds have been seen in Mahipura river mouth in Bhitarkanika.

A significant fire broke out at Nalabana Bird Sanctuary located within Chilika Lake in Odisha's Khurda district, resulting in the destruction of several fishing boats

- There are concerns that many migratory birds and wild animals, including fishing cats, may have perished in the blaze.
- The Nalabana Bird Sanctuary, situated on Nalabana Island within Odisha's Chilika lagoon area, serves as the core of the Chilika ecosystem.
- This sanctuary, covering approximately 16 sq km, received official recognition in 1987.
- During the monsoon, the island is submerged, only to resurface after the monsoon season.
- Nalabana and Mangalajodi, situated along the Chilika lake's banks, are the primary gathering spots for birds.
- Migratory birds begin arriving at Chilika around November, seeking respite from the harsh winter conditions of their native habitats in Siberia, China, Japan, and other northern hemisphere countries.
- Some notable migratory species include Bar-headed geese, greater flamingos, herons, black-tailed godwits, and the rare Great Knot, which was recently spotted after a five-year absence.
- Chilika Lake, where these sanctuaries are located, holds the distinction of being Asia's largest brackish water lagoon and the world's second-largest, following the New Caledonian barrier reef in New Caledonia.

Experts are advocating for the extension of multilingual education (MLE) in Odisha beyond Class III to reach more tribal youths

- In Odisha, which boasts 21 tribal languages and 74 dialects, the MLE-based learning ecosystem has received a boost with the regularization of 64 posts of tribal language teachers on July 26, 2021.
- Experts in education, linguistics, and anthropology involved in tribal socio-cultural and economic development suggest that a comprehensive linguistic survey of tribals, including Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs), is necessary to ensure an effective MLE-based learning ecosystem.
- They also propose the inclusion of local educated tribal youths in the education system through SSD schools.
- Currently, the tribal language teaching system is mainly limited to lower classes, i.e., Class I to III.
- However, experts argue that to make tribal students more comfortable with their studies, the MLE process should continue up to Class VIII.
- In developed languages like Santhali, it could be extended up to the Higher Secondary or even Graduation level.

Tribes in Odisha

- In Odisha, as many as 62 communities have been enlisted as Scheduled Tribes in with the provisions of Article-242 of constitution of India.
- Among the tribes some such as Kondh, Gond, Saora, Santal etc. are numerically very large and widely distributed and few others like Bondo, Chenchu, Lodha, Mankirdiaetc being small in number are found concentrated in certain pockets.

In 2024, Sambalpur introduced voter mascots named 'Voter Dada' and 'Voter Nani' dressed in traditional Sambalpuri attire to raise awareness among voters about the election process.

- These mascots are part of the 'No voter to be left behind' initiative by the district administration to ensure maximum voter participation.
- The mascots will educate voters about various election-related procedures, including voter registration, polling station locations, model polling stations, Sakhi booths managed by women, PwD-managed polling stations, and ethical voting practices.
- The initiative aims to enhance voter awareness and encourage new and young voters to participate in the electoral process.
- The mascots will conduct extensive campaigns in urban areas of Sambalpur district to inform people about election dates, timings, booth locations, voting procedures, and the use of IT applications for voter assistance.

A recent study has uncovered the presence of a crucial probiotic strain in the tribal beverage 'handia'

- Metabolite profiling of this strain has revealed the presence of vital compounds, including essential amino acids, short-chain fatty acids, antimicrobial and immunomodulatory molecules, and compounds that enhance flavor and aroma.
- This discovery is particularly significant due to the identification of gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA) during the genome sequencing of the probiotic strain isolated from 'handia'.
- GABA is known for its beneficial physiological effects, such as anti-anxiety, hypotensive, and diuretic properties, making it valuable for the food and pharmaceutical industries.
- The genome sequencing of the bacterium *Levilactobacillus brevis* ILSH3 (H3) found in 'handia' has revealed a range of attributes that make it a promising probiotic candidate. *L. brevis* is known for producing metabolites like lactic acid and acetic acid, which have antimicrobial properties, as well as flavor compounds like diacetyl and acetoin.

- Importantly, genes related to probiotic potential in the genome showed no matches against any pathogenic families.
- The study also identified an array of 25 distinct genes in the genome, including transporters, molecular proteins, and transcriptional regulators, that can help mitigate adverse effects induced by low pH conditions.
- GABA, an important metabolite in the bacteria, acts as a key inhibitory neurotransmitter in the central nervous system of mammals. Additionally, various immunomodulatory genes capable of stimulating host immune responses were found in the genome.

The Gajapati district administration in Odisha has creatively decorated polling booths with tribal paintings to celebrate the democratic process among tribal communities.

- This initiative aims to make the elections more engaging for the Souras, a particularly vulnerable tribal group (PVTG) in Odisha.
- The Saura and LanjiaSoura communities are known for adorning their homes and villages with murals during festivals and ceremonies, such as marriages.
- The Sora (alternative names and spellings include Saora, Saura, Savara and Sabara) are a Munda ethnic group from eastern India.
- They live in southern Odisha and north coastal Andhra Pradesh.
- Lanjia Sora woman in traditional jewelry in Rayagada district, Odisha, India.
- The idital, ceremonial paintings done in honor of various deities are the main feature of their religion.

AIIMS-Bhubaneswar has introduced a state-of-the-art service for the placement of Artificial Urinary Sphincters (AUS), marking a significant advancement in urological care.

- This innovative service aims to enhance the quality of life for patients suffering from severe urinary incontinence.
- The AUS implantation procedure is considered a gold standard treatment for urinary incontinence that has not responded to traditional therapies. This service is specifically designed for patients who have developed urinary incontinence due to factors such as prostate surgery, spinal cord injuries, or other conditions affecting urinary control.

The Bhitarkanika National Park authorities have implemented various measures to protect

wildlife from threats such as heatwaves, poaching, and fires.

- Forest Department has renovated existing ponds and ditches in the Bhitarkanika forest block to ensure an adequate water supply for hoofed animals and wild boars.
- Additionally, measures have been taken at the Dangamal Crocodile Research Centre to create a better cooling environment for nearly a hundred crocodile hatchlings housed at the hatchery.

Bhitarkanika National Park:

- Bhitarkanika National Park, located in the Kendrapara district of Odisha, is India's second-largest mangrove ecosystem, following the Sunderbans.
- Designated as a national park on September 16, 1998, it received Ramsar site status in August 2002, becoming the state's second Ramsar site after Chilika Lake.
- Spanning 145 square kilometers, this park is characterized by a network of creeks and canals, which are fed by the Brahmani, Baitarani, Dhamra, and Patasala rivers, creating a unique ecosystem.
- The flora of Bhitarkanika National Park includes mangrove species, casuarinas, and grasses like the indigo bush.
- In terms of fauna, the park is renowned for its large population of endangered saltwater crocodiles.
- Additionally, the Gahirmatha Beach, forming the park's eastern boundary, hosts the largest colony of Olive Ridley Sea Turtles.
- Other mammals found in the park include monkeys, jackals, common langurs, otters, sambar deer, jungle cats, foxes, mongooses, wolves, fishing cats, and hyenas.

Dr. SK Panigrahi, an Odia scientist, recently demonstrated a fascinating project called 'Surya Tilak' at the Ayodhya temple on the auspicious occasion of Ram Navami.

- The process was achieved through a specialized mirror-lens arrangement designed by astronomers at the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA) in Bengaluru and installed by a team from the Central Building Research Institute in Roorkee.

Channeling the Sun's Rays:

- The IIA team proposed a complex four-mirror-and-four-lens array.
- The setup included a pickup mirror positioned to receive sunlight at an angle, which then reflected the light through three other mirrors and four lenses, ensuring the light reached the idol's forehead at the right intensity.
- Opto-Mechanical System: The system operates like a periscope, with a specially designed 19-gear

system to adjust the pickup mirror's angle annually. This adjustment accounts for the variation in the Sun's position relative to the mirror each year.

INTACH recently introduced a project aimed at revitalizing the Kerang fabric of the Gadaba tribe in Odisha's Koraput region.

- The Gadaba and Bonda tribes have a rich tradition of using hand-woven clothes made from Kerang fiber.
- They collect bark from wild Kerang trees, soak it in water from nearby hill streams, dry it in the sun, and extract the fiber.
- The extracted fiber is then woven using vegetable dyes in traditional patterns that have been passed down for generations.
- Gadaba women wear full-length clothes or sarees with colorful stripes that cover their entire bodies, while Bonda women wear a small piece of cloth called Ringa, which wraps around the lower part of their bodies.
- Clothes made from Kerang fabric are known to last for several generations, sometimes up to 100 years.
- A study conducted in 2020 revealed that very few villages had looms, and none of the Gadaba people were involved in making Kerang fabric.
- In response, INTACH launched a project to revive this dying tradition.
- The project team engaged with Gadaba tribesmen from various villages through workshops and discussions, providing looms and other assistance to tribals in four villages of the Lamptaput block.

INTACH:

- The Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) was founded in 1984 in New Delhi with the vision to spearhead heritage awareness and conservation in India.
- Today INTACH is recognized as one of the world's largest heritage organizations.
- INTACH's mission to conserve heritage is based on the belief that living in harmony with heritage enhances the quality of life, and it is the duty of every citizen of India as laid down in the Constitution of India.

Odisha Skill Development Authority (OSDA) has joined hands with the prominent e-commerce platform Meesho to implement the recently launched Swakalpaprogramme, aiming to benefit 10,000 individuals.

- Vision: To transform Odisha into the "Entrepreneurial Capital of the Country."
- Under the scheme's initial phase, 1,000 individuals have been chosen to receive comprehensive

mentorship and support for setting up their enterprises.

- Meesho, in partnership with OSDA, World Skill Centre (WSC), and Palladium Consulting India Pvt Ltd, will manage the Swakalpaprogramme.
- This includes providing 104-hour entrepreneurship training followed by a six-month mentorship to assist in setting up enterprises.

Perks of Swakalpa:

- 10,000+ Candidate Participation
- 25% Women Representation
- 100 hours Entrepreneurship Training
- 24 Weeks of Mentoring & Hand Holding
- 1,000+ Micro-Business Set Up

Ratan Tata, the chairman emeritus of Tata Group and a prominent philanthropist, received the KISS Humanitarian Award 2021.

- The award, initiated in 2008 by AchyutaSamanta, founder of KIIT and KISS, recognizes individuals and organizations committed to humanitarian work globally.
- The KISS Humanitarian Award comprises a citation and a gold-plated trophy that conveys a profound social message.
- The trophy symbolizes the spirit of selfless service to humanity, empowering and enlightening countless individuals worldwide.
- The hands lifting the heart symbolize the compassionate service to humanity, while the single pair of hands holding the heart signifies the profound impact that dedicated individuals can have on the lives of the less fortunate.

The Odisha government has urgently requested the Centre for the supply of TB drugs to support the National TB Elimination Programme (NTEP).

National TB Elimination Programme (NTEP)

- India has pledged to eradicate tuberculosis by 2025, five years earlier than the global target of 2030.
- To align with this ambitious goal, the National Tuberculosis Control Programme has been renamed the National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme (NTEP).
- The approach extends beyond medical interventions to address the social determinants of TB and reduce access barriers to diagnosis and treatment.
- Under the NikshayPoshan Yojana, nutritional support is provided to TB patients throughout their treatment.
- Efforts are underway to improve Airborne Infection Control in healthcare settings and to offer

chemoprophylaxis to pediatric contacts of TB patients and PLHIV patients.

- Plans are in motion to expand TB preventive treatment to adult contacts.
- The 'TB Mukh Bharat Abhiyaan' has been launched as a grassroots movement to eliminate TB in India.
- India also remains committed to assisting neighboring countries with technical support.
- India commends the South-East Asia Region (SEAR) for its high-level political commitment and increased investments in ending tuberculosis.

Tuberculosis (TB):

- TB, caused by *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* bacteria, spreads through the air when infected individuals cough, sneeze, or spit.
- Symptoms include cough with sputum, chest pains, weakness, weight loss, fever, and night sweats.
- TB is treatable and curable, but multidrug-resistant tuberculosis (MDR-TB) does not respond to first-line drugs. However, it can be treated with second-line drugs.
- Extensively drug-resistant TB (XDR-TB) is a severe form of MDR-TB that does not respond to the most effective second-line drugs, leaving patients with limited treatment options.

Hundreds of jellyfish carcasses have been discovered along Gopalpur Beach in Odisha's Ganjam district.

- Environmentalists and nature enthusiasts are concerned about this discovery, and the exact cause of the jellyfish deaths is yet to be determined.
- Southern winds and tide patterns can cause jellyfish to come ashore, where they struggle to return to sea due to their slow movement, eventually leading to their deaths. Such incidents occur annually.
- Dr. Anil Mohapatra, a scientist from the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI), explained that jellyfish reproduce during this season, leading to a surge in their numbers.
- A jellyfish is a marine creature classified under the phylum Cnidaria, which includes sea anemones, sea whips, and corals.

- Like other members of this phylum, jellyfish have body parts that extend from a central axis.
- They are found in oceans worldwide, varying in size and shape.
- Jellyfish have a soft, transparent, umbrella-shaped bell that contracts and expands for movement.
- Their tentacles hang from the bell, containing tiny stinging cells used to stun or paralyze prey before consumption.
- Waste is expelled and food is consumed through an opening in the bell, which serves as their mouth.

The Odisha government has extended its "Anwasha" program (free residential school programme for needy ST and SC children) to 17 districts in the state, benefiting 22,340 children.

- Selected through a lottery system from BPL families in remote areas, these children stay in 98 Anwasha hostels located within 163 English medium schools in urban areas.

About

- The program aims to integrate these children into mainstream education by offering a conducive environment for their overall development.
- Specialized subject teachers in Mathematics, English, and Science, along with other tutors, act as "after-school mentors" to the enrolled students.
- The program provides indoor and outdoor recreational facilities, a nutritious diet, and all necessary study materials to the students.
- Parents have expressed gratitude for the program, highlighting its positive impact on their children's academic and extracurricular activities.
- Anwasha has become a second home for many students, providing them with study materials and a wellness grant of Rs 200 per month.
- Initially launched as a pilot project, the program has expanded its reach and impact, benefiting thousands of students from ST and SC categories.
- The program's success has led to its extension for another five years, ensuring continued support for needy students.

OPSC Current Affairs

**NATIONAL**

The Ministry of Defence (MoD) announced that India's defence exports surged to a record Rs 21,083 crore in the fiscal year 2023-24, marking a remarkable growth of 32.5% from the previous year.

- Defence exports witnessed a staggering growth of 31 times over the past decade, from FY14 to FY24.
- Comparing data from two decades reveals a remarkable 21-fold increase in defence exports, highlighting the sector's exponential expansion.
- The Ministry credited policy reforms and 'Ease of Doing Business' initiatives for fostering an enabling environment for defence exports.
- End-to-end digital solutions have been instrumental in promoting defence exports, streamlining processes for domestic industries.
- Global Acceptability of Indian Defence Products
- The surge in exports reflects the increasing global acceptability of India's defence products and technologies, underscoring the nation's growing stature in the global defence market.
- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh outlined ambitious targets, aiming for an annual defence production of Rs 3 trillion by 2028-29.
- Exports of military hardware are projected to reach Rs 50,000 crore, with emphasis on indigenization and self-reliance in defence manufacturing.
- The government's commitment to boosting defence exports is evident through continuous efforts to enhance indigenous capabilities and facilitate a conducive business environment.
- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh reiterated India's resolve to achieve self-reliance in defence production and become a net exporter of defence equipment.
- Persistent Challenges and Global Dynamics
- Despite significant progress in defence exports, India remains the world's largest arms importer, indicating ongoing challenges in achieving self-sufficiency in defence procurement.

India's First Gene Therapy for Cancer Launched

- The President of India, Smt. Droupadi Murmu, launched India's first home-grown gene therapy for cancer at IIT Bombay on April 4, 2024.
- President Murmu hailed the therapy as a new hope for humanity as it is both accessible and

affordable. She expressed confidence that the innovative treatment will give new life to countless patients suffering from cancer.

- India's first CAR-T cell therapy is not only an example of the 'Make in India' initiative but also a shining example of the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' (Self-Reliant India) campaign.
- The therapy's development as a collaborative effort between IIT Bombay, Tata Memorial Hospital, and industry partner ImmunoACT.

About CAR-T Cell Therapy:

- NexCAR19 CAR-T therapy is India's first indigenously Made-in-India CAR-T therapy; borne from academia-industry partnership. NexCAR19 is the world's most affordable CAR-T therapy and it puts India firmly on the global map of advanced cell and gene therapy.
- The CAR-T Cell therapy has been developed by Prof. Rahul Purwar and his team at the BSBE Department, IIT Bombay in close association with Tata Memorial Centre and ImmunoACT.

India to Establish First Privately Managed Strategic Petroleum Reserve by 2029-30

- This initiative aims to allow the operator the liberty to trade all stored oil, aligning with models seen in countries such as Japan and South Korea.
- India's current SPR strategy involves partial commercialization, with plans to expand this approach with new SPR projects.
- India plans to construct two new SPRs, including an 18.3 million barrels facility in Padur, Karnataka, and a 29.3 million barrels SPR in Odisha.
- ISPRL estimates the Padur SPR project, along with associated pipeline and import facility, to cost approximately 55 billion rupees (\$659 million). The federal government is expected to contribute up to 60% of the total cost. The tender evaluation criterion prioritizes bidders requiring the lowest federal financing or offering the highest premium for the 60-year lease.

DRDO Initiates Project for Test Centre in West Bengal

- The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has started implementing a project in Junput village in West Bengal to build a small test centre for the country's weapon systems.

- Junput, like Odisha's Chandipur which is known for its Integrated Test Range (ITR), is also situated by the Bay of Bengal.
- An additional operation area is required as the existing ITR at Chandipur near Balasore has become saturated with work related to testing.
- Since its inception, the DRDO has aimed at designing and developing state-of-the-art sensors, weapon systems, platforms and allied equipment in defence and security domains of land, air, sea, space and cyber
- As timely trials of weapon systems are of paramount importance, a plan is being implemented for an additional operation area at Junput near Digha, about 70 kilometres from Chandipur
- Junput is also 177 km from Kolkata and 40 km from Digha, a popular sea resort town.
- Located in the coastal zone of West Bengal, this proposed site covers 8.73 acres of land and also meets the requisite safety norms. The project has got recommendations from the central and the West Bengal governments.
- According to the standard, while undergoing any flight test, DRDO always keeps the safety and tranquillity of humans and nature at utmost priority. All the people living in the vicinity of the test site should freely continue with their day-to-day activities.
- Further, DRDO ensures that its tests or trials do not impact the life of people, especially fishermen and farmers, dwelling in its surroundings.

India aims to produce 100 GW nuclear power by 2047: AEC Chairman

- India has set an ambitious target in the nuclear power sector, aiming to scale up its production to 1 lakh MW by 2047, as announced by Atomic Energy Commission Chairman A K Mohanty. This goal marks a substantial increase from the current production level of over 8,000 MW.
- During the release of a report titled 'Synchronising Energy Transitions Towards Possible Net Zero for India: Affordable and Clean Energy for All', largely funded by the Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser to the government of India.
- Mohanty outlined the strategic roadmap to achieve this ambitious target, revealing that the Department of Atomic Energy is preparing a vision document for 'Amrit Kaal'.
- This vision aims to reach a nuclear capacity of about 100 GW by 2047, with contributions from various sources. Breeder reactors are expected to contribute 3 GW of nuclear power, while 17.6 GW

will come from light water reactors with international cooperation, and an additional 40-45 GW from pressurised heavy water reactors.

- The accompanying report emphasized the importance of India phasing down coal usage in the next three decades, highlighting the need for robust infrastructure for alternative sources such as nuclear power.
- It also stressed the significance of flexible grid infrastructure and storage to facilitate the integration of renewable energy sources. Furthermore, the report suggested that if India chooses to continue its reliance on coal, it should explore carbon dioxide technologies (CDRs) like bioenergy with carbon capture and storage (BECCS) and CCUS to comprehend their long-term potential fully.

Excavation Unearths 5,200-Year-Old Harappan Settlement in Kachchh, Gujarat

- Archaeologists from Kerala University, in collaboration with various institutions, have unearthed a significant Harappan settlement at Padta Bet in Gujarat
- Excavation unearthed evidence of a Harappan settlement dating back to circa 3200 BCE to 1700 BCE.
- Structures included circular and rectangular buildings made of locally available sandstone and shales.
- Discoveries: Unique pottery traditions, semi-precious stone beads, terracotta spindle whorls, copper, lithic tools, and animal bone fragments.
- The site's strategic location atop a hillock, overlooking a valley, and with access to a nearby stream suggests significance in Harappan urban planning and resource management.

Government has set up a three-member committee of gynecologists to finalize a list of over-the-counter (OTC) drugs that will be available for sale at general stores without the need for a prescription.

- The committee, chaired by the Directorate General of Health Services Atul Goel, aims to complete the list within two weeks. This initiative is part of India's new OTC policy for drugs, which seeks to reduce treatment costs and promote self-care while ensuring safety.

Objectives

- Improve accessibility to commonly used medicines, especially in rural areas
- Reduce treatment costs for citizens
- Promote responsible self-care practices
- Ensure safety and efficacy of OTC drugs

Current Status of OTC Drugs in India

- India currently lacks a clear policy to regulate the distribution, marketing, and consumption of OTC drugs.
- Commonly used medicines for cough, cold, and contraceptives are often sold over the counter without proper guidelines.
- The Drugs & Cosmetics Act, 1940, and the Drugs & Cosmetics Rules, 1945, do not define OTC medicines.

India aims to halt urea imports by the end of 2025 by boosting domestic production and promoting alternative fertilizers.

- The government's approach involves reviving closed fertilizer plants across various states.
- Plants at Gorakhpur, Ramagundam, Talcher, Barauni, and Sindri are targeted for revival, with four already operational.
- Encouraging the use of alternative fertilizers like nano liquid urea and nano liquid DAP is a significant part of the strategy.
- Initiatives by entities like IFFCO and Coromandel International Limited are contributing to this effort.
- PM Programme for Restoration, Awareness, Nourishment and Amelioration of Mother Earth' (PM-PRANAM)
- The PM-PRANAM scheme, launched in 2023, incentivizes states and UTs to promote alternative fertilizers and balanced fertilizer usage.
- The government heavily subsidizes fertilizers, with Rs 1.64 lakh crore allocated for fertilizer subsidy in 2024-25.
- Urea is provided to farmers at a statutorily notified Maximum Retail Price (MRP) under the Urea Subsidy Scheme (USS), while other fertilizers operate under the Nutrient Based Subsidy Policy.

Indian Coast Guard Inaugurates Aquatic Centre at Mandapam, Tamil Nadu

- Indian Coast Guard Director General Rakesh Pal inaugurated the Indian Coast Guard Aquatic Centre at ICGS Mandapam near Rameshwaram, Tamil Nadu.

- The ICG Chief is on a four-day visit to the maritime force's bases in Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, and Puducherry and made a maiden visit to Chennai for a review of operational preparedness and commensurate infrastructure development in the region.
- The Indian Coast Guard, Indian Army, Navy, and Air Force are the four forces under the Defence Ministry and are governed by their different acts.

Innovative Election Initiative: Punjab Launches 'Booth Raabta' Website

Punjab has launched the "Booth Raabta" website ahead of the state assembly elections.

- The website aims to bridge the gap between voters and election authorities.
- It provides voters with crucial information about polling booths and real-time updates.
- The platform facilitates communication between voters and election authorities, fostering transparency.
- Punjab's initiative underscores the importance of leveraging technology for promoting democratic participation in elections.

President of India Inaugurates Homoeopathy Symposium on World Homoeopathy Day April 10

- The theme of the convention is "Empowering Research, Enhancing Proficiency: A Homoeopathic Symposium".
- The convention is aimed at promoting evidence-based scientific treatment in clinical practice and health programs, to capacitate homoeopathic community in research-based therapeutics, to become a healthcare powerhouse meeting the population's needs for personalized, safe, and credible healthcare, and to enrich homoeopathic medicine with quality diagnostics, therapeutics, and scientific tools for better patient outcomes.

Longte Festival Celebrated by Arunachal Pradesh's Nyishi Tribe

- The Nyishi tribe of Arunachal Pradesh is celebrating its Longte festival.
- Longte is one of the oldest and most important agriculturally important festivals of the Nyishi tribe and is a sign of the arrival of the new season, after which the seeds begin to be sown in the fields.
- This festival also reminds us of separating man from evil forces from the tradition that has been going on since ancient times.

- The Longte festival is celebrated by the Nyisis tribe of Arunachal Pradesh, in which animals are not sacrificed. Instead, the altar is decorated with white feathers of a hen and bamboo flowers.
- LongteYulo is one of the old festivals of the Nyisis tribe, celebrated with gaiety and devotion at the beginning of spring in April.

UNFPA Report: India's Population Trends and Reproductive Health Inequities

- India's estimated population reaches 144 crore, projected to double in 77 years, surpassing China.
- 24% of India's population is aged 0-14, with significant segments in the 10-19 and 10-24 age ranges.
- Maternal deaths in India decline, accounting for 8% of global fatalities, attributed to improved access to maternal healthcare.
- Despite progress, dramatic inequities in maternal mortality persist, with disparities among districts and vulnerable groups.
- Women with disabilities face up to 10 times higher risk of gender-based violence, highlighting systemic inequalities.
- Improvements in healthcare access primarily benefit wealthier and ethnic groups, leaving marginalized communities behind.
- Inequalities persist in women's bodily autonomy and access to contraception, posing challenges to achieving reproductive health equity.

Permanent Education Number (PEN) Required for Students Starting Academic Year 2024-25

- In a move to simplify and streamline the process of students' transition from one school to another, the School Education Department in the state has made the use of Permanent Education Number (PEN) mandatory from the academic year 2024-25.
- PEN is a unique identification number assigned to every student by the Union Ministry of Education, through the UDISE+ (Unified District Information System for Education Plus) portal, which covers more than 14.89 lakh schools, 95 lakh teachers, and 26.5 crore children.

Central Government Committee on LGBTQ+ Community Welfare

- In the landmark Supriyo Chakraborty vs. Union Of India Case 2023, the Special Marriage Act of 1954 was challenged for its exclusion of same-sex marriages, citing a violation of Article 14 of the fundamental rights.

- Despite the Act allowing marriages between individuals of different religions, it did not extend this provision to same-sex couples. The Supreme Court upheld this exclusion, prompting the government to establish a committee to address the concerns of the LGBTQ+ community without legally recognizing their relationships as marriages.
- The committee, chaired by Union Home Secretary Rajiv Gauba, comprises six members including secretaries from key ministries. Social Justice and Empowerment Secretary Saurabh Garg serves as the convener, with representatives from the ministries of Home Affairs, Women and Child Development, Health and Family Welfare, and Law and Justice.

New Archaeological Discoveries Unveil Telangana's Ancient Heritage

- In recent archaeological explorations in Telangana, three significant sites have been discovered, shedding light on the region's ancient history and cultural heritage.
- These discoveries, ranging from megalithic monuments to rock art sites, offer valuable insights into the life and times of ancient civilizations that once thrived in these areas.
- One of the discoveries includes more than 200 megalithic monuments found in the dense forest and slopes of a hill.
- These monuments, believed to be dating back to around 1,000 BCE, are predominantly of the 'Dolmenoid Cists' type, characterized by squarish or rectangular shapes.
- What sets these monuments apart is their unique construction, where the side slabs are arranged following the shape of the cap-stone, resulting in each 'dolmenoid cist' having a unique shape dictated by the cap-stone.
- Another significant discovery is an Iron Age megalithic site at Ooragutta near Bandala village in SS Tadvaimandal of Mulugu district.
- Discovered by a team of archaeologists, this site showcases new types of monuments not found elsewhere in India, indicating a distinct architectural style and cultural practice.
- The monuments at this site are particularly intriguing due to their unique features and construction, suggesting a high level of craftsmanship and architectural planning.
- Additionally, two new rock art sites have been discovered at Damaratogu in Gundalamandal of Bhadrachalam district.
- One of these sites, known as 'DevarlabandaMula', exclusively depicts animals and no humans,

suggesting a cultural significance possibly related to hunting or animal worship.

- The absence of weapons or domestic animals in the paintings indicates that these artworks may belong to the mesolithic age, dating anywhere between 8000 – 3000 BCE.
- These discoveries not only enrich our understanding of the region's ancient past but also underscore the need for further archaeological exploration and preservation efforts.
- The unique architectural styles and cultural practices reflected in these sites highlight the rich heritage of Telangana and its contribution to the broader narrative of Indian history.

The Rs 72,000 crore 'Great Nicobar Island Development Project' aimed at the holistic development of the Great Nicobar Island has come under scrutiny due to its potential impact on the indigenous Shompen and Nicobarese communities.

- Experts have raised concerns about the project's clearances violating constitutional mandates and ignoring the views of the tribals.
- The project, piloted by NITI Aayog and implemented by the Andaman and Nicobar Islands Integrated Development Corporation (ANIIDCO), involves the construction of a transshipment port, an international airport, a township, and a power plant.
- More than half of the project area lies over the Tribal Reserve Area, which is currently used by the Shompen, a particularly vulnerable tribal group.
- The final environmental clearance was given by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) in November 2022.

Shompen Tribe Casts Historic Votes in Andaman and Nicobar Elections

- Seven members of the Shompen tribe cast their votes in the Andaman and Nicobar Lok Sabha constituency.
- The total number of voters in the Union Territory (UT) is 3,15,148, which includes 1,64,012 male, 1,51,132 female and four voters in the third gender category.
- The estimated population of the Shompen tribe, according to the 2011 Census data, stands at 229 individuals.
- This historic event serves as a testament to the ongoing efforts to ensure the rights and

representation of marginalized groups in the democratic fabric of the nation.

India's Largest Climate Clock Unveiled at CSIR HQ for Earth Day Celebration

- The Climate Clock is a graphic to demonstrate how quickly the planet is approaching 1.5 °C of global warming, given current emissions trends.
- It also shows the amount of CO₂ already emitted, and the global warming to date.
- The installation of the Climate Clock aims to raise awareness about climate change and its adverse impacts.
- Climate clocks provided by the foundation have been installed in various CSIR labs to raise awareness about climate change.
- The event signifies CSIR's aim to spread awareness about climate change and to make people energy literate.
- The date shown when humanity reaches 1.5°C will move closer as emissions rise, and further away as emissions decrease.

Indian Historical Records Commission (IHRC) Adopts a New Logo and Motto

- The Indian Historical Records Commission (IHRC), an apex advisory body on archival matters, acts as an all-India forum of creators, custodians and users of records to advise the Government of India on the management of records and their use for historical research. Established in 1919, the IHRC is headed by the Union Minister of Culture.
- In order to visually communicate the unique identity of IHRC and the ethos that it represents, an online competition was launched in 2023 on MyGov portal to invite the designs for logo and motto, and in response a total 436 entries were received.
- The logo signifies the theme and uniqueness of IHRC entirely. The pages in the shape of lotus petals represent IHRC as the resilient nodal institution for maintaining historical records. The Sarnath pillar in the middle represents India's glorious past. Brown as the colour theme reinforces the organization's mission of preserving, studying and honouring India's historical records.
- The motto translates as "Where history is preserved for the future." The motto holds great significance for the IHRC and its work. The IHRC plays a vital role in identifying, collecting, cataloguing and maintaining historical documents, manuscripts other sources of historical

information. By doing so the Commission ensures that valuable historical knowledge is conserved for future generations. The motto, therefore, reflects the Commission's commitment to ensuring the safeguarding of historical documents and making these accessible for the benefit of present and future generations.

India's First Multi-Purpose Green Hydrogen Pilot Project Inaugurated in Himachal Pradesh

- SJVN begins Centralized Operations of 1500 MW Nathpajhakri Hydro Power Station and 412 MW Rampur Hydro Power Station.
- The state-of-the-art Green Hydrogen Pilot Project is set to produce 14 kilograms of Green Hydrogen daily during 8 hours of operation. The hydrogen produced will be stored at a pressure of 30 bars, in six storage tanks, with a total storage capacity of 12 m³. The project will produce hydrogen using alkaline electrolyzer of 20 Nm³/hour capacity, which would be powered by renewable energy supplied from 1.31 MW Solar Power Plant of SJVN in Wadhval, Shimla.
- Besides generating power, the green hydrogen will also be used for High Velocity Oxygen Fuel Coating of turbine underwater parts.

The Madras High Court has instructed the Tamil Nadu government to implement the Guidelines for Elimination of Corporal Punishment in Schools (GECPP) provided by the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR).

Corporal punishment

- Corporal punishment in schools has been a longstanding issue in India, with many children facing physical and mental abuse at the hands of teachers and school authorities.
- The NCPCR, a statutory body established under the Commissions for Protection of Child Rights (CPCR) Act, 2005, has been working towards eliminating this practice by issuing guidelines and recommendations to state governments.

Directives of the court

- The Madras High Court's order includes the following key directives:
- The guidelines must be communicated to all educational institutions across Tamil Nadu and to the District Educational Authorities.

- District Educational Authorities are directed to sensitize school authorities to follow the guidelines scrupulously to protect the mental health of children.
- Suitable instructions are to be issued to district educational authorities to conduct seminars and awareness camps regarding the NCPCR guidelines.
- In case of any complaint, actions must be initiated by the competent authorities, and any lapse, dereliction, or negligence should result in departmental disciplinary proceedings under the Service Rules.

Recently, in Assam's predominantly tribal Diphu Lok Sabha constituency, candidates from all political parties have pledged to implement Article 244(A) of the Constitution, aiming to establish an autonomous 'state within a state.'

About Article 244(A)

- Inserted by the 22nd Amendment Act, 1969.
- Empowers Parliament to form an autonomous state within Assam for certain tribal areas.
- Allows for a separate legislature, council of ministers, and greater autonomy over law and order.
- The demand for autonomy in Assam's hill areas like Karbi Anglong dates back to the 1950s.
- Several militant groups signed peace accords with the government for implementing Article 244(A).
- A central issue in the Diphu Lok Sabha constituency of Assam.
- Key features include:
- Provision for a separate Legislature or Council of Ministers, or both
- Goes beyond the limited powers granted to autonomous councils under the Sixth Schedule
- Allows for greater control over law and order and financial matters
- In 2021, a peace settlement was reached with five militant groups in Karbi Anglong, promising greater autonomy and a special development package. A similar agreement was signed with the Dimasas National Liberation Army in 2023.
- Despite the peace settlements, the implementation of Article 244(A) remains a central issue in the Diphu constituency. All candidates have promised to work towards realizing this constitutional provision, which has been a demand of the tribal communities in the region.

India must grow at 8-10% every year to reap demographic dividend: RBI bulletin

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has emphasized that the Indian economy needs to grow at a rate of 8-10 per cent per annum over the next decade to reap the demographic dividend.
- The RBI believes that India's favourable demographics will help it break the low middle income barrier and harness its young and rising labor force.
- The working-age population is expected to grow at a rate of 9.7 million in 2021-2031 and 4.2 million in 2031-2041 per year, making a focus on labour quality essential for the growth strategy.

NABARD unveils Climate Strategy 2030

- The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) unveiled its Climate Strategy 2030 document on Earth Day to address India's growing need for green financing. The strategy aims to mobilize resources for climate change mitigation, adaptation, and resilience projects in the country.
- The strategy is structured around four key pillars:
 - Accelerating green lending across sectors
 - Playing a broader market-making role
 - Internal green transformation of NABARD
 - Strategic resource mobilization
- The initiative reinforces NABARD's commitment to environmental stewardship and positions it as a pivotal player in India's transition towards a resilient and sustainable economy.



INTERNATIONAL

Congo Appoints First Female Prime Minister amid Eastern Violence

- Tuluka's appointment comes after weeks of uncertainty. It is still going to be months before a new government is formed since the process requires deliberations with several political parties.
- Far from the nation's capital, Kinshasa, eastern Congo has long been overrun by more than 120 armed groups seeking a share of the region's gold and other resources as they carry out mass killings.
- Both regional and UN peacekeepers have been asked to leave Congo after the government accused them of failing to resolve the conflict.
- Tuluka promised to work towards peace and development, as well as on the number of promises made by the president on the campaign trail including better living conditions for people.

India-Nepal Joint Initiative to Promote Sanskrit Research and Education

- India and Nepal have collaborated to promote Sanskrit research and education.
- The initiative aims to strengthen bilateral relations and deepen cultural ties between the two nations.
- Preservation of Sanskrit heritage is a key focus, highlighting the importance of linguistic and cultural diversity.

- Academic collaboration will facilitate scholarly exchange and promote a deeper understanding of Sanskrit studies.
- This initiative underscores the shared commitment of India and Nepal towards promoting their cultural heritage.

Germany has become the largest EU country to legalize recreational cannabis, allowing adults over 18 to possess 25 grams and grow three plants at home.

- Germany has officially legalized recreational cannabis, making it the largest EU country to do so.
- The new law allows adults over 18 to possess 25 grams of dried cannabis and grow up to three marijuana plants at home.
- This move places Germany among the countries with the most lenient cannabis regulations in Europe, joining Malta and Luxembourg.
- Meanwhile, the Netherlands, known for its relaxed approach to cannabis, has recently adopted stricter measures to deter cannabis tourism.
- The legalization came into effect at midnight, with celebratory scenes at Berlin's iconic Brandenburg Gate where people gathered to mark this milestone.
- The next phase of the law, starting from July 1, will allow the legal acquisition of weed through 'cannabis clubs' in the country.

- These clubs can have up to 500 members each and distribute up to 50 grams of cannabis per person monthly.

South Korea's 'Artificial Sun' Reactor Sets Record at 100 Million Degrees Celsius

- Scientists in South Korea have been able to safely maintain a 100 million degrees celsius temperature in a nuclear fusion experiment, a first for the world and a record by itself.
- Using the Korea Superconducting Tokamak Advanced Research (KSTAR) device, which was known as an artificial sun nuclear fusion reactor, the team produced plasma temperatures of 100 million degree Celsius. It is seven times hotter than the core of the sun. The temperature was generated for a record 48 seconds, during tests between December and February.
- The purpose of this fusion is to recreate the nuclear reaction that makes it possible for the Sun and other stars to shine.
- This was done by fusing two atoms together so that a huge amount of energy could be released. The most important thing is that the reactor does not emit any kind of carbon or any other kind of pollution which can cause global warming.

Abdel Fattah al-Sisi Sworn in for Third Term as Egyptian President

- Egypt's President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, 69, has commenced his third term as the leader of the nation, extending his tenure until 2030. Amidst battling economic challenges, Sisi vows to prioritize national interests and fulfill the aspirations of the Egyptian people for a modern, democratic state.
- Reaffirmation of Commitment: Sisi pledges to remain dedicated to nation-building and serving the interests of Egypt.
- Election Victory: Securing 89.6% of the vote in the December election, Sisi's victory solidifies his position, though critics raise concerns about the electoral process.
- Opposition Dynamics: Observers note the sidelining and imprisonment of opposition challengers, raising questions about the electoral integrity and political landscape.

Romania unveils the world's most potent laser, utilizing Chirped-Pulse Amplification (CPA) technology pioneered by Nobel laureates Gerard

Mourou and Donna Strickland, promising groundbreaking applications in various sectors.

- With a peak power of 10 petawatts and femtosecond duration pulses, this laser sets a new standard in intensity, offering immense potential for advancements in fields such as healthcare, space exploration, and industrial processes.
- The laser's capabilities span across numerous domains, including advanced precision instruments for corrective eye surgery, compact particle accelerators for cancer treatment, and innovative solutions for addressing global challenges like nuclear waste disposal and space debris cleanup.
- Developed in partnership with the French company Thales, this laser represents a collaborative effort to push the boundaries of laser technology, showcasing the importance of international cooperation in scientific breakthroughs.
- Gerard Mourou envisions the 21st century as the age of lasers, analogous to the electron's significance in the previous century, highlighting the transformative potential of this technology to shape the future of science and industry.

Zimbabwe declares state of disaster to tackle the prolonged drought crisis

- The declaration was widely expected following similar actions by neighboring Zambia and Malawi, where drought linked to the El Niño weather phenomenon has scorched crops, leaving millions of people in need of food assistance.
- Due to the El Niño-induced drought more than 80% of our country received below normal rainfall," President Emmerson Mnangagwa said in a speech calling for international aid. The country's top priority, he said, is "securing food for all Zimbabweans.
- Zimbabwe, once a regional agricultural powerhouse and grain exporter, has in recent years relied more and more on aid agencies to avert mass hunger due to extreme weather conditions such as heat waves and floods.

Global Life Expectancy Trends: Lancet Study Insights

- A recent Lancet study reveals a significant rise in global life expectancy, with an average increase of 6.2 years between 1990 and 2021. Notably, India has seen an eight-year increase during this period. The study attributes this rise to declines in deaths from various ailments such as diarrhoea,

respiratory infections, stroke, and heart disease, although the gains were somewhat offset by the arrival of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020.

- In the South Asia region, countries like Bhutan, Bangladesh, Nepal, India, and Pakistan have shown varied improvements in life expectancy, with Bhutan leading with a gain of 13.6 years. Proper management of the Covid-19 pandemic is highlighted as a crucial factor in preserving these gains.
- The study underscores the significant net gain in life expectancy in Southeast Asia, East Asia, and Oceania, largely due to reductions in deaths from chronic respiratory diseases, stroke, respiratory infections, and cancer. However, the emergence of Covid-19 has disrupted these advancements, making it the second-leading cause of death globally.
- The GBD 2021 report highlights the substantial drops in deaths from enteric diseases, contributing to a 1.1-year increase in global life expectancy between 1990 and 2021. Reductions in deaths from lower respiratory infections and advancements in preventing deaths from various causes further drove up life expectancy worldwide.

Abu Dhabi Future Energy Company PJSC – Masdar, the UAE’s clean energy powerhouse, is gearing up to host the World Future Energy Summit (WFES).

- Taking place from April 16 to 18 at the Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre (ADNEC), WFES is the world’s leading business event for future energy, clean technology and sustainability, with a packed programme of events, activations, discussions and forums.
- The Masdar Pavilion at WFES will act as a hub for innovation, collaboration and knowledge sharing, with its theatre featuring an engaging programme of panels and presentations, including forums by Masdar’s global strategic initiatives, Y4S (Youth 4 Sustainability) and WiSER (Women in Sustainability, Environment and Renewable Energy).
- The Innovation Zone, hosted by Masdar, will feature a series of industry panels with innovators and experts, focusing on the latest climate solutions.
- It will include technology showcases from ADSW partners, international startups and SMEs across urban mobility, clean energy, agritech, and artificial intelligence, and will officially launch the SME Day at WFES on 18th April to continue the legacy of the COP28 SME Climate Hub initiative.

The UK and the US have inked a MOU to foster collaboration on the development of advanced testing for AI models.

- The agreement underscores a concerted effort by both nations to align their scientific methodologies and collaboratively enhance the evaluation processes for AI technologies. By agreeing to undertake joint testing exercises and encouraging exchanges of expertise between their AI Safety Institutes, the UK and US aim to spearhead a unified approach to AI safety. This initiative is not just about mitigating risks but also about leveraging AI’s potential to improve lives globally.
- UK Secretary of State for Science, Innovation, and Technology, Michelle Donelan, emphasised the historic nature of this collaboration, viewing it as an extension of the “enduring special relationship” between the two countries. She highlighted the global imperative of AI safety and the collective responsibility to navigate the technology’s challenges and opportunities responsibly.
- Echoing this sentiment, US Secretary of Commerce, Gina Raimondo, characterized AI as the defining technology of our era, stressing the partnership’s role in advancing understanding and establishing rigorous standards for AI systems. Raimondo’s comments reflect a proactive stance towards addressing AI risks while strengthening the bilateral ties that underscore this initiative.
- As AI continues to evolve at a breakneck pace, this transatlantic partnership marks a proactive step towards ensuring that AI development remains safe and beneficial. By committing to share insights and research on AI safety and security, the UK and US not only reinforce their special relationship but also set a precedent for international cooperation in the realm of AI governance.
- The implications of this agreement extend beyond bilateral relations, aiming to establish a global framework for AI safety. By working together, the UK and US are laying the groundwork for a safer, more secure AI future, demonstrating leadership and a shared commitment to harnessing AI’s vast potential responsibly.

China has become the largest importer of Russian seaborne crude, surpassing India, due to India's slowdown in imports amidst sanctions and rising price.

- China has overtaken India as the primary importer of Russian crude oil via sea routes. In March,

China imported 1.82 million barrels per day (bpd) of Russian crude by sea, surpassing India's 1.36 million bpd. Additionally, China also receives Russian oil through pipelines.

- India's recent slowdown in Russian crude imports is attributed to various sanctions and rising prices. While India had been the leading importer of seaborne Russian crude for around eighteen months, China's February imports of 1.3 million bpd marginally exceeded India's 1.27 million bpd, with the gap widening significantly in March.
- Despite this shift, India's imports of Russian oil increased by 7 per cent month-on-month in March, indicating a growing inclination towards acquiring discounted barrels. Media reports suggest that India's Russian imports surpassed those from other countries, including Iraq and Saudi Arabia. Overall crude oil imports for India rose to 4.89 million bpd in March from 4.41 million bpd in February, according to data from Vortexa.
- Urals sour-grade oil remained India's primary import from Russia, alongside other grades such as Varandey, Siberian Light, and Sokol from Sakhalin I. Among traditional Middle-Eastern suppliers, Iraq saw a substantial increase in crude oil supply to India in March, while imports from Saudi Arabia declined.

Simon Harris, at 37, becomes Ireland's youngest Prime Minister, succeeding Leo Varadkar. His rapid political ascent within Fine Gael culminates in a pledge for unity and focus on core values.

- Simon Harris has been confirmed as Ireland's new prime minister, following Leo Varadkar's shock resignation.
- Harris will face challenges including the longstanding housing crisis, health-care, political competition and an economy reliant on multinationals.
- Harris said that he was "deeply honoured" to become taoiseach and pledged to "work every day to realise the hopes, dreams and aspirations of all our people."

Zimbabwe Introduces ZiG: A New Gold-Backed Currency

- Under the leadership of central bank governor John Mushayavanhu, the ZiG currency will operate with a market-determined exchange rate, replacing the depreciating RTGS dollar.
- The new notes, ranging from denominations of 1 to 200, aim to restore confidence in the local

currency. Additionally, coins will be introduced to alleviate the scarcity of US coins, which has led to unconventional forms of change.

Against the backdrop of the recent terrorist attack in Moscow, India and Kazakhstan convened in Astana to bolster their counter-terrorism collaboration.

- Both nations engaged in discussions regarding the terrorist landscape within their respective regions. This included addressing state-sponsored terrorism and cross-border terrorist activities, particularly prevalent in South Asia.
- The meeting also delved into the specific challenges posed by terrorism in the Afghanistan-Pakistan region. Strategies were explored to combat the growing menace in this area, which often spills over into neighboring countries.

Israel utilized its ship-mounted defense system, the C-Dome, for the first time to intercept a suspicious aerial target near Eilat.

- Mounted on Sa'ar 6-class corvettes, the C-Dome defense system is the naval counterpart of the land-based Iron Dome.
- Developed by Rafael Advanced Defence Systems, the C-Dome employs the same interceptor technology as the Iron Dome, providing a robust defense against rocket and missile threats. This operational debut highlights Israel's continuous efforts to enhance its defensive capabilities in response to evolving security challenges.

Lindy Cameron, an Oxford graduate and former CEO of the UK's National Cyber Security Centre, has been appointed as the UK's first woman high commissioner to India.

- Cameron's appointment coincides with a period of enhanced bilateral cooperation between the UK and India. Despite historical ties, recent efforts have been directed towards bolstering trade and defence relations.
- Negotiations for a free-trade agreement are underway, signaling potential for expanded economic collaboration.

Japanese astronaut to be first non-American to set foot on Moon

- In a joint announcement, President Joe Biden and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida revealed that Japanese astronauts will join future NASA lunar missions as part of the Artemis program.
- This move is seen as a strategic effort to strengthen economic and defense ties between the United States and Japan.
- Biden stated that “two Japanese astronauts will join future NASA lunar missions, and one will become the first non-American ever to land on the moon.”
- This pledge marks a significant milestone in international space cooperation and the ongoing race to return humans to the lunar surface.

India outpaces China in digital services exports: WTO report

- India has secured its place as the world's fourth-largest exporter of digitally delivered services, contributing more than a fifth to the global trade in services.
- As per the recent Global Trade Outlook and Statistics report by the World Trade Organisation (WTO), India's exports of digitally delivered services reached \$257 billion in 2023, marking a 17% increase compared to the previous year.
- This growth outpaced that of Germany and China, which saw 4% growth each.
- The report highlights that globally, exports of digitally delivered services surged to \$4.25 trillion in 2023, marking a 9% year-on-year increase. This accounted for 13.8% of world exports of goods and services.
- While global trade in goods declined across all regions, exports of digitally delivered services continued to flourish. Europe and Asia, holding a combined global share of 76.2%, witnessed export increases of 11% and 9%, respectively.
- In 2023, business, professional, and technical services dominated the world exports of digitally delivered services at 41.2%, followed by computer services (20.5%), financial services (16%), intellectual property related services (10.9%), insurance and pension services (5.2%), telecommunications services (2.6%), audio-visual and other personal, cultural, and recreational services (2.1%), and information services (1.5%).

World Cybercrime Index Unveiled: Russia and Ukraine Top List

- Russia and Ukraine emerge as the top two hubs of cybercrime, according to the index.
- India secures the 10th position, scoring notably in impact, professionalism, and technical skills.

- China and the United States closely follow, showcasing their prominence in cybercriminal activities.
- Certain cybercrimes are associated with specific countries, such as data/identity theft with the United States and technical products/services with China.

Russia successfully tested its Angara-A5 space rocket for the first time on April 11, 2024. The test launch was conducted from the Vostochny Cosmodrome in the Far East of Russia.

- The Angara-A5 rocket reached an altitude of more than 25,000 kilometers (15,500 miles) per hour within minutes of launch.
- The Angara-A5 is a three-stage rocket that stands 54.5 meters (178.81 feet) tall and weighs about 773 tons, with a payload capacity of 24.5 tons.
- Russia launched the Angara project in 1991, shortly after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, to develop a domestically produced launch vehicle.
- The first Angara-A5 test flight took place in 2014, and a second test was conducted in 2020 from the Plesetsk Cosmodrome in northern Russia.
- A partial test of the Angara project in 2021 was unsuccessful.

India Donates Ambulances and School Buses to Nepal

- In a significant display of goodwill and bilateral cooperation, the Government of India recently gifted 35 ambulances and 66 school buses to organisations working in various districts across Nepal. This generous contribution aims to bolster essential services in healthcare and education within Nepal, further strengthening the long-standing ties between the two neighbouring nations.
- Significantly, the distribution of the vehicles included direct aid to regions still recovering from severe earthquake damage. Two ambulances were specifically delivered to the districts of Jajarkot and West Rukum, demonstrating India's commitment to providing targeted help to areas most in need. This strategic allocation addresses immediate healthcare needs to support the broader recovery efforts in these communities.
- The donation is part of a broader tradition that spans three decades, wherein India gifts vehicles to Nepal on every Independence Day and Republic Day. This tradition underscores the priority India places on enhancing Nepal's health

and education infrastructure. Since the inception of this initiative, India has donated over 1,009 ambulances and 300 school buses to Nepal, significantly impacting the country's development and the well-being of its citizens.

First Trilateral Summit Meeting of US, Japan, and Philippines

- Tensions between China and the Philippines focus on the Second Thomas Shoal, situated about 200 kilometers from Palawan. The Philippines grounded a ship, BRP Sierra Madre, in 1999 to strengthen its claim on the shoal, leading to ongoing clashes with Chinese vessels attempting to block or harass.
- Japan's Dispute: The Senkaku Islands dispute between China and Japan involves incursions by Chinese ships into Japanese territorial waters since 2008. The United States affirms its defense treaty with Japan, asserting that Senkaku Island falls under its protection.
- Strategic Importance: Both the Senkaku Islands and the Second Thomas Shoal lie within the South China Sea, a region vital for trade and potentially rich in oil and gas reserves. China's expansive claims in the area have sparked conflicts with multiple neighboring countries.

Comet Pons-Brooks: A Celestial Phenomenon visible in April 2024

- Comet 12P/Pons-Brooks, affectionately known as the 'Mother of Dragons' comet, is passing by Earth. This rare visitor, making its first appearance in the inner solar system in over 70 years.
- Comet 12P/Pons-Brooks, with its nucleus measuring approximately 30 km across, is currently visible in the constellation of Aries. Its current visual magnitude stands at 5.37, making it barely visible to the naked eye but easily observed with the aid of small binoculars.
- The comet's distinct 'horned' appearance, which has led to its nickname as the 'devil comet,' adds to the intrigue and beauty of this cosmic phenomenon.
- A comet is a celestial object composed primarily of ice, dust, and rocky material that orbits the Sun in an elliptical path. When a comet approaches the inner solar system, the heat from the Sun causes the ice to vaporize, releasing dust and creating a glowing coma (a cloud of gas and dust) around the comet's nucleus. The coma may also develop into a tail that points away from the Sun due to the solar wind.

Nigeria Becomes First Country to Roll Out New Meningitis Vaccine

- Meningitis is the inflammation of the tissues surrounding the brain and spinal cord, usually caused by infection. It can be fatal. Meningitis can be caused by several species of bacteria, viruses, fungi, and parasites.
- The highest global burden is seen with bacterial meningitis. Around one in six people who get this type of meningitis die. One in five have severe complications.
- Epidemics of meningitis occur worldwide, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. The so-called "African meningitis belt" consists of 26 contiguous countries from Senegal and The Gambia in the west to Ethiopia in the east. Outbreaks have also been reported in countries outside Africa, like Canada, Belgium, France, Brazil and Denmark.
- Nigeria's 19 northern states are within the African meningitis belt. A few southern states, such as Osun, Ogun, and Anambra, are also affected. The major factors that determine meningitis infection include a hot and dry environment and dusty atmospheric conditions.
- In Africa, there are five strains of meningitis: serotypes A, C, W, X, and Y. The strains share the same infectivity and clinical features (symptoms and signs). Serotype A, the first and dominant strain in the country, established these features.
- The new variants, such as group C meningococcal, may increase the severity of the infection, as seen in some cases in northwestern Nigeria. Serotypes W, X, and Y may have similarly higher severity because the organisms are new to the country. Therefore, immunity to them is not strong enough.
- This vaccine contains the five most important serotypes causing meningitis in Nigeria, and it is bound to have a far-reaching positive impact on the disease's control. Among all the 26 African countries within the African meningitis belt, Nigeria is by far the most populous. Thus, an epidemic of the disease affects many people.
- Before the year 2000 hardly a case of serotype C, W, X, or Y had been reported in Nigeria. The success of group A conjugate MenAfriVac introduced in 2010 in Burkina Faso has changed the pattern and periodicity of epidemic meningitis, and the real challenge and menace of replacement serotypes underscores the critical importance of the 5-in-1 conjugate meningitis vaccine. Its impact will be huge.

16th World Future Energy Summit in Abu Dhabi: driving sustainable energy solutions

- The 16th World Future Energy Summit has commenced in Abu Dhabi, drawing together global leaders, policymakers, and experts in sustainable energy and climate initiatives. The summit aims to foster dialogue on key issues like global climate action, renewable energy, energy security, and sustainable development.
- The World Future Energy Summit is an important event that helps to shape and strengthen the intellectual and corporate development in the field of energy.
- It provides a platform for professionals to share knowledge and ideas, and to learn about the latest advancements in the field. The summit is highly regarded and plays a pivotal role in promoting the evolution of energy-related industries.
- It is widely regarded as the most significant event in the realm of sustainable energy and offers a plethora of solutions for actionable development in the transformation of future energy systems.
- With a focus on innovation and technological advancement, the summit brings together visionaries, experts, and leaders from various sectors to discuss and showcase the latest breakthroughs, strategies, and initiatives in the energy industry.
- It serves as a melting pot for ideas, collaborations, and partnerships that drive the global transition towards a clean, affordable, and reliable energy future.

North Korea's testing of advanced anti-aircraft and strategic cruise missiles, including those capable of carrying nuclear warheads, exacerbates tensions with South Korea and the United States.

- North Korea had conducted a power test of a super-large warhead designed for "Hwasal-1 Ra-3" strategic cruise missile and a test launch of "Pyoljji-1-2" new-type anti-aircraft missile on Friday afternoon, it reported, citing the DPRK Missile Administration.
- DPRK stands for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the North's official name.
- North Korea's strategic cruise missile is believed to be designed to carry a nuclear warhead.

India appreciates inaugural Hindi radio broadcast in Kuwait

- The program, which will air every Sunday from 8:30 to 9:00 p.m., commenced on Sunday, broadcasting on FM 93.3 and AM 96.3. This milestone event is a significant step towards

fostering cultural exchange and strengthening ties between the two nations.

- The introduction of Hindi programming on Kuwait Radio is expected to resonate with the Indian diaspora and Hindi-speaking community in Kuwait, providing them with a platform to connect with their language, culture, and heritage.
- The inaugural broadcast has been met with enthusiasm and anticipation, with audiences eagerly awaiting future episodes. It is anticipated that the Hindi radio program will serve as a bridge between the two nations, facilitating greater understanding and cooperation across various spheres.
- As the Hindi radio program takes its place on the airwaves of Kuwait, it symbolises the enduring bond between India and Kuwait, reaffirming their commitment to further enhancing cooperation and friendship in the years to come.

Nepal Hosts Inaugural Rainbow Tourism Conference, Paving the Way for Inclusive Travel

- The conference's main objective is to position Nepal as an LGBT-friendly tourism destination. The international conference was inaugurated by Minister for Women, Children and Senior Citizens, Bhagawati Chaudhary, who underlined the need to forge collaboration among different stakeholders to promote LGBT tourism in Nepal.
- She said that so far, 3,100 people belonging to the LGBT community have been formally registered in Nepal, though the exact number of people belonging to the community is much higher than that. Asserting that Nepal has formulated many laws guaranteeing equal treatment and a violence-free atmosphere for the sexual minority community, Cahudhay said that there is a need to pay attention to their effective implementation.

India bats for designing regional ocean observations to better understand deep ecosystems

- Amid challenges posed by climate change, India has made a strong pitch for designing region-specific ocean observations for forecasting and roping in NGOs to harness traditional knowledge for better understanding of deep-sea ecosystems. At the 2024 Ocean Decade Conference in Barcelona earlier this month, India also called for people-centred multi-hazard early warning systems and designing adaptation planning strategies to increase coastal resilience.
- The Indian delegation to the conference was led by Earth Sciences Secretary M Ravichandran and

comprised experts in the area of ocean studies, including T. Srinivasa Kumar, Director of the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS).

- Ravichandran also urged integration of ocean observation systems across platforms in accessible and usable formats, bringing focus on use of science for policy and decision making by coastal cities and a greater emphasis on region specific ocean observations.
- India had convened the Indian Ocean Regional Decade Conference in Hyderabad in February to deliberate on ocean decade challenges and steps to address the same.
- At the Barcelona conference, India also stressed on increasing bio-geo-chemical and coastal observations and the need to reinvigorate ocean data management programs such as the International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange (IODE), the digital twins and capacity development hub initiatives.

Sustainable Finance for Tiger Landscapes Conference: Bhutan's Earth Day Initiative

- The Coalition includes several leading conservation organizations including the Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA), Fauna

& Flora International (FFI), International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Natural State, Panthera, TRAFFIC, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and Zoological Society of London (ZSL)

- 1 billion USD dollars additional catalyzed from global public and private investors and institutions for tiger conservation by 2034

Objective

- Recognize Tigers as an indicator species and their potential to contribute to national and global biodiversity, climate, human well-being, sustainable development agendas and within global funding mechanisms.
- Inspire collaboration and catalyze funding from the private and public sectors to contribute to sustainable financing for tigers and their landscapes through 2034.
- Showcase successful approaches to sustainable financing for replication and scaling up.
- Facilitate an exchange among key stakeholders to share and explore new funding streams.
- Present conservation finance models from Representative Landscapes, based on evidence-based action plans and performance indicators, inspire the adoption of creative financing strategies to secure and recover tiger populations.



GEOGRAPHY and ENVIRONMENT

Strong evidence of ozone's presence on Jupiter's moon Callisto has been found by a team of scientists.

- Study outlines the researchers' investigation into the chemical evolution of "SO₂ astrochemical ice", which is ice primarily composed of sulfur dioxide (SO₂) in the presence of ultraviolet irradiation.
- This shed light on the chemical processes and composition on the surface of Callisto. By analyzing the UV absorption spectra of the irradiated ice samples, Scientists identified a distinct signature indicating the formation of ozone.
- They corroborated their findings by comparing them with data from the Hubble Space Telescope to understand Callisto's environment and the potential habitability of icy moons in the Solar System.

Government issues Scheme Guidelines for Pilot Projects on use of

Green Hydrogen in the Transport Sector

- Under the National Green Hydrogen Mission, along with other initiatives, the MNRE will implement pilot projects for replacing fossil fuels in the transport sector with Green Hydrogen and its derivatives. These pilot projects will be implemented through the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways and the Scheme Implementing Agencies (SIAs) nominated under this Scheme.
- The scheme will support development of technologies for use of Green Hydrogen as a fuel in Buses, Trucks and 4-wheelers, based on fuel cell-based propulsion technology / internal combustion engine-based propulsion technology. The other thrust area for the scheme is to support development of infrastructure such as hydrogen refuelling stations.
- The scheme will also seek to support any other innovative use of hydrogen for reducing carbon emissions in the transport sector, such as blending of methanol / ethanol based on green hydrogen

and other synthetic fuels derived from green hydrogen in automobile fuels.

- The Scheme will be implemented with a total budgetary outlay of Rs. 496 Crores till the financial year 2025-26.
- The use of Green Hydrogen in the transport sector, via the proposed pilot projects, will lead to development of necessary infrastructure including refuelling facilities and distribution infrastructure, resulting in establishment of a Green Hydrogen ecosystem in the transport sector. With the expected reduction in the Green Hydrogen production cost over the years, the utilization in the transport sector is expected to increase.

The Nepal Army will collect around 10 tonnes of garbage and five bodies lying at Mt. Everest as part of the Mountain Cleaning Campaign 2024 in the Everest region.

- The cleaning campaign aims to control human-made pollution in the Himalayas and address problems related to climate change.
- A 12-member team led by Maj. Aditya Karki will embark on the Everest base camp on April 14. An 18-member Sherpa team will assist the army in its cleaning expedition. The expedition will be flagged off by Nepal Army chief Gen. Prabhuram Sharma in Kathmandu.

'Adverse Effect Of Climate Change Will Be On Nation's Future' : Supreme Court Stresses Importance Of Forest Protection

- Supreme Court of India recognized the right against adverse effects of climate change as a fundamental right within the ambit of Articles 14 (right to equality) and 21 (right to life) of the Indian Constitution.
- The Supreme Court stated that the right against the adverse effects of climate change, although not explicitly articulated, is inherently linked to the right to a clean environment, which is recognized as a fundamental right under Articles 14 and 21 of the Constitution. The court emphasized that as the impact of climate change intensifies year by year, it becomes necessary to recognize this right distinctly.

Kerala: Fire destroys 100 hectares in Wayanad Sanctuary

- The fire began in Karassery and quickly spread to other areas within the sanctuary, including Kumbramkolly, Ezhekkar, Narikkolly, and Kottanode. Three units of Fire and Rescue Services responded to the blaze, with around 150 individuals working for six hours to bring it under control. This incident marked the fourth fire in the sanctuary this year, with dried bamboo pods, high temperatures, gusty winds, and withered undergrowth contributing to the rapid spread of the flames.
- Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary is a popular tourist destination located in the Wayanad district of Kerala. Established in 1973, it is home to a rich variety of flora and fauna including elephants, tigers, leopards, deer, and exotic bird species. The sanctuary is also known for its picturesque landscapes, tropical rainforests, and beautiful waterfalls like the Meenmutty and Soochipara falls.

Plastic Overshoot Day Report

- Plastic Overshoot Day is determined based on a country's Mismanaged Waste Index (MWI). The gap in waste management capacity and plastic consumption is called MWI.
- Plastic Pollution Crisis: The report highlights that an additional 68,642,999 tonnes of plastic waste will enter nature in 2023, indicating a severe plastic pollution crisis.
- The report identifies 12 countries responsible for 52% of the world's mismanaged plastic waste. India is among them, alongside China, Brazil, Indonesia, Thailand, Russia, Mexico, the United States, Saudi Arabia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Iran, and Kazakhstan.
- The three countries with the highest mismanaged waste percentages—Mozambique (99.8%), Nigeria (99.44%), and Kenya (98.9%) belong to Africa.
- India ranks fourth in the MWI, with 98.55% of generated waste.
- Short-life Plastics: Short-life plastics, including plastic packaging and single-use plastics, make up approximately 37% of the total plastic used annually. These categories pose a higher risk of leakage into the environment.
- India's Plastic Overshoot: Plastic Overshoot Day for India occurred on January 6, 2023, when the country's plastic waste generation outweighed its waste management capacity.
- India's per-person consumption is 5.3 kg, significantly lower than the global average of 20.9 kg.

A report has highlighted alarming economic consequences of climate change, predicting that the global economy could face annual losses of up to USD 38 trillion by 2049.

- The study, conducted by scientists at the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK) in Germany, warns that global income could drop by 19% within the next 25 years due to the impacts of climate change, even if significant efforts are made to reduce carbon emissions.
- The study, which analyzed detailed weather and economic data from over 1,600 regions worldwide spanning the past 40 years, projects that the majority of regions will experience substantial income reductions.
- North America and Europe are among the hardest hit, while South Asia and Africa face the most severe impacts, primarily driven by the effects of climate change on agricultural yields, labor productivity, and infrastructure. The United States and European Union are also expected to incur significant economic costs due to climate change.

Researchers have discovered that the Ross Ice Shelf in Antarctica, roughly the size of France, is experiencing sudden movements of 6 to 8 centimeters once or twice a day.

- These movements are triggered by the Whillans Ice Stream, a fast-flowing river of ice that occasionally gets stuck and then surges forward.
- The discovery highlights a previously unknown aspect of ice shelf dynamics and raises concerns about the long-term stability of the Ross Ice Shelf in the face of climate change.
- The Whillans Ice Stream exhibits a stop-and-go motion, which is believed to be caused by a lack of water lubrication beneath the stream.
- This causes the stream to intermittently stick and then release built-up pressure in sudden bursts, known as slip events.
- These slip events are similar to movements along fault lines before earthquakes and can result in movements of up to 40 centimeters in just a few minutes.

Mount Ruang, a remote volcano located in Indonesia's North Sulawesi region, erupted recently, sending a plume of ash 400 meters (1,312 feet) above the peak.

- This eruption followed several others, which forced thousands of residents to evacuate as molten rocks rained down on their villages.
- The volcano started erupting stirring a mix of lava, ash columns, and volcanic lightning. More than 6,000 residents of the neighboring Tagulandang island were evacuated to the side of the island facing away from the crater.
- Mount Ruang's last major eruption occurred in 2002, which also led to the evacuation of residents.
- Indonesia's volcanology agency warned that the volcanic activity at Mount Ruang remained high, with potential dangers including flying rocks, hot clouds, and lava flows.
- The agency advised all residents to wear masks to prevent respiratory issues.
- The alert level maintained the exclusion zone around the crater and included warnings about further eruptions and the possibility of parts of the volcano collapsing into the sea, potentially causing a tsunami.

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has reported that more than 27% of the identified glacial lakes in the Himalayas have significantly expanded since 1984, based on long-term satellite monitoring.

- Out of the 676 expanding glacial lakes, 130 are located within India, primarily in the Indus, Ganga, and Brahmaputra river basins. This expansion is attributed to the unprecedented rates of glacier retreat and thinning due to human-induced climate change.
- ISRO analyzed 2,431 glacial lakes larger than 10 hectares during 2016-17, of which 676 have notably expanded since 1984.
- Among the 130 expanding lakes in India, 65 are in the Indus basin, 7 in the Ganga basin, and 58 in the Brahmaputra basin.
- 601 of the 676 expanding lakes have grown more than twice in size, while 10 lakes have grown between 1.5 to 2 times, and 65 lakes have expanded by 1.5 times.
- The majority of the expanding lakes are moraine-dammed (307), followed by erosion (265), other types (96), and ice-dammed (8).
- 314 expanding lakes are located between 4,000-5,000 meters, and 296 are situated above 5,000 meters.
- The Himalayas are often referred to as the "Third Pole" due to their extensive glaciers and snow cover.

- Glacial lakes play a crucial role as freshwater sources for rivers in the Himalayan region, supporting millions of people downstream.
- The rapid expansion of glacial lakes in the Himalayas is a clear indicator of the severe impacts of climate change on the region's delicate ecosystem.
- The report emphasised on conservation of Himalaya to mitigate the risks associated with GLOFs and develop effective climate action strategies for the region.

The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) unveiled its Climate Strategy 2030 document on Earth Day to address India's growing need for green financing.

- The strategy aims to mobilize resources for climate change mitigation, adaptation, and resilience projects in the country.
- India requires approximately \$170 billion annually to reach a cumulative total of over \$2.5 trillion by 2030 for green financing.
- As of 2019-20, India garnered only about \$49 billion in green financing, with the majority of funds earmarked for mitigation.
- A mere \$5 billion was allocated towards adaptation and resilience, reflecting minimal private sector engagement due to challenges in bankability and commercial viability.

NABARD's Climate Strategy 2030

- Accelerating green lending across sectors
- Playing a broader market-making role
- Internal green transformation of NABARD
- Strategic resource mobilization
- The initiative reinforces NABARD's commitment to environmental stewardship and positions it as a pivotal player in India's transition towards a resilient and sustainable economy.

As per recent report highlighted on the warming climate is altering the dynamics of tundra environments, potentially transforming them from carbon sinks to carbon sources.

- Tundra ecosystems, found in Arctic and alpine regions, have historically acted as carbon sinks due to the accumulation of organic carbon in frozen soils. However, rising temperatures are causing significant changes in these ecosystems, leading to increased carbon release.
- An international team of over 70 scientists conducted open-top chamber (OTC) experiments at 28 tundra sites worldwide for 25 years.
- The study found that a mean increase of 1.4°C in air temperature, 0.4°C in soil temperature, and a 1.6% drop in soil moisture led to a 30% increase in ecosystem respiration during the growing season.
- The increase in respiration was attributed to increased metabolic activity in both plants and microbes, resulting in the release of carbon.
- Tundra regions with higher nitrogen limitations and sites that stimulated plant and microbial turnover showed more sensitivity to warming through respiration responses.

The fourth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC-4) to develop an international legally binding treaty on plastic pollution commenced recently in Ottawa, Canada.

- The objective of this penultimate round of negotiations is to refine the text of the draft agreement, aiming to finalize the treaty at the fifth session (INC-5) in November 2024.
- In March 2022, the UN Environment Assembly adopted a historic resolution to develop a global treaty on plastic pollution
- The treaty aims to address the full life cycle of plastic, including production, design and disposal
- INC began its work in late 2022 with the ambition to complete negotiations by end of 2024
- Previous sessions were held in Uruguay (INC-1), France (INC-2), and Kenya (INC-3)



SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

WHO Launches CoViNet: A Global Network for Coronaviruses

- CoViNet leverages the expertise of 36 laboratories from 21 countries across all six WHO regions.
- These laboratories specialize in human, animal, and environmental coronavirus surveillance,

fostering a comprehensive approach to understanding and managing coronaviruses.

- Representatives of CoViNet laboratories convened in Geneva on 26 – 27 March to finalize an action plan for 2024-2025.
- The plan focuses on enhancing early detection, risk assessment, and response capabilities to address emerging coronavirus-related health challenges.
- CoViNet emphasizes a One Health approach, bringing together experts from human, animal, and environmental health sectors.
- This collaborative effort aims to monitor and assess coronavirus evolution and transmission patterns comprehensively.
- Data generated by CoViNet will inform the work of WHO's Technical Advisory Groups on Viral Evolution (TAG-VE) and Vaccine Composition (TAG-CO-VAC), among others.
- By integrating the latest scientific insights, CoViNet supports the development of evidence-based global health policies and tools.

Kodaikanal Solar Observatory celebrates 125 years of studying the Sun.

- The 125th anniversary of the iconic Kodaikanal Solar Observatory (KSO) was celebrated on 1 April 2024 by Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA), an autonomous institute of the Department of Science and Technology (DST), to remember the history of KSO, felicitate its scientists, and honour its legacy was a milestone for astronomy in India. The KSO houses a digital repository of 1.2 lakh digitised solar images and thousands of other images of the Sun recorded every day since the start of the 20th century.
- Established on 1 April 1899 by the British, the Observatory has one of the longest continuous daily records of the Sun in the world, and this unique database has been digitised and is publicly available for astronomers from across the globe.
- Starting with these celebrations, IIA has planned a number of events over the coming months to highlight the Observatory's rich history, its diverse achievements, and its ongoing research. which in turn, arose from the Madras Observatory established in 1792. Currently, KSO is operational as a field station under the Indian Institute of Astrophysics, which is an autonomous institution under the Department of Science and Technology.

GUJCOST Designated as Nodal Centre for ISRO's START Programme

- Under the START programme, GUJCOST will conduct live classes, acting as the central hub for knowledge dissemination. Four Regional Science Centres in Rajkot, Patan, Bhavnagar, and Bhuj will also contribute to facilitating the programme, expanding its reach across the region.
- The inaugural online programme, titled "Exploration of Solar System," invites registrations until April 19. Scheduled to commence on April 24 and run until May 10, 2024, the programme aims to provide participants with a deep understanding of the complexities of the solar system.

ISRO's Chandrayaan-3 Mission Awarded the Prestigious John L. "Jack" Swigert, Jr. Award for Space Exploration

- The Chandrayaan-3 mission, launched by ISRO on July 14, 2023, was a groundbreaking achievement for India. The mission consisted of a lander named Vikram and a rover named Pragyan, and it successfully landed at the unexplored south pole of the moon on August 23, 2023. This made India the first country in the world to land a lunar module at the south pole of the moon.
- The Space Foundation, in presenting the John L. "Jack" Swigert, Jr. Award for Space Exploration to the Chandrayaan-3 team, recognized the exceptional technical and engineering achievements of the mission. The Foundation highlighted the unquestioned leadership and ingenuity of the people of India in the global space ecosystem, showcasing their remarkable contribution to space exploration.

Researchers have created the first "World Cybercrime Index" to identify the most significant sources of cybercrime at a national level.

- The index has been developed by researchers from the University of Oxford, University of New South Wales, Monash University, and Sciences Po.
- The report has identified the countries that are the most significant sources of cybercriminal activity. The index was created by surveying 92 leading cybercrime experts worldwide.

The Cost of Cybercrime

- Cybercrime is estimated to cost the world around \$9.22 trillion in 2024. This figure is expected to grow to \$13.82 trillion by 2028. Locating cybercriminals is challenging due to their use of methods to conceal their locations. Documented legal cases only capture a small portion of the global scenario.

Findings

- Cybercriminal threats originate from a small number of countries.
- China, Russia, Ukraine, the United States, Romania, and Nigeria ranked in the top 10 for each of the five selected categories.
- 97 countries were named by at least one expert as a hub for a particular category
- India ranked 10th on the index, with scores of 7.90 for impact, 6.60 for professionalism, and 6.65 for technical skills
- Russia and Ukraine held the top two positions, while China and the United States ranked 3rd and 4th.
- Certain types of cybercrimes were associated with specific countries (e.g., data and identity theft with the United States, technical products or services with China)

India Ranks Second in Hepatitis B and C Cases Worldwide

- The World Health Organisation's (WHO) 2024 Global Hepatitis Report reveals that India is second only to China in the number of Hepatitis B and C infections, with 3.5 crore cases. Hepatitis, characterized by liver inflammation, poses significant health risks and can be fatal. The report highlights that 254 million people are affected by Hepatitis B and 50 million by Hepatitis C globally.

Breakthrough in Healthcare: IIT Jodhpur Unveils Nano-Sensor for Disease Tracking

- Researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology Jodhpur (IIT Jodhpur) have unveiled a groundbreaking nano-sensor designed to swiftly detect Cytokines, vital proteins regulating various cellular functions. This innovation aims to combat the high mortality rates resulting from delayed diagnoses and the absence of early warnings in disease progression.
- Cytokines, pivotal biomarkers of inflammation, are instrumental in diagnosing diseases and monitoring their advancement. They play critical roles in diverse medical domains including tissue repair, cancer progression, and immune system modulation, laying the foundation for precision medicine and targeted therapies.

India's Commitment to Debris-Free Space Missions by 2030

- India aims to achieve debris-free space missions by involving all space actors, both governmental and non-governmental, by 2030. This initiative

underscores the nation's commitment to long-term space sustainability.

- ISRO emphasizes the importance of developing skills for future explorations beyond Earth's orbit, including lunar and planetary missions. Additionally, plans for India's own space station, 'Bharatiya Antriksh Station,' by 2035 are underway, with a focus on ensuring the sustainability of space in collaboration with other space actors.

India's First Military-Grade Geospatial Satellite TSAT-1A Launched by Private Sector

- Tata Advanced Systems Ltd (TASL), a subsidiary of Tata Sons, has successfully launched India's first military-grade geospatial satellite built entirely by the private sector. The satellite, named TSAT-1A, was launched recently, in collaboration with Satellogic, marking a significant milestone in India's space industry.
- The launch of TSAT-1A comes at a time when India is focusing on enhancing its space capabilities and encouraging private sector participation in the space industry.
- The successful launch of this satellite demonstrates the growing capabilities of Indian private companies in the space sector and highlights the potential for public-private partnerships in this domain.
- TSAT-1A, a sub-metre resolution earth observation satellite, was launched from the Kennedy Space Center in Florida, United States, using SpaceX's Falcon 9 rocket. The satellite, weighing less than 50 kg, was part of the payload aboard the Bandwagon-1 mission. Manufactured at TASL's Vemagal facility in Karnataka, TSAT-1A now orbits the Earth in low-earth orbit (LEO).

Astronomers find biggest stellar black hole in Milky Way galaxy 'by chance'

- Astronomers at the European Space Agency (ESA) have identified the biggest stellar black hole, named Gaia BH3, discovered in the Milky Way, with a mass 33 times that of the Sun.
- This black hole was detected "by chance" during data collection from ESA's Gaia mission and it imposes an odd 'wobbling' motion on the companion star orbiting it.
- Data from the European Southern Observatory's Very Large Telescope (ESO's VLT) and other ground-based observatories were used to verify the mass of the black hole.

- Stellar black holes are formed from the collapse of massive stars and the ones previously identified in the Milky Way are on average about 10 times as massive as the Sun. Even the next most massive stellar black hole known in the Milky Way galaxy, Cygnus X-1, only reaches 21 solar masses, making this new 33-solar-mass observation exceptional

NASA is gearing up for the upcoming total solar eclipse when the moon's shadow will traverse a vast swath of North America.

- To capture this rare celestial event, the space agency will deploy two of its specialized WB-57 jet planes, equipped with state-of-the-art instruments, to track the eclipse and conduct scientific studies of the Sun's outer atmosphere, known as the corona.
- The primary goal of NASA's eclipse mission is to unravel the mysteries surrounding the Sun. By studying the corona during the eclipse, scientists hope to:
 - Gain insights into the structure and temperature of the corona
 - Understand how the Sun influences Earth's ionosphere
 - Potentially detect hidden asteroids that are usually obscured by the Sun's glare
 - Lead researcher Bharat Kunduri, a research assistant professor at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Virginia, emphasised the unique opportunity presented by the eclipse, stating, "The eclipse basically serves as a controlled experiment. It gives us an opportunity to understand how changes in solar radiation can impact the ionosphere, which can in turn impact some of these technologies like radar and GPS that we rely on in our daily lives."

Meta Unveils Upgraded AI Assistant Powered by Llama 3

- In a significant move, Meta AI is expanding its services to over a dozen countries, including Australia, Canada, Ghana, Jamaica, and South Africa, after previously being available only in the United States. The AI assistant has been seamlessly integrated with major Meta apps, allowing users to access its features without switching between different platforms.
- Moreover, Meta has partnered with tech giants Google and Bing to provide real-time information through Meta AI, ensuring users have access to the latest and most accurate data.

Microsoft's VASA-1: Bringing Images to Life with AI

- The research aimed to animate static images with accompanying audio tracks while ensuring authentic facial expressions. VASA-1 demonstrates remarkable success in this endeavor, producing animations that seamlessly synchronize with provided audio, as evidenced by sample videos on the project page.
- By training VASA-1 on a diverse dataset encompassing thousands of images with varied facial expressions, the team achieved its impressive results. Notably, the system generates high-resolution (512-by-512 pixels) animations at 45 frames per second, with an average processing time of two minutes per video using a Nvidia RTX 4090 GPU.

India, US to reactivate Indian Ocean Observing System (IndOOS)

- India and the US have recently agreed to reactivate the Indian Ocean Observing System (IndOOS), a network of 36 moored buoys in the high seas aimed at collecting ocean and atmospheric data for weather forecasts.
- The system fell into neglect during the COVID-19 pandemic, leading to gaps in crucial observational data, particularly related to the Indian Ocean Dipole phenomenon and monsoon predictions.
- The decision to reactivate IndOOS was made during a meeting between Earth Sciences Secretary M Ravichandran and Rick Spinrad, Administrator of the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).
- The moored buoys are part of the RAMA programme, established in 2008 through collaboration between India's Ministry of Earth Sciences and NOAA. The NOAA will provide instrumentation, while India will provide ship-time starting in July to restart the RAMA array.

A research centre in Romania, part of the European Union's Infrastructure Extreme Light Infrastructure (ELI) project, has developed the world's most powerful laser.

- The laser, operated by French company Thales Group, utilizes Nobel Prize-winning inventions and promises revolutionary advancements in various fields, including healthcare and space exploration. The laser is housed at a research centre near the Romanian capital, Bucharest.
- The laser technology, known as chirped pulse amplification (CPA) technique, used in the

Romanian facility is based on the inventions of Gérard Mourou from France and Donna Strickland from Canada. They were awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics in 2018 for their groundbreaking work in harnessing the power of lasers for advanced precision instruments.

NASA's Solar-Powered Spacecraft: Pioneering Solar Sail Technology

- The spacecraft, equipped with a solar sail, was launched from New Zealand at 3:30 am IST and is set to orbit 1,000 kilometers above Earth. Upon deployment, the sail will measure approximately 80 square meters, harnessing sunlight to navigate through space.
- The primary objective of the mission is to demonstrate the effectiveness of solar sail propulsion, paving the way for future missions with reduced reliance on heavy propulsion systems. Through a series of pointing maneuvers, the mission aims to showcase the orbit-raising and lowering capabilities solely using the pressure of sunlight on the sail.

The Canadian government has announced a substantial C\$2.4 billion (\$1.8 billion) investment package to bolster the country's artificial intelligence (AI) sector.

- The move comes as Prime Minister Justin Trudeau continues to unveil spending plans ahead of a new budget.
- The primary focus of the investment is a C\$2 billion fund dedicated to enhancing computing capabilities and technological infrastructure. This funding aims to accelerate the work of AI researchers, startups, and other companies in the field.
- In addition to the main fund, the government will allocate resources to expedite the adoption of AI in sectors such as agriculture and healthcare. The goal is to harness the full potential of AI to create well-paying jobs for Canadians, especially young people, while simultaneously increasing productivity and economic growth.

Within a year, more than 10,000 letters and mail had been posted and 'cancelled' at the post office.

- In 1988-89, Dakshin Gangotri submerged in ice and was subsequently decommissioned. Another branch was set up at Maitri research station in Antarctica on January 26, 1990.

- Letters meant for the post office in Antarctica are sent to the National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR) in Goa, the nodal agency for India's polar expeditions.
- A researcher carries the consignment of letters during scientific expeditions to the continent.
- At the research base, the letters are 'cancelled' with the stamp impression "Maitri North Goa," which has become a renowned "collector's item" among philatelists and hobbyists.
- The term 'cancellation' pertains to the mark placed on a stamp or postal stationery to render it useless for reuse, denoting the location and date of the originating post office.
- New Pin Code: MH-1718
- Nearly 40 years later, the Department of Posts is opening a second branch of the post office and assigning a new pin code MH-1718.
- The code currently allocated is "experimental," as is customary when a new branch commences operations.

Union textiles ministry is working on developing fabric-based teeth to make dental implants more affordable.

- The plan involves using dental resins made from polyester to replace expensive ceramic, polymer, and composite implants, with research being conducted by institutions like AIIMS and IITs. Fabric-based teeth are already used in some countries like Germany and the US to cut costs.
- The project falls under the National Technical Textiles Mission, with a budget of ₹375 crore allocated for its development.

The World AI Creator Awards (WAICAs) has announced the world's first 'Miss AI' beauty pageant, featuring AI-generated models competing in a unique event that blends traditional beauty pageantry with the world of AI creators.

- Contestants will be judged on beauty, tech, and social media influence, with a focus on their use of AI tools to craft digital artwork.
- The winner of 'Miss AI' will receive a \$5,000 cash prize, promotion on the Fanvue platform, a mentorship program valued at \$3,000, and PR support worth over \$5,000.
- Entrants must be entirely AI-generated, with no restrictions on the tools used. The judging panel includes two AI-generated judges, Aitana Lopez

and Emily Pellegrini, as well as two humans: Andrew Bloch, an entrepreneur and PR adviser,

and Sally-Ann Fawcett, a beauty pageant expert and author.



DEFENCE & SECURITY

Defence exports touch record Rs 21,083 crore in FY 2023-24, an increase of 32.5% over last fiscal; Private sector contributes 60%, DPSUs - 40%

- Defence exports have touched a record Rs 21,083 crore (approx. US\$ 2.63 Billion) in the Financial Year (FY) 2023-24, a growth of 32.5% over the last fiscal when the figure was Rs 15,920 crore. The recent figures indicate that the defence exports have grown by 31 times in the last 10 years as compared to FY 2013-14.
- The defence Industry, including the private sector and Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs), have made tremendous efforts in achieving the highest-ever defence exports. The private sector and the DPSUs have contributed about 60% and 40% respectively.
- In addition, there has been a rise in the number of export authorisations issued to the defence exporters during FY 2023-24. From 1,414 export authorisations in FY 2022-23, the number jumped to 1,507 in FY 2023-24.
- A comparative data of two decades i.e. the period from 2004-05 to 2013-14 and 2014-15 to 2023-24 reveals that there has been a growth of 21 times in the defence exports. Total defence exports during 2004-05 to 2013-14 were Rs 4,312 crore, which has gone up to Rs 88,319 crore in the period from 2014-15 to 2023-24.
- The remarkable growth has been achieved due to the policy reforms and 'Ease of Doing Business' initiatives brought in by the Government, in addition to the end-to-end digital solution provided to the Indian industries for promoting defence exports. This growth is a reflection of global acceptability of Indian defence products and technologies.

ICG's Pollution Control Vessel Samudra Paheredar makes a port call in Vietnam as part of its overseas deployment to ASEAN countries

- Indian Coast Guard (ICG) Pollution Control Vessel Samudra Paheredar, with an integral helicopter, made a port call at Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam on April 02, 2024 as part of its ongoing overseas deployment to Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries. During the three-day

visit, the crew will engage in professional interactions focusing on marine pollution response, maritime search & rescue, and maritime law enforcement. The activities will also include cross-deck training, subject matter expert exchanges, sports events and passage exercise with the Vietnam Coast Guard (VCG).

- The visit not only aims to strengthen ties between the ICG and VCG, but also showcases India's indigenous shipbuilding capabilities. In addition, 25 National Cadet Corps (NCC) cadets aboard the vessel will participate in a Walkathon and Beach Clean-up activities.
- Since 2015, the ICG and VCG have an existing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which institutionalised the cooperative engagements between the two maritime agencies. This overseas deployment is a testimony to ICG's commitment to bolster bilateral relationships and enhance international cooperation with friendly countries.
- The visit of the ICG specialised vessel to these countries is in pursuance with India ASEAN Initiative for marine pollution announced during ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus in Cambodia in 2022. The deployment of Samudra Paheredar to the ASEAN region reflects India's shared concern and resolve towards marine pollution, promoting safety and security through maritime cooperation. Prior to Ho Chi Minh, the vessel had visited Manila, Philippines to demonstrate a seamless continuation of diplomatic maritime engagements in the ASEAN region.

New Generation Ballistic Missile Agni-Prime successfully flight-tested by Strategic Forces Command & DRDO off the Odisha coast

- Strategic Forces Command (SFC), along with Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), conducted the successful flight-test of New Generation Ballistic Missile Agni-Prime from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of Odisha at around 1900 hrs on April 03, 2024.
- The test met all the trial objectives validating its reliable performance, as confirmed from the data captured by a number of range sensors deployed at different locations, including two downrange ships placed at the terminal point.

- The successful development and induction of the missile will be an excellent force multiplier for the Armed Forces

INS SHARDA awarded on the spot unit citation for anti piracy operations.

- Admiral R Hari Kumar, Chief of the Naval Staff, during his visit to Southern Naval Command, Kochi, awarded 'On the Spot Unit Citation' to INS Sharda for successful conduct of anti-piracy operations. The ship was involved in the safe release of all 19 crew members (11 Iranian & 08 Pakistani) of Iranian fishing vessel Omari which was held hostage by pirates off East coast of Somalia.
- The ship was tasked to investigate the Iranian fishing vessel Omari that was likely hijacked by pirates. Based on surveillance inputs of naval RPA, the ship intercepted the vessel and maintained a covert trail throughout the night. During early morning hours of 02 Feb 24, the ship's integral helo and subsequently Prahar team was launched. The aggressive posture of ship coerced the pirates to safely release the crew and boat. The swift and decisive actions of the ship resulted in rescue of hijacked fishing vessel and its crew from Somali pirates. The relentless effort of the ship, mission deployed for anti-piracy operations saved precious lives at sea upholding Indian Navy's resolve to enhancing security and safety of seafarers in the Indian Ocean Region.
- The CNS interacted with Team Sharda and commended them for responding to piracy attack with alacrity leading to safe and successful conduct of operations at sea under challenging conditions. During his address, he complimented the professional approach of crew which resulted in recognition and acclaim of Indian Navy as the preferred security partner in the region.

Tri-service Conference 'Parivartan Chintan' held in New Delhi

- The Tri-service Conference, 'Parivartan Chintan', was held in New Delhi on 08 April 2024. The 'Chintan' was curated as a brainstorming and idea incubation discussion to generate new and fresh ideas, initiatives and reforms to further propel Jointness and Integration in the Armed Forces. Jointness and Integration are the cornerstones of the transformation to Joint Structures which the Indian Armed forces are progressing towards with the intention of being "Future Ready".
- Chief of Defence Staff Gen Anil Chauhan initiated the 'Chintan' by highlighting the need for

developing a Joint Culture for the Armed Forces, which while respecting the uniqueness of each service, distils the best of each service to give a de-novo approach to traditional concepts. He also stressed upon the need to integrate the capabilities of each service by creating structures that increase our efficiency and enhance our war fighting ability and interoperability.

Command Hospital, Pune becomes the first government hospital across the country to procure and conduct successful piezoelectric bone conduction hearing implants

- Department of Ear, Nose & Throat (ENT) at Command Hospital (Southern Command) in Pune has conducted two piezoelectric Bone Conduction Hearing Implants (BCI) in a 7-year old male child suffering from congenital external and middle ear anomalies with severe degree of hearing loss and one adult with Single Sided Deafness (SSD), becoming the first government hospital across the country to procure and conduct the successful piezoelectric bone conduction hearing implants.

IAF in Operation Meghdoot

- Meghdoot was launched on 13 April 1984, when the Indian Army and Indian Air Force (IAF) advanced to the Siachen glacier to secure the heights dominating the Northern Ladakh region. The operation involved the airlifting of Indian Army soldiers by the IAF and dropping them on the glacial peaks. Although the operation began in 1984, IAF helicopters were already operating in the Siachen Glacier since 1978, flying the Chetak helicopters which was the first IAF helicopter to land in the Glacier in October 1978.
- In the highest battlefield in the world, known for its extreme climatic conditions, IAF helicopters form the lifeline and the sole link of Indian troops with the outside world, playing a critical role in continuing the four decade old military operation; responding to emergencies, supplying essential logistics and evacuating the sick and wounded from the 78 km long glacier. Flying in such ruthless terrain, records of human endurance, flying and technical proficiency are being set by the IAF nearly every day.

DRDO & Indian Army conduct successful trials of indigenous Man Portable Anti-tank Guided Missile Weapon System

- Man Portable Anti-tank Guided Missile (MPATGM) Weapon System, indigenously designed and developed by Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO), has been field evaluated in different flight configurations several times with the objective of proving the technology with high superiority. The system consisted of the MPATGM, Launcher, Target Acquisition System, and the Fire Control Unit.
- Adequate number of missile firing trials have been successfully conducted towards achieving compliance of complete operational envelop as stipulated in the General Staff Qualitative Requirements (Infantry, Indian Army). The Warhead Flight Trials were successfully conducted at the Pokhran Field Firing Range, Rajasthan on April 13, 2024. Missile performance and warhead performance were found to be remarkable.
- Penetration trials of the Tandem Warhead System of MPATGM have been successfully completed and it is found capable of defeating modern armour protected Main Battle Tank. The ATGM system is well-equipped with day/night and top attack capability. Dual mode seeker functionality is a great value addition to the missile capability for tank warfare. With this, technology development and successful demonstration have been concluded and the system is now ready for Final User Evaluation Trials leading towards its induction into the Indian Army.

Indian army contingent departs for India- Uzbekistan Joint Military Exercise DUSTLIK

- The Indian Army contingent departed today for the 5th edition of India- Uzbekistan joint military Exercise DUSTLIK. The Exercise is scheduled to be conducted from 15th to 28th April 2024 at Termez, the Republic of Uzbekistan. Exercise DUSTLIK is a yearly event conducted alternatively in India and Uzbekistan. Last edition was conducted at Pithoragarh (India) in February 2023.
- The Indian Armed Forces contingent comprising 60 personnel is being represented by 45 personnel from the Indian Army, majorly from a Battalion of the JAT Regiment, and 15 personnel from the Indian Air Force. The Uzbekistan contingent comprising approximately 100 personnel, from Uzbekistan Army and Air Force, will be represented by personnel from Southern Operational Command, part of South-West Military District.
- Aim of Exercise DUSTLIK is to foster military cooperation and enhance combined capabilities to execute joint operations in mountainous as well as

semi urban terrain. It would focus on high degree of physical fitness, joint planning, joint tactical drills and basics of special arms skills.

- Tactical drills to be practiced during the exercise will include creation of a Joint Command Post, establishing an Intelligence & Surveillance Centre, securing of landing site, Small Team Insertion & Extraction, Special Heliborne Operations, Cordon and Search Operations, Room Intervention Drills and Demolition of illegal structures.
- The complexity of this edition of Exercise DUSTLIK has been enhanced with conduct of multi domain operations as the contingent comprises of personnel from combat support arms and services besides Infantry. Two Women Officers also form part of the IA contingent, including one from the Regiment of Artillery and the second from the Army Medical Corps.
- Exercise 'DUSTLIK' will enable the two sides to share their best practices in Tactics, Techniques and Procedures of conducting joint operations. The Exercise will facilitate developing inter-operability, bonhomie and camaraderie between soldiers of both the countries. This will also enhance the level of defence cooperation, further fostering bilateral relations between the two friendly nations.

SPACE, a premier testing & evaluation hub for sonar systems for Indian Navy, set up by DRDO, inaugurated in Kerala

- A state-of-the-art Submersible Platform for Acoustic Characterisation and Evaluation (SPACE) was inaugurated by Secretary, Department of Defence (R&D) and Chairman DRDO Dr Samir V Kamat at Underwater Acoustic Research Facility, Kulamavu in Idukki, Kerala on April 17, 2024. The SPACE, set up by the Naval Physical & Oceanographic Laboratory of DRDO, has been designed as a premier testing and evaluation hub for sonar systems destined for Indian Navy onboard various platforms including ships, submarines and helicopters.
- The SPACE marks a milestone in naval technology advancement. It will consist of two distinct assemblages - a platform which floats on the water surface, and a submersible platform which can be lowered to any depth upto 100 m using winch systems. Upon completion of operations, the submersible platform can be winched up and docked with the floating platform.
- The SPACE will mainly be utilised for evaluation of complete sonar system, allowing for quick deployment and easy recovery of scientific

packages such as sensors and transducers. It will be suitable for survey, sampling, and data collection of air, surface, mid-water, and reservoir floor parameters using modern scientific instrumentation. It will cater to the needs of data processing and sample analyses in modern, well equipped scientific laboratories heralding a new era of Anti-Submarine Warfare research capabilities.

Indigenous Technology Cruise Missile successfully flight-tested by DRDO off the Odisha coast

- Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) conducted a successful flight-test of Indigenous Technology Cruise Missile (ITCM) from the Integrated Test Range (ITR), Chandipur off the coast of Odisha on April 18, 2024. During the test, all subsystems performed as per expectation. The missile performance was monitored by several Range Sensors like Radar, Electro Optical Tracking System (EOTS) and Telemetry deployed by ITR at different locations to ensure complete coverage of the flight path. The flight of the missile was also monitored from the Su-30-Mk-I aircraft of the Indian Air Force.
- The missile followed the desired path using way point navigation and demonstrated very low altitude sea-skimming flight. This successful flight test has also established the reliable performance of the indigenous propulsion system developed by Gas Turbine Research Establishment (GTRE), Bengaluru.
- The missile is also equipped with advanced avionics and software to ensure better and reliable performance. The missile is developed by Bengaluru-based DRDO laboratory Aeronautical Development Establishment (ADE) along with contribution from other laboratories and Indian industries. The test was witnessed by many senior scientists from various DRDO laboratories along with the representatives from the production partner.

Indian Navy conducts Exercise Poorvi Lehar on the east coast

- Indian Navy conducted Exercise Poorvi Lehar on East Coast under the Operational Control of The Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Naval Command. The exercise aimed at validation of procedures towards assessment of Indian Navy's preparedness to meet Maritime Security challenges in the region.
- The exercise witnessed participation of Ships, Submarines, Aircrafts and Special Forces. XPOL

was conducted in multiple phases including combat training in a realistic scenario during the Tactical Phase and successful conduct of various firings during the Weapon Phase towards reaffirming Indian Navy's capability to deliver ordnance on target. With operation of aircraft from diverse locations, a near continuous Maritime Domain Awareness was maintained throughout the Area of operations. In addition to the participation of assets from Eastern Naval Command, the exercise also witnessed participation of assets from IAF, Andaman & Nicobar Command and Coast Guard indicating a very high degree of interoperability amongst the Services.

- The Exercise offered valuable lessons to participating forces operating under realistic conditions, thereby enhancing their readiness to respond effectively to maritime challenges in the region.
- The successful conclusion of XPOL 2024, reaffirms Indian Navy's resolve to meet growing security challenges in the maritime domain.

INSV TARINI returns triumphant after historic transoceanic expedition by Indian Navy's Women Officers

- The Indian Naval Sailing Vessel (INSV) Tarini has returned triumphant to her base port at Goa on 21 Apr 24 after a historic transoceanic expedition of nearly two months duration.
- The expedition was undertaken in double-handed mode by Lt Cdr Dilna K and Lt Cdr Roopa A, women officers of the Indian Navy. Their exceptional journey marks a historic milestone as they become the first from India to accomplish such a feat.
- The expedition was Flagged off from Goa by renowned circumnavigator and their mentor Cdr Abhilash Tomy (Retd) on 28 Feb 24. After 22 days of navigating through the unpredictable elements of the Indian Ocean, INSV Tarini arrived at Port Louis, Mauritius, on 21 Mar 24.
- This historic moment was celebrated with a series of events where the officers had the privilege of interacting with government officials from the Mauritius Coast Guard and the Indian High Commission. In a gesture of camaraderie and collaboration, the vessel also undertook a training sortie with personnel from the Mauritius Coast Guard embarked, strengthening bilateral ties and fostering goodwill between the two maritime nations.
- INSV Tarini was flagged in by Commanding Officer INS Mandovi and Naval Station

Commander North Goa at the boat pool of INS Mandovi, in presence of naval personnel and families of Station Mandovi, symbolizing the collective achievement and camaraderie within the Indian Navy.

DRDO develops Lightest Bullet Proof Jacket for protection against highest threat Level 6 of BIS

- DRDO's Defence Materials and Stores Research and Development Establishment (DMSRDE), Kanpur has successfully developed the lightest Bullet Proof Jacket in the country for protection against 7.62 x 54 R API (Level 6 of BIS 17051) ammunition. Recently, this bullet proof jacket was

successfully tested at TBRL, Chandigarh as per BIS 17051-2018.

- This jacket is based upon new design approach, where novel material along with new processes have been used. The front Hard Armour Panel (HAP) of this jacket defeats multiple hits (06 shots) of 7.62 x 54 R API (Sniper rounds) in both ICW (In-conjunction with) and Standalone design. The ergonomically designed front HAP is made up of monolithic ceramic plate with polymer backing which enhances the wearability and comfort during the operation. The areal density of ICW Hard Armour Panel (HAP) and standalone HAP is less than 40 kg/m² and 43 kg/m² respectively.



SPORTS

Novak Djokovic Becomes the Oldest World No. 1 in ATP Rankings History

- The 24-time Grand Slam champion Novak Djokovic continued to set records on the ATP Tour as he began the week ranked 419th as World No.1. The Serbian icon is on the verge of making history this Sunday by becoming the oldest World No. 1 ever, surpassing Roger Federer's record as the oldest No. 1 in ATP Rankings, when he will be 36 years and 321 days old.
- Djokovic, one of the greatest players of all time, has proven near-unrivalled longevity at the pinnacle of his sport even as he enters his fourth decade. Since turning 30 on May 22, 2017, he has won 31 tour-level titles, including 12 of his 24 Grand Slams, 10 of his 40 ATP Masters 1000 victories, and two of his seven ATP Finals triumphs.
- Djokovic initially achieved World No. 1 on July 4, 2011, at the age of 24. In contrast, both of Serbian's major 'Big 3' competitors, Federer and Rafael Nadal, reached No. 1 for the first time at the age of 22.
- Carlos Alcaraz, Djokovic's most recent competitor for the top place, became the youngest No. 1 in ATP Rankings history in September 2022, at the age of 19.
- Nonetheless, in the roughly 13 years since he initially became World No. 1, Djokovic has spent a significant portion of his time atop tennis mountain. Monday marked the start of his record-extending 419th week as World No. 1, putting him 109 weeks ahead of second-placed Federer (310 weeks).

The Maharashtra team emerged as the undisputed champion at the 56th National Kho Kho Championship 2023-24, clinching both the men's and women's titles.

- Maharashtra vs Indian Railways In the men's final, the Maharashtra team defeated the Indian Railway team by a narrow margin of 52-50 points after the two teams were tied at 32-32 points at the end of the stipulated time.
- Maharashtra vs Airport Authority of India In the women's category, the Maharashtra team, led by Sampada Maurya, outshone the Airport Authority of India team with a score of 18-16 points to claim the championship.

Chess: India has a new No. 1 as Arjun Erigaisi Climbs to No. 9 in the World

- Anand is on the 11th spot in the ratings with a rating of 2751. Anand is followed by the Candidates troika of 18-year-old Praggnanandhaa R, 17-year-old Gukesh D, and Vidit Santosh Gujrathi (29 years old).
- Pragg is 14th in the FIDE charts with a rating of 2747. Gukesh is 16th with a rating of 2743. Vidit is 25th with a rating of 2727 points.
- The former world champion Magnus Carlsen still tops the charts with a rating of 2830.

Bilquis Mir: The First Indian Woman on the Paris Olympics Jury

- She started her journey as a canoeist from the iconic Dal Lake in 1998 and went on to represent India.

- As the first Indian woman to be selected as a jury member for the Olympics, Bilquis Mir will have the opportunity to contribute her expertise and experience to the prestigious event. This appointment not only recognizes her achievements but also reflects the growing representation of Indian women in the international sports arena.

Inaugural National Women's Hockey League: Raising the Bar for Women's Sports in India

- The league is structured in two phases, with all matches to be played at the Marang GomkeJaipal Singh Astroturf Hockey Stadium in Ranchi. This venue has recently hosted prestigious events like the FIH Olympic Qualifiers and the Women's Asian Champions Trophy, further emphasizing the significance of this league.
- The scoring system for the matches is designed to encourage fierce competition. Teams will be awarded three points for a win in normal time, while a draw will result in a shoot-out competition. The winner of the shoot-out will receive one bonus point, and the loser will get one point. No points will be awarded to the losing team in normal time.
- The launch of the National Women's Hockey League is a significant step forward in the development of women's sports in India. It provides a dedicated platform for the country's top women's hockey talent to showcase their skills and compete at the highest level.

Asian Wrestling Championship: Udit Bags Silver, Abhimanyu and Vicky Claim Bronze Each

- Abhimanyou (men's 70kg) blanked the Republic of Korea's Lee Seungchul 10-0 in the quarter-finals before losing to Japan's Yoshinosuke Aoyagi in the semi-finals by the same score. Abhimanyou then

rallied from a three-point deficit to beat Uzbekistan's BegijonKuldashev 6-5 in the bronze medal match.

- Vicky (97kg) defeated the People's Republic of China's TuerxunbiekeMuheite 9-6 but went down against Kazakhstan's RizabekAitmukhan 13-0 by technical superiority in the semi-finals. Vicky beat Kyrgyzstan's Andrei Aronov 10-1 to seal the bronze.

Rashmi Kumari Wins National Women's Carrom Title For The 12th time

- The 51st National Carrom Championship, sponsored by the Petroleum Sports Promotion Board (PSPB) and SYNCO carrom company, attracted a strong field of 237 men and 174 women participants from across the country. The tournament showcased the depth and diversity of talent in the sport, with the semifinals and quarterfinals providing a glimpse into the future of Indian carrom.
- Rashmi Kumari's 12th national title is a testament to her unwavering dedication and the respect she has earned within the carrom community. As a role model and inspiration to aspiring players, her success serves to motivate the next generation of carrom champions to strive for greatness and uphold the rich traditions of the sport.

Rohit Sharma Achieves Historic Milestone, Becomes First Indian to Hit 500 T20 Sixes

- Rohit Sharma's milestone is not just a personal achievement but a celebration of the immense talent and skill that Indian cricketers possess. As the first Indian to reach the 500-six mark, Rohit's legacy will inspire the next generation of batters to push the boundaries of their capabilities and strive for excellence in the shortest format of the game.

Indian Girls Shine at 13th European Girls' Mathematical Olympiad 2024

- The 4-member Indian team clinched a total of four medals, including two **silver** and two **bronze**, in the 13th EGMO 2024. The illustrious medal winners are:

Student's Name	Location (State)	Award/Medal
Gunjan Agarwal	Gurgaon, Haryana	Silver Medal
Sanjana Philo Chacko	Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala	Silver Medal
Larissa	Hisar, Haryana	Bronze Medal
SaeVitthal Patil	Pune, Maharashtra	Bronze Medal

TakshviVaghani Sets New World Record for the Lowest Limbo Skating Over 25 Metres

- TakshviVaghani, has etched her name in the record books by setting a new world record for the lowest limbo skating over 25 metres. On April 18, 2024, the 6-year-old prodigy from Ahmedabad, Gujarat, defied the boundaries of human agility, gliding across the 25-meter distance at a mere 16 cm (6.29 in) above the ground.

T20 World Cup ambassador Usain Bolt predicts big things for cricket in USA

- Legendary sprinter Usain Bolt has been named the official ambassador for the upcoming ICC Men's T20 World Cup, co-hosted by the West Indies and the United States from June 1 to 29.
- Bolt's role as an ambassador goes beyond a mere title. He will be a driving force in promoting the event, making cameo appearances alongside Caribbean music giants Sean Paul and Kes in the official anthem's music video, set to be released next week. Fans can expect to see Bolt cheering on the Windies at key matches and participating in fan engagement events, particularly in the USA, where cricket is poised for a significant leap.



APPOINTMENTS

Rakesh Mohan Appointed to World Bank Economic Advisory Panel

- According to the CSEP statement, the World Bank's Economic Advisory Panel will focus on strategic issues for the World Bank Group in relation to their objectives, research agenda, and actions. The panel will provide guidance and insights to help the World Bank Group achieve its goals.
- This appointment of Rakesh Mohan to the prestigious panel underscores his expertise and experience in international economics and finance, which will be valuable in advising the World Bank on its strategic direction.

Wipro Appoints New CEO: Srinivas Pallia

- Srinivas Pallia, the new CEO, has had an illustrious career spanning over three decades at Wipro. He has a comprehensive understanding of the company's diverse geographies, functions, service lines, and business units, which will enhance his leadership role.
- Pallia has held various leadership positions, including serving as the President of Wipro's Consumer Business Unit and the Global Head of Business Application Services. Most recently, he excelled as the CEO for Americas 1, Wipro's largest and fastest-growing market.

IPS Officer Love Kumar Appointed as IG in Special Protection Group

- The Special Protection Group (SPG) is a special force in India responsible for providing security to

the Prime Minister, former Prime Ministers, and their immediate families.

- The appointments of Love Kumar and Umesh Chander Datta as IGs in the SPG are aimed at strengthening the group's leadership and enhancing its overall effectiveness in fulfilling its critical security mandate.

Centre Appoints Manoj Panda as New Finance Commission Member

- Prior to Panda's appointment, the finance panel operated with only three full-time members and Chairperson Arvind Panagariya. With Panda onboard, the commission is now at full strength, comprising four full-time members and a chairperson.
- The vacancy in the commission arose when Niranjana Rajadhyaksha, Executive Director of Artha Global, cited unforeseen personal circumstances for his inability to assume the role. Panda's appointment rectifies this vacancy, ensuring the commission's operational effectiveness.
- The Sixteenth Finance Commission is expected to submit its report by October 31, 2025, outlining financial recommendations for the upcoming five-year period starting from April 1, 2026. The commission initiated its activities with its first meeting held on February 14, 2024.

Harendra Singh Appointed as Coach of Indian Women's Hockey Team Until 2028 Olympics

- Singh will be appointed as the coach of the senior national women's hockey team until the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics.
- Hockey India has not made any formal announcement regarding the appointment due to the ongoing model code of conduct for the Lok Sabha elections.
- Hockey India has announced a 33-member Indian Women's Hockey Team that will continue training in Bangalore until May 16, 2024.
- The Indian women's team will travel to Antwerp, Belgium, and London, England, to face Argentina, Belgium, Germany, and Great Britain in the FIH Hockey Pro League 2023/24 later this year.
- Harendra Singh has joined the Bangalore camp to manage the senior national women's hockey team.

Former Revenue Secretary Tarun Bajaj to Head US-India Tax Forum

- The US-India Tax Forum was officially launched on February 25, 2020, and is an initiative to provide member companies with a platform to engage with relevant government officials on tax issues as they conduct business in the US-India corridor, discuss the future of taxation, and how businesses and governments can work together in a global world to improve the ease of doing business environment.
- The US-India Tax Forum has around 350 member companies and is the leading tax platform bringing Government of India policymakers, global tax experts, and the business community at large to advocate for better tax policy.
- As the head of the US-India Tax Forum, Tarun Bajaj will leverage his extensive experience in tax administration and policymaking to guide the forum's efforts in fostering stronger tax cooperation between the United States and India.

Jagjit Pavadia Re-elected to International Narcotics Control Board

- In 2016, she served as the First Vice-President of the Board, and then President from 2021-2022.
- Established in 1968, the INCB is the independent and quasi-judicial monitoring body for the implementation of the UN international drug control conventions.
- It plays a key role in monitoring the production and trade of narcotics and psychotropics, as well as their availability for medical and scientific purposes, and also deciding which precursors should be regulated.

Senior IPS Officer Anurag Kumar Appointed as Joint Director of CBI

- The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) is India's premier investigating agency, responsible for probing a wide range of criminal cases, including those related to corruption, economic offenses, and high-profile crimes.
- The CBI plays a pivotal role in upholding the rule of law and ensuring accountability at the highest levels of government and the private sector.
- As a Joint Director of the CBI, Anurag Kumar will be responsible for overseeing and directing various aspects of the agency's operations, including the investigation of complex cases, coordination with other law enforcement agencies, and the implementation of strategic initiatives aimed at enhancing the CBI's effectiveness.

Vice Admiral Dinesh Kumar Tripathi Appointed as Next Chief of the Naval Staff

- As a Rear Admiral, he served as the Assistant Chief of Naval Staff (Policy and Plans) and the Flag Officer Commanding Eastern Fleet.
- In the rank of Vice Admiral, he has served as Commandant of the Indian Naval Academy, Ezhimala, Director General of Naval Operations, Chief of Personnel, and Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Western Naval Command.

Nalin Prabhat Appointed as Director-General of NSG

- Nalin Prabhat, who is currently serving as the Additional Director-General of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) in Jammu and Kashmir, has been appointed as the Director-General of the NSG, which is the country's premier counter-terrorism and counter-hijack force.
- According to an order issued by the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT), Prabhat's appointment as the NSG chief is effective until his superannuation on August 31, 2028. The NSG is a highly specialized force trained to counter terrorist activities, hijackings, and other high-risk situations.

President Droupadi Murmu has appointed Professor Naima Khatoon as the first woman Vice-Chancellor of the Aligarh Muslim University (AMU), breaking a century-old glass ceiling.

- The timing of the appointment is noteworthy, as the AMU Vice-Chancellor holds an important position in the Muslim community, both in India and abroad. Khatoon's appointment is being viewed as a message to the Muslim world, showcasing the government's commitment to inclusive leadership.
- Although the university's founding chancellor was Sultan Jahan, the Begum of Bhopal, and at least three AMU alumnae have gone on to helm prestigious universities, it took more than 100 years for the university court to propose the name of a deserving woman from a modest family in Odisha's Jajpur district. Old-timers suggest that certain customs and the residential nature of the university might have prevented a woman from attaining the top post earlier.

Narsingh Yadav Elected Chairman of WFI Athletes Commission

- Narsingh Yadav, a former Commonwealth Games gold medalist, came into the limelight before the 2016 Olympic Games. Olympic medalist Sushil

Kumar had requested a trial match against Narsingh, as Sushil could not participate in the qualification tournament due to injury.

- While Sushil's appeal was rejected by the Delhi High Court, confirming Narsingh's participation in the Rio Olympics, Narsingh failed two dope tests before the Games. The Court of Sports banned him for four years, but the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) cleared him, stating that the positive test was part of a conspiracy. Narsingh's ban ended in July 2020.
- The United World Wrestling (UWW), headquartered in Corsier-sur-Vevey, Switzerland, is the international governing body for wrestling. It oversees wrestling competitions at the Olympics and World Championships.
- The Wrestling Federation of India (WFI), based in New Delhi, governs the sport in the country. It organizes national and international wrestling events, provides training and support to Indian wrestlers participating in major competitions like the Olympic Games.



AWARDS

Professor Meena Charanda was given the 'International Culture Award' for the year 2024

- Prof. Meena Charanda has been given this honor for her remarkable work in the field of education and social service.
- Prof. Charanda was presented with this honor at a program at the India International Center on March 30, 2024. Professor Charanda was given a memento, plaque, shield and citation from the university in the award.
- Professor Meena Charanda
- Professor Charanda has been teaching in the Political Science Department of Kalindi College for more than two decades. Professor Charanda has obtained a PhD degree from Delhi University on the study of Dalit Assemblies of Uttar Pradesh.
- Besides this, Professor Charanda's book on the role of Dalit MLAs in the Uttar Pradesh Assembly has also been published.
- Apart from this, more than 50 articles have been published in various newspapers and magazines and have discharged the responsibilities of various committees and activities of the college.
- Along with this, two PhD researchers are doing research work under the direction of Professor Charanda.

Vineet Jain, the managing director of the Times Group, received the prestigious Exchange4Media News Broadcasting Awards (ENBA)

Lifetime Achievement Award 2023 for his significant contributions to Indian television news.

- The award citation commended Jain for his instrumental role in founding the group's TV platform, the Times Network, which includes channels like Times Now, ET Now, Mirror Now, Times Now Navbharat, and ET NOW Swadesh.
- According to the jury, these channels have greatly impacted the delivery of news in India. Jain's dedication to innovative programming, balanced coverage, and adapting to the evolving needs of the audience have garnered widespread respect and admiration.

REC wins SKOCH ESG Award 2024 in Renewable Energy Financing Category

- REC has emerged as a significant player in India's clean energy transition, actively contributing to the nation's sustainable future. Through various initiatives and achievements, REC has committed



to numerous sustainable projects and signed various MOUs for green projects.

- Furthermore, REC has engaged in one-on-one discussions with various developers of green projects, spanning sectors such as solar, wind, Pumped Storage Projects, E-mobility, RE manufacturing, green ammonia and green hydrogen, and battery storage.
- Looking ahead, REC anticipates a significant expansion in its renewable energy portfolio, with projections indicating growth to 10 times its present value, reaching more than Rs. 3 lakh crores by 2030, representing approximately 30% of its Assets Under Management.
- The SKOCH ESG Awards recognize organizations that demonstrate outstanding performance in Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) practices. The SKOCH ESG Award and Assessment serve as an important benchmark for evaluating organizations' commitment to India 2047. It focuses on the interplay between sustainable investments and processes in shaping a sustainable and growing business future.
- REC is a 'Maharatna' Central Public Sector Enterprise under the Ministry of Power, and is registered with RBI as Non-Banking Finance Company (NBFC), and Infrastructure Financing Company (IFC).
- REC finances the entire Power-Infrastructure sector comprising Generation, Transmission, Distribution, Renewable Energy and new technologies like Electric Vehicles, Battery Storage, Pumped Storage Projects, Green Hydrogen and Green Ammonia projects.
- Recently, REC has also diversified into the Non-Power Infrastructure sector comprising Roads & Expressways, Metro Rail, Airports, IT Communication, Social and Commercial Infrastructure (Educational Institution, Hospitals), Ports and Electro-Mechanical (E&M) works in respect of various other sectors like Steel and Refinery.

In recognition of his efforts, Dr. Kommuri was felicitated with the Distinguished Overseas Dental Specialist (Orthodontics and Orofacial Pain) title at the National Fame Awards 2024, held at The Club in Mumbai.

- The National Fame Awards, an initiative by Brands Impact, aim to recognize exceptional individuals and organizations that have achieved fame and nationwide popularity. The awards

celebrate inspiring achievements and positive impact in various fields.

- Several B-Town celebs were honored at the third edition of National Fame Award Awards, including Gauahar Khan, Udit Narayan, Alka Yagnik, Rahul Dev, Zayed Khan, Jennifer Winget, and others.

15th CIDC Vishwakarma Awards 2024 honour SJVN for its Corporate Social Responsibility Contribution

- SJVN Limited has won two prestigious awards at the 15th CIDC Vishwakarma Awards 2024, instituted by the Construction Industry Development Council. SJVN has been conferred with 'Achievement Award for Creating Social Development & Impact' and 'CIDC Partners in Progress Trophy'.
- Speaking about the recognitions, Chairperson & Managing Director, SJVN and Chairperson of CSR Foundation Smt. Geeta Kapur said that these awards acknowledge SJVN's commitment to positive change through innovative and sustainable Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives.
- All the CSR initiatives of SJVN are undertaken through the registered trust, SJVN Foundation. Till date, the company has spent more than Rs. 450 crores on a spectrum of CSR activities spanning the verticals of Education & Skill development, Health & Hygiene, Infrastructural Development & Community Asset Creation, Sustainable Development, Assistance during Natural Disasters, Preservation & Promotion of Local Culture and Sports.
- CIDC Vishwakarma Awards have become an epitome for recognizing organizations and individuals for their initiatives across various fields, including Corporate Social responsibility, contributing significantly to the growth and sustainable development of the nation.

Aleksei Navalny and Yulia Navalnaya Honoured with Freedom Prize

- The late Russian dissident Aleksei Navalny and his wife, Yulia Navalnaya, will receive the Freedom Prize of the Media from a leading German forum, the Ludwig Erhard Summit. The award is presented annually to public figures who have made significant contributions to freedom of expression, dialogue, and democracy.
- The Freedom Prize has been awarded to other prominent figures, including Russian politician

Garry Kasparov in 2023 and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in the past.

- Former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, widely recognized for his role in the dissolution of the Soviet Union and democratic reforms, has also been a recipient of the award.

Groundbreaking Study by Dr. Agarwal's Eye Hospital on post-crosslinking surgery patients Wins 'Best Scientific Poster Award' at ASCRS 2024 Annual Meeting

- The research was led by ophthalmologists Prof. Lional Raj and Prof. David Heber from Dr. Agarwal's Eye Hospital in Tirunelveli.
- The prospective controlled, randomized study demonstrated remarkable clinical outcomes, offering new hope for patients suffering from keratoconus.
- The study found that stable keratoconus patients undergoing RevitalVision vision-training software post Crosslinking surgery experienced a significant improvement in their vision, with an average improvement of 2.5 lines on the visual acuity test chart.
- The study addresses a critical gap in treatment for keratoconus patients post-crosslinking surgery, providing a tangible improvement in vision and enhancing their quality of life.
- RevitalVision, a prescribed, home-based vision-training software program, has been proven effective in improving vision in keratoconus patients following cross-linking surgery.

Lokesh Muni honoured with American President's Volunteer Award 2024.

- Jain Acharya Lokesh Muni has become the first Indian monk to be honoured with the American President's Gold Volunteer Service award in recognition of his contribution to the public good and humanity.
- The American President's Volunteer Service Award was established in 2003 during George Bush's Presidency. The award is given to individuals who have provided at least 500 hours of voluntary service in the United States and whose voluntary work has positively impacted communities and inspired those around them.

Indian-American actor and 'Mean Girls' star Vandanapu was named the South Asian Person of the

Year by Harvard University on 10 April.

- Vandanapu's recognition as the "South Asian Person of the Year" by Harvard University is a testament to the impact she has made in the entertainment industry and beyond. This prestigious award not only celebrates her individual achievements but also highlights the importance of diverse representation and the power of storytelling that transcends cultural boundaries.
- In her acceptance speech, Vandanapu expressed her gratitude and the profound significance of this honor, stating, "Receiving this award from an institution as esteemed as Harvard University is incredibly humbling and beyond inspiring. This award is not just a recognition of my work, but it shines a light on the importance of storytelling that crosses borders and the vital role of Indian representation in global media."

Mamta G. Sagar, a renowned Kannada poet, writer, academic, and activist based in Bengaluru, has added another feather to her cap by winning the prestigious World Literary Prize.

- The ceremony was held as a part of the first Congress of WOW in Abuja, Nigeria.
- The three-day Congress was held at the Association of Nigerian Authors (ANA) Writers Village, a community started by celebrated Nigerian author Chinua Achebe in 1981. The event was a collaboration between ANA and Pan African Writers Association (PAWA).
- With anthologies like 'KaadaNavilinaHejje' (published in 1992) and 'Nadiya Neerina Teva' (1999), the Bengaluru-based writer seeks to address issues related to gender, politics and human rights violations.
- In recent years, Mamta's focus has been on performance poetry. KaavyaSanje, a community of poets founded by her, has been hosting poetry reading events across public spaces in Bengaluru and online with local, national and international poets.
- In 2018, she produced a set of poetry films, 'Interversions 1', 'Interversions 2' and 'Interversions 3', with verses drawn from her works.
- She is currently collaborating with poets from KaavyaSanje to bring out a compilation of her poetry, which has not been published before.

Nykaa's co-founder Adwaita Nayar Named Young Global Leader In World Economic Forum's Class of 2024.

- Adwaita Nayar, the co-founder of Nykaa and CEO of Nykaa Fashion, has been inducted into the esteemed World Economic Forum's Young Global Leaders Community as part of the Class of 2024.

Amitabh Bachchan to be Honoured with the Prestigious Lata Deenanath Mangeshkar Award

- The Lata Deenanath Mangeshkar Award was instituted by the Deenanath Mangeshkar Smriti Pratishthan in 2022, in honor of the legendary Lata Mangeshkar, the revered "Swar Kokila" (Nightingale) of India. This prestigious award celebrates the enduring legacy of Lata Mangeshkar, who captivated audiences with her mesmerizing vocal prowess and left an indelible mark on the world of Indian music.
- In the previous two years, the Lata Deenanath Mangeshkar Award was conferred upon Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the esteemed singer Asha Bhosle, respectively, recognizing their remarkable contributions to the nation and the arts.

Pavuluri Subba Rao Honoured with Aryabhata Award for Astronautics Contribution

- This honour recognizes Rao's "tremendous lifetime contribution to the promotion of astronautics in India."
- In addition to the Aryabhata Award, Rao was also bestowed with the title of 'Distinguished Fellow' by the ASI, further acknowledging his significant contributions to the field of aerospace and aviation.
- Rao's journey began as a scientist at ISRO, where he gained invaluable experience and expertise in space technology. In 1992, he took the entrepreneurial leap and incorporated Ananth Technologies Limited, with the aim of indigenously designing and developing sophisticated avionics for ISRO and the Defense sector.
- The company has supplied key components and technologies to an impressive 98 satellites and 78 launch vehicles, cementing its position as a reliable partner in the country's space endeavors.
- With over 1,600 employees across three Centers of Excellence in Hyderabad, Bengaluru, and Thiruvananthapuram, Ananth Technologies has become a driving force behind indigenous innovation in the aerospace and defense sectors.



OBITUARIES

Nobel Prize-Winning Physicist Peter Higgs Dies At Age Of 94

- He gave rise to the "God particle" that helped explain how matter formed after the Big Bang.
- The physicist gained global recognition in 2012, when he was awarded the Nobel prize, almost 50 years after Higgs predicted the existence of a new particle, which came to be known as the Higgs boson, or the "God particle."
- Higgs was emeritus professor at University of Edinburgh

Renowned Carnatic Musician K.G. Jayan Passes Away at 90

- Together, Jayan and Vijayan created a musical legacy that spanned over 1,000 compositions. Their talents graced films, plays, and devotional albums, leaving an indelible mark on the cultural landscape of Kerala. Tragically, Vijayan passed away in 1988. However, Jayan continued his musical journey, pouring his heart into devotional songs and Carnatic concerts.

- The brothers' musical talents extended beyond the realm of Carnatic music. They composed music for several Malayalam films, including *Bhoomiyile Malakhamar*, *Dharmasastha*, *Nirakudam*, *Sneham*, *Theruvugeetham*, *Padhapooja*, *Shanmughapriya*, and *Pappathi*. Their film compositions added another dimension to their artistic legacy.

Sudhir Kakar, the "Father of Indian Psychology", Passes Away

- **Sudhir Kakar: A Pioneer in Indian Psychology** The passing of Sudhir Kakar marks a significant loss for the field of psychology in India. As the father of Indian psychology, Kakar's contributions have been instrumental in shaping our understanding of the human mind within the Indian cultural context.
- **Legacy and Influence** Kakar's groundbreaking work has left an indelible mark on the landscape of psychology, influencing not only academia but also clinical practice, education, and policymaking. His insights continue to resonate with scholars and

practitioners, fostering a deeper appreciation for the complexities of the Indian psyche.

Yakshagana Exponent SubrahmanyaDhareshwar Passes Away

- SubrahmanyaDhareshwar, a revered Yakshagana exponent, passed away on April 24, 2024.
- Dhareshwar's demise is a significant loss to the Yakshagana community and Karnataka's cultural heritage.
- He dedicated his life to promoting and preserving the rich tradition of Yakshagana, leaving behind a lasting legacy.

- Dhareshwar's contributions extended beyond performances; he played a crucial role in training and mentoring aspiring artists.
- His influence transcended borders, earning him recognition both nationally and internationally for his expertise in Yakshagana.

Legendary English Cricketer Derek Underwood Passes Away at 78

- Derek Underwood, England and Kent's greatest spinner has died at the age of 78. In 24 years of his domestic cricket playing for Kent, where he was born, Underwood claimed 2,523 wickets with an average of 19.04 in more than 900 first-class matches between 1963 and 1987.



IMPORTANT DAYS

Dates	Name of Important Days	Dates	Name of Important Days
1 April	Odisha Foundation Day	17 April	Rama Navami
1 April	Prevention of Blindness Week	17 April	World Haemophilia Day
2 April	World Autism Awareness Day	18 April	World Heritage Day
4 April	International Day of Mine Awareness	21 April	National Civil Service Day
5 April	National Maritime Day	22 April	World Earth Day
7 April	World Health Day	23 April	World Book and Copyright Day
10 April	World Homoeopathy Day (WHD)	24 April	National Panchayati Raj Day
11 April	National Safe Motherhood Day (NSMD)	25 April	World Malaria Day
11 April	National Pet Day	26 April	World Intellectual Property Day
13 April	Jallianwala Bagh Massacre	28 April	World Day for Safety and Health at Work
14 April	B.R. Ambedkar Remembrance Day	30 April	World Veterinary Day

Explanation:

April 1

Odisha Day

- It is celebrated on 1 April in Odisha in the memory of the formation of the state as a separate province on 1 April 1936.
- The administrative identity of Odisha was fully lost in 1568 after the death and conquest of Mukunda Dev, the last king.

April 2

World Autism Awareness Day

- The day encourages member states of the United Nations to take measures to raise awareness about people with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) throughout the world.
- World Autism Awareness Day", passed in council on 1 November 2007, and adopted on 18 December 2007.
- It was proposed by the United Nations representative from Qatar.

April 3

World Party Day

- Designated as a universal day of coordinated events dedicated to human, joyful celebration, World Party Day occurs on April 3.
- World Party Day was first observed in 1996 after the publication of 'Flight: A Quantum Fiction' Novel by Vanna Bonta.

April 4

United Nations' International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action

- The United Nations' International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action is observed on April 4 each year.
- This day aims to raise awareness about landmines and progress toward their eradication.
- On 8 December 2005, the United Nations (UN) General Assembly declared that April 4 of each year would be officially proclaimed and observed as International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action.
- It was first observed on April 4, 2006.

April 5

National Maritime Day in India every year

- The first ship of the Scindia Steam Navigation Company Ltd started for the United Kingdom from Mumbai (then British Bombay) on this day in 1919.
- It marked a red-letter day in the maritime history of India, a country known for its seafaring abilities since ancient days.
- The National Maritime Day was first celebrated on 5th April, 1964.

April 6

International Day of Sport for Development and Peace (IDSDP)

- Each year, on 6 April, the world commemorates the International Day of Sport for Development and Peace (IDSDP).
- The International Day of Sport for Development and Peace (IDSDP) is an annual celebration of the power of sport to drive social change, community development and to foster peace and understanding.
- Creating a historical link to the first modern Olympic Games in 1896, 6 April was declared the International Day of Sport for Development and Peace by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly in 2013.

April 7

World Health Day

- The World Health Day is a global health awareness day under the sponsorship of the World Health Organization (WHO)
- In 1948, the WHO held the First World Health Assembly.
- The Assembly decided to celebrate 7 April of each year, with effect from 1950, as the World Health Day.

International Day of Reflection on the 1994 Rwanda Genocide

- April 7, 2004 was recognized as an international observance the International Day of Reflection on the 1994 Rwandan genocide by the United Nations.

April 10

World Homeopathy Day

- In Honor of the Father of Homeopathy System of Medicine Dr. Samuel Hahnemann.
- Every year 10th April is celebrated all over the world as 'World Homeopathy Day as a tribute to Hahnemann.
- The week following the birth date of Hahnemann i.e. 10th April is celebrated as World Homeopathy Awareness Week.

April 11

National Safe Motherhood Day, India

- In 2013, the Government of India declared April 11, the anniversary of Political activist Kasturba Gandhi, as the National Safe Motherhood Day.
- India is the first country in all across the world to have officially declared a National Safe Motherhood Day.
- The day is an initiative of the White Ribbon Alliance India (WRAI) in an effort that women must have the availability and enough access to care during pregnancy, childbirth, and postnatal services.

World Parkinson Day

- World Parkinson's Disease Day marks the birthday of Dr. J Parkinson.
- April 11 is World Parkinson's Day and throughout the month events are taking place all over the world to raise more awareness and vital funds for research in to better treatments & ultimately a cure.

April 12

International Day of Human Space Flight

- The General Assembly, in its resolution on 7 April 2011, declared 12 April as the International Day of Human Space Flight.
- It is also Cosmonautics Day in Russia
- 12 April 1961 was the date of the first human space flight, carried out by Yuri Gagarin, a Soviet citizen.

April 13

The Jallianwala Bagh massacre

- It is also known as the Amritsar massacre, took place on 13 April 1919 when troops of the British Indian Army under the command of Colonel Reginald Dyer fired rifles into a crowd of Indians, who had gathered in Jallianwala Bagh, Amritsar, Punjab.

April 14

Ambedkar Jayanti

- Ambedkar Jayanti or Bhim Jayanti is an annual festival observed on 14 April to commemorate the memory of B. R. Ambedkar.
- It marks Babasaheb Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's birthday who was born on April 14, 1891.
- Since 2015 it has been observed as an official public holiday throughout India.

April 15

World Creativity and Innovation Day

- On April 21, 2018, the first official World Creativity and Innovation Day (#WCID), as announced by the United Nations, was celebrated.

- The week (April 15-21) has been identified as World Creativity and Innovation Week by the United Nations.
- The celebration starts on 15 April, the birthday of Leonardo Da Vinci, and culminating in World Creativity and Innovation Day on 21 April.

World Art Day

- World Art Day (Rittik Day) is an international celebration of the fine arts which was declared by the International Association of Art (IAA).
- A proposal was put forward at the 17th General Assembly of the International Association of Art in Guadalajara to declare April 15 as World Art Day, with the first celebration held in 2012.
- The date was decided in honor of the birthday of Leonardo da Vinci.

April 16

World Voice Day

- World Voice Day (WVD) is a worldwide annual event that takes place on April 16 devoted to the celebration of the phenomenon of voice
- This celebration started in Brazil in 1999 as the Brazilian National Voice Day.

April 17

World Hemophilia Day

- World Hemophilia Day is an international observance held annually on April 17 by the World Federation of Hemophilia (WFH)
- April 17 was chosen in honor of WFH founder Frank Schnabel's birthday.

April 18

World Heritage Day

- The International Day for Monuments and Sites also known as World Heritage Day is an international observance held on 18 April each year.
- It was proposed by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) on 18 April 1982 and approved by the General Assembly of UNESCO in 1983.

April 21

Civil Service Day

- The Civil Service Day is celebrated on 21 April every year.
- This date is chosen to commemorate the day when first Home Minister of Independent India, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel addressed the probationers of Administrative Services Officers in 1947 at Metcalf House, Delhi.
- He referred to civil servants as the 'steel frame of India'.

- The first such function was held in Vigyan Bhawan, New delhi 21 April 2006.

April 22

Earth Day

- Earth Day is an annual event celebrated on April 22.
- It was first celebrated in 1970 by marking the anniversary of the birth of the modern environmental movement in 1970.
- In 1969 at a UNESCO Conference in San Francisco, peace activist John McConnell proposed a day to honor the Earth and the concept of peace
- Initially it was first to be celebrated on March 21, 1970, the first day of spring in the northern hemisphere.
- It now is observed in 192 countries, and coordinated by the nonprofit Earth Day Network, chaired by the first Earth Day 1970 organizer Denis Hayes

April 24

National Panchayati Raj Day

- National Panchayati Raj Day (National Local Self-Government day) is the national day of India celebrated by Ministry of Panchayati Raj on 24 April annually
- Then Prime Minister of India Manmohan Singh inaugurated the first National Panchayati Raj Day in 2010
- This day marks the passing of Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act, 1992 that came into force with effect from 24 April 1993.
- In 1994, women were given a 33% reservation on the seats of Panchayats, as a result of the 73rd Amendment to the Constitution.
- Ever since, the 24th of April has been celebrated as the Women's Political Empowerment Day.

April 25

World Malaria Day

- World Malaria Day (WMD) is an international observance commemorated every year on 25 April and recognizes global efforts to control malaria.
- It is marked by the World Health Organization (WHO)
- World Malaria Day was established in May 2007 by the 60th session of the World Health Assembly.

April 26

World Intellectual Property Day

- World IP Day is celebrated annually on April 26, the date on which the Convention establishing WIPO entered into force in 1970.

- WIPO's member states-initiated World IP Day in 2000 to raise public awareness about the role of IP in daily life.
- The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) is the global forum for intellectual property policy, services, information and cooperation.

International Chernobyl Disaster Remembrance Day

- The United Nations (UN) has proclaimed April 26 International Chernobyl Disaster Remembrance Day.
- The day was first observed in 2016, on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the 1986 nuclear disaster.
- On April 26, 1986, a reactor in the Chernobyl nuclear power plant in today's Ukraine experienced a catastrophic explosion and fire, releasing unprecedented levels of radioactive materials into the atmosphere.

April 28

World Day for Safety and Health at Work

- The International Labour Organization celebrates the World Day for Safety and Health at Work on the 28 April to promote the prevention of occupational accidents and diseases globally.
- The 28 April is also the International Commemoration Day for Dead and Injured Workers or International Workers' Memorial Day organized worldwide by the trade union movement since 1996.
- Since 2003, this day is being observed.

April 29

Day of Remembrance for all Victims of Chemical Warfare

- The Day of Remembrance for all Victims of Chemical Warfare is an annual event held on April 29 as a tribute to the victims of chemical warfare.

- It is officially recognized by the United Nations (UN) and has been celebrated since 2005.
- April 29 was chosen as the date for the event's celebration because the Chemical Weapons Convention entered into force on that day in 1997.

April 30

Prevention of Blindness Week

- The Prevention of Blindness Week campaign is planned by the Government of India which is held from 1st to 7th April for increasing the awareness towards the blind people.
- Prevention of Blindness Week was first started by the Jawaharlal Nehru and Raj Kumari Amrit Kaur in the year 1960 under the Societies Registration Act of 1860.

World Immunization Week

- It is a global public health campaign to raise awareness and increase rates of immunization against vaccine-preventable diseases around the world.
- It takes place each year during last week of April.
- The World Health Assembly endorsed World Immunization Week during its May 2012 meeting.

World Veterinary Day

- Last Saturday of April is being celebrated as World Veterinary Day.
- World Veterinarian Day was created in 2000 by the World Veterinary Association to highlight and promote the lifesaving work performed by veterinarians around the globe.
- It was created by the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) and the World Veterinary Association (WVA).

Save the Frogs Day

- Last Saturday of April is being celebrated as Save the Frogs Day.
- Conceived and coordinated by SAVE THE FROGS organization, it is the world's largest day of amphibian education and conservation action.
- It was started in 2009.



1. Who has been appointed as the first woman Prime Minister of Congo?
 - A. Adelaide Keita
 - B. Adede Monifa
 - C. Judith Suminwa Tuluka
 - D. Sama Lukonde
2. 'Indian Historical Records Commission', which was in the news recently, is functioning under which Ministry?
 - A. Ministry of Education
 - B. Ministry of Home Affairs
 - C. Ministry of Culture
 - D. Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs
3. India's first multipurpose (heat and power) green hydrogen pilot project was launched in which state?
 - A. Punjab
 - B. Himachal Pradesh
 - C. Sikkim
 - D. Arunachal Pradesh
4. SubrahmanyaDhadeshwar passed away, he was a famous singer of which of the following folk dance?
 - A. Kathakali
 - B. Kathak
 - C. Yakshagana
 - D. Bharatnatyam
5. Which has become India's largest port in terms of cargo volume?
 - A. Paradip Port
 - B. Visakhapatnam port
 - C. Kandla Port
 - D. Mangalore Port
6. Recently Abdel-Fattah Al-Sisi has been sworn in as the President of which country?
 - A. Qatar
 - B. Iran
 - C. Egypt
 - D. Oman
7. Who has recently become India's top ranked chess player?
 - A. Arjun Erigaceae
 - B. Gukesh
 - C. R. Praggnanandhaa
 - D. Vishwanathan Anand
8. 'Operation Sankalp', which was in news recently, is related to which of the following?
 - A. Naxalism
 - B. Women and child Trafficking
 - C. Cyber security
 - D. Maritime security
9. Who won the National Kho Kho Championship 2023-24 Men's Title?
 - A. Rajasthan
 - B. Uttar Pradesh
 - C. Odisha
 - D. Maharashtra
10. Which country recently passed Foreign Aid Bill to provide military aid to Ukraine?
 - A. Germany
 - B. France
 - C. UK
 - D. USA
11. Where was India's first domestic gene therapy for cancer launched?
 - A. IIT Bombay
 - B. IIT Delhi
 - C. IIT Kharagpur
 - D. IIT Madras
12. Kathia wheat, which has recently been given GI tag, belongs to which state?
 - A. Haryana
 - B. Punjab
 - C. Uttar Pradesh
 - D. Rajasthan
13. Who has been recently appointed as a member of the Economic Advisory Panel by the World Bank Group?
 - A. Amitabh Kant
 - B. Rajiv Sinha
 - C. Rakesh Mohan
 - D. Ajay Mohan Singh
14. Who won the title of CCI Snooker Classic?
 - A. Pankaj Advani
 - B. Kamal Chawla
 - C. Abhay Kapoor
 - D. Shreyansh Sinha
15. When is National Maritime Day celebrated every year?
 - A. 3rd April
 - B. 4th April
 - C. 5th April
 - D. 6th April
16. The city of Miraj, which has been granted GI tag for its art of making musical instruments, is located in which state?
 - A. Maharashtra

- B. Madhya Pradesh
C. Rajasthan
D. Gujarat
17. Which player has been included in the team by Delhi Capitals in place of Harry Brook in IPL 2024?
A. Ben Stroke
B. Adil Rashid
C. Lizard Williams
D. Ravi Bopara
18. What is the theme of 'World Immunization Week' 2024?
A. Long Life for All
B. Humanly Possible: Immunization for All
C. Vaccines bring us closer
D. Vaccines Work for All
19. When is World Health Day celebrated every year?
A. 6th April
B. 7th April
C. 8th April
D. 9th April
20. Where was the 'Sagar Kavach' exercise organised recently?
A. Andaman and Nicobar
B. Lakshadweep
C. Andhra Pradesh
D. Kerala
21. Atacama Desert, recently seen in news, is the driest desert in the world, located in which country?
A. Brazil
B. Chile
C. Argentina
D. Peru
22. In which country will the Clean Energy Investor Forum be organized by IPEF?
A. India
B. China
C. Singapore
D. Malaysia
23. In which city will the National Women's Hockey League be inaugurated?
A. Ranchi
B. Lucknow
C. Varanasi
D. Bhopal
24. Who launched India's first private sub-meter resolution surveillance satellite?
A. Agnikul Cosmos
B. Dhruv space
C. Tata Advanced Systems Limited
D. Skyroot Aerospace
25. Recently, which country has tested the Pyoljji-1-2 anti-aircraft missile?
A. Ukraine
B. Iran
C. North Korea
D. Egypt
26. India has acquired the right to operate the overseas Sittwe port, in which country?
A. Iran
B. Qatar
C. Sri Lanka
D. Myanmar
27. For which mission the ISRO team was awarded the prestigious 'John L. 'Jack' Swigert Jr.' Award was presented to?
A. Aditya L1 Mission
B. Chandrayaan-3 mission
C. Gaganyaan Mission
D. Mangalyaan Mission
28. World Homeopathy Day celebrated every year on which date?
A. 8th April
B. 9th April
C. 10th April
D. 11th April
29. Where was the first steel cutting ceremony of Fleet Support Ships for the Indian Navy held?
A. Mumbai
B. Ahmedabad
C. Cuttack
D. Visakhapatnam
30. Who has been appointed the head of the US-India Tax Forum?
A. Tarun Bajaj
B. Akashdeep Goyal
C. Rajesh Taneja
D. Vinay Kumar Sinha
31. Tale Valley wildlife sanctuary, recently seen in news, is located in which state?
A. Arunachal Pradesh
B. Assam
C. Maharashtra
D. Tamil Nadu

32. In which country is the Asian Wrestling Championship 2024 being organized?

- A. Iran
- B. China
- C. Kyrgyzstan
- D. India

33. When is the International Human Space Flight Day observed every year?

- A. 11th April
- B. 12th April
- C. 13th April
- D. 14th April

34. What is India's rank in the recently released World Cyber Crime Index?

- A. 10
- B. 20
- C. 30
- D. 40

35. Which is the first stadium in India to use hybrid pitch technology?

- A. Narendra Modi Stadium
- B. Wankhede
- C. Dharamshala
- D. Sawai Mansingh

36. Who is the MD of International Monetary Fund, who has been elected for the second five-year term?

- A. Soumya Swaminathan
- B. Kristalina Georgieva
- C. Geeta Gopinath
- D. Anshula Kant

37. Gepang Gath glacial lake, recently seen in news, is located in which state?

- A. Himachal Pradesh
- B. Uttarakhand
- C. Sikkim
- D. Arunachal Pradesh

38. Where is the World Future Energy Summit 2024 being organized?

- A. New Delhi
- B. Dhaka
- C. Dubai
- D. Abu Dhabi

39. Which Indian institution played an important role in the Shri Ram 'Surya Tilak' program in Ayodhya?

- A. IIT Varanasi
- B. IIT Delhi
- C. Indian Institute of Astrophysics

D. IIT Madras

40. World Heritage Day is celebrated every year on which date?

- A. 16th April
- B. 17th April
- C. 18th April
- D. 19th April

41. India recently supplied BrahMos supersonic cruise missile to which country?

- A. Nepal
- B. Philippines
- C. Thailand
- D. Bangladesh

42. Recently 'Tirangi Barfi' has been given GI tag, it is related to which city?

- A. Lucknow
- B. Kanpur
- C. Varanasi
- D. Patna

43. Eastern Naval Command of Indian Navy conducted 'Eastern Wave Exercise', where is the headquarters of Eastern Command?

- A. Chennai
- B. Visakhapatnam
- C. Paradip
- D. Kolkata

44. Indian milk brand 'Nandini' has become the sponsor of which two teams in the upcoming T20 Cricket World Cup?

- A. Scotland and England
- B. Scotland and Ireland
- C. Nepal and Sri Lanka
- D. USA and Bangladesh

45. Who has been appointed as the chief of 'National Security Guard'?

- A. Vijay Kumar Singh
- B. Aniruddha Prasad
- C. Manoj Kumar Sharma
- D. Nalin Prabhat

46. Recently, which country hosted the 'Sustainable Finance for Tiger Landscapes Conference'?

- A. Nepal
- B. Bhutan
- C. Bangladesh
- D. Myanmar

47. The National Defense University has joined hands with Starburst Aerospace of which country for defense innovation?

- A. Germany
- B. France
- C. USA
- D. Japan

48. Volcano Mount Erebus was in news recently, in which continent is it located?

- A. Asia
- B. North America
- C. Antarctica
- D. Europe

49. Who has been appointed as the brand ambassador of ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024?

- A. MS Dhoni
- B. Lionel Messi
- C. Sachin Tendulkar
- D. Usain Bolt

50. Which city becomes the first city in India to install 210 artificial reefs?

- A. Chennai
- B. Kochi
- C. Kolkata
- D. Mumbai

ANSWERS

1. Answer C

The African country Congo has appointed Judith Suminwa Tuluka as the country's first woman Prime Minister. Tuluka's appointment has come at a time when there is an atmosphere of tension in the area bordering Rwanda. Congo is a Central African country, its capital is Kinshasa.

2. Answer C

Established in 1919, IHERC is a pivotal advisory body on archival matters in India, overseeing record management and historical research. It operates under the Union Minister of Culture.

3. Answer B

Satluj Jal Vidyut Nigam (SJVN) has established India's first multi-purpose (combined heat and power) Green Hydrogen pilot project at 1,500 MW NathpaJhakri Hydro Power Station (NJHPS) in Himachal Pradesh's Jhakri.

4. Answer C

Subrahmanya Dhareshwar had served 46 years in the field of Yakshagana, a unique dance form from coastal Karnataka, which involves distinct singing, dancing and drama style that has resemblance with the Theyyam art form of neighbouring Kerala.

5. Answer A

Paradip Port in Odisha has become India's largest major port in terms of cargo volumes, handling 145.38 million tonnes in FY24, surpassing Deendayal Port Authority in Gujarat for the first time in its 56-year history.

6. Answer C

Abdel Fattah el-Sisi has been sworn in before parliament for his third term as Egyptian president. El-Sisi's oath-taking on Tuesday marked what should be his final six-year stretch as leader of the Arab world's most populous country, unless he again ushers through a constitutional amendment prolonging his tenure.

7. Answer A

India has a new number 1 in the latest chess rankings: Arjun Erigaisi was the top-ranked Indian in the latest FIDE rankings released by the world governing body of chess.

8. Answer D

The Indian Navy has launched 'Operation Sankalp' in the Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman with the aim of ensuring the security of Indian ships. Operation Sankalp of the Indian Navy, launched in response to the increasing tension in the maritime domain, is a successful effort.

9. Answer D

The Maharashtra team made a clean sweep at the 56th National Kho Kho Championship 2023-24. It won both the men's and women's titles, held at Delhi's Karnail Singh Stadium and the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium.

10. Answer D

President Joe Biden has signed a \$95 billion military aid package, featuring \$61 billion for Ukraine, \$26 billion for Israel, and \$8 billion for the Indo-Pacific. Notably, the bill includes provisions targeting TikTok, giving parent company ByteDance nine months to sell the app before it's banned in the US. Months of negotiation, lobbying by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, and a split in the House Republican conference preceded the signing, posing challenges for House Speaker Mike Johnson's leadership due to conservative opposition to increased aid for Ukraine.

11. Answer A

The President of India, Smt Droupadi Murmu launched India's first home-grown gene therapy for cancer at IIT Bombay today (April 4, 2024). Speaking on the occasion, the President said that the launch of India's first gene therapy is a major breakthrough in our battle against cancer.

12. Answer C

Kathiya Gehu (wheat) from the Bundelkhand region in Uttar Pradesh has received the first Geographical Indication (GI) tag for a farm produce in the area.

13. Answer C

Rakesh Mohan, former Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), has been appointed as a member of the World Bank Group's Economic Advisory Panel, chaired by Lord Nicholas Stern and co-chaired by World Bank Group Chief Economist Indermit Gill.

14. Answer A

Pankaj Advani claims CCI billiards classic title

15. Answer C

Every year, National Maritime Day is observed on April 5

16. Answer A

The sitars and tanpuras of Miraj, a small town in Maharashtra's Sangli district known for its craftsmanship in making musical instruments, have been awarded the coveted Geographical Indication (GI) tags

17. Answer C

"Lizaad Williams, the South African fast bowler, has been signed by the Delhi Capitals as a replacement for England's Harry Brook for

the remainder of the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2024," the franchise said in a statement

18. Answer B

'World Immunization Week' is celebrated annually from April 24 to 30 to highlight the importance of vaccines. Established by the World Health Assembly in 2012, it now spans over 180 countries. The theme for 2024 is 'Humanly Possible: Immunization for All', emphasizing universal access to vaccines. Vaccination campaigns have eradicated smallpox and nearly eliminated polio. 'European Vaccination Week' and 'National Child Immunization Week' in India also contribute to global immunization efforts.

19. Answer B

World Health Day (WHD) is celebrated on 7 April every year to mark the anniversary of the founding of WHO in 1948. Each year, a theme is selected to highlight a priority area of public health concern in the world.

20. Answer B

A two-day maritime security exercise involving all maritime security agencies of India was conducted off the Lakshadweep Islands from April 1-2. The exercise, named Sagar Kavach 01/24, aimed to validate the effectiveness of coastal security mechanisms in dealing with asymmetric threats from the sea.

21. Answer B

Researchers have made a groundbreaking discovery in Chile's Atacama Desert, uncovering thriving microbial life 13 feet below its parched surface, marking the deepest such find in the region. The Atacama, nestled between the Andes Mountains and the Pacific Ocean, spans nearly 1,000 km along Chile's coast. It's renowned as the driest desert globally, showcasing extreme conditions such as high UV radiation and saline, oxidizing soils, and is dotted with caked salt deposits and volcanic peaks.

22. Answer C

Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) has decided to organise a Clean Economy Investor Forum in Singapore on 5th - 6th June 2024. The IPEF Clean Economy Investor Forum is one of the initiatives under the IPEF, which was launched in May 2022.

23. Answer A

The Indian hockey landscape is set to witness a groundbreaking event with the inaugural season of the National Women's Hockey League 2024 - 2025. Scheduled to be held in Ranchi from April 30 to May 9, this league promises to be a thrilling showcase of the country's top women's hockey talent.

24. Answer C

Tata co launches India's 1st privately-built sub-metre resolution surveillance satellite. TASL & Satellogic launched TSAT-1A, India's first private sub-metre res earth observation satellite. It offers high-res images to Indian armed forces, surpassing Isro's resolution.

25. Answer C

On April 20, 2024, North Korea announced testing of Pyolji-1-2 anti-aircraft and Hwasal-1 Ra-3 super large strategic cruise missiles in the West Sea of Korea. Conducted a day earlier, this test escalated tensions with South Korea and the USA. The Hwasal-1 Ra-3, capable of carrying nuclear warheads, underwent a power test. This follows a February 2024 test, and adds to recent missile tests, including a solid-fuel hypersonic missile, heightening regional tensions.

26. Answer D

After Chabahar, India has gained the rights to operate a second overseas port, Sittwe, in Myanmar. This development is part of the Kaladan Multimodal Transit Transport project, which aims to provide alternate connectivity from the eastern coast of India to the northeastern states through the Sittwe port.

27. Answer B

India's Chandrayaan-3 mission team was recently awarded the prestigious 2024 John L. 'Jack' Swigert Jr. Award for Space Exploration, acknowledging their efforts to elevate the standards of space exploration.

28. Answer C

The World Homoeopathy Day is observed every year on April 10 to commemorate the Birthday of Dr. Hahnemann, the Founder of Homoeopathy.

29. Answer D

First Steel-Cutting Ceremony for the Indian Navy's Fleet Support Ship held at Hindustan Shipyard, Visakhapatnam

30. Answer A

Tarun Bajaj, former Revenue Secretary in Government of India, has been appointed as Head of US-India Tax Forum

31. Answer A

Recently discovered in India, the rare butterfly Neptisphilyra was found in Arunachal Pradesh's Tale Valley wildlife sanctuary. Known as the long-streak sailor, it boasts serrated wings with rich brownish-black above and yellow-brown below. Native to East Asia, it frequents evergreen forests, riverine vegetation, and rocky streams. Its habitat spans eastern Siberia, Korea, Japan, central, and southwest China. This marks the first sighting of the species in India.

32. Answer C

2024 Asian Wrestling Championships	
Host city	Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan
Dates	11-16 April 2024
Stadium	Bishkek Arena

33. Answer B

International Day of Human Space Flight, 12 April

34. Answer A

Recent cybercrime activities have also placed India on the list at 10th rank.

35. Answer C

Hybrid cricket pitches have been installed at the Himachal Pradesh Cricket Association (HPCA) Stadium in Dharamshala.

36. Answer B

IMF Executive Board Selects Kristalina Georgieva to Serve a Second Term as Managing Director. Washington, DC: The Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) today selected Kristalina Georgieva to serve as IMF Managing Director for a second five-year term starting on October 1, 2024.

37. Answer A

Over 40 years, ISRO's satellite imagery reveals a 178% expansion of the Gepang Gath glacial lake in Himachal Pradesh, growing from 36.49 to 101.30 hectares by 2022. ISRO warns of a 1.96-hectare yearly increase, signaling heightened risk. Glacial lake outburst floods (GLOFs) threaten downstream communities, triggered by natural dam failures due to factors like avalanches and extreme weather. Recent GLOFs in Sikkim caused severe flooding, damaging infrastructure and raising concerns over future events.

38. Answer D

The 16th World Future Energy Summit has recently commenced in Abu Dhabi, gathering global leaders, policymakers, and experts in the field of sustainable energy and climate initiatives.

39. Answer C

The Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA), Bengaluru has played a crucial role in the "Surya Tilak" project at Ayodhya - where sunlight was directed onto the forehead of Ram Lalla idol at 12pm Wednesday, on the occasion of Ram Navami.

40. Answer C

World Heritage Day is celebrated every year on 18 April to preserve human heritage and to recognize all the efforts of relevant organisations.

41. Answer B

"India completed the delivery of the first batch of BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles to the Philippines. India and the Philippines have signed a \$375 million contract for supplying these cruise missiles to the Philippines Marine Corps," say Defence officials

42. Answer C

Two renowned products from Varanasi, the Tirangi Barfi and Metal Casting Craft, were granted GI certification

43. Answer B

The Eastern Naval Command is one of the three command-level formations of the Indian Navy. It is headquartered in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.

44. Answer B

Under the Nandini brand, KMF will sponsor Scotland and Ireland teams for the T20 cricket World Cup, scheduled to be co-hosted by the West Indies and the United States from June 1-29.

45. Answer D

Nalin Prabhat appointed D-G of National Security Guard

46. Answer B

On Earth Day 2024, Bhutan leads the Sustainable Finance for Tiger Landscapes Conference, striving to raise \$1 billion in a decade to

safeguard crucial tiger habitats. Co-hosted by Bhutan's Queen Jetsun Pema Wangchuck, the event, in collaboration with the Royal Government of Bhutan and the Tiger Conservation Coalition, highlights sustainable finance, the UN's Global Biodiversity Framework, and essential public-private partnerships for tiger conservation.

47. Answer B

Rashtriya Raksha University and Starburst, France, Forge Historic Partnership to Propel Innovation in Aerospace, Defence and Homeland Security.

48. Answer C

Erebus, Antarctica's best known and world's southernmost active volcano, overlooks the McMurdo research station on Ross Island. It has a lava lake in the summit crater that has been active since at least 1972

49. Answer D

Legendary Jamaican sprinter Usain Bolt has been named by the International Cricket Council (ICC) as the ambassador for the 9th ICC Men's T-20 World Cup, which will be hosted by the West Indies and the United States of America jointly from 1 to 29 June 2024.

50. Answer D

Mumbai, India, is the first city in India to install 210 artificial reefs, which are being built in the Arabian Sea near Worli Koliwada. The RPG Foundation (RPGF) has funded the initiative, which is part of its Project Nature marine conservation initiative. The reefs are made from recycled cement and cost Rs 62 lakh to install. The reefs are a significant milestone in marine conservation. They will provide a steady supply of commercial fish and benefit local fishermen.