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## 1. INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### ANGOLA ANNOUNCES DEPARTURE FROM OPEC

**Why in news:** Angola, a significant oil-producing nation, has declared its decision to exit the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) with effect **from January 1, 2024**. This move follows the footsteps of **Ecuador in 2020 and Qatar in 2019**.

#### About OPEC:

- The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) is a permanent, Intergovernmental Organization, created at the Baghdad Conference held **in Iraq in 1960 by Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Venezuela**.
- It initially had its headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland which was then moved to Vienna, **Austria in 1965**.
- Members:
- Algeria, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Venezuela.
- OPEC nations produce **about 30% of the world's crude oil**.
- **Saudi Arabia is the biggest single oil supplier** within the group, producing more than 10 million barrels a day.

### ARGENTINA REJECTS BRICS MEMBERSHIP

#### Why in news:

1. **Argentine President Javier Milei has officially declined the invitation to join the BRICS** (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) grouping of major emerging economies
  - BRICS is an acronym for the grouping of the world's leading emerging economies, namely Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa.
  - In 2001, the British Economist Jim O'Neill coined the term BRIC to describe the four emerging economies of **Brazil, Russia, India, and China**.
  - **South Africa** was invited to join BRIC in **December 2010**.
  - **NEW MEMBERS: Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates**.
  - This new membership is set to take effect from **1st January 2024**.
2. On **January 1, Russian President Vladimir Putin officially marked the commencement of Russia's 2024 BRICS Chairmanship**. motto: **"Strengthening**

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	<p><b>Multilateralism for Equitable Global Development and Security.”</b></p> <p>3. This signifies Russia’s commitment to fostering collaboration among the BRICS nations – Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa.</p>
<b>\$700 MILLION BAILOUT TRANCHE TO PAKISTAN</b>	<p><b>Why in news:</b> Cash-strapped Pakistan is poised to receive a crucial \$700 million bailout tranche from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) during the Executive Board meeting on January 11. The disbursement, under the existing \$3 billion Stand-By Arrangement (SBA), is expected to provide much-needed financial support to Pakistan’s struggling economy.</p>
<b>OMAN TO HOST FIH HOCKEY5S WORLD CUP QUALIFIERS</b>	<p><b>Why in news:</b> From January 15 to 21, 2024, this state-of-the-art stadium will witness fierce competition among elite international teams</p>
<b>FULLY DIGITAL SCHENGEN VISAS 2024 PARIS OLYMPICS.</b>	<p><b>Why in News:</b> France leads the EU by launching fully digital Schengen visas through the "Olympic Consulate" for the 2024 Paris Olympics. The online system, operational since January 1, processes 70,000 visas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• France has become the first European Union member to introduce fully digital Schengen visas for the 2024 Olympic.</li></ul>
<b>FITCH RATINGS</b>	<p><b>Why in news:</b> Fitch Ratings released its report ‘APAC Cross-Sector Outlook 2024’, affirming robust economic growth in the Asia Pacific region.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Asia Pacific, with GDP set to expand by or above 5% in key nations such as India, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Vietnam.</li><li>• The Indian economy, which grew by 7.2% in the 2022-23 fiscal year, is projected to achieve GDP growth rates of 6.9% and 6.5% in the current fiscal year and 2024-25, respectively..</li></ul>

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<p><b>QUEEN MARGRETHE II OF DENMARK</b></p>	<p><b>Why in news:</b> Queen Margrethe II of Denmark, in her New Year’s speech, revealed her decision to abdicate the throne after 52 years of rule.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Her decision to abdicate the throne adds a new chapter to Denmark’s royal history, making way for her son, Crown Prince Frederik, to assume the responsibilities of the monarchy.</li> <li>• Denmark witnessed a historic moment on <b>January 14 as King Frederik X ascended the throne.</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>KYRGYZSTAN NEW NATIONAL SYMBOL</b></p>	<p><b>Why in news:</b> Kyrgyzstan has officially designated the snow leopard as its national symbol, showcasing a strong dedication to conservation and maintaining ecological harmony.</p>
<p><b>INDIA-NEPAL RELATIONS</b></p>	<p><b>Why in news:</b> Indian External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar concluded a two-day Nepal visit. The 7th India-Nepal Joint Commission meeting resulted in a significant pact: India will import 10,000 MW of hydroelectricity from Nepal over the next decade.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• India announced a financial package of Nepali <b>Rs 1,000 crore (USD 75 million) for rebuilding infrastructure in areas affected by the 2015 earthquake.</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>BANGLADESH'S PRIME MINISTER SHEIKH HASINA HAS BEEN RE-ELECTED FOR A FIFTH TERM</b></p>	<p><b>Why in news:</b> Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina's party Awami League has won the fourth consecutive term in the general elections of the country, while this is Hasina's fifth overall term as the prime minister of the country.</p>
<p><b>GABRIEL ATTAL AS THE NEW PRIME MINISTER OF FRANCE</b></p>	<p><b>Why in news:</b> French President Emmanuel Macron has made a significant political move by appointing <b>Gabriel Attal as the new prime minister of France.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At 34 years old, <b>Attal not only becomes the youngest prime minister in the country’s history but also the first openly gay official</b> to hold this prestigious position.</li> <li>• Departure of outgoing is Prime Minister Elisabeth Borne.</li> </ul>
<p><b>RAJNATH SINGH VISITS UK</b></p>	<p><b>Why in news:</b> Defence Minister Rajnath Singh is on a pivotal three-day visit to London, fostering high-level discussions on a range of defence, security, and industrial cooperation issues between India and the UK.</p>
<p><b>UKRAINE PEACE</b></p>	<p><b>Why in news:</b> Ukrainian President <b>Volodymyr Zelenskiy has secured Switzerland’s agreement</b> to host a global peace summit aimed at resolving the conflict sparked by</p>

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<b>SUMMIT</b>	Russia’s incursion into <b>Ukraine on Feb. 24, 2022.</b>
<b>SOUTH KOREA BANS EATING OF DOG MEAT</b>	<p><b>Why in news:</b> South Korea’s parliament made history <b>by passing a groundbreaking bill that bans the eating and selling of dog meat.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This move marks the end of a centuries-old practice that has been increasingly criticized in the face of growing support for animal welfare.</li> <li>• The breeding and slaughtering of dogs for human consumption will be punishable by up to three years in prison or a fine of 30 million won (\$22,800). Notably, the bill does not stipulate penalties for individuals consuming dog meat.</li> </ul>
<b>UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (UNDP)</b>	<p><b>Why in news:</b> The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the European Union (EU) have allocated grants totaling over <b>US\$420,000 (approximately 1.6 million PGK)</b> to support initiatives aimed at combating deforestation, improving food and nutrition security, and adapting to the impacts of climate change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These grants are set to benefit communities across six districts <b>in Enga Province, Papua New Guinea.</b></li> </ul>
<b>SOLAR POWER STATIONS INAUGURATED AT EGYPTIAN WORLD HERITAGE SITES</b>	<p><b>Why in News:</b> Manial Palace, the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, represented by the Supreme Council for Antiquities (SCA), in collaboration with the Industrial Modernization Center and the <b>United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Egypt, officially inaugurated solar power stations at five renowned Egyptian world heritage sites and museums.</b></p>
<b>19TH NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT (NAM)</b>	<p><b>Why in News:</b> The 19th Summit was decided to be <b>conducted in the capital of Uganda, Kampala at the 18th Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Summit held in Azerbaijan.</b></p> <p>The summit took place between 15th and 20th January 2024 at Speke Resort Munyonyo. Theme ‘Deepening Cooperation for Shared Global Affluence,.</p> <p><b>About NAM:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The NAM was established in 1961 in Belgrade, Yugoslavia through the initiative of President of Yugoslavia Josip Broz Tito, President of Egypt Gamal Abdel Nasser, Prime Minister of India Jawaharlal Nehru, President of Indonesia Sukarno, and</li> </ul>

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	President of Ghana Kwame Nkrumah.
<b>CABO VERDE ACHIEVES MALARIA-FREE CERTIFICATION BY WHO</b>	<p><b>Why in News:</b> Cabo Verde has been certified as <b>malaria-free by the World Health Organization</b>, becoming the third African nation to achieve this status.</p> <p>Cabo Verde’s certification adds to the list of 43 countries and 1 territory globally that have been recognized as ‘malaria-free’ by the WHO. Notable instances in the South East Asian region include the Maldives (2015) and Sri Lanka (2016), while India awaits such certification.</p>
<b>INDIA AIDS AFGHANISTAN</b>	<p><b>Why in News:</b> The Indian government supports Afghans in tackling locusts, providing 40,000 liters of <b>Malathion</b>, an eco-friendly pesticide effective in arid regions with minimal water usage.</p> <p>Molecular Formula : <b>C10H19O6PS2</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Malathion is an insecticide in the chemical family known as organophosphates. Products containing malathion are used outdoors to control a wide variety of insects in agricultural settings and around people's homes.</li> <li>• Malathion has also been used in public health mosquito control and fruit fly eradication programs.</li> </ul>
<b>CABINET APPROVAL FOR INDIA-OMAN IT COOPERATION MOU</b>	<p><b>Why in News:</b> The Union Cabinet chaired by <b>Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi was apprised of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)</b>, signed on 15th December, 2023, between the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology of the Sultanate of <b>Oman on cooperation in the field of Information Technology.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The MoU intends to promote <b>comprehensive cooperation between the Parties through mutual support, sharing of technologies</b>, information and investments in the field of Information Technology.</li> <li>• The MoU shall come into effect from the date of signature of the Parties and shall be remain in force <b>for a period of 3 years.</b></li> <li>• Both <b>G2G and B2B bilateral Cooperation</b> in the field of Information Technology will be enhanced.</li> <li>• MoU envisages <b>improved collaboration leading to employment opportunities in the field of IT.</b></li> </ul>

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## FRENCH PRESIDENT EMMANUEL MACRON : 75TH REPUBLIC DAY CELEBRATIONS

**Why in News** French President Emmanuel Macron concluded his two-day visit to India, participating as the chief guest in the 75th Republic Day celebrations. The visit aimed at strengthening strategic ties between India and France, featuring a 40-member delegation and significant diplomatic engagements.

### Key Announcements

- **Declaring 2026 as India-France Year of Innovation**
- Operationalisation of Unified Payment Interface (UPI) at Eiffel Tower
- Setting up a Solar Academy in Senegal under the STAR-C program of the International Solar Alliance
- Establishment of **India's Consulate in Marseille and French Bureau de France in Hyderabad**
- Operationalisation of the Young Professional Scheme under the Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement
- Operationalisation of **5-year validity Schengen Visa for Indian Masters alumni of French institutions**
- **Support to France for the United Nations Ocean Conference in Nice in 2025.**

## SAUDI ARABIA TO OPEN FIRST ALCOHOL STORE FOR DIPLOMATS

**Why in News** Saudi Arabia is preparing to open its **first alcohol store, exclusively for diplomats.**

- This significant development represents a notable shift in the Kingdom's approach to alcohol, which has traditionally been banned under its strict interpretation of Islamic law.
- However, in recent years, **Saudi Arabia has embarked on a series of socio-economic reforms under Vision 2030**, spearheaded by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. These reforms aim to modernize the Saudi economy and society, reducing its dependence on oil and opening up to more international norms.

## THE WORLD'S LARGEST SOURCE OF OPIUM

**Why in News: Myanmar has emerged as the world's largest source of opium in 2023, surpassing Afghanistan, according to a new report by the United Nations.**

- This shift is attributed to a third consecutive year of expanding cultivation fueled by Myanmar's civil war and a significant decline in opium cultivation in Afghanistan.
- Myanmar Capital: Naypyidaw

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Myanmar <b>Currency: Myanmar Kyat</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>AIRSTRIKES ON YEMEN'S HUTHI REBELS</b></p>	<p><b>Why in News:</b> In retaliation to Iran-backed Huthi rebels' assaults on Red Sea shipping, the US and UK executed airstrikes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Airstrike Targeted:</b> According to reports, the airstrikes by the US and UK on Yemen targeted an airbase, airports, and a military camp.</li> <li>• <b>The Red Sea Crisis:</b> It is part of the violent regional spillover of Israel's war with Hamas in the Palestinian enclave of Gaza.</li> <li>• In response to the Houthi attacks on ships in the Red Sea, the U.S. Secretary of <b>Defense announced the formation of <u>Operation Prosperity Guardian</u> in December 2023.</b></li> <li>• <b>About:</b> It is a multinational security mission to ensure safe transit through the Red Sea region, under the aegis of the <b>existing Combined Maritime Forces' Task Force 153.</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>MAERSK REVEALS WORLD'S LARGEST SHIP FUELED BY METHANOL</b></p>	<p><b>Why in News:</b> The <b>Ane Maersk</b> represents a bold leap into a greener future, boasting the title of the world's largest container vessel fueled by green methanol, a derivative of green hydrogen. This innovative propulsion system heralds a new era of eco-friendly maritime transportation.</p>
<p><b>MILITARY REGIMES OF NIGER, MALI, AND BURKINA FASO WITHDRAW FROM ECOWAS</b></p>	<p><b>Why in News:</b> The military regimes in <b>Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger</b> have announced their immediate withdrawal from the <b>Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)</b>, citing the bloc as a threat to member states.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The leaders of the three nations justified their withdrawal as a "<b>sovereign decision,</b>" criticizing ECOWAS for an "irrational and unacceptable posture" in imposing sanctions.</li> <li>• They formed an "<b>Alliance of Sahel States</b>" to strengthen their stance.</li> </ul> <p><b>ABOUT (ECOWAS)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ECOWAS, also known as CEDEAO in French, is a regional intergovernmental organization established <b>in 1975.</b></li> <li>• Created through the Lagos Treaty, ECOWAS aims to foster economic integration,</li> </ul>



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	<p>cooperation, and development among West African nations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Secretariat, <b>headquartered in Abuja, Nigeria.</b></li><li>• <b>Member States:</b></li><li>• ECOWAS consists of <b>15 member states:</b> Benin, <b>Burkina Faso</b>, Cape Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, <b>The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Senegal, and Togo.</b></li></ul>
<b>DENMARK ANNOUNCES ALLIANCE ON GREEN FUELS IN INDIA</b>	<p><b>Why in News:</b> Denmark has announced its <b>Green Fuels Alliance India (GFAI) initiative to boost collaborative efforts between the two countries</b> in the sustainable energy solutions sector and advance their joint global goal towards carbon neutrality.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The <b>green fuels sector, including green hydrogen</b>, by fostering innovation, collaboration, and partnerships</li><li>• It aligns with sustainability objectives under <b>the 2020 Green Strategic Partnership signed between the two nations.</b></li></ul>
<b>India-Mauritius</b>	<p><b>Why in News:</b> India has signed an agreement with Mauritius to jointly develop a <b>small satellite, which will be launched by ISRO in early 2024.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The cooperation will be between <b>ISRO and Mauritius Research and Innovation Council (MRIC) and total estimated project cost is Rs 20 crores borne by India.</b></li></ul>

## 2. NATIONAL NEWS

<b>FIRST ALL-GIRL SAINIK SCHOOL</b>	<p><b>Why in news:</b> Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated the first all-girl Sainik School in Vrindavan, Mathura district, Uttar Pradesh.</p> <p><b>About Samvid Gurukulam Girls Sainik School</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Samvid Gurukulam Girls Sainik School, <b>with a capacity of nearly 870 students, is part of a broader initiative to establish 100 new Sainik Schools across India in partnership with NGOs, private entities, and state governments.</b></li><li>• This initiative aligns with the objective of <b>increasing educational opportunities for girls aspiring to join the armed forces.</b></li></ul>
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### FIRST HINDU TEMPLE IN THE UAE

**Why in News:** Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** is scheduled to inaugurate the temple on **February 14** in **Abu Dhabi**.

- The BAPS Hindu Mandir, **located in the capital's Abu Mureikha area**, marks the **first Hindu temple in the UAE** and is anticipated to be **one of the largest** and most exquisite Hindu temples outside of India, as well as the largest in West Asia.
- BAPS stands for the **Bochasanwasi Shri Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha**. According to its website, it is a **"socio-spiritual Hindu faith with its roots in the vedas"** which was pioneered by **Bhagwan Swaminarayan (1781-1830)** in the late **18th century** and established in **1907** by **Shastriji Maharaj (1865-1951)**.

### MAHARISHI VALMIKI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

**Why in News:** PM Modi Unveils **Airport, Station Ahead Of Ram Temple Consecration In Ayodhya**.

- Ayodhya Airport Renamed As **'Maharishi Valmiki International Airport.'** reflecting the historical and cultural significance of the region.
- This state-of-the-art airport, developed at a **cost of over Rs 1450 crore in its first phase**, signifies a pivotal milestone in Ayodhya's infrastructural development.
- With a **sprawling terminal area of 6500 sqm**, the airport boasts a capacity to cater to around 10 lakh passengers annually.
- Redevelopment of **Ayodhya Dham Railway Station**--PM Modi marked the completion of **Phase I of the project, which incurred a cost of over ₹240 crore**.

### 'FIRST OIL PRODUCTION' IN KRISHNA-GODAVARI BASIN

**Why in News:** ONGC begins **'first oil production'** from deep-water block in **Krishna-Godavari basin**.

- Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) commenced its **'first oil production'** from the **deep-water KG-DWN 98/2 Block in the Krishna Godavari (KG) basin** off the Bay of Bengal on **the Kakinada coast on January 7**.
- The block is **approximately 25 km from the coastline**.
- The peak production of the 98/2 field is expected to be around 45,000 barrels of oil per day and over **10 Million Metric Standard Cubic Metres per Day (MMSCMD) of gas**.
- The block will help increase **ONGC's total production of oil and natural gas by 11% and 15% respectively**; peak production of the field is expected to be around 45,000

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barrels of oil per day and over 10 MMSCMD of gas.

**Why in News** The Inland Waterways Authority of India, under the Ministry of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways (MoPSW), is set to host the inaugural 'Inland Waterways Development Council' meeting on January 8, 2023, in Kolkata.

- Shri Sarbananda Sonowal, will also unveil groundbreaking initiatives, including "Harit Nauka – Guidelines for Green Transition of Inland Vessels" and the "River Cruise Tourism Roadmap 2047,"
- Ministry has set a **bold objective to elevate** the modal share of **Inland Water Transportation (IWT) from the current 2% to 5%**, aligning with the goals outlined in the **Maritime India Vision 2030**.
- In the state of West Bengal, the **Sagarmala Programme** is actively driving maritime development with **62 projects valued at Rs. 16,300 Crores**.

### FIRST HEALTHY AND HYGIENIC FOOD STREET

**Why in news:** Union Health Minister **Dr Mansukh Mandaviya** recently inaugurated 'Prasadam,' the nation's first healthy and hygienic food street, in a grand ceremony at Neelkanth Van, Mahakal Lok, Ujjain, and Madhya Pradesh.

- The 'PRASADAM' initiative aims to connect common citizens across the nation with pure and safe local and traditional food.
- "The DART Book" by FSSAI for at-home food adulteration tests was released, emphasizing the importance of food safety.

### WINGS INDIA 2024

**Why in news:** Hyderabad's Begumpet Airport is set to host the aviation extravaganza, **Wings India 2024, from January 18 to 21**, marking the country's most significant civil aviation event.

- Jointly organized by the **Ministry of Civil Aviation (MOCA) and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Indian Industry (FICCI)**, this four-day biennial spectacle promises to be a showcase of cutting-edge aviation technology and machinery.
- Union Minister for Civil Aviation **Shri Jyotiraditya M Scindia** inaugurated **Wings**

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	<p><b>India 2024, Asia's largest aviation expo</b>, at Begumpet Airport in Hyderabad.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The inauguration saw several key announcements, including <b>the release of a joint knowledge paper on civil aviation by FICCI and KPMG, and the launch of UDAN 5.3.</b></li><li>• The <b>theme: "Connecting India to the World in Amrit Kaal: Setting the Stage for India Civil Aviation @2047"</b>.</li></ul>
<p><b>PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI INAUGURATES THE 27TH NATIONAL YOUTH FESTIVAL IN NASHIK</b></p>	<p><b>Why in news:</b> Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the <b>National Youth Festival at Nashik, Maharashtra on January 12, 2024.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The theme of the National Youth Festival this year is <b>"MYBharat-Viksit Bharat@2047- By the Youth, For the Youth "</b>.</li><li>• Dedicating the event to Swami Vivekananda, an emblem of India's dynamic youth power, whose <b>birth anniversary is annually celebrated as National Youth Day</b></li><li>• The National Youth Festival in India is an annual gathering of youth with various activities including competitive ones.</li><li>• Celebrated to commemorate the birth anniversary of youth icon Swami Vivekananda, it is organized by <b>the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.</b></li><li>• Government of India in collaboration with one of the State Governments. Thus, it is held in collaboration with <b>a different state/UT during National Youth Week, 12 to 16 January, every year.</b></li></ul>
<p><b>INDIA TO HOST YEAR-LONG 'RAMAYAN' FESTIVAL FROM DELHI</b></p>	<p><b>Why in News: India To Host Year-long 'Ramayan' Festival From Delhi</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The festival is scheduled to commence from <b>Delhi's historic Purana Qila (Old Fort) on January 18 and will traverse various cities such as Lucknow, Ayodhya, and Varanasi.</b></li><li>• India aims to transcend borders with this festival by involving <b>seven neighboring countries, including Cambodia, Malaysia, Laos, Thailand, and Sri Lanka.</b></li><li>• <b>The "Year of Connecting the World Through Ramayana"</b></li></ul>
<p><b>NATIONAL ACADEMY OF CUSTOMS, INDIRECT TAXES &amp; NARCOTICS (NACIN)</b></p>	<p><b>Why in news:</b> Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the new campus of the <b>National Academy of Customs, Indirect Taxes &amp; Narcotics (NACIN) at Palasamudram in Andhra Pradesh's Sri Sathya Sai district.</b></p>

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<b>5TH EDITION OF THE MEGHALAYA GAME</b>	<p><b>Why in news:</b> On January 15, 2024, the President of India, Smt Droupadi Murmu, inaugurated the 5th Edition of the Meghalaya Games in Tura, Meghalaya.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>In her address, the President highlighted the tremendous potential for the development of sports and sportspersons in the <b>North East region, citing its rich tradition of a strong sports culture.</b></li></ul>
<b>FARSI AS ONE OF THE NINE CLASSICAL LANGUAGES OF INDIA</b>	<p><b>Why in news:</b> "The government of India has decided to include Farsi as one of the nine classical languages of India in our New Education Policy," said Jaishankar, highlighting the cultural, literary, and linguistic connections between Iran and India.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>As of now, India recognizes six languages as classical, including <b>Tamil (2004), Sanskrit (2005), Kannada (2008), Telugu (2008), Malayalam (2013), and Odia (2014).</b></li><li>In addition to these classical languages <b>Pali, Persian, and Prakrit</b> and their works of literature are to be <b>preserved according to India's National Education Policy-2020.</b></li><li>The addition of <b>Farsi (Persian)</b> brings the total to nine classical languages.</li></ul>
<b>ARTIFICIAL REEF PROJECT</b>	<p><b>Why in news:</b> Union Fisheries Minister Parshottam Rupala inaugurated <b>an artificial reef project in Vizhinjam, Kerala.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The project is designed to <b>boost fishery resources in the region</b>, thus improving the livelihood of traditional fishermen.</li><li>The Kerala State Coastal Development Corporation, with technical assistance from the <b>Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI)</b>, is overseeing the project.</li><li>The project will deploy <b>6,300 artificial reef units across 42 fishing villages from Pozhiyoor to Varkala in Thiruvananthapuram district.</b></li></ul>
<b>CENTRAL</b>	<p><b>Why in news:</b> The 63rd gathering of the <b>Central Geological Programming Board (CGPB)</b> took place in Bhopal, <b>Madhya Pradesh, with Shri V.L. Kantha Rao, Secretary of the Ministry of Mines, presiding.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>The portal utilizes cutting-edge technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI) &amp; Machine</b></li></ul>

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<b>GEOLOGICAL PROGRAMMING BOARD (CGPB)</b>	<p>Learning (ML) for enhanced mineral exploration.</p> <p><b>About Geological Survey of India:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>The Geological Survey of India (GSI) is a scientific agency.</b></li><li>• It is <b>one of the oldest of such organisations in the world and the second oldest survey in India after Survey of India (founded in 1767).</b></li><li>• GSI, <b>headquartered at Kolkata</b>, has six Regional offices <b>located at Lucknow, Jaipur, Nagpur, Hyderabad, Shillong and Kolkata.</b></li><li>• Presently, Geological Survey of India is an attached office <b>to the Ministry of Mines.</b></li></ul>
<b>GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESERVATION POLICY</b>	<p><b>Why in news:</b> The controversial draft <b>‘Guidelines for Implementation of the Reservation Policy’ were released by the UGC in December 2023.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• They <b>proposed de-reserving vacant reserved category seats in higher education institutions after reasonable efforts to fill them.</b></li><li>• Recently, the Ministry of Education responded on its official Twitter handle to clarify that there has been no change in the reservation policy for central educational institutions. <b>“After enactment of this Act, no reserved post is to be de-reserved. Ministry of Education has given directives to all the CEIs to fill up the vacancies strictly as per the 2019 ACT,”</b> the ministry tweeted.</li></ul>
<b>INDIA’S FIRST GRAPHENE CENTRE</b>	<p><b>Why in news:</b> MeitY Secretary S Krishnan inaugurated the <b>India Innovation Centre for Graphene (IICG) and a Centre of Excellence (CoE) in Intelligent Internet of Things (IIoT) Sensors in Kerala.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Digital University Kerala (DUK) (formerly IIITMK) and CMET, Thrissur, play crucial roles as technical partners in establishing these pioneering centers.</li></ul>
<b>PM INITIATES 8 AMRUT PROJECTS</b>	<p><b>Why in news:</b> PM Modi made history <b>in Solapur, Maharashtra, with 8 AMRUT projects and 90,000 houses under PMAY-Urban.</b> 10,000 beneficiaries received PM-SVANIDHI benefits.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In a significant stride towards urban rejuvenation, <b>Prime Minister Modi kickstarted eight AMRUT projects, collectively valued at around Rs. 2,000 crores.</b></li><li>• These projects aim to <b>enhance infrastructure, utilities, and overall living standards in Solapur, Maharashtra.</b></li><li>• Ensuring economic security for the poor, the Prime Minister outlined various life</li></ul>

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	<p>insurance schemes, providing a <b>Rs. 2 lakh cover for accidents and life insurance. He revealed that Rs. 16,000 crores</b> have been disbursed in the form of insurance to support poor families in times of need.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The <b>Asia Book of Records and India Book of Records acknowledged this remarkable feat</b>, cementing the team's place in the annals of achievement.</li></ul>
<b>REPUBLIC DAY PARADE 2024</b>	<p><b>Why in news:</b> The Republic Day Parade 2024 witnessed a remarkable tableau that captured the essence of India as the 'Mother of Democracy.'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• This stunning representation not only enthralled the audience but also clinched the first spot in the parade, symbolizing India's rich democratic heritage.</li><li>• <b>The tableau of the Ministry of Culture has secured the first prize at the Republic Day Parade 2024.</b></li><li>• First: <b>Odisha's tableau, themed "Woman Empowerment in Viksit Bharat," showcased the state's commitment to women's progress.</b></li><li>• Second: <b>Gujarat's "Dhordo: A Global Icon of Gujarat's Border Tourism" tableau highlighted the state's border tourism.</b></li><li>• Third: <b>Tamil Nadu's "Kudavolai System in Ancient Tamil Nadu – Mother of Democracy" tableau depicted the region's ancient democratic system.</b></li><li>• Ministries/Departments Category:</li><li>• The Ministry of Culture won with their tableau</li><li>• "Bharat: Mother of Democracy," celebrating India's democratic heritage.</li><li>• A special prize was awarded to the Central Public Works Department for their tableau "<b>Central Vista – Viksit Bharat Ka Pratibimb,</b>" and a special memento was given to the 'Vande Bharatam' dance group.</li></ul>
<b>CLEAN CITY AWARDS 2023</b>	<p><b>Why in news:</b> <b>Surat in Gujarat and Indore in Madhya Pradesh</b> have been jointly recognized as the cleanest cities in India at the Union Urban Affairs Ministry's annual Clean City Awards 2023.</p>

## Swachh Survekshan awards 2023



Indore and Surat were declared the joint cleanest cities of India as part of the Swachh Survekshan Awards. A look at the highlights

### TOP 10 CITIES

Rank Urban local body, State

- 1 Indore, Madhya Pradesh
- 1 Surat, Gujarat
- 3 Navi Mumbai, Maharashtra
- 4 Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh
- 5 Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh
- 6 Vijaywada, Andhra Pradesh
- 7 New Delhi (NDMC), Delhi
- 8 Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh
- 9 Greater Hyderabad, Telangana
- 10 Pune, Maharashtra

### BOTTOM 3

Rank ULB, State

- 1 Kolkata, West Bengal
- 2 Asansol, West Bengal
- 3 Haora, West Bengal

### TOP STATES

Rank State No of ULBs

- 1 Maharashtra 411
- 2 Madhya Pradesh 378
- 3 Chhattisgarh 169

### THE MOST IMPROVED

#### PANAJI, GOA

Fastest moving city with population of over 100,000

#### NOWROZABAD, MP

Fastest moving city with population less than 100,000

- Maharashtra secured the top position among states in the annual cleanliness rankings for urban areas.
- **Swachh Survekshan, initiated by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) in 2016**, serves as a competitive framework to promote urban sanitation improvements and citizen participation.
- Over time, Swachh Survekshan has grown to become the world's largest urban sanitation survey.
- **Themes: The 2023 survey focused on the theme "Waste to Wealth," while the upcoming 2024 survey will emphasize "Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle."**

### STAPLE FOOD STORES

**Why in news:** The Indian government launches a groundbreaking initiative to establish subsidized **staple food stores at Delhi metro stations, starting with Rajiv Chowk.**

- The establishment and operation of this store will be overseen by the National Cooperative Consumer Federation of India (NCCF).
- Collaborative effort, **NCCF will partner with the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation for**



this pilot project.

## 3. SCHEMES – MINISTRIES & STATES

**PRITHVI (PRITHVI VIGYAN)**

**Why in news:** The Indian government, under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has launched an ambitious initiative named **PRITHVI (PRITHvi Vlgyan)**, a comprehensive scheme by the Ministry of Earth Sciences. With a significant budget of Rs. 4,797 crore, the program spans from 2021-26.

- The scheme encompasses **five ongoing sub-schemes** namely “Atmosphere & Climate Research-Modelling Observing Systems & Services (ACROSS)”, “Ocean Services, Modelling Application, Resources and Technology (O-SMART)”, “Polar Science and Cryosphere Research (PACER)”, “Seismology and Geosciences (SAGE)” and “Research, Education, Training and Outreach (REACHOUT)”.

**PRERANA: AN EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING PROGRAM**

**Why in news:** The Department of School Education & Literacy, Ministry of Education, proudly presents Prerana: An Experiential Learning program.

- This unique initiative aims to empower students of classes **IX to XII with leadership** qualities and provide them with a meaningful, unique, and inspiring experience.

**PAiSA Dashboard & PM SVANidhi**

**Why in news:** Street Vendors Get a Boost: PAiSA Dashboard & PM SVANidhi Portal Launched

- **PAiSA Dashboard:** This online platform provides real-time updates on the progress of the PM SVANidhi Mission scheme. Vendors can track loan applications, disbursements, and repayments at their fingertips, fostering transparency and accountability.
- **PM SVANidhi Mission Monitoring Portal:** This dedicated portal offers comprehensive data and insights on the scheme’s nationwide implementation. Stakeholders, including government officials, lenders, and street vendor associations, can access valuable information to monitor progress, identify challenges, and ensure effective execution.

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<b>'PRADHANMANTRI SURYODAYA YOJANA</b>	<p><b>Why in news:</b> PM Modi Launches Sunrise Scheme To Install Solar Panels In 10 Million Households</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• PM Narendra Modi unveils '<b>Pradhanmantri Suryodaya Yojana,</b>' a transformative initiative fostering energy self-reliance and benefiting the common citizens of India.</li><li>• '<b>Pradhan Mantri Suryodaya Yojana</b>' under which one crore households will get rooftop solar across the nation.</li><li>• '<b>Pradhan Mantri Suryodaya Yojana</b>' under which one crore households will get rooftop solar across the nation. REC Ltd aims to increase its renewable energy loan portfolio to <b>Rs 300,000 crore by 2030, with a current sanctioned amount of about Rs 125,000 crore.</b></li></ul>
<b>CASUAL WORKERS</b>	<p><b>Why in news:</b> Insurance Cover for Casual Workers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The approved scheme is set to provide a significant <b>INR 10 lakh (\$13,500) to the families of casual paid labourers</b> in the unfortunate event of their death.</li></ul>
<b>PM-JANMAN SCHEME</b>	<p><b>Why in news:</b> PM Modi Releases <b>First Instalment of PM-JANMAN Scheme</b> for Pucca Homes uplifting <b>Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)</b>, Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to release ₹540 crore, the inaugural tranche of funding, for <b>pucca homes under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G) on January 15.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• This disbursement, part of the recently <b>launched PM-JANMAN package, aims to foster the comprehensive development of PVTG habitations.</b></li></ul>
<b>E-SAKSHI MOBILE APPLICATION</b>	<p><b>Why in news:</b> The launch of the <b>e-SAKSHI mobile application</b> marks a significant advancement in the administration of the <b>Member of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS) in India.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• This digital initiative, spearheaded by the Union Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) <b>aims to transform the way MPs engage in and manage development projects within their constituencies.</b></li></ul>
<b>MULYA PRAVAH 2.0</b>	<p><b>Why in news:</b> <b>Mulya Pravah 2.0: UGC's New Directive for Ethical Education in India</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The main objective of this revised guideline is to instill human values and professional ethics in higher education institutions across India.</li><li>• It aims to create a <b>culture of integrity, accountability, and transparency within</b></li></ul>

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	these institutions.
<b>YUVA NIDHI</b>	<p><b>Why in new: 'Yuva Nidhi' Scheme Launched For Jobless Youth In Shivamogga, Karnataka</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Launched at <b>Freedom Park in Shivamogga</b>, this initiative aims to provide unemployment assistance to graduates and diploma holders who completed their degrees during the academic year 2022-23.</li><li>• The government has committed to providing <b>Rs 3,000 per month to degree holders and Rs 1,500 per month to diploma holders</b> who have been unable to secure employment in the last six months and are not pursuing higher studies.</li></ul>
<b>THE BORDER ROADS ORGANISATION (BRO)</b>	<p><b>Why in news: India's Defence Minister, Rajnath Singh</b>, has recently approved a groundbreaking scheme aimed at <b>providing insurance cover to casual workers employed by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO)</b>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The scheme is expected to offer financial security and welfare to the families of casual paid labourers who play a crucial role in building infrastructure in the country's farthest frontiers.</li></ul>

### 4. SUMMITS

<b>RECENTS SUMMITS</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) The 10th edition of the <b>Vibrant Gujarat Global Investors Summit (VGGS)</b> is set to take place in <b>Gandhinagar from January 10 to 12, 2024</b>. The theme for this edition is <b>"Gateway to the Future."</b></li><li>2) Czech Republic's Prime Minister <b>Petr Fiala</b>, Timor-Leste's President <b>José Ramos-Horta</b>, UAE's President <b>Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan</b>, and Mozambique's President <b>Filipe Nyusi</b> are expected to attend.</li><li>3) Anurag Thakur attends youth dialogue program on theme <b>'My Bharat Mera Yuva Bharat'</b> at <b>Malala Auditorium in Diu</b>.</li><li>4) Union Minister Piyush Goyal launched the logo for <b>"Bharat Mobility Global Expo 2024"</b> in <b>New Delhi</b>, emphasizing India's innovative approach.</li><li>5) Amit Shah <b>Inaugurates 58th DGsP/IGsP Conference 2023 at Rajasthan International Centre, Jaipur</b>, bringing together top law enforcement officers and over 500 police officers in a hybrid mode.</li></ol>
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- 6) An orientation session was conducted **for the Swayampurna Mitras of Goa at the Directorate of Accounts, Porvorim**, today, 01 January, in view of the upcoming **International Purple Fest Goa - 2024**, which is slated to take place from 8 to 13 January 2024.
- The primary objective of the meeting was **to apprise the Swayampurna Mitras** about the significance of the fest, which is designed as a platform for individuals with disabilities to exhibit their capabilities and talents.
  - The **International Purple Fest aims to host various sessions tailored to different types of disabilities**, offering guidance on effectively managing challenges. Moreover, specialized sessions have been planned for parents of disabled individuals, providing invaluable guidance on care-giving.
- 7) The nation is set to chair the UNESCO World Heritage Committee and **host its 46th session in New Delhi from July 21 to 31, 2024**.
- This significant announcement was **made by Vishal V Sharma, India's Permanent Representative to UNESCO**, on January 9, underlining the nation's growing influence and commitment to global cultural and natural heritage conservation.
- 8) The **54th annual meeting of the World Economic Forum (WEF)** kicked off on January 15, embracing a **'back to basics' ethos at the local Swiss Alpine School in Davos**, lasting until January 19, 2024.
- Key focus areas include addressing rising geopolitical tensions, fostering cooperation, creating a new economic framework for growth and jobs, **harnessing AI's potential, and formulating a long-term strategy for climate and energy**.
- 9) India introduces the **"Global Good-Gender Equity and Equality Alliance" at the World Economic Forum**.
- WEF Founder and Chairman Klaus Schwab has pledged full support to India's initiative, **designating WEF as a "Network Partner" and Invest India as an "Institutional Partner."**
- 10) Prime Minister Narendra Modi kickstarted **the Commonwealth Legal Education Association (CLEA) – Commonwealth Attorneys and Solicitors General Conference (CASGC) 2024 at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi, focusing on Cross-Border Challenges in Justice Delivery**.

## 5. STATE NEWS

### GUJARAT

- 1) The **Gujarat government**, in partnership with **Mazgaon Dock Limited**, is set to **pioneer India's first-ever submarine tourism project at Dwarka, exploring marine wonders around Bet Dwarka.**
  - Bet Dwarka is believed to house a **submerged city created by Lord Krishna himself.** The submarine, weighing approximately **35 tonnes**, is designed to **accommodate 30 passengers.**
- 2) **Gujarat Sets Guinness Record In Mass Surya Namaskar**
  - The state hosted the **largest simultaneous Surya Namaskar performance**, involving over **4,000 participants from 108** locations across 51 categories.
- 3) The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment's Department for Persons with Disabilities **hosted 'Divya Kala Mela' in Surat, Gujarat, from December 29, 2023, to January 7, 2024.**
  - The primary objective of the 'Divya Kala Mela' is to contribute to **the economic empowerment** of Persons with Disabilities (PwD)/Divyangjan.
- 4) Ahead of the 10th edition of Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit, the state government **inked 58 more MoUs with companies expressing intention to invest Rs 7.12 lakh crore** with a potential to generate 3.70 lakh employment opportunities in various sectors in Gujarat, an official statement said.
  - The 10th Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit (VGGs) will be organised in Gandhinagar from January 10 to 12.
- 5) **Simmtech, a South Korean firm**, announced its plans to set up a manufacturing plant in **Sanand, Gujarat.** With an investment of **Rs 1,250 crore**, **Simmtech** aims to contribute to the creation of a robust semiconductor ecosystem in the state.
- 6) Shanghai's **New Development Bank (NDB) commits a substantial \$500 million loan for Gujarat's Mukhayamantri Gram Sadak Yojana** during the Vibrant Gujarat Summit.

### TAMIL NADU

- 1) Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone for a slew of development projects worth over **Rs 20,000 crore in Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu**.
  - The projects encompass various sectors, **including rail connectivity, roads, oil and gas, and shipping, and are poised** to contribute significantly to the state's progress.
- 2) PM Narendra Modi inaugurated the **Rs 400 crore for** Demonstration Fast Reactor Fuel Reprocessing Plant at the Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research (IGCAR), Kalpakkam, to the nation.
  - This facility is a significant step towards advancing India's nuclear capabilities, designed to reprocess fuel from Prototype **Fast Breeder Reactors (PFBR)**.
  - **Bharatiya Nabhikiya Vidyut Nigam Ltd (BHAVINI), based in Kalpakkam**, is at the forefront of this initiative. BHAVINI is currently setting up the PFBR and has plans for two additional fast reactors in the future
  - Significant milestones include the filling of the **main vessel with 1.15 tons of liquid sodium last August**.
- 3) The Tamil Nadu government, led by **Chief Minister MK Stalin, revealed its ambitious vision for the state to achieve a \$1 trillion economy by 2030** during the Global Investors Meet in Chennai on January 7
- 4) Tamil Nadu commenced the **Jallikattu competition in Avaniyapuram, Madurai district**. **Jallikattu** is a highlight of the Pongal harvest festival held in the second week of January.
- 5) Jallikattu, a bull-taming sport, traces its roots back to around 2,000 years, showcasing a deep-seated connection to the cultural fabric of Tamil Nadu. Initially conducted as a means to select suitable bridegrooms, the event has evolved into a symbol of valor and tradition.

### MAHARASHTRA

- 1) The **Maharashtra government** has declared a **new wildlife habitat for the 'canid' wild dogs family in Sangli**, as '**Atpadi Conservation Reserve**', which is among the smallest at 9.48 sq. kms, officials said here.
  - The new reserve in the lush green western Maharashtra will help preserve the habitat of wolves, jackals, foxes and hyenas in the area, besides other mammals like deer, civets, rabbits and more that abound in the region.

- Location and Connectivity: The Atpadi Conservation Reserve is situated in the forest land of Sangli district. It forms a crucial ecological bridge, **connecting the Maini Conservation Area in the west with the Maldhok Bird Sanctuary in the northeast.** This connectivity is vital for the movement and genetic diversity of wildlife in the region.
- 2) Mumbai Trans Harbour Link (MTHL) Inaugurated**
- The project costs a total of ₹17,843 crore (US\$2.2 billion). The bridge has a capacity to handle **70,000 vehicles per day.** Construction on the bridge began in April 2018, and was inaugurated by Prime Minister **Narendra Modi on 12 January 2024.**
  - Marking the opening of India's longest sea bridge to date.
  - The **21.8-kilometer link built** which aims to **reduce travel time between South Mumbai and Navi Mumbai from 120 minutes to just 20 minutes.**
- 3) Pench Tiger Reserve in Maharashtra has made history by securing recognition as India's inaugural Dark Sky Park, marking its position as the fifth in Asia.**
- The International Union for Conservation of Nature, recognizing the intrinsic value of the night sky as a natural, cultural, and historical resource, played a pivotal role in conferring this distinction.
  - The Reserve is located in the southern reaches of **the Satpura hills in the Seoni and Chhindwara districts in Madhya Pradesh** and **continues in Nagpur district in Maharashtra as a separate Sanctuary.**
  - The area of the Pench Tiger Reserve and the surrounding area is the real story area of Rudyard **Kipling's famous "The Jungle Book."**
  - India has nominated the 'Maratha Military Landscapes' for inclusion in the UNESCO World Heritage List for the 2024-25 cycle. This significant move by the Culture Ministry highlights the exceptional fortification and military systems envisioned by the Maratha rulers.
- 4) Understanding the Maratha Military Landscapes:** The 'Maratha Military Landscapes of India' comprise twelve components, including Salher Fort, Shivneri Fort, Lohgad, Khanderi Fort, Raigad, Rajgad, Pratapgad, Suvarnadurg, Panhala Fort, Vijay Durg, Sindhudurg, and Gingee Fort. These structures, dating back to the 17th and 19th centuries, span across Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu, showcasing the strategic

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military prowess of the Maratha rule.

### UTTAR PRADESH

- 1) Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath inaugurated **the state's first floating air-conditioned restaurant during his visit to Sangam City.**
  - The restaurant, managed by the Uttar Pradesh State Tourism Development Corporation (UPSTDC).
- 2) Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently inaugurated the **Integrated Industrial Township in Greater Noida (IITGN)**, a smart township spread over 750 acres.
  - The **Rs 1,700 crore project aims to compete with the world's best manufacturing hubs** by providing all necessary industrial infrastructure and facilities.
- 3) Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated projects worth **Rs 19,100 crores in Bulandshahr, spanning rail, road, oil, and urban development.**

### KERALA

- 1) **Suchetha Satish, a 16-year-old prodigy, mesmerized the audience at the Indian Consulate Auditorium in Dubai during the Concert for Climate.** The event was part of the COP 28 summit, attended by representatives from over 140 nations, emphasizing the global significance of her achievement.
  - **Suchetha Satish, a Kerala teen, made history at the Concert for Climate in Dubai, setting a Guinness World Record by singing in an impressive 140 languages, showcasing her extraordinary musical talent.**
- 2) The Kerala Drug Control Department has taken a proactive step to combat the growing threat of **antimicrobial resistance (AMR) through Operation Amrith (Antimicrobial Resistance Intervention For Total Health).**
- 3) This initiative aims to curb the overuse of antibiotics in the state by conducting surprise raids in **pharmacies and detecting over-the-counter (OTC) sales of antibiotics without a doctor's prescription.**



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### ODISHA

- 1) Recently, **Odisha** announced the **world's first exclusive melanistic tiger** safari adjoining **the Similipal Tiger Reserve**. The aim is to boost tourism and allow better research and public viewing access to these rare tigers that are hard to sight in forests.
- 2) Odisha Chief Minister Naveen **Patnaik recently unveiled the Shree Mandir Parikrama Prakalpa (SMPP), a large development project around Puri's 12th century Shree Jagannath Temple**. The project aims to transform Puri into a world-class heritage destination for pilgrims
- 3) On **January 9, Odisha's Chief Minister**, Naveen Patnaik, achieved a significant milestone with the inauguration of the **Malkangiri airport in the southwestern region of the state**.
  - Situated over **233 acres in the Katelguda area of Goudaguda panchayat**, Malkangiri airport was established at a cost of **INR 70 crore**.
- 4) **The National Chilika Birds Festival, a hallmark event in Odisha's calendar, commenced with grandeur on January 26.**

### PUNJAB

- **Punjab becomes 1st state to map all accident-prone sites, Mappls app alerts users**
- This initiative comes as part of the preparations for the launch of Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann's flagship project, the '**Sadak Suraksha Force**'. the Punjab Police has teamed up with MapMyIndia to integrate real-time traffic updates and alerts into the Mappls App.

### WEST BENGAL

- 1) West Bengal has successfully obtained Geographical Indication (GI) tags for several products under the National GI Drive Mission.
  - **Recognition of Sunderbans Honey – 'Mouban'**: The coveted GI tag has been granted to Sunderbans honey, locally known as 'Mouban,' collected by the 'Mouli' community.
  - **Black Nunia Rice – 'Prince of Rice'**: Hailing from Jalpaiguri district, Black Nunia rice, known as the 'Prince of Rice,' has earned its GI tag. This indigenous rice variety adds to the agricultural richness of the state.
  - **Distinctive Sarees – Tangail, Gorod, and Kadiyal**: West Bengal Forest Development Corporation Limited (WBFDC) applied for the GI tag for Tangail, Gorod, and Kadiyal

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	<p>sarees, reflecting the rich textile heritage of the region. Mirzapur in Murshidabad district is renowned for producing exclusive Kadiyal sarees.</p> <p>2) West Bengal Chief Minister <b>Mamata Banerjee</b> has recently introduced a <b>comprehensive social welfare scheme named “Yogyasree.”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The initiative aims to provide free training modules for <b>Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST) students in West Bengal, specifically targeting entrance and competitive examinations.</b></li></ul> <p>3) <b>Ganga Sagar Mela</b> Held annually in Sagardwip, West Bengal, this magnificent fair has earned the distinction of being the second most popular mela <b>in the country, surpassed only by the revered Kumbh Mela.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Champai Soren</b> has been announced as the next Chief Minister of Jharkhand, following the resignation of Hemant Soren.</li></ul>
<b>CHHATTISGARH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Chhattisgarh Government</b> will launch the free <b>Ramlala Darshan Scheme, a pilgrimage to the newly built Ram Temple at Ayodhya.</b></li><li>• The state will send around 20,000 residents to Ayodhya for darshan of Shri Ramlala every year.</li></ul>
<b>ASSAM</b>	<p>1) Assam prepares for the 5th '<b>Gunotsav 2024,</b>' a state-wide assessment to evaluate 40 lakh students, enhancing education quality and learning outcomes in government schools. <b>Gunotsav'</b> emphasizes active participation from all stakeholders, including teachers, students, administrators, and local communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• This holistic engagement is <b>expected to foster accountability and contribute to an overall enhancement of the quality of education in Assam.</b></li></ul> <p>2) After a hiatus of nine years, Moh-Juj, the traditional buffalo fights, have made a comeback in Assam.</p> <p>3) The Assam Government's approval, along with strict Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), ensures a balance between cultural preservation and animal welfare.</p> <p>4) The tradition of <b>Moh-Juj</b> was <b>suspended in 2015 following the Supreme Court's ban</b> on similar events like <b>Jallikattu in Tamil Nadu.</b> The ban was primarily due to concerns regarding animal cruelty.</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>
<b>HIMACHAL PRADESH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In a progressive move aligning with the National Education Policy (NEP)-2020, the state of Himachal Pradesh has unveiled the ambitious <b>‘My School-My Pride’ campaign under the ‘Apna Vidyalay’ programme.</b></li> <li>• This initiative is set to revolutionize the quality of education in government schools, providing a holistic approach to student growth and development.</li> </ul>
<b>LAKSHADWEEP ISLANDS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated <b>projects worth ₹1,156 crore</b> during his visit to the Lakshadweep islands.</li> <li>• Among these projects is the Kochi-Lakshadweep Islands Submarine Optical Fibre Cable, a <b>₹1,072-crore initiative providing 100 Gbps internet connectivity to the islands.</b></li> <li>•</li> </ul>
<b>JHARKHAND</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jharkhand's CM, Hemant Soren, reduces old-age pension age from 60 to 50. The decision primarily targets tribals and Dalits, lowering the age threshold from 60 to 50 years. This bold initiative aims to provide financial support to a broader segment of the population, acknowledging the specific challenges faced by these communities.</li> </ul>
<b>NAGALAND</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The three-day International Camel Festival kicked off with great fervor in the culturally rich district of Bikaner, Rajasthan.</b></li> </ul>
<b>KOLKATA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The vibrant hues of oranges and the aroma of citrus filled the air as the 4th edition of the Rüsoma Orange Festival unfolded in the picturesque village of Rüsoma, nestled in the Kohima district in Nagaland.</li> </ul>
<b>ANDHRA PRADESH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Andhra Pradesh government <b>is set to unveil the world’s tallest statue of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar at Vijayawada.</b></li> <li>• Named the <b>‘Statue of Social Justice,’</b> stands at an impressive <b>height of 206 feet, making it one of the top 50 tallest statues globally, with Sardar Vallabhai Patel’s ‘Statue of Unity’</b> claiming the top spot.</li> <li>• The YS Jagan Mohan Reddy government in Andhra Pradesh has initiated a comprehensive <b>caste census</b>, marking the state’s commitment to understanding and addressing the complex caste dynamics within its population</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Andhra Pradesh Initiates Caste Census, Second Only To Bihar.</b></li> </ul>
LADAKH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The vibrant <b>Mamani Ethnic Food Festival of Purig</b>, held annually at Heritage Village Styangkung Barsoo, stands as a triumphant celebration of culinary diversity, cultural heritage, and community unity.</li> <li>• Organized by the <b>Himalayan Cultural Heritage Foundation</b> in collaboration with <b>Nyarpa Committee Styangkung</b>, this annual festival has become a cornerstone in preserving and reviving the rich traditions of the <b>Ladakh region</b>.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>

### 6. DEFENCE AND SPACE

DEFENCE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT ORGANISATION (DRDO)	<p><b>Why in news:</b> India's Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) commemorated its <b>66th Foundation Day on January 1, 2024</b>, marking a significant journey of innovation and self-reliance in the country's defense sector.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DRDO stands for Defence Research and Development Organisation. It was established in 1958 by the Government of India, under the Ministry of Defence</li> <li>• With a project in 1960 on Surface-to-Air Missiles (SAM), <b>the Project Indigo was the DRDO's first major defence project</b>. This project was discontinued without any success.</li> <li>• Headquarters <b>DRDO Bhavan, New Delhi</b></li> <li>• Motto "<b>Strength's Origin is in Science</b>"</li> <li>• Sanskrit: <b>बलस्य मूलं विज्ञानम्</b></li> <li>• DRDO Chairman <b>Dr. Samir V Kamat</b></li> <li>• 1st chairman: <b>Daulat Singh Kothari (1948–1961)</b></li> </ul>
'DESERT CYCLONE 2024'	<p><b>Why in news:</b> India-UAE Joint Exercise '<b>Desert Cyclone 2024</b>' Kicks Off In Rajasthan. this joint manoeuvre aims to enhance <b>interoperability through the exchange of knowledge and best practices, particularly in urban operations.</b></p>
SAGAR PARIKRAMA	<p><b>Why in news:</b> The 10th phase of Sagar Parikrama took place from January 1st to 6th, 2024, to various locations of Andhra Pradesh and Puducherry.</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10th phase of Sagar Parikrama begins from Chennai Port</li> <li>• Union Ministers will <b>distribute Kisan Credit Card (KCC) to beneficiaries like fishermen, aqua farmers and other stakeholders during the events to progressive fishermen, particularly coastal fishermen and fish farmers, young fisheries entrepreneurs etc.</b></li> <li>• Best practices and initiatives taken through <b>Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) scheme, KCC</b> and other schemes will be widely disseminated to fishermen for their benefits.</li> <li>• Senior officials from Department of Fisheries, Government of Andhra Pradesh, National Fisheries Development Board, Indian Coast Guard, Fishery Survey of India, fishermen association and other dignitaries will also participate in the event.</li> </ul>
<b>VERY LOW FREQUENCY COMMUNICATION TRANSMISSION STATION</b>	<p><b>Why in news:</b> The Indian Navy has strategically chosen Telangana as the location for its second Very Low Frequency (VLF) communication transmission station in the country. This significant development is set to take place in the <b>Vikarabad district, with the new VLF center scheduled for completion by 2027.</b></p>
<b>EXERCISE CYCLONE'S SPECIAL OPERATIONS</b>	<p><b>Why in news: India And Egypt Armies Unite For Exercise Cyclone's Special Operations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The primary objective of Exercise CYCLONE is to <b>familiarize both the Indian and Egyptian special forces with each other's operating procedures in the context of Special Operations in desert and semi-desert terrain.</b></li> </ul>
<b>OPERATION SARVASHAKTI</b>	<p><b>Why in news:</b> As a response to rising terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir, <b>the Indian Army initiates Operation Sarvashakti</b>, aiming for <b>coordinated counter-terrorist actions</b> on both sides of the Pir Panjal ranges.</p>
<b>INDIA-KYRGYZSTAN</b>	<p><b>Why in news:</b> The 11th India-Kyrgyzstan Joint Special Forces Exercise, <b>KHANJAR, has started at Bakloh, Himachal Pradesh.</b> It is scheduled from 22nd Jan to 3rd Feb 2024.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The primary aim of the exercise is to facilitate the exchange of experiences and best practices in Counter-Terrorism and Special Forces Operations.</li> <li>• The joint exercise is expected to enhance interoperability, communication, and coordination between the Indian and Kyrgyzstan special forces.</li> </ul>

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<b>INDIGENOUS ASSAULT RIFLE</b>	<p><b>Why in news:</b> The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has launched an <b>indigenous assault rifle</b> named '<b>Ugram</b>', intended to meet the operational requirements of armed forces, paramilitary, and state police entities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The rifle, with a <b>calibre of 7.62 x 51 mm</b>, has been designed, developed, and manufactured in collaboration with a private industry partner.</li><li>• The first operational prototype of the <b>rifle was unveiled at the DRDO's Armament and Combat Engineering Systems in Pune</b>. It has an effective range of 500 metres and weighs less than four kilograms.</li></ul>
<b>AKASH-NG</b>	<p><b>Why in news:</b> DRDO Achieves Success In Akash-NG Missile Flight Test</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The flight test targeted a high-speed unmanned aerial vehicle flying at a low altitude. <b>The AKASH-NG missile system, comprising the missile with an indigenously developed Radio Frequency Seeker</b>, Launcher, Multi-Function Radar, and Command, Control, and Communication system, successfully intercepted and destroyed the designated target.</li></ul>
<b>SADA TANSEEQ</b>	<p><b>Why in news:</b> The <b>first-ever joint military drill, Sada Tanseeq</b>, by India and Saudi Arabia, is set to start in <b>Rajasthan</b>, marking a significant boost in bilateral ties</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Scheduled from January 29th to February 10th, 2024, Sada Tanseeq signifies a landmark <b>collaboration, epitomizing the growing strategic partnership between India and Saudi Arabia</b>.</li><li>• Exercise <b>Al-Mohad Al-Hindi</b> have paved the way for enhanced maritime security cooperation between <b>India and Saudi Arabia</b>.</li><li>• This naval exercise, focused on tactical maneuvers and search and rescue operation</li></ul>
<b>DRISHTI 10</b>	<p><b>Why in news:</b> The Indian Navy has recently acquired its <b>first indigenous medium-altitude long-endurance (MALE) drone, the Drishti 10 Starliner unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV)</b>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• This marks a significant development in enhancing the navy's intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities.</li><li>• Manufactured by <b>Adani Defence and Aerospace in collaboration with Israeli defence firm Elbit Systems</b>, the drone offers versatility and advanced features.</li></ul>

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- 1) Joint Exercise '**Sahyog Kaijin**' Between Indian and Japanese Coast Guards off the coast of Chennai.
  - The joint exercise, which **commenced on January 8**, focused on enhancing interoperability and **sharing best practices in maritime law enforcement, search and rescue operations, and pollution response at sea.**
- 2) The Indian Army has declared 2024 as the **"Year of Technology Absorption."**
  - The decision to observe 2024 as the Year of Technology Absorption follows the 2023 declaration of the "Year of Transformation."
- 3) **Ex-Ayutthaya: India-Thailand First Naval Exercise Connects to Ayodhya**
  - 'Ex-Ayutthaya' translates to 'The Invincible One,' emphasizing the historical and cultural links between Ayodhya and Ayutthaya.
- 4) **India, France, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE)** conducted a major air exercise, named '**Desert Knight**', over the Arabian Sea.
- 5) **Ex Sea Dragon 24** fosters collaboration and interoperability among the navies of the **US, Australia, South Korea, Japan, and India**. The exercise aims to refine coordination and communication through **professional interactions both on the ground and in the air, as per the Indian Navy's official statement.**

### SPACE

- 1) **NASA**, the renowned space agency, has redirected its **OSIRIS-REx spacecraft from its recent mission to asteroid Bennu to study another celestial body: Apophis.** This asteroid, named after the Egyptian god of Chaos, is anticipated to pass within a remarkably close distance of 32,000 kilometers from Earth's surface on April 13, 2029.
- 2) The **Peregrine-1 lunar lander, operated by private firm Astrobotic**, successfully launched from Cape Canaveral, marking the first American lunar mission in 51 years. Scheduled to land on February 23, the mission, conducted under NASA's Commercial Lunar Payload Services (CLPS) initiative, aims to study the Moon's surface environment in preparation for upcoming human missions.
- 3) **China Deploys 'Einstein Probe,' A Lotus-Shaped Satellite, To Monitor Cosmic Turbulence**
- 4) ISRO introduces the advanced '**Distress Alert Transmitter (DAT-SG)**, enhancing

satellite communication for fishermen at sea ensuring real-time acknowledgments, revolutionizing maritime safety.

- 5) **SpaceX's Falcon 9 successfully launched Axiom Space's Ax-3 mission**, carrying the Crew Dragon capsule "Freedom" to the International Space Station.
- 6) **Smart Lander for Investigating Moon, or SLIM**: Japan has marked a significant achievement in **space exploration by becoming the fifth country to successfully soft-land a spacecraft on the Moon.**
  - **Japan follows the United States, the Soviet Union, China and India in reaching the moon.**

## 7. SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

### HUMAN DNA BANK

**Why in news:** Banaras Hindu University (BHU) is advancing scientific frontiers with two pioneering efforts: **creating the Human DNA Bank and nearing completion of the Wildlife DNA Bank.**

- BHU's DNA banks aim to collect and analyze genetic data from diverse populations.

### FIRST 'BRAIN-READING' DEVICE

**Why in news:** Neuralink, the company through which entrepreneur Elon Musk hopes to revolutionize brain-computer interfaces (BCIs), **has implanted a 'brain-reading' device into a person for the first time.**

- It would facilitate speedy surgical insertions of its chip devices to treat conditions like obesity, autism, depression and schizophrenia.
- **Telepathy, the first product**
- In a series of posts on X, Musk spoke about Telepathy, **the company's first product.** "Enables control of your phone or computer, and through them almost any device, just by thinking. Initial users will be those who have lost the use of their limbs.

### INDIA INTERNATIONAL SCIENCE FESTIVAL 2023

**Why in news:** **The 9th edition of the India International Science Festival (IISF) 2023 will be held in Faridabad, Haryana from January 17 to 20, 2024.**

- The mega science fair of India will be organised at the campus of Translational Health Science and Technology Institute (THSTI) and Regional Center for Biotechnology (RCB) of the Department of Biotechnology in Faridabad.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>theme of the present edition</b> is 'Science and Technology Public Outreach in Amrit Kaal'.</li> <li>• <b>IISF 2023 aims to inspire a wide range of people and provide</b> a platform for individuals with diverse interests such as students, teachers, scientists, researchers, industry professionals, entrepreneurs and science communicators.</li> </ul>
<p><b>BHARATGPT</b></p>	<p><b>Why in news:</b> CoRover.ai Introduces <b>BharatGPT, India's First Large Language Model</b> aiming to transform AI dialogues across 22 Indian languages.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• through a strategic collaboration with the National Hub of Language Technology (NHLT) under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology's National Language Translation Mission (NLTM) CoRover address language barriers.</li> </ul>
<p><b>DISEASE X</b></p>	<p><b>Why in news:</b> <b>World leaders converge at Davos for WEF 2024, spotlighting Disease X—an illness stemming from an unknown microbial threat. WHO underscores the urgency for cross-cutting R&amp;D preparedness.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disease X is a placeholder name that was adopted by the World Health Organization (WHO) in February 2018 on their shortlist of blueprint priority diseases to represent a hypothetical, unknown pathogen that could cause a future epidemic.</li> <li>• The WHO's roster of priority diseases encompasses a spectrum of threats, including:</li> <li>• COVID-19, Crimean-Congo hemorrhagic fever, Ebola virus disease and Marburg virus disease, Lassa fever, Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS) and SARS, Nipah and henipaviral diseases, Rift Valley fever, Zika</li> </ul>
<p><b>SAMAVESHA'</b></p>	<p>I-STEM, the Indian Science, Technology, and Engineering facilities Map, is initiating <b>'Samavesha' at IISc., Bengaluru</b> —a groundbreaking project to revolutionize research collaboration across the country.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To promote research collaboration in India by improving access to facilities and laboratories.</li> <li>• It will link researchers with scientific <b>institutes via an online portal.</b></li> <li>• The platform facilitates the connection of researchers and industries <b>with institutions possessing the necessary equipment, allowing them to lease it for experiments.</b></li> <li>• The initiative seeks to reduce capital expenditure for researchers, industries, and startups, and avoid the duplication of resources at the national level.</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Significance: It will provide access to cutting-edge research infrastructure for new-age researchers, startups, and industries nationwide, thereby facilitating innovation.</li><li>• <b>About I-STEM</b></li><li>• I-STEM (Indian Science, Technology, and Engineering facilities Map) is an initiative of the Office of Principal Scientific Advisor, Government of India.</li><li>• It is a <b>National Web portal for sharing R&amp;D (Research and Development) facilities</b>.</li><li>• Launched in <b>2020</b></li><li>• It is developed with the concept <b>“One Nation One Portal” for the scientific community, aimed at “Linking Researchers and Resources”</b>.</li></ul>
<b>GOLDN</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Researchers at <b>IIT Bombay</b> have developed an instrument named <b>GOLDN for mechanically recycling waste plastic polymers through melt-mixing</b>.</li><li>• This indigenous single screw extruder can manufacture composites from thermoplastic waste that can be molded into materials like paver blocks, tiles and bricks.</li></ul>

## 8. ENVIRONMENT

<b>SALTWATER OR ESTUARINE CROCODILES</b>	<p><b>Why in news:</b> The population of saltwater or estuarine crocodiles (<i>Crocodylus porosus</i>) in Odisha’s Bhitarkanika National Park has seen a slight increase, numbering 1,811 as per the 2024 census. This is up from 1,793 crocodiles counted last year through an extensive survey effort.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The population of saltwater or estuarine crocodiles (<i>Crocodylus porosus</i>) in Odisha’s Bhitarkanika National Park has seen a slight increase, <b>numbering 1,811 as per the 2024 census. This is up from 1,793 crocodiles counted last year through an extensive survey effort.</b></li></ul>
<b>NORTHEAST AFRICAN CHEETAH’S</b>	<p><b>Why in news:</b> group of experts have requested that the Northeast African cheetah’s conservation status be upgraded <b>from vulnerable to endangered on the International Union for Conservation of Nature’s (IUCN) Red List.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The most recent population estimate for wild <i>A. j. soemmeringii</i> is only 260-590 mature individuals.</li></ul>

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<b>THE HIMALAYAN WOLF</b>	<p><b>Why in news:</b> The Himalayan Wolf (<i>Canis lupus chanco</i>) is a prominent lupine predator found across the Himalayas. Its <b>taxonomic status had been unclear until</b> recently.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The animal has now been assessed for <b>the first time on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)'s Red List.</b></li> <li>The Himalayan Wolf has been categorized as <b>"Vulnerable"</b> on the IUCN Red List.</li> </ul>
<b>DALMA WILDLIFE SANCTUARY</b>	<p><b>Why in news:</b> The sanctuary lies on the <b>Chota nagpur Plateau of Jharkhand, contiguous with the steel city Jamshedpur.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is situated around the Dalma hills.</li> <li>The sanctuary is known for <b>its elephants.</b> Beside elephants the sanctuary has considerable population of other wildlife like barking deer, wild boar, giant squirrel sloth bear etc.</li> </ul>
<b>KAZIRANGA NATIONAL PARK</b>	<p><b>Why in news: Rare golden tiger snapped in Kaziranga</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A golden tiger (also known as a golden tabby tiger) is a Bengal tiger exhibiting a color variation resulting from a recessive gene.</li> <li><b>Kaziranga National Park</b></li> <li>Location: It is located in <b>the State of Assam.</b> It is the single largest undisturbed and representative area in the Brahmaputra Valley floodplain.</li> <li>UNESCO World Heritage Site: The Park was declared as a National Park in 1974. In 1985, the park was designated as a <b>World Heritage Site by UNESCO. Further, it was also declared as a Tiger Reserve in 2006.</b></li> <li>Important Bird Area: It is also recognized as an <b>Important Bird Area by Bird Life International</b> for the conservation of avifaunal species.</li> </ul>
<b>CHANDAKA WILDLIFE SANCTUARY</b>	<p><b>Why in news:</b> "Odisha: Sambar, bison to be introduced in Chandaka wildlife sanctuary"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is located in the Odisha's Khurda district.</li> <li>2. It marks the northeastern edge of the Eastern Ghats.</li> <li>It designated as a sanctuary in 1982.</li> <li>Conservation Status:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IUCN Status: <b>Vulnerable</b></li> <li>Wildlife Protection Act, 1972: <b>Schedule I</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	<p><b>Why in news:</b> Humboldt's enigma, a concept introduced by <b>Alexander von Humboldt during the 19th century.</b> This concept suggests a correlation among temperature, altitude, humidity,</p>

## HUMBOLDT'S ENIGMA

and biodiversity.

### What is Humboldt's enigma?

- Humboldt's enigma proposes that biodiversity isn't **confined solely to Earth's tropical regions**.
- It suggests that various regions beyond the tropics, such as mountainous areas, also exhibit significant biodiversity.
- For example- In case of India, the biodiversity isn't confined only to the tropical regions of MP, Chhattisgarh and Western Ghats but also the regions like eastern Himalayas also serve as regions of abundant biodiversity, where variations in climate and a diverse geological makeup contribute to abundant biodiversity.

## 9. ECONOMY

## WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM

**Why in news:** At the **2024 World Economic Forum in Davos** organized around the theme of **"Rebuilding Trust"**, India participated embodying the spirit of **"Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam"** – ready to shape a share3d future underpinned by global cooperation.

- **Switzerland and India have finally sealed a free-trade agreement (FTA) following a marathon 16-year negotiation period.** The announcement came from Swiss Economy Minister Guy Parmelin, who, after attending the World Economic Forum in Davos, swiftly headed to India for crucial discussions with his counterpart, Piyush Goyal
- The key driver for this growth is anticipated to be increased private sector investment.
- **About World Economic Forum (WEF):**
- The WEF is a Swiss nonprofit foundation established in 1971, based in Geneva, Switzerland.
- Recognized by the Swiss authorities as the international institution for public-private cooperation.
- the WEF was founded by German economist Klaus Schwab.

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## 'BHARAT PARK'

**Why in news:** India to set-up 'specific trade zone' in UAE.

- The government plans to set up '**Bharat Park**', an India-specific trade zone with a showroom and warehouse in the UAE. **Goods Made in India will be displayed and stored for the global audience in the Park.**
- Urging the industry to maintain the quality of goods exported from India, Piyush Goyal, Union Minister of Textiles and Commerce said the Bureau of Indian Standard will spend ₹40 crore to set up **21 testing laboratories at various places in India.**

## BLOOMBERG BILLIONAIRE'S INDEX

**Why in news:** Elon Musk, CEO of X (formerly Twitter) emerged as the richest person on 30 January, 2024, according to Bloomberg Billionaire's Index.

- Mukesh Ambani of Reliance Industries, ranked 11th in the Bloomberg Billionaire's Index on 30 January, has a net worth of \$108 billion.
- Further **Gautam Adani of Adani Group, ranked 14th** on the billionaire's index, has a net worth of \$95.9 billion.

Rank	Name	Total net worth
1	Elon Musk	\$204B
2	Jeff Bezos	\$186B
3	Bernard Arnault	\$183B
4	Bill Gates	\$145B
5	Mark Zuckerberg	\$145B
6	Steve Ballmer	\$142B
7	Larry Page	\$137B
8	Sergey Brin	\$130B
9	Larry Ellison	\$128B
10	Warren Buffett	\$128B
11	Mukesh Ambani	\$108B
12	Carlos Slim	\$101B
13	Francoise Bettencourt Meyers	\$96.7B
14	Gautam Adani	\$95.9B
15	Amancio Ortega	\$84.6B

## INDIA GDP GRWOTH FORECAST BY DIFFERENT AGENCIES

**Why in news:** Fitch Ratings released its report '**APAC Cross-Sector Outlook 2024**', affirming robust economic growth in the Asia Pacific region.

- The forecast highlights a **5% GDP growth in India** and various emerging markets, indicating positive trends in the banking sectors of India and Indonesia.
- India's National Statistical Office (NSO) forecasts a strong 7.3% GDP growth in FY24, exceeding **the 7.2% from the previous year.** Construction leads with 10.7% growth.

- **Why in news:** During the **Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit**, Finance Minister Nirmala

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Sitharaman outlined ambitious projections for India's economic growth.

- Currently the world's fifth-largest economy at USD 3.4 trillion, India aims to become the third-largest by 2027-28, reaching a GDP of over USD 5 trillion.
- Sitharaman expressed confidence that even with conservative estimates, India's economy could soar to USD 30 trillion by 2047.

### 10. BOOKS AND AUTHORS

AUTHOR	BOOKS
SANJEEV JOSHI	Ek Samandar, Mere Andar
CHITRA BANERJEE DIVAKARUNI	"An Uncommon Love: The Early Life of Sudha and Narayana Murthy,"
RK PACHNANDA, BIBEK DEBROY, , ANIRBAN GANGULY, AND UTTAM KUMAR SINHA	"Modi: Energising A Green Future"
M.J. AKBAR, ALONG WITH CO-AUTHOR K. NATWAR SINGH	"Gandhi: A Life in Three Campaigns."
MANORAMA MISHRA	Sanskriti ke Ayaam'
RAGHURAM RAJAN, ROHIT LAMBA	'Breaking the Mould: Reimagining India's Economic Future.'
	Governor of Kerala, <b>Arif Mohammad</b> , unveiled a book titled " <b>Ram Mandir Rashtra Mandir Ak Sajhi Virast</b> " at the Rang Bhawan Auditorium in Delhi. Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation, Shri Amit Shah, released the book ' <b>Assam's Braveheart Lachit Barphukan</b> ' in Guwahati, Assam.
MADHAV GODBOLE	"The Babri Masjid Ram Mandir Dilemma: An Acid Test for India's Constitution,"
RAMNATH KOVIND	'Naye Bharat ka Samaveda,'

## 11. REPORTS AND INDICES

### ALL INDIA SURVEY ON HIGHER EDUCATION (AISHE)

- The Ministry of Education, Government of India, released **the All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) 2021-2022 recently.**
- a) Overall female enrollment reaches **2.07 crore in 2021-22**, showcasing an increase from 2.01 crore in 2020-21.
- b) Female PhD enrollment doubles to 0.99 lakh in 2021-22 from 0.48 lakh in 2014-15, with an annual growth rate of 10.4%.
- c) Science stream witnesses 57.2 lakh students enrolled in 2021-22, with females (29.8 lakh) outnumbering males (27.4 lakh).
- d) Enrolment of Scheduled Tribe (ST) students rises by **65.2%, reaching 27.1 lakh in 2021-22 from 16.41 lakh in 2014-15.**
- e) North East States report total student enrollment at 12.02 lakh in 2021-22, with female enrollment (6.07 lakh) surpassing male enrollment (5.95 lakh).
- f) The report highlights a commendable rise in female enrollment in the science stream, surpassing male counterparts.

#### **About All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE):**

- The AISHE report has been published by the Ministry of Education since 2011.
- **Aim: To portray the status of higher education in the country.**
- Indicators of educational development such as **Institution Density, Gross Enrolment Ratio, Pupil-teacher ratio, Gender Parity Index, Per Student Expenditure** will also be calculated from the data collected through AISHE.

### THE STATUS OF SNOW LEOPARDS

- Union Minister of Environment, Forest, and **Climate Change, Shri Bhupender Yadav, released a significant report on the status of Snow leopards in India.**
- The Snow Leopard Population Assessment in India (SPAII)
- a) This is the first-ever scientific exercise, which took around 4 years to complete.
- b) The Wildlife Institute of India (WII) is the National Coordinator for this exercise.
- c) As per the assessment, India has an estimated 718 snow leopards in the wild.
- d) **Ladakh (477) has the highest number of snow leopard, followed by Uttarakhand (124),** Himachal Pradesh (51), Arunachal Pradesh (36), Sikkim (21), and Jammu and Kashmir

(nine).

e) India has around 10-15% of global population of snow leopard.

- **Conservation Status**
- IUCN List of Threatened Species: **Vulnerable.**
- CITES: Appendix I.
- Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972: Schedule-I.

**CORRUPTION PERCEPTIONS INDEX (CPI) 2023**

- Recently, the **Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) 2023** has been released by **Transparency International** showing that most countries have made little to no progress in tackling public sector corruption.

**CORRUPTION PERCEPTION INDEX 2023**

Top rankers			India and its neighbouring countries		
Country	Rank 2023 (Score)	Rank 2022 (Score)	Country	Rank 2023 (Score)	Rank 2022 (Score)
Denmark	1 (90)	1 (90)	<b>India</b>	93 (39)	85 (40)
Finland	2 (87)	2 (87)	China	76 (42)	65 (45)
New Zealand	3 (85)	2 (87)	Pakistan	133 (29)	140 (27)

- The CPI ranks 180 countries and territories around the globe by their perceived levels of public sector corruption, scoring on a scale of 0 (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean).
- **Denmark with a score of 90 tops** the index for the sixth consecutive year, with **Finland and New Zealand** following closely with scores of 87 and 85, respectively.
- **Somalia, Venezuela, Syria, South Sudan and Yemen**, with their scores 11, 13, 13, 13 respectively, take the bottom spots in **the index**.
- India was ranked **93 out of 180 countries** on the CPI 2023.

**ELECTRICITY 2024 REPORT**

- **International Energy Agency (IEA) projections in Electricity 2024 Report**, India’s electricity demand will outpace China’s and have the world’s fastest growth rate by 2026.
- Expected annual average growth of 6.5% between 2024 and 2026.
- India added 21 GW of renewable energy capacity in 2023.



- But renewables stagnated at a **21% generation** share as reduced hydropower output offset solar and wind growth.

**'STATES' STARTUP RANKING 2022'**

- **Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu** emerged as the best performers among large states in the 'States' Startup Ranking 2022' released by the **Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)**.



**GLOBAL FIREPOWER'S MILITARY STRENGTH RANKINGS FOR 2024**

- Global Firepower's Military Strength Rankings for 2024
- The **US secured the top position**, with **Russia and China following**. India claimed the 4th spot.
- **Bhutan ranks lowest with a power index of 6.3704.**

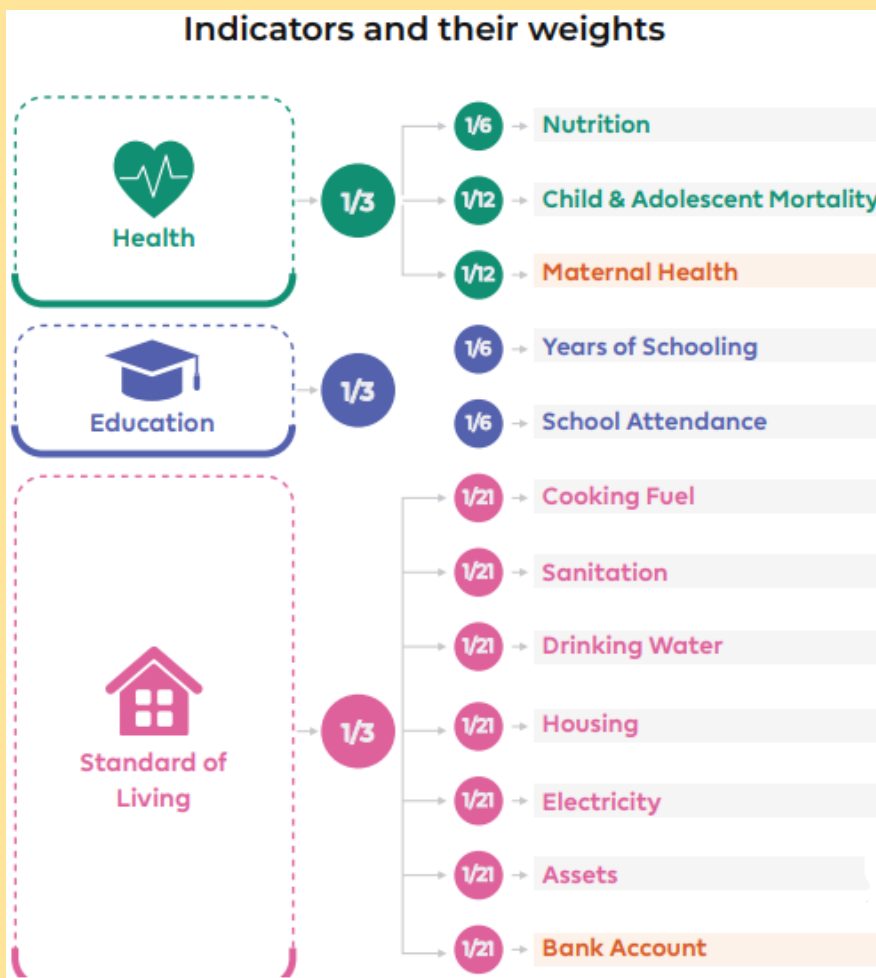
**MULTIDIMENSIONA**

- A recent **NITI Aayog report** reveals that **24.82 crore people** in India have successfully moved out of multidimensional poverty from 2013-14 to 2022-23. The decline is

## L POVERTY

remarkable, dropping from **29.17% to 11.28%** during this period.

- India is likely to achieve **SDG Target 1.2 (reducing multidimensional poverty by at least half) much ahead of 2030.**
- The discussion paper was released today by Prof Ramesh Chand, Member, NITI Aayog in presence of Shri B. V. R. Subrahmanyam, CEO NITI Aayog. **Oxford Policy and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)** have provided technical inputs for this paper.
- **Uttar Pradesh registered the largest decline in the number of poor with 5.94 crore people escaping multidimensional poverty during the last nine years followed by Bihar at 3.77 crore, Madhya Pradesh at 2.30 crore and Rajasthan at 1.87 crore.**



- 1) In a recent on-time performance review conducted by aviation analytics firm **Cirium**, **Hyderabad and Bengaluru airports have emerged as global leaders in punctuality,**

securing the second and third ranks, respectively.

- 2) **United Nations' World Economic Situation and Prospects 2024 report**, India emerges as a key player, projecting a GDP growth of 6.2% in the coming year. This slightly trails behind the 6.3% estimate for 2023.
- 3) **Chennai emerged as the top Indian city for women in 2023** in terms of inclusivity and conduciveness to working women, as per findings from diversity, equity, and inclusivity consultant Avtar Group's Top Cities for Women in India (TCWI) 2023.
  - Chennai topped the million-plus category, and **Tiruchirappalli came on top of the less than a million category**. . Its IIS rate slipped by 1 and is second to Bengaluru on this scale.
- 4) **National capital Delhi, notorious for crimes against women**, made its debut in the top 10 by positioning itself on **the 8th** rankReport by CBRE-CREDAI sheds light on the landscape of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in India.As of December 2023, the country boasts over 3 crore registered MSMEs, with Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, and Uttar Pradesh jointly constituting nearly 40% of this vibrant sector.
- 5) **Global Passport Ranking**
  - **France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Singapore, and Spain** share the top spot in the quarterly ranking of the world's most powerful passports and Finland and Sweden, tied with South Korea, secure the second spot with easy access to 194 destinations.
  - India secures the 80th position, with visa-free access to 62 countries.
  - Finland and Sweden, tied with South Korea, secure the second spot with easy access to 193 destinations.

## 12. APPOINTMENTS

NAME	APPOINTMENT
ARVIND PANAGARIYA	Ex-Niti Aayog vice chairman and Columbia University has been appointed as the chairman of the Sixteenth Finance Commission
VIVEK SRIVASTAVA	Vivek Srivastava as the Director General of Fire Service, Civil Defence & Home Guards under the Ministry of Home Affairs.

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<b>RAVINDRA KUMAR TYAGI</b>	Ravindra Kumar Tyagi has been appointed as the new Chairman and Managing Director (CMD)
<b>GEETIKA MEHTA</b>	Geetika Mehta Nivea India, a leading personal care products company, has appointed Geetika Mehta as its new managing director
<b>RANDHIR JAISWAL</b>	Randhir Jaiswal appoint as a spokesperson Ministry of External Affairs (MEA)
<b>PUNEET CHHATWAL</b> <b>PUNEET CHHATWAL</b>	Puneet Chhatwal Puneet Chhatwal, the Managing Director and CEO of Indian Hotels Company Limited, has been appointed as the new Chairperson of the Federation of Associations in Indian Tourism & Hospitality (FAITH).
<b>NADIA CALVINO</b>	Nadia Calvino Appointed as New President of the European Investment Bank Shashi Singh has been elected as the president of the All India Rubber Industries Association (AIRIA), the apex body for rubber industries in India.
<b>VICE ADMIRAL</b> <b>DINESH K TRIPATHI</b>	On January 4, 2024, Vice Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi, AVSM, NM, officially took over as the Vice Chief of the Naval Staff
<b>P SANTHOSH</b>	P Santhosh, Chief General Manager at Canara Bank, has been appointed as the Managing Director of National Asset Reconstruction Company (NARCL).
<b>G RAM MOHAN RAO</b>	SEBI appoints G Ram Mohan Rao as Executive Director for 3 years, tasked with overseeing investigation and internal inspection departments, reinforcing market integrity commitment.
<b>RASHMI SHUKLA</b>	Rashmi Shukla becomes <b>Maharashtra's first woman Director General of Police.</b>
<b>SANJIV AGGARWAL</b>	Sanjiv Aggarwal Appointed CEO and MD of National Investment and Infrastructure Fund Limited (NIIFL)
<b>MR. VIKAS SHEEL</b>	Mr. Vikas Sheel, a seasoned bureaucrat, is now the Executive Director of the <b>Asian Development Bank (ADB) in Manila</b> , emphasizing India's commitment to international development.
<b>RAGHURAM IYER</b>	Raghuram Iyer appointed as CEO of Indian Olympic Association

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<b>ASHWANI GUPTA</b>	Ashwani Gupta Appointed as CEO of Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone
<b>INDRA MANI PANDEY</b>	India's seasoned diplomat, Ambassador Indra Mani Pandey, has officially become the Secretary General of <b>BIMSTEC</b> , succeeding Tenzin Lekphell from Bhutan.
<b>RITESH PAI</b>	<b>PhonePe</b> Appoints Ritesh Pai As CEO For International Payments Division
<b>SAMIR KUMAR SINHA</b>	Senior IAS officer <b>Samir Kumar Sinha</b> now appointed as Additional Secretary and Director General (Acquisition) in the Defence Ministry.
<b>SENTHIL PANDIAN C</b>	AS officer Senthil Pandian C as the <b>new ambassador to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in Geneva</b> , succeeding Brajendra Navnit, whose term concludes on March 31, 2024.
<b>TSHERING TOBGAY</b>	Tshering Tobgay Re-Elected As Bhutan's Prime Minister
<b>SHEEL VARDHAN SINGH,</b>	Sheel Vardhan Singh, ex-Director General of the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), has been appointed as a member of UPSC.
<b>REAR ADMIRAL UPAL KUNDU</b>	Rear Admiral Upal Kundu Takes Charge As Chief Of Staff, Southern Naval Command
<b>MANISH JAIN'S</b>	Manish Jain's Appointment as Country Managing Director for Experian India
<b>VICE ADMIRAL AN PRAMOD</b>	Vice Admiral AN Pramod assumed the critical role of Director General Naval Operations on January 15, 2024.
<b>SHRI SATNAM SINGH SANDHU</b>	The President appointed Shri Satnam Singh Sandhu to the Rajya Sabha, acknowledging his outstanding role in education, philanthropy, and community development.
<b>JUSTICE SANJIV KHANNA</b>	Justice Sanjiv Khanna, Appointed as the NALSA Executive Chairperson, succeeding Justice S. K. Kaul, who retired on December 25.
<b>VICE ADMIRAL SANJAY JASJIT SINGH</b>	Vice Admiral Sanjay Jasjit Singh took charge as the Flag Officer Commanding in Chief (FOC-in-C) of the Indian Navy's Western Naval Command.
<b>HRITHIK ROSHAN</b>	The RuPay Prime Volleyball League (PVL) has taken a significant stride in its marketing and promotion efforts by appointing the acclaimed Bollywood actor Hrithik Roshan as the brand ambassador.
<b>16TH FINANCE COMMISSION</b>	<p>a) <b>Shri. Ajay Narayan Jha</b>, former member, 15th Finance Commission and former Secretary, Expenditure Full time Member</p> <p>b) <b>Smt. Annie George Mathew</b>, former Special Secretary, Expenditure Full time</p>

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Member

- c) **Dr. Niranjan Rajadhyaksha**, Executive Director, Artha Global Full time Member
- d) **Dr. Soumya Kanti Ghosh**, Group Chief Economic Advisor, State Bank of India Part time Member

- 1) **PepsiCo India** Appoints Marketing chief **Jagrut Kotecha** as new CEO succeeding Ahmed El Sheikh.
- 2) **Senior IPS officer Daljit Singh Chaudhary** appointed Director **General of Sashastra Seema Bal**
- 3) The **Central government** has formally announced **the appointment of Justice Prasanna B Varale** as a Supreme Court judge, making him the third judge from the Dalit community in the apex court.
- 4) **Felix Tshisekedi** Named President of The Democratic Republic of Congo
- 5) **Chad's transitional** government has taken a significant step towards establishing civilian rule by appointing former opposition **leader Succes Masra as the prime minister of Chad.**
- 6) **Sultan Ibrahim of Johor** state installed as **Malaysia's 17th king**
- 7) Ecuadorian President **Daniel Noboa** announced a 60-day nationwide state of emergency recently after the country's most wanted crime lord escaped custody amid a spree of riots across prisons
- 8) On December 15th, **Guyana and Venezuela** agreed to resolve their centuries-old border conflict over the Essequibo region peacefully, easing fears of potential military escalation.

### 13. OBITUARIES

**PROF VED PRAKASH NANDA**

- Prof Ved Prakash Nanda Professor **Ved Prakash Nanda**, a luminary in the Indian diaspora, recently passed away, leaving behind a legacy of profound contributions to literature, education, and international law.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Prof. Nanda received the <b>Gandhi, King, Ikeda Award</b> for Community Peace Building.</li></ul>
<b>USTAD RASHID KHAN</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Indian classical music world mourns the passing of Ustad Rashid Khan, a towering figure who left an indelible mark on the <b>Rampur-Sahaswan Gharana</b> and beyond.</li></ul>
<b>MUNAWWAR RANA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Munawwar Rana</b>, a celebrated Urdu poet, passed away at the age of 71 due to cardiac arrest in Lucknow.</li><li>• He was awarded the prestigious <b>Sahitya Akademi Award in 2014 for his poetry book 'Shahdaba'</b>.</li></ul>
<b>DR. PRABHA ATRE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Indian classical music fraternity mourns the loss of <b>Dr. Prabha Atre</b>, a revered classical vocalist and a luminary of the <b>Kirana Gharana</b>, who passed away in Pune at the age of 91.</li><li>• She was a recipient of the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award (1991), Padma Shri (1990), Padma Bhushan (2002), and the Padma Vibhushan (2022), India's second-highest civilian honor.</li></ul>
<b>DR NITYA ANAND</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dr Nitya Anand, man who discovered <b>India's first oral contraceptive pill 'Saheli', passes awayDr. Anand got the Padma Shri award.</b></li></ul>
<b>R. CHAMPAKALAKSHMI</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Historian R. Champakalakshmi, former president of Indian History Congress and professor in the Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, passed away.</li></ul>

### 14. SPORTS

<b>CRICKETER SACHIN TENDULKAR'S STATUE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Indian cricketer <b>Virat Kohli just won the Puberty Athlete of the Year award.Kohli won easily with 78% of the votes from 500,000 people.</b></li><li>• <b>Past winners:</b></li><li>• 2023: Virat Kohli (Cricket)</li><li>• 2022: Rohit Sharma (Cricket)</li><li>• 2021: Neeraj Chopra (Javelin Throw)</li></ul>
<b>THE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Karnataka won</b> the most recent edition of <b>the Santosh Trophy in 2023, defeating Services in the final.</b></li></ul>

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### SANTOSH TROPHY IN 2023

- The Santosh Trophy is a prestigious football competition in India, with a rich history **dating back to 1941**.
- The National Football Championship for **Santosh Trophy**, also known as the **FIFA Santosh Trophy**, is an inter-state football tournament contested by state associations and government **institutions under the All India Football Federation (AIFF)**.

### NATIONAL SPORTS AWARDS 2023

- **Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports announced the National Sports Awards 2023**
- President Droupadi Murmu has conferred the **Arjuna Awards to various sports personalities at the Rashtrapati Bhawan**. The **second-highest athletic honour in India, the Arjuna Award**, is given for demonstrating leadership, sportsmanship, and discipline along with good performance over the preceding four years.

Name of India's National Sports Awards	Awarded For
<b>Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award</b>	Awarded for outstanding performances in sports spanning over a period of four years.
<b>Arjuna Award</b>	Given out for consistent good performance over a period of four years.
<b>Dronacharya Award</b>	It is awarded to coaches for producing medal winners at prestigious international events.
<b>Major Dhyan Chand Award</b>	Presented for good performance and contributing towards the promotion of sports.
<b>Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Trophy</b>	Given to the university for top performance in inter-university tournaments over the last one year.
<b>Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puruskar</b>	Awarded to organisations and individuals for playing a role in the area of sports promotion and development over the last three years.
<b>Tenzing Norgay National Adventure Award</b>	To recognise outstanding achievements in the field of adventure activities or sports on land, sea and air.

- **Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award:**
- Satwik Sairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty (badminton)
- **Dronacharya Award for Outstanding Coaches in Sports and Games 2023:**
- Ganesh Prabhakaran (mallakhamb), Mahavir Saini (para athletics), Lalit Kumar (wrestling), RB Ramesh (chess), Shivendra Singh (hockey).
- **Dhyan Chand Lifetime Award**
- Kavita (kabaddi), Manjusha Kanwar (badminton), Vineet Kumar Sharma (hockey).



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- **Maulana Abul Kalam Azad (MAKA) Trophy 2023:**
- Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar (winner),
- Lovely Professional University, Punjab (1st runners-up),
- Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra (2nd runners-up)

Name	Sport
Mohammed Shami	Cricket
Pawan Sehrawat	Kabaddi
Ritu Negi	Kabaddi
Vaishali Rameshbabu	Chess
Murali Sreeshankar	Athletics
Parul Chaudhary	Athletics
Krishan Bahadur Pathak	Hockey
Sushila Chanu	Hockey
Sunil Kumar	Wrestling
Antim Panghal	Wrestling
Aditi Gopichand Swami	Archery
Ojas Pravin Deotale	Archery
Ayhika Mukherjee	Table Tennis
Mohammad Hussamuddin	Boxing
Esha Singh	Shooting
Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar	Shooting
Naorem Roshibina Devi	Wushu
Diksha Dagar	Golf
Harinder Pal Sandhu	Squash
Sheetal Devi	Para-Archery
Anush Agarwalla	Equestrian
Divyakriti Singh	Equestrian Dressage
Nasreen Shaikh	Kho-Kho
Pinki Singh	Lawn bowls
Illuri Ajay Kumar Reddy	Blind cricket
Prachi Yadav	Para Canoeing

- 1) **Aman Sehrawat**, India's rising **wrestling** star, clinched a **gold at Zagreb Open 2024** in the 57 kg men's singles.
- 2) **Real Madrid** played against **Barcelona** and won 4-1. This big game was part of the Spanish Super Cup final and happened on January 14, 2024. It took place in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.
- 3) **ICC Awards 2023: Rohit Sharma** named captain of ICC ODI team of the year
- 4) **Man Singh** Clinches **Gold at the Asian Marathon Championships 2024** in Hong Kong
- 5) **Sreeja Akula**, an Indian table tennis player, reached a pivotal point in her career, clinching her

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first international title at **WTT Feeder Corpus Christi 2024** in Texas, USA.

- 6) Indian Grandmaster **Koneru Humpy** secured the women's individual silver medal at the 2023 World Rapid Chess Championships held in **Samarkand, Uzbekistan**.
- 7) **Anahat Singh**, a rising star in Indian squash, secured victory in the girls' under-19 category at the 2023 Scottish **Junior Open squash** held in **Edinburgh**.
- 8) World champion Beatrice Chebet ended her year on a high by running 14:13\* to smash the women's world 5km record at the Cursa dels Nassos, a World Athletics Label road race, in Barcelona on Sunday (31). to better the previous record by six seconds.
- 9) **Divyakriti Singh**, the prestigious **Arjuna Award**, making her the first woman from Rajasthan to achieve this honour. The award was presented in a grand ceremony at Rashtrapati Bhavan by the President of India, Droupadi Murmu.
- 10) **Indian tennis star Rohan Bopanna** has etched his name in the history books by becoming the oldest player to claim the **No. 1 spot in the men's doubles rankings at the age of 43**.
  - Bopanna's accomplishment surpasses the previous record held by American tennis player Mike Bryan, who was 41 years and 76 days old when he was ranked World No. 1 in men's doubles in 2019. After the Australian Open, Bopanna, who will turn 43 years and 330 days old
- 11) Asian Shooting **Championships 2024 in Jakarta, Indonesia**, Rhythm **Sangwan** secured a bronze medal in the women's 25m pistol event, obtaining a Paris 2024 Olympic quota for India.
- 12) In a display of exceptional batting, Hyderabad's Tanmay Agarwal scored an unbeaten 323 off just 160 balls against Arunachal Pradesh in the Ranji Trophy Plate Group game. His innings included 33 fours and 21 sixes, showcasing his aggressive batting style.
- 13) Naorem Roshibina Devi, hailing from Manipur, secures the esteemed title of IWUF (International Wushu Federation Female Athlete of the Year) Female Athlete of the Year in Wushu.
- 14) **Indian boxer Mandeep Jangra** secured a remarkable **triumph at the US-based National Boxing Association's (NBA) intercontinental super featherweight championship**
- 15) At the ISSF World Cup(International Shooting Sport Federation) World Cup, **Rhythm Sangwan and Ujjwal won gold in the 10m air pistol mixed team event**. Meanwhile, Arjun Babuta and Sonam Uttam Maskar won silver in the 10m air rifle mixed team event.
- 16) At 21, **Divyansh Singh Panwar** adds to his shooting legacy, clinching his fourth World Cup gold in the 10m air rifle with a remarkable final score of 253.7

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## KHELO INDIA WINTER GAMES 2024

- Khelo India Winter Games 2024 Mascot Unveiled
- This year’s edition is especially noteworthy as it marks the debut of the **Union Territory of Ladakh as a host, alongside Jammu & Kashmir.**
- The mascot for the Khelo India Winter Games 2024 is the majestic snow leopard, named **‘Sheen-e She’ or ‘Shan’ in the Ladakh region**



## THE 9TH ASIAN WINTER GAMES

- Unveiling the Essence of the 9th Asian Winter Games: Slogan, Emblem, and Mascots
- Host: In the capital city of **Heilongjiang Province(HARBIN), China.**

- Official slogan: **“Dream of Winter, Love among Asia”**
- The official emblem, aptly named **“Breakthrough”**. **Designed by the team from the Academy of Arts & Design at Tsinghua University.**
- The heart and soul of the Games are personified in its mascots, **“Binbin” and “Nini”, two charming Siberian tiger cubs.**



- The Games promise an exhilarating array of events, featuring six sports covering 11 disciplines and 64 events.
- The Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) is a governing body of sports in Asia, currently with 45 member National Olympic Committees. Talal Fahad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah was elected as President of the OCA on 8 July 2023.
- **Formation 16 November 1982**
- **Headquarters Kuwait City, Kuwait**
- **Official language English**
- **President Randhir Singh (Acting President)**

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## AUSTRALIAN OPEN 2024 WINNERS

Winner	Runner-Up	
<b>Jannik Sinner (Italy)</b>	Daniil Medvedev (Russia)	Mens single
<b>Aryna Sabalenka(Belarus)</b>	Zheng Qinwen (China)	Women Single
<b>Rohan Bopanna (India) &amp; Matthew</b>	Ebden Simone Bolelli and Andrea Vavassori (Italy)	Men Double
<b>Hsieh Su-Wei (Taiwan) &amp; Elise Mertens</b>	Jelena Ostapenko and Lyudmyla Kichenok (Latvia-Ukraine)	Women Double

## 15. MISCELLANEOUS

- 1) A key outcome was the launch of a **“Global Good Alliance for Gender Equity and Equality”** with WEF’s backing to bring together best practices, knowledge sharing and investments across women’s health, education and enterprise.
- 2) The Union Minister of **Ayush and Ports, Shipping & Waterways, Shri Sarbananda Sonowal, laid the foundation stone for ‘Ayush Diksha,’** a pioneering center dedicated to the development of future **Ayush professionals**. The ceremony took place at the **Central Ayurveda Research Institute campus in Bhubaneswar**.
- 3) Union Minister **G. Kishan Reddy inaugurates five diverse galleries at Salar Jung Museum, Hyderabad,** showcasing ancient Indian sculptures, Bidriware, antique lamps, European bronze statues.
- 4) The Central Government launches the **'Anuvadini' app, an Artificial Intelligence-driven platform, to provide digital study materials in Indian languages.**
- 5) Vice-President **Jagdeep Dhankhar** inaugurated the 'Hamara Samvidhan, Hamara Samman' campaign, celebrating India's 75th Republic Year.  
  
Under the **‘Hamara Samvidhan Hamara Samman’** campaign, efforts focus on legally empowering **marginalized communities, ensuring their access to justice.**
- 6) The **Indo-Islamic Cultural Foundation** is set to commence the construction of a mosque in Ayodhya named **"Masjid Muhammed bin Abdullah," to foster unity and goodwill transcending religious differences.**

Beyond the mosque, the IICF plans to construct a **500-bed hospital** within the complex. This holistic approach underscores the foundation’s commitment to

contributing to **the overall well-being of the community.**

- 7) The Shri Ram Janmbhoomi Temple, designed and built **by Larsen & Toubro** as mandated by the Shri Ram Janmbhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust, stands as an architectural marvel, crafted to endure for a millennium.
- 8) Microsoft has unveiled an ambitious new initiative **called AI Odyssey** that aims to provide advanced skills training **in artificial intelligence (AI) tools and technologies to 100,000 software** developers across India.
- 9) India has submitted nominations for **three cities – Indore, Bhopal and Udaipur – to receive the tag of 'International Wetland City' under the Ramsar Convention.** This recognition highlights efforts by cities to conserve urban and peri-urban wetlands.
- 10) The **Similipal kai chutney**, made with red weaver ants by the tribal people of **Odisha's Mayurbhanj district**, received a **geographical indication (GI)** tag on January 2nd, 2024. The savory ant chutney is renowned in the region for its nutritional and medicinal properties.
- 11) **Francoise Bettencourt Meyers** is the first woman with a **\$100 billion**
- 12) **Felix Tshisekedi** elected as **President of Democratic Republic of Congo**
- 13) Professor B R Kamboj honoured with **M S Swaminathan Award**
- 14) On the occasion of **New Year 2024**, CMD IREDA Shri Pradip Kumar Das has announced that the **year 2024 will be christened as 'Year of Human Resource Development and Discipline'** to mark IREDA's future roadmap into new strategic sectors and geographies.

**16. PLACES IN NEWS**

**ESSEQUIBO REGION**

**Why in news:** Guyana and Venezuela agreed to resolve their centuries-old border conflict over the Essequibo region peacefully, easing fears of potential military escalation.



**Why in news:** Iranian Revolutionary Guards has warned that the Mediterranean Sea could be closed if the US and its allies continued to commit “**crimes**” in Gaza.

