

Current Affairs of February 2024

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National

Tamil Nadu Achieves Record With Highest Number Of Ramsar Sites In India

- **Tamil Nadu** has set a new benchmark in environmental conservation and biodiversity protection by securing two more **Ramsar sites**, thus achieving the highest number of such designated areas in the country.
- The recent addition of the **Longwood Shola Reserve Forest in The Nilgiris** and the **Karaivetti Bird Sanctuary in Ariyalur** has propelled the state to the forefront of ecological conservation efforts in India.
- With these new designations, Tamil Nadu now boasts 16 Ramsar sites, a testament to its rich biodiversity and the state government's commitment to preserving it.



Tamil Nadu Achieves Record with Highest Number of Ramsar Sites in India

Interim Budget 2024-2025 Speech Of Nirmala Sitharaman

- **Transformation of Indian Economy:** Led by the visionary leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, our government has navigated through significant challenges, implementing structural reforms and pro-people programs with the motto of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas'.
- **Renewed Hope and Optimism:** With the implementation of these initiatives, the people of India are now looking towards the future with renewed hope and optimism. Tangible benefits have fostered confidence, garnering widespread support for inclusive growth.
- **Comprehensive Development Agenda:** In our second term, under the continued leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Modi, we have doubled down on our commitment to building a prosperous nation with comprehensive development for all.



Union Budget 2024 Detailed Sector Wise, Defence, Education, Railway And Income Tax

- In the Budget for the fiscal year 2024-25, the Union Government demonstrates a robust commitment to bolstering economic growth through substantial investments in infrastructure development.
- The total expenditure in the Budget is estimated at **47,65,768 crore (47.65 Lakh Crore)**, with a **significant focus on capital expenditure, reaching 11,11,111 crore (11.11 Lakh Crore)**. This reflects a commendable increase of 16.9% in capital expenditure over the Revised Estimates (RE) for 2023-24.
- The Budget allocates **11,11,111 crore** for capital expenditure, marking a 16.9% surge over the RE for 2023-24. The effective capital expenditure for 2024-25 is projected at **14,96,693 crore**, showcasing a substantial increase of 17.7% over the RE for 2023-24.

Difference Between Interim Budget Vs Full Budget

- As the political landscape gears up for the **2024 Lok Sabha elections** in India, discussions surrounding the country's financial planning take center stage. Central to this discourse are the distinctions between the interim budget and the full union budget, two crucial fiscal documents that guide the nation's economic trajectory.
- The **interim budget** serves as a **temporary financial plan** presented by the incumbent government when its term is ending or during a transition of power. It is a stopgap arrangement designed to ensure the smooth functioning of the government until a new administration assumes office.
- In contrast, the **full union budget** represents the **comprehensive financial roadmap** of the ruling government for the entire fiscal year. It encompasses all aspects of fiscal policy, including revenue generation, expenditure allocation, and policy initiatives.

RBI Imposes Major Restrictions On Paytm Payments Bank: Operations Limited Post-February 29

- In a significant move, the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has imposed major business restrictions on **Paytm Payments Bank**, effective from **February 29**.
- The RBI directive prohibits Paytm Payments Bank from accepting fresh deposits, credit transactions, or

top-ups in customer accounts, including prepaid instruments such as wallets and FASTags, after February 29.

- While the Paytm app is expected to continue normal operations, services linked to the Paytm Bank will only be available until February 29 or until the exhaustion of the available balance.
- The nodal accounts of Paytm's parent company, One97 Communications Ltd., and Paytm Payments Bank Ltd., have been terminated by the central bank as part of the regulatory measures.

India's First Beachside Startup Fest In Mangalore On Feb 16

- The first-ever **Mangalore Beachside Startup Fest** is set to unfold from February 16th to 18th, marking a significant milestone in the region's entrepreneurial landscape.
- With a focus on nurturing and promoting nascent ventures, this event promises to be a catalyst for the burgeoning startup ecosystem in Mangalore.
- Under the banner of **Tapasya Beach Festival (TBF)**, the Mangalore Beachside Startup Fest is poised to become a **hub of creativity and innovation**.
- A highlight of the fest is the **opportunity for students to showcase their innovative ideas**. With approximately 20 startups expected to present their concepts, the event promises a diverse array of groundbreaking innovations across various domains.



Budget 2024: Bhutan Leads As Top Indian Aid Recipient

- The Interim Budget 2024, unveiled by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, sheds light on **India's foreign aid allocation, with Bhutan emerging as a significant recipient**.
- In the Financial Year 2024-25, India allocated a substantial portion of its budget to foreign aid, with a notable emphasis on Bhutan.
- The Indian government provided **₹6,541.79 crore** to foreign governments with **₹4,927.43 crore as a grant and ₹1,614.36 crore as a loan**, as per the revised estimates for 2023-24. It crossed the budget estimates of ₹5,848.58 crore for 2023-24.

RBI Announces: 97.50% Of Rs 2,000 Notes Returned To System

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) revealed on February 1 that **97.50% of the Rs 2,000 currency notes** in circulation as of May 19, 2023, have been successfully reintegrated into the banking system.
- The total value of Rs 2,000 banknotes in circulation decreased from Rs 3.56 lakh crore on May 19, 2023, to Rs 8,897 crore by January 31, 2024.
- The Rs 2,000 banknotes were introduced in **November 2016** to address the urgent currency requirements after the withdrawal of Rs 500 and Rs 1,000 notes. Printing of Rs 2,000 notes ceased in 2018-19 once an ample supply of other denominations became available. Despite this, Rs 2,000 notes remain legal tender, as confirmed by the RBI.

Uttarakhand Cabinet Approves Uniform Civil Code Bill: Tabled In Assembly On Feb 6

- The Uttarakhand Cabinet, led by Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami, has greenlit the **Uniform Civil Code (UCC) bill**, marking a historic move.
- The bill, crafted based on recommendations from a government-appointed committee, will be presented in the **Uttarakhand Assembly on February 6**. The committee suggests banning polygamy and child marriage, advocating for uniform marriageable age and divorce procedures.
- If passed, Uttarakhand would be the first state post-Independence to adopt the Uniform Civil Code, aiming to standardize civil laws for all citizens, irrespective of their religious affiliations.



Mukesh Ambani Tops Global Brand Guardianship Index 2024

- Mukesh Ambani, the visionary leader steering Reliance Industries Limited, secures the first position among Indian executives and an impressive second globally in the prestigious **Brand Guardianship Index 2024** by Brand Finance.
- This recognition places Ambani ahead of renowned global leaders such as Satya Nadella, Sundar Pichai, Tim Cook, and Elon Musk.

- Brand Finance's survey awarded Mukesh Ambani an impressive **Brand Guardianship Index (BGI) score of 80.3**. He stands just below the leading score of **81.6 held by Huateng Ma** of China-based Tencent. The BGI utilizes a balanced scorecard, emphasizing CEOs' ability to act as stewards of their company's brand and long-term value.

India's Woman Robot Astronaut "Vyommitra" Will Fly Into Space Ahead Of ISRO's Ambitious "Gaganyaan" Mission

- In a pioneering leap for India's space endeavors, **Vyommitra**, the woman robot astronaut developed by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), is set to embark on an uncrewed mission in the third quarter of this year.
- The mission, named after the Sanskrit words "**Vyoma**" (**Space**) and "**Mitra**" (**Friend**), signifies a significant stride towards the ambitious Gaganyaan mission, the country's maiden manned space flight, slated for 2025.
- Vyommitra, equipped with advanced capabilities, is designed to monitor module parameters, issue alerts, and execute life support operations.
- This female robot astronaut simulates human functions in the space environment, interacting seamlessly with the Life Support System. Its tasks include operating six panels and responding to queries, showcasing its versatility for space exploration.

Bharat Rang Mahotsav, India's Biggest Theatre Festival, Kicks Off In Gujarat

- The prestigious **Bharat Rang Mahotsav**, India's foremost theatre festival, inaugurated its festivities in the culturally vibrant Kachchh district of Gujarat, heralding the onset of a lively homage to the performing arts.
- The festival kicked off in grand style with a mesmerizing rendition of '**Uttararamacharitam**,' a classic masterpiece by Bhavabhuti, directed by Dr. Chavan Pramod R. from Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda. This stirring play, presented in Gujarati, showcased the remarkable talent of NSD students.
- As Bharat Rang Mahotsav enters its **25th year**, it stands as a testament to the diverse theatrical voices that enrich India's cultural landscape. From Mumbai to Srinagar, the festival brings together artists from

across the nation, offering a kaleidoscope of performances.

Isha Foundation's 242ft Adi Shiva Statue Approved Near Jewar Airport

- The **Civil Aviation Ministry** has granted in-principle approval for the installation of a towering **242 feet high statue of Adiyogi Shiva** near the upcoming Noida International Airport in Jewar, western Uttar Pradesh.
- The Isha Foundation has requested 200 acres of land from the Yamuna Authority for the establishment of the statue and associated facilities.
- The installation of the Adiyogi Shiva statue near the Noida Airport holds the promise of not only **enriching the spiritual identity of the region but also enhancing its cultural landscape**.
- As a beacon for yoga enthusiasts and spiritual seekers, it will complement existing landmarks and contribute to the harmonious coexistence of industrial and spiritual activities.



India To Fence Indo-Myanmar Border For Enhanced Security

- In an endeavor to bolster border security measures, India has embarked on a significant project to fence the entire **1643-kilometer-long Indo-Myanmar border**.
- With the surge of anti-Junta rebels and tribal militants crossing over since the 2021 Myanmar military coup, the fencing initiative aims to curb unauthorized border crossings and enhance security measures.
- Apart from fencing, the plan includes paving a patrol track along the border to facilitate better surveillance capabilities, ensuring comprehensive monitoring of border activities.



The Public Examinations (Prevention Of Unfair Means) Bill, 2024

- **The Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Bill, 2024**, represents a comprehensive legal framework aimed at safeguarding the integrity and fairness of public examinations across India. The bill is introduced to address and prevent the use of unfair means in public examinations.
- It encompasses a wide range of definitions and stipulations that clarify the roles, responsibilities, and penalties associated with the conduct of public examinations.
- The bill's enactment underscores the government's commitment to ensuring a transparent, equitable, and merit-based assessment system.

White Paper On Economy: NDA Govt To Table On Alleged UPA Govt's Economic Mis-Management

- India's Budget session has been extended by a day to allow for the tabling of a **"white paper"** on alleged economic mismanagement under the previous Congress-led UPA government.
- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will present the white paper in both houses of Parliament on **Feb 10**, highlighting the economic challenges faced before 2014 and the subsequent turnaround under the current government.
- The white paper serves as a tool for the government to communicate its **analysis of past economic policies** and present its vision for the future. It aims to educate the public on economic issues and gather feedback on proposed strategies.

Uttarakhand Pioneers Uniform Civil Code Implementation In India

- **Uttarakhand** has marked a significant milestone in **India's legislative history** by becoming the **first state** to implement the **Uniform Civil Code (UCC)**.
- The UCC aims to standardize laws governing personal matters like marriage, divorce, inheritance, and more across all citizens, irrespective of their religion.
- The journey towards implementing the Uniform Civil Code in Uttarakhand began with the formation of a high-level committee led by retired Supreme Court judge, **Justice Ranjana P Desai**. This committee was tasked with drafting the UCC, which laid the foundation for the Bill passed by the Uttarakhand Assembly.

Supreme Court Declares Electoral Bonds Scheme Unconstitutional

- In a landmark decision, the **Supreme Court** ruled the **electoral bonds scheme**



- **unconstitutional**, citing it as arbitrary and violative of **Article 14** of the Constitution.
- This verdict came following a batch of pleas challenging the legality of the scheme, which allowed for anonymous funding to political parties.
- A Constitution Bench headed by Chief Justice of India **Dr D.Y. Chandrachud** and also comprising **Justices Sanjiv Khanna, B.R. Gavai, J.B. Pardiwala and Manoj Mishra** has held that the non-disclosure of voluntary political contributions is violative of **Article 19(1)(a) of the Indian Constitution**.

Tata Group Achieves Historic ₹30 Lakh Crore Market Cap, With TCS Crosses 15 Lakh Crore

- Tata Group has made history by becoming the first Indian conglomerate to surpass the **₹30 lakh crore mark** in combined market capitalization.
- This significant achievement is driven by strong performances from key subsidiaries, including **Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), Tata Motors, Tata Power, and Indian Hotels**.
- TCS shares reached a new peak on February 5, with a remarkable surge of over 4 percent, propelling its market capitalization beyond **₹15 lakh crore**. This resurgence marks a significant milestone for the leading IT services company.

TomTom Traffic Index 2023: London Slowest, Bengaluru Second Most Congested City

- **TomTom**, a leading expert in location technology, has unveiled revealing insights into the global challenge of traffic congestion. Among the findings, **London emerges as a focal point**, experiencing the slowest traffic in 2023.
- **Bengaluru's ascent to the second spot as the most congested city in 2023**, according to TomTom's rankings, underscores the urgent need for intervention.
- **With Delhi ranking 44th and Mumbai 52nd**, there's a clear imperative for strategic interventions to

improve urban mobility and enhance the quality of life for residents.

Tata Trusts To Inaugurate India's First Small Animal Hospital In Mumbai

- In a visionary collaboration with philanthropist Ratan Tata, **Tata Trusts** proudly announces the launch of the nation's foremost **Small Animal Hospital in Mahalaxmi, Mumbai**. With a capacity exceeding 200 beds, the **hospital pledges round-the-clock services aimed at safeguarding the well-being of pets**.
- Spanning an impressive 98,000 square feet across five floors, this state-of-the-art facility epitomizes excellence in pet healthcare. Scheduled for inauguration in March 2024, the hospital is poised to revolutionize the landscape of pet healthcare.

Telangana To Establish AI Hub, Make Internet A Basic Right

- Telangana Governor **Tamilisai Soundararajan** made groundbreaking announcements outlining the state government's ambitious agenda for digital inclusion and technological advancement.
- With a focus on ensuring universal access to the internet and **positioning Hyderabad and Telangana as the nation's AI capital**, Governor Soundararajan's vision sets a bold precedent for the state's future development.
- Governor Soundararajan's commitment to **making the internet a basic right for all citizens of Telangana** underscores her dedication to bridging the digital divide and empowering every individual with the tools for success in the digital era.

Parliament Passes Historic JK ST Quota Bill, Two Other Reservation Bills

- The Rajya Sabha cleared three Bills related to J&K aiming to address issues of **reservation for marginalized communities** and modify existing lists of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the Union territory.
- 1. Jammu and Kashmir Local Bodies Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2024. 2. Constitution (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Tribes Order (Amendment) Bill, 2024. 3. Constitution (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Castes Order (Amendment) Bill, 2024.



- The purpose of passing the bills is to provide reservations to Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in local bodies within the Union Territory. It was moved by Union Minister of State for Home, Nityanand Rai.

Southern Railway Appoints First Transwoman TTE, Breaks Barriers In Dindigul

- **Sindhu Ganapathy** was appointed as the **first transwoman Travelling Ticket Examiner (TTE) of Southern Railway**. This marks a significant milestone in the journey towards inclusivity and acceptance in the Indian workforce.
- Ms. Ganapathy's career with the Railways began in 2003 when she joined as an Assistant. For years, life seemed . At the age of 37, Ms. Ganapathy has not only broken barriers but also set a precedent for the transgender community's representation in prestigious government positions.

Katrina Kaif Joins Chennai Super Kings As Brand Ambassador For IPL 2024

- **Chennai Super Kings (CSK)** have officially announced the appointment of **Katrina Kaif** as their brand ambassador for the upcoming **Indian Premier League (IPL) 2024 season**.
- The announcement of Katrina Kaif as the brand ambassador comes on the heels of CSK's newly inked sponsorship deal with Etihad Airways.
- Katrina Kaif, one of Bollywood's most celebrated actresses, is set to bring her star power to the cricketing world as the new face of Chennai Super Kings. Known for her charismatic presence and massive fan following, Kaif's association with CSK is expected to amplify the team's appeal and strengthen its connection with fans across the globe.

National Conference on APAAR: One Nation One Student ID Card Inaugurated by Dharmendra Pradhan

- Dharmendra Pradhan, Union Minister of Education, Skill Development, and Entrepreneurship, inaugurated the National Conference on **APAAR: One Nation One Student ID Card** in New Delhi.
- This conference aimed to emphasize the importance of the APAAR ID as a universally recognized



document for students across the nation. Pradhan highlighted the significance of Digital Public Infrastructures (DPIs) and their proliferation, both globally and within India, with 19 established DPIs in the country.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi Inaugurates Major Railway And Road Infrastructure Projects

- Prime Minister Modi led the inauguration and laying of foundation stones for several vital infrastructure encompassing railway modernization, road overpasses, and underpasses, aiming to enhance connectivity, safety, and efficiency.
- The objective of this initiative is to enhance station facilities by implementing modern infrastructure, thereby improving the overall passenger experience.
- The scope of the project involves the redevelopment of 553 railway stations spread across 27 states and union territories. The investment for this ambitious endeavor is estimated to exceed Rs 19,000 crore.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi Unveils 'PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana'

- Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has announced the launch of an ambitious scheme – the 'PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana'.
- Aimed at fostering a greener future and facilitating the nation's march towards energy self-sufficiency, this initiative is set to revolutionize the energy landscape of India.
- This pioneering project, with an earmarked investment exceeding **Rs 75,000 crore**, is designed to illuminate one crore households across the country by providing up to 300 units of free electricity every month, generated through solar power.

Luxury Train 'Palace On Wheels' To Begin Spiritual Journey

- After 42 years of its existence, the **Palace on Wheels** luxury train is set to embark on a new route, delving into the sacred Indian cities of **Ayodhya, Kashi, and Varanasi** in Uttar Pradesh.

- The **Palace on Wheels**, renowned for its opulence and comfort, has long been synonymous with exploring the royal heritage of Rajasthan.
- It will now offer a **six-day spiritual journey**, traversing from Delhi to Ayodhya, Prayagraj, Varanasi, Mathura, and Vrindavan. This religious tour aims to provide passengers with a profound immersion into the cultural and spiritual tapestry of India.

Farmers Protest 2.0: Key Demands Explained

- Farmers affiliated with the **Kisan Mazdoor Morcha (KMM)** and the **Samyukta Kisan Morcha (SKM)** are marching from Punjab and Haryana towards Delhi to demand key reforms. Their primary demand is the enactment of a law guaranteeing a **minimum support price (MSP)** for crops, addressing uncertainties in the market.

PM Modi's UAE Visit: UPI payment, CBSE office, BAPS Hindu temple and other key highlights

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** embarked on a two-day visit to the United Arab Emirates (UAE), where he was warmly received by President Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan.
- Their cordial meeting included discussions on various fronts, signifying the strengthening of bilateral relations.

Reliance Industries Hits ₹20-Lakh Crore Market Cap Milestone

- **Reliance Industries Limited (RIL)** achieved a significant milestone on Indian stock exchanges by surpassing a market capitalization of **₹20-lakh crore**.
- This marks the first instance of any company achieving this valuation on the Indian bourses. The surge in market value is attributed to various factors including robust performance across its business segments and favorable market conditions.

Supreme Court Collegium Recommends Transfer Of 3 High Court Judges

- The **Supreme Court collegium**, led by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud, has recommended the transfer of **three high court judges** upon their respective requests.

- The collegium has acceded to Justice Moushumi Bhattacharya's request and recommended her transfer to the High Court for the State of Telangana.
- The collegium has accepted Justice AnuSivaraman's request and recommended her transfer to the Karnataka High Court.
- The collegium has resolved to recommend Justice Sujoy Paul's transfer to the High Court for the State of Telangana, considering the better administration of justice.

16th Finance Commission Holds First Meeting Under Chairmanship Of Arvind Panagariya

- The 16th Finance Commission (FC) convened its inaugural session with Arvind Panagariya at the helm to deliberate upon its Terms of Reference (ToR).
- The commission aims to engage in comprehensive analytical endeavors and leverage expertise from prominent research institutions and think tanks specializing in fiscal federal relations.
- The 16th FC acknowledges the necessity for extensive consultations with diverse stakeholders, including state governments, local bodies, various ministries of the Government of India, and subject matter experts.



India's First Helicopter Emergency Medical Service (HEMS) To Start From Uttarakhand

- India is set to launch its first Helicopter Emergency Medical Service (HEMS) from Uttarakhand, marking a significant milestone in the country's healthcare and aviation sectors.
- The HEMS will be based at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Rishikesh, strategically located to cover a radius of 150 kilometers.
- This positioning enables the swift airlifting of individuals who have encountered accidents or medical emergencies, ensuring prompt access to critical healthcare facilities.

Major Iron Ore Deposits Uncovered In Rajasthan's Karauli

- Rajasthan's Karauli district has emerged as a new focal point for mineral exploration after the Mines Department announced the discovery of substantial iron ore deposits.
- This find, located near Hindon, spans approximately 1,888 hectares and is poised to significantly impact the state's industrial landscape.
- Mines Secretary Anandi highlighted this discovery's potential to spur industrial development and generate employment opportunities within the state.



Tamil Nadu Assembly Rejects Delimitation And 'One Nation, One Election' Proposals

- The Tamil Nadu Assembly made a political statement by unanimously adopting two resolutions that challenge the Union government's proposals on 'One Nation, One Election' and the post-2026 delimitation process.
- The first resolution openly criticizes the concept of 'One Nation, One Election,' arguing that it undermines the essence of federalism and democratic decentralization.
- The second resolution expresses apprehensions about the proposed delimitation process, suggesting it could unfairly penalize states like Tamil Nadu, which have made significant strides in socio-economic development.

Himachal Pradesh Leads As India's Most Welcoming Region In 2024

- In a recent announcement, Booking.com, the popular online travel agency, unveiled its 12th Annual Traveller Review Awards 2024, highlighting the Most Welcoming Regions and Cities in India.
- Securing the top spot in the category of the 'Most Welcoming



Region in India' is **Himachal Pradesh**, showcasing a remarkable jump from the 5th position in 2023.

- This recognition reflects the state's commitment to providing a warm and hospitable environment for travelers. The rankings further feature **Goa, Kerala, Rajasthan, and Uttarakhand** in the following positions.

India Achieves Global Digitalization Milestone As Third Largest Digital Economy

- **India** has cemented its position as the **third-largest digitalized nation in the world**, trailing only behind the technological powerhouses of the **United States of America (USA) and China**.
- This significant finding is part of the **"State of India's Digital Economy Report, 2024,"** unveiled by the **Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER)**, a renowned Delhi-based think tank.
- The report paints a comprehensive picture of India's digital landscape, comparing it favorably with some of the world's most developed economies, yet highlighting areas for improvement in user-level digital engagement.

India's Outward FDI In January 2024 Rises 25.7% To \$2.1 Billion

- According to recent data released by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), In January 2024, India's outward foreign direct investment (FDI) commitments surged by **25.7% year-on-year to \$2.09 billion**.
- In January 2024, equity commitments surged to \$760.9 million, marking a substantial increase from \$597.4 million recorded in January 2023. However, this figure was slightly lower than the equity commitments of \$834.7 million reported in December 2023.

Maharashtra Government Extends 10% Reservation To Marathas

- The Maharashtra Cabinet has approved a draft bill to extend a **10 percent reservation to the Maratha community** in both educational institutions and government employment.
- This move follows a report submitted by the **Maharashtra Backward Class Commission**



(**MBCC**) justifying the extension beyond the 50 percent cap.

- The government has scheduled a special session of the state assembly to introduce the bill in response to Maratha quota activist **Manoj JarangePatil's hunger strike**.

Chandigarh Unveils North India's First 'Pizza ATM'

- **CITCO** (Chandigarh Industrial and Tourism Development Corporation) introduces a **pizza maker** near Sukhna Lake, producing hot pizzas in three minutes, a first in North India.
- The pizza vending machine is the only one operational in India, marking a significant breakthrough. **Dr. Rohit Shekhar Sharma**, Founder & CEO at iMatrix Group of Companies leads the project inspired by France.
- The machine is crafted at their Mohali factory, outperforming similar ventures, dispensing 100 pizzas daily. Operational since early 2024, the Pizza ATM swiftly becomes a local favorite, offering both vegetarian and non-vegetarian options.

Reliance Industries, Tata Power, Adani Power, And Vedanta Ltd: Private Investment In India's Nuclear Energy Sector

- The Indian government is set to invite private investment worth **\$26 billion** into its **nuclear energy sector**. This initiative aims to bolster non-carbon-emitting energy sources, aligning with India's goal of increasing non-fossil fuel-based electricity generation to 50% by 2030.
- Private firms, including **Reliance Industries, Tata Power, Adani Power, and Vedanta Ltd**, are being approached for investments totaling around 440 billion rupees each (\$5.30 billion).
- The **Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL)** will retain rights for building, operating, and managing the nuclear stations, including fuel management.



Reliance Industries Is Set To Launch 'Hanooman', A ChatGPT-Style AI Service

- **Reliance Industries**, led by **Mukesh Ambani**, in collaboration with some of the country's premier engineering institutions, is poised to unveil its pioneering **ChatGPT-style service named 'Hanooman' next month.**
- The development of 'Hanooman' is a result of a concerted effort between **Reliance JioInfocomm, Centre, and several Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT), including IIT Bombay.**
- This endeavor, featuring a consortium of Reliance and eight affiliated universities, underscores the synergy between India's leading corporate powerhouse and its academic institutions in pushing the frontiers of technology.

India Opens Space Sector To 100% Foreign Investment

- India has taken a significant step by opening its space sector to **100% foreign direct investment**



(FDI) through an amendment in the FDI policy.

- Under the amended FDI policy, various sub-sectors and activities within the space sector now have liberalized FDI thresholds
- The liberalized entry routes are expected to enhance the ease of doing business in India, leading to increased FDI inflows and contributing to overall economic growth, investment, income, and employment opportunities.

1st Ever Skill India Centre Inaugurated In Sambalpur, Odisha

- Union Minister of Education and Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, **Shri Dharmendra Pradhan**, spearheaded the inauguration of the **first Skill India Centre (SIC) in Sambalpur, Odisha.**
- The centre boasts best-in-class infrastructure, cutting-edge technologies, and modern facilities to facilitate effective learning

- The aim is to empower over **1200 students through this centre** and equip them with the necessary skills for the 21st-century job market.

PhonePe Launches Indus Appstore To Challenge Google And Apple

- PhonePe has launched the **Indus Appstore**, a made-in-India Android app marketplace, aiming to rival Google Play Store and Apple App Store.
- The platform hosts over **2 Lakh apps** across 45 categories. Indus Appstore boasts a wide array of apps from Indian brands such as Zomato, Myntra, Domino's, Flipkart, Dream11, Swiggy, and more.
- The marketplace is accessible in English and 12 Indian languages, ensuring inclusivity and catering to a broader user base. Until March 2025, developers are exempt from app listing fees, fostering an environment conducive to app development and innovation.

Cybercrime Report: India Ranks 80th Worldwide

- In 2023, India ranked as the **80th most targeted country** for cybercrime globally. Local threats affected approximately 34% of users, resulting in the blocking of 74,385,324 incidents by **Kaspersky products.**
- Nearly 34% of Indian users experienced local threats, leading to the blocking of over 74 million incidents. Nature of Threats Includes malicious programs directly on users' devices and removable media, as well as those initially hidden within complex installers or encrypted files.



PMModi To Lay Foundation For 550 Amrit Bharat Stations

- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** is scheduled to inaugurate the foundation stone laying ceremony for **550 Amrit Bharat stations on February 26.**
- The initiative aims to improve railway station facilities by developing rooftop plazas and city centers, with an investment of Rs 40,000 crore.



- Additionally, the Prime Minister will lay foundation stones for about **1,500 road overbridges and underbridges across different states.**

PMModi Inaugurates Ninth Edition Of Raisina Dialogue

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the **9th edition of Raisina Dialogue** in New Delhi, marking a significant moment for global discourse on geopolitics and geo-economics.
- Joining him in the inaugural session was the Prime Minister of Greece, **Kyriakos Mitsotakis**, who graced the event as the Chief Guest.
- The theme of the 9th edition, **“Chaturanga: Conflict, Contest, Cooperate, Create,”** reflects the multifaceted nature of global challenges and the imperative of collaboration in addressing them.

India Unveils Largest Solar-Battery Project, Pioneering Renewable Energy Innovation

- The **Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI)** has commissioned **India’s largest solar-battery energy storage system (BESS) in Rajnandgaon, Chhattisgarh.**
- This large-scale integration of solar and battery storage represents a **pioneering leap** in renewable energy generation and utilization in India.
- The project addresses peak energy demand by storing solar energy during the day and releasing it during evening hours, ensuring **grid stability and reliability.**



India Unveils Largest Solar-Battery Project, Pioneering Renewable Energy Innovation

PMModi Inaugurates Sikkim’s First Railway Station In Rangpo

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi ceremonially laid the foundation stone for **Sikkim’s inaugural railway station in Rangpo**, marking a significant moment in the state’s history.
- The station’s design is deeply rooted in local culture, heritage, and architecture. The inauguration of the Rangpo railway station is part of a larger initiative to enhance rail infrastructure nationwide.

- **With over 2,000 projects valued at approximately Rs 41,000 crore**, this ambitious endeavor aims to revolutionize transportation networks, fostering connectivity and economic development.

VijayShekhar Sharma Steps Down From Paytm Payments Bank Board

- In a significant development, **Vijay Shekhar Sharma**, the Founder and CEO of Paytm, has resigned from his role as part-time non-executive chairman and board member of **Paytm Payments Bank.**
- This move comes amidst a restructuring of the bank’s board in response to regulatory concerns and a directive from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to wind down operations by March 15.
- Vijay Shekhar Sharma holds a **51% stake in Paytm Payments Bank**, while One97 Communications, the parent company of Paytm, owns the remaining stake.

Gaganyaan Mission And ISRO Projects Inauguration By PM Modi

- PM Modi disclosed the identities of the four pilots currently undergoing training for India’s first human space flight mission, Gaganyaan, during his visit to the Vikram Sarabhai Space Center (VSSC) in Kerala’s Thiruvananthapuram.
- The astronauts, **Group Captain P Balakrishnan Nair, Group Captain Ajit Krishnan, Group Captain AngadPratap, and Wing Commander S Shukla**, were also awarded ‘astronaut wings’ by the Prime Minister.
- The Gaganyaan mission marks India’s pioneering venture into manned space exploration, slated for launch between 2024-2025.

Reliance Launches “Vantara,” A National Initiative For Animal Welfare

- **Reliance Industries and Reliance Foundation** have launched a bold initiative, **Vantara (Star of the Forest)**, dedicated to the rescue, treatment, care, and rehabilitation of animals in need.
- This ambitious program is spearheaded by **AnantAmbani**. Vantara’s core lies in a sprawling **3,000-acre sanctuary** within the **Green Belt of Reliance’s Jamnagar Refinery Complex in Gujarat.**

Norovirus: Symptoms, Causes, Prevention & Treatment

- **Norovirus**, a highly contagious virus belonging to the Caliciviridae family, presents a significant public health concern worldwide.



- Characterized by its rapid transmission through various mediums, **including close personal contact, contaminated surfaces**, and consumption of infected food or water, this pathogen poses challenges for both healthcare systems and individuals alike.

Uttarakhand To Become Third State Enacting Law Holding Rioters Liable For Damages

- The **Uttarakhand government** will introduce a bill to hold rioters responsible for damage to both government and private property.
- In the upcoming budget session, they intend to present the **Uttarakhand Public and Private Property Damage Recovery Bill**, aiming to make rioters financially liable for losses resulting from protests or strikes.
- Uttarakhand is poised to become the **third state**, after **Uttar Pradesh and Haryana**, to enact such a law. The move aligns with the govt's agenda to maintain law and order and protect public and private assets from unlawful destruction.

World's First Vedic Clock Unveiled In Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh

- **Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh**, is set to unveil a groundbreaking innovation in timekeeping with the world's first **Vedic Clock**.
- This meticulously crafted timepiece, housed on an **85-foot tower at the city's JantarMantar**, will be officially inaugurated on **March 1st, 2024**, by **Prime Minister NarendraModi** in a virtual ceremony.
- Located near the **Government Jiwaji Observatory**, the Vedic clock transcends the conventional role of displaying time. It is designed to offer comprehensive information relevant to the **Vedic Hindu Panchang**.

PM NarendraModi Inaugurates India's Longest Cable-Stayed Bridge, SudarshanSetu

- Prime Minister **NarendraModi** inaugurated India's longest cable-stayed bridge, **Sudarshan Setu**, in **Gujarat's Dwarka**.
- This monumental infrastructure project, connecting **Okha** and



BeytDwarkaisland, stands as a testament to the nation's commitment to progress and connectivity.

- **SudarshanSetu**, formerly known as the **Signature Bridge**, has been constructed at a cost of **₹979 crore**. Spanning an impressive **2.32 km**, it is India's longest cable-stayed bridge, serving as a vital link between the **Okha mainland and BeytDwarkaisland**.

International

BRICS Welcomes New Members: Saudi Arabia, Egypt, UAE, Iran, And Ethiopia

- In a significant development on January 1, **Saudi Arabia, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, Iran, and Ethiopia** officially joined the BRICS group, expanding its membership to ten nations.
- The expansion, initially set to occur during the 15th BRICS summit in August 2023 in Johannesburg, South Africa, aims to enhance the group's influence on the global stage. Argentina, initially invited, opted out in December.
- The newly enlarged BRICS now boasts a combined population of 3.5 billion and an economy exceeding \$28.5tn, constituting around 28% of the global economy. While this growth signals a potential geopolitical shift, analysts express uncertainty over its impact on decision-making and overall group dynamics.



India Launches UPI Payments At Eiffel Tower In Paris

- India has officially introduced the **Unified Payments Interface (UPI)** at the iconic **Eiffel Tower** in Paris, marking a significant step towards realizing Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of globalizing UPI.
- **NPCI International Payments (NIPL)** has partnered with French e-commerce and proximity payments company, **Lyra**, to facilitate the acceptance of UPI payments in France.
- The collaboration between **India and France** in the digital payments sector, initiated in July, allows the use of India's UPI for retail payments in France. This groundbreaking agreement positions France as the pioneer in embracing UPI on the European continent.



France Takes Lead As First EU Nation To Offer Digital Visas

- **As of January 1, 2024**, France has pioneered the issuance of **Digital Schengen visas**, marking a significant leap in streamlining visa processes within the **European Union**.
- This groundbreaking initiative precedes the broader digitalization of Schengen visa procedures scheduled for full implementation in **2026**.
- France takes the lead in digitalizing the Schengen visa system, setting the stage for a more efficient and streamlined application process. The initiative aims to enhance visa accessibility and convenience, particularly with the upcoming major sporting events in mind.

Russian Cosmonaut Oleg Kononenko Sets World Record For Most Time In Space

- Russian cosmonaut **Oleg Kononenko** achieved a historic milestone by setting a world record for the **most time spent in space**, surpassing his compatriot



Gennady Padalka's previous record of 878 days in orbit.

- At 0830 GMT, Oleg Kononenko officially broke the record, marking a significant achievement in the history of space exploration. His dedication and contributions to space missions have positioned him as a prominent figure in the realm of human spaceflight.
- The 59-year-old cosmonaut surpassed the previous record held by Gennady Padalka, who accumulated a total of 878 days, 11 hours, 29 minutes, and 48 seconds in space.

Israeli Researchers Uncover Underwater Canyon Near Cyprus

- The **Geological Institute of Israel** has recently made a groundbreaking discovery near Cyprus, uncovering an underwater canyon of unprecedented proportions.
- Named **Eratosthenes** after the nearby underwater mountain, this canyon sheds new light on the geological history of the Mediterranean region.

- Eratosthenes Canyon is a relic of the past, dating back approximately **5.5 million years** to the Messinian Event. Stretching across approximately 10 kilometers in width and plunging to depths of 500 meters, Eratosthenes Canyon's sheer magnitude is awe-inspiring.

Iran Abolishes Visa Requirements For Indian Tourists From Feb 4, 2024

- Iran eliminates visa requirements for Indian tourists from **February 4, 2024**, aiming to boost tourism and global engagement. Indian ordinary passport holders can visit every six months for up to 15 days.
- Iran has expanded its visa waiver program to include **33 countries**, alongside India, to encourage overseas travelers, showcasing its commitment to global interaction.
- The countries approved for Iran's new visa waiver program include **India, Russia, UAE, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait**, and others.



Monkey Fever

- **Kyasanur Forest Disease** also known as **Monkey Fever**, has emerged as a significant health concern in Karnataka, India. With two fatalities reported this year and 49 positive cases, the state's health department is on high alert.
- Originating from the Kyasanur Forest in 1957, KFD is caused by the **Kyasanur Forest Disease Virus (KFDV)**, belonging to the Flaviviridae family.
- The state has witnessed 49 confirmed cases this year, leading to heightened efforts by health officials to contain the spread. The majority of cases have been reported in the Uttara Kannada district, signalling a concentrated outbreak zone.

Google Rebrands Its Chatbot, Bard, As Gemini

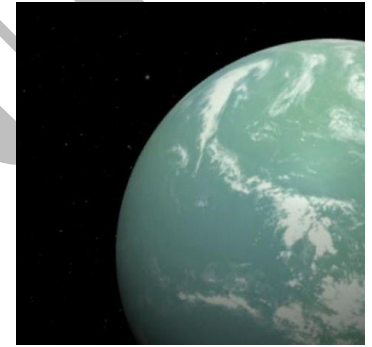
- Alphabet's Google has made significant strides in the realm of artificial intelligence (AI), recently rebranding its chatbot and introducing a new subscription plan.
- Formerly known as Bard, Google's chatbot has undergone a transformation and is now dubbed

Gemini. This rebranding effort coincides with the launch of a new subscription plan, offering users access to Google's most advanced AI model, the **Ultra 1.0**, within the Gemini family.

- Gemini will seamlessly integrate with popular Google products like **Gmail and Google Docs**, offering users a cohesive AI experience across various platforms. This integration sets Google apart from its competitors and enhances user convenience.

NASA Discovers Super-Earth In The Habitable Zone

- **NASA's Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS)** has made a significant discovery—a **super-Earth** located in a habitable zone, offering tantalizing possibilities for the conditions conducive to life.
- This discovery sheds light on the diversity of planets in our universe and the potential for habitable worlds beyond our solar system.
- The newly discovered exoplanet, named **TOI-715 b**, is situated in a solar system 137 light-years away from Earth. In cosmic terms, this distance is relatively close, offering astronomers a valuable opportunity for detailed study.



India To Replace Military Personnel With Technical Staff In Maldives

- India has announced the **replacement of military personnel** operating aviation platforms in the Maldives with competent Indian technical personnel.
- MEA Spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal confirmed the decision, stating that the current military personnel will be substituted with skilled technical personnel. This move aims to maintain operational expertise while addressing the Maldives' request for the withdrawal of Indian troops.
- The first aircraft's military personnel will be replaced by Indian technical personnel by March 10. Replacement of military personnel in the remaining two aircraft will be finalized by May 10.

7th Indian Ocean Conference Held In Perth, Australia

- The **7th Indian Ocean Conference** recently convened in Perth, Australia, drawing together leaders, ministers, and officials from Indian Ocean rim countries.
- Organized by **India Foundation** in collaboration with the **Ministry of External Affairs and Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**, the conference aimed to address diverse issues under the theme “**Towards a Stable and Sustainable Indian Ocean.**”
- The IOC aims to foster **Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR)** by uniting critical states and principal maritime partners in dialogue and cooperation.



Dubai Launches World's First Air Taxi Service at World Government Summit 2024

- At the **World Government Summit 2024**, Dubai has unveiled groundbreaking agreements to introduce the world's inaugural air taxi service, setting a new standard in urban transportation.
- This initiative, centered around the innovative **Joby Aviation S4 aircraft**, promises to revolutionize Dubai's cityscape with its electric-powered, environmentally friendly design.

India In Talks For Full Membership With IEA

- India is engaged in discussions with ministers from member countries of the **International Energy Agency (IEA)** regarding its application to attain full membership in the **Paris-based organization**, comprising **31 nations**.
- These talks acknowledge India's strategic significance in addressing global energy and climate challenges, as highlighted during the IEA's 2024 ministerial meeting held in Paris.
- The IEA, comprising **31 member countries** and **eight associates**, has four countries, including India, seeking full membership.

Saudi Arabia's First Luxury Train 'Dream Of The Desert' Set To Launch First In The Middle East

- **Saudi Arabia** is preparing to introduce its **first luxury train**, named the **Dream of the Desert**. It will be the first luxury train in the Middle East, offering travelers a journey through Saudi Arabia.
- The **800-mile journey** will begin in Riyadh, the capital city of Saudi Arabia, and wind its way northwest toward the border with Jordan.
- With its promise of luxury and cultural immersion, this new venture is positioned to become a classic in its own right. Reservations for the train's first ride will open by late 2024, before its planned launch in 2025.

Germany Overtakes Japan As Third-Largest Economy

- Official data reveals that **Germany** has surpassed **Japan** as the world's **third-largest economy**, primarily due to a significant depreciation in the yen compared to the stability of the euro.
- Japan's economy, despite growing 1.9% last year, contracted in the fourth quarter, leading to its relegation to the fourth position.
- The yen depreciated by over 18% against the dollar in 2022 and 2023, facilitating Germany's ascendancy due to the stability of the euro against the dollar.

Prabowo Subianto Wins Indonesian Presidency: A Decisive Victory

- **Prabowo Subianto** emerges victorious in Indonesia's Presidential race, securing nearly 60% of the votes in the first round.
- His military background and alignment with **President Joko Widodo's** policies propel him to a clear-cut victory, sparking positive reactions in Indonesian markets.
- Prabowo's running mate, **Gibran RakabumingRaka**, the eldest son of President Joko Widodo, is set to become the youngest vice-president in Indonesian history.

US House Passes Quad Bill: All You Need To Know

- The **US House of Representatives** has overwhelmingly passed the **Quad bill** aimed at enhancing cooperation between the **US, Australia, India, and Japan**.
- The bill mandates the establishment of a **Quad Intra-Parliamentary Working Group** to bolster joint efforts in various domains.

- This landmark legislation aims to bolster collaboration among the United States, Australia, India, and Japan. Its primary objective is to foster closer ties and facilitate strategic cooperation between these key nations.

Greece Legalizes Same-Sex Marriage: A Landmark Decision

- Greece has made history by legalizing same-sex marriage and granting equal parental rights to same-sex couples, marking a significant shift in the country's societal and legal landscape.
- The newly passed legislation not only recognizes same-sex marriages but also ensures equal parental rights for same-sex couples.
- This includes granting both parents in a same-sex union the same legal status as guardians, allowing them to make crucial decisions for their children and participate fully in their upbringing.



Japan's 1,000-Year-Old Sominsai Festival Comes To An End

- The **Sominsai festival**, an ancient tradition deeply rooted in Japanese culture, has recently concluded its final celebration after a millennium-long legacy.
- Commencing on the **seventh day of the Lunar New Year** and spanning through the night, it was a spectacle of tradition and spirituality.
- At the heart of the festival was a display of fervor and tradition as **hundreds of nude men engaged in spirited wrestling matches** over wooden talismans.

Malta Becomes 119th Country to Join International Solar Alliance

- **Malta**, a small yet significant player in the global arena, recently took a remarkable step towards sustainable energy by joining the **International Solar Alliance (ISA)**.
- This move underscores the country's commitment to reducing reliance on non-renewable energy sources and embracing environmentally friendly alternatives.



- With this development, Malta becomes the 119th nation to join the alliance, reinforcing the collective effort to combat climate change through solar energy deployment.

America's Odysseus Spacecraft Makes 1st Commercial Moon Landing In History

- In a historic moment for space exploration, the **Odysseus spacecraft**, spearheaded by **Intuitive Machines (IM)**, has achieved what was once solely the domain of national space agencies: a successful soft landing on the lunar surface.
- This landmark event marks the first commercial venture to accomplish such a feat, signalling a significant leap forward in private sector involvement in space exploration.
- The significance of this achievement cannot be overstated. Not since the **Apollo era in 1972** has an American spacecraft delicately touched down on the moon's surface.



Philippines Becomes First Asian Country To Ratify ILO Convention To End Workplace Violence And Harassment

- The **Philippines** has achieved a significant milestone by becoming the first Asian country to ratify the **Violence and Harassment Convention 2019 (No. 190)** as announced by the **International Labor Organization (ILO)**.
- The convention addresses workplace violence and harassment comprehensively, marking a crucial step towards ensuring safe and respectful work environments globally.
- By ratifying **Convention No. 190**, the Philippines joins **37 other nations** in the world that have taken a stance against workplace violence and harassment.



Mobile World Congress 2024 Begins On February 26

- Every year, the **Mobile World Congress (MWC)** brings people from the mobile industry together and gives them a chance to connect as well as collaborate.



- The Mobile World Congress 2024 will be hosted by **GSMA**, the global association representing the interests of mobile network operators worldwide.
- The event will take place in the vibrant city of **Barcelona, Spain**, known for its rich cultural heritage and innovative spirit.

Giant Anaconda Discovered In Amazon Rainforest

- In a groundbreaking expedition led by **National Geographic**, the scientific community and the world at large have been introduced to a previously unknown giant lurking in the depths of the **Amazon rainforest**.
- The newly discovered **Northern Green Anaconda**, scientifically named **Eunectesakayima**, challenges our perceptions of the natural world.
- It measures an astonishing **26 feet in length and weighs 200 kg**. Its head, comparable in size to that of a human, and a body as wide as a car tyre underscore the snake's immense size and strength.

Dubai Introduces 5-Year Multiple-Entry Visa For Indian Travelers

- **Dubai's Department of Economy and Tourism (DET)** has announced the introduction of a five-year multiple-entry visa aimed at enhancing travel between India and the UAE.
- This initiative comes in response to the significant increase in Indian visitors to Dubai, with India being the top source market for tourists in the region.
- The visa is processed within 2-5 working days upon application acceptance, granting holders a 90-day stay in the UAE, extendable once for an additional 90 days, with a maximum cumulative stay of 180 days within a year.

UAE Removed From FATF Gray List

- Less than two years after being demoted to the **Financial Action Task Force's (FATF) "gray list,"** the United Arab Emirates (UAE) has been

swiftly removed, signaling significant progress in the country's efforts to combat illicit financial activities.

- The Paris-based watchdog acknowledged the UAE's strengthened anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing measures, leading to the country's exit from increased monitoring. **Namibia and Kenya** have been placed on the gray list following the latest FATF review.

Algeria Inaugurates World's Third-Largest Mosque

- **Algeria** celebrated the grand opening of what has been acclaimed as "**Africa's largest mosque**" and the third-largest mosque in the world.
- Known as **Djamaa El-Djazair**, this monumental structure is more than just a mosque; it's an architectural marvel and a modernist wonder.
- Featuring the tallest minaret (A tall, thin tower) globally, standing at **265 meters**, this structure has the capacity to host 120,000 worshippers.

New Zealand To Repeal Anti-Tobacco Law

- New Zealand, under Prime Minister Christopher Luxon's coalition government, is repealing the law banning

tobacco sales to future generations, originally enacted during Jacinda



Arden's tenure

- **Sales to individuals born after Jan. 1, 2009**, would have been prohibited, alongside other stringent regulations. The legislation aimed to drastically reduce nicotine content and slash the number of tobacco retailers by over 90%.
- The new coalition government, elected in October, has announced the urgent repeal of the groundbreaking law. Repeal will occur without public consultation, aligning with previous plans of the administration.

Peru declares dengue health emergency

- **Peru** has declared a **health emergency** in response to the escalating cases of **dengue fever** across the nation.
- Health Minister **Cesar Vasquez** announced on Monday that over **31,000** cases of dengue have been reported within the first eight weeks of **2024**, resulting

in 32 fatalities. The emergency declaration will encompass 20 out of Peru's 25 regions.

Lord Buddha Sacred Relics Enshrined In Thailand

- In a ceremony, the **Holy Relics of Lord Buddha and His Two Disciples** were enshrined for public reverence. A procession, emanating from the national museum, showcased the cultural heritage of Thailand.
- The **Governor of Bihar, Shri Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar**, presented the Holy Relics of Buddha to **Thai Prime Minister (Chairman), Mr. Srettha Thavisin**.
- This parade, **spanning 26 days**, celebrated the spiritual significance of the Relics and highlighted the friendship between India and Thailand, symbolized by the display of their national flags and cultural exhibitions.

India's Position At 42 In The Global Intellectual Property Index 2024



- The **US Chamber of Commerce** recently unveiled the **12th edition** of its **International Intellectual Property (IP) Index**, offering a comprehensive evaluation of the IP landscape across the globe.
- This year's index ranked 55 economies, assessing their IP frameworks' effectiveness in fostering innovation and creative industries. **India secured the 42nd position out of the 55 countries evaluated**, with an overall score of 38.64 percent.
- The United States retained its position at the pinnacle, followed closely by the United Kingdom and France, highlighting the critical role of robust IP systems in economic development.

Defence

Delhi's Beating Retreat: A Spectacle Of Tradition And Music

- At the Vijay Chowk on January 29, the **Beating Retreat ceremony**, which signifies the end of Republic Day celebrations, began amid the strains of beautiful music.
- The traditional 'buggy' that President and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces **Droupadi Murmu** arrived at the location in added to the event's vintage charm, which dates back to its **inception in the early 1950s**.
- **Major Roberts** of the Indian Army created the original ceremonial of the massed bands performing a beatdown in the early 1950s, which is when the Beating Retreat ceremony first emerged. Over the years, it has evolved into a grand spectacle that showcases the unity, discipline, and musical prowess of India's military and paramilitary forces.

INS Sandhayak: A New Chapter In India's Naval Mapping And Surveillance

- On February 3, **Visakhapatnam's Naval Dockyard** will witness a momentous occasion as **Defence Minister Rajnath Singh** presides over the commissioning ceremony of **INS Sandhayak**.
- Built by the GRSE in Kolkata, the 110-meter-long **INS Sandhayak** displaces about 3,800 tonnes and boasts an impressive 80 percent indigenous content.
- The ship is propelled by two robust diesel engines, ensuring she can reach speeds over 18 Knots. With an endurance of over 25 days, **INS Sandhayak** is well-equipped for extended missions.



Preeti Rajak Becomes Indian Army's First Female Subedar

- **Havildar Preeti Rajak**, a distinguished trap shooter in the Indian Army, has reached a historic milestone by being promoted to the esteemed rank of **Subedar**.



- She becomes the **first woman in the Indian Army to hold this prestigious rank**, signifying not only her personal accomplishment but also a significant advancement for women in the armed forces.
- Rajak embarked on her journey with the **Corps of Military Police in December 2022**, earning her place through her outstanding performance in trap shooting. She made history as the first meritorious sportswoman in the shooting discipline to be enrolled in the army as a havildar, laying the foundation for her trailblazing career.

India-US Seal \$4B MQ-9B Armed Drone Deal

- India's strategic collaboration with the **United States** in defense takes a significant leap forward with the procurement of **MQ-9B armed drones**.
- The **MQ-9B**, developed by **General Atomics Aeronautical Systems Inc.**, epitomizes the cutting-edge advancements in armed drone technology.
- Designed to provide unparalleled intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities, the **MQ-9B** heralds a new era in modern warfare.
- India's procurement plan includes acquiring a **total of 31 MQ-9B drones**. Among these, the Indian Navy will receive **15 MQ-9B SeaGuardian drones**, while the Army and Air Force will each be equipped with **eight MQ-9B SkyGuardian drones**.

The Indo-Japan "Dharma Guardian" Military Exercise Begins

- The **5th edition** of the **Joint Military Exercise 'Dharma Guardian'** commenced today at the Mahajan Field Firing Ranges in Rajasthan, India.
- The exercise, scheduled to run from February 25th to March 9th, 2024, brings together the **Indian Army and the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force**

(JGSDF) for a focused training program aimed at enhancing interoperability and fostering closer military cooperation.

- The exercise focuses on joint tactical maneuvers in a simulated semi-urban environment, adhering to the principles outlined in Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter.

IAF To Conduct Exercise Vayu Shakti-2024

- The **Indian Air Force (IAF)** is set to conduct **Exercise Vayu Shakti-24**, a grand display of its aerial might, on 17 February 2024, at the Pokhran Air to Ground Range near Jaisalmer.



IAF To Conduct Exercise Vayu Shakti-2024

- Following the successful execution of the previous edition on 16 February 2019, this year's exercise promises to be an even more impressive demonstration of the IAF's offensive and defensive capabilities, both during the day and night.
- Exercise Vayu Shakti is a biennial event that serves as a testament to the Indian Air Force's strategic capabilities. It is an opportunity for the IAF to demonstrate its combat readiness and operational effectiveness, showcasing a wide array of aircraft and weapon systems in action.

Defence Minister Unveils The Statue General BipinRawat In Dehradun

- In a memorable event at **TonsBridge School in Dehradun**, Defence Minister **Rajnath Singh** and Uttarakhand's CM **Pushkar Singh Dhami** unveiled a statue of General BipinRawat, who was India's first Chief of Defence Staff (CDS).
- During the event, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh shared stories of General Rawat's courage and dedication. He talked about an incident which motivated General Rawat to improve the operations of the Indian Army along the borders with Pakistan and China when he was the Army Chief and later as the CDS.
- Singh praised General Rawat for his commitment to the country's security and his role as a true symbol of the military's values. He mentioned how General Rawat's life motto, 'Die with your boots on,' showed his dedication to duty until his last breath.

Visakhapatnam To Host 12th Edition Of MILAN Naval Exercise

- The 12th edition of the MILAN naval exercise is poised to set sail in the strategic port city of Visakhapatnam from February 19 to 27, marking a significant



Visakhapatnam to host 12th edition of MILAN naval exercise

- gathering of naval forces from over 50 countries.
- This year's theme, "Forging Naval Alliances for a Secure Maritime Future," underscores the exercise's commitment to enhancing global maritime security through cooperation and strategic dialogue.
- MILAN 2023 seeks to bolster the safety of maritime trade, a vital artery of the global economy, through shared efforts and expertise.

Indian Air Force (IAF) Conducted 'Exercise Vayu Shakti-24'

- Indian Air Force (IAF) conducted 'Exercise Vayu Shakti-24' at the Pokhran range near Jaisalmer, Rajasthan, presenting a formidable display of its aerial firepower.



Indian Air Force (IAF) conducted 'Exercise Vayu Shakti-24'

- The event, attended by the Chief of Defence Staff, General Anil Chauhan, marked a significant demonstration of the IAF's offensive capabilities through a series of meticulously planned aerial manoeuvres and precision strikes.
- Adhering to this year's theme, 'Lightning Strike from the Sky', the exercise involved over 120 aircraft showcasing the IAF's day and night offensive prowess.

Multinational Military Exercise 'Shanti Prayas IV' Commences In Kathmandu

- Kathmandu became the focal point of global peacekeeping efforts as it hosted the commencement of the multinational military exercise 'Shanti Prayas IV'.
- This event, which draws army representatives from 19 countries actively involved in United Nations

Peacekeeping missions, underscores the collaborative spirit and dedication towards maintaining global peace and security.

- The Shanti Prayas Exercise is co-hosted by the Nepali Army and the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, reflecting the strong military cooperation between Nepal and the United States

India Hosts Milan Naval Exercise With Participation Of Nearly 50 Countries

- India is hosting the 12th edition of the 'Milan' naval exercise in Visakhapatnam, aimed at bolstering maritime cooperation among like-minded nations.



- Navies from almost 50 countries

including the US, Japan, Australia, France, Bangladesh, South Korea, Vietnam, Indonesia, and Malaysia are participating.

- Milan is a biennial multinational naval exercise initiated in 1995 with the participation of Indonesia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, and Thailand, aligned with India's 'Look East' policy. The exercise evolved under the Andaman and Nicobar Command until its 10th edition.

DRDO To Test Indigenous Laser Weapon DURGA-2

- In a notable stride towards advanced military technology, the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) is reportedly gearing up to test a real prototype of its indigenous laser weapon system, DURGA-2.
- Directed energy weapons, commonly known as laser weapons, operate by focusing energy through laser, microwave, or particle beams. If successfully developed and deployed, such weapons have the capability to safeguard vital defense infrastructure from missile or air attacks.

Trilateral Exercise 'Dosti-16' Kicks Off In Maldives

- **Indian and Sri Lankan coast guard ships** joined the **Dosti 16** exercise held in the **Maldives** from February 22-25.



- This year marked a significant development with **Bangladesh** participating as an observer, indicating a widening scope for the exercise and underlining the growing importance of maritime collaboration in tackling evolving challenges.

- By fostering cooperation, the exercise **addresses traditional security concerns** while collectively preparing for non-traditional threats like piracy, smuggling, and environmental disasters.

IAF Strengthens Air Defense With Indigenous SAMAR-2 Missile System

- The **Indian Air Force (IAF)** has taken a significant stride in bolstering the nation's air defense capabilities with the development of the **Surface to Air Missile for Assured Retaliation (SAMAR-2)** missile system.
- This innovative system leverages repurposed **Russian R-27 air-to-air missiles**, transforming them into a potent surface-to-air defense solution.
- SAMAR-2 represents a strategic approach to **maximizing the utility of aging missile systems**. By integrating these nearing-expiration assets into a robust air defense network, the IAF ensures their continued effectiveness in safeguarding Indian airspace.

Adani Group Launches South Asia's Largest Ammunition And Missiles Complex In U.P.

- The Adani Group has inaugurated the **Ammunition & Missiles Complex in Kanpur**, Uttar Pradesh. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, along with Chief of Army Staff Gen Manoj Pande, inaugurated the complex.
- This complex, owned by Adani Defence, marks the first phase of the state's defense corridor and is dedicated to the brave warriors of the Balakot strike.

- The complex is expected to generate approximately **4,000 jobs**, with a significant multiplier effect benefiting MSMEs and the local ecosystem.

NATO Launches Steadfast Defender 2024 Military Exercise

- The **North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)** launched its largest military exercise in Europe in decades, **Steadfast Defender 2024**, in late January 2024.
- This large-scale operation, conducted against the backdrop of the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict, serves as a potent symbol of NATO's collective military might and unwavering commitment to the security of its member states.
- The exercise strategically encompasses various European countries, with a particular focus on nations bordering the Baltic Sea, a critical region due to its proximity to Russia's exclave Kaliningrad and its economic importance for oil exports.

Appointments or Resign/Retired

Champai Soren: The Next Chief Minister Of Jharkhand

- In a significant political development, **Champai Soren** has been announced as the **next Chief Minister of Jharkhand**, following the resignation of **Hemant Soren**.
- Born in November 1956 in Jilinggora village, Seraikela-Kharsawan district, Champai Soren's political journey is deeply rooted in his early life experiences and his involvement in the movement for the creation of the state of Jharkhand.
- Champai Soren has been a stalwart in Jharkhand politics, serving as a legislator from the Serikela assembly constituency since 1991. His dedication to the JMM and his role in the Jharkhand movement earned him the nickname 'Jharkhand Tiger.'

Jay Shah Secures Historic Third Term As President Of The Asian Cricket Council

- The cricketing world witnessed a historic moment on January 31, as **Jay Shah**, the Secretary of the **Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI)**, was unanimously appointed for a third consecutive term as the **President of the Asian Cricket Council (ACC)**.
- This extension, granted during the ACC Annual General Meeting in Bali, reflects not only Shah's accomplishments but also the success and progress achieved under his dynamic leadership.
- The proposal for his extension, put forth by Shammi Silva, President of Sri Lanka Cricket, received unanimous support from all ACC members, underscoring the unity and shared vision within the council.

Anil Kumar Lahoti Appointed Chairman Of TRAI

- Former Railway Board Chief **Anil Kumar Lahoti** has been appointed as the chairman of the **Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI)** following the vacancy left by PD Vaghela.
- The appointment, approved by the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT), marks a significant transition in India's telecommunications sector.
- Lahoti, an **Indian Railway Service of Engineer (IRSE)** with a background in Civil

Engineering and a Master of Engineering degree, brings extensive leadership experience and expertise in Strategic Management to his new role.

- **PD Vaghela vacated the position in November 2023**, leading to Lahoti's appointment. Lahoti's tenure, initially for three years or until he turns 65, replaces Meenakshi Gupta, who held the position temporarily.

Michelle O'Neill Becomes Northern Ireland's First Minister

- In a groundbreaking move, **Michelle O'Neill**, an Irish nationalist representing Sinn Fein, has been appointed as **Northern Ireland's First Minister**.
- O'Neill's appointment reflects **Sinn Fein's** (Political party) aspiration for a United Ireland, a vision they believe is now within grasp. Her elevation to the position of First Minister signifies the party's growing influence and political clout in Northern Ireland.
- O'Neill's commitment to serving all citizens equally, as demonstrated in her address to the assembly, underscores her role as a leader for all of Northern Ireland. Her appointment signals a new era of inclusivity and representation in the region's political leadership.



Punjab Governor Banwarilal Purohit Resigns

- Punjab Governor and Chandigarh Administrator **Banwarilal Purohit** resigned from his post, citing "personal reasons."
- Purohit's resignation comes just a day after meeting Union Home Minister Amit Shah in Delhi. The timing of his resignation, following the **BJP's triumph in the Chandigarh** mayoral polls where they secured all three posts.
- Banwarilal Purohit, born on 16 April 1940, is an Indian politician who served as the **29th Governor of Punjab, India**, and Administrator of Chandigarh until 3 February 2024. He previously served as the **Governor of Tamil Nadu from 2017 to 2021** and the Governor of Assam from 2016 to 2017.

Justice Ritu Bahri Becomes Chief Justice Of Uttarakhand High Court

- **Justice Ritu Bahri** has become the new **Chief Justice of the Uttarakhand High Court**. The Governor, Lt Gen (retd) Gurmit Singh, gave her the oath at a beautiful ceremony at Raj Bhawan.
- The government announced Justice Bahri's new role on February 2, 2024. She takes over from the previous Chief Justice, Vipin Sanghi, who retired.
- Before this, she was the Acting Chief Justice in Punjab and Haryana. The Supreme Court said she should get this job on November 2, 2023, which is a big deal.

Ranveer Singh Joins BoAt As A Stakeholder And Brand Ambassador

- Bollywood superstar **Ranveer Singh** has recently invested in the popular lifestyle brand **boAt**, becoming not only a stakeholder but also the official face of the brand's audio products.
- This partnership marks a strategic move for boAt, as they welcome Singh into their illustrious list of brand ambassadors, which already features notable celebrities and sports personalities.
- With Ranveer Singh on board, boAt's lineup of brand ambassadors now includes some of the most influential names in the entertainment and sports industry, such as Kiara Advani, Rashmika Mandanna, and cricket stars Shreyas Iyer, Hardik Pandya, KL Rahul, and Jemimah Rodrigues.

Lieutenant General Upendra Dwivedi Appointed Army Vice Chief

- In a strategic move within the Indian Army, **Lieutenant General Upendra Dwivedi** has been appointed as the new **Army Vice Chief**, effective February 15.
- This transition signifies a seamless succession plan as Lt Gen Dwivedi steps into the role, succeeding Lt Gen MV Suchindra Kumar, who is set to assume command at the Northern Army Command in Udhampur



- Lt Gen. Dwivedi boasts a distinguished career within the Indian Army, having previously served in key positions including **Deputy Chief** and **Director General of Infantry** at the Army Headquarters.
- His operational experience in the Northern Command, particularly during the ongoing India-China military standoff, positions him well for his new role as Army Vice Chief. With expertise in command and strategic roles, Lt Gen. Dwivedi brings a wealth of experience to his appointment.

Nikhil Joshi Appointed As Managing Director Of Boeing Defence India

- **Boeing**, the **American aerospace giant**, has made a significant move to enhance its operations and propel its growth strategy in India by appointing **Nikhil Joshi** as the managing director of **Boeing Defense India (BDI)**.
- Prior to his engagement with Boeing, Joshi served as the country manager for Eaton Aerospace in India, where he significantly contributed to expanding the company's business footprint.
- His extensive experience includes commanding frontline ships and air squadrons, coupled with over 4,000 hours of flying time on various maritime reconnaissance aircraft.



Nand Kishore Yadav Elected As Bihar Legislative Assembly Speaker

- Veteran Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader **Nand Kishore Yadav** has been elected as the **Speaker of the Bihar Legislative Assembly**.
- Nand Kishore Yadav, a seven-time Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) from the Patna Sahib constituency, has been a prominent figure in Bihar politics.
- First elected as an MLA in 1995, Yadav's career has been distinguished by his several tenures as a minister in the Nitish Kumar government, showcasing his versatility and leadership within the state's governance.

Lebanese Judge Nawaf Salam Elected As ICJ's New President

- **Nawaf Salam** was elected president of the ICJ in **The Hague**, succeeding US Judge Joan Donoghue. This significant milestone marks him as the first Lebanese and second Arab to hold this prestigious position for a three-year term.
- Salam's journey with the ICJ began in **2018**, and he currently holds the highest judicial position globally. His appointment highlights his remarkable trajectory within the field of international law.
- As the principal judicial body of the United Nations, the ICJ is responsible for adjudicating legal disputes between states and providing advisory opinions on legal questions referred to by UN organs and specialized agencies.

Shubman Gill Designated As Punjab 'State Icon' For Lok Sabha Polls

- In a significant move to boost voter engagement and participation in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections, the Punjab Chief Electoral



Officer's

office has announced Indian cricketer **Shubman Gill** as the new "state icon" for Punjab.

- This appointment is a strategic effort to connect with the youth and sports enthusiasts, ensuring that the electoral process resonates more deeply across various demographics.
- As a state icon, Shubman Gill will be actively involved in various voter awareness campaigns. The cricketer's popularity could have an encouraging voter participation, especially in areas where voter turnout has historically been low.

Appointment Of Salil Parekh To The USISPF Board Of Directors

- In a significant move, **Salil Parekh**, the Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director of Infosys, has been appointed to the Board of Directors of the **US India Strategic and Partnership Forum (USISPF)**.
- Salil Parekh, with a distinguished career spanning nearly three decades in the IT services industry, is

recognized for his leadership in executing business turnarounds and managing successful acquisitions.

- Since taking the helm at Infosys on January 2, 2018, Parekh has set the strategic direction for the company, steering one of India's leading IT giants through periods of significant change and global challenges.

GeetaBatra's Historic Appointment To The World Bank's GEF

- **GeetaBatra**, a distinguished Indian economist, has been appointed as the Director of the **Independent Evaluation Office (IEO)** of the **World Bank's Global Environment Facility (GEF)**.
- This appointment marks a significant milestone, as Batra becomes the first woman from a developing country to assume this prestigious role.
- At 57, GeetaBatra brings a wealth of experience and expertise to her new position. Prior to this appointment, she served as the Chief Evaluator & Deputy Director for Evaluation at the GEF's IEO.

Maryam Nawaz Becomes First Woman Chief Minister Of Punjab

- **Maryam Nawaz**, the daughter of Pakistan's former Prime Minister **Nawaz Sharif** and a senior leader of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) party, has become the first woman Chief Minister of Punjab province.
- Maryam Nawaz secured victory in the chief ministerial elections despite facing a walkout by lawmakers from Imran Khan's party-backed Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC).
- She defeated RanaAftab of the PTI-backed SIC in the election, marking a significant political triumph in the politically crucial Punjab province.

Former PM Alexander Stubb Wins Finland Presidential Election

- Former Prime Minister **Alexander Stubb** secured victory in **Finland's presidential runoff** against ex-Foreign Minister **PekkaHaavisto**.
- This win places Stubb in charge of navigating Finland's foreign and security policies, particularly significant given Finland's recent NATO membership following Russia's invasion of Ukraine.
- Stubb of the **National Coalition Party** secured 51.6% of the votes, while independent candidate Haavisto received 48.4%.

World Gold Council Appoints De Beers' Sachin Jain As Chief Executive Officer

- The World Gold Council (WGC), representing global gold miners, has named **Sachin Jain** as its new **CEO for India**, effective from March.
- Jain joins WGC India from De Beers, where he served in various senior capacities over the past 13 years. Notably, as Managing Director of De Beers India, he spearheaded the De Beers Forevermark business in India and West Asia.
- Prior to his stint at De Beers, Jain held significant roles at renowned companies such as Lladro, Swatch Group, and Benetton. His diverse experience spans over two decades, reflecting his versatile skill set and strategic acumen.

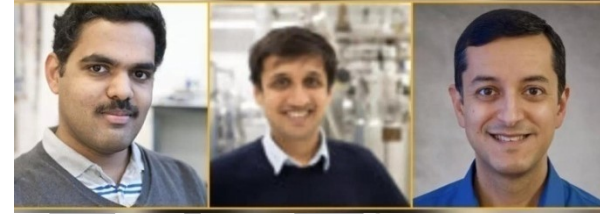
Justice A M Khanwilkar Appointed Lokpal Chairperson

- In a significant development, former Supreme Court judge Justice **Ajay Manikrao Khanwilkar** has been appointed as the **chairperson of the Lokpal**, the anti-corruption ombudsman of India. His appointment comes after a distinguished career in the judiciary, retiring from the apex court in July 2022.
- The notification issued by Rashtrapati Bhawan also announced the appointments of other key members of the Lokpal. Joining Justice Khanwilkar are **Justice Lingappa Narayana Swamy, Justice Sanjay Yadav, and Justice Ritu Raj Awasthi** as judicial members.

Honours/ Awards

Three Indian Scientists To Be Honored With Prestigious UK Prize In London

- The prestigious **Blavatnik Awards** will recognize the exceptional contributions of **Rahul R Nair, Mehul Malik, Tanmay Bharat,** and other early career scientists at a black-tie gala in London on February 27.
- These awards, totaling 480,000 pounds in grants, underscore the importance of recognition and research funding in propelling scientific breakthroughs.
- **Rahul R Nair**, has been honored as the Laureate in Physical Sciences & Engineering for his pioneering work in **developing innovative membranes using two-dimensional (2D) materials.**
- **Professor Mehul Malik** work harnesses **high-dimensional entanglement to create robust quantum networks**, promising secure transmission of data over long distances.
- **Dr. Tanmay Bharat**, a structural microbiologist at the MRC Laboratory of Molecular Biology, **utilizes cryo-electron tomography to uncover atomic-level details of cell surface molecules.**



FM Sitharaman Declares Free Cervical Cancer Vaccine For Girls Aged 9-14

- Union Finance Minister **Nirmala Sitharaman**, in her interim budget speech for 2024-25, indicated that the government would actively “promote” vaccination to **combat cervical cancer.**
- Sitharaman stated, “Our government will encourage vaccination for girls aged **9 to 14 years** as a preventive measure against cervical cancer” during her budget speech.
- In India, cervical cancer ranks as the **second most common cancer among women**, posing a significant health challenge.

Grammy Awards 2024

- The **66th Annual Grammy Awards**, marking a significant milestone in the music industry, celebrated the most remarkable recordings, compositions, and

artists of the year, from **October 1, 2022, to September 30, 2023.**

- Hosting for the fourth consecutive time, **Trevor Noah** brought his charismatic presence and sharp wit to the stage, making the night unforgettable for both the winners and the worldwide viewers.
- This year's ceremony not only highlighted the incredible talent and achievements within the music industry but also continued the tradition of celebrating the universal language of music in all its diversity and splendour.

Priest Ishwari Prasad Namboodiri Honored With The Shankar Smriti Award

- **Priest Ishwari Prasad Namboodiri**, the chief priest (Rawal) of the world-renowned Badrinath Dham in Uttarakhand, was honoured with the **Shankar Smriti Award in Kerala.**
- This recognition marks a significant acknowledgement of his dedication and service to the spiritual domain, enhancing the rich tapestry of Indian religious practices.
- Awarded annually during the 103rd Malliyoor Bhagavat Hamsa Smarana Utsav in Kerala's Kottayam district, the Shankar Smriti Award celebrates outstanding contributions to spirituality, art, and service.
- The Malliyoor Bhagavat Hamsa Smriti Trust presents this award to individuals who have shown exceptional dedication to ritual practice, meditation, and the pursuit of spiritual service.

LK Advani To Be Awarded Bharat Ratna, Announced By PM Modi

- The Indian government has announced that **LK Advani**, one of the most prominent figures in Indian politics, will be conferred with the **Bharat Ratna**, the nation's highest civilian award.
- The Bharat Ratna is a fitting recognition of LK Advani's legacy as a statesman who has dedicated his life to the nation. The award celebrates his immense contributions and his role as a catalyst for political and social change in India.
- Born on **November 8, 1927, in Karachi**, LK Advani's political journey is a saga of resilience, leadership, and profound influence on the Indian political landscape. Advani, a key architect of the Bharatiya Janata Party

(BJP), has been instrumental in shaping the party's ideology and steering it to national prominence.

PT Usha Honored With Lifetime Achievement Award By SJFI And DSJA

- Legendary sprinter and current President of the Indian Olympic Association (IOA), **PT Usha**, was honoured with the prestigious '**Lifetime Achievement**' award.
- This accolade was presented to her by the **Sports Journalists Federation of India (SJFI) and Delhi Sports Journalists Association (DSJA)**, recognizing her extraordinary contributions to Indian athletics.
- PT Usha, often hailed as the "**Queen of Indian track and field**," was presented with a medallion, a citation, and a memento, signifying the high esteem in which she is held for her stellar sporting career.
- This event not only celebrated her achievements but also highlighted the legacy she has built over the years, inspiring countless athletes across the nation.

Picture Of Polar Bear Falling Asleep On Iceberg Wins Top Photography Prize

- In a celebration of nature's serene beauty, a photograph depicting a **polar bear asleep on an iceberg** has clinched the prestigious **Wildlife Photographer of the Year People's Choice Award.**
- This enchanting image, titled 'Ice Bed,' captured by British amateur photographer Nima Sarikhani, has emerged victorious in a competition that saw a record-breaking 75,000 votes from the public.
- Polar bears, symbols of the Arctic's wild majesty, face significant threats from climate change and diminishing sea ice. 'Ice Bed' not only showcases the stunning beauty of these creatures but also highlights the urgent need for conservation efforts to protect their natural habitat.



UAE Awards 'Golden Visa' To Super 30 Founder Anand Kumar

- Renowned Mathematics educator **Anand Kumar**, founder of Super 30, achieved a significant milestone

on Tuesday, February 6, as he was granted the prestigious **'Golden Visa'** by the **United Arab Emirates (UAE) government**.

- Traditionally dominated by luminaries from entertainment and sports, the **Golden Visa now embraces intellectual prowess and educational contribution**, exemplified by Kumar's pioneering work in mathematics education.
- Introduced in **2019** by the UAE government, the Golden Visa aims to attract exceptional foreign talents across various fields, including entrepreneurs, scientists, and outstanding students. It offers recipients the opportunity to reside, work, or study in the UAE, coupled with exclusive benefits.

Bharat Ratna To Honour PV Narasimha Rao, Chaudhary Charan Singh, And MS Swaminathan

- India's highest civilian award, the **Bharat Ratna**, is set to honour the indelible contributions of three distinguished individuals whose efforts have significantly shaped the nation's trajectory.



Bharat Ratna to Honor PV Narasimha Rao, Chaudhary Charan Singh, and MS Swaminathan

- **Former Prime Ministers PV Narasimha Rao and Chaudhary Charan Singh, alongside renowned agricultural scientist MS Swaminathan**, are the esteemed recipients of this prestigious accolade, acknowledging their unparalleled dedication to the progress of India.
- The 'Bharat Ratna,' the country's highest civilian award, was established in 1954. Individuals, irrespective of race, occupation, position, or gender, are eligible for this prestigious honor.

Pyarelal Sharma Honored With Lakshminarayana International Award

- **Pyarelal Sharma**, one-half of the legendary composer duo **Laxmikant-Pyarelal**, has been felicitated with the prestigious Lakshminarayana International Award.
- This honour was bestowed upon him as part of the Lakshminarayana Global Music Festival, acknowledging his invaluable contributions to the Indian music industry.
- The Lakshminarayana International Award, named after the violin maestro Lakshminarayana, is presented

to individuals who have made significant contributions to the world of music.

Dr. Bina Modi Named 'Outstanding Business Woman Of The Year 2023'

- **Dr. Bina Modi**, the esteemed Chairperson of Modi Enterprises, has been honored with the prestigious **'Outstanding Business Woman of the Year' Award**.
- This recognition, bestowed upon her by **Rajnath Singh**, Defence Minister of India, at a distinguished conference organized by the Indo-American Chamber of Commerce (IACC), underscores her exceptional leadership and contributions to the industry.
- As Chairperson of Modi Enterprises – KK Modi Group, **Dr. Bina Modi oversees a diverse portfolio of companies, including the renowned FMCG giant, Godfrey Phillips India, and the leading agro-chemical firm, Indofil.**

Bengali Translation Wins Prestigious Romain Rolland Book Prize 2024

- The recipient of this year's **Romain Rolland Book Prize** is **Pankaj Kumar Chatterjee** for his remarkable translation of Jean-Daniel Baltassat's **"Le Divan de Staline"** into Bengali, titled **"Staliner Divan."**
- Published by New Bharat SahityaKutir, Kolkata, Chatterjee's translation stood out for its linguistic prowess and fidelity to the original text. This marks the second time that a Bengali translation has been honoured with this prestigious award.

2024 World Governments Summit In Dubai: India, Türkiye, And Qatar Named Guests Of Honor

- The **2024 World Governments Summit**, scheduled to be held in Dubai from February 12-14, has designated **India, Türkiye, and Qatar** as guests of honor.
- Themed 'Shaping Future Governments,' the summit aims to facilitate discussions among over 25 government and state heads worldwide.



- President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al Thani to lead their respective delegations. These nations will exhibit their successful government experiences and best developmental practices.

K.P.P. Nambiar Award For ISRO Chairman S. Somanath

- The field of space exploration and technology in India witnessed a momentous occasion as the **IEEE Kerala Section** announced the recipient of the prestigious **K.P.P. Nambiar Award**.
- This year, the accolade was bestowed upon **ISRO Chairman S. Somanath**, a figure synonymous with innovation and leadership in space technology.
- Named after the doyen of the electronic industry and the founder chair of the IEEE Kerala section, K.P.P. Nambiar, the award honors individuals or groups within the State who have demonstrated significant contributions towards the IEEE vision of advancing technology for humanity.

Noida Recognized As “Water Warrior” City

- **The Department of Water Resources, River Development, and Ganga Rejuvenation**, under the Union Water Ministry, has honored Noida with the title of “**Water Warrior**” city.
- The city clinched the title of the **best sewage treatment plant (STP)** and also received accolades for its **water reuse project of the year**.
- Satish Pal, the additional chief executive officer of the Noida Authority, along with RP Singh, the deputy general manager of the authority’s water department, received these awards on behalf of the city.

National Film Awards: Indira Gandhi And NargisDutt Names Removed From Categories

- **The National Film Awards**, one of India’s most prestigious film award ceremonies, is set to see significant changes in its 70th iteration in 2022.
- In a noteworthy update, the names of former **Prime Minister Indira Gandhi** and celebrated actor **NargisDutt** will no longer be associated with specific award categories as previously done.
- Previously known as the **Indira Gandhi Award for Best Debut Film**, this category will now be simply referred to as the “**Best Debut Film of a Director.**”

Gulzar And Jagadguru Rambhadracharya Awarded Prestigious Jnanpith Award 2023

- **The Jnanpith Award**, India’s most prestigious literary accolade, has announced its recipients for the year 2023, marking a momentous occasion in the annals of Indian literature.
- This year, the honour is bestowed upon two luminaries from the world of letters: celebrated Urdu poet and Bollywood personality **Gulzar**, and the distinguished Sanskrit scholar and spiritual leader **Jagadguru Rambhadracharya**.
- Their selection for the **58th edition of the award** underscores the rich diversity and depth of Indian literary traditions, spanning the classical to the contemporary.

Alex Dawson Captures The Underwater Photographer Of The Year 2024 Award

- Swedish photographer **Alex Dawson** has clinched the prestigious title of **Underwater Photographer of the Year 2024**.
- His winning entry, ‘Whale Bones’, is a mesmerizing image that transports viewers beneath the icy expanse of the Greenland ice sheet, where a diver is seen exploring the skeletal remains of a minke whale.
- This striking composition not only showcases Dawson’s exceptional photographic skills but also highlights the haunting beauty of the underwater world.



Alex Dawson Captures the Underwater Photographer of the Year 2024 Award

Shashi Tharoor Honoured With France’s Highest Civilian Award

- Diplomat, author, and politician, **Shashi Tharoor** has been bestowed with the prestigious ‘**Chevalier de la Légion d’Honneur**’ (**Knight of the Legion of Honour**), France’s highest civilian honour.
- This accolade celebrates Tharoor’s lifelong dedication to fostering global understanding and his significant service to India and the world at large.



- Established in 1802 by Napoleon Bonaparte, the Legion of Honour stands as the epitome of French recognition for outstanding service to France, transcending nationality.

Sports

Abhinav Bindra Selected As Torchbearer For The 2024 Paris Olympics

- The ancient tradition of the **Olympic Torch Relay** continues its journey towards **Paris 2024**, with the flame set to cross the Mediterranean and embark on a 68-day adventure across France.
- Abhinav Bindra**, India's first individual Olympic gold medalist and an IOC Athletes' Commission member, is among the 11,000 torchbearers chosen to carry the iconic symbol.
- Abhinav Bindra, a shooting legend and the first Indian athlete to win an individual Olympic gold medal, has been selected as one of the torchbearers. His inclusion reflects the unifying power of the Olympics and the celebration of sporting excellence on a global stage.



SCA Stadium Renamed In Honor Of Niranjan Shah Ahead Of India-England Test Match

- Saurashtra Cricket Association (SCA) Stadium** is set to be rebranded as the **Niranjan Shah Stadium**. This change comes as a tribute to the former first-class cricketer and senior cricket administrator, Niranjan Shah, marking his immense contributions to the sport and the region.
- The renaming ceremony will be a notable event, taking place in Khandheri, where the stadium has been a central hub for national cricket matches for over a decade.
- Niranjan Shah's legacy in cricket extends beyond his playing days; from the mid-1960s to the mid-1970s, he represented Saurashtra in 12 first-class games, laying the groundwork for a lifelong association with cricket.



SCA Stadium Renamed in Honor of Niranjan Shah Ahead of India-England Test Match

FIFA To Introduce Blue Cards And Sin-Bins

- The **International Football Association Board (IFAB)** is preparing to debut a new card, the **blue card** as part of trials involving sin bins in professional football.
- IFAB proposes the inclusion of blue cards alongside the traditional yellow and red cards. Blue cards will serve as a **disciplinary measure for dissent and cynical fouls**, resulting in players being temporarily sent to the sin-bin.
- Ifab, the governing body responsible for football's laws, **aims to bolster disciplinary measures with the introduction of blue cards**. These measures target dissent and cynical fouls, emphasizing a zero-tolerance approach to unsportsmanlike behavior.


Etiha Airways Takes Flight As Official Sponsor Of CSK

- **Etiha Airways joins forces with the Chennai Super Kings (CSK)** as their official sponsor, marking a thrilling new chapter for both entities.
- 
- This strategic partnership, announced on February 9th, 2024, promises to propel the excitement of cricket to new heights for fans around the world.
 - Etiha Airways, a global airline renowned for its premium services and innovative approach, shares a similar commitment to excellence and a passion for connecting people across diverse cultures.

U19 World Cup 2024 Final, Australia Beats India By 79 Runs

- **Australia U19** win the **U19 World Cup 2024 Final** by 79 runs. With the massive win over India, Australia has secured its fourth World Cup title in U-19 cricket.
- Australia added to their triumphs in **2002, 2010, and 2020**. Their consistent performance throughout the tournament showcased their depth and talent, making them deserving champions.
- **Kwena Maphaka** was named U19 Cricket World Cup Player of the Tournament and player of the Match was awarded to **Mahli Beardman**.

Sumit Nagal Clinches Chennai Open Title, Secures First-Ever Top 100 Spot

- Sumit Nagal has risen to the top 100 which is a testament to his resilience and determination. Nagal's journey began in 2023 when he played as a player ranked **506** in the world and qualified for the ATP Chennai Open Challenger.
- 
- His success in **Chennai Challenger** last year marked the beginning of his resurgence after surgery. Nagal's victory in the ATP Chennai Open Challenger on February 12, 2024, saw him rise from 121 to **98** in the **ATP rankings**.
 - This achievement marked the first time Nagal entered the top 100 in his career. Only **10 Indian men** have ever reached the top 100 since the introduction of ATP rankings in 1973.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah inaugurated the Gandhinagar Premier League

- Union Home Minister **Amit Shah** inaugurated the **Gandhinagar Premier League (GPL)** in **Ahmedabad, Gujarat**. The event, graced by the presence of Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel among other dignitaries, marks a pivotal step towards enhancing grassroots cricket and fostering local talent across the nation.
- **Hardik Pandya**, an India all-rounder, was spotted with Union Home Minister Amit Shah at the Gandhinagar Premier League's launch.

ICC Bans UK Cricketer Rizwan Javed For Over 17 Years For Match-Fixing

- UK-based club cricketer **Rizwan Javed** has been handed a severe ban from all cricketing activities for a period of **17 ½ years**.
- This decision comes in the wake of his involvement in several breaches of the **Emirates Cricket Board (ECB) Anti-Corruption Code for Participants**.
- Rizwan Javed was one among eight individuals charged by the International Cricket Council (ICC) on behalf of the ECB for their involvement in corruption attempts during the **2021 Abu Dhabi T10 Cricket League**.

Badminton Asia Team Championships 2024: India Women Win Title

- In an unforgettable showdown at **Shah Alam, Malaysia**, the Indian women's badminton team etched their names into history by clinching a historic gold medal at the **Badminton Asia Team Championships 2024**.



Badminton Asia Team Championships 2024: India women win title

- This victory marks a groundbreaking moment in India's badminton journey, as the team emerged victorious against Thailand with a thrilling 3-2 scoreline.
- The finale saw 17-year-old AnmolKharb deliver a stellar performance in the decisive match, securing India's maiden continental triumph.

MS Dhoni Named Captain Of IPL's Greatest All-Time Team

- The **Indian Premier League (IPL)**, since its inception in 2008, has been a powerhouse of talent and excitement in the cricketing world.
- The selection panel comprises renowned cricketing figures including WasimAkram, Matthew Hayden, Tom Moody, and Dale Steyn, whose expertise and experience bring invaluable insight to the decision-making process.
- The iconic Mahendra Singh Dhoni was unanimously chosen to lead this star-studded ensemble, bringing his unparalleled leadership and cricketing acumen to the fore.

Pakistan's Babar Azam Becomes Quickest To 10,000 Runs In T20s

- Former Pakistan captain and batting maestro **Babar Azam** etched his name in the annals of cricket history by becoming the quickest batter to surpass the milestone of **10,000 runs in T20 cricket**.
- His remarkable achievement came during an exhilarating clash between Karachi Kings and Peshawar Zalmi in the **Pakistan Super League (PSL) 2024**.
- Babar Azam's achievement adds another feather to his illustrious cap, making him the 13th batter to amass 10,000 runs in T20 cricket.

Bhopal Athletes Conquer The World's Highest Frozen Lake Marathon

- In a remarkable display of endurance and determination, **Bhagwan Singh and Mahesh Khurana from Bhopal** have completed the **Pangong Frozen Lake Marathon 2024**, held in Leh-Ladakh.

Bhagwan Singh is also the first mountaineer from Madhya Pradesh to scale Mount Everest.



Bhopal Athletes Conquer the World's Highest Frozen Lake Marathon

- Known for its extreme conditions, this marathon is celebrated as the 'World's Highest Frozen Lake Marathon.' The event unfolded on February 20, amidst heavy snowfall, at an altitude of 18,680 feet with temperatures plunging to -15°C , posing an ultimate challenge to the participants.

South Africa's Tristan Stubbs Hits First-Class Triple Century

- Tristan Stubbs** has etched his name in the annals of South African cricket history, becoming the **11th batter to achieve a first-class triple-century in the nation**, and notably the eighth since readmission.
- Stubbs' outstanding performance places him at the forefront of Division 11's leading run-scorers in the domestic four-day competition.
- With two centuries from five matches**, he has showcased consistency and prowess with the bat, solidifying his position as a formidable force in the cricketing arena.

JacintaKalyan Makes History As India's First Female Pitch Curator

- In a groundbreaking move for Indian cricket, **Jacinta Kalyan** has etched her name in the annals of sports history as the country's first female pitch curator.
- JacintaKalyan's journey to becoming India's first female curator is nothing short of inspiring. Previously serving in the administrative sector, Kalyan made a bold transition to curatorship driven by her unwavering passion for the game.
- With the highly anticipated **2nd edition of the Women's Premier League (WPL)** just around the

corner, the excitement among fans, players, and tournament organizers is palpable.

Army Clinches Khelo India Winter Games 2024 Title On Final Day

- The **Khelo India Winter Games 2024** concluded in Gulmarg, with the **Army emerging victorious** after a thrilling final day of competition.
- Alpine skier **Bobby Pandey's gold medal** in the parallel slalom event proved decisive, propelling Army to the top of the medal table with **10 gold medals**.
- This narrow margin placed them one gold ahead of **Karnataka (9 gold)** and three ahead of **Maharashtra (7 gold)**, who had led after the first round in Ladakh.

Ashwin Surpasses Kumble To Become India's Leading Wicket-Taker In Tests At Home

- Indian off-spinner **Ravichandran Ashwin** etched his name in cricketing history, surpassing legendary leg-spinner **Anil Kumble** to become the **leading wicket-taker in Test matches played on Indian soil**.
- The feat unfolded during the third day of the ongoing fourth Test match between India and England in Ranchi. Ashwin dismissed Ben Duckett and Ollie Pope, taking his tally to **351 wickets** in Tests played in India. This eclipsed Kumble's previous record of **350 wickets** achieved in 63 matches.



Namibia's Jan NicolLoftie-Eaton Smashes Fastest T20I Hundred

- **Jan NicolLoftie-Eaton**, the dynamic **Namibian batter**, etched his name in cricketing history by scoring the **fastest T20 International (T20I) century** in a blistering innings against Nepal.
- Loftie-Eaton's extraordinary feat occurred during the first T20I of the Tri-Nation series on Tuesday, February 27, leaving fans and pundits in awe of his remarkable display of power-hitting.

Obituaries

Rocky Actor Carl Weathers Passed Away At 76

- On February 1st, 2024, the entertainment world was rocked by the news of the passing of **Carl Weathers**, a beloved Hollywood actor renowned for his unforgettable roles in 'Rocky' and 'Predator.' The announcement was made by **Deadline**, a leading US-based media outlet.
- Born on January 14, 1948, in New Orleans, Carl Weathers embarked on a remarkable journey in the world of cinema. With a **career spanning five decades**, he left an indelible mark on audiences worldwide.
- Weathers etched his name in cinematic history with his **portrayal of Apollo Creed**, the charismatic and formidable heavyweight champion in the 'Rocky' franchise. His electrifying performances opposite Sylvester Stallone's Rocky Balboa captivated audiences and earned him a place in the pantheon of Hollywood legends.

Namibian President Hage Geingob Passes Away At 82, Undergoing Cancer Treatment

- Namibia is mourning the loss of **President Hage Geingob**, who succumbed to cancer at the age of 82. He had been undergoing treatment for the illness, leaving the nation in a period of transition.
- Born in 1941, Geingob played a pivotal role in Namibia's political landscape. He chaired the drafting of Namibia's constitution and served as the **first prime minister** after the country gained independence in 1990.
- Namibia, known for its **diamond and lithium deposits**, faces a shift in leadership as Vice President Nangolo Mbumba takes charge until upcoming elections later in the year. Geingob's tenure included addressing economic disparities and overseeing the mining sector's prominence in the country.

'Anupamaa' Actor Rituraj Singh Passes Away At 59

- The Indian entertainment industry mourns the loss of **Rituraj Singh**, a versatile actor who passed away at the **age of 59** due to cardiac arrest.
- Singh, whose career spanned over several decades, was revered for his dynamic performances across television, cinema, and web series.

- His sudden demise has left fans and colleagues deeply saddened, reflecting on the indelible mark he has left on the world of entertainment.

Renowned Jain Monk Acharya Vidyasagar Maharaj Passed Away At 77

- Renowned Jain monk Acharya Vidyasagar Maharaj, aged 77, breathed his last on Sunday, February 18 at Chandragiri Teerth in Chhattisgarh's Rajnandgaon district.
- The revered spiritual leader undertook 'sallekhna,' a Jain religious practice involving voluntary fasting unto death for spiritual purification.
- Acharya Vidyasagar Maharaj was born on October 10, 1946, in Sadalga, Karnataka. His early life was marked by a profound inclination towards spirituality, setting the stage for his remarkable journey.



'Udaan' Actor Kavita Chaudhary Passes Away At 67

- Kavita Chaudhary, a veteran actor and creative force best known for her groundbreaking role in the television show "Udaan" and as the iconic Lalitaji in Surf commercials.
- Chaudhary passed away at the age of 67 due to cardiac arrest in Amritsar, leaving behind a legacy that continues to inspire generations.
- Kavita Chaudhary's journey in the world of Indian television was marked by her passion for storytelling and her commitment to portraying strong, independent women. Her most notable work, "Udaan," aired in 1989, where she not only played the lead role of IPS officer Kalyani Singh but also took on the roles of writer and director.

Iconic 'Dum Pukht' Chef Imtiaz Qureshi Passes Away At 93

- Chef Imtiaz Qureshi, who passed away at the age of 93. The Padma Shri awardee, often hailed as a "culinary genius," was instrumental in bringing the ancient dum pukht cooking technique back to the forefront of Indian cuisine.

- Dum pukht, a slow-cooking method that originated in the royal kitchens of Awadh, became his signature style.
- This technique involves cooking ingredients in a sealed pot (or 'handi'), allowing the meats to cook in their own juices and spices to infuse deeply, creating flavors that are both delicate and profound.

Dattajirao Gaekwad, Nation's Oldest Test Cricketer, Passes Away At 95

- Dattajirao Gaekwad, the nation's oldest Test cricketer, passed away recently at the age of 95.
- Gaekwad, a name synonymous with resilience, elegance, and sportsmanship, leaves behind a legacy that is etched in the annals of Indian cricket history. His contribution to the sport goes beyond just the runs he scored or the matches he played; it encompasses the spirit of cricket that he embodied throughout his life.

World Marathon Record Holder Kelvin Kiptum Dies In Road Accident

- Kelvin Kiptum, the men's marathon world record holder, and his coach, Gervais Hakizimana, met with a tragic end in a traffic accident on the night of February 12, 2024.
- At only 24 years of age, Kiptum had already made history at the Chicago Marathon in October by setting a new world record of 2:00:35, surpassing the previous record held by his compatriot Eliud Kipchoge.
- The fatal crash occurred between the towns of Eldoret and Kaptagat in western Kenya, an area known for its significance in the training of elite distance runners. The accident claimed the lives of Kiptum and his Rwandan coach, leaving the athletics community in shock and despair.



Ameen Sayani, Renowned Radio Presenter And Voice Of Geetmala, Passes Away

- **Ameen Sayani**, the legendary voice that defined radio for generations of Indians, passed away at the age of 91.
- Known for his iconic program **Binaca Geetmala**, Sayani's voice was a staple in Indian households, bridging the gap between music and its lovers across the nation.
- He suffered a heart attack on the evening of February 20 and was rushed to H N Reliance Hospital in south Mumbai, where he breathed his last around 7 p.m., as confirmed by his son, Rajil Sayani.

Senior Supreme Court Advocate Fali S Nariman Passes Away At 95

- Renowned constitutional jurist and senior Supreme Court advocate **Fali S Nariman** passed away at the age of 95 in New Delhi.
- His journey to becoming a senior advocate in 1961 marked the beginning of a legal practice that would span over seven decades.
- Nariman's initial years at the High Court of Bombay laid the foundation for a career that would see him move to New Delhi in 1972, where he would leave an indelible mark on the Supreme Court of India's history.



Former Lok Sabha Speaker Manohar Joshi Passes Away At 86

- Former Lok Sabha Speaker and ex-Maharashtra Chief Minister, **Manohar Joshi**, passed away at the age of 86, marking the end of an illustrious career that spanned several decades in Indian politics.
- A prominent figure in the Shiv Sena, Joshi was the first from the party to hold the top post in Maharashtra, serving as Chief Minister from 1995 to 1999.
- His tenure as Lok Sabha Speaker from 2002 to 2004, during the Vajpayee government, was a testament to his leadership and political acumen.

Legendary Ghazal Singer Pankaj Udhas Passes Away

- The music world mourns the passing of legendary ghazal singer **Pankaj Udhas**, who died at the age of 72 after a prolonged illness. Udhas was Born in Jetpur, Gujarat, in 1951.
- Udhas' initial career involved Bollywood playback singing and even exploring Indian pop. However, his true passion lay in **ghazals**, a form of Urdu poetry set to music.
- In 1980, he released his debut ghazal album, "Aahat," marking the beginning of a remarkable career that would span over 40 years.



Shafiqur Rahman Barq, India's Oldest MP And Samajwadi Party Leader, Dies At 94

- **Shafiqur Rahman Barq**, a senior leader of the Samajwadi Party and MP representing Sambhal, Uttar Pradesh, breathed his last at a private hospital in Moradabad at the age of 94.
- Shafiqur Rahman Barq was a significant presence in Indian politics, closely aligned with the **Samajwadi Party**. His political journey included multiple terms as a Member of Parliament in the Lok Sabha, representing constituencies like Moradabad and Sambhal.

Important Days with theme

World Wetlands Day 2024

- On February 2, 2024, the world comes together to celebrate **World Wetlands Day**, emphasizing the undeniable importance of wetlands to both the environment and human wellbeing.
- The theme for World Wetlands Day 2024, "**Wetlands and Human Wellbeing**," highlights the intricate connection between wetland ecosystems and the health, safety, and prosperity of human communities.
- World Wetlands Day is observed annually on February 2, marking the anniversary of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, signed in **1971 in Ramsar, Iran**.
- This international treaty aimed at the conservation and wise use of wetlands was a significant milestone, leading to the global recognition of the value of wetlands.



World Cancer Day 2024

- Cancer remains one of the most formidable health challenges of our time, affecting millions of people worldwide with its myriad forms and complexities.
- Recognized annually on **February 4th**, **World Cancer Day** aims to shed light on this critical issue, advocating for advances in research, prevention, and patient care.
- The ongoing theme for World Cancer Day from 2022 to 2024, "**Close the Care Gap: Everyone Deserves Access To Cancer Care**," focuses on the disparities in cancer care across different communities and regions.



- This year's sub-theme, "**Together, we challenge those in power**," emphasizes the importance of holding leaders accountable for investing the necessary resources to combat cancer effectively.

World Pulses Day 2024

- Every year on **February 10th**, the global community celebrates **World Pulses Day**, an occasion dedicated to recognizing the pivotal role of pulses in promoting food security, nutrition, and sustainable agricultural practices.
- This year's theme, "**Pulses: Nourishing Soils and People**," emphasizes the dual benefits of pulses for enhancing soil health and providing essential nutrients to humans.
- World Pulses Day finds its roots in the International Year of Pulses (IYP) 2016, an initiative led by the FAO to raise awareness about the benefits of pulses.

World Radio Day 2024, Date, History, Significance And Theme

- Every year on **February 13th**, the world unites to celebrate **World Radio Day**, a day that marks the enduring significance of radio as a medium of communication.
- The **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)** honours this day to reflect on radio's vast virtues and its ongoing relevance in today's digitally divided world.
- The theme for World Radio Day 2024, "**Radio: A Century Informing, Entertaining and Educating**," celebrates the historical evolution of radio and its profound impact on society.

145th Birth Anniversary Of Sarojini Naidu, National Women's Day

- **February 13, 2024** marks the **145th birth anniversary of Sarojini Naidu**, a distinguished figure in India's struggle for independence and a celebrated poet known as the "**Nightingale of India**."
- This day is also recognized as the **National Women's Day** as she played a pivotal role in advocating for **women's rights**. Naidu's literary prowess earned her the title of the "**Nightingale of India**."
- Her poetry, characterized by vivid imagery and lyrical quality, resonated deeply with the Indian nationalist sentiment. Published in 1912, "**In the Bazaars of**

Hyderabad” remains one of her most celebrated works.

World Day Of Social Justice 2024

- Every year, on the **20th of February**, the global community comes together to observe the **World Day of Social Justice**. It serves as a reminder of the pressing need to address inequality, injustice, and social exclusion around the world.
- At the core of the World Day of Social Justice is the advocacy for decent work and fair globalization. The theme chosen for the World Day of Social Justice 2024, “Bridging Gaps, Building Alliances,” highlights the importance of collaboration and partnership in tackling global challenges.

International Mother Language Day 2024

- Annually commemorated on **February 21**, **International Mother Language Day** in **2024** falls on a Wednesday, marking a special day of recognition and celebration of linguistic diversity worldwide.
- The genesis of International Mother Language Day traces back not to India, but to Bangladesh, highlighting a pivotal movement in the history of linguistic rights.
- This year, the theme for International Mother Language Day is “**Multilingual education – a pillar of learning and intergenerational learning.**”



Central Excise Day 2024

- Every year on **February 24th**, India observes **Central Excise Day**, a tribute to the enactment of the Central Excise and Salt Act in 1944.
- This significant day marks the foundation of the **Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC)**, a pivotal institution in the administration of indirect taxes in India.
- Central Excise Day 2024 not only commemorates the historic legislation but also celebrates the relentless efforts of the CBIC officers in maintaining the quality and safety of goods within the country.

World NGO Day 2024

- Every year on **February 27th**, the world comes together to celebrate **World NGO Day**, a day dedicated to recognizing and honouring the invaluable contributions of **Non-**



Governmental Organizations (NGOs).

- These organizations, driven by a passion for positive change, play a crucial role in addressing some of humanity’s most pressing challenges.
- The theme for World NGO Day 2024 is “**Building a Sustainable Future: The Role of NGOs in Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).**”

National Science Day 2024

- **National Science Day** is celebrated annually on **28th February** in India to commemorate the discovery of the ‘Raman Effect’ by Indian physicist **Sir Chandrasekhara Venkata Raman**.
- This day serves as a reminder of the pivotal role science plays in shaping our lives and society. Each year, National Science Day is celebrated with a specific theme, highlighting significant aspects of scientific progress and innovation.
- The theme for National Science Day 2024 is ‘**Indigenous Technologies for Viksit Bharat**’, emphasizing the importance of promoting scientific, technological, and innovation skills.