

Monthly April Current Affairs 2024

Women's Prize

- The inaugural **Women's Prize for Non-Fiction** has announced its shortlist of six books, including **"Code Dependent: Living in the Shadow of AI"** by Indian-British journalist and commentator **Madhumita Murgia**. The book explores the impact of artificial intelligence on human society.



- The other shortlisted books cover a wide range of subjects: "Thunderclap: A Memoir of Art and Life and **Sudden Death**" by **Laura Cumming** , "Doppelganger: A Trip Into the Mirror World" by Naomi Klein, "A Flat Place" by Noreen Masud
- "All That She Carried: The Journey of Ashley's Sack, a Black Family Keepsake" by Tiya Miles , "How to Say Babylon: A Jamaican Memoir" by Safiya Sinclair



- The common thread among the books is their originality of voice and ability to turn complex ideas and personal trauma into compelling prose.
- The jury, chaired by historian and broadcaster Suzannah Lipscomb, included fair fashion campaigner Venetia La Manna, academic Nicola Rollock, biographer Anne Sebba, and author Kamila Shamsie. They looked for books that offer new perspectives and an alternative lens to examine the past, present, and future.

900 Year Old Chalukyan Inscription

- A **900-year-old Kannada inscription** dating back to the **Kalyana Chalukya dynasty** has been discovered in a state of utter neglect at **Gangapuram**, a temple town in Jadcherla mandal, Mahabubnagar district.
- The rare inscription was found lying uncared for on a tank bund near the **Chowdamma temple**.



- The inscription was **issued on June 8, 1134 CE** by the Customs Officers of Tailapa-III, son of the Kalyana Chalukya Emperor '**Bhulokamalla**' **Someswara-III**.
- Records the **remission of income** accrued through toll taxes called Vaddaravula and Hejjunka towards a perpetual lamp and incense for the God Somanatha. E. Sivanagi Reddy, an archaeologist and CEO of Pleach India Foundation, noticed the inscription during a visit to the Chowdamma temple as part of the 'Preserve Heritage for Posterity' campaign.



- After carefully studying the inscription, Dr. Reddy sensitized the Chowdamma Temple Committee Members about its historical significance and the need for immediate preservation.
- The Temple Committee Members, including K. Mallikarjun, Giriprasad, Chennaiya, Seenu, Sankar, Srinivas, and Satteyya, have responded positively to the call for preservation.




- They have agreed to **shift the inscription to the premises of the Chowdamma temple** and erect it on a pedestal with details. A retired engineer, Gangapuram Kesava Prasad, also participated in the program.
- Although the inscription was previously copied and published by the Archaeology department, this discovery highlights the importance of preserving **cultural heritage and raising awareness** among local communities. The

collaborative efforts of archaeologists, foundations, and community members ensure that such rare archaeological finds are protected for future generations.

START 2024 Program

- The **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** will conduct the **Space Science and Technology Awareness Training (START) 2024** program during April and May.
- ISRO is inviting **Expression of Interest (EOI)** from educational institutes, universities, and colleges within India offering UG and PG courses in physical sciences and technology to **host START-2024**.
- The main **objective of the training program** is to attract youngsters to the fields of space science and technology.
- The training modules will cover introductory-level topics on various verticals of space science and technology, including Indian space exploration programs and research opportunities.



The poster for START-2024 features a dark blue background with a solar system theme. At the top, the text reads 'START-2024 Space Science & Technology Awareness Training' in white and yellow, with the ISRO logo to the right. Below this, it states 'During 15 April to 3 May (Online mode)'. The central theme is 'Exploration of the Solar System', accompanied by illustrations of planets. Registration details are provided: 'Online registration through the jigyasa portal for PG & final year UG students of Physical Sciences and Technology studying in the host institutes as well as other individuals starts on 8th April 2024 and ends on 12th April 2024'. A deadline for sending Expression of Interest is set for April 2, 2024, with the URL <https://jigyasa.isro.gov.in/START>. A QR code is provided for more details. The Science Programme Office at ISRO Headquarters and Indian Institute of Remote Sensing, ISRO, is mentioned. The poster also notes that the program offers more than 20 hours of lectures by national experts and ISRO professionals, including scientific interactions and evaluations.

- Post-graduate students and final year undergraduate students studying physical sciences (Physics and Chemistry) and technology (Electronics, Computer Science, Mechanical, Applied Physics, Radiophysics, Optics & Opto-electronics, Instrumentation, and other associated subjects) in institutes within India are eligible to apply.



- The **START program** aims to **inspire and encourage** young minds to pursue careers in space science and technology. By providing comprehensive training and exposing students to Indian space exploration programs, ISRO hopes to nurture future talents in this field.
- Through this initiative, **ISRO seeks to foster innovation and scientific curiosity** among the youth, ensuring a steady pipeline of skilled professionals for India's space endeavors. The program aligns with ISRO's commitment to promoting science, technology, and research in the country.

Indian Parliamentary Delegation

- **Indian Parliamentary Delegation**, led by Deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha Harivansh Narayan Singh, held a bilateral meeting with their **Armenian counterparts** on the sidelines of the **Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)** event in **Geneva, Switzerland**.
- The Armenian delegation was represented by the Vice President of the National Assembly, **Hakob Arshakyan**.



- Harivansh appreciated **Armenia's support to India** in multilateral initiatives and emphasized the growing partnership between the two countries.
- Highlighting the shared democratic values and rich cultural heritage, Harivansh proposed enhancing focus on promoting cultural exchanges, such as art exhibitions, film festivals, and academic collaborations. He expressed hope for exploring various areas of engagement in parliamentary affairs between India and Armenia.



- Deputy Chairman also met with the **IPU President, Tulia Ackson, the Speaker of the National Assembly of Tanzania**. He congratulated her on assuming the presidency of the IPU and expressed hope that their meeting will renew their commitment and strengthen collaboration with the IPU and world parliaments.
- An Indian Parliamentary Delegation, led by Harivansh, is currently attending the **148th Assembly of the IPU in Geneva, Switzerland**.
- **The delegation comprises five members** from Rajya Sabha: S Niranjana Reddy, Sujeet Kumar, Ashok Mittal, Prashanta Nanda, and Sumitra. The meetings and discussions during the IPU event aimed to strengthen parliamentary ties between India and other nations. The Indian delegation highlighted the importance of shared democratic values, cultural exchanges, and collaboration in parliamentary affairs.

World's First Om Shaped Temple

- The **world's first-ever temple** designed in the iconic Om shape has been inaugurated in the village of Jadan, Pali district of Rajasthan.

- This architectural masterpiece, spanning across 250 acres, is not only expected to attract tourists but will also boast an impressive visual presence visible from space.



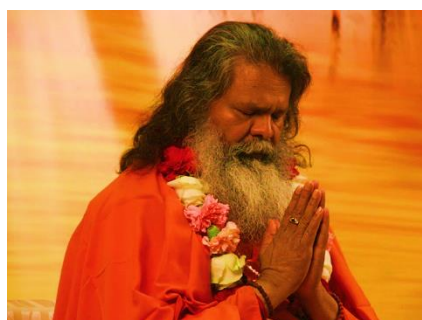
- This groundbreaking endeavor marks a significant milestone as it pioneers the creation of such a distinctive temple globally. The **'Om Aakar'** temple, following the Nagara style commonly seen in North India, pays tribute to the region's rich cultural and architectural heritage.



- The temple, **dedicated to Lord Shiva**, embodies spiritual significance with a consecration program for the Shivalinga scheduled between February 10-19, 2024.
- Following the **Nagara style of architecture** prevalent in North India, the Om-shaped temple is a sprawling structure with the Om symbol extending over a radius of about half a kilometer. The intricate design showcases the cultural and architectural heritage of the region.



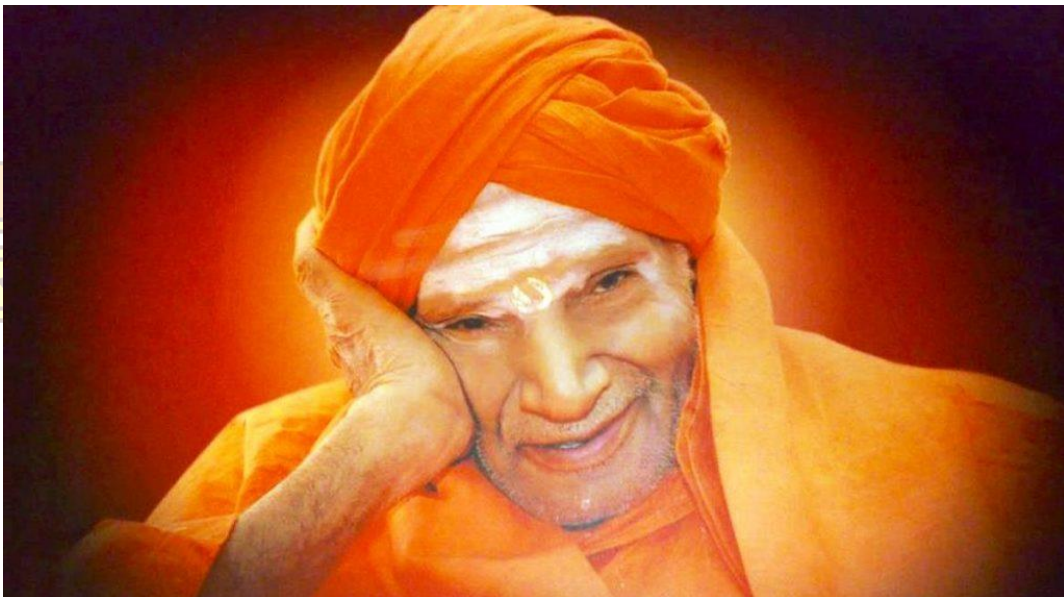
- Temple complex boasts **1,008 idols of Lord Mahadev**, including 12 Jyotirlingas. The structure stands at 135 feet, supported by 2,000 pillars, and accommodates 108 rooms. Notably, the tomb of Guru Madhavanand ji is positioned at the center of the premises.
- The foundation stone for the **temple was laid in 1995**, and construction has been ongoing for the past 25 years. The temple reflects dedication and perseverance in bringing this unique vision to fruition.
- **Swami Maheshwaranand Maharaj**, a revered spiritual leader with a global following, emphasized that this Om-shaped temple is a pioneering creation, marking a unique blend of spirituality and architectural innovation.



- The temple is associated with Om Ashram, founded by **Vishwa Guru Maha Mandleshwar Paramahansa Swami Maheswara Nanda Puriji Maharaj**. The ashram follows Hindu traditions, and the Om mantra, considered a Mahamantra, holds a central place in its spiritual practices.
- As the Om Shiv Mandir nears completion, it stands as a testament to cultural heritage, spiritual devotion, and architectural innovation, offering a unique experience for visitors and devotees alike.

Dr.Sree Sree Sivakumara Swamigalu

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid tributes to spiritual leader, and educator **Dr. Sree Sree Sivakumara Swamigalu** on his birth anniversary.
- Mr. Modi said, Dr. Swamigalu has made unparalleled contributions towards community service, embodying the true spirit of selflessness and compassion.



- He said, Dr. Swamigalu's work in **education, healthcare and social welfare** has touched millions of lives, and set a profound example of dedication and humanitarian service.
- He was a **Lingayatism religious figure**. Swami joined the Siddaganga Matha in 1930 Karnataka and became head seer in 1941. He also founded the Sri Siddaganga Education Society.

UP Leads with Most GI-Tagged Products

- Northern Indian state of **Uttar Pradesh** has taken the lead in having the highest number of Geographical Indication (GI) certified products in the country. With

the recent addition of **15 new products**, **Uttar Pradesh** now boasts a total of 69 GI-tagged products, surpassing Tamil Nadu's 58.

- The holy city of Varanasi has emerged as a leader in GI-tagged goods production, with a remarkable 30 certified products – the highest from a single geographical area. GI certification ensures that these products are unique representations of a specific culture, society, or craft.



- The newly added GI-tagged products from Uttar Pradesh include:
 - Banaras Thandai (a refreshing milk-based drink)
 - Banaras Tabla (a popular Indian percussion instrument)
 - Banaras Shehnai (a traditional wind instrument)
 - Banaras Lal Bharwamirch (red chili peppers)
 - Chiragaon Karonda (a fruit variety from Varanasi)
 - Banaras Lal Peda (a sweet delicacy)
 - Banaras Mural Painting (a traditional art form)
 - Jaunpur Imarti (a sweet dish)
 - Mathura Sanjhi Craft (a traditional art form)
 - Bundelkhand Kathiya Gehu (a wheat variety)
 - Pilibhit Bansuri (a type of flute)
 - Sambhal Bone Craft
 - Chitrakoot Wooden Craft & Toys
 - Moonj Craft
 - Rampur Patchwork
 - Varanasi's Diverse Offerings
 - **Varanasi, in particular, has secured Geographical Indication** for its famous Banaras Thandai and other regional products, expanding its portfolio to 30 GI-tagged items. Notable additions like the Banaras Tabla, Lal Peda sweets, and Jaunpur Imarti have further enriched the region's diverse offerings.

International Culture Award

- **Professor Meena Charanda**, Principal of Kalindi College, Delhi University, has been awarded the **prestigious ‘International Culture Award’** for the year 2024.
- Prof. Charanda received this honour in recognition of her remarkable work in the field of education and social service.
- The award ceremony took place on March 30, 2024, at the India International Center.
- During the award ceremony, **Prof. Charanda was presented with:** A memento, A plaque , A shield , A citation from the university.



- Other Awardees While Prof. Charanda was recognized for her contributions, the committee also selected other women and men for the ‘International Culture Award’, whose names will be announced soon.
- Prof. Charanda has been teaching in the Political Science Department of Kalindi College for more than two decades.
- **She holds a PhD degree from Delhi University**, where she studied Dalit Assemblies of Uttar Pradesh. Prof. Charanda has authored a book on the role of Dalit MLAs in the Uttar Pradesh Assembly. She has published more than 50 articles in various newspapers and magazines. Currently, two PhD researchers are conducting research under Prof. Charanda’s guidance.

India’s First AI-Based Film ‘IRAH’

- Amidst the growing buzz around Artificial Intelligence (AI), the trailer and song launch event for **India’s first Hindi film on this subject, “IRAH,”** took place in Mumbai.
- The movie boasts an impressive cast, including Rohit Bose Roy, Rajesh Sharma, Karishma Kotak, and Rakshith Bhandarry in prominent roles.



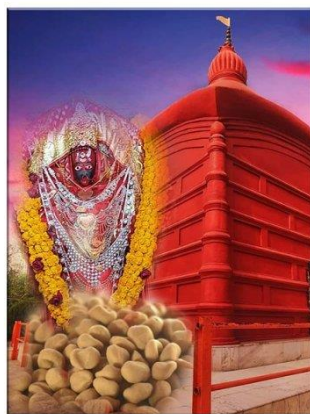
- Produced by **Big Films Media** and directed by **Sam Bhattacharjee**, “IRA H” is set to hit theaters nationwide on April 4th, 2024.
- The event was graced by the presence of music composer Sameer Sen. The trailer of “IRA H” offers a glimpse into the dark underbelly of AI technology, highlighting its potential misuse and negative repercussions.
- The actor shared insights into the innovative aspects of his role, revealing that much of the film relied on VFX, with numerous scenes requiring him to deliver dialogues in virtual environments.
- His character is also intertwined with an app named IraH, which plays a crucial role in the plot.
- Director Sam Bhattacharjee elaborated on the film’s thematic depth, emphasizing the pivotal role of technology and data in contemporary society. He credited the lead actor, Rohit Bose Roy, for his commitment to the project and highlighted the extensive three-year effort invested in the film’s VFX production.

GI Tag

- Three traditional products from Tripura have recently received the prestigious Geographical Indication (GI) tag.
- The products are Matabari pera prasad, Rignai pachara textiles and Risa. With this, Tripura now has 4 GI Protected products. The ‘**Matabari pera prasad**’ is a sweet offering at the renowned Tripureswari temple in Tripura.
- Made from milk and sugar, this delicacy is famous for its distinctive taste and deep-rooted cultural traditions.
- ‘**Rignai pachara**’ is a traditional hand-woven attire meticulously crafted by skilled artisans using indigenous materials and techniques.



- This garment holds symbolic value within Tripura's cultural tapestry and reflects the rich legacy of the region's textile heritage.
- The '**Rignai pachara**' has garnered significant interest among urban dwellers, particularly in metropolitan areas, for its traditional allure.
- **Risa, another traditional product** from Tripura, received the GI tag earlier this month.
- Risa carries great significance for the art of Tripuri. Tripuri tribal women make all the fabrics, including Risa, using loom looms.
- In addition to the recently recognised products, the **queen pineapple of Tripura** had already received a GI tag through the initiative of the North Eastern Regional Agricultural Marketing Corporation (NERAMAC).



- This nutrient-rich pineapple is one of the 13 fruits and vegetables from the Northeast that have been awarded the GI tag.
- **The GI tag ensures legal protection** against unauthorised imitation or misuse of the products produced in a particular geographical region, safeguarding their authenticity and preserving the cultural heritage associated with them. This

recognition also facilitates market access and promotion, both domestically and internationally, thereby fostering economic opportunities for local communities involved in their production.

SKOCH ESG Award

- **REC Limited, a Maharatna Central Public Sector Enterprise** under the Ministry of Power and a leading NBFC, has been bestowed with the SKOCH ESG Award 2024 in the '**Renewable Energy Financing**' category.
- The award underscores REC's dedication to sustainable financing, paving the way for a greener future and accelerating the transition to renewable energy.
- REC has emerged as a significant player in India's clean energy transition, actively contributing to the nation's sustainable future.



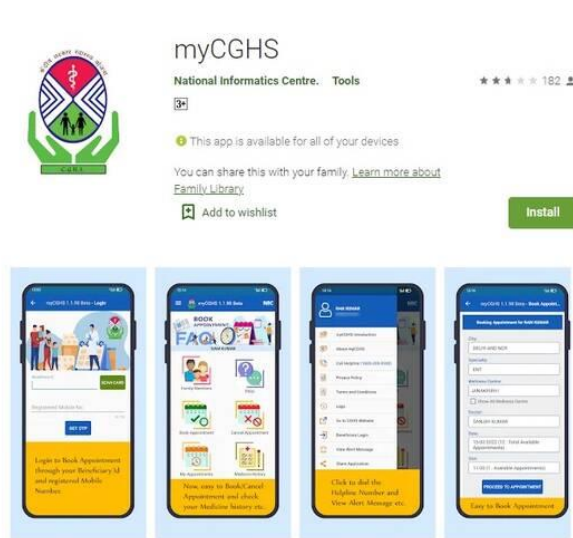
- Through various initiatives and achievements, REC has committed to numerous **sustainable projects** and signed various MOUs for green projects.
- Furthermore, REC has engaged in one-on-one discussions with various developers of **green projects, spanning sectors** such as solar, wind, Pumped Storage Projects, E-mobility, RE manufacturing, green ammonia and green hydrogen, and battery storage.
- Looking ahead, REC anticipates a significant expansion in its renewable energy portfolio, with projections indicating growth to 10 times its present value, reaching more than **Rs. 3 lakh crores by 2030**, representing approximately 30% of its Assets Under Management.
- The **SKOCH ESG Awards recognize organizations** that demonstrate outstanding performance in Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) practices.
- The SKOCH ESG Award and Assessment serve as an important benchmark for evaluating organizations' commitment to India 2047.



- It focuses on the interplay between sustainable investments and processes in shaping a sustainable and growing business future.
- REC finances the entire Power-Infrastructure sector comprising **Generation, Transmission, Distribution, Renewable Energy, and new technologies** like Electric Vehicles, Battery Storage, Pumped Storage Projects, Green Hydrogen and Green Ammonia projects.
- Recently, REC has also diversified into the **Non-Power Infrastructure sector** comprising Roads & Expressways, Metro Rail, Airports, IT Communication, Social and Commercial Infrastructure, Ports, and Electro-Mechanical (E&M) works in respect of various other sectors like Steel and Refinery.

MyCGHS App

- Secretary, **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare** Apurva Chandra launched the **myCGHS app** for the **iOS ecosystem of devices** in New Delhi.
- The app is designed to enhance access to **Electronic Health Records**, information, and resources for Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS) beneficiaries.
- The App was already available for the Android system. Talking to reporters, Mr Chandra said that the **myCGHS app facilitates** a wide range of services, including booking and cancellation of online appointments, accessing lab reports from CGHS labs, checking medicine history, checking medical reimbursement claim status, accessing referral details, locating nearby wellness centres and empanelled hospitals among others.



- About the concerns expressed on the issue **linking ABHA Id with CHGS Cards**, the Union Health Secretary also clarified that there is no question of discontinuation of the CGHS scheme. He said, ABHA Ayushman Bharat Health Account- ABHA is the national digital identity for health which is part of the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission. He said, that more than 55 crore ABHA Cards have been created.



African Nation's First Woman Prime Minister

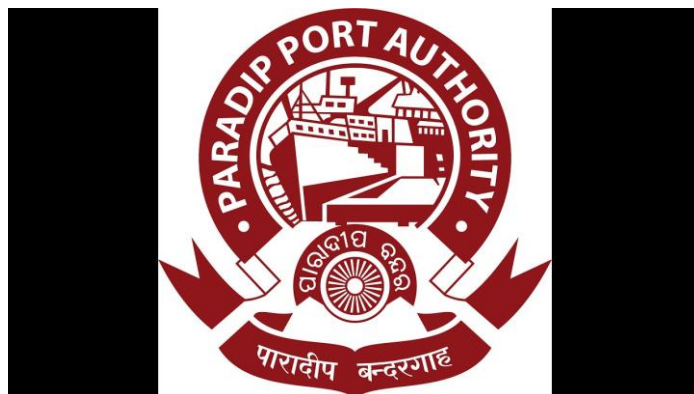
- The **Democratic Republic of Congo** appointed **Judith Suminwa Tuluka** as the **African nation's first woman Prime Minister**.
- **President Felix Tshisekedi** of the Democratic Republic of Congo made the appointment. He fulfilled a campaign promise and took an important step towards the formation of a new government after being re-elected late last year.



- The authorities face a raft of challenges including a worsening conflict and humanitarian crisis in eastern regions and the management of Congo's considerable mineral wealth.
- In his first term, Mr Tshisekedi had assured to root out endemic corruption, rebuild the economy, tackle deep inequalities and curb the eastern insecurity. Critics say he fell short on all the counts.

India's Top Cargo Handling Port

- **Paradip Port Authority, Odisha**, surpasses Deendayal Port Authority, Kandla, to become India's leading cargo-handling major port in the fiscal year 2023-24, handling **145.38 Million Metric Tons (MMT)** of cargo, marking a 7.4% growth from the previous year.
- **Handled 59.19 million metric tonnes** of coastal shipping traffic. Managed 43.97 million metric tonnes of thermal coal coastal shipping.
- Achieved highest productivity among all major ports in India. Improved berth productivity from 31050 MT to 33014 MT.



- Offers the lowest tariffs among all Indian ports. Frozen tariff rates for cargo handling for three years starting in 2022 as part of business development plan.
- Established by the **Odisha government in 1962**; taken over by the Indian government in 1965.
- Declared a major port by the Indian government on April 18, 1966, becoming the 8th major port of India.
- Operates as an **autonomous body under the Major Port Trusts Act 1963**, under the Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways, administered by a Board of Trustees appointed by the Government of India.



G2G Agreement Have Gone To Israel

- External Affairs Ministry said the first batch of people under the **G2G agreement** have gone to Israel.
- Briefing media in New Delhi this afternoon, Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal stressed that **India is conscious of their safety** and has urged the Israeli authorities to ensure their safety and wellbeing.



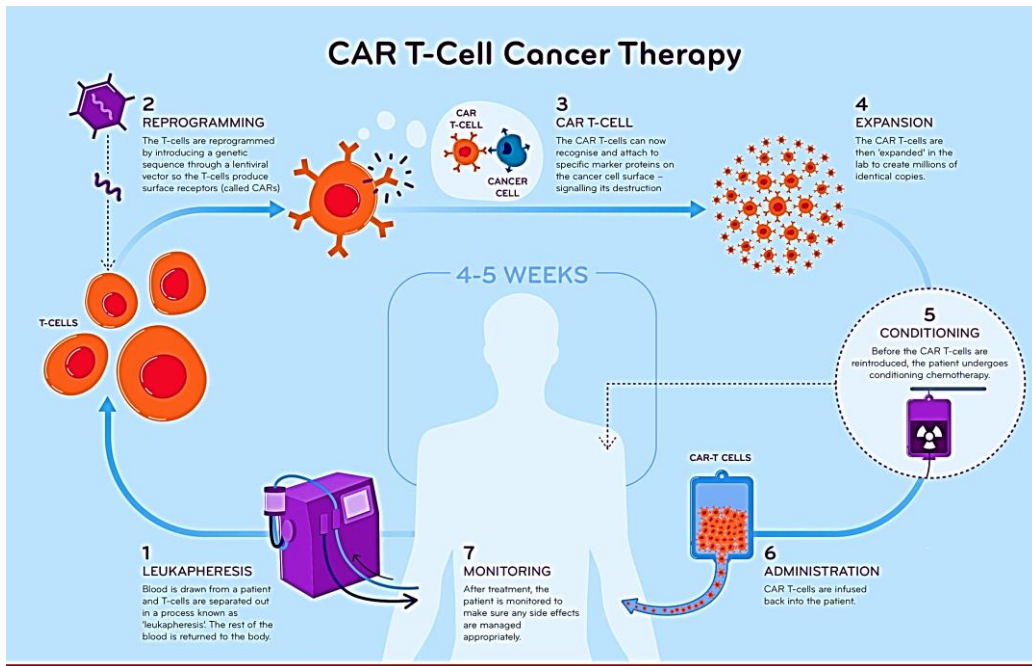
- The workers have gone to Israel as part of a Mobility Agreement that India signed with Israel. The agreement predates the ongoing conflict in the region.
- Replying to another query, the spokesperson said India has noted with concern the **Israeli attack on Iranian diplomatic premises** in Syria on the first of April.
- He said India is distressed at the escalating tensions in West Asia and their potential to fuel further **violence and instability**.



- India has urged all parties to avoid actions that go against commonly accepted principles and norms of international law.
- Replying to a question on **China claiming Arunachal Pradesh**, the spokesperson said that Arunachal Pradesh is an inalienable part of India and will remain so.
- On India-Bangladesh ties, Mr Jaiswal said bilateral relations are very strong. He said both nations have a very comprehensive partnership that spans across sectors.

CAR-T Cell Therapy To Nation

- **President Droupadi Murmu** will visit Mumbai, where she will dedicate **CAR-T Cell Therapy** to the nation at IIT Bombay.
- The **CAR-T Cell Therapy** (used to treat cancer patients) has been developed in India by IIT Bombay-incubated Company Immunoadoptive Cell Therapy (ImmunoACT).



- The CAR-T Cell Therapy product has been developed as a collaborative effort between IIT Bombay and Tata Memorial Centre (TMC).
- **Designed and developed at IIT Bombay**, the therapy has undergone integrative process development and manufacturing at ImmunoACT.
- Clinical investigations and translational studies were conducted by teams at TMH. The CAR-T Cell Therapy product is expected to save many lives at much lower cost compared to the cost of such products available outside India.

Agni Prime Missile

- **Agni-Prime Missile** has been successfully flight-tested in Odisha yesterday. The flight-test was conducted by Strategic Forces Command (SFC), along with Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of Odisha.



- According to the Defence Ministry, New Generation Ballistic Missile Agni-Prime met all the trial objectives validating its reliable performance.

- Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh has **congratulated DRDO, SFC** and the Armed Forces for the successful test.
- He said that the successful development and induction of the missile will be an excellent force multiplier for the Armed Forces.

Erez Crossing

- **Israel's security Cabinet** has approved the **reopening of the Erez crossing** to allow the flow of more humanitarian aid into Gaza. Erez Crossing, also known as **Beit Hanoun**, is a border crossing between **Israel and the northern Gaza Strip**.
- It is being reopened for the first time since the terror attack by the **Palestinian group Hamas** on the 7th of October last year.



- The Israeli official said the **crossing is being opened** to allow more humanitarian aid to enter Gaza. The cabinet also approved using the **Israeli Port of Ashdod** to help transfer more aid to Gaza.
- Israel tightly controlled land crossings and has **banned all travel by air and sea** to and from Gaza. Before the start of the conflict, there were two functional crossings within the enclave: **Erez for the movement of people** and **Kerem Shalom for goods**.
- The conflict in Gaza escalated after the 7th of October attack by the Palestinian group Hamas, where about 2,500 terrorists breached the border into Israel from the Gaza Strip, leading to casualties and the seizure of hostages.
- Israel has characterised its actions as **targeting Hamas' infrastructure** with the goal of eliminating the entire terror group while making efforts to minimise civilian casualties.



Strategic Petroleum Reserve

- India is embarking on establishing its **first privately managed strategic petroleum reserve (SPR)** by 2029-30.
- This initiative **aims to allow the operator the liberty** to trade all stored oil, aligning with models seen in countries such as **Japan and South Korea**.
- India's current SPR strategy involves partial commercialization, with plans to expand this approach with new SPR projects.



- India plans to construct two new SPRs, including an **18.3 million barrels** facility in **Padur, Karnataka**, and a **29.3 million barrels SPR** in **Odisha**.
- These projects will involve private partners who will have the **freedom to trade all stored oil locally**. The **government will retain the first right** to the oil in case of supply shortages.

- The Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves Ltd (ISPRL) has initiated a tender process to assess interest from local and global companies for the Padur SPR project.



- The completion timeline is projected at **60 months** from the initiation of the project. India, being the world's third-largest oil importer and consumer, seeks to bolster its SPR capacity to mitigate risks associated with global supply disruptions and price fluctuations.
- Additionally, expanding storage capacity aligns with India's ambition to join the **International Energy Agency (IEA)**, which mandates member countries to maintain a minimum of **90 days of oil consumption**. ISPRL estimates the Padur SPR project, along with associated pipeline and import facility, to cost approximately 55 billion rupees (\$659 million).
- The federal government is expected to contribute up to **60% of the total cost**. The tender evaluation criterion prioritizes bidders requiring the lowest federal financing or offering the highest premium for the 60-year lease.

Young Global Leaders Community

- The **World Economic Forum (WEF)** has announced the **20th edition of its Young Global Leaders Community: The Class of 2024**.
- The list includes nearly **90 individuals** under the age of 40 from diverse fields, including politics, business, civil society, the arts, and academia.



- **This year, five Indians** have been selected for the Young Global Leaders program. They are: Bhumi Pednekar (Art and Culture), Adwaita Nayar (Business) – Chief Executive Officer, Nyka Fashion , Arjun Bhartia (Business) – Director, Jubilant Group , Priya Aggarwal Hebbar (Business) – Non-Executive Director, Vedanta Limited , Sharad Vivek Sagar (Social Entrepreneurs) – Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Dexterity Global.
- The **WEF's Young Global Leaders program** was launched in **2005** and aims to identify the future generation of leaders who can contribute to addressing the world's most pressing challenges.



- The program includes a **three-year leadership** development curriculum, executive education courses, learning journeys, and opportunities to collaborate with peers.

WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM

- The **World Economic Forum** is an international non-profit organization headquartered in **Cologny, Switzerland**. It was established in **1971** by **Klaus Schwab** with the goal of promoting public-private cooperation to address global issues.
- The WEF is known for its **annual meeting in Davos, Switzerland**, as well as its research and reports, such as the Global Gender Gap Report, Global Competitiveness Report, and Energy Transition Index.

Zimbabwe Introduces ZiG

- Zimbabwe has launched a new **gold-backed currency called ZiG**, an abbreviation for **“Zimbabwe Gold.”**
- This move comes as the country grapples with **hyperinflation** and a volatile financial landscape. Under the leadership of central bank governor **John Mushayavanhu**, the ZiG currency will operate with a market-determined exchange rate, replacing the depreciating RTGS dollar.
- The new notes, ranging from **denominations of 1 to 200**, aim to restore confidence in the local currency.



- Additionally, **coins will be introduced** to alleviate the scarcity of US coins, which has led to unconventional forms of change.
- To instill faith in the **ZiG**, **Mushayavanhu assures** that the currency will be backed by **precious minerals, predominantly gold**, or foreign exchange reserves.
- This measure aims to prevent the rampant devaluation experienced by previous iterations of **the Zimbabwean dollar**, addressing historic mistrust stemming from past currency crises.
- Despite the **introduction of ZiG**, the US dollar remains the dominant currency in transactions, reflecting deep-seated preferences among Zimbabweans. Skepticism persists due to previous failed attempts at currency stabilization, notably the bond note, which collapsed amid government overspending.

Largest Importer of Russian Crude

- **China has surpassed India** as the primary importer of Russian crude oil via sea routes, with China importing **1.82 million barrels per day (bpd)** in March compared to **India's 1.36 million bpd**.
- This shift is attributed to **India's slowdown** in imports due to sanctions and rising prices. In March, **China imported 1.82 million bpd** of Russian crude by sea, exceeding India's 1.36 million bpd.



- This trend marks a significant shift, as **China has become the largest buyer** of Russian seaborne crude.
- India's recent **slowdown in Russian crude imports** is linked to various sanctions and escalating prices.
- Despite a **7% month-on-month increase** in March, India's imports fell short of China's, indicating a strategic shift in its oil procurement.
- **Urals sour-grade oil remains** India's primary import from Russia.
- India's increased reliance on Russian crude stems from geopolitical tensions, particularly since **Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022**.
- Despite pressure from Western nations and OPEC+'s efforts to stabilize crude prices, India continues to purchase oil from Russia due to significant demand and Moscow's discounted offerings. Indian officials argue that this strategy contributes to stabilizing global crude prices.



Sittwe Agreement Approved

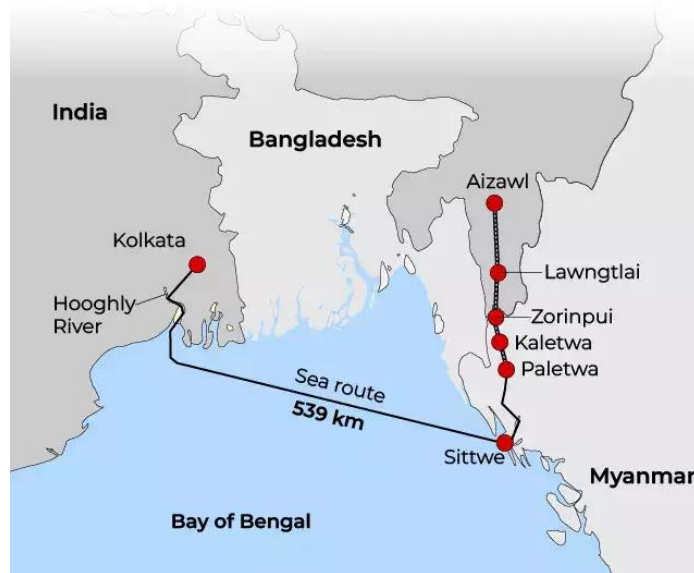
- In a strategic move to bolster its **maritime presence and enhance regional connectivity**, India has gained operational control over the **Sittwe Port in Myanmar**, following approval from the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).

- The agreement allows **India Ports Global (IPGL)**, a company fully owned by the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, to manage the entire port on the **Kaladan River**, marking India's second overseas port acquisition after Chabahar in Iran.



- Unlike the limited control over **terminals in Chabahar**, India now possesses complete operational authority over the Sittwe Port, positioning it strategically in the Indian Ocean rivalry with China.
- The deal includes a **long-term lease arrangement**, subject to renewal every three years, enabling India to undertake substantial development initiatives at the port.
- The port development is integral to the Kaladan project, aimed at enhancing connectivity between **Sittwe in Myanmar and Mizoram in India**, facilitated by waterways and road networks.
- The port's development aligns with India's strategy to uplift landlocked northeastern states by reducing transportation and logistic costs, thereby fostering economic growth and regional integration.

Kaladan Multi Modal Transit Transport Project



- **The Kaladan project's waterways and road networks** will substantially improve connectivity to Mizoram and Tripura, furthering trade and commerce in the region.
- **Amidst Myanmar's civil unrest**, particularly in the Rakhine state where Sittwe is situated, security concerns loom large due to ongoing conflicts between the Myanmar army and insurgent groups like the Arakan Army.
- The escalating conflict poses a potential threat to the stability and continuity of the Sittwe project. If the **rebels gain control over the Rakhine province**, it could jeopardize the port's operations and future prospects, highlighting the precarious geopolitical landscape in the region.

Indian Origin Expert Ashwini

- **Dr. Ashwini Keshavan, an Indian-origin neurologist**, has been selected to be a part of a **world-class research team in the UK**. This prestigious team has been entrusted with the crucial task of conducting research to **detect dementia through blood tests** and gathering more evidence to support this approach.
- The research team's findings are expected to have a wide-ranging impact in the coming five years, as the **potential to diagnose dementia** through a simple blood test could revolutionize the way the condition is detected and managed.



- Dr. Ashwini Keshavan is part of a team that is **focusing on p-tau217**, a promising biomarker for Alzheimer's disease. This means that her research is aimed at examining the potential of **this specific protein as an indicator of Alzheimer's**, one of the most common forms of dementia.



- The overarching goal of these collaborative efforts is to **make the detection and diagnosis of dementia more accessible and affordable**, with the research team actively working to recruit participants from across the UK.
- **Dementia is a syndrome** that leads to a decline in cognitive function, which includes memory, reasoning, comprehension, spatial awareness, mathematical abilities, learning capacity, language skills, and decision-making processes. It is a chronic and progressive condition, and the symptoms are distinct from the typical effects of biological aging.

- Dementia can have various causes, such as **brain cell damage**, head injury, stroke, brain tumor, or even HIV infection.
- Dementia disproportionately affects women, with **65% of total deaths** due to the condition occurring in women.
- This initiative aligns with the World Health Organization's (WHO) "Global Dementia Action Plan," which sets global targets for dementia to be achieved by 2025.

First MNC To Export EVs From India

- **French automaker Citroën** has become the first multinational car manufacturer to export electric vehicles (EVs) produced in India to the **international market**.
- The company announced the commencement of exports of its locally manufactured **ë-C3**, **sending an initial shipment** of 500 units to Indonesia from the Kamarajar Port.



CITROËN

- Aligning with its global ambitions of democratizing electric mobility and promoting sustainable transportation, Citroën's export of the Made-in-India ë-C3 showcases the country's manufacturing and engineering capabilities on a global scale.
- This move not only **highlights Citroën's commitment to India** but also contributes significantly to the nation's goal of establishing a sustainable and competitive EV manufacturing ecosystem. The export of the ë-C3 symbolizes the strength of Indo-French industrial cooperation and mutual commitment to cleaner mobility.



- With support from both governments, this initiative underscores the importance of collaboration in delivering affordable and environmentally friendly mobility solutions, in line with the Indo-French roadmap for the Indo-Pacific.

UK's First Woman High Commissioner To India

- **Lindy Cameron, a distinguished Oxford University alumna** and former CEO of the UK's National Cyber Security Centre, has been appointed as the **first woman high commissioner to India**.
- Her appointment marks a significant milestone in UK-India relations, coming 70 years after India appointed its **first high commissioner to London**.
- Cameron's career spans diverse roles, including service in conflict zones like Iraq and Afghanistan. With a background in international development, she has held senior positions in the UK government, notably as director general for country programmes.



- Cameron's appointment coincides with a period of **enhanced bilateral cooperation** between the UK and India.
- Despite historical ties, recent efforts have been directed towards bolstering trade and defence relations.
- Negotiations for a free-trade agreement are underway, signaling potential for expanded economic collaboration.
- Both nations are actively seeking to strengthen defence ties, evident from recent high-level visits and strategic initiatives.
- The deployment of the UK's carrier strike group and littoral response group to the Indian Ocean, along with the establishment of a dedicated office for India in London, underscores the commitment to enhancing security cooperation.

UPI in Nepal

- **PhonePe, in collaboration with eSewa and the Hotel Association of Nepal (HAN) Pokhara, is set to promote UPI during the Fewa New Year Festival in Nepal.**



- Popularize UPI payments on the **Fonepay Network in Nepal**. Raise awareness about digital payments among local merchants and customers.
- Demonstrate the convenience of digital transactions during the festival. On-ground activations to educate merchants and customers about digital payments.
- Prominent branding and kiosks showcasing UPI usage. Interactive activities to highlight the **ease of UPI payments**. Engagement with over 3,000 merchants and an expected 100,000 visitors.

Spring Meetings Of IMF & World Bank

- Spring meetings of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank will begin in Washington with **twin objectives** of help countries to **combat climate change**, and assist the **most indebted nations**.
- The events will start with the IMF's publication of its updated **World Economic Outlook**.



- The **meetings will bring central bankers** together with finance and development ministers, academics, and representatives from the private sector and civil society to discuss the state of the global economy.
- This year marks the **80th anniversary of both institutions**. They were born of the **Bretton Woods conference**, held in 1944 as allied nations sought to regulate the international financial order after World War II, which was then still raging.
- **World Bank head Ajay Banga** during a recent live streamed press conference said that there is the climate crisis, debt, food insecurity, pandemics and fragility. He said, there is clearly a need to accelerate access to clean air, water and energy.

US, Japan, And Philippines

- On April 11, 2024, **President Joe Biden** of the United States convened the inaugural **trilateral summit** at the White House in Washington D.C., bringing together leaders from the **United States, Japan, and the Philippines**.



- The summit aimed to affirm America's **steadfast support for its allies**, Japan and the Philippines, particularly amidst the escalating territorial disputes with China.
- Prior to the summit, a joint maritime exercise named **Maritime Cooperative Activity (MCA)** took place in the exclusive economic zone of the Philippines on April 7, 2024. The exercise involved maritime forces from the Philippines, Japan, the United States, and Australia, responding to allegations of Chinese harassment against the Philippines.
- **Tensions between China and the Philippines** primarily revolve around the **Second Thomas Shoal**, located approximately 200 kilometers from Palawan. In 1999, the Philippines grounded the BRP Sierra Madre to bolster its claim on the shoal, leading to ongoing clashes with Chinese vessels attempting to impede or harass Philippine resupply missions.



- Similarly, the **Senkaku Islands dispute between China and Japan** has seen Chinese ships encroaching into Japanese territorial waters since 2008. The United States has affirmed its defense treaty with Japan, emphasizing that the Senkaku Islands fall under its protective umbrella. Both the Senkaku Islands and the Second Thomas Shoal are situated within the South China Sea, a region of paramount strategic importance for trade and potentially abundant in oil and gas reserves. China's expansive claims in the area have ignited conflicts with several neighboring countries.

CDP-SURAKSHA

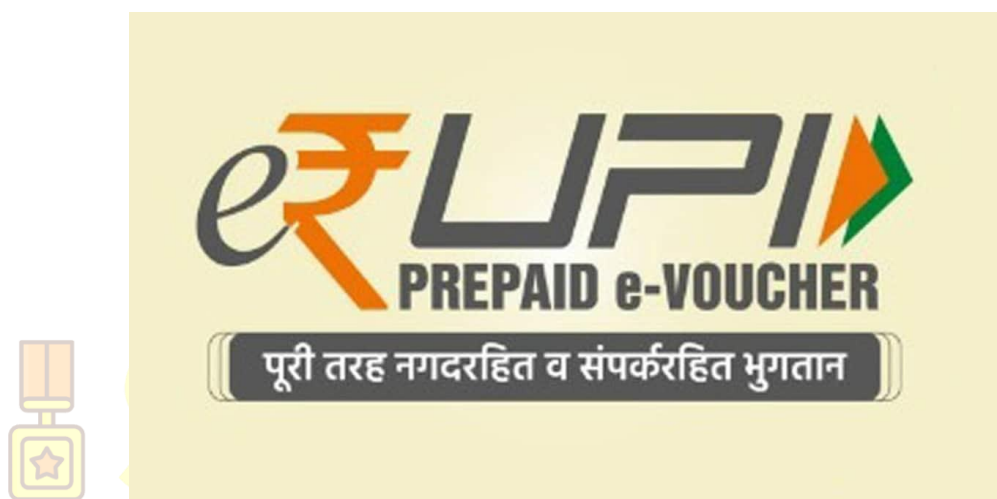
- The Indian government has launched **CDP-SURAKSHA**, a groundbreaking digital platform aimed at streamlining the distribution of subsidies to horticulture farmers under the **Cluster Development Programme (CDP)**.
- This initiative comes amidst the significant contribution of the **horticulture sector to India's agricultural Gross Value Added (GVA)**, with consistent growth in crop production over the years.



- CDP-SURAKSHA, which stands for “**System for Unified Resource Allocation, Knowledge, and Secure Horticulture Assistance,**” is designed to ensure swift subsidy disbursement to farmers’ bank accounts via the **e-RUPI voucher system** provided by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI).
- Unlike the previous system where farmers had to independently purchase materials and then seek subsidy release, **CDP-SURAKSHA facilitates** upfront

subsidy provision during material purchase. Vendors only receive payment upon farmers' verification of delivery, ensuring transparency and accountability in the process.

- CDP, managed by the National Horticulture Board (NHB), focuses on enhancing the competitiveness of identified horticulture clusters.
- With **55 clusters identified and 12 selected for the pilot phase**, covering millions of hectares and farmers, CDP provides substantial government assistance based on cluster size, aiming for holistic development and global competitiveness.



- **Integration and Validation:** Seamlessly integrates databases with PM-KISAN and UIDAI for efficient validation.
- **Cloud-based Infrastructure:** Utilizes cloud-based server space from the National Informatics Centre (NIC) for enhanced accessibility and scalability.
- **e-RUPI Integration:** Leverages the e-RUPI voucher mechanism for secure and cardless subsidy payments.
- **Geo-tagging and Geo-fencing:** Enables precise tracking of delivery and verification through geo-tagged media, ensuring authenticity and preventing misuse.

European Girls' Mathematical Olympiad 2024

- **Indian team** has secured 2 Silver and 2 Bronze medals in the 13th European Girls' Mathematical Olympiad (EGMO) 2024.
- This Olympiad was held in **Tskaltubo, Georgia** from April 11 – 17, 2024.

- **Gunjan Agarwal of Gurgaon and Sanjana Philo Chacko of Thiruvananthapuram** won Silver medals while Larissa from Hissar and Pune's Saeel Patil won Bronze medals.



- This achievement marks the second instance of all four contestants securing medals at EGMO since India's debut in 2015.
- The team was led by leader Sahil Mhaskar, Deputy Leader Aditi Muthkhod and Observer Ananya Ranade from the Chennai Mathematical Institute.

Bisket Jatra Festival

- **Bisket Jatra is an eight-day celebration** that culminated today with a huge celebration in the district of Bhaktapur.
- Thousands of people gathered in Bhaktapur Durbar Square to witness the celebration.



- People assembled and pulled the **chariot of Bhairava and Bhadra Kali** in opposite directions in the city lanes. In the tug of war, people pulled an unequal number of ropes which were biased toward the forward direction.

- A tug of war took place during Jatra to determine to which half of the city the chariot would go first.
- With unstable wheels, **the heavy chariot trembling with push and pull forces** in opposite directions, and people falling to the ground during tug of war, made this event appear as the most dangerous part of the festival.

Miss AI: The World's First Beauty Pageant

- World is set to witness the **first-ever beauty pageant** exclusively for AI-generated models and influencers.
- **Dubbed "Miss AI,"** this unique contest will pit these virtual creations against each other, judging them on their online presence, aesthetics, and the technical prowess behind their creation.



- The victor of this pioneering event will be crowned with a **staggering \$20,000 prize money**, solidifying Miss AI's status as the world's first AI beauty pageant.
- The AI-generated influencers will be evaluated based on a comprehensive set of criteria that goes beyond mere **physical appearance**. Their **engagement numbers with fans**, rate of audience growth, and utilization of platforms will be meticulously assessed, ensuring that the social clout of these virtual contestants is given due consideration.



- Adding to the excitement, the Miss AI pageant will be judged by a **panel of four esteemed individuals**, including two AI influencers themselves – Aitana Lopez and Emily Pellegrini, boasting a combined following of over 550,000 on Instagram.
- The human judges, Andrew Bloch, an entrepreneur and PR adviser, and **Sally-Ann Fawcett**, a renowned beauty pageant historian and author, will provide their expertise and insights to this groundbreaking event.
- The **first prize of \$5,000 cash**, along with Fanvue promotion and PR support, await the crowned Miss AI winner (or the creator behind the AI influencer). The runner-up and third-place winners will also receive cash prizes, further incentivizing the creation of these virtual influencers.

GI Tag

- GI Registry Office based in Chennai announced that the **Tiranga Barfi of Varanasi** and the **Dhalua Murti Metal Casting** Craft have been included in the prestigious GI category.
- Total number of GI products from the state has reached an **impressive 75**, comprising **58 handicrafts and 17 agricultural and food products**.
- This remarkable achievement sets a new record for the **highest number of GI tags associated** with a particular state in India.
- Steeped in the rich history of India's independence movement, the **Tiranga Barfi holds a special place** in the hearts of Varanasi's residents. During the struggle for freedom, this tricolored sweetmeat was ingeniously crafted to facilitate secret meetings and information exchange among revolutionaries.



- The **saffron hue** is derived from saffron, the **green color** comes from pistachio, and the **white shade** is created using khoya and cashew nuts.
- The **Dhalua Murti Metal Casting Craft**, originating from the Kashipura locality of Varanasi, has gained national recognition for its intricate and exquisite metal idols.
- The craftsmen in this region have mastered the art of **casting idols of deities** such as Maa Annapurna, Lakshmi-Ganesh, Durgaji, and Hanumanji, along with various instruments, bells, thrones, and seals for minting coins.

UNFPA Report

- **United Nations Population Fund's (UNFPA)** latest report, titled "Interwoven Lives, Threads of Hope: Ending Inequalities in Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights," sheds light on India's population dynamics and the persistent disparities in sexual and reproductive health.
- India leads globally with an estimated **population of 144.17 crore**, surpassing China. The report reveals that India's population is expected to double in **77 years**.



- Notably, **24% of India's population** falls in the **0-14 age bracket**, indicating a significant youth demographic.
- While **maternal deaths have decreased**, accounting for 8% of global fatalities, India still faces stark inequities in maternal health. Despite improved access to maternal health services, disparities persist, with certain districts experiencing alarmingly **high maternal mortality ratios**.
- The report highlights ongoing gender-based disparities in healthcare access and outcomes. Vulnerable groups such as women with disabilities, migrants, ethnic minorities, LGBTQIA+ individuals, and disadvantaged castes face heightened risks and barriers to sexual and reproductive health services.

World Future Energy Summit

- **16th World Future Energy Summit** has commenced in Abu Dhabi, drawing together global leaders, policymakers, and experts in sustainable energy and climate initiatives.
- The summit aims to **foster dialogue** on key issues like global climate action, renewable energy, energy security, and sustainable development.



WORLD FUTURE ENERGY SUMMIT

- **Sheikha Shamma bint Sultan bin Khalifa Al Nahyan**, President and CEO of the UAE Independent Climate Change Accelerators, emphasized the critical need for substantial financial investments to **limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius**.
- She highlighted the role of blended finance and stressed the importance of international cooperation in addressing climate change. **Francesco La Camera, Director-General of the International Renewable Energy Agency**, emphasized the urgency of increasing renewable energy capacity to at least **11 terawatts by 2030**.
- **Organized by Masdar**, the state-owned Abu Dhabi Future Energy Company, the summit serves as a platform for global leaders in sustainable energy and climate initiatives to exchange knowledge, ideas, and solutions.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Primary Objective Of Smart Meter National Programme

- A. To replace India's 25 crore conventional meters with smart meters
- B. To improve water distribution efficiency
- C. To promote renewable energy sources
- D. To reduce pollution from power plants

ANSWER: A

2. Which IIT Successfully Transferred Pioneering Swine Fever Vaccine Technology To BioMed Pvt, A Vaccine Manufacturing Company

- A. IIT Guwahati
- B. IIT Madras
- C. IIT Kanpur
- D. IIT Roorkee

ANSWER: A

3. Mushk Budiji Is An Indigenous Variety Of Which Crop

- A. Rice
- B. Wheat
- C. Maize
- D. Jowar

ANSWER: A

4. Afanasy Nikitin Seamount Lies In Which Ocean

- A. Pacific Ocean
- B. Indian Ocean
- C. Atlantic Ocean
- D. Arctic Ocean

ANSWER: B

5. ENBA Lifetime Achievement Award Is Awarded To

- A. Sanjeev Jain
- B. Rohit Jain
- C. Vineet Jain
- D. Rituraj Jain

ANSWER: C

6. Cumbum Valley Is Located In Which State

- A. Tamil Nadu
- B. Karnataka
- C. Maharashtra
- D. Kerala

ANSWER: A

7. Which Institute Hosted International Chess Federation Rated Chess Tournament

- A. IIT Madras
- B. IIT Kanpur
- C. IIT Delhi
- D. IIT Hyderabad

ANSWER: A

8. World Ozone Day Celebrated On

- A. September 13
- B. September 14
- C. September 15
- D. September 16

ANSWER: D

9. Rignai Pachara Textiles Recently Got GI Tag Belongs From

- A. Manipur
- B. Tripura
- C. Gujarat
- D. Kerala

ANSWER: B

10. Which Company Awarded SKOCH ESG Award 2024 In 'Renewable Energy Financing' Category

- A. REC
- B. Adani Green Energy
- C. Tata Green Energy
- D. JSW Energy

ANSWER: A

11. Which Country Collaborated With India For Sanskrit Research And Education

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

ANSWER: A

12. Taipei Is Capital Of

- A. South Korea
- B. Taiwan
- C. North Korea
- D. Japan

ANSWER: B

13. MyCGHS App Is Related To

- A. Education
- B. Stocks
- C. Health
- D. Export

ANSWER: C

14. Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Established In

- A. 2000
- B. 2001
- C. 2002
- D. 2003

ANSWER: B

15. Dr. Karthik Kommuri Seen In News Is

- A. Teacher
- B. Doctor
- C. Scientist
- D. Athlete

ANSWER: B

16. CAR-T Cell Therapy Is Used To Treat

- A. Cancer
- B. TB
- C. Malaria
- D. Dengue

ANSWER: A

17. Lumpy Skin Disease Is Mostly Occurred In Which Species/Group

- A. Cattle
- B. Fish
- C. Wild cat
- D. Birds

ANSWER: A

18. 'NICES Programme', Is Operated By Which Organization

- A. ISRO
- B. DRDO
- C. IEA
- D. SEBI

ANSWER: A

19. Ahobilam Shrine Is Located In Which State

- A. Andhra Pradesh
- B. Rajasthan
- C. Madhya Pradesh
- D. Maharashtra

ANSWER: A

20. Recently, President Of India Launched India's First Home Grown Gene Therapy For Cancer At Which Place

- A. IIT Madras
- B. IIT Bombay
- C. IIT Hyderabad
- D. IIT Delhi

ANSWER: B

21. Kathia Wheat, Recently Got A GI Tag, Belongs To Which State

- A. Madhya Pradesh
- B. Andhra Pradesh
- C. Uttar Pradesh
- D. Rajasthan

ANSWER: C

22. Perungamanallur Massacre Is Associated With Which State

- A. Tamil Nadu
- B. Maharashtra
- C. Karnataka
- D. Odisha

ANSWER: A

23. Which Ministry Launched 'MyCGHS App' For Ios Ecosystem Of Devices

- A. Ministry of Agriculture
- B. Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
- C. Ministry of Rural Development
- D. Ministry of Power

ANSWER: B

24. What is 'KSTAR', recently seen in news

- A. Anti drone system
- B. South Korea's fusion reactor
- C. South Korean naval vessel
- D. Food coloring agents

ANSWER: B

25. Forest And Wildlife Department Of Delhi Is Establishing A Tissue Culture Laboratory At Which Wildlife Sanctuary Of India

- A. Benog Wildlife Sanctuary
- B. Asola-Bhati Wildlife Sanctuary
- C. Binsar Wildlife Sanctuary
- D. Sariska Wildlife Sanctuary

ANSWER: B

26. Lunar Polar Exploration Mission (LUPEX) Is A Joint Mission Between Which Two Space Agencies

- A. ISRO & JAXA
- B. NASA & ISRO
- C. CNSA & ROCOSMOS
- D. ESA & NASA

ANSWER: A

27. What Is 'INDRA App'

- A. A Multi Purpose App That Will Helps Astronauts To Carry Activities
- B. It Provides Digital Financial Data To States
- C. It Disseminates Weather Related Information And Forecasts
- D. It Is Related To Anganwadi Workers

ANSWER: C

28. Maravakandy Dam Is Located In Which State

- A. Tamil Nadu
- B. Uttar Pradesh
- C. Maharashtra
- D. Telangana

ANSWER: A

29. A Decade Of Documenting Migrant Deaths" Report, Recently Released By Which Organization

- A. International Labour Organization (ILO)
- B. World Trade Organization (WTO)
- C. International Monetary Fund (IMF)
- D. International Organization for Migration (IOM)

ANSWER: D

30. Which Country Has Overtaken India As The Primary Importer Of Russian Crude Oil Through Sea Routes

- A. China
- B. Iran
- C. Bangladesh
- D. Pakistan

ANSWER: A