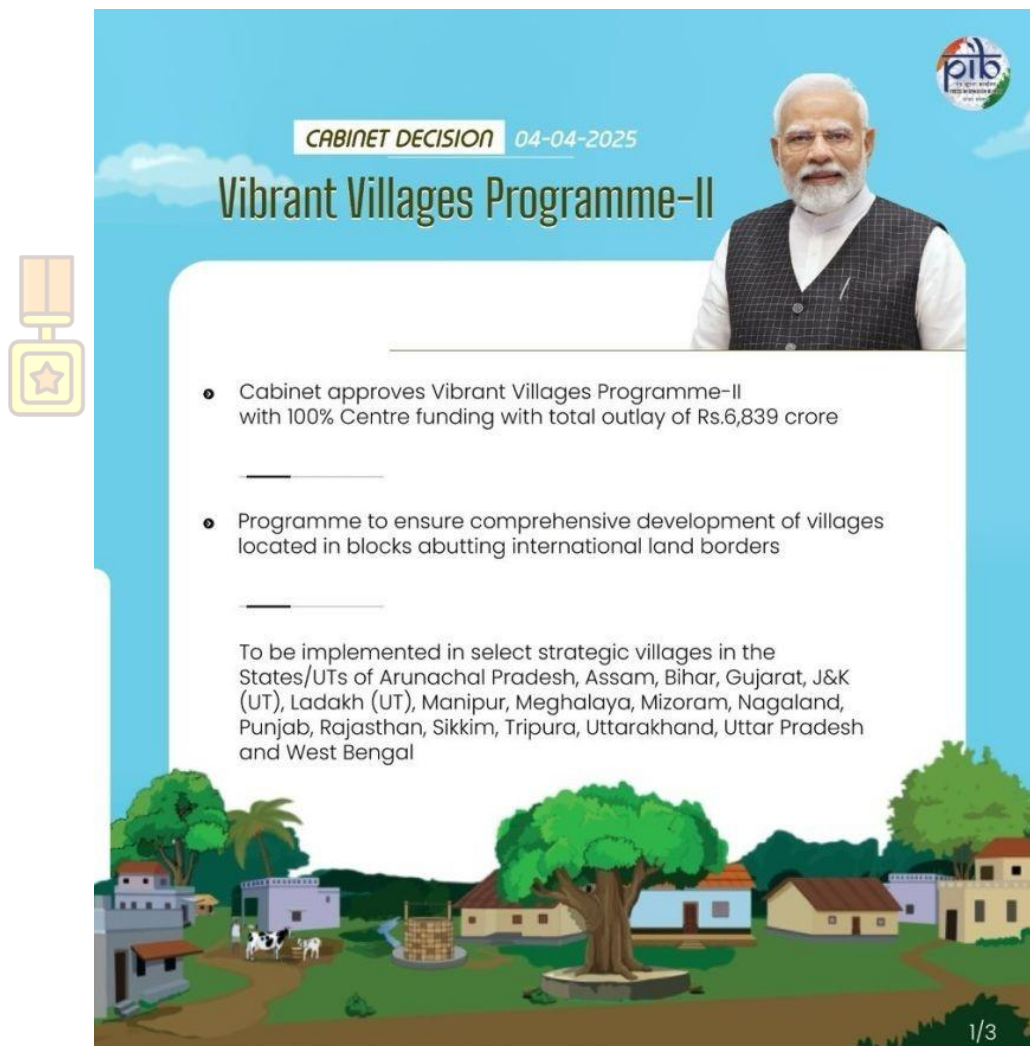


Daily Current Affairs

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“Vibrant Villages Programme-II

- Union Cabinet chaired by the PM Narendra Modi, approved the **Vibrant Villages Programme -II (VVP-II)** as a **Central Sector Scheme (100% Centre funding)**, furthering its commitment for the vision of Viksit Bharat@2047 for ‘Safe, Secured & Vibrant land borders’.



- The Programme would help in the comprehensive development of the villages located in the blocks abutting international land borders (ILBs), other than the **Northern border already covered under VVP-I**. With a **total outlay of Rs.6,839**

crore, the programme shall be implemented in select strategic villages in the States/UTs of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Gujarat, J&K (UT), Ladakh (UT), Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tripura, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal till the FY 2028-29.



- The objective is to improve living conditions, livelihood opportunities, internal security, and ensure integration of border populations as vital stakeholders in border safety. **Funding will support infrastructure development**, value chain creation through cooperatives and **SHGs, SMART education, tourism circuits**, and other sustainable livelihood projects. The programme will leverage technology platforms like PM Gati Shakti, and ensure saturation of services in four key areas: road, telecom, TV connectivity, and electrification through convergence with existing schemes.



Key To City Lisbon

- President Droupadi Murmu was presented with the prestigious **“Key of Honour” of Lisbon City in Portugal**. The symbolic gesture, presented by Lisbon Mayor Carlos Moedas at the historic Câmara Municipal de Lisboa, officially recognised her as an honorary citizen of the city. The **“Key to the City of Lisbon”** is the highest honor bestowed by the city.



- President Murmu expressed her gratitude to the Mayor and the people of Lisbon for the distinguished award, praising their affectionate nature, open-mindedness, spirit of tolerance, and respect for diversity.
- President Murmu said that **Portugal has been a vital partner for India** in strengthening its ties with both the European Union and Lusophone nations. She highlighted that Indians represent the fourth-largest community in Portugal,

- The scheme **was launched in 2015 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi** to provide collateral-free loans of up to ten lakh rupees to non-corporate, non-farm, small and micro enterprises, aiming to facilitate financial inclusion and empower entrepreneurs.



- Under the scheme, three categories of loans are being provided. This includes Shishu loans of up to **50,000 rupees**, Kishor loans of up to **five lakh rupees** and Tarun loans of up to **ten lakh rupees**.

Palna Scheme

- Government has said that **one thousand 761 Anganwadi-cum-Crèches** are operational across the country under the Palna Scheme. Palna is a centrally sponsored scheme which provides **quality crèche** facilities in a safe and secure environment for children from **six months to six years**.



- Palna scheme is implemented with a funding ratio of 60:40 between the central and state governments, except in Northeast and special category states, where **the ratio is 90:10.**
- **The Women** and Child Development Ministry has said that there are two types of crèches under the **Palna scheme – standalone crèches and Anganwadi-cum-crèches.** The Ministry of Labour and Employment has amended the Maternity Benefit Act to mandate all establishments with 50 or more employees to provide a crèche facility.
- The crèche facilities under **Palna are provided to all mothers**, irrespective of their employment status. The ministry said one thousand 284 standalone crèches are also operational across the country.
- The Women and Child Development Ministry has set a target to **establish 17 thousand new Anganwadi cum creches** under the scheme in 2024-25. The ministry said 11,395 Anganwadi-cum-Crèches have been approved across 34 states and union territories under the scheme.

Dubai Crown Prince To Begin First Official India Visit

- **Crown Prince of Dubai, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence of the UAE, Sheikh Hamdan Bin Mohammed Al Maktoum** will be on a two-day visit to India.



- This would be his **first official visit to India as the Crown** Prince of Dubai. He will be accompanied by several ministers, senior government officials and a high-level business delegation.

- The **External Affairs Ministry** said in a statement that **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** will host a working lunch for the Crown Prince. The visiting dignitary will also hold meetings with External Affairs Minister Dr S. Jaishankar and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh.



- **Crown Prince will visit Mumbai**, where he will participate in a business roundtable with prominent business leaders from both sides. The interaction will strengthen **India-UAE economic and commercial cooperation** across traditional and futuristic areas.
- Dubai has played an important role in India's commercial, cultural and people-to-people exchanges with the UAE. The **majority of India's around 4.3 million** diaspora in the UAE reside and work in Dubai. The visit of the Crown Prince will further solidify the India-UAE Comprehensive Strategic Partnership and strengthen multifaceted ties with Dubai.

Saudi Arabia Ban 14 Countries

- **Saudi Arabia has imposed a temporary visa ban on individuals** from 14 countries, including India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. The suspension affects Umrah visas, business visit visas, and family visit visas, and is part of efforts to control **overcrowding during the Hajj pilgrimage**.
- This move is being implemented to **regulate the flow of visitors to Saudi Arabia**, prevent illegal overstaying, and ensure a smooth and secure Hajj season. The ban is set to remain in place until the end of the Hajj pilgrimage, which **concludes in mid-June 2025**. The visa ban will impact individuals countries. The identified countries are,

- **India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Iraq, Nigeria, Jordan, Algeria, Sudan, Ethiopia, Tunisia, Yemen.** The ban aims to control the number of pilgrims and visitors to Mecca during the Hajj, especially after the 2024 Hajj tragedy, where overcrowding and extreme heat led to the death of over 1,000 pilgrims, many of whom were unauthorized.



- Saudi authorities want to prevent individuals from overstaying their Umrah or visit visas to perform Hajj without proper registration.
- **Types of Suspended Visas**
- Umrah visas: Religious visa for performing Umrah, a pilgrimage to Mecca that can be undertaken throughout the year.
- Business visit visas: Temporary visas for business visits.
- Family visit visas: Visas for family reunification purposes.

Nolen Gurer Sandesh

- West Bengal has achieved a significant milestone in preserving and promoting its cultural heritage by securing **Geographical Indication (GI) tags for seven new products, including the iconic Nolen Gurer Sandesh and Baruipur guavas.**
- This recognition will provide global recognition to these traditional items, boosting the state's local economy and enhancing its cultural identity. These GI

tags highlight West Bengal's rich heritage, spanning from sweets and agriculture to textiles and handicrafts.



- The newly tagged products include some well-known regional delicacies like **Nolen Gurer Sandesh**, a sweet made with date palm jaggery, and **Kamarpukur's white 'bonde'**. This step is part of West Bengal's continuous effort to safeguard its unique traditional products and promote them globally. With the approval of these seven products, the state now has a total of 33 GI-tagged items, which include a wide array of food items, textiles, and art forms. Other Newly GI-Tagged Products
- Kamarpukur's White 'Bonde' : A traditional sweet from Kamarpukur.
- Murshidabad's 'Chhanabora' : A renowned sweetmeat made from chhena.
- Bishnupur's 'Motichur Laddoo' : Famous sweet from Bishnupur, well-known for its taste.
- Radhunipagal Rice : Rice variety from Radhunipagal, known for its unique flavor and quality.
- Malda's Nistari Silk Yarn : A unique silk yarn produced in Malda, known for its smooth texture and sheen.

Harappan Sites

- Haryana government has officially declared **two Harappan civilization sites located in Bhiwani district — Mitathal and Tighrana** — as protected archaeological sites and monuments. These sites, dating back **over 4,400 years**, **hold immense historical** and cultural value, shedding light on the evolution of early agricultural societies, town planning, craft industries, and trade during the Harappan and post-Harappan periods.



- The sites have now been brought under legal protection through a notification issued by the Haryana Heritage and Tourism Department under the Haryana **Ancient and Historical Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1964**.
- The move aims to safeguard these ancient settlements from encroachment and damage, with fencing and security arrangements to be implemented.
- **Mitathal Site (Harappan Civilization) : First discovered in 1913**, with a hoard of coins belonging to Samudra Gupta (Gupta dynasty). Excavated in 1968, revealing the Copper-Bronze Age culture of the Indo-Gangetic divide (3rd–2nd millennia BCE). Excavations from 1965 to 1968 uncovered proto-historic material, including beads and copper implements.



- **Archaeological features** : Harappan-style town planning, architecture, arts, and crafts. Pottery: Sturdy red ware, well-burnt and painted in black with pipal leaf, fish scale, and geometric designs. **Artifacts**: Beads, bangles, terracotta, and objects made of stone, shell, copper, ivory, and bone.



- **Tighrana Site (Post-Harappan/Chalcolithic Culture)** : Settlement dating back to around 2,400 BCE. Inhabited by Chalcolithic agricultural communities called Sothians. Located at Chang, Mitathal, Tighrana, and nearby regions.
- **Settlement features** : Thatched-roofed mud-brick houses, possibly fortified. 50 to 100 houses per settlement.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana Inaugurated In

- A. 2014
- B. 2015
- C. 2016
- D. 2017

ANSWER: B

2. Mitathal Site Was First Discovered In

- A. 1900
- B. 1913
- C. 1800
- D. 1813

ANSWER: B

3. Radhunipagal Rice Recently Got GI Tag Belongs From

- A. Gujarat
- B. Haryana
- C. Odisha
- D. West Bengal

ANSWER: D

4. Which State Government Has Declared Mitathal And Tighrana Harappan Sites As Protected Archaeological Sites

- A. Rajasthan
- B. Gujarat
- C. Haryana
- D. Madhya Pradesh

ANSWER: C

5. Which Ministry Responsible For Organizing Viksit Bharat Youth Parliament

- A. Ministry of Home Affairs
- B. Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports
- C. Ministry of Education
- D. Ministry of Labour and Employment

ANSWER: B

6. Which Union Minister Launched New Website Of Department Of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation

- A. Gajendra Singh Shekhawat
- B. Nitin Gadkari
- C. C.R. Patil
- D. Piyush Goyal

ANSWER: C

7. In Which States Will India Launch A Scientific Study To Assess Zoonotic Spillover Risks

- A. Kerala, Rajasthan, and Gujarat
- B. Sikkim, Maharashtra, and Tamil Nadu
- C. Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, and Punjab
- D. West Bengal, Bihar, and Karnataka

ANSWER: B

8. Which Country Assumed Chairmanship Of BIMSTEC For The Next Two Years

- A. India
- B. Myanmar
- C. Sri Lanka
- D. Bangladesh

ANSWER: D

9. Which organization, Along With The Indian Army, Conducted Four Successful MR-SAM Tests In Odisha

- A. DRDO
- B. ISRO
- C. HAL
- D. BARC

ANSWER: A

10. Who Will Lead India's Delegation To The 150th IPU Assembly In Tashkent

- A. Om Birla
- B. Narendra Modi
- C. Rajnath Singh
- D. Sonia Gandhi

ANSWER: A

11. Who Is The Indian Pilot Designated To Board The Axiom-4 Mission

- A. Rakesh Sharma
- B. Shubhanshu Shukla
- C. Ravish Malhotra
- D. Nikhil Rathore

ANSWER: B

12. Which Country Has Become The First European Nation To Announce Its Withdrawal From The International Criminal Court

- A. Poland
- B. Italy
- C. Hungary
- D. Austria

ANSWER: C

13. What Is Target For Coastal Cargo Traffic Set By The Coastal Shipping Bill, 2024

- A. 230 million tonnes by 2030
- B. 200 million tonnes by 2028
- C. 250 million tonnes by 2032
- D. 300 million tonnes by 2035

ANSWER: A

14. When Is National Maritime Day Observed In India

- A. April 2
- B. April 3
- C. April 4
- D. April 5

ANSWER: D

15. Who Has Been Awarded The “Sri Lanka Mitra Vibhushana” By President Anura Kumara Dissanayake

- A. Amit Shah
- B. S. Jaishankar
- C. Draupadi Murmu
- D. Narendra Modi

ANSWER: D

16. What Is The Theme Of World Health Day 2025

- A. Our Planet, Our Health
- B. Building a Fairer, Healthier World
- C. Universal Health Coverage: Everyone, Everywhere
- D. Healthy Beginnings, Hopeful Futures

ANSWER: D

17. Ionian Islands, Is Located In Which Country

- A. Indonesia
- B. New Zealand
- C. Australia
- D. Greece

ANSWER: D

18. Which Ministry Recently Released The Publication “Women And Men In India 2024: Selected Indicators And Data”

- A. Ministry of Women and Child Development
- B. Ministry of Home Affairs
- C. Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation
- D. Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

ANSWER: C

19. Name Of The New Policy Launched By The Indian Government To Consolidate Regional Rural Banks

- A. One Nation, One Bank
- B. Rural Credit Programme
- C. One State, One RRB
- D. Bharat Banking Reform

ANSWER: C

20. Primary Objective Of Establishing 728 Eklavya Model Residential Schools

- A. Education to tribal children
- B. Skill development for urban youth
- C. Vocational training for rural women
- D. Literacy programs for adults

ANSWER : A