



# GEN-MOR

STAY AWARE, STAY AHEAD!

JANUARY  
ISSUE 1  
ARMY DAY  
SPECIAL

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UNEASY LIES THE HEAD  
THAT WEAR'S CROWN

# THE GEN-MOR 40TH

## E D I T I O N

### PREFACE

This magazine has been prepared under the guidance of Maj Gen (Dr.) Yash Mor Sir and is issued with his approval. Amid the era of misinformation and hype, we tried to deliver precise and to-the-point information on global and national happenings around us. It is a one-stop solution for current affairs. Our team has continued with Sir's vision to make all readers fall in love with knowledge. The purpose of the magazine is to make you more aware of the dynamic world and diverse nation. Both aspects factual and intellectual have been taken care of, and factual information has been highlighted which is more important for the NDA/CDS/CAPF & AFCAT examination. This magazine is the output of deliberate efforts put in by a team of contributors of 7 members (Vasu-Designer, Kanishak, Aditi, Akhilesh, Devinder and Nishchay-contributors). I would like to thank each of them for keeping themselves up to date every single day and diligently working throughout.

I am grateful for the opportunity given to me by Maj Gen (Dr.) Yash Mor Sir to lead the team.

As we navigate the complexities of the world together, we invite you to explore the pages of Yash More Magazine with an open mind and a thirst for knowledge. Thank you for being part of the Maj Gen Yash Mor Community.

Dated - 15-Jan-2024

Sonit Gautam

(Managing Editor  
& contributor)

# RECCOMENDATION



SHREYAS



AKSHITA YADAV



ISHATWA MAHESWARI



HIMANI



MAYANK AGRAWAL



SANIA MARWAL



MEET



GARGI



AWADH



ARPIT AGGARWAL



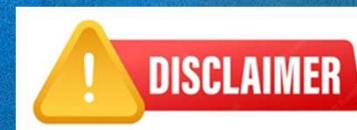
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SUDHANSU



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# EDITOR'S NOTE



AT THE OUTSET, IT GIVES ME GREAT PLEASURE TO SEND THIS SPECIAL EDITION OF GEN-MOR MAGAZINE TO YOU ON THE OCCASION OF ARMY DAY.

With this edition, I also wish to thank my new team which has put much work into bringing this issue to you all.

While the country is celebrating the inaugural of the long-awaited Ram Mandir at Ayodhya in the next few days, the world at large continues to be in turmoil.

The Israel - Hamas war has crossed 100 hundred days and no sight of any kind of truce or ceasefire. Over 24k people have been killed and over 60k wounded in one of the deadliest wars in the urban area of the Gaza Strip. The war has now spread to Lebanon and chances of it spiraling to other areas are not being ruled out with the Houthi rebels almost choking the Red Sea. The trade over high seas has been disrupted which is a matter of grave concern.

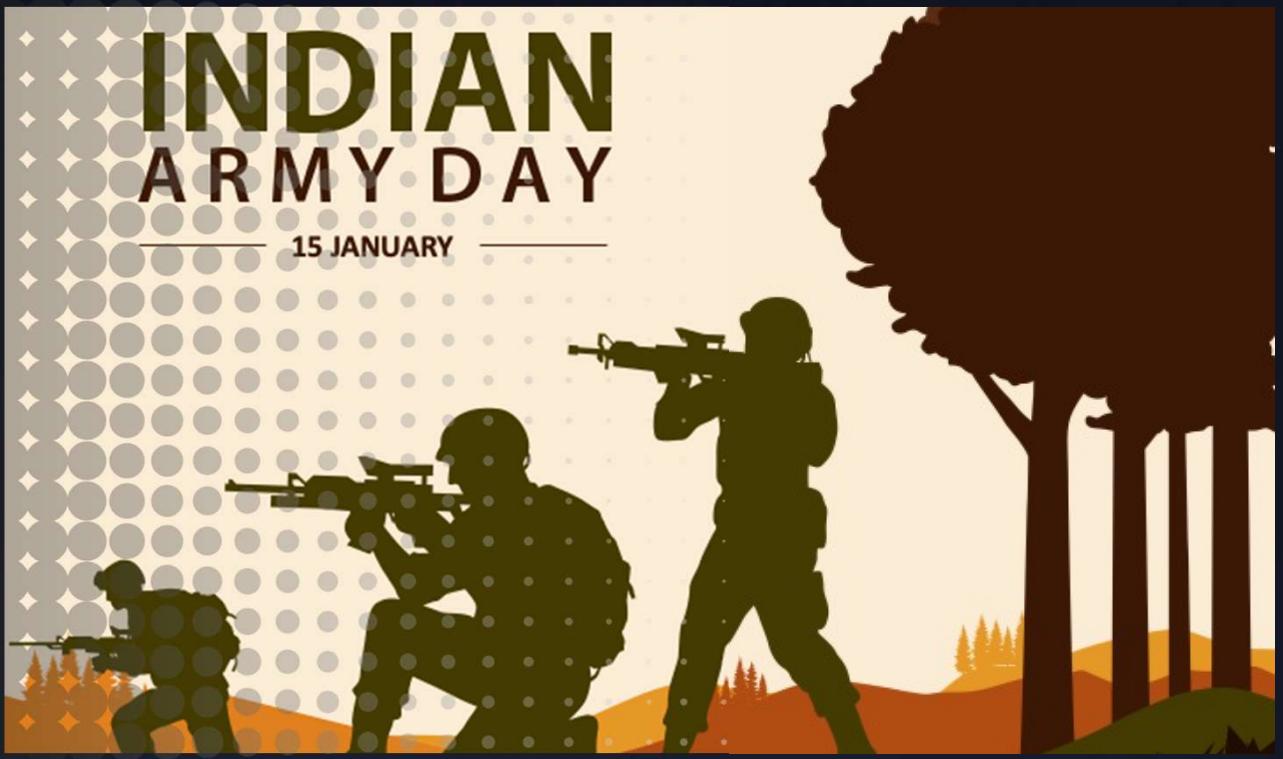
Russia- Ukraine war also continues relentlessly with rising casualties on both sides. Once again there appears little or no sign of any attempts at stopping the war. NATO and Europe continue to help Ukraine fight the mighty Russian forces.

We at the YMA are in the process of rolling out another interesting course to help defense aspirants polish their communication skills. The Advanced Officers' Communication Course (AOCC) will be started in the third week of January.

**Wishing you all a very Happy Army Day and Republic Day.**

**My second inning  
for YOUR first inning**





## ARMY DAY 2024: THE CAPITAL CITY OF UTTAR PRADESH, LUCKNOW, WILL HOST A SPECTACULAR PARADE TODAY TO COMMEMORATE THE 76TH ARMY DAY OF THE INDIAN ARMY

Every year on January 15, India celebrates its Army Day. The purpose of the day is to remember troops and all they have sacrificed for the country. Additionally, Army Day commemorates the year 1949, when Field Marshal Kodandera M Cariappa became the first Indian Commander-in-Chief of Independent India, succeeding General FRR Bucher, the last British-serving chief of the Indian Army.

From 1949 till 2022, the Army Day parade was organised at the Cariappa Parade Ground in the Delhi Cantonment. The Chief of Army Staff reviews the marching contingents who also take part in the Republic Day Parade every year.

The capital city of Uttar Pradesh, Lucknow, will host a spectacular parade today to commemorate the 76th Army Day of the Indian Army. For the second year in a row, the Army Day parade has been relocated outside of Delhi. The parade was held at the Parade Ground of the MED & Centre in Bengaluru the previous year.

General Manoj Pande, Chief of Army Staff on Monday extended his greetings on the occasion of 76th Army Day. In his address to the troops, General Manoj Pandey paid homage to soldiers who laid down their lives in service to the nation. "On the occasion of Army Day 2024, I convey my felicitations and warm wishes to all ranks of the Indian Army, civilian employees, Veterans and their families. We solemnly remember and pay homage to our comrades who have laid down their lives in service of the nation. Their supreme sacrifice shall always inspire us," he said.



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ISRAEL HAMAS WAR ,WAR BACKGROUND CEASEFIRE PRESENT SITUATION IN GAZA

# NATIONAL NEWS



- RASHMI SHUKLA IS APPOINTED AS THE FIRST WOMAN DGP OF MAHARASHTRA.
- MALDIVES PRESIDENT URGES CHINA TO SEND MORE TOURISTS.
- COLD WAVE SWEEPS THROUGH DELHI AND UTTAR PRADESH.
- FARMERS SWITCH TO HEAT-TOLERANT WHEAT.
- 2023 IS THE WARMEST YEAR ON RECORD.
- 50% HIKE IN FY25 BUDGET OUTLAY FOR 'MGNREGS'.
- IT MINISTER ASHWINI VAISHNAW FLAGS SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCE ON DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES.
- ON TUESDAY, THE DGCA SAID INSPECTIONS REVEALED A MISSING WASHER ON A BOEING 737 MAX PLANE OPERATED BY AN INDIAN AIRLINE.
- TECH NEWS TODAY: ADITYA-L1 NOW IN FINAL ORBIT, IQOO 9 PRO COMING IN FEBRUARY AND MORE
- THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO) LINKED INDIAN-MADE COUGH SYRUPS TO THE DEATHS OF 66 CHILDREN IN THE GAMBIA. THE WHO SAID THE ACCEPTABLE SAFETY LIMIT FOR BOTH ETHYLENE GLYCOL AND DIETHYLENE GLYCOL IS NO MORE THAN 0.10%.

The Lok Sabha approved the Chief Election Commissioner and Other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service, and Term of Office) Bill, 2023, despite limited participation from opposition members in the House. The Bill, earlier passed by the Rajya Sabha on December 12, addresses the absence of a clause regarding the appointment of the Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners in the Election Commission (Conditions of Service of Election Commissioners and Transaction of Business) Act, 1991.

#### **Additional Information for CDS/NDA/CAPF & AFCAT**

- Article 324 to 329 of the constitution deals with powers, function, tenure, eligibility, etc of the commission and the member.
- The President appoints CEC and Election Commissioners.
- Tenure of six years, or up to the age of 65 years, whichever is earlier.
- They enjoy the same status and receive salary and perks as available to Judges of the Supreme Court (SC) of India.

#### **Parliament passes Bill to replace the PRB Act**

On Thursday, Parliament approved the Press and Registration of Periodicals Bill, aiming to streamline the allocation of titles and registration for periodicals using an online system. This new legislation eliminates the need for physical interaction, simplifying the entire process. It marks a significant update as it replaces the antiquated Press and Registration of Books Act from 1867.

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#### **MACRON ACCEPTS PM'S INVITE, TO BE THE CHIEF GUEST AT R-DAY**

French President Emmanuel Macron has accepted India's invitation to be the **chief guest at the Republic Day** celebrations next January. This visit marks the 25th anniversary of the India-France Strategic Partnership. Both countries share significant alignment on global issues. Macron confirmed his attendance through a social media post, expressing gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi. France has become a vital defense partner for India, maintaining consistent high-level engagements. Earlier, PM Modi was honored at the **Bastille Day parade in Paris**, and Macron visited New Delhi during the G-20 Summit in September.

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#### **A VESSEL WITH 20 INDIANS ON BOARD WAS HIT BY A DRONE**

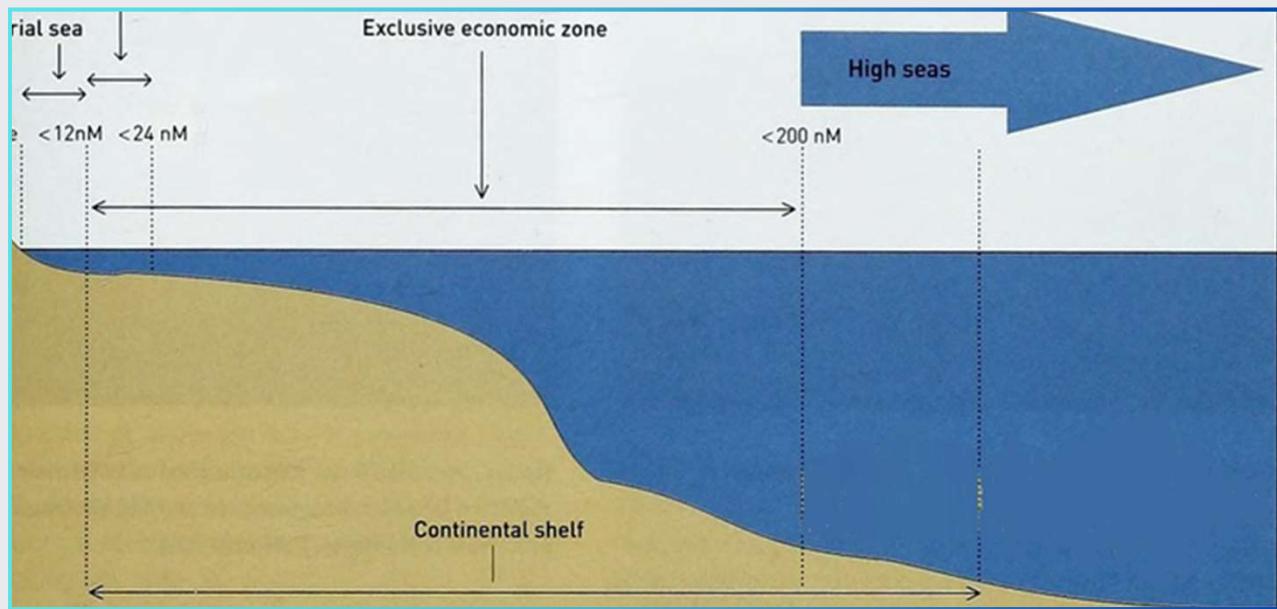
A Liberia-flagged merchant vessel, **Chem Pluto**, faced a suspected drone strike just beyond the Indian Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), leading to substantial damage. The Coast Guard and Navy promptly intervened to aid the vessel, which had 21 crew members, mostly Indians. Despite significant damage, the crew remained safe. The vessel, en route to Mumbai from Saudi Arabia carrying crude oil, experienced steering issues after the incident. The Coast Guard directed **ICGS**

**Vikram** to assist, while a Navy warship and aircraft provided support and ensured the crew's safety. Chem Pluto, initially bound for Mangaluru from the UAE, is now heading to Mumbai for repairs under **escort by ICGS Vikram**.

### • Additional Information for CDS/NDA/CAPF & AFCAT -

**What is economic exclusive zones?**

The EEZ is an area that is adjacent to and beyond the territorial sea. It can extend to a maximum of 200 nautical miles from the baseline.




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## WHO URGES NATIONS TO RAISE SURVEILLANCE AGAINST COVID19

**T**he World Health Organization (WHO) has urged countries in Southeast Asia to bolster surveillance due to rising cases of respiratory diseases, including COVID-19 and its **JN.1 variant**, along with influenza. Poonam Khetrapal Singh, WHO-Southeast Asia's Regional Director, highlighted the need for strengthened surveillance, sequencing, and data sharing to tailor responses to evolving viruses. JN.1, classified as a variant of interest, has shown a rapid global spread, prompting concerns but currently posing a low additional health risk globally. With winter approaching, the variant might escalate COVID-19 cases, compounded by other infections..

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## 3 SENIOR OFFICERS TAKEN OFF POSTS AS ARMY PROBES CIVILIAN DEATHS

**T**hree officers in Jammu and Kashmir are under investigation for the deaths of three detained civilians in Army custody. Police are treating the deaths as murder and have started an inquiry. During the ongoing investigation, the top Army leader visited and removed three officers from duty. The army is searching for those responsible for an attack that killed four soldiers and detained eight individuals. A video circulating online showed suspected Army personnel mistreat-

-ting three individuals, leading to their deaths according to the police. The Army Chief emphasised professionalism during the visit.

## PRESIDENT MURMU GIVES ASSENT TO NEW CRIMINAL JUSTICE BILLS

President Droupadi Murmu has officially approved three new criminal justice Bills, recently passed by Parliament. These transformative laws - the **Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, and Bharatiya Sakshya Act** - are set to replace the age-old Indian Penal Code, Code of Criminal Procedure, and **Indian Evidence Act of 1872**. During the parliamentary debate, Union Home Minister Amit Shah emphasized that these new laws prioritize delivering justice rather than solely focusing on punishment. Aimed at a significant overhaul, the laws provide clear definitions of various offenses and their corresponding punishments, intending to reform and modernize the criminal justice system.

## PRESIDENT GIVES ASSENT TO TELECOMMUNICATION ACT

President Droupadi Murmu has approved the Telecommunications Act, 2023, which serves as the updated version of the long-standing **Telegraph Act of 1885** governing telecom services in India. With this approval, the implementation of various sections of the Act will necessitate the formulation of corresponding rules. Primarily, the Act maintains the framework of telecommunications law while formalizing specific procedures. It includes the reservation of spectrum bands for distinct purposes and introduces mechanisms for resolving conflicts between licensed service providers and the government. Moreover, it outlines newer approaches for telecom operators to secure permissions for installing their equipment across different states.

## GEELANI FOUNDED OUTFIT DECLARED UNLAWFUL BODY

The Union Home Ministry declared Tehreek-e-Hurriyat, Jammu and Kashmir (TeH), an "unlawful association" under the anti-terror law, citing its involvement in separatist activities aiming to separate J&K from India and establish Islamic rule. The outfit, once part of the All Party Hurriyat Conference, has faced numerous charges under various laws, including the UAPA and Arms Act. Known for spreading anti-India propaganda and supporting terrorism, it aims to disrupt public order and foster disaffection against India. The notification, effective for five years, aims to curb TeH's secessionist activities and anti-national sentiments in J&K.

## RENEWABLE ENERGY INVESTMENT TO SURGE 83% TO \$16.5 BILLION IN 2024

India's renewable energy sector is set to experience a significant boost with an estimated 83%

increase in investments, reaching around \$16.5 billion by 2024. This aligns with the nation's goal of achieving 500 GW of renewable energy by 2030 and reducing fossil fuel-based power generation to less than 50%. Additionally, India has committed to achieving net-zero emissions by 2070. India's focus has expanded to include green hydrogen, aiming to reduce reliance on diesel, especially in long-haul vehicles. Recognizing its diesel-based economy, India has approved the National Green Hydrogen Mission with an allocation of ₹19,744 crore.

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## CENTRAL GOVT. BANS MUSLIM LEAGUE J&K FACTION

**T**he Muslim League Jammu Kashmir (Masarat Alam faction) was designated as an "unlawful association" for five years by the Union Home Ministry under the anti-terror Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act. Home Minister Amit Shah mentioned on X that the group participates in separatist endeavours within Jammu and Kashmir.

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## QATAR COURT DROPS DEATH PENALTY FOR EIGHT FORMER INDIAN NAVAL PERSONNEL

**I**n a significant development in the case of eight former Indian naval personnel sentenced to death in Qatar, the Ministry of External Affairs confirmed that the Court of Appeals in Doha has reduced their sentences.

### India-Qatar Trade Status -

India's bilateral trade with Qatar in 2021-22 was US\$ 15.03 billion. India's export to Qatar during 2021-22 was US\$ 1.83 billion and India's import from Qatar was US\$ 13.19 billion. In 2021, India was among the top four largest export destinations for Qatar and is also among the top three sources of Qatar's imports.

### Pegasus spyware found on journalists' phones after Apple alert

Two journalists, including Siddharth Varadarajan, founder-editor of The Wire news website, were targeted by Pegasus spyware this year, as confirmed by Amnesty International's Security Lab. Following alerts from Apple about "state-sponsored hacking," they handed their devices for testing. The NSO Group, the creator of Pegasus, sells to governments, and India's Intelligence Bureau acquired hardware from them in 2017. According to The Washington Post, after Apple's alerts in October, government officials pressured the tech giant to offer alternative explanations. Union Ministers and Apple made unverified statements, suggesting warnings were sent to Opposition leaders and journalists in 150 countries, though no other country reported such alerts.

## CENTRE, ASSAM SIGN PEACE PACT WITH ULFA FACTION

The Union Home Ministry and the Assam government made a significant move by signing a peace agreement with a faction of the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA). Home Minister Amit Shah highlighted its importance for Assam's peace, stating that the government successfully put an end to violent groups in the state. Around 700 ULFA members have agreed to surrender weapons, leave their camps, and transition into the mainstream, embracing peaceful democratic processes. Shah also mentioned plans for a specific schedule to address ULFA's demands and the formation of a monitoring committee by the Home Ministry. This pact marks a milestone for Assam's future and the Northeast, long plagued by violence.

### **Important Facts About ASSAM**

- First oil well in Asia – Digboi (Assam)
- Haflong lake: Natural lake on the only hill station of Assam. The Hill station is regarded as 'Scotland of Assam'.
- Dhubri is an important river port on River Brahmaputra.

**Jain sculptures of the 11th century were discovered in the Mysuru district**

Recently, in **Varuna village of Mysuru district**, workers discovered three Jain sculptures dating back to the 11th century during drainage excavation. Unfortunately, one of the sculptures was severely damaged and couldn't be identified, while the other two remained in relatively good condition. They were found among debris, shedding light on the rich historical and cultural heritage of the area.



## PANAGARIYA TO HEAD 16TH FINANCE COMMISSION

The Finance Ministry has officially approved the appointment of **Mr. Panagariya**, a Columbia University professor and former Vice-Chairman of NITI Aayog, to head a panel with a specific focus on terms of reference approved by the Cabinet on November 29. The commission's members will be announced separately, and Ritvik Ranjanam Pandey, formerly a Joint Secretary in the Department of Revenue, will serve as the panel's secretary. According to the order, the commission, including its chairman and members, will serve until they submit their report or October 31, 2025, whichever comes earlier. October 2025 marks the deadline for the commission to submit recommendations to be considered in the budget planning process.

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR CDS/NDA/CAPF & AFCAT -**

- FCs are constitutional bodies set up under Article 280 of the Constitution every five years to make recommendations on the distribution of financial resources between the Union and the

**STATES**

• The recommendations of FCs are advisory in nature and not binding on the Union government. However, they are usually accepted with minor modifications or deviations.

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### **INDIA'S GDP ESTIMATED TO GROW BY 7.3%: NSO DATA**

India's GDP growth for 2023-24 is estimated at 7.3%, slightly up from the previous year and surpassing the RBI's projection of 7%. The first half saw 7.7% growth, but the second half is expected to be around 6.9%-7%. However, Gross Value Added (GVA) might dip from 7% to 6.9%, and nominal GDP growth is forecasted at 8.9% (lower than the 10.5% budgeted). This discrepancy might lead to a fiscal deficit of around 6%, up from the targeted 5.9%. There's an anticipated slowdown in GVA growth for the farm sector and other industries like Trade, Hotels, Transport, Communication, and Services.

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### **FIRST GIRLS' SAINIK SCHOOL OPENED IN MATHURA WITH 870 STUDENTS**

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated the [first all-girls Sainik School in Vrindavan](#), Uttar Pradesh, as part of the initiative to establish 100 new Sainik Schools in partnership with NGOs, private, and state government schools across all states and union territories. With approximately 870 students, this initiative, alongside the existing 33 Sainik Schools, aims to provide quality education in line with the National Education Policy, 2020, offering enhanced career opportunities, including pathways to the armed forces. This move extends opportunities to girls who aspire to serve the country, following the successful pilot project's introduction of girls' admissions in Sainik School, Chhingchhip, Mizoram, starting from the academic session 2021-22.

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### **FREE MOVEMENT REGIME AT MYANMAR BORDER TO END SOON**

The Union government plans to revoke the Free Movement Regime along the India-Myanmar border, requiring people in border areas to obtain visas to enter India. This arrangement, allowing border crossing without visas since the 1970s, will be replaced with a border fence covering approximately 300 km, with a tender set to be issued soon. Despite potential opposition from states like Nagaland and Mizoram, the government asserts that border security falls under its jurisdiction, with ongoing discussions with Myanmar regarding this decision.

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### **GOVT. AMENDS DRUG RULES TO RAISE QUALITY**

The Union Health Ministry announced updated rules under Schedule M of the Drugs and Cosmetic Rules, 1945, aimed at enhancing quality control for pharmaceutical and biopharmaceutical products. Schedule M outlines the Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) for these products.

## **GIFT CITY IS SET TO HOST THE 10TH GUJARAT GLOBAL INVESTMENT SUMMIT**

**G**ujarat is gearing up to host the 10th Vibrant Gujarat Global Investment Summit, inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The event will witness participation from heads of state, policymakers, diplomats, and top industrialists. Over 100 countries, with 30 as partners and a dozen international organizations, will join hands with the state government for collaboration and opportunities. Anticipating around 100,000 visitors, including CEOs, business leaders, policymakers, and diplomats from across the globe, the three-day summit will spotlight futuristic sectors like semiconductors, green hydrogen, e-mobility, space manufacturing, renewable energy, financial services, and technology at the GIFT City.

### **FOUR MORE NCC UNITS ARE TO BE RAISED IN J&K AND LADAKH**

**D**efence Minister Rajnath Singh has greenlit the establishment of four new National Cadet Corps (NCC) units in Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh. This includes one mixed Army battalion each in Udhampur, Kupwara, and Kargil, along with an Air squadron in Udhampur. This move will bring in an additional 12,860 cadets, boosting the total strength in the region to 40,730 cadets across 12 units under two Group Headquarters.

### **PROGRAMME FOR STUDENTS TO BEGIN SOON AT PM'S SCHOOL**

**T**he Ministry of Education launched 'Prerana,' an experiential learning program at PM Narendra Modi's alma mater in Vadnagar, Gujarat. It's a weekly residential program for 20 students (10 boys, 10 girls) from Classes 9 to 12. It combines heritage and innovation, offering tech-based learning. Interested students can apply through [prerana.education.gov.in](http://prerana.education.gov.in). The program includes yoga, mindfulness, and hands-on learning activities.

### **'HIT-AND-RUN' LAW: TRUCKERS HOLD PROTEST**

**T**ruck drivers staged 'rasta roko' protests in multiple states including Maharashtra, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, and Chhattisgarh against a provision in the new penal law related to hit-and-run accidents. According to the Bharatiya Nyay Sanhita, drivers causing severe accidents and fleeing without informing the police could face penalties of up to 10 years in prison or a fine of ₹7 lakh.

### **INDIA AND PAK. EXCHANGE LIST OF NUCLEAR INSTALLATIONS**

**A**s part of their annual tradition since 1992, India and Pakistan exchanged a list of their nuclear installations, through a bilateral agreement prohibiting attacks on each other's atomic facilities. The exchange occurred following the provisions outlined in the agreement on the prohibition of attacks against nuclear installations and facilities, conducted simultaneously through diplomatic channels in New Delhi and Islamabad. This routine exchange, now in its 33rd consecutive year, is mandated by a pact signed on December 31, 1988, and aims to ensure mutual awareness and

respect for each other's nuclear installations and facilities.

### **Timeline of India's Nuclear Journey:**

#### **Year Event**

1947 - India gains independence.

1948 - Atomic Energy Act was passed, establishing AEC.

1950 - Nehru's dual intent strategy on nuclear power.

1964 - China conducts its first nuclear test.

1974 - India conducts its first nuclear test (Smiling Buddha).

1985 - US President R Reagan tells Rajiv Gandhi about Pakistan's bomb.

1989 - Rajiv Gandhi approves the development of nuclear weapons.

1998 - India conducts nuclear tests (Operation Shakti).

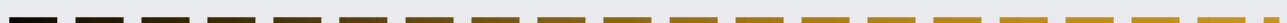
1999 - Kargil conflict between India and Pakistan.

2005 - Indo-US nuclear deal negotiations begin.

2008 - Indo-US nuclear deal ratified by Nuclear Suppliers Group.

Present - India maintains a policy of credible minimum deterrence and global nuclear disarmament.

- Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram share international boundary with Myanmar.
- Both countries share a heritage of religious, linguistic and ethnic ties. Myanmar has a substantial population of Indian origin



# INTERNATIONAL NEWS

- Oppenheimer won a Golden Globe for best drama film of the year Christopher Nolan won the award for Best Director, and Cillian Murphy took home the award for Best Actor.
- Houthi Attacks and Military Escalation in the Red Sea.
- Ethiopia-Somaliland Port Deal and the Geopolitics of the Western Indian Ocean.
- Red Sea Crisis Exposes a Weak Point of Global Maritime Trade.
- The US Navy shoots down 24 Houthi drones and missiles launched from Yemen. US and China resume in-person military policy coordination talks..
- A 7.5-magnitude earthquake struck central Japan, killing 128 people. A 3-meter tsunami reached a nuclear plant after the quake. Snow and rain have hampered relief efforts in affected areas
- Japan has issued improved emergency measures following a fatal plane collision at Haneda airport.
- In 2023, China's global rank for press freedom declined to 177 out of 180, with only North Korea having less press freedom.
- Nepal arrests people smugglers supplying Russia's army in Ukraine.



**T**op US military official, General CQ Brown, and China's General Liu Zhenli held the first virtual meeting in over a year, discussing global and regional security issues. General Brown stressed collaborative efforts to manage competition responsibly, prevent miscalculations, and maintain open communication lines. He reiterated the significance of substantive dialogue with the People's Liberation Army to minimize misunderstandings. Despite some restoration of military communication, US officials cautioned that establishing a fully functional dialogue will take time.

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**UNSC CLEARS GAZA AID RESOLUTION WITHOUT CALL TO SUSPEND FIGHTING**

**T**he UN Security Council adopted a revised resolution on immediate aid for Gaza, omitting the call for an "urgent suspension of hostilities" between Israel and Hamas. The U.S. and Russia abstained. The altered resolution emphasizes "urgent steps" for humanitarian access and a sustainable cessation of hostilities. Security Council resolutions are legally binding, but enforcement varies.

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**JAPAN PASSES RECORD MILITARY BUDGET, EASES POSTWAR BAN ON EXPORT OF LETHAL WEAPONS.**

**J**apan's Cabinet approved a 16% increase in military spending for the next year, marking a departure from its self-defence-only principle. The move, part of Prime Minister Fumio Kishida's new security strategy, also eases the postwar ban on lethal weapons export and permits exports of Japanese-made weapons under foreign licenses. The budget amounts to 6.8 trillion yen, the 12th consecutive year of increased arms spending.

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**AIRCRAFT GROUNDED IN FRANCE'S VATRY AIRPORT LEAVES FOR INDIA.**

**A** Romanian Legend Airlines Airbus A-340, carrying mostly Indian citizens, faced detention in France over concerns of undocumented immigration. After delays and interrogations at Vatry airport, the French government allowed its return to India. Passengers initially resisted, with some filing asylum applications. The incident involved an alleged attempt to fly passengers to Nicaragua, known for its liberal immigration policy. The airline's lawyer denied trafficking involvement. A judicial investigation is open.

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**INDIA, RUSSIA INK 'KEY' PACTS RELATED TO KUNDANKULAM NUCLEAR POWER PLANT.**

**I**ndia and Russia signed crucial agreements related to the construction of future power units at the Kudankulam nuclear power plant, strengthening their enduring partnership. External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, during his Russia visit, emphasized progress in various sectors and

recognized Russia as a "special partner" in defense, nuclear power, and space.

## **QATAR COURT DROPS DEATH PENALTY FOR EIGHT INDIANS**

The Court of Appeals in Doha commuted the death sentences of eight former Indian naval personnel, employees of Dahra Global defense services in Qatar. While the death penalty was waived, the original guilty verdict on charges of espionage was upheld. Families express relief at the commutation but disappointment at the guilty verdict, vowing to continue the fight for innocence.

## **PAKISTAN ELECTION COMMISSION REJECTS IMRAN'S CANDIDACY IN GENERAL POLLS.**

Former Prime Minister Imran Khan's candidacy for Pakistan's February parliamentary election was rejected by election officials due to his conviction and disqualification under the constitution. Despite filing papers after a conviction suspension, Khan faces multiple legal challenges. The decision adds to the troubles of his party amid a government crackdown, prompting criticism of bias.

## **EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER WENT ON TWO-DAY VISIT TO NEPAL.**

During his visit to Nepal on January 4 and 5, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar is expected to finalize agreements related to purchasing 10,000 MW of hydroelectric power. The visit aims to strengthen bilateral ties, focusing on power exports, air connectivity, and community development programs. This marks a positive step in the formal structure of bilateral relations.

## **103 KILLED IN TWIN BLASTS AT MEMORIAL EVENT IN IRAN.**

Two bombs exploded during a commemoration event in Kerman, Iran, killing at least 103 people. The incident occurred near the Saheb al-Zaman Mosque as supporters marked the fourth anniversary of General Qassem Soleimani's killing. Iran's Supreme Leader blamed "evil enemies" and vowed a "harsh response." The attack left 211 wounded, with suspicions of remote-controlled bombs.

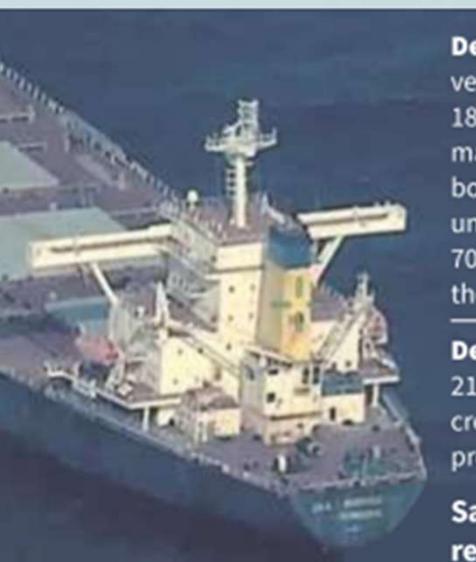


## NAVY FOILS HIJACKING BID IN ARABIAN SEA.

Indian Navy's elite marine commandos, MARCOS, successfully thwarted a hijacking attempt in the North Arabian Sea. All 21 crew members, including 15 Indians, were evacuated from the merchant vessel Lila Norfolk. Swift action, including the deployment of INS Chennai and a Maritime Patrol Aircraft, deterred the hijackers, showcasing the Navy's effective anti-piracy measures.

### NAVY FOILS HIJACKING BID IN ARABIAN SEA

Indian navy's elite marine commandos, marcos, successfully thwarted a hijacking attempt in the north arabian sea all 21 crew members, including 15 indians, were evacuated from the merchant vessel lila norfolk. swift action, including the deployment of ins chennai and a maritime patrol aircraft, deterred the hijackers, showcasing the navy's effective anti-piracy measures.



**Dec 14:** Malta-flagged vessel m.v. *Ruen*, with an 18-member crew, sent a mayday message indicating boarding by about six unknown persons around 700 nautical miles from the Indian coast

**Dec 23:** m.v. *Chem Pluto*, with 21 Indian and 1 Vietnamese crew members, reported a projectile attack around 217 nautical miles southwest of Porbandar. Initial investigation by the Navy indicated a drone attack

**Dec 23:** A Gabon-flagged crude oil tanker m.v. *Sai Baba* with an all-Indian crew heading to India was hit by one-way attack drone in Southern Red Sea; no injuries were reported

**Safe and secure:** The cargo ship Lila Norfolk, after rescue, prepares to move to the next port of call. PTI

## AIR STRIKE ON MYANMAR VILLAGE KILLS 15, AS JUNTA BATTLES REBELS ACROSS COUNTRY.

An airstrike in northwestern Myanmar's Khampat Township killed at least 15, including children, with 20 wounded. Witnesses suggested a higher toll of 19, including eight children. A junta fighter jet targeted two churches, causing casualties as people fled. The village, controlled by a People's Defence Force, faces intensified conflict amid Myanmar's ongoing unrest.

# DEFENCE NEWS



- India To Increase Warship Deployment To Counter Piracy In Arabian Sea.
- India In Constant Touch With Israel, Palestine Leaders: Ambassador Kamboj Tells Unga.
- Fighter Jet Engine Deal With India To Start This Year: Ge Aerospace's Amy Gowder.
- Indian Navy's Fast Attack Ship Visits Sri Lanka.
- India To Begin Trials Of Indigenous Zorawar Tanks Soon
- India To Increase Warship Deployment To Counter Piracy In Arabian Sea.
- Navy Chief Unveils First Indigenously Manufactured Uav From Adani Defence & Aerospace.
- Drdo Launches Indigenous Assault Rifle 'Ugram' For Armed Forces.
- Fighter Jet Engine Deal With India To Start This Year.
- India, Uae Sign MoUs In Presence Of Pm Modi, Uae President.
- Navy Chief Unveils First Indigenously Manufactured Uav From Adani Defence & Aerospace.



## PURCHASE OF T-90 TANKS

Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) has approved the purchase of two technological kinds of **T-90 TANKS** i.e. the **Digital Ballistic Computer (DBC)** & **Automatic Target Tracker (ATT)**. The upgrade improves the accuracy by eliminating the need for manual positioning. ATT has remarkable tracking capabilities. The inclusion of DBC improves the calculations which takes account of atmospheric conditions to ensure the precision while hitting the target. As of now, T-90 are operated manually to hit the targets but soon it will be upgraded. Moreover, INDIAN ARMY is gradually replacing T-72 TANKS with 1700 Future Ready Combat Vehicles (FRCVs) equipped with battlefield management system.

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## FRANCE SENT PRICE BIDS FOR 26 RAFALE JETS & 3 SUBMARINES

India has received price bids from France for purchase of 27 RAFALE-M-CARRIER based fighter jets as well as 3 SCORPENE-CLASS SUBMARINES. Defence acquisition council chaired by defence minister Acceptance of Necessity (AOM) for the ownership of 26 rafale-M fighters and 3 additional scorpene class diesel- electric submarines from France. The deal ranges from 22 single seated rafale-M- fighters to 4 twin seater rafale trainers which are not carrier- compatible. The rafale-M-jets are meant to operate from the Indian navy's two aircraft carriers. The contracts are expected to be concluded by the end of 2024 and the further delivery of the submarines are likely to happen in 2031.

The major difference between the existing scorpene and new one is the Integrated Combat System (ICS). The earlier submarines had installed system from France where as the new submarines are going to have indigenous integrated combat system.

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## COMMISSIONING OF INS IMPHAL

INS IMPHAL is the third ranked ship of the four warships under **the project 15B** that includes the following ships -**INS VISAKHAPATNAM (2021), INS MORMUGAO (2022), INS IMPHAL (26TH DECEMBER'2023) & INS SURAT (2024)**. The project 15B is identified by its lead ship, i.e. INS Visakhapatnam. The four ships of the class are 163 meters long, 17.4m wide and it displaces around 7,400 tonnes. The ships of Visakhapatnam class are operated by crew of around 350 including 50 officers and 250 sailors. The ship is equipped with state-of-the-art combat management system that can determine the threats using analytical tool and create a tactical picture using the resources available on board. The ship has secure network to handle data from all the sensors and weapon system. The ship has **BrahMos surface-to-surface missile** and vertically launched **Barak-8 surface-to-air missiles** for long range engagement on the shores and sea-based targets. The forward bow deck of the ship has 127 mm main gun and also has four AK-630 30mm

guns for close-point engagement. the ship is armed with indigenously developed **533mm torpedo launches** and **rbv-6000 anti-submarine rocket** launchers to provide anti-submarine warfare capabilities. it can role two multi-role helicopters and also has a hangar facility. ins imphal can fight under nuclear, biological and chemical warfare conditions. the ship is capable of achieving speed above 30 knots (56km/hr) powered by combined gas and gas (cogag) propulsion. after commission the ship will join western naval command. this ship is the tribute to the city of imphal. **it is the largest, most potent and most advanced destroyer.**

## UNVEILING BHUJANG DRONE

**D**rone-Acharya Aerials Innovations Limited (DAIL) has introduced **BHUJANG** which is acronym for Battlefield Hybrid UAV for Joint Attack, Navigation and Guarding. The drone is capable of operating at the maximum altitude of 6300 meters making it India's first super high-altitude multi-rotor, multi- role drone. It is the total game changer for the country's defence and security landscapes. The drone is equipped with an advance electro-optic sensor which will help in proving the precise view of the surroundings, even in low light conditions. The integrated guns add up an extra layer of offensive capability with auto-trigger facility. The BHUJANG underwent rigorous testing with the Indian army. it has encrypted communication system ensuring the secure operation.

## NAVY INCREASED THE SURVEILLANCE IN THE ARABIAN SEA

**T**he Indian navy has substantially enhanced the maritime surveillance efforts in the central and the north Arabian sea due to the recent drone attacks on India- bound merchant vessels '**chem pluto**' and '**Sai baba**' by the Iran backed Houthi rebels. Task groups which are comprising of destroyers and frigates have been deployed in the red sea, Gulf of Aden and central and north Arabian sea to undertake maritime security operations and give assistance to merchant vessels in case of any incident. The navy has deployed INS KOLKATA, INS MORMUGAO, INS CHENNAI, INS VISHAKAPATNAM in Arabian sea.



## NEW EPAULETTES FOR ADMIRALS

**T**he Indian navy revealed new epaulettes for the ranks of admiral, vice admiral, rear admiral, surgeon vice admiral & surgeon rear admiral inspired by Maratha ruler Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj who built massive maratha navy. the new epaulettes have the new golden navy button carrying the new naval crest, a red octagon which backs the national emblem, a sword and a telescope. the

epaulettes for medical officers have red border while the earlier epaulettes for the same ranks did not have the octagonal red backing for the national emblem. the old epaulettes carried a baton and sword, but new ones carry an indian sword and telescope. the stars on new epaulettes are also designed differently as compared to older ones.



### **REPRESENTATION OF EPAULETTES -**

**RED OCTAGON** – Reflects the eight cardinal directions indicating an all-round long-term vision.

**SWORD** – Represents being the cutting edge of national power and winning wars through dominance, defeating overcoming challenges.

**TELESCOPE** – Symbolises a long- term vision, foresight, and a weather-eye in the changing world.

### **7. THE NAVY SUCCESSFULLY STOPPED A HIJACKING ATTEMPT IN THE ARABIAN SEA**

In a positive outcome, the Indian Navy's MARCOS successfully foiled a hijacking attempt in the North Arabian Sea. All 21 crew members, including 15 Indians, were safely evacuated from the merchant vessel Lila Norfolk. Sanitization by MARCOS confirmed no presence of hijackers. The attempt was likely abandoned after a forceful warning from the Indian Navy's Maritime Patrol Aircraft and interception by a Naval warship.

### **8. SERVICE EXTENSION OF SU-30 MKI**

The Indian Airforce (IAF) is considering extending the service life of Su-30 MKI fighter jets **by 20 years** or more through extensive trials and testing. It has been into the forces since last two decades. There are over 260 of these planes in this fleet, the IAF ensures their availability for operation until 2045 and beyond. The Aircraft will be further upgraded it will be equipped with latest avionics, weapons and radars which will be organised domestically. The indigenously

developed **Virupaksa radar**, designed to meet requirements of IAF in various sectors, it is expected to be most advanced among all SUKHOI-30 variants.

## ROBOTIC ARTILLERY MOUNTED GUN SYSTEM TESTED AT POKHRAN RANGE

**T**he Indian government is trying to provide Indian army with arms and ammunition under the theme Make in Indian. DRDO recently, tested a robotic artillery mounted gun system at the Pokhran field firing range in Jaisalmer and it was successful. This special gun of 155\*52 mm is like a robot. It takes the ammunition on its own and loads it. As soon as the trail is completed, the gun will be deployed at Pakistan and China borders, especially in hilly areas. Earlier, it was important to include 6-8 soldiers for loading the gun but now it loads itself. The gun can fire five rounds in minute. The importance of the mounted artillery gun is that it can automatically locate the enemy's gun and starts firing. The Indian Army is ready to include 814 mounted guns in its artillery regiment.

## DESERT CYCLONE-2024

**D**esert cyclone- 2024 is the 1st edition of military exercise between **India & UAE**. The exercise is scheduled to be conducted in **Mahajan, Rajasthan** from 2nd to 15th January 2024. The Indian Army contingent comprising of 45 personnel is being represented from **Mechanised Infantry Regiment**. While from the UAE contingent is being represented by troops from the **Zayed First Brigade**. The aim of the exercise is to enhance interoperability in sub-conventional operations including fighting in built-up area in especially dessert or semi-dessert terrain. The exercise will increase the cooperation between both the sides during peace keeping operations. Exercise 'DESERT CYCLONE' signifies further strengthening of bonds of friendship and trust between India & UAE. The exercise will encourage healthy bilateral relations between two friendly nations. Drills are planned to be performed during the exercise, domination of built-up area and Heli borne operations. It is a significant exercise for both the countries.

## ROBOTIC ARTILLERY MOUNTED GUN SYSTEM TESTED AT POKHRAN RANGE

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## DRDO LAUNCHES INDIGENOUS ASSAULT RIFLE 'UGRAM' FOR ARMED FORCES.

This is the first time that the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) lab has collaborated with a private industry to manufacture a 7.62 x 51 mm calibre rifle, said an official. The weapon is designed and developed to meet the operational requirements of the Indian armed forces, paramilitary forces and state police forces, said the official. The rifle, weighing less than four kg with a 500-meter firing range, was unveiled at the hands of Shailendra Gade, the director general of the Armament and Combat Engineering (ACE) system of the DRDO.

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### INDIAN NAVY IN GUAM

P-8I Submarine Hunter & Surveillance Aircraft of India Navy landed at Guam island in West Pacific on 8 Jan to take part in Exercise Sea Dragon 2024 aims to enhance interoperability b/w Navies of USA, Japan, Australia & South Korea.

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### DRDO COUNTER-DRONE SYSTEM READY, HANDED OVER TO PRIVATE FIRMS.

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has completed its counter-drone system, now ready for production and demonstrated to armed services and security agencies. Some orders are already in place. The focus has shifted to high-endurance unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), while the industry caters to smaller drones. The integrated anti-drone system developed by DRDO covers the detection, identification, and neutralization of drones. The technology, already ordered by the armed forces, is adaptable to various challenges and is being shared with private firms like BEL, Adani, Larsen & Toubro (L&T), and Icom through Transfer of Technology (ToT). DRDO's emphasis remains on anti-drone technology, collaborating closely with industry partners while also conducting extensive research for protection against various drone types, including micro drones.



# SPORT'S NEWS



- **Hockey:** Baljeet Kaur's speedy rise from Tarn Taran to India's squad for Olympic qualifiers, with help from a former World Cupper
- In Women's shooting, Rhythm Sangwan bagged the Bronze medal in the 25-meter Pistol event at the Asian Shooting Championship in Jakarta, Indonesia.
- Lalremsiami Discusses Forward Line Prep for FIH Olympic Qualifiers Ranchi 2024.
- Formula E announces cancellation of E-Prix race in Hyderabad.
- Ashwini Ponnappa's experience and Tanisha Crasto's aggressive instincts dovetailed perfectly as the Indians registered a significant upset over Japanese stars at #MalaysiaOpenSuper1000.
- FIFA has delinked from the Santosh Trophy in Arunachal Pradesh.
- **India At Asian Para Games 2023:** Bhavina Patel Grabs Bronze In Women's Table Tennis Singles-Class 4 Section.

# MANCHESTER CITY WINS FIFA CLUB WORLD CUP 2023



**E**nglish Premier League side **Manchester City** won the **FIFA Club World Cup 2023** by defeating the Brazilian Club **Fluminense** FC 4-0 in the finale.

## D GUKE SH WINS CHENNAI GRANDMASTERS

**1**7 year old **Dommaraju Gukesh** clinched the **Chennai Grandmasters** title following a drawn game against P Harikrishna. The title earns the Chennai lad a qualification to the Candidates, which is to be held at Toronto, Canada in April of 2024.

## SEN,KASHYAP LOSE NATIONALS

**C**ommonwealth Games medalist Lakshya Sen and women's top seed Akarshi Kashyap were knocked out in the quarterfinals of the **85th Senior National Badminton Tournament** held at Guwahati.

## SAURABH CHAUDARY BACK IN WINNER'S CIRCLE

**F**ormer world number Saurabh Chaudary won the men's 10m air pistol T1 national shooting selection trials with a score of 244.5 in the finals

## VIRENDER SINGH TO RETURN PADMA SHRI

**D**eflympics medalist Virender Singh, popularly known as Goonga Pehlwan has decided to return his Padma Shri award showing solidarity with country's top wrestlers opposing the election of Mr.Sanjay Singh as the WFI president.

## INDIA BEATS AUSTRALIA FOR THE FIRST TIME IN WOMEN'S TEST CRICKET

**F**or the first time in Women's cricket, after spanning more than four decades and 10 matches, India beats Australia in a test match for the first time. The match held at Mumbai, Indian Women created history by winning the match by 8 wickets. **Sneh, received Player of the Match.**

## FIFA THREATENS TO SUSPEND BRAZIL'S FOOTBALL TEAM

**F**IFA warned that it could suspend Brazil's national teams if the soccer governing body of Brazil, CBF(Confederação Brasileira de Futebol) made interventions and quickly held new board presidential elections in January 2024 to replace the current president Ednaldo Rodrigues. FIFA

has given instructions to wait and any interventions till the approval might lead to sanctions on the CBF.

## KATIE MOON TO BE MUMBAI MARATHON AMBASSADOR

**T**wo time **Pole Vault** world champion and Tokyo Olympics Gold Medalist Katie Moon becomes the event ambassador of Tata Mumbai Marathon to be held in January 2024.

## KOHLI FIRST EVER BATTER TO SCORE 2000+ RUNS OVER 7 CALENDAR YEARS ( FOR AFCAT )

**V**irat Kohli became the first batter to score 2000 runs in seven different calendar years. His 76 in the first Test against South Africa took his tally to 2006 runs in 2023. He had previously achieved the feat in 2012 (2186 runs), 2014 (2286 runs), 2016 (2595 runs), 2017 (2818 runs), 2018 (2735 runs) and 2019 (2455 runs).

## CARLSEN KEEPS 'OPEN' TITLE

**T**here was no surprise with Magnus Carlsen playing out a safe draw with R. Praggnanandhaa to keep the title in the World rapid chess title in Samarkand (Uzbekistan).

## SAVITA PUNIA TO LEAD 18MEMBER INDIAN WOMEN'S SQUAD IN OLYMPIC QUALIFIERS

**V**eteran goalkeeper Savita Punia will continue to lead the side and Vandana Katariya will be her deputy as Hockey India on Saturday named an 18member Indian women's team for the Olympic Qualifiers scheduled to be held in Ranchi from January 13 to 19.

## ZVEREVLED GERMANY BEATS SWIATEK'S POLAND, CLINCHES UNITED CUP

**A**lexander Zverev saved two match points in a gruelling threeset win over Hubert Hurkacz to help Germany upset top seeds Poland and clinch a maiden **United Cup** title in Sydney. The United Cup is a prestigious international Tennis Tournament where players represent their countries as teams.

## **UCHIJIMA OVERCOMES MAKAROVA TO TRIUMPH**

**S**econd seed Moyuka Uchijima of Japan beat top seed Ekaterina Makarova 64, 61 in the final of the \$40,000 ITF women's tennis tournament at the Ganesh Naik Sports Complex in Navi Mumbai.

## **Ronaldo ends 2023 as the world's top goal scorer with 54 strikes**

**C**ristiano Ronaldo was the top goalscorer in world football in 2023. The five time Ballon d'Or winner scored 54 goals for Portugal and Al Nassr. Harry Kane was second with 52 goals for England and Bayern Munich along with PSG's French attacker Kylian Mbappe. Manchester City's Norwegian striker Erling Halaand netted 50 times.

## **Simranjeet to lead India men; Rajni to captain women's side**

**S**imranjeet Singh and Rajni Etimarpu will lead the men's and women's sides respectively as Hockey India on Sunday named the Indian teams for the upcoming FIH Hockey5s World Cup to be held in Muscat, Oman. While the Hockey5s Women's World Cup will be held between January 24 and 27, the men's event is slated from January 28 to January 31.

### **WHAT IS 5S IN HOCKEY?**

**E**ach team will have a maximum of 5 players on the field. Each team may choose to play with a fully-kitted goalkeeper as one of their five players. If a team chooses to play without a goalkeeper, then their team will have five field players, none of whom have goalkeeping privileges.

## **KENYA'S CHEBET SHATTERS WOMEN'S 5KM WORLD RECORD**

**K**enya's Beatrice Chebet smashed the women's world 5km record. The 23yearold's time of 14min 13sec improved on the previous womenonly world record of 14:29 set by Ethiopia's Senbere Teferi in September 2021.

## **ARYAVEER DEWAN CLINCHES US OPEN U15 SQUASH TITLE**

**I**ndia's Aryaveer Dewan, seeded fourth, beat third seed Brendan Tagliarini of USA 11-8, 12-10, 11-4 to win the US Junior Open squash championship in Philadelphia. Aryan ousted top seed Jayden Oon of Malaysia 119, 118, 911, 1311 in the semifinals and has risen to No.2 spot in his age group in Asia.

## **SOUTH AFRICA'S 55 IS ANY TEAM'S LOWEST TEST SCORE AGAINST INDIA<sup>29</sup>**

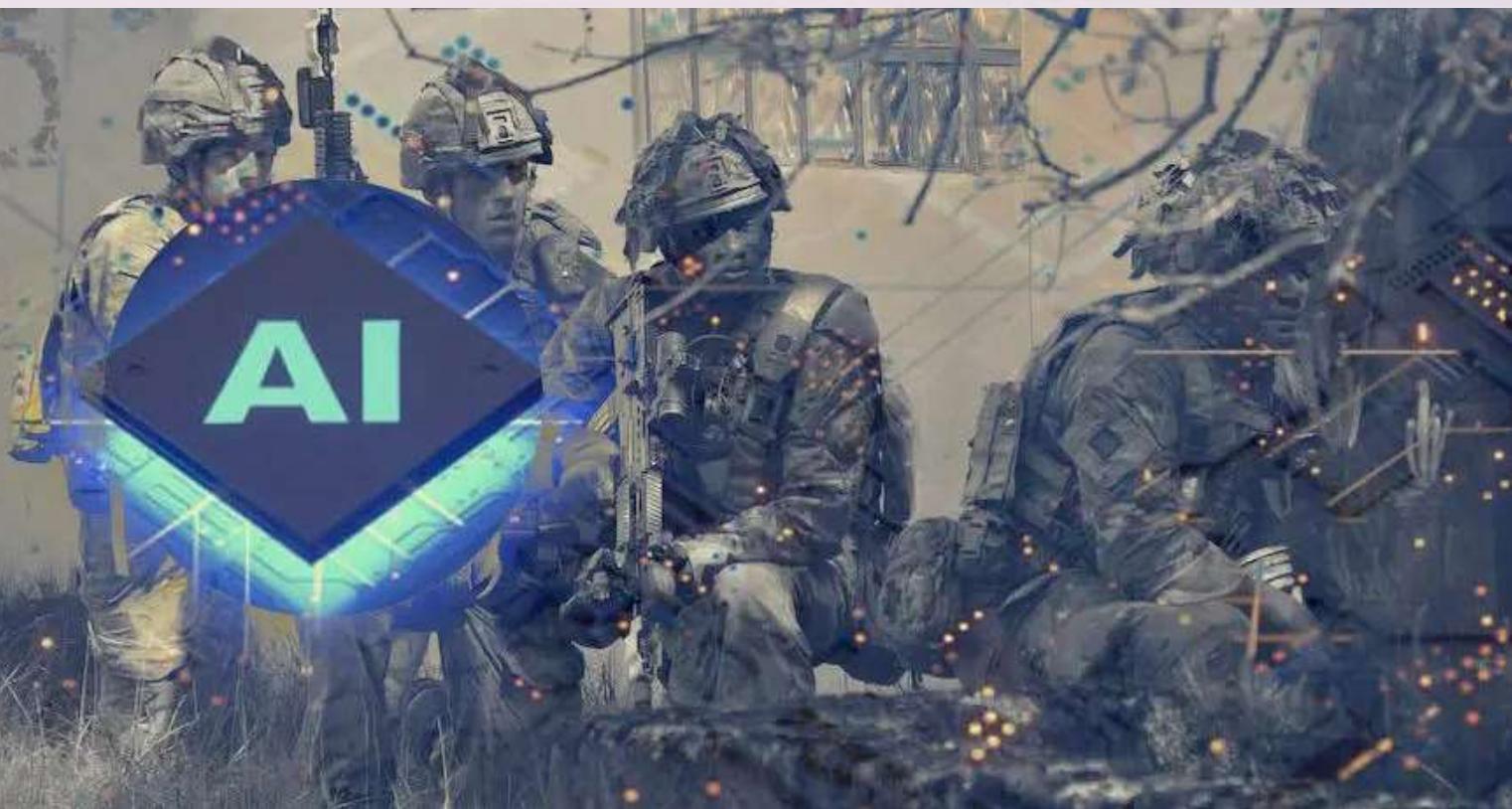
**S**outh Africa's first innings total of 55 on 03-01-2024 is the lowest score by a team in Tests against India, eclipsing New Zealand's 62 at Wankhede Stadium, Mumbai, in 2021. It is also the Proteas' lowest Test score since their readmission in 1991, beating the 73 scored against Sri Lanka at Galle in 2018.

## **RAGHURAM IYER NAMED CEO OF IOA**

**T**he Indian Olympic Association (IOA) on 06-01-2024 appointed Raghuram Iyer as its chief executive officer (CEO).

# SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

- ISRO PAYLOAD "ACES" PERFORMANCE CHECK, CAPTURES LIGHT FROM SUPERNOVA EVENT
- UAE TO BUILD AIRLOCK FOR NASA'S GATEWAY STATION ORBITING THE MOON
- THE EARLY UNIVERSE WAS BANANAS
- SCIENTISTS CLAIM THEY HAVE ENGINEERED THE MICROBIOME OF A RICE PLANT, DEVELOPING A TECHNOLOGY THAT COULD POTENTIALLY REDUCE OUR DEPENDENCE ON PESTICIDES.
- IISC AND ASTER CMI HOSPITAL DEVELOP AI TOOL TO HELP IN NERVE DISORDER SCREENING.
- SILICON PHOTONICS RESEARCH CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE LAUNCHED AT IIT MADRAS.
- IIT MADRAS DEVELOPS 3D-PRINTED FACE IMPLANTS FOR PATIENTS SUFFERING FROM BLACK FUNGUS.
- 5-YEAR-OLD AT AIIMS DELHI ACHIEVES WORLD RECORD AS YOUNGEST TO UNDERGO AWAKE BRAIN SURGERY.



**A**rtificial intelligence can overcome "lossy bottlenecks," limitations in decision-making processes that simplify complex choices. In various domains like dining, employment, apparel, and software, AI can offer personalised and nuanced solutions, reducing the impact of these bottlenecks. The focus then shifts to politics, proposing a system where AI enhances voter representation by advocating for specific policies based on detailed political preferences. While this concept could revolutionise democracy it also acknowledges privacy concerns and emphasises the importance of human deliberation in political processes. It concludes by noting that these technologies may first be applied in less politically charged domains.

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### **SOLAR MISSION ADITYA L1 TO REACH DESTINATION ON JANUARY 6: ISRO CHAIRMAN**

**I**ndia's solar mission, Aditya L1, is set to reach the Lagrangian point (L1) on January 6 marking a significant achievement for the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). The observatory, launched on September 2 will study the Sun from a halo orbit at L1, approximately 1.5 million km away from Earth. ISRO Chairman S Somanath confirmed this development during the Bharatiya Vigyan Sammelan. Aditya L1's arrival at L1 will enable it to measure solar events for the next five years, contributing valuable data for global understanding of the Sun's dynamics. Somanath also outlined ISRO's plans for a future Indian space station and emphasised India's commitment to technological advancement in the space sector.

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### **2023 IN SPACEFLIGHT: CHANDRAYAAN-3 AND OTHER MISSIONS THAT DEFINED SPACE EXPLORATION THIS YEAR**

**I**n 2023, India solidified its position among space superpowers with Chandrayaan 3's successful lunar landing and the launch of the Aditya L1 solar probe. Despite notable achievements 2023 saw even more significant milestones, including NASA's Artemis 1 Moon mission and China's first space station completion. The year also featured the OSIRIS-REx mission's return of an asteroid sample and the Psyche mission to explore planetary cores. Most Noteworthy was China's Shenzhou 16 mission, setting a world record with 17 humans in orbit. However, challenges included Russia's Luna-25 and Hakuto lunar missions crashing, and SpaceX's Starship experiencing two explosions. This emphasises the dynamic landscape of private space companies, showcasing rapid development and learning from failures.

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### **JAPAN'S SLIM 'MOON SNIPER' REACHES LUNAR ORBIT AHEAD OF LANDMARK LANDING.**

**J**apan's Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) has successfully inserted its "Smart Lander for Investigating Moon" (SLIM) into lunar orbit, aiming to become the fifth country to soft-land a spacecraft on the Moon. SLIM took a unique route to the Moon and, if successful, will be the smallest and lightest spacecraft to land on the Moon. Weighing only 200 kilograms, SLIM's main objective is to demonstrate precision landing capabilities by landing within 100 metres of the chosen site, with the mission aiming to land near the small crater named Shinoli in the Moon's equatorial region.

## **WHEN TO SPOT 'COLD MOON' IN INDIA - LONGEST, LAST FULL MOON OF 2023**

**T**he Cold Moon, the longest and final full moon of the year, graced the sky until December 27. This celestial event is associated with the winter solstice, marking the year's shortest period of sunlight. During the winter solstice, the Cold Moon becomes the longest full moon, earning the names Long Night Moon, Frost Moon, and Winter Moon. The full moon occurs when the sun, earth, and moon align on an imaginary 180-degree line, allowing sunlight to illuminate the side facing Earth. December's moon is named Cold Moon due to the onset of winter in the Northern Hemisphere.

## **'ELECTRONIC SOIL' THAT ENHANCES CROP GROWTH DEVELOPED BY SCIENTISTS.**

**S**cientists have developed an electrically conductive "soil" named eSoil, tailored to hydroponic cultivation, which can lead to 50% more growth of barley seedlings in 15 days. This hydroponic cultivation method stimulates the root system electrically through the new substrate, providing a controlled environment to grow food, even in urban settings. Barley seedlings grown in the conductive "soil" experienced up to a 50% growth boost in 15 days when their roots were electrically stimulated. This method could be valuable for sustainable agriculture, especially in areas with limited arable land and harsh environmental conditions.

## **'BENEFITTED FROM RUSSIAN GEOPOLITICAL SITUATION AS SOME LAUNCHES CAME TO INDIA... WE RAISED OUR PRESTIGE AND ABILITY': ISRO CHIEF S SOMANATH**

**A**n narrative has been created that the concepts of science and God do not go together and all scientists should be atheists. I do not believe either in atheism or in the belief system. I always worship the approach of scientists to find out the truth.

ISRO Chairman S Somanath discusses various aspects of India's space missions, including the complex manoeuvres involved in bringing back the Chandrayaan-3 propulsion module to Earth. He outlines ISRO's plans for future Moon missions, collaboration with international partners for human spaceflight, and the impact of geopolitical situations on global space exploration. Somnath

emphasizes isro's commercial plans, having launched numerous foreign satellites, and highlights efforts to create markets in africa, southeast asia, arabic countries, and south america. he also addresses controversies surrounding his malayalam memoir and expresses a belief in the compatibility of science and spirituality.

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## **SEND YOUR NAME TO JUPITER'S MOON EUROPA BEFORE TIME RUNS OUT: HERE'S HOW**

**N**ASA's "Message in a Bottle" campaign offers the opportunity to send your name on a microchip aboard the Europa Clipper mission, exploring Jupiter's moon Europa for signs of life. The campaign allows participants to sign up and submit their names until December 31. Technicians at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory will stencil the names onto a coin-sized microchip using an electron beam. The chip, along with an engraved metal plate featuring a poem by Ada Limon, will be attached to the spacecraft, creating a symbolic "message in a bottle" as it flies by Europa. Participants can also download a custom electronic souvenir from the campaign's website.

## **Space tech startup has launched payload on ISRO's PSLV-C58 XPoSat Mission on Jan 1**

Space technology startups Dhruva Space, Bellatrix Aerospace, and TM2Space are set to launch their payloads on the upcoming Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) - C58 XPoSat Mission by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) on January 1, 2024. This mission marks ISRO's first X-Ray Polarimeter Satellite mission. Dhruva Space will showcase its LEAPTD (Launching Expeditions for Aspiring Technologies Technology Demonstrator), while Bellatrix Aerospace plans to launch two payloads, including the Rudra 0.3 HPGP green monopropellant thruster and ARKA 200. TM2Space will deploy the Radiation Shielding Experiments Module to assess the effectiveness of tantalum coating.

"India's space economy today stands at a modest 8 billion USD, but we project that by 2040 it will multiply manifold. But more interestingly, according to some international observers, for example, the recent ADL (Arthur D Little) Report, India has the potential of reaching a 100 billion USD space economy by 2040,"

ISRO successfully launched over 430 foreign satellites, generating revenue exceeding 290 million euros from European satellites and over 170 million USD from American satellite launches.

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## **ISRO TO USHER IN 2024 WITH THE LAUNCH OF DEDICATED SCIENTIFIC SATELLITE TO STUDY BLACK HOLES**

**I**SRO is set to launch its first X-Ray Polarimeter Satellite (XPoSat) as the primary payload aboard a Polar .

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The study, published in Nature, explored the impact of online search engines on belief in misinformation. Lead author Kevin Aslett warns us about "data voids," areas dominated by misinformation, emphasising the danger of non-credible information in search results. The research, conducted through five experiments, reveals that searching online to evaluate news increases belief in popular misinformation. The effect persists over time, regardless of when misinformation was published. Exposure to lower-quality search results intensifies this phenomenon. The study underscores the importance of media literacy programs and urges search engines to prioritise credible content delivery.

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### **XPOSAT: WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT ISRO'S MAIDEN SATELLITE TO STUDY BLACK HOLES**

ISRO celebrated the New Year by launching its first X-Ray Polarimeter Satellite (XPoSAT) using the PSLV-C58 rocket. XPoSAT aims to study celestial objects like black holes, featuring two payloads: POLIX for measuring X-ray polarisation in the 8-30keV energy band and XSPECT for polarisation and spectroscopic measurements. The mission, with a lifespan of about 5 years, holds global significance for the astronomy community, providing insights into black holes, neutron stars, and galactic nuclei. The launch also included 10 other payloads, contributing to various experiments and technologies.

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### **ISRO Plans to launch at least 12 missions this year**

In 2024, ISRO plans to conduct at least 12 launches, surpassing its previous records. The successful launch of the X-ray Polarimeter Satellite marked the beginning of a year focused on Gaganyaan, India's maiden human space flight mission scheduled for 2025. The agency aims to conduct two more rounds of tests in 2024, including a test flight with a humanoid robot (Vyomitra) and an unmanned flight, paving the way for the manned Gaganyaan mission. Prerequisites include developing critical technologies for crew safety, life support, and an emergency escape system. ISRO achieved significant milestones in 2023, landing on the Moon and launching the Aditya-L1 sun observatory.

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### **NASA'S JUNO SPACECRAFT REVEALED JUPITER'S VOLCANIC MOON IO**

NASA's Juno spacecraft captured detailed images of Jupiter's moon Io during a close encounter, flying roughly 930 miles from its surface. The JunoCam imager showed a silhouetted, dusty red sphere marked by massive greyish volcanoes on Io. The spacecraft, launched in 2011, has performed

56 flybys of Jupiter and documented close encounters with its largest moons. Another ultra-close flyby of Io is scheduled for February 3, 2024, aiming to collect vital data about Io and its volcanism. Juno's extended mission concludes in September 2025 with a deliberate crash into Jupiter's atmosphere.

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## SPACEX LAUNCHED ITS FIRST 'DIRECT-TO-CELL' STARLINK SATELLITES

**S**pacEX launched 21 Starlink satellites, including six with "Direct-to-Cell" capabilities, enabling direct internet access via smartphones. These satellites have advanced modems functioning as space-based cellphone towers, potentially eliminating ground-level cellphone dead zones. This innovation allows collaboration with network providers globally, offering direct-to-cell services to customers and reducing reliance on traditional terrestrial towers. SpaceX highlights existing partnerships with providers like T-Mobile, Rogers, KDDI, Optus, One NZ, Salt, and Entel, indicating global interest in Direct-to-Cell capabilities. SpaceX, amid 2023 challenges, emphasised Starlink's expansion, boasting over 5,000 active satellites for a growing low-Earth orbit internet network.

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## INDIA TO USE SPACEX ROCKET TO LAUNCH COMMUNICATIONS SATELLITE

**T**he Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) will utilise SpaceX's Falcon-9 rocket to deploy its heavy communication satellite, GSAT-20, in the middle of this year. Weighing 4,700 kg, GSAT-20 exceeds the launch capacity of ISRO's most powerful rocket. Falcon-9, a reusable rocket, has the capability to carry over 8,300 kg to Geostationary Transfer Orbit (GTO), making it a suitable choice. NSIL, the commercial arm of ISRO, facilitated the collaboration with SpaceX. GSAT-20 aims to address high-speed connectivity gaps in rural areas and enable in-flight internet services, contributing to the country's digital connectivity. This launch follows NSIL's successful "demand-driven" launch of GSAT-24 in the previous year, purchased entirely by Tata Play, a Direct-To-Home broadcaster.

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## QUADRANTIDS 2024: FIRST METEOR SHOWER PEAK OF THE YEAR

**T**he Quadrantid meteor shower was visible from New Delhi starting at 12:07 AM and each night, with the radiant point in the constellation Bootes. The shower was expected to remain active until the dawn broke at around 6:46 AM. For the best viewing experience, choose a dark and secluded outdoor location with minimal light pollution and an open view of the horizon. Lie down if possible, and look in the direction of the radiant point. Allow a few minutes for your eyes to adjust to the darkness to enhance visibility.

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Astronomers proposed that oxygen levels on a planet can indicate the potential for advanced technology, termed "techno signatures." A study published in Nature Astronomy suggested that not only is oxygen crucial for life processes, but it plays a key role in technological development. The researchers highlighted the importance of oxygen in open-air combustion, a fundamental process for technology on Earth. Interestingly, the levels of oxygen needed for complex biological life and intelligence are not as high as those required for technology development. They introduced the concept of an "oxygen bottleneck," suggesting that high oxygen levels may be a prerequisite for fostering technological civilizations. This perspective may guide the search for extraterrestrial intelligence.

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## UNITED STATES TO TEST RADICAL NEW X-65 AIRCRAFT WITH FUTURISTIC CONTROLS

DARPA plans to build and deploy the experimental X-65 aircraft, featuring a revolutionary design to test innovative flight controls. Unlike traditional aircraft using movable external control surfaces, the X-65 will employ jets of air from a pressurised source to shape airflow over its surfaces. This departure from century-old design paradigms aims to reduce weight, complexity, and potentially improve performance. The unmanned aircraft, weighing over 3 metric tons with a wingspan of nearly ten metres, will have both traditional flaps/rudders and active flow control actuators. Aurora Flight Sciences, a Boeing subsidiary, is building the first X-65, expected to roll out in early 2025 for its inaugural flight.

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## JAPAN-LED XRISM MISSION REVEALED ITS FIRST X-RAY PICTURE OF COSMOS

The XRISM (X-ray Imaging and Spectroscopy Mission), led by Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency in collaboration with NASA and the European Space Agency, released a preview of the data it aims to collect during its upcoming science operations. XRISM is designed to detect X-ray radiation with energy up to 12,000 electron volts, allowing it to study the hottest regions in the universe, large structures, and objects with strong gravity. The mission's instruments, Resolve and Xtend, focus on the same X-ray Mirror assembly. Resolve, a microcalorimeter spectrometer, and Xtend, an X-ray imager, provide valuable insights into celestial sources' compositions, motions, and physical states.

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## ISRO'S ADITYA L1 REACHED ITS DESTINATION; INDIA CREATES ANOTHER LANDMARK

The Aditya-L1 spacecraft, India's first space-based solar observatory, is scheduled for a crucial manoeuvre to enter its final orbit around Lagrange point 1 (L1) of the sun-earth system. Placing the observatory in a halo orbit around L1, approximately 1.5 million km from Earth, will allow it to continuously observe the sun without eclipses. The manoeuvre is essential to prevent the spacecraft from continuing its journey toward the sun. Aditya-L1's mission objectives include studying the

solar upper atmosphere, dynamics of the chromosphere and corona, and the origin of coronal mass ejections (CMEs). The observatory carries seven scientific payloads for these studies.

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## **WHO IS NIGAR SHAJI, THE WOMAN BEHIND ADITYA L-1 MISSION?**

**N**igar Shaji, the 59-year-old female mission director of Aditya L-1, has played a crucial role in steering the mission, which aims to enhance our understanding of the Sun. Hailing from Sengottai in Tamil Nadu, Shaji's curiosity and passion for learning led her to a successful career as a space scientist at ISRO. With a background in electronics and communications, she joined ISRO in 1987 and has worked on various projects, contributing to the successful launch of Aditya L-1 in September 2023. Shaji emphasised the supportive environment for women scientists at ISRO, where recognition is based on merit. The Aditya L-1 mission aims to study the Sun's influence on space weather dynamics and Earth's climate.

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## **THE EARLY UNIVERSE WAS BANANAS**

**N**ew images from the James Webb Space Telescope suggest that baby galaxies, contrary to previous assumptions, might have shapes resembling bananas, pickles, cigars, or surfboards. The images of around 4,000 newborn galaxies challenge the expectation that they would appear as orbs or discs. If confirmed, this discovery could significantly alter the understanding of galaxy emergence and growth, offering insights into the mysterious nature of dark matter. The early galaxies' peculiar shapes might be linked to the properties of dark matter, affecting how galaxies form and evolve in the universe.

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## **PEREGRINE MISSION ONE: KEY POINTS ABOUT NASA'S FIRST MOON LANDER MISSION SINCE APOLLO**

**T**he Peregrine Mission One, a lunar lander built by Astrobotic Technology, was scheduled for launch on January 8, 2024, with an anticipated moon landing by February 23. As part of NASA's Commercial Lunar Payload Services program, the private U.S. company will send small robotic landers to the moon's south polar region to collect lunar resources. The lander will carry 15 commercial payloads and five NASA-sponsored payloads, with a total mass capacity of 90kg. Astrobotic aims to achieve a soft landing on the moon, and the mission will provide valuable data for NASA's objectives, including locating water molecules and measuring radiation. The launch was set for 2:18 am EST from Cape Canaveral, Florida.

## ADITYA-L1 DATA TO START POURING IN SOON

India's solar observatory, Aditya-L1, has successfully activated all seven key instruments after being placed in orbit around Lagrange Point-1. The activation occurred in phases between Saturday and Sunday. Aditya-L1, launched on September 2, 2023, will observe various aspects of the Sun for approximately five years. The spacecraft, located about 1.5 million km from Earth, will provide crucial data for understanding space weather dynamics and the Sun's influence on Earth's climate. The first set of data is expected to be available by mid-January 2024. Aditya-L1's mission includes observing the photosphere, chromosphere, and corona of the Sun.

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## NASA delays Artemis mission; astronauts will not return to Moon till 2026

NASA is delaying its Artemis mission, which aims to land American astronauts on the moon, by about a year. The Artemis III lunar landing mission is now targeted for September 2026, demonstrating the challenges NASA faces in meeting ambitious deadlines and navigating technical complications. The delays are attributed to issues with Lockheed Martin's Orion capsule, which revealed problems with its heat shield and internal components during the Artemis I mission. Additionally, challenges with developing new spacesuits and SpaceX's Starship rocket, dependent on untested propellant transfer capabilities, contribute to the setbacks. The delayed precursor mission is now planned for September 2025.

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# THE ISRAEL-HAMAS WAR-BACKGROUND

## CEASEFIRE & PRESENT SITUATION IN GAZA

**Israel and Hamas have been at war for more than 8 weeks, as of 10 dec 2023, with over 18,000 Palestinians killed (as on date). The Palestine Health Ministry says it can no longer provide an official death toll because of the intensity of fighting and repeated communication breakdowns. On the contrary, nearly 1,200 people were killed in Hamas's Oct. 7 assault on Israel, with almost 250 taken away as hostages by the rampaging militants. This now counts as the deadliest day for Jews since the Holocaust.**

### BACKGROUND OF THE ATTACK

Hamas, a Palestinian militant group that has controlled the Gaza Strip since 2007, claimed the attack was "to free Palestinian prisoners, stop Israeli aggression on Al-Aqsa Mosque, and to break the siege on Gaza." So, on Oct. 7, it launched an unprecedented cross-border attack on Israel. In a highly organized stealth assault, they bulldozed the border fence in multiple places, caught Israel's security apparatus off-guard and overwhelmed military defenses. Surprised by the lack of resistance, the attackers turned the operation into a bloody and chaotic rampage through civilian areas.



Militants took captives from a swath of territory more than 20 miles wide, reflecting the broad sweep of the incursion across Gaza's border with southern Israel. Majority of them were civilians, including women/children.

At the site of a dance festival three miles from the border fence, more than 260 bodies were recovered. Israeli officials said 5,400 people were injured in the attack, and at least 32 U.S. nationals had died. In retaliation, on that very day, Israel declared war on Hamas. Since then, Gaza has been bombarded with Israeli air and artillery strikes, killing thousands and injuring more than 40,400, many of them children.

### **THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT: A CHRONOLOGY**

Roots of the latest fighting predate the establishment of the state of Israel 75 years ago-and founding of Hamas in 1987.

Palestinians and Israelis alike consider the territory between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea as their own. Periodic bouts of violence, armed conflict and displacement followed.. Before Oct. 7, there were 6,407 Palestinian and 308 Israeli fatalities in the past 15 years,

as per U.N. data. Most recently, Israel has coexisted uneasily with Hamas-cycling between bloody escalations and periods of relative peace, including times when Gazans were able to work in and export goods to Israel.

Hamas -designated by the United States as a terrorist organization since 1997-won elections in Gaza in 2006, defeating Fatah, the main Palestinian party that still controls the Palestinian Authority, the U.S.-backed government based in the West Bank, the second Palestinian territory. In 2007, Hamas expelled the Palestinian Authority from Gaza and seized full control of the enclave.

Elections have not been held in Gaza since. Hamas, unlike the Palestinian Authority, does not acknowledge Israel's right to exist. The group, supported by Iran, has used explosives and rockets, along with suicide bombings and kidnappings, to target Israel since gaining control of Gaza.

### **THE GAZA STRIP AND ITS HISTORY**

Israel retaliated with a years-long blockade, restricting imports and exports and the movement of civilians in and out of the Strip, which covers a tiny 360 sq kms, but houses about 2.1 million, in a strategy that rights groups have decried as collective punishment



and a violation of international law. The power imbalance and lack of movement toward peace and Palestinian statehood (the 2 State Solution) have kept tensions simmering. In May 2021, Israeli attempts to evict families from a Palestinian neighborhood in favor of Jewish Israelis in East Jerusalem led to violent clashes, prompting Hamas to launch rockets at Israeli cities.

This April 23', **Israeli forces stormed al-Aqsa Mosque, a sacred Muslim site in Jerusalem.** The following month, a five-day conflict between Israel and Islamic Jihad, another armed Palestinian faction, killed 22 people in Gaza and two in Israel. It was a rare summer of quiet in the Gaza Strip until late August, when Israel halted new work permits and barred workers with permits from entering the country, blaming Hamas for a string of attacks on Israeli settlers in the West Bank.

### **What are Israel's military objectives in Gaza?**

Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu, who formed a unity govt. with a political rival, has promised to end Hamas rule in the Gaza Strip. Israel's military has said a key target of this war is the militant group's leadership, and leaders have said they will collapse its military and governmental capabilities to the point that they cannot recover. Previous ground offensives into Gaza, in 2014 and 2019, were more limited in aim -intending to punish and degrade Hamas but not remove it completely.

Nearly 1,000 Palestinians were killed in 2019; the death toll in 2014 exceeded 1,500, including more than 500 children.

### **What is the situation for people in Gaza?**

Aid agencies say the enclave is in the grip of a humanitarian crisis, which Israel's bombardments and demands for nearly 1 million Palestinians living in northern Gaza to flee southward have worsened. Since early Oct, residents of the Gaza Strip have been largely cut off from internet and cellphone and landline networks, further isolating them from the rest of the world. U.S. officials have directly linked the power and digital blackouts to Israel and said Washington had applied pressure to have communications restored.

Unable to leave the enclave through its closed borders, many Palestinians are facing critical shortages of basic resources amid collapsed infrastructure. A deal was eventually reached to allow some humanitarian aid in through Egypt, and supplies are slowly trickling into Gaza through the Rafah border crossing. Israel

has restricted fuel deliveries, saying they could be used by Hamas, while hospitals such as al-Shifa and others say they have been pushed to breaking point by lack of power. Limited openings at the crossing have also allowed some injured Palestinians and foreign citizens to leave for Egypt. Gaza's residents thus have no electricity, no water and nowhere to flee.

Journalists on the ground attempting to report on the conflict have also been killed. Since Oct. 7, 50 journalists/other media workers have been killed: the majority Palestinian, besides more than 22,000 persons, mostly children & women !

### **Agreement to a four-day pause in hostilities**

A deal reached on 25th Nov 23 between Israel and Hamas paused the fighting for four days, in exchange for the release of 500 of the 240 hostages held inside the enclave, mostly women & children, including those of other nationalities. It marked the first cessation since a six-week air and ground assault and capped weeks of tense international talks, mediated by the Qatari government, with heavy intercession of the Biden administration. As part of the deal, each hostage was traded for three Palestinians held in Israeli prisons. Israel also allowed more fuel and humanitarian aid into the enclave, and the pause was to be extended by a day for every additional 10 hostages who would be released above the initial group of 50. Hence we saw 2 additional days of ceasefire, wherein 20 more hostages were released, but same

could not be extended further, amidst mistrust & allegations from both side.

### **What could happen next in the Israel-Gaza war?**

Israeli leaders, including PM Netanyahu have vowed to continue military pressure on Hamas to secure the release of the remaining hostages. Israeli forces have urged civilians in the south to move to unspecified "safe zones," following evacuation calls from the north. The White House has cautioned Israel against moving on the south, in the "absence of a cohesive plan" to protect "a dramatically increased civilian population" of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians,

Questions also remain over who will run Gaza when the war is over. Netanyahu said Israel doesn't "seek to occupy Gaza", but added that Israel would be responsible for the enclave's security "for an indefinite period, which has raised red flags in USA. "Gaza cannot continue to be run by Hamas," Secretary of State Antony Blinken said, adding: "It's also clear that Israel cannot occupy Gaza." Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas's administration would return to Gaza only as part of a "comprehensive solution," his aides said, though critics bashed the idea.

### **Will other World Powers Get Involved**



There's a growing risk that the conflict could draw in neighboring countries or even global powers. A potential flash point is Israel's northern border with Lebanon, where a risk exists of a second front opening up between Israel and Hezbollah—the well-armed and battle-trained Lebanese Shiite political and militant group that has fought Israel for decades, from its base in southern Lebanon. Iran, which backs Hezbollah, has denied having any role in the original Hamas attack. But Tehran has warned that it could take unspecified "preemptive action" to deter an Israeli assault on Gaza; an Iranian intervention would risk engulfing the region in a wider conflict.

### **India's Policy over Israel-Palestine Conflict**

**Background:** India's historical stance has leaned towards Palestine, driven by factors like **Mahatma Gandhi's opposition to a Jewish state in Palestine**, India's large Muslim population, and the **need to maintain good relations with Arab countries**. India's position was also guided by the **general consensus** in the Arab world, the Non-Aligned Movement, and the UN. When the partition of Palestine plan was put to vote at the UN, **India voted against, along with the Arab countries**. India also opposed Israel's admission to the UN. During the **Cold War**, India aligned **itself with the Soviet Union**, which supported the Arab states, thus **perpetuating its pro-Palestine position**.

### **Shift in India's Policy**

- In 1992, after the end of the Cold War, India established full

diplomatic relations with Israel, marking a significant shift, undeterred of the potential fallout with the Arab nations. Despite this, India continued to voice support for the Palestinian cause.

- **Balance in National Interest:** India's diplomatic decisions are guided by national interest, necessitating a balance between maintaining strong relations with Israel, supporting Palestine, and developing ties with the Arab world.
- India's relations with Israel have strengthened in recent years, to include **sectors like trade, technology, defence, and counter-terrorism cooperation**. Today Israel is India's 2nd biggest defence partner and has stood beside India as its brother in arms.
- India's support for Israel is seen as a response to its **fight against cross-border terrorism**, although the situations in Israel and India differ significantly.

**Stands With Palestine's Cause :** Besides growing relations with Israel, India has reiterated its stand for Palestine's cause. Amid the ongoing tensions, USD 29.53 million has been contributed by India to the **UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA)** for Palestinian refugees. India also sent nearly 6.5 tonnes of medical aid and 32 tonnes of disaster relief material for **Palestinian people**.

### **India Balancing its Stance**

- o In 2017, the first time PM Modi visited Israel and in 2018 he made an official visit to Palestine for the first time.



- o In 2017, India voted against the U.S. and Israel for an attempt to declare unilaterally all of Jerusalem as the Israeli capital.
- o India's policy is-we condemn terrorism, but do not support indiscriminate reprisal bombings.

**India's Official Stand :** India's official position on the Israel-Palestine conflict remains unchanged, advocating for a **two-state solution with Israel and Palestine** as good neighbors. It was only after the mediation of the US, in the **1991 Madrid Peace conference** a two-state solution was agreed to **resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.**

### Way Forward

- Maintaining a status quo in the Israel-Palestine conflict is a challenging endeavor, and India can play a constructive role by **promoting a peaceful resolution** based on a two-nation theory.
- India should continue its diplomatic efforts and use its international influence

- to encourage both Israel and Palestine to return to the negotiating table, after ending the war earliest.
- India must continue to act as a mediator and provide humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people to address the immediate needs and alleviate suffering in conflict-affected areas.
- Encourage dialogues and exchanges between Israeli and Palestinian civil society groups, academics, and youth to promote mutual understanding and trust.

-by Col(Dr.) Bhaskar Gupta



# 50 MCQS QUESTION YOU CAN USE



**1.'VARUNA' IS A BILATERAL NAVAL EXERCISE BETWEEN INDIA AND WHICH COUNTRY?**

- [A] USA
- [B] France
- [C] UAE
- [D] Sri Lanka

**2.Indian Army launched a joint Training exercise 'Cyclone - I' with which country?**

- [A] USA
- [B] Egypt
- [C] France
- [D] Sri Lanka

**3.What is the name of the fifth stealth Scorpene class Submarine, which was recently commissioned into the Indian Navy?**

- [A] INS Vagir
- [B] INS Virat
- [C] INS Vaaman
- [D] INS Vajra

**4.The Indian Armed Forces are set to procure armed Predator MQ 9A drones from which country?**

- [A] France
- [B] Israel
- [C] USA
- [D] Russia

**5.India's largest helicopter manufacturing facility was inaugurated in which state?**

- [A] Andhra Pradesh
- [B] Karnataka
- [C] Uttar Pradesh
- [D] Maharashtra

**6.What per cent of India's capital procurement budget has been earmarked for domestic industry?**

- [A] 25
- [B] 50

- [C] 75
- [D] 100



**7.ISRAELI AEROSPACE INDUSTRIES(IAI) SIGNED MOU WITH WHICH INDIAN ORGANISATION TO FORM A JOINT VENTURE RELATED TO ARMED FORCES?**

- [A] HAL
- [B] ISRO
- [C] BEL
- [D] DRDO

**8.Which country is the host of the international multilateral air exercise 'Exercise Desert Flag VIII'?**

- [A] UK
- [B] UAE
- [C] Japan
- [D] Sri Lanka

**9.Which country is the host of the 'Exercise Cobra Warrior 2023'?**

- [A] India
- [B] Japan
- [C] UK
- [D] France

**10.INS Dronacharya, which recently received President's Colour, is based in which state?**

- [A] Kerala
- [B] Goa
- [C] Visakhapatnam
- [D] Andhra Pradesh

**11.WHAT IS THE TITLE OF THE AUTOGRAPHY OF MAJOR DHYANCHAND?**

- [A] GOAL
- [B] HOCKEY DAYS
- [C] HOCKEY – MY LIFE
- [D] ME & MY HOCKEY

**12.IN CONTEXT OF THE INDIAN AWARDS AND HONORS IN SPORTS, WHICH AMONG THE FOLLOWING IS GIVEN AS LIFE TIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD?**

- [A] Dronacharya Award
- [B] Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award
- [C] Dhyan Chand Award
- [D] Arjuna Award

**13.Which among the following sports have largest number of participants in teams of either side?**

- [A] Rugby
- [B] Water polo
- [C] Baseball
- [D] Soccer

**14.Which of the following games were previously called 'British Empire Games'?**

- [A] East Asian Games
- [B] Southeast Asian Games
- [C] Olympic Games
- [D] Commonwealth Games

**15.Who is the President of Hockey India?**

- [A] Mohammad Mushtaq Ahmed
- [B] Dilip Tirkey
- [C] Tapan Kumar Das
- [D] Rajinder Singh

**16.When was the Olympic flag created?**

- [A] 1912
- [B] 1914
- [C] 1915
- [D] 1913

**17.What tennis bodies together comprise the Tennis Integrity Unit?**

- [A] The ITF
- [B] The Association of Tennis Professionals
- [C] Women's Tennis Association
- [D] All

**18.Which of the following countries has not participated in every Commonwealth Games?**

- [A] Australia

- [B] Canada
- [C] England
- [D] France



**19.Which was the first Summer Olympic Game which allowed females to compete at track and field athletics?**

- [A] 1920 Summer Olympics, Antwerp
- [B] 1924 Summer Olympics, Paris
- [C] 1928 Summer Olympics, Amsterdam
- [D] 1932 Summer Olympics, Los Angeles

**20.Which country hosted the maximum number of Winter Olympic Games?**

- [A] United States of America
- [B] France
- [C] Austria
- [D] Canada
- [B] Canada
- [C] England
- [D] France

**19.Which was the first Summer Olympic Game which allowed females to compete at track and field athletics?**

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**20.Which country hosted the maximum number of Winter Olympic Games?**

- [A] United States of America
- [B] France
- [C] Austria
- [D] Canada

## **21. Which of the following statement(s) is (are) true about the heart?**

- (i) The left atrium receives oxygenated blood from different parts of the body while the right atrium receives deoxygenated blood from the lungs
- (ii) Left ventricle pumps oxygenated blood to different body parts while the right ventricle pumps deoxygenated blood to the lungs
- (iii) Left atrium transfers oxygenated blood to the right ventricle which sends it to different body parts
- (iv) The right atrium receives deoxygenated blood from different parts of the body while the left ventricle pumps oxygenated blood to different parts of the body
- (a) (i)
- (b) (ii)
- (c) (ii) and (iv)
- (d) (i) and (iii)

## **22. Consider the following statements about transportation in human beings**

- BLOOD is a connective tissue.
- Plasma helps in clotting of blood after a cut or injury.
- Plasma transports food, carbon dioxide and nitrogenous wastes in dissolved form
- OXYGEN is carried by the white blood corpuscles.

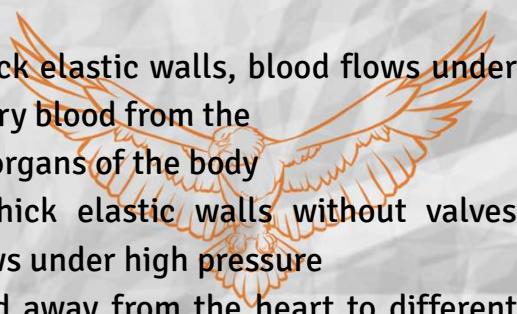
Which of the above is/are correct ?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1, 2 and 3
- (d) 1,2,3 and 4.

## **23. Choose the correct statement that describes arteries.**

- a) They have thick elastic walls, blood flows under high pressure; collect blood from different organs and bring it back to the heart
- (b) They have thin walls with valves inside, blood flows under low pressure and carries blood away from the heart to various organs of the body

- (c) They have thick elastic walls, blood flows under low pressure; carry blood from the heart to various organs of the body
- (d) They have thick elastic walls without valves inside, blood flows under high pressure and carries blood away from the heart to different parts of the body.



## **24. The filtration units of kidneys are called**

- (a) ureter
- (b) urethra
- (c) neurons
- (d) nephrons

## **25. The following reaction is an example of a**



- (i) displacement reaction
- (ii) combination reaction
- (iii) redox reaction
- (iv) neutralisation reaction
- (a) (i) and (iv)
- (b) (ii) and (iii)
- (c) (i) and (iii)
- (d) (iii) and (iv)

## **26. Which of the following are exothermic processes?**

- (i) Reaction of water with quicklime
- (ii) Dilution of an acid
- (iii) Evaporation of water
- (iv) Sublimation of camphor (crystals)
- (a) (i) and (ii)

- (b) (ii) and (iii)
- (c) (i) and (iv)
- (d) (iii) and (iv)

**Question 23. The filtration units of kidneys are called**

- (a) ureter
- (b) urethra
- (c) neurons
- (d) nephrons

**Question 24. The following reaction is an example of a**



- (i) displacement reaction
  - (ii) combination reaction
  - (iii) redox reaction
  - (iv) neutralisation reaction
- (a) (i) and (iv)
  - (b) (ii) and (iii)
  - (c) (i) and (iii)
  - (d) (iii) and (iv)

**Question 25. Which of the following are exothermic processes?**

- (i) Reaction of water with quicklime
  - (ii) Dilution of an acid
  - (iii) Evaporation of water
  - (iv) Sublimation of camphor (crystals)
- (a) (i) and (ii)
  - (b) (ii) and (iii)
  - (c) (i) and (iv)
  - (d) (iii) and (iv)

**Question 26. Which of the following salts does not contain any water of crystallisation ?**

- (a) Blue vitriol
- (b) Baking soda
- (c) Washing soda
- (d) Gypsum

**Question 27. Sodium carbonate is a basic salt because it is a salt of**

- (a) strong acid and strong base
- (b) weak acid and weak base
- (c) strong acid and weak base
- (d) weak acid and strong base

**Question 28. If a few drops of concentrated acid accidentally spill over the hand of a student, what should be done ?**

- (a) Wash the hand with saline solution
- (b) Wash the hand immediately with plenty of water and apply a paste of sodium hydrogen carbonate
- (c) After washing hand with plenty of water, apply solution of sodium hydroxide on the hand
- (d) Neutralise the acid with a strong alkali

**Question 29. Which of the following statements is not correct ?**

- (a) All metal carbonates react with acid to give a salt, water and carbon dioxide
- (b) All metal oxides react with water to give salt and acid
- (c) Some metals react with acids to give salt and hydrogen
- (d) Some non metal oxides react with water to form an acid

**Question 30. Which of the following are present in a dilute aqueous solution of hydrochloric acid ?**

- (a)  $\text{H}_3\text{O}^+ + \text{Cl}^-$
- (b)  $\text{H}_3\text{O}^+ + \text{OH}^-$
- (c)  $\text{Cl}^- + \text{OH}^-$
- (d) unionised HCl

**31. Consider the following statements about light**

- (1) Light is neither particle nor wave
  - (2) It can travel in vacuum
  - (3) It travel fastest in solids
  - (4) Sound waves are faster than light waves
- Which of the above is/ are correct ?

- (a) One only
- (b) Two
- (c) Three
- (d) All four

**32.Which is the first European country to have a Reciprocal Access Agreement with Japan?**

- [A] Germany
- [B] UK
- [C] Italy
- [D] France

**33.A Yeti Airlines with 72 passengers crashed in which country, in its deadliest plane crash in 30 years?**

- [A] Sri Lanka
- [B] Nepal
- [C] Bangladesh
- [D] Indonesia

**34.The US Defence officials have shot down a surveillance balloon of which country?**

- [A] India
- [B] China
- [C] Russia
- [D] Afghanistan

**35.Which gulf country recently announced that it will send its first ever woman astronaut on a space mission?**

- [A] Qatar
- [B] Saudi Arabia
- [C] Bahrain
- [D] Oman

**36.Which country celebrated its Liberation Day on March 3, to mark its freedom from Ottoman rule?**

- [A] Israel
- [B] Bulgaria

[C] Ukraine

[D] Turkey

**37.Which country has introduced a concept known as the “Kill Web” in response to the escalating nuclear threat?**

- [A] USA
- [B] India
- [C] South Korea
- [D] China

**38.Which country has opened military service to women for the first time in 25 years?**

- [A] Sri Lanka
- [B] Colombia
- [C] UK
- [D] Japan

**39.Which country brokered the ‘Saudi-Iran Détente’ peace deal?**

- [A] USA
- [B] China
- [C] India
- [D] Russia

**40.India signed MoU with which country on semiconductor supply chain and innovation partnership?**

- [A] UK
- [B] France
- [C] USA
- [D] Italy

**41.Which country’s company ALE, has planned to create an ‘Artificial Meteor Shower’?**

**has planned to create an ‘Artificial Meteor Shower’?**

- [A] China
- [B] India
- [C] Japan
- [D] Australia

**42. Who recently became the first Indian woman to receive the Arjuna Award for Equestrian Sports?**

- [A] P. V. Sindhu
- [B] Mary Kom
- [C] Saina Nehwal
- [D] Divyakriti Singh

**43. Which government department is responsible for organizing the Startup India Innovation Week 2024 from 10th-18th January 2024?**

- [A] Department of Food and Public Distribution
- [B] Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)
- [C] Department of Financial Services
- [D] Department of Heavy Industries

**44. Which ministry has been conferred with the prestigious 1st Prize in the Innovation Sandbox presentation for “Digital Transformation Initiatives in Land Governance through SVAMITVA Scheme”?**

- [A] Ministry of Panchayati Raj
- [B] Ministry of Finance
- [C] Ministry of External Affairs
- [D] Ministry of Home Affairs

**45. Which two countries’**

**scientists joined India’s 43rd Antarctic Expedition?**

- [A] Singapore and Mauritius
- [B] Bangladesh and Bhutan
- [C] Mauritius and Bangladesh
- [D] Nepal and Myanmar

**46. According to the 2024 Henley Passport Index, what is the rank of India?**

- [A] 83rd
- [B] 80th
- [C] 82nd
- [D] 90th

**47. When is the ‘World Braille Day’ observed every year?**

- [A] January 1
- [B] January 2
- [C] January 4
- [D] January 6

**48. What was the primary field of Ved Prakash Nanda, who passed away recently?**

- [A] Agriculture
- [B] Environment Protection
- [C] International Law
- [D] Human Rights

**49. Adora Magic City is the first homegrown cruise ship of which country?**

- [A] Thailand
- [B] China
- [C] Japan
- [D] South Korea

**50. What is the name of the first chemo drug available as syrup form in India?**

- [A] Previl
- [B] Prevall
- [C] Privell
- [D] Prevall

# **TOP 5 SECTIONS**

(STAY SMART AND AHEAD )

## **Top 5 Schemes to know :**

### **1. JAL JEEVAN MISSION**

In news - Jal Jeevan Mission marks milestone: 14 crore rural households, 72.71% now have tap water.

- Over 2 Lakh Villages & 161 Districts Are Now 'Har Ghar Jal'.
- As of today, six states, namely Goa, Telangana, Haryana, Gujarat, Punjab, and Himachal Pradesh and three Union Territories of Puducherry, D&D and D&NH, and A&N Islands have achieved 100% coverage.
- Launched by PM Modi on 15th August 2019, Jal Jeevan Mission, is envisioned to provide safe and adequate drinking water through individual household tap connections by 2024 to all households in rural India.

### **2. Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY)**

- PM-JAY is the world's largest health insurance scheme fully financed by the government.
- Launched in February 2018, it offers a sum insured of Rs.5 lakh per family for secondary care and tertiary care.
- Health Benefits Packages cover surgery, medical and daycare treatments, cost of medicines and diagnostics.

### **3. SVAMITVA Scheme**

In news - the SVAMITVA Scheme Receives the 'Best Innovation Award' at the Public Policy Dialogues Conclave 2024.

About SVAMITVA-

- SVAMITVA (Survey of Villages and Mapping with Improvised Technology in Village Areas) launched on the National Panchayati Raj Day (April 24) 2021.
- Aim: To provide an integrated property validation solution for rural India.

### **4. Production Linked Incentive ( PLI) Scheme**

- In news - Government Extends Automobile Industry's PLI Scheme by One Year with Partial Amendments
- Announcement made by Ministry of Heavy Industries
- Aim - to provide clarity and flexibility to the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme
- Union Cabinet approved the PLI-Auto Scheme on 15.09.2021 with a budgetary outlay of Rupee 25,938) crore for a period of 5 years FY 2022-23 to FY 2026-27).

### **5. PM PRANAM Scheme**

- Ministry of Chemicals & Fertiliser
- PM-PRANAM stands for (Prime Minister's Programme for Restoration, Awareness, Generation, Nourishment and Amelioration of Mother Earth).
- Aim: To incentivise states to use alternative, non-chemical fertilisers.
- It was first announced in the 2023-24 Budget with a total outlay of ₹3,70,128.7 crore.

Time Period: 2022-23 to 2024-25

# **Top 5 terminology**

## **1. Dark Patterns**

Definition: the common term used for false scarcity claims, confirmation bias, forced bundling and subscription traps used online; recently banned in India. Dark patterns endanger the experience of Internet users and make them more susceptible to financial and data exploitation by Big Tech firms.

## **2. Masala Bonds**

Definition: Masala Bonds are rupee-denominated bonds. It is a debt instrument issued by an Indian entity in foreign markets to raise money, in Indian currency, instead of dollars or local denomination. Kerala became the first Indian state to issue Masala Bonds.

## **3. Astroturfing**

Astroturfing is the use of fake grassroots efforts that primarily focus on influencing public opinion and typically are funded by corporations and political entities to form opinions.

## **4. Carbon Offset**

Definition: Carbon offsets, in simple terms, are like eco-friendly credits. When you do something that reduces carbon emissions, like planting trees or supporting renewable energy projects, you earn these credits. Then, you can use these credits to balance out your own carbon footprint. It's a way of compensating for the environmental impact of activities by investing in projects that help reduce or capture an equivalent amount of greenhouse gases elsewhere.

## **5. DINK Life**

"DINK" stands for "Dual Income, No Kids." "DINK life" refers to a lifestyle where a couple, typically married or in a long-term

partnership, enjoys the financial benefits and flexibility that come with having dual incomes while intentionally choosing not to have children.

THESE TERMINOLOGIES ARE IMPORTANT TO KNOW AND CAN BE USED IN VARIOUS FORMS IN WRITING, SPEAKING AND ALSO BEING ASKED DIRECTLY IN VARIOUS COMPETITIVE EXAMINATIONS.

## **Top 5 Quotes To Know-**

### **1. Education:**

"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." - Nelson Mandela

### **2.Geopolitics:**

"Peace cannot be kept by force; it can only be achieved by understanding." - Albert Einstein

### **3.Science and Technology:**

"The important achievement of technology is to empower people to do what they want to do. It lets people be creative." - Steve Jobs

### **4.Women Empowerment:**

"Women are the largest untapped reservoir of talent in the world." - Hillary Clinton

### **5.Environment:**

"The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second-best time is now." - Chinese Proverb

THESE QUOTES CAN BE USED IN VARIOUS FORMS IN YOUR LECTURETTE, PERSONAL INTERVIEW GROUP DISCUSSION AND ESSAY WRITING.

# **Top 5 Idioms To Know-**

## **1. Bite the Bullet:**

Meaning: To endure a painful or difficult situation with courage.

Example: "Facing the tough decision, she had to bite the bullet and accept the consequences."

## **2. Break the Ice:**

Meaning: To initiate a conversation in a social setting to relieve tension or awkwardness.

Example: "A joke can often break the ice in a room full of strangers."

## **3. Burn the Midnight Oil:**

Meaning: To work late into the night or early morning hours.

Example: "In order to meet the deadline, he had to burn the midnight oil to finish the project."

## **4. Cost an Arm and a Leg:**

Meaning: To be very expensive or costly.

Example: "Getting my car repaired is going to cost an arm and a leg"

## **5. Piece of Cake:**

Meaning: Something very easy to do.

Example: "Solving that math problem turned out to be a piece of cake for her."

**THESE IDIOMS CAN ADD COLOUR AND EXPRESSIVENESS TO YOUR LANGUAGE WHEN USED APPROPRIATELY.**

# Thankyou

## TEAM GEN-MOR



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# MAJ GEN YASH MOR,SM

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Maj Gen Yash Mor is a third generation Army officer. Born and brought up in village Bass in Hisar district of rural Haryana. He is an alumnus of Rashtriya Military School, Indian Military Academy, Defence Services Staff College, Commandant General Staff College, Bangladesh and NESA Centre, Washington DC. He represented the country in the United Nations as a Peace Keeper in Mozambique in 1993 to 1994.

He has experience of fighting Terrorism in Punjab and J&K. He was awarded the SENA MEDAL and Army Chief COMMENDATION CARD for gallantry during Counter Terrorist operations in South Kashmir.

He commanded 1 GUARDS and an Independent Armoured Brigade. He was specially chosen to be the first General Officer Commanding (GOC) of an important Administrative Headquarters in Ladakh. Before superannuating, he was Chief of Staff of a Corps in the Desert Sector.

Post superannuating he has dedicated his, "Second Innings for the First Innings" of the youth of the country. His YouTube channel is one of the fastest growing in the country. He is a motivator, TEDx speaker, author, editor, Unacademy educator and Life coach. His articles have been published in leading journals, newspapers and web-based news portals

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