



Current Affairs Supplement
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National

46th World Heritage Committee meeting held in New Delhi, India; Inscribes 26 New Heritage Sites

The **46th session** of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) **World Heritage Committee** (WHC), hosted by **India** for the **first** time, was held at the Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi, Delhi (India) from 21st to 31st July 2024.

i. The 46th session of WHC inscribed 26 new World Heritage Sites viz. 19 cultural, 4 natural, and 1 mixed property and 2 Significant modifications to existing boundaries.

ii. PM Narendra Modi announced a USD 1 million grant to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre. This funding will support capacity building, technical assistance, and the conservation of world heritage sites.

iii. The Government of India (GoI) and the **Government of the USA** signed the **first** ever ‘**Cultural Property Agreement**’ to prevent and curb the illicit trafficking of antiquities from India to the USA.

iv. Union Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat inaugurated the **Humayun’s Tomb World Heritage Site Museum** in New Delhi, Delhi.



About United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO):

Director-General– Audrey Azoulay

Headquarters– Paris, France

Establishment– 1945

Highlights of Visit of David Lammy MP, UK Foreign Secretary, to India

David Lammy MP, Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, the **United Kingdom (UK)** paid an official visit to India from 24th to 25th July 2024 at the invitation of Union Minister **Dr. S. Jaishankar**, Ministry of External Affairs (**MEA**), Government of India (GoI).

- This marks his first official visit to India in his capacity as UK Foreign Secretary after Labour Party swept the UK’s General Elections held in July, 2024.
- On 24th July 2024, External Affairs Minister (**EAM**) Dr. Jaishankar held a bilateral meeting with David Lammy MP
- India and the UK launched a new Technology Security Initiative (**TSI**) which aims to boost economic growth and strengthen the collaboration between two countries.



State Visit of H.E. Pham Minh Chinh, PM of Viet Nam to India from 30 July- 01 August, 2024

The Prime Minister (PM) of Vietnam **H.E. Pham Minh Chinh** paid a **State Visit to India** from 30 July to 1 August 2024, at the invitation of Narendra Modi PM of India to deepen comprehensive strategic partnership and enhance cooperation between the two countries.



- This is the **first visit of a Vietnamese leader to India** after India and Vietnam established their comprehensive strategic partnership in September 2016. This was the fifth meeting between the two PMs in the last few years. This visit resulted in the signing of various agreements, MoUs and other strategic developments.
- India and Vietnam agreed on a **new plan of action**, which will be implemented over the next five years (**2024-2028**) to strengthening bilateral trade and economic cooperation.
- In a sign of their growing strategic partnership, India has extended two Lines of Credit (**LoC**) amounting to **USD 300 million to Vietnam** to bolster the country's maritime security.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah Launched 4 Apps for 3 New Criminal Laws in Chandigarh

On 4th August 2024, Union Minister Amit Shah, Ministry of Home Affairs (**MoHA**) and Ministry of Cooperation (**MoC**) has launched 4 Applications (Apps) namely, **e-Sakshya**, **Nyaya Setu**, **Nyaya Shruti** and **e-Summon** for the 3 new criminal laws in Chandigarh. These apps were developed by National Informatics Centre (NIC), New Delhi (Delhi).



- The 3 new criminal laws – Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (**BNS**), Bharatiya Nyaya Suraksha Sanhita (**BNSS**) and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam (**BSA**) which came into effect on 1st July, 2024, has repealed the British-era laws, the Indian Penal Code (**IPC**), 1860; the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPc), 1973 and the Indian Evidence Act (IEA), 1872 respectively.

Note: Chandigarh will be the **1st** administrative unit in the country, where complete implementation of all 3 new criminal laws will be completed in the **next 2 months**.

Key Dignitaries: Gulab Chand Kataria, Governor of Punjab and Administrator; and Ajay Kumar Bhalla, Secretary, MoHA.

About New Apps:

i.e-Sakshya app is a mobile based application which will enable the police to save all videography, photography and testimonies in a criminal case on a cloud-based e-evidence server, which will

also be available in the courts immediately.

ii.Nyaya Shruti app will facilitate judicial hearings through electronic medium like: video conferencing and onboarding of documents, has also been shared with all states or Union Territories (UTs) and e-committee of the Supreme Court(SC) for implementation by the courts.

iii.Nyaya Setu will provide a unified legal interface for legal information, legal advice and legal assistance and thus enable a more inclusive and just society.

- This interface has interlinked police, medical, forensic, prosecution and prisons, which will provide police with all the information related to the investigation in just one click.

iv.e-summon app will facilitate delivery of court summons electronically i.e. from the court to police station and also to the person to whom summons is to be sent.

ISRO Selected 2 New Crew Members for Axiom-4 Mission to International Space Station

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) announced that National Mission Assignment Board has selected Indian astronauts Group Captain **Shubhanshu Shukla** and Group Captain **Prasanth Balakrishnan Nair**, as crew members for the **Axiom-4** (Ax-4) mission to the International Space Station (ISS).

- Wing Commander Shubhanshu Shukla has been assigned as **Prime mission pilot** while Group Captain Prasanth Balakrishnan Nair will be his back-up.

Note: Group Captain Shukla and Group Captain Nair are among the 4 astronauts designates for the Gaganyaan mission which is expected to be launch in **2025**. The other 2 astronauts of Gaganyaan mission are Group Captain Ajit Krishnan, Group Captain Angad Pratap.

About Axiom-4 Mission:

i.In August 2023,NASA and Axiom space signed an order for the **4th** private astronaut mission (Axiom mission (Ax-4)) to the ISS.

ii.It is scheduled to be launch in **2024** on Falcon 9 rockets from NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida, USA.

Axiom-4 Crew:

i.Axiom Space Inc announced the crew for Ax-4, its 4th private mission to the ISS.

ii.Astronauts **Sławosz Uznański of Poland** and **Tibor Kapu of Hungary (Mission Specialist)** will fly alongside an Indian astronaut on Axiom.

iii.The mission will be **commanded** by former National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) astronaut **Peggy Whitson**(the United States of America –USA), who also led the Ax-2 mission to the station in May 2023.

iv.The selected crew members will be approved to fly to the ISS by the Multilateral Crew Operations Panel (MCOP).

About Shubhanshu Shukla:

Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla was commissioned on **17th June, 2006** in the fighter stream

of the Indian Air Force (IAF). He is a fighter combat leader and a test pilot with approximately 2000 hours (hrs) of flying experience.

- He has an extensive experience of flying variety of aircraft including Su-30 MKI, MiG-21, MiG-29, Jaguar, Hawk, Dornier, among others.

About Prasanth Balakrishnan Nair:

Group Captain Nair, a recipient of Sword of Honour at Air Force Academy, was commissioned on **19th December, 1998** in the fighter stream of the IAF.

- He is a category ‘A’ Flying Instructor and a Test Pilot with approximately 3000 hrs of flying experience. He has also commanded a Su-30 squadron.
- He has an extensive experience of flying variety of aircraft including Su-30 MKI, MiG-21, MiG-29, Hawk, Dornier, An-32 among others.

About Indian Space Research Organisation(ISRO):

Chairman- Sreedhara Panicker Somanath

Govt Declares Adichunchanagiri in Karnataka & Choolannuar in Kerala as Peacock Sanctuary

Union Minister **Bhupender Yadav**, Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), announced that the central government has declared the **Choolannuar** in **Kerala** and **Adichunchanagiri** in **Karnataka** as **Peacock Sanctuaries**.

- Breeding and conservation centers have been established by the MoEF&CC to protect Peacocks, the National Bird of India, since 1963.

About Peacock:

Peacock or Indian peafowl (*Pavo cristatus*) is a familiar and universally known large *pheasant* (any large, colourful, and long-tailed bird of the family *Phasianidae*).

- In **1963**, the peafowl was declared the **national bird of India** because of its rich religious and legendary involvement in Indian traditions.
- It is fully protected under the Indian Wildlife Protection) Act, 1972.

About Choolannuar Peacock Sanctuary:

- The Choolanur Peacock Sanctuary was **established** on 14 March **1996** as “Chulannur Peafowl Sanctuary”.
- The **first Peacock Sanctuary of India**, is located about 30 km from Palakkad town and is unique in Kerala.



iii. It is locally known as *Mayiladumpara* and in 2008, the Government of Kerala renamed the sanctuary as “**Chulannur Peafowl Sanctuary, dedicated to the memory of K.K. Neelakantan**”

- Kavassery Kailasam Neelakantan (K.K. Neelakantan) (Induchoodan) was an Indian ornithologist.

iv. It spreads over approximately 500 hectares of reserve forest in Peringottukurisi Panchayat in Palakkad district and Malesamangalam in Thrissur district.

About Adichunchanagiri Peacock Sanctuary:

i. The Adichunchanagiri Peacock Sanctuary in Karnataka was **established** in **1981** and caters to a large peafowl (members of the pheasant family) population.

ii. The sanctuary is located in **Mandya district**'s Nagamangala Taluk, Karnataka and is about 115 kilometers (km) west of Bengaluru.

iii. The area of the sanctuary is about 88.4 hectares (ha) with boundaries and it serves as a popular adventure activity for trekking and mountain climbing with picturesque views.

Other Peacock sanctuary in India:

The peacock sanctuary located in Bankapur (Karnataka). It is engaged in the conservation and breeding of peacocks.

SWFI's Top 100 Largest Central Bank Rankings by Total Assets 2024: RBI Ranked 12 Globally

According to the Sovereign Wealth Fund Institute's (SWFI), Top 100 Largest Central Bank Rankings by Total Assets in the World in 2024, India's Central Bank, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) ranked **12th** globally with a current total assets of **USD 839 Billion**. The RBI registered a balance sheet growth of 11.08% Year-on-Year (Y-o-Y) to Rs 70.47 trillion as of March 2024.



- The Federal Reserve System (FRS), the central bank of the United States of America (USA) **topped** the list, boasting assets worth USD 7.84 trillion.

- It is followed by **China's** People's Bank of China (PBC) in the 2nd **place**, with USD 6 trillion, and **Japan's** Bank of Japan (BOJ) in the 3rd, with USD 5.54 trillion.

Note: The central banks included in the list are responsible for managing the world's most significant and largest economies. Their substantial asset bases and influence highlight their crucial role in the global financial system.

Key Indicators of Wealth:

i. Central Banks hold significant assets, including gold, foreign currencies, and government bonds.

ii. The wealth of a central bank is often measured by its assets, which are a reflection of the overall health of the country's economy.

- The total wealth of central banks is mainly assessed through their assets, with the balance sheet acting as a crucial indicator.

iii.The assets of central banks are often measured by their foreign exchange reserves, including monetary gold, foreign exchange funds, Special Drawing Rights (SDRs), and reserve positions in the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Top 10 Largest Central Bank Rankings by Total Assets

Rank	Name of the Bank	Total Assets (in USD)	Country
1	Federal Reserve System (FRS)	7.84 Trillion	United States of America (USA)
2	People's Bank of China (PBC)	6 Trillion	China
3	Bank of Japan (BOJ)	5.54 Trillion	Japan
12	Reserve Bank of India (RBI)	839 Billion	India

Global Distribution:

- European central banks dominate the top 10 positions, holding a combined USD 11.09 trillion.
- African central banks face challenges like inflation and weak monetary policies, affecting their rankings.

Role of Central Banks:

- Central banks play a critical role in the global economy, primarily by managing a country's money supply and interest rates.
- They also regulate and supervise the other financial institutions within their jurisdiction.
- Additionally, central banks work to ensure financial stability in the country, promoting sustained economic growth.

Indian Gold Sector Established 1st Self-Regulatory Body to Boost Consumer Trust

The Indian Gold sector with the support of the World Gold Council (WGC), London, the United Kingdom(UK) established 1st self-regulatory body named, the Indian Association for Gold Excellence and Standards (IAGES) in order to boost consumer trust.

Aim: To promote fair, transparent and sustainable practices in the bullion industry.

- IAGES will cover the whole value chain of gold industry i.e. from bullion trade, refinery, and trading to manufacturing, retailing, and digital platforms.

Key Points:

- Existing industry bodies such as: Indian Bullion and Jewellers Association (IBJA), All India Gems and Jewellery Council of India (GJC) and Gem and Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC) will become the part of IAGES.
- The newly formed association will provide accreditation by issuing IAGES logo. The logo will be given to those members who pass the strict audit, and can display it in their premises which will signify its adherence to high standards of business integrity and processes.
- The WGC will promote the IAGES among retail consumers and will also provide financial support to the campaign.

Points to Note:

- As per the WGC, the Gold demand in India decreased by 5% in the June quarter of 2024 compared to previous year but consumption in the 2nd half of 2024 will improve due to a correction in local prices following a reduction in import taxes.
- India is the 2nd biggest gold consumer in the world after China.

MHA Constituted 5 member Committee to Monitor India-Bangladesh Border

On 9th August 2024, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has constituted 5-member committee headed by **Ravi Gandhi**, Additional Director General (ADG), Border Security Force (BSF) and Eastern Command of the Indian Army (IA) to **monitor the current situation** on Indo-Bangladesh Border (IBB).

Members:

Other 4 members of the committee are

1. Maninder Pratap Singh, Inspector General (IG), BSF Frontier Headquarter (HQ) South Bengal;
2. S Patel Piyush Purushottam Das, IG, BSF Frontier HQ Tripura;
3. Sanjiv Gupta, member (Planning and Development), Land Ports Authority of India (LPAI); and
4. Vivek Verma, Secretary, LPAI.

Purpose of the committee:

- The committee is entrusted with responsibility to maintain communication channels with their respective counterpart authorities in Bangladesh to ensure the safety and security of Indian nationals, hindus and other minority communities living in the strife-torn country.
- The committee is formed after the several reports of hindu community and its temples were targeted ever since **Sheikh Hasina stepped down** from the post of Bangladesh Prime Minister (PM) and escaped to India (on 5th August, 2024) and violence erupted across Bangladesh.

Note:

- India and Bangladesh share **4,096 kilometer (km)** long land border, of which 1880 km share



with northeastern states of Assam, Tripura, Meghalaya and Mizoram.

ii. West Bengal (WB) shares the longest length of border i.e. **2,217 km** with Bangladesh.

PM Narendra Modi Receives Parimal Nathwani's Book On Gir And Asiatic Lions

The Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi has received the first copy of 'Call of the Gir', a coffee table book on Gir National Park (Gujarat) and Asiatic lions, written by Parimal Dhirajlal Nathwani, the Member of Parliament (MP), Rajya Sabha (Andhra Pradesh).

- He dedicated the book to PM for being the visionary behind '**Project Lion and Lion@2047: Vision for Amrit Kaal**'.

i. This is the 2nd coffee table book of Nathwani which is published by Quignog, the internationally recognized publisher.

- His first coffee table book 'Gir Lions: Pride of Gujarat' was published by Times Group Books (TGB) in 2017.

ii. The book is based on Gir's landscapes, noted for the Asiatic lions and it combines vibrant photography and narratives to highlight the urgency of conservation efforts.

iii. It has a message from the PM and Anant Ambani, Director of Reliance Industries Limited.

Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman Harivansh Releases a Book Titled 'Bharat ke 75 mahan krantikari'

Harivansh Narayan Singh, the Deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha (Bihar) has released the book titled '**Bharat ke 75 mahan krantikari**' (**75 Great Revolutionaries of India**) in New Delhi, Delhi.

- The book was written by **Bhim Singh**, Member of Parliament (MP), Rajya Sabha (Bihar).
- The book chronicles the lives of many revolutionary freedom fighters like Tantia Bhil, Surya Sen, Pritilata Waddedar and Permand Jhansi, who have not been remembered much.

NIRF Rankings 2024: IIT Madras bags top spot in overall category for the 6th time; IISc Bengaluru tops Universities category

Union Minister **Dharmendra Pradhan**, Ministry of Education (MoE) has released the **9th edition of India Rankings (2024)** based on the parameters identified and defined in the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF).

i. According to the India Rankings 2024, **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras**, Chennai, Tamil Nadu (TN) bagged the top spot as the best educational institution in the country overall category for the **6th** consecutive time. It is followed by **Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru**, Karnataka at the 2nd spot and **IIT Bombay**, Mumbai, Maharashtra at the 3rd spot respectively.

ii. For the year 2024, the framework provides a comprehensive "Overall" rank, alongside distinct



rankings in the categories of Universities, Research Institutions, Degree Colleges, Innovation, and discipline-specific rankings in Engineering, Management, Pharmacy, Law, Medical, Dental, Architecture & Planning, and Agriculture & Allied Sectors.

iii. Additionally, Open Universities, State Public Universities and Skill Universities have also been included as new verticals in this year's Rankings.

About Ministry of Education (MoE):

Union Minister – Dharmendra Pradhan (Constituency- Sambalpur, Odisha)

Minister of State (MoS)- Sukanta Majumdar (Balurghat, West Bengal (WB)), Jayant Chaudhary (Independent Charge-IC) (Rajya Sabha- Uttar Pradesh (UP))

3 Indian Wetlands, 2 from TN & 1 from MP Added to Ramsar List, Totaling 85 Sites

Union Minister Bhupender Yadav, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) announced that **3 wetlands** from India namely **Nanjarayan Bird Sanctuary** and **Kazhuveli Bird Sanctuary** in Tamil Nadu (TN) and **Tawa Reservoir** in Madhya Pradesh (MP) were designated as Wetlands of International Importance, also known as **Ramsar Sites**.



- With this addition, the number of Ramsar sites in India becomes **85**, covering an area of 1,358,068 hectares (ha).

- TN has the highest number of Ramsar sites (18) followed by Uttar Pradesh (UP) (10).

About the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC):

Union Minister– Bhupender Yadav (Constituency- Alwar, Rajasthan)

Minister of State (MoS)- Kirti Vardhan Singh (Constituency- Gonda, Uttar Pradesh)

Highlights of 78th Independence Day of India on August 15, 2024

i. The Government of India has organized the 78th Independence Day celebrations at the Red Fort in New Delhi, Delhi. Prime Minister (PM) of India Narendra Modi addressed the nation and delivered his 11th consecutive Independence Day speech.

- 2024 Independence Day signified the theme '**Viksit Bharat@2047**' i.e. transforming India into a developed nation by 2047.
- It was his **first address** of his third term.

ii. The Guard of Honour for the PM consisted of officer and 24 personnel from the Indian Army (IA), Indian Navy (IN), Indian Air Force (IAF), and Delhi Police. The **IN** is the **coordinating service** in 2024.

About Delhi:

Lieutenant Governor– Vinai Kumar Saxena

Chief Minister– Arvind Kejriwal



Bihar Governor unveils book 'Gandhian Statesman of Bihar: Nitish Kumar'

Bihar Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar launched a book on Bihar Chief Minister(CM) Nitish Kumar titled 'Gandhian Statesman of Bihar: Nitish Kumar' on 19th August 2024 in Patna, Bihar. The book is published by Prabhat Prakashan, New Delhi(Delhi).

- This book is co-authored by Ashok Choudary, Minister of Rural Works Department, Government of Bihar and his daughter Shambhavi Choudhary, Member of Parliament (MP – Lok Sabha), Samastipur, Bihar.
- This book highlights the CM Nitish Kumar's contributions to the state's development and aims to enlighten the younger generations about his works.

Lok Sabha Speaker Constitutes 6 New Parliamentary Committees for 2024-25

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla constituted 6 new Parliamentary Committees for 2024-25, including the Public Accounts Committee (PAC), Committee on Estimates(CoE) , Committee on Public Undertakings(CoPU) and committees focused on the welfare of Other Backward Classes (OBCs), Scheduled Castes (SCs), and Scheduled Tribes (STs).

- All the committees formed in the 18th Lok Sabha have a tenure of 1 year and have members from both the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha.

Public Accounts Committee (PAC):

i.The PAC is crucial for monitoring government expenditures and reviewing Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) reports.

- It was established in 1964 based on the recommendations of the Krishna Menon Committee.

ii.It will be chaired by **K.C. Venugopal**, a senior Indian National Congress (INC) leader and a Member of Parliament (MP), Rajasthan.

iii.It consists of 22 members, 15 elected by Lok Sabha, the lower house of the Parliament, and not more than 7 members of Rajya Sabha, the upper house of the Parliament.

Committee on Estimates(CoE):

i.The Committee on Estimates will be chaired by **Dr Sanjay Jaiswal**, an MP of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Paschim Champaran , Bihar.

ii.The committee constituted for the first time in 1950, consisting of 30 members from Lok Sabha (Lower House).

iii.It will examines budget estimates for administrative departments and suggests efficiency improvements.

Committee on Public Undertakings(CoPU):

i.The Committee on Public Undertakings will be chaired by **Baijyant Panda**, a BJP Lok Sabha MP from Kendrapara, Odisha.

- The CoPU was first formed in 1964, following a motion proposed by Minister of Commerce and Industry Nityanand Kanungo in September 1963.
- ii.It consists of 22 members, 15 elected by Lok Sabha, the lower house of the Parliament, and 7 members by the Rajya Sabha, the upper house of the Parliament.
- iii.Its function is to examine the performance of the Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) and assess the impact of PSUs on the economy.

Welfare Committees:

i.The Committee on Welfare of Other Backward Classes (OBCs) will be chaired by **Ganesh Singh**, a BJP MP from Satna, Madhya Pradesh(MP).

- The function of the committee is to consider reports from the National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC) and reviewing welfare measures for OBCs.
- It was first constituted in 2012 and the committee is made up of 30 members, 20 from Lok Sabha and 10 from Rajya Sabha

3rd Japan-India 2+2 Foreign and Defence Ministerial Meeting held in New Delhi

Union Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) of India; Union Minister Rajnath Singh, Minister of Defence (MoD) of India; and Kamikawa Yoko, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan and Kihara Minoru, Ministry of Defence of Japan held the **Third Japan-India 2+2 Foreign and Defence Ministerial Meeting** in New Delhi, Delhi.

i.The dialogue emphasised the importance of a free, open, and rules-based **Indo-Pacific region**, with both countries confirming their commitment to strengthening their partnership.

They also recognized the importance of a free and open Indo-Pacific region, where maritime security, trade, and connectivity play crucial roles.

ii.The meeting further deepens the defence cooperation and brings greater depth to the **‘Special Strategic and Global Partnership (SGSP)’** between India and Japan.

Note: The **second** India-Japan 2+2 Ministerial Meeting took place in September **2022** in Japan.

Cabinet Approvals on 24th August, 2024

The Union Cabinet chaired by Narendra Modi, Prime Minister (PM) of India has approved:

- i.Unified Pension Scheme (**UPS**) for central government employees.
- ii.The merger of 3 umbrella schemes under a new unified central sector scheme, **“Vigyan Dhara”** of the Department of Science and Technology (DST).
- ii.Biotechnology for Economy Environment and Employment (**BioE3**) **Policy** for fostering High Performance Biomanufacturing.

MHA Announces Creation of 5 New Districts in Ladakh Namely, Zaskar, Drass, Sham, Nubra, & Changthang

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), announced the creation of **5 new districts** in the Union Territory (UT) of **Ladakh**, namely, **Zaskar, Drass, Sham, Nubra, and Changthang**. With the formation of the new districts, Ladakh's total number of districts has increased to **7**.



- The MHA also instructed the Ladakh administration to establish a committee to evaluate aspects such as headquarters, boundaries, and the structure of the new districts and submit its report within 3 months.
- Currently, Ladakh has only 2 districts, **Leh and Kargil**, both managed by its autonomous district council.

Note: Ladakh has been demanding inclusion in the sixth schedule of the Indian Constitution to protect its tribal identity, culture, land, and resources.

Objective:

The creation of 5 new districts aims to improve governance and bring services and benefits of the Central government and Ladakh administration closer to the people in this remote region, ensuring progress reaches every corner.

Background:

- i.Ladakh was previously part of the former state of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K).In 2019, the Union government repealed Article 370, revoking J&K's special status.
- ii.On 9th August 2019, the Parliament bifurcated the State of J&K into 2 UTs by passing the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019.

- The 2 new UTs are J&K and Ladakh, only the former retained a legislative assembly.
- Ladakh became a UT on 31st October 2019.

Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana completes 10 years of Successful Implementation

The Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (**PMJDY**), a National Mission for Financial Inclusion, launched on August 28, 2014 by the Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi, completed **10 years** (decade) of successful implementation.

- As the largest initiative of its kind globally, PMJDY has integrated millions into the formal banking system, empowering marginalized communities and enhancing financial security.
- PMJDY has brought 53.13 crore people into the formal banking system as of August 14, 2024, with **55.6%** (29.56 crore) of Jan-Dhan account holders being women and 66.6% (35.37 crore) of accounts in rural or semi-urban areas.

Gujarat Replaced UP as Top Investment Destination in FY24 : RBI Study

According to a study by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) economists, Gujarat replaced Uttar Pradesh (UP) in attracting bank funds for projects in the state in the Financial Year 2023-24(FY24).

- Gujarat received funds for total **154** projects which accounted **14.7 %**(increased from 14% in FY23) of the total projects financed by the banks and Financial Institutions (**FIs**) in FY24.
- The total cost of projects sanctioned by banks and FIs during the FY24, increased to a record high of **Rs 3,90,978 crore** (around Rs 4 trillion).

Key Findings:

i.UP received funds for total **69** projects which accounted **7.6%** (decreased from 16.2% in FY23) of the total funds financed by banks and FIs in FY24.

- However, UP continued to be among top 5 states to attract project funding from banks and FIs.

ii.Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh (AP) and Karnataka were the others among top 5 states to get bank fund for projects in their respective states from banks and FIs in FY24.

- The combined value of projects in these 5 states accounted for about 55% of the total cost of projects sanctioned during FY24.

CCI Approves Merger of RIL's Media Assets with Walt Disney

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) approved the proposed combination involving Reliance Industries Limited (RIL), Viacom18 Media Private Limited (Viacom18), Digital18 Media Limited, Star India Private Limited (SIPL), and Star Television Productions Limited (STPL).

- The transaction aims to **merge** the entertainment businesses of **Viacom18**, part of the **RIL group**, with **SIPL**, a wholly owned entity of **The Walt Disney Company** (TWDC).
- The combined entity will be India's largest media empire worth over **Rs 70,000 crore**. Under the deal, RIL and its affiliates will hold **63.16%** of the combined entity and The Walt Disney will hold **36.84%** stake in the combined entity.

Note: The combination approved by the Commission is subject to compliance with voluntary modifications.

Proposed Combination:

As a result of the transaction, SIPL, currently a wholly owned entity of TWDC through its

subsidiaries, will become a Joint Venture (JV) jointly held by RIL, Viacom18, and existing TWDC subsidiaries.

Businesses Involved:

- i. RIL's diverse operations include exploration and production of oil and gas, media, entertainment, and digital services in India, and worldwide.
- ii. Viacom18 is engaged in Television (TV) broadcasting, Over-The-Top (OTT) platform operation, advertising, production/distribution of motion pictures, etc.

Air Chief Marshal V R Chaudhari Launches 1st Comic Book in Heroes of IAF Series

Air Chief Marshal Vivek Ram Chaudhari, Chief of the Air Staff (CAS) of the Indian Air Force (IAF), has launched the **first comic book** in the series “**Heroes of the Indian Air Force.**” The book published by the IAF aims to depict the heroic narratives of the IAF through comics.

- i. The book was **developed** by the National Film Development Corporation of India (NFDC), with Anubhav Khanduri as the General Manager.
- ii. Rogue Communications Private Limited, an agency empanelled under the same name handled the storyline and creatives.
- iii. The **32-page** book narrates **2 stories**, “**Find Your Calling**” about the life of Marshal of the Air Force **Arjan Singh**, Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC) (1944), and “**The Boyra Boys**” which narrates the epic air battle during the **1971 Indo-Pak War**.
- iv. The book aims to educate and inspire young readers, fostering a sense of duty and aspiration to join the IAF.

International

G20 Agrees on Brazil's Billionaire Tax Proposal to Tackle Taxation of Ultra-Rich

The Group of Twenty (G20) finance ministers and central bankers issued the first-ever joint ministerial declaration on taxation, **The Rio de Janeiro G20 Ministerial Declaration on International Tax Cooperation**, committing to effective taxation of “ultra-high-net-worth individuals.”

- It was adopted during the Communiqué of the **3rd G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Meeting** held in Rio de Janeiro, **Brazil**. This declaration emphasized cooperative engagement while respecting tax sovereignty.
- Brazil**, holding the **G20 Presidency** proposed a **2%** minimum tax on the worlds richest billionaires, making it a top priority for the upcoming G20 summit from November 18 to 19, 2024 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.
- My The proposal faces opposition from some countries, including Germany and the United States of America (USA), while France, Spain, Colombia and the African Union and South Africa expressed their support for this initiative.

Note:The final declaration did not agree on a specific global tax, and Billionaires currently pay 0.3% of their wealth in taxes.

China to Build World's 1st Thorium Molten Salt NPP in Gobi Desert

China plans to build the world's 1st Nuclear Power Plant (NPP) that will be fuelled by liquid fuel based on **molten thorium salt** in the **Gobi Desert**, China. The construction of the plant will begin in 2025 with the aim of developing safer and more environmentally friendly nuclear energy.

- Since the reactor uses liquid salt and carbon dioxide to transfer heat and generate electricity, it does not require water for cooling.
- It will use fuel enriched with less than 20% Uranium-235 (U-235) and approximately 50 kilogram (kg) of thorium.
- It will use FLiBe, a mixture of lithium fluoride and beryllium fluoride, containing 99.95% lithium-7 and the fuel will consist of uranium tetrafluoride (UF₄).
- The reactor is scheduled to be completed and operational in 2029, generating heat at a maximum power of 60 megawatts (MW).
- If successful, this would be the 1st operational molten salt nuclear reactor since the United States of America (USA) shut down its test reactor in 1969.

Note: The Gobi Desert that lies across southern Mongolia and northwestern China is the **5th largest desert** in the world and the second largest desert in Asia.

RIL Climbs to 86th in Fortune Global 500 List for 2024; Walmart topped the list for 11th consecutive year

According to the **Fortune Global 500 list for 2024**, India's Reliance Industries Limited (RIL), led by Mukesh Ambani, has improved its ranking to 86th (2024) from 88th (2023) while retaining its position as the **highest-ranked Indian firm** for the 21st consecutive year.



i.The United States of America (USA)-based retail and wholesale company, Walmart Inc. has topped the list as the largest company by revenue for the 11th consecutive year. Walmart's consolidated revenue stood at USD 648.1 billion.

ii.USA based e-commerce company, **Amazon.com, Inc** and Chinese state-owned electric utility, **State Grid Corporation of China** have secured the 2nd and 3rd positions respectively.

iii.9 Indian companies featured in the 2024 rankings. 5 of them are from the public sector – LIC, SBI, ONGC, IOCL and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (**BPCL**) and the remaining 4 are from private sectors (RIL, Tata Motors, HDFC Bank and Rajesh exports).

India Retained 8th Position in Global Agriculture Exports: WTO

According to the World Trade Organization(WTO)'s report titled “**World Trade Statistical Review 2023**”, India has retained its position as the world's 8th largest exporter of agricultural products in 2023, despite a decline in its export from USD 55 billion in 2022 to USD 51 billion in 2023.



Top 5 Exporters in Agricultural Products:

Rank	Country	Value (USD Billion)
1	EU	836
2	USA	198
3	Brazil	157
4	China	95

5	Canada	88
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- The European Union(EU) ranked 1st with export value of USD 836 billion followed by the United States of America (USA) at 2nd (198 billion) and Brazil at 3rd (USD 157 billion).

About World Trade Statistical Review 2023:

- It is a new interactive tool which presents the key data and trends for international merchandise and commercial services trade in 2023.
- The digital platform enables the users to view the latest trends in world trade, in terms of both value and volumes.

- It has simplify for users to view the vast world trade data by using filters which display the data by economy, region, selected grouping, product group and services sector.

Reasons for Decline in India's Exports:

- India's export declined mainly due to geopolitical factors such as: the Red Sea crisis and the Russian-Ukraine war which has significantly impacted regulated commodities like: rice, wheat, sugar, and onions.

About World Trade Organisation (WTO):

Director-General (DG)- Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala

Headquarters- Geneva, Switzerland

Member Nations- 164

Established- 1995

World Airline Awards 2024 by Skytrax: India's Vistara voted as Best Airline in

India/South Asia 2024 Skytrax's World Airline Awards 2024 has honoured Indian airline **Vistara** (Tata SIA Airlines Limited) as the **Best Airline in India / South Asia 2024**. It receives the honour for the fourth consecutive time since 2021. Vistara is ranked **16th** in the World's Best Airline ranking and **8th** in Asia's Best Airlines ranking.



- Qatar Airways** has been voted the **World's Best Airline** for the 8th time. **Singapore Airlines**, which topped the 2023 list, is ranked 2nd followed by the **Emirates** at 3rd position.

Note: Skytrax is a London, the United Kingdom–based consultancy that runs airline and airport review website.

About Skytrax:

Chief Executive Officer (CEO)- Edward Plaisted

Headquarters- London, the United Kingdom

Established- 1989

USA accounts for Highest FPI investment in India: SEBI Report

According to a report by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (**SEBI**), the United States of

America (**USA**) led the Foreign Portfolio Investment (**FPI**) in India for the Fiscal Year 2023-24 (FY24), with 3,457 registered FPIs. It is followed by **Luxembourg** with 1,393 and **Canada** with 804.

- As of March 31, 2024, the total number of FPIs in India increased to **11,219** registered FPIs from 11,081 in FY23.
- The FY24 saw the highest FPI inflows into India since 1992-93.

Highlights:

- The report analyzed the country-wise distribution of FPIs and their Assets Under Custody (AUC), representing the total value of assets managed by FPIs held by custodians.
- By March 31, 2024, the AUC of FPIs increased by 42.8%, rising to **Rs 69.5 lakh crore** from Rs 48.7 lakh crore at the end of March 31, 2023, reflecting growing foreign investor confidence in India.
- Equity assets constituted **92.2%** of the total AUC and the highest contributions to these equity assets came from the USA, which accounted for **39.2 %** of the total, followed by Singapore at **9.8%**, and Luxembourg at **7.1%**.

Razorpay the Only Indian Company Featured in ‘Forbes Cloud 100 List’ 2024; Open AI Tops the List

Razorpay Software Private Limited(**RSPL**), a Bengaluru (Karnataka)-based Payments software company ranked 70th(last year Razorpay ranked 49th) on the Forbes Cloud 100 2024 List, the 9th annual ranking of the world’s top private cloud computing companies. This marks Razorpay’s 3rd consecutive appearance on the list, acknowledging its innovation and leadership in cloud technology.

- Razorpay is the **only Indian company** featured on the list, with nearly 3,300 employees, and has raised close to **USD 742 million** in funding.
- San Francisco, California, the United States of America (USA)-based **OpenAI** and **Databricks, Inc.** ranked **1st** and **2nd** respectively followed by the dual-headquartered Financial Infrastructure company, **Stripe, Inc.** in San Francisco, California(USA), and Dublin(Ireland) at 3rd place in the list.

Forbes Cloud 100 2024 List is published by Forbes in partnership with Bessemer Venture Partners and Salesforce Ventures.

About Razorpay Software Private Limited(RSPL):

Chief Executive Officer(CEO) – Harshil Mathur

Headquarters – Bengaluru, Karnataka

Ambani Family Tops 2024 Hurun India Most Valuable Family Businesses; HCL Tech’s Roshni Nadar Tops Among Women Leaders

According to 2024 Barclays Private Clients Hurun India Most Valuable Family

Businesses, **Ambani Family** headed by Mukesh Ambani, Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Reliance Industries Limited (RIL), is **ranked 1st** with a value of Rs 2,575,100 Crore.

- **Bajaj family** led by Niraj Bajaj, Directors of the Bajaj Group, ranks **2nd** with a value of Rs 712,700 crore and **Birla family**, led by Kumar Mangalam Birla, Chairperson of the Aditya Birla Group, ranks **3rd** with a value of Rs 538,500 crore.
- **Roshni Nadar Malhotra**, representing the Nadar family, is **India's most influential woman leading a family-owned business**. The Nadar family is ranked **5th** with a value of Rs 430,600 crore.

About Hurun Report Inc. (Hurun Report):

It is a leading research, luxury publishing and events group established in 1998 in London (U.K.). Hurun India was launched in 2012.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO)-Rupert Hoogewerf

Managing Director (MD) & Chief Researcher (Hurun India)-Anas Rahman Junaid

Headquarters (Hurun India)- Mumbai, Maharashtra

Brand Finance's Food & Drink 2024:AMUL Emerged as World's Strongest Food and Dairy Brand

According to the Brand Finance's Food & Drink 2024 report, Anand Milk Union Limited (AMUL) has emerged as the **world's strongest food and dairy brand** with an AAA+ rating for the 4th consecutive year. The brand value of AMUL has increased by **11%** to **USD 3.3 billion**, with a Brand Strength Index (BSI) score of 91 out of 100.

- AMUL has improved its ranking from **29th** position (2023) to **22nd** (2024) position on the list of world's most valuable and strongest food brands.
- **Switzerland's Nestlé** emerged as the world's most valuable food brand, valued at **USD 20.8 billion**, despite a 7% decline compared to 2023, followed by the United States of America (USA)-based **Lay's** and **China's Yili** at the **2nd** and **3rd** position respectively.

About Brand Finance:

Chairman and Chief Executive Officer (CEO)– David Haigh

Headquarters- London, the United Kingdom (UK)

Established-

1996

Defence

India's 1st Multinational Air Exercise 'Tarang Shakti' commenced at Sular, TN

'Tarang Shakti (Wave of Power) 2024', largest multilateral air exercise began at the Sular Air Base in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu (TN).

- It is the first multinational air exercise to be conducted on India soil after **61 years**.



About Tarang Shakti 2024:

- Aim:** To promote interoperability among the air forces of participating nations, enabling them to share best practices and improve operational coordination.
- The Tarang Shakti 2024 exercise is being conducted in two phases. The first phase being held in Sular, **Tamil Nadu**(TN) from August 6 to 14, 2024 and the second phase to be held in Jodhpur, **Rajasthan** from August 29 to September 14.
- Each phase of the drills will involve the participation of 70-80 aircraft, including fighter planes, helicopters, special operations planes, mid-air refuellers and Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) aircraft.

Participants:

Around **30 countries**, including the United States of America (USA), Germany, France, Australia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the United Kingdom (UK), and Singapore, will showcase their fighter jets. 10 countries which will participate with their assets, and 18 countries as observers.

- For the **first time**, German Air Force came to India for an exercise.

i.From Indian side Su-30MKI, Light Combat Aircraft (**LCA**) **Tejas**, Mirage, Mig29K (Indian Navy/IN), Refueller IL-78 and heavy military transport aircraft C-130 will participate in the exercise.

iii.**Eurofighter Typhoons** from Germany, Spain and UK, **Rafales** from France.

- A -330 MRTT Refuellers, Heavy Military Transport Aircraft A321 and A 400 Ms from Germany, Spain, the UK and France are also participating in the exercise..

Indian Army Conducts 'Parvat Prahaar' Exercise in Ladakh, Focusing on High-Altitude Warfare Operations

The **Indian Army** conducted 'Parvat Prahaar' (*Mountain Strike*), a large-scale **strike corps exercise**, in the Union Territory (UT) of **Ladakh**. The strategic military exercise focused on high-altitude warfare and operations, involving various military units and equipment to maintain readiness near the India-China border.



- The exercise assisted the Indian Army to validate new warfighting concepts and technology integration. The Strike Corps, attached to the Northern Command, is focused on developing high-altitude warfare and operations.
- This fortnight's exercise emphasises mountainous and rugged terrains, such as those found in regions like Eastern Ladakh.

Participants:

- i.The exercise includes all major fighting elements including artillery, armoured, infantry troops, and supporting units.
- ii.The drill involves tanks, artillery guns, Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), air defence systems, and aviation assets.
- iii.The exercise also involves the deployment of new weapons acquired by the armed forces over the past 4 years to counter the Chinese threat.

About the Exercise:

- i.With over 500 tanks and 50,000 troops deployed since 2020, India continues to test the readiness of troops near the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Eastern Ladakh,
 - Additional troops were posted at the frontlines to counter Chinese deployments.
- ii.New infrastructure like all-weather roads and communication networks along the LAC in Eastern Ladakh has been created to support troops through harsh winters.

IAF Successfully Concluded Participation Exercise Udara Shakti 2024

The Indian Air Force (IAF) **contingent** participated in the **Exercise Udara Shakti 2024** (EX US24), bilateral air exercise with the Royal Malaysian Air Force (RMAF) from August 5 to 9, 2024 at RMAF Base Station in Kuantan, **Malaysia**

- Aim:** To bolster the operational efficiency, technical experts of both Air Forces engaged in sharing of their maintenance practices.

Key Dignitaries: The opening ceremony was attended by Group Captain **Ajay Rathi**, leader of the IAF team, Subhashini Narayanan, Deputy High Commissioner of India to Malaysia and other senior officials of the RMAF.

Key Highlights of the exercise:

- i.The exercise was based on two different concepts such as: Field Training Exercise (FTX) and Subject Matter Expert Exchange (SMEE).
- ii.The exercise saw the participation of **7 Sukhoi-30** fighter jets from both the RMAF and the IAF.
 - The IAF contingent participated with **Su-30MKI** fighter jets while the RMAF participated with Su-30MKM fighters.
- iii.During the exercise, the Su-30 MKI fighter jets of IAF engaged in air combat missions with Su-30MKM fighter jets of RMAF.

- This enabled the crew of air forces of both the countries to familiarize with each other's operational protocol, thus, enhancing interoperability, commonality and overall effectiveness in Su-30 aircraft operations.

Ex Mitra Shakti 2024: 10th Edition of India- Sri Lanka Joint Military Exercise commenced in Sri Lanka

Exercise Mitra Shakti 2024, the 10th edition of the joint military exercise between the Army of India and Sri Lanka commenced at Army Training School, Maduru Oya, **Sri Lanka**.



- The combat training exercise is set to conclude on 25th August 2024.
- It is part of India's efforts to strengthen military ties with Sri Lanka and enhance bilateral relations.

Note:

i. The annual Mitra Shakti exercise was started in **2012** and is held alternately in India and Sri Lanka.

ii. Mitra Shakti 2023, the **9th edition** of the exercise was held in 2023 in Pune, Maharashtra.

About Mitra Shakti 2024:

- The exercise aims to bolster joint military capabilities for counter-insurgency operations in a semi-urban environment under Chapter VII of the United Nations Mandate
- Mitra Shakti primarily focuses on infantry, with mixed infantry divisions from both armies participating.
- Mitra Shakti facilitates the exchange of best practices, enhances interoperability, and strengthens the bonds between the two armies, further boosting defense cooperation and bilateral ties.

Participants:

India: 106 personnel from the Rajputana Rifles.

Sri Lanka: Represented by the Gajaba Regiment.

Highlights:

i. The exercise consists of four phases:

- **Phase 1:** Static display and weapon demonstrations.
- **Phase 2:** Training and rehearsals, including night drills.
- **Phase 3:** Sports competitions to foster camaraderie.
- **Phase 4:** A comprehensive joint exercise.

ii. Tactical drills to be rehearsed during the exercise include response to terrorist actions, establishing joint command posts, intelligence and surveillance centers, securing helipads, special heliborne operations, cordon and search operations, and the use of drones and counter-drone systems.

About Sri Lanka:

Prime Minister (PM)– Dinesh Gunawardena

Capital– Colombo (Executive & Judicial), Sri Jayawardhapura Kotte (Legislative)

Currency– Sri Lankan Rupee

Indian Navy Commissioned INS Arighaat, 2nd Arihant-Class Submarine, in Visakhapatnam

Indian Naval Ship (INS) Arighaat, the 2nd Arihant-Class SSBN(Ship, Submersible, Ballistic, Nuclear), was commissioned into the Indian Navy at Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh (AP) in the presence of Union Minister Rajnath Singh, Ministry of Defence (MoD).



- It is India's 2nd indigenous nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine, after **INS Arihant** which was commissioned into service in August 2016.

Note: Arihant is a Sanskrit word which means '**Destroyer of the Enemy**'.

Key People:

Admiral Dinesh Tripathi, Chief of Naval Staff(CNS), Vice-Admiral Suraj Berry, and officials from the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) were present during the event.

Key Points:

- INS Arighaat retains the same reactor and dimensions of INS Arihant such as: displacement of 6,000 tonnes and is powered by an 83 MegaWatt (MW) pressurized light-water reactor with enriched Uranium (U), but has several technological upgrades.
- INS Arighaat was constructed by using the advanced design and manufacturing technology, detailed Research & Development (R&D), utilization of special materials, complex engineering and highly skilled workmanship.

Features:

- It can attain speeds up to 24 knots (44 Kilometers per hour (km/hr)) when submerged and about 12-15 knots (22-28 km/hr) on surface level.
- It has 4 missile launch tubes. Each tube can carry up to three K-15 submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBM) with a range of 750 km, or one K-4 SLBM, that has a range of 3,500 km. Both are capable of carrying nuclear warheads

Appointments or Resign/Retired

Former Union Health Secretary Preeti Sudan Took Charge as Chairperson of UPSC

Preeti Sudan, the former Secretary of the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW), took oath as the New **Chairperson** of the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC). She will hold the post till **29th April 2025** or until further orders.

- She became the **2nd woman** to head the UPSC after **RM Bathew** who served as UPSC Chair from 1992 to 1996.
- She succeeds **Manoj Soni**, who resigned from the post in **July 2024** almost 5 years before his tenure ends in 2029.

Note:

The appointment was approved by Droupadi Murmu, President of India, under clause (1A) of Article 316 of the Constitution for performing the duties of Chairman, UPSC.

About Preeti Sudan:

- Preeti Sudan is an Indian Administrative Service (IAS) Officer of the 1983 batch from the Andhra Pradesh (AP) cadre. She has been a **member of UPSC** since **November 2022**.
- She retired as the Secretary of MoHFW in July 2020.
- She previously served as Secretary of the Department of Food & Public Distribution (DFPD), Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food, and Public Distribution.
- She has also worked as a consultant with the World Bank.

Overview of UPSC:

- The UPSC was established as the Public Service Commission (PSC) in India for the first time in 1926. In 1937, the PSC became the Federal Public Service Commission (FPSC), and in 1950, the (FPSC) came to be known as the UPSC.
- UPSC is a constitutional body as mandated under Articles 315-323, Part XIV, Chapter II of the Constitution..
- The Commission is headed by a chairperson and it can have a maximum of 10 members.

PCB Chairman Mohsin Naqvi Becomes Next ACC President

Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Chairman **Mohsin Naqvi** is set to become the next **President** of the **Asian Cricket Council** (ACC) later this year (2024). His two-year term will commence in **January 2025**.

- Jay Shah**, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) Secretary is the **current ACC president**, who got a one-year extension in January 2024 for a third consecutive term.
- Naqvi is expected to take on the responsibilities for the Asia Cup in 2025 (T20I) in India and the 2027 edition in Bangladesh (ODI).
- This will be in addition to Naqvi's current responsibilities of ensuring that the ICC Champions Trophy 2025, hosted by Pakistan.

Note: ACC is a cricket organisation to promote and develop the sport of Cricket in Asia, was established in 1983.

Lt Gen Vikas Lakhera Assumed Charge as DG of Assam Rifles

On 1st August 2024, Lieutenant (Lt.) General (Gen) **Vikas Lakhera** officially assumed charge as the **22nd** Director General(DG) of the Assam Rifles, India's oldest paramilitary force often known as the "*Sentinels of the North-East*".



- He **succeeded** Lt. Gen. **Pradeep Chandran Nair**, Who retired from the service on 31st July 2024. He served as 21st DG of Assam Rifles since 2021.
- Prior to this appointment, Vikas Lakhera served as the Additional Director General (ADG) of **Military Operations**, handling information warfare.

About Lieutenant General Vikas Lakhera:

i.Lt Gen Vikas Lakhera was commissioned into the 4th Battalion of the Sikh Light Infantry (LI) of the Indian Army in 1990. He subsequently commanded the Unit in Lower Assam under the Red Horn Division.

ii.He also held various command and staff appointments, including:

- Division Officer and Training, Advising, and Counseling (TAC) at the National Defence Academy (NDA), Khadakwasla, Maharashtra.
- Military Advisor (MA) to the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief (GOC-in-C), at Eastern Command Headquarters, Kolkata, West Bengal.

About the Assam Rifles:

Assam Rifles was established in 1835 as the "Cachar Levy." It is fondly called '**Friends of the North East People**'.

Director-General (DG)– Lt Gen Vikas Lakhera

Headquarters– Shillong, Meghalaya

Former India Wicket Keeper Dinesh Karthik Appointed as SA20 League Ambassador

Krishnakumar Dinesh Karthik, an Indian commentator and former India wicket keeper has been appointed as the **league ambassador** of South Africa's premier T20 cricket League (**SA20 League**) ahead of the 2025 edition of the tournament. He became the **first Indian player** to be associated with the South African tournament.

- He has signed to join Paarl Royals as an overseas player ahead of the 2025 season, becoming the first Indian player to feature in the SA20.

i.Karthik will join his former Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) and Delhi Daredevils teammate **AB de Villiers** as one of the league's ambassadors.

ii.Karthik has announced his retirement from all forms of cricket in June 2024.

iii.He played for India in 26 Tests, 94 One Day International (ODI), and 60 T20Is. He was also a part of the Indian team that won the 2007 T20 World Cup South Africa.

SA20 League:

i.SA20 League, also known as Betway SA20 for sponsorship reasons, is organised by Cricket South Africa (CSA) and first contested in 2023. The 3rd season is set to be held from **9th January to 8th February 2025**.

ii.The tournament features six franchises: MI Cape Town, Joburg Super Kings (JSK), Durban SuperGiants (DSG), Paarl Royals, Pretoria Capitals, and Sunrisers Eastern Cape (SEC). The teams are owned by owners of Indian Premier League (IPL) franchises.

Nobel Laureate Muhammad Yunus Named Chief Adviser of Bangladesh's Interim Government

Nobel Peace Prize winner **Muhammad Yunus**, a Bangladeshi Banker, has been appointed as the **chief adviser** of **Bangladesh's interim government** by the Bangladesh President Mohammed Shahabuddin.

Note: Muhammad Yunus and his Grameen Bank won the Nobel Peace Prize for 2006 for their work to "create economic and social development from



below”

Background:

i.The appointment was made following the meeting led by the President of Bangladesh with chiefs of three three services and a 13-member delegation of Anti-Discrimination Student Movement (ADSM).

ii.The appointment comes a day after Bangladesh Prime Minister(PM) **Sheikh Hasina resigned** and fled Bangladesh following a violent crackdown on a student-led uprising.

Note: Sheikh Hasina was the longest serving PM in Bangladesh history, until her resignation on 5 August 2024. She served as 1st term as PM from 1996 to 2001 and again from January 2009 to August 2024.

About Muhammad Yunus:

i.In 1972, Muhammad Yunus was appointed professor of economics at the University of Chittagong, Bangladesh.

ii.In 1983, he established the Grameen Bank (GB) (Village Bank) in Bangladesh and served as its Managing Director (MD) till 2011.

iii.In 1996, he served as Cabinet Minister (Advisor) in the Caretaker Government of Bangladesh.

Awards/Honours:

i.He was honoured with the **Ramon Magsaysay Award** in the Field of “Community Leadership” in **1984**.

ii. In 1987, he was awarded the **Independence Day Award**, the **highest civilian national award of Bangladesh** for his outstanding contribution to rural development.

iii. In 1994, he was awarded the World Food Prize by the World Food Prize Foundation, in the United States of America (USA).

About Bangladesh:

Capital– Dhaka

President– Mohammed Shahabuddin

Currency– Bangladeshi Taka

ACC Approved Appointment of C.S. Setty as new SBI Chairman; Rana Ashutosh Kumar Singh as MD

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) approved the appointment of **Challa Sreenivasulu Setty** (CS Setty) (59 years old) as new Chairman of the State Bank of India (SBI), India's largest Public Sector Bank (PSB), for a **3 year** term with effect from the date he assumes office, on or after **28th August 2024**.



- He is currently serving as one of the Managing Directors (MDs) of SBI.
- He will succeed the current chairman **Dinesh Khara**, whose term is set to retire on 28th August 2024 on attaining the age of 63 (the upper age limit for the post of SBI's chairman).

Note: In June 2024, the Financial Services Institutions Bureau (FSIB) approved the appointment of CS Setty as next chairman of SBI.

About Challa Sreenivasulu Setty:

- He started his career with SBI as Probationary Officer (PO) in 1988.
- In January 2020, C.S. Setty joined the Board of SBI as MD and managed departments like International Banking, Global Markets, and Technology.

Rekha Sharma Steps Down As NCW Chairperson

Rekha Sharma, the chairperson of the National Commission for Women (NCW) stepped down as her tenure ended on August 6 2024.

- Rekha assumed the charge of the NCW chairperson on August 7, 2018 and served in the role for **two terms** (2018 to 2021) and (2021 to August 2024)
- She has served as the Acting Chairperson from 2017 to 2018 after Lalitha Kumaramangalam stepped from the position in September 2017.
- She has been a **member** of NCW since August 2015.

Note: NCW was set up as a statutory body in January 1992 under the National Commission for Women Act, 1990, headquartered at New Delhi, Delhi.

M Suresh becomes interim AAI Chairman, succeeding Sanjeev Kumar

M Suresh has been appointed as the interim Chairman of the Airports Authority of India (AAI) as an additional charge.

- He is succeeding **Sanjeev Kumar** who has been appointed as Secretary of Department of Defence Production (DPP), Ministry of Defence (MoD). He is a 1993 batch IAS officer of Maharashtra cadre.
- The change in leadership underscores the importance of maintaining continuity in managing India's airport infrastructure during this crucial period.

About M Suresh:

- i. M. Suresh, from Tenkasi district in Tamil Nadu, holds the position of interim Chairman for **three months** or until a regular incumbent joins or until further orders.
- ii. He is currently serving as the Member of **Air Navigation Services (ANS)** at the AAI.
- iii. His diverse background might influence his approach to addressing the different needs of airports across India, considering the unique challenges and opportunities in various regions.

Paetongtarn Shinawatra becomes Thailand's Youngest PM

Paetongtarn Shinawatra (37 years old), was elected as youngest-ever and second female Prime Minister (PM) of **Thailand** by the Parliament.

- She succeeds **Phumtham Wechayachai**, who served as Acting PM of Thailand for two days from 14th August 2024 following the removal of PM Srettha Thavisin.
- She secured the position with 319 votes in favor, 145 against, and 27 abstentions.

**Key Points:**

- i. Paetongtarn Shinawatra has been serving as the leader of Pheu Thai Party since 2023.
- ii. She is the daughter of **Thaksin Shinawatra**, who served as PM from 2001 to 2006.
 - Means, she is the third member of the Shinawatra family to become PM, following her father, and her aunt, Yingluck.
- iii. Known by her nickname "**Ung-Ing**," she began her political career in 2021 as Chief of the Pheu Thai Party's **Inclusion and Innovation Advisory Committee**.
- iv. She has also been active in business and social initiatives.

Parvathaneni Harish Appointed as India's Permanent Representative to UN

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has appointed **Parvathaneni Harish** as the **Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations (UN)** at New York, United States of America (USA).

- He is succeeding **Ruchira Kamboj** who retired from the post in June 2024. She was the **first woman** to become the Indian Ambassador to the UN.

- He is currently serving as **India's ambassador to Germany** (since November 2021).

About Parvathaneni Harish:

i. Parvathaneni Harish is a 1990 batch Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officer.

ii. He has served as Additional Secretary (Economic Relations) in the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).

- He also led Multilateral Economic Relations Division and represented India in **G20** (Group of Twenty), **G7** (Group of Seven), **BRICS** (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa), and India, Brazil, South Africa (**IBSA**).

iii. He has also served as Joint Secretary and Officer on Special Duty to the Vice President of India.

BCCI Secretary Jay Shah Becomes Youngest ICC Chairman, Replacing Greg Barclay

Jay Shah, Secretary of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), has been elected unopposed as the next **Chairman** of the International Cricket Council (ICC) with effect from 1st December 2024. At **35**, Shah has become the **youngest-ever chairman** in the history of the ICC.



- He will **succeed** incumbent chairman **Greg Barclay** of New Zealand, who decided not to seek a 3rd consecutive 2-year term after the conclusion of his tenure in November 2024.

Points to Note:

i. Shah will leave his current position as BCCI secretary, during the Board's Annual General Meeting (AGM) to be held at the end of September 2024 or in October 2024.

ii. He became the **5th Indian** to assume a role at the ICC and **3rd Indian** to assume the role of ICC Chair. The other 4 Indians are:

- Late Jagmohan Dalmiya, ICC President (1997 – 2000);
- Sharad Pawar, ICC President (2010 – 2012);
- N Srinivasan, ICC Chair (2014 – 2015); and
- Shashank Manohar, ICC Chair (2015 – 2020).
-

About Jay Shah:

i. In 2019, he was selected as the BCCI's representative for the future ICC Chief Executive

Committee (CEC) meetings.

ii. He has been serving as the BCCI Secretary since 2019 and President of the Asian Cricket Council (ACC) since 2021.

- He had become the **youngest-ever BCCI secretary** at the age of 31.

- In 2024, his term as the president of the ACC was unanimously extended by 1 year, making him the **youngest administrator** to be **reappointed** as the ACC President.

v. In 2022, he became a member of the Board of the ICC. By 2022, he also led the ICC's Finance and Commercial Affairs (F&CA) Committee.

About the International Cricket Council (ICC):

The ICC was founded as the Imperial Cricket Conference in 1909. It was renamed as the International Cricket Conference in 1965 and changed as International Cricket Council in 1987.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) – Geoff Allardice

Headquarters – Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE)

Founded – 1909

ACC Approves Appointment of Satish Kumar as Chairman and CEO of Railway Board

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) approved the appointment of **Satish Kumar**, Indian Railway Management Service (IRMS) officer, as the **Chairman** and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the **Indian Railway Board (IRB)** under the Ministry of Railways (MoR). Kumar is the **first person** from the Scheduled Castes (SC) or Dalit community to hold this position in the IRB history.



- Satish assumes charge with effect from **September 1 2024**, till the date of his superannuation and his re-employment on contract basis, from January 1 till August 31, 2025, on usual terms and conditions, or until further orders, whichever is earlier.

- He succeeds **Jaya Varma Sinha**, who is set to superannuate on August 31 2024. He will join the Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT) as an administrative member after her retirement.

About Satish Kumar:

i. Satish Kumar is a 1986-batch officer of Indian Railway Service of Mechanical Engineering (IRSME).

ii. He began his career in Indian Railways in March 1988 and has held various positions which includes the General Manager (GM) of North Central Railway (NCR), the Senior Deputy GM and Chief Vigilance Officer (CVO) at North Western Railway (NWR) in Jaipur, Rajasthan.

iii. He has served as the Divisional Railway Manager (DRM) for the Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh, UP) Division of Northern Railway from 2017 to 2019.

About Indian Railways (IR):

Indian Railways (IR) was established in 1853, and nationalized in 1951.
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) – Jaya Varma Sinha (till August 31, 2024)
Headquarters – New Delhi, Delhi

B Srinivasan Appointed as the New Director General of NSG

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC), chaired by the Prime Minister (PM) of India Narendra Modi, has approved the appointment of **B Srinivasan** as the Director General (DG) of the National Security Guard (NSG) with effect from his date of joining the post until his superannuation on 31 August 2027, or until further orders.



- B Srinivasan, a 1992 batch Indian Police Service (IPS) officer of Bihar cadre, is currently serving as the Director of Bihar Police Academy, Rajgir, Bihar.
- He will succeed the **Anish Dayal Singh**, who has been serving as DG (additional charge) of NSG since 15th August 2024.

Note: NSG, also known as “black cats,” is India’s counter-terrorism and counter-hijack force and is under the administrative control of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA).

Background:

- Nalin Prabhat, a 1992 batch IPS officer of Andhra Pradesh (AP) cadre, was appointed as the DG of NSG in April 2024, for a tenure upto 31st August 2028, the date of his retirement.
- On 27th August 2024, Nalin Prabhat was appointed as the Special Director General of Police (SDGP) of the Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) with immediate effect till 30th September 2024.
- Following the retirement of the RR Swain, incumbent DGP of J&K on 30th September 2024, Prabhat will take charge as DGP of J&K.

Honours/ Awards

Highlights of the 70th National Film Awards for the Year 2022: 'Aattam' bags the Best Feature Film award

The Jury panel of the **70th National Film Awards** announced the list of winners of the **National Award for the year 2022** at the event held at the National Media Centre, New Delhi, Delhi. The list of winners was presented to Union Minister **Ashwini Vaishnaw**, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (**MIB**) in the presence of Vrunda Desai, Joint Secretary (Films), MIB.

Highlights:

- i. The Malayalam film **Aattam** (The Play) directed by Anand Ekarshi was awarded the Best Feature Film award.
- ii. The Hindi/Urdu film **Ayena** (Mirror) directed by Siddhant Sarin has bagged the award for Best Non-Feature Film.
- iii. The Kannada film **Kantara** won the Award for Best Popular Film Providing Wholesome Entertainment.

About Ministry of Information & Broadcasting (MIB):

Union Minister– Ashwini Vaishnaw (Rajya Sabha- Odisha)

Minister of State (MoS)– Dr. L. Murugan (Rajya Sabha- Madhya Pradesh)

Ram Charan Awarded 'Ambassador of Indian Arts and Culture' at Indian Film Festival of Melbourne 2024

Indian actor Konidela Ram Charan Teja, who works predominantly in Telugu cinema, was honoured with the prestigious title of "**Ambassador of Indian Arts and Culture**" during the 15th edition of Indian Film Festival of Melbourne (**IFFM 2024**) held at the Palais Theatre in St. Kilda, Melbourne (Australia).

I. IFFM 2024 was held from 15 to 25 August 2024 backed and presented by the Victorian Government in Australia.

ii. In addition to being the Guest of Honour, Ram Charan also hoisted the Indian national flag at Melbourne's iconic Federation Square during the IFFM 2024.

iii. Established in 2010, the IFFM highlights the rich diversity and creativity of Indian filmmaking, featuring films from Bollywood films to regional language cinema.

RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das Rated 'A+' in Global Finance Central Banker Report Cards 2024

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor, Shaktikanta Das has been rated "A+" for 2nd consecutive year in the 'Central Banker Report Cards 2024' by the United States of America (USA) based Global Finance magazine .

- Other than Shaktikanta Das, **Christian Kettel Thomson**, Royal Governor of the Bank of Denmark (Denmark) and **Thomas Jordan**, Chairperson of the Swiss National Bank (Switzerland) have been received the “A+” rating.

About Central Banker Report Cards:

- It is an annual report, published by the Global Finance magazine since 1994.
 - The performance of the central bank governors are rated based on 4 criteria: controlling inflation, managing interest rates, promoting economic growth, and maintaining stability in the domestic currency's exchange rate.
 - The report assess the performance of central bank governors from nearly 100 important countries, territories, and districts, including, the European Union (EU), the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank (ECCB), the Bank of Central African States (BEAC), and the Central Bank of West African States (BCEAO).
 - The grades are based on an “A+” to “F” scale with A representing “excellent performance” and F representing “outright failure”.
- Shaktikanta Das** is a 1980-batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer from the Tamil Nadu (TN) cadre.
 - He worked as secretary in the Department of Revenue and Department of Economic Affairs (DEA), Ministry of Finance (MoF), Government of India (GoI) under 3 different finance ministers- P.Chidambaram, Pranab Mukherjee, and Arun Jailtey.
 - He has served as a member of 15th Finance Commission (FC) of India and G-20 Sherpa of India.
 - He was appointed as the **25th** Governor of RBI in 2018 , succeeding Urjit Patel.
 - In June 2023, Shaktikanta Das was bestowed with the award of “**Governor of the Year**” at the 10th annual Central Banking Awards 2023 held at London, the United Kingdom (UK).

Gautam Adani Becomes India's Richest Man: Hurun India Rich List 2024

The Hurun India Rich List 2024, the **13th** edition of the Rich List was released which is topped by **Gautam Adani**, Chairman of the Adani Group with a net worth of **Rs 1,161,800 Crore** (Cr), a 95% increase in wealth.

- Mukesh Ambani**, Chairman of Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) at 2nd with **Rs 1,014,700 Cr** and **Shiv Nadar & Family** of HCL Technologies ranked 3rd with a wealth of **Rs 314,000 crore**.
- Radha Vembu** of **Zoho** is the **wealthiest self-made woman** with Rs 47,500 crore,
 - Mumbai** (Maharashtra), the billionaire capital of Asia, has topped the list as the preferred city among the billionaires in India.

About Hurun India:

Managing Director and Chief Researcher– Anas Rahman Junaid



Sports

Indo-French Tennis Partners Yuki Bhambri & Albano Olivetti Won the 2024 Swiss Open Gstaad Men's Doubles

Indian tennis player Yuki Bhambri and his French partner Albano Olivetti won the Men's Doubles title at the **56th Swiss Open Gstaad**, an Association of Tennis Professionals (ATP) 250 tennis tournament held at the Roy Emerson Arena in Gstaad, Switzerland from 15–21 July 2024.

i. The Indo-French pair, defeated the all-French duo Ugo Humbert – Fabrice Martin, 3-6, 6-3, 10-6 in the final event.

ii. This is the **2nd ATP Tour title** of the year for the **Indo-French pair**. Bhambri and Olivetti also won the BMW Open (previously Bavarian International Tennis Championships), a 250-series event held in Munich, Germany, in April 2024.

iii. This victory marks the overall **3rd victory of Yuki Bhambri**, who won his maiden ATP title with Lloyd Harris (South Africa) at the 2023 Mallorca Championships, in Santa Ponsa, Spain.

iv. **Matteo Berrettini**, an Italian tennis player won the Swiss Open Gstaad 2024 **Men's Singles title**, by defeating the Frenchman Quentin Halys in the finals of the Gstaad 250 tournament, with the score of 6-3, 6-1. It was his 2nd Swiss Open Gstaad singles title.

- It was Berrettini's **9th title** of his career, and 2nd title in 2024 after the ATP of Marrakech held in Marrakesh, Morocco in April 2024.

Part 1: Overview of the Paris 2024 Summer Olympics

The **2024 Summer Olympics**, officially the Games of the **XXXIII(33rd) Olympiad**, is taking place in Paris, France from **26th July to 11th August 2024**. The opening ceremony of the 2024 Olympics, branded as "**Paris 2024**", was held on the **Seine River** in Paris, France, on 26th July 2024.



- In the history of the modern Olympics, this was the first opening ceremony to ever take place outside of a stadium.

Indian Medal Winners:

As of 7th August 2024, **Indian shooters** won **3 bronze medals** at the Paris 2024 Olympics.

i. **Manu Bhaker** won the bronze in the Women's 10 Metre Air Pistol event and became the **first Indian woman** to win a medal in Shooting.

ii. **Manu Bhaker** and **Sarabjot Singh** won the bronze in the Mixed 10-metre Air Pistol team event by defeating Republic of Korea's Oh Ye Jin and Lee Wonho.

iii. **Swapnil Kusale** won the bronze medal in Men's 50-meter rifle three-position(3P) event. this marks India's first-ever Olympic shooting medal in this category.

Hockey India retires No. 16 jersey in honour of PR Sreejesh, Appoints him as Junior Men's Team Coach

Hockey India has officially retired the No. 16 jersey from the national senior men's team in honour of **Parattu Raveendran (PR) Sreejesh**, the goalkeeper who announced his retire after the Paris Olympics 2024.

- He is regarded as the **'God of Indian Modern History'** and popularly known as "The Wall of India".
- This announcement was made during the farewell ceremony organized by Hockey India.
- Hockey India also appointed him as the **coach** for the **Junior Men's Hockey Team**.



Key Points:

i. Throughout his 18-year career, he has competed in **four Olympic Games** since 2012, captained the team at the Rio 2016 Olympics, and secured **two Olympic bronze medals** (Tokyo 2020, Paris 2024).

ii. His career accolades also include **two Asian Games gold medals** (2014, 2023), an Asian Games bronze (2018), two Commonwealth Games silver medals (2014, 2022), and four victories in the Asian Champions Trophy (2011, 2016, 2018, 2023).

About PR Sreejesh:

i. Hailing from Kerala, debuted with the junior national team in 2004 at 16, followed by his senior debut in 2006 at 18.

ii. He was honored with the **Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award** in 2021.

iii. He became the **second Indian athlete** to be named **World Games Athlete of the Year** in 2021 after Indian women's hockey captain **Rani Rampal** in 2020.

iv. He also earned the International Hockey Federation (FIH) **Goalkeeper of the Year** title for two consecutive years, 2021 and 2022.

Part II: Overview of Paris 2024 Summer Olympics

The **2024 Summer Olympics**, officially the Games of the XXXIII(33rd) Olympiad, was held in Paris, France from 26th July to 11th August 2024.

- **India** was ranked 71st in the medal tally with **6 Medals (1 Silver & 5 Bronze)** and ranked **71st**.
- **The United States of America (USA)** topped the medals tally with **126 Medals** (40 Gold, 44 Silver, 42 Bronze) followed by **China** with 91 medals (40 Gold, 27 silver and 24 bronze) and **Japan** with 45 medals (20 Gold, 12 Silver and 13 Bronze).

i. Neeraj Chopra (Haryana) won the **Silver medal** in the Javelin throw event with an **89.45-meter(m)** throw. This marks his **second Olympic medal**. With this, he becomes the 5th Indian to win two Olympic medals.

ii. The Indian men's hockey team **won the bronze medal** under the **captaincy of Harmanpreet Singh**. India **defeated Spain** with a score of **2-1** in the bronze medal match.

iii. Indian wrestler **Aman Sehrawat** (Haryana) won a **bronze medal in the 57 kg freestyle wrestling** by defeating Darian Toi Cruz from Puerto Rico with a score of 13-5 in the bronze medal match

About the International Olympic Committee (IOC):

Established– June 23, 1894.

President- Thomas Bach

Headquarters– Lausanne, Switzerland

Lausanne Diamond League 2024: Neeraj Chopra Finishes 2nd with Season's Best 89.49 m

Indian javelin thrower **Neeraj Chopra** finished **2nd** at the **Lausanne Diamond League 2024** (also known as **Athletissima**) with his season's best throw of 89.49 meter.

- Lausanne Diamond League 2024, organised by **World Athletics**, was held from the 21st to 22nd August 2024 at Pontaise Olympic Stadium in **Lausanne, Switzerland**.
- The Two-time world champion and 2024 Paris Olympics bronze-medalist Anderson Peters of Grenada won the event with a throw of **90.61m** while Julian Weber of Germany finished 3rd with a throw of **87.08m**.



Results:

Rank	Winner
1	Anderson Peters (Grenada) (90.61m)
2	Neeraj Chopra (India) (89.49m)
3	Julian Weber (Germany) (87.08m)

Diamond League standings:

i. With seven points gained from this tournament, **Neeraj Chopra** is sharing the **3rd** spot alongside **Julian Weber** (Germany) in Diamond League standings with **15** points.

ii. Anderson Peters (Grenada) is currently ranked No 1 with **21** points.

About Neeraj Chopra:

- i. Neeraj Chopra claimed a silver medal with an 89.45m throw at the 2024 Paris Olympics held in Paris, France in August 2024 and won a **gold** at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.
- ii. He took part in the **Doha Diamond League** (Doha, Qatar) held in May 2024 where he finished second with a throw of 88.36 m behind Czech Republic's Jakub Vadlejch who won the event with a throw of 88.38m.

About Diamond League:

- i. The Diamond League is an annual series of track and field athletic competitions organised by World Athletics (formerly known as the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF)).
- ii. The inaugural season was held in **2010**.
- iii. The 2024 Diamond League is the 15th season of the annual outdoor track and field meet.

- The Lausanne Diamond League 2024 is the 11th event of the 2024 season.

Shikhar Dhawan Announces Retirement from International and Domestic Cricket

On 24th August 2024, Indian cricketer **Shikhar Dhawan** (38 years old), fondly known as "Gabbar", announced his **retirement** from both domestic and international cricket.

Note: He played his last ODI in December 2022 against Bangladesh in Chattogram (Bangladesh). His last competitive appearance was for the Punjab Kings in the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2024.

About Shikhar Dhawan's Career

- i. Shikhar Dhawan made his One Day International (ODI) debut for India against Australia in October 2010 and his Test debut in March 2013.
- ii. He scored **6793** runs at an average of 44.11 and a strike rate of 91.35. He scored 2315 runs at an average of 40.61 in 34 Tests, and 1759 runs at a strike rate of 126.36 in 68 Twenty20 International (T20Is).
- iii. He has scored 24 hundreds (17 in ODIs and 7 in Tests) across 269 international matches.
- iv. He was also India's highest run scorer in the **2015** ODI World Cup and was the highest scorer for India in Asia Cup 2014, World Cup 2015, Champions Trophy 2017 and Asia Cup 2018.
- v. Shikhar represented Delhi Capitals, Mumbai Indians, Deccan Chargers, Sunrisers Hyderabad and Punjab Kings in the IPL.

He is also the second-highest run-getter in IPL after Virat Kohli.

- He scored 6769 runs which includes 2 centuries and 51 half-centuries across 222 matches at a strike rate of 127.14.

vi. In domestic cricket, he won the Ranji Trophy for Delhi in 2007-08 when Delhi beat Uttar Pradesh.

vii. He was also the top run-scorer at the Under-19 World Cup in 2004.



Formula 1: McLaren's Lando Norris wins Dutch GP 2024

McLaren's Lando Norris, a British racing driver, won the title at the Formula 1 (F1) Heineken Dutch Grand Prix (GP) 2024 held at the **Circuit Zandvoort**, in Zandvoort, the Netherlands. This marks Norris's 2nd title of his F1 career.



- **Red Bull's Max Verstappen** a Dutch-Belgian racing driver (competing under the Dutch flag) finished **2nd** followed by **Ferrari's Charles Leclerc** of Monaco at the 3rd position.

Key Points:

- The Dutch GP 2024 was the 15th round of the 2024 Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA) F1 world championship.
- The 16th round will be the F1 Pirelli Gran Premio D'Italia 2024 which will be held in Autodromo Nazionale Monza (Monza Circuit) near Milan, Italy, from 30 August to 1 September 2024.

Top 3 at Dutch GP 2024:

Position	Driver	Team	Points
1	Lando Norris	McLaren	26
2	Max Verstappen	Red Bull Racing	18
3	Charles Leclerc	Ferrari	15

About Lando Norris:

- Lando Norris won his first F1 career title at the 2024 Miami GP in May 2024 in Florida, the United States of America (USA).
- Norris** became the **1st McLaren driver** to win from pole since Mercedes' Lewis Hamilton (British racing driver) in 2012.
The last was Charles Leclerc for Ferrari in Australia in 2022.

About the Dutch GP:

- The 1st edition of the F1 Dutch GP was held at the Zandvoort track in **1952** and raced on and off at the track until **1985**.

- After 36 years, the Dutch GP again returned in **2021**.

Obituary

Padma Awardee & Renowned Indian Classical Dancer Yamini Krishnamurthy Passed Away

Padma Awardee **Mungara Yamini Krishnamurthy**, a renowned Indian Classical Dancer, has **passed away** at the age of 83 in New Delhi, Delhi. She was born on December 20, 1940 in Madanapalle in Chittoor district, Andhra Pradesh (AP).



- Government of India (GoI) honoured Yamini with **Padma Shri** (1968), **Padma Bhushan** (2001) and **Padma Vibhushan** (2016) for her contributions in the field of **arts**.

About Mungara Yamini Krishnamurthy:

- Mungara Yamini Krishnamurthy is a distinguished Indian classical dancer, and a doyen of **Bharatanatyam**, **Kuchipudi** and **Odissi** for over four decades.
- She played a significant role in popularizing Kuchipudi which was then emerged as a solo dance form of AP in southern India.
- She gave her debut in 1957 in Chennai, Tamil Nadu (TN) and became one of the most admired dancers in India by 1960.
- She published an autobiography titled '**A Passion for Dance**' with Renuka Khandekar in 1995.

Padma Bhushan Awardee & Renowned Social Worker Shobhana Ranade Passed Away

Padma Bhushan Awardee Shobhana Sitaram Ranade, a renowned Gandhian activist and social worker **passed away** at the age of 99 in Pune, Maharashtra. She was born on 26th October 1924 in Pune.



- In **2011**, The Government of India (GoI) honoured Shobhana with the **Padma Bhushan** award for her contributions in the field of social work.

About Shobhana Ranade:

- Shobhana Ranade began her journey of service after meeting **Mahatma Gandhi** at the Aga Khan Palace in Pune, where she was influenced by his principles.
- She devoted her life to the service of the underprivileged, especially women and children.
- She also held various positions which includes the **President** of the All India Women's Conference, (AIWC) New Delhi, Delhi; President of the All India Women's Literacy Eradication Committee; **Secretary** of the Gandhi National Memorial Society(GNMS),Pune; President of the All India Women's Council and Bhoodan Gram Dan Mandal (Maharashtra).

Notable works:

- i. Ranade co-founded the **first child welfare** institutions at **Maitreyi Ashram** and **Shishu Niketan** (Assam), with the goal of fostering disadvantaged youngsters.
- ii. She also started a program through the Adim Jati Seva Sangh to teach them spinning on the charkha in order to empower Naga women.
- iii. She contributed to the establishment of the GNMS and a training institute at the Aga Khan Palace, Pune and also started the Balgram and Bal Sadan child welfare projects in Saswad, Pune.
- iv. In 1998, the Kasturba Mahila Khadi Gramodyog Vidyalaya was founded under her leadership to provide vocational training to **destitute women**.
- v. She was also involved in the Ganga Bachao Abhiyan (**Save Ganga Movement**), an initiative aimed at saving the Ganga River from pollution.

Former WB CM & Communist Party Leader Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee Passed Away

Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee, former Chief Minister (CM) of West Bengal (WB) and veteran Communist Party Leader **passed away** at the age of 80 in Ballygunge, Kolkata, WB. He was born on March 1, 1944 in Kolkata.

- He served as the CM of WB from 2000 to 2001; 2001 to 2006 and 2006 to 2011.



About Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee:

- i. Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee joined Communist Party of India (CPI) (Marxist) as a primary member in 1966 and later he was elected to the CPI(M) state committee in 1972 and became a full time member of CPI (M) in 1985.
- ii. In 1996, he became the Home Minister of WB, and in 1999 he was named the **Deputy CM** of WB.
- iii. He took over as the CM of WB for the **first time** in November 2000, after Jyoti Basu stepped down.
- iv. In the 2011 assembly elections, Bhattacharya lost to the Mamata Banerjee-led Trinamool Congress.

Awards:

Government of India (GoI) honoured him with **Padma Bhushan** for Public Affairs in 2022. He refused to receive it.

Padma Bhushan Awardee & Former External Affairs Minister K Natwar Singh Passed Away

Padma Bhushan Awardee **Kunwar Natwar Singh**, a Diplomat and Former External Affairs Minister, passed away at the age of 93 in Gurugram, Haryana. He was born in 1929 in Bharatpur, Rajasthan.

- In **1984**, the Government of India (GoI) honoured him with **Padma Bhushan (Civil Service)**.

About Kunwar Natwar Singh:

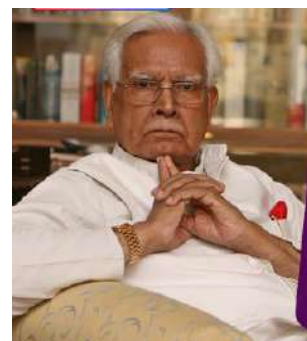
- Kunwar Natwar Singh joined the Indian Foreign Service (IFS) in 1953.
- He served as India's Ambassador to Pakistan from 1980 to 1982.
- He served as Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs (**MEA**) from 1982 to 1984.
- He also served as the Secretary-General (SG) of the 7th Non-aligned Movement (NAM) Summit held in New Delhi (Delhi) in 1983.

Political career:

- In 1984, Kunwar resigned from the IFS and joined the Indian National Congress (INC) party.
- He was elected as a Member of Parliament (**MP**) from Bharatpur in 1984 and was again re-elected in 1998.
- He also served as the Union Minister of State (MoS) for Steel, Mines, and Coal, and Agriculture from 1985 to 1989 under the leadership of then Prime Minister (PM) Rajiv Gandhi.
- He was elected (indirectly) to the Rajya Sabha from Rajasthan in 2002. He served as the External Affairs Minister (**EAM**) from **2004 to 2005** under the leadership of then PM Manmohan Singh.

Books:

He has authored several books which includes, 'The Legacy of Nehru: A Memorial Tribute' and 'My China Diary 1956-88' and his autobiography titled '**One Life is Not Enough**' (2014).



Padma Awardee Ram Narain Agarwal, 'Father of Agni missile', Passed Away

Renowned Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) missile Scientist, **Dr Ram Narain Agarwal**, widely known as the "*Father of Agni Missiles*," passed away at the age of 84 in Hyderabad, Telangana. He was born on 24 July 1941 in Jaipur, Rajasthan.

- He was honoured with the **Padma Shri** in **1990** and **Padma Bhushan** in **2000** for his contribution to Science and Engineering.

About Dr Ram Narain Agarwal:

- He was a prominent scientist at the DRDO, contributing to the Agni and other missile programs.
- Under his leadership, the 1st successful test of the Technology Demonstrator missile was conducted in May 1989.



iii. In 1995 he was appointed as the first Programme Director of Agni missiles which commenced in 1983 and was also known as 'Agni Man'.

- By 1999, Dr Agarwal and his team established the new version with a Road Mobile Launcher (RML) capability and an enhanced strike distance beyond that of Agni-1.

25th Director General of Coast Guard Rakesh Pal Passed Away

Indian Coast Guard(ICG) Director General(DG) **Rakesh Pal** passed away at the age of 58 in Chennai, Tamil Nadu(TN). He was born in 1965 in Uttar Pradesh(UP).

- He has been serving as the DG of the Indian Coast Guard since July 2023.

About Rakesh Pal:

i. Rakesh Pal was an alumnus of **Indian Naval Academy** (INA) and joined the ICG in January 1989.

ii. He specialized in gunnery and weapons systems. He was appointed as the First Gunner of the ICG in the Indian Naval Ship(INS) Dronacharya in Kochi, Kerala.

iii. He was known for having vast sea experience and commanded all classes of ICG ships, namely Samarth, Vijit, Sucheta Kriplani, Ahalyabai, and C-03.

iv. He was promoted to three-star rank and appointed as **Additional Director General**(ADG) in February 2022 and then he became DG in New Delhi, Delhi.

Awards:

Rakesh Pal was awarded the **Ati Vishisht Seva Medal** (AVSM), **Tatrakshak Medal**(TM) and the **President's Tatrakshak Medal**(PTM).

Former COAS General S. Padmanabhan passes away in Chennai

General Sundararajan Padmanabhan, former Chief of Army Staff(COAS), passed away at the age of 83 in Chennai, Tamil Nadu(TN). He was born on 5th December 1940 in Trivandrum, Kerala.

- He assumed the office of the COAS in 2000 and retired from the post in December 2002.

i. He was commissioned into the Regiment of Artillery after graduating from the Indian Military Academy (IMA) on December 13, 1959.

ii. He was promoted as Lieutenant General and served as the commander of the 15 Corps in Jammu and Kashmir(J&K) from 1993 to 1995.

ii. He also served as General Officer Commanding (GOC) of the Northern Command at Udhampur, J&K.

Important Days with theme

International Day of Friendship 2024 – July 30

The **United Nations (UN)**'s **International Day of Friendship** or World Friendship Day is annually observed across the globe on **July 30** to honour the friendship.

- The day honours the enduring bonds of friendship with various activities, despite the different dates observed around the world.
- 2024 marks the **13th anniversary** of International Friendship Day.



Background:

i. In 2011, During the 65th UN session, the United Nations General Assembly (**UNGA**) adopted the resolution A/65/L.72 and proclaimed 30th July of every year as the International Day of Friendship.

ii. The first-ever International Friendship Day was observed in **2011**.

Note: In India, Friendship Day is celebrated on **First Sunday** in the month of **August**.

World Wide Web Day 2024 – August 1

World Wide Web (WWW) Day is annually observed across the globe on August 1 to celebrate the creation and **impact of the World Wide Web**, and recognize its role in connecting the world.

- The day highlights the web's transformative role in revolutionising communication, collaboration, and access to knowledge.



Significance:

i. Aim : To recognize and appreciate **Tim Berners-Lee**'s groundbreaking work and vision.

ii. It celebrates the individuals who have contributed to the web's evolution into its current advanced and organised structure.

About the World Wide Web:

i. World Wide Web, also known as the **Web** or **W3** is a collection of websites or web pages stored in web servers and connected to local computers through the internet.

ii. It was created to help people **share and find information** easily, using links that connect different pages together.

iii. In 1989, **Sir Tim Berners-Lee** invented the WWW, with the goal to create a robust, user-friendly global information system by fusing computers, data networks, and hypertext while he was employed at Geneva (Switzerland)'s **CERN** (the European Organization for Nuclear Research).

iv. He coined the term 'World Wide Web' and wrote the first World Wide Web server 'httpd' and the first client program 'WorldWideWeb' in October 1990.

14th Indian Organ Donation Day – 3 August 2024

The Indian Organ Donation Day (IODD) is annually celebrated across India on 3rd August to commemorate the 1st successful deceased donor organ transplant, which was also the **1st Heart transplant in India**.

- **3rd August 2024** marks the observance of the **14th IODD**.

- IODD is annually celebrated by the National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organization (NOTTO).



Background:

i. The NOTTO started celebrating **Indian Organ Donation Day** in **2010** and until **2022**, it was celebrated on **27 November**.

ii. In **2023**, IODD was moved to **3 August** to mark the anniversary of India's **1st successful heart transplant**.

Hiroshima Day 2024 – August 6

Hiroshima Day is annually observed across the globe on 6th August to commemorate the atomic bombing of Hiroshima in Japan by the United States of America in 1945.

- **6th August 2024** marks the **79th anniversary** of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima.

Background:

i. During the World War II (WWII – 1939-1945), the United States Army Air Forces (USAAF) Boeing-29 (B29) Superfortress '**Enola Gay**' dropped the first atomic bomb, nicknamed '**Little Boy**', over the Japanese city of Hiroshima on **6th August 1945**.

iii. **Hiroshima's 1st Peace Festival** was held on **6 August 1947**, 2 years after the bombing, and the Hiroshima Peace Festival Association organised the Peace Festival to promote lasting peace.



Quit India Movement Day 2024 – August 8

The Quit India Movement Day, also known as August Kranti Day, is annually observed across India on 8th **August** to commemorate the launch of the **Quit India Movement** in **1942**, a significant movement in India's struggle for independence from British colonial rule, demanding the immediate withdrawal of British forces.



- The day underscores the power of non-violent resistance and civil disobedience in achieving social and political change, highlighting democracy, freedom, and unity.
- 8 August 2024** marks the **82nd anniversary** of the Quit India Movement Day.

World Lion Day 2024 – August 10

World Lion Day is annually observed across the globe on August 10 to raise awareness about **Lion (Panthera Leo)** and highlight their conservation issues and promote efforts to protect lions.

i.Aim : To educate people about the challenges faced by lions and celebrate their vital role in ecosystems and cultural heritage across the world.

ii.World Lion Day was initiated by **Big Cat Rescue (BCR)**, a wildlife sanctuary in Florida, the United States of America(USA) dedicated to lions and was co-founded by Dereck and Beverly Joubert.

- The first World Lion Day was observed in **2013**.

International Youth Day 2024 – August 12

The United Nations (UN)'s **International Youth Day** is annually observed across the globe on **12 August** to honor young people and their contributions to society. The day also brings the youth issues to the attention of the international community and recognise their potential as global partners.

- The **theme** of International Youth Day 2024 is “**From Clicks to Progress: Youth Digital Pathways for Sustainable Development**”.



Background:

i.The idea for International Youth Day was proposed in **1991** by youth, who gathered for the 1st session of the UN System's **World Youth Forum** in Vienna, Austria.

ii.In **1998**, a resolution proclaiming **12 August** as **International Youth Day** was adopted by the 1st session of the World Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth (**WCMRY**).

iii.In **1999**, the UN General Assembly (**UNGA**) at its 54th session endorsed the recommendation in its resolution A/RES/54/120 entitled “**Policies and programmes involving youth.**”

iv.The **1st** International Youth Day was observed on **12th August 2000**.

World Elephant Day 2024 – August 12

World Elephant Day is an annual international campaign observed across the globe on **12 August** to raise awareness about the preservation and protection of Elephants (Elephantidae), the ‘*Gentle Giants*’ worldwide.

i.The day also highlights the threats faced by the Elephants, including poaching, habitat loss, human-elephant conflict, etc.

ii.The theme for World Elephant Day 2024 is “**Personifying Prehistoric Beauty, Theological**”



Relevance, and Environmental Importance”.

iii.Aaranyak, a biodiversity organisation in Assam has launched a **Mobile Application (App)** named ‘**HaatiApp**’ and a comprehensive **Solar Fence Manual** in **Assamese**, to address the Human-Elephant Conflict (HEC) in Assam and Northeast India, at an event held in Guwahati, Assam.

Partition Horrors Remembrance Day 2024 – August 14

Partition Horrors Remembrance Day (in Hindi -Vibhajan Vibhishika Smriti Diwas) is annually observed across India on **August 14** to remember the struggles and sacrifices faced by Indians during the **Partition of India** by the British Empire in **1947**.



- This day also pays tribute to the courage of Indians, which illustrates the power of human resilience.
- 14th August 2024 marks the **4th observance** of Partition Horrors Remembrance Day.
- In 2021, the Prime Minister (**PM**) of India **Narendra Modi** officially designated 14th August of every year will be observed as Partition Horrors Remembrance Day to honour the victims and acknowledge the profound impact of partition on millions of lives.

Note: 14th August also marks the Independence day of Pakistan.

World Humanitarian Day 2024 – August 19

World Humanitarian Day (WHD) is annually observed across the globe on 19 August to pay tribute to humanitarian workers worldwide, who have been killed or injured while helping the most vulnerable.

- **Aim:** To recognise aid workers and mobilise people worldwide to advocate for the broader humanitarian cause.
- *WHD 2024 marks the 21st anniversary of the tragic attack on the United Nation(UN) headquarters in Baghdad.*

i.The slogan for the 2024 WHD commemoration is “**#ActForHumanity**” which calls for protecting civilians and humanitarian workers, addressing impunity, and striving for peace.

ii.On 11 December **2008**, the UN General Assembly (UNGA) adopted a resolution A/RES/63/139, proclaiming the 19 August of every year as World Humanitarian Day.

iii.The day **19 August** commemorates the **bomb attack** on the UN headquarters in **Baghdad, Iraq** in **2003**, which resulted in 22 deaths of humanitarian aid workers, including Sergio Vieira de Mello, the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) to Iraq.

Sadbhavana Diwas or Harmony Day 2024 – August 20

Sadbhavana Diwas, also known as Harmony Day, is annually observed across India on August 20 to commemorate the birth anniversary of the former Indian Prime Minister (PM) Rajiv Gandhi.

- The day aims to promote peace, national integration, and communal harmony throughout India. It also serves as a reminder of his vision for a peaceful, prosperous, and united India.
- Sadbhavana Diwas 2024 marks the **80th birth anniversary** of Rajiv Gandhi. He was born on August 20, 1944.

Background:

The first Sadbhavana Diwas was observed on **August 20, 1992**, a year after Rajiv Gandhi assassination on 21st May 1991.

- The word ‘Sadbhavana’ means ‘Goodwill and Bonafide’ in English.

First-Ever National Space Day – 23 August 2024

The **first-ever National Space Day (NSpD)** is observed across India on **23 August 2024** to commemorate the achievement of the Chandrayaan-3 Mission launched by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).

i. The 2024 theme of NSpD is, “**Touching Lives while Touching the Moon: India’s Space Saga.**”

ii. On 22 August 2024, **President Droupadi Murmu** presented the **Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar (RVP) -2024**, at an award ceremony held at Gantantra Mandap, Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi(Delhi).

- The **ISRO–Chandrayaan 3 Team** was awarded the **Vigyan Team (VT) Award** for their contributions to space science and technology.
- iii. In **August 2023**, the GoI declared the 23 August of every year as National Space Day, to mark the remarkable success of the Chandrayaan-3 mission.

National Sports Day 2024 – August 29

National Sports Day (NSD), also known as Rashtriya Khel Divas, is annually observed in India on **29th August** to honour the **birth anniversary** of **Major Dhyan Chand Singh**, one of the greatest field hockey players in the history of Indian sports.

- He was born on **29th August 1905**, in Allahabad, British India (now Prayagraj in Uttar Pradesh).
- 29 August 2024** marks the celebration of the **13th NSD**.



- The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MYAS) requested all the Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) to organise sporting and fitness activities any 1 day between 26 and 31 August 2024, to celebrate NSD 2024.

Background:

- i.In **2012**, The Government of India (**GoI**) declared that **29 August** of every year will be observed as **National Sports Day**, to **commemorate** the **birthday** of **Major Dhyan Chand**.
- ii.The **1st NSD** was observed on **29 August 2012**.