



Current Affairs Supplement

December 2024

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National

Arjun Vajpai Became 1st Indian to Conquer Mount Shishapangma in China

Arjun Vajpai, the youngest person to climb Mount (Mt.) Everest, achieved a historic milestone by summiting **Mount Shishapangma** in China, his eighth peak above **8,000** meters(m).

- This remarkable feat makes him the **1st Indian** to summit Mt. Shishapangma, the fastest to ascend it (a Base Camp to summit and back in under 72 hours), and the first Indian to climb eight 8,000m peaks.
- i. Arjun Vajpai began his pursuit of all **14** of the world's 8,000m peaks at age 16 and now he is on track to become the **first Indian** to complete this extraordinary achievement.

- Now he summited 8 of the 14 tallest mountains on Earth.
- ii. He was only 30 years old when he set the **Guinness World Record** for being the youngest person to climb Mt. Everest (2010) and Mt. Lhotse (2011) and also holds the record for the fastest ascent of an 8,000m peak in China.
- iii. His mountaineering legacy includes summits of Everest (2010), Lhotse (2011), Manaslu (2011), Makalu (2016), Cho Oyu (2016), Kanchenjunga (2018), and Annapurna (2023). Despite setbacks, including a serious injury, Vajpai's resilience continues to inspire India.

India Re-elected to UN Peacebuilding Commission for 2025-2026

India was re-elected to the United Nations (UN) Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) for the 2025-2026 term, consolidating its position in global peace efforts.

- Currently, India is serving as the member of the commission and its tenure will expire on **31st December, 2024**.
- The announcement was made by the Permanent Mission of India to the UN.

About UN-PBC:

i. PBC was established in **December, 2005** as an intergovernmental advisory body that supports peace efforts in conflict-affected countries and is an important addition to the capacity of the International Community in the broad peace agenda.

- India has been a founding member of the UN-PBC since its formation in 2005.
- ii. At present, PBC has **31 member states** which are elected from the UN General Assembly (**UNGA**) and UN Security Council (**UNSC**) and UN Economic and Social Council (**ECOSOC**). It also includes the top financial contributing nations and the top troop-contributing nations to the UN as members.
- iii. The main function of the PBC is to provide recommendations and information to enhance the coordination of all relevant actors within and outside the UN.
- iv. It acts as a bridge among the principal organs and relevant entities of the UN by sharing advice on peacebuilding needs and priorities, which is in alignment with the respective competencies and responsibilities of these bodies.

India's Role in UN-PBC:

i. India is among the largest contributors of uniformed personnel to UN Peacekeeping missions.



- More than 200,000 Indians have served in 49 of the 71 UN peacekeeping missions established around the world since 1948.
- ii. Currently, India has deployed about **6,000** military and police personnel to UN operations in Abyei, the Central African Republic (CAR), Cyprus, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Lebanon, the Middle East, Somalia, South Sudan, and Western Sahara.

Navi Overtakes Cred to become 4th largest UPI app

Sachin Bansal's app **Navi** overtakes Kunal Shah's **Cred** app to become the **4th largest** Unified Payment Interface (UPI) app in India. National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) data shows that Navi witnessed a 31 percent growth by registering 157.51 million transactions in October 2024 overtaking Bengaluru-based Cred, which recorded 152.28 million transactions in the same month.

- UPI market is led by PhonePe with 48% market share, followed by Google Pay and Paytm with 37% and 7% market share respectively.
 - Both Navi and Cred now account for approximately 1% of the market share.
- Note:** In December 2024, The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) lifted the restrictions imposed on Navi citing supervisory concerns on the loan pricing strategy.

Two ISRO Astronauts Successfully Completed Initial Training for Axiom-4 Mission to ISS

Bengaluru(Karnataka) based Indian Space Research Organisation (**ISRO**) announced that two Indian astronauts, Group Captain **Shubhanshu Shukla** (prime) and Group Captain **Prasanth Balakrishnan Nair** (backup), referred to as the Gaganyatris, selected for the upcoming Axiom-4 (Ax-4) mission to the International Space Station (ISS), have successfully completed the initial phase of their training.

i. As part of the ongoing collaboration between the ISRO and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), the two Gaganyatris began their training in the United States of America(USA) in August 2024.

ii. Axiom Mission 4 (Ax-4) is a private spaceflight to the International Space Station (ISS) operated by the USA-based Axiom Space in partnership with SpaceX (an American space technology company)

About National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA):

Administrator– Bill Nelson

Headquarter– Washington, D.C., United States of America, USA

Founded- 1958

UP Declares Temporary 'Mahakumbh Mela District' for 2025 Maha Kumbh

Uttar Pradesh (UP) declared a new temporary district in preparation for the **2025 Maha KumbhMela (the festival of the sacred pitcher)** and the duration of the event exists until **March 31, 2025**. The district will be known as the "Maha Kumbh Mela District" that aims to streamline the administration and management of the large scale religious gathering in **Prayagraj(Previously known as Allahabad),UP**.



- The Maha Kumbh was scheduled to begin on **January 13 2025** will coincide with PaushPoornima and continue until MahaShivaratri on February 26, 2025.
- The UP government notified the Kumbh Mela area as the **76th district** of the state for a duration of 4 months.
- A notification has been issued under the authority granted by Section 2 (th) of the Uttar Pradesh PrayagrajMela Authority Act, 2017, to establish the Mahakumbh Mela District for the organization of Mahakumbh 2025.
- The district will function under the leadership of Mela Adhikari **Vijay Kiran Anand** who will also hold the role of District Magistrate and be responsible for the overall functioning of the district.

About KumbhMela:- The Maha KumbhMela (the festival of the sacred pitcher) is anchored in Hindu mythology. It is the world's largest public gathering and collective act of faith. **i.** KumbhMela, in Hinduism, is a religious pilgrimage that is celebrated four times over a course of 12 years. The geographical location of Kumbh Mela spans over four locations in India and the Mela site keeps rotating between one of the four pilgrimages on four sacred rivers as listed below:

- In Haridwar, Uttarakhand, on the banks of Ganges
- In Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh on the banks of Shipra
- In Nashik, Maharashtra on the banks of Godavari
- In Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh, at the confluence of the Ganges, the Yamuna, and the mythical invisible Sarasvati

About Uttar Pradesh (UP):

Chief Minister (CM)-Yogi Adityanath

Governor- Anandiben Patel

Capital- Lucknow

Highlights of International Film Festival of India 2024 held in Goa

The 55th edition of the International Film Festival of India (IFFI) was held from **20th November to 28th November 2024** at Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Stadium in **Panaji, Goa**.

- The theme of IFFI 2024, “**Young Filmmakers – The Future is Now,**” reflecting the importance of youth in shaping the future of cinema.
- The festival was organized by the **Ministry of Information & Broadcasting (MIB)**, in collaboration with the **National Film Development Corporation (NFDC)** and the **Entertainment Society of Goa (ESG)**.



Opening Ceremony:

The Opening Ceremony hosted by popular film personalities **Abhishek Banerjee** and **Bhumi Pednekar**. The festival opened with the Asia premiere of **Better Man**, an Australian film directed by **Michael Gracey** that depicts the life of popstar **Robbie Williams** who was portrayed as a chimpanzee by Jonno Davies.

Closing ceremony

The festival concluded with the Closing film, “**Dry Season**” – directed by the acclaimed Czech filmmaker **BohdanSláma**, depicting the story of humanity, sustainability, and generational bonds and a conflict between two family clans.

India's First Hyperloop Test Track for High Speed Transportation

India's first Hyperloop test track measuring 410 meters(m) was successfully completed at Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras, Discovery Campus in Thaiyur, TamilNadu (TN). The announcement was made by Union Minister **Ashwini Vaishnaw**, Ministry of Railways (MoR).

- The test track was developed through a collaborative effort involving the Indian Railways (**IR**), IIT Madras' AvishkarHyperloop team and the TuTr incubated startup at IIT Madras.
- i. The first full scale Hyperloop project in India is set to connect Mumbai and Pune (Maharashtra), reducing travel time between the two cities to just 25 minutes.
- ii. The Hyperloop is an innovative high speed transportation system designed to transport pods, which carry 24-28 passengers, through low pressure tubes at speeds up to 1,100 kilometre per hour(km/h).
- iii. With an estimated cost of Rs 1.5 billion/km, this system promises high speeds, energy efficiency, reduced congestion and lower noise pollution marking a significant leap towards future mobility in India.

Note: The Hyperloop concept was originally popularised by Elon Musk in 2012.

Punjab: 1st state to enact Development and Promotion of Sports Act 2024

Punjab Chief Minister (**CM**) **Bhagwant Singh Mann** has given approval to enact the ‘Punjab State (Development and Promotion of Sports) Act 2024’, becoming the **1st state** in India to promote the enhancement of sports infrastructure and transparency in player selection.

- As per the National State Policy (**NSP**) 2024, the initiative aims to establish a legal framework that adopts **National** and **International** best practices to drive the development of sports within the state.
- The primary objectives of the Act include promoting the growth of sports, ensuring the fair selection of players at district, state and national levels and also fostering transparency within sports associations.
- The act mandates that accounts must be maintained by a Chartered Accountant, with an annual statement of income and expenditure published by May 31.

About Punjab State (Development and Promotion of Sports) Act 2024:

- i. A five-member committee:** To select the team & players for district or state representation, consisting of the General Secretary, 2 Senior Coaches and 2 Eminent players.
- ii. A Dispute Resolution Committee:** Formed under the Deputy Commissioner or Administrative Secretary will address player appeals within **7 days**.
- iii. A five-member Sexual Harassment Committee:** Formed at the district level by the District Magistrate, consisting of 3 female and 2 male members from the Executive Committees of Sports Associations.
- iv. A State level committee** will be formed by the Administrative Secretary of the Sports Department.

- Committees may take ‘suo-moto’ (on its own motion) notice of incidents.

Three Books on Sitaram Yechury's Writings on culture, media, and secularism Launched

Former CPI(M) General Secretary **Prakash Karat** released the three books based on late Communist Party of India (Marxist) CPI(M) leader **Sitaram Yechury's** writings on culture, media, science and secularism at Jawahar Bhawan in New Delhi (Delhi).

- These books, published posthumously by the SafdarHashmi Memorial Trust (SAHMAT) based in New Delhi and **Tulika Books**. These books are available in both Hindi and English.
- i. One of the books, '*Hindu Rashtra HaiKya*', is a Hindi translation of Yechury's influential 1993 work *What is Hindu Rashtra*, written shortly after the demolition of the Babri Masjid.
- The other two books are '*The Fight for the Republic*', which includes essays on Hindutva and India @75, and '*Reflections on Culture, Media, and Science*'.
- ii. Sitaram Yechury, born in Chennai, Tamil Nadu (TN), was a prominent CPI(M) leader and former RajyaSabha Member. He passed away on September 12, 2024, leaving a lasting impact on Indian political thought.

President Droupadi Murmu granted assent to Bharatiya Vayuyan Vidheyak 2024 to replace Aircraft Act 1934

The President of India, **Droupadi Murmu** granted assent to the **Bharatiya Vayuyan Vidheyak (BVV) 2024**, which replaced the colonial-era (90-year-old) **Aircraft Act of 1934**.



- The notification was issued by the Ministry of Law and Justice (MoL&J) following the bill's passage in both Houses of Parliament, RajyaSabha (Council of States) and the LokSabha(House of the People).
- i. The primary aim is to enhance safety, streamline regulatory processes and improve aviation security and infrastructure management in India.
- ii. The BVV 2024, introduced in July 2024 and passed in August 2024 by LokSabha, aims to modernize India's aviation regulatory framework, eliminate redundancies and enhance ease of doing business in the sector.

Union Cabinet Approved "One Nation, One Election" Bill

The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi approved two key bills regarding One Nation, One Election (ONOE), which aimed to conduct simultaneous Lok Sabha elections with state legislative assemblies and local bodies across the country in a phased manner.

- i. The 1st bill named **the Constitution (129th Amendment) Bill, 2024** will enable the terms of the Lok Sabha and state assemblies to be synchronized.
- ii. The Second bill named **The Union Territories Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2024** aims to align elections in the Union Territories (UTs) of Puducherry, Delhi and Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) with Lok Sabha elections.
- iii. Both these bills are based on the key recommendations of the High-level Committee on Simultaneous Elections, which was constituted under the chairmanship of former President of India Ram Nath Kovind in September 2023.

India's Foreign Direct Investment inflows hit USD 1 Trillion

As per data released by **Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)** in December 2024, **India** reached a significant economic milestone with gross Foreign Direct Investment (**FDI**) inflows totaling **USD 1 trillion** since **April 2000**.

- In the first half of the current Financial Year 2024-25 (FY25), FDI increased by about 26% to USD 42.1 billion.
- FDI inflows totaled **USD 709.84 billion** over the last ten years (April 2014 to September 2024), which represents 68.69% of all FDI inflows over the past 24 years.
- The government's flagship initiative, "**Make in India**," along with liberalized sectoral policies and the Goods and Services Tax (GST) has strengthened investments in India.
- In 2024, the Income Tax Act, 1961 was amended to abolish angel tax and reduce the income tax rate for foreign companies

Top FDI Investors in India

i. Mauritius topped FDI inflows at 25%, followed by **Singapore** in second place with 24%. The US ranked third at 10%, while the Netherlands (7%), Japan (6%), and the UK (5%) also made significant contributions.

ii. Smaller investors like the UAE, Cayman Islands, Germany, and Cyprus contributed 2%-3% each.

Union Minister Rammohan Naidu Unveils 100 Years Celebration Logo of NSCBI Airport in Kolkata

Union Minister Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu, Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA), unveiled the **centenary celebrations logo** of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose International Airport (**NSCBI Airport**) in Kolkata, West Bengal (WB), commemorating 100 years of its service.



- A special **commemorative stamp** and coin were also released to honor the airport's 100-year journey, along with the launch of an exclusive art book showcasing India's rich cultural heritage through modern airport architecture.
- The event was attended by Vumlunmang Vualnam, Secretary of the MoCA, Vipin Kumar, Chairman of the Airport Authority of India (AAI), and other senior officials.

i. Kolkata Airport marked its 100th anniversary on December 21, 2024. A three-month-long celebration has been planned.

ii. A dedicated **UDAN Yatri Café** will be opened at the airport, catering to passengers traveling under the Ude Desh ka Aam Naagrik (UDAN) scheme. The café will provide quality, affordable meals to enhance the travel experience for passengers.

Note: The civil aviation sector in India is growing rapidly and has positioned itself as the **third-largest** domestic aviation hub globally.

Overview of Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake's visit to India from December 15 to 17, 2024

President of Sri Lanka, **Anura Kumara Dissanayake**(AKD), visited India from December 15 to 17,2024, marking his **first bilateral** trip to India after Sri Lanka's presidential and parliamentary elections. He was accompanied by Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka Vijitha Herath and Deputy Minister of Finance Anil Jayantha Fernando. This visit was undertaken at the invitation of the Indian Prime Minister(PM) **Narendra Modi**.



- During the visit, President Dissanayake held discussions with Indian PM **Narendra Modi** and President **Droupadi Murmu** on various bilateral issues of mutual interest.
- He also participated in a business event in New Delhi(Delhi) aimed at strengthening investment and commercial ties between India and Sri Lanka and also visited Bodh Gaya(Bihar).

i.India and Sri Lanka sign two agreements on **Double taxation**, capacity building and training in the presence of Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake and PM Narendra Modi in New Delhi(Delhi).

ii.Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake along with PM Narendra Modi issued a joint statement titled "**Fostering Partnerships for a Shared Future**" which outlined a wide range of collaborative initiatives, from energy partnerships to regional security cooperation.

About Sri Lanka:

President- Anura Kumara Dissanayake

Prime Minister (PM)-Harini Nireka Amarasuriya

Capital- Colombo

Union Minister Bhupender Yadav releases India State of Forest Report 2023

Union Minister, **Bhupender Yadav**, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) released the 18th edition of 'India State of Forest Report(**ISFR 2023**)' on Volume I and Volume II at Forest Research Institute (FRI) in Dehradun, Uttarakhand.

- According to the report, India's total **forest and tree cover** in 2023 stands at **827,357 square kilometer**(sq km), which is around 25% of the geographical area of India. This marks an overall increase of 1,445 sq km from 2021, with forest cover alone rising by 156 sq km.
- The ISFR report was brought out by the Forest Survey of India (FSI) on a biennial basis in 1987.

i.Total Forest & Tree Cover: 8,27,356.95 sq km(25.17% of India's area).

- **Forest cover:** 7,15,342.61 sq km(21.76%)

- **Tree cover:** 1,12,014.34 sq km(3.41%)

ii.Highest forest cover: MP (77,073 sq km) followed by Arunachal Pradesh(AR) (65,882 sq km) and Chhattisgarh (55,812 sq km) are the top three states having largest forest cover in Area wise.

About Forest Survey of India (FSI):

The Forest Survey of India (FSI) was established in 1981 after the expansion of the Pre-Investment Survey of Forest Resources (PISFR) project initiated in 1965 by Food and

Agriculture Organization (FAO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Government of India (GoI).

- The scope of PISFR's activities was expanded and it was reorganised as the FSI in 1981.

Director General(DG) – Anoop Singh
Headquartered – Dehradun, Uttarakhand

HarperCollins India to Release Deepa Malik's 'Bring It On: The Incredible Story of My Life'

In December 2024, HarperCollins Publishers India Private Limited, headquartered in Gurgaon, Haryana, a subsidiary of HarperCollins Publishers Limited (United Kingdom, UK), has announced the release of *Bring It On: The Incredible Story of My Life*, a memoir by **Deepa Malik**, India's first female Paralympic medalist.

i. The book shares Deepa Malik's inspiring journey of overcoming numerous challenges, including surviving three spinal tumors. She discusses her fight against societal biases, patriarchy, and politics, all while breaking barriers as a **wheelchair-liberated athlete**.

ii. **Deepa Malik** is India's leading para athlete, having won 23 international medals. She made history as India's first female Paralympic medalist with a silver at the Rio Paralympics 2016. She has received the Padma Shri, Khel Ratna, Arjuna Award, and holds four Limca Book of Records (LBR).

- She has served as the **first female president** of the Paralympic Committee of India (PCI), holds three honorary doctorates, the Asian Order, and now serves as South Asia's representative on the Asian Paralympic Committee (APC) board.

International

Russia hands over BRICS chairmanship to Brazil at Sherpa meeting in Ekaterinburg The final Sherpa and Sous-Sherpa meeting of BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) was held in Ekaterinburg, Russia, from 27th to 28th November 2024.



- The meeting witnessed the ceremonial handover of the BRICS chairmanship from **Russia** to **Brazil**, marking the end of a pivotal year for the bloc under Russia's leadership.

Points to note:

i. Sergey Ryabkov, Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister and BRICS Sherpa, stated the progress of the BRICS nations in various sectors, including politics, security, economics, and humanitarian efforts.

ii. During its tenure, **Russia** organised over 250 events to strengthen cooperation within BRICS.

iii. Under Russia's presidency, XVI BRICS Summit was held in Kazan from 22nd to 24th October 2024. This led to the adoption of the Kazan Declaration.

- The summit also marked the expansion of BRICS. **Egypt, Iran, the UAE (United Arab Emirates) and Ethiopia** were welcomed as a full member in 2024. Additionally, Belarus, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand joined as BRICS partners in 2024.

About BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa):

The grouping was formed in September 2006 and it originally comprised Brazil, Russia, India and China (BRIC).

Chair (2025) – Brazil

Headquarters – Shanghai, China

China launched world's 1st 'self-driving' satellites

China successfully launched the world's first 'self-driving' satellites developed by the Shanghai Academy of Spaceflight Technology (SAST), a subsidiary of the China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation (CASC), marking a milestone in the country's commercial space programme. It was the 547th flight mission of the Long March series of rockets.



- The two satellites, named **Siwei Gaojing-2 03** and **Gaojing-2 04**, were launched aboard a Long March-2C carrier rocket from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Centre (JSLC) in northwest China.
- The satellites will provide high-resolution, all-day, all-weather radar imagery.

About the self-driving Satellites:

i. These satellites have been designed to maintain or change their flight paths without ground intervention and revolutionise surveying and mapping in the space sector.

ii. The SAST-developed satellites bring advanced capabilities to space exploration and are equipped with Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) technology and high-precision radar payloads, enabling them to:

- Automatically return to orbit with an unprecedented accuracy of **100 metres(m)**.
- Perform formation coordinated fly around at sub metre precision.

UN Climate Change Conference, COP29 conducted at Baku in Azerbaijan

The 29th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations (UN) Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP29) took place in Baku, Azerbaijan from 11th to 22nd November 2024. UN Climate Change Executive Secretary Simon Stiell inaugurated COP29.

- The event also included the **19th** meeting of the COP serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (**CMP 19**), and the 6th meeting of the COP serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (**CMA 6**) with an aim to complete first enhanced transparency framework and the new collective quantified goal on finance, among other matters.
- The 61st sessions of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (**SBSTA 61**) and the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (**SBI 61**) will also be conducted alongside the event.
- The COP29 Presidency of Azerbaijan announced that the **Baku Finance Goal (BFG)** to send USD 1.3 trillion in climate finance every year to developing countries, much higher than the previous USD 100 billion goal. This will help boost global investment.
- India focused on **accountability, green credit, fair financing**, and achievable **climate goals** for its developing economy at CoP29.
- COP29 adopts new operational standards for **global carbon market** under Paris Agreement **Article 6** to enhance international collaboration for reducing carbon emissions.

QS World University Rankings Sustainability 2025 : IIT Delhi Topped Among All Indian Universities; University of Toronto

According to the 3rd edition of the “QS World University Rankings: Sustainability 2025” released by the Quacquarelli Symonds (QS), global higher education experts on December 10 2024, the Indian Institute of Technology-Delhi (IIT-D) in New Delhi (Delhi) has topped among all Indian universities featured on the list and secured **171st** position globally with overall score of **80.6**. It has improved its ranking by 255 places compared to 426th spot in last year.

i. IIT-D is followed by IIT Kharagpur (**IIT-KGP**) in Kharagpur, West Bengal (WB) and IIT Bombay (**IIT-B**) in Mumbai, Maharashtra ranked at **202nd** and **234th** position, respectively.
ii. The **University of Toronto**, Canada has topped the list as the world’s most sustainable university, followed by the **ETH Zurich** in Zurich, Switzerland ranked at **2nd** position.

- While, **Lund University in Sweden** and University of California, Berkeley (**UCB**), the United States of America (USA), jointly ranked at **3rd** spot on the list.

16th UNCCD Conference of the Parties (COP16) in Riyadh

The 16th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP16) of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) was conducted from 2nd December to 13th December

2024 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The conference was based on the theme – Our Land. Our Future, saw the participation of nearly 200 countries.

- The conference aimed to renew global commitment to enhance investment and action to restore land and boost drought resilience for the benefit of people and planet.
- This was the **first UNCCD COP being held in the Middle East and North Africa region** and the largest multilateral conference ever hosted by Saudi Arabia.
- The event also coincided with the **UNCCD's 30th anniversary**.
- The UNCCD estimates **that USD 2.6 trillion in investments are needed by 2030** to restore over one billion hectares of degraded land and enhance drought resilience.

Bloomberg World's Richest Families 2024: Waltons top with USD 432.4 bn, Ambani's ranked 8th

According to the **Bloomberg's Richest Family 2024 Index**, the **Walton family of Walmart** (United States of America) have secured the top spot as the world's wealthiest family with a net worth of **USD 432.4 billion**.

- The **Al Nahayan Family** (United Arab Emirates) (USD 323.9 billion) secured the **2nd** spot followed by the **Al-Thani Family** (Qatar) (USD 172.9 billion) gained the **3rd** spot on the list.
- Amongst the Indian families, the **Ambani family** (USD 99.6 billion) and **Mistrys of Shapoorji Pallonji** (USD 41.4 billion) family have secured spots in this global ranking at **8th** and **23rd** respectively.

Key Highlights:

i. The net worth of the Walmart family has surpassed the individual net worth of Elon Musk and the combined wealth of royal families in the Middle East.

ii. The **Hermes Family (France)** has secured the **4th** spot with a net worth of **USD 170.6 billion** while the **Koch Family (US)** has secured the **5th** spot with a net worth of **USD 148.5 billion**.

iii. Overall, however, India's richest saw their net worths increase as the top 20 have added **USD 67.3 billion** since January 2024 — with the biggest gainers being **Shiv Nadar** (USD 10.8 billion) and **Savitri Jindal** (USD 10.1 billion).

iv. **Gautam Adani** was **omitted** as first-generation wealth and single-heir fortunes were excluded from this ranking.

3 Indian Women on Forbes' 2024 World's 100 Most Powerful Women List; Topped by Ursula von der Leyen

In December 2024, Forbes, an American global media company released the 21st annual ranking of the World's 100 Most Powerful Women (MPW) list. Union Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, Ministry of Finance, MoF and Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) (ranked at 28th spot) has topped among the 3 Indian women featured on the list.

- She is followed by **Roshni Nadar Malhotra**, Chairperson of HCL Technologies; and **Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw**, Founder and Executive Chairperson of Biocon India Private Limited ranked at **81st** and **82nd** spot on the list respectively.

i. Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission (EC) has topped the list for the **3rd** consecutive year, followed by Christine Lagarde, President of European Central Bank (ECB); Georgia Meloni, President of Italy ranked at **2nd** and **3rd** position respectively.

ii. This latest edition of the rankings has represented women on the list into 6 main categories: business, technology, finance, media & entertainment, politics & policy, and philanthropy.

iii. Caitlin Clark (22 year old), an American Basketball player who ranked at **100th** spot has become the youngest person to be featured on Forbes' 2024 MPW list.

About Forbes:

Chief Executive Officer (CEO)- Mike Federle

Headquarters- New Jersey, the United States of America (USA)

Established- 1917.

Zscaler ThreatLabz Report : India Tops Global List for Mobile Malware Attacks

According to the “**Zscaler ThreatLabz 2024 Mobile, IoT, and OT Threat Report**” by Zscaler Inc., headquartered in United States America (USA), India tops the list globally in mobile malware attacks, accounting for 28 % of worldwide attacks. This marks a significant jump from its previous 3rd place ranking in 2023. India surpasses the United States (US) at 27.3% and Canada at 15.9%.

- A dataset covering over 20 billion threat-related mobile transactions and associated cyber threats, spanning from June 2023 to May 2024.
- The United States remains **the top target of Internet of Things (IoT) attacks**, experiencing 81% of overall attacks, followed by Singapore, the UK, Germany, and Canada.
- Manufacturing experienced the **highest volume of IoT attacks**, accounting for 36% of all IoT malware blocks observed, followed by transportation (14%) and food, beverage & tobacco (11%). Meanwhile, the technology and education sectors were most targeted by mobile threats.

Overview of the Cyber Threat

ThreatLabz reported a 111% rise in mobile spyware and a 29% increase in banking malware, indicating a sharp rise in financially-motivated cyber-attacks. The report also highlighted a 45% rise in IoT (Internet of Things) malware attacks

World Bank: India Emerged Topmost Recipient of Remittances among LMICs, with USD 129 billion Inflows in 2024

According to the World Bank (WB)'s latest data, **India** has emerged as the topmost recipient of remittances among Low and Middle-Income Countries (**LMICs**) in 2024, with an estimated inflow of **USD 129 billion**, witnessed an increase of **3.2%** compared to USD 125 billion in 2023.

- India is followed by **Mexico** (USD 68 billion), **China** (USD 48 billion), **the Philippines** (USD 40 billion), and **Pakistan** (USD 33 billion). This surge is mainly attributed by a recovery in the job markets in High-Income Countries (HICs) within the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (**OECD**).

i. As per the data, globally, remittance inflows have increased by an impressive **5.8%** in 2024 compared to modest growth of 1.2% registered in 2023.

ii. The report highlighted that officially recorded remittances to LMICs are projected to reach **USD 685 billion** in 2024.



China Approves Construction of World's Largest Hydropower Dam on Brahmaputra River

China approved the construction of the world's largest hydropower dam on **Yarlung Zangbo River**, the 5th largest river of China in Tibet (China), a region where the Brahmaputra river flows into India and Bangladesh.

- With an estimated investment of USD 137 billion, the dam, situated near the India-Tibet border, will be the largest infrastructure project in the world.
- The project, part of China's 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-2025), aims to generate 300 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity annually, more than three times the capacity of the 'Three Gorges Dam', currently the world's largest, in central China.

i. The dam will be constructed at a dramatic gorge where the Brahmaputra River makes a sharp U-turn in the Himalayas.

- This part of the river offers significant hydropower potential due to a 2,000-meter (6,561 feet) drop over just 50 kilometers (31 miles).

USA declares 'Bald eagle' as National Bird after 240 years

President of the United States of America (USA), **Joseph Robinette Biden** signed a bipartisan bill that officially designates the "**Bald Eagle**" as the **National bird of the USA**. The significant recognition formalizes the bald eagle's role as a symbol of American strength and power, a position it has held informally for over 240 years.



- The bald eagle has been a symbol of the USA since 1782, when it was featured on the Great Seal of the USA. The seal includes the eagle, an olive branch, arrows, a shield, the motto "E Pluribus Unum (Out of Many, One)" and a constellation of stars.

i. The bald eagle is native to North America, Canada, the USA and appears on various national emblems, including the presidential flag, USA currency and military insignia.

ii. **Haliaeetus leucocephalus** is the scientific name of the bald eagle, known for its striking white head and yellow beak atop its brown body.

Defence

11th edition of Indian Coast Guard's "SAREX-24" Maritime Exercise Held in Kerala

The 11th edition of Indian Coast Guard (ICG)'s National Maritime Search and Rescue Exercise & Workshop (SAREX-24) was held in Kochi, Kerala from 28th November to 29th November.

- It is a **biennial** exercise, which was conducted under the aegis of New Delhi (Delhi)-based National Maritime Search and Rescue Board (NMSARB).
- **Theme of SAREX-24:** "Enhancing Search and Rescue capabilities through Regional collaboration".

Key Dignitaries: **S. Paramesh**, Director General (DG) of ICG and also the DG of National Maritime Search and Rescue Coordinating Authority (NMSRCA) was among the dignitaries present at the event.

Note: The 10th edition of SAREX-22 was held in Chennai, Tamil Nadu (TN) in 2022, under the theme "Capacity Building Towards Marine Passenger Safety".

About SAREX-24:

i. The 1st day of the exercise featured several programmes, including table-top exercise, workshop & seminars which involved participation of senior officials from government agencies, ministries and armed forces, among others.

India-Singapore bilateral military exercise 'Agni Warrior 2024' held in Maharashtra

The India-Singapore bilateral military exercise 'Agni Warrior (XAW-2024)' was held at the Devlali Field Firing Ranges in Maharashtra from November 28 to November 30. This annual exercise is part of the ongoing defense collaboration between the two nations and aims to enhance cooperation and interoperability between their artillery units.



- The 13th edition of Joint Military Exercise intends to showcase joint firepower planning and execution, utilizing New Generation Equipment by the artillery arms of both armies.

Background:

i. The Agni Warrior Exercise conducted under the Army Bilateral Agreement between India and Singapore since 2004.

ii. The exercise comprised extensive joint preparation and field training. Personnel from both armies collaborated on multiple operational aspects.

iii. The 12th Edition of Exercise Agni Warrior held at Field Firing Ranges, Devlali in 2022.

About Agni Warrior 2024:

Indian Army and Cambodian Army Collaborate in First Edition of Exercise CINBAX

The inaugural edition of Exercise CINBAX, a Joint Table Top Exercise (TTX) between the Indian Army (IA) and Cambodian Army commenced at the Foreign Training Node in Pune, Maharashtra.



- CINBAX 2024 will run till 8th December 2024.

- The exercise aims to enhance the operational efficiency and interoperability of both armies in peacekeeping missions under the United Nations Charter.

About CINBAX 2024:

- The Exercise **CINBAX** involves 20 personnel from each side, with the IA contingent comprising soldiers from an Infantry Brigade.
- The primary objective of the exercise is to plan and conduct joint Counter Terrorism (CT) operations, focusing on establishing a Joint Training Task (JTT) Force for Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance.
- The exercise will also cover operational planning in a CT environment, wargaming various contingencies and the integration of force multipliers in sub-conventional operations.

4th Indo-Malaysia Joint Military Exercise 'Harimau Shakti' Begins in Malaysia

The 4th edition of India- Malaysia Joint Military Exercise 'Harimau Shakti', between the Indian Army (IA) and the Malaysian Army, commenced at Bentong Camp in Pahang district, Malaysia. The exercise is scheduled to continue until December 15, 2024.

- The aim of Harimau Shakti 2024 is to enhance defence cooperation, further augmenting bilateral relations between the two nations.

Background:

- Harimau Shakti, the Indo-Malaysia joint exercise, has been conducted annually since 2012 to enhance bilateral ties and cooperation between the two nations.
- This annual exercise is hosted alternately in India and Malaysia.
- The previous edition was conducted in **November 2023** at Umroi Cantonment, located in Ri Bhoi district of Meghalaya, India.

Harimau

Shakti

2024:

i. Participants: The Indian contingent is represented by 78 personnel from the **MAHAR Regiment**, while the Malaysian contingent comprises 123 personnel from the **Royal Malaysian Regiment**.

India, France and UAE Conducted Trilateral Air Exercise 'Desert Knight 2024' over Arabian Sea

The Indian Air Force (IAF), the France Air and Space Force (FASF) and the United Arab Emirates Air Force (UAEAF) have conducted their trilateral air combat exercise 'Desert Knight 2024' over the Arabian Sea for three days from **11 to 13 December 2024** to enhance their defence cooperation. It was the 2nd trilateral exercise of 2024.

- The aim of the exercise was to enhance synergy and interoperability among the air forces of the three countries.

Participants:

- The IAF participated with aircraft, **Sukhoi-30MKIs** and **Jaguars**, supported by IL-78 mid-air refuellers and AEW&C (airborne early-warning and control) systems, operating from Jamnagar, Gujarat.
- French **Rafale jets** and UAE's **F-16 fighters** were stationed at the Al Dhafra airbase in the UAE.

About Desert Knight 2024:

- The "large force engagement" exercise showcased intense combat exercise conducted around



350-400 kilometer(km) southwest of Karachi, over the Arabian Sea.

SLINEX 2024 : India, Sri Lanka joint naval exercise held in Visakhapatnam, AP

The 11th Edition of annual bilateral maritime Exercise Sri Lanka-India Naval Exercise(**SLINEX-24**) held between the Indian Navy(IN) and the Sri Lankan Navy under the Eastern Naval Command of the IN from December 17-20, 2024 in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh(**AP**).

- The primary aim of SLINEX 2024 is to enhance the operational interoperability between the Indian and Sri Lankan navies.
- i. It was initiated in **2005** and evolved into a significant series of exercises designed to improve interoperability, foster mutual understanding and promote maritime security in the **Indian Ocean** region.
- ii. The previous edition of SLINEX was conducted in Colombo, Sri Lanka in April 2023.

US Successfully Tested Long-Range Hypersonic Weapon 'Dark Eagle'

The United States (**US**) **Army**, in collaboration with the **US Navy**, successfully test-fired its Long-Range Hypersonic Weapon (**LRHW**), also known as '**Dark Eagle**' at Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Florida, United States of America (**USA**). The launch was the 2nd successful end-to-end flight of the weapon's All Up Round (**AUR**) in 2024 using the LRHW's trailer based launcher system.

- This event was the **1st live-fire** demonstration of the system, involving both a Battery Operations Center and a Transporter Erector Launcher in the Pentagon's hypersonic missile development program.
- The aim of this initiative is to strengthen the USA's defence capabilities, particularly in strategic regions like the South China Sea.

About LRHW:

- i. The Long-Range Hypersonic Weapon (LRHW) is a cutting-edge hypersonic missile developed by **Lockheed Martin Corporation** and **Northrop Grumman Corporation**.
- ii. The missile utilizes a two-stage rocket booster to carry the Navy's Common Hypersonic Glide Body (C-HGB) to speeds exceeding Mach 5(761 meter per hour, mph).

Appointments or Resign/Retired

Harbhajan joins Sania Mirza, Evra, El Khatib and Nurmagedov as ambassadors of Dubai Sports Council

In November 2024, **Harbhajan Singh**, former Indian cricketer, was appointed as Dubai Sports Council (DSC)'s **Sports Ambassador** to promote sports in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

- The announcement was made in the presence, His Highness Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai and Chairman of The Executive Council of Dubai.

i. Along with Harbhajan Singh, Khabib Nurmagedov (Russian Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) Champion), Sania Mirza (former Indian Tennis player), and Patrice Evra (French Footballer) were appointed as Sports Ambassadors of DSC.

ii. Harbhajan Singh, has scored 711 wickets in international cricket which includes 417 in Tests and 269 in One-Day Internationals (ODI).

Hemant Soren Sworn-in as CM of Jharkhand for 4th term

Hemant Soren was sworn in as the 14th Chief Minister (CM) of Jharkhand at Morabadi Ground in Ranchi, Jharkhand. This marks Hemant Soren's 4th term as CM of Jharkhand.

- Governor of Jharkhand, **Santosh Kumar Gangwar** administered the oath of office and secrecy.
- Soren's Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM), in alliance with the Congress, Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) and Communist Party of India-Marxist-Leninist Liberation (CPI-ML-L), secured 56 of 81 Assembly seats in the Jharkhand Assembly election held in November 2024.



Points to note:

i. In January 2024, he resigned from the CM post after being arrested by the Enforcement Directorate (ED).

ii. On 4th July 2024, he was sworn in as the CM of Jharkhand for the 3rd term.

About Hemant Soren:

i. Hemant Soren is an Indian politician and member of Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM).

ii. He became Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) for the 1st time in 2009.

iii. He took charge as CM for the first time in 2013. He was again re-elected in 2019.

iv. He has also served as a Rajya Sabha member from 2009 to 2010 and Deputy CM of Jharkhand from 2010 to 2013.

Masato Kanda Elected as ADB's 11th President

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) Board of Governors elected **Masato Kanda** as **11th President** of ADB. He will succeed incumbent **Masatsugu Asakawa**, who will leave office on February 23 2025.

- He will assume office on **February 24 2025** and will also complete the unexpired tenure of Masatsugu Asakawa that ends on November 23 2026.



- Prior to this appointment, Masato Kanda served as Special Advisor to Japan's Prime Minister (**PM**) and Ministry of Finance.

About Masato Kanda:

i. Masato Kanda has held key leadership roles at the Ministry of Finance of Japan, including Vice-Minister of Finance for International Affairs gaining nearly **4 decades** of experience.

- During his tenure as Vice-Minister of Finance for International Affairs, Japan made a record contribution of more than **USD 1 billion** to the Asian Development Fund 13th replenishment (**ADF 13**).

Devendra Fadnavis Sworn-in as 21st CM of Maharashtra; Eknath Shinde & Ajit Pawar as Deputy CM

Devendra Fadnavis, leader of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), was sworn in as 21st Chief Minister (CM) of Maharashtra, marking his 3rd term following the Mahayuti alliance's victory. The BJP-Shiv Sena-NCP Mahayuti coalition has a majority of 230 seats in the 288-members in the Maharashtra Assembly election held in November 2024.



- Maharashtra's Governor CP Radhakrishnan administered the oath of office at a grand ceremony held at Azad Maidan in Mumbai, Maharashtra.
- The swearing-in ceremony was attended by Prime Minister (**PM**) Narendra Modi, Union Ministers Rajnath Singh, Ministry of Defence (MoD), Amit Shah, Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), and Nitin Gadkari, Ministry of Road Transport & Highways (MoRTH) along with Bollywood stars and industrialists like Shah Rukh Khan, Salman Khan, Mukesh Ambani and Kumar Mangalam Birla.

Other

Appointments:

Eknath Shinde of Shiv Sena and Ajit Pawar of the Nationalist Congress Party (**NCP**) also took their oaths as Deputy CM of Maharashtra.

Revenue Secretary Sanjay Malhotra appointed as the new Governor of RBI

The Government of India (GoI) appointed **Sanjay Malhotra**, Revenue Secretary, Ministry of Finance (**MoF**) as the new Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (**RBI**). He replaced Shaktikanta Das (2nd longest serving RBI Governor) and became the **26th Governor** of RBI.



- The appointment was approved by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (**ACC**) and was notified by the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT), Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievance and Pension (MoP).
- His tenure starts on **December 11, 2024** for a period of **3 years**.

About Sanjay Malhotra:

i. Sanjay Malhotra was a 1990-batch Indian Administrative Officer (IAS) officer of the Rajasthan cadre.

ii. Malhotra is a computer science graduate from (Indian Institute of Technology) IIT Kanpur

and a master's from Princeton University, United States (US).

Shammi Silva Takes Over as 29th President of ACC

Shammi Silva, the head of Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC), has taken over as the 29th President of the Asian Cricket Council (ACC),

- He succeeded India's Jay Shah, who became the Chairman of the International Cricket Council (ICC) on December 1 2024.

About Shammi Silva:

i. Shammi Silva has a rich sporting background. He played cricket for the Colombo Cricket Club (CCC) during the 1983-84 season, where he also captained the team.

ii. Beyond cricket, he was actively involved with the Sri Lanka **squash national team**, serving as a member, manager, and coach.

iii. In May 2023, he was re-elected for the third consecutive term as Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) President.

Note: Jay Shah had served three terms as ACC President. Under his leadership, the ACC achieved remarkable milestones, including record-breaking commercial rights valuations for Asia Cup tournaments from 2024 to 2031.

About Asian Cricket Council (ACC):

The Asian Cricket Council (ACC), established in 1983, is an organization dedicated to promoting and developing the sport of cricket in Asia. It operates as a subordinate body to the International Cricket Council (ICC).



Francois Bayrou Appointed as PM of France

The President of France **Emmanuel Macron** appointed veteran centrist **Francois Bayrou**, leader of the MoDem group allied with Macron's party, as the Prime Minister (PM) of France, after former PM Michel Barnier was overthrown by Parliament.

- His appointment comes as France faces significant political instability due to a fragmented National Assembly, with no single party holding a majority.
- On December 13 2024, Michel Barnier officially transferred his power to **Francois Bayrou** during a ceremony held in Paris, France.



About Francois Bayrou:

i. Francois Bayrou (73) has presided over the European Democratic Party (EDP) and the Democratic Movement (MoDem).

ii. He was a member of the National Assembly for a seat in Pyrénées-Atlantiques from 1986 to 2012.

- From 1993 to 1997, he was the Minister of National Education in 3 successive governments.

iii. He was a Member of the European Parliament (MEP) from 1999 to 2002 and has been the mayor of Pau (City in France) since 2014.

iv. He was also a **3-time** presidential candidate in the 2002, 2007 and 2012 elections. He was

appointed as the Minister of Justice in 2017.

vi. He is the author of a biography of the 16th- and 17th-century French king Henry IV.

About France:

President– Emmanuel Macron

Former football player Mikheil Kavelashvili appointed as 6th President of Georgia

Former Manchester City footballer **Mikheil Kavelashvili** was appointed as the **6th President** of Georgia. He will assume office on **December 29 2024** and will replace incumbent President **Salome Zourabichvili**.

- Mikheil Kavelashvili was nominated by the Georgian Dream party and won the presidential election with 224 votes out of 300 votes.

Note: The president of Georgia was elected indirectly for the first time by a 300-member electoral college consisting of members of parliament and local government representatives.

About Mikheil Kavelashvili:

i. Mikheil Kavelashvili is a Georgian politician and former professional footballer, known for his career as a striker.

ii. He played in the **English Premier League** for Manchester City and in the Swiss Super League for several clubs, including Dinamo Tbilisi and Spartak Vladikavkaz.

ii. He earned 46 caps for the Georgian national football team, scoring 9 goals and helping Georgia to win the 1998 Malta International Football Tournament.

iii. He entered politics in 2016, being elected to the Parliament of Georgia for the ruling Georgian Dream party. He was re-elected in 2020.

iv. In 2022, he co-founded the **People's Power party**, a satellite faction of Georgian Dream Party.

v. In the 2024 parliamentary election, he was elected for the **3rd time**, representing the party list of Georgian Dream Party, with which People's Power had aligned.

- He was the only candidate on the ballot and easily won the vote given the Georgian Dream party's control of a 300-seat electoral college that replaced direct presidential elections in 2017.

Suman Berry Appointed Chairman of EAC-PM with Additional Charge

The Vice Chairman (VC) of the National Institute for Transforming India (**NITI Aayog**), **Suman Berry** was appointed as the **Chairman** of the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (**EAC-PM**) with an additional charge.

- He succeeded Bibek Debroy, who passed away on 1st November 2024.

Note: Debroy, a prominent economic adviser to the prime minister, was known for his extensive contributions to economic theory, income inequality, and infrastructure financing.

About Suman Berry:

i. Before being appointed as Vice-chairman of NITI Aayog, held roles as a Global Fellow at the Asia Programme of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars (WWICS) in Washington D.C., the United States of America (USA).

ii. He was also on the board of the Shakti Sustainable Energy Foundation (**SSEF**) in New Delhi, Delhi. Suman worked at the World Bank for 28 years, and later became the lead economist

iii. He had previously worked as the Director General (DG) of the National Council of Applied Economic Research (**NCAER**) in New Delhi, Delhi.

i. EAC-PM is an independent body set up to provide advice on economic and related matters to

the Government of India, especially to the Prime Minister.

ii. As of 2024, members of EAC-PM include:

- Chairman – Suman Berry
- Members – Sanjeev Sanyal, Shamika Ravi
- Part-Time Members – Rakesh Mohan, Dr Sajjid Chinoy, Dr Neelkanth Mishra, Nilesh Shah, Professor T.T. Ram Mohan and Dr Poonam Gupta

About the National Institute for Transforming India (NITI Aayog):

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) – B.V.R. Subramanyam

Chairman – Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi

Headquarters – New Delhi, Delhi

Established – 2015

Justice Manmohan sworn in as Supreme Court Judge

Former Delhi High Court Chief Justice Manmohan appointed as a judge of the Supreme Court under **Article 124(2)** of the **Constitution of India**. Justice Manmohan was born on December 17, 1962, in Delhi.

- The Supreme Court now has **33 working judges, with a sanctioned strength of 34**.
- Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna administered the oath of office. CJI Khanna was the only judge from the Delhi High Court in previous.
- The President of India appoints Supreme Court judges based on the recommendation of the Collegium (a group of senior Supreme Court judges led by the Chief Justice of India).

About Justice Manmohan

i. He became a permanent judge of the Delhi High Court on December 17, 2009 and served as acting Chief Justice of the Delhi High Court from November 9, 2023. Later became full time Chief Justice of the Delhi High Court from September 29, 2024.

Rules for Supreme Court Judge:

- Must have served as a high court judge for at least five years, or been a high court advocate for at least ten years to qualify for a Supreme Court judge position.
- Supreme Court judges retire at the age of 65.

Former SC Judge Madan Lokur Appointed as Chairperson of UN IJC

The Former Supreme Court (SC) Judge of India **Justice Madan B Lokur** has been appointed as the chairperson of the United Nations (UN) **Internal Justice Council (IJC)** from 19th December 2024 to 12th November 2028 by the UN Secretary-General António Guterres.

- He would head the council which also comprises other distinguished jurists.

About Justice Madan Lokur:

i. Justice Lokur became a judge of the SC on 4th June 2012, and retired on 30th December 2018.

ii. He was the standing counsel for the Central government for six years, from 1990 to 1996. In 1997, he was named a senior advocate, and in 1998, he was appointed as the



Additional Solicitor General (ASG) of India.

iii. In October 2017, he and Justice Deepak Gupta increased the legal age of consent for marriages to 18.

iv. He was appointed Chief Justice of the Gauhati High Court in June 2010 and later became the Chief Justice of the Andhra Pradesh (AP) High Court in November 2011.

v. In 2019, Justice Lokur was appointed as a judge on the non-resident panel of the Supreme Court of Fiji. He was the **first Indian judge** to be appointed to the Supreme Court of another country.

About UN Internal Justice Council (IJC):

i. The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) created the IJC as part of a new system to ensure independence, professionalism, and accountability in the UN's justice system.

ii. According to UNGA resolution 62/228, the UNGA appoints the judges of the UN Dispute Tribunal (UNDT) and the UN Appeals Tribunal (UNAT) based on recommendations from the IJC.

- No two judges in either tribunal can be from the same country.

President Droupadi Murmu Appointed New Governors in 5 States: Kerala, Odisha, Bihar, Mizoram and Manipur

President of India, Droupadi Murmu, appointed new Governors in **5 states** Kerala, Odisha, Bihar, Mizoram and Manipur at the Rashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi (Delhi).

- All the appointments will be effective from the dates the Governors assume charge of their respective offices.
- President Droupadi Murmu has accepted the **resignation** of Raghubar Das as Governor of Odisha and appointed **Hari Babu Kambhampati** as the new Governor of Odisha.

New Governors of the 5 States:

State	New Governor	Previous Governor
Kerala	Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar	Arif Mohammed Khan
Odisha	Hari Babu Kambhampati	Raghubar Das
Bihar	Arif Mohammed Khan	Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar
Mizoram	General (Dr.) V.K. Singh (Retired)	Hari Babu Kambhampati
Manipur	Ajay Kumar Bhalla	Lakshman Prasad Acharya

Former Justice V. Ramasubramanian Appointed as NHRC Chairperson

President of India, Droupadi Murmu appointed former Supreme Court (SC) **Justice V. Ramasubramanian** as the **9th Chairperson** of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) for a three-year term ending in December 2027.

- Justice Ramasubramanian succeeds **Justice (Retired) Arun Kumar Mishra**, whose tenure concluded on June 1, 2024. Since then, the NHRC had been functioning under Acting Chairperson Vijaya Bharati Sayani.
- The President also appointed child rights activist **Priyank Kanoongo** and retired Justice **Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi** as **NHRC members**.

i. Justice V. Ramasubramanian, is a noted Tamil scholar and skilled judgment writer. He joined the Bar in 1983 and practiced for about 23 years in the High Court of Madras.

ii. He served in various courts, including as Chief Justice (CJ) of Himachal Pradesh (HP) High Court (HC) and a Supreme Court (SC) judge (2019–2023), delivered 102 key judgments on issues like demonetization and bribery.

Points to Note:

- A former Chief Justice of India (CJI) or a retired judge of the top court is appointed as NHRC chairperson by the President on the recommendation of the selection committee.
- The **NHRC**, established in 1993 as a statutory body, is tasked with protecting and promoting human rights.

President Droupadi Murmu Appointed CJs for Himachal, Uttarakhand High Courts

President of India, **Droupadi Murmu** approved several significant judicial appointments based on recommendations from the Supreme Court (SC) Collegium. **Justice Gurmeet Singh (G.S.) Sandhawalia** has been appointed as the Chief Justice (CJ) of the Himachal Pradesh (HP) High Court (HC). **Justice Guhanathan Narendar** has been appointed as the CJ of the Uttarakhand HC.

i. **Justice G.S. Sandhawalia** was a judge in the Punjab and Haryana HC. He replaced **Justice Rajiv Shakdher**, who retired on 18 October 2024.

ii. **Justice Guhanathan Narendar** was serving as a judge in the Andhra Pradesh (AP) HC. He succeeded **Justice Ritu Bahri**, who retired on 10 October 2024.

iii. **Permanent Judges in Delhi HC:** Justice Shailender Kaur and Justice Ravinder Dudeja, who were previously additional judges of the Delhi High Court, were made permanent judges.

iv. **Permanent Judges in Karnataka HC:** Four additional judges of the Karnataka High Court were elevated to permanent judges: Justice Ramachandra Dattatray Huddar, Justice Venkatesh Naik Thavaryanaik, Justice Vijaykumar Adagouda Patil, Justice Rajesh Rai Kallangala.

Note: Additional judges usually serve for two years before becoming permanent.

Honours/ Awards

52nd International Emmy Awards 2024; Vir Das became 1st Indian to Host Event

The 52nd International Emmy Awards 2024 took place in New York, United States of America (USA). The awards were presented by presented by the International Academy of Television Arts and Sciences (IATAS).

i. The event was hosted by Indian stand-up comedian and actor **Vir Das**. With this, he became the first Indian to host this annual event.

ii. The **International Emmy Directorate Award** was presented **Sidonie Dumas**, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of **Gaumont**, the Paris (France) based television & film production group, and International Emmy Founders Award was presented to the American writer-producer **David E. Kelley**.

About International Academy of Television Arts and Sciences (IATAS):

President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO)– Bruce L. Paisner

Headquarters– New York, United States of America (USA)

Establishment– 1969

'Manifest' : Cambridge Dictionary Word of the Year 2024

In November 2024, The Cambridge Dictionary has chosen '**manifest**' as its Word of the Year 2024, reflecting a significant rise in its usage. With nearly **1,30,000** lookups in their websites, the word gained popularity across mainstream media, self-help communities, and social media platforms.

i. The phrase *to manifest* refers to the act of imagining one's desired achievements, with the belief that doing so can increase the chances of success.

ii. Celebrities like Dua Lipa, Gabby Thomas, and Ollie Watkins popularized the term by sharing how they "**manifested**" their success in 2024. Despite its widespread use, the idea of manifesting remains unproven, originating from a century-old spiritual philosophy.

Note: In 2023 '**hallucinate**' was the Cambridge Word of the Year, highlighting the evolving nature of language in our time.

Indian-origin JasleenKaur Wins Turner Prize 2024 for Her Exhibition Alter Altar

Indian-origin Scottish artist **Jasleen Kaur** has been awarded the prestigious **Turner Prize 2024** for her thought-provoking exhibition, *Alter Altar*. Actor James Norton presented the award along with a prize of Great Britain Pound (GBP) **25,000** (approximately Rs 26.84 lakh) to JasleenKaur at the ceremony took place at Tate Britain in London, United Kingdom (UK).

- The other artists who were shortlisted alongside JasleenKaur includes Pio Abad, Claudette Johnson, and Delaine Le Bas.

i. JasleenKaur's 'Alter Altar Exhibition' reflects **themes** of identity, migration, and cultural inheritance, drawing inspiration from her family's journey as migrants to Scotland.

ii. JasleenKaur's exhibition is on display at Tate Britain until February 2025, alongside other



shortlisted artists.

ICC Wins 2024 OPCW-The Hague Award

The Indian Chemical Council (ICC) was honoured with the “2024 Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons(OPCW)- The Hague Award” for its contribution to Chemical Disarmament during the 29th Session of the Conference of the States Parties (CSP) held in The Hague, the Netherlands.

- The award was presented by Ambassador Fernando Arias, Director-General of the OPCW, and Jan van Zanen, Mayor of The Hague, presented the award to ICC Director General, D. SothiSelvam, who received the award on behalf of the Council.
- i. This award recognises the ICC’s underscores the Council’s role in promoting chemical safety, industry-wide security, and compliance with international norms.
- ii. The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), which came into force in 1997, is an international treaty with 193 States Parties, aiming for the total elimination of chemical weapons.

Note:

The OPCW was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2013 for its efforts in chemical disarmament. To honor individuals and organizations contributing to the CWC’s goals, the OPCW established the OPCW The Hague Award in **2014**.

- **Hubert Foy**, Director of the African Center for Science and International Security received the 2023 OPCW-The Hague Award

3 Indians on BBC’s 100 Most Inspiring Women List 2024: Aruna Roy, Vinesh Phogat & Pooja Sharma

London (the United Kingdom (UK))-based British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) released the **12th** edition of BBC’s 100 Most Inspiring and Influential Women List 2024. This latest edition of the list has featured **3 Indian women**: former civil servant and renowned social activist **Aruna Roy**; three-time Olympian-turned-politician **Vinesh Phogat**, and performer of funerary rites, **Pooja Sharma**, for their exceptional contributions to social activism, sports and breaking societal barriers.

- Apart from them, the list has included two Indian-origin women: **Sunita Williams**, National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Astronaut and **Sneha Revanur**, 20-year old Artificial Intelligence (AI) expert.
- The theme of the 2024 list is “Resilience”.

About British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC):

Chairman- Samir Shah

Headquarters- London, the United Kingdom (UK)

Established-

1922

Former President of Chile Michelle Bachelet to be Conferred the Indira Gandhi Peace Prize 2024

The Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust announced that Former President of Chile, **Veronica Michelle Bachelet Jeria** will be conferred the **Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development for 2024** in recognition of her exemplary contributions to human rights, peace, and equality.



- Michelle Bachelet was selected by the International Jury of the Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust, chaired by **Shivshankar Menon**, former Foreign Secretary and National Security Advisor (NSA).

i. The recipient of the award receives a monetary award of **Rs 25 lakh** along with a citation.

ii. The Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development for 2023 has been jointly awarded to Argentine-Israeli classical pianist Daniel Barenboim and Palestinian peace activist Ali Abu Awwad.

About Chile:

President- Gabriel Boric

Capital-

Santiago

Currency- Chilean Peso (CLP)

“Polarization” Named Merriam-Webster’s 2024 Word of the Year

On December 10 2024, the word “**polarization**” was announced as **Merriam-Webster Word of the Year 2024**.

- This term gained attraction in 2024, especially during the United States of America (USA) presidential election, which underscored the growing divide in political opinions and beliefs.

- Other words that stood out in the data in 2024 are demure, ‘totality’ and ‘allision’.

i. Polarization, defined as “division into two sharply distinct opposites,” often describes the extreme political, cultural and ideological divides in the USA and globally. The word “polarization” has historical roots dating back to the early 1800s and continues to shape discussions on the current state of global affairs. The polar in polarization is from Latin polaris, which describes the Earth’s poles and **Polaris** is also a name for the North Star. **Note:** The word “authentic” was Merriam-Webster’s word of the year for **2023**.

UNEP Champions of the Earth Award 2024: Indian Ecologist Madhav Gadgil Honored for Lifetime Achievement

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has announced the winners of the ‘**2024 Champions of the Earth Award**’, the UN’s highest environmental honor to recognize individuals and organizations making extraordinary contributions to environmental protection, focusing on combating land degradation, drought, and desertification.

- This year, nominations focused on finding champions who are restoring degraded land, increasing drought resilience and preventing desertification.
- Veteran Indian ecologist **Madhav Gadgil** was awarded with the Champions of Earth award by the United Nations (UN). He is among the six awardees who have been

bestowed the honour for their respective contributions in the field of conservation and environmental protection.

- Since its inception, **122 laureates**(7 world leaders, 70 individuals, and 19 groups or organisations) have been acknowledged for their exemplary work.

About United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP):

Executive Director(ED) – Inger Anderson

Headquarters– Nairobi, Kenya

Established– 1972

WTA Awards 2024: Aryna Sabalenka wins WTA Player of the Year 2024 for the 1st time

Belarusian tennis player, **Aryna Sabalenka**, currently ranked world No. 1 in singles was honoured with the “2024 Women’s Tennis Association (WTA) Player of the Year Award” taking the crown for the 1st time in her career. She has won **23** career titles, **17** in singles and **6** in doubles.



- WTA has announced the 2024 WTA Player Award winners including 5 Players Awards and 3 Player Service Awards.

List of 2024 WTA Awards:

Category	Winner
Player of the Year	Aryna Sabalenka (Belarus)
Doubles Team of the Year	Jasmine Paolini (Italy) & Sara Errani(Italy)
Most Improved Player of the Year	Emma Navarro (the United States of America (USA))
Newcomer of the Year	Lulu Sun (New Zealand)
Comeback Player of the Year	Paula Badosa (Spain)

About Women’s Tennis Association (WTA):

Chairman & Chief Executive Officer (CEO)– Portia Archer

Headquarters- Florida, the United States of America (USA)

Established- 1973

TIME Magazine Named US President-elect Donald Trump as 'Person of the Year' for 2024

New York (the United States of America (USA))–based **TIME** magazine has named US President-elect **Donald Trump** as its **Person of the Year for 2024**, recognising his deep influence on American politics and the country's role in the world.



- He was previously named TIME's Person of the Year in 2016 following his 1st victory in the US Presidential elections at the time.
- i. Caitlin Clark (22 years-old), American basketball player has been named as the TIME Magazine's Athlete of the Year for 2024.
- ii. Lisa Tzvu-Fang Su, CEO and Chair of Advanced Micro Devices Inc.(AMD), a semiconductor design company has been named as the TIME Magazine's CEO of the Year for 2024.

About TIME Magazine:

Chief Executive Officer (CEO)– Jessica Sibley

Headquarters- New York, United States of America (USA)

Created in- 1923

Oxford University Press Names 'Brain rot' as Word of the Year 2024

Oxford University Press (OUP) selected '**Brain rot**,' a noun (n), which refers to the deterioration of a person's mental or intellectual state, often attributed to the overconsumption of content that is seen as trivial or intellectually unchallenging as the Oxford Word of the Year for 2024.

- Other shortlisted words include **Demure**, **Dynamic Pricing**, **Lore**, **Romantasy** and **slop**.
 - i. The term highlights growing concerns about the impact of consuming excessive, trivial online content, particularly on social media, and its effect on mental health.
 - ii. The term '*brain rot*' was first recorded in **1854** in **Henry David Thoreau's** book *Walden*. Thoreau used it to describe the mental stagnation he observed in those who were disconnected from nature.
- Note:** The Oxford Word of the Year 2023 was '*Rizz*', a colloquial noun defined as style, charm, or attractiveness.

Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw awarded the 2024 Jamsetji Tata Award

Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, Chairperson of Biocon Group, was conferred the 2024 Jamsetji Tata award by the Indian Society for Quality (ISQ) at ISQ Annual Conference 2024 held in Bengaluru, Karnataka.

- This award was presented to her for being a pioneer in the bioscience movement in India since 1978, a first-generation entrepreneur to establish Biocon Limited and associated companies to serve customers in India and across the world.
- She received the award from **Janak Kumar Mehta**, President of ISQ and Chairman and Managing Director (CMD), TQM International.

Key People: The event was graced by B Muthuraman, former Vice Chairman of Tata Steel and Dr KN Subramanya, Principal of R V College of Engineering and President of ISQ's Bengaluru chapter.

About Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw:

i. Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw is a pioneering biotech entrepreneur and founder of Biocon, a global biopharmaceuticals enterprise.

ii. She has been awarded with two of India's highest civilian honours, the **Padma Shri** (Trade & Industry) in 1989 and the **Padma Bhushan** (Science & Engineering) in 2005.

iii. In 2020, she has been conferred with the Order of Australia, Australia's highest civilian honour in 2020 and named EY World Entrepreneur of the Year.

iv. She was honoured with the Othmer Gold Medal by the U.S.-based Chemical Heritage Foundation in 2014.

About Jamsetji Tata Award:

i. The Jamsetji Tata Award was instituted in **2004** by ISQ. It honors business leaders who made significant contributions to Indian society.

ii. This award is named after **Jamsetji Tata**, who is known as the '**Father of Modern Indian Industry**'.

The Best FIFA Football Awards 2024 : Vinicius Junior and Aitana Bonmati won The Best Men's and Women's player Award

The Best FIFA (International Federation of Association Football) Football Awards ceremony 2024 was held in Doha, Qatar, on 17 December 2024.

- **Vinicius Junior** (Brazil) won the Best FIFA Men's Player 2024 Award, while **Aitana Bonmati** (Spain) won the Best FIFA Women's Player 2024 Award for the second consecutive year.
- This year, a new **award** has been introduced for **Women's football**. The award has been named after Marta Vieira da Silva, who has retired from professional football after 20 years of excellent service for Women's football.

i. Alejandro Garnacho (Argentina) won the Puskas Award for the best goal of 2024 for his breathtaking overhead kick for Manchester United FC against Everton (North Liverpool) in November 2023.

ii. Marta Vieira da Silva (Brazil) received the inaugural Marta Award, celebrating the best goal in women's football.



Noted Hindi Writer Suryabala wins 34th Vyas Samman

Hindi writer **Suryabala** has been chosen for the **34th Vyas Samman 2024** in recognition of her novel "**Kaun Des Ko Vasi: Venu Ki Diary**" which was published in 2018.

- This Hindi novel explores how Indian youth see America as a land of opportunity, the challenges they face when moving there, the temptations they encounter, and the cultural conflicts they experience.
- The selection was made by a committee chaired by Prof. Ramji Tiwari.

Note: **Pushpa Bharathi** was honored with the 33rd Vyas Samman for the book "Yaadein Yaadein Aur Yaadein".

About

Suryabala:

i. Suryabala, born in 1943 in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh (UP). Throughout her extensive career, she has authored more than 50 novels, biographies, and children's stories, many of which have been adapted into television serials.

ii. **Noted works:** Dikshanta (1992), Mere sandi-patra (2003) and Dishahen (2010)

iii. **Awards:** In 2019, she was honored with the Bharat Bharti, the highest literary award from the UP Hindi Sansthan.

- In 2003, she received the Priyadarshini Award from Maharashtra state government in recognition of her outstanding contributions to literature.
- She has also been honored with the Maharashtra Hindi Academy Award, the Ratni Devi Goenka Award, and the 'Vyanga Sri' award by the Hindi Bhavan Nyas.

About Vyas Samman:

i. The Vyas Samman is a prestigious literary award presented annually by the K.K. Birla Foundation to honor outstanding Hindi literary works published in the last 10 years.

ii. The first Vyas Samman was awarded in **1991** to Dr. Ram Vilas Sharma for his work *Bharat ke Pracheen Bhasha aur Hindi*.

iii. The award includes a cash prize of **Rs 4 lakh**, along with a citation and a plaque.

iv. The K.K. Birla Foundation also presents the **Saraswati Samman** and the **Bihari Puraskar**.

Christopher Nolan and Emma Thomas Honored with Knighthood and Damehood

Oscar award winning filmmaker **Christopher Nolan** and his wife, **Emma Thomas** were honored with royal honors '**knighthood**' and '**damehood**', respectively, by **King Charles III** for their remarkable contributions to the film industry in a ceremony held at Buckingham Palace in London, the United Kingdom (UK).

- The couple has worked together on numerous blockbuster films since 1997 through their **Syncopy** production company.

About the honor:

An honor **knighthood** is a title bestowed upon men and an honor **damehood** is a title bestowed upon women.

- These honors allow them to use the titles '**Sir**' and '**Dame**' before their names, recognizing their outstanding work in film production.



About Christopher Nolan & Emma Thomas:

i. **Christopher Nolan**, the director of *Oppenheimer*, *Inception*, and *Interstellar* has earned global recognition for his visionary film making.

- **Emma Thomas** has worked as a producer on all of his films, including *Memento* (2000), *Batman Begins* (2005) and *The Prestige* (2006).

ii. **Christopher Nolan** and his wife, **Emma Thomas** are best known for their successful collaborations on films such as: *Insomnia* (2002), *The Dark Knight Trilogy* (2008-2012), *Inception* (2010), *Interstellar* (2014), *Dunkirk* (2017), *Tenet* (2020) and *Oppenheimer* (2023).

ii. Their work has received critical acclaim, with '**Oppenheimer**' winning **7 Academy Awards**, including 'Best Picture' and grossing over USD 976 million worldwide.

- The movie explores the life of **J Robert Oppenheimer**, the American physicist who played a pivotal role in developing nuclear weapons during World War II.

iii. In March 2024, Christopher Nolan received his **1st Oscar** for “Best Director for the film” Oppenheimer, which stars **Cillian Murphy** at the 96th Academy Awards.

- He also received the British Film Institute (BFI)’s fellowship for his innovation and influence as a filmmaker.

iv. Emma Thomas is the **first British female producer** to win the Oscar for Best Picture for Christopher Nolan’s biographical thriller Oppenheimer.

Maharashtra’s ‘Government at Your Doorstep’ Initiative Wins SKOCH Award

Maharashtra government’s initiative ‘Shasan Aplya Dari’ (‘Government at Your Doorstep’) has won the SKOCH Award for its excellence in citizen-focused governance and commitment to deliver efficient public services.

- The programme was chosen from amongst **280** projects across various categories nationwide.
- Over **5 crore** benefits were delivered to the doorsteps of the citizens in the initiative.
- The initiative was implemented by the Chief Minister’s Public Welfare Cell.

About Government at Your Doorstep Initiative:

i. The initiative was launched in **May, 2023**, at **Patan** in **Satara** district.

ii. Under this initiative, the benefits of various government schemes like subsidy on tractors, Gopinath Munde farmer accident insurance grant, allocation of houses under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (**PMAY**), Chief Minister’s Assistance Fund, subsidy for irrigation wells under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (**MGNREGA**), assistance under Chief Minister’s **Employment Generation Program**, distribution of bicycles, and several other schemes, were provided to citizens under one roof.

Tansen Samaroh 2024: Pt. Swapan Chaudhuri honoured Rashtriya Tansen Samman; Sanand Nyas with Mansingh Tomar Award

The **100th** edition of the Tansen Sangeet Samaroh, one of India’s most celebrated classical music festivals, was held from December 15 to 19, 2024 in **Gwalior**, Madhya Pradesh (**MP**). The Department of Culture, MP organizes the music festival, with Dharmendra Singh, the Culture Minister of MP, serving as the chief guest at the award function.



- The event honored tabla player Padma Shri **Pandit Swapan Chaudhuri** with the ‘**Rashtriya Tansen Samman 2023**’ and Indore’s **Sanand Nyas Institution** with the ‘**Raja Mansingh Tomar Samman 2023**’. The awards recognize their contributions to Indian classical music and cultural preservation.
- Sanand Nyas President Jayant Madhav Bhise and Secretary Sanjeev Babikar accepted the award on behalf of the institution.

Note: Gwalior is a city recognized as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (**UNESCO**) City of Music.

About Pandit Swapan Chaudhuri:

i. Pandit Swapan Chaudhuri was born in 1945 in Kolkata, West Bengal (WB). He is a renowned Indian tabla player.

Sports

Australian Swimmer & 14-Time Olympic Medalist Emma McKeon announces Retirement

Emma Jennifer McKeon, (30), Australian swimmer and Olympic medalist, announced her retirement from competitive swimming. She won a gold medal in the 4 x 100 metre (m) freestyle relay in the 2024 Paris Games. It was her final Olympics.

- Emma McKeon holds the Australian record of **14 Olympic medals** across Rio 2016, the Tokyo 2020 and Paris 2024 Games, with six Olympic gold medals, three silver medals and five bronze medals.
- She is second only to American female Olympian Katie Ledecky (14 Olympic medals – 9 Gold) in terms of Olympic swimming gold medals won.



About Emma McKeon:

i. Emma McKeon specializes in freestyle and butterfly races of 200 meters (m) or less.

ii. She competed at the Olympic Games Rio 2016 and won **4 medals** (1 Gold, 2 silver and 1 Bronze).

- In 2016 Olympics, with Emma McKeon and David David McKeon becoming the first brother and sister to swim for Australia at the same Games in 56 years.

iii. She won **7-medals** (4 Gold medals and 3 Bronze medals) at Tokyo 2020.

- With this, she became the **1st Female Swimmer** and the **2nd woman** in history to win 7 medals in a single Olympics.

iv. McKeon's **11 Olympic medals** overall broke the previous **Australian record of nine** from Ian Thorpe and Leisel Jones over the course of their careers.

Max Verstappen wins Qatar Grand Prix 2024

Red Bull's **Max Verstappen** (Netherlands) won the Formula 1 (F1) **Qatar Grand Prix 2024** which was held at the Lusail International Circuit in Lusail, Qatar.

- This was his **9th** win of the season and **63rd** of his career.
- Monégasque racing driver **Charles Leclerc** (Ferrari) secured the **2nd** spot (18 points) for Ferrari and Australia's **Oscar Piastri** (McLaren) (15 points) claimed the **3rd** spot.



About Max Verstappen :

i. Max Verstappen won his **first** F1 World Championship title in **2021** after winning **10** Grands Prix (GP) during the 2021 season.

- He won the next two championships in **2022** and **2023** and secured his 4th consecutive title in **2024** after winning 9 Grand Prix.
- The **9** GP won during the 2024 season includes Las Vegas GP, Sao Paulo (Brazilian) Grand Prix, Bahrain GP, Saudi Arabia GP, Japanese GP, Chinese GP, Emilia-Romagna GP, Canadian GP and Spanish GP.

About Qatar Grand Prix:

- i. The Qatar Grand Prix (officially known as the Formula 1 Qatar Airways Qatar Grand Prix) is a F1 motor race event held in Lusail, Qatar.
- ii. It was the **23rd** and penultimate round of the 2024 F1 World Championship.
- iii. It was held for the first time in **2021**.

Syed Modi International 2024: PV Sindhu and Lakshya Sen won singles titles

Indian shuttlers Puserla Venkata (P.V) **Sindhu** and **Lakshya Sen** won the **women's and men's singles titles**, respectively, at the **Syed Modi India International Super 300 tournament** held from 26th November 2024 to 1st December 2024 at the Babu Banarasi Das Indoor Stadium in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh (UP).



- P.V Sindhu defeated the world number 119 **Wu Luo Yu** of the People's Republic of China to win the Women's Singles finals 21-14, 21-16.
- Lakshya Sen defeated **Jia Heng Jason Teh** of Singapore to win the Men's Singles finals 21-6, 21-7.

Note: It was the 37th tournament of the 2024 BWF World Tour.

Saudi Arabia to Host 2034 FIFA World Cup

The International Federation of Association Football (FIFA) announced that **Saudi Arabia** as the host for the **Men's World Cup 2034** during the Extraordinary FIFA Congress held in Zurich Switzerland. This significant milestone marks the kingdom's global sports ambitions under **Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's** Vision 2030 initiative.

- This is the first time Saudi Arabia will host the FIFA Men's World Cup. Saudi Arabia, including 48 countries will compete at the 25th edition of the World Cup.
- Saudi Arabia's bid, the only one presented, was applauded by more than 200 FIFA member federations in a remote online vote, hosted by FIFA President **Gianni Infantino**.

i. FIFA also announced that **Spain, Portugal** and **Morocco** will co-host the 24th men's World Cup with one-off matches in three South American countries.

ii. For its centenary celebrations, the first three matches of the 2030 World Cup will be held in Uruguay, Argentina and Paraguay.

iii. The 2026 World Cup will be jointly hosted by the USA, Canada and Mexico.

Arjun Erigaisi becomes 2nd Indian to reach 2800 ELO rating in chess

Grandmaster (GM) **Arjun Erigaisi** became the **second Indian** and 16th player worldwide to reach the gold-standard ELO rating of **2800**, after legendary **Viswanathan Anand**.

i. Arjun now has **2801** rating points and is currently **ranked No. 4** in the world, just below Hikaru Nakamura (2802) of the United State of America (USA).

- **Norwegian Magnus Carlsen** continued to be at the **top** spot with 2831 ratings, followed by Fabiano Caruana (2805) of the USA.

ii. Earlier this year, he won both team gold and individual gold medals in the 45th Chess Olympiad in Budapest, Hungary.

iii. He also claimed the Menorca Open title in April 2024, defeating GMs Kirill Alekseenko and Maksim Chigaev.

Lando Norris wins F1 Abu Dhabi GP as McLaren secure constructors' title

British racer **Lando Norris** of **McLaren** (25 points) has won the season-ending Formula 1 (F1) **Abu Dhabi Grand Prix (GP) 2024** which was held at the Yas Marina Circuit in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates (UAE).

- This victory has led McLaren to secure its **first F1 Constructors' title** since **1998** (after 26 years).

Key Points:

i. **Carlos Sainz** (Spain) (18 points) and **Charles Leclerc** (Monaco) (15 points) of Ferrari secured **2nd** and **3rd** spot, respectively, for Ferrari which was the only team that could have beaten McLaren to the championship.

ii. This was the **4th** victory for **Lando Norris** in the 2024 season. The other three being – Miami GP, Netherlands GP and Singapore GP.

- He finished runner-up behind Max Verstappen in the 2024 Drivers' World Championship.

D Gukesh becomes youngest world champion at 18, breaks Kasparov's record

Indian grandmaster **Gukesh Dommaraju** (D. Gukesh) from Chennai (Tamil Nadu, TN) defeated China's **Ding Liren** in the 14th and final round to win the **World Chess Championship 2024** that was held from 25th November to 12th December 2024 in **Singapore**.



- With this win, D. Gukesh has become the **18th** and the youngest world champion at the age of **18 years 8 months 14 days** till date.
- Before Gukesh, **Garry Kasparov** (Russia) was crowned as the world champion in **1985** when he was 22 years, six months and 27 days old.

Note

i. D. Gukesh was awarded with a prize money **Rs.11.45 crore (USD 1.35 million)** by the International Chess Federation (FIDE).

ii. He will also be awarded with **Rs.5 crore** by the TN government.

Key Points:

i. **Gukesh** is the **2nd** grandmaster from India to hold the world title.

- Grandmaster **Viswanathan Anand** was the unbeaten world champion for 6 years starting in **2007**.

About

D. Gukesh:

i. Gukesh earned the grandmaster title at the age of **12** and remains the **third**-youngest grandmaster in chess history.

ii. He is the **third**-youngest player to have surpassed FIDE rating **2700** at the age of 16.

iii. Gukesh has become the only **second** Indian after his mentor Viswanathan Anand to win the prestigious Candidate Chess Tournament who had won the title in 2014.

iv. He has won the team **bronze** and individual **gold** medal at the **44th Chess Olympiad** in 2022.

Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy 2024: Mumbai beat Madhya Pradesh to win 2nd title

Mumbai defeated Madhya Pradesh (MP) by **5 wickets** to win the **17th** edition of the **Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy (SMAT) 2024**. The Cricket tournament was held from **23rd November to 15th December 2024** and the final was held at the Mangalam Chinnaswamy Stadium in **Bengaluru**, Karnataka.

- This was Mumbai's **2nd** title at the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy. Its first title came in **2022** when they defeated Himachal Pradesh by 3 wickets in the final.
- The team of Mumbai was captained by **Shreyas Iyer** while the team of MP was captained by **Rajat Patidar**.

Note

The winning team Mumbai has been awarded with **Rs 5 crore** as prize money while the runners up team Madhya Pradesh has received **Rs 2.5 crore** as prize money.

Key Highlights:

i. Shreyas Iyer has become the **first** captain in history to win both the Indian Premier League (IPL) and Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy (SMAT) trophies in captain and in the same year.

About Mumbai Cricket Team:

i. Mumbai is the most successful team in the history of Ranji Trophy, winning over **42** titles. It also has won **14** Irani Cups.

Union MoS Raksha Khadse Unveils Mascot, Logo, Anthem, Jersey, Torch & Tagline for 38th National Games in Uttarakhand

Union Minister of State (MoS) **Raksha Khadse**, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MYAS), unveiled the **Mascot, Logo, Anthem, Jersey, Torch and Tagline** for the **38th National Games** at an event held at Maharana Pratap Sports College in Dehradun (Uttarakhand). It aims to promote sports culture, enhance infrastructure and motivate young athletes.

- The 38th National Games is scheduled to take place at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium in Dehradun, Uttarakhand from **January 28 to February 14, 2025** with over 10,000 athletes competing in 38 sports.
- Uttarakhand Chief Minister (CM) Pushkar Singh Dhami and Indian Olympic Association President **P T Usha** were present at the event.

About**Uttarakhand:**

Chief Minister (CM)– Pushkar Singh Dhami.

Legendary Cricketer, India's 2nd highest wicket-taker, Ravichandran Ashwin retires from International cricket

Ravichandran Ashwin, India's premier off-spinner announced his retirement from International cricket ending a remarkable **14 year** career at the top level across formats. He is India's **2nd-highest wicket-taker** in Test cricket with **537** wickets in **106** matches.

- The announcement was made in the post match press conference following the third Test of the ongoing Border-Gavaskar Trophy against Australia.
- After representing India in 106 Tests, 116 ODIs and 65 T20Is and picking up **765 wickets** across formats.

Career Achievements and Records:

i.537 Test Wickets: Ravichandran Ashwin retires as the 2nd highest wicket-taker for India in Test cricket, with 537 wickets.

- He was only behind Anil Kumble (Indian former cricketer and coach), who has 619 wickets from 132 matches.
- His 537 wickets came in 106 Test matches, an incredible achievement that cements his legacy in Indian cricket.

ii. Ashwin Played for India in 116 ODIs, Ashwin took 156 wickets, while his T20I career saw him claim 72 wickets in 65 matches. Ashwin as a batter scored 3503 runs in test with (6 Hundreds and 14 Fifties), In ODI and T20 707 & 184 runs respectively.

iii.Record in World Test Championship: He was the **1st bowler** to take 100 wickets in the World Test Championship, achieving this milestone in March 2022.

- He remains as the highest wicket-taker in the tournament's history, with 195 wickets across 3 editions.

iv.Fastest to 500 Test Wickets: He became the **2nd-fastest bowler** to reach 500 Test wickets, achieving the milestone in 98 games in February 2024.

He also holds the record for being the quickest to reach 250, 300, and 350 Test wickets.

India to Host World Boxing Cup Final and World Boxing Congress in 2025

In December 2024, the Boxing Federation of India (BFI) headquartered in New Delhi, Delhi has announced that **India** will host the **World Boxing Cup Final 2025** and the 3rd edition of **World Boxing Congress** in November 2025 in **New Delhi**.

- The 2025 World Boxing Cup series will **begin in Brazil** in March 2025, followed by events in **Germany** and **Kazakhstan**, culminating with the finale in New Delhi, India.
- These tournaments, which carry ranking points, will feature top-ranked boxers and winners from earlier stages.

i. The World Boxing Congress 2025 will bring together stakeholders, officials, and dignitaries from the global boxing community to discuss the issues related to the sports, organisation and other masters.

Salman Khan and Tiger Shroff named as brand ambassador for Kho Kho World Cup 2025

The Kho Kho Federation of India (KKFI) has announced Indian actors **Salman Khan and Tiger Shroff** as the brand ambassadors for the inaugural edition of the **Kho Kho World Cup**, which will be held from 13th to 19th January 2025 in New Delhi, Delhi at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium in New Delhi and the Noida Indoor Stadium.

- The announcement was made during an event held at Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, New Delhi and attended by KKFI President Shri Sudhanshu Mittal, KKFI General Secretary MS Tyagi, and members of the Indian men's and women's teams.
- **i.** The Kho Kho World Cup 2025 features **21 men's** teams and **20 women's** teams from 24 different countries.

Obituary

Essar Group co-founder Shashi Ruia passed away at 81

Essar Global Fund Limited (EGFL) co-founder and a business tycoon **Shashi Ruia** passed away at the age of **81** in Mumbai, Maharashtra. He was born on December 23, 1943 in Rajasthan.

About Shashi Ruia:

i. Shashi Ruia known for his humility and philanthropy, was a first-generation entrepreneur and businessman who began his career in 1965 under the guidance of his father, **Nand Kishore Ruia**.

ii. He along with his brother **Ravi Ruia**, established Essar Group (The company known as Essar Global Fund Limited, EGFL) in **1969**. Initially Essar group focused on construction and engineering projects.



- In 1991, Essar entered into the power sector, becoming India's first Independent Power Producer (IPP), went into shipping in 1992, and entered the telecom business in 1995.

Indian Classical Musician and Sarod Player 'Aashish Khan' Passed Away at 84

In November 2024, Indian Classical Musician and Sarod player '**Ustad Aashish Khan**' has passed away at the age of 84 in Los Angeles, the United States of America (USA). He was born in 1939 in Maihar, Madhya Pradesh (MP).

- In 2004, he was honoured with the **Sangeet Natak Akademi Award** (Akademi Ratna), the highest recognition for performing arts.

i. In 2006, Ustad Aashish Khan received a **Grammy nomination** in the 'Best Traditional World Music Album' category for his album "Golden Strings of the Sarode".

ii. He formed his own Indo-jazz band "Shanti" with tabla maestro Ustad Zakir Hussain in 1969. He also established the Aashish Khan School of World Music in Kolkata, West Bengal (WB).

iii. He made countless contributions to Indian music, with some of his most famous works including scores for films such as Gandhi and A Passage to India.

Former Karnataka CM & Padma Vibhushan Awardee Somanahalli Mallaiah Krishna passed away

Somanahalli Mallaiah (SM) Krishna, former Chief Minister (CM) of Karnataka and former Governor of Maharashtra passed away at the age of 92 in Bengaluru, Karnataka. He was born on May 1, 1932 in Somanahalli, Mysore (Karnataka).

- In 2023, he was honoured with the **Padma Vibhushan**, the 2nd highest civilian award of India, in recognition of his contributions to Indian politics.

About SM Krishna:

i. SM Krishna began his political career in 1962 by winning the Maddur Vidhana Sabha seat as an independent, defeating K.V. Shankar Gowda.

ii. From 1971–2014, he served as a Member of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha and represented Karnataka's Mandya constituency.



iii. He held the position of Speaker of Karnataka Legislative Assembly between 1989–1993 and served as Deputy Chief Minister (**DyCM**) of Karnataka from 1993 to 1994.

iv. He served as the **10th CM of Karnataka** from 1999 to 2004 and led the state during which he laid the foundation for Bengaluru's emergence as an Information Technology (IT) hub.

v. He also served as the **19th Governor of Maharashtra** from 2004 to 2008 and also the Union Minister of External Affairs under the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government from 2009–2012.

vi. He later joined Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in March 2017 after ending a 50 year long career in Indian National Congress (INC).

Renowned Indian tabla player & Padma Awardee Zakir Hussain passed away

Renowned Indian tabla player & Padma Awardee **Zakir Hussain Allaraka Qureshi** passed away at the **age of 73** in California, the United States of America (USA). He was born on March 9, 1951 in Mumbai, Maharashtra.

- Zakir Hussain, a **4 time** Grammy award winner, has received the **Padma Vibhushan, the Padma Bhushan and the Padma Shri**.

About Zakir Hussain:

i. Zakir Hussain was an iconic tabla virtuoso, composer, percussionist and music producer who was celebrated for bringing classical Indian music to a global audience.

- Hussain's remarkable career spanned across Indian classical music, film music, jazz and world music. He was also a **film actor** and received widespread acclaim for his pioneering work in world music fusion.

ii. His collaborations with Western musicians like Mickey Hart of the Grateful Dead, on the album 'Planet Drum', became landmark moments in the world of fusion music.

- **Planet Drum** went on to win the **1st-ever** Grammy for 'Best World Music Album' in 1992, setting the stage for Zakir Hussain's global recognition.

iii. In February 2024, he became the **1st Indian musician** to receive 3 Grammys at the "66th Annual Grammy Awards" for 'Best Global Music Album', 'Best Global Music Performance' and 'Best Contemporary Instrumental Album'.

Awards and Honors:

i. Padma Awards:

- **Padma Shri** (1988) – Received India's 4th highest civilian award for his exceptional contributions to Indian music.
- **Padma Bhushan** (2002) – Received India's 3rd highest civilian award for his distinguished service in the field of art and culture.
- **Padma Vibhushan** (2023) – Received India's 2nd highest civilian award in recognizing his immense contribution to music.

ii. Grammy Awards: He won **4 Grammy Awards** throughout his career, including **3** in 2024 alone. His wins were for his collaborative works, including 'Pashto, As We Speak, and This Moment' with the pioneering world fusion band Shakti.

Environmentalist and Padma Shri Awardee Tulsi Gowda Passed Away

An environmentalist **Tulsi Gowda** also known as ‘**Encyclopedia of Forest**’, passed away at the age of 86 in Honnali, Karnataka. She was born in 1938 in Honnali.

- In 2021, she was awarded the **Padma Shri Award**, India’s fourth highest civilian honour, for her contribution to environmental conservation.

About Tulsi Gowda:

i. Tulsi Gowda hails from the **Halakki** tribal family and is regarded as the “**Vruksha Maate**” (Mother of trees) by her tribe due to her deep knowledge of the forest.

ii. She is recognized for planting and taking care of over 1,00,000 trees across Karnataka. She plants more than 30,000 saplings every year, creating a lasting legacy of thousands of trees.

iii. Her efforts have helped improve one community reserve, five tiger reserves, 15 conservation areas, and 30 wildlife sanctuaries, protecting a variety of ecosystems.

Awards & Honours:

i. University of Agricultural Science, Dharwad (UASD), Karnataka awarded her a doctorate for her environmental knowledge and efforts.

ii. In 1986, She was honoured with the **Indira Priyadarshini Vrikshamitra Award (IPVM)**, which recognizes outstanding efforts in tree planting and the development of barren lands.

iii. In 1999, she was awarded the **Karnataka Rajyotsava Award**, (also known as the Kannada Rajyotsava Award), which is the second-highest civilian honour in Karnataka, given annually to distinguished citizens over sixty.



Former Haryana CM Om Prakash Chautala passed away

Om Prakash Chautala, a five-time Chief Minister (CM) of Haryana, passed away at the age of 89 in Gurugram, Haryana. He was born on January 1, 1935, in Sirsa, Haryana.

About Om Prakash Chautala:

i. In 1970, Om Prakash Chautala began his political career by winning his first election to the Haryana Legislative Assembly as a member of the Janata Dal (People’s Party).

ii. From 1987-1990, he was elected to the Rajya Sabha (Upper House of the Indian Parliament) and served until 1990.

iii. In 1989, he became the CM of Haryana for the 1st time, succeeding his father, Chaudhary Devi Lal, who had taken up the position of Deputy Prime Minister (DYCM) of India.

- Again he served as the CM of Haryana on 12 July 1990 to 17 July 1990, again from 22 March 1991 to 6 April 1991.

iv. In 1996, he became the Leader of the Opposition in Haryana after the Haryana Vikas Party formed the government. In 1999, he formed a coalition government, becoming the CM of Haryana for the **4th time**.

v. In the Haryana Assembly elections 2000, he secured 47 seats in a 90-member assembly, and continued as CM (5th time) until 5 March 2005.

vi. He had documented his experiences in Urdu diaries, which are being translated into Hindi for upcoming books. His autobiography and a travelogue titled “Meri Videsh Yatra” covering his visits to 119 countries are almost ready for publication.



Former Indian PM & Padma Vibhushan Awardee Dr Manmohan Singh passed away Dr Manmohan Singh, former Indian Prime Minister (PM) and a key architect of India's economic reforms passed away at the age of 92 in New Delhi (Delhi). He was born on 26 September 1932 in Gah, West Punjab (British India).



- Dr. Manmohan Singh served as India's 13th **PM** from **2004 to 2014** (2 consecutive terms), becoming India's 4th longest-serving PM. During his tenure as **PM**, he negotiated the landmark Indo-US Civil Nuclear Agreement, which ended decades of nuclear isolation for India.
 - He has received the '**Padma Vibhushan**' and 'Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development' award for his exceptional contribution in the Indian Economy Reforms.
- i.** He served as 'Chief Economic Advisor' to the Government of India (GoI) from 1972 to 1976; Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance (MoF) from November 1976 to April 1980; Member Secretary, Planning Commission from April 1980 to September 1982.
- ii.** He also served as the **15th Governor** of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) from 1982 to 1985 and also served as the Union Minister of Finance during the PV Narasimha Rao government in 1991 and played a crucial role in shaping India's economic policy.

Renowned Indian film-maker & Padma Awardee Shyam Benegal passed away

Renowned Indian film-maker & Padma Awardee **Shyam Benegal** passed away at the **age of 90** in Mumbai, Maharashtra. He was born on 14 December 1934 in Secunderabad, Andhra Pradesh (AP) (now Telangana).



- Shyam Benegal won **18 National Awards** and received the '**Padma Shri**' and '**Padma Bhushan**' awards for his contribution in the Indian film industry.

About

Shyam

Benegal:

i. Shyam Benegal began his career in 1959 as a copywriter at Lintas Advertising (now MullenLowe Lintas Group), Mumbai (Maharashtra) and became creative head, directing over **900** advertising films and documentaries.

- In 1962, his first documentary, '**Gher Betha Ganga**' (Ganges at the Doorstep) made in Gujarati, marked his early foray into filmmaking.
- ii.** He became known for his work in new Indian cinema and parallel cinema, which focused on realism and social issues. His breakthrough came with **Ankur (The seedling, 1974)**, addressing caste conflict in rural AP.
- iii.** In the 1980s, he created the landmark 'Bharat Ek Khoj' (1988), a 53-episode series based on Jawaharlal Nehru's Discovery of India.
- iv.** His last project was the 2023 biographical film '**Mujib: The Making of a Nation**' a biopic about Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, who led Bangladesh's struggle against Pakistan.

Awards and Honors:

i. In 1976, he received the '**Padma Shri**', India's 4th highest civilian award, and '**Padma Bhushan**', India's 3rd highest civilian award, in 1991 for his distinguished service in the field of arts.

ii. In 2007, he received the ‘**Dadasaheb Phalke Award**’, ‘**Lifetime Achievement Award**’ in 2015 from the All Lights India International Film Festival and ‘**Shantaram Lifetime Achievement Award**’ in 2018.

iii. He has won **18 National Awards**, a Filmfare Award and a Nandi Award for various films and also received the National Film Award for ‘Best Feature Film’ in Hindi 7 times.

Former Suzuki Motor Chairman and CEO Osamu Suzuki Passed Away

The former President, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Japan based Suzuki Motor Corporation (SMC), **Osamu Suzuki** passed away at the age of 94 in Shizuoka, Japan. He was born in Gifu, Japan in 1930.

- He played a key role in transforming the Japanese mini-vehicle manufacturer into a globally competitive company.

About Osamu Suzuki:

i. Osamu Suzuki began his career as a loan officer at a local bank. He became the 4th adopted son to head SMC after marrying Shoko Suzuki, the granddaughter of the company’s founder, Michio Suzuki.

ii. He joined SMC in 1958, became its president and CEO in 1978, and in 2000, he was appointed chairman of the company. He retired in June 2021 and became an adviser to SMC.

- With more than 30 years as the head of SMC, he was one of the longest-serving leaders in the global auto industry.

iii. Known for his sharp business sense and frugality, he led the Hamamatsu-based automaker for over 40 years, during which he played a key role in expanding the company into international markets, especially in India.

Awards and recognitions:

i. In 2007, Osamu Suzuki was honoured with the ‘**Padma Bhushan**’, India’s third-highest civilian award in field of ‘Trade and Industry’, for his contribution to the country’s economic development through the automobile industry.



Former USA President & Nobel Laureate James Earl Carter Jr. passed away

James Earl Carter Jr. (also known as Jimmy Carter), former President of the United States of America (USA) and the Nobel Laureate passed away at the age of **100** in Georgia, the USA. He was born on October 1, 1924 in Georgia.

- He received numerous accolades and awards including the ‘Nobel Peace Prize’ and ‘Grammy Awards’ reflecting his humanitarian efforts on the world stage.

About James Earl Carter Jr:

i. Jimmy Carter was a prominent American politician, Businessman (a peanut farmer, the US Navy officer, evangelist, negotiator, author, woodworker and humanitarian.

- He graduated from the US Naval Academy in 1946 and joined the US Navy’s submarine service.

ii. He won a state Senate seat in 1962 and began his political career by serving as the **76th governor of Georgia**, the USA from 1971 to 1975.

iii. He served as the **39th President** from **1977 to 1981** where he successfully negotiated the



‘Camp David Accords’ in 1978, leading to a peace treaty between Egypt and Israel in Middle Eastern diplomacy.

v. As of 2024, he became the **longest-living** USA president, surpassing former 41st president late George H. W. Bush (2018).

vi. His biography titled ‘His Very Best: Jimmy Carter, A Life’ written by Jonathan Alter was published in 2020.

Awards and Recognition:

- **Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament, and Development (1997):** He received the award for his post-presidential humanitarian work, including efforts in global health, human rights and conflict resolution.
- **United Nations (UNs) Human Rights Award (1998):** He was presented with this award in recognition of his work to advance the cause of human rights worldwide.
- **Presidential Medal of Freedom (1999):** He was honored with the highest civilian award of the USA for his meritorious contribution to the security and world peace of the USA.
- **Nobel Peace Prize (2002):** He was awarded for recognizing his decades of work in advocating for peace, democracy and human rights.
- **Grammy Award (2016) & (2019):** He won the awards for his **spoken word album**, further demonstrating the breadth of his contributions in his audiobooks beyond politics.

Important Days with theme

National Constitution Day “Samvidhan Divas” 2024 – November 26

National Constitution Day also known as ‘Samvidhan Divas’, is annually observed across India on **26th November** to commemorate the adoption of the Indian Constitution in 1949 by the constituent Assembly of India. 26 November 2024 marks the **75th Anniversary** of adopting the Constitution of India.

- A **commemorative coin and stamp** were released to mark the 75th anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution of India .
- Two books titled “**Making of the Constitution of India: A Glimpse**“ and “**Making of the Constitution of India & its Glorious Journey**“ were launched.
- A booklet dedicated to the **Art of the Constitution of India** was also unveiled, along with the Constitution of India in both language of Sanskrit and Maithili.
- The theme of this year’s National Constitution Day is “**HumaraSamvidhan, HumaraSwabhimaan.**”



Background:

i. On 19th November 2015, the **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (MoSJ&E)** announced that the Government of India (GoI) would celebrate the 26th November of every year as ‘Constitution Day’ to promote constitutional values among citizens.

ii. 2015 marked the 125th birth anniversary of **Dr. B. R. Ambedkar**, chairman of the drafting committee of the Indian Constitution. Previously this day was celebrated as **Law Day**.

National Milk Day 2024 – November 26

National Milk Day is annually observed across India on 26th November to commemorate the birth anniversary of **Dr VergheseKurien**, “Father of the White Revolution in India”.

- The annual observance is led by the Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying, under the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying (MoFAH&D).
- **26th November 2024** marks the observance of the **11th National Milk Day** and **103rd Birth anniversary** of VergheseKurein, fondly known as “**Milkman of India**”.

Background:

i. National Milk Day was jointly initiated by the Indian Dairy Association (IDA), National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) and 22 other State-Level Milk Federations in 2014.

ii. The first ever National Milk Day was observed on 26th November 2014.

International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People 2024 – November 29

The United Nations (UN’s) **International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People** is annually observed across the globe on **29th November** to provide a platform for the global community to reaffirm its commitment to the Palestinian people’s dignity, rights, justice, and their right to self-determination.



Background:

i. On 2nd December 1977, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) adopted the resolution A/RES/32/40 B, declaring 29th November of every year as the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

ii. The **first-ever** International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People was observed on 29th November **1978**.

About the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA):

Commissioner General – Philippe Lazzarini

Established – 1949

Headquarters – Amman (Jordan) and Gaza (Palestinian Territory)

World AIDS Day 2024 – December 1

The United Nations (UN's) World Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) Day is annually observed across the globe on **1st December** to raise awareness about Human Immunodeficiency Viruses (HIV)/ AIDS and foster unity in the fight against the pandemic.

- The theme of World AIDS Day 2024 is “**Take the Rights Path: My Health, My Right!**”

Background:

i. In August 1987, World AIDS Day was proposed by James W. Bunn and Thomas Netter, two public information officers for the Global Programme on AIDS at the World Health Organization (WHO) in Geneva, Switzerland.

ii. The first-ever World AIDS Day was observed on 1st December 1988.

**World Computer Literacy Day 2024 – December 02**

The World Computer Literacy Day (WCLD) was observed across the globe on 2nd December to raise awareness about the importance of digital skills and computer literacy in the modern technological world, especially for women and children.

- **2nd December 2024** marks the observance of the **24th** WCLD.

Background:

i. WCLD was established to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the National Institute of Information Technology (NIIT) on 2nd December 2001, to bridge the global digital divide.

ii. The first-ever WCLD was observed on 2nd December **2001**.

About the National Institute of Information Technology (NIIT)

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) – Pankaj Jathar

Headquarters – Gurugram, Haryana

Established

–

1981



Indian Navy Day 2024 – December 04

Indian Navy Day is annually observed across India on **December 4th** to recognise the role and achievements of the Indian Navy in ensuring the safety of the nation.

- The day also commemorates **Operation Trident**, Indian Navy's offensive operation conducted during the Indo-Pakistan war in 1971.
- The theme for 2024 is "Strength and Power through Innovation and Indigenization".

History:

i. On May 1, 1830, the East India Company came under British control and was granted combatant status, becoming the Indian Navy. In 1858, it was renamed "Her Majesty's Indian Navy."

ii. The Indian Navy adopted the Vedic invocation to Lord Varuna, "Sam no Varunah," as its motto, meaning "Be auspicious unto us, O Varuna."

- Navy Day was first celebrated on **October 21, 1944**.

iii. Since 1972, it has been observed on December 4 to commemorate the successful naval operations during the 1971 war, including the missile attack on Karachi harbor, as well as to honor the sacrifices of war martyrs.

**International Civil Aviation Day 2024 – December 7**

The United Nations (UN) **International Civil Aviation Day** is observed annually on **December 7** worldwide to raise awareness about international civil aviation and the role of aviation in the social and economic development of the nation.

- The day also highlights the role of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), a UN Specialised agency in helping countries to cooperate and realize a truly global rapid transit network at the service of all mankind.
- 7th December 2024 marks the **80th anniversary** of the signing of the Convention on International Civil Aviation in Chicago, United States.

**Theme:**

The theme of International Civil Aviation Day 2024 is "**Safe Skies. Sustainable Future: Together for the next 80 years**".

i. From 9 to 12 December 2024 in Muscat, Oman, The **ICAO Security Week 2024** will be held by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). This event will be a unique opportunity to cover all aspects of aviation security, including aviation cyber security and other emerging issues.

- **Theme** - "Sustainable Future of Aviation Through Security".

Armed Forces Flag Day 2024 – December 7

Armed Forces Flag Day (AFFD) was annually observed across India on 7th December to honour the bravery, sacrifice, and dedication of the men and women serving in the Army, Navy, and Air Force.

- 7th December 2024 marks the **76th** observance of the AFFD.
- Kendriya Sainik Board (**KSB**) is the main government body that creates and runs welfare programs for ex-servicemen (ESM) and their families through Rajya Sainik Boards (RSBs) in state capitals and Zila Sainik Boards (ZSBs) in districts across India.
- In 1993, the Defence Ministry of India merged all related welfare funds, such as the **Kendriya Sainik Board Fund** and the funds for war victims, into a single fund, the **Armed Forces Flag Day Fund (AFFDF)**.



Background:

- On August 28, 1949, then Defence Minister of India **Baldev Singh**, established a committee to initiate the observance of AFFD.
- The first-ever AFFD was observed on 7th December **1949**.

Human Rights Day 2024 – December 10

The United Nations (UN)'s **Human Rights Day (HRD)**, also known as **International or World Human Rights Day**, is annually observed on **10th December** worldwide to raise awareness about human rights, transcending distinctions of race, colour, religion, gender, origin, or status.

- **2024** celebrates the **76th** anniversary of the UDHR, alongside the **31st anniversary** of the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).
- The theme of HRD **2024** is “**Our Rights, Our Future, Right Now**”



Events in India:

i. On 10th December 2024, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) hosted a program at the Plenary Hall of Vigyan Bhavan in New Delhi to mark HRD, with President **Droupadi Murmu** as the Chief Guest.

- The event was followed by a National Conference on ‘**Mental Well-being: Navigating Stress from Classroom to Workplace.**’

International Mountain Day 2024 – December 11

The United Nations (UN) **International Mountain Day (IMD)** is annually observed on 11 December worldwide to raise awareness about the importance of mountains to life and highlight the importance of mountain development.

- The theme of IMD 2024 is “**Mountain solutions for a sustainable future – innovation, adaptation, and youth**”

Background:

i. The origin of IMD can be traced back to **Chapter 13 of Agenda 21**, titled “*Managing Fragile Ecosystems: Sustainable Mountain Development*,” adopted during the Earth Summit **1992**.



ii. In 2003, UNGA adopted resolution A/RES/57/245, declaring December 11 of each year as International Mountain Day. The first observance of this day took place on **December 11, 2003**.

UNICEF Day 2024 – December 11

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Day is observed annually on **December 11th** to mark the creation of UNICEF by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) and **Ludwik Rajchman** on 11th December 1946.

- 11 December 2024 marks the **77th anniversary** of the foundation of UNICEF.
- The theme of UNICEF Day 2024 is **“Listen to the Future”**, highlights the importance of listening to children's voices to create a brighter tomorrow.



Background:

i. UNICEF, known as the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, was created by resolution 57(I) of the UNGA on 11 December 1946.

ii. UNICEF initially focused on providing food, clothing and healthcare to children affected by World War II.

iii. Over time, it became an integral part of the UN system, gaining permanent status in 1953 and the name was renamed as the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

iv. UNICEF's exceptional contributions to children's welfare were recognized and was awarded the **Nobel Peace Prize** on October 26 1965.

53rd Vijay Diwas – 16 December 2024

Vijay Diwas, or Victory Day (Bijoy Dibos), is annually observed across India and Bangladesh on **16 December** to celebrate the historic victory of Indian armed forces against Pakistan in the **1971 Indo-Pak war** (India Pakistan War of 1971).

- The day also pays tributes to the martyrs of both India and Bangladesh, who lost their lives on the line during the war.
- The day commemorates the formal surrender of the Pakistani Armed Forces to the joint Indian and **Mukti Bahini** (Bangladesh liberation forces) in Dhaka (Bangladesh) during the Bangladesh Liberation War in 1971.



First-Ever UN World Meditation Day – December 21 2024

The United Nations (UN) observed the **first ever ‘World Meditation Day’** on December 21 2024 to emphasize the profound mental, physical, and social benefits of meditation, while fostering peace and unity worldwide.

Background:

i. On November 29 2024, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) declared **December**

21 as 'World Meditation Day' following the unanimous adoption of a resolution co-sponsored by **6 countries** comprising India, Sri Lanka, Liechtenstein, Andorra, Mexico and Nepal.

- The resolution was adopted on December 6 2024, by the **193-member** UNGA.
- ii. The resolution, introduced by **Liechtenstein**, was also cosponsored by Bangladesh, Bulgaria, Burundi, the Dominican Republic, Iceland, Luxembourg, Mauritius, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Portugal and Slovenia.

National Mathematics Day 2024 – December 22

National Mathematics Day(NMD), celebrated annually on December 22 to mark the birth anniversary of the Indian mathematician, **Srinivasa Ramanujan**.

- This day is celebrated to raise awareness about the importance of mathematics for the growth of humanity and to recognise the contributions made by Ramanujan, to mathematics.
- 22 December 2024 marks the **137th birth anniversary** of Srinivasa Ramanujan.



Background :

National Mathematics Day(NMD) was introduced by former Prime Minister(PM) Manmohan Singh on 26 December 2011 at Madras University, to mark the 125th birth anniversary of the Indian mathematician Srinivasa Ramanujan who was born on 22 December 1887.

- On this occasion former PM Manmohan Singh also announced that 2012 would be celebrated as the National Mathematics Year.
- The first NMD was celebrated on December 22, 2012.

National Farmer's Day 2024 – December 23

National Farmer's Day, also known as Kisan Diwas, is annually observed across India on 23rd December to honor the farmers' contribution to the overall social and economic development of India and commemorate the birth anniversary of **Bharat Ratna Chaudhary Charan Singh**, the 5th Prime Minister(PM) of India.

i. The theme for National Farmers' Day 2024 is "**Empowering 'Annadatas' for a Prosperous Nation**."

- This theme underscores the nation's commitment to supporting farmers, who are often referred to as 'Annadatas' or 'providers of food,'.

ii. 23rd December 2024 marks the **122nd birth anniversary** of Chaudhary Charan Singh.

Background:

i. In 2001, the Government of India (GoI) declared 23 December, the birth anniversary of Chaudhary Charan Singh, as Kisan Diwas or National Farmer's Day to recognize his contribution towards the agriculture sector and the welfare of the farmers.

ii. The **1st Kisan Diwas** (National Farmer's Day) was observed on **23 December 2001**.



National Consumer Rights Day 2024 – 24 December

National Consumer Rights Day, also known as **Bharatiya Grahak Diwas** or National Consumer Day, is annually observed across India on **24 December** to raise awareness of consumer rights and responsibilities.

- On the occasion of National Consumer Day 2024, Union Minister, **Pralhad Joshi**, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution & Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (**MOCAF&PD**) inaugurated and launched several pro-Consumer initiatives at an event held in Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi (Delhi).
- The theme of National Consumer Day 2024 was “**Virtual Hearings & Digital Access to Consumer Justice**”.



Background:

i. The day commemorates the enactment of the Consumer Protection Act (CPA) of 1986, which received the assent of the President of India on 24 December 1986.

- The 1st National Consumer Rights Day was observed on **24 December 1986**.

Good Governance Day 2024- December 25

Good Governance Day, also known as ‘Sushasan Diwas’ in Hindi, is annually observed across India on 25th December to mark the birth anniversary of the former (10th) Prime Minister (PM) Late **Atal Bihari Vajpayee**. The day also aims to create awareness of accountability and administration of government among the people.

- **25th December 2024** marks the 11th Good Governance Day and **100th birth anniversary** of Atal Bihari Vajpayee.
- Theme of Good Governance Day 2024 “**India’s Path to a Viksit Bharat: Empowering Citizens through Good Governance and Digitalisation,**”.
- The 4th Good Governance Week (**Sushasan Saptah**) is celebrated annually from 19th to 25th December.

Background:

i. In 2014, the Government of India (GOI) declared 25th December as Good Governance Day to honor the legacy of Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

- The **first** Good Governance Day was observed on 25th December 2014.