LawEx

UNION BUDGET

2024-2025

A product by **SmartKeeda**

About Magazine

"LawEx" is a carefully curated set of Current Events designed specifically for CLAT aspirants. To take you one step closer to realizing your dream, "LawEx" provides a fortnightly overview of the most significant current events related to politics, economics, science and technology, & sports with a wide range of infographics to ensure a smoother learning experience and enhanced retention of information.

Editor's Note

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman presented the Union Budget for 2024-25 on 23 July 2024, marking her seventh consecutive budget presentation, a new record surpassing former Prime Minister Morarji Desai. The Charaideo Moidams, a unique 700-year-old mound-burial system of the Ahom dynasty from Assam, was officially inscribed on the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage List on July 26 becoming the 43rd property from India to be included in the prestigious index. The Supreme Court agreed to hear a case whose outcome will likely shape the contours of the "right to be forgotten", known in European information privacy regulation as the "right to erasure", in India. For more updates, keep reading.

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TEST ZONE

CROSSWORD CORNER

VAISHNAV BHATT

Our Top Achiever
AIR - 113th
CLAT 2024

Q. Give us a brief intro about yourself, Vaishnav.

Ans. Hello, I'm Vaishnav and I secured AIR 113 in CLAT 2024. I completed my 10th standard in Delhi and have moved to Bangalore this year.

Q. When did you think about doing law?

Ans. I've had some very unpleasant experiences in life when I was staying in Delhi where my family and I had to suffer emotionally and financially and a major part of it was due to insufficient knowledge of the law and our rights. In this process I had to interact with some lawyers, and visit the court as well. These experiences made me want to pursue law as a profession as I found it interesting and also felt that having this knowledge would keep me safe and I would be able to help others as well who face similar situations due to insufficient knowledge.

Q. When did you seriously start preparing for CLAT?

Ans. I started my preparation in March 2023.

Q. What is the role of LawEx in your preparation?

Ans. LawEx helped me a lot with my preparation for CLAT. Their current affairs magazine and Maths YouTube videos are excellent and have been of great help. I also found their GK topic tests to be very useful.

Q. Do you think LawEx Lectures with sufficient reading and mock practice enough for CLAT?

Ans. I feel LawEx should increase the number of mock tests that they offer. Apart from this I think that they provide sufficient study material.

Q. What did you do for your subject-wise strategy?

Ans. My weak point was GK, so I gave it a bit more attention compared to the other subjects. For this I read The Hindu newspaper everyday for 1.5 hrs and focused on the editorial as that improved my vocabulary and helped improve my English as well. I allocated 4-5 hours for GK everyday. I gave 2 hours for legal reasoning. During this time I had not yet started giving mock tests. I watched LawEx's maths YouTube videos to improve my maths for around 30 minutes. A bulk of my preparation was focused on these 3 subjects. Apart from this I attempted around 60 mock tests, 20 of which were from LawEx and the rest I had to source from other test series.

Q. What was your highest and lowest score in mock tests?

Ans. My lowest score was 72 and my highest score was 96.25. On average my score was around 90 marks out of 120.

Q. How did you keep your confidence up when scoring low in mocks?

Ans. My performance in mocks was more or less pretty consistent throughout my preparation. So I did not face this issue.

Q. How to maintain mock scores?

Ans. In my opinion, analysing the mocks after attempting them is very important as it makes you understand what kind of mistakes you have made and helps you to improve upon them in the next mock. This will also make you understand your own weak points and which subject needs improvement. This will help you maintain and improve your score.

Q. How much GK is sufficient and how to revise it?

Ans. No amount of GK can be considered sufficient in my opinion. So I would suggest to find 2-3 sources which are of good quality like The Hindu newspaper and LawEx magazine which covers most of the topics which you need to know and for static GK you can purchase any book like A P Bharadwaj's Static GK book. I revised for GK by doing the topic tests multiple times.

Q. How many Mocks are sufficient for CLAT Preparation?

Ans. According to me atleast 50 mock tests are required so that your speed along with accuracy improves and it doesn't make you feel anxious anymore as a calm mind will help you concentrate better and score more. Clat is a reading based exam and it can be quite draining especially in the last 30-35 minutes so practicing mocks is important here.

Q. What is your advice to CLAT Aspirants?

Ans. I would advise CLAT aspirants to give themselves at least one year for preparation and attempt 1-2 mock tests every week so that it doesn't drain you out. I made this mistake too by attempting around 60 mocks in 2 months. It is not feasible. CLAT is highly competitive and requires consistency and patience. As my English was at a decent level to begin with, I was somehow able to manage the stress. Also don't forget to take short breaks and have good sleep. Some books which I purchased for CLAT are A P Bharadwaj's Legal reasoning and A P Bharadwaj's static GK. Also practice 15-20 mocks on OMR printouts as well and try finishing your mocks in 115 minutes as this is the time you'll get in your actual examination. Best wishes to all of you.

QUICK BOOSTERS

UNION BUDGET 2024-2025

WHY IN NEWS?

• Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman presented the Union Budget for 2024-25 on 23 July 2024, marking her seventh consecutive budget presentation, a new record surpassing former Prime Minister Morarji Desai.

Key Points

• As mentioned in the Interim Budget, the focus of the budget remains on 4 major castes, namely 'Garib' (Poor), 'Mahilayen' (Women), 'Yuva' (Youth) and 'Annadata' (Farmer).

• The Union Budget 2024-25 emphasises employment, skilling, support for MSMEs, and the middle class.

– This year, Rs 1.48 lakh crore has been allocated for education, employment and skilling.
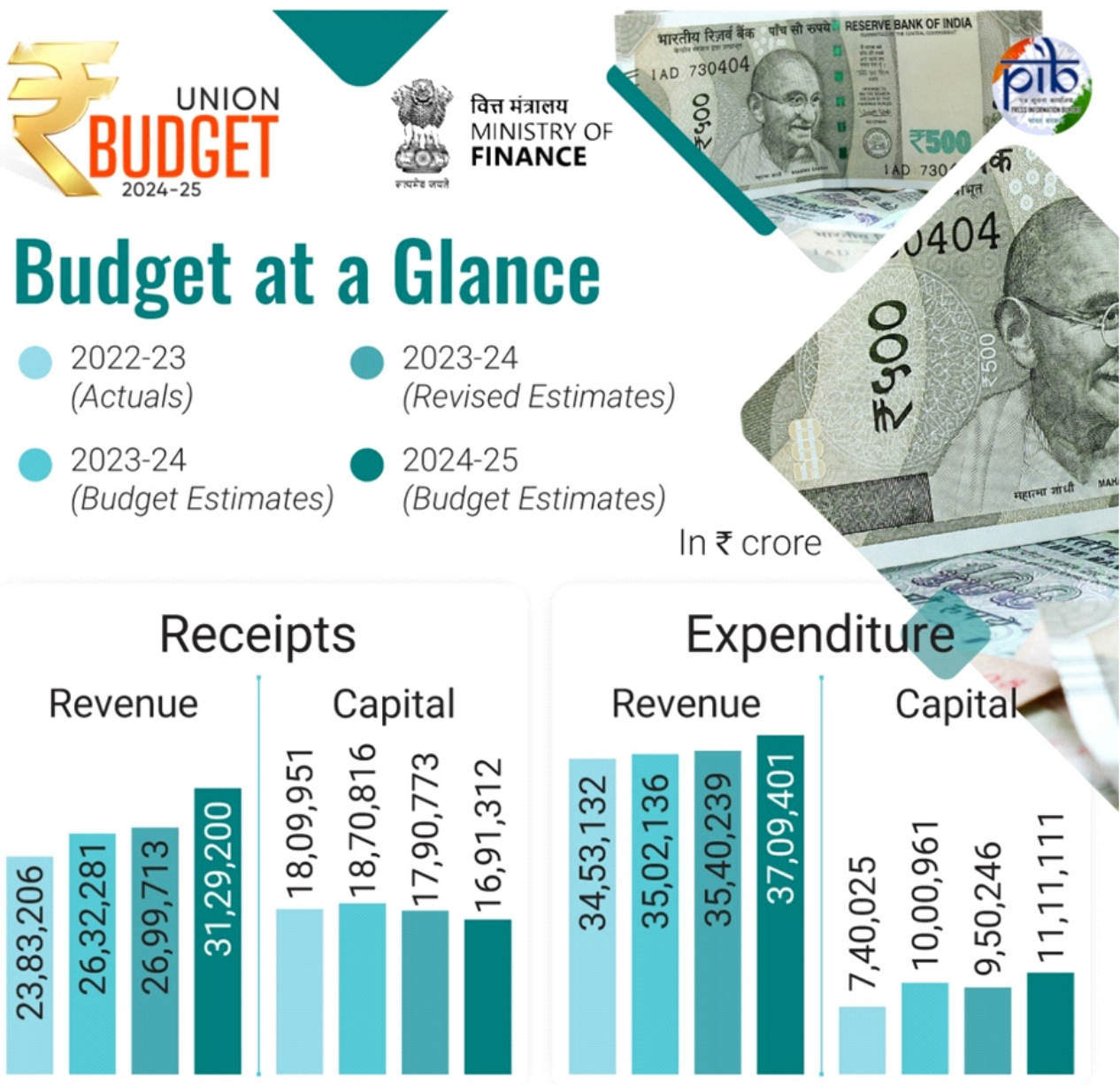
UNION BUDGET 2024-25

वित्त मंत्रालय MINISTRY OF FINANCE

Budget at a Glance

- 2022-23 (Actuals)
- 2023-24 (Revised Estimates)
- 2023-24 (Budget Estimates)
- 2024-25 (Budget Estimates)

In ₹ crore

Receipts

Revenue
- 23,83,206
- 26,32,281
- 26,99,713
- 31,29,200

Capital
- 18,09,951
- 18,70,816
- 17,90,773
- 16,91,312

Expenditure

Revenue
- 34,53,132
- 35,02,136
- 35,40,239
- 37,09,401

Capital
- 7,40,025
- 10,00,961
- 9,50,246
- 11,11,111

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Budget Priorities

- The budget prioritises 9 priorities for generating ample opportunities for all. These are productivity and resilience in agriculture, employment & skilling, inclusive human resource development and social justice, manufacturing & services, urban development, energy security, infrastructure, innovation, Research & Development and next-generation reforms.

Priority 1 : Productivity and Resilience in Agriculture

- A provision of Rs 1.52 lakh crore has been announced for agriculture and allied sectors this year.
- New 109 high-yielding and climate-resilient varieties of 32 field and horticulture crops will be released for cultivation by farmers.
- In the next two years, 1 crore farmers across the country will be initiated into natural farming supported by certification and branding.
- 10,000 need-based bio-input resource centres will be established.
- The government will facilitate the implementation of the Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) in agriculture for coverage of farmers and their lands in 3 years.

Priority 2 : Employment & Skilling

- The Finance Minister announced the Prime Minister's package of 5 schemes and initiatives to facilitate employment, skilling and other opportunities for 4.1 crore youth over a 5-year period with a central outlay of ₹2 lakh crore.
- As part of the Prime Minister's package, 3 schemes for 'Employment Linked Incentive' to be implemented - Scheme A - First Timers; Scheme B - Job Creation in Manufacturing; Scheme C - Support to Employers.

> - Scheme A - First Timers: One-month salary of up to Rs 15,000 to be provided in 3 installments to first-time employees, as registered in the EPFO.
> - Scheme B - Job Creation in manufacturing: Incentive to be provided at specified scale directly, both employee and employer, with respect to their EPFO contribution in the first 4 years of employment.
> - Scheme C - Support to employers: Government to reimburse up to Rs 3,000 per month for 2 years towards EPFO contribution of employers, for each additional employee.

- The 4th scheme under the Prime Minister's package is like Employment Linked Incentive and initiatives to boost skills with a focus on skilling 20 lakh youth over a 5-year period and upgrading 1,000 Industrial Training Institutes.
- Model Skill Loan Scheme to be revised to facilitate loans up to Rs 7.5 lakh with a guarantee from a government-promoted fund.
- Financial support for loans up to Rs 10 lakh for higher education in domestic institutions to be provided to youth who have not been eligible for any benefit under government schemes and policies.
- E-vouchers for this purpose will be given directly to 1 lakh students every year for annual interest subvention of 3% of the loan amount.

Priority 3 : Inclusive Human Resource Development and Social Justice

- The government will formulate a plan, 'Purvodaya', for the all-round development of the eastern region of the country covering Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Odisha and Andhra Pradesh.
- The industrial node at Gaya is to be developed along the Amritsar-Kolkata Industrial Corridor.
- The government will launch the 'Pradhan Mantri Janjatiya Unnat Gram Abhiyan' by adopting saturation coverage for tribal families in tribal-majority villages and aspirational districts covering 63,000 villages and benefitting 5 crore tribal people.
- More than 100 branches of India Post Payment Bank will be set up in the North East region to expand the banking services.
- A provision of ₹2.66 lakh crore for rural development including rural infrastructure was made this year.

Priority 4 : Manufacturing & Services

- The budget provides special attention to MSMEs and manufacturing, particularly labour-intensive manufacturing with a separately constituted self-financing guarantee fund up to Rs 100 crore per applicant.
- Public sector banks will build their in-house capability to assess MSMEs for credit, instead of relying on external assessment.
- The limit of Mudra loans will be enhanced to Rs 20 lakh from the current Rs 10 lakh for those entrepreneurs who have availed and successfully repaid previous loans under the 'Tarun' category.
- Financial support for setting up 50 multi-product food irradiation units, 100 food quality and safety testing labs with NABL accreditation and E-Commerce Export Hubs in the MSME sector will be provided.
- As the 5th scheme under the Prime Minister's package, the government will launch a comprehensive scheme for providing internship opportunities in 500 top companies to 1 crore youth in 5 years.

Priority 5 : Urban Development

- Under the PM AwasYojana Urban 2.0, the housing needs of 1 crore urban poor and middle-class families will be addressed with an investment of Rs 10 lakh crore.
- In partnership with the State Governments and Multilateral Development Banks, the government will promote water supply, sewage treatment and solid waste management projects and services for 100 large cities through bankable projects.
- Additionally, building on the success of 'PM SVANidhi', the government plans to establish 100 weekly street food hubs (haats) annually over the next five years.

Priority 6 : Energy Security

- PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana has been launched to install rooftop solar plants to enable 1 crore households to obtain free electricity up to 300 units every month.
- Nuclear energy is expected to form a very significant part of the energy mix for Viksit Bharat.

Priority 7 : Infrastructure

- Rs 11,11,111 crore for capital expenditure has been allocated this year, which is 3.4% of India's GDP.
- Phase IV of Pradhan Mantri Gram SadakYojana (PMGSY) will be launched to provide all-weather connectivity to 25,000 rural habitations which have become eligible in view of their population increase.
- For Irrigation and Flood Mitigation in Bihar, through the Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme and other sources, the government will provide financial support for projects with an estimated cost of Rs 11,500 crore such as the Kosi-Mechi intra-state link and 20 other ongoing and new schemes including barrages, river pollution abatement and irrigation projects.
- The government will also provide assistance to Assam, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Sikkim for flood management, landslides and related projects.

Priority 8 : Innovation, Research & Development

- The government will operationalize the Anusandhan National Research Fund for basic research and prototype development, allocating Rs 1 lakh crore to spur private sector-driven research and innovation at a commercial scale.
- To expand the space economy by 5 times in the next 10 years, a venture capital fund of Rs 1,000 crore will be established.

Priority 9 : Next Generation Reforms

- The government will formulate an Economic Policy Framework to guide economic development and reforms for enhancing employment.
- Implementing comprehensive labour reforms through integrated portals like e-shram portal, Shram Suvidha and Samadhan portals will be revamped to enhance ease of compliance for industry and trade.
- The Government will develop a taxonomy for climate finance to enhance the availability of capital for climate adaptation and mitigation.
- The rules and regulations for Foreign Direct Investment and Overseas Investments will be simplified to facilitate foreign direct investments, nudge prioritization, and promote opportunities for using Indian Rupee as a currency for overseas investments.
- 'NPS-Vatsalya', a plan for contribution by parents and guardians for minors will be started. On attaining the age of majority, the plan can be converted seamlessly into a normal New Pension Scheme (NPS) account.
- A Committee to review the NPS has been constituted to address the relevant issues while maintaining fiscal prudence to protect the common citizens.

Budget Estimates 2024-25

- For the year 2024-25, the total receipts other than borrowings and the total expenditure are estimated at Rs 32.07 lakh crore and Rs 48.21 lakh crore respectively.
- The net tax receipts are estimated at Rs 25.83 lakh crore and the fiscal deficit is estimated at 4.9% of GDP.
- The gross and net market borrowings through dated securities during 2024-25 are estimated at Rs 14.01 lakh crore and Rs 11.63 lakh crore respectively.

Personal Income Tax

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Tax Relief and Revised Tax Slabs in New Tax Regime

0-3 lakh rupees	Nil
3-7 lakh rupees	5 per cent
7-10 lakh rupees	10 per cent
10-12 lakh rupees	15 per cent
12-15 lakh rupees	20 per cent
Above 15 lakh rupees	30 per cent

- Income tax saving of up to ₹ 17,500/- for salaried employee in new tax regime

Income Tax Relief for around Four Crore Salaried Individuals and Pensioners

- Standard deduction for salaried employees to be increased from ₹ 50,000/- to ₹75,000/-
- Deduction on family pension for pensioners to be increased from ₹ 15,000/- to ₹ 25,000/-

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ECONOMIC SURVEY 2023-2024

WHY IN NEWS?

- Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman tabled the Economic Survey 2023-2024 in both Houses of Parliament on July 22.

Key Highlights of the Survey

Chapter 1: State of the Economy – Steady as She Goes
- The global economy grew by 3.2% in 2023, slightly lower than previous years but higher than earlier projections of 2.8%.
- India's GDP grew at more than 8% in FY 2023-24, the survey pegs the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rate for the current financial year (FY 2024-25) between 6.5% and 7%.
- The retail inflation reduced from 6.7% in FY23 to 5.4% in FY24.
- The current Account Deficit (CAD) stood at 0.7% of the GDP during FY24, an improvement from the deficit of 2.0% of GDP in FY23.
- 55% of the tax collected accrued from direct taxes and the remaining 45% from indirect taxes.
- The government progressively increased capital expenditure and provided free food grains to 81.4 crore people.

Chapter 2: Monetary Management and Financial Intermediation- Stability is the Watchword
- RBI maintained a steady policy repo rate at 6.5% throughout FY2024.
- Credit disbursal by Scheduled Commercial Banks (SCBs) stood at Rs. 164.3 lakh crore, growing by 20.2 % at the end of March 2024.
- Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) has been recognised as an effective solution for the twin balance sheet problem, in the last 8 years, 31,394 corporate debtors involving a value of Rs 13.9 Lakh Crore have been disposed off as of March 2024.
- Primary capital markets facilitated capital formation of Rs. 10.9 lakh crore during FY24 (approximately 29% of the gross fixed capital formation of private and public corporates during FY23).
- The market capitalisation of the Indian stock market has seen a remarkable surge, with the market capitalisation to GDP ratio being the fifth largest in the world.
- Indian microfinance sector emerges as the second largest in the world after China.

Chapter 3: Prices and Inflation- Under Control
- Retail inflation decreased from 6.7% in FY23 to 5.4% in FY24 despite global disruptions.
- Government interventions in LPG, petrol, and diesel prices aided inflation management.
- 29 States and Union Territories recorded inflation below 6% in FY24.
- The RBI projects inflation to fall to 4.5% in FY25 and 4.1% in FY26.
- IMF forecasts inflation of 4.6% in 2024 and 4.2% in 2025 for India.

Chapter 4 : External Sector - Stability Amid Plenty
- India's rank in the World Bank's Logistics Performance Index improved by six places, from 44th in 2018 to 38th in 2023, out of 139 countries.
- India's current account deficit narrowed 0.7% in FY24.
- India's share in global goods exports was 1.8% in FY24, against an average of 1.7% during FY16-FY20.
- India's services exports grew by 4.9% to USD 341.1 billion in FY24, with growth largely driven by IT/software services and 'other' business services.
- India is the top remittance recipient country globally, with remittances reaching a milestone of USD 120 billion in 2023.
- India's external debt to GDP ratio stood at 18.7% at the end of March 2024.

Chapter 5: Medium-Term Outlook – A Growth Strategy for New India

- Amrit Kaal's growth strategy is based on six key areas - boosting private investment, expansion of MSMEs, agriculture as a growth engine, financing green transition, bridging the education-employment gap, and building the capacity of States.
- For the Indian economy to grow at 7% plus, a tripartite compact between the Union Government, State Governments and the private sector is required.

Chapter 6: Climate Change and Energy Transition: Dealing with Trade-Offs

- As of 31 May 2024, the share of non-fossil sources in the installed electricity generation capacity has reached 45.4%.
- India aims to achieve a 'Viksit Bharat' or 'Developed India' by 2047 and targets Net Zero carbon emissions by 2070.
- Energy demand is expected to grow 2 to 2.5 times by 2047 to support economic and developmental goals.
- India reduced the emission intensity of its GDP from 2005 levels by 33% in 2019.

Chapter 7: Social Sector - Benefits that Empower

- Between FY18 and FY24, the welfare expenditure has grown at a CAGR of 12.8%.
- The Gini coefficient, an indicator of inequality, has declined from 0.283 to 0.266 for the rural sector and from 0.363 to 0.314 for the urban sector of the country.
- More than 34.7 crore Ayushman Bharat cards have been generated, and the scheme has covered 7.37 crore hospital admissions.
- Under PM-AWAS-Gramin, 2.63 crore houses were constructed for the poor in the last nine years (as of 10 July 2024).
- 15.14 lakh km of road construction completed under Gram Sadak Yojana since 2014-15 (as of 10 July 2024).

Chapter 8: Employment and Skill Development: Towards Quality

- The unemployment rate declined to 3.2% in 2022-23.
- According to PLFS, more than 45% workforce is employed in agriculture, 11.4% in manufacturing, 28.9% in services, and 13.0% is in construction.
- According to PLFS, youth (age 15-29 years) unemployment rate has declined from 17.8% in 2017-18 to 10% in 2022-23.
- The female labour force participation rate (FLFPR) has been rising for six years (37.0% currently).
- The gig workforce is expected to expand to 2.35 crore by 2029–30.
- Indian economy needs to generate an average of nearly 78.5 lakh jobs annually until 2030 in the non-farm sector to cater to the rising workforce.
- Compared to 50.7 crore persons in 2022, the country would need to care for 64.7 crore persons in 2050.

Chapter 9: Agriculture and Food Management – Plenty of Upside Left If We Get It Right

- Agriculture and allied sectors registered an average annual growth rate of 4.18% at constant prices over the last five years.
- As of 31 January 2024, the total credit disbursed to agriculture amounted to ₹ 22.84 lakh Crore.
- As of January 31, 2024, banks issued 7.5 crores Kisan Credit Card (KCC) with a limit of ₹9.4 lakh crores.
- An area of 90.0 lakh hectares has been covered under micro irrigation in the country under the Per drop more crop (PDMC) from 2015-16 to 2023-24.

Chapter 10: Industry - Small and Medium Matters

- Economic growth of 8.2% in FY24 was supported by an industrial growth rate of 9.5%.
- India's pharmaceutical market stands as the world's third-largest by volume with a valuation of USD 50 billion.
- India is the world's second-largest clothing manufacturer and one of the top five exporting nations.
- India's electronics manufacturing sector accounts for an estimated 3.7% of the global market share in FY22.

Chapter 11: Services - Fuelling Growth Opportunities

- The services sector accounted for 55% of the economy in FY24 and grew by 7.6% during the year.
- Globally, India's services exports constituted 4.4% of the world's commercial services exports in 2022.
- India's share in digitally delivered services exports globally increased to 6.0% in 2023 from 4.4% in 2019.
- The aviation sector in India has grown substantially, with a 15% YoY increase in total air passengers in FY24.
- Passenger traffic originating in Indian Railways increased by about 5.2% in FY24 compared to the previous year.
- Tourism industry witnessed over 92 lakh foreign tourist arrivals in 2023, implying a YoY increase of 43.5%.
- The Indian e-commerce industry is expected to cross USD 350 billion by 2030.

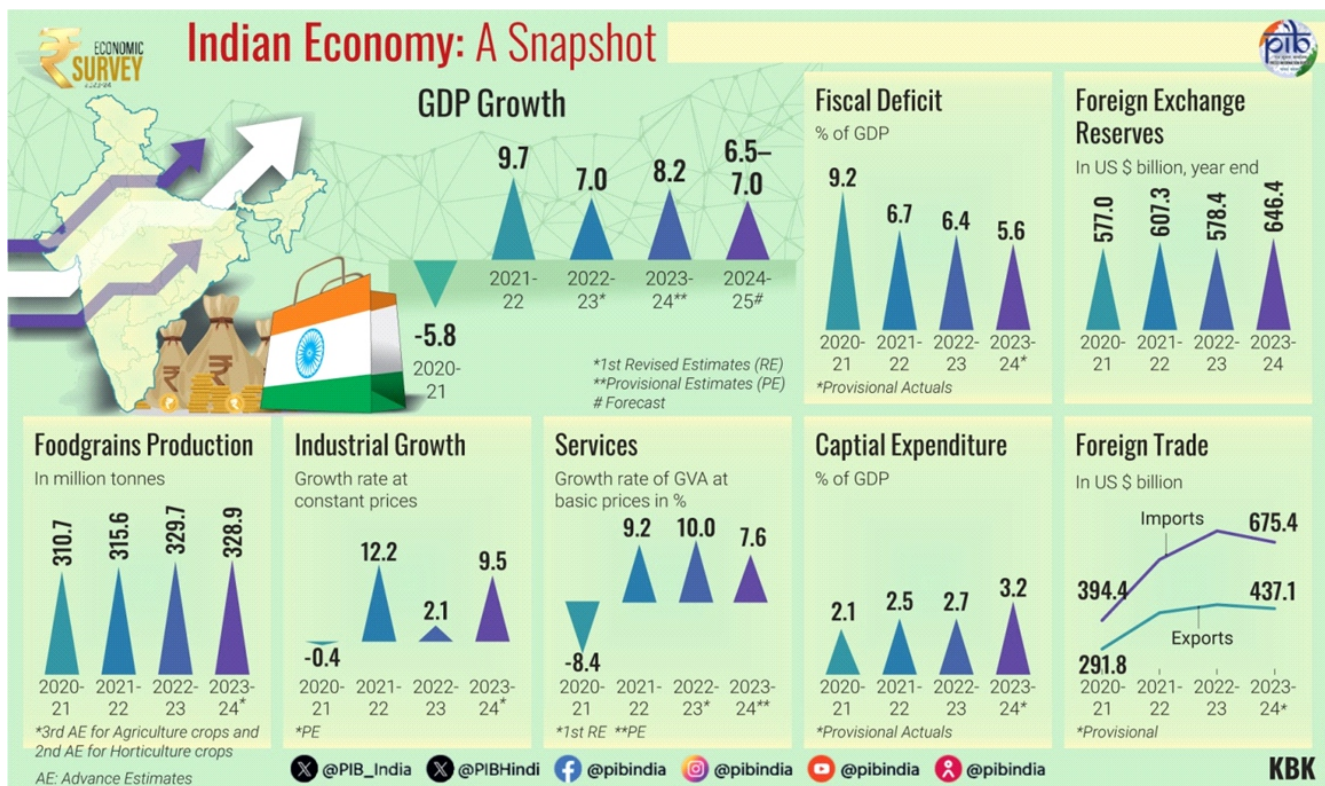## Chapter 12: Infrastructure – Lifting Potential Growth

- The average pace of NH construction increased by nearly 3 times from 11.7 km per day in FY14 to around 34 km per day by FY24.
- Capital expenditure on Railways has increased by 77% in the past 5 years, with significant investments in the construction of new lines, gauge conversion and doubling.
- In FY24, new terminal buildings at 21 airports were operationalized.
- India's rank in the International Shipments category in the World Bank Logistics Performance Index has improved to 22nd in 2023 from 44th in 2014.

Chapter 13: Climate Change and India: Why We Must Look at the Problem Through Our Lens

- Current global strategies for climate change are flawed and not universally applicable.
- The Western approach does not seek to address the root of the problem, i.e. overconsumption, but rather chooses to substitute the means to achieve overconsumption.
- A one-size-fits-all approach will not work, and developing countries need to be free to choose their own pathways.
- "Mission LiFE" focuses on human-nature harmony promoting mindful consumption rather than overconsumption which lies at the root of the global climate change problem.

About Economic Survey

- The Economic Survey is an annual document presented by the government ahead of the Union Budget to review the state of the economy.
- It is prepared by the Economics Division of the Department of Economic Affairs of the Finance Ministry under the guidance of India's Chief Economic Advisor (CEA), currently V. Anantha Nageswaran.
- It is tabled in both houses of Parliament by the Union Finance Minister
- It was presented for the first time in 1950-51.
- Initially, it was a part of the budget documents but in 1964 it became a separate volume.

Indian Economy: A Snapshot

GDP Growth
9.7 (2021-22), 7.0 (2022-23*), 8.2 (2023-24**), 6.5–7.0 (2024-25#), -5.8 (2020-21)
*1st Revised Estimates (RE)
**Provisional Estimates (PE)
Forecast

Fiscal Deficit (% of GDP)
9.2 (2020-21), 6.7 (2021-22), 6.4 (2022-23), 5.6 (2023-24*)
*Provisional Actuals

Foreign Exchange Reserves (In US $ billion, year end)
577.0 (2020-21), 607.3 (2021-22), 578.4 (2022-23), 646.4 (2023-24)

Foodgrains Production (In million tonnes)
310.7 (2020-21), 315.6 (2021-22), 329.7 (2022-23), 328.9 (2023-24*)
*3rd AE for Agriculture crops and 2nd AE for Horticulture crops
AE: Advance Estimates

Industrial Growth (Growth rate at constant prices)
-0.4 (2020-21), 12.2 (2021-22), 2.1 (2022-23), 9.5 (2023-24*)
*PE

Services (Growth rate of GVA at basic prices in %)
-8.4 (2020-21), 9.2 (2021-22), 10.0 (2022-23*), 7.6 (2023-24**)
*1st RE **PE

Capital Expenditure (% of GDP)
2.1 (2020-21), 2.5 (2021-22), 2.7 (2022-23), 3.2 (2023-24*)
*Provisional Actuals

Foreign Trade (In US $ billion)
Imports: 394.4 → 675.4
Exports: 291.8 → 437.1
2020-21, 2021-22, 2022-23, 2023-24*
*Provisional

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ASSAM'S CHARAIDEO MOIDAMS RECOGNIZED BY UNESCO

WHY IN NEWS?

- The Charaideo Moidams, a unique 700-year-old mound-burial system of the Ahom dynasty from Assam, was officially inscribed on the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage List on July 26 becoming the 43rd property from India to be included in the prestigious index.

Key Facts

- A moidam is a tumulus – a mound of earth raised over a grave – of Ahom royalty and aristocracy.
- Assam's Charaideo Moidams are royal burial sites of the Ahom dynasty, which ruled over much of Assam and the North East from 1228 to 1826 AD.
- Located around 30 km from Sivasagar town in eastern Assam, even today, the tumuli in Charaideo are considered sacrosanct by many locals.
- A typical moidam at Charaideo contains one or more chambers in a vault. On top of these is a hemispherical earthen mound, rising high above the ground, covered in grass.
- On top of this mound, there is a pavilion, known as the chow chali. A low octagonal wall surrounds the mound with one entrance.
- Ahom kings and queens were buried inside these moidams. Unlike Hindus who cremate their dead, the predominant funerary method of the Ahoms, originating from the Tai people, was the burial.
- The height of a moidam is typically indicative of the power and stature of the person buried inside.
- Inside the chambers of the moidam, the dead king would be buried along with items he needed for the "afterlife", as well as servants, horses, livestock and even their wives.
- It is the similarity of the Ahom burial rites with that of the ancient Egyptians that give Charaideo moidams the moniker of "Pyramids of Assam."

Importance of Charaideo

- The word Charaideo has been derived from three Tai Ahom words, Che-Rai-Doi. "Che" means city or town, "Rai" means "to shine" and "Doi" means hill.
- In short, Charaideo means, "a shining town situated on a hilltop."
- While the Ahoms shifted capitals multiple times over their 600-year history, Charaideo is considered to be their first capital city established in 1253 AD by King Sukaphaa.
- Throughout the Ahom rule, it remained a symbolic and ritual centre of power, due to its salience in the dynasty's founding. After Sukaphaa was laid to rest in Charaideo in 1856, subsequent royals also chose it as their own resting place.
- Today, these moidams are major tourist attractions. While there are over 150 moidams in the region, only 30 are protected by the Archaeological Survey of India with many in a state of disrepair.

> The Moidam is the first from the North East to be recognised as a World Heritage Site in cultural category.
> Assam has two other such sites in the natural category – Kaziranga National Park and Manas National Park, both upgraded to tiger reserves.

The Ahoms and their Present-day Relevance

- The Ahoms were one of India's longest-reigning ruling dynasties. At their peak, their kingdom stretched from modern-day Bangladesh to deep inside Burma.
- Known to be able administrators and valiant warriors, the Ahom dynasty has enduring cultural appeal in Assam.
- In 2023, Ahom general and folk hero Lachit Borphukan's 400th birth anniversary, Lachit Diwas, was celebrated from November 23 to 25.
- Today, despite originating from South Chinese ruling dynasties, Ahoms are invoked as local Indian rulers who left behind a strong legacy.

Tell Umm Amer

- During the 46th session of the World Heritage Committee, which was hosted in India for the first time, the Palestinian site of Tell Umm Amer was listed in both the UNESCO World Heritage Site List and the Lost of World Heritage in Danger.
- Also known as the 'Monastery of Saint Hilarion', the site lies in the Gaza Strip which continues to reel under Israel's relentless assault.
- Situated on the coastal dunes of the Nuseirat Municipality, just 10 km south of Gaza city, the ancient Christian monastery was founded in the fourth century by Hilarion the Great (291-371 CE), considered by some to be the father of Palestinian monasticism.
- The present-day archaeological remains of the site span more than four centuries, from the time of Hilarion to the Umayyad period.
- The ruins comprise "five successive churches, bath and sanctuary complexes, geometric mosaics, and an expansive crypt" making the monastery "one of the largest in the Middle East".
- It is considered a hub of religious, cultural, and economic activity from its time until the Umayyad period (661–750).
- In December 2023, UNESCO's Intergovernmental Committee for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict had already decided to grant 'provisional enhanced protection' to the monastery under the 1954 Hague Convention and its Second Protocol.

KARGIL VIJAY DIWAS 2024

WHY IN NEWS?

- Kargil Vijay Diwas is celebrated every year on July 26 to pay tribute to the bravery of Indian soldiers who made the ultimate sacrifice for the country during the Kargil War of 1999.
- Additionally, it also commemorates the country's victory over Pakistan in the Kargil War of 1999 and marks the successful culmination of Operation Vijay.
- In this operation, the Indian Armed Forces reclaimed the territories in the Kargil district of Jammu and Kashmir that had been infiltrated by Pakistani soldiers and militants.

Historical Background

- India and Pakistan were involved in a major war in 1971 that led to the creation of Bangladesh. The two powers continue their fight to dominate Siachen Glacier by erecting military outposts on the surrounding mountain ranges.
- When the two countries tested their nuclear weapons in 1998, the animosity between the neighbours touched an all-time high.
- To defuse the tension, they signed the Lahore Declaration in February 1999 and called for a bilateral, peaceful settlement to the Kashmir issue.
- During the winter of 1998-1999, the Pakistani army sent forces secretly to Kargil's Drass and Batalik Sectors in the Ladakh region, to capture the position to overlook the movement in the NH 1A in the winter of 1998 - 1999.
- The Indian military mistook the infiltrators for radicalised terrorists. But soon, the Indian army realised that it was something bigger and more planned.
- It was fought in the summer of 1999 along a 170km mountain frontier, stretching from Mashkoh Valley to Turtuk in the Kargil sector,
- In response, India launched Operation Vijay, deploying over 200,000 troops to the region to counter the incursion.

Operation Safed Sagar

- The Indian Air Force (IAF) played a pivotal role in India's triumph against Pakistan in 1999 through its 'Operation Safed Sagar'.
- Safed Sagar was the name of the operation that the IAF gave to its role in Operation Vijay in the Kargil War.
- This was the first time combat air power was used in the mountain ranges above 15,000 feet altitude.
- The IAF kickstarted its mission by attacking enemy positions and supply lines. MiG-21, MiG-27ML and MiG-23BN fighters were deployed to carry out the first strike.

Significance

- Kargil Diwas honours the ultimate sacrifice of Indian soldiers during the 1999 war.
- The Kargil War memorial in Dras was built in 2000 by the Indian Army to commemorate the success of Operation Vijay in 1999.
- It was later renovated in 2014. It is also known as the "Dras War Memorial" due to its location in the town of Dras in the Kargil district of Jammu and Kashmir.
- The National War Memorial, inaugurated in 2019, is dedicated to soldiers who sacrificed their lives in various conflicts and missions, including the Sino-Indian war in 1962, Indo-Pak wars in 1947, 1965, and 1971, Indian Peace Keeping Force Operations in Sri Lanka 1987-90, and the Kargil Conflict in 1999.

Operation Talwar

- Operation Talwar was the code name given to the operation of the Indian Navy during the Kargil War.
- The Navy's readiness sent a strong message to Pakistan about potential responses to further aggression.
- In a bid to keep the enemies at bay, the Indian Navy made plans to blockade Pakistani ports, primarily the Karachi port to cut off supply routes under Operation Talwar.
- The western and eastern fleets of the Indian Navy also threatened to cut Pakistan's sea trade and launched aggressive patrols in the North Arabian Sea.
- This tactical trick of the Indian Navy posed a threat to Pakistan's economic survival as the country's majority of trade flows, primarily oils are based on the sea.

PROJECT ASMITA

WHY IN NEWS?

- The Ministry of Education and the University Grants Commission (UGC) launched a project titled ASMITA (Augmenting Study Materials in Indian Languages through Translation and Academic Writing) to develop 22,000 books in Indian languages in the next five years.

Key Highlights

- The project is a collaborative effort of the UGC and the Bharatiya Bhasha Samiti, a high-powered committee under the ministry, to promote Indian languages in education.
- The project aims to create a robust ecosystem for translation and original book writing in Indian languages across various disciplines within higher education.
- The goal is to produce 1,000 books in 22 languages within five years, resulting in 22,000 books in Bharatiya Bhasha.
    - Also, the commission aims to produce 1,800 textbooks covering Arts, Science and Commerce streams by June 2025.
- Thirteen nodal universities have been identified to lead the project, along with member universities from various regions.
- The UGC has also created a standard operating procedure (SOP) for the book-writing process in each assigned language.
- The SOP includes the identification of nodal officers, authors, allocation of title, subject and programme, writing and editing, submission of the manuscript, review and plagiarism check, finalisation, designing, proofreading and e-publication.

Other Initiatives

1. **Bahubhasha Shabdakosh -** The ministry also launched the "Bahubhasha Shabdakosh", a single-point reference for all the words in all Indian languages and their meanings.
- It is an extensive initiative to create a grand repository of multilingual dictionaries.
- This initiative will be developed by the Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL) in collaboration with the Bharatiya Bhasha Samiti.
- This Shabdakosh will help in using Bharatiya words, phrases and sentences for various new-age domains like IT, industry, research, education.
2. **Real-time Translation Architecture**, led by the National Education Technology Forum (NEFT) in collaboration with Bharatiya Bhasha Samiti, will facilitate the creation of a technological framework to enhance real-time translation capabilities in Bharatiya Bhasha.
- NETF has been conceived as an autonomous body, incorporated as a Society that would facilitate decision-making on the deployment, induction and use of technology for the realisation of NEP objectives.

Significance

- The three initiatives, ASMITA, Bahubhasha Shabdkosh and Real-time Translation Architecture, will give momentum to imparting learning in Bharatiya Bhashas, empowering learners in their academic pursuits and preserving and promoting India's language traditions.
- Further, these initiatives in line with the National Education Policy (NEP) will help create a comprehensive pool of academic resources in 22 scheduled languages, bridge the linguistic divide, foster social cohesion and unity and also transform our youth into socially responsible global citizens.
- The Eighth Schedule to the Indian Constitution consists of the following 22 languages - Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Kashmiri, Konkani, Malayalam, Manipuri, Marathi, Nepali, Oriya, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Sindhi, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu, Bodo, Santhali, Maithili and Dogri.

POLITICAL REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN

WHY IN NEWS?

- In the recently concluded general elections in the United Kingdom (UK), a record 263 women MPs (40%) have been elected to the House of Commons.

Worldwide Representation

- Women's representation in parliament varies across different democracies.
  - Sweden has 46% female MPs, South Africa (45%), the UK (40%) and the US (29%).
  - It is a perennial issue to promote higher representation for women who constitute half the population in all countries.
- Universal suffrage was achieved in various parts of the world after prolonged political movements.
  - New Zealand as a self-governing unit under British rule was the first to grant universal women suffrage in 1893.
  - The UK, itself provided all its women the right to vote only in 1928.
  - The US granted equal voting rights through the 19th Amendment only in 1920.

Country wise data on women representation*

Women representation in parliament varies across different democracies

Moving forward: Trinamool Congress MPs take selfies at the Parliament House complex during the first session of the 18th Lok Sabha, on June 25. PTI

Country	% of elected women	Quota in Parliament	Quota in political parties
Sweden	46%	No	Yes
South Africa	45%	No	Yes
Australia	38%	No	Yes
France	38%	No	Yes
Germany	35%	No	Yes
U.K.	40%	No	Yes
U.S.	29%	No	No
Pakistan	16%	Yes	No
Bangladesh	20%	Yes	No

*(as of September 2023) | Source: PRS legislative research

Representation in India

- India as a sovereign republic provided the right to vote for all its women right from the first general elections in 1952.
- While the right to vote was provided to all women since the commencement of the Constitution, the representation of women in the Lok Sabha and State legislative assemblies has been far from satisfactory.

- As of April 2024, India ranks 143 in the list of countries in the 'Monthly Ranking of Women in National Parliaments' published by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, a global organisation for national parliaments.
- India lags behind countries like Vietnam, the Philippines, Pakistan, and China in gender representation.
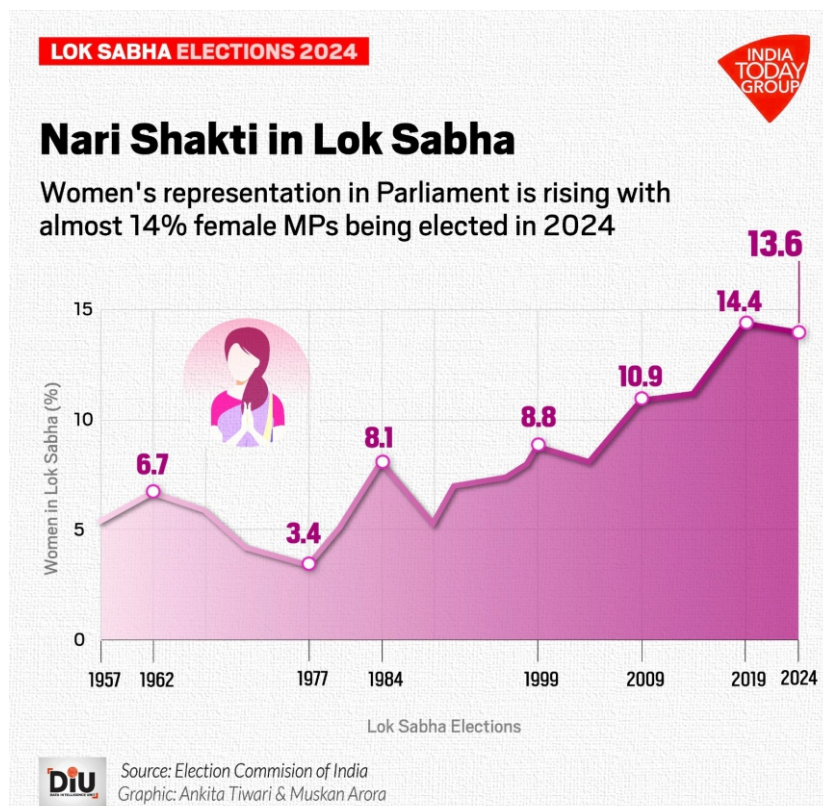
- The percentage of women MPs in the Lok Sabha had been very low between 5% and 10% till 2004.
    – It rose marginally to 12% in 2014 and currently stands at 13.6% in the 18th Lok Sabha (far below than global average of around 25%), while in the Rajya Sabha, it is 13%.
- In numbers, the 16th, 17th and 18th Lok Sabha have 64, 78 and 74 women MPs, respectively.
    – The Trinamool Congress has the highest proportion of women MPs in the current Lok Sabha at 38% (11 MPs).
- In 1957, just 45 women candidates were contesting the Lok Sabha election; in 2024 there were 799 — 9.5% of the total candidates in the fray.
    – Of this 74 were elected, representing 13.6% of the MPs in the 543-seat House.
    – The ruling Bharatiya Janata Party and the principal Opposition Congress party have around 13% each.
- As many as 150 Lok Sabha constituencies had no women candidates.
- Some States saw no women candidates at all — such as Manipur and Nagaland (which have two and one Lok Sabha seats respectively).

- The representation in State Legislative Assemblies is even poorer with the national average being around 9%.
- The 73rd and 74th amendments of the Constitution in 1992/1993, provided for one-third reservation for women in panchayats and municipalities.
- Naam Tamilar Katchi, a State party in Tamil Nadu, has been following a voluntary quota of 50% for women candidates in the last three general elections. However, voluntary or legislated quotas within political parties are unlikely to yield the desired representation in our country.

- In September 2023, the Indian Parliament through the 106th constitutional amendment provided for one-third reservation of seats for women in the Lok Sabha and State legislative assemblies.
- This reservation shall come into effect based on the delimitation exercise after the relevant figures of the first Census conducted after the commencement of this act is published.
- Hence, the Census which is overdue since 2021 should be conducted without any further delay to ensure that this reservation is implemented starting with the general elections in 2029.

LOK SABHA ELECTIONS 2024
INDIA TODAY GROUP

Nari Shakti in Lok Sabha

Women's representation in Parliament is rising with almost 14% female MPs being elected in 2024

Women in Lok Sabha (%)

Year	Value
1957	
1962	6.7
1977	3.4
1984	8.1
1999	8.8
2009	10.9
2019	14.4
2024	13.6

Lok Sabha Elections

DIU Source: Election Commision of India
Graphic: Ankita Tiwari & Muskan Arora

THIRTY METER TELESCOPE

WHY IN NEWS?

- Indian scientists have developed an open-source tool to generate an infrared star catalogue for the Adaptive Optics System (AOS) of the Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT).
  - This advancement is crucial for the telescope's ability to generate sharper astronomical images.

What is the Thirty Meter Telescope Project?

- The TMT is a revolutionary class of extremely large telescopes that will enable us to explore deeper into space and observe cosmic objects with unparalleled sensitivity.
- This is an ambitious international project involving India, the United States, Canada, China, and Japan that aims to significantly advance our understanding of the universe.
- The TMT is a next-generation astronomical observatory designed to provide unprecedented resolution and sensitivity with its massive 30-meter primary mirror, advanced adaptive optics system, and state-of-the-art instruments.

Primary Goals of the TMT
- Study the early universe and the formation and evolution of the first galaxies and stars after the Big Bang.
- Investigate the formation, structure, and evolution of galaxies across cosmic time.
- Study the relationship between supermassive black holes and their host galaxies.
- Investigate the formation of stars and planetary systems.
- Characterize exoplanets and study their atmospheres.

Mirror System of TMT
- Primary Mirror: 30 meters in diameter, composed of 492 hexagonal segments.
- Secondary Mirror: Composed of 118 smaller hexagonal segments.
- Tertiary Mirror: 3.5 meters by 2.5 meters, positioned centrally within the primary mirror.

- The preferred site for the TMT is Mauna Kea, Hawaii, one of the world's premier astronomical sites.
  - However, due to conflicts with indigenous Hawaiians who consider the site sacred, alternative locations such as the Observatorio del Roque de los Muchachos (ORM) on La Palma in the Canary Islands, Spain, are being explored.

Adaptive Optics System (AOS)

- The TMT's AOS, known as the Narrow Field Infrared Adaptive Optics System (NFIRAOS), uses deformable mirrors and laser guide stars to correct atmospheric turbulence, enhancing image resolution.
- This facility will project up to nine lasers into the sky to create artificial guide stars. However, atmospheric turbulence affects these laser beams, so measuring atmospheric tip-tilt is uncertain.
- To correct these effects, the AOS requires feedback from three real stars, known as Natural Guide Stars (NGS).
- Researchers at the IIA in Bengaluru, led by Dr. Sarang Shah, have developed an automated code to generate this catalogue, essential for the NFIRAOS to function optimally.
- The automated code can compute the expected near-infrared magnitudes of stellar sources identified in various optical sky surveys using their optical magnitudes.
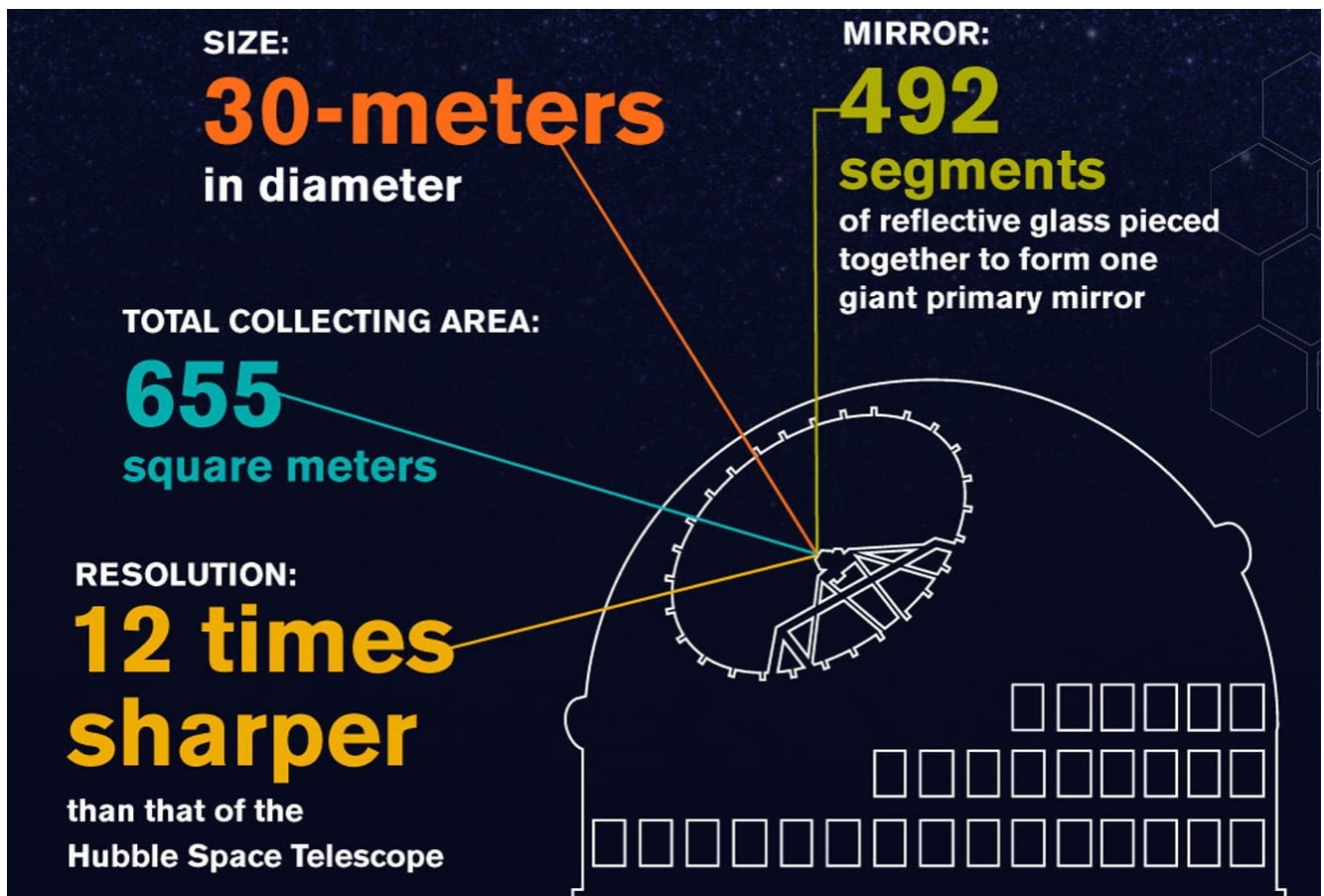
DID YOU KNOW?

- India's participation in the TMT collaboration involves the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA), Bengaluru, the Inter-University Center for Astronomy and Astrophysics (IUCAA), Pune, and the Aryabhatta Research Institute for Observational Sciences (ARIES), Nainital.
- India is also seen as a major contributor to the TMT project, providing hardware, instrumentation, software, and funding worth $200 million.
- In January 2024, India decided to formally join the Square Kilometer Array (SKA) project, an international scientific collaboration working to build the world's largest radio telescope.
- India is also part of CERN, the European Council for Nuclear Research.
    – Located near Geneva, Switzerland, CERN is a globally recognized centre for particle physics research - Project of the "God particle".
- India is also a part of the international Facility for Antiproton and Ion Research (FAIR), Darmstadt, Germany for studying the building blocks of matter and the evolution of the Universe.
- In another experiment, India is working with the European Union, United States, Japan, China, Russia and South Korea to build a little bit of the sun under laboratory conditions.
    – An experimental nuclear fusion reactor, Thermonuclear-Experimental-Reactor (ITER), is being built at Cadarache in the south of France to harness fusion reactions to generate energy.

SIZE: **30-meters** in diameter

MIRROR: **492 segments** of reflective glass pieced together to form one giant primary mirror

TOTAL COLLECTING AREA: **655** square meters

RESOLUTION: **12 times sharper** than that of the Hubble Space Telescope

SUPREME COURT AND MONEY BILL

WHY IN NEWS?

- The Supreme Court (SC) agreed to consider a submission for setting up a constitutional bench to hear pleas challenging the validity of passage of laws like the Aadhaar Act as money bills allegedly to bypass the Rajya Sabha.

Key Points

- The decision of the SC was aimed at addressing the controversy around money bills after the government introduced legislation like the passage of Aadhaar Act, 2016, amendments to the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002, (PMLA) and the Foreign Contributions Regulations Act, 2010, (FCRA), apparently to circumvent the Rajya Sabha.
- Money Bills offer a fast-track route to enact legislation because they do not require passage in Rajya Sabha.

What is a Money Bill?

- In the usual process of lawmaking, a Bill must be passed by majorities in both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha. The exception is a category of Bills known as Money Bills.
  - A money bill is a piece of legislation which can be introduced only in the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha cannot amend or reject it.
- Under Article 109, a Money Bill shall be introduced only in Lok Sabha and, upon passage, transmitted to Rajya Sabha for its "recommendations".
  - The Rajya Sabha can only make recommendations which may or may not be accepted by the Lower House.
  - Rajya Sabha must revert within 14 days, but it is up to Lok Sabha to accept or reject any or all of its recommendations.
  - If the Bill is not returned by Rajya Sabha within the stipulated period, it is considered passed anyway.
- To ensure this process is not abused, Article 110 provides a strict definition of a Money Bill.
  - In order for a Bill to be designated as a Money Bill, it must contain "only provisions dealing with all or any" of a specific list of subjects.
  - These subjects include taxation, financial obligations of the Government of India, the Consolidated Fund (revenue received by the government through taxes and expenses incurred in the form of borrowings and loans) or Contingency Fund (money to meet unforeseen expenditure) of India, or "any matter incidental" to the matters listed in the Article.
- Under Article 110(3), "If any question arises whether a Bill is a Money Bill or not, the decision of the Speaker of the House of the People thereon shall be final."
  - This decision is final and cannot be questioned in any court or by either House of Parliament, nor can it be contested by the President.

- The President of India cannot exercise a suspensive veto in the case of money bills. He can either give his assent or withhold his assent to a money bill but cannot return it for the reconsideration of the Parliament.
- Normally, he gives his assent to the money bill as it is introduced in the Parliament with his prior permission.

Important Cases in SC

- **Aadhar Act -** In September 2018, the court ruled in favour of the government, upholding the constitutionality of the Aadhaar law by a 4-1 majority.
  - The petitioners argued that the Act was passed as a Money Bill, even though it contained provisions that were unrelated to the subjects listed under Article 110.
  - Justice Ashok Bhushan, who concurred with the majority, wrote that the main aim of the Act was to provide subsidies and benefits, which involves expenditure from the Consolidated Fund, and qualified the Act to be passed as a Money Bill.
  - Justice D Y Chandrachud (he was not CJI at the time), was the sole dissenting voice.
  - He observed that the use of the Money Bill route in this case was an "abuse of the constitutional process", and that passing an ordinary Bill as a money Bill limits the role of Rajya Sabha in lawmaking.

- **Finance Act, 2017 -** The Finance Act, 2017 included amendments to a number of Acts which, among other things, empowered the government to notify rules regarding the service conditions of members of Tribunals.
  - Shortly afterwards, the Centre notified the Appellate Tribunal and Other Authorities (Qualifications, Experience and Other Conditions of Service of Members) Rules of 2017 (Tribunal Rules).
  - A host of petitioners, including the Madras Bar Association and the All India Lawyers' Union argued that the Finance Act, 2017, must be struck down in its entirety as it contained provisions that had no connection with the subjects listed in Article 110.
  - In November 2019, a five-judge Bench struck down the Tribunal Rules as unconstitutional for interfering with judicial independence but referred the Money Bill aspect to a larger seven-judge Bench (in Rojer Mathew vs South Indian Bank Ltd case).
  - The court observed that the five-judge Bench in the Aadhaar case did not elaborate upon what makes a valid Money Bill.

- **PMLA Amendments -** Amendments to the PMLA, passed as Money Bills from 2015 onwards, gave the Enforcement Directorate extensive powers, including arrest and raids.
  - The petitioners challenged the wide powers of the Enforcement Directorate under the PMLA, where the restrictive bail conditions under Section 45 were introduced through a Money Bill (the Finance Act, 2018).
  - Although the Supreme Court upheld the legality of these amendments, it left the question of whether they should have been passed as Money Bills to the seven-judge Bench.

- **Electoral Bond scheme -** The petitioners also challenged the Centre's Electoral Bond scheme which was facilitated through amendments to key laws through the Money Bill route.

WHAT'S A MONEY BILL?

↘ According to Article 110 of the Constitution, a bill is deemed to be a money bill if it deals "only" with matters specified in Article 110 (1)(a) to (g)—taxation, borrowings by the government and appropriation of money from the Consolidated Fund of India, etc.

↘ Article 110(1)(g) adds that "any matter incidental to any of the matters specified in Articles 110(1)(a)-(f)" can also be classified as a money bill

↘ The government has cited this clause to introduce legislations such as the Aadhaar

Act, 2016, and the recent amendments to the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002, as money bills

↘ Generally, for a bill to be enacted, the approval of both houses of Parliament is required. But a money bill can be introduced only in the Lok Sabha. The Rajya Sabha cannot amend or reject it, only suggest amendments, and it's up to the Lok Sabha to accept or reject these

↘ If a dispute arises over whether a bill is a money bill or not, the LS speaker's decision is final. However, the Supreme Court in 2018 stated that this decision is subject to judicial scrutiny

SC TO EXAMINE ACQUITTED MAN'S 'RIGHT TO BE FORGOTTEN'

WHY IN NEWS?

- The Supreme Court agreed to hear a case whose outcome will likely shape the contours of the "right to be forgotten", known in European information privacy regulation as the "right to erasure", in India.
- The top court now has to decide whether the right to be forgotten is a fundamental right and, if so, how it relates to other fundamental rights guaranteed by the Constitution of India.

- A three-judge Bench headed by Chief Justice of India (CJI) D Y Chandrachud will hear a challenge against a Madras High Court ruling that on February 27 directed legal search portal Indian Kanoon to take down a judgment in a 2014 rape and cheating case.
- The acquitted man moved the Madras HC in 2021, saying that he had been denied citizenship of Australia because his name appears in the judgment that is publicly available on the legal portal.

What is the Right to be Forgotten ?

- The right to be forgotten can be loosely described as the right to remove one's digital footprint (from Internet searches, etc.) which violates the right to privacy.
- It is provided by the European Union's (EU's) General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), a law passed by the 28-member bloc in 2018.

- In May 2014, the Luxembourg-based Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU), the highest court in matters concerning the application and interpretation of EU law, affirmed that there exists a right to be forgotten.
- In what is commonly referred to as the "Google Spain case", the court ruled on the plea of Spanish lawyer Mario Costeja González to have Google remove information from 1998 regarding the forced sale of his property due to social security debt.
- Citing Articles 7 (respect for private and family life) and 8 (protection of personal data) of the EU Charter on Fundamental Rights, the CJEU ruled that search engines must cater to individual requests to remove data that "appear to be inadequate, irrelevant or no longer relevant or excessive in the light of the time that had elapsed".
- Informational self-determination — an individual's right to control and limit her personal information — is now widely recognised in EU law.
- Article 17 of the EU's GDPR describes the right to erasure.

- After a search engine company like Google gets requests under the GDPR to get information deleted, it first reviews and then removes links on country-specific sites within the European Union.
- ECJ observed that the EU cannot enforce the 'right to be forgotten' on countries which do not recognize such a right.

Interpretation in India

Justice BN Srikrishna Committee's draft Personal Data Protection Bill 2018 is introducing a new right — the right to be forgotten, to remove very old, irrelevant and unnecessary information links from social media networks.


- In India, there is no statutory framework that prescribes the right to be forgotten.
- In the K S Puttaswamy v Union of India (2017), the SC synced the Right to be forgotten with the right to privacy.
  - A concurring opinion in the Puttaswamy ruling by Justice S K Kaul mentions the right to be forgotten.
  - Justice Kaul said that this right "does not mean that all aspects of earlier existence are to be obliterated... It would only mean that an individual who is no longer desirous of his personal data to be processed or stored, should be able to remove it from the system where the personal data/ information is no longer necessary, relevant, or is incorrect and serves no legitimate interest".
- In the landmark 1994 ruling in Rajagopal vs. State of Tamil Nadu, the SC had talked about a "right to be let alone".
  - The SC observed that "A citizen has a right to safeguard the privacy of his own, his family, marriage, procreation, motherhood, child-bearing and education among other matters. None can publish anything concerning the above matters without his consent whether truthful or otherwise...".
  - But the ruling drew a distinction between the right to be let alone and the publication of public records, such as court decisions.
- In Dharamraj Bhanushankar Dave vs State Of Gujarat (2017), the petitioner had asked the Gujarat HC to remove details of his acquittal in a murder and kidnapping case, saying that it had come up during background checks while he was applying for an Australian visa.
  - The court refused to grant him relief, holding that court orders are allowed to be in public domain.
- In [Name Redacted] vs The Registrar General, the Karnataka HC in 2017 ensured that the name of the petitioner would be protected in an annulment case.
  - Although the court did not substantially engage with jurisprudence on the right to be forgotten, it said that the ruling is in keeping "with the trend in the Western countries where they follow this as a matter of rule...in sensitive cases involving women in general...".
- In 2021, the Delhi HC extended the right to be forgotten to even a criminal case by allowing a ruling involving Jorawar Singh Mundy, an American law student, to be taken down from search results.
- The Orissa HC in 2020, while hearing a criminal case which involved "revenge porn", said that the legal possibilities of being forgotten "online or offline cries for a widespread debate".

WHAT DOES IT EVEN MEAN

The right to be forgotten (RTBF) is a right to have one's personal information removed from publicly available sources, such as search engines and online directories, on certain grounds.

DELETE DATA
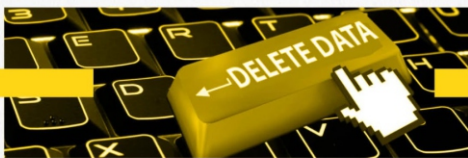
INDIVIDUALS MAY SEEK TO HAVE THEIR INFORMATION **(INCLUDING VIDEOS, PHOTOGRAPHS, IDENTIFYING INFO)** **DELETED.**

NEWS18 creative

HOW IT ALL BEGAN

RTBF has its roots in the **French right of oblivion** which allows convicts to prevent the publication of facts about the crime committed by them.

The first RTBF case
Mario Costeja González vs Google Spain

1998
Mario Costeja Gonzalez, a Spaniard, had financial difficulties because of which his house was put up for auction. These details were covered in a newspaper that later went online. **The article kept appearing every time his name was googled.**

2014
The European Court of Justice (ECJ) ruled in his favour and asked Google to delete **"inadequate, irrelevant or no longer relevant"** data from its search results, when a member of the public requests so.

The ruling came to be known as the "right to be forgotten". RTBF gained currency after this case.

NEWS18

RUSSIAN ATHLETES 'BANNED' FROM THE 2024 PARIS OLYMPICS

WHY IN NEWS?

- Athletes from Russia and Belarus have been banned from participating in the ongoing Paris Olympics 2024 under their nations' official flags by the International Olympic Committee (IOC).
- Many of them are instead competing under a separate category called 'Athlètes Individuels Neutres' or AIN in French, meaning Individual Neutral Athletes.

Reason Behind Ban

- The IOC initially sanctioned the two nations soon after the Russian invasion of Ukraine began in 2022, just days after the Winter Olympics ended in Beijing on February 20, 2022.
- It said the invasion had violated the Games' Olympic Truce, which says nations are not to attack one another from one week before the Olympic Games to one week after the Paralympic Games.
  - The Paralympics are held shortly after the Olympics.
- Belarus was also implicated for allegedly allowing Russia to use its territory for military purposes. Its western border is with Russia, while Ukraine borders it on the south.
- In October 2023, the Russian Olympic Committee was officially suspended after it declared its authority over Ukrainian sports organisations in Donetsk, Kherson, Luhansk and Zaporizhzhia — regions the IOC recognised as part of the Ukrainian Olympic Committee.
- The IOC also cited Russia's International Friendship Association (IFA), formed to conduct the Summer and Winter Friendship Games, as a political body and a blatant violation of the IOC charter.
  - The charter says, "Recognising that sport occurs within the framework of society, sports organisations within the Olympic Movement shall apply political neutrality".
- However, the IOC announced in 2023 that Russian and Belarusian athletes can participate in the Olympics, provided they don't represent their country or any associated organisation.

- In 2017, the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) reported a major scandal where over 1,000 individuals had benefited from a state-sponsored doping scheme between 2011 and 2014.
  - This included athletes who won medals at the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia.
  - The IOC then issued a ban, but individual athletes were allowed to apply as "Olympic athletes from Russia".
- In 2019, the WADA also voted to ban Russia from the 2020 Tokyo Olympics and the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics.
  - Russia lost the right to bid for or compete in tournaments and government officials were banned from attending major Olympic events.
  - At the Tokyo Olympics, Russian athletes competed under the Russian Olympic Committee (ROC) banner.

Who are Independent Athletes?

- The Independent Athletes compete under a neutral flag and wear a neutral uniform.
- If they win medals, a neutral song will be played in place of their country's national anthem. The audience also cannot wave their flags.

- Following the dissolution of the USSR, some athletes from the region competed in the 1992 Summer Olympics in Barcelona, Spain, as independent participants under the Olympic flag.
- This was allowed as the former Soviet states did not have Olympic committees.
- The Indian Olympic Association was suspended from the IOC in 2014, due to its failure to comply with the Olympic Charter and its statutes relating specifically to "good governance".
- Three athletes who qualified for the Winter Olympics could compete under the Olympic flag.
- With the reinstatement of the Indian association on February 11, days after the games commenced, two of the three athletes could compete under the Indian flag with their events to be held in the remaining days.

- In the 2016 Olympics at Rio de Janeiro in Brazil, the IOC allowed the formation of the Refugee Olympic Team so that athletes from displaced regions could compete.

GANATANTRA MANDAP AND ASHOK MANDAP

WHY IN NEWS?

- President Droupadi Murmu announced the renaming of two halls in the Rashtrapati Bhavan – 'Durbar Hall' and 'Ashok Hall' – as 'Ganatantra Mandap' and 'Ashok Mandap', respectively.

What is the Durbar Hall of the Rashtrapati Bhavan?

- The hall hosts Civil and Defence Investiture Ceremonies, where the President confers honours to the recipients.
- Swearing-in ceremonies, like those of the Chief Justices of India, are also conducted here.
- Durbar Hall witnessed a historic moment in the swearing-in ceremony of independent India's first government in 1947.
- The hall is encircled by columns made of yellow Jaisalmer marble, with white caps and bases.
- Marble in multiple colours was imported primarily from Rajasthan's Makrana, Alwar, Marwar and Ajmer. A deep chocolate-coloured marble was imported from Italy.
- Two thrones were also installed for the Viceroy and his wife.
  - The President's Chair later replaced them and a 5th-century Buddha statue now stands behind it.

What is Ashok Hall?

- 'Ashok Hall' was originally a ballroom.
  - It is now used for the presentation of credentials by Heads of Missions of foreign countries and as a formal place of introductions for the visiting and Indian delegations before the commencement of the State Banquets hosted by the President.
- A loft-like space is used for playing the national anthem during important functions.
- Various paintings adorn the room including one painting gifted by Fath Ali Shah, the second of seven Qajar rulers of Persia, showing him hunting a tiger, etc.
- Italian artist Tomasso Colonnello, with the help of 23 Indian artists, was enlisted to extend the forest theme to the rest of the room.

About Rashtrapati Bhavan

- Rashtrapati Bhavan is the home to the president of India, the world's largest democracy.
  - The presidential palace took more than 17 years to build, at an estimated cost of ₹14 million.
- Lord Irwin, Viceroy and Governor-General of India, became its first occupant on April 6, 1929.
- The name of the Viceroy's House was changed to Government House when India became independent on August 15, 1947.
- It was changed to Rashtrapati Bhavan during the term of President Dr. Rajendra Prasad in 1950.
- It was designed by British architect Sir Edwin Landseer Lutyens, who combined Indian, Mughal, and European architectural styles.
- Mughal Gardens at the Rashtrapati Bhavan, now Amrit Udyan, were also designed by Sir Lutyens to accommodate elements of Indian landscaping and the British style of architecture.
  - In 2023, the Mughal Gardens were renamed as Amrit Udyan.
- Earlier in 2022, the PM inaugurated the 'Kartavya Path' symbolising a shift from the erstwhile Rajpath being an icon of power to the Kartavya Path being an example of public ownership and empowerment.

GOVERNMENT SERVANTS AND RSS ACTIVITIES

WHY IN NEWS?

- The Indian government officially lifted a ban that prevented government officials from participating in the activities of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS).
- This bar on officials participating in activities of the RSS first came into effect almost six decades ago.

Key Highlights

- The Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT), which manages the central government's human resources, decided to remove the mention of RSS from the impugned OMs (Official Memorandums) dated 30.11.1966, 25.07.1970 and 28.10.1980.
- Following a directive issued by the DoPT, employees can now participate in the activities of the RSS without attracting disciplinary action under the rules of conduct applicable to them.
- This circular is only for central government employees. State governments have their own Conduct Rules for their employees, and issue such instructions from time to time.
- The circular implies that the RSS is not a "political" organisation, and that central government employees can now take part in RSS activities without fear of attracting action under Rule 5(1) of the Conduct Rules.
  - Rule 5 of the Central Civil Services (Conduct) Rules, 1964 prohibits government servants from being associated with political parties or engaging in political activities.
- However, while the 1966, 1970, and 1980 circulars also mentioned the Jamaat-e-Islami as an organisation of a "political" nature, the July 9 circular removed that tag from only the RSS.
  - This means that the Jamaat-e-Islami still remains an organisation whose activities are categorised as "political", and government officials cannot take part in them.

About Three OMs

- **OM of 1966** - On November 30, 1966, the Ministry of Home Affairs (of which DoPT was part until 1998) issued a circular clarifying its stance on government employees' involvement with the RSS and Jamaat-e-Islami, labelling participation in these organisations as contrary to government policy.
  - The circular referenced Rule 5 of the Central Civil Services (Conduct) Rules, 1964 and stated that those involved with these groups could face disciplinary action.
  - The All India Services (Conduct) Rules, 1968, which apply to officers of the IAS, IPS, and Indian Forest Service, has a similar Rule 5(1).
- **OM of 1970** - On July 25, 1970, the MHA stressed that government employees should face disciplinary action for violating the instructions issued on November 30, 1966.
  - During the Emergency (1975-77), orders were issued to take action against workers of the RSS, Jamaat-e-Islami, Ananda Marg and CPI-ML, whose activities had been banned.
- **OM of 1980** - On October 28, 1980, the government of Indira Gandhi issued a circular underlining "the need to ensure a secular outlook on the part of Government servants", and stressed that "the need to eradicate communal feelings and communal bias cannot be over-emphasised".

- Before the notification of the Central Civil Services (Conduct) Rules, 1964, and the All India Services (Conduct) Rules, 1968, there were the Government Servants' Conduct Rules, which were framed in 1949, when Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was home minister.
- Rule 23 of 1949 was the same as Rule 5 of 1964 and 1968.
- Thus, participating in political activities was always prohibited for government employees. The nature of the organisations in question was clarified from time to time as per requests and representations.

- Further, the violations of Rule 5(3) of the 1964 and Rule 5(3) of the All India Services (Conduct) Rules, 1968 could lead to the official concerned being dismissed from service.
- Both rules state that, If any question arises whether a party is a political party or whether any organisation takes part in politics, the decision of the Government is final.

About RSS

- The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) was founded on 27th September 1925 by Dr. Keshav Baliram Hedgewar in Nagpur, Maharashtra.
- It aims to promote the idea of Hindutva, which emphasises Hindu cultural and national identity.
- The RSS has been banned thrice in independent India - After Mahatma Gandhi's assassination in 1948, during the emergency in 1975 and after the demolition of Babri Masjid in 1992.
- RSS did not participate directly in the Indian independence movement, it contributed to the socio-political awakening of Hindus.
- It operates through a network of shakhas (branches) across India and abroad, focusing on physical, intellectual, and cultural training.
- It has inspired many other organizations, including the Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP), Bajrang Dal, and Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP).
- It is also considered the ideological parent of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which has been a major political force in India since the 1990s.

HISTORY OF BAN ON RSS

1st BAN

RSS was banned in 1948 following the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi. The Indian government, led by Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, suspected its involvement in the assassination alleging that Nathuram Godse, Gandhi's assassin, had association with RSS. Later, the ban was lifted in 1949

2nd BAN

RSS was banned in 1975 by the Indira Government during Emergency, which lasted from June 25, 1975, to March 21, 1977. RSS was actively involved in organising and participating in protests against the Government's corruption and scams. Their activities included campaigns and movements that opposed the Emergency and the draconian measures implemented by Indira Gandhi

3rd BAN

Another ban followed in 1992 after the demolition of disputed structure in Ayodhya. The ban was imposed by then PV Narasimha Rao-led Government. The Rao Government had banned the RSS, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, the Bajrang Dal and, however, failed to justify it before a central tribunal

CONSENT OF STATES FOR CBI INVESTIGATIONS

WHY IN NEWS?

- The Madhya Pradesh Government in Madhya Pradesh, led by Chief Minister Mohan Yadav, announced that the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) would require its written consent for initiating any inquiry against state government officials.

What is General Consent?

- The CBI is governed by The Delhi Special Police Establishment (DSPE) Act, 1946, and it must mandatorily obtain the consent of the state government concerned before beginning to investigate a crime in a state.
    - It means the CBI will not be able to register any fresh case involving officials of the central government or a private person in the state without the consent of the state government.
- According to Section 6 of the Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, the CBI is required to seek consent from a state government to conduct an investigation in its jurisdiction.
    - The CBI's position is in this respect different from that of the National Investigation Agency (NIA), which is governed by The NIA Act, 2008, and has jurisdiction across the country.
- The consent of the state government to CBI can be either case-specific or general.
- General consent is normally given by states to help the CBI in the seamless investigation of cases of corruption against central government employees in their states.
    - This is consent by default, in the absence of which the CBI would have to apply to the state government in every case, and before taking even small actions.
- Several states, including Meghalaya, Mizoram, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Kerala, and Punjab, have withdrawn general consent for CBI investigations.

- While the Madhya Pradesh Government has not specified withdrawal of general consent. However, this has taken into consideration some changes in the provisions contained in the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS).
- All previous general consent for any other offences and any consent given by the state government on a case-by-case basis for any other offence will also continue to apply.
- This was advised in recent consultations with the CBI.
- Also under Section 17A of the Prevention of Corruption Act, agencies need permission to conduct any inquiry against government officials.
- It provides that no enquiry or inquiry or investigation shall be conducted by a police officer into any offence alleged to have been committed by a public servant under the PC Act without prior approval from the appropriate authority.

Implications

- In December 2023, the centre responded sharply to states' actions, insisting requiring the CBI to ask for permission had severely limited its powers to investigate cases.
- A Parliamentary panel said there was a need to enact a law so the agency could probe cases without state "interference".
- At the same time, the panel also acknowledged there need to safeguards to ensure objectivity and impartiality in the functioning of the CBI so the states don't complain of discrimination.

About CBI

- The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), functioning under the Department of Personnel, Ministry of Personnel, Pension & Public Grievances, is the premier investigating police agency in India.
- CBI was established in 1963 by a resolution of the Ministry of Home Affairs following the recommendations by the Santhanam Committee on Prevention of Corruption (1962–1964).
- It is also the nodal police agency in India, which coordinates investigations on behalf of Interpol Member countries.
- It derives its investigative powers from the Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, 1946.
- Investigations under the Prevention of Corruption Act, CBI is supervised by the Central Vigilance Commission.

9th GOVERNING COUNCIL MEETING OF NITI AAYOG

WHY IN NEWS?

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired the 9th governing council meeting of the NITI Aayog.
- It was attended by chief ministers and lieutenant governors from 20 states and six Union Territories.

Key Outcomes

- Prime Minister emphasised on cooperation and collective effort of all States and the Centre to work together in order to achieve the vision of Viksit Bharat @2047.
  - Indian economy, which was ranked 10th largest economy in the world in 2014, has risen to become the 5th largest economy by 2024.
  - The vision of Viksit Bharat can be realized through the Viksit States, and the aspiration of Viksit Bharat should reach the grassroots level i.e. to each district, block, and village.
  - For this, each State and District should create a vision for 2047 so as to realise Viksit Bharat @ 2047.
- The Aspirational Districts Programme anchored by NITI Aayog was appreciated and observed that the key to its success was continuous and online monitoring of measurable parameters, which led to healthy competition among districts to better their performance in different government schemes.
- The emphasis on skilling and training of youth was also given to make them employment-ready as the world looks favourably towards India for skilled human resources.
- NITI Aayog will prepare an 'Investment-friendly Charter' of parameters which would include policies, programmes and processes to be put in place for attracting investments.
  - The States may be monitored on the achievement of these parameters to promote healthy competition among them for attracting investments.
- Prime Minister also underscored the importance of law and order, good governance and infrastructure as vital for attracting investments, rather than just incentives.
- The Prime Minister encouraged the creation of River Grids at the State level for the effective utilisation of water resources.
- The concept of 'zero poverty' villages was discussed, aiming for holistic development starting at the grassroots.
  - The concept emphasized tackling poverty on an individual basis rather than just at a programme level.
- Enhancing productivity, diversifying agriculture, and promoting natural farming practices were discussed as means to improve soil fertility, reduce costs, and access global markets.
- The meeting also focused on the recommendations of the 3rd National Conference of Chief Secretaries.
  - Under the overarching theme of 'Ease of Living', recommendations were made on the following five key themes:
  1. Drinking Water: Access, Quantity, and Quality
  2. Electricity: Quality, Efficiency, and Reliability
  3. Health: Accessibility, Affordability, and Quality of Care
  4. Schooling: Access and Quality
  5. Land and Property: Accessibility, Digitization, Registration, and Mutation
- Prime Minister encouraged states to initiate Demographic Management Plans to address the issues of population ageing in future.
- Prime Minister asked the states to take up capacity building of government officials at all levels and encouraged them to collaborate with the Capacity Building Commission for the same.
- The integration of technology in governance, addressing cybersecurity challenges, and leveraging AI for efficient governance were highlighted as critical areas for future readiness.

What is the Governing Council?

- The Governing Council is the premier body tasked with evolving a shared vision of national priorities and strategies, with the active involvement of States, in shaping the development narrative.
- It embodies the objectives of cooperative federalism, presents a platform to discuss inter-sectoral, inter-departmental and federal issues to accelerate the implementation of the national development agenda.
- The Governing Council Secretariat (GCS) coordinates the meetings of the Governing Council.
- It also coordinates the activities of all the Verticals, Divisions and Units of NITI Aayog.
- GCS acts as the nodal division for coordinating matters related to the Annual Report of NITI Aayog for circulation in the Parliament.
- The Division also handles Parliament Questions, Standing Committee matters, RTI queries, CPGRAMS grievances and VIP references pertaining to GCS.

Members

- Prime Minister of India (Chairperson)
- Chief Ministers(States and Union Territories with legislature)
- Lt Governors of other UTs
- Ex-Officio Members
- Vice Chairman, NITI Aayog
- Full-Time Members, NITI Aayog
- Special Invitees

DID YOU KNOW?

- The Government has replaced the Planning Commission with a new institution named NITI Aayog (National Institution for Transforming India) on 1 January 2015.
- NITI Aayog emphasises on a 'Bottom–Up' approach to envisage the vision of Maximum Governance and Minimum Government, echoing the spirit of 'Cooperative Federalism'.
- It has two Hubs namely the 'Team India Hub' (acts as an interface between states and the centre) and the 'Knowledge and Innovation Hub' (builds the think-tank acumen of NITI Aayog).
- Chairperson - Narendra Modi
- Vice Chairperson - Suman Bery
- CEO - B.V.R. Subrahmanyam
- Members are Dr VK Saraswat, Prof. Ramesh Chand, Dr VK Paul, and Dr Arvind Virmani.

VIKSIT BHARAT @2047
शासी परिषद की नौवीं बैठक
Ninth Meeting of the Governing Council
27 JULY 2024

SOFI 2024 REPORT

WHY IN NEWS?

- The "State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2024" (SOFI 2024) report has been recently published by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the UN World Food Programme (WFP), and the World Health Organization (WHO).

Key Highlights

- Between 713 and 757 million people faced hunger in 2023, equivalent to one in eleven people globally and one in five in Africa.
- The report in the context of the G20 Global Alliance against Hunger and Poverty Task Force Ministerial Meeting in Brazil, warns that the world is falling significantly short of achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2, Zero Hunger, by 2030.
- The report shows that the world has been set back 15 years, with levels of undernourishment comparable to those in 2008-2009.
- Approximately 2.33 billion people experienced moderate or severe food insecurity in 2023. Severe food insecurity affected more than 864 million people globally.
- The percentage of the population facing hunger continued to rise in Africa (20.4 per cent), remained stable in Asia (8.1 per cent) and showed progress in Latin America (6.2 per cent).
- From 2022 to 2023, hunger increased in Western Asia, the Caribbean, and most African subregions.
- While Africa was the region with the largest percentage of the population facing hunger, Asia was still home to the largest number: 384.5 million, or more than half of all those facing hunger in the world were Asian.
- In Africa, 298.4 million people may have faced hunger in 2023, compared with 41.0 million in Latin America and the Caribbean, and 3.3 million in Oceania.
  - The report warned that if current trends continue, about 582 million people will be chronically undernourished in 2030, half of them in Africa.
- New estimates showed that more than one-third of people in the world — about 2.8 billion — could not afford a healthy diet in 2022.
- Largest in low-income countries (71.5 per cent), followed by 52.6 per cent for lower-middle-income countries, 21.5 per cent for upper-middle-income countries and 6.3 per cent for high-income countries.
- There have been improvements in reducing the prevalence of stunting and wasting among children under five. However, progress is insufficient to meet the 2030 (SDG) targets.
- The rate of exclusive breastfeeding among infants under six months has increased but is still below the 2030 target.

India's Performance

- India is home to 194.6 million (19.5 crore) undernourished people – the highest in any country in the world, as per the SOFI report.
  - Undernourishment is a condition in which an individual's habitual food consumption is insufficient to provide the amount of dietary energy required to maintain a normal and active life.
  - The prevalence of undernourishment is used to measure hunger.
- India's figures this year are still a little bit of an improvement over past ones: the number of undernourished people in the country in the 2004-06 period, for instance, was 24 crore.
- The report also highlighted that more than half of Indians (55.6%) are still unable to afford a 'healthy diet'.
  - This proportion is the highest in South Asia. In terms of numbers, this translates into 79 crore people in India.
- 13% of India's population suffers from chronic undernourishment, indicating prolonged food insecurity.
- In the Global Hunger Index (GHI) 2023, India ranked 111th, highlighting significant issues in food security.
- As per the SOFI report, more than half of women in India, at 53.0%, are anaemic – the highest in South Asia and also among the highest in the world.
  - Globally, the prevalence of anaemia in women (15 to 49 years) increased from 28.5% in 2012 to 29.9% in 2019.
- The prevalence of obesity in children under five years is 2.8%, and in adults, it has risen to 7.3%. A significant portion of the Indian population is physically inactive, contributing to the rise in obesity.

Key Recommendations

- In line with the theme of this year's report - "Financing to End Hunger, Food Insecurity and All Forms of Malnutrition" – its recommendations focus on a comprehensive approach to achieving SDG 2: Zero Hunger.
  - This includes transforming agrifood systems, addressing inequalities and making healthy diets affordable and accessible.
- It called for increased and more cost-effective financing, with a clear and standardized definition of financing for food security and nutrition.
- Further, the report called for integrated nutrition programs that address both undernutrition and overnutrition. This includes initiatives to promote balanced diets and physical activity to combat rising obesity rates.
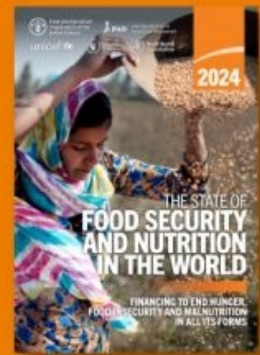
QUICK FACTS

CONTEMPORARY EVENTS OF SIGNIFICANCE FROM INDIA AND THE WORLD

1. The **foundation day** of the Central Reserve Police Force (**CRPF**) was observed on **27 July**. The CRPF was initially established as the Crown Representatives Police in 1939 in response to political turmoil and unrest within the princely states. The force was renamed the Central Reserve Police Force in 1949.

2. The Ministry of Education celebrated the **4th anniversary** of the implementation of the **National Education Policy 2020** (NEP 2020) with Akhil Bhartiya Shiksha Samagam 2024 in New Delhi's Manekshaw Centre Auditorium and with a week-long campaign called "Shiksha Saptah." NEP 2020 aims to address India's evolving development needs by overhauling the education system to meet 21st-century goals and Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4) while preserving India's cultural heritage. It replaced the National Policy on Education, 1986, which was modified in 1992.

3. The **Ministry of Defence** will undertake a massive **15 lakh tree plantation** drive across the country on the occasion of the **78th Independence Day** ceremony on 15 August 2024. The plantation drive is a part of the **'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' (A Tree in the Name of Mother)** campaign, and will be conducted through the three Services, and associated organizations such as DRDO, Defence PSUs, CGDA, NCC, Sainik Schools, Ordnance factories. Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' campaign on the occasion of World Environment Day on 5 June 2024 and urged everyone in India and across the globe to plant a tree as a tribute to the mothers.

4. A revamped '**model skill loan scheme'** for skill development courses was launched by the government with a fresh maximum loan limit of Rs 7.5 lakh — up from the previous amount of Rs 1.5 lakh. The revised scheme aims to benefit 25,000 students annually. It now includes non-banking financial companies (NBFCs), NBFC-MFIs (micro-finance institutions), and small finance banks as eligible lending institutions.

5. **Manu Bhaker** became the **first woman shooter** from India ever to win an Olympic medal, after claiming a bronze medal in the women's 10m air pistol event at the Paris Olympics 2024. Manu Bhaker is the fifth Indian shooter to win an Olympic medal, following Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore (2004 Athens), Abhinav Bindra (2008 Beijing), Vijay Kumar (2012 London), and Gagan Narang (2012 London).

6. The Union Budget 2024 has announced the National Pension Scheme for Minors, dubbed '**NPS Vatsalya**'. This plan will be converted to normal NPS once the child becomes an adult, i.e., attains 18. Upon reaching adulthood (18 years), the NPS Vatsalya accounts seamlessly convert into regular NPS accounts, promoting consistent saving habits. The NPS is a voluntary pension system for all citizens, including both residents and Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) between the ages of 18 and 70 years.

7. The Prime Minister of India inaugurated the **Indian Newspaper Society (INS) Towers** on his visit to the Indian Newspaper Society (INS) Secretariat in Mumbai. The Society's origins date back to 1927, with the establishment of a group initially known as The India, Burma & Ceylon Newspapers' London Committee.

8. Scientists from the **CSIR-Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology**, New Delhi, have developed an **enhanced genome-editing system** that can modify DNA more precisely and more efficiently than existing CRISPR-based technologies. CRISPR occurs naturally in some bacteria, as a part of their immune system that limits infections by recognising and destroying viral DNA.

9. Union Minister for Environment, Forest, and Climate Change, Bhupender Yadav, launched the **Ideas4LiFE initiative** at the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi. The initiative invites ideas related to products and services that promote environment-friendly lifestyles. He emphasized the initiative's goal to motivate contributions to the global 'Mission LiFE', aiming for environmental sustainability.

10. **NITI Aayog** signed a Joint Letter of Intent (JLoI) with the World Intellectual Property Organization (**WIPO**) under its Atal Innovation Mission (**AIM**) aimed at building programs for innovation, entrepreneurship and intellectual property (IP) for countries in the global south. As one of the specialized agencies of the United Nations, WIPO is the nodal institution that releases the Global Innovation Index (GII) annually. As per the GII 2023 report, India had retained the 40th position of 132 economies featured in the GII ranking.

11. Every year on **July 23**, India commemorates the **birth anniversary** of one of its greatest freedom fighters and social reformers, **Bal Gangadhar Tilak**. Known as Lokmanya Tilak, he played a pivotal role in India's struggle for independence. Tilak was often referred to as the "Father of Indian Unrest" by the British colonial authorities due to his radical approach and his emphasis on Swaraj (self-rule). Along with Lala Lajpat Rai and Bipin Chandra Pal, he was part of the Lal-Bal-Pal trio of leaders with extremist ideology.

12. President Droupadi Murmu appointed **Justices N. Kotiswar Singh** and Madras High Court Acting **Chief Justice R. Mahadevan** as Supreme Court judges. A five-member Supreme Court Collegium headed by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud had recommended their names in a resolution on July 11. The Centre notified the two appointments which would return the top court to its full sanctioned strength of 34 judges. Justice Singh is the first judge from Manipur, a State which has witnessed traumatic months of ethnic violence, to be appointed to the Supreme Court.

13. **Captain Supreetha C.T.**, who hails from Mysuru, has become the first woman officer from the Corps of Army Air Defence, to be operationally deployed at Siachen Glacier. The Siachen Glacier, which is also known as the world's highest battlefield located in the Eastern Karakoram range in the Himalayas.

14. The Union Ministry of Education and the University Grants Commission (UGC) launched a project titled **ASMITA (Augmenting Study Materials in Indian Languages through Translation and Academic Writing)** to produce 22,000 books in Indian languages in the next five years. It will be a collaborative effort of the UGC and Bharatiya Bhasha Samiti, a high-powered committee under the ministry to promote Indian languages in education.

15. **Gevra and Kusmunda** blocks of state-owned South Eastern Coalfields have secured second and fourth spots, respectively, in the list of the world's 10 largest coal mines in terms of production volume released by WorldAtlas.com. Located in the Korba district, Chhattisgarh these two mines produce more than 100 million tons of coal annually accounting for about 10% of India's total coal production.

16. A Bengaluru-based firm, **NewSpace Research and Technologies**, has claimed to have successfully tested a **100-kg Max Take Off Weight (MTOW)** Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) at an altitude of 19,024 feet at Ladakh's Umling La pass, which also happens to be the highest motorable pass in the world. MTOW includes the weight of the drone and the payload.

17. Union Minister of Information and Broadcasting (I&B) Ashwini Vaishnaw inaugurated **India's 500th Community Radio Station** in Mizoram. The station **'Apna Radio 90.0 FM'** is a station run by the Indian Institute of Mass Communication, Aizawl.

18. **Nita Ambani**, founder of **Reliance Foundation**, has been **re-elected** unanimously to the **International Olympic Committee (IOC)** for a second term. Ambani was the first Indian woman to join the IOC in 2016. Since her initial appointment, Ambani has been instrumental in promoting India's Olympic vision and has played a key role in the growth of sports in the country through the Reliance Foundation's initiatives. The recent hosting of the IOC session in Mumbai, the first in over four decades, is seen as a testament to India's rising influence in the world of sports.

19. **India** has increased its forest area in the past decade and **ranks third globally** in average annual net gain in forest area from 2010-2020. India added an average of 2,66,000 hectares of additional forest area every year during the period. Forests covered 24% of India's total geographical area accounting for 2% of the world's total forest area in 2020. The top 10 countries, accounting for 66% of the world's forest area, Brazil (59%), Peru (57%), the Democratic Republic of Congo (56%) and Russia (50%) have half or more of their total geographical area under forests. Among Indian States, Madhya Pradesh with 11% of India's total forest cover, had the largest area under forests in 2021, followed by Arunachal Pradesh (9%), Chhattisgarh (8%), Odisha (7%) and Maharashtra (7%).

20. Indian astrophysicist **Prahlad Chandra Agrawal**, who has been involved with major Indian space programmes including the AstroSat space telescope and the Chandrayaan 1 lunar mission, has been awarded the **COSPAR Harrie Massey Award 2024**.

21. The **Indian Institute of Spices Research (IISR)** has received the best technology award for its pioneering work in the field of horticultural sciences. The technology titled '**Process for instant soluble turmeric enriched spice flavoured milk powder**' was one of the top five technologies under the Horticulture Sciences Division of the ICAR. The technology had already been commercialised with Malabar Regional Co-operative Milk Producers' Union Limited. Two products — Golden Milk and Golden Milk Mix — had been produced and marketed.

22. **INS Delhi** has been adjudged the Best Ship of the Eastern Fleet at the annual '**Fleet Awards Function-2024**' held in Visakhapatnam. INS Kavaratti was given the award for the Best Ship in Corvettes/ OPVs/ LSTs while INS Shivalik, INS Sumedha and INS Sumitra were adjudged the most spirited ships of the Sunrise Fleet while carrying out a wide variety of challenging missions over the last one year.
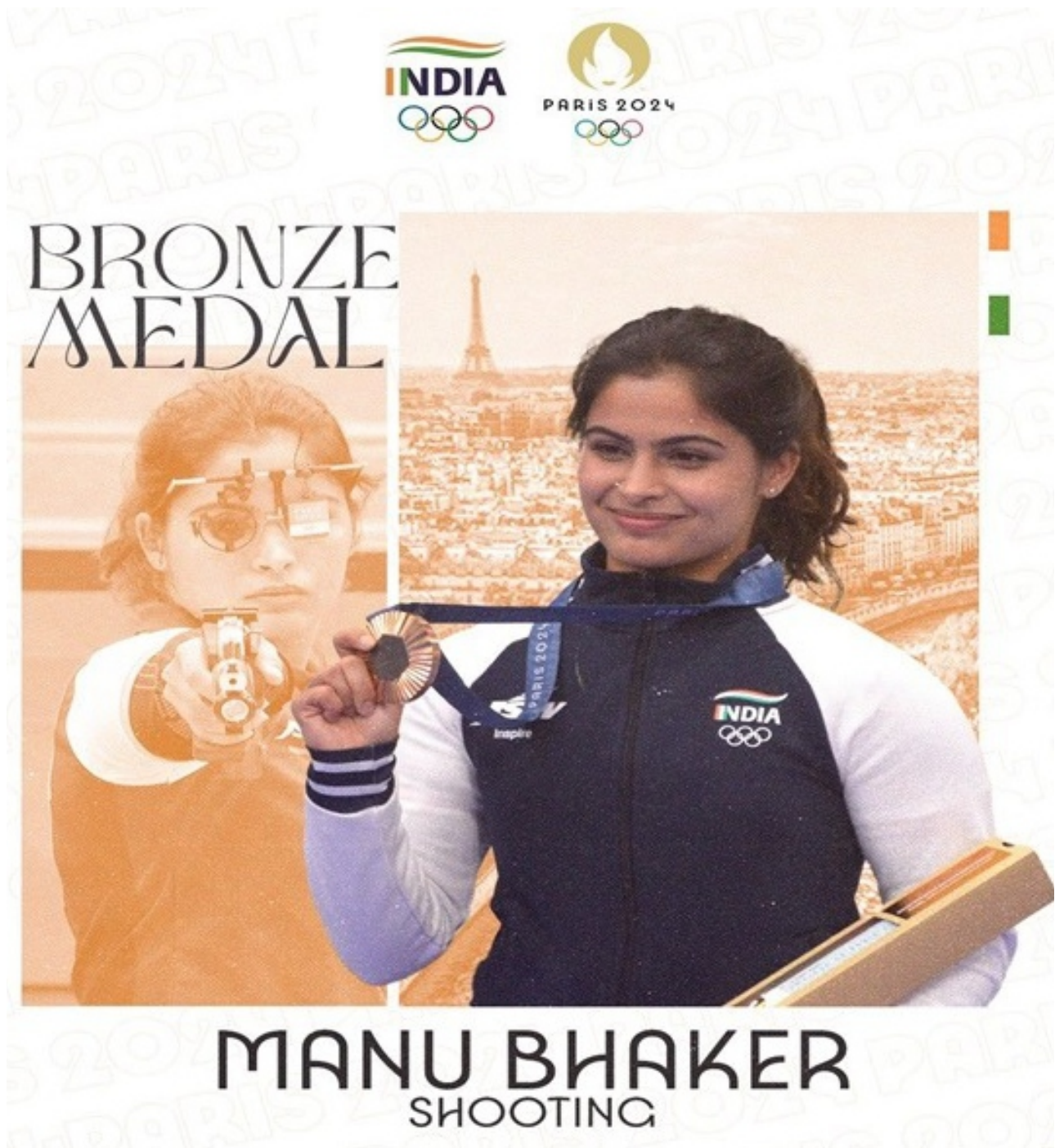
INDIA Olympics   **PARIS 2024** Olympics

BRONZE MEDAL

MANU BHAKER
SHOOTING

QUICK FACTS

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

1. Every year on **July 29**, **International Tiger Day** is celebrated to highlight the importance of tiger conservation across the globe. The declaration to celebrate this day was made on July 29, 2010, in St. Petersburg, aiming to unite all tiger range countries in a concerted effort to enhance tiger conservation and management worldwide. As per the 5th cycle of the All India Tiger Estimation 2022 (usually done in cycles of four years) summary report, India has a minimum of 3,167 tigers and is now home to more than 70% of the world's wild tiger population. Further data analysis using the latest statistical models for camera-trapped and non-camera-trapped tiger presence areas estimates the upper limit of the tiger population at 3,925, with an average number of 3,682 tigers, reflecting a commendable annual growth rate of 6.1%.

2. The Indian contingent participated in the **21st edition of Khaan Quest**, a multinational peacekeeping exercise, being held from 27th July 2024 to 9th August 2024 in the Five Hills Training Area in the Mongolian capital of Ulaanbaatar. The Indian contingent consists of 40 personnel from a Battalion of the Madras Regiment, along with additional members. Khaan Quest started as a bilateral event between the U.S. and Mongolian armed forces in 2003 and became a multinational peacekeeping exercise from 2006 onwards.

3. **World Hepatitis Day** is observed on **July 28** each year to raise awareness of viral hepatitis and its impact on global health. The primary objective is to support those affected by hepatitis and promote hepatitis prevention, testing, and treatment. This date was selected to commemorate the birthday of Dr. Baruch Blumberg, the Nobel Laureate and the American doctor; who found the hepatitis B infection (HBV) in the 1960s and found a diagnostic test and vaccine for it. In 2010, this day was moved from May 19 to July 28. In 2008, the first community-driven World Hepatitis Day was organised by the 2007-established World Hepatitis Alliance. The theme for this year is "It's time for action".

4. **India** has taken over as the **Chair of the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC),** an autonomous international organisation for cooperation in and implementation of disaster risk reduction and building climate resilience in Asia and the Pacific region, for 2024-25. India is playing a global and regional leadership role in the field of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR). India has taken a number of global initiatives in the field of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), especially that of establishing an international Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI). India and 8 neighbouring countries -- Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand are the founding members of ADPC.

5. Anthropologists around the world were shaken into action recently by the unexpected public appearance of a previously uncontacted tribe **Mashco Piro tribe** from the Amazon rainforests of Peru. The Mashco Piro tribe, long secluded in the depths of the Peruvian forest, emerged from their isolated habitat for the first time.

6. Recently, **NASA** collaborated with Grammy-winning rapper, singer, and songwriter **Missy Elliott** to send her song "**The Rain (Supa Dupa Fly)"** to **Venus**. The song was transmitted across 158 million miles (254 million kilometers) at the speed of light by NASA's DSN (Deep Space Network); the journey took about 14 minutes to complete. More specifically, it was transmitted by the Deep Space Station 13 (DSS-13) radio dish antenna at the DSN's Goldstone Deep Space Communications Complex in California. Fittingly, the station's nickname is "Venus."

7. **India** successfully concluded its fourth periodic review by the **UN Human Rights Committee under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)** in Geneva. The rights and freedoms provided in the ICCPR are guaranteed under the Constitution and legislative and judicial framework. India became a party to the ICCPR in 1979 and has undergone three such reviews so far, the last being in 1997.

8. **Spain's Carlos Alcaraz** has beaten Serbia's Novak Djokovic in the men's single tennis **Wimbledon** final match, winning his 4th Grand Slam title. Alcaraz became the youngest player to win 4 Grand Slam titles, achieving this before the age of 22. The new generation of tennis players, led by Alcaraz and Jannik Sinner (from Italy), has won 4 of the last
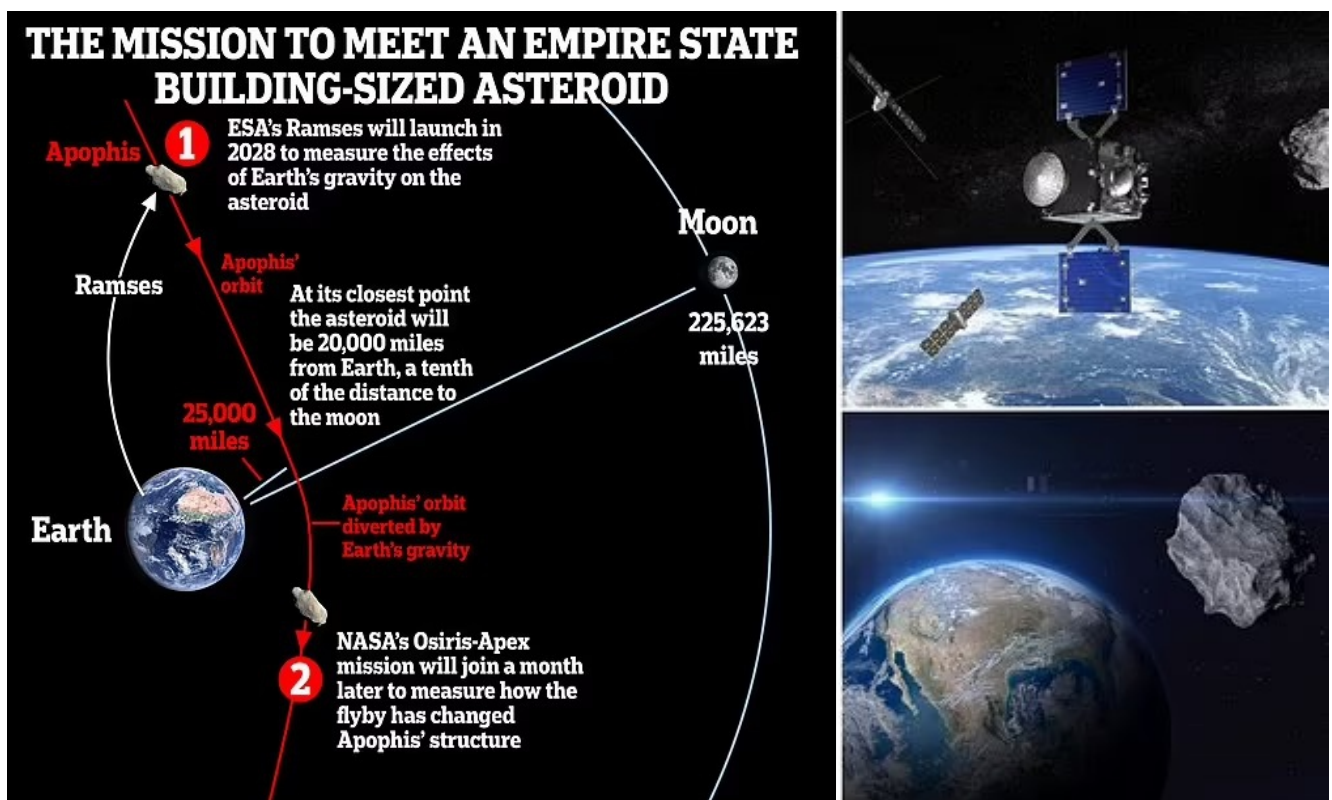
5 Grand Slams, signalling a shift in the balance of power in men's tennis.

9. At the **High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development** at the United Nations headquarters in New York, indigenous tribal communities from Rajasthan showcased their traditional practices as effective solutions to global challenges. The forum was held under the auspices of the **UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)** with the theme, 'Reinforcing the 2030 agenda and eradicating poverty in times of multiple crises: The effective delivery of sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions'.

10. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) released a report titled "**Navigating New Horizons: A Global Foresight Report on Planetary Health and Human Wellbeing, 2024**". The report urges the world to address emerging challenges that could disrupt planetary health. It highlights 8 critical global shifts accelerating the triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss, nature loss, and pollution.

11. As per the **WHO and UNICEF estimates of national immunisation coverage (WUENIC)**, there was a two percentage point dip (from 95% in 2022 to 93% in 2023) in the coverage of diphtheria, pertussis, and tetanus (DPT) vaccine, used as a proxy for the number of "zero-dose" children — those who have not received any routine immunisation. This number, however, was much higher than the 87% and 88% DPT coverage seen in 2020 and 2022 respectively, and higher than the 2023 global average of 89%.

12. Scientists have confirmed the existence of a **cave on the moon**, located near the site where the Apollo 11 mission landed 55 years ago. This discovery has significant implications for future lunar exploration and the establishment of a sustainable human presence on the moon.

13. **Paris' Grevin Museum** honoured **Shah Rukh Khan** with customised gold coins. With this, the superstar has become the first actor to have gold coins in his name at the museum. Grevin Glasse of Paris issued the coins to honour the 'Jawan' actor.

14. **Meta** announced its most capable version of a large language model, dubbed **Llama 3.1**. It's free of charge and will be open source, which simply means anyone can easily access the cutting-edge artificial intelligence model. Meta has already released two smaller versions of Llama 3, one with 70 billion parameters and another with 8 billion. Meta also released upgraded versions of these models branded as Llama 3.1.

15. The latest ranking released by the **Henley Passport Index** puts **India's** passport at the **82nd spot**, allowing Indians visa-free entry to 58 countries. Singapore passport has been named the world's most powerful passport, offering visa-free access to 195 countries, as per the list. France, Italy, Germany and Spain tied with Japan in second place, providing passport holders access to 192 countries. Then, in third place in the ranking, Austria, Finland, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, South Korea, and Sweden all have visa-free access to 191 destinations.

16. According to Interesting Engineering, **China** unveiled the **first carbon fiber-only passenger train** in history. Because this train is noticeably lighter than conventional trains, it will help cut pollution tremendously. This advanced train can reach a top speed of 87 mph. It is expected to consume 7% less energy than a typical steel train.

17. **Ursula von der Leyen** has been reelected to a second five-year term as **president of the European Commission** after a vote by EU lawmakers, as the continent's mainstream seeks to reassert itself in the face of a resurgent far right.

18. **Ivory Coast** joined the **United Nations Water Convention as the 53rd Party and the 10th African nation to do so.** In 2024, at least three more African nations, which include Sierra Leone, Zambia and Zimbabwe, are in the final stages of accession and joining the convention. Ivory Coast joined the convention to enhance cooperative water management across borders in response to growing water stress and the effects of climate change on the water resources it shares with its neighbours. The 1992 UN Water Convention, which is also known as the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes.

19. The European Space Agency (**ESA**) has announced a mission to **study the Apophis asteroid** when it passes by Earth at a very close distance in **2029**. ESA is the second major space agency, after NASA, to commit a space mission for Apophis which was once considered to be on a pathway to collide with the Earth. Apophis will come within 32,000 km of the Earth in 2029, offering space agencies a rare opportunity to study an asteroid from such close quarters. ESA said an asteroid of such a large size comes this close to the Earth only once in about 5,000 to 10,000 years.

20. The **World Leaders Summit 2024** has set the stage for global dialogue, uniting influential figures worldwide at a historic venue–**the House of Lords** in the **UK Parliament**. This prestigious gathering is not just another event; it symbolizes hope and collaboration in addressing urgent international issues. The 2024 World Leaders Summit at the House of Lords marks a significant moment in global diplomacy.

THE MISSION TO MEET AN EMPIRE STATE BUILDING-SIZED ASTEROID

Apophis

1 ESA's Ramses will launch in 2028 to measure the effects of Earth's gravity on the asteroid

Ramses

Apophis' orbit

At its closest point the asteroid will be 20,000 miles from Earth, a tenth of the distance to the moon

25,000 miles

Earth

Apophis' orbit diverted by Earth's gravity

2 NASA's Osiris-Apex mission will join a month later to measure how the flyby has changed Apophis' structure

Moon

225,623 miles
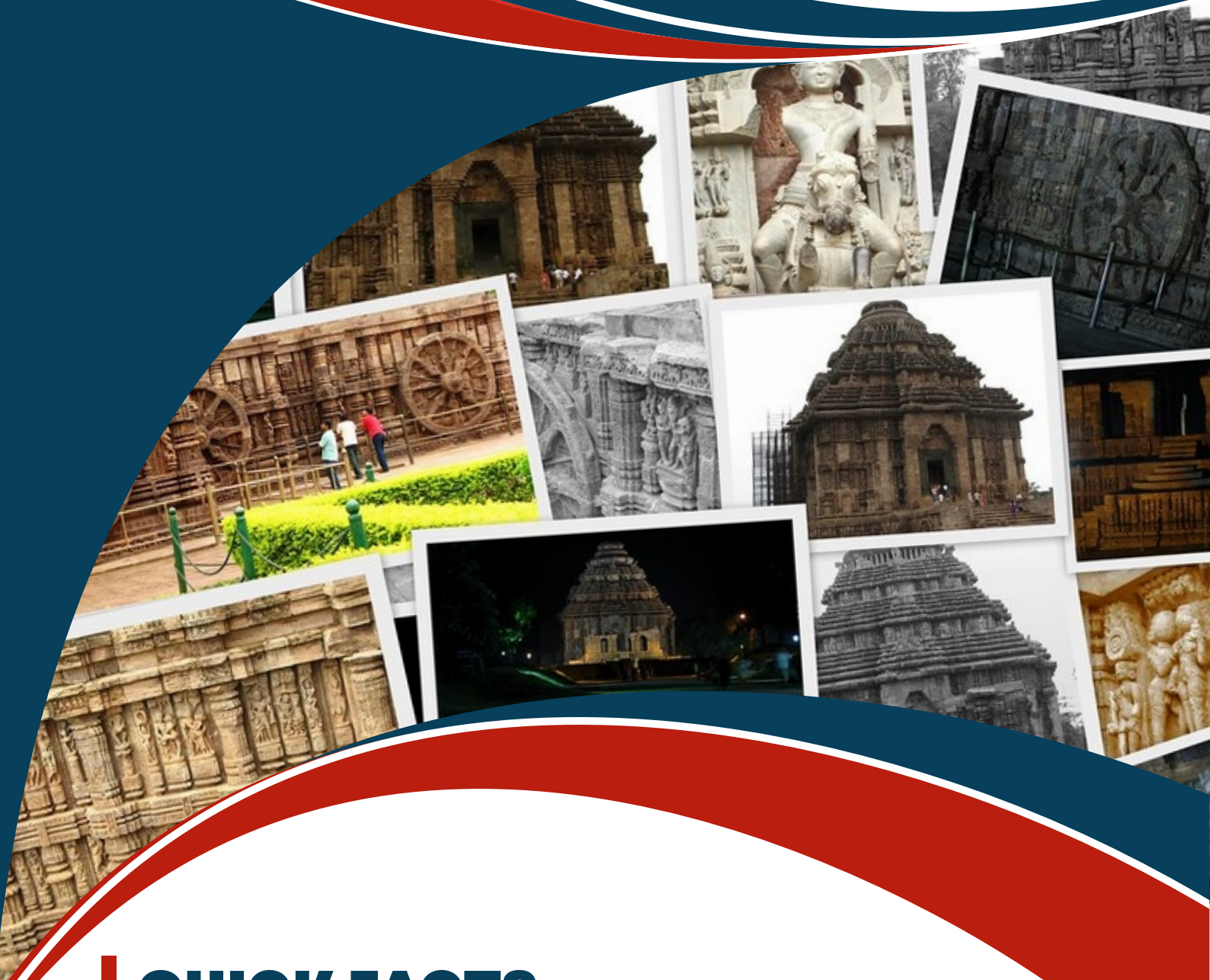
QUICK FACTS

ARTS & CULTURE AND HISTORICAL
EVENTS OF CONTINUING SIGNIFICANCE

1. Every year **July 31** is observed as **Shaheed Udham Singh Martyrdom Day**. Shaheed Udham Singh is most associated in popular culture as the person who exacted revenge for the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy. He is referred to as the 'lone assassin' or the 'patient assassin' since he was the one who shot and killed Michael O'Dwyer, the Lieutenant Governor of Punjab, whose government oversaw the horrific Amritsar slaughter, and who later gave Brigadier-General Dyer's murderous orders his blessing.

2. Indian tennis legends **Leander Paes** and **Vijay Amritraj** were inducted into the sport's **Hall of Fame**. Paes was inducted in the Player Category, while Amritraj was recognised as a part of the Contributor Category. Leander Paes has won 18 Grand Slam titles in doubles and mixed doubles and was a former doubles world No. 1. He was awarded the Padma Shri in 2001 and Padma Bhushan in 2014. Vijay Amritraj played his first Grand Prix event in 1970. He was honoured with the Padma Shri award in 1983. He was a part of the Indian Davis Cup team that reached the finals in 1974 and 1987. He was also appointed a United Nations ambassador for peace in 2001.

3. In a ceremony to mark the International Meet of leading medical celebrities, professionals and Medicos from all over the country and abroad, **Union Minister Jitendra Singh** was conferred the prestigious "**Lifetime Achievement Award**" for his significant contributions to diabetology, diabetes care, and research. The event attracted medical professionals from across India and around the world. Jitendra Singh's pioneering work on "Stress Diabetes in Kashmiri Migrants" was hailed by the World Health Organization (WHO).

4. Olympic gold medal-winning shooter **Abhinav Bindra** was awarded with **Olympic Order** by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) for his outstanding services to the Olympic Movement during the 142nd IOC Session in Paris. The Olympic Order is the highest award of the IOC, given for distinguished contributions to the Olympic Movement.

5. Over 700 artefacts, and five large galleries visually narrating the life and journey of Mughal emperor Humayun, the sunken museum at **Humayun's Tomb**, spread across a sprawling 100,000 square feet, is all set to open for the public from August 1. The museum is a facility of the Archaeological Survey of India but has been designed and built by the Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC) — at the culmination of 25 years of conservation effort at the 300-acre Humayun's Tomb, Sunder Nursery and Nizamuddin Basti area of Delhi, as part of which over 60 monuments have been conserved.

6. The new **NCERT** incorporates several changes from the previous textbooks. The textbook aims to align with the National Curriculum Framework for School Education 2023 and the National Education Policy 2020, emphasising the integration of traditional Indian knowledge and a thematic approach to social science education.

7. **India's National Flag Day** commemorates the adoption of the Indian national flag on July 22, 1947, by the Constituent Assembly, a few days before the country attained Independence from the British on August 15, 1947. The Indian national flag, known as the "Tiranga", features three horizontal stripes of equal width. The top stripe is saffron (kesaria), representing courage and sacrifice. The middle stripe is white, symbolising peace and truth, with a navy blue Ashoka Chakra (wheel) at its centre, which signifies the eternal wheel of law. The bottom stripe is green, denoting growth and auspiciousness. The flag's proportions are in the ratio of 2:3 and the Ashoka Chakra has 24 spokes, representing continuous progress.

8. **Wagh Nakh**, the wartime weapon used by **Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj**, was brought to Mumbai from London's Victoria and Albert (V&A) Museum. The Wagh Nakh or tiger claws were used by Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj to kill Afzal Khan, the general in the Bijapur Adil Shahi empire.

PASSAGE - 1

[1]'s Charaideo Moidams burial sites have been added to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) World Heritage Sites list.

These are royal burial sites of the Ahom dynasty, which ruled over much of [1] and the North East from 1228 to 1826 AD. Located around 30 km from Sivasagar town in eastern [1], even today, the tumuli in Charaideo are considered sacrosanct by many locals.

A moidam is a tumulus – a mound of earth raised over a grave – of Ahom royalty and aristocracy. While Charaideo exclusively contains moidams of Ahom royals, other moidams of aristocrats and chiefs can be found scattered across Eastern [1], in the region between the towns of Jorhat and Dibrugarh.

A typical moidam at Charaideo contains one or more chambers in a vault. On top of these is a hemispherical earthen mound, rising high above the ground, covered in grass. On top of this mound, there is a pavilion, known as the chow chali. A low octagonal wall surrounds the mound with one entrance.

Ahom kings and queens were buried inside these moidams. Unlike Hindus who cremate their dead, the predominant funerary method of the Ahoms, originating from the Tai people, was the burial. The height of a moidam is typically indicative of the power and stature of the person buried inside. However, except for those of Gadhadhar Singha and Rudra Singha, most moidams remain unidentified.

[Extracted, with edits and revisions, from: "What are [1]'s Charaideo Moidams, India's UNESCO's World Heritage Site?", The Indian Express]

Q.1 Which state's name has been replaced with "[1]" in the passage above?

A Assam

B Sikkim

C Arunachal Pradesh

D Manipur

Q.2 The World Heritage Committee included Tell Umm Amer, located in _____, in the UNESCO World Heritage Sites list, and the List of World Heritage in Danger.

A Palestinian

B Ukraine

C Myanmar

D Syria

Q.3 The mound-burial system of the Ahom dynasty - 'Moidams' – is the _____ UNESCO World Heritage Site of India.

A 41st

B 42nd

C 43rd

D 44th

Q.4 The World Heritage Day is celebrated on which date?

A September 5

B January 30

C December 7

D April 18

Q.5 Which country hosted the 46th Session of the World Heritage Committee for the first time?

A Brazil

B India

C Japan

D France

PASSAGE - 2

Kargil Vijay Diwas, celebrated every_____, marks a significant moment in India's history—the victory over Pakistan in the 1999 Kargil War. This day honours the courage and sacrifice of Indian soldiers who defended the nation's sovereignty. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Drass in Ladakh to commemorate the 25th anniversary of this historic event.

The history of Kargil Vijay Diwas dates back to the tumultuous period between India and Pakistan, which saw major conflicts, including the 1971 war that led to the creation of Bangladesh. Despite signing the Lahore Declaration in [2], aimed at peaceful resolution of the Kashmir issue, the peace was short-lived. Pakistani soldiers and militants infiltrated the Kargil district of Jammu and Kashmir in the winter of 1998-1999, occupying strategic positions to disrupt the link between Kashmir and Ladakh.

Several soldiers displayed extraordinary valor during the Kargil War. Captain Vikram Batra, known for his iconic declaration, "Ye dil mange more!" led his team to recapture Point 4875 even after being injured. He received the Param Vir Chakra posthumously. Lieutenant Manoj Kumar Pandey played a vital role in clearing enemy positions and was posthumously awarded the Param Vir Chakra for his courage and leadership.

[Extracted, with edits and revisions, from: "Kargil Vijay Diwas 2024: History, significance and other details about this historic day", The Economic Times]

Q.1 Which date has been replaced with "[1]" in the passage above?

A September15
B April 28
C November 29
D July 26

Q.2 Which Operation was launched by the Indian Army during the Kargil War?

A Operation Safed Sagar
B Operation Vijay
C Operation Talwar
D Operation Bandar

Q.3 Which Operation was launched by the Indian Navy during the Kargil War?

A Operation Safed Sagar
B Operation Vijay
C Operation Talwar
D Operation Bandar

Q.4 Which Operation was launched by the Indian Air Force during the Kargil War?

A Operation Safed Sagar
B Operation Vijay
C Operation Talwar
D Operation Bandar

Q.5 Which date has been replaced with "[2]" in the passage above?

A January 1999
B February 1999
C March 1999
D April 1999

Answers
Q.1 (D) Q.2 (B) Q.3 (C) Q.4 (A) Q.5 (B)

PASSAGE - 3

Athletes from Russia and Belarus have been banned from participating in the ongoing Paris Olympics under their nations' official flags. Many of them are instead competing under a separate category called Athlètes Individuals Neutres or AIN in French, meaning Individual Neutral Athletes.

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) initially sanctioned the two nations soon after the Russian invasion of Ukraine began in 2022, just days after the Winter Olympics ended in Beijing on February 20, 2022. It said the invasion had violated the Games' Olympic Truce, which says nations are not to attack one another from one week before the Olympic Games to one week after the Paralympic Games. The Paralympics are held shortly after the Olympics.

Belarus was also implicated for allegedly allowing Russia to use its territory for military purposes. Its western border is with Russia, while Ukraine borders it on the south.

In October 2023, the Russian Olympic Committee was officially suspended after it declared its authority over Ukrainian sports organisations in Donetsk, Kherson, Luhansk and Zaporizhzhia — regions the IOC recognised as part of the Ukrainian Olympic Committee.

[Extracted, with edits and revisions, from: "Why are Russian athletes 'banned' from the 2024 Paris Olympics?", by Anagha Jayakumar, The Indian Express]

Q.1 Which city will host the 2026 Winter Olympics?

A Milan and Cortina d'Ampezzo, Italy

B Los Angeles, US

C Brisbane, Australia

D Salt Lake City, US

Q.2 Which region will host the 2030 Winter Olympics?

A The Rocky Mountains

B The Swiss Alps

C The French Alps

D The Andes

Q.3 Which city has been selected for the 2032 Summer Olympics?

A Paris, France

B Milan, Italy

C Los Angeles, USA

D Brisbane, Australia

Q.4 The 2028 Summer Olympics will be held in _____.

A Brisbane, Australia

B Los Angeles, US

C Salt Lake City, US

D Rome, Italy

Q.5 Which city will host the 2034 Winter Olympics?

A Sydney, Australia

B Madrid, Spain

C Salt Lake City, US

D Munich, Germany

Answers

Q.1 (A) Q.2 (C) Q.3 (D) Q.4 (B) Q.5 (C)
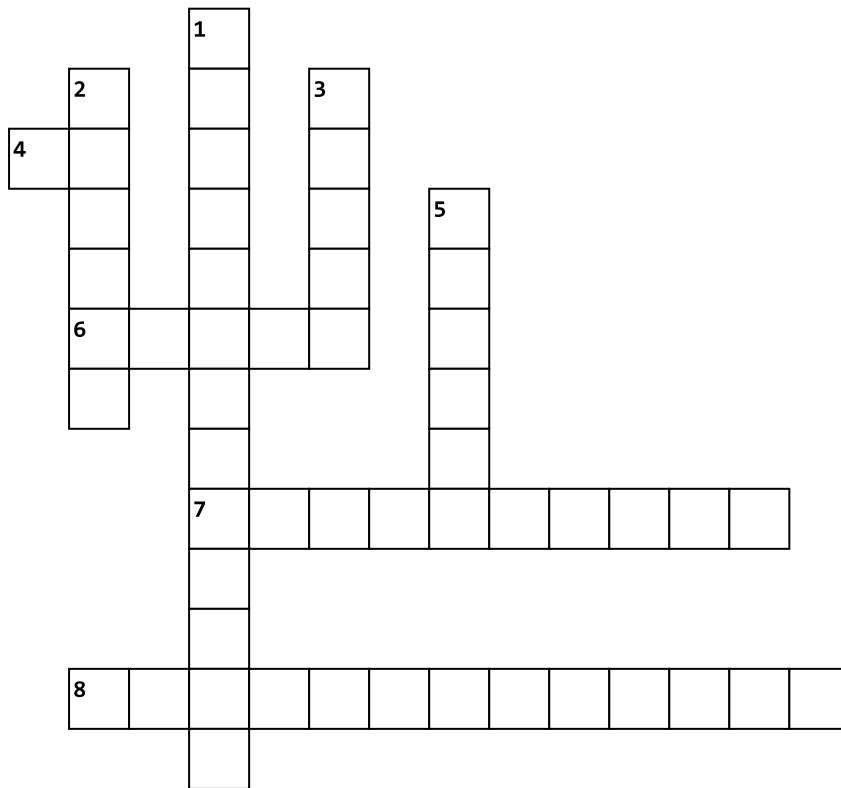
CROSSWORD CORNER

CROSSWORD - 1

Across

4. India's rank in the Henley Passport Index 2024

6. Meta's latest version of a large language model

7. 53rd Party of United Nations Water Convention

8. Winner of men's single Wimbledon 2024

Down

1. Awarded with Olympic Order by the IOC

2. India's National Flag Day

3. Elected as the Chair of the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre
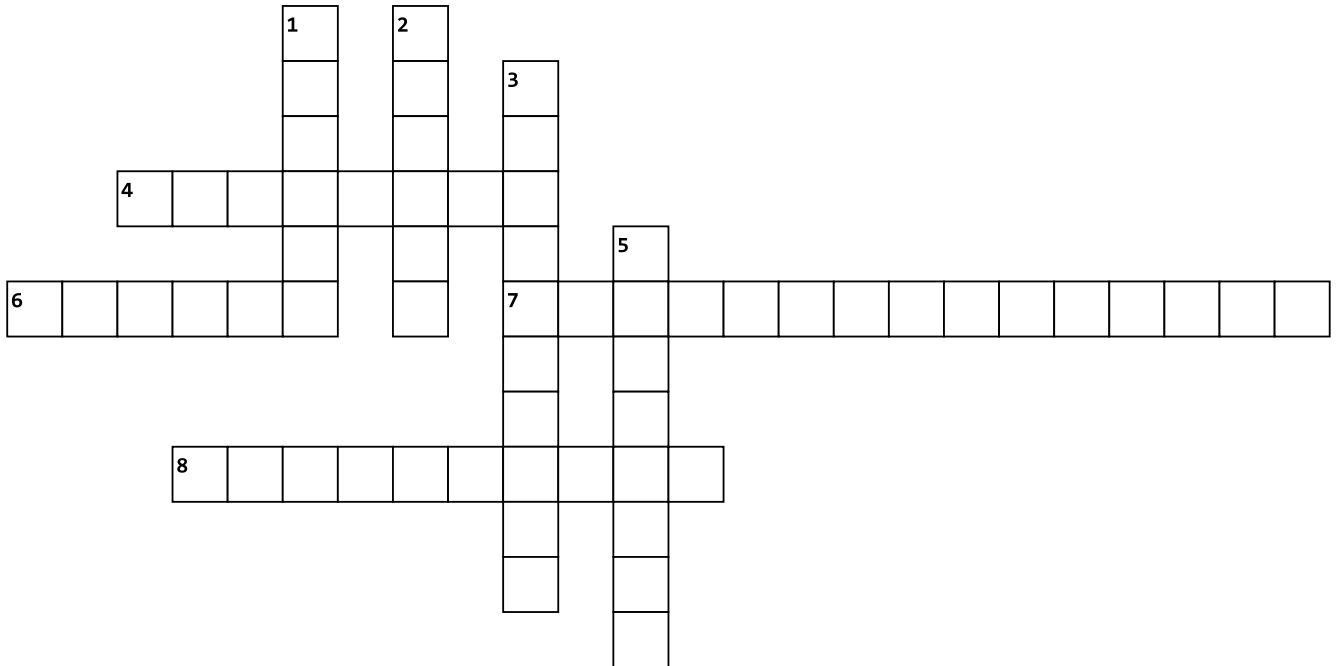
5. Shaheed Udham Singh Martyrdom Day

Answers

8 CarlosAlcaraz	**4** 82
7 IvoryCoast	**3** India
6 Llama 3.1.	**2** 22July
5 31July	**1** AbhinavBindra

CROSSWORD - 2

Across

4. 78th Independence Day

6. World Hepatitis Day

7. India's 500th Community Radio Station in Mizoram

8. 1st woman shooter to win an Olympic medal

Down

1. Foundation day of CRPF

2. International Tiger Day

3. Re-elected to the IOC for a second term

5. Adjudged the Best Ship of the Eastern Fleet

Answers

4 15August			**8** ManuBhaker	
3 NitaAmbani			**7** ApnaRadio90.0FM	
2 29July			**6** 28July	
1 27July			**5** INSDelhi	

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