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LawEx

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ISSUE - 04



Ranking States on Police,
Judiciary, Prisons & Legal Aid



[Cover story]

INDIA JUSTICE REPORT 2022



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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

Third edition of India Justice Report released, Karnataka tops in delivery of justice among 18 large states while UP ranks lowest. India's Skyroot Aerospace successfully test-fires 3D-printed cryogenic engine for record 200 seconds. To gain more insights, keep reading further

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CONTENTS

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CONTEMPORARY EVENTS OF SIGNIFICANCE :-

INDIA JUSTICE REPORT 2022	1-2
INDIAN RAILWAY @170	3-5
FOREIGN TRADE POLICY 2023	6-7
50 YEARS OF BANDIPUR TIGER RESERVE	8
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IGDMEC) AMENDMENT RULES, 2023	9
3D-PRINTED CRYOGENIC ENGINE	10
RECOGNITION AS A NATIONAL PARTY	11-12
LIGO - INDIA PROJECT	13
STATE ENERGY EFFICIENCY INDEX 2021-22	14-15

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS :-

JUICE MISSION	16-17
INDIA - ROMANIA FIRST DEFENCE COOPERATION AGREEMENT	18

ARTS & CULTURE AND HISTORICAL EVENTS :-

INDIA'S DIPLOMATIC ROLE IN THE KOREAN WAR	19
FOREIGN STUDENTS AS BRAND AMBASSADORS OF INDIA'S HERITAGE	20
PATTANAM SITE IN KERALA	21
CENTENARY YEAR OF THE VAIKOM SATYAGRAHA - 2024	22
TRADITION OF SUCCESSION BY REINCARNATION IN TIBETAN BUDDHISM	23

QUICK FACTS

CONTEMPORARY EVENTS OF SIGNIFICANCE	24-25
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS	26-27
ARTS & CULTURE AND HISTORICAL EVENTS	28

TEST ZONE

PASSAGE -1 (Contemporary Events of Significance)	29
PASSAGE -2 (International Affairs)	30
PASSAGE -3 (Arts & Culture and Historical Events)	31

CROSSWORD CORNER

CROSSWORD -1	32
CROSSWORD -2	33



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The Question Bank



**CONTEMPORARY EVENTS OF SIGNIFICANCE FROM
INDIA AND THE WORLD**

QUICK BOOSTERS

INDIA JUSTICE REPORT 2022

WHY IN NEWS?

- In the third India Justice Report (IJR) 2022, Karnataka has achieved the top rank among the 18 large and mid-sized States with populations over one crore, as per the justice delivery, namely Police, Judiciary, Prisons, and Legal Aid.


Key Findings of the Report

- Tamil Nadu has ranked in second position, Telangana in third, Gujarat in fourth and Andhra Pradesh in fifth.
- The State of Uttar Pradesh is at rank 18, which is the lowest.
- The list of Seven Small States with a population of less than one crore each was topped by Sikkim, which was ranked second in 2020.
- Sikkim has been followed by Arunachal Pradesh which was at rank 5 in 2020, and Tripura is at rank three.
- In this list, the State of Goa is at rank Seven which is the lowest.
- Except for Delhi and Chandigarh, no State or Union territory devotes more than one per cent of its total annual expenditure to the judiciary.
- Vacancy among High Court judges is at 30 per cent.
- The average pendency in High Courts is highest in Uttar Pradesh (11.34 years) and West Bengal (9.9 years), while it is lowest in Tripura (1 year), Sikkim (1.9 years), and Meghalaya (2.1 years).
- As of December 2022, the country had 19 judges for every 10 lakh people and a backlog of 4.8 crore cases. The Law Commission had suggested, as early as in 1987, that there should be 50 judges for every 10 lakh people in a decade's time.
- As of December 2022, the High Courts were functioning with only 778 judges against a sanctioned strength of 1,108 judges.
- In India, prisons are over-occupied at over 130 per cent and more than two-thirds of the prisoners (77.1 per cent) are awaiting the completion of investigation or trial.

About IJR

- This IJR is a collaborative effort undertaken in partnership with DAKSH, Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, Common Cause, Centre for Social Justice, Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy and TISS-Prayas.
- It was first published in 2019.
- The third edition of the IJR adds an assessment of the capacity of State Human Rights Commissions.

National Deficits



Police

SC/ST/OBCs
 Every state has statutorily mandated quotas for SC, ST and OBC. In the police, **only Karnataka** has been able to fulfil these reservations.

Women
Not a single state/UT meets their own reserved quotas for women in police.

Rural-Urban Divide
 In 19 states/UTs **urban police stations** serve greater populations than their rural counterparts.
 Kerala's urban police stations serve ten times the population of a rural one and Gujarat's four times.



SHRC

33,312
Total number of pending cases across all 25 State Human Rights Commissions in March 2021


44%
National average vacancy across 25 SHRCs



CCTVs

Compliance of Supreme Court judgment on installation of CCTVs
Only Arunachal Pradesh reports having CCTV cameras in all 14 spots (as directed by the apex court) in all its 24 police stations. Only 8 states/UTs (Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Arunachal Pradesh, Kerala, Ladakh, Tripura, Karnataka, Delhi, Goa) reported having night vision-equipped CCTVs.

National Deficits



Judiciary

Judge vacancy
 No court works with a full complement of judges except the High Court of Sikkim and the district courts in Chandigarh.

SC/ST/OBC
 At the district court level **no state/UT could fully meet** all its Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes quotas. Data on SC/ST/OBC judges is not available for High Courts.


Case Clearance Rate
 Among the 18 large and mid-sized states, **only Kerala and Punjab** could achieve case clearance rates of 100 per cent and more at both High Court and subordinate court levels.



Legal Aid

9,417
The reduction in the number of Legal services clinics dropping to 4,742 (2022) from 14,159 (2020)

₹7,322 crore
The total value of settlement by National Lok Adalats between 2021-2022



Prisons

32 states where share of undertrials is more than 60%

24 states/UTs that provided education to less than 5% inmates during 2021

5 states that didn't provide any vocational training to inmates in 2021

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National Findings

Overall ranking*

Color guide

Best Middle Worst

Indicators
(in IJR 3)

102

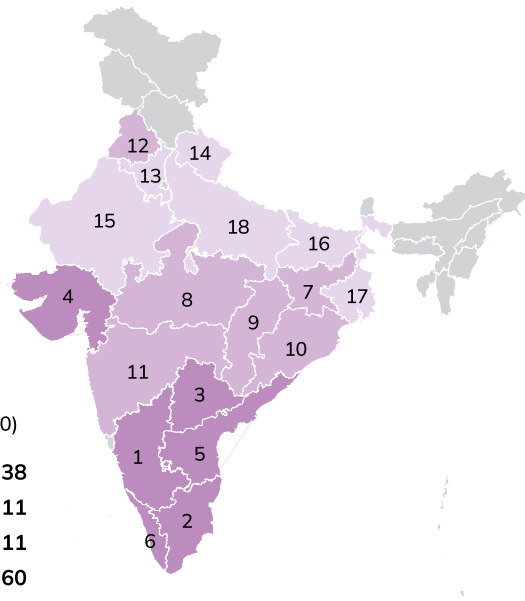
Clusters

- I. 18 large and mid-sized states
(population above 10 million)
- II. 7 small-sized states
(population up to 10 million)

Map 1: Large and mid-sized states

Rank (out of 18)

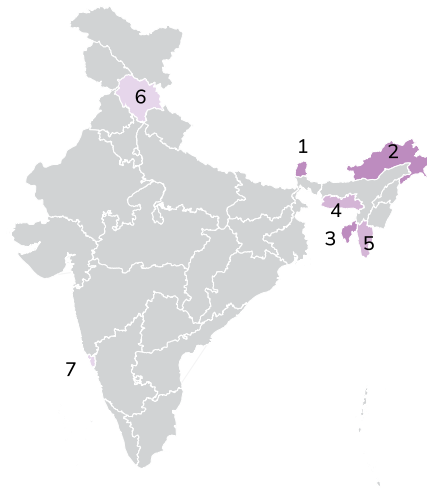
NEW				
IJR 1 2019	IJR 2 2020	IJR 3 2022	State	Score (out of 10)
6	14	1	Karnataka	6.38
3	2	2	Tamil Nadu	6.11
11	3	3	Telangana	6.11
8	6	4	Gujarat	5.60
13	12	5	Andhra Pradesh	5.41
2	5	6	Kerala	5.36
16	8	7	Jharkhand	5.26
9	16	8	Madhya Pradesh	5.25
10	7	9	Chhattisgarh	5.20
7	11	10	Odisha	5.16
1	1	11	Maharashtra	5.16
4	4	12	Punjab	5.10
5	9	13	Haryana	4.79
15	15	14	Uttarakhand	4.46
14	10	15	Rajasthan	4.36
17	13	16	Bihar	4.32
12	17	17	West Bengal	3.88
18	18	18	Uttar Pradesh	3.78



Map 2: Small states

Rank (out of 7)

NEW				
IJR 1 2019	IJR 2 2020	IJR 3 2022	State	Score (out of 10)
2	2	1	Sikkim	5.01
6	5	2	Arunachal Pradesh	4.28
7	1	3	Tripura	4.02
5	7	4	Meghalaya	3.97
4	6	5	Mizoram	3.85
3	4	6	Himachal Pradesh	3.72
1	3	7	Goa	3.42



* Composite ranking across police, prisons, judiciary and legal aid

Note: Scores are shown up to 2 decimals. While they both show the same score, Tamil Nadu is ranked above Telangana on the third decimal (6.112 versus 6.105) and Odisha above Maharashtra (5.159 versus 5.157).



INDIAN RAILWAYS @170

WHY IN NEWS?

- The Indian Railway has completed 170 years on April 16.

Journey of 170 Years

- The first passenger train in Asia was operated on a small stretch of 34 km between Mumbai and Thane on April 16, 1853, which proved to be a giant leap for the progress and prosperity of the country over the next 17 decades.
- The railways soon spread wings - and tracks - to other parts of India. The first passenger train started in the east on August 15, 1854, covering 39 km between Howrah and Hooghly, followed by Veyasarpandy and Walajah Road in the south (Madras Presidency) on July 1, 1856, and in the north between Hathras Road and Mathura Cantt., a 53 km stretch, on October 19, 1875, and chugged along, never to look back.

Electrification

- Starting with the heavy, highly-polluting steam locomotives, the Indian Railways started services on the first electrified 15 km track between Mumbai's Victoria Terminus (now, CSMT) and Kurla Harbour in February 1925.
- At one point, it even shifted in August 1955 to diesel locos, but these were gradually discarded as oil prices became prohibitive over the decades.
- However, electrification picked up the pace. In the past 100 years, the Indian Railways has become 80 per cent electrified, offering a cheaper, environment-friendly and faster alternative, as per the official data till 2022.

Rail Network

- Over the past 170 years, the Indian Railways has mushroomed into a multi-gauge with over 108,000 km of running lines, transporting passengers, animals and cargo to some of the country's remotest corners, traversing plains, forests, deserts or snowy mountains, safely and surely.

Nationalisation

- During the British rule, the railway network had multiple owners and 'fathers', but after Independence, the earliest visionary Railway Ministers - John Mathai, N. Gopalaswami Ayyangar and Lal Bahadur Shastri - initiated the process of unification into a single compact entity.
- This started in 1951 with the formation of various divisions like Central Railway, Western Railway, Northern Railway, and Southern Railway, divided into zones - which later multiplied as per the growth and local requirements. At present, there are 17 Railway Zones and 68 Divisions in the country.

Budget

- The Government has decided to merge Rail Budget with the Union Budget from the budget year 2017-18.
- The merger of the Railway Budget with the General Budget is based on the recommendations of the Committee headed by Bibek Debroy, Member, NITI Aayog and a separate paper on 'Dispensing with the Railway Budget' by Bibek Debroy along with Kishore Desai.
- National Rail Plan Vision – 2030
- Indian Railways have prepared a National Rail Plan (NRP) for India – 2030. The Plan is to create a 'future-ready' Railway system by 2030.
- The objective of the Plan is to create capacity ahead of demand, which in turn would also cater to future growth in demand right up to 2050 and increase the modal share of Railways to 45% in freight traffic and continue to sustain it.



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Bullet Train

- The Indian Railways is building the country's first bullet train from Ahmedabad, Gujarat to Mumbai, Maharashtra, over a 508-kilometre route. The high-speed train will run at a top speed of 350 km per hour, covering the distance in three hours. The Indian Railways is targeting August 2026 for running the first bullet train.

RAPIDX

- India's National Capital Region Transport Corporation (NCRTC) has named its first semi-high-speed regional rail services as 'RAPIDX'. The trains will operate on the Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) corridors, which are being implemented to connect key urban nodes across the National Capital Region (NCR). The brand name 'RAPIDX' has been chosen because it is easy to read and pronounce in various languages.

Introduction of Vistadome Coaches

- Vistadome coaches provide a panoramic view through wider body side windows and transparent sections in the roof, thus enabling the passengers to enjoy the scenic beauty of the places they travel. As on November 2022, 82 Vistadome coaches are available over various sections of Indian Railways.

KAVACH

- In the spirit of the vision Atam Nirbhar Bharat, Kavach has been adopted as the National Automatic Train Protection system. Indian Railways has taken up deployment of Kavach on Delhi-Mumbai & Delhi-Howrah corridors.
- One Station One Product (OSOP) Scheme
- One Station One Product scheme was announced in the Union Budget 2022-23. This scheme aims to provide opportunities for enhanced livelihood through skill development to local artisans, potters, weavers/handloom weavers, craftsmen etc., through the provision of sale outlets at Railway Stations across the Country.

Vande Bharat Express

- Vande Bharat Express is the next major leap for Indian Railways in terms of speed and convenience.
- The first Vande Bharat Express train was flagged off on February 15, 2019, on the New Delhi Kanpur-Allahabad-Varanasi route. Until now, 15 Vande Bharat Express trains have been operating in the country.

Domestic Tourism

- Bharat Gaurav policy was launched on 23 November 2021 to showcase India's rich cultural heritage and magnificent historical places to the people of India and the world. Bharat Gaurav Tourist Train launch is in line with the Government of India initiative "Dekho Apna Desh" to promote domestic tourism.
- Till date, 17 Bharat Gaurav circuits have been established on the lines of the "Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat" scheme of the Government of India to showcase the heritage of vibrant Gujarat. On this basis, 10 more circuits are in the offing.

Introduction of Tejas Rajdhani Trains

- Ultra-modern Tejas trains have been introduced on Linke Hofmann Busch (LHB) platform with sleeper coaches over Indian Railways. These ultra-modern trains have the following major distinguished features: Automatic entrance doors, Passenger Announcement / Passenger Information System, Fire and Smoke detection system, CCTV cameras, Improved lavatory - vacuum-assisted flushing with bio-toilets, etc.

Amrit Bharat Station Scheme

- The Amrit Bharat Station Scheme has recently been launched for the development of Railway stations on Indian Railways. Presently, the scheme envisages to take-up 1275 stations for upgradation/modernisation over Indian Railway.



Skill Development

- To empower youth by way of giving entry-level training in Railway Training Institutes, “Rail Kaushal Vikas Yojana” was launched on Indian Railways in September 2021. Under the scheme, entry-level training is provided at more than 90 Training Locations on Zonal Railways & Production Units in industry-relevant Technical Trades. The training is provided free of cost to the candidates.

Gati Shakti Master Plan

- Indian Railways is one of the seven engines of 'PM GatiShakti' masterplan- a transformative approach for economic growth and sustainable development. 100 PM GatiShakti Cargo Terminals for multimodal logistics facilities will be developed during the next three years.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Indian Railways completes 100% electrification of rail network in Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand recently.
- The Indian Railways is determined to reduce its carbon footprint to achieve 'Net-zero Carbon Emission' by 2030.
- UNESCO accorded World Heritage Sites status to Darjeeling Himalayan Railway in 1999, Nilgiri Mountain Railway in 2005, Kalka Shimla Railway in 2008 and Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus, Mumbai in 2004.
- The world's highest railway bridge on the river Chenab is being built in Jammu and Kashmir. The Chenab Bridge, is 1,178 feet above the riverbed underneath, making it the world's highest railway bridge.
- India's first cable-stayed rail bridge on Anji River is being built in Jammu and Kashmir. Anji Bridge is an “asymmetrical” bridge erected on a single pylon and it has tunnels on both ends.
- The maiden passenger service was hauled by three engines, inexplicably named 'Sahib', 'Sindh' and 'Sultan'.
- India is set to get its first tilting trains by 2025-26.
- The maiden Bharat Gaurav Train, namely, Shirdi Yatra was launched on 14.06.2022.
- Shri Ramayana Yatra was launched by IRCTC from New Delhi on 21.06.2022. This is the first tourist train covering the place of significance of Lord Rama in Nepal (Janakpur).
- Indian Railways and India Posts have formally launched Rail Post Gati Shakti Express Cargo Service.



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FOREIGN TRADE POLICY 2023

WHY IN NEWS?

- Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution and Textiles, Piyush Goyal, launched the Foreign Trade Policy 2023 (FTP 2023).

Key Pillars of the Policy

- Incentive to Remission
- Export promotion through collaboration - Exporters, States, Districts, Indian Missions
- Ease of doing business, reduction in transaction cost and e-initiatives
- Emerging Areas – E-Commerce Developing Districts as Export Hubs and streamlining Special Chemicals, Organisms, Materials, Equipment, and Technologies (SCOMET) policy

Process Re-Engineering and Automation

- The policy emphasises export promotion and development, moving away from an incentive regime to a regime which is facilitating, based on technology interface and principles of collaboration.
- FTP 2023 codifies implementation mechanisms in a paperless, online environment, building on earlier 'ease of doing business' initiatives. Reduction in fee structures and IT-based schemes will make it easier for MSMEs and others to access export benefits.
- Duty exemption schemes for export production will now be implemented through Regional Offices in a rule-based IT system environment, eliminating the need for a manual interface.

Facilitating E-Commerce Exports

- Various estimates suggest e-commerce export potential in the range of USD 200 to USD 300 billion by 2030.
- FTP 2023 outlines the intent and roadmap for establishing e-commerce hubs and related elements such as payment reconciliation, book-keeping, returns policy, and export entitlements.

Towns of Export Excellence

- Four new towns, namely Faridabad, Mirzapur, Moradabad, and Varanasi, have been designated as Towns of Export Excellence (TEE) in addition to the existing 39 towns.

Recognition of Exporters

- Exporter firms recognised with 'status' based on export performance will now be partners in capacity-building initiatives on a best-endeavor basis. Similar to the 'each one teach one' initiative, 2-star and above status holders would be encouraged to provide trade-related training based on a model curriculum to interested individuals. This will help India build a skilled manpower pool capable of servicing a \$5 Trillion economy before 2030.

Promoting Export From the Districts

- The FTP aims at building partnerships with State governments and taking forward the Districts as Export Hubs (DEH) initiative to promote exports at the district level and accelerate the development of grassroots trade ecosystem.

Streamlining SCOMET Policy

- India is placing more emphasis on the "export control" regime as its integration with export control regime countries strengthens. There is a wider outreach and understanding of SCOMET among stakeholders, and the policy regime is being made more robust to implement international treaties and agreements entered into by India.



Facilitation Under Export Promotion of Capital Goods (EPCG) Scheme

- The EPCG Scheme, which allows the import of capital goods at zero Customs duty for export production, is being further rationalised.

Amnesty Scheme

- Under the amnesty scheme, an online portal will be launched for registration and a six-month window will be available to exporters to avail the scheme.
- It will cover all pending cases of default in export obligation of authorisations, these can be regularised on payment of all customs duties exempted in proportion to unfulfilled export obligations.

Facilitation Under Advance Authorization on Scheme

- The advance authorisation Scheme accessed by DTA units provides duty-free import of raw materials for manufacturing export items and is placed at a similar footing to EOU and SEZ Scheme. However, the DTA unit has the flexibility to work both for domestic as well as export production.

DID YOU KNOW?

- The Government aims to increase India's overall exports to USD 2 trillion by 2030, with equal contributions from the merchandise and services sectors.
- The previous foreign trade policy for 2015-2020 had targeted exports of USD 900 billion by 2020. This target was extended along with the policy for three years till March 2023.
- India is, however, likely to end 2022-23 with total exports of USD 760-770 billion as against USD 676 billion in 2021-22.



FOREIGN TRADE POLICY 2023

Key Pillars



50 YEARS OF BANDIPUR TIGER RESERVE

WHY IN NEWS?

- Bandipur Tiger Reserve completed 50 years as a Project Tiger Reserve on 1 April 1973.

About Project Tiger

- Project Tiger was launched in 1973 to promote conservation of the tiger.
- It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme of the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC).
- Initially, there were 12 tigers in Bandipur when Project Tiger was launched, as a result of protection measures, there are currently 173 tigers using the area.

5th cycle of Management Effectiveness Evaluation (MEE)

- Periyar Tiger Reserve in Kerala is the country's best-maintained tiger reserve. Periyar Tiger Reserve is followed closely by the Satpura Tiger Reserve in Madhya Pradesh, Bandipur in Karnataka and Nagarhole in Karnataka.
- MEE is the most significant approach to enhance the management perspectives of reserves and their associated landscape connectivity.
- The government has been using the MEE to assess tiger reserves across the country since its inception in 2006.
- At present, the country has 998 Protected Areas – including 106 National Parks, 567 Wildlife Sanctuaries, 105 Conservation Reserves and 220 Community Reserves – covering 1,73,629 sq km or 5.28% of India's geographical area.

Tiger Census 2022

- According to the figures of the 5th cycle of India's Tiger Census, the number of tigers in India has increased by 6.74 per cent from 2,967 in 2018 to 3,167 in 2022.
- There has been a significant increase in the tiger population in the Shivalik Hills and Gangetic Plains, while tiger occupancy in Jharkhand, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, and Telangana showed a decline.
- The Western Ghats population also showed a decline, with major populations being stable.
- Tigers have been spotted for the first time in Himachal Pradesh and in new areas in Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra.
- The national tiger census is done every four years by the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA). It is a statutory body under the MoEFCC and was established in 2005 following the recommendations of the Tiger Task Force.

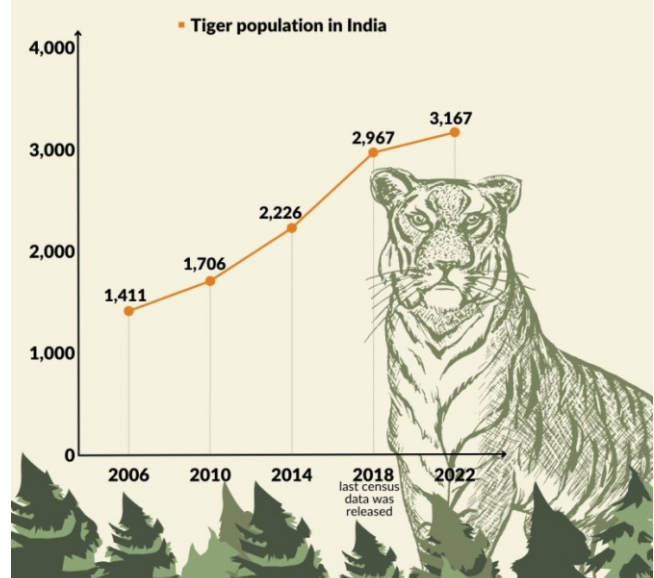
About Bandipur Tiger Reserve

- Bandipur Tiger Reserve is located in Karnataka. It is surrounded by Mudumalai Tiger Reserve (Tamil Nadu) in the South, Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary (Kerala) in the Southwest & North West Side.
- The Kabini Reservoir separates the Bandipur and Nagarhole Tiger Reserve.
- It is also important to the country's first biosphere reserve, the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve.

International Big Cats Alliance (IBCA)

- Prime Minister also launched the IBCA for the protection and conservation of seven major big cats of the world, including tiger, lion, leopard, snow leopard, puma, jaguar and cheetah, with the membership of the 97 range countries harbouring these species.
- The IBCA will engage in advocacy, partnerships, capacity building, eco-tourism, and finance tapping. It will also disseminate information and create awareness among its members.

PM Narendra Modi releases latest tiger census figures to mark 50 years of completion of Project Tiger



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INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (INTERMEDIARY GUIDELINES AND DIGITAL MEDIA ETHICS CODE) AMENDMENT RULES, 2023

WHY IN NEWS?

- Recently, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) amended the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 and created the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Amendment Rules, 2023 (IT Rules, 2023).

Key Highlights

- One Fack News** : The amendment authorises a “fact check unit of the central government” to identify “fake or false or misleading” information in respect of “any business of the central government”.
- The newly proposed unit will scrutinise any online comments, news reports or opinions about government officials and ministries and then notify online intermediaries for its censorship.
 - Such intermediaries will not only include online social media companies but also service providers across a plump layer of the tech stack including ISPs and file hosting companies.
- Under the new IT Rules, social media companies will lose their “safe harbour immunity” for posts that the Government has flagged as misinformation.
 - Social media companies have traditionally enjoyed legal immunity for content posted by users, as the Information Technology Act, 2000 treats them as intermediaries.
- On Online Real Money Gaming Industry** : The amendment will also empower the Union Government to regulate the online real money gaming industry, which comprises apps like fantasy sports sites, rummy and poker.
- The amendment requires real money gaming services, where users deposit money in expectation of winnings, to get themselves certified as “permissible” by a Self-Regulatory Body (SRB) consisting of experts and industry members.
- Since decades of constitutional jurisprudence has narrowed down the definition of “betting and gambling,” for which administrative authority rests with States, “permissible” real money games would likely be those where the outcome doesn't depend purely on chance.
- The real money gaming industry, which has battled States in court — often successfully — against wholesale bans, has welcomed this amendment and indicated that they will comply.
- The games that are not declared “permissible” would fall under the “betting and gambling” category, opening them up to restrictions from States where such activities are prohibited.
- The Government has categorically refused to get into the debate on whether a real money game is one of skill or chance, which is a crucial distinction to legally determine whether an app facilitates betting or gambling. This decision has been left to the SRBs.
- As such, major fantasy sporting apps and card games that have obtained court orders recognising them as games of skill, may not be impacted. Before passing this amendment, the Union Cabinet amended the Allocation of Business Rules to give the Centre powers to regulate “online gaming”.

DID YOU KNOW?

- MeitY used its subordinate rule-making power under Section 79 of the Information Technology Act, 2000, to create the IT Rules, 2023. This power is meant to fill in details within the legislative intent and directions of the Supreme Court.
- The Shreya Singhal judgment of the Supreme Court established that Section 79 and the IT Rules require intermediaries to have actual knowledge from a court order or be notified by the appropriate government in relation to the unlawful acts — these are reasonable restrictions under Article 19(2) of the Constitution. However, Article 19(2) does not contain the phrases “fake or false or misleading”.
- The IT Rules may be read under broader classifications such as public order, security of the state, and morality. Nevertheless, any inaccurate or inaccurate statement will not automatically become “fake or false or misleading,” and not all classes of “fake or false or misleading” fit within reasonable restrictions, creating an unconstitutional power for government censorship.

Impact

- As per the Union Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology, this amendment did not constitute censorship and would only remove social media firms' immunity when they choose to leave 'fake news' that is declared as such.

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3D-PRINTED CRYOGENIC ENGINE

WHY IN NEWS?

- Private space vehicle company Skyroot Aerospace recently test-fired its 3D-printed Dhawan II engine for a duration of 200 seconds.
- The engine was developed by the company for its heavier vehicle, Vikram II.

Key Points

- The launch used a single-stage solid fuel Vikram S rocket.
- The Vikram-1 rocket, the first in the series of rockets being developed by the company, will use three solid-fuel stages to take satellites to orbit.
- The Dhawan II that was tested recently will be used as the upper stage of the updated version Vikram-2.
- A cryogenic upper stage instead of a solid fuel stage enhances the payload-carrying capacity of a rocket.
- Dhawan II is completely indigenous and used a superalloy for 3D printing the engine, which reduced the manufacturing time by 95%. It will use Liquid Natural gas (LNG) and Liquid Oxygen (LoX) as propellants.
- The development of Dhawan II was partly supported by NITI Ayog's ANIC-ARISE program, which promotes technologies, including the use of green rocket propellants.

Vikram Series of Skyroot

- Vikram - named after Dr. Vikram Sarabhai, founder of the Indian Space Program - is a series of modular Space launch vehicles especially crafted for the small satellite market.
- It has four variants - Vikram S, Vikram, Vikram II and Vikram III. Vikram S, made Skyroot the first Indian private company to send a rocket into space.
- Vikram II rocket is scheduled to become launch-ready by 2024 which will make the company the first private launcher from South Asia.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Skyroot launched India's first privately developed rocket Vikram-S in November 2022.
- Only six countries - the US, China, Russia, France, Japan, and India, have developed cryogenic engines.
- India's heaviest launch vehicles – GSLV and GSLV Mk III – use cryogenic fuel in the launch vehicle's upper stage.
- India is the 6th-largest player in the space industry internationally, having ~3.6% of the world's space-tech companies (as of 2021).
- The US holds the leader's spot, housing 56.4% of all companies in the space-tech ecosystem, followed by the UK (6.5%), Canada (5.3%), China (4.7%) and Germany (4.1%).



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RECOGNITION AS A NATIONAL PARTY

WHY IN NEWS?

- The Election Commission (EC) recently recognised the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) as a national party.
- The country now has six national parties — Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Congress, Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), CPI(M), National People's Party (NPP) and AAP.

Key Highlights of the Decision

- The EC's decision was based on a review of the parties' poll performances — the 2014 and 2019 Lok Sabha polls and 21 state assembly polls since 2014.
- The Trinamool Congress (TMC), Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) and Communist Party of India (CPI), however, lost their national party status.
- AAP - Besides Delhi, Goa and Punjab, AAP became a state party in Gujarat after the 2022 Assembly elections, where it secured 12.92% of the votes.
- TMC - TMC had ceased to be a state party in Manipur and Arunachal Pradesh, though it continued to be a state party in West Bengal and Tripura and was accorded state party status in Meghalaya on the basis of the 2023 elections.
- The EC found the TMC did not contest the 2019 Lok Sabha elections from Arunachal Pradesh and Manipur and got 0.40% and 43.28% of the votes in Tripura and West Bengal, respectively. In the Assembly polls from 2016 to 2018, the party's vote share was 44.91% in West Bengal, 1.41% in Manipur, and 0.30% in Tripura. In the most recent polls, the party got 48.02% of the votes in West Bengal (2021) and did not contest in Manipur (2022).
- NCP - The NCP lost its state party status in Goa, Manipur and Meghalaya as its vote share was 2.28%, 0.95% and 1.61%, respectively, in the Assembly elections between 2017 and 2018. It remains a state party in Maharashtra, where it polled 16.71% of the votes in the 2019 Assembly elections. The party was also given state party status in Nagaland on the basis of the Assembly elections earlier this year.
- CPI - In the case of the CPI, the EC withdrew its status as a state party in West Bengal and Odisha, while it remains a state party in Kerala, Manipur and Tamil Nadu. In the Assembly elections held from 2016 to 2019, the party's vote share was 0.79% in Tamil Nadu (but it has two MPs from the state), 1.45% in West Bengal, 0.74% in Manipur (but its vote share in the state was 8.27% in the 2019 Lok

Sabha election), and 0.12% in Odisha.

- The EC also granted state party status to the Lok Janshakti Party in Nagaland, Voice of the People Party in Meghalaya, and Tipra Motha in Tripura, based on their recent poll performances.
- Six others lost state party status — Peoples Democratic Alliance in Manipur, Pattali Makkal Katchi in Puducherry, Rashtriya Lok Dal in Uttar Pradesh, Bharat Rashtra Samithi in Andhra Pradesh, Revolutionary Socialist Party in West Bengal and Mizoram People's Conference in Mizoram.

Criteria for Recognition as a National Party

- The Election Commission (EC) reviews the poll performance of recognised parties after every State Assembly election or general election to the Lok Sabha.
- The rules for recognition as a national party are specified by the EC in para 6B of the Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968.
- A party becomes eligible to be accorded national status if it manages to fulfil one of the following conditions:
 - if it is recognised as a State party in at least four States,
 - if it secures 6% of the total votes polled in four States in the last Lok Sabha or Assembly elections, and in addition, gets four of its members elected to the Lok Sabha, or
 - if it wins 2% of seats in the Lok Sabha from at least three States.
- Besides this, the Symbols Order of 1968 was amended in 2016 to give parties one additional "pass over". As per this amendment, deemed to have been in force since January 1, 2014, if a national or state party fails to fulfil the eligibility criteria in the next general elections (March 2014 Lok Sabha polls in this case) or the Assembly election after the election in which it received recognition, it will continue to be recognised as a national or state party, meaning it will not be stripped of its status. However, whether it will continue to be recognised after any subsequent election would again have to be determined by the eligibility criteria.



Benefits of Recognition as National & State Parties

- A recognised political party enjoys privileges such as a reserved party symbol, free broadcast time on State-run television and radio, consultation in the setting of election dates, and giving input in setting electoral rules and regulations. Besides other benefits, the status of a national party gets land for an office in the national capital.
- A national party can contest elections across the country and can field candidates in any state, which helps in expanding its base and influence.
- A national party can engage 40 'star campaigners' as opposed to 20 such campaigners allotted to a registered unrecognised party. Star campaigners' expenses are not added to the party's overall costs of running an election campaign.
- National parties need to have just one proposer to submit a nomination. They are given two free sets of electoral rolls during the roll revision. They also get one free electoral roll for each candidate during general elections.
- Candidates put up by registered but unrecognised political parties are allotted election symbols by the Returning Officers of the constituencies after the last date for withdrawal of candidature as per availability. Thus, the party cannot use a single poll symbol across the country.

Criteria for Recognition as a State Party

- For recognition as a State party, it has to secure at least 6% of the valid votes polled and two seats in Assembly polls or one in Lok Sabha polls.
- There are three other alternatives for eligibility:
 - (a) at General Elections or Legislative Assembly elections, the party has to win 3% of the seats in the legislative assembly of the state (subject to a minimum of 3 seats),
 - (b) at a Lok Sabha General Elections, the party has to win one Lok Sabha seat for every 25 Lok Sabha seats allotted for the state, or
 - (c) at a General Election to the Lok Sabha or the Legislative Assembly, the party has to poll 8% of votes in a State.

AAP GETS AN UPGRADE



ON 10 APRIL 2023, THE ECI REJIGGED THE LIST. INDIA NOW HAS SIX NATIONAL POLITICAL PARTIES

		
BJP	Congress	CPI(M)
		
BSP	NPP	AAP





LIGO-INDIA PROJECT

WHY IN NEWS?

- The Union Cabinet approved the Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory (LIGO) project, India's largest scientific facility.

Key Points

- It will be built by the Department of Atomic Energy and the Department of Science and Technology with the U.S. National Science Foundation and several national and international research institutions.
- It will be located in the Hingoli district of Maharashtra, about 450 km east of Mumbai.
- It is scheduled to begin its scientific runs from 2030.
- The observatory will be the third of its kind, made to the exact specifications of the twin LIGO in Louisiana and Washington in the U.S. LIGO-India will work in tandem with them.

Importance

- While two LIGOs can study gravitational waves, a third observatory is required to better triangulate the location of a source in the sky.
- A more ideal setup requires four observatories to record the same wave. To this end, researchers are setting up and upgrading detectors in Italy and Japan.
- LIGO-India will be a unique platform that brings together in India the frontiers of science and technology of the quantum and the cosmos.
- The observatory will enable dramatic returns in astronomy and astrophysics. Indian science and technology will leapfrog in a number of cutting-edge frontiers of great national relevance.

About LIGO Project

- LIGO is an international network of laboratories that detect gravitational waves.
- LIGOs are designed to measure changes in distance that are several orders of magnitude smaller than the length of the proton. Such high precision Instruments are needed because of the extremely low strength of gravitational waves that make their detection very difficult.
- The LIGO is a giant L-shaped instrument. Each arm of the 'L' is 4 km long. Two laser pulses are shot through each arm at the same time, and they bounce off a mirror at the end to return to the vertex. A detector checks whether the pulses return at the same time.
- When a gravitational wave passes through the detector, the pulses are slightly out of time. Researchers use this and other signals to detect, record, and study gravitational waves.
- Gravitational waves are emitted by very massive objects in the universe in extreme environments, such as when black holes collide. Just as the light emitted by an object can be used to probe its electromagnetic properties, gravitational waves can be used to probe the gravitational features of the source.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Gravitational waves were first postulated (1916) in Albert Einstein's General Theory of Relativity.
- The LIGO in the U.S. first detected gravitational waves in 2015, which led to a Nobel Prize in Physics in 2017.
- Besides the United States (in Hanford and Livingston), such gravitational wave observatories are currently operational in Italy (Virgo) and Japan (Kagra).



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STATE ENERGY EFFICIENCY INDEX 2021-22

WHY IN NEWS?

- Union Minister of Power and New & Renewable Energy R. K. Singh released the report of State Energy Efficiency Index (SEEI) 2021-22.

Key Findings of the Index

- Front Runner category (>60 points) - 5 states - Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Rajasthan and Telangana.
- Achiever category (50-60 points) - 4 states - Assam, Haryana, Maharashtra, and Punjab.
- Contender category (30-49.5) - 8 states—Chandigarh, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, and Uttar Pradesh.
- Further, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Assam and Chandigarh are the top-performing states in their respective state groups, while Telangana and Andhra Pradesh showed the most improvement since the last index.
- Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Assam received top honours at the National Energy Conservation Awards (NECA) 2022.

About Index

- The index developed by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE), a statutory body under the Ministry of Power, in association with Alliance for an Energy-Efficient Economy (AEEE), assesses the annual progress of states and UTs in energy efficiency implementation, for FY 2020-21 and 2021-22.
- SEEI 2021-22 has an updated framework of 50 indicators aligned with national priorities. Programme-specific indicators have been included this year to track outcomes and impacts of state-level energy efficiency initiatives.
- Based on the progress and accomplishments of states in energy efficiency implementation, they have been classified into four categories: Front Runner, Achiever, Contender, and Aspirant.

DID YOU KNOW?

- India is committed to achieving NDC goals and transitioning to a net-zero economy by 2070.
- India is now committed to reduce the emission intensity of its GDP by 45% by 2030 from 2005 levels.
- The energy sector is responsible for 75% of India's total greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.
- India has increased its cumulative energy savings targets till 2030 from 86.9 megatonnes of oil equivalent (MTOE) to 150 MTOE with updated targets for all states and union territories (UTs).
- The Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) was established on 1st March 2002 under the provisions of the Energy Conservation Act, 2001.



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states
and UTs
improved
their scores
from SEEI
2020

7

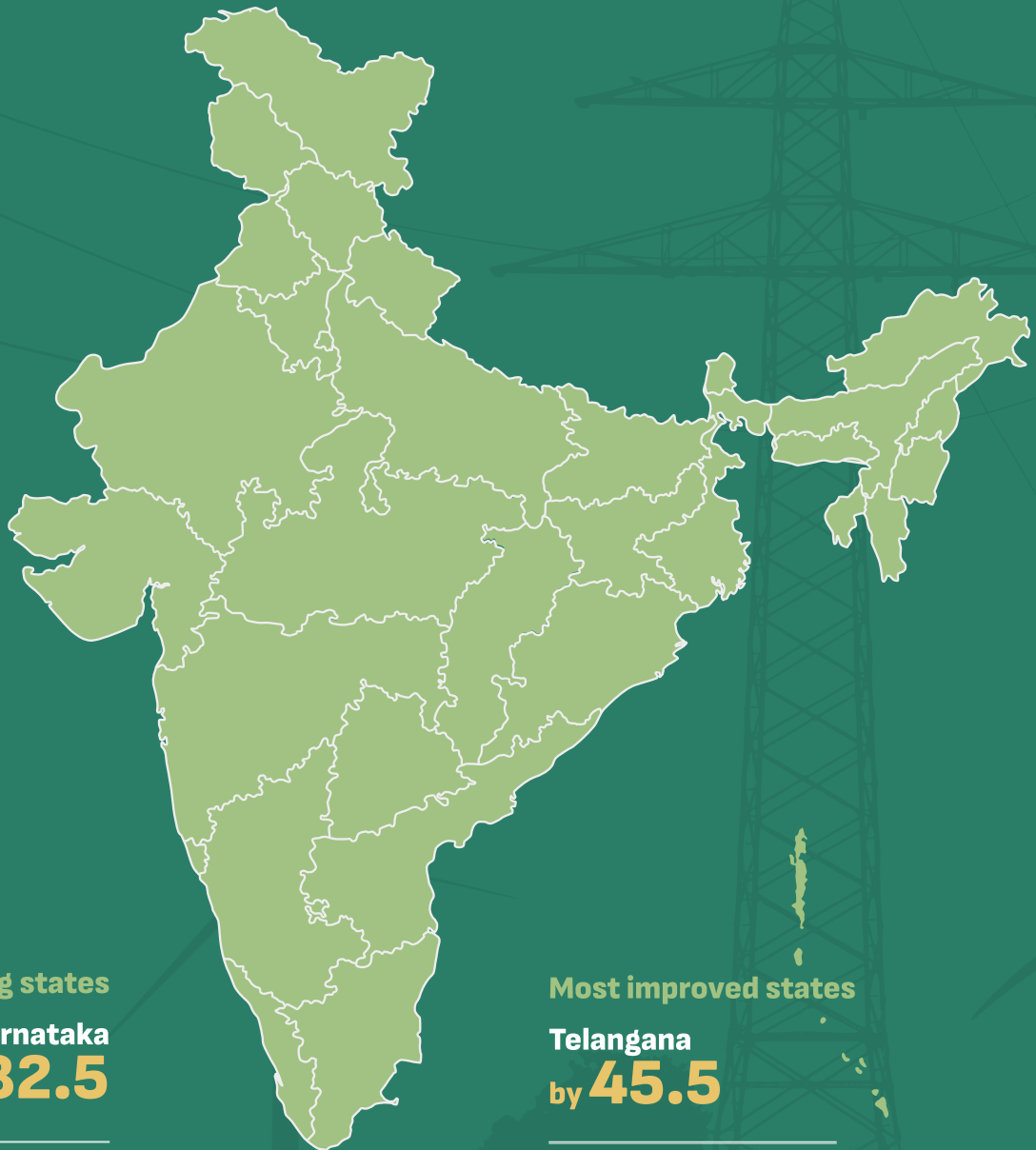
states
improved
their scores
by more than
15 points

5

'Front
runner'
states

4

'Achiever'
states



Top performing states

Karnataka
82.5

Andhra Pradesh
77.5

Most improved states

Telangana
by **45.5**

Andhra Pradesh
by **27**

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JUICE MISSION

WHY IN NEWS?

- On April 14, 2023, the European Space Agency launched Jupiter Icy Moons Explorer or JUICE Mission from Europe's spaceport French Guiana on an eight-year-long voyage to Jupiter and its moons.

Aim of the Mission

- Planned to reach Jupiter in 2031, the mission aims to carry out a detailed exploration of the Solar System's largest planet and its three large ocean-bearing moons — Ganymede, Callisto and Europa, which potentially have habitable environments.

Why Jupiter and its Moons?

- Scientists believe that these three moons of Jupiter possess icy crusts and contain oceans of liquid water underneath, making them potentially habitable.
- JUICE will help probe these water bodies by creating detailed maps of the moons' surfaces and enable the scientists, for the first time, to look beneath them.
- Although the mission will examine all three moons (Ganymede, Callisto and Europa), the main focus will be on Ganymede. JUICE will move into Ganymede's orbit and use its suite of ten sophisticated instruments to measure how Ganymede rotates, its gravity, shape and interior structure, its magnetic field, its composition, and to penetrate its icy crust using radar down to a depth of about nine km.
- JUICE will also create a comprehensive picture of Jupiter by trying to understand its origin, history and evolution.
- Juice will also analyse the chemistry, structure, dynamics, weather, and climate of Jupiter and its ever-changing atmosphere.

Previous Missions to Jupiter

- Only two other spacecraft have ever examined Jupiter: the Galileo probe, and Juno.
- The Galileo mission orbited Jupiter from 1995 to 2003 and led to geological discoveries on all four large moons (Io, Europa, Ganymede and Callisto).
- The Juno mission is still orbiting Jupiter today and has provided scientists with an unprecedented view into Jupiter's composition, structure and space environment.

About Io, Europa, Ganymede and Callisto

- Io, Europa, Ganymede and Callisto are, like Earth's Moon, relatively large, spherical complex worlds.
- Io, the closest of the four to its host planet, is abuzz with geological activity, including lava lakes, volcanic eruptions and tectonically formed mountains. But it is not home to large amounts of water. Europa, Ganymede and Callisto, in contrast, have icy landscapes.
- Europa's surface is a frozen wonderland with a young but complex history, possibly including icy analogues of plate tectonics and volcanoes.
- Ganymede, the largest moon in the entire solar system, is bigger than Mercury and has its own magnetic field generated internally from a liquid metal core.
- Callisto appears somewhat inert compared to the others, but serves as a valuable time capsule of an ancient past that is no longer accessible on the youthful surfaces of Europa and Io.
- Most exciting is Europa, Ganymede and Callisto all almost certainly possess underground oceans of liquid water.

About Underground Oceans

- Europa, Ganymede and Callisto have chilly surfaces that are hundreds of degrees below zero. At these temperatures, ice behaves like solid rock.
- The best evidence of these oceans comes from Jupiter's magnetic field. Saltwater is electrically conductive. So as these moons travel through Jupiter's magnetic field, they generate a secondary, smaller magnetic field that signals to researchers the presence of an underground ocean.
- Using this technique, planetary scientists have been able to show that the three moons contain underground oceans. And these oceans are not small — Europa's ocean alone might have more than double the water of all of Earth's oceans combined.



Expected Outcomes

- JUICE is not equipped to detect life. It is capable of finding out whether there could be places around Jupiter, inside the icy moons, where the necessary conditions, such as water, essential biological elements, energy, and stability, to sustain life are present.
- According to ESA, the three moons of Jupiter, Ganymede, Callisto and Europa, are believed to hold immense amounts of water, which could be around six times more than the volume of water in Earth's oceans, there is a possibility that life is present on them.
- Life on these moons could be in the form of microbes. More advanced species might also be present, like the ones we detect in deep-sea trenches and at hydrothermal vents on Earth, such as various kinds of coral, worms, mussels, shrimp and fish.
- Scientists also believe that JUICE would help them provide much-needed insight into how such a planetary system and its constituents are formed and evolved over time, as well as revealing how possibly habitable environments can arise in Jupiter-like systems around other stars.

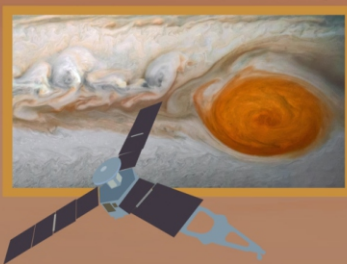
DID YOU KNOW?

- Ganymede is the largest moon in the Solar System — larger than Pluto and Mercury — and the only one to generate its own magnetic field.
- Three of Jupiter's moons — Europa, Ganymede and Callisto — are home to large, underground oceans of liquid water that could support life.
- By the time Juice reaches Jupiter, another spacecraft, NASA's Europa Clipper, would already be orbiting the planet — scheduled to be launched in October this year, Europa Clipper would arrive at Jupiter in 2030 and aims to study its Europa moon.
- Jupiter is the largest planet in our solar system. As of February 2023, Jupiter has 92 moons.



A TRIO OF MISSIONS: JUNO, JUICE AND EUROPA CLIPPER

Their destination may be the same, but Juno, Juice and Europa Clipper are all unique missions with different goals and instruments. Juno's discoveries are being used to optimise plans for Juice and Europa Clipper.



JUNO

Target: Jupiter

Arrival: 2016

Special skill: a polar orbit that goes very close to Jupiter, allowing deep mapping of its gravity and magnetic fields

Image credit: NASA/JPL-Caltech/SwRI/MSSS
Image processing by Kevin M. Gill, © CC BY

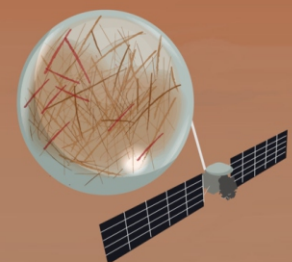


JUICE

Targets: Jupiter, Ganymede, Europa, Callisto

Arrival: 2031

Special skill: observing Jupiter and its icy moons to provide a complete view of habitable conditions in the Jovian system



EUROPA CLIPPER

Target: Europa

Arrival: 2030

Special skill: investigating the potential for life on Europa; helping select a landing site for a future Europa lander

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INDIA-ROMANIA FIRST DEFENCE COOPERATION AGREEMENT

WHY IN NEWS?

- India and Romania have signed the first defence cooperation agreement, aiming to set up and expand military cooperation between both countries.

Key Highlights

- The agreement will enhance collaboration through the exchange of expertise and knowledge on subjects of mutual interest, including the co-development and co-production of military hardware.
- The agreement will promote cooperation in the field of defence between the two countries. Furthermore, this agreement will also open up enormous opportunities in sectors like defence medicine, scientific research, cyber defence, technology and research and development.
- The European Union (EU) Strategy for cooperation in the Indo-Pacific is an opportunity to strengthen EU-India cooperation in the region. Romania is committed to active involvement in the Indo-Pacific within the framework of this strategy.
- The EU-India Strategic Partnership roadmap and commitments from the EU-India Leaders' Meeting in May 2021 provide a good basis to enhance cooperation and promote regional security in the Indo-Pacific.

DID YOU KNOW?

- India, the fifth economy in the world, is one of the largest troop contributors to United Nations peacekeeping missions.
- Romania is a NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) and EU member country.
- Romania is determined to become a member of the International Solar Alliance shortly; positive steps have already been taken.
- India-Romania bilateral ties, formally established in 1948, marked 70 years in 2018.
- Romania capital – Bucharest
- Romania President - Klaus Iohannis



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INDIA'S DIPLOMATIC ROLE IN THE KOREAN WAR

WHY IN NEWS?

- During its G20 Presidency Year 2023, India is recalling its diplomatic role in the Korean War seven decades ago.

About the War

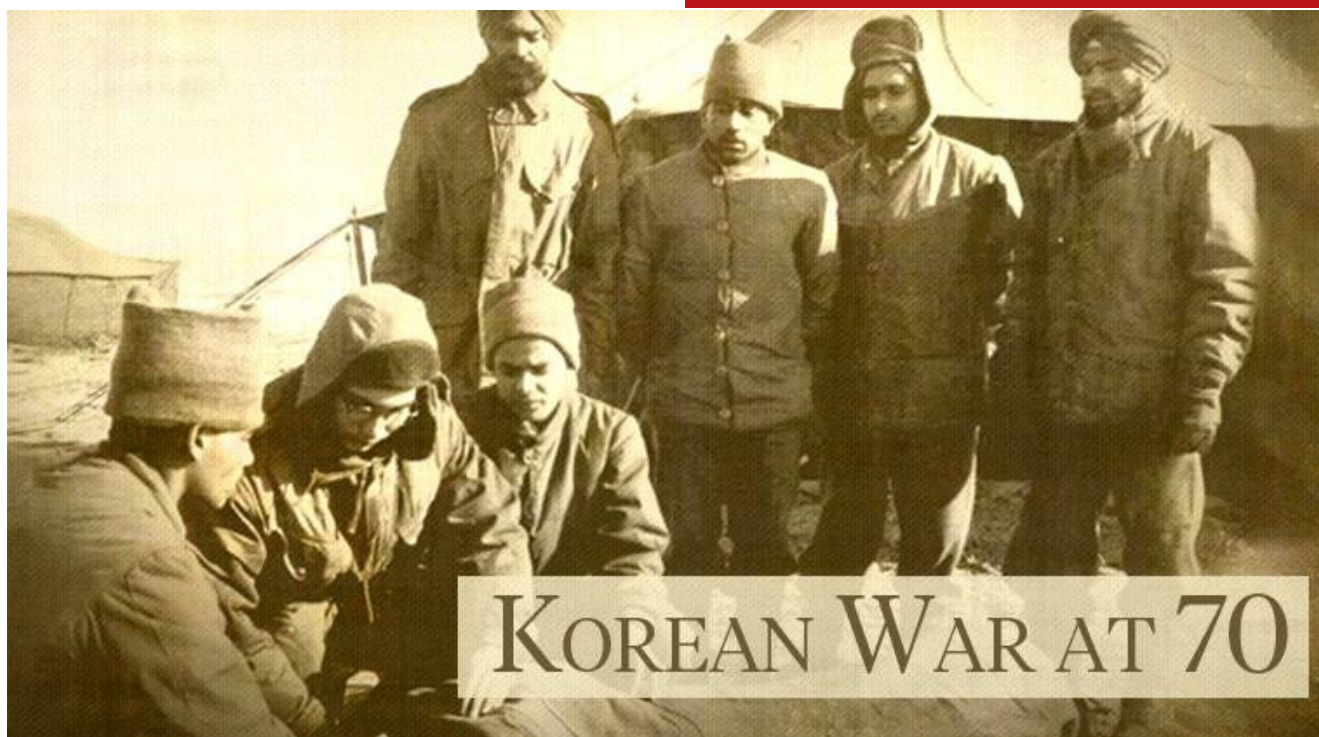
- On 25 June 1950, North Korean forces invaded South Korea. The peninsula had been divided at the end of World War II along the 38th Parallel, with Soviet and US forces occupying the North and South respectively.
- In 1948, after the two Koreas declared themselves separate countries, and held their own elections, the occupying forces departed. However, neither the North nor the South accepted the other and to this day, both claim the entire Korean peninsula and the islands on either side.

India's Effort

- As the 1950 Korean War pitted Cold War opponents against each other, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru made a huge diplomatic push to prevent an escalation into another world war, and for the parties to arrive at a quick ceasefire.
- The efforts were only partially successful. Even so, India is counted among the countries that contributed to bringing the war to a close. New Delhi also discharged an important role in the months after the truce as chair of a committee to repatriate prisoners of war.
- India's efforts then met with limited success — and in its G20 year, any role that Delhi might want to play in the Russia-Ukraine war is likely to be informed by its experience from 70 years ago.

DID YOU KNOW?

- South Korea is a major player in India's Act East Policy under which India aims to promote economic cooperation, cultural ties and develop strategic relationships with countries in the Asia-Pacific.
- India has had diplomatic relations with North Korea for over 47 years, which reflects the legacy of India's commitment to the Non-Alignment Movement.
- The 'Act East Policy' announced in November, 2014 is the upgrade of the "Look East Policy".
- The Non-Aligned Movement was founded and held its first conference (the Belgrade Conference) in 1961 under the leadership of Josip Broz Tito of Yugoslavia, Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt, Jawaharlal Nehru of India, Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, and Sukarno of Indonesia.



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FOREIGN STUDENTS AS BRAND AMBASSADORS OF INDIA'S HERITAGE

WHY IN NEWS?

- The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) is planning to expand the country's artistic and creative footprint globally by tapping into the experiences of foreign students studying in India.

Key Points

- The ICCR will start E-3, or Exit Engagement Evenings with foreign students, beginning three or four months before they finish their courses in various Central and State universities, institutes like the National Institutes of Technology, and agricultural colleges of the country.
- The ICCR has held discussions with the Ministries of Tourism, Textiles, and AYUSH as well as various educational institutions on the schedule, which will begin from the academic year 2023-24.
- The engagements would also include visits to places of national importance. At present, the ICCR has zeroed in on the Khadi Commission, the Indian Tourism Development Corporation and the Department of AYUSH to hold these evenings with the students.

Why?

- This "soft diplomacy" is meant to spread the India story when students go back to their home countries.
- As per the ICCR, more than 48,000 foreign students will be brand ambassadors of India's heritage, tourist destinations, textiles, yoga, ayurveda, and craft.



भारतीय सांस्कृतिक सम्बंध परिषद
Indian Council For Cultural Relations



Other Efforts of ICCR

- In April 2022, ICCR launched a website called the India Alumni Portal as a platform to connect with foreign students around the world who have studied in India. The portal is envisaged to be a single platform for all past and present foreign scholars to register, interact, and maintain their Indian links.
- The portal is aimed at helping past students reconnect with each other. ICCR itself offers scholarships to over 6,000 students every year, and there are now 30,000+ ICCR alumni.
- Indian missions abroad are now mandated to form alumni associations in the countries they are present in, and organise activities inviting members to meet visiting Indian dignitaries.

DID YOU KNOW?

- According to the latest, All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) brought out by the Ministry of Education, the number of foreign students enrolled in Indian higher education institutions was 48,035 in 2020-21, a marginal dip from 49,348 in 2019-20.
- People from more than 160 countries visit India to study.
- Nepal, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, the U.S., the UAE, Bhutan, Sudan, Nigeria, Tanzania, and Yemen were the countries from which majority of the students came.
- The ICCR is an autonomous organisation of the Government of India under the Ministry of External Affairs.
- It was established in 1950 with the aim of promoting Indian culture and its values abroad and fostering cultural exchanges between India and other countries.

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PATTANAM SITE IN KERALA

WHY IN NEWS?

- The Pattanam excavations confirmed the existence of a thriving urban centre from the 5th century B.C. till the 5th century A.D., with its peak phase from 100 B.C. to A.D. 300.

Key Points

- The technological, metallurgical, literary, and artistic advances of this phase bear witness to rigorous cultural and commercial exchanges.
- The Pattanam excavations have unearthed over 45 lakh sherds (ceramic fragments); these include approximately 1.4 lakh belonging to the littoral regions of the Mediterranean, the River Nile, the Red Sea, the western and eastern Indian Oceans, and the South China Sea.
- Recent findings include the seal of a sphinx, native to the ancient Greek city of Thebes.
- There is no evidence that institutionalised religion existed in ancient Pattanam. No idols of gods and goddesses or grandiose places of worship were found.
- There was certainly no indication of the graded inequality embodied within the caste system that has characterised contemporary Kerala and most of the rest of India.
- The burials were of a “secondary” nature, where the dead were cremated first and the osseous remains ceremoniously buried later.
- Large terracotta urn burials and a wide variety of stone monuments abound in the Periyar delta and basin regions, showing the ceremonious nature of the later burial practices. No artefact found indicates any religious customs.
- Material evidence from the site strengthens the belief that Pattanam society may have lived in harmony with nature, like several indigenous societies did, and not viewed people as separate from nature.

About Pattanam

- Pattanam in central Kerala lies as the only multicultural archaeological site on the southwestern coast of the Indian subcontinent.
- Often referred to as the 'first emporium' of the Indian Ocean, Muziris — of which Pattanam is part — is an example of the Greco-Roman classical age coming into direct contact with an ancient South Indian civilisation.



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CENTENARY YEAR OF THE VAIKOM SATYAGRAHA - 2024

WHY IN NEWS?

- As the year 2024 marks the centenary of the Vaikom Satyagraha, Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan and Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin jointly inaugurated the centenary celebrations at Vaikom on 11 April 2023.

About Vaikom Satyagraha

- Precisely a century ago, Kerala's Vaikom town, which was then in the princely state of Travancore, became the epicentre of a historic non-violent movement against untouchability and caste discrimination.
- Back then, the people of the oppressed classes, especially the Ezhavas, were prohibited from walking on the four roads surrounding the Vaikom Mahadeva temple.
- Vaikom Satyagraha that lasted for 604 days (20 months) from March 30, 1924 to November 23, 1925 marked the dawn of temple entry movements across India.
- Madhavan, K.P. Kesava Menon, who was the then secretary of Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee and Congress leader and educationist K. Kelappan, are considered the pioneers of the Vaikom Satyagraha movement.
- Periyar's wife Nagammai and sister Kannammal, played an unprecedented role in the fight.
- Mahatma Gandhi, who arrived at Vaikom in March 1925, held a series of discussions with leaders of various caste groups and met Maharani Regent at her Varkala camp. Although the Queen expressed her willingness to opening all the roads, but, as the head of State, she said she had to heed to public opinion, mentioned Pazha. Athiyaman.
- The Vaikom Satyagraha brought open the rift between Gandhi and Periyar. While Gandhi saw it as Hindu reformist movement, Periyar called it a fight against caste-based atrocities. Periyar was not happy with the partial success attained, and he eventually quit Congress months later.

DID YOU KNOW?

- In 2020, the Kerala government inaugurated Vaikom Satyagraha Memorial Museum and Mahatma Gandhi statue at Vaikom.
- Starting this year on September 17, on Periyar's birth anniversary, the Tamil Nadu government will be presenting the Vaikom Award in memory of Periyar to remarkable change-makers who fight for the welfare of the oppressed in States outside Tamil Nadu.
- K. Kelappan is also known as Kerala Gandhi.



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TRADITION OF SUCCESSION BY REINCARNATION IN TIBETAN BUDDHISM

WHY IN NEWS?

- The Dalai Lama has named a US-born Mongolian boy as the tenth Khalkha Jetsun Dhampa, the head of the Janang tradition of Tibetan Buddhism and the Buddhist spiritual head of Mongolia.
- The latest announcement has brought attention back to the larger question of the 14th Dalai Lama's own reincarnation.

Background

- The ninth Khalkha Jetsun Dhampa died in 2012 at Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. Since then, there had been a tense wait for his reincarnation.
- In 2016, during the Dalai Lama's latest visit to Mongolia, he announced that the Jetsun Dhampa had been born in the country and the search was on to find him.

About Tibetan Buddhism

- Buddhism became the predominant religion in Tibet by the 9th century AD.
- It evolved from the Mahayana and Vajrayana traditions of Buddhism, incorporating many tantric and shamanic practices of both post-Gupta period Buddhism in India as well as the Bon religion which was spread across Tibet before Buddhism's arrival.
- Tibetan Buddhism has four major schools: Nyingma (8th century), Kagyu (11th century), Sakya (1073), and Gelug (1409).
- The Janang school (12th century) is one of the smaller schools that grew as an offshoot of the Sakya school.
- Since 1640, the Gelug school has been the predominant school of Tibetan Buddhism. The Dalai Lama belongs to this school.

DID YOU KNOW?

- The Dalai Lama is the foremost spiritual and temporal authority of Tibet.
- Dalai Lama is a title given by the Tibetan people for the foremost spiritual leader of the Gelug or "Yellow Hat" school of Tibetan Buddhism, the newest of the classical schools of Tibetan Buddhism.
- The 14th and current Dalai Lama is Tenzin Gyatso. He is living in exile in Dharamshala, India.
- The Dalai Lamas are believed to be manifestations of 'Avalokiteshvara' or Chenrezig, the Bodhisattva of Compassion and the patron saint of Tibet.



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**CONTEMPORARY EVENTS OF SIGNIFICANCE
FROM INDIA AND THE WORLD**

QUICK FACTS



1. To motivate farmers to adopt **chemical-free farming** and enhance the reach of **natural farming**, the Government has formulated **National Mission on Natural Farming (NMNF)** as a separate and independent scheme from 2023-24 by upscaling the **Bhartiya Prakritik Krishi Paddati (BPKP)**. Natural farming is a chemical-free farming method based on locally available resources.
2. The **National Dairy Research Institute, Karnal** has produced the **country's first cloned female calf of the desi breed Gir** which can produce more than 15 litres of milk per day. Indigenous cattle breeds such as Gir, Sahiwal, Tharparkar, and Red-Sindhi, play a pivotal role in milk production and the growth of the Indian dairy industry.
3. The Punjab government has issued a "**hue and cry notice**" against the fugitive pro-Khalistan preacher Amritpal Singh. The 'hue and cry' rule simply meant that if a suspect or a criminal was running down the street in front of some bystanders, then each of them had to yell to help the police identify and catch them. In policing terms, the phrase traces its **origin to 1285** when **England's King Edward I** signed the "Statute of Winchester" to deal with security and peacekeeping on a local level by revamping the existing police system.
4. On **2nd April 2023**, the Indian Space Research Organisation (**ISRO**) and its partners successfully demonstrated a precise landing experiment for a **Reusable Launch Vehicle (RLV)** at the Aeronautical Test Range (ATR), Chitradurga, Karnataka. The Reusable Launch Vehicle Autonomous Landing Mission (RLV LEX) test was the second of five tests that are a part of ISRO's efforts to develop RLVs, or space planes/shuttles, which can travel to low earth orbits to deliver payloads and return to earth for use again.
5. A '**seed bank**', which collects and stores seeds of species of plants that are **native to the Aravallis**, is gradually taking shape at a nursery at the **Asola Bhatti Wildlife Sanctuary**, after a few years of efforts at collecting seeds from across the city and other states. The project, which started in 2015, is being implemented jointly by the Forest Department and the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS). India has established its own seed storage facility at Chang La in Ladakh, Jammu and Kashmir.
6. **India** has initiated an **anti-dumping probe** into imports of the poisonous chemical sodium cyanide from **China, the European Union, Japan and Korea** following a complaint by domestic players. Sodium cyanide is used for the extraction of gold and silver from their respective ores, manufacturing insecticides, dyes, pigments, and bulk drugs.
7. Prime Minister Narendra Modi participated in **Combined Commanders' Conference in Bhopal**, Madhya Pradesh. The three-day conference of Military Commanders had the **theme 'Ready, Resurgent, Relevant'**.
8. The **WHO** recently published the '**Global Report on Sodium Intake Reduction**,' which sheds light on the progress of its 194 member states towards reducing population sodium intake **by 30% by 2025**. An average Indian's sodium consumption is more than double the physiological need and dramatically exceeds the World Health Organization's recommended daily intake. WHO recommends a daily intake **of less than 5 grams of salt for adults**.
9. **National Maritime Day** is celebrated on **5 April** in India to commemorate the maiden voyage of the first Indian commercial vessel, the SS Loyalty, from Mumbai to London in 1919. This year's theme was "**Propelling Indian Maritime to Net Zero**."
10. Recently, the **Geographical Indication (GI)** Registry has awarded the registration to **Ladakh's wood carving, Banarasi Paan, Banarasi Langda Mango, Ramnagar's Bhanta (White Big Round Brinjal), Adamchini Rice (District Chandauli), Mathura's 'Peda', Agra's 'Petha' and Kanpur's 'Sattu' & 'Bukunu'**.
11. The Government of India has decided to invite bids for **50 GW of renewable energy capacity** annually for the next five years (2023-24 to 2027-28). These annual bids of ISTS (Inter-State Transmission) connected renewable energy capacity will also include setting up of wind power capacity of at least 10 GW per annum. It is in accordance with Prime Minister's announcement at COP26, of achieving 500 GW of installed electricity capacity from non-fossil fuel (Renewable Energy + Nuclear) **sources by 2030**. India currently has a total renewable energy capacity of 168.96 GW (as on 28th February 2023) with about 82 GW at various stages of implementation and about 41 GW under tendering stage. This includes 64.38 GW of Solar Power, 51.79 GW of Hydro Power, 42.02 GW of Wind Power and 10.77 GW of BioPower.



12. In a written reply to a question in the Rajya Sabha, Union Minister of State Science and Technology Dr Jitendra Singh said that so far **1,60,000 farmers have received benefits** during the last one-year (January 2022-December 2022) under the **Biotech-KISAN scheme**. The Biotech-KISAN scheme has been launched to counsel and to provide solutions to the farmers on the problems related to water, soil, seeds and marketing.
13. As many as **269 districts in 27 States have achieved a 100% target set for Phase II** by March 2023 in the **Rice Fortification Programme** under the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS). Fortification is the process of enhancing the nutritional value of staple foods like rice, by adding important vitamins and minerals, including iron, iodine, zinc, and Vitamin A & D.
14. The **Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways** recently launched the App Version of the National Logistics Portal (Marine) - '**Sagar-Setu**'. The mobile app will ensure data mobility such that approvals & monitoring shall be at the fingertips of port & ministry officials and stakeholders as well. National Logistics Portal (Marine) is a national maritime single window platform encompassing complete end-to-end logistics solutions to help exporters, importers, and service providers exchange documents seamlessly and transact business.
15. According to the **Department of Biotechnology (DBT)**, the **Genome India Project**, a Centre-backed initiative to sequence 10,000 Indian human genomes and create a database, will be **completed by the end of the year**.
16. Andaman and Nicobar Command (ANC) conducted a large-scale **Joint Military Exercise 'Ex KAVACH'** involving the assets of the Army, Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard. The exercise, which began on February 23, 2023, concluded on April 07, 2023. 'Exercise KAVACH' demonstrated the capabilities and preparedness of the Armed Forces to safeguard India's maritime interests and ensure the security of the **Andaman and Nicobar Islands**.
17. **President Droupadi Murmu** recently flew a **sortie in a Sukhoi-30 MKI** fighter aircraft from Tezpur Air Force Station in Assam. **Murmu is the third President and the second woman President to fly such a sortie**. Former President Pratibha Patil had flown in the Su-30 MKI jet from Pune Air Force base in 2009. Before that, A P J Abdul Kalam had flown in Su-30 when he was the country's President. Tezpur Air Force Station, which hosted the sortie, is a frontline IAF airbase facing China — it has fighter squadrons, a helicopter unit and radar and missile squadrons.
18. **Bengaluru's Ulsoor Bazaar post office** is set to become home to **India's first post office built using 3D printing technology**. The 1,100 sqft building is expected to cost 30-40 per cent less than conventional buildings because of the technological intervention. The post office is being built at a cost of Rs 23 lakh.
19. NSE Indices Ltd, an arm of the National Stock Exchange (NSE), launched the country's first-ever Real Estate Investment Trusts and Infrastructure Investment Trusts index — **Nifty REITs and InvITs Index**. The index aims to track the performance of REITs and InvITs that are publicly listed and traded on the NSE.
20. The **Cumbum grapes** recently earned the **Geographical Indication tag or GI tag**. The Cumbum valley located at the Western Ghats in **Tamil Nadu** is known as the '**Grapes city of South India**' and cultivates the Panneer Thrathchai. This variety which is also known as Muscat Hamburg constitutes almost 85% of the grape-growing areas in Tamil Nadu.
21. Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the **5th International Conference on Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (ICDRI) 2023** via video message. **CDRI was launched in 2019**, at the United Nations Climate Action Summit in New York. **It is India's second major global initiative** after the **International Solar Alliance (ISA)**. The CDRI Secretariat is based in New Delhi, India.
22. The Government approved the **Indian Space Policy 2023** which seeks to institutionalise the private sector participation in the space sector, with ISRO focusing on research and development of advanced space technologies. The policy will allow the private sector to take part in end-to-end space activities that include building satellites, rockets and launch vehicles, data collection and dissemination.
23. In a written reply to a question in the Rajya Sabha, Union Minister of State Science and Technology Dr Jitendra Singh said that so far **1,60,000 farmers have received benefits** during the last one-year (January 2022-December 2022) under the **Biotech-KISAN scheme**. The Biotech-KISAN scheme has been launched to counsel and to provide solutions to the farmers on the problems related to water, soil, seeds and marketing.

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INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

QUICK FACTS



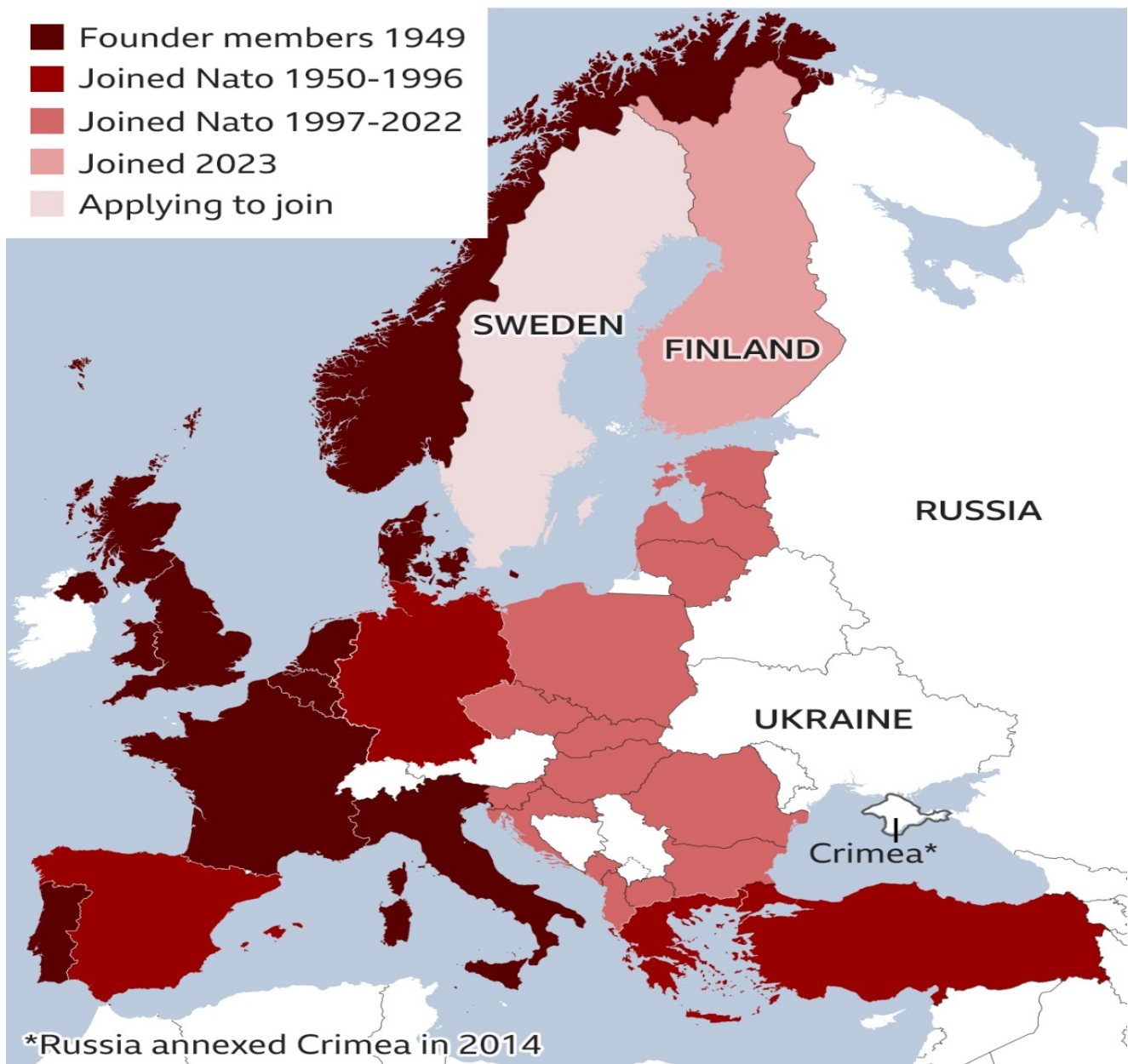
1. Using **gravitational lensing**, astronomers have discovered one of the **biggest black holes ever found**. Gravitational lensing is the name given to the phenomenon where a foreground object—a galaxy or a black hole—bends the light from a more distant object behind it, magnifying it in the process. The ultramassive black hole is over 30 billion times the mass of our Sun. Black holes are regions of space-time where gravity is so strong that nothing, not even light, can escape from them.
2. Astronomers **recorded the brightest gamma-ray radiation** (named GRB 221009A) of all time, which could overturn a long-standing theory of GRB jets. GRBs are the most powerful explosions in the universe. They generate more energy in mere seconds than Earth's sun will produce over its entire 10-billion-year lifetime.
3. The **2nd edition of the joint military exercise "the Africa-India Field Training Exercise (AFINDEX-2023)"** concluded recently in Maharashtra. The strategically significant India-Africa Army Chiefs Conclave was also hosted in Pune. The multinational military drill was aimed at promoting the idea of Africa-India Militaries for Regional Unity (AMRUT) and focused on incorporating the current dynamics of UN Peacekeeping Forces (UNPKF) through practical and comprehensive discussions and tactical exercises.
4. **India and Malaysia have agreed to settle trade in the Indian rupees**. On 14 March, the Government informed the Rajya Sabha that, banks from **eighteen countries** were allowed by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to open Special Rupee Vostro Accounts (SRVAs) to settle payments in Indian rupees.
5. According to a report by The Independent, **Tokyo-based ALE is set to launch the satellite in 2025** and it hopes to give people all over the world "the opportunity to view the world's first live human-made meteor shower." Meteor showers are beautiful celestial events, peppering the sky with shooting stars. The project is called **Sky Canvas** and it is designed to collect atmospheric data in the mesosphere, which is the third layer of the atmosphere. The Mesosphere is too low to be observed by satellites and too high for weather balloons or aircraft.
6. **World Autism Awareness Day** is observed on **April 2** to raise awareness about Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and promote the livelihood of people having autism. **The theme for World Autism Awareness Day 2023 is "Transforming the narrative: Contributions at home, at work, in the arts and in policymaking."** The first World Autism Awareness Day was observed in 2008.
7. **France** has invited **Prime Minister of India** to visit Paris as a guest at the annual **Bastille Day parade in Paris**. The French military parade known as the Bastille Day military parade, also referred as the 14 July military parade, has been performed on the morning of July 14 in Paris. This day is marked as France's National Day.
8. **The Air Forces of India and the U.S. conducted the Cope India exercise** from April 10 to 21 at the Kalaikunda airbase in West Bengal, with Japan as an observer. Cope India started out as a fighter-training drill in 2004.
9. **Saudi Arabia and other OPEC+ oil producers** announced further oil output cuts of around 1.16 million barrels per day. OPEC was established in 1960 by founding members Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Venezuela. **OPEC now has 13 member states. OPEC+ countries include 13 OPEC member countries and Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Brunei, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Mexico, Oman, Russia, South Sudan and Sudan.**
10. **Finland** has become the **31st member of NATO** (North Atlantic Treaty Organization), doubling the length of member states' borders with Russia. NATO is a political and military alliance consisting of 31 member countries. It was **formed in 1949** to promote mutual defence and collective security among its members.
11. **Indian Navy and Sri Lanka Navy** conducted **10th edition of the bilateral maritime exercise SLINEX-23 in Colombo**. The exercise was conducted in two phases - the Harbour Phase and the Sea Phase. The other military exercise between India and Sri Lanka is 'Mitra Shakti'.
12. **India** has been **elected by the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)** as a member of the UN Statistical Commission, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, and the Programme Coordinating Board of the Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) for a four-year period (beginning on 1 January 2024).





13. The **Italian Data Protection Authority** temporarily banned **ChatGPT** due to concerns over the illegal collection of personal data and the lack of guardrails to prevent minors from using the chatbot.
14. **World Health Day** is observed on **April 7** every year. World Health Day marks the birthday of the World Health Organisation. WHO was **founded in 1948**, and on World Health Day 2023, WHO observed its 75th anniversary. The theme for World Health Day **2023** is "**Health For All.**"
15. While studying the atoms of heavy elements, physicists in **Japan discovered** a previously unknown **isotope of uranium**, with atomic number 92 and mass number 241, i.e. **uranium-241**.
16. **SpaceX** launched **NASA's Tropospheric Emissions: Monitoring of Pollution (TEMPO)** air quality monitoring instrument. TEMPO is on its way to a geostationary orbit where it will monitor major air pollutants across North America. TEMPO will take important scientific observations, including that of ozone, nitrogen oxide, sulphur dioxide and formaldehyde levels.

Nato's European expansion since 1949



Source: Nato

BBC

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**ARTS & CULTURE AND HISTORICAL EVENTS
OF CONTINUING SIGNIFICANCE**

QUICK FACTS



1. The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York has announced that it will return **15 Indian sculptures** that were found to have been trafficked. The artefacts include **West Bengal's Yakshi Terracotta and Madhya Pradesh's sandstone Celestial Dancer** (Apsara), valued at over \$1 million. They range in date from the 1st century BCE to the 11th century CE and consist of stone, **terracotta, copper, a ceramic pot from Chandraketugarh, the God of Love, from the second half of the 8th century CE, a stone bust of Kamadeva, and a Svetambara enthroned Jina.**
2. **Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar** recently greeted the people of the nation on the occasion of **Mahavir Jayanti**. It marks the birth anniversary of Lord Mahavira, who was the **last Tirthankara of Jainism**. Lord Mahavira was born on the 13th day of the bright half of the moon in the month of Chaitra. As per the Gregorian calendar, it is usually celebrated in the month of March or April.
3. Prime Minister of India paid tributes to **Babu Jagjivan Ram Ji** on his birth anniversary. Born in Bihar in 1908, Ram was a freedom fighter and served as a minister in governments led by former prime ministers Jawaharlal Nehru and India Gandhi. He quit Congress to protest against the Emergency and served as a deputy prime minister in the Janata Party government.
4. The world-famous **Basohli painting from Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua district** has obtained the Geographical Indication (GI) Tag. **This is the first time that the Jammu region got a GI tag for handicrafts.**
5. In a bid to harness the unique cultural heritage of rural India, the Government has identified and documented distinctive features of more than **one lakh villages across the country**. The entire exercise has been carried out under the '**Mera Gaon Meri Dharohar**' (My Village My Heritage) programme of the **National Mission for Cultural Mapping (NMCM)**.
6. Prime Minister Narendra Modi participated in the **125th Anniversary celebrations of Sri Ramakrishna Math at Vivekananda House in Chennai**, Tamil Nadu. Started in Chennai in **1897** by Swami Ramakrishnananda, the Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission are spiritual organisations engaged in various forms of humanitarian and social service activities.
7. **Calyampudi Radhakrishna Rao**, a prominent Indian-American mathematician and statistician, will receive the **2023 International Prize in Statistics**, the equivalent to the Nobel Prize in the field, for his monumental work 75 years ago that revolutionised statistical thinking. **The first International Prize in Statistics was awarded in 2017 to David R Cox** for the development of the Cox proportional hazards model, which allows researchers to investigate patient survival rates in complex studies.
8. **Guru Tegh Bahadur Parkash Purab 2023** is celebrated to mark the birth of the **Ninth Guru of Sikhism**, Guru Tegh Bahadur and to remember his life and teachings. This year it is being observed on April 11, 2023. Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji is the ninth Sikh Guru, was born on 01 April 1621 in Amritsar, to the **sixth Guru Hargobind Ji** and Mata Nanaki Ji.
9. The Prime Minister has paid tribute to the great social reformer, philosopher, and writer **Mahatma Jyotirao Phule on his birth anniversary**. Mahatma Jyotirao Govindrao Phule was born on April 11, 1827. He wrote '**Tritiya Ratna**,' '**Gulamgiri**,' and '**Shetkarayacha Aasud**.'
10. **Madhya Pradesh's traditional Gond painting** has been awarded the Geographical Indication (GI) tag. The paintings, which are created by the **Gond tribe**, depict nature, animals, and religious themes, and showcase their way of life. The Dindori district is the main source of Gond painting, and it has expanded to other places in the area.
11. The **Jallianwala Bagh Massacre Day**, observed every year on **13 April**, is observed as a reminder of one of the darkest days in the struggle for Indian Independence. Jallianwala Bagh Massacre Day 2023 **marks 104 years since the** tragic incident that is seen as a turning point in Indian history.
12. India's Northeastern state **Assam** created history and marked its name in the Guinness Book of World Records **by performing the traditional Bihu dance at a single venue**. The performers attempted to create world records in two categories - the largest Bihu dance performance and the largest performance by folk musicians.
13. The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) is planning to create a pool of experts in languages spoken in countries like **Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Uzbekistan and Indonesia** to facilitate better people-to-people exchanges. The special project called 'The Language Friendship Bridge', will train five to 10 people in the official languages of each of these countries. As of now, the ICCR has zeroed in on **10 languages: Kazakh, Uzbek, Bhutanese, Ghoti (spoken in Tibet), Burmese, Khmer (spoken in Cambodia), Thai, Sinhalese and Bahasa (spoken in both Indonesia and Malaysia).**



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TEST ZONE

PASSAGE - 1

The Indian Railways turns 170 on April 16. Forever India's favourite carrier, the railways are as much at a crossroads today as the rest of India — reconciling the trials and tribulations of the past with a future reckoning. Perhaps the most striking symbols of Indian Railways in the current zeitgeist are the talismanic Vande Bharat Express trains. Much of this modernisation contributes to passenger comfort, but sometimes it also leads to a spectacularly short-sighted loss of beauty and cultural heritage.

In cities across India, colonial-era station buildings, many of which are a syncretic mix of local culture and European styles — such as Kacheguda in Hyderabad and Egmore in Chennai — are set for modernisation that will almost certainly produce drab, mall-like monoliths. Kacheguda station in Hyderabad is one among the 1,275 railway stations slated for redevelopment under the Amrit Bharat scheme. On April 8, the Prime Minister laid the foundation stone for the redevelopment of Secunderabad Railway Station at the cost of about ₹ 720 crore. Around the country, 1,275 railway stations are slated for redevelopment under the Amrit Bharat scheme.

[Extracted, with edits and revisions, from: "Indian Railways turns 170 | Swanky Vande Bharat trains aside, who does the Railways really cater to?", by Kartik T, The Hindu]

1. In which year did the first passenger train start in India?

A 1853

C 1857

B 1894

D 1900

2. Indian Railways is determined to reduce its carbon footprint to achieve 'Net-zero Carbon Emission' by –

A 2045

C 2030

B 2035

D 2050

3. The world's highest railway bridge on the River Chenab is being built in which state?

A Arunachal Pradesh

C Uttarakhand

B Sikkim

D Jammu and Kashmir

4. India's first cable-stayed rail bridge is being built in Jammu and Kashmir. This bridge is being built on which river?

A Satluj

C Chenab

B Anji

D Indus

5. What is the name of India's first semi-high-speed regional rail services?

A RAPID FAST

B NCRX

C VANDE BHARAT

D RAPIDX

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

Answers

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PASSAGE - 2

The European Space Agency (ESA) is all set to launch the Jupiter Icy Moons Explorer (JUICE) mission on Friday (April 14) from its spaceport in French Guiana on an Ariane 5 launcher. Planned to reach Jupiter in 2031, the Mission aims to carry out a detailed exploration of the planet and its icy moons, which potentially have habitable environments.

JUICE has been constructed by an industrial consortium led by Airbus Defence and Space — a division of the Airbus group responsible for the development and manufacturing of the corporation's defence and space products — based on the parameters provided by the ESA.

Only two other spacecraft have ever examined Jupiter: the Galileo probe, which orbited the gas giant between 1995 and 2003, and [1], which has been circling the planet since 2016. Notably, by the time Juice reaches Jupiter, another spacecraft, NASA's Europa Clipper, would already be orbiting the planet — scheduled to be launched in October this year, Europa Clipper would arrive at Jupiter in 2030 and aims to study its Europa moon.

According to ESA's website, the Juice “will make detailed observations of the giant gas planet and its three large ocean-bearing moons — Ganymede, Callisto and Europa”, by using remote sensing, geophysical and in situ instruments.

[Extracted, with edits and revisions, from: “European Space Agency set to launch Jupiter Icy Moons Explorer (Juice): What is the mission about”, by Alind Chauhan, The Indian Express]

1. Which is the largest planet in our Solar System?

A Venus

C Jupiter

B Earth

D Saturn

2. Which Mission's name has been replaced with '[1]' in the passage above?

A Juno

C Curiosity

B ARTEMIS

D Parker Solar

3. Which is the largest moon in the entire Solar System?

A Io

C Callisto

B Europa

D Ganymede

4. Which planet does not have any moons?

A Jupiter

C Saturn

B Venus

D Mars

5. _____ is India's first privately-developed rocket.

A Vikram-S

C Dhawan

B Rohini

D Aryabhata

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

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PASSAGE - 3

The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) is aiming at expanding the country's artistic and creative footprint globally, by tapping into the experiences of foreign students studying here. It hopes that the more than 48,000 foreign students here will be brand ambassadors of India's heritage, tourist destinations, textiles, yoga, ayurveda, and craft.

Beginning this year, the ICCR will start E-3, or Exit Engagement Evenings with foreign students, beginning three or four months before they finish their courses in various Central and State universities, institutes like the National Institutes of Technology, and agricultural colleges of the country. The engagements would also include visits to places of national importance. This "soft diplomacy" is meant to spread the India story when students go back to their home countries.

At present, the ICCR has zeroed in on the Khadi Commission, the Indian Tourism Development Corporation and the Department of AYUSH to hold these evenings with the students. According to the latest All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) brought out by the Ministry of Education, the number of foreign students enrolled in Indian higher education institutions was 48,035 in 2020-21, a marginal dip from 49,348 in 2019-20. People from more than 160 countries visit India to study. Nepal, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, the U.S., the UAE, Bhutan, Sudan, Nigeria, Tanzania, and Yemen were the countries from which majority of the students came.

[Extracted, with edits and revisions, from: "How ICCR plans to build its brand ambassador programme amongst foreign students in India", by Sreeparna Chakrabarty, The Hindu]

1. The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), an autonomous body under the administrative control of –

A Ministry of Education

B Ministry of External Affairs

C Ministry of Culture

D Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

2. The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) was founded in 1950 by _____, independent India's first Education Minister.

A Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan

B Jawahar Lal Nehru

C K. L. Shrimali

D Maulana Abul Kalam Azad

3. The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) has envisaged a special project to create a pool of experts in 10 languages from some neighbouring countries and others who share a cultural heritage with India. What is the name of this project?

A The Language Friendship Bridge

B Bhashini Project

C The Language Friendship Bhasha

D Friendship Language Model

4. The Ministry of AYUSH celebrates Ayurveda Day every year on Dhanvantari Jayanti (Dhanteras). The first Ayurveda Day was celebrated in which year?

A 2014

B 2015

C 2016

D 2017

5. In which year the government of India changed the name of the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) to the Ministry of Education?

A 2019

B 2020

C 2021

D 2022

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

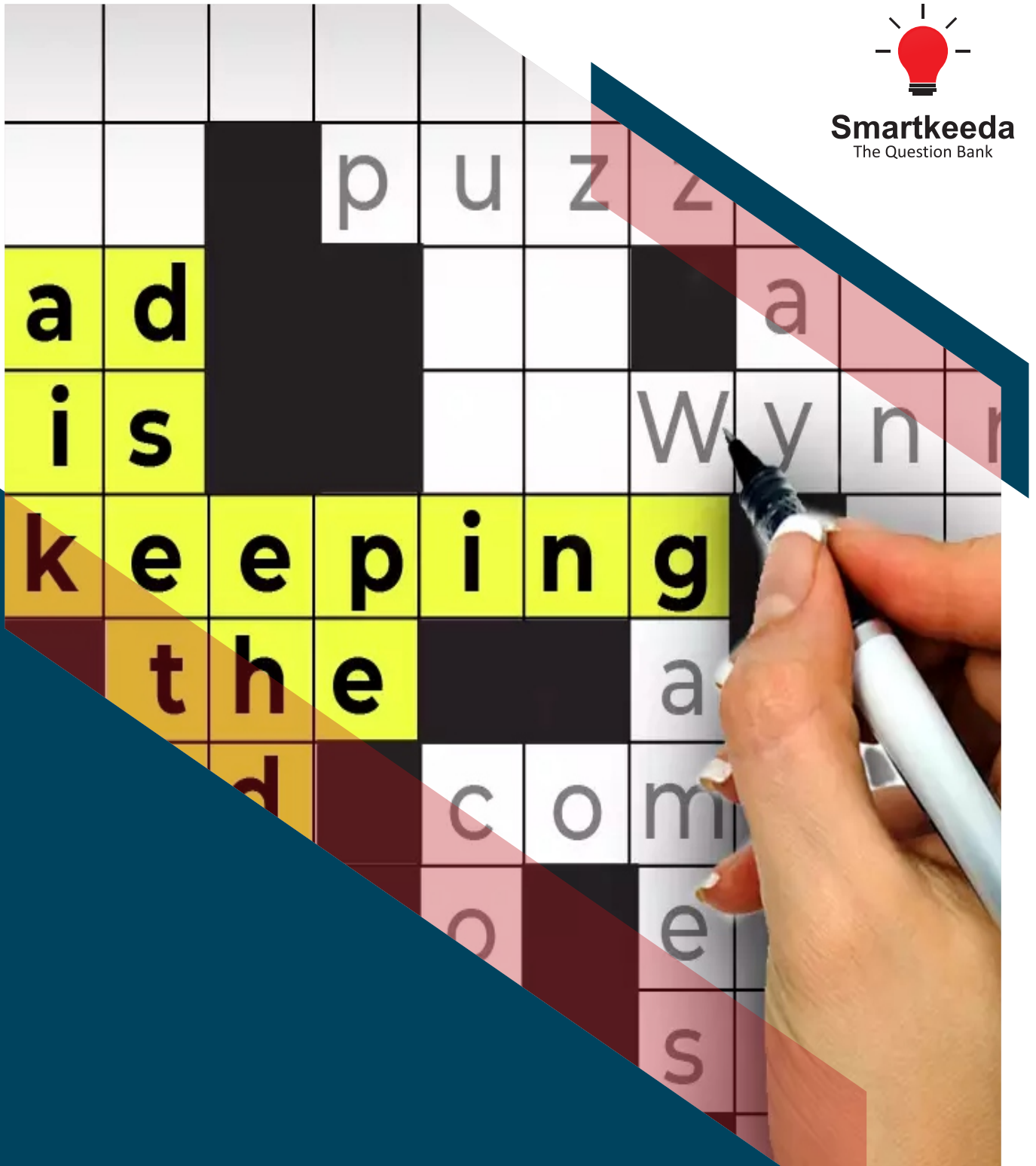
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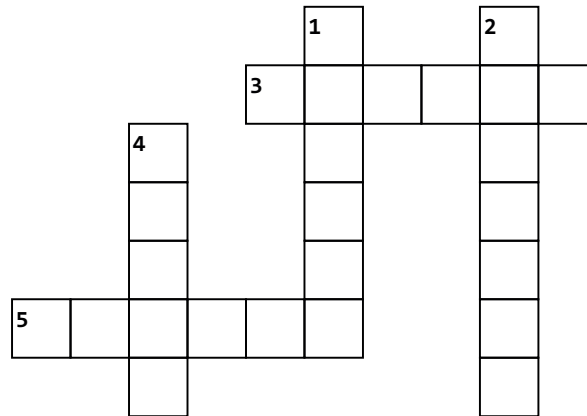
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CROSSWORD CORNER



CROSSWORD - 1



Across

3. World Health Day
5. National Maritime Day

Down

1. World Autism Awareness Day
2. 31st member of NATO
4. NASA's air quality monitoring instrument

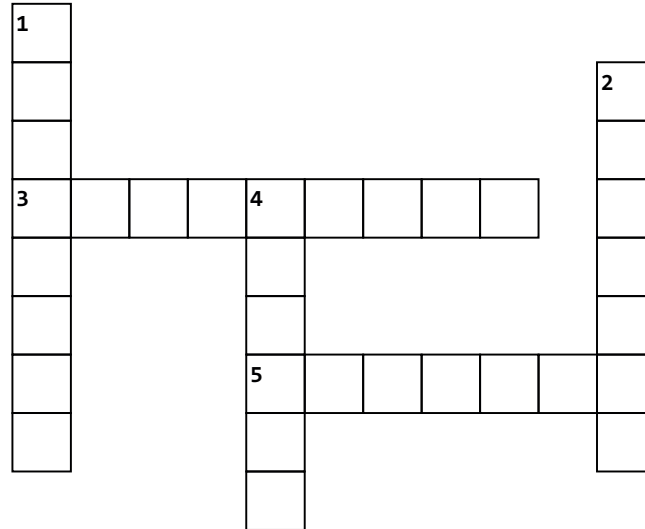
Answers

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|---------|---|---------|---|
| 5 April | 5 | 7 April | 3 |
| TEMPO | 4 | Finland | 2 |
| | | 2 April | 1 |





CROSSWORD - 2



Across

- 3.** Rice from Chandauli District of Uttar Pradesh got GI Tag
5. Painting from Jammu and Kashmir got GI Tag

Down

- 1.** Last Tirthankara of Jainism
2. Jallianwala Bagh Massacre Day
4. Grapes from Tamil Nadu got GI Tag

Answers

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| 3 | Adamchini |
| 2 | 13 April |
| 1 | Mahavira |
| 5 | Basohli |
| 4 | Cumbum |



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