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2nd MARCH 2024 DESCRIPTIVE

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Paytm Payments Bank fined Rs 5.49 crore for violating money laundering norms

- The **Financial Intelligence Unit-India (FIU-IND)** has levied a penalty of **₹5.49 crore** on **Paytm Payments Bank Ltd** for violations of the Prevention of **Money Laundering Act**, after finding substantial proof of money generated from illegal activity being routed through accounts held by entities with the bank.
- The FIU-IND had initiated a review of Paytm Payments Bank Limited's operations after receiving specific information from law enforcement agencies about a few entities and their network of businesses engaging in a number of illegal acts, including organising and facilitating online gambling.
- **RBI** on January 31, directed Patym Payments Bank to halt acceptance of deposits and top-ups in customer accounts, wallets, FASTags, and other instruments by February 29 (later extended to March 15). Allegations includes breaching of KYC norms and other regulatory standards.

About FIU-India

- Financial Intelligence Unit—India (FIU-IND) is an organisation under the **Department of Revenue**, Government of India which collects financial intelligence about offences [1] under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002.
- It was set up in November 2004 and reports directly to the **Economic intelligence Council (EIC)** headed by the Finance Minister. Its headquarters located in **New Delhi**.



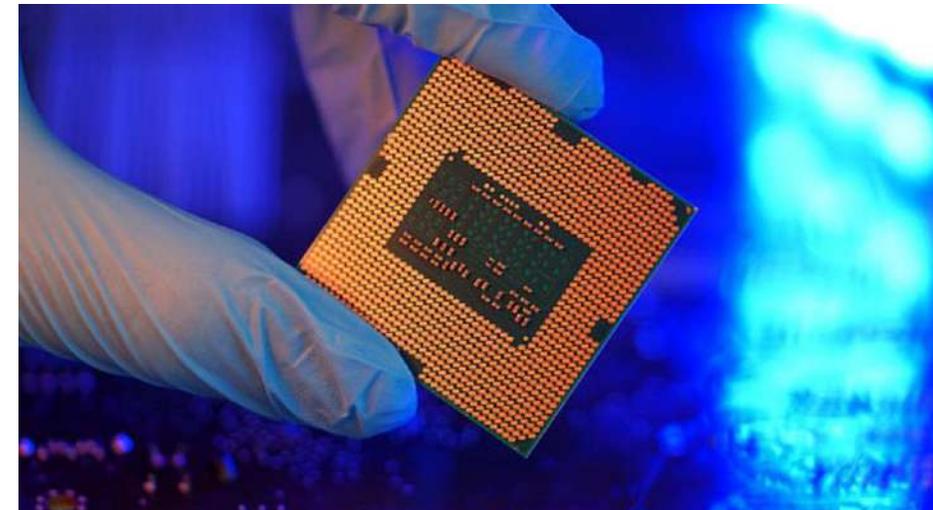
India, Malaysia holding joint naval exercise 'Samudra Laksamana'

- The shores of **Visakhapatnam** witness the dynamic spectacle of maritime cooperation as **Exercise Samudra Laksamana** unfolds its third edition from February 28 to March 2, 2024.
- The exercise aims to strengthen bonds and enhance interoperability between the **Indian Navy** and **Royal Malaysian Navy**. This collaborative effort involves the participation of Indian **Naval Ship Kiltan** and the Royal **Malaysian Ship KD Lekir**, marking the **3rd edition** of the exercise.
- This exercise involves harbour professional interactions followed by the operational phase at sea, the harbour phase involves professional interactions, subject matter expert exchange on topics of mutual interest, sport fixtures, and other interactions.
- In Sea phase, units would be jointly honing skills while conducting various operations at sea.



Government approved setting up three new semiconductor units

- The Union Cabinet has approved setting up of **three semiconductor units** under the 'Development of Semiconductors and Display Manufacturing Ecosystem in India'. The construction work of all three units will start within the next 100 days.
- Of these three semiconductor units, the proposal to set up two semiconductor units in **Gujarat** and one in **Assam** was approved. A total of 2602 crore chips will be manufactured annually from these three fab centers.
- The first among the proposals approved by the Union Cabinet is the plant of **Tata Group** and **Taiwan company Powerchip** to be set up in **Dholera (Gujarat)**. The second proposal is related to its installation in **Morigaon, Assam**. It will be set up by Tata Group company Tata Semiconductor Assembly and Test Private Limited (TSAT) in collaboration with a big automobile company.
- The third plant will be set up by **CG Power in Sanand, Gujarat**. The unit will be set up in partnership with CG Power, Renesas Electronics Corporation, Japan and Stars Microelectronics, Thailand, a semiconductor unit.
- The government will invest a total of Rs 1.26 lakh crore in the above three projects. In this, the government will provide assistance of Rs 59 thousand crore in the form of subsidy.



Chapchar Kut festival celebrated across Mizoram with full traditional fervor

- **Chapchur Kut** – the biggest festival of **Mizoram** was celebrated across the state with full traditional fervor and festivities on March 2nd, 2024. The festival has attracted thousands of people who thronged the Assam Rifles Ground – Lammual – in the heart of **Aizwal city** with full capacity.
- Chapchar Kut is the biggest festival of the Mizos, which is celebrated in March after completion of the most arduous task of Jhum operation (jungle-clearing).
- Chapchar Kut has been celebrated since time immemorial. In the olden days, it was celebrated for days and weeks. But in modern times, the celebration has been shortened to a day or two.
- In recent times, the festival is celebrated on the first Friday of March every year. Chapchar Kut is being celebrated to thank God after completion of their most arduous task of jhum operation - jungle clearing (clearing of the remnants of burning) at the beginning of a year.





Government Approves

Establishment of

**INTERNATIONAL
BIG CAT ALLIANCE**

Cabinet approves the establishment of International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA)

- The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi approved the establishment of **International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA)** with headquarters in India with a one-time budgetary support of **Rs.150 crore** for a period of **five years** from **2023-24** to **2027-28**.
- PM Modi had called for an alliance for the conservation of tigers, other species of the big cat family and its many endangered species. The PM announced this on the occasion of **Global Tiger Day**, 2019 to curb poaching in Asia, highlighting India's role in tiger conservation.
- **About Big Cat Alliance:** The International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) launched by India in April 2023 during the 50th anniversary of **Project Tiger** (launched in April 1st,1973) The Big Cat Alliance will be a multi-country, multi-agency coalition.
- It will bring together 96 big cat countries, with an interest in big cat conservation. Main creatures that come under Big Cat are, there are mainly **7 Big Cats these include Tiger, Lion, Cheetah, Leopard, Snow Leopard, Puma & Jaguar**.
- The Alliance ensures sustainable use of natural resources and mitigates challenges emanating from climate change. By safeguarding big cats and their habitats, the IBCA contributes to natural climate adaptation, water and food security and well-being of thousands of communities reliant on these ecosystems.

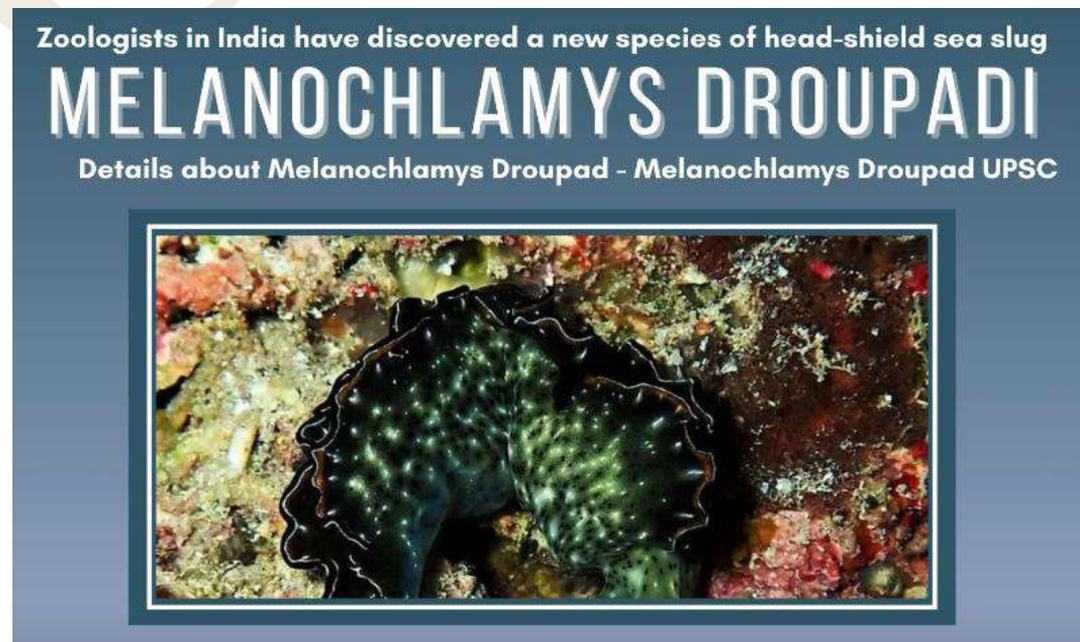
MobiKwik introduces Pocket UPI to facilitate payments without linking bank accounts

- **One MobiKwik Systems Limited (MobiKwik)**, a fintech company, introduced a new feature on its platform, ‘**Pocket UPI**’, that enables users to have an enhanced control over budgeting and finance management.
- Pocket UPI allows users to make UPI payments through MobiKwik Wallet without linking their bank account, thus giving more power in the hands of the users with an additional choice while they make UPI payments.
- Pocket UPI safeguards users from compromised transactions and financial fraud by transferring funds from the MobiKwik Wallet rather than their bank account, thus limiting exposure when making financial transactions.
- **MobiKwik**
- **Founded:** April 2009
- **Founders:** Bipin Preet Singh & Upasana Taku
- **Headquarters:** Gurgaon, Haryana



Zoological survey of India names New marine Species after President Droupadi Murmu

- The **Zoological Survey of India (ZSI)** has named a new marine species of head-shield sea slug after President of India Droupadi Murmu. The new species belonging to the **Melanochlamys genus** was discovered off the coasts of **Digha in West Bengal** and **Udaipur in Odisha**.
- This species named after the president of India Droupadi Murmu, **Melanochlamys Droupadi**, this previously unknown head-shield sea slug is distinctive to these regions and has not been found elsewhere in the world.
- *Melanochlamys droupadi* is a small invertebrate, measuring up to 7 mm in length, with a brownish-black coloration. Its unique feature is the presence of a ruby red spot at the hind end. The species is hermaphroditic (Possessing both male and female reproductive organs, structures and tissue) and is typically found crawling on the intertidal zone of sandy beaches.
- **Zoological Survey of India (ZSI)**
- **Founded:** 1 July 1916
- **Indian Director:** Dr Dhriti Banarjee
- **Headquarters:** Kolkata, West Bengal.



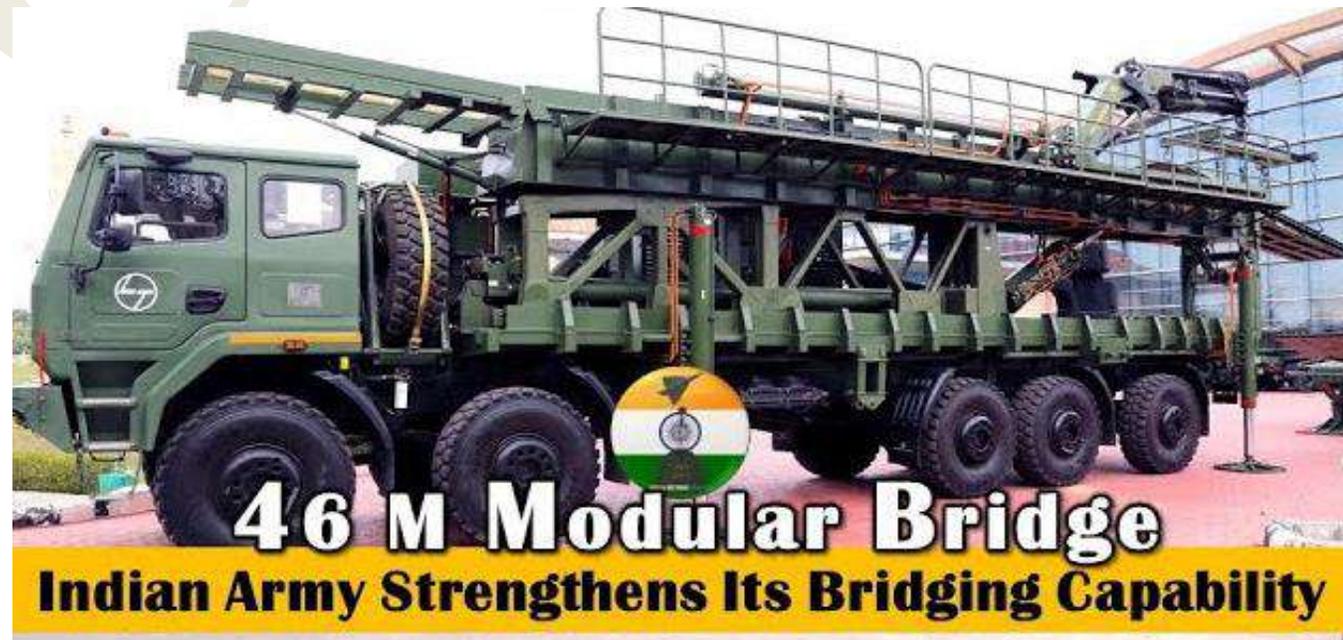
World Seagrass Day 2024

- **‘World Seagrass Day’** is celebrated every year on **1 March**. This day is celebrated to raise awareness about seagrass and its important functions in the marine ecosystem.
- Every year a certain theme is set to celebrate World Seagrass Day. The theme of World Seagrass Day for the year 2024 has been set as **“Healthy Seagrass, Healthy Planet”**.
- **History of World Seagrass Day:**
- On 23rd May 2022, the **United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)** declared 1 March as world Seagrass Day after a resolution was passed by **Sri Lanka** to emphasize the conservation of seagrass in the marine environment. It is celebrated annually by UNGA.
- In this way the **first World Seagrass Day was organised in 2023**. Seagrasses evolved about 100 millions ago when most plants were also found under water. This day is celebrated to raise awareness about seagrass and its important functions in the marine ecosystem.



Indian Army Enhances Bridging Capability with 46-meter Modular Bridge Induction

- The Indian Army has bolstered its bridging capability with the induction of the **46-meter Modular Bridge**.
- Designed and developed by **Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO)**, the bridging system was formally handed over in a ceremony at the Manekshaw Centre, New Delhi.
- The event was graced by Army Chief General **Manoj Pande**.
- According to the Defence Ministry, **a total of 41 sets** will be inducted in the armed forces over the **next four years**.
- The bridge will enable the army to overcome obstacles such as canals and ditches with ease.
- The modular bridges will replace the manually launched Medium Girder Bridges that are currently being used in the Indian Army.
- **About DRDO:**
- **Headquarters:** DRDO Bhavan, New Delhi
- **Formed:** 1 January, 1958
- **Chairman:** Sameer V. Kamat



Mission Utkarsh – Initiative for Anaemia Control among adolescent girls using Ayurveda interventions

- **Ministry of Ayush** and **Ministry of Women & Child Development** have signed a MoU for the nutritional improvement in adolescent girls through Ayurveda Interventions.
- It will be a Joint Public Health Initiative for **Anaemia Control** among adolescent girls using Ayurveda interventions in the five districts under **Mission Utkarsh**.
- Under Mission Utkarsh, 15 central ministries or departments will work to elevate districts at the bottom, to state and national averages.
- In the first phase, the focus may be on improving the anaemic status of adolescent girls (14-18 years) in **five aspirational districts** of five states namely **Assam (Dhubri), Chhattisgarh (Bastar), Jharkhand (Paschimi Singhbhum), Maharashtra (Gadchiroli), and Rajasthan (Dhaulpur)**.
- The objective is to combat anaemia and work towards achieving an **"Anaemia Mukta Bharat"** (Anaemia Free India).
- Anaemia is a medical condition characterised by a deficiency of red blood cells or haemoglobin in the blood, leading to reduced oxygen-carrying capacity



LVPEI founder Dr Gullapalli N Rao honoured with ‘World EyeCons21’ award

- **Dr Gullapalli N Rao**, founder of the **LV Prasad Eye Institute**, was honoured along with 23 other most influential ophthalmologists around the world with the “**World EyeCons21**” award at the 39th Asia Pacific Academy of Ophthalmology (APAO) meeting in Bali, Indonesia.
- He was ranked among the top 10 in this group for his exceptional contributions to shaping the world of eye care in the 21st century.
- This was the inaugural award initiated by the **Asia Pacific Journal of Ophthalmology (APJO)**.
- Dr Rao is the first and only Indian to be selected for this recognition.
- He was the former Chair of the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB) in which role he led the Global VISION 2020: The Right to Sight along with the World Health Organization (WHO), and the former President of the Academia Ophthalmologica Internationalis (AOI), a group of the 80 most eminent academicians in ophthalmology.



Breast surgeon Dr Raghu Ram honour with Telugu Association of London award

- **Dr Raghu Ram Pillarisetti**, founding director of **KIMS-Ushalakshmi Centre** for breast diseases, has been conferred with lifetime achievement award by the **Telugu Association of London (TAL)** recently.
- TAL chairman Dr Ramulu Dasoju praised him for his contribution in spreading awareness on breast cancer.
- Despite his relatively young age, Dr Raghuram has become one of the few people to receive the award. He is also the only Indian living outside the UK to be bestowed with this honor.
- During the celebration of Ugadi 2023, organized by the Telugu Association of London (TAL), Dr Raghu Ram Pillarisetti was awarded the lifetime achievement award.
- TAL is the biggest Telugu Charity Organisation in the UK and represents the Telugu speaking community of around 10,000 people in and around London.



IPS Officer Daljit Singh Chaudhary Named NSG's New Director General

- **Daljit Singh Chaudhary**, a 1990 batch IPS officer, has been appointed as the Director General (DG) of the **National Security Guard (NSG)**, marking a significant development in India's security apparatus.
- Chaudhary, currently serving as the **DG of Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB)**, will now shoulder the additional responsibility of leading the NSG, commonly referred to as the **"black cats"**.
- This move signifies a significant development in India's security apparatus, enhancing Chaudhary's role in shaping and overseeing critical aspects of national defense.



DRDO completes flight tests of Very Short-Range Air Defense System

- **DRDO** conducted two successful flight tests of **Very Short-Range Air Defence System (VSHORADS)** missile on 28th & 29th Feb 2024 from a ground based portable launcher off the coast of **Odisha from Integrated Test Range, Chandipur**.
- These tests were carried out against high speed unmanned aerial targets under different interception scenarios. During all the test flights, th targets were intercepted and destroyed by the missiles.
- **VSHORADS** is a **Man Portable Air Defence System (MANPAD)** designed and developed indigenously by **Research Centre Imarat (RCI)** in collaboration with other DRDO laboratories and Indian Industry Partners.
- VSHORADAS missile incorporates many novel technologies including miniaturized Reaction Control System (RCS) and integrated avionics which have been successfully proven during the tests.
- The missile is propelled by a dual thrust solid motor and meant for neutralizing low altitude aerial threats at short ranges.
- The design of the missile including launcher has been highly optimized to ensure easy portability. The flight test was witnessed by officials of the Indian Army, senior Scientists from various DRDO laboratories and Industry Partners.



Russia launches Iran's imaging satellite 'Pars 1' into space

- **Russia** launched **Pars 1**, an **Iranian** imaging satellite, into space.
- This satellite has the capability of sending high-resolution images of surface locations from its orbit 500 km above Earth.
- The rocket also carried a Russian weather satellite and 17 Russian small satellites.
- Iranian Minister of Information and Communications Technology Issa Zarepour said that the launch of the Pars 1 satellite from Russia was in line with the development of space and international interactions with various countries.
- The Pars 1 carries a **15-meter camera**, enabling it to send high-resolution images of surface locations from its orbit.



Former Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney dies at 84

- Former **Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney**, who led his country from 1984 to 1993, has died at the age of 84.
- The conservative leader, the 18th prime minister in Canada's history, passed away "peacefully, surrounded by family," as posted by his family.
- Mulroney led Canada through the closing days of the Cold War and forged a free trade agreement with the US.
- Born in a blue-collar paper mill town in north-eastern Quebec, Mulroney began his career as a lawyer and business executive before taking over as the leader of the **Progressive Conservative Party** and becoming prime minister.

