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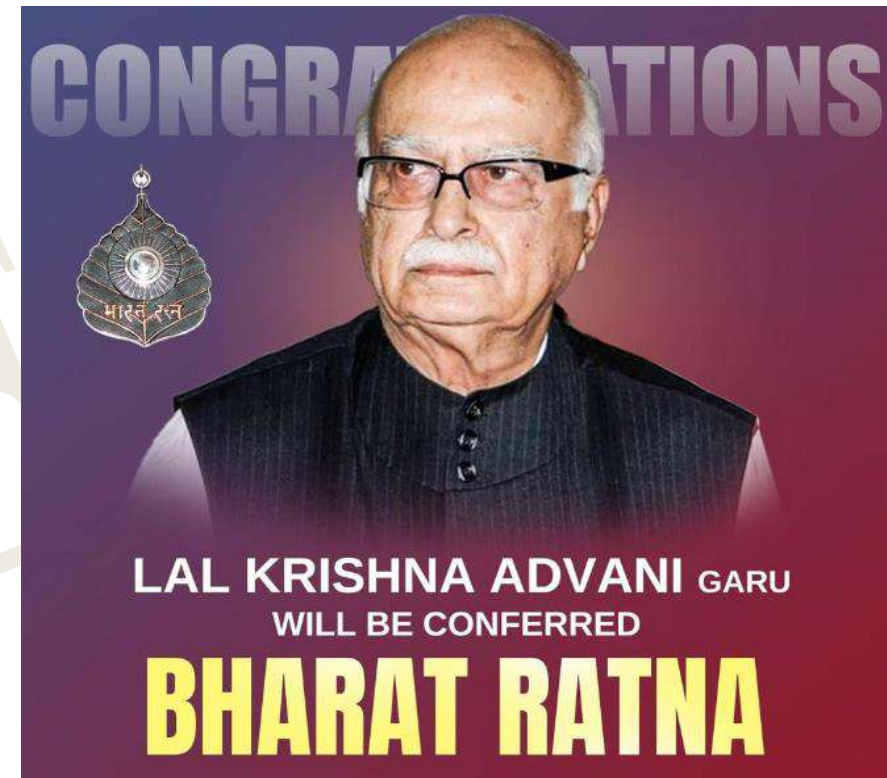
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LK Advani To Be Honoured With Bharat Ratna

- BJP veteran Lal Krishna Advani will be honoured with **Bharat Ratna**, the **highest civilian award in India**.
- Born in **Karachi**, LK Advani **migrated to India** after the Partition. He settled down in Bombay. He had joined the RSS in 1941 at the age of fourteen.
- In 1951, he became a member of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh, which was founded by BJP icon Syama Prasad Mookerjee. The Jana Sangh was the political precursor to the BJP.
- **He is one of the founding members of the BJP.** He served as the president of the party three times.
- Advani became the member of the Rajya Sabha for the first time in 1970. He served four RS terms till 1989.
- He first became the **Minister for Information and Broadcasting** and leader of the house in Rajya Sabha in 1977, following the Janata Party's victory in the general elections.
- In **1989**, he became a **Lok Sabha member for the first time**.
- When the Atal Bihari Vajpayee formed a government in 1999, Advani served as the **Minister of Home Affairs** and the **Deputy Prime Minister**.
- In **2015**, LK Advani was conferred with **the Padma Vibhushan**, India's second highest civilian honour.



Sonu Sood Honored with 'Champions of Change Award' For Humanitarian Contribution

- Bollywood actor and philanthropist Sonu Sood has received the prestigious 'Champions of Change' award in recognition of his outstanding humanitarian efforts.
- Renowned for his selfless endeavors, Sood has garnered widespread acclaim for his unwavering commitment to societal welfare, which has earned him numerous accolades.
- Through his charitable organization, 'The Sood Foundation', the actor has helped the underprivileged in terms of education, helped the poor promote their enterprises, and he has also begun work on his dream project, an old age residence.
- His dedication to uplifting communities in times of crisis has been praised globally and has emphasized the impact of individual self-sacrifice on a broader scale.
- Champions of Change Award is a highly prestigious Award organized at International, National & State level (in India) by **Interactive Forum on Indian Economy (IFIE)**, a Govt. of India recognized not-for-profit company.
- The award recognises individuals fostering Gandhian values, community service, and social development.
- The awards are organised annually and comprises of a **Gold Medals & certificates**.



IEA Report - Electricity 2024



- According to the latest **International Energy Agency (IEA)** projections in Electricity 2024 Report, India's electricity demand will outpace China's and have the world's fastest growth rate by 2026.
- **Dominance of Coal:** Despite a projected decrease to 74% in 2023, coal will continue to dominate India's power sector through 2026, as per the IEA report.
- **Stable Renewable Generation:** Renewable generation remained stable at 21% of electricity generation in 2023, with 21 GW of renewable energy capacity added.

- **Rise in Electricity Demand:** India experienced a 7% increase in electricity demand in 2023, driven by economic growth and higher space cooling needs.
- **Future Projections:** Coal-fired power generation in India is expected to rise by 2.5% annually (2024-2026), while renewable generation will grow by 13% annually.
- **Electricity Capacity Growth:** About 85% of new electricity capacity is expected to come from emerging economies, particularly in South Asia, with China and India leading.
- **Global Nuclear Power Growth:** More than half of the nuclear power plants in the global pipeline (2024-2026) are in China and India, contributing to a forecasted 10% increase in global nuclear generation by 2026.
- **India's Nuclear Expansion:** India aims to triple its nuclear capacity by 2032, with 6 GW under construction, anticipating rapid growth in nuclear power generation (2024-2026).
- **International Energy Agency**
 - It is an autonomous inter-governmental organisation within the OECD framework.
 - Foundation: 1974 to ensure the security of oil supplies.
 - Membership: 31 member countries and 11 association countries.
 - India joined this organization in 2017 as an Associate member.
- **Reports published by IEA:** World Energy Outlook, World Energy Balances, Energy Technology Perspectives, World Energy Statistics and Net Zero by 2050

India Air Force will organize “Vayu Shakti-2024” exercise in Jaisalmer, Rajasthan

- The Indian Air Force will conduct mega exercise Vayu Shakti 2024 at Pokhran Range in Jaisalmer on February 17.
- During the exercise, the Air Force will showcase its air combat and operational capabilities with a focus on interoperability and maneuvers.
- More than 100 aircraft and helicopters will participate in Vayu Shakti, 2024. A number of indigenously manufactured and designed aircraft and helicopters like **Tejas, Prachanda and Dhruv** will participate in the exercise.
- Air-to-air and surface-to-air missile systems including **MICA, R-73, SAMAR** and **Akash** will also demonstrate lethality.
- According to the Indian Air Force, 77 fighter aircraft including Rafale, Jaguar, Mirage 2000, Sukhoi 30 MKI, 41 helicopters including MI 17, Apache and five transport aircraft including C130 and C17 will participate in Vayu Shakti 2024.



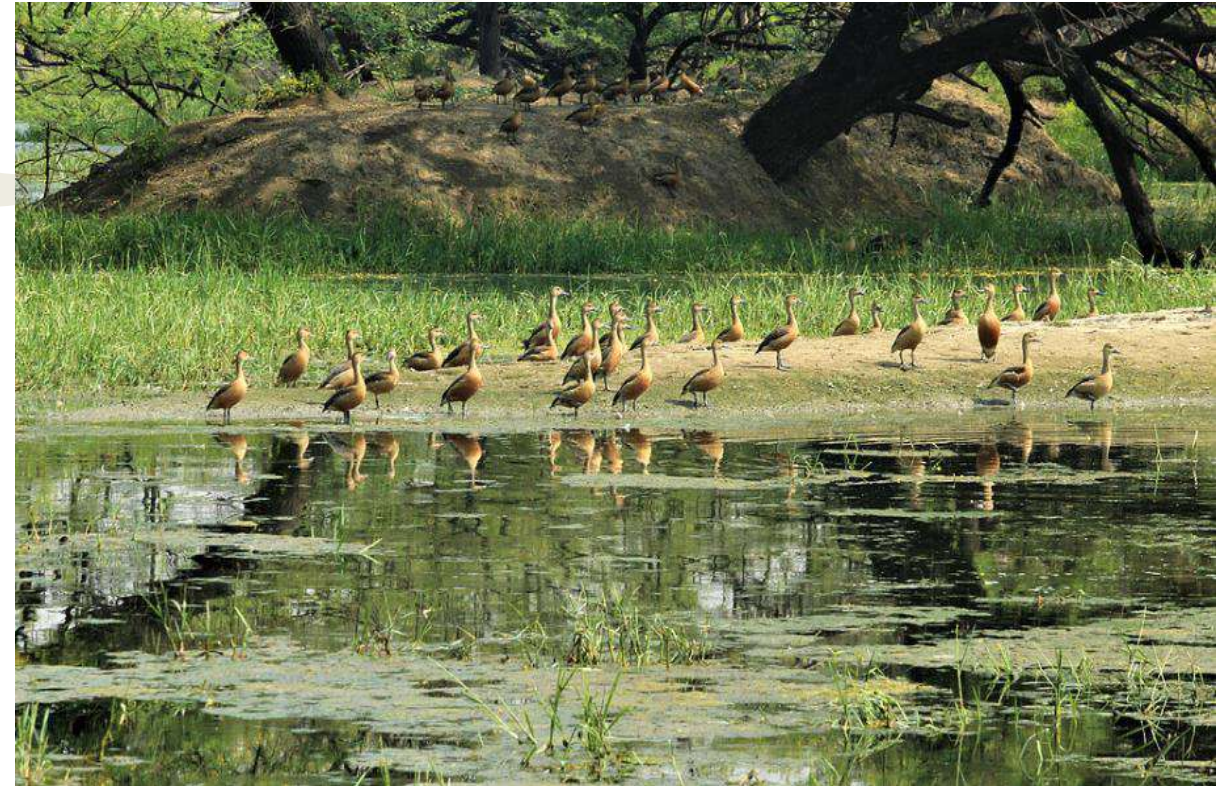
China's Grandmaster Wei Yi wins Wimbledon Chess 'Tata Steel Masters 2024'

- Chinese grandmaster Wei Yi claimed the Tata Steel Chess Tournament title for the first time in the Netherlands, beating Gukesh Dommaraju from India in a sensational tiebreak decider.
- It was the 86th edition of the prestigious chess tournament held at Wijk aan Zee, a village on the Dutch west coast.
- In the final, the 24-year-old grandmaster Wei, 16th in the FIDE world ranking, defeated Gukesh with a draw with the black pieces and a victory with white.
- The results meant four players finished on top on 8.5 points: **Wei, Gukesh, Giri and Abdusattorov**.
- In the semifinals of the tiebreak, Wei beat Abdusattorov, and Gukesh defeated Giri.
- Chinese reigning world champion **Ding Liren**, ranked fourth in the FIDE world ranking, the highest ranked player present in Wijk aan Zee, finished 8th with six points, and China's Ju Wenjun, current and four times women's world champion, finished 10th with 4.5 points.



International Conference of World Wetlands Day-24 was held in Indore, Madhya Pradesh

- On World Wetlands Day (Feb 2nd), an international conference had been organized in Indore.
- Chief Minister **Dr. Mohan Yadav** was present as the chief guest and Union Minister of State for Environment **Ashwini Choubey** a special guest in this program organized at Sirpur Pond, the Ramsar site of Indore.
- **Dr. Masunda Mumba**, Secretary General of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands was also present at this occasion.
- The program was organized jointly by the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Madhya Pradesh State Wetland Authority and Municipal Corporation, Indore on World Wetlands Day.
- The number of ponds in Madhya Pradesh are more than 15 thousand. Many measures are being taken by the state government for the conservation of these ponds. Due to this, the number of Ramsar sites has increased from one to four in just two years.
- Apart from this, Bhopal and Indore are among the three cities of the country that are moving towards getting recognition as **Ramsar Wetland City**.



Abhinav Bindra becomes torch bearer for 2024 Paris Olympics

- India's first individual gold medallist at the Olympic Games, Abhinav Bindra has been selected as a torch bearer for the upcoming 2024 Paris Olympic Games to be held in the French capital from July 26 to August 11.
- Bindra, who won gold in the men's 10m air rifle in the Beijing Olympic Games in 2008, will be part of the Olympic torch relay that will be held from April 16 to July 26.
- Bindra is also a member of the Athletes Commission of the **International Olympic Committee (IOC)**.
- The Paris 2024 Olympic Torch Relay will start its journey in France on 8 May 2024 with the flame arriving in Marseille ahead of 68 days of travel across the French territories.
- The relay will involve 10,000 torch bearers, including 3000 torch bearers who will participate in Team Relays, and will visit 400 cities.



‘Ungalai Thedi, Ungal Oril’ scheme started in Tamil Nadu

- Tamil Nadu government, under the leadership of Chief Minister M.K. Stalin, has taken a significant step towards improving public service delivery and expediting the implementation of various schemes through the launch of the “Ungalai Thedi, Ungal Ooril” (**Bringing Services to Your Doorstep**) scheme.
- This innovative initiative aims to bridge the gap between the government and the public by ensuring that the benefits of various schemes reach the grassroots level.
- “Ungalai Thedi, Ungal Ooril” is designed to enhance the efficiency and transparency of service delivery in the state.
- Under this scheme, Collectors and senior district-level officials are mandated to spend 24 hours in one taluk on the fourth Wednesday of every month.
- This dedicated time will be utilized to review the functioning of various projects, inspect infrastructure, and directly engage with the public to understand their needs and grievances.



Karnataka Government announces launch of 'Digital Detox Initiative' for responsible online gaming environment

- The Karnataka government launched a 'Digital Detox' initiative in collaboration with the **All India Game Developers Forum (AIGDF)**, with special emphasis on gaming and social media.
- The aim is to spread awareness about the ills of spending too much time in the digital world and instead create an environment of responsible gaming.
- The **Digital Detox initiative** is a commitment of building a digitally empowered Karnataka through responsible use of technology.
- This initiative will enable an environment of meaningful and constructive use of technology while minimising its adverse effects.
- The Government of Karnataka will work with AIGDF and the National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences (NIMHANS) to raise awareness about mindful technology.



Tamil Nadu announced 'Kalaignar Sports Kit' scheme

- Tamil Nadu Youth Welfare and Sports Development Minister Udhayanidhi Stalin recently announced a pioneering scheme aimed at nurturing sports talent at the grassroots level.
- Named after the late Kalaignar Karunanidhi, the 'Kalaignar Sports Kit' initiative is set to provide sporting kits to **12,000 village panchayats** across the state.
- The initiative seeks to honor the legacy of former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, by promoting sports development among the youth of Tamil Nadu.
- The inaugural distribution of the sports kits under the Kalaignar Sports Kit scheme is scheduled to take place on February 7th in **Trichy**.
- This event marks the beginning of a concerted effort to equip village-level athletes with the necessary resources to pursue their sporting aspirations.



Kalaignar Sports Kit Scheme

Karnataka clinches Nagesh Trophy, defeated Andhra Pradesh

- Karnataka clinched the Nagesh Trophy, marking a significant milestone in the Men's National T20 Cricket Tournament for the Blind 2023-24.
- The thrilling final, held in Nagpur, saw Karnataka defeating Andhra Pradesh by nine wickets, ending a 20-year wait for a national title.
- This victory not only showcased the exceptional talent of the visually impaired cricketers but also highlighted the spirit of resilience and determination that defines the sport.
- The Nagesh Trophy, named in memory of **Late SP Nagesh**, Founder President of the Cricket Association for the Blind in India and Founder Trustee of Samarthanam Trust for the Disabled, stands as a testament to the indomitable spirit of visually impaired cricketers.
- Organized by the **Cricket Association for the Blind in India (CABI)**, Cricket Association for the Blind in Vidarbha, and Samarthanam Trust for the Disabled, the tournament underscores the importance of inclusivity and empowerment in sports.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi to lay foundation stone of Talabira Thermal Power Project

- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi is slated to lay the foundation stone for NLC India Limited's (NLCIL) 2,400 MegaWatt Supercritical Thermal power plant in Sambalpur, **Odisha**.
- The foundation stone for the Neyveli Lignite Corporation India Limited (NLCIL) Talabira Thermal power project, valued at over **₹27,000 Crore**, will be laid, perfectly aligning with the vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat.
- This state-of-the-art project is positioned to provide reliable, affordable and continuous power, making a significant contribution to the nation's energy security and playing a crucial role in driving economic growth.
- The thermal power plant boasts higher efficiency, reduced carbon footprint and an impressive 10% eco-friendly biomass co-firing initiative.
- This landmark project underlines our commitment to a greener future and stands as a beacon of progress in the nation's pursuit of energy security and environmental stewardship.



Indians can now pay in rupees at Eiffel tower

- India has formally launched the UPI at the iconic Eiffel Tower in Paris, terming it as taking Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of taking UPI global.
- NPCI International Payments Limited (NIPL) and Lyra, a French leader in securing e-commerce and proximity payments, have announced the acceptance of the UPI payment mechanism in France.
- The move comes after India and France signed an agreement in the digital payments sector in July last year under which India's unified payments interface can be used for retail payments in the European nation.
- With this, **France** has become the **first European country to accept UPI**.
- **Eiffel Tower** is the first merchant to offer UPI payments in France, thereafter it will be extended to other merchants in the tourism and retail space.
- **Unified Payments Interface (UPI)** is an Indian instant payment system developed by the **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) in 2016**.

