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‘Nritya Kalanidhi’ award conferred on Vasanthalakshmi

- Classical dancer and choreographer Vasanthalakshmi Narasimhachari was presented with ‘Nritya Kalanidhi’ award at the 17th Dance Festival of The Music Academy.
- ‘Nritya Kalanidhi’ award is presented in the field of dance every year by the Madras Music Academy.
- Vasanthalakshmi and her late husband and dance exponent M.V. Narasimhachari were dance tutors at the Singapore Fine Arts Society in the 1970s. They had trained many Singaporean dancers and created multicultural performances.
- The recognition of Narasimhachari’s work also served to emphasize the cultural connections between Singapore and Tamil Nadu, reminding the audience of the significant role the Tamil community plays in Singapore, where Tamil is recognized as an official language.



India Ratings raises GDP forecast to 6.7%

- India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra) has increased the GDP growth estimate for the current fiscal year to 6.7 per cent from the earlier 6.2 per cent.
- It cited a resilient economy, sustained government capital expenditure and the potential for a new private corporate capital expenditure cycle for the upgrade.
- The agency also anticipates a slowdown in private final consumption expenditure predicting a growth of 5.2% YOY in the current fiscal.
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) also anticipates a sequential slowdown in GDP growth in the final two quarters and projects the overall FY24 GDP to be 7 per cent. The Indian economy had grown by 7.2 per cent in the 2022-23 fiscal year.



Nadia Calvino is appointed as the President of European Investment Bank

- Spain's Finance Minister **Nadia Calviño** will become the next head of the European Investment Bank.
- She replaced **Werner Hoyer** of Germany.
- She became the 8th President of the EU Bank and the **first woman** to lead the institution.
- **European Investment Bank:**
 - It is the European Union's Investment Bank and is owned by 27 member states.
 - Established in the year 1958.
 - Headquarters: Kirchberg, Luxembourg.

PM Modi launched Internet Cable Project in Lakshadweep

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated projects worth **₹1,156 crore** during his visit to the Lakshadweep islands.
- Among these projects is the Kochi-Lakshadweep Islands Submarine Optical Fibre Cable, a Rs.1,072-crore initiative providing **100 Gbps internet connectivity** to the islands.
- The undersea cable link, executed by Japanese firm NEC and laid by BSNL, promises 100 times faster internet for the residents of Lakshadweep, covering a distance of 1,868 kilometers.
- It connects Kavaratti, Agatti, Amini, Kadmat, Chetlet, Kalpeni, Minicoy, Androth, Kiltan, Bangaram, and Bitra.
- This initiative allows telecom companies to offer 4G, 5G, and high-speed broadband for the first time in the archipelago.
- The project is funded through the Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF), which is set to be renamed as Digital Bharat Nidhi after the Telecommunications Act, 2023 is notified.
- **About Lakshadweep:**
- **Formation:** November 1st, 1956
- **Capital:** Karavatti
- **Administrator:** Praful Patel





Czech Prime Minister will be chief guest at Vibrant Gujarat Summit

- The Prime Minister of Czech Republic Petr Fiala is expected to be the Guest of Honour at the 10th Vibrant Gujarat Global Investors Summit to be held from January 10-12 in Gandhinagar.
- It is the **10th edition of Investors Summit and** the theme for this edition is **“Gateway to the Future.”**

- This biennial event serves as a crucial platform for global policymakers, diplomats, business leaders, and investors to foster collaborations, partnerships, and explore investment opportunities.
- The summit will witness the participation of several prominent global leaders, reinforcing India’s evolving diplomatic priorities. **Czech Republic’s Prime Minister Petr Fiala, Timor-Leste’s President José Ramos-Horta, UAE’s President Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, and Mozambique’s President Filipe Nyusi** are expected to attend.

➤ **About Gujarat:**

➤ **Capital:** Gandhi Nagar

➤ **Chief Minister:** Bhupendrabhai Patel

➤ **Governor:** Acharya Devvrat

Kerala launched K-SMART app for digital access to local government services

- The Kerala Government launched K-SMART (Kerala Solutions for Managing Administrative Reformation and Transformation), which will bring all services of the three-tier local self-government institutions on a unified digital platform.
- This is the first such initiative in the country that the entire bouquet of services of a department is being made available to the public on a digital platform.
- K-SMART would provide a major relief to expatriates who want to avail various services of the local bodies without visiting the offices.
- Kerala is the first state in the country to declare Internet access a fundamental right.
- **About Kerala:**
- **Capital:** Thiruvananthapuram
- **Chief Minister:** Pinarayi Vijayan
- **Governor:** Arif Muhyammed Khan



Uttar Pradesh ranks first in Inter-Operable Criminal Justice System



- **Chief Minister:** Yogi Adityanath
- **Founded:** 24 January 1950
- **Capital:** Lucknow
- **Governor:** Anandiben Patel

- Uttar Pradesh has consistently ranked first for the third consecutive year in recording the highest entry rate on the Inter-Operable Criminal Justice System (ICJS) platform, conceptualized by the Supreme Court's e-committee and implemented by the Ministry of Home Affairs.
- The ICJS platform facilitates the seamless transfer of data and information among various pillars of the criminal justice system nationwide.
- In these, data related to crimes and criminals is exchanged between courts, police, jails and forensic science laboratories through a single window system.
- The Directorate of Prosecution of Uttar Pradesh has recorded 1,56,22,514 entries on the ICJS platform so far. Madhya Pradesh is in second place with 35,04,828 entries and Bihar is in third place with 16,65,107 entries.

Bank of India launches super special fixed deposit scheme

➤ Bank of India (BoI) has introduced a 175-day tenor fixed deposit at an interest of 7.50 per cent per annum for deposits of ₹2 crore & above to less than Rs.50 crore, amid liquidity tightness in the banking system and credit growth outstripping deposit growth.

- This comes in response of the State Bank of India (SBI) and Bank of Baroda (BoB) increasing their deposit rates.
- The “Super Special Fixed Deposit”, which has been introduced with effect from January 1, 2024, is a high-yielding avenue for HNIs (high net worth individuals) and Corporates to deploy their surplus funds for the short term.
- It is for domestic rupee term deposit only for a limited period.
- **Headquarters:** Mumbai, Maharashtra
- **MD & CEO:** Rajneesh Karnatak
- **Tagline:** Relationship Beyond Banking





India will launch GSAT-20 for the first time from SpaceX's Falcon-9 Rocket

- ISRO's commercial arm, 'New Space India Limited' (NSIL), has announced that India will use SpaceX's Falcon 9 Rocket to launch its next-generation heavy communications satellite GSAT-20 (or GSAT-N2).
- This will be India's first mission launched from SpaceX's Falcon 9 rocket. According to NSIL, this Indian mission can be started in the second quarter of 2024. Heavy lift launcher Falcon-9 can perform this flight from Florida. This mission will be accomplished under a launch service contract between NSIL and US-based aerospace company SpaceX.

- Main reason for the use of falcon rocket is: Currently, ISRP's LVM3 rocket can deliver payloads up to 4,000 kg to the geostationary transfer orbit, whereas Falcon-9's capacity can be almost double. The Payload or satellite India wants to send into space under this mission weighs around 4,700 Kg.
- **About GSAT-20:** GSAT-20 is a communication satellite known as CMS-03 or GSAT-N2. The Indian Space Research Organization Satellite Center and Liquid Propulsion System Centre have jointly developed it. The GSAT-20 satellite is funded, owned and operated by New Space India Limited.
- **New Space India Limited (NSIL):** NSIL is the commercial arm of the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO).
- **Establishment:** 2019
- **Headquarters:** Bengaluru
- **About ISRO:**
- **Founder:** Vikram Sarabhai
- **Headquarters:** Bengaluru, Karnataka
- **Founded:** 15th Aug, 1969

WORLD BRAILLE DAY

louis braille



World Braille Day - January 4

- World Braille Day is observed every year on January 4 to honour the birth anniversary of Louis Braille, the inventor of the Braille writing system for blind and visually impaired individuals.
- Despite the advent of new technologies and systems, visually impaired and blind people still face significant challenges in leading an independent life.
- The primary objective of recognising World Braille Day is to promote Braille literacy and raise awareness among people about its importance.
- The theme for World Braille Day 2024, **“Empowering Through Inclusion and Diversity,”**.
- It emphasizes the transformative power of embracing diversity within the visually impaired community and advocates for an inclusive environment that enables everyone, regardless of their abilities, to thrive and contribute meaningfully.

Abu Dhabi's First Temple to be inaugurated by PM Modi on February 14th

- Weeks after consecration of Ram Mandir in Ayodhya, Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to inaugurate another significant temple on February 14th in Abu Dhabi. The BAPS (**Bochasanwasi Shri Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha**) Hindu Mandir marks the first Hindu temple in the UAE.
- It is anticipated to be one of the largest and most exquisite Hindu temples outside of India, as well as the largest in West Asia. During PM Modi's first visit to the UAE in 2015, the country allocated land in Abu Dhabi for the construction of a Hindu temple. This visit held diplomatic importance, making Modi the first Indian Prime Minister in 34 years to visit the strategic Gulf nation.
- BAPS temple design draws inspiration from Vedic architecture and sculptures. Artisans in India many statues and carvings, shipped to Abu Dhabi.
- Bochasanwasi Shri Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha (BAPS), a socio-spiritual Hindu faith rooted in the Vedas, pioneered by Bhagwan Swaminarayan in the late 1700s. Formally established in 1907 by Shastriji Maharaj (1865-1951).

