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- ❖ Indiramma housing scheme will be launched by the Telangana government on March 11
- ❖ The first edition of the Naval Commanders' Conference of 2024 will commence from 5th March

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Maritime Exercise Samudra Lakshman conducted off Visakhapatnam

- In the **third edition** of this exercise, **the Indian Naval Ship Kiltan** and the **Royal Malaysian Ship KD Lakir** participated.
- This involved discussions at a professional level after the phase relating to operational procedures at sea.
- The crews of these two ships held talks related to various procedures at the port, subject to expert exchange on issues of mutual interest, sports events, and other such interactions.
- The objective of such engagement is to enhance the knowledge base, share best practices, and further enhance mutual cooperation on ocean-related perspectives.
- During the sea phase, both contingents honed their skills while jointly conducting various naval operations at sea.
- The aim of the exercise is to strengthen relations and enhance mutual understanding between the Indian and Royal Malaysian Navies.



Third India-Malaysia
Maritime Exercise
SAMUDRA LAKSHMAN
Concludes

NITI Aayog member Dr. V.K Paul launched National Birth Defect Awareness Month 2024

- “Breaking Barriers: Inclusive Support for Children with Birth Defects” is the theme of National Birth Defect Awareness Month 2024.
- The birth defects awareness campaign will be focused on awareness about prevention, early identification, and timely management.
- Birth Defect Day is observed every year on 3rd March. This initiative is part of this day.
- National Birth Defect Awareness Month will spread awareness about all birth defects and treatment for children.
- Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram of the Child Health division under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) has planned month-long activities.
- At present, in India, the Neonatal mortality rate is 20 per 1000 live births, the Infant mortality rate is 28 per 1000 live births and the Under 5 mortality rate is 32 per 1000 live births.
- Every year, around 6% of children are born with Birth Defects.



Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh inaugurated DefConnect 2024 in New Delhi

- DefConnect 2024 has been inaugurated to encourage indigenous defence innovation.
- It brings together key stakeholders including the Armed Forces, defence industry leaders, start-ups, academia, and policymakers.
- The aim of the event is to facilitate meaningful engagements and showcase cutting-edge technologies.
- It will attract innovators and investors from leading defence sector industries of India.
- Innovations for Defence Excellence-Defence Innovation Organisation (iDEX-DIO) is organising the event.
- PM Modi had launched the iDEX in 2018. It provides a unified platform for defence and aerospace sector stakeholders.
- It oversees technology development and potential collaborations in defence field.



Indian Navy will commission MH 60R Seahawk multi-role helicopter at INS Garuda in Kochi on 06 March 2024

- This will mark a key movement in India's defence modernisation.
- The Indian Navy will commission the Seahawks squadron as INAS 334.
- These helicopters come under the 24-aircraft Foreign Military Sales contract.
- This contract was signed with the US government in February 2020.
- So far, the Navy has inducted six of the 24 MH-60 R choppers.
- MH 60R Seahawk multi-role helicopter is designed for anti-surface warfare, anti-submarine warfare, search and rescue, medical evacuation and vertical replenishment.
- **Sea Hawk** is a twin turboshaft engine, multi-mission United States Navy helicopter.
- **INS Garuda** is an Indian naval air station located in Kochi, Kerala. It is the oldest operating air station of the Indian Navy.



National Workshop on Logistics Efficiency Enhancement has been jointly organized by the DPIIT and World Bank

- The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) in association with the World Bank Group organized a National Workshop on Logistics Efficiency Enhancement.
- It will bring together the logistics sector community to identify factors affecting logistics performance and areas of improvement.
- The workshop was divided into three sessions, which are given below.
- **Session I:** It covered discussions on the approach and methodology adopted in the calculation of the Logistics Performance Index (LPI) by the World Bank
- **Session II:** During this session, the corridor approach including Bharatmala and Sagarmala Corridors for enhancing logistics efficiency has been discussed.
- **Session III:** Officials from States shared best practices, reforms, and digital initiatives undertaken to improve logistics efficiency.



BPCL Teams Up with Neeraj Chopra As Brand Ambassador for 'Speed' petrol

- **Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL)**, a prominent oil and gas company in India, has appointed the Olympic gold medalist, **Neeraj Chopra**, as its brand ambassador.
- This collaboration aims to amplify the promotion of BPCL's Premium Petrol '**Speed**', showcasing the synergy between excellence in athletics and superior performance in fuel technology.
- The current world number 1's remarkable achievements resonate with BPCL's commitment to delivering high-quality products and services to its customers.
- Neeraj Chopra, with his achievements in athletics, epitomizes the essence of winning, performance, and success. His role model status, journey, and accomplishments align with the ethos of '**Speed**', making him the perfect embodiment of the brand's values.



India secures top spot in ICC World Test Championship rankings

- The Indian Men's Cricket Team has reached on top in the World Test Championship (WTC) standings, replacing New Zealand.
- The International Cricket Council (ICC) updated their WTC points table, in which India moved to the top of the points table, following Australia's victory over New Zealand in the Wellington Test.
- India is currently leading the five-match test series against England 3-1, and a win in the final match of the series will further strengthen their position in the WTC points table.



Comoros, Timor-Leste becomes new members of WTO at MC13 held in Abu Dhabi

- The Union of the **Comoros** and the Democratic Republic of **Timor-Leste** have formally become the members of the World Trade Organisation (WTO).
- The signing ceremony was held during the WTO's **13th Ministerial Conference** (MC13) hosted by the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in **Abu Dhabi**.
- With the accession of Comoros and Timor-Leste, the total number of WTO members became 166.
- The MC13 was held from 26th to 29th Feb 2024 and the conference was chaired by H.E.Dr Thani Bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi, UAE's Minister of State for Foreign Trade.
- Ministers from several countries participated in the conference to review the functioning of the multilateral trading system and to take action on the future work of the WTO.



National Safety Day 2024 celebrated on 4 March

- Every year on 4 March, **National Security Day** or **National Safety Day** is commemorated in India by the **National Safety Council**.
- The day was first celebrated on the foundation day of the **National Safety Council in 1972**.
- The theme for National Safety Day 2024 is "**Focus on Safety Leadership for ESG Excellence**".
- The main objective of National Security Day is to implement safe practices at the workplace by taking safety measures to prevent accidents.
- It is dedicated to all security forces of India for their contribution to maintaining peace and security.
- It is observed to honour the sacrifice of all security forces, including policemen, para-military forces, commandos, guards, army, etc.

National Safety Council (NSC):

- It was founded on March 4, 1966, by the Ministry of Labour and Employment as a self-financing non-governing body.
- In 2000, the NSC was established as a public trust under the Bombay Public Trust Act 1950.
- Its headquarters is in Navi Mumbai.
- It was founded to develop and implement a voluntary routine in the areas of safety, health, and the environment.



Google unveils Genie AI which can create video games from text and image prompts

- **Google's DeepMind team** has unveiled "**Genie**" - a groundbreaking AI model poised to revolutionise the gaming industry and creative endeavours alike.
- Genie introduced as an innovative platform capable of crafting interactive **2D video games** from a **single image** prompt or text description, marks a significant leap forward in the realm of artificial intelligence.
- Developed by Google DeepMind's Open-Endedness Team, this pioneering project signifies a fusion of cutting-edge technology and imaginative potential.
- Unlike its predecessors, Genie operates on a unique principle. Drawing insights from a vast dataset comprising 200,000 hours of unlabelled video footage predominantly from 2D platformer games, this AI marvel learns through observation rather than explicit instruction.
- By discerning patterns and interactions within the videos, Genie transcends traditional limitations, empowering it to generate immersive gaming experiences from minimal input.



Haj Suvidha App launched and Haj Guide Released for Haj-2024 by Union Minister Smriti Irani

- Union Minister for Minority Affairs, **Smriti Zubin Irani**, introduced two significant initiatives aimed at enhancing the Haj pilgrimage experience for 2024.
- The **Haj Suvidha App** was launched to provide essential information and access to crucial services, while the **Haj Guide-2024** was released to educate pilgrims about various aspects of the journey, with a focus on utilizing the app effectively.
- **Purpose:** To streamline the Haj pilgrimage experience by offering direct access to essential services.
- Haj Guide-2024
- **Objective:** To educate pilgrims about various aspects of the Haj pilgrimage and promote the effective utilization of the Haj Suvidha App.
- **Languages:** Published in 10 languages for widespread accessibility.
- **Distribution:** Will be issued to all Haj pilgrims to facilitate a better understanding of the pilgrimage process and the utilization of digital resources.

**SMRITI IRANI
LAUNCHED
HAJ GUIDE
2024 AND
HAJ SUVIDHA
MOBILE APP**

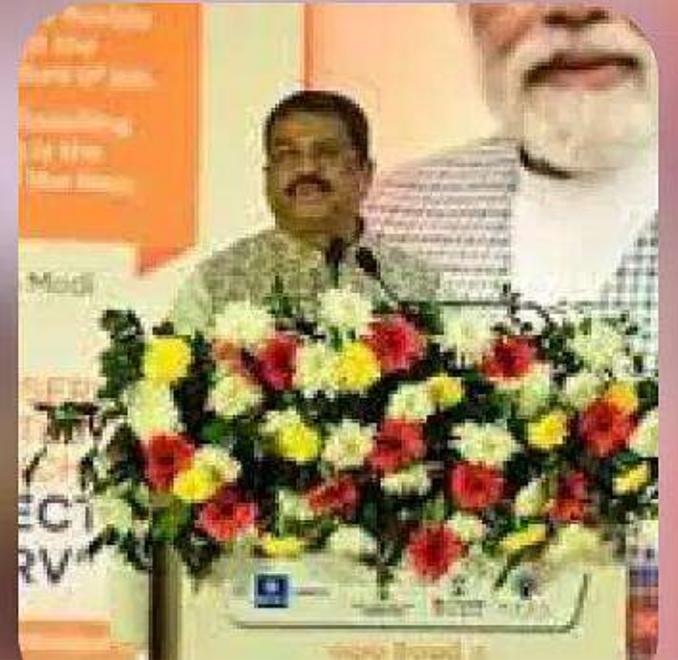


Dr Pradeep Mahajan receives Maharashtra Bhushan Award 2024

- In a remarkable recognition of his contributions to the field of regenerative medicine, **Dr. Pradeep Mahajan**, the Founder and Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of StemRx Hospital and Research Centre, along with StemRx Bioscience Solutions, has been awarded the prestigious **Maharashtra Bhushan Award 2024**.
- Dr. Mahajan's journey in the medical field is marked by his innovative approach and dedication to regenerative medicine.
- His work has not only provided groundbreaking treatments for patients but has also significantly contributed to the scientific community's understanding of regenerative therapies.
- Under Dr. Mahajan's leadership, **StemRx Hospital and Research Centre** has emerged as a leading institution in the field of regenerative medicine.
- Among Dr. Mahajan's notable achievements are the world's youngest case of **Cerebral Palsy treated with regenerative medicine** and the first instance of **Empty Nose Syndrome** in India being addressed through innovative therapies.



Pradhan Inaugurates Project Odiserv in Odisha to Enhance Youth Employment Skills



Dharmendra Pradhan Launches Project ODISERV for Odisha's Graduates

- Union Minister of Education and Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, Dharmendra Pradhan launched **Project ODISERV** aimed at preparing young graduates from Odisha for employment opportunities in the financial services sector.
- Project ODISERV will empower the nation's youth, enhancing their employability and helping them achieve their career aspirations.
- The 100-hour training program will equip Odisha's youth with crucial skills required in the banking, finance and insurance industries.
- The training program will boost competencies, increase the employability of Yuva Shakti of Odisha and prepare a future-ready workforce.
- National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) under the aegis of the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE) and Bajaj Finserv Ltd developed this initiative at Gangadhar Meher University (GMU) in Sambalpur, Odisha.
- The launch of Project Odiserv is expected to transform the landscape of skill development in Odisha.

FSSAI gives 'Eat Right Station' certificate to 150 Railway Stations

- 150 railway stations receive the 'Eat Right Station' certification by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI).
- Ensuring access to safe and nutritious food options for millions of rail passengers, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has awarded its prestigious 'Eat Right Station' certification to 150 railway stations.
- The 'Eat Right Station' certification process involves stringent audits of food vendors, comprehensive training programs for food handlers, and strict adherence to hygiene and sanitation protocols.
- According to the Health Ministry, stations that successfully meet these criteria are recognized for their efforts in promoting informed food choices and awarded the 'Eat Right Station' certification.
- In addition to railway stations, **six prominent metro stations across the country have also been accredited as Eat Right Stations.** Notable among them are stations at Noida Sector 51, Esplanade in Kolkata, IIT Kanpur, Botanical Garden in Noida, and Noida Electronic City Metro Station.



150 Railway Stations

Awarded by FSSAI Awards
EAT RIGHT STATION
Certification

India's 1st Green Hydrogen Plant in the Stainless Steel Sector has been inaugurated at Jindal Stainless Limited, Hisar, Haryana

- It has been inaugurated by Union Steel Minister **Jyotiraditya Scindia**.
- This will be the world's first off-grid Green Hydrogen plant for the stainless steel industry.
- This will be the world's first Green Hydrogen plant with rooftop and floating solar.
- It will cut down carbon emissions by about **2,700 Metric Tons per annum**.
- It will cut down **54,000 tons** of carbon dioxide emissions during the next two decades.
- While speaking on the occasion, Union Minister highlighted that India has evolved from a net importer to net exporter and aims to become world's largest producer of crude steel.
- The National Green Hydrogen Mission was launched in 2023.
- It was launched with an outlay of about twenty thousand crore rupees.
- It was launched to make India a Global Hub for the production, usage and export of Green Hydrogen and its derivatives.



B Sai Praneeth has announced his retirement from international badminton

- **B Sai Praneeth** is an Indian shuttler. In his 24-year-long career, he won a World Championships bronze medal.
- He also represented India at the Tokyo 2020 Olympics.
- He has also won the **2017 Singapore Open**.
- After retirement, he will be the head coach of the Triangle Badminton Academy in the US.
- After Prakash Padukone in 1983, he became the first male Indian shuttler in 36 years to earn a bronze medal at the BWF World Championships in 2019. In 2019, he received the Arjuna Award.



The first edition of the Naval Commanders' Conference of 2024 will commence from 5th March

- The **first edition** of the Naval Commanders' Conference of 2024 is scheduled to commence from 5th March.
- Defense Minister, Rajnath Singh, will address the Naval Commanders during this conference.
- The conference will be held for three days in the Hybrid format.
- The Chief of Defence Staff, along with the Chiefs of the Indian Army and Indian Air Force will also take part in this conference.
- Naval Commanders during the conference will discuss the coordination of tri-service forces in the face of the evolving national security situation in the region.
- They will also explore avenues to enhance tri-service synergy and readiness in defence of the nation and India's national interests.
- Geopolitical dynamics, regional challenges, and volatile maritime security situation will be also discussed.

