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Woman Robot Astronaut “Vyommitra” to Fly into Space Ahead of Gaganyaan

- India's woman robot astronaut Vyommitra will fly into space ahead of the **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** ambitious Gaganyaan mission, the country's first manned space flight carrying Indian astronauts.
- Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) **Jitendra Singh** said the uncrewed Vyommitra Mission is scheduled for the third quarter of this year, while the manned mission Gaganyaan is scheduled to be launched in 2025.
- Vyommitra is a name derived from two Sanskrit words - **vyoma, meaning space**, and **mitra, meaning friend**.
- The robot astronaut can monitor module parameters, issue alerts, and execute life-support operations and it can also perform tasks such as operating six panels and responding to queries.
- It has been designed in such a manner to simulate human functions in the space environment and interact with the life support system.
- The Gaganyaan project envisages demonstration of human space capabilities by launching a crew of astronauts into an orbit of 400 km, and then bringing back the astronauts safely to Earth.

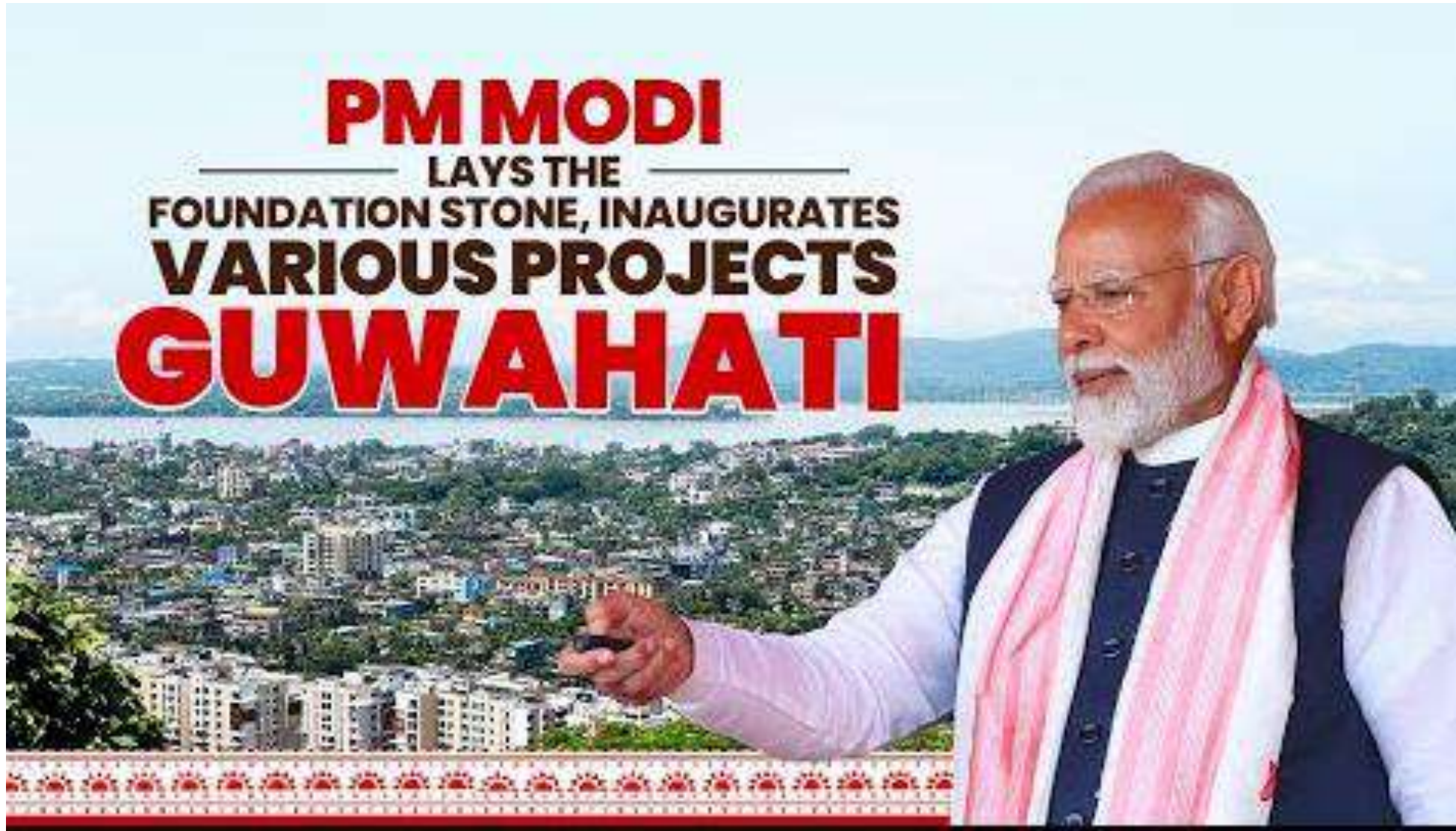


**Woman Robot Astronaut
Vyommitra** to Fly into
Space Ahead of Gaganyaan

Shankar Mahadevan and Zakir Hussain's fusion band 'Shakti' wins Grammy Awards 2024

- The 66th Annual Grammy Awards 2024 are being held in **Los Angeles**.
- Indian musicians Shankar Mahadevan and Zakir Hussain's fusion band 'Shakti' bagged the Grammy's award for **'Best Global Music Album'**.
- The award was for their latest album **'This Moment'**.
- The album 'This Moment', released on June 30 last year, features eight songs created by John McLaughlin (guitar synth), Zakir Hussain (tabla), Shankar Mahadevan (vocalist), V Selvaganesh (percussionist), and Ganesh Rajagopalan (violinist).
- They were nominated for the Grammys with other artists like Susana Baca, Bokante, Burna Boy, and Davido.
- **Zakir Hussain** also secured the **'Best Global Music Performance'** Grammy for his contribution to **'Pashto'** alongside Bela Fleck and Edgar Meyer, featuring Rakesh Chaurasia - a virtuoso flute player.
- While Hussain bagged three Grammys in one night, Chaurasia got two awards.





Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of Kamakhya Corridor project in Assam

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stones for eight coveted projects, including the Maa Kamakhya Access Corridor project and inaugurated two other projects worth over **Rs.11,500 crore** in Guwahati.
- These projects will boost the connectivity in the region while also increasing avenues of employment for locals and encouraging them to take up sports.
- Kamakhya Access Corridor has been sanctioned under the **Prime Minister's Development Initiative for North Eastern Region (PM-DevINE) scheme**. It will provide world class amenities to pilgrims visiting the temple.
- The foundation stone of multiple road upgradation projects worth over Rs.3400 crore have been laid. Under this project 43 roads including 38 bridges will be upgraded as part of the **South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation (SASEC) Corridor Connectivity**.
- PM also inaugurated two 4-laning projects, namely Dolabari to Jamuguri and Biswanath Chariali to Gohpur. These projects will help improve the connectivity to Itanagar and boost the overall economic development of the region.
- The projects also include an international standards sports stadium in **Chandrapur**, and upgradation of **Nehru stadium as a FIFA standard football stadium**.

Bihar State Disaster Management Authority launched 'NITISH Device'

- The Bihar State Disaster Management Authority has launched the **Novel Initiative Technological Intervention for Safety of Humanlives (NITISH) device**, an innovative pendant-shaped technology designed to provide timely alerts to farmers and the public, specifically targeting lightning, floods, heatwaves, and coldwaves.
- The initiative was triggered by recurring deaths among farmers due to lightning and flash floods, emphasizing the device's role in saving lives.
- The NITISH Device is introduced in collaboration with the **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Patna**.
- The device is connected to the Bihar Meteorological Service Centre, ensuring real-time and accurate weather-related alerts.
- The NITISH device will sound an alert to its users half an hour before lightning or flooding.
- The pendant will get charged from body heat. The device will sound an alert in three ways: it will send voice messages; its colour will change from green to red; and the device will keep warning till its user switches it off.
- Considering the challenges faced by farmers, the device is waterproof, ensuring durability and functionality in various weather conditions.



Odisha CM launches The Hindu Group's book on Lord Jagannath

- Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik released **Shree Jagannatha, Lord Of The Universe, a coffee-table book** brought out by The Hindu Group Publishing at the valedictory session of three-day-long first ever 'World Odia Language Conference'.
- The book, which pictorially narrates traditions and rituals associated with sibling deities of **Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra in Puri**, one of the four sacred dhams for Hindus..
- 'Shree Jagannatha, Lord Of The Universe', is **compilation of short essays encompassing various aspects of rich traditions including Rath Yatra of Lord Jagannath.**
- Experts on Jagannath culture, journalists and former bureaucrats have contributed for the book through their authoritative writings.



Taylor Swift becomes first artist in history to win Album of the Year four times at the Annual Grammy Awards

- In a breath-taking victory, Taylor Swift bagged the coveted Album of the Year award for her latest work, **Midnights**, marking a record-breaking feat: **the most Album of the Year wins for any artist in Grammy history**.
- Following her 13th Grammy win for the album *Midnights*, where she secured the Best Pop Vocal Album award, Taylor Swift made history by clinching her 14th Grammy as well.
- This groundbreaking win included her fourth Album of the Year award.
- Taylor Swift has broken a tie with Stevie Wonder, Frank Sinatra, and Paul Simon to achieve this historic milestone.
- In the past, the **singer** has clinched victory in this category for her albums, including *Fearless*, *1989*, and *Folklore*.



Mukesh Ambani Topped Global Brand Guardianship Index 2024

- Mukesh Ambani, Chairman and Managing Director of **Reliance Industries Limited**, has been ranked first among all the Indians and second globally in the Brand Guardianship Index 2024 compiled by Brand Finance.
- The Brand Guardianship Index is a global recognition of CEOs, who are building business value in a sustainable manner by balancing the needs of all stakeholders - employees, investors, and the wider society.
- Notably, **Mukesh Ambani was placed at the second position globally in the 2023 ranking as well.**
- This year Ambani was ranked at the first position in Brand Guardianship Index 2024 among the '**Diversified conglomerates**'.
- Brand Finance's survey gave Mukesh Ambani a **BGI score of 80.3**, just below 81.6 of Huateng Ma of China-based Tencent.



Michelle O'Neill Becomes Northern Ireland's First Minister

- An Irish nationalist made history by becoming Northern Ireland's first minister as the government returned to work after a two-year boycott by unionists.
- Sinn Fein Vice President Michelle O'Neill was named first minister in the government which, under the terms of the 1998 Good Friday peace accord, shares power equally between Northern Ireland's two main communities — **British unionists** who want to stay in the UK, and **Irish nationalists** who seek to unite with Ireland.
- Northern Ireland was established as a unionist, Protestant-majority part of the UK in 1921, following independence for the Republic of Ireland, so O'Neill's nomination was seen as a highly symbolic moment for nationalists.



**IIRF MBA Rankings
2024: IIM Ahmedabad
Tops, FMS Delhi
Clinches Second
Position**



IIRF's Top MBA Colleges in India 2024: IIM-Ahmedabad Ranked First in Government Colleges Category

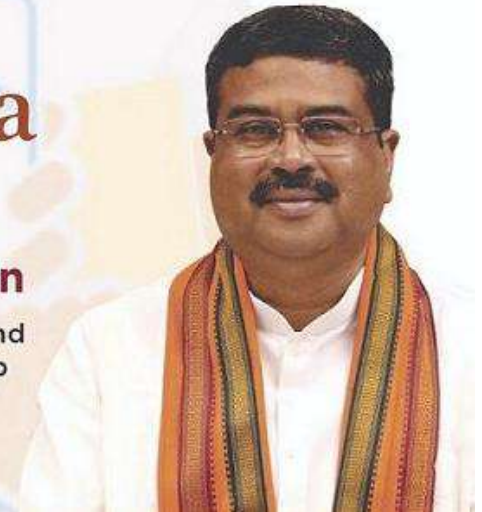
- The **Indian Institutional Ranking Framework (IIRF)** has released the rankings of business schools in 2024.
- The institutions are evaluated on seven parameters and ranked by Maction Consulting under the Federation for World Academics (FWA).
- The **seven parameters** of evaluation include Placement Performance, Teaching Learning Resources and Pedagogy, Research, Industry Income and Integration, Placement Strategy & Support, Future Orientation, and External Perception and International Outlook (EPIO).
- Moreover, the IIRF rankings 2024 include six categories consisting of the Overall Ranking of Government and Private Institutions, the Top 50 Business Schools Under University Program, the Top 50 Business Schools for Research, the Top 50 Schools of Eminence for Employability, and the Top 20 Emerging Business Schools.
- More than 300 management institutions are evaluated, out of which, 50 government and 160 private management institutions are ranked.
- **Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad (Gujarat)**, has topped among the Top Government MBA colleges in India.
- **Xavier Labour Relations Institute(XLRI), Jamshedpur (Jharkhand)**, has topped among the Top Private MBA colleges in India.

Dharmendra Pradhan to inaugurate two-day ULLAS mela in New Delhi

- Union Minister of Education Dharmendra Pradhan will inaugurate the two-day ULLAS Mela at New Delhi's National Bal Bhavan.
- The Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Education is organising ULLAS Mela from 6th-7th February, 2024 to showcase various National and State level activities under **ULLAS-Nav Bharat Saksharta Karyakram**.
- Seven hundred participants from various States and UTs along with more than 100 dignitaries from the **Ministry of Education**, and various organizations will be participating in the event.
- Government of India is implementing a centrally sponsored innovative scheme called Nav Bharat Saksharta Karyakram or New India Literacy Program for the period of FYs 2022-2027 to achieve the target of 100% literacy by 2030.
- The scheme is popularly known as **ULLAS: Understanding of Lifelong Learning for All in Society, upholding the motto "Jan-Jan Sakshar"**.
- The scheme is targeted at all non-literates of age 15 years and above.
- The scheme, in line with NEP 2020, **targets adults aged 15 and above**, who could not go to school or attain formal education.
- The scheme also focuses on vocational skills development, aiming to equip individuals with skills for local employment.

Inauguration of
ULLAS Mela
by

Shri Dharmendra Pradhan
Hon'ble Union Minister for Education and
Skill Development & Entrepreneurship



PETA challenges Traditional Buffalo, Bulbul fights in Assam



- Animal rights group PETA India has now filed petitions in the **Gauhati High Court** seeking a complete ban on buffalo and bulbul fighting events.
- PETA claims its investigations found violations of animal cruelty laws and the government's own SOPs at recent events.
- It alleges animals were abused and forced to fight despite injuries.

Background:

- Buffalo fights, known as **Moh Jooj**, and bulbul fights are traditional practices associated with the Assamese winter harvest festival of **Magh Bihu**, celebrated in January.
- The fights were discontinued after the Supreme Court's 2014 judgment, which prohibited the use of bulls as performing animals in events like jallikattu and bullock-cart races across the country.
- The **Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI)** directed the Assam government to end animal and bird fights during Bihu celebrations in 2015.
- In May 2023, the Supreme Court overruled its 2014 judgment, allowing states like Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, and Karnataka to amend the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1960, permitting events like jallikattu, kambala, and bullock cart racing.
- In December 2023, the Assam Cabinet approved the framing of **Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)** for the conduct of buffalo and bulbul fights, ensuring no deliberate torture or cruelty to the animals.

Ranveer Singh Joins boat as a Stakeholder and Brand Ambassador

- Bollywood actor Ranveer Singh has invested an undisclosed amount in boAt, and is also signed on as the brand ambassador of the company.
- The company co-founded by Aman Gupta has also announced an upcoming campaign featuring Singh for Boat's sub-brand 'Nirvana series'..
- The **360-degree ad campaign** has been conceptualised and executed with the Bangalore-based creative agency Talented.
- BoAt, one of India's leading electronics and audio products company, was founded by **Sameer Mehta and Aman Gupta in November 2016.**

boat



Safe Internet Day – Feb 6th

- **Safer Internet Day**, celebrated on **6th February** each year, serves as a global call to action for individuals, families, and communities to unite in making the digital world a safer and more secure environment for all.
- The theme for Safer Internet Day 2024, **“Inspiring Change. Making a difference, managing influence and navigating change online,”** reflects a proactive approach towards fostering a positive and secure online experience.
- The inception of Safer Internet Day dates back to **2006**, initiated by EU Safe Borders and later embraced by the Insafe Network of Awareness Centres.
- This initiative aimed to highlight the importance of internet safety and encourage responsible digital technology usage.
- In 2012, the United States officially adopted Safer Internet Day, marking its expansion into a global movement. Today, Safer Internet Day transcends geographical boundaries, rallying countries worldwide to promote online safety and responsibility.

