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HEADLINES

- ❖ ISRO's Aditya-L1 successfully placed in a halo orbit around L1 point
- ❖ ISRO Chairman honoured with doctorate by JNTU-H
- ❖ IIT-H to host Ministry of Education's IInvenTiv-2024
- ❖ Cabinet gives nod to 'Prithvi' programme for earth observation
- ❖ The 81st Golden Globe Awards, 2024
- ❖ India signs bilateral Haj agreement 2024 with Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
- ❖ Sarbananda Sonowal to chair the first inland waterways development council meeting to be held in Kolkata
- ❖ RBI issues guidelines on bank classification of unclaimed deposits
- ❖ RBI penalises five Gujarat-based cooperative banks
- ❖ ITC Collaborates with Microsoft and Skymet to Shield Tobacco Farmers from Climate Challenges
- ❖ India launches a single-window portal for medical devices management

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ISRO's Aditya-L1 successfully placed in a halo orbit around L1 point

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has placed the Aditya-L1 spacecraft in a halo orbit around the **Lagrangian point (L1)**.
- After travelling for 127 days and covering a distance of 1.5 million km, the spacecraft was placed in a halo orbit around L1, following a firing manoeuvre which was carried out by ISRO scientists and engineers at the **ISRO Telemetry Tracking and Command Network (ISTRAC) in Bengaluru**.
- **The distance of L1 from the earth is approximately 1% of the earth-sun distance.**
- The Aditya-L1 satellite will be continuously viewing the sun without any occultation or eclipse and provides a greater advantage of observing the solar activities without obstruction.
- It carries **seven payloads** to observe the photosphere, chromospheres and the outermost layer of the sun (corona) using electromagnetic and particle detectors.
- Using the special vantage point of L1, four payloads will directly view the sun and the remaining three payloads will carry out in-situ studies of particles and fields at the L1.
- The Lagrange Points are the positions in space where a small object tends to stay, if put there. These can be used by spacecraft as **"parking spots" in space** to remain in a fixed position with minimal fuel consumption.
- At Lagrange points, the gravitational pull of two large masses precisely equals the centripetal force required for a small object to move with them.
- **Aditya-L1 Project Team:**
- **Project Director:** Nigar Shaji
- **Principal scientist of the mission:** K Sankarasubramanian

ISRO Chairman honoured with doctorate by JNTU-H

- In recognition of his outstanding contributions to the field of science and technology, the Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University (JNTU) – Hyderabad conferred the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Honoris Causa) on **Dr. Sreedhara Panicker Somanath**, Chairman Indian Space Research Organisation and Secretary Department of Space.
- Dr. Somanath received the honorary JNTU Hyderabad doctorate from JNTU-Hyderabad Vice Chancellor Prof. Katta Narasimha Reddy during the varsity's 12th convocation.
- The ISRO recently launched the Aditya-L1, the first Indian space-based observatory to study the Sun.
- **Founder:** Vikram Sarabhai
- **Headquarters:** Bengaluru
- **Founded:** 15 August 1969
- **Owner:** Government of India



IIT-H to host Ministry of Education's IInvenTiv-2024

- Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad (IITH) will host the second edition of Ministry of Education's flagship event, IInvenTiv-2024 on 19th and 20th January 2024.
- Hon'ble Education Minister of India, **Shri Dharmendra Pradhan**, will inaugurate the 2nd edition of this mega Research and Development (R&D) fair.
- **IInvenTiv-2024** is a platform to highlight the holistic impact of the research and innovation carried out by the top Higher Education Institutes in our country.
- It seeks collaborative avenues among state universities, institutes, and industry to enhance the development and reach of innovations at the grass roots level.
- This year, the event will focus on five pivotal domains, reflecting the diverse landscape of innovation and also in line with the thrust areas for Atmanirbhar and Viksit Bharat. These include:
 - Affordable Healthcare
 - Agriculture & Food Processing
 - Sustainable Technologies including Climate change, E-mobility, Clean Energy
 - Defence and Space
 - Industry 4.0





Union Cabinet

Approves

Earth Science (Prithvi) Scheme



Cabinet gives nod to 'Prithvi' programme for earth observation

- The Union Cabinet Chaired by the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi has approved the overarching scheme **“PRITHvi Vigyan (PRITHVI)” of Ministry of Earth Sciences**, for implementation during the period from 2021-26 at an overall cost of Rs. 4,797 crore.
- The scheme encompasses five ongoing sub-schemes namely **“Atmosphere & Climate Research-Modelling Observing Systems & Services (ACROSS)”**, **“Ocean Services, Modelling Application, Resources and Technology (O-SMART)”**, **“Polar Science and Cryosphere Research (PACER)”**, **“Seismology and Geosciences (SAGE)”** and **“Research, Education, Training and Outreach (REACHOUT)”**.

- The major Objectives of the overarching Prithvi Scheme are:
- Enhance long-term observations of various Earth components (atmosphere, ocean, geosphere, etc.) to monitor planetary changes.
- Develop models for weather prediction, understanding climate hazards, and studying climate change.
- Explore polar and high-seas regions to uncover new phenomena and resources.
- Create technology for sustainable exploration and utilization of oceanic resources for societal needs.
- Apply insights from Earth system science to benefit society, the environment, and the economy.
- The Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) holistically addresses all the aspects relating to the Earth System Science.
- Various components of PRITHVI scheme are inter-dependent and are carried out in an integrated manner through combined efforts of the concerned Institutes under MoES.
- The integrated R&D efforts will help in addressing the grand challenges of weather and climate, ocean, cryosphere, seismological science and services and explore the living and non-living resources for their sustainable harnessing.

The 81st Golden Globe Awards, 2024

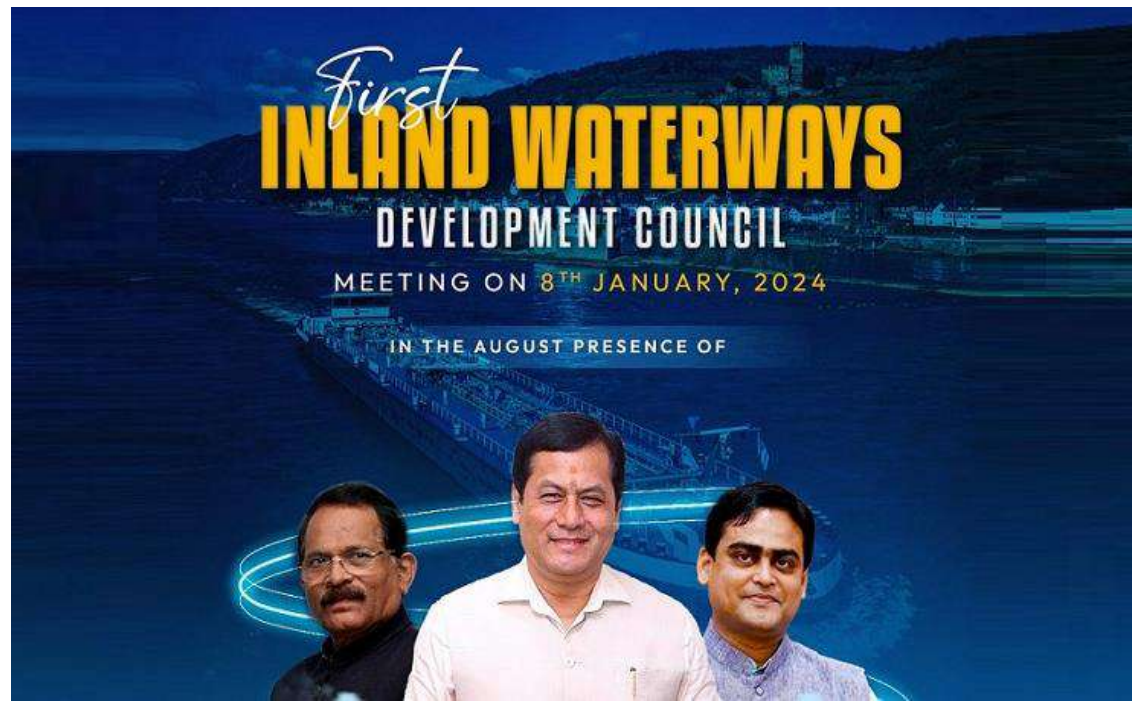
- The **81st Golden Globe Awards** was held on **January 7 in Beverly Hills, California**, a western US state.
- The Golden Globe Awards 2024 was hosted by stand-up comedian and actor **Joe Koy**.
- Christopher Nolan's blockbuster biopic **Oppenheimer** dominated the 81st Golden Globes, winning five awards including best drama, while Yorgos Lanthimos' Frankenstein riff **Poor Things** pulled off an upset victor over Barbie to triumph in the best comedy or musical category.
- Along with best comedy or musical, Poor Things also won for Emma Stone's performance as Bella.
- **Lily Gladstone** won best actress in a dramatic film for Martin Scorsese's Killers of the Flower Moon.
- The Golden Globe Awards are **awards for excellence in American and international film and television**.
- The first Golden Globe Awards were held in January 1944 in Los Angeles.
- These awards are presented by the **Hollywood Foreign Press Association (HFPA)**.
- AR Rahman was the first Indian to win a Golden Globe Award in the Best Score category for the film Slumdog Millionaire.
- Natu Natu is the first Asian song to win a Golden Globe honor at the 80th Golden Globe Awards, 2023.





India signs bilateral Haj agreement 2024 with Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

- Union Minister for Women and Child Development and Minority Affairs Smt. Smriti Zubin Irani accompanied by Shri. V. Muraleedharan, Minister of State for External Affairs and Parliamentary Affairs signed the Bilateral Haj Agreement 2024 with H.E. Dr. Tawfiq bin Fawzan Al-Rabiah, Minister of Hajj and Umrah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) at Jeddah, KSA.
- A total quota of 1,75,025 pilgrims from India has been finalised for Haj 2024 with 1,40,020 seats being reserved for pilgrims to proceed through Haj Committee of India which will greatly benefit the common first time pilgrims intending to undertake the Haj pilgrimage in 2024 whereas 35,005 pilgrims would be permitted to proceed through Haj Group Operators.



Sarbananda Sonowal to chair the first inland waterways development council meeting to be held in Kolkata

- The Inland Waterways Authority of India, under the **Ministry of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways (MoPSW)**, is set to host the inaugural 'Inland Waterways Development Council' meeting in Kolkata.
- The Minister will also unveil groundbreaking initiatives, including **"Harit Nauka - Guidelines for Green Transition of Inland Vessels"** and the **"River Cruise Tourism Roadmap 2047,"** during the meeting.

- The Ministry has set a bold objective to elevate the modal share of Inland Water Transportation (IWT) from the current 2 per cent to 5 per cent, aligning with the goals outlined in the Maritime India Vision 2030.
- Furthermore, as part of the ambitious Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047, the ministry aims to substantially increase the existing IWT cargo volume from approximately 120 MTPA to over 500 MTPA, signifying a significant leap forward in the development of inland waterways in the country.
- The establishment of the Inland Waterways Development Council in October 2023 by the Government of India underscores its commitment to comprehensive development of inland waterways and the associated Inland Water Transport (IWT) ecosystem for improved cargo efficiency, passenger movement, and river cruise tourism, with active participation from States and Union Territories.



RBI issues guidelines on bank classification of unclaimed deposits

- The Reserve Bank of India released comprehensive guidelines on the measures to be put in place by banks while classifying accounts and deposits as inoperative accounts and unclaimed deposits.
- This includes periodic review of such accounts and deposits, measures to prevent fraud in such accounts/deposits, grievance redressal mechanism for expeditious resolution of complaints, steps to be taken for tracing the customers of inoperative accounts including nominees or legal heirs for account re-activation, claims settlement or closure.
- As per the new norms, account holders can reactivate their inoperative accounts/ unclaimed deposits by submitting KYC documents afresh at all branches, including non-home branches, of banks in which they have an account.

- This move comes after RBI launched **“100 Days 100 Pays”** campaign in June last year, under which banks must trace and settle the top 100 unclaimed deposits of every bank in every district.
- The deadline for the scheme, which was to end on 8 September, has now been extended to 1 April 2024.
- A savings or current account is treated as **inoperative**, if there are no ‘customer induced transactions’ in the account for a period of over two years.
- The balance in savings or current accounts **not operated for 10 years** and term deposits not claimed for 10 years from the date of maturity are classified by banks as **unclaimed deposits**.
- For the purpose of classifying an account as inoperative, only customer induced transactions and not bank induced transactions shall be considered.

RBI penalises five Gujarat-based cooperative banks

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed monetary penalty on five co-operative banks for rule violations.
- These banks are The Co-operative Urban Bank, Shree Bharat Co-operative Bank, The Limdi Urban Co-operative Bank, The Sankheda Nagarik Sahakari Bank and The Bhuj Commercial Co-operative Bank.
- The central bank imposed a penalty of Rs 5 lakh each on The Sankheda Nagarik Sahakari Bank and Shree Bharat Co-operative Bank.
- It also imposed a penalty of Rs 1.50 lakh each on The Co-operative Urban Bank and The Bhuj Commercial Co-operative Bank.
- Similarly, the central bank imposed Rs 50,000 penalty on The Limdi Urban Co-operative Bank.
- The monetary penalty on each of these five banks is based on deficiencies in regulatory compliance and is not intended to pronounce on the validity of any transaction or agreement entered into by the bank with its customers.

ITC Collaborates with Microsoft and Skymet to Shield Tobacco Farmers from Climate Challenges

- **ITC**, a prominent Indian conglomerate, has joined forces with **Microsoft** and **Skymet** to address the escalating challenges faced by tobacco farmers in India due to climate change.
- This initiative incorporates cutting-edge technologies such as drones, AI, and data analytics to provide accurate weather forecasts, crop advisories, hotspot mapping, and nutritional supplementation.
- The program's overarching goal is to **enhance the climate resilience of tobacco crops**, enabling farmers to better navigate the biotic and abiotic stresses induced by climate vagaries.
- By leveraging technology and strategic partnerships, ITC aims to empower farmers and reduce the impact of extreme weather events on tobacco cultivation.



India launches a single-window portal for medical devices management

- In a move to streamline the import, clinical investigations, and testing of medical devices, the Centre has launched the **National Single Window System (NSWS)**.
- NSWS acts as a **one-stop shop for all the approvals required by the investor and facilitates ease of doing business**.
- The NSWS portal, distinct from the existing SUGAM and cdscomonline portals, has been developed by Tata Consultancy Services (TCS). It facilitates applications for the certificate of registration and licences to manufacture or import medical devices for various purposes, including clinical investigations, tests, evaluations, demonstrations, and training.
- NSWS, enables investors to identify, apply, track, and obtain the necessary approvals before starting any business operations in India, eliminating the need for investors to visit multiple IT platforms and authorities, the **Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO)**.

