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- ❖ Two-day annual 'Dosmoche Mahostav' started in Leh and Likir of Ladakh
- ❖ NASA discovers potentially habitable 'super-Earth' 137 Light-years away
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## **Bharat Ratna 2024: Narasimha Rao, Chaudhary Charan Singh, MS Swaminathan to receive India's highest civilian award**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that former prime ministers PV Narasimha Rao and Chaudhary Charan Singh and agricultural scientist MS Swaminathan will be conferred Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian award.
- Usually, three Bharat Ratna awards are given in a year. However, this year, the government has named five people for Bharat Ratna, including veteran BJP leader LK Advani and former Bihar chief minister Karpoori Thakur.

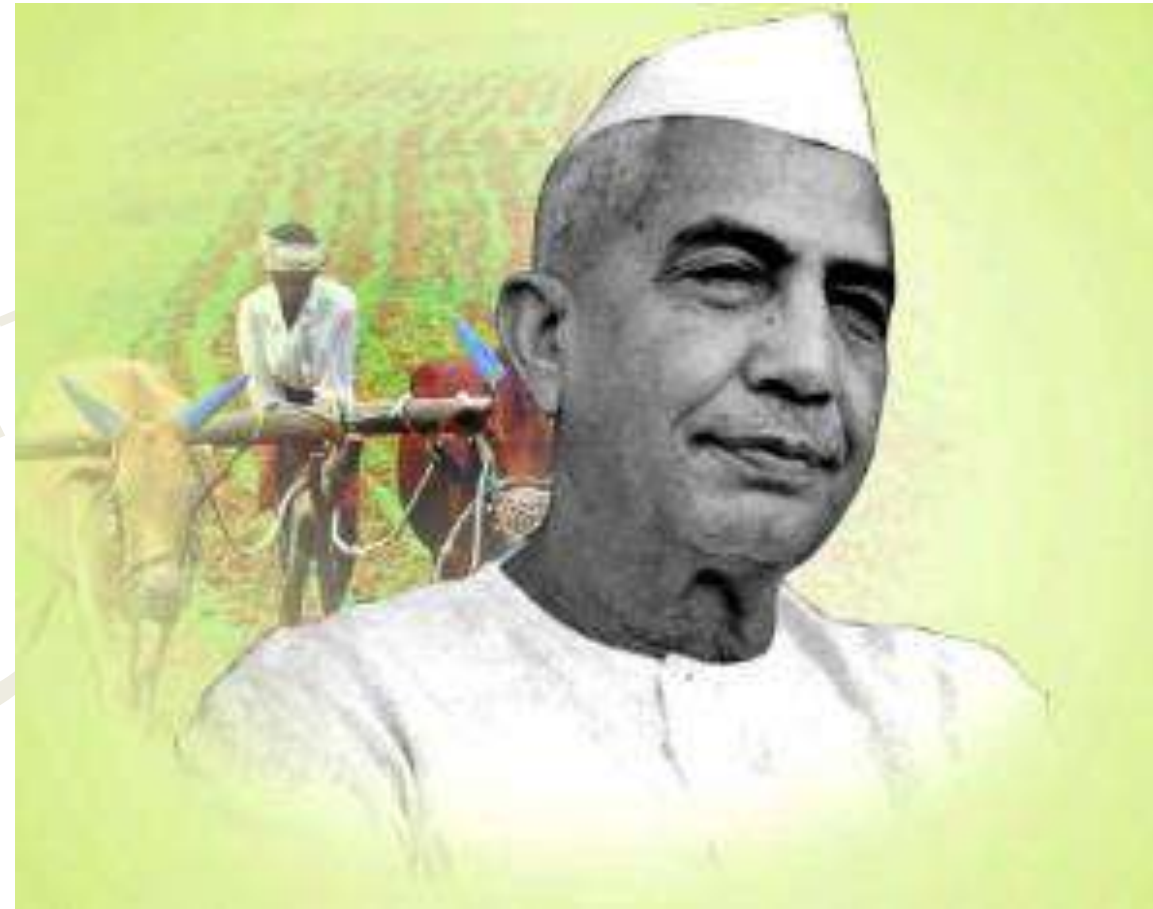


### **PV Narasimha Rao:**

- Pamulaparti Venkata Narasimha Rao served as the **10th Prime Minister of India** from June 21, 1991, to May 16, 1996, for a total of 1,791 days.
- He is best known for ushering the country into an era of economic reforms. His tenure as Prime Minister was marked by significant measures that opened India to global markets.
- His contributions to India's foreign policy, language and education sectors underscore his multifaceted legacy as a leader who not only steered India through critical transformations but also enriched its cultural and intellectual heritage.

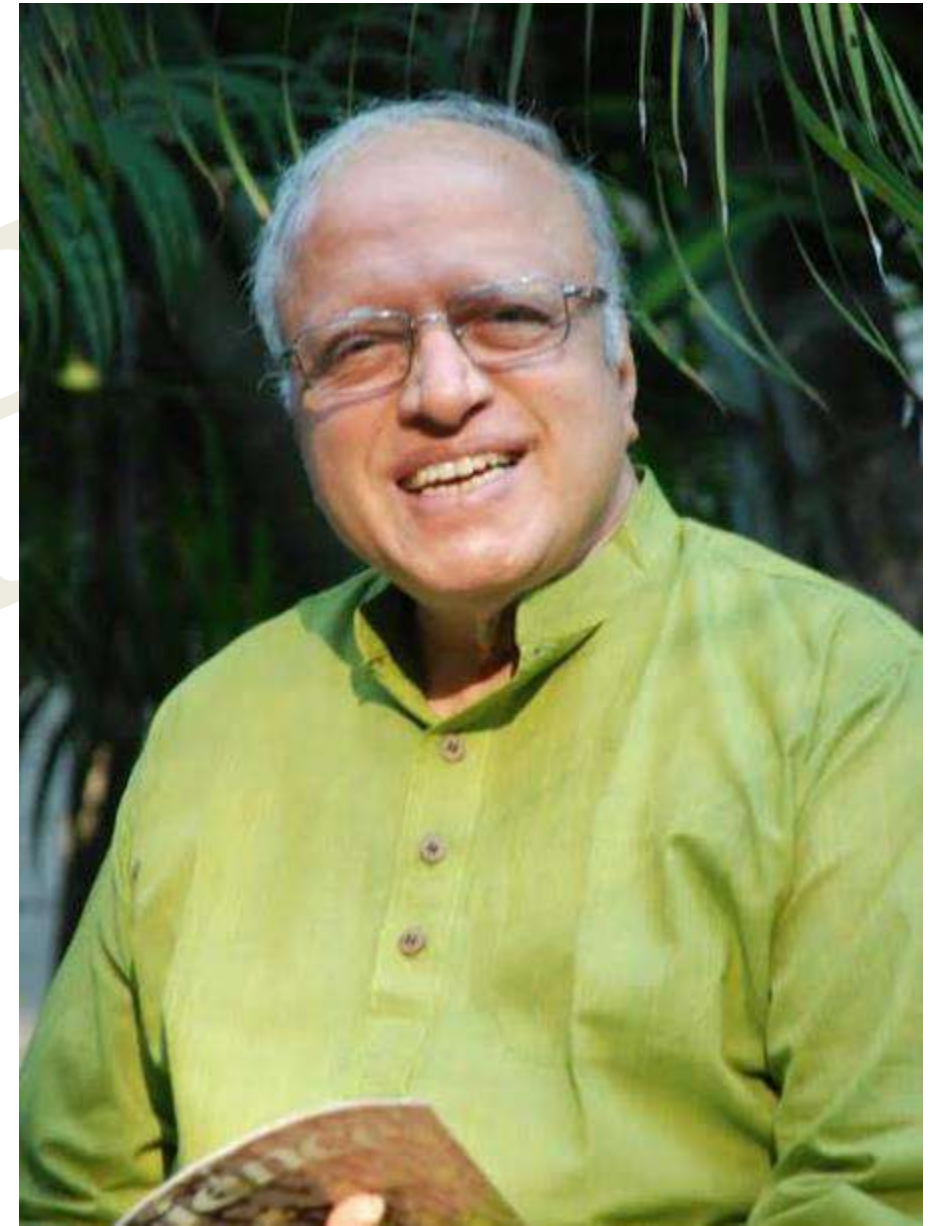
## Charan Singh

- Chaudhary Charan Singh served as the **6<sup>th</sup> Prime Minister of India**, albeit for a brief period of time. He was sworn in on July 28, 1979, and was compelled to step down just 170 days later after failing to prove his government's majority on the floor of Parliament.
- He had dedicated his entire life to the rights and welfare of farmers.
- After exiting the Congress in Uttar Pradesh in the 1950s, he went on to form the first non-Congress government in the northern state. He also went on to form the Bharatiya Kranti Dal (BKD), which later merged with the Samyukta (United) Socialist Party to form the Bharatiya Lok Dal (BLD).
- Notably, following the revocation of the Emergency, the BLD emerged as a crucial component of the Morarji Desai-led Janata Party government that came to power in 1977.



## **MS Swaminathan**

- MS Swaminathan is popularly known as the father of the Green Revolution in India.
- He got his MSc degree in Agricultural Sciences (specializing in genetics and plant breeding) from the Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI), and PhD degree from Cambridge University, UK.
- He played a major role in the set of changes introduced in farming in the 1960s and '70s that helped India achieve food security.



## RBI decided to keep the repo rate unchanged at 6.5 per cent for the sixth consecutive time.

- In the Reserve Bank of India's Monetary Policy Committee, the repo rate was kept unchanged at 6.5 %. The decision was taken by a majority of 5-1.
- The repo rate was last changed in February 2023 when it was increased from 6.25 per cent to 6.5 per cent.
- The **Marginal Standing Facility rate** has also been kept **unchanged at 6.75 per cent** and the **Standing Deposit Facility rate** has been kept at **6.25 per cent**.
- Equated monthly instalments (EMIs) on home, car and other loans will remain unchanged.
- Retail inflation reached to a four-month high of 5.69 per cent in December 2023.
- For 2024-25, the inflation target will remain at 4.5% in Q1; 4 per cent in Q2; 4.6 per cent in Q3; and 4.7 per cent in Q4.
- The real GDP growth for 2024-25 has been projected at 7 per cent.



## **Olzhas Bektenov appointed as the new Prime Minister of Kazakhstan.**

- Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev signed a decree appointing Olzhas Bektenov as the new Prime Minister of Kazakhstan.
- The former head of the Presidential Executive Office assumed this new role after being relieved of his post.
- At the plenary meeting of the Mazhilis, Kazakhstan's lower chamber of parliament, Bektenov's candidacy, nominated by the Amanat party, received significant support from the majority of deputies.
- Alikhan Smailov, who had been serving as Prime Minister since January 2022, resigned.
- On February 5, President Tokayev signed a decree dismissing the government, ending Alikhan Smylov's tenure as Prime Minister.
- The **capital of Kazakhstan is Astana**, and its **currency is Kazakhstani Tenge**.



## As part of the Digital Health India program, 'Kilkari' program launched in Gujarat and Maharashtra.

- The 'Kilkari' program was launched by the Ministers of State for Health, Dr. Bharati Pravin Pawar and Prof. S.P Singh Baghel.
- It is a mobile health initiative for beneficiaries in Gujarat and Maharashtra, with local content as part of the Digital Health India program.
- Kilkari is a centralized **interactive voice response** (IVR) based mobile health service that delivers free, weekly, time-appropriate AV messages about pregnancy, delivery, and child care to beneficiaries' mobile phones.
- It is operational in 18 states and union territories.
- On the occasion, the Mobile Academy was also launched.
- It is a free audio training course designed to expand and refresh the knowledge of **Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs)** and improve their communication skills through their mobile phones.
- The 'Kilkari' program aims to provide weekly services, timely accessible, accurate, and relevant 72 audio messages through IVRS about reproductive, maternal, neonatal, and child health care to the targeted beneficiaries.





## **World Sustainable Development Summit has been inaugurated by Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankar in New Delhi.**

- It was inaugurated in the presence of Prime Minister of Guyana Mark Phillips and Union Minister for Environment, Forests and Climate Change Bhupender Yadav.
- On the occasion, Vice-President quoted Mahatma Gandhi and said the earth has enough for everyone's need, but not for everyone's greed.
- The summit is organised by '**The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)**'.
- The summit is being held from 7-9 February 2024 in New Delhi.
- This is the 23rd edition of the annual summit of TERI.
- The **theme** for this year's summit is **Leadership for Sustainable Development and Climate Justice**.

## Veteran journalist and Sahitya Akademi awardee Farooq Nazki died at 83.

- Renowned journalist and Sahitya Akademi awardee Mohammad Farooq Nazki passed away at 83.
- He was a renowned personality in the world of media and literature.
- He worked as a broadcaster, poet, and media advisor. He also worked in various positions in All India Radio Kashmir and Doordarshan.
- Farooq Nazki received the **Sahitya Akademi award in 1995** for his remarkable poetry collection titled "**Naar Hyutun Kanzal Wanas**".
- He also served as the media advisor to two chief ministers, Farooq Abdullah and Omar Abdullah.



## **Pawan Kumar assumed the charge of Chief Adviser (Cost) in the Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance.**

- Pawan Kumar assumed charge after approval from the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC).
- Kumar is an officer of the Indian Cost Accounts Service under the Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance.
- Earlier, he was holding the charge of Additional Chief Adviser (Cost).
- He has played a key role in the development of a web-based Online Dashboard for the performance evaluation of CPSEs in the Department of Public Enterprises, Ministry of Finance.
- A leading think tank honoured this initiative with a **gold award in the e-Governance category in 2022.**



## **Saurashtra Cricket Association (SCA) Stadium in Rajkot will be renamed as Niranjan Shah Stadium.**

- The SCA announced that it would rename its home venue in **Khanderi, Rajkot to Niranjan Shah Stadium** on 14 February.
- Its name will be changed a day before it takes the field for the third Test of the ongoing five-match series between India and England.
- Shah played 12 first-class cricket for Saurashtra in the 1960s and 70s.
- **Shah** is more famous for serving as **SCA secretary for almost four decades.**
- He also held a position in the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI).
- Other BCCI officials named after cricket stadiums are: MA Chidambaram (Chennai), M Chinnaswamy (Bengaluru), IS Bindra (Mohali), and Wankhede (Mumbai).
- There are nine stadiums named after India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, across the country— eight of which have hosted domestic or international cricket fixtures.



## Inaugural session of the 7th Indian Ocean Conference was addressed by Dr. S. Jaishankar in Perth, Australia

- The Indian Ocean Conference is being organized on 9-10 February in collaboration with the Australian Government's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade as well as the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Singapore, and the Perth-US Asia Center in Australia.
- Ministers from more than 22 countries and senior officials from 16 countries and 6 multilateral organizations attended the conference.
- More than 400 social and corporate leaders, policy practitioners, scholars, professionals, and media persons from around 40 countries also participated.
- The theme of the two-day Indian Ocean Conference was "**Towards a Stable and Sustainable Indian Ocean**".
- This conference is a major consultative forum for the countries of the Indian Ocean region.
- It has been organized annually by **the Ministry of External Affairs in collaboration with the India Foundation since 2016.**
- The Conference endeavors to bring critical states and principal maritime partners of the region together on a common platform to deliberate upon the prospects of regional cooperation for **Security And Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR).**



## **A health emergency was declared in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, amid a dengue fever surge.**

- The Brazilian government declared a health emergency in Rio de Janeiro to control the cases of dengue.
- 10 care centres have been opened, and emergency operation centres have been created.
- The cases of the mosquito-borne disease quadrupled in Brazil in January.
- Rio has registered 10,000 cases so far this year, as compared to 23000 cases in the whole of 2023.
- In January alone, 362 people were hospitalised in Rio due to dengue.
- Rio is one of three states to declare public health emergencies due to the rise in dengue infections.
- Climate change has increased the temperature, and as a result, rainfall has increased. It increases the risk of dengue.



## Assam CM launches Mascot for Khelo India University Games 2024

- Assam Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma ceremonially launched the Logo, Anthem, Mascot, Jersey and Torch of Khelo India University Games - 2023, Ashtalakshmi in Guwahati in the presence of Nisith Pramanik, Union MoS for Youth Affairs & Sports and Home Affairs.
- Assam had successfully conducted the National Games and SAARC Games and assured of providing the best facilities and service to all the participating members in this sporting event.
- 16 sporting disciplines will be held in Guwahati of the total 20 sporting disciplines and the remaining 4 disciplines in other North Eastern States.
- The Khelo India University Games will provide the platform for the University students to prepare themselves for greater international events.
- The State government in association with the Sports Authority of India is going to host the Fourth Khelo India University Games, 2023 in Guwahati from 19th to 29th February, 2024.
- The event will be organised at 18 venues in 7 cities during 11 days duration where around 4500 athletes are expected to participate in 20 sporting disciplines. Over 200 universities will participate in the mega-university event.



## UAE grants 'Golden Visa' to Super 30 founder Anand Kumar

- Super 30 founder Anand Kumar joined the elite list of Indian celebrities, including Bollywood actors Shah Rukh Khan and Sanjay Dutt, who have been granted the **'Golden Visa' by the United Arab Emirates government.**
- The coveted Golden Visa, introduced by the UAE in **2019**, grants long-term residency, permitting independent living, working, and studying.
- Kumar was nominated for the Golden Visa by the UAE Embassy in India.
- In 2002, Kumar, a Mathematics educator, started his Super 30 programme in the Indian city of Patna. He is known for teaching underprivileged students exams like JEE-Main and JEE-Advanced – the entrance examination for the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs).
- Kumar received the Padma Shri in the year 2023, the fourth-highest civilian award by the Indian government for his contributions to the field of literature and education.



## Two-day annual 'Dosmoche Mahostav' started in Leh and Likir of Ladakh

- Likir dosmoche is a Buddhist festival that takes place annually from 27th to 29th of the 12th Tibetan month which falls on 7, 8 February every year.
- The festival is also known as the "**Festival of Scapegoat**" and is the last of the New Year celebrations. It was started by the royals of Ladakh.
- The significance of Dosmoche festival is to eradicate the evil and the people actively participate in the rituals that have been followed since ages.
- During the festival, there are specific timings for certain rituals and idols are prepared of dough.
- In the ceremony, the idols are burnt or kept isolated in solitary. By doing so, it is believed that the evil spirits of the old year dwells around the idol or waft with them.
- Thus, the village gets ready to welcome the New Year wearing their Ladakhi traditional customs and musicians play religious orchestra throughout the two day celebration



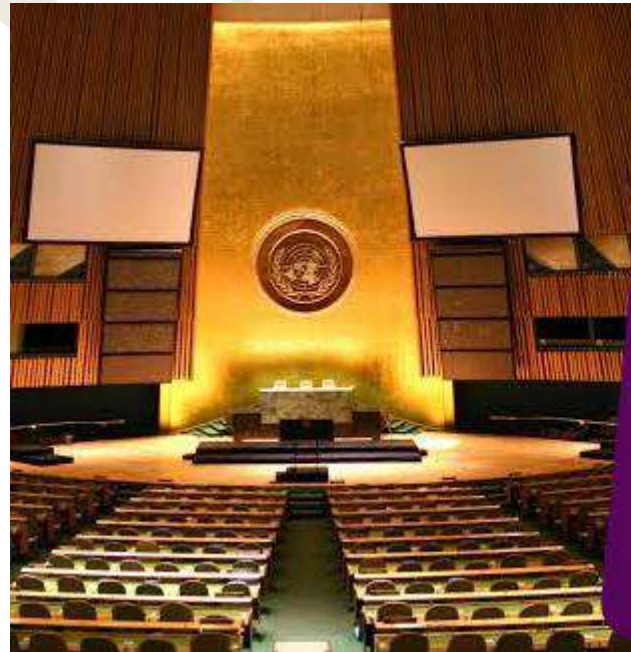
## NASA discovers potentially habitable 'super-Earth' 137 Light-years away

- The scientists at NASA have found a 'super-Earth,' a planet that could potentially support life.
- This planet, called **TOI-715 b** is 137 light-years away from us and is about one and a half times as wide as Earth.
- It revolves around its parent star in the conservative habitable zone, which could "give the planet the right temperature for liquid water to form on its surface."
- TOI-715 b's **parent star is a red dwarf**, which is smaller and colder than the Sun.
- In comparison to planets orbiting stars like the Sun, red dwarfs are smaller and colder, which allows planets to cram closer while remaining safely inside the star's habitable zone.



## India contributes USD 32.89 million to UN Regular Budget for 2024

- India has paid USD 32.89 million to the United Nations Regular Budget for 2024, joining the “honour roll” of 36 Member States who have paid their regular budget dues in full to the UN on time.
- India contributed USD 32.895 million to the 2024 United Nations Regular Budget and made the payment on January 31, 2024.
- This places India among the “honour roll” of 36 Member States that have paid their regular budget assessments to the UN in full and within the 30 day due period.
- By paying its UN assessments in full and on time, India demonstrates its commitment to supporting the United Nations and its mission. The timely payment allows the UN to fund its programs and operations worldwide.
- India has consistently been among the countries that pay their UN budget contributions on time and in full each year.



**India pays  
USD 32.89 million  
to UN Regular  
Budget for 2024**