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Gabriel Attal has been named the youngest PM in France's History

- **Gabriel Attal** has been named the next **Prime Minister of France**, as Emmanuel Macron aims to revive his presidency with a new government.
- Gabriel Attal is currently working as an **Education Minister**.
- He is the youngest Prime Minister in modern French history with an age of 34 years, outranking even Socialist Laurent Fabius who was 37 when he was appointed by François Mitterrand in 1984.
- Mr Attal replaces **Elisabeth Borne**, who resigned after 20 months in office.
- Gabriel Attal will be France's youngest Prime Minister and the first openly gay Prime Minister.



About France:

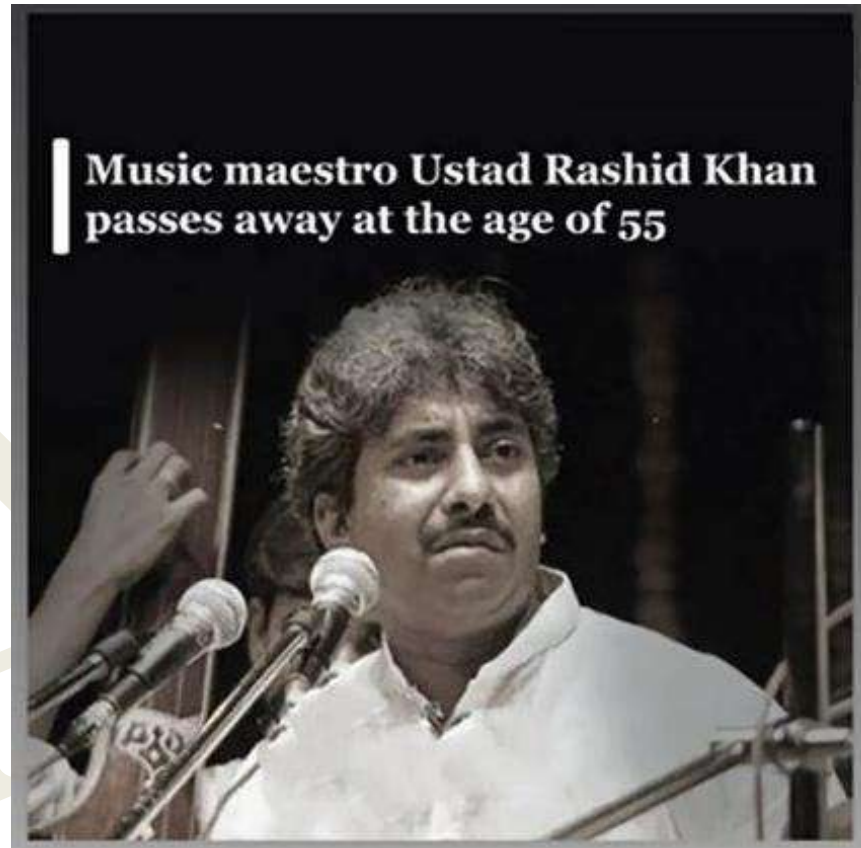
Capital: Paris

Currency: Euro

President: Emmanuel Macron

Prime Minister: Gabriel Attal

Veteran music emperor 'Ustad Rashid Khan' passed away at the age of 55



- Hindustani classical singer and music maestro **Utsad Rashid Khan** passed away in **Kolkata** at the age of 55.
- He belongs to the **Rampur-Sahaswan Gharana**, is the great-grandson of the Gharana founder Inayat Hussain Khan.
- He also set up a music academy in his mother's memory in Kolkata where he nurtured young talent.
- **His awards:** Padma Shri in 2006, the Sangeet Natak Akademi honour in 2007, and the Padma Bhushan in 2022.

Dubai secures top spot in 2024 Tripadvisor Travellers' choice awards for third consecutive year

- **Dubai** has clinched the prestigious title of the **No.1 global** destination in the “Tripadvisor Travellers' Choice Best of the Best Destinations Awards 2024”, marking its **third consecutive win**.
- This achievement sets a historic milestone, making Dubai the first city to accomplish such a feat in succession.
- The announcement coincides with the first anniversary of the Dubai Economic Agenda, D33, which strives to solidify Dubai's standing as a leading global city for **both business and leisure**.
- The accolade, revealed by Tripadvisor, the world's largest travel guidance platform, is particularly noteworthy as winners are exclusively determined by the reviews of millions of global travelers within Tripadvisor's community.
- These reviews cover a 12-month period from October 1, 2022, to September 30, 2023, assessing the quality and quantity of feedback on hotels, restaurants, and experiences in each destination.
- Dubai has not only been celebrated on Tripadvisor but has also secured the “World's No. 2 spot in Euromonitor International's Top 100 City Destinations Index 2023”.
- It is also listed among the **top 10 cities in the Global Power City Index**, as per a report from the Mori Memorial Foundation's Institute for Urban Strategies in Japan.



Dubai crowned No.1 global destination in Tripadvisor Travellers' Choice Awards for third consecutive year

IndusInd Bank introduces Samman RuPay Credit card for Government Employees

- **IndusInd Bank** launched its UPI-enabled **IndusInd Bank Samman RuPay Credit Card**, in association with National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) especially for government sector employees.
- The cards have been launched for government sector employees to provide them with a range of exclusive benefits and enhance their overall banking experience.



- The Samman RuPay Credit Card will offer the benefits of a traditional credit card with the advanced features of UPI, creating a seamless financial tool.
- The card offers a plethora of advantages, including cashback on diverse expenditures, complimentary movie tickets, no charges on cash advances, and waivers on surcharges for transactions done through IRCTC and fuel purchases.
- These features are not only designed to provide financial incentives but also to simplify and enrich the day-to-day transactional experience of government employees.

DRDO Launches
an **Indigenous**
Assault Rifle Named
UGRAM



DRDO launches Assault Rifle “Ugram” for Indian Army

- The **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** has launched **Ugram**, a state-of-the-art assault rifle of the **7.62 x 51 mm calibre**, which has been indigenously designed, developed and manufactured in collaboration with a private industry partner.
- The assault rifle has been designed for the operational requirements of armed forces, paramilitary and state police entities.
- The first operational prototype of the rifle, which has been named Ugram, which means ferocious, was unveiled at the hands of **Dr Shailendra V Gade, Director General**, Armament and Combat Engineering Systems of the DRDO
- The rifle has an effective range of **500 m** and weighs less than four kilograms and has been developed by DRDO's Pune-based facility Armament Research and Development Establishments (ARDE) in collaboration with Dvipa Armour India Private Limited.

9th edition of International Science festival to be held in Faridabad in January 2024

- The 9th edition of the Indian International Science Festival (IISF) is set to be held at the Campus of Translational Health Science and Technology Institute (THSTI) and the Regional Centre for Biotechnology (RCB) in Faridabad, Haryana from 17th January to 20th January 2024.
- The mega science fair promises a unique blend of scientific exploration, innovation and public engagement.



- The theme of the present edition of the science fair is **‘Science and Technology Public Outreach in Amrit Kaal’**.
- The main aim of the India International Science Festival (IISF) is to provide an inspirational platform to the public at large and individuals with diverse levels of interests like students, educators, scientists, researchers, industry professionals, entrepreneurs and science communicators.

Singapore's Changi Airport Earns The Title of World's Best Airport For 2023

- Singapore's Changi Airport has once again been crowned the **World's Best Airport for the year 2023**, according to the prestigious awards presented by the air transport research firm, **Skytrax**.
- Changi Airport reclaimed its status as the best in the world, marking the **twelfth time** it has received this coveted accolade.
- The annual Skytrax awards are a significant benchmark in the aviation industry, recognizing excellence in airport services and facilities.

➤ The unique feature that contributes to Changi Airport's allure is the **World's Tallest Indoor Waterfall known as Jewel**.

➤ The 2021 and 2022 Airport of the Year went to "Hamad International Airport, while Doha took second place in the global ranking and won three top awards for the World's Best Airport Shopping, the Best Airport in the Middle East and the Cleanest Airport in the Middle East".





Henley Passport Index 2024

- The **Henley Passport Index 2024** was released highlighting the "**power**" of passports of **199 countries**.
- The index, which ranks countries based on the number of destinations that allow visa-free entry to their passport, was topped by France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Singapore and Spain. Passports of all these countries have visa-free access to 194 destinations, three more than last year.
- Japan and Singapore have continued to top the list for five years now.
- According to the latest ranking, **India stands at the 80th rank** in the list of most powerful passports. Its passport has visa-free access to 62 nations, including Angola, Barbados, Bhutan, Bolivia, Djibouti, El Salvador, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Malaysia, Mauritius, Nepal, Qatar and Zimbabwe.

- In 2023, too, India's passport was ranked at the 80th spot, up five places from 2022. However, the number of visa-free destinations has jumped from 57 to 62 this year.
- The least powerful passport in the world is Afghanistan. It ranked at 104th spot with access to 28 countries. It is followed by Syria (103), Iraq (102), Pakistan (101) and Yemen (100).
- The United Arab Emirates was the fastest climber over the past decade, jumping to 11th place and offering access to 183 destinations without a visa.

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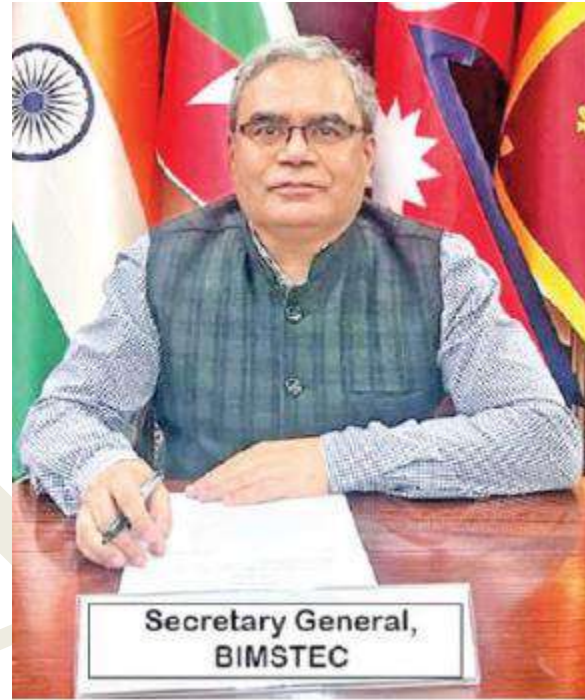


Railways to use AI for crowd control in Prayagraj during Magh Mela

- The Indian Railways is set to implement Artificial Intelligence (AI) for crowd control management at stations in Prayagraj during the upcoming Magh Mela.
- This move is seen as a rehearsal for the Maha Kumbh in 2025.
- As per an IANS report, at a recent coordination meeting between railway officials and the district administration, it was decided that devotees would be directed to 14 holding areas, including seven at Prayagraj Junction, four at Prayag station, and three at Rambagh, as well as circulating areas.

- To accommodate the heavy rush, additional bogies and Mela special trains will be operated. Shuttle buses and e-rickshaws will be available to transport people from the station to the mela area.
- To closely monitor the movement of devotees, a control tower has been constructed on top of the station building, which will aid in crowd management.

Indra Mani Pandey will be the next Secretary General of BIMSTEC



- **Indra Mani Pandey**, a senior Indian diplomat has assumed the post of **Secretary General of BIMSTEC for three years**.
- He replaced Bhutan's **Tenzin Lekfel**.
- Prior to this, Indra Mani Pandey had been India's permanent representative to the United Nations.
- The BIMSTEC is a regional organisation comprising seven Member States: five deriving from South Asia, including Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka and two from Southeast Asia, including Myanmar and Thailand.
- This sub-regional organisation came into being on 6th June 1997 through the Bangkok Declaration.

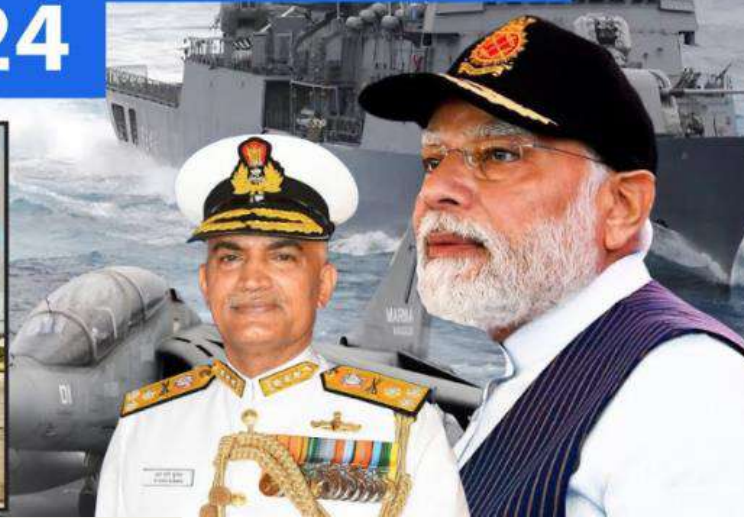


IAS officer **Senthil Pandian**
India's envoy to WTO

India's Representative to the World Trade Organization (WTO)

- **Senthil Pandian** (IAS officer -2002 of the Uttar Pradesh cadre) has been appointed as “India's ambassador to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in Geneva”.
- The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) approved Pandian's appointment for a **three-year term**, effective from the date of assuming charge.
- The appointment comes as the tenure of **Brajendra Navnit**, India's current ambassador to the WTO, concludes on March 31, 2024.

Indian Navy Reached Guam To Participate In Ex. Sea Dragon 2024



Indian Navy's P-8I Aircraft Reaches Guam For Exercise Sea Dragon 24

- The Indian Navy marked its presence in the Pacific, with the arrival of a **P-8I aircraft at Guam, USA**.
- This deployment signals the navy's participation in the **fourth edition of Ex Sea Dragon 24**, an Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) exercise spearheaded by the US Navy.
- Exercise Sea Dragon 24 fosters collaboration and interoperability among the navies of the US, Australia, South Korea, Japan, and India.
- The exercise aims to refine coordination and communication through professional interactions both on the ground and in the air.