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Democracy Report 2024 Launch



Democracy Report 2024

- **V-Dem (Varieties of Democracy) Institute** has released the ‘Democracy Report 2024’ that tracks democratic freedoms worldwide.
- The headquarters of the project is based at the department of political science, **University of Gothenburg, Sweden**.
- The V-Dem Institute publishes a number of high-profile datasets that describe qualities of different governments, annually published and publicly available for free.

- The report classifies countries into four regime types based on their score in the **Liberal Democratic Index (LDI)**:
- Liberal Democracy, Electoral Democracy, Electoral Autocracy, and Closed Autocracy.
- A liberal democracy is one where, in addition to the requirements of electoral democracy such as regular free and fair elections, mechanisms for judicial independence and constraints on executive overreach are robust, alongside rigorous protection of civil liberties and equality before law.
- In an **electoral autocracy — the category India falls into** — multiparty elections coexist with insufficient levels of basic requisites such as freedom of expression and free and fair elections.
- **Overall Findings of the report:**
- In 2023, 42 countries (home to 35% of the world’s population) were undergoing autocratization.
- 71% of the world’s population — 5.7 billion people — live in autocracies, an increase from 48% ten years ago.
- The level of democracy enjoyed by the “average person in the world is down to 1985-levels”, the report said.
- The sharpest decline occurring in Eastern Europe, and South and Central Asia.
- The report singled out freedom of expression, clean elections, and freedom of association/civil society as the three worst affected components of democracy in autocratizing countries.
- India, which was downgraded to the status of an **electoral autocracy** in 2018, has declined even further on multiple metrics to emerge as **“one of the worst autocratizers”**.
- As per the report, level of liberal democracy enjoyed by the average Indian now “down to levels last seen in 1975....when Indira Gandhi declared a state of emergency in India”.

Mission Divyastra: Agni-5 Missile with MIRV Technology

- The **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** conducted India's first successful flight test of the indigenously developed **Agni-V missile**.
- The test involved the missile carrying between four to six dummy warheads.
- The flight test, named **Mission Divyastra**, was carried out from **Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island off the Odisha coast**.
- The Agni-series missile, which was successfully tested, may not have been fired to its **maximum range of 5,000 km**. Instead, **the emphasis of the test was on firing multiple warheads to strike widely-separated targets**.
- The technology that goes into putting multiple warheads on a single rocket or missile is known as **“Multiple Independently Targetable Re-Entry Vehicle”** (MIRV) technology.
- As its name suggests, it involves launching a single missile carrying 4-6 warheads, each of which can be programmed to strike a separate target, several hundred kilometres apart.



Citizenship Amendment Act Implemented



Central Government implements Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA)

- The ministry of home affairs has notified the Citizenship Amendment Act's (CAA) rules, paving the way for the law's implementation across the country.
- **The law makes it easier for Hindu, Sikh, Jain, Buddhist, Christian and Parsi refugees from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan, to get Indian citizenship.**
- The rules, called the Citizenship (Amendment) Rules, 2024 will enable the persons eligible under CAA-2019 to apply for grant of Indian citizenship.
- The law aims to give citizenship to **non-Muslim migrants** from these countries, who came to India before **December 31, 2014**.
- The CAA was passed in December 2019 and subsequently got the president's assent but there were protests in several parts of the country against it so it could not come into effect as rules had not been notified till now.
- According to **Home Ministry**, the applications for citizenship will be submitted in online mode. A web portal has been provided for this purpose.
- Through **registration or naturalization**, non-Muslim minorities from Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan are granted Indian citizenship by the Citizenship Act of 1955 in **nine states**.
- These states are Gujarat, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, and Maharashtra.



Indian Writer Amitav Ghosh Awarded the Netherland's Erasmus Prize 2024 for highlighting Climate Crisis

- Indian author Amitav Ghosh has been awarded the prestigious **Erasmus Prize-2024** for his passionate contribution to the theme '**Imagining the unthinkable**' for bringing forth the global crisis of climate change through the written word.
- Author of bestsellers such as *The Nutmeg's Curse*, *The Hungry Tide*, and *The Great Derangement*, among others, Ghosh (67) was awarded the prize by the **Netherland's Praemium Erasmianum Foundation**.
- Ghosh has delved deeply into the question of how to do justice to this existential threat that defies our imagination. His work offers a remedy by making an uncertain future palpable through compelling stories about the past.
- The prize consists of a sum of money of **Euro 1,50,000** and adornments designed by Bruno Ninaber van Eyben. The patron of the foundation presents the prize during a ceremony that usually takes place at the royal palace in **Amsterdam**.
- Born in Kolkata in 1956, Ghosh studied social anthropology at Oxford and divided his time between India and the United States. He has won multiple prizes, including the **2018 Jnanpith Award**, the highest literary prize in India.

Srinivasan Swamy Honoured with prestigious IAA Golden Compass Award

- **Srinivasan Swamy** received the 'IAA Golden Compass Award' from the International Advertising Association (IAA) in March 2024.
- Srinivasan Swamy holds the position of Chairman and Managing Director at RK Swamy Limited. He is also known as **Sundar Swami**.
- This award is being given for the first time to an Indian industrial leader.
- Srinivasan Swamy has been awarded the IAA Golden Compass Award at the **45th IAA World Congress held in Penang, Malaysia**.
- He was presented with the award by Penang Governor Tun Ahmad Fuzi Abdul Razak.
- The award honors stalwarts who have made significant contributions in the field of marketing, advertising and media industries.
- To recognize his commitment to excellence in communications as well as his contribution to the worldwide advancement of the International Advertising Association.



Infibeam Avenues Secures RBI Authorization for Payment Aggregator License

- **Infibeam Avenues**, India's leading AI-powered fintech company, has received official approval from the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** to operate as a payment aggregator.
- The authorization, granted on March 4, allows Infibeam Avenues to function as a payment aggregator under its widely recognized payment gateway brand, CCAvenue.
- The RBI's approval follows the in-principle nod given in October 2022, solidifying Infibeam Avenues' position in the digital payments sector.
- The RBI introduced the **Payment Aggregator (PA) framework in March 2020**, requiring payment gateways to obtain an aggregator license for merchant acquisition and the provision of digital payment acceptance solutions.
- Infibeam Avenues has experienced substantial growth, with over 10 million merchants on its platform and onboarding more than half a million merchants in the first half of FY24.
- The company attributes its rapid expansion to strategic partnerships with banks and merchants, showcasing a commitment to collaborative efforts within the financial ecosystem.
- Infibeam Avenues has introduced innovative solutions such as the CCAvenue mobile app, featuring India's first pin-on-glass SoftPoS solution, CCAvenue TapPay, aimed at revolutionizing digital payments for merchants and Kiranas across the country.





INS JATAYU

**New Navy Base
Will Commision in Minicoy**

LAKSHADWEEP

INS Jatayu Commissioned By Indian Navy At Lakshadweep

- The Indian Navy has commissioned **INS Jatayu at Minicoy island in Lakshadweep**, enhancing operational capabilities and extending reach in the vital Indian Ocean region.
- The commissioning ceremony was attended by **Navy Chief Admiral R Hari Kumar, Lakshadweep administrator Praful Patel, Southern Naval Command Chief Vice Admiral V Srinivas, and Western Naval Command Chief Vice Admiral Sanjay J Singh.**
- INS Jatayu is strategically significant in anti-piracy and anti-narcotics operations in the Western Arabian Sea, contributing to maritime security efforts.
- The base is named after Jatayu, a character from the epic Ramayana, symbolizing selfless service and dedication. The commissioning marks a pivotal moment in the Indian Navy's commitment to safeguarding maritime security.
- Admiral Kumar highlighted Lakshadweep's strategic importance amidst geopolitical developments, emphasizing INS Jatayu's role in maintaining maritime domain awareness and protecting national interests.
- **Captain Lovekesh Thakur, Naval Officer-in-Charge (Lakshadweep)**, highlighted Minicoy's strategic location on traditional trade routes, making it a crucial vantage point for gathering information on shipping movements and enhancing surveillance capabilities.



**INDIA'S FIRST
DRIVERLESS METRO TRAIN
TO BE INTRODUCED IN
BENGALURU**

Bengaluru to Get India's First Driverless Metro Train

- The **Bengaluru Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL)** has received the first set of six train coaches for India's upcoming driverless metro line, known as the Yellow Line. This 18.8 km-long line will connect RV Road and Bommasandra, making it the country's first driverless train system.
- The Yellow Line will utilize the **Communication-based Train Control (CBTC)** system, a modern radio communication system providing timely and accurate train control information. This system enables Unattended Train Operations (UTO), automating tasks such as door operations, stoppage, and train movement.
- The Bengaluru Metro will incorporate Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology for track safety monitoring. AI algorithms will analyze sensor data to detect anomalies like cracks, wear and tear, and other irregularities. Cameras on trains will capture visual data for real-time analysis of safety concerns.
- Special features of the driverless metro trains include a hot axle detection system, real-time location displays, front and rear-view cameras for passenger monitoring, and an **Emergency Egress Device (EED)** unit for passenger safety during emergencies.
- The driverless metro coaches are manufactured by Chinese firm CRRC Nanjing Puzhen Co Ltd, in collaboration with Indian company Titagarh Rail Systems Ltd., as part of the Make In India Initiative.
- The driverless Yellow Line is currently undergoing safety tests and is expected to commence operations soon, connecting Bengaluru's tech hub with the southern regions of the city and helping alleviate traffic congestion on Hosur Road.

Sela Tunnel has been inaugurated by PM Modi in Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the world's longest bi-lane tunnel, the Sela Tunnel, in Arunachal Pradesh.
- It has been built at an altitude of 13,000 feet. It will ensure uninterrupted connectivity to Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh in any season.
- It has been built at an investment of 825 crore. It has two tunnels and a link road.
- The foundation stone for the Sela Tunnel was laid in 2019 by the Prime Minister.
- **It lies along the route from Tezpur (Assam) to Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh.**
- Sela Tunnel is the highest tunnel in India, will provide all-weather connectivity to the strategic Tawang region and other forward areas bordering China.



Japanese housing pioneer Riken Yamamoto won Pritzker Prize 2024

- On March 5, Riken Yamamoto was named as the winner of the ninth Pritzker Prize often referred to as the "Nobel Prize of Architecture".
- In the 45-year history of the Pritzker Prize, no country has won this award more than Japan.
- Yamamoto is best known for innovative housing projects and educational institutions. He has been awarded \$100,000 and a bronze medal.
- In 2023, David Chipperfield won the Pritzker Prize.
- In 1979, American architect Philip Johnson won the first Pritzker Prize.

➤ **Pritzker Prize:**

- It is an international architecture award that is awarded annually to "honor a living architect or architects whose built work demonstrates a combination of those qualities of talent, vision and commitment."
- In 1979, Jay A. Pritzker and his wife Cindy Founded this award.
- The prize is funded by the Pritzker family and sponsored by the Hyatt Foundation.



Devendra Jhajharia has been elected the President of Paralympic Committee of India

- India's sports ministry has recently removed the suspension of the Paralympic Committee of India.
- The committee was suspended by the ministry after it failed to conduct elections on time.
- Deepa Malik was the previous president of the committee. Malik assumed charge in 2020.
- The first-ever Para Shooting World Cup in India is being conducted in New Delhi from March 9 to 15.
- 50 countries with almost 500 athletes will be taking part in this event.
- Devendra Jhajharia won two gold medals for India at the Paralympics.
- He won his first Paralympics gold in Athens in 2004. He won the second one in Rio in 2016.
- He also won a silver medal in the Tokyo Paralympics.



Devendra Jhajharia Becomes New President of Paralympic Committee of India

Santhosh Trophy 2023-24: Services beats Goa to lift title for 7th time in competition's history

- **Services team** lifted the Santosh Trophy for the seventh time, beating Goa 1-0 in the 77th National Football Championship for Santosh Trophy Final at the Golden Jubilee Stadium, Arunachal Pradesh.
- PP Shafeel, moment of magic finally arrived in the 67th minute the winner as Services edged out Goa to clinch their seventh Santosh Trophy title.
- AIFF President Mr. Kalyan Chaubey presented the Santosh Trophy to Services, the winners of the 77th edition of the National Football Championship.
- **Best Goalkeeper:** Sayad bin Abdul Kadir (Services)
- **Top scorer of the tournament:** Phijam Sanathoi Meitei (Manipur) – 11 goals
- **Player of the tournament:** Samir Murmu (Services)
- **Fair Play Award:** Jharkhand
- **About All India Football Federation**
- **Establishment year:** 23rd June 1937
- **Headquarters:** New Delhi
- **President:** Kalyan Choubay



International Day of Women Judges 2024 – March 10

- On April 28 last year, the United Nations General Assembly had resolved to proclaim 10 March of each year as the ‘International Day of Women Judges’ and called upon the Member States to observe the same, ‘in order to promote the full and equal participation of women at all levels of the judiciary’.
- In the 72-year-old history of the Supreme Court, which has seen appointment of a total of 256 Judges till date, only 11 are women.
- It took the government 39 years to appoint Fathima Beevi as the first woman SC Judge. .
- It was for the first time during the tenure of Justice Ramana as CJI that the SC saw appointment of three women SC judges in Justices Kohli, Nagarathna and Trivedi.
- It is ironic that the country would have to wait for 77 years to get its first woman CJI in Justice Nagarathna in September 2027.

MARCH 10TH
INTERNATIONAL
DAY OF WOMEN
JUDGES



UGC launches 'SheRNI' to ensure women scientist representation

- **The University Grants Commission's (UGC), Information and Library Network (INFLIBNET) Centre** has launched the **She Research Network in India (SheRNI)**.
- She Research Network in India, also known as SheRNI, is like a big online club for women who know a lot about different things. It helps connect these women so they can share what they know and help each other out.
- The SheRNI initiative is aimed at empowering women professionals to forge meaningful alliances, foster collaboration, and uplift one another, thereby propelling the advancement of women across diverse fields.
- About University Grants Commission
- **Formation year:** November 1956
- **Headquarters:** Newdelhi
- **Chairman:** Mamidala Jagadesh Kumar

**UGC launches 'SheRNI'
to ensure women
scientist representation**



Indian Navy participates in Exercise Cutlass Express 24

- The Indian Navy participated in the Exercise Cutlass Express - 24 (CE-24) which was held at Port Victoria, Seychelles from 26 February -08 March 2024.
- The Indian Navy was represented by **INS Tir**, the lead ship of the First Training Squadron. INS Tir was led by Senior Officer, First Training Squadron, Capt Anshul Kishore.
- The exercise was inaugurated by the President of Seychelles **Wavel Ramkalawan** in presence of dignitaries from India, USA and African countries.
- Exercise Cutlass Express is a multinational maritime exercise sponsored by the **U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) and led by U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa/U.S. Sixth Fleet.**
- The exercise seeks to promote maritime security and cooperation in the strategic waters of the East African coast and the Western Indian Ocean.
- The Indian Navy has been participating in the Exercise Cutlass Express since 2019.
- **Republic of Seychelles**
- **Capital:** Victoria
- **President:** Wavel Ramkalawan
- **Currency:** Seychelles Rupee



According to ICEA report, India became the 2nd largest mobile phone manufacturing country in the world in the last decade

- India is set to export around 30 per cent of its total smartphone production in the financial year 2024, according to a report by the **India Cellular and Electronics Association (ICEA)**
- The report, which looks at the smartphone production in India from 2014-2024 period, the sector did Rs 20 lakh crore cumulative smartphone production against a target out of all the smartphones sold in India, 97 per cent were made locally within the country.
- It is believed that the doubling of India's GDP from the current **\$3.7 trillion to \$7 trillion by 2030** will be led by growth in the digital sector and trade. In both these areas, electronics manufacturing led by mobile production will play a critical role.
- The industry expects to end FY24 with an estimated export of Rs 1.2 lakh crore. This would mean a 7,500 per cent increase in exports over a decade," according to the report.
- **About India Cellular and Electronics Association (ICEA)**
 - **Eshtablished year:** 2017
 - **Headquarters:** Newdelhi
 - **Chairman:** Pankaj Mohindroo



ICEA
INDIA CELLULAR
& ELECTRONICS
ASSOCIATION

‘Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain-2024’ campaign has been launched by Union Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat

- The fifth edition of the campaign has been launched under the theme ‘Nari Shakti se Jal Shakti’.
- This campaign will be implemented till the 30th of November, 2024.
- It has been launched to recognize and appreciate the role of women in water management, conservation and sustainability.
- The campaign includes water conservation and rainwater harvesting, enumerating, geo-tagging and inventory of all water bodies.
- The campaign includes setting up of Jal Shakti Kendras in all districts; intensive afforestation; and awareness generation among the masses.
- Its main aim is to establish a powerful connection between the ‘Nari Shakti’ and the sustainable management of water resources.
- Union Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat also launched two books namely, “Jal Shakti Abhiyan: 2019 to 2023” and “101 Water Champions of Jal Jeevan Mission”.



Rajendra Prasad Goyal assumes Additional Charge as Chairman & MD of NHPC Limited

- State-owned NHPC appointed Rajendra Prasad Goyal as MD and CEO of company with immediate effect.
- The hydropower giant has been without a permanent Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) since Abhay Kumar Singh retired on August 31, 2022.
- Goyal works as the Director of Finance at NHPC.
- **About NHPC**
- **Establishment year:** 7th November 1975
- **Headquarters:** Faridabad, Haryana
- **Chairman:** Rajendra Prasad Goyal

