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GLOBAL FIREPOWER MILITARY STRENGTH 2024

US Tops, India Fourth Place



Global Firepower Military Strength Ranking 2024: India at 4th Place

- The latest annual report by **Global Firepower (GFP)** revealed that India has maintained its position as the world's fourth most powerful military. All top four military powers in the world have maintained their respective positions, including the **United States**, which has secured the top spot since 2006.
- The GFP ranking evaluates military capabilities based on factors such as manpower, equipment, natural resources, finances, and geography across land, sea, and air.
- The combined PowerIndex (PwrIdx) score is generated, with a lower score indicating stronger military capabilities. According to the index, a "0.0000" is considered to be the perfect score.
- According to the report, the United States leads globally not only in military strength but also in technological advancements, medical, aerospace, and computer/telecom sectors. The US boasts 13,300 aircraft, including 983 attack helicopters, with a PwrIdx of 0.0699, signifying its dominance in military power.
- Russia secured the second position with a PwrIdx of 0.0702, closely followed by China at 0.0706, while India maintained its fourth position since 2006, with a score of 0.1023.

Top 10 countries with the most powerful militaries in the world:

1. United States
2. Russia
3. China
4. India
5. South Korea
6. United Kingdom
7. Japan
8. Turkey
9. Pakistan
10. Italy

10 countries with the least powerful militaries in the world:

1. Bhutan
2. Moldova
3. Suriname
4. Somalia
5. Benin
6. Liberia
7. Belize
8. Sierra Leone
9. Central African Republic
10. Iceland

Pench Tiger Reserve attains India's first dark sky park status

- The Pench Tiger Reserve in **Maharashtra** has been designated as **India's first Dark Sky Park** and the **fifth in Asia**, protecting the night sky and preventing light pollution.
- The certification was given by the **“International Dark-Sky Association”**, a global dark-sky movement to promote astronomy.
- A Dark Sky Park is a designated area characterized by **low light pollution levels**, making it an ideal location for stargazing and astronomical observation.
- This designation positions Pench Tiger Reserve as a sanctuary where tourists can witness celestial spectacles, shielded from the intrusion of artificial light pollution.
- Dark Sky Place certification focuses on lighting policy, dark sky-friendly retrofits, outreach and education, and monitoring the night sky.
- The **International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)** emphasises on the recognition of the intrinsic value of the night sky as a natural, cultural, and historical resource.
- The IUCN also highlights the need to preserve natural darkness for the sake of nature conservation, ecological integrity in protected areas, and the well-being of communities in healthy cities.





INS Cheetah, Guldar & Kumbhir decommissioned after 40 years

- Indian Navy Ships Cheetah, Guldar and Kumbhir were decommissioned after rendering four-decades of service to the nation.
- The decommissioning event was conducted at **Port Blair**, wherein the National Flag, the Naval Ensign and Decommissioning Pennants of the three ships were lowered for the last time.
- Cheetah, Guldar and Kumbhir were constructed at the Gdynia Shipyard, Poland as Polnocny class Landing Ships and were commissioned into the Indian Navy in 1984, 1985 and 1986 respectively.

- The Commanding Officers of the three ships were Cdr V B Mishra, Lt Cdr SK Singh and Lt Cdr J Banerjee respectively.
- During the initial years, Cheetah was based at Kochi and Chennai for brief periods, and Kumbhir and Guldar were based at Visakhapatnam. The ships were subsequently re-based at **Andaman and Nicobar Command**, where they served till their decommissioning.
- According to the Ministry of Defence, these ships were in active Naval service for nearly 40 years, and collectively traversed about 17 lakh nautical miles, spending over 12,300 days in sea. As the amphibian platforms of the Andaman and Nicobar Command, these ships have conducted over 1300 beaching operations for landing of army troops ashore.
- These ships participated in numerous maritime security missions and **Humanitarian Assistance** and **Disaster Relief operations**.
- Notable among them are their role during **Operation Aman** as part of IPKF operations and **Operation Tasha**, a joint operation carried out between Indian Navy and Indian Coast Guard in May 1990. The operation was to control smuggling of arms and ammunition and illegal immigration across Indian Sri Lankan border.
- It also made stellar contributions in relief operations post 1997 cyclone off Sri Lanka and the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami.

Ex-Ayutthaya: India-Thailand First Naval Exercise Connects to Ayodhya

- The Indian Navy and Royal Thai Navy (RTN) conducted a maiden bilateral exercise, named **‘Ex-Ayutthaya’**, which symbolises the significance of ‘Ayodhya’ in India and Ayutthaya in Thailand, which holds historic legacies and has rich cultural ties.
- ‘Ex-Ayutthaya’, which translates to **‘the invincible one’** or **‘undefeatable’**, was conducted from December 20-23, 2023. Indigenously built Indian naval ships Kulish and IN-LCU 56 participated in the inaugural edition of the exercise.
- The Royal Thai Navy was represented by His Thai Majesty's Ship (HTMS) Prachuap Khiri Khan.
- The 36th edition of **India-Thailand Coordinated Patrol (Indo-Thai CORPAT)** was also conducted along with the maiden bilateral exercise.
- With the institution of a bilateral exercise, both navies have taken a step towards strengthening operational synergy and progressively increasing the exercise complexity.
- As part of the central government's vision of **SAGAR (Security And Growth for All in the Region)**, the Indian Navy has been proactively engaging with countries in the Indian Ocean Region towards enhancing regional maritime security.



**IND-Thai Navy First Bilateral Exercise
‘Ex-Ayutthaya’ Connects To Ayodhya**



Indian Army indigenously develops end-to-end secure mobile ecosystem 'SAMBHAV'

- In line with the ethos of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat', the Indian Army has indigenously developed an "**end-to-end secure mobile ecosystem**" named SAMBHAV, to provide secure communication with instant connectivity on the move.
- The ecosystem **SAMBHAV (Secure Army Mobile Bharat Version)** operates on the state-of-the-art contemporary **5G technology** and will represent a significant leap forward in India's defence capability.
- It has been developed in close collaboration with national centers of excellence from the academia and industry.
- The development of 'SAMBHAV' technology **aims to address the information security challenges faced by the Indian Army.**

Madhya Pradesh emerges overall Champion of first ever Beach Games held in Diu

- In the first ever Beach Games held in Diu, Madhya Pradesh emerged as the overall champion with impressive performance winning **18 medals including 7 gold**.
- **Maharashtra won 14 medals** including 3 gold, while **Tamil Nadu, Uttarakhand**, and hosts **Dadra, Nagar Haveli, Diu & Daman secured 12 medals each**.
- The first multi-sports beach games in India were organized at the pristine blue flag-certified Ghoghla Beach in Diu from the 4th to the 11th January
- Assam won 8 medals, out of which 5 were Gold. Lakshadweep secured the gold medal in Beach Soccer, marking a historic achievement for the pristine island territory.
- Over **1400 athletes**, all **under the age of 21**, from 28 states and Union Territories participated in games like Tug of War, Sea Swimming, Pencak Silat, Mallakhamb, Beach Volleyball, Beach Kabaddi, and Beach Soccer.
- The sport of **Beach Boxing** made its debut marking a historic moment in the nation's athletic journey.



Lionel Messi & Aitana Bonmati Named Best FIFA Male & Female Players

- Argentina World Cup winner **Lionel Messi** has been crowned FIFA's best men's player for 2023 for his contribution to helping Argentina's men's team win the World Cup in Qatar. He overtook Norwegian striker Erling Haaland in a close contest.
- In the women's category, **Aitana Bonmati** received the award for FIFA's best player, having led Spain to the FIFA World Cup and Barcelona to the Champions League glory.
- **Ederson**, the goalkeeper for Manchester City, secured the best male goalkeeper award, while **Mary Earps**, the number one goalkeeper for Manchester United and England, earned the best female goalkeeper accolade.
- Manchester City coach **Pep Guardiola** won the Best Male Manager of 2023 award. On the other hand, England coach **Sarina Wiegman** won the women's best coach award for a record fourth time.



Rameshbabu Praggnanand became India's number 1 chess player by defeating world chess champion Ding Liren

- Praggnanandhaa became the No.1 chess player in India after he over took the number-one spot among Indian players in the live ratings.
- He beat World Champion Ding Liren at the **2024 Tata Steel Chess Tournament** and leapfrogged GM Viswanathan Anand.
- He surpassed India's first chess grandmaster Viswanathan Anand, who had won the coveted title in 1988 and had earned a spot in history by becoming the first Indian to win the chess grandmaster title.
- After defeating world champion Ding Liren of China in the fourth round of the Tata Steel Chess Tournament, 18-year-old Praggnanandhaa has **2748.3 points** as against 2748 of five-time world champion Anand in the FIDE live ratings.
- The tournament was held at **The Netherlands**. Praggnanandhaa became the second Indian after Anand to defeat a reigning world champion in classical chess.





The 75th Emmy Awards 2024

- The 75th Primetime Emmy Awards were held on January 16, 2024, in **Los Angeles**. 'The Bear' and 'Succession' have won the most awards at the 75th Emmy Awards.
- Emmy Awards are awarded in 16 categories by the **International Academy of Television Arts & Sciences**.
- The 75th edition of the Emmys, organized by the National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences, took place at the Peacock Theater in Los Angeles. Comedian and actor **Anthony Anderson** hosted the show.
- The comedy series "**The Bear**" won Emmy Awards for Best Comedy as well as Best Actor, Best Director, Best Writer and Supporting Actor and Actress categories.
- "**Succession**" has won the Emmy Award 2024 for Best Drama and has won six awards in total.

Telangana sings agreement with WEF for setting up C4IR in Hyderabad

- Telangana is set to lead advancements **in health technology and life sciences** with the establishment of the **Centre for the Fourth Industrial Revolution (C4IR)** in Hyderabad.
- The agreement was signed during discussions between state Chief Minister **A Revanth Reddy** and World Economic Forum (WEF) President **Borge Brende** at the ongoing WEF Annual Conference in Davos, Switzerland.
- The C4IR in Hyderabad is scheduled to be launched on February 28 as part of the BioAsia-2024 conference. It will focus on leveraging technology to enhance the state's healthcare.
- The initiative aligns with the broader vision of Telangana government and goals of the World Economic Forum, emphasising collaboration to improve people's lives through enhanced lifestyles and improved quality of living standards.



Indian & Japan Coast Guards conducts Joint 'Exercise Sahyog Kaijin' off Chennai Coast

- The Indian and Japanese Coast Guards have recently conducted a successful joint exercise named 'Sahyog Kaijin' off the coast of Chennai.
- This marks the **20th edition** of the joint exercise between the Japanese and Indian Coast Guards since its institution in 2000.
- This exercise is a part of the ongoing collaboration between the two countries under the **Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) signed in 2006.**



- The MOC also includes high-level visits, annual joint exercises, training exchanges and participation in workshops and seminars.
- The 5-day training and exercise covered important aspects of chemical pollution at sea, and safety equipment including hands-on practical training on the response equipment.

Oxford Scientists Initiates First Human Trails For Deadly Nipah Virus Vaccine

- The University of Oxford has started human testing of an experimental vaccine against the brain-swelling Nipah virus that led to outbreaks in Kerala and other parts of Asia.
- There is no vaccine yet for the deadly virus. Nipah was first identified about 25 years ago in Malaysia and has led to outbreaks in Bangladesh, India and Singapore.
- The first participants in the Oxford trial have already received doses of the vaccine. The shot is based on the same technology as the one used in **AstraZeneca** and **Serum Institute of India's COVID-19 shots**.
- The 51-patient early-stage trial will take place in Oxford and will examine the safety and immune response of the vaccine in people aged 18 to 55 years.
- "Nipah has epidemic potential, with its **fruit bat hosts** found in areas home to over two billion people. This trial is a step forward in efforts to build a suite of tools to protect against this killer virus.
- The infection can cause fever, headache, cough and difficulty breathing, with brain swelling likely to follow. Its fatality rate is estimated at 40% to 75%, according to the **World Health Organization**.



US Air Force Officer Madison Marsh becomes First Active-Duty Winner of Miss America 2024

- In a historic achievement, **Second Lt. Madison Marsh**, an officer in the U.S. Air Force, was crowned **Miss America 2024**, marking the first time an active-duty service member has clinched this prestigious title.
- Madison, a second lieutenant in the US Air Force and master's student at the Harvard Kennedy School's public policy program, won the beauty pageant in Orlando, Florida.
- Hailing from **Colorado**, the home of the U.S. Air Force Academy, Marsh proudly represented her state in the pageant.
- Since 2018, Marsh has been actively involved in raising awareness and funds for pancreatic cancer research.
- **She co-founded the Whitney Marsh Foundation** with her father and sister in honor of her mother, who succumbed to the disease.





ICC Player of the Month for December 2023, Pat Cummins and Deepti Sharma Shine

- **Deepti Sharma, the Indian all-rounder**, secures **ICC Women's Player of the Month** with outstanding performances in Test matches.
- **Australian** pace spearhead, **Pat Cummins**, clinches the **ICC Men's Player of the Month for December 2023** with stellar contributions.
- Deepti Sharma showcases her versatility with a noteworthy all-round performance, while Pat Cummins display outstanding bowling.

Wings India-2024 exhibition started at Begumpet Airport in Hyderabad

- The biggest civil aviation event in Asia, Wings India 2024 started on 18th January, at Begumpet Airport in Hyderabad.
- Airports Authority of India in collaboration with the **Ministry of Civil Aviation and FICCI** is organising the **biennial event**, inaugurated by the **Union Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia**.
- This edition of Wings India will be showcasing an array of new-generation aircraft displays, allied aviation services, auxiliary unit industries, and advancements in the tourism sector.
- The Wings India 2024 is being held with the main theme **‘Connecting India with the World in Amritkal’** and will witness deliberations over the strategies and strategic framework for the future Aviation Sector of the country.
- The best of the aviation industry will be showcasing their innovative aviation technology and aircraft machinery at the event. Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. will be showcasing its indigenous civil platforms like the Hindustan-228 aircraft and the upgraded civil helicopter Dhruv in the exhibition.
- Air India will unveil its **Airbus A350**, the first aircraft of its kind in the country while **Boeing 777-9** will be on display for the first time in the country.



Farsi would be the 9th Indian Classical Language

- The government of India has decided to include Farsi as one of the nine classical languages of India in the New Education Policy.
- This recognition reflects a commitment to fostering greater understanding and appreciation of Farsi's rich heritage within the Indian educational framework.
- The **Indian classical languages**, or the Shastriya Bhasha, is an umbrella term for the languages of India having high antiquity, and valuable, original and distinct literary heritage.
- **Tamil** was the first language in India to be accorded classical language status in 2004. **Sanskrit, Kannada, Malayalam, and Odia** are the other languages that have been declared classical languages in India by the central government.
- According to the National Education Policy-2020 of India, Pali and Prakrit along with **Farsi (Persian)** should be preserved.



India's First Cow Sanctuary in Uttar Pradesh

- The Uttar Pradesh Government has recently built India's First Cow Sanctuary, a Centrally funded at **Muzaffarnagar district** under the **Rashtriya Gokul Mission (RGM)**.
- The sanctuary is situated at the Tuglakpur-Kamhera village under the Purkaji block of the Muzaffarnagar district.
- The sanctuary can shelter up to **5,000 stray cattle**.
- Stray cattle have become a big problem in Uttar Pradesh, as they damage crops and attack people.
- As per the 20th Livestock Census of 2019, the state has 11.84 lakh stray cattle.
- **Rashtriya Gokul Mission**
 - It is a centrally-sponsored scheme, launched in 2014, for the conservation of indigenous **bovine breeds**.
 - It comes under the **Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying** for the development.



Maharashtra government has declared a new wildlife habitat for the 'canid' wild dogs family in sangli

- The Maharashtra government has established a crucial new wildlife habitat in Sangli district, aptly named the **Atpadi Conservation Reserve**.
- Spanning a compact 9.48 sq. km, this reserve prioritizes the protection of the endangered '**canid**' family, including wild dogs, wolves, jackals, and foxes. The Atpadi Conservation Reserve marks a significant step forward in conserving Maharashtra's precious biodiversity.
- Strategically located, Atpadi bridges the gap between the **Maini Conservation Area** and the **Madhok Bird Sanctuary**, fostering a safe wildlife corridor.
- Its establishment not only safeguards endangered species but also promotes ecological balance and ensures the well-being of local wildlife corridors.



#startupindia

INNOVATION
WEEK 2024 | Is Here!

10th - 18th January 2024

#Celebrating8YearsofInnovation

DPIIT is organizing Startup India Innovation Week 2024 from 10th to 18th January 2024

- The DPIIT (**Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade**), a part of the **Ministry of Commerce and Industry**, is organising 'Startup India Innovation Week' from 10th to 18th January 2024.
- This year, the '**Startup India**' initiative is celebrating its eighth anniversary. It commenced in 2016.
- This initiative aims to bring together stakeholders, including startups, entrepreneurs, and investors, to celebrate and boost the Indian Startup Ecosystem, culminating in **National Startup Day on January 16th, 2024**.
- Eight virtual **Ask Me Anything (AMA)** live sessions are planned to be conducted from 10th to 17th January 2024 with startup ecosystem enablers including incubators and accelerators, investors, mentors, unicorns, corporates, startups, academia, and government to build capacity of the ecosystem.
- Further, 5 dedicated mentorship sessions focused on 'How to Start Up' are planned to be conducted focused on capacity building of aspiring entrepreneurs and student entrepreneurs on topics such as understanding business structures, processes to incorporate an entity, and building a business plan.



Economy to grow at 7.4% this fiscal: PHDCCI

- Industry body **PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PHDCCI)** expects Indian economy to grow 7.4 per cent this fiscal and 7.5 per cent in 2025-26, according to its Chief Economist and Deputy Secretary General **S P Sharma**.
- This growth projection, much higher than the RBI's projection of 7 per cent is "bit conservative" as the year 2024 is widely expected to see some global growth slowdown.
- Indian economy grew 7.7 per cent in the first half this fiscal. PHDCCI projection of 7.4 per cent for entire fiscal would imply that the chamber is anticipating growth of 7.1 percent in second half.

- World Bank has, in its latest Global Economic Prospects report, highlighted that the global economy is set for weakest half-decade performance in 30 years.
- 2023-24 would be a year of consolidation of Indian economy and would move into \$4-trillion zone in 2024-25.

Each state can field tableau once in 3 years in Republic Day parade

- The Government has finalized a rotational plan to ensure that every State and Union Territory gets an opportunity to present their tableaux at the **Republic Day parade** within a **three-year cycle (2024-2026)**.
- The rotational system, agreed upon by 28 States, intends to provide fair opportunities to all regions, mitigating accusations of political bias and fostering a more inclusive celebration.
- **The Ministry of Defence (MoD)** is responsible for conducting the parade and coordinating arrangements with States and other agencies.
- **The Ministry of Culture collaborates with the MoD** in the selection process, given the cultural and artistic nature of the tableaux, supporting in the evaluation and promotion of cultural displays.
- The theme of 2024 Republic Day parade is **‘Viksit Bharat’** (Developed India) and **‘Bharat-Loktantra ki Matraka’** (India-Mother of Democracy).



Jitendra Singh inaugurated 9th Indian International Science Festival in Haryana

- Minister of State for Science and Technology Dr. Jitendra Singh inaugurated the 9th Indian International Science Festival in Faridabad, Haryana.
- The primary objective of this festival is to **commemorate the world of science**, making it accessible to all. It will continue till 20th January, which aims to engage the public with science and celebrate the joy of science.
- **Department of Science and Technology** informed that during the festival, 17 different events are being organized keeping in mind different sections of the society like young students, women scientists, toy manufacturers, social organizations, science teachers and start-ups.
- India emerges as a global frontrunner, showcasing its unparalleled prowess on the international stage.

