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- ❖ India's Wholesale Price Inflation Eases To 0.20% In February

Rajnath Singh inaugurated Navy's headquarters in Delhi

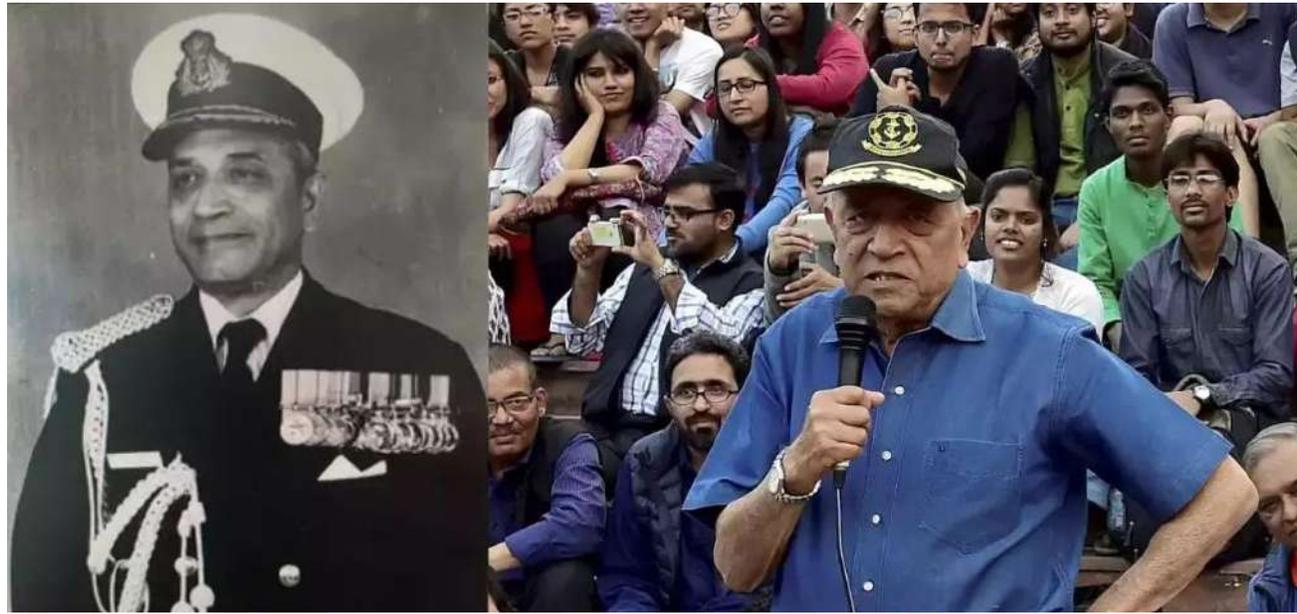
- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh officially inaugurated **Nausena Bhawan**, the **newly-constructed Headquarters of the Indian Navy, located at Delhi Cantt.**
- This milestone signifies the Navy's transition to its first independent headquarters in Delhi, consolidating its operations previously scattered across 13 different locations.
- The architectural marvel of Nausena Bhawan was the result of a rigorous all-India Competition process, ensuring both functionality and aesthetic appeal.
- Comprising three wings spread across four stories, the building incorporates innovative construction technologies to optimize efficiency and sustainability.
- With a Green Rating IV under the Integrated Habitability Assessment, the building underscores its commitment to sustainable practices.
- Additionally, it features a comprehensive three-tier security system, incorporating cutting-edge technologies such as Automatic Underbelly scanning of vehicles, Power fence, Face Recognition Cameras, Bollards, Vehicle Stoppers, Access Control, and Security Cameras.





Rs.2890 cr deal for Dornier upgrade inked with HAL

- The defence ministry inked a contract worth over Rs 2,890 crore with state-run aerospace major Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL) for mid-life upgrade of 25 Dornier aircraft of the Indian Navy.
- Under the project, the HAL will incorporate state-of-the-art avionics systems and sensors onboard the aircraft.
- The upgrade would significantly enhance the operational capability of the Dornier aircraft of the Indian Navy to perform primary roles of maritime surveillance, coastal surveillance, electronic intelligence and development of maritime domain awareness.
- The MLU of 25 Dornier aircraft is likely to generate an employment of 1.8 lakh mandays during its execution span of 6.5 years.



Former Navy Chief Admiral L.Ramdas passes away

- Admiral Laxminarayan Ramdas (Retd), who served as the 13th Chief of Naval Staff between December 1990 and September 1993, passed away.
- In **2004**, he was honoured with the **Ramon Magsaysay Award for Peace** for his efforts towards demilitarizing and denuclearizing South Asia.
- He played a heroic role during the **Indo-Pakistan War of 1971**. During the operations against Pakistan in December 1971, he was the commanding officer of an Indian Naval unit of the eastern fleet.
- He was commissioned into the Indian Navy on September 1, 1953.
- Later, he was promoted to Lieutenant in 1955 and to Lieutenant-Commander in 1963.

TS Government to take up comprehensive caste survey with Rs.150 cr

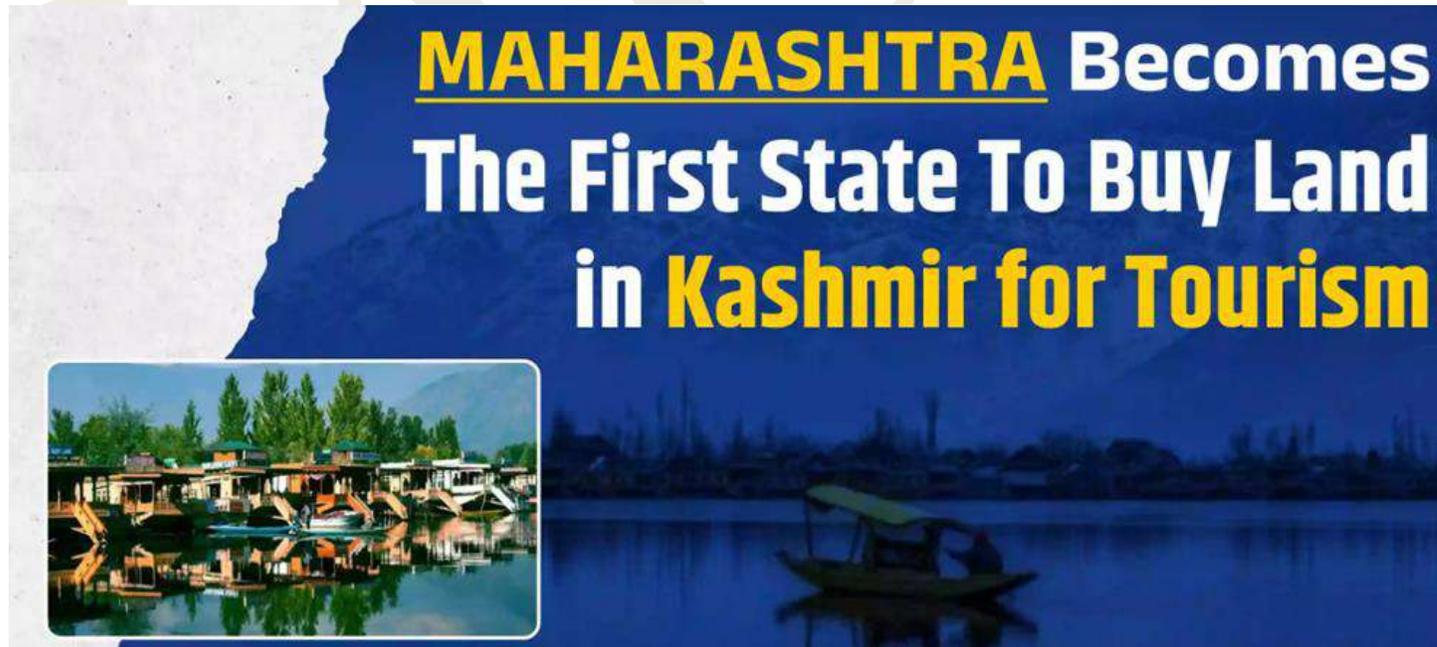
- The Telangana government issued orders for a “door-to-door” survey of the entire state after it passed a resolution to carry out a **caste census** in the state.
- The Telangana government last month had passed a resolution in the state Assembly to carry out a Socio, Educational, Economic, Employment, Political and Caste Survey, **Kulangana**, as per the decision of council of ministers on February 4, 2024.
- The resolution was passed unanimously as the principal opposition Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) expressed its support.
- The survey will be carried out at an estimated cost of **Rs 150 crores**.
- Conducting a caste enumeration, is described as the “foundational step” for the development of Backward Classes.



CASTE CENSUS

Maharashtra will establish First-Of-Its-Kind Tourist facility in Jammu & Kashmir

- **Maharashtra** has decided to **purchase 2.5 acres** of land in the **Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir** and has become the first state to purchase land in Jammu and Kashmir for the purpose of **tourism**.
- The government of Maharashtra will build a guest house - **Rajya Bhawan** on this land for its tourists visiting J&K with a construction cost of **Rs 8.16 crore**.
- This will mark the first state building in the valley.
- Maharashtra Cabinet has approved the purchase of land on 13 March 2024. The state government will build Maharashtra Bhavan in Budgam, central Kashmir, located in Srinagar.
- For this, a piece of land of 2.5 acres has been earmarked in Ichgam near Srinagar Airport.



GoI approved 'TG' Prefix on Vehicle Registration Plates in Telangana

- The Central government has approved replacing TS with TG on vehicle registration number plates in Telangana.
- The **Union Ministry of Road Transport And Highways** issued a gazette notification to this effect.
- The change will be applied to the newly-registered vehicles, while the old vehicles with TS number plates will continue.
- After the formation of Telangana state on **June 2, 2014**, the Centre had notified TG for vehicle registration number plates. But the previous BRS government requested the Centre to change TG to TS stating that TS indicates Telangana State. Accordingly, the Centre issued a gazette notification in June 2014.
- However, the newly-formed Congress government has decided to switch back to TG.
- The state Cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on February 3 approved replacing TS with TG and referred the state Cabinet decision to the Centre for approval.



India ranks 62nd on the DHL Connectedness Index

- According to the recently published DHL Global Connectedness Report 2024, **India ranked 62nd on the DHL Global Connectedness 2023 Index.**
- India was ranked 67th in the 2022 Index.
- The **DHL Global Connectedness Report** has been published annually since **2011**. The report is commissioned by the **German logistics company DHL** and prepared by the **New York University Stern School of Business**.
- A country's connectedness to the world is measured by the global movement of trade, capital, information, and people. Based on these indicators, the report ranks 181 countries and territories.
- **Singapore** was the most globally connected country, followed by the Netherlands and Ireland.
- In this report, 143 countries became more globally connected.
- Only 38 countries reported a decline in the levels of connectedness.
- The report found **Europe** to be the most globally connected region. After Europe, the most connected regions were North America, followed by the Middle East(West Asia) and North Africa.



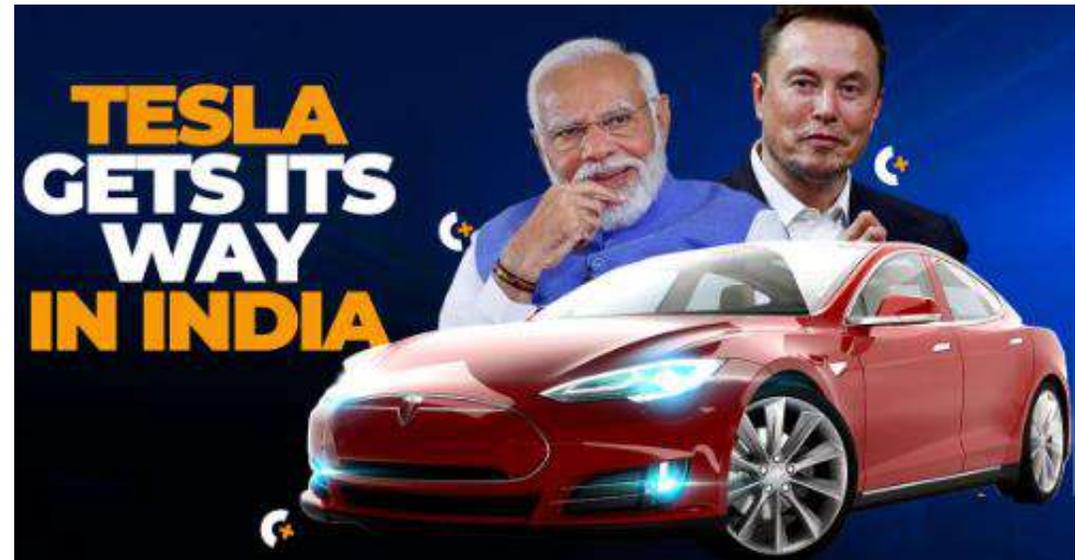
Rachin Ravindra becomes youngest recipient of Sir Richard Hadlee Medal

- Rachin Ravindra became the youngest recipient of the Sir Richard Hadlee Medal after becoming the **country's best male cricketer of the year**.
- At 24, Ravindra is the youngest winner in the award's history, after a season that's seen him become a mainstay of New Zealand's red and white ball sides.
- Ravindra continued his meteoric rise in the Test arena, registering New Zealand's highest ever maiden Test century with 240 during the first Test against South Africa at Bay Oval, and playing a key role in the BLACKCAPS first ever Test series victory over South Africa.
- He also shone on the T20 international stage, featuring in 14 of the BLACKCAPS' 26 T20I matches over the season and scoring a blistering 68 from 35 balls in the first T20I against Australia at Sky Stadium.
- Among women, **Melie Kerr** grabbed the major prizes at the New Zealand Cricket Awards.
- Kerr claimed a clean sweep of the major female awards, winning the Debbie Hockley Medal after being named ANZ ODI and T20I Player of the Year, and the Dream11 Super Smash Women's Player of the Year.
- **Kane Williamson** was recognised for his outstanding form in the Test arena with the ANZ Test Player of the Year Award, and winning the Redpath Cup for men's first-class batting.



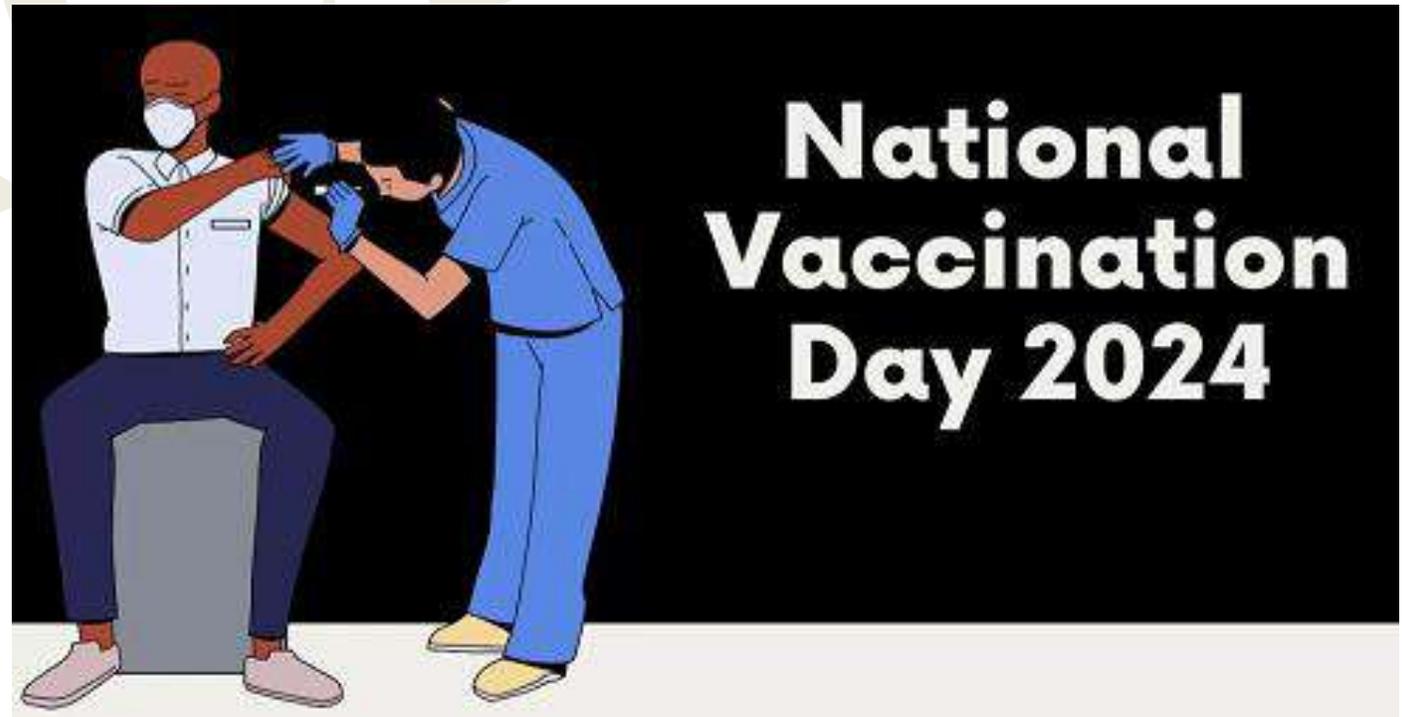
A New EV policy approved by the Indian Government to boost Tesla's market entry plans

- In the new EV policy, the government's focus will be on domestic EV manufacturing.
- The policy is also designed to attract investments in the **e-vehicle sector** by reputed global EV manufacturers.
- Under the policy, a company will have to invest a minimum of **Rs 4150 crore** and there is no maximum limit on investment.
- The company will have to start its plant in 3 years.
- Within 5 years, the company also has to reach 50% domestic value addition (DVA).
- To increase domestic value addition (DVA) during manufacturing, the government aims to achieve a localization level of 25% by the third year and 50% by the fifth year.
- **Customs duty of 15%** (as applicable to CKD units) will be applicable on vehicles with a minimum CIF value of US\$ 35,000 and above for a total period of 5 years.
- This will require the manufacturer to set up manufacturing facilities in India within a period of 3 years.
- If Tesla comes, first a plant will have to be set up, and then production will start.
- The bank guarantee of the companies will be returned once 50% DVA is reached.



National Vaccination Day 2024: 16 March

- Every year on March 16, National Immunization Day is observed in India.
- Vaccination Day aims to raise awareness about the importance of immunisation and how it can prevent the spread of infectious diseases.
- The theme of National Vaccination Day 2024 is "**Vaccines Work for Everyone**".
- The day was first commemorated in **1995**, the year India launched its Pulse Polio Program.
- **World Immunization Week** is celebrated every year in the **last week of April**.
- In 1978, the Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI) was established. The program was renamed as the Universal Immunization Program (UIP) in 1985.
- **Mission Indradhanush:**
- Mission Indradhanush was launched in December 2014 to ensure full immunization with all available vaccines for children up to two years of age and pregnant women.
- The mission aims to achieve the target of the Sustainable Development Goal of Ending preventable child deaths by 2030.



RBI has imposed a penalty of Rs 1.40 crore on the Bank of India

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed a monetary penalty of **Rs 1.40 crore on Bank of India (BoI)** for non-compliance with certain directions issued by it on 'Interest Rate on Deposits', 'Customer Service in Banks', 'Interest Rate on Advances', among others.
- The penalty is also for non-compliance with RBI's directions on 'Central Repository of Information on Large Credits (CRILC) - Revision in Reporting', and 'Membership of Credit Information Companies (CICs)'.
- The penalty is also for contravention of provisions of the Credit Information Companies Rules, 2006 (CIC Rules).
- A monetary penalty of **Rs 29.55 lakh** has been imposed by the RBI on **Bandhan Bank**.
- The RBI has imposed this penalty for non-compliance with directions relating to the interest rate on deposits.
- The RBI also placed a penalty of **Rs 13.60 lakh on Indostar Capital Finance**.





Singer Sadi Mohammad passed away in Bangladesh

- In Bangladesh, a legendary Rabindra Sangeet singer Sadi Mohammad passed away.
- He was a renowned **Rabindra Sangeet singer**.
- Sadi Mohammad completed his bachelor's and master's in Rabindra Sangeet from the **Visva-Bharati University in India** and is the son of Liberation War martyr Salimullah and Jebunnesa Salim Ullah.
- He served as the director of Rabi Raag, a cultural organisation.
- **Rabindra Sangeet** are songs written and composed by **Rabindranath Tagore**.



TATA POWER Commission

INDIA'S LARGEST

SOLAR BATTERY PLANT

Tata Power Solar Completes India's Largest Solar And Battery Energy Storage Systems Project

- **Tata Power Solar Systems Limited (TPSSL)**, a subsidiary of **Tata Power Renewable Energy Limited (TPREL)**, has completed India's largest Solar and Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) project in Rajnandgaon, Chhattisgarh.
- The project comprises a 100 MW Solar PV Project combined with a 120 MWh Utility Scale Battery Energy Storage System, awarded on an EPC basis by SECI.
- TPSSL's collaboration with Tata AutoComp Systems Limited for BESS demonstrates a commitment to excellence and partnership-driven success.
- The project is expected to generate 243.53 million units of energy annually, contributing to India's renewable energy targets and reducing carbon emissions by 4.87 million tonnes over 25 years.
- TPSSL has a distinguished track record in executing large-scale solar projects, including ground-mount utility-scale and rooftop systems, and facilitating over one lakh solar water pumps.
- The company plays a vital role in promoting solar rooftop installations, particularly in commercial and industrial sectors, acting as a catalyst for sustainable energy adoption.
- TPREL, as the parent company, specializes in developing, owning, operating, and maintaining renewable energy projects, offering comprehensive green energy solutions across diverse segments.
- TPREL's portfolio includes solar, wind, hybrid, peak, floating solar, and storage systems, with plans for a state-of-the-art solar cell & module plant in Tamil Nadu. The company also provides EV charging solutions and advisory services across the renewable energy sector.

Traditional 'Phool Dei' festival begins in Uttarakhand

- Phool Dei is an auspicious folk festival which welcomes the spring season in the state of Uttarakhand. It is also known as the **harvest festival** of the state Uttarakhand.
- The festival is celebrated on the first day of the Hindu month, Chaitra.
- Phool Dei is all about flowers and springtime. The term '**Dei**' refers to a **ceremonial pudding** which is the key food in this festival that is made from jaggery.
- This festival showcases the inner connection between the communities who all are living in the hills.
- Young girls of the villages/towns pluck the first flowers of the season and scatter these flowers on the threshold of their home and other houses of their village/town.
- Folk singers welcome the spring with their music and are given rice and gifts.



Jyotiraditya M. Scindia flags off the inaugural flight of the India's newest Regional Airline Fly91

- **Union Minister for Civil Aviation** Jyotiraditya Scindia inaugurated a regional airline – **Fly91** and flagged off its maiden flight between Manohar International Airport (MOPA), Goa and Agatti Islands, Lakshadweep.
- Mr Scindia reiterated the government's commitment to connect tier 2 and tier 3 cities through the UDAN scheme.
- The aviation industry is expecting to raise its domestic traffic to 30 crores by 2030 which was just 6 crores in 2014.
- The Schedule flights of new airline Fly91 will commence from 18th of March between Manohar International Airport, Goa and Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Jalgaon, Agatti, Pune, Nanded and from Bengaluru, Hyderabad, and Pune to Sindhudurg, Jalgaon, Nanded and Goa, in a phased manner.



Mohammad Mustafa has been named the new Prime Minister of Palestine

- Mohammad Mustafa is appointed as the Prime Minister of the Palestinian Authority (PA).
- He is one of the leading Palestinian business figures who has overseen Gaza reconstruction under Hamas Islamist rule.
- He has served as an economic advisor to President Abbas for an extended period.
- He has also worked in many positions in the World Bank.
- Apart from this, Mustafa has also been the Deputy PM and Economy Minister of Palestine. Currently Mohammad Mustafa is also the Chairman of Palestine Investment Fund.
- Mustafa was chosen to help lead reconstruction efforts in Gaza after the first war between Israel and the Islamic militant group Hamas a decade ago.



Odisha Extends Support to Women Employees with Extra Casual Leave

- The Odisha government led by chief minister **Naveen Patnaik** announced that women employees working in various government departments will now get an additional **10 days of casual leave** annually apart from the 15 days they were getting.
- The announcement has been made in view of the domestic responsibilities and other problems faced by women government employees.
- Odisha was the first state to announce 33 percent reservation in government jobs during the 90's.
- The state government announced **paid maternity leave of 180 days** for women block grant employees.
- The state government doubled the maternity benefit from ₹5,000 to ₹10,000 under **Mamata**, a State-specific scheme for pregnant women and lactating mothers.
- The state government had hiked the per diem allowance for each meeting of women officials of block level and panchayat level SHG federation to ₹500, weeks after it announced financial aid of ₹1,000 each for uniforms and blazers of the 7 million SHG members.
- The State Cabinet approved ₹2,000 each for 150,000 SHG members in leadership positions.



Odisha Extends Support to Women Employees with Extra Casual Leave

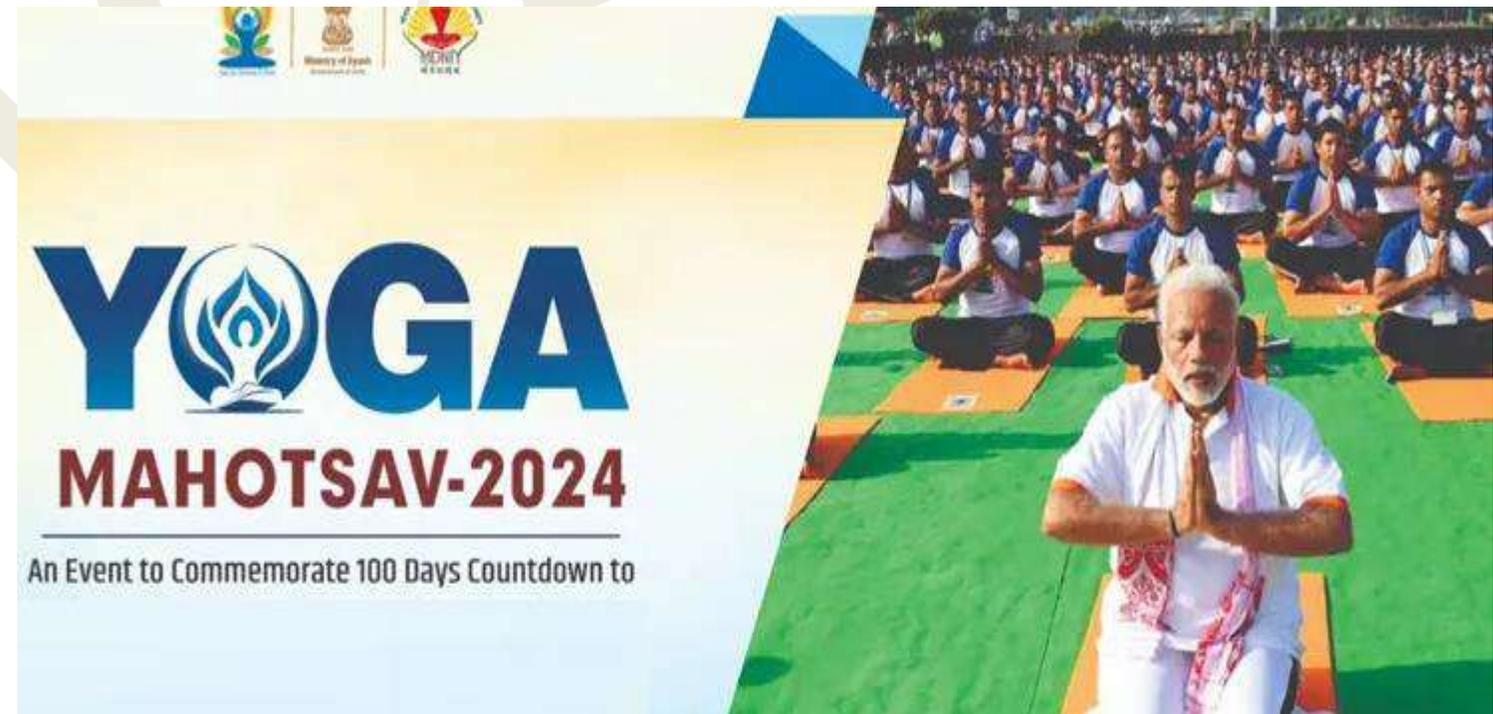
Chameli Devi award presented to Greeshma Kuthar,Ritika Chopra

- The prestigious Chameli Devi Jain Award 2024 for Outstanding Woman Media Person of the Year has been given jointly to two remarkable journalists: Greeshma Kuthar – Independent Journalist and Ritika Chopra – Indian Express.
- Greeshma Kuthar engaged in deeply-researched long-form investigative reporting from conflict areas such as Manipur. Her reports have appeared in publications like **The Caravan and Al Jazeera**.
- Ritika Chopra, the Chief of National Bureau (Government) and National Education Editor at the Indian Express, Delhi has overseen the newspaper's coverage of government policy, education, and the Election Commission of India.
- About the Award:
- The **Chameli Devi Jain Award** for Outstanding Woman Media Person of the Year was set up by **The Media Foundation in 1980**.
- It is named after Chameli Devi Jain, a freedom fighter and community reformer who was imprisoned during India's independence movement.
- The first award was given in **1982**, and since then, it has been presented annually.
- The award recognizes **impactful journalism** in fields such as social development, politics, gender justice, human rights, health, conflict, and consumer values.



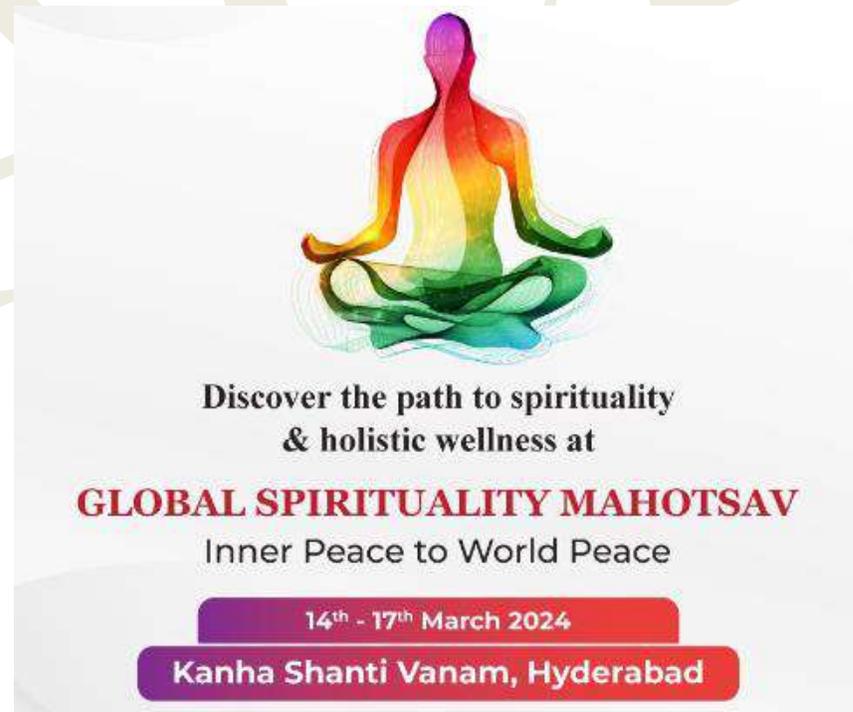
Yoga Mahotsav 2024: IDY 100 Days Countdown begins with Women Empowerment Focus

- Yoga Mahotsav-2024, a grand event was organized today to commemorate 100 Days Countdown to IDY (**International Day of Yoga**) -2024 at Vigyan Bhawan.
- The event was celebrated with this year's IDY theme **“Yoga for Women Empowerment”**, reflecting the Ministry of Ayush's commitment to promote global health and peace through yoga, particularly emphasizing women's well-being.
- International Day of Yoga is observed every year on **21st June**. This year the 10th edition will be observed.
- The purpose of 100 days countdown is to maximize the reach of Yoga by garnering the support of leading Yoga organizations, Yog Gurus, and other Ayush stakeholders.
- The one-day Yoga Mahotsav-2024 covered a range of activities after the inaugural session, including theme based technical sessions (Empowering Women's Health through Yoga, Transforming Life through Yoga). The event ended with a Panel Discussion (Yoga & Women Empowerment: Different Dimensions), Y-Break and Yoga demonstrations.



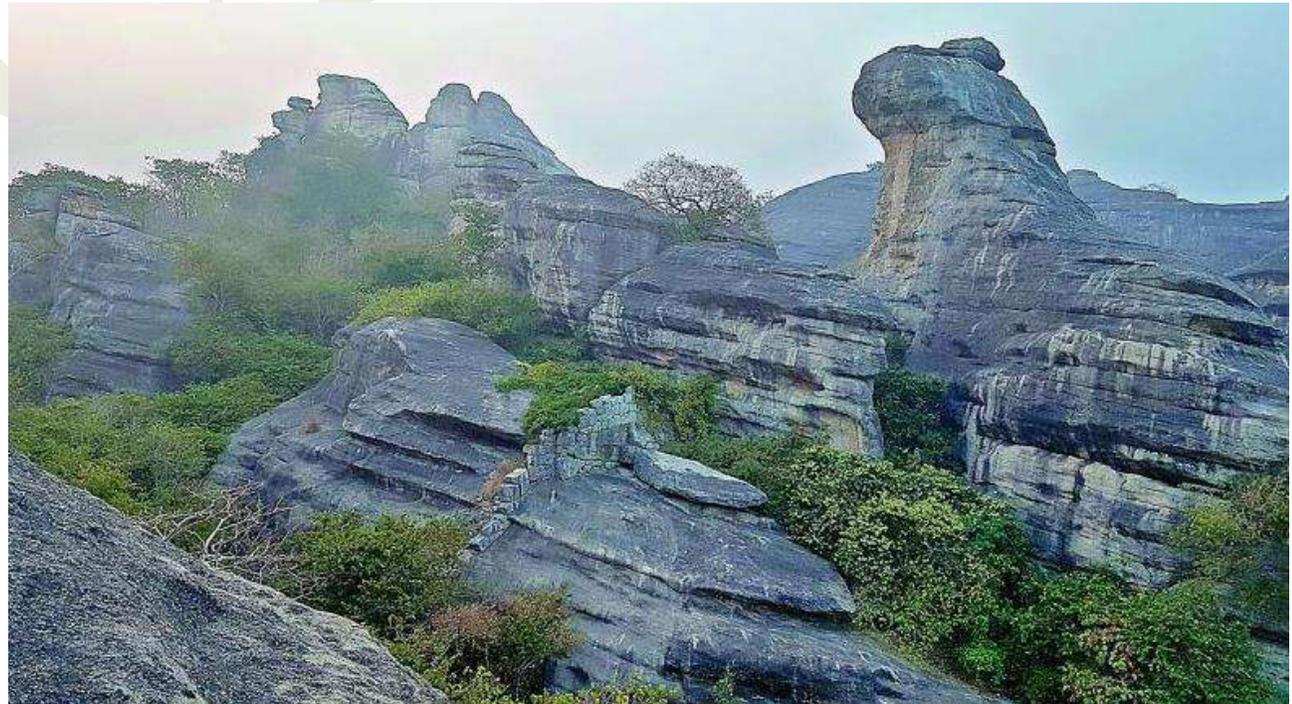
The Global Spiritual Mahotsav 2024 will be held from March 14-17, Hyderabad

- The **Ministry of Culture**, with the support of Heartfulness, will organize the largest spiritual assembly named The Global Spiritual Mahotsav.
- The Global Spiritual Mahotsav 2024 will be held from March 14-17 at the world's largest meditation center, Kanha Shanti Vanam, in Hyderabad. The President and Vice President will enhance the prestige of this summit.
- The four-day spirituality summit has the theme of "**Inner Peace to World Peace**". The conference aims to bring interfaith dialogues and help people of every age and every walk of life connect with spirituality in daily life.
- More than 100 countries, over 150 spiritual institutions and organizations, and over 100,000 participants are expected to join this summit



Pandavula Gutta designated exclusive Geo-heritage site in 'Telangana'

- Pandavula Gutta a Geographical marvel older than the Himalayan hills, has been officially recognized as the sole Geo-heritage site in Telangana.
- As part of the ongoing 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav', the Geological Survey of India (GSI), Telangana, took a significant step forward in raising awareness about Telangana's rich heritage by organizing a geo-heritage walk at the **Pandavula Gutta located in Jayashankar-Bhupalpally District.**
- The cave paintings at Pandavula Gutta offers a rare glimpse into the prehistoric man's rock art identified on walls and ceilings of caves, rock shelters, and isolated boulders. The rock art painting depicts wildlife like Bison, Antelope, Tiger, Leopard, etc.
- Geological Survey of India (GSI) declares geo-heritage sites/ national geological monuments for protection and maintenance.
- The term **geological heritage** is used for natural geological or geo-morphological features that have aesthetic, intrinsic or scientific and educational value, that provide unique insight into geological processes affecting the formation or evolution of Earth.



The International Energy Agency released annual 'Global Methane Tracker 2024' report

- According to the International Energy Agency's (IEA) Global Methane Tracker 2024, methane emissions from fuel use in 2023 were close to being the highest ever at 120 million tonnes (Mt).
- Out of the 120 Mt of methane that escaped into the atmosphere, around 80 million tons of methane emissions came from just 10 countries, The United States leads in methane emissions from oil and gas operations, and is "closely followed" by Russia. China, on the other hand, leads in emissions from coal operations.
- More than 5 million tons of methane emissions were traced back to major fossil fuel leaks around the world. The world needs to slash methane emissions from fossil fuels by 75 percent by 2030 to achieve the Paris Agreement goal of limiting warming to 1.5°C.
- The IEA estimated that this goal would require about \$170 billion in spending. This is less than 5 percent of the income generated by the fossil fuel industry in 2023.
- **Methane (CH₄)** is an organic compound composed of carbon and four hydrogen atoms. Second-biggest anthropogenic contributor to global warming after carbon dioxide, 80 times more potent.
- **International Energy Agency:**
- **Established in:** November 1974
- **Headquarters:** Paris, France
- **Members Countries:** 31



NITI Aayog launched the 'Vocal for Local' initiative under its Aspirational Blocks Programme

- In a move towards bolstering local economies and fostering grassroots entrepreneurship, NITI Aayog launched the '**Vocal for Local**' initiative under its Aspirational Blocks Programme .
- This Initiative aims to boost sustainable growth by showcasing indigenous products through '**Aakanksha**'. A dedicated window on the GeM (Government e-Marketplace) portal facilitates e-commerce for local products.
- As a part of this initiative, indigenous local products from 500 Aspirational Blocks have been mapped and consolidated under Aakanksha.
- **About Aspirational Blocks Programme (ABP)**
- The ABP is set on the lines of the Aspirational District Programme that was launched in 2018 and covers 112 districts across the country. The Centre had announced its intention to launch this initiative in the Union Budget 2022-23.
- The programme will cover 500 districts across 31 states and Union Territories initially. Over half of these blocks are in 6 states—Uttar Pradesh (68 blocks), Bihar (61), Madhya Pradesh (42), Jharkhand (34), Odisha (29) and West Bengal (29). However, states can add more blocks to the programme later.



India's first Indoor athletic centre inaugurated in Bhubaneswar

- Odisha Chief Minister **Naveen Patnaik** inaugurated India's first indoor athletics and aquatic centres at the **Kalinga stadium in Bhubaneswar**.
- The newly developed India's first indoor athletics stadium has the facilities to host national and international athletic events.
- The stadium, built at an estimated cost of Rs 120 crore, can accommodate 120 athletes for full-time coaching. It also has a classroom for studies, medical facilities, and a dedicated pantry for athletes.
- Italian company **Mondo SpA** has set up a 10,000 sq. meter track in the stadium, the first of its kind in the country.
- The stadium has facilities for the long jump, triple jump, 100m, and 200m race tracks. Pole vault and shot put events can also be held in the stadium.
- The Chief Minister also laid the foundation stone for a new indoor diving centre in the stadium complex.





**Telecom Regulatory
Authority of India**

No porting allowed within seven days of SIM card swap:TRAI

- The telecom sector regulator has said that if a SIM card has been swapped or replaced, the mobile number associated with it won't be allowed to be ported out to a different telco for a period of seven days.
- The regulator has amended the mobile number portability (MNP) regulations and put in additional conditions for porting out to curb the practice of porting of mobile numbers by way of fraudulent SIM swap or replacement by unscrupulous elements.
- As per Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Trai), through the amendment, an additional criterion for rejection of the request for allocation of unique porting code (UPC) has been introduced.
- Specifically, the UPC should not be allocated if the request for UPC has been made before the expiry of seven days from the date of SIM swap or replacement of the mobile number.
- The new regulations will come into effect from **July 1, 2024**.

India's Wholesale Price Inflation Eases To 0.20% In February

- India's wholesale price index-based inflation moderated further to a four-month low of **0.20 per cent in February** on an annual basis, as against 0.27 per cent in January, data released by the Ministry of Commerce & Industry.
- The sequential WPI rate for February grew 0.07 per cent against a contraction of (-)0.33 per cent in the month before.
- India's headline retail inflation stood steady at 5.09 percent in February.
- Positive rate of inflation in February, 2024 is primarily due to increase in prices of food articles, crude petroleum & natural gas, electricity, machinery & equipment and motor vehicles, trailers & semi-trailers etc.
- Inflation for food articles stood at 6.95 per cent in February. For the primary articles segment, the inflation rate in February surged to 4.49 percent from 3.84 per cent in the preceding month.
- Wholesale inflation in crude petroleum and natural gas grew 8.24 per cent in February. The fuel and power inflation witnessed a contraction of (-) 1.59 per cent in February against a contraction of (-)0.51 per cent in January.
- Inflation for manufactured products contracted (-) 1.27 per cent in February.
- The last time WPI inflation was lower than October 2023, when it came in at -0.26 percent.

