

# IACE

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### 20<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2024 DESCRIPTIVE

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## Utsa Patnaik selected for Malcolm Adisesiah Award 2023

- Renowned **economist** of national and international repute, **Utsa Patnaik**, has been selected for the **Malcolm Adisesia Award 2023**.
- **The Malcolm and Elizabeth Adisesia Trust** gives the award every year.
- The prestigious national award is presented to outstanding social scientists.
- A national-level jury, specially constituted to choose the winner, selects from among the received nominations.
- The award will be given along with a citation and **prize money of Rs, 2 lakhs** at a function to be held in **Chennai, Tamil Nadu**.



## WHO defines Pathogens that transmit through air

- World Health Organization (WHO) declared that Pathogens transmit through the air will be called '**infectious respiratory particles**'.
- WHO has updated terminology for pathogens and the main aim of the change is to help in identifying, and respond to existing and new airborne pathogens.
- At present, there is no common terminology to describe the transmission of these pathogens, which was particularly challenging during the global COVID-19 pandemic.
- The announcement on after the wide-ranging consultations across multiple steps in **2021-2023**.
- As per the new definition, all particles expelled from the mouth or nose of an infected person, regardless of size, are called “infectious respiratory particles” or IRPs.



- The **pathogens** covered include those that cause **respiratory infections**, e.g. **COVID-19, influenza, measles, Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS), Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), and tuberculosis.**

**About WHO:**

**Founded:** 7<sup>th</sup> April 1948

**Headquarters:** Geneva, Switzerland

**Director General:** Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus

## World Population Report 2024: UNFPA

- **The United Nations Population Fund's (UNFPA) World Population - 2024 report revealed that India's population is estimated to double in 77 years.**
- **India leads globally with an estimated population of 1.44 billion (144 cr), followed by China at 1.425 billion.**
- **India's population was recorded at 1.21 billion during the last census, conducted in 2011.**



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- The report revealed that 24% were aged 0-14, 17% aged 10-19, and 26% aged 10-24. 68% aged 15-64, and 7% aged 65 and above.
- Men have a life expectancy of 71 years and women 74 years.
- The report also highlighted that 30 years of India's progress in sexual and reproductive health has largely ignored the most marginalised communities globally.
- The percentage of **child marriage** in India was at **23% between 2006-2023**.
- Maternal deaths in India have significantly decreased, making up 8% of global maternal fatalities.
- The report highlights that maternal mortality is high among indigenous groups. Women with disabilities are more vulnerable to gender-based violence.
- India's **640 districts** revealed that while nearly a **third achieved** the sustainable development goal of reducing maternal mortality ratio below 70 per 100,000 live births, 114 districts still have ratios of 210 or more.
- Vulnerable groups face greater sexual and reproductive health risks, exacerbated by factors like climate change and caste-based discrimination.

### **About UNFPA:**

**Founded:** 1969

**Headquarters:** New York, United States of America

**President:** Fernando Carrera

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## A fine of Rs 60.3 lakhs imposed by RBI on 5 cooperative banks for violating rules

- A fine of **Rs 43.30 lakh** has been imposed on **Rajkot Nagrik Sahakari Bank** for non-compliance with RBI instructions.
- RBI has ‘prohibited granting of loans and advances to directors and their relatives and firms in which they have interest’ and ‘prohibited opening of savings bank accounts in the name of certain organizations’.
- A monetary penalty of **Rs 5 lakh** each has been imposed by the central bank on **The Kangra Co-operative Bank (New Delhi)**, **Rajdhani Nagar Co-operative Bank (Lucknow)**, and **District Co-operative Bank, Garhwal (Kotdwar, Uttarakhand)**.
- Apart from this, a fine of **Rs 2lakh** has been imposed on **the District Cooperative Bank (Dehradun)**.
- In each case, the RBI said the penalty is based on deficiencies in regulatory compliance.
- It is not intended to affect the validity of any transaction entered into by the banks with their respective customers.



## The book 'India - the Road to Renaissance: A Vision and an Agenda' has been launched in Hyderabad

- The book 'India - the Road to Renaissance: A Vision and an Agenda' is written by former UN official **Bhimeswara Challa**.
- The book was launched at Administrative Staff College of India (ASCI) campus in Hyderabad.
- The launch event was attended by former IAS officer Dr Jayaprakash Narayan, former ASCI chairman K. Padamanabhaiah and former RBI Governor Dr D. Subba Rao.
- This book shows plea for a new, resurgent India. It's a call to arms for all those who refuse to accept the status quo and demand a brighter future for our nation.



## India delivers first batch of BrahMos supersonic missiles to Philippines

- India delivered **the first batch of BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles** to the **Philippines**, in reflection of the growing military ties between the two countries amid China's military muscle-flexing in the South China Sea.
- The supplies came over two years India signed a **\$375 million deal** with the **Southeast Asian nation** to supply the weapon systems.
- **A C-17 Globemaster transport aircraft** of the Indian Air Force (IAF) transported the missile and the launchers to the Philippines for the country's marine forces.
- It was the **first export of the BrahMos missile** by India.
- A few other countries including **Argentina** have also shown interest in procuring BrahMos missiles from India.



- **BrahMos Aerospace Pvt Ltd**, an **India-Russian joint venture**, produces the supersonic cruise missiles that can be launched from submarines, ships, aircraft, or land platforms.
- BrahMos missile flies at a speed of 2.8 Mach or almost three times the speed of sound.
- The twin sides are also favouring implementation of an arbitral award by a UN court on the South China Sea.
- As part of efforts to boost military ties with the Philippines, India has decided to post a defence attache to that country along with Ethiopia, Mozambique, Poland and Ivory Coast.

### **About Philippines:**

**Capital:** Manila

**President:** Bongbong Marcos

**Currency:** Peso

## Hamad International Airport “World’s Best Airport” by Skytrax awards

- **Hamad International Airport**, located in **Doha, Qatar**, has been awarded the “**World’s Best Airport**” title by the esteemed **Skytrax World Airport Awards**.
- The ceremony was held at the **Passenger Terminal Expo 2024 in Frankfurt, Germany**. The airport also received the title of ‘**World’s Best Airport Shopping**’ for the **second consecutive year** and was named “**Best Airport in the Middle East**” for **10 consecutive years**.
- Hamad International Airport saw significant growth in passenger traffic in 2023, serving more than 45 million passengers, a significant increase of 31% compared to the previous year.
- The airport has welcomed new airline partners including **Vistara, Iberia, Xiamen Airlines, Garuda Indonesia** and **Japan Airlines**.



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- It now serves over **250 destinations** including passenger, cargo and chartered flights.
- As Hamad International Airport approaches its 10th year of operation, it is preparing for a busy year ahead.
- Hamad International Airport is Qatar's gateway to the world.
- **MATAR, the Qatari company for airport management and operations**, is responsible for the commercial and operational functions of the airport and is a corporate subsidiary of **Qatar Airways Group**.
- **Hyderabad's Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (RGIA)** crosses the **25 million passenger traffic** mark in **Financial Year 2024** as compared to **21 million passenger traffic** in **Financial Year 2023**, marking a **19% Year on Year (YoY) increase**.

#### **About Qatar:**

**Capital:** Doha

**PM:** Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al Thani

**President:** Sheikh Tamim ibn Hamad Al Thani

**Currency:** Riyal

## Rajiv Gauba to head central government committee on LGBTQ + community

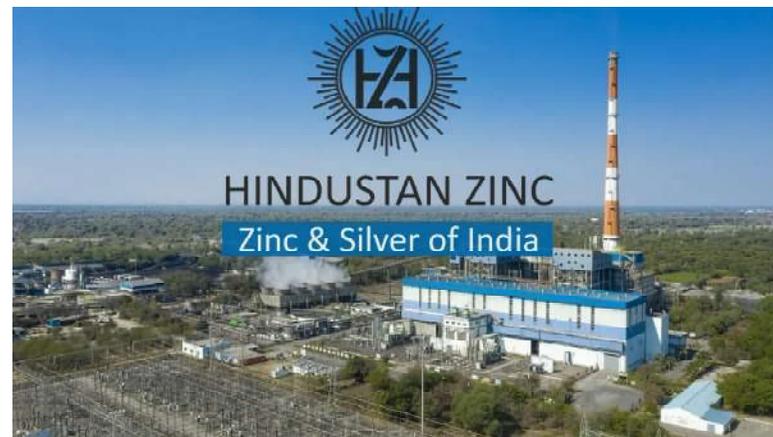
- The government of India has set up a **committee on LGBTQ+ communities'** welfare headed by Union Home Secretary **Rajiv Gauba**.
- The committee has been set up by the government on the suggestion of the Supreme Court in the **Supriyo Chakraborty vs Union of India Case**.
- In the Supriyo Chakraborty vs. Union of India Case 2023, **the Special Marriage Act of 1954** was challenged because it did not permit **same-sex marriage**.
- The plaintiffs argued that this was **against Article 14 of the fundamental rights, which provides for equal protection of law**.



- Under the **Special Marriage Act of 1954**, people of different religions can marry. The marriage is legally recognized by the government and is registered before the designated authority within India or abroad.
- If a Hindu wants to marry a Muslim, the marriage can be done under the Special Marriage Act without changing their religion.
- In India, there is no uniform civil code. There are separate personal laws for different religions.
- The Hindu Marriage Act 1954 applies to Hindus, Sikhs, Jains, and Buddhists. Similarly, the Indian Christian Marriage Act of 1872 applies to Christians, the Muslim Personal Law (Shariat) Application Act of 1937 applies to Muslims, and the Parsi Marriage and Divorce Act of 1936 applies to the Parsi community.
- **The six-member committee** will be headed by Union Cabinet Secretary Rajiv Gauba and include secretaries of important ministries like:
  - Social Justice and Empowerment Secretary Saurabh Garg as convenor and Secretary from the Home Affairs, Women and Child Development, Health and Family Welfare, and Law and Justice ministries.
  - **LGBTQ+** is a collective term which represents a personal sexual orientation or identity.
  - The term include les-bian, gay, bisex-u-al, transgender, queer, inter-sex, asex-u-al and other identities. They are also sometimes called as **Queer**.

Vedanta firm Hindustan Zinc has become the 3rd largest  
Silver producer globally

- **Vedanta group firm Hindustan Zinc** has become the **third largest producer of silver globally**.
- As per a survey, its **Sindesar Khurd Mine in Rajasthan** now stands as **the world's second largest silver-producing mine**, moving up from **last year's fourth spot**.
- Silver plays a pivotal role in the global energy transition and Hindustan Zinc's production growth of 5 per cent year-on-year is attributed to increased ore production and enhanced grades, reinforcing its status as a key player in the global silver market.
- **Hindustan Zinc**, a Vedanta Group company in zinc, **lead and silver businesses**, is **the world's second largest integrated zinc producer** and now **the third largest silver producer**.



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- The company has a market share of **75 per cent** of the growing **zinc market** in India with its **headquarters** in **Udaipur** along with zinc, lead mines and smelting complexes spread across Rajasthan.

**About Vedanta Limited:**

**Founded:** 25<sup>th</sup> June 1965

**Headquarters:** Mumbai, Maharashtra

**CEO:** Sunil Duggal

## Nalin Prabhat appointed as Director General of National Security Guard (NSG)

- **Nalin Prabhat** a 1992 batch IPS officer of Andhra Pradesh cadre has been appointed as the **Director-General of the National Security Guard (NSG)**, which is the country's premier counter-terrorism and counter-hijack force.
- He is currently serving as the Additional Director-General of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) in Jammu and Kashmir.
- According to an order issued by **the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT)**, Prabhat's appointment as the NSG chief is effective until his superannuation on **August 31, 2028**.
- He replaced **Daljith Singh Chaudary**.
- The NSG is a highly specialized force trained to counter terrorist activities, hijackings, and other high-risk situations.

### About NSG:

**Founded:** 16<sup>th</sup> October 1984

**Headquarters:** New Delhi



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## Sapna Tewari appointment as Special Director of Intelligence Bureau (IB)

- **Sapna Tewari**, currently serving as Additional Director in the Intelligence Bureau (IB), has been appointed as the **Special Director in the IB**.
- **The Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT)** order states that her appointment is for a tenure of **two years** from the date of assumption of charge or until her superannuation on **April 30, 2026**, whichever is earlier.
- The IB is India's premier intelligence agency responsible for gathering and disseminating intelligence related to national security, counter-terrorism, and other critical matters.

### **About Intelligence Bureau (IB):**

**Founded:** 23<sup>rd</sup> December 1887

**Headquarters:** New Delhi

**Director:** Tapan Kumar Deka

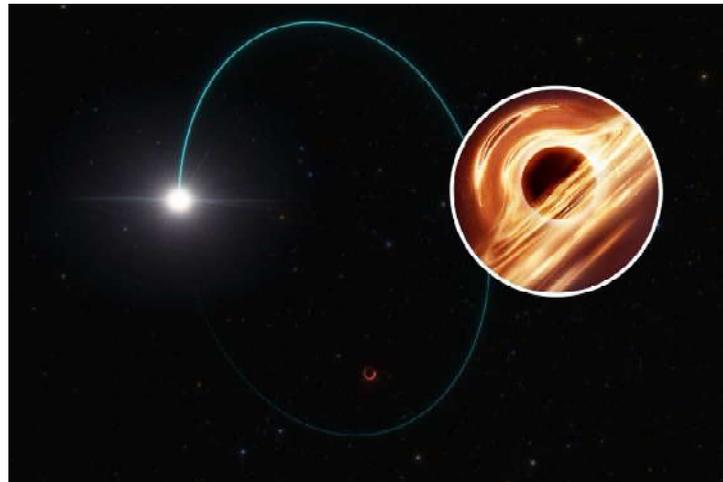


## European astronomers find Milky Way's largest Stellar-mass black hole

- European astronomers discovered the largest **stellar black hole** in our galaxy. It is **2,000 light years away from Earth**. The mass of this black hole named **'BH-3'** is **33 times more than the Sun**.

### **About ESA's Gaia Space Observatory discovered 'BH-3':**

- The weight of many stellar black holes previously found in the galaxy is 10 times the mass of the Sun. For the first time, a massive black hole has been detected.
- **'BH-3'** was discovered by the **Gaia Space Observatory of the European Space Agency (ESA)**.
- The Gaia Space Telescope was launched in the year **2013**.
- Scientists came to know of **'BH-3'** when they observed flexibility in the rotation of a star in the **'Aquila'** constellation. This **star revolves around a giant black hole**.



- Scientists estimate that there may be **one billion stellar black holes** like ‘BH-3’ in **the galaxy**.
- However, it is very difficult to find them, because most stellar black holes do not have any stars revolving around them.
- This is the **second black hole** discovered so far, which is the closest to Earth.
- According to scientists, ‘BH-3’ originated from the destruction of a **giant star**. Some black holes are formed by the collapse of huge clouds of dust and gas.
- ‘**Sagittarius A\***’ is one such black hole, which is present in the center of the galaxy. It is the **largest non-stellar black hole**, with a mass **four million times** that of the **Sun**.

#### **About formation of black holes:**

- When a star with more than eight times the mass of the Sun runs out of fuel, it undergoes a supernova explosion, causing its core to collapse and become a stellar black hole.
- Black holes were **first discovered** by **Karl Schwarzschild** and **John Wheeler**.

## Santhosh Viswanathan appointed as Managing Director of Intel India

- Computer chip maker **Intel** announced **Santhosh Viswanathan** will head the India region business as its **Managing Director (MD)**. Viswanathan has been with Intel for about 21 years.
- In **March** this year, **Intel** announced **India as a separate region** within its SMG (Sales, Marketing and Communications Group) organisation, to capitalise on the country's rapid growth and business opportunities.
- Viswanathan took charge as **Vice President and Managing Director** for the Indian market in **July 2022**. Now Intel has formed India as a separate region.
- The company also announced the appointment of **Hans Chuang** as **General Manager (GM) of SMG Asia Pacific and Japan (APJ)**.
- **Based out of Taiwan, Hans** will be responsible for Intel's overall business in the APJ region, including driving revenue growth, engaging with the local ecosystem to create new opportunities, and strengthening existing customer and partner relationships.

### **About Intel:**

**Founded:** 18<sup>th</sup> July 1968

**Headquarters:** Santa Clara, California, United States

**CEO:** Patrick P. Gelsinger



## India and the US plan to restart the Indian Ocean Observing System (IndOOS)

- **India and the US plan to restart the Indian Ocean Observing System (IndOOS), a network of 36 buoys stationed in the high seas.**
- These buoys will collect detailed data on ocean and atmospheric conditions to help improve weather forecasts.
- The **IndOOS array of buoys**, which is a crucial source of weather data, was neglected and fell into disrepair during the COVID-19 pandemic.



- This resulted in a lack of observational data, which is essential for weather forecasters. This is especially important since the Indian Ocean Dipole phenomenon is connected to the monsoon.
- To address this issue, **M Ravichandran**, the Earth Sciences Secretary, discussed with **Rick Spinrad**, the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) of the US, about reactivating the IndOOS.
- The **moored buoys** are part of the **Research Moored Array for African-Asian-Australian Monsoon Analysis and Prediction (RAMA) programme**, which was established in **2008** through a collaboration between **the Ministry of Earth Sciences and NOAA**.
- NOAA has agreed to provide instrumentation, while India will provide ship-time starting from July to restart the RAMA program. The process will require about **60-90 days of ship-time**.
- The RAMA moored buoys need to be replaced annually because the sensors become less accurate and the batteries run out.
- This maintenance is usually done by research vessels from **Indonesia, India and South Korea, in collaboration with NOAA**.
- Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, these research cruises were suspended for over two years. Only one servicing cruise was able to turn around two buoys in the southwest Indian Ocean in January 2022.

## Meta unveils Llama 3 and real-time image generator

- **Meta** released its latest **large language model Llama 3** and a **real-time image generator**.
- Its main objective is to fill the gap with **OpenAI** in the rapidly evolving field of artificial intelligence (AI).
- The newly unveiled models will be integrated into Meta's virtual assistant- Meta AI.
- Meta's Llama 3 is the latest in its Llama series of **open-source AI models**.
- It came in two versions: **one with 8 billion parameters** and a **second with 70 billion parameters**.
- The models are trained on sequences of 8,192 tokens. It grouped query attention (GQA) for both the 8B and 70B parameter models.
- The incorporation of image data into Llama 3's training holds promise for Meta's upcoming product, the **Ray-Ban Meta smart glasses**, enabling the AI assistant to identify objects and provide relevant information to users.

### **About Meta:**

**Founded:** February 2004

**Headquarters:** Menlo Park, California, United States

**CEO:** Mark Zuckerberg



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## Ajith Kumar K.K appointed as MD and CEO of Dhanlaxmi Bank

- **The Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has granted its approval for the appointment of **Ajith Kumar K.K** as the **MD & CEO** of the **Dhanlaxmi Bank** for a **period of 3 three years**.
- He replaced **JK Shivan**.
- Ajith Kumar K.K is a seasoned banker with over 36 years of experience with the Federal Bank Limited in various facets of banking including credit, human resources, business, branch banking, etc.
- Presently, he is the **chief human resources officer in Federal Bank Limited** in the cadre of President.
- The bank had reported a net profit of **Rs 3.05 crore** in **Q3 FY24**, which is sharply lower as compared with the PAT of Rs 21.73 crore posted in Q3 FY23. Total income of the bank rose 10% YoY to Rs 343.42 crore during the period under review.

### About Dhanlaxmi Bank:

**Founded:** 14<sup>th</sup> November 1927

**Headquarters:** Thrissur, Kerala

**Tagline:** Tann Mann Dhan



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## Aegon Life Insurance rebranded as Bandhan Life Insurance

- Aegon Life Insurance rebranded as Bandhan Life Insurance with a tagline of **‘Bharat Ki Udaan, Bandhan Se’**, reflecting its commitment to empowering the aspirations of India.
- Under the ownership of Bandhan Financial Holdings, the company is embarking on an aggressive growth strategy, aiming to recruit 1,000 new employees and expand its customer base.
- With a vision set for the next five years, Bandhan Life aims to emerge as a leading multi-channel insurance provider, focusing on digital innovation, robust distribution, and service excellence.
- The revamped product names, such as **Bandhan Life iTerm Prime**, signal a shift towards a more comprehensive and customer-centric approach.
- The new logo, depicting a **growing bud**, symbolizes the company’s dedication to nurturing the dreams and aspirations of India.

### About Bandhan Life Insurance:

**Founded:** 2008

**Headquarters:** Mumbai, Maharashtra

**MD& CEO:** Satishwar Balakrishnan



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## Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail (ABRFL) decided to merge with Madura Fashion & Lifestyle (MFL)

- The board of **Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail (ABRFL)** has approved the proposal of a vertical demerger of **Madura Fashion and Lifestyle (MFL)** business into a newly incorporated entity named as **Aditya Birla Lifestyle Brands (ABLB)**.
- ABRFL also plans to raise **Rs 2,500 crore** equity capital within **12 months** of demerger with promoter participation.
- The demerger will be implemented through the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) scheme of arrangement, and upon its completion, all shareholders of ABRFL will have identical shareholdings in both the companies.
- The move is triggered by need to boost stagnant valuation and reverse losses seen during FY24 amid higher investment into newer businesses.

**About Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail (ABRFL):**

**Founded:** 1997

**Headquarters:** Mumbai, Maharashtra

**Chairman:** Kumar Mangalam Birla



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