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India wins gold at 2024 Badminton Asia Team Championships

- **India women's badminton team** has won the title of **Badminton Asia Team Championship 2024** on 18 February 2024. In the final of this championship played in **Malaysia**, the Indian Women's team defeated **Thailand** 3-2. This was the 5th edition of the championship being played since 2016.
- **PV Sindhu** led the Indian team in this championship. The young and dynamic group of Indian women's team won against two-time bronze medalists Thailand. Two-time Olympic medalist PV Sindhu, who returned to the court after four months, defeated world number 17 Supanida Katethong in the first match.
- The Indian Women's Team has won a medal for the first time in the Championship. In this championship, India has won gold for the first time in any category (Men's and Women's). Whereas the men's team has earlier won bronze in 2016 and 2020.
- This championship started in the year 2016. The 1st Badminton Asia Team Championships was held at the GMC Balayogi indoor Stadium in Hyderabad, India from 15-21 February 2016. It was organized by the Badminton Asia Confederation.



World's 1st Wooden Satellite will be Launched by NASA and JAXA

- **NASA** and the **Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA)** are planning to launch the world's first wooden satellite called the **LignoSat** probe into space to make space flight more sustainable
- This unusual spacecraft is made up of Mangolia wood which, during the experiments, was found to be particularly stable and resistant to cracking. The wooden satellite was created by Japanese scientists and now the US has become a part of their mission as they finalized the satellite to be launched on a US rocket.
- In a pioneering effort to address the growing issue of space debris, the researchers at **Kyoto University** in collaboration with the logging company Sumitomo Forestry built the timber satellite. They came up with the idea of using alternative to metal, which are biodegradable material.



- Wood doesn't burn or rot in the lifeless vacuum of space, but it will turn into fine ash upon re-entry into Earth's atmosphere, making it a surprisingly useful, biodegradable material for future satellites. After successful testing their wood samples on the **international Space Station (ISS)** earlier this year, scientists believe the test is suitable for satellite launch.

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)

- The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) is an autonomous agency of the executive branch of the United States federal government.
- **Established** in 1958
- **Founder:** Dwight D. Eisenhower
- **Headquarters:** Washington, D.C., United States

Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA)

- The Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) is designated as the main executive organization that technically supports aerospace development and utilization for the Japanese government.

Indian Air Force Conducts Exercise Vayu-Shakti 2024 in Pokhran, Rajasthan

- **The Indian Air Force (IAF)** demonstration exercise **Vayu-Shkathi** 2024 was held on 17 February 2024 at the **Pokhran** Air-to-Ground Range near Jaisalmer in **Rajasthan**. The exercise showcased the offensive and defensive firepower capabilities of IAF across the day and night.
- Exercise Vayu-Shakthi 2024 was based on the theme, **“Lightning Strike from the Sky”**. The 2024 Vayu-Shakti exercise featured joint operations with the Indian Army, highlighting the seamless coordination between the two branches of the armed forces.
- A total of 121 aircrafts participated in the exercise and showcased the IAF’s offensive capabilities. Fighter aircraft including the Rafale, SU-30 MKI, MiG-29, Mirage-2000, Tejas and Hawk attacked simulated enemy targets on the ground and in the air with precision.

About Exercise Vayu Shakthi:

It is a triennial exercise conducted once every 3 years by the IAF to demonstrate its ability to conduct full-spectrum operations, both day and night. The last edition of exercise Vayu Shakti was held on 16 February 2019.



Bank of Baroda launches India's second corporate credit card on RuPay network

- On February 14, 2024, **BOBCARD Limited**, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Bank of Baroda, and National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) launched **India's second Corporate Credit Card** on the RuPay Network.
- This card offers a range of benefits including complimentary lounge access, fuel surcharge waiver, personal accidental death insurance cover, and an attractive rewards program for various business transactions.
- It also provides the convenience of linkage with UPI through UPI-enabled app. This launch is a significant step towards enhancing credit card penetration in the country, contributing to the overall growth and development of the economy.
- In December 2023, **IndusInd bank** launched '**eSvarna**' which is India's first Corporate Credit Card on RuPay network. This card facilitates transactions at merchant outlets and allows users the flexibility to make UPI payments by linking the card with UPI-enabled apps.

Bank Of Baroda:

Established: 20 July 1908

Headquarters: Vadodara, Gujarat

MD & CEO: Debadatta Chand

Tagline: India's International bank

The RuPay logo features the word "RuPay" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. To the right of the text is a stylized graphic element consisting of two overlapping triangles, one orange and one green, pointing towards the right.The BOBCARD logo features a stylized orange letter "B" with white diagonal lines radiating from its top-left corner. Below the "B" is the word "BOBCARD" in a bold, orange, sans-serif font.

BAFTA Award for the Best Film Award in 2024 to Oppenheimer

- The **77th edition of BAFTA** (British Academy of Film and Television Arts) was recently held on February 18th, 2024 at Royal Festival Hall in London. Scottish actor **David Tennant** has been roped in to host the show.
- Leading the charge with an impressive 13 nominations, **“Oppenheimer”** emerged as the night’s biggest winner, securing 7 BAFTAs, including best film.
- Those Seven categories won by Oppenheimer movie includes Best film, Best Director for **Christopher Nolan**, Best Actor for **Cillian Murphy**, Best Supporting Actor for **Robert Downey Jr**, Original Score, Cinematography and Editing.
- After Oppenheimer, **“Poor Things”** coming in second Place with the 5 wins. Which includes Best Actress for **Emma Stone**, Special Visual Effects, Production Design, Costumer Design and Makeup & Hair.
- Indian actress **Deepika Padukone** was also present at the award night she presented the award for the Best Film Not in the English language category won by **‘The Zone of Interest’**, a polish historical drama by Jonathan Glazer.



BPCL will set up the country's first green hydrogen plant at the Cochin airport

- The **Cochin International Airport Limited (CIAL)** has signed a MoU with **Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL)** to develop the world's first green hydrogen plant within the premises of Cochin airport.
- According to the agreement, BPCL will invest Rs 30 crore and set up the plant at Kochi Airport and impart technology. CIAL will provide suitable land, water, and green energy for the plant which is expected to be completed in early 2025.
- CIAL is the **world's first fully solar-powered airport** and this will be the first ever green hydrogen plant in the country to be set up in an airport. Initially the plant will provide 220 kg of hydrogen a day which can be used for operating vehicles plying in the airport.
- **Green Hydrogen** refers to hydrogen produced using renewable energy sources like solar or wind instead of fossil fuels, hence it has zero carbon emissions. It is produced through a process called electrolysis which separates hydrogen and oxygen from water. As a clean fuel, green hydrogen is important for sustainable future across sectors including transportation.



➤ World Day of Social Justice 2024

- Every year on **February 20th**, people around the world celebrate **World Day of Social Justice**. The main objective of celebrating this day at the global level is to provide social justice to the people at large.
- World Day of Social Justice, created by United Nations (UN), reminds us that there are still many things preventing millions of people from living a fair life.
- The theme of World Day of Social Justice 2024 is "**Bridging Gaps, Building Alliances**". The importance of organizing this day at the global level is to create awareness about social justice among the people.
- **History of World Day of Social Justice:** In 1995, Copenhagen, Denmark hosted the World Summit for Social Development. This resulted in the Copenhagen Declaration and Plan of Action. In New York 2005, UN member states reviewed the Copenhagen Declaration and Plan for Action at a session of the Commission for Social Development.
- On November 26, 2007, the United Nations General Assembly announced that beginning with the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly, February 20 would be observed as World Day of Social Justice. In this way the first World Day of Social Justice was celebrated on 20 February 2009.



Renowned Jain Monk Acharya Vidyasagar Maharaj passed away

- Renowned **Jain Monk Acharya Vidyasagar Maharaj** passed away at 77, at Chandragiri Teerth in Rajnandgaon district, **Chhattisgarh**. The revered spiritual leader undertook '**Sallekhana**', a Jain religious practice involving voluntary fasting unto death for spiritual purification.
- Acharya Vidyasagar Maharaj was born in Sadalga, Karnataka, on October 10, 1946. His early life was characterized by a strong spiritual bent, which laid the ground work for his remarkable journey.
- Acharya Shri Vidyasagar Maharaj began a pivotal chapter in his life at the age of 22 in 1968, when he was initiated into the revered order of **Digambara monks**. The renowned Acharya Gyansagar Ji Maharaj guided his spiritual journey.
- Acharya Vidyasagar Maharaj was elevated to the revered status of Acharya in 1972, a testament to his dedication, discipline, and spiritual prowess, just four years after being initiated.
- **Sallekhana is Jain Religious Practice:** Sallekhna" is a profound Jain practice in which people voluntarily abstain from food and liquids, fasting until death, as a means of spiritual purification. Acharya Vidyasagar Maharaj practised'sallekhna' for the past three days, culminating in his Samadhi at Chandragiri Teerth.





IREDA

And **PNB**

Signed An MoU

For Renewable Energy Projects



IREDA and PNB signed an MoU for Renewable Energy Projects

- **Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Ltd. (IREDA)** and **Punjab National Bank (PNB)** recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with an aim to promote renewable energy initiatives across the country.
- The two organizations will work together to finance a variety of renewable energy projects by co-lending and loan syndication. IREDA and PNB can invest in each other's bonds through this collaboration.
- Through the MoU and prior agreements with other leading financial institutions, IREDA is well-positioned to fund large-scale renewable energy projects, aligning with the Hon'ble Prime Minister's COP26 announcement to achieve a 500 GW Non-Fossil-based electricity generation capacity by 2030.“
- **About IREDA:** Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Limited (IRDEA) is a public Limited Government Company established in 1987 as a Non-Banking Financial Institution.
- IREDA is a Mini Ratna (Category – I) organisation owned by the Government of India and administratively controlled by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE). Its Chairman & MD Pradip Kumar Das, IRDEA headquartered in New Delhi.

Punjab National Bank:

- **Established In:** 19 May 1894, Lahore, Pakistan
- **Headquarters:** New Delhi
- **CEO:** Atul Kumar Goel
- **Tagline:** The Name You Can Bank Upon

World Pangolin Day February 17th 2024

- **World Pangolin Day** is annually observed across the globe on the **3rd Saturday of February** to celebrate and raise awareness about the Pangolin or scaly anteater, one of the most unique **mammals** on Earth.
- In 2024, World Pangolin Day falls on 17th February 2024. This marks the observation of the 13th World Pangolin Day. The First World Pangolin Day was observed in February 2012.
- **About Pangolin:** Pangolin are the only mammals wholly covered in scales and they use those scales to protect themselves from predators in the wild. Their scales are made up of keratin, which is the same protein found in rhino horn and hair and human fingernails.
- These mammals are insectivores that eat ants and termites using their long, sticky tongues as they have no teeth. There are 8 species of Pangolin, all 8 species of Pangolin are listed as **‘threatened with extinction’** on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List.
- As **‘the most’** trafficked non-human mammal in the world. ‘Pangolins are listed in **Appendix I** of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) by the IUCN’s Red List.



The Khajuraho Dance Festival started on 20 February 2024 in Khajuraho, Madhya Pradesh

- The 50th edition of famous **Khajuraho Dance Festival (KDF)** is set to commence from February 20. This event, that will be concluded on February 26, will be held at the **Kandariya Mahadev Temple** and Devi Jagadamba Temple inside the Western Temple Complex – an architectural marvel of the **Chandela era**.
- Khajuraho Dance Festival which began in 1975, will showcase India's rich culture and heritage in its Golden Jubilee year, as eminent classical dancers from all over the country come together in **Khajuraho, Madhya Pradesh**.
- The first day of this year's festival will see 1,500 to 2,000 artists take part in **Kathak Kumbh**, thereby setting a Guinness World Record by presenting dancing together.
- The festival is organized every year by the Madhya Pradesh Culture Department, through Ustad Alauddin Khan Music Art Academy, Madhya Pradesh Tourism Department and Archeology Department.

