

# IACE

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**21<sup>st</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup> APR 2024 DESCRIPTIVE**

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## International Mother Earth Day: April 22<sup>nd</sup>

- On April 22nd, the world will unite to commemorate **the 54th International Mother Earth Day**.
- This annual event serves as a poignant reminder of the critical need to address the mounting environmental challenges threatening our planet, including rapidly rising pollution levels, deforestation, and global warming.
- The concept of Earth Day originated in **1970**, when **Senator Gaylord Nelson** from Wisconsin proposed a nationwide teach-in to raise awareness about environmental degradation.
- **Theme:** Planet vs Plastics
- This theme emphasizes the need for collective action to repair and heal the planet's ecosystems, combat climate change, and preserve biodiversity.



## National Civil Service Day 2024: April 21<sup>st</sup>

- National Civil Service Day is observed every year on April 21.
- It is also observed to mark the hard work done by civil servants in various departments and organizations to ensure the smooth functioning of the administrative machinery.
- After Independence, Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel referred to civil servants as the steel frame of India.
- Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel announced that National Civil Service Day will be observed every year to honour the contributions of civil servants to the country.
- The first ever National Civil Services Day in India was celebrated on **21 April 2006**.
- **Charles Cornwallis** is known as the “**Father of the Indian Civil Service**” for his contribution to the reform and modernization of India’s civil services.



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## Three new archaeological sites have been discovered in Telangana

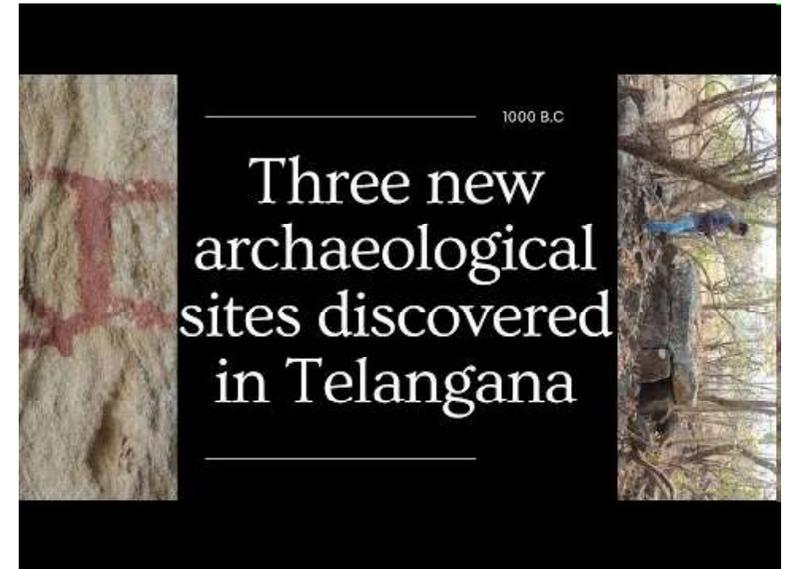
- In recent archaeological explorations in Telangana, three significant sites have been discovered, shedding light on the region's ancient history and cultural heritage.
- These discoveries, ranging from megalithic monuments to rock art sites, offer valuable insights into the life and times of ancient civilizations that once thrived in these areas.
- The site was discovered by a team comprising K P Rao and Ch Praveen Raju.

### **Megalithic Monuments in Dense Forest:**

- One of the discoveries includes more than **200 megalithic monuments** found in the **dense forest** and slopes of a hill.
- These monuments, believed to be dating back to around 1,000 BCE, are predominantly of the 'Dolmenoid Cists' type, characterized by squarish or rectangular shapes.

### **Unique Iron Age Megalithic Site:**

- Another significant discovery is an Iron Age megalithic site at Ooragutta near Bandala village in SS Tadvai mandal of Mulugu district.



- Discovered by a team of archaeologists, this site showcases new types of monuments not found elsewhere in India, indicating a distinct architectural style and cultural practice.

### **Rock Art Sites at Damaratogu:**

- Additionally, **two new rock art sites** have been discovered at **Damaratogu** in **Gundala mandal of Bhadradri Kothagudem district**.
- One of these sites, known as **‘Devarlabanda Mula’**, exclusively depicts animals and no humans, suggesting a cultural significance possibly related to hunting or animal worship.
- The absence of weapons or domestic animals in the paintings indicates that these artworks may belong to the mesolithic age, dating anywhere between 8000 – 3000 BCE.

## Deepika Soreng received the Asunta Lakra Award

- **Deepika Soreng, an Indian Women's Hockey Team player, won the Asunta Lakra Award for Upcoming Player of the Year during the Hockey India 6th Annual Awards 2023.**
- She made her debut for India in the Women's Junior Asia Cup. She helped the Indian team to win the Gold medal by scoring 7 goals in 6 matches.
- She was also a key player for the Indian team that won the **Silver medal** in the **FIH Women's Hockey5s World Cup Oman 2024** and also named the **Young Player** of the **Tournament**.
- She travelled with the team to the 2023 FIH Junior Women's World Cup.
- The Asunta Lakra Award is a testament to Hockey India's commitment to nurturing and recognizing emerging talents within the sport.



## Russia-India signed an agreement to operate a large research hub in New Delhi

- **The Higher School of Economics**, located in **Russia**, and the **University of Delhi** signed a pact on strategic cooperation and joint actions.
- They will also operate a **large research hub in New Delhi**. It will start operating at the partner university from India.
- HSE University is a national research university located in Moscow, Russia.
- Recently, the **Indo-Russian Education Summit** was held in **New Delhi**. It is the largest event of its kind in the history of India-Russia bilateral relations.
- 60 Russian universities arrived at this summit from Moscow, Saint Petersburg, Siberia, Crimea, the Urals and other regions.
- The summit brought diplomats, politicians, scientists, and businessmen to one platform to explore new opportunities for cooperation in education, science and innovative technologies.

### About Russia:

**Capital:** Moscow

**PM:** Mikhail Mishustin

**President:** Vladimir Putin

**Currency:** Rubble

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## Slovenia becomes the 39<sup>th</sup> country to join the Artemis Agreement

- **Slovenia** signed the **Artemis Agreement**, which is a series of non-binding **arrangements for outer space**.
- **Slovenia** has affirmed its dedication to the sustainable use of **space** **NASA** welcomes Sweden to the Artemis Accords family.
- **NASA and the US Department of State** in **2020** announced **the Artemis Agreement**. It has **39 signatories**, including **India and Japan**.
- The Artemis Agreement are a set of principles for cooperation in space exploration and the use of the moon, mars, comets, and asteroids for peaceful purposes.
- **Artemis program** is also aiming to land the **first astronauts on Mars** and other planets and celestial bodies.
- **Sweden** become **38<sup>th</sup> country** to join in Artemis Accords on **April 16<sup>th</sup> 2024**.
- The Artemis Accords provide the important implementation of key obligations from the 1967 Outer Space Treaty.



- On **22 June 2023**, Prime Minister Narendra Modi signed the Artemis Accords to make **India** a global space power and India became the **27th country** to sign the Artemis Accords.
- Israel, Romania, Bahrain, Singapore, Colombia, France, Saudi Arabia, Rwanda, Nigeria, and the Czech Republic have joined the accords in 2022.

## A new Species Clouded Tiger Cat found in Brazil's Rainforest

- A new tiger species has been recently discovered in the **dense rainforests of Brazil**. Named **the clouded tiger cat** (*Leopardus pardinoides*), this cat may be small but it is significant for biodiversity and conservation.
- The discovery of the clouded tiger cat highlights the need for greater protection of wildlife and their habitats.
- The clouded tiger cat is found in the cloud forests of the southern Central American and Andean mountain chains, spanning from Costa Rica to Argentina.
- Its habitat vastly differs from that of its relatives, the northern tiger cat and the Atlantic Forest tiger cat, which live in savannas and shrublands.
- The discovery of this new species highlights the diverse range of wildlife found in the Americas and reminds us of the many surprises nature has in store.
- **The Amazon rainforest**, also known as **Brazil's Rainforest**, is the **world's largest intact forest**.



- The rainforest is mostly located in Brazil, but it is also shared among eight other countries, such as Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, Suriname, Venezuela, and French Guiana, an overseas territory of France.
- This forest absorbs about **25% of atmospheric carbon dioxide** and produces **6% of the total oxygen** so it is called as “**lung**” of the planet **Earth**.

**About Brazil:**

**Capital:** Brasília

**President:** Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva

**Currency:** Real

## ACC has approved the Appointment of new Additional Secretaries

- The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved the appointment of **Indian Administrative Service (IAS)** officers to the **Additional Secretary** level positions.
- **Rakesh Kumar Verma (IAS)** has been designated as **Additional Secretary in the Department of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation**, falling under the Ministry of Jal Shakti.
- His previous position as Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Tourism. Verma, a 1993-batch IAS officer of Punjab cadre, brings extensive experience to his new role.
- **Suman Billa (IAS)** assumes the role of **Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Tourism**, succeeding **Rakesh Kumar Verma**.
- Billa, a 1996-batch IAS officer of Kerala cadre, has been appointed to this post as part of the ongoing restructuring, temporarily filling the upgraded post of Joint Secretary level.
- **Aradhana Patnaik (IAS)** joins as **Additional Secretary in the Department of Health & Family Welfare**. Patnaik, a 1998-batch IAS officer of Jharkhand cadre, transitions from her previous position as Joint Secretary in the same department.



सत्यमेव जयते

**Government Of India**

- **Himani Pande (IAS)** assumes the role of **Additional Secretary in the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)**. Pande, a 1998-batch IAS officer of Jharkhand cadre, currently serves as Joint Secretary in DPIIT.
- **Kamal Kishore Soan (IAS)** has been appointed as **Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Labour & Employment**, transitioning from his role as Joint Secretary in the same ministry.

**About ACC:**

**Headquarters:** New Delhi, Delhi

**Chairman:** Narendra Modi

## JNU professor Surinder S. Jodhka awarded with Malcom Adiseshia Award 2024

- **Malcolm and Elizabeth Adiseshiah Trust** has announced the annual **Dr Malcolm Adiseshiah National Award 2024** for **two professors**.
- Professor **Surinder S Jodhka**, School of Social Sciences, JNU, was selected for the **Malcolm Adiseshiah Award** (2L & citation) while **Vikas Kumar**, associate professor, **Azim Premji University**, will get the **Elizabeth Adiseshiah Award** (1L & citation).

### **About Malcom and Elizabeth Adiseshiah Award:**

- This is a prestigious award instituted by **Malcolm & Elizabeth Adiseshiah Trust** during the year **2000**. The Malcolm Adiseshiah Award & the Elizabeth Adiseshiah Award for Distinguished Contributions to Development Studies.
- The Elizabeth Adiseshiah Citation (Instituted in 2018) will be presented to a young scholar below the age of 45 as on 1st January of the year of Award for recognized contributions to Development Studies.



- The **Malolm Adiseshiah Award** carries a citation and a **cash prize of Rs.2 lakhs**. The Awardee is expected to deliver the Malcolm Adiseshiah Memorial Lecture at the presentation ceremony.
- **Elizabeth Adiseshiah Award** will carry a **cash prize of Rs.1 lakh**.

## RuPay Launches 'Link it, Forget it' campaign at IPL 2024 to promote credit card on UPI

- **RuPay**, in collaboration with **the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)**, introduces the '**Link it, Forget it**' campaign during **the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2024**. This initiative aims to showcase the seamless integration of RuPay credit cards with UPI, emphasizing the convenience of leaving physical wallets behind.
- The campaign's primary goal is to raise awareness about RuPay credit cards, highlighting their integration with UPI and the consequent elimination of the need for physical wallets.
- Developed by **DDB Mudra Group**, the campaign employs humor and relatable scenarios to illustrate how forgetting your physical wallet is no longer a concern with RuPay credit cards linked to UPI.
- The campaign encourages viewers to embrace **RuPay credit cards linked to UPI**, promising a convenient and secure payment experience while bidding farewell to cumbersome wallets.



- Consumers are encouraged to request **RuPay credit cards** from their banks and link them to their preferred UPI apps like BHIM, facilitating smooth and secure transactions.

**About NPCI:**

**Founded:** 2008

**Headquarters:** Mumbai, Maharashtra

**Chairman:** Ajay Kumar Chaudhary

**MD & CEO:** Dilip Asbe

## CAG of India & Bulgarian National Audit Office signed MoU to Enhance Audit Expertise

- **The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Supreme Audit Institutions (SAIs) Bulgaria, the Bulgarian National Audit Office, in Sofia.**
- The agreement, inked by the two Supreme audit institutions, aims to enhance collaboration and the exchange of expertise in the field of auditing between the two nations.
- Through this MoU, a platform will be established for the exchange of knowledge and experience amongst auditing professionals and technical teams through collaboration in training programs, and mutual assistance in conducting audits
- The MoU signing ceremony was attended by **Goritsa Grancharova - Kozhareva, Acting President of the Bulgarian National Audit Office** and **Girish Chandra Murmu the CAG of India.**

### About Bulgaria:

**Capital:** Sofia

**PM:** Dimitar Glavchev

**President:** Rumen Radev

**Currency:** Bulgarian lev

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## IRDAI celebrates Silver Jubilee on 19th April 2024

- **The Insurance Regulatory Development Authority of India (IRDAI)** marks its **silver jubilee year** on **19<sup>th</sup> April 2024**, the regulator is preparing the groundwork for a number of regulatory reforms announced in March, which will only take effect from the current financial year.
- The silver jubilee marks a major milestone in regulatory governance. It consolidates 34 regulations with six regulations.
- The introduction of two new regulations enhances clarity and coherence in the regulatory space.
- In line with the **Malhotra Committee report's** recommendations, the IRDAI was set up in **1999** as an autonomous body for regulating and taking ahead the insurance industry. On **April 19, 2000**, it was formally established as a statutory body.
- IRDAI set a target for insurance companies is **insurance for all by 2047**.



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- IRDAI played an important role in liberalizing the insurance sector in India. It allowed private players to enter the market and compete next to the state-owned insurers. Foreign companies were allowed ownership of up to 26 per cent.

**About IRDAI:**

**Founded:** 1999

**Headquarters:** Hyderabad, Telangana

**Chairperson:** Debasish Panda

## DPE granted Navratna status to National Fertilizers Limited (NFL)

- State-owned **National Fertilizers Ltd** granted “Navratna” status from the Department of Public Enterprise (DPE).
- The term ‘**Navratna**’ refers to a select group of top-performing Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) that have been granted greater autonomy and financial powers by the Centre in recognition of their performance.
- National Fertilizers reported a **73% drop** in consolidated **net profit at <sup>1</sup> 150.9 crore** for the December quarter. The revenue dropped 25.2% YoY to <sup>1</sup> 7,581 crore for the quarter.
- Shares of National Fertilizers Ltd ended at <sup>1</sup> **97.00**, down by <sup>1</sup> 0.24, or 0.25% on the BSE.
- Navratna Companies in India are a **set of public sector companies which have the financial autonomy to invest up to Rs. 1000 crores without any approval from the central government.**



**National Fertilizers Limited**

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- The Navratna status was first given to a set of **9 Public Sector Enterprises (PSEs) in 1997.**
- **RITES** has become India's **16th Navratna CPSE.** Total 17 Navratna companies are there as on today.

**About National Fertilizers Ltd:**

**Founded:** 23<sup>rd</sup> August 1974

**Headquarters:** Noida, Uttar Pradesh

**Chairman & MD:** U Saravanan

## PM inaugurates 2550th Bhagwan Mahavir Nirvan Mahotsav on occasion of Mahavir Jayanti

- Senior BJP leader and Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the **2550th Bhagwan Mahaveer Nirvan Mahotsav** on the auspicious occasion of **Mahaveer Jayanti** at **Bharat Mandapam** in **New Delhi** on **April 21<sup>st</sup>**
- The ceremony witnessed various significant events including paying tributes to Bhagwan Mahaveer's Murti, a dance drama presentation by school children titled "**Vartaman mein Vardhaman,**" and the release of a **commemorative stamp and coin.**
- Bhagwan Mahavir, the **24th Tirthankar,** illuminated the path of peaceful co-existence and universal brotherhood through Jain principles.
- Born in **599 BCE** in **Vaishali,** an ancient city in present-day **Bihar,** India, Lord Mahavir was originally named **Vardhamana.**
- He was the successor of the 23rd Jain Tirthankara Parshvanatha.
- Jains celebrate Mahavir Janma Kalyanak every year on the 13th day of Chaitra month.



## According to S&P Global Report, SBI got 20th position in Asia-Pacific region

- **Three Indian banks, SBI, HDFC Bank and ICICI Bank**, have been included in **the top 50 banks of the Asia-Pacific region** according to a report of **S&P Global Market Intelligence**.
- The list dominated by **mainland Chinese banks** has been ranked based on their assets (loans).
- Only two Indian banks, SBI and HDFC, were included in the top 50 Asia-Pacific regions based on their assets in the 2022 list.
- This year, ICICI Bank was also included in the list. The aggregate assets of these three top Indian lenders rose sharply by 50.5 percent to \$1.51 trillion in 2023.
- India's largest commercial bank, State Bank of India, was the top-ranked bank in the 2023 list.
- The government-owned **SBI** improved its ranking from **20 in 2023 to 21 in 2022**. In 2023, SBI's assets increased to **\$780.05 billion**.
- **India's largest private sector bank, HDFC Bank**, was the **second-highest-ranked** Indian bank in 2023. In 2022, it was ranked 46, while in 2023, it jumped to **33**.



- The main reason for HDFC Bank's rank jump was the merger of the Housing Development Finance Corporation (HDFC) with HDFC Bank in 2023. HDFC Bank's assets jumped to \$464.34 billion in 2023.
- The **second largest private sector bank** in India, **ICICI Bank**, was included for the **first time** on the list of the top 50 Asia Pacific banks. ICICI Bank was **ranked 48th**.
- The total assets of Industrial and Commercial Bank of **China** stood at **\$6.30 trillion** in 2023, more than **eight times of India's largest lender SBI**.

### **Chinese Banks Dominate the List**

- Out of the **top 10 banks** in the Asia -Pacific region, **6 were Chinese banks**.
- **Industrial and Commercial Bank of China Ltd.**, the world's largest bank, remained **the largest bank** in the region at the end of 2023.
- In second place was the Agricultural Bank of China Limited.
- In third place was the China Construction Bank Corporation.
- According to the S&P report, the top four Chinese banks' assets grew by 10.2 per cent to \$21.91 trillion in 2023, with Agricultural Bank showing the biggest growth at 14.3 per cent.
- The Japanese and South Korean banks suffered the biggest declines in the annual ranking. The combined assets of Japanese lenders fell by 2.5 per cent to \$10.53 trillion in 2023.
- The combined assets of the South Korean Bank declined by 0.9 per cent compared to last year to \$2.66 trillion in 2023

## Indian Navy conducts extensive exercise 'Poorvi Leher' on East Coast

- The Indian Navy carried out an extensive exercise along the East Coast as part of efforts to check its preparedness to meet any maritime security challenges.
- The exercise '**Poorvi Leher**' witnessed participation of ships, submarines, aircraft and special naval forces.
- The Indian Navy conducted Exercise **Poorvi Lehar** on **East Coast** under the **Operational Control** of the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Naval Command.
- The exercise was conducted in multiple phases, including combat training in a realistic scenario during the **tactical phase** and successful conduct of various firings during the **weapon phase**, towards reaffirming the Indian Navy's capability to deliver ordnance on target
- The exercise also witnessed participation of assets from IAF, Andaman and Nicobar Command and Coast Guard indicating a very high degree of interoperability amongst the Services.
- Navy Day celebrates on **December 4<sup>th</sup>** and headquarters located in **New Delhi**.

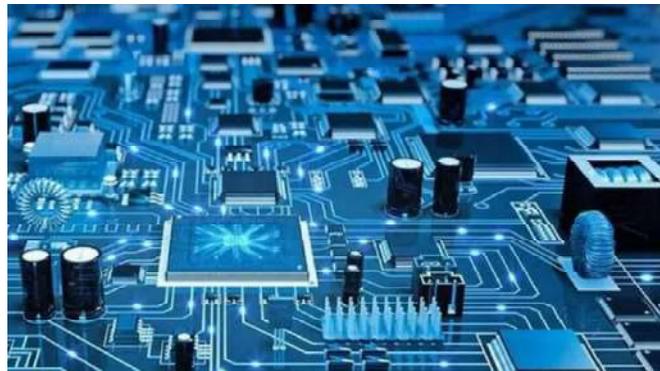


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## Tamil Nadu is the top state in electronics exports with record \$9.6 billion in FY23-24

- The southern state **Tamil Nadu** has become the **top state** in terms of **electronic goods exports** in the **financial year 2023-24**, surpassing **Karnataka** and **Uttar Pradesh**.
- The state posted a **78 per cent increase** in exports from **\$5.37 billion** in **2022-23** to **\$9.56 billion** in **2023-24**.
- One major reason for this is the **‘China Plus One’** strategy adopted by global majors like **Apple**. As a result, its contractors such as Foxconn and Pegatron, along with suppliers like Tata Electronics and Salcomp, have contributed to the rise of Tamil Nadu as the country’s electronic hub last year.
- Karnataka became the number two exporting state with \$4.62 billion, contributing to 16 per cent of the national exports, followed by Uttar Pradesh with \$4.46 billion worth of exports and 15 per cent of the national share.
- The other top states in the list are Maharashtra (\$3.09 billion), Gujarat (\$2.75 billion), Delhi (\$1.51 billion), Haryana (\$698.3 million), and Telangana (\$610.62 million).



## IRDAI abolished the age limit for individuals buying health insurance policies

- The IRDAI has removed the age limit of 65 years for individuals buying health insurance policies to expand the market and foster adequate protection from healthcare expenses.
- With the recent amendment, which has been effective from April 1, anyone, regardless of age, is eligible to buy a new health insurance policy.
- It marks a significant change from the old rules that stopped people from getting full coverage.
- It will ensure adequate protection against unforeseen medical expenses.
- As per the IRDAI, insurers may design products specifically for senior citizens, students, children, maternity, and any other group.
- Insurers cannot deny coverage to individuals with serious medical issues such as cancer, heart or kidney failure, and AIDS.



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## Kaushik Rajashekara honored with International Fellowship by the Engineering Academy of Japan

- **Karnataka based Kaushik Rajashekara, a distinguished professor at the University of Houston's Cullen College of Engineering, has been elected as an International Fellow of the prestigious Engineering Academy of Japan.**
- This honour recognizes his outstanding contributions to the field of power conversion and the electrification of transportation.
- This International Fellow specifically honours his “**outstanding scientific research and scientific-technical developments in the field of energy,**” which promote greater efficiency and environmental security for energy sources worldwide.
- In 2022, **Rajashekara received the prestigious Global Energy Prize** bestowed by the **Global Energy Association**, considered the most coveted prize in the field of international energy



## Sukant Kadam bags silver medal in Spanish Para-Badminton 2024

- **Ace Para-shuttler Sukant Kadam** secured a **silver medal** in the **Spanish Para-Badminton International 2024-II** tournament played at **Vitoria, Spain**.
- **Sukant** went down fighting to **India's Tarun** in the final of the SL 4 category.
- In the semifinals, Sukant defeated World Champion Suhas Yathiraj.
- In the final, Sukant faced compatriot Tarun. Sukant started the match really well but went down in the first game 13-21. In the second game, Sukant made a strong comeback and rallied hard to win 21-16.
- In the third and deciding game, Sukant made some errors which proved costly, and he went down fighting. The final score read 13-21, 21-16, 16-21. IANS

