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GAIA TELESCOPE DISCOVERS

**Two Ancient
Streams of Stars
Shiva & Shakti**

Gaia telescope discovers two ancient streams of stars Shiva & Shakti

- The **European Space Agency's Gaia space telescope** has discovered **two ancient streams of stars** called **Shiva and Shakti**. These new discoveries have greatly advanced human understanding of the origin of the galaxy.
- Named after a divine couple from Hindu Philosophy, shiva and Shakti symbolize the creation of the Universe, reflecting the streams' role in the Milky Way's formation.
- **Khyati Malhan** of the Max Planck Institute for Astronomy expressed astonishment at the ability to detect these ancient structures, highlighting the remarkable data provided by Gaia.
- Gaia's observations enabled researchers to determine the orbits, content, and composition of individual stars within the Milky Way, leading to the discovery of the shiva and Shakti streams.
- Each stream carries the mass of about 10 million suns, with stars aged between 12 to 13 billion years, exhibiting similar orbits and compositions, suggesting they merged with the Milky Way in its early history.
- Gaia's exploration of the galaxy's heart revealed the oldest stars, lacking heavier metal elements, leading to the identification of the 'poor old heart' of the Milky Way.



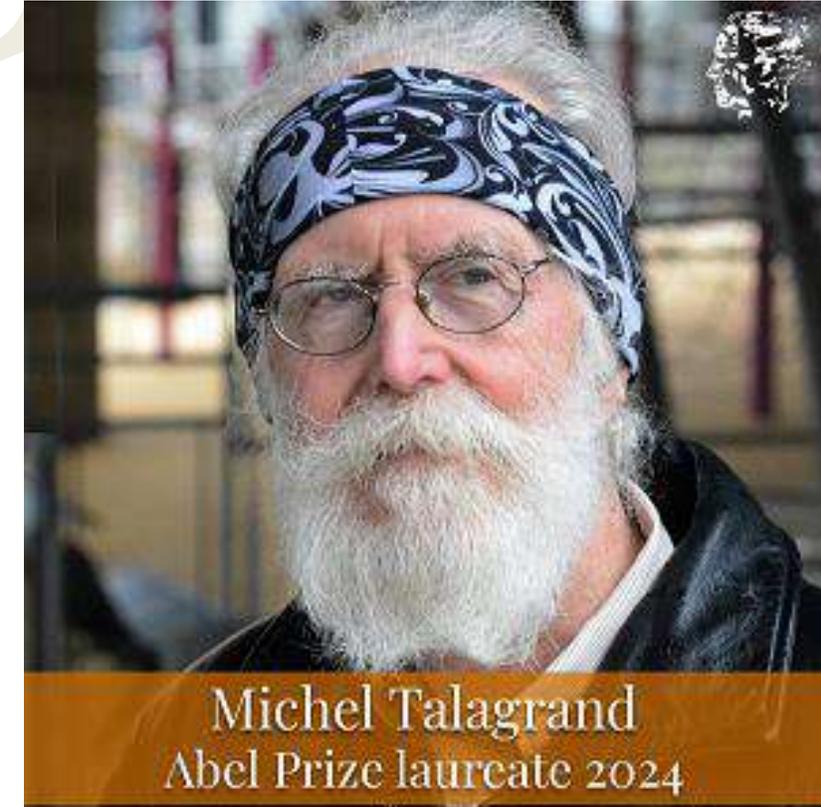
**First Person
To Reach Point
Nemo-Remotest Point
on Earth **CHRIS BROWN****

Chris Brown, 1st person who reaches 'point Nemo' the remotest point on Earth

- **Chris Brown of Britain** has become the **first person** in history to reach **Point Nemo**, the **oceanic pole of inaccessibility** in the **Pacific Ocean**.
- The Point Nemo is located in the **southern Pacific Ocean** east of **New Zealand**.
- Point Nemo is an imaginary point in the South Pacific Ocean that is very far from land. It is located at coordinates 48°52.6' South latitude and 123°23.6' West longitude.
- The **Croatian-Canadian** survey engineer, **Hrvoje Lukatela**, using a geospatial computer programme, calculated the point in the **South Pacific Ocean in 1992**.
- He named the region **Point Nemo in 1992** after the **fictional captain Nemo** created by author **Jules Verne**.
- In Jules Verne's fiction book Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea, Captain Nemo was the captain of a submarine. **Nemo** is a Latin word which means '**no man**.'
- The nearest landmass in the north is Ducie Island, part of the Pitcairn Islands, which is 2,688 km away from Point Nemo. In the northeast of Point Nemo lies Motu Nui Island, part of Easter Island and in the south is Maher Island, part of Antarctica.
- **About New Zealand**
- **Capital:** Wellington
- **PM:** Christopher Luxon
- **President:** Dame Jacinda Kate Laurell Ardern
- **Currency:** New Zealand dollar

Abel prize for 2024 is awarded to Michael Talagrand

- The **Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters** has decided to award the **Abel Prize for 2024** to **Michel Talagrand** of the **French National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS)**, Paris, France.
- The Abel Prize is given for **three specific areas of Talagrand's work**:
- **Suprema of stochastic processes** – A stochastic process produces a sequence of random values, and the "supremum" is the largest value to be expected from a collection of those values. If the height of waves crashing on a beach is a stochastic process, it is useful to know what the largest wave to hit the beach next year is likely to be.
- **Concentration of measures** – Counterintuitively, when a process depends on a range of different sources of randomness, instead of getting more complicated, it is possible for the different random factors to compensate for each other and produce more predictable results. Talagrand has given sharp quantitative estimates for this.
- **Spin glass** – Leaving abstract probability theory behind, a "spin glass" is a special form of matter that atoms can arrange themselves in, much to the initial surprise of physicists.
- As well as Michel Talagrand receives the prize for his work in probability theory and stochastic processes. From the outset, the development of probability theory was motivated by problems that arose in the context of gambling or assessing risks.



- Michael has received over ten prizes, including the **Shaw Prize in 2019**.
- **About Abel Prize:**
- The Abel Prize is awarded annually by the **King of Norway** to one or more outstanding mathematicians. It is named after the Norwegian mathematician **Niels Henrik Abel** and directly modeled after the Nobel Prizes. It comes with a monetary award of 7.5 million Norwegian kroner.
- **Established:** 23 August 2001
- **First awarded:** 2003
- The **first Abel Prize** laureate was **Jean-Pierre Serre** in 2003.

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Drone manufacturer Garuda Aerospace has launched a border patrol surveillance Drone, 'Trishul'

- Drone manufacturer **Garuda Aerospace** has launched a Border Patrol Surveillance Drone, 'Trishul'. The Border Patrol surveillance drone Trishul can be used to monitor the movement of people, monitor natural disasters and assess traffic.
- According to Garuda Aerospace, the border patrol surveillance drone, Trishul, has been fitted with state-of-the-art equipment. The equipment installed in it mainly includes the following: that are State-of-the-Art Cameras, InfraRed and Equipped with a variety of sensors including radar.
- Trishul is also capable of gathering data regarding security threats.

- The launch of Trishul exemplifies the company's commitment to building a drone ecosystem with benchmark-setting products and services.
- So far, 446 drones have been distributed to women self-help groups in 20 states.
- Garuda Aerospace has played a major role in the economic empowerment of women through initiatives like '**NaMo Drone Didi Yojana**' launched by PM Modi.
- The **NaMo Drone Didi Scheme** aims to provide drones to **15,000 selected women SHGs** to provide rental services to farmers for agricultural purposes.
- The distribution of 446 drones to women self-help groups has had a positive impact on more than 20 states across India.
- Garuda Aerospace has played an important role in promoting gender equality and economic empowerment in rural communities.
- Indian cricketer **Mahendra Singh Dhoni** serves as its **brand ambassador** and shareholder. Garuda Aerospace was also the official drone partner of **IPL team Chennai Super Kings** for the year **2023**.
- **About Garuda Aerospace:**
- **Founded:** 2015
- **Headquarters:** Chennai, Tamilnadu
- **Founder & CEO:** Agnishwar Jayaprakash

US Surgeons perform first pig-to-human Kidney Transplant

- 62-year-old man with end-stage renal disease has become the first human to receive a new kidney from a genetically modified pig, doctors from **Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston**.
- The four-hour surgery, “marks a major milestone in the quest to provide more readily available organs to patients”.
- The patient, Richard Slayman of Weymouth, Massachusetts, is recovering well and expected to be discharged soon.
- Kidneys from similarly edited pigs raised by eGenesis had successfully been transplanted into monkeys.
- A **University of Maryland** team in **January 2022** transplanted a genetically modified **pig heart** into a 57-year-old man with terminal heart disease, but he died two months later.



United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) approves first resolution on Artificial Intelligence (AI).



- The **United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)** unanimously adopted the **first global resolution on artificial intelligence** that encourages countries to safeguard human rights, protect personal data, and monitor AI for risks.
- The nonbinding resolution, proposed by the United States and co-sponsored by China and over 120 other nations, also advocates the strengthening of privacy policies.
- "Today, all 193 members of the United Nations General Assembly have spoken in one voice, and together, chosen to govern artificial intelligence.
- In November, the U.S., Britain and more than a dozen other countries unveiled the first detailed international agreement on how to keep artificial intelligence safe from rogue actors, pushing for companies to create AI systems that are "secure by design."
- The resolution is the latest in a series of initiatives - few of which carry teeth - by governments around the world to shape AI's development.
- **78th Session of United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)** held in **New York** under the chairmanship of **Dennis Francis** and the theme, "Rebuilding trust and reigniting global solidarity: Accelerating action on the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals towards peace, prosperity, progress and the sustainability for all."
- **About UNGA:**
- **Founded:** 1945
- **Headquarters:** New York, United States.

**'Flash Pay':
Federal Bank,
NPCI partner
for contactless
payments**

RuPay
ON-THE-GO

FEDERAL BANK

Flawless
Faster
Payments
with
**Flash
Pay!**

Make your payments
quicker and easier with
the all new Federal Bank
FlashPay.

Federal Bank Partners with NPCI to Introduce ‘Rupay Smart Key Chain- FlashPay’ for contactless Payments

- **Federal Bank** joined hands with the **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)** to launch the **Federal Bank RuPay Signet Contactless Credit Card- “Flashpay”**.
- One of the major highlights of this card is, it comes with the lowest Annual Percentage Rate (APR) starting from just 5.88% per annum.
- Customers can make payments up to **₹5,000 without a PIN**, whereas those **over ₹5,000** will require **PIN authentication** and **per day limit** at any PoS terminal has been capped at **₹1 lakh**.
- ‘Flash Pay’ allows users to make secure payments with just a tap, **eliminating** the need for **physical cards or cash**.
- The Federal Bank RuPay Signet credit cardholders will gain access to a wide variety of offers and deals across categories including travel, food and dining, shopping, sports, entertainment, lifestyle and much more.
- Through the ‘Flash Pay’ device, users can make payments at millions of merchants, with built-in security features such as **tokenisation and encryption** to ensure that transactions are safe and secure.
- **About Federal Bank:**
- **Founded:** 23 April 1931
- **Headquarters:** Aluva, Kerala
- **CEO:** Shyam Srinivasan

Indian Airline “IndiGo” is named as Airline of the Year 2024

- **IndiGo** is named as the ‘**Airline of the Year**’ at the **Air Transport Awards 2024** held in **Greece’s Athens**.
- IndiGo becoming the first Indian airline to carry **100 million passengers in 2023** carrier to operate **2,000 daily flights**.
- The low-cost carrier aims to aggressively expand its network by doubling its fleet size by the end of this decade.
- The 2024 Air Transport Awards was organised in partnership with **Hermes – Air Transport Organisation** and **ATN – Air Transport News** to recognize the contributions made in the aviation sector.
- Founded in 2006, IndiGo is the largest aviation company in India with respect to market share and operates a fleet of over 350 aircraft. The airline is currently operating around 2000 daily flights and connecting over 85 domestic destinations and more than 30 international destinations.
- **About Indigo:**
- **Founded:** August 2006
- **Headquarters:** Gurugram, Haryana
- **CEO:** Pieter Elbers.



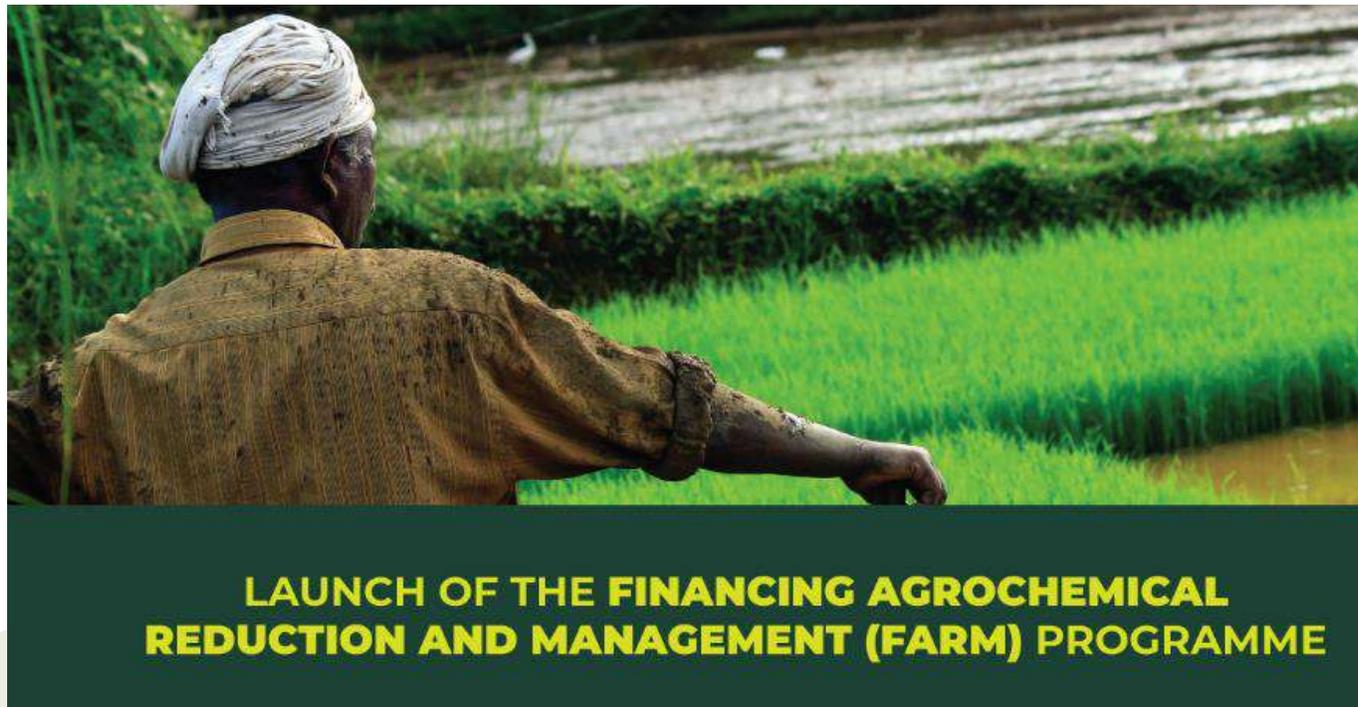
Louis Montenegro named as the Prime Minister of Portugal

- Centre-right leader **Luis Montenegro** was appointed prime minister of **Portugal** and he currently serves as the President of the Social Democracy Party (PSD) .
- He replaced the 51-year-old lawyer and veteran parliamentarian, the Socialist Party's **Antonio Costa**, who was in power since **2015**.
- In 2002, 29-year-old Montenegro was elected to the Assembly of the Republic for Aveiro. He won against Jorge Moreira da Silva in 2022 and became President of the PSD and he is Democracy Alliance (DA) leader.
- **About Portugal**
- **Capital:** Lisbon
- **President:** Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa
- **Currency:** The euro



148th Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) meeting held in Geneva, Switzerland

- A seven-member parliamentary delegation led by **Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman Harivansh** to attend the **five-day 148th Assembly** of the **Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)** being organised in **Geneva, Switzerland**.
- During the Assembly, scheduled from March 23 to 27, the Indian delegation will highlight issues such as parliamentary diplomacy and building bridges for peace and understanding.
- The delegation includes five Rajya Sabha members S. Niranjan Reddy, Kartikeya Sharma, Ashok Mittal, Prashanta Nanda, and Sumitra Balmik along with Rajya Sabha Secretary General PC Mody.
- The delegation will participate in a number of meetings of different standing committees, namely the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security, Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Standing Committee on democracy and Human Rights, and Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs in addition to forums of Young Parliamentarians and Women Parliamentarians of the IPU.
- **About Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU):**
- **Founded:** 1889
- **Headquarters:** Geneva, Switzerland
- **President:** Duarte Pacheco
- **Member Countries:** 180 countries.



GEF funded Financing Agrochemical Reduction and Management (FARM) programme

- The **Global Environment Facility (GEF)** funded **Financing Agrochemical Reduction and Management (FARM)** Programme upto \$37-million project, with an additional \$ 342 million in co-financing.
- Its objective is to catalyze a framework for regulatory and financial investment to detoxify the agriculture sector by eliminating the use of the most harmful inputs to food production systems.
- **About FARM:**
- FARM is a **\$379 million** initiative aimed at reducing agrochemical usage and promoting sustainable alternatives in food production and the programme is set to **run** for **five years**.

- It focuses on realigning financial incentives to prevent the use of harmful inputs and encourage the adoption of low and non-chemical alternatives.
- FARM supports government regulations to phase out **persistent organic pollutants (POPs)** in agrochemicals and agri-plastics and adopt better management standards.
- It strengthens banking, insurance, and investment criteria to improve the availability of effective pest control, production alternatives, and trade in sustainable produce.
- **Member countries include India**, Ecuador, Kenya, Lao PDR, the Philippines, Uruguay, and Vietnam.
- Implementing agencies include UNEP (United Nations Environment Programme), ADB (Asian Development Bank), UNDP (United Nations Development Programme), and UNIDO (United Nations Industrial Development Organization), with execution carried out in-country by FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization).
- **About the Global Environment Facility (GEF):**
- **Founded:** 1992
- **Headquarters:** Washington, D.C
- **Member Countries:** 186 member countries
- Serves as the **financial mechanism** for five international environmental conventions, including the Minamata Convention on Mercury, Stockholm Convention on POPs, UN Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD), UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).
- The **World Bank** serves as the trustee for the GEF, which has more than 180 member countries, including **India**.

Kerala's Nayana James won the women's long jump event at 3rd Indian Open Jump Competition

- Nayana James from Kerala won the **women's long jump gold** at the **3rd Indian Open Jumps competition**, registering the **third biggest leap** by an Indian - **6.67m** at **Anju Bobby George Centre, Bengaluru, Karnataka**.
- Rising star Shaili Singh settled for the silver with a best of 6.4m.
- Nayana won the bronze medal at the 2017 Asian Championships in Bhubaneswar, served another reminder with an attempt which was behind Anju Bobby George's national record (6.83m, Athens, 2004) and Shaili's 6.76m (Bengaluru, 2023).
- Nayana had two more good jumps measuring **6.64m** and **6.48m**.
- **About Kerala:**
- **Capital:** Thiruvananthapuram
- **Chief Minister:** Pinarayi Vijayan
- **Governor:** Arif Mohammed Khan



Nayana James Shines at Indian Open Jumps Competition



Government allocates Rs 6200cr to boost Regional Rural Banks (RRBs)

- The government has allocated **Rs 6212.03** crore to **Regional Rural Banks (RRBs)** as part of the recapitalization scheme on March 6th 2024.
- Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) are commercial banks owned by the Indian government that operate at the regional level in different states.
- RRBs were established in **1975** to provide basic banking and financial services to rural areas, particularly to small and marginal farmers, agricultural laborers, artisans, and small entrepreneurs. The **Narasimham Committee** had recommended the creation of Regional Rural Banks.
- The performance of RRBs has improved significantly, with a consolidated **CRAR** (Capital to Risk-weighted Assets Ratio) at an all-time high of **13.83 per cent** as of December 31, 2023.
- Indian RRBs have shown the highest ever consolidated **net profit of Rs 4,974 crores** in **FY22-23** and a net profit of **Rs 5,236 crore** up to the 3rd quarter of **FY 2023-24**.
- Similarly, the credit expansion has led to an increase in the consolidated credit-deposit ratio to 72.13 per cent as of 30.09.2023, which is the highest in the last 15 years.
- This comes against a backdrop of a 3-year board-approved viability plan (VP) in the financial year 2022-23, with a well-defined implementation mechanism aimed at achieving sustainable viability.
- RRBs are important for banking and financial services to rural communities, agriculture activities and small businesses. There are **43 RRBs sponsored** by **12 scheduled commercial banks** in India.

JSL and IIT-Kharagpur partners to work on metallurgical projects

- **Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur (IIT Kharagpur)** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **Jindal Stainless limited**, the country's largest stainless steel manufacturer marking a pivotal moment in the advancement of metallurgical research and development.
- This industry-academy collaboration will work together on metallurgical projects, such as process optimisation, materials characterisation and primary alloy production.
- IIT Kharagpur will provide technical consultancy and engage in academic and industrial research to enhance productivity and process improvement at Jindal Stainless Limited.
- **About Jindal Stainless limited:**
- **Founded:** 1970
- **Headquarters:** New Delhi
- **CEO:** Tarun Kumar Khulbe
- **Chairman:** Ratan Jindal.



Haryana crowned champions of the 14th Hockey India Senior Women National Championship

- Hockey Haryana defeated Hockey Maharashtra 1-0 (3-0 SO) in Final to win the **14th Hockey India Senior Women National Championship** at the **Major Dhyanchand Hockey Stadium Pimpri**, Pune, Maharashtra.
- **Deepika (26')** scored for Hockey Haryana in **regulation time** **Navneet Kaur, Usha** and **Sonika** scored for Hockey Haryana in the **shootout**.
- While Indian Women's Hockey Team and Hockey Haryana's **Captain and goalkeeper Savita** made three successive saves as Hockey Haryana clinched the **Gold**.
- **Hockey Jharkhand** finishes in **third place** with win over Hockey Madhya Pradesh.
- **About Haryana:**
- **Capital:** Chandigarh
- **Chief Minister:** Nayab Singh Saini
- **Governor:** Bandaru Dattatreya



Border- Gavaskar Trophy extended

- The **Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI)** and **Cricket Australia (CA)** have confirmed that the **Border-Gavaskar Trophy** would be played in **five Tests** next summer.
- For the **first time** since **1991-92, Australia and India** will play a five-Test series this summer.
- The extended Border-Gavaskar Trophy series will be the highlight of the 2024-25.
- In the last four Test series between the two sides, India has been the superior team, winning all four. This includes winning the Test series in Australia in consecutive years, 2018-19 and 2020-21.
- In 2018-19, India became the first Asian team to win a test series in Australia. The Border-Gavaskar Trophy has been extended for this and subsequent series to acknowledge the position of the nations that competed in the 2023 ICC World Test Championship final, as well as their ongoing commitment to the game's premier international format.
- **About BCCI:**
- **Founded:** 10th December 1928
- **President:** Roger Binny
- **Headquarters:** Mumbai, Maharashtra

