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- ❖ PM Modi unveiled Indian Railways projects worth Rs 41000 crore
- ❖ In the Archery Asia Cup 2024, India concluded the tournament with 14 medals, including nine gold in Baghdad, Iraq
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- ❖ Dubai introduced a 5-year multiple-entry visa for Indian tourists
- ❖ 'Savera' program for early screening and detection of breast cancer launched by the Haryana Chief Minister

IAACE



Forget what you can get, and
remember what you can give

this **WORLD
NGO
DAY**

27 February

World NGO Day 2024: 27 February

- World NGO Day is celebrated annually on 27 February to recognize and honour all non-governmental and non-profit organizations.
- The theme of World NGO Day 2024 is **"Building a Sustainable Future: The Role of NGOs in Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)."**
- It was **first proposed in 2010 by the Baltic Sea NGO Forum**. It highlights the work of NGOs around the world.
- In 2014, the UN, EU leaders, and international organizations adopted 27th February as World NGO day.
- It is celebrated in over 89 countries and in more than six continents.
- The Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland hosted the global inaugural event of World NGO Day on 27 February 2014 in Helsinki, Finland.
- India has more than three million non-governmental organizations (NGO). They play important roles as facilitators and partners in different sectors.

Non-governmental organization (NGO):

- A non-governmental organization (NGO) is a non-profit group that functions independently.
- It plays a vital role in international development, improving communities, and philanthropy work.

Ghazal singer Pankaj Udhas breathed his last at the age of 72

- Famous ghazal singer Pankaj Udhas died on 26 February 2024 at the age of 72. He was ill for the last several days.
- He got great recognition from the famous ghazal '**Chitthi Aayi Hai**'.
- Pankaj Udhas's father, Keshubhai Udhas, worked as a government employee. He was very fond of playing Israj. His mother Jituben Udhas was very fond of songs. The family's musical inclination was fostered by Pankaj Udhas's father's influence, leading him and his two brothers toward music.
- Pankaj was admitted to the Music Academy in Rajkot.



Philippines ratifies ILO Convention eliminating violence, harassment in workplaces

- The Philippine government ratified the International Labour Organisation (ILO) convention aimed at eliminating violence and harassment in workplaces, **becoming the first Asian country to do so.**
- The government deposited its ratification document on the Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190) on February 20, which is also the World Day of Social Justice.
- The Convention No. 190 introduces the first globally recognised definition of workplace violence and harassment, as well as offers protection to all individuals in the workforce.
- Under the convention, the Philippine government is mandated to adopt inclusive and gender-responsive strategies for preventing and eradicating workplace violence and harassment.



SECI unveils India's largest Solar-battery storage project in Chhattisgarh

- **Solar Energy Corp. of India Ltd (SECI)**, under the **Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE)**, has commissioned India's largest battery energy storage system (BESS) with an installed capacity of 152.325 MWh and dispatchable capacity of 100 MW AC (155.02 MW peak DC) solar power with 40 MW/120 MWh BESS in Rajnandgaon, Chhattisgarh.
- The solar power would be purchased by Chhattisgarh State Power Distribution Co. Ltd (CSPDCL) to meet the energy demand of the state during peak hours demand of the state using green electrons and also towards its renewable purchase obligations.
- This project is estimated to save tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions annually.
- The project has been constructed with funding from the World Bank and Clean Technology Fund under Innovation in Solar Power & Hybrid Technologies Project as well as leveraged financing from domestic lending agencies.



Indian economist Geeta Batra became the first woman of the country to become director of 'global environmental facility'

- Geeta Batra, an Indian economist, has been named as the new Director at the Independent Evaluation Office of the World Bank's Global Environment Facility (GEF), making her the first-ever woman from a developing country to hold the coveted post.
- Batra, 57, is currently the Chief Evaluator & Deputy Director for Evaluation at the GEF's Independent Evaluation Office (IEO), affiliated to the World Bank.
- Her name was unanimously recommended for the coveted position at the 66th GEF Council Meeting held in Washington on February 9 and was announced last week.
- She will also build partnerships with multilateral and bilateral agencies, foundations and networks, and share knowledge of what works, where and why.
- She worked for a couple of years as Senior Manager, Risk, at American Express, before joining the World Bank's Private Sector Development Department in 1998.



Geeta Batra becomes first woman from developing country to lead World Bank's environmental evaluation office.

Fintech startup paymart partners with 5 Indian banks to launch the country's first 'Virtual ATM'

- Paymart, a fintech startup, announced its partnership with five Indian banks to introduce a groundbreaking virtual, cardless, and hardware-less cash withdrawal service.
- The partnered banks include **IDBI Bank, Indian Bank, Jammu & Kashmir Bank, and Karur Vyasa Bank**, with discussions underway with four additional banks for further collaboration.
- Paymart boasts future-ready technology and direct connectivity to banks' Core Banking Systems, positioning itself as a versatile Cardless Switch.
- The startup plans to commence pilot programs with its partner banks in February/March, paving the way for a phased nationwide rollout scheduled for April/May 2024.
- Paymart conducted a successful pilot of its virtual ATM service with IDBI Bank over a period of six months, validating its effectiveness and reliability.
- Paymart's virtual ATM service aims to empower local shopkeepers by transforming them into essential hubs for cash withdrawals, eliminating the need for traditional ATM machines or additional hardware.
- Paymart's founder and CEO: **Amit Narang**



PM Narendra Modi

Launches

**World's Largest Grain
Storage Scheme**



PM Narendra Modi launches the world's largest grain storage scheme

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the pilot project of the world's largest grain storage plan in the cooperative sector in 11 **Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS)** of 11 states.
- The world's largest storage plan of 700 lakh metric tons would be completed in the next five years at a cost of **Rs 1.25 lakh crore**.
- The Prime Minister also laid the foundation stone for additional 500 PACS across the country for construction of godowns and other agriculture infrastructure under the grain storage initiative.
- The initiative aims to seamlessly integrate PACS' godowns with the food grain supply chain, fortifying food security and fostering economic development in the country with a collaborative effort supported by NABARD and spearheaded by the National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC).
- This initiative is being implemented through the convergence of various existing schemes like the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF) and Agriculture Marketing Infrastructure (AMI) to enable PACS participating in the project to avail subsidies and interest subvention benefits for undertaking infrastructure development.
- The Prime Minister also inaugurated a project for computerization in 18,000 PACS across the country, aligning with the government's vision of "**Sahakar se Samridhi**" aimed at rejuvenating the cooperative sector and empowering small and marginal farmers.

RBI has given approval to HDFC Bank for sale of 90% of stake in HDFC Credila

- HDFC Bank will continue to own 9.99% stake in HDFC Credila.
- HDFC Bank will sell 90% stake in HDFC Credila to a group of private equity investors, including BPEA EQT and ChrysCapital group.
- The sale of HDFC Credila comes after approximately eight months have passed since HDFC and HDFC Bank completed their merger.
- The central bank had requested in April 2023 that HDFC cut its stake in Credila to less than 10% over the two years.
- Students pursuing higher education in India and abroad can apply for education loans from HDFC Credila. It is HDFC Bank's subsidiary for student loans.



On 26 February, the 13th Ministerial Conference (MC13) of the World Trade Organization started in Abu Dhabi, UAE

- This four-day high-level meeting will bring together the world's trade ministers to evaluate the functioning of the multilateral trading system and chart the future of the WTO.
- Dr. Thani bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi, Minister of State for Foreign Trade of the UAE is chairing the conference.
- Commerce and Industry **Minister Piyush Goyal is leading the Indian delegation.**
- Trade ministers from the 164 member countries of the WTO are meeting against the backdrop of an uncertain global economic situation due to the Red Sea crisis, the Ukraine-Russia war, and the Israel-Hamas conflict.
- Ahead of the meeting, the G-33, a coalition of developing countries, of which India is a key member, urged the WTO to take forward agricultural trade talks at the 13th WTO Ministerial Conference.
- They will discuss the lack of progress, particularly regarding food security challenges faced by developing nations.
- The group stressed the urgency of action, citing the Food and Agriculture Organization's estimate of some 600 million people facing long-term hunger by 2030.
- The 13th WTO Ministerial Conference presents an important opportunity for WTO Members to address critical issues in the global trading system, particularly agricultural trade and food security.
- In 1996, the First ministerial conference was held in Singapore.



PM Modi inaugurated the Bharat Tex 2024 at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi

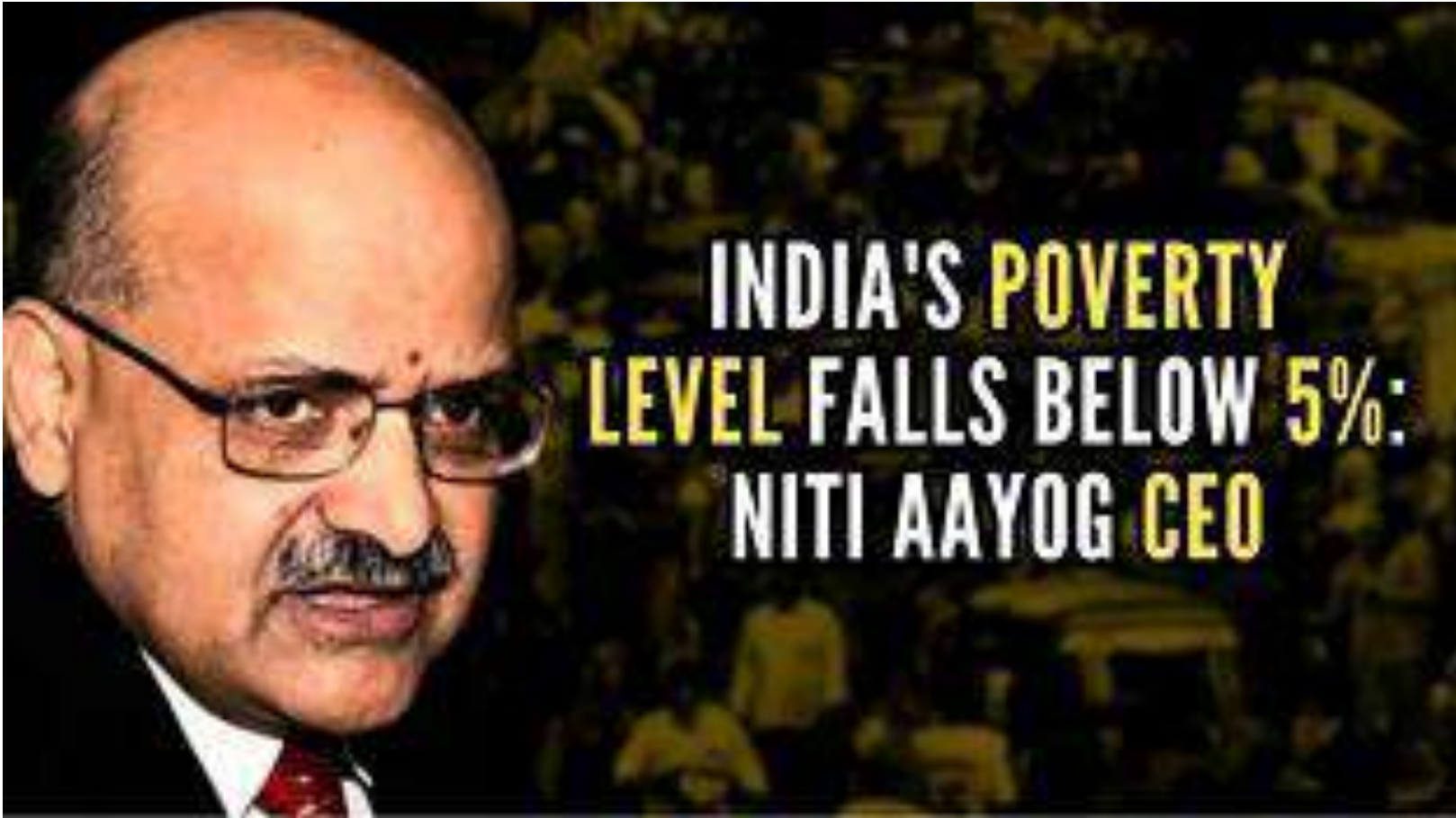
- Bharat Tex 2024 is considered one of the largest-ever global textile events to be organised in India.
- It is a 4-day long textile event. More than 100 countries are taking part at the event.
- It will feature more than 65 knowledge sessions. Over 100 global panelists will discuss various issues facing the textile sector.
- Policymakers, global CEOs, more than 3 thousand 500 exhibitors and more than 3 thousand buyers will participate.
- Bharat Tex 2024 will boost trade and investment. It will help enhance exports. It will showcase India's prowess in the textile sector.



Defence Security Corps celebrated its 77th Raising Day on 25 February 2024.

- It was raised on 25 February 1947 as 'Defence Department Constabulary'.
- Its troops are providing security to different sensitive defence and civil installations across the length and breadth of India since 1947.
- Defence Security Corps is a corps of the Indian Army.
- It is responsible for providing security cover to the defence installations of the Army, Navy and Air Force.
- It is the sixth largest corps of the Army. **Its motto is Raksha Tatha Suraksha.**





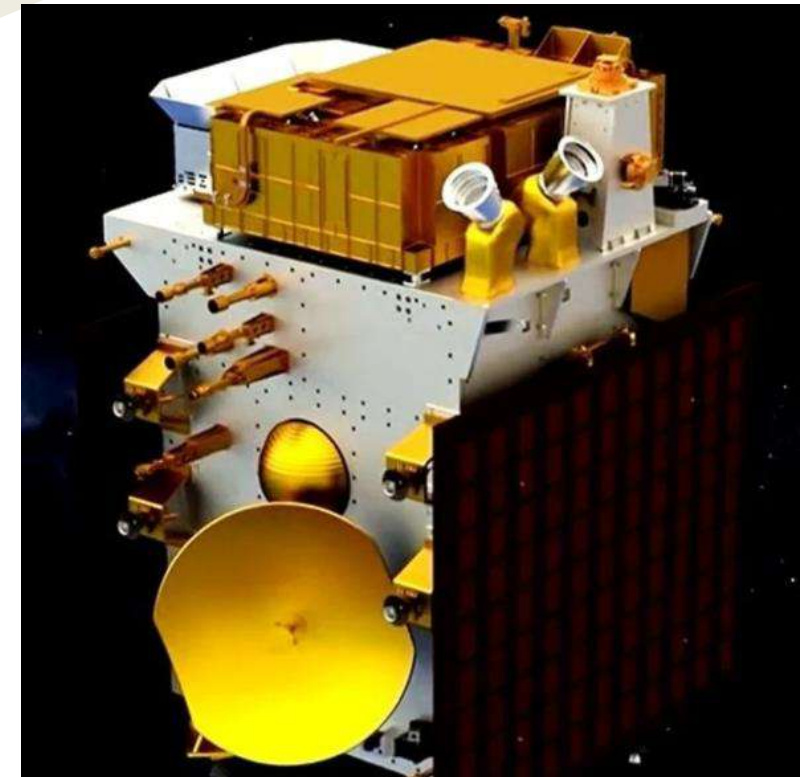
**INDIA'S POVERTY
LEVEL FALLS BELOW 5%:
NITI AAYOG CEO**

Poverty has come down to below 5% in India: NITI Aayog CEO

- NITI Aayog CEO **B V R Subrahmanyam** said that people are becoming prosperous in rural and urban areas.
- He said that as per the latest consumer expenditure survey, poverty has come down to 5%.
- The **National Sample Survey Office (NSSO)** released data on household consumption expenditure for the year 2022-23.
- According to this data, the per capita monthly household expenditure has become doubled in 2022-23 as compared to 2011-12.
- This survey has kept people in 20 different categories and the average per capita monthly expenditure for all categories stood at Rs 3,773 in rural areas and Rs 6,459 in urban areas.
- If the trend continues then it might become possible that urban and rural consumption become the same in the coming years.
- Consumption in rural areas is growing faster than in urban areas. The gap was 84 per cent in 2011-12 and has come down to 71 per cent in 2022-23.
- As per the NSSO survey, consumption of cereals has decreased in rural areas.
- Consumption of cereals and food in urban areas has also decreased as a share in the average MPCE from six per cent in 2011-12 to less than four per cent now.
- In food, people are drinking more milk, eating fruits and more vegetables.

Aditya-L1 mission detected solar wind impact of Coronal Mass Ejections.

- The **Plasma Analyser Package for Aditya (PAPA)** payload on Aditya-L1 has detected the impact of coronal mass ejections (CMEs) on solar wind.
- PAPA is an energy and mass analyzer designed for in-situ measurements of solar wind electrons and ions in the low energy range.
- It is operational since Dec 12, 2023, and has two sensors- **Solar Wind Electron Energy Probe (SWEEP)** and **Solar Wind Ion Composition Analyser (SWICAR)**.
- Solar Wind Electron Energy Probe is for measuring electrons in the energy range of 10 eV to 3 keV while Solar Wind Ion Composition Analyser is for measuring ions in the energy range of 10 eV to 25 keV and mass range of 1-60 amu.
- The observations by PAPA show its effectiveness in monitoring space weather conditions and its capability to detect and analyse solar phenomena.
- Aditya-L1 mission was successfully launched by **PSLV-C57 rocket** on September 2. It carried **seven payloads** to study the Sun.





First-Ever Maharashtra MSME Defence Expo Being Held in Pune

The first-ever 'Maharashtra MSME Defence Expo' inaugurated in Pune

- The three-day Expo was organized at the International Exhibition and Convention Center of Moshi in Pune from February 24 to 26.
- The expo saw the participation from the armed forces, defense public sector undertakings, and ordnance factories.
- The event was set to promote the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' campaign as envisioned by PM Modi.
- Under the Defence Expo, the **Indian Air Force's Made in India Samar-II and Akash surface-to-air weapon systems are being showcased.**
- The Samar-II system has been developed using R-27 beyond visual range air-to-air missiles.
- It can now engage targets at longer ranges than its previous version, the Samar-1 air defense missile system.
- DRDO showcased different types of rockets used by the Pinaka Multi-Barrel Rocket Launcher System at the expo.
- It includes guided, extended-range, and Pinaka-Mark 1 rockets.
- For the first time at the Expo, DRDO displayed a wheeled 8x8 CBRN reconnaissance vehicle.
- The Vehicle Research and Development Establishment (VRDE) (DRDO) Indigenously designed and developed 2nd Generation vehicle, Wheeled (8x8) platform.
- It has been manufactured by **Mahindra Defence System Ltd.**

PM Modi unveiled Indian Railways projects worth Rs 41000 crore

- On 26 February, PM Modi laid foundation stones and inaugurated around 2,000 railway infrastructure projects worth more than ₹41,000 crore.
- The redevelopment of 553 railway stations under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme has been started by PM Modi. These railway stations will be redeveloped for Rs 19000 crore.
- These stations will be developed as **'City Centres'**. These stations will have modern passenger amenities such as roof plazas, landscaping, inter modal connectivity, improved modern façades, and kids play areas.
- PM Modi also inaugurated Gomti Nagar station in Uttar Pradesh which has been redeveloped at a total cost of around ₹385 crore.
- He also laid the foundation stone for approximately 1,500 road overpasses and underpasses across various states.

Amrit Bharat Station Scheme:

- It was launched to upgrade station facilities with modern infrastructure.
- Rs 24,470 crore has been allocated by the government for this scheme.
- 1309 railway stations railway stations will be redeveloped under this scheme.
- It was launched in February 2023 by the Ministry of Railways.



In the Archery Asia Cup 2024, India concluded the tournament with 14 medals, including nine gold in Baghdad, Iraq

- By defeating compatriot Simranjit Kaur, the three-time Olympian **Deepika Kumari** won the gold medal in the women's individual recurve category.
- In the men's individual recurve category, **Dheeraj Bommadevara** defeated Tarundeep Rai 7-3 to win the archery title in the All India final.
- In all individual events, India secured top podium positions, topping both the men's and women's compound events.
- For the women's gold medal match, **Preneet Kaur** defeated Iran's Fatemeh Hemmati 138-135, while for the men's title, **Prathamesh Javakar** defeated teammate Kushal Dalal 146-144.



UAE has been removed from FATF's 'grey list'

- The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) has decided to remove UAE from its 'grey list'.
- UAE was placed under scrutiny in 2022 after FATF highlighted the risk of money laundering and terrorist financing.
- The European Union listed the UAE as a high-risk country for money laundering and terrorist financing.
- Last year, ESMA barred European banks and others from clearing trades with the Dubai Commodities Clearing Corporation.
- **The fifth FATF Plenary was held under the Singapore Presidency of T. Raja Kumar in Paris on 21-23 February.**
- **Financial Action Task Force (FATF):**
 - It is the body for global money laundering and terrorist financing watchdog. It sets international standards that aim to prevent these illegal activities and the harm they cause to society.
 - **Headquarters:** Paris, France
 - Established in 1989
 - **Member countries:** 39



NEWS

UAE REMOVED FROM FATF 'GREY' LIST:
A TRIUMPH FOR ECONOMIC CONFIDENCE

Dubai introduced a 5-year multiple-entry visa for Indian tourists

- Dubai government has launched five-year multiple-entry visa for Indian tourists.
- **The Department of Economy and Tourism (DET)** of Dubai has launched this initiative to attract more Indian tourists.
- In 2023, Dubai witnessed a remarkable 25% surge in overnight visitors from India.
- This five-year multiple-entry visa for Indian tourists will deepen the economic collaborations, stimulate tourism, and fortify business relationships.
- This new visa will allow the tourists to enter the UAE multiple times on their sponsorship. **A tourist holding this visa can stay for 90 days initially and can stay up to a maximum of 180 days.**
- To obtain the visa, applicants must meet certain criteria, including a bank balance of 4,000 USD, valid health insurance for the UAE, a round-trip ticket, and proof of stay in the UAE.





Haryana Launches Innovative "Savera" Program for Early Breast Cancer Detection

'Savera' program for early screening and detection of breast cancer launched by the Haryana Chief Minister

- This program has been initiated by the **Medanta Foundation** in collaboration with the health department in Gurgaon.
- Under the scheme, visually impaired people will conduct the screening for breast cancer.
- The importance of this ability has been understood, tested, and used by people associated with the medical world.
- A normal doctor can detect breast cancer up to one centimeter after examination while visually impaired people can detect it up to half a centimeter. They have a very high sensitivity to touch.
- During its initial phase, the program will be launched in the Civil Hospital of Sector 10, the Polyclinic of Sector 31, and the PHC of Wazirabad.
- **Breast cancer is one of those cancer types that mainly occurs in women living in cities.**
- Every year around 90,000 women lose their lives due to breast cancer across the country.
- The CM also mentioned the establishment of the **National Cancer Institute at AIIMS in Jhajjar district**, which has been equipped with 1,000 beds.
- Other initiatives of the government for cancer prevention include the establishment of Atal Cancer Care Center in Ambala district and cancer treatment and research is also being done at PGIMS, Rohtak.