

❖ Taiwan unveils first domestic submarine 'Haikun'

- Taiwan recently unveiled its first domestically built submarine "Haikun".
- The country aims to enhance its defense capabilities amid the constant threat of a possible attack from China.
- Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen presided over the launch ceremony in Kaohsiung.
- Taiwan, officially the Republic of China, is a democratic island nation that China considers a rebel province.
- The enduring dispute over Taiwan's status has been a long-term source of regional tension, with China stressing its intention to reunify Taiwan with the mainland, even by force if necessary.

❖ MSME Ministry to lead Swachhta Hi Seva campaign on October 1, 2023

- The MSME Ministry will actively participate in the “One Date One Hour Ek Saath” initiative as part of the Swachhta Hi Seva campaign on October 1, 2023.
- The ministry has planned more than 200 programs for the “One Date, One Hour, Together” activity, which will be conducted by its subordinate organizations.
- Organizations such as the National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC), Khadi and Village Industries (KVI), COIR Board, MGIRI-Wardha, NIMSME-Hyderabad, and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises- Development Facilitation Offices (MSME-DFOs) will actively participate in this campaign.
- A Joint Secretary level nodal officer has been appointed to oversee the preparation and implementation of the entire campaign and its activities to be held on October 1, 2023 across India.

- The theme of Swachhata Hi Seva Abhiyan in 2023 is “Garbage Free India”.
- The Ministry is also actively pursuing the Special Drive for Disposal of Pending Cases (SCDPM) 3.0 and Swachhta Hi Seva Abhiyaan, which will run from September 15 to October 2, 2023.

❖ **FSSAI introduces 'special category' provision to promote gender equality in food industry**

- Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) introduced a new provision called 'Special Category' in the FOSCOS portal.
- This provision aims to promote gender equality and equal opportunities for women and transgender entrepreneurs in the food business sector.
- Under this provision, licensing and registration authorities will give priority to 'special category' applications.
- Priority will be maintained in such a way that a one-to-one ratio is maintained between 'Special Category' applications and regular applications, unless there are no pending applications in any category.
- Persons belonging to 'Special Category' will be identified through Aadhaar/PAN (Permanent Account Number) authentication during the application submission process.
- FOSCOS was introduced by FSSAI in 2020 as an upgraded version of the Food Licensing and Registration System (FLRS), which was initially launched in 2012.

About Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI):

- FSSAI is a statutory body under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, established in the year 2008 under the Food Safety and Standards Act 2006.
- The current Chairman of FSSAI is Sudhansh Pant.
- The headquarters of FSSAI - New Delhi, Delhi.

❖ PM Narendra Modi launches Sankalp Saptah

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched a week long program called "Sankalp Saptah" for aspirational blocks in New Delhi.
- About three thousand panchayat and block level representatives and officials from across the country will participate in this program to be held at Bharat Mandapam in the national capital.
- Additionally, around two lakh people including block and panchayat level officials and farmers will join the program virtually.
- Sankalp Saptah will be celebrated in all 500 aspirational blocks of 329 districts of the country from 3rd to 9th October.
- During this week each day will focus on a specific development theme on which all the Aspirational Blocks will work.

The topics for the first six days are as follows:

- 1) Sampurna Swasthya (Comprehensive Health)
- 2) Suposhit Pariwaar (Well-nourished Family)
- 3) Swachhta (Cleanliness)
- 4) Krishi (Agriculture)
- 5) Shiksha (Education)
- 6) Samridhi Diwas (Prosperity Day)

- The final day of the week will be dedicated to celebrating the work done throughout the week, known as Sankalp Saptah - Samavesh Samaroh".

❖ Odisha scientist Swati Nayak wins Norman Borlaug Field Award 2023

- Indian agricultural scientist Swati Nayak became the third Indian agriculture scientist to win the prestigious Norman Borlaug Field Award 2023.
- She is fondly called as “Bihana Didi” (Seed Lady) by local communities in Odisha.
- The Norman Borlaug Field Award 2023 is presented by the World Food Prize Foundation in memory of the Nobel awardee Dr. Norman Borlaug, for outstanding achievements in international agriculture and food production by individuals under 40 years.
- The award is named after Norman E. Borlaug, the father of the Green Revolution and the 1970 Nobel Peace Prize laureate.
- The award diploma incorporates the image of Dr. Norman E. Borlaug at work in the fields of Mexico and a cash prize of USD 10,000.

❖ MS Swaminathan passed away (1925-2023)

- Mankombu Sambasivan Swaminathan aka MS Swaminathan, world renowned agronomist, agricultural scientist and plant geneticist, passed away at the age of 98.
- He is considered as the architect of India’s green revolution, he played a major role in introducing and developing high-yielding varieties of wheat and rice.
- He was acclaimed by the TIME magazine as one of the twenty most influential Asians of the 20th century and one of the only three from India besides Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore.
- The United Nations Environment Programme described him as “the Father of Economic Ecology” for his leadership of the ever-green revolution movement in agriculture.
- He was awarded the first World Food Prize in 1987 following which he set up the MS Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF) in Taramani, Chennai.

➤ Swaminathan served as the Director of Indian Agricultural Research Institute (1961-72), Director General of Indian Council of Agricultural Research and Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Agricultural Research and Education (1972-79), Principal Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture (1979-80), Acting Deputy Chairman and later Member (Science and Agriculture), Planning Commission (1980-82) and Director General, International Rice Research Institute, the Philippines (1982-88).

❖ **Mathematician Ruixiang Zhang to receive 2023 Sastra Ramanujan Prize**

➤ Ruixiang Zhang, Assistant Professor, University of California, Berkeley, USA will be awarded with the 2023 SASTRA Ramanujan Prize for his outstanding contributions in mathematics.

➤ The annual cash prize of USD 10,000 will be given at an international conference in Number Theory during December 20 and December 22 at SASTRA University in Kumbakonam, mathematician Srinivasa Ramanujan hometown.

➤ The age limit for the prize has been set at 32 influenced by Ramanujan achievements in his brief life of 32 years.

➤ The main objective of this prize is to acknowledge and encourages exceptional achievements in mathematics.

➤ Kannan Soundararajan (then at Michigan) receiving the First SASTRA Ramanujan Prize on Dec 20, 2005 from Dr Arabinda Mitra, Director, Department of Science and Technology, India.

❖ **Shanth Kumar of Deccan Herald is new PTI Chairman**

- Shanth Kumar is the Editor of the leading Kannada daily "Prajavani" and Director of Printers (Mysore), publishers of "Deccan Herald", "Prajavani", "Sudha" and "Mayura" publications. He succeeds R Lakshmi pathy, publisher of Tamil daily "Dinamalar".
- He has been involved in the management of The Printers (Mysore) Pvt. Ltd in various roles since 1983.
- He was also Chairman of the Audit Bureau of Circulation (ABC), a member of the Executive Committee of the Indian Newspaper Society (INS) for more than 20 years. This is the second time that he is serving as the Chairman of the Board of PTI, the last time being 2013 to 2014.
- Shanth Kumar has a keen interest in sports and photography. He has covered several Olympic Games since 1988 as an accredited photographer, besides several other sporting events.

❖ **NABARD Announces listing Social Bonds on BSE.**

- The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) has issued India's first 'AAA' rated Indian Rupee denominated Social Bonds aggregating ₹1,040.50 crore at a coupon rate of 7.63 per cent.
- The bonds (redeemable, taxable, non-convertible, non-priority sector, unsecured, social securities of face value ₹1 lakh each) of five-years tenure were issued privately to eligible institutional investors on September 26, as per the Development Finance Institution's (DFI) statement.
- NABARD recently announced a Sustainability Bond Framework, which seeks to finance and refinance new or existing eligible green and social projects.
- Eligible social projects include affordable basic infrastructure, access to essential services, affordable housing, employment generation, food security, socioeconomic advancement and empowerment, the release added.

➤ Face Value and Issue Size of Each bond has a face value of Rs 1,00,000. The base issue size is Rs 1,000 crore, with an option to retain oversubscription up to Rs 2,000 crore, making the total aggregate size up to Rs 3,000 crore.

➤ Purpose of Social bonds are financial instruments issued to raise funds for projects and initiatives that have a positive social impact on society. These projects can encompass areas such as healthcare, education, affordable housing, poverty alleviation, and environmental sustainability.

❖ Vivek Bhasin has been appointed the director of 'Bhabha Atomic Research Centre'

➤ Shri Vivek Bhasin, Distinguished Scientist and Director, Nuclear Fuels Group (NFG) of the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) today took over as the 14th Director of BARC from Dr. Ajit Kumar Mohanty, Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission and Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Atomic Energy.

➤ Bhasin is widely recognized for his expertise in the development of nuclear fuels, nuclear reactor component designing and structural integrity assessment of power reactors.

➤ He was also instrumental in improving the rate of production of Plutonium-Uranium carbide fuel for Fast Breeder Test Reactor (FBTR) in Kalpakkam.

➤ He is a recipient of several honours, including Indian Nuclear Society Medal (2002), DAE Science & Technology Award (2006), and Homi Bhabha Science and Technology Award (2014).

➤ He is a Fellow of Indian National Academy of Engineering and has more than 300 publications to his credit in the field of nuclear science and engineering.

❖ **'Oxford University' has got the top position in the World University Rankings released by Times Higher Education**

➤ The University of Oxford tops the ranking for the eighth year in a row, but others in the top five have seen shifts in their ranks. Stanford University moves up to second place, pushing Harvard University down to fourth.

➤ The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) climbs up two places to third this year. The University of Cambridge slips to fifth place, after being in joint third place last year.

➤ The highest new entry is Italy's Catholic University of the Sacred Heart, ranked in the 301-350 bracket. However, the majority of the institutions joining the ranking for the first time this year are in Asia.

➤ With 91 institutions, India is now the fourth most-represented nation, overtaking China (86).

➤ Four countries enter the ranking for the first time – all of them in Europe.

➤ Stanford University leads the teaching pillar, while the universities of Oxford and Cambridge come top for research environment.

❖ Google and HP have partnered to produce budget-friendly Chromebook laptops in India

- HP announced a collaboration with Google to manufacture Chromebooks in India, as a part of its commitment to the government's Make in India initiative.
- This partnership aims to support the digital education ecosystem in India and help more students enhance their learning by providing affordable, safe, and high-quality computing devices to education authorities, schools and institutions.
- These Chromebook devices will be manufactured at the Flex Facility near Chennai, where HP has been producing a range of laptops and desktops since August 2020.
- The production of HP Chromebooks is starting from October 02, 2023, and will cater to the demand for affordable PCs in India mainly from the education sector.
- HP is committed to advancing digital equity, and have been driving many initiatives to enable digital education across India.
- Manufacturing Chromebook laptops in India will allow Indian students to get easy access to affordable PCs. By further expanding manufacturing operations, continue to support the Make in India initiative of the Government.