

Travancore Heritage tourism project



- In a tourism initiative, the Kerala government has launched a ₹100 crore Travancore Heritage Project to conserve and showcase the cultural richness and tangible legacy of the erstwhile kingdom
- The project, which seeks to preserve old-world looks of the vintage structures, overall covers heritage structures from Padmanabhapuram Palace, now in Kanyakumari district of Tamil Nadu, to the Parthasarathy temple on the banks of the Pampa in Aranmula of Pathanamthitta district in Kerala.

Team TRIFED bags the award for excellence in PSU for Investment in Start-ups in the Organisational Awards category of the Business Leader of the Year awards



- TRIFED, has won 4 awards in the 19th Global edition and the 4th India Edition of World Leadership Congress and Awards.
- The Economic Times presents Business Leader of the Year, which took place in Mumbai on February 17, 2021.
- Recognised for its diligent efforts towards the transformation of lives of the tribal population across the country, TRIFED won a collective award of Excellence in PSU – for investment in start-ups in the Organisational Award Category

Foreign Ministers of India, Australia, Japan and US to meet today to discuss free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific region



- The Third India-Australia-Japan-USA QUAD Foreign Minister's Meeting will be held today with participation of the respective Foreign Ministers.
- The QUAD meeting will provide an opportunity to continue the useful exchange of views from their last meeting in Tokyo in October last year.

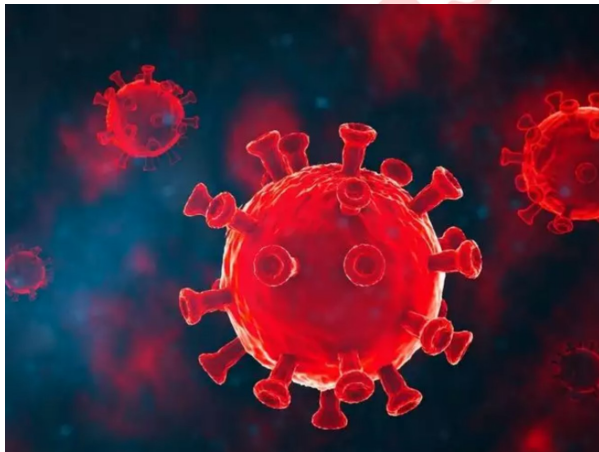
- The Ministers will exchange views on regional and global issues especially practical areas of cooperation towards maintaining a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific region.
- They will also discuss ongoing efforts to combat the COVID-19 pandemic, addressing global climate change and other issues of mutual interest.

WCCB receives Asia Environmental Enforcement Award-2020



- The Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) has received the Asia Environmental Enforcement Award-2020 awarded by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).
- Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) has been awarded this year under the Innovation category. Earlier, the Bureau had received the award in 2018 under the same category.

What is the South African Covid variant?



- The WHO has identified three new variants of coronavirus originating in the UK, Brazil and now in South Africa
- Of the three, the latest South African variant known as 20H/501Y.V2 or B.1.351, is different from the one in Britain and appears to be more infectious than the original virus.
- The South African variant carries a mutation called N501Y that appears to make it more contagious or easy to spread, a report in The New York Times said.

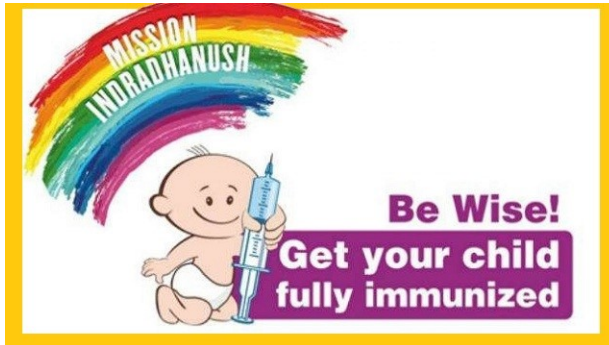
Go Electric campaign



- The Centre today launched the Go Electric campaign to boost the adoption of electric mobility vehicles and electric cooking appliances to ensure energy security in the country.
- Go Electric is a future of India which will promote cost effective, environment friendly and indigenous electric products.

- Carbon emission from transport vehicles is a major challenge and the country needs to promote usage of vehicles which operate on alternative modes of fuels like electric batteries, CNG and Bio-fuel.
- Launching the campaign, Road Transport and Highways Minister said India would become the number one manufacturer of electric vehicles in the next five years.

Intensified Mission Indradhaush 3.0 to expand immunization coverage across the country begins on Monday



- Health Minister launched the intensified Mission Indradhaush 3.0 immunization programme. The new programme will begin from 22nd of February for 15 days and another phase from the 22nd of next month.
- The government has given top priority to the health sector in the Budget and the Finance Commission has also dedicated an entire chapter to health.

Hyderabad gets recognition as 2020 Tree City of the World



- The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization and the Arbor Day Foundation have recognized Hyderabad as a 2020 Tree City of World, for its commitment to growing and maintaining urban forests.
- Officials said the recognition was a testament to the city's sustained and institutional efforts to plant, nurture and celebrate trees, development of urban and peri-urban forestry actions, projects and strategic planning and commitment to building a healthy city.
- Most of the other cities were from the United States, United Kingdom, Canada and Australia.

India, Nepal sign MoU for reconstruction of six secondary schools in Himalayan Nation



- India and Nepal yesterday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the reconstruction of six secondary schools in the Himalayan nation.
- The MoU was signed between the Indian Embassy and Nepal's Central Level Project Implementation Unit (Education) of Nepal Reconstruction Authority (NRA).
- The MoU was for the construction of six secondary schools at a total cost of Nepali Rupees 518 million, according to a statement by the Indian Embassy.
- Of the six schools, four including Kanti Bhairab Secondary School, Champa Devi Secondary School, Dhapasi Secondary School and Bishnu Devi Secondary School are located in Kathmandu district and remaining two Siddheshwar Secondary School and Harisiddhi Secondary School are located in Kavre district. Of the six schools, a groundbreaking ceremony of one was held yesterday amid a ceremony in Thali of Kathmandu.
- The signing of the memorandum took place at a ceremony for the reconstruction of Shree Kanti Bhairab Secondary School at Kageshwari Municipality in Kathmandu.

American space agency NASA lands its fifth rover 'Perseverance' on Mars successfully



- The American space agency NASA successfully landed its fifth rover 'Perseverance' on Mars yesterday in a deep crater near the planet's equator called Jezero.
- It touched down the surface of Mars after successfully overcoming a risky landing phase known as the seven minutes of terror.
- The six-wheeled vehicle will now spend at least the next two years drilling into the local rocks, looking for evidence of past life.
- About the size of an SUV, it weighs a ton, is equipped with a seven feet long robotic arm, has 19 cameras, two microphones and a suite of cutting-edge instruments to assist in its scientific goals.
- It has a laser spectrometer on board that will be able to examine rocks using different wavelengths of energy.
- Starting from summer, it will attempt to collect around 30 rock and soil samples in sealed tubes, to be eventually sent back to Earth sometime in the 2030s for lab analysis.

- The rover is only the fifth ever to set its wheels down on Mars. This feat was first accomplished in 1997 and all so far have been American.

Ladakh admin pays special attention towards promotion of culture, winter sports and tourism



- In Kargil Ladakh, After the allocation of UT status, the Administration is providing much attention towards promotion of culture, winter sports and tourism.
- The three-day Ladakh Winter Carnival concludes at Chiktan Shagaran (Traditional Polo Ground) where various programmes were organised such as Music and Dance, Cultural Display and Archery Competition.
- More than 25 archery teams and 150 folk artists of the Balti, Purgi, Shina Dardi and Aryan Dardi folk artists participated in the carnival.
- Colorful traditional music and dance performances were presented by the folk artists on the occasion while several traditional and modern archery matches were also played

PM WANI scheme

- This will allow setting up of public WiFi hotspots across the country via public data offices or public data offices (PDOs).
- It will not require the PDOs to get a license or pay a fee.
- This will involve multiple players, including PDOs, Public Data Office Aggregators (PDOA), app providers, and a central registry.
- PDOs will be “facilitators” between service providers and users.
- A PDOA will be an aggregator of PDOs that will oversee functions relating to authorization and accounting of Wi-Fi connections.
- A person, who wants to use public Wi-Fi, can do so via an app and will make payments as per usage.
- The project will also have an app developer who will build a platform to register users and discover Wani-compliant Wi-Fi hotspots in an area and display them on the app.
- A central registry, which will be maintained by the Centre for Development of Telematics, will record the details of app providers, PDOAs and PDOs.

Significance of the project:

- Public Wi-Fi networks will 'democratize' content distribution and broadband access to millions at affordable rates.
- This will be the UPI (unified payments interface) of connectivity services.

Yoga reduced Covid stress: IIT-D study



- The study titled 'Yoga an effective strategy for self-management of stress-related problems and wellbeing during COVID-19 lockdown: A cross-sectional study was published in a journal named PLOS ONE.
- A team of researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi researchers have conducted a study on the correlation between yoga and stress during the coronavirus-induced lockdown.
- The study has concluded that the yoga practitioners experienced lower levels of stress, anxiety and depression during four to ten weeks of lockdown.
- A team of scientists from the National Resource Centre for Value Education in Engineering (NRCVEE), an academic centre at IIT Delhi, including Dr Pooja Sahni, NRCVEE, Mr Nitesh, NRCVEE, Dr Kamlesh Singh, Professor at Humanities and Social Sciences Department, IIT Delhi and Prof Rahul Garg, Head, NRCVEE.
- The participants were grouped as; yoga practitioners, other spiritual practitioners, and non-practitioners based on their responses to daily practices that they follow. Yoga practitioners were further examined based on the duration of practice as; long-term, mid-term and beginners.

Delhi can designate human rights courts in each district: HC



- The court said this while upholding the notification specifying such courts in each district, issued by the Delhi government last year and signed by the L-G
- The court has sought Delhi government's reply regarding a submission that no public prosecutor has been appointed for the Human Rights courts.

Thirukkural



- Tamil Nadu petrol pump offers free fuel for children reciting Thirukkural

Thirukkural

- It is a classical Tamil language text consisting of short couplets of seven words each, or kurals
- Written by: Thirukkural was written more than 2000 years ago by an ancient sage called Thiruvalluvar.
- The text is divided into three books with aphoristic teachings on virtue (aram), wealth (porul) and love (inbam), respectively.
- Considered one of the greatest works on ethics and morality, it is known for its universality and secular nature
- The traditional accounts describe it as the last work of the third Sangam, but linguistic analysis suggests a later date of 450 to 500 CE and that it was composed after the Sangam period
- It is traditionally praised with epithets and alternate titles such as “the Tamil Veda” and “the divine book
- This book emphasizes non-violence and moral vegetarianism as virtues for an individual
- It highlights truthfulness, self-restraint, gratitude, hospitality, kindness, goodness of wife, duty, giving, and so forth, besides covering a wide range of social and political topics such as king, ministers, taxes, justice, forts, war, greatness of army and soldier’s honor, death sentence for the wicked, agriculture, education, abstinence from alcohol and intoxicants
- It also includes chapters on friendship, love, sexual union, and domestic life. The Tamil people and the government of Tamil Nadu have long celebrated and upheld the text with reverence

Majuli Island



- The Guinness World Records has officially designated Assam’s Majuli as the largest river island in the world.
- It is situated in the Brahmaputra River.
- The river island covering an area of around 880 sqkm has toppled the previous record held by Brazil’s Marajo island in the Amazon river.
- Majuli is the largest freshWater mid-river deltaic island in the world.
- It is situated in the upper reaches of the river Brahmaputra in Assam within the latitude of 26045’ N – 27012’ N & longitude of 93039’ E – 94035’ E with mean height of 84.5 Mt. above MSL.

- This landmass, with a population of 1.6 Lakhs, majority being tribals, has a very rich heritage and has been the abode of Assamese Vaishnavite culture with tremendous options for spiritual and Eco-tourism.
- The island is a biodiversity hotspot and has rich ecology with rare breeds of flora and fauna.

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