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TB Mukht Bharat



- Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare Launched the “Tribal TB Initiative”, aiming to fulfil the cherished goal of a “TB Mukht Bharat” envisioned by Prime Minister
- A Guidance Note on Joint Action Plan for Tuberculosis (TB) Elimination, a Special Edition of Tribal Ministry’s Publication ‘ALEKH’ on TB, and a document on Tribal Tuberculosis (TB) Initiative was also released at the event.
- As many as 177 tribal districts were identified as high priority districts where physical remoteness, malnutrition, poor living conditions and lack of awareness contribute to the vulnerability of the tribal population to TB.
- Initially, the activities of the joint plan will be focusing on 161 districts across 18 identified States, officials said.

Jeshoreshwari Kali Shaktipeeth



- The Jeshoreshwari Kali Shaktipeeth in Satkhira, which is one of the 51 Shaktipeeths in the Puranic tradition
- Jeshoreshwari Kali Temple is a famous Hindu temple in Bangladesh, dedicated to the goddess Kali.
- The temple is located in Ishwaripur, a village in Shyamnagar upazila of Satkhira.
- The name "Jeshoreshwari" means "Goddess of Jeshore".
- Worship is done by the priest every Saturday and Tuesday at noon time.
- But before 1971, there was a daily routine of worship.
- Every year on the day of Kali puja, the present Caretakers of the temple conduct a ceremony.
- There is also a Mela taking place around the temple compound.
- A large rectangular covered platform called Natmondir has been erected adjacent to the main temple, from where the face of the goddess can be seen.
- This was renovated by Laxman Sen in the late 13th century, but the builders are not known. After 1971, it crumbled. Now only the pillars can be seen.

Bapu-Bangabandhu Digital Exhibition



- Bapu and Bangabandhu are two exemplary personalities from South Asian region, whose thoughts and messages resonate globally.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Bangladeshi counterpart Sheikh Hasina on Friday jointly inaugurated the "Bangabandhu -Bapu Museum" at the Bangabandhu International Conference Centre here.
- The museum has a digital exhibition on India's Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi and Bangladesh's Father of the Nation 'Bangabandhu' Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.
- The exhibition was inaugurated at a time when Bangladesh is celebrating the golden jubilee of the country's independence and the birth centenary of 'Bangabandhu' Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Shigmotsav 2021



- Goa to celebrate Shigmotsav amidst Covid-19 pandemic
- It is the celebration of a 'rich, golden harvest of paddy' by the tribal communities of Goa
- 'Shigmo' as it is called in Konkani, is another vibrant celebration full of colour, song and dance rooted in Goan culture and traditions
- The Shigmo parade is a religious festival characterized by colors, music, dance and floats.
- Folk dances like Ghode Modni (a dance of equestrian warriors), Gopha and Phugadi are among the many dances performed by the participating communities.
- The float parades have, over the years, been a draw for tourists both domestic and international.
- The state government of Goa decided to allow Shigmo festivities this year, the celebrations will be limited to parades in three locations Panaji, Ponda and Mapusa.
- Agricultural communities including the Kunbis, Gawdas and Velips celebrate the festival that also marks the onset of spring.
- Shigmo celebrations last over a fortnight in the months of Phalgun-Chaitra months of the Hindu calendar that correspond with March-April every year.
- The festival begins with 'Naman' that is the invocation of the local folk deities on the village 'maand' or the village stage to the beats of percussion instruments like the Ghumat, Dhol, Mhadle and Tashe by the male folk

- This is called the 'romta mell' that moves from one village to another.
- The celebration is replete with traditional, colourful costumes, mythological installations, painted faces and costumes of various hues.

Tribes of Goa

Kunbis



- Kunbi (alternatively Kanbi) is a generic term applied to castes of traditionally non-elite farmers in Western India.
- These include the Dhanoje, Ghatole, Hindre, Jadav, Jhare, Khaire, Lewa (Leva Patil), Lonare and Tirole communities of Vidarbha.
- The communities are largely found in the state of Maharashtra but also exist in the states of Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala and Goa.

Gawdas

- This tribal community is believed to be the first settlers in Goa. Gowdas practice Hinduism
- The Gowdas are the highest populated tribe in Goa
- Gawdas /Gaudas and Kunbis are aboriginal people residing in the coastal Indian state of Goa.
- They are believed to be the original inhabitants of Konkan.

Velips

- Velip people are also considered aborigines of Goa
- The Velips are thought to be a sub-caste of the Kunbis and also have certain traditions and customs in common with them.
- Velips can be found in the forest regions of Canacona, Sanguem, and Quepem.

Dhangars

- Dhangars are believed to have migrated to Goa from Gujarat. Members of this tribe are quite pious and religiously worship their god named 'Bira Deva'.
- These tribals are mainly shepherds or cattle herders and live a semi-nomadic lifestyle

Murder hornets



- Local authorities in the Pacific Northwest of the United States and Canada's province of British Columbia are waging an aggressive campaign to eradicate colonies of "murder hornets"
- Asian hornets are the largest hornet in the world
- It is native to East Asia, South Asia, Mainland Southeast Asia, parts of the Russian Far East.
- Scientific name: *Vespa mandarinia*
- An adult hornet can grow to more than 4.5 centimeters (1.7 inches) long and have a stinger that is another 6 millimeters (0.2 inches) long.
- Appearance: They are large, and have noticeably large orange heads and black eyes.
- Orange color can range from light, almost yellow, to dark orange
- These hornets are usually found in forests and mountain areas and create nests by enlarging existing burrows or occupying decayed trees.
- The hornet feeds primarily on other insects, such as caterpillars, as well as tree sap and honey.
- These hornets are aggressive predators and will hunt medium- to large-sized insects such as other hornet species, large beetles and mantises.
- However, they're especially known for feeding on honey bees and have the capability to quickly decimate local populations that they come into contact with.
- Their stinger is longer and more dangerous than that of most other stinging insects, containing neurotoxins and capable of puncturing a beekeeping suit.

Nucleic Acid Testing (NAT)



- The Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare and Chairman of the Indian Red Cross Society inaugurated a Nucleic Acid Testing (NAT) Testing Facility at the IRCS NHQ Blood Centre.
- It is a molecular technique for screening blood donations to reduce the risk of transfusion transmitted infections in the recipients, thus providing an additional layer of blood safety
- In other words, NAT is a technique used to detect a particular nucleic acid sequence and thus usually to detect and identify a particular species or subspecies of organism, often a virus or bacteria that acts as a pathogen in blood, tissue, urine, etc.

- It was introduced in the developed countries in the late 1990s and early 2000s
- Many countries in the world have implemented NAT for HIV and for hepatitis B virus (HBV).
- NAT technique is highly sensitive and specific for viral nucleic acids.
- It is based on amplification of targeted regions of viral ribonucleic acid or deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) and detects them earlier than the other screening methods thus, narrowing the window period of HIV, HBV and hepatitis C virus (HCV) infections.
- NAT also adds the benefit of resolving false reactive donations on serological methods

International Pulsar Timing Array



- Recently, the International Pulsar Timing Array (IPTA) approved India's full membership as the Indian Pulsar Timing Array (InPTA).
- IPTA is multi-institutional, multi-telescope collaboration, comprising the European Pulsar Timing Array (EPTA), the North American Nanohertz Observatory for Gravitational Waves (NANOGrav), and the Parkes Pulsar Timing Array (PPTA).
- Goal of IPTA is to detect gravitational waves using an array of approximately 30 pulsars
- India has officially joined an elite group of international radio telescopes that are involved in tracking very low-frequency gravitational waves, particularly those emerging from two orbiting very large supermassive blackholes.
- With the India's joining, observations made by Pune-based upgraded Giant Metrewave Radio Telescope (uGMRT), operated by TIFR – National Centre for Radio Astrophysics (NCRA), will be used along with the data gathered by some large radio telescopes located in Europe, America and Australia.
- With uGMRT, India has become the first Asian country to be a full member of IPTA consortium comprising European Pulsar Timing Array (EPTA), North American Nanohertz Observatory for Gravitational Waves (NANOGrav) and Parkes Pulsar Timing Array (PPTA) from Australia.
- It will now be able to obtain improved observations by an order of 5, making the overall data more robust.
- Here on, Indian researchers will get access to international data

Indian Pulsar Timing Array (InPTA)

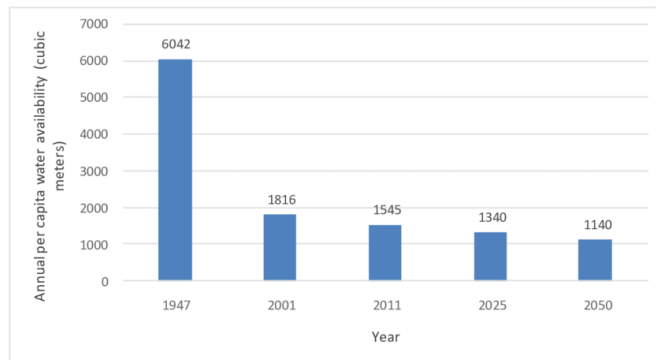
- It was set up in 2019
- InPTA is an experiment aimed at detection of Gravitational waves (GWs) in the sub-microHertz frequency range by observing an ensemble of millisecond pulsars

- InPTA aims to contribute its data and its analysis results to an international effort, called the International Pulsar Timing Array (IPTA)

Giant Metrewave Radio Telescope (uGMRT)

- A special accolade for a very special telescope – GMRT – designed, built and operated by Indian scientists and engineers.
- It is used by radio astronomers from across the world to study our Universe.
- GMRT was set up by National Centre for Radio Astrophysics (NCRA) for radio astronomical research using the metre wavelengths range of the radio spectrum. It is located at a site about 80 km north of Pune.
- As of now, the uGMRT is the only radio telescope in the world offering this wide a frequency range and sensitivity.

Per capita water availability



- Recently, the Union Minister of State for Jal Shakti in a written reply in Rajya Sabha mentioned about Per capita water availability in the country
- Water availability per person is dependent on the population of the country and for India, per capita water availability in the country is reducing due to increase in population.
- Reducing per capita water: The average annual per capita water availability in the years 2001 and 2011 was assessed as 1816 cubic meters and 1545 cubic meters respectively which may further reduce to 1486 cubic meters and 1367 cubic meters in the years 2021 and 2031 respectively.
- Benchmark: As per Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, 135 litre per capita per day (lpcd) has been suggested as the benchmark for urban water supply.
- For rural areas, a minimum service delivery of 55 lpcd has been fixed under Jal Jeevan Mission, which may be enhanced to higher level by states.
- As mentioned in the report of National Commission for Integrated Water Resources Development (NCIWRD), the percentage of water used for irrigation out of the total water use for the year 1997-98 was 83.30%.
- Further, as per NCIWRD report, the percentage of water used for irrigation out of the total water use for the year 2025 under high demand scenario was estimated as 72.48%.

Development activities in Garo Hills



- Recently, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Development of North-Eastern Region (DoNER) mentioned about Development activities in Garo Hills in his written reply to questions in Rajya Sabha
- Out of total 11 districts in Meghalaya, 5 districts fall under Garo hills region.
- In Garo hills regions, 13 projects are under implementation for construction/ widening/ reconstruction of roads/bridges for 133.8 km length
- Two flagship schemes of Government namely Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojana (DDUGJY) and Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana-Saubhagya are being implemented across the country for various rural electrification works and electrification of the remaining un-electrified households in rural and urban areas, including NER and State of Meghalaya.
- All the inhabited census villages and households of Garo hills have been electrified.
- Under the North Eastern Region Power System Improvement Project (NERPSIP) scheme, 14 power projects are under implementation in Garo hills.
- Garo hills is the only region in Meghalaya which comes under the railway map by way of Mendipathar – Dudhnoi railway line.
- Under Comprehensive Telecom Development Plan, 389 towers covering 534 uncovered villages have been approved in three districts of Garo Hills for provision of 4G mobile services.
- Various developmental measures taken up by State Government under Central Sector Scheme/Centrally Sponsored Schemes/State Schemes include construction of first state run Medical College at Tura in West Garo Hills District, sanction of a Tribal Research Institute at Babadam, West Garo Hills, approval for setting up of Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS) in six Community & Rural Development Blocks of the Garo Hills Region and construction of 36 Anganwadi Centre Buildings (AWCs).
- Jal Jeevan Mission- Har Ghar Jal (JJM) is being implemented in this region. Under JJM, 31% of the households in the Garo Hills region have been provided with functional household tap connections till January, 2021.

Garo Hills

- They are part of the Garo-Khasi range in Meghalaya, India.
- They are inhabited mainly by tribal dwellers, the majority of whom are Garo people. It is one of the wettest places in the world. The range is part of the Meghalaya subtropical forests ecoregion
- People who reside in the Garo Hills are known as the Garos. Besides the Garo hills, there are Garo settlements in the plains of Assam and Bangladesh.

Uday Kotak Committee on Corporate governance



- It was constituted in 2017 under the chairmanship of Uday Kotak
- Primary objective: Improving standards concerning corporate governance of listed companies in India.
- Composition: Kotak Committee was represented by different stakeholders, including the government, the industry, stock exchanges, academicians, proxy advisors, professional bodies, lawyers, etc.
- This committee was requested to provide recommendations on diverse issues such as ensuring independence in spirit of independent directors and their active participation in the functioning of the company, and improving safeguards and disclosures pertaining to related party transactions.
- It was also asked to make recommendations on accounting and auditing practices by listed companies, board evaluation practices, disclosure and transparency related issues and addressing issues faced by investors on voting and participation in general meetings.
- SEBI accepted some of the recommendations of the committee, which submitted the report in the same year of its formation

What are electoral bonds?

Benefits of Electoral Bonds

WILL BRING substantial transparency in political donations against the present system of contributions in the election funding mechanism

HOW MUCH funding comes, what kind of funding it is, the source of funding and where it will be spent will be known clearly

NON DISCLOSURE of recipients will ensure people are free to donate to any political party of their choice

WILL REINFORCE the idea of moving away from a cash system towards clean money which cheque system could not achieve

15 DAYS between buying and selling will ensure they don't turn into a parallel economy

- Electoral bonds are interest-free bearer instruments used to donate money anonymously to political parties.
- A bearer instrument does not carry any information about the buyer or payee, and the holder of the instrument (which is the political party) is presumed to be its owner.
- The bonds are sold in multiples of Rs 1,000, Rs10,000, Rs1 lakh, Rs10 lakh, and Rs 1 crore, and State Bank of India is the only bank authorised to sell them.
- Donors can buy and subsequently donate bonds to a political party, which can encash the bonds through its verified account within 15 days.
- There is no limit on the number of bonds an individual or company can purchase.
- If a party hasn't encashed any bonds within 15 days, SBI deposits these into the Prime Minister's Relief Fund

TORNADOES



- Multiple tornadoes rip through US' Alabama
- Tornado, a small-diameter column of violently rotating air developed within a convective cloud and in contact with the ground.
- Tornadoes occur most often in association with thunderstorms during the spring and summer in the mid-latitudes of both the Northern and Southern Hemispheres.
- These whirling atmospheric vortices can generate the strongest winds known on Earth: wind speeds in the range of 500 km (300 miles) per hour have been measured in extreme events.
- When winds of this magnitude strike a populated area, they can cause fantastic destruction and great loss of life, mainly through injuries from flying debris and collapsing structures.
- Most tornadoes, however, are comparatively weak events that occur in sparsely populated areas and cause minor damage.

Earth safe for over 100 yrs from asteroid Apophis that was on 'risk list': NASA



- America's NASA has ruled out any chance of asteroid Apophis hitting the Earth for at least the next 100 years. It said, "a small chance" had remained of the asteroid, estimated to be about 1,100 feet (340 meters) in diameter, colliding with Earth in 2068.
- However, that possibility has now been ruled out and Apophis is off NASA's "risk list".

Rabbits dig up tool used 9,000 yrs ago on island in UK: Report



- A prehistoric stone age tool that dates back 9,000 years was dug up by burrowing bunnies on Skokholm Island, media reports said.
- The "bevelled pebble" was probably used by hunter-gatherers for tasks such as preparing seal hides for skin-clad watercraft.
- The pebble, along with a shard from a bronze age burial urn, was spotted by two wardens on Skokholm Island.

Octopuses' change in colour associated with alternating sleep states: Study



- Researchers have said the change in colour in octopuses when they sleep is characteristic of two major alternating sleep states, an "active sleep" stage and a "quiet sleep" stage.
- Study authors Sidarta Ribeiro and Sylvia Medeiros said that during "active sleep" the octopuses experience a state analogous to REM sleep, which is the state during which humans dream the most.

Central Scrutiny Centre



- CSC is a program of the Corporate Affairs Ministry that aims to check user records through a direct process.
- The purpose of launching CSC is to ensure that data quality is not affected and is free of defects.
- CSC will first carefully check the documents submitted by users in the straight-through process, identify data quality problems and irregularities, and communicate them with the relevant company registry so that corrective measures can be taken to restore the authenticity and correctness of the data, and can be seamlessly shared with other regulatory agencies if necessary.

National Creche Scheme For Working Mothers



- At present, in order to prevent the spread of Covid-19, the Creches under the "National Creche Scheme for the Children of Working Mothers" are currently not functioning in the country.

Highlights:

- The National Creche Scheme (formerly known as the Rajiv Gandhi National Creche Scheme) is being implemented through the States/UTs as a centrally sponsored scheme to provide daycare facilities to children of working mothers (age group 6 months to 6 years).

- The main goal of the National Creche Scheme are as follows: Day care facilities, including sleeping facilities .
- Early stimulation for children under 3 years of age and preschool education for children from 3 to 6 years old.
- Nutrition supplement (locally sourced). Growth monitoring. Health check-ups and immunization

Safe City Project Under Nirbhaya Fund Scheme



- The Ministry of the Home Affairs approved the "Safe City" project in 8 cities under the Nirbhaya Fund scheme.
- Highlights: The eight cities are Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Chennai, Delhi, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Lucknow and Mumbai.
- These projects involve identifying hot spots for crimes against women and deploying various components through awareness-raising programs, including infrastructure, technology adoption, and community capacity building.
- The status of project implementation is regularly reviewed by the State Apex Committee.

Green Zone Sites Approved For Drone Operations



- 34 Green Zone sites were approved for “No -Permission-No-Take off” (NPNT) - compatible drone operations.
- Highlights: The Ministry of Civil Aviation has approved the licensing of drone operations for “No-Permission-No-Take off” (NPNT) in another 34 green areas to facilitate, simplify and promote drone operations in the country.
- The approved location allows drones to be used up to 400 feet Above Ground Level (AGL).
- These areas are in addition to the 26 green zone sites approved in February 2021 and the 6 green zone sites approved in April 2020.
- NPNT Compliance: According to the regulations of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), “NPNT or ‘No Permission – No Take-off” compliance enables all remotely piloted aircraft (except Nano) to obtain a valid permit through the Digital Sky platform before operating in India.
- This further allows the drone to be unable to operate until the necessary approvals.

- When flying in these approved "green zones", you can know the time and location of the flight just through the Digital Sky portal or app.
- The framework requires users to register on an online portal, which is a national unmanned traffic management system for remotely piloting aircraft.
- The flight of drones in green zones sites should meet the applicable conditions of the 2021 Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) Rules.

Auctions For Commercial Coal Mining



- India launched the second batch of commercial coal mining auctions.
- Highlights: Second batch of auctions was launched by India for commercial coal mines, offering 67 coal mines for sale.
- Since the start of the auction system in 2014, this is the largest number of mines offered in a specific tranche auction.
- Of the 67 mines provided by the Ministry of Coal, 23 are stipulated in the CM (SP) Act and 44 are stipulated in the MMDR Act.
- The coal mines provided include mix of mines with small reserves and large reserves, coking and non-coking mines, and distribution in six states (Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh) fully and partially explored coal mines.

AYUSH Ministry Sets Up A Team To Explore The Potential Of Yoga



- The AYUSH Ministry has established an interdisciplinary expert group to explore the potential of yoga as a tool to increase people's productivity.
- Highlights:
- The high-level interdisciplinary committee established by the AYUSH Ministry of the Government of India will discuss the aspects of yoga that increase productivity.
 - The committee was established through a video conference on March 24, 2021.
 - The committee is chaired by Dr. H. R Nagendra, President of SVYASA.
 - Its members include representatives of AIIMS New Delhi, IIT Mumbai, IIM Bangalore, several leading yoga institutions, corporate departments and AYUSH ministry.

- Although the benefits of yoga have been widely accepted by its practitioners, its productivity aspect, that is, its role in providing employees with better performance in the workplace, has largely been untapped.
- As employers are struggling to cope with this situation and strive to improve the health of the workplace, this aspect has become particularly important given the increasing physical and psychological stress on employees due to the current pandemic.
- High-level interdisciplinary committee committee is expected to submit its preliminary recommendations by May 2021.

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