

23 Mar, 2024

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NATIONAL NEWS

Operation 'Indravati' begins to evacuate Indians from Haiti to Dominican Republic

India has started **Operation Indravati** to evacuate its nationals from Haiti to the Dominican Republic, External Affairs Minister **S Jaishankar** said and asserted that it was "fully committed" to the security and well-being of Indians abroad.



- The move comes days after India had said it was looking at evacuating up to 90 of its nationals from Haiti in view of the deteriorating security situation in the Caribbean nation.

India's first battery storage gigafactory to start operating by October in Jammu and Kashmir

GoodEnough Energy said it will start operations at India's first battery energy storage gigafactory in the northern region of Jammu and Kashmir by October.



- The facility will help industry in cutting more than 5 million tons of carbon emissions in a year, GoodEnough said in a statement. **India has set a 2070 goal for becoming net zero.**
- GoodEnough has already spent 1.5 billion rupees (\$18.07 million) on the 7 gigawatts per hour (GWH) facility and will spend 3 billion rupees by 2027 to raise capacity to 20 GWH.
- Battery energy storage projects are critical to India's ambitious plan to expand its renewable energy capacity to **500 gigawatts (GW) by 2030**, from 178 GW at present.

India's First Oil Palm Processing Unit Started Operation in Arunachal

India's first integrated oil palm processing unit in Arunachal Pradesh started operation by one of India's largest oil palm development companies, **3F Oil Palm**.



- A new factory has been established in the Lower Dibang Valley district of India's northeast state. This factory is part of Mission Palm Oil and is India's first oil palm factory under NMEO-OP.
- This integrated Oil Palm project will include a cutting-edge oil palm factory (Palm Oil Processing and Refinery), a zero-discharge effluent plant, a palm waste-based power plant, and additional structures and go-downs for support purposes.
- The inauguration of the 3F Oil Palm Processing Unit in Arunachal Pradesh was virtually carried out by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, marking the commencement of a transformative journey. Prime Minister Modi laid the **foundation stone** for various other projects worth over **Rs 55,000 crore**.

4th Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Startup Forum organized in New Delhi

The **fourth** edition of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) **Startup Forum** was organized in **New Delhi**. The initiative focused on broadening startup interactions among the SCO Member States, fostering an environment conducive to innovation, promoting job creation, and inspiring young talent to develop innovative solutions.



- The plenary session of the forum witnessed physical participation from SCO Member States including a delegation of SCO startups, nodal agencies for startups at the Member States, senior government officials and diplomats.
- In addition, the delegates also attended a workshop conducted by Startup India on 'Establishing a Seed Fund: A Strategic Approach to Fostering Innovation and

Entrepreneurship’. The workshop included an interactive session to understand various models of setting up seed funds to support early-stage startups.

- Going forward, India will host the second meeting of the SWG in November 2024 and SCO Startup Forum 5.0 in January 2025.

CMFRI launches mobile app to encourage public participation in marine fisheries research

In a bid to encourage citizen science initiatives in marine fisheries research, the **ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI)** has launched an **innovative mobile app ‘Marlin@CMFRI’**.



- The app is a gateway for **comprehensive media sharing** and is aimed to transform marine fishery research, species identification, and assessment efforts within India’s Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).
- ‘Marlin@CMFRI’ helps the public to upload photos of marine fish species encountered in the vast expanse of the Indian EEZ, leading to the development of a rich visual repository of marine fishery resources.
- The app encourages users to provide species details ensuring that the database is scientifically enriched, facilitating accurate species identification. This data will contribute to the development of a sophisticated, AI-powered system for automated identification of marine fishery resources.

41st Steering Committee Meeting of the International Partnership for Hydrogen and Fuel Cells in the Economy holds Industry Outreach Programme

The fourth day of the **41st Steering Committee Meeting of the International Partnership for Hydrogen and Fuel Cells in the Economy (IPHE)**, being hosted by India in New Delhi during **March 18 – 22, 2024**, has been organized as a **Stakeholders’ Consultation Day**, as part of the Industry Outreach Programme of the Steering Committee Meeting.

- The Programme, held at Sushma Swaraj Bhawan in New Delhi aimed to foster collaboration and dialogue among key stakeholders to advance the development of clean and green hydrogen technologies.



- The International Partnership for Hydrogen and Fuel Cells in the Economy (IPHE) is a global initiative that provides a forum for stakeholders to collaborate on policies and practices promoting the advancement of hydrogen and fuel cell technologies. It aims to accelerate the commercialization of these technologies to enhance energy security, environmental sustainability, and economic development.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

India to provide support of Rs 10,000 crore to Bhutan over next five years

India will provide support of ten thousand crore rupees to Bhutan over the next five years. Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced this in Thimpu on the first day of his state visit to Bhutan.



- Prime Minister Narendra Modi **inaugurated the Gyaltsuen Jetsun Pema Mother and Child Hospital**, a state-of-the-art hospital in Thimphu, built with the assistance of the Government of India.
- Mr Modi and his Bhutanese counterpart reviewed the entire gamut of India-Bhutan friendship and agreed to boost the developmental partnership as well as deepen cultural linkages. Mr Modi said the MoUs and agreements will add momentum to India-Bhutan relations.
- The two countries exchanged several MoUs and signed agreements in the fields of energy, trade, digital connectivity, space and agriculture, and finalised the MoU on the establishment of rail links between the two nations.

US, UK & Australia entered agreement to build Australia's SSN-AUKUS submarines

The **United States, the United Kingdom and Australia** have welcomed the new agreement to **build Australia's SSN-AUKUS submarines** and termed it a significant milestone in the endeavour of defence cooperation.



- The agreement has been signed between Australia's ASC Pty Ltd and UK-based BAE Systems, with the former being selected as Australia's nuclear-powered submarine sustainment partner.
- AUKUS is a trilateral security partnership for the Indo-Pacific region between Australia, the UK and the US. AUKUS is built on the bedrock of decades of close defence, capability and technology cooperation between our three nations and is a natural progression of our partnership.

New Zealand announces ban on disposable e-cigarettes

New Zealand's government has said it will **ban disposable e-cigarettes, or vapes, and raise fines** for people who sell these types of products to minors.



- It comes less than a month after New Zealand repealed a law from the previous left-leaning government to phase out tobacco smoking.
- That law would have required reduced nicotine levels and placed a lifetime ban on cigarettes for anyone born after 2008.

BANKING & FINANCE

PB Fintech Ventures into Payment Aggregation with newly approved subsidiary

PB Fintech, the promoter of Policy Bazaar, said its board has approved the incorporation of a wholly-owned subsidiary to carry on the business of **payment aggregator**.



- The subsidiary called '**PB Pay Private Limited**' would carry on the business of payment aggregator' domestic and/or cross border or both, as may be permitted by the Reserve Bank of India, by facilitating merchants with offline and/or digital payment acceptance infrastructure or both.
- The paid-up share capital of the proposed company would be Rs 27 crore, it said. The application for the process of incorporation of the proposed wholly-owned subsidiary would be filed and completed subject to approval from the relevant authorities.

SBI Cards collaborate with Titan to launch co-branded card

SBI Card, country's largest pure play credit card issuer, has partnered **Titan Company Ltd** (Titan) to launch '**Titan SBI Card**'. This one-of-its-kind shopping credit card is designed for addressing the consumers' aspirational spending needs.



- With features that include cashbacks, Titan gift vouchers and Reward Points, cardholders can avail exclusive benefits of over ₹ 2,00,000 worth per annum., according to SBI Card.
- Cardholders are eligible for 5 per cent cashback when they shop using Titan SBI Card from Mia, Caratlane, and Zoya across their offline and online stores. Additionally, upon shopping from Tanishq, they get Titan gift vouchers worth 3 percent value of the spends.

Must Watch

BEGINNERS GUIDE

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BUSINESS & ECONOMY

Global trade outlook positive, geopolitical uncertainties remain: UNCTAD

The **international trade is expected to rebound in 2024**, reversing the last year's downturn, amid lingering geopolitical uncertainties, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) said.



- In its **Global Trade Update report**, the UN's trade and development body warned that the logistical challenges such as shipping disruptions in the Red Sea, Black Sea and Panama Canal cast shadows over the optimistic outlook, and **can raise costs and disrupt supply chains**.
- Projections for 2024 are more optimistic. Overall, moderating global inflation and improving economic growth forecasts suggest a reversal of the downward trends. Additionally, rising demand for environmental goods should boost trade in 2024. However, it's important to note that the global trade outlook for 2024 remains subject to significant uncertainties.
- In 2023, **global trade saw a 3 per cent contraction, equaling roughly \$1 trillion**, compared to the record high of \$32 trillion a year ago. Trade in goods dipped by 5 per cent compared to 2022. The services sector grew by 8 per cent year on year (Y-o-Y) in 2023.

DGCA Imposes Rs 80 Lakh Penalty On Air India For Violating FDTL Rules

Directorate General of Civil Aviation has imposed a financial penalty of eighty lakh rupees on **Air India Limited** for violation of regulations about Flight Duty Time Limitations, FDTL and Fatigue Management System, FMS of the flight crew.

- DGCA conducted a spot audit of Air India Limited in January this year to verify the regulatory compliance by the operator in respect for FDTL and FMS regulations. During the audit, the evidences were collected and fleet-wise random reports were analyzed.



CBI, Europol Sign Working Arrangement To Establish Cooperative Relations

The Central Bureau of Investigation (**CBI**) and European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (**Europol**) signed a **Working Arrangement for establishing cooperative relations** between the law enforcement authorities of these two organisations.



- This collaborative effort underscores the necessity of global partnerships in addressing modern-day challenges posed by transnational crime networks.
- The arrangement promotes direct cooperation between CBI and Europol to leverage their respective mandates and strategies. It signifies a significant milestone in the ongoing efforts to combat crime on an international scale.

SPORTS

India Open Jumps | Nayana bags long jump gold with personal best mark
Kerala's **Nayana James(28)** recorded a personal best mark, **leaping 6.67m to secure the women's long jump gold** at the **3rd Indian Open Jumps Competition** held at the Anju Bobby George Foundation .

- Nayana sailed to a distance of 6.67m, season's best, in her second attempt to take pole position. Shaili Singh, with a solid season opener of 6.40m, had to be content with the silver.



- The **men's long jump title** went to **Kerala's Muhammed Anees** whose best effort was 7.94m. Another athlete to record a personal best was Tamil Nadu's 22-year-old **Pavithra Venkatesh** in women's pole vault as she scaled 4.15m.
- **Tamil Nadu's M Gowtham** scaled 5.10m in the **men's pole vault competition** 30cm better than his best to claim the gold.

APPOINTMENTS

Vietnamese President Vo Van Thuong Resigns One Year After His Election

Vietnamese President Vo Van Thuong has resigned one year after his election. His resignation has been accepted by the Vietnamese Communist Party.



- Mr. Thuong is the second president to resign in two years amid an anti-corruption crackdown.
- His resignation came after weeks of rumors suggesting that he would be removed from office, and on the eve of a special session of Vietnam's parliament dedicated to "personnel matters."

Manorama Online CEO Mariam Mammen Mathew appointed DNPA chairperson

Mariam Mammen Mathew, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Manorama Online, has been appointed as the **chairperson of the Digital News Publishers' Association (DNPA)** for a two-year term starting from April 1, 2024.



- She will be succeeding **Tanmay Maheshwari**, the Managing Director (MD) of Amar Ujala. Mathew served as the vice-chairperson during Maheshwari's chairmanship.
- **Puneet Gupta**, the Chief Operating Officer (COO) of Times Internet, has been appointed as the new **vice-chairman of DNPA**, while Puneet Jain, the CEO of Digital HT Media, continues in his role as the treasurer.

Simon Harris set to be Ireland's youngest PM

Simon Harris, set to become **Ireland's youngest ever taoiseach (Prime Minister)**, will hope his social media skills and fresh face can save his party's flagging fortunes as elections loom.



- Already dubbed by media the "TikTok Taoiseach" (pronounced "Tee-shock") the 37-year-old **beats** the previous record holder, **predecessor Leo Varadkar, who was 38** when he took the top job in 2017. Harris, currently Ireland's minister for further and higher education, was health minister from 2016 until mid-2020.
- After Leo Varadkar's shock resignation, Harris leapt from the blocks in the race for leader of the centre-right Fine Gael party and by default prime minister.

Gustavo Adrianzén is the new Prime Minister of Peru

Peruvian President Dina Boluarte named the country's representative to the Organization of American States (OAS) as the new **prime minister**, a day after the previous prime minister stepped down amid accusations of corruption.



- **Gustavo Adrianzen** will be Peru's latest prime minister, after **Alberto Otarola** resigned after an audio came out of the official appearing to influence the awarding of government contracts.
- Adrianzén Olaya, 57, served as Minister of Justice and Human Rights in 2015 under then-President Ollanta Humala. In 2023, he was named Peru's permanent representative before the Organization of American States (OAS).

Naveen Jindal takes charge as president of the Indian Steel Association

Naveen Jindal, chairman, Jindal Steel and Power, took charge as **president of Indian Steel Association (ISA)**, the apex body for steel producers.



- In a statement, the association said Naveen Jindal has been unanimously elected as the president of ISA by the apex committee, the governing body of ISA. He succeeds **Dilip Oommen**, CEO of Arcelor Mittal Nippon Steel India.

Microsoft hires DeepMind co-founder to lead new AI division

Microsoft has appointed DeepMind co-founder **Mustafa Suleyman** to head its new **consumer AI division** that handles products like Copilot, Bing and Edge.

- This marks the first time the tech giant has a dedicated leader overseeing this critical area. Suleyman joins Microsoft from rival Inflection AI, where he served in a leadership role.



- Aside from Suleyman, the tech giant has also hired some employees from his startup, Inflection AI, including Karen Simonyan, who will fill in as chief scientist of the consumer AI group.

AWARDS

PM Modi becomes first foreign head to be bestowed with Bhutan's highest civilian award 'Order of the Druk Gyalpo'

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was conferred the **Order of the Druk Gyalpo**, Bhutan's highest honor, making him the **first foreign government leader to receive this honour** from the Himalayan nation. The King of Bhutan bestowed the honor upon Prime Minister Narendra Modi.



- The Order of the Druk Gyalpo was bestowed upon PM Modi in recognition of "his outstanding contribution to the growth of India-Bhutan relations and for his distinguished service to the Bhutanese nation and people".
- Notably, the announcement of the honour was made by the King of Bhutan during the 114th National Day celebrations on December 17, 2021.

UNESCO puts 6 new Madhya Pradesh destinations on tentative list of World Heritage Sites

In a significant boost to its rich cultural and historical legacy, **6 new sites from Madhya Pradesh** have found place in the tentative **UNESCO** list of **World Heritage Sites (WHS)**.



- The six sites include Gwalior Fort, the historical Dhamnar rock-cut caves and Bhojeshwar Mahadev Temple in Bhojpur, the rock art site of Chambal valley, Khooni Bhandara-Burhanpur, Ramnagar and Mandla Gond sites.
- Earlier 4 sites were included in 2021, bringing the total sites to 10 under this tentative list by March 2024. Besides, 3 sites from MP are already included in UNESCO's permanent list.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

ISRO successfully conducts 'Pushpak' Reusable Landing Vehicle landing experiment

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has **successfully** conducted the **Pushpak Reusable Landing Vehicle (RLV) LEX 02 landing experiment** at the Aeronautical Test Range in Chitradurga in Karnataka .



- The RLV LEX 02 landing experiment is the second of the series of experiments conducted by the space agency. Pushpak (RLV-TD), the winged vehicle, landed autonomously with precision on the runway after being released from an off-nominal position.

- The winged RLV-TD has been configured to act as a flying test bed to evaluate various technologies, including hypersonic flight, autonomous landing and powered cruise flight. In the coming years, this vehicle will be scaled up to become the **first stage of India's reusable two stage orbital launch vehicle**.

China launches Queqiao-2 relay satellite to support moon missions

China launched its **Queqiao-2 relay satellite** to support upcoming lunar far side and south polar missions. A Long March 8 rocket lifted off from Wenchang Satellite Launch Center.



- The 1,200-kilogram satellite carries a 4.2-meter parabolic antenna and is part of China's plans for future lunar exploration and a stepping stone towards building a lunar base in the 2030s.
- The spacecraft will enter a highly elliptical lunar orbit inclined by 55 degrees once it reaches the moon. The orbit is specially designed to support China's Chang'e-6 lunar far side sample return mission, due to launch in May.

OBITUARIES

Frans de Waal, Primatologist and Bestselling author, dies at 75

Primatologist Frans de Waal, whose study of chimpanzees and apes helped reveal the reconciliatory and empathic nature of primates including humans has died from stomach cancer in Georgia. He was 75.



- De Waal has won multiple awards over his long career and in 2007 made Time magazine's list of the world's 100 most influential people. He was the author of 16 books, translated into over 20 languages.



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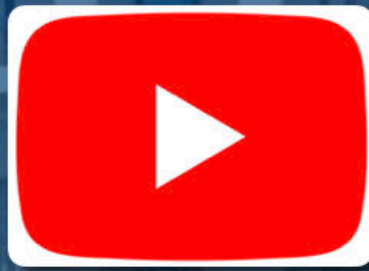


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