

**06 Mar, 2024**

# **CURRENT AFFAIRS**

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- BANKING; FINANCE**
- SPORTS; AWARDS**
- SCIENCE**
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## NATIONAL NEWS

### **Geological Survey of India celebrates 174th Foundation Day**

The Geological Survey of India (GSI) celebrated its **174th Foundation Day on 4th March, 2024**, in a grand manner across all its offices throughout the country. The event was marked with great fervor and enthusiasm.



- This significant event holds paramount importance for aspirants preparing for various government exams, including positions in teaching, police, banking, railways, defense, and civil services such as PSCS to IAS. The celebrations also marked the launch of the **Indian Journal of Geoscience, Volume 77, Issue IV**.
- The celebrations also included the launch of an exhibition showcasing rocks, minerals, and fossils, which was open to students from various colleges in Kolkata and its neighbouring cities. This exhibition aims to inspire students to take an interest in natural science and promote research in the field of mineral exploration.

### **Sarbananda Sonowal inaugurates first-ever Made-in-India ASTDS Tug**

**Sarbananda Sonowal**, Union Minister of MoPSW & AYUSH inaugurated the **60T bollard pull tug named 'Ocean Grace'** and the Medical Mobile Unit (MMU), virtually.



- The Ocean Grace is the **first make in India ASTDS Tug** developed by the **Cochin Shipyard Limited** under MoPSW. The Medical Mobile Unit (MMU) is part of port's commitment to corporate social responsibility. This initiative highlights 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' initiative of PM Modi.
- The first ASTDS tug is powered by NIGATA main engines and a Power Z-Peller ZP Propulsion engine, this tug is meticulously designed for optimal efficiency and

reliability, guaranteeing seamless navigation and proficient vessel assistance, especially for large vessels like VLCCs and ULCCs.

- The goal of the Green Tug Transition Programme (GTTP) is to convert **at least 50% of all tugs into Green Tugs by 2030** and to have Green Tugs operating at all major ports. JNPA, DPA, PPA, and VoCPA will purchase two brand-new green tugs (battery-electric powered) from Cochin Shipyard by 2027 as part of the first phase.

## India's 1st dolphin research centre inaugurated in Patna, will help in study of Gangetic Dolphins

Bihar Chief Minister **Nitish Kumar inaugurated India's first-ever dolphin research centre in Patna**. Built at a cost of **Rs 30 crore**, the National Dolphin Research Center (NDRC) stands on the banks of the Ganges inside the Patna University campus and will help students and researchers understand the behaviour of freshwater dolphins, particularly of those found in the Ganges.



- The research will delve into various aspects such as changing behaviour, survival skills, food habits, causes of death, and more. The objective is to establish the NDRC as a centre of excellence.
- The NDRC, spanning a 4,400 square metre plot on the premises of Patna University near the Ganga, offers a strategic location for researchers to closely observe dolphins in their natural habitat.

## India launches Chakshu—a platform for reporting fraud calls and texts

The department of telecommunication's new platform, **Chakshu**, simplifies **reporting on fraud calls and messages**, and allows for real-time intelligence-sharing among several stakeholders.



- Chakshu will allow Indian citizens to report fraudulent communication—whether **received on call or SMS or social media like WhatsApp**. Once such information is received, the platform will trigger re-verification, and failing re-verification the number will be disconnected.
- Chakshu, which is currently not accessible to individuals, will act as an information exchange and coordination agency among telecom companies, law enforcement agencies, banks and financial institutions, social media platforms, and authorities issuing identity documents.

## **Scindia unveils India's first green hydrogen plant in stainless steel sector**

Union Minister for Steel and Civil Aviation, **Jyotiraditya M. Scindia**, virtually inaugurated **India's 1st Green Hydrogen Plant** in Stainless Steel Sector located at Jindal Stainless Limited, **Hisar**, Haryana.



- The project is the **world's first off-grid green hydrogen plant** for the stainless steel industry and the world's first green hydrogen plant with rooftop and floating solar units
- The plant is a state-of-the-art green hydrogen facility with a target to reduce carbon emissions as much as 2,700 metric tonnes per annum and 54,000 tons of CO2 emissions over the next two decades.
- This initiative aligns with the global shift towards renewable energy sources and showcases India's dedication to incorporating green hydrogen technology into critical industries like stainless steel production.

## **Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya inaugurates 3 new CIPET at Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh**

Union Minister of Chemicals and Fertilisers and Health and Family Welfare **Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya** virtually inaugurated **3 centers of Central Institute of Petrochemicals Engineering & Technology (CIPET)** established in Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh from New Delhi.



- These three new CIPET centres dedicated to the nation by the Minister are CSTS Baddi (Himachal Pradesh), CSTS, Ranchi (Jharkhand), and CSTS Gwalior (MP).
- This center seeks to provide skill development training to unemployed kids as well as long-term courses in plastics technology. It also aims to provide technical support services and promote polymer and related businesses in the region, resulting in employment or self-employment for trained students.
- The institute has focused its research on industry demands, such as solar cell technology, gas separation, water purification, and polymer research. The establishment of these CIPET centres marks a significant step forward for India's petrochemical sector, emphasizing skill development, research, and innovation to promote industrial growth and self-sufficiency.

### **UP emerges as the first State in country to issue five crore Ayushman cards under Ayushman Bharat PMJAY**

Uttar Pradesh, led by Chief Minister **Yogi Adityanath**, has emerged as the **first state in the country to issue five crore Ayushman cards**. Additionally, Uttar Pradesh maintains the leading position in terms of the highest number of Ayushman cards issued compared to other states.



- Uttar Pradesh has issued **50,017,920 Ayushman cards**, benefiting 74,382,304 individuals. A total of 3,716 hospitals in the state are empaneled under this scheme. Under the Ayushman Bharat Scheme, a total of 3,481,252 health claims have been filed, with 3,275,737 claims settled, representing a settlement rate of 92.48 percent in the state.
- Panchayat assistants, Kotedars, and Asha workers conduct door-to-door visits to facilitate the creation of Ayushman cards for residents. Additionally, eligible beneficiaries can obtain their cards at the Gram Panchayat Bhawan within their respective villages.

### **Telangana launches Indiramma Housing Scheme 2024: 3,500 Units in First Phase**

Telangana Revenue Minister **Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy** announced a significant boost to the housing sector in Telangana with the launch of the **Indiramma Housing Scheme 2024**.



- Under the newly launched scheme, the Telangana government is offering a generous financial aid package. Eligible individuals owning land will receive **Rs 5 lakh to construct houses**, demonstrating the administration's resolve to ensure that all citizens have access to permanent housing.
- For those who do not possess a house site, a piece of land along with `5 lakh will be provided. This will begin the process of selecting **3,500 beneficiaries per Assembly constituencies** from among the applications received during the Praja Palana programme.
- The Indiramma Housing will be the fifth guarantee the Congress will implement in 100 days since it assumed power.

## CM Yogi launches 'MYUVA Scheme' to empower youth entrepreneurs in Uttar Pradesh

In a significant move to empower the youth and boost entrepreneurship in Uttar Pradesh, Chief Minister **Yogi Adityanath** recently launched the **MYuva Scheme**.



- This initiative aims to **create a conducive environment for young individuals aspiring to become entrepreneurs**. The MYuva Scheme addresses various aspects of entrepreneurship, providing a comprehensive platform for skill development, financial support, and mentorship.
- Under the MYuva Scheme, the government will organize **skill development programs, workshops, and training sessions**. These programs will cover a wide range of industries, including technology, manufacturing, and service sectors. By enhancing the skill set of young individuals, the government aims to make them more competitive in the job market and encourage them to explore entrepreneurial opportunities.

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### France enshrines women's constitutional right to an abortion in a global first

France enshrined the right to abortion in its constitution, a world first welcomed by women's rights groups as historic and harshly criticised by anti-abortion groups.



- MPs and senators overwhelmingly backed the move, by **780 votes** against 72, in a special joint vote of the two houses of parliament, under the gilded ceilings of Versailles Palace, just outside Paris.
- Abortion rights are more widely accepted in France than in the United States and many other countries, with polls showing around 80% of French people back the fact that abortion is legal.

## BANKING & FINANCE

### RBI gives approval to Fincare Small Finance Bank's merger with AU bank

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said it has approved a \$530-million all-stock merger of Fincare Small Finance Bank Ltd with AU Small Finance Bank Ltd. The effective date of the merger will be April 1, 2024.



- The RBI's nod comes over a month after the Competition Commission of India (CCI) approved the merger of the two banks.
- The merger marks a significant milestone in the country's banking sector, creating a formidable entity with a customer base of more than one crore and a pan-India banking franchise, AU Small Finance Bank said in a regulatory filing.

## RBI bans IIFL Finance from giving gold loans due to serious deviations

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) directed IIFL Finance Ltd. to stop sanctioning or disbursing gold loans or assigning/securing/selling any of its gold loans with immediate effect.



- This ban comes after an RBI inspection revealed several supervisory concerns in the company's gold loan portfolio, including deviations in gold purity assessment, and breaches in the Loan-to-Value ratio among others.
- These restrictions aim to safeguard the interests of customers, RBI added saying The business restrictions will be lifted if, in the next audit, it is found that NBFC has changed course and is in compliance with RBI directives.

## BUSINESS & ECONOMY

### After JP Morgan, Bloomberg index to include Indian bonds

Bloomberg said it will include India Fully Accessible Route (FAR) bonds in the Bloomberg Emerging Market (EM) Local Currency Government Index and related indices, to be phased in over a ten-month period, starting **January 31, 2025**. This comes about five months after JP Morgan had announced it would include India in its widely tracked emerging market debt.



- The inclusion of Indian bonds in these two key indices could **attract billions of dollars of foreign investment** in the Indian government securities (G-Sec) market. This could potentially lead to a decline in Indian bond yields and strengthen the rupee.
- FAR is a separate channel introduced by the RBI, in consultation with the Government, for non-resident investment in G-Secs with effect from April 1, 2020.



## Moody's upgrades India's 2024 GDP forecast to 6.8%

Global rating agency **Moody's** has raised **India's growth forecast for 2024 calendar year to 6.8 per cent** from 6.1 per cent estimated earlier on the back of strong economic data. This comes after India reported its real GDP growth at 8.4 per cent on-year in the December quarter, resulting in a 7.6 per cent for 2023-24.



- Moody's upgrade comes on the back of 'stronger-than-expected' economic data of 2023, and after Barclays revised its forecast by a 110 basis points to 7.8 per cent for 2023-24 after the December quarter figures as well.
- India is likely to remain the fastest growing among G-20 economies over our forecast horizon," Moody's said in its **Global Macroeconomic Outlook for 2024**. It predicted **2025 growth to be 6.4 per cent**.

## Google unveils Genie AI which can create video games from text and image prompts

Google's DeepMind team has unveiled "Genie" - a groundbreaking AI model poised to revolutionise the **gaming industry** and creative endeavours alike.



- Genie introduced as an innovative platform capable of crafting interactive **2D video games from a single image prompt or text description**, marks a significant leap forward in the realm of artificial intelligence.
- Developed by Google DeepMind's Open-Endedness Team, this pioneering project signifies a fusion of cutting-edge technology and imaginative potential.
- Unlike its predecessors, Genie operates on a unique principle. Drawing insights from a vast dataset comprising 200,000 hours of unlabelled video footage predominantly

from 2D platformer games, this AI marvel learns through observation rather than explicit instruction.

## Flipkart launches its own UPI to boost digital payment offering

E-commerce marketplace **Flipkart** launched its own unified payments interface (UPI) handle to enhance its digital payment offerings for all customers.



- In the first phase, Flipkart UPI will be powered by **Axis Bank**. It will initially be available for Android users. Customers can register for UPI with the @fkaxis handle and can do fund transfers and checkout payments using the Flipkart app.
- Users can now set up their UPI handle for online and offline merchant transactions within and outside of the Flipkart marketplace.
- With UPI emerging as the preferred payment option, the launch of Flipkart UPI will provide unparalleled convenience and zero-cost solutions, democratising access to seamless payment options.

## SPORTS

### Puneri Paltan clinches maiden title as Pro Kabaddi League 10 draws to an end

**Puneri Paltan** won the **Pro Kabaddi League trophy for the first time** as they **defeated the Haryana Steelers** in the final at the GMC Balayogi Stadium in Hyderabad.



- The Paltan took an early lead with Ankit opening the scoring for the Steelers and Rahul Sethpal keeping the game interesting with his dynamic offensive moves.

- Puneri Paltan made all the difference with their raids early on in the proceedings, with Pankaj Mohite's heroic one earning them four points helping them take a critical edge in the match.

## APPOINTMENTS

### **Suman Kumari makes history as BSF's First Female Sniper**

In a first, Border Security Force (BSF) welcomes woman sniper, sub-inspector **Suman Kumari**. She has recently completed an eight-week sniper course at Indore's Central School of Weapons and Tactics (CSWT) to become the **first woman sniper of the BSF**. Suman has achieved 'instructor grade' at the course



- Suman opted for the sniper school after seeing the threat posed by cross-border sniper assaults while overseeing a platoon in Punjab. Her strong character won approval from her superiors to participate in the training.
- It's noteworthy that Suman was the **only female student enrolled in the sniper course out of 56 male peers**. Through this achievement, she aims to inspire other women to join the military.

### **Neeraj Chopra named brand ambassador for BPCL's premium petrol 'Speed'**

Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) has is pleased to introduce Olympic and World Javelin Champion **Neeraj Chopra as the brand ambassador** for their Premium Petrol 'Speed'.



- This collaboration adds to BPCL's list of esteemed brand ambassadors. Previously, the company had partnered with cricketer Rahul Dravid for its 'Pure for Sure' initiative and range of 'MAK lubricants'.

## AWARDS

### **Tiger Woods honored with USGA's most prestigious award**

Legendary golfer **Tiger Woods** has been selected to receive the **Bob Jones Award**, the highest honour bestowed by the United States Golf Association (**USGA**).



- This prestigious award recognizes Woods' dedication to sportsmanship, his respect for the traditions of the game, and his significant charitable endeavors.
- Woods typically is honored for his performances on the course, where he has won 15 majors among his 82 career victories on the PGA Tour.

### **Cuttack Rupa Tarakasi, Banglar muslin get GI tag**

The famous **Cuttack Rupa Tarakasi** (Silver Filigree) has been given the Geographical Indication (**GI**) tag by the Geographical Indications Registry in Chennai.



- The application for this was filed by the Odisha State Co-operative Handicrafts Corporation Limited and was facilitated by the Department of Textile and Handicrafts, Government of Odisha. Filigree has been traditionally associated with fine craftsmanship and luxurious design in classical jewellery.
- Silver Filigree, or Tarakasi, is a testament to the unparalleled skill and precision of artisans in Cuttack. The craft's history traces back to over 500 years ago, with influences spanning from Persia to Indonesia, and finally making its home in Cuttack, Odisha.

### **Ministry of I&B awarded for Best Performance in Accounts**

On the occasion of the **48th Foundation Day of the Indian Civil Accounts Service**, the **Ministry of Information & Broadcasting** has been honored with the **Award for Best Performance in Accounts** during the Financial Year 2023-24.



- This prestigious accolade signifies the Ministry's outstanding contribution and commitment to financial excellence.
- Led by Chief Controller of Accounts Ajay S. Singh, the ministry showcased exceptional efficiency and diligence in accounting practices, earning the prestigious recognition from the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting.

## **Dr Pradeep Mahajan receives Maharashtra Bhushan Award 2024 for work in Regenerative Medicine**

The **Maharashtra Bhushan Award 2024** has been bestowed upon **Dr. Pradeep Mahajan**, recognizing his groundbreaking work in the field of regenerative medicine.

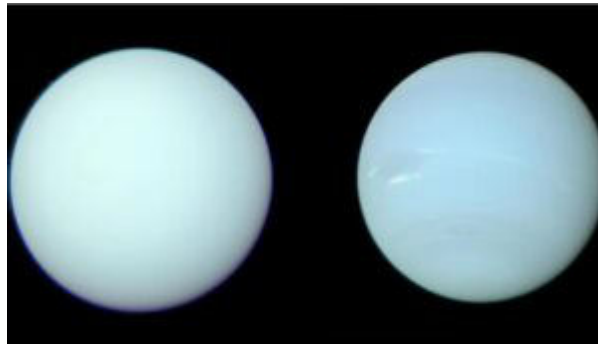


- This prestigious accolade celebrates his significant contributions to advancing medical science and providing innovative treatments that have positively impacted countless lives.
- Dr. Mahajan's journey in the medical field is marked by his innovative approach and dedication to regenerative medicine. His work has not only provided groundbreaking treatments for patients but has also significantly contributed to the scientific community's understanding of regenerative therapies.

## ENVIRONMENT

### **New moons of Uranus and Neptune discovered**

Astronomers have **discovered three previously unknown moons around Uranus and Neptune**, the most distant planets in our solar system. The three moons were all spotted several years ago but were recently confirmed by the International Astronomical Union's (IAU) Minor Planet Center, the organization responsible for naming new solar system objects such as moons, asteroids and comets



- The new moons were each spotted using ground-based telescopes, which is no mean feat considering their diminutive size and distance from our planet.
- The find includes one moon spotted orbiting Uranus, the first discovery of its kind in more than 20 years and two detected in Neptune's orbit.
- The newfound Uranian moon is the 28th to be observed orbiting the ice giant and is also likely the smallest, measuring 5 miles (8 kilometers) across. The moon, called **S/2023 U1**, takes 680 Earth days to complete one orbit around the planet.
- The brighter Neptune moon now has a provisional designation **S/2002 N5**, is about 23 kilometers in size, and takes almost 9 years to orbit the ice giant. The fainter Neptune moon has a provisional designation **S/2021 N1** and is about 14 kilometers with an orbit of almost 27 years. They will both receive permanent names based on the 50 Nereid sea goddesses in Greek mythology.

### **Neolithic child burial site discovered in TN**

Professors and students from the department of **Ancient History and Archaeology, University of Madras** have found a **neolithic child burial site at Chettimedu Pathur in Chengalpattu, Tamil Nadu.**



- The team heading the excavation reported that it rare to find burials from the Neolithic period which was between 5000-1500 BCE.
- The excavation, which began on February 5, led to the discovery of the burial site which featured a child with a pot beside it. This is the **first time such a child burial has been identified in Tamil Nadu**. It is believed to be from 5000 BC
- According to preliminary findings, the pot dates back to the Neolithic period and the age of the child was between 9 and 11 years. The child's head is placed at the north and the body points to the south while the face has been turned to the west. Shreds of burnished red ware, burnished grey ware and red ware with an elongated neck and wide mouth belonging to the same period were also discovered.

## OBITUARIES

### **Eminent archaeologist and Padma Shri awardee Arun Kumar Sharma dies at 91**

Eminent archaeologist and Padma Shri awardee **Arun Kumar Sharma**, who had served as the archaeological advisor to the Chhattisgarh government died at the age of 91.



- Sharma had collected archaeological evidence in support of the existence of Lord Ram's temple at the disputed site of Ayodhya. The evidence collected by him was accepted by first the Allahabad High Court and then by the Supreme Court during hearings on the disputed site in Ayodhya.
- Sharma, while serving in Chhattisgarh, was involved in excavations at several places like Sirpur, Tarighat, Sirkatti, Arang, Tala, Malhar and the findings helped in the revelation of the history of these places. He also published 35 books on archaeology.
- In 2016, Sharma along with his team re-established Lord Ganesh idol on Dholkal mountain in Dantewada district of Bastar region within a week after it was dismantled. He was awarded with the prestigious **Padma Shri award in 2017**.

# Must Watch

## BANK EXAMS 2024

+ English Subtitles

### 6 MONTHS DETAILED STRATEGY

- SBI PO    - IBPS PO  
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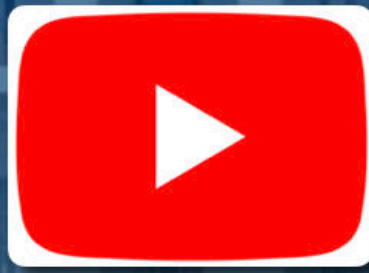
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