

26 Apr, 2024

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NATIONAL NEWS

Indian Historical Records Commission (IHRC) Adopts a New Logo and Motto



- The **Indian Historical Records Commission (IHRC)**, an apex advisory body on archival matters, acts as an all-India forum of creators, custodians and users of records to advise the Government of India on the management of records and their use for historical research. Established in 1919, the IHRC is headed by the Union Minister of Culture.
- To visually communicate the unique identity and ethos of the IHRC, an online competition was launched in 2023 on the MyGov portal. From a total of 436 entries, the following design by **Shaurya Pratap Singh (Delhi)** was selected as the **new logo and motto**.
- The **logo** signifies the theme and uniqueness of IHRC. The **pages in the shape of lotus petals represent IHRC** as the resilient nodal institution for maintaining historical records. **The Sarnath pillar in the middle** represents India's glorious past. Its **brown colour theme** reinforces the organization's mission of preserving, studying and honouring India's historical records.
- The motto ("**Yatra Bhavishyatah Itihaas Rakshitah**" - **Where history is preserved for the future**) holds great significance for the IHRC, it translates as where history is preserved for the future. The motto reflects the Commission's commitment to ensuring the safeguarding of historical documents and making these accessible for the benefit of present and future generations.

India's Centralised Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS) recognized as a best practice in Commonwealth Secretaries of public service/ secretaries to cabinet meeting outcome statement

- The Commonwealth Secretariat has recognized Centralised Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System(**CPGRAMS**) of **India as a best practice in Commonwealth Secretaries of Public Service/ Secretaries to Cabinet meeting** that took place from 22 to 24 April, 2024 in Marlborough House, **London**.



- The theme of the meeting was **‘Institutionalisation of SMART Government to enhance public service delivery’** with focus on adopting AI in governance. The forum brought together Commonwealth Heads of Public Service, Secretaries to Cabinet, Senior Public Officials, industry champions, and eminent scholars.
- The Indian presentation on the Centralized Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS) was made by **V. Srinivas**, Secretary, Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG), on April 23, 2024 and received commendation from Commonwealth Member countries as a global best practice.
- The Secretary General of the Commonwealth, Ms. Patricia Scotland KC said "CPGRAMS is a state-of-the-art grievance redressal system and a best practice of SMART government. The Commonwealth’s remaining 1.2 billion citizens can benefit from the adoption of the technology platform in the same way India’s 1.4 billion citizens have benefited."

India has lost over 1,500 sq km of land to ‘catastrophic’ soil erosion



- A new study has revealed a worrying trend for **India’s soil health**. Nearly **30 per cent of the country’s landmass is experiencing “minor” soil erosion**, while a critical 3 per cent faces “catastrophic” topsoil loss, according to the research.
- The study, **Geospatial modeling and mapping of soil erosion in India**, for the first time, classified soil erosion on a pan-India basis. The study came up with six classifications for soil erosion ranging from “minor” to “catastrophic” in terms of soil eroded in tonnes over a hectare over a year.
- Data accessed and quantified by DTE shows the northeastern state Assam lost close to 300 square kilometres or 31 per cent of its surface soil to “catastrophic” erosion.

Satellite monitoring shows 27% glacial lakes in Himalayas expanding: Isro



- **More than 27 per cent of the identified glacial lakes in the Himalayas have notably expanded since 1984** and 130 of those are in India, **ISRO** said.
- In a statement, the space agency said long-term satellite imagery covering the catchments of Indian Himalayan river basins from 1984 to 2023 indicates significant changes in glacial lakes.
- Of the 2,431 lakes larger than 10 hectares identified during 2016-17, 676 glacial lakes have notably expanded since 1984, it said.
- Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) said 601 of the 676 lakes have expanded more than twice while 10 lakes have grown between 1.5 to two times and 65 lakes 1.5 times. 130 of the 676 lakes are situated within India, with 65, seven, and 58 located in the Indus, Ganga and the Brahmaputra river basins, respectively.

SJVN sets milestone with Inauguration of First Multi-purpose Green Hydrogen Pilot Project of the Nation



- **SJVN Limited** has achieved a significant milestone with the **inauguration of India's first Multi-purpose (Combined Heat & Power) Green Hydrogen Pilot Project at SJVN's 1,500 MW Nathpa Jhakri Hydro Power Station (NJHPS) in Jhakri.**
- The green hydrogen produced from the project will be utilized for **High Velocity Oxygen Fuel (HVOF) Coating Facility of NJHPS for meeting its combustion fuel requirements.** In addition, it will also generate electricity through its fuel cell of 25 kW capacity.
- The state-of-the-art Green Hydrogen Pilot Project is set to produce 14 kilograms of Green Hydrogen daily during 8 hours of operation. The hydrogen produced will be stored at a pressure of 30 bars, in six storage tanks, with a total storage capacity of 12 m³.

- The project will produce hydrogen using alkaline electrolyzer of 20 Nm³/hour capacity, which would be powered by renewable energy supplied from 1.31 MW Solar Power Plant of SJVN in Wadhwal, Shimla.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Asia was the world's 'disaster capital' in 2023, with all climate change drivers upping the ante in region: WMO report



- The **Asian continent** was the **world's most disaster-prone region in 2023**. Floods and storms caused the highest number of reported casualties and economic losses in Asia, while the impact of heatwaves became more severe, according to a **report launched by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) in Bangkok**.
- The WMO report **The State of the Climate in Asia 2023** is based on inputs from National Meteorological and Hydrological Services; United Nations partners and a network of climate experts.
- It also showed that sea level rise in the Bay of Bengal off India's eastern coast was the second-highest in the region last year, being nearly 30 per cent above the global average. The rise of temperature in eastern and northern India had been highest in India, according to the document.
- The report emphasises the need for robust climate finance mechanisms to scale up adaptation and address loss and damage in developing countries of Asia, which bear the brunt of climate-related adversaries.

10 Asian nations pledge \$1 billion for tiger habitat conservation



- In a significant win for conservation efforts, **10 Asian countries have come together to pledge \$1 billion** over the next decade towards **protecting and expanding vital**

tiger habitats across the continent. This collaborative initiative marks a renewed commitment to reversing the decline of these majestic big cats.

- This was announced at the **Sustainable Finance for Tiger Landscapes Conference in Bhutan** which concluded April 23 was attended by Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, India, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Nepal, Thailand and Vietnam.
- While sharing innovative and successful models and methods from Cambodia, Indonesia, Bhutan, India and other countries, the attendees recognised the importance of having country-specific conservation mechanisms that are best suited to conserving habitats and environments.

Global food crisis: 1 in 5 people in need of urgent action



- Nearly **282 million people** faced high levels of acute food insecurity in **59 countries in 2023**, with extreme weather being the second most significant factor driving food crisis, revealed the **2024 Global Report on Food Crisis (GRFC)** released recently.
- The overall share of the analysed population facing high levels of acute food insecurity was marginally lower than in 2022, but still higher than pre-COVID-19.
- In fact, for four consecutive years, the proportion of people facing acute food insecurity has remained persistently high at almost 22 per cent of those assessed, significantly exceeding pre-COVID-19 levels.
- With food crisis escalating alarmingly in conflict hotspots in 2023, notably **Palestine (Gaza Strip) and Sudan**, conflict / insecurity became the primary driver in 20 countries, directly affecting 135 million people. The Gaza Strip became the area with the most severe food crisis in the last eight years of GRFC reporting.

Eritrea fares worst in the world in plastic waste management, shows Plastic Overshoot Day report; India ranked 4th

- Due to poor waste management practices, **81 countries** which include 44 African nations and India classified as **'low waste producing polluters'**, contribute to plastic pollution. Around 97 per cent of plastic waste created in Eritrea is mismanaged, making the African country with the poorest plastic waste management practices in the world, a new report showed.
- In 2024, around 90,954 tonnes of plastic waste was estimated to be mismanaged in the African country, out of around 93,444 tonnes produced in 2024.



- The **Mismanaged Waste Index (MWI) in the 2024 Plastic Overshoot Day (POD) Report** by Swiss non-profit **EA Earth Action** has listed the nation as one of 42 African nations, where 78-97 per cent of the plastic waste produced is mishandled. According to the MWI index, **13 of the 15 worst performing countries are from Africa.**
- India's rank in the MWI has improved significantly since 2023, showed the report. **India, which ranked fourth in MWI 2023 with 98.55 per cent of generated waste being mismanaged,** has improved and is now at the 95th position. POD for India is April 23, 2024. The Overshoot day for India got extended by nine days from April 14 in the year 2021.
- India (12.5 days) is second among the 12 countries responsible for 60 per cent of the world's mismanaged plastic waste, or 70 days of overshoot for 2024 after China (23.5 days).

22.8 million work suffer occupational injuries, 18,970 die every year globally due to excessive heat wave: ILO

- Excessive heat results in an estimated **22.85 million occupational injuries, 18,970 deaths and 2.09 million disability-adjusted life years (DALYs) every year** with large numbers of workers in **Americas, Africa, the Middle East and India suffering from irreversible kidney failure** due to high temperatures, the **International Labour Organisation** said.



- According to the International Labour Organisation(ILO)'s report titled “**Ensuring safety and health at work in a changing climate**”, excessive heat, extreme weather, solar UV radiation, and air pollution have led to an alarming increase in some

diseases, which is already having a severe impact on the safety and health of workers worldwide.

- Each year, exposure to air pollution kills over 860,000 outdoor workers, while exposure to solar UV radiation causes over 19,000 deaths from non-melanoma skin cancer.

BANKING & FINANCE

NABARD unveils Climate Strategy 2030 to mobilise green financing



- National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (**NABARD**) on the occasion of **Earth Day on April 22, 2024** unveiled its **Climate Strategy 2030 document** which aims to address India's need for green financing.
- Despite the pressing demand, where India requires **approximately \$170 billion annually to reach a cumulative total of over \$2.5 trillion by 2030**, current green finance inflows are critically insufficient. As of 2019-20, India garnered about \$49 billion in green financing.
- With the majority of funds earmarked for mitigation, only \$5 billion was allocated towards adaptation and resilience, reflecting the minimal private sector engagement in these areas due to challenges in bankability and commercial viability.

Indian Bank ties up with Tata Power Solar to boost solar energy adoption



- **Indian Bank** has entered into a strategic partnership with Tata Power Solar Systems Ltd. (TPSSL) to **boost solar energy adoption** by providing financial support to residential consumers for installations.
- The collaboration aims to provide financial support under the **PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana scheme** for installations up to 3 KW, and from 3-10 KW under the regular scheme, the public sector lender said in a statement.
- Under this collaboration, residential consumers can avail **loans up to ₹2 lakh at an annual interest rate of 7%**, in compliance with government regulations. The financing solutions aim to facilitate installations up to 3 KW under the scheme, with a nominal margin money requirement of 10% and collateral-free financing, making it easier for homeowners to embark on their solar journey. Additionally, repayment tenures extend up to 10 years, offering flexibility and convenience.

SBI Card launches 3 credit card variants in travel category with SBI Card Miles



- India's largest credit card issuer **SBI Card** launched its **first travel-focused core credit card, 'SBI Card MILES' in three variants**. This card caters to all types of travelers, from those who are just starting to explore to frequent flyers.
- The three variants, **SBI Card MILES ELITE, SBI Card MILES PRIME, and SBI Card MILES**, have been designed to elevate curated travel benefits. Cardholders can earn up to six Travel Credits on every Rs 200 travel spend and up to 2 Travel Credits on spending Rs 200 on other categories.
- The card is available on the **Mastercard and RuPay** network. Travel credits can be converted into hotel points and airline miles by SBI Card MILES customers. In addition to other advantages, they receive expedited rewards on all trip reservations and access to airport lounges.

Nabard partners with RBI Innovation Hub to fast-track digital agri lending

- The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (**NABARD**) said it has partnered with Reserve Bank's arm **RBIH** to put in place a system which will enable **faster processing of agricultural loans**.
- NABARD said it will integrate its e-KCC loan origination system portal with the Public Tech Platform for Frictionless Credit (PTPFC) of Reserve Bank Innovation Hub (RBIH), a wholly-owned subsidiary of the RBI.



- NABARD has developed the loan origination system portal to facilitate digital Kisan Credit Card (KCC) loan processing for cooperative banks and Regional Rural Banks (RRBs).

BUSINESS & ECONOMY

Crisil's ESG ratings unit gets Sebi's approval for ESG scoring



- The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) has **approved Crisil ESG Ratings & Analytics as a Category 1** provider of environmental, social, and governance (ESG) ratings.
- Crisil ESG Ratings, a unit of Crisil, was incorporated after Sebi amended the SEBI (Credit Rating Agencies) Regulations, 1999, to include provisions on ESG Rating Providers (ERPs) last year.
- The rating provider launched its ESG scoring business in 2021 and now tracks over 1,000 companies across 65 sectors. The company said this business will now be transferred to the subsidiary Crisil ESG Ratings.

Kuwait's CMA sign MoU with India's IFSCA for enhancing joint cooperation

- On the sidelines of the **India-Kuwait Investment conference, organised by the Indian Embassy in Kuwait**, India and Kuwait inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) **aimed at sharing information on technologies and innovations** within the financial and regulatory sectors.

Must Watch

BANK EXAMS 2024

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- An MoU was signed between India's International Financial Services Centres Authority (**IFSCA**) and Kuwait's Capitals Market Authority (CMA). This partnership seeks to bolster the development of financial markets in both countries.
- The agreement aims to foster collaboration in sharing information on technological advancements and innovations within the financial and regulatory frameworks.

SPORTS

Former World No. 1 Garbine Muguruza announces tennis retirement at 30



- Spain's former world number 1 and Wimbledon and French Open champion **Garbine Muguruza** announced her **retirement** at a news conference, making the extended break she had announced a year ago a permanent step.
- Venezuelan-born Muguruza won the French Open in 2016 and Wimbledon in 2017, and she reached the final of the Australian Open in 2020. Last April she said she would take a break from competition to spend more time with her family.
- She beat Serena Williams in the 2016 Roland Garros final and defeated Venus Williams in the 2017 final in Wimbledon, making her the only player to defeat each Williams sister in a Grand Slam title match.
- Muguruza, 30, was ranked number one in 2017 and was ranked as high as third by the end of 2021 when she won three WTA titles.

APPOINTMENTS

Hardayal Prasad appointed as new CEO and managing director of Srei Infrastructure Finance



- Under the new management of the state-owned National Asset Reconstruction Company Limited (NARCL), Srei Infrastructure Finance Limited (SIFL) announced the appointment of **Hardayal Prasad** as its new **Managing Director and CEO**.
- Prasad, with 36 years of experience, is a former Managing Director & CEO of SBI Cards & Payment Services Ltd and PNB Housing Finance Ltd, a company statement said.

Axis Bank re-appoints Amitabh Chaudhry as MD and CEO



- The Board of **Axis Bank** approved the **re-appointment of Amitabh Chaudhry as Managing Director & CEO of the Bank**, for a further period of three years with effect from January 1, 2025 up to **December 31, 2027**.
- This re-appointment is subject to approval of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and approval of the members, in terms of applicable laws.
- Chaudhry, age 59 years, joined Axis Bank as MD & CEO with effect from January 1, 2019, after successfully leading HDFC Standard Life Insurance Company Limited (HDFC Life), for over nine years, per the Bank's regulatory filing.
- Prior to HDFC Life, he was the MD & CEO of Infosys BPO and the Head of testing unit of Infosys Technologies Limited.

Sprint legend Usain Bolt named ambassador for ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024



- The International Cricket Council (ICC) have announced Olympic legend **Usain Bolt** as an ambassador for the upcoming ICC Men's T20 World Cup, which will be played in the West Indies and USA from 1-29 June 2024.
- As an ambassador, Bolt will play a key role in promoting the event, starting with a cameo appearance in next week's release of the event's official anthem music video alongside iconic artists Sean Paul and Kes.
- The eight-time Olympic Gold Medallist will also attend T20 World Cup matches in the West Indies and be part of fan engagement events promoting the sport within the United States.

Prabowo Subianto declared Indonesia's president-elect amid fraud allegations



- **Indonesia's** electoral commission formally declared **Prabowo Subianto president-elect** in a ceremony, after the country's highest court rejected challenges to his landslide victory lodged by two losing presidential candidates.
- Mr. Subianto, who is currently defence minister, won the election with **58.6% of the votes**, or more than 96 million ballots, more than twice the amount received by either of the other two candidates. But his rivals alleged that his victory had depended on large-scale fraud and widespread state interference.

AWARDS

Actor Randeep Hooda Honoured With Lata Deenanath Mangeshkar Award



- Actor **Randeep Hooda** has been bestowed with **Lata Deenanath Mangeshkar Award** in recognition of his contributions to Indian cinema and his recent film **Swatantrya Veer Savarkar**.
- During a ceremony held at Mumbai's Dinanath Mangeshkar Natyagrih, Hooda expressed his gratitude, saying that he felt honoured to receive the award from a family closely associated with Savarkar.
- Directed by actor Randeep Hooda, who also portrays Savarkar in the film, the biopic offers a retelling of India's armed revolution for independence.
- The ceremony also honoured Bollywood megastar **Amitabh Bachchan** with the **Lata Deenanath Mangeshkar Award** for his exceptional contributions to Indian cinema.

Indian students secure 2 prestigious awards at NASA's 30th Human Exploration Rover Challenge



- **India** shines brightly at **NASA's 30th Human Exploration Rover Challenge (HERC)**, claiming two distinguished awards, highlighting the country's increasing importance in the quest for lunar exploration.

- Teams representing **KIET Group of Institutions, Delhi-NCR (College/University)**, and **Kanakia International School, Mumbai (High School)**, clinched top honors in two categories.
- KIET Group of Institutions team earned recognition for its outstanding performance in the 'Crash and Burn' category, while Kanakia International School emerged victorious as the 'Rookie of the Year'.
- Parish Episcopal School from Dallas won first place in the high school division, while the University of Alabama in Huntsville secured the college/university title.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

South Korea launches nanosatellite for satellite constellation project



- A **South Korean nanosatellite was launched into orbit** as part of the nation's project to **create a satellite constellation by 2027**, officials said. According to the Ministry of Science and ICT, the Earth observation satellite lifted off aboard Rocket Lab's Electron rocket from a spaceport in Mahia, New Zealand.
- The satellite, named **NEONSAT-1**, was deployed into space at an altitude of 520 kilometres, about 50 minutes after the rocket's launch. NEONSAT stands for the New-space Earth Observation SATellite constellation for national safety.
- Developed by the state-run Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology (KAIST) for mass production, NEONSAT-1 weighs less than 100 kilograms and has a resolution of 1 metre.
- The satellite was the first among 11 nanosatellites to form a satellite constellation to monitor and take images of the Korean Peninsula and its surrounding regions.

NASA confirms nuclear-powered Dragonfly drone is going to Titan



- **NASA** has finally confirmed its **Dragonfly rotorcraft mission** will be heading to **Titan**. Dragonfly was originally slated to launch in **2026**.
- NASA approved the mission and the **July 2028 launch date**, with a scheduled arrival at Titan in 2034. Powered by a Multi-Mission Radioisotope Thermoelectric Generator (**MMRTG**), it will cover tens of thousands of miles or kilometers, farther than any planetary rover has traveled.
- The car-sized Dragonfly, which is being built by the Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory (APL) in Laurel, Maryland, will reach Titan in 2034. For the next 2.5 years, the nuclear-powered drone is expected to perform one hop every Titan day-16 days to us Earthlings, hunting for prebiotic chemical processes at various pre-selected locations on the frigid moon, which is known to contain organic materials.

OBITUARIES

National Award-winning director Durai of Pasi fame passes away



- Tamil film director **Durai**, whose film Pasi, depicting the life of people on the fringes of society, including rag pickers and rickshaw pullers, won the national award, died at the age of 84.
- Alongside an extensive career in the Tamil film industry, Durai directed 46 films across multiple languages including Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, and Hindi.
- In 1982, Durai was honored with the prestigious Kalaimamani Award by the Tamil Nadu State government for his significant contributions to cinema.

Sudhir Kakar, Indian psychoanalysis pioneer, passes away



- **Sudhir Kakar**, often called the "**father of Indian psychoanalysis**," passed away at 85.
- He was a famous author and cultural critic. His life and work bridged the gap between Western and Eastern thought. He left an unforgettable mark on the field of psychoanalysis in India.
- Kakar wrote several books and articles on the confluence of psychoanalysis with Indian culture, mythology and religion. His works like *The Inner World: A Psychoanalytic Study of Childhood and Society in India* questioned traditional Western psychoanalytic perspectives, offering unique insights into the Indian psyche.
- He received many awards for his work, including the Kardiner Award of Columbia University, the Boyer Prize for Psychological Anthropology of the American Anthropological Association, Germany's Goethe Medal and its highest federal award, the Order of Merit.



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