



19 March 2024

National and International News

Ethanol 100



Context:

- Petroleum Minister Hardeep Singh Puri unveiled **Ethanol 100 fuel, offering cleaner emissions and higher efficiency.**

Key points:

- **Cleaner and Greener Alternative:** Ethanol 100 offers a cleaner alternative to traditional gasoline, with lower emissions of greenhouse gases and pollutants, contributing to combating climate change and improving air quality.
- **High-Octane Rating:** With a high-octane rating typically between 100-105, Ethanol 100 is suitable for high-performance engines, ensuring better efficiency and power output while minimizing environmental impact.
- **Versatility:** Ethanol 100 can be utilized in various vehicles, including flex-fuel vehicles (FFVs) designed to run on gasoline, ethanol, or any blend of the two, highlighting its versatility and potential to become a mainstream fuel option.
- **Increased Availability:** The launch of Ethanol 100 expands its availability to 183 retail petrol outlets across Maharashtra, Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh, New Delhi, and Tamil Nadu, with plans for further expansion.
- **Towards Blending Targets:** This initiative aligns with the goal of achieving 20% ethanol blending by 2025-26, a target that has seen significant progress with the increased availability of ethanol blends like E20 and now Ethanol 100.

India's Atmospheric Research Testbed in Central India (ART-CI) Phase 1 Inauguration

Context:

- **Location:** Silkheda, Sehore district, 50 km northwest of Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh.
- **Funded by:** Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES).
- **Purpose:** Study cloud processes during Indian monsoons in Monsoon Core Zone (MCZ).
- **Focus:** Understanding crucial cloud processes during monsoon season.

Need for ART-CI:



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- Indian monsoon complexity impacts **agriculture and economy**.
- Lack of comprehensive cloud process data hinders predictions.
- ART-CI addresses need for specialized monsoon research infrastructure.

**Madhya Pradesh's Strategic Importance:**

- Silkheda strategically **located along major rain-bearing synoptic systems' path**.
- Clear environment with minimal pollutants ideal for meteorological research.
- Suitable for **installing sensitive, high-end meteorological instruments**.
- **Geographical positioning and environmental quality give Silkheda a strategic advantage for meteorological research.**

**HbA1C test**

**Context:**

- According to **2018 ICMR guidelines**, individuals over **30** should be screened for diabetes due to India's significant diabetes burden.
- India has around **10.13 crore diabetic individuals and 13.6 crore pre-diabetics, accounting for 17% of global diabetes cases**.
- Over **35%** of Indians have hypertension, and nearly **40%** have abdominal obesity, increasing diabetes risk.
- Prevention and early detection are crucial in managing this health issue.

**HbA1C Test Functionality**

- **Test Principle:** Measures the **percentage of red blood cells coated with sugar (glycated hemoglobin) to diagnose and manage pre-diabetes and diabetes**.
- **Test Accuracy and Approval:** Discovered in **1955**, correlated with diabetes in 1968, approved by the ADA in 2009, and endorsed by WHO in 2011 with improved accuracy from 1993 to 2012.

**World Monuments Fund 2025**



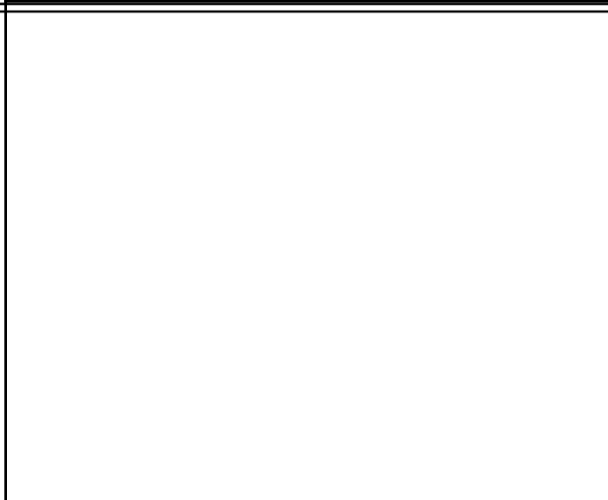
**Context:**

- Conservationists propose **Kazhuveli watershed, Tamil Nadu, for inclusion in World Monuments Fund Watch 2025**.
- The historic Eri network in the region, vital for agriculture, is in decline and requires urgent protection.

**Significance:**



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- Nomination-based initiative linking **local heritage preservation** with **global awareness and action**.
  - **Aims to preserve locations in need, addressing issues like cultural heritage and environmental sustainability.**
- About World Monuments Fund (WMF):**
- **A private, global non-profit organization** dedicated to protecting historic architectural and cultural heritage sites worldwide.
  - **Founded in 1965, headquartered in New York City**, WMF partners with local communities and governments to preserve significant sites through donations and matching funds.

## EX TIGER TRIUMPH – 24



### Context:

- In alignment with the established partnership between India and the US, a **bilateral tri-Service Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) Exercise, Tiger Triumph24, is set to take place on the Eastern Seaboard from 18 to 31 March 2024.**

### The exercise will involve:

- Indian Navy Ships with integral helicopters and landing crafts embarked
- Indian Navy aircraft
- Indian Army personnel and vehicles
- Indian Air Force aircraft and helicopters
- Rapid Action Medical Team (RAMT)
- The US will be represented by **US Navy Ships with embarked troops of the US Marine Corps and US Army.**
- The primary objectives of the exercise include developing interoperability for conducting HADR operations and refining Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to enable rapid and smooth coordination between the forces of both countries.



Kerala Regional News

<p><b>2.5L citizens above 85 can vote from home for Lok Sabha election in Kerala</b></p>	<p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With the <b>Election Commission allowing postal ballot facility for people aged 85 and above</b> and <b>Persons with Disabilities (PWD)</b>, a <b>total of 5.12 lakh people in the two categories in Kerala will be able to cast their votes from home for the Lok Sabha election.</b></li> <li>• The number of voters in the <b>'85 years and above' category stood at 2.50 lakh</b></li> <li>• There are <b>2.62 lakh voters in the PwD category.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>About:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>postal ballot option</b> was provided to voters aged 80 and above, those in the PwD category and Covid patients in the <b>2020 Bihar assembly elections.</b></li> <li>• It was <b>introduced in Kerala in the last assembly elections.</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>SAKHI to be a friend in need for Gaganyaan crew</b></p>	<p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC)</b>, the <b>Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)</b> facility at <b>Thumba in Thiruvananthapuram</b>, has developed a multi-purpose app <b>SAKHI.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>About:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SAKHI stands for <b>Space-borne Assistant and Knowledge Hub for Crew Interaction</b></li> <li>• This AI-powered software <b>acts as a virtual assistant for the crew</b>, ensuring smooth communication with ground control and onboard systems.</li> <li>• It will also <b>monitor the astronauts' well-being, reminding them of hydration, meals, and even sleep schedules.</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Scheme for creating 'Student Startup Professionals' in agri sector launched</b></p>	<p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>ICAR-Central Tuber Crops Research Institute (ICAR-CTCRI) Agri-Business Incubator</b>, in <b>collaboration with the College of Agriculture, Vellayani</b>, under the <b>Kerala Agricultural University</b>, and the <b>Kerala Startup Mission (KSUM)</b>, has launched a scheme for creating</li> </ul>



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	<p><b>'Student Startup Professionals' for agritech startups.</b></p> <p><b>About:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Under the Certified Agritech Startup Professional Scheme (CAgtSP), students are <b>attached with the ICAR-CTCRI Agri-Business Incubator for one year.</b></li> <li>• They will be directly involved in <b>mentoring startups, covering areas like business plan preparation and drafting agreements, seed funding and market linkage.</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Zircle, solar platform for households expands to Kerala</b></p>	<p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Zircle, a startup aiming to simplify the switch to clean energy for households, has expanded its services to Kerala.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>About:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Previously operational in Delhi-NCR, Zircle is the first platform in India solely dedicated to assisting residential consumers with adopting solar energy solutions.</b></li> <li>• <b>This expansion allows Kerala residents to leverage Zircle's expertise to navigate the process of installing solar panels in their homes.</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Kerala creates over 1 lakh MSMEs for second year in a row</b></p>	<p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Kerala's MSME's sector has witnessed impressive growth for the second consecutive year.</b></li> <li>• <b>Over one lakh new MSMEs were established in 2023-24, building on the success of the previous year.</b></li> <li>• <b>This brings the total number of new ventures started since the launch of the "Year of Enterprises" initiative in 2022-23 to a staggering 2,40,396.</b></li> <li>• <b>This initiative, led by the Department of Industries &amp; Commerce, has resulted in significant investment (Rs. 15,167.36 crore) and job creation (5,09,740) in the MSME sector over the past two years.</b></li> </ul>

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