



April 2024

National and International News

<p>BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles</p>	<p>Why in news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • India delivered the first batch of BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles to the Philippines. • The Philippines concluded a \$375-million deal with India in January 2022 for three batteries of the BrahMos, becoming the first export customer. <p>Key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The delivery comes amid the ongoing showdown between the Philippines and China in the South China Sea. • Several countries have expressed interest in acquiring BrahMos systems, and discussions are in advanced stages with Indonesia and Thailand among others. <p>About BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type: Supersonic cruise missile. • Developed by: Joint venture between India's Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and Russia's NPO Mashinostroyenia. • Name Origin: Named after the Brahmaputra River in India and the Moskva River in Russia. • Speed: Mach 2.8 to 3.0 (supersonic speed). • Range: Approximately 290-450 kilometers, with extended range versions in development. • Warhead: Conventional and nuclear options, with a payload capacity up to 300 kilograms. • Launch Platforms: Versatile launch capabilities from land, sea, sub-sea, and air platforms. • Guidance System: Equipped with an inertial navigation system and a terminal active radar guidance system. • Stealth Technology: Designed to reduce radar cross-section for stealthier approach. • BrahMos-II: Development of a hypersonic version of the missile, BrahMos-II, which is expected to travel at speeds of Mach 7+.
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- **Extended Range:** Ongoing efforts to extend the missile's range beyond 450 kilometers under international missile treaties.



BrahMos Cruise Missile

Air-launched variant tested

BrahMos, the world's fastest supersonic cruise missile, successfully flight-tested for the first time from a Sukhoi-30MKI fighter of the Indian Air Force against a sea based target in Bay of Bengal

The missile is now capable of being launched from land, sea and air, completing the tactical cruise missile triad for India

Technical Specifications

Maximum range	400+ km	Warhead mass	200-300 kg
Velocity	Mach 2.8	Altitude	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Cruise: 15 km ■ Terminal: 10-15 metre
Weight	2.5 tonnes		

Special Features

- Universal for multiple platforms
- "Fire and Forget" principle of operation
- High supersonic speed all through the flight
- Long flight range with varieties of flight trajectories
- Low radar signature
- Shorter flight times leading to lower target dispersion and quicker engagement
- Pin point accuracy with high lethal power aided by large kinetic energy on impact



Compared to existing state-of-the-art subsonic cruise missiles, BrahMos has

- 3 times more velocity
- 2.5 to 3 times more flight range
- 3 to 4 times more seeker range
- 9 times more kinetic energy

National Curriculum for Early Childhood Care and Education 2024 - Aadharshila

Why in news?

- The Central government has released a curriculum for children aged **three to six-years-old**, aiming to **boost**



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	<p>pre-school learning in 14 lakh anganwadis across India.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) has released the 'Aadharshila,' the National Curriculum for Early Childhood Care and Education 2024. <p>About Aadharshila:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aadharshila is a detailed 48-week curriculum for three to six-year-olds in anganwadis. The curriculum aims to strengthen foundational literacy and numeracy concepts. The curriculum includes a weekly play calendar with activities such as storytelling, singing rhymes, art and craft, and more. The curriculum targets at least 48 weeks of learning in the duration of three years. The curriculum helps in developing listening skill, vocabulary building, boosting imagination, narration, following instructions, creativity, social development, developing self-expression and self-esteem. The national framework will serve as a base for States to develop their own culturally appropriate curriculums. Training of anganwadi workers towards providing early childhood education started under the 'Poshan Bhi, Padhai Bhi' scheme by the MWCD.
<p>United Nations membership for the state of Palestine</p>	<p>Why in news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The United States vetoed a U.N. resolution that would have allowed full United Nations membership for the state of Palestine. The vote in the 15-member Security Council was 12 in favour, the United States opposed, and two abstentions. <p>Key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The resolution would have recommended the 193-member General Assembly to approve Palestine becoming the 194th member of the United Nations. 140 countries have already recognized the state of Palestine, so its admission would have been approved.



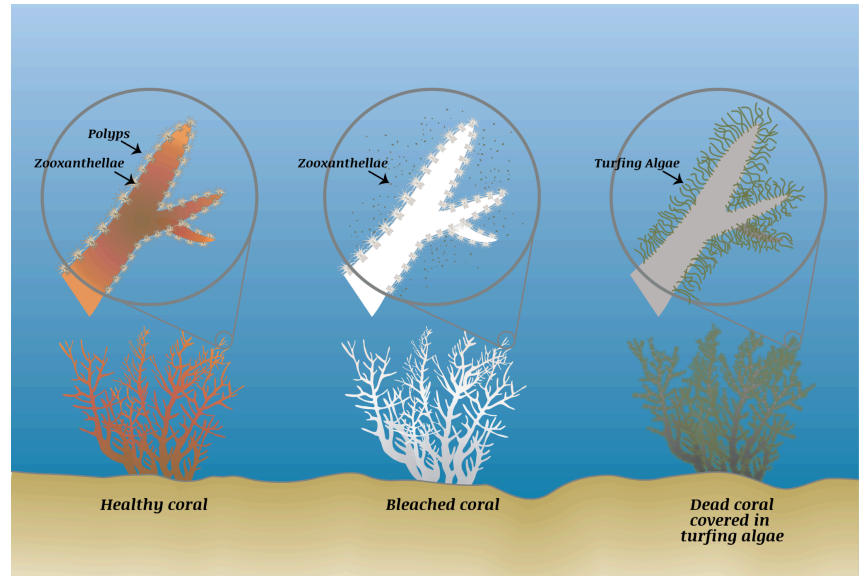
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	<p>Think:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Know about the process for obtaining full membership of the United Nations.
<p>Fourth global mass coral bleaching</p>	<p>Why in news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The fourth global mass coral bleaching event has been triggered by extraordinary ocean temperatures, as stated by the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). This event could have serious consequences for ocean life and millions of people who rely on reefs for food, jobs, and coastal defence. <p>Key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The primary reason behind the soaring temperatures is the rising emissions of heat-trapping greenhouse gases (GHGs) such as carbon dioxide and methane in the atmosphere. Nearly 90% of the extra heat trapped by GHGs has been absorbed by the oceans. <p>About Corals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coral Reefs: Coral reefs are large underwater structures composed of the skeletons of colonial marine invertebrates called coral. Types: The three main types of coral reefs are fringing reefs, barrier reefs, and atolls. Composition: Reefs are built by and made up of thousands of tiny animals called coral polyps, which secrete a hard exoskeleton of calcium carbonate. Corals are classified as either hard coral or soft coral. Hard corals are the architects of coral reefs. Coral reefs, also referred to as “rainforests of the sea”, have existed on the Earth for nearly 450 million years. Australia’s Great Barrier Reef is the largest in the world, stretching across 2,028 kilometres. <p>Did you know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coral Bleaching: The phenomenon where coral colonies lose their vibrant colors due to the expulsion of symbiotic zooxanthellae algae from their tissues, leaving them white or pale. This is usually a stress response.



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- **Primary Causes:** Major factors include **increased sea temperatures, solar irradiance, ocean acidification, pollution, and changes in sea level.**



Fossils prehistoric snake found in Gujarat

Why in news?

- Researchers at **IIT Roorkee discovered fossils** of one of the **largest snakes**, named **Vasuki Indicus**, in **Kutch, Gujarat.**
- The snake likely lived 47 million years ago during the **Middle Eocene period.**

Key points:

- Vasuki Indicus belonged to the now-extinct **Madtsoiidae snake family** but represents a unique lineage from India.
- The researchers found 27 pieces of a well-preserved vertebral column of the snake at the **Panandhro Lignite Mine in Kutch.**
- The discovery could improve understanding of how the **madtsoiid species** evolved in different climates and the **factors that contributed to large body sizes.**
- **Much like present-day pythons and anacondas,** Vasuki Indicus killed its prey by suffocation.
- The name **Vasuki refers to the mythical snake** often depicted around the neck of the Hindu god Shiva.



Kerala Regional News

<p>K-Smart</p>	<p>Why in news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • K-Smart is a one-stop e-governance platform developed by the Information Kerala Mission (IKM) that integrates all services offered by local self-government institutions. <p>About K-Smart:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • K-SMART, which stands for Kerala Solution for Managing Administrative Reformation and Transformation, is an advanced e-governance platform launched by the Kerala state government. • Developed by the Information Kerala Mission for the Local Self-Government Department, this platform was officially launched on January 1, 2024. • It represents a significant upgrade from the Integrated Local Governance Management System (ILGMS) previously used in grama panchayats across the state (Information Kerala Mission). • K-SMART integrates various service delivery options onto a single web and mobile application, making government services like issuing birth, death, and marriage certificates, property tax, building permits, and many more accessible online without the need for physical visits to government offices.
<p>Kerala State Human Rights Commission</p>	<p>Why in news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Kerala State Human Rights Commission is currently without a clear leader due to Justice S Manikumar's refusal to assume the role of Chairman. • The government appointed K Baijunath as the acting chairman, only for the position to become vacant again upon his retirement. <p>About State Human Rights Commission:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The State Human Rights Commission is a multi-member body consisting of a chairperson and two members. • The chairperson should be a retired Chief Justice or a Judge of a High Court and members should be a



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	<p>serving or retired judge of a High Court or a District Judge in the state with a minimum of seven years experience as District Judge and a person having knowledge or practical experience with respect to human rights.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The chairperson and members are appointed by the Governor on the recommendations of a committee consisting of the chief minister as its head, the speaker of the Legislative Assembly, the state home minister and the leader of the opposition in the Legislative Assembly. • In the case of a state having Legislative Council, the chairman of the Council and the leader of the opposition in the Council would also be the members of the committee. • Further, a sitting judge of a High Court or a sitting District Judge can be appointed only after consultation with the Chief Justice of the High Court of the concerned state.
<p>Samagra Shiksha, Kerala (SSK)</p>	<p>Why in news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The summer reading programme 'Malayala Madhuram' has been rolled out by the Samagra Shiksha, Kerala (SSK) under the World Bank-aided STARS project. • The SSK had implemented Sachithra (illustrated notebook), Samyuktha diary, and Rachanotsavam in schools to improve students' command of the Malayalam language. <p>About Samagra Shiksha, Kerala (SSK):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Samagra Shiksha Kerala (SSK) is an integrated program for school education in the Indian state of Kerala. • It is part of the broader national initiative, Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan, aimed at improving the quality of education from pre-school to higher secondary levels by ensuring inclusive and equitable education. • The primary focus of SSK is to provide holistic education that covers academic, vocational, and social dimensions, ensuring all children have access to education without discrimination.



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The program integrates support for teacher training, infrastructure development, learning materials, and the inclusion of special needs students.
<p>Thrissur Pooram</p>	<p>Why in news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The fireworks display at the famous Thrissur Pooram festival was delayed for several hours due to a protest. <p>About Thrissur Pooram:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thrissur Pooram is a magnificent and colorful temple festival held in the city of Thrissur in Kerala. It is one of the most significant and largest gatherings of its kind in Asia, celebrated annually at the Vadakkunnathan Temple. The festival usually takes place in April or May, and its date is determined by the Malayalam calendar. The festival is famous for its grand procession of caparisoned elephants, dazzling fireworks, and the ensemble of traditional instruments such as chenda, edakka, and elathalam.
<p>Man-animal conflict in Kerala</p>	<p>Why in news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Kerala government has declared man-animal conflict as a state-specific disaster. This decision was taken due to recurring incidents of loss of lives in human settlements due to attacks by wild animals. <p>Key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The responsibility to manage man-animal conflict now shifts to the state disaster management authority. The authority can take quicker and more decisive action. The Chief Minister is the ex officio chairman of the body at the state level. The district collector heads the district disaster management authority. Once an issue is declared a state-specific disaster, the disaster management authority can take quick decisions and actions overriding all other norms. Actions can override other norms, including those under the , 1972. As per section 71 of the Disaster Management Act, no court (except the Supreme Court or a High Court) shall have jurisdiction to entertain any suit or



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proceeding in respect of anything done by relevant authorities in pursuance of any power conferred by this Act.

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