



06 May 2024

National and International News

<p><b>Integrated Pensioners' Portal</b></p>	<p><b>Why in news?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Centre has started an <b>Integrated Pensioners' Portal</b> in collaboration with <b>Bank of India</b>.</li> <li>• The <b>portal</b> combines the <b>pension processing</b> and <b>payment services</b> of <b>five banks</b> into a <b>single window</b>.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The platform has been <b>launched to digitalise pension services</b> and <b>enhance the welfare of pensioners</b>.</li> <li>• <b>Retirees can access:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Monthly pension slips,</li> <li>○ Check the status of life certificates,</li> <li>○ Submit Form 16, and</li> <li>○ View statements of arrears paid.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The <b>pension portals</b> of <b>SBI, Bank of Baroda, Punjab National Bank, and Canara Bank</b> have also been <b>integrated with the Bhavishya portal</b>.</li> <li>• The portal is <b>designed to ensure complete digitisation of the pension processing and payment system</b>.</li> <li>• The portal's <b>primary objective</b> is to <b>achieve transparency and efficiency in pension-related services</b>.</li> <li>• The <b>portal has a Bhavishya platform</b> and <b>CPENGRAMS</b>, an online complaint redressal system.</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Atlas V rocket and Starliner</b></p>	<p><b>Why in news?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An <b>Atlas V rocket</b> is set to <b>launch with two veteran astronauts, Barry Wilmore and Sunita Williams.</b></li> <li>• They will be inside a crew capsule called <b>Starliner, built by Boeing.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Key points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is the <b>third test flight of the Starliner</b> and the <b>first with astronauts on board.</b></li> <li>• The astronauts are <b>destined for the International Space Station (ISS) in low-earth orbit.</b></li> <li>• <b>If successful, the U.S. will have two spacecraft capable of launching astronauts to space for the first time in its history.</b></li> <li>• The <b>Starliner is a spacecraft that transports astronauts in space.</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Goods &amp; Services Tax Appellate Tribunal (GSTAT)</b></p>	<p><b>Why in news?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>Goods &amp; Services Tax Appellate Tribunal (GSTAT)</b> has been initiated by the Centre with the <b>appointment of retired Justice Sanjaya Kumar Mishra as its President.</b></li> <li>• The <b>tribunal aims to help businesses resolve various disputes efficiently.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Key points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Justice Mishra, <b>former Chief Justice of the High Court of Jharkhand,</b> will hold the <b>post for a period of 4 years</b> or until he <b>attains the age of 70 years,</b> whichever is earlier.</li> <li>• The <b>Centre plans to set up 31 GSTAT benches</b> across the country, with <b>one Principal Bench in Delhi.</b></li> <li>• <b>Uttar Pradesh will have the highest number of benches (three)</b> among all states. Other larger states will have two benches each.</li> <li>• The <b>Principal Bench will handle inter-State disputes,</b> while <b>Benches in States will handle all other issues,</b> including <b>rates.</b></li> <li>• GST Tribunals are envisioned as <b>specialised bodies to handle disputes related to GST,</b> providing a <b>timely and efficient resolution mechanism.</b></li> </ul>



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<p><b>Artificial General Intelligence (AGI)</b></p>	<p><b>Why in news?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Sam Altman, CEO of OpenAI, has committed to investing billions of dollars in the development of Artificial General Intelligence (AGI).</b></li> </ul> <p><b>About AGI:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Artificial General Intelligence (AGI) refers to a type of artificial intelligence that can understand, learn, and apply knowledge across a wide range of tasks, much like a human.</b></li> <li>• <b>It integrates cognitive abilities like reasoning, problem-solving, planning, and learning.</b></li> <li>• <b>Unlike narrow AI, which is designed for specific tasks (e.g., facial recognition, internet searches), AGI can generalize its intelligence across unfamiliar tasks.</b></li> <li>• <b>AGI adapts to new environments and tasks without needing additional programming.</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>International Election Visitors' Programme (IEVP)</b></p>	<p><b>Why in news?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>75 delegates from 23 countries are in India to observe the Indian General Elections as part of the International Election Visitors' Programme (IEVP).</b></li> <li>• <b>The event was inaugurated in New Delhi by CEC Shri Rajiv Kumar and ECs Shri Gyanesh Kumar and Sukhbir Singh Sandhu.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>About IEVP:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The International Election Visitors' Programme (IEVP) is a flagship program of the Election Commission of India for international cooperation and engagement with the Election Management Bodies (EMBs) of other countries and International Organizations.</b></li> <li>• <b>It provides participants with a broad picture of the Indian election process, new initiatives in voter facilitation, the transparency and accessibility of the electoral system.</b></li> </ul>



Kerala Regional News

<p><b>Kanthallur Tourism Fest</b></p>	<p><b>Why in news?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Kanthallur</b>, a village that <b>won the gold award for Best Tourism Village</b>, is planning a tourism fest.</li> <li>● The fest will be held from May 7 to 12 at <b>Payas Nagar in Idukki</b>.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The fest <b>aims to explore Kanthallur’s tourism potential and attract more tourists</b>.</li> <li>● <b>The fest is being organized in association with several entities:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Kanthallur panchayat</li> <li>○ Homestay and resorts association</li> <li>○ Drivers union</li> <li>○ Forests and Wildlife department</li> <li>○ Merchants associations</li> <li>○ Tribal villages under the panchayat.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● The <b>district industries centre</b> will <b>conduct a food processing and marketing expo</b> called ‘<b>Kanthallur Kanavu</b>’ at the fest venue.</li> <li>● In September 2023, <b>Kanthallur village</b>, under <b>Devikulam taluk</b>, had bagged the <b>gold award from the Government of India</b> in the <b>best rural tourism projects category</b>.</li> <li>● <b>Kanthallur is the only place in the State where apples are cultivated commercially</b>, and the <b>orchards</b> are also a <b>major attraction for tourists</b>.</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Coastal Greening Programme</b></p>	<p><b>Why in news?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coastal greening programme to take off in Kerala soon.</li> </ul> <p><b>About Coastal Greening Programme:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The <b>Coastal Greening Programme</b> aims to <b>strengthen the green cover along the coast by planting mangroves.</b></li> <li>It will be <b>implemented in 33 panchayats</b> along the coast <b>between Ernakulam and Thiruvananthapuram districts,</b> including <b>Alappuzha and Kollam.</b></li> <li>The programme will <b>cover a distance of 59 km along the coast.</b></li> <li>About <b>14 acres</b> will come under the greening programme.</li> <li>The programme will be <b>overseen by Haritha Keralam Mission,</b> with the <b>support of Indian Railways.</b></li> <li>The <b>Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme</b> will be <b>utilised to maintain the mangrove saplings for three years.</b></li> <li><b>Each panchayat</b> will decide on the saplings to be planted.</li> <li>The <b>Social Forestry</b> division of the Forest department will <b>supply the saplings</b> for the programme.</li> <li>The mission <b>also plans to create awareness among the people</b> about the <b>importance of mangrove cover to prevent sea erosion</b> and to <b>help breeding of fish species in the backwaters.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Think:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Know about Haritha Keralam Mission.</li> </ul>
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<p>Campaign on climate change to create awareness among fishers</p>	<p><b>Why in news?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) has launched a campaign to create awareness about climate change among fishing communities.</li> <li>• This initiative is part of the National Innovation in Climate Resilient Agriculture (NICRA) project.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The campaign was conducted in two major fishing villages in Ernakulam district—Kuzhippilly and Chellanam.</li> <li>• Scientists explained the science behind climate change, its effects on fisheries, and the adaptation strategies.</li> <li>• They highlighted that increasing sea surface temperature results in migration of fish stock to cooler waters, affecting the fish catch.</li> <li>• Rising temperature is causing a decline in dissolved oxygen levels in inland water bodies, leading to increased fish kills.</li> <li>• CMFRI distributed ice boxes to the fisherwomen in Chellanam to address the issue of reducing the shelf life of locally harvested fish due to increasing temperature.</li> <li>• They were also provided with gillnets, cast nets, pots, and seabass fish seeds during the programme.</li> </ul>
<p>P. Govindan Kutty</p>	<p><b>Why in news?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• G.K. Pallath, also known as P. Govindan Kutty, was a renowned lyricist in the film and theatre fields.</li> <li>• He passed away at the age of 85.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• His first song, “Rakthathirakal Neenthi Varum,” was sung by K.S. George and Sulochana at a communist plenum in 1958.</li> <li>• He entered the Malayalam film industry as a lyricist with the hit song “Kattu Vannu Ninte Kamukan Vannu” in 1978 in the film Padasaram.</li> <li>• He wrote songs for films including Chora Chuvanna Chora, Chakara, Kattuthee, Valkannadi, and Noolpalam.</li> <li>• He showed an interest in literature since his childhood.</li> </ul>



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<p><b>Jose Kattookaran</b></p>	<p><b>Why in news?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thrissur's first Mayor Jose Kattookaran passes away.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jose Kattookaran was a senior <b>Congress leader</b> and the <b>first Mayor of Thrissur Corporation</b>.</li> <li>• He was <b>district secretary of the Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC)</b>.</li> <li>• When <b>Thrissur municipality was upgraded to corporation</b>, he became the <b>first Mayor from 2000 to 2004</b>.</li> <li>• He functioned as the <b>general secretary of the District Congress Committee</b> for a long period.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS)</b></p>	<p><b>Why in news?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS)</b> has issued a <b>red alert along the Kerala and south Tamil Nadu coast</b> due to <b>swell waves</b>.</li> <li>• The <b>Kerala State Disaster Management Authority</b> has directed people to move away from beaches.</li> </ul> <p><b>About INCOIS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• INCOIS was established in <b>1999</b>.</li> <li>• It is an <b>autonomous organization</b> under the <b>Ministry of Earth Sciences</b>.</li> <li>• The <b>primary purpose of INCOIS is to provide the best possible ocean information and advisory services to society, industry, government agencies, and the scientific community</b> through sustained ocean observations and constant improvements through systematic and focused research.</li> <li>• The headquarters of INCOIS is located in <b>Hyderabad, Telangana</b>.</li> </ul>



## Daily Current Affairs Encyclopedia

### Project Bhoomika

#### Why in news?

- Architect N S Abhayakumar won the **Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO) design award** in the category of **cost-effective rural/urban housing deploying innovative/emerging & disaster-resistant technology**.
- The award was for **Project Bhoomika**, a **flood-relief housing initiative** where 10 houses were built for people in Cheruthana village of Alappuzha who lost their houses in the **2018 floods**.

#### Key points:

- The **design scheme of the project** was based on a **cost-effective and disaster-resistant technology**.
- A unique aspect of Project Bhoomika was the **partial inclusion of its beneficiaries in the design process**, allowing them to choose the design without affecting the cost.
- The **project involved young students of architecture and civil engineering** in the implementation of a socially relevant human settlement project.
- Considering the topography of the region, the **houses were conceived in such a way that different parts could be pre-fabricated and transported by boat and then erected at the site**.

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