

National and International Weekly Current Affairs 22 to 28 January 2024

National News

### Ayodhya Ram Mandir Pran Pratishtha Ceremony

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to preside over the '**pran-pratishtha**' ceremony at the Ram Mandir in Ayodhya, marking the consecration of the 51-inch idol of Ram Lalla.
- Crafted by sculptor **Arun Yogiraj**, the idol depicts a five-year-old Lord Ram

#### Important details

- Temple Name- Shri Ram Mandir (popularly known as Ram Mandir)
- Location- Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh, India
- Dedication- Lord Shri Rama
- Significance- Built at Ram Janmabhoomi, birthplace of Lord Shri Rama
- **Construction Style- Indian Nagar Style**
- **Architect- Chandrakant B. Sompura (CBS)**
- Construction Company- Larsen and Toubro (L&T)
- Project Management Company- Tata Consulting Engineers Limited (TCEL)

#### Ayodhya Ram Mandir History From 1528-2024

##### Period Event

**16th Century-**The temple was attacked and destroyed by Babur.

**1767-** The earliest record of the mosque in Descriptio Indiae.

**1853-** The first instance of religious violence was documented.

**1858-** British administration prohibits Hindu rituals.

**1949-** Murtis of Rama and Sita were installed inside Babri Masjid.

**1950-** The state took control of the mosque; Hindus allowed worship.

**1980s-** Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) launches movement for a temple.

**1989-** VHP leaders conduct Shilanyas, laying the foundation adjacent to the disputed site.

**1992-** Demolition of the mosque by VHP and BJP rally; inter-communal violence ensues.

**2005-** Terrorist attack on makeshift Ram temple; attackers killed.

**2019-** Supreme Court's verdict on Ayodhya dispute; land handed to Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra trust.

**2020-** Government approves plan for temple construction; land allocated for a new mosque in Dhannipur village

#### Ram Mandir Murti

- The Statue of Rama is a planned monument in Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh, India. It will be **181 meters (594 ft) tall, and 251 meters (823 ft) tall including the plinth and umbrella.**
- The idol of Ramlala, which depicts Lord Ram as a five-year-old child, was revealed days before the consecration ceremony on Monday. The idol was made by the famous sculptor Arun Yogiraj from Karnataka. The new idol will be called **Achal Murti**, while the old idol will be called **Utsav Murti**

#### Indigenous Mobile Hospital (BHISHM) Deployed in Ayodhya

- **Two Arogya Maitri Disaster Management Cube-BHISHM, revolutionary mobile hospitals** equipped with cutting-edge technology, have been deployed in **Ayodhya** to bolster medical readiness.
- This cube is a part of the broader initiative named "**Project BHISHM**" – **Bharat Health Initiative for Sahyog, Hita and Maitri, is tailored to treat up to 200 casualties**, emphasizing rapid response and comprehensive care.
- The whole unit contains **72 easily transportable components** that can be conveniently carried by hand, cycle, or even drone, providing unmatched flexibility.
- In the face of mass casualty incidents (MCIs), where requirements range from basic aid to advanced medical and surgical care, the Aid Cube stands out with its ability to be deployed within an astonishing **12 minutes**.
- The **state-of-the-art BHISHM software system integrated into a provided tablet** allows operators to locate items quickly, monitor their usage and expiry, and ensure readiness for subsequent deployments.

#### T.N. Cabinet approves new policy aimed at 'holistic development of women

- The Tamil Nadu Cabinet approved the **State's New Policy for Women**

- The policy is aimed at holistic development of women, and focused on empowering them through education, economic independence and power sharing
- A State-level committee headed by Chief Secretaries and district-level committees headed by Collectors will be constituted to monitor the implementation of the policy.
- The State government has been implementing many women empowerment schemes such as **Vidiyal Payanam, Kalaignar Magalir Urimai Thogai, and construction of working women's hostel** in many districts.

### Vaibhav' Fellows to build long-term research synergy

The **Department of Science and Technology (DST)** announced the first batch of Fellows of the Vaibhav scheme meant to attract Indian-origin scientists based abroad for short-term collaboration.

#### About Vaibhav

- The fellowship offers Non-Resident Indian (NRI) researchers an opportunity to work for a minimum of one month to a maximum of two months a year with a research institution or an academic institution in India.
- **Duration:** Three years with the government offering the researchers an amount of up to Rs 37 lakh for the entire period.
- **Aim:** Improving the research ecosystem of India's Higher Educational Institutions by facilitating academic and research collaborations between Indian Institutions and the best institutions in the world.

### French President to attend 'shobha yatra' in Jaipur

- A 'shobha yatra', or public procession, in Jaipur is expected to be the high point of **French President Emmanuel Macron's visit to the pink city.**
- Jaipur has been chosen by the Indian hosts as the first stopover for the French President
- He will be the chief guest at the Republic Day parade in New Delhi.

### Centre releases three-drug regimen for treating leprosy

- The Union government has approved a new treatment regimen for leprosy, aiming at stopping its transmission at the **sub-national level by 2027.**
- The WHO says leprosy is a chronic infectious disease caused by **Mycobacterium leprae.**
- The bacteria are transmitted via droplets from the nose and mouth during close and frequent contact with untreated cases.
- Leprosy, reported from all the six WHO regions, is curable with multi-drug therapy (MDT).
- The WHO's recommended treatment regimen consists of three drugs — **dapsone, rifampicin and clofazimine.** The combination is referred to as MDT. The duration of treatment is **six months for PB and 12 months for MB cases.** MDT kills the pathogen and cures the infection.
- The majority of new cases detected are from Southeast Asia.

### Union govt. makes it clear that Aadhaar card no proof of citizenship, birth date

- Aadhaar cards and PDF versions emphasize they are "**proof of identity, not of citizenship or date of birth.**"
- The inclusion of explicit disclaimers signals caution to government departments and organizations against using Aadhaar for citizenship or date of birth verification.

#### Historical Context:

- The invalidity of Aadhaar for determining date of birth and citizenship has been established since 2018.
- A 2018 memorandum clarified that Aadhaar is not a proof of date of birth per se, as it relies on a different document provided by applicants.
- A Bombay High Court judgment in the previous year reinforced this stance, cited in a December 2023 circular by UIDAI.

#### Key Points:

##### Aadhaar and Citizenship:

- Aadhaar has never served as **proof of citizenship**, as foreign nationals residing in India for **180 days** are also eligible to obtain it.

- Government departments, despite this, have accepted Aadhaar for purposes typically reserved for citizens or adults.

#### EPFO's Decision:

- Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) has **stopped accepting Aadhaar as proof of date of birth.**
- EPFO circular issued on January 16 removes Aadhaar from the list of acceptable documents for proving date of birth.

#### Recent Warning Update:

- The warning initially only mentioned Aadhaar not being a proof of citizenship last year but now clarifies that it is not a proof of date of birth either.
- The warning is now visibly imprinted on all Aadhaar cards and digital copies issued to Indian residents.

### Maharashtra State News

#### Ayodhya's Ram temple is being built in Nagara Style

- The Ram temple in Ayodhya have been designed by Chandrakant Sompura and his son Ashish
- The temple design complex is in the Nagara style of temple architecture.

#### About:

- The Nagara style of temple architecture emerged some time in the fifth century CE, during the late Gupta period, in northern India.
- Some important features of Nagara Style Architecture are:

#### Shikhara:

- The crowning glory of Nagara temples is the shikhara, a curvilinear tower that tapers upwards, symbolizing the ascent towards the divine.
- Its shape can vary depending on the sub-style, ranging from the beehive-like Rekha to the segmented Bhumija

#### Amalaka and Kalasha:

- Atop the shikhara sits the amalaka, a fluted disc representing the sun. It's crowned by the kalasha, a pot symbolizing prosperity and the containment of the sacred essence within the temple

#### Mandapa:

- The mandapa serves as a gathering space for devotees, often featuring intricately carved pillars and ceilings. It can be enclosed or open-air, depending on the temple's layout.

#### Garbhagriha:

- The innermost sanctum of the temple, the garbhagriha houses the main deity. It's typically the most sacred space, often dimly lit and adorned with religious iconography.

#### Army's lone blind officer gets PMO invite for Republic Day function

- Lt Col Dwarakesh, the Indian Army's sole blind active-duty officer gets PMO invite for Republic Day function
- He is currently posted at the Station Headquarters in Pune's Khadki.
- He also won a shooting national medal and climbed the Siachen Glacier.
- He along with another civilian woman are the only two blind para shooters in the country.
- They have imported special equipment from Switzerland to support their shooting endeavors.

#### Maha govt joins Shivaji Maharaj-era icons' heirs for conservation project

- The MH govt has enlisted the expertise of nine descendants of Chhatrapati Shivaji era Maratha Chieftains and warriors along with other Maratha sardars closely associated with the warrior king.
- This collaboration with descendants of Shivaji Maharaj-era icons for a historical conservation project is a promising initiative with far-reaching implications.
- This unique partnership offers solutions and options that go beyond the mere restoration of physical structures.

#### 98-year-old master sculptor gives shape to iconic statues

- Ram Vanji Sutar, 98 year old sculptor, has sculpted a 30 ft tall bronze statue of Jatayu
- This statue has pride of place on an elevation, Kuber Tila, at the Ram Janmabhoomi complex in Ayodhya
- He is also working on a 251-meter tall statue of Ram, which will become the tallest in the world.

### Maharashtra Deputy CM Fadnavis to monitor a special aid cell for poor patients

- A new medical cell under state's deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis will work to ensure a bed for poor patients at charitable hospitals run by trusts.
- Maharashtra has over 468 charitable hospitals.
- As per provisions under Bombay Public Trust Act, 1950 and Bombay High Court orders, around 10 percent of the total beds in these hospitals should be kept reserved for poor patients with free treatment
- Also, a 10 percent beds for treatment at concessional rates.
- The total number of beds that can be made available under this is around 11,000.

### Parakram Diwas 2024

- Every January 23rd, India celebrates the birth anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose.
- This year the nation observes the 127th edition of Parakram Diwas 2024.

#### Key Points:

- The Government of India, recognizing the need to honour Netaji's heroic legacy, officially declared January 23 as Parakram Diwas in 2021.
- A highlight of Parakram Diwas 2024 was the digital launch of 'Bharat Parv' by the Prime Minister. This event, showcasing the nation's diversity through Republic Day Tableaux and cultural exhibits, was a vibrant display of India's rich heritage.

### Government clears CIL plan to pump Rs 5,607 crore into 2 thermal power projects

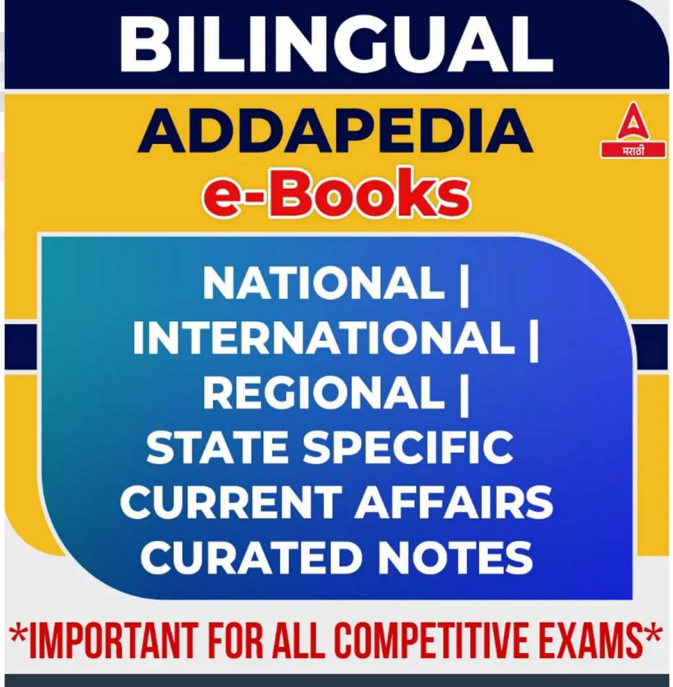
- Cabinet's panel approves equity investment of Rs 5,607 crore by Coal India Ltd subsidiaries in two thermal power projects in Madhya Pradesh and Odisha with a combined capacity of 2,260 MW.
- The investment clearance underlines the government's resolve to expand coal-fired generation capacity and confidence in meeting additional fuel requirement from domestic coal mines

### Maharashtra Final Voter List Released

- The final voter list for the state of Maharashtra has finally been released.
- A total of 90,124,310 voters are eligible to vote in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections.
- The number of voters in the age group of 18 to 29 has increased by 14,00,3798 in the final voter list
- The number of voters in this age group now stands at 1,73,63,865

### 200 tribal youths participate in exchange programme

- Around 200 tribal youths participated in the 15th Tribal Youth Exchange programme at the Yashwantrao Chavan Maharashtra State Open University in Nashik.
- The event was organized by the Nehru Yuva Kendra Nashik under the Union Ministry of Youth programs and sports.
- Union MoS for tribal affairs, Dr Bharati Pawar inaugurated the programme and personally interacted with the participants from the naxal-affected areas in the age group of 18-22 years.



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**NATIONAL | INTERNATIONAL | REGIONAL | STATE SPECIFIC CURRENT AFFAIRS CURATED NOTES**

**\*IMPORTANT FOR ALL COMPETITIVE EXAMS\***

## Unique dance fusion at Kala Ghoda to invoke love for planet earth

- The 24th edition of the multidisciplinary street arts festival, the Kala Ghoda Art Festival (KGAF) commenced in Mumbai on January 20, 2024.
- KGAF featured renowned artists in a mega event for nine days across 25 prestigious venues in the city.
- It also showcased performances from 14 different verticals, including visual arts, dance, music, theater, and literature
- One of the anticipated performances was an innovative fusion of Egyptian bellydance and Indian Kathak dance
- It was a collaboration between Leena Viie, award-winning international bellydance artist, and Aditi Yadav, acclaimed Kathak exponent.

## National Girl Child Day

- National Girl Child Day is observed on 24 January every year to spread awareness about the inequalities faced by a girl child in Indian society.
- The day advocates for equal opportunities in education, healthcare and nutrition
- It also promotes awareness about the rights of a girl child and addresses issues like child marriage, discrimination, and violence against girls.
- The day is in line with various campaigns and programs run by the Indian government including Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao (Save the Girl Child, Educate the Girl Child) scheme in India that was initiated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi 2015.

## International Day of Education

- The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 24 January as International Day of Education
- This day underscores the vital role education plays in building a more peaceful, sustainable, and prosperous future for all.
- It's a call to action to advocate for inclusive, equitable, and quality education for every child, youth, and adult.
- The theme of the 2024 celebrations is 'learning for lasting peace'.

- This theme highlights the importance of education in fostering peace and understanding and strikes a deep chord with contemporary global issues.

## Percentage of young voters rise in state; decline in 40 to 80+ age group

- Maharashtra has seen a net addition of 4,12,416 in the final electoral roll taking the total number of voters in the state to around 9.12 crore.
- While the young voters between the age group of 18 to 29 has shown an increase of around 1%, the voter percentage from age 40 to 80+ has shown a decrease of 3 per cent when compared to the draft electoral roll.

## 'India can greatly reduce CAR-T cell therapy cost'

- India now has a revolutionary weapon in its arsenal in its fight against cancer.
- The Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) has approved the CAR-T cell therapy, offering new hope to countless patients battling the deadly disease.
- This cutting-edge treatment, which is already saving lives globally, could become affordable for the Indian population
- This highly personalized treatment involves harnessing the power of a patient's immune system, genetically modifying the T cells to seek and destroy cancer cells with deadly precision

## SII enters collaboration to make affordable vaccines

- City-based Serum Institute of India Pvt Ltd (SII) and Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) have collaborated to boost vaccine production efforts in global south regions.
- While CEPI works to develop new vaccines against known or novel infectious diseases within three months of a pandemic threat being recognised, the mass production capacity at SII would boost the efforts to end any future pandemics.

## National Voters' Day

- The **National Voters' Day** is celebrated every year in India on **January 25** to encourage the country's voters to participate in the electoral process.
- It not only encourages the youth to participate in the electoral process but also focuses on the fact that the right to vote is a basic right.
- This day also marks the **foundation day of the Election Commission of India, i.e. 25th January 1950.**
- This year, it is the **14th edition** which is being celebrated.
- **Theme 2024 - 'Nothing Like Voting, I Vote For sure'**

### Did you Know?

- The **first-ever National Voters' Day** was celebrated on **January 25, 2011**

## 27% population in Maharashtra affected by tobacco menace

- **Maharashtra grapples with a staggering 27 per cent** of its population affected by the **adverse effects of tobacco consumption.**
- In view of this, an **innovative initiative has emerged, positioning teachers as key influencers** in spearheading tobacco control efforts within schools.
- The **Healis Sekhsaria Institute for Public Health** in Navi Mumbai, in collaboration with the **Harvard T H Chan School of Public Health (HSPH)/Dana Farber Cancer Institute (DFCI)** in the USA, joined forces with the **Bihar Department of Education (DOE)** to develop and test the ground breaking **Tobacco-Free Teachers, Tobacco-Free Society (TFT-TFS)** programme.

### Did you Know?

- **Tobacco-related deaths claim the lives of 3,700 individuals daily in India.**

## MH may sell Samruddhi Eway rights for ₹60-70k cr

- In a bid to unlock massive funds for infrastructure development, the **Maharashtra government is considering the sale of rights to the ambitious Samruddhi Expressway.**
- Estimates peg the **potential deal at a staggering ₹60-70,000 crore**

- It thus makes it **India's one of biggest infrastructure monetization projects.**

## New women's policy moots quota, discounts, financial aid

- **Maharashtra is set to introduce a new policy for women that includes incentives such as housing quotas, insurance discounts, and tax concessions.**

### Key Points:

- **Quotas:** The policy suggests quotas for women in education, employment, and leadership positions. Proponents argue it's necessary to break down existing barriers, while critics fear it might compromise meritocracy.
- **Discounts:** Proposed initiatives include tax breaks and reduced fees for women-owned businesses and services used by women. Supporters see it as financial encouragement, while opponents raise concerns about potential market distortions.
- **Financial Aid:** Scholarships, grants, and loan schemes aim to address economic barriers faced by women in education and entrepreneurship. This is generally well-received, but questions remain about targeting and long-term sustainability.

## Zero stamp duty, registration charges for home buyers at Mumbai expo

- **CREDAI-MCHI, the apex body of the real estate industry of the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR) is thrilled to announce the 31st edition of India's Largest Property Expo, scheduled to take place in Mumbai from January 26th to 28th, 2024.**
- It offers **zero registration charges and stamp duty for three days**, featuring over 75 developers and expected increased unit sales
- This year, the **Expo propagates the theme "Zero is our Hero,"**
- The **3-day event is to be held at the Jio World Convention Centre**
- The intent is to take advantage of the ongoing demand for residential housing and give a boost to the momentum with the added incentive, that will result in a saving of around 6 per cent for the consumer.

## Republic Day

- India celebrated its 75th Republic Day on January 26, 2024
- This day marks the adoption of the Constitution in 1950.
- Theme 2024: “Viksit Bharat” and “Bharat – Loktantra ki Matraka”
- It translates to: Developed India and Bharat - The Mother of Democracy

### About:

- It marked the transition of the country from a British dominion to a sovereign, socialist, secular, democratic republic.
- The Constitution established the framework for governance, guaranteeing fundamental rights and outlining the duties of citizens.

### Significance of Republic Day:

- Celebration of democracy and self-governance
- Display of national unity and diversity
- Renewal of commitment to nation-building

## Bharat Ratna Award

- The Bharat Ratna Award is the highest civilian honor in India.
- Karpooori Thakur gets Bharat Ratna Award 2024

### About:

- He served as the Chief Minister of Bihar twice.
- He was known for championing the cause of the backward classes.
- He was popularly known as Jan Nayak (people's hero),

### Bharat Ratna Award:

- It was started in 1954.
- It is awarded to those people who work exceptionally for public service, or the highest performance in the field of literature, science, art, or any human endeavor.
- A maximum of three persons can be the recipients of this prestigious award in a single year.

## Padma Awards

- The Padma Awards are some of the highest civilian honors recognizing distinguished service in various fields.

- These awards are conferred by the President of India at ceremonial functions which are held at Rashtrapati Bhawan.
- It was instituted in 1954.
- These awards are announced annually on the eve of Republic Day
- The list comprises 5 Padma Vibhushan, 17 Padma Bhushan and 110 Padma Shri Award

### PADMA VIBHUSHAN (5)

1. Ms. Vyjayanthimala Bali - TN (Art)
2. Ms. Padma Subramaniam - TN ( Art)
3. Shri Konidela Chiranjeevi - AP (Art)
4. Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu - AP (Public Affairs)
5. Shri Bindeshwar Pathak (P) - Bihar ( Social Work)

### PADMA BHUSHAN (17)

- M Fathima Beevi (Posthumous), Hormusji N Cama, Mithun Chakraborty, Sitaram Jindal, Young Liu, Ashwin Balachand Mehta, Satyabrata Mookherjee (Posthumous), Ram Naik, Tejas Madhusudan Patel, Olanchery Rajagopal, Dattatray Ambadas Mayaloo Alias Rajdutt, Togdan Rinpoche (Posthumous), Pyarelal Sharma, Chandreshwar Prasad Thakur, Usha Uthup, Vijaykanth (Posthumous) and Kundan Vyas

### Republic Day Parade Tableaux

- A total of 25 tableaux from 16 states and Union Territories, as well as nine Ministries and Departments participated in the parade of 2024.
- The states and UTs set to be represented in the parade include Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Ladakh, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Meghalaya, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan, Arunachal Pradesh, Haryana, Manipur, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, and Telangana.

### About MH Tabulex:

- Theme: "Bharatiya Lokashathiche Preranasthan: Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj" (The Inspiration of Indian Democracy: Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj)
- It celebrated 350 years of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj's coronation

- The tableau **depicted Rajmata Jijabai giving lessons** in governance and politics to a younger Shivaji.
- Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj carved out his independent kingdom from the Adilshahi Sultanate of Bijapur, which formed the foundation of the Maratha Empire.
- The tableau **depicted Shivaji's Ashtapradhan Mandal**, with some women seen raising their concerns in a court.

## Evolution of Indian Constitution

- The **Indian Constitution, adopted on November 26, 1949, is a testament to the long and arduous journey of India's struggle for self-governance.**
- Its **evolution can be traced back to various influences, including:**
- **Pre-colonial Legal Codes:** Ancient Indian legal systems like Manu Smriti and Arthashastra laid the foundation for principles like justice and rule of law.
- **Colonial Acts and Reforms:** The Government of India Acts (1773-1935) introduced concepts like separation of powers and legislative councils, shaping constitutional development.
- **Independence Movement and Nationalist Ideals:** The Indian National Congress advocated for a democratic and inclusive constitution, drawing inspiration from various global models.

### The Drafting Process:

- **Constituent Assembly (1946-1950):** A diverse body of elected representatives **led by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar** meticulously deliberated and drafted the Constitution over three years.

### Key Influences:

- The **Constitution borrowed features from diverse sources like the British parliamentary system, American federalism, Irish fundamental rights, and French republicanism.**
- **Content and Structure:** The Constitution **comprises 22 parts, 395 articles, and 8 schedules**, outlining the framework for a sovereign, socialist, secular, democratic republic.

### Post-Adoption Amendments:

- The Constitution remains a dynamic document, **undergoing over 106**

**amendments** to adapt to changing social, political, and economic realities.

## International News

### UAE govt. to set up tourism township at hill station in Kerala

- The United Arab Emirates (UAE) government has evinced interest in developing a tourism township at a hill station in Kerala at an altitude of around 3,000 ft above mean sea level.
- The State has identified **Wagamon/Munnar to set up the tourism township**
- Munnar, located around 5,200 ft above mean sea level, is a popular destination for both domestic and foreign tourists.
- Wagamon, located over 3,000 ft above sea level, is an emerging destination and a getaway for those looking to spend time in the lap of nature.

### Turkiye ratifies Sweden's NATO membership

Turkiye's Parliament ratified Sweden's NATO membership after more than a year of delay.

- It has become the **32nd member of the security alliance**

### About NATO

- **Formed in 1949** with the signing of the **Washington Treaty**, NATO is a security alliance of 30 countries from North America and Europe.
- Recently, **Finland joined the alliance as 31st member.**
- NATO's fundamental goal is to safeguard the Allies' freedom and security by political and military means.
- It is a **system of collective defence** where independent member states agree for mutual defence in case of any attack by external party.
- **Article 5 of the Washington Treaty** states that an attack against one Ally is an attack against all.
- This article forms the core of the Alliance, a promise of collective defense.
- **Headquarter - Brussels, Belgium.**

## Agreement news



## U.S. officials to come to India to discuss bilateral ties

Top U.S. diplomats will travel to Delhi to discuss bilateral issues, energy cooperation and possible dates for the Quad Summit with U.S.-Australia-Japan-India leaders

### About QUAD

- The Quad is aimed at promoting **regional security and economic cooperation** in the Indo-Pacific region.
- The four countries share a common interest in **maintaining a free and open Indo-Pacific**, promoting democracy, human rights, and the rule of law, and countering China's expanding influence in the region.
- The Quad has held several meetings at the ministerial and leaders' level to discuss issues such as maritime security, infrastructure development, and supply chain resilience.
- The Quad is seen as a **mechanism for balancing China's influence** in the region, although its members have stressed that it is not a military alliance and is open to other countries who share their values and interests.

## Airbus, Tata to set up India's first private copter assembly line

### Context:

- **Airbus Helicopters and Tata Group** collaborate to establish a Final Assembly Line (FAL) for civil helicopters in India.
- This marks India's first private-sector helicopter assembly facility, with a focus on Airbus' popular H125 single-engine civil helicopter.

### Key Points:

#### Key Details of the Partnership:

- **Tata Advanced Systems Limited**, a Tata Group subsidiary, will join forces with Airbus Helicopters to set up the assembly facility.
- The facility's primary purpose is to manufacture the **H125 helicopter** for the Indian market and export to neighboring countries.
- Airbus and Tata are concurrently working on a **FAL in Vadodara for the C-295 military transport** aircraft, part of a larger contract with the Indian Air Force.
- Airbus specifies that the **FAL in India will handle critical tasks such as integration of**

major components, avionics, and mission systems.

### Awards News

## Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar

- A total of 19 children were given the national children's awards for the year 2024 by the President.
- The '**Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar**' was given to nine boys and 10 girls in six categories, **namely art and culture, bravery, innovation, science and technology, social service and sports.**

### About

- The Central government confers the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar (PMRBP) to children for their exceptional achievements.
- The awards are conferred upon the children in the **age group of 5–18.**

Name	State	Category
Aaditya Vijay Bramhane (posthumous)	Maharashtra	Bravery
Anushka Pathak	Uttar Pradesh	Art & Culture
Arijeet Banerjee	West Bengal	Art & Culture
Armaan Ubhrani	Chhattisgarh	Art & Culture
Hetvi Kantibhai Khimsuriya	Gujarat	Art & Culture
Ishfaq Hamid	Jammu & Kashmir	Art & Culture
Md Hussain	Bihar	Art & Culture
Pendyala Laxmi Priya	Telangana	Art & Culture
Suhani Chauhan	Delhi	Innovation
Aryan Singh	Rajasthan	Science & Technology
Avnish Tiwari	Madhya Pradesh	Social Service
Garima	Haryana	Social Service
Jyotsna Aktar	Tripura	Social Service
Saiyam Mazumder	Assam	Social Service
Aaditya Yadav	Uttar Pradesh	Sports
Charvi A	Karnataka	Sports
Jesicca Neyi Saring	Arunachal Pradesh	Sports
Linthoi Chanambam	Manipur	Sports
R Surya Prasad	Andhra Pradesh	Sports

## Film set in India nominated for best documentary in oscars.

- “To Kill a Tiger”, set in a small Indian village, was nominated for the **Best Documentary feature at the 2024 Academy Awards**.
- A Canadian production, To Kill a Tiger, is directed by Delhi-born Nisha Pahuja, an **Emmy-nominated filmmaker based in Toronto**.
- It had its world premiere at Toronto International Film Festival 2022 where it won the Amplify Voices Award for Best Canadian Feature Film.
- The film follows Ranjit’s battle to find justice for his 13-year-old daughter who was abducted and sexually assaulted by three men.

### Schemes and Committees News

## Pradhanmantri Suryodaya Yojana

- PM Modi announces scheme to **install rooftop solar systems in 10 million homes**
- It has a target of installing rooftop solar on 1 crore houses

### Key points

- The **Pradhanmantri Suryodaya Yojana's main objective** is to **provide electricity to low and middle-income individuals** through solar rooftop installations.
- It also aims to offer additional income for surplus electricity generation.

### Defence News

## India-France defence ties

### Context:

### India-France Defence Industrial Roadmap and Cooperation:

- India and France announce a **"defence industrial road map"** for collaboration in defence production.
- Emphasis on future cooperation in **"co-design and co-development"** of military hardware.

### Key Agreements and Talks:

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi and French President Emmanuel Macron sealed several agreements during talks in Jaipur.

- The agreements aim to bring parity with the **India-U.S. defence production plan finalized last year**.

### Defence-Space Partnership:

- A new agreement for a defence-space partnership was signed, focusing on collaboration in **"space situational awareness."**
- Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on coordinating satellite launches to enhance space cooperation.

### Diverse Collaborations:

- Additional agreements signed on partnerships in energy, digital health, agriculture, and education.
- No significant progress announced on big-ticket government-to-government deals for fighter jets, engines, and submarines.
- **Airbus-TATA Joint Venture:**
  - Despite no progress on major defence deals, a joint venture for local manufacture of civilian helicopters agreed between Airbus and TATA.

### Ranks & Reports News

## Gender equity in education

- The latest **Annual Status of Education Report** shows that while girls and boys from rural India equally aspire to become doctors or engineers, when it comes to choosing **Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) courses**, it is boys who take up STEM courses more than girls.
- Data from one of the largest competency-based sample surveys in school education, **the National Achievement Survey (2017)**, covering over 22 lakh students, shows parity in learning levels between boys and girls in elementary and secondary classes across the country.

## Production of sugar

- Production of sugar from October 1, 2023, to January 15, 2024, stood at 149.52 lakh tonne compared with 157.87 lakh tonne during same period last season.
- The **production is lower this year in Maharashtra, Karnataka and Gujarat**.

### Science and Technology News

## Mpemba effect

- The Mpemba effect is the name given to the **observation that a liquid (typically water) which is initially hot can freeze faster than the same liquid which begins cold, under otherwise similar conditions.**
- There is disagreement about its theoretical basis and the parameters required to produce the effect.
- The Mpemba effect is named after Tanzanian scientist Erasto Bartholomeo Mpemba, who described it in 1963 as a secondary school student.

## NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar (NISAR) Mission

The **NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar (NISAR) Mission**, designed to observe natural processes and changes in earth's complex ecosystems, is on track for an **"early 2024" launch.**

### About

- NISAR is a **Low Earth Orbit (LEO) observatory jointly developed by NASA and ISRO.**
- It is an **SUV-size satellite weighing 2,800 kilograms.**
- It consists of both L-band and S-band synthetic aperture radar (SAR) instruments, which makes it a dual-frequency imaging radar satellite.
- NISAR will be the first satellite mission to use two different radar frequencies (L-band and S-band) to measure changes in our planet's surface.
- SAR is capable of penetrating clouds and can collect data day and night regardless of the weather conditions.
- NASA has provided the **L-band radar, GPS, a high-capacity solid-state recorder** to store data, and a payload data subsystem. ISRO has provided the S-band radar, the GSLV launch system, and spacecraft.
- It also consists of a **large 39-foot stationary antenna reflector made of a gold-plated wire mesh which will be used to focus "the radar signals emitted and received by the upward-facing feed on the instrument structure.**

- It will measure **Earth's changing ecosystems, dynamic surfaces, and ice masses, providing information about biomass, natural hazards, sea level rise, and groundwater.**
- NISAR will observe **Earth's land and ice-covered surfaces globally with 12-day regularity on ascending and descending passes.**

## Cannabis compound that has antibiotic effects

- Scientists at **CSIR-Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine (IIIM), Jammu**, have found that phytocannabinoids, a class of compounds found in the cannabis plant, possess some hitherto unexplored antibiotic properties.
- Cannabis has the potential to make a dent in India's fight against the escalating threat of antibiotic resistance.
- **Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is a major health concern worldwide.** It refers to when bacteria, viruses, fungi, and parasites no longer respond to medicines used to treat them.
- Reports have also flagged the overuse of antibiotics in India, their misuse in animal husbandry, and poor waste disposal for engendering AMR and potentially rendering India the **"AMR capital of the world".**

### Miscellaneous News

## Mosquitofish

Various government and non-governmental organizations in Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, and Punjab have released mosquitofish into local water bodies to address a mosquito menace that locals have complained about.

### About

- It is also known as **mosquito fish**, and is widely used as a biological agent for controlling mosquito larvae.
- It is native to the waters of the **south-eastern United States.**
- It has been a part of mosquito-control strategies for over a century in various parts of the world, including India.

- A single full grown **fish eats about 100 to 300 mosquito larvae per day.**
- Also it has been part of various malaria control strategies in India since 1928, including the **Urban Malaria Scheme.**
- The International Union for Conservation of Nature declared *Gambusia* one of the 100 worst invasive alien species in the world.

### Architectural details of Ayodhya Temple

- The Temple is built over **three 20-foot high floors each with a total of 392 pillars and 44 doors.**
- **Makrana Marble and Pink sandstone, granite stone, and colored Marble** are used in the construction.
- Foundation of the temple is built of a **14-metre-thick layer of roller-compacted concrete.** And a 21-foot-high granite plinth has been placed to protect against ground moisture.
- Iron has not been used anywhere in the construction.
- The Architectural style of the temple is **Nagara style with Sanctum Sanctorum (garbhagriha), Mandaps (halls), and Mandirs.**
- At each corner of the compound will be dedicated to Surya, Bhagwati, Ganesh, Shiv. On the northern and southern arms, temples to Annapurna and Hanuman will be built respectively.
- Temples of Maharshi Valmiki, Vashishtha, Vishwamitra, Agastya, Nishad Raj, Shabri etc have also been proposed.

### Baltic Sea

Russia blames **Kyiv** for attack on gas terminal at Baltic Sea port.

#### About

- It is part of the **North Atlantic Ocean, situated in Northern Europe.**
- It extends northward from the latitude of southern Denmark almost to the Arctic Circle and separates the Scandinavian Peninsula from the rest of continental Europe.
- The Baltic sea connects to the **Atlantic Ocean through the Danish Straits.**
- It is the largest expanse of brackish water in the world. Its water salinity levels are lower than that of the World Oceans due to the inflow

of fresh water from the surrounding land and the sea's shallowness.

- **Surrounding Countries:** Denmark, Germany, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Russia, Finland and Sweden.

### 75th Republic Day

- President Smt Droupadi Murmu to lead the **75th Republic Day celebrations in New Delhi on January 26, 2024.**
- French President **Emmanuel Macron** to be the Chief Guest at the parade.

#### Key Points:

- **Twin themes: 'Viksit Bharat' and 'Bharat - Loktantra ki Matruka'.**

#### Women Empowerment in Parade:

- Over 100 women artists herald the parade with Indian musical instruments.
- Maiden participation of an all-women Tri-Service contingent.
- Women pilots showcased Nari Shakti during the Fly-past.
- Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) contingents consisted of only women personnel.

#### Padma Awards:

- These awards are announced annually on the eve of Republic Day
- 2024 list comprises **5 Padma Vibhushan, 17 Padma Bhushan and 110 Padma Shri Awards.**

#### PADMA VIBHUSHAN (5)

- Ms. Vyjayanthimala Bali - TN (Art)
- Ms. Padma Subramaniam - TN ( Art)
- Shri Konidela Chiranjeevi - AP (Art)
- Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu - AP (Public Affairs)
- Shri Bindeshwar Pathak (P) - Bihar ( Social Work)

#### Gallantry Awards:

- President Smt Droupadi Murmu has approved Gallantry awards to 80 Armed Forces personnel, including 12 posthumous, on the eve of 75th Republic Day.
- They include **Param Vir Chakra** winners Subedar Major (Honorary Captain) Yogendra Singh Yadav (Retd) & Subedar Major Sanjay Kumar (Retd), and **Ashok Chakra** winners Major General CA Pithawalla (Retd), Colonel D Sreeram Kumar & Lt Col Jas Ram Singh (Retd).

#### Do you know?

- The **Param Vir Chakra** is awarded for the most conspicuous act of **bravery and self-sacrifice** in the face of the enemy, while the **Ashok Chakra** is awarded for similar acts of valour and self-sacrifice but, other than, in the face of the enemy.

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