

### Maharashtra State News

#### World Cancer Day

- **World Cancer Day** is observed annually on **February 4th**
- It was initiated on **February 4, 2000**, at the **World Summit Against Cancer for the New Millennium** in Paris.
- It aims to **unite the world** in the fight against cancer.
- **Between 2022 and 2024**, the focus of **World Cancer Day** is to help **“Close the cancer gap.”**
- The **theme** for this year is **“Together, we challenge those in power”**.
- This theme encompasses the global demand for leaders to prioritize and invest in cancer prevention and care and to do more to achieve a just and cancer-free world

#### About:

- Cancer is a complex group of diseases characterized by uncontrolled cell growth that can invade and damage surrounding tissues.
- It often arises from genetic mutations within cells, leading to abnormal proliferation and disruptions in the body's natural regulatory mechanisms.
- While cancer can affect any part of the body, various factors influence individual risk and specific types.

#### Panel for effective implementation of sickle cell disease programme

- The Maharashtra government has established a **committee for the first time to ensure the effective implementation of the Sickle Cell Disease Control Programme.**
- The state government has issued **directives for the formation of committees at the state, district, and taluka levels**
- It also assigns them the critical tasks of investigating, treating, and preventing sickle cell disease.
- This initiative is specifically tailored to **address the healthcare needs of rural, remote, and tribal areas.**

#### Open varsity signs MoUs for training of drone operators

- The **Yashwantrao Chavan Maharashtra Open University (YCMOU)** has signed **Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs)** with **several institutions** to offer **training programs for drone operators.**
- It will be in line with the **National Education Policy 2020** with the aim to provide all possible measures to develop skills of people that will increase their employability.

#### This initiative also aims to:

- Address the growing demand for skilled drone operators in various sectors.
- Provide accessible and affordable drone training to individuals across India.
- Equip trainees with the knowledge and skills to operate drones safely and effectively, complying with regulations.

#### BoM records highest growth in deposit mobilization among PSU banks in Q3

- **Bank of Maharashtra** has recorded the **highest growth rate** in terms of **deposit mobilization** among public sector lenders at a time when most lenders are facing difficulty in achieving double-digit growth.
- Out of 12 **public sector banks**, only **Bank of Maharashtra and State Bank of India** (could log a **double-digit growth** in deposits in the **third quarter** ended December 2023.
- The **Pune-based lender Bank of Maharashtra** reported a **17.89% growth in deposits** followed by **SBI at 12.84%** during the quarter, according to published quarterly numbers of the public sector banks.

#### Olympian Dattu Bhokanal caps comeback with sprint single scull gold

- **Dattu Bhokanal** has won the **men's singles scull gold** in the **National Sprint rowing championships** at the Army Rowing Node.
- He is an Olympian and Asian Games **gold medallist in quadruple scull**, pipped Services rower **Salman Khan by three-tenth of a second**, crossing the finish line in 1

minute 29.5 seconds compared to the latter's 1:29.8, to claim the the title.

### International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation

- The **International Day of Zero Tolerance for female genital mutilation (FGM)** is observed annually on **6 February**.
- This provides an opportunity for all stakeholders involved in **ending FGM to celebrate achievements**, advocate for abandonment of the practice and raise awareness.
- **2024 Theme: Her Voice. Her Future**
- This year marks the 13th anniversary of this international day.
- In 2024, nearly 4.4 million girls - or more than 12,000 each day - are at risk of FGM around the world.

### Mascot of Pench Tiger Reserve

- **Hori, a Malabar pied hornbill**, has been chosen as the **mascot for the Pench Tiger Reserve (PTR)**.
- Known as **Dhanesh in Marathi** and Dhan Chidiya by local tribals, the bird holds cultural significance in the region.
- The PTR management has officially named the mascot "**Hori**".

### Pench Tiger Reserve:

- Maharashtra, being the third largest state in India and a leader in protecting biodiversity, bears **maximum numbers (six) of tiger reserves in India along with Madhya Pradesh**.
- Pench Tiger Reserve situated in the **northern part of eastern Vidarbha** is spread in Ramtek, Parseoni and Saoner tehsil of Nagpur district.
- **It is the 25th tiger reserve of India.**
- The Pench Tiger reserve (PTR) which derives its name from its lifeline - **the River Pench is spread over 741.41 Sq.km of area.**

### Government Initiatives to Combat Air Pollution

- In response to a directive from the Bombay High Court, the BMC introduced a new Android application named "**Mumbai Air**" to address complaints related to air pollution.

- The app's launch was part of the **court's order to establish a website and mobile app for this purpose.**

### Establishment of State-Level Committee

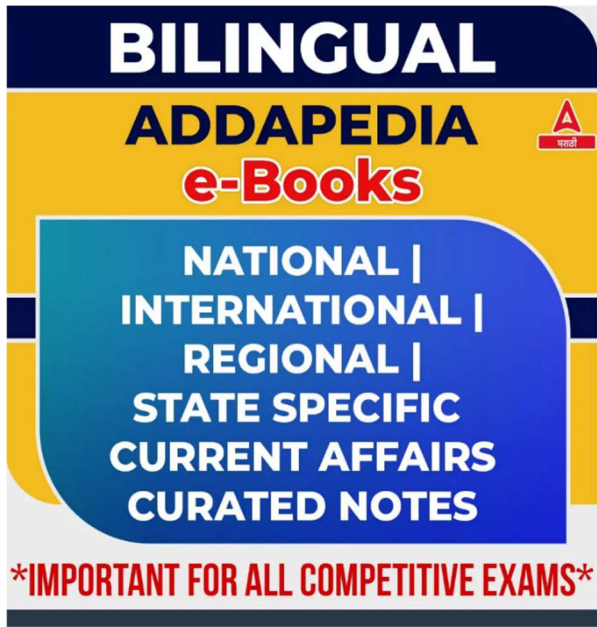
- The state environment department has established a state-level committee aimed at **devising strategies to alleviate the prevalent air pollution issues within the city.**
- This move comes after the Bombay High Court, prompted by various reports and a Public Interest Litigation (PIL), mandated the enactment of legislation akin to the central **Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act to combat the alarming Air Quality Index (AQI) and pollution levels in Mumbai.**

### Thane's New Landmark

- Thane, known as the City of Lakes, is unveiling a new landmark, the **Grand Central Park, spanning 20.5 acres in Kolshet.**
- Chief Minister Eknath Shinde will inaugurate this public park on February 8.
- The Grand Central Park draws inspiration from iconic parks like **New York's Grand Central Park and London's Hyde Park.**
- It's a product of the Thane Municipal Corporation's Suvidha plot development project.
- Boasting over **3,500 tree species**, the park offers diverse amenities for visitors.
- It includes themed sections such as **Mughal, Chinese, Moroccan, and Japanese gardens.**
- **The Grand Central Park stands as Thane's largest developed park among its 80-plus parks.**

### BMC Budget 2024-25

- The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) has unveiled a budget of **₹59,954.75 crore for the financial year 2024-25, marking a notable increase of 10.5% compared to the previous fiscal year.**
- The civic administration presented the budget to municipal commissioner Iqbal Singh Chahal, who was appointed as BMC administrator by the state government after the five-year term of corporators ended in March 2022.



### Major Green Initiative: Maharashtra to Convert 5000 Diesel Buses to LNG

- Maharashtra is undertaking an initiative to convert 5000 of its diesel buses to Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG)
- It marks a significant stride towards environmental sustainability and cleaner air.
- This will reduce diesel vehicle pollution by 10%.
- The conversion will be done in six phases, with a provision for LNG fuel in 90 stations across the state.
- In order to promote green transportation, the industry department has collaborated with Kings Gas Pvt.
- This transformative project is anticipated to yield substantial benefits, including:
  - Reduced Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions
  - Improved Air Quality
  - Enhanced Public Health
  - Economic Advantages
  - Energy Security

### Maharashtra Government Releases Guidelines for Student Internships Across Diverse Sectors

- Maharashtra govt issues guidelines for student internships, encouraging

collaboration with industries, NGOs, and professionals.

- As per the National Education Policy, internships are mandatory for 8-12 credits.
- Each college is required to establish an internship cell, offering diverse opportunities and conducting preparatory programs.
- Students can list preferences, and colleges must select projects aligning with local industry needs.
- Alongside industries, NGOs, financial institutions, and banks, students can also pursue internships under professionals, such as chartered accountants, lawyers, or artists.
- After internships, students present comprehensive reports, promoting knowledge exchange.

### Mumbai region reports 26% animal bites; rabies deaths rise 3-fold in Maharashtra

- The Mumbai region has seen a significant rise in animal bites, with a 26% increase reported in the past five years.
- WHO estimates that rabies kills 55,000 each year, including 20,000 from India.
- In 2023, Maharashtra registered 30 rabies deaths as compared to 10 in 2019.
- Maharashtra witnessed a concerning 3-fold increase in rabies deaths within the same period.

#### About:

- Rabies is a vaccine-preventable viral disease that spreads from animal bites and is 100% fatal except in a couple of cases in the world.

### Agency charge reduced to 1% from 5% for CC roads plan

- Despite concerns expressed by two members, the state cabinet has approved Rs 28,500 crore to construct 6,000km of cement concrete roads through the Hybrid Annuity Model (HAM).
- The state provides 30% of funds while 70% is raised by the concessionaire from the market.
- The concessionaire is Maharashtra State Infrastructure Development Corporation (MSIDC), formed last May under the public works department.

## Green growth can drive Maha to meet \$1tn economy target

- The International Forum for Environment, Sustainability and Technology (iFOREST), a prominent environmental think tank, has called for a just energy transition in Maharashtra to support green growth and green jobs and to achieve a \$1 trillion economy in five years.
- iFOREST recently released a report at an event 'Just Energy Transition in Maharashtra: An Opportunity for Green Growth and Green Jobs'.
- The report, which is the first comprehensive assessment of challenges and opportunities of a green energy transition in the state, covers all major sectors that will be highly or moderately impacted in the years to come.
- It highlights opportunities for green growth and jobs which can be catalyzed through the right govt policy levers, and required private and public investments.

## Pilot vaccination drive against Japanese Encephalitis for children from March

- The state health department, by march, will initiate a pilot vaccination drive against Japanese Encephalitis (JE) for children in four regions of Maharashtra including Pune city, Pimpri-Chinchwad, Raigad and Parbhani.
- The first phase of the JE vaccination for children was carried out a couple of years ago in 16 districts of Maharashtra including Gondia, Gadchiroli, Wardha, Solapur, Bhandara and Dharashiv among others.

### About:

- Japanese encephalitis (JE) is a potentially life-threatening mosquito-borne viral infection primarily affecting the brain.
- The causative agent is the Japanese encephalitis virus (JEV), a member of the flavivirus family, closely related to dengue, yellow fever, and West Nile viruses.
- JEV is transmitted primarily through the bites of infected Culex mosquitoes, particularly active at dusk and dawn in rural areas.

- Pigs and wild birds serve as virus reservoirs, but direct transmission from person to person is not possible.

## Tata Trusts to launch India's first small animal hospital in Mumbai

- Tata Trusts is set to launch India's first state-of-the-art Small Animal Hospital in Mahalaxmi, Mumbai.
- The hospital is a first-of-its-kind and spans over 98,000-square-foot, across 5 floors with a capacity of over 200 beds.
- Inspired by philanthropist and former Tata Group Chairman Ratan Tata's vision for a super speciality hospital for pets, the facility will provide round the clock services through pet-sensitized veterinarians, nurses and technicians trained to deliver quality care with a mission to save lives.
- The hospital will be launched in March 2024.

## CM announces 837cr for Maha project on cybersecurity

- MH CM at the formal inauguration of the Maharashtra State Police Games 2024 (Feb 4 to Feb 10) in Nashik said that the govt has taken up a project worth Rs 837 crore to enhance the cybersecurity mechanism
- It includes command and control centre, technology-assisted investigation, centre of excellence, cloud based data centre, security operation centre for cybersecurity to enable the police to look into every angle and details of crimes to catch the culprits
- The state is committed to increasing the manpower in the police force for which it has recruited 17,000 policemen.
- The govt has also decided to start a loan scheme for construction of houses for police through banks as earlier.

## Art of Living launches Kisan Basket, signs MoU with state to promote natural farming

- Global spiritual organization Art of Living Foundation launched Kisan Basket, a platform that will allow consumers to directly order from farmers.
- The Foundation signed an MoU with the state government to this effect in the



presence of Art of Living founder Sri Sri Ravi Shankar.

- The organization said they are already implementing natural farming over 1.3 million hectares in the state to bring about holistic rural development.
- More than 10,000 tribal farmers have been trained around Sambhaji Nagar district in natural farming and sustainable agriculture, making them self-reliant.

Did you Know?

- The project found mention in PM Modi's Mann Ki Baat show as well.

### Adani's Gondkhairi coal mine secures EC, path clear for pollution board application

- The Adani Group has got the environmental clearance (EC) from the ministry of forest environment and climate change (MOEFCC) for its underground coal mine at Gondkhairi in Kalmeshwar taluka, 20 km from the city.
- This is the first mine of Adani Group in Maharashtra.
- The EC paves the way for the company to apply for consent to operate before the Maharashtra Pollution Control Board (MPCB).

### National Deworming Day

About:

- This coal mine project has been a source of concern due to its potential environmental impact. Coal mining can release harmful pollutants into the air and water, and can also contribute to climate change.
- The project has also been criticized for its potential displacement of local communities.
- National Deworming Day (NDD) is observed annually on February 10th in India
- It aims to make every child in the country "worm-free."
- It was launched in 2015, and the initiative targets children aged 1-19 years, both enrolled and non-enrolled in schools, through platforms like schools and Anganwadi centers.
- Theme of National Deworming Day 2024 is "Eliminate STH: Invest in a healthier future for children"

- It revolves around public health, with a specific focus on preventing and controlling parasitic worm infections, particularly in children

Significance:

Reduces worm infections:

- Soil-transmitted helminths (intestinal worms) are prevalent in India, leading to health issues like anemia, malnutrition, impaired cognitive development, and reduced school attendance. NDD tackles this by mass deworming children.

Improves overall health:

- By eliminating worms, NDD improves children's overall health, nutritional status, and quality of life, contributing to better educational outcomes and future potential.

### World Pulses Day

- In 2018, the United Nations General Assembly declared February 10 as World Pulses Day.
- This day was established to emphasize the importance of pulses in mitigating global food challenges, improving human health, and improving soil health.
- This includes dry edible seeds like lentils, chickpeas, beans, and dry peas.
- The theme for World Pulses Day 2024 is 'Pulses: Nourishing soil and people.'
- This theme emphasizes the positive impact of pulses on both soil health and human nutrition.

Did you Know?

- Burkina Faso proposed the observance of World Pulses Day.
- The Year 2016 was declared as the International Year of Pulses.
- India is the largest producer of pulses in the world.

### Move to eradicate bonded labour in Katkari community

- The Maharashtra State Human Rights Commission has moved to eradicate bonded labour prevalent among members of the Katkari community, which is under the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG) category.

About:


- The **Katkari community is an Adivasi (indigenous) group in Maharashtra**, facing a severe issue of bonded labor, also known as **"vethbigari."**
- This system traps families in **debt-based servitude**, often lasting generations.
- Despite its **illegality since 1976**, various factors contribute to its persistence.

**Challenges:**

- Deep-rooted Social Structures
- Illiteracy and Lack of Awareness
- Livelihood Insecurity
- Inadequate Law Enforcement

**Govt approves new alignment of Shaktipeet Mahamarg**

- **MH State govt approved the alignment of the Maharashtra Shakti Peeth Mahamarg**, the greenfield expressway to connect **Nagpur and Goa**.
- The **802-km-long expressway will pass through 12 districts**.
- Once completed, it will be the **longest expressway in the state**.
- The **Maharashtra State Road Development Corporation (MSRDC)** will execute the project.



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