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# Daily Current Affairs Encyclopedia

## 1 November 2023

## **International & National News**

Access to high-speed Internet	Context Prime Minister hailed telecom operators' progress in spreading 5G coverage in urban centres, saying that over 80% of India's urban population now had access to high-speed technology.  Key points  • Within a year of the 5G launch, about 4 lakh 5G base stations have been built in India • India is exporting about ₹2 lakh crore in electronics manufacturing • India is not only rapidly expanding 5G in India, but is also moving towards becoming a leader in the field of 6G.
7.5% dip in active workforce under MGNREGS, says study	<ul> <li>The number of active workers under the Mahatma         Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee         Scheme (MGNREGS) has dipped by 7.5%, according to a         data analysis for the period April to September 2023 by         LibTech India, a consortium of academics and activists.</li> <li>The workforce has reduced from 15.49 crore in the         previous financial year to 14.33 crore, as per data         available till October 6, 2023.</li> </ul>
Thallium as a murder weapon	In Mahagaon village in Gadchiroli district of Maharashtra, two women allegedly killed five family members by lacing their food with poison in the form of thallium.  About thallium  It is a chemical element with the atomic number 81 and was discovered by Sir William Crookes in 1861.  It is a soft, heavy, inelastic metal.  Thallium is tasteless and odourless and has been used by murderers as a difficult-to-detect poison.  Appearance: A soft, silvery-white metal that tarnishes easily.  Sources:  It is found in trace amounts in the earth's crust.  It is found in several ores. One of these is pyrites, which are used to produce sulfuric acid. Some thallium is obtained from pyrites, but it is mainly obtained as a by-product of copper, zinc and lead refining.

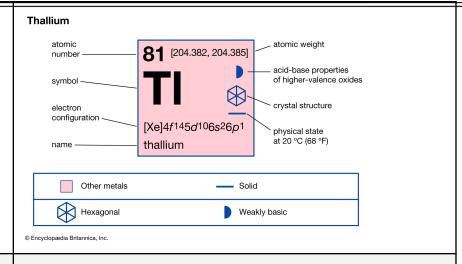




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#### **Uses of Thallium**

- Thallium's utilization is restricted due to its **toxic nature**.
- Thallium sulfate, once a rodent killer, is now banned for household use in many developed nations.
- It finds application in the electronics industry for photoelectric cells.
- Thallium oxide is used to create high-refraction glass and low-melting glass.
- It is also used in the manufacturing of low-temperature thermometers, and imitation jewels.

#### **Health Hazards:**

Thallium can damage the nervous system causing headaches, weakness, and irritability. Repeated exposures can cause tremors, hallucinations, coma and death.

## A new mushroom species named Candolleomyces albosquamosus



#### Context

A new mushroom species named Candolleomyces albosquamosus has been discovered in the Jawaharlal **Nehru Tropical Botanic Garden and Research Institute** (JNTBGRI) at Palode, Thiruvananthapuram.

#### **Key Details about the New Species:**

- Physical Characteristics: The mushroom has a delicate, fragile appearance with a honey-yellow cap.
- Distinctive Feature: It is identified by the presence of white woolly scale-like structures on its cap, leading to the name 'albosquamosus.'
- Size: The mushroom is small, reaching a height of about 58 mm.

### **Genus and Taxonomic Information:**

Genus: Belongs to the genus Candolleomyces.



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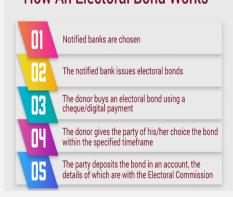
- Previous Understanding: Seven species previously categorized under the genus Psathyrella in India are now recognized as Candolleomyces.
- Global Significance: The discovery is notable because there are only 35 known species in the Candolleomyces genus worldwide.

### Significance:

The discovery adds momentum to the study of **fungal** diversity in the Western Ghats region, emphasizing its ecological importance and uniqueness in the realm of biodiversity.

#### **Electoral Bonds**

## How An Electoral Bond Works



#### Context

A five-judge bench of the Supreme Court is hearing petitions challenging the constitutional validity of the electoral bonds scheme.

### **Key Facts about Electoral Bonds**

- Implemented in 2018 to reduce the influence of black money in politics.
- Provided a legal and transparent mechanism for contributions to political parties.
- Donors' identities remain confidential, reducing the risk of retaliation.

#### Do you know

There is **criticism** regarding Electoral bonds because of,

- **Lack of transparency** regarding the source of funds.
- Concerns about potential misuse, including laundering illicit money.
- Reports indicate a significant portion of political funding comes from electoral bonds.

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