

## Maharashtra Weekly Current Affairs 22 to 27 April 2024

### Maharashtra State News

#### Dand patta

- The 'dand patta' or gauntlet sword, reportedly used by Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj and other Maratha warriors, has been declared as the state weapon of Maharashtra.
- The announcement was made by Chief Minister at a function in the Shivneri fort.

#### About Dand patta:

- The 'dand patta' is a gauntlet that includes a 90-centimetre sharp blade attached to a glove-like metal extension designed to fit the knuckles and back of the hand.
- Over the centuries, the 'dand patta' became a legendary weapon associated with the bravery and martial traditions of Maratha warriors.

#### 'Mangrove Clean-Up drive' on Sarsole Jetty along Navi Mumbai

- The Environment Life Foundation (ELF) started its 'Mangrove Clean-Up drive' on Sarsole Jetty along Navi Mumbai.
- ELF, in coordination with the Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation (NMMC) and the forest department, has collected about 450 tons of trash accumulated around mangroves from Nerul to Panvel.

#### About Mangroves:

- Mangroves are unique ecosystems that thrive in coastal intertidal zones.
- Mangroves are salt-tolerant forest ecosystems found along coastlines, river mouths, and estuaries.
- They are prevalent in tropical and subtropical regions.
- Mangrove trees have adapted to their saline environments with specialized root systems, such as prop roots or pneumatophores, which help in stabilization and oxygen intake.

#### India Meteorological Department (IMD)

- The India Meteorological Department (IMD) issued a heatwave alert.

- The alert is for eight districts in Maharashtra: Mumbai, Thane, Raigad, Palghar, Nashik, Jalgaon, Dhule, and Nandurbar.
- Malegaon has been the hottest zone in Maharashtra so far, with a temperature of 43°C.

#### About India Meteorological Department (IMD):

- The IMD was established in 1875 under the British Raj and is one of the oldest meteorological organizations in the world.
- Its primary function is to provide meteorological observations, weather forecasts, and seismology reports. It is an agency of the Ministry of Earth Sciences of the Government of India.
- The headquarters of IMD is located in New Delhi, India.

#### Professor Shireesh Kedare

- Professor Shireesh Kedare was appointed as the director of the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay.
- He is an Institute Chair Professor from the Energy Science and Engineering department of IIT Bombay.

#### BMC to double property tax for shops without Marathi signboard

- The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) is planning to double the property tax for shops and establishments that have not set up signboards in the Marathi language, effective from May 1.
- The BMC will cancel the license of the illuminated (glow sign) boards that have not adhered to the Devnagri script, effective immediately.

#### Pench Tiger Reserve (PTR)

- The number of tourists visiting the Pench Tiger Reserve (PTR) in Maharashtra has doubled.
- It has doubled from 41,000 during the pre-Covid period (2020-21) to over 1 lakh visitors in 2023-24. This increase coincides with the silver jubilee of the park.

#### About Pench Tiger Reserve (PTR):

- Pench Tiger Reserve is located in the southern part of the Satpura mountain ranges in Maharashtra, stretching into Madhya Pradesh.
- It covers a large area and features a mix of tropical moist, dry deciduous forest, and tropical dry deciduous forest.
- Pench Tiger Reserve gained international fame as the setting for Rudyard Kipling's classic novel "The Jungle Book," which features the fictional Mowgli's adventures.

### Chaitra Yatra of Jyotiba

- The Chaitra Yatra of Jyotiba which is celebrated annually in Kolhapur, Maharashtra.
- The procession of Sasan-Kathis (huge decorated bamboo sticks) commenced in the presence of Kolhapur district collector.

#### About Chaitra Yatra of Jyotiba:

- The deity of the temple, Shri Jyotiba or Kedareshvar, is believed to be an incarnation of Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva.
- According to legend, Vishnu, Brahma, and Shiva came together to incarnate as the deity Jyotiba who eventually destroyed the evil demon Ratnasura.
- Jyotiba also helped Goddess Mahalakshmi, the presiding deity of Kolhapur, in her fight with the demons.
- The original temple was constructed by Navji Saya, and the present temple was constructed by Ranoji Shinde in 1730 AD.

### India's first Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) powered bus

- Maharashtra has launched India's first Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) powered bus.
- The bus will be operated by the Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation (MSRTC).

#### About LNG powered bus:

- MSRTC plans to convert 5000 of its diesel vehicles to LNG alternative fuel vehicles in phases.
- MSRTC has signed an MoU with M/s Kings Gas for the conversion of buses to LNG.

### Chief Minister Vayoshree Yojana

- The Maharashtra government has introduced a new scheme called the 'Chief

### Minister Vayoshree Yojana' for senior citizens.

- The scheme is set to benefit around 15 lakh senior citizens suffering from physical or mental disabilities.

#### Key points:

- Under this scheme, eligible citizens above the age of 65 will receive financial assistance of three thousand rupees.

### Digital certificates initiative in Maharashtra

- Maharashtra is taking a significant step towards digitization by using blockchain technology to issue certificates.
- The Maharashtra State Board of Skill Development has decided to issue blockchain-based certificates to students.
- Around 10 lakh digital certificates will be issued to diploma holders of eight educational years.

#### Key points:

- The state government has partnered with blockchain startup Zupple and its blockchain-based application LegitDoc to issue tamper-proof digital documents.
- This system can help issue and verify digital documents that can be verified from anywhere around the world, within seconds.
- Zupple tied up with the Maharashtra government and started issuing blockchain "caste certificates" to up to 65,000 tribals in Gadchiroli in a bid to stop fraudulent claims on government benefits for the disadvantaged.

### Maharashtra Mangrove Cell

- The Maharashtra Mangrove Cell has commissioned the Maharashtra Remote Sensing Application Centre (MRSAC) to conduct a new satellite-based survey of the mangroves along the state's coastline.
- It aims to understand the spread and destruction of mangroves.

#### Key points:

- The survey will span two years and cover seven coastal districts:
  - Sindhurg,
  - Ratnagiri,
  - Raigad,
  - Thane,
  - Mumbai,

- Mumbai Suburban, and
- Palghar.

#### About Maharashtra Mangrove Cell:

- The Maharashtra Mangrove Cell is a dedicated unit established by the Government of Maharashtra for the protection, conservation, and management of mangroves.
- The Mangrove Cell was created on 5th January 2012.
- It is the first such state-wide unit in the country.
- The Cell is headed by the Chief Conservator of Forests.

#### SVEEP (Systematic Voters' Education & Electoral Participation)

- The Nashik district in Maharashtra, India, has implemented measures to support blind voters in the upcoming 2024 Lok Sabha elections.
- The District Election Office and the Nashik District SVEEP (Systematic Voters' Education & Electoral Participation) Committee have been organizing a series of voter awareness rallies.

#### About SVEEP:

- SVEEP is a program designed by the Election Commission of India aimed at increasing voter education and participation, ensuring that all eligible citizens are informed and motivated to vote during elections.
- It was officially launched in 2009 to address the low voter turnout in Indian elections and to tackle the issues of electoral participation across various demographics.

#### National Association for the Blind, India (NAB):

- To further facilitate the voting process, ballot papers in Braille will be provided by the National Association for the Blind, India (NAB), enabling blind voters to cast their votes on electronic voting machines (EVMs) with ease.
- Braille numbers will also be affixed to the EVMs for tactile identification.

#### Bengal Monitor Lizard Hemipenes and Soft corals

- 781 Bengal Monitor Lizard Hemipenes and 19.6 kg of soft corals were seized in Mumbai.
- The seizure was made by the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI)'s Mumbai zonal unit.

#### Key points:

- The endangered Bengal Monitor Lizards are found in Gujarat, Maharashtra, and Rajasthan.
- The reproductive organ of a male monitor lizard is suspected to be illegally traded as a lucky charm/aphrodisiac by traffickers.
- Soft corals are trafficked for use in the aquarium trade, and some species are used in traditional medicines and for extracting compounds for pharmaceutical potential.

#### Maharashtra becomes first Indian state to buy land in Kashmir

- Maharashtra is set to become the first Indian state to buy land in the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir for the construction of a tourist facility.

#### Key points:

- The facility, named Maharashtra Bhawan, will be constructed in central Kashmir's Budgam.
- This will be the first-ever state Bhawan in the valley.
- Before the abrogation of Article 370, only the permanent residents of Jammu and Kashmir could buy land in the erstwhile state. However, the government could lease lands for up to 99 years to industries and people from outside.

#### Ahmednagar becomes Ahilya Nagar, Maharashtra Cabinet approves name change

- The Maharashtra Cabinet has decided to rename Ahmednagar district as Ahilya Nagar after the 18th-century queen Ahilyabai Holkar.
- The proposal to rename the city was first announced by Maharashtra Chief Minister on the 298th birth anniversary of Ahilyabai Holkar.

- Earlier, the Maharashtra government changed the names of **Aurangabad and Osmanabad to Chatrapati Sambhaji Nagar and Dharashiv, respectively.**

### Eleven heritage sites from Maharashtra on its 'Must See Monuments' list

- The **Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)** has included **eleven heritage sites from Maharashtra** on its **'Must See Monuments' list.**

#### Maharashtra's 'Must See Monuments'

- 1) Ajanta Caves, Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar
- 2) Ancient Buddhist Stupa, Mansar, Nagpur
- 3) Buddha Caves, Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar
- 4) Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus, Mumbai
- 5) Devgiri (Daulatabad) Fort, Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar
- 6) Elephanta Caves, Mumbai
- 7) Verul Caves, Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar
- 8) Fifteen temples at Lonar, Buldhana
- 9) Gavilgad Fort, Chikhaldara, Amravati
- 10) Pandava Caves, Nashik
- 11) Bibi ka Maqbara, Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar

### Maharashtra's largest co-located hybrid initiatives

- **Mahindra** plans to invest ₹1,200 crore in a **150 MW hybrid solar and wind energy project in Maharashtra.**
- The project aims to generate **460 million kWh of clean energy.**
- This initiative marks the **entry of Mahindra Susten into the hybrid renewable energy sector.**
- The **focus** of the project is on **reducing 4,20,000 tonnes of CO2 emissions.**
- The **project** is set to be **one of Maharashtra's largest co-located hybrid initiatives.**

### Renaming of 8 Mumbai Railway Stations

- The **Maharashtra Cabinet** has **approved the renaming of 8 Mumbai Railway Stations.**
  - Curry Road has been renamed to Lalbaug.
  - Sandhurst Road has been renamed to Dongri.

- Marine Lines has been renamed as Mumbadevi.
- Cotton Green has been renamed to Kalachowki.
- Charni Road has been renamed to Girgaon.
- Dockyard Road has been renamed to Mazgaon.
- King Circle has been renamed to Tirthakar Parshivnath.

- The cabinet has also decided to rename **Mumbai Central Station as Nana Jagannath Shankarsheth Station.**
- **A proposal for this has been sent to the Railways Ministry.**

### Pod taxi project

- The **Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority** has **approved the Pod Taxi project in Bandra Kurla Complex (BKC), Mumbai.**
- The approval was chaired by CM.
- The project aims to ease commuting for thousands with a **Personal Rapid Transit (PRT) system.**
- The **route covers 8.8 km** with 38 stations, **connecting BKC, Kurla, and Bandra stations.**
- The project follows the **Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model.**

### Rashmi Shukla

- **Rashmi Shukla** is the **first woman Director General of Police (DGP) of Maharashtra.**
- She is a senior **Indian Police Service (IPS) officer.**
- She has previously **served in central roles,** including as the **Director General of the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB).**
- She has also served as the **additional Director General of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF).**
- **She has been granted an extension till January 3, 2026,** from her initial retirement date in **June 2024.**
- A legal opinion was sought, citing Supreme Court rulings, to ensure a minimum 2-year term for DGP appointment.

Think:

- Know about Prakash singh case

## Ellora Ajanta International Festival 2024

- The **Ellora Ajanta International Festival 2024** is a significant event spanning over 3 days.
- The festival is **organized by the District Collector-Chatrapati Sambhaji Nagar**, in association with the **Directorate of Tourism, Government of Maharashtra**.
- The event **celebrates the art, architecture, and culture of the region**.
- A special focus of the festival is on the iconic **Ellora and Ajanta Caves**, which are recognized as **UNESCO World Heritage Sites**.
- The festival aims to **promote local tourism through the celebration of these cultural landmarks**.

## India's first Dark Sky Park

- **Maharashtra's Pench Tiger Reserve** has made history by becoming **India's first Dark Sky Park**.
- It has **secured the fifth position in Asia**.
- The **International Union for Conservation of Nature** recognizes the night sky as a vital natural, cultural, and historical resource.
- The establishment of 'Dark Sky Parks' is actively promoted by the **International Astronomical Union**.

## Overseas voters in India

- **Maharashtra ranks second in terms of overseas voters**.
- However, **Kerala is far ahead of all other states, including Maharashtra**, in this regard.

### Key points:

- The **right to vote for Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) and Indian citizens** was granted through a **pre-2010 amendment**.
- **Overseas electors can enroll in constituencies** that match their **Indian residential address specified in their passports**.
- Any changes in their overseas residential address, including those due to employment or education alterations, must be updated with the **Electoral Registration Officer (ERO)**.

## Atpadi Conservation Reserve

- A new reserve has been established that links the **Maini Conservation Area with the Maldhok Bird Sanctuary**.
- The Atpadi Conservation Reserve has been **set up to safeguard the habitat of various wildlife species including wolves, deer, foxes, and civets**.
- The reserve is **located in the Atpadi region of Sangli district**.

## BP Technical Solutions India

- **British Petroleum (BP)** has announced the establishment of **BP Technical Solutions India (BP TSI) in Pune, Maharashtra**.
- The aim of this initiative is **to enhance BP's global technical and engineering capabilities**.
- The **BP-owned center will provide high-quality services to both hydrocarbons and new energy businesses worldwide**.
- The center is expected to open in **Q2 2024**.
- **Molyama Kromah** has been appointed as the **Head of BP Technical Solutions India**.

## Light pollution

- The **recent deaths of flamingos in Navi Mumbai** have raised concerns among **environmentalists and local authorities**.
- **Light pollution is suspected to be one of the causes for these deaths**.

### Key points:

- The **bright street lights around the water body could have blinded young flamingos flying into or out of the DPS Lake in Nerul**.

### About Light pollution:

- Light pollution is the **presence of unwanted, inappropriate, or excessive artificial lighting in the environment**. It includes various types of light emissions such as **glare, skyglow, light trespass, and clutter**.
- **Many wildlife species depend on natural light patterns for navigation, foraging, and reproduction. Light pollution can disrupt these patterns, affecting behaviors such as migration and breeding**.

## Maharashtra Cow Service Commission Bill

- The **Maharashtra Cow Service Commission Bill** was tabled in the State Assembly.
- The **bill was announced** by Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis in the state budget.

### Key points:

- The bill aims at **promoting and protecting indigenous cattle breeds**.
- **Composition of the Commission:** The Maharashtra Cow Service Commission will be a **25-member body**. It will comprise members from the **Animal Husbandry and other governmental departments**, as well as members from various **universities and NGOs**.
- **Responsibilities of the Commission:** The commission will be responsible for **safeguarding indigenous cows, bulls, bullocks, and calves**. It will promote rearing and breeding of indigenous cows and handle the registrations and overall supervision of cow shelters.

## Maharashtra, first state to set up department for Divyang

- The **Maharashtra state government** recently approved the formation of a separate government department for the **divyang (differently abled)**.
- This announcement was made on the **International Day of Disabled Persons**.

### Key points:

- **Maharashtra is the first state in India** to set up a separate department for **Divyang (differently-abled)**.
- The department is established to **serve the physically and mentally disabled people in the state, both educationally and professionally**.
- The department seeks to **ensure the welfare of the Divyangs and effectively implement various government schemes targeting them**.

## Electronic Manufacturing Cluster (EMC)

- The **Union Ministry of Electronics and IT** recently approved the greenfield **Electronic Manufacturing Cluster (EMC)** at Pune.

### Key points:

- An **Electronic Manufacturing Cluster (EMC)** is a manufacturing cluster designed to **provide the necessary facilities and amenities for manufacturing electronic products like mobile phones, cables, etc.**
- **Maharashtra's first greenfield EMC project** is to be established in **Ranjangaon, near Pune**.
- The **Central Government's approval** was given to **Maharashtra's State Industrial Agency and Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation (MIDC)**.

## Dahi Handi

- **Dahi Handi** has been given the **status of a game in Maharashtra** and will be considered a **type of adventure sports**.
- **Govindas participating in Dahi Handi** will receive benefits of government schemes, including a **5 percent reservation in government jobs**.
- **Insurance protection** will be provided to Govindas. In case of an accident during Dahi Handi:
- **If a Govinda dies**, an amount of **Rs 10 lakh** will be given to the family members of the concerned Govinda as help.
- **If a Govinda suffers a serious injury**, such as losing both eyes, both legs, both hands, or any two important parts of the body, an amount of **Rs 7.5 lakh** will be given as help from the state government.
- **If a Govinda loses an arm, a leg, or any part of the body in an accident**, an amount of **Rs 5 lakh** will be given as help.