

**Weekly Current Affairs 29<sup>th</sup> January to 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2024 - English****National News****PM Modi Unveils Infrastructure Boost in Bulandshahr, Uttar Pradesh**

In a significant development, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated and laid the foundation stone for projects worth over **Rs 19,100 crores in Bulandshahr, Uttar Pradesh**. The diverse projects spanned crucial sectors such as rail, road, oil and gas, and urban development.

**THDCIL Inaugurates India's Largest Green Hydrogen Pilot Project on 75th Republic Day**

On the 75th Republic Day, **THDC India Limited (THDCIL)**, a prominent Power Sector PSU, proudly unveiled **India's Largest Electrolyser End Fuel Cell-based Green Hydrogen Pilot Project** at its office complex in Rishikesh. The initiative aligns with the "National Green Hydrogen Mission," showcasing THDCIL's commitment to sustainable energy practices.

**Mera Yuva Bharat (MY Bharat) Portal Surpasses 1.45 Crore Youth Registrations in Three Months**

In a monumental achievement, the **Mera Yuva Bharat (MY Bharat) portal** has garnered over 1.45 crore youth registrations within a remarkable three-month period, attesting to its widespread popularity. Launched by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi on October 31, 2023, the platform has swiftly become a crucial driver of youth development and engagement.

**FM Sitharaman Declares Free Cervical Cancer Vaccine For Girls Aged 9-14**

Union Finance Minister **Nirmala Sitharaman**, in her interim budget speech for 2024-25, indicated that the government would actively "promote" vaccination to **combat cervical cancer**. Despite this commitment, the finance minister did not provide specific details regarding the government's plan, leaving uncertainties about its inclusion in the national immunization program.

**International News****Bhutan's Tshering Tobgay Embarks on Second Term as Prime Minister after Fourth Free Election**

Bhutan's liberal leader, **Tshering Tobgay**, from the People's Democratic Party (PDP), has commenced his second term as prime minister, following recent elections in the nation. The formal appointment was marked by King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck presenting Tobgay with a scarf, as announced on the king's official Facebook page. Bhutan, with a population of less than 800,000, has embraced democracy for 15 years and is renowned for its unique Gross National Happiness (GNH) index, measuring factors like recreation and emotional well-being.

**Sultan Ibrahim of Johor state installed as Malaysia's 17th king**

In a historic ceremony, **Sultan Ibrahim of Johor** state has been installed as **Malaysia's 17th king**. This event marks a significant moment in the nation's constitutional monarchy system, where the throne rotates among the rulers of the nine Malay states.

**BRICS Welcomes New Members: Saudi Arabia, Egypt, UAE, Iran, and Ethiopia**

In a significant development on January 1, **Saudi Arabia, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, Iran, and Ethiopia** officially joined the BRICS group, expanding its membership to ten nations. The expansion, initially set to occur during the 15th BRICS summit in August 2023 in Johannesburg, South Africa, aims to enhance the group's influence on the global stage. Argentina, initially invited, opted out in December.

**State News****Odisha Launches LABHA: A 100% State-funded MSP Scheme for Tribal Empowerment**

In a significant move towards the development and empowerment of approximately one crore tribals in Odisha, the state government, led by Chief Minister

Naveen Patnaik, has approved the launch of the 'LABHA' scheme. LABHA, an acronym for **Laghu Bana Jatya Drabya Kraya**, is a 100% state-funded Minimum Support Price (MSP) for Minor Forest Produce (MFP).

**India Nominates 'Maratha Military Landscapes' for UNESCO World Heritage List 2024-25**

**India** has nominated the 'Maratha Military Landscapes' for inclusion in the **UNESCO World Heritage List for the 2024-25 cycle**. This significant move by the Culture Ministry highlights the exceptional fortification and military systems envisioned by the Maratha rulers.

The 'Maratha Military Landscapes of India' comprise twelve components, including **Salher Fort, Shivneri Fort, Lohgad, Khanderi Fort, Raigad, Rajgad, Pratapgad, Suvarnadurg, Panhala Fort, Vijay Durg, Sindhudurg, and Gingee Fort**. These structures, dating back to the **17th and 19th centuries**, span across Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu, showcasing the strategic military prowess of the Maratha rule.

**Champai Soren: The Next Chief Minister of Jharkhand**

In a significant political development, **Champai Soren** has been announced as the **next Chief Minister of Jharkhand**, following the resignation of **Hemant Soren**. This marks a pivotal moment in Jharkhand's political landscape, bringing Champai Soren, a seasoned politician and a key figure in the **Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM)**, to the forefront of the state's governance. This blog post aims to delve into Champai Soren's political journey, his contributions to Jharkhand's development, and what his leadership might mean for the future of the state.

**Tamil Nadu Achieves Record with Highest Number of Ramsar Sites in India**

**Tamil Nadu** has set a new benchmark in environmental conservation and biodiversity protection by securing two more **Ramsar sites**, thus achieving the highest number of such designated areas in the country. The recent addition of the

**Longwood Shola Reserve Forest in The Nilgiris and the Karaivetti Bird Sanctuary in Ariyalur** has propelled the state to the forefront of ecological conservation efforts in India. With these new designations, Tamil Nadu now boasts 16 Ramsar sites, a testament to its rich biodiversity and the state government's commitment to preserving it.

**Assam Cabinet Approves Bill For Tourism Sector Growth**

**Assam**, under the leadership of Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, advances with key decisions. The recent cabinet meeting saw approvals crucial for the state's growth. These include the **Assam Tourism Development and Registration Bill 2024** and the **Mising Autonomous Council Amendment Bill 2024**. Additionally, infrastructure strides are evident with the approval of a significant flyover project in Guwahati.

**Karnataka's Digital Detox Initiative for a Responsible Gaming Environment**

In an era where digital devices have become an extension of our lives, the **Government of Karnataka** has taken a pioneering step towards fostering a healthier digital ecosystem. Recognizing the need to mitigate the adverse **effects of excessive online gaming**, the state has announced a groundbreaking **digital detox initiative** to create a responsible gaming environment. This move not only highlights the government's commitment to public health but also sets a precedent for digital wellbeing.



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## Economy News

Union Budget 2024-25: Nirmala Sitharaman's Focus on Economic Growth

On February 1, 2024, as part of the legislature's budget session, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will deliver the **Union Budget 2024** for the fiscal year 2024–2025. However, due to it being an election year, the budget presented will be a temporary financial plan or a vote on account.

### Government Cuts Import Duty on Phone Components Cut to 10% from 15%

In a strategic move to bolster the **mobile phone manufacturing industry in India**, the Centre has announced a significant reduction in import duties on mobile phone components. The import duty on parts used for mobile phone manufacturing has been slashed to **10% from the earlier 15%**. This decision aligns with India's broader objectives to enhance its role in global supply chains and increase exports.

### India's Core Sector Growth Slumps to 14-Month Low at 3.8% in December 2023

India's core sector output growth plummeted to a **14-month low of 3.8% YoY** in December, as reported by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. This sharp decline from the previous month's 7.9% was attributed to a high base and a slowdown in six constituent sectors. Notably, only fertilizers (5.8%) and cement (1.3%) sectors saw an output acceleration in December.

### GST Collection Soars 10% in January to Record ₹1.72 Lakh Crore, Marking Second-Highest Ever

In a commendable financial feat, the Centre reported a **10.4% surge** in Goods and Services Tax (GST) revenue for January, reaching an impressive **₹1,72,129 crore**. This milestone represents the **second-highest GST collection ever** recorded, with the ₹1.7 lakh crore benchmark surpassed for the third time in the fiscal year 2023–24. The Ministry of Finance disclosed that the robust growth is indicative of a significant year-on-year increase,

showcasing a notable rise from the ₹1,55,922 crore collected in January 2023.

### Union Budget 2024

In the Budget for the fiscal year 2024–25, the Union Government demonstrates a robust commitment to bolstering economic growth through substantial investments in infrastructure development. The total expenditure in the Budget is estimated at **₹47,65,768 crore (₹47.65 Lakh Crore)**, with a significant focus on **capital expenditure, reaching ₹11,11,111 crore (₹11.11 Lakh Crore)**. This reflects a commendable increase of 16.9% in capital expenditure over the Revised Estimates (RE) for 2023–24.

### Budget 2024: Bhutan Leads As Top Indian Aid Recipient

The Interim Budget 2024, unveiled by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, sheds light on **India's foreign aid allocation, with Bhutan emerging as a significant recipient**. In the Financial Year 2024–25, India allocated a substantial portion of its budget to foreign aid, with a notable emphasis on Bhutan. The allocation for Bhutan underscores India's commitment to supporting its neighboring countries' development initiatives.

### Govt Offers 'Bharat' Rice At ₹29/kg In Retail Market

In response to escalating rice prices, the Government of India has unveiled the **'Bharat' brand rice**, aiming to address market volatility and ensure affordability for consumers. The rice will be available in **5- and 10-kg packs at ₹29 per kg** through cooperatives such as Nafed, NCCF, and Kendriya Bhandar.

### Record-Breaking UPI Transactions Hit ₹18.4 Trillion in January: NPCI Data

The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) reports a remarkable milestone in Unified Payment Interface (UPI) transactions for January, reaching a **record ₹18.41 trillion**. This marks a 52% increase in volume and a substantial 42% rise in value compared to the same month in the previous financial year.

**RBI Announces: 97.50% of Rs 2,000 Notes Returned to System**

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) revealed on February 1 that **97.50% of the Rs 2,000 currency notes** in circulation as of May 19, 2023, have been successfully reintegrated into the banking system. This development follows the government's decision to withdraw the high-denomination bills as part of the clean note policy.

**Agreement News**

**India, France Ink Deal On Defence Space Agreement**

Amidst the grandeur of India's Republic Day celebrations, a significant milestone was quietly achieved as **French Defence Minister Sebastien Locornu** and India's National Security Advisor Ajit Doval sealed the **Defence Space Agreement** on January 26. The low-key signing belied the transformative potential of this pact, marking a pivotal moment in Indo-French relations.

**Qatar Secures 15-Year Gas Supply Deal with Bangladesh to Bolster Energy Ties**

In a major stride within the energy sector, **QatarEnergy and Excelerate Energy** have finalized a pivotal 15-year LNG Sale and Purchase Agreement (SPA) with the goal of providing LNG to Bangladesh. Under the SPA, Excelerate will secure up to one million tons per annum (MTPA) of LNG from QatarEnergy. The deliveries, set to commence from January 2026, will be directed to floating storage and regasification units in Bangladesh. The agreement encompasses Excelerate's procurement of 0.85 MTPA of LNG in 2026 and 2027, and one MTPA from 2028 to 2040.

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**Appointment News**

**Sharat Chauhan Appointed As Puducherry's New Chief Secretary**

**Sharat Chauhan**, a seasoned 1994 batch IAS officer of the AGMUT cadre, has been designated as the **new Chief Secretary of Puducherry**. The announcement of his appointment came through an official order issued by the Union Home Ministry on January, 29. With an extensive background in administration, Chauhan is poised to bring fresh perspectives and efficient governance to the union territory.

**Government Appoints Four key Members of the Sixteenth Finance Commission**

The government has taken a significant step in shaping the **Sixteenth Finance Commission (SFC)** by appointing **4-key members**, three of whom are designated as full-time members. The Commission, headed by Shri Arvind Panagariya, former Vice-Chairman of NITI Aayog, was constituted on December 31, 2023.

**President Nominates Shri Satnam Singh Sandhu as Rajya Sabha Member**

In a significant move, the President of India nominated **Shri Satnam Singh Sandhu** as a member of the Rajya Sabha. This decision recognizes Sandhu's remarkable contributions to education, philanthropy, and community development.

**Appointed Members**

1.	<b>Shri. Ajay Narayan Jha</b> , former member, 15th Finance Commission and former Secretary, Expenditure	Full time Member
2.	<b>Smt. Annie George Mathew</b> , former Special Secretary, Expenditure	Full time Member
3.	<b>Dr. Niranjan Rajadhyaksha</b> , Executive Director, Artha Global	Full time Member
4.	<b>Dr. Soumya Kanti Ghosh</b> , Group Chief Economic Advisor, State Bank of India	Part time Member

**Anil Kumar Lahoti Appointed Chairman Of TRAI**

Former Railway Board Chief **Anil Kumar Lahoti** has been appointed as the chairman of the **Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI)** following the vacancy left by PD Vaghela. The appointment, approved by the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT), marks a significant transition in India's telecommunications sector.

**AU Small Finance Bank Appoints HR Khan as Non-Executive Chairman**

AU Small Finance Bank announced the appointment of **Harun Rashid Khan**, former deputy governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), as its Non-Executive Chairman. The appointment, effective January 30, 2024, received approval from the Board of Directors, RBI, and shareholders.

**Jay Shah Secures Historic Third Term as President of the Asian Cricket Council**

The cricketing world witnessed a historic moment on January 31, as **Jay Shah**, the Secretary of the **Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI)**, was unanimously appointed for a third consecutive term as the **President of the Asian Cricket Council (ACC)**. This extension, granted during the ACC Annual General Meeting in Bali, reflects not only Shah's accomplishments but also the success and progress achieved under his dynamic leadership.

**Justice Pradeep Kumar Srivastava Appointed Permanent Judge At Jharkhand High Court**

The Ministry of Law and Justice has officially appointed **Justice Pradeep Kumar Srivastava** as a **permanent judge at the Jharkhand High Court**.

**Shri Pawan Kumar Assumes Charge As Chief Adviser (Cost) In Ministry of Finance**

Consequent upon approval of Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC), **Shri Pawan Kumar**, ICoAS, has assumed charge as **Chief Adviser (Cost)**, Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance, in Level-17 (Apex level) on 01/02/2024.

**Science & Technology News****ISRO's POEM-3 Platform Fulfills All Payload Goals**

On January 27, the **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** announced that it has successfully executed all experiments within the **Payload Orbital Experiment for Microgravity (POEM-3)** mission, which was launched as part of the PSLV-C58 mission.

**ISRO To Launch INSAT-3DS Satellite From Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh**

The **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** is set to launch its latest meteorological satellite, **INSAT-3DS**, marking a significant advancement in India's space capabilities. This satellite, **designed to enhance weather forecasting and disaster management**, represents a culmination of rigorous testing and collaboration between ISRO and various stakeholders.

**Summits & Conference News****Prime Minister Narendra Modi Inaugurates CLEA-CASGC 2024 Conference**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi kickstarted the **Commonwealth Legal Education Association (CLEA) – Commonwealth Attorneys and Solicitors General Conference (CASGC) 2024** at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi, focusing on Cross-Border Challenges in Justice Delivery.

**Awards & Honors News****Filmfare Awards 2024 Winners List**

The **69th edition** of the **Filmfare Awards 2024** took place in **Gandhinagar, Gujarat**. This year, the two-day celebration in Gujarat opened with a Curtain Raiser, leading up to the Filmfare Awards ceremony. The 69th Hyundai Filmfare Awards 2024 with Gujarat Tourism was held in **GIFT City, Gujarat**.

Category	Winner
Best Film	12th Fail
Best Director	Vidhu Vinod Chopra (12th Fail)
Best Actor in a Leading Role (Male)	Ranbir Kapoor (Animal)
Best Actor in a Leading Role (Female)	Alia Bhatt (Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani)
Best Film (Critics')	Joram (Devashish Makhija)
Best Actor (Critics')	Vikrant Massey (12th Fail)
Best Actress (Critics')	Rani Mukerji (Mrs Chatterjee vs. Norway), Shefali Shah (Three of Us)
Best Actor in a Supporting Role (Male)	Vicky Kaushal (Dunki)
Best Actor in a Supporting Role (Female)	Shabana Azmi (Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani)
Best Lyrics	Amitabh Bhattacharya ("Tere Vaaste" – Zara Hatke Zara Bachke)
Best Music Album	Animal (Pritam, Vishal Mishra, Manan Bhardwaj, Shreyas Puranik, Jaani, Bhupinder Babbal, et al.)
Best Playback Singer (Male)	Bhupinder Babbal (Arjan Vailly – Animal)
Best Playback Singer (Female)	Shilpa Rao (Besharam Rang – Pathaan)
Best Story	Amit Rai (OMG 2), Devashish Makhija (Joram)
Best Screenplay	Vidhu Vinod Chopra (12th Fail)
Best Dialogue	Ishita Moitra (Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani)
Best Background Score	Harshavardhan Rameshwar (Animal)
Best Cinematography	Avinash Arun Dhaware (Three of Us)
Best Production Design	Subrata Chakraborty, Amit Ray (Sam Bahadur)
Best Costume Design	Sachin Lovelekar, Divvyaa Gambhir, Nidhhi Gambhir (Sam Bahadur)
Best Sound Design	Kunal Sharma (Mpse) (Sam Bahadur) Sync Cinema (Animal)
Best Editing	Jaskunwar Singh Kohli- Vidhu Vinod Chopra (12th Fail)
Best Action	Spiro Razatos, Ani Arasu, Craig Macrae, Yannick Ben, Kecha Khamphakdee, Sunil Rodrigues (Jawan)
Best VFX	Red Chillies VFX (Jawan)
Best Choreography	Ganesh Acharya ("What Jhumka?" – Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani)
Best Debut Director	Tarun Dudeja (Dhak Dhak)
Best Debut Male	Aditya Rawal (Faraaz)
Best Debut Female	Alizeh Agnihotri (Farrey)
Lifetime Achievement Award	David Dhawan

### Three Indian Scientists To Be Honored With Prestigious UK Prize In London

The prestigious **Blavatnik Awards** will recognize the exceptional contributions of Rahul R Nair, Mehul Malik, Tanmay Bharat, and other early career scientists at a black-tie gala in London on February 27. These awards, totaling 480,000 pounds in grants, underscore the importance of recognition and research funding in propelling scientific breakthroughs.

### Maha Gaurav 2024 award presented to Nikhil Wagh by Maharashtra Deputy CM Ajit Pawar

**Nikhil Mukund Wagh**, who works as a **Public Relations Officer at Goa Shipyard Limited**, was recently given the “**Maha Gaurav 2024**” award. This award was handed to him by **Shri Ajit Pawar**, the Deputy Chief Minister of Maharashtra, during a ceremony at Kaneri Math in Kolhapur on Monday, January 29. The award is a big deal because it recognizes Nikhil’s great work in public relations.

## Important Dates News

### Indian Newspaper Day 2024

**Indian Newspaper Day**, observed on **January 28th** each year, is a tribute to the rich legacy of journalism in the country. It marks the inception of newspapers in India, a historic moment when James Augustus Hicky introduced the first printed newspaper, **Hicky’s Bengal Gazette, in 1780**. This article delves into the significance of this day, the historical backdrop of Hicky’s Bengal Gazette, and the evolving role of newspapers in today’s digital age.

### Martyrs Day 2024

India commemorates **Martyrs’ Day**, also known as **Shaheed Diwas, on January 30th each year**. This day holds a dual significance as it marks the assassination of **Mahatma Gandhi, the “Father of the Nation,”** and also serves to honour all the brave souls who sacrificed their lives for the country’s freedom and sovereignty.

### International Zebra Day 2024

**International Zebra Day**, observed annually on **January 31**, is a significant event dedicated to raising awareness about the conservation of zebras. These unique animals, easily recognizable by their black and white stripes, are an integral part of Africa’s wildlife and ecosystem. However, due to environmental degradation and the increasing human population, zebras are increasingly vulnerable. In this article, we delve into the history, significance, and ways to contribute to the conservation of this endangered species.

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### World Wetlands Day 2024

**On February 2, 2024**, the world comes together to celebrate **World Wetlands Day**, emphasizing the undeniable importance of wetlands to both the environment and human wellbeing. Wetlands, with their diverse ecosystems ranging from freshwater to marine environments, including swamps, marshes, and mangroves, play a pivotal role in the lives of countless species, including humans. This day serves as a critical reminder to raise awareness and take action towards the conservation of our planet’s vital wetlands.

### Rheumatoid Arthritis Awareness Day 2024

Every year on **February 2nd**, the world marks **Rheumatoid Arthritis Awareness Day**, dedicated to shedding light on rheumatoid arthritis (RA), a chronic autoimmune disease that significantly impacts the lives of millions globally. This observance aims to raise awareness, encourage early diagnosis and

treatment, and provide support to those affected by RA. With women being disproportionately affected, understanding this disease's nuances is crucial for all.

#### International Day of Human Fraternity 2024

**International Day of Human Fraternity** serves as a powerful reminder of the beauty of unity and the strength found in diversity. Observed annually on **February 4th**, the day calls for global solidarity and mutual understanding, underscoring the importance of compassion, respect, and empathy in overcoming hatred and conflict. As we approach the 2024 celebration, let's delve into the significance of this special day and reflect on how we can contribute to a more harmonious world.

#### World Cancer Day 2024

Cancer remains one of the most formidable health challenges of our time, affecting millions of people worldwide with its myriad forms and complexities. Recognized annually on **February 4th, World Cancer Day** aims to shed light on this critical issue, advocating for advances in research, prevention, and patient care.

### Sports News

#### Netherlands won FIH Hockey5s Women's World Cup

**India** finished as runner-up at the inaugural edition of the FIH Hockey 5s Women's World Cup after a 7-2 loss to the **Netherlands** in the final in Muscat. India tried to make a comeback and scored twice – **Jyoti Chhatri (20th minute) and Rutaja Dadaso Pisal (23rd minute)** – but could not catch the Dutch team which added one more goal courtesy of Kalse before the full-time hooter

#### Naorem Roshibina Devi Crowned Female Wushu Athlete Of The Year

**Naorem Roshibina Devi**, the pride of Manipur, has clinched the prestigious title of **International Wushu Federation Female Athlete of the Year**, solidifying her place as a powerhouse in the world of wushu.

#### Indian Boxer Mandeep Jangra Secures U.S Intercontinental Title

Indian boxer **Mandeep Jangra** secured a remarkable triumph at the US-based National Boxing Association's (NBA) intercontinental **super featherweight championship**. His win came after a compelling bout against American Gerardo Esquivel in Toppenish City, Washington.

#### Khelo India Winter Games 2024 Mascot Unveiled

The mascot for the Khelo India Winter Games 2024 is the majestic snow leopard, named **'Sheen-e She' or 'Shan' in the Ladakh region**. Native to the high-altitude areas of J&K and Ladakh, the snow leopard symbolizes the spirit of the Games and brings attention to the conservation of this endangered species.

### Obituaries News

#### Dr Nitya Anand, man who discovered India's first oral contraceptive pill 'Saheli', passes away

**Dr. Nitya Anand**, who made the first oral contraceptive pill **'Saheli' in India**, passed away at 99 in Lucknow. Dr. Anand was in charge of the Central Drug Research Institute (CDRI) from 1974 to 1984. He was part of CDRI since it started in 1951. He guided 100 PhD students, wrote over 400 papers, and had more than 130 patents.





**Historian R. Champakalakshmi Passes Away**

The academic community is in mourning following the passing of **R. Champakalakshmi**, a revered historian, former president of the Indian History Congress, and professor at the Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University. Her death marks a significant loss in the scholarly world, particularly in the field of Indian history. Colleagues and students remember her as a guiding force and a multidisciplinary expert whose contributions to historiography were profound and wide-ranging.

**Defence News****India, Saudi Arabia To Start Military Exercise SADA TANSEEQ From Jan 29-Feb 10**

The inaugural joint military exercise, **Sada Tanseeq**, between the armies of **India and Saudi Arabia**, is poised to commence in **Rajasthan**, showcasing a significant leap in bilateral relations between India and Saudi Arabia. Scheduled from **January 29th to February 10th, 2024**, Sada Tanseeq signifies a landmark collaboration, epitomizing the growing strategic partnership between India and Saudi Arabia.

**SARVATRA: Indian Army's Mobile Bridge System**

In the realm of national defense, rapid deployment and robust infrastructure are paramount. The **Indian Army**, under the Ministry of Defence, stands vigilant against external threats, prioritizing cutting-edge equipment like **SARVATRA** – a Multispan Mobile Bridging System. Crafted by **Armament and Combat Engineering Systems (ACE)** under the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), SARVATRA epitomizes innovation in bridging solutions, ensuring seamless connectivity for the Indian Army.

**Preeti Rajak Becomes Indian Army's First Female Subedar Havildar Preeti Rajak**, a distinguished trap shooter in the Indian Army, has reached a historic milestone by being promoted to the esteemed rank of **Subedar**. Her promotion marks a groundbreaking achievement, as she becomes the **first woman in**

**the Indian Army to hold this prestigious rank**, signifying not only her personal accomplishment but also a significant advancement for women in the armed forces.

**Indian Navy Declares 2024 As 'Year of Naval Civilians'**

In a strategic move to bolster efficiency and bolster the well-being of its civilian workforce, the **Indian Navy** has declared 2024 as the **'Year of Naval Civilians.'** This groundbreaking initiative targets comprehensive Civilian HR Management, with a sharp focus on enhancing administrative efficiency, embracing digital transformation, implementing targeted training programs, and fostering employee welfare activities.

**India-US Seal \$4B MQ-9B Armed Drone Deal**

India's strategic collaboration with the **United States** in defense takes a significant leap forward with the procurement of **MQ-9B armed drones**. This acquisition underscores the strengthening ties between the two nations and represents a pivotal moment in enhancing India's military capabilities.

**Books & Authors News**

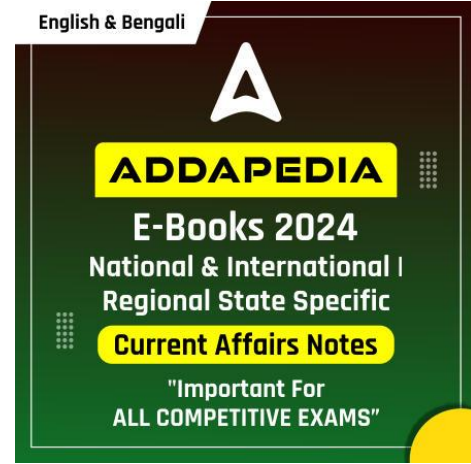
Himanta Biswa Sarma released first volume of 'Political History of Assam (1947-1971)'

Assam Chief Minister **Himanta Biswa Sarma** released the first edition of **'Political History of Assam (1947-1971)' - Volume 1**, marking a significant step in documenting the state's political journey.

**Miscellaneous News**

WHO Honors Countries For The First Time For Eliminating Industrially Produced Trans Fats

In a significant milestone, the **World Health Organization (WHO)** has issued its first-ever certificates acknowledging advancements in eliminating trans fatty acids (TFA), both industrially produced and naturally occurring. Five countries—**Denmark, Lithuania, Poland, Saudi Arabia, and Thailand**—have been commended for their pioneering efforts in demonstrating effective policies and robust monitoring and enforcement mechanisms in their TFA elimination strategies.



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