



19 Apr 2025

National and International News

<p>Axiom-4 Mission</p>	<p>Why in news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indian astronaut Shubham Shukla is set to travel to the International Space Station (ISS) next month as part of the Axiom-4 mission, marking the first such journey by an Indian in nearly four decades since Rakesh Sharma's historic spaceflight aboard a Russian Soyuz spacecraft. <p>Key Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Axiom Mission 4 (or Ax-4) is a private spaceflight to the International Space Station. It is operated by Axiom Space and uses a SpaceX Crew Dragon spacecraft. The flight is in collaboration with NASA and will be the fourth flight of Axiom Space after Axiom Mission 1, Axiom Mission 2 and Axiom Mission 3. Mission Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Axiom-4 aims to facilitate commercial activities in space, including scientific research, technological development, and space tourism. It is set to carry a diverse crew of astronauts from different countries, reflecting the growing international interest in space exploration. The mission will support various scientific experiments and technological tests in the unique microgravity environment of space. <p>About International Space Station (ISS):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> International Space Station is a modular space station launched in 1998. Modular stations can allow modules to be added to or removed from the existing structure, allowing greater flexibility. It is a large laboratory in space that allows astronauts to come aboard and stay for weeks or months to carry out experiments in microgravity. The first crew on the ISS arrived on November 2, 2000. Objective: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To conduct scientific research in astrobiology, astronomy, meteorology, physics, and other fields. It is the largest artificial object in space. It circles the Earth in roughly 93 minutes, completing 15.5 orbits per day.
<p>Goods and Services Tax (GST)</p>	<p>Why in news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The government clarified that it is not considering imposing GST on UPI transactions exceeding ₹2,000.

**Key Points:**

- The Goods and Services Tax is a form of **Indirect Tax levied on most of the goods and services sold in India for domestic consumption.**
- It is based on the **principle of Value Added Tax (VAT) and is applicable throughout India.**
- It is paid by consumers, but it is remitted to the government by the businesses selling the goods and services.
- It has subsumed and replaced various indirect taxes that were previously levied by the central and state governments.
- **Components of GST:**
 - **Central Goods and Services Tax (CGST)** - It is levied on the intra-state (within the same state) as well as intra-UT (within the same UT) supply of goods and services.
 - **State Goods and Services Tax (SGST)** - It is levied on the intra-state (within the same state) supply of goods and services.
 - **Union Territories Goods and Services Tax (UTGST)** - It is equivalent to SGST for UTs that don't have their own legislature. Thus, it is levied on the intra-UT (within the same UT) supply of goods and services.
 - **Integrated Goods and Services Tax (IGST)** - It is levied on the inter-state (between two different states) supply of goods and services.

Kuno National Park**Why in news?**


- Chief Minister Mohan Yadav announced that two cheetahs will be relocated from Madhya Pradesh's Kuno National Park to the Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary on April 20. This marks their release into a second habitat since their reintroduction to India in 2022.

Key Points:

- It is located in the Morena and Sheopur districts in Madhya Pradesh. It covers an area of 750 sq.km.
- It derives its name from the meandering Kuno River (one of the main tributaries of the Chambal River) that graces the region.
- Initially **established as a wildlife sanctuary, it was only in 2018 that the government changed its status into a national park.**
- It was selected under '**Action Plan for Introduction of Cheetah in India**'.
- **Vegetation:** Kuno is primarily a grassland region, though a few rocky outcrops are found here too.
- **Flora:** Kardhai, Salai, and Khair trees dominate the forested area of Kuno National Park, which is mostly mixed forest.
- **Fauna:** The protected area of the forest is home to the jungle cat, Indian leopard, sloth bear, Indian wolf, striped hyena, golden jackal, Bengal fox, and dhole, along with more than 120 bird species.



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	<p>About Cheetah:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cheetahs breed year-round, with peak breeding during the rainy season. Females reach sexual maturity between 20–24 months, while males mature later, at 24–30 months. They are the fastest land animals, capable of reaching speeds up to 120 km/h and can accelerate from 0 to 100 km/h in just 3 seconds. IUCN Status: Vulnerable They are protected under Schedule II of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972. They are also included in Appendix I of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), offering the highest level of protection from international trade. Project Cheetah began in 2022 with the translocation of 8 cheetahs from Namibia and 12 from South Africa to Kuno National Park.
<p>Person in news: Mathew Samuel Kalarickal</p> 	<p>Why in news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recently, Mathew Samuel Kalarickal, celebrated as the 'Father of Angioplasty' in India, passed away on April 18, 2025. <p>Key Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr. Mathew Samuel Kalarickal (1948–2025) was a pioneering Indian cardiologist, widely regarded as the "Father of Angioplasty" in India. He played a pivotal role in introducing and popularizing coronary angioplasty—a minimally invasive procedure to treat blocked arteries—across the country. Awards & Honors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Padma Shri (2000) Dr. B. C. Roy Award in Interventional Cardiology (1996) Doctor of Science Award by Dr. M.G.R. University (2003) Rashtriya Samman (Top Tax Payer Award) (2000)
<p>IOS Sagar (Indian Ocean Ship Sagar) Mission</p>	<p>Why in news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> INS Sunayna, currently deployed to Africa as part of the Indian Ocean mission IOS SAGAR, arrived at Nacala Port in Mozambique. <p>Key Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The IOS Sagar initiative is designed to deepen India's maritime collaboration with Indian Ocean Region (IOR) countries. The mission is aimed at fostering international cooperation between India and several African countries. It involves the deployment of the Indian Navy's INS Sunayna, crewed by Indian sailors alongside 44 personnel from nine African nations. The initiative will take place from April 5 to May 8, 2025. Key Participating Countries: Sri Lanka, Maldives, Mauritius, Comoros, Kenya, Madagascar, Mozambique, Seychelles, and South Africa.



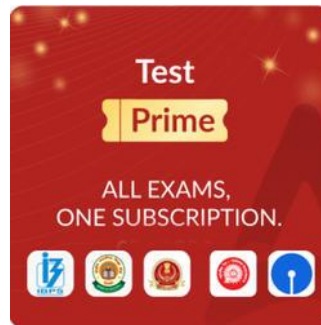
India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC)

Why in news?

- India is set to become a key global connectivity hub through the IMEC, which will cut logistics costs by 30% and transport time by 40%, boosting global trade, said Shri Piyush Goyal.

Key Points:

- It is a connectivity project that seeks to develop a **seamless infrastructure of ports, railways, roads, sea lines, and pipelines to enhance trade among India, the Arabian Peninsula, the Mediterranean region, and Europe.**
- It was **announced in 2023** on the sidelines of the **G20 meeting in New Delhi** when a **memorandum of understanding (MoU)** was signed between the European Union and seven countries, namely **India, the US, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), France, Germany, and Italy.**
- The IMEC will comprise two separate corridors, **the eastern corridor connecting India to the Arabian Gulf and the northern corridor connecting the Gulf to Europe.**
- The corridor will include a **shipping route connecting Mumbai and Mundra (Gujarat) with the UAE** and a **rail network connecting the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan with the Israeli port of Haifa** to reach the shores of the Mediterranean Sea.
- Along the corridor, the countries will also lay the **network of electricity grids, optical fiber cable for digital connectivity, and pipeline for the transportation of hydrogen gas.**
- It intends to **increase efficiency, reduce costs, secure regional supply chains, increase trade accessibility, enhance economic cooperation, generate jobs, and lower greenhouse gas emissions.**
- The corridor will be supported by the **Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment (PGII), a US-led initiative** to bridge the infrastructure gap in developing countries.



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